

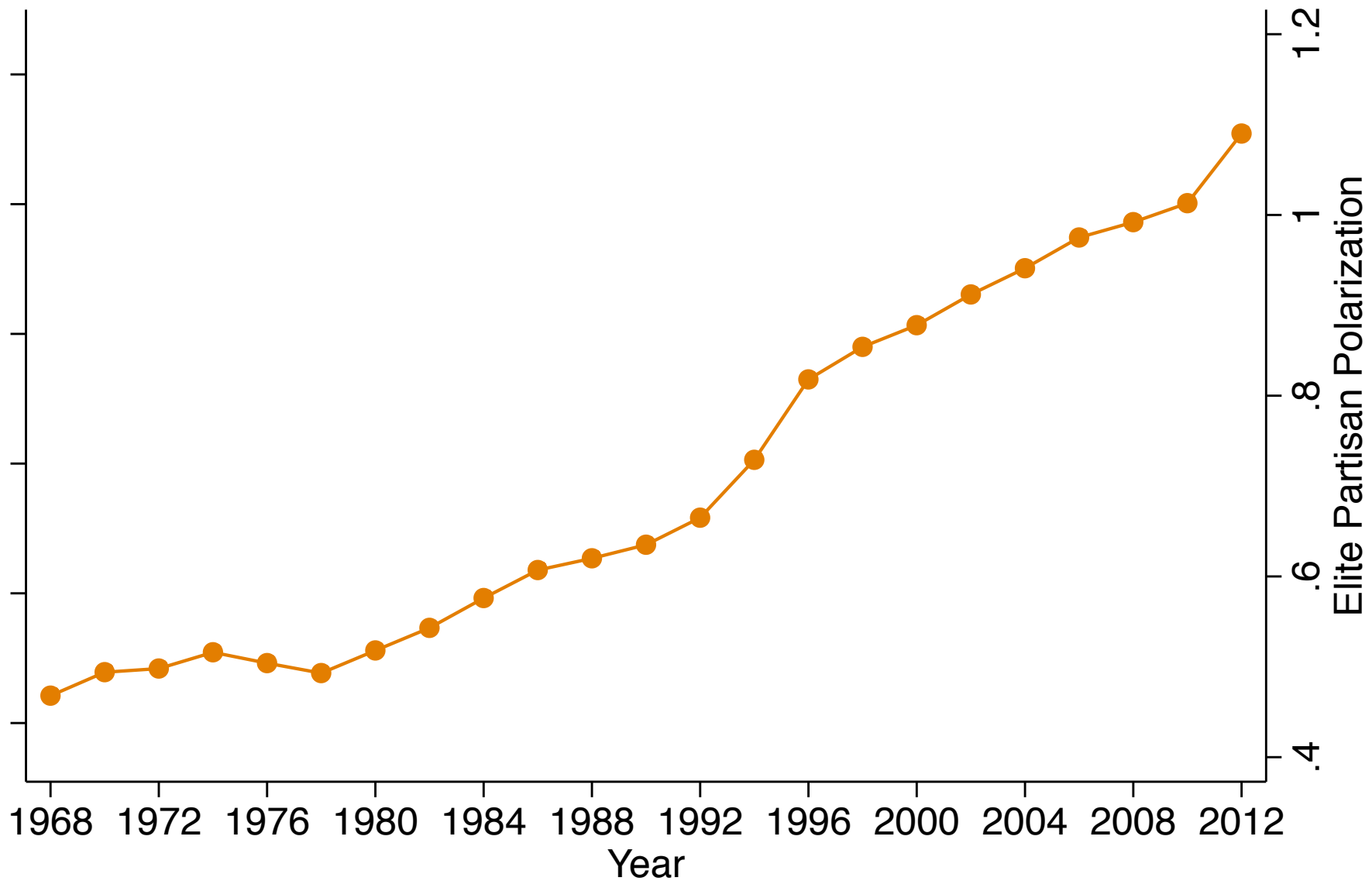
# **More a Symptom than a Cause: Polarization and Partisan News Media in America**

Kevin Arceneaux

*Temple University*

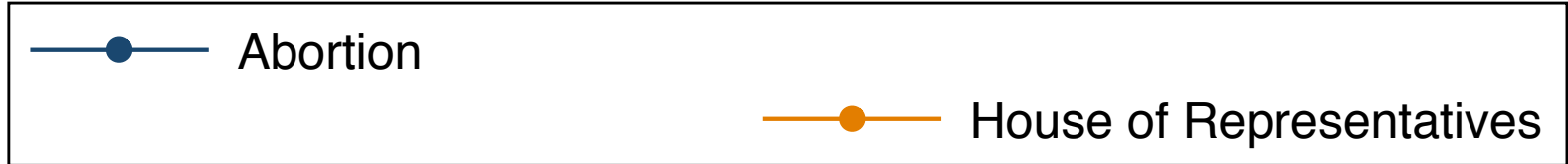
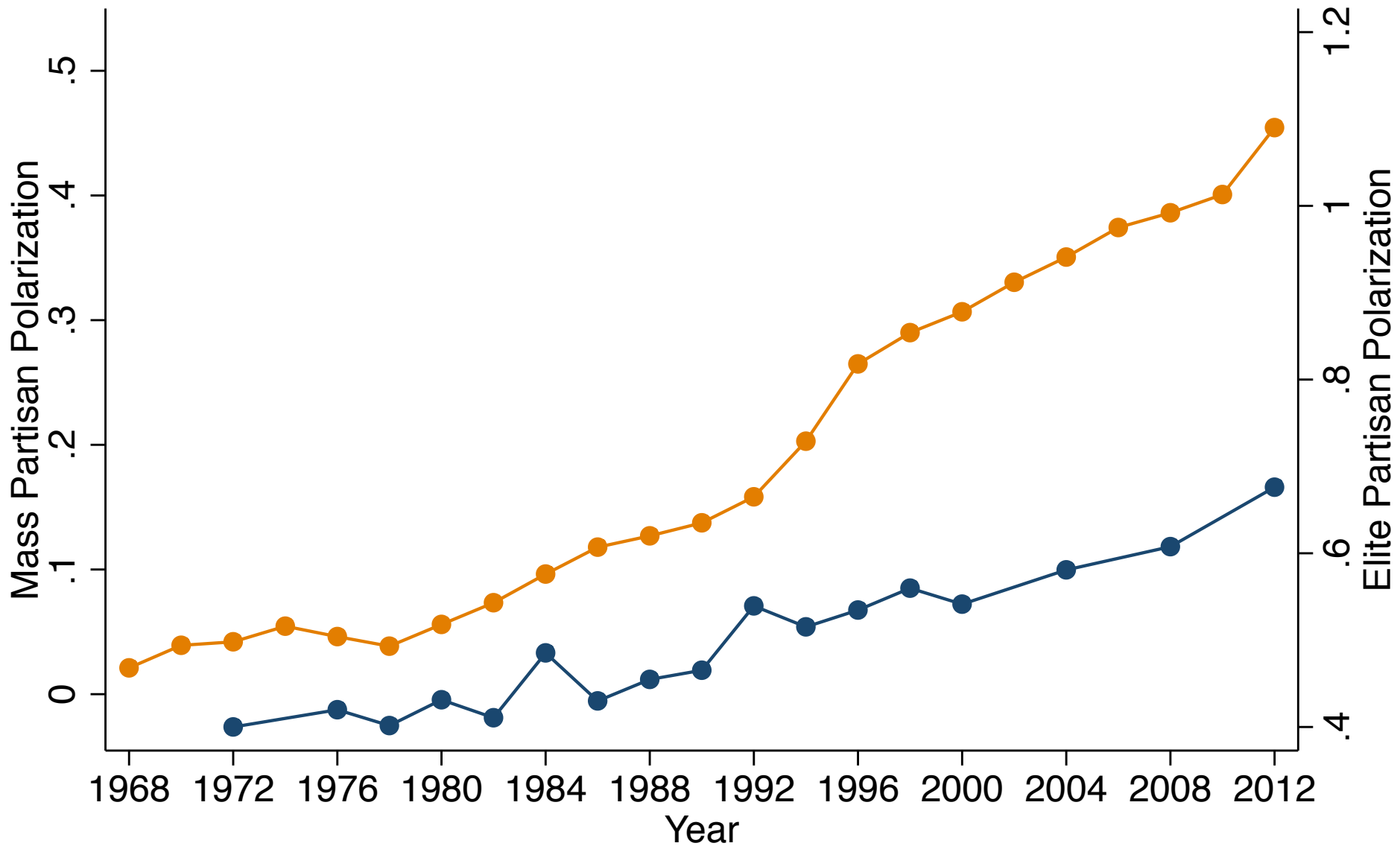
Martin Johnson

*University of California–Riverside*

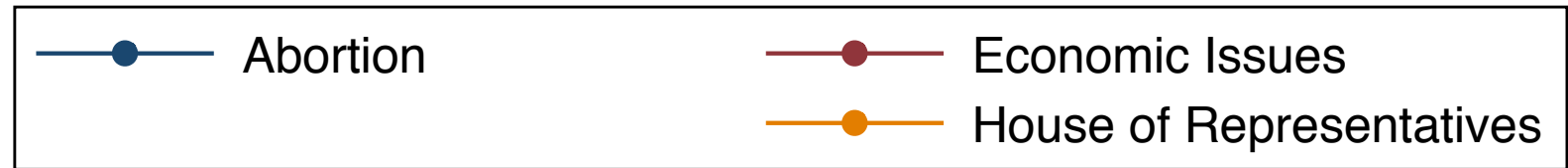
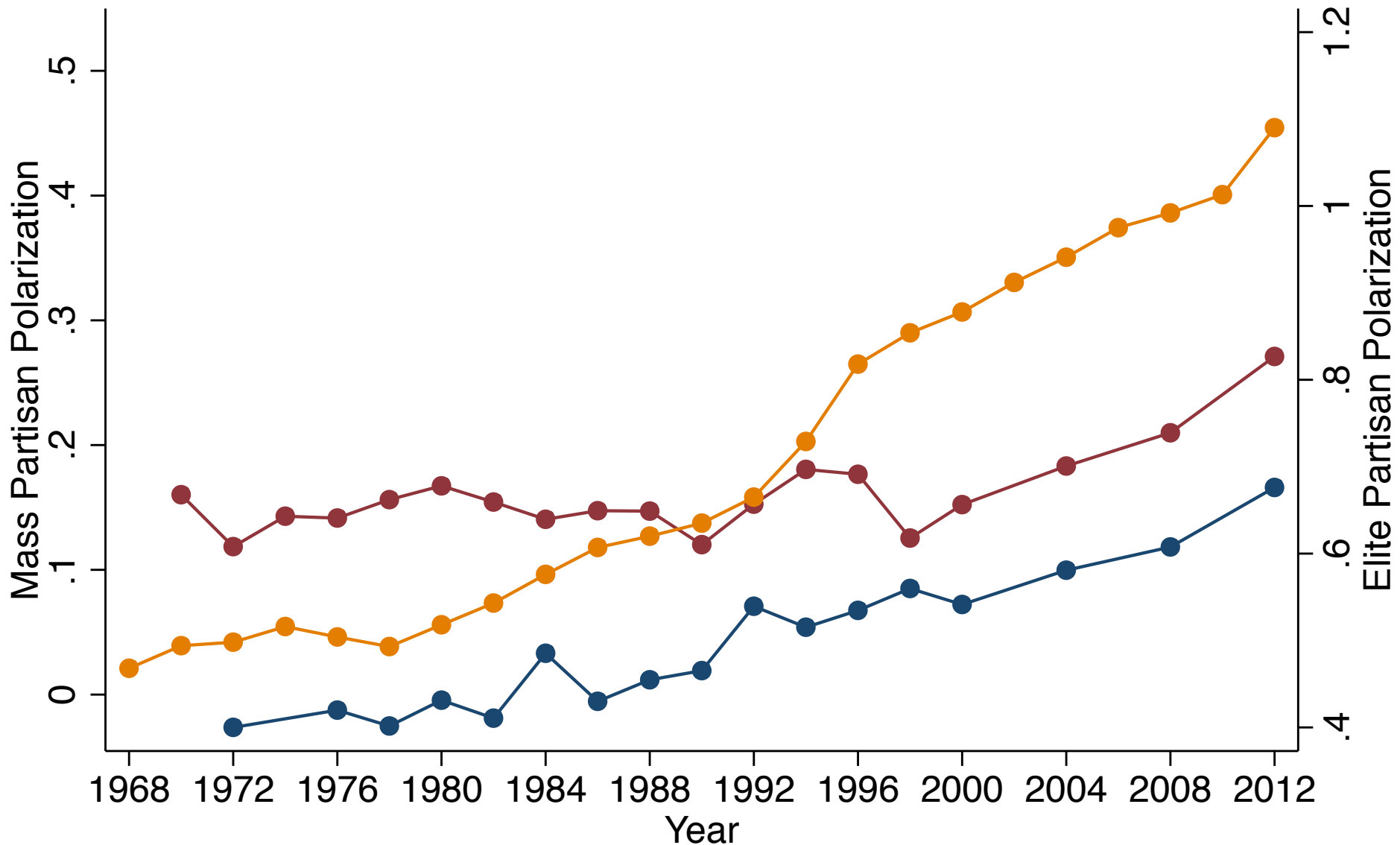


