The Effects of Scandalous Information on Recall of Policy-Related Information

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Political observers often criticize the news media’s focus on scandalous activities of candidates as distracting voters from the “real issues.” However, the extent to which such a fondness for scandal influences voters remains unclear. The present study examines whether exposure to scandalous information about a candidate interferes with memory for policy-related information. Two possibilities are considered. One possibility is that scandalous information attracts substantial attention and processing from individuals thereby interfering with previously stored campaign information. A second possibility argues that conceiving of memory as organized in associative networks suggests that scandalous information facilitates, rather than interferes with, recall of policy-related campaign information. Based on data from a longitudinal experiment, I conclude that exposure to scandalous information is less hazardous to voters than is often suggested by political observers.

KEY WORDS: Scandal, Recall, Network model, Interference, Memory

Political pundits and observers criticize the news media’s obsession with scandal as distracting voters from “real issues” and undermining the democratic process. For example, Todd Gitlin detailed in Washington Monthly’s December 1998 issue what he called the media’s excessive coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Members of the news media itself periodically critique the obsession with scandal. In 2000, Will Hutton of The Guardian outlined the British press’s obsession with detailing scandal at all cost and argued that “a

fiercely independent media is the guarantor of democracy,” but that the “British media, paradoxically, may be beginning to endanger it [democracy].”

Without doubt, the media displays a penchant for highlighting scandalous activities or behaviors that are inconsistent with prevailing moral standards such as sexual infidelity, financial improprieties, and many similar incidents. Moreover, politicians display a fondness for engaging in scandalous behavior. While such scandalous activities and the media’s obsession with them are arguably pervasive, the concern for their democratic implications remains questionable. Certainly, researchers focusing on scandalous activities have identified a consistently negative effect of scandal on the trait assessments and evaluations voters offer of political candidates, and the electoral fortunes of political actors (Abramowitz, 2001; Alford, Teeters, Ward, & Wilson, 1994; Dimock & Jacobson, 1995; Fischle, 2000; Funk, 1996; Goren, 2002; Jacobson & Dimock, 1994; Newman, 2002; Rundquist, Strom, & Peters, 1977; Shah, Watts, Domke, & Fan, 2002; Sigal, Hsu, Foodim, & Betman, 1988; Stoker, 1993; Zaller, 1998). However, the extent to which scandalous activities have additional democratic implications remains less clear. In this study, I address whether exposure to scandalous information prevents voters from learning about the policy positions of political candidates. Specifically, does scandalous information interfere with memory for policy-related information?

While political observers frequently raise questions about the media’s obsession with scandal during political campaigns, the particular effect of exposure to scandalous information on voters’ knowledge of the policy positions of political candidates remains unclear. As a result, I consider the extent to which exposure to negative information about a candidate—involvement in a scandal—facilitates or impedes memory for policy-related campaign information. To this end, I first briefly review the extensive literature in psychology which demonstrates that negative information, especially about individuals, is advantaged over nonnegative information in terms of attention, recall, and evaluation.

Given these findings, I then suggest two competing possibilities for the effect scandalous information may have on related information stored in memory. The first, interference, suggests that scandalous information about candidates garners substantial attention and processing from individuals thereby interfering with memory for previously stored information about the candidate. Alternatively, conceiving of memory as organized in an associative network implies that scandalous information may facilitate, rather than impede, memory for policy-related

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3 The 2008 Presidential Election season was no exception. Few candidates managed to escape the primary contest unscathed. While aboard the “Straight Talk Express,” John McCain’s relationship with lobbyist Vicki Iseman came under scrutiny. Further, Hillary Clinton’s inaccurate description of sniper fire on a trip to Bosnia in 1996 led to questions regarding her foreign policy experience as First Lady. Additionally, the release of controversial clips from sermons by Reverend Jeremiah Wright raised questions about Barack Obama’s relationship with his ex-pastor.
campaign information. To test these competing hypotheses, I used a longitudinal experimental design exposing subjects to campaign information over time allowing for an examination of overall recall of campaign information and the effect of exposure to scandal on recall of such information. The results suggest that scandalous information may be less hazardous to voters than is sometimes suggested as such information was positively related to recall of policy-related information.

The Appeal of Negative Information

There is an extensive literature in psychology supporting the hypothesis that “bad is stronger than good”; that is, negative information has a more powerful effect on the individual than positive or neutral information. Research on diverse topics like the self-concept and eyewitness testimony finds that individuals attend to negative information for longer periods of time, process it more deeply, and give it more weight in decision making than nonnegative information (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, & Finkenauer, 2001).

One way that “bad is stronger than good” is in the ability of negative information to dominate attentional resources. Negative information tends to receive more attention than nonnegative information. For example, Pratto and John (1991) asked participants in their experiment to identify the color of a positive or negative trait word and found that participants devoted more time to the negative trait words than the positive trait words. The authors concluded that negative stimuli grab attention much more so than positive stimuli. Because of this attentional advantage, negative information receives more extensive processing (Baumeister et al., 2001; Bless, Hamilton, & Mackie, 1992; Ohira, Winton, & Oyama, 1997; Robinson-Riegler & Winton, 1996). As noted by Baumeister et al. (2001), the more extensive processing of negative information, events, and emotions leads to enhanced memory for such information. When asked to recall trait words, participants in the Pratto and John (1991) experiment were less likely to recall the positive traits to which they were exposed than the negative traits.

Additionally, research on the effects of mood on information processing notes the differential effect of positive moods versus negative moods. Negative moods are argued to lead to more extensive information processing than positive moods (e.g., Clore, Schwarz, & Conway, 1994; Schwarz, 1990). Bless et al. (1992) found that inducing positive or negative moods influenced the care with which individuals processed incoming information. Furthermore, the more extensive processing during negative moods facilitates recall. For example, Forgas, Goldenberg, and Unkelbach (2009) examined the effect of a “naturally occurring mood” on memory for situational information. Specifically, Forgas and colleagues found that weather-induced mood influenced memory such that bad weather led to higher levels of recall for items in a shop than did good weather.

