

Murrow Media Mind Lab Presidential Debate Test September 10, 2024

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Summary of Methodology

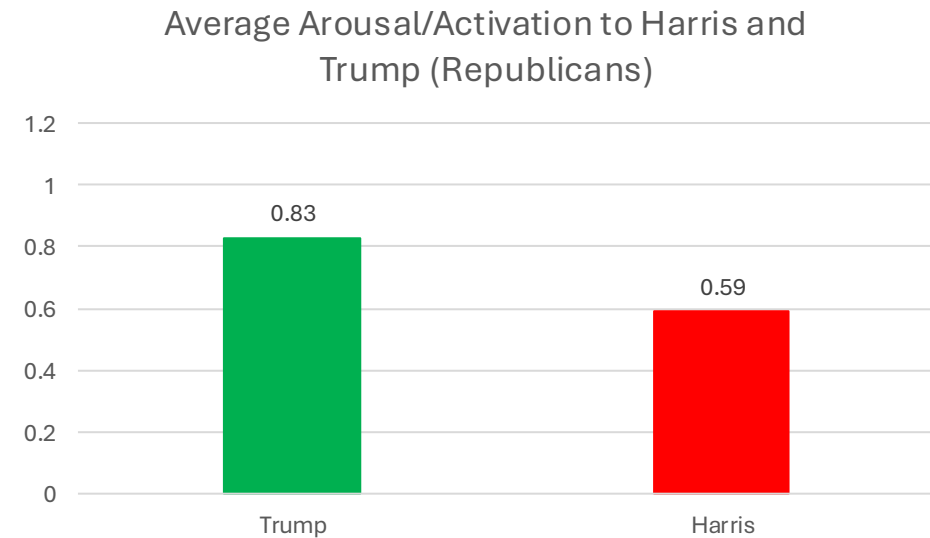
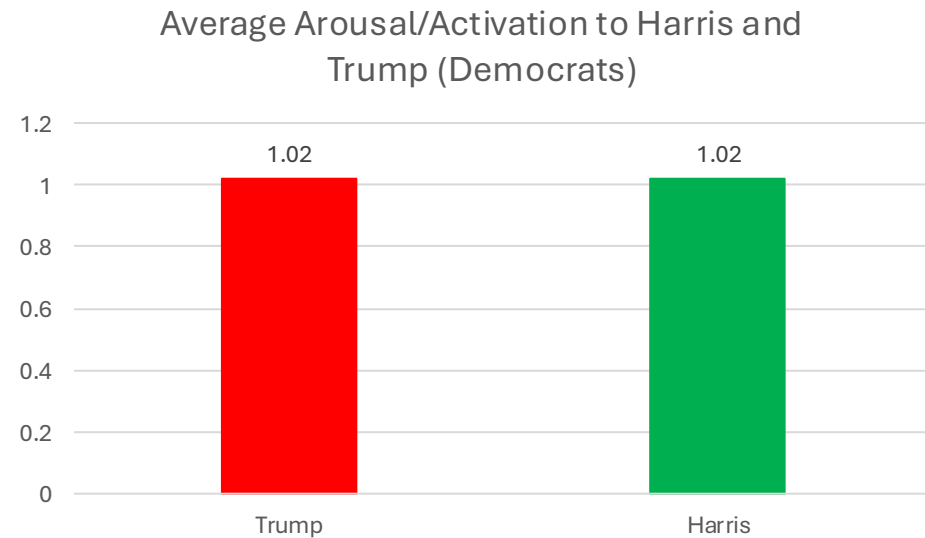
- Participants
 - Adults over 30 recruited from the Pullman/Moscow community
 - Strongly identify with either the Democratic or Republican party
 - Certain they will vote in the 2024 election
 - Certain they will vote for their party's candidate
- Study sample
 - 18 Democrats
 - 13 Republicans