—●— House of Representatives

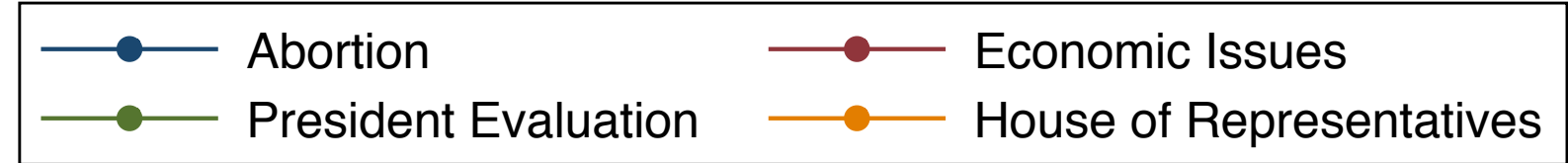
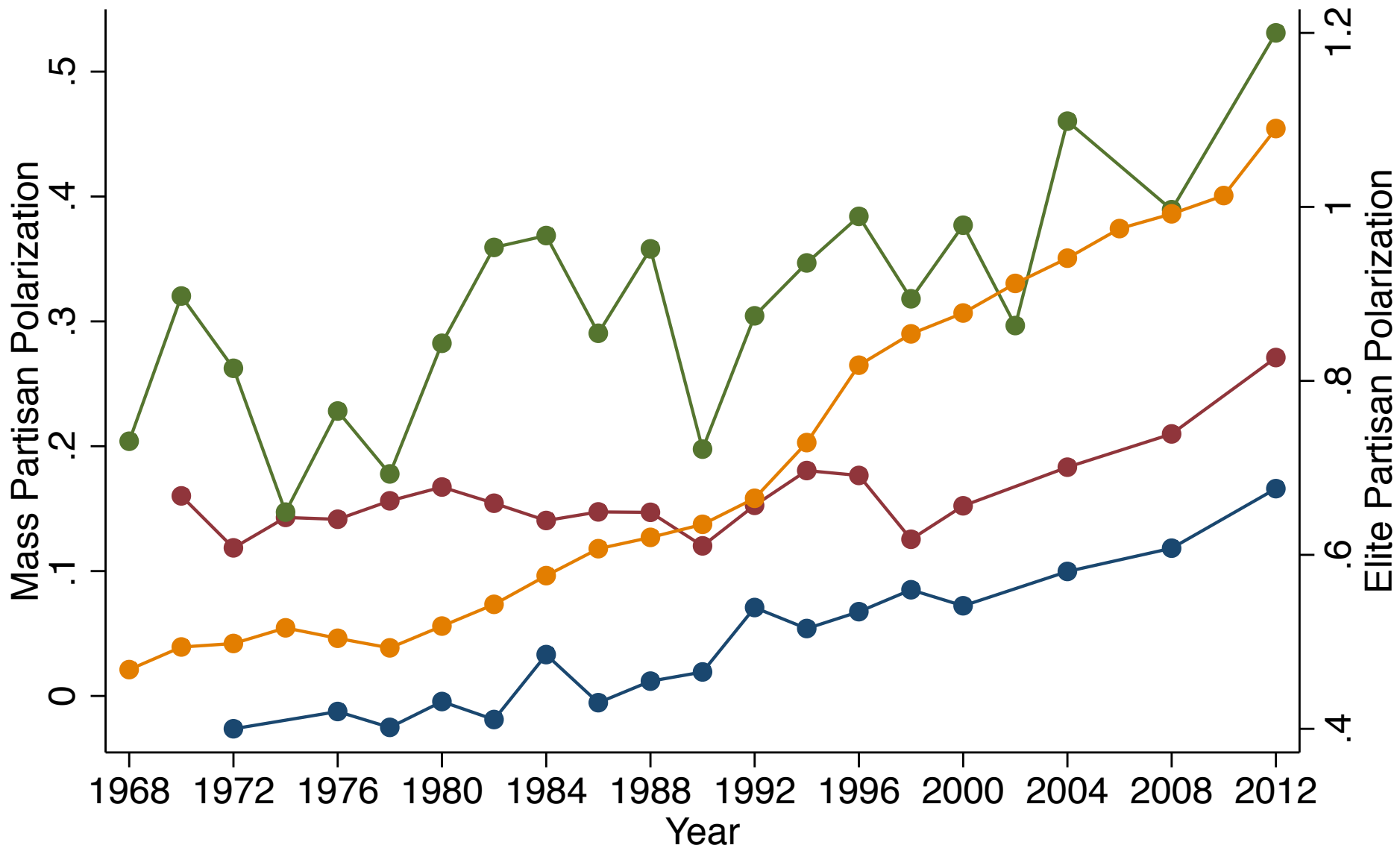
Source: Poole and Rosenthal



Source: Poole and Rosenthal; American National Election Studies



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## What about the emergence of partisan news media?

	Elite	Mass
Direct Effects		
Indirect Effects		





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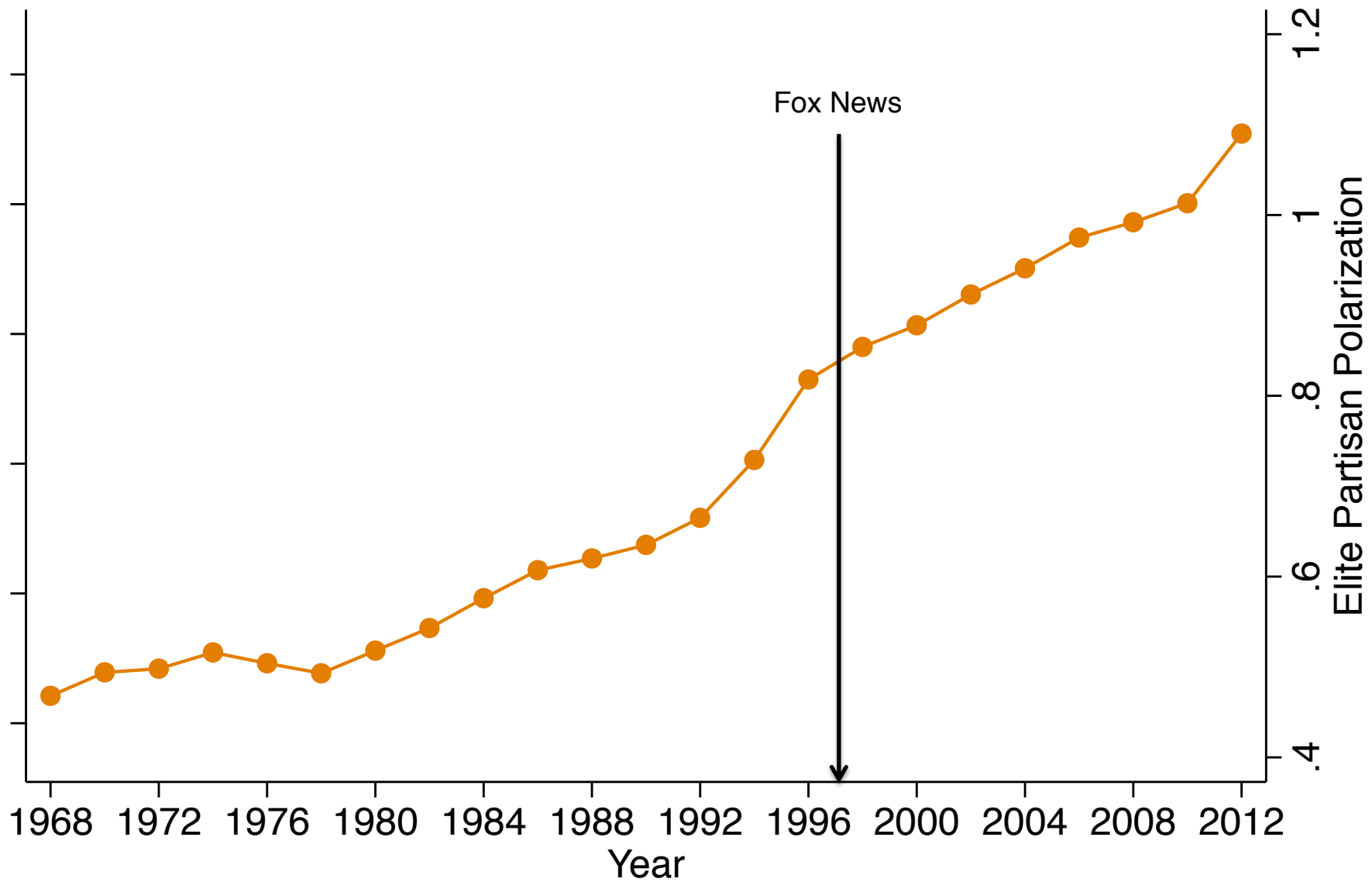




