It´s All in the Face: Facial Appearance, Political Ideology and Voters´ Perceptions

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Word Count:

Democratic societies are based on citizens' political participation. Citizens should not only vote but their voting decision should result from an active interest and involvement. Classic thinkers such as J.S. Mill and Rousseau believed that following and discussing political affairs allows citizens to make informed political decisions that represent their own self-interest as well as the common good. According to that ideal, voters should be informed about the relevant issues and candidates' position on these issues, and these "hard facts" should determine their votes. Alas, many modern democracies do not live up to this standard. Not only is a large part of the population not voting at all. For example in the European Union participation in the national elections on average hardly exceeded 70% of the voters during the last ten years (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu), a figure that has not been reached in the USA for the last century.[1] Moreover, for psychologists it may not come as a surprise that voting decisions such as many other decisions may be based on heuristic cues rather than objectively relevant information. In this vain, the image of the cognitive miser had been adapted by political scientists (e.g. Brady & Sniderman, 1985; Conover & Feldman, 1989; Popkin, 1991; McKelvey & Ordeshook, 1986; Sniderman, Broda & Tetlock, 1991; s.a. Bartels, 1996) and in this perspective cues have been identified on which voters base their decision, such partisanship or incumbency.

Recent research uncovered the crucial role of candidate´s looks for electoral success (e.g. Lenz & Lawson, 2011; for review see Wänke, Landwehr & Samochowiec, 2011). Some research suggests the existence of a winner´s look by showing that electoral success can be predicted by adults´ and even children´s choices of photographs

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[1] Data taken from Table 397. Participation in Elections for President and U.S. Representatives: 1932 to 2010". *U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012*. U.S. Census Bureau; and "Voter Turnout in Presidential Elections: 1828 - 2008". *The American Presidency Project*. UC Santa Barbara. Retrieved 2014-1-02.).

of unknown politicians (Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009; s.a. Little, Burris, Jones & Roberts, 2007). Other research identified specific looks, such as looking competent (Todorov, Mandisozda, Goren & Hall, 2005) or attractive (e.g. Berggren, Johrdahl & Poutvaara, 2010; Banducci, Karp, Thrasher & Rallings, 2008). Perhaps voting decisions based on looks are even further away from the ideal of an interested and involved citizen than party membership and incumbency. After all, one may expect that party affiliation is a good indicator of a candidate´s views and whether they match one´s own and incumbency is an indicator for experience. Looks, on the other hand are only skin-deep and arbitrary. Or aren´t they?

Recent research in person perception suggests that several traits and behaviours can be identified from looks (for a review see Ambady, Bernieri, & Richeson, 2000). Among many others, political ideology, more precisely whether a person endorses a left or right political ideology, has been shown to be detected above chance level. In the present chapter I will first give an overview of this research and then discuss the evidence for possible mediators and moderators. In the final section I will turn to the question whether "ideological" looks can have an impact on voting decisions. Throughout this chapter I will use the terms *right* and *conservative* and respectively *left* and *liberal* synonymously, because different studies used different categorizations. Although these dimensions are not identical their distinction does not matter much for the present purpose.

Detecting Ideology from Faces

Early work by Jahoda (1953) found that British participants showed an above chance accuracy in categorizing British politicians according to whether they belonged to the

Conservative or the Labour party. One may speculate why this idea had been asleep for several decades and has only been rediscovered recently. Arguably, the "thin slice" approach (Ambady et al., 2000) revived interest in person perception with a host of research showing that presumably non-observable variables such as personality traits and others can actually be identified from short behavioural sequences and even stills. In the last years numerous studies have emerged showing that also political ideology can be identified above chance level.