There are two general explanations for why this negativity bias occurs: a cost-orientation hypothesis and a figure-ground hypothesis. Many researchers
have argued that being attuned to negative information is evolutionarily advantageous. When an individual pays attention to positive or neutral information, benefits do ensue; however, failure to pay attention to negative information can lead to severe evolutionary costs for the individual. Attending to negative information or events allows individuals to survive threats to their existence and to pass along their genes (Baumeister et al., 2001). In contrast, other researchers have argued that individuals operate in a generally positive world. Learning negative information provides a contrast to this generally positive world (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Fiske, 1980; Hamilton & Huffman, 1971; Katz, Gutek, Kahn, & Barton, 1975; Pratto & John, 1991; Sears, 1983). Individuals weigh negative information more heavily because negative information is more informative or helpful in distinguishing people (Hamilton & Huffman, 1971). We expect people to behave in certain socially desirable ways and undesirable events, information, or behaviors are seen as uncommon, infrequent, and atypical (Pratto & John, 1991). Bad behavior is less common than good behavior, so learning bad information about a person is more telling than good information. Experimental tests bear out these expectations: Extreme and negative attributes receive more attention, are recalled to a greater extent, and receive more weight in likability evaluations than nonnegative information (Fiske, 1980).4

Based on the attentional and processing advantages of negative information, I expect scandalous information to be recalled to a greater extent than nonscandalous information (Hypothesis 1). If negative information dominates attentional resources and is processed more extensively, does such processing affect memory for associated information, specifically policy-related information?5

Interference with Memory for Policy-Related Information

The concern raised by scandal-ridden candidates and observers alike is that excessive focus on scandal in political campaigns distracts voters from “relevant” campaign information. Psychologists focusing on memory have suggested that one reason individuals are unable to recall information is because one memory trace replaces, or interferes with, another memory trace (e.g., Gruneberg & Morris, 1992; Roediger, Gallo, & Geraci, 2002). In this case, an older memory trace is replaced by a newer memory trace making recall of the older trace less likely. If previously stored campaign information is replaced with newer information, or interfered with, we should expect lower recall of the previously stored information.

4 For a more thorough discussion of these theories, please consult Skowronski and Carlston (1989).
5 This study focuses on recall of policy-related information, but both arguments presented below are more general and would anticipate less (interference argument) or greater (network model) recall overall. In this study, I focus on policy-related information because the claim that the media concentrates on scandal thereby distracting voters from the candidates’ policy positions has not been empirically examined.
Because negative information, like a candidate’s involvement in scandalous activities, tends to be advantaged in terms of attention and recall, the first possibility then is that exposure to scandalous information decreases recall of policy-related campaign information (i.e., the candidate’s positions on the issues) because it replaces that information in memory (Hypothesis 2a). A further implication of the interference argument is that memory for policy-related information received prior to exposure to the scandal should be replaced by memory for the scandal. Therefore, recall of previously stored information about a candidate should be lower for individuals recalling scandalous information than for those not recalling the scandalous information (Hypothesis 2b).

An Associative Network Model of Memory

Interference is not the only possible consequence of scandalous information on memory. Learning scandalous information about a candidate may facilitate memory for policy-related information. Specifically, combining the information processing advantages of negative information with the storage and retrieval properties of an associative network model leads to the prediction that scandalous information may actually enhance memory for policy-related information.

As discussed above, extensive research in psychology demonstrates that negative information, events, and emotions receive more attention, are processed more deeply, and are recalled to a greater extent than their nonnegative counterparts. As a result, scandalous information should be afforded more attention and processing thereby making recall of the scandalous information more likely. Such attention and processing though should also facilitate recall of policy-related information if information about political candidates is organized and stored together in memory.

Political researchers have variously argued that memory for a political actor is likely organized in associative networks (Anderson, 1983; Hastie, 1980; Huang & Price, 2001; Judd & Krosnick, 1989; McGraw, Pinney, & Neumann, 1991; Ottati, Wyer, Deiger, & Houston, 2002; Pryor & Ostrom, 1981; Rahn, 1995; Srull, 1981; Srull & Wyer, 1989). According to this model, information about political actors (personality information, behaviors, issue positions, party membership, etc.) is represented by nodes connected to each other with associative pathways (Sedikides, Devine, & Fuhrman, 1991).

A person node is established when initial information about a political actor is encountered (Ostrom, Pryor, & Simpson, 1981; Sedikides & Ostrom, 1988). When additional information or attributes about a political actor are encountered, associative connections between the person node and the new information are established. Connections between pieces of information, or nodes, are established when pieces of information are seen as related. Nodes vary in their strength value and nodes are better recalled when they have higher strength values and are strongly connected to other nodes with high strength values.
Importantly, associative network models assume that the way information is organized in memory influences the way information is recalled at a later date. As McGraw et al. (1991) indicate, asking individuals to recall information about a political actor leads the individual to access the superordinate person node and the first item is activated. This notion was first coined as spreading activation by Collins and Loftus (1975) when they argued that priming one concept in memory activates linked concepts. In an associative network model, the information that is likely to be recalled is that information that has a strong value associated with it and a strong link to the superordinate person node (McGraw et al., 1991).

Because of the attentional and processing advantages of scandalous information, such information should have a higher strength value and be better recalled than nonnegative information. In the context of an associative network model, the more extensive processing or elaboration of scandalous information should also be consequential for the retrieval of related information. Individuals exposed to scandalous information should have higher levels of recall of policy-related information than those not exposed to such information (Hypothesis 3a). As noted by Brown and Craik (2000), elaboration entails relating current information to previously stored information. This elaboration should increase the likelihood that previously stored information is retrieved from memory at a later date. Moreover, retrieval of scandalous information should activate and therefore facilitate the retrieval of related information (i.e., the candidate’s positions on the issues) stored in memory through spreading activation. As a result, recall of scandalous information should be positively related to recall of previously stored campaign information among those exposed to scandalous information (Hypothesis 3b).

Research Design

To examine these hypotheses, I used an experimental design as such a design affords control over the information to which individuals are exposed. Without control over information about the candidate (both scandalous and nonscandalous), any differences in recall of policy-related information attributed to scandal exposure may actually be due to differences in exposure to policy-related information. As a result, I used a longitudinal experimental design in which subjects were exposed to identical policy-related information about a candidate, but varied in their exposure to scandalous information.

