

Can (Thin) Populism be manipulated without manipulating Host Ideology? Evidence from a conjoint validation approach

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Online Supplementary Materials

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A. Overview of Samples

This project consists of three samples. The US study (Samples 1 and 2) was fielded on Prolific on May 29th 2024 and the UK study (Sample 3) was fielded on Prolific on March 18th 2025. Both studies used quotas to target samples that matched census benchmarks for sex, age, and ethnicity. For ease of interpretation, I explain the three samples here. Note that samples 1 and 2 were fielded in one survey where respondents are randomly assigned to one of two versions of the conjoint experiment. The survey instruments for these studies are available at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/NUAVW>.

Sample 1: This sample comprises respondents completing the baseline conjoint experiment in the US Prolific sample. These are the respondents who do not see an attribute mentioning the partisanship of the politicians. The target sample size for this group was 700 and the actual final sample size is 699. See Table A1 for sample demographics.

Sample 2: This sample comprises respondents completing the amended conjoint experiment in the US Prolific sample. These are the respondents who see an attribute mentioning the partisanship of the politicians. The target sample size for this group was 700 and the actual final sample size is 704. See Table A2 for sample demographics.

Sample 3: This sample comprises respondents completing the baseline conjoint experiment in the UK Prolific sample. No respondents in the UK experiment see partisan information in the conjoint task. The target sample size for this group was 700 and the actual final sample size is 690. See Table A3 for sample demographics. Additional information on Sample 3 is provided in Appendix Section H.

Table A1: Sample 1 Demographics

		N	%
Sex	Male	337	48.2
	Female	352	50.4
	Other	10	1.4
Race or Ethnicity	White	461	66.0
	Black	92	13.2
	Hispanic	66	9.4
	Asian	46	6.6
	Other	34	4.9
Age	18-25	93	13.3
	26-35	129	18.5
	36-49	147	21.0
	50-64	228	32.6
	65-100	100	14.3
	Missing	2	0.3
Education	Some high school	6	0.9
	High school graduate	80	11.4
	Some college	197	28.2
	College graduate	281	40.2
	Some graduate school	24	3.4
	Graduate school degree	111	15.9
Household Income	Under \$20,000	89	12.7
	\$20,001 – \$50,000	186	26.6
	\$50,001 – \$100,000	239	34.2
	\$100,001 – \$150,000	111	15.9
	Above \$150,000	63	9.0
	Prefer not to answer	11	1.6
Partisanship	Democrat	412	58.9
	Independent	70	10.0
	Republican	217	31.0

Table A2: Sample 2 Demographics

		N	%
Sex.	Male	345	49.0
	Female	350	49.7
	Other	9	1.3
Race or Ethnicity	White	447	63.5
	Black	92	13.1
	Hispanic	71	10.1
	Asian	54	7.7
	Other	40	5.7
Age	18-25	82	11.6
	26-35	131	18.6
	36-49	176	25.0
	50-64	219	31.1
	65-100	96	13.6
Education	Some high school	5	0.7
	High school graduate	90	12.8
	Some college	174	24.7
	College graduate	277	39.3
	Some graduate school	30	4.3
	Graduate school degree	128	18.2
Household Income	Under \$20,000	79	11.2
	\$20,001 – \$50,000	192	27.3
	\$50,001 – \$100,000	265	37.6
	\$100,001 – \$150,000	96	13.6
	Above \$150,000	64	9.1
	Prefer not to answer	8	1.1
Partisanship	Democrat	423	60.1
	Independent	86	12.2
	Republican	195	27.7

Table A3: Sample 3 Demographics (UK Study)

		N	%
Sex	Male	331	48.0
	Female	357	51.7
	Other	2	0.3
Race or Ethnicity	White	586	84.9
	Black	26	3.8
	Hispanic	4	0.6
	Asian	54	7.8
	Other	20	2.9
Age	18-25	74	10.7
	26-35	120	17.4
	36-49	165	23.9
	50-64	228	33.0
	65-100	103	14.9
Education	Primary school	1	0.1
	Secondary school up to 16 years	87	12.6
	Higher or secondary or further education (A-levels, BTEC, etc.)	169	24.5
	College or university	311	45.1
	Post-graduate degree	121	17.5
Household Income	Under £20,000	89	12.9
	£20,001 – £50,000	316	45.8
	£50,001 – £100,000	199	28.8
	Above £100,000	52	7.5
	Prefer not to answer	34	4.9
Partisanship	Conservative	125	18.1
	Labour	229	33.2
	Liberal Democrat	68	9.9
	SNP	15	2.2
	Plaid Cymru	3	0.4
	Reform UK	52	7.5
	UKIP	5	0.7
	Green Party	65	9.4
	Other	10	1.4
	None	118	17.1

B. Additional Details of Conjoint Design

Respondents evaluate six pairs of politicians. Prior to the first task respondents are told:

Next, we will show you six pairs of hypothetical politicians. For each pair we will ask you some questions about your perceptions of the politicians.

Subsequently, each profile pair is introduced as follows:

Please read the statements from two hypothetical politicians and then answer the questions below.

An example of the conjoint task for the baseline design is presented in Figure 1 in the paper. In addition, Figure B1 below shows what the task looks like for respondents for whom partisan information is included in the profiles.

Fig B1: Example of Conjoint Task (In Sample 2 where partisan information is included)

Politician Comparison 1

Please read the statements from two hypothetical politicians and then answer the questions below.

Politician 1 (Republican): I will always defend the will of the people! In contrast to out-of-touch bureaucrats, my priorities are not self-serving. My priority is investing resources to stimulate semiconductor manufacturing.

Politician 2 (Democrat): In contrast to the corrupt elite, my priorities are not self-serving. I will concentrate on bread-and-butter issues as opposed to culture war politics.

C. Outcome Variables

Following each vignette featuring a pair of conjoint profiles, respondents are asked four binary choice questions about the profiles and are further asked to rate both politicians on four scales. The questions asking about people-centrism and anti-elitism are taken from a validated populist attitudes scale (Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove 2014; Castanho Silva et al. 2020) and thus mirror the questions commonly used to assess voters’ levels of populism. As mentioned in the paper, I focus on these two dimensions as opposed to anti-pluralism because they are the two that are more consistently included in the published literature and because there is more variation in how scholars operationalize these concepts.

In developing the outcome measures for perceived people-centrism and perceived anti-elitism, I first consulted the research validating existing populist attitudes scales (Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove 2014; Castanho Silva et al. 2020; Schulz et al. 2018) to ensure that the items were validated as tapping into people-centrism and anti-elitism, respectively. Second, I wanted to ensure that the question did not mirror the treatment text too closely. For instance, I did not want to simply use Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove’s (2014) item “The politicians in the [National] Parliament need to follow the will of the people” or Castanho Silva et al.’s (2020) item “The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country’s politics” because this language was too similar to the treatment text and repeated the phrase “the will of the people”. The anti-elitism item “Say that many people in the political class are crooked” is an adaptation of an item in Castanho Silva et al.’s (2020) scale that broadens the target group from the government to the political class whereas the people-centrism item “Say that politicians should always listen to the people” is loosely based on the Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014) item described above.

The *Perceived People-Centrism Binary*, *Perceived Anti-Elitism Binary*, *Perceived Conservative Ideology Binary*, and *Perceived Immigration Stance Binary* variables are based on the forced-choice questions shown below. When analyzing conjoint data, each profile is a row in the dataset and thus for these three variables each outcome will be coded as one if it is the profile selected on the forced-choice question and as zero if it is not selected. The corresponding rating variables are based on the rating outcome questions shown below. Here the outcome for each profile will simply be the rating provided by the respondent for that profile. Lastly, the *Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating (Folded)* variable is a transformation of the *Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating* variable into a 3-point variable that ranges from “neither liberal or conservative” to “Very liberal or conservative”. This last variable was originally considered to assess not only if thin ideology treatments affect perceptions of host ideology but also perceptions of host ideology extremity (but see Appendix Section M).

Exact question wordings are as follows:

Based on the above information, which politician do you think is more likely to:

- Say that politicians should always listen to the people (Politician 1, Politician 2)
- Say that many people in the political class are crooked (Politician 1, Politician 2)
- Say that immigration should be reduced (Politician 1, Politician 2)
- Have conservative ideology (Politician 1, Politician 2)

How likely do you think the two politicians are to say that “politicians should always listen to the people”?

Politician 1: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

Politician 2: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

How likely do you think the two politicians are to say that “many people in the political class are crooked”?

Politician 1: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

Politician 2: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

How likely do you think the two politicians are to say that “immigration should be reduced”?

Politician 1: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

Politician 2: Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Very likely, Extremely likely

How liberal or conservative do you think the two politicians are?

Politician 1: Very liberal, Somewhat liberal, Neither liberal nor conservative, Somewhat conservative, Very conservative

Politician 2: Very liberal, Somewhat liberal, Neither liberal nor conservative, Somewhat conservative, Very conservative

D. Pre-Registered Estimation Strategy (Stage 1 Document)

This appendix section is a copy of the estimation strategy outlined in the Appendix of the Stage 1 manuscript available at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/NUAVW>. The below information can also be found in pre-registration documents deposited at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/ZMUHQ> (US Studies) and <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/RCDTX> (UK Study). There were no changes to the general estimation approach but small changes to how results are presented. Any deviations from this estimation strategy are discussed in Appendix Section M.

For all below models *People-Centrism* and *Anti-Elitism* refer to the variables capturing the respective conjoint attributes. All analyses will be implemented using the *cregg* R package (Leeper and Barnfield 2018), primarily using the *mm* function to calculate marginal means. Formal statistical tests will report exact p-values (using $p < 0.05$ as a cut-off for results discussed as statistically significant). Unless otherwise stated, the analyses presented in the paper will use sample 1. In the appendix I will also report on analyses that (1) pool respondents from samples 1 and 2, and (2) use respondents from sample 3. Key differences in results between samples 1 and 2 will be reported on in the discussion of *RQ3/H3* and key differences between the US and UK samples will be reported on in the discussion of *RQ4*.

RQ1/H1:

To assess *RQ1/H1* I will calculate marginal means of all conjoint attributes for the people-centrism and anti-elitism outcomes. These marginal means can be interpreted as the mean outcome of a specific attribute level when averaging across the other conjoint attributes. This will allow me to assess both whether different operationalizations of anti-elitism and people-centrism affect perceptions of those constructs, respectively, as well as if there are significant differences in marginal means across different operationalizations.

I will fit the below models and then plot the resulting marginal means:

- Perceived People-Centrism Binary $\sim$ People-Centrism + Anti-Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived People-Centrism Rating $\sim$ People-Centrism + Anti-Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Anti-Elitism Binary $\sim$ People-Centrism + Anti-Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Anti-Elitism Rating $\sim$ People-Centrism + Anti-Elitism + Filler Attribute

My preference is to plot the marginal means for both the forced-choice binary outcomes and the rating outcomes within the same plot. Thus, this plot would consist of two facets (one for the anti-elitism outcomes and one for the people-centrism outcomes) which each include dot and whisker estimates of marginal means and 95% confidence intervals for the forced-choice and rating outcomes. If this presentation is too cluttered, then I will present one outcome type in the manuscript and the other in the appendix. In addition, in the appendix I will include average marginal component effects for the above models using the control attributes for the anti-elitism and people-centrism attributes (i.e. the feature level in which no information is provided for that attribute) as the reference category. These results will be used to assess H1 using a statistical test rather than relying on descriptively comparing marginal means.

RQ2/H2:

To assess *RQ2/H2* I will calculate marginal means of all conjoint attributes for two different conceptualizations of host ideology: perceived conservatism and perceived immigration position. This will allow me to assess both whether different operationalizations of anti-elitism and people-centrism affect perceptions of two indicators of host ideology as well as if different operationalizations do so to different degrees.

- Perceived Conservative Ideology Binary $\sim$ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating $\sim$ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating (Folded) $\sim$ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Immigration Stance Binary $\sim$ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute
- Perceived Immigration Stance Rating $\sim$ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute

The results for *RQ2/H2* will be graphically presented in the same way as described above for *RQ1/H1*. As above I will plot marginal means for the two main host ideology outcomes (i.e. perceived conservatism and perceived immigration stance) in the same plot (as two facets). In addition, I will present the results for the folded conservatism measure as an alternative measure of host ideology (i.e. host ideology extremity) in the appendix. As above, the appendix will also include average marginal component effects for the above models using the control attributes for the anti-elitism and people-centrism attributes as the reference category.

RQ3/H3:

For this analysis I will pool respondents from samples 1 and 2. I will estimate the same models as specified for *RQ2/H2* but add the sample (sample 1 vs sample 2) as a grouping variable across which I will estimate sub-group marginal means.

- Perceived Conservative Ideology Binary ~ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute, by(sample)
- Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating ~ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute, by(sample)
- Perceived Conservative Ideology Rating (Folded) ~ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute, by(sample)
- Perceived Immigration Stance Binary ~ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute, by(sample)
- Perceived Immigration Stance Rating ~ People Centrism + Anti Elitism + Filler Attribute, by(sample)

This estimation strategy will allow me to plot sub-group marginal means as well as differences in marginal means across the two models. Statistically *H3* will thus be assessed in two ways. First, I will use a nested model comparison test (implemented using the *cj_anova* function) which provides a formal test of whether any of the interactions between the sample variable and each attribute levels differs from zero at $p < 0.05$. Second, in addition to plotting marginal means by sample, I will also plot differences in marginal means between the two models (implemented using the *mm_diff* function). This approach will thus allow me to formally test whether the effect of people-centric and anti-elitism attribute levels is smaller in a design in which the conjoint vignettes include explicit partisan information.

RQ4:

The exploratory analyses for *RQ4* will follow the same strategy discussed above for *RQ3/H3* but for all outcome variables (i.e. all models included in *RQ1/H1* and *RQ2/H2*). Here I will estimate (1) sub-group marginal means grouped by sample 1 vs sample 3 to explore heterogeneity across the US and UK samples, (2) sub-group marginal means grouped by partisanship (where the comparison will exclude pure independents and compare Democrats to Republicans, including partisan leaners coded based on the standard ANES partisanship branching question), and (3) sub-group marginal means grouped by low and high populist attitudes (see Appendix K). As above, I will ascertain whether there are significant differences across sub-groups using both the *cj_anova* and *mm_diff* functions.

Note that all the plots showing sub-group marginal means across (1) the US and UK sample, (2) Democrats and Republicans, and (3) respondents with populist attitudes above and below the mean will be included in the appendix. Any substantively large heterogeneity uncovered in these analyses will also be discussed in the main manuscript.

E. Power Analyses

I conducted a priori power analyses using the *cjpowR* R package, which was designed for estimating statistical power in conjoint experiments (Schuessler and Freitag 2020; Freitag and Schuessler 2020). It is worth noting that the package was explicitly designed for use with forced-choice binary outcomes and thus the below analyses refer to those outcomes. At present the package does not support power analyses for ordinal outcome measures but the expectation would be that power should increase for ordinal measures (see Ragland 1992). First, Hypotheses 1 and 2 concern differences between marginal means (i.e. average marginal component effects). For both hypotheses, I am interested in the effect of conjoint attributes that have four levels (e.g., the People-Centrism and Anti-Elitism attributes). Given the target sample size of each sample ($n=700$) and each respondent evaluating six pairs of profiles, the resulting effective sample size for these tests is 8400 ($700 \times 6 \times 2$). This sample size is sufficient to achieve 90% power for an average marginal component effect (AMCE) of 0.05 (the median effect size identified in Schuessler and Freitag (2020) at $\alpha = 0.05$. Here it is further worth noting that the fear of an incorrect sign on a given effect is negligible (Schuessler and Freitag 2020).

Second, Hypothesis 3 concerns an interaction between the aforementioned attributes and design type (i.e. whether respondents participated in the baseline conjoint design in sample 1 or the design which included partisan information in sample 2). This leads to a 4-level attribute $\times$ 2-level moderator interaction. Pooling the two samples results in an effective sample size of 16800. This effective sample size is sufficient to detect a relatively large average marginal component interaction effect ($AMCIE = 0.07$) at 90% power or a moderately sized interaction effect ($AMCIE = 0.061$) at 80% (see Schuessler and Freitag (2020) for comparisons to published conjoint studies in which the mean minimum detectable AMCIE for 15 highly cited conjoint experiments was 0.069 at 80% power). Power for the examination of potential heterogeneous effects (RQ4) will depend on the distribution of partisanship and populist attitudes in the samples. Given that these are exploratory analyses, I will thus report the minimum detectable effect when discussing any heterogeneous effects.

F. Additional Results

Additional Results for RQ1/H1

Figure F1: Ratings Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S1)

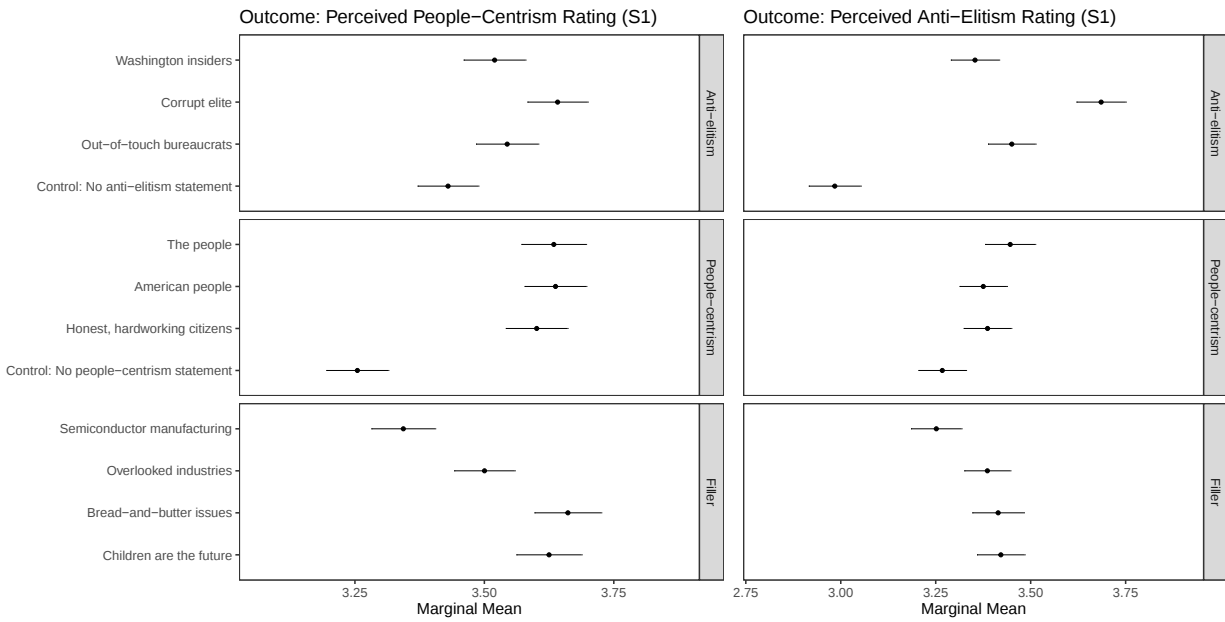


Figure F2: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ1/H1 (S1)

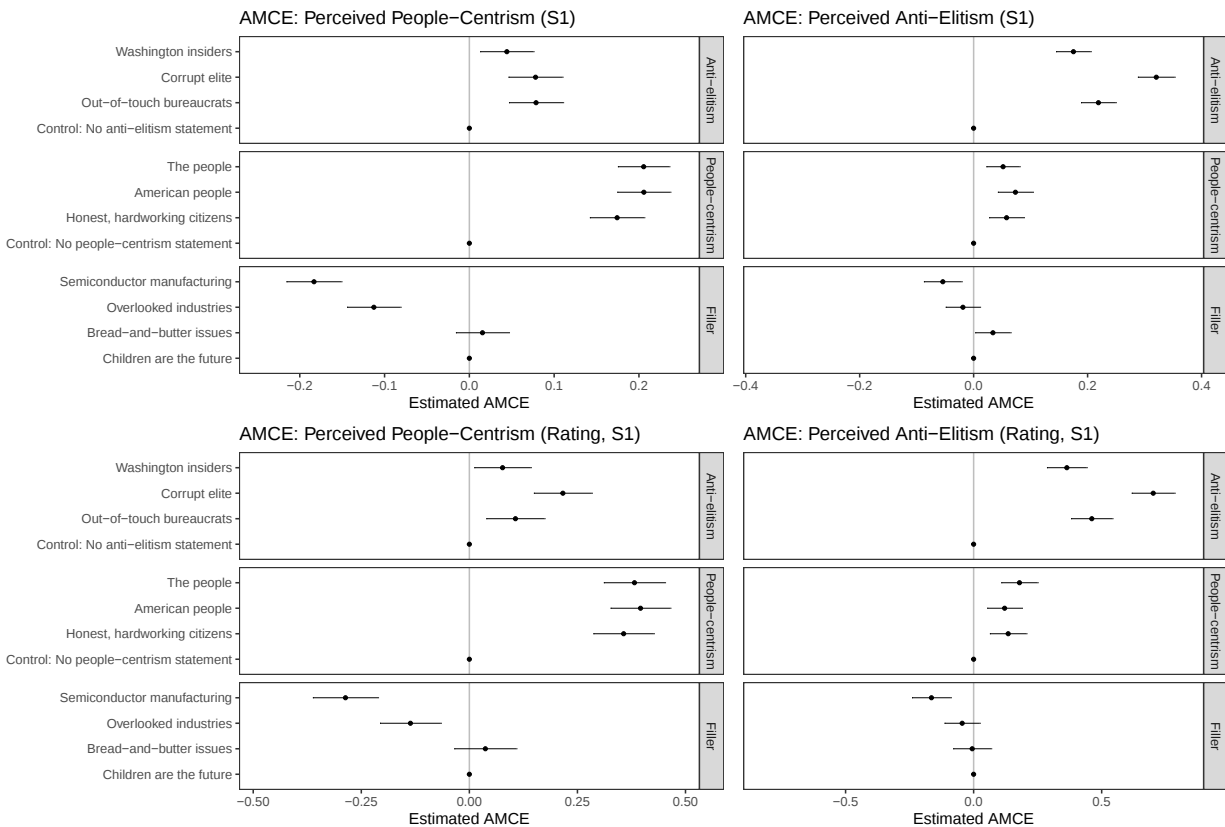


Figure F3: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2)

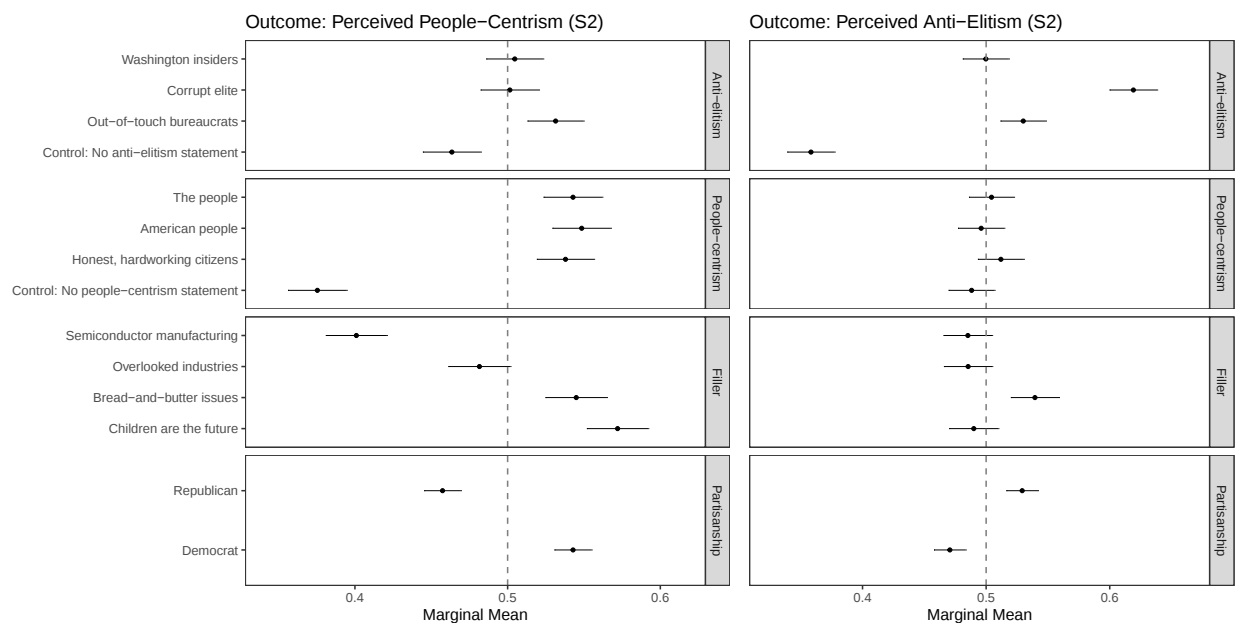


Figure F4: Ratings Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2)

