

Online Appendix

Primaries and Populism:
Voter Efficacy, Champions, and Election Rules

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This document contains supplementary information for “Primaries and Populism: Voter Efficacy, Champions, and Election Rules.”

- A1: This section displays the main questions about primary type included in the survey.
- A2: Displays additional information about the distribution of primary type preferences.
- A3: Displays results from repeating Model 1 for the other primary types, including predicted probabilities for one profile of characteristics.
- A4: Discusses matters related to the factions and vignettes approaches to understanding ‘champions,’ additional information for Models 1 and 2.
- A5: Presents relationships between the values questions underlying Model 3.
- A6: Additional comments on the status quo rules.

A1 Primary Type Questions

Primary Preferences

(Question 1) The next few questions are about **primary elections**, the elections which select the candidates that will appear on your November ballot. Not all states use the same kinds of primary elections.

Generally speaking, which type of primary election system do you think is best for congressional elections (for U.S. House and Senate)? [Rotated Answers]

1 **Party primaries.** Voters can participate in a party's primary to choose its nominees. The nominees of each party compete against each other in the general election.

2 **Nonpartisan primaries.** All voters can choose between all candidates for each office. The two candidates with the most primary votes compete against each other in the general election, regardless of their party.

(Question 2) For states that do conduct party primary elections, which procedure do you think is best? [Rotated Answers]

1 Voters affiliate in advance of the primary with political parties.

2 Each election year, voters can choose a party at the time of the primary.

(Question 3) For states that do have partisan voter registration for participation in primary elections, which do you think is best? [Rotated Answers]

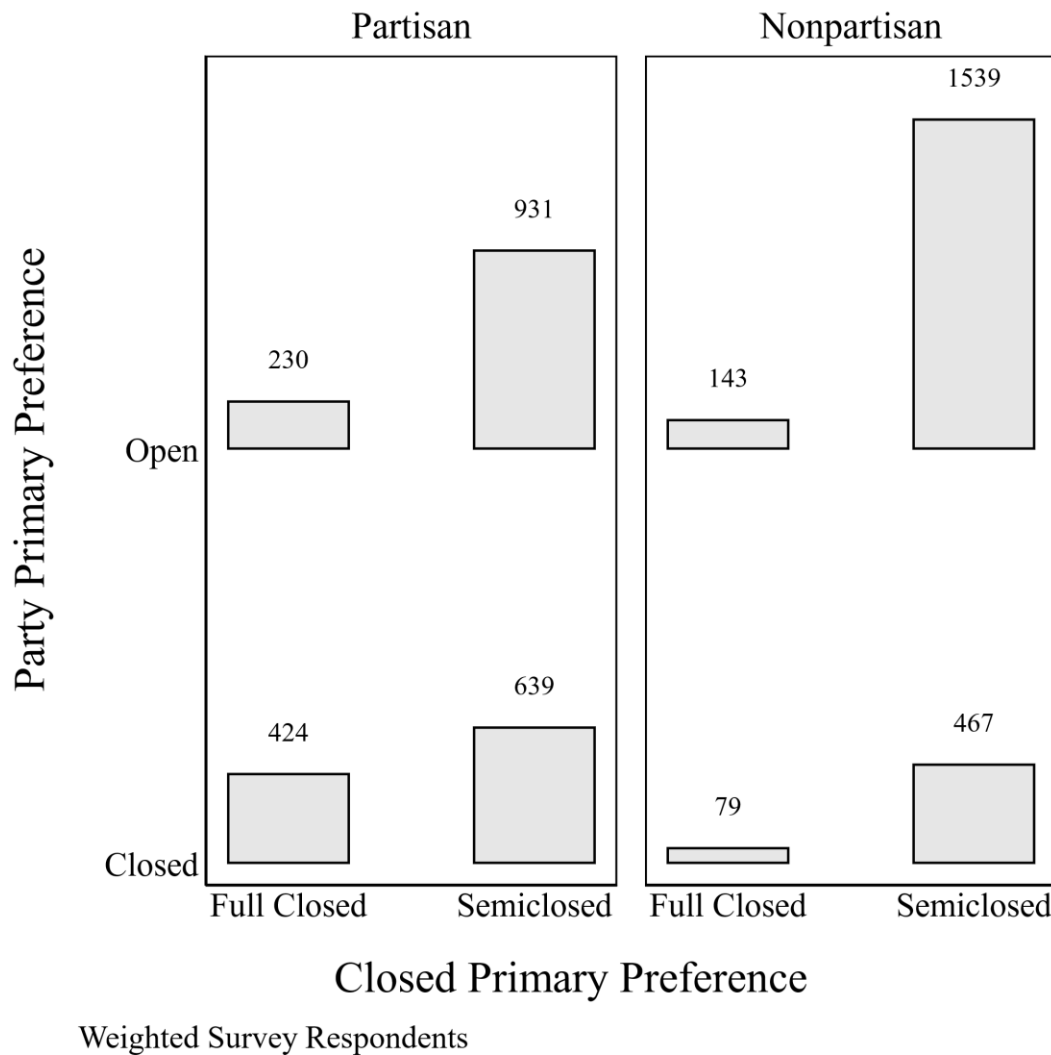
1 Independent voters should be allowed to participate in party primaries.

