

Supplemental Appendix

Collision with Collusion: Partisan Reaction to the Trump-Russia Scandal

Appendix A: Technical Details of the Portal Design

Timely stories were automatically drawn from Google News at the top of every hour by a computer programming script, using the language PHP, that queried RSS feeds of online content at regular intervals. First, a query for the top 15 stories in the Top Stories (U.S.) section of Google News was used to construct the baseline news feed. Any story appearing in the results of this query was included in the portal and appeared there unless an experimental manipulation filtered it out. This baseline news feed provided 1,018 of the 1,196 total stories presented to respondents enrolled in the portal.

A series of additional keyword-based RSS queries were also conducted at the top of each hour and were not restricted to the Top Stories section. These queries were used to identify stories that were candidates for inclusion based on experimental conditions such as the Trump-Russia scandal. Assigning the results of these keyword queries to portal users required researcher intervention, because the queries uncovered minor, local, and obscure stories that would look out of place in a feed otherwise consisting of top news stories. When a story was found only in a keyword-based feed and not in the Top Stories feed, the authors verified whether the story fit the intended manipulation and whether the story was newsworthy enough for inclusion in the portal.

All top stories were given a random publication delay, ranging from 5 minutes to 65 minutes, before they appeared in the portal, allowing the authors to log in once per hour to check categorization of stories before publication. Each experimental factor filtered out stories from the baseline feed, and some also injected stories that would otherwise not have appeared. For participants in a control condition for a given treatment, stories matching this condition were automatically filtered out. Although each such filtering manipulation removed all stories categorized as that type of story, we still conceptualize the treatments as “reduced coverage” instead of as “no coverage,” due to the possibility of minor categorization or researcher error.

Stories were also injected for some factors, meaning adding stories to the portal that would otherwise not have appeared in the baseline feed. This was done manually by the authors and could be scheduled ahead of time to ensure that each treatment would include at least a few stories per day. The authors attempted to use very recent stories from keyword feeds for injection when possible, but injected stories from previous days or hours if necessary. When enough stories matching an experimental factor were naturally already present in the baseline feed, the authors sometimes canceled or delayed additional story injection for that factor.

Appendix B: Question Wording

Trump Approval and Perceived Consequences (from “Results: Trump Evaluations”)

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling:

His job as President overall?	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Strongly disapprove, 7=Strongly approve
Taken as a whole, how good or bad do you think the consequences of a Trump Presidency will be?	Very good, Somewhat good, Neither good or bad, Somewhat bad, Very bad	

Emotions Towards Trump (from “Results: Emotions Towards Trump”)

Think about how Donald Trump makes you feel. Below we've included some words. For each word, select the option that best fits the extent to which you feel each emotion currently. How do you feel, right now, about President Trump?

Angry	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Proud	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Enthusiastic	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Anxious	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Hopeful	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Worried	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Outraged	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much
Fearful	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all,7=Very much

Media Attitudes (from “Results: Media Evaluations and Portal Use”)

In general, mainstream news outlets are fair	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Strongly disagree,7=Strongly agree
In general, mainstream news outlets are unbiased	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Strongly disagree,7=Strongly agree
In general, mainstream news outlets can be trusted	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Strongly disagree,7=Strongly agree

Partisanship

Generally speaking do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, independent, or what?	Republican, Democrat, Independent, Other	
How strongly do you identify as a member of either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1=Not at all, 7=Very strongly
<i>(note: this was mistakenly asked of all respondents; used in Table A7)</i>		

Tables

Table A1. Effects of additional exposure to Trump-Russia stories on assessments of Donald Trump's job performance (rescaled 0 to 1), with partisanship as a moderating variable. Fixed effects panel regression.

	(1) Trump Job Approval	(2) Consequences of a Trump Presidency
More Trump-Russia stories+	0.054*** (0.017)	0.051*** (0.018)
Republican	0.438*** (0.018)	0.437*** (0.019)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	-0.076*** (0.025)	-0.089*** (0.027)
Democrat	-0.184*** (0.016)	-0.197*** (0.017)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	-0.045** (0.022)	-0.046* (0.024)
More immigration stories	0.009 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.010)
More intraparty disagreement	0.005 (0.009)	0.007 (0.010)
More fact-checking stories	0.001 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.010)
More defense of journalism	0.002 (0.009)	-0.001 (0.010)
Constant	0.248 (0.015)	0.274 (0.016)
Observations	2,839	2,840
Number of waves	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A2. *Effects of additional exposure to Trump-Russia stories on emotions towards (rescaled 0 to 1) Donald Trump, by respondent partisanship. Fixed effects panel regression.*