As summarized in Table 1, the evidence comes in form of different measures, from different countries and via different analyses. Most studies used politicians as targets, probably because politicians provide an objective external accuracy criterion, namely party membership or even roll-call voting. Not surprisingly then, the most commonly used dependent measure and criterion is party membership, as was already the case in Jahoda's classical study. Sometimes participants are asked instead to categorize the targets as politically left or right, in particular when the participants come from another country than the targets and participants are therefore not familiar with the respective parties (Berggren, Johrdaal, & Poutvaara, 2012; Samochowiec et al., 2010; Ivanov, 2013). Party membership as a criterion is of course only a proxy when it comes to political ideology as members of a party may well differ in their political views and members of different parties may actually be rather close in their views. In this respect, Samochowiec and colleagues (2010; see also Carpinella & Johnson, 2013) relied on roll-call vote scores, which are a good indicator of a politician's ideological orientation (Franklin, 1991). Their data showed that identifying political ideology goes beyond simply telling who is right and who is left. Even within the right and left subsamples the correlation between estimated and actual ideology was significant or marginally significant indicating a rather fine-grained sensitivity for political ideology.

With different measures also the analyses that are conducted vary. For dichotomous categorization a signal detection analysis should be the method of choice when the analysis is participant-based. Alternatively, in particular in older studies, the average percentage of correctly identified targets is reported and whether it significantly deviates from the chance level of 50%. Analyses can also be target-based, indicating the average percentage of correct categorizations and whether it significantly deviates from the chance level of 50%. When accuracy is based on roll-call votes the resulting score can be correlated with the average estimate made by participants on a rating scale (target-based). Alternatively, for a participant-based analysis the correlation of each participant´s estimates with actual scores can be averaged over participants and tested against zero. Some studies report target- and participant-based analyses (e.g. Samochowiec et al., 2010; Samochowiec, 2009).

With all this evidence, a few studies show a deviation from the pattern. Two studies from the 80s (Bull & Hawkes, 1982; Bull, Jenkins, & Stevens, 1983) used only a small number of targets and moreover dropped all targets that were rated as close to the middle. Benjamin and Shapiro (2009) showed 10 seconds of video clips of US politicians to their participants. After each pair of video clips participants guessed who the Democrat and who the Republican were. Their estimates did not differ from chance. This is surprising as the relative judgment should actually be easier. With a similar procedure only using stills rather than video clips other researchers found significant accuracy (Olivola, Sussman, Tsetsos, Kang & Todorov, 2012; Samochowiec, 2009; see also Wänke, Samochowiec & Landwehr 2011).

Despite these non-findings, there is considerable evidence that political ideology can be identified above chance from looks, and in particular, faces. Some evidence (Berggren et al., 2012; Samochowiec et al., 2010; Ivanov, 2013) suggests that this is the

case even when the observers are unfamiliar with the respective political system. In light of all this evidence, an obvious question is which cues guide the perception of political ideology.

Which cues give away political ideology?

What makes a face appear left or right? Note, that this question is different from how left and right targets actually differ regarding their facial appearance. In principle, people consensually may use cues which they believe to indicate liberal or conservative worldviews but which do not possess any validity. So the question may actually consist of three different questions: a) which cues signal left or right political attitudes, b) which cues actually correlate with left or right political attitudes, and c) which cues do both and may thereby mediate accuracy in political perception.

Having said so, the fact that people apparently agree in categorizing others as left or right and even that their judgment reflects some accuracy does not necessarily mean that there are identifiable cues. The detection of political attitudes could also operate according to Brunswick's notion of vicarious functioning (Brunswick, 1943). Withstanding the identification of single cues, cues that correlate with the respective attributes may vary between targets, and which cues are used for the judgment may vary between judges and within judges between trials (Karelaia & Hogarth, 2008; Stenson, 1974). Nevertheless, in the following I will review a few variables discussed in the literature.

Clothing & Styling

There is ample evidence that people with different political views also differ in their tastes and preferences, or example in art (Wilson, Ausman, & Mathews, 1973), poetry (Gillies & Campbell, 1985), music (Glasgow, Cartier, & Wilson 1985) and even in how

people decorate their personal surroundings (Carney, Jost, & Gosling, 2009). As Tomkins

(1963) proposed, political attitudes pervade all aspects of life. Thus, it may not be

surprising that they dress differently and cultivate different personal styles. True

enough personal styling correlated with political views (Darley & Cooper, 1972). In the

same vein Samochowiec (2009) found that personal styling of students did relate to

their political orientation and more importantly also to the perceived political

orientation. However, styling only partly mediated the accuracy. Politicians may tend to

vary less in their appearance –at least in official photos. Almost all politicians wear a

business outfit. The only study that I am aware of that tested whether clothing was used

as a cue presented photos of politicians where everything below the chin was deleted

(Samochowiec et al., 2010). Still accuracy was significantly above chance level. At least

clothing could not have been responsible. Other means of styling such as hairstyles or

glasses were also considered in that study but no significant cue emerged.

