

Sins of the Brother:

Partisanship, Family Dynasty and Accountability in Toronto 2014

One of the simplest cues individuals use to inform their vote choice is a candidate's party affiliation. If a candidate runs for the incumbent party, any blame or credit for the conduct and policies of the previous administration becomes part of the information voters can use to determine their vote preference. What happens in non-partisan contests, however, when party cues may be unavailable? Do voters perceive partisan ties, even in officially non-partisan elections? If partisan ties are recognized, do they influence retrospective evaluations of incumbents; do party ties formed at one level of government affect accountability in a non-partisan race at another? Finally, do retrospective evaluations factor into vote choice, even in the absence of an incumbent candidate? We investigate these questions in the context of the 2014 Toronto Municipal Election, using data from the Toronto Election Study. Though this election was technically non-partisan, the major candidates had varying degrees of links to parties at other levels of government. Additionally, although there was no incumbent candidate, the outgoing mayor's brother ran for office. The election therefore provides a unique opportunity to evaluate whether non-incumbent politicians are held accountable for the actions of other politicians at their level of government, but also for those of political parties from another order of government.

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Paper prepared for the LABEL colloquium, Montreal, QC, May 17-18, 2016.

Regular, competitive and fair elections are important tools that enable voters to reward or punish politicians on the basis of past performance. In other words, elections are the mechanism through which voters hold their representatives accountable for their actions. Retrospective evaluations fuel many voters' decisions – do I like what the government has done, or do I want change? Indeed, it is the desire for re-election, and the wrath of voters, that constrains the behaviour of many politicians. Candidates with no record in office would seem, then, to have a relatively blank slate with voters, but the presence of political parties complicates things. As Dalton (2002, 125, 126) notes, parties “define the choices available to voters” and “shape the content of election campaigns,” and they also provide important links across elections. Even when no incumbents are running, party labels tie candidates to previous contests and governments, making it hard to outrun the sins or successes of predecessors. Party ties can also colour the retrospective evaluations of voters regarding government performance (Duch et al. 2000; Anderson & McGregor 2014), such that governments of one's preferred party may be evaluated more generously; governments of opposing parties more harshly. If such evaluations factor into future vote choices, this means that partisanship has a complicated relationship with accountability – on the one hand, it can bias perceptions and weaken accountability; on the other, it can ensure that “fresh starts” are not granted to politicians unduly.

Although party systems are well established at the federal and provincial levels in Canada, most municipal elections in the country are non-partisan in nature.¹ At first glance, one might expect such non-partisan contests to truly be that – untouched by partisan sentiment. There is also reason to expect that voters may put more weight upon evaluations

¹ There are some notable exceptions. In Vancouver and major cities in Quebec, well-established municipal parties exist but they differ from those at the provincial and federal level. In Montreal, older municipal parties have given way to new parties, a few of which coalesced in support of specific mayoral candidates.

of the incumbent and his/her performance because party cues are not available. Such evaluations would enhance accountability, but if they are biased then the accountability function of non-partisan elections is threatened. Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to investigate whether, and the extent to which, partisan bias affects non-partisan contests.

We focus on two types of bias. The first is cross-level partisanship. Do party ties, developed in the federal political arena, shape retrospective evaluations of candidates in a non-partisan municipal election? Specifically, we focus on the 2014 Toronto mayoral race. McGregor et al. (Forthcoming) have shown that most voters in Toronto associated the mayoral candidates with political parties, despite their official lack of such labels. Did those perceptions, and voters' own partisan biases, affect evaluations of the incumbent's performance? The second type of partisan ties we consider are cross-candidate, in the form of unofficial "quasi-party" link between candidates. When voters perceive links between previous politicians and new candidates, are evaluations and support affected?

The 2014 Toronto mayoral election is particularly well-suited to answering these questions, and thus evaluating the influence of partisan/quasi-partisan ties on accountability in a non-partisan setting. While the election was ostensibly non-partisan in nature, the candidates had varying degrees of partisan links. By considering those voters who did and did not attribute partisan ties to candidates, we are able to improve our understanding of how partisan attitudes formed at one level of government can affect accountability in a non-partisan race at another. In addition, the incumbent mayor (the late Rob Ford) withdrew his candidacy at the last moment, only to be replaced on the ballot by his brother (Doug Ford). Rob had an exceptionally high-profile term in office and it is not immediately clear if, and to what extent, Doug was held accountable for the actions of his brother. This constitutes a fascinating dynasty, or quasi-partisan scenario, where voter attitudes towards the new

candidate may have been shaped by attitudes towards the outgoing mayor, in a manner similar to how party labels might influence attitudes. This election thus provides us with an opportunity to study two ways in which a non-partisan election may be influenced by evaluations of parties or individuals outside of the specific race itself.

Analyses conducted with Toronto Election Study data reveal that cross-level partisanship and quasi-party bias did factor into vote choice in two ways. First, evaluations of the previous mayor's performance were significantly biased by the partisan leanings of electors. Second, support for Doug Ford in the 2014 contest was shaped heavily by those evaluations of his brother's performance, independently of evaluations of Doug himself. To put it plainly, support for Doug Ford reflected the actions of not only his brother, but also of political parties at another level of government.

Parties, Partisanship and Accountability

To properly evaluate partisan bias in non-partisan elections, we first need to understand the role that parties play in elections. E.E. Schattschneider (1942, 1) famously stated that “modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties,” and James Bryce (1921, 119) asserted that “parties are inevitable. No one has shown how representative government could be worked without them.” Indeed, in most democratic systems around the world, parties structure most aspects of political life.² In some contexts, even minor offices like sheriff and coroner are contested along partisan lines.

² Following Epstein, we define a ‘party’ as “any group ... seeking to elect government office holders under a given label” (1980: 9). We recognize, however, that parties may be conceived differently. In a discussion of parties in Canadian municipalities, Sproule-Jones (2011) suggests that parties may be defined by behaviour, or more specifically, by how cohesive the behaviour of a group of politicians is, and that label is unimportant. We suggest, however, that labels are necessary for voters to employ partisanship as a heuristic.

