

RESEARCH NOTE / NOTE DE RECHERCHE

Incorporating Immigrants into Canadian Politics: An Experiment on the Effects of Attentiveness to Elections in the Country of Origin

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Abstract

In recent decades, Canada and other democracies have experienced a significant rise in migrant settlement. This has sparked much interest among scholars and policy makers in the forces that encourage or impede the political incorporation of newcomers. In this research note, we consider a factor that has received relatively little scrutiny, the impact of immigrants' attention to native-country politics on willingness to participate in residential-country elections and affiliate with a political party in that country. We examine this through an original survey of Americans in Canada conducted during the 2020 US election cycle. A randomized experiment demonstrates that directing the attention of American emigrants to US campaigns can lower interest in Canadian elections and weaken attachments to a Canadian political party, particularly for those who are less integrated into Canadian society. These findings point to a potential tension between political engagement as an *emigrant* versus as an *immigrant*.

Résumé

Au cours des dernières décennies, le Canada et d'autres démocraties ont connu une augmentation significative de l'établissement de migrants. Cette situation a suscité beaucoup d'intérêt de la part des chercheurs et des décideurs pour les forces qui favorisent ou entravent l'intégration politique des nouveaux arrivants. Dans cette note de recherche, nous examinons un facteur qui a été relativement peu étudié, à savoir l'impact de l'attention portée par les immigrants à la politique de leur pays d'origine sur leur volonté de participer aux élections de leur pays de résidence et de s'affilier à un parti politique dans ce pays. Nous examinons cette question à l'aide d'une enquête originale menée auprès d'Américains au Canada pendant le cycle électoral américain de 2020. Une expérience randomisée démontre que le fait d'attirer l'attention des émigrants américains sur les campagnes américaines peut diminuer l'intérêt pour les élections canadiennes et affaiblir l'attachement à un parti politique canadien, en particulier pour ceux qui sont moins intégrés

dans la société canadienne. Ces résultats mettent en évidence une tension potentielle entre l'engagement politique en tant qu'émigrant et en tant qu'immigrant.

Keywords: political transnationalism; campaigns; American (or US) emigrants

Mots clés: transnationalisme politique; campagnes; émigrants américains (ou US)

Introduction

In recent decades, Canada, the US, and the industrialized democracies of Europe have all experienced a remarkable rise in migrant settlement. This substantial expansion of immigrant populations across the Western world has sparked much interest among scholars and policy makers in the forces that encourage or impede the political incorporation of newcomers. Much of this research focuses on conditions and opportunities within a particular settlement country. The extent to which native-born citizens discriminate against or accept immigrants (for example, Bilodeau et al., 2023; Fischer-Neumann, 2014; Oskooii, 2016; Paquet and Lawlor, 2022); outreach on the part of local civic organizations and political parties (for example, Dancygier et al., 2015; McCann and Nishikawa Chávez, 2016; Wong, 2006); the accessibility of public services in education, healthcare, and housing (for example, Freeman, 2004; Givens, 2007); policies concerning naturalization and the acquisition of full citizenship rights (for example, Just and Anderson, 2012)—all of these factors, among others, have been found to have substantial effects on immigrant acculturation and involvement in a new democratic system.

In this note, we pursue a line of inquiry that has received considerably less scrutiny in the scholarly literature on immigrant incorporation: how immigrants' attentiveness to politics in the country of origin shapes attitudes and aspirations regarding elections and parties in the settlement country. Does such attentiveness undercut immigrant political incorporation in the country of residence, which would suggest a “zero-sum” relationship between political engagement in a national versus transnational context? Or can attention to politics from the distance as an emigrant spur greater engagement in the adoptive country as an *immigrant*?

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Over one hundred nations or territories now allow expatriates to participate in elections via absentee ballot (Lafleur, 2013; Umpierrez de Reguero et al., 2023; McCann et al., 2019; Wellman et al., 2023). This expansion of voting rights ensures that a great many migrants will be drawn in some fashion into native-country politics when elections take place there, casting absentee ballots or donating to political parties, talking about politics with friends and relatives from the native country, or simply paying close attention to the contest from the distance (Burgess and Tyburski, 2020; Paarlberg, 2020).

