

# Information and Politicians' Beliefs About Election-Related Violence: Preanalysis Plan for A Survey Experiment with Politicians in Kenya

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## 1 Introduction

It is well documented that political elites play a primary role in the production of election-related violence ([Human Rights Watch, 1993, 1995b, 2007](#); [Husain, 2002](#); [Brass, 2003](#); [Wilkinson, 2004](#); [Höglund and Piyarathne, 2009](#); [Sives, 2010](#); [Wilson, 2010](#); [Berenschot, 2012](#); [Travaglianti, 2014](#)), and Kenya is no exception ([Human Rights Watch, 1995a](#); [Akiwumi et al., 1999](#); [Klopp, 2001](#); [Laakso, 2007](#); [KNCHR, 2008](#); [Klopp and Kamungi, 2008](#); [Waki Commission, 2008](#); [Mueller, 2011](#); [Dercon and Gutiérrez-Romero, 2012](#)). Yet recent research on election-related violence in Kenya has shown that politicians may overestimate the benefits of violence and underestimate its costs ([Rosenzweig, 2018](#)). Specifically, politicians underestimate the strength and breadth of voter backlash against the use of violence in their efforts to win office, including among their core coethnic supporters. Thus, elite misperceptions about the electoral effects of violence may explain the persistence of election-related violence in Kenya, and correcting these misperceptions may reduce the use of violence associated with electoral competition. The experiment described here randomizes the provision of information about the negative effects of violence on voter support to a sample of Kenyan politicians, evaluating the effect of this information on their perceptions about the efficacy of

violence and violent rhetoric as electoral tactics, and assessing whether the effect of the information depends on politicians' pretreatment levels of certain cognitive biases or the length of their engagement in electoral politics. The study seeks to shed light on *why* politicians misperceive the effects of violence on voting, and whether providing systematic information about these effects can reduce violent electoral tactics by reducing politicians' misperceptions about their efficacy.

## 2 Theory

There are two plausible mechanisms by which politicians may misperceive voter preferences and the effects of campaign tactics, with their relative importance dependent on the electoral context. The first is that, especially in new or developing democracies such as Kenya, politicians may lack sufficient information about voter preferences and the relative efficacy of different electoral tactics. Teasing out the contribution of particular tactics to election outcomes is difficult in any context due to the many factors at play in determining these outcomes. But doing so is particularly challenging in a context where there is little polling, unsophisticated campaign technology, and limited research on voting behavior and campaign strategy. Politicians in new or emerging democracies also have fewer iterations of the electoral process with which to make inferences about what does and does not work when competing for office. In such contexts, it is unsurprising that limited information can lead to tactical mistakes.

Yet politicians in advanced democracies with highly sophisticated campaigns misperceive voter preferences and the efficacy of campaign tactics as well. The persistence of misperception in even high-information environments suggests that, rather than simply lacking adequate information, politicians may also misinterpret what information they have due to some cognitive bias—such as overconfidence or confirmation bias—that causes them to form

false beliefs. Existing models of belief formation show how individuals can come to false conclusions about the state of the world simply by putting too much weight on certain types of information (Ortoleva and Snowberg, 2015; Eyster and Rabin, 2010). And recent studies of politicians across several countries find that they are even more likely to exhibit several common biases than the citizens they represent (Sheffer et al., 2016; Sheffer, 2016).

The existence of these biases can help to explain the persistence of violence over multiple election cycles. In such cases, politicians may be subject to a conventional wisdom that violence and violent rhetoric are effective campaign tactics, and any new information about their efficacy is interpreted in this light. Boas (2016), for example, demonstrates how the coincidence of certain campaign tactics with electoral success at the presidential level results in convergence among different political actors on the tactics of the first successful presidential campaign, regardless of whether the relevant tactics are objectively responsible for the model candidate's success. In that vein, the coincidence of violence with the victory of President Moi and his KANU party in the first multiparty elections in Kenya in 1992 and 1997—regardless of the actual impact of violence on the party's electoral performance—established a conventional wisdom that violence is an effective tactic in Kenyan elections. Combined with a natural tendency toward confirmation bias and overconfidence in the informativeness of their observations, politicians may therefore interpret instances of violent, rabble-raising candidates winning elections as evidence of the efficacy of such tactics, and instances of their losing as exceptions to the rule.

A theory of elite misperception can therefore explain the use of violent electoral tactics via two different mechanisms—lack of information and cognitive bias—with the relative importance of each dependent upon the electoral context. In the first instance, politicians may misperceive the efficacy of violence due to a simple lack of information about voter preferences and the impact of alternative electoral strategies. This is most likely to be the case in new democracies, particularly those holding the first multiparty elections under a

new electoral regime, as politicians seek to compete for office under conditions of very high uncertainty about what makes for a successful campaign.