This experiment combined two in-person sessions (introductory and debriefing) with experimental sessions conducted over the Internet using a website designed for this experiment. After the introductory session, experimental sessions occurred over a two-week period followed by an in-person debriefing session.

6 Conducting experimental sessions outside of the laboratory using the Internet as a platform is not common, but can be useful in studying recall over a longer period of time than possible with most laboratory experiments. To overcome a common criticism of Internet-based experiments and...
once all subjects had completed the experiment. Table 1 provides an illustration of the experimental design.

**Subjects**

Subjects participating in this experiment were recruited from an undergraduate American politics course taught in three sections at a large southern university. Subjects were told they would be required to read information about a nonpartisan mayoral candidate, answer questions about that candidate, and evaluate the candidate. For their full participation in the experiment, they would be eligible for a $500 drawing limited to those fully participating in the experiment. Subjects agreeing to participate in the experiment were given the address to the surveys—control over the sample—subjects provided identifying information during the in-person introductory session and then were required to provide this to begin the online portion of the experiment.

7 Using college students as participants in experiments can be limiting given their often minimal political experiences, but the focus of this research was on memory which should be testable using a population of young adults.

8 One person in each of the three sessions was paid $500 for a total cost of $1500. Given the multistage nature of the experiment, paying each subject individually for participating was not feasible. Despite the lottery nature of payment, motivation was not sacrificed as the retention rate was quite high.
experiment’s website and instructed to register within five days in order to continue their participation.

**Experimental Design**

After registering for the experiment, subjects completed Stage 0 of the experiment, a prestimulus questionnaire. In this questionnaire, subjects answered questions regarding demographic characteristics, political attitudes, and questions designed to tap political knowledge. After completing the questionnaire, subjects were randomly assigned to either a control condition or a treatment condition.

During Stages 1–5, subjects in the control condition read a series of articles from an online newspaper detailing the issue positions of a fictitious nonpartisan mayoral candidate. Subjects in this condition read five newspaper articles presenting issue positions of the candidate on immigration, abortion, the environment, homeland security, and domestic partnership. Each article presented the candidate’s general position on an issue and specific details regarding the candidate’s position on two policies or plans falling within the general issue area (please see the appendix for a sample).

Subjects assigned to the treatment condition read the same newspaper articles on immigration, abortion, the environment, and domestic partnership, but in place of the homeland security article, treatment subjects read an article detailing the candidate’s confession of an extra-marital affair with a former aide. The confession was framed as a way to preempt the disclosure of the affair in an upcoming tell-all TV interview with the former aide (please see the appendix for the text of the scandal article).

Two days after subjects completed Stage 1 of the experiment they received an email asking them to return to the website for Stage 2, which presented the second article. This process was repeated until subjects completed Stage 5 (this stage presented the final article).

Having read the fifth article (domestic partnership in both conditions), subjects were asked to return to the website to complete the final online stage of the experiment. Subjects were randomly assigned to complete this stage of the experiment one to fourteen days after reading all five articles. In this final stage, subjects completed a questionnaire asking them to recall the candidate’s issue positions, anything else they might remember from the campaign, and to evaluate the

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9 All online stages of the experiment were managed by a computer program written for this experiment. The researcher was required to “activate” subjects for each stage of the experiment. Activation was done by clicking a checkbox on the subject management screen. Once activated for a stage, an automated email was sent to the subject letting them know they were now eligible to complete the next stage of the experiment and provided a link to that stage. Reminders could be sent to subjects to ensure they proceeded promptly through the stages.

10 Subjects were divided into two additional groups. Some subjects saw a consistently liberal candidate while others saw a consistently conservative candidate. In this paper, I collapsed the subjects into one group as this split did not alter the results discussed.
candidate. After subjects completed all stages of the experiment, they were debriefed in-person and the $500 prize was awarded by random draw.

Experiments with multiple sessions tend to suffer from high attrition rates. In this experiment, 413 subjects registered for the experiment and 363 completed all seven stages. As a result, the attrition rate was low over the various stages of the experiment as 88% of subjects registering for the experiment completed all seven stages. This was likely due to the motivation of the prize money and the management of the subjects between stages.

Results

I used this experiment to examine whether scandalous information, in the form of a newspaper article disclosing the candidate’s confession of an extramarital affair, facilitated or impeded recall of policy-related campaign information. I first considered whether scandalous information was recalled to a greater extent than nonscandalous information. I then explored the extent to which exposure and recall of scandalous information influenced recall of policy-related campaign information.

Recall Advantage of Scandalous Information

Accumulating evidence in psychology demonstrates a negativity bias in terms of attention and recall of negative information versus nonnegative information. Given these findings, I anticipated that scandalous information would be recalled to a greater extent than nonscandalous information (Hypothesis 1). During Stage 4 of the experiment, subjects in the control condition read an article outlining the candidate’s position on homeland security while subjects in the treatment group read an article detailing the candidate’s confession of an extra-marital affair. The expectation was that subjects in the treatment group would recall the affair to a greater extent than subjects in the control condition would recall the issue of homeland security. During Stage 6, subjects were asked two free recall questions: recall of the issues discussed in the campaign and recall of anything else they might remember from the campaign. Specifically, subjects were asked to “list anything you may remember about the policy positions the candidate advocated in the campaign” and to “list anything else you may remember about the candidate or his campaign for mayor.” Did treatment subjects recall the scandal to a greater

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11 The attrition rate in the experiment was higher among subjects who were male, African American, and self-identified their social class as working class.

12 Two coders were asked to independently code all of the recall data. Two measures of intercoder reliability for recall of the scandal, recall of the issues discussed in the campaign, and recall of the issue positions of the candidate were examined. The first, intercoder agreement, captures the extent to which the coders agreed on the coding of a measure for each subject. The second, Cohen’s Kappa, captures intercoder agreement, but also takes into consideration any agreement that may occur by
extent than control subjects recalled homeland security? To examine this possibility, I compared the recall of the scandal by subjects in the treatment condition to the recall of homeland security by subjects in the control condition.\textsuperscript{13} Table 2 presents these results. Based on their responses, subjects in the treatment group recalled the scandal to a greater extent than subjects in the control group recalled homeland security (Pearson Chi2 (1) = 8.32, p < 0.005).