Focusing on this latter form of engagement, what are the implications of attention to native-country politics for immigrant incorporation in the country of residence? One plausible scenario is that when immigrants turn their attention towards elections in their native country, they become less open to taking part in the country where they have settled. Following from Tsuda (2012), we label this a “zero-

sum” model of bi-nationalism (see also Black, 2011: 1171; Black, 1987; Peltoniemi 2018). The key theoretical premise of this model is that in an immigrant’s country of origin, campaigns and elections would likely tend to focus on topics that are salient for voters within that country, such as the job performance of incumbent leaders or the attractiveness of specific national policies and ideological positions. These considerations may have little bearing on political debates, ideologies and agendas in the settlement country (Zechmeister, 2006). It is a truism that involvement, including simply paying attention to politics, can be costly for individuals. Many people may turn away from politics because they lack the wherewithal to keep track of public affairs and take part (Verba et al., 1995). For immigrants, the prospect of following politics in two distinctive national contexts could be daunting; an immigrant whose attention is directed towards campaigns and elections in the country of birth may naturally pull back from politics in the residential country due to these limitations.

It is possible, however, to imagine a contrasting dynamic, where remote attentiveness to country-of-origin elections promotes deeper engagement in the settlement country (Levitt, 2000: 460; Tsuda, 2012: 635).¹ Various mechanisms could account for this. Attention to elections as a transnational citizen may reinforce a general sense of social obligation and civic duty or bolster beliefs about personal efficacy in politics (see, for example, Mansbridge, 1999; Superti, 2023). These effects could in turn lead to higher levels of enthusiasm to take part in politics where one has settled. At the very least, this hypothesis posits that there is no inherent tension between democratic incorporation as both an *immigrant* and *emigrant* (cf. Finn, 2020).

We explore these contrasting possibilities by focusing on a sizable immigrant population in a Western democracy that has received scant scholarly attention: Americans living in Canada. The United States has long considered itself a nation of immigrants, but it is also a nation of emigration. In a 2018 report, the Federal Voting Assistance Program estimated that nearly five million voting-age Americans live abroad. Canada is the leading destination country for American emigrants, with some 860,000 US citizens having relocated north of the border (FVAP, 2020). Within this population, the FVAP indicates that 516,309 were eligible to vote in the US—a far higher number than in any other country, and more than half again as many as in the UK, which has the second-largest number of American emigrants.

This focus on the American-born population in Canada is theoretically advantageous for several reasons. Most residents of Canada live close to the US-Canada border, and American elections receive extensive coverage in English-language Canadian media outlets (Matthews and Satzewich, 2006). In any US election cycle, there would be ample opportunities for Americans living north of the border to take part in a campaign. It would do little good to examine whether directing attention to elections in the country of origin undercuts or promotes involvement in the residential country for an immigrant group that would not have much potential to become informed about politics in the country of origin.²

Another advantage of focusing the analysis on Americans in Canada is that the relationship between political attentiveness in the US context and engagement in the Canadian context—be it “zero-sum” or positively reinforcing—may be more

readily gauged. The United States and Canada are similar in many respects, sometimes described by researchers and observers as “two peas in a pod” (Bloemraad, 2011). Both are first-world industrialized democracies where English is spoken most. Few Americans in Canada would be considered economic migrants who live on the margins of society. Rather, Americans who are most open to settling in Canada tend to have personal finances that are somewhat better than average (Marrow and Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020). If attention to politics in the native country is compatible with or even boosts political incorporation in the settlement country, this effect should be most noticeable for an immigrant population that is not otherwise excluded from civic life because of social or economic marginalization, as many “South to North migrants” are.