Given the difficulties of isolating the effects of particular campaign tactics through observational methods alone, information constraints likely prevent politicians from accurately perceiving the efficacy of their tactics even after several iterations of the electoral process. Still, as multiparty competition becomes regular, generating additional observations from which to make inferences, the relative importance of cognitive biases in determining the level of elite misperception is likely to increase relative to the lack of information alone. Specifically, the tactics that the winner of founding elections employs tend to become established electoral practice, as other parties and candidates seek to emulate the winner's perceived success (Boas, 2016). Thus, even as the informativeness of the evidence available to them is limited, politicians may *overestimate* the precision of the available information and seek or evaluate new information in a manner that *confirms*—rather than challenges—their preconceived notions. With respect to violence, this means that, where the winner of founding elections is observed using violence as an electoral tactic, 1) overconfidence causes politicians to interpret this fact as reliable evidence that violence is an effective electoral tactic, regardless of whether the winner's electoral success can be expressly attributed to their use of violence; and 2) confirmation bias leads politicians to seek out and interpret information that confirms their beliefs about the efficacy of violent electoral tactics, whether or not these beliefs are accurate. These tendencies can explain the persistence of violence in electoral competition even when its efficacy is in doubt.

If lack of information or cognitive bias explain why politicians misperceive the effects of violence and therefore employ it as an electoral tactic even when it is of questionable efficacy, then providing politicians with systematic information about the effects of violence on voter support should improve the accuracy of their beliefs about the effects of violence and reduce the likelihood that they employ it in their efforts to win office. This effect may

be concentrated among those with the least education and experience with electoral politics (if misperceptions are due to a simple lack of information) or among those least subject to relevant cognitive biases (if cognitive bias is the main mechanism at play). The experiment described here is designed to test the mechanisms underlying the theory by analyzing whether the provision of information to politicians affects their perceptions of the efficacy of violence as an electoral tactic, and whether this effect is moderated by politicians' level of experience or cognitive bias.

Importantly, politicians may provoke election-related violence not only by directly organizing, financing, or explicitly encouraging it, but also indirectly through the use of heated rhetoric that heightens tensions and stokes conflict. In fact, there is evidence both that such rhetoric *does* increase the likelihood of violence, and that politicians themselves acknowledge as much (Rosenzweig, 2018). We are therefore interested not just in whether the experimental intervention makes politicians less likely to believe that violence is an effective electoral tactic, but their beliefs about the efficacy of hostile ethnic rhetoric as well.

These insights suggest the following hypotheses:

If elite misperception is due to a lack of information about voter backlash against violence and violent rhetoric, then:

*H1:* Politicians in the treatment group will rate politicians with allegations of employing violence or violent ethnic rhetoric as less likely to win an election than those in the control group.

*H1a:* This effect will be most pronounced among politicians with less education and less experience in electoral politics.

If elite misperception is due to cognitive biases that affect politicians' interpretation of the evidence about the efficacy of violence and violent rhetoric, then:

*H2:* The effect of the treatment will be greater for politicians with lower pretreatment

levels of cognitive bias.<sup>1</sup>

The following section describes the experimental design for testing these hypotheses.

### 3 Experimental Design

The survey experiment will be conducted with sample of 584 politicians who ran as candidates for MP in Kenya's 290 constituencies in the 2017 general elections. Subjects were identified from the Kenya Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission's official list of candidates; all candidates for MP were eligible for inclusion, and a team of research assistants sought out contact information (email, phone number, and Facebook account) for as many candidates as they could find. The survey will be sent to politicians via email, SMS, or Facebook message (recruited via the following text), depending on the contact information that is available for them, and will be administered on the Qualtrics platform (the Qualtrics survey instrument is appended to this document).

#### Email

Dear Hon. [Name],

My name is Dr. Steven Rosenzweig, a political scientist from Boston University. I am conducting a survey of Kenyan politicians about their background and electoral competition in Kenya and would like to collect your views. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes of your time, and your answers will be completely anonymous. If you're willing to participate, please click here [LINK] to be directed to the survey.

Many thanks in advance,

Steven C. Rosenzweig, Ph.D.  
Department of Political Science  
Boston University  
USA

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<sup>1</sup>The specific forms of cognitive bias and how they are measured are described below.

## SMS

Hon [Name]: I am Dr Steven Rosenzweig from Boston University. Linked here [LINK] please find a survey I am conducting of Kenyan politicians about their background and electoral competition in Kenya. Your answers are anonymous and will take only 15 min.

Prior to the randomized information treatment, respondents will be asked a series of background questions that can be used to check balance and as covariates. They will also be asked a series of questions about the extent of their political experience. They will then be asked a battery of questions meant to measure several cognitive biases that may be relevant to their belief formation with respect to the effects of election-related violence, including 1) overconfidence, 2) confirmation bias, 3) anchoring, and 4) status quo bias. Respondents will then have a 50 percent chance of seeing the information treatment (shown in Appendix B) plus two questions about the information (whether or not the respondent has heard of this information before, and how credible they believe it to be) and a 50 percent chance of not receiving the information. Finally, respondents will answer outcome questions related to their perceptions of the likely electoral success of two candidates for office describes in short vignettes, one of which has an alleged history of instigating violence, the other of which has employed hostile ethnic campaign rhetoric.