\textit{Recall of Policy-Related Information}

The above evidence regarding the recall advantage of scandalous information confirms much prior work on the negativity bias—negative information receives more attention, more extensive processing, and is better recalled than nonnegative information. The remaining analyses focus on whether exposure and recall of scandalous information influenced memory for policy-related campaign information.

During Stage 6, subjects were asked to recall the issues discussed in the campaign. The questionnaire used a free-recall format, which allowed me to create multiple recall measures. In particular, I created two measures capturing recall of policy-related information: Recall of Issues and Recall of Positions. The first measure, Recall of Issues, captured whether subjects recalled the issues discussed in the campaign. For each issue in the campaign—immigration, abortion, environment, homeland security, and domestic partnership—did the subject mention it in answering the free-recall questions? However, measuring recall in this way ignores that subjects in the treatment condition were only exposed to four issues while those in the control condition were exposed to all five. Therefore, I created a standardized measure that divided a subject’s recall of the issues by the total number of possible recalled issues (5 for the control condition and 4 for the chance. Intercoder reliability was high for recall of the scandal (intercoder agreement = 97.2\%; kappa = 0.928), recall of the issues (intercoder agreement = 90.06\%; kappa = 0.871), and recall of the candidate’s issue positions (intercoder agreement = 86.4\%; kappa = 0.829).

\textsuperscript{13} Given that subjects were not asked specifically about the scandal, the tests likely underestimate the impact of the scandal on recall of campaign information. In contrast, subjects were asked specifically about the candidate’s issue positions. As a function of this inequity, any results are likely underestimating the effect of scandalous information.

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Recall of the Fourth Article by Condition}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
\hline
Recall & Control Condition & Scandal Condition \\
\hline
No & 127 & 93 \\
& (68.3\%) & (53.5\%) \\
Yes & 59 & 81 \\
& (31.7\%) & (46.6\%) \\
N & 186 & 174 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\Chi-Square = 8.321, p < 0.005.
\end{table}
scandal condition). As a result, Recall of Issues ranged from 0 to 1 and the mean level of recall was 0.517.

The second measure, Recall of Positions, is a more stringent measure as subjects must recall the issue positions of the candidate (e.g., pro-immigration) not just the issues discussed in the campaign (e.g., immigration). Once again, I created a standardized measure of Recall of Positions ranging from 0 to 1 with a mean of 0.382.

Was recall of policy-related information lower with exposure to scandalous information (Hypothesis 2a) or was it greater with exposure to scandalous information (Hypothesis 3a)? I conducted a difference of means test for each recall measure allowing for unequal variance in the two groups to determine if the mean recall of the no-scandal group was significantly different from the mean recall of the scandal group and to be clear as to the direction of the difference. Subjects in the scandal condition (M = 0.557, SD = 0.261) recalled a greater proportion of the issues to which they were exposed than those in the no-scandal condition (M = 0.478, SD = 0.259), p < 0.002. The mean number of recalls suggests that subjects in both groups recalled over two issues discussed in the campaign. However, the difference between the means suggests that subjects in the scandal condition recalled, on average, over half of the issues to which they were exposed while subjects in the control condition recalled a little over forty percent of the issues to which they were exposed.

Similarly, subjects in the no-scandal group (M = 0.355, SD = 0.294) recalled a lesser proportion of the issue positions of the candidate than those in the scandal group (M = 0.412, SD = 0.305), p < 0.035. Overall, subjects remembered at least one and a half correct issue positions in each group and recall, as a proportion of information exposure, was higher in the scandal condition than the no-scandal condition. Subjects exposed to the article detailing the candidate’s extramarital affair were more likely to recall the issues and issue positions of the candidate than those not exposed to this negative information.

One concern with these results is the possibility that random assignment failed to distribute subjects with certain characteristics conducive to recall (e.g., sophistication, race, age, gender, and social class) across the two conditions. For example, a number of researchers have noted the cognitive advantages accruing to those who pay substantial attention to politics (e.g., Hamill & Lodge, 1986; Kahn & Kenney, 1997; McGraw et al., 1991; McGraw & Steenbergen, 1997). Additionally, within the associative network framework, researchers have argued that political sophisticates are likely to have a more extensive network (more nodes) and stronger connections between nodes (McGraw et al., 1991). Given their more

14 I considered a variety of alternative solutions. For example, one could collapse those recalling four and five issues in the control condition into one category. This is problematic because subjects recalling four of five issues in the control condition would be classified as equivalent to those recalling four of four issues in the scandal condition, when in fact they are not.

15 An F-test indicated that the variances of the two groups were significantly different from each other.
extensive memory networks, they may be better able to recall information in general. As a result, failing to randomly assign political sophisticates to the treatment and control groups may contribute to the positive relationship found between exposure to the scandal and recall of policy-related information.

To investigate this possibility, I examined whether subjects in the scandal and no-scandal conditions were significantly different from each other in terms of various individual-level characteristics. During the prestimulus stage of the experiment, subjects answered questions related to political sophistication, race, age, gender, and social class. Political sophistication was measured with a 13-question knowledge quiz asking subjects to identify the most conservative political party, the party in control of the House, the party in control of the Senate, and the political offices of 10 political actors. Political sophistication ranged from 0 to 13. Subjects were classified as either low sophisticate or high sophisticate. High sophisticates were those subjects falling above the median and low sophisticates were those subjects falling below the median. Subjects were also asked to provide their age, gender, social class (working class, middle class, or upper class), and racial identification (African American, Asian, Native American, Latino/Hispanic, White, or Other).

Subjects assigned to the scandal condition were not significantly different from subjects assigned to the control condition in terms of political sophistication (Pearson Chi2(1) = 0.83, p = 0.36), race (Pearson Chi2(5) = 2.76, p = 0.74), age (Pearson Chi2(18) = 18.68, p = 0.41), and social class (Pearson Chi2(3) = 3.97, p = 0.265). The groups did slightly differ in terms of gender (Pearson Chi2(1) = 2.56, p = 0.11). The proportion of male subjects was higher in the treatment condition (53%) than the control condition (47%). The proportion of female subjects was higher in the control condition (55%) than in the treatment condition (45%).

