Abstract

When individuals encounter information about the distribution of political opinions in a society, it tends to alter their preferences. Most people learn about the attitudes of other citizens from news stories featuring surveys sponsored by major media organizations. For nearly three decades, however, journalists have been blending aggregate-level survey results with in-depth interviews of the respondents from the poll who agree to speak to reporters for attribution. Including qualitative remarks from especially eager and talkative respondents introduces selection-bias into the reporting on an otherwise nationally representative survey. Experiments confirm that the direction and substance of citizen cues found in interviews with survey respondents affects political preferences. While the potential for misrepresentation is great, follow-up interviews with respondents can simulate deliberative exchanges and frame issues. Studying this little known but empirically common form of discourse helps resolve disputes about political disagreement and its effects.

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Few technologies have had more far-reaching implications for democracies than the random sample public opinion poll. When elections and policies hinge on the will of the people—or at least as they should in theory—then it is helpful to know what citizens want. Opinion surveys provide a cost-effective and statistically sound method of determining public preferences. But how one defines public opinion has traditionally been a function of how it is measured. Even though polls dominate today to the point where they are virtually synonymous with public opinion (Herbst 1993), not everyone agrees that polls represent an improvement or are beneficial (e.g., Blumer 1948; Bourdieu 1979; Ginsberg 1986).

For better or worse, though, the availability of polling data alters what politicians do and say (Downs 1957; Geer 1996; Druckman and Jacobs 2006). Polls also affect citizens. Political behavior and opinions change when citizens learn the distribution of preferences in the electorate (Mutz 1992; 1998). Yet if learning the views of others is so influential, that begs the question of how citizens obtain this information. Social networks are one strong possibility (McClurg 2006a; 2006b; Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955), but these are heavily influence by the availability of discussants (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995) or workplaces (Mutz and Mondak 2006). A more general and potentially less idiosyncratic way of discovering what others believe or want is via publicly disseminated opinion polls.

The mass media regularly conduct and publish the results of polls. Scholars have charted thousands of instances of newspapers across the country printing page one stories with polling data since the 1980s (Lavrakas and Bauman 1995; Lavrakas, Traugott, and Miller 1995). They have also explored how the polling agenda interacts with the news agenda and patterns of democratic responsiveness (Althaus and Oats-Sargent 2007; Barabas 2007). Moreover, there are books that help voters better use election polls (Traugott and Lavrakas 2004) as well as studies of what citizens think of polls (Currin-Percival 2005; Traugott 2003). But what has escaped attention is the tendency of reporters to single out respondents in polls conducted by their organization and to interview these individuals in news articles featuring survey results.

This is important because just as polls are increasingly common, opportunities for communicating with others who hold divergent views seem to be on the decline (Mutz 2006; cf. Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004). Similarly, while many view deliberation as important, opportunities to engage other citizens are not as common as one might like (Cook, Delli Carpini, and Jacobs 2004; Mendelberg 2002; Page 1996). There are proposals for including deliberative results on ballots (Gastil 2000) or developing institutionalized days of deliberation (Ackerman and Fishkin 2004), but these have yet to be adopted in a sustained way.

We argue that a little known process of including citizen quotes in news articles can mimic important features of deliberation. In the first of two studies, we show that despite the recent movements toward civic journalism in the 1990s, this practice of selective quoting respondents is (A) not new since it has been in existence since the 1970s, and (B) is used by a variety of media outlets like the New York Times, the Washington Post, USA Today, and the L.A. Times. We identify more than two hundred articles that contain quotes from an average of roughly four individual respondents per story, and we present statistics on their demographic profiles as well as evidence on how the in-depth quotes are used to buttress the main headline from the article. At the conclusion of our first study, we examine the respondents who are selected for interviews. We demonstrate that they are not a random subset of survey respondents. Instead, they are chosen on the basis of their willingness to have a reporter contact them as well as their verbosity. The highly educated, wealthy, white, and liberal respondents are particularly likely to be quoted in the news stories about polls.
Finally, in the second half of our study, we test several hypotheses about how being exposed to follow-interview quotes affects political behavior. In particular, scholars have documented impersonal influence mechanisms whereby poll results influence political opinions (Mutz 1998). Yet we do not know much about the role of non-representative quotes that journalists embedded within articles about polls. There is also research suggesting that many people are not exposed to cross-cutting deliberation about politics, but these short statements on policy and politics are one way citizens can learn about dissenting views on important issues.

In a series of experiments with hundreds of participants, we show that when subjects view hypothetical quotes hinting at attitudinal consensus, it alters their policy preferences in predictable ways. However, in other instances subjects respond more to diverse messages attributed to Republicans and Democrats as well as quotations that give conflicting cues (i.e., Republicans who convey a liberal policy preference). We conclude with a discussion of the role of polling in our society as well as the way in which the journalistic norms that encourage qualitative quotes may ultimately give people a misleading picture of what other citizens prefer on major issues.

**Political Disagreement and Semi-Impersonal Influence**

Scholars believe that deliberation is important (Fishkin 1991; 1995; Gutmann and Thompson 1996). Empirically, it is not as common as one might hope, but exchanges that approximate deliberation occur daily in a wide range of settings from organized townhall meetings to informal gatherings (e.g., Bryan 2004; Mansbridge 1999; 1980; Mendelberg and Oleske 2000; Walsh 2007; 2004). Yet ordinary discussion does not automatically rise to the level of democratic deliberation. One core element, beyond having participants start the deliberation with an open-mind, is exposure to diverse viewpoints (Barabas 2004). Whether people are exposed to opinion diversity in any communication setting is hotly debated.

Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague (2004) argue that opinion diversity is more common than one might guess. Using surveys and agent-based models, they argue that disagreement is not necessarily extinguished when two people who disagree interact. However, Diana Mutz (2006) maintains that disagreement is not widespread, especially since it tends to undercut participation in politics. In contrast with Huckfeldt et al. who think that social contexts are imposed, Mutz argues that political preferences influence choices about social surroundings as well as choices about discussants. This happens whenever people segregate themselves into like minded groups and residential areas. It suggests that despite the partisan acrimony and bickering that occurs among elites, it could be that political disagreement is rare in the daily life of ordinary citizens.

Mutz argues that it is hard to find discussants who disagree, especially in the U.S. (2006, 49-54). Side-stepping the role of interpersonal discussion in the diversity debate, it is probably far more common for opposing views to be heard in mediated political deliberation, when media pundits debate the merits of competing policies (Page 1996). The problem is that this style of deliberation often relies heavily on elite voices who may or may not have citizens interests at stake. Sometimes commentators incorporate the public by discussing polling results or statements from politicians who invoke public opinion (Cook, Barabas, and Page 2002), but journalists have been criticized for not including the public in a more direct fashion.

A recent movement called public or “civic” journalism seeks to counter this by including citizens more directly in media reports (Glasser 1999; Rosen 2001). Sometimes this takes the form of bringing the public into media reporting by using focus groups or seeking out citizens for
(wo)man-on-the-street interviews. Increasingly, however, journalists include the public by conducting opinion polls and publishing the results (Lavrakas and Traguott 2000). The availability of polling data has drawn attention from scholars who argue that it alters leadership strategies and what people think or do (Geer 1996; Mutz 1998). The scholarship on how polls have changed politics is important and so is the related body of work on social networks. But both overlook an important and related class of political behavior: the qualitative quote.

**Respondent Quotes in Follow-Up Interviews**

We define a qualitative quote as transcribed comments from a survey respondent in a news report about that same poll. A qualitative quote appears anytime a survey respondent agrees to speak to a reporter for attribution. Typically the interviews take place over the phone some later time after the survey questions have been completed. Thus, they are not merely the open-ended responses to items in the survey, though answering the questions may have helped the person think about issues in the follow-up interview.

Empirically, some qualitative quotes are short. Some are long. Often these quotes come with basic identifying information such as name, age, hometown, and partisanship. For example, between July 18 to 21, 2008, NBC and the Wall Street Journal interviewed 502 voters to get their views on the fall presidential election. In a published article on July 24 by political reporters Seib and Meckler (2008) conveyed aggregate statistics from the poll signaling a modest Obama lead, before launching into a discussion of whether voters were really ready for an Obama presidency. The article then provided five in-depth quotations from survey respondents in the poll, which are reprinted below with the same text that appeared in the original article:

- Patti Carr, 59 years old, of Collierville, Tenn., outside of Memphis, says she voted for Democrats Bill Clinton, Al Gore and John Kerry. But she isn’t yet sold on Barack Obama. His experience is giving her pause. “I see Obama as a very nice person but I don’t believe he has the experience at this time to be president,” she says. “He’s new, he’s young and he still has a lot to learn, I believe.” She leans for now toward Sen. McCain, but is open to persuasion.

- Riki Frank, 44, a graphic artist and stay-at-home dad from Auburn, Wash., leans toward Sen. Obama, but hesitates because of his background. “I’m a white-bread American. I was raised in Iowa. I got the Midwestern work ethic,” says Mr. Frank. “He’s a black man. His name—is unique. It’s definitely not a Catholic name. He’s kind of way off the pattern of the norm of what I grew up with. That’s not necessarily a bad thing. Just because I can’t relate to the person doesn’t mean it’s a bad thing.”

- The danger for Mr. Obama is that blank spaces in American’s understanding could be filled by misinformation—the kind that holds, incorrectly, that he’s a Muslim rather than a Christian, or that he refuses to salute the American flag. That challenge is reflected in the views of Beth Brotherton, 43, of Taylorville, Ill., an attorney now staying home to care for her four children. She leans Democratic, but is uncomfortable with Sen. Obama. ‘I don’t want to find out after he’s elected that he’s got some kind of Islamic connection. I don’t think that’s true, but you never know,” she said.

