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Abstract*

Amid public skepticism toward trade, we investigate whether evidence-based information – concise statements of research findings – can shape trade policy preferences. In survey experiments conducted on U.S. general population samples from 2018-2022, we consistently uncover a "backfire effect": information highlighting the benefits of trade, such as job gains in productive sectors or lower prices for consumers, induces protectionist preferences. We interpret this effect as stemming from prior-biased belief updating, whereby the information activates pre-existing concerns about competition for jobs and trade relations with China. These associations are evoked particularly among limited-attention respondents, as well as politically-engaged Republicans.

JEL Codes: D8, F1, F6
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1 Introduction

Public skepticism toward free trade has been rising across countries, amid a growing backlash against globalization (Colantone et al. 2022). These sentiments stem in part from longstanding concerns over how openness to trade affects jobs and wages, particularly in the manufacturing sector.[1] But the recent resurgence of protectionism has notably been driven also "from the top down" by political leaders (Goldberg and Reed 2023), who have tapped into and amplified the public's grievances during episodes such as Brexit in the U.K., the U.S.-China trade war, and the Covid-19 supply chain disruptions.[2] This has been enabled by the rise of mobile devices and social media, which provide political actors with platforms to disseminate their messaging frequently and at scale. Much of this rhetoric has been skeptical and even hostile toward globalization, often without providing systematic information on the benefits and costs of trade.

In this paper, we investigate whether and how *evidence-based* information on the gains and losses from trade can shape preferences towards trade policy. This research question is all the more pressing in the current political and media environment where economic arguments are widely disseminated but often in partisan forms, making it unclear whether objective narratives can foster more informed views on trade policy among the general public. Specifically, we set out to understand whether information drawn from economics research, conveyed in a concise and accessible manner, can shape perceptions toward trade. Are people receptive to such information and willing to update their trade policy preferences accordingly? Or might this instead trigger unintended reactions and consequences?

To date, studies on what shapes individuals' trade policy preferences have (barring a few exceptions) been largely silent on the role of information. Economists have conventionally viewed these preferences as mainly driven by whether openness to trade aligns with one's material self-interest (Baldwin 1989, Rodrik 1995), one's concerns about how trade will impact broader society (Mansfield and Mutz 2009), or one's sociopolitical identity (Grossman and Helpman 2021). Much less is known about how information itself, particularly information drawn from research, affects views on trade. From an empirical standpoint, a key challenge lies in distinguishing the effect of information from alternative forces, including the possibility that individuals might select their information sources based on their pre-existing beliefs (Gentzkow and Shapiro 2010, 2011).

We address this challenge by developing a series of survey-based experiments, which we conducted annually between 2018 and 2022 on representative samples of the U.S. general population, with responses from around 18,000 individuals over these five years. By randomizing the assignment of participants to information treatments, we are able to identify the causal impact of exposure to specific economic arguments on stated trade policy preferences. This draws on the influential methodological approach, described in Haaland et al. (2023) and Stantcheva (2023a),

1. Such concerns have been present since at least the mid-1990s, with some economists arguing that trade with low-income countries was responsible for low unskilled wages and rising inequality in developed countries (e.g., Wood 1995). Others emphasized the role of within-industry specialization and evidence from the factor content of trade to argue that the effect of trade on wage inequality was small relative to other forces (see Krugman 1995, 2000). For follow-up on this debate, see Lawrence (2008), Krugman (2008), among others.

2. The Global Trade Alert has documented the recent rise in government measures that restrict international trade; see https://www.globaltradealert.org.

that has been pioneered in recent years to study how information shapes the public's views in various policy domains (see Section 2 for an overview).

We designed four baseline information treatments, each conveying an employment or price effect of trade highlighted in conventional trade theories and documented in empirical evidence, including in recent research on the "China trade shock" (Autor et al. 2013, 2016; Pierce and Schott 2016). In this respect, our approach differs from other survey studies (discussed in Section 2) that rely on hypothetical scenarios or framing variations embedded in question wording. Two of our treatments focus on the relationship between trade and jobs in different sectors. The "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment summarizes the central finding of Autor et al. (2013), that rising import competition from China adversely affected labor market outcomes for U.S. manufacturing workers. In contrast, the "Trade Helps Jobs" treatment describes how increased imports of goods from China led the U.S. to specialize more in services, as studied by Caliendo et al. (2019), with service-sector jobs in turn driving an increase in total jobs in the U.S. The remaining two treatments focus on effects on U.S. consumer prices. The "Trade Helps Prices" treatment draws on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics to highlight how the rise in imports from China was associated with lower prices, both for durables (such as computers) and non-durables (such as apparel). Conversely, the "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment describes how recent U.S. tariff actions against China have raised the prices of tariff-affected goods and reduced U.S. real income, as analyzed in Amiti et al. (2019). Each of our narratives is worded in simple, comparable language without technical jargon, akin to how a researcher might seek to communicate their findings to a general audience on Twitter/X, and is accompanied by a figure illustrating the respective trend in jobs or prices (see Appendix A.1). Following the treatments, we then solicited participants' preferences over a range of policy instruments, such as tariffs on imports, investments in education and worker training, and progressive taxes.

We find that the evidence-based information shifts preferences for trade policy, but in complex and unanticipated ways. On the less surprising side, participants who received the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment on manufacturing job losses were significantly more likely to favor protectionist measures than the no-information control group. Strikingly though, we document a *backfire effect* in response to information emphasizing the benefits of trade. The "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments induced a more negative view of the impact that trade has had on most Americans, as well as a stronger preference for limits on imports. This effect is economically meaningful, amounting to between one-third to one-half the size of the protectionist shift from the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment; as an alternative benchmark, this backfire effect would close up to one-third of the average gap between Republicans and independents in the intensity of their protectionist preferences.

These patterns, though puzzling at first glance, are robust: They hold consistently across all survey rounds, despite substantial political shifts and trade disruptions over the sample period. They are unlikely to stem from a basic miscomprehension of the narrative, as we show that participants could, on average, correctly recall whether the information they received was about the effect of trade on jobs or on prices. The results are also robust to alternative wording choices, including removing the adjective "cheaper" (which may connote lower quality), and omitting any explicit reference to China from the treatment text.

This finding of a backfire effect is, to the best of our knowledge, new to the literature on public attitudes toward trade. In the body of survey-based studies on this topic conducted by economists and political scientists, respondents have been moved to favor more protectionism when trade is framed in a negative light, but the effects of positive frames have typically been statistically indistinguishable from zero (see Hiscox 2006, Rodríguez Chatruc et al. 2021, Coppock 2023, Stantcheva 2023b, as discussed further in Section 2). Our results go beyond this asymmetry, as information on the gains from trade provided in this evidence-based format actually provokes a significant protectionist reaction.

To understand the mechanisms behind this backfire effect, we examine heterogeneity across respondents. Our investigation shows that this protectionist reaction to pro-trade information is driven by two groups in the U.S. general population. First, the backfire effect is manifest among participants who spent a *shorter* duration on their treatment screens, which we take as a proxy for limited or constrained attention. We draw here on insights from the behavioral literature, that individuals with limited cognitive engagement often rely on prior associations, i.e., "what comes to mind", to formulate their beliefs and decisions when presented with new signals (Gennaioli and Shleifer 2010; Gabaix 2019; Bordalo et al. 2020). Toward this end, we document how the information, including the evidence on the benefits of trade, appeared to activate associations that tend to be negative, most notably underlying concerns about competition to American jobs and about trading with countries like China; we see this, in particular, in the high frequency with which "jobs" and "China" were mentioned in the participants' textual responses.

On the other hand, high-attention respondents expressed greater engagement on sociopolitical issues, and were more likely to support one of the two major U.S. political parties. This stronger partisan identity, in turn, significantly mediates their response to trade-related information. Republican supporters become more protectionist not only when exposed to evidence on manufacturing job losses, but also when presented with information highlighting the employment or price benefits of trade; this is the second key group in the U.S. general population among whom the backfire effect is operative. In contrast, Democrats move away from protectionist positions when exposed to information on these gains from trade; we even detect a statistically significant shift in favor of less protection (in the "Trade Helps Jobs" treatment group) in one specification. We present suggestive evidence that these responses are driven by partisan political identity, rather than (more specifically) by individuals' prior positions on economic policy matters. With this sharp divergence along partisan lines, an unintended consequence of the information provision is that it increases political polarization, with preferences for protection widening by a further one-third of the initial gap between Republicans and Democrats.[3]

The above patterns are difficult to reconcile with standard neoclassical trade-theoretic reasoning alone. For example, one might argue that learning that "Trade Helps Prices" could lead individuals to infer offsetting losses to jobs in import-competing sectors; however, this on its own would not fully explain why we see sharply different responses by party affiliation. The observed polarization instead points to a key role for political identity in shaping how economic evidence

3. On a related note, we find several other respondent characteristics (e.g., household income, loss aversion) that are also relevant in mediating how individuals react to information on the benefits of trade; we elaborate on these in Section 5.3.

is interpreted, particularly in salient and contested policy domains such as trade.

An alternative mechanism more directly tied to political identity is that Republicans could be adjudging information from researchers to be unpersuasive when this contradicts their party-line views. We find however that such expressive rejection of "experts" by Republicans is unlikely to account for the backfire effect: When we asked participants who selected "more limits on imports" to indicate their reasons for this policy preference, the option "not persuaded" consistently received among the lowest agreement scores across the six potential explanations we listed, nor was there a significant difference across Republicans and Democrats in how strongly they cited this reason. Instead, concerns over how "imports often compete for jobs with U.S. workers" and over "imports from countries such as China" received the highest agreement scores. This latter pattern could be seen even in the control group, which underscores how these loom large as prior concerns in the minds of the American public when the issue of trade is raised (c.f., Mutz 2021). Moreover, in line with partisan positioning, Republicans were significantly more likely than Democrats to cite these concerns about U.S. jobs and about trading with China as reasons for seeking more protection against imports.

We instead rationalize our empirical findings through a framework of *prior-biased* belief updating (Charness and Dave 2017, Benjamin 2019) in the formation of trade policy preferences. This allows for systematic biases in how individuals process informational signals: When the signal aligns with one's priors on the issue of trade, whether these be latent associations evoked by the mention of trade or strongly-held beliefs prescribed by one's political identity, the received evidence confirms and strengthens these prior views. But when the signal is dissonant – such as when a Republican is shown information that trade yields some benefits – this leads them to reinforce rather than reconsider their priors. This doubling down on the part of limited-attention respondents and high-attention Republicans is what accounts for the backfire effect to pro-trade information in our overall sample. This echoes a pattern of belief updating that has been found with other flashpoint policy topics, including affirmative action and gun control (Taber and Lodge 2006), crime perceptions (Nyhan et al. 2020), and immigration (Barrera et al. 2020), where respondents have been known to double down on their views when presented with messaging that conflicts with their priors.

Our survey findings reveal key challenges in communicating evidence-based information about international trade. While economists frequently emphasize the gains from trade and cite related research when engaging with the public, messaging that focuses exclusively on these benefits can be insufficient – and even counterproductive – when it fails to address widely-held concerns about jobs and U.S.–China economic relations. We discuss further the implications of our findings for public communication and policy discourse on trade in the Conclusion.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the related literature. Section 3 elaborates on our survey design and implementation. Section 4 reports broad patterns in the data collected, and presents evidence on the effects of the information treatments. Section 5 explores explanations and mechanisms. Section 6 concludes. The Online Appendix contains supplementary material on our survey instrument, as well as additional results.

2 Related Literature

Our paper lies at the intersection of two lines of work: the literature in international trade on preferences over trade policy (see Baldwin 1989 and Rodrik 1995 for overviews), and the recent body of survey-based studies on the role that information can play in shaping views on various policy issues (see Haaland et al. 2023 and Stantcheva 2023a).

We seek first to expand our understanding of the determinants of trade policy preferences at the individual level. Baldwin (1989) organizes these explanations under two headings: economic self-interest and non-economic concerns.[4] The former considers these preferences to be shaped by how one's material circumstances are affected by openness to trade. Theory points to how this can occur through one's industry of work (the specific-factors model), or through one's skill or education level (the Heckscher-Ohlin model); these hypotheses have been tested empirically, often using extant surveys of socioeconomic attitudes.[5] The more recent work on the "China trade shock" (led by Autor et al. 2013) has further placed the spotlight on geographic location as a locus of economic exposure to trade when worker mobility across regions is limited.[6]

This literature on trade policy preferences has also examined non-economic forces, drawing on insights from political science and behaviorial psychology. On social and national concerns, Mansfield and Mutz (2009) and Mutz (2021) find that trade attitudes are often more strongly correlated with individuals' perceptions of how the country as a whole has been affected by trade, rather than by one's private financial situation.[7] On behavioral factors, loss aversion (Kahneman and Tversky 1979, 1984) can induce an anti-trade policy bent, if the perceived utility of the gains from trade is outweighed by the disutility from losses incurred (Freund and Ozden 2008, Tovar 2009).[8] Separately, Grossman and Helpman (2021) study how the social identity that individuals bear – "concerns for members of those groups in society with whom they identify" – can influence their preferred trade policies. As political affiliation now stands as a key source of social identity in many countries (Bonomi et al. 2021, Gennaioli and Tabellini 2023), the party that one supports is in practice a reliable marker of preferences for protection.[9]

4. Another branch of the literature focuses on the role of lobbying and interest groups in shaping the "demand-side" of trade policy; see Grossman and Helpman (1995), Krishna (1998), Ornelas (2005), Bombardini (2008), Blanga-Gubbay et al. (2022), Adão et al. (2023), among others.

5. See, for example, Balistreri (1987), Scheve and Slaughter (2001a), O'Rourke and Sinnott (2001), Beaulieu (2002ab), Mayda and Rodrik (2005), Hainmueller and Hiscox (2006), Blonigen (2011), Blonigen and McGrew (2014), Jäkel and Smolka (2017), and Mendez and van Patten (2022). There is a parallel literature on the role of personal economic circumstances in shaping preferences over migration policy; see Scheve and Slaughter (2001b), Mayda (2006), Facchini and Mayda (2008, 2009), and Mayda et al. (2022).

6. That said, there are efforts to seek a more comprehensive assessment of how individuals' economic interests have been affected on net by trade liberalization with China. For example, cheaper inputs from China have enabled U.S. manufacturing firms to become more competitive (Amiti et al. 2020); employment has grown in non-manufacturing sectors in which the U.S. has comparative advantage (Caliendo et al. 2019); while U.S. consumers have experienced gains as a result of the lower prices of Chinese goods (Bai and Stumpner 2019).

7. Rotemberg (2003) develops a theory of trade policy determination in the presence of voter altruism.

8. More subtly, opposition toward free trade could also be driven by uncertainty over the distribution of gains versus losses from adopting such a policy (Fernandez and Rodrik 1991).

9. A related body of work studies whether trade policy shapes aggregate voting outcomes: see Autor et al. (2020), Fetzer and Schwarz (2021), Lake and Nie (2021), Choi et al. (2021), Che et al. (2022), Blanchard et al. (2024) on the U.S.; Colantone and Stanig (2018) on Brexit; Dippel et al. (2022) on Germany; and Ogeda et al.

For the most part though, the above literature has (implicitly) assumed a full-information environment. An exception is Ponzetto et al. (2020), who examine support for protection in a setting with costly information acquisition, but work on this topic is otherwise quite limited. Our paper places the role of information – specifically, exposure to evidence on the gains and losses from trade – front and center, to explore how this affects beliefs about trade and preferences over trade policies.

In terms of methodology, we draw on an influential body of survey-based work studying how information can shape policy views, including: attitudes toward inequality (Norton and Ariely 2011, Chow and Galak 2012), taxes and redistribution (Kuziemko et al. 2015, Alesina et al. 2018, Fisman et al. 2020, Alesina et al. 2023), and immigration (Haaland and Roth 2020, Grigorieff et al. 2020, Facchini et al. 2022). This has yielded rich and nuanced evidence on the efficacy of information treatments. For example, Kuziemko et al. (2015) find that support for tax and redistribution policies is unaffected when individuals are made aware of the extent of income inequality, a result they attribute to individuals' broad lack of trust in government. On the other hand, Alesina et al. (2018) show that information on the degree of intergenerational (im)mobility raises support for redistributive measures, but only among left-leaning respondents.

A number of these survey experiments have been on the topic of trade, and thus relate directly to our paper. Several earlier studies explored the use of issue framing – short cues on gains and/or losses associated with trade, incorporated in question wording – to see how this can affect trade policy preferences (e.g., Hiscox 2006, Rho and Tomz 2017, Rodríguez Chatruc et al. 2021, and Coppock 2022).[10] The key result emerging has been that negative frames (e.g., jobs losses) can indeed induce more support for protection; on the other hand, positive frames (e.g., lower goods prices) typically yield insignificant effects on preferred trade policies. Building on this, Di Tella and Rodrik (2020) presented scenarios describing jobs at risk in a fictional manufacturing plant, while manipulating the context behind the potential layoffs (e.g., attributing these in turn to technology advances, bad management, or international outsourcing); of note, the outsourcing treatment triggered particularly strong support for import restrictions.

The recent survey by Stantcheva (2023b) merit a close discussion. These developed a set of educational videos to foster conceptual understanding of trade-related forces, such as comparative advantage, the logic of productivity gains, and distributional effects. The videos used stylized examples ("Imagine a country that imports cars and exports textiles. . .") to explain these mechanisms (e.g., why trade raises efficiency, and how it can hurt some workers while benefiting others). In terms of results, the treatment priming respondents on the salience of risks to jobs diminished support for free trade; this broadly echoes the effects of negative trade messaging found in the earlier studies described above. The treatment explaining the efficiency gains to firms and workers did raise support for trade; when combined with messaging that highlights distributional issues (i.e., that there are winners and losers from openness to trade), this led

(2021) on Brazil. On the other hand, Conconi et al. (2014) present evidence that the proximity of elections shapes the trade policy platforms that U.S. politicians adopt.

10. For example, the positive frame question adopted by Rodríguez Chatruc et al. (2021), which they embedded in the Latinobarometro survey, was: "Are you in favor of or against (your country) increasing trade with other countries so that prices fall and the variety of products you may buy increases?" Separately, Nguyen (2017) explored whether the Kuziemko et al. (2015) prime on income inequality can shift one's desired trade policies.

respondents to also favor more redistributive policies.

Relative to this work, our survey differs in treatment content and format. Rather than administering hypothetical scenarios or question frames, we provide information that is factual, drawing on documented empirical evidence on the gains and losses from trade.[11] We moreover pursue a narrative format that is less instructional compared to Stantcheva (2023b). Our treatments are designed instead to mimic the more concise, bite-sized communication style on social media platforms, that policymakers often use when interacting with the general public, and that researchers often adopt when disseminating their findings. Our wording also makes clear that the evidence is grounded in the U.S. context, based on research into the effects on American workers and domestic goods prices; most of the videos in Stantcheva (2023b), by contrast, narrate the effects on a stylized abstract country ("country A").

These points of distinction help to account for our key new finding of a backfire effect against pro-trade narratives, while shedding light on mechanisms related to how the U.S. general public processes information about international trade in practice. Our shorter treatment format, being less time-intensive than that in Stantcheva (2023b), allows mechanisms related to limited attention and "what comes to mind" to surface, inadvertently evoking negative prior associations of trade held by a sizeable segment of the U.S. population. Our analysis moreover uncovers the important role of individuals' partisan political identity in mediating how trade policy preferences respond to information. We would posit, in particular, that the U.S.-focused nature of our narratives, being directly about outcomes for American workers and consumers, may well have heightened personal salience, activating political and occupational identities in ways that hypothetical examples and conceptual explanations do not. As far as we are aware, these forces – related to limited attention in information processing, and the role of political identity – have not been highlighted in survey-based work on trade policy preferences. Our findings thus underscore how the effectiveness of information about trade, even if evidence-based, nevertheless depends on the behavioral and political context in which it is received.

3 Survey Design: Methodology and Platform

We developed a survey with randomized information treatments, that each offer evidence on a specific gain or loss that stems from trade liberalization. The full set of treatments and questions is documented in Appendix A.1.[12] Below, we describe the four main parts of the survey:

Part 1: Background. This first section gathered standard biographic data, including: age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, state of residence, education, employment status and sector, household income, and news consumption habits. We also canvassed respondents' baseline beliefs on socioeconomic issues, such as their: degree of trust in government; satisfaction with the U.S. job market; willingness to pay more for a U.S. brand of similar quality; outlook on whether "children born into my community will have a better life than my generation"; the impact that

11. This focus on information that is evidence- or research-based is in the same spirit as a body of experimental studies that have explored whether such findings can prompt the adoption of specific actions by policymakers (Hjort et al. 2021, Vivalt and Coville 2023, DellaVigna et al. 2023).

12. The 2022 survey can be found at: `https://hbs.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_esNIwUlv3V4Iufc`.

NAFTA has had on their family ("extremely good" to "extremely bad"); and views on how big a problem inequality is in the U.S. today ("not a problem" to "a serious problem").

To ascertain respondents' political identity, we asked which party's candidate they supported in the most recent presidential election ("Democrat", "Republican", or "Neither"). We also gauged loss aversion with a common approach from behaviorial economics (c.f., Kahneman and Tversky 1979, 1984), by eliciting preferences over receiving a discount and avoiding a surcharge of an equal dollar amount (framed in the context of a monthly cellphone bill). Throughout this background questions module, we refrained from using terms related to trade policy to avoid inadvertently priming responses on preferred policy measures.

Part 2: Treatment. Respondents were then randomly assigned with equal probability to the control or one of the treatment groups. Each information treatment had the same preamble – "How have globalization and imports affected workers and households? Economic researchers have been studying this issue." – and proceeded to describe an employment or price effect of openness to trade found to be important following China's 2001 accession to the WTO:

(a) The "Trade Hurts Jobs" narrative reported the main finding of Autor et al. (2013), on how the rise in imports from China had a negative impact on the labor market outcomes of manufacturing workers in the U.S.

(b) The "Trade Helps Jobs" narrative related how the rise in imports from China led the U.S. to specialize more in service sectors as established by Caliendo et al. (2019), which contributed to an increase in the total number of jobs in the U.S. economy.

(c) The "Trade Helps Prices" narrative described how the rise in imports from China was accompanied by lower prices for both durable goods (computers, electrical products, furniture) and non-durable goods (apparel), drawing on price indices from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(d) We introduced the "Tariff Hurts Prices" narrative in the 2020 survey, following the surge in U.S. tariffs. Based on the findings of Amiti et al. (2019), this described how the tariffs imposed starting in 2018, particularly on imports from China, resulted in higher prices, incurring an estimated loss to U.S. real income of $1.4 billion per month.

Each narrative was limited to three to four sentences that avoid technical jargon, akin to a short social media post.[13] This was accompanied by a figure illustrating the trend in jobs or price outcomes, to visually reinforce the message (see Appendix A.1). For "Trade Hurts Jobs", we reproduced Figure 1 from Autor et al. (2013), which overlays the rise in imports from China between 1987-2007 with the contemporaneous decline in the manufacturing employment share in the U.S. population. For "Trade Helps Jobs" and "Trade Helps Prices", we created analogous figures in which the decline in manufacturing employment was replaced by data series showing respectively the increase in U.S. nonfarm jobs and the fall in U.S. goods prices. For "Tariff Hurts Prices", we included a figure depicting how the U.S. prices of tariff-affected goods rose in 2018-2019 following the new tariffs. It should be stressed that each narrative was crafted from

13. While the treatment screen included an academic citation to attribute the source of the narrative, the institutional affiliations of the researchers were not displayed; this was to minimize any possible influence on the survey responses arising from reputations or perceptions associated with these institutions.

evidence backed by economics research or data, while adopting a neutral and factual tone; we did not deliberately expose participants to falsified or hypothetical accounts.

We implemented several variants of these treatments in later survey editions. Starting in 2020, we jointly presented the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Helps Jobs" information to some respondents, to gauge the impact of such composite narratives. We also ran treatments that removed key wording – e.g., taking out explicit mention of "China" as a trade partner – to assess the sensitivity of our findings. We elaborate on these treatments in Sections 4.3-4.4.[14]

Part 3: Policy Preferences. After the treatments, we solicited choices over economic policies. We captured preferences for protection with the following directly-posed questions:

(a) "Do you support placing more limits on imports?" (Yes or No.)

(b) "Would you support an increase in the U.S. tariff rate to reduce imports?" (Yes or No.)

(c) "Would you support the U.S. signing free trade agreements with more foreign countries?" (Yes or No.)

(d) "Of the following two policies, which do you prefer?" (Higher taxes on top income earners; Higher tariffs on imports from foreign countries; Both policies; Neither policy.)

We further included a question asking respondents to select three "Most Preferred" policies from a list of eight options, to assess the strength of their preference for protection relative to other measures often proposed to address labor market concerns. The eight policies were: "higher taxes on top income earners"; "higher minimum wage"; "more benefits for the unemployed (e.g., unemployment insurance)"; "improving education and worker training"; "more limits on imports from foreign countries (e.g., higher tariffs on imports)"; "weakening the U.S. dollar, so that U.S. exports are more competitive"; "exiting from existing free trade agreements"; and "more limits on immigration". These were presented on each participant's screen in a randomized order to account for choice biases that can arise due to the order in which options appear.

We adopted phrasing in these policy questions comparable to that in established socioeconomic surveys such as the Gallup Poll, American National Elections Studies, and World Values Survey. We asked about trade policy in multiple ways – e.g., "higher tariff rates on imports", "more limits on imports" – to seek out respondents' broad inclination toward protectionism, and to avoid being reliant on the wording or structure of any single question. We will later work with a principal component measure that extracts a common component of variation in the responses on these five questions; this will help alleviate concerns over measurement error (e.g., should a participant misread a question, or inadvertently select an unintended answer).

Part 4: Validate and Explain Choices. Beginning in 2020, we incorporated a set of questions to validate how well participants engaged with the narratives. We directly asked whether the

14. The debate on whether trade was the main cause behind weak U.S. labor market outcomes is far from settled. Manufacturing employment has fallen steadily in most developed nations for decades (Lawrence and Lawrence 2012), and a leading alternative hypothesis is that technological change – the rise of computers, automation, and robotics – displaced low-end manufacturing jobs (see Acemoglu and Restrepo 2017). In the 2018-2019 survey, we included a "It's not Trade, it's Technology" narrative with the statement: "Technological advances in recent decades, such as computerization and automation, have tended to favor skilled workers while replacing some jobs that used to be performed by unskilled workers." The effects were not statistically significant and, given budget constraints, we omitted this from subsequent rounds to focus on the jobs- and prices-related treatments.

information read earlier in the survey affected their views on trade policy ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). As a basic recall question, we also asked whether the information received was on the topic of "the relationship between trade and jobs", "the relationship between trade and prices", or whether "I did not receive information on any of the above".

To draw out the beliefs and concerns that shaped protectionist choices, we included (starting in 2021) a set of follow-up questions for those who picked "more limits on imports" as a top-three preferred policy. Respondents were reminded of this selection, and were then shown a list of proposed reasons and asked to assess how much each of these explained their policy choice (on a scale of 1 for "strongly disagree" to 5 for "strongly agree"). The listed reasons included: being unpersuaded by the information; national security; competition for jobs; and concerns about imports from China (see Section 5.2 for more details).[15] These respondents were also invited to describe any other relevant reasons in a text box.

We conducted annual runs of the survey in the U.S. general population over 2018-2022. For the purpose of our analysis, we have grouped the data collected into four rounds. The first surveys were launched in July 2018 and April 2019, with the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments; we group these two pre-pandemic years as a single "round" due to the smaller number of observations (2,277). The second round was conducted from April-June 2020, with 6,009 participants; in addition to the treatments from round 1, we introduced the "Tariff Hurts Prices" narrative on the new U.S. tariffs, the mixed jobs treatments, and the "Trade Helps Prices" variants with modified wording. The third round in April 2021 had 4,058 participants, while the fourth round in April-July 2022 yielded 6,005 observations. Note that we did not seek to assemble a longitudinal panel of individuals due to concerns over low re-contact rates and potential self-selection into the follow-up sample, as discussed in Stantcheva (2023a). The median time taken to complete the survey was about 11 minutes in rounds 2-4 (after the validation and follow-up questions were added). Within the survey, respondents spent about half a minute on average on the information treatment screens.[16,17]

4 Evidence on Information Treatment Effects

4.1 Broad Patterns of Policy Preferences

We provide a first look at key features in our data. Table B.1 in the appendix presents summary statistics on a range of biographic variables (e.g., gender, age), socioeconomic characteristics (e.g., household income, education, employment), sociopolitical traits (e.g., party supported), and news consumption habits (e.g., media sources, frequency). We also report on several location

15. The answer options for the basic recall question, as well as the list of reasons for selecting "more limits on imports" in this follow-up question, were presented in random order.

16. Round 1 saw a longer average duration on the treatment screen, as the preamble of the narratives included more background information on inequality trends in the U.S.; this was removed in rounds 2-4.

17. Participants who completed the survey received about $2 each; the average cost per observation charged by the survey company (Qualtrics) was $5-$6 across the rounds. As a data quality measure, Qualtrics removed observations that took less than half the median completion time after a first run of collection and replaced these with freshly sampled respondents.

characteristics, that respondents would, in principle, be exposed to through their county of residence.[18] These are: the college-educated share, the manufacturing share in local employment, exposure to imports from China for 2000-2007, and an urban area dummy.[19]

Across the columns in Table B.1, the means of the respondent and location characteristics are similar over the four survey rounds. The sample is representative of the U.S. general population along five dimensions by design: age, gender, race, education, and region.[20] We also match fairly well the labor force participation rate (e.g., 61% in round 4), as well as employment shares by sector (e.g., $0.07/0.51 \approx 13.7\%$ for manufacturing and $0.40/0.51 \approx 78.4\%$ for services in round 4), even though these moments were not targeted.[21] The sample slightly over-represents the unemployment rate (10-11% across rounds), while leaning more Democrat in left-right political identity (41-49% Democrat versus 34-36% Republican). This *per se* does not invalidate our empirical approach, since we will show that the control and treatment groups within each round are balanced across these key characteristics.

Table B.1 further reveals several patterns in sociopolitical attitudes. The average respondent exhibited a slight distrust in government, held mildly negative views of the impact of NAFTA and on the health of the U.S. job market, and expressed a slight willingness to pay more for U.S. brands. Respondents also regarded both inequality and inflation as problems, particularly inflation in 2022. That said, there is substantial dispersion in each of these variables around their respective means.

Turning to policy preferences, Table 1 sheds light on the extent of support for various policies, including trade-related actions; we report unconditional means here that pool across the control and all treatment groups. When queried in a direct "Yes/No" manner, a fairly large share of respondents agreed with placing more limits on imports (57-62% across rounds). Meanwhile, the share favoring alternative policies, such as a minimum wage and more progressive taxation ("higher taxes on top income earners"), was similarly high (65-80%).[22] Interestingly, between

18. We were able to infer the county of residence for more than 96% of the respondents in each survey round from their state and city/town, by performing a fuzzy merge with a repository of city names across U.S. states. Observations with a Stata `reclink` fuzzy merge score lower than 0.93 were checked manually to correct for spelling errors, abbreviations (e.g., "St." versus "Saint"), and differences between colloquial and formal names (e.g., "St. Pete" versus "St. Petersburg"). Where there was ambiguity, the IP address coordinates of the respondents were geolocated using Google Maps to determine their likely location. We dropped observations with coordinates outside the U.S.; these were less than 0.3% of the entire sample.

19. The college-educated variable is expressed as a share of the local population aged 25 and older, and is a five-year average over 2013-2017 (from the American Community Survey). The manufacturing share variable is for the year 2016 (County Business Patterns dataset). Both measures are constructed at the county level, whereas the China import shock variable taken from Autor et al. (2013) is at the commuting zone level. The urban area dummy is equal to one for counties in Metropolitan Statistical Areas, as defined in 2013 (US Census).