	(1) Trump emotions index	(2) Trump positive emotions index	(3) Trump negative emotions index
More Trump-Russia stories+	0.048*** (0.016)	0.061*** (0.017)	-0.043** (0.018)
Republican	0.360*** (0.017)	0.453*** (0.018)	-0.303*** (0.020)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	-0.077*** (0.024)	-0.109*** (0.025)	0.057** (0.027)
Democrat	-0.203*** (0.015)	-0.143*** (0.016)	0.238*** (0.017)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	-0.038* (0.021)	-0.051** (0.022)	0.032 (0.024)
More immigration stories	0.001 (0.009)	0.000 (0.010)	0.001 (0.010)
More intraparty disagreement	0.008 (0.009)	0.003 (0.010)	-0.013 (0.010)
More fact-checking stories	-0.001 (0.009)	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.001 (0.010)
More defense of journalism	-0.002 (0.009)	0.001 (0.010)	0.005 (0.010)
Constant	0.362 (0.015)	0.211 (0.015)	0.547 (0.017)
Observations	2,767	2,805	2,801
Number of waves	2	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A3. Effects of additional exposure to Trump-Russia stories on media attitudes, by respondent partisanship (rescaled 0 to 1). Fixed effects panel regression.

	(1) Mainstream media: Unbiased	(2) Mainstream media: Trust	(3) Mainstream media: Fair
More Trump-Russia stories+	-0.035** (0.017)	-0.036** (0.017)	-0.015 (0.017)
Republican	-0.069*** (0.018)	-0.105*** (0.019)	-0.080*** (0.018)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	0.021 (0.026)	0.040 (0.026)	0.025 (0.026)
Democrat	0.160*** (0.016)	0.168*** (0.016)	0.172*** (0.016)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	0.042* (0.022)	0.039* (0.023)	0.037 (0.023)
More immigration stories	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.029*** (0.010)	-0.024** (0.010)
More intraparty disagreement	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.010)
More fact-checking stories	0.039*** (0.010)	0.030*** (0.010)	0.029*** (0.010)
More defense of journalism	0.008 (0.010)	-0.001 (0.010)	0.004 (0.010)
Constant	0.255 (0.015)	0.376 (0.016)	0.365 (0.015)
Observations	2,834	2,816	2,840
Number of waves	2	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A4. *Re-analysis of dependent variables from Tables 1-3 with usage variables indicating proportion of total clicks devoted to Russia stories and portal usage pre-treatment.*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Trump Job Approval	Trump emotions index	Mainstream media: Unbiased	Mainstream media: Trust	Mainstream media: Fair
More Trump-Russia stories+	0.054*** (0.018)	0.047*** (0.017)	-0.037** (0.018)	-0.037** (0.018)	-0.025 (0.018)
Republican	0.445*** (0.020)	0.379*** (0.019)	-0.067*** (0.021)	-0.118*** (0.021)	-0.093*** (0.021)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	-0.084*** (0.027)	-0.091*** (0.026)	0.015 (0.028)	0.047* (0.028)	0.036 (0.028)
Democrat	-0.194*** (0.017)	-0.205*** (0.016)	0.166*** (0.017)	0.167*** (0.018)	0.172*** (0.017)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	-0.033 (0.024)	-0.033 (0.023)	0.040* (0.024)	0.049** (0.024)	0.044* (0.024)
Proportion of total clicks devoted to Russia stories	-0.161*** (0.053)	-0.203*** (0.050)	0.174*** (0.053)	0.146*** (0.054)	0.131** (0.054)
More immigration stories	0.001 (0.010)	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.029*** (0.011)	-0.024** (0.010)
More intraparty disagreement	0.003 (0.010)	0.009 (0.010)	0.010 (0.010)	-0.000 (0.011)	0.006 (0.010)
More fact-checking stories	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.004 (0.010)	0.040*** (0.010)	0.027** (0.011)	0.028*** (0.010)
More defense of journalism	-0.007 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.010)	-0.001 (0.011)	-0.003 (0.010)
Portal usage pre-treatment	0.012 (0.009)	0.012 (0.008)	-0.005 (0.009)	0.008 (0.009)	0.003 (0.009)
Constant	0.244 (0.027)	0.357 (0.026)	0.250 (0.027)	0.350 (0.028)	0.352 (0.027)
Observations	2,432	2,373	2,433	2,414	2,433
Number of waves	2	2	2	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A5. Results for individual emotions toward President Trump, comprising overall emotions index and positive and negative emotions indices from Table A2.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Proud	Enthusiastic	Hopeful	Anxious	Worried	Outraged	Angry	Fearful
	Positive emotions index			Negative emotions index				
More Trump-Russia stories+	0.059*** (0.017)	0.071*** (0.018)	0.057*** (0.019)	-0.024 (0.020)	-0.034* (0.020)	-0.050** (0.021)	-0.050** (0.021)	-0.046** (0.021)
Republican	0.447*** (0.018)	0.444*** (0.019)	0.463*** (0.020)	-0.231*** (0.022)	-0.296*** (0.022)	-0.334*** (0.023)	-0.344*** (0.022)	-0.282*** (0.022)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	-0.115*** (0.026)	-0.116*** (0.027)	-0.089*** (0.028)	0.046 (0.031)	0.029 (0.030)	0.061* (0.032)	0.066** (0.031)	0.047 (0.032)
Democrat	-0.119*** (0.016)	-0.130*** (0.017)	-0.178*** (0.017)	0.196*** (0.019)	0.217*** (0.019)	0.270*** (0.020)	0.245*** (0.019)	0.262*** (0.020)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	-0.047** (0.022)	-0.057** (0.023)	-0.048* (0.025)	-0.005 (0.027)	0.015 (0.026)	0.052* (0.028)	0.051* (0.027)	0.033 (0.028)
More immigration stories	0.001 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.010)	0.001 (0.011)	0.002 (0.012)	-0.008 (0.011)	0.011 (0.012)	-0.000 (0.012)	0.002 (0.012)
More intraparty disagreement	0.002 (0.010)	0.006 (0.010)	0.002 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.011)	-0.026** (0.012)	-0.019 (0.012)	-0.021* (0.012)
More fact-checking stories	-0.004 (0.010)	0.001 (0.010)	-0.010 (0.011)	-0.008 (0.012)	-0.002 (0.011)	0.002 (0.012)	0.006 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.012)
More defense of journalism	0.003 (0.010)	-0.000 (0.010)	0.001 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.012)	0.001 (0.011)	0.009 (0.012)	0.006 (0.012)	0.014 (0.012)
Constant	0.169 (0.015)	0.189 (0.016)	0.271 (0.017)	0.752 (0.019)	0.801 (0.018)	0.641 (0.019)	0.545 (0.019)	0.492 (0.019)
Observations	2,839	2,820	2,844	2,836	2,838	2,843	2,837	2,842
Number of waves	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A6. Results for individual emotions towards President Trump, using logged dependent variables (original 1-7 scale).