Angle & Cheek Display

Do left and right politicians differ how they present themselves in photos? And do

observers use this information? Different theories make different predictions.

On the one hand, the spatial agency bias pertains to perceptions of agency from

the positioning in the pictures. In many languages the subject is mentioned before the

verb and the object. If so and if it is a language that is written from left to right the

subject appears on the left side with the object further to the right. Accordingly analyses

of artwork within the Western world has found that the persons in the more agentic

role are predominantly portrayed as orienting themselves to the right from the

perceiver´s perspective (showing their right cheek) compared to depicted persons in the

less agentic role (Chatterjee, 2002; McManus & Humphrey, 1973; Suitner & Maass, 2007). Although agency (and communion) are not political dimensions, one might arguably propose that agency might relate more to a right than a left political orientation as perceived dominance is also related to a perceived right political orientation (see below). One might therefore expect single targets that are displaying the right cheek to be *perceived* as more agentic than those that display the left cheek.

Other research has shown that emotions are rated as more expressive when they are displayed on the left side of the face (McManus & Humphrey, 1973; Powell & Schirillo,2009) and portraits featuring the left side of the face are judged as more emotional (Nicholls, Wolfgang, Clode, & Lindell, 2002). So perhaps one may expect that politicians prefer to present the left cheek in portraits assuming that voters find more emotional politicians more appealing. Indeed, an analysis of pictures of 1183 politicians from Australia, Canada, UK, and the US and found that in all four countries politicians tended to display the left cheek rather than the right cheek (Thomas, Loetscher, Clode, and Nichols, 2012). Although the authors report that this effect was overall more pronounced for conservative politicians than liberal politicians this difference was only significant in one country, Canada. As many portraits came from the official parliament websites it may well be possible that different parties employ different photographers and the individual style of the photographer may play a larger than rather strategic attempts of the politician.

Gender

Gender may be a fairly valid indicator of political beliefs in many of the cited studies, as in the USA, Germany (Inglehart & Norris, 2000) and in Switzerland

(http://www.weltwoche.ch/ausgaben/2007-30/artikel-2007-30-staat-der-frauen.html) women lean more to the left than men. Also among politicians this tends to be true in the respective societies. Women are even more under-represented among conservative parties and tend to represent more left politics (for the USA see Koch, 2001, Swers, 2002, Evans, 2005). And indeed, women are also perceived to be more left than men. A study in the US (Koch 2000) asked participants to rate Senate candidates according to their ideology. Different from the studies reported above where participants did not know the politicians, in this study only participants who recognized the candidate's name were included. Overall, and independent of party, female candidates were believed to be more liberal than the male candidates. A comparison between their actual ideological orientation based on roll-call vote scores with the perceived orientation showed that although the women were on average indeed more liberal than the men, the perceived ideology gap was even wider than the actual difference.

So gender may be an obvious cue. Indeed, female politicians were more likely guessed to be Democrats (Olivola et al., 2012; Carpinella & Johnson, 2013) or left (Samochowiec et al., 2010), and gender contributed to accuracy. Samochowiec and colleagues even found that participants reported to use gender as a cue. But in all these studies the analyses controlled for gender. Gender therefore could not explain the remaining effect. Other studies only used male politicians (Jahoda, 1954, Ivanov, 2013; Mueller, 2013). Also in Rule and Ambady's studies (2010) women were overrepresented among the Democrat compared to the Republican sample but the authors do not report whether gender may have served as a cue for accuracy.

