

Monitors and Mistrust

A Study on Race, Partisanship, and Poll Watchers

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Political Science Honors Bachelor's Degree

Abstract

Poll watchers, also called election observers or monitors, have grown in salience and polarization in recent elections. Given that one ostensible purpose of poll watchers is to increase voter confidence in the integrity of elections, studying to what extent this is the case is vital. While previous scholarship has found poll watchers can boost the legitimacy of elections by providing the perception of unbiased and bipartisan observers, little is known about how racial dynamics might complicate this relationship. In this paper, I ask: How do the racial and partisan identities of poll watchers affect voter confidence in the election? How might the alignment of a co-racial or a co-partisan poll watcher increase voter confidence in the election? To test this, this paper leverages a conjoint survey experiment fielded after the November 2024 Presidential Election. I find that voters are most trusting of polling locations that are observed by nonpartisan and co-partisan poll watchers, as well as locations observed by poll watchers that align with the voter's ethnoracial background. I also present original observational data on the location, prevalence, and perceptions of poll watchers—which helps create a comprehensive overview of these observers.

Keywords: poll watchers, american elections, race, electoral trust



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1 Introduction

How can we increase the trust of voters in electoral spaces, such as polling places? This question is posed by election administrators, poll workers, and politicians during every election cycle. The answer to this question has large implications on voter participation, trust in government as a whole, and the representativeness of the government. While much of the literature focuses on causes of mistrust such as voter ID requirements, ballot fraud, and deceptive news media (Alvarez et al. 2008; Coll 2024; and Craig and Gainous 2024), little research exists regarding an important actor within the electoral process: poll watchers. Poll watchers, also referred to as “election observers” and “challengers,” are individuals recruited by political parties, non-partisan groups, candidates, international organizations, government agencies, or other organizations to observe a polling location (“Poll Watchers and Challengers” n.d.). In some jurisdictions, poll watchers can be ordinary citizens who want to witness and evaluate the voting process.

I propose two novel questions: 1) How do the racial and partisan identities of poll watchers affect voter confidence in the election? 2) How might the alignment of a co-racial or a co-partisan poll watcher increase voter confidence in the election I contribute to the ongoing literature on poll watchers with an original conjoint survey experiment that includes a racial component to the poll watcher’s identity, in addition to their partisanship. I examine marginal effects of these poll watcher characteristics across respondent demographics on electoral trust. I leverage a survey fielded after the 2024 Presidential Election, which allows me to capture these racial differences and better understand the behaviors and feelings of minority groups. Alongside these experimental findings, I use observational data to show the prevalence of poll watchers, and descriptive insights into their performance, the parties from which they are recruited, and voter perceptions of intimidation.

This paper’s main goal is understanding how the ethnorace and partisanship of poll

watchers affects voters, with a particular emphasis on minority voters. The conjoint results show that when a poll watcher identifies themselves as a Democrat or Republican, this decreases voter confidence compared to the presence of a nonpartisan poll watcher. While there is no statistically significant difference between the parties, Democrat poll watchers decrease the likelihood of a confident evaluation of a polling location by 10.2 percentage points and Republican poll watchers decrease the likelihood of a confident evaluation of a polling location by 8.5 percentage points. In addition, while a co-partisan poll watcher decreases the likelihood of a confident evaluation by 4.6 percentage points, an out-partisan poll watcher decreases the likelihood of a confident evaluation by 15.8 percentage points.

This paper levies the term *ethnoracial group*, which is a group that is either an ethnic group or racial group, or a combination of both. For example, while traditional census and other surveys may collect race and ethnicity separately (e.g. White and Hispanic), analysis is conducted on the ethnoracial level (Latine). In addition, I find that when a poll watcher's ethnorate aligns with the respondent's, there is a 2 percentage point increase in the likelihood that the respondent expresses confidence that their vote will be counted, statistically significant effect at the 5% level. When disaggregating the in-group and out-group racial categories, I find no significant effect of a Asian or Latine poll watcher among the nationally weighted sample, compared to a white poll watcher. Black and Native American poll watchers decrease the likelihood of a confident evaluation by 3.8 and 2.7 percentage points on average respectively.

Why is the race of a poll watcher important? “Ethnoracial differences in generalized trust are attributed to historical and contemporary discrimination, neighborhood context, and ethnoracial socialization” (Smith 2010). These differences in trust also exist across varied electoral contexts, such as across states (Uribe et al. n.d.). This has large implications on why certain ethnoracial groups have differential turnout rates. The public’s trust and confidence in electoral systems is required for a well-functioning and representative

democracy. If certain racial groups are less trusting of the voting process, they may be less likely to participate in elections, and may even miss out on being fairly represented in government. Some scholarship has found general increases in confidence in electoral administration among Black and Latine voters who have an in-person interaction with a poll worker of the same race/ethnicity (King and Barnes 2019). This demonstrates a need for diverse representation at all polling locations. I propose that poll watchers could fill the ethnoracial gap as an alternative or supplement to descriptively representative election workers.

In addition to race, why might poll watcher partisanship remain important? Partisan gaps in trust exist and can be filled with bipartisan or nonpartisan poll watchers (Cohen and Sheagley 2024). Interacting these two features is valuable in understanding whether effects of historical discrimination remain. For example, how much a white Republican poll watcher might affect the trust of a Black voter might have been foundational in the creation of the original consent decree between political parties, but has yet to be studied under present day circumstances.

2 Literature Review

Fundamentally, poll watchers have a clearly stated purpose—to watch the polls. They are recruited individuals who observe polling locations at certain steps of the process, bound by state law. Under the Elections Clause of the Constitution, states are responsible for prescribing where poll watchers may be present, whether they require prior vetting, and at what capacity these poll watchers are allowed to intervene (U.S. Const. art. I, §4, cl. 1). For example, in Pennsylvania, partisan poll watchers may be present during all stages, from the preparation of voting equipment to the counting of votes, tabulations, or recounts (“Poll Watchers and Challengers” n.d.). However, in West Virginia, no statute

regulates nor allows partisan poll watchers; instead, audits, tabulation, and recounts are open to the public (“Poll Watchers and Challengers” n.d.). These state-level differences also apply to the privileges which poll watchers have regarding what they may do while observing, and what qualifications, training, or accreditation are required. Some states allow the challenging of ballots, which puts to question the eligibility of a voter.

Yet, poll watchers exist to increase transparency and perceived fairness in the electoral process. The invitation of otherwise everyday citizens to observe the polling locations serves to not only increase the trust of the poll watcher themselves, but as a signal of confidence on behalf of the election administrators—implicitly indicating that there is no fraud or wrongdoing to hide. As of 2024, 23 states allow poll watchers to act as challengers and question the eligibility of a voter (“Poll Watchers and Challengers” n.d.). This privilege begets the possibility of a malicious person challenging ballots on a whim, rather than for a legitimate purpose. Still, most Americans do not understand how modern elections are run nor the protections in place, bringing about uncertainty related to unfamiliar actors (Green 2021).

Given that modern-day poll watchers exist to increase voter confidence in the integrity of the voting process, the question remains whether all voters feel similarly about these added protections. We do not have the answer of whether poll watchers are viewed as an affirming force of electoral trust. Extant literature has long pointed to Black voter confidence being lower than that of white voters (Alvarez et al. 2008). This holds true for other ethnoracial minorities, such as Latine and Native American voters (Uribe et al. n.d.). These gaps in trust have implications beyond perceptions: a significant turnout gap exists between white and nonwhite voters (Morris and March 2022). This makes the electoral trust of nonwhite voters critical for study because ways to even the ethnoracial gaps may have strong effects on the representativeness of electoral results.

Largely these differences between minority and white voters exist because of voter in-

timidation in suppression throughout American history. During the Reconstructionist Era, the federal government necessitated the use of military troops in the South to protect Black voters. However, after the troops' withdrawal, white supremacist groups began intimidating Black voters through "job losses, eviction and lynching" ("Movement Advancement Project — Threatening Democracy" 2022). These actions reduced voter registration and turnout, until the Civil Rights movement, where these intimidation techniques outlawed by the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Yet, contemporary acts of voter intimidation and suppression still exist in the present day. For example, voter ID laws also pose an institutional obstacle to racial and ethnic minorities that skews elections to the right (Cobb et al. 2010; Hajnal et al. 2017; Coll and Clark 2024). Poll watchers also play a role in both voter intimidation and suppression. These negative experiences at the ballot box critically shape the views of voters, which reduces in-person and overall voter turnout for minority groups.

In the late twentieth century, poll watchers were recruited by the Republican Party to intimidate minority voters in an effect to decrease Democratic vote share and increase white vote share (Press 1982; Pilkinton 2020). However, in 1982, the Republican Party entered a consent decree stating that they were responsible for "ballot security" efforts (Press 1982; Debevoise 1987). This required the ceasing of any voter intimidation methods to discourage voters. This decree prevented Republican intimidation against historically Democratic voting blocs, such as Latino or Black voters, but it was lifted in December 2017 and the Republican Party was enabled to recruit poll watchers in the 2018 midterm election ("Poll Watchers and Challengers" n.d.).

While they were not particularly salient during that election cycle, claims of electoral fraud during the 2020 election brought new fears among the electorate. Republicans believed that fraud would rise as a function of the pandemic, but especially the concern over the counting of mail-in ballots at polls. This increased the number of poll watchers

present in polling locations (Lapp 2020; Tensley 2024). Claims about biased vote outcomes are hard to verify by voters (Mbozi 2024). Voters point to heuristics such as statements from elected officials in line with their partisanship, but also their in-person experiences. Concerns over actual voter manipulation are largely unfounded and in the hours or days following an election, unverifiable (Eggers et al. 2021). The dominant is that poll watchers would be recruited by political parties where they expect fraud to exist, to prevent or at least discourage it.

The observation of elections and the associated risks are not unique to the United States. In other countries with less robust checks on election administration or where electoral corruption is more likely, poll watchers and other appointed partisan representatives have the capacity to manipulate election results¹. However, because cases of electoral fraud in the United States are very rare, the likelihood of poll watchers being capable of vote manipulation in the United States is naturally small. The incident rate of meddlers like poll watchers or international election observers is relatively low, but the fears of election interference remain salient for many voters (Bush and Prather 2022). Poll watchers are also not extensively documented, as they require exit polls, media coverage, or individual polling locations to report their presence. For these reasons, research often centers on how voter confidence is affected by poll watchers in the United States, rather than their impact on broader election outcomes.

As recent as the 2016 election, media coverage of and concerns over the use of poll watchers have increased (Katz 2016; Pilkinton 2020; Timm 2020). Media coverage on poll watchers has shown that poll watchers (often non-registered or those without training) were turned away, or that they were seen intimidating voters or disrupting a polling location. A 2016 CNN article cites Donald Trump's claims about elections prone to voter fraud as a

¹See Ascencio and Rueda 2019 for a discussion on Mexican elections and the presence of political party agents, including a correlated vote share under poll observation, and Duarte and Carrizosa 2023 for a discussion on the effect of poll workers on vote share in Paraguay and their incentives.

reason for the rise in the prominence of poll watchers (Vladeck 2016). Even if claims about voter fraud are disproven², recruitment efforts are still taken. Voter fraud claims are not common among elected and unelected officials³. According to Conn (2006), “the argument that there will be less fraud with poll challenges is unfounded” with consideration in large part to the majority of elections throughout history and nationally having little fraud even if held without watchers. Yet, politicians and government affiliates defend poll watchers to bolster their claims about fraud. For example, former White House aide to Donald Trump and 2020 Trump campaign election day operations director Mike Roman tweeted that Democratic election officials prevented Republican-recruited poll watchers from observing polling locations (see Figure 1). While the poll watcher was barred from entering initially, the man was later allowed inside (“Fact-checking Pennsylvania vote claims” 2020). This case indicates that poll watchers introduce ambiguity and uncertainty about the fairness of electoral spaces which drives lower voter confidence and faith in their votes being counted. A analysis from Lapp (2020) found during the 2020 Presidential election, neo-Nazi and alt-right groups began recruitment efforts to become poll watchers, and made attempts to enter early voting sites in Philadelphia. However, these cases of surveillance were rebuked by the Trump campaign. Whether voters associate all Republican poll watchers with the history of voter intimidation or connect them to violent groups is unclear.

As an increasingly salient and polarizing actor in American elections, poll watchers pose various questions to researchers regarding their real-world implications on voter confidence and fairness. The 2022 Survey on the Performance of American Elections supports this, finding that partisan poll watchers strongly impact the amount of confidence voters have in the integrity of state elections (Stewart III 2022). Very few respondents (less than 30%) are familiar with whether their local elections allow for non-partisan or partisan poll watchers.

²See Eggers et al. (2021) where authors found that “purported … anomalous fact[s] about the election result [Biden’s 2020 win are] either not a fact or not anomalous.”

³See Wilder (2021) for a discussion on individual states and their elected representatives’ claims and Craig and Gainous (2024) for a discussion on Trump’s claims.



Figure 1: A Tweet from Michael Roman accusing Democratic election officials from preventing entry to Republican poll watcher

Yet, 61% believe that non-partisans increase confidence compared to only 43% stating that partisans would increase confidence. Experimental findings on poll watchers by Cohen and Sheagley (2024) support these findings: shared-partisan poll watchers increase perceptions of fairness, whereas partisans of either party decrease fairness, compared to having no poll watchers present.

To further demonstrate how distrust is sowed regarding poll watchers, I compare them to another figure with whom voters interact on Election Day: poll workers. These poll workers, often citizen volunteers, shape the public's confidence in elections by entrusting voters that their vote will be counted by competent individuals (Hall and Stewart III 2009). Among misinformed voters, these individuals, who are trained to perform tasks such as identity verification or vote tabulation, can be confused for poll watchers. While there is some research on descriptive representation of other election officials and workers, there is none examining the effect of race on an outside actor like poll watchers. King and Barnes (2019) find that the interaction with racially/ethnically congruent poll workers

during an in-person vote increase the trust in American elections among Black and Latinx voters. This is logically consistent with higher approval ratings and perceived effectiveness among candidates who descriptively represent their constituents (among racial or gender lines) (Broockman 2013; Mansbridge 2011).

A recent paper found that bipartisan representation of poll watchers can increase the confidence of voters, compared to poll watchers from a single political party (Cohen and Sheagley 2024). In hypothetical polling places where only Republican or only Democratic poll watchers are present, they find that the fairness perception decreases, compared to having no poll watchers present. The authors supplement their conjoint design with a vignette experiment using three news articles: a control article, one in which partisan poll watchers acted in good faith, and one in which partisan poll watchers acted in bad faith. Republican respondents, with the treatment that watchers are acting in bad faith, agree less that election officials do their jobs, voters follow the rules, that there is no fraud, and that election officials follow the rules, compared to the control condition. Democratic respondents, under both treatments, for some of the outcomes, have more negative views of poll watchers compared to the control condition. These findings are significant because they show that the effect of *one* bad-faith actor, in the case of poll watchers, can affect the perceptions of electoral trust more broadly. My paper adds onto the conjoint experiment and broader literature on poll watchers by testing a tighter abstraction of partisanship, and by adding a racial component to the poll watcher.

Finally, with the introduction of this racial component, it is critical to lay out the reasons why poll watcher race might matter to voters. Antman and Duncan (2024) find that individual's willingness to divulge their true ethnic backgrounds changes on a local level as a result of support for anti-immigrant legislation. Anti-minority sentiment, they argue, raises the salience of ethnicity and race in political discourse. Race and ethnicity critically determine “reasonable points of division” but a shared identity because non-

immigrant Hispanics and immigrants creates stronger political opposition against closed immigration policies (Bazo Vienrich and Creighton 2018).

There is also broader political action as a result of linking minority fate. For Latines, Asian Americans, and African Americans, “minority linked fate has a positive and significant relationship with unconventional [political] participation” (Chan and Jasso 2023). With the paper centered on political activism, it naturally follows that minorities who act in the interest of a broader minority community are also acting in a proxy for their own interests. This racial group solidarity even extends to multiracial people, whose interests might align with both groups but race-relevant attitudes align more with the minority-group derived from their background (Vossoughi et al. 2024). Discrimination against out-groups creates solidarity between people of color under the belief that one marginalized group is being discriminated similarity (Pérez et al. 2024). However, in-group racial solidarity does not require shared substantive political values, only the shared identity (Blum 2007).

3 Theory and Hypotheses

My hypotheses are organized by poll watcher race and poll watcher partisanship tests. Generally, I expect that alignment of a poll watcher’s characteristics with the respondents’ to have a positive causal effect on the respondents’ confidence in a polling location. For a voter, noticing that a poll watcher descriptively represents them would mean that the interests of the poll watcher (in ensuring that the voter’s preferences are represented) are aligned with their own. If a respondent believes that a poll watcher shares their partisanship, the respondent is likely to assume that the poll watcher is in place to ensure their party’s votes are counted. Likewise, a poll watcher of the same race ensures would make a respondent feel like their race is represented and they are protected from any voter intimidation or suppression related to their race. I am particularly interested in seeing the marginal ef-

fect of a racial out-group poll watcher among whites and non-whites (see Hypotheses A2 and A3). I expect that white (and Republican, see Hypothesis B3) poll watchers decrease voter confidence among non-whites because of historical cases of disenfranchisement. The hypotheses for this project are defined below⁴.

3.1 Race of Poll Watchers on Electoral Trust

The expectation that co-racial poll watchers will increase confidence across all racial groups is grounded in existing theories about within-group racial solidarity (Blum 2007; Chan and Jasso 2023; Pérez et al. 2024). Individuals are likely to be the most trusting of those who share some ethnic or racial background because distinct ethnic boundaries have the advantage of common trust and social capital within ethnic economies (Cao 2022). In addition to alignment on ethnic lines, certain majority-immigrant ethnic groups such as Latines, Asians, and Pacific Islanders face a group threat that may create a notion of unity and in-group trust (Bazo Vienrich and Creighton 2018). I extend this to say that if a respondent notices that a poll watcher comes from their racial background (as identified through race-signaling names), their confidence in their vote and the votes of voters of their racial group is increased. The racial group confidence question that I ask is “How confident are you that */insert respondent race/* voters like you would be treated fairly at this voting location?” If a respondent knows that their racial group is included in the electoral process at some level, I expect this confidence to increase. This leads to my first hypothesis:

Hypothesis A1: Voters who witness a polling location in which a co-racial poll watcher was present will be more likely to trust that election than a voter who witnesses an election in which a co-racial poll watcher was not present.

⁴These hypotheses were pre-registered on OSF here: <https://osf.io/pzy92>. A copy of the pre-analysis plan can be found in the Appendix. The pre-registered hypotheses were rewritten for clarity, and the original hypotheses are included individually as a footnote.

This should hold among all respondents, and across ethnoracial groups⁵.

Here, I take “all racial groups” to mean the average effect of a combined but weighted sample. However, I also expect that if this is the case, that the co-racial poll watcher effect is positive among subsets created for each ethnoracial group. The effect may not be significantly different across racial lines, but I expect that they follow the overall trend in the sample.

Additionally, seeing an in-group poll watcher will have the highest increase in confidence among white respondents, compared to the minority respondents. Research indicates that foreigners have solidarity with systematically inferior ethnic groups (Black and Native American) showing a broader alignment across minoritized groups than what might exist across ethnic minority groups and whites (Chan and Jasso 2023; Pérez et al. 2024). If minorities can form coalitions by linking their fates outside their ethnoracial group, this should extend to elections where the outcomes that benefit one ethnoracial minority would benefit others. The expectation of white respondents to rate white poll watchers with higher confidence follows Hypothesis A1. Minority respondents may perceive a polling location being watched by white respondents as one where their racial group would not be able to be represented. For Black and Native American respondents, historical cases of voter disenfranchisement by white Americans affect voter participation and trust in elections. Because of fears that their vote will not be counted in the present day without racial representation, they would have lower confidence of white poll watchers. In addition, Latine and Asian respondents, due to rising anti-Latine and anti-Asian (both anti-immigrant) sentiment (Antman and Duncan 2024, Canizales and Vallejo 2021, Han et al. 2023, Sommer and Franco 2024), would have lower confidence of white poll watchers.

In addition to the effect of white poll watchers on non-whites, I expect non-white poll watchers will decrease white respondents’ confidence. For the reasons listed above, white

⁵Original hypothesis: Co-racial poll watchers will increase confidence across all racial groups.

poll watchers will have the highest confidence among white respondents. Thus, a minority poll watcher will decrease the confidence of white respondents. There are several reasons why this might be the case. For one, white respondents may think there are incentives for non-white poll watchers to manipulate the electoral process in some way, and would consider the poll watchers as means through which this manipulation occurs (Fahey 2023; Moniz and Swann 2025). For another, white respondents may also think that a polling location might not be conducted properly under non-white poll watchers. These possible causal mechanisms, while untested in this paper, ground these theories of race in realistic perceptions that exist in all racial groups. From these expectations, I derive the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis A2: Nonwhite voters who witness a polling location in which a white poll watcher was present will be less likely to trust that election than a nonwhite voter who witnesses a polling location in which a nonwhite poll watcher was present⁶.

Hypothesis A3: White voters who witness a polling location in which a nonwhite poll watcher was present will be less likely to trust that election than a white voter who witnesses a polling location in which a white poll watcher was present⁷.

3.2 Partisanship of Poll Watchers on Electoral Trust

In the same way that I expect voters to react to co-racial poll watchers, I expect a strong effect of the partisanship of poll watchers on the confidence of voters. I hypothesize that these partisan signals will be especially impactful for minority voters. The history of vote

⁶Original hypothesis: White poll watchers will decrease confidence among minority groups (all non-white respondents)

⁷Original hypothesis: All non-white poll watchers will decrease confidence among white Americans.

denial that has been practiced over the past 30 years has often been targeted at minority voters and done by Republicans (Stewart III 2023). Historical patterns of disfranchisement shape the impact of poll watchers.

Co-partisan poll watchers will increase the confidence of voters. I theorize that the partisan cues in the conjoint experiment will be a strong factor in the confidence of voters. The incentives for a partisan poll watcher to observe a polling location are larger than that of a nonpartisan. For one, the poll watcher is incentivized to ensure that the votes for their party are counted because their presence exists to ensure and dissuade the other party is not acting maliciously through vote manipulation. While a non-partisan might only be interested in decreasing voter manipulation overall, a partisan may be interested in performing their own manipulation tactics. As a signal for the voters of the same party, partisan poll watchers increase confidence by being a symbol of representation. In following the historical patterns, a malicious Republican poll watcher may have the incentive to intimidate minority voters to increase their party's vote share. Thus, partisanship of a poll watcher that aligns with the voter would increase the confidence in their ballot (of a matching party) being counted.

Hypothesis B1: Voters who witness a polling location in which a co-partisan poll watcher was present will be more likely to trust that election than a voter who witnesses an election in which a co-partisan poll watcher was not present.

This should hold among all respondents, and across ethnoracial groups⁸.

As above, I describe that the co-partisan effect in the weighted sample would increase confidence for all respondents on average. I expect that this trend holds across racial groups. Additionally, out-partisan poll watchers will decrease the confidence of respondents. For the same reasons as above, feelings that the other party is manipulating the ballot through

⁸Original hypothesis: Co-partisan poll watchers will increase confidence across all racial groups.

poll watchers would decrease the level of confidence in the polling location. Republicans, especially those who believed theories of mass voter fraud, such as the “Big Lie,” would be weary of any poll watcher, and Democrats would be weary of Republican poll watchers who have acted in bad faith in the past.

Hypothesis B2: Nonwhite voters who witness a polling location in which an out-partisan poll watcher was present will be less likely to trust that election than a nonwhite voter who witnesses an election in which a non-partisan poll watcher was present⁹.

I theorize about the interactions between race and partisanship. Due to historical disenfranchisement by Republicans of minority (especially Black) voters, minority voters will be the least confident of a polling location with a Republican poll watcher. A vast majority of minority voters identify with the Democratic Party. Among white respondents, identification with the Democratic party is 24%, compared to 27%, 29%, 37%, 42%, and 56% for Native American, other race, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latine, and Black respondents, respectively. These partisanship differences may account for the lower confidence among Republican poll watchers.