2 Independent voters should not be allowed to participate in party primaries.

A2 Preferences over primary types

The main analysis focuses on the preference for nonpartisan primaries. This figure gives the weighted number of respondents for each combination of responses across all three primary-type questions. The most common combination was: nonpartisan, open, and then semiclosed.

Figure A2-1: Primary preferences across all three primary questions, showing weighted number of respondents.



A3 Models for other primary types, results

Figure A3-1: Comparative estimates for nonpartisan vs partisan, open vs closed, and semiclosed vs fully closed primaries. Model specification matches Model 1 from the main text. Displays estimates and 95% confidence intervals.

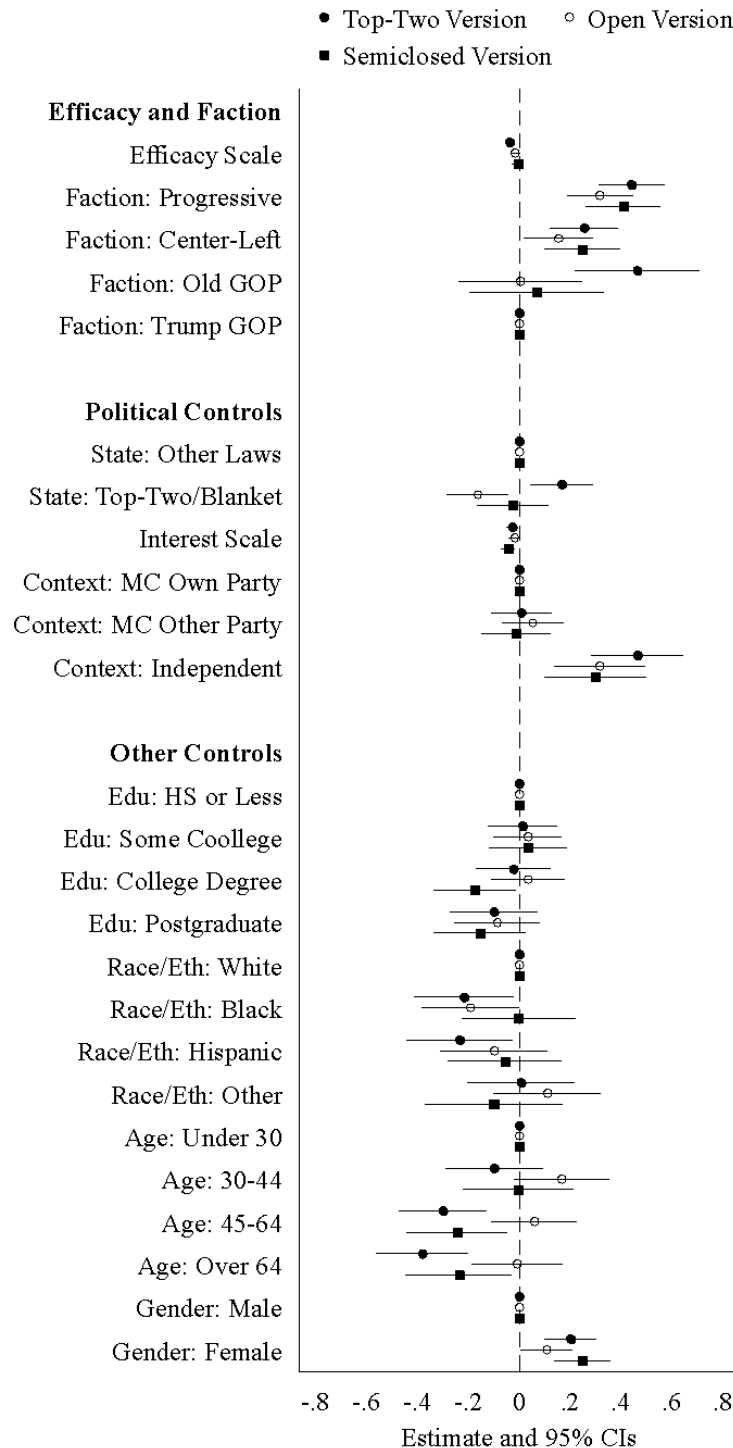
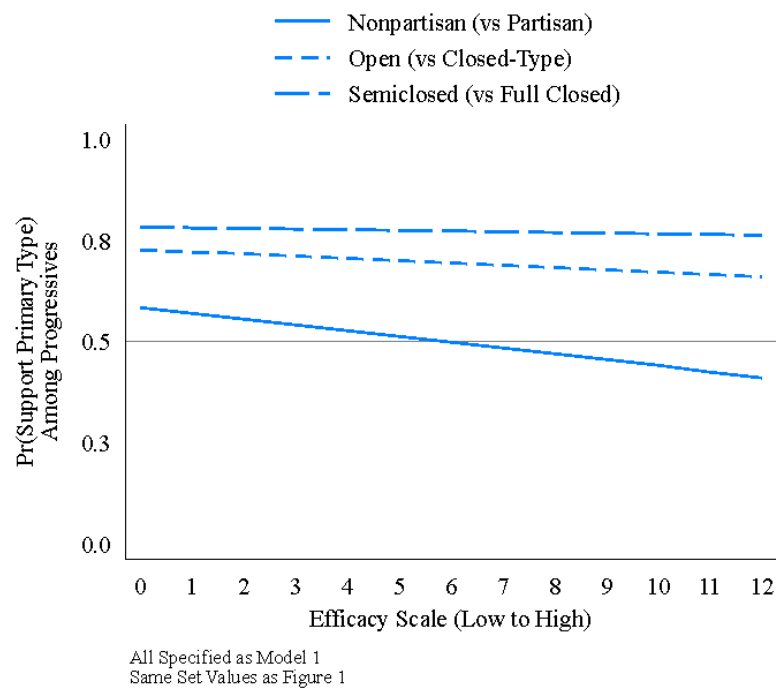
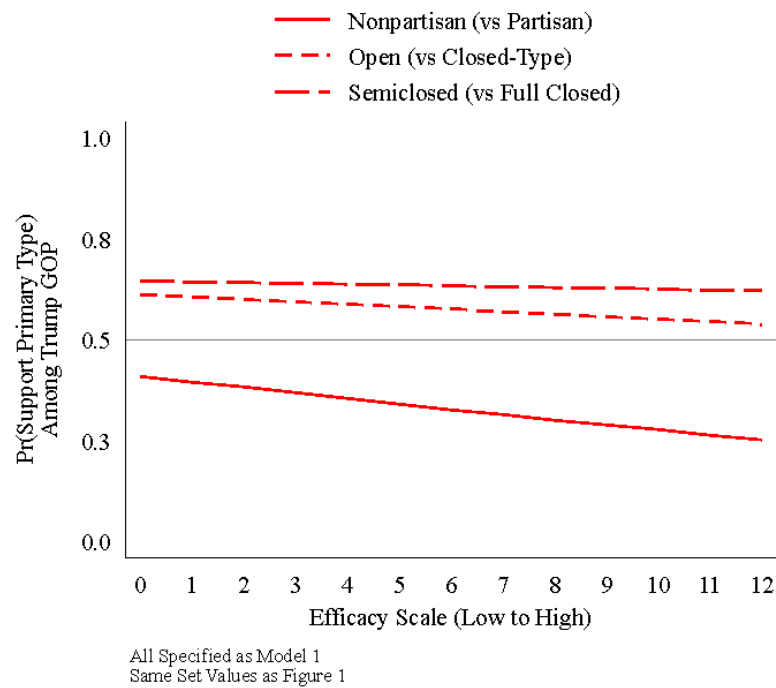