- One great question that hangs over this year’s election wasn’t an issue in 1980: How much uncertainty about Sen. Obama’s background involves his race? It’s an explicit factor for some voters. “I just don’t think we’re ready for a black president,” says Donna Bender, 62, of Oshkosh, Wis., a retired credit clerk and registered Democrat. “I’m prejudiced.”

- The Obama campaign’s hope is that voters will continue to stress the need for change. That hope is embodied in Robert Benedict, 71, a Democrat in Erin, NY. He says Sen. Obama is “inexperienced,” but adds: “On the other hand, maybe that’s what we need. Maybe we need somebody who’s not the status quo politician of Washington.”
Thus in quotes from just five respondents out of more than 500 who were interviewed, the Wall Street Journal reporters created a virtual public debate about the electoral viability of Barack Obama. A range of considerations were covered, including Obama's experience, religious affiliation, unique name, and whether the country was ready to elected its first African-American president. While one might guess that interviewees would self-censor out of an attempt to offer socially desirable responses, the second to last quote above even includes a candid admission of racial prejudice from a woman within Obama's party.

Quotes like these have appeared for decades and they cover a range of topics. For example, in an article by Jonathan Ferbringer in the New York Times on June 12, 1982, respondents were asked about Reagan-era tax cuts. In one of eight quotes, a survey respondent said, “The tax cut is not going to make a difference in my life style,” said Michael Riffey, a vice president for the Bank of America in Los Angeles. ‘Clearly the Government has to cut back on the deficit and the defense budget and cut some of the overhead of the Government and get some of the waste programs out of the way,’ added Mr. Riffey, a Republican whose salary is in the $60,000 range.”

Another poll almost a decade later on the Clarence Thomas Supreme Court nomination quoted survey a respondent named Janet Seurattan from Marydell, Delaware, who “...was one of the respondents to the poll who said she doubted Professor Hill's credibility.” As the article continued, “In a follow-up interview, she said she believed that Ms. Hill had made up some of the accusations of sexual harassment. ‘She might have thought some of this stuff up in her head,’ Ms. Seurattan, 29, said. ‘women have a tendency to do that sometimes.’” The article went on by stating that, “Ms. Seurattan said that one reason that she doubted Ms. Hill's account was that she found it hard to believe that Judge Thomas would have sexually harassed only one woman in his office. ‘If he did it to one, he'd do it to all of them,’ she said. ‘I've worked with men who had an ignorant mouth, and they did it to all the women, not just me.’” Researchers typically write blandly worded questions about whether respondents perceive sexual harassment in their workplace, but these quotes make the aggregate polling statistics come alive with personal testimonials about co-workers with “an ignorant mouth.”

A last example shows the breadth of issues covered over time. Other quotes embellish upon current events and allow respondents to speak about issues in their own words. For example, a news article by Adam Nagourney and Janet Elder of the New York Times, on January 24, 2003, conveyed the results of a NYT/CBS poll from Jan.19-22, 2003 with 997 adults on President Bush, probably timed to coincide with his State of the Union Address to be delivered a few days later. The article featured three survey respondents, two of whom were identified as Republicans. The first passage was, “President Bush is concentrating on the war effort in Iraq and not worrying about the country, said Marianne Reiter, 70, a Republican in Queens. ‘I think he justifies the tax breaks by thinking they will get people to vote for him.'” The second was, “We should not be cutting taxes as long as there is a deficit, said Nancy Stevens, 65, a

\footnote{1 The article by New York Times reporter Elizabeth Kolbert titled “The Thomas Nomination: Most in National Survey Say Judge is More Believable,” appeared on Oct. 11, 1991 based upon a poll of 501 adults. The other quotes in the article were: “In a follow-up interview, one of the women surveyed for the poll, Carol Burgess, of Raleigh, N.C., said, ‘Our political system is so messed up, I don't know what it would take to correct it.’” The article went on to quote another respondent as saying, “You don't know whom to believe,” said one respondent, Alberta Paige, 46, of Biloxi, Miss. ‘I believe there is something that has not come out.’ Ms. Paige, who is black, said she did not agree with Judge Thomas's assertion that the process was tinged with racism. ‘He's trying to get the issue off of him, and get in on racism,’ she said. ‘He's an angry man.'”}
Republican who is a retired store owner from East Hardwick, Vt., said in a follow-up interview. "The tax cuts helped only the wealthy. If we took care of the budget deficit, it would trickle down better to the lower income people." A third respondent from the survey was Robert Hall, a 74-year-old retired high school business instructor from Louisiana. Mr. Hall was quoted as saying, "We didn't have a budget deficit until President Bush got in there. All those years we struggled to get rid of the deficit and now we're right back into it. The tax cuts put us back into the deficit."

These are just a taste of the rich set of follow-up interviews on a diverse set of issues from people throughout the country who have been part of the respondent interview and quoting process over the decades. Later we try to be more precise in determining how prevalent quotes like these are as well as their descriptive characteristics, but the important point for now is that qualitative quotes supplement the polling information and aggregate consensus cues that often accompany media stories on polls (i.e., the percentage of respondents who favor or oppose a position). Furthermore, and as we discuss next, these quotes are “qualitative” because of their counter-cyclical place in the evolution of public opinion measurement.

Opinion Polling and Biases

As Berinsky echoes these comments and goes further by point out their role in democratic governance. He writes, “Polls provide the most obvious and ongoing link between citizens and their leaders….surveys have become a critical mechanism for the communication of information between the mass public and political elites.” (Berinsky 2004, 2).

This is different than the view held by policymakers, who often equate public opinion with interest groups or media content (Herbst 1998). But expressions of public opinion also take the form of letters to the editor, constituency mail, protest demonstrations, or even conversations (Herbst 1994; 1998; Lee 2002; Rottinghaus 2003; 2007). In fact, historically there has been a considerable amount of variation in what public opinion “is” and how it is measured, which tends to influence the politics of the era.

Herbst (1993) laments the increasing quantification and rationalization of public opinion. The title of her book, “Numbered Voices,” conveys the basic argument. Since originating with George Gallup in the 1930s (Gallup and Rae 1940), the sample survey has become entrenched to the point that few question it (Converse 1987; 1996; cf. Blumer 1948; Ginsberg 1986). However, public opinion was not invented in the 20th century. It manifested in salons, coffeehouses, and non-random straw polls during the pre-sample survey era. These are just a few of the opinion measurement techniques that have appeared over the centuries. Herbst argues that features of modern public opinion polling that make polling organizations proud--such as automation, standardization, or procedures--tend to stifle the very essence of opinion. More specifically, Herbst (1993, 166) writes, “I contend that the rigid, structured nature of polling may narrow the range of public discourse by defining the boundaries for public debate, and by influencing the ways that journalists report on politics.” Drawing upon Max Weber’s arguments concerning rationality, she criticizes the increasingly quantified notion of public opinion.

Polling can be and has been faulted for distorting perceptions of what the public believes due to item non-response when respondents refusing to answer items on a survey (Althaus 2003; 1998; Brehm 1993). Individuals also hide behind “don’t know” responses, perhaps out of fear or
ignorance (Berinsky 2002). Yet Herbst is concerned about something far more fundamental. She worries about the diminished prospects for interpersonal communication in the polling era. As Herbst writes, “Conversation, as theorists from Tarde to Habermas have argued, is fundamental to the construction of a democratic public sphere, and polls do not seem to generate interpersonal discussion” (p. 166). In a similar manner, she also believes polling influences journalism to its detriment. Herbst writes “…when newspaper journalists use the sample survey to describe public opinion on an issue, they are less likely to conduct in-depth interviews with knowledgeable citizens and political activists” (p. 18). Yet follow-up interviews with survey respondents represent movement in the opposite direction toward a more qualitative and unstructured rendition of public opinion. Respondents are being given a chance to talk about issues in their own words, not forced into response options with stilted language such as “favor or oppose.”

*Expectations and Mechanisms*

Just as aggregate poll results convey information about what others in a society prefer, the process of including follow-up interviews transmits potentially even more detailed issue information. Citizens who are exposed to quotes discover not only what the prevailing view is, but how others arrived at their viewpoints. In that sense, this is an uncharted area of citizen-to-citizen influence, yet one that potentially approximates democratic deliberation and something that helps citizens make sense of the world through providing justifications and frames.

To some degree, then, there are reasons to be optimistic about this development. Verba (1996) defends the use of polls and why they should have the stature that they do. In particular, Verba argues polls eliminate bias inherent in the political system which are often the result of self-selection; “Surveys produce just what democracy is supposed to produce—equal representation of all citizens” (p.3). When polling firms team up with the news media to reducing barriers to participation by conducting a poll and seeking out individuals for interviews, it may help provide some much needed diversity in political debate. It may also be the sort of unstructured, communicative style of public opinion expression that Herbst recommends. In other words, the quotes give people a glimpse of opinion diversity without having them speak directly to others. Yet the process of qualitative quotes can also work against the faithful transmission of public opinion to citizens and lawmakers. Given that there can only be space for a fraction of all respondents, the quotes are almost certainly going to be atypical in some fashion.

We will explore these and related issues. For example, how often are follow-up interviews used, both across time and sources? Do quotes provide the sort of opinion diversity that, some argue, is lacking in political life? Furthermore, are there any patterns underlying who is selected? If random, then nothing we should not find any significant predictors of the measures used by interviewers and journalists to screen respondents for potential interviews. On the other hand, if there are biases, as we expect, then socio-economic indicators in the surveys should predict who is likely to be a candidate for interviewing. Finally, are the quotes in support of the aggregate results or are they being used to undermine the dominant direction of the poll?

