Values-based Political Messages and Persuasion: Relationships among Speaker, Recipient, and Evoked Values

Thomas E. Nelson
The Ohio State University

Jennifer Garst
University of Maryland, College Park

The persuasive power of values-based political messages may depend on recipients having (1) shared values with the speaker (a type of personal identity match); (2) shared political party identifications with the speaker (a type of social identity match); and/or (3) expectations about values traditionally associated with different political parties (an expectancy violation/confirmation). The independent and joint effects of these factors on the success of a persuasive message were examined, using the theoretical framework of dual-process models of persuasion. Participants (N = 301), classified according to their party identifications and primary value orientations, read a political speech that varied by argument quality, speaker party, and values evoked. Results indicated that value matching promotes close attention to the message, while party mismatching increases message rejection. These effects depend to some extent, however, on expectancies about values traditionally associated with different parties. Participants especially rejected messages from rival party members when the speaker evoked unexpected values. Results are discussed in terms of their implications for the efficacy of values-based political communication.

KEY WORDS: Persuasion; Political Attitudes; Values; Identity

Political leaders and policy makers who wish to persuade regularly draw on the power of values-based language. In the United States, supporters of affirmative action, for example, often appeal to egalitarian values by suggesting that society has an obligation to correct the effects of past discrimination, whereas opponents appeal to individualistic values by suggesting that every person should
be judged without regard to race. Since the September 11th terrorist attacks, communicators in the United States have exploited patriotic values to promote everything from the military response to new car purchases. It is well documented that individuals support policies and candidates who they perceive as promoting their favorite values (e.g., Dawson, 1979; Feldman, 1982; Katz & Hass, 1988; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; see Kinder, 1998, for a review). Furthermore, if a communicator can effectively frame an issue as especially relevant to a particular value, he or she might sway the attitudes of those who place high personal priority on that value (Druckman, 2001; Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997). Values, therefore, are powerful and reliable weapons in the persuader’s arsenal.

Our research examines another, less-recognized function of values-based political communication: as a means to signify political identity and establish community with audience members. This additional social purpose of values-based language can be equally important for persuasion.

We conducted an experiment to examine whether values-based rhetoric would enhance the persuasive power of a political speech by establishing a common identity between the speaker and like-minded audience members. As a point of comparison, we also included information about the speaker’s party membership. We argue that values, like political parties, serve as important foundations for a citizen’s political identity. A long tradition of research in American political behavior underscores the preeminent role that party membership plays in structuring political thought and action (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Rahn, 1993). Values, too, serve as important wellsprings of political attitudes (Feldman, 1988; Feldman & Zaller, 1992). In lieu of political ideology, which most research suggests the general public lacks, values function as general standards for evaluating candidates, policies, and other objects in the political universe (Kinder, 1998; Ladd & Lipset, 1980; Rokeach, 1973).

The typical persuasive political message presents multiple identity cues that may influence opinions in complex and contingent ways. For instance, Garst and Bodenhausen (1996) found that the persuasive impact of values-based language was regulated by the party identification of both recipient and speaker. The means by which these effects were realized remain unknown, however, and thus serve as a principal focus of the present research. Specifically, we examined two possible mechanisms for the impact of political identities on persuasion: (1) identity as a direct persuasive cue; and (2) identity as a trigger for careful and thorough message processing.

**Political Identities**

Besides setting a solid footing for opinions, parties and values also animate individual political identities. Parties and values neatly correspond to an important distinction that social psychologists have drawn between two general classes of identity: social and personal (e.g., Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reichers, & Wetherell, 1987). Social identity refers to that portion of one’s self-concept that derives from
nominal group membership (e.g., “American,” “female,” “student,” etc.). Clearly, political party serves this function. Personal identity, by contrast, refers to that portion of one’s self-concept that derives from self-categorization based on similarities and differences vis-à-vis other individuals, including personality characteristics. We argue that deeply-felt values enter into the personal identity equation for many people by helping them recognize political similarities and differences with other citizens (see Deaux, 1993, 1996; Reid & Deaux, 1996; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994).

Political values do not have the clear organizational foundation that is the hallmark of a proper political party. Still, many people recognize distinct political subtypes defined by their dominant values, such as “Christian conservative” or “civil libertarian.” Explicit party label and implicit value orientation thus present two kinds of potential identity matches between the speaker and the audience member, either one of which may influence the processing of the persuasive message. In the United States, Democrats have been traditionally been associated with egalitarian values and Republicans with individualistic values (Hart, 2000; Ladd & Lipset, 1980), but the fit between party and values is not perfect. Indeed, just as it might be politically expedient for a candidate to “raid” the other party’s issues in order to broaden her appeal (Norpoth & Buchanan, 1992), so too might it behoove a candidate to steal a few rhetorical pages from the opposition’s book of values. Such strategies might backfire, however, and so we examine the degree of correspondence between the speaker’s own party and the values implicit in his or her speech as another potential influence on audience reactions.

Figure 1 summarizes the relationships that are inherent in a values-based political speech, any of which can affect the audience’s response to the speaker’s...
message. The type of values-based language used conveys whether the speaker’s values match those of the recipient (a type of personal identity match). The party identification of the speaker conveys whether the speaker’s party matches that of the recipient (a type of social identity match). Finally, the combination of the speaker’s values-based language and the speaker’s party either confirms or violates common expectations about value-party combinations (a type of expectancy confirmation/violation). For instance, a Republican Party candidate invoking egalitarian values would disconfirm common expectancies of U.S. audiences (Hart, 2000; Ladd & Lipset, 1980). To date, these three types of relationships have each largely been studied in isolation (see Fleming & Petty, 2000; Mackie & Queller, 2000; Petty, Wheeler, & Bizer, 2000; Smith & Petty, 1996; for reviews). The typical political speech contains all of these relationships, however, which may interact in ways that cannot be predicted from their main effects alone.