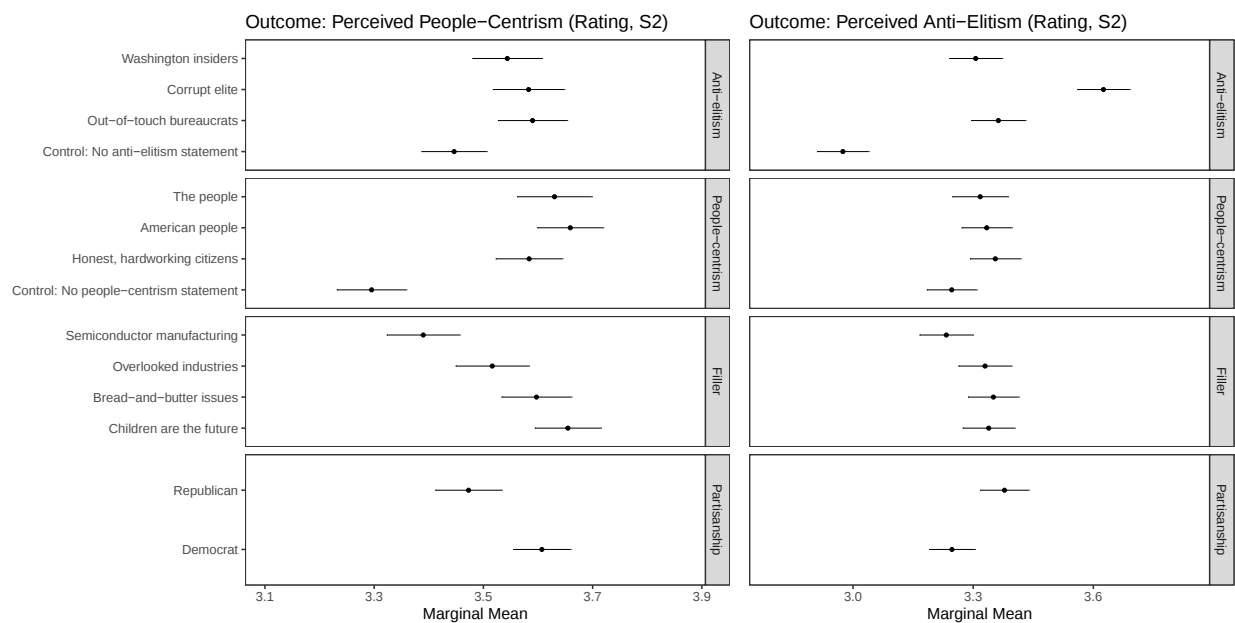


Figure F5: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ1/H1 (S2)

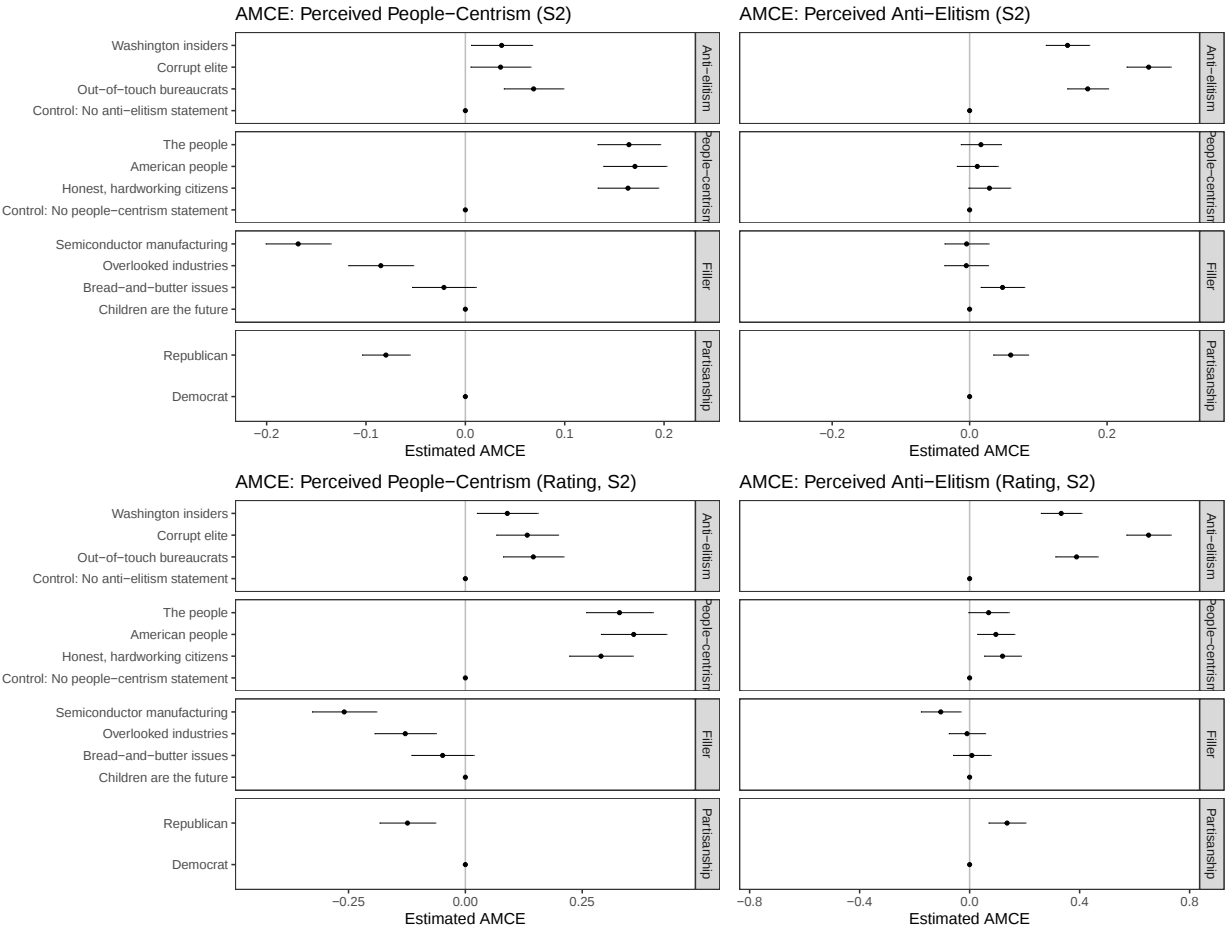


Figure F6: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 2 for RQ1/H1 (Binary)

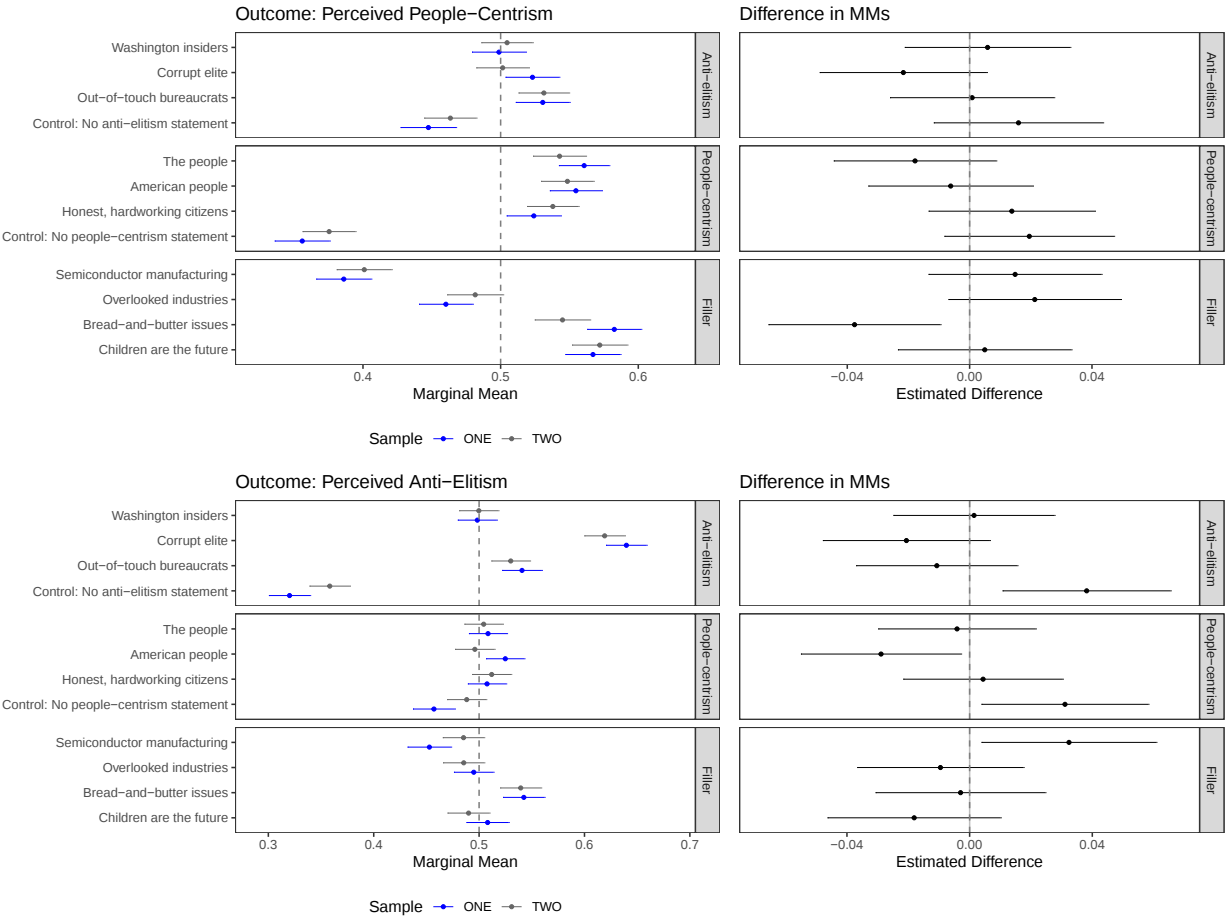
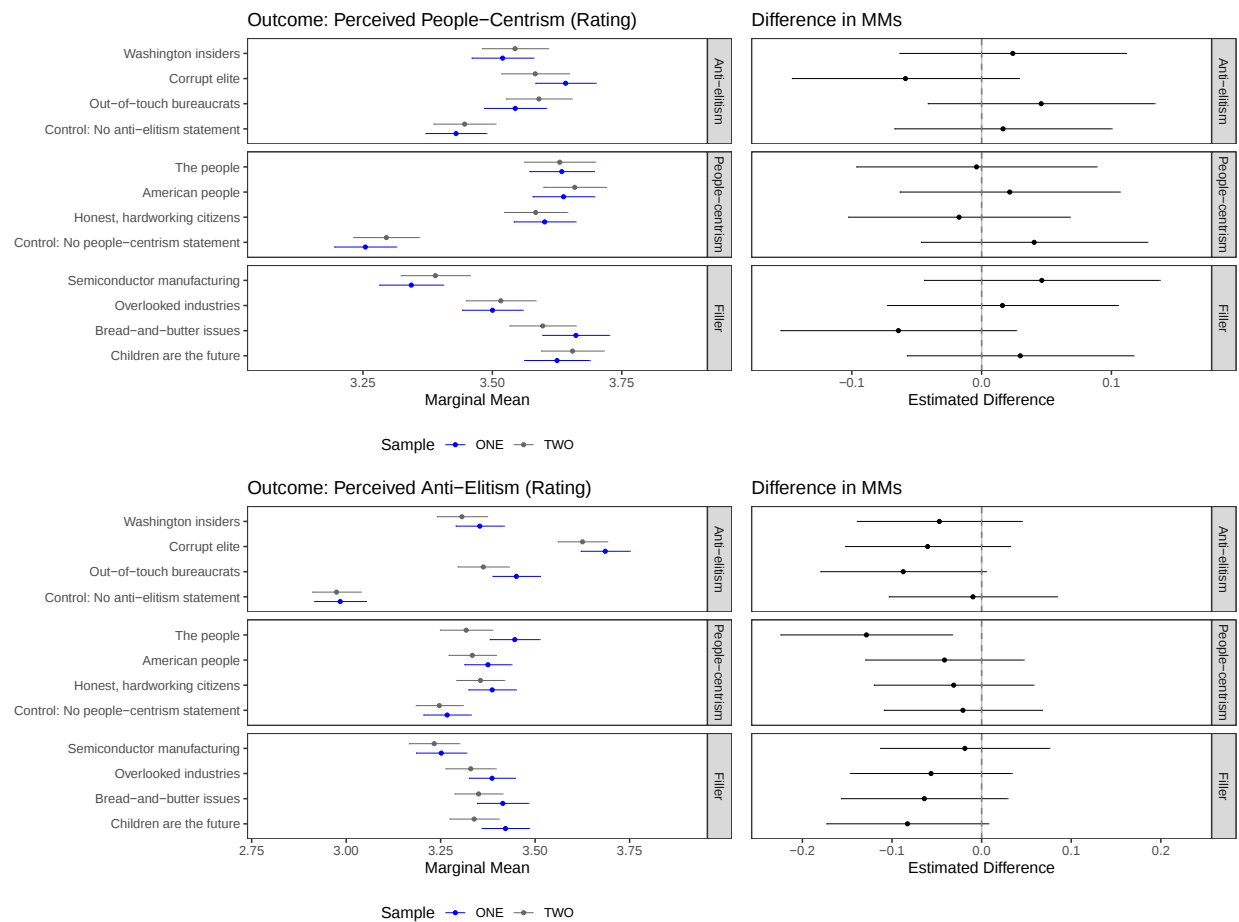


Figure F7: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 2 for RQ1/H1 (Rating)



Additional Results for RQ2/H2

Figure F8: Ratings Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S1)

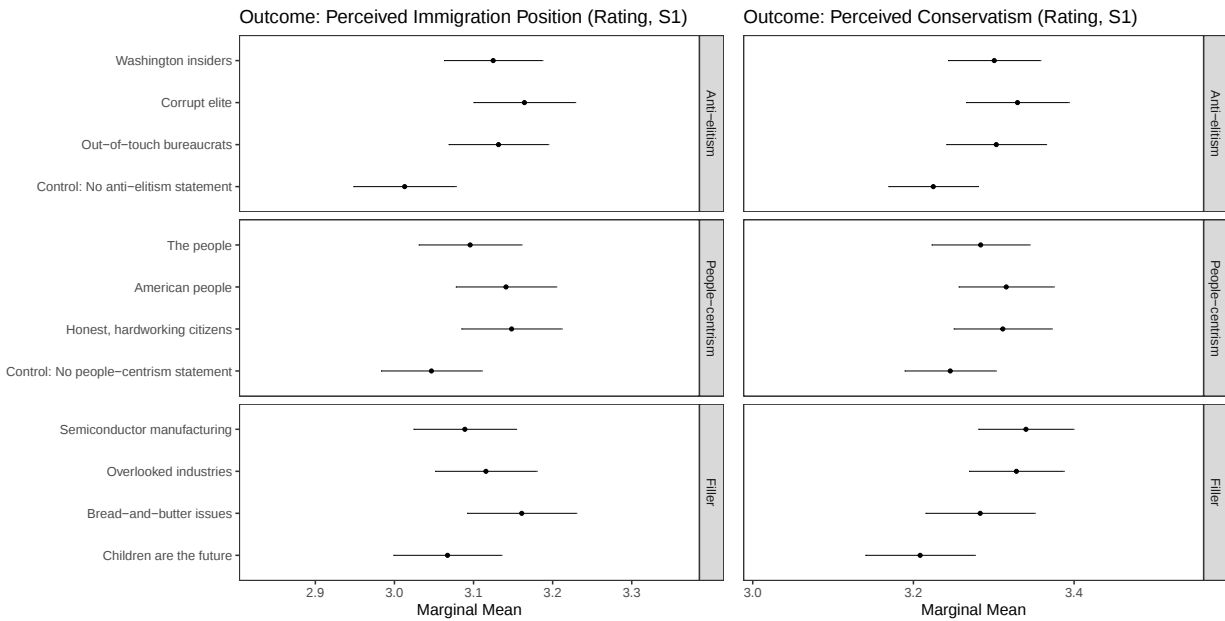


Figure F9: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S1)

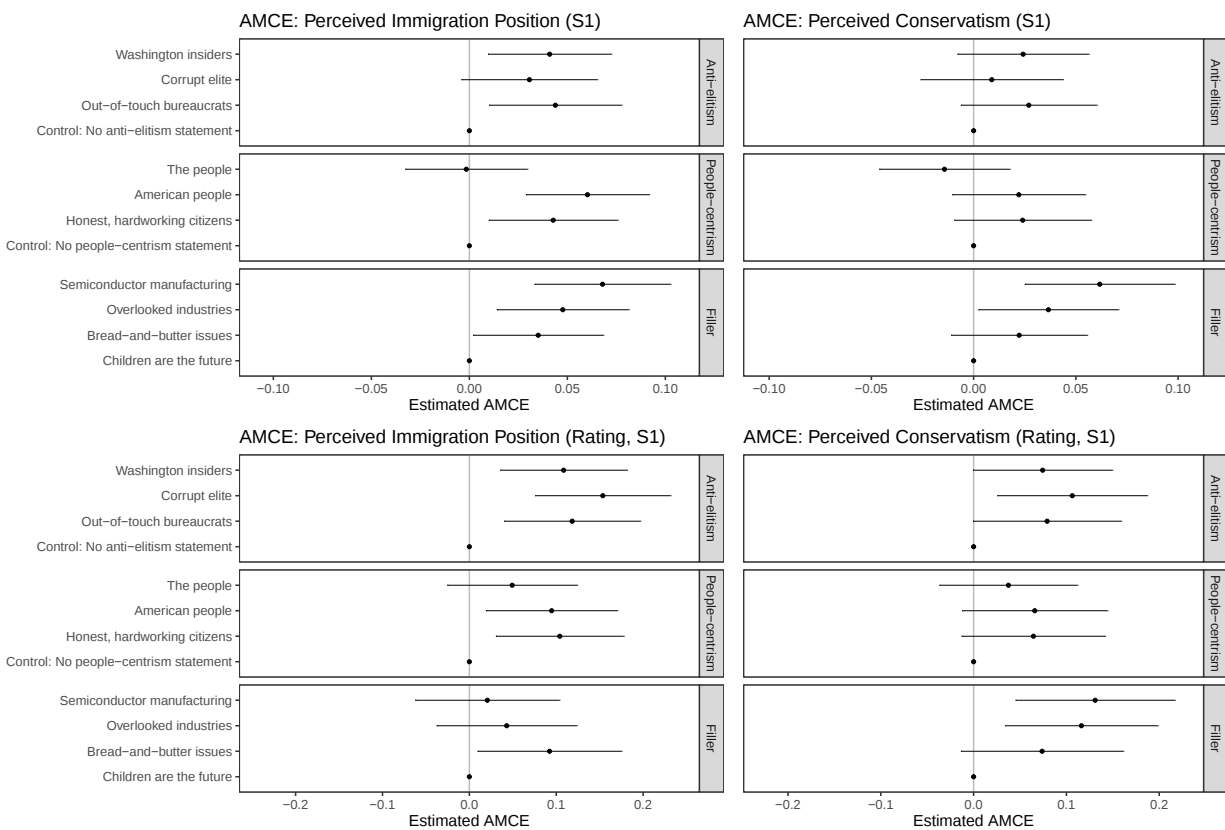


Figure F10: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S1, Alternative Baseline)

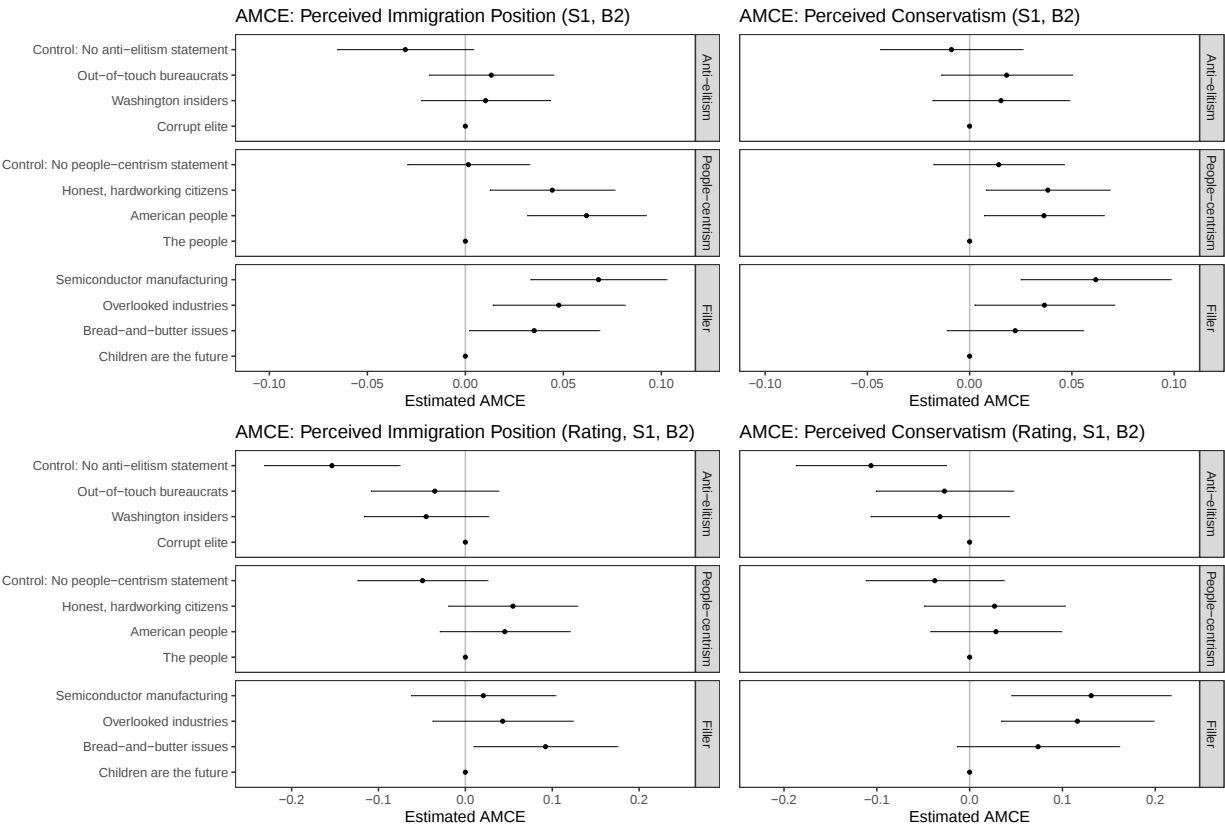


Figure F11: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2)