Although a bias that female gender indicates a left orientation is actually justified, Carpinella and Johnson (2013) showed evidence that on top of gender, gender-typical looks may also paly a role. Among female US politicians Republicans were more gender-

typically feminine than Democratic politicians. Interestingly, the reverse was found among male politicians: Democrat males looked more masculine than Republican males. Moreover, gender-typicality was apparently used as a cue in identifying the politician's party as revealed by a mediation analysis. Among those categorized as Republican accuracy was higher for typical as compared to atypical women and lower for typical as compared to atypical men. Among those categorized as Democrats accuracy was higher for atypical as compared to typical women and lower for atypical as compared to typical men. A mediation analysis indeed found significant effects for gender typicality as mediating actual to perceived ideology.

Gender-typicality may also be positively correlated with attractiveness. If so, these findings would also make different predictions for male and female politicians regarding the correlation of attractiveness and ideology. The next section will look at attractiveness.

Attractiveness

Berggren, Johrdaal & Poutvaara (2012) report data according to which physical attractiveness is used as a cue in detecting political ideology. In two studies Swedish as well as Finish politicians were rated according to attractiveness and political ideology. Although *actually* right politicians were rated as more attractive than *actually* left ones, those erroneously assumed to be right were also rated as more attractive than those erroneously perceived as left. So in both studies respondents tended to categorize more attractive politicians as more likely to be right rather than left. A similar effect had also been reported by Bull and colleagues (1982; 1983) in the UK, although for a much smaller data set. Participants tended to classify more attractive politicians as Conservatives rather than Labour.

Whether attractiveness is a valid cue for political ideology depends on the correlation of attractiveness with actual ideology. From a learning perspective it would make sense that it is used as a cue in cultures where indeed attractiveness correlates with political ideology. This seems to be the case in Sweden, Finland, Australia, France and the US where right candidates are judged to be more attractive (Berggren et al., 2012). Most of the participants in the studies where attractiveness was used as a cue came from such countries (Finland for the categorization of Swedish politicians; Sweden and USA for the categorization of Finnish politicians).

Within the set of Swiss politicians, attractiveness did not correlate with actual ideology (Fritz, 2013). Yet, it may have been used, however in the opposite direction: Attractiveness rated in one study (Fritz, 2013) was negatively correlated with ideology estimated in another study (Samochowiec et al., Exp.2). This suggests that cues may be used not because of some actual – and thus experienced – correlation, but because of certain – unfounded- stereotypes, in this case the stereotype that right politicians are less attractive than left ones. At this point, it is unclear whether this negative relationship was related to participants´ own views. It may have been stronger among left participants and weaker among more right-leaning participants.

Moreover, given that beauty is in the eye of the beholder we cannot rule out that the raters' own political views influenced not only what they inferred from attractiveness but also the attractiveness ratings. Berggren and colleagues (2012) report that right politicians were only rated as more attractive by right participants but not by left participants. Likewise, Jahoda (1954) found an in-group bias in so far as conservatives rated those they believed to be Labour as less attractive and vice versa. Thirty years later but with a much smaller sample Bull and colleagues (1982; 1983) however, found no in-group bias in their studies in Britain. Supporters of the Labour and

the conservative party equally rated politicians they thought to be conservative as more attractive than those they believed to be Labour.

Likeability & Trustworthiness

The same problem that participants' own orientation may influence the ratings may of course also, and perhaps even more so, hold for perceptions of likeability and trustworthiness. Rule and Ambady (2010) found that *perceived* Democrats were rated as warmer (a compound of trustworthiness and likeability) than *perceived* Republicans but no difference was found for *actual* party affiliation. Fritz (2013) found virtually the same pattern for Swiss politicians with perceived warmth, trustworthiness and likeability of a politician negatively correlating with perceived right ideology but not correlating with actual ideology. In both data sets it is not clear whether this is a universal pattern that warmer faces tend to be perceived as more left or whether this is due to perhaps skewed ideological distribution in the participants. If the sample was predominated by more left participants, as may well be the case for student samples, an in-group-bias could easily account for the more favourable ratings for perceived left targets.