Hypothesis B3: Nonwhite voters who witness a polling location in which a Republican poll watcher was present will be less likely to trust that election than a nonwhite voter who witnesses an election in which a non-partisan or Democrat poll watcher was present¹⁰.

I hypothesize that out-partisan poll watchers will only have modest decreases in confidence among white Americans. Electoral trust for white voters is far higher than the trust of any other racial group. In addition, white voters do not have any cases of mass

⁹Original hypothesis: Out-partisan poll watchers will decrease confidence among minority groups.

¹⁰Original hypothesis: Minority groups will have the least confidence in Republican poll watchers.

disenfranchisement at the same levels of minority voters. With these two reasons, I predict that white voters may not change their level of confidence that much because they are fairly confident overall that their vote will be counted. While this may not be the case for Republican voters and Democrat poll watchers, this out-partisan effect would still be smaller than the out-partisan effect for minority voters.

Hypothesis B4: White voters who witness a polling location in which an out-partisan poll watcher was present will be *modestly* less likely to trust that election than nonwhite voters who witness an election in which an out-partisan poll watcher was present¹¹.

4 Research Design

To test my hypotheses, this survey is distributed using the online survey vendor Cint after the November 2024 Presidential Election, with a sample size of 5,281 respondents. The survey captured 1460 white respondents, 1011 Black respondents, 933 Asian and Pacific Islander respondents, 1080 Latine respondents, 358 Native American respondents, and 439 other ethnogroup respondents. This oversample of minorities allows the testing of hypotheses of determinants of distrust for these groups. Respondents receive no benefits from the study nor face any risks, as they can opt out at any point and only receive standard questions. The final survey instrument received approval from the UC San Diego Institutional Review Board on November 1, 2024¹². No personally identifiable information that could allow subjects to be identified was collected. The first day of data collection is November 6, 2024, the day after the election, and data collection completed one week

¹¹Original hypothesis: Out-partisan poll watchers will modestly decrease confidence among white Americans.

¹²This survey was filed as an amendment to the IRB project #805606: A Research Practice Partnership to Chart Voter Experiences and Test Best Practices for Building Trust in Elections. A copy of the IRB application can be found in the Appendix.

later, on November 13, 2024.

My study uses a three-task single-profile conjoint survey experiment to test the effects of the partisanship of poll watchers (whether they are wearing a Republican, Democrat, or no party badge) and the race of poll watchers (based on a defined set of race-signaling names). In this design, individual features (treatments) are assigned at random like in a randomized control trial. Because there are several attributes included in each conjoint experiment (see Figure 2), this design insulates the effect of seeing a poll watcher's name (and implied race) or partisanship within other factors that might also interact with voter confidence. This design allows for causal identification of individual attribute level effects, using the average marginal component effect proposed by Hainmueller et al. (2014), under the expectation that each effect holds all other attributes equal.

	Polling location
Voter Registration	Same day registration not permitted
Verification Process	State name and give signature on sign in
Poll Watcher Present	Benjamin Longfish
	Wearing Republican Party badge
Voting Method	Hand-counted paper ballots
Polls Close	8 PM

Figure 2: An example of a conjoint task representing a polling location with randomized attributes

Although paired conjoint designs are popular in political science and marginally better at “reproducing real-world attribute effects,” I opted for a single-profile design (Hainmueller et al. 2014). First, this reduces the cognitive load required by a respondent on each individual conjoint task. Because I am mostly interested in identifying a racial and partisanship effect of poll watcher attributes, the paired-choice might dilute the effects. A respondent is able to read and understand the attributes of a single polling location together. The forced

choice design between polling locations requires the respondent to analyze and weigh differences whereas I am interested in the situation of the conjoint polling location as a whole. In addition, I ask three dependent variable questions which relate to electoral trust at the own vote, racial group's votes, and national level, which would be too complex to implement in a forced choice design. This design, which uses an implicit reference to race would not be applicable in a two-profile design. The names of poll watchers are a multi-dimensional attribute and make it less realistic to compare a polling location next to another because voters do not select the individual attributes nor the people who may be observers at the location.

Figure 3 describes the flow of the survey instrument. The conjoint experiment is placed at the end of the survey, which also includes an experiment that tests various video treatments on institutional belonging. The attribute selection in the conjoint is orthogonal to the video treatment, as both the video treatment and all attributes in the conjoint are randomly selected. Thus, the presumption that effects may carry over from the original treatment in the video can be ignored by adding respondent level-controls.

I use a set of names across the racial groups to represent a poll watcher, from which we define an in-group and out-group for each respondent. Thus, each respondent will have an equal probability of seeing a name that matches their racial group, that does not match, or seeing an indicator that a poll watcher is not present. Analysis will be at both the aggregate level of in-group and out-group, and at the aggregate race level. Each respondent will see a table with the attributes and one of the levels, including other measures to better represent a voter experience, such as voting method, voting verification, voter registration, voter registration, and poll closing times. They will then answer three questions relating to their confidence in their own ballot, in the nationwide vote counting process, and in the treatment of voters in their racial group. These questions are:

- If you were to vote at this polling location, how confident are you that your ballot

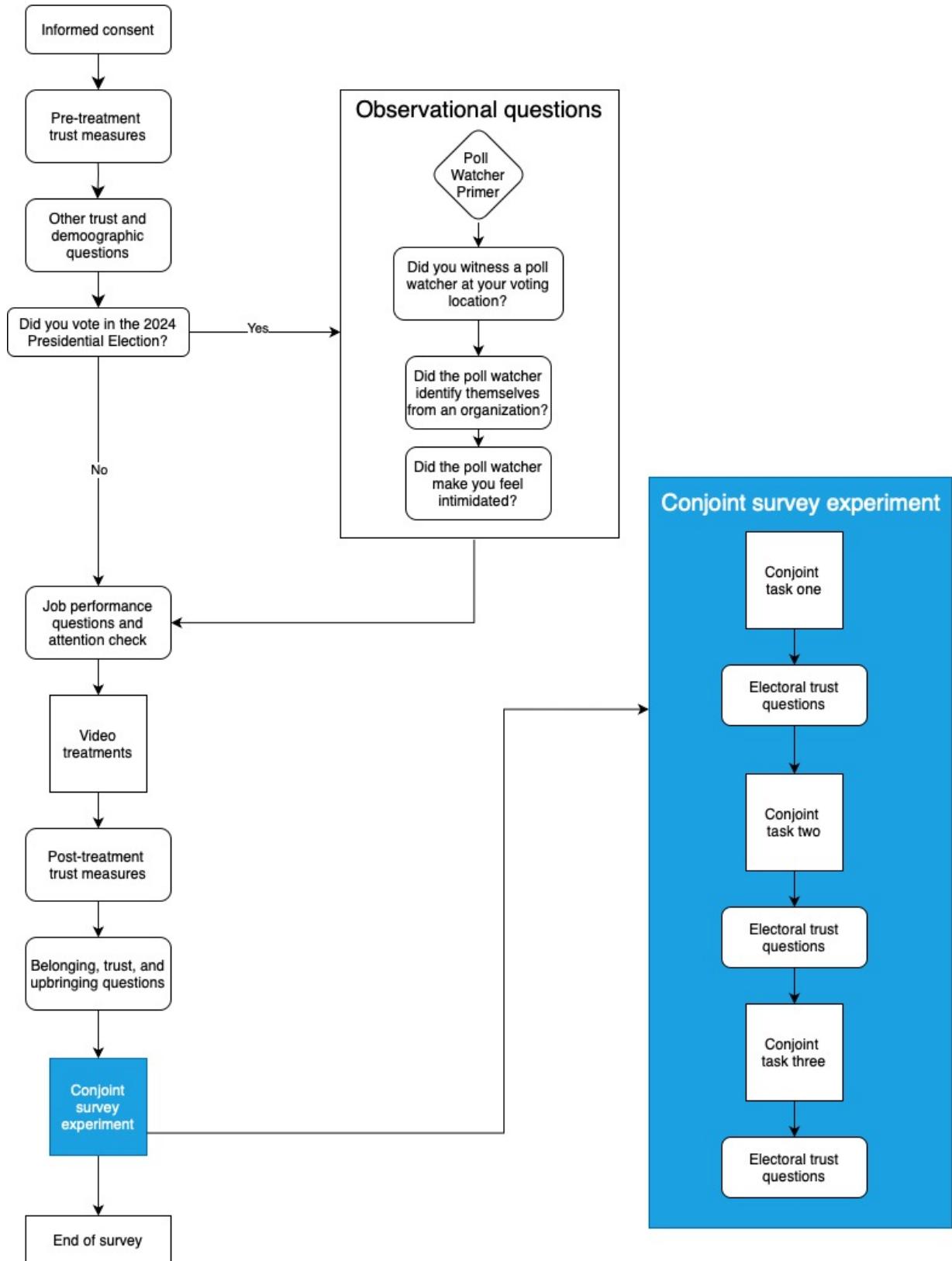


Figure 3: Flowchart of survey instrument.

would be counted accurately and fairly?

- If all polling locations were run like this, how confident are you that votes nationwide would be counted as voters intended?
- How confident are you that *[insert respondent race]* voters like you would be treated fairly at this voting location?

Answers are on a four-level likert scale: Very confident, Somewhat confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident. The final list of attributes is described by Table 1.

Attribute	Attribute Level
Voting Method	Hand-counted paper ballots Machine-counted paper ballots Touchscreen electronic machines Touchscreen electronic machines with audit
Verification Process	None required State name on sign in State name and give signature on sign in Show photo ID on sign in Show photo ID and give signature on sign in
Poll Watcher Name	In-group [Name drawn from list that matches <i>respondent's race</i>] Out-group [Name drawn from list that does not match <i>respondent's race</i>]
Poll Watcher Partisanship	Wearing badge with no party affiliation Wearing Republican Party badge Wearing Democratic Party badge
Voter Registration	Same day registration not permitted Same day registration during early voting Same day registration up to Election Day
Polls Close	6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM

Table 1: Final conjoint attributes and possible attribute levels

Following this, the names are derived from a list defined by the Imai et al. (2022) dataset on common first and last names, which was created using race and ethnicity data pulled

from voter registration data. This follows the proposed *population* average marginal component effect (pAMCE) by De La Cuesta et al. (2022), which uses substantive knowledge (the distribution of races within the survey sample) to estimate the profile distribution of electoral trust of various names. Names are 50/50 split on gender and 20/20/20/20/20 across ethnorate. The final list of names is as described by Table 2.

This variation in naming allows me to measure the effect of gender, and also create more accurate estimates of each racial category by dividing across common first and surnames. Under simulation, the randomization scheme gives a uniform distribution across all names among the broader sample, given the uniform prevalence of the races in the survey. Because the sample is not fully representative of all five racial groups, this means that the distribution of predicted names is not uniform. However, the in-group/out-group split is still randomized evenly. The total number of names that appeared across the conjoint tasks for each racial group are 3,995 white names, 3,206 Black names, 2,845 Latine names, 2,751 Asian names, and 2,319 Native American names.

White	Black	Asian	Latine	Native
Cooper Smith	Devante Thomas	Andrew Chen	Jose Rodriguez	Benjamin Longfish
Michael Anderson	Tyrese Howard	Eric Kim	Miguel Castillo	Nelson Todacheene
Allison Miller	Tanya Jackson	Christine Zhang	Ana Rosales	Winona Laughing
Susan Moss	Imani Hall	Mayu Kobayashi	Gloria Medina	GloJean Gorman

Table 2: Treatment poll watcher names across the five racial groups

Analysis is the average marginal component effects of the attributes on the outcome measures. My main analysis is conducted on a binary rescale where “Confident” collapses responses that are very and somewhat confident, and where “Not Confident” collapses responses that indicate not too and not at all confident. Unless otherwise noted, results in the main paper include fixed effects on respondent, state, and profile order. This deviates from the pre-analysis plan, which states that standard errors would be clustered at the respondent level with diagnostic checks on profile order. The original analysis would lead to biased estimates of the effect sizes because clustered errors only capture estimation er-

ror, not any within-respondent effects. This approach also adds fixed effects respondent's state, to control for state level variation in election monitor and challenger laws. The main model per the pre-analysis plan is included in the Appendix, Table 9. The models following the pre-analysis plan included in the appendix have similar effect sizes with much larger standard errors. In addition, population weights are added to the linear models based on 2024 Census data. Finally, I also interact the effect of respondent race and respondent partisanship on the attribute measures to examine whether poll watchers have heterogeneous effects on respondents. Finally, analysis is conducted using population weights to closely match a nationally representative sample.

Finally, I lay out the steps to analyzing the observational data. The relevant questions of interest are "How did you cast your ballot?", "Did you witness a poll watcher at your voting location", "Did the poll watcher identify themselves from an organization?", "Did the poll watcher make you feel intimidated?", "Please rate the job of the following individuals in ensuring that you had a free and fair elections process" for polling place workers and poll watchers, and "Rate your level of trust in the following features of elections: Having nonpartisan or bipartisan observers observe election operations."

These results can be used to understand national trends in the placement of poll watchers and their perceived party identifications. The results of all descriptive questions, unless otherwise noted in the linear models, are unweighted on the respondent level. States have between 1 and 724 respondents within them, which means that within-state weighting would be impractical for the states with a small number of observations. I examine the observational effect of poll watchers through these voter experience questions. I ask whether voters (early or Election Day) recognized and identified a poll watcher, then if the poll worker was from a particular political party or organization and if the voter felt intimidated. I expect the observational data to show how trust of and interactions with poll watchers varies across ethnoracial groups. These questions allow me to validate the racial and partisanship effects that may be present in the experimental data across a broader sample.

5 Observational Data

The questions about poll watchers posed in my survey present a novel opportunity to describe their presence and the reactions surrounding them, based on the real-life experiences of voters. The following maps should not be extrapolated to explain the true numbers or proportions of poll watchers within each state, because the sample is not equally representative. They do, however, represent that poll watchers are prevalent across the country. In order to ensure that respondents understand what poll watchers are, they were given the following primer just prior to the questions:

Poll watchers (election observers) are individuals appointed to observe a portion of the elections process without violating voter privacy.

Often, political parties, candidates, or issue groups supporting or opposing a ballot measure are permitted to appoint watchers at a polling location. In some jurisdictions, poll watchers may challenge the eligibility of voters or the validity of ballots.

Respondents were then asked “Did you witness a poll watcher at your voting location?” Figure 4 shows the proportions of respondents who voted in-person in each state that witnessed a poll watcher. The states with the highest proportion of respondents who witnessed a poll watcher, in decreasing order, are Alaska (87.5%), Nebraska (81.8%), Colorado (78.3%), Arizona (77.1%), and Mississippi (68.8%). The states with the lowest proportion of respondents who witnessed poll watchers, in increasing order, are South Dakota (14.3%), Delaware (27.3%), Idaho (30%), North Dakota (33.3%), and Oklahoma (39.2%). Montana and Wyoming had zero respondents who witnessed a poll watcher. Table 3 shows a linear model of swing state and Trump won in 2020 as independent variables on a respondent’s witnessing of a poll watcher. There is no significant effect of a respondent being in a swing state or a Trump won state on the probability that they witnessed a poll watcher.

Table 4 shows the effect of a swing state or a Trump win in 2020 on a state’s proportion of respondents who witnessed a poll watcher. The second coefficient indicates that states

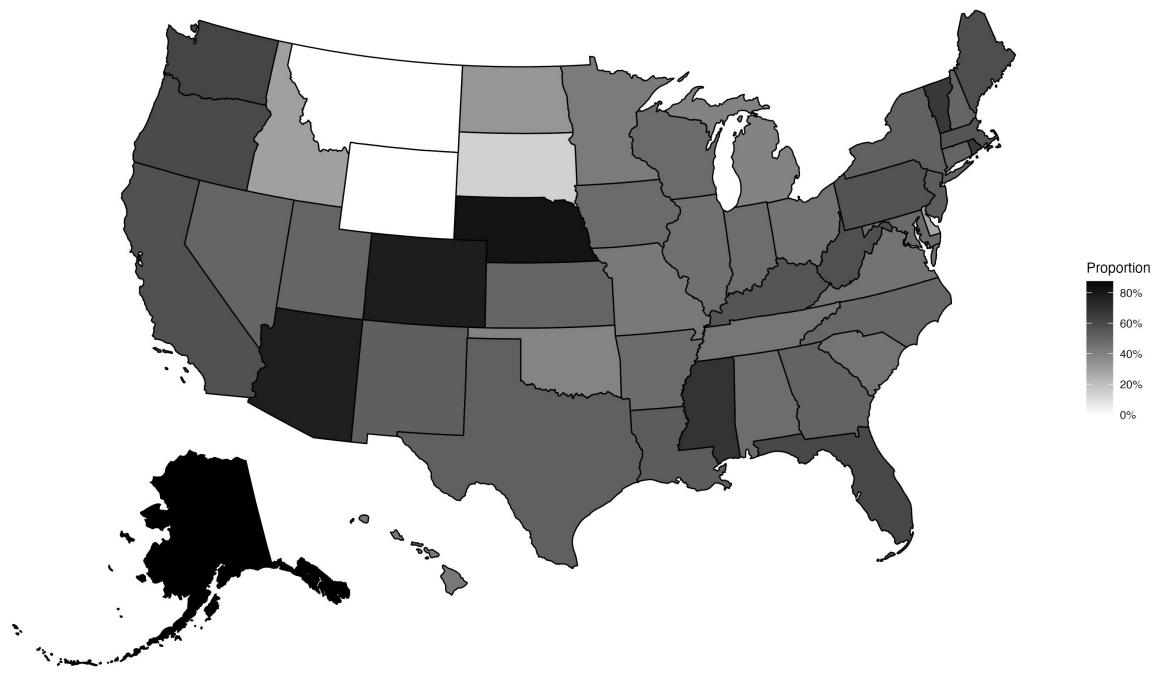


Figure 4: Map of proportions of respondents who voted in person and witnessed a poll watcher.

	Witnessed a Poll Watcher
Swing State in 2024	0.031 (0.021)
Trump Won State in 2020	−0.016 (0.019)
N	2810
R ²	0.001
Adj. R ²	0.000
RMSE	0.50

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 3: Model of state characteristics on whether a respondent witnessed a poll watcher. Excluded respondents did not answer the questions about poll watcher or did not vote in person. The dependent variable is coded as a 1 if a respondent saw a poll watcher, and 0 if not or unsure.

	Proportion of Respondents Who Witnessed a Poll Watcher
Swing State in 2024	0.024 (0.064)
Trump Won State in 2020	−0.097* (0.047)
N	50
R ²	0.095
Adj. R ²	0.057
RMSE	0.16

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 4: Model of state characteristics on the proportion of respondents who witnessed a poll watcher. Excluded respondents did not answer the questions about poll watcher or did not vote in person, then the results were grouped per state. The dependent variable is the proportion between 0 and 1.

where Trump lost in 2020 are associated with a 9.7 percentage point increase on average in the proportion of respondents who witnessed poll watchers. Thus, poll watchers were likely more prevalent in states where Trump lost in 2020; however, whether the state was a swing state or not did not have an effect on the proportion of respondents.

If a respondent witnessed a poll watcher, they were asked “Did the poll watcher identify themselves from an organization?” The answer choices (order randomized) were “Yes, the Republican Party”, “Yes, the Democratic Party”, “Yes, another organization __”, and “No, they did not identify themselves.” If the poll watcher came from another organization or did not identify themselves, they were coded as 0. If the poll watcher identified themselves from the Republican Party, they were coded as 1, and if from the Democratic Party, they were coded as -1. Figure 5 shows the average partisanship of the poll watchers witnessed by respondents who voted in person. 17 states have an average Republican poll watcher identification and 20 states have an average Democrat poll watcher identification. Trump won 6 of the 17 states where most respondents reported a Republican poll watcher identified themselves in the 2020 Presidential Election. While there is no relationship between the average reported partisanship, this indicates that Republican poll watchers were most clear to the respondents in Democratic states. Rather than generalizing these results to say that

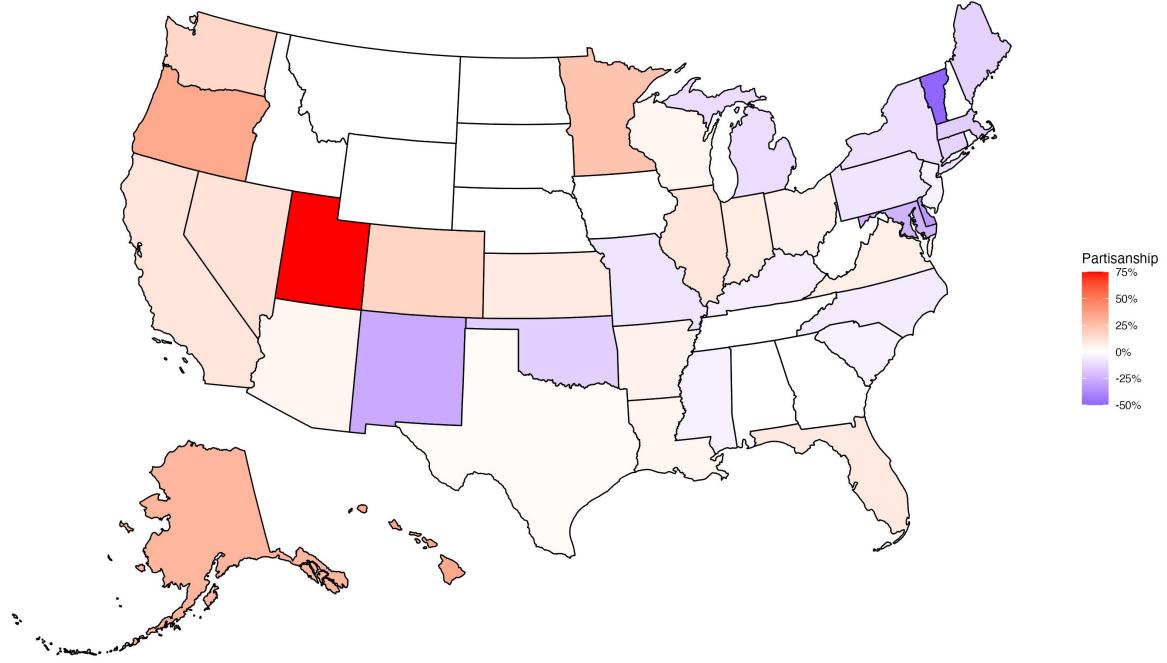


Figure 5: Map of average partisanship of poll watchers witnessed by respondents who voted in person.

Republican poll watchers were more common in those states, the more accurate conclusion is that the respondents from those states were more likely to report seeing a Republican. Thirteen states have either a balanced reported partisanship or no reported partisanship among the respondents.