Figure A3-2: Predicted probabilities from the models in Figure A3-1, with all values set to the same values as in Figure 1 in the main text.



A4 Champions

This appendix includes additional information about the measures of ‘champions.’ For the factional measure, we asked respondents: “From this list, which politician comes closest to representing your views?” The list then includes twelve political figures, split evenly between Republicans and Democrats, balanced to include both male and female politicians plausibly of our four categories (labeled “Progressive,” “Center-Left,” “Old GOP,” and “Trump GOP” – as described in the main text). Table A4-1 shows how party identification (with “leaners” counted with their party) relates to politician preference. Table A4-2 then illustrates how politician preference corresponds with support for the nonpartisan primary rules.

It is easier to divide the Republicans into these factions than it is to divide the Democrats. Romney and Murkowski were included because of explicit, easily definable, actions taken: defying President Trump’s preferences on high-profile votes (impeachment for Romney, Supreme Court confirmation for Murkowski). It is generally understood that Sanders and Ocasio-Cortez are more of a type, in terms of rhetorical style and ideological identification. In the run-up to the 2020 presidential nomination, both Warren and Harris were frequently described as competing for that ‘lane’ of voters, as opposed to someone like Biden; Harris even had a more liberal voting record than Sanders did in the Senate, outflanked only by Warren.¹ Yet, by the time of the survey, Harris had agreed to be Biden’s running mate. Harris was selected on the survey by a substantial proportion of the respondents (8%, representing a quarter of the ‘progressive’ group as we define it), more than selected Ocasio-Cortez (5%) or H. Clinton (4%). An interesting feature of Table A4-2, though, is that supporters of Harris – the one person on this list elected by winning a same-

¹ Compare: <https://voteview.com/person/41701/kamala-devi-harris> and <https://voteview.com/person/41301/elizabeth-warren> vs. <https://voteview.com/person/29147/bernard-sanders>.

party election using the top-two procedure – are *less likely* to favor the top-two procedure than supporters of Sanders and Ocasio-Cortez (and, with a smaller difference, Warren).

Figure A4-1 re-runs Model 1 but disaggregates the faction variable back to the individual politicians. The results are relative to the excluded categories (“Trump GOP” for Model 1, Trump for the alternative model). As there are so few Republican-side respondents picking Murkowski, Blackburn, Scott, or Cotton, the Murkowski supporters are combined with the Romney supporters and the Blackburn, Scott, and Cotton supporters are treated as a group. These results are broadly consistent with the ‘faction’ findings we present as Model 1.

Table A4-1: Support for politicians by party identification, with “leaners” included with their affiliated party. Table displays weighted column percentages and unweighted ns.

Faction	Politician	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	Total
Progressive	Bernie Sanders (n=552)	18	19	1	12
Progressive	Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (n=231)	9	6	0	5
Progressive	Elizabeth Warren (n=409)	14	5	1	8
Progressive	Kamala Harris (n=380)	14	5	1	8
Center-Left	Joe Biden (n=928)	33	11	2	18
Center-Left	Hillary Clinton (n=182)	7	4	0	4
Old GOP	Mitt Romney (n=203)	1	11	7	5
Old GOP	Lisa Murkowski (n=23)	0	1	0	1
Trump GOP	Donald Trump (n=1,489)	2	30	77	35
Trump GOP	Marsha Blackburn (n=31)	0	1	1	1
Trump GOP	Tim Scott (n=101)	0	4	4	2
Trump GOP	Tom Cotton (n=79)	0	2	4	2
Missing	I don't know (n=17)	0	1	0	0
Total	Total (n=4,625)	100	100	100	100

Table A4-2: Support for the top-two by preferred politician. Table displays weighted row percentages, with unweighted ns (answering the top-two question), with the weighted factional size repeated in the right column.

Faction	Politician	Partisan (Row %)	Nonpartisan (Row %)	Of Total (Col. %)
Progressive	Bernie Sanders (n=541)	34	66	12
Progressive	Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (n=231)	34	66	5
Progressive	Elizabeth Warren (n=406)	43	57	8
Progressive	Kamala Harris (n=379)	48	52	8
Center-Left	Joe Biden (n=919)	52	48	18
Center-Left	Hillary Clinton (n=179)	48	52	4
Old GOP	Mitt Romney (n=203)	38	62	5
Old GOP	Lisa Murkowski (n=23)	27	73	1
Trump GOP	Donald Trump (n=1,465)	59	41	35
Trump GOP	Marsha Blackburn (n=31)	68	32	1
Trump GOP	Tim Scott (n=100)	67	33	2
Trump GOP	Tom Cotton (n=78)	65	35	2
Missing	I don't know (n=14)	55	45	0
Total	Total (n=4,569)	50	50	100

Figure A4-1: Coefficients for Model 1, but replacing faction with specific candidates.