20. The sampling quotas were: (i) by gender, female: 50.8%, male: 49.2%; (ii) by age, 18-24: 12.8%, 25-34: 17.7%, 35-44: 16.7%, 45-54: 17.7%, 55-64: 16.4%, 65+: 18.8%; (iii) by race, non-Hispanic White: 61.9%, non-Hispanic Black: 12.3%, Hispanic: 17.4%, Asian: 5.3%, Other: 3.2%; (iv) by education, HS diploma/GED or less: 40.8%, some college (no degree): 20.9%, college degree: 26.9%, graduate degree: 11.4%; and (v) by region, Midwest: 21.33%, Northeast: 18.02%, South: 37.27%, West: 23.38%.

21. For comparison, the labor force participation rate reported in 2022 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics was around 62%. The manufacturing and services shares of employed workers calculated from the 2022 Current Population Survey were 9.6% and 76.3%, respectively.

22. The sum of the shares for "Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer tariffs" and "Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer progressive tariffs" exceeds one, since respondents were allowed to select "Both". The share who selected "Tariffs

Table 1: Expressed Policy Preferences: Respondent Shares

	Round 1 2018-19 (N=2,277)	**Round 2** 2020 (N=6,009)	**Round 3** 2021 (N=4,058)	**Round 4** 2022 (N=6,005)
Direct Questions (e.g., "Yes/No")				
Do you support placing more limits on imports?	0.57 [0.49]	0.62 [0.49]	0.59 [0.49]	0.58 [0.49]
Would you support an increase in the U.S. tariff rate?	0.28 [0.45]	0.25 [0.43]	0.25 [0.43]	0.32 [0.47]
Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer tariffs	0.44 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]
Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer progressive taxes	0.68 [0.46]	0.65 [0.48]	0.68 [0.47]	0.68 [0.47]
Would you support signing more FTAs?	0.68 [0.47]	0.65 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]
Would you support a minimum wage?	0.78 [0.41]	0.80 [0.40]	0.74 [0.44]	0.78 [0.42]
Most Preferred Policies (pick 3 out of 8)				
More limits on foreign imports	0.23 [0.42]	0.27 [0.44]	0.28 [0.45]	0.28 [0.45]
Exiting from FTAs	0.13 [0.34]	0.12 [0.33]	0.13 [0.34]	0.12 [0.33]
More limits on immigration	0.34 [0.47]	0.31 [0.46]	0.37 [0.48]	0.35 [0.48]
Weaken the USD	0.07 [0.26]	0.09 [0.29]	0.09 [0.28]	0.08 [0.28]
Higher taxes on top income earners	0.51 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]
Higher minimum wage	0.61 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.56 [0.50]	0.61 [0.49]
More unemployment benefits	0.30 [0.46]	0.34 [0.47]	0.29 [0.45]	0.30 [0.46]
Improve education and worker training	0.59 [0.49]	0.49 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.56 [0.50]

Notes: Values reported are equal to the share of respondents, pooled across the control and all treatment groups, who expressed a preference for the policy in question; standard deviations are in brackets. The shares for "Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer tariffs" and "Tariffs vs. prog. taxes: Prefer progressive taxes?" do not sum to one, as respondents were allowed to select both policies.

65-68% of the participants indicated support for signing new free trade agreements; it is possible that more free trade agreements and placing limits on imports were not seen as contradictory, since these could be pursued with different foreign countries.

The lower panel in Table 1 summarizes the responses to the "Most Preferred" policy question, where participants chose their top three from the menu of eight options. The share of respondents who selected "more limits on imports" was between 23-28%, while only around 12% identified "exiting from free trade agreements" as a preferred course of action. Import restrictions thus received less support once individuals were asked to prioritize this against other policies, as seen from the distinct gap to the 57-62% who agreed with "more limits on imports" when this was posed as a "Yes/No" question. On the other hand, tax or labor market measures – "improve education and training", "higher minimum wage", and "higher taxes on top income earners" – each received broad support, from about 50-60% of those surveyed. Not all public assistance programs were favored though, as only around 30% selected "more unemployment benefits". "More limits on immigration" received a measure of support (34-37%), while the option with the least backing was to "weaken the US Dollar" (7-9%).

This ranking of the eight policy options was similar across the four survey rounds. A "higher minimum wage" was consistently selected as a "Most Preferred" policy by the largest share of respondents, followed by "improve education and worker training" and "higher taxes on top

vs. prog. taxes: Prefer tariffs" also exceeds the share who replied "Yes" on "Would you support an increase in the U.S. tariff rate?" For the latter question, one of the options was to keep the tariff rate the same, and a majority of respondents (around 60%) appear to have gravitated to this as a default answer. That said, respondents who supported higher tariffs on one of these questions were also likely to do so on the other (correlation: 0.27).

income earners".[23] There appears to be an uptick over time in the share supporting "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy, from 23% in 2018-2019 to 27-28% in 2020-2022, although this pattern is not uniformly replicated; in the direct "Yes/No" question, the share of respondents who favored more limits on imports peaked instead in round 2.

4.2 Empirical Specification

We turn to the task of identifying whether and how the information treatments affected policy preferences. We evaluate this formally using the following regression specification:

$$\mathbf{1}(Policy_i) \;=\; \sum_{b=1}^{B} \beta_b \mathbf{1}(Treatment_i = b) + \gamma X_i + \epsilon_i, \tag{1}$$

where $\mathbf{1}(Policy_i)$ is an indicator variable for whether respondent i expressed support for a particular policy action. The $\mathbf{1}(Treatment_i = b)$'s are each dummy variables that take on the value of one if the respondent received information treatment b; the omitted category ($b = 0$) is the no-information control group. The β_b coefficients (for $b = 1, \ldots, B$) therefore capture the effects of the respective treatments relative to the control. Given the randomization of treatments to respondents, these effects can be accorded a causal interpretation. In Tables B.2a-B.2d in the appendix, we confirm that the randomization achieved balance in a large set of respondent characteristics across the control and treatment groups within each survey round.[24]

The vector X_i of controls comprises: (i) biographic variables (gender, age, race, education, employment status and sector, household income, region of birth); (ii) political identity (party supported in the last presidential election); and (iii) news habits (frequency, main sources). To capture these flexibly, we use a set of dummies for the response options from each associated survey question. We also include in X_i: (iv) location variables (the college-educated share, manufacturing share in employment, exposure to imports from China, and urban dummy).[25] With randomization, the assignment of treatments is orthogonal to these respondent or location characteristics, and so the inclusion of X_i is not crucial for the consistency of the treatment effects. Indeed, the β_b's we estimate with and without these controls are similar (see Table B.3). The purpose of these covariates is instead to facilitate a comparison with prior empirical work on the correlates of preferences for protection. Last but not least, we account for several survey features. When relevant, we control for the randomized list order (1 to 8) of "more limits on imports" in the menu of eight "Most Preferred" policies; as we will see, this variable typically

23. The responses to the complementary question on one's "Least Preferred" policies yielded a consistent message, with these same three options selected with the lowest frequencies (details available on request).

24. We conducted a multiple hypothesis test of the orthogonality of the listed covariates in Tables B.2a-B.2d; the respective randomization-t p-values (c.f., Young 2019) for rounds 1-4 are 0.733, 0.092, 0.602, and 0.316 (with 1,000 iterations, controlling for survey-week fixed effects). In the two variants of the "Trade Helps Prices" narrative included in round 2, which separately removed "China" and "cheaper" from the wording, the profile of these respective respondent groups was older and had slightly fewer years of education (Table B.2b, last two columns); if these two characteristics are dropped, we do not reject the null hypothesis of orthogonality in this round (p-value=0.362). Note that age and education are controlled for in the regression analysis.

25. For respondents whose county could not be determined, we assigned the in-sample weighted-average value for each of these four location variables (using county population in 2017 as weights).

has a negative coefficient, reflecting some tendency to pick options that appear earlier on one's screen. We further include week dummies (to capture the possible influence of contemporaneous events), and an indicator for whether the survey was taken on a mobile device (to capture possible differences in how mobile and non-mobile users process information).[26]

We estimate (1) as a logit regression, using in turn the following as the outcome variable: (i) whether a "Yes" was recorded for "Do you support placing more limits on imports?"; (ii) whether a "Yes" was recorded for "Would you support an increase in the U.S. tariff rate?"; (iii) whether "higher tariffs on imports from foreign countries" or "both" (higher tariffs and higher taxes on top income earners) was selected when asked on preferences over these two policies; (iv) whether a "Yes" was recorded for "Would you support signing more free trade agreements?"; and (v) whether "more limits on imports" was chosen as a top-three "Most Preferred" policy. For these regressions, we report marginal effects that are evaluated setting the treatment dummies at a base value of zero and the covariates in X_i at their in-sample mean values.

We also run OLS regressions based on (1), with the first principal component of (i)-(v) as the dependent variable. We subtract the binary response to (iv) – "Would you support signing more free trade agreements?" – from one before computing this principal component, to obtain a measure that is increasing in the intensity of preferences for protection. The pairwise correlation across (i)-(v) constructed as such ranges between 0.103-0.367, indicating that while expressions of protectionist preferences are broadly aligned across the questions, this correlation is far from perfect; to the extent that this arises from measurement error on any single survey question, using the first principal component will in principle dampen the impact of such noise.

4.3 Effects of Information Treatments

Table 2 reports the effects of the four baseline information treatments, pooling the observations from all rounds. Starting with "Trade Hurts Jobs", participants exposed to this narrative linking trade to manufacturing job losses came away with stronger preferences for protection compared to the control group. This treatment raised support for "more limits on imports" (Column 1, "Yes/No" question), a "U.S. tariff rate increase" (Column 2), and "higher tariffs" (Column 3, when juxtaposed with "higher taxes on top income earners"); at the same time, it dampened support for free trade agreements (Column 4). It also inclined participants to pick "more limits on imports" as a top-three "Most Preferred" policy (Column 5).

Summarizing these preceding responses with their first principal component, Column 6 confirms this protectionist shift induced by the "Trade Hurts Jobs" narrative. The treatment coefficient of 0.249 implies an effect which is about one-third the size of the gap between Republicans and independents in their average degree of support for trade protection (Republican coefficient: 0.639); as an alternative benchmark, this treatment effect would raise the principal component measure of protectionist preferences by about one-fifth of a standard deviation (1.375).

Turning to the "Trade Helps Jobs" narrative, we find that this did *not* move respondents to favor more open trade policies. The β_b estimates across Columns 1-5 are instead directionally consistent with a mild *increase* in support for protection. The effects are even significant (at

26. See Couper et al. (2017) for a review of potential concerns that arise with mobile web-based surveys.

Table 2: Effect of Information Treatments on Preferences Towards Trade Policy (Pooled: All rounds)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dependent variable	More limits on imports	US tariff increase	Prefer: Tariffs vs prog. taxes	Support more FTAs	Most Pref.: More limits on imports	First prin. component	Did info affect views?	Impact of trade on Americans
	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	OLS	Ord. Logit	Ord. Logit
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.081***	0.063***	0.048***	-0.039**	0.046***	0.249***	0.048***	-0.248***
	[0.014]	[0.013]	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.012]	[0.037]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.016	0.021	0.034**	-0.004	0.017	0.086**	0.030*	-0.025*
	[0.015]	[0.014]	[0.017]	[0.017]	[0.013]	[0.041]	[0.016]	[0.015]
Trade Helps Prices	0.055***	0.022*	0.012	-0.002	0.040***	0.126***	0.028*	-0.058***
	[0.015]	[0.013]	[0.016]	[0.015]	[0.013]	[0.037]	[0.015]	[0.015]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.035**	0.016	0.027	-0.004	0.030**	0.105***	0.046***	-0.164***
	[0.016]	[0.013]	[0.017]	[0.016]	[0.014]	[0.040]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Randomization Order					-0.009***	-0.016***		
					[0.002]	[0.005]		
Supported Democrat	-0.006	-0.004	-0.042***	0.119***	-0.047***	-0.168***	0.093***	0.089***
	[0.013]	[0.011]	[0.014]	[0.012]	[0.010]	[0.032]	[0.013]	[0.012]
Supported Republican	0.196***	0.127***	0.157***	-0.035***	0.129***	0.639***	0.084***	-0.002
	[0.014]	[0.012]	[0.013]	[0.013]	[0.012]	[0.035]	[0.013]	[0.013]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	11,552	11,552	11,552	11,552	11,552	11,552	9,275	9,275
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.0744	0.0795	0.0481	0.0661	0.0758	0.153	0.0488	0.0569
In-sample share or s.d.	0.587	0.264	0.474	0.657	0.260	1.375	0.357	0.541

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variables are: in Columns 1-4, an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent supported the policy in question; in Column 5, an indicator equal to 1 if they selected "More limits on imports" among their three "Most preferred" policies; in Column 6, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 7, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 8, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). Columns 1-5 report marginal effects from logit regressions; Column 6 reports OLS estimates; Columns 7-8 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The in-sample statistics reported are: in Columns 1-5, the share who supported the policy; in Column 6, the standard deviation of the principal component measure; in Columns 7-8, the share who selected the fourth or fifth highest response bin. The controls included are: dummies for gender, age group, race, education, household income bins, employment status (including broad sector), survey answered on a mobile device, BEA region of birth (including foreign-born category), frequency following current affairs, news program source; county controls for college-educated share, exposure to China imports (2000-2007), manufacturing share of employment, urban dummy, missing dummy (i.e., county variables filled in with the in-sample average); and survey week dummies. The "Randomization Order" variable is the list order in which "More Limits on Imports" was presented among the eight policy options to the respondent. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

the 5% level) when participants were asked to indicate their preference over higher tariffs and/or more progressive taxes (Column 3), as well as with the principal component measure (Column 6) which is less affected by idiosyncratic noise in the five component responses. Based off this last column (coefficient: 0.086), the implied shift in favor of protection is about one-third that of the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment effect. If anything, this mode of communicating that trade has some beneficial labor market effects tilts respondents towards protectionism. (As we will see, this finding holds even among those respondents who could correctly recall that this information treatment was on the topic of jobs; see Table B.7b.)

The "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" narratives yielded even more striking

results: When shown evidence that imports have been accompanied by lower goods prices, or that tariffs have hurt U.S. consumers, participants *raised* their support for more limits on imports (Columns 1 and 5). With the first principal component measure (Column 6), both the "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" coefficients are significant at the 1% level; the magnitudes of these effects are about half that of exposure to the "Trade Hurts Jobs" narrative.[27]

The evidence-based information on the impacts of trade thus triggers more intense preferences for import restrictions, regardless of the positive or negative nature of the described impact. These patterns continue to hold when we use alternative methods to combine the component responses in (i)-(v), such as an unweighted average or a factor analysis approach (see Table B.4 in the appendix). The treatment effects are moreover comparable over the four survey rounds, despite the disruptions from such events as the U.S.-China trade war and the Covid-19 pandemic (see Table B.5).[28] Given its robustness and replicability, this observation – that information on the benefits of trade instead prompts protectionist reactions – cannot be put aside as an isolated finding. As we will shortly see in Section 5, this backfire effect is even stronger among key subsets of respondents when we open up our sample to consider treatment effect heterogeneity.

In Columns 7-8, we use the validation questions included in rounds 2-4 to verify that, at least at a self-reported level, the treatment effects on trade policy preferences we have uncovered are linked to participants' engagement with the conveyed information. Relative to the control group, respondents exposed to a treatment were more likely to "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" that the information affected their views on trade policy (Column 7, ordered logit).[29] Interestingly, Republican and Democrat supporters were both more likely than independents to affirm that the treatment affected their views, suggesting more engagement with information on the part of those with a stronger prior political identity.

Furthermore, when asked post-treatment to assess the impact that trade has had for most Americans, each of the treatment groups was *less* likely to register "extremely good" or "somewhat good" as a response (Column 8, ordered logit). These marginal effects vary in size across the four treatments (from -0.025 to -0.248). But what is notable is that even respondents who received information about the benefits of trade – to either service-sector jobs or goods prices – became more negative in their views about how trade has affected most Americans. In particular, this provides reassurance against the possibility that participants could be shading their answers towards what they perceive to be the survey's objective: The narratives on the beneficial dimensions of trade actually induce a protectionist response and a worsening view of trade, contrary to the anticipated direction of experimenter demand effects.[30]

27. Recall that the "Tariff Hurts Prices" narrative was only introduced in round 2; note that we can nevertheless run regressions with all four baseline treatment dummies using the sample pooled over all four rounds.

28. The baseline treatment effects still stand when we restrict the sample to rounds 2-4 (dropping the 2018-2019 survey at the onset of the U.S.-China tariffs) or to rounds 3-4 (dropping the 2020 survey which overlapped with Covid-19 lockdowns and the Black Lives Matter protests). The effects are also similar, albeit estimated with slightly less precision, when each round is examined separately (see Table B.5).

29. The dependent variables in Columns 7 and 8 of Table 2 are each categorical variables with five bins. We run an ordered logit regression based on (1), and report marginal effects on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest bin is selected as the response. The number of observations is smaller than in the prior columns, as these validation questions were included starting in round 2.

30. Note also that no monetary stakes were conditioned on specific responses being given. More broadly, see

In sum, information on manufacturing job losses from trade intensifies preferences for import restrictions, while alternative information on potential gains from trade (or the losses incurred from tariffs) likewise raises protectionist sentiment. These shifts are accompanied by a stronger belief that being open to trade has had a negative impact on most Americans. Whereas various studies have found that short cues or primes about the positive effects of trade yield a zero effect on trade policy preferences (Hiscox 2006, Rodríguez Chatruc et al. 2021, Coppock 2023, Stantcheva 2023b), the evidence-based information we administered here on the benefits of trade goes further, in that it induces a pro-protectionist backfire effect.

Respondent characteristics. Before turning to other treatment results, we briefly discuss the role of several respondent characteristics. Table B.3 in the appendix reports the full set of coefficients from Columns 6-8 of Table 2, where the dependent variables are, respectively, the principal component measure of protectionist preferences and the responses to the two validation questions. In line with previous research (e.g., Blonigen 2011), we find older participants to be more supportive of protection. The effect of gender on trade policy preferences is imprecisely estimated (Column 2, Table B.3), although women do tend to hold a more negative view of the impact of international trade on most Americans (Column 4, c.f., Scheve and Slaughter 2001, Mayda and Rodrik 2005, Blonigen 2011). The role of education is similarly mixed: those with some college education express a more positive view of the impact of trade, but this is not reflected in their trade policy choices. Controlling for education, household income is positively correlated with support for protection, as is being employed in agriculture, mining, or manufacturing (relative to services).[31]

Political affiliation is particularly important in explaining where members of the U.S. public stand on trade policy. In contrast to prior decades, Republican supporters view import restrictions more favorably during our sample period than independents, with the opposite being true for Democrats, a reflection of how decisively the Trump administration moved the Republican party away from support of free trade. It is worth noting too that Republicans are more intense in their support for protection (coefficient: 0.639) than Democrats are in their opposition to it (-0.168), relative to independents.[32]

Mixed-Information Treatments. Building on our baseline treatments, we explored whether the joint provision of information on the benefits and costs of trade (i.e., "presenting both sides of the coin") might modulate the impact on preferences over trade policy. We incorporated such mixed-information treatments in rounds 2-4, by presenting the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Helps Jobs" narratives on the same screen, in both possible orders (see Appendix A.1 for details on how this was worded). Table B.6 in the appendix reports these findings; to provide points of comparison for the sizes of the effects, the sample there pools the control group with the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and the two mixed-information treatment groups.

We find that joint exposure to both jobs-related narratives still triggers a statistically significant shift in favor of more limits on trade, so that a more balanced or complete message per se

De Quidt et al. (2018) who find that experimenter demand effects tend to be relatively small.

31. Interestingly, participants who took the survey on a mobile device are also more in favor of protection.

32. Related to this, viewership of Fox News correlates strongly with a preference for protection.

does not undo the backfire effect. That said, the protectionist response to the mixed-information treatments is weaker compared to receiving only the narrative that "Trade Hurts Jobs", particularly if "Trade Helps Jobs" is sequenced after "Trade Hurts Jobs" (Column 1, Table B.6). This suggests that content about the positive effect of trade on jobs can modestly counteract information that focuses solely on job losses. Interestingly, respondents exposed to the mixed job treatments became more negative on the impact trade has had on most Americans (Column 3), but expressed a lower degree of confidence in their assessment on this front (see Table B.10, Column 9). With these treatments, there thus appears to be less certainty about the net impact of trade on jobs, which could explain the milder protectionist response.

4.4 (Non-)Explanations

Our central finding of a backfire effect to information on the benefits of trade warrants more investigation. The remainder of our paper will focus on better understanding what is driving such information to trigger a stark protectionist shift in policy preferences in the U.S. general public. We start by considering two apparent "prime suspect" explanations that relate to how respondents comprehended the content and wording in the treatment text. We will see though that these are unlikely to fully account for the backfire effect.

Treatment topic. Could the results be due to a basic misreading of the topic of the narrative? Could it be that participants who received, for example, the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment did not read it as being about the link between trade and prices, but rather as on the topic of international trade more generally? Given the (arguably) more widespread coverage of news on the negative impact of trade on manufacturing jobs in the U.S. media, this could then have triggered a reaction in support of limits on trade.

We find however that the backfire effect arises despite the fact that respondents, particularly those who received a narrative about prices, were on average able to correctly recall the broad topic of the treatment shown to them. We reach this conclusion by examining the end-of-survey recall question included in rounds 2-4 (see Table B.7a for summary statistics): Participants assigned to the "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments were significantly less likely to say that the information was on the topic of trade and jobs (Table B.7b, Column 1, logit regression), and more likely to indicate that it was on the relationship between trade and prices (Column 2). In a similar vein, those in the "Trade Hurts Jobs" or the "Trade Helps Jobs" groups were, on average, able to correctly state that the content was about jobs rather than prices. Furthermore, across respondents, there was a significantly higher correct recall rate among those who received narratives about prices rather than about jobs (Column 3); this is noteworthy, since "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" were the two treatments where the backfire effect was strongest in inducing protectionist sentiments.

In a related exploration, we re-ran the regression with the principal component measure of trade policy preferences (i.e., the Table 2, Column 6 specification), respectively for the subsamples with incorrect versus correct recall of the received information (Table B.7b, Columns 4-5). This reveals that the tilt toward protectionism in reaction to information about the benefits of trade is *not* driven by participants who mistook the subject matter of the narrative. The backfire effect is

statistically significant even in the subsample who correctly recalled the topic of the information, with positive β_b treatment coefficients that are comparable, if not more sizeable, than in the subsample with incorrect recall.[33] There is a subtle point to be made here: Participants may still have been led to express protectionist preferences because the information evoked an association between trade and job losses. That said, this association was not triggered by a misreading of the content, but rather came in spite of participants' general ability to recall correctly the topic of the information.

Wording connotation. With the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment, another concern is that the adjective "cheaper" could be associated with "lower quality". If read in this way, this would cast imports in a negative light, which could then explain a desire for more import restrictions. This prompted us to craft a "sans Cheaper" version of the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment, in which we replaced the phrase "availability of cheaper goods" with "increased availability of goods" (see Appendix A.1 for the full wording). In Panel A of Table B.8, we nevertheless find this modified treatment continues to induce support for protection, with an effect similar in size to that of the original "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" narratives.[34] The potential negative connotations of this piece of wording therefore does not suffice to explain the backfire effect.

A related possibility is that the mere mention of "China" is what is evoking the protectionist responses, given that our narratives are written around the surge in imports into the U.S. following China's WTO accession. With this in mind, we explored whether removing "China" from the text – by referring instead to an "increase in imports from the rest of world" (see Appendix A.1) – has any bearing on trade policy preferences; we implemented such "sans China" versions for the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments. Interestingly, Panel B of Table B.8 shows for the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment that the backfire effect persists – the protectionist turn is *not* dampened – when dropping "China" from the wording.[35] In Table B.9, we further find that the treatment effect from each of the three "sans China" narratives is statistically indistinguishable from that of its "with China" counterpart; for example, when comparing the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Hurts Jobs sans China" treatments, we cannot reject a null of equal-sized coefficients. Put simply, there is a protectionist response to the information even when China is not explicitly named. We will have more to say by way of interpreting this finding in Section 5.2.[36,37]

33. For Table B.7b, the sample comprises the control and the four baseline treatment groups. In Columns 4-5, we take an agnostic stance to include all control group observations in both the "Recall Incorrect" and "Recall Correct" regression samples; from Table B.7a, the share of the control group who selected "I did not receive any information" was low at around 20%, which suggests this recall question may have been subtle and thus less informative about the recall abilities of the control group. That said, the Columns 4-5 results are similar if we were to partition the control group into the "Recall Incorrect" and "Recall Correct" samples based on whether or not the respondent selected "I did not receive any information" as their response (available on request).

34. The Table B.8, Panel A sample comprises the control group, as well as the "Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices", and "Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper" treatment groups.

35. The Table B.8, Panel B sample comprises the control group, as well as the "Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices", and "Trade Helps Prices sans China" treatment groups. We did not run a "sans China" version of "Tariff Hurts Prices", given the difficulty of dissociating the U.S. tariffs from their main target country.

36. Table B.10 verifies that the treatment effects are stable even when we pool all the baseline and variant treatments – the mixed-information, "sans Cheaper", and "sans China" narratives – in the same regression.

37. Di Tella and Rodrik (2020) find a stronger preference for protection when they manipulate the identity

5 Sources of the Backfire Effect: Exploring Mechanisms

The preceding analysis establishes that the backfire effect does not arise from a simple misreading of the information or from unintended interpretations of specific wording. In this section, we turn instead to examine heterogeneity in the information treatment effects across various segments of respondents. In particular, we examine whether differences across respondents, specifically in their attention to the treatments and in their political identity, can point us to the sources of the backfire effect and its underlying mechanisms.

5.1 Attention to the Treatment

A pertinent dimension to consider is participants' level of attention to the treatments. In practice, individuals who devote limited attention to policy-relevant information constitute a large segment of the general population and can differ systematically from higher-attention respondents in how they engage with political and economic issues. Understanding how this former group responds to evidence-based information therefore provides a natural benchmark for assessing both the reach and the limits of information-based persuasion. Limited attention could, on the one hand, reflect disengagement or haste, which might lead to noisy responses and attenuated treatment effects.[38] An alternative possibility, drawing on the behavioral economics literature, is that individuals with limited attention rely more heavily on salient prior associations – what "comes to mind" – when forming judgments (Gennaioli and Shleifer 2010; Bordalo et al. 2020).[39] In this case, brief exposure to information about trade may activate these existing beliefs or associations.

We proxy for attention using the time each respondent spent on their treatment screen. As one might imagine, there is a fair amount of dispersion in this recorded duration across our entire sample (see bottom of Table B.1), as well as for any single treatment within a given survey round (Tables B.2a-B.2d). This time spent is in principle a choice variable for each respondent, and so our goal here is to uncover observational (rather than causal) patterns between this treatment screen duration and declared policy preferences; this will nevertheless offer insights into how different segments of respondents appeared to process the information provided.

Table 3 compares the responses across limited- versus high-attention participants. We do so by splitting each treatment group into those who took a below- versus above-median duration on their treatment screen (computed separately within each survey round).[40] Quite strikingly, the

of the foreign country to which jobs might be offshored from a developed to a developing country (France to Cambodia). We did not experiment with a change in country name in our treatments due to budget constraints. Moreover, as we will see in Table 5, our survey participants cited concerns about trade with China even when randomized to a "sans China" treatment, which underscores the difficulty of dampening the salience of China as a trade partner in the minds of the U.S. general public.

38. A related concern is information avoidance (Goldman et al. 2017). However, the fact that limited-attention respondents respond significantly to the treatments relative to the control group suggests that they do not simply avoid or disregard the information.

39. See Gabaix (2019) for a comprehensive review of behavioral theories of inattention.

40. Note that the treatment screen duration is not a meaningful variable for respondents randomized into the control group; the control group thus serves as the omitted category throughout all columns in Table 3. In the appendix, we further show that high attention and correct information recall are not equivalent in our data. While participants with an above-median treatment screen time were more likely to provide a correct recall answer about

Table 3: Role of Attention to the Treatment

Dependent variable	(1) First prin. component	(2) First prin. component	(3) First prin. component	(4) Did info affect views?	(5) Impact of trade on Americans
Treatment duration:	Below-median	Above-median	Top quintile	Below-median	Below-median
	OLS	OLS	OLS	Ord. logit	Ord. logit
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.179***	0.325***	0.469***	0.061***	-0.121***
	[0.043]	[0.050]	[0.071]	[0.018]	[0.021]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.115**	0.062	0.059	0.059***	-0.087***
	[0.047]	[0.051]	[0.075]	[0.019]	[0.019]
Trade Helps Prices	0.162***	0.104**	0.106	0.049**	-0.099***
	[0.046]	[0.048]	[0.065]	[0.019]	[0.019]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.158***	0.060	0.028	0.047**	-0.137***
	[0.046]	[0.055]	[0.081]	[0.020]	[0.021]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	7,193	7,185	4,567	5,760	5,760
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.144	0.171	0.165	0.0586	0.0530

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups who spent a below-median, above-median, or top-quintile duration on their information treatment screen (as stated in the column headings, computed within treatment-by-round). The dependent variables are: in Columns 1-3, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 4, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 5, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as listed in the Table 2 notes, together with the Democrat and Republican dummies; Columns 1-3 further include the "Randomization order" of "More Limits on Imports" in the "Most Preferred" list of eight policies. Columns 1-3 report OLS regressions, while Columns 4-5 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. Standard errors are clustered by county, and computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

protectionist response to narratives about the benefits of trade (or the losses from tariffs) is most evident among those who spent *less* attention on the treatment screen (Column 1, below-median duration); this result, based on the principal component measure of trade policy preferences, holds with the extensive set of individual and location controls inherited from the Table 2, Column 6 specification. When we instead limit the sample to those who paid more attention – successively, above-median (Column 2) and top-quintile (Column 3) duration – the coefficients for the "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments fade in size and lose statistical significance, though not to such an extent that the effects reverse sign. As for "Trade Hurts Jobs", we see the shift in favor of trade restrictions being amplified the longer the duration spent on this treatment screen.

Clearly then, limited-attention individuals are important in accounting for the backfire effect against pro-trade information. Despite the shorter treatment duration, the effects in Column 1 are far from noisy: These respondents registered significantly stronger support for protectionist policies relative to the control group, regardless of the nature of the information conveyed.

the topic of the information (see Column 4, Table B.11), the correlation between the two indicator variables is relatively low (only around 0.185, for respondents in the four baseline treatment groups).

They also agreed more with the statement that the information affected their views on trade policy (Column 4), while souring in their beliefs on the impact trade has had on most Americans (Column 5). This suggests prima facie that behavioral mechanisms related to limited attention, and how this can affect the updating of beliefs, are relevant for understanding the backfire effect among these respondents. The treatments appear to have (inadvertently) activated prior associations about international trade, which as we will see shortly in Section 5.2, tend to comprise concerns about the impact on U.S. jobs or about trading with China. For limited-attention individuals with these default views and concerns, evidence to the contrary appears to have prompted them to double down on these prior associations and reinforced support for protection.

Before diving into a more extensive exploration of these priors, it is worth discussing one other implication from Table 3. Columns 1-3 suggest that greater attention is associated with trade policy preferences that align more closely with the content of the information; in particular, high-attention respondents reacted (on average) less adversely when shown evidence about the gains from trade. It appears then that information that engages individuals' attention for a longer duration can be more effective in communicating these potential gains. The challenge, of course, is whether it is feasible to design narratives that elicit a longer attention span, or whether attention to information is ultimately driven by deep-seated respondent characteristics.