Finally, if the respondent witnessed a poll watcher, they were also asked “Did the poll watcher make you feel intimidated?” Figure 6 shows the proportions of respondents who witnessed a poll watcher and felt intimidated by them. The states with the highest level of intimidation of voters, excluding South Dakota (100%), in decreasing order, are Delaware (66.7%), California (31.9%), Illinois (28%), Florida (27.8%), and Connecticut (26.7%). These findings indicate where respondents were most likely to answer that they were intimidated. Of respondents who saw poll watchers, 34.42% of respondents who identified the poll watcher from the Republican Party felt intimidated, compared to 30.82% of respondents who witnessed a Republican poll watcher. There is some partisan difference, showing that the respondents in this survey are more likely to be intimidated by a Republican poll

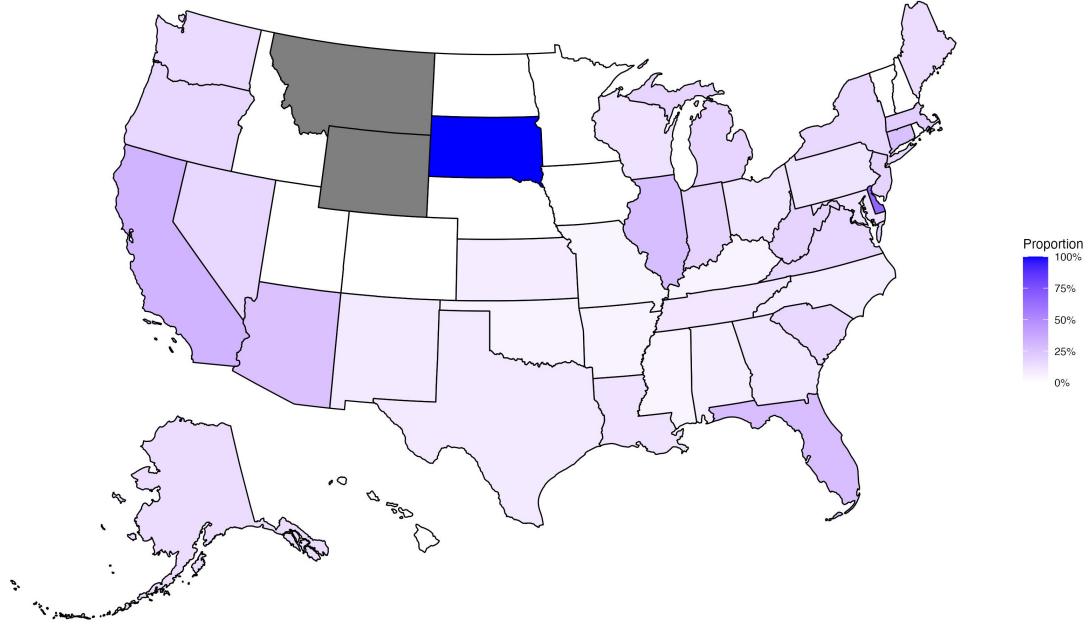


Figure 6: Map of proportions of respondents who felt intimidated by the poll watcher they witnessed.

watcher.

Figure 7 shows the proportion of respondents who felt intimidated by a poll watcher they witnessed in person. Asian and Pacific Islander and Latine respondents had the highest levels of intimidation, then Black respondents. This suggests that these the gap in trust might be a result of experiences that they have at the polling booth. Under ideal conditions, the proportions of respondents who feel intimidated should be as low as possible, to ensure trust in the poll watchers and the electoral system as a whole. There are no significant differences between white respondents and respondents of Native American or an other ethnorate. Because minority groups are more likely to feel intimidated by poll watchers, compared to white respondents, I believe that the best way to address these race-level differences might be to make a voter feel represented by the presence of a co-racial poll watcher.

In addition, respondents were asked to rate the job performance of individuals in ensuring the respondent had a free and fair elections process. Poll watchers and election monitors consistently received fewer positive ratings by respondents compared to polling

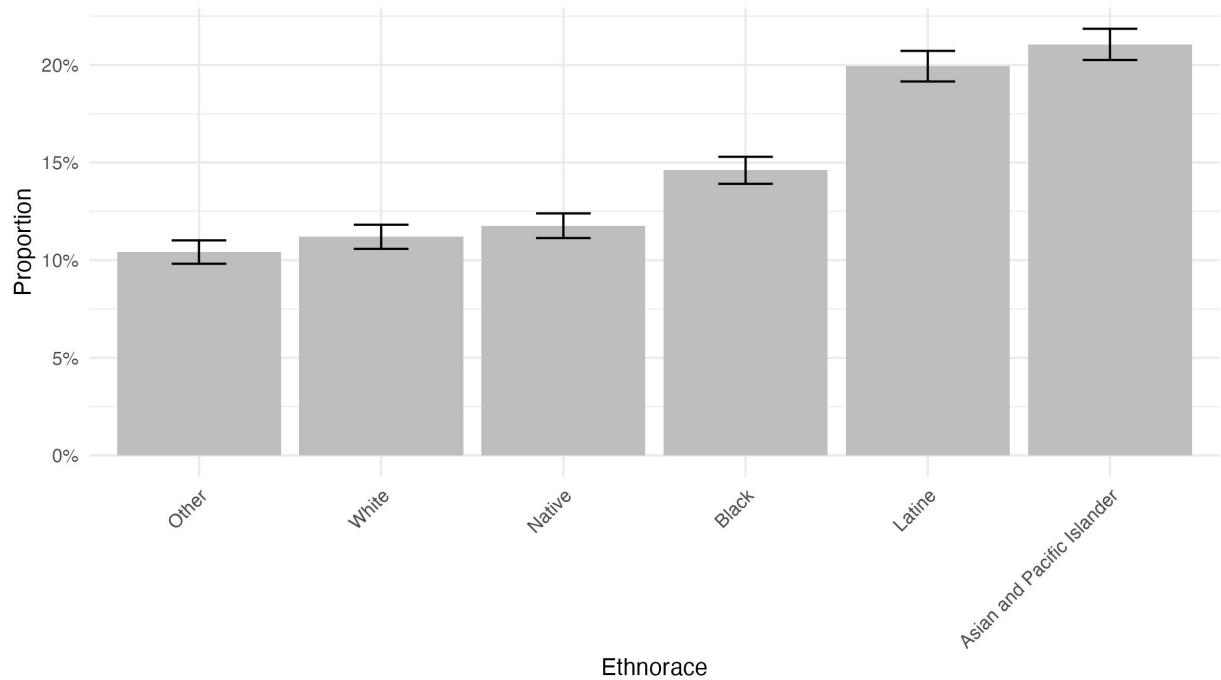


Figure 7: Proportion of respondents who felt intimidated by a poll watcher they identified, by ethnoracial group. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals on the proportions.

place workers or other election workers. There were also twice as many respondents who did not know how to rate poll watchers, indicating some uncertainty regarding their work toward a fair elections process. These two figures are the most likely individuals with whom a voter interacts on Election Day. Thus, if poll watchers are viewed negatively in comparison to a generally impartial and trusted election worker, this position might undermine electoral confidence. Perhaps it is understood that poll watchers are only acting in their self interest politically, compared to poll workers who are dedicating their time to serve voters more broadly.

Finally, respondents were asked “Rate your level of trust in the following features of elections:” The scale is a five-point grid, from “Trust a lot in accuracy and integrity”, “Trust Some”, “Unsure”, “Distrust Some”, to “Distrust a lot in accuracy and integrity”. Figures 9 and 10 show the proportions of respondents that have high levels of trust in “Having nonpartisan or bipartisan observers observe election operations.” White respondents are the most trusting of these nonpartisan or bipartisan observers, with Asian and Pacific Islander

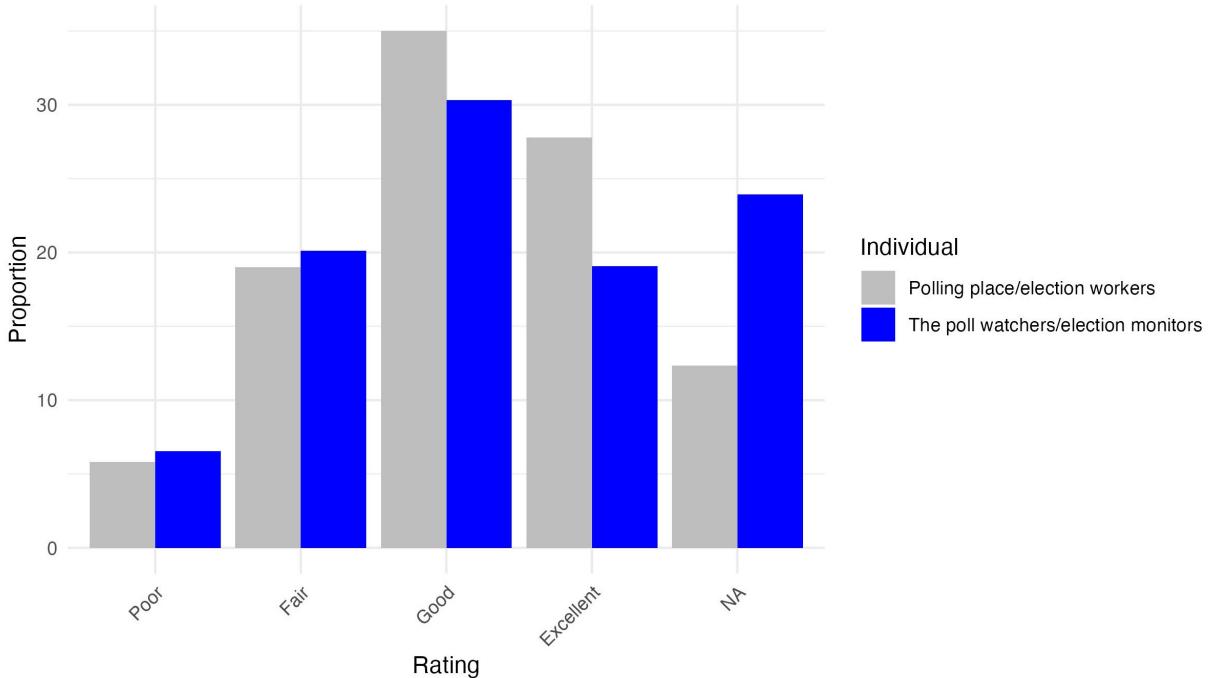


Figure 8: Respondent evaluations of poll watchers, compared to polling place workers, in ensuring a free and fair elections process.

respondents slightly lower. Of other ethnoracial groups, Black, Native, and Latine, less than a majority of respondents trusted these observer figures. This indicates that while nonpartisan or bipartisan poll watchers may begin to bridge a gap in trust between Asian and Pacific Islander and white respondents, the mere presence of them does not bridge the gap for other minority groups.

Republican and Democrat respondents have the highest proportion of respondents that trust nonpartisan or bipartisan poll watchers, according to Figure 10. While it makes sense that a Democrat or Republican poll watcher may trust a nonpartisan more than an observer from their or another party, like in the experimental results, the lower proportion of trust among independents indicates that they may not trust poll watchers at the same level.

The collected survey data indicates a strong and nearly uniform distribution of witnessed poll watcher accounts across the country. These poll watchers commonly come from political parties and where the most Republican poll watcher observations appears to align with states in which Trump lost the 2020 Presidential Election. Finally, the findings show

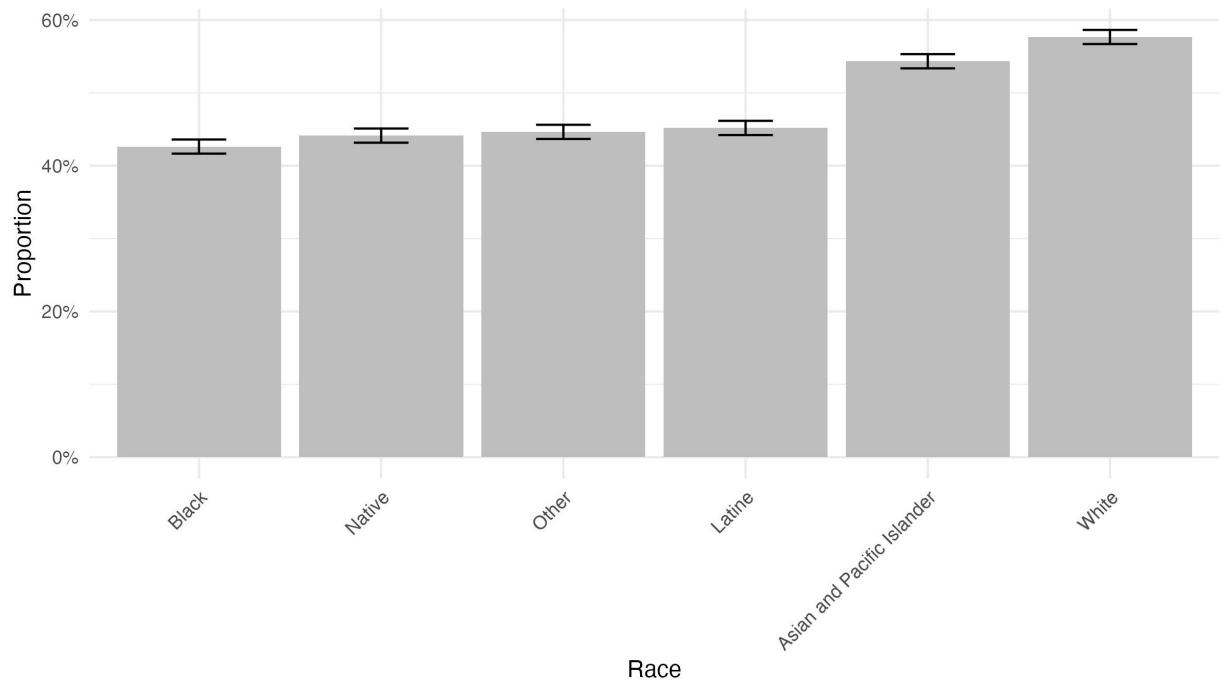


Figure 9: **Proportion of respondents that trust “a lot” or “some” in having nonpartisan or bipartisan observers observe election operations, by ethnoracial group.** Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals on the proportions.

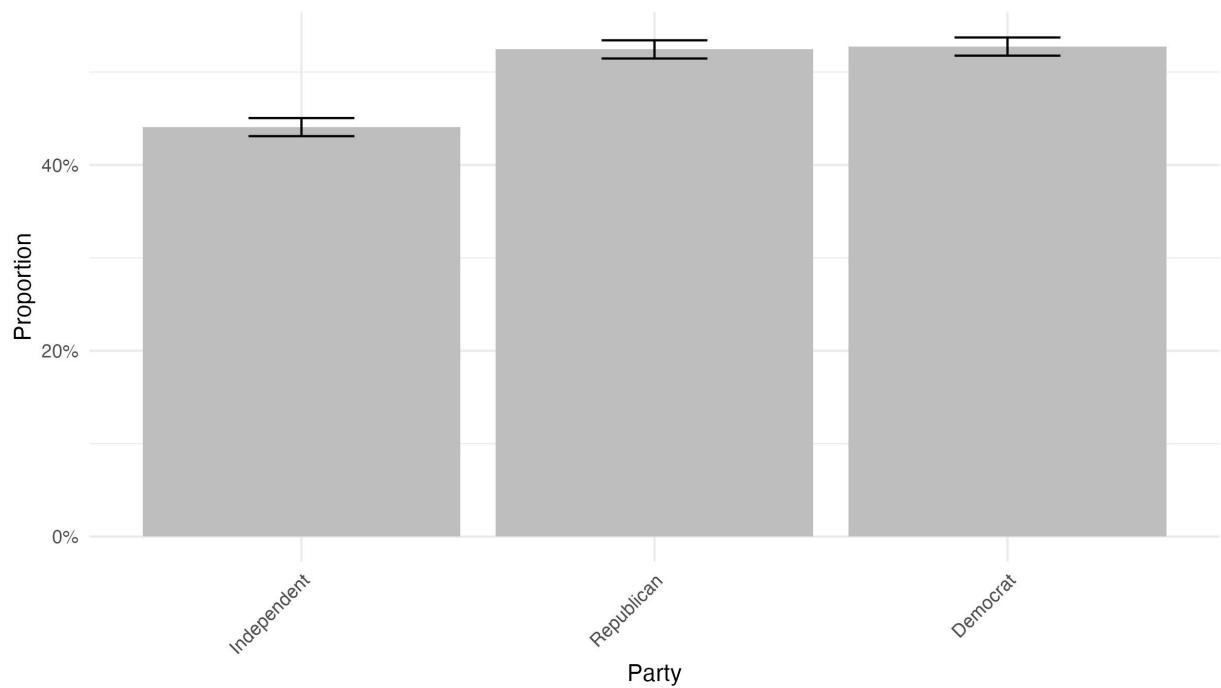


Figure 10: **Proportion of respondents that trust “a lot” or “some” in having nonpartisan or bipartisan observers observe election operations, by respondent party.** Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals on the proportions.

that there are clear ethnoracial gaps in trust with regard to poll watchers. While nonpartisan and bipartisan observers may address some of the distrust among certain ethnoracial minorities, it is unclear if these unbiased figures can counteract the distrust that arises from the strong polarization common in present-day poll watchers.

6 Conjoint Experiment Data

6.1 Overall Model

Knowing that partisanship and ethnoracial gaps exist, the conjoint experiment serves to analyze if the identities of a poll watcher can increase the trust of voters. Figure 11 shows the average marginal component effects for each attribute level on a respondent's confidence that their vote will be counted. The effects are averaged over all other covariates. The model includes population weights, but also controls for the respondent's demographics, state, and conjoint task order. Among the nationally representative weighted sample, Asian and Latine poll watchers do not have a significant effect on a respondent's confidence. A Black poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation of a polling location by 3.8 percentage points on average, compared to a baseline white poll watcher. A Native American poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 2.7 percentage points on average. These results seem to indicate that there is an effect of a poll watcher's implied racial identity: that minorities in electoral spaces sow distrust among voters nationwide.

Among the national sample, Republican poll watchers decrease the probability of a confident evaluation by 8.5 percentage points on average and Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability by 10.2 percentage points on average, compared a poll watcher with no stated party affiliation. Respondents tend to be the most trusting of an independent poll watcher, however, there is no significant difference in effects between the Republican and Democrat poll watchers. Additionally, female poll watchers do not have a significant effect either compared to a male poll watcher.

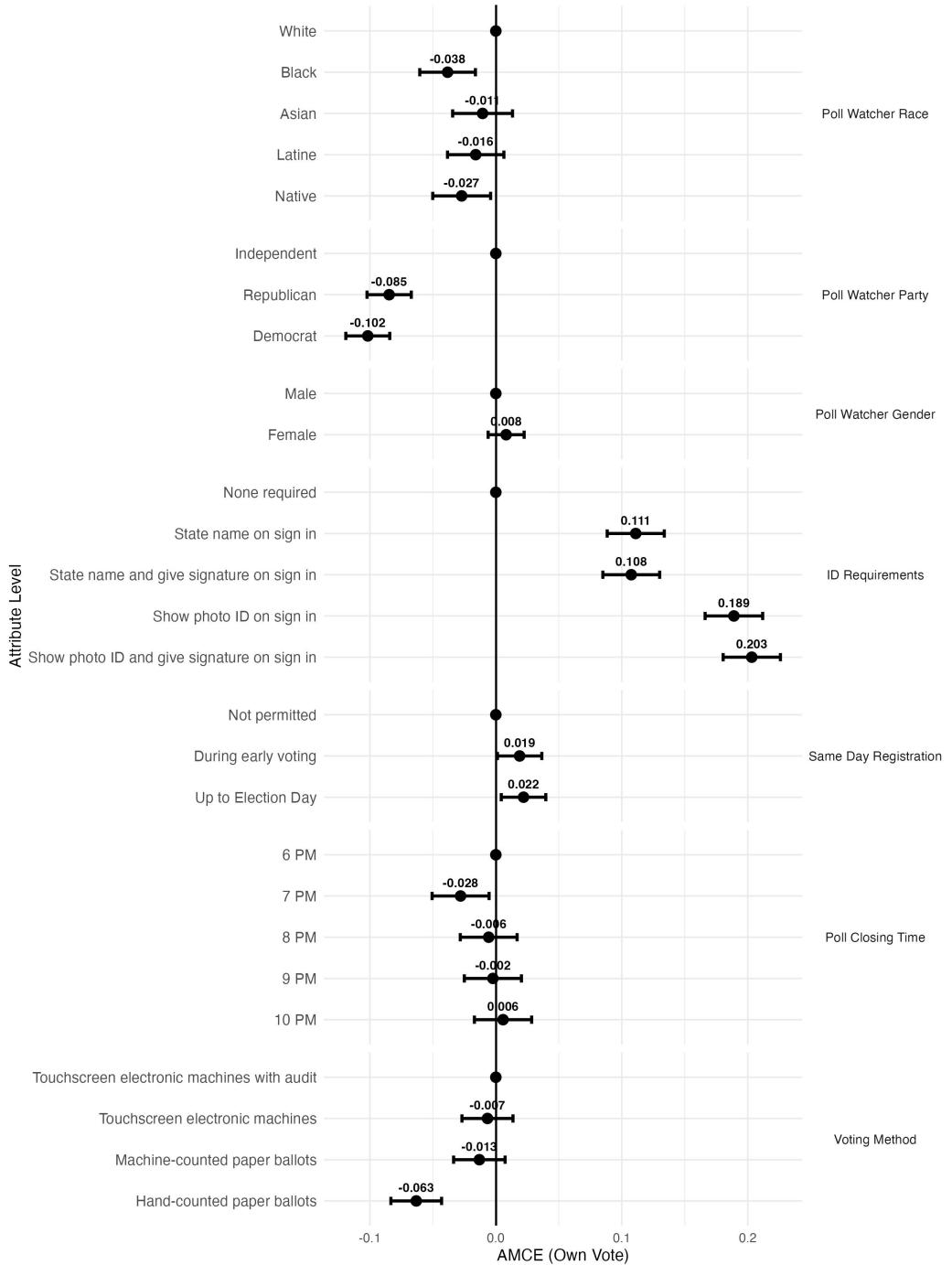


Figure 11: Overall model of average marginal component effects of conjoint attributes on a respondent's confidence in their vote being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent's own vote. Model includes population weights, as well as fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

In addition to the poll watcher characteristics, the model includes other variables relevant to the administration of a polling location. Compared to having no voter ID requirement, stating their name or stating their name and giving a signature increases the probability of a confident evaluation by about 11 percentage points. The strongest effect in the model comes from showing photo ID or showing photo ID and giving a signature, which raise the probability of a confident evaluation by 18.9 and 20.3 percentage points on average respectively. There is no significant difference in effects by adding a signature requirement to stating name or showing photo ID.

Same day registration appears to increase the probability of a confident evaluation by 1.9 percentage points on average during early voting, and by 2.2 percentage points on average when allowed up to Election Day, compared to same day registration not being permitted. The 8 PM, 9 PM, and 10 PM poll closing times counterintuitively do not have a significant difference from the 6 PM closing time. However, a 7 PM closing time decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 2.8 percentage points on average compared to the 6 PM baseline.

Finally, while touchscreen electronic machines and machine-counted paper ballots do not have a significantly different effect compared to audited touchscreen electronic machines. Hand-counted paper ballots decrease the probability of a confident vote by 6.3 percentage points on average.

Figure 12 shows the average marginal component effects of the attribute levels, and includes the co-racial, co- and out-partisan poll watchers as variables instead of the exact race and partisanship. As stated above, a co-racial poll watcher indicates that the race of the poll watcher aligns with the racial identity of the respondent. Out-partisan poll watchers are poll watchers from the opposite political party. A Republican [Democrat] poll watcher would be an out-partisan poll watcher to a Democrat [Republican] respondent. Similarly, in-partisan poll watchers are poll watchers from the same political party, excluding independents. A Republican [Democrat] poll watcher would be an in-partisan poll watcher to a Republican [Democrat] respondent.