Given these gender differences between the groups, did gender moderate the recall advantage associated with exposure to scandalous information? The results of a 2 (male or female) X 2 (scandal or no scandal) ANOVA indicated that gender was not related to recall of the issues discussed in the campaign (F(1,356) = 0.87, p = 0.353) though exposure to the scandal was positively related to recall of the issues (F(1,356) = 8.47, p = 0.004). Importantly, the interaction between gender and the scandal was not related to recalling the issues discussed in the campaign (F(1,356) = 0.00, p = 0.945). Focusing on recall of the candidate’s issues positions, a 2 (male or female) X 2 (scandal or no scandal) ANOVA demonstrated that gender was not related to recall (F(1,356) = 0.39, p = 0.533) whereas exposure to the scandal fostered recall of the candidate’s issue positions (F(1,356) = 3.24, p = 0.073). Once again, the interaction between the scandal and gender was not significant (F(1,356) = 0.16, p = 0.690).

The evidence amassed so far suggests that exposure to scandalous information may not be as damaging as political pundits argue as subjects in the treatment group recalled more information to which they were exposed than subjects in the
control group. Moreover, the positive effect for exposure to scandalous information is unlikely to be a consequence of a failure in random assignment.  

An alternative test of the interference argument is to analyze recall of previously acquired information or information presented prior to exposure to the scandal. If the interference hypothesis (2b) is accurate, memory for the issue information presented prior to the scandal should be replaced by memory for the scandal. In contrast, Hypothesis 3b suggests that memory for the scandalous information should be positively related to memory for other information about the candidate. Processing additional information about the candidate (i.e., the scandal) should facilitate recall of previously stored information about the candidate. Therefore, Hypothesis 3b expects greater recall of policy-related information among those also recalling the scandal whereas Hypothesis 2b expects lower recall.

To examine these expectations, I created two additional measures of recall for all subjects: Recall of Early Issues and Recall of Early Issue Positions. All subjects were exposed to the same information regarding the candidate prior to the fourth article (the scandal for treatment subjects and homeland security for control subjects): the candidate’s positions on immigration, abortion, and the environment. There was no need to standardize these measures as all subjects were exposed to the same three articles. Recall of early information ranged from 0 to 3.

Contrary to the interference hypothesis (Hypothesis 2b), memory for the scandal did not interfere with memory for policy-related information among those in the treatment group. Subjects recalling the scandal were more likely to recall the early issues (M = 2.013, SD = 0.798) than those not recalling the scandal (M = 1.452, SD = 0.866), p < 0.0001. Further, subjects recalling the scandal were also more likely to recall the candidate’s issue positions (M = 1.580, SD = 0.986) than those not recalling the scandal (M = 0.978, SD = 0.095), p < 0.0001. Subjects recalling the scandal recalled two of the three issues discussed early in the campaign and about one and a half of the candidate’s issue positions while subjects not recalling the scandal recalled approximately one and a half of the three issues and one of the candidate’s issue positions.

Random assignment and the above analysis make it unlikely that individual-level characteristics can explain the positive relationship between recalling the scandal and recalling policy-related information. However, some individuals may simply recall more information in general (including scandalous

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16 As noted in the description of the experiment, subjects were randomly assigned to complete the recall questionnaire 1–14 days after exposure to the final newspaper article. Consistent with prior research on information processing (e.g., Lodge et al., 1995), the delay between information exposure and recall was expected to reduce recall of the information presented in the campaign. OLS regression analyses were performed with exposure to the scandal and delay as predictors of recall of the issues and recall of the candidate’s positions controlling for demographic and political characteristics of the subject. Consistent with expectations, the time between the subject’s exposure to the final newspaper article and the recall questionnaire was negatively related to recalling the issues and the candidate’s issue positions. However, delay did not mitigate the positive relationship between exposure to the scandal and recall and was excluded from the analyses presented.
information). If this were the case, then recalling the fourth article (homeland security) among subjects in the control group should be just as likely to increase recall of policy-related information as recalling the scandal did among subjects in the treatment group. To examine this possibility, I investigated whether recalling the scandal (for the treatment group) or recalling homeland security (for the control group) influenced recall of the early policy-related information.

In Table 3, I present the results when the demographic and political characteristics and recall of the fourth article (scandal for the treatment group and homeland security for the control group) were regressed on recall of the policy-related information. Models 1 and 2 in Table 3 illustrate the effect of recalling the scandal on recall of the early issues and recall of the candidate’s positions on

\[ \text{Recall Fourth Article} \quad 0.55^{***} \quad 0.60^{***} \quad 0.00 \quad 0.18 \]

\[ \text{Sex} \quad 0.11 \quad -0.07 \quad 0.13 \quad 0.06 \]

\[ \text{Social Class} \quad -0.28^{***} \quad 0.07 \quad 0.07 \quad 0.20^{**} \]

\[ \text{Age} \quad -0.03 \quad -0.02 \quad 0.02 \quad -0.02 \]

\[ \text{African-American} \quad -0.37^{*} \quad -0.56^{**} \quad -0.19 \quad -0.18 \]

\[ \text{Asian} \quad -0.11 \quad -0.41^{**} \quad 0.36^{*} \quad -0.13 \]

\[ \text{Latino} \quad 0.06 \quad -0.06 \quad 0.11 \quad -0.07 \]

\[ \text{Other} \quad -0.64^{**} \quad -0.52 \quad 0.62^{*} \quad -0.01 \]

\[ \text{Knowledge} \quad 0.08^{***} \quad 0.04 \quad 0.07^{***} \quad 0.11^{***} \]

\[ \text{Ideological Match} \quad -0.29^{**} \quad 0.01 \quad -0.05 \quad -0.09 \]

\[ \text{Constant} \quad 1.81^{***} \quad 1.19^{*} \quad 0.40 \quad 0.35 \]

\[ \text{Observations} \quad 173 \quad 173 \quad 183 \quad 183 \]

\[ \text{R}^2 \quad 0.221 \quad 0.159 \quad 0.105 \quad 0.168 \]

\textbf{Note.} Values are coefficients from OLS regression with standard errors are in parentheses. The comparison category for race is white. ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

\[ \]
these early issues. Recalling the scandal was positively related to both recalling the issues and the candidate’s issue positions. Models 3 and 4 display the effect of recalling homeland security on recall of the issues discussed early in the campaign and recall of the candidate’s positions on these early issues. Subjects in the control group recalling the information presented in the fourth article were no more likely to recall the early information than those not recalling information from the fourth article. This evidence suggests that recalling the scandal facilitated recall for policy-related information whereas recalling nonscandalous information did not.