To speak to this, Table 4 explores the correlates of attention, revealing that individuals who took less time on the information treatments are not a random sample of the U.S. population. Participants with a below-median treatment screen time had milder views on a range of issues often seen as sociopolitical flashpoints by the U.S. body politic (Column 1, logit regression): They tended to be less concerned about inequality in the U.S., less willing to pay a premium for a U.S. brand, and more satisfied with the U.S. job market. At the same time, they expressed greater trust in government, and were not as pessimistic about their children's future livelihoods. Of note, they appeared to be less immersed in partisan politics, being significantly less likely to identify as either a Republican or Democratic party supporter (Column 2). These patterns hold when we expand the sample beyond the four baseline treatment groups to include those who received the mixed-information and modified-wording narratives (Column 3).[41] They are also robust to controlling for the whole host of individual and location variables used in our earlier Table 2 regressions (Table 4, Columns 2-3).[42] In sum, respondents who exhibited limited attention appear to be a less sociopolitically engaged segment of the U.S. population; their protectionist reaction to pro-trade information thus appears to reflect automatic associative reinforcement, rather than deliberate ideological expression. Whether it will be straightforward to induce such individuals to spend more time processing information presented to them on policy issues remains an open question for further research.

41. Note that we omit the control group observations from this exercise in Table 4, since the recorded treatment screen duration for this group is not as meaningful.

42. There are several other interesting correlates of attention to the information. From Table 4, loss aversion is associated with a shorter treatment duration. From the coefficients reported in full in the appendix (Table B.11, Columns 1-2), younger individuals, those who follow the news less frequently, as well as those who used a mobile device for the survey tended to spend a shorter time on their treatment screen. On a related note, we have verified that the protectionist response to pro-trade information in the limited-attention sample is robust to additionally controlling for the sociopolitical variables considered in Column 1 of Table 4 (see Table B.11, Column 3).

Table 4: Correlates of Attention to the Treatment

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Indicator: Below-median treatment duration		
Treatments:	Baseline	All	All
	Logit	Logit	Logit
NAFTA: Bad impact on family	-0.015**	0.009	0.007
	[0.007]	[0.008]	[0.006]
US Inequality a Problem	-0.013**	-0.027***	-0.031***
	[0.006]	[0.007]	[0.005]
Willing to pay more for US Brand	-0.100***	-0.049***	-0.042***
	[0.012]	[0.014]	[0.010]
Trust in Government	0.020***	0.013**	0.014***
	[0.006]	[0.006]	[0.005]
Dissatisfied with US Job Market	-0.046***	-0.033***	-0.031***
	[0.012]	[0.013]	[0.010]
Disagree children will have a better life	-0.045***	-0.030***	-0.032***
	[0.005]	[0.006]	[0.004]
Loss aversion	0.014***	0.013***	0.010***
	[0.004]	[0.004]	[0.003]
Supported Democrat		-0.047***	-0.053***
		[0.017]	[0.013]
Supported Republican		-0.051***	-0.058***
		[0.018]	[0.014]
Individual, county, week controls?	N	Y	Y
Observations	8,375	8,375	15,172
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.0234	0.118	0.123

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds, comprising: in Columns 1-2, the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups (excluding the "Control"); and in Column 3, all treatment groups (excluding the "Control"). The dependent variable is an indicator for whether the respondent had a below-median duration on their treatment screen (computed within treatment-by-round). The individual, county, and week controls included in Columns 2-3 (but not reported) are as listed in the Table 2 notes. All columns report marginal effects from logit regressions, evaluated with all right-hand side variables at their in-sample mean values. Standard errors are clustered by respondent county, and computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

5.2 Why Limit Imports? Priors that Come to Mind

To gain more direct insight into the beliefs and concerns that motivate preferences for protection, we asked participants who chose "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy their reasons behind this choice. (Recall that this follow-up question, described in full in Appendix A.2, was incorporated in the survey from round 3 onward.)

Table 5 reports summary statistics on the degree of agreement with each of the common reasons we proposed for favoring "more limits on imports" (1 for "strongly disagree" to 5 for "strongly agree"). The reasons, shown in a random order on each respondent's screen, were: being (un)persuaded by the information; concerns about imports being of lower quality; U.S. national security; competition for jobs with U.S. workers; concerns about imports from countries such as China; and being of the view that there are other more important concerns.[43] Note

43. We did not pose an analogous follow-up question to respondents who left "more limits on imports" off their list of top-three "Most Preferred" policies. At a practical level, it would be more challenging for respondents to

Table 5: Reasons for More Limits on Imports as a Most Preferred Policy
Summary Statistics (Pooled: Round 3, 2021; Round 4, 2022)

Reasons: 5=Strongly agree 1=Strongly disagree	Not persuaded	Lower quality	National security	Compete with US jobs	Concern abt imports from China	Other more important concerns
Control (N = 297)	—	3.54 [1.09]	3.40 [1.11]	3.85 [1.10]	3.95 [1.08]	3.60 [1.01]
Panel A: Below-median Treatment Duration						
Trade Hurts Jobs (N = 114)	3.61 [1.08]$^{\text{Pers.}}$	3.69 [1.01]	3.35 [1.04]	3.81 [1.00]	3.76 [1.04]	3.69 [1.02]
... sans China (N = 87)	3.48 [1.09]$^{\text{Pers.}}$	3.51 [1.02]	3.51 [1.04]	3.74 [1.04]	3.53 [1.13]	3.52 [1.13]
Trade Helps Jobs (N = 87)	3.49 [1.01]	3.52 [1.06]	3.52 [1.14]	3.74 [1.05]	4.00 [1.07]	3.61 [0.92]
... sans China (N = 74)	3.53 [0.85]	3.39 [0.96]	3.47 [0.92]	3.65 [0.91]	3.55 [1.14]	3.38 [0.96]
Trade Helps Prices (N = 109)	3.29 [1.00]	3.64 [1.05]	3.31 [1.07]	3.72 [1.05]	3.77 [1.05]	3.65 [0.95]
... sans China (N = 126)	3.62 [1.01]	3.60 [1.17]	3.49 [1.16]	3.93 [1.10]	3.90 [1.17]	3.61 [1.17]
Tariff Hurts Prices (N = 103)	3.29 [0.97]	3.49 [1.10]	3.37 [1.11]	3.71 [1.02]	3.83 [1.12]	3.52 [0.97]
Other treatments (N = 333)	3.39 [1.10]	3.46 [1.11]	3.51 [1.05]	3.72 [1.02]	3.80 [1.05]	3.49 [1.03]
Panel B: Above-median Treatment Duration						
Trade Hurts Jobs (N = 150)	4.02 [0.96]$^{\text{Pers.}}$	3.76 [0.92]	3.56 [0.98]	4.31 [0.76]	4.25 [0.90]	3.93 [0.84]
... sans China (N = 96)	3.80 [1.03]$^{\text{Pers.}}$	3.76 [0.99]	3.60 [1.06]	4.20 [0.94]	4.10 [1.02]	3.86 [0.88]
Trade Helps Jobs (N = 148)	3.72 [1.02]	3.96 [0.99]	3.80 [1.03]	4.28 [0.83]	4.47 [0.84]	3.95 [0.92]
... sans China (N = 97)	3.71 [0.97]	3.81 [0.99]	3.35 [1.04]	4.12 [0.95]	4.23 [1.14]	3.76 [0.99]
Trade Helps Prices (N = 141)	3.31 [1.04]	3.84 [0.94]	3.52 [1.04]	4.33 [0.87]	4.26 [0.88]	4.09 [0.72]
... sans China (N = 130)	3.38 [1.14]	3.80 [1.00]	3.57 [1.11]	4.25 [0.87]	4.26 [0.96]	4.01 [0.83]
Tariff Hurts Prices (N = 142)	3.26 [1.13]	3.70 [1.17]	3.59 [1.11]	4.11 [1.05]	4.34 [0.87]	3.83 [0.98]
Other treatments (N = 442)	3.56 [1.08]	3.91 [0.98]	3.59 [1.04]	4.24 [0.92]	4.30 [0.87]	3.82 [0.86]

Notes: Mean values reported, with standard deviations in brackets. Based on the sample of Round 3 (2021) and Round 4 (2022) respondents who selected "More Limits on Import" as a top-three "Most Preferred" policy and were directed to these follow-up questions on their reasons for this preference. For the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Hurts Jobs sans China" treatments, the summary statistics in the first column (with superscript "Pers.") are agreement scores with being "persuaded that imports have hurt jobs in the U.S.", rather than being "not persuaded". The "Other treatments" row pools the agreement scores across the "Trade Hurts Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Hurts Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper" treatment groups.

that the reasons expressed by the control group should in principle reflect a set of underlying prior associations that are motivating protectionist preferences in the U.S. general public, as this group was not exposed to any of the information treatments. On the other hand, for those who received a narrative on the potential benefits of trade (or the costs from trade barriers), their reasons would speak directly to why such information "backfired". Given the role of attention uncovered in the previous subsection, Table 5 further parses apart these agreement scores for limited- versus high-attention respondents within each treatment group. To be clear, the goal of Table 5 is not to isolate treatment effects, since these summary statistics are based on the responses of those who had already revealed a preference for "more limits on imports". Instead, it is intended solely to provide descriptive evidence of the priors and reasons that respondents draw on when they express such support for protectionist policies.

Several key messages emerge. Among these participants who favored restrictions on imports,

fully recount the policies they could have but did not choose in the menu of eight options, which would make it harder to elicit sharp insights on their reasons for not selecting "more limits on imports" specifically.

there is a high degree of consistency across the control and all treatment groups (regardless of attention span) in the reasons cited most heavily for this choice. While one hypothesis is that they might have found the evidence unpersuasive, due perhaps to skepticism or distrust of academic "experts" (e.g., Cheng and Hsiaw 2022), this does not surface as a leading explanation. In fact, participants who received the "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments assigned a lack of persuasion one of the lowest, if not the lowest, agreement scores among the reasons for their favoring "more limits on imports".

It is instead concerns over how "imports often compete for jobs with U.S. workers" and over "imports from countries such as China" that saw the highest agreement scores, uniformly across all control and treatment groups. Of note, there is a similarly strong agreement registered on concerns for U.S. jobs, regardless of whether the respondent was randomized to a narrative about jobs (e.g., "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs") or about prices (e.g., "Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices"). Likewise, concern about trade with China is cited as a prime reason for preferring more limits on imports, even for the narratives that omit mention of "China" while providing otherwise identical information (e.g., comparing "Trade Helps Jobs" with "Trade Helps Jobs sans China", or "Trade Helps Prices" with "Trade Helps Prices sans China"). For the "sans China" groups, the information thus appears to evoke prior perceptions not only of trade in general but also specifically about trade with China, a topic on which there has been much news coverage in recent years related to unfair trade practices and geoeconomic competition.[44] This pervasive nature of concerns about trade with China – which surface even when China is not explicitly named – helps to explain why we find a similarly-sized protectionist reaction when comparing each treatment and its respective "sans China" counterpart (Table B.9).

Concerns about U.S. jobs and about trade with China resonated most even with the control group, which underscores how rooted these are as prior beliefs that are prompting a segment of the U.S. public to favor import protection. More subtly, the average agreement scores for those with below-median treatment duration (Panel A) resemble closely the control group. It appears then that what comes to mind for these limited-attention individuals are the same negative prior associations about the impact of trade shared in the broader U.S. public, regardless of the specific content of the information conveyed to them. While we see a similar ranking across reasons with the high-attention group (Panel B), there is also a distinctly stronger intensity (compared to the rest of the sample) in their degree of concern about U.S. jobs and about trading with China; this is in line with the earlier observation that those who took more time on the treatments were from a more sociopolitically engaged subset of the U.S. general population.

In the appendix, we show that these observations from Table 5 based on unconditional means are supported too by more formal regressions on the individual-level data. We consider OLS specifications of the form:

$$Agree_{ir} \quad = \quad \beta_J \mathbf{1}(ReasonJobs_r = 1) + \beta_C \mathbf{1}(ReasonChina_r = 1) + \alpha Order_{ir} + \delta_i D_i + \epsilon_{ir}, \quad (2)$$

44. This rise in U.S. protectionist sentiment in response to the emergence of an economic challenger is not without precedent. In the late 1980s, there was a surge in calls for barriers to trade and investment directed against Japan. A *New York Times* poll conducted at that time found that Americans viewed the economic power of Japan as a greater threat to U.S. national security than the military power of the Soviet Union, and about one in four supported restricting Japanese imports "a great deal" (*New York Times* 1990).

where the left-hand side variable is the agreement (on the 1 to 5 scale) expressed by individual i with reason r for preferring "more limits on imports", while $Order_{ir}$ is the randomized position in which that reason appeared on i's screen.[45] By conditioning on respondent fixed effects D_i, (2) exploits within-individual variation over the listed reasons for favoring import restrictions. With this more stringent approach, we confirm that concerns about job competition and about trading with China (captured by the indicator variables, $\mathbf{1}(ReasonJobs_r = 1)$ and $\mathbf{1}(ReasonChina_r = 1)$, respectively) each received significantly stronger agreement compared to all other reasons (which we collect together as the omitted category). This pattern holds when looking just within the control group, as well as separately among those who paid limited (respectively, high) attention on their assigned information treatment (Columns 1-3, Table B.12); indeed, the agreement scores from the limited-attention participants were statistically more similar to the control group than for those who spent an above-median duration on their treatment (Columns 4-5, Table B.12). Moreover, concerns about U.S. jobs and about trade with China stood out regardless of whether the treatment was about the effect of trade on jobs or trade on prices, or whether or not the narrative included "China" in its wording (Table B.13).

Word clouds. We provide further, visual corroboration of the importance of "jobs" and "China" in motivating protectionist preferences, through a word-cloud analysis of text responses (Figure 1). When participants were prompted to express any other reasons they had for favoring "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy, phrases that appeared with high frequency included: "American Jobs", "Made in the USA", "America First", "Self Reliance", and "China" (Panel A). Separately, when participants were asked to identify countries on which they favored placing more limits on imports, the most common answer recorded was "China", followed by "Russia" (Panel B).

These text-response patterns are pervasive: They are present within the control group (left column), which highlights once again how competition for U.S. jobs and reservations about trade with China are latent concerns spontaneously evoked by the topic of trade. The patterns likewise hold for individuals who received an information treatment, both among those with a below- and above-median treatment screen time (middle and right columns). In a series of additional word clouds in the appendix, we show how jobs- and worker-related concerns are dominant as a justification for "more limits on imports", both when the treatment conveyed was on the link between trade and jobs, as well as when it was on the link between trade and prices. In an analogous vein, the most commonly identified target country for import restrictions was China, regardless of whether the treatment was "with" or "sans China" in its wording (Figure B.1).[46]

Prior-biasing updating. It is useful at this juncture to take conceptual stock. We have just seen that those who express protectionist policy choices carry underlying prior concerns about trade, particularly related to the potential repercussions for U.S. jobs and of trading with

45. As Tables B.12-B.13 show, there appears to be a tendency to agree more strongly with reasons that appear earlier in the list.

46. We provide regression-based confirmation of these patterns in the appendix: There is no statistically significant difference in the occurrence of "jobs" or "China" in the text answers of the control, limited- and high-attention respondents (Table B.14), nor is there a meaningful difference across those shown a treatment about jobs versus about prices, as well as across those shown a treatment "with" versus "sans China" (Table B.15).

Figure 1: Word Clouds

A: What other reasons led you to select "More limits on imports" as a preferred policy?

Control group

Treatment: Below-median duration

Treatment: Above-median duration

B: On which countries do you support placing more limits on imports?

Control group

Treatment: Below-median duration

Treatment: Above-median duration

Notes: Sample comprises all available respondents across the control and all treatment groups who provided meaningful text responses. Panel A illustrates the pervasiveness of "jobs" concerns, while Panel B illustrates the frequency with which "China" is identified as a target country for more limits on imports. Within each Panel, the word clouds are illustrated for the control, below-median and above-median treatment duration subgroups respectively.

countries like China. Regardless of their specific content, the information treatments appear to have reinforced these priors, prompting these participants to become more negative in their beliefs of the impact trade has had on most Americans, and amplifying protectionist sentiments, particularly so among limited-attention respondents (see Tables 2 and 3).

To help rationalize these patterns, we lay out a framework of belief updating in the formation of trade policy preferences in which this updating is not Bayesian but rather *prior-biased*, drawing on the ideas in Charness and Dave (2017) and Benjamin (2019). We develop this more fully in Appendix C, but the key mechanism can be readily described. When individuals with a negative prior about the impact of trade receive a message (such as "Trade Hurts Jobs") that is consistent with that prior, the information reinforces their preferences for protection in the expected direction. However, when presented with a narrative that is at odds with or "dissonant"

with one's priors (such as evidence on the gains from trade, or the harm from imposing trade barriers), this prompts the individual to instead double down on their priors. For the limited-attention segments of the U.S. public who may not normally express strong views on sociopolitical issues, being shown evidence that is at odds with "what comes to mind" appears to have activated such latent priors, leading them to disbelieve the information and instead express a desire for more limits on trade.

In the next subsection, we will explore how prior-biased updating is relevant too for understanding trade policy preferences among those who engaged more attentively with the information. For this more sociopolitically active segment of the population, this will manifest itself as further heterogeneity in the information treatment effects along the lines drawn by their partisan political identity.

5.3 Among High-Attention Respondents: Political Identity

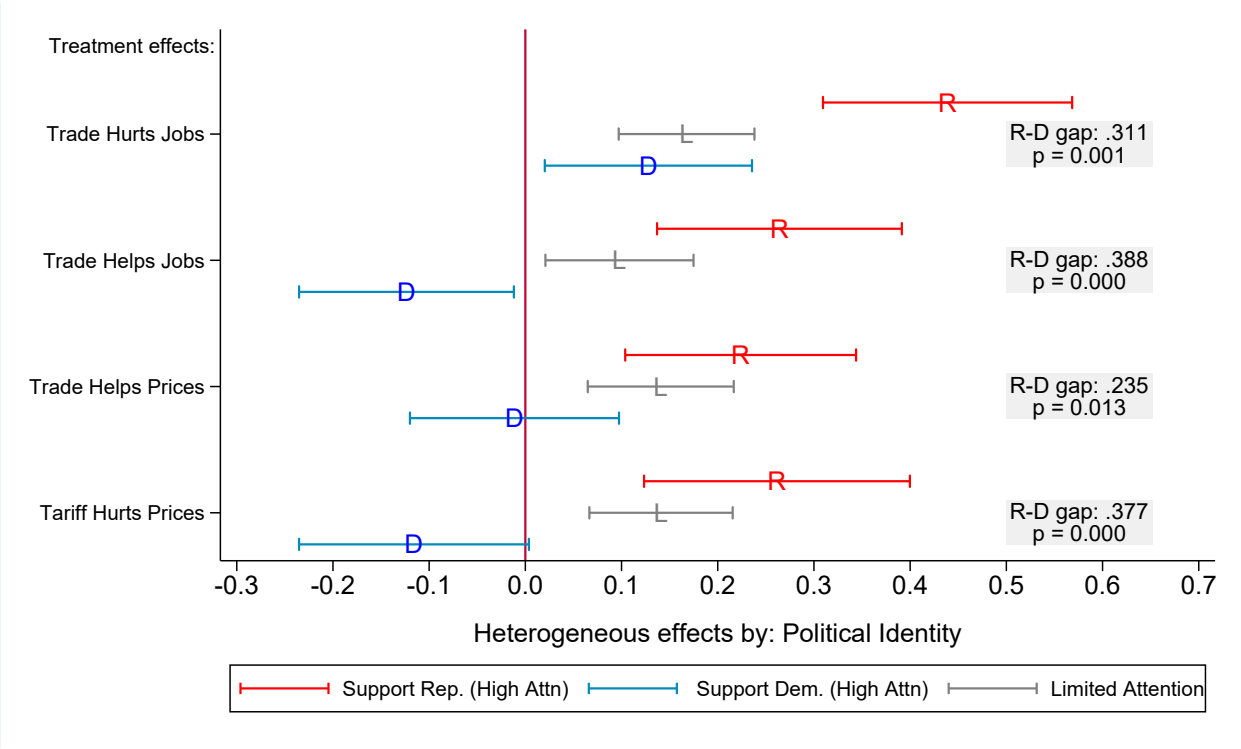
We have seen that respondents who took a longer time on their treatment screen were more likely to self-identify as a supporter of one of the two major U.S. political parties (c.f., Table 4), the latter being a characteristic elicited in the survey before the information treatments. The defining role of political identity in the U.S. context is noteworthy, given how party affiliation has increasingly been shaping individuals' preferences over a range of policies, including those related to trade (Grossman and Helpman 2021). Our sample period was marked by the Republican party's embrace of protectionism; by contrast, the Democratic party in its opposition to the Trump administration had a position that was less hostile toward international trade. This provides the motivation to explore differences across Republicans and Democrats among this politically-engaged segment of the U.S. public, to examine whether and how the information might have interacted with political identity in influencing policy preferences.

Toward this end, we consider a specification of the form:

$$\mathbf{1}(Policy_i) \;=\; \sum_{b=1}^{B} \sum_{x_i \in \tilde{X}_i} \alpha_{b,x} \mathbf{1}(Treatment_i = b) \times x_i + \sum_{b=1}^{B} \beta_b \mathbf{1}(Treatment_i = b) + \gamma X_i + \epsilon_i, \quad (3)$$

where $\tilde{X}_i$ is a subset of respondent variables in the vector X_i of controls. The above regression augments (1) with interaction terms between the treatment dummies and each $x_i \in \tilde{X}_i$, with the x_i's being characteristics that plausibly correlate with baseline beliefs (i.e., priors) held by respondent i on the desirability of free trade. In Appendix C, we show how this interaction specification emerges naturally from the model of belief updating in the formation of policy preferences. Intuitively, the $\alpha_{b,x}$ coefficient speaks to whether trade policy preferences are updated uniformly in the direction of the signal, or whether there are differential treatment effects that reveal how prior beliefs mediate one's reaction to the information. More concretely, suppose that x_i is a positive correlate of one's prior inclination toward protectionism, such as an indicator variable for Republican supporters. Finding that $\alpha_{b,x} > 0$ across all treatments would then indicate that high-x_i respondents are updating their beliefs on trade in a manner that is prior-biased, given that their views in support of protection are amplified regardless of whether

Figure 2: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects and Prior-Biased Updating by Political Identity



Notes: Implied information treatment effects with 90% confidence intervals are illustrated; standard errors are clustered by respondent county. Based on an OLS regression with treatment group dummies each interacted with indicators for: (i) below-median treatment duration; (ii) above-median treatment duration and "Support Rep."; and (iii) above-median treatment duration and "Support Dem.". Sample comprises the "Control" group, and the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups, pooled across all available rounds. For each treatment group, the "R-D gap" reports the difference in the implied information treatment effects between high-attention Republicans and high-attention Democrats; the p-value is for a test with null hypothesis that the "R-D gap" equals zero, based on the full covariance matrix of the estimated regression coefficients.

the information conveyed is on the gains or losses from trade.

In what follows, we report results based on OLS regressions of (3) using the principal component summary measure of protectionist preferences as the dependent variable; we focus on the four baseline narratives – "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices" – and their treatment effects relative to the control group. In line with how we have been segmenting the respondents, we consider a set $\tilde{X}_i$ that comprises indicator variables for whether i was: limited-attention (L), a high-attention Republican (R), or a high-attention Democrat (D), with the omitted category being high-attention independents. Figure 2 illustrates the implied information treatment effects from running this regression, for each separate respondent type (L, R, D) in each treatment group b, taking into account the estimated coefficients of the relevant main and interaction effect terms.[47]

Figure 2 reveals that the protectionist reaction to the treatments was strongest among high-attention Republicans, followed by limited-attention respondents, and then high-attention

47. For example, the treatment effect of "Trade Hurts Jobs" for the R group is calculated as the level effect coefficient on the "Trade Hurts Jobs" dummy, plus its interaction coefficient with being a high-attention Republican. We do not include the level effect of the L, R, and D categories when estimating (3), since these attention-contingent dummies are defined only for the treatment groups (and not the control group); as an example, the set of treatment indicators interacted with the L dummy spans the level effect of the L dummy itself.

Democrats. This pattern is consistent with prior-biased updating along partisan lines. For Republican supporters, narratives such as "Trade Hurts Jobs" that align with their political priors reinforce those party-line views, accentuating preferences for protection even more than among limited-attention respondents. On the other hand, efforts to convey either the jobs- or price-related benefits of trade were unable to move Republicans in the direction of the narratives; they appear to react to the disconfirming information by instead doubling down on those priors, inducing a larger backfire effect compared to the limited-attention segment.

At the other end of the political spectrum, high-attention Democrats exhibit a dampened preference for protection, as if they were updating their views to become less opposed to trade, in line with where their party stood during the sample period. The implied treatment effects on the three narratives that speak to the benefits of remaining open to trade each have a negative sign, with one of these (for "Trade Helps Jobs") even significant at the 10% level. With high-attention Democrats, such information appears to have traction in moderating and even reversing protectionist preferences. The earlier regressions in Table 3, specifically Columns 2-3 focusing on high-attention individuals, were thus masking important heterogeneity in the treatment effects: the more muted and even insignificant "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" coefficients there are the outcome of offsetting shifts in Republicans' and Democrats' preferences for protection toward their respective party-line positions.

On a related note, we have obtained a similar pattern of heterogeneous treatment effects when using, in lieu of the Republican and Democrat dummies, a pair of indicator variables for whether one regards oneself as more conservative versus more liberal "on economic policy matters" (see Table B.17).[48] More interestingly, when both sets of interaction terms, namely for partisan identity and economic policy positioning, are included jointly in the same regression, the backfire effect among high-attention Republicans remains statistically significant, but not the corresponding effect for economic policy conservatives (Table B.18). This suggests that partisan political identity embodies a broader set of forces, extending beyond one's prior economic policy beliefs, that are relevant for shaping responses to information on the topic of trade.

This differential response along party lines is not easily explained by mechanisms in conventional trade theories. One could posit, for instance, that individuals who read the "Trade Helps Prices" narrative might have reasoned that there must be domestic industries hurt by import competition, prompting them to then favor more protectionism. That said, it is unclear why this line of reasoning would necessarily resonate more strongly with Republicans than Democrats, without circling back to the observation that the two parties differ in their prior positioning on trade policy. Another alternative interpretation is that the backfire effect among Republicans could reflect their greater distrust or even rejection of academics. We ultimately do not view this as a leading explanation, given the low agreement scores assigned to being unpersuaded by the evidence relative to other concerns about trade (reported earlier in Table 5). Moreover, as

48. Specifically, respondents were asked whether they viewed themselves as more liberal, moderate, or more conservative "on economic policy matters". The correlation between being a Democratic supporter and being more liberal on economic policy is 0.38, and that between being a Republican supporter and being more conservative on economic policy is 0.48. Table B.16 shows that those who saw themselves as economic policy conservatives were more inclined to express protectionist preferences, with the opposite being true for economic policy liberals; this holds while controlling for partisan political identity.

we will shortly see, Republicans were no more likely than Democrats to cite being unpersuaded by the evidence as a reason for favoring more limits on imports.

This finding that information can reinforce prior beliefs stemming from one's political identity echoes results uncovered in other policy domains. Respondents have been found to double down on their beliefs in the face of messaging that is incongruent with their priors on such issues as: affirmative action and gun control (Taber and Lodge 2006), crime perceptions (Nyhan et al. 2020), and immigration (Barrera et al. 2020). It also connects with a strand of work on the efficacy of fact-checking, which has demonstrated that such efforts can fail to persuade and can even lead individuals to dig in their heels toward views rooted in one's partisanship (e.g., Nyhan and Reifler 2010).[49] Related to this, the desire for congruent, confirmatory messaging can affect the demand for news sources (Mullainathan and Shleifer 2005, Chopra et al. 2022).

We highlight two implications of this prior-biased updating on the basis of political identity. First, the doubling down by high-attention Republicans in their support for protectionist policies is a further source of the backfire effect in the overall sample. Together with the limited-attention participants discussed earlier in Section 5.1, these are the two key segments of the U.S. general population in which evidence-based efforts to communicate the gains from trade (or the losses from trade barriers) instead entrench concerns about the desirability of being open to trade.

As a second unintended consequence, the information generates a further polarization of Republicans and Democrats on the issue of trade. We summarize this with the "R-D gap" reported in Figure 2; this is the difference in the treatment effects across party identity lines, and thus speaks to how much further these relatively more engaged Republicans' and Democrats' protectionist preferences moved apart. We can reject a null hypothesis of no divergence (i.e., equal treatment effects for Republicans and Democrats) for all four baseline treatments (p-values < 0.05). The extent of this polarization is sizeable: the gulf between these Republicans and Democrats in the intensity of their support for protection widens further, by between 26.7%-44.1% of the initial gap (across the four treatments).[50]

Other dimensions of heterogeneity. In related analysis, we have explored other respondent characteristics that might proxy for the prior views individuals hold regarding international trade, to see if these too interact with the information to yield meaningful heterogeneous treatment effects. The details from this analysis are summarized by Figures B.2-B.4 in the appendix. There, we consider a range of potential markers of one's pre-disposition toward protection, including: variables that capture the role of economic self-interest (e.g., whether one is employed in manufacturing, whether one has less than college-level education); sociotropic concerns (e.g., how concerned one is about inequality in the U.S., how satisfied one is with the U.S. job market); and loss aversion.

We find that many of these respondent variables exhibit significant level-effect correlations

49. An overview of work in political science on this topic is provided by Nyhan (2021). In the context of trade policy, Porter and Wood (2022) find that fact-checking treatments intended to correct misperceptions about openness can induce more favorable attitudes toward free trade, but these effects are weaker for Republicans.

50. For example, consider the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment. The initial difference between the Republican and Democrat dummy coefficients from the Table 3, Column 2 regression (run with the high-attention respondents) is $0.6674 - (-0.2115) \approx 0.879$. This widens by a further 0.311 upon exposure to the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment, or $0.311/0.879 \approx 35.4\%$ of the initial gap.

with preferences for protection, but their interactions with the treatments are often imprecisely estimated. For example, manufacturing sector workers and those without a college degree are slightly more inclined to support protectionist policies (Figure B.2, principal component outcome measure).[51] However, the interactions of each of these two variables with the treatment dummies otherwise yield indistinct results (Figure B.3). While one might have hypothesized that adverse economic exposure to trade shocks could make individuals' preferences for protection more responsive to the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment or less responsive to evidence on the benefits of trade, we do not find such patterns in practice.[52]

Interestingly, we do uncover several pertinent interaction effects when we focus on the more sociopolitically-engaged segment of our sample, namely those with an above-median treatment screen duration (Figure B.4). When significant, these effects can be read as being consistent with prior-biased updating. For example, respondents from lower-income households (<$50,000 annual income) and those who perceive a negative impact from NAFTA tend to favor more limits on trade (Figure B.2), and they appear to double down on this preference when presented with information that trade can have positive job impacts (Figure B.4, Panel B). We see a similar intensification among: those who are more pessimistic about the outlook for future generations and are shown information that "Trade Helps Jobs" (Panel B), and among those who are willing to pay more for a U.S. brand and are shown the "Tariff Hurts Prices" narrative (Panel D). In line with the hypothesis in Freund and Ozden (2008) and Tovar (2009), we find that loss averse individuals are less inclined toward free trade (Figure B.2); they also appear to downweight information on the benefits of trade openness for goods prices (Figure B.4, Panel C), as the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment instead reinforces their preference for protection.