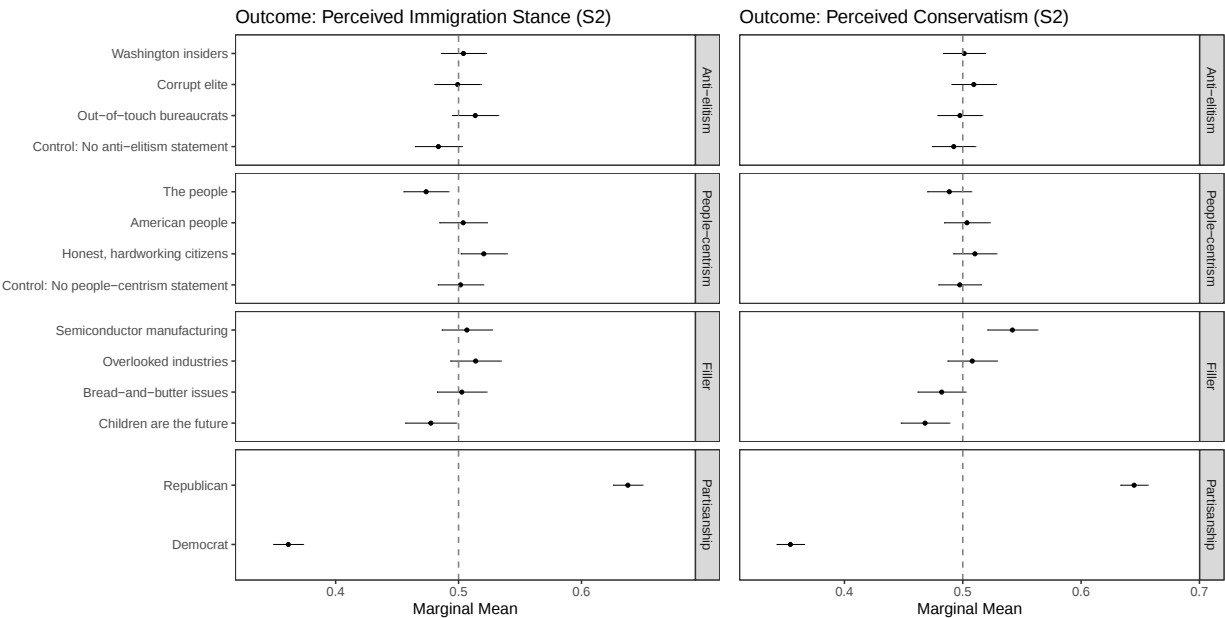


Figure F12: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2)

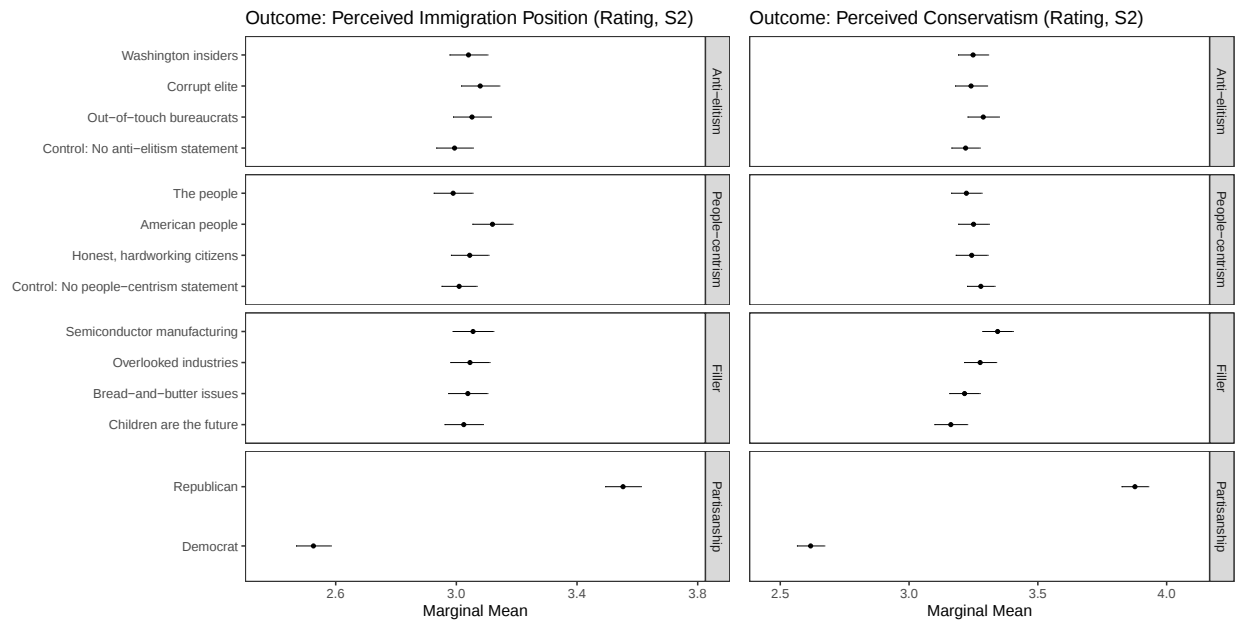


Figure F13: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S2)

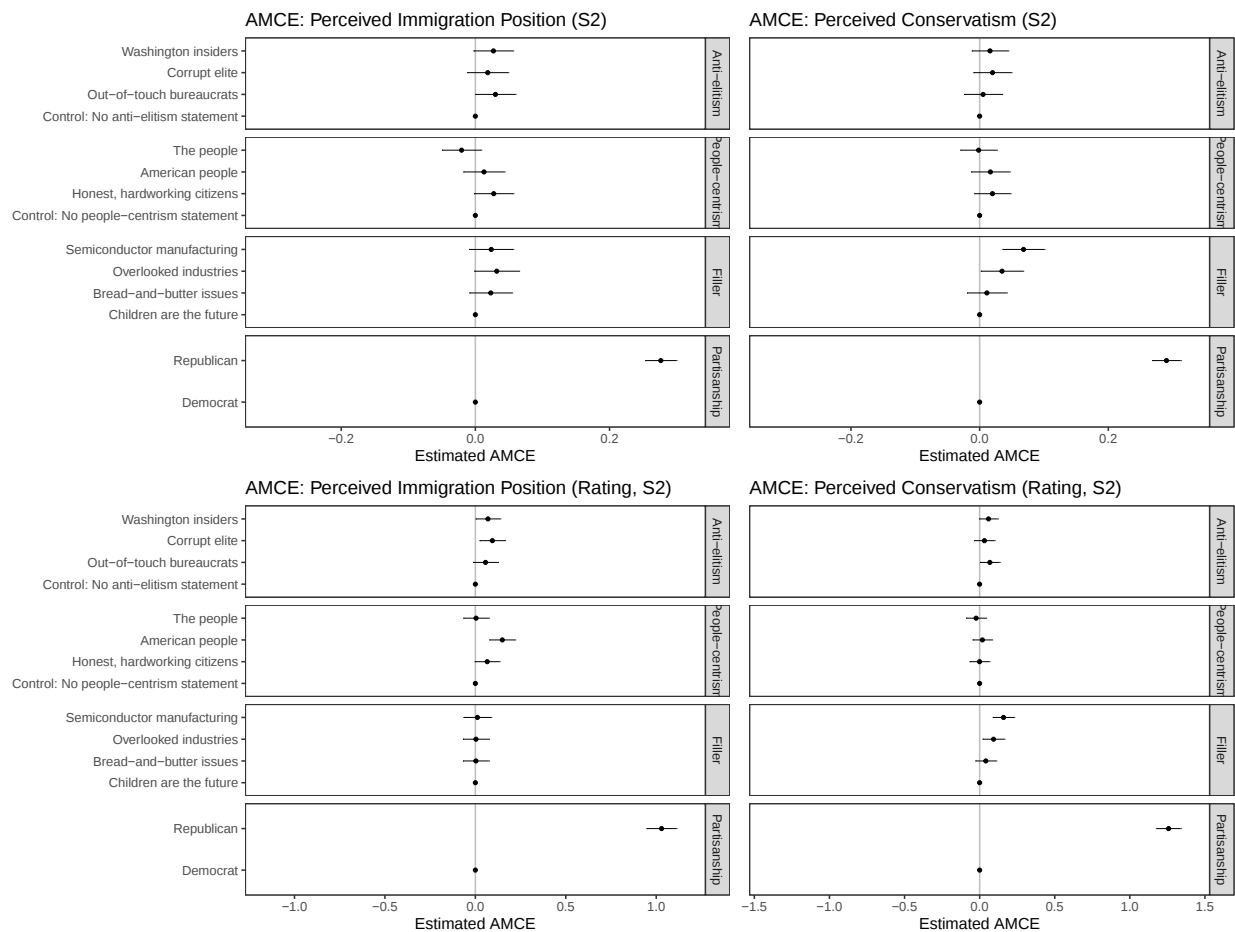
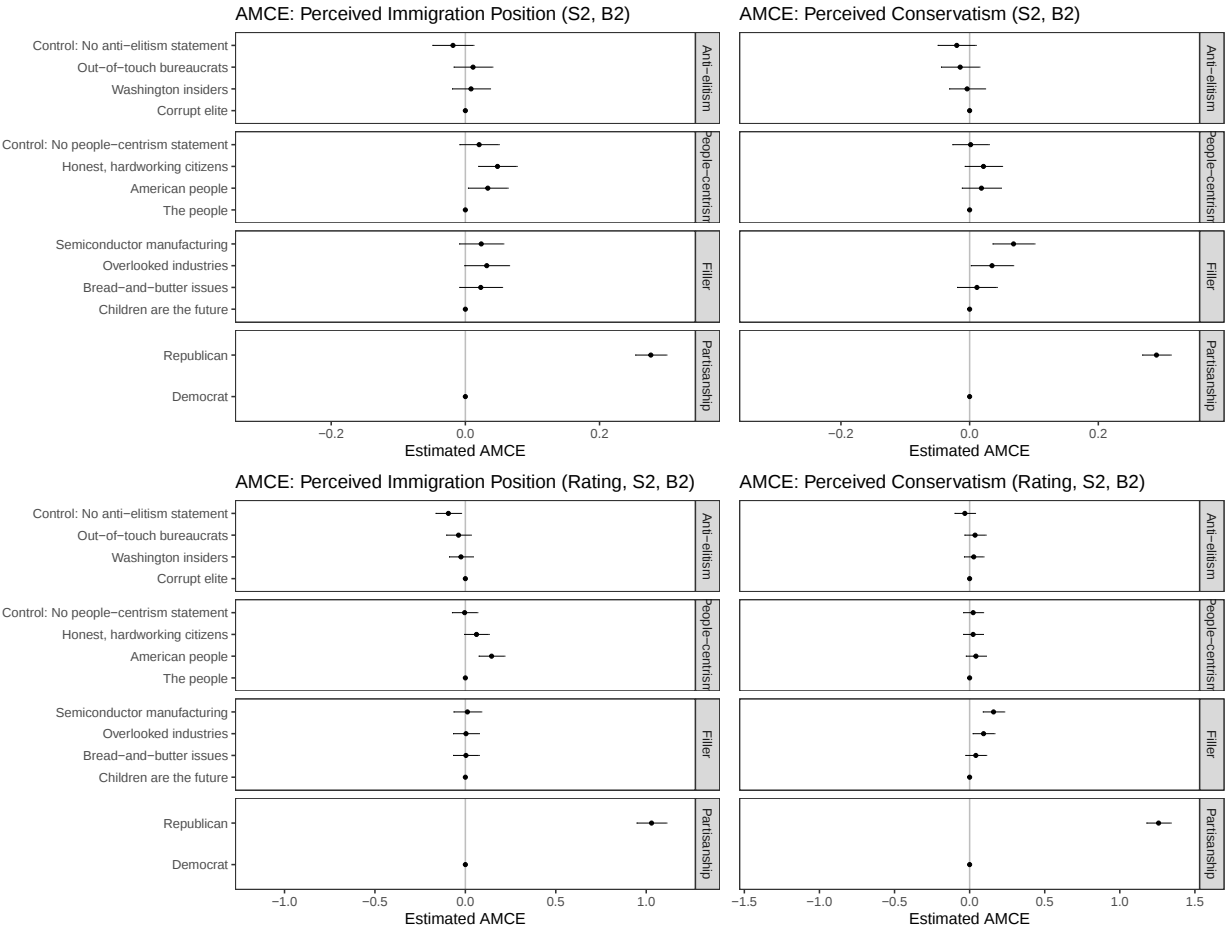


Figure F14: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S2, Alternative Baseline)



Additional Results for RQ3/H3

Figure F15: Difference in Rating Outcomes for RQ3/H3

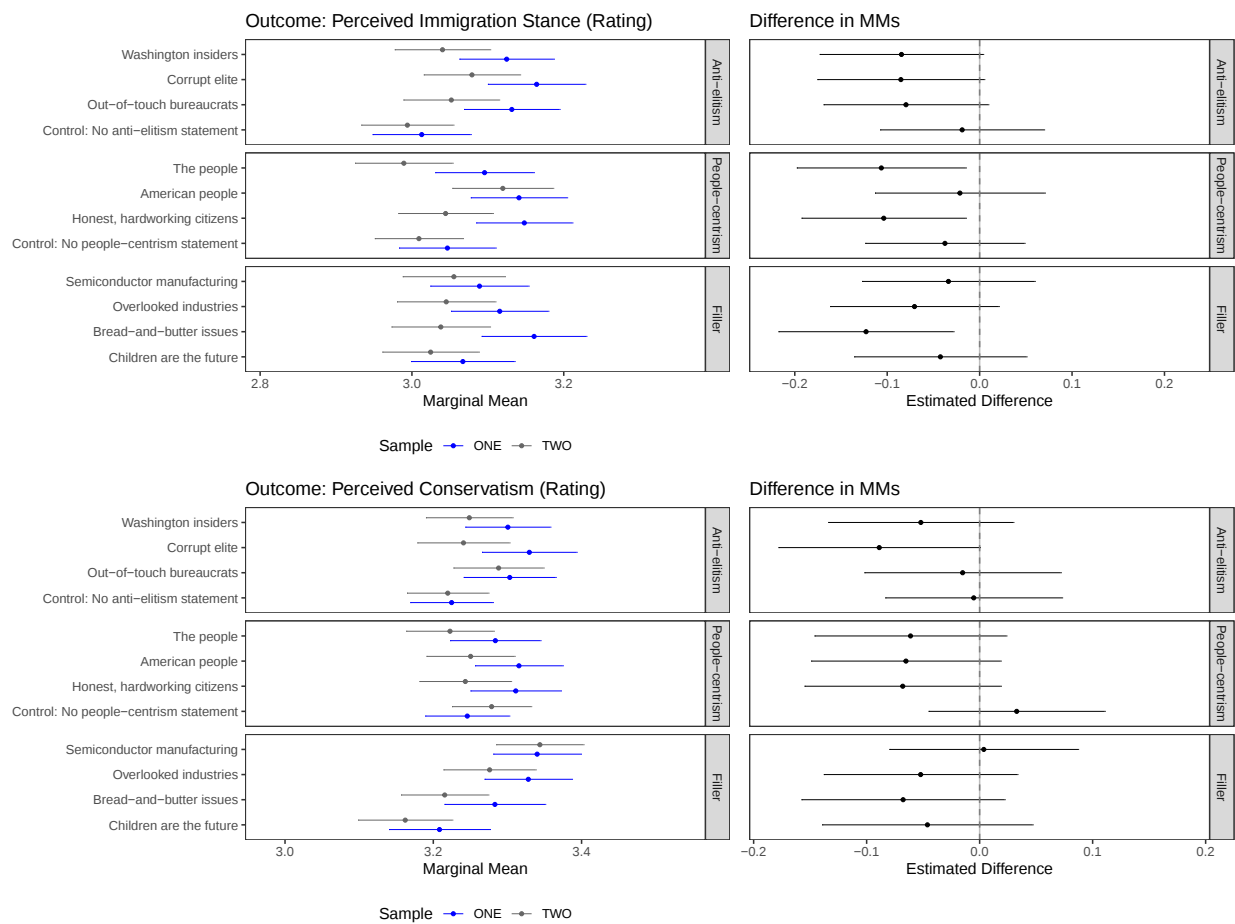


Figure F16: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ3/H3

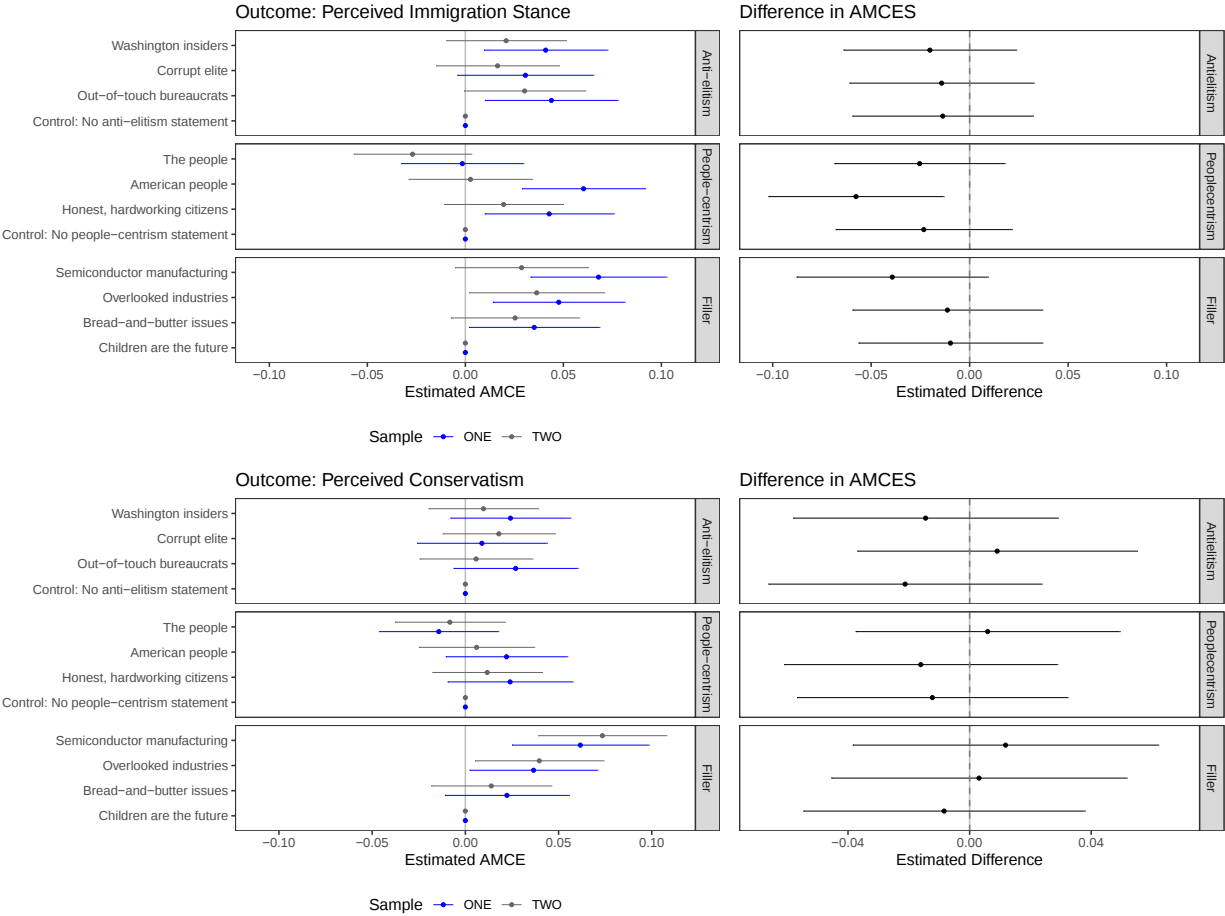
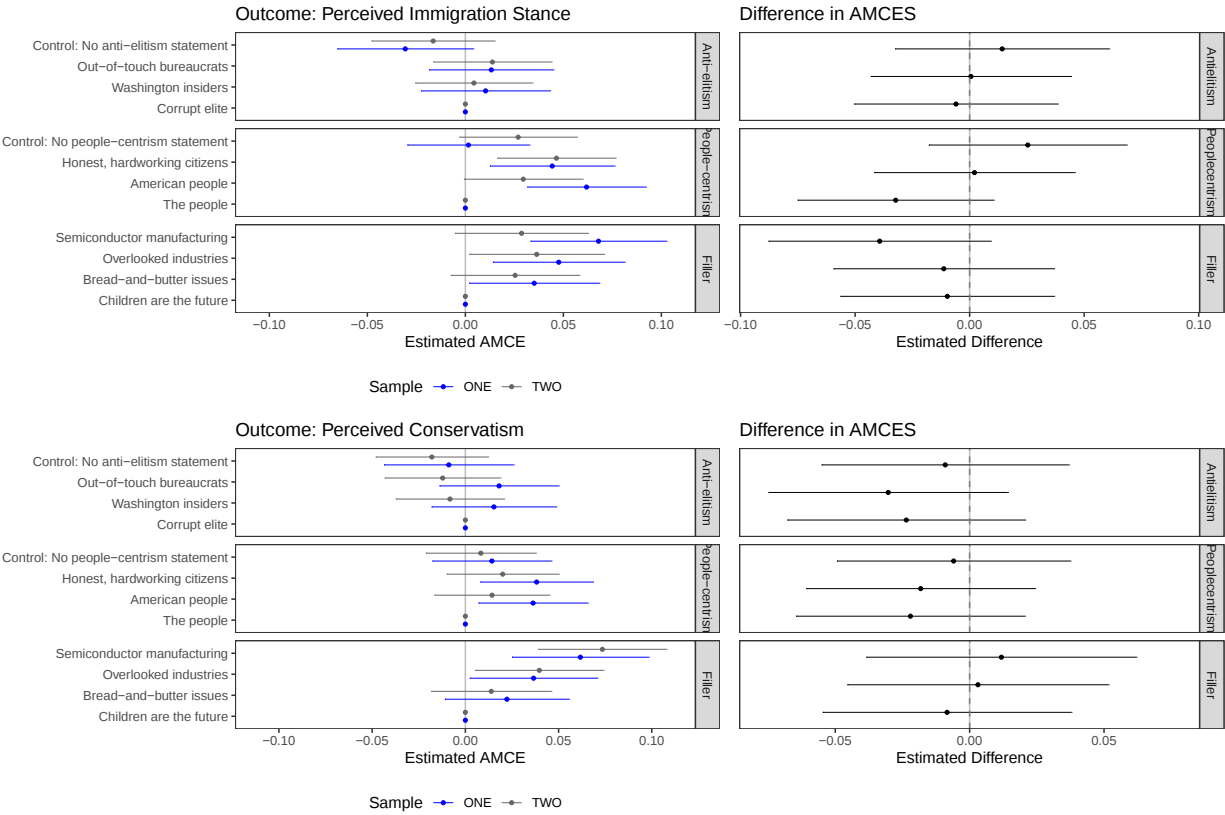
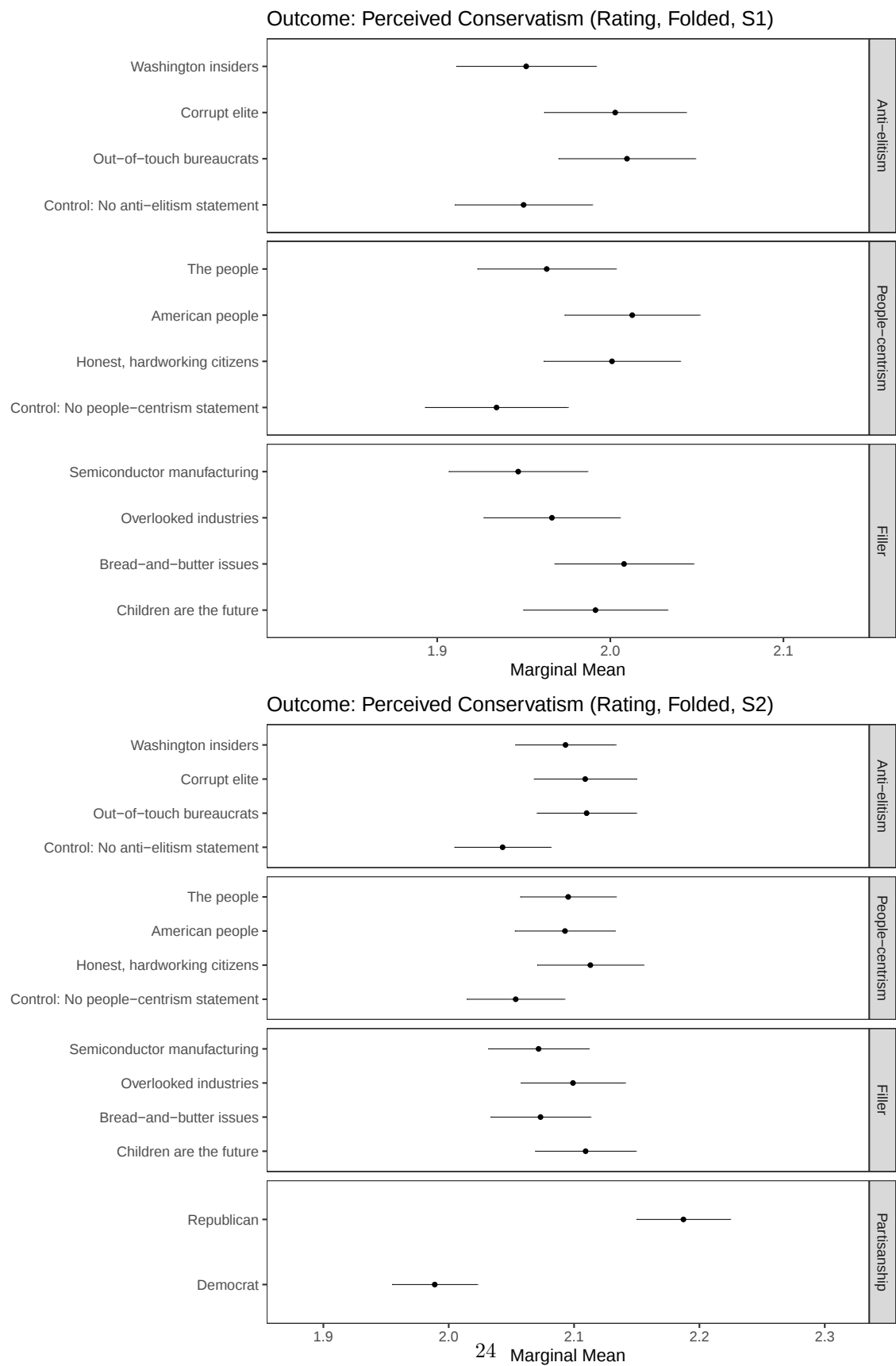


