

Affect, sophistication, and citizen competences

Research proposal

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Addresses

- Problem 1
 - Affective component of political sophistication?
 - Cognitive psychology on political expertise (e.g. Krosnick, 1990)
 - Brain imaging evidence (Carr et al., 2003; Rizzolatti and Craighero, 2004; Schreiber and Iacobini, 2004)
 - Survey evidence: 1980-2004 ANES (Miller, 2011)

Addresses

- Problem 2
 - Unclear link between sophistication and behaviour
 - Heterogenous attribution (Gomez and Wilson, 2001)
 - “Sophistication interaction” problem (Goren 2004)
 - Motivated reasoning (Redlawsk, 2002; Westen et al, 2006)
 - Interactive emotion and cognition theorizing: more explanatory power?
 - Affective component of political competences—interactive term with sophistication

“The Affect Effect”

- How political science can make sense of cognitive psychology evidence (or why it should):
 - Locate emotions on the Motivation—Ability—Opportunity dimension
 - Motivation: information search, selective exposure etc. (starting Marcus et al., 2000)
 - Ability level explanations?

Project overview

- Emotion-cognition links in political thinking
 - How basic emotions relate to political sophistication: integrate related (consistent) beliefs and differentiate (inconsistent) beliefs
- Linking emotion schemas to deliberative potential
 - Basic emotions' and sophistication's interaction in informed preference formation, opinion change, public spirited thinking
- Linking emotion schemas to political awareness
 - Basic emotions' and sophistication's policy specific and counter-attitudinal information information

Project overview cont.

- Three types of empirical evidence measuring:
 - Basic emotions (trait): interest, joy, sadness, anger, disgust, fear
 - Political sophistication: the use of abstractions to differentiate and integrate
 - Competence indicators: political awareness, informed preferences, opinion change, public spirited thinking
- Survey evidence
- Psycho-physiological evidence
- Text evidence

study one

“Affective elements in political sophistication”

- emotions of interests: *interest, joy, sadness, anger, disgust, fear*
- the goal is to experimentally manipulate emotion feelings before assessing political sophistication in terms of opinion consistency
- two rounds:
 - 1st: Writing task (Travis)–emotional prompt
 - 2nd: Source text manipulation meant to induce anger and fear
- Oy Pusulası: consistency measure of individual opinions as well as latent values

study one

- Eye tracking component: two supplementary studies
- 1st: (indirectly) measure treatment compliance
 - in general: how to induce emotions experimentally
 - Compare the two methods: writing task vs source task
 - state versus trait emotions?
 - Broadly, pupilometry and fixation measures
 - Established psychological correlates: next slide

study one

- 1st: (indirectly) measure treatment compliance (cont.)
 - Well established: attention and emotion associations
 - review Yiend (2010)
 - Not definitional relationship, but reliable and robust: good proxy?
 - selective attention under anxiety trait
 - Important: saccades and pupil dilation
 - Not well established: anger and attention (reviewing now)
 - Wilkowski (2007) – combination of gaze duration vs source cues
 - Somewhat established: interest and attention (Wang et al. 2008)
 - Larger amount of pupil dilation
 - Increased duration of fixation
 - Increased eye movement activity
 - Dan: blinks.

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PREMIER REFERENCE SOURCE

Gaze Interaction and Applications of Eye Tracking

Advances in Assistive Technologies



Päivi Majaranta, Hirotaka Aoki, Mick Donegan, Dan Witzner Hansen,
John Paulin Hansen, Aulikki Hyrskykari & Kari-Jouko Rähä

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study one

- Eye tracking component: two supplementary studies
- 2nd: attention to counter-attitudinal information
 - in focus: VAA output
 - participants asked to explore the party positions
 - time limits apply
 - between-subjects design:
 - individually anger and threat prompts modify information seeking pattern: counter-attitudinal information
 - their role in in emotion-sophistication interactions

study one

- 2nd: attention to counter-attitudinal information (cont.)
 - Measuring information seeking: AOI comparison
 - Heatmaps



study 2

“Emotions and deliberative potential”

- A textual analysis of Mumsnet.com discussion boards
 - Outcome of interest: opinion change, public spirited thinking, informed preferences
- Basic emotions in text: LIWC (Pennebaker et al., 2007)
- Sophistication in text: argument diversity and language style
 - (use of abstractions)

study 2

- Positioning in text: WORDFISH Scaling Software (Proksch, 2009)
- Public spirited thinking
 - Thematic dictionary based: principled referencing: efficiency, social justice, collective action, sustainability etc.

study 3

“Emotions and Political awareness”

- Awareness treated separately from sophistication
 - Not definitional relationship between them
- Aim: how different emotion-sophistication constellations influence
 - Adaptive effects on political information search
 - Lasting effects on political awareness
- British VAA
 - Observational set-up
 - Battery of survey questions exploring basic emotional states
 - Political sophistication: opinion consistency: VAA-generated data
 - IV: emotion-sophistication interactions

study 3

“Emotions and Political awareness”

- Lasting effects on awareness
 - Panel option
- In combination with Study 1