**Persuasive Mechanisms**

How do political identity markers such as value orientation and partisanship contribute to the effectiveness of a persuasive political message? The “dual-process” models of persuasion such as the elaboration likelihood model (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty & Wegener, 1998a) and the heuristic-systematic model (HSM; Chaiken, Liberman, & Eagly, 1989) suggest a pair of possible effects. Both models posit that there are two routes to persuasion that anchor a continuum ranging from high to low elaboration. High elaboration, called the “central route” by the ELM and “systematic processing” by the HSM, is an effortful process requiring considerable motivation and ability to scrutinize a message. According to both models, individuals who follow this process attend closely to persuasive arguments in order to understand them and evaluate their merits. Individuals thus form a coherent and reasoned position that responds to the quality of the speaker’s case; strong arguments will garner more support than weak arguments.

The other process, ELM’s “peripheral route” or HSM’s “heuristic processing,” relies on persuasive cues such as source credibility and interpersonal similarity to reach a satisfactory decision without extensive issue-relevant thinking (see Petty & Wegener, 1998a, for a review). Although the specifics of the models differ, both posit that when elaboration likelihood is low (i.e., in the absence of motivation and/or ability to scrutinize a message) issue-relevant thinking will be minimal. Individuals will thus form a position unrelated to the quality of the speaker’s case; strong arguments will not garner more support than weak arguments.

Our experiments follow the well-established procedure of manipulating argument quality to gauge the amount of attention paid to the message (Chaiken et al., 1989; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Recipients within the “central” or “systematic” mode should pay close attention to argument quality and therefore should
be more persuaded by strong arguments than weak arguments. Recipients who adopt the speaker’s position regardless of the strength of his/her arguments are thought to be in the “peripheral” or “heuristic” mode (Fleming & Petty, 2000; Mackie & Queller, 2000).\(^1\)

**Identity Match**

Recent reviews argue that social and personal identity match have similar persuasive effects in situations where the likelihood for individuals to attend to the message is known (Fleming & Petty, 2000; Petty et al., 2000). Therefore, the potential effects of these two aspects of identity match, party affiliation match and value system match, respectively, will be discussed together.

*Identity match as instigator of message scrutiny.* A shared party identification or value orientation between speaker and recipient could appeal to the recipient’s sense of personal involvement and relevance and so promote central or systematic processing of political speeches (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, 1990). Johnson and Eagly (1989) define involvement as the “motivational state induced by an association between an activated attitude and some aspect of the self-concept” (p. 293). More specifically, individuals may scrutinize a persuasive appeal from a speaker that shares either their values or party because it has the potential to provide them information about the social reality of people similar to themselves (Mackie & Queller, 2000; Mackie, Worth, & Asuncion, 1990; Turner, 1982).

*Identity match as persuasive cue.* Although the aforementioned research suggests that party and value match may instigate message scrutiny, the ubiquity of value and party cues in political communication, and the notoriously scant attention that most citizens pay to political messages (Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Rahn, 1993; see Kinder, 1998, for a review) suggest that in a political context elaboration likelihood may be low. Therefore, a common party identification or value system could *alternatively* function as a direct persuasive cue (called “peripheral cue” in the ELM, Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, and “heuristic cue” in the HSM, Chaiken et al., 1989). According to Chaiken (1987), people tend to use less effortful modes of information processing because of cognitive economy; unless individuals are especially motivated to engage in issue- and message-relevant thinking, less effortful processing will occur. The research literature is replete with examples of strong favoritism shown towards messages from a communicator who shares a social group designation (e.g., were from the same school, Mackie.

\(^1\) This binary portrayal oversimplifies the ELM somewhat. Identity cues may have other effects on message processing, such as biasing argument elaboration or serving as arguments in their own right (Petty & Wegener, 1998a). Given the political context of our experimental situation, it seemed unlikely that the situation would generate the high-elaboration likelihood necessary for these outcomes to obtain. Further, these possibilities were not suggested by our data.
et al., 1990; Mackie, Gastardo-Conaco, & Skelly, 1992; see also Fleming, 1999) or personal identity (e.g., self-monitoring, DeBono, 1987; see also Brock, Brannon, & Bridgewater, 1990) with the audience (see Fleming & Petty, 2000; Mackie & Queller, 2000; Petty et al., 2000, for reviews). For political communication, common party membership and implicit values are both especially important signals that garner audience favor (Kinder, 1998; Popkin, 1991; Rahn, 1993).

Expectancies about Values and Political Party. The extant research has examined social identity and personal identity relationships in isolation, whereas the typical political message conveys both kinds of information. As a consequence, audience members may be sensitive to the degree of correspondence between the speaker’s overt party designation and the values implicit in his or her speech, regardless of their personal partisanship or values. In the United States, Democrats are usually seen as the standard bearers for egalitarian values whereas Republicans are associated with individualistic values (Hart, 2000; Ladd & Lipset, 1980). More specifically, Hart (2000) showed that audiences have clear expectations about partisan political speech: “. . . Democrats and Republicans do talk differently and these differences may well ‘prime’ voters in predictable ways. More intriguing, these language patterns relate quite well to the specific ideologies undergirding the two parties” (p. 160).

The literature is of two minds when it comes to the likely consequences of violating audience expectations. On the one hand, audiences may dismiss or discount messages from speakers who violate expectations about appropriate speech (Burgoon & Miller, 1985; Kaid & Downs, 1990). On the other hand, expectancy violations might draw attention and prompt scrutiny, rather than simply serving as a basis to reject the message (Baker & Petty, 1994; Goodstein, 1993; Petty, Fleming, Priester, & Feinstein, 2001; Maheswaran & Chaiken, 1991; Maheswaran, Mackie, & Chaiken, 1992; Smith & Petty, 1996). Petty and colleagues (Petty et al., 2001) argue that the pattern of effects depends on the type of expectancy violation. Speakers will be punished when they speak for their own self-interest, but will draw attention to their messages when they argue against their group’s interest. In the political context simulated in our experiment, the match between the speaker and audience member’s party and value orientations adds a further wrinkle, making predictions difficult. Opposition candidates who violate expectations might be perceived as “pandering,” and therefore punished. Absent such suspicions, however, speakers who evoke unexpected values might arouse audience curiosity and therefore inspire close attention to message content.