Figure F17: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ3/H3 (Alternative Baseline)



Folded Conservatism Measure

Figure F18: Folded Conservatism Measure



G. Heterogeneous Effects (RQ4)

Heterogeneity by Partisanship

Figure G1: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S1) by Partisanship

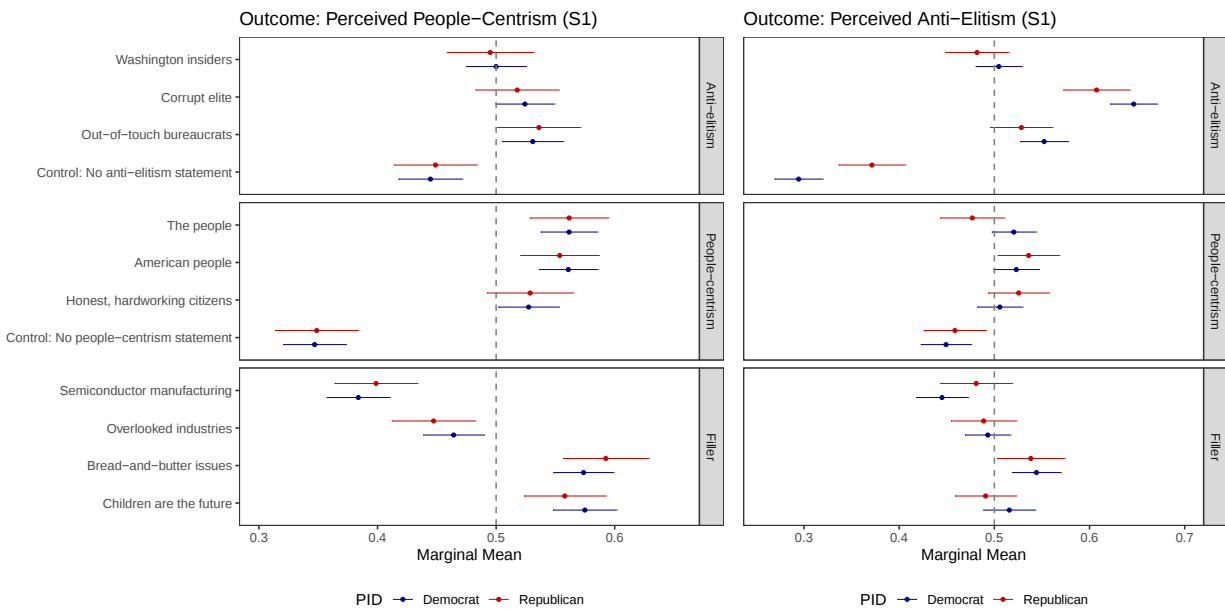


Figure G2: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2) by Partisanship

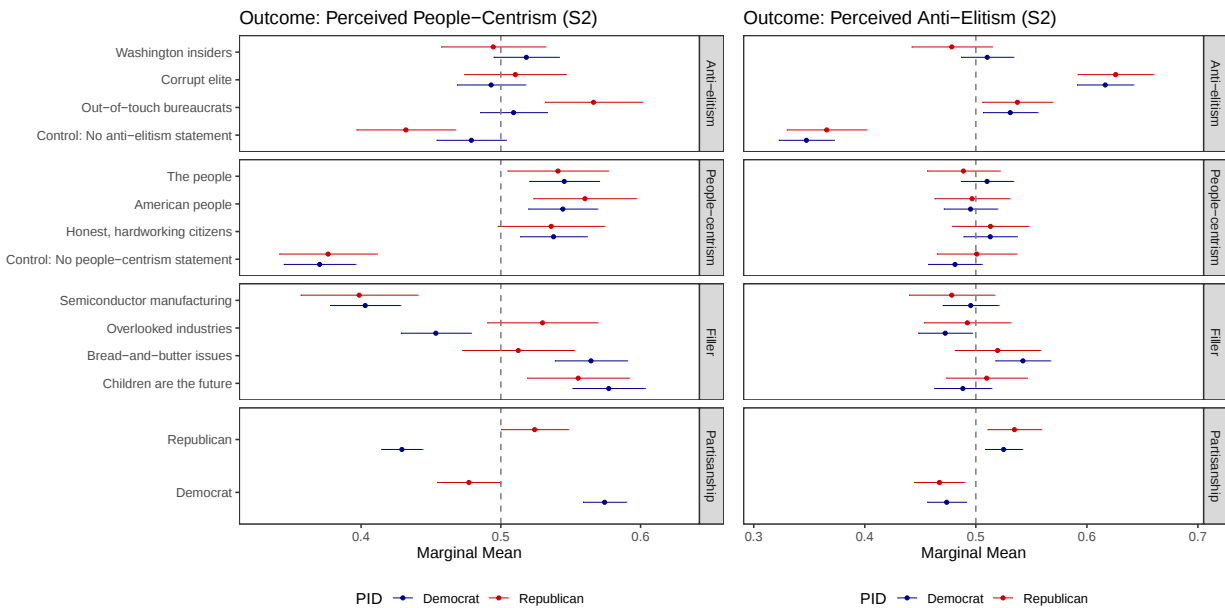


Figure G3: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S1) by Partisanship

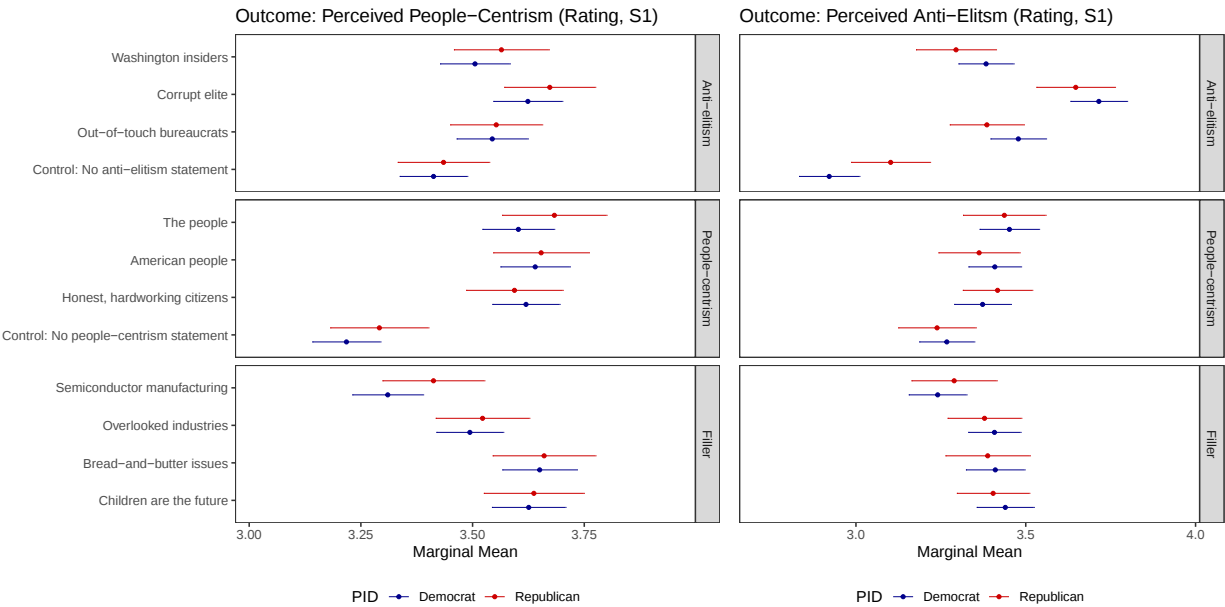


Figure G4: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2) by Partisanship

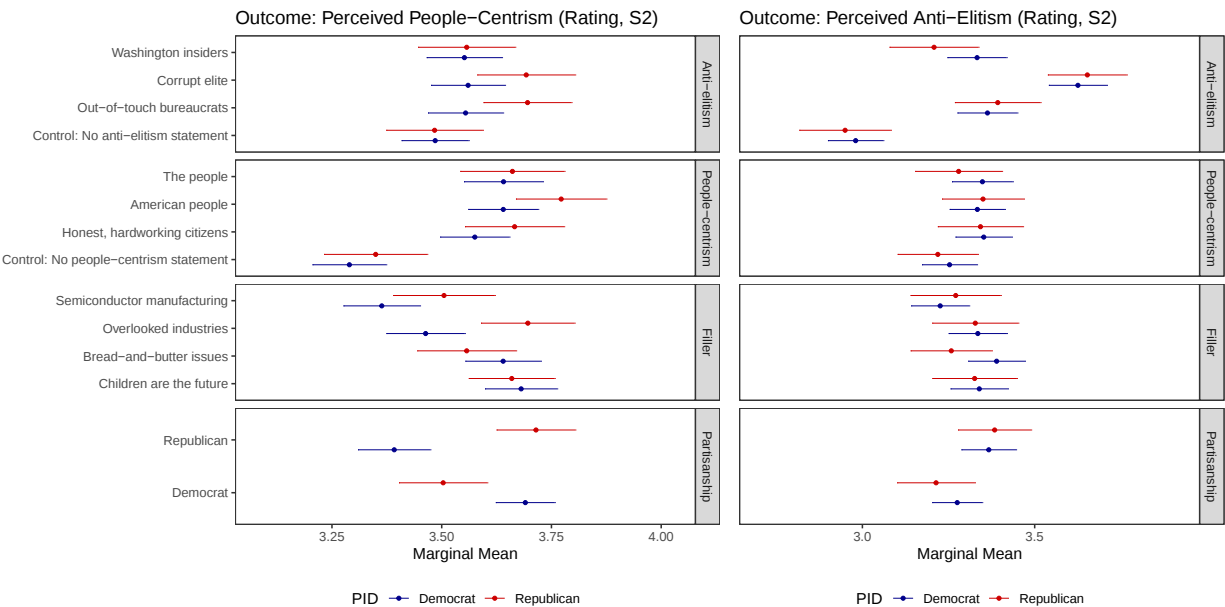


Figure G5: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S1) by Partisanship

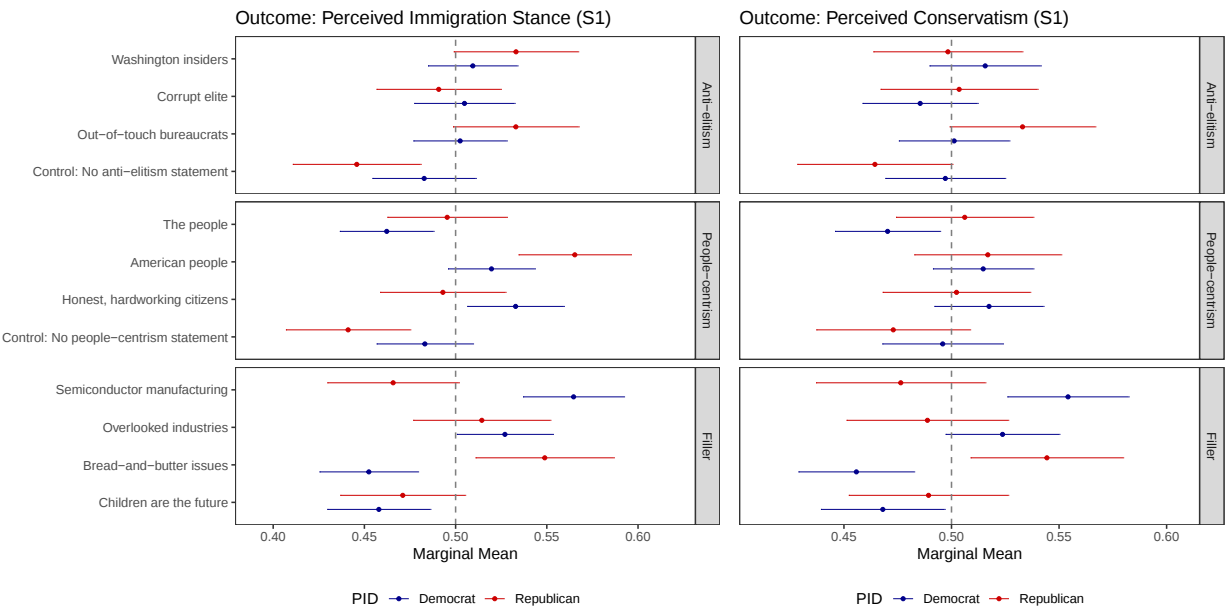


Figure G6: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2) by Partisanship

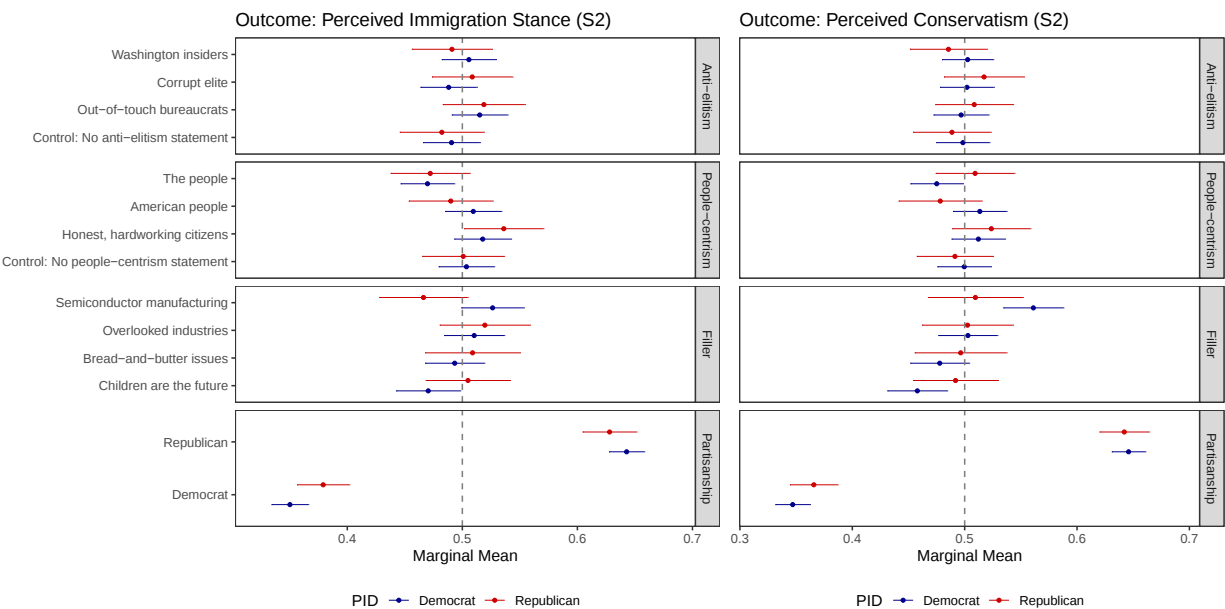


Figure G7: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S1) by Partisanship

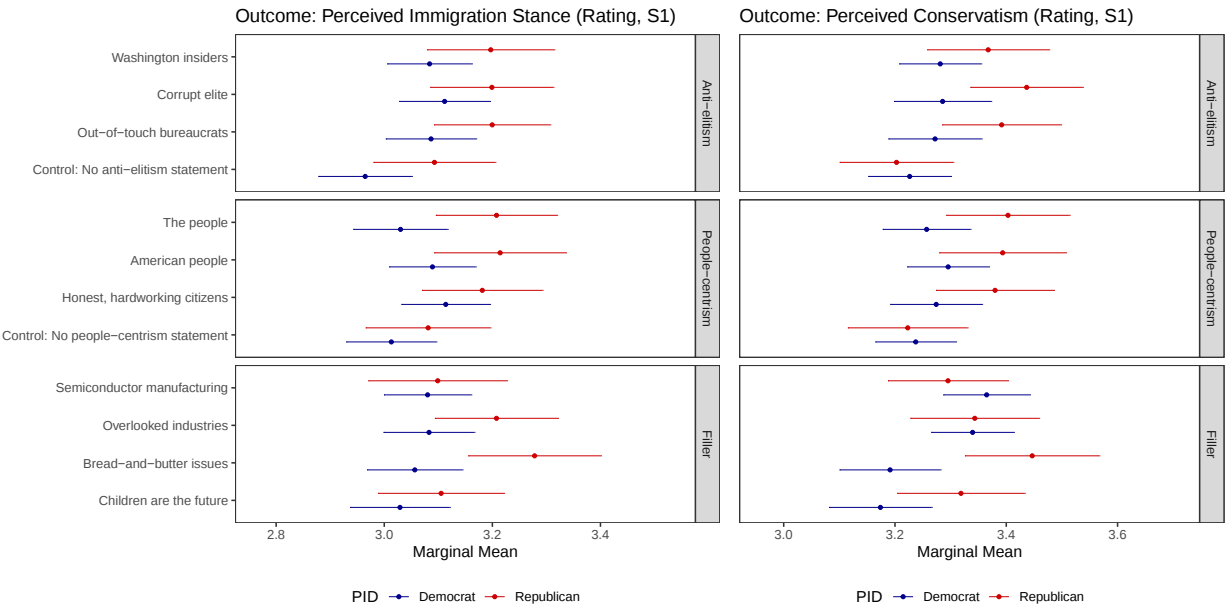
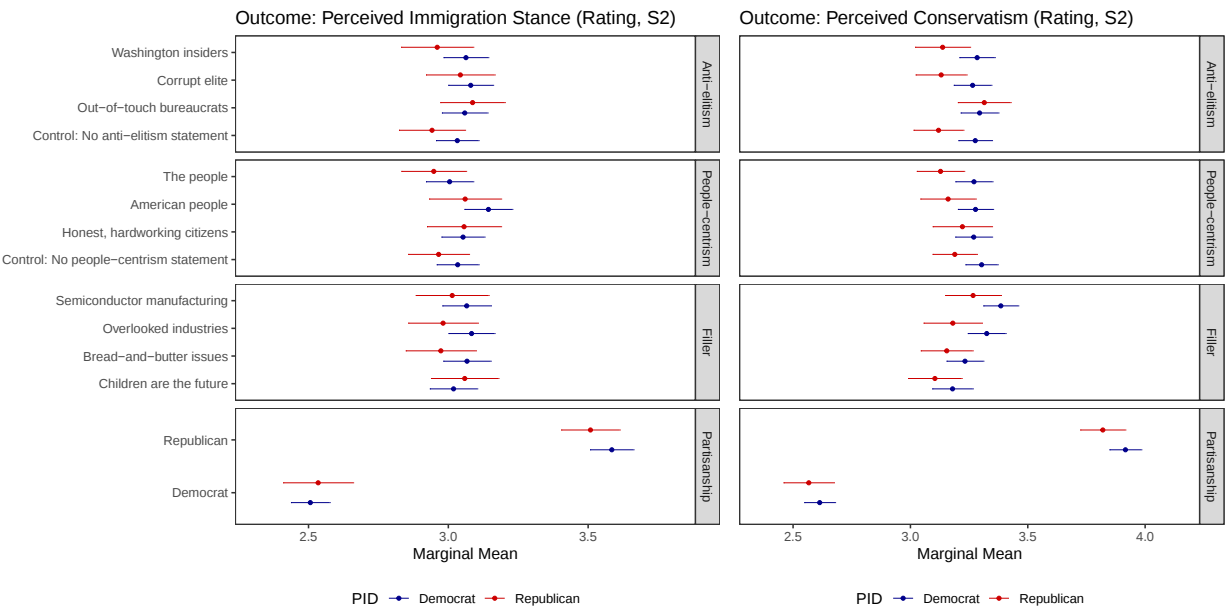


Figure G8: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2) by Partisanship



Heterogeneity by Populist Attitudes

Figure G9: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S1) by Populist Attitudes

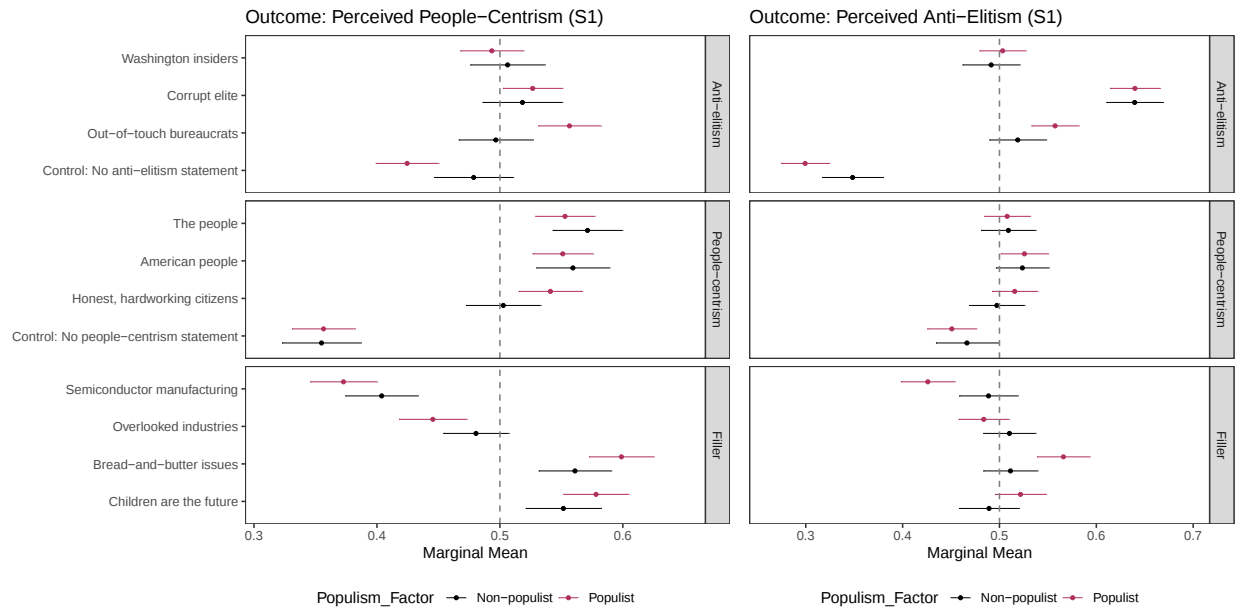


Figure G10: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2) by Populist Attitudes