Our first hypothesis is that the possibility of mediated, semi-impersonal deliberation exists through qualitative quotes. That is, the quotes appear regularly, over time, and with enough diversity to simulate some of the key supply side requirements of deliberation. Second,

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2 Herbst (1993) also writes, “…polling is an attempt to maximize a ‘top-down’ form of mass political participation [and] it may fail to improve debate and discussion in democratic societies as compared to public opinion techniques of the past” (p. 66).
we argue that the pool from which the quotes are draw is not a random selection. In other words, there will be socio-economic and demographic biases inherent in the pool of potential interviewees. Given that quotes are not well known, we will chart their history and how they are used by journalists to supports headlines.

In the second half of our paper, we study the effects of these follow-up interviews. We expect that quotes are another form of public opinion and thus will be just as influential when it comes to moving public opinion. That is, scholars have already shown that poll results influence citizens. The quotes from respondents in the polls will have an independent and comparable contribution to opinion formation. Some of the same processes will be at work as well, with the largest effects for those who engage in cognitive elaboration (see Mutz 1998 for more). What this means is that while heuristic responses are possible—with subjects cuing off of the consensus information—the effects will be moderated by the extent to which individuals actively process the information and their level of commitment to the issue. When individuals are not committed to the issue and engage in elaboration, they should be highly likely to be swayed by polls and/or quotes. This condition approximates the deliberative ideal (Barabas 2004), and it offers the best potential for influencing public opinion.

**Data and Methods**

Our analyses take place at several different though related levels with multiple datasets. Because qualitative quotes are not especially well known, the first part of the our study charts their prevalence, describing how often and in what form the follow-up interviews take as well as some of the patterns underlying their use. Later in this phase, we analyze individual-level survey data from the polls featured in the news stories to better characterize the quotation process and to search for nonrandom patterns. The second half of our paper assesses what effects, if any, quotations have on the views of individuals who encounter them in news reports. The subsections below detail each major part of the data acquisition process and our methods.

**Media Reports on Polls**

The first step was to identify news reports that contained information about surveys. We were not concerned with generic references to polls from sources beyond the newspaper in question. Instead, we focus on surveys conducted in the days prior to the article which are sponsored by the newspaper and their partner polling organizations.

This was accomplished by using Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe electronic database to search for the term “poll” or “survey” in the full text of an article as well as the name of the survey organization. For each article that came up, a researcher read the article for any mentions of survey results and follow-up quotes. This technique enables us to provide a historical look at the complete set of articles with polls and follow-up qualitative quotes in the *New York Times* as well as the breadth of quotes in three other sources (*USA Today*, the *L.A. Times*, and the *Washington Post*) for the 2006-2007 time period. For all of our sources at this initial stage, we counted the number of poll stories in a month for each organization as well as the subset of these that contained follow-up interviews with the survey respondents.

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3 For example, when searching for poll articles in the *New York Times*, we started with all major papers under the general news category and then searched for “New York Times/CBS” in the full text and not “news summary” or “editorial desk” in the full text. We also limited the search to articles from the “New York Times.”
Next, once news stories with polls and follow-up interviews were located, we conducted a content analyses to build a database with basic descriptive information on the individuals being quoted as well as information on the substance of their remarks and how their quote fit within the news story. More specifically, we created a series of dichotomous measures indicating whether the respondent’s political party was mentioned (1=yes, 0=no), their age, occupation, city, state, gender, name, race, or religion. We also counted the number of distinct reasons the person gave for their opinion, the direction of the quote on a liberal (-1) to conservative (1) continuum, and whether their statement supported or contradicted the headline of the article. The last few indicators were especially helpful for trying to understand whether a journalist was attempting to provide opportunities for dissent or merely trying to provide consistent backing for a particular viewpoint in the article. Appendix A provides additional details on the coding of these measures.

Polling Data

Beyond characterizing the quotes in the media content analysis, we also sought to acquire the underlying survey data. In most instances, the polls mentioned in the newspaper articles were publicly available. In particular, to find the survey data, we searched the archives of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and the Inter-university Consortium for Social and Political Research (ICPSR) for the polls mentioned in any of the New York Times articles from 1979 through 2007. We comment on the distributions later, but we were able to download the survey data more than three-quarters of the time (i.e., 192 of 236 unique stories, or 81%).

Once the polls were identified, they were stacked into a single dataset. Many of the questions did not reappear across surveys, but several did. In particular, we were able to find descriptive data such as race, gender, age, income, and education as well as partisanship and some attitudinal variables (e.g., presidential approval). Importantly, we also identified a key variable used to screen respondents for possible follow-up interviews. Often called “chatty” or “nm” in the New York Times/CBS codebooks, the variable is a three-point interviewer designation of whether the respondent is willing to be called back by a reporter and is talkative, willing but not talkative, or not willing.

In the first part of our analysis, we employ multinomial logit models to analyze this variable as a function of demographics and other information we have from the surveys. Our goal is to determine whether there are any biases in the pool of respondents who are deemed willing and talkative by the interviewers. Also where possible, we attempt to come up with a possible set of individuals in the in the surveys who might have been interviewed based upon whatever information we have for them from the articles. Ordinarily such an endeavor might present confidentiality concerns, but the respondents agreed to reveal their identities publicly in the news story and there was often some ambiguity about which respondents could have been interviewed (i.e., the article mentions a fifty-year old from New York, and there are several people in the dataset who match that description). The analyses in this phase of the project move

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4 We found two NYT stories with follow-up interviews in 1979, but the poll data were not available. Data from the 2006-2007 period were not in yet deposited in the archives at the time the data were collected. The ratio of polls found for articles with follow-up interviews will improve once data for the 2006-2007 period is added in the future.

5 Although it seems to combine two traits—willingness and talkativeness—the variable appears that way in the data.

6 As an additional precaution, we explained our procedures to the head of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Dr. David Weakliem, during the spring of 2006. He confirmed that our research did not represent a confidentiality violation. The public opinion data remains unidentified; we simply add a variable to identify the set of possible respondents without revealing any particular one. We then use the indicators to describe and analyze distributions of the follow-up interviewee set across surveys and time.
Experiments

To probe the effects that citizen cues have on individuals who encounter them, we conducted three experiments using student samples from a large university in the eastern part of the United States. In particular, we recruited 933 students in twenty-four political science classes from all subfields and levels during May 2007 through July 2008. Each survey took approximately 15 minutes and the subjects were not paid. As a warm-up, students were asked to rate their knowledge on more than a dozen issues like Medicare, abortion, education policy, the war in Iraq, and even fashion trends. Then, on the second page of the paper-and-pencil questionnaire, they were exposed to an experimental stimulus or given a placebo control news story. After reading our treatments which we describe below, students completed additional items pertaining to the experiment, policy preferences items on other issues, as well as a battery of questions related to their demographic background.

The first experiment, on Social Security privatization, was the most comprehensive. There were twelve experimental conditions. The standard introduction for experimental conditions was that there was a “New Poll on Social Security” by a journalist named Brenda Goodman. The first few lines repeated in all experimental conditions were, “A public opinion poll of Americans aged 18 and older was recently conducted on the issue of Social Security privatization, a policy in which individuals would be allowed to invest part of their payroll tax contributions in the stock market to help pay for their retirement.” Depending on their assignment, respondents were either randomized into reading aggregate poll data from the survey or quotations from four fictional respondents. The poll data suggested that a supermajority favored or opposed privatizing Social Security.\(^7\) Nine other experimental conditions, subjects were shown realistic quotes conveying background characteristics and issue positions for four poll respondents. We varied partisanship, direction of preference, and unanimity. For example, in one condition, all four faux respondents were identified as Democrats who disagreed with the privatization reform idea.

- Brian Sheehan, 36, a Democrat from Elmhurst, New York said, "I do not think the government should allow people to invest their Social Security money."
- Carol Bender, 58, a Democrat from Springfield, Illinois said, "It is a bad idea."
- Jim Edgar, 67, a Democrat from Longview, Texas, said, "I guess I'm against that policy."
- Andrea Foster, 25, a Democrat from Oakland, California said, "I strongly disagree with the idea on Social Security. It doesn't make sense."

In other conditions, the same four faux individuals were described as all Republicans or mixed partisans (two from each party) who disagreed with the policy. Similarly, there were conditions in which all four respondents were cast as all Democrats (or Republicans, or Mixed) who favored the proposal. Finally, there were instances in which partisans crossed the lines (Republicans opposing it and Democrats supporting it). The names, ages, hometowns, and basic structure of the quotes remained unchanged across all conditions. In addition, the genders, ages, and states

\(^7\) “A clear majority, 72%, said they favored allowing individuals to invest part of their Social Security tax contributions into the stock market.” A different opposition condition used the word “opposed” instead of “favored.”
were varied so as not to give preference to any single profile or region. In the final condition, which served as a placebo control, the same four fictitious poll respondents were quoted as agreeing with the idea of expanding the number of teams in the National Football League.

The first experiment on Social Security was based upon the consensus cues in other forms of impersonal influence at the aggregate level (Mutz 1998). That is, these quotations or polls only provide a cue as to the distribution of support, either for a large poll or four individuals, who may or may not be in agreement with each other. The Social Security experiments will be helpful for comparing pro vs. con conditions as well as whether partisans are more inclined to follow cues from fellow partisans. These experiments also included measures of cognitive elaboration, attitude commitment, and need for cognition that Mutz (1998) uses to distinguish between purely heuristic effects and a cognitive response process.

The Social Security experiments are helpful from the standpoint of isolating directionality and partisanship in the citizen cues, but they lack a key element of realism because they do not provide reasons for support or opposition. In other words, they do not say why each person favors or opposes the issue, just where they stand, much like the presentation of aggregate public opinion results. Journalists may supply some of this information, either from other poll questions or from their own reading of the issue, but one feature of the real world quotes cited earlier is that they allow respondents to express in their own words why they take the stand that they do. In two other experiments, on immigration policy and energy policy, we included reasons based upon rationales that appeared in real articles. Also like the real world manifestation of qualitative quotes, we varied whether respondents would get polls only, quotes only, or both. This allows us to test the relative effects as well as their effects when in competition, to see if being exposed to deliberation (e.g., Druckman and Nelson 2003) or competition between polls and quotes has an effect (e.g., Chong and Druckman 2007).