From the perspective of voters, the importance of parties in elections is threefold. First, party affiliations provide information for those who need to choose among candidates. Knowing which party a candidate is associated with provides some indication of the policy stances he or she is likely to support. Voters can use this information to make an informed estimate of which candidate is most closely aligned with their preferences. Indeed, partisan cues have been shown to help electors vote “correctly,” or to accurately identify the candidate that they should support, based upon a comparison of voter policy preferences to the positions of candidates (Lau and Redlawsk 1997).

Relatedly, the second reason parties are useful to voters is that their reputations provide cues that continue over time, across multiple elections. In addition to knowing what policies candidates support in a particular contest, knowing how (or if) others from that party have delivered on policy promises in the past may inform estimates of what is likely to occur in the future. If a voter really cares about a specific issue, past experience with the party can provide an indication of whether promises are likely to be delivered. This is similar to the logic in the valence model of electoral choice (Clarke et al. 2009). If voters care about choosing representatives that are a “safe pair of hands” for guiding the actions of government, then party affiliation (and past party performance) is key information.

Finally, and emerging directly from the second point, the relevance of party reputations for voter decision-making facilitates the accountability function of elections. In a majoritarian view of elections, citizens vote to choose a policy-making team, using either retrospective or prospective judgements (or both) (Powell 2000). The information available to citizens when making their vote choice thus becomes quite important – if retrospective, then previous behaviour and outcomes are relevant; if prospective, previous behaviour may inform expectations for future behaviour. Fiorina’s (1981) discussion of Downsian

retrospective voting makes clear that party connections across elections are important. As Downs puts it, “a good guide to what a party will do in the future is what it has done in the past” (p.12). Politicians will therefore be mindful of their behaviour in office as they know that judgements about their performance will factor into decisions on the next election. Even if incumbent candidates do not seek re-election, their party can benefit from or be disadvantaged by their past performance.

Partisanship is therefore a straightforward heuristic that voters can draw upon in low-information contexts, allowing them to hold parties and politicians accountable. Even when voters know little about candidates or the issues of an election, they can draw upon their experience with the incumbent government to form a judgement about whether they wish to “throw the rascals out” (vote for an opposition party) or stay with “the devil they know” (the incumbent party). This type of limited information rationality (Key 1966) can be very useful for voters when making their judgements, and help to promote democratic accountability.

Although the above reasoning points to the benefits of partisan contests for the accountability function of elections, the presence of parties and partisanship also poses a potential problem in this regard. If voters are expected to use elections as an opportunity to judge governments for past performance, partisan attitudes may lead to bias in those evaluations. The “perceptual screen” discussed by Campbell et al. (1960, 133) may lead to more positive evaluations than are warranted by co-partisans, and perhaps more negative evaluations from those who identify with other parties. Accountability may therefore be diminished in partisan contests because incumbent performance may be misunderstood.

Now consider accountability in a non-partisan election. There are two reasons to expect that accountability might be more important in the decision-making calculus of voters

in such a setting. First, theoretically, there should be no partisan bias in retrospective evaluations, so the accountability function of elections should be unaffected by perceptual screens. If candidates do not run as party members then voter attitudes towards parties should, in theory, not influence attitudes towards candidates. Second, without parties the relationship between candidates across elections is broken. Only if the incumbent is expected to run in consecutive elections would there be any concern on the part of the politician for how previous activities would factor into future events, and only in such a case would it be possible for a voter to hold a candidate accountable. It would seem, then, that non-partisan contests allow for greater accountability than do partisan contests.

Cross-Level and Cross-Candidate Ties

Before we pronounce non-partisan contests as ideal tools for accountability, we must recognize that the multi-level nature of the Canadian political system adds an additional twist to decision-making and accountability in Canadian municipalities. Canadian researchers have suggested that partisan ties at one level can shape attitudes towards parties at another (Clarke & Stewart 1987; Stewart & Clarke 1998).³ Research from countries where local and national party systems match suggests that national-level considerations can affect municipal election results (Heath et al. 1999; Martins and Veiga 2013; Cassette et al. 2013). Finally, partisan links at one level of government have been shown to be related to municipal vote choice in Canada (Cutler and Matthews 2005; McGregor et al. Forthcoming). Little is known,

³ This is especially likely in Ontario, where the federal and provincial party systems correspond with one another. Not only are the competitive parties the same at both levels, but they currently are ranked in the same order in both legislatures. Federally, the Liberals have 80 seats in Ontario, as compared to 33 for the Conservative Party and 8 for the NDP. In the provincial legislature the Liberals hold 58 seats, the PC party has 28 and the NDP 21. Furthermore, the parties themselves are also linked. The NDP is 'fully integrated,' in that joining the provincial NDP automatically makes one a member of the Federal wing of the party. Though the Liberal and (Progressive) Conservative parties lack this formal link, they share resources and expertise extensively during election time (Esselment, 2010).

however, about whether non-partisan municipal politicians might be held accountable for the performance of parties at other levels of government.

The key to addressing such a matter is to understand the party cues, ties and links that exist, or are perceived, in non-partisan elections. It is possible that technically non-partisan elections may be quasi-partisan in reality due to the ties of candidates. First, politicians may have partisan histories. It is not uncommon for Canadian politicians to ‘jump’ between the federal, provincial and municipal levels, and in such instances party relationships are readily available cues for voters.⁴ Second, the leanings of the candidates or endorsements may imply ties to parties that exist at other levels of government. Research from the United States has shown that in “low information” elections, such as at the municipal level, such partisan cues can be particularly important for voters (Squire and Smith 1988; Schaffner and Streb 2002; Bonneau and Cann, 2015). Thus, regardless of official party links, voters may try to use their established partisan preferences to inform their vote choices. The extent to which elections perform an accountability function may depend, therefore, on the extent to which candidates are *perceived* to be non-partisan, instead of an actual absence of party involvement or ties.