Some illumination comes from a study with a different design (Ostner, 2011). Participants had to directly compare ten pairs of politicians. In each pair, one politician was left-looking and one right-looking. Preference for the left-looking politician on likeability and trustworthiness was strongly correlated with own ideology, with left participants showing a larger preference for the left-looking politician. However, even among the participants who reported to be right-leaning, on average the left-looking politician was rated as more likeable than the right-looking one. In sum these data would reflect both, an in-group bias and an advantage of left-looking politicians on the

warmth dimension. Whether this generalizes over different target sets is an open question.

Power

Besides trustworthiness and likeability (warmth) and attractiveness other dimensions that have been investigated with regard to the perception of political ideology are competence and dominance, sometimes referred to as power (Rule & Ambady, 2010). Perceived competence seems to be a main contributor to eligibility (Todorov et al., 2005 Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009; for a review see Wänke, Samochowiec & Landwehr, 2011). Dominance is conceived as the other main dimension of face variability besides trustworthiness (Oosterhof & Todorov, 2008). Various studies find evidence that perceived dominance and/or competence (power) correlates with actual political orientation, insofar that right targets are perceived as higher in dominance and/or competence than left targets (Fritz, 2013; Rule & Ambady, 2010; Samochowiec, et al., 2010; Berggren et al., 2012). This fits well with findings that right-wing ideology is related to social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Likewise, competence (Bull & Hawkes, 1982; Bull et al., 1983; Jahoda, 1954; Rule & Ambady, 2010) and dominance also correlate with a perceived right orientation (Fritz, 2013; Rule & Ambady, 2010; Samochowiec, et al., 2010). And indeed, perceived power (compound of dominance and competence; Rule & Ambady, 2010) or dominance (Samochowiec et al., 2010) mediated the accuracy of political identification. It should be noted though that in both studies it could only account for part of the mediation.

Of course perceived competence and dominance in a politician may also be influenced by raters´ own views and the perceived similarity in political ideology just as

was the case for attractiveness, likeability and trustworthiness. The next section will discuss this issue in more detail.

Mediators or Dependent variables?

With rather subjective estimates as attractiveness, likeability, or dominance one might ask whether these impressions are really an antecedent or a consequence of the perceived political ideology. Interestingly, in the studies by Rule and Ambady (2010), Samochowiec et al. (2010), and Fritz (2013) the ratings for trustworthiness and likeability as well as competence and dominance on the one hand and for political orientation on the other hand were made by independent samples. Thus, it can be excluded that prompting one judgment influenced the other. This, of course, does not rule out that either or both judgments were also formed spontaneously. Possibly, (Democrat) participants may have inferred ideology from likeability, "he looks like a nice guy, he must be a Democrat". Alternatively of course, the reverse direction may also be possible, "He looks like a liberal, I like him". And as a third possibility perhaps a more holistic inference process may have triggered both judgments: "He looks a certain type, he must be nice and a Democrat."

Of course, whether political identification is an antecedent or a consequence of another impression pertains to any dimension. With regard to attractiveness Jahoda's analysis (1954) suggests that the latter is more likely than the former. He observed that consensus in perceived attractiveness was higher than consensus in party identification, and that in-group favouratism was only observed among targets that were wrongly identified. Thus, he concluded, that participants used perceived high attractiveness and competence to infer that the target must hold similar political views, and low

attractiveness and low IQ to infer that the target must hold opposite political views. He reports several statements made by participants that give a flavour of how an inference process might work. Quotes from conservative participants are: "The ones with breeding in their features are Conservatives"; "Socialists are rough-looking types and lack polish"; "The ones with a vacant expression are Labour." And Labour participants were quoted: "The fat and stupid looking ones are Conservatives"; "Labour people have a frank and open appearance." (Jahoda, 1954; p 333). From this perspective attractiveness and competence are clearly operating as cues for believed political ideology but would not contribute to accuracy. Yet, Jahoda did find accuracy in the categorizations on top of in-group favouritism. Unfortunately, his analyses do not separately estimate the size of the in-group bias from actual cue validity. Neither do later studies report analyses that tease apart the impact of perceivers´ own ideology on perceived traits and on the use of these perceptions in judging ideology.