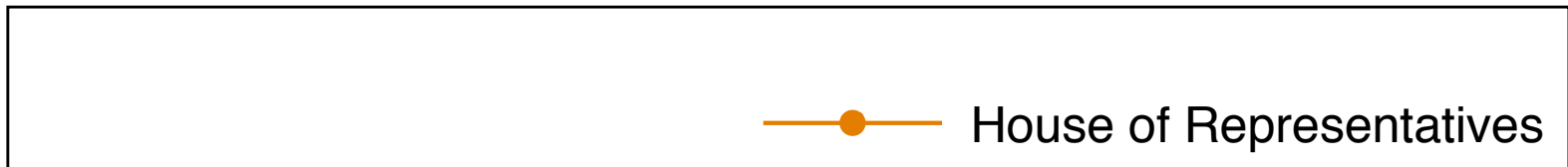
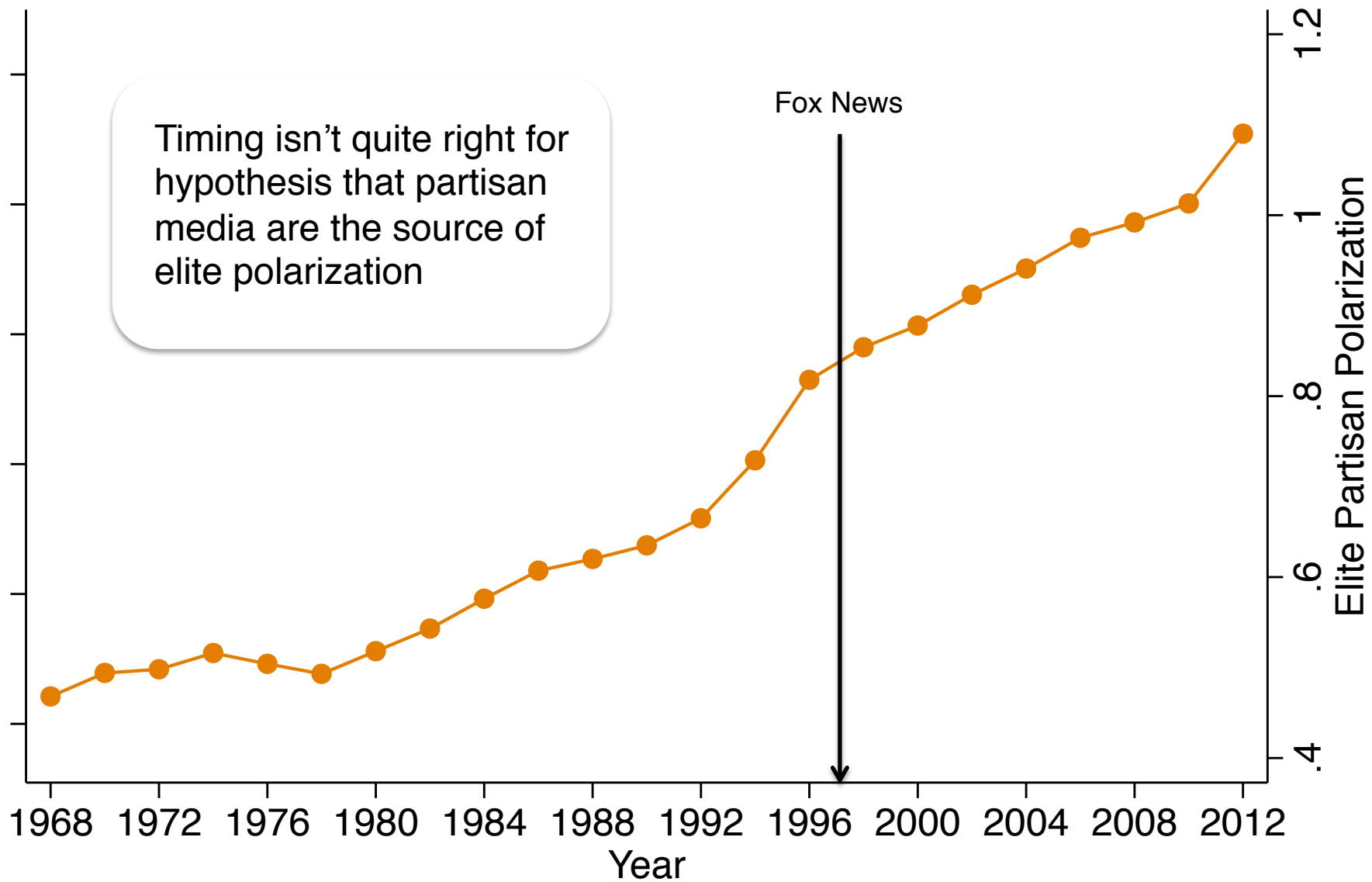
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Indirect Effects	Partisan news may also activate partisans to contact politicians (Levendusky 2013)	Partisan news may spread through discussant networks (Siegel 2013)

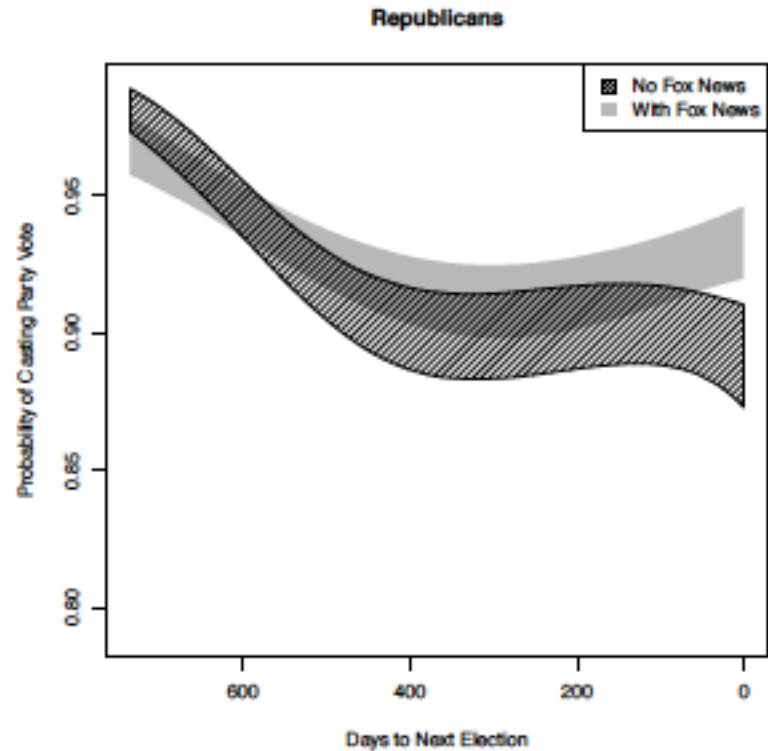
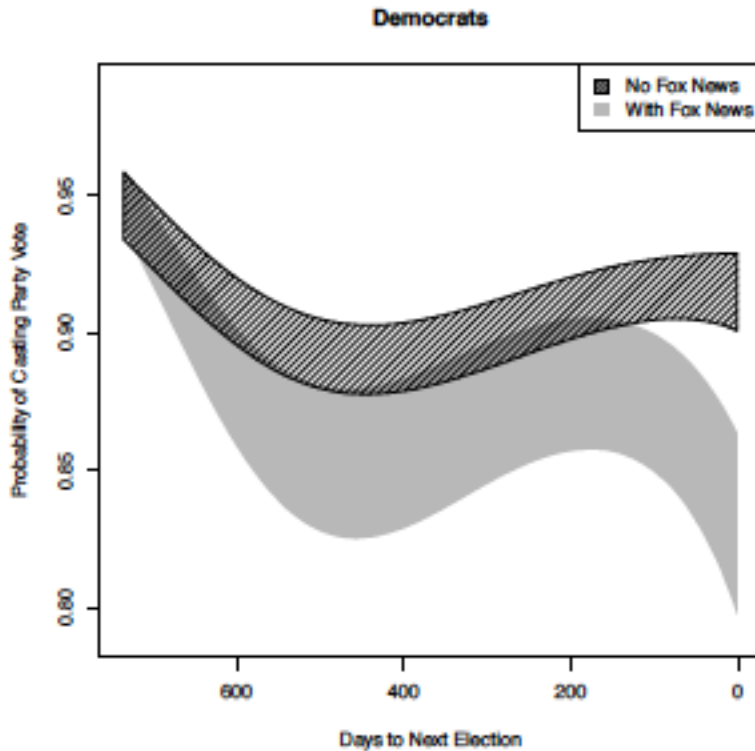