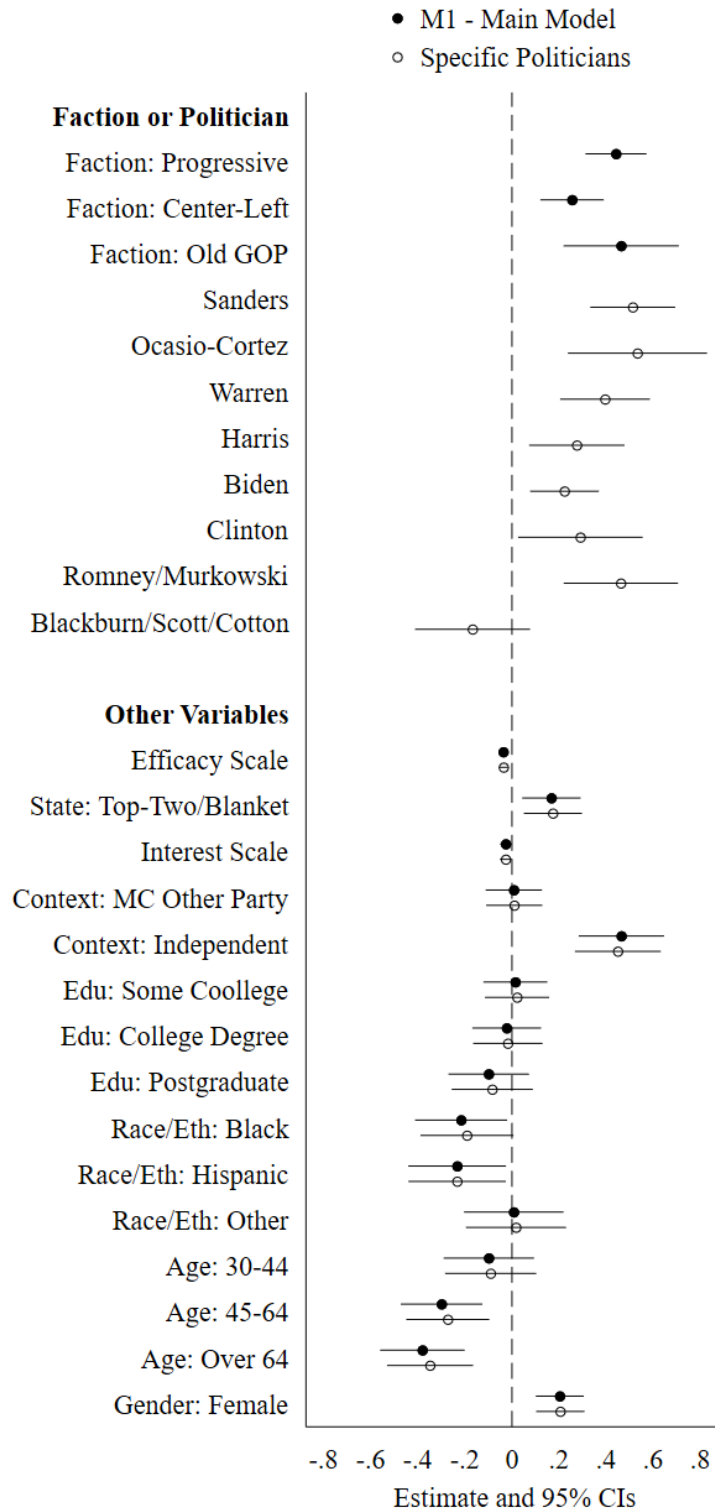
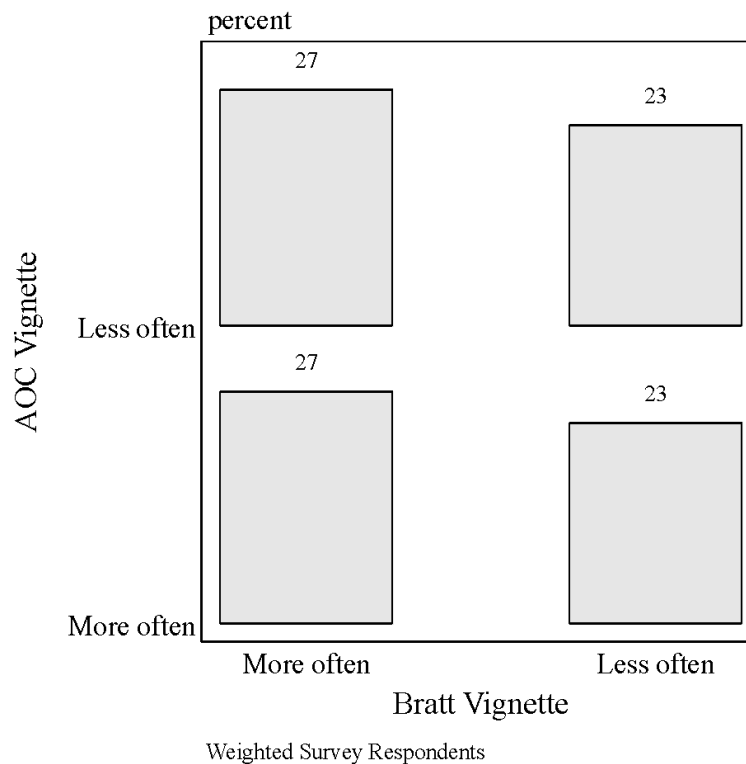


Figure A4-2: Response to the Ocasio-Cortez and Brat Vignettes



(Ocasio-Cortez) In a previous election in New York for the U.S. House of Representatives, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democrat, defeated Democratic Caucus Chair Joe Crowley, a 10-term incumbent, in a primary election and went on to win the seat that year. The *New York Times* reported that Ocasio-Cortez was affiliated with the “Democratic Socialists of America.”

Is this an election result you would like to see happen more often, or less often?