The second and third experiments use a basic 2x2 design, featuring quotes only, polls only, both, or nothing (control). The experimental stimuli text was adapted, often verbatim, from articles that appeared in the New York Times. In that sense, the experiments focus on some of the same polls that are part of our larger database on articles and follow-up interviews. Compared to the highly specific and segmented treatments in the Social Security experiment, they are less comprehensive but more realistic in the sense that they more closely resemble real world political phenomena (i.e., there are no variations across partisanship or substantive direction of the quotes, just whether a quote appears or not, alone or in conjunction with a poll). Appendix B provides more detailed information on the treatment and control conditions used in each of the experiments. The analysis begins with basic comparisons across condition means, but then proceeds to statistical models (probit or ordered probit) that attempt to control for

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8 For energy policy, the treatments were modeled on articles that appeared in the New York Times on April 27, 2007 titled “Climate Panel Sees Need for New Steps on Emissions” and another title “Public Remains Split on Response to Warming.” The second of the two articles referenced a nationwide poll conducted from April 20-24, 2007 (n=1,052) by the New York Times and CBS News. The treatment texts were paragraphs from the articles, modified slightly to make them flow. The article featured a follow-up interview with a respondent in the poll. This poll was selected to be temporally near the time the experiment went into the field. The immigration experiment was also modeled on an article titled, “Public divided over how to treat illegals,” in the USA Today on April 12, 2006. The article quoted several respondents from a poll conducted by USA Today and Gallup from May 5-7, 2006 (n=1,013). Three of the quotes from the article were used in the experimental treatments. The outcome measures for both experiments were items on gas tax increases and building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico that appeared in the actual surveys.
background characteristics and that provide interactions with theoretically important variables such as cognitive elaboration, need for cognition, and commitment.

**Study 1: The Use and Origins of Qualitative Quotes**

We argue that qualitative quotes expose individuals to multiple viewpoints on issues that they might not have heard otherwise, providing a low-cost way of achieving the ideals of democratic deliberation with diverse participants. We believe some of the same underlying opinion mechanisms are at work too, but before studying the effects of qualitative quotes, it is helpful to understand their history and how journalists use them to convey information about public opinion to citizens.

*The Prevalence of Citizen Quotes*

From 1979 through 2007, we identified 2,630 articles that mentioned poll results in *New York Times* articles based upon polling from the joint *CBS News* and *New York Times* polling team. Of these, just under ten percent (n=239) contained follow-up interviews with qualitative quotes. These aggregate numbers mask a considerable amount of heterogeneity. In some months, like July of 1994, four out of the six poll stories that month featured follow-up interviews. Occasionally the percentage was higher, such as when every poll article in a month featured quotes (e.g., Oct. 1979, Nov. 1979, April 1980, July 1997, April 1998, April 1999, or August 2001). But the percentages were high in these months because they typically featured only one or two polling stories and all had quotes. The average across all years and all sources was about 12% of the stories with poll results contained follow-up quotations from the respondents.

Somewhat more illuminating are the recent trends. Figure 1 depicts the number of articles with poll results and follow-up quotations across four major newspapers for the 2006-2007 period. In Panel A, the *New York Times* featured poll stories in 158 of their articles, or about 7 per month. Of these, nearly 20% (n=31) contained qualitative quotes, or a little more than 1 per month. Compared to the 1979-2005 period, the NYT has increasingly relied on qualitative quotes in their articles about public opinion. In some months, a third to half of the stories featured quotations (Jan. ’06, Jan. ’07, and Aug. ’07). Yet in other months, like November of 2007, there were eleven news stories with polling results, and none of them contained quotes.9

Insert Figure 1 here.

The next frame, Panel B, shows the series for the *Los Angeles Times* and their partner organization, the financial media firm *Bloomberg*. There were 110 articles during the two year period in the LAT series. Of these 34, or 31%, featured articles with quotations. The average was about 5 polling stories per month, about 1.5 of which had follow-up interviews. In some months, like May of 2006, all news stories with polls featured quotations. Other high months with 50% or more of the articles featuring respondent interviews were April ’06, June ’06, December ’06, and July ’07.

The last two panels show the aggregate patterns for the *USA Today*/Gallup and *Washington Post/ABC News* polling teams. There is considerable variance in the *USA Today* article count. Over the same time period, there are hundreds of additional stories with poll results. Across the two years, there were 438 poll stories, with an average of 18 per month. Of

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9 Interestingly, this seems to be a newspaper phenomenon. A brief examination of the CBS news suggests that poll results are only conveyed in the aggregate. The broadcast partner in these surveys rarely employed qualitative quotes despite the fact that television stations help fund the surveys.
these, quotations were featured in 23 stories, for an average of roughly one per month. Again, there was a lot of variation. Several months had 15, 24, or 28 articles with polls but no quotations (July '07, June '06, and Sept. '06 respectively). But during December of 2007, almost a quarter of the poll stories (4 of 17) featured quotations from poll respondents.

The Washington Post featured poll results in 240 articles over the two years. Of all the sources considered here, it used quotes the least, just 13 times (.54%). The heaviest usage, in percentage terms, were the months of April '06, July '06, May '07, and November of '07, with about 14-15% of the stories containing interviews. Often these stories feature more than citizen cues and aggregate poll results. Based upon an examination of the articles, it seems the Post was often able to use elite interviews in their stories given their proximity with Washington, DC and connections with lawmakers.

Overall, we found more than 3,400 articles with polls and of these, more than 300 (312) employed follow-up articles across the four sources. Interestingly, readers of the New York Times or Los Angeles Times were exposed to more citizen cues and opinion interpretations on average than readers of the USA Today and Washington Post. Yet, there is considerable heterogeneity across the sources, and as we see next, the newspapers employ the quotes differently. That is, just because a paper uses more qualitative quotes than another does not automatically mean that the quotations featured a higher level of diversity.

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for the attributes of individuals who are quoted for news stories in four newspapers: the New York Times, USA Today, the Los Angeles Times, and the Washington Post. There are 1,211 individuals in this dataset, each given varying amounts of information as to their identity. The most common aspects of a respondent's identity provided by news stories are: the individual's gender (100%), name (93%), home town (98%), age (73%), and occupation (68%; i.e., there was occupational information for 882 individuals out of 1211 quoted). In addition to basic individual attributes, over 35% of overall articles report an individual's party affiliation when quoting them. Surprisingly, Republican identifiers are the most quoted overall, with 16% of quotes given by them. This is over 3% higher than the number of Democrats, and twice as much as independents. Even when looking at specific newspapers, Republicans are usually quoted at greater amounts. For the New York Times (a supposedly liberal newspaper), reporters quote 5% more Republicans than Democrats for news stories.

This difference becomes even more dramatic when we look at the New York Times over the time period of 2006-2007. There are four quotes from Republicans for every one quote by a Democrat during this two year stretch. Despite its reputation, when it comes to interviews with individuals concerning current events, the New York Times does not appear to be slanted toward liberals. In fact, the New York Times appears more hospitable to conservative individuals, or at least they make an effort to include the voices of Republicans. The other newspapers included in this table were only examined for the two-year time period of 2006-2007. The most dramatic split in the number of partisans quoted for news stories comes from the Washington Post, where Democrats are being quoted at a rate of 20% to 8% for Republicans (i.e., 4 of 50 quotes were identified as Republicans while 10 of 50, or 20%, were Democrats). The sample size here is smaller than for the other newspapers, however. For the USA Today, there is only a slight difference between the number of Democrats and Republicans quoted in their news stories. Still, Democrats are quoted 1.5% more than Republicans over this time period. Finally, the LA Times also has a very even split with regards to partisan quotes. Republicans are quoted more often than Democrats, though only by two quotations.
The final aspect of this descriptive table is the nature of the quotes included in news stories. In other words, we want to explore the issue of why newspapers include quotes from everyday citizens in their news stories. Are these quotes included to elucidate the topic of the article, pushing the views of the article's authors or political actors? Or are these quotes a random sample of the respondents to the poll, included just to improve the readability and relatability of the article? The way we get at these questions is by measuring the number of supportive or contradictory quotes reported in each article. If a quote from an individual seems to support then contention of the article's headline, it is considered supportive. If the quote contradicts the thrust of the headline, then it is considered a contradictory quote.

From the results, it is clear that newspaper authors use quotations selectively and judiciously in order to support the contention of the article. Overall, over 75% of quotes serve to reinforce the article's headline, while few than 15% go against the headline. The strategic use of supportive quotes help make the article seem more convincing, while enough contrary views are included to make the article not completely one-sided. Opposing voices are heard, but just at greatly reduced rates. The highest proportion of supportive quotes are found in the USA Today (84%) and the Washington Post (82%), while the lowest amount is found in the New York times over the 2006-2007 time period (74%). Clearly, newspapers seek out individuals who elucidate the argument provided by an article in order for it to have the maximum impact. In analyses not shown, there were no dominant patterns in the types of quotes employed to reinforce headlines (i.e., quotes that were supportive of the headlines were no more likely to be from any particular demographic or partisan group). As we see next, however, there are biases related to the supply of respondents who are available for being quoted.