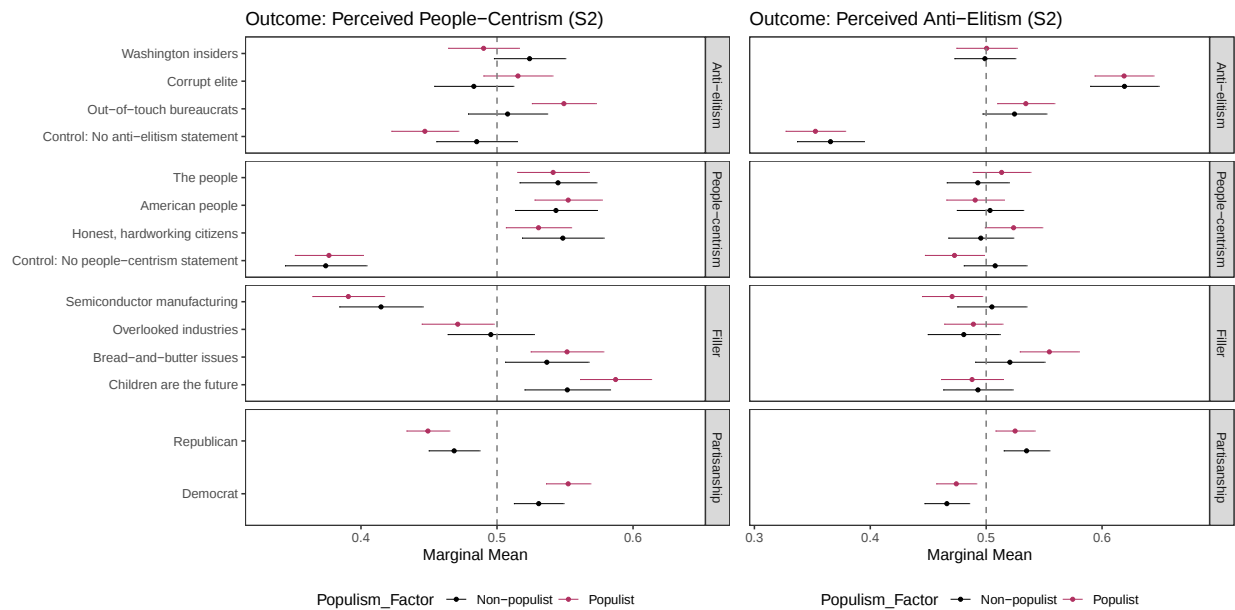


Figure G11: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S1) by Populist Attitudes

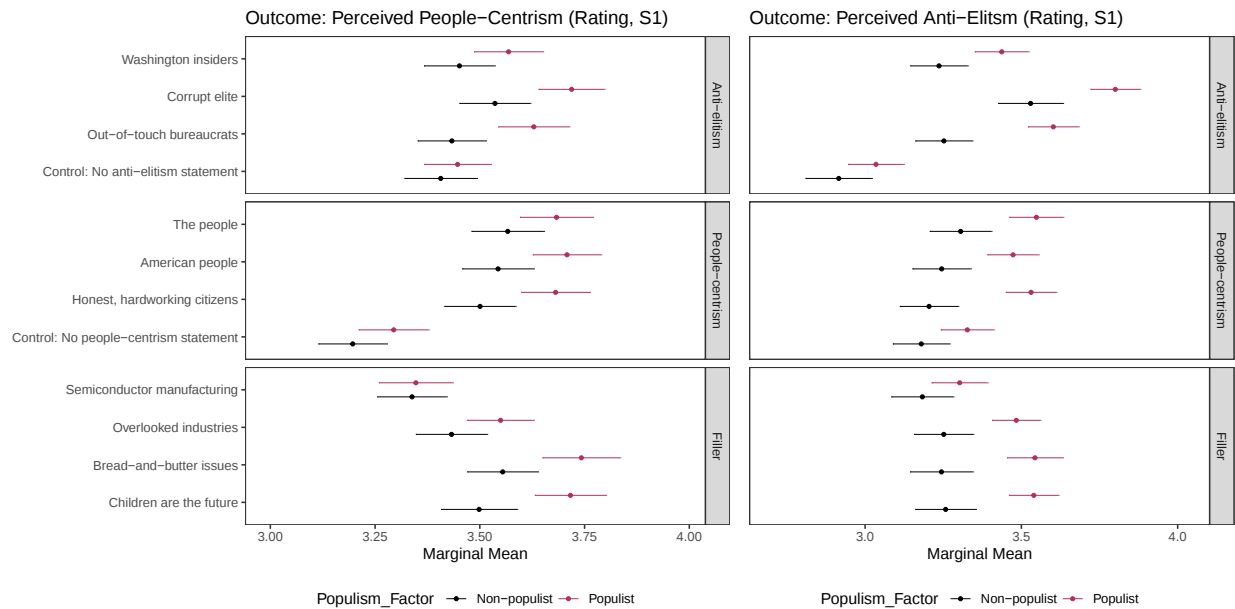


Figure G12: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S2) by Populist Attitudes

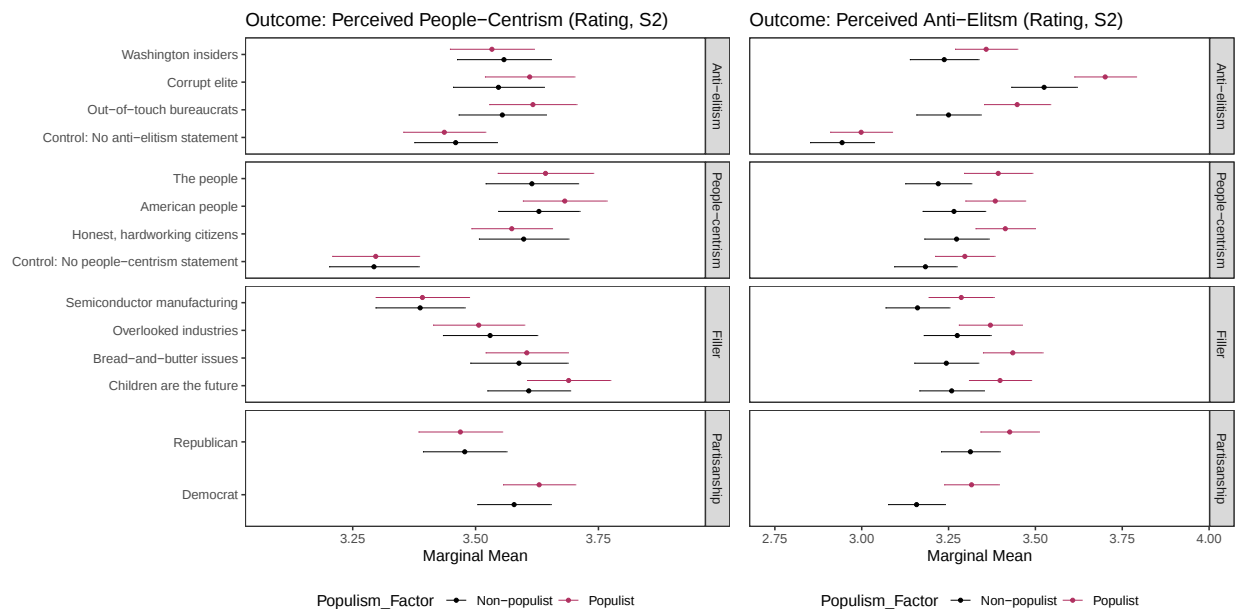


Figure G13: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S1) by Populist Attitudes

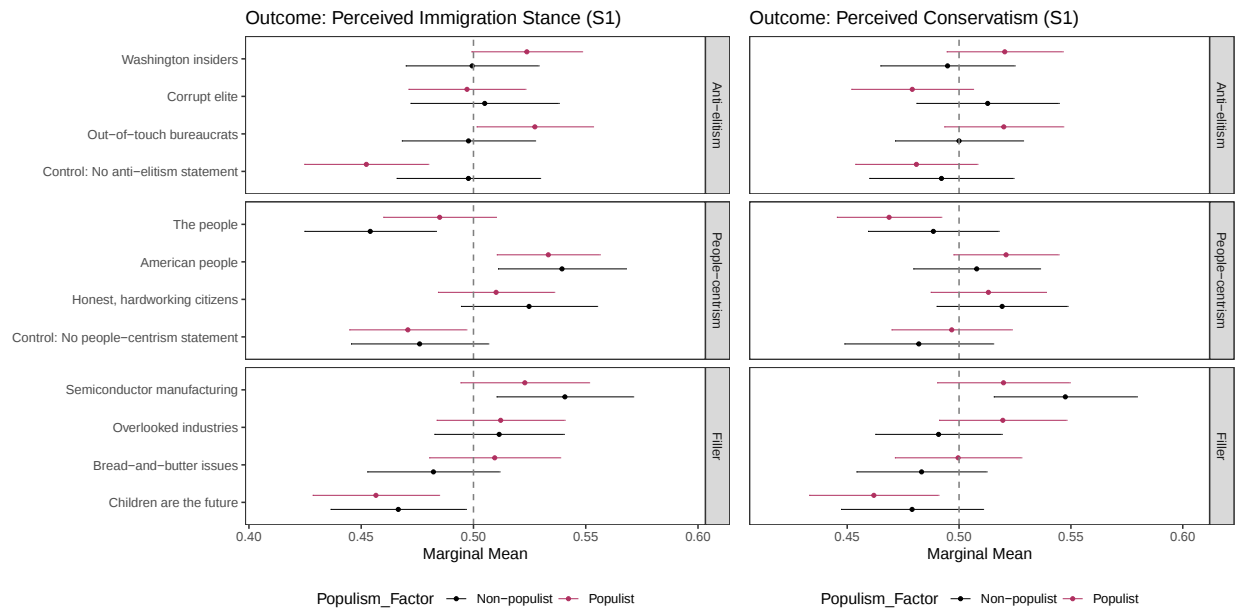


Figure G14: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2) by Populist Attitudes

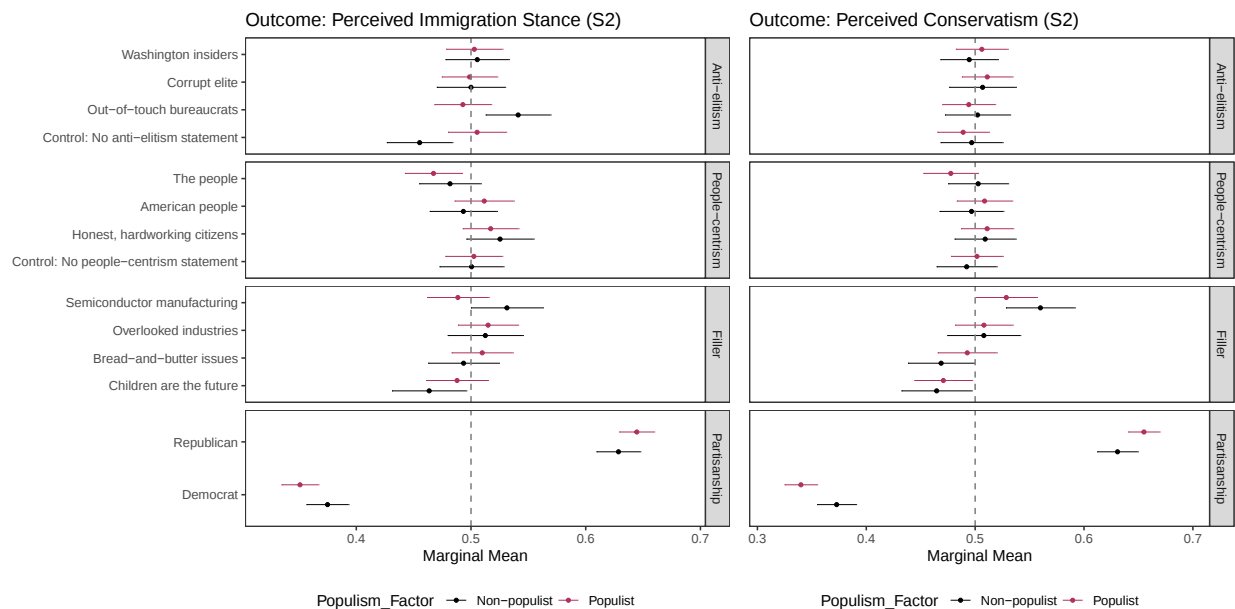


Figure G15: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S1) by Populist Attitudes

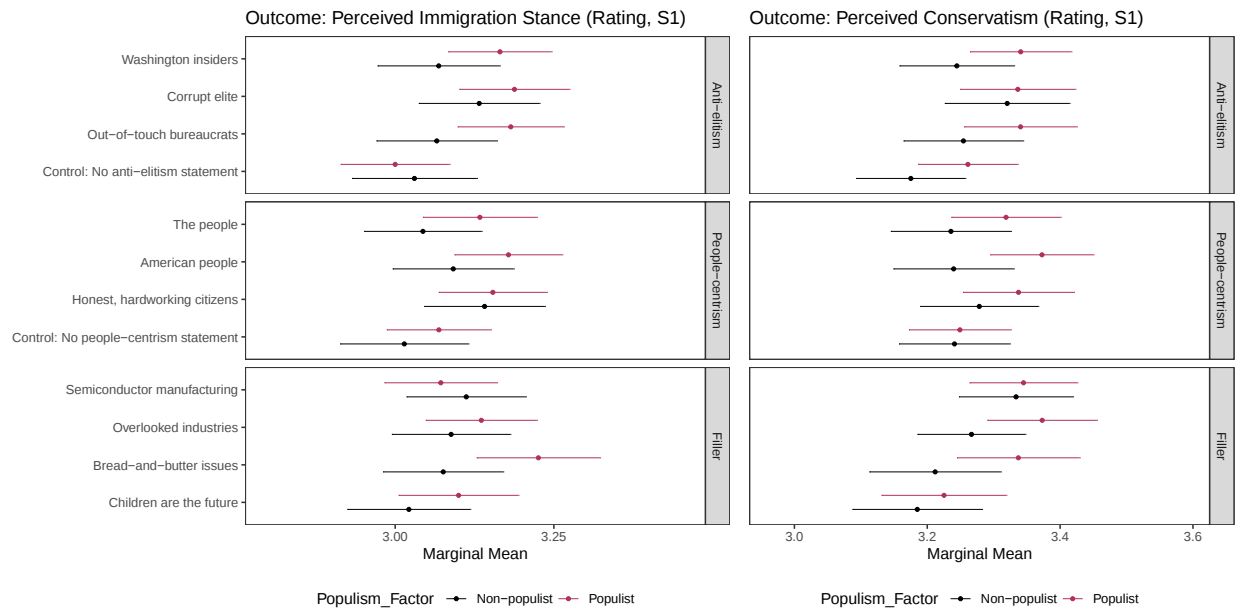
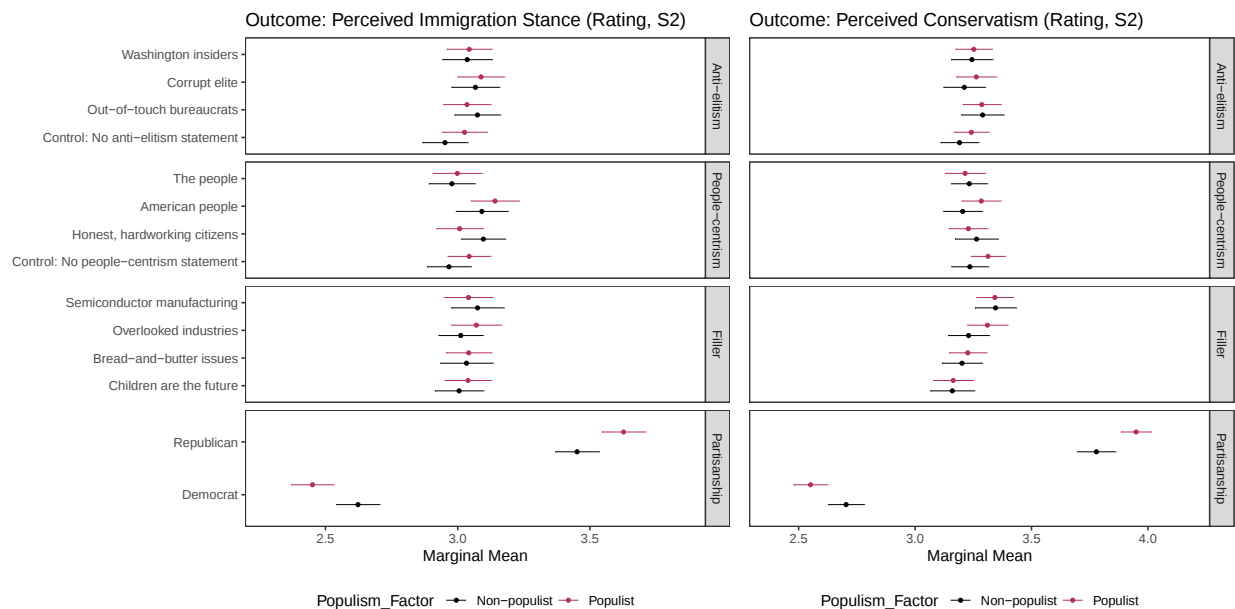


Figure G16: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S2) by Populist Attitudes



H. Details of UK Replication Study

The UK replication (Sample 3) mirrors the first version of the US conjoint (the version in which no partisan information is included). The conjoint levels only differ such that “American people” is replaced with “British people” and “Washington insiders” is replaced with “Westminster insiders”.

The main departure is that the rating outcome measuring host ideology asks about perceptions of the politicians using the left-right political scale as opposed to the liberal-conservative scale using the following question: How politically left or right do you think the two politicians are? (Response options: Very left, Somewhat left, Neither left nor right, Somewhat right, Very right). To assess heterogeneity across partisanship (RQ4) respondents will be grouped by which party they identify with using the following question from the British Election Study (BES): “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat or what?” (Response options: Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Scottish National Party (SNP), Plaid Cymru, Reform UK, United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Green Party, Other, None).

As a result, while analyses using the “people-centrism” and “anti-elitism” outcomes as well as the host ideology binary variable can be directly compared across the two contexts, I cannot directly compare perceptions of ideology ratings across the two contexts given that the outcomes are measured using different questions. Any descriptive discussions of differences in perceptions of host ideology ratings across the two contexts will acknowledge this caveat.

I. Results from UK Replication Study

Replication of RQ1/H1

Figure I1: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 3 for RQ1/H1 (Binary)

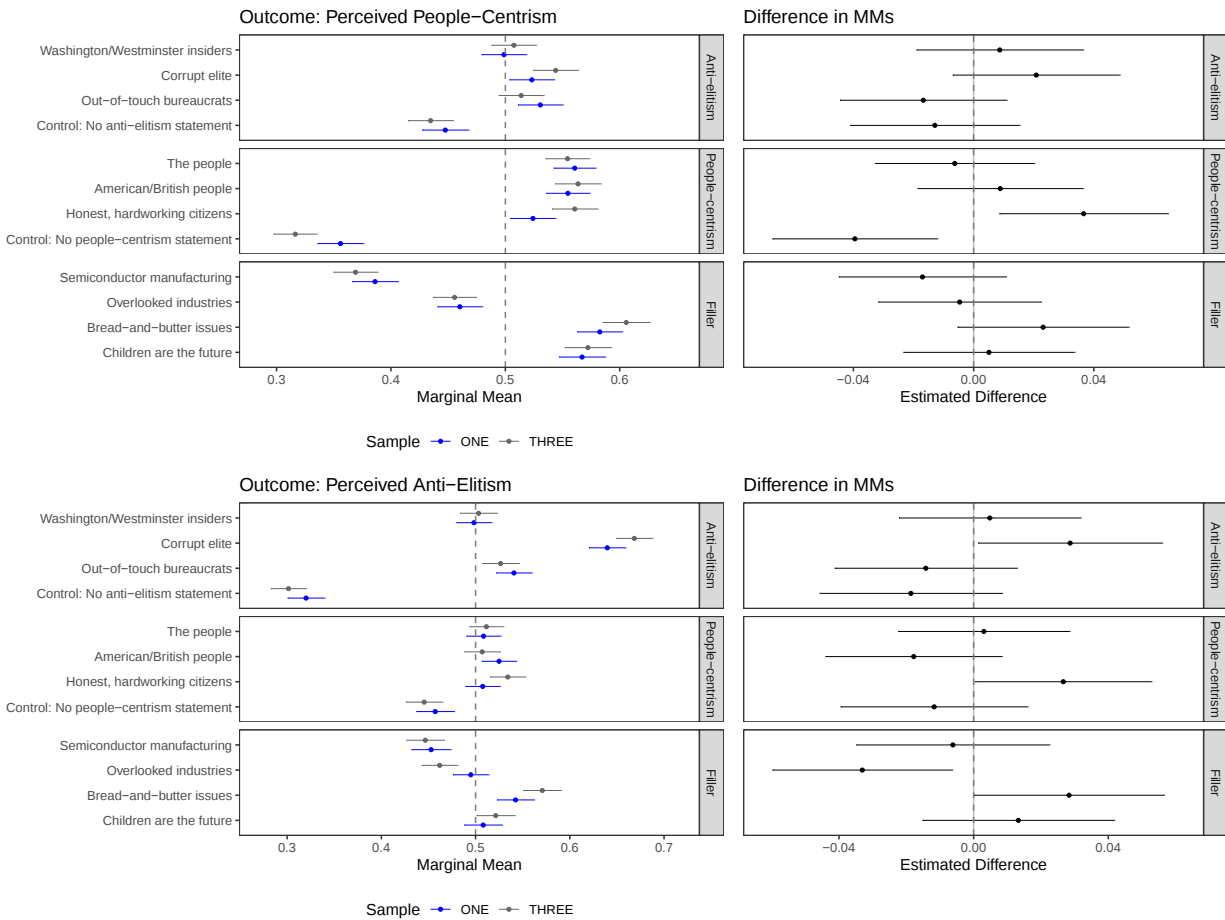


Figure I2: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 3 for RQ1/H1 (Rating)