## 4 Analysis

This section details the outcomes to be examined by the study, as well as the data to be used and the specific analyses to be run in order to evaluate the effects of the experimental intervention on the relevant outcomes.

### 4.1 Outcomes

The study will analyze the effects of the treatment on the following outcomes:

- 1) Respondents' perception of the likelihood that a candidate with a history of violence will win election;
- 2) Respondents' perception of the likelihood that coethnics will vote for a candidate with a history of violence;
- 3) Respondents' perception of the likelihood that non-coethnics will vote for a candidate with a history of violence;
- 4) Respondents' perception of the likelihood that a candidate that has employed hostile ethnic rhetoric will win election; and
- 5) Respondents' perception of the likelihood that coethnic voters will vote for a candidate that has employed hostile ethnic rhetoric.

All outcomes are measured on a 1 to 10 scale, 1 indicating least likely and 10 indicating most likely.

## **4.2 Data and Analyses**

The data will be analyzed in a regression framework using OLS. Each outcome question will be regressed on an indicator for the experimental treatment. The null hypothesis of no effect will be tested using a one-tailed test, with variance estimated using Huber-White robust standard errors. To test for heterogeneous treatment effects on the basis of education and electoral experience or levels of cognitive bias, I will estimate an interaction effect, interacting the treatment indicator with either 1) pretreatment measures of education and electoral experience or 2) pretreatment measures of cognitive bias (the latter both individually and in combination). The coefficient and statistical significance on the interaction will be the most straightforward test of whether there is a differential effect of the information treatment on less educated or experienced politicians or those with lower levels of cognitive biases.

## 5 Power Analysis

Power analysis will be conducted by simulation, using data on all covariates to be included in the main analysis and realized outcome data from untreated constituencies. Since the design of the experiment was constrained by factors such as the number of candidates for which contact information was available and the number of candidate that actually completed the survey, power calculations did not inform the design. Its main purpose is to understand what size effects the actually conducted experiment is able to detect.

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# A Qualtrics Survey Instrument

## Politician Survey Experiment

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### Start of Block: Informed Consent

Description Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey, which is research being conducted by Principal Investigator Steven Rosenzweig, a political scientist at Boston University in the U.S. We are conducting a survey of Kenyan politicians about their background and electoral competition in Kenya and would like to collect your views. We do not foresee any risks or personal benefits associated with participating in the study.

Your answers will be anonymous. Only the researchers involved in this study and those responsible for research oversight will have access to the information you provide.

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes. Participation is voluntary, there is no penalty for refusing to participate, and you may end participation at any time or refuse to answer any individual question without penalty. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact Principal Investigator Steven Rosenzweig at [scrosen@bu.edu](mailto:scrosen@bu.edu).

If you would like to talk with someone other than the researchers to discuss problems or concerns, to discuss situations in the event that a member of the research team is not available, or to discuss your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Boston University Charles River Campus IRB at +1-617-358-6115 or [irb@bu.edu](mailto:irb@bu.edu).

Do you wish to proceed with the survey?

Yes (1)

No (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey, which is research being conducted b... = No*

### End of Block: Informed Consent

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### Start of Block: Background Information



age How old are you?

---

---



sex What is your sex?

- Male (0)
  - Female (1)
- 

tribe What is your tribe?

---

religion What is your religion?

- Christian (1)
  - Muslim (2)
  - Other (3)
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If What is your religion? = Christian*

X→

bornagain Do you consider yourself born-again and/or a member of a Pentecostal or Revivalist church?

- Yes (1)
  - No (0)
- 

X→

education What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- No formal schooling (0)
  - Some primary schooling (1)
  - Primary school completed (2)
  - Some secondary school (3)
  - Secondary school completed (4)
  - Post-secondary qualification other than university (e.g. diploma or degree from teaching college) (5)
  - Some university (6)
  - University completed (7)
  - Post-graduate degree (Masters or PhD) (8)
- 

marital What is your marital status?

- Never married (1)
  - Married (2)
  - Widow/widower (3)
  - Separated/divorced (4)
-

party Which political party are you a member of?

- Jubilee (1)
- ODM (2)
- Wiper (3)
- ANC (4)
- FORD-Kenya (5)
- KANU (6)
- Other party (7)
- Independent (No party) (8)

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*Display This Question:*

*If Which political party are you a member of? = Other party*

otherparty Which political party are you a member of?

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currentoffice Do you currently hold elected office? If so, which one?

- Do not currently hold office (1)
- Current governor (2)
- Current senator (3)
- Current MP (4)
- Current Women's Representative (5)
- Current MCA (6)

tenure How long have you held this position?

- Since 2017 (1)
  - Since 2013 (2)
  - Since 2007 (3)
  - Since 2002 (4)
  - Since 1997 (5)
  - Since 1992 (6)
- 

otherpositions What other elected positions have you held, if any?

- None (1)
  - Governor (2)
  - Senator (3)
  - MP (4)
  - Women's Representative (5)
  - MCA (6)
  - District Councillor (7)
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If What other elected positions have you held, if any? = MP*

mp tenure How long did you serve as MP?