Political identity and beliefs. As a final exercise, we return to the reasons expressed by participants for favoring "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred Policy", studied earlier in Section 5.2. We build on that discussion, by showing how partisan political identity is highly relevant for explaining the intensity of the beliefs and concerns held about the desirability of free trade. For this, we augment the specification in (2) as follows:

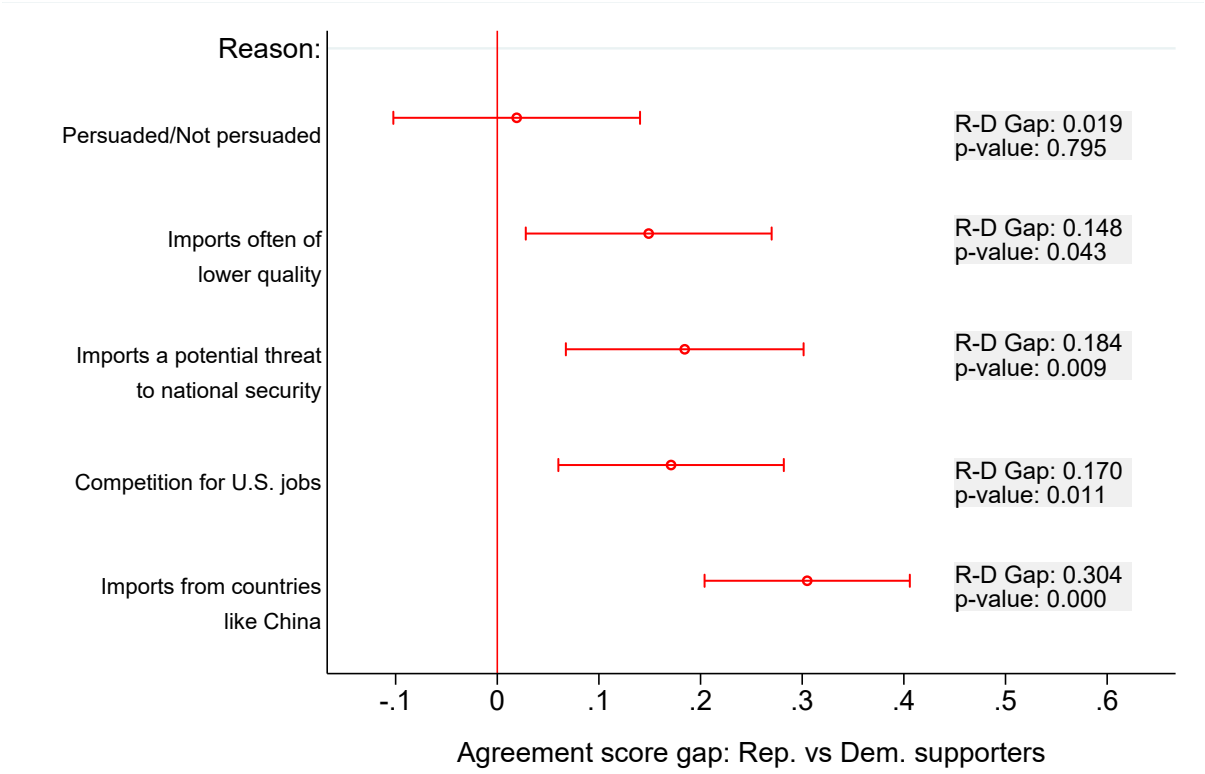
$$\begin{aligned} Agree_{ir} \;=\; & \sum_{l=1}^{5} \gamma_{l,R} \mathbf{1}(Reason_r = l) \times Rep_i + \sum_{l=1}^{5} \gamma_{l,D} \mathbf{1}(Reason_r = l) \times Dem_i \\ & + \alpha Order_{ir} + \delta_i D_i + \delta_{tr} D_{tr} + \epsilon_{ir}, \end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

where Rep_i (respectively, Dem_i) is an indicator for whether i identified as a Republican (respectively, Democratic) supporter in the most recent presidential election. Equation (4) is an exacting specification: the D_i's sweep up the role of both observable and unobserved respondent characteristics (including the main effects of Rep_i and Dem_i), while the D_{tr}'s are fixed effects which control for the average degree of agreement expressed by each treatment group t with each reason l. In what follows, we work with the full list of reasons, but with "there are other more

51. With the respondent variables being z-scored in Figure B.2, it is useful to point out that Republican and Democrat partisan identity have particularly sizeable influence on preferences for protection.

52. See, however, Ardanaz et al. (2013), who find that economic self-interest variables play a mediating role in shaping views toward trade in a survey-based experiment run in Argentina with short frames as treatments.

Figure 3: Why "More Limits on Imports"? The Role of Political Identity
(Interaction Effects)



Notes: Point estimates with 90% confidence intervals are illustrated; standard errors are clustered by respondent county. Based on OLS regressions on the Round 3 (2021) and Round 4 (2022) samples; comprising respondents in the "Control" group, and the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variable in each column is the agreement score (on a scale of 1-5) with a given reason for selecting "More limits on imports" as a top-three Most Preferred policy. All regressions include individual fixed effects, a full set of treatment-group-by-reason dummies, as well as reason dummies interacted with "Support Rep." and "Support Dem.". Point estimates reported for each stated reason are the difference between the "Support Rep." and "Support Dem." interaction coefficients; the p-value is from a test with null hypothesis that the "R-D gap" equals zero, based on the full covariance matrix of the estimated regression coefficients.

important concerns" as the omitted bin.

Figure 3 illustrates the difference, $\gamma_{l,R} - \gamma_{l,D}$, between the Republican and Democrat coefficients that we estimate from (4) for each reason l. We find that Republicans are no more inclined than Democrats to cite "Not persuaded" as a reason for wanting "more limits on imports", indicating that the heterogeneous information treatment effects in Figure 2 are unlikely to be driven by an expressive rejection of academics on the part of Republicans. To be clear, the estimated $\gamma_{l,R} - \gamma_{l,D}$ does not reflect the overall persuasion gap between Republicans and Democrats, but only among those who selected "more limits on imports" as a top-three preferred policy. Strictly speaking, this does not rule out the possibility that Democrats as a whole were more persuaded by the expert evidence, although one would need a more subtle, non-obvious story to explain why some Democrats were less persuaded than their co-partisans by the evidence (behaving more like Republicans in this respect) and then went on to select "more limits on imports".

Instead, Republicans are significantly more intense compared to Democrats in their agreement with concerns about the quality of imports, about national security, about competition

posed to American workers, and especially about trading with China, as grounds for backing more import restrictions (p-values < 0.05). The intensity of beliefs and concerns for favoring protection thus appear to be defined (at least in part) by political identity, with Republicans holding particularly strong reservations about importing from China. This underscores a key challenge in communicating information on the benefits of trade to the U.S. general public: Given the tendency for individuals to double down on their priors based on political identity, such information is unlikely to succeed, particularly with Republican party supporters, unless it also seeks to address strongly-held concerns about U.S.-China trade relations, and (by extension) about the countries' broader geopolitical competition.

6 Concluding Discussion

Can evidence-based information shift preferences towards trade policy? We explored this question by conducting a series of surveys over 2018-2022 that contain randomized information treatments, each with a concise summary of economics evidence on the gains and losses from trade.

We find that the answer to our motivating question is: "Yes", but in complex and unanticipated ways. On the one hand, information on adverse impacts to manufacturing jobs ("Trade Hurts Jobs") raises support for more limits on imports. On the other hand, we uncover a novel backfire effect, as narratives that report evidence on gains in non-manufacturing jobs ("Trade Helps Jobs") or gains through lower consumer prices ("Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices") also induce a stronger preference for protection. The reactions to information presented in this format on the benefits versus losses from trade are thus highly asymmetric.

We document patterns of heterogeneous responses that shed light on mechanisms. Among respondents who spent a relatively limited duration on the narratives, the information appears to instinctively call to mind prior associations of trade that tend to be negative, related to competition posed to American jobs or reservations about trading with China. Among respondents who spent more time to engage with the information, their stronger sense of partisan political identity plays a distinctive role in shaping how they react to the narratives: When the information is dissonant with the trade policy positions of the party they support, it instead reinforces their preferences in favor of their priors (rather than in the direction of the conveyed information), with Republicans becoming more supportive and Democrats less in favor of protectionist measures. This is consistent with a pattern of prior-biased belief updating that we flesh out in a simple model, and it results in a greater polarization of the two parties' supporters in their preferences over trade policy. In response to narratives on the gains from trade, this doubling down by limited-attention respondents and by high-attention Republicans in their desire for import protection is sufficiently strong to account for the backfire effect in our overall sample.

Our findings give pause to whether short evidence-based messaging can steer public views over trade policy, much as one might place stock in this as a mode for communicating information about the gains from trade. If policy preferences can be shifted by such narratives in unintended directions, this should prompt some rethinking on the role of information in the political economy of trade policy formation. We highlight three challenges on this front.

First, our findings call for more to be done to focus messaging and education on assuaging the

two key sets of prior concerns – over competition with American jobs, and over trade with China (see Section 5.2) – to pre-empt the backfire effect against pro-trade narratives. On concerns over American jobs, we would hypothesize that one may be able to make inroads through efforts, such as in Stantcheva (2023b), to improve the public's understanding of the scope for redistributive policies to remediate the adverse effects of trade. Information that engages respondents for a longer duration may also hold promise (c.f., Table 3), subject to the caveat that one would first need to elicit this participation in more time-intensive treatments. On the other hand, we are more pessimistic about the ability of economics-based evidence to move the U.S. general public on their concerns about U.S.-China trade, as these may well extend beyond the sole purview of economics to considerations of geopolitical competition and rivalry.

Second, recent trends in partisan positions, notably within the Democratic party, are likely to further complicate the task of public communication on trade policy. As clear already in our survey responses, Republicans are more intense in their support for protection than Democrats are in their opposition to it (relative to independents). Under the Biden administration, the Democratic party arguably became more lukewarm on free trade, as seen from the continued use of the Trump-era tariffs, calls to encourage friendshoring and nearshoring, and the roll-out of industrial policies to bolster domestic manufacturing (Alfaro and Chor 2023). If anything, concerns about American jobs and about the geoeconomic risk of China as a trade partner are poised to intensify among Democrats. This expands the challenge of communicating to the U.S. public that there are tradeoffs and pitfalls when protectionist policies are pursued.

Third, looking beyond trade policy, our findings raise a broader question: Under what circumstances might one expect such a backfire effect against policy messaging to arise? While a full answer to this lies beyond the scope of our paper, what we can posit based on our results and our reading of the literature is that such reactions are more likely when the policy issues at stake are keenly contested along partisan lines. This is an issue that warrants further investigation, to more effectively shape public communication on policies moving forward.

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A Online Appendix: Survey Platform

A.1 Survey Treatments

The following **preamble** is presented at the start of each of the information treatment narratives (excluding the control group).

> How have globalization and imports affected workers and households? Economic researchers have been studying this issue.

"Trade Hurts Jobs" narrative. Based on Autor, Dorn and Hanson (AER 2013), with Figure 1 drawn from their paper:

> A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from China, after China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This was a major force behind the fall in U.S. employment in the manufacturing sector, as the figure below shows. This led to weak wage growth for the middle- and low-income workers who used to hold these manufacturing jobs.

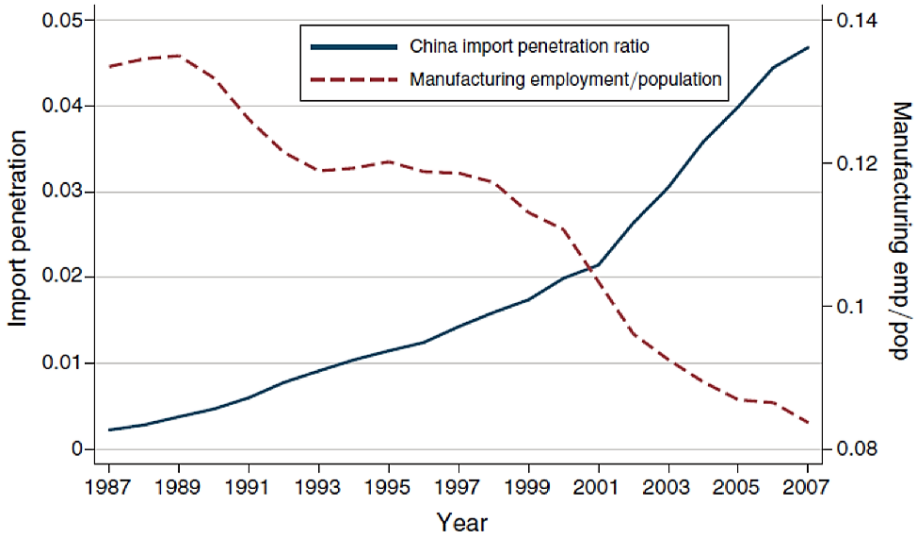
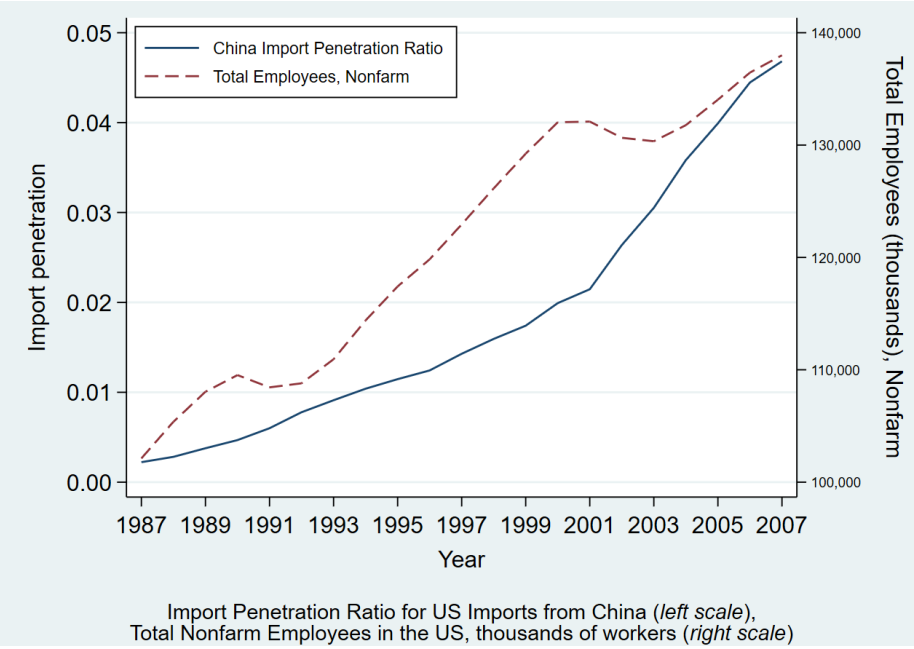


FIGURE 1. IMPORT PENETRATION RATIO FOR US IMPORTS FROM CHINA (*left scale*), AND SHARE OF US WORKING-AGE POPULATION EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING (*right scale*)

"Trade Helps Jobs". Based on Caliendo, Dvorkin and Parro (2019):

> A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from China, after China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This enabled the U.S. to specialize more in the service sectors in which it is particularly productive, helping to increase the number of jobs in the U.S. economy. The figure below shows that the rise in total jobs over the last decades was substantial.



Starting in 2020, two additional treatments were included that mix the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Helps Jobs" narratives:

- **"Trade Hurts Helps Jobs":** "Trade Hurts Jobs" is presented first, followed by "Trade Helps Jobs". The narratives are prefaced respectively by: "On the one hand, a line of recent research. . .", and "On the other hand, another line of recent research. . .". (The figures from both narratives were included.)

- **"Trade Helps Hurts Jobs":** This is analogous to "Trade Hurts Helps Jobs", except that the order of the "Trade Hurts Jobs" and "Trade Helps Jobs" narratives are reversed.

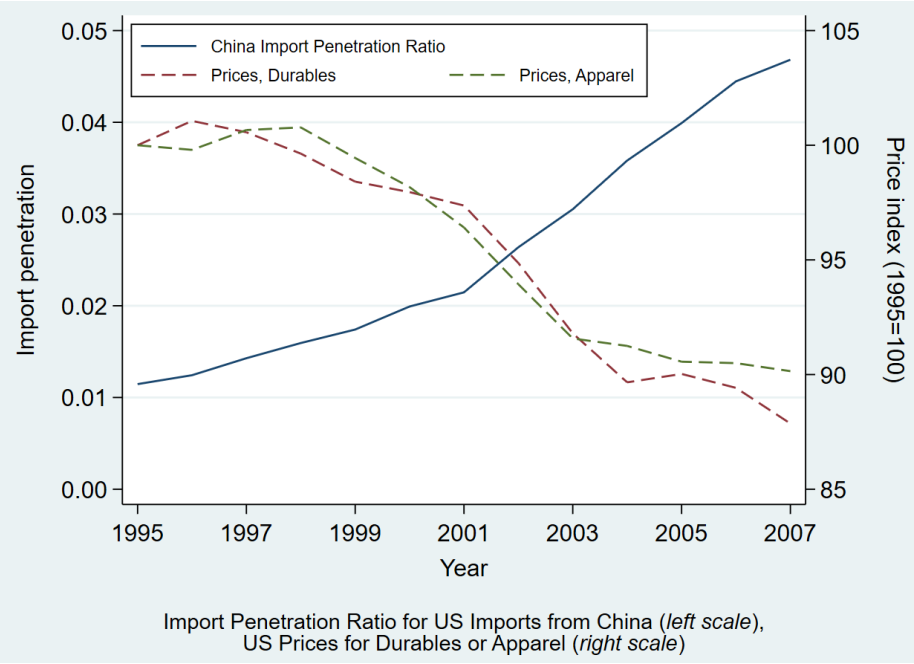
Starting in 2021, two additional treatments were run that took out any occurrence of the word "China" from the narratives and from the accompanying figure:

- **"Trade Hurts Jobs sans China":** The wording is as follows, with the key change being replacing the description of the rise in imports from China with a description that refers to a general rise in imports from the rest of the world. "A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from the rest of the world, as a result of globalization. This was a major force behind the fall in U.S. employment in the manufacturing sector, as the figure below shows. This led to weak wage growth for the middle- and low-income workers who used to hold these manufacturing jobs."

- **"Trade Helps Jobs sans China":** The wording is as follows. "A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from the rest of the world, as a result of globalization. This enabled the U.S. to specialize more in the service sectors in which it is particularly productive, helping to increase the number of jobs in the U.S. economy. The figure below shows that the rise in total jobs over the last decades was substantial."

"Trade Helps Prices". Based on price index data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

> A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from China, after China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. This was a major force behind the availability of cheaper goods, which benefited Americans. As imports from China increased, the prices of durable goods (computers, electrical products, furniture, etc.) and of nondurable goods such as apparel all saw declines, as the figure below shows.



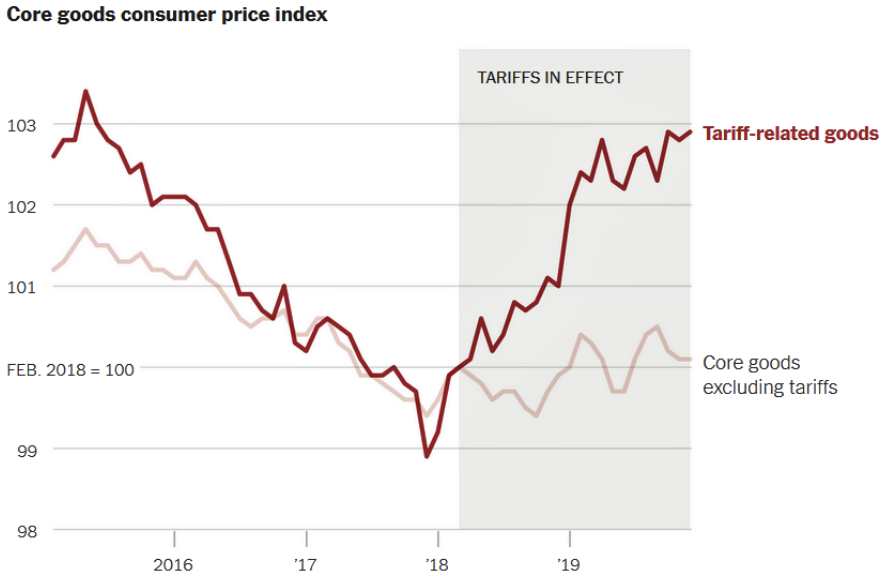
Two variants of the "Trade Helps Prices" treatment were included in the survey starting in 2020:

- **"Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper".** The sentence: "This was a major force behind the availability of cheaper goods, which benefited Americans." was replaced by: "This was a major force behind the increased availability of goods, which benefited Americans." This wording was intended to replace the adjective "cheaper", which could have triggered negative views towards imports due to the possible association of "cheaper" with being of "low quality".

- **"Trade Helps Prices sans China".** Any references to "China" were removed from the narrative; this parallels the wording in the "Trade Hurts Jobs sans China" and "Trade Helps Jobs sans China" treatments, as follows. "A line of recent research has shown that the United States substantially increased its imports from the rest of the world, as a result of globalization. This was a major force behind the availability of cheaper goods, which benefited Americans. As imports from the rest of the world increased, the prices of durable goods (computers, electrical products, furniture, etc.) and of nondurable goods such as apparel all saw declines, as the figure below shows."

"Tariff Hurts Prices". Based on Amiti, Redding and Weinstein (2019); figure from the *New York Times* ("Opinion: The Year in Charts," by Steve Rattner, 31 Dec 2019).

A line of recent research has shown that the tariffs in 2018 have raised the cost of living in the United States. Over the course of 2018, the U.S. imposed tariffs on approximately $400 billion of imports, particularly from China. This led to significant increases in U.S. prices of tariff-related goods, as the figure below shows. It is estimated that this increase in prices lowered U.S. real income by $1.4 billion per month.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Core goods excludes food and energy; tariff-related goods prices includes laundry equipment and other appliances, furniture and bedding, housekeeping supplies, window and floor coverings, auto parts and bicycles.

A.2 Full Questionnaire

On the introductory screen, participants are first briefed on the survey, the requirements to participate, the team conducting it, and are given contact information of the team in the event that they have questions. It is mentioned that they can withdraw from the survey at any point, but will only be compensated upon completing the survey. They are then asked if they consent to being surveyed for the project.

Questions asked in the survey are below. Answer choices for each question are in *italics*.

Demographic Questions

- What is you age (in years)?
  18-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; Above 65
- What gender do you identify with?
  Male; Female; Other
- Were you born in the US?
  Yes; No
- In which state were you born? *(Dropdown list provided.)*
- In which country were you born? *(Dropdown list provided.)*
- In which state (or territory) do you live? *(Dropdown list provided.)*
- What is the name of the city or town in which you live? *(Text box.)*
- How would you describe your ethnicity/race?
  White; African-American; Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin; Asian; American Indian or Alaskan Native; Middle Eastern or North African; Pacific Islander; Other
- What is your level of education?
  High school or less; Some college (or currently in college); College graduate; Post graduate
- What is/was your major in college? *(Dropdown list provided.)*
- Which of the following best describes your employment status?
  Employed, working 40 or more hours per week; Employed, working 1-39 hours per week; Not employed, looking for work; Not employed, NOT looking for work; Retired; Disabled, not able to work; Student, full-time
- Which of the following best describes the sector in which you are currently working?
  Agriculture; Mining; Manufacturing; Services
- Which of the following best describes your current occupation? *(Dropdown list provided.)*
- What was your TOTAL household income last year?
  $0-$24,999; $25,000-$49,999; $50,000-$74,999; $75,000-$99,999; $100,000-$149,999; $150,000-$199,999; $200,000+; Unsure

Background Views and Beliefs

- On economic policy matters, where do you see yourself on the liberal/conservative spectrum?
  More conservative; More liberal; Moderate
- Which party's candidate did you support in the 2016 U.S. presidential election?
  Democrat; Republican; Neither
- Which party's candidate did you support in the 2020 U.S. presidential election? [Rounds 3-4 only]
  Democrat; Republican; Neither
- When there is an economic policy problem, do you view the free market or government action as the best solution?
  Free market; Government action; It depends
- Do you think top income tax rates for the richest households in the United States were higher in the 1980s and the 1990s than they are today?
  Yes; No
- How big of a problem do you think inequality is in the United States today?
  Not a problem; A small problem; A problem; A serious problem
- Do you think income inequality in the United States has increased or decreased since the 1980s?
  Increased; Stayed the same; Decreased
- What do you think the current average tariff rate is in the U.S.? (Tariff rate refers to a tax imposed on imported goods.)
  0-4.99%; 5-9.99%; 10-14.99%; 15%+
- Do you think China is one of the top three export destinations for U.S. firms?
  Yes; No
- How much of the time do you think you can trust government to do what is right?
  Always; Most of the time; About half the time; Sometimes; Never
- How much of the time do you think you can trust private corporations to do what is right for their workers? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Always; Most of the time; About half the time; Sometimes; Never
- How much of the time do you think people in your neighborhood can be trusted? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Always; Most of the time; About half the time; Sometimes; Never
- How much of the time do you think foreigners can be trusted? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Always; Most of the time; About half the time; Sometimes; Never
- Are you willing to pay more for a U.S. brand than a foreign brand of similar quality?
  Yes; No
- Which of the following would you prefer on your monthly cell phone statement: Avoiding an additional surcharge of $100 vs getting a discount of $100? [Rounds 2-4 only]

Strongly prefer avoiding a surcharge; Slightly prefer avoiding a surcharge; No preference for either; Slightly prefer getting a discount; Strongly prefer getting a discount

- Suppose you are given a cell phone with a market value around $500. [Rounds 2-4 only]
  - Indicate the price you would be willing to pay if you had to purchase the cell phone yourself:
    $450 or less; Between $450 and $500; Exactly $500; Between $500 and $550; $550 or more
  - Indicate the price you would be willing to accept if you were to sell the cell phone:
    $450 or less; Between $450 and $500; Exactly $500; Between $500 and $550; $550 or more

- Are you satisfied with the current health of the U.S. job market?
  Yes; No
- Which of the following best describes how you view your job? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Gives a sense of identity; Just something to do for a living
- How big of a problem do you think inflation (i.e., rising prices) is in the United States today? [Round 4 only]
  Not a problem; A small problem; A problem; A serious problem
- What impact do you think the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, a free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada) has had on you and your family?
  Extremely good; Somewhat good; Neither good nor bad; Somewhat bad; Extremely bad
- What impact do you think the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic has had on job security for you and your family? [Rounds 3-4 only]
  Extremely good; Somewhat good; Neither good nor bad; Somewhat bad; Extremely bad
- What impact do you think the U.S. government's coronavirus (covid-19) relief packages and stimulus checks have had for you and your family? [Rounds 3-4 only]
  Extremely good; Somewhat good; Neither good nor bad; Somewhat bad; Extremely bad
- Do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. government's coronavirus (covid-19) relief packages and stimulus checks? [Rounds 3-4 only]
  Strongly approve; Somewhat approve; Neither approve; nor disapprove; Somewhat disapprove; Strongly disapprove
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children born into my community will have a better life than my generation.
  Strongly agree; Somewhat agree; Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree; Strongly disagree

News Sources

- What type of media would you say is your main source of news about current events?
  Television; Internet; Print media/Newspapers; Radio; Podcasts; Word of mouth; None/Don't follow the news

- How often do you follow the news to keep up with current events?
  Daily; 3-6 times a week; 1-2 times a week; Less than once a week
- Which of the following programs is your main source of news?
  Broadcast television news (e.g., PBS, CBS, ABC, NBC); Cable news: CNN, MSNBC; Cable news: Fox News; Local TV news station; News/Evening news (non-specific); Other specific program/channel
- Which of the following internet sources is your main provider of news?
  Commercial media websites (e.g., cnn.com, bbc.com, nytimes.com); Social media (Facebook/Twitter); News aggregating service (Google News, Apple News, etc); Others; None (Do not obtain your news from internet sources)

Information Treatments

Refer to Section A.1 for a description of the information treatments. At the end of the treatment screen (which is a blank screen for the control group), participants are instructed to click to proceed to the next section.

Treatment Response Questions

- What impact do you think being open to international trade has had for most Americans? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Extremely good; Somewhat good; Neither good nor bad; Somewhat bad; Extremely bad
- How confident are you in your assessment from the previous question, regarding the impact that international trade has had for most Americans? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Not at all confident; Somewhat not confident; Neutral; Somewhat confident; Extremely confident
- Do you support placing more limits on imports?
  Yes; No
  - If yes, on which countries?
    All Countries; Developing countries; Others (text box to specify)
- Would you support an increase in the U.S. tariff rate to reduce imports?
  Yes; No, maintain tariff rate; No, lower tariff rate
- What would you like the U.S. tariff rate to be? *(Text box.)*
- Should the U.S. tariff rate on imports be increased for specific industries?
  Yes; No
  - If yes, on which industries? *(Text box.)*
- Would you like the U.S. to leave the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, a free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada)?
  Yes; No

- Would you support a higher minimum wage?
  Yes; No
- Of the following two policies, which do you prefer?
  Higher taxes on top income earners; Higher tariff rates on imports from foreign countries; Both policies; Neither policy
- Would you support the U.S. signing free trade agreements with more foreign countries?
  Yes; No
- Of the policies listed below, please select the three you MOST prefer: *(order randomized for survey participants)*
  - *More limits on imports from foreign countries (e.g., higher tariffs on imports)*
  - *Exiting from existing free trade agreements*
  - *Higher taxes on top income earners*
  - *More benefits for the unemployed (e.g., unemployment insurance)*
  - *More limits on immigration*
  - *Improving education and worker training*
  - *Weakening the U.S. dollar, so that U.S. exports are more competitive*
  - *Higher minimum wage*
- Of the policies listed below, please select the three you LEAST prefer: *(order randomized for survey participants)*
  - *More limits on imports from foreign countries (e.g., higher tariffs on imports)*
  - *Exiting from existing free trade agreements*
  - *Higher taxes on top income earners*
  - *More benefits for the unemployed (e.g., unemployment insurance)*
  - *More limits on immigration*
  - *Improving education and worker training*
  - *Weakening the U.S. dollar, so that U.S. exports are more competitive*
  - *Higher minimum wage*

Validation and Follow-up

- Did the information from the research findings that you read about earlier in this survey affect your views on trade policy (i.e., the use of tariffs or limits on imports)? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Strongly agree; Somewhat agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat disagree; Strongly disagree

- If participant selected "More Limits on Imports" as one of their three "Most Preferred" policies, they were directed to a series of follow-up questions. [Rounds 3-4 only]

– For participants in the control group: "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies. For each of the following statements, please tell us the degree to which it explains your selecting "More limits on imports" as a preferred policy. I selected "More limits on imports" as a preferred policy because..." *(order randomized for survey participants)*

  * Imports are often of lower quality.
  * Imports often compete for jobs with U.S. workers.
  * Imports are a potential threat to U.S. national security.
  * I am concerned about U.S. imports from countries such as China.
  * There are other more important concerns.

  For each potential reason, the participant chooses between the following options: *Strongly agree; Somewhat agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat disagree; Strongly disagree*

– For participants in the "Trade Hurts Jobs" or "Trade Hurts Jobs sans China" treatment groups: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how imports have affected manufacturing jobs in the U.S." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  * I was persuaded that imports have hurt jobs in the U.S.

– For participants in the "Trade Helps Jobs" or "Trade Helps Jobs sans China" treatment groups: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how trade has allowed the U.S. to create jobs in the service sectors in which the U.S. is particularly productive." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  * I was not persuaded that trade has helped to create jobs in the U.S.

– For participants in the "Trade Hurts Helps Jobs" treatment group: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how imports have affected manufacturing jobs in the U.S., while at the same time trade has allowed the U.S. to create jobs in the service sectors in which the U.S. is particularly productive." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  * I was not persuaded that trade has helped to create jobs in the U.S.