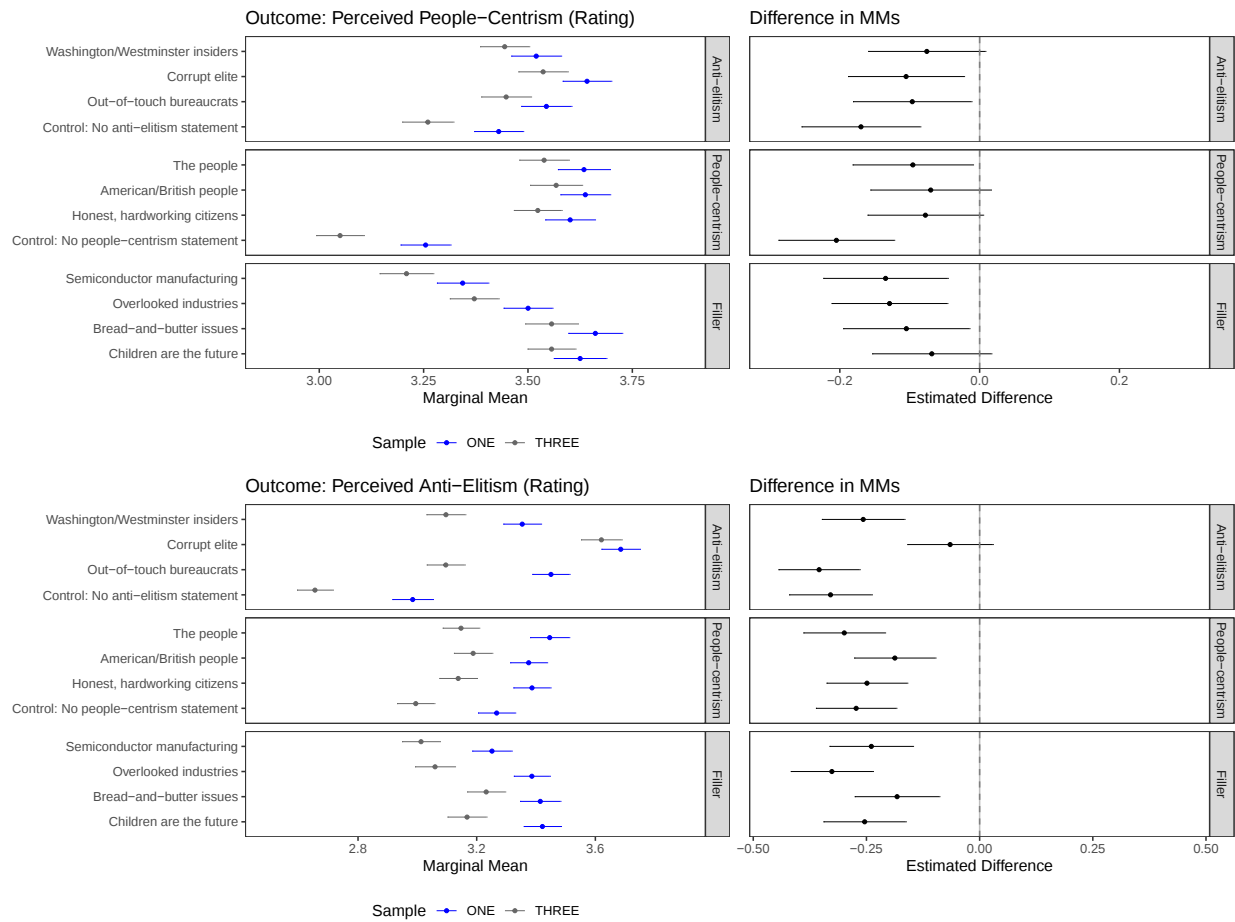


Figure I3: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3)

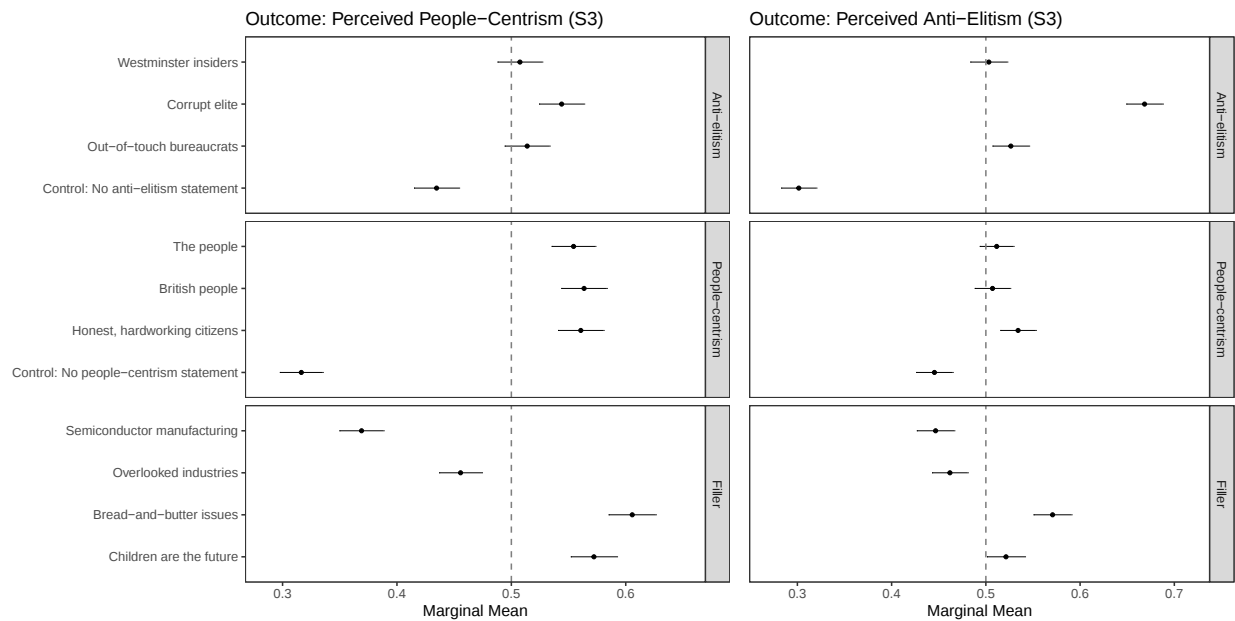


Figure I4: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3)

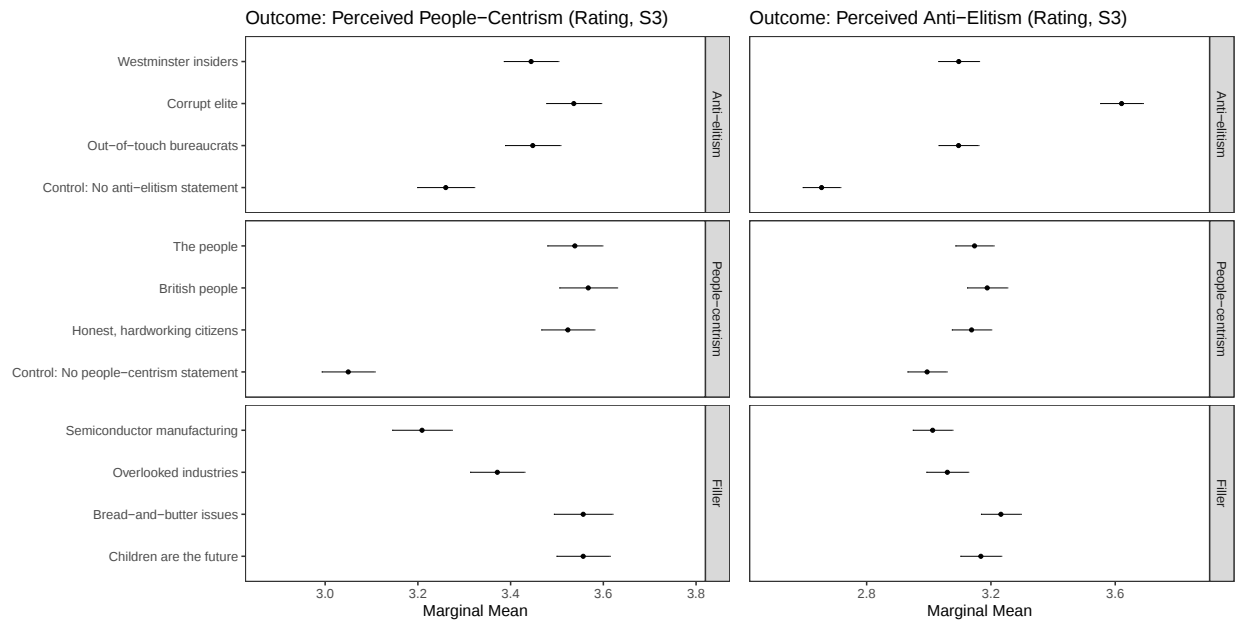
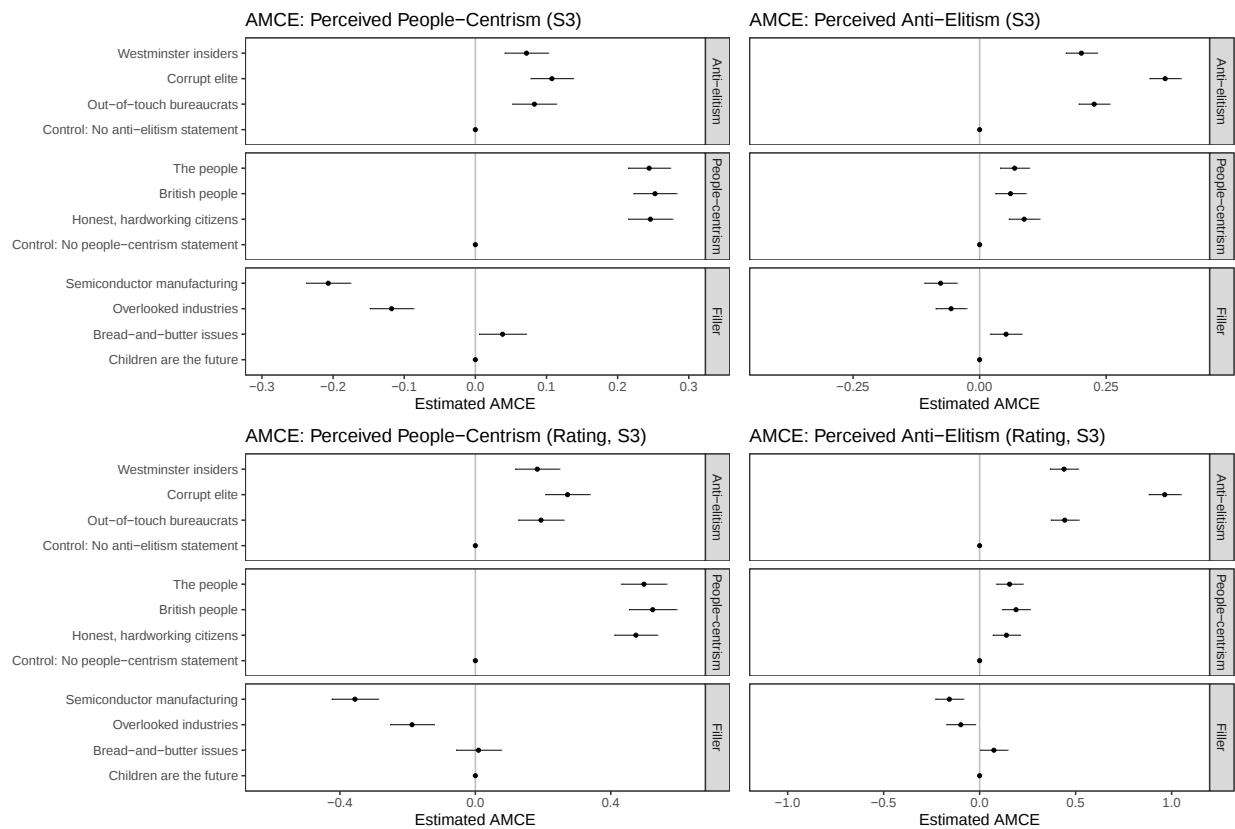


Figure I5: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ1/H1 (S3)



Replication of RQ2/H2

Figure I6: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 3 for RQ2/H2 (Binary)

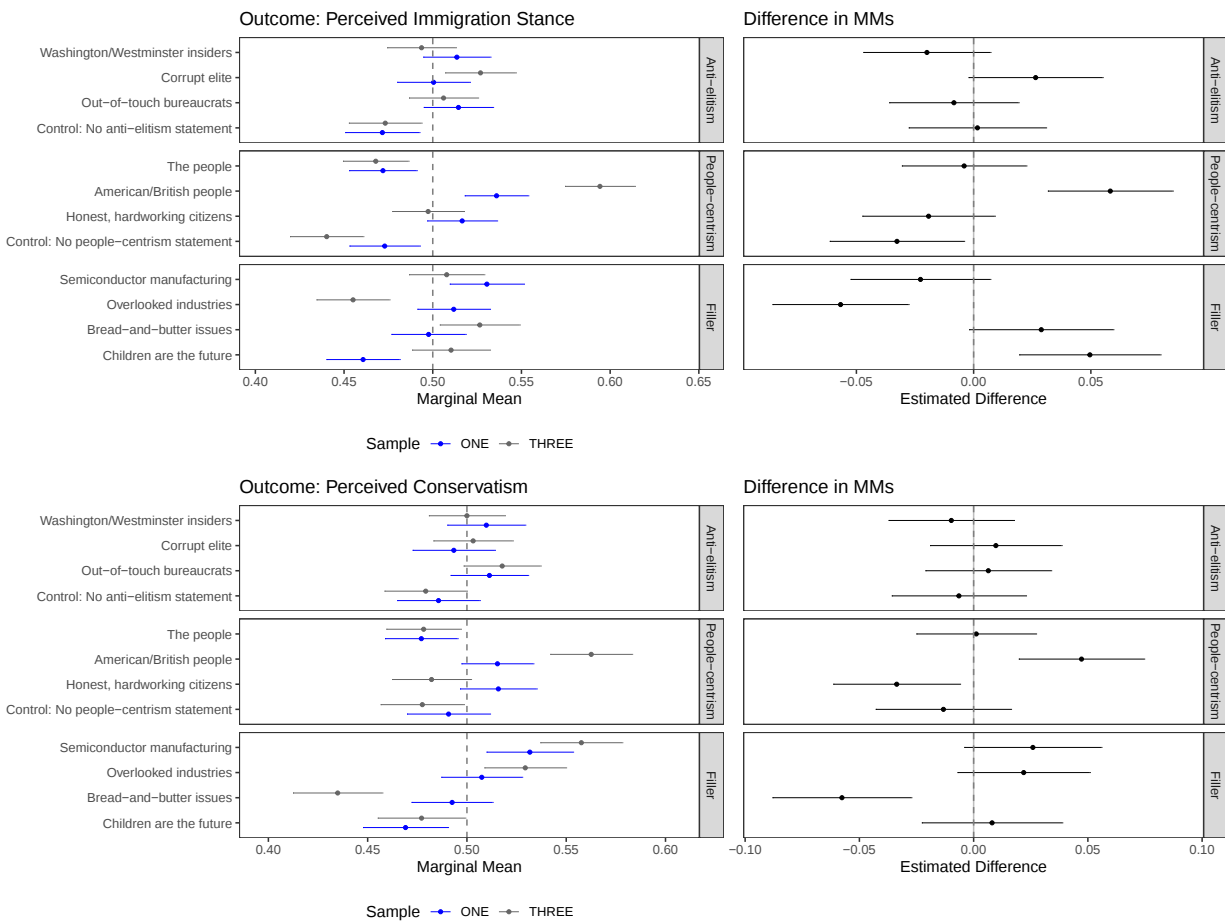
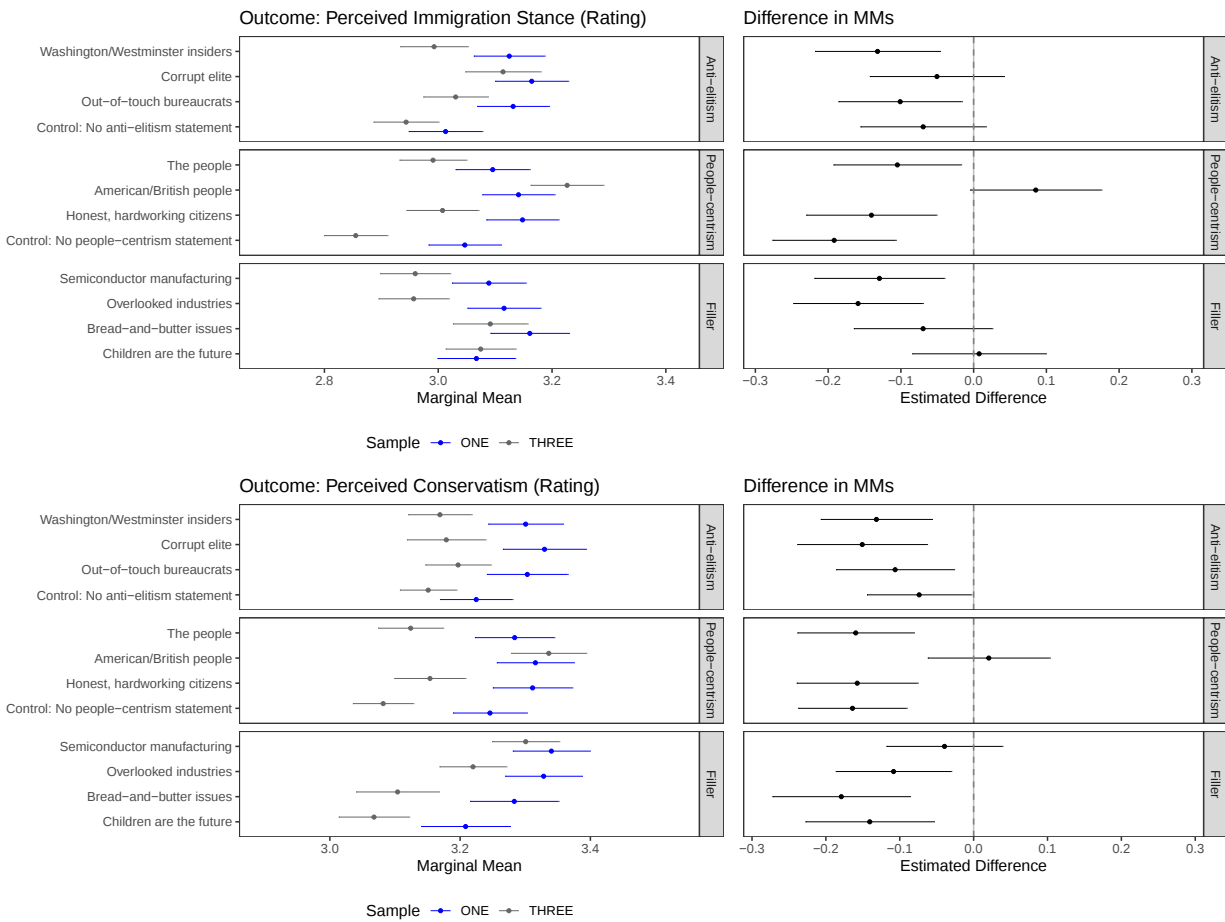


Figure I7: Difference between Sample 1 and Sample 3 for RQ2/H2 (Ratings)



Note: These differences need to be compared with caution as the US sample used the liberal-conservative scale whereas the UK sample used the left-right scale.

Figure I8: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3)

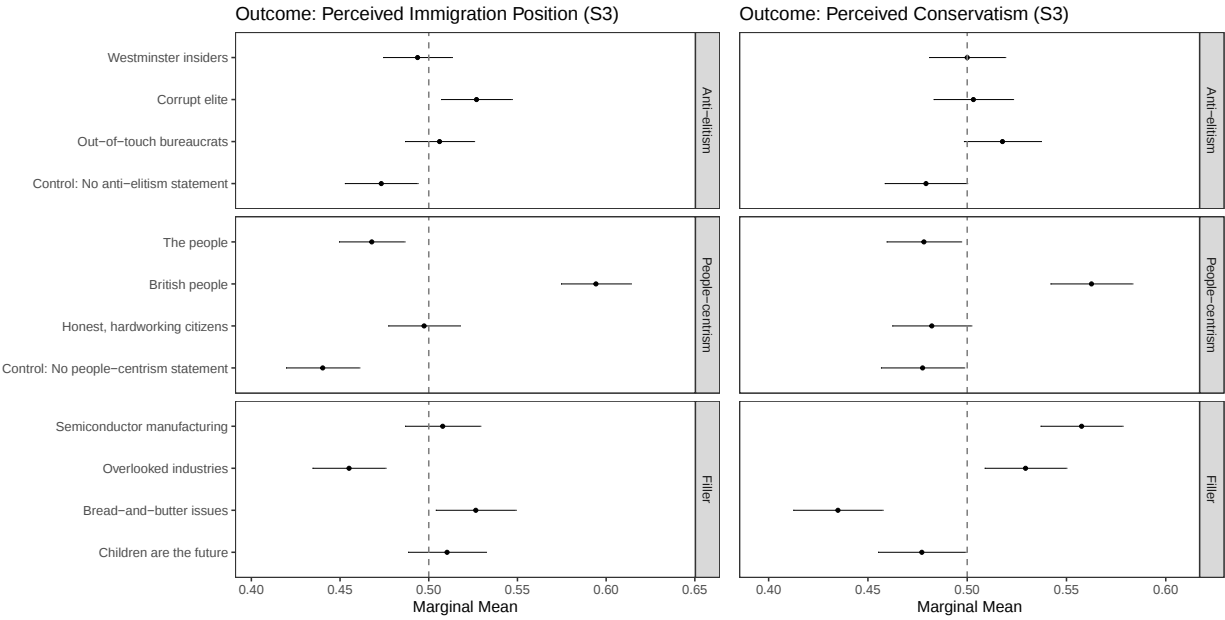


Figure I9: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3)

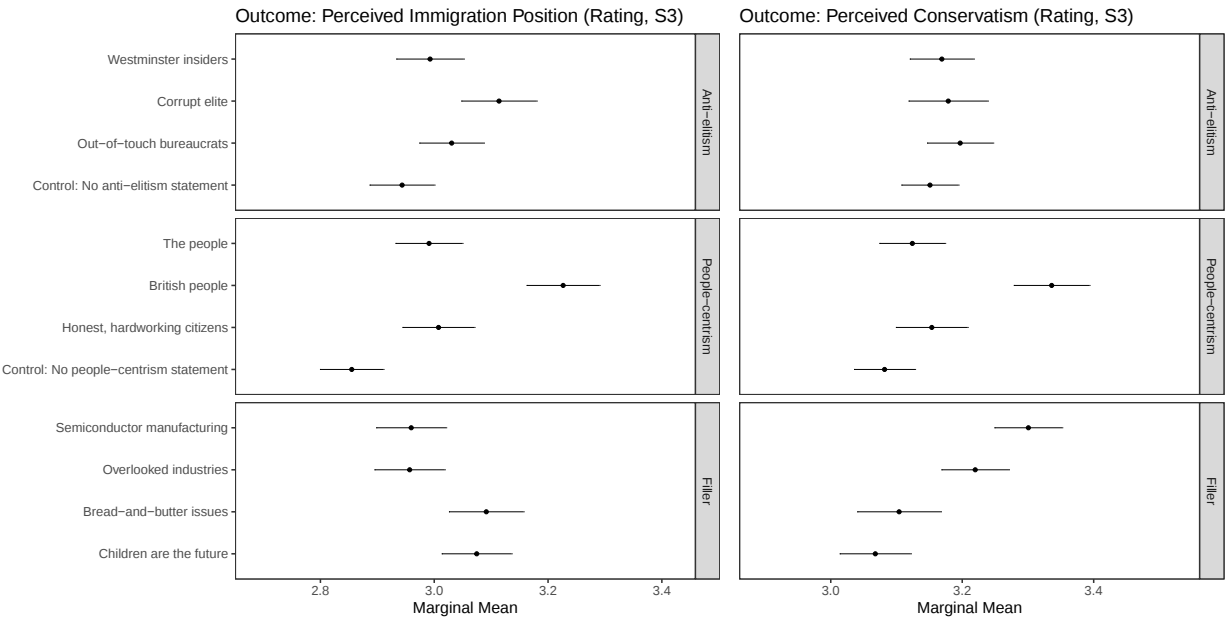


Figure I10: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S3)