Experiment

Overview

We investigated the impact of party match, value match, and expectancy violation by asking experimental participants to respond to a complex, politically
realistic message that incorporated all three types of relationships. Research participants read a persuasive speech purportedly given by a candidate clearly labeled as “Democratic” or “Republican.” The speech was peppered with references to *individualistic* (Protestant Ethic) values such as devotion to work, achievement, and discipline; or *egalitarian/humanitarian* values like equality, social justice, and concern for others (Katz & Hass, 1988). By measuring participants’ own partisanship and their relative adherence to these two value dimensions, we can examine how persuasion is aided when the speaker party or value orientation matches the recipients’. We can also examine the consequences of a mismatch between the speaker’s party designation and the values he evokes. While the correspondence between political party and social values is not ironclad, these two value dimensions mirror historic differences in party image in the United States, with the Democrats viewed as the champions of equality and compassion and Republicans seen as the defenders of individual rights and responsibilities (White, 2003).

After reading the speech, participants expressed their own opinions toward the issue. They also completed several questionnaire items designed to measure their reactions to the speaker and his message, including the depth of thought devoted to the message.

The experiment addressed the following hypotheses:

1. **Party match between speaker and recipient heightens message scrutiny.**
2. **Value match between speaker and recipient heightens message scrutiny.**

   Participants who receive a message from a member of their own party or from a speaker who shares their values should respond favorably to strong arguments and unfavorably to weak arguments and should show other evidence of careful message consideration.

3. **In the absence of message scrutiny, party match between speaker and recipient serves as a positive persuasive cue.**
4. **In the absence of message scrutiny, value match between speaker and recipient serves as a positive persuasive cue, as compared to no value match.**

   As alternatives to H1 and H2, H3 and H4 predict that participants will not attend especially closely to messages from fellow partisans or those who share their values. Instead, participants will respond favorably to in-group messages and reject out-group messages, regardless of argument quality.

5. **Expectancy violation heightens message scrutiny.**

   Speakers who use value rhetoric normally associated with the rival party will raise suspicions and inspire close attention to message content. Participants will therefore respond to argument quality and show evidence of careful message processing.
Our experiment examines the comparative, combined, and interactive effects of all three relationships. The potential for independent effects seems reasonable when considering value match and party match, but it seems less likely that these effects will be independent of recipient’s expectancies. A party match between the speaker and recipient might have different effects if the speaker simultaneously evokes incongruous values (Garst & Bodenhausen, 1996). Thus, we will explore the following research questions:

1. **Does expectancy confirmation/violation moderate the effect of party match on recipients’ reactions to the message?**

2. **Does expectancy confirmation/violation moderate the effect of value match on recipients’ reactions to the message?**

If the effects of value match and party match turn out to be independent, it is appropriate to ask about their relative strengths. Most theorists argue that personal identity and social identity play prominent, interrelated roles in the development and maintenance of the self-concept (Deaux, 1993, 1996; Reid & Deaux, 1996). Still, we must be mindful that they may not serve equally to regulate the processing of persuasive messages. Turner and colleagues favor a kind of hydraulic model for the two sources of identity, with one rising in prominence as the other falls (Turner et al., 1987). A variety of environmental forces and circumstances will dictate which aspect dominates (Turner & Oakes, 1989). Party identification has been identified as a preeminent political marker (Campbell et al., 1960; Popkin, 1991), but personal values also supply a meaningful and enduring sense of uniqueness for many citizens (Feldman, 1988; Feldman & Zaller, 1992; Kinder, 1998; Ladd & Lipset, 1980). Thus, we will examine the following research question:

3. **Will party match or value match between speaker and recipient have more powerful effects on recipients’ reactions to the message?**

**Method**

**Participants and Design**

360 undergraduates from introductory psychology classes participated in exchange for course credit. Responses of 59 participants were excluded from data analysis because they could not be matched with a previously completed screening survey (n = 54) or did not indicate their political party identification (n = 5). Thus, data were analyzed from 301 students (177 females and 124 males) whose ages ranged from 17 to 39, with a mean of 19.5 years.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight experimental conditions formed by a 2 (Value Orientation of Speech: Protestant Ethic vs. Humanitarian-Egalitarian) × 2 (Argument Quality: strong vs. weak) × 2 (Speaker’s Party
Identification: Democratic vs. Republican) between-participants design. Participants were also classified according to their primary value orientations (more Protestant Ethic or more Humanitarian-Egalitarian) and their party identifications (Democratic; Republican; or Independent/Other).

Independent Variables

The experiment presented a transcript of a fictitious political speech that was recently given by a public university trustee in Arizona that argued for the adoption of a service requirement in the senior year of college. Public university trustees are elected officials in Ohio, where the research was conducted. The transcript was varied orthogonally according to type of values-based language used (Protestant Ethic or Humanitarian-Egalitarian) and argument quality (strong or weak). The Protestant Ethic and Humanitarian-Egalitarian versions of the transcript used the same basic arguments to advocate the service requirement, but associated the policy with alternative values. There was no mention of whether the service requirement would be implemented locally; thus, elaboration likelihood was not constrained to be either high or low.

We deliberately selected an issue that, while certainly relevant to the students’ experience and therefore likely to grab their attention, nevertheless was novel, and therefore carried no preexisting associations with political parties or values. Our goal was plausibly to associate the proservice requirement speech with the Democratic or Republican party, and Humanitarian-Egalitarian or Protestant Ethic values.