There is also the possibility of “dynastic” ties. Even when there is no incumbent, outgoing politicians may have ‘anointed’ successors. While the potential benefits for doing so are obvious (at least if the outgoing politician is popular), such an arrangement can tie the new candidate to the record of the incumbent, in essence making him or her accountable for actions which were not his or her own. In most cases, these “quasi-

⁴ For example, Jean Charest left the federal Progressive Conservatives to lead the Liberal Party of Quebec, and former NDP Premier of Ontario Bob Rae joined the federal Liberal Party. There are also many instances of politicians shifting to the municipal level from partisan politics at the federal or provincial level. For example, the current mayor of Brampton (Linda Jeffrey) is a former member of Provincial Parliament, and the mayor of Mississauga (Bonnie Crombie) severed in both the Provincial and Federal legislatures before taking municipal office.

party” ties would depend upon the knowledge levels of individual voters, but less so if the link was obvious through a shared last name. “Dynastic politicians,” defined as those whose family members have served in the same position in the past (Asako et al. 2015.) are very common in many parts of the world (for example, see Bohlken and Chandra 2012 on India, Tiniguchi 2008 on Japan, Camp 1995 on Mexico, Mendoza et al. 2012 on the Philippines and Feinstein 2010 on the United States). They enjoy ‘brand name advantage’ and higher electoral success than their non-dynastic competitors (Asako et al. 2015; Feinstein 2010). Such politicians are less common in party based systems (Doyle et al. 2015), but they are not altogether unheard of in Canada, or in Toronto in particular.⁵ In terms of our overall research agenda, we wish to assess whether dynastic politicians are held accountable for the actions of their family members; can one be punished for the sins of one’s brother? If so, this represents another form of (quasi-)partisan bias in non-partisan elections that has obvious implications for electoral accountability.

The 2014 Toronto Mayoral Race

The Toronto mayoral election, held on 27 October 2014, was undoubtedly the highest-profile race of all the municipal elections held across the province that day. Due to its size and national prominence, Toronto’s municipal election was destined to receive more media coverage than most other municipal contests in Ontario. However, the 2014 election was of particular interest to many because of the infamy of its incumbent mayor, Rob Ford.

From a conflict of interest trial to his substance abuse scandal to his refusal to resign from

⁵ At the federal level, the country’s current Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, is the son of one of the country’s longest serving prime ministers, Pierre. In Toronto 2014, in addition to Doug replacing Rob on the mayoral ticket, Michael Ford (nephew of the Ford brothers) was going to run for Toronto City Council in ward 2, Doug’s old seat, only to be replaced by Rob Ford after he dropped from the Mayoral race. Mike Layton, son of former councillor and former leader of the federal NDP, Jack Layton, is also a high profile Councillor from ward 19.

office, Ford made news in the local, national and international media. Initially, Ford registered to run for re-election, but withdrew from the mayoral race for health reasons, just an hour before the candidate registration deadline. His brother Doug quickly registered to take his place on the ballot.

There were three noteworthy contenders in the mayoral race. Aside from Doug Ford, the other two were high profile politicians at the provincial and federal levels, respectively. John Tory was a past mayoral candidate, provincial politician, leader of the right-wing Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, corporate CEO and radio talk show host. Olivia Chow resigned her seat as an NDP Member of Parliament to contest the race. She is a former Toronto City Councillor, served as the chair of the Community Services committee and vice-chair of the Toronto Transit Commission, and is the widow of Jack Layton, the former leader of the federal NDP. Although neither Ford brother had official partisan ties, the two had fairly high profile links to the Conservative Prime Minister, Stephen Harper - Rob and the Prime Minister were self-described 'fishing partners' and attended political events in support of one another (Wallace 2011). For even moderately informed electors, therefore, the party leanings of the candidates were not hard to understand.

As alluded to above, strictly speaking, there was no incumbent in the race. However, it is possible that the connection between Doug Ford and his brother may have created a "Ford" party or dynastic link for voters. The brothers had a strong, highly publicized association, and they shared more than a last name (or label). Their voting records on council were very similar, Doug was a high profile advisor to Rob, the two brothers co-hosted a radio show together, and even their respective campaign websites were nearly identical. Both brothers ran under the banner of "Ford Nation", and Doug appeared to

have kept many of the same advisors and volunteers—i.e. the same spokesperson that withdrew Rob Ford from candidacy later filed the registration papers for Doug (Hui et al. 2014). Finally, by all accounts, Doug Ford ran on the same platform as his brother. In short, this situation is the closest to a party that one is likely to find in an officially non-partisan setting: the familial ties, branding, and organization of the two brothers suggest the existence of a quasi-party. It is thus quite possible that voters held Doug accountable for the actions of Rob.

To summarize, the focus of this paper is to understand how partisan (or dynastic) bias affects a non-partisan election. The specifics of the Toronto election create an interesting set of circumstances with which to probe accountability in municipal elections without parties. Obvious party ties existed for some candidates and there was a dynastic link between the previous mayor and one of the candidates. Officially, however, it was a non-partisan election with no incumbent. In the analysis that follows, we investigate accountability in the 2014 Toronto mayoral election by answering the following research questions:

1. Did partisan ties, when recognized, influence retrospective evaluations of Rob Ford's performance as mayor?
2. Did retrospective evaluations have an independent effect on vote choice in the 2014 election, even in the absence of an incumbent candidate?

Data and Methodology

This paper draws upon data from the Toronto Election Study, a two-wave internet survey of Torontonians conducted around the time of the 2014 Toronto Municipal Election. Three thousand respondents were interviewed in the weeks before election-day,

of which nearly 75% also completed a post-election questionnaire. The TES includes a variety of questions about attitudes and behaviour, similar to those contained in many national election studies, and is the first dataset of its kind that allows for a thorough consideration of voting behaviour in a non-partisan Canadian municipality.⁶ Note that, in order to maximize the generalizability of our findings, all results discussed below are weighted for age, gender, and education.