The limited prior research on the American immigrant population in Canada suggests that migrants’ attention to native-country politics does not undercut political incorporation in the Canadian context. The participants in Croucher’s (2011) study were said to be “perfectly at ease with and fully entitled to possess and practice citizenship in a country where they did not reside ... and to practice simultaneous membership” in two nation-states (126; see also Dashefsky and Woodrow-Lafield, 1992 and Matthews and Satzewich, 2006). Yet while everyday life in Canada is in many respects similar to life in the United States, there is no denying that the two countries differ markedly in their party organizations, governing agendas, federal structure, and formal institutions of representation (Bilodeau et al., 2010). Such differences lend credence to the “zero-sum” view of bi-nationalism. Americans in Canada whose attention is drawn into US elections may well grow less enthusiastic about taking part in Canadian politics because of the distinctive features of each political system and the challenges of engagement in the two domains.

When probing such dynamics, we will be mindful of subgroup variations. Whether or not remote attention to US politics is compatible with political incorporation in the Canadian context, the effects of transnationalism could be most evident for Americans who have not yet put down deep roots in Canada. All immigrants lead lives that to an extent fall “in between” two countries (cf. Jones-Correa, 1998). This would be especially true for those who do not yet identify as a member of the country of residence, continue to identify as still part of the country of origin, or have lived a relatively short while in the new country. For such immigrants, the trade-off between attention to native-country politics and political engagement in the country of residence may be most apparent (Tsuda, 2012).

As immigrants become more established in the residential country and grow to see themselves as bona fide members of it, their level of political engagement in that country might tend to depend more on domestic mobilizing factors, such as patterns of outreach from political parties and interest groups and less on levels of transnational connections. In the analysis below, we also investigate the potential moderating influence of education level. If attentiveness to politics in the country of origin undercuts a willingness to become involved in the residential country because of the cognitive costs of involvement in two separate political systems, this tension could be more readily apparent for less educated migrants.

Research Design and Findings

The analysis draws from an original web survey of Americans over eighteen living in Canada ($N = 686$). Respondents were sampled via large opt-in panels from two different sources, Qualtrics and Asking Canadians. Each firm creates large- N panels from loyalty program websites that attract a diverse set of Canadians. In both cases, the panel from which our samples are drawn was tailored to ensure that it is representative of census data as reported by the official Statistics Canada agency. Background information in both panels included place of birth, which allowed us to target American-born respondents, including Americans who were not Canadian citizens.³ It is worth noting with respect to the representativeness of this sample that it is similar to the 464 American-born respondents in the 2019 Canadian Election Study, a large nationally representative survey that included both Canadian citizens and non-citizens (Stephenson et al., 2000; see the online appendix).

This survey was conducted in August of 2020, near the time of the Democratic and Republican national conventions. A few minutes into the survey, a randomized experimental treatment was applied. Approximately half of the respondents ($N = 356$) were exposed to vivid images of the two major party presidential nominees, Donald Trump and Joe Biden, rallying supporters (see Figure 1).⁴ These respondents then reported their impressions of the pictures, whether the images prompted feelings of anger, hopefulness, fear and/or pride.⁵ Respondents assigned to the control group were not exposed to US campaign images or prompted to report any personal reactions to the presidential candidates.

The goal of showing randomly selected study participants colourful imagery of political rallies in the United States was to concentrate the attention of emigrants on the presidential contest south of the border and reinforce their standing as potential participants. Relatively few rallies were held during the 2020 American elections due to COVID restrictions, which would likely have made these images particularly striking. The subsequent items on reactions to the pictures provided a rationale for exposing respondents to such images and served as a manipulation check to confirm that subjects had indeed paid attention and were personally moved in some way. Over 90 per cent of the members of the treatment group reported having an affective reaction, a very high level of responsiveness demonstrating that, at that moment, American electoral politics was indeed a salient focus of attention. This experimental treatment is admittedly exploratory. No previous research has sought to direct migrants' attention towards elections in their country of origin to observe downstream effects on orientations towards country-of-residence politics.⁶

What are the implications of such mobilization on engagement in Canadian politics? We focus on two outcome measures: level of willingness to take part in Canadian elections when given the chance and level of identification with one of the Canadian political parties.

