Best Oral Presentation—1st Place

Relationships Between Media Consumption and Emotional Change Over Time Following the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election

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Emotional memories are more distinct than non-emotional, but additionally, memory representations differ for positive vs. negative events (Kensinger & Schacter, 2006). Further, surprise might benefit memory under positive vs. negative contexts (Murty et al., 2016). We investigated emotional reactions and memories for the night of the 2016 US Election and how they differed by political affiliation and outcome surprise. Participants were recruited online through Amazon Mechanical Turk and responded at three timepoints: November 2016, May 2017, and November 2017. Participants reported autobiographical memories of Election Night, as well as their emotional responses, media consumption, and perceptions of change in these responses over time. Demographic, personality, and political affiliation variables were also collected. Clinton supporters felt negatively and Trump supporters felt positively about election outcome; both reactions were more intense with surprise. Follow-up analysis is investigating the relationship between emotion change and media consumption, in terms of political bias and frequency.

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