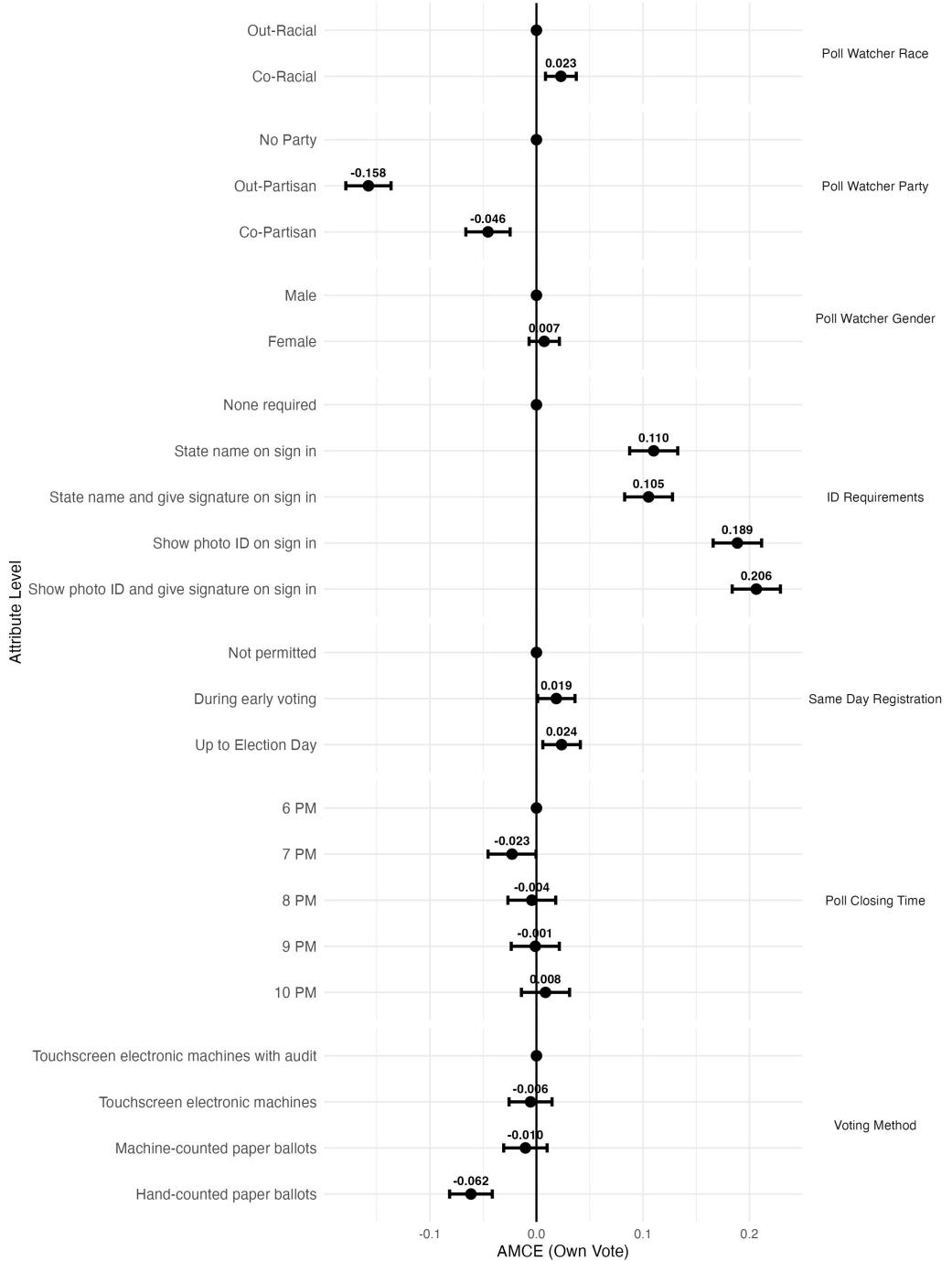


Figure 12: Overall model of average marginal component effects of conjoint attributes, including conditional race and partisanship, on a respondent's confidence in their vote being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent's own vote. Model includes population weights, as well as fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

A co-racial poll watcher increases the likelihood that a respondent is confident that their vote will be counted in a polling location by 2.3 percentage points on average, according to Figure 12. These findings are promising, as it shows that while certain minorities are less trusted as poll watchers, that on average poll watchers that align with a respondent's race increase trust. A co-partisan poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 4.6 percentage points on average and an out-partisan poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 15.8 percentage points on average, compared to the baseline of a poll watcher from neither party. There is no significant difference in trust between male and female poll watchers. A co-partisan poll watcher increases the probability of a likelihood evaluation by 11.2 percentage points on average, compared to an out-partisan poll watcher.

6.2 Race of Poll Watchers on Electoral Trust

Co-racial poll watchers increase confidence among the nationally weighted sample. Non-white poll watchers also decrease trust among white respondents. There is no significant difference in trust between white and nonwhite poll watchers among nonwhite respondents.

Across the entire sample, a poll watcher of the same racial background increases the probability of a confident evaluation of a polling location's counting of a respondent's vote by 2.1 percentage points on average, according to Figure 13. The first estimate is the overall sample, whereas the latter estimates represent estimates calculated on a subset of the ethnoracial group. White respondents on average increase their confidence when they witness a white poll watcher, with a 2.9 percentage point increase on average in the probability of a confident evaluation. This positive effect on confidence wanes across nonwhite ethnoracial groups. For all other nonwhite ethnoracial groups, the effect of an co-racial poll watcher is smaller with a positive AMCE. However, the standard errors are too large to indicate statistical significance in these effects. I attribute this to the small sample size as well as the larger variation in levels of trust that exist among nonwhite respondents.

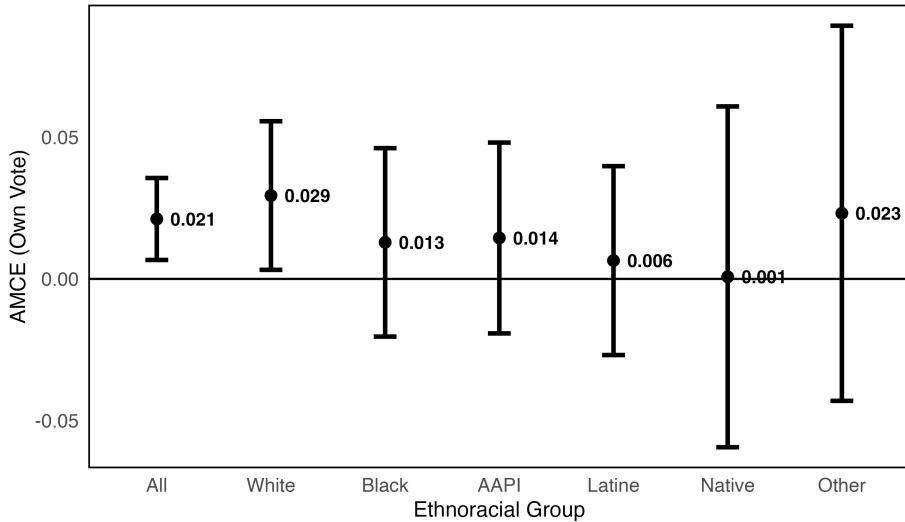


Figure 13: Effect of a co-racial poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their own vote being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model, including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

While this experiment is mainly interested in individual level voter confidence, respondents were also asked to evaluate their confidence in the polling location’s counting of voters who share the same racial group as the respondent. This question is designed to prime the effect of the poll watcher’s race as the name of the poll watcher is the only attribute that directly indicates how much a respondent should trust the representativeness of a polling location. The effect sizes here show significant increases in the probability of a confident evaluation, according to Figure 14. For all respondents, a co-racial poll watcher is associated with a 2.8 percentage point increase. The dependent variable here is also significant for white, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latine respondents. Asian and Pacific Islander respondents on average have a 4.3 percentage point increase, the highest across all groups, in the probability of a confident evaluation for their racial group’s votes. Black respondents do not have a statistically different AMCE from 0, but the estimate is still positive. This shows that among Black voters, they are not likely to change their confidence whether there is or is not a co-racial poll watcher. Similarly, the estimate for Native American respondents is also not statistically different from 0, but the estimate is now negative. The

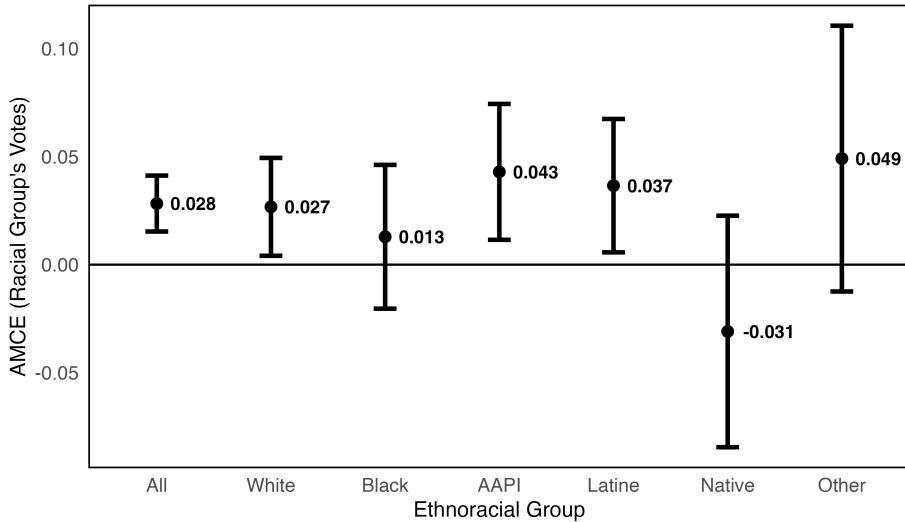


Figure 14: Effect of a co-racial poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in the votes of voters of their group being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in votes of the respondent’s race. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model, including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

larger error bar for Native American respondents is a function of the smaller number of respondents, but also wider variation in confidence in the polling locations in this experiment. The expanded overall models are included in the Appendix, under Table 10 and Table 11.

These findings support Hypothesis A1 that co-racial poll watchers increase confidence in the overall sample. However, it is unclear whether this is the case across all racial groups. It appears that white respondents become the most confident in their own vote, but this is not the case for other ethnoracial groups.

In the sample, nonwhite poll watchers on average decrease the probability of a confident evaluation of respondent’s own votes being counted by 2.4 percentage points, compared to the baseline of a white poll watcher, according to 15. To test the marginal effect of a nonwhite poll watcher on white and nonwhite respondents, I add an interaction effect to the original model on the nonwhite poll watcher and nonwhite respondents. For white respondents (0 for the nonwhite respondent variable), the effect is the same, a 2.4 percentage

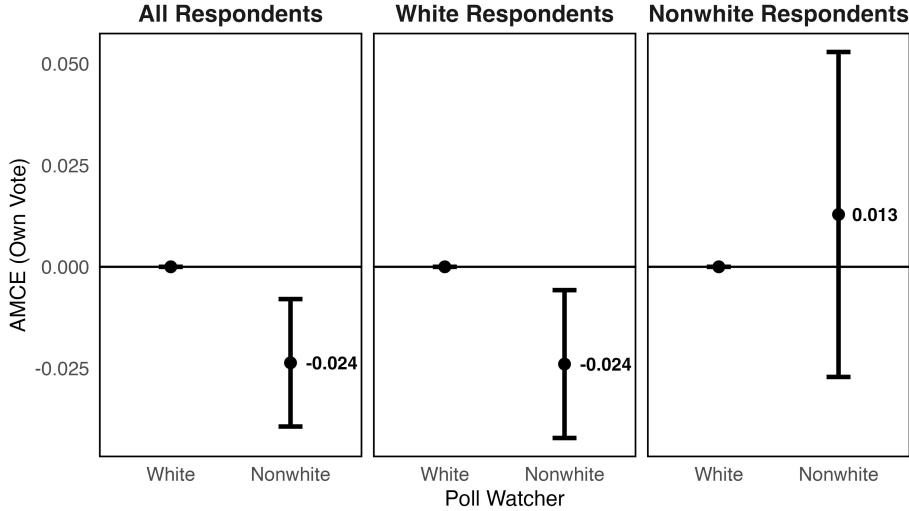


Figure 15: **Effect of a nonwhite poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their own vote being counted.** Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model, including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

point decrease in the probability of a confident evaluation. However, for nonwhite respondents (1 on the nonwhite respondent variable), the interaction term raises the probability of confidence by 3.7 percentage points. On average, the model estimates that a nonwhite poll watcher increases the likelihood of a confident evaluation by 1.3 percentage points for nonwhite respondents. This estimate, with the larger combined covariance, is not statistically significant from 0, suggesting that the model is underpowered for this interaction effect; although both the nonwhite poll watcher effect and the interaction term individually are significant at the 95% confidence level.

When examining the effects on the confidence of racial group’s votes being counted, the effect is similar among all respondents. A nonwhite poll watcher decreases the confidence among the nationally weighted sample of a votes for the respondent’s racial group being counted by 2.5 percentage points, per Figure 16. This effect is not significant when interacted with white and nonwhite respondents. For white respondents, on average, the nonwhite poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 1.1 percent-

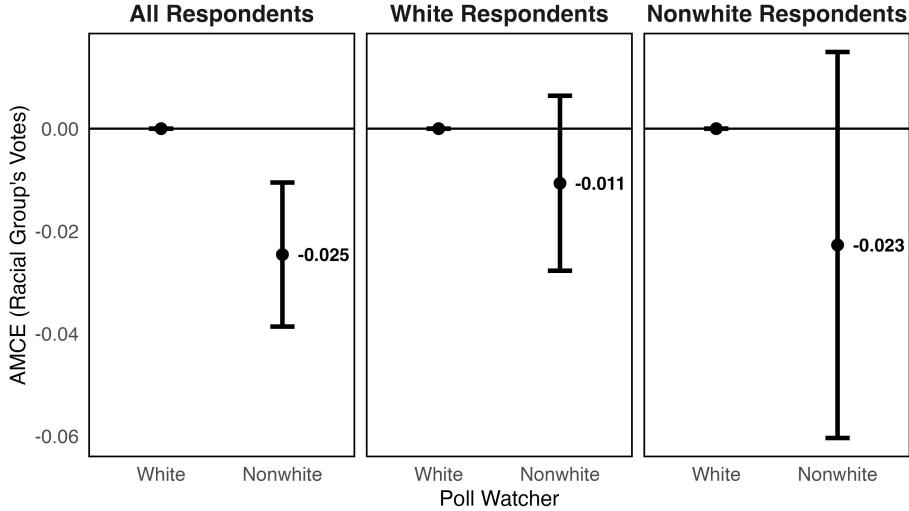


Figure 16: Effect of an nonwhite poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in the votes of voters of their racial group being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in votes of the respondent’s race. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model, including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

age points. For nonwhite respondents, the effect is stronger in the negative direction, the nonwhite poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 2.3 percentage points. Because these results are not statistically significant, this indicates that the marginal effect of a nonwhite poll watcher on the confidence of racial group’s votes being counted is not different from 0. The standard errors are larger than compared with the own vote confidence, which indicates a wider variation in this outcome variable.

While these results indicate that nonwhite poll watchers tend to decrease confidence among all respondents, they suggest mixed evidence in support of Hypotheses A2 and A3. The poll watcher variable has collinear white and nonwhite values, which allows the reference categories to be flipped if the signs are flipped. This means that the effect of a white poll watcher, for nonwhite respondents, is a decrease in the probability of a confidence evaluation by 1.3 percentage points. As above, because this effect is not statistically significant, there is no evidence to show that white poll watchers decrease confidence among the pooled nonwhite respondents. This insignificant result is the case among both dependent

variables. This suggests that there is no evidence to support Hypothesis A2. Among white respondents, nonwhite poll watchers appear to decrease confidence in respondent's own votes being counted, but have no effect on the confidence of the racial group's votes being voted. These findings do support Hypothesis A3, because nonwhite poll watchers decrease white respondent's direct vote confidence. Thus, white voters who witness a polling location in which a nonwhite poll watcher was present will be less likely to trust that election than a white voter who witnesses a polling location in which a white poll watcher was present.

6.3 Partisanship of Poll Watchers on Electoral Trust

Co-partisan poll watchers moderately increase respondent confidence and out-partisan poll watchers significantly decrease respondent confidence. Poll watchers from either party drive lower confidence compared to a nonpartisan poll watcher.

From the main model, it is clear that respondents are most trusting of a non-partisan poll watcher, and that a poll watcher from either the Democratic or Republican Party decreases confidence compared to the poll watcher with no party affiliation. All estimates are compared against a poll watcher with no party affiliation and use the outcome of own vote confidence. When controlling for all other factors, among all respondents, Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability of a respondent giving a confident evaluation to a polling station by 10.2 percentage points on average, and Republican poll watchers decrease the probability by 8.5 percentage points on average, according to Figure 17.

Among Democratic respondents, Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability of a confident evaluation by 5.6 percentage points and Republican poll watchers decrease the probability by 18.1 percentage points. Both estimates are significant at the 95% confidence level. Among Republican respondents, Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability of a confident evaluation by 14.2 percentage points and Republican poll watchers decrease the probability by 2.3 percentage points. While the effect of Democratic poll watchers for Republican respondents is significant, the effect of Republican poll watchers is not. This

indicates that a Republican poll watcher does not change a Republican respondent's probability of a confident evaluation, compared to the baseline of a nonpartisan poll watcher. Republican respondents are trusting of either poll watchers who have no party affiliation or who share their party affiliation, and are only distrusting of Democratic poll watchers. Among Democratic respondents, there is a statistically different effect between Democratic and Republican poll watchers, where these respondents have a higher decrease in confidence of Republican poll watchers compared to Democratic poll watchers.

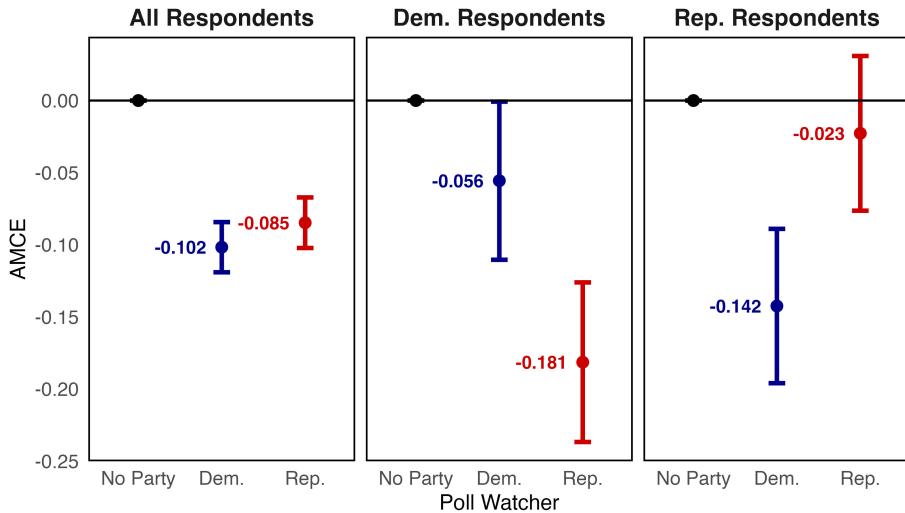


Figure 17: Effect of a Democratic or Republican poll watcher on a respondent's confidence in their own vote being counted, by partisanship. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent's own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

These results partially recreate the partisan influences found in the Cohen and Sheagley (2024) paper. The original paper included the possibility of bipartisan representation, with no poll watcher as the baseline. In their findings, they found the same that representation from a single party leads to decreased respondent confidence compared to having no poll watcher at all. Here, there is more nuance in the results, showing that Democrats are far more trusting of a nonpartisan poll watcher than one from their own party, as well as that Republicans are equally trusting of nonpartisan poll watchers as poll watchers coming from

their own party. Yet, there are still partisan differences where the opposite party drives overall confidence lower than the same party.

While these results indicate some level of co-partisan and out-partisan effects across political parties, it is critical to study these across ethnoracial lines. Copartisanship is defined as when the poll watcher's partisan identification aligns with the respondent's own partisan identification. For example, the variable is coded as a 1 when the poll watcher identifies with the Democratic Party and the respondent also identifies with the Democratic Party. The copartisanship does not apply to independent poll watchers and independent respondents, because an independent respondent would not directly align themselves with a poll watcher that has no party affiliation.

Among all respondents, the effect of a co-partisan poll watcher is a 3.2 percentage point increase in the probability of respondent's confident evaluation of their own vote being counted. This indicates that having a poll watcher that identifies from the same political party increases confidence. The model does not include the co-racial poll watcher as a control, but instead the race of the poll watcher. Regardless of the poll watcher's race, the aligning partisanship is a strong cue for increased confidence. Among the subsetted models, the co-partisan effect is positive for white, Black, and Latine respondents, and negative for Asian and Pacific Islander respondents, however, it is not statistically significant from 0. For Native American respondents, the aligning partisanship indicates a 20.6 percentage point decrease in the probability of a confidence evaluation, far higher. This result is surprising because it indicates that Native American respondents are not trusting of poll watchers that align with their own partisanship. This may signal a stronger difference from the baseline poll watcher with no partisan affiliation. Other ethnorace respondents have a 10 percentage point increase in the probability of a confident evaluation on average. Both estimates for Native American and other ethnorace respondents are statistically significant.

These results support part of Hypothesis B1 that co-partisan poll watchers, at least modestly, increase confidence among all respondents, but there is no evidence to suggest this is a trend across all racial groups. The standard errors are larger for the subsetted

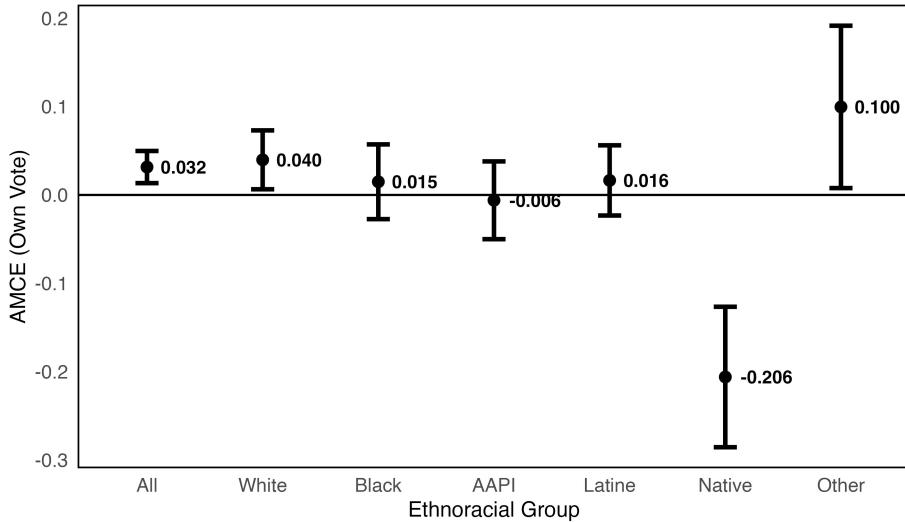


Figure 18: Effect of a co-partisan poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their own vote. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), and fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

groups, a function of the sample size, which may be the reason why some estimates are not statistically significant.

While the effects of a co-partisan poll watcher modestly increase respondents’ confidence, an out-partisan poll watcher strongly decreases confidence across all ethnoracial groups, according to Figure 19. Among all respondents that have a partisan affiliation, a poll watcher from an opposing political party decreases the probability of a confident evaluation of their own vote being counted by 13.5 percentage points on average. This trend exists across all ethnoracial groups, with the strongest effects among Native American respondents, with an 20.6 percentage point decrease in probability, and other ethnorace respondents, with an 20.2 percentage point decrease. These results suggest that while an co-partisan poll watcher does not change a respondent’s confidence at the same strength as an outpartisan poll watcher. Respondents are less confident in the reliability of a poll watcher from another party, signaling distrust that an opposing party’s poll watcher would uphold the integrity of the respondent’s vote. Black respondents appear to have the smallest negative effect of an outpartisan poll watcher, which suggests that they are the least

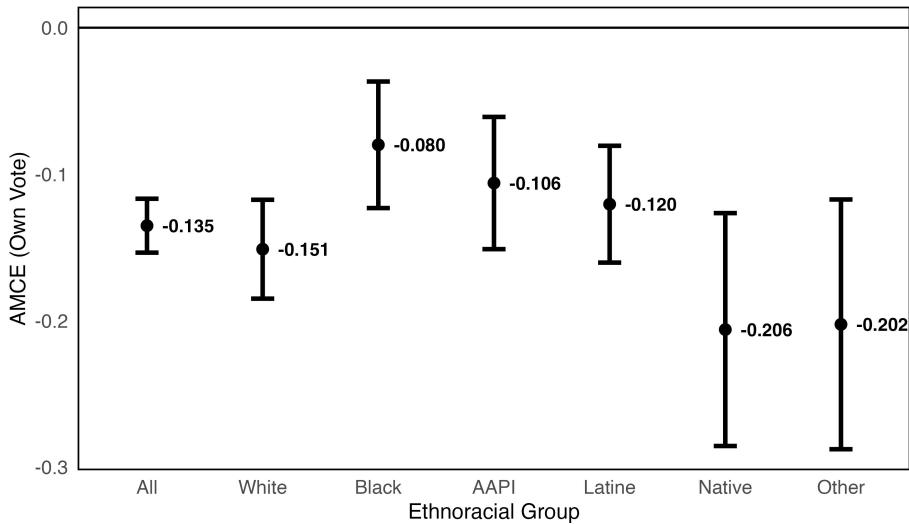


Figure 19: Effect of an out-partisan poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their own vote being counted. Estimates are created by OLS regression on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), and fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

sensitive to seeing an opposing party’s poll watcher.