To begin our investigation we establish the extent to which Torontonians associated the three major candidates with parties. In a previous work, we (McGregor et al. Forthcoming) conducted an analysis of a question from the pre-election wave of the TES, which asked respondents which party, if any, they associated with the candidates.⁷ This simple question allows us to determine what share of the population linked the candidates with parties, and which parties. Such an indicator is vital to understanding the effect of party cues on accountability in a non-partisan election.

We then examine the effect of partisanship upon retrospective evaluations Rob Ford's performance as mayor. We consider two measures of partisanship. The first indicates the partisan ties of electors alone, and respondents are either classified as supporters of the Liberals, Conservatives, NDP or Greens, or as non-partisans. If there is some degree of consistency within the population surrounding assessments of Ford's partisan ties, then the standard measure of partisanship (based upon the ties of voters alone) may reveal that supporters of parties other than the outgoing mayor's should rate his past performance less positively than will supporters of that party. The second measure of partisanship is an indicator of compatibility. In a non-partisan contest, partisan links must

⁶ As a quality control measure, the TES included a question to ensure that respondents were answering questions seriously (respondents were reimbursed for their participation in the TES). The 3.1% of respondents who 'failed' this question are excluded from our analysis.

⁷ Appendix I contains the wording of all survey questions used in this paper's analysis.

be inferred by voters, and these assessments are, by definition, going to be less consistent than is the case with officially partisan races (where party labels are ubiquitous, including on ballots themselves). As such, we consider a measure of partisan compatibility, based upon a comparison of the partisan attachments of respondents to the parties that individual respondents associated with the candidates.⁸ If partisans who associated Doug Ford with their preferred party (co-partisans) evaluate Rob Ford's time as mayor more or less critically than non-partisans or partisans of a party other than that which they associated with Doug Ford (anti-partisans). We expect that partisan (in)compatibility should colour evaluations of the incumbent's performance. Specifically, co-partisans should be most satisfied with Ford, and anti-partisans should be least satisfied (with other voters somewhere between these extremes).⁹

The indicator of satisfaction with Rob Ford's performance is measured through a standard question in the pre-election survey ("How satisfied are you with the performance of the current mayor?"). If we observe a relationship between either measure of partisanship and evaluations of Rob Ford's performance, such an effect would arguably diminish the accountability function of the 2014 mayoral election, as this would indicate that attitudes towards Ford were shaped by attitudes forged on the basis on partisan politics from the federal level, rather than on the basis of Ford's performance itself. Note that a series of

⁸ Note that we use the perceptions of individual respondents, rather than an aggregate sample estimate of candidate partisanship. Furthermore, while the TES contains measures of respondent partisanship from both the federal and provincial levels, the analyses in this paper make use of federal level responses. The party systems are the same at the two levels of government and, unsurprisingly, federal and provincial partisanship are closely correlated. The substantive conclusions of all analyses below remain unchanged if provincial partisanship is used instead.

⁹ For this analysis we are aided by the non-partisan nature of the election. In a partisan contest, evaluations of the incumbent's performance might conceivably influence the partisan leanings of respondents, meaning that an analysis of this nature would be subject to concerns over endogeneity, making it difficult to draw causal conclusions. In this case, however, since the mayor of Toronto is not technically associated with a party (regardless of voter perception), we expect no such effect to be present; there can be no reasonable expectation that Rob Ford's performance would influence federal-level partisanship. In the case of the 2014 Toronto Election, therefore, we can be confident that the causal relationship between partisanship and satisfaction with the mayor is unidirectional.

controls are included in our analysis to ensure that we have properly isolated the effect of partisanship upon our outcome variable.

We then turn to our second research question and evaluate the extent to which voters held Doug Ford accountable for the performance of Rob. Recall that we conceptualize accountability as voting in accordance with one's evaluation of the performance of the incumbent. Presumably, if a respondent is unsatisfied with the mayor's performance, *ceteris paribus*, he or she should be less likely to vote for the incumbent than a respondent who is relatively satisfied. Of course, in theory, retrospective evaluations and electoral accountability are only relevant if an incumbent candidate or party is present. Accordingly, this portion of our analysis evaluates the extent to which voters held Doug accountable for the actions of his brother. Through a series of logistic regression vote choice models, where vote choice is the outcome variable, we consider the relationship between satisfaction with Rob and support for Doug, and whether this relationship is moderated by the extent to which voters viewed the policies of the two brothers as dissimilar (or the perception of Doug as a pseudo-incumbent). If Doug is held accountable for Rob's performance, our analysis should reveal that those who viewed the two brothers as similar to one another were more likely to vote in accordance with their evaluation of Rob's record (high levels of satisfaction should be correlated with support for Doug). Again, we include a series of controls in this analysis.

Results

Party links and partisan compatibility

Table 1 reveals which party, if any, each of the three mayoral candidates were linked to by electors. This table is reproduced from McGregor et al. (Forthcoming), where full

details are available. For our purpose here, the most important trend in the table is that, even in the ostensibly non-partisan Toronto election, most voters associated candidates with established political parties. Ford was associated with a party by 62% of respondents, while the analogous figures for Chow and Tory are 79.5% and 75%, respectively. The modal response for both Ford and Tory was ‘Conservative,’ while Chow was mostly commonly associated with the NDP, though each of the candidates were associated with different parties by many respondents.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

The data from Table 1 can be combined with information on the partisan leanings of respondents to create a measure of co-partisanship, which we use in our subsequent analysis. Overall, 82.8% of TES respondents reported federal partisan ties. The Liberal Party had the most partisans (39.2%), followed by the Conservatives (25.0%), the NDP (13.0%), and the Green Party (4.6%).¹⁰ Combining this data with perceptions of the partisan associations of candidates reveals that 20.7% of respondents were Doug Ford co-partisans and 34.6% were anti-partisans (the remaining respondents either were non-partisans or did not associate Ford with a party). The corresponding values for Tory are 21.6% co-partisan and 45.6% anti-partisan. 12.0% and 59.0% of respondents were Chow co- and anti-partisans, respectively. Thus Ford had the second highest rate of co-partisanship (a mere 1% less than Tory), but had by far the lowest level of anti-partisanship.