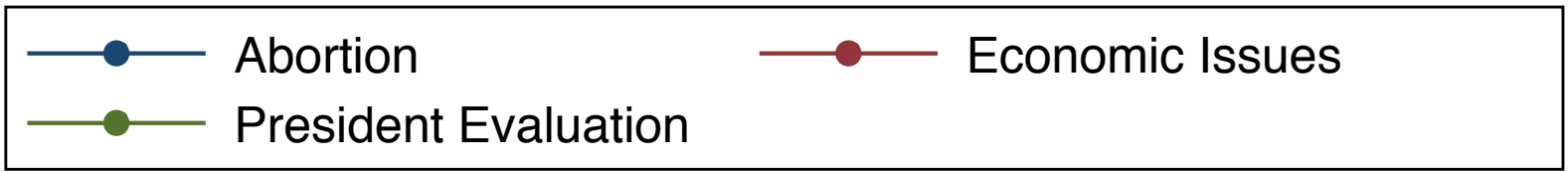
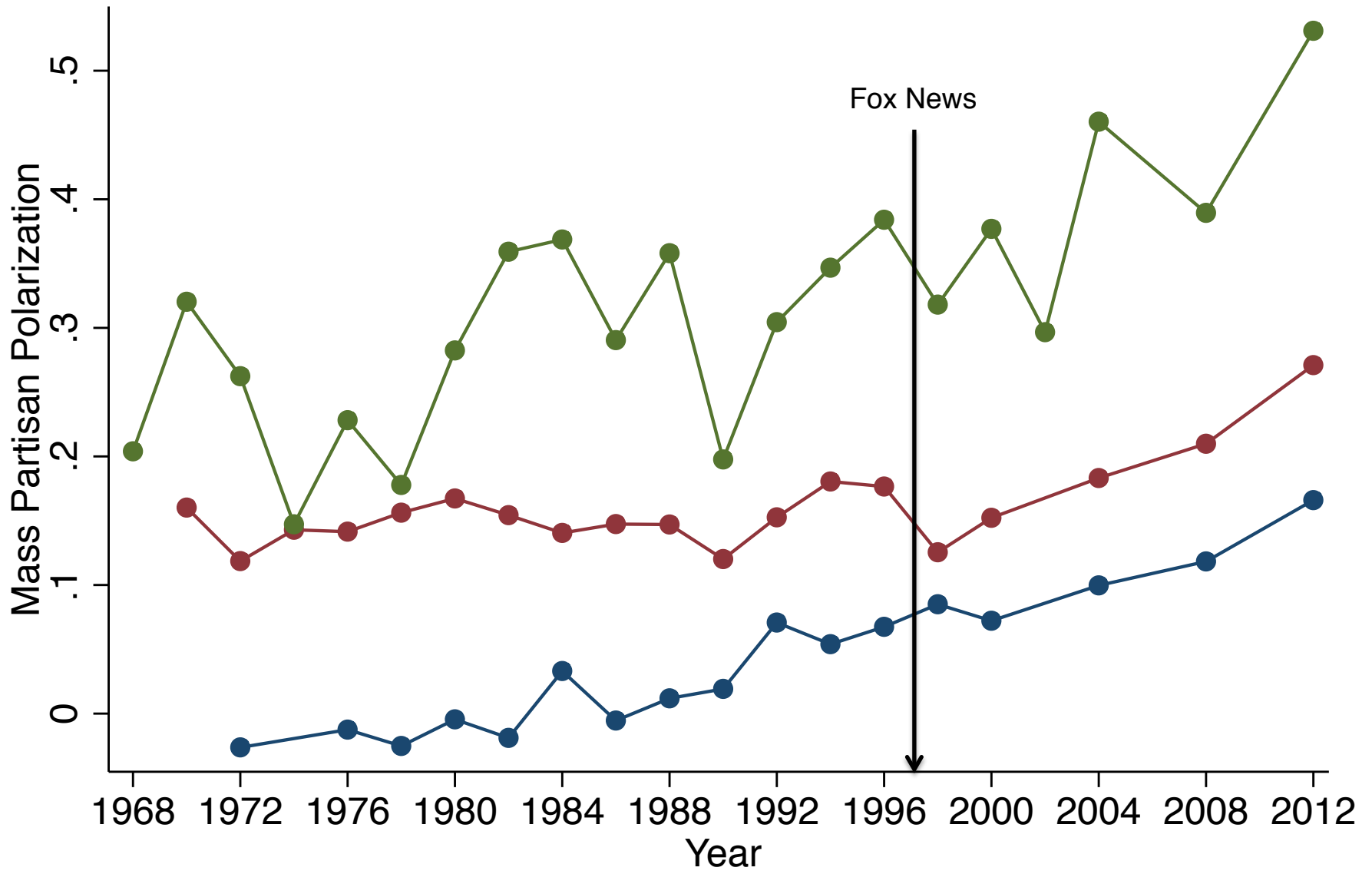
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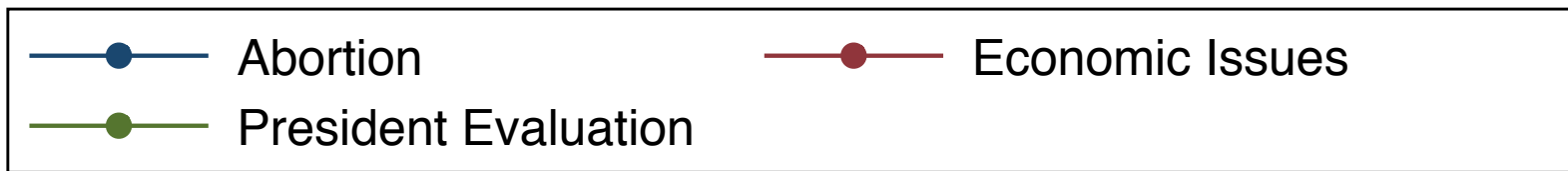
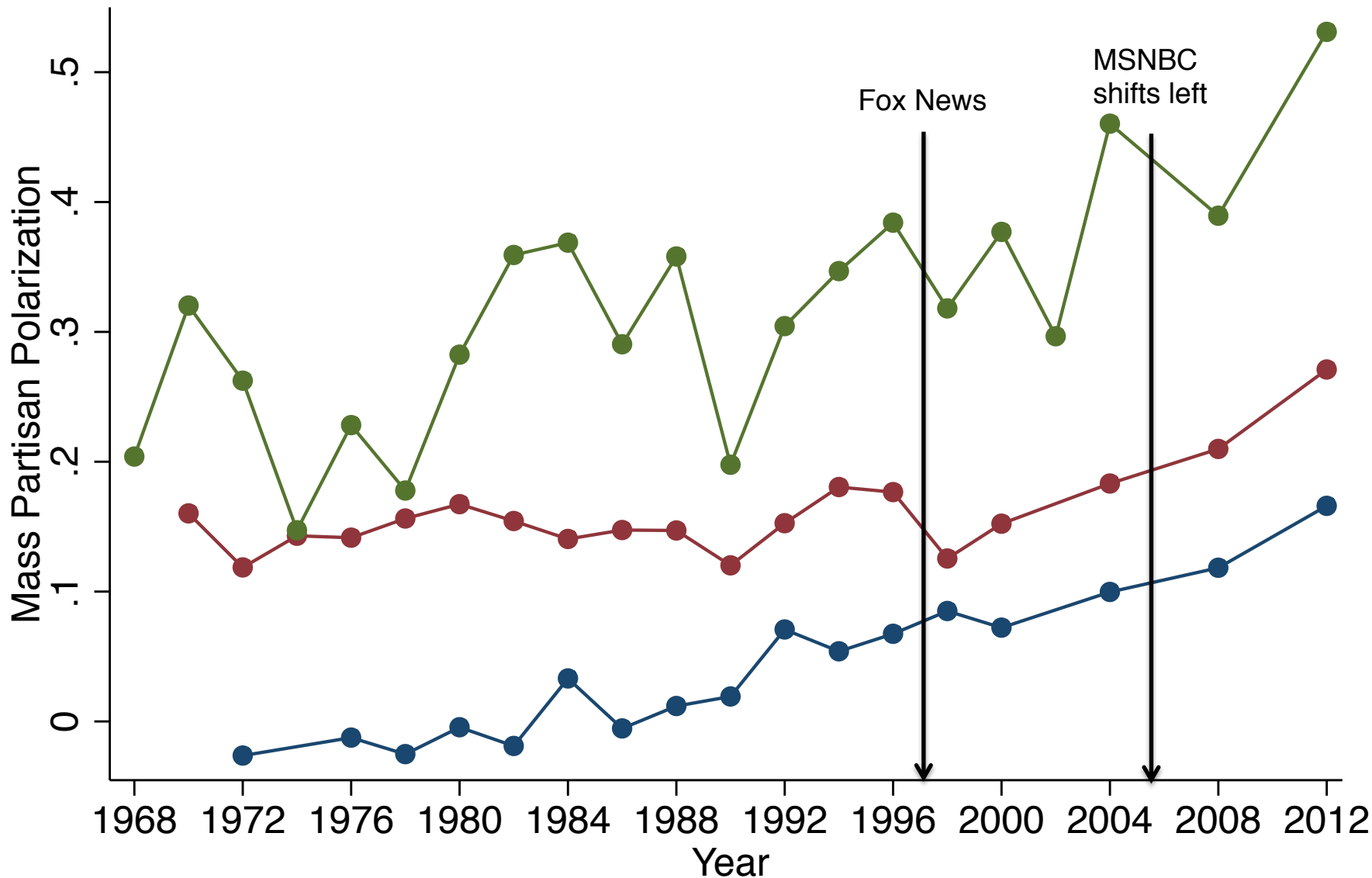


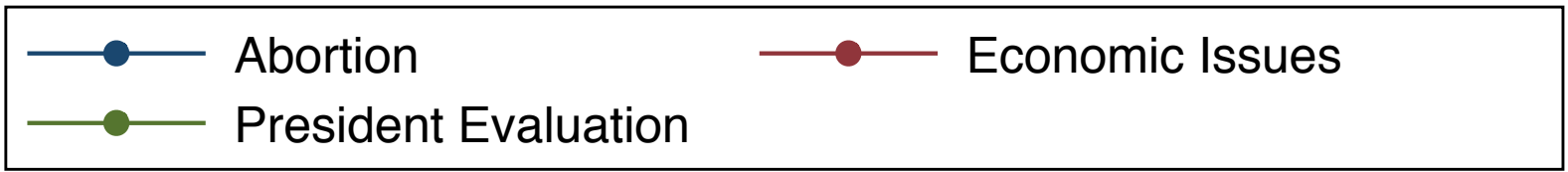
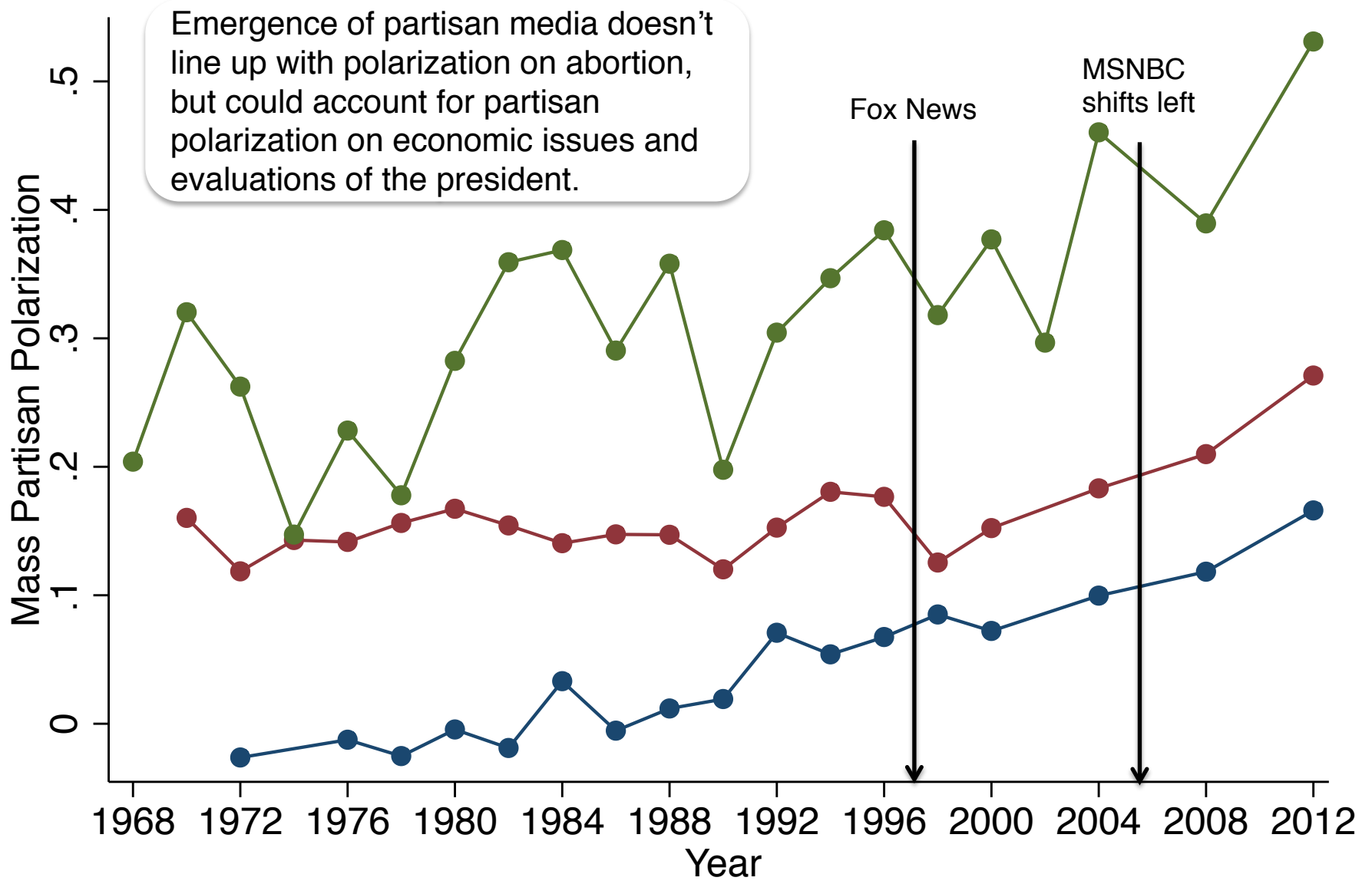
# And... Fox News had a depolarizing effect in the beginning!