The findings here show strong support for Hypothesis B2 that outpartisan poll watchers decrease confidence among minority groups. However, there is no evidence to support Hypothesis B4 that outpartisan poll watchers only modestly decrease confidence among white Americans. The fundamental theory here is that white respondents might be less sensitive to the effect of a poll watcher’s party than minority respondents because they did not face historical disenfranchisement. However, the confidence intervals for white respondents overlap with all other ethnoraces, suggesting that there is no statistically different effect of outpartisan poll watchers for white respondents from minority groups. Nor do these results suggest that the effect is smaller for white Americans, they have a higher effect, a 15.1 percentage point decrease in the probability of a confident evaluation, than Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latine respondents.

Figure 20 shows the average marginal component effects of Democratic and Republican poll watchers, compared to the baseline of a poll watcher with no party affiliation, across

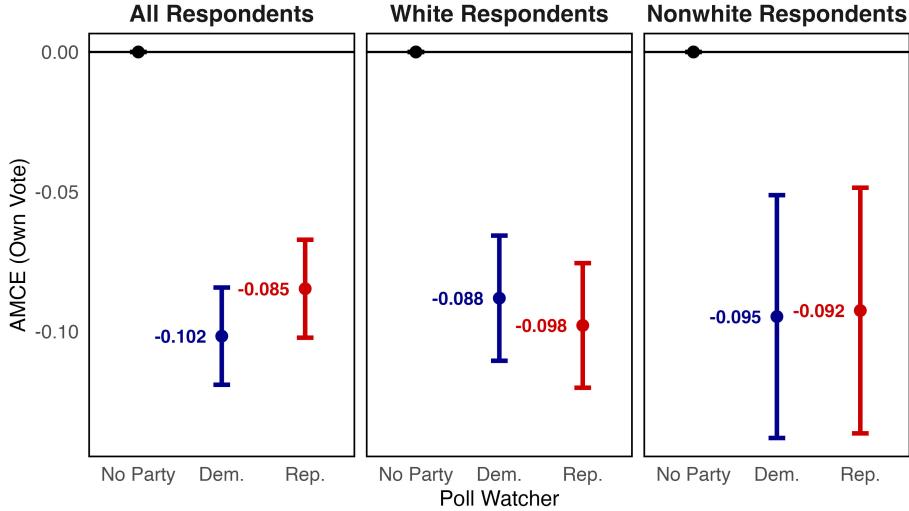


Figure 20: Effect of a Democratic or Republican poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their vote being counted, by minority ethnorace. Estimates are created by OLS on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

the ethnoracial groups. For white respondents, the effect of a Democratic poll watcher is a 8.8 percentage point decrease in the probability of a confident evaluation of their own vote being counted, compared to a 9.8 percentage point decrease for Republican poll watchers. These results are both statistically significant compared to the baseline poll watcher with no race. Democrat poll watchers have a slightly lower confidence decreasing effect than Republican poll watchers for white respondents. However, since their confidence intervals overlap, there is no significant difference in the effect of either partisan poll watcher. For nonwhite respondents, the effect of a Democratic poll watcher is a 9.5 percentage point decrease in the probability of a confident evaluation of their own vote being counted, compared to a 9.2 percentage point decrease for Republican poll watchers. These results are also statistically significant compared to the nonpartisan poll watcher. There is no significant difference among nonwhite respondents between the effects of Democratic and Republican poll watchers.

While these results do not support Hypothesis B3, Figure 21 indicate the directions

theorized earlier. For all respondents, the effect of a Democratic poll watcher on the confidence of a respondent's racial group's votes being counted is a 6.6 percentage point decrease in the probability of a confident evaluation. The effect of a Republican poll watcher is a 4 percentage point decrease, compared to the baseline of a nonpartisan poll watcher. These results indicate that among the nationally representative sample, Republican poll watchers counterintuitively reduce confidence less than Democratic poll watchers. However, this may be a result of the weighting and the lack of partisan representativeness.

When analyzing among white and nonwhite respondents, the expected directions appear. For white respondents, Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability of a confident evaluation by 6.5 percentage points, compared to a 3.8 percentage point decrease for Republican poll watchers. This follows with the intuition that white respondents (who have more Republican affiliation) on average are more confident of Republican poll watchers to uphold the votes of other white voters. The confidence intervals again overlap, indicating that there is no significant difference in the effects of either partisan poll watcher, but they both significantly decrease confidence compared to the nonpartisan baseline. For nonwhite respondents, Democratic poll watchers decrease the probability of a confident evaluation by 4.3 percentage points, compared to a 9 percentage point decrease for Republican poll watchers. The standard errors are larger because of the wider variation among nonwhite respondents and the interaction adds error to the estimates. There is no significant difference between the effects of a Democratic and Republican poll watcher, but they both significantly decrease confidence in minority group's votes compared to a nonpartisan poll watcher.

These findings indicate a lack of support for Hypothesis B3, however, they show the stability of the own vote confidence outcome, compared to the racial group's votes confidence outcome. The difference in effect estimates for nonwhite respondents appears to show that nonwhite respondents are more confident that Democratic poll watchers can ensure the votes of other nonwhite respondents are counted. Although this figure collapses all minority groups into nonwhite, they suggest that the presence of a Republican poll watcher

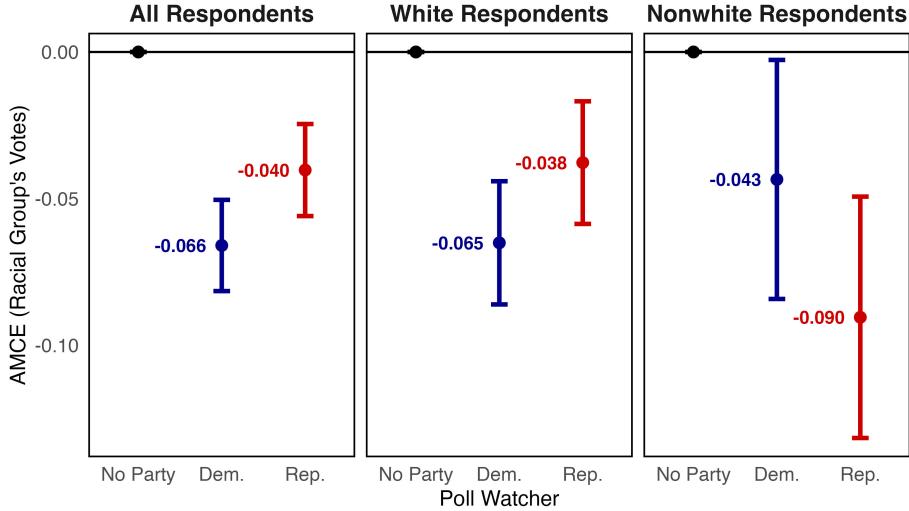


Figure 21: Effect of a Democratic or Republican poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in the votes of the respondent’s racial group being counted, by minority ethnorace. Estimates are created by OLS on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

leads to the the strongest decrease in confidence in the broader sample.

Figure 22 shows the average marginal component effects of a co-partisan and out-partisan poll watcher, compared to a poll watcher with no party affiliation. Co-partisan poll watchers decrease the probability that a respondent is confident a polling location will count their own vote by 4.5 percentage points, compared to the baseline nonpartisan poll watcher. Out-partisan poll watchers decrease the probability that a respondent is confident a polling location will count their own vote by 15.8 percentage points, compared to the baseline nonpartisan poll watcher. While these findings among all respondents again indicate that partisan poll watchers decrease confidence compared to nonpartisan poll watchers, there is an 11.3 percentage point decrease in confidence for out-partisan poll watchers, compared to co-partisan poll watchers.

Among white respondents, a co-partisan poll watcher increases the probability of a confident evaluation by 2.5 percentage points, compared to a poll watcher with no party

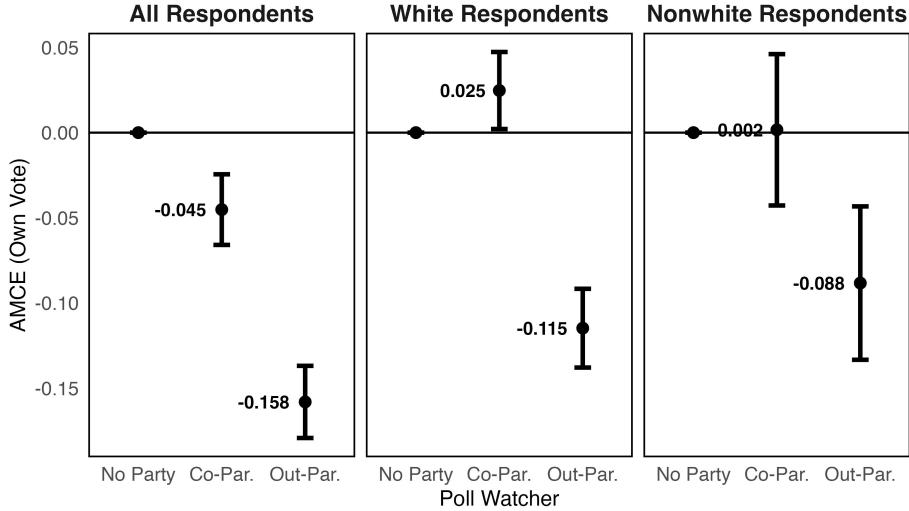


Figure 22: Effect of a co-partisan or out-partisan poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in their vote being counted, by minority ethnorace. Estimates are created by OLS on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

affiliation. An out-partisan poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 11.5 percentage points among white respondents compared to a poll watcher with no party affiliation. Among nonwhite respondents, a co-partisan poll watcher increases the probability of a confident evaluation by 0.2 percentage points, compared to a poll watcher with no party affiliation. This is not statistically significant from zero, indicating that there is no significant difference between a co-partisan poll watcher and a nonpartisan poll watcher for nonwhite respondents. An out-partisan poll watcher decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 8.8 percentage points among nonwhite respondents compared to a poll watcher with no party affiliation.

Among white respondents, co-partisan poll watchers increase trust, whereas out-partisan poll watchers decrease trust, compared to nonpartisan poll watchers. Among nonwhite respondents, only out-partisan poll watchers decrease trust. These findings suggest that co-partisanship is a stronger cue for white respondents than nonwhite respondents. Hypothesis B4 states that the effect of out-partisan poll watchers will be larger for nonwhite

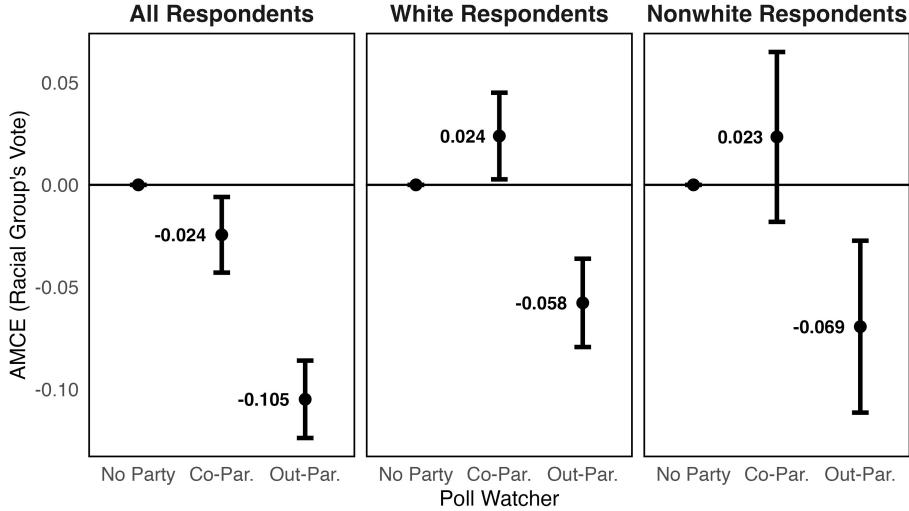


Figure 23: Effect of a co-partisan or out-partisan poll watcher on a respondent’s confidence in the votes of the respondent’s racial group being counted, by minority ethnorace. Estimates are created by OLS on a binary confidence outcome. A 0 to 1 on the coefficient scale represents a move from not confident to confident for perceived confidence in a respondent’s own vote. Models include population weights and all covariates from the overall model (controls for poll watcher race), including fixed effects for state, conjoint task order, and respondent ID (only for all respondents). Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

respondents compared to white respondents. There is no significant difference in the effect of an out-partisan poll watcher; this indicates no support for Hypothesis B4. In fact, we learn that the effect of an out-partisan poll watcher might be larger for white respondents than nonwhite respondents, contradicting the hypothesis.

These findings hold for the confidence in a respondent’s racial group’s votes. Among all respondents, a co-partisan and out-partisan poll watcher decrease the probability a respondent will be confident that their racial group’s votes will be counted by 2.4 and 10.5 percentage points respectively. Among white respondents, a co-partisan increases the probability a respondent will be confident that their racial group’s votes will be counted by 2.4 percentage points. An out-partisan poll watch decreases the probability of a confident evaluation by 5.8 percentage points for white respondents. For nonwhite respondents, a co-partisan poll watcher increases the probability of a confident evaluation by 2.3 percentage points but this is not statistically significant. For nonwhite respondents, an out-partisan

poll watcher increases the probability of a confident evaluation by 6.9 percentage points.

7 Conclusion

This study sought to advance the understanding of poll watchers and their effects of electoral trust. While previous literature tells us that bipartisan poll watchers warrant higher levels of confidence compared to poll watchers of either political party, this paper attempts to explain one of the mechanisms behind these effects: race. While this paper is grounded in the idea that historical disenfranchisement that extends to the present day also extends to the perceptions of poll watchers, I found little evidence to support this claim. Yet, there are still crucial questions

The first question of interest was whether the racial identity of poll watchers mattered to voters, in addition to their partisanship. I find that it does. Among a nationally representative sample, Black and Native American poll watchers have statistically significant decreases in respondent confidence, compared to a baseline white poll watcher. There is no significant differences, though, between Asian or Latine poll watchers and the baseline white poll watcher.

The second question of interest was whether a co-racial or a co-partisan poll watcher increases voter confidence in the election. Here, I also find that this is the case. A co-racial poll watcher increases respondent's confidence in their own votes being counted, in addition to confidence that votes of their racial group will be counted. I also find that nonwhite poll watchers are perceived negatively compared to white poll watchers, among white respondents. Yet, there is no significant difference between white and nonwhite poll watchers among nonwhite respondents. These results, which also control for the partisanship of the poll watcher, indicate that white respondents prefer seeing white poll watchers at their polling location. There is mixed evidence to support this co-racial conclusion for nonwhite respondents.

Partisanship differences are also clear. Among all respondents, Republican and Demo-

crat poll watchers decrease trust, compared to the baseline of a poll watcher with no party affiliation. I expected that there is some co-partisan effect that might increase trust among respondents with a party affiliation. However, I find that among Republican and Democrat respondents that there is a significant difference between Republican and Democrat poll watchers. For Republican respondents, Republican poll watchers are seen equally trusting as nonpartisan poll watchers, with Democrat poll watchers significantly lower. Yet, for Democratic respondents, seeing a Democratic poll watcher does not bridge the gap in trust between nonpartisan poll watchers and Democratic poll watchers. Republican poll watchers have the strongest decrease in confidence among Democratic respondents. Across the ethnoracial groups, co-partisan poll watchers only have significant increases in trust among white and other ethnorace respondents, and decreases for Native American respondents. Out-partisan poll watchers, however, appear to decrease confidence among all ethnoracial groups.

There are clear ethnoracial differences in experiences at the polling booth. Minorities are far more likely to feel intimidated by a poll watcher if they identified one, and also are less trusting of nonpartisan or bipartisan observers. The experimental findings suggest that a diverse group of poll watchers should generally increase trust if the poll watcher is co-racial. The results also indicate that poll watcher intimidation feels are fairly low, which is a sign that more voters might be willing to trust a poll watcher they witness. While the co-partisan and co-racial poll watchers only modestly increase trust, they show meaningfully that ethnoracial minorities can become more trusting of the elections through systematic and representative change.

This study imprecisely captures the effects of a polling location, but it does show what the broader American public believe to be most trusting. Thus, these results should not be taken to say a poll watcher of a given race and partisanship should not be trusted, and therefore should not be allowed in a polling location. These findings indicate some level of distrust among out-groups, whether that is a partisan out-group or a racial out-group. However, the normative implication of this is not to remove partisan poll watchers or non-

racially-representative poll watchers entirely. It is to recruit poll watchers from either party and from nonpartisan sources such as international organizations or governmental bodies. Additionally, while it is unfeasible to attempt to recruit enough poll watchers whose racial identities match the polling location's ethnic makeup, I recommend the recruitment of as diverse of a group as possible. If the results here show voters feel more confident in their vote being counted when there is someone like them observing the polling location, it is therefore important to ensure the people within election administration are descriptively and substantively representative.

This experimental design had several limitations. This study restricted every polling location to having a singular poll watcher of some ethnoracial background and Democratic, Republican, or no party affiliation. This design means that rather than a respondent seeing what poll watcher(s) are allowed/present in a polling location, they see a poll watcher. Because poll watchers occupy two attributes in the conjoint, this may have caused stronger respondent reactions to different poll watcher characteristics. Finally, the single-profile design also limits direct comparisons between parties and poll watcher races. While the single-profile design allows for variation within and the inclusion of multiple dependent variables, it limited the power of the study. Thus, a future study should apply this study's conjoint attributes to a two-profile forced-choice design. Analysis could then be used to know whether a respondent will always pick a poll watcher from the same race or a poll watcher of their party.

If it is the case that the partisanship and racial alignment of poll watchers truly matters to voters, then election administrators, political parties, and other organizations need to take these symbolic changes in trust seriously. Voters may not have the same cues at the polling booth like what they were given in this experiment, a badge with their name and partisanship. Making it clear to voters that poll watchers are there to represent them, both substantively and descriptively, and ensure their votes will be counted, is a necessary step toward bridging gaps in electoral trust.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Complete Survey Demographics

Table 5 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Variable	Category	N	Percentage
Age Group	18-29	1270	24.05
	30-44	1496	28.33
	45-64	1371	25.96
	65+	1144	21.66
Education Level	High School	1540	29.16
	Some College	1968	37.27
	College	1207	22.86
	Graduate Degree	566	10.72
Ethnicity	Hispanic	1080	20.45
	Not Hispanic	4201	79.55
Gender	Male	2513	47.59
	Female	2768	52.41
Race	White	1533	29.03
	Black	1101	20.85
	Asian	1048	19.84
	Native American	500	9.47
	Other	1099	20.81
Political Party	Democrat	1932	36.58
	Republican	1518	28.74
	Independent	1831	34.67

Table 5: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

8.2 Missingness

Figure 24 indicates the missing values in the dataset after cleaning and recoding variables. Certain demographic variables, such as state, ethnorate, and partisanship, were requirements for Cint to field the survey, which describes their lack of missing values. Only 2.6% of all values are missing, and up to 6% of any given variable. All missing values are dropped in the linear models; however, this shows that generally survey respondents all both received a non-blank conjoint, and answered the confidence questions accordingly. Nothing suggests that the non-complete cases are associated with the race. In the pivoted conjoint data, there are 299 incomplete white cases, 325 incomplete Black cases, 323 incomplete Asian and Pacific Islander cases, 319 incomplete Latine cases, 94 incomplete Native American cases, and 521 incomplete cases for other racial groups. For the latter, the 521 cases suggests that the randomization scheme based on an in-group did not randomize well for the other racial categories, given there are no names representative of the

racial group. 59% of other ethnorace respondent tasks had an nonco-racial poll watcher. However, these results should not raise concern because of the generalizability of the results to the in-group/out-group level and poll watcher race breakdowns.



Figure 24: Missingness in recoded and cleaned dataset

8.3 Survey Weights

The survey is weighted based on data from the United States Census Bureau¹³. They are population estimates as of July 1, 2024, as described in Table 6. The mean survey weight among the conjoint sample is 1.000 and the median survey weight is 0.400. Weights range from 0.125 to 8.000. The distribution of these weights can be seen in Figure 25.

¹³U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). QuickFacts. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045224>.

Variable	Category	Percentage
Age Group	18-29	20.4
	30-44	24.7
	45-64	32.3
	65+	22.6
Race	White	75.3
	Black	13.7
	Asian	6.7
	Native American	1.3
	Other	3.0
Gender	Male	48.8
	Female	51.2
Ethnicity	Hispanic	19.5
	Not Hispanic	80.5
Education Level	High School	36.4
	Some College	30.6
	College	20.6
	Graduate Degree	12.4

Table 6: U.S. Census Bureau Population Targets

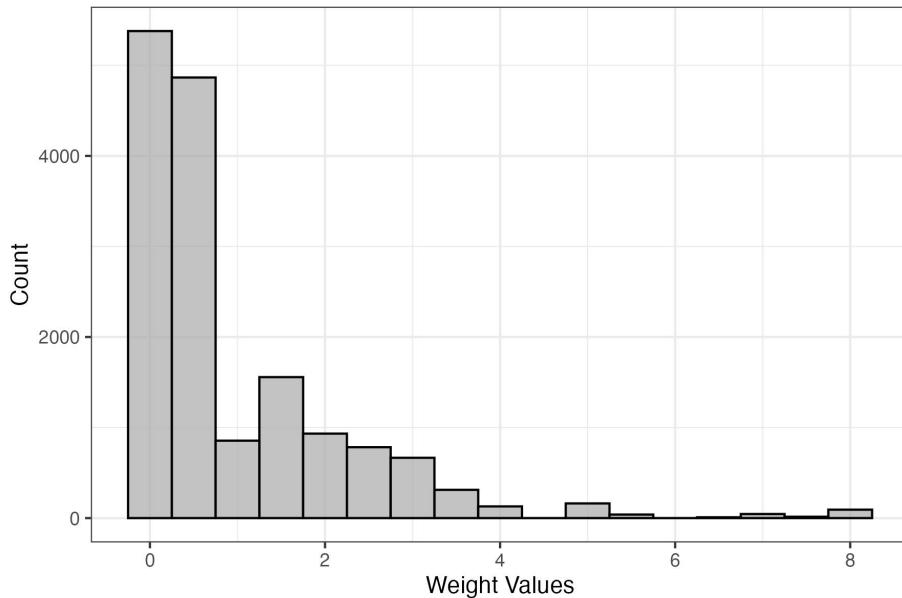


Figure 25: Distribution of survey weights

8.4 Main Linear Model

Table 7 is the complete linear models on the binary outcomes for a voter's own vote, votes of their same racial group, and nationwide votes. Reference categories are out-group

poll watcher, independent poll watcher, male poll watcher, audited touchscreen electronic machines, no voter ID requirements, disallowed same day registration, and 6 PM closing time.

	Own Vote	Racial Group's Votes	Nationwide Votes
PW In Group	0.021** (0.007)	0.028*** (0.007)	0.011 (0.007)
PW Democrat	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.066*** (0.008)	-0.089*** (0.009)
PW Republican	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.041*** (0.008)	-0.071*** (0.009)
PW Female	0.009 (0.007)	0.000 (0.007)	0.006 (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.021* (0.009)	-0.014 (0.010)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.023* (0.009)	-0.008 (0.011)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.064*** (0.010)	-0.071*** (0.009)	-0.067*** (0.010)
State name on sign in	0.112*** (0.012)	0.077*** (0.010)	0.100*** (0.012)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.107*** (0.012)	0.067*** (0.010)	0.113*** (0.012)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.189*** (0.012)	0.146*** (0.010)	0.204*** (0.012)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.204*** (0.012)	0.149*** (0.010)	0.215*** (0.012)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.009 (0.008)	0.018+ (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.022* (0.009)	0.015+ (0.008)	0.030*** (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.019+ (0.012)
Closing 8 PM	-0.005 (0.011)	0.017 (0.010)	0.000 (0.012)
Closing 9 PM	-0.002 (0.012)	0.012 (0.010)	0.020+ (0.012)
Closing 10 PM	0.007 (0.012)	0.004 (0.010)	0.001 (0.012)
N	14 431	14 237	14 438
R ²	0.612	0.646	0.621
Adj. R ²	0.403	0.454	0.417
RMSE	0.29	0.26	0.29

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 7: Main Linear Model with fixed effects for state, conjoint order, and respondent ID

8.4.1 Main Linear Model without Covariates, with Clustered Standard Errors

Table 8 is the complete linear models without the covariates for state and conjoint order, and clustered on respondent ID, following the pre-analysis plan. Reference categories are

out-group poll watcher, independent poll watcher, male poll watcher, audited touchscreen electronic machines, no voter ID requirements, disallowed same day registration, and 6 PM closing time.