Summary of Methodology

- Procedure
 - Participants viewed the debate at Goertzen Hall on the WSU-Pullman campus
- Measures
 - A newly developed technology, Research Ring
 - This technology measures “skin conductance /sweat gland activity”
 - Skin Conductance indicates the intensity of emotional responses due to sympathetic nervous system activity
 - Self report questionnaires
 - Attitudes toward the candidates (measured prior and after the debate)
 - Perception of candidate performance in the debate
 - Willingness to donate to the candidate’s campaign for their party

Results

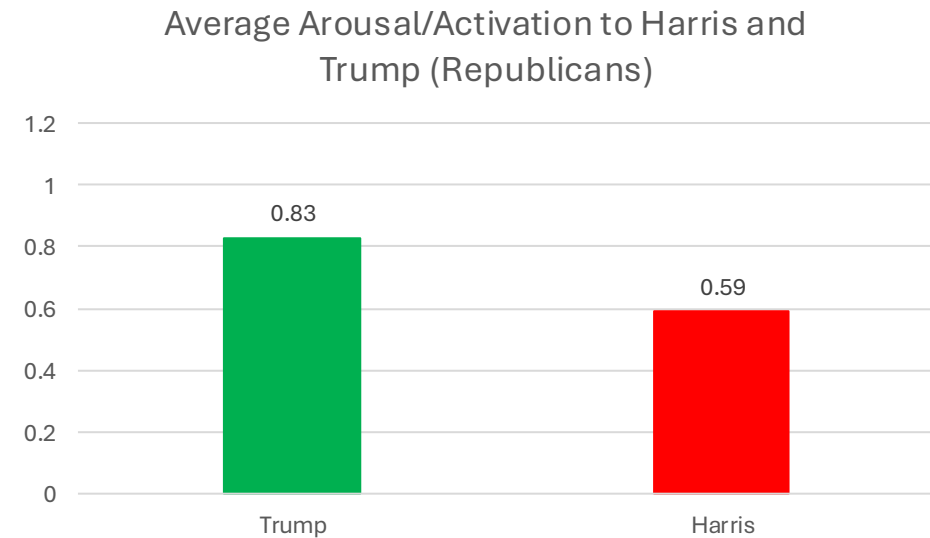
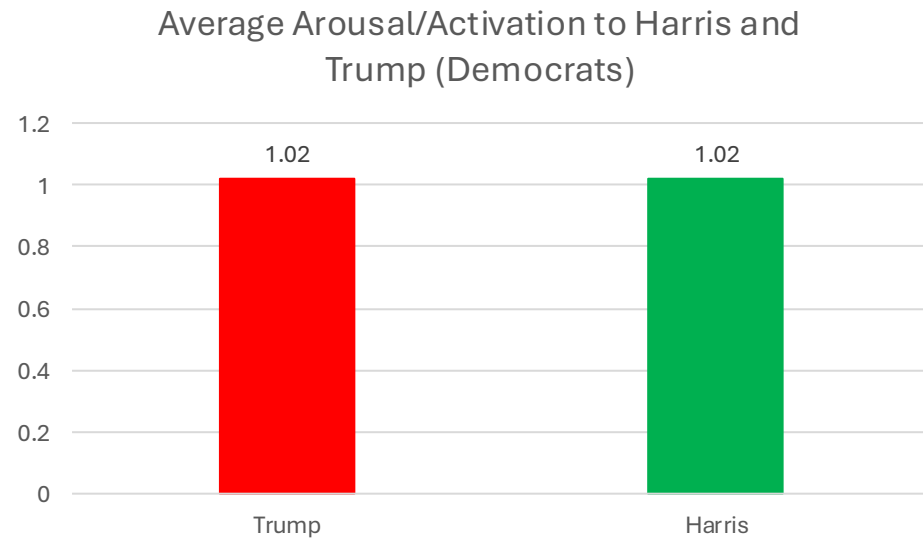
- Democrats were more emotionally/motivationally activated during the debate than Republicans
 - Experienced more intense emotional responses to both candidates as indicated by skin conductance recorded across the debate broadcast