	(1) Proud	(2) Enthusiastic	(3) Hopeful	(4) Anxious	(5) Worried	(6) Outraged	(7) Angry	(8) Fearful
	Positive emotions			Negative emotions				
More Trump-Russia stories+	0.121*** (0.037)	0.154*** (0.038)	0.105*** (0.040)	-0.062 (0.038)	-0.080** (0.037)	-0.123*** (0.041)	-0.113*** (0.040)	-0.116*** (0.041)
Republican	0.950*** (0.040)	0.933*** (0.041)	0.896*** (0.043)	-0.443*** (0.041)	-0.553*** (0.040)	-0.721*** (0.045)	-0.692*** (0.043)	-0.590*** (0.044)
More Trump-Russia stories X Republican	-0.213*** (0.056)	-0.230*** (0.058)	-0.145** (0.060)	0.113* (0.058)	0.078 (0.056)	0.155** (0.063)	0.152** (0.061)	0.120* (0.062)
Democrat	-0.314*** (0.035)	-0.335*** (0.036)	-0.424*** (0.037)	0.303*** (0.036)	0.330*** (0.035)	0.478*** (0.039)	0.406*** (0.038)	0.454*** (0.038)
More Trump-Russia stories X Democrat	-0.093* (0.049)	-0.114** (0.051)	-0.093* (0.053)	0.006 (0.051)	0.039 (0.049)	0.117** (0.055)	0.116** (0.053)	0.079 (0.054)
More immigration stories	0.000 (0.021)	0.002 (0.022)	0.010 (0.023)	0.005 (0.022)	-0.018 (0.021)	0.019 (0.024)	-0.002 (0.023)	0.003 (0.023)
More intraparty disagreement	0.007 (0.021)	0.014 (0.022)	0.010 (0.023)	-0.005 (0.022)	0.002 (0.021)	-0.044* (0.024)	-0.031 (0.023)	-0.029 (0.023)
More fact-checking stories	-0.024 (0.021)	-0.011 (0.022)	-0.037 (0.023)	-0.014 (0.022)	-0.011 (0.021)	-0.004 (0.024)	0.004 (0.023)	-0.014 (0.023)
More defense of journalism	0.003 (0.021)	-0.003 (0.022)	-0.004 (0.023)	-0.006 (0.022)	-0.000 (0.021)	0.012 (0.024)	0.014 (0.023)	0.027 (0.023)
Constant	0.472 (0.034)	0.513 (0.035)	0.697 (0.036)	1.366 (0.035)	1.437 (0.034)	1.129 (0.038)	1.262 (0.037)	1.173 (0.037)
Observations	2,839	2,820	2,844	2,836	2,838	2,843	2,837	2,842
Number of wave	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