- One term (1)
- Two terms (2)
- Three terms (3)
- Four terms (4)
- Five terms (5)

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*Display This Question:*

*If What other elected positions have you held, if any? = District Councillor*

councillor tenure How long did you serve as district councillor?

- One term (1)
- Two terms (2)
- Three terms (3)
- Four terms (4)

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elections How many elections have you competed in during your career in politics?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)

End of Block: Background Information

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Start of Block: Campaign Violence List Experiment Control

listviolencecontrol Please say HOW MANY of the following campaign strategies you used in your most recent campaign. In other words, we only want to know the number of the strategies listed below that you used, not which ones. How many of the following campaign strategies did you use during your most recent campaign? a) Television advertisements b) Distributing hats, t-shirts, or other items with your name on them to voters c) Campaign rallies d) Meeting voters at their home or business

- None (1)
- One (2)
- Two (3)
- Three (4)
- All four (5)

End of Block: Campaign Violence List Experiment Control

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Start of Block: Campaign Violence List Experiment Treatment

listviolencetreat Please say HOW MANY of the following campaign strategies you used in your most recent campaign. In other words, we only want to know the number of the strategies listed below that you used, not which ones. How many of the following campaign strategies did you use during your most recent campaign? a) Television advertisements b) Distributing hats, t-shirts, or other items with your name on them to voters c) Campaign rallies d) Meeting voters at their home or business e) Organizing your supporters to prevent voters who support you from turning out to vote

- None (1)
- One (2)
- Two (3)
- Three (4)
- Four (5)
- All five (6)

End of Block: Campaign Violence List Experiment Treatment

---

Start of Block: Campaign Rhetoric List Experiment Control

listrhetoriccontrol Please say HOW MANY of the following promises you made to voters in your most recent campaign. In other words, we only want to know the number of the promises listed below that you made, not which ones. How many of the following promises did you make to voters during your most recent campaign? a) Promise to generate employment for local youths b) Promise to ensure access to credit for local farmers c) Promise to help constituents with school fees and medical expenses d) Promise to leave office after only one term

- None (1)
- One (2)
- Two (3)
- Three (4)
- All four (5)

End of Block: Campaign Rhetoric List Experiment Control

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Start of Block: Campaign Rhetoric List Experiment Treatment

listrhetorictreat Please say HOW MANY of the following promises you made to voters in your most recent campaign. In other words, we only want to know the number of the promises listed below that you made, not which ones. How many of the following promises did you make to voters during your most recent campaign? a) Promise to generate employment for local youths b) Promise to ensure access to credit for local farmers c) Promise to help constituents with school fees and medical expenses d) Promise to leave office after only one term e) Promise to ensure that members of your community get access to land instead of those from other communities

- None (1)
- One (2)
- Two (3)
- Three (4)
- Four (5)
- All five (6)

End of Block: Campaign Rhetoric List Experiment Treatment

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Start of Block: Overconfidence

overconfidencetimer1 Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

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overconfidence11 In what year was the telephone invented? Even if you are not sure, please give us your best guess.

\_\_\_\_\_

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overconfidence12 How confident are you of your answer to this question?

- No confidence at all (1)
- Not very confident (2)
- Somehow unconfident (3)
- Somehow confident (4)
- Very confident (5)
- Certain (6)



overconfidence13 As a different way of answering the previous question, what do you think is the percent chance (from 0 to 100) that your guess, entered above, is within 25 years of the actual answer?

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Page Break

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overconfidencetimer2 Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

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overconfidence21 What is the population of Ethiopia, in millions? Even if you are not sure, please give us your best guess.

---

overconfidence22 How confident are you of your answer to this question?

- No confidence at all (1)
  - Not very confident (2)
  - Somehow unconfident (3)
  - Somehow confident (4)
  - Very confident (5)
  - Certain (6)
- 



overconfidence23 As a different way of answering the previous question, what do you think is the percent chance (from 0 to 100) that your guess, entered above, is within 25 million of the actual answer?

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Page Break

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overconfidencetimer3 Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

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overconfidence31 In what year was the writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o born? Even if you are not sure, please give us your best guess.

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overconfidence32 How confident are you of your answer to this question?

- No confidence at all (1)
  - Not very confident (2)
  - Somehow unconfident (3)
  - Somehow confident (4)
  - Very confident (5)
  - Certain (6)
- 



overconfidence33 As a different way of answering the previous question, what do you think is the percent chance (from 0 to 100) that your guess, entered above, is within 10 years of the actual answer?

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Page Break

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overconfidencetimer4 Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

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overconfidence41 What percent of the Kenyan population lives in the former Rift Valley Province? Even if you are not sure, please give us your best guess.

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overconfidence42 How confident are you of your answer to this question?

- No confidence at all (1)
  - Not very confident (2)
  - Somehow unconfident (3)
  - Somehow confident (4)
  - Very confident (5)
  - Certain (6)
- 



overconfidence43 As a different way of answering the previous question, what do you think is the percent chance (from 0 to 100) that your guess, entered above, is within 5 percentage points of the actual answer?