To illustrate the substantive significance of recalling the scandal for recalling the early campaign information, I simulated the expected value of recall of the early campaign information across the range of political knowledge for those recalling the scandal and those not recalling the scandal when all other variables were set at their mean value with a 90% confidence interval. The results are displayed in Figure 1. The left panel displays recall of the early issues and the right panel displays recall of the candidate’s positions on the early issues. In each panel, the black bars represent recall of the scandal and the gray bars represent no recall. Overall, recalling the scandal increased recall of the issues.

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Figure 1. Recall of Early Campaign Information by Recall of Scandal.

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18 For a more detailed discussion of CLARIFY, please see Tomz, Wittenberg, and King (2003).
by 0.49 (or about half an issue) and recall of the candidate’s positions by 0.56 (over half an issue position).

As a comparison, Figure 2 displays the same simulations for the control group. I simulated the expected value of recall of the early campaign information across the range of political knowledge for those recalling homeland security and those not recalling homeland security with a 90% confidence interval. The two panels represent recall of the early issues (left panel) and recall of the candidate’s positions on the early issues (right panel). In each panel, the black bars represent recall of homeland security and the light gray bars represent no recall. Because there is no discernible difference between those recalling and not recalling homeland security in their recall of the information discussed in the campaign, the bars overlap. Importantly, recalling homeland security did not significantly increase recall of policy-related information about the candidate presented prior to the fourth article.

The above analysis suggests that exposure and recall of scandalous information did not impede subjects’ ability to recall policy-related information about a candidate. Rather, those subjects exposed to scandalous information recalled policy-related information to a greater extent than those not exposed to the scandalous information. Most importantly, subjects recalling the scandal were more likely to recall policy-related information presented prior to the scandal than those subjects not recalling the scandal. Such results are inconsistent with an
interference argument positing that scandalous information interferes with previously stored information about the candidate. However, these results are consistent with an alternative argument combining the processing advantages of negative information with an associative network model of memory.

Specifically, scandalous information receives more extensive processing and elaboration than nonscandalous information. This is reflected in the higher levels of recall of the scandalous information among those in the treatment group as compared to the recall of the fourth policy article by those in the control group. I also explored the possibility that such extensive processing of scandalous information may facilitate recall of policy-related information as a result of the organization of memory in associative networks. The extensive processing or elaboration of scandalous information should involve the formation of connections between the scandalous information and previously stored policy information. Such elaboration enhances the likelihood that previously stored information will be recalled at a later date. The greater recall of such information among those in the scandal condition and those recalling the scandal provides evidence for elaboration.

Further, I also considered the relationship between exposure to the scandal and recall of the final issue presented in the campaign (the same for both the control and treatment groups).19 If the positive relationship between scandalous information and policy-related information is driven by the extensive processing or elaboration of scandalous information, this positive relationship should not necessarily extend to the final article (domestic partnership benefits for both conditions). Elaboration involves relating information currently being processed to previously encountered information. This “rehearsal” of information stored in memory enhances the likelihood that such previously stored information will be recalled. If scandalous information is processed more deeply or elaborated on, the information presented prior to the scandal should be most influenced by

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19 Alternatively, one could consider reading time or response latency data. The extensive processing or elaboration of scandalous information may be reflected in the time it takes subjects to complete future stages of the experiment. While the web program written for this experiment does track the time a subject takes to complete each stage, the reading time or response latency data for this experiment is imprecise. The program tracks when a subject begins a stage, but subjects have control over when they finish each stage. As a result, the reading time/response latency data is highly subject to participant control. To minimize the effect of subject control over timely completion of the experiment, I dropped those subjects that took less than a minute and those that took longer than ten minutes. After doing so, subjects in the scandal treatment did spend more time reading Article 5 (M = 3.05, SD = 1.49) than subjects in the control group (M = 2.91, SD = 1.40), p = 0.195. While certainly not conclusive, this is consistent with the expectation that exposure to scandalous information in Stage 4 may have made subjects more likely in the future to examine information about the candidate more carefully than those subjects not exposed to the scandalous information. An alternative possibility is to look at the order in which scandal was recalled. Was it recalled early on or later in the recall data? Unfortunately, the free recall questions do not make this possible. The first question asked specifically about the policy positions of the candidate and the second asked about anything else they may remember from the campaign. Subjects restricted their answers to the first question to policy positions and listed the scandal as part of their response to the second question.
elaboration and information presented after the scandal should be less influenced by elaboration. I compared the recall of domestic partnership benefits by subjects in the scandal condition and subjects in the control condition. Subjects in the scandal condition did not significantly differ in their recall of the issue (Pearson \( \chi^2 (1) = 0.240, p = 0.624 \)) or recall of the issue position of the candidate on domestic partnership benefits (Pearson \( \chi^2 (1) = 0.232, p = 0.630 \)) from subjects in the control condition. This is to be expected if elaboration is the mechanism by which exposure to the scandal was positively related to recall of policy-related information.

Research on the negativity bias raises an additional possibility. Researchers have found that the more extensive processing of negative information is often reflected in the amount of information recalled overall (Abele, 1985; Klinger, Barta, & Maxeiner, 1980). In this experiment, if individuals are “thinking” more deeply about the candidate after reading that he engaged in scandalous behavior, then the number of nonscandal recalls subjects offer should be positively related to scandal exposure. I examined the total number of recalls offered by subjects in the control condition and subjects in the scandal condition. Because subjects in the treatment condition were only exposed to four issues while those in the control condition were exposed to all five, I created a standardized measure of total recall that divided a subject’s total recall by the total number of issues (5 for the control condition and 4 for the scandal condition). Subjects in the treatment condition offered more recalls (M = 1.163, SD = 0.635) than subjects in the control condition (M = 0.952, SD = 0.597), \( p < 0.001 \).

This discussion, while certainly not conclusive, illustrates that subjects in the scandal condition were not distracted when they heard that the candidate engaged in an extramarital affair. Rather, the evidence presented above indicates that subjects may have processed the information more deeply or elaborated on the scandalous information by thinking about the previously stored information they had about the candidate.