Interest in Participating in Canadian Elections

Table 1 presents findings from five OLS regression models. The dependent variable in each case is a four-point item on general willingness to turn out for a hypothetical Canadian election, which was asked after the treatment. This item was worded



Figure 1. Pictures Used for the Experimental Treatment

so that all respondents, including those who were not registered to vote in Canada, could report their general attitude towards taking part: “If elections were being held in Canada and you were eligible to vote, how likely is it that you would participate—*very likely* [4], *somewhat likely* [3], *not too likely* [2], or *very unlikely* [1]?”⁷

Predictors in the first model include the treatment indicator plus a four-point scale measuring the degree of identification as a “Canadian” (4 = very strongly, 1 = not strongly at all), a similar measure asking about identification as an “American,” the number of years the respondent had lived in Canada (5 years or fewer, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years, or more than 20 years), and level of formal education (high school or less, some college or trade school, college degree, or post-graduate studies). The subsequent models in this table include multiplicative interaction terms to assess potential subsample variations in treatment effects.⁸

As shown in the first specification, exposure to images of American campaign rallies had only a very slight and statistically insignificant demobilizing effect on

Table 1. Effect of Treatment on Likelihood of Canadian Vote Turnout

	<u>b</u>	<u>SE</u>								
Treatment	-.043	.061	-.493	.202***	.092	.147	-.475	.265*	-.144	.189
Canadian identification	.238	.035***	.165	.047***	.235	.036***	.243	.036***	.239	.036***
American identification	-.027	.030	-.022	.030	-.000	.040	-.026	.030	-.027	.030
Years in Canada	.016	.038	.020	.038	.016	.038	-.057	.058	.016	.038
Education level	.232	.031***	.233	.031***	.233	.031***	.231	.031***	.213	.046***
Treatment X Canadian ID			.142	.061**						
Treatment X American ID					-.054	.053				
Treatment X years in Canada							.122	.072*		
Treatment X education level									.035	.062
Constant	2.22	.216***	2.42	.232***	2.15	.225***	2.46	.262***	2.27	.239***

Note: ** = $p < .10$; *** = $p < .05$; **** = $p < .01$. Coefficients estimated through ordinary least squares regression. The dependent variable is a four-point scale ranging from “very unlikely to vote” (1) to “very likely to vote” (4). Results from ordered logistic regression models are substantively identical to these. $N = 686$.

willingness to vote in Canadian elections.⁹ However, the second model suggests that the experimental treatment had a greater effect on Americans who do not see themselves as fully Canadian.¹⁰ The negative sign of the interactive effect of exposure to the treatment and level of Canadian identification imply that American migrants who were exposed to scenes of US campaign rallies and did not identify as “Canadian” were significantly demobilized in the Canadian context. This offers support to the zero-sum hypothesis for this subpopulation and is in keeping with Tsuda’s (2012: 635) conjecture that the “less integrated immigrants are in the host society,” the more such zero-sum relationships would likely surface.

The chart in Figure 2 clarifies this effect. Among Americans who did not identify as Canadian, the treatment reduced enthusiasm by approximately one-third of a point, a pronounced and significant effect. The impact of the treatment diminishes to insignificance for respondents who strongly or very strongly identified as Canadian.

Turning to the third regression model in Table 1, the negative sign for the “treatment X American identification” interaction term implies that migrants who identified more strongly as Americans tended to lose interest in Canadian electoral politics following exposure to the treatment, an effect that complements the findings in the second model. This coefficient, however, does not rise to the level of statistical significance ($p = .31$). The fourth model provides further evidence for the zero-sum view of transnationalism for less incorporated immigrants. Here we find that exposure to US campaign rally images primarily affected Americans without deep roots in Canada. Figure 3 shows these distinctive effects. For Americans who had resided in Canada for less than five years, the negative impact of the treatment is approximately as strong as that for respondents who did not identify as “Canadian.” With respect to education level (fifth model in Table 1), we find no evidence of such moderating effects.

