Individual responses to the severity and type of electoral manipulation: A social-psychological model of manipulation and protest

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Electoral manipulation is a prominent tool for ruling parties in unconsolidated democracies and in electoral authoritarian regimes (Simpser 2013)—the most common form of authoritarianism today (Beatriz Magaloni and Kricheli 2010). At the same time, public concerns about voter fraud, gerrymandering, and foreign interference appear to be on the rise even in consolidated democracies (Hasen 2012; Norris 2013). Theories of electoral manipulation often posit negative public reaction as one of the few guardrails that can prevent manipulation efforts by governments and parties (Little 2012; Little, Tucker, and LaGatta 2015; B Magaloni 2010); however, protests against manipulated elections are relatively rare, while manipulation is common. This raises a puzzle: why is opposition protest failing to prevent electoral manipulation as predicted in much of the existing literature?

This project draws on insights from political science, sociology, and psychology to address this question. In particular, it investigates how electoral manipulation affects two predictors of individual participation in collective action identified in social psychology: the salience of group identity and feelings of anger.[1] While all forms of electoral manipulation are likely to produce more anger than a clean election, theories of procedural justice and legitimacy costs would predict that some forms of manipulation generate more anger than others, making collective action more likely. On the other hand, theories of group identification suggest that some manipulation efforts—those that directly involve state power or are excessive to winning

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[1] Two other factors—group efficacy and moral conviction—were also measured in the survey experiment, but are not reported here due to space constraints.

the election—should decrease individuals' sense of identification with the aggrieved party, making collective action in defense of clean elections *less* likely. The results of a preliminary study using a convenience sample of American undergraduate students (n = 377) are supportive of the latter hypotheses but not the former. If borne out by more representative samples, these results would help explain why the risk of protest regularly fails to deter election manipulation. In particular, it complicates the common understanding that exposure of electoral misdeeds by opposition groups and election monitors is a central tool for deterring manipulation; that logic does not hold if exposure to certain forms of manipulation makes collective action less likely. In turn, this understanding of the microfoundations of the relationship between manipulation and protest helps explain the widespread toleration of election monitors among authoritarian governments (Hyde 2011), even as they attempt to keep certain kinds of manipulation out of view (Sjoberg 2014). Furthermore, it helps account for variation in the type of manipulation used under different circumstances (van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Harvey 2016), as parties deploy risker tactics in places where they exercise greater control.

Ruling parties may seek to maximize their use of tactics that depress opposition identity, subject to political and resource constraints. When such tools are insufficient or unavailable, they face the choice of employing tactics that carry a greater risk of provoking mass protest, or risking losing the election outright in the absence of such vote-padding tools. This theory also helps provide causal underpinnings for the finding that elections in which electoral manipulation is excessive are less likely to experience electoral protest (Simpser 2013), and for the argument that formal types of manipulation (e.g. biased electoral rules) are less risky for governments than election-day tactics (Birch 2011). In addition to these advances, the project has the potential to provide benefits to in the areas of electoral integrity and democracy promotion. If democracy is

not self-enforcing as some have argued (Fearon 2011; Hyde and Marinov 2014), because electoral manipulation in some forms makes electoral protest unlikely, this project may indicate the most effective appeals for mobilizing individuals against electoral manipulation. These lessons could be adopted by election monitors, political parties, democracy promoters, and activists.

This short paper presents results from the preliminary study using American undergraduate participants (n = 377). Participation in the Harvard Experimental Political Science Graduate Conference would help to refine the experimental protocol as I prepare grant applications to conduct representative survey experiments in one or more electoral authoritarian regimes and unconsolidated democracies. In particular, I plan to conduct this experiment using a nationally representative sample of Russian respondents, a case where election management and the risk of protest are keen concerns of the ruling party (and one where I have experience conducting survey experiments). With sufficient funding, I also hope to carry out the experiment in more democratic cases as well, in order to vary levels of political contestation and experience with democracy.

In the preliminary experiment, respondents were exposed to vignettes describing the result of a gubernatorial election in an unnamed state. In the control condition, the results were presented as free and fair; in the treatment conditions, the type and severity of electoral manipulation varied randomly. Four types of manipulation were used (vote-buying, voter pressure, falsification, and formal manipulation of the rules), along with two levels of severity. The salience of respondents' partisan affiliation, their feelings of efficacy, emotions, and sense of moral conviction were then measured using standard scales from the literature. While the sample of respondents in the preliminary study is highly unrepresentative, studying Americans'

responses is useful because the US provides a case of consolidated democracy in which parties nevertheless fight over the electoral rules of the game, and allege (or deny) acts of electoral manipulation.[2] As a result, if social-psychological reactions to manipulation are found to be significant in the US context, it bodes well for uncovering them in future studies focused on more authoritarian contexts where the rules of the game are more hotly contested (Schedler 2002b). By comparing diverse democratic and authoritarian cases, the overall project will uncover how individual reactions to manipulation are contingent on the consolidation of democratic norms and practices.

The puzzle: Common electoral manipulation, rare electoral protest

Ruling parties can derive considerable benefits from electoral manipulation efforts. Naturally, it helps them increase their odds of prevailing in the current election (Lehoucq 2003), but it can also send signals of dominance (Magaloni 2006; Simpser 2013) and draw ambitious politicians to the party (K. F. Greene 2007). Considering these benefits, what constrains governments and parties from engaging in manipulation? One major school of thought holds that leaders choose not to engage in manipulation in order to avoid provoking costly protests, especially in close elections (Chernykh and Svolik 2015; Little, Tucker, and LaGatta 2015; Magaloni 2010). A related approach, drawn from analysis of the post-communist color revolutions, argues that mass mobilization will be easiest during 'stolen elections' in which the winning party would have lost without the help of electoral manipulation (Bunce and Wolchik 2006; Tucker 2007).