**Scandal and Candidate Evaluation**

The above discussion demonstrates that scandals may not have deleterious effects on memory. However, this should not imply that scandals do not have negative evaluative implications. As noted in the introduction, much prior research (Abramowitz, 2001; Alford et al., 1994; Dimock & Jacobson, 1995; Fischle, 2000; Funk, 1996; Goren, 2002; Jacobson & Dimock, 1994; Newman, 2002; Rundquist et al., 1977; Shah et al., 2002; Sigal et al., 1988; Stoker, 1993; Zaller, 1998) demonstrates that exposure to scandal has a negative effect on trait assessments, candidate evaluation, and the electoral fortunes of politicians.

Consistent with this research, subjects in this experiment reacted negatively to learning that the candidate engaged in an extramarital affair. During Stage 4
of the experiment, subjects assigned to the treatment condition read that the candidate had engaged in an extramarital affair whereas subjects in the control condition read about the candidate’s position on local funding for homeland security efforts. After exposure to these articles, subjects were asked to evaluate the candidate on a 5-point scale from very negative (1) to very positive (5). Subjects exposed to the scandalous information evaluated the candidate more negatively (M = 2.57, SD = 1.07) than subjects in the control group (M = 3.33, SD = 1.14), p < 0.0001.

Beyond these direct effects on evaluation, scandal involvement may also have indirect effects on evaluation. In the previous section, I presented results indicating that individuals exposed to scandalous information were more likely to recall information about the candidate than those not exposed to the scandal. Exposure to scandal could have an indirect effect on evaluation due to this enhanced recall. If information about the candidate stored in memory is consistent with the individual’s preferences, then there may be an indirect positive effect of exposure to the scandal. However, if information about the candidate stored in memory is inconsistent with the individual’s preferences, then there may be an indirect negative effect of exposure to the scandal.

Because subjects were asked to read information about either a liberal or a conservative candidate, the effect of recall on candidate evaluation likely depends on the extent to which the candidate shares the subject’s ideological orientation. Recall of the campaign information should have a positive effect on candidate evaluation among subjects sharing the candidate’s ideological orientation (i.e., conservative subjects reading about a conservative candidate and liberal subjects reading about a liberal candidate). In contrast, recall of the campaign information should have a negative effect on candidate evaluation for those subjects not matching the candidate’s ideological orientation (i.e., liberal subjects reading about a conservative candidate and conservative subjects reading about a liberal candidate).

To explore these possibilities, Table 4 presents OLS regression results modeling candidate evaluation as a function of the interactive effect of recall and ideological matching controlling for scandal exposure and demographic and political characteristics of the subject. During Stage 6 of the experiment, subjects were asked to evaluate the candidate on a scale from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). Model 1 illustrates the interactive effect of recall of the issues and ideological matching on candidate evaluation and Model 2 presents the interactive effect of recall of the candidate’s positions and ideological matching on candidate evaluation. Recalling information about the candidate and matching the candidate’s ideology had a positive effect on candidate evaluation whereas recalling information about the candidate and not matching the candidate’s ideology had a negative effect on candidate evaluation.

To explore the significance of this indirect effect of scandal, I simulated the expected value of candidate evaluation across the range of recall for those
matching the candidate’s ideology and those not matching the candidate’s ideology when all other variables were set at their mean value with a 90% confidence interval. The results are displayed in Figure 3. The left panel displays the results for recall of the issues and the right panel displays the results for recall of the issue positions. In each panel, the black bars represent matching the candidate’s ideology and the gray bars represent not matching the candidate’s ideology. Subjects sharing the candidate’s ideology and recalling information from the campaign evaluated the candidate much more positively than subjects recalling information and not matching the candidate’s ideology. These results suggest that involvement in scandal is certainly not without risk, both directly and indirectly.

Table 4. Candidate Evaluation by Recall of Policy-Related Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>(1) Candidate Evaluation (Issues)</th>
<th>(2) Candidate Evaluation (Positions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Match</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.29)</td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>-0.21***</td>
<td>-0.24***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Match*Recall</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td>0.37***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandal</td>
<td>-0.21*</td>
<td>-0.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
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<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
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<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
<td>(0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>0.39***</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(0.16)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>2.76***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
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<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Values are coefficients from OLS regression models with standard errors in parentheses. The comparison category for race is white. ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.
Discussion

Much of the concern over scandalous information is that this information distracts individuals from policy issues. In this study, I examined whether exposure to scandalous information interfered with or enhanced memory for policy-related information. The first argument, interference, posited that scandalous information replaces memory for policy-related information. The second argument coupled research on the negativity bias with research on associative network models of memory to argue that scandalous information facilitates memory for policy-related information. To examine these divergent arguments, I conducted an experiment assigning subjects to either a treatment condition (scandal exposure) or a control condition.

As expected, scandalous information was recalled to a greater extent than nonscandalous information. More importantly, I considered the possibility that scandalous information may have additional effects on memory. Specifically, I asked whether there was a significant difference in the level of recall of policy-related information between those in the treatment condition and those in the control condition. Subjects in the treatment condition recalled significantly more than those in the control condition. Additionally, subjects in the treatment condition recalling the scandal were more likely to recall policy-related information than those in the treatment condition who did not recall the scandal.
The overwhelming conclusion from this analysis then is that “bad is stronger than good”: scandalous information reported by the news media facilitates recall of policy-related information. However, such scandalous information can have both direct and indirect evaluative implications for the scandal-ridden candidate. In this study, subjects exposed to scandalous information evaluated the candidate more negatively than those in the control group. Moreover, recall of the policy-related information had a positive effect on candidate evaluation when subjects shared the candidate’s ideological orientation, but a negative effect on candidate evaluation when subjects faced a candidate not sharing their ideology. These results suggest that scandalous information may have beneficial effects on memory for policy-related information, but potentially damaging effects on candidate evaluation.