Effect on Canadian Partisanship

Does this conditional “zero-sum” finding carry over from voting intention to party identification in the Canadian context? After the treatment was administered, all respondents indicated whether they identified strongly with a Canadian political party (coded 4), identified weakly (3), leaned towards a Canadian party (2), or did not identify at all with one of the parties (1). Table 2 presents findings from five regression models that are comparable to those in Table 1. As was the case with the item on turning out to vote in a Canadian election, there is only a very modest negative relationship between exposure to American campaign images and the level of Canadian partisanship.¹¹

The second specification in this table indicates, however, that the degree of identification as a “Canadian” interacted with the treatment; Americans who did not see themselves as Canadian were somewhat more responsive ($p < .10$ for the interaction term). Figure 4 shows this effect. Less incorporated Americans who were reminded of the US campaigns saw a drop in Canadian partisanship ($-.37$) that essentially matches the drop in interest in taking part in Canadian elections. The other potential moderating variables (strength of identification as an American, time spent in Canada, and education level) do not, however, have similarly significant effects on the treatment.

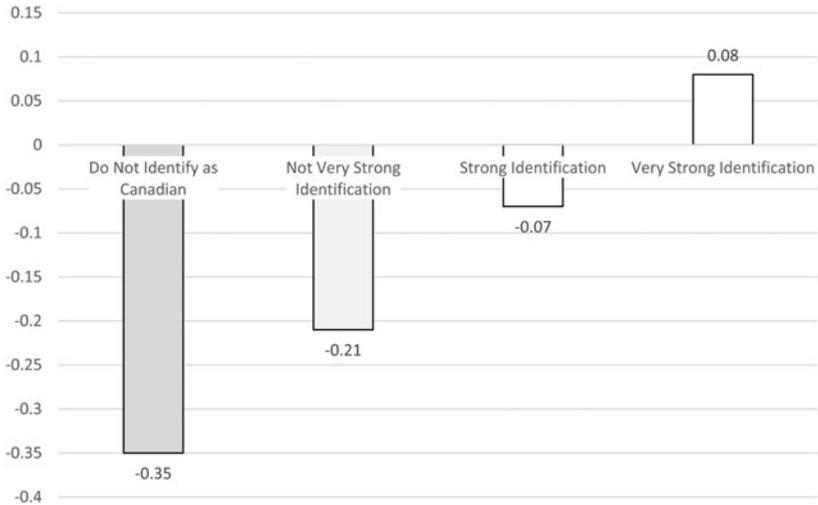


Figure 2. Treatment Effect of Interest in Voting in a Hypothetical Canadian Election, by Strength of Identification as “Canadian”

Note: Predictions are derived from the second regression model in Table 1. The dependent variable is a four-point scale measuring interest in voting in a Canadian election (very unlikely to vote [1]; not too likely [2]; somewhat likely [3]; very likely [4]). Members of the randomly assigned treatment group were exposed to pictures of American presidential campaign rallies. Dark grey shading indicates statistical significance at the .05-level; lighter grey shading indicates significance at the .10-level.