Moderators of accuracy

Are there systematic differences in reading ideology? For example, it is sometimes suggested that perhaps women are better in person perception. So far, however, significant gender differences have not been reported. Neither is there evidence that perceiver´s political ideology relates to accuracy. Signal detection analyses found no difference in accuracy for Democrats and Republicans (Rule & Ambady, 2010; Carpinelli & Johnson, 2013) or for left and right participants (Samochowiec et al., 2010). Yet, own ideology does influence categorization. Various studies found evidence for a stricter in-group inclusion criterion and a more lenient out-group inclusion criterion. In other words, perceivers whose own political orientation is leaning to the right are more likely to categorize a target as left rather than right. Vice versa, perceivers who are leaning to the

left are more likely to categorize a target as right rather than left. This was found when the targets were politicians and thus not necessarily part of the perceiver´s in-group (Samochowiec et al., 2010; Ivanov, 2013) as well for non-politician targets (Samochowiec, 2009). This tendency of an in-group over-exclusion bias presumably protects the in-group as erroneous exclusions will be less costly than erroneous inclusions (Nesse, 2005; Schaller, 2008). The fact that for political categorization an in-group over-exclusion bias occurs attests to the high relevance political orientation seems to play for social identity and social perception. Apparently it is not entirely irrelevant how others´ political orientation relates to one´s own or we would not find the typical categorization biases.

Another aspect that is noteworthy about the in-group over-exclusion bias is that it may lead to erroneous conclusion about differences in accuracy between groups. Note that if one holds a stricter criterion for in-group categorization than for out-group categorization false alarms are less likely for the in-group than for the out-group. So it may look that either group is more accurate for the out-group than for the in-group if only correct categorizations are taken into account.

Consequences of ideological looks

In more than a dozen studies from various countries evidence has accumulated that perceivers can identify political ideology from faces. These studies used different designs and criteria but in sum the fact that political ideology can be detected from faces at least to some extent seems hardly deniable. What is less researched is whether such political looks have any consequences. Do these looks influence elections? As a working hypothesis one might assume that voters are more likely to vote for a candidate that

looks as s/he would share the voters political views. Testing this hypothesis is not easy as the following will illustrate.

On the aggregate level the perception of politicians can be related to their electoral success. Two studies indeed suggest that there is a relationship between the two. Samochowiec et al. (2010), report that among their set of Swiss politicians those that on average were perceived more accurately had a higher likelihood of being re-elected. The authors argued speculatively that politicians whose looks mismatch what their party stands for fare a disadvantage because they may be considered as "not the real thing" by the party´s followers. Given a political system with more than one party on each side of the political spectrum voters may have voted for another right or left party where the candidate looked more appropriate. In contrast, Oliviola and colleagues (2012) argue exactly the other way around. They suggest that candidates´ looks my attract voters from the opposing party. The two hypotheses are actually not in opposition to each other. Whether mismatching looks attract voters from the other side or deter voters from the same side are not mutually exclusive options but may well occur in parallel.

A highly impressive analysis of US elections seems to provide evidence for the attraction of voters by ideological looks. Olivola and colleagues (2012) first determined the perceived looks of 512 candidates by showing pairs of opposing candidates and asking participants to identify the Republican candidate. This rendered for each Democratic candidate the likelihood with which he (only male candidates were used) was mistaken for a Republican and vice versa. Some candidates were hardly misidentified, others were predominantly misidentified. This likelihood of being misidentified as a Republican was then correlated to the respective Democrats´s electoral success. In Republican leaning states a Democrat´s vote share correlated

positively with the likelihood of being perceived as the Republican candidate. Democrats had a better chance of winning the more they looked Republican (or phrased the other way around Republicans had less chances of winning the more they looked like a Democrat). But as impressive as these findings seem, two things should be pointed out. First, the analogous effect did not emerge for Democratic leaning states. Second, and more important, even if it had, neither this finding nor the observation by Samochowiec at al. (2010) is proof for the influence of looks on electoral success. After all, looks do correlate with actual politics as shown in the first part of this chapter. So it may well be the case that in Republican leaning states Republican looking Democrats fared a better chance because they also had a more Republican agenda. Likewise, Swiss voters may have punished atypically looking candidates not because of their looks but because of their politics, which may have been not what the voters expected from the party. Thus, actual election results, as impressive the evidence is, cannot clarify the relationship between looks and electoral success.