Our analysis does not hinge on whether respondents are able to ‘accurately’ associate candidates with parties, but how their evaluations of these associations combine with their own partisan preferences to shape evaluations of Rob Ford’s performance and, in turn, vote

¹⁰ 1.3% of respondents reported being partisans of an ‘other’ party. These individuals are dropped from subsequent analysis as they cannot be included in the partisan compatibility measure (since we do not know to which party they are referring), nor can they be grouped together as supporters of a single party. Those respondents who associate Ford with an ‘other’ party are dropped for similar reasons.

choice in the 2014 election. Nevertheless, to ensure that our results are not driven by political sophisticates (who may be better able to recognize party leanings) we control in the analysis below for political knowledge, attentiveness, education and age.¹¹

Cross-level party bias

Our two research questions relate to the accountability process: did federal partisanship affect satisfaction with mayoral incumbent performance, and did this measure of satisfaction affect vote choice more among those who recognize the dynastic ties between the Ford-Brother in the 2014 Toronto Election? We begin by considering the first question, evaluating whether and to what extent partisanship biased evaluations of the incumbent's performance. Partisans might view a politician whom they associate with their party more favourably than they would in the absence of such partisan ties. Conversely, those who identify with an incompatible party may evaluate that person's performance more harshly than they might otherwise.

We consider this matter by regressing satisfaction with the mayor's performance onto the two types of partisanship variables described above (those based upon the partisan ties of voters alone, as well as the Ford co-partisan and anti-partisan variables). The results of this analysis are found in Table 2. Ideally we would have a measure of Rob Ford's partisan ties, but such data are unavailable, so we use a question about Doug. We suggest, however, that such a substitution is acceptable as, when asked how similar they believed Doug's policies were compared to those of Rob, 86.2% of TES respondents thought the brothers' policies were all or mostly the same. Only 10.4% did not know, only 3.4% were of

¹¹ An analysis not shown, but available from the authors, reveals that these four factors are positively associated with linking Chow and Tory to the NDP and Conservatives, respectively. The relationships are all significant at $p < 0.05$ in both bivariate and multivariate comparisons.

the opinion that the platforms of the two brothers were either mostly or all different. Additionally, the Pearson correlation between 101-point feeling thermometers for the two brothers is an impressive 0.90, and perceptions of the ideology of the two brothers were nearly identical.¹² Therefore, we think Doug Ford partisan compatibility is a reasonable proxy.

Our measure of satisfaction with Rob Ford's performance is the dependent variable, coded to range from 0 to 1, with five categories. Table 2 presents the results of four ordered logit models—two with only the partisanship variables, and another two with controls added. We include controls for economic and social conservatism (which may predispose an individual to be satisfied with the outcome of Ford's conservative agenda), as well as the measures of sophistication discussed above. Note that, with the exception of age (which is coded in years), all variables are coded from 0 to 1.

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Table 2 provides compelling evidence of the biasing effect of partisanship upon satisfaction. The models with the voter-only partisanship variables (2A and 2B) reveal strong evidence that Liberal, Conservative and NDP partisanship is related to satisfaction with Rob Ford's performance. Model 2B, which controls for a series of ideological and sophistication measures, is particularly compelling. Liberal and NDP partisans were relatively unsatisfied with Ford's performance, while Conservatives were satisfied (non-partisans were in the middle). Models 2C and 2D reveal that voters whose party affiliation is compatible with their perception of Doug Ford's partisanship have an increased likelihood of being satisfied with the performance of Rob Ford, while those who see Doug Ford as a

¹² TES respondents were asked to place the brothers on a left-right (0-10) ideological scale. Average values for Doug and Rob respectively were 7.46 and 7.45. In contrast, Chow was assigned a score of 2.9 and Tory a value of 7.5.

partisan foe have an increased likelihood of being dissatisfied. Again, this pattern holds even after the addition of several controls that might influence either evaluations of candidates or perceptions of partisanship.

Table 2 also suggests that the partisan compatibility variables better explain satisfaction levels than do the voter-only variables. The Pseudo R^2 values are higher in the partisan compatibility models – this value jumps from 0.0838 to 0.1013 from Model 2B to 2D. Additionally, the co-partisan variable in model 2D has the greatest magnitude of any variable in any of the models in Table 2. Such a finding indicates that sharing partisanship with Ford has a particularly large effect upon retrospective evaluations. Thus in non-partisan elections it is partisan compatibility, rather than simply the partisan ties of voters themselves, that matters most.¹³

To better understand the results of Table 2 we present Figure 1, which shows the predicted probability that anti-partisans and co-partisans will fall into each category of the satisfaction variable, as well as the results for the whole sample. Note that the results are based upon Model 2D, and were calculated by manipulating values for the partisanship variables while leaving values for the control variables unchanged.

[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 1 reveals substantially different patterns of satisfaction between Ford co- and anti-partisans, and demonstrates that both of these groups differ from the sample as a whole.

¹³ TES data provide further evidence of the importance of partisan compatibility in this non-partisan race. Among NDP partisans, 55.9% of those who identified Chow with the NDP supported her. Only 33.3% of NDP partisans who did not recognize her as an NDP member voted for her. Similarly, 66.2% of Conservative partisans who recognized Tory as a Conservative supported him, compared to only 34.2% of those who did not. These numbers can be compared to values for Ford—46.7% of Conservative partisans who considered Ford to be a Conservative voted for him, while only 27.9% of those who did not see him as a Conservative did the same. Clearly party ties were more evident for Chow and Tory and they provided a clear advantage among those who perceived them as co-partisans. Among those who did not perceive them that way, however, vote support was much lower. This additional piece of evidence confirms that it is important to understand non-partisan elections as they are really perceived by voters. Accountability is possible to the extent that partisan ties are relevant.