The Pool of Potential Interviewees

Table 2 shows the results from a multinomial logit model that uncovers the factors which promote or inhibit an individual's willingness to discuss their views with reporters. We suspect that newspaper reporters do not choose individuals to interview at random. Instead, they seek out individuals who express a willingness to talk and have things to say. There are three categories into which individuals are coded in the dataset by the survey interviewer concerning the respondents willingness to express their views to reporters. The first category (which serves as the baseline for the model above) is an individual being unwilling to talk to a reporter. The next category is an individual who is willing to talk to a reporter, but is coded by the interviewer as being not talkative. Finally, the top category is an individual who is willing to speak to a reporter and is considered talkative by the interviewer. It is somewhat subjective as to how the interviewer codes individuals as being talkative or not, but it is likely that newspaper reporters seek out individuals who they think will discuss the topic in some detail and be willing to speak in some length.

Looking at the relationship between being unwilling to discuss their views and being willing (but not talkative), there are a number of factors that play a role. First, increasing an individual's education makes them more likely to be in the willing but not talkative category compared to the unwilling category (coeff.=.12; \( p < .05 \)). As expected, greater education seems to give individuals the confidence to speak about their views to reporters. Age, however, has a negative impact. As people get older, they are less likely to be in the willing but not talkative category compared to the unwilling category (coeff.=-1.35; \( p < .05 \)). Being female has a similar effect, as women are more likely to be unwilling to share their views with a reporter than be
willing, but not talkative (coeff.=-.31; p < .05). Finally, those who consider themselves Republicans are more likely to be willing and not talkative compared to not willing (coeff.=.10; p < .05). Other variables included in the model, except being a liberal which is marginally positive (.04; p < .10), have no statistical effect on an individual's likelihood of being in one category over the other.10

The right half of Table 2 show the results of comparing the categories unwilling with willing and talkative. As before, increasing one's education makes a person more likely to be willing and talkative compared to unwilling (.60; p < .05). Overall, it appears that additional education makes a person more willing to speak to reporters, regardless of that individual's talkativeness. Higher levels of Income also has an effect, as wealthier individuals are more likely to be willing and talkative rather than unwilling (.16; p < .05). In contrast, Age continues to have a negative effect on willingness here, as older individuals are again more likely to be unwilling to speak rather than willing and talkative (-.74; p < .05). African-Americans and women are also less likely to be willing and talkative (-.08 and -.46 respectively; p < .05). Partisanship and political ideology also seems to matter. Republicans are slightly more likely to be rated willing and talkative than independents (the baseline; .03; p < .10). Similarly, liberals are more likely to be willing and talkative relative to moderates (.15; p < .05), while conservatives are less likely to be so (-.04; p < .05).

Since multinomial logit coefficients are challenging to interpret directly, Figure 2 shows the predicted responses of being in a particular outcome category with large changes in the independent variables (either categorical in the case of dichotomous measures or min-to-max changes for continuous measures). The baseline probability of being not willing is .26 for the average/modal respondent, .38 for willing but not talkative, and .36 for being willing and talkative. Reordered in terms of their substantive effects, Figure 2 shows that age has the largest influence. Older individuals are 21 percentage points less likely to speak to a reporter. Almost all of this decreased willingness comes as the expense of those who are willing but not talkative as the solid black bars indicate. The gray bars show that women are also less likely to be willing to speak to a reporter compared with men by roughly 7 percentage points. Most of this decrease is relative to the category of being willing and talkative.

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The other main substantive effects we observed are for education. Perhaps unsurprisingly, more educated individuals are more willing to speak for attribution and they are judged more talkative by about 12 points. Liberals and high income respondents are also more likely to be in the quotation pool. In an unexpected twist given the frequency of Republican quotes shown earlier, Republicans are more willing by a few points to be willing but not talkative. Similarly, conservatives are less likely to be willing and talkative. Both of these suggest that Republican or conservatives would be less likely to be quoted given their lowered likelihood of being in the top quotable category. Finally, and consistent with other socio-economic status biases, black respondents are less likely to be willing and talkative by a few percentage points.

These patterns confirm the selection-bias hypothesis with respect to the pool of potential interviewees. Although they started from a national representative group of potential candidates,

10 The IIA assumption of multinomial logit holds except when we cluster the standard errors on the survey, which is important to do. We present multinomial logit results because they are more tractable from the standpoint of using multiply imputed data (King et al 2001), but the results are similar using multinomial probit and generalized ordered probit.
reporters use qualitative quotes from a nonrandom segment of respondents. Thus, in an attempt to move beyond the representative quantitative numbers, the use of qualitative quotes introduces elements of selection-bias into reporting on mass opinion. There appear to be journalistic imperatives driving these decisions, as the comments embodied in the quotes—irrespective of demographic patterns—reinforce the headlines of the article.

Study 2: Experimental Evidence

Having established that quotes are a regular feature of the political landscape and that they have the potential to introduce distorted perceptions of public opinion, we next sought to establish whether quotes alter political judgments. To do this we conducted three experiments. We outlined our procedures in the methods section, but the main substantive difference across the experiments—other than issue topic—was that the first experiment separates quotes and polls by pushing and pulling in various directions (e.g., either pro or con, attributed to Democrats or Republicans, consistent with party stands or not) while the two others pit real world quotes against poll information from articles that appeared in the mid-2000s.

Experiment 1: Social Security

The first experiment randomly assigned 720 subjects into one of 11 treatment conditions or a twelfth placebo control condition. The main outcome of interest was public preferences on a proposal to partial privatize the Social Security program in the United States. The wording was, “As you may know, one idea to address concerns with the Social Security system would allow people who retire in future decades to invest some of their Social Security taxes in the stock market and bonds, but would reduce the guaranteed benefits they get when they retire. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?” There were four answer choices from “extremely good idea” to “extremely bad idea.” The language on the question appeared in national polls from the NYT/CBS team and other organizations during the early part of the 21st Century and the issue is one that has vexed policymakers for years. Consistent with research on impersonal influence (e.g., Mutz 1998), subjects were also asked for their level of commitment to the issue and they were given a chance to offer some of their thoughts as they were forming their opinions.

Subjects were exposed to a variety of possible treatments concerning the direction and partisan affiliation of the consensus cues as well as whether the information was consistent or inconsistent with party stands on the issues. It is helpful to begin by considering consensus cues in general (collapsing across partisan variations) relative to the control condition. Like the public as a whole, the 54 control group respondents were relatively split in terms of their support for Social Security privatization with a .48 on a 0 to 1 scale with “extremely good idea” being scored...

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11 In analyses not shown, every individual who was actually quoted in the articles appeared to have answered willing and talkative on this measure, even allowing for uncertainty over the respondent’s identity.
12 The commitment question was, “How committed are you to your stand on allowing people to invest some of their Social Security taxes in the stock market? On a 10 point scale in which 10 means completely committed and 1 means not at all committed, how committed would you say you are?” The cognitive elaboration measure was, “As you were thinking about your opinion on allowing people to invest some of their Social Security taxes in the stock market, what kinds of thoughts occurred to you?”
13 Since Goldwater in the 1960s and continuing through George W. Bush and John McCain, the Republican party and its standard-bearers have championed Social Security privatization. Democrats have long resisted these efforts.
as the top category. Confirming research on poll-driven impersonal influence, being exposed to poll findings tends to make individuals more supportive of the privatization idea by about 7 percentage points (i.e., to .54 compared to .48 with rounding; \( p < .05 \)).

Insert Figure 3 here.

Importantly, however, receiving aggregate support quotes moved preferences by almost as much. The five percentage point change is different from the control group (mean=.53, \( n=185 \) for a difference of .05, s.e.=.036; \( p < .08 \), one-tailed) and statistically indistinguishable from polling conditions. Disagreement quotations moved respondents in the opposite direction relative to the controls, but the three point change was not statistically significant. Similarly, mixed quotations with pro and con sentiments had mildly positive effect of a few points, but not enough to be different from chance.

These patterns are confirmed in the first column of Table 3, which shows the effects of the public consensus cues in increasing levels of detail. The ordered probit model coefficient for supportive quotations is .25 with a standard error of .17, which is statistically significant at the \( p < .10 \) level, one-tailed. No other quote condition registered a significant effect, but the aggregate poll cues lead to positive and significant effects on privatization opinions (coeff.=.31, s.e.=.18; \( p < .05 \)). These models consider all respondents, but the next two columns consider self-identified Democrats and Republicans separately. Interestingly, Democrats who might ordinarily have been expected to oppose the policy were only influenced by supportive quotes (coeff.=.39; \( p < .05 \)). On the other hand, Republicans have historically championed privatization. The supportive quotes did nothing to alter that support, but the negative consensus quotes subtly worked to diminish their support for privatization (coeff.= -.30; \( p < .10 \)). All of this confirms the idea that qualitative quotes matter, especially when it comes to facilitating exposure to opposing viewpoints.

Insert Table 3 here.

In the fourth column of Table 3, we return to models with all respondents, but this time the various treatment conditions are separated. There were eleven treatments in all. The signs on the coefficients are sensible. All three supportive quotation conditions, attributed to Democrats, Republicans, or both parties are positive, but only the quotes attributed to Republicans are statistically significant (\( p < .10 \)). Similarly, two of the three opposition quote conditions are negative, but this time only the bipartisan group registers a significant effect (coeff.= -.30; \( p < .10 \)). Finally, we see from this model that it is not just any polls but particularly the positive consensus cues that push support higher (coeff.=.43; \( p < .05 \)).

The last set of estimates in Table 3 are for a model that includes interactions of the experimental conditions with Democratic or Republican partisan dummies as well as a variety of control variables. The main effects, which can be interpreted as the effects for the omitted Independent category, are generally consistent with the previous results. Independents are more likely to support privatization when they are exposed to Republicans who support it, mixed partisans who are either split or when Democrats are supportive. They are also influenced by

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14 A similar question appeared in a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll in March 2005. Most thought it would be a bad idea (59%), while 33% said good idea, and 8% stated no opinion. Support was higher among younger respondents.

15 Most of the subgroup differences are based upon simple one-tailed t-tests, but the findings hold with nonparametric specifications and later the effects will be considered in more elaborate statistical models.
aggregate polls to support privatization, irrespective of whether the polls point to majorities in favor of the policy or against it.