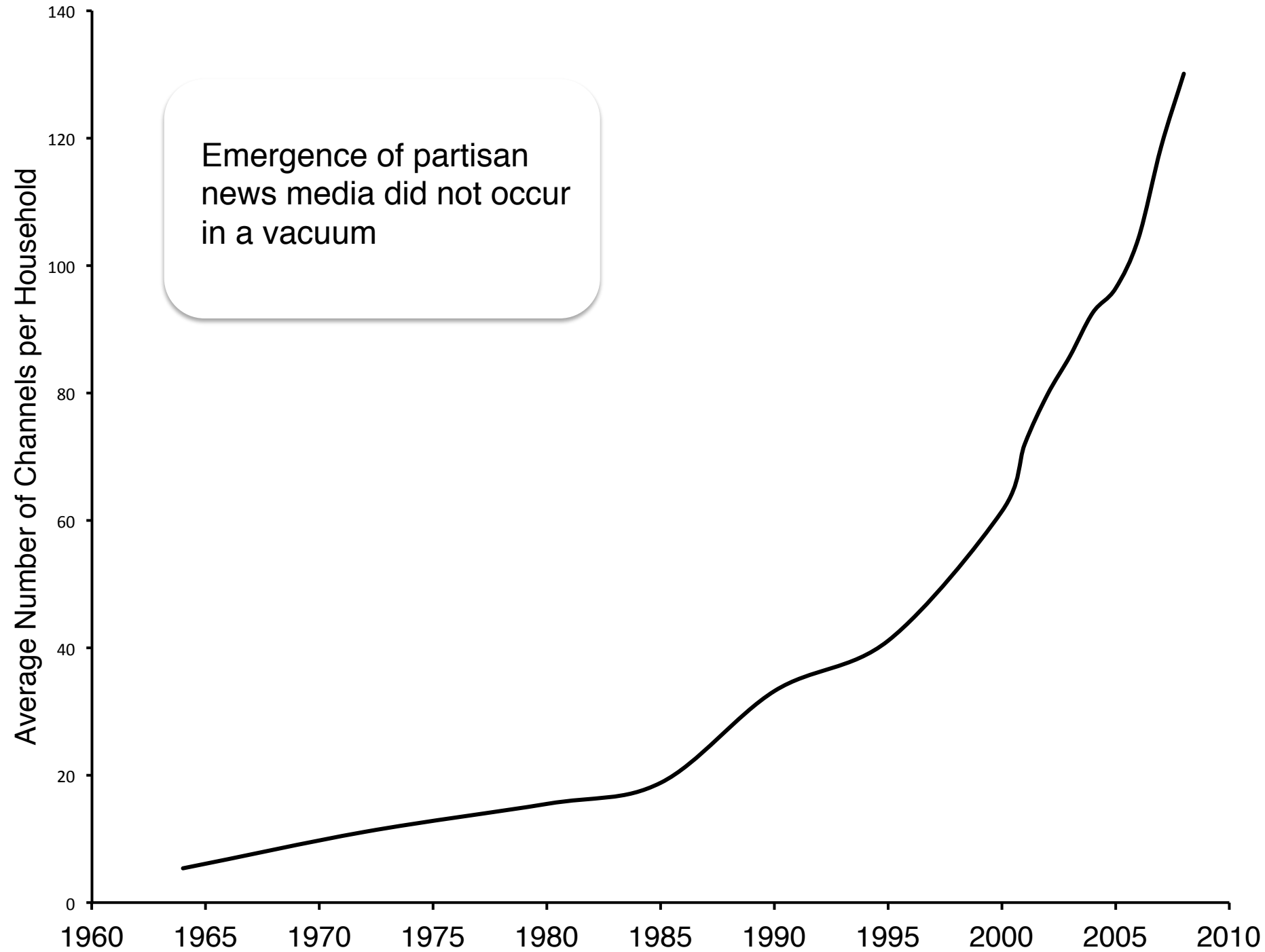
Arceneaux, Johnson, Lindstädt, & Vander Wielen 2013











Proportion of News Seekers

1  
.9  
.8  
.7  
.6  
.5  
.4  
.3  
.2  
.1  
0

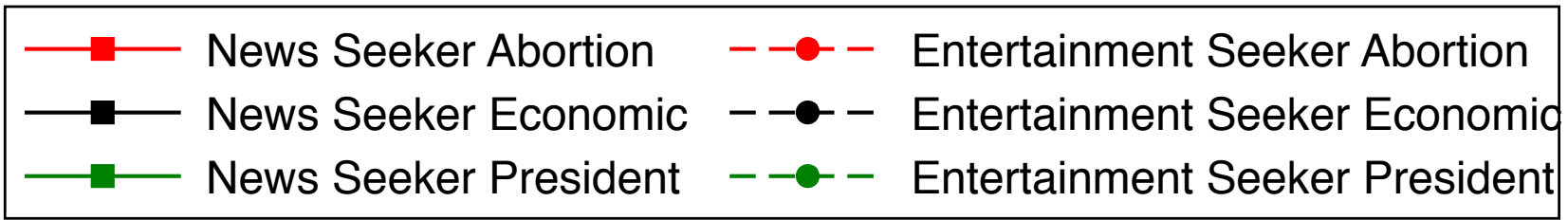
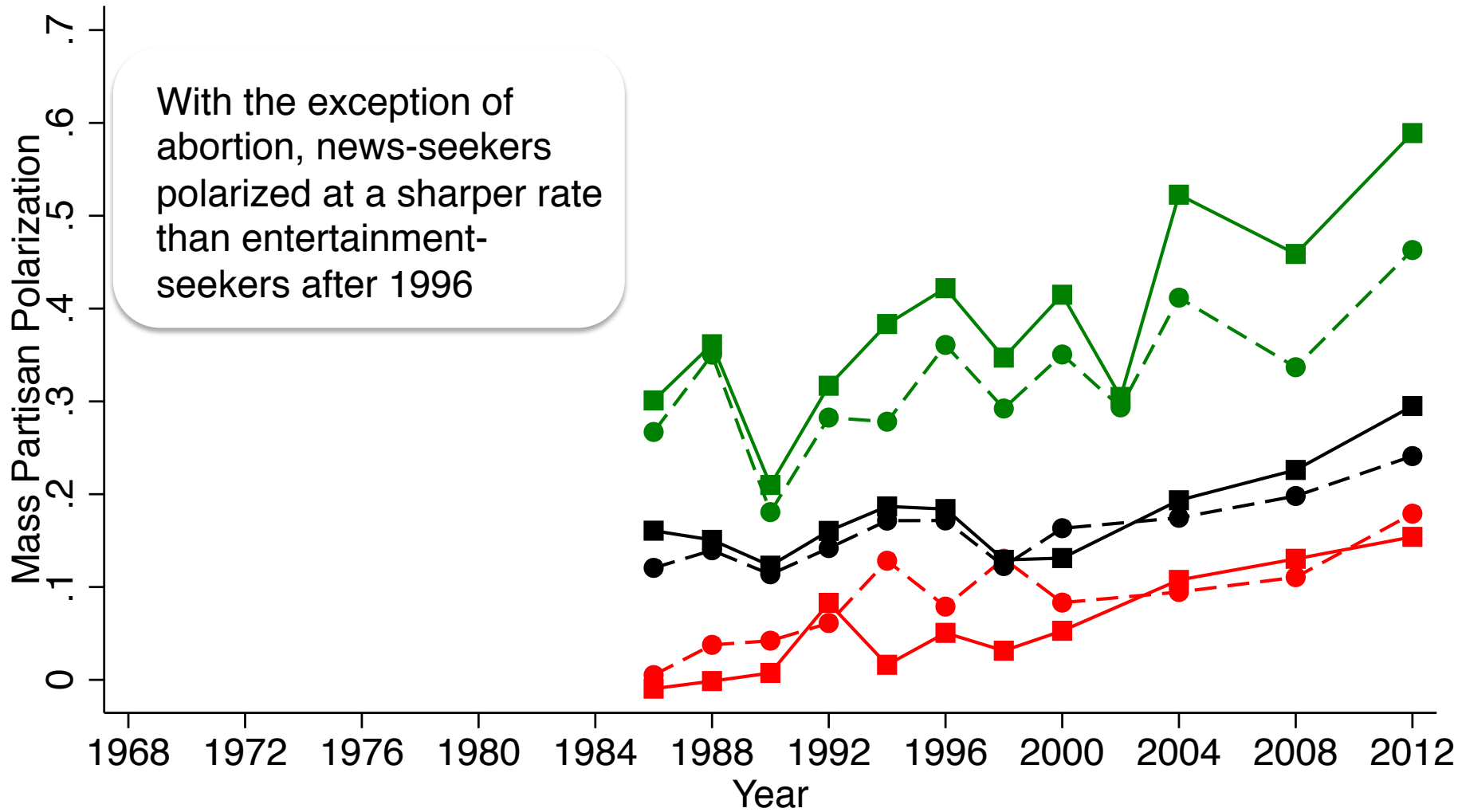
More entertainment options = Fewer news viewers (Prior 2007)