– For participants in the "Trade Helps Hurts Jobs" treatment group: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how trade has allowed the U.S. to create jobs in the service sectors in which the U.S. is particularly productive, while at the same time imports have affected manufacturing

jobs in the U.S.." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  - I was not persuaded that trade has helped to create jobs in the U.S.

- For participants in the "Trade Helps Prices", "Trade Helps Prices sans China", and "Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper" treatment groups: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how imports have helped to lower prices of goods for Americans." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  - I was not persuaded that imports have lowered goods prices for Americans.

- For participants in the "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups: The opening sentence is replaced by "We noticed that you selected "More limits on imports" as one of your three most preferred policies, after reading the information about how tariffs imposed by the U.S. have raised the prices of goods for Americans." Also, the following potential reason is added to the baseline list: *(order randomized)*

  - I was not persuaded that tariffs imposed by the U.S. have raised goods prices for Americans.

- For all the above groups: What other reasons led you to select "More limits on imports" as a preferred policy? *(Text box.)*

- Has the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic affected your views on trade policy (i.e., the use of tariffs or limits on imports)? [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Yes; No
- In view of the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic, which of the following would you agree with? (Select all that apply.) [Rounds 2-4 only]
  Yes; No
  - *Countries should be able to restrict the export of medical products and health equipment.*
  - *Countries should avoid imposing tariffs on imports of medical products and health equipment.*
  - *Countries should keep the manufacture of goods that are needed in supply chains at home and avoid moving production abroad.*
  - *Countries should avoid imposing tariffs on imports of goods that are needed in supply chains.*
  - *Countries should be able to restrict the movement of people across borders.*
  - *None of the above.*
- How has the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic affected your views of China? [Rounds 3-4 only]

Strongly positively affected; Somewhat positively affected; Neither positively nor negatively affected; Somewhat negatively affected; Strongly negatively affected

- In what other ways has the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic affected your views about globalization? [Rounds 2-4 only] *(Text box.)*
- The information from the research findings that I read about earlier in this survey was on the topic of: [Rounds 2-4 only] *(order randomized)*
  - *the relationship between trade and prices*
  - *the relationship between trade and jobs*
  - *I did not receive information on any of the above*

B Online Appendix: Additional Tables and Figures

In this section, we provide a walk-through guide of the appendix tables and figures.

Table B.1 presents summary statistics for our respondent-level data, for each of the four survey rounds (2018-2019, 2020, 2021, 2022). Table B.2a-B.2d breaks these summary statistics down for each round, separately for the control and each treatment group. These illustrate that the underlying treatment randomization delivered subsamples that were broadly balanced along these baseline characteristics. The respective table footnotes report p-values for a randomization-t multiple hypothesis test (based on Young 2019) of the orthogonality of the covariates.

In Table B.3, we elaborate on the regressions in Table 2 of the main paper; the sample here pools the data across all four survey rounds. Column 1 in this appendix table reports a stripped-down version of the baseline regression from Column 6 of Table 2 (where the dependent variable is the first principal component measure of preferences for protection); we remove all auxiliary controls to verify that the treatment effects remain relevant. Column 2 reproduces Column 6 of Table 2 in its entirety, reporting the full set of estimated coefficients for the controls. Columns 3 and 4 report on the full set of estimated marginal effects from Columns 7 and 8 of Table 2 (ordered logit regressions), based respectively on the survey questions asking respondents if the information affected their views on trade policy (1= Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), and their assessment of the impact of trade on most Americans (1= Extremely bad, 5=Extremely good); specifically, we calculate the implied marginal effects on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected.

In Table B.4, we present robustness checks using alternative constructions of the dependent variable. Instead of the principal component measure, Columns 1-3 aggregate the five component questions via respectively: (i) a simple unweighted average; (ii) a dummy equal to one if the respondent selected a protectionist response on at least three of the five component variables; and (iii) the first factor from a factor analysis of the five variables. (Note that for the component question on support for more free trade agreements, we take one minus the response to this question, to obtain a measure that is increasing in protectionist preferences.)

In Table B.5, we revert to using the principal component measure of protectionist preferences as the outcome variable, and show robustness checks based on alternative survey round samples. Columns 1-4 present the regressions when run separately on each round. In Column 5, the sample comprises only rounds 2-4, dropping the first survey round that coincided in particular with the roll-out in 2018-2019 of the first Trump administration's tariff actions. In Column 6, the sample comprises only rounds 3-4, which further drops the 2020 survey that overlapped with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matters protests in major U.S. cities.

Table B.6 reports on the effects of the mixed-jobs treatments, namely: "Trade Hurts Helps Jobs" and "Trade Helps Hurts Jobs". The sample in this table comprises the control group, as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and the two mixed-jobs treatments. The latter composite treatments elicited significant protectionist reactions (Column 1, principal component measure), led respondents to indicate that the information had affected their views on trade policy (Column 2), while shifting their beliefs on the impact trade has had on most Americans in a negative direction (Column 3); these effects were not as strong though as those

estimated for respondents who received the singular "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment.

Table B.7a reports summary statistics on the end-of-survey information recall question. This includes the share of respondents who selected each answer option ("about jobs", "about prices", "no information"), as well as the shares who, conditional on the information received, were able to correctly recall it.

Table B.7b explores regressions related to this end-of-survey recall question. Columns 1-2 show that individuals who received the "Trade Hurts Jobs" or "Trade Helps Jobs" treatments were more likely to recall that the information was on the relationship between trade and jobs, rather than on trade and prices. Conversely, those who received the "Trade Helps Prices" and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments were more likely to correctly recall that the information was on the relationship between trade and prices, rather than on trade and jobs. Column 3 shows that there was on average a slightly higher correct recall rate for respondents in the two baseline prices treatment groups, relative to the two baseline jobs treatments. Columns 4-5 re-run our core regression from Column 6, Table 2, on the subsamples of respondents with incorrect (respectively, correct) recall; the control group observations are included in both columns as the reference group. The results show that the backfire effect to information on the benefits of trade (or the harm from trade barriers) is present in both subsamples, and is even stronger for the "Trade Helps Jobs" treatment in the subsample that exhibited correct information recall.

Table B.8 compares the effects of the two baseline price treatment against the "Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper" treatment (Panel A), and against the "Trade Helps Prices sans China" treatment (Panel B). The backfire effect is present with these modified-wording price treatments.

Table B.9 compares the effects of the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments against their respective "sans China" counterparts (respectively, in Panels A-C). The p-values reported for each regression reveal no statistically significant difference in the treatment effects on the first principal component measure of preferences for protection (Column 1); on whether or not the information affected views on trade policy (Column 2); and on beliefs about the impact of trade on most Americans (Column 3).

Table B.10 re-runs the regression specifications from Table 2 in the main paper, but includes jointly all treatments across all survey rounds, namely: the four baseline treatments, the mixed-jobs treatments, the modified-wording price treatments, and the "sans China" treatments. This shows that the key findings in Table 2, as well as in Tables B.6, B.8 and B.9, remain robust when we pool all baseline and variant treatment groups.

Table B.11 expands on the correlates of attention examined in Table 4 in the main paper. Columns 1-2 reproduce respectively Columns 2-3 from Table 4, while reporting in full the estimated coefficients on all auxiliary control variables; note that the difference across these two columns in Table B.11 is that the sample in the first column comprises the control and the four baseline treatment groups, whereas that in the second column pools across all treatments groups. Since the set of seven "sociopolitical variables" were not used in our baseline treatment effect regressions in Column 6 of Table 2, we verify in Column 3 of Table B.11 that including these variables does not alter substantively the estimated effects of the four baseline treatments on preferences for protection (first principal component measure). The last column in Table B.11 shows that individuals who took an above-median duration on their treatment screens (i.e.,

"high-attention") were in turn more likely to correctly recall whether the information they received was about jobs or about prices, although the marginal effect is relatively small (0.167); note that we drop the control group observations from this last column.

Tables B.12 and B.13 analyze the agreement scores respondents expressed with the various proposed reasons for selecting "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy, when directed in rounds 3-4 to this set of follow-up questions. As a reminder, the dependent variable is the agreement (on an integer scale of 1 to 5) by respondent i with each specific reason, and the sample here is limited to those respondents who picked "more limits on imports" as one of their top-three preferred policies out of the menu of eight options.

Table B.12 reports results based on the regression in (2), confirming that respondents consistently expressed stronger agreement on average with concerns about competition for U.S. jobs, as well as concerns about imports from countries like China; note that all other reasons (i.e., "(Not) Persuaded", "Quality concerns", "National security", "Other more important concerns") are pooled as the omitted category, to avoid cluttering the table with more reason indicator variables. This finding holds when the sample comprises just the control group (Column 1); respondents with limited-attention in the four baseline treatment groups (Column 2); respondents with high-attention in the four baseline treatment groups (Column 3); when pooling the observations in the prior three columns (Column 4); or when pooling the control and all treatment groups, i.e., beyond the four baseline treatments (Column 5). Columns 4-5 report p-values verifying that the agreement scores on these two key reasons ("jobs" and "China") were significantly higher than for all other reasons, for the limited- and high-attention respondents respectively, after taking into account the relevant main and interaction effect coefficients. These columns also report p-values that confirm that the high-attention respondents registered significantly higher agreement scores on both these reasons relative to the limited-attention respondents.

In Table B.13, we show that competition for U.S. jobs and concerns about imports from China were once again the reasons that received the highest agreement scores (relative to all other reasons), regardless of whether the treatment received was on the topic of jobs or prices (Column 1); or whether the treatment was one that had China in its wording or was "sans China" (Columns 2-4). Note that the sample in Column 1 comprises the control and all treatment groups, while that in Columns 2-4 comprises the control group and respectively, the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments each with their "sans China" counterparts. As an example of how to interpret the key p-values of interest, that reported for "Jobs (jobs treatment, full effect)" is for a test of significance of the agreement score expressed on concerns about jobs relative to the omitted reasons category, among respondents who received a treatment on the topic of jobs (e.g., "Trade Hurts Jobs"), taking into account the relevant main and interaction effect coefficient estimates. Similarly, in Columns 2-4, the p-value reported for "Jobs (with China treatment, full effect)" is for a test of significance of the agreement score expressed on concerns about jobs relative to the omitted reasons category, among respondents who received a treatment with China in its wording (rather than "sans China"), once again taking into account the relevant main and interaction effect coefficients.

Tables B.14 and B.15 perform a formal analysis of the text responses given by survey participants, via a series of logit regressions. In Table B.14, we examine if there are significant

differences in the textual responses across limited- versus high-attention respondents. The dependent variable in Columns 1-2 is an indicator for whether "China" is listed as a text answer to the question on which countries the respondent would favor placing more import limits on, while that in Columns 3-4 is an indicator for whether "China" is mentioned in the textual response on other reasons for selecting "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy; the latter variable is naturally defined only for the subset of respondents who made this a top-three policy choice. The sample in odd-numbered columns comprises the control, "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and their counterpart "sans China" treatment groups; the sample in even-numbered columns comprises all available treatments. The results here show no significant difference in the propensity to mention "China" across those who took below- versus above-median duration on their information treatment screens. Columns 5-6 then explore whether there are differences in the propensity to mention "jobs" in the free text box seeking other reasons for selecting "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy. Once again, the p-values reported show no significant difference in the occurrence of "jobs" in the textual responses of limited- versus high-attention respondents.

In Table B.15, we run an analogous set of logit regressions with the same series of dependent variables and respondent samples across the six columns as in Table B.14, but instead explore whether there are significant differences across treatment groups with wording that was "with" versus "sans China" (Columns 1-4), as well as across treatments about "jobs" versus "prices" (Column 5-6). The results point to how "China" is similarly likely to be raised in the textual responses, regardless of whether or not "China" was named in the narrative wording. Also, respondents are just as likely to mention "jobs" in their textual answers, regardless of whether they received a treatment that was about jobs or about prices. (Note that we control in both Tables B.14 and B.15 for survey round dummies *in lieu* of week dummies due to the more limited number of observations with text responses.)

Tables B.16-B.18 explore whether it is respondents' prior economic policy views, rather than their partisan political identity per se, that is shaping preferences for protection. Recall that we capture respondents' economic policy positioning with indicator variables for whether they considered themselves to be "more conservative" or "more liberal" on economic policy matters (with "moderate" being the omitted category).

In Table B.16, we include this pair of economic policy positioning indicator variables on the right-hand side of our Column 6, Table 2 baseline specification, in which the principal component measure of protectionist preferences is the dependent variable. The results show that those who regarded themselves as "more conservative" on economic policy are also more inclined to support protectionist policies (relative to "moderates"), with the opposite being true for those who are "more liberal". Of note though, the inclusion of these indicators for economic policy stance does not detract from the role of the partisan identity dummies, with Republicans being more in favor of protectionism, and Democrats less so (relative to independents).

Table B.17 turns to interaction specifications, to explore the role played respectively by partisan political identity and economic policy positioning in mediating responses to the information treatments. Column 1 reports the key main and interaction effect coefficients used in the construction of Figure 2, with the second sub-column then computing the implied full effects (rather

than differential effects) of each information treatment for limited-attention respondents (L), high-attention Republicans (R), and high-attention Democrats (D) respectively. These full effects confirm that the "Trade Hurts Jobs" treatment shifts all three subgroups in a protectionist direction (relative to the no-information control group). On the other hand, there is a backfire effect in reaction to the "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatments among limited-attention respondents, and especially, among high-attention Republicans. For high-attention Democrats, such pro-trade information actually tends to dampen protectionist preferences, with this effect even significant at the 10% level for the "Trade Helps Jobs" treatment. Column 2 replaces the high-attention Republican (R) and high-attention Democrat (D) dummies with indicators for high-attention economic conservatives and high-attention economic liberals instead. We obtain a similar pattern of responses, in that the high-attention economic conservative (respectively, economic liberal) indicator appears to mediate information treatment responses in a manner akin to the high-attention Republican (respectively, Democrat) dummy as seen in Column 1.

Building on Table B.17, Table B.18 reports an interaction specification that jointly considers the roles of partisan political identity and prior economic policy views. This reveals that the backfire effect against pro-trade information is statistically significant among high-attention Republicans, rather than among high-attention economic conservatives; taken at face value, this suggests that it is political identity, rather than one's economic policy views per se, that is driving the heterogeneity in information treatment effects. (That said, this conclusion is subject to the caveat that the economic policy views indicators are strongly correlated with political identity: the correlation between being a Republican supporter and being more conservative on economic policy is 0.48, while the correlation between being a Democratic supporter and being more liberal on economic policy is 0.38.)

We turn next to the appendix figures. Figure B.1 presents an alternative set of word clouds (relative to Figure 1 in the main paper). Panel A illustrates text responses on other reasons expressed for choosing "more limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy, separately for respondents who received a jobs treatment (specifically, "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Hurts Jobs sans China", "Trade Helps Jobs sans China") and a prices treatment (specifically, "Trade Helps Prices", "Trade Helps Prices sans China"). The prominence of "American jobs" as a reason for favoring limits on imports is evident regardless of whether the treatment administered was about jobs (on the left) or about prices (right). Panel B illustrates text responses for the countries the participant would support placing more import limits on. This is shown separately for those who received a treatment with China in its wording (specifically, "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices") and those in which China was removed from the wording (the three "sans China" counterpart treatments). Observe that "China" appears in the text responses with a high frequency regardless of whether the treatment is "with China" (left) or "sans China" (right). These word clouds demonstrate that concerns about American jobs, and about trading with China, loom large in the minds of the U.S. general public, no matter whether "jobs" or "China" are raised explicitly in the information treatment.

Figure B.2 illustrates the level effect coefficients of key respondent characteristics, in terms of how they correlate with preferences for protection (principal component measure). Each

coefficient is from a separate regression based on (1), but run without the treatment dummies, while adding x_i as necessary to the right-hand side (if it is not already included in X_i). To facilitate comparison with the illustrations that follow, we run these regressions on a sample that comprises the control and the four baseline treatment groups, pooled across all survey rounds; each respondent characteristic x_i is also z-scored.

The covariates considered are as follows. We include six proxies of economic self-interest: whether the individual is employed in the manufacturing sector; the Autor et al. (2013) China import shock measure for 2000-2007 at the commuting zone level; whether the individual has less-than-college educational attainment; whether the respondent is currently unemployed; whether the respondent's annual household income was less than $50,000; and the respondent's assessment of how bad NAFTA has been for them and their family (1=Extremely good, 5=Extremely bad). We consider six measure of sociotropic concerns: whether the individual views inequality in the U.S. to be a problem (1=Not a problem, 4=A serious problem); whether the individual views inflation in the U.S. to be a problem (1=Not a problem, 4=A serious problem, available in round 4 only); degree of trust in government "to do what is right" (1=Never, 5=Always); whether the respondent is willing to pay more for a U.S. brand of similar quality; whether the respondent is dissatisfied with the current state of the U.S. job market; and the respondent's extent of disagreement with the statement that "children born into my community will have a better life than my generation" (1=Strongly agree, 5=Strongly disagree). We include the measure of loss aversion (1=Strongly prefer getting a discount of $100, 5=Strongly prefer avoiding a surcharge of $100). Last but not least, we explore the role of political identity, through indicator variables for whether the respondent supported the Republican (respectively, Democratic) party candidate in the most recent presidential election.

Figure B.3 then presents the interaction coefficients (the α_b's); we run separate regressions of (3) for each x_i, that include the four baseline treatment dummies – "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", "Tariff Hurts Prices" – and their interactions with the respondent characteristic in question. (To be clear, each panel in Figure B.3 illustrates the interaction coefficients for a given treatment b, across the separate regressions for the different x_i's; we do not run the interactions jointly with all the x_i's given sample size constraints.) We z-score each x_i to allow comparison of the coefficient magnitudes.

Figure B.4 repeats the exercise in Figure B.3, but limits the sample to the control group, as well as those in the four baseline treatment groups that took an above-median duration on their respective treatment screens (calculated separately by treatment and survey round), these being respondents who are less likely to use limited-attention behavioral heuristics to process the information.

Table B.1: Summary Statistics: Respondent Characteristics by Survey Round

	Round 1 2018-19 (N=2,277)	**Round 2** 2020 (N=6,009)	**Round 3** 2021 (N=4,058)	**Round 4** 2022 (N=6,005)
Biodata				
Gender: Male	0.49 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]
Gender: Female	0.51 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]
Age: Average (approx.)	47.55 [16.78]	45.45 [16.61]	46.55 [16.69]	46.45 [16.78]
Race: White	0.61 [0.49]	0.67 [0.47]	0.62 [0.48]	0.62 [0.49]
Race: African-American	0.11 [0.32]	0.13 [0.33]	0.12 [0.32]	0.12 [0.33]
Race: Hispanic	0.17 [0.37]	0.13 [0.34]	0.18 [0.38]	0.17 [0.38]
Born in US?	0.92 [0.27]	0.92 [0.27]	0.91 [0.28]	0.92 [0.28]
Socioeconomic Characteristics				
Household Income: Average $ (approx.)	58,196 [47,585]	64,886 [54,093]	62,010 [49,462]	58,785 [45,827]
Education: Average years (approx.)	11.81 [4.91]	11.56 [4.86]	11.71 [4.87]	11.70 [4.86]
Employment Status: Not in Labor Force	0.40 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]
Employment Status: Unemployed	0.10 [0.30]	0.11 [0.32]	0.10 [0.30]	0.10 [0.30]
Employment Status: Employed	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]
Employment Sector: Manufacturing	0.08 [0.26]	0.09 [0.28]	0.07 [0.26]	0.07 [0.26]
Employment Sector: Services	0.39 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.39 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]
Student?	0.03 [0.17]	0.04 [0.20]	0.04 [0.20]	0.03 [0.17]
Loss aversion (Scale: 1 to 5)	—	3.11 [1.47]	3.07 [1.50]	3.06 [1.50]
Baseline Sociopolitical Attributes				
Last Presidential election: Supported Dem.	0.41 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.49 [0.50]	0.44 [0.50]
Last Presidential election: Supported Rep.	0.34 [0.47]	0.36 [0.48]	0.33 [0.47]	0.34 [0.47]
Trust in government? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.50 [1.05]	2.79 [1.13]	2.69 [1.11]	2.55 [1.08]
Impact of NAFTA on family (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.16 [0.90]	3.35 [0.90]	3.31 [0.87]	3.11 [0.91]
Children born into better life? (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.07 [1.13]	3.23 [1.10]	3.16 [1.15]	2.95 [1.14]
Satisfied with health of US job market?	0.48 [0.50]	0.35 [0.48]	0.40 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]
Willing to pay more for US brand?	0.59 [0.49]	0.65 [0.48]	0.63 [0.48]	0.61 [0.49]
Inequality in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	3.01 [0.96]	2.96 [0.95]	2.97 [0.96]	2.99 [0.94]
Inflation in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	—	—	—	3.42 [0.80]
News consumption patterns				
Number of days per week (approx.)	5.02 [2.47]	5.29 [2.34]	5.01 [2.43]	4.87 [2.52]
Main tv source: Broadcast tv	0.29 [0.45]	0.26 [0.44]	0.25 [0.43]	0.26 [0.44]
Main tv source: CNN, MSNBC	0.17 [0.37]	0.21 [0.40]	0.20 [0.40]	0.16 [0.37]
Main tv source: Fox News	0.16 [0.36]	0.17 [0.38]	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.37]
Location Characteristics				
Share with college and above (age≥25)	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.12]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.10]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	2.56 [1.82]	2.57 [2.11]	2.54 [1.77]	2.61 [2.02]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]
Urban?	0.86 [0.35]	0.87 [0.33]	0.86 [0.35]	0.85 [0.35]
Survey Characteristics				
Duration to complete (secs.)	727 [1,513]	912 [2,292]	888 [1,015]	897 [925]
Treatment duration	47 [66]	28 [84]	28 [58]	26 [64]
Mobile device?	0.61 [0.49]	0.70 [0.46]	0.58 [0.49]	0.54 [0.50]

Notes: Mean values reported, with standard deviations in brackets. For age, household income, and frequency of news consumption, this is approximated by a weighted average of the midpoint values of the response option bins, using the share of respondents picking each bin as weights. For years of education, an analogous weighted average is taken that assigns 6 years to "High school or less", 14 years to "Some college", 16 years to "College graduate", and 18 years to "Post graduate". The average treatment duration is longer in Round 1 due to a longer treatment preamble (which was shortened in later rounds).

Table B.2a: Treatment Balance: Survey Round 1 (2018-2019)

TREATMENT:	Control	Trade Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Prices
Biodata				
Gender: Male	0.49 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]
Gender: Female	0.50 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]
Age: Average (approx.)	47.14 [17.11]	48.10 [16.78]	47.82 [17.02]	47.17 [16.19]
Race: White	0.60 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.64 [0.48]	0.62 [0.49]
Race: African-American	0.13 [0.33]	0.11 [0.31]	0.11 [0.32]	0.11 [0.31]
Race: Hispanic	0.15 [0.36]	0.18 [0.38]	0.18 [0.38]	0.18 [0.38]
Born in US?	0.92 [0.28]	0.91 [0.29]	0.93 [0.25]	0.92 [0.27]
Socioeconomic Characteristics				
Household Income: Average $ (approx.)	56,283 [46,165]	59,436 [49,180]	60,356 [50,360]	56,851 [44,589]
Education: Average years (approx.)	11.84 [4.97]	11.98 [4.87]	11.70 [4.93]	11.73 [4.88]
Employment Status: Not in Labor Force	0.41 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.38 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]
Employment Status: Unemployed	0.11 [0.32]	0.09 [0.28]	0.10 [0.30]	0.09 [0.29]
Employment Status: Employed	0.48 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]
Employment Sector: Manufacturing	0.07 [0.26]	0.08 [0.27]	0.08 [0.27]	0.07 [0.25]
Employment Sector: Services	0.36 [0.48]	0.41 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]
Student?	0.04 [0.20]	0.03 [0.17]	0.03 [0.17]	0.03 [0.17]
Baseline Sociopolitical Attributes				
Last Presidential election: Supported Dem.	0.42 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]
Last Presidential election: Supported Rep.	0.34 [0.48]	0.34 [0.47]	0.34 [0.47]	0.34 [0.48]
Trust in government? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.42 [1.06]	2.45 [1.10]	2.64 [1.02]	2.51 [1.02]
Impact of NAFTA on family (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.15 [0.89]	3.12 [0.95]	3.18 [0.86]	3.17 [0.88]
Children born into better life? (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.03 [1.09]	3.09 [1.17]	3.08 [1.11]	3.07 [1.14]
Satisfied with health of US job market?	0.46 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]
Willing to pay more for US brand?	0.59 [0.49]	0.59 [0.49]	0.59 [0.49]	0.57 [0.49]
Inequality in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	3.07 [0.93]	2.94 [1.01]	3.02 [0.93]	3.01 [0.94]
News consumption patterns				
Number of days per week (approx.)	4.90 [2.52]	5.11 [2.47]	5.03 [2.45]	5.02 [2.44]
Main tv source: Broadcast tv	0.26 [0.44]	0.31 [0.46]	0.28 [0.45]	0.29 [0.45]
Main tv source: CNN, MSNBC	0.18 [0.38]	0.17 [0.38]	0.18 [0.38]	0.15 [0.36]
Main tv source: Fox News	0.15 [0.36]	0.14 [0.35]	0.16 [0.37]	0.17 [0.38]
Location Characteristics				
Share with college and above (age≥25)	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.10]	0.30 [0.11]	0.29 [0.11]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	2.58 [1.80]	2.50 [1.66]	2.59 [1.83]	2.56 [2.00]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.17 [0.12]	0.17 [0.12]
Urban?	0.89 [0.31]	0.87 [0.34]	0.83 [0.37]	0.84 [0.36]
Survey Characteristics				
Duration to complete (secs.)	594 [571]	619 [406]	936 [2,683]	774 [1,324]
Treatment duration	—	47 [70]	45 [50]	50 [74]
Mobile device?	0.57 [0.50]	0.57 [0.50]	0.65 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]

Notes: Mean values reported for each control or treatment group, with standard deviations in brackets; see the notes to Table B.1 for details. The randomization-t p-value (c.f., Young 2019) for a multiple hypothesis test of the orthogonality of the above covariates with respect to the Round 1 treatment dummies is 0.733 (based on 1,000 iterations, controlling for survey-week fixed effects); we exclude from the covariate set examined in this test the survey and treatment duration variables (which mechanically differ across treatments), and the male gender and out of labor force dummies (due to collinearity with other variables).

Table B.2b: Treatment Balance: Survey Round 2 (2020)

TREATMENT:	Control	Trade Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Prices	Tariff Hurts Prices	Trade Hurts Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Prices sans China	Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper
Biodata									
Gender: Male	0.45 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.44 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]
Gender: Female	0.55 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.55 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]
Age: Average (approx.)	44.34 [16.48]	44.88 [17.10]	44.43 [16.88]	44.15 [16.48]	45.31 [16.77]	45.76 [16.75]	47.32 [16.38]	46.78 [15.91]	48.80 [15.52]
Race: White	0.69 [0.46]	0.66 [0.47]	0.67 [0.47]	0.64 [0.48]	0.68 [0.47]	0.69 [0.46]	0.70 [0.46]	0.65 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]
Race: African-American	0.11 [0.32]	0.10 [0.34]	0.10 [0.34]	0.16 [0.37]	0.12 [0.32]	0.13 [0.34]	0.13 [0.34]	0.11 [0.31]	0.10 [0.30]
Race: Hispanic	0.11 [0.32]	0.14 [0.35]	0.13 [0.33]	0.14 [0.35]	0.13 [0.34]	0.11 [0.32]	0.10 [0.31]	0.18 [0.38]	0.17 [0.38]
Born in US?	0.93 [0.25]	0.93 [0.26]	0.93 [0.26]	0.92 [0.28]	0.91 [0.28]	0.92 [0.27]	0.93 [0.25]	0.92 [0.27]	0.90 [0.30]
Socioeconomic Characteristics									
Household Income: Average $ (approx.)	66,541 [54,351]	64,642 [53,897]	63,792 [54,351]	64,681 [54,427]	66,636 [55,145]	65,231 [52,956]	63,136 [50,864]	64,825 [55,512]	63,651 [54,416]
Education: Average years (approx.)	12.09 [4.83]	11.62 [4.90]	11.74 [4.78]	11.74 [4.82]	11.55 [4.90]	11.66 [4.73]	11.54 [4.85]	10.68 [4.93]	10.96 [4.92]
Employment Status: Not in Labor Force	0.36 [0.48]	0.40 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.38 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]	0.38 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]
Employment Status: Unemployed	0.15 [0.36]	0.12 [0.32]	0.12 [0.32]	0.10 [0.30]	0.10 [0.30]	0.10 [0.30]	0.09 [0.29]	0.13 [0.33]	0.09 [0.29]
Employment Status: Employed	0.49 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]
Employment Sector: Manufacturing	0.07 [0.25]	0.09 [0.29]	0.09 [0.29]	0.09 [0.28]	0.11 [0.31]	0.08 [0.27]	0.07 [0.25]	0.09 [0.28]	0.08 [0.27]
Employment Sector: Services	0.37 [0.48]	0.32 [0.47]	0.38 [0.48]	0.37 [0.48]	0.36 [0.48]	0.35 [0.48]	0.38 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.38 [0.48]
Student?	0.04 [0.19]	0.05 [0.22]	0.05 [0.21]	0.05 [0.21]	0.05 [0.22]	0.05 [0.21]	0.04 [0.20]	0.02 [0.14]	0.03 [0.17]
Loss aversion (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.08 [1.46]	3.09 [1.47]	3.23 [1.44]	3.15 [1.45]	3.10 [1.46]	3.06 [1.52]	3.02 [1.46]	3.11 [1.48]	3.10 [1.56]
Baseline Sociopolitical Attributes									
Last Presidential election: Supported Dem.	0.41 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]
Last Presidential election: Supported Rep.	0.36 [0.48]	0.35 [0.48]	0.36 [0.48]	0.36 [0.48]	0.37 [0.48]	0.38 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.33 [0.47]	0.39 [0.49]
Trust in government? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.77 [1.13]	2.79 [1.13]	2.83 [1.14]	2.82 [1.12]	2.77 [1.12]	2.78 [1.11]	2.83 [1.16]	2.69 [1.15]	2.79 [1.16]
Impact of NAFTA on family (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.39 [0.91]	3.34 [0.85]	3.34 [0.94]	3.41 [0.88]	3.32 [0.89]	3.35 [0.91]	3.33 [0.86]	3.33 [0.90]	3.29 [0.95]
Children born into better life? (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.24 [1.09]	3.26 [1.11]	3.27 [1.07]	3.27 [1.08]	3.23 [1.08]	3.19 [1.10]	3.24 [1.08]	3.11 [1.14]	3.15 [1.15]
Satisfied with health of US job market?	0.34 [0.47]	0.36 [0.48]	0.34 [0.47]	0.37 [0.48]	0.34 [0.47]	0.32 [0.47]	0.33 [0.47]	0.36 [0.48]	0.32 [0.47]
Willing to pay more for US brand?	0.66 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.68 [0.47]	0.63 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.68 [0.47]
Inequality in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	2.92 [0.95]	2.95 [0.96]	2.97 [0.94]	2.98 [0.93]	2.98 [0.94]	2.84 [0.98]	2.93 [0.91]	3.07 [0.95]	3.01 [0.96]
News consumption patterns									
Number of days per week (approx.)	5.41 [2.26]	5.24 [2.38]	5.17 [2.45]	5.36 [2.28]	5.16 [2.40]	5.35 [2.30]	5.58 [2.16]	5.19 [2.39]	5.33 [2.36]
Main tv source: Broadcast tv	0.24 [0.43]	0.29 [0.45]	0.24 [0.43]	0.25 [0.44]	0.26 [0.44]	0.25 [0.43]	0.28 [0.45]	0.22 [0.41]	0.26 [0.44]
Main tv source: CNN, MSNBC	0.22 [0.41]	0.20 [0.40]	0.21 [0.41]	0.20 [0.40]	0.20 [0.40]	0.20 [0.40]	0.19 [0.39]	0.23 [0.42]	0.21 [0.41]
Main tv source: Fox News	0.18 [0.38]	0.17 [0.38]	0.20 [0.40]	0.16 [0.37]	0.17 [0.38]	0.17 [0.38]	0.19 [0.40]	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.37]
Location Characteristics									
Share with college and above (age≥25)	0.32 [0.12]	0.31 [0.12]	0.31 [0.12]	0.31 [0.12]	0.32 [0.12]	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.11]	0.32 [0.12]	0.30 [0.12]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	2.59 [2.02]	2.46 [1.91]	2.71 [2.40]	2.51 [2.18]	2.55 [2.05]	2.60 [2.32]	2.66 [1.88]	2.51 [1.79]	2.55 [2.34]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.16 [0.11]	0.15 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.15 [0.11]	0.15 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.12]	0.16 [0.12]	0.16 [0.12]
Urban?	0.89 [0.32]	0.88 [0.33]	0.86 [0.35]	0.87 [0.33]	0.88 [0.33]	0.89 [0.32]	0.87 [0.34]	0.89 [0.31]	0.84 [0.36]
Survey Characteristics									
Duration to complete (secs.)	887 [1,812]	871 [1,204]	952 [2,337]	1,031 [4,706]	924 [1,263]	779 [727]	831 [1,113]	854 [737]	1,003 [2,240]
Treatment duration	—	26 [78]	33 [96]	32 [165]	26 [44]	34 [46]	34 [42]	28 [55]	31 [60]
Mobile device?	0.71 [0.46]	0.71 [0.46]	0.69 [0.46]	0.70 [0.46]	0.69 [0.46]	0.64 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]	0.77 [0.42]	0.72 [0.45]

Notes: Mean values reported for each control or treatment group, with standard deviations in brackets; see the notes to Table B.1 for details. The randomization-t p-value (c.f., Young 2019) for a multiple hypothesis test of the orthogonality of the above covariates with respect to the Round 2 treatment dummies is 0.092 when age and education years are included, and 0.362 when these two variables are excluded (based on 1,000 iterations, controlling for survey-week fixed effects); we exclude from the covariate set examined in this test the survey and treatment duration variables (which mechanically differ across treatments), and the male gender and out of labor force dummies (due to collinearity with other variables).