It is hard to tell a consistent story about the Democratic and Republican interaction terms. There are significant interactions for Democrats. When Republicans are quoted as supporting privatization, Democrats oppose it, which is understandable. Democrats are also more likely to support privatization when the cues come from both partisan groups. No other Democratic condition identifier is significant, which could be due to power reasons since no condition had more than 70 subjects. Every significant Republican condition interaction is negative, which applies to 8 of the 11 groups. Republicans are more likely to oppose privatization when they encounter Republicans who support it, Democrats who oppose it, Republicans who oppose it, and mixed partisans of any combination as well as aggregate level polling on either side of the issue. These puzzling results include controls for commitment to the issue, being a Republican, and gender. Individuals who are not committed to the issue are less likely to support privatization as are women. Republicans, however, are more likely to favor privatization.

Other than confirming that quotes matter, the direction of the effects was not always what one might expect, even for the aggregate poll results. Offsetting counterintuitive results like these are not unknown in the literature on impersonal influence (Mutz 1998), but often it depends on issue and individual characteristics, particularly whether the issue is one where individuals are committed and whether they engage in cognitive elaboration. To explore these topics, we conducted two additional experiments, which are smaller in scope but which allow us to probe psychological mechanisms and which feature aspects of quotes missing in the privatization experiment: the reasons for and against policy positions that respondents offer along with their directional views.

Experiments 2 & 3: Immigration and Energy

We conducted a second experiment on the issue of immigration, specifically the policy of securing the southern border of the United States, which had been in the news during the time of the experiment. The key outcome question was, “Do you favor or oppose building a wall along the border with Mexico as a way to reduce illegal immigration to the United States?” Again, this was a question that media organizations had been asking of the American public. Respondents who had been in other experiments answered this question, which gave use a group of almost 900 (n=891) who could be control cases. The policy was not popular in general, with only 40% supporting the idea of building a wall on the border. This figure is similar to national polling by USA Today/Gallup in May of 2006 (n=1,013) with the same question, which found that 42% favored building the wall, with 56% opposed and 2% stating no opinion. The experiment pitted polling information with majorities urging action on controlling the board against quotes from three individuals who express support for the wall policy. There was also a condition which employed both poll information and quotes.

We employed a similar structure for a third experiment on energy policy. The main opinion preference item was, “In order to cut down on energy consumption and reduce global warming, would you favor or oppose an increased federal tax on gasoline?”16 When this question was asked by CBS News and the New York Times in April of 2007, 38% of national respondents favored the policy while 58% opposed; the balance was undecided or did not know. Our subjects were even more opposed. Only 28% of the nearly 800 person control group (n=790) supported

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16 The immigration and gas tax questions are coded as 1=favor, 0=opposed. Both experiments also include the commitment and cognitive elaboration measures.
the policy, but this may have been due to the timing of the survey. Gas prices rose considerably between April 2007 and when the surveys were actually fielded later that year and in 2008. At any rate, most citizens and subjects in our experiment were not very enthusiastic about the idea.

The lack of majority support for both issues made the movements we observed even more impressive. Figure 4 shows the deviations from the control groups for the three treatment conditions in the immigration and gas tax experiments. Beginning with the immigration condition means which are denoted with the black solid bars, consensus polling information point in the direction of a rampant immigration problem did not stimulate more support for building a wall. In fact, it lowered it considerably, from 40% in the control group to just 18% in the treatment group for a difference of 22 points ($p < .10$). On the other hand, consensus information in a poll pointing to a majority behind the idea of raising the gas tax increased support in that condition relative to the control group by roughly seven points. This difference was marginally insignificant ($p < .15$).

That polling can lead to movements consistent or inconsistent with the consensus has been documented elsewhere (Mutz 1998). What has not been shown is how quotes from a few of the respondents in a poll can have equivalent effects or that they interact with polling results to produce entirely new patterns. This is seen in “quotes only” and “quotes & polls” condition comparisons of Figure 4. Immigration quotes themselves have a small positive effect (n.s.), but when polls and quotes appear in the same article, the effects are the largest we observe at 23 percentage points. That is, support for building a wall along the border with Mexico increases from 40% in the control condition to 64% in the treatment condition ($p < .06$), which completely reverses the negative poll-only effect. The same pattern appears in the case of the gas tax. While polling information in support of the policy moved opinions slightly in favor of the policy, quotes alone had the opposite effect, lowering support by 16 percentage points ($p < .05$). Again, however, when subjects encounter articles with both quotes and polling information, they move toward the consensus cue by roughly 10 percentage points ($p < .10$).

All of these condition-level movements are important because they suggest new dynamics are at work when it comes to the effects of polling information. Polls and quotes seem to work different for different issues when separated. When combined, they reinforce each other and produce similar results. The quotes in these experiments differ from the Social Security design in that they mention reasons for support (e.g., slashed funds for cleaning up the environment, legislators beholden to Big Oil, alternative sources of energy in the case of the gas tax or strained governmental resources, guidelines for legal immigration, and a cut off date to make current immigrants legal for the proposal to build a wall). Aggregate polling results presented by journalists may get into some of these details, but quotes function as pseudo-deliberation. Citizens are exposed to the views of others who may or may not agree with them. Rationales are offered, albeit with the journalist picking and choosing among the pool of potential interviewees and possible quotes.

An important question, though, is what mechanisms are at work? Specifically, are these the same as in other forms of impersonal influence, or are they different? Table 4 explores these issues for the immigration and energy policy proposals. The first and fourth columns use condition indicators to confirm what was depicted in Figure 4 regarding the significant positive effects for polls and quotes despite erratic patterns for polls or quotes alone. The second and fifth

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17 Citizens were treatment subjects in one experiment or the other, but not both. They could, however, serve as control group respondents for other experiments if they did not receive those treatments.
columns add important individual-level characteristics of cognitive elaboration and need for cognition, along with their interactions and a measure of individual-level commitment to the issue (see Mutz 1998, Chapter 8 for a similar modeling strategy). The main effects are confirmed, but there is added evidence that the relationships are interactive.

Insert Table 4 here.

Cognitive elaboration refers to the tendency of individuals to engage in systematic mental processing. In the immigration experiment, the original effects observed for polls or for polls & quotes are magnified among those who displayed evidence of elaboration on their views by writing out the reasons they supported or opposed the policy. For the gas tax, this was true only of the respondents in the polling condition (coeff. = .59, se=.37). Respondents high in need for cognition also have a tendency to be systematic processors. For both immigration and energy policy, they are more likely to lead subjects in the polling condition toward supporting the reform proposals. However, the most illuminating results from the perspective of simulating deliberation are in columns three and six. These specifications add the triple interactions between being low in commitment to the issue (scored as 1 if respondents is below the median; 0 otherwise), engages in cognitive elaboration, and was assigned to one of our treatment conditions. The patterns identified earlier still hold, but importantly individuals who are not committed to the issue (i.e., keep an open-mind), but who elaborate and are exposed to opinions on the matter reverse their support and become much less likely to support a wall on the border with Mexico. This relationship is depicted in Figure 5, the predicted probabilities for the -65.93 coefficient (se=21.48) suggest that the effect is large, at roughly 40 percentage points ($p < .05$). Thus, polls and quotes, even with elaboration, lead people to be more supportive of the policy, but the relationship reverses for individuals who are in a deliberative environment.

Insert Figure 5 here.

On the other hand, Elab X Quotes X Low Commitment in the case of the gas tax tends to increase support for that otherwise unpopular policy by a large measure, nearly 72 percentage points. These are sizeable reversals, but they are compared to a control group that did not care for this policy much at all. Again, respondents in the situation that can most closely be described as deliberative (i.e., not committed and exposed to different opinions), are heavily influenced by the quotes. There are no corresponding significant effects for the other condition, elaboration, and commitment interactions. All of this is the case in models that control for demographic and partisanship factors. Across both policies, it is possible to mimic deliberation and move opinions, even on unpopular policies. The responses are not simply heuristic, knee-jerk reactions to the prevailing direction of opinion sentiment. If that had been the case, then both policies would have engendered more support. Instead, there is a complex pattern of support, with qualitative quotations playing an important role in both.

Conclusions

While virtually unknown among scholars, qualitative quotes are journalistic devices that reporters use to frame stories. These follow-up interviews with respondents from a public opinion poll can provide opinion cues and rationales for other citizens who read about the survey topics featured in articles. This behavior has been a regular feature of news stories on polls dating back at least to the 1970s. However, just as information about impersonal mass collectives affects the political judgments (Mutz 1992; 1998), reading the episodic narratives from poll respondents also structures political attitudes.
Qualitative quotes offer new opportunities to study citizen interaction in a democracy. James Fishkin, Bob Luskin, and their colleagues (Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell 2002) have popularized the method of inviting a nationwide random sample to a single location to deliberate about politics. The quotations in our study an attempt to proxy that experience, albeit on a smaller scale. It is probably fair to say that this form of simulated deliberation is not the same as the proverbial “ideal speech situation” when individuals gather for critical conversation about the state (Habermas 1989), such as what might occur in the salons of yesteryear (Herbst 1993).

Yet most individuals encounter little diversity in their daily political life (Mutz 2006; cf. Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004). These quotes offer one way of resolving the paradox between the exposure to opposing viewpoints on the one hand and the homogeneity often necessary to sustain political participation on the other. Qualitative quotes might not seem common, especially since most poll articles do not contain quotations, but the same could be said about highly structured opportunities for deliberation. It is certainly not common for the typical person to attend a townhall meeting, candidate debate, or issue forum. In that sense, the behavior studied here is more common and has a wider reach in terms of disseminating the views of the participants than other manifestations of deliberation.