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[2] Recent prominent examples include President Donald Trump's allegation of millions of fraudulent votes in the 2016 election, and Roy Moore's December 2017 request for a court to stay the swearing-in of Alabama Senator Doug Jones while citing allegedly suspicious results.

However, post-election protest is relatively rare in hybrid and authoritarian regimes (Kalandadze and Orenstein 2009), while manipulation is common (Simpser 2013). In other words, ruling parties in these regimes are not often deterred, and opposition groups are rarely able to mobilize to punish electoral malfeasance. I argue that this puzzle results from an emphasis in previous research on structural factors and formal models of opposition behavior. These models overlook the fact that only some individuals choose to engage in collective action, even among those with the grievances and resources that are collectively associated with protest (Valentino et al. 2011). To address this question, a large literature in social psychology has identified four factors that influence individual participation in collective action. These are group efficacy, group identity, anger, and moral conviction (Van Zomeren 2013). This paper investigates the relationship between forms of electoral manipulation and two of these factors: *anger* and *group identity*.

Group, or social, identity refers the fact that people may come to think of themselves as closely associated with a group (Tajfel and Turner 1979). As a result, individuals can view their social position in group terms, and can be motivated to support the group's interests in the same way they may become motivated to defend their own personal interests (Blackwood and Louis 2012; Turner et al. 1987; Van Zomeren 2013). Stronger identification with the group has been shown to increase the likelihood of participating in collective action on the group's behalf (van Zomeren, Spears, and Leach 2008).

Similarly, anger is understood to be the emotion most strongly associated with collective action (Van Zomeren 2013). Anger is an approach emotion (Carver and Harmon-Jones 2009) that people may feel in response to perceived injustice (Lazarus 1991; Roseman 1991). ??). Feelings of anger can lead to consistently higher political participation, including costly forms of

engagement like protest (Valentino et al. 2011). As a result, anger can help citizens overcome collective action problems, in part by leading them to read threats against a group as threats that affect the self (Groenendyk and Banks 2014). Anger is particularly well-suited to sparking protest, since it can reinforce risk-seeking behavior (Lerner and Keltner 2001) and problem-focused coping (Folkman et al. 1986)(Folkman et al. 1986). Experimental evidence has shown that feelings of anger lead to increased willingness to participate in politics, including in public demonstrations (Valentino et al. 2011) and information-gathering (Ryan 2012). Nonetheless, it remains unknown how particular forms of electoral manipulation affect feelings of either anger or group identity.

Theory: a social-psychological model of electoral protest

Much of the literature on manipulation and protest emphasizes the closeness of the election result or the decisiveness of manipulation as key explanatory factors (Simpser 2013), and treats electoral manipulation as a unified phenomenon rather than as a web of tactics and techniques (Schedler 2002a). These tactics vary in their benefits (van Ham and Lindberg 2015; Harvey 2016), costs and risks (Birch 2011), and in their palatability to voters (Weschle 2016). Taken together, this earlier work suggests that attitudes toward electoral manipulation may be complex, as individuals weigh issues of procedural fairness against questions of distributive justice, the favorability of the result for the respondent, and the closeness of the result (Doherty and Wolak 2012; Krehbiel and Cropanzano 2000). Specifically, these factors may varyingly affect individuals' sense of group identity and feelings of anger, leading to different levels of protest risk. This theory and hypotheses are briefly sketched below.

Based on prior research, I predict that electoral manipulation which makes the difference between winning and losing will increase the salience of group identity and feelings of anger

among those who affiliate with the wronged party (compared to both a clean election and a case in which manipulation occurred but only padded the winner's margin of victory). This is because group-based grievances have been shown to result in increased salience for group identity (Klandermans 1997; Simon and Klandermans 2001; Simon, Pantaleo, and Mummendey 1995) and stronger feelings of anger (Roseman 1991; van Zomeren, Spears, and Leach 2008). In the case of decisive electoral manipulation, the losing party has a serious grievance—the manipulation effort 'stole' an electoral victory from their group. An indirect effect is also possible. In the case of decisive manipulation, the implication that the wronged party would have won in the absence of manipulation suggests greater social support for the group and raises the possibility that the result can be overturned. The belief that one's group has social support and that a negative situation can be changed can increase a sense of group efficacy (Cohen-Chen et al. 2014; van Zomeren, Leach, and Spears 2012), which in turn helps intensify group identity and anger (Klar 2013). [3] This theory is in line with Simpser's (2013) observation that excessive manipulation reduces the likelihood of protest, and with the claim that 'stolen' elections are riskiest for ruling parties (Tucker 2007).

> *Hypothesis 1*: Excessive manipulation will decrease the salience of group identity among members of the aggrieved group, relative to decisive manipulation and to clean elections.
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> *Hypothesis 2*: Decisive manipulation will increase feelings of anger among members of the aggrieved group, relative to excessive manipulation and clean elections.

With regard to the type of manipulation used, I focus on four different manipulation tactics—vote-buying, voter pressure by employers, falsification, and institutional bias—corresponding to four long-standing categories of manipulation (Schedler 2002). The latter two

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[3] Anger, in particular, is driven by efficacy. In the absence of a belief that the situation can be changed, withdrawal emotions like fear and sadness are more common (Carver 2004, Frijda 1986, Lazarus 1991).

techniques are state-based, while the former rely on non-state actors. Among the state-based

tactics, institutional bias refers to laws and regulations that unfairly tip the electoral scales in

favor of the ruling party (Levitsky and Way 2010). This form of bias is thus procedurally

legitimate; falsification by election officials, on the other hand, is illegal and procedurally

illegitimate. A first hypothesis to be tested is the claim that institutional forms of manipulation

carry smaller legitimacy costs than those forms of manipulation that take place outside of formal

channels (Birch 2011; Lehoucq 2003). Since exposure to a procedural injustice is associated with

higher levels of anger (van Zomeren et al. 2004), especially when coupled with unfavorable

result for the individual (Krehbiel and Cropanzano 2000), it is expected that the three

procedurally illegitimate forms of electoral manipulation with generate higher levels of anger

than institutional bias.