Table B.2c: Treatment Balance: Survey Round 3 (2021)

TREATMENT:	Control	Trade Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Prices	Tariff Hurts Prices	Trade Hurts Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Prices sans China	Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper
Biodata									
Gender: Male	0.46 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]
Gender: Female	0.54 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]
Age: Average (approx.)	45.53 [17.23]	45.91 [16.49]	46.29 [16.50]	47.19 [16.97]	45.96 [17.10]	46.76 [16.15]	47.44 [16.77]	47.65 [16.57]	46.20 [16.43]
Race: White	0.61 [0.49]	0.61 [0.49]	0.62 [0.49]	0.64 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.60 [0.49]	0.62 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.63 [0.48]
Race: African-American	0.13 [0.33]	0.13 [0.34]	0.12 [0.33]	0.11 [0.31]	0.10 [0.30]	0.12 [0.33]	0.13 [0.34]	0.12 [0.33]	0.10 [0.30]
Race: Hispanic	0.16 [0.37]	0.18 [0.38]	0.18 [0.39]	0.17 [0.37]	0.17 [0.37]	0.18 [0.38]	0.16 [0.37]	0.19 [0.39]	0.20 [0.40]
Born in US?	0.90 [0.30]	0.91 [0.28]	0.91 [0.29]	0.94 [0.24]	0.92 [0.27]	0.91 [0.29]	0.89 [0.31]	0.93 [0.26]	0.92 [0.28]
Socioeconomic Characteristics									
Household Income: Average $ (approx.)	61,560 [50,471]	61,932 [48,021]	60,963 [46,445]	66,472 [54,351]	64,456 [51,312]	59,767 [49,064]	60,991 [48,760]	58,790 [46,746]	63,182 [49,566]
Education: Average years (approx.)	11.83 [4.89]	11.57 [4.87]	11.89 [4.82]	11.52 [4.98]	11.86 [4.83]	11.72 [4.80]	11.95 [4.90]	11.57 [4.89]	11.43 [4.89]
Employment Status: Not in Labor Force	0.42 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.41 [0.49]	0.44 [0.50]	0.40 [0.48]	0.34 [0.48]	0.41 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]	0.37 [0.48]
Employment Status: Unemployed	0.09 [0.29]	0.11 [0.32]	0.11 [0.31]	0.08 [0.28]	0.10 [0.30]	0.13 [0.33]	0.10 [0.30]	0.09 [0.29]	0.11 [0.31]
Employment Status: Employed	0.49 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]
Employment Sector: Manufacturing	0.07 [0.26]	0.07 [0.26]	0.10 [0.30]	0.07 [0.26]	0.05 [0.21]	0.09 [0.28]	0.06 [0.23]	0.08 [0.27]	0.08 [0.27]
Employment Sector: Services	0.38 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.37 [0.48]	0.40 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]
Student?	0.06 [0.24]	0.02 [0.15]	0.04 [0.21]	0.05 [0.21]	0.05 [0.22]	0.02 [0.14]	0.04 [0.18]	0.05 [0.22]	0.03 [0.17]
Loss aversion (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.14 [1.48]	3.16 [1.48]	3.17 [1.55]	3.07 [1.51]	3.08 [1.52]	2.97 [1.49]	2.93 [1.45]	3.06 [1.52]	3.08 [1.47]
Baseline Sociopolitical Attributes									
Last Presidential election: Supported Dem.	0.51 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.45 [0.50]
Last Presidential election: Supported Rep.	0.30 [0.46]	0.32 [0.47]	0.32 [0.47]	0.35 [0.48]	0.32 [0.47]	0.31 [0.46]	0.31 [0.47]	0.34 [0.47]	0.36 [0.48]
Trust in government? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.66 [1.11]	2.69 [1.16]	2.63 [1.07]	2.80 [1.16]	2.77 [1.12]	2.59 [1.10]	2.73 [1.10]	2.61 [1.11]	2.69 [1.08]
Impact of NAFTA on family (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.30 [0.88]	3.32 [0.92]	3.28 [0.90]	3.40 [0.88]	3.33 [0.85]	3.30 [0.83]	3.28 [0.87]	3.23 [0.85]	3.33 [0.85]
Children born into better life? (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.11 [1.16]	3.16 [1.17]	3.10 [1.08]	3.25 [1.19]	3.21 [1.14]	3.17 [1.14]	3.12 [1.11]	3.07 [1.17]	3.22 [1.15]
Satisfied with health of US job market?	0.37 [0.48]	0.42 [0.49]	0.37 [0.48]	0.42 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.37 [0.48]
Willing to pay more for US brand?	0.61 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.63 [0.48]	0.66 [0.47]	0.65 [0.48]	0.60 [0.49]	0.64 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]	0.64 [0.48]
Inequality in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	2.94 [1.01]	2.97 [0.98]	3.00 [0.95]	3.01 [0.92]	3.03 [0.92]	3.02 [0.94]	2.93 [0.98]	2.94 [0.97]	2.93 [0.95]
News consumption patterns									
Number of days per week (approx.)	4.94 [2.45]	4.90 [2.45]	4.88 [2.49]	5.25 [2.31]	4.99 [2.47]	4.85 [2.49]	5.05 [2.45]	5.09 [2.46]	5.10 [2.32]
Main tv source: Broadcast tv	0.25 [0.43]	0.26 [0.44]	0.24 [0.43]	0.27 [0.44]	0.24 [0.43]	0.23 [0.44]	0.27 [0.44]	0.25 [0.44]	0.25 [0.44]
Main tv source: CNN, MSNBC	0.20 [0.40]	0.19 [0.39]	0.19 [0.40]	0.20 [0.40]	0.21 [0.41]	0.22 [0.42]	0.21 [0.41]	0.19 [0.39]	0.17 [0.38]
Main tv source: Fox News	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.37]	0.15 [0.36]	0.14 [0.35]	0.14 [0.35]	0.15 [0.36]	0.13 [0.34]	0.13 [0.34]	0.17 [0.38]
Location Characteristics									
Share with college and above (age≥25)	0.30 [0.10]	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.10]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.11]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	2.46 [1.68]	2.46 [1.60]	2.50 [1.60]	2.63 [1.98]	2.57 [1.84]	2.55 [1.84]	2.53 [1.82]	2.64 [1.75]	2.50 [1.77]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.17 [0.12]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.17 [0.12]	0.16 [0.12]
Urban?	0.88 [0.33]	0.88 [0.33]	0.86 [0.35]	0.85 [0.36]	0.85 [0.36]	0.86 [0.34]	0.86 [0.35]	0.85 [0.36]	0.86 [0.35]
Survey Characteristics									
Duration to complete (secs.)	881 [853]	873 [1,106]	859 [846]	901 [672]	857 [601]	956 [949]	892 [807]	847 [621]	923 [1,959]
Treatment duration	—	26 [30]	30 [47]	31 [56]	29 [79]	41 [63]	38 [97]	31 [52]	25 [32]
Mobile device?	0.60 [0.49]	0.57 [0.50]	0.62 [0.49]	0.54 [0.50]	0.57 [0.49]	0.59 [0.49]	0.57 [0.49]	0.56 [0.50]	0.57 [0.50]

Notes: Mean values reported for each control or treatment group, with standard deviations in brackets; see the notes to Table B.1 for details. The randomization-t p-value (c.f., Young 2019) for a multiple hypothesis test of the orthogonality of the above covariates with respect to the Round 3 treatment dummies is 0.602 (based on 1,000 iterations, controlling for survey-week fixed effects); we exclude from the covariate set examined in this test the survey and treatment duration variables (which mechanically differ across treatments), and the male gender and out of labor force dummies (due to collinearity with other variables).

Table B.2d: Treatment Balance: Survey Round 4 (2022)

TREATMENT:	Control	Trade Hurts Jobs	Trade Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Prices	Tariff Hurts Prices	Trade Hurts Helps Jobs	Trade Helps Hurts Jobs	Trade Hurts Jobs sans China	Trade Helps Jobs sans China	Trade Helps Prices sans China	Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper
Biodata											
Gender: Male	0.48 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.45 [0.50]
Gender: Female	0.52 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.54 [0.50]
Age: Average (approx.)	46.02 [16.90]	46.58 [16.11]	46.88 [16.84]	47.47 [16.51]	45.66 [17.02]	46.94 [16.14]	46.04 [17.48]	47.22 [16.45]	45.77 [17.13]	46.83 [16.84]	46.04 [17.00]
Race: White	0.61 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.63 [0.48]	0.62 [0.49]	0.62 [0.49]	0.65 [0.48]	0.61 [0.49]	0.58 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.64 [0.48]	0.62 [0.48]
Race: African-American	0.12 [0.33]	0.13 [0.34]	0.11 [0.32]	0.12 [0.33]	0.11 [0.31]	0.13 [0.33]	0.14 [0.35]	0.13 [0.34]	0.12 [0.32]	0.10 [0.31]	0.10 [0.30]
Race: Hispanic	0.18 [0.38]	0.15 [0.36]	0.18 [0.39]	0.17 [0.38]	0.18 [0.39]	0.15 [0.36]	0.15 [0.36]	0.17 [0.37]	0.18 [0.39]	0.17 [0.37]	0.19 [0.40]
Born in US?	0.91 [0.29]	0.93 [0.26]	0.93 [0.25]	0.93 [0.26]	0.93 [0.26]	0.91 [0.28]	0.90 [0.29]	0.92 [0.27]	0.91 [0.29]	0.91 [0.29]	0.93 [0.25]
Socioeconomic Characteristics											
Household Income: Average $ (approx.)	56,923 [44,204]	58,259 [45,365]	61,117 [47,971]	61,637 [48,177]	58,484 [44,529]	60,407 [44,629]	58,900 [45,744]	59,668 [48,033]	55,052 [45,223]	60,556 [45,293]	58,953 [46,291]
Education: Average years (approx.)	11.55 [4.81]	11.73 [4.85]	11.71 [4.95]	11.91 [4.89]	11.93 [4.84]	11.98 [4.77]	11.68 [4.88]	11.73 [4.90]	11.56 [4.87]	11.73 [4.84]	11.44 [4.95]
Employment Status: Not in labor force	0.38 [0.49]	0.38 [0.48]	0.41 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.38 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]	0.38 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.40 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]
Employment Status: Unemployed	0.12 [0.32]	0.11 [0.31]	0.10 [0.30]	0.09 [0.29]	0.09 [0.29]	0.08 [0.28]	0.09 [0.29]	0.12 [0.33]	0.09 [0.29]	0.09 [0.29]	0.10 [0.29]
Employment Status: Employed	0.50 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.52 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.53 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.54 [0.50]
Employment Sector: Manufacturing	0.08 [0.27]	0.05 [0.22]	0.07 [0.25]	0.06 [0.25]	0.07 [0.25]	0.05 [0.22]	0.07 [0.26]	0.09 [0.28]	0.07 [0.26]	0.07 [0.26]	0.08 [0.27]
Employment Sector: Services	0.39 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.39 [0.49]	0.43 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.38 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]
Student?	0.02 [0.15]	0.03 [0.16]	0.03 [0.17]	0.03 [0.16]	0.04 [0.20]	0.04 [0.20]	0.04 [0.19]	0.02 [0.13]	0.04 [0.18]	0.03 [0.17]	0.03 [0.17]
Loss aversion (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.12 [1.46]	3.13 [1.53]	2.98 [1.53]	3.01 [1.51]	3.06 [1.47]	3.04 [1.48]	3.12 [1.47]	3.07 [1.50]	3.03 [1.47]	2.92 [1.52]	3.09 [1.55]
Baseline Sociopolitical Attributes											
Last Presidential election: Supported Dem.	0.43 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.47 [0.50]	0.46 [0.50]	0.45 [0.50]	0.42 [0.49]	0.41 [0.49]	0.45 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.39 [0.49]	0.45 [0.50]
Last Presidential election: Supported Rep.	0.34 [0.48]	0.31 [0.46]	0.33 [0.47]	0.36 [0.48]	0.35 [0.48]	0.39 [0.49]	0.36 [0.48]	0.32 [0.47]	0.29 [0.46]	0.37 [0.48]	0.36 [0.48]
Trust in government? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.54 [1.12]	2.57 [1.06]	2.62 [1.08]	2.51 [1.06]	2.54 [1.06]	2.50 [1.02]	2.53 [1.01]	2.53 [1.09]	2.57 [1.08]	2.53 [1.10]	2.55 [1.10]
Impact of NAFTA on family (Scale: 1 to 5)	3.10 [0.91]	3.23 [0.90]	3.15 [0.86]	3.09 [0.88]	3.08 [0.88]	3.13 [0.89]	3.10 [0.87]	3.07 [0.96]	3.12 [0.93]	3.06 [0.93]	3.10 [0.93]
Children born into better life? (Scale: 1 to 5)	2.92 [1.18]	3.00 [1.13]	3.08 [1.09]	3.01 [1.10]	2.96 [1.12]	3.03 [1.13]	2.99 [1.09]	2.83 [1.15]	2.97 [1.13]	2.94 [1.14]	2.83 [1.21]
Satisfied with health of US job market?	0.41 [0.49]	0.45 [0.50]	0.40 [0.49]	0.43 [0.50]	0.38 [0.48]	0.41 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.42 [0.49]	0.43 [0.50]	0.40 [0.49]	0.38 [0.49]
Willing to pay more for US brand?	0.60 [0.49]	0.62 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]	0.59 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.59 [0.49]	0.60 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.63 [0.48]
Inequality in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	2.99 [0.93]	3.02 [0.92]	3.03 [0.95]	3.04 [0.89]	3.07 [0.95]	2.92 [0.93]	2.91 [0.95]	3.04 [0.94]	3.04 [0.93]	2.91 [1.00]	2.95 [0.96]
Inflation in US a problem? (Scale: 1 to 4)	3.40 [0.82]	3.45 [0.78]	3.41 [0.80]	3.38 [0.79]	3.47 [0.78]	3.42 [0.79]	3.43 [0.76]	3.40 [0.81]	3.40 [0.82]	3.45 [0.79]	3.41 [0.82]
News consumption patterns											
Number of days per week (approx.)	4.86 [2.51]	4.90 [2.52]	5.03 [2.48]	5.10 [2.47]	4.92 [2.54]	4.92 [2.51]	4.90 [2.46]	4.68 [2.57]	4.78 [2.56]	4.82 [2.52]	4.70 [2.54]
Main TV source: Broadcast TV	0.24 [0.43]	0.27 [0.44]	0.25 [0.43]	0.27 [0.45]	0.28 [0.45]	0.26 [0.44]	0.26 [0.44]	0.28 [0.45]	0.22 [0.42]	0.25 [0.43]	0.27 [0.45]
Main TV source: CNN, MSNBC	0.15 [0.36]	0.15 [0.36]	0.19 [0.40]	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.37]	0.15 [0.35]	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.36]	0.18 [0.38]	0.18 [0.38]	0.16 [0.37]
Main TV source: Fox News	0.16 [0.37]	0.16 [0.37]	0.15 [0.36]	0.18 [0.38]	0.15 [0.35]	0.17 [0.38]	0.15 [0.36]	0.16 [0.37]	0.17 [0.37]	0.16 [0.37]	0.16 [0.36]
Location Characteristics											
Share with college and above (age≥25)	0.30 [0.10]	0.30 [0.10]	0.29 [0.10]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.11]	0.30 [0.11]	0.31 [0.11]	0.30 [0.11]	0.29 [0.10]	0.30 [0.10]	0.30 [0.10]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	2.63 [2.03]	2.45 [1.72]	2.49 [1.78]	2.74 [1.89]	2.61 [2.11]	2.46 [1.79]	2.72 [2.11]	2.60 [1.89]	2.49 [1.80]	2.57 [2.51]	2.93 [2.47]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.10]	0.15 [0.10]	0.17 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.17 [0.11]	0.17 [0.11]	0.16 [0.11]	0.16 [0.12]	0.17 [0.11]	0.17 [0.11]
Urban?	0.86 [0.35]	0.85 [0.35]	0.83 [0.38]	0.86 [0.35]	0.85 [0.36]	0.85 [0.35]	0.87 [0.33]	0.83 [0.38]	0.85 [0.36]	0.87 [0.34]	0.85 [0.36]
Survey Characteristics											
Duration to complete (secs.)	892 [957]	862 [674]	885 [644]	938 [889]	857 [618]	836 [590]	944 [1,246]	931 [1,177]	960 [1,132]	862 [657]	883 [1,047]
Treatment duration	—	29 [53]	29 [49]	30 [63]	26 [27]	36 [40]	37 [56]	34 [126]	31 [90]	29 [36]	25 [34]
Mobile device?	0.57 [0.50]	0.49 [0.50]	0.43 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.45 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.51 [0.50]	0.66 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]	0.52 [0.50]	0.54 [0.50]

Notes: Mean values reported for each control or treatment group, with standard deviations in brackets; see the notes to Table B.1 for details. The randomization-t p-value (c.f., Young 2019) for a multiple hypothesis test of the orthogonality of the above covariates with respect to the Round 4 treatment dummies is 0.316 (based on 1,000 iterations, controlling for survey-week fixed effects); we exclude from the covariate set examined in this test the survey and treatment duration variables (which mechanically differ across treatments), and the male gender and out of labor force dummies (due to collinearity with other variables).

Table B.3: Effect of Information Treatments on Preferences Towards Trade Policy: Full Results (Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent Variable	(1) First principal component		(2) First principal component		(3) Did information affect views?		(4) Impact of trade for most Americans?	
	OLS		OLS		Ordered logit		Ordered logit	
Treatment dummies: (Omitted: Control group)								
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.223***	[0.037]	0.249***	[0.037]	0.048***	[0.015]	-0.248***	[0.016]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.066	[0.045]	0.086**	[0.041]	0.030*	[0.016]	-0.025*	[0.015]
Trade Helps Prices	0.123***	[0.035]	0.126***	[0.037]	0.028*	[0.015]	-0.058***	[0.015]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.108***	[0.040]	0.105***	[0.040]	0.046***	[0.016]	-0.164***	[0.016]
Most Pref., Randomization Order			-0.016***	[0.005]				
Individual Controls:								
Gender (Omitted: Male)								
Female			-0.025	[0.026]	-0.040***	[0.009]	-0.053***	[0.009]
Other			-0.174	[0.185]	0.075	[0.090]	0.028	[0.071]
Age (Omitted: 18-24)								
25-34			0.157***	[0.039]	0.008	[0.019]	-0.043***	[0.015]
35-44			0.366***	[0.041]	0.012	[0.019]	-0.081***	[0.017]
45-54			0.513***	[0.047]	-0.090***	[0.018]	-0.171***	[0.019]
55-64			0.641***	[0.056]	-0.116***	[0.020]	-0.171***	[0.020]
Above 65			0.657***	[0.058]	-0.108***	[0.021]	-0.155***	[0.021]
Race (Omitted: White)								
African-American			0.028	[0.042]	0.016	[0.018]	-0.022	[0.015]
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin			0.018	[0.038]	-0.007	[0.017]	0.002	[0.013]
Asian			-0.104	[0.071]	-0.008	[0.022]	-0.028	[0.025]
Other			0.103	[0.066]	0.031	[0.029]	-0.010	[0.031]
Education: College and above?			-0.050	[0.031]	-0.005	[0.011]	0.037***	[0.011]
Household Income (Omitted: $0-$49,999)								
$50,000-$99,999			0.081***	[0.029]	-0.005	[0.011]	0.003	[0.011]
$100,000-$149,999			0.113**	[0.050]	0.011	[0.017]	0.054***	[0.020]
$150,000-$199,999			0.129*	[0.072]	0.093**	[0.037]	0.118***	[0.023]
≥$200,000			0.213***	[0.075]	0.045	[0.037]	0.182***	[0.021]
Unsure			-0.099*	[0.055]	-0.033	[0.021]	-0.035	[0.022]
Employment Status (Omitted: Not in labor force)								
Not employed, looking for work			-0.011	[0.043]	0.039**	[0.016]	0.002	[0.018]
Student			0.092	[0.073]	0.065*	[0.035]	0.006	[0.025]
Employed, in Agriculture			0.308***	[0.078]	0.258***	[0.030]	0.163***	[0.025]
Employed, in Mining			0.349***	[0.093]	0.238***	[0.042]	0.137***	[0.028]
Employed, in Manufacturing			0.149***	[0.051]	0.121***	[0.023]	0.060***	[0.022]
Employed, in Services			0.035	[0.035]	0.048***	[0.012]	0.028**	[0.013]
Responded on Mobile Device?			0.168***	[0.027]	0.040***	[0.010]	0.010	[0.011]
Most recent presidential election (Omitted: Neither)								
Supported Democrat			-0.168***	[0.032]	0.093***	[0.013]	0.089***	[0.012]
Supported Republican			0.639***	[0.035]	0.084***	[0.013]	-0.002	[0.013]
Frequency following news (Omitted: ¡ once a week)								
1-2 times a week			0.153***	[0.049]	0.056***	[0.016]	0.055***	[0.019]
3-6 times a week			0.175***	[0.044]	0.106***	[0.015]	0.083***	[0.019]
Daily			0.179***	[0.043]	0.105***	[0.014]	0.119***	[0.017]
Main News Source (Omitted: Broadcast TV news)								
CNN/BBC			-0.094**	[0.036]	0.007	[0.017]	0.037**	[0.014]
Fox News			0.256***	[0.039]	-0.066***	[0.015]	-0.023	[0.016]
Local TV news station			0.032	[0.034]	-0.089***	[0.013]	-0.067***	[0.013]
News/Evening News/Other program source			-0.095**	[0.038]	-0.118***	[0.014]	-0.054***	[0.016]

(cont.)

Table B.3 (cont.): Effect of Information Treatments on Preferences Towards Trade Policy: Full Results (Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent Variable	(1) First principal component		(1) First principal component		(1) Did information affect views?		(1) Impact of trade for most Americans?	
	OLS		OLS		Ordered logit		Ordered logit	
(cont.)								
Region of Birth (Omitted: New England)								
Mideast			0.167**	[0.069]	0.031	[0.026]	0.013	[0.024]
Great Lakes			0.216***	[0.066]	0.006	[0.023]	0.005	[0.022]
Plains			0.139*	[0.075]	-0.021	[0.024]	-0.000	[0.027]
Southeast			0.168***	[0.064]	0.018	[0.022]	0.017	[0.021]
Southwest			0.108	[0.074]	0.031	[0.026]	0.042*	[0.023]
Rocky Mountain			-0.043	[0.096]	0.017	[0.030]	0.033	[0.035]
Far West			0.096	[0.062]	0.031	[0.026]	0.021	[0.022]
Others or Missing			-0.116	[0.168]	0.171**	[0.077]	-0.056	[0.092]
Not born in US			-0.005	[0.075]	0.031	[0.026]	0.037	[0.027]
County Controls:								
Share with college education (age≥25)			-0.147	[0.166]	0.102	[0.079]	0.254***	[0.069]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s			-0.003	[0.006]	0.002	[0.002]	-0.001	[0.003]
Share of manufacturing in employment			0.321**	[0.149]	-0.055	[0.050]	0.068	[0.052]
Urban?			-0.011	[0.044]	-0.011	[0.016]	-0.014	[0.016]
County characteristics filled?			0.148***	[0.055]	0.115***	[0.034]	0.086***	[0.030]
Week dummies	Y		Y		Y		Y	
Observations	11,552		11,552		9,275		9,275	
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.003		0.153		0.0488		0.0569	
In-sample share or std. dev.	1.375		1.375		0.357		0.541	

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variables are: in Columns 1-2, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 3, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 4, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). The associated survey questions for Columns 3-4 were included starting in round 2. Columns 1-2 report OLS estimates; while Columns 3-4 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The "Randomization Order" variable is the list order in which "More Limits on Imports" was presented among the eight policy options to the respondent. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.4: Robustness: Alternative Constructions of the Dependent Variable (Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent variable	(1) Unweighted average	(2) Dummy: ≥3 policies	(3) Factor analysis, first factor
	OLS	OLS	OLS
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.051***	0.066***	0.135***
	[0.008]	[0.013]	[0.020]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.017**	0.020	0.047**
	[0.009]	[0.015]	[0.022]
Trade Helps Prices	0.024***	0.024*	0.069***
	[0.008]	[0.014]	[0.020]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.021**	0.023	0.057***
	[0.008]	[0.014]	[0.021]
Randomization Order	-0.003***	-0.006***	-0.008***
	[0.001]	[0.002]	[0.003]
Supported Democrat	-0.045***	-0.053***	-0.082***
	[0.007]	[0.011]	[0.018]
Supported Republican	0.127***	0.186***	0.348***
	[0.007]	[0.012]	[0.019]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y
Observations	11,552	11,552	11,552
R-squared	0.152	0.116	0.152
In-sample s.d. of dep. variable	0.286	0.471	0.745

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variables are: in Column 1, an unweighted average of the five policy variables from Table 2, columns 1-5; in Column 2, an indicator variable equal to 1 if the responses on at least three of these five policy questions favored more protection; and in Column 3, the first factor from a factor analysis of these five policy variables, constructed with two factors; each of these measures is constructed to be increasing in preferences for protection by taking one minus the "Support More FTAs" variable. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. All columns report OLS regressions; the bottom row reports the in-sample standard deviation of the dependent variable. Standard errors are clustered by county; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.5: Robustness: Alternative Sample Periods

Dependent variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	First principal component					
	OLS Rd 1	OLS Rd 2	OLS Rd 3	OLS Rd 4	OLS Rd 2-4	OLS Rd 3-4
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.282***	0.178***	0.345***	0.251***	0.242***	0.295***
	[0.076]	[0.062]	[0.083]	[0.081]	[0.043]	[0.059]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.135	0.046	0.051	0.157*	0.081*	0.104*
	[0.098]	[0.064]	[0.084]	[0.083]	[0.044]	[0.058]
Trade Helps Prices	0.211**	0.062	0.123	0.167**	0.109***	0.146**
	[0.089]	[0.062]	[0.090]	[0.080]	[0.042]	[0.058]
Tariff Hurts Prices	—	0.099	0.073	0.121	0.099**	0.097
		[0.067]	[0.082]	[0.085]	[0.042]	[0.061]
Randomization Order	0.003	-0.016**	-0.021*	-0.020**	-0.019***	-0.021***
	[0.011]	[0.008]	[0.012]	[0.009]	[0.006]	[0.008]
Supported Democrat	-0.259***	-0.158***	-0.153**	-0.106*	-0.141***	-0.127***
	[0.075]	[0.052]	[0.077]	[0.061]	[0.035]	[0.048]
Supported Republican	0.728***	0.622***	0.619***	0.635***	0.625***	0.625***
	[0.081]	[0.064]	[0.085]	[0.068]	[0.040]	[0.051]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	2,277	4,059	2,257	2,959	9,275	5,216
R-squared	0.183	0.167	0.168	0.163	0.153	0.154
In-sample s.d. of dep. variable	1.400	1.361	1.389	1.383	1.371	1.384

Notes: Sample varies by column, as indicated in each column heading; comprising respondents in the relevant rounds from the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variable is the first principal component measure of preferences for protection, computed separately for each column sample period. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. All columns report OLS regressions; the bottom row reports the in-sample standard deviation of the dependent variable. Standard errors are clustered by county; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.6: Mixed Jobs Information Treatments

Dependent variable	(1) First prin. component	(2) Did info affect views?	(3) Impact of trade on Americans
	OLS	Ord. logit	Ord. logit
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.244***	0.047***	-0.249***
	[0.037]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.082**	0.030*	-0.022
	[0.041]	[0.016]	[0.015]
Trade Hurts Helps Jobs	0.180***	0.035**	-0.093***
	[0.048]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Hurts Jobs	0.213***	0.043***	-0.208***
	[0.044]	[0.016]	[0.017]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y
Observations	10,269	8,561	8,561
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.158	0.0467	0.0584

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and the two mixed-jobs information treatments. The dependent variables are: in Column 1, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 2, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 3, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). The associated survey questions for Columns 2-3 were included starting in round 2. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications; all columns further include the "Randomization order" of "More Limits on Imports" in the "Most Preferred" list of eight policies. Column 1 reports OLS estimates; while Columns 2-3 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.7a: Summary Statistics: End-of-Survey Recall of Treatment Information

	Round 2, 2020 (N=4,059)	Round 3, 2021 (N=2,257)	Round 4, 2022 (N=2,959)
Share who said information was about jobs	0.33 [0.47]	0.34 [0.48]	0.31 [0.46]
Share who said information was about prices	0.52 [0.50]	0.50 [0.50]	0.54 [0.50]
Share who said no information received	0.14 [0.35]	0.16 [0.36]	0.16 [0.36]
Correctly identified nature of information received	0.45 [0.50]	0.48 [0.50]	0.43 [0.50]
Conditional on a jobs treatment, correctly identified as such	0.41 [0.49]	0.45 [0.50]	0.45 [0.50]
Conditional on a prices treatment, correctly identified as such	0.60 [0.49]	0.63 [0.48]	0.65 [0.48]
Conditional on no treatment, correctly identified as such	0.19 [0.40]	0.25 [0.43]	0.22 [0.42]

Notes: Sample comprises the "Control" group, as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The end-of-survey information recall questions were incorporated in the survey starting in round 2.