Value orientation of speech. Values-based language was used throughout the speeches to frame the arguments contained in the transcript. The initial paragraphs provided the strongest statement of the speaker’s values:

Protestant Ethic. My top priorities are to create individual opportunities for individual achievement by students on this campus and to promote a campus-wide atmosphere of accomplishment, dedication, and personal motivation. . . . [The service requirement] allows individual students to help themselves through their own initiative and diligence and provides them with the opportunity to engage in work that they find meaningful.

Humanitarian-Egalitarian. My top priorities are to create equal opportunities for each and every student on this campus and to promote a campus-wide atmosphere of equality, social justice, and strong concern for the welfare of others. . . . [The service requirement] allows all students to benefit equally and provides them with the opportunity to show their concern for others in need.

Pretesting confirmed that readers of the speech were responsive to the manipulated value orientation of the speech and that value orientation could be manipulated independently of argument quality.
Argument quality. In approximately half of the cases the speech contained arguments that an independent pretest sample (drawn from the same participant population) had rated as relatively strong and compelling (e.g., “Data from the Educational Testing Service confirm that the difficult service requirements were motivating almost all teachers and students to put significantly more effort into their courses”). The other half of the speeches contained arguments pretested to be weaker and less compelling (e.g., “Data from the Educational Testing Service confirm that the difficult service requirements were motivating one or two teachers and students to put slightly more effort into their courses”).

Speaker’s party. The speaker was represented to be either a member of the Democratic or Republican party. The speaker’s party was provided both in the experimental instructions and as a heading for the speech itself.

Participants’ primary value orientation. Participants’ commitment to Protestant Ethic (PE) and Humanitarian-Egalitarian (HE) value orientations were assessed during the first week of the semester as part of a larger testing session. A total of 2,620 introductory psychology students completed the PE and HE value orientation scales, adapted from Katz and Hass (1988). The 11-item PE scale addressed devotion to work, individual achievement, and discipline, whereas the 10-item HE scale addressed the ideals of equality, social justice, and concern for others’ well-being. Responses were assessed using 7-point scales with higher scores indicating greater endorsement of the relevant value. The PE scale showed marginal reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .68$), whereas the HE scale showed acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .81$).

Any attempt to categorize individuals into specific value “types” will inevitably obscure gradations of individual difference. On the other hand, considerable research suggests that humanitarianism and individualism anchor the opposite ends of a bipolar value dimension (e.g., Schwartz, 1994). For this reason, and for the sake of simplifying the analysis, we categorized individuals as more PE ($n = 143$) or more HE ($n = 158$), based on the greater of the z-scores for the HE and PE values.

Participants’ party identification. Participants classifying themselves as strong Democrats ($n = 8$), moderate Democrats ($n = 53$), or leaning toward Democrats ($n = 56$) were categorized as “Democrats,” whereas participants classifying themselves as strong Republicans ($n = 9$), moderate Republicans ($n = 54$), or leaning toward Republicans ($n = 36$) were categorized as “Republicans.” Participants who identified themselves as Independents ($n = 69$) or Other ($n = 16$) were classified as such.

Dependent Variables

Multiple measures of participants’ reactions to the stimulus materials were collected. Confirmatory principal axis factor analyses (eigenvalues > 1) verified the unidimensionality of the attitude and auxiliary composite measures described
below. Although the composites are conceptually distinct, there is a clear relationship among the composites and an index quantifying the positivity of participants’ thoughts (see Table 1).

**Attitude.** Participants rated the “proposal of a service requirement for seniors” on 9-point semantic differential scales anchored by good—bad, beneficial—harmful, wise—foolish, positive—negative, effective—ineffective, convincing—unconvincing. Participants also answered questions aimed at assessing how much they agreed with the position taken in the speech (“How strongly do you agree or disagree with the position taken in the speech you read?”; “Would you be willing to support John Snyder’s proposal?”; “If John Snyder’s proposal were to be adapted at Ohio State, how would you feel about it?”) using 9-point Likert-type scales. After rescoring to a common 1–9 metric, a 9-item attitude composite was formed.

**Thought listing.** Participants’ cognitive responses to the speech were assessed via a standard thought-listing technique (Cacioppo & Petty, 1981). Participants were asked to write down any thoughts that had occurred to them as they read the speech, after which they indicated which of their thoughts were favorable, opposed, and neutral to the speech. Independent coders made this determination in a small number of cases where participants failed to make this rating themselves. To examine the positivity and negativity of participants’ thoughts simultaneously, a thought positivity index was created by subtracting the total number of negative thoughts from the total number of positive thoughts and dividing the sum by the total number of thoughts listed.

**Auxiliary measures.** A behavioral intention composite was formed from two questions assessing whether participants would donate money or volunteer for the speaker’s campaign. A speaker evaluation composite was formed from five questions that focused on participants’ perceptions of the speakers’ intelligence, trustworthiness, likeability, open-mindedness, and concern for the welfare of all students. All auxiliary items used 9-point Likert-type scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Correlations Among Dependent Composite Measures</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.62**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thought Positivity Index</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Behavioral Intention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.50**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Speaker Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( M = )</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( SD = )</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N = )</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s ( \alpha = )</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. ***p < .01. Higher scores indicate greater positivity toward each construct.*
Manipulation checks. Participants completed a single-item manipulation check of the speaker’s party by indicating whether the speaker was reported to be a Democrat, Republican, this information was not specified, or don’t remember. Participants indicated their impressions of the speaker’s values with three 9-point forced-choice scales (individual achievement is important—social justice is important; social equality of all people is important—individual responsibility of all people is important; personal discipline is important—concern for others’ well-being is important). After rescoring to a common 1–9 metric, a speech value orientation composite was formed with higher scores indicating more Humanitarian-Egalitarian than Protestant Ethic values perceived in the speech (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .65$).