	Own Vote	Racial Group's Votes	Nationwide Votes
(Intercept)	0.640*** (0.026)	0.718*** (0.025)	0.604*** (0.027)
PW In Group	0.014 (0.012)	0.015 (0.011)	0.009 (0.012)
PW Democrat	-0.091*** (0.015)	-0.059*** (0.014)	-0.074*** (0.015)
PW Republican	-0.094*** (0.015)	-0.054*** (0.014)	-0.088*** (0.015)
PW Female	0.026* (0.012)	0.029* (0.011)	0.021+ (0.012)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.002 (0.016)	-0.004 (0.015)	-0.008 (0.016)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.022 (0.017)	-0.007 (0.016)	-0.006 (0.017)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.048** (0.017)	-0.045** (0.015)	-0.046** (0.017)
State name on sign in	0.102*** (0.020)	0.066*** (0.018)	0.089*** (0.021)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.097*** (0.020)	0.066*** (0.019)	0.099*** (0.020)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.172*** (0.021)	0.113*** (0.019)	0.185*** (0.021)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.185*** (0.019)	0.132*** (0.017)	0.195*** (0.020)
Same day registration during early voting	0.016 (0.015)	0.002 (0.014)	0.019 (0.015)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.016 (0.015)	0.020 (0.014)	0.018 (0.016)
Closing 7 PM	-0.010 (0.019)	-0.019 (0.017)	-0.008 (0.018)
Closing 8 PM	-0.009 (0.020)	-0.006 (0.018)	0.001 (0.020)
Closing 9 PM	-0.003 (0.018)	-0.006 (0.017)	0.009 (0.018)
Closing 10 PM	0.002 (0.019)	-0.013 (0.017)	-0.005 (0.019)
N	14 431	14 237	14 438
R ²	0.032	0.019	0.032
Adj. R ²	0.031	0.018	0.031
RMSE	0.46	0.44	0.46
Std.Errors	by: Respondent	by: Respondent	by: Respondent

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 8: Main Linear Model only clustered on respondent ID

8.4.2 Main Linear Model without Survey Weights

Table 9 is the complete linear models with fixed effects for state, conjoint order, respondent ID, but without nationally representative survey weights. Reference categories are

out-group poll watcher, independent poll watcher, male poll watcher, audited touchscreen electronic machines, no voter ID requirements, disallowed same day registration, and 6 PM closing time.

	Own Vote	Racial Group's Votes	Nationwide Votes
PW In Group	0.013+ (0.007)	0.015* (0.007)	0.007 (0.008)
PW Democrat	-0.083*** (0.009)	-0.053*** (0.008)	-0.084*** (0.009)
PW Republican	-0.088*** (0.009)	-0.061*** (0.008)	-0.083*** (0.009)
PW Female	0.001 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.007)	-0.004 (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.004 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.011)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.024* (0.010)	-0.004 (0.011)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.047*** (0.010)	-0.047*** (0.010)	-0.054*** (0.010)
State name on sign in	0.130*** (0.012)	0.081*** (0.011)	0.112*** (0.012)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.134*** (0.012)	0.098*** (0.011)	0.132*** (0.012)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.180*** (0.012)	0.126*** (0.011)	0.186*** (0.012)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.201*** (0.012)	0.135*** (0.011)	0.208*** (0.012)
Same day registration during early voting	0.001 (0.009)	0.005 (0.008)	0.007 (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.006 (0.009)	0.008 (0.008)	0.019* (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	0.006 (0.012)	0.007 (0.011)	0.003 (0.012)
Closing 8 PM	0.022+ (0.011)	0.014 (0.011)	0.023* (0.012)
Closing 9 PM	0.013 (0.011)	0.017 (0.011)	0.029* (0.012)
Closing 10 PM	0.020+ (0.011)	0.022* (0.011)	0.025* (0.012)
N	14 431	14 237	14 438
R ²	0.621	0.648	0.621
Adj. R ²	0.417	0.456	0.418
RMSE	0.29	0.26	0.29

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 9: Main Linear Model without survey weights, with fixed effects for state, conjoint order, and respondent ID

8.5 Linear Models for Race Hypotheses

8.5.1 Hypothesis A1

	All	White	Black	AAPI	Latine	Native	Other
<i>Poll Watcher Characteristics</i>							
PW In Group	0.021** (0.007)	0.029* (0.013)	0.013 (0.017)	0.014 (0.017)	0.006 (0.017)	0.001 (0.031)	0.023 (0.034)
PW Democrat	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.106*** (0.016)	-0.041* (0.020)	-0.075*** (0.021)	-0.135*** (0.019)	-0.193*** (0.038)	-0.153*** (0.038)
PW Republican	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.090*** (0.016)	-0.066** (0.020)	-0.103*** (0.021)	-0.088*** (0.020)	-0.091* (0.036)	-0.097* (0.038)
PW Female	0.009 (0.007)	-0.002 (0.013)	-0.002 (0.017)	-0.007 (0.017)	0.062*** (0.017)	0.010 (0.029)	-0.031 (0.032)
<i>Voting Method</i>							
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.027 (0.019)	0.018 (0.024)	-0.014 (0.024)	0.036 (0.023)	-0.037 (0.042)	0.005 (0.046)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.029 (0.019)	0.005 (0.024)	-0.008 (0.024)	0.016 (0.023)	-0.014 (0.044)	-0.069 (0.043)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.064*** (0.010)	-0.079*** (0.019)	-0.048* (0.023)	-0.022 (0.024)	-0.041+ (0.024)	-0.044 (0.042)	-0.116** (0.044)
<i>Voter ID Requirement</i>							
State name	0.112*** (0.012)	0.112*** (0.021)	0.132*** (0.027)	0.143*** (0.027)	0.104*** (0.027)	0.133** (0.044)	0.135** (0.051)
State name and give signature	0.107*** (0.011)	0.131*** (0.021)	0.113*** (0.026)	0.137*** (0.027)	0.025 (0.026)	0.086+ (0.048)	0.126* (0.049)
Show photo ID	0.189*** (0.012)	0.207*** (0.021)	0.133*** (0.026)	0.174*** (0.026)	0.161*** (0.028)	0.189*** (0.047)	0.237*** (0.049)
Show photo ID and give signature	0.204*** (0.012)	0.233*** (0.021)	0.159*** (0.026)	0.196*** (0.027)	0.135*** (0.027)	0.192*** (0.048)	0.199*** (0.050)
<i>Same Day Registration</i>							
During early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.012 (0.016)	-0.014 (0.021)	-0.023 (0.021)	0.063** (0.020)	-0.036 (0.037)	-0.022 (0.039)
Up to Election Day	0.022* (0.009)	0.001 (0.016)	-0.011 (0.020)	0.025 (0.021)	0.105*** (0.021)	-0.041 (0.036)	-0.016 (0.037)
<i>Closing Time</i>							
7 PM	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.038+ (0.021)	0.019 (0.027)	0.034 (0.027)	-0.028 (0.026)	-0.012 (0.049)	0.000 (0.048)
8 PM	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.020 (0.021)	0.018 (0.027)	0.091*** (0.027)	0.002 (0.026)	0.034 (0.046)	0.020 (0.050)
9 PM	-0.002 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.021)	0.032 (0.027)	0.035 (0.026)	-0.013 (0.026)	-0.031 (0.048)	-0.011 (0.050)
10 PM	0.007 (0.012)	0.003 (0.021)	0.011 (0.027)	0.039 (0.027)	0.020 (0.026)	-0.008 (0.049)	0.009 (0.047)
N	14 431	4195	2813	2553	3027	1011	832
R ²	0.612	0.616	0.613	0.633	0.619	0.611	0.683
Adj. R ²	0.406	0.414	0.402	0.434	0.414	0.392	0.460
RMSE	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.30	0.27

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 10: Linear models for Hypothesis A1 on confidence of own vote, divided by ethnoraacial group

	All	White	Black	AAPI	Latine	Native	Other
<i>Poll Watcher Characteristics</i>							
PW In Group	0.028*** (0.007)	0.027* (0.012)	0.013 (0.017)	0.043** (0.016)	0.037* (0.016)	-0.031 (0.027)	0.049 (0.031)
PW Democrat	-0.066*** (0.008)	-0.075*** (0.014)	-0.041* (0.020)	-0.054** (0.019)	-0.076*** (0.018)	-0.113*** (0.034)	-0.151*** (0.036)
PW Republican	-0.041*** (0.008)	-0.022 (0.014)	-0.066** (0.020)	-0.077*** (0.020)	-0.079*** (0.019)	-0.053+ (0.032)	-0.091* (0.035)
PW Female	0.000 (0.006)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.002 (0.017)	0.021 (0.016)	0.004 (0.015)	0.002 (0.026)	0.016 (0.029)
<i>Voting Method</i>							
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.021* (0.009)	-0.035* (0.016)	0.018 (0.024)	-0.034 (0.022)	0.023 (0.021)	-0.005 (0.037)	0.044 (0.043)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.023* (0.009)	-0.031+ (0.016)	0.005 (0.024)	-0.022 (0.022)	0.005 (0.021)	-0.043 (0.039)	0.018 (0.039)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.071*** (0.009)	-0.087*** (0.016)	-0.048* (0.023)	-0.049* (0.023)	-0.037+ (0.022)	0.002 (0.038)	-0.003 (0.041)
<i>Voter ID Requirement</i>							
State name	0.077*** (0.010)	0.073*** (0.018)	0.132*** (0.027)	0.081** (0.025)	0.068** (0.026)	0.152*** (0.040)	0.031 (0.048)
State name and give signature	0.067*** (0.010)	0.079*** (0.018)	0.113*** (0.026)	0.098*** (0.025)	-0.016 (0.024)	0.002 (0.043)	0.124** (0.046)
Show photo ID	0.146*** (0.010)	0.164*** (0.018)	0.133*** (0.026)	0.112*** (0.025)	0.109*** (0.026)	0.114** (0.042)	0.196*** (0.045)
Show photo ID and give signature	0.149*** (0.010)	0.163*** (0.018)	0.159*** (0.026)	0.095*** (0.025)	0.115*** (0.025)	0.086* (0.043)	0.118* (0.047)
<i>Same Day Registration</i>							
During early voting	0.009 (0.008)	0.007 (0.014)	-0.014 (0.021)	0.020 (0.019)	0.013 (0.019)	-0.048 (0.033)	-0.004 (0.036)
Up to Election Day	0.015+ (0.008)	0.004 (0.014)	-0.011 (0.020)	-0.007 (0.020)	0.066*** (0.020)	-0.016 (0.032)	0.008 (0.035)
<i>Closing Time</i>							
7 PM	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.004 (0.018)	0.019 (0.027)	0.010 (0.026)	-0.084*** (0.025)	-0.067 (0.043)	-0.014 (0.045)
8 PM	0.017 (0.010)	0.014 (0.018)	0.018 (0.027)	0.051* (0.025)	0.011 (0.025)	-0.055 (0.041)	0.042 (0.046)
9 PM	0.012 (0.010)	0.010 (0.018)	0.032 (0.027)	0.020 (0.025)	0.014 (0.025)	-0.073+ (0.043)	-0.017 (0.047)
10 PM	0.004 (0.010)	0.003 (0.018)	0.011 (0.027)	0.061* (0.025)	-0.021 (0.024)	-0.046 (0.044)	-0.007 (0.044)
N	14 237	4129	2813	2508	2990	997	825
R ²	0.646	0.653	0.613	0.661	0.643	0.689	0.701
Adj. R ²	0.457	0.469	0.402	0.475	0.448	0.511	0.493
RMSE	0.26	0.24	0.29	0.26	0.28	0.27	0.25

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 11: Linear models for Hypothesis A1 on confidence of racial group's votes, divided by ethnoracial group

8.5.2 Hypotheses A2 and A3

	Own Vote	Own Vote with Interaction	Racial Group's Vote	Racial Group's Vote with Interaction
PW Nonwhite	-0.024** (0.008)	-0.024** (0.009)	-0.024** (0.008)	-0.024** (0.009)
PW Democrat	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.091*** (0.009)	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.091*** (0.009)
PW Republican	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.096*** (0.009)	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.096*** (0.009)
PW Female	0.008 (0.007)	0.025*** (0.007)	0.008 (0.007)	0.025*** (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.011)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.063*** (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.011)	-0.063*** (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.011)
State name	0.112*** (0.012)	0.102*** (0.012)	0.112*** (0.012)	0.102*** (0.012)
State name and give signature	0.107*** (0.011)	0.096*** (0.012)	0.107*** (0.011)	0.096*** (0.012)
Show photo ID	0.189*** (0.012)	0.174*** (0.012)	0.189*** (0.012)	0.174*** (0.012)
Show photo ID and give signature	0.204*** (0.012)	0.184*** (0.012)	0.204*** (0.012)	0.184*** (0.012)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.018+ (0.009)	0.019* (0.009)	0.018+ (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.022* (0.009)	0.016+ (0.009)	0.022* (0.009)	0.016+ (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	-0.028* (0.012)	-0.018 (0.012)	-0.028* (0.012)	-0.018 (0.012)
Closing 8 PM	-0.006 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.012)
Closing 9 PM	-0.003 (0.012)	-0.009 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.012)	-0.009 (0.012)
Closing 10 PM	0.006 (0.012)	-0.004 (0.012)	0.006 (0.012)	-0.004 (0.012)
Nonwhite Respondent		-0.067*** (0.016)		-0.067*** (0.016)
PW Nonwhite × Nonwhite		0.037* (0.018)		0.037* (0.018)
N	14 431	14 431	14 431	14 431
R ²	0.612	0.058	0.612	0.058
Adj. R ²	0.406	0.054	0.406	0.054
RMSE	0.29	0.46	0.29	0.46

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 12: Linear models for Hypotheses A2 and A3 on confidence, with nonwhite poll watcher and nonwhite respondent interaction

8.6 Linear Models for Partisanship Hypotheses

	Own Vote	Own Vote with Interaction	Racial Group's Vote	Racial Group's Vote with Interaction
PW Democrat	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.065*** (0.016)	-0.066*** (0.008)	-0.047** (0.015)
PW Republican	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.096*** (0.016)	-0.040*** (0.008)	-0.034* (0.015)
PW Black	-0.038*** (0.011)	-0.036*** (0.011)	-0.034*** (0.010)	-0.051*** (0.010)
PW Asian	-0.011 (0.012)	-0.011 (0.012)	-0.012 (0.011)	-0.020+ (0.011)
PW Hispanic	-0.016 (0.011)	-0.023* (0.011)	-0.025* (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.010)
PW Native	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.030* (0.012)	-0.025* (0.010)	-0.028* (0.011)
PW Female	0.008 (0.007)	0.024** (0.007)	0.000 (0.006)	0.026*** (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.021* (0.009)	-0.004 (0.010)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.016 (0.011)	-0.022* (0.009)	-0.001 (0.010)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.063*** (0.010)	-0.047*** (0.011)	-0.070*** (0.009)	-0.043*** (0.010)
State name on sign in	0.111*** (0.012)	0.102*** (0.012)	0.077*** (0.010)	0.066*** (0.011)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.108*** (0.011)	0.094*** (0.012)	0.067*** (0.010)	0.064*** (0.011)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.189*** (0.012)	0.176*** (0.012)	0.146*** (0.010)	0.119*** (0.011)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.203*** (0.012)	0.185*** (0.012)	0.148*** (0.010)	0.132*** (0.011)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.017+ (0.009)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.001 (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.022* (0.009)	0.018+ (0.009)	0.015+ (0.008)	0.018* (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	-0.028* (0.012)	-0.015 (0.012)	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)
Closing 8 PM	-0.006 (0.011)	-0.015 (0.012)	0.016 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.011)
Closing 9 PM	-0.002 (0.012)	-0.008 (0.012)	0.012 (0.010)	-0.009 (0.011)
Closing 10 PM	0.006 (0.012)	-0.007 (0.012)	0.003 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)
Democrat Respondent		0.067*** (0.016)		0.081*** (0.015)
Republican Respondent		0.020 (0.016)		0.022 (0.015)
PW Democrat \times Democrat Res.		0.010 (0.023)		0.006 (0.022)
PW Republican \times Democrat Res.		-0.085*** (0.023)		-0.104*** (0.022)
PW Democrat \times Republican Res.		-0.077*** (0.022)		-0.031 (0.021)
PW Republican \times Republican Res.		0.074*** (0.022)		0.034 (0.021)
N	14 431	14 431	14 237	14 237
R ²	0.612	0.067	0.646	0.051
Adj. R ²	0.406	0.062	0.457	0.046
RMSE	0.29	0.45	0.26	0.44

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 13: Linear models on confidence for marginal effect of respondent party on confidence

8.6.1 Hypothesis B1

	All	White	Black	AAPI	Latine	Native	Other
PW Co-Partisan	0.032*** (0.009)	0.040* (0.017)	0.015 (0.022)	-0.006 (0.022)	0.016 (0.020)	0.060 (0.042)	0.100* (0.047)
PW Black	-0.038*** (0.011)	-0.050* (0.021)	-0.005 (0.026)	-0.053+ (0.031)	-0.021 (0.027)	-0.010 (0.057)	-0.059 (0.050)
PW Asian	-0.009 (0.012)	-0.019 (0.022)	-0.011 (0.033)	-0.017 (0.026)	0.058+ (0.030)	-0.096+ (0.056)	0.047 (0.051)
PW Hispanic	-0.016 (0.011)	-0.021 (0.021)	-0.012 (0.033)	-0.037 (0.032)	0.000 (0.026)	-0.019 (0.058)	-0.025 (0.051)
PW Native	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.030 (0.020)	-0.024 (0.033)	-0.036 (0.033)	0.003 (0.030)	-0.039 (0.047)	0.034 (0.050)
PW Female	0.007 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.017)	-0.009 (0.017)	0.050** (0.017)	0.003 (0.030)	-0.042 (0.032)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.028 (0.019)	0.020 (0.024)	-0.016 (0.024)	0.039+ (0.023)	-0.008 (0.042)	0.003 (0.047)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.028 (0.019)	0.006 (0.024)	-0.010 (0.024)	0.019 (0.023)	0.009 (0.045)	-0.060 (0.043)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.062*** (0.010)	-0.077*** (0.019)	-0.045+ (0.024)	-0.026 (0.024)	-0.037 (0.024)	-0.035 (0.043)	-0.116** (0.044)
State name on sign in	0.106*** (0.012)	0.105*** (0.021)	0.131*** (0.027)	0.146*** (0.027)	0.088** (0.028)	0.145** (0.045)	0.132* (0.052)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.102*** (0.012)	0.125*** (0.021)	0.114*** (0.026)	0.140*** (0.027)	0.010 (0.026)	0.097* (0.049)	0.124* (0.049)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.186*** (0.012)	0.207*** (0.021)	0.131*** (0.026)	0.173*** (0.027)	0.144*** (0.028)	0.202*** (0.048)	0.249*** (0.049)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.200*** (0.012)	0.225*** (0.021)	0.159*** (0.026)	0.201*** (0.027)	0.134*** (0.027)	0.209*** (0.048)	0.210*** (0.050)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.012 (0.016)	-0.013 (0.021)	-0.020 (0.021)	0.063** (0.020)	-0.024 (0.038)	-0.022 (0.040)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.024** (0.009)	0.004 (0.016)	-0.010 (0.020)	0.030 (0.021)	0.109*** (0.022)	-0.037 (0.037)	-0.008 (0.038)
Closing 7 PM	-0.026* (0.012)	-0.034 (0.021)	0.020 (0.027)	0.031 (0.027)	-0.034 (0.027)	-0.024 (0.050)	0.003 (0.049)
Closing 8 PM	-0.004 (0.012)	-0.019 (0.021)	0.020 (0.027)	0.090*** (0.027)	0.009 (0.027)	0.023 (0.047)	0.030 (0.050)
Closing 9 PM	-0.001 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.021)	0.035 (0.027)	0.039 (0.026)	-0.009 (0.026)	-0.038 (0.049)	-0.009 (0.051)
Closing 10 PM	0.006 (0.012)	0.003 (0.021)	0.017 (0.027)	0.037 (0.027)	0.015 (0.026)	-0.011 (0.050)	0.014 (0.047)
N	14 431	4195	2813	2553	3027	1011	832
R ²	0.607	0.610	0.610	0.628	0.611	0.599	0.678
Adj. R ²	0.398	0.405	0.398	0.426	0.401	0.371	0.449
RMSE	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.31	0.27

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 14: Linear models for Hypothesis B1 on confidence of own vote, divided by ethnoraacial group

8.6.2 Hypothesis B2

	All	White	Black	AAPI	Latine	Native	Other
PW Out-Partisan	-0.135*** (0.009)	-0.151*** (0.017)	-0.080*** (0.022)	-0.106*** (0.023)	-0.120*** (0.020)	-0.206*** (0.041)	-0.202*** (0.043)
PW Black	-0.042*** (0.011)	-0.058** (0.021)	-0.005 (0.026)	-0.054+ (0.031)	-0.022 (0.027)	-0.005 (0.056)	-0.045 (0.049)
PW Asian	-0.012 (0.012)	-0.022 (0.022)	-0.008 (0.033)	-0.018 (0.026)	0.049+ (0.030)	-0.092+ (0.055)	0.061 (0.050)
PW Hispanic	-0.018 (0.011)	-0.024 (0.021)	-0.013 (0.033)	-0.036 (0.032)	-0.002 (0.025)	-0.024 (0.057)	-0.019 (0.051)
PW Native	-0.030* (0.012)	-0.034+ (0.020)	-0.022 (0.033)	-0.037 (0.033)	0.003 (0.030)	-0.043 (0.046)	0.047 (0.050)
PW Female	0.006 (0.007)	-0.002 (0.013)	-0.002 (0.017)	-0.009 (0.017)	0.047** (0.017)	0.000 (0.029)	-0.039 (0.031)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.005 (0.010)	-0.027 (0.019)	0.021 (0.024)	-0.013 (0.024)	0.043+ (0.023)	-0.017 (0.041)	0.020 (0.046)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.009 (0.010)	-0.024 (0.019)	0.006 (0.024)	-0.010 (0.024)	0.026 (0.023)	0.001 (0.044)	-0.061 (0.042)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.061*** (0.010)	-0.075*** (0.018)	-0.047* (0.023)	-0.023 (0.024)	-0.033 (0.024)	-0.041 (0.042)	-0.116** (0.044)
State name on sign in	0.108*** (0.011)	0.107*** (0.021)	0.130*** (0.027)	0.140*** (0.027)	0.098*** (0.028)	0.144** (0.045)	0.144** (0.051)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.103*** (0.011)	0.126*** (0.021)	0.112*** (0.026)	0.137*** (0.027)	0.018 (0.026)	0.098* (0.048)	0.130** (0.049)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.189*** (0.012)	0.205*** (0.021)	0.130*** (0.026)	0.173*** (0.027)	0.166*** (0.028)	0.207*** (0.047)	0.248*** (0.048)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.205*** (0.012)	0.231*** (0.021)	0.161*** (0.026)	0.198*** (0.027)	0.145*** (0.027)	0.213*** (0.048)	0.216*** (0.050)
Same day registration during early voting	0.018* (0.009)	0.011 (0.016)	-0.014 (0.021)	-0.022 (0.021)	0.068*** (0.020)	-0.021 (0.037)	-0.020 (0.039)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.024** (0.009)	0.006 (0.016)	-0.011 (0.020)	0.028 (0.021)	0.107*** (0.021)	-0.032 (0.036)	0.000 (0.037)
Closing 7 PM	-0.023* (0.011)	-0.030 (0.021)	0.019 (0.027)	0.030 (0.027)	-0.029 (0.027)	-0.004 (0.049)	-0.007 (0.048)
Closing 8 PM	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.022 (0.021)	0.021 (0.027)	0.086** (0.027)	0.013 (0.026)	0.037 (0.047)	0.030 (0.049)
Closing 9 PM	0.000 (0.012)	-0.002 (0.021)	0.033 (0.027)	0.036 (0.026)	-0.009 (0.026)	-0.040 (0.048)	-0.023 (0.050)
Closing 10 PM	0.008 (0.012)	0.006 (0.021)	0.014 (0.027)	0.033 (0.027)	0.021 (0.026)	0.000 (0.049)	0.012 (0.046)
N	14 431	4195	2813	2553	3027	1011	832
R ²	0.615	0.620	0.613	0.633	0.617	0.613	0.689
Adj. R ²	0.410	0.420	0.402	0.433	0.411	0.393	0.468
RMSE	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	0.30	0.26