> *Hypothesis 3*: Institutional bias will decrease feelings of anger among members of the
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> aggrieved group, compared to procedurally illegitimate forms of electoral manipulation.

By contrast, institutional bias should result in reduced levels of identification with the

aggrieved group. Research on group identification has shown that the emphasis individuals place

on group affiliations can vary significantly according to the context surrounding that

identification (Kuo and Margalit 2012). They may adopt or disfavor identities based on strategic

calculations (Laitin 1998; Posner 2005), in search of material or psychological benefits, and may

do so without any conscious calculation (Shih, Pittinsky, and Ambady 1999). In particular,

people are less likely associate themselves with a less powerful, low-status group, especially

when the boundaries of the group are permeable—like those of a political party (Huddy 2001;

Simon and Klandermans 2001). Since institutional bias is indicative of the ruling party's control

over the state at the highest level, it implies that the disfavored party has little ability to influence group members' fates (Tajfel and Turner 1979). In turn, this should lead individuals to be less likely to identify with that party. By the same reasoning, falsification by election officials may have a similar effect; however, this relationship is likely to be weaker due to the narrower degree of ruling-party power implied by falsification relative to its control over the laws of the land.

> *Hypothesis 4a*: Institutional bias will decrease respondents' identification with the aggrieved group, compared to a clean election and to non-state forms of electoral manipulation.

> *Hypothesis 4b*: Falsification will decrease respondents' identification with the aggrieved group, compared to a clean election and to non-state forms of electoral manipulation.

Violations of procedural justice are known to spark anger among those who do not benefit from the process, but evaluations of procedural justice do not rest solely on the perception that a process was fair. In addition to fairness, individuals also respond to the perception that they were treated with respect (Blader and Tyler 2003; Tyler and van der Toorn 2013). While all forms of electoral manipulation negatively affect the fairness of the election, they vary in the degree to which they suggest respect or disrespect for targeted voters. In particular, voter pressure is coercive (Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014; Mares and Young 2016). In its most severe form, threats of physical violence are generally targeted at potential opposition voters (Bratton 2008), while milder economic forms of pressure can be aimed at turning out supporters (Boone 2011). This seeming reluctance to target potentially cheap swing voters with negative inducements (Mares and Young 2016), suggests that ruling parties may fear that such tactics will backfire unless aimed at known opponents or reliable supporters. On the other hand, vote-buying involves a reciprocal exchange between patrons and clients that may involve

feelings of mutual respect, loyalty, and trust (Kramon 2016; Lawson and Greene 2014).

Inasmuch as decision-making procedures indicate a "positive, full-status relationship" between

decision-makers and constituents, "it is judged to be fair" (Tyler and Lind 1992), while behaviors

that treat constituents in a disrespectful, undignified, or low-status way can be perceived as

unfair (MacCoun et al 1988, p. 54). In a similar vein, (Gonzalez Ocantos, de Jonge, and

Nickerson 2014) use cross-national survey experiments to show that stigma towards vote-*sellers*

increases with the income of the seller. That is, controlling for the respondent's socioeconomic

status, poorer vote-sellers face lower stigma for their behavior. Consequently, I predict that

coercive manipulation will be more likely than reciprocal tactics to generate anger, due to the

less dignified nature of pressure and intimidation for the target.

       This is likely to be true even among respondents who have not personally experienced

such pressure. Being exposed to a third-party's harm can also rouse strong feelings of anger and

injustice (Vidmar 2002), since everyone has a stake in seeing the rules of the community upheld

(Miller 2001). This is especially true for respondents who can they identify with the victim of the

injustice (Yzerbyt et al. 2003).

> *Hypothesis 5*: Coercive forms of manipulation, like voter pressure, will generate more
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> anger than other forms of manipulation.
>
> *Hypothesis 6*: Reciprocal forms of manipulation, like vote-buying, will generate less
>
> anger than other forms of manipulation.

Study design

       Participants in this preliminary study were undergraduate students enrolled in an

introductory course in American politics (n = 377). The implications for this convenience sample

for interpreting the results and considered in the discussion section. Respondents were presented

with a vignette that describes election manipulation in a race for governor in a battleground state, presented as genuine information. Within that vignette, two features were randomly varied. First, the manipulation effort was presented either as determinative of the winner and loser (decisive), or as excessive to the winning party's victory (Simpser 2013). Second, one of the four manipulation tactics—vote-buying, falsification, voter pressure, and institutional bias—was indicated. Lastly, for respondents assigned to the control group, a vignette is presented in which allegations of manipulation are made, but are disproven by an independent audit. The vignette presents the currently-dominant Republican Party as the winner of the election (and the beneficiary of any manipulation), implying that individuals who support the Democratic Party make up the potentially aggrieved group.[4] Since the theory is concerned with social-psychological responses among aggrieved individuals, the overrepresentation of Democratic and liberal-identifiers in the undergraduate sample is beneficial, helping to maximize the potential effect size in each treatment condition, and reduces the risk of partisan imbalances across groups (Mutz 2011). Future work in other countries should also oversample for opposition-oriented respondents. Following the vignette, two blocks of questions measuring emotions and identification with political parties are presented in randomized order. These draw on standard scales from prior research. A short summary of the vignette is provided at the top of the block, to reduce the cognitive effort associated with remembering the details of the vignette.