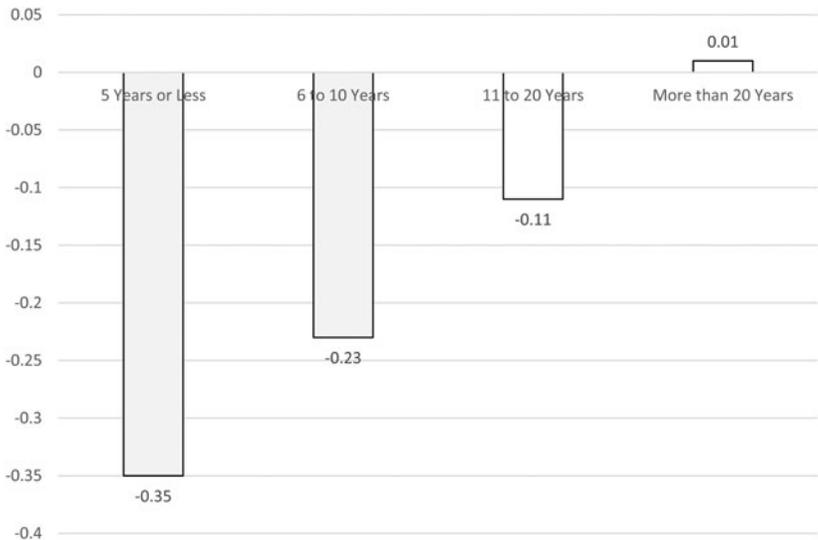


Figure 3. Treatment Effect on Interest in Voting in a Canadian Election, by Length of Time Living in Canada

Note: Predictions are derived from the fourth regression model in Table 1. Grey shading indicates significance at the .10-level.

Table 2. Effect of Treatment on Identification with a Canadian Political Party

	<u>b</u>	<u>SE</u>								
Treatment	-.067	.075	-.499	.250**	-.188	.181	.158	.327	.072	.233
Canadian identification	.193	.044***	.123	.058**	.196	.044***	.191	.044***	.193	.044***
American identification	-.037	.037	-.032	.037	-.061	.049	-.037	.037	-.036	.037
Years in Canada	-.035	.047	-.032	.047	-.035	.047	.003	.072	-.035	.047
Education level	.160	.038***	.161	.038***	.159	.038***	.160	.038***	.186	.057***
Treatment X Canadian ID			.138	.075*						
Treatment X American ID					.048	.066				
Treatment X years in Canada							-.063	.090		
Treatment X education level									-.048	.076
Constant	2.07	.267***	2.27	.287***	2.13	.277***	1.95	.323***	2.00	.295***

Note: ** = $p < .10$; *** = $p < .05$; **** = $p < .01$. Coefficients estimated through ordinary least squares regression. The dependent variable is a four-point scale ranging from “do not identify with a Canadian party” (1) to “strongly identify with a Canadian party” (4). Results from ordered logistic regression models are substantively identical to these. $N = 686$.

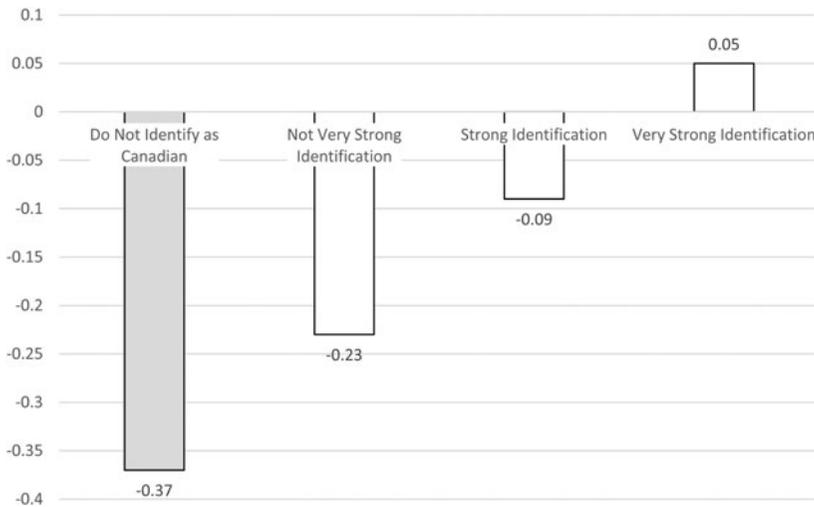


Figure 4. Treatment Effect on Level of Identification with a Political Party in Canada, by Strength of Identification as “Canadian”

Note: Predictions are derived from the second regression model in Table 2. The dependent variable is a four-point scale measuring level of identification with a Canadian political party (no identification [1]; “leaning” identification [2]; weak identification [3]; strong identification [4]). Members of the randomly assigned treatment group were exposed to pictures of American presidential campaign rallies. Dark grey shading indicates statistical significance at the .05-level; none of the other effects are significant ($p > .10$).