Qualitative quotes represent another step in the evolution of series of public opinion measurement techniques (Herbst 1993). They can be used to study citizen interactions in ways that have not been seen before. They have their roots in impersonal influence, but these quotes are attributed, so semi-personal might be a better moniker. Individuals are exposed to an issue debate with others who might bring different or opposing viewpoints. That is not to say that this process is uniformly desirable or without biases, but there is a potential for more disagreement and citizen-to-citizen transmission of views via the mass media. Nevertheless, we show, experimentally, that it can compliment information that individuals get from polling distributions. Especially for citizens who read the quotes with an open-mind, the cues they encounter can act as powerful frames to structure their beliefs.

It is important to acknowledge several of the limitations of this study. The articles with poll information contain more than just the quotes studied here. For example, there are graphics with distributions of opinions across multiple issues. There are also interviews with policy experts and politicians. Furthermore, the articles contain context and analysis provided by the journalist. Our studies did not venture into these areas in any systematic way, but one could imagine a myriad of treatments designed to more faithfully mimic the real world. In addition, the experiments we conducted used student subjects. Their level of attention may have been higher than what might happen in other cases as citizens read stories about quotes along with other articles on politics and in a potentially haphazard manner. Finally, the policy issues our experiments were topics being considered by policymakers, but one could imagine studying other issues or electoral behavior.

Overall there is the potential to draw more readers in by making opinion numbers seem more real. However, being selected to be a respondent in a poll is the product of a random process. As we have argued, being selected for a follow-up interview follows predictable socio-economic biases that could reinforce biases that have already been documented regarding public opinion polls (Althaus 2002; 1998; Berinsky 2004; 2002). Thus, the quotes might draw in more readers and provide critical contextual background, which is consistent with the public journalism movement, but they could also give readers the wrong impression regarding the distribution and rationales for societal preferences.
Appendix A

Media Content Analysis of Qualitative Quotes

Table 1 provides descriptive information on qualitative quotes appearing in major publications since the late-1970s. All 1,211 quotes in the four newspapers analyzed here were coded on a range of descriptive and substantive dimensions that are detailed below. To ensure high reliability, a second reader confirmed the coding for a subset of the entire database.

Political Party

Each quoted respondent was often identified as a member of a major political party or as an independent. For example, news story might start a quote from a respondent with a passage such as “John Smith, 37, a Republican from Illinois.” In this case, the respondent would be classified as a Republican identifier (i.e. coded as 1 in the Republican variable). The partisan labels were almost always one of the two major political parties in the United States. In a few cases, however, respondents were identified as “conservative” or “liberal.” In such cases, respondent were coded as “Republican” or “Democrat” respectively. In the few instances when partisanship was not clear (i.e. the respondent was characterized as moderate), they were coded as party unspecified. Sometimes, a party was not specified, but respondents were characterized as a “Bush-supporter” or some other candidate supporter. In these cases when the individual was not clearly denoted as a partisan, they were coded as unspecified. This is because in many cases the articles listed individuals who identified with one party as supporting the candidate of another. Thus, being a “candidate-x” supporter does not imply being a “party-x” supporter unless further evidence is provided.

Age

If a specific age was associated with a respondent, the age code is given a 1 and zero otherwise.

Occupation

If a respondent’s occupation is specified, it was coded as 1 and zero otherwise. Any occupation status was counted, including students, retirees, and the unemployed.

City/State

If the person’s residence was given, it was coded as 1 and zero otherwise. Any indication, i.e. city, county, or state, was counted. In situations where the poll was state specific, if the respondent’s neighborhood was also included, it was coded as 1 on the location measure and zero otherwise.

Gender

I coded any respondent as including gender if one of two conditions were satisfied: a gender was directly specified (either by using pronouns or directly stating a sex) or a respondents name was
given. The first condition is obvious, thus if a respondent is referred to as him or her or the article states that “one man said…” the gender criteria is met. The second condition is trickier. In many cases, an individual’s name was given without explicitly stating the gender of that individual. In most cases, it was obvious what the gender of the named respondent was. In other cases, i.e. foreign or unfamiliar names, the gender of the respondent was less clear. However, in order to not bias against the coder’s relative knowledge of the gender of names, I coded a name being sufficient for the establishment of gender. I feel that if an article is providing a name, it is assuming the provision of a gender. At least, it is not assuming that the gender is a secret as presumably the gender is obvious to some readers.

*Name, Race, or Religion*

If a name for the respondent (first or last) is given, this is coded as 1, zero otherwise. If the respondent’s race is provided, either in the headline (i.e. “Poll of black individuals states…”), I assume that all respondents are black unless otherwise noted) or body of the article, this is coded as one, zero otherwise. Finally, if the respondent’s religion (either specific denomination or general faith) is given, this is also coded as one, zero otherwise.

*Number of Reasons Given*

We counted the number of reasons that a respondent provides to justify his or her position. The justifications had to be distinct, so several sentences on one theme or idea were counted as a single justification.

*Directionality and Ambivalence*

The direction, from -1 = liberal to 1 = conservative, was recorded for the respondents views on the issue. If the respondent expressed opinions on both sides of the issue, they are given a one on the ambivalence measure, zero otherwise.

*Support/Contradict Headline*

If the headline makes an unequivocal (i.e. non-probabilistic) claim, determined whether the respondents support or contradict that claim. If the headline states something like “65% of respondents say x”, then respondent were coded as supportive if they make a statement in line with headlines majority’s claim. Similarly, if a respondent is one of the 35% who does not agree with x, then they were coded as contradicting the headline. This is done so that to get some sense of the distribution of poll respondents who support the issue in question and so we know whether the news source is quoting both sides of the issue. Finally, if a headline expresses ambivalence toward issue x (or the ambivalence of the public), then we coded respondents who have ambivalent responses as supporting the headline (=1). That is, only those who express a strong pro or con opinion would be coded as contradicting the headline. However, if the headline states a true “split” in opinion and gives no indication one way or the other (or makes no claim at all) then all responses were coded as other. This is because any response could be seen as supporting the headline since it gives no direction to the claim. In addition, any statement that does not match the thrust or claim of the headline is coded as other.
Appendix B

This appendix provides wording details on the experiments. To present the text in an efficient manner, the general introductions and any common information is shown. For Social Security, all possible variations of the conditions are shown in brackets. For the second and third experiments on immigration and energy policy, the treatment condition for the poll & quotes is given (in the Social Security experiments, polls and quotes were never presented together). The underlined text was common to all experimental conditions. The italic text was from the poll experiment (or polls and quotes). Boldface type denotes the quote experiment (or poll & quotes).

Social Security Experiment Stimuli

New Poll on Social Security
By Brenda Goodman

A public opinion poll of Americans aged 18 and older was recently conducted on the issue of Social Security privatization, a policy in which individuals would be allowed to invest part of their payroll tax contributions in the stock market to help pay for their retirement.

A clear majority, 72%, said they [favored/opposed] allowing individuals to invest part of their Social Security tax contributions into the stock market.

New Poll on Social Security
By Brenda Goodman

A public opinion poll of Americans aged 18 and older was recently conducted on the issue of Social Security privatization, a policy in which individuals would be allowed to invest part of their payroll tax contributions in the stock market to help pay for their retirement.

Brian Sheehan, 36, a [Democrat/Republican] from Elmhurst, New York said, "I [do not/do] think the government should allow people to invest their Social Security money."

Carol Bender, 58, a [Democrat/Republican] from Springfield, Illinois said, "It is a [bad/good] idea."

Jim Edgar, 67, a [Democrat/Republican] from Longview, Texas, said, "I guess I'm [against/for] that policy."

Andrea Foster, 25, a [Democrat/Republican] from Oakland, California said, "I strongly [disagree/agree] with the idea on Social Security. It [doesn't/does] make sense."
New Poll on Expansion of National Football League  
By Brenda Goodman

A public opinion poll of Americans aged 18 and older was recently conducted on the issue of expanding the National Football League, a policy in which more teams would be added around the country to increase the number of games.

Brian Sheehan, 36, a Republican from Elmhurst, New York said, "I do think there should be more teams in the NFL."

Carol Bender, 58, a Democrat from Springfield, Illinois said, "It is a good idea."

Jim Edgar, 67, a Republican from Longview, Texas, said, "I guess I'm for that policy."

Andrea Foster, 25, a Democrat from Oakland, California said, "I strongly agree with the idea of more football teams in America."

Immigration Policy Stimuli

New Direction for Immigration  
By Brenda Goodman

[All respondents] A poll taken Friday through Sunday found a majority of those surveyed want to make it a crime for foreigners to immigrate illegally to the USA and for Americans to help those illegal immigrants once they arrive.

[Polling information] Still, nearly two-thirds also say the government should allow illegal immigrants to remain and become U.S. citizens if they meet certain requirements over time. There is nearly universal agreement on one point: The system needs fixing.

Eight in 10 say illegal immigration to the USA is "out of control." More than nine in 10 say it's important for the government to take steps this year to control the borders and deal with those illegal immigrants who already are here. The feelings about border security are particularly intense with most people supporting building a wall along the border.

[Quotes] William Gretler, 77, of Shell Lake, Wis., worries about undocumented workers taking jobs from Americans and creating burdens for taxpayers. "The local government has to pick up their medical care, the school system has to pick up their schooling and health care systems have to pick up the price for helping keep them alive," the retired steelworker says.

Joshua Akers, 22, a grocery-store stocker in Columbia, S.C., feels little of Gretler's ambivalence toward illegal immigrants. "I think they should be deported if they can't meet certain guidelines," he says, including having a family member who lives in the USA and
already is a citizen. "They know it's wrong to come across the border and they do it anyway, which is not right."

Wayne Sanders, 42, of Oakland, Calif., supports setting a cutoff date to prevent a new wave of illegal immigrants from taking advantage of any program enacted to make current ones legal and erecting a wall along the border.