Voters who see Ford as a co-partisan have a probability of 0.60 of being either fairly or very satisfied, while the probability of being dissatisfied is a mere 0.24. Conversely, Ford anti-partisans are much more likely to view his performance negatively (probability = 0.65) than positively (0.22). The results of Table 2 and Figure 1 thus show an undeniable pattern: even in a non-partisan election partisanship can bias retrospective evaluations.

Cross-candidate accountability

We next turn to consider whether these biased evaluations affected support for Doug Ford, even independently of attitudes towards the 2014 candidates themselves. We theorized above that cross-partisan ties could bias perceptions, but we also questioned whether cross-candidate ties had implications for accountability. Did voters hold Doug responsible for Rob's performance? Table 3 reports the results of a series of logistic regression vote choice models, where the dependent variable is a vote for Doug Ford (1) compared to any other candidate (0), and our primary causal variable of interest is satisfaction with Rob Ford's performance. To properly model the relationships that we expect to see, we interact the satisfaction variable with a 'similarity' variable. This interaction allows us to determine whether the extent to which respondents saw the brothers as similar has an effect upon whether they held Doug accountable for Rob's performance. In other words, were those who considered Doug and Rob to belong to the same 'party' more likely to vote on the basis of their evaluation of the incumbent? Note that the similarity variable is coded as a dummy for ease of interpretation – those who saw the brothers as very similar or mostly similar are compared to all other respondents.¹⁴

¹⁴ In this dummy the 'don't know' category is grouped with those individuals who saw the brothers as very or mostly different. This is due to sample size issues (given that so few respondents saw the brothers as different), but also for theoretical reasons. Neither group should hold Doug responsible for the actions of Rob and, at the very least, they should both be less likely to hold him accountable than those individuals who view

We also include in Table 3 models without interactions to provide a baseline indication of the relationship between satisfaction and support for Doug. Furthermore, we specify models with and without controls to evaluate the robustness of any observed effects. In addition to the controls used in Table 2, we also include candidate evaluations (this allows us to account for the possibility that candidate ratings may have influenced either retrospective evaluations or attitudes about the similarity of the Ford brothers).

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Put plainly, Table 3 suggests that the relationship between satisfaction with Rob Ford and voting for Doug Ford does indeed depend upon whether voters viewed the two brothers as sharing similar policy ideas. This pattern is robust to the addition of several control variables. In the models without the interaction, satisfaction with Rob is positively related to support for Doug (the “similarity” variable is insignificant on its own, but this is unsurprising, as we have no theoretical reason to expect this variable to drive vote choice on its own).

The introduction of the interaction term shows, however, just how important the ‘similarity’ variable is to the relationship between satisfaction and vote choice. The positive and significant interaction effects in Models 3B and 3D reveal that voters who were satisfied with Rob’s performance were more likely to vote for Doug if they believed the policies of the brothers were similar. In other words, if voters considered the two brothers to belong to the same political ‘party’ their votes were influenced positively if they had positive retrospective evaluations. This is what one would expect if this were a partisan election—the virtues of the previous administration would be reflected in support for a future administration of the same political stripe.

the brothers similarly. Note that the substantive conclusions of this analysis remain unchanged if an ordinal ‘similarity’ variable is used instead.

As with Table 2, the raw logistic regression results in Table 3 reveal little more than direction and statistical significance, so we present Figure 2, which displays the vote choice/satisfaction/similarity relationship graphically. Values in the figure represent the predicted probability of voting for Doug Ford for each value of the satisfaction variable (values are determined through postestimation, based upon Model 3D, where the variables of interest are manipulated and controls are left unchanged). Each line represents a value for the “similarity” variable. Such a figure provides some context to the interactive relationship observed in Table 3. Note that the predicted probability of supporting Ford for the sample as a whole is 0.23.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 2 confirms that, among voters who viewed the policies of the brothers as similar, satisfaction with Rob was positively associated with support for Doug. It also reveals the magnitude of this effect: very satisfied voters have a predicted probability of 0.40 of voting for Ford, while this value is only 0.07 for the “not at all satisfied” category. Note that, while the slope of the “not similar” line is negative, it is not significantly different from zero, suggesting that satisfaction is not related to vote choice among voters who do not see the Ford brothers as similar to one another. This is what we would expect if candidates were not tied to each other, as there is no reason for a voter to consider the performance of the previous administration if they perceive no ties with current candidates.

The key takeaway message from Figure 2 is that there is a statistically significant difference between the two lines. For those voters who viewed Doug as a pseudo-incumbent, satisfaction works very much as one would expect in a partisan election—it is positively associated with incumbent support. In this technically non-partisan election, therefore, many voters held Doug accountable for the actions of his brother.

Discussion and Conclusion

In theory, politicians can only be held accountable for their actions if they have previously held power. We have shown here, however, that this is not always the case in practice. Partisanship and party cues can play an important role in officially non-partisan contests, depending upon the perception of partisan ties by voters. Cross-party and cross-candidate ties can exist in officially non-partisan settings where there is no incumbent present. When voters associate candidates with parties, perceptions can bias evaluations of the performance of politicians. These evaluations can, in turn, influence vote choice if links are perceived between candidates. Partisan ties, while adding a degree of accountability to non-partisan elections, also distort it by introducing (potentially undeserved) bias.

This piece has addressed the two stages of electoral accountability. First, voters must make an assessment of the incumbent's past performance. Second, voters must decide whether or not to factor this information into their vote choice. Toronto Election Study data reveal that, even in a non-partisan election, partisanship can play a role in both of these components of electoral accountability. Partisan perceptions colour evaluations of incumbent performance, and quasi-partisan, or dynastic links between incumbents and current candidates, can moderate the relationship between evaluations of satisfaction and vote choice.