+ Given the presence of *Republican* and *Democrat* interaction terms, this main effect captures the effect of more Trump-Russia stories on *Independent* respondents.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A7. Marginal predicted probabilities of Trump emotional response, by 7-point party strength measure.

Strength of Party ID	Republicans			Democrats		
	Less Trump-Russia coverage	More Trump-Russia coverage	Difference	Less Trump-Russia coverage	More Trump-Russia coverage	Difference
1 (Weak)	0.493	0.485	-0.009	0.323	0.328	0.006
2	0.511	0.509	-0.001	0.248	0.254	0.006
3	0.527	0.527	0.001	0.253	0.258	0.005
4	0.581	0.579	-0.002	0.245	0.251	0.006
5	0.676	0.671	-0.005	0.199	0.206	0.007
6	0.813	0.808	-0.005	0.131	0.137	0.007
7 (Strong)	0.879	0.872	-0.008	0.085	0.091	0.006

Table A8. Tests for selection into treatment (more Trump-Russia stories). Column 1 tests for inclusion in the pre-test (i.e. randomization), and Column 2 tests for inclusion in the post-test (i.e. randomization – dropout/non-users).

	(1) Included in Russia treatment	(2) Included in Russia treatment
Republican (wave 1)	0.006 (0.035)	
Democrat (wave 1)	-0.016 (0.030)	
Republican (wave 2)		0.022 (0.042)
Democrat (wave 2)		-0.041 (0.037)
Age	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Female	-0.031 (0.026)	0.001 (0.032)
Education (Eighth grade or below omitted)		
Some high school	-0.496 (0.517)	-
GED	-0.665 (0.515)	-0.301 (0.222)
High school graduate	-0.455 (0.504)	-0.043 (0.178)
Some college	-0.501 (0.503)	-0.061 (0.170)
Four-year college degree	-0.472 (0.503)	-0.033 (0.169)
Graduate or professional degree	-0.495 (0.503)	-0.071 (0.172)
White	-0.031 (0.037)	-0.044 (0.048)
Black	-0.014 (0.059)	-0.063 (0.077)
Constant	0.985 (0.503)	0.556 (0.179)
Observations	1,526	1,011
R-squared	0.006	0.009

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A9. Analyses of dropout from the PCRG portal. Dependent variable is whether a respondent dropped out and/or was not included in the post-test.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Sample restrictions:	None	Republicans only	Democrats only	High Trump approval only ⁺
More Trump-Russia stories	-0.008 (0.023)	-0.058 (0.046)	0.054 (0.035)	-0.067 (0.057)
Republican	0.036 (0.030)			
Democrat	0.022 (0.027)			
More immigration stories	0.029 (0.023)	0.024 (0.046)	0.017 (0.035)	0.011 (0.057)
More intraparty disagreement	-0.022 (0.023)	-0.089 (0.046)	0.021 (0.035)	-0.074 (0.057)
More fact-checking stories	0.013 (0.023)	-0.009 (0.046)	-0.029 (0.035)	0.080 (0.058)
More defense of journalism	0.012 (0.023)	0.053 (0.046)	-0.030 (0.035)	0.064 (0.057)
Constant	0.312 (0.033)	0.398 (0.055)	0.329 (0.042)	0.389 (0.071)
Observations	1,526	393	647	250
R-squared	0.045	0.092	0.050	0.140

+ Those who rated Trump as a “6” or “7” on the 1-7 scale of Trump approval.