Energy Policy Experimental Stimuli

Climate Panel Sees Need For New Steps On Emissions
By Brenda Goodman

[All Respondents] Substantial new efforts will be needed worldwide to stem accelerating growth in greenhouse-gas emissions linked to rising global temperatures, according to a summary of a report being prepared by hundreds of climate scientists and economists working under the auspices of the United Nations.

The summary, which is subject to revision, said that efforts to rein in the billions of tons of annual releases of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases would have to begin soon to limit risks of large changes in the climate and their impact on humans and nature.

Public opinion surveys are conducted from time to time with the hope of determining what Americans think about this issue. [Polling information] A new public opinion poll finds that Americans in large bipartisan numbers say the heating of the earth’s atmosphere is having serious effects on the environment now or will soon and think that it is necessary to take immediate steps to reduce its effects.

Ninety percent of Democrats, 80 percent of independents and 60 percent of Republicans said immediate action was required to curb the warming of the atmosphere and deal with its effects on the global climate. Almost 75 percent of those in the poll said they would be willing to pay higher taxes on gas to discourage energy usage and fight global warming.

[Quotes] One person in the survey said, “I think the Republicans have slashed the funds for cleanup of the environment, and if it comes down to whether or not it will cost big business, forget about the cleanup.” That statement came from Randy Miller, 43, a Democrat from Kansas City, Kansas.

“The Democrats are more willing to spend dollars on pure research,” said Ron Gellerman, 65, a respondent from Maple Grove, Minn., who was a Republican. “They’re open to alternative sources of energy, like wind. We could save more energy by increasing the efficiency of our electrical system and our automobiles. And the Democrats would be more willing to look at that sort of thing because they’re not so beholden to Big Oil.”
Widespread Storms Kill 11 in 3 States
By Brenda Goodman

A storm system that stretched nearly 1,000 miles from the Midwest to the Southeast killed at least 11 people in three states, including five who died when what appeared to be a tornado caused the roof to collapse at a high school in Enterprise, Ala., state emergency management officials said.

Two other people were killed in Alabama, three in Georgia and one in Missouri.

Some students remained unaccounted for and could be trapped inside the building, said Larry Walker, deputy director of the Emergency Management Agency in Coffee County, in southeastern Alabama.

Students at Enterprise High School had just been ordered to take cover in hallways when fierce winds bore down at 1 p.m., plunging them into darkness and pounding them with falling debris.

"The ceiling part fell on us and rocks hit me on the back," said Ezekiel Jones, 17, a senior who was in the gym when the apparent tornado struck. "I was thinking of my mom, my girlfriend, my sister and my friends. Everybody was screaming."

Steven Carter, 16, a junior, said he was in the science wing when the lights went out.

"It happened fast," Steven said. "There wasn't much warning."

He said he could smell methane leaking from the Bunsen burners in the classrooms.

Steven said he saw science teachers tending to some of the wounded with first-aid kits salvaged from the wrecked classrooms.

Because of confusion at the school scene, emergency management officials initially said 15 had died there. They were still trying to assess the damage across the state, and Gov. Bob Riley declared a state of emergency.
References


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Descriptive Information and Attributes of Individuals who Were Quoted in News Reports about Public Opinion Polls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times (1980-2007) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times (2006-2007) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times (2006-2007) N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA Today (2006-2007) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA Today (2006-2007) N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA Times (2006-2007) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post (2006-2007) %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post (2006-2007) N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* All cell percentages, except for the first column, represent the count of quotes for any particular attribute out of the total number of quotes for each set of row observations. In other words, 1,125 of all 1,211 total quotes, or 93%, listed the respondent’s name. Moving down, 880 of 965, or 91% of the time the respondent’s name was given in *New York Times* articles from 1980 to 2007.
Table 2: Determinants of Willingness to Discuss Views with Reporters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Willing, but Not Talkative</th>
<th>Willing and Talkative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coeff. (se)</td>
<td>coeff. (se)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.12 (.07) **</td>
<td>.60 (.05) **</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.06 (.07)</td>
<td>.16 (.06) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>-.74 (.06) **</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-.02 (.04)</td>
<td>-.08 (.03) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-.31 (.02) **</td>
<td>-.46 (.02) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>.03 (.03)</td>
<td>.01 (.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>.10 (.03) **</td>
<td>.03 (.02) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>.04 (.03) *</td>
<td>.15 (.02) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>.00 (.02)</td>
<td>-.04 (.02) **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.09 (.12) **</td>
<td>.59 (.09) **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Cases 184,091

Note: The dependent variable is coded as 0=not willing to be interviewed by a reporter, 1=willing, but not talkative, and 2=willing and talkative. The estimates are multinomial logit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The omitted baseline category is not willing to discuss views with a reporter.

* p < .10, ** p < .05, one-tailed.
Table 3. The Effects of Public Consensus Quotes on Social Security Reform Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Only Democrats</th>
<th>Only Republicans</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>All w/ Interactions</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>coeff (se)</td>
<td>coeff (se)</td>
<td>coeff (se)</td>
<td>coeff (se)</td>
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<td>Supportive Quotes</td>
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<td>.39 (.19) **</td>
<td>.00 (.17)</td>
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<td>Opposition Quotes</td>
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<td>-.10 (.18)</td>
<td>-.30 (.18) *</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Aggregate Poll</td>
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<td>.41 (.48)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive, All Republicans</td>
<td>.33 (.20) *</td>
<td>1.09 (.49) **</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive, Both Partisans</td>
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<td>.12 (.46)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposition, All Democrats</td>
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<td>.33 (.48)</td>
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<td>Opposition, All Republicans</td>
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<td>.62 (.50)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposition, Both Partisans</td>
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<td>-.38 (.46)</td>
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<td>Mixed, Dems Oppose/Reps Support</td>
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<td>.61 (.51)</td>
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<td>Mixed, Partisans Split</td>
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<td>.71 (.50) *</td>
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<td>.80 (.54) *</td>
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<td>.83 (.48) **</td>
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<td>.59 (.44) *</td>
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<td>Dem X Opposition, All Dems</td>
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<td>Rep X Mixed, Dems Oppose/Rep Support</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Rep X Mixed, Dems Support/Reps Oppose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep X Poll, 72% Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cut Point 1</td>
<td>-1.44 (.16) **</td>
<td>-1.09 (.15) **</td>
<td>-1.97 (.21) **</td>
<td>-1.45 (.16) **</td>
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<td>.44 (.14) **</td>
<td>-.56 (.14) **</td>
<td>.02 (.15)</td>
<td>.14 (.43)</td>
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<td>Cut Point 3</td>
<td>.03 (.15)</td>
<td>.47 (.14) **</td>
<td>1.18 (.16) **</td>
<td>.03 (.15)</td>
<td>.16 (.43)</td>
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<td>Cut Point 4</td>
<td>1.81 (.17) **</td>
<td>2.23 (.23) **</td>
<td>1.82 (.17) **</td>
<td>2.17 (.44) **</td>
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<td>Log-Likelihood</td>
<td>-751.80</td>
<td>-237.50</td>
<td>-195.42</td>
<td>-749.19</td>
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<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>715</td>
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** p < .05, * p < .10, one-tailed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Immigration Policy to Build a Wall along the Boarder</th>
<th>Energy Policy to Raise Gasoline Tax</th>
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<td>coeff (se)</td>
<td>coeff (se)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poll Only</td>
<td>-.67 (.44) *</td>
<td>.20 (.20)</td>
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<td>Quotes Only</td>
<td>-.18 (1.40)</td>
<td>-.62 (.28) *</td>
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<td>Poll and Quotes</td>
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<td>.27 (.21) *</td>
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<td>Elaboration</td>
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<td>.79 (.07) **</td>
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<td>Elaboration X Poll</td>
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<td>.59 (.37) *</td>
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<td>.39 (.34)</td>
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<td>-.05 (.11)</td>
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<td>.73 (.55) *</td>
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<td>Low Commitment</td>
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<td>.37 (.11) **</td>
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<td>-.62 (.27) **</td>
<td>.24 (.65)</td>
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<td>-6.14 (1.00) **</td>
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<td>-.07 (0.2)</td>
<td>-.29 (.13) **</td>
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<td>1.07 (6.06)</td>
<td>11.21 (5.69)</td>
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<td>Constant</td>
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Note: The Elaboration X Polls coefficient could not be estimated for the immigration model because it is too similar to the interaction term with elaboration, polls, and low commitment. All respondents but one who elaborated in this condition were against the proposal. Standard errors are bootstrapped. * p < .10, ** p < .05, one-tailed.
Figure 1. Use of Polls and Qualitative Quotes across Four Sources: 2006-2007

Panel A. NY Times / CBS

Panel B. LA Times / Bloomberg

Panel C. USA Today / Gallup

Panel D. Washington Post / ABC

News stories with Poll
Follow-up interviews
Figure 2. Predicted Responses Based Upon Demographic Characteristics

Change in Likelihood of Response

Not Willing to Speak to a Reporter  Willing, Not Talkative  Willing, Talkative

-25 -20 -15 -10 -5 0 5 10 15 20 25

Age  Female  Education  Liberal  Republican  Income  Black  Conservative
Figure 3. Public Consensus Cues in Polls and Quotes

Change Relative to Control Group

Poll  Agreement Quotes  Disagreement Quotes  Mixed Quotes
Figure 4. Deliberative Cues for Immigration and Gas Tax

Change Relative to Control Group

Poll Only
Quotes Only
Poll & Quotes

Immigration
Gas Tax
Figure 5. The Effects of Deliberative Public Cues on Policy Preferences for Open-Minded Individuals Who Elaborate

Poll & Quotes

Quotes Only

Immigration Policy: Support for Building a Wall on the Boarder

Energy Policy: Support for Increasing the Gas Tax