In terms of non-partisan elections more generally, the electorate's seeming desire to use party ties (even quasi-party ones) to structure their choices calls into question whether any election can be truly non-partisan. Our findings indicate clearly that many voters have a tendency to employ shortcuts when formulating decisions in non-partisan municipal contests, even if such shortcuts provide little benefit in terms of accountability. Partisanship and familial associations are two such shortcuts, but gender and ethnic affinity voting have

also been observed in the 2014 Toronto mayoral contest, suggesting that many voters are falling back upon sociodemographic cues when making their decisions (Bird et al. Forthcoming). Furthermore, despite the fact that Canadian mayors have little to no influence over a city's economy, voters have nevertheless been found to hold incumbents accountable for economic performance (Cutler & Matthews, 2005; Anderson et al. Forthcoming). While we are agnostic about the normative implications of the reliance upon such cues, strictly speaking, in the absence of an incumbent candidate, none of these shortcuts advance the accountability function of elections. Doug Ford, rightly or wrong, was not judged solely on the basis his own merits (or lack thereof).

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Table 1: Perceived Candidate Party Ties

	Olivia Chow	Doug Ford	John Tory
None	5.6%	14.7%	6.8%
Conservative	2.4%	46.2%	55.8%
Liberal	4.8%	10.1%	15.5%
NDP	68.5%	2.0%	1.2%
Green	3.2%	1.8%	1.7%
Other	0.6%	1.9%	0.9%
Don't know	14.9%	23.3%	18.2%

N = 2850

Entries report column percentages

Table 2: The Determinants of Satisfaction with Mayoral Performance

	Model 2A	Model 2B	Model 2C	Model 2D
<i>Liberal Partisan</i>	-0.74 (0.15)***	-0.32 (0.16)**		
<i>Conservative Partisan</i>	0.56 (0.15)***	0.78 (0.17)***		
<i>NDP Partisan</i>	-1.02 (0.20)***	-0.77 (0.21)***		
<i>Green Partisan</i>	-0.32 (0.26)	-0.37 (0.27)		
<i>Ford anti-partisan</i>			-0.76 (0.12)***	-0.43 (0.12)***
<i>Ford co-partisan</i>			1.30 (0.14)***	1.42 (0.15)***
Economic conservatism		1.06 (0.28)***		1.02 (0.27)***
Social Conservatism		1.32 (0.21)***		1.27 (0.22)***
Knowledge		-1.20 (0.17)***		-1.18 (0.17)***
Attentiveness		0.59 (0.26)**		0.53 (0.26)**
University education		-0.48 (0.10)***		-0.44 (0.10)***
Age		-0.02 (0.00)***		-0.02 (0.00)***
Cut 1	-0.79 (0.13)	-1.40 (0.28)	-0.53 (0.08)	-1.17 (0.25)
Cut 2	-0.19 (0.13)	-0.72 (0.27)	0.10 (0.08)	-0.47 (0.25)
Cut 3	0.42 (0.13)	-0.04 (0.27)	0.73 (0.08)	0.23 (0.25)
Cut 4	1.79 (0.15)	1.42 (0.27)	2.16 (0.11)	1.77 (0.25)
Pseudo R ²	0.0348	0.0838	0.0545	0.1013
N	1805	1805	1805	1805

Entries report regression coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses)

*, $p < 0.10$, **, $p < 0.05$, ***, $p < 0.01$

Table 3: Satisfaction with Rob Ford and Voting for Doug Ford

	Model 3A	Model 3B	Model 3C	Model 3D
<i>Satisfaction with Rob Ford</i>	5.98 (0.38)***	1.32 (0.99)	3.26 (0.67)***	-1.29 (1.64)
<i>Ford brothers similar</i>	0.77 (0.51)	-2.70 (0.75)***	0.29 (0.57)	-3.01 (1.02)***
<i>Satisfaction X similar</i>		5.14 (1.07)***		5.17 (1.64)***
Rating of Doug Ford			4.27 (0.72)***	4.24 (0.72)***
Rating of John Tory			-3.28 (0.56)***	-3.36 (0.58)***
Rating of Olivia Chow			-1.01 (0.48)**	-0.91 (0.47)*
Economic conservatism			-0.55 (0.59)	-0.60 (0.58)
Social Conservatism			0.26 (0.51)	0.34 (0.53)
Knowledge			0.51 (0.41)	0.61 (0.39)
Attentiveness			-1.67 (0.66)**	-1.79 (0.71)**
Univesity education			0.00 (0.24)	0.01 (0.24)
Age			0.01 (0.01)	0.14 (0.01)
Constant	-5.06 (0.61)***	-1.92 (0.69)***	-2.67 (0.97)***	0.21 (1.21)
Pseudo R ²	0.4524	0.4669	0.5893	0.5999
N	1469			

Entries report regression coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses)