Conclusion

Individuals who leave their native country to reside in another live their lives to an extent between the two nations (Jones-Correa, 1998). When major national elections are taking place in one’s country of origin, many emigrants are likely to be drawn into the process either formally, by voting and giving material support to a campaign, or informally, by encouraging friends and family “back home” to vote a certain way or simply becoming intellectually engaged from a distance.

Relatively little is known about the implications of emigrant attentiveness to home-country politics for immigrant incorporation in the settlement country. To our knowledge, this is the first study to use experimental methods to trace the impact of transnational attentiveness on willingness to take part in settlement-country elections and identify as a partisan in that context. As with all experiments, there is a degree of artificiality in this analytical framework. The experimental treatment was meant to remind American emigrants in Canada of the lively and contentious campaigns taking place south of the border and reinforce their standing as participants. We could not, of course, randomly assign respondents to participate in the US election in a more formal way. Nevertheless, the evidence we uncover is suggestive, albeit exploratory and worthy of further investigation. For respondents who do not identify as Canadian or who have lived in the country for a relatively brief period, exposure to images of the Trump and Biden campaign rallies followed by reflections on one’s personal feelings about the events led to a significant decline in enthusiasm to take part in Canadian politics. This effect may stem from wariness about the challenge of focusing attention on US politics while simultaneously

engaging in the civic life of another country that is not yet familiar or approachable. The limited prior research on American immigrants in Canada suggested that attention to US politics was compatible with integration into Canadian democracy. Indeed, Americans in Canada were said to feel entitled to take part in both domains (Croucher, 2011). Our findings put a finer point on this characterization.

To expand on these findings, future research should investigate more closely the mechanisms behind the experimental effects and how more overt and sustained transnational mobilization by campaigns, parties, and groups may affect the trajectory of immigrant incorporation. In addition to the theoretical mechanism posited above—American emigrants who engage in some fashion in US politics might pull away from Canadian politics because of implicit “cost constraints”—the feelings that respondents in the treatment group noted after seeing the campaign images point to another possible mechanism. Negative reactions to the rallying pictures were somewhat more common than positive ones. This tendency raises the possibility that the outcome of transnational political engagement for an emigrant could affect political attitudes and aspirations in the residential-country context. That is, political bi-nationality may not be strictly a zero-sum or mutually reinforcing proposition. Emigrants who find their attentiveness to home-country politics to be satisfying may in turn grow more enthusiastic about political engagement in the settlement country. But if transnational engagement in whatever form is unsatisfying, then the prospect of taking part in politics in the residential country could become less attractive. Within our dataset, there is some evidence to suggest that pulling away from Canadian politics stemmed in part from having a more negative reaction to the rally pictures.¹² Future work should investigate more systematically how the outcomes from particular transnational political activities, rather than transnational attentiveness among emigrants per se, affect involvement as an immigrant.

Finally, we should underscore the need for further comparative analysis. By focusing on the American immigrant population in Canada, we control for various factors that could make it difficult to assess how attention to campaigns in the country of origin might affect political incorporation in the settlement country. At the same time, we recognize that this is a rather select group of immigrants. Future work should examine whether the findings presented here can be generalized to cover other cases of transnational campaign exposure, where the more numerous populations of “South to North” migrants direct their attention to native-country politics. Many of these migrants might be classified as economic migrants or refugees who grudgingly emigrated to a developed democracy under duress or persecution. These migrants may never identify with the settlement country to the degree that US-born residents of Canada grow to see themselves as “Canadian.” It is, therefore, possible that for migrants who settled not so much by choice but by necessity, the effect of transnational political engagement on attitudes towards politics in the residential country would be comparatively more influential.