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End of Block: Overconfidence

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Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 1,1

confirmationbias11 The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to identify the rule that applies to this sequence of numbers. The sequence is: 2, 4, 6 To help you identify the rule, you can enter any sequence of three numbers, and we will tell you whether it fits the rule. You will have up to 5 opportunities to test whether the sequence of numbers fits the rule.

- 1st Number: (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2nd Number: (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3rd Number: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 1,1

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Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 1,2

*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID61/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*And The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID61/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

yes1 Yes! The sequence you entered satisfies the rule.

-----  
*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID61/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*Or The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID61/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

no1 No! The sequence you entered does NOT satisfy the rule.

-----  
confirmationbias12 Are you ready to identify the rule, or do you prefer to keep entering numbers to help you figure it out?

- I'm ready to identify the rule (1)
- I want to continue entering numbers to test the rule (2)

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 1,2

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**Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 2,1**

confirmationbias21 Enter any sequence of three numbers, and we will tell you whether it fits the rule. You have up to 4 remaining opportunities to test whether the sequence of numbers fits the rule.

- 1st Number: (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2nd Number: (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3rd Number: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

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**End of Block: Confirmation Bias 2,1**

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**Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 2,2**

*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID81/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*And The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID81/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

yes2 Yes! The sequence you entered satisfies the rule.

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*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID81/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*Or The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID81/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

no2 No! The sequence you entered does NOT satisfy the rule.

---

confirmationbias22 Are you ready to identify the rule, or do you prefer to keep entering numbers to help you figure it out?

- I'm ready to identify the rule (1)
- I want to continue entering numbers to test the rule (2)

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 2,2

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Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 3.1

confirmationbias31 Enter any sequence of three numbers, and we will tell you whether it fits the rule. You have up to 3 remaining opportunities to test whether the sequence of numbers fits the rule.

1st Number: (1) \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Number: (2) \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Number: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 3.1

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Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 3.2

*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID86/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*And The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID86/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

yes3 Yes! The sequence you entered satisfies the rule.

-----  
*Display This Question:*

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID86/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*Or The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID86/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

no3 No! The sequence you entered does NOT satisfy the rule.

-----

confirmationbias32 Are you ready to identify the rule, or do you prefer to keep entering numbers to help you figure it out?

- I'm ready to identify the rule (1)
- I want to continue entering numbers to test the rule (2)

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 3.2

---

Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 4.1

confirmationbias41 Enter any sequence of three numbers, and we will tell you whether it fits the rule. You have up to 2 remaining opportunities to test whether the sequence of numbers fits the rule.

- 1st Number: (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2nd Number: (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3rd Number: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 4.1

---

Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 4.2

Display This Question:

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID90/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*And The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID90/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

yes4 Yes! The sequence you entered satisfies the rule.

-----  
Display This Question:

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID90/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*Or The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID90/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

no4 No! The sequence you entered does NOT satisfy the rule.

-----

confirmationbias42 Are you ready to identify the rule, or do you prefer to keep entering numbers to help you figure it out?

- I'm ready to identify the rule (1)
- I want to continue entering numbers to test the rule (2)

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 4.2

---

Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 5.1

confirmationbias51 Enter any sequence of three numbers, and we will tell you whether it fits the rule. This is your last opportunity to test whether the sequence of numbers fits the rule.

- 1st Number: (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2nd Number: (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3rd Number: (3) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 5.1

---

Start of Block: Confirmation Bias 5.2

Display This Question:

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID94/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*And The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Less Than  $\{q://QID94/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

yes5 Yes! The sequence you entered satisfies the rule.

-----  
Display This Question:

*If If The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 1st Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID94/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2\}$*

*Or The following sequence of three numbers obeys a certain rule. In this exercise, we ask you to ide... 2nd Number: Is Greater Than or Equal to  $\{q://QID94/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3\}$*

no5 No! The sequence you entered does NOT satisfy the rule.

End of Block: Confirmation Bias 5.2

---

**Start of Block: Sequence Rule**

sequencerule What is the rule that the sequence of numbers obeys?

---

**End of Block: Sequence Rule**

---

**Start of Block: Anchoring**

anchoring1 In 2014, a nationally representative poll conducted by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Nairobi to assess the priorities of Kenyan citizens found that 39.3% of Kenyans believe that crime and security is one of the most important issues facing the country that the government should address.

What percentage of Kenyans do you think believes that crime and security is one of the most important issues facing the country that the government should address?

---

Page Break

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anchoring2 IDS conducted the survey again in 2016, finding that 24.8% of Kenyans believe that crime and security is one of the most important issues facing the country that the government should address.

What percentage of Kenyans do you think believes that crime and security is one of the most important issues facing the country that the government should address? You previously answered  $\${anchoring1/ChoiceTextEntryValue}\%$ .