*, $p < 0.10$, **, $p < 0.05$, ***, $p < 0.01$

Figure 1: Satisfaction by Partisan Compatibility

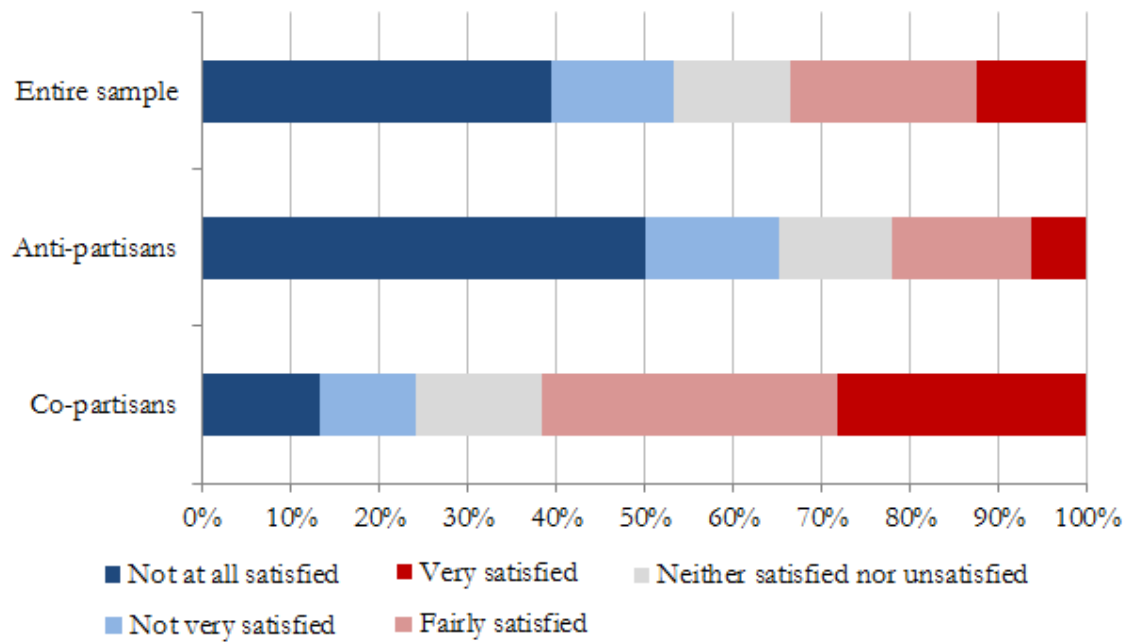
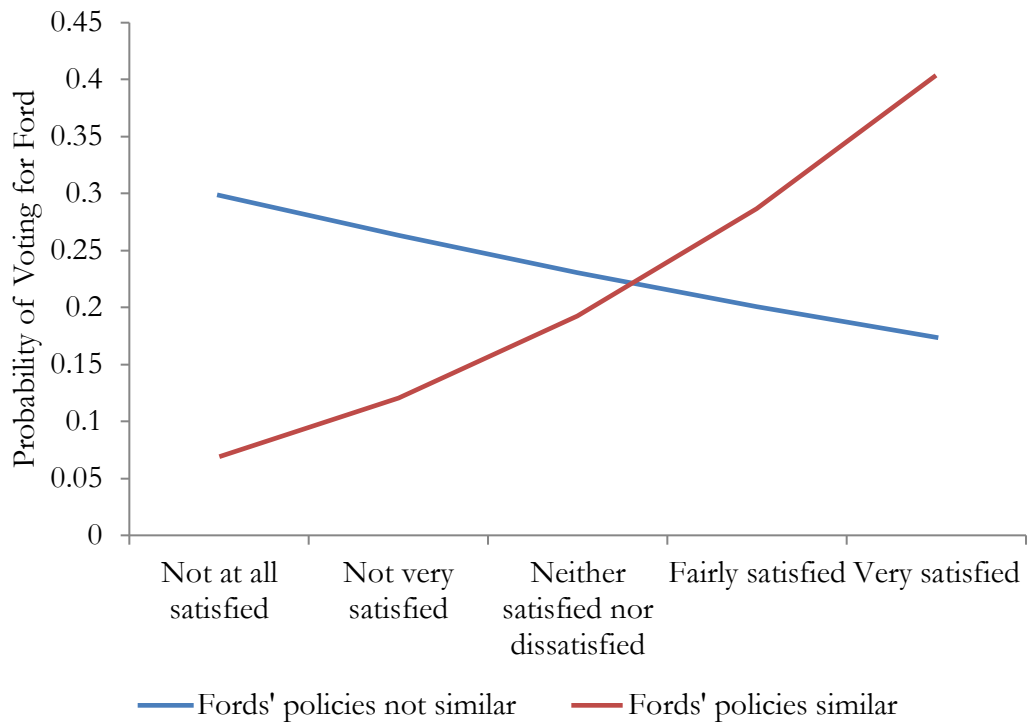


Figure 2: Probability of Voting for Doug Ford by Satisfaction and Perceived Similarities between Ford brothers



Appendix I: Toronto Election Study Survey Questions

Survey Quality Control Question: To ensure that your browser is downloading the content of this survey, please select the number four below: *One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Don't know*

Feeling Thermometers: How do you feel about (Doug Ford, Olivia Chow, John Tory, Rob Ford)? Use a scale from 0 to 100, where zero means you really dislike the candidate and one hundred means you really like the candidate. *0-100*

Ideological Placement of Candidates: On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means left and 10 means right, where would you place (Doug Ford, Olivia Chow, John Tory, Rob Ford)?

Similarity of Doug and Rob Ford: In your opinion, how similar are Doug Ford's politics to those of his brother Rob? *All the same, Mostly the same, Mostly different, All different, Don't know.*

Satisfaction with Incumbent: How satisfied are you with the performance of the current Mayor? *Not at all satisfied, Not very satisfied, Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, Fairly unsatisfied, Very satisfied, Don't know*

Candidate Party Association: Which political party, if any, would you associate with (Doug Ford/Olivia Chow/John Tory)? *None, Conservative Party of Canada, Green Party of Canada, Liberal Party of Canada, New Democratic Party of Canada, Other federal party, Green Party of Ontario, Ontario Liberal Party, New Democratic Party of Ontario, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, Other provincial party, Don't know*

Partisanship: In Federal politics, do you usually think of yourself as a: *Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, Other, None of the above, Don't know.* How strongly do you associate with [answer to question above] party? *Very strongly, Fairly strongly, Not very strongly, Don't know*

Controls

Economic Conservatism Index: Government should leave it entirely up to the private sector to create jobs (*Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know*). Government should

see to it that everyone has a decent standard of living. (*Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know*)

Social Conservatism Index: How do you feel about each of the following groups? Please use the sliders to indicate your feelings on a scale from 0 to 100, where zero means you REALLY DISLIKE the group and one hundred means you REALLY LIKE the group. Racial minorities (0-100), Feminists (0-100). Gays and lesbians (0-100)

Knowledge: Do you know the name of the Mayor of Toronto prior to Rob Ford? Do you know the name of the Governor General of Canada? Do you know the name of the Finance Minister of Canada? Do you know the name of the leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario?

Attentiveness: How much attention did you pay to the mayoral election campaign (0-100)

University Education: What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Age: In what year were you born?