Vignette text and experimental conditions

Respondents are presented with the following vignette. Text in italics indicates sections of the vignette that were present in the control condition, but replaced by treatment text in the experimental conditions; text for these conditions is also presented in a table below. Bolded text

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[4] The Republican party is chosen since it is presently the dominant party nationally. In non-democratic contexts, the ruling party will be presented as the winner (e.g. United Russia in the Russian case).

was also bold in the survey instrument itself. The aim of the vignette is to indicate to the reader that electoral manipulation was alleged in a significant contest—a gubernatorial election in a close race. It then presents the results of an ostensibly independent investigation, which either refutes the allegations or indicates that a particular form of manipulation was employed. Next, the investigation indicates whether or not the manipulation effort affected the final outcome of the race (that is, whether or not the Democratic candidate lost the election due to the manipulation). In the control condition, this sentence reiterates that the Republican candidate won fairly. Lastly, the vignette suggests some stakes for the outcome of the election, by stymieing Democratic priorities.

The four experimental conditions dealing with manipulation tactics represent vote-buying, falsification, voter pressure, and institutional bias against the opposition party. Each of these treatments is written to capture a typical example of the phenomenon. In the case of vote-buying, it is presented as being carried out by party activists and targeting lower-income voters (Stokes et al. 2013). Falsification is carried out by election officials. Voter pressure involves a coercive relationship between voters and someone in a position of power; in this case, employers are described pressuring their employees (Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014). Finally, institutional bias is described in broad terms, as a law that made it more difficult for some Democratic supporters to vote. The decisiveness of the manipulation is also varied randomly, and indicates whether or not the manipulation effort determined the winner of the election, or was unnecessary to secure the winning party's victory.

Vignette text (control condition):

Below, you will be presented with a short description of a recent election, followed by additional questions. Please read the description carefully.

You may have seen news reports after the 2016 election alleging that **the election for governor in one battleground state was unfairly manipulated to benefit the Republican candidate**, who has since taken office.

An independent, non-partisan investigation of these allegations has recently been completed. The investigation concluded *that there was no hard evidence of electoral manipulation.*

The independent experts believe that *the Republican candidate won fairly in a clean election, and the Democratic candidate lost*.

State Democrats had hoped to enact their policy priorities, but have been blocked by the new governor.

Variable	Text
Type (n)	"The investigation concluded…
Vote-buying (68)	…that party activists paid low-income voters to turn out and vote for the Republican candidate."
Falsification (68)	…that state election officials forged the results to increase the Republican candidate's share of the vote."
Pressure (68)	…that employers threatened workers with reduced wages if they did not turn out and vote for the Republican candidate."
Institutional bias (69)	…that a recent election law made it more difficult for many Democratic voters to cast ballots."
Control (67)	… that there was no hard evidence of electoral manipulation."
Level (n)	"The independent experts believe that…
Decisive (130)	…that the Republican candidate won as a result of this manipulation. That is, the Democratic candidate would have won in a clean election."
Non-decisive (143)	…that the manipulation effort did not affect the outcome of the election. That is, the Republican candidate would still have won even in a clean election."
Control (67)	…the Republican candidate won fairly in a clean election, and the Democratic candidate lost."

Table 1: Randomly varied text for explanatory variables, with number of respondents in each group.

Dependent variables

The strength of partisan group identity is measured using the approach provided by

Huddy et al (2015). The goal of these measures is to capture the salience of respondents'

identification with the partisan group, something not directly captured by straightforward

partisan affiliation. As Huddy et al (2015) note, "Measuring gradations in social identity strength is crucial to identifying the individuals who react most strongly to collective threat, feel the strongest emotions, and are most likely to take action in defense of their political party." Questions and responses are as follows.

1) How important is being a Democrat to you? (Extremely, very, not very, not at all)

2) Dow well does the term Democrat describe you? (Extremely, very, not very, not at all)

3) When talking about Democrats, how often do you use "we" instead of "they"? (All the time, most, some, rarely, never)

4) To what extent do you think of yourself as being a Democrat? (A great deal, somewhat, very little, not at all)

Huddy et al (2015) combine the responses to these questions to form a scale ranging from zero to one, which they found to be highly reliable (Crohnbach's α between .81 and .9 depending on the sample). The same procedure is applied here. Since the dependent variable is a proportion, these results are analyzed using linear regression models and tobit models (as robustness checks).

Anger and other emotions

Following Valentino et al (2011) and (Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015), emotions are measured by asking respondents the following: "Generally speaking, how do you **feel** about the events described above? Please tell us how much you feel each of the following emotions." Respondents are then be presented with eight emotional descriptors, with responses ranging from zero (not at all) to four (a great deal). The eight descriptors are as follows, with general emotional category in parentheses: 'angry,' 'disgusted,' 'outraged,' (anger); 'afraid,' 'nervous,' (fear); 'hopeful,' 'proud,' 'happy,' (enthusiasm). Using multiple measures of a single emotional concept in this way is widely considered to be preferable to a single measure (e.g. "How angry do you feel?") (Marcus et al. 2006). Additionally, evaluating a range of possible emotional

response (anger, fear, enthusiasm) reduces the risk of design and social desirability effects in which respondents guess how the researcher expects them to feel about the vignette. Huddy et al (2015) find these scales to be reliable, with α ranging from .88 to .93. As with group identity, these responses will be rescaled to range from zero to one, and analyzed using linear regression and tobit models.

Results

The tables below present results of linear-regression and tobit models of the dependent variables. In models that treat feelings of anger as the dependent variable, two sets of models are shown. The first set restricts the analysis only to self-reported Democrats and those who lean toward the Democrats (this variable is measured at the outset of the survey, and is distinct from the measures of strength of group identity that serve as a dependent variable). The second set of models shows the results using data from all respondents, including pure independents and Republican supporters. Since the second dependent variable is a measure of identification with the Democratic Party, models that make use of this variable are only presented using data from self-reported Democrats.