Table B.7b: End-of-Survey Recall of Treatment Information and Trade Policy Preferences

Dependent variable	(1) Info received on jobs?	(2) Info received on prices?	(3) Info correct?	(4) First prin. component	(5) First prin. component
	Logit	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
				Recall incorrect	Recall correct
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.130***	-0.044***	—	0.129***	0.393***
	[0.018]	[0.017]		[0.048]	[0.058]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.149***	-0.062***	0.018	0.025	0.140**
	[0.016]	[0.017]	[0.017]	[0.052]	[0.056]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.050***	0.139***	0.205***	0.113*	0.107**
	[0.015]	[0.018]	[0.017]	[0.059]	[0.051]
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.056***	0.125***	0.188***	0.094*	0.104**
	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.017]	[0.055]	[0.049]
Individual, County, Week Controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	9,275	9,275	7,036	6,156	6,532
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.0422	0.0313	0.0514	0.149	0.168

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variables are: in Column 1, an indicator for whether the respondent said the information received was on the relationship between trade and jobs; in Column 2, an indicator for whether the respondent said the information received was on the relationship between trade and prices; in Column 3, an indicator for whether the respondent correctly answered the end-of-survey recall question on the information treatment content (with the "Control" group dropped from the sample, and the "Trade Hurts Jobs" group as the omitted category); in Columns 4-5, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. The randomization order variables included are: in Columns 1-2, the order in which "about jobs" (respectively, "about prices") appeared in the answer options; in Column 3, not included; in Columns 4-5, the order in which "More Limits on Imports" appeared in the "Most Preferred" list of eight policies. Columns 1-3 report marginal effects from logit regressions, evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values; Columns 4-5 report OLS regressions. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.8: "Sans Cheaper" and "Sans China" Prices Treatments

Dependent variable	(1) First prin. component	(2) Did info affect views?	(3) Impact of trade on Americans
	OLS	Ord. logit	Ord. logit
Panel A: "Sans Cheaper" Price Treatment			
Trade Helps Prices	0.130***	0.025	-0.061***
	[0.038]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.111***	0.045***	-0.168***
	[0.042]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper	0.176***	0.015	-0.059***
	[0.048]	[0.017]	[0.017]
Observations	8,303	7,147	7,147
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.151	0.0518	0.0533
Panel B: "Sans China" Price Treatment			
Trade Helps Prices	0.133***	0.027*	-0.062***
	[0.039]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.114***	0.046***	-0.171***
	[0.042]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices sans China	0.141***	0.004	-0.056***
	[0.048]	[0.017]	[0.017]
Observations	8,309	7,153	7,153
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.145	0.0492	0.0515
Individual, County, Week Controls?	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as respondents who received the treatments listed in the respective panels. The dependent variables are: in Column 1, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 2, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 3, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). The associated survey questions for Columns 2-3 were included starting in round 2. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications; Column 1 further includes the "Randomization order" of "More Limits on Imports" in the "Most Preferred" list of eight policies. Column 1 reports OLS estimates; while Columns 2-3 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.9: Baseline versus "Sans China" Treatments

Dependent variable	(1) First prin. component	(2) Did info affect views?	(3) Impact of trade on Americans
	OLS	Ord. logit	Ord. logit
Panel A: Trade Hurts Jobs			
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.247***	0.048***	-0.248***
	[0.037]	[0.016]	[0.017]
Trade Hurts Jobs sans China	0.140*	0.057**	-0.203***
	[0.072]	[0.025]	[0.026]
Test for equality, p-value:	[0.175]	[0.754]	[0.121]
Observations	5,784	4,617	4,617
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.158	0.0483	0.0716
Panel B: Trade Helps Jobs			
Trade Helps Jobs	0.079*	0.030*	-0.029*
	[0.043]	[0.016]	[0.017]
Trade Helps Jobs sans China	0.132*	0.019	-0.021
	[0.077]	[0.024]	[0.024]
Test for equality, p-value:	[0.555]	[0.715]	[0.786]
Observations	5,714	4,586	4,586
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.156	0.0487	0.0464
Panel C: Trade Helps Prices			
Trade Helps Prices	0.136***	0.027*	-0.064***
	[0.039]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices sans China	0.145***	0.007	-0.057***
	[0.050]	[0.017]	[0.018]
Test for equality, p-value:	[0.850]	[0.212]	[0.667]
Observations	6,542	5,386	5,386
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.144	0.0500	0.0523
Individual, County, Week Controls?	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as those who received the treatments listed in the respective panels. The dependent variables are: in Column 1, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 2, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 3, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"). The associated survey questions for Columns 2-3 were included starting in round 2. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications; Column 1 further includes the "Randomization order" of "More Limits on Imports" in the "Most Preferred" list of eight policies. Column 1 reports OLS estimates; while Columns 2-3 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The p-value reported is for a test of equality of the "sans China" and "with China" treatment coefficients. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.10: Robustness: All Treatments Simultaneously
(Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent variable	(1) More limits on imports	(2) US tariff increase	(3) Prefer: Higher tariffs	(4) Support more FTAs	(5) Most Pref.: More limits on imports	(6) First prin. component	(7) Did info affect views?	(8) Impact of trade on Americans	(9) Confidence in answer to (8)
	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	OLS	Ord. Logit	Ord. Logit	Ord. Logit
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.080***	0.063***	0.047***	-0.040**	0.047***	0.248***	0.048***	-0.247***	-0.022
	[0.014]	[0.014]	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.013]	[0.037]	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.015	0.022	0.034**	-0.004	0.016	0.085**	0.031*	-0.024	-0.018
	[0.015]	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.017]	[0.013]	[0.041]	[0.016]	[0.015]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices	0.054***	0.023*	0.011	-0.003	0.040***	0.125***	0.029*	-0.059***	-0.022
	[0.015]	[0.012]	[0.016]	[0.015]	[0.013]	[0.037]	[0.015]	[0.016]	[0.015]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.034**	0.017	0.027	-0.005	0.031**	0.106***	0.047***	-0.164***	-0.029*
	[0.016]	[0.014]	[0.017]	[0.016]	[0.015]	[0.040]	[0.016]	[0.016]	[0.015]
Trade Hurts Helps Jobs	0.040**	0.026*	0.043**	-0.037**	0.057***	0.175***	0.031**	-0.092***	-0.031**
	[0.018]	[0.015]	[0.019]	[0.018]	[0.015]	[0.047]	[0.016]	[0.016]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Hurts Jobs	0.079***	0.050***	0.036*	-0.033*	0.033**	0.207***	0.039**	-0.205***	-0.029
	[0.017]	[0.016]	[0.020]	[0.018]	[0.015]	[0.043]	[0.016]	[0.016]	[0.018]
Trade Hurts Jobs sans China	0.052*	0.082***	-0.008	-0.024	0.002	0.153**	0.057**	-0.203***	-0.034
	[0.028]	[0.028]	[0.030]	[0.027]	[0.022]	[0.071]	[0.025]	[0.026]	[0.025]
Trade Helps Jobs sans China	0.055*	0.064**	0.017	0.023	-0.004	0.125	0.020	-0.020	0.004
	[0.028]	[0.027]	[0.032]	[0.028]	[0.022]	[0.076]	[0.025]	[0.022]	[0.026]
Trade Helps Prices sans China	0.038**	0.035**	-0.000	-0.020	0.027*	0.108**	0.006	-0.047***	-0.014
	[0.019]	[0.015]	[0.019]	[0.018]	[0.016]	[0.046]	[0.016]	[0.017]	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices sans Cheaper	0.055***	0.039**	0.027	-0.012	0.028*	0.147***	0.017	-0.055***	-0.007
	[0.019]	[0.016]	[0.019]	[0.019]	[0.015]	[0.047]	[0.017]	[0.017]	[0.016]
Randomization Order					-0.009***	-0.016***			
					[0.001]	[0.004]			
Supported Democrat	0.004	0.016**	-0.040***	0.121***	-0.045***	-0.133***	0.097***	0.103***	0.065***
	[0.010]	[0.008]	[0.011]	[0.010]	[0.008]	[0.026]	[0.009]	[0.009]	[0.010]
Supported Republican	0.192***	0.129***	0.151***	-0.032***	0.136***	0.639***	0.082***	0.010	0.070***
	[0.011]	[0.010]	[0.010]	[0.011]	[0.010]	[0.028]	[0.010]	[0.011]	[0.010]
Individual, county, week controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	18,349	18,349	18,349	18,349	18,349	18,349	16,072	16,072	16,072
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.0687	0.0764	0.0447	0.0657	0.0736	0.146	0.0454	0.0539	0.0316
In-sample share or s.d.	0.595	0.274	0.479	0.648	0.267	1.386	0.353	0.531	0.447

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" and all treatment groups. The dependent variables are: in Columns 1-4, an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent supported the policy in question; in Column 5, an indicator equal to 1 if they identified "More limits on imports" among their three "Most preferred" policies; in Column 6, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection; in Column 7, whether the information received affected one's views on trade policy (1="Strongly disagree", 5="Strongly agree"); in Column 8, post-treatment views on the impact that trade has had for most Americans (1="Extremely bad", 5="Extremely good"); in Column 9, how confident the respondent was in their assessment on the impact trade has had for most Americans (1="Not at all confident", 5="Extremely confident"). Columns 1-5 report marginal effects from logit regressions; Column 6 reports OLS estimates; Columns 7-9 report marginal effects from ordered logit regressions on the predicted probability that either the fourth or fifth highest response bin is selected. The in-sample statistics reported are: in Columns 1-5, the share who supported the policy; in Column 6, the standard deviation of the principal component measure; in Columns 7-9, the share who selected the fourth or fifth highest response bin. All marginal effects are evaluated with the treatment dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The individual, county, and week controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. The number of observations in Columns 7-9 is lower than in the prior columns, as these validation questions were included in the survey starting in round 2; the results in Columns 1-6 are very similar if the sample there is restricted to the rounds 2-4 observations (available on request). Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.11: Correlates of Attention: Full Results

Dependent Variable	(1) Below-median treatment duration?		(2) Below-median treatment duration?		(3) First principal component		(4) Info recall correct?	
	Logit		Logit		OLS		Logit	
Treatments in sample:	Four baselines		All		Four baselines		Four baselines	
Treatment duration:	All		All		Below-median		All	
Sociopolitical variables:								
NAFTA: Bad impact on family	0.009	[0.008]	0.007	[0.006]	0.055***	[0.019]	0.001	[0.007]
US Inequality a Problem	-0.027***	[0.007]	-0.031***	[0.005]	-0.119***	[0.018]	0.013*	[0.007]
Willing to pay more for US Brand	-0.049***	[0.014]	-0.042***	[0.010]	0.589***	[0.030]	0.025**	[0.012]
Trust in Government	0.013**	[0.006]	0.014***	[0.005]	0.027*	[0.014]	-0.001	[0.006]
Dissatisfied with US Job Market	-0.033***	[0.013]	-0.031***	[0.010]	-0.038	[0.034]	0.003	[0.012]
Disagree children will have a better life	-0.030***	[0.006]	-0.032***	[0.004]	-0.002	[0.016]	0.017***	[0.006]
Loss aversion	0.013***	[0.004]	0.010***	[0.003]	0.023**	[0.011]	-0.002	[0.004]
Duration variables:								
Above-med. treatment duration							0.167***	[0.016]
Above-med. survey duration							-0.008	[0.013]
Treatment dummies: (Omitted: Control group)								
Trade Hurts Jobs					0.148***	[0.045]	—	
Trade Helps Jobs					0.096**	[0.046]	0.017	[0.016]
Trade Helps Prices					0.149***	[0.045]	0.210***	[0.017]
Tariff Hurts Prices					0.154***	[0.046]	0.190***	[0.017]
Most Pref., Randomization Order					-0.023***	[0.006]		
Individual Controls:								
Gender (Omitted: Male)								
Female	0.012	[0.012]	-0.010	[0.010]	-0.063**	[0.029]	-0.026**	[0.012]
Other	0.156	[0.105]	0.136*	[0.077]	-0.061	[0.208]	-0.124	[0.083]
Age (Omitted: 18-24)								
25-34	-0.073***	[0.023]	-0.096***	[0.015]	0.083*	[0.044]	0.000	[0.023]
35-44	-0.146***	[0.023]	-0.161***	[0.017]	0.203***	[0.048]	-0.005	[0.022]
45-54	-0.211***	[0.023]	-0.227***	[0.017]	0.367***	[0.049]	0.000	[0.024]
55-64	-0.291***	[0.026]	-0.312***	[0.018]	0.581***	[0.065]	-0.004	[0.026]
Above 65	-0.395***	[0.027]	-0.395***	[0.019]	0.570***	[0.065]	-0.010	[0.028]
Race (Omitted: White)								
African-American	0.057***	[0.020]	0.052***	[0.015]	0.071	[0.045]	-0.024	[0.021]
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin	0.003	[0.017]	-0.005	[0.013]	0.074*	[0.043]	0.004	[0.017]
Asian	-0.017	[0.031]	-0.040*	[0.023]	-0.038	[0.076]	0.018	[0.033]
Other	0.000	[0.035]	-0.033	[0.025]	0.070	[0.082]	0.011	[0.037]
Education: College and above?	-0.000	[0.013]	-0.022**	[0.011]	-0.050	[0.035]	0.027*	[0.014]
Household Income (Omitted: $0-$49,999)								
$50,000-$99,999	-0.035**	[0.016]	-0.020	[0.012]	0.035	[0.035]	0.049***	[0.014]
$100,000-$149,999	-0.053**	[0.023]	-0.024	[0.017]	0.131**	[0.054]	0.045**	[0.021]
$150,000-$199,999	-0.039	[0.031]	-0.023	[0.024]	0.079	[0.088]	0.041	[0.032]
≥$200,000	-0.055	[0.035]	-0.056**	[0.027]	0.224**	[0.096]	0.121***	[0.041]
Unsure	0.110***	[0.034]	0.089***	[0.027]	-0.090	[0.060]	-0.085***	[0.026]
Employment Status (Omitted: Not in labor force)								
Not employed, looking for work	-0.007	[0.024]	0.016	[0.018]	0.036	[0.050]	0.025	[0.022]
Student	0.009	[0.034]	0.035	[0.027]	0.051	[0.080]	0.062*	[0.034]
Employed, in Agriculture	0.118***	[0.037]	0.129***	[0.029]	0.294***	[0.087]	-0.033	[0.035]
Employed, in Mining	0.063	[0.051]	0.129***	[0.037]	0.275***	[0.094]	0.022	[0.050]
Employed, in Manufacturing	0.077***	[0.027]	0.085***	[0.020]	0.096*	[0.058]	0.023	[0.025]
Employed, in Services	0.040***	[0.016]	0.039***	[0.012]	0.039	[0.040]	0.026*	[0.015]
Responded on Mobile Device?	0.116***	[0.014]	0.119***	[0.011]	0.135***	[0.034]	-0.036**	[0.014]
Most recent presidential election (Omitted: Neither)								
Supported Democrat	-0.047***	[0.017]	-0.053***	[0.013]	-0.073*	[0.039]	0.022	[0.016]
Supported Republican	-0.051***	[0.018]	-0.058***	[0.014]	0.425***	[0.041]	0.053***	[0.017]
Frequency following news (Omitted: < once a week)								
1-2 times a week	-0.041	[0.025]	-0.064***	[0.019]	0.117**	[0.059]	0.048**	[0.022]
3-6 times a week	-0.040*	[0.023]	-0.062***	[0.017]	0.081	[0.050]	0.072***	[0.020]
Daily	-0.075***	[0.021]	-0.096***	[0.016]	0.110**	[0.049]	0.086***	[0.019]

(cont.)

Table B.11 (cont.): Correlates of Attention: Full Results

Dependent Variable	(1) Below-median treatment duration?		(2) Below-median treatment duration?		(3) First principal component		(4) Info recall correct?	
	Logit		Logit		OLS		Logit	
Treatments in sample:	Four baselines		All		Four baselines		Four baselines	
Treatment duration:	All		All		Below-median		All	
(cont.)								
Main News Source (Omitted: Broadcast TV news)								
CNN/BBC	0.017	[0.019]	0.032**	[0.013]	-0.026	[0.045]	-0.031	[0.019]
Fox News	0.038**	[0.019]	0.046***	[0.014]	0.150***	[0.050]	-0.038**	[0.019]
Local TV news station	0.015	[0.017]	0.017	[0.012]	0.012	[0.043]	-0.008	[0.019]
News/Evening News/Other program source	-0.040**	[0.018]	-0.021	[0.014]	-0.020	[0.047]	0.003	[0.020]
Region of Birth (Omitted: New England)								
Mideast	-0.012	[0.033]	-0.021	[0.027]	0.087	[0.087]	-0.051	[0.035]
Great Lakes	-0.042	[0.032]	-0.032	[0.027]	0.058	[0.087]	-0.027	[0.036]
Plains	-0.061	[0.039]	-0.044	[0.031]	0.066	[0.098]	-0.001	[0.039]
Southeast	-0.003	[0.032]	-0.001	[0.027]	0.074	[0.084]	-0.043	[0.035]
Southwest	-0.040	[0.033]	-0.012	[0.028]	0.074	[0.091]	-0.037	[0.038]
Rocky Mountain	-0.108**	[0.042]	-0.081**	[0.036]	-0.279**	[0.109]	-0.035	[0.043]
Far West	-0.038	[0.032]	-0.029	[0.027]	0.071	[0.083]	-0.052	[0.035]
Others or Missing	-0.052	[0.115]	-0.043	[0.088]	-0.246	[0.193]	-0.031	[0.130]
Not born in US	-0.042	[0.036]	-0.020	[0.030]	-0.059	[0.096]	-0.012	[0.039]
County Controls:								
Share with college education (age≥25)	-0.016	[0.072]	-0.018	[0.052]	-0.019	[0.155]	-0.035	[0.069]
Autor-Dorn-Hanson measure for 2000s	-0.000	[0.003]	-0.000	[0.003]	-0.002	[0.008]	-0.002	[0.003]
Share of manufacturing in employment	0.005	[0.069]	-0.045	[0.050]	0.306*	[0.175]	0.041	[0.067]
Urban?	0.015	[0.021]	0.011	[0.015]	0.024	[0.052]	0.005	[0.020]
County characteristics filled?	0.139***	[0.048]	0.122***	[0.032]	0.062	[0.057]	-0.011	[0.026]
Week dummies?	Y		Y		Y		Y	
Observations	8,375		15,172		6,684		7,036	
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.118		0.123		0.194		0.0709	

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds. The treatments in the regressions are: in Columns 1, 3 and 4, the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" groups; in Column 2, all treatment groups. (The "Control" group is excluded from all columns, except Column 3.) The dependent variables are: in Columns 1-2, an indicator for whether the respondent spent a below-median duration on their information treatment screen (computed within treatment-by-round); in Column 3, the first principal component measure of preferences for protection (where the sample here includes the "Control" group, but restricts the treatment group observations to those with a below-median treatment duration); in Column 4, an indicator for whether the respondent correctly answered the end-of-survey recall question on the information treatment topic (with the "Trade Hurts Jobs" group being the omitted category). The end-of-survey information recall question was incorporated in the survey starting in round 2. All Columns report marginal effects from logit regressions, evaluated with treatment and duration dummies (where applicable) at a zero base value, and all other right-hand side variables at their in-sample mean values; the exception is Column 3, which reports an OLS regression. Standard errors are clustered by respondent county, and computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.12: Reasons for "More Limits on Imports": The Importance of "Jobs" and "China"

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Agreement score: Reasons for "More Limits on Imports" (5 = Strongly agree; 1 = Strongly disagree)				
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Treatments in sample:	Control	Four baselines	Four baselines	Four baselines	All
Treatment duration:	—	Below-median	Above-median	Pooled	Pooled
Reasons: (Omitted: all other reasons)					
Compete with Jobs	0.332***	0.241***	0.516***	0.331***	0.331***
	[0.055]	[0.041]	[0.032]	[0.055]	[0.055]
Concerns about imports from China	0.439***	0.326***	0.589***	0.437***	0.437***
	[0.049]	[0.044]	[0.034]	[0.049]	[0.049]
Below-median treatment duration × Reason					
Compete with Jobs				-0.090	-0.076
				[0.065]	[0.060]
Concerns about imports from China				-0.111	-0.148***
				[0.069]	[0.056]
Above-median treatment duration × Reason					
Compete with Jobs				0.185***	0.179***
				[0.061]	[0.059]
Concerns about imports from China				0.152***	0.130**
				[0.059]	[0.054]
Reasons randomization order	0.058***	0.028***	0.023***	0.030***	0.023***
	[0.016]	[0.010]	[0.008]	[0.006]	[0.004]
p-value: Jobs (below-median, full effect)				[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: China (below-median, full effect)				[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: Jobs (above-median, full effect)				[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: China (above-median, full effect)				[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: Jobs (above- vs below-median)				[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: China (above- vs below-median)				[0.000]	[0.000]
Individual fixed effects?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,485	2,478	3,486	7,449	15,759
Number of respondents	297	413	581	1,291	2,676
R-squared	0.573	0.515	0.451	0.510	0.516
In-sample mean	3.667	3.598	3.926	3.766	3.757
In-sample s.d.	1.097	1.049	1.008	1.051	1.052

Notes: Sample comprises respondents in rounds 3-4 who selected "More limits on imports" as a top-three "Most preferred" policy out of the list of eight policies. Column 1 comprises only the "Control" group; Column 2 comprises respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups who spent a below-median duration on the treatment screen (computed within treatment-by-round); Column 3 comprises respondents in these four baseline treatment groups who spent an above-median duration on the treatment screen; Column 4 pools across the respondents in the prior three columns; while Column 5 further includes respondents in all treatment groups. The dependent variable is the agreement score (on a scale of 1-5) with a given reason for selecting "More limits on imports"; the omitted category comprises all other reasons, namely: "(Not) Persuaded", "Quality concerns", "National security", "Other more important concerns". All columns report OLS regressions, with respondent fixed effects and a randomization order variable (for the order in which a reason appeared on the respondent's screen). The p-values reported are for tests of: (i) whether the overall effect of the "Jobs" (respectively, "China") reason coefficient is different from zero for below- (respectively, above-) median treatment duration respondents; and (ii) whether the respective reason coefficients are equal across the below- versus above-median treatment duration groups. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.13: Reasons for "More Limits on Imports":
Comparing Treatments "with" and "sans China", about Jobs and about Prices

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Agreement score: Reasons for "More Limits on Imports" (5 = Strongly agree; 1 = Strongly disagree)			
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Treatments in sample:	All Abt Jobs vs Prices	Trade Hurts Jobs With vs Sans China	Trade Helps Jobs With vs Sans China	Trade Helps Prices With vs Sans China
Reasons: (Omitted: all other reasons)				
Compete with Jobs	0.331***	0.331***	0.331***	0.331***
	[0.055]	[0.055]	[0.055]	[0.055]
Concerns about imports from China	0.437***	0.436***	0.437***	0.437***
	[0.049]	[0.049]	[0.049]	[0.049]
Treatment about Jobs × Reason				
Compete with Jobs	0.033			
	[0.059]			
Concerns about imports from China	-0.023			
	[0.054]			
Treatment about Prices × Reason				
Compete with Jobs	0.118**			
	[0.060]			
Concerns about imports from China	0.054			
	[0.058]			
Treatment with China × Reason				
Compete with Jobs		0.046	0.004	0.137*
		[0.069]	[0.080]	[0.071]
Concerns about imports from China		-0.113	0.119*	0.018
		[0.070]	[0.071]	[0.074]
Treatment sans China × Reason				
Compete with Jobs		0.007	0.027	0.118
		[0.079]	[0.080]	[0.079]
Concerns about imports from China		-0.239***	-0.060	0.011
		[0.073]	[0.088]	[0.079]
Reasons randomization order	0.023***	0.019**	0.037***	0.032***
	[0.004]	[0.008]	[0.009]	[0.008]
p-value: Jobs (jobs treatment, full effect)	[0.000]			
p-value: China (jobs treatment, full effect)	[0.000]			
p-value: Jobs (prices treatment, full effect)	[0.000]			
p-value: China (prices treatment, full effect)	[0.000]			
p-value: Jobs (with China treatment, full effect)		[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: China (with China treatment, full effect)		[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: Jobs (sans China treatment, full effect)		[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
p-value: China (sans China treatment, full effect)		[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Individual fixed effects?	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	15,759	4,167	3,921	4,521
Number of respondents	2,676	744	703	803
R-squared	0.513	0.550	0.531	0.516
In-sample mean	3.757	3.746	3.751	3.735
In-sample s.d.	1.052	1.048	1.057	1.074

Notes: Sample comprises respondents in rounds 3-4 who selected "More limits on imports" as a top-three "Most preferred" policy out of the list of eight policies. Column 1 comprises all treatment groups; Columns 2-4 comprise the with and sans China versions of respectively the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments; the omitted category in each column is the "Control" group. The dependent variable is the agreement score (on a scale of 1-5) with a given reason for selecting "More limits on imports"; the omitted category comprises all other reasons, namely: "(Not) Persuaded", "Quality concerns", "National security", "Other more important concerns". All columns report OLS regressions, with respondent fixed effects and a randomization order variable (for the order in which a reason appeared on the respondent's screen). The p-values reported are for tests of whether the overall effect of the "Jobs" (respectively, "China") reason coefficient is different from zero for respondents who received treatments about jobs (respectively, about prices, with China, sans China). Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.14: Analysis of Text Responses:
Occurrence of "Jobs" and "China", by Treatment Duration

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Text response indicator					
	Listed China to limit imports from		China appears in reasons for more limits on imports		Jobs appears in reasons for more limits on imports	
	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit
Treatments in sample:	Three pairs	All	Three pairs	All	Three pairs	All
Below-median treatment duration	-0.004	-0.001	0.027	0.022	0.004	0.011
	[0.020]	[0.018]	[0.048]	[0.040]	[0.062]	[0.057]
Above-median treatment duration	0.013	0.021	0.005	0.019	0.038	0.032
	[0.017]	[0.016]	[0.038]	[0.034]	[0.052]	[0.049]
p-value: Above- vs Below-median	[0.369]	[0.114]	[0.489]	[0.861]	[0.439]	[0.547]
Individual, County controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Round dummies?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	945	1,436	518	886	582	937
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.198	0.188	0.125	0.0957	0.103	0.0785
In-sample mean	0.892	0.902	0.120	0.119	0.239	0.234
In-sample s.d.	0.310	0.298	0.325	0.323	0.427	0.423

Notes: Sample based on respondents who provided meaningful text responses, across all available rounds. The odd-numbered Columns comprise the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatment groups, and their "sans China" counterparts, while the even-numbered Columns include all treatment groups; the omitted category in each column is the "Control" group. The dependent variable is: in Columns 1-2, an indicator variable for whether "China" was listed as a country on which the respondent supported placing more limits on imports; in Columns 3-4 (respectively, Columns 5-6), an indicator variable for whether "China" (respectively, "job"/"worker") appeared in the text response on other reasons for listing "More limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy. The controls included are as in the Table B.3 full specifications, except that round dummies are used in lieu of round-week dummies to preserve degrees of freedom. All columns report marginal effects from logit regressions, evaluated with the treatment duration dummies at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The p-value reported in each column is for a test of equality of the coefficients for the above- versus below-median treatment duration dummies. Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.15: Analysis of Text Responses:
Occurrence of "Jobs" and "China", by Nature of Treatment Received

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Text response indicator					
	Listed China to limit imports from		China appears in reasons for more limits on imports		Jobs appears in reasons for more limits on imports	
	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit	Logit
Treatments in sample:	Three pairs	All	Three pairs	All	Three pairs	All
With China	0.003	0.013	-0.004	0.015		
	[0.017]	[0.016]	[0.044]	[0.037]		
Sans China	0.016	0.020	0.024	0.030		
	[0.018]	[0.018]	[0.039]	[0.036]		
About Jobs					0.043	0.045
					[0.053]	[0.051]
About Prices					0.007	0.002
					[0.056]	[0.052]
p-value: With China vs Sans China	[0.427]	[0.619]	[0.305]	[0.534]		
p-value: About Jobs vs About Prices					[0.337]	[0.124]
Individual, County controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Round dummies?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	945	1,436	518	886	582	937
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.198	0.185	0.127	0.0963	0.103	0.0802
In-sample mean	0.892	0.902	0.120	0.119	0.239	0.234
In-sample s.d.	0.310	0.298	0.325	0.323	0.427	0.423

Notes: Sample based on respondents who provided meaningful text responses, across all available rounds. The odd-numbered Columns comprise the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatment groups, and their "sans China" counterparts, while the even-numbered Columns include all treatment groups; the omitted category in each column is the "Control" group. The dependent variable is: in Columns 1-2, an indicator variable for whether "China" was listed as a country on which the respondent supported placing more limits on imports; in Columns 3-4 (respectively, Columns 5-6), an indicator variable for whether "China" (respectively, "job"/"worker") appeared in the text response on other reasons for listing "More limits on imports" as a "Most Preferred" policy. The controls included are as in the Table B.3 full specifications, except that round dummies are used in lieu of round-week dummies to preserve degrees of freedom. All columns report marginal effects from logit regressions, evaluated with the "with China" and "sans China" dummies (respectively, "about jobs" and "about prices" dummies) at a zero base value, and all other controls at their in-sample mean values. The p-value reported in each column is for a test of equality of the coefficients for the "with China" and "sans China" dummies (respectively, "about jobs" and "about prices" dummies). Standard errors are clustered by county, computed where necessary by the delta method; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.16: Robustness: Controlling for Liberal vs Conservative Economic Policy Positioning

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Preferences for protection, first principal component			
Treatment duration:	OLS All	OLS Below-median	OLS Above-median	OLS Top quintile
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.243***	0.174***	0.318***	0.457***
	[0.036]	[0.043]	[0.049]	[0.069]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.085**	0.115**	0.061	0.054
	[0.041]	[0.047]	[0.050]	[0.075]
Trade Helps Prices	0.120***	0.157***	0.096**	0.097
	[0.037]	[0.046]	[0.048]	[0.066]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.105***	0.158***	0.056	0.019
	[0.040]	[0.047]	[0.055]	[0.081]
In the last presidential election:				
Supported Republican	0.523***	0.497***	0.559***	0.586***
	[0.037]	[0.042]	[0.053]	[0.065]
Supported Democrat	-0.125***	-0.066*	-0.129***	-0.066
	[0.033]	[0.039]	[0.047]	[0.061]
On economic policy matters:				
Conservative beliefs	0.274***	0.269***	0.245***	0.236***
	[0.035]	[0.040]	[0.047]	[0.056]
Liberal beliefs	-0.129***	-0.075**	-0.213***	-0.176***
	[0.031]	[0.036]	[0.042]	[0.051]
Individual, County, Week, Rand. order Controls?	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	11,552	7,193	7,185	4,567
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.163	0.153	0.182	0.174