---

End of Block: Anchoring

---

Start of Block: Status Quo Bias

statusquotext Suppose you have inherited a shamba from your uncle. You have to decide whether to keep it, or to sell it and use the proceeds from the sale to buy another shamba that is for sale for the same price. Based on past experience and analysis of future conditions, your uncle's shamba is expected to return a profit of Kshs 750,000-850,000 per year.



statusquo1 Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 850,000-950,000?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to retu... = No*



statusquo2 Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 950,000-1,050,000?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to retu... = No*

X→

statusquo3 Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 1,050,000-1,150,000?

Yes (1)

No (0)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to retu... = No*

X→

statusquo4 Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 1,150,000-1,250,000?

Yes (1)

No (0)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to retu... = No*

X→

statusquo5 Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 1,250,000-1,350,000?

Yes (1)

No (0)

---

Display This Question:

If Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 1,350,000-1,450,000? = No



Would you sell your uncle's shamba and buy the other one if the other shamba was expected to return a yearly profit of Kshs 1,350,000-1,450,000?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

End of Block: Status Quo Bias

---

Start of Block: Information Treatment

Recent research from Boston University (available [here](#)) has found that **violence is not a useful strategy for the politicians that use it**. Specifically, employing violence as a tactic for winning elections costs politicians crucial votes, including from their own communities.

The research finds that **when a politician instigates violence, voters are up to 50% less likely to vote for that politician, overall**. Even members of the same tribe are up to 46% less likely to vote for a politician that instigates violence. The results are the same even when it is unclear whether the politician themselves is directly responsible. When given the choice between voting for a violent politician from their tribe and voting for a peaceful politician from another tribe, **80% of voters would vote for a peaceful politician from another tribe over a violent politician from their own tribe**.

Voters also dislike politicians who make statements against other tribes. In fact, **voters are up to 20% less likely to vote for politicians from their community that use tribal rhetoric**.

Finally, **politicians allegedly involved in the 2007/08 post-election violence were half as likely to win election in the next elections in 2013 than the average sitting MP**.

In short, the research suggests that violence and tribal rhetoric are *not* effective tactics for politicians seeking elected office in Kenya. In fact, the use of violence and tribal rhetoric reduces voter support, making it difficult for politicians to win their elections. **Based on this evidence, candidates are likely to be most successful if they avoid the use of violence and tribal rhetoric in their campaigns**.

**Candidates Lose Votes When They Instigate Violence**

The research involved conducting household surveys with Kenyan voters to measure their support for different types of candidates for elected office. Specifically, voters were presented with descriptions of candidates for office with different combinations of attributes. They were then asked the likelihood that they would vote for the candidate described.

The data from these surveys demonstrated that the use of violence as an electoral tactic sharply reduces voter support for the candidates that use it, including among voters from their own tribe. Specifically, voters are up to 50% less likely to vote for a candidate if they instigate violence during the campaign (see Figure 1). Even voters from the same tribe as the candidate are up to 46% less likely to vote for a candidate that instigates clashes with other tribes (see Figure 1). In addition, when given the choice between voting for a violent politician from their tribe and voting for a peaceful politician from another tribe, 80% of surveyed Kenyans prefer to vote for a peaceful politician from another tribe over a violent politician from their own tribe.

Importantly, violence loses votes even when it is organized to defend against perceived threats, for example to defend against attacks from other tribes. The data shows that arming youths to defend against attacks from other tribes reduces the candidate's support among members of the same tribe by up to 39%. Violence also loses votes even when responsibility for it cannot be directly attributed to the candidate, reducing support for the candidate by up to 50%.

The research also analyzed how politicians accused of instigating violence have fared in their election campaigns. It found that politicians mentioned in the Waki Report as alleged perpetrators of the 2007/08 post-election violence only won election in the next elections in 2013 at a rate of 30%. This is compared to a 60% overall reelection rate for sitting MPs in the same elections. Thus, candidates suspected of instigating violence in 2007/08 fared poorly in the 2013 election campaigns relative to sitting politicians overall.

### **Candidates Lose Votes When They Use Tribal Rhetoric**

Data from the same surveys of Kenyan voters described above shows that, not only does violence lose votes, but using tribal rhetoric loses votes as well. In fact, the study showed that Kenyan voters are 20% less likely to vote for politicians from their own community when the politician makes statements pledging to restore their fair share of land and jobs allegedly stolen by other tribes (see Figure 2). Voters preferred to vote for politicians from their community that did *not* make tribal appeals and instead simply promised to improve the quality of roads and help women and youths start businesses.

### **Additional Information**

Additional information about the study, including how it was conducted and more detailed findings, are available from two sources. For a working paper that describes the findings

reported here, as well as additional analyses, see “Dangerous Disconnect: Voter Backlash, Elite Misperception, and the Costs of Violence as an Electoral Tactic” by [Steven C. Rosenzweig](#), available [here](#).

---

researchknowledge Have you heard of these research findings before?

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
- 

credibility How credible do you believe these research findings to be?