Results

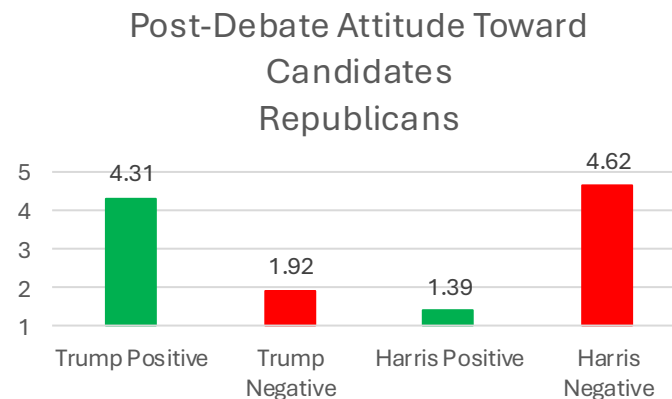
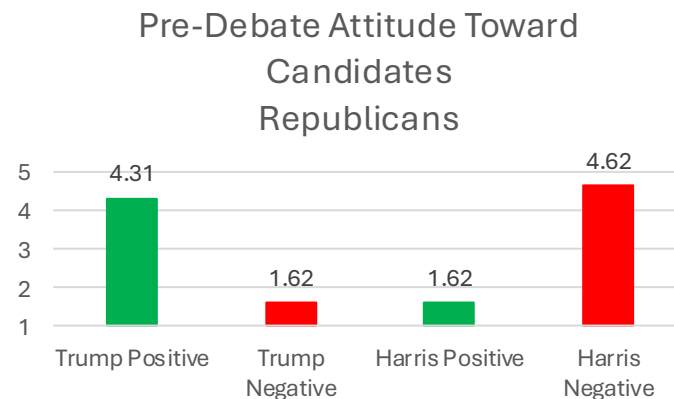
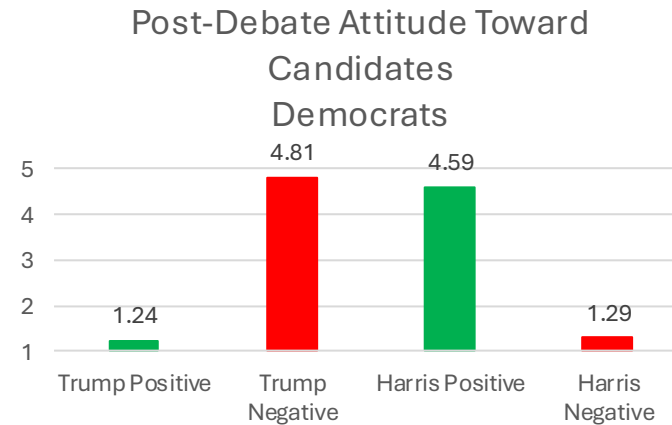
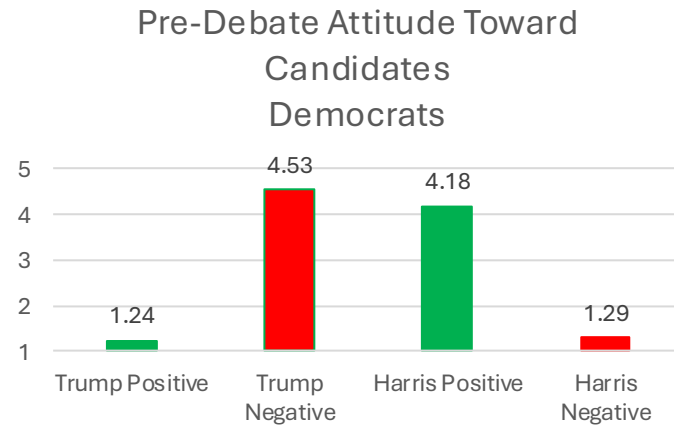
- Democrats appear to perceive Trump as more of a “visceral threat” than Republicans perceive Harris as a “visceral threat”

