

April 22, 2016

Dear Editor(s),

We are submitting for your consideration an article entitled, “Does Media Coverage Drive Public Support for UKIP or Does Public Support for UKIP Drive Media Coverage?” We employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative tools in an effort to disentangle the causal ordering (if any) between the two variables indicated in the title. As you will be aware, the recent history of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) has stirred a great deal of scholarly and public debate. In particular, there have been many bold and high-profile claims and counter-claims in public debate regarding the quantities of media attention given to UKIP. At the same time, the scholarly literature on the dynamic relationship between media coverage and public support for right-wing populist parties comes largely from proportional representation systems, which we argue are most likely to produce evidence that media coverage precedes public support. Thus, we believe that a systematic study of the dynamics between public support and media coverage of UKIP is uniquely and doubly valuable, given the broad public interest and the particular scholarly value of testing theory on a less-likely case. We believe our article is best suited for a general interest political science journal such as BJPolS because of this coincidence between its timely political significance and the causal leverage it offers to the large and international body of research on the media-support nexus.

All of the data and code necessary to reproduce our manuscript is available at http://j.mp/Murphy_Devine_22-04-2016. Please note, however, this archive could not be made anonymous. Finally, we are glad to confirm this manuscript is not under review at any other journal. Please let us know if you have any questions, concerns, or if there is anything we can help you with. Please direct correspondence to Justin Murphy (j.murphy@soton.ac.uk).

Kind regards,

Dr. Justin Murphy (corresponding author)
Assistant Professor
University of Southampton
Department of Politics and International Relations
University Road
Building 58, Office 3083
Southampton, SO17 1BJ
United Kingdom
Email: j.murphy@soton.ac.uk

Daniel Devine,
Post-Graduate Researcher
University of Southampton
Department of Politics and International Relations
Email: djd1g15@soton.ac.uk