- 1 More often
- 2 Less often

(Brat) In a previous election in Virginia for the U.S. House of Representatives, David Brat, a Republican, defeated Republican House Majority Leader David Cantor, a 7-term incumbent, in a primary election and went on to win the seat that year. The *New York Times* reported that Brat was affiliated with the “Tea Party.”

Is this an election result you would like to see happen more often, or less often?

- 1 More often
- 2 Less often

Figure A4-3: The two champion measurements

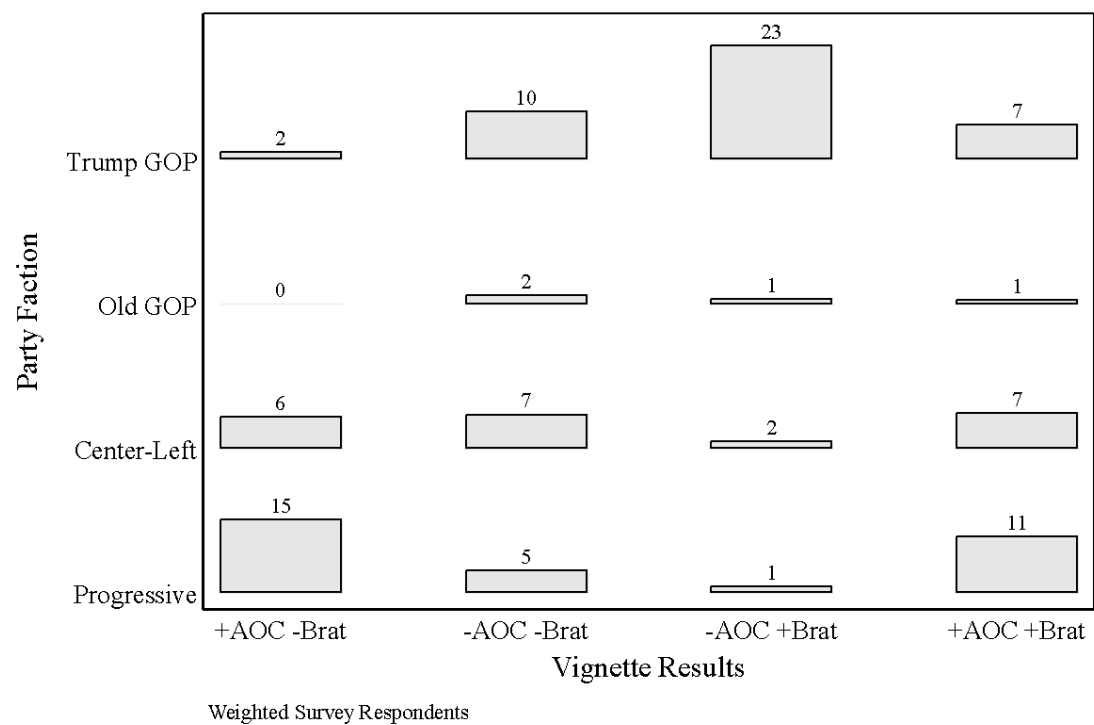
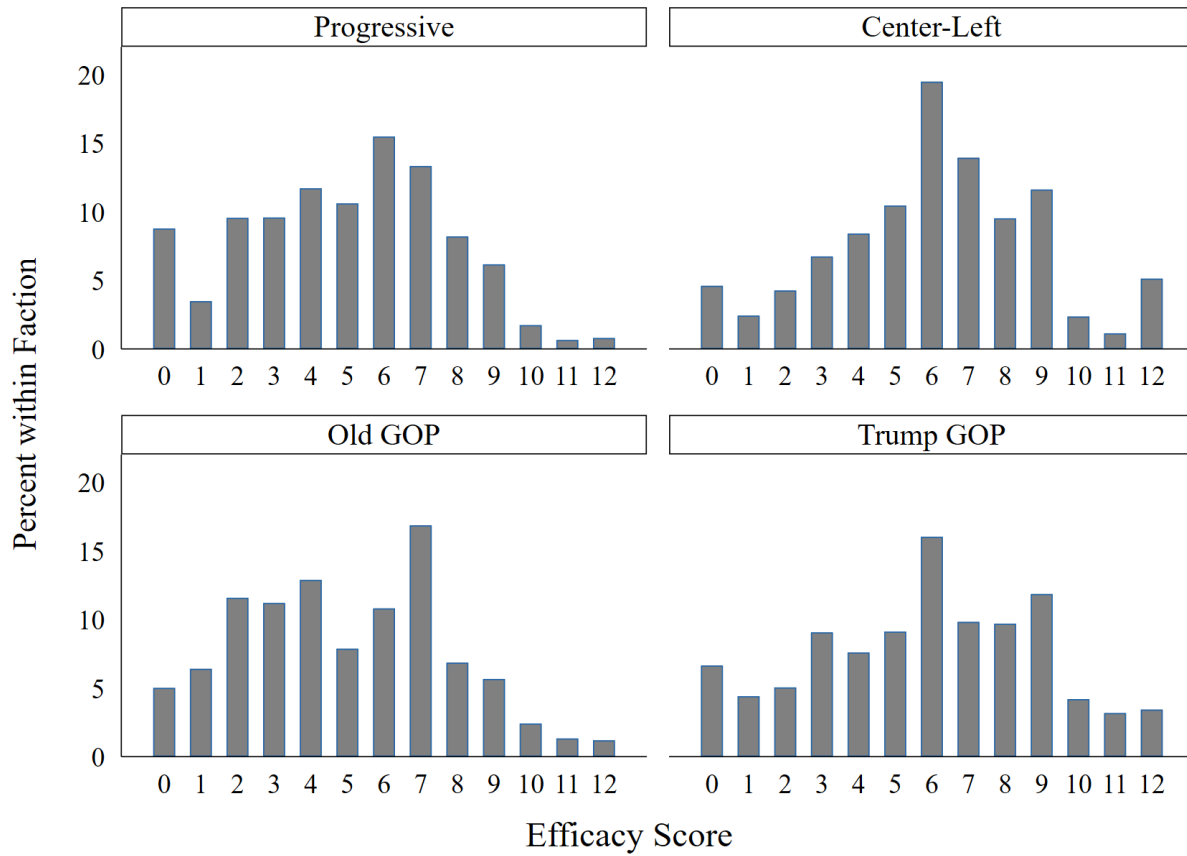