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Competing interests. The authors declare none.

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Notes

1 Tsuda (2012) and Chaudhary (2018) note that this hypothesis could also imply that political involvement in the residential country has the potential to spur engagement in origin-country politics, a dynamic that is not considered here.

2 Under a 1986 federal law in the United States, Americans in Canada (and other countries) have the right to vote via absentee ballot. Turnout rates for expatriates tend to be low but are not trivial. In the US presidential election of 2016, for example, approximately five percent of voting-age Americans in Canada cast a ballot. Over the last several decades, the two major US political parties have sought to mobilize Americans living abroad, with the Democratic Party investing far more than the Republican Party in transnational outreach (Dark, 2003; Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2020; Kalu and Scarrow, 2020). One recent survey of Americans living in Canada found that approximately one in four were exposed to political ads from the US via social media, text messaging, or email (McCann and Rapoport, 2023).

3 While surveys on political attitudes in Canada typically sample citizens, it was important for our purposes not to make sampling conditional on being a Canadian citizen. According to data from the 2019 Canadian Election Study, citizenship status is significantly correlated with the length of time an immigrant has lived in the country and positive feelings towards Canada. In that study, approximately three out of ten US-born respondents are not naturalized Canadian citizens. Our own survey did not include an item on formal citizenship status. Had we included such an item and excluded non-citizens from the sampling or modelling, a considerable amount of variation in the two measures of “rootedness” in Canadian society would have been lost.

4 The application of the randomized experimental treatment was balanced with respect to age, education, gender and time living in Canada.

5 Question wordings are provided in the online appendix.

6 The Institutional Review Boards of Purdue University and the College of William & Mary approved the study protocol. We did not further preregister the study, given uncertainties at the outset about sampling procedures and the more exploratory nature of the investigation. As noted in the previous section, prior research has yielded mixed expectations regarding the impact of transnational involvement on residential-country politics. We therefore had no firm expectations about causal effects when implementing this first-ever experimental design in this area. In such instances, the value of preregistration is relatively limited (Pham and Oh, 2021).

7 Results from ordered logistic regression models are substantively identical. Of course, if we had asked about actual turnout behaviour, Americans who were not eligible to vote in Canada would have to be excluded from the analysis, which would have left us with a truncated sample. Such a focus in question wording would also have been problematic because the next round of federal elections in Canada, which took place in September of 2021, had not yet been announced at the time of the survey (August 2020). For these reasons, we framed the dependent variable in hypothetical terms, with respondents asked to assume that elections were taking place at that time and that they were eligible to participate. The aim was to gauge a general orientation towards electoral involvement in the settlement country.

8 The items on national identification, education, and years spent in Canada were asked before the treatment. The online appendix provides a correlation matrix for these predictors.

9 Among survey respondents who were exposed to images of US campaigning, the mean level of interest in taking part in a hypothetical Canadian election is 3.58, as compared to 3.65 for Americans who were not exposed; the standard error for this difference is .064, which makes this difference in means statistically insignificant ($p = .28$).

10 That is, compared to members of the control group, identification as a Canadian became more relevant as a predictor for Americans whose attention had been directed to the US campaigns.

11 The mean level of identification with a Canadian political party for respondents who were not exposed to images from US campaigns was 2.94; for those in the exposure treatment group, this mean drops slightly to 2.86. The standard error for this difference is .08, indicating that this difference is not statistically significant ($p = .29$).

12 Within the treatment group, a scale that gauges the number of positive emotional reactions to the rally images relative to negative reactions correlates modestly but significantly with interest in voting in Canadian elections ($r = .11, p = .04$); this scale also correlates positively with identifying with a Canadian political party, but this relationship is not significant ($r = .05, p = .32$). Since these emotional reactions were freely expressed and not experimentally manipulated, any causal inferences are necessarily limited. Nevertheless, such correlations suggest that how satisfying or unsatisfying political encounters and activities are in the context of the native country could shape the trajectory of incorporation in the country of residence.

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