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$.

Table A10. Results presented as crosstabulations by party and Trump-Russia news condition, including change between conditions.

Dependent Variable	Less Trump-Russia News		More Trump-Russia News		Change from Wave 1 to Wave 2	
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 1	Wave 2	Less	More
Republicans						
Trump job approval	0.6818	0.6995	0.6796	0.6843	0.0177	0.0047
Overall consequences of Trump	0.7045	0.7178	0.6937	0.6768	0.0133	-0.0125
Emotions index	0.7298	0.7459	0.6998	0.7132	0.0127	0.0095
Positive emotions index	0.6624	0.6637	0.6202	0.6268	0.0034	0.0049
Negative emotions index	0.2315	0.2109	0.2513	0.2374	-0.0193	-0.0115
Media - unbiased	0.1783	0.2013	0.1538	0.1784	0.0236	0.0246
Media - trust	0.2519	0.2608	0.2488	0.2554	0.0090	0.0049
Media - fair	0.2715	0.2765	0.2711	0.2793	0.0051	0.0082
Democrats						
Trump job approval	0.0638	0.0636	0.0764	0.0703	0.0003	-0.0066
Overall consequences of Trump	0.0706	0.0739	0.0844	0.0761	0.0020	-0.0087
Emotions index	0.1501	0.1750	0.1588	0.1754	0.0233	0.0180
Positive emotions index	0.0612	0.0594	0.0733	0.0644	-0.0014	-0.0083
Negative emotions index	0.7958	0.7543	0.7891	0.7509	-0.0368	-0.0359
Media - unbiased	0.4308	0.4565	0.4323	0.4668	0.0262	0.0342
Media - trust	0.5429	0.5745	0.5592	0.5826	0.0322	0.0239
Media - fair	0.5341	0.5696	0.5674	0.5855	0.0355	0.0162

Note. Crosstabulations do not include whether respondents were included in other conditions in our fully factorial design, as do the statistical models estimated above. Only respondents who completed pre-test and post-test are included.

Figures

Figure A1. Kernel density plot of clicks on Trump-Russia stories shown within Portal.

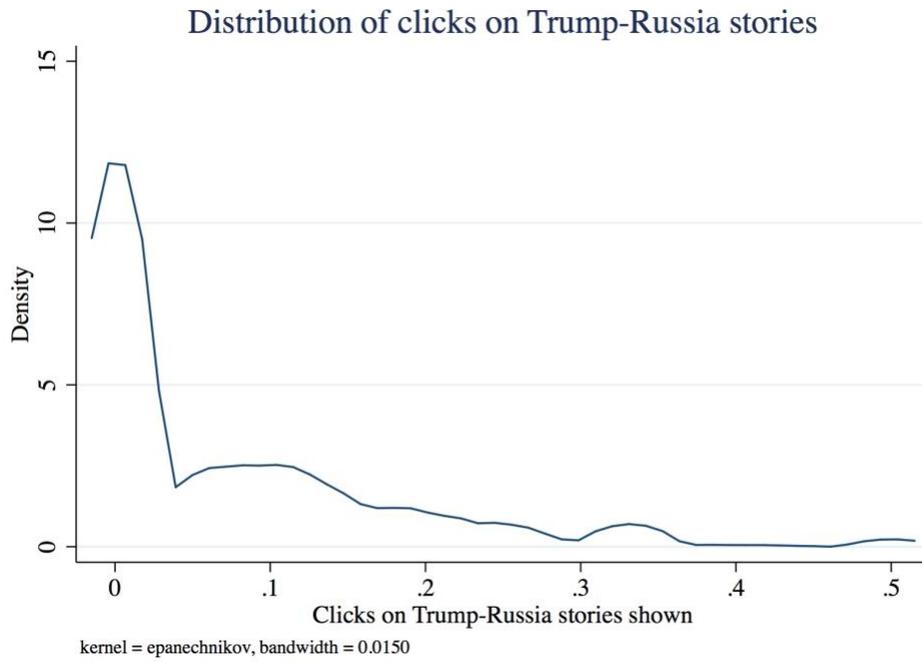


Figure A2. Sample demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education) of those who completed both waves of the survey.