Procedure

Participants reported to the laboratory for a study to investigate “what makes a university trustee gain political support.” Participants read the randomly assigned speech transcript, completed the measures listed above, and then provided standard demographic data and political party identification. No mention was made of the screening questionnaire participants completed approximately three weeks earlier.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

As expected, a one-way ANOVA on the speech value orientation composite revealed that the speaker who used HE language was perceived to express relatively more HE than PE values and beliefs than the speaker who used PE language ($M = 5.76, SD = 1.77$ vs. $M = 4.44, SD = 1.72$, respectively), $F(1, 281) = 40.79$, $p < .001$. A total of 62% of the participants correctly recalled the speaker’s party, whereas 19% indicated they did not remember, 15% indicated that the speaker’s affiliation was not specified, and 4% indicated the wrong party affiliation. The percentage of participants who accurately remembered the speaker’s party did not differ based on whether the speaker was reported to be a Democrat or a Republican (62% vs. 63%, respectively), Wald z-ratio (1, $N = 300$) $< 1$.\(^2\)

To assess the relationship between values and political party, a one-way ANOVA was used to examine participants’ value orientations (as assessed by the difference between the $z$-scores of their preexisting HE and PE values) as a function of their parties. The analysis revealed the expected relationships for Democratic and Republican participants even though the overall analysis was not

\(^2\) The pattern of results for all dependent variables was unchanged when cases were limited to participants who correctly recalled the speaker’s party.
significant, $F(2, 298) = 2.29, p = .10$. More specifically, Democrats endorsed relatively more HE than PE values ($M = .19, SD = 1.25$) than did Republicans who endorsed relatively more PE than HE values ($M = -.15, SD = 1.20, p = .05$). The relative values endorsed by Independent/Others ($M = -.11, SD = 1.32$) did not differ from either Democratic or Republican participants (both $ps \geq .10$).

Primary Analyses

To assess our hypotheses, we conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) using Wilks’ criterion on the four dependent measures of participants’ reactions to the stimulus materials (attitude, thought positivity index, behavioral intention, and speaker evaluation), which we label collectively, if somewhat imprecisely, as participants’ opinion. The predictive factors in the analysis were: value match (speech value orientation same as participant’s vs. different), party match (speaker’s political party same as participant’s vs. different), expectancy (speaker’s values match his party designation vs. the opposite party), and argument quality (strong vs. weak). In general, heightened message scrutiny would be indicated by a statistically significant effect of argument quality on opinion. More precisely, if value match or party match heightens message scrutiny, we should observe a statistically significant interaction between matching and argument quality. Participants should respond to argument quality when their values or party identification match the speaker’s, while they should be relatively insensitive to the strength of the arguments when their values or partisanship do not match the speaker’s.

By contrast, value/party match as a direct persuasive cue would be indicated by a significant effect of speaker value/party on participant opinion, regardless of argument strength. Participants should be more persuaded by fellow partisans, or those with similar apparent values, whatever the strength of their arguments. Follow-up analyses of variance (ANOVAs) examined each dependent variable separately to elucidate the effects found in the initial multivariate analysis.

Party match is not relevant to participants who declined to identify with either the Democratic or Republican parties, so these participants were eliminated from

---

3 When interpreting significant effects from an omnibus F-test for this and all subsequent analyses, the $F$ statistics and significances of the simple main effects and/or simple interactions were derived using the MSE from the omnibus ANOVA (see Kirk, 1995).

4 Regression analysis that examined party match and value match as continuous variables, incorporating the strength of participants’ party identifications and primary value orientations in the relationship calculations, largely replicated the pattern of effects found when party match and value match were treated as dichotomous variables.

5 Examination of the association among the three relationship factors revealed that they were largely independent. More specifically, a value match between speaker and recipient could not be significantly predicted by the combination of expectancy and party match, Wald z-ratio $(1, N = 216) = 3.05, p = .08$. 

the main analysis.\(^6\) A separate analysis of their data followed the same procedure as above, but excluded the party match factor. Due to the relatively small number of Independent and Other participants (some cell sizes were as small as eight), caution should be used in interpreting these results.

**Hypothesis 1: Party match heightens message scrutiny.** The multivariate analysis examining all four dependent variables simultaneously revealed a main effect of argument quality, \(F(4, 195) = 2.74, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05\), and a significant interaction between party match and argument quality, \(F(4, 195) = 2.68, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05\). However, examination of the individual dependent measures revealed no significant party match \(\times\) argument quality interactions [attitude, \(F(1, 198) < 1\); thought positivity index, \(F(1, 200) = 1.82, p > .15\); behavioral intention, \(F(1, 200) = 1.72, p > .15\); speaker evaluation, \(F(1, 200) < 1\)]. Furthermore, only participants’ behavioral intentions showed a pattern consistent with party match as an instigator of message scrutiny. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

**Hypothesis 2: Value match heightens message scrutiny.** The multivariate analysis revealed a significant interaction between value match and argument quality, \(F(4, 195) = 2.38, p = .05, \eta^2 = .05\). Table 2 presents separate ANOVAs for the four dependent measures. Rows 1 and 2 of the table present the main effects of value matching and argument quality, while row 3 presents the interaction between these two variables; this interaction is also presented graphically for the attitude measure in Figure 2. Examination of the pattern across the four dependent measures reveals that participants responded to argument strength only when the speaker’s values matched their own. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported, even though the two-way interactions between value match and argument quality for the individual dependent measures were not always significant.