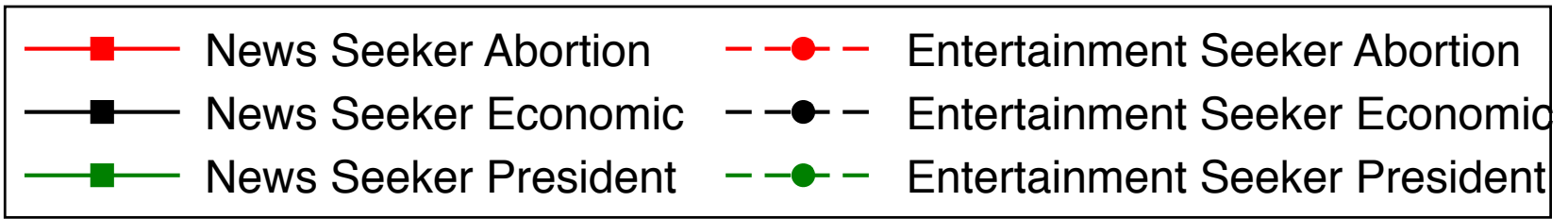
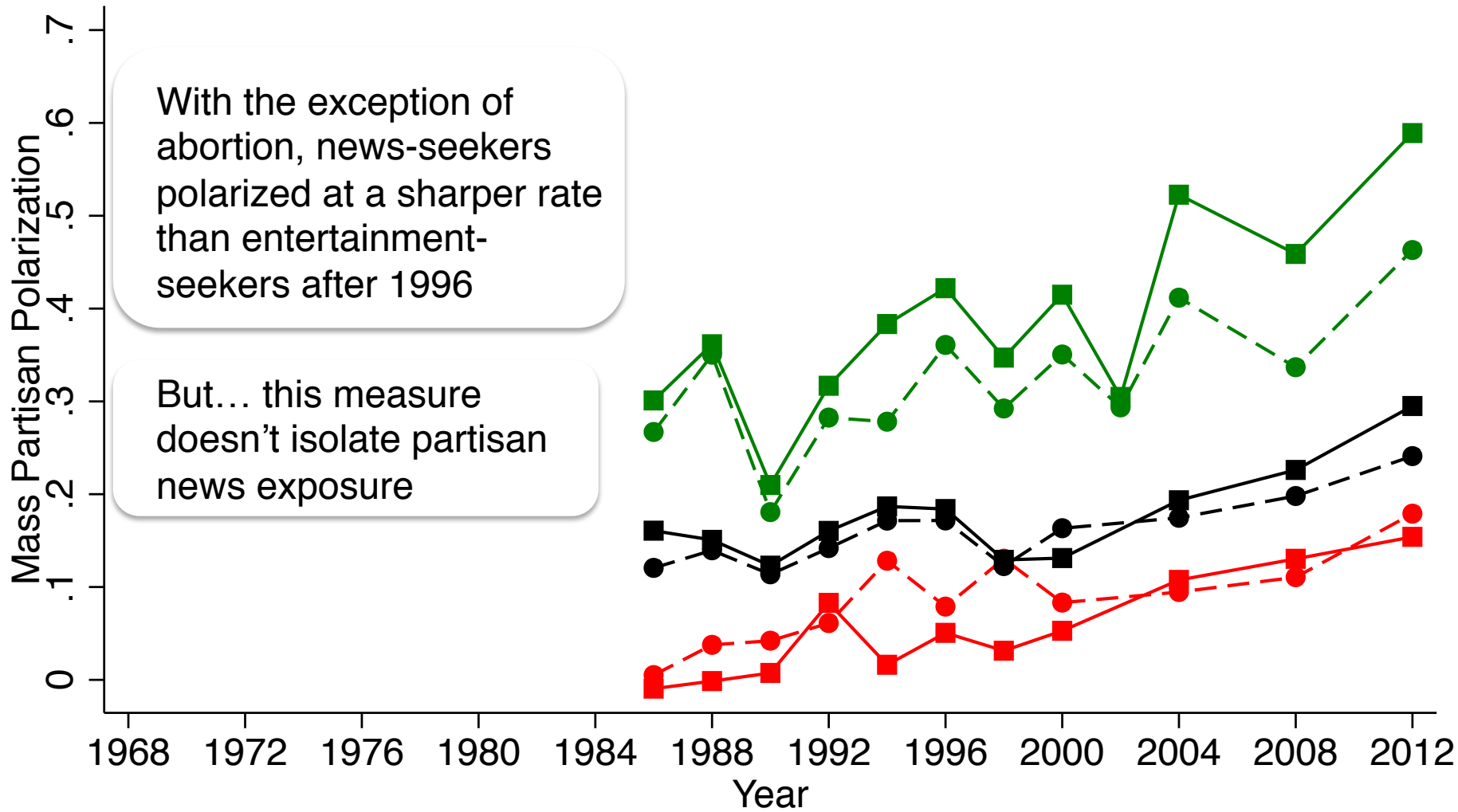


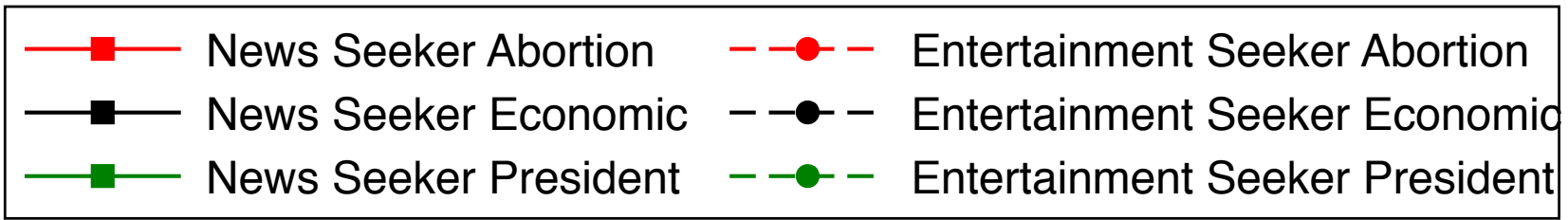
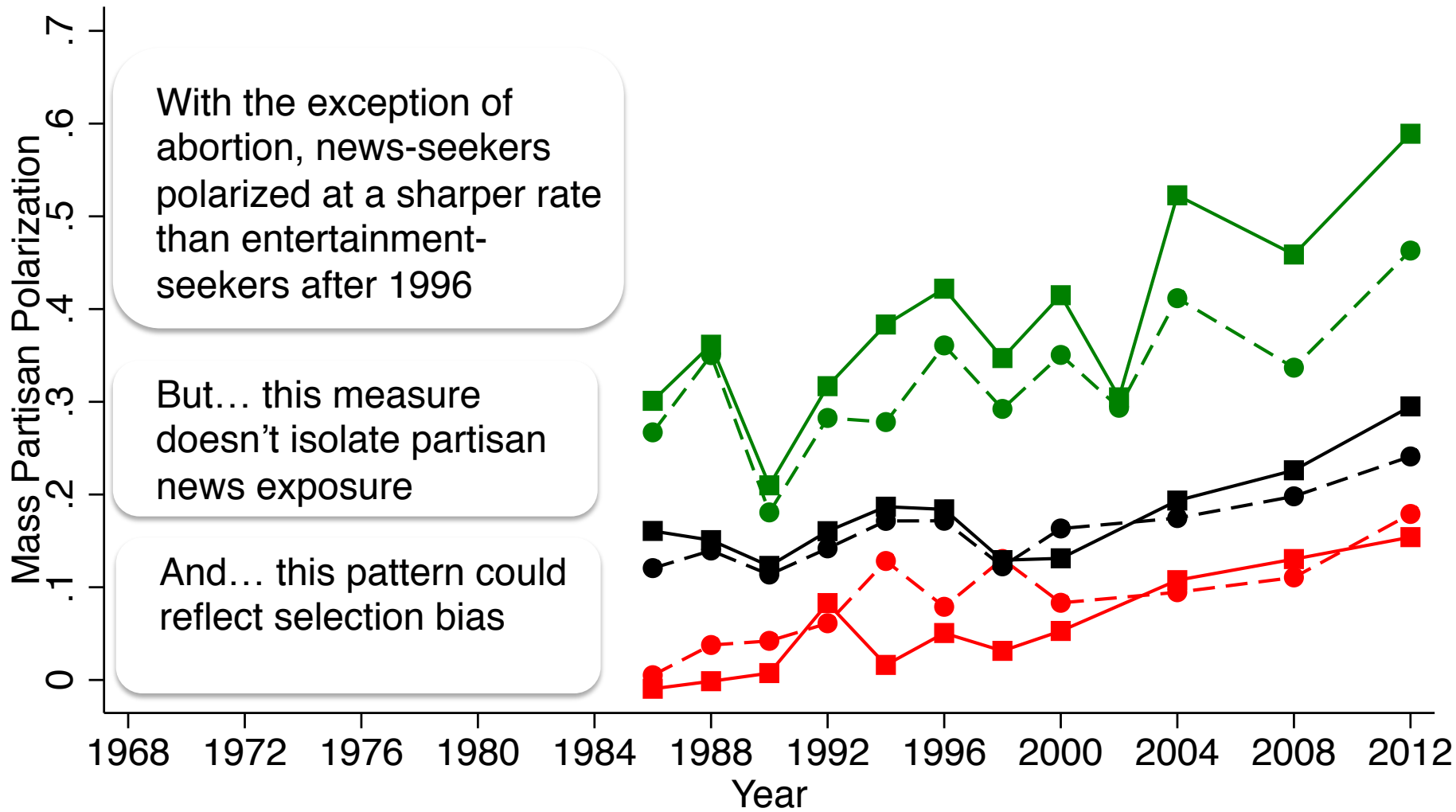
1968 1972 1976 1980 1984 1988 1992 1996 2000 2004 2008 2012