Figure A4-4: Champions and Efficacy



Feelings of efficacy are higher for the Center-Left (mean of 6.092, standard error of 0.139) and Trump GOP (mean of 5.845, standard error of 0.099) than for the Old GOP (mean of 4.954, standard error of 0.26) and Progressive factions (mean of 4.922, standard error of 0.097).

A5 Values Relationships

The questions used to frame Model 3 are as follows:

(Compromise²) Which statement best describes your preference:

- 1 Politics should be about finding a compromise between people with different views.
- 2 Politics should be about sticking to your convictions, and fighting to implement them.

(Priority) Which do you think is **more important** in elections for the U.S. House of Representatives?

- 1 Having the opportunity to vote for a candidate you really believe in.
- 2 Having the party you want to have a majority in Congress win the election.

(Competence) How likely is the winning candidate in **your U.S. House district** to be a competent and effective legislator?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely

(Representation) Do you think the winning candidate in **your U.S. House district** will be more likely to prioritize...

- 1 ... voting with their party's leaders.
- 2 ... making up their own mind on how to vote.
- 3 ... listening to what their voters at home want.
- 4 ... doing whatever their big donors want.

² See Wolak (2020, p. 36).

(Rep. Primary) In most congressional elections in **your U.S. House district**, to win the primary and advance to the general election ballot, do **Republican Party** candidates need to be more moderate or more conservative?

- 1 More moderate.
- 2 More conservative.
- 3 It tends to depend on something else.

(Dem. Primary) In most congressional elections in **your U.S. House district**, to win the primary and advance to the general election ballot, do **Democratic Party** candidates need to be more moderate or more liberal?

- 1 More moderate.
- 2 More liberal.
- 3 It tends to depend on something else.