- Very credible (1)
- Somewhat credible (2)
- Not very credible (3)
- Not at all credible (4)
- Not sure (5)

End of Block: Information Treatment

---

Start of Block: Violence Experiment

violenceintro ***Please read the following information about a politician--a potential candidate for MP--and then answer the questions below.***

---

violencevignette Mr.  $\{e://Field/Violence\%20Experiment\%20Name\}$  plans to run for MP in a  $\{e://Field/Violence\%20Experiment\%20Demography\}$  constituency in the next elections in 2022. Mr.  $\{e://Field/Violence\%20Experiment\%20Name\}$  is 51 years old, and he is currently serving his second term as a County Assembly Member. While in office, he's focused on issues in the health sector. If elected, he promises to create jobs, reduce corruption, and improve the quality of primary education $\{e://Field/Violence\%20Treatment\}$

---

violenceoutcome1 On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 indicating very unlikely and 10 indicating very likely, what would you say is the likelihood that this candidate would win the election for MP?

- 1 - Very unlikely to win (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 (5)
  - 6 (6)
  - 7 (7)
  - 8 (8)
  - 9 (9)
  - 10 - Very likely to win (10)
  - Not sure (11)
-

violenceoutcome2 On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they would never vote for this candidate and 10 indicates that they would definitely vote for this candidate, how likely would voters from the candidate's tribe be to vote for the candidate described above?

- 1 - Very unlikely to vote for him (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 (5)
  - 6 (6)
  - 7 (7)
  - 8 (8)
  - 9 (9)
  - 10 - Very likely to vote for him (10)
  - Not sure (11)
-

violenceoutcome3 On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they would never vote for this candidate and 10 indicates that they would definitely vote for this candidate, how likely would voters from other tribes be to vote for the candidate described above?

- 1 - Very unlikely to vote for him (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 - Very likely to vote for him (10)
- Not sure (11)

End of Block: Violence Experiment

---

Start of Block: Rhetoric Experiment

rhetoricintro ***Now please read the following information about another potential candidate for MP and answer a few questions about the candidate.***

-----

rhetoricvignette Mr. [\\${e://Field/Rhetoric%20Experiment%20Name}](#) plans to run for MP in a [\\${e://Field/Rhetoric%20Experiment%20Demography}](#) constituency in the next elections in 2022. Mr. [\\${e://Field/Rhetoric%20Experiment%20Name}](#) is 48 years old. He is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya and currently serves as a County Assembly Member. If elected, he promises to improve the quality of roads in the constituency and help women and the youth to start businesses

-----

rhetoricoutcome1 On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 indicating very unlikely and 10 indicating very likely, what would you say is the likelihood that this candidate would win the election for MP?

- 1 - Very unlikely to win (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 (5)
  - 6 (6)
  - 7 (7)
  - 8 (8)
  - 9 (9)
  - 10 - Very likely to win (10)
  - Not sure (11)
-

rhetoricoutcome2 On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they would never vote for this candidate and 10 indicates that they would definitely vote for this candidate, how likely would voters from the candidate's tribe be to vote for the candidate described above?

- 1 - Very unlikely to vote for him (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 (5)
  - 6 (6)
  - 7 (7)
  - 8 (8)
  - 9 (9)
  - 10 - Very likely to vote for him (10)
  - Not sure (11)
-

rhetoricoutcome3 On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 indicates that they would never vote for this candidate and 10 indicates that they would definitely vote for this candidate, how likely would voters from other tribes be to vote for the candidate described above?

- 1 - Very unlikely to vote for him (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 - Very likely to vote for him (10)
- Not sure (11)

End of Block: Rhetoric Experiment

---

## B Information Treatment Memo

### YALE UNIVERSITY STUDY FINDS THAT VIOLENCE IS A LOSING STRATEGY IN KENYAN ELECTIONS

#### SUMMARY

Research by Yale University political scientist Dr. [Steven Rosenzweig](#) (available [here](#) and [here](#)) has found that **violence is a losing strategy for the politicians that use it**. Specifically, employing violence as a tactic for winning elections costs politicians crucial votes, including from their own communities.

The research finds that **when a politician instigates violence, voters are 50% less likely to vote for that politician, overall**. Even members of the same tribe are 46% less likely to vote for a politician that instigates violence. The results are the same even when it is unclear whether the politician themselves is directly responsible. When given the choice between voting for a violent politician from their tribe and voting for a peaceful politician from another tribe, **80% of voters would vote for a peaceful politician from another tribe over a violent politician from their own tribe**.

Voters also dislike politicians who make statements against other tribes. In fact, **voters are 20% less likely to vote for politicians from their community that use tribal rhetoric**.

Finally, **politicians allegedly involved in the 2007/08 post-election violence were half as likely to win election in 2013 than the average sitting MP**.