Excessive and decisive manipulation

Hypotheses 1 and 2 consider the effects of excessive and decisive manipulation on identification with the aggrieved political party and on feelings of anger, respectively. Table 1 shows that Hypothesis 1, which holds that excessive manipulation will dampen respondents' identification with the Democratic Party, is modestly supported. In both the OLS and Tobit models, exposure to decisive manipulation does not produce significantly different levels of identification with Democrats than losing a clean election (the control condition). By contrast,

excessive manipulation does appear to be associated with reduced identification with Democrats, with two important caveats. First, the result falls just short of the conventional threshold for statistical significance (p = .058 and .064, respectively, in Models 1 and 2). More importantly, the difference between the coefficients for excessive and decisive manipulation is not itself statistically significant (Gelman and Stern 2006). Figure 1 shows this relationship graphically using Model 1, with the control condition (the intercept) plotted to show the substantive size of the treatment effects.

	Dependent variable:	
	Democrat ID	
	OLS	*Tobit*
	(1)	(2)
Excessive	-0.06[*]	-0.06[*]
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Decisive	-0.05	-0.05
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	0.41[***]	0.41[***]
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Observations	210	210
R^2	0.02	
Adjusted R^2	0.01	
Residual Std. Error	0.17 (df = 207)	
F Statistic	1.96 (df = 2; 207)	
Log Likelihood		56.79
Wald Test (df = 2)		3.58
Note:	[*]p<0.1; [**]p<0.05; [***]p<0.01	

Table 1: Level of manipulation and strength of identification as a Democrat
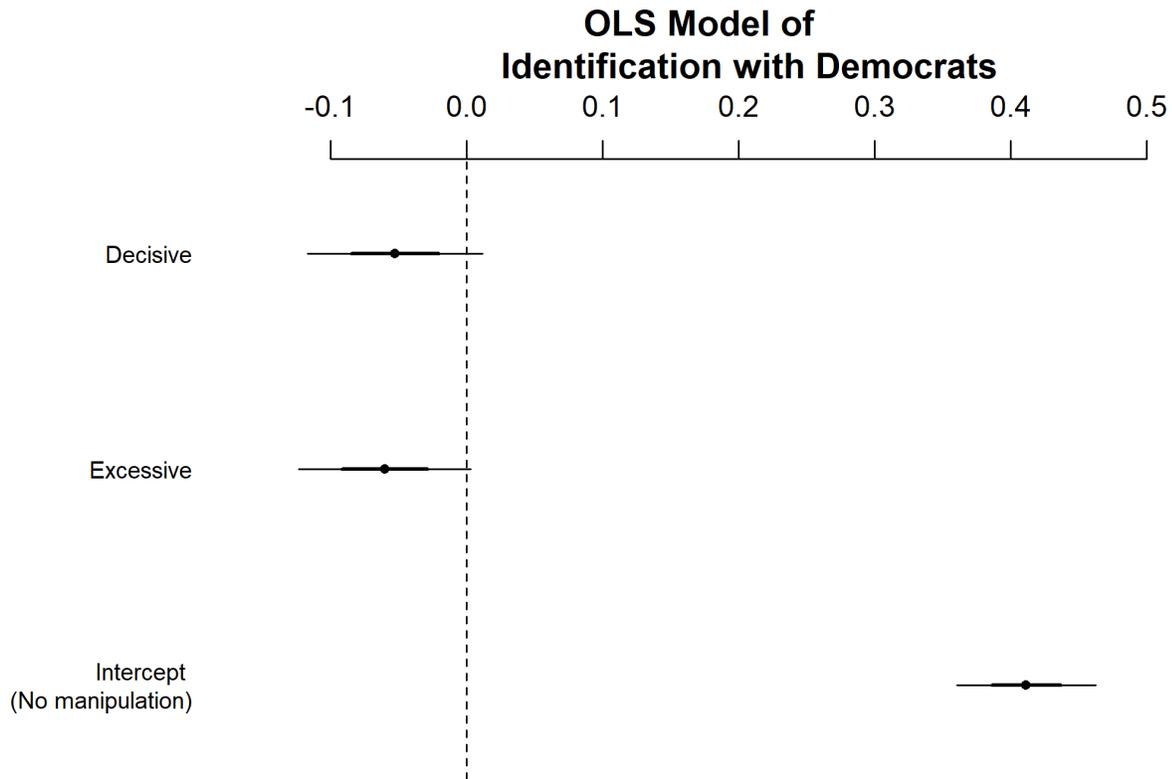
OLS Model of Identification with Democrats

Figure 1: Strength of identification with the Democratic Party and manipulation level (Model 1)

As Table 2 shows, Hypothesis 2 does not appear to be supported. While both decisive and excessive electoral manipulation efforts cause significantly higher levels of anger among Democrats and the overall sample, Figure 2 shows that the effects of the two levels of manipulation are virtually identical to one another. This shows that, at least for the sample and procedure employed here, it is manipulation itself—rather than decisive manipulation—that sparks feelings of anger. Conditional on the particularities of this experiment, this finding contributes to the claim that "stolen" elections are more likely to generate mass protest (Simpser 2013; Tucker 2007).