There are important theoretical consequences associated with the findings from this experiment. Prominent models of public opinion posit different assumptions for the way individuals process campaign information to form evaluations about candidates. Specifically, some models in a memory-based tradition, an online processing tradition, or hybrid models explicitly focus on the use of campaign information in structuring the evaluations individuals offer of political candidates (e.g., Kelley & Mirer, 1974; Lau & Redlawsk, 2006; Lavine, 2001; Lodge et al., 1995; Redlawsk, 2001; Zaller, 1992, 1996). Yet most specifications of candidate evaluation do not focus on how different types of information can influence the processing or recall of related information. The present study suggests that exposure to certain information can affect not just recall of that information, but also recall of related information.

If scandalous information does not have the deleterious effects political observers suggest, then the negative consequences for democratic politics have been overstated. While these results do not suggest that candidates can engage in scandalous activities without consequence, they do suggest that the depiction of the public as blind to anything but scandalous information seems to be an exaggeration. Subjects in this experiment did not discard the information they previously stored about the candidate after exposure to the scandal; instead, they appear to have thought more carefully about the candidate after hearing such negative information. The claim is not that scandalous information improves democracy and voter decision making, but that the conventional wisdom concerning the democratic implications of scandal involvement deserves scrutiny. Similarly, Baum (2002, 2003, 2006) questioned conventional wisdom suggesting that the soft news media convey very little political information. In the course of entertaining, the soft news media may provide individuals who are not generally interested in politics with some political information. The results from the present study suggest that exposure to scandalous information (like exposure to soft news) may have beneficial side-effects not previously explored.

The results of this project raise additional questions for future research and suggest that we should take a more nuanced view of the importance of scandalous
information for models of candidate evaluation and voting behavior. This experiment, while more lengthy than typical experiments, lasted just over a month and subjects were exposed to campaign information about a single candidate. Does the relationship between scandal and memory hold once two or more candidates are introduced or when scandalous information about both candidates is released? Does the specific type of scandal play a role in facilitating memory for policy-related information? Would memory for policy-related information differ if the scandal was professional rather than personal?

Additionally, the effects of scandalous information on memory likely depend on the presence of at least some policy-related information. In this experiment, all subjects were exposed to policy-related information prior to exposure to the scandal. Whether this occurs outside of the confines of the laboratory is likely a function of the timing of the scandal and individual-level characteristics. When politicians experience a scandal early in their political careers, voters may not have policy-related information stored in memory. As a result, these candidates may not have particularly long careers given the direct negative effects of scandal on evaluation. In other cases, politicians with some public record may be able to endure a scandal, but with some effect on recall and evaluation given the nature of prior information. Additional experimental research is necessary to explore these possibilities.

Further, certain individual-level characteristics, like political sophistication, generally influence exposure to campaign information. In the context of the present study, all treatment subjects, irrespective of political sophistication, were exposed to information about the candidate. This was necessary to accurately measure recall of policy-related information, but may exaggerate the extent to which nonsophisticates would be exposed to campaign information. While experimental research focusing on characteristics of the scandalous information is warranted, nonexperimental research would be most useful for identifying individual-level variation in the relationship between exposure to scandalous information and memory for policy-related information.
Doyle Calls for City to
“Get Tough on
Illegal Immigration”
By: Tom Jones, Staff Writer for Conrad Daily News

Jim Doyle raised the profile of immigration issues in the race for Conrad mayor Monday with a fund-raiser featuring U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer, who is an outspoken critic of immigration policies. The strongest response from the crowd came as Doyle made an emotional plea for the shutting down of day-labor centers, the centerpiece of his plan to “get tough on illegal immigration in Conrad”.

“Yesterday, I spent the morning with Sergeant Rick Morland and some of his men in the Conrad police department.” Doyle explained. “And, I can tell you they are upset and demoralized with the inconsistency of the city’s immigration policies. How can the city ask these men to risk their lives enforcing our immigration laws and at the same time coddle illegals by building day labor centers where they go to find illegal work?”

Doyle went on to argue that illegal immigration is a significant drain on city resources and that crime has increased in the neighborhoods where day-labor centers have been built.

After Doyle’s speech, his remarks were applauded by Representative Earl Blumenauer, who said illegal immigration is no longer just the domain of the federal government and it was the responsibility of cities to strictly enforce immigration laws.

“The action in immigration policy is turning to the states and, even more so, to the cities,” Blumenauer told about 80 people Monday evening, “Jim Doyle is the man to lead Conrad on immigration issues. As a young lawyer in neighboring Pendleton, Doyle witnessed the problem of illegal immigration first hand and later as chairman of the state immigration task force, he worked tirelessly to enforce a tough immigration policy”.

Doyle has added an immigration platform to the usual mix of City Hall issues, promising to work to close a day-labor center in the southwest area of Conrad and prevent additional funding for these centers.

Doyle also opposes a Conrad policy that prohibits police from stopping people for the purpose of determining immigration status and bars them from arresting a person when the violation is an infraction of a federal immigration law.

“Current policy forbidding officers from asking about someone’s citizenship violates U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft’s requests for strict enforcement of immigration laws during the country’s war on terrorism,” Doyle said.
Doyle also said he would lend the support of the mayor’s office to a push to seal the nation’s borders, as well as ports of entry such as New York City and Los Angeles. Such moves he argued would cut illegal immigration and crime.

He noted that a widely publicized police raid in Chandler six years ago proved the point that immigration is a problem that Conrad will have to face. The raid, which targeted suspected illegal immigrants, resulted in the arrest and deportation of over 200 people.

Scandal Article

“Doyle Admits to Extra-Marital Affair with One Time Aide”
By: Carrie Alfanger, Staff Writer Conrad Daily News

In a hastily-prepared press conference early this morning, Jim Doyle admitted to having had an extramarital affair with former aide, Marilyn Smith. Doyle said that the relationship had lasted several months but had ended in August of 1999.

Doyle’s statement was timed to preempt the disclosure of the affair by Marilyn Smith, who has already taped what is reported to be a “tell all” interview with KRBY, the local ABC affiliate.

Before his statement today, the 52 year-old Doyle has consistently denied rumors of infidelity. In a recent interview with this newspaper, Doyle was questioned about the rumors but stated unequivocally, “I have always been faithful to my wife and family.”

After Doyle’s statement, Congressmen Earl Blumenauer, a strong supporter of Doyle, released a statement indicating that while the affair “was disappointing,” his support for Doyle’s mayoral candidacy was “unshaken”.

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