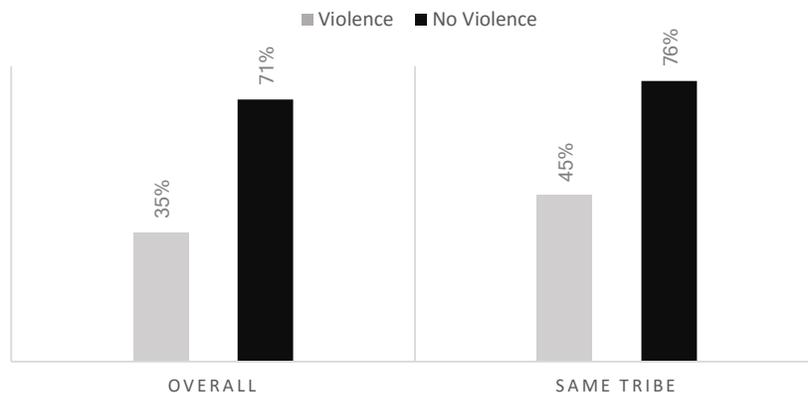
In short, the research suggests that violence and tribal rhetoric are *not* effective tactics for politicians seeking elected office in Kenya. In fact, the use of violence and tribal rhetoric reduces voter support, making it difficult for politicians to win their elections. **Based on this evidence, candidates are likely to be most successful if they avoid the use of violence and tribal rhetoric in their campaigns**.

#### CANDIDATES LOSE VOTES WHEN THEY INSTIGATE VIOLENCE

The researcher conducted household surveys with Kenyan voters to measure their support for different types of candidates for elected office. Specifically, voters were presented with descriptions of candidates for office with different combinations of attributes. They were then asked the likelihood that they would vote for the candidate described.

The data from these surveys demonstrated that the use of violence as an electoral tactic sharply reduces voter support for the candidates that use it, including among voters from their own tribe. Specifically, voters are 50% less likely to vote for a candidate if they instigate violence during the campaign (see Figure 1). Even voters from the same tribe as the candidate are 46% less likely to vote for a candidate that instigates clashes with other tribes (see Figure 1). In addition, when given the choice between voting for a violent politician from their tribe and voting for a peaceful politician from another tribe, 80% of surveyed Kenyans prefer to vote for a peaceful politician from another tribe over a violent politician from their own tribe.

**FIGURE 1: VIOLENCE LOSES VOTES**  
**LIKELIHOOD OF VOTING FOR CANDIDATE**



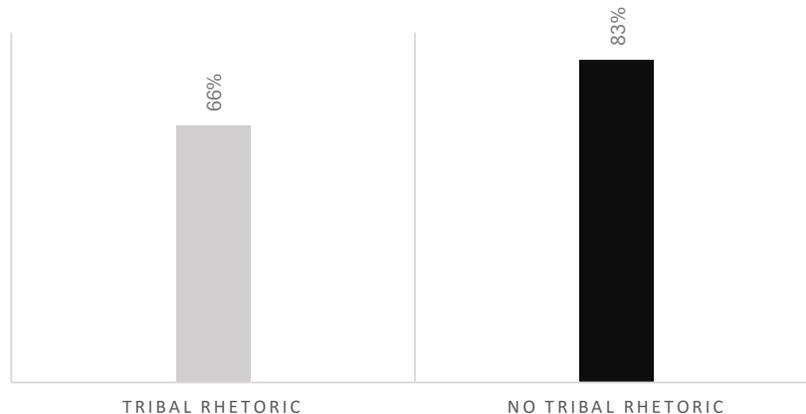
Importantly, violence loses votes even when it is organized to defend against perceived threats, for example to defend against attacks from other tribes. The data shows that arming youths to defend against attacks from other tribes reduces the candidate’s support among members of the same tribe by 39%. Violence also loses votes even when responsibility for it cannot be directly attributed to the candidate, reducing support for the candidate by more than 50%.

The research also analyzed how politicians accused of instigating violence have fared in their election campaigns. It found that politicians mentioned in the Waki Report as alleged perpetrators of the 2007/08 post-election violence only won election in the next elections in 2013 at a rate of 30%. This is compared to a 60% overall reelection rate for sitting MPs in the same elections. Thus, candidates suspected of instigating violence in 2007/08 fared poorly in the 2013 election campaigns relative to sitting politicians overall.

**CANDIDATES LOSE VOTES WHEN THEY USE TRIBAL RHETORIC**

Data from the same surveys of Kenyan voters described above shows that, not only does violence lose votes, but using tribal rhetoric loses votes as well. In fact, the study showed that Kenyan voters are 20% less likely to vote for politicians from their own community when the politician makes statements pledging to restore their fair share of land and jobs allegedly stolen by other tribes (see Figure 2). Voters preferred to vote for politicians from their community that did *not* make tribal appeals and instead simply promised to improve the quality of roads and help women and youths start businesses.

**FIGURE 2: TRIBAL RHETORIC LOSES VOTES**  
LIKELIHOOD OF VOTING FOR CANDIDATE



### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information about the study, including how it was conducted and more detailed findings, are available from two sources. For a working paper that describes the findings reported here, as well as additional analyses, see “Dangerous Disconnect: Voter Backlash, Elite Misperception, and the Costs of Violence as an Electoral Tactic” by [Steven C. Rosenzweig](#), available [here](#). For the full dissertation, which describes the study in even greater detail, see *Voter Backlash, Elite Misperception, and the Logic of Violence in Electoral Competition* by [Steven C. Rosenzweig](#), available [here](#).