Mock elections or judgments of likelihood of voting for a particular candidate may provide an estimate. In a lab study, Oliviola and colleagues (2012) provide more evidence. Participants were shown pairs of opposing candidates and asked to indicate which they would vote for. Here the participants did not know the candidates and so the impact of looks could be separated from any other information. The results were similar to those from actual elections. Among Republican participants a candidate´s likelihood of being voted for correlated with the candidates likelihood of being perceived as the Republican candidate in the pair. Analogous to the results from the actual election study there was no matching effect among Democrat participants. Apparently, in the US, Republican voters more than Democratic voters seem to take looks into account. A lab study with Swiss politicians (Ostner, 2011) also found an influence of looks on voting

preference and propensity to vote for a candidate. The more participants reported being right the more they preferred the right looking candidate in a choice between a right and a left looking candidate. In contrast to the US study the effects were not limited to right voters. However, in these lab studies, participants did not have much other information upon to base their choice. It is thus unclear what the impact of looks is when voters also have party and other information. Yet, given that other looks seem to have an influence over other information (e.g. Todorov et al., 2005; Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009) it may well be the case that ideological looks do as well. In particular if we consider that ideological looks may influence how right and left voters perceive a candidate´s competence (Jahoda, 1954) or likeability (Ostner & Wänke, 2011).

Conclusion

Certainly more research on how people infer political ideology is needed. In addition, the mere phenomenon offers some interesting hypotheses for future research. On the one hand the political and economical climate influences electoral success of right versus left parties and candidates. On the other hand, research has provided evidence for the impact of such factors on the preference for certain looks. For example, masculine faces fare an advantage in times of war whereas more feminine faces are preferred at peace times (Little et al., 2007). Given the relationship between facial looks and assumed politics, one may wonder to what extent such political shifts are based on preferences for different looking candidates. Perhaps, depending on the respective situation more or less dominance appeals to voters. As perceived dominance relates to a candidate´s ideology looks may in fact be contributing to right or left shifts in the electorate.

Source	Targets (still photos of face unless otherwise indicated)	N	Participants	Dependent variable	Criterium	Accuracy
Benjamin & Shapiro (2009)	US politicians Silent video clips	58 pairs 21 pairs per participant	Students at US university (N=264; about 95 per pair)	Dichotomous categorization: Democrat, Republican	Party membership (Democrat, Republican)	53% of participants correctly identified party membership; n.s.
Bergren, Jordahl & Poutvara (2012; unpublished manuscript)	Swedish politicians	266	Finnish residents (N=2238; about 60 per target)	Dichotomous Left-right categorization	Party membership (Right: Moderaterna, Folkpartiet; left: Socialdemokraterna)	Chi-square (1) = 64.431, p < .001 Based on present author's calculations
Bergren, Jordahl & Poutvara (2012; unpublished manuscript)	Finish politicians	1357	Residents outside of Finland (N=2513, about 9 per target)	Dichotomous Left-right categorization	Party membership (Right: National Coalition Party; left: Social Democratic Party, Left Alliance)	Chi-square (1) = 118,665, p < .001 Based on present author's calculations
Bull & Hawkes (1982)	British politicians	14	British residents (N=66)	7-point rating scale (1= strongly Conservative; 7= strongly Labour)	Party membership (Conservative vs. Labour)	Significant consensus but no accuracy: 7 correctly identified, 4 incorrect, 3 neutral (between 3.5 and 4.5 on rating scale).