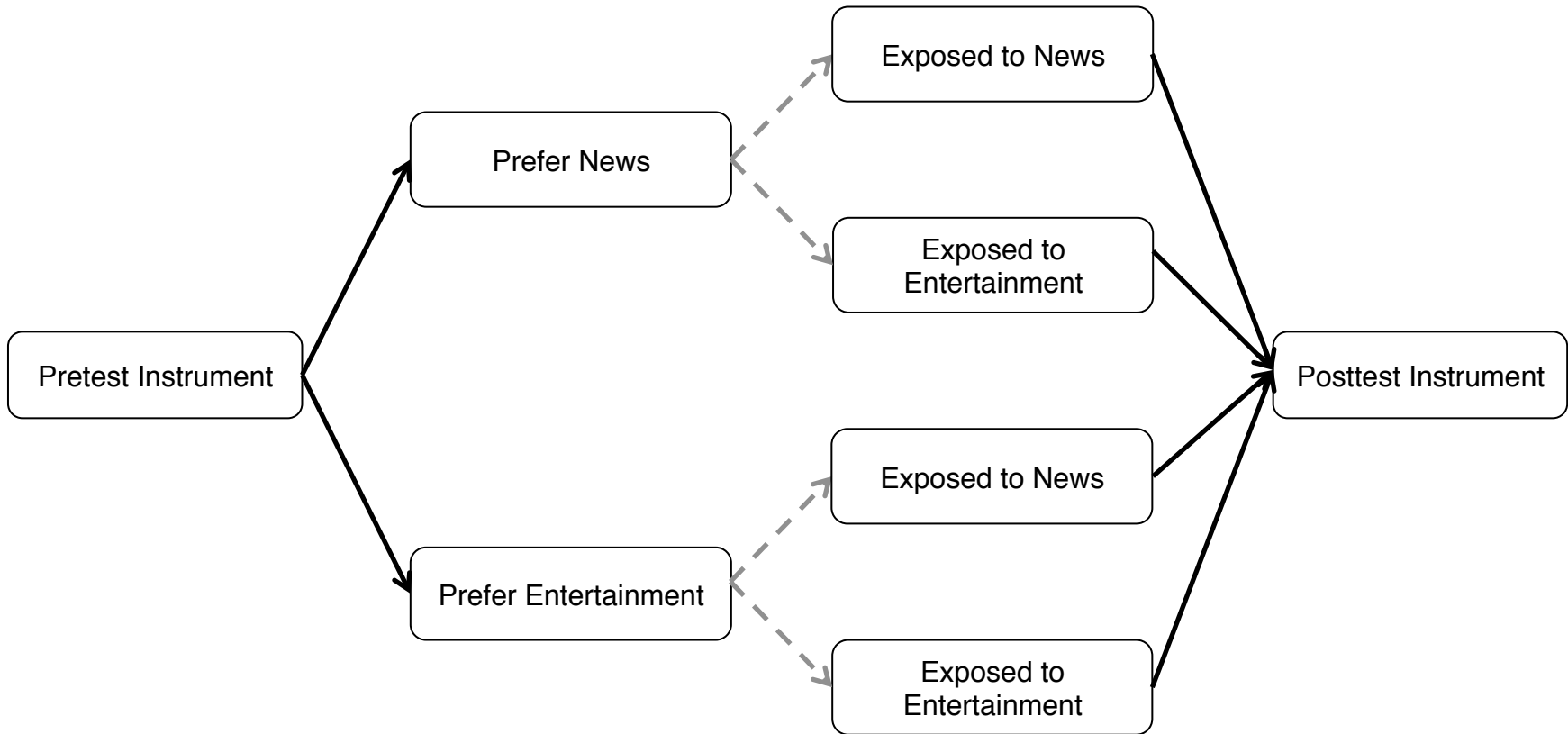
Year

Source: American National Election Studies

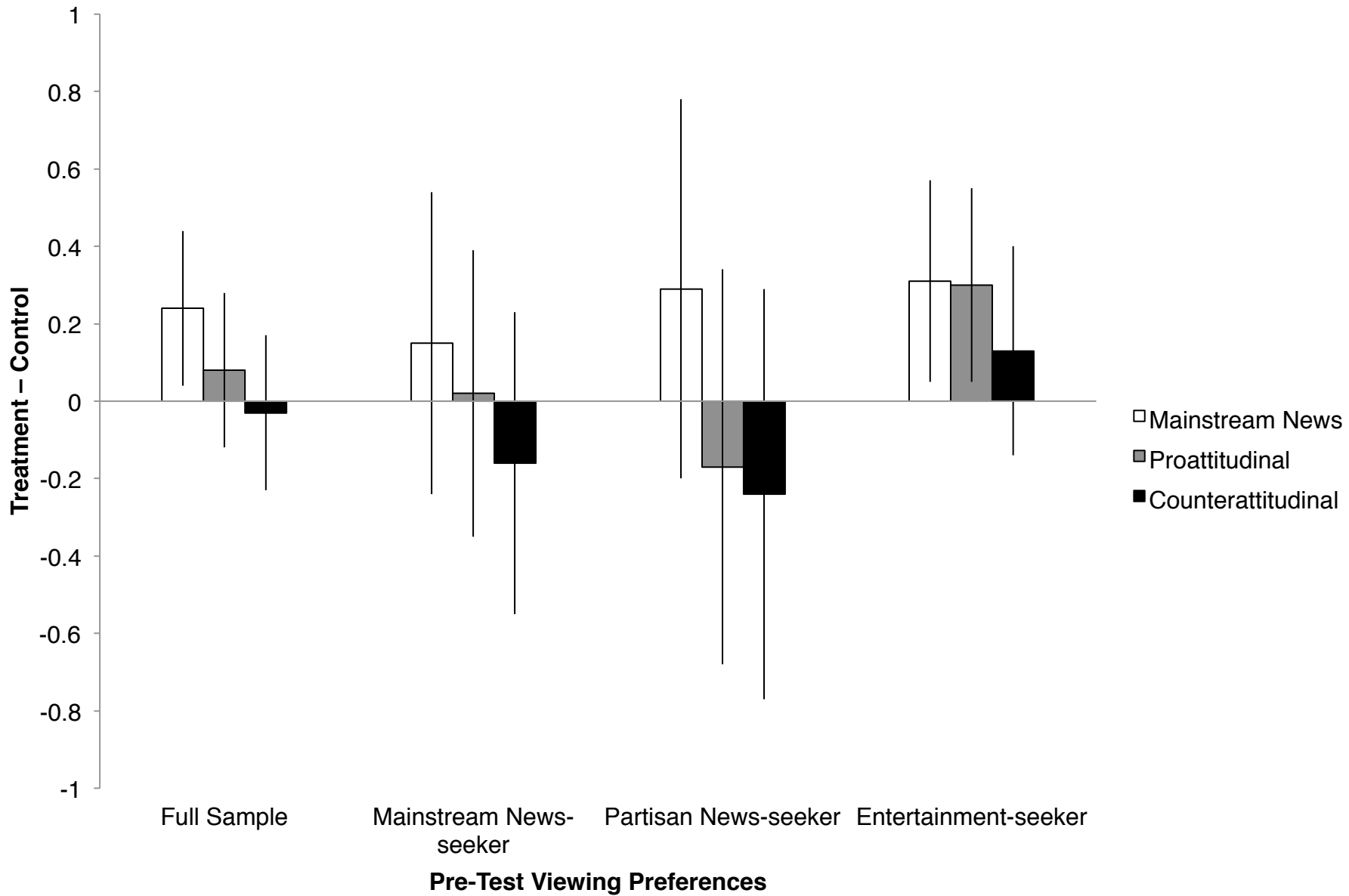




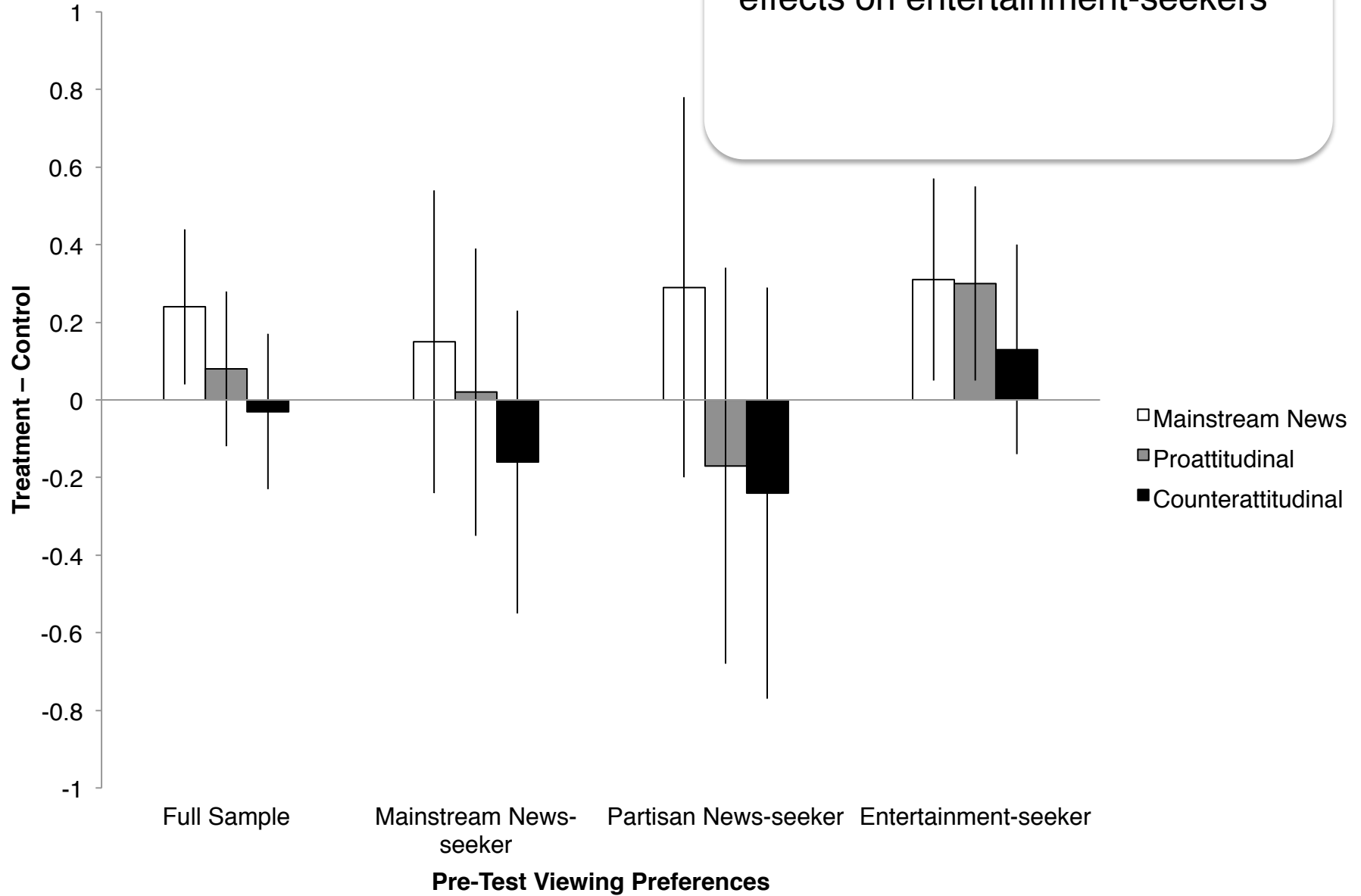




## Participant Preference Experiment



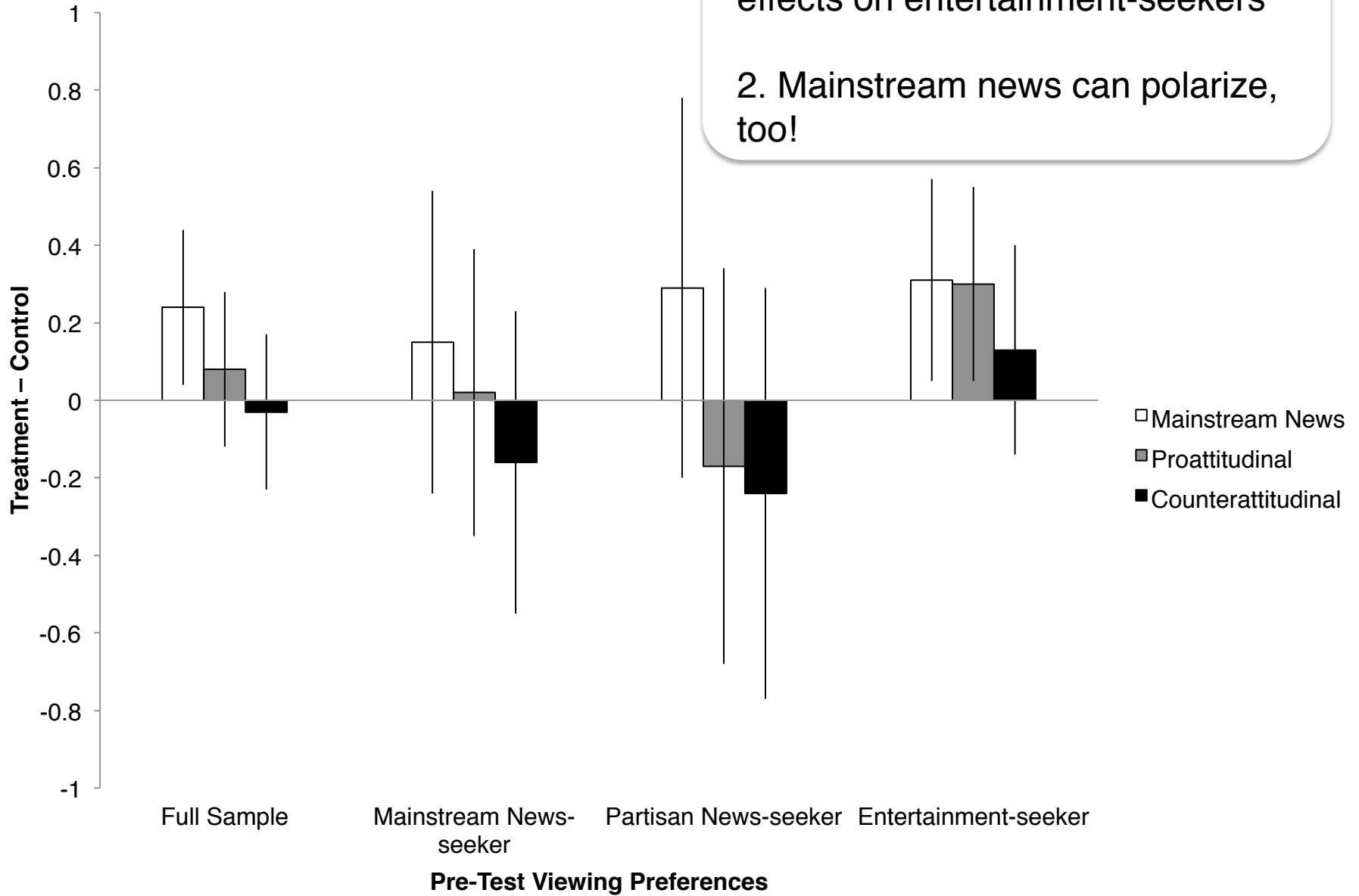
1. Partisan news has stronger effects on entertainment-seekers