To provide further support for the claim that value match inspired closer message scrutiny, we conducted mediational analyses to examine whether participants’ attitudes were based on the thoughts that they generated in response to the messages. Following Baron and Kenny (1986), we rescaled argument quality, thought positivity, and attitudes to a common 0–1 metric and then conducted a series of regression analyses. The results appear in Figure 3. Two path coefficients representing the effect of argument quality on attitudes appear in the figure: the

-------

\(^6\) Party match, value match, and expectancy can each be determined in multiple ways using the above design (e.g., party match can be due to a common Republican or Democratic identity; expectancy violation can be due to a Democratic speaker expressing PE values or a Republican speaker expressing HE values). In such a case it becomes necessary to establish that any effects result from matching (or mismatching) in general, not because of any specific combination of party and/or value. In no instance was a significant effect involving value match moderated by whether the value was PE or HE; in no instance was a significant effect involving party match moderated by whether the party was Democrat or Republican; and finally, in no instance was a significant effect involving expectancy moderated by the specific combination of speaker party and speech value orientation (all \(p s > .15\)). Therefore, the specific values and parties underlying the analyses will not be discussed further.
Table 2. Effects of Value Match × Argument Quality and Expectancy × Value Match × Argument Quality Interactions on Mean Attitude, Thought Positivity Index, Behavioral Intention, and Speaker Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Argument Quality</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Thought Positivity Index</th>
<th>Argument Quality</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Behavioral Intention</th>
<th>Argument Quality</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Speaker Evaluation</th>
<th>Argument Quality</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Match</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>.79 .001</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>(1.63/51)</td>
<td>(1.92/59)</td>
<td>(57/52)</td>
<td>(51/59)</td>
<td>(1.5/52)</td>
<td>(1.93/59)</td>
<td>(2.15/52)</td>
<td>(1.93/59)</td>
<td>(1.23/52)</td>
<td>(1.45/59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Value Match</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>.20 ns</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>(1.66/53)</td>
<td>(1.97/51)</td>
<td>(51/53)</td>
<td>(55/52)</td>
<td>(1.95/53)</td>
<td>(2.45/52)</td>
<td>(1.95/53)</td>
<td>(2.45/52)</td>
<td>(1.20/53)</td>
<td>(1.62/52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectancy Violation</td>
<td>Value Match</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>.53 .05</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>(1.80/27)</td>
<td>(1.79/31)</td>
<td>(.62/28)</td>
<td>(.49/31)</td>
<td>(2.10/28)</td>
<td>(1.85/31)</td>
<td>(2.09/28)</td>
<td>(1.85/31)</td>
<td>(2.22/28)</td>
<td>(1.26/31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectancy Confirmation</td>
<td>Value Match</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.09 .001</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>(1.36/24)</td>
<td>(2.07/28)</td>
<td>(.52/24)</td>
<td>(.53/28)</td>
<td>(2.25/24)</td>
<td>(2.04/28)</td>
<td>(2.25/24)</td>
<td>(2.04/28)</td>
<td>(1.22/24)</td>
<td>(1.63/28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-way interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. Standard deviations and cell sizes appear respectively in parentheses under each mean. The d statistic and significance of the simple main effect of argument quality (derived from F ratios using MSE from omnibus ANOVA: Kirk, 1995) are indicated in the third and fourth columns, respectively, for each dependent measure. ns indicates p > .15.
first (above the line) is the effect without controlling for thought positivity; the second (below the line) controls for thought positivity. The significance of the attenuation caused by entering thought positivity is provided for each condition (Sobel, 1982).

Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the effect of argument quality on attitudes was mediated, at least in part, by the thoughts individuals generated about the messages, but only when there was a value match. Specifically, the relationship between argument quality and attitudes diminished significantly when the thought positivity index was also entered into the value match model \((p < .05)\), but not the no value match model. These findings further support that value match prompts recipients to base their judgments on a thoughtful consideration of the arguments.7

Hypothesis 3: In the absence of message scrutiny, party match between speaker and recipient serves as a positive persuasive cue. Participants were no more favorable to a message from a fellow party member than from a member of the opposing party \([F(4, 195) < 1]\), so Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Hypothesis 4: In the absence of message scrutiny, value match between speaker and recipient serves as a positive persuasive cue. As discussed above, a value match between speaker and recipient encouraged greater message scrutiny. Consistent with those results, we found that participants who shared the same

---

7 When the data from Independent/Other participants were examined, the key interaction was not significant in either the multivariate case or in any of the univariate cases. Thus, value matching did not inspire greater scrutiny among nonpartisans.
values as the speaker were not automatically more favorable to his message \(F(4, 195) = 1.99, p = .10, \eta^2 = .04\), and in fact expressed more negative thoughts when a speaker with common values used weak arguments to make his case \(F(1, 200) = 7.63, p < .01, \eta^2 = .03; \) weak arguments \(p < .01\); strong arguments \(p > .20\). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

_Hypothesis 5: Expectancy violation heightens message scrutiny._ The predicted interaction between expectancy and argument quality was significant in

---

\(t(107) = 2.50, p < .05\)

---

\(t(101) < 1, \text{ns}\)

---

\(+ p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001\)

_Figure 3. Mediation of the Argument Quality to Attitude Relationship by Thought Positivity Index._

---

When responses from Independent/Other participants were examined, neither the multivariate, \(F(4, 74) < 1, \text{nor univariate, all four } Fs < 1\), analyses provided support for value matching as a persuasive cue.
neither the multivariate nor univariate analyses, both for partisans and Independent/Others. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Research Question 1: Does expectancy confirmation/violation moderate the effect of party match on recipients' reactions to the message? Next we turned to our research questions concerning the interaction of party and value cues; specifically whether speakers are punished when they use value language traditionally associated with the other party. First, we examined whether expectancies regulate the impact of party match as a persuasive cue or as a determinant of message scrutiny. The multivariate analysis revealed an expectancy $\times$ party match interaction, $F(4, 195) = 2.85$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Table 3 presents separate ANOVAs for the four dependent measures. Rows 1 and 2 of the table present the main effects of expectancy violation/confirmation and party match, while row 3 presents the interaction between these two variables; this interaction is also presented graphically for the attitude measure in Figure 4. Examination of the attitude and behavioral intention measures reveal that participants were especially opposed to messages from a candidate of the opposing party when he evoked inappropriate values. When the speaker confirmed expectancies, there was no difference in participants’ attitudes toward the proposal, or their behavioral intentions, as a function of speaker party.