- NOTE: This is supported by the attitudinal data and is contextualized by “messaging” about Trump



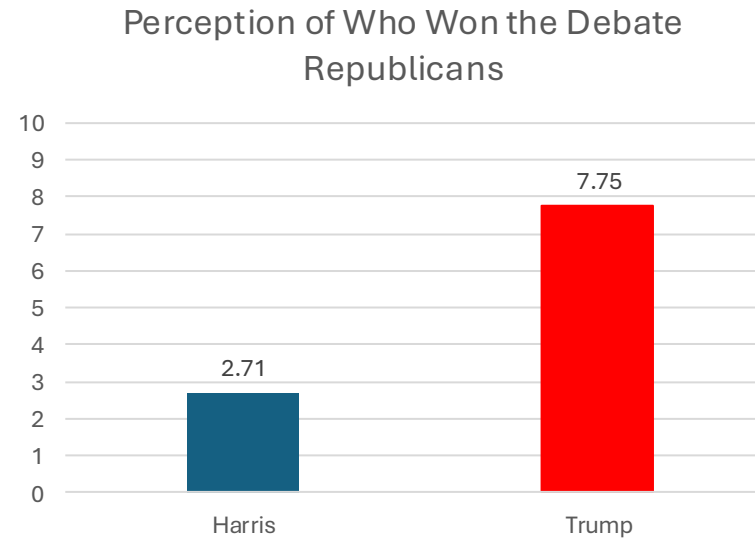
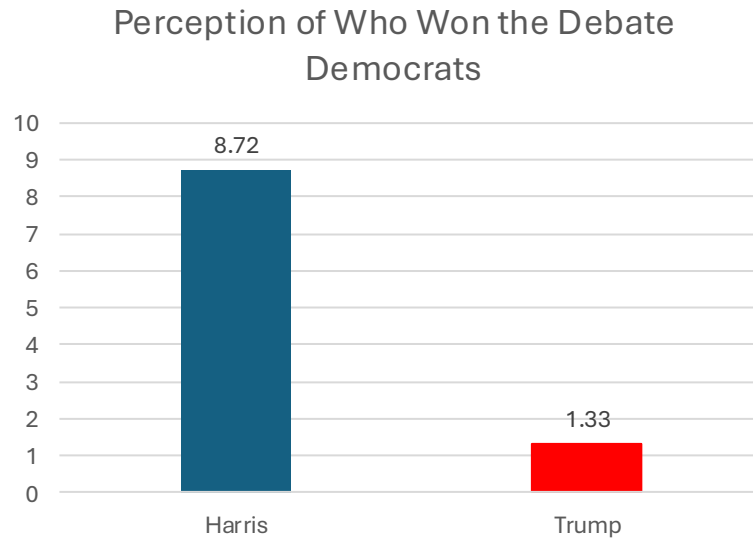
Results

- Attitudes are highly consistent with partisanship
 - Republican attitudes are very slightly more mixed (positive/negative) than Democrat attitudes
 - The debate appears to have very slightly strengthened Democrats' positive feelings toward Harris while not impacting negative feelings toward Harris
 - The debate appears to have very slightly strengthened Republicans' negative feelings toward Trump while not impacting positive feelings toward Trump
- Attitudinal data in combination with skin conductance data indicates that there may be a stronger relationship between “visceral” intense emotional responses to each candidate and attitudes toward each candidate for Democrats compared to Republicans



Results

- Democrats have a stronger perception of their candidate “winning” the debate than Republicans



Results

- Democrats are more willing to donate to their party's Presidential campaign than Republicans (note: Based on viewing the debate)
 - Important to note that behavioral intent to donate for either party based on viewing the debate is low!
- Emotional responses elicited by the candidates during the debate appears to have a slightly stronger relationship to Democrats perceptions and behavioral intent compared to Republicans