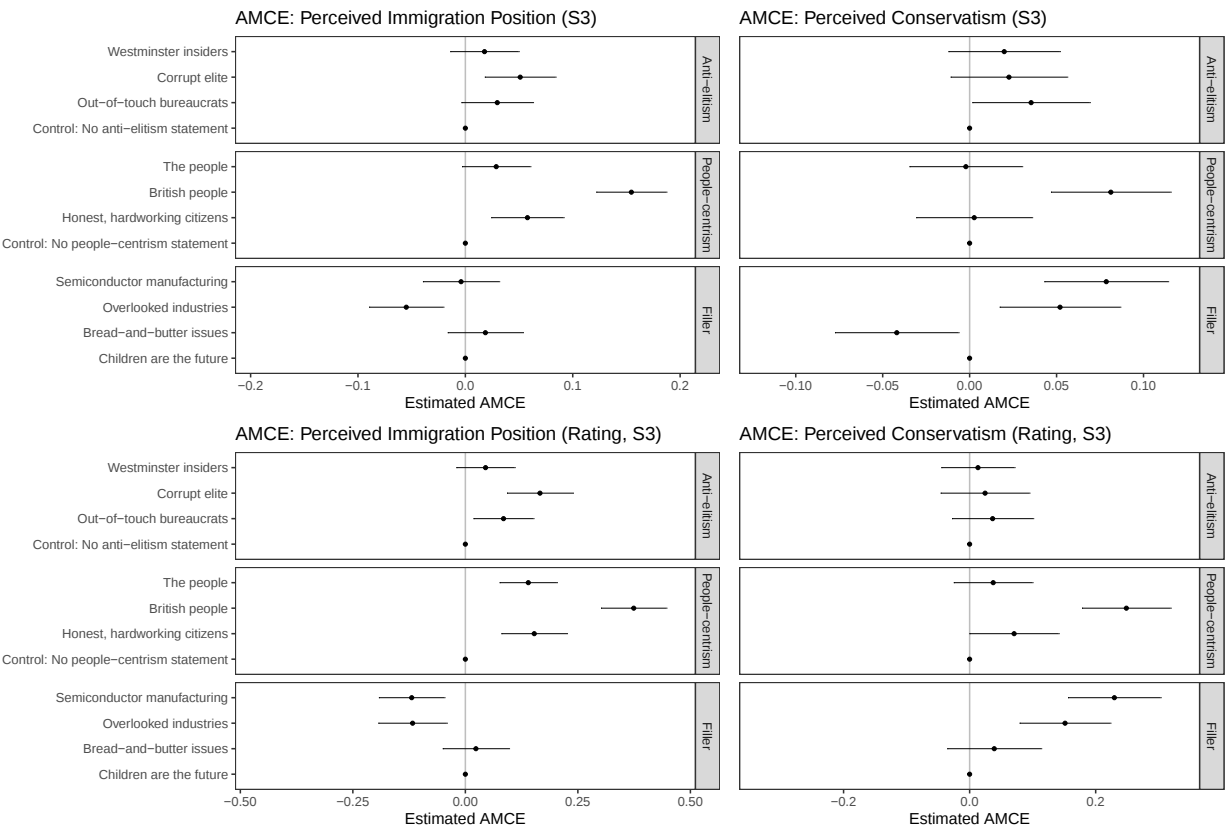
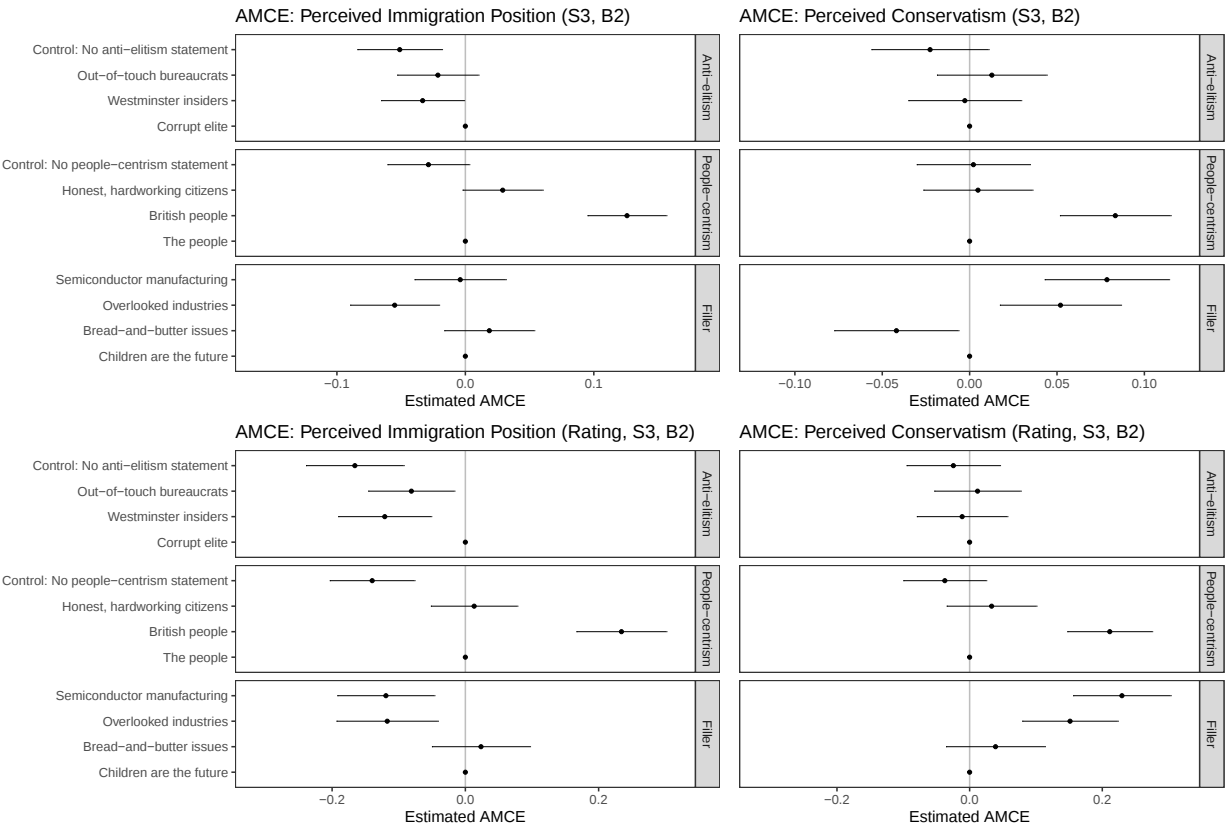


Figure I11: Average Marginal Component Effects for RQ2/H2 (S3) using Alternative Baseline



Replication of RQ4

Figure I12: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3) by Partisanship

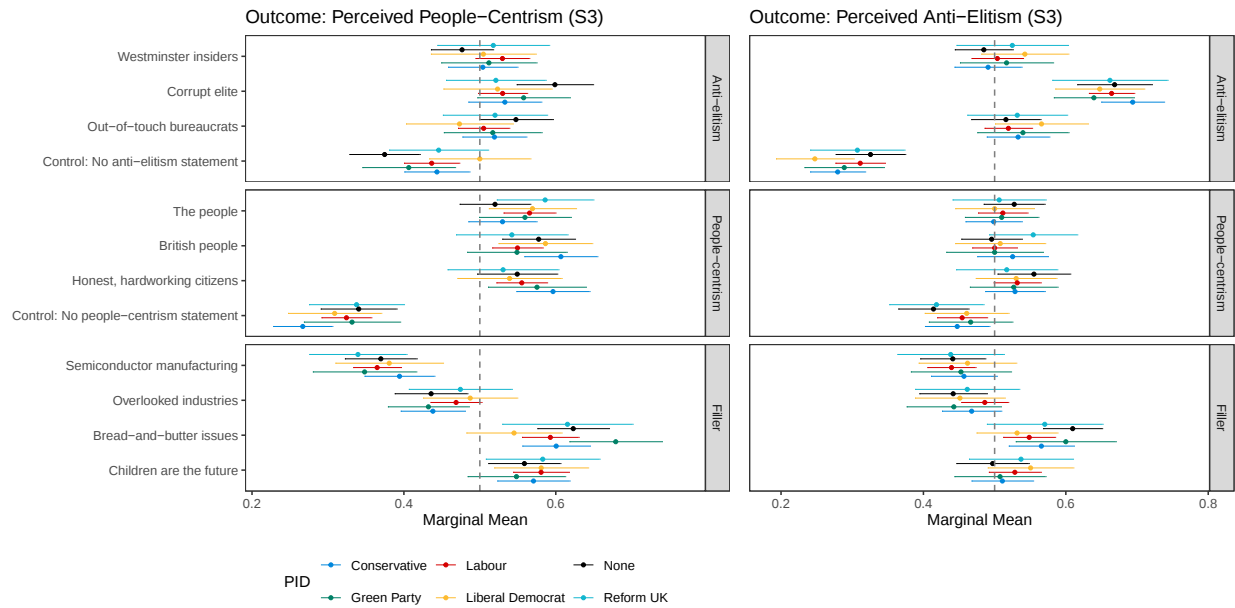


Figure I13: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3) by Partisanship

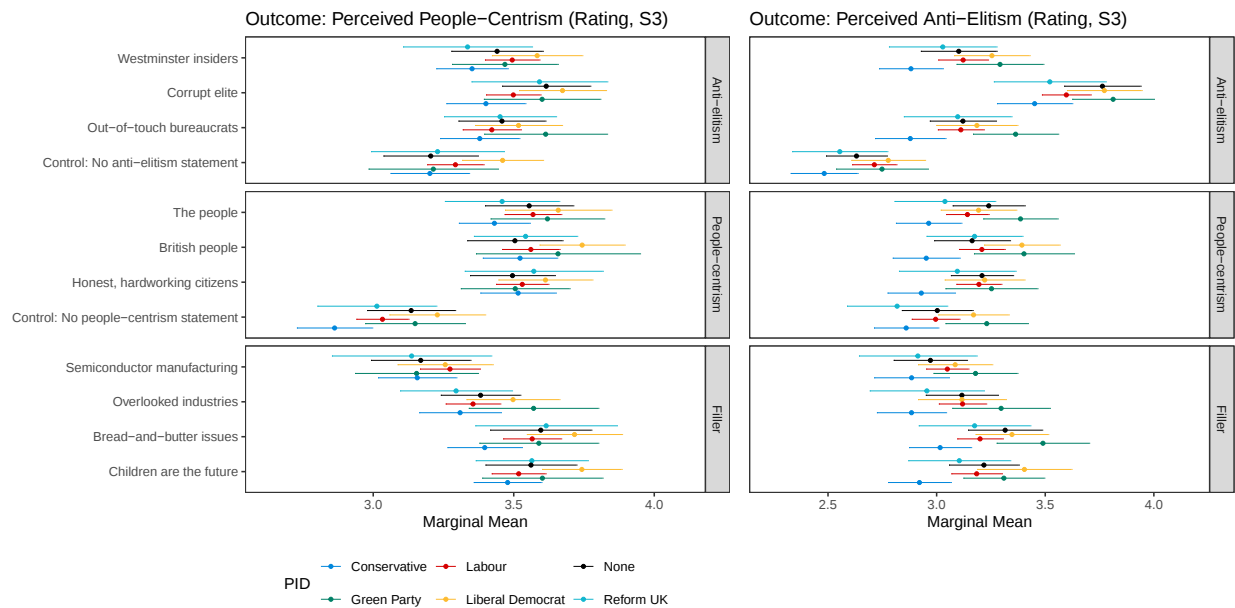


Figure I14: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3) by Partisanship

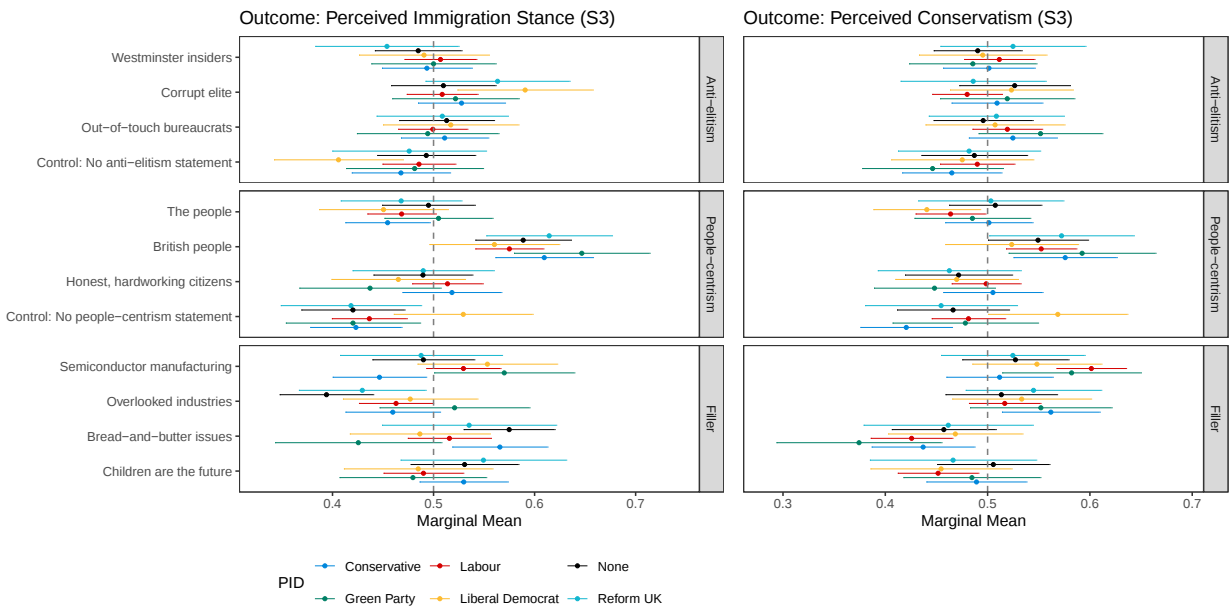


Figure I15: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3) by Partisanship

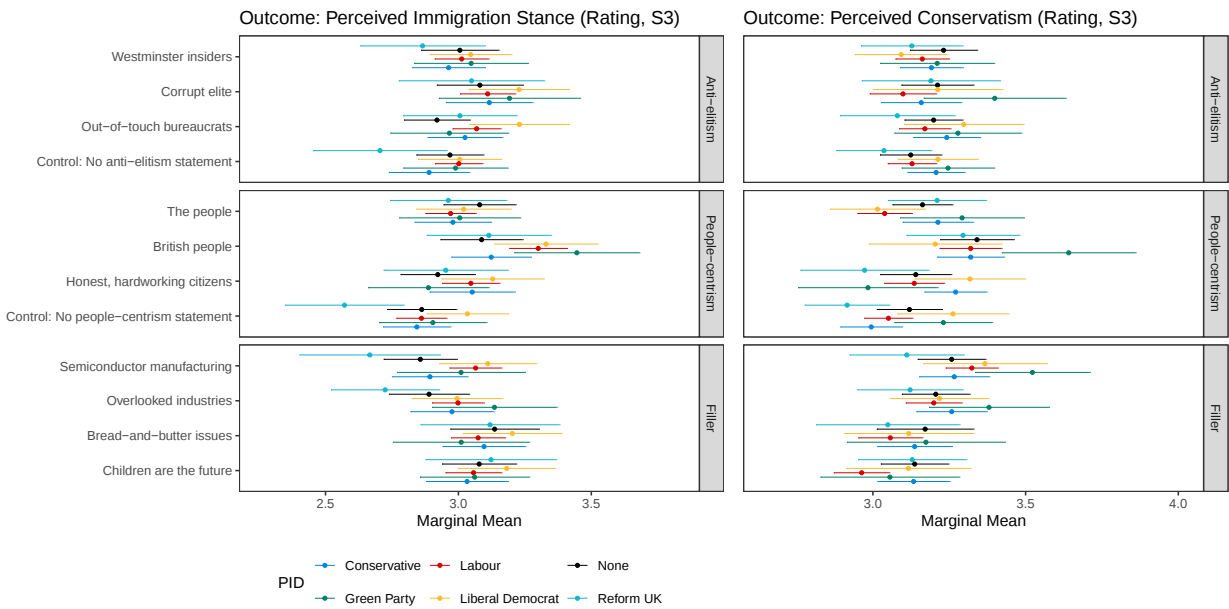


Figure I16: Binary Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3) by Populist Attitudes

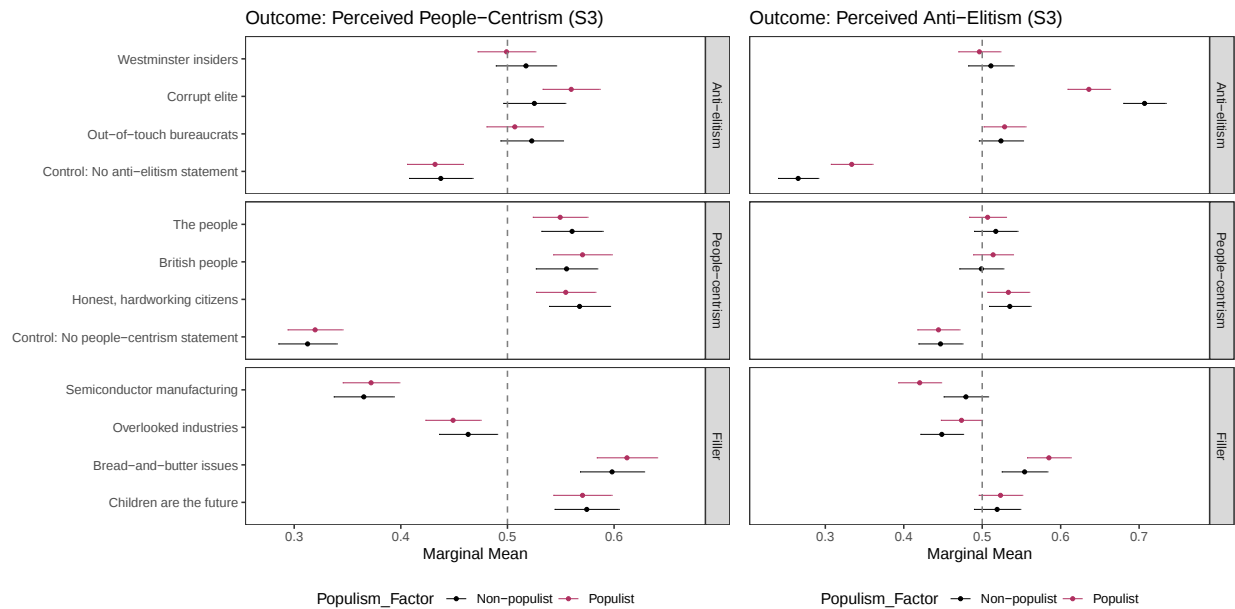


Figure I17: Rating Outcomes for RQ1/H1 (S3) by Populist Attitudes

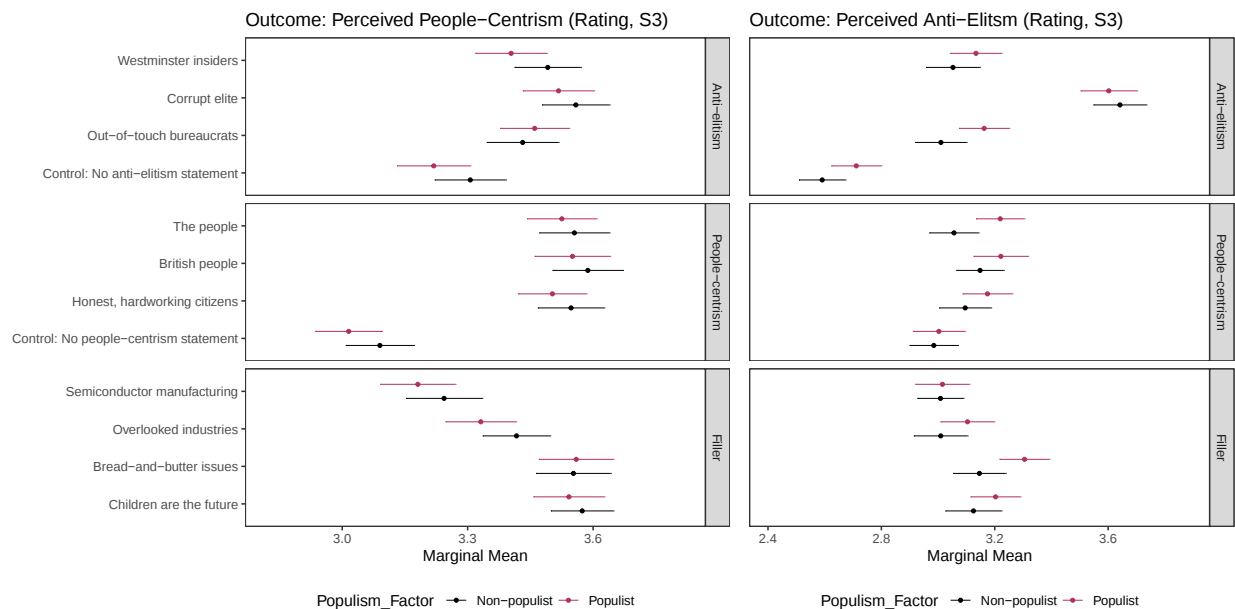


Figure I18: Binary Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3) by Populist Attitudes

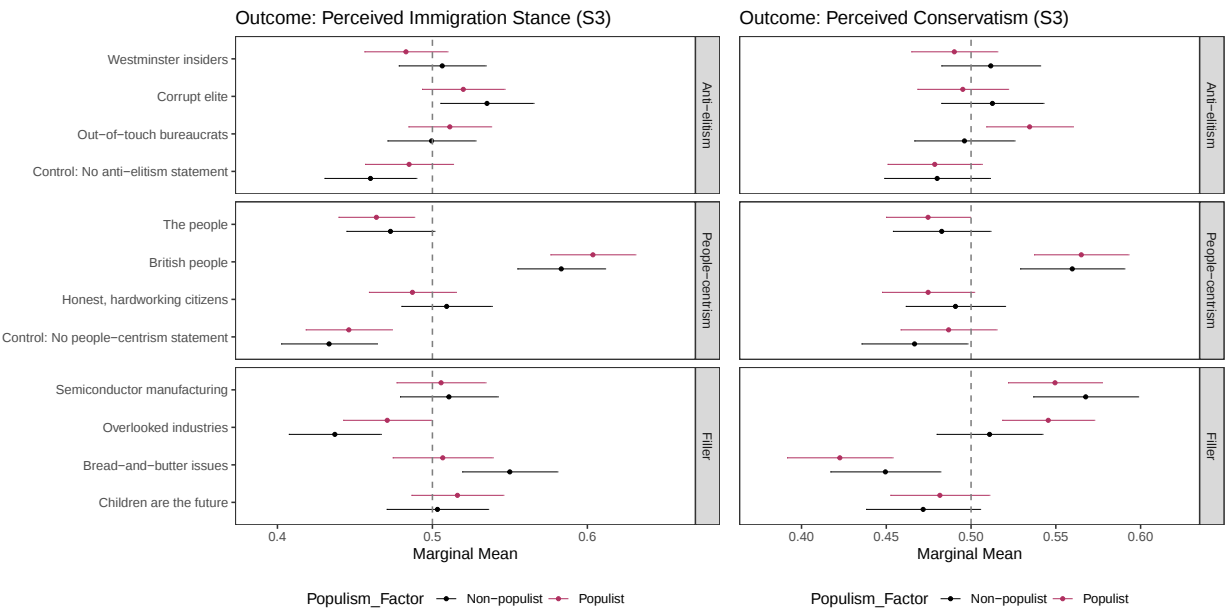
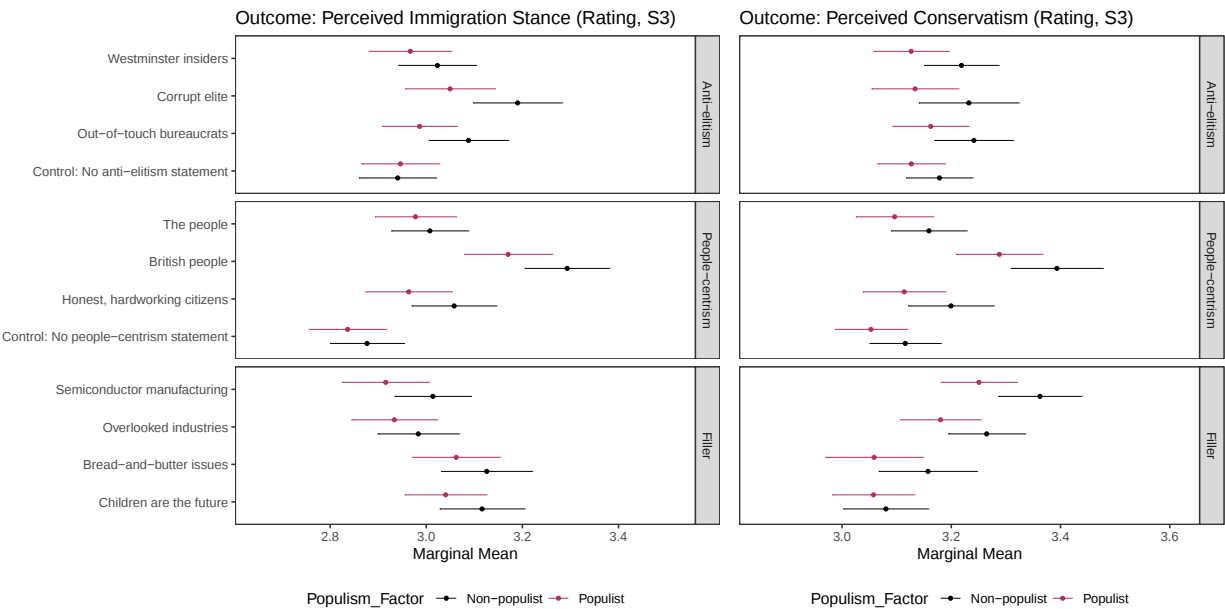


Figure I19: Rating Outcomes for RQ2/H2 (S3) by Populist Attitudes



J. Data Quality Checks

Each study included a mock vignette and corresponding question to assess respondent attentiveness (Kane, Velez, and Barabas 2023). Prior to the conjoint experiments respondents answered the following mock vignette question:

Please read the following excerpt from a recent magazine article:

Going to the movies is one of the best ways to beat the summer heat. Not only do you get to cool off in a dark, air-conditioned cinema (and maybe enjoy a cold drink), but you also get to take in the latest blockbuster spectacle out of Hollywood. Many point to the release of Steven Spielberg’s “Jaws” in 1975, along with “Star Wars” in 1977, as the birth of the summer blockbuster – movies with big budgets and even bigger returns. These movies are oftentimes accompanied by large marketing campaigns and extensive merchandising. Prior to “Jaws,” the summer season was not generally considered the best time to release movies that were expected to be major hits.