						n.s.
Bull, Jenkins, & Stevens (1983)	British politicians	2 x 18	Students at British university (N$_1$=22; N$_2$=23)	9-point rating scale (1= very Labour; 9= very Conservative)	Party membership (Conservative vs. Labour)	14 correctly identified, 9 incorrectly, 13 neutral (between 4.5 and 5.5 on rating scale). n.s.
Carpinella & Johnson (2012)	US politicians	434	Students at US university (N=120)	Dichotomous categorization: Democrat, Republican	Party membership (Democrat, Republican) Roll-call vote	Signal detection, **p<.0001,**
Fritz (2013; unpublished data)	Swiss politicians	2 x 20	German internet sample (N$_1$=28; N$_2$=27)	7-point rating scale (1=left;7=right)	Roll-call vote translated into 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correlation of politicians´ voting and average estimated orientation; p < .001
Ivanov (2013; unpublished data)	French politicians	268	German internet sample (N=153; about 50-52 per target)	Dichotomous Left-right categorization	Party membership (left: Partie Socialiste; right: UMP)	52% correct identification; p < .001 Signal detection, p < .001
Jahoda (1954)	British politicians	20	British (N=284)	Party membership (Conservative vs. Labour)	Party membership (Conservative vs. Labour)	60% correct identifications, p < .001
Mueller (2013; unpublished data)	French politicians	268	Students at a French university	Dichotomous Left-right categorization	Party membership (left: Partie Socialiste; right: UMP)	52% correct identification; p < .001
Oliviola et al. (2012)	Pairs of US politicians (One	256 pairs,	Students at US	Dichotomous categorization:	Party membership (Democrat,	56% correct identifications, p < .05

	Democrat, one Republican)	N=512	universit yy (N=60)	Democrat, Republican	Republican)	
Oliviola & Todorov (2009)	US politicians	784	US internet sample (N=1005; about 77 per target)	Dichotomous categorization: Democrat, Republican	Party membership (Democrat, Republican)	55% correct identifications, p <.05
Ostner	Swiss Politicians	20		Rating 1-..	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	
Rule & Ambady (2010)	US politicians	118	Students at US universit y (N=29)	Dichotomous categorization: Democrat, Republican	Party membership (Democrat, Republican)	Signal detection; p < .001
Rule & Ambady (2010)	US students	84	Students at US universit y (N=24)	Dichotomous categorization: Belonging to Democrat or Republican student clubs	Self-reported party identification (Democrat, Republican)	Signal detection; p < .001
Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, (2010)	German Politicians Stills and videos clips	40	97 students of a Swiss universit y	Dichotomous Left-right categorization	Party membership (SPD, Grüne, Die Linke = left; CDU, CSU, FDP = right)	Signal detection p < .0001 70% Correct identification, p < .01
Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, (2010)	Swiss Politicians	2 x 41	Internet sample (N_{Swiss}= 206; N_{others}=	7-point rating scale (1 = extremely left, 7= extremely right)	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correlation of politicians´ voting and average estimated orientation; p < .0001 Signal detection after

			197; about half per target)			dichotomization; p <.0001
Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, (2010)	Swiss Politicians	82	Students at a Swiss university (N=20)	7-point rating scale (1 = extremely left, 7= extremely right)	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correlation of politicians´ voting and average estimated orientation; p < .0001
Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, (2010) (Clothing cues removed)	Swiss Politicians	82	Students at a Swiss university (N=20)	7-point rating scale (1 = extremely left, 7= extremely right)	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correlation of politicians´ voting and average estimated orientation; p < .01
Samochowiec, Wänke & Fiedler, (2010)	Swiss Politicians	82	Swiss residents (N=53)	7-point rating scale (1 = extremely left, 7= extremely right)	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correlation of politicians´ voting and average estimated orientation; p < .0001
Samochowiec (2009)	Swiss Students	54	Students at a Swiss university (N=90)	5-point rating scale (1 = left, 5= right)	Self-reports on 5-point rating scale (1 = left, 5= right)	Correlation of self-report and rating, p < .0001 (adjusted for gender, p < .01)
Samochowiec (2009)	Pairs of Swiss politicians	42 pairs	Students at a Swiss university (N=76)	Select more "right" politician.	Roll-call vote translated to 7-point scale (1=left; 7=right)	Correct identification, p < .0001