	Dependent variable:			
	Anger			
	OLS	*Tobit*	*OLS*	*Tobit*
	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Excessive	0.20***	0.24***	0.14***	0.19***
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Decisive	0.19***	0.23***	0.15***	0.20***
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Constant	0.36***	0.34***	0.29***	0.22***
	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Observations	210	210	341	341
R^2	0.07		0.03	
Adjusted R^2	0.06		0.03	
Residual Std. Error	0.30 (df = 207)		0.31 (df = 338)	
F Statistic	7.39*** (df = 2; 207)		5.91*** (df = 2; 338)	
Log Likelihood	-134.49		-239.78	
Wald Test (df = 2)	12.66***		10.92***	
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 2: Level of manipulation and feelings of anger
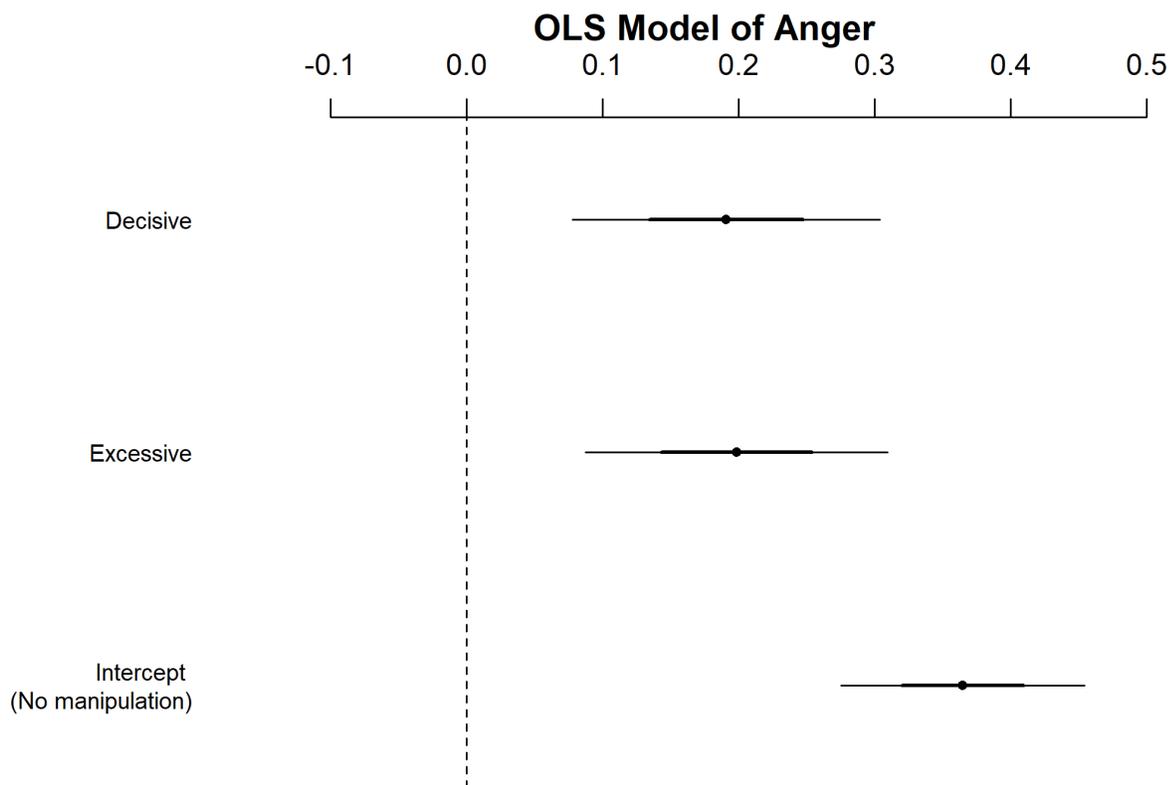
OLS Model of Anger

Figure 2: Severity of electoral manipulation and feelings of anger (Model 3)

Manipulation tactic

Hypothesis 3 holds that procedurally legitimate manipulation tactics, like duly passed laws that make it more difficult for particular parties to compete, should generate less anger than procedurally illegitimate (illegal) tactics. This hypothesis does not appear to be supported. As Figure 4 shows, all four forms of electoral manipulation are associated with increases in feelings of anger among Democratic supporters, but these effects are virtually identical. Voter pressure produces a somewhat larger increase in feelings of anger than the other three tactics, but even in this case the effect is clearly statistically indistinct from the other treatments. Furthermore, the coefficients and standard errors for institutional bias are also nearly identical across Models 9

and 11, shown in Table 4, indicating that Democrats and non-Democrats react in approximately the same way to institutional bias.

Hypotheses 4a and 4b posit that state-based forms of electoral manipulation will more effectively reduce identification with Democrats than non-state forms of manipulation. Table 3 and Figure 3 show that these hypotheses are modestly supported in the case of falsification, and more strongly supported for institutional bias. The substantive size of this latter effect is considerable. As the table and figure indicate, strength of identification with Democrats among those who consider themselves supporters of that party averages at approximately .4 out of a maximum of 1. Exposure to institutional manipulation reduces the strength of identification with Democrats by 0.11, or approximately 25 percent. The effect for falsification is shy of the traditional threshold for statistical significance (p = .065), driven by a smaller effect size than that of institutional bias.