9 A mediational analysis, patterned after the procedure described earlier, confirmed that the interaction between party match and expectancy violation affected opinions directly and not through the mediation of message scrutiny.
Table 3. Effects of Expectancy × Party Match Interaction on Mean Attitude, Thought Positivity Index, Behavioral Intention, and Speaker Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Thought Positivity Index</th>
<th>Behavioral Intention</th>
<th>Speaker Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Party Match</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>p&lt;</td>
<td>Party Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectancy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.71/55)</td>
<td>(2.06/58)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.94/50)</td>
<td>(1.61/51)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d =</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p &lt;</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way interaction</td>
<td>F(1, 198) = 6.52, p &lt; .05, η² = .03</td>
<td>F(1, 200) &lt; 1</td>
<td>F(1, 200) = 3.45, p = .06, η² = .02</td>
<td>F(1, 200) = 1.08, p &gt; .20, η² = .01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Standard deviations and cell sizes appear respectively in parentheses under each mean. The d statistics and significance of the simple main effects of party match (expectancy; derived from F ratios using MSE from omnibus ANOVA; Kirk, 1995) are indicated in the third and fourth columns (rows), respectively, for each dependent measure. ns indicates p > .20.
Research Question 2: Does expectancy confirmation/violation moderate the effect of value match on recipients’ reactions to the message? Recall that a value match between speaker and recipient encouraged message scrutiny, and hence a greater sensitivity to argument quality. In other words, when the speaker’s values matched the audience’s, strong arguments persuaded but weak arguments fell flat. What happens when those values do not match the speaker’s party designation? The analysis returned a significant three-way interaction in the multivariate data between expectancy, value match, and argument quality, $F(4, 195) = 2.85, p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .06$. The interaction was decomposed by analyzing the effects of argument quality and value match separately for the expectancy violation and confirmation conditions. Table 2, rows 4–8, presents the main effects and interactions for expectancy violation, value match, and argument quality for the four dependent variables. Figure 5 graphs the three-way interaction for the attitude measure. A value match between speaker and audience members prompted closer scrutiny of the speech primarily when the speaker used values-based language appropriate for his party designation. More specifically, when the speaker confirmed expectancies, the value match \times argument quality interactions were significant for both the attitude and speaker evaluation measures, $F(1, 198) = 12.14, p < .001$ and, $F(1, 200) = 5.83, p < .05$, respectively (see Table 2, rows 6 and 7, and
Figure 5, right side), but not when he violated expectancies. Comparable results were obtained from analysis of Independent/Other participants. 10

Research Question 3: Will party match or value match between speaker and recipient have more powerful effects on recipients’ reactions to the message? To test this research question, we ran twice a regression model that included all main and interactive effects involving value match, party match, expectancy, and argument quality to predict participants’ attitudes. By varying the order of entry of the predictors, our first run examined the incremental increase in the fit of the model (F statistic) due to the addition of the main effects and interactions involving the value match factor; the second run examined the incremental increase in model fit due to the party match factor. The incremental change in F attributable to the addition of the value match factor to the full design was significant, $F(8, 198) = 2.34, p < .05, R^2 = .08$, whereas the incremental change due to the addition of the party match factor to the full design was not, $F(8, 198) = 1.58, p > .13, R^2 = .05$. Participants were more responsive to value match than party match in our experimental context.

Discussion

The value of a concerted examination of party and value identity markers is apparent in the complex and contingent pattern of our effects. The only persuasive main effect to emerge was for argument quality—not surprisingly, stronger arguments were more convincing and produced more attitude change on the whole than weaker arguments. From the web of interactions described above a clear pattern emerges that points to the importance of values as persuasive social identity markers, but also to the liabilities of relying on values to persuade when they do not correspond to one’s party designation.

Participants attended more closely to messages that evoked their own values (consistent with Hypothesis 2). This deeper processing made them more favorable to strong arguments, but resistant to weak ones. There also was suggestive evidence that this effect primarily occurred when the speaker’s apparent values matched his party. Even nonpartisan participants seemed to scrutinize the message more thoroughly when the speaker used values common to his party and similar to the participants’ own.

Contrary to the hypothesis that party designation would act as a peripheral persuasive cue (e.g., Zaller, 1992), messages from rival party members were not summarily rejected. Recipients were skeptical of messages from rival party

10 Although the MANOVA suggests that expectancies regulate the impact of value match as a determinant of message scrutiny, a subsequent mediational analysis, patterned after the analysis represented in Figure 3, did not reveal a greater mediational role for thought positivity when expectancies were confirmed.
members only when the speaker evoked the “wrong” values. In other words, in the absence of message scrutiny participants relied on a combination of party match and expectancies as a persuasive cue.

The present research clearly demonstrates the need to move beyond isolated investigations of the persuasive powers of social identity, personal identity, and expectancies and to look at these persuasive processes in combination. The power of political messages derives not only from the values evoked and the party membership claimed by the speaker, but also to some extent on whether these two aspects fit the audience’s expectations. The results suggest that these three types of relationships in values-based political messages work in various combinations to determine both the attention audience members pay to political speeches and the persuasive power of political talk.

The contemporary political environment offers a flood of news, information, and propaganda. With so many demands on their time and a healthy skepticism of the political world’s actual value to them, most ordinary citizens rely on shortcuts in their processing of political communication. A speaker’s social affiliations—both informal and formal—amount to valuable identity markers, alerting the audience to issues that deserve special attention. Political party occupies a central role in most theories of citizen politics; it is the social identity cue par excellence. The present results suggest that values—a kind of personal identity cue—could be just as important for an individual’s receptiveness to persuasive speech (Research Question 3). In this study, the correspondence between speaker and audience values accounted for participant reactions to the speech better than the correspondence between speaker and audience party. Perhaps participants place greater weight on information connoting shared values because it is perceived to be more personally relevant (Petty & Cacioppo, 1990), or even more reliable. Whereas much of the literature describes the tight interconnections between elements of social and personal identity, there is reason to believe that aspects of personal identity, like value systems, might lie closer to the heart of some individuals, signifying truly self-definitional qualities rather than mere category membership (Reid & Deaux, 1996; Turner et al., 1994). Personal values may therefore serve as more striking, salient communication markers for these people.