1. Partisan news has stronger effects on entertainment-seekers

2. Mainstream news can polarize, too!





**Ideological Content**



**Ideological Content vs.**



**Partisan Cues**

# Sorting out Content vs. Cues

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## 1. Participant Preference Design

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1. Participant Preference Design
2. Provide people with counterstereotypical cues

## **Sorting out Content vs. Cues**

1. Participant Preference Design
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3. Vary source: likeminded news vs. co-partisan

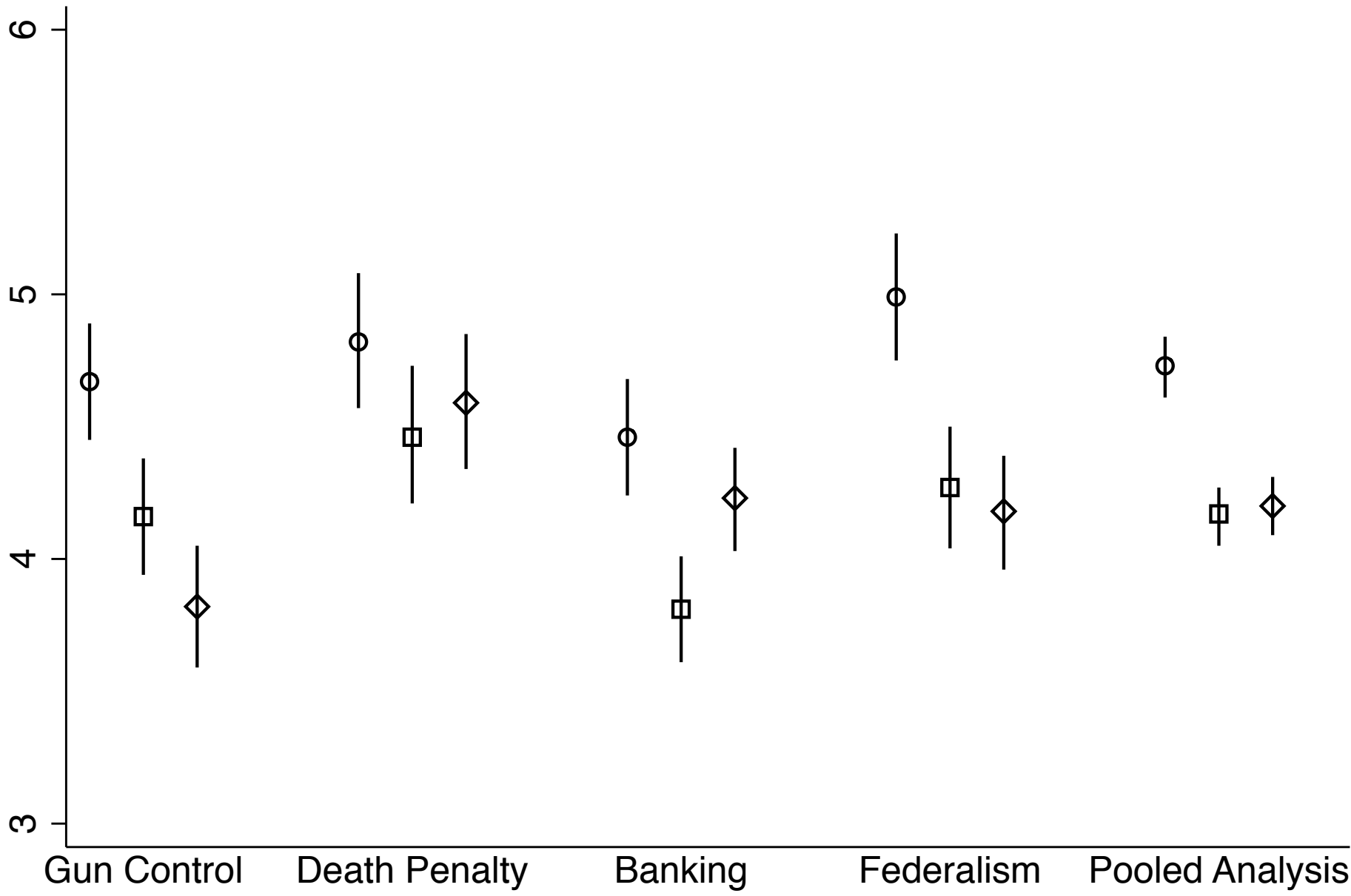
# Sorting out Content vs. Cues

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Issue	Liberals	Conservatives
Gun Control	Waiting periods and registries won't stop criminals	Waiting periods and registries help law enforcement
Death Penalty	Heinous crimes deserve ultimately punishment	Recent mistakes require moratorium
Bank Regulation	Regulation hamstrings community banks	Regulation needed to so banks don't become too big to fail
Federalism	Devolution empowers the people	Federal government needs to take charge to stop unfunded mandates



Mean Polarization Level



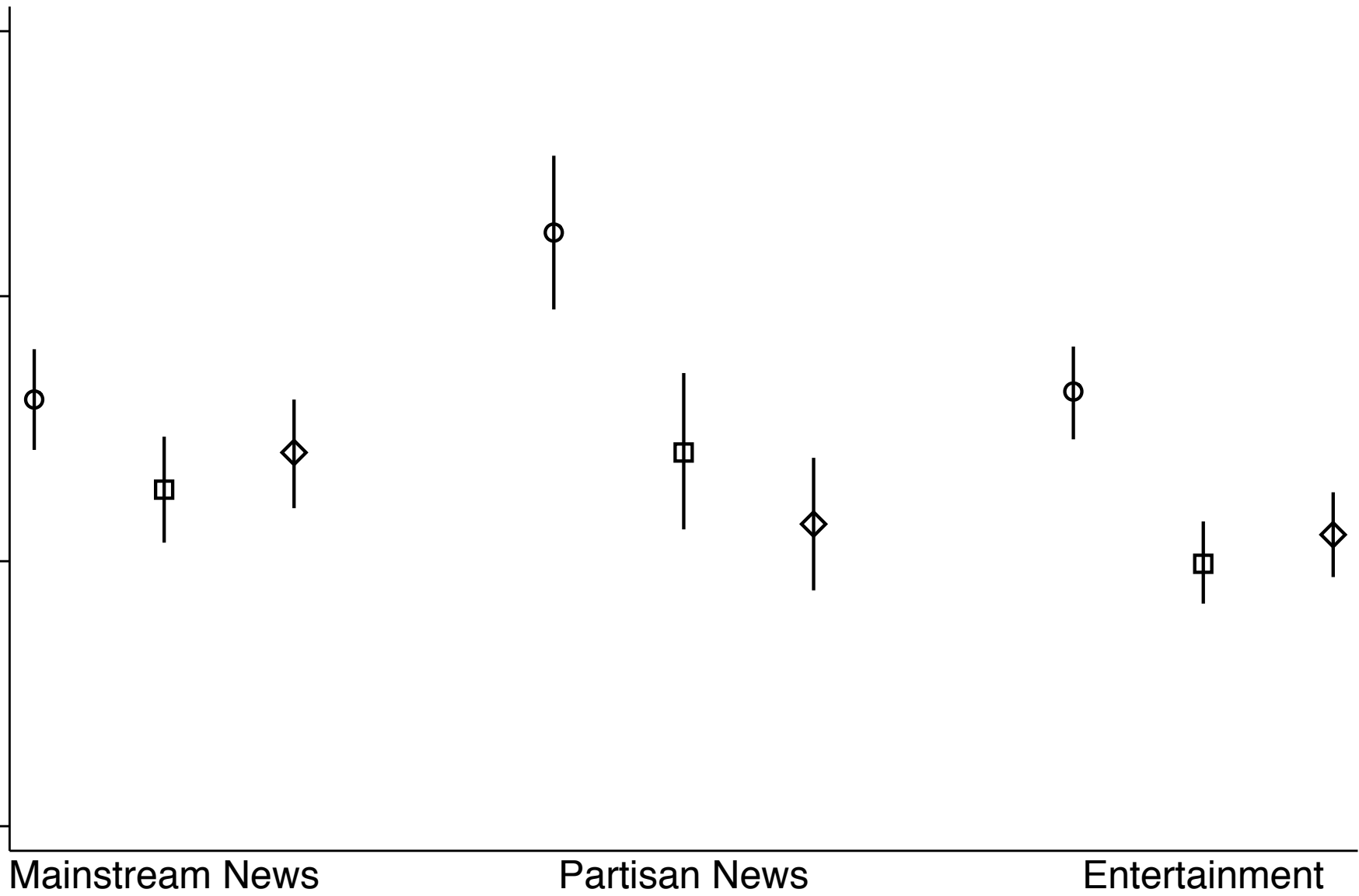
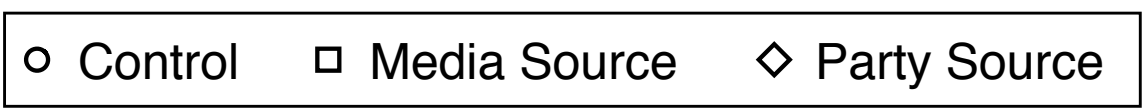
○ Control    □ Media Source    ◇ Party Source

Mean Polarization Level

6  
5  
4  
3

Mainstream News                      Partisan News                      Entertainment

Media Preference



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2. Both mainstream and partisan news media may play a role in mass partisan polarization
3. If partisan elites moved to the center, the electorate would likely follow