	Dependent variable:	
	Democrat ID	
	OLS	*Tobit*
	(7)	(8)
Falsification	-0.07*	-0.06
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Vote-buying	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Voter pressure	-0.03	-0.02
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Institutional bias	-0.11***	-0.11***
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	0.41***	0.41***
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Observations	210	210
R^2	0.05	
Adjusted R^2	0.03	
Residual Std. Error	0.17 (df = 205)	
F Statistic	2.72** (df = 4; 205)	
Log Likelihood	60.39	
Wald Test (df = 4)	11.06**	
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table 3: Manipulation type and strength of identification as a Democrat

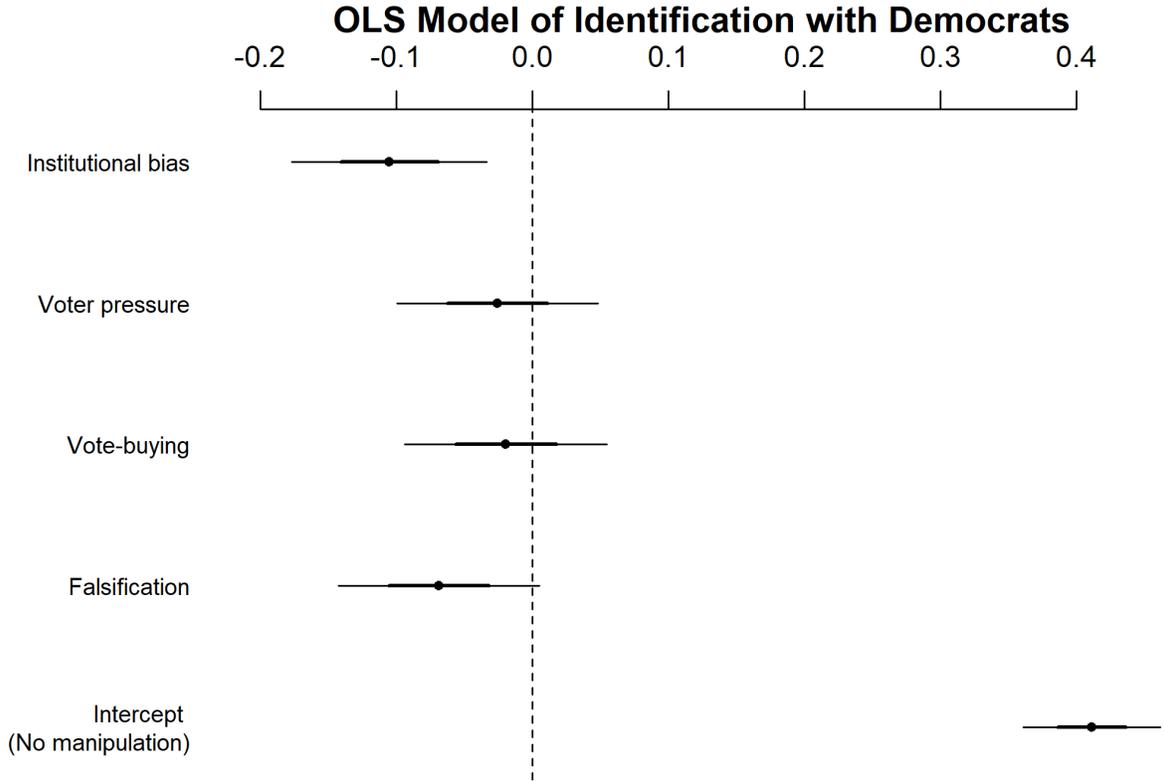**OLS Model of Identification with Democrats**

Figure 3: Manipulation type and identification with the Democratic Party (Model 7)

Lastly, Hypotheses 5 and 6 suggest that coercive forms of manipulation will generate more anger, while reciprocal forms will generate less. In particular, exposure to voter pressure should cause respondents to express more anger than exposure to vote-buying. These hypotheses are not supported. While the point estimate for the effect of vote-buying is indeed smaller than that of voter pressure, as Figure 4 shows, this difference is not statistically significant.

	Dependent variable:			
	Anger			
	OLS	*Tobit*	*OLS*	*Tobit*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Falsification	0.21***	0.26***	0.13**	0.18**
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Vote-buying	0.17***	0.19**	0.13**	0.17**
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Voter pressure	0.26***	0.33***	0.20***	0.27***
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Institutional bias	0.14**	0.17**	0.14**	0.19**
	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Constant	0.36***	0.34***	0.29***	0.22***
	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Observations	210	210	342	342
R^2	0.08		0.04	
Adjusted R^2	0.06		0.03	
Residual Std. Error	0.30 (df = 205)		0.31 (df = 337)	
F Statistic	4.56*** (df = 4; 205)		3.64*** (df = 4; 337)	
Log Likelihood		-132.34		-239.98
Wald Test (df = 4)		17.07***		13.93***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4: Manipulation type and feelings of anger