[Page break]

- What was the topic of the newspaper excerpt you just read?
 - Housing policy
 - Scientific research publishing
 - Professional sports
 - Summer movie blockbusters
 - War in Ukraine
 - Funding for space exploration

Passage rate for this attention check was very high. In Sample 1, 19 respondents provided an incorrect response (2,7%). In Sample 2, 15 respondents provided an incorrect response (2,1%). In Sample 3, three respondents provided an incorrect response (0,4%). There were no significant differences in treatment effects across attentive and non-attentive respondents. To illustrate this point, Figures J1-J4 present the main results for Sample 1 (the sample with the largest amount of inattentiveness) for both all respondents (left panels) and attentive respondents only (right panels).

Figure J1: Binary Outcomes for Perceived People-Centrism Outcome (S1) by Attention

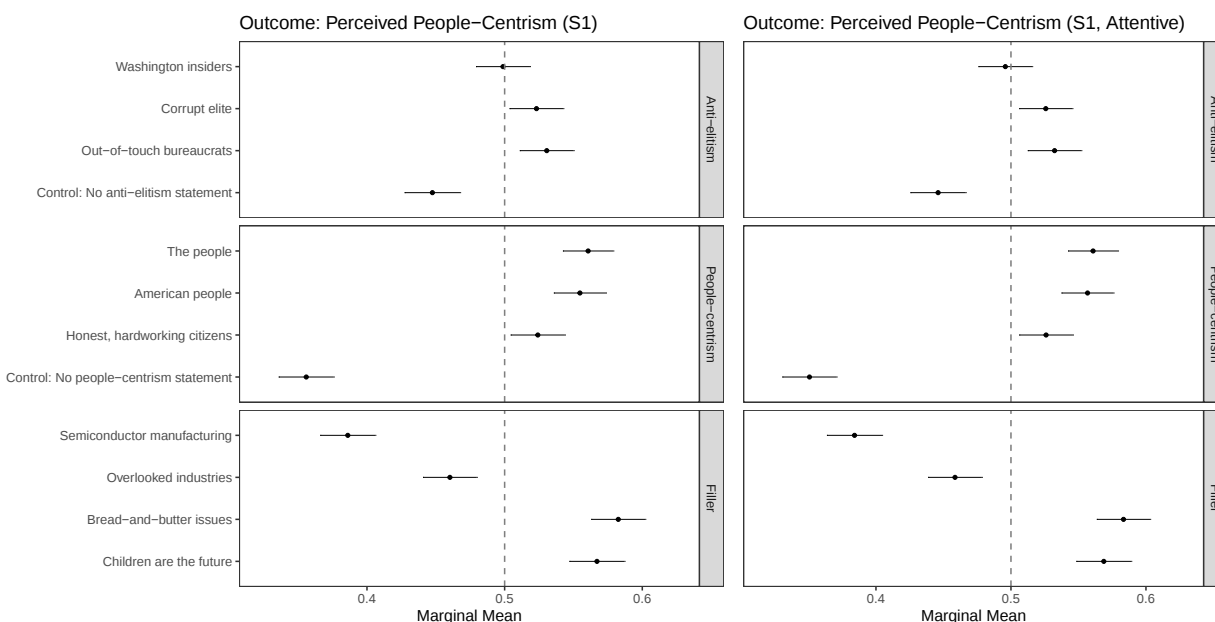


Figure J2: Binary Outcomes for Perceived Anti-Elitism Outcome (S1) by Attention

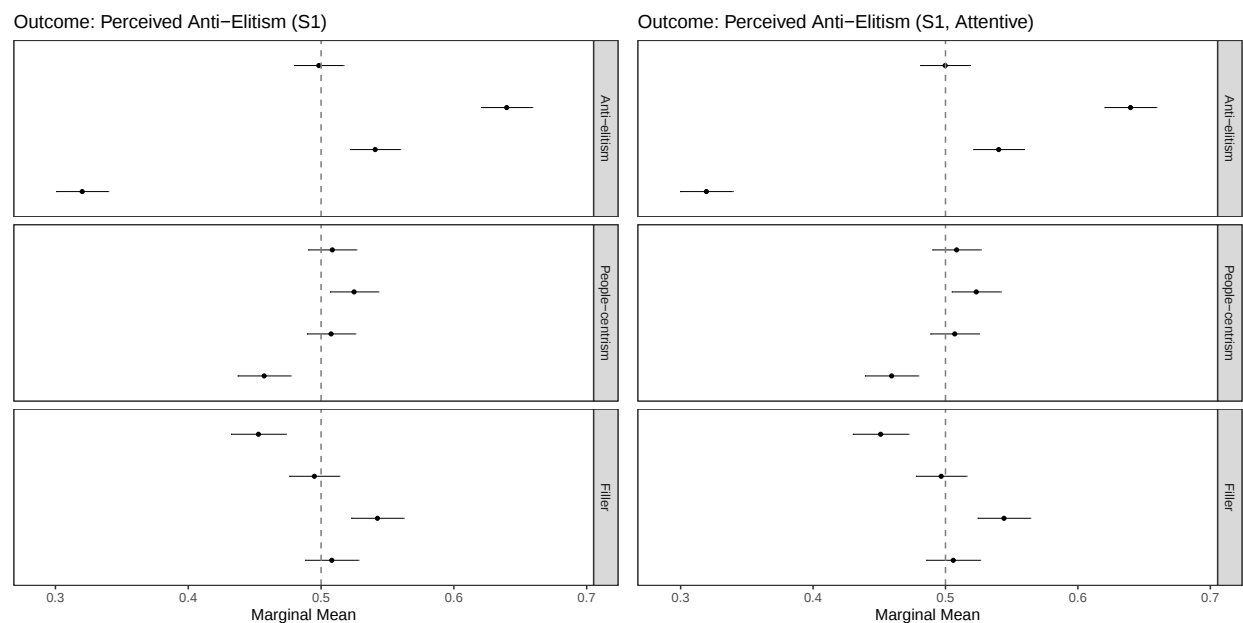


Figure J3: Binary Outcomes for Perceived Immigration Stance Outcome (S1) by Attention

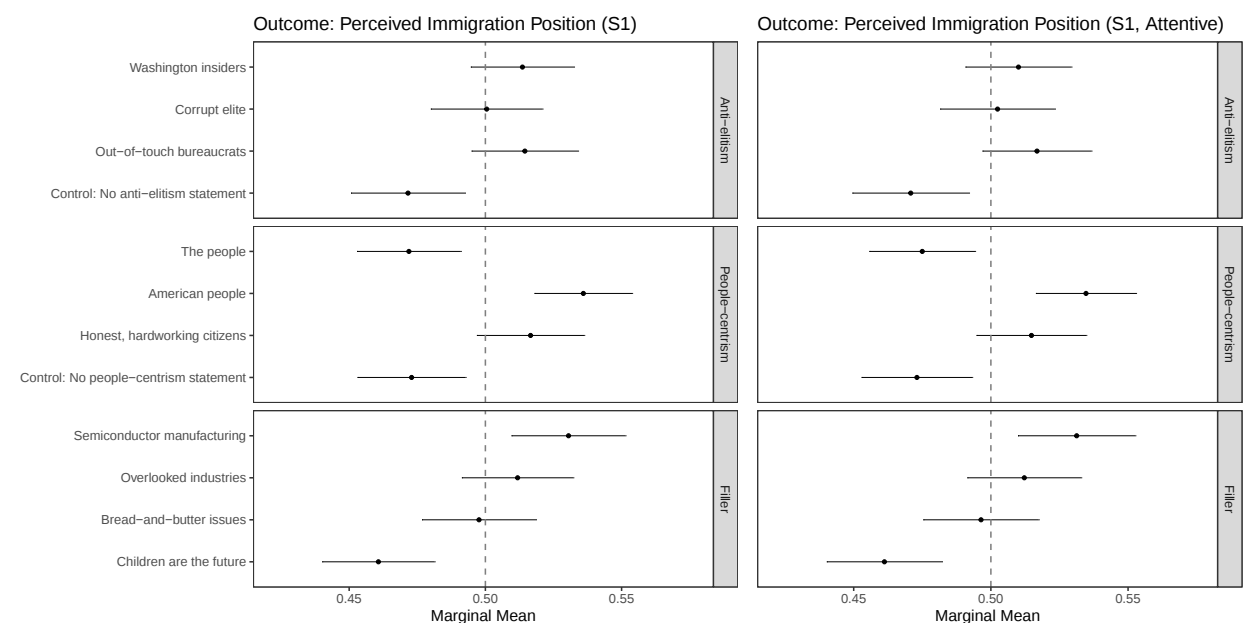
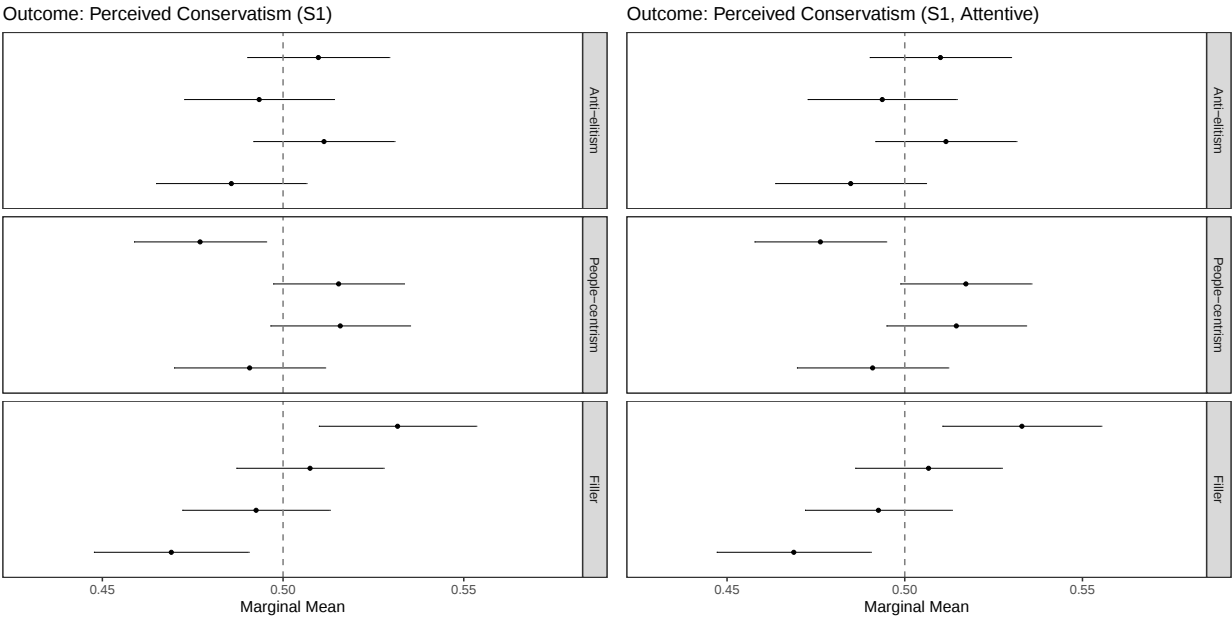


Figure J4: Binary Outcomes for Perceived Conservatism Outcome (S1) by Attention



K. Measurement of Populist Attitudes

The surveys assessed respondents' populist attitudes using the scale proposed in Castanho Silva et al. (2020). Given that this variable will be used to assess sub-group differences the question battery was placed prior to the conjoint experiment. All questions are asked using five-point agree-disagree scales.

Ppl1: Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.

Ppl2: Politicians don't have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job. (reverse coded)

Ppl3: The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country's politics.

Ant1: The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.

Ant2: Government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives. (reverse coded)

Ant3: Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked.

Man1: You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.

Man2: The people I disagree with politically are not evil. (reverse coded)

Man3: The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed.

To examine heterogeneity by populist attitudes, I fit a factor model to the populist attitudes items using polychoric correlation. In the US sample the factor loading threshold was lowered from 0.45 to 0.4 as the original criteria would have led to a populism scale with no items capturing people-centrism (see Appendix M). This led to the inclusion of the following variables: *Ppl1*, *Ppl3*, *Ant1*, *Ant2*, and *Ant3*. In the UK sample, using the pre-registered threshold of 0.45 for factor loading inclusion led to the inclusion of the following variables: *Ppl3*, *Ant1*, *Ant2*, *Ant3*, and *Man1*. When examining sub-group marginal means by populist attitudes (RQ4) I classify respondents above the mean factor score as "populists" and respondents below the mean factor score as "non-populists".

L. Adherence to APSA’s Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research

The author confirms that there are no competing interests. Funding for the studies came from start-up funds provided to the author by their institution. The experimental design is consistent with APSA’s Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research. The design did not use deception, there were no foreseeable harms to participants, and participants provided consent prior to participating in the studies. The studies were reviewed and deemed exempt by Arizona State University’s Institutional Review Board (STUDY00020157). Detailed information regarding reporting standards is provided in Appendix Section N.

The studies were pre-registered at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/ZMUHQ> (US Studies) and <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/RCDTX> (UK Study). In addition, Stage 1 materials are deposited at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/NUAVW>. All deviations from these pre-registrations are discussed in Appendix Section M.

All data and code needed to replicate the analyses is deposited in the *JEPS* Dataverse at <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/JIUPOU> (Neuner 2025).

M. Reporting Table & Deviations from Pre-Registration

	Specified in pre-registration?	Reported in manuscript?	Deviations
Sampling	Yes	Manuscript p. 10; Appendix p.2	N/A
Sample Exclusions	Yes	Appendix p.46 & 52	N/A
Experimental Conditions	Conjoint attributes (3 factors in S1 and S3, and 4 factors in S2); S1 vs S2 randomly assigned	Manuscript p.12; Appendix p.32	N/A
Observed Measure 1: People-centrism Binary	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 2: People-centrism Rating	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 3: Anti-Elitism Binary	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 4: Anti-Elitism Rating	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 5: Immigration Stance Binary	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 6: Immigration Stance Rating	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 7: Conservatism Binary	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 8: Conservatism Rating	Yes	Manuscript p.13; Appendix p.7-8	N/A
Observed Measure 9: Conservatism Rating Folded	Yes	Appendix p.7-8	Yes, included in appendix but not discussed substantively after reconsideration whether it measures outcome of interest; see Manuscript p.13 & Appendix M.
Respondent partisanship	Yes	Appendix p.10 & 32	N/A

	Specified in pre-registration?	Reported in manuscript?	Deviations
Respondent populist attitudes	Yes	Appendix p.10 & 48	Yes, in US sample items with factor loadings above .4 instead of .45 were included to ensure that variable included people-centrism items; see Appendices K & M.
Research Question 1/Hypothesis 1	Yes	Manuscript p.8 & 9	N/A
Research Question 2/Hypothesis 2	Yes	Manuscript p.8 & 9	N/A
Hypothesis 3	Yes	Manuscript p.10	N/A
Research Question 4	Yes	Manuscript p.8-9	N/A
Empirical test of H1	Yes	Manuscript p.15-16	N/A
Empirical test of H2	Yes	Manuscript p.16-17	Using 4/5 outcomes; See point about folded conservatism measure above.
Empirical test of H3	Yes	Manuscript p.17-19	Using 4/5 outcomes; See point about folded conservatism measure above.
Empirical test of RQ4	Yes	Manuscript p.19	N/A
Were there studies included in pre-registration that are not reported in the manuscript? (If yes, explain)	No		
Additional comments	See additional details below		

No changes to research questions, hypotheses, or study design were made after in-principal acceptance. Below I describe minor changes (primarily to the presentation of results):

- I plot the results for the binary outcomes in the main manuscript and include figures with the ratings outcomes in the Appendix. While I initially aimed to plot both sets of estimates in single plots, this presentation was too cluttered (this change was already noted as a possibility for the stated reason in the Stage 1 analysis plan). As pre-registered, the paper discusses results for both binary and ratings outcomes.
- Instead of discussing how results in Samples 2 and 3 compare to results in Sample 1 in a separate section, I decided to directly discuss these in the sections testing H1 and H2. This change was made due to word limit constraints and to streamline the manuscript.
- While I plot results for the folded conservatism measure in the Appendix (as specified in the pre-analysis plan), I do not discuss these results substantively as it is unclear whether ideology strength is an appropriate measure of host ideology.
- Following in-principle acceptance, I added a manipulation check to confirm that respondents in Sample 1 did not see partisan information whereas respondents in Sample 2 did. This change was already noted in the deposited pre-analysis plan. While open-ended responses provided at the completion of the survey suggest that some respondents had difficulties with the interpretation of this question, the results from the manipulation check confirm that the treatment was successful. Specifically, 72% of

respondents in Sample 1 correctly recalled that the profiles included no information on the politicians' partisanship whereas 80% of respondents in Sample 2 correctly recalled that the profiles included partisan information.

- When discussing RQ2/H2, I now include an AMCE plot using the *corrupt elite* and *the people* levels as baseline levels as this allows me to more directly test the hypothesis which is explicitly about differences compared to these levels. The language about using the *attribute not mentioned* levels was likely inadvertently copied from the section regarding RQ1/H1.
- When creating the respondent-level populism variable in the US data, I included variables with factor loadings above 0.4 as opposed to 0.45 as two of the people-centrism variables were slightly below the original threshold which would have resulted in a populism variable that included no people-centrism items.
- The pre-analysis plan did not specify which political parties would be included in the sub-group analysis plots for the UK replication. I excluded parties with fewer than 50 respondents from the plots due to large confidence intervals. This results in the SNP (15 respondents), Plaid Cymru (3 respondents), UKIP (5 respondents), and Other (10 respondents) not being featured in Figures I12-I15.

N. Detailed Information on Reporting Standards

- **Hypotheses**
 - H1: Treatments operationalizing people-centrism and anti-elitism will increase perceptions of a politician’s people-centrism and anti-elitism, respectively, vis-à-vis a control condition.
 - H2: Treatments that include explicit references to groups (e.g., “American people”, “bureaucrats”) will be more likely to also affect perceptions of host ideology than more generic invocations of “the people” and “elites”.
 - H3: Treatments operationalizing people-centrism and anti-elitism will have a smaller effect on perceptions of host ideology when explicit partisan information is provided.
- **Subjects and Context**
 - The samples were recruited through Prolific.
 - Prolific used quotas to target samples that matched census benchmarks for sex, age, and ethnicity.
 - The US study (Samples 1 and 2) was fielded on May 29th 2024 and the UK study (Sample 3) was fielded on March 18th 2025.
 - The median survey completion time was 11,3 minutes in the US study and 11 minutes in the UK study.
 - The initial pay for respondents in the US Studies was set to \$1.2 but this amount was adjusted when it became clear that respondents were taking longer than anticipated to complete the studies. In addition, to address this concern each respondent was paid a \$0.4 bonus, resulting in respondent pay ranging from \$1.76 to \$1.94. For the UK study, respondents were paid \$2.6 (roughly £2 UK Pound Sterling).
 - Data were collected online using the “Qualtrics” survey platform.
 - Prolific does not provide data that would enable the calculation of a response rate.
- **Allocation Method**
 - The studies implemented fully randomized conjoint experiments. In addition, in the US Study respondents were randomly assigned to either Sample 1 (no partisan information) or Sample 2 (partisan information).
 - Randomization was implemented using Qualtrics at the level of the respondent.
 - There were no profile restrictions or blocking.
 - It is not possible to create a balance table given the large number of randomly drawn profiles.
 - The instructions shown to participants are provided in Online Appendix Section B.
 - Respondents were blind to the randomization of conjoint attributes and were told that they were evaluating hypothetical candidates.
- **Treatments**
 - A table with all conjoint attributes and levels in the baseline design is provided in the main manuscript (Figure 1). Figure B1 shows the conjoint attributes for respondents in Sample 2.
 - Randomization to conjoint profiles was implemented using Qualtrics.
 - Participants completed six conjoint trials for a total of 6 forced choice selections and 12 ratings per respondent.
- **Results**
 - All conjoint analyses were conducted on the full sample using all conjoint task responses with non-missing outcome data. Conjoint ratings with missing outcome data were excluded. When estimating sub-group marginal means, listwise deletion was used when data on partisan identification and populist attitudes were missing.
 - All analyses are unweighted.
 - All conjoint analyses were conducted using the *cregg* R package (version 0.3.7) (Leeper and Barnfield 2018).
- **Consort Information**
 - The surveys required a binary “I agree” consent question and thus there is no data on how many people opened the survey but did not start it.
 - The UK survey (Sample 3) included an additional GDPR consent question and 40 respondents dropped out before starting the survey.
 - Number of respondents who started the survey but did not complete it: 38 (Sample 1), 34 (Sample

- 2), and 26 (Sample 3).
- Given the nature of the sample there was limited attrition and there is either none of a negligible amount of missing data across the outcome variables.
 - **Other Information**
 - The studies were reviewed and deemed exempt by the Institutional Review Board of Arizona State University (STUDY00020157).
 - The Stage 1 manuscript and supplementary materials as well as study materials are deposited at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/NUAVW>.
 - The studies were pre-registered at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/ZMUHQ> (US Studies) and <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/RCDTX> (UK Study).
 - Any deviations from the pre-registration are noted in Appendix Section M.
 - There is no external funding to report. Funding came from start-up funds provided to the author by his institution (Arizona State University).
 - Replication materials (data and code) are available on the *JEPS* Dataverse at <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/JIUPOU> (Neuner 2025).

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