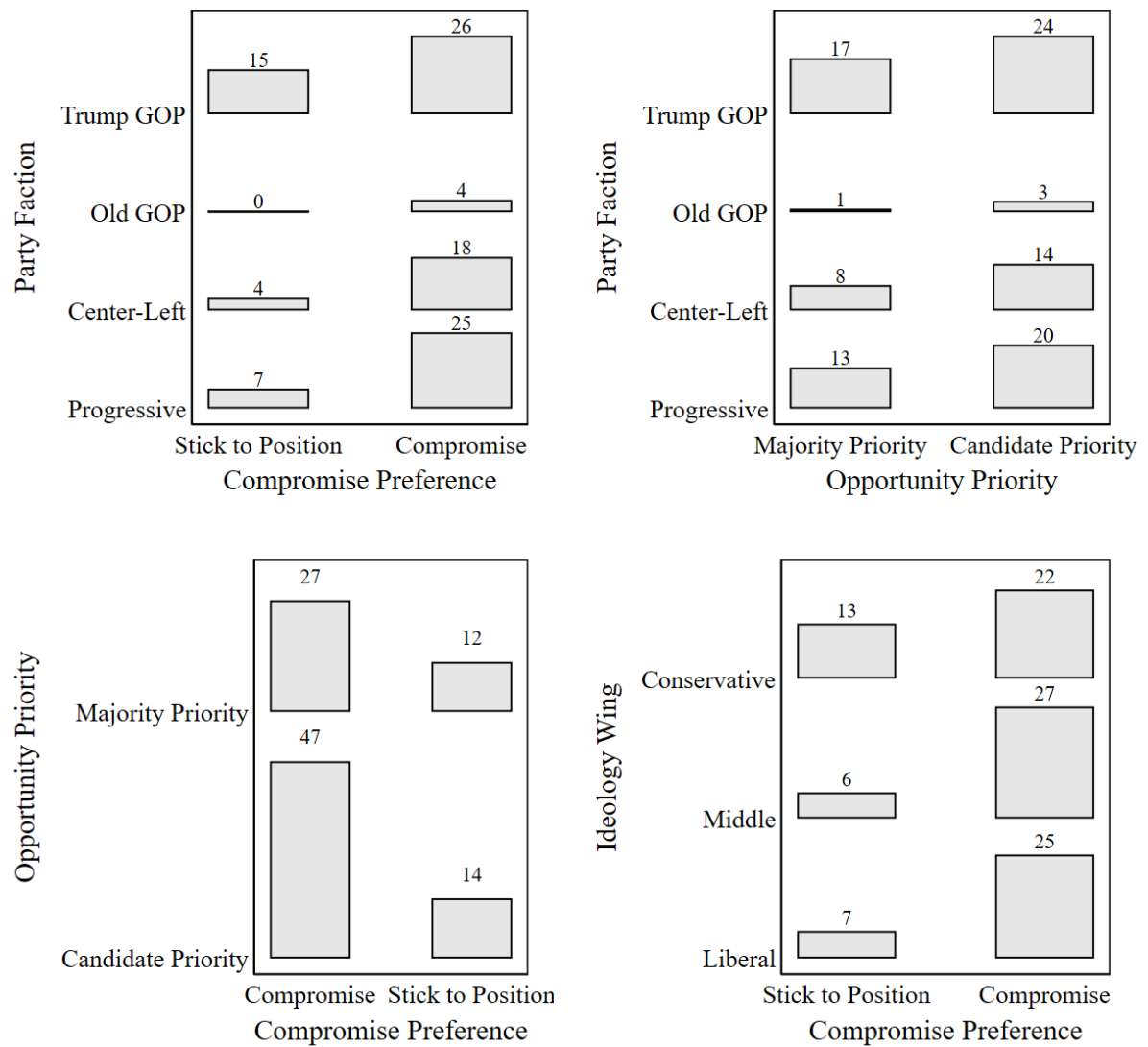
(Ideology) In general, how would you describe your own political viewpoint?

- 1 Very liberal
- 2 Liberal
- 3 Moderate
- 4 Conservative
- 5 Very conservative
- 6 Not sure

(For the ideology variable in the paper, the very liberal and liberal categories are combined together; in addition, the conservative and very conservative categories are combined together.)

The next page displays the relationship between the two “values” questions – a preference for compromise and the election priority – and the faction and ideology grouping variables.

Figure A5-1: Relationships between independent variables relating to values.



Weighted Survey Data
Displays percentages within each graph.

A6 The Status Quo

An important possibility, mentioned in the text, is that some voters could prefer changing the rules simply as an anti-status-quo position. While we cannot vary the national context (a partisan presidential nomination process, including recent defeats for Senator Sanders for the 2016 and 2020 Democratic Party nomination), our survey question for the top-two asks about *congressional* elections – and there is variation in the ‘status quo’ congressional rule at the state level. Is it the case that members of the “progressive” faction (as defined by preference for political leaders, as in the main text) are more likely to favor the top-two if it represents a change to the status quo?

From a bivariate perspective: no. California and Washington have the rule on which our question was modified; in the main text of the paper, we also use a ‘state law’ variable for any state with past experience with either the top-two or blanket type rules (a slightly larger group). Using just California and Washington (vs. the others), we find that 62% of “progressives” favor the top-two in those states and 60% of progressives in other states favor it. (If we use the broader ‘state law’ group, the numbers are 63% and 60%.) Using a bivariate (design-based F-test) for association, these are not significant differences within that group. We do find a general (modest) increase of support *for* the top-two in states that have it (that is: the opposite of the ‘change’ hypothesis) in Model 1, but this variable is not interacted with faction type and the ‘change’ narrative depends on the faction type. Thus we modify Model 1 to include an interaction between ‘state law’ and ‘faction.’ The coefficients of M1 and this new model are plotted side-by-side in Figure A6-1. The interaction terms are not significant.

Figure A6-1: Modifying Model 1 to include an interaction with ‘state law’ and ‘faction.’ Plots estimated coefficient and 95% confidence interval.