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 15: Linear models for Hypothesis B2 on confidence of own vote, divided by ethnoraacial group

8.6.3 Hypothesis B3

	Own Vote	Own Vote with Interaction	Racial Group's Vote	Racial Group's Vote with Interaction
PW Democrat	-0.102*** (0.009)	-0.088*** (0.011)	-0.066*** (0.008)	-0.065*** (0.011)
PW Republican	-0.085*** (0.009)	-0.098*** (0.011)	-0.040*** (0.008)	-0.038*** (0.011)
PW Black	-0.038*** (0.011)	-0.019+ (0.011)	-0.034*** (0.010)	-0.017+ (0.010)
PW Asian	-0.011 (0.012)	0.001 (0.012)	-0.012 (0.011)	0.004 (0.011)
PW Hispanic	-0.016 (0.011)	-0.012 (0.011)	-0.025* (0.010)	-0.023* (0.010)
PW Native	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.026* (0.012)	-0.025* (0.010)	-0.015 (0.011)
PW Female	0.008 (0.007)	0.026*** (0.007)	0.000 (0.006)	0.028*** (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.021* (0.009)	-0.006 (0.010)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)	-0.022* (0.009)	-0.003 (0.010)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.063*** (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.011)	-0.070*** (0.009)	-0.046*** (0.010)
State name on sign in	0.111*** (0.012)	0.102*** (0.012)	0.077*** (0.010)	0.064*** (0.011)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.108*** (0.011)	0.097*** (0.012)	0.067*** (0.010)	0.065*** (0.011)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.189*** (0.012)	0.175*** (0.012)	0.146*** (0.010)	0.117*** (0.011)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.203*** (0.012)	0.183*** (0.012)	0.148*** (0.010)	0.130*** (0.011)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.018+ (0.009)	0.009 (0.008)	0.001 (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.022* (0.009)	0.016+ (0.009)	0.015+ (0.008)	0.017* (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	-0.028* (0.012)	-0.018 (0.012)	-0.013 (0.010)	-0.021+ (0.011)
Closing 8 PM	-0.006 (0.011)	-0.014 (0.012)	0.016 (0.010)	-0.009 (0.011)
Closing 9 PM	-0.002 (0.012)	-0.009 (0.012)	0.012 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.011)
Closing 10 PM	0.006 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.003 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.011)
Nonwhite Respondent		-0.040** (0.014)		-0.081*** (0.013)
PW Democrat × Nonwhite		-0.007 (0.019)		0.022 (0.018)
PW Republican × Nonwhite		0.005 (0.019)		-0.053** (0.018)
N	14 431	14 431	14 237	14 237
R ²	0.612	0.058	0.646	0.054
Adj. R ²	0.406	0.054	0.457	0.049
RMSE	0.29	0.46	0.26	0.44

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 16: Linear models for Hypothesis B3 on confidence, with Democrat/Republican poll watcher and nonwhite respondent interaction

8.6.4 Hypothesis B4

	Own Vote	Own Vote with Interaction	Racial Group's Vote	Racial Group's Vote with Interaction
PW Co-Partisan	-0.045*** (0.011)	0.025* (0.012)	-0.024** (0.009)	0.024* (0.011)
PW Out-Partisan	-0.158*** (0.011)	-0.115*** (0.012)	-0.105*** (0.010)	-0.058*** (0.011)
PW Black	-0.042*** (0.011)	-0.021+ (0.011)	-0.036*** (0.010)	-0.019+ (0.010)
PW Asian	-0.013 (0.012)	0.000 (0.012)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.003 (0.011)
PW Hispanic	-0.017 (0.011)	-0.012 (0.011)	-0.026** (0.010)	-0.023* (0.010)
PW Native	-0.030** (0.012)	-0.027* (0.012)	-0.027** (0.010)	-0.016 (0.011)
PW Female	0.007 (0.007)	0.024** (0.007)	-0.001 (0.006)	0.025*** (0.007)
Touchscreen electronic machines	-0.005 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.011)	-0.020* (0.009)	-0.005 (0.010)
Machine-counted paper ballots	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.017 (0.011)	-0.020* (0.009)	-0.002 (0.010)
Hand-counted paper ballots	-0.061*** (0.010)	-0.047*** (0.011)	-0.068*** (0.009)	-0.045*** (0.010)
State name on sign in	0.109*** (0.011)	0.101*** (0.012)	0.076*** (0.010)	0.063*** (0.011)
State name and give signature on sign in	0.105*** (0.011)	0.094*** (0.012)	0.065*** (0.010)	0.064*** (0.011)
Show photo ID on sign in	0.189*** (0.012)	0.175*** (0.012)	0.146*** (0.010)	0.117*** (0.011)
Show photo ID and give signature on sign in	0.205*** (0.012)	0.185*** (0.012)	0.149*** (0.010)	0.132*** (0.011)
Same day registration during early voting	0.019* (0.009)	0.017+ (0.009)	0.009 (0.008)	0.000 (0.009)
Same day registration up to Election Day	0.024** (0.009)	0.018* (0.009)	0.017* (0.008)	0.018* (0.009)
Closing 7 PM	-0.024* (0.011)	-0.016 (0.012)	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.020+ (0.011)
Closing 8 PM	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.015 (0.012)	0.017+ (0.010)	-0.009 (0.011)
Closing 9 PM	-0.001 (0.011)	-0.010 (0.012)	0.012 (0.010)	-0.009 (0.011)
Closing 10 PM	0.008 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.004 (0.010)	-0.016 (0.011)
Nonwhite Respondent		-0.040*** (0.011)		-0.087*** (0.010)
PW Co-Partisan × Nonwhite		-0.023 (0.020)		0.000 (0.018)
PW Out-Partisan × Nonwhite		0.026 (0.020)		-0.012 (0.018)
N	14 431	14 431	14 237	14 237
R ²	0.615	0.060	0.648	0.054
Adj. R ²	0.411	0.055	0.460	0.049
RMSE	0.28	0.46	0.26	0.44

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 17: Linear models for Hypothesis B4 on confidence, with Co-Partisan/Out-Partisan poll watcher and nonwhite respondent interaction

8.7 Pre-Analysis Plan

The complete pre-analysis plan is included below. The pre-registered hypotheses and methodology for conjoint survey experiment is on page 7 and 8 of the pre-analysis plan. Information identifying the author has been redacted.

Pre-Analysis Plan: A Study On the Determinants of Race and Ethnicity in Trust in Elections

This document presents a pre-analysis plan for a study on the determinants of trust in elections by racial and ethnic minorities using messages produced by non-partisan election officials in the United States. We will test the effectiveness of these messages using a survey experiment after the 2024 American Presidential Election in November 2024. The study will test the effectiveness of messaging produced by election officials with different factors. First, we aim to understand if consistent messaging delivered by messengers of different races is more or less effective at increasing levels of trust among members of minoritized communities. Second, we aim to understand if different messaging delivered by the same election official is more or less effective at increasing levels of trust among members of minoritized communities. The survey will also include a second experiment on poll watchers to test the level of confidence that respondents have in the election based on a hypothetical polling location. The conjoint survey experiment examines the effect of randomly assigned attributes of polling locations to determine what causes a lack of voter confidence, including the implied race (through names) and partisanship of poll watchers. Furthermore, we plan to conduct a regression discontinuity in time (RDiT) to measure “winner effects”: we will gather half of the sample immediately after the election (when we expect that the presidential contest results will be uncertain) and the second half after the Associated Press projects a winner.

Study design.

The survey will be conducted after the November 2024 Presidential Election targeting at most 5,000 respondents, though the final number will be determined by cost using the online survey vendor Cint. The first portion of the survey, which is identical to the second portion, will field to 2,500 or fewer respondents the day after the election on Wednesday, November 6, 2024. The second portion of the survey, which is again identical to the first portion, will field to 2,500 or fewer respondents as soon as a projected winner of the election is called by the Associated Press.

Measures.

In the post-election survey, respondents will be asked a series of questions about their voting habits, preferences towards voting methods, and trust in elections. The full survey text is described at the end of this submission. They will then be routed to the video treatment designed to increase trust in elections, described below. They will then be asked a second time about their trust in elections, allowing use of both between-subjects and within-subject variation to estimate treatment effects.

For the analysis of this experiment, we will examine the effect of the treatments by directly comparing responses to the outcome measures listed below across the relevant groups (those who viewed different messages and those who viewed videos from different messengers). We will also subtract respondents’ answers to these questions in the pre-treatment phase from their answers to the same questions in the

post-treatment phase to measure the change in respondent opinions measuring within-subject differences. We reserve the right to estimate multivariate regression models that include individual-level control variables to estimate treatment effects, in order to reduce variance. We will treat the variables as interval variables, rescaling them to either 1-4 or 1-5 depending on the number of response options and excluding “Don’t know/no opinion” responses (see survey instrument below).

Treatment Messages and Hypotheses, Messenger versus Message.

All respondents will be independently randomized into one of the following groups, creating a 2x3 factorial:

- ¼ of respondents will see a video that describes institutional protections
- ¼ of respondents will see a video that describes themes of belonging
- ¼ of respondents will see a video that describes election security
- ¼ of respondents will see a control video of a Honda commercial

Additionally, the messenger will vary:

- 3/8 of respondents will see a video by Connecticut Secretary of State Stephanie Thomas
- 3/8 of respondents will see a video by Connecticut Deputy Secretary of State Kozin
- ¼ of respondents will see the aforementioned control video of a Honda commercial

The table below describes our research design in another way:

25%	25%	25%	25%
Thomas-Institutional	Thomas-Belonging	Thomas-Security	Pure Control
Kozin-Institutional	Kozin-Belonging	Kozin-Security	Pure Control

Each of the six election official videos – “Institutional,” “Belonging,” and “Security” messages delivered by each of the two officials – is designed to increase trust in elections, though the nature of the message varies. We will explore their differential effectiveness on different audiences. To test messenger effects, we will vary the identity of the speaker. Thomas is a Black woman. Kozin is a white woman. The message content, visuals, and institutional identification in these messages is otherwise similar, allowing us to isolate the impact of the race of the messenger. For our purposes below, we define “minority respondent” as all non-white respondents. We set forth hypotheses about how we expect any of the three election trust messages to affect trust and how we expect these impacts to vary by message and by messenger.

Hypothesis 1: Election Official Videos Increase Election Trust. Respondents who are exposed to any of six election official videos will report higher levels of trust in elections, relative to those who are exposed to a pure control.

Hypothesis 2. Election Official Videos Effect Broader Trust. Respondents who are exposed to any of six election official videos will report higher levels of trust in society, trust in state government, and trust in the federal government, relative to those who are exposed to a pure control.

Hypothesis 3. Messenger Effects. Minority respondents, and particularly Black respondents, who are exposed to any of three videos recorded by a Black election official will report higher levels of trust in elections, relative to those who are exposed to any of the three videos recorded by a white election official.

Hypothesis 4. Respondents who view the “Institutional” or “Belonging” messages will exhibit a larger increase in trust than those who view the “Security” message.

Message-Audience Interactions

Hypothesis 4a. For white respondents, respondents who view the “Security” message will exhibit the largest increase in trust.

Hypothesis 4b. For Black American and Native American respondents, respondents who view the “Institutional” message will exhibit the largest increase in trust.

Hypothesis 4c. For Latino and Asian American respondents, respondents who view the “Belonging” message will exhibit the largest increase in trust.

Hypothesis 5: Structural Belonging Mediates the Effect of the Treatment on Trust. Measures of belonging will mediate the relationship between our treatment and outcome variables such that respondents exposed to the “Belonging” treatment will have higher levels of belonging and will in turn exhibit higher trust compared to those in the control.

Hypothesis 6: Information about Election Protections Mediates the Effect of the Treatment on Trust. Respondents who view the institutional protections treatment video will show greater awareness of election protections and in turn be more trusting of elections compared to those who are exposed to the control condition.

Treatment Scripts and Outcome Measures

Treatment 1: Institutional Protections/Rules Ensuring Access

"Ensuring access to voting is our top priority. We want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in our democracy.

Federal law provides that every registered voter has the right to cast a ballot regardless of race, color, religion, sex, gender, or any other bases under the law. Each state also has its own laws that give voters options for how to cast their ballots and ensure that officials cannot turn away lawful voters, making it easier for everyone to vote.

We are committed to making voting accessible for all. Your voice matters, and we are here to ensure it is heard."

Treatment 2: Belonging and Efficacy

"Ensuring that everyone's voice is heard in elections is our top priority. We want to make sure that all individuals and communities can have a voice in government.

Federal law ensures that ballots and voting information are available in multiple languages so our diverse communities can fully participate. Our polling stations are designed to be inclusive spaces for all voters, with staff trained to ensure that you are able to cast your vote as you intend.

We are committed to providing resources so you can vote with confidence . Your voice matters, and every voice deserves to be heard."

Control - Generic Ballot Security

"Ensuring the integrity of elections is top priority. We want to make sure that only people who are eligible to vote cast ballots and that those ballots are protected and counted accurately.

Election officials take a number of steps to ensure that you can trust elections. From testing voting machines to safeguarding ballots themselves to conducting audits of the vote count, local, state, and federal election officials work together to protect the accuracy and integrity of elections.

We are committed to making elections trustworthy. Your voice matters, and we are here to ensure it is heard."

What was the focus of the video that you just watched?

- A lion
- A car
- An election official
- A football coach

How confident are you that your vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

The following battery of questions was asked pre and post treatment

Think about vote counting throughout your county or city, and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident

- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Now, think about vote counting throughout \$inputstate. How confident are you that votes in \$inputstate were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Finally, think about vote counting throughout the country. How confident are you that votes nationwide were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

—

Generally speaking, how often can you trust other people?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the state government in your state capitol to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what is best for each of the following groups? [Grid layout]

- Women, Men, people living in rural areas, people living in cities and suburbs, Black people, White people, Hispanic/Latino people, Asian-American people, Native American people, Republicans, Democrats
- Answers: [Always, most of the time, about half the time, some of the time, or never]

Mediators asked post-treatment

How much do you believe that you belong in U.S. Society?

How much do you believe that you are an [insider/outsider] in the United States?

How much do you believe that others in U.S. society value and respect you?

How much do you believe that you are accepted and included by others in U.S. society who are not like you?

- A lot
- Some
- Not much
- Not at all

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel like a full and equal citizen in this country with all the rights and protections that other people have.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you think the following statement is true or false?

Each state also has its own laws that give voters options for how to cast their ballots and ensure that officials cannot turn away lawful voters, making it easier for everyone to vote.

- True
- False

Treatment Profiles and Hypotheses, Poll Watcher Identity Study.

For the poll watcher study, we use a two-task single-profile conjoint experiment assigning the attributes of a polling location. This results in an effective N of 10,000 or fewer. This survey is placed at the end of the survey so as to not interfere with the above video experiment; however diagnostic checks may determine whether there is a carryover effect of voter confidence from the video treatments. We consider the attribute selection as orthogonal to the video treatment through random assignment, so any effect at present can be ignored.

For the primary treatment, we use a set of names across the racial groups, from which we define an in-group and out-group for each respondent. Thus, each respondent will have an equal probability of seeing a name that matches their racial group, that does not match, or seeing an indicator that a poll watcher is not present. Analysis will be at the aggregate level of in-group and out-group but we reserve the right to test at the name or race level with sufficient responses. Each respondent will see a table with the attributes and one of the levels, including other measures to better represent a voter experience, such as voting method, voting verification, voter registration, voter registration, and poll closing times. They will then answer three questions relating to their confidence in their own ballot, in the nationwide vote counting process, and in the treatment of voters in their racial group. The final list of attributes is included in the full survey text.

Analysis will be both marginal means and average marginal component effects on the three outcome measures. We will treat the variables as interval variables, rescaling them to 1-4 and excluding “Don’t know/no opinion” responses (see survey instrument below). Additionally, analysis may also be conducted on a binary rescale where “Confident” collapses responses that are very and somewhat confident, and where “Not Confident” collapses responses that indicate I don’t know, not too and not at all confident. Standard errors will be clustered at the respondent level and separate analysis and diagnostic checks may be conducted across the profile order. We will also interact the effect of race and partisanship on the attribute measures to examine whether poll watchers have heterogeneous effects on minority respondents. Finally, along with the effects across racial lines, analysis may also be conducted using population weights to match a nationally representative sample.

Historical patterns of disfranchisement shape the impact of poll watchers; members of groups that have faced historical or contemporary electoral exclusion will react differently to election observers than white Americans do.

Race

Hypothesis A1: Co-racial poll watchers will increase confidence across all racial groups

Hypothesis A2: White poll watchers will decrease confidence among minority groups

Hypothesis A3: All non-white poll watchers will decrease confidence among white Americans

Partisanship

Hypothesis B1: Co-partisan poll watchers will increase confidence across all racial groups

Hypothesis B3. Out-partisan poll watchers will decrease confidence among minority groups

B3a: Minority groups will have the least confidence in Republican poll watchers

Hypothesis B4: Out-partisan poll watchers will modestly decrease confidence among white Americans

Exploratory:

Interactions due to theoretical assumptions of poll watcher meddling

Hypothesis C1: Human involvement in the vote counting method (hand-counted paper ballots) will increase the strength of the poll watcher effect

Hypothesis C2: Voter ID requirements will increase the strength of the poll watcher effect

Hypothesis C3: Same-day registration will increase the strength of the poll watcher effect

Hypothesis C4: Voters with an in-person negative [positive] experience with a poll watcher will report lower [higher] levels of confidence

We will use the moderator of the perceived job performance of various key people in election administration, including poll watchers, on the outcome variables. We expect that a perceived poor job by poll watchers will lead to decreased confidence in this experiment.

The dependent variables are measured by the following questions:

If you were to vote at this polling location, how confident are you that your ballot would be counted accurately and fairly?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

If all polling locations were run like this, how confident are you that votes nationwide would be counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

How confident are you that \$INSERTRACE voters like you would be treated fairly at this voting location?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Finally, our analysis of the winner effects on the outcome variables is defined below.

Treatment Messages and Hypotheses, Observational Winner Effect Study

Because we plan to gather half of our sample after the election but before the Associated Press has projected a winner of the presidential contest (the “period of uncertainty”) and the other half of our sample after there is a projected winner, we will be able to test for potential “winner effects.” We will test both for a *partisan winner effect* – a shift in trust that comes when one party’s candidate is projected as the winner – and a *racial and ethnic winner effect* – a shift in trust that comes when the candidate preferred by a majority of members of a racial and ethnic group is projected as the winner. Differentiating evidence between the two effects will come if, for instance, the increase in trust from the period of uncertainty is larger for Black Democrats than for white Democrats if Vice President Kamala Harris is projected as the winner.

To test for all effects, we will estimate multivariate models predicting pre-treatment trust in elections with a full set of socioeconomic controls, demographic controls, and partisan affiliation, with a “period of uncertainty” variable distinguishing respondents who completed the survey before or after a winner was projected. We will use national exit polls to determine which candidate was preferred by a majority of the members of each racial and ethnic group.

Partisan Winner Effect Hypothesis 1. Trust in elections will be higher when a winner is projected, relative to during the period of uncertainty, for respondents who affiliate with the party of the projected winner, all else equal

Partisan Winner Effect Hypothesis 2. Trust in elections will be lower when a winner is projected, relative to during the period of uncertainty, for respondents who affiliate with the party of the projected loser, all else equal.

Racial and Ethnic Winner Effect Hypothesis 1. Trust in elections will be higher when a winner is projected, relative to during the period of uncertainty, for respondents who are members of a racial and ethnic group that prefers the candidate who won, all else equal.

Racial and Ethnic Winner Effect Hypothesis 1a. This increase will be larger than the increase for co-partisans in an ethnic group that does not prefer the candidate who won.

Racial and Ethnic Winner Effect Hypothesis 2. Trust in elections will be lower when a winner is projected, relative to during the period of uncertainty, for respondents who are members of a racial and ethnic group that prefers the candidate who lost, all else equal.

Racial and Ethnic Winner Effect Hypothesis 2a. This decline in trust will be larger than the decline for co-partisans in an ethnic group that does not prefer the candidate who lost.

The pre-treatment variables that we will use to test this hypothesis are the following, asked before exposure to experimental treatments:

Generally speaking, how much do you trust the United States’ election system?

- Trust a lot
- Trust some
- Distrust some
- Distrust a lot
- Don’t know/no opinion

How confident are you that your vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident

- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Think about vote counting throughout your county or city, and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Now, think about vote counting throughout \$inputstate. How confident are you that votes in \$inputstate were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Finally, think about vote counting throughout the country. How confident are you that votes nationwide were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

8.8 Complete Survey Instrument

The complete survey instrument is included below. The conjoint survey experiment is on page 18 of the instrument. Information identifying the author has been redacted.

Informed consent.

Professor Thad Kousser at UC San Diego is conducting a research study about what Americans think about elections. If you agree to participate, you will read some information and answer a set of survey questions. Research records will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be protected by Cint and by Professor Kousser. Participation is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. If you want additional information or have research related questions about this study, you may reach Professor Kousser at 858-534-3239.

- I agree to participate
- I decline to participate

Would you prefer to take this survey in English or Spanish?

- English
- Spanish

reCAPTCHA Bot Check

Generally speaking, how much do you trust the United States' election system?

- Trust a lot
- Trust some
- Distrust some
- Distrust a lot
- Don't know/no opinion

How confident are you that your vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Think about vote counting throughout your county or city, and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Now, think about vote counting throughout \$inputstate. How confident are you that votes in \$inputstate were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Finally, think about vote counting throughout the country. How confident are you that votes nationwide were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

—

What comes to mind when you think about what you may distrust about the United States' elections system?

[open ended]

Which of these would you consider your primary race or ethnicity, if you had to choose one?

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian American
- American Indian/Native American
- Other _____

Do you think that what happens to \$INSERTRACE people will have something to do with what happens in your life?

- Yes, a lot
- Yes, some
- Yes, but not too much
- No

Do you think it is important for \$INSERTRACE people in the United States to work together politically in order to increase their status in society?

- Not important at all
- Somewhat important
- Very important

—

Have you ever been treated unfairly or personally experienced discrimination because of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, being an immigrant, religious heritage or having an accent?

- Yes
- No

How much discrimination have you personally faced in election settings (such as at the polls, when exercising your right to vote, or with targeted campaign ads) because of your ethnicity or race?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

—

Do you know if there is a winner projected by major news organizations for the 2024 Presidential Election?

- Yes, there is an projected winner
- No, there is not a projected winner

- I'm not sure

[IF YES]

Who is the winner projected by major news organizations of the 2024 Presidential Election?

- Kamala Harris
- Donald Trump
- I'm not sure

How often do you talk to your friends and family about politics?

- Once a week or more
- Once a month
- A few times a year
- Never

How often do you talk to your friends and family about the trustworthiness of elections?