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups (Column 1). Columns 2-4 then limit the sample to those who spent a below-median, above-median, and top-quintile duration respectively on their information treatment screen (computed within treatment-by-round). The dependent variable is the first principal component measure of preferences for protection. The controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. All columns report OLS regressions. Standard errors are clustered by county; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.17: Prior-Biased Updating by Political Identity and Economic Policy Positioning: Main and Interaction Effect Coefficients (Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent variable:	(1) Preferences for protection, first principal component OLS				(2) OLS			
	Coef. estimate		Full effect		Coef. estimate		Full effect	
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.561***	[0.103]			0.375***	[0.076]		
Trade Helps Jobs	0.155	[0.102]			0.168**	[0.085]		
Trade Helps Prices	0.158	[0.099]			0.132*	[0.075]		
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.129	[0.120]			0.097	[0.081]		
Interacted with limited-attention dummy (L):								
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.394***	[0.104]	0.168***	[0.043]	-0.227***	[0.079]	0.148***	[0.043]
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.057	[0.103]	0.098**	[0.047]	-0.077	[0.083]	0.091*	[0.049]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.018	[0.102]	0.141***	[0.046]	-0.004	[0.081]	0.128***	[0.047]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.012	[0.121]	0.141***	[0.045]	0.047	[0.085]	0.144***	[0.047]
Interacted with high-attention and Republican dummy (R):								
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.122	[0.126]	0.439***	[0.079]				
Trade Helps Jobs	0.110	[0.123]	0.264***	[0.077]				
Trade Helps Prices	0.066	[0.118]	0.224***	[0.073]				
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.133	[0.145]	0.262***	[0.084]				
Interacted with high-attention and Democrat dummy (D):								
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.433***	[0.116]	0.128*	[0.065]				
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.278**	[0.115]	-0.124*	[0.068]				
Trade Helps Prices	-0.170	[0.110]	-0.011	[0.066]				
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.245*	[0.136]	-0.116	[0.073]				
In the last presidential election:								
Supported Republican	0.616***	[0.039]						
Supported Democrat	-0.065*	[0.039]						
Interacted with high-attention and Conservative dummy:								
Trade Hurts Jobs					0.045	[0.106]	0.419***	[0.079]
Trade Helps Jobs					0.039	[0.113]	0.207**	[0.083]
Trade Helps Prices					0.059	[0.100]	0.191***	[0.074]
Tariff Hurts Prices					0.091	[0.112]	0.187**	[0.087]
Interacted with high-attention and Liberal dummy:								
Trade Hurts Jobs					-0.276**	[0.110]	0.099	[0.085]
Trade Helps Jobs					-0.425***	[0.107]	-0.257***	[0.075]
Trade Helps Prices					-0.186*	[0.107]	-0.054	[0.083]
Tariff Hurts Prices					-0.243**	[0.111]	-0.146*	[0.088]
On economic policy matters:								
Conservative beliefs					-0.098***	[0.036]		
Liberal beliefs					0.462***	[0.039]		
Individual, County, Week Controls?	Y				Y			
Observations	11,552				11,552			
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.157				0.136			

Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variable is the first principal component measure of preferences for protection. The controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. All columns report OLS regressions. The implied full effects for the various subsamples are calculated using the main effect and relevant interaction term coefficients; the implied full effects from Column 1 are illustrated in Figure 2 in the main paper. Column 1 does not include the level effects of the limited-attention, high-attention Republican, and high-attention Democrat dummies, since these would be collinear with the set of interactions between the treatment indicators and (respectively) the L, R, and D dummies; in particular, this is because the "Control" group could not be meaningfully split by treatment screen duration. An analogous statement applies in Column 2 for the limited-attention, high-attention conservative, and high-attention liberal dummies. Standard errors are clustered by county; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Table B.18: Political Ideology or Economic Policy Views? Main and Interaction Effect Coefficients (Pooled: All rounds)

Dependent variable:	(1) Prefs. for protection, first prin. comp. OLS			
	Coef. estimate		Full effect	
Trade Hurts Jobs	0.552***	[0.110]		
Trade Helps Jobs	0.209*	[0.111]		
Trade Helps Prices	0.174*	[0.105]		
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.145	[0.125]		
Interacted with limited-attention dummy (L):				
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.390***	[0.111]	0.162***	[0.043]
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.111	[0.111]	0.097**	[0.047]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.038	[0.107]	0.136***	[0.046]
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.004	[0.127]	0.141***	[0.046]
Interacted with high-attention and Republican dummy (R):				
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.102	[0.131]	0.450***	[0.108]
Trade Helps Jobs	0.109	[0.126]	0.318***	[0.107]
Trade Helps Prices	0.055	[0.131]	0.229**	[0.112]
Tariff Hurts Prices	0.149	[0.157]	0.294**	[0.123]
Interacted with high-attention and Democrat dummy (D):				
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.324***	[0.122]	0.228**	[0.092]
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.150	[0.116]	0.058	[0.098]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.118	[0.115]	0.056	[0.093]
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.177	[0.136]	-0.032	[0.090]
In the last presidential election:				
Supported Republican	0.281***	[0.040]		
Supported Democrat	-0.066*	[0.036]		
Interacted with high-attention and Conservative dummy:				
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.030	[0.111]	0.522***	[0.129]
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.069	[0.114]	0.139	[0.129]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.029	[0.115]	0.146	[0.132]
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.044	[0.127]	0.102	[0.157]
Interacted with high-attention and Liberal dummy:				
Trade Hurts Jobs	-0.148	[0.115]	0.405***	[0.137]
Trade Helps Jobs	-0.315***	[0.107]	-0.107	[0.118]
Trade Helps Prices	-0.112	[0.112]	0.063	[0.131]
Tariff Hurts Prices	-0.140	[0.105]	0.005	[0.140]
On economic policy matters:				
Conservative beliefs	0.281***	[0.040]		
Liberal beliefs	-0.066*	[0.036]		
Individual, County, Week Controls?	Y			
Observations	11,552			
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.167			

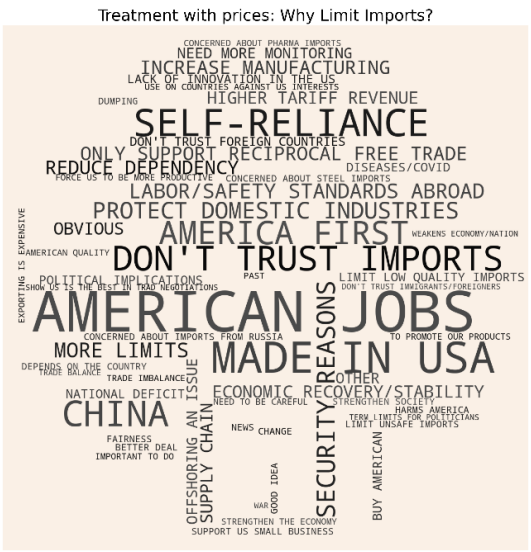
Notes: Sample is pooled across all available survey rounds; comprising the "Control" group (the omitted category), as well as respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups. The dependent variable is the first principal component measure of preferences for protection. The controls included (but not reported) are as in the Table B.3 full specifications. All columns report OLS regressions. The implied full effects for the various subsamples are calculated using the main effect and relevant interaction term coefficients. As in Table B.17, we do not include the level effects of the limited-attention, high-attention Republican, high-attention Democrat, high-attention conservative, and high-attention liberal dummies, since these would be collinear with the set of interactions between the treatment indicators and (respectively) the L, R, D, high-attention conservative, and high-attention liberal dummies; in particular, this is because the "Control" group could not be meaningfully split by treatment screen duration. Standard errors are clustered by county; ***, ** and * denote significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels respectively.

Figure B.1: Word Clouds
(By Treatment Groups)

A: What other reasons led you to select "More limits on imports" as a preferred policy?

Treatment about Jobs

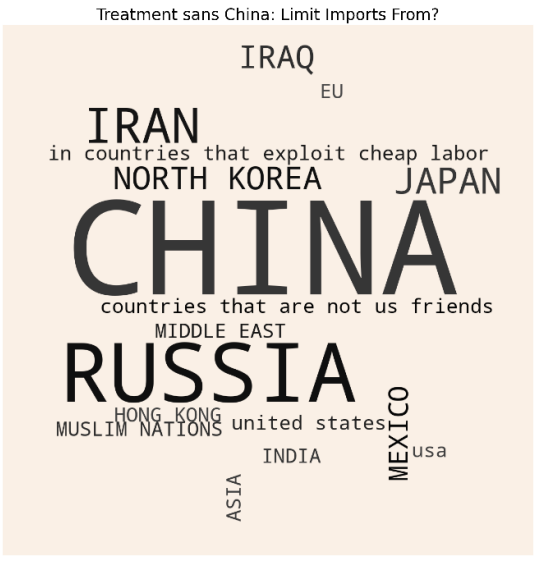
Treatment about Prices



B: On which countries do you support placing more limits on imports?

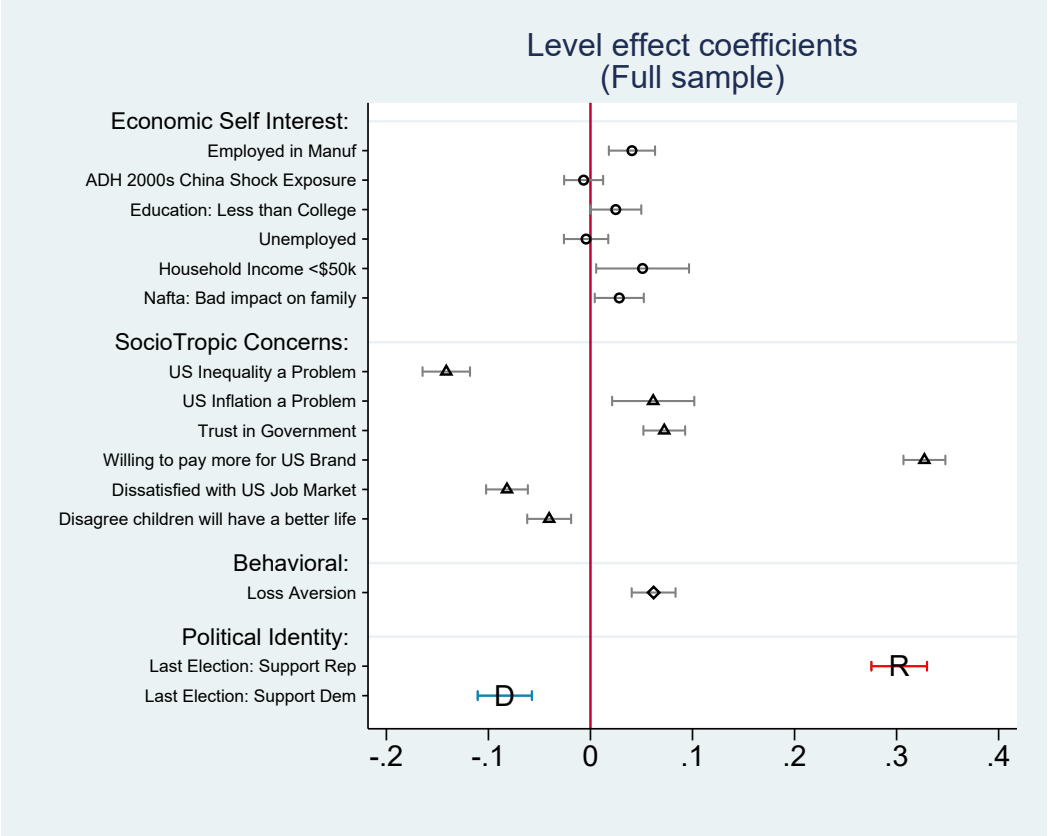
Treatment with China

Treatment sans China



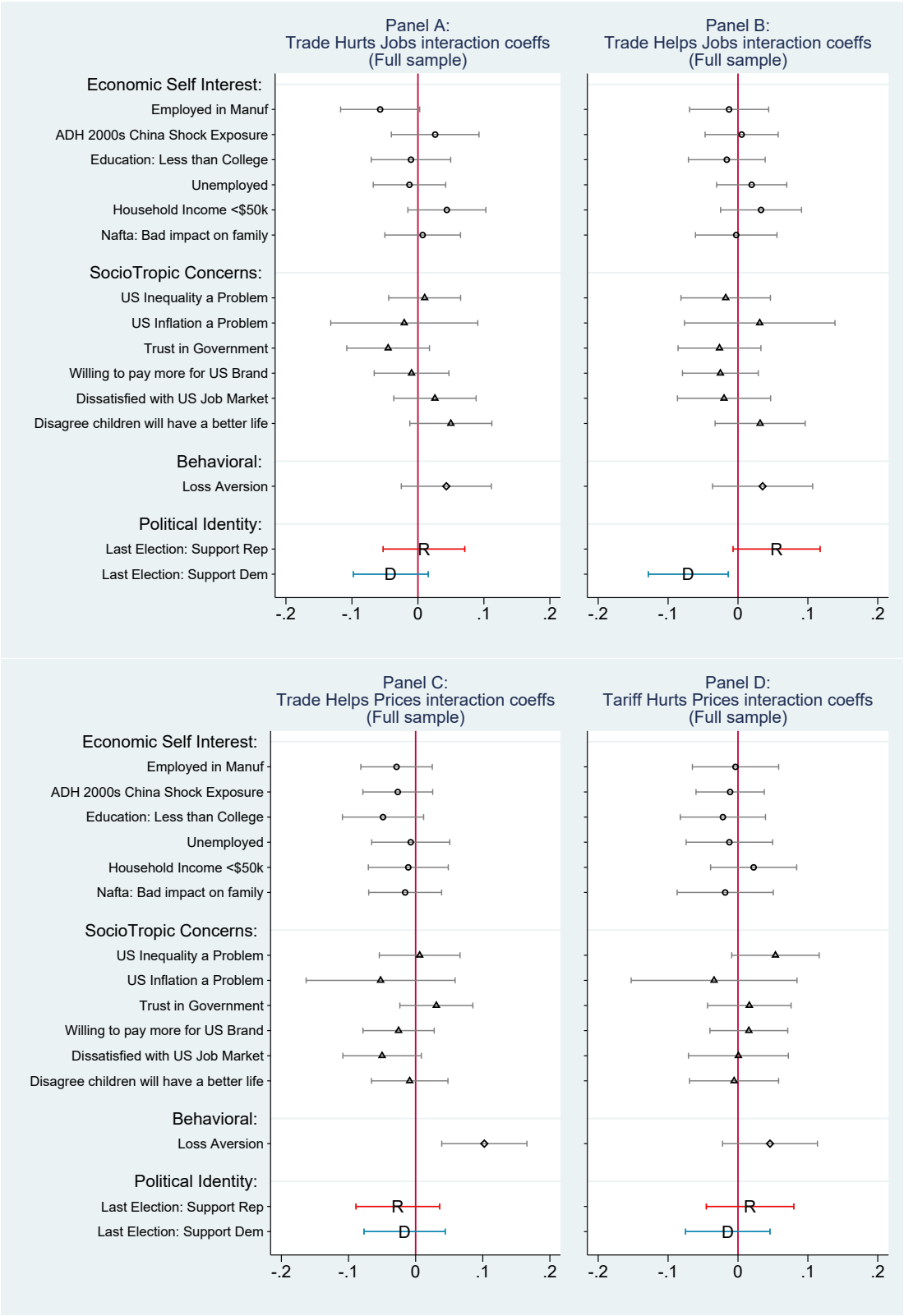
Notes: Sample comprises all available respondents across the respective treatment groups who provided meaningful text responses. Panel A illustrates the pervasiveness of "jobs" concerns; the sample on the left comprises treatments about jobs ("Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and their "sans China" counterparts), while the sample on the right comprises treatments about prices ("Trade Helps Prices" and its "sans China" counterpart). Panel B illustrates the frequency with which "China" is identified as a target country for more limits on imports; the sample on the left comprises the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", and "Trade Helps Prices" treatments, while the sample on the right comprises the three "sans China" counterparts.

Figure B.2: Respondent Characteristics and Preferences for Protection
(Level effects, Full sample)



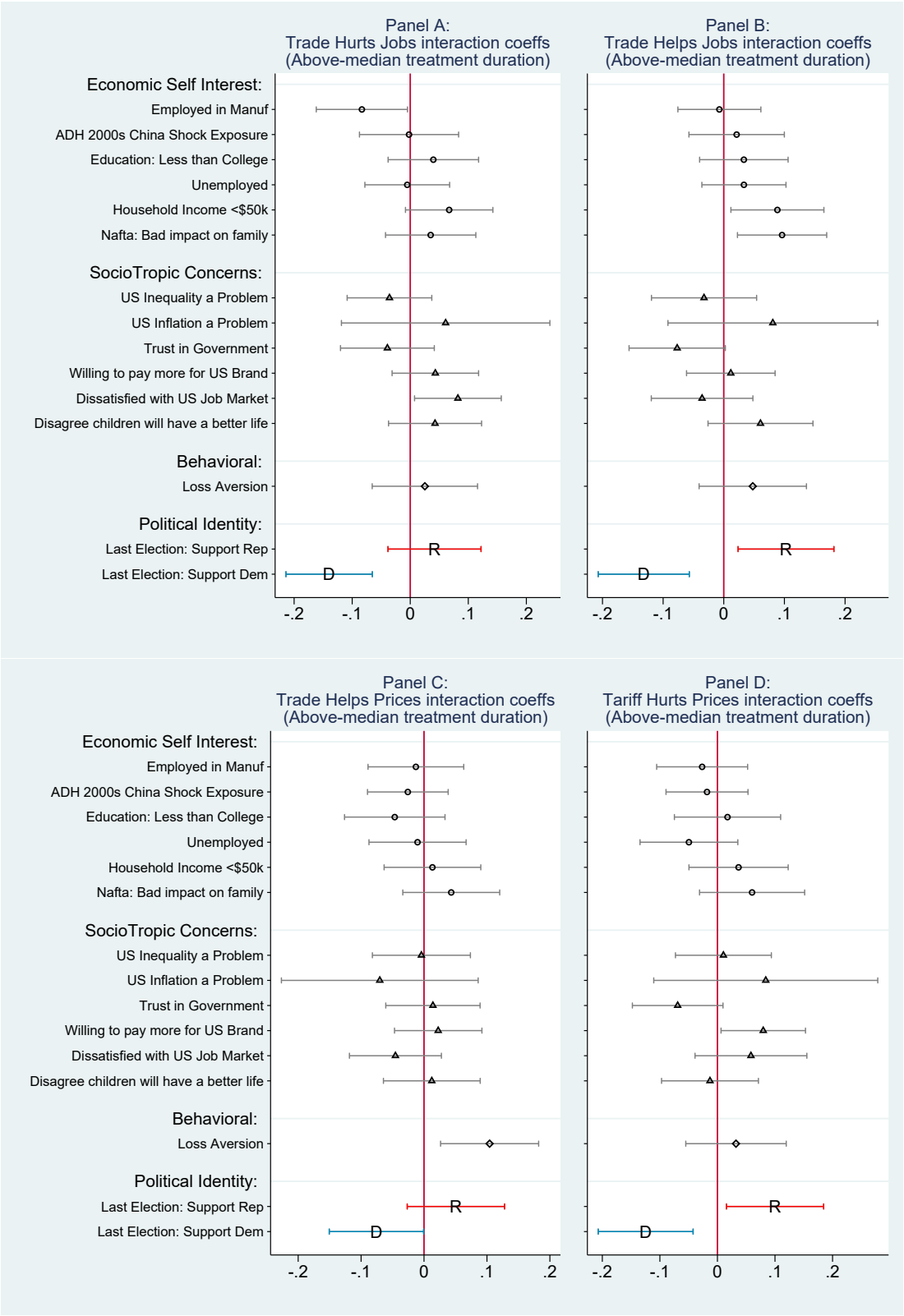
Notes: Coefficient point estimates with 90% confidence intervals are illustrated; standard errors are clustered by respondent county. Each coefficient is from a separate OLS regression; sample comprises respondents in the "Control" group, and respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups, pooled across all available rounds. Each respondent characteristic is expressed as a z-score.

Figure B.3: Respondent Characteristics and Preferences for Protection
(Interaction effects, Full sample)



Notes: Coefficient point estimates with 90% confidence intervals are illustrated; standard errors are clustered by respondent county. Each coefficient is from a separate OLS regression with all four treatment group indicators interacted with the respondent characteristic in question; sample comprises respondents in the "Control" group, and respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups, pooled across all available rounds. Each respondent characteristic is expressed as a z-score.

Figure B.4: Respondent Characteristics and Preferences for Protection
(Interaction effects, Above-median treatment duration)



Notes: Coefficient point estimates with 90% confidence intervals are illustrated; standard errors are clustered by respondent county. Each coefficient is from a separate OLS regression with all four treatment group indicators interacted with the respondent characteristic in question; sample comprises respondents in the "Control" group, and respondents in the "Trade Hurts Jobs", "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices", and "Tariff Hurts Prices" treatment groups who spent an above-median duration on the treatment screen, pooled across all available rounds. Each respondent characteristic is expressed as a z-score.

C Online Appendix: A Model of Belief Updating and Trade Policy Preferences

In this online appendix, we formulate a model of *prior-biased* belief updating that rationalizes the information treatment responses in preferences for protection uncovered by our survey, including the "backfire effect" against information on the potential gains from trade. The model also allows us to motivate our empirical specification, for exploring heterogeneity in treatment effects across respondents with different prior characteristics.

Belief Updating in Trade Policy Preferences. Consider a stylized setting in which there are two possible trade policies: "FT" in which free trade is adopted, and "LT" where limits on trade are put in place.

We consider a discrete-choice decision problem from the perspective of individuals, indexed by i. Let A refer to the "state" that free trade is good (equivalently, that limits on trade are bad). Individual i places a prior probability $p_i(A)$ on the realization of this state that free trade is good. On the other hand, A^c denotes the "state" that free trade is bad (equivalently, that limits on trade are good), which holds with complementary prior probability $1 - p_i(A)$.

Individual i's expected utility under FT is given by:

$$U_i(FT) = p_i(A)U_i(FT|A) + (1 - p_i(A))U_i(FT|A^c) + \varepsilon_{i,FT},$$

where $U_i(FT|A)$ and $U_i(FT|A^c)$ are the levels of utility experienced by the individual under free trade, conditional on the realization of the states A ("free trade is good") and A^c ("free trade is bad") respectively. $\varepsilon_{i,FT}$ is a preference shock term, that is an iid draw across individuals i taken from a Gumbel distribution with zero location parameter and unit shape parameter.

On the other hand, the individual's expected utility under LT is given by:

$$U_i(LT) = p_i(A)U_i(LT|A) + (1 - p_i(A))U_i(LT|A^c) + \varepsilon_{i,LT},$$

where $U_i(LT|A)$ and $U_i(LT|A^c)$ are the analogously defined utility levels of individual i if limits to trade are enacted. $\varepsilon_{i,LT}$ is an iid shock drawn from a separate Gumbel distribution with zero location parameter and unit shape parameter; this is independent in particular from the $\varepsilon_{i,FT}$'s. We assume that individuals are aware of the distributions from which $\varepsilon_{i,FT}$ and $\varepsilon_{i,LT}$ are drawn, but are unaware of the actual realizations of these draws at the time they express their preferences over FT versus LT.

In words, the individual's utility under each policy features a systematic component (which is a weighted average over their utility conditional respectively on A and A^c), plus an idiosyncratic component (an iid Gumbel shock term). It will be convenient to define: $\Delta U_{i,FT} \equiv U_i(FT|A) - U_i(LT|A)$ and $\Delta U_{i,LT} \equiv U_i(LT|A^c) - U_i(FT|A^c)$, while making the natural assumption that: $\Delta U_{i,FT}, \Delta U_{i,LT} > 0$. In words, conditional on "trade is good", the individual's utility is higher under free trade than under limits on trade. Likewise, conditional on trade being "bad", their utility is higher if there are limits on trade rather than under free trade.

Individual i would prefer more limits on imports if $U_i(FT) < U_i(LT)$. The probability that

this occurs is:

$$\begin{aligned} Pr(U_i(FT) < U_i(LT)) &= Pr(\varepsilon_{i,FT} - \varepsilon_{i,LT} < -p_i(A)\Delta U_{i,FT} + (1-p_i(A))\Delta U_{i,LT}) \\ &= \frac{\exp\{-p_i(A)\Delta U_{i,FT} + (1-p_i(A))\Delta U_{i,LT}\}}{1+\exp\{-p_i(A)\Delta U_{i,FT} + (1-p_i(A))\Delta U_{i,LT}\}}. \end{aligned}$$

where we use the property that $\varepsilon_{i,FT} - \varepsilon_{i,NFT}$ takes on a logistic distribution with mean zero and unit scale parameter. Bearing in mind that $\Delta U_{i,FT}, \Delta U_{i,LT} > 0$, the above expression implies that the individual is more disposed to prefer limits on trade if: (i) the perceived probability that free trade is good, $p_i(A)$, is smaller; (ii) the utility gap across A^c and A under limits on trade, $\Delta U_{i,LT}$, is larger; and (iii) the utility gap across A and A^c under free trade, $\Delta U_{i,FT}$, is smaller.

Suppose that individuals adopt a cutoff rule whereby they express a preference for limits on trade if $Pr(U_i(FT) < U_i(LT))$ is sufficiently high. We normalize this cutoff probability to 1/2, so that a preference for limits on trade is voiced if there is a higher probability that one will be better off under LT than under FT; the cutoff of 1/2 is algebraically convenient, but is without loss of generality as long as the cutoff is a constant. Define y_i to be an indicator variable equal to 1 if i expresses a preference for limits on trade, and equal to 0 otherwise. We thus have:

$$\begin{aligned} y_i &= \mathbf{1}\left(Pr(U_i(FT) < U_i(LT)) > \frac{1}{2}\right) = \mathbf{1}\left(\log\frac{Pr(U_i(FT) < U_i(LT))}{1-Pr(U_i(FT) < U_i(LT))} > 0\right) \\ &= \mathbf{1}\left(\log\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} + \log\frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}} > 0\right). \end{aligned} \quad \text{(C.1)}$$

We now map equation (C.1) to our data setting, by positing that our first principal component dependent variable of preferences for protection is a monotone increasing function of y_i. This rationalizes a specification in which we regress this outcome variable against an empirical counterpart for $\log\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} + \log\frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}}$. For individuals in the no-information control group, the $p_i(A)$ that they use in this decision problem is the probability based on prior beliefs that they attach to "trade is good" being the realized state. For individuals who receive an information treatment, the content of this treatment communicates a signal S about whether trade is good or bad. Whether or not the individual expresses a preference for limits on imports then depends not on the prior probability, but on the posterior probability after beliefs are updated, which we denote by $\pi_i(A|S)$. In other words, we replace $\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}$ by $\frac{1-\pi_i(A|S)}{\pi_i(A|S)}$ in equation (C.1).

We adopt the formulation of generalized belief updating from Charness and Dave (2017) and Benjamin (2019), where the posterior odds of A^c relative to A conditional on receiving a treatment narrative S are given by:

$$\frac{1-\pi_i(A|S)}{\pi_i(A|S)} = \left(\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}\right)^{\kappa_S}\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}. \quad \text{(C.2)}$$

In particular, the case $\kappa_S = 1$ corresponds to Bayes rule. More broadly, we consider a form of non-Bayesian updating that is "prior-biased" (Benjamin 2019), wherein:

$$\kappa_S = c_{0,S} + c_{1,S}(\mathbf{1}(S \text{ confirms } A^c)) + c_{2,S}(\mathbf{1}(S \text{ disconfirms } A^c)),$$

with $c_{0,S} + c_{1,S} > 0$ and $c_{0,S} + c_{2,S} < 0$. (We allow the magnitude of these coefficients to differ with S to allow for heterogeneity in the strength of updating across different treatments, subject to the sign restrictions being respected.)

Note that $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}$ is the relative likelihood of observing the signal S under the state "trade is bad" versus "trade is good". It is natural to assume that $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} > 1$ for information treatments that convey a negative impact of openness to trade (e.g., "Trade Hurts Jobs"), so that it is more likely that one would observe such a signal in the state A^c where "trade is bad"; conversely, we have $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} < 1$ for information treatments that communicate a positive benefit from trade (e.g., "Trade Helps Jobs", "Trade Helps Prices"). S is then said to "confirm" A^c if both $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}, \frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} > 1$ or both $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}, \frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} < 1$. On the other hand, S is said to "disconfirm" A^c if either $\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} > 1 > \frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}$ or $\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} > 1 > \frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}$.

To see how the belief updating process in (C.2) operates, consider the case of an individual i who places a higher prior probability on free trade being bad rather than good (i.e., $\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} > 1$). We refer (for simplicity) to such as an individual as having a prior belief that free trade is bad. In the context of our findings in Section 5 in the main paper, this could be because the individual has latent associations of trade that evoke concerns about jobs or about imports from China; alternatively, this could be because the individual identifies as a Republican supporter. Then:

- If S is the information treatment that "Trade Hurts Jobs", the signal S confirms their prior ($\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} > 1$). Since $\kappa_S = c_{0,S} + c_{1,S} > 0$, (C.2) implies that the individual updates toward their prior: $\frac{1-\pi(A|S)}{\pi(A|S)} > \frac{1-p(A)}{p(A)} > 1$, so this reinforces their belief that "trade is bad".
- If S is instead the information treatment that "Trade Helps Jobs" or "Trade Helps Prices", this signal S disconfirms their prior ($\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} < 1$). Since $\kappa_S = c_{0,S} + c_{2,S} < 0$, we have: $\left(\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}\right)^{\kappa_S} > 1$. From (C.2), this implies: $\frac{1-\pi(A|S)}{\pi(A|S)} > \frac{1-p(A)}{p(A)} > 1$ once again. The individual thus updates in a manner that doubles down on their prior belief that "trade is bad" in the face of this discordant signal.

The above discussion also applies analogously for individuals who identify as Democrat (with the opposite prior beliefs $\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} < 1$). This specification of κ_S therefore implies that belief updating is "prior-biased" in that the individual updates in the direction of their prior regardless of whether the signal is confirming or disconfirming of their baseline beliefs.

Substituting from (C.2) into (C.1), we see that a preference is expressed for more limits on imports ($y_i = 1$) if and only if: $\kappa_S \log \frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} + \log \frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} + \log \frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}} > 0$. Bearing in mind the earlier discussion on mapping to the empirical variables, this calls for regressing our measure of preferences for protection on $\kappa_S \log \frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} + \log \frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} + \log \frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}}$; the latter can be re-written

as:

$$\begin{aligned}
& \log\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)} + \log\frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}} + c_{0,S}\log\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} \\
+ & \left[c_{1,S}\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}>1\right) + c_{2,S}\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}<1\right)\right]\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}>1\right)\log\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)} \\
+ & \left[c_{1,S}\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}<1\right) + c_{2,S}\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}>1\right)\right]\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}<1\right)\log\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}
\end{aligned}$$

For a given signal S, the above implies that the effect of the information treatment is potentially heterogeneous across individuals in a manner that depends on their priors, as captured by the $\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}>1\right)$ and $\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}<1\right)$ terms. Consider for example the "Trade Hurts Jobs" signal. The above expression calls for the use of a treatment dummy to pick up the main effect of the treatment (the term in $\log\frac{p(S|A^c)}{p(S|A)}$, with coefficient $c_{0,S}$), while including interactions of this dummy with respondent variables that pick up whether or not the individual in question has a prior that is aligned with the signal (i.e., $\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}>1\right)$) or discordant with it (i.e., $\mathbf{1}\left(\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}<1\right)$); for example, these could respectively be a Republican and Democrat supporter dummy, and the implied interaction coefficients would be $c_{1,S}$ and $c_{2,S}$. The sign restrictions $c_{0,S}+c_{1,S}>0$ and $c_{0,S}+c_{2,S}<0$ in turn mean that $c_{1,S}>c_{2,S}$. A finding of heterogeneous treatment effects, with $c_{1,S}>c_{2,S}$ (the interaction coefficient on a Republican dummy exceeding that on the Democrat dummy) would thus be consistent with prior-biased updating. Separately, we associate the $\frac{1-p_i(A)}{p_i(A)}$ and $\frac{\Delta U_{i,LT}}{\Delta U_{i,FT}}$ terms on the right-hand side with respondent i control variables cum an error term: $\beta_X X_i + \epsilon_i$.

This discussion yields a rationalization for the interaction specification – equation (3) in the main paper – that we pursue, where we interact the treatment dummies with respondent characteristics, x_i, that are potential markers of one's priors toward protectionist policies. It moreover provides an interpretation of those interaction coefficients through the lens of "prior-biased" updating.