The present research also suggests, however, that the persuasive power of values-based speech and shared party affiliation can be undercut when the speaker strays outside the boundaries laid down by his or her party designation. Rather than causing surprise and enhanced message scrutiny due to the speaker arguing against his group’s interest (Hypothesis 5 was not supported), the incongruity between the speaker’s party label and the values he endorsed appeared to raise suspicions about the speaker’s true motives (see Petty et al., 2001, for a full discussion of this topic). When the values of speaker and audience matched, expectancy violation might have distracted attention from the substance of the message. Rival party speakers, however, were punished when they used unex-
pected language. In an era of sinking trust in our leaders, when nearly every move a politician makes is portrayed as cynically self-interested (Patterson, 1993), language that strikes of insincere pandering will not sit well with many citizens.

We do not have direct evidence on the mechanisms responsible for expectancy-violation effects, but it is clear that our participants understood the traditional party-value associations, according to a post-hoc investigation. Participants ($N = 48$; drawn from the same participant population as the experimental participants) were asked to indicate how much either an average Democrat or an average Republican would endorse PE and HE values (Katz & Hass, 1988). As expected, participants perceived that Republicans, as compared to Democrats, would be more likely to endorse PE values. The difference, although not large, was statistically significant ($M_{Rep} = 4.70, SD = .61$ vs. $M_{Dem} = 4.29, SD = .72$), $F(1, 46) = 4.51, p < .05$. Participants were also more likely to attribute HE values to the Democrats, by a comfortable margin ($M_{Rep} = 4.19, SD = .85$ vs. $M_{Dem} = 5.24, SD = 1.03$), $F(1, 46) = 14.80, p < .001$. Furthermore, other research suggests that audiences need not be consciously aware of an expectancy violation for it to influence their responses (Afifi & Burgoon, 2000). Although expectancy violations clearly played a role in recipients’ reactions to the speech in the current investigation, a definitive identification of the specific mechanism(s) underlying these reactions awaits further investigation.

We must be mindful of the limitations to our design, of course. In this single experiment, we examined a single issue (student service requirement), and it is not obvious that we should expect the same pattern of results for other issues or from other participants. Wells and Windschitl (1999) urge appropriate caution when interpreting the results from such designs. Our case is stronger than many similar single-message designs, however, because the constructs that we vary—political party and political values—form a fair representation of the kinds of political markers that most interest us. In the case of political party, Democrats and Republicans amount to a census of the mainstream parties in contemporary U.S. politics, whereas the values that we sample are surely among the most readily recognized in our political culture (Hart, 2000). Still, there are many political groups (e.g., interest groups such as The Sierra Club or National Right to Life) that, while considerably smaller than the two major parties, still get regular mention by speakers who strive to establish community with audiences. In thinking beyond the political realm, there is plainly a large number and wide variety of social and personal identity markers, which could have different effects on message responsiveness as political party and egalitarian and individualistic values.

Further, we must be cautious in weighing the power of value matching relative to party matching on the basis of these data. It is well known that college-aged adults are often still engaged with the task of forming life-long political allegiances (Sears, 1986), and so values might be especially effective as political markers among this age group. That nearly 40% of our sample misidentified the
speaker’s party suggests that party designations were not preeminent for all members of this group. As other researchers have argued (e.g., Reid & Deaux, 1996; Turner & Oakes, 1989; Turner et al., 1987), social and personal identity are tightly interwoven, and the balance between them will surely vary with time and circumstance. A clarification of the boundary conditions of when and where each type of identity will take precedence awaits further investigation. One potentially important condition is a preexisting link between group designation and the issue under consideration. Mackie, Worth, and Asuncion (1990) found that the group cues moderate persuasive effects more powerfully when there is a natural and obvious association between the group designation and the issue under consideration. Our experiment deliberately avoided preestablished associations between the issue and partisan or value groups, but most issues in the public spotlight readily acquire clear links to the parties and other politically renowned collectives.

These caveats noted, our work suggests that politicians would do well not to abuse the informative value of the personal identity markers by disingenuously capitalizing on value language that clearly does not suit them. Speaking to the audience’s values might backfire if one’s arguments are not solid, because the audience will pay close attention to messages that evoke their values. Scrutiny of the candidate’s message may be especially pronounced when the values involved in the message harmonize with the candidate’s political affiliation. Under such circumstances, if the speaker offers a solid case, he or she may reap the benefits of close examination. If a speaker evokes values traditionally associated with the rival party, however, he or she risks alienating members of that party, who may summarily reject his or her position and candidacy. In all, our results suggest that there are limits to how much politicians should tailor their speeches in order to capitalize on the values of their intended audience.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was supported in part by a National Institute of Mental Health postdoctoral fellowship to Jennifer Garst (Grant No. T32-MH19728). Portions of this research were presented in the Information Systems Division of the annual convention of the International Communication Association, Washington, DC, May 2001. We appreciate the comments made by Edward L. Fink about an earlier draft, as well as comments made about the research by members of the 1997–1998 Political Psychology lab group and Group on Attitudes and Persuasion at Ohio State University. We are also grateful to Angie Hammonds, Jen Portillo, Levana Mizrachi, Liat Raby, Joy Williams, Heather Allman, Angela Macioce, James Doherty, and Lauren Braddock for their help in gathering and coding the data. Correspondence concerning this article should be sent to Thomas E. Nelson, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Ohio State University, 2140 Derby Hall, Columbus, OH, 43210-1373 or Jennifer Garst, Research Associate,
REFERENCES