OLS Model of Anger
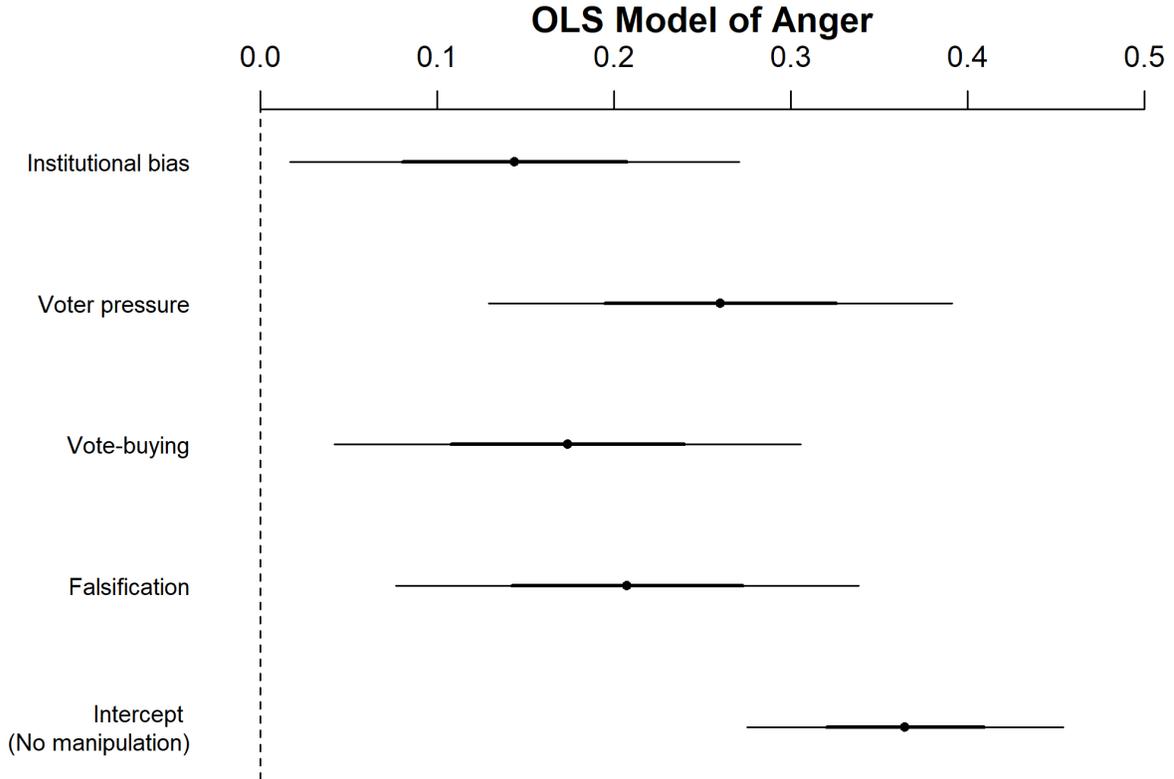
Discussion

Anger appears to be a fundamental response to a tainted election for those on the losing side. This increase in anger among the losing party is sizeable; Figure 2 shows that respondents exposed to manipulation were about fifty percent angrier than their counterparts who were exposed to losing a clean election. However, levels of anger do not appear to vary according to the nature of the manipulation effort. Respondents were just as angry when considering an election their party lost *because* of electoral manipulation as they were when considering an election in which their party would have lost *even without* manipulation. There are several ways to interpret this result.

First, taken at face value, it would appear that increased anger over a 'stolen' election does not contribute to a higher risk of protest. To the extent that protest is more likely after such elections, it would appear to be driven by factors other than emotion. Second, it could be the case that this result is driven by the nature of the sample, which is overwhelmingly young, from well-off families, interested in politics,[5] and American. Such individuals may be more likely than the average American (and the average citizen of a country with less experience with democracy) to be angered by the violation of the norm of fair elections, regardless of the means or outcome of that violation. Under this interpretation, the results still provide some insight into the dynamics of protest, since the young and college-educated are often overrepresented among protesters, and studying the attitudes of the educated middle class can be useful even in electoral authoritarian regimes (S. Greene and Robertson 2017). Lastly, it could be the case that the treatment instrument did not strongly enough distinguish between the two outcomes. A manipulation check showed that 66% of respondents correctly recalled whether or not electoral manipulation had determined the outcome of the race.

With regard to group identification, however, there is evidence that the kind of manipulation employed matters. In particular, the results presented here show that identification with the disfavored group—the opposition party—is depressed by state-based manipulation efforts. This is a potentially significant finding, if replicated elsewhere, since group identity has been shown to be at the heart of many social-psychological models of collective action: a stronger sense of 'us' predicts taking action to protect that 'us' (Van Zomeren 2013). If state-based manipulation does reduce individuals' sense of identification with a target group, it provides an alternative explanation for incumbents' preference for such tactics; not reduced

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[5] 50% of the sample claimed to be somewhat interested in politics, 28% very interested, and 6% extremely interested.

legitimacy costs (note that institutional bias provokes as much anger as other techniques), but a wedge driven between opposition groups and their potential supporters. It also suggests an alternative explanation for the empirical finding that excessive manipulation is associated with a reduced risk of protest (Simpser 2013). While excessive manipulation did not appear to significantly affect anger or identification with the Democratic Party, it may be the case that governments that are able to manipulate elections excessively are also those that are able to seriously bias the institutional electoral framework. Troublingly, this finding may also indicate that authoritarian ruling parties may gain some benefit from allowing election monitors and other civil society groups to identify state-based manipulation, reducing the risk of allowing monitors to take part in elections (Hyde and Marinov 2014). Furthermore, there are implications for more democratic countries, where illegal manipulation is rare but efforts to influence electoral rules are not; the results show that disadvantaged parties may find it difficult to mobilize their supporters against such rule-based forms of electoral manipulation. Future work might investigate these possibilities.

Lastly, this is a preliminary study. More work is necessary to test these hypotheses on more representative samples, in countries where illegal electoral manipulation is common. In addition, the implications of varying forms of electoral manipulation on other social-psychological motivators of collective action—feelings of efficacy and moral convictions—must be tested.

Summary and conclusion

There is currently a mismatch between existing theories of electoral manipulation, which posit that mass mobilization against flawed elections have a deterrent effect on electoral malfeasance, and the empirical reality that manipulation is widespread and electoral protest is

rare. This project seeks to address this puzzle by bringing individual-level factors and a social-psychology framework into a research agenda that has been heavily influenced by formal models and an emphasis on the closeness of the election result. This is done by experimentally varying the decisiveness and type of electoral manipulation, and measuring the effects on two important triggers of individual participation in collective action: feelings of anger and identification with the wronged group. The results have the potential to improve our understanding of when and why parties engage in electoral manipulation, why they rely on different mixes of tactics under different conditions, and why opposition groups struggle to mobilize in response. This approach is new in the study of electoral manipulation, and could open up new questions for researchers studying elections in both democratic and non-democratic contexts. Additionally, it helps test a social-psychological model of collective action against the more rational-choice model dominant in the study of electoral manipulation. Lastly, this new direction has the potential to provide benefits to society by influencing how NGOs and opposition parties frame their appeals to mobilize supporters in defense of clean elections—potentially leading to fairer elections and greater accountability.

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