- Once a week or more
- Once a month
- A few times a year
- Never

Generally speaking, how often can you trust other people?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the state government in your state capitol to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what is best for each of the following groups? [Grid layout]

- Women, Men, people living in rural areas, people living in cities and suburbs, Black people, White people, Hispanic/Latino people, Asian American people, Native American people, Republicans, Democrats
- Answers: [Always, most of the time, about half the time, some of the time, or never]

Did you vote in the 2024 Presidential Election?

- Yes
- No
- I don't remember

[IF YES]

How did you cast your ballot? (*rotate answer order*)

- Voting by returning a mail ballot through the mail
- Voting by returning a mail ballot at an official dropbox or at a polling place
- Voting in person on Election Day
- Voting early in person, before Election Day

Who did you vote for? [*rotate first two categories*]

- Kamala Harris and Tim Walz
- Donald Trump and JD Vance
- Some other third party candidate
- Prefer not to say

How satisfied were you with the process of casting your ballot – whether it was a mail ballot or a ballot cast in person – in this year's Presidential Election?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

—

What aspect of the process of casting your ballot did not satisfy you? Select any that apply.
(*rotate answer order; all but last two; if None selected, no other option required*)

[IF IN PERSON, EIP or ED, is selected]

- Ease or difficulty of voting, for me or others at the polling location
- Hours available
- Accessibility of location
- Assistance of election workers
- A long line at the location where I voted
- Lack of voting information or materials
- Lack of voting materials in preferred language
- Ease or difficulty of using electronic voting machines

- A poll worker questioned whether my identification was valid
- Problems with my voter registration when I tried to vote
- Difficulty finding my polling place
- My polling center had limited staff
- My polling center had limited resources or limited voting equipment
- Problems with the voting equipment or ballot
- Difficulty in voting at a polling place because I do not have a home address
- Not confident ballot was counted correctly
- None, I was very satisfied with the voting process
- Other: _____

How many minutes did you stand in line before you had the opportunity to cast your ballot? _____

Approximately how many minutes did you travel to vote in person? _____

—

[IF BY MAIL is selected]

- Ease or difficulty of voting
- Difficulty getting my absentee or mail-in ballot
- Difficulty in returning my mail ballot
- Trouble with my absentee or mail-in ballot getting returned
- Difficulty in receiving a mail ballot because I do not have a home address
- Not confident ballot was counted correctly
- None, I was very satisfied with the voting process
- Other: _____

[IF BY DROPBOX is selected]

- Ease or difficulty of voting
- Difficulty finding a dropbox location
- Difficulty getting my absentee or mail-in ballot
- Difficulty in receiving a mail ballot because I do not have a home address
- Not confident ballot was counted correctly
- None, I was very satisfied with the voting process
- Other: _____

Approximately how many minutes did you travel to drop off your ballot? _____

[IF NO is selected]

How much of a factor did the following reasons play in your not voting in the November General Election?

- I did not have the right kind of identification
- Illness or disability (own or family's)
- Out of town or away from home
- I forgot to vote
- I requested but did not receive an absentee ballot
- I was too busy/had a conflicting work, family, or school schedule
- Transportation problems
- I didn't like the candidates or campaign issues
- There were problems with my registration
- Bad weather
- The polling place hours, or location, were inconvenient
- The line at the polls was too long
- I did not know where to vote
- I did not receive my ballot in the mail, or it arrived too late for me to vote.
- Answers: Not a factor, A minor factor, A major factor, I don't know

— *Return to all respondents*

Poll watchers (election observers) are individuals appointed to observe a portion of the elections process without violating voter privacy.

Often, political parties, candidates, or issue groups supporting or opposing a ballot measure are permitted to appoint watchers at a polling location. In some jurisdictions, poll watchers may challenge the eligibility of voters or the validity of ballots.

Did you witness a poll watcher at your voting location?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

[IF YES is selected]

Did the poll watcher identify themselves from an organization? [rotate R and D]

- Yes, the Republican Party
- Yes, the Democratic Party
- Yes, another organization _____
- No, they did not identify themselves

Did the poll watcher make you feel intimidated?

- Yes
- No

- Unsure
-

Please rate the job performance of the following individuals in ensuring that you had a free and fair elections process. Select all that apply.

- The President (Joe Biden)
 - The Governor of \$inputstate
 - Your County Elections Official
 - Polling place workers or other elections workers
 - The poll watchers/election monitors
-
- Excellent
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
 - I don't know

Rate your level of trust in the following features of elections: (*5-point grid from Trust a lot in accuracy and integrity, Trust Some, Unsure, Distrust Some, Distrust a lot in accuracy and integrity*)

- Accuracy in the counting of paper ballots cast in person
- Accuracy in the counting of ballots cast through electronic voting machines
- Accuracy in the counting of ballots cast by mail
- Ensuring that ineligible voters are not attempting to cast ballots
- Ensuring that election officials prevent ineligible voters from casting ballots
- Ensuring that voters are prevented from casting more than one ballot
- Ensuring that eligible voters do not face obstacles to register to vote
- Ensuring the security of drop box locations
- Ensuring that ballots cast by mail arrive at designated elections offices
- The length of time required to count ballots
- The testing and audits performed on voting machines before and after the election
- Having nonpartisan or bipartisan observers observe election operations

How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

People like me **do not** have opportunities to influence the decisions of the federal government.

- Agree strongly
- Agree somewhat
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree somewhat
- Disagree strongly

You feel you understand the most important political issues of this country.

- Agree strongly
- Agree somewhat
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree somewhat
- Disagree strongly

To ensure you are paying attention, please select “Somewhat disagree”.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat disagree

We would now like you to watch a short video and we will then ask you some questions about it.

Treatment 1: Institutional Protections/Rules Ensuring Access

"Ensuring access to voting is our top priority. We want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in our democracy."

Federal law provides that every registered voter has the right to cast a ballot regardless of race, color, religion, sex, gender, or any other bases under the law. Each state also has its own laws that give voters options for how to cast their ballots and ensure that officials cannot turn away lawful voters, making it easier for everyone to vote.

We are committed to making voting accessible for all. Your voice matters, and we are here to ensure it is heard."

Treatment 2: Belonging and Efficacy

"Ensuring that everyone's voice is heard in elections is our top priority. We want to make sure that all individuals and communities can have a voice in government."

Federal law ensures that ballots and voting information are available in multiple languages so our diverse communities can fully participate. Our polling stations are designed to be inclusive spaces for all voters, with staff trained to ensure that you are able to cast your vote as you intend.

We are committed to providing resources so you can vote with confidence . Your voice matters, and every voice deserves to be heard."

Control - Generic Ballot Security

"Ensuring the integrity of elections is top priority. We want to make sure that only people who are eligible to vote cast ballots and that those ballots are protected and counted accurately."

Election officials take a number of steps to ensure that you can trust elections. From testing voting machines to safeguarding ballots themselves to conducting audits of the vote count, local, state, and federal election officials work together to protect the accuracy and integrity of elections.

We are committed to making elections trustworthy. Your voice matters, and we are here to ensure it is heard."

What was the focus of the video that you just watched?

- A lion
- A car
- An election official
- A football coach

How confident are you that your vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Think about vote counting throughout your county or city, and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Now, think about vote counting throughout \$inputstate. How confident are you that votes in \$inputstate were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Finally, think about vote counting throughout the country. How confident are you that votes nationwide were counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

—

Generally speaking, how often can you trust other people?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time

- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How often can you trust the state government in your state capitol to do what is right?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what is best for each of the following groups? [Grid layout]

- Women, Men, people living in rural areas, people living in cities and suburbs, Black people, White people, Hispanic/Latino people, Asian American people, Native American people, Republicans, Democrats
- Answers: [Always, most of the time, about half the time, some of the time, or never]

How much do you believe that you belong in U.S. Society?

How much do you believe that you are an [insider/outsider] in the United States?

How much do you believe that others in U.S. society value and respect you?

How much do you believe that you are accepted and included by others in U.S. society who are not like you?

- A lot
- Some
- Not much
- Not at all

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel like a full and equal citizen in this country with all the rights and protections that other people have.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Do you think the following statement is true or false?

Each state also has its own laws that give voters options for how to cast their ballots and ensure that officials cannot turn away lawful voters, making it easier for everyone to vote.

- True
- False

[If “Protestant” is selected, then:]

What specific religion, church or denomination is that?

- Baptist
- Episcopalian/Anglican/Church of England
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Just Protestant
- Presbyterian
- Reformed
- Brethren
- Evangelical United Brethren
- Christian or just Christian
- Christian Scientist
- Church (or Churches) of Christ
- United Church of Christ
- Disciples of Christ
- Church of God

- Assembly of God
- Congregationalist
- Holiness
- Pentecostal
- Friends, Quaker
- Non-denominational - Protestant
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Unitarian/Universalist
- Native American
- Other {SPECIFY}

[If "Baptist" is selected, then:]

With which Baptist group is your church associated?

Is it the Southern Baptist Convention, the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., the American Baptist Association, the National Baptist Convention, an independent Baptist church, or some other Baptist group?

- Southern Baptist Convention
- American Baptist Churches in USA 3. American Baptist Association
- National Baptist Convention
- Independent Baptist
- Other {SPECIFY}

(RESUME) [If religion != 9, 10, 12, then:]

Do you go to religious services [every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few

times a year, or never/ never,

a few times a year, once or twice a month, almost every week, or every week]?

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

[If religion != 9, 10, 12, then:]

Would you say that your political views are in line with most people in your church or place of worship?

- Very much in line
- Somewhat in line
- Not very much in line
- Not in line at all

[If religion != 9, 10, 12, then:]

Has your in-person attendance increased, decreased, or stayed about the same post COVID-19?

- My in-person attendance has increased post COVID-19
- My in-person attendance has decreased post COVID-19
- My in-person attendance has stayed about the same post COVID-19
- I no longer go to church or my place of worship in person anymore post COVID-19

Americans have their roots in many different countries, and many Americans are born or raised abroad.

- Were you born in the United States or another country?
 - In the United States
 - In another country
- Were your parents born in the United States or another country?
 - Both born in the United States
 - One born in the United States, one born in another country
 - Both born in another country or countries
- Did you grow up in the United States or another country?
 - In the United States
 - In another country or other countries
- Did your parents grow up in the United States or another country?
 - In the United States
 - One in the United States, one in another country
 - Both in another country or other countries

Reflect on your experience as a voter. If you are paying attention, please leave this blank. ____

In this section of the survey, you will see two polling locations. You will evaluate them based on how they were administered.

Attribute	Attribute Level
Voting Method ∈	Hand-counted paper ballots Machine-counted paper ballots Touchscreen electronic machines Touchscreen electronic machines with audit
Verification Process ∈	None required State name on sign in State name and give signature on sign in Show photo ID on sign in Show photo ID and give signature on sign in
Poll Watcher Name ∈	In-group [Name drawn from list that matches \$INSERTTRACE] Out-group [Name drawn from list that does not match \$INSERTTRACE]
Poll Watcher Partisanship ∈	Wearing badge with no party affiliation Wearing Republican Party badge Wearing Democratic Party badge
Voter Registration ∈	Same day registration not permitted Same day registration during early voting Same day registration up to Election Day
Polls Close ∈	6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM

If you were to vote at this polling location, how confident are you that your ballot would be counted accurately and fairly?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

If all polling locations were run like this, how confident are you that votes nationwide would be counted as voters intended?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

How confident are you that \$INSERTTRACE voters like you would be treated fairly at this voting location?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not at all confident
- I don't know

Proposed Names Draw

Names ∈

White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native
Cooper Smith	Devante Thomas	Andrew Chen	Jose Rodriguez	Benjamin Longfish
Michael Anderson	Tyrese Howard	Eric Kim	Miguel Castillo	Nelson Todacheene
Allison Miller	Tanya Jackson	Christine Zhang	Ana Rosales	Winona Laughing
Susan Moss	Imani Hall	Mayu Kobayashi	Gloria Medina	GloJean Gorman

8.9 IRB Application

The complete research protocol for IRB application #805606 is included below. Information identifying the author has been redacted.

#805606 - A Research Practice Partnership to Chart Voter Experiences and Test Best Practices for Building Trust in Elections

Protocol Information

Review Type	Status	Approval Date	Continuing Review Date
Exempt	Exempt	Nov 13, 2024	--
Expiration Date	Initial Approval Date	Initial Review Type	
--	Oct 13, 2022	Exempt	

Feedback

Approval Comment

The amendment to add or remove study personnel has been approved.

Study personnel are individuals engaged in research activities involving living human individuals including accessing and/or using identifiable human specimens (e.g., blood, tissue) and/or identifiable private information for research purposes.

PI responsibilities include:

Study personnel have completed the appropriate CITI training.

Study personnel have been asked about potential conflicts of interest related to the research.

Study personnel engaged in research activities involving living human participants have the skills/training to perform their research-related responsibilities.

Protocol Amendment Form

Amendment

UCSD AMENDMENT APPLICATION

All changes to an approved research study must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation, except when changes are necessary to avoid an immediate, apparent hazard to a study participant.

In general, changes to exempt research do not require submission of an amendment except for change in PI. However, changes in study procedures whereby the study no longer qualifies as exempt research requires a new submission.

SECTION A: Study Classification

OCAA Review

Is this an amendment where review of the study is conducted by an external IRB and the changes [do not meet the criteria for OIA submission](#) and are being submitted only to trigger OCAA review?

No

Focus of Study?

Social/Behavioral/Educational

SECTION B: Multi-Site Research

Is the research a multi-site study?

No

Does the amendment include any changes that are not being implemented at UCSD/RCHSD?

No

SECTION C: Current Study Status

Indicate the current status of research participant enrollment:

Enrollment completed/closed

Indicate the current status of the research activities:

Research activities on hold.

Explain

Research activities are completed, we are amending to add a researcher.

SECTION D: Type of Amendment

NOTE: The OIA staff manage administrative changes. Changes to studies originally approved by the full board may require approval by the full board.

Type of Amendment (select all that apply)

Administrative changes - Revisions to previously approved studies that do not alter the risk–benefit assessment of the research.

For example:

- Additions or changes in Study personnel
- Correcting typographical errors, grammar, change phone number
- Changing document formatting
- Translations of approved documents
- Adding approvals from other sites

Administrative changes

Change in Study Design

For example changes in:

- Study purpose and objectives
- Study design (e.g., adding a new treatment arm, long-term observational component)
- Inclusion/exclusion criteria or subject populations (including vulnerable populations)
- Sample Size
- Data/Safety Monitoring Plan

Changes in Study Procedures

For example changes in:

- Recruitment process and/or materials
- Informed consent process or waivers of consent
- Increase/Decrease in Study visits
- Data collection procedures

SECTION E: Changes/Modifications

The proposed changes(s)/modification(s) were initiated by (*select all that apply*):

Principal Investigator

Briefly describe the proposed changes to the research and rationale for the change, as applicable:

Add a researcher in study personnel.

How will research participants (current or past) be notified of this change? (Select all that apply)

Other

Describe

Project is closed, research is completed.

Will the amendment/changes, in the opinion of the UCSD PI, increase or decrease the risk to research participants?

Neither

User Assurance

By submitting this form, I confirm that the information within this form is accurate and complete.

I am submitting with the awareness and permission of the Principal Investigator.

Upload the following documents:

- Revised versions of previously approved documents affected by the proposed changes (e.g., Research Plan, Consent/Accent, or Recruitment Materials). Include a PDF track-changes version as well as a clean PDF copy.
 - Note: If revising currently approved documents, please use the "Replace" feature in Kuali to stack new versions of the document on top of the currently approved version. For step by step directions, please see step 8 in our [KBA](#).
- New documents (e.g., new Consent/Accent form or recruitment materials – PDF versions).
- Supporting materials relevant to the proposed changes (e.g., Master Protocol (MP), Investigators Brochure (IB)), Audit finding. Include a PDF track-changes version (or a detailed summary of the changes) and a clean PDF copy.

Please make all protocol changes that are part of this amendment below.

Project Basics

STUDY TITLE

A Research Practice Partnership to Chart Voter Experiences and Test Best Practices for Building Trust in Elections

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

KOSSER, THADDEUS

Lead Department:

Political Science

Facesheet Inclusion

General Information

SUBMISSION TYPE

Administrative Determination or Registration

Submission for Administrative Determination or Registration.

Human Subjects Research - Exempt Registration

PI is a PI-eligible UCSD employee

Yes

LOCATION WHERE ACTIVITY(IES) WILL BE PERFORMED

Off-Campus (In California)

Off-Campus (In USA outside of CA)

LAY LANGUAGE SYNOPSIS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The 2020 US Presidential election highlighted growing distrust in the political process; we aim to collaborate with election officials to identify the advertisements, media messaging and social media messages that they are using to increase trust in elections and to combat election misinformation. Election officials are engaged in advertising and communication strategies aimed at combatting mistrust generated by both campaigns, social media, and more traditional medias but little is known about the effectiveness of these strategies. Our study will investigate the effectiveness of these measures in order to identify best practice methods at combating misinformation and increasing trust that can guide election officials going forward. In addition to understanding how misinformation can be countered to build trust, we will also focus on what interventions can best accommodate voters with disabilities by making elections more accessible. We want to understand how states and localities are working to provide information to voters facing disabilities and whether these approaches meet their informational needs and ensure trust. Both these aspects of the study center around developing interventions that increase trust in the system by those who feel elections are not serving them.

Study Personnel

Update the PI line by pressing the [Edit Pencil](#) and answer the pop-up questions **Do not list any other personnel here. If needed, add an administrative contact in Permissions.**

Person	KOSSER, THADDEUS
Home Unit	Political Science
Institutional Title	Professor
Researcher Role	Principal Investigator
Permissions	Full Access

Person	URIBE, LAURA
Home Unit	Political Science
Institutional Title	PhD Candidate

Researcher Role

Key Person

Permissions

Full Access

Person

HILL, SETH

Home Unit

Political Science

Institutional Title

Professor

Researcher Role

Co-Investigator

Permissions

Full Access

Person

Gaudette, Jennifer

Home Unit

Political Science

Institutional Title

PhD Candidate

Researcher Role

Key Person

Permissions

Read-Only

Person

Aldridge, Kailen

Home Unit

Political Science

Institutional Title

PhD Student

Researcher Role

Key Person

Permissions

Read-Only

Person

ZHAO, ALEX

Home Unit

Political Science

Institutional Title

PhD Candidate

Researcher Role

Key Person

Permissions

Read-Only

Person

Dablo, David

Home Unit

Political Science

Institutional Title

Undergraduate Student

Researcher Role

Key Person

Permissions

Read-Only

Do any of the personnel listed above have any **potential conflict of interest** related to the research?

No

Funding

Choose the option that describes the funding for this project.

Funding to UCSD current or pending in Proposal Development, IP or Award stage (Department or Fiscal contact has submitted a Proposal, IP or Award record in the Grants Module)

Type of Funding

Non-Federal

Non Federal

Non-Profit/Foundation

If your project is pending please search for your [Institutional Proposal](#) and copy and paste the IP number into the search below.

If your project is active please search for your [Award](#) and copy and paste the Award ID into the search below.

Exempt Basics

I am requesting that UCSD concur with an exemption issued for this project by another institution (for example, the prime awardee).

No

This study (check all that apply)

Is none of the above

Exempt Categories

All study procedures must fit into one or more of the categories below. Select the applicable category(ies):

1. Educational/Instructional research in an educational setting

2. Interactions involving only one or more of the following:

- Educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement)
- Survey procedures with adults (children can be included unless otherwise noted above)
- Interview procedures with adults (children can be included unless otherwise noted above)
- Observation of public behavior (includes visual or auditory recording)

Category 2

My study is limited to one or more of the following allowable interactions. The protocol I will attach describes the purpose and nature of these interactions:

Survey procedures with adults

3. Benign behavioral interventions in adults

4. Secondary use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens

5. About public benefit or service programs

6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies

Exemption Confidentiality

Choose the applicable statement about the study data:

I will not record direct identifiers or indirect links to identifiers that would allow the identity of any subject to be readily ascertained.

Research Characteristics

The research will involve the following. Carefully review then select all that apply or "None of the Above."

None of the Above

This research is cancer-related.

No

SCRO Screening

Does this research involve creation or use of a culture-derived, human pluripotent stem cell population derived from an embryo?

No

Does this research involve creation or use of a culture-derived, human pluripotent stem cell population that is a product of somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT)?

No

If this project does not include covered Stem Cell Lines then SCRO Review is not required.

Informed Consent

Specify how informed consent will be obtained:

Signed consent/parental permission

Indicate the setting(s) in which the consent process will be conducted:

Via Internet

Explain Internet Setting

The survey will be administered online; researchers will never see subjects face to face. Respondents will be consented into the survey before answering any questions and will be able to opt out of the survey by not consenting.

Screening/Recruitment

Does the research require that you conduct a preliminary assessment to determine eligibility?

No

Is this study limited to use of existing identifiable information/data/biospecimens, and will not involve any direct contact with research participants?

No

Specify the recruitment methods to be employed:

Web-based including Social Media (e.g., Amazon, Facebook, Twitter)

Specify Web Based Contact

Subjects will be recruited from Lucid or Forthright, which are companies that provide access to online samples of Americans. Lucid is an online survey vendor who creates a marketplace connecting researchers with participants matching targeted demographics. Similarly, Forthright is an online survey vendor who curates a panel connecting researchers with participants matching targeted demographics. It is an increasingly popular tool for recruiting samples.

Risks & Benefits

Risks to Participants

Does the research involve any physical, psychological, social, legal, economic risks or any other foreseen risks to participants.

No

Do the research activities offer potential direct benefits to research participants?

No

Briefly Explain

Respondents will receive no benefits from taking the study as it is asking them about their own personal opinions. They will not face any risks as they can opt out of the study at any point and will only be presented with questions they might encounter in their everyday or in other surveys from public polling companies and political campaigns.

Describe the potential societal benefits of the proposed research (e.g., knowledge to be gained):

The main societal benefit will be a contribution to best practices at combatting election misinformation and building trust in the election process. We will test multiple current messaging and communication tests used by election officials to understand which are most effective, producing useful knowledge election officials can use in the 2024 election cycle to increase confidence in, trust in, and information about the election process.

Explain how risks to research participants are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits:

Because risks to participants are minimal, the societal benefit outweighs potential risks. None of the information being collected is sensitive in nature or likely to result in any type of harm to the participants, while the benefits towards increasing confidence in the electoral process are significant.

Supporting Information

IRB Certification Required. Upload the following documents, as applicable

- Research Protocol - Exempt
- Consent/Accent/Parental Permission Forms or Information Sheets, as applicable
- Recruitment Materials, as applicable
- Non-standardized assessments

Supporting Document

[01_Research Protocol_v10.01.24.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Protocol

Name/Version

Protocol - Tracked Changes

Supporting Document

[2_consent_v_10.16.24.doc](#)

Attachment Type

Informed Consent/Parental Permission

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[Survey Instrument.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[01_Research Protocol_v10.01.24.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Protocol

Name/Version

Protocol - Clean

Supporting Document

[Survey Instrument_2024_CA.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[2_consent_v_10.16.24.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Informed Consent/Parental Permission

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_Pilot_Survey_Instrument.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_Nevada_Survey_Instrument.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_W1_Survey_Instrument.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_W2_Survey_Instrument.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_Maricopa.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_Maricopa.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_ContraCosta.docx](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024_ContraCosta.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Supporting Document

[3_2024 REP_Oversample.pdf](#)

Attachment Type

Data Collection Instruments

Name/Version

Added Information - Optional

Include any additional information that you want to communicate about the study.

A similar version of this project has previously been approved as "Exempt" (Project #200562XX) and the modifications are minimal to this study, changing only the geographic target of the study and minor changes to the survey instrument.

Assurance/Acknowledgement

By submitting this form, I confirm that the information within this form is accurate and complete.

I am the Principal Investigator

Administrative Details Form

Determinations

Review Type

Exempt

Exemption Category

Exempt Category 2

Study Status

Active - Open to Enrollment

Approved Enrollment

Approved at UCSD

Approved at Rady

Approved at All Sites