The Virus of Fear:
The Political Impact of Ebola in the U.S.

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The Politics of Pandemics

- Covid-19 represents an enormous shock, which is bound to have electoral effects.
- Economic: major recession, economic fallout
- Policy: incumbents may be judged by their response to crisis
  - "Rally 'round the flag"?
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Fear and Politics

- Emotions as a powerful tool to influence voting behavior
- Fear often used by politicians to mobilize voters against external threats e.g., terrorism, immigrants, minorities, refugees, etc.
- Many results from lab experiments, but "real-world" evidence is scant
- Empirical challenge: disentangle the impact of fear from other factors e.g., policy judgements

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- Look at the impact of Ebola scare on voting in the U.S. 2014 elections
- Ideal context: perceived threat high but actual risk low

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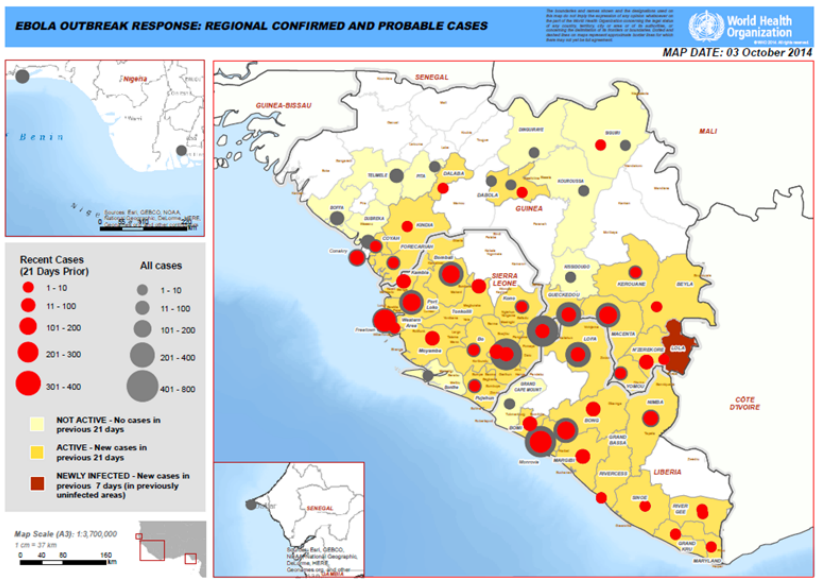
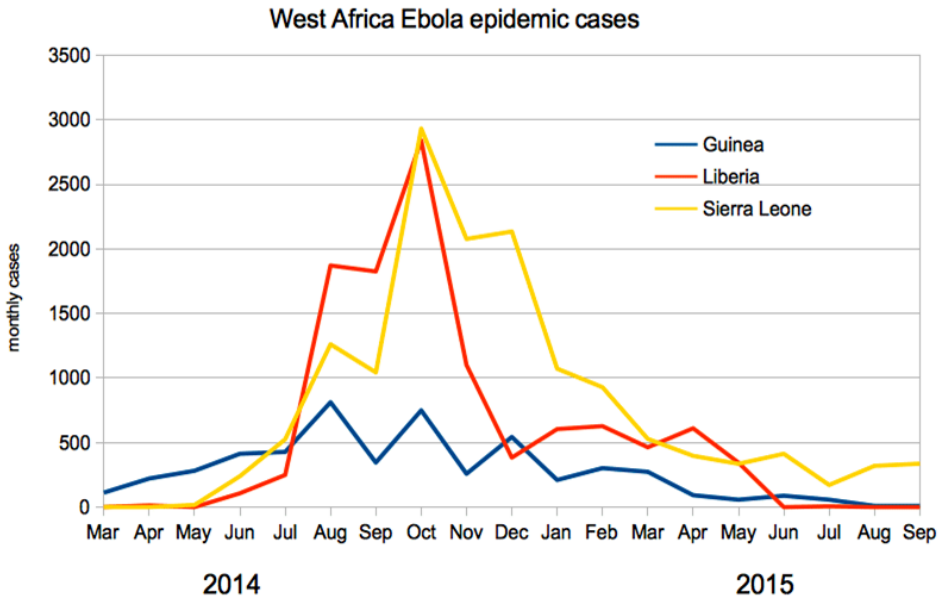
2014 Ebola outbreak: West Africa





2014 Ebola outbreak: most affected countries

Country	Total Cases (Suspected, Probable, Confirmed)	Lab Confirmed Cases	Total Deaths
Sierra Leone	14124	8706	3956
Liberia	10678	3163	4810
Guinea	3814	3358	2544
Nigeria	20	19	8
Mali	8	7	6
United States	4	4	1
Italy	1	1	0
Senegal	1	1	0
Spain	1	1	0
United Kingdom	1	1	0
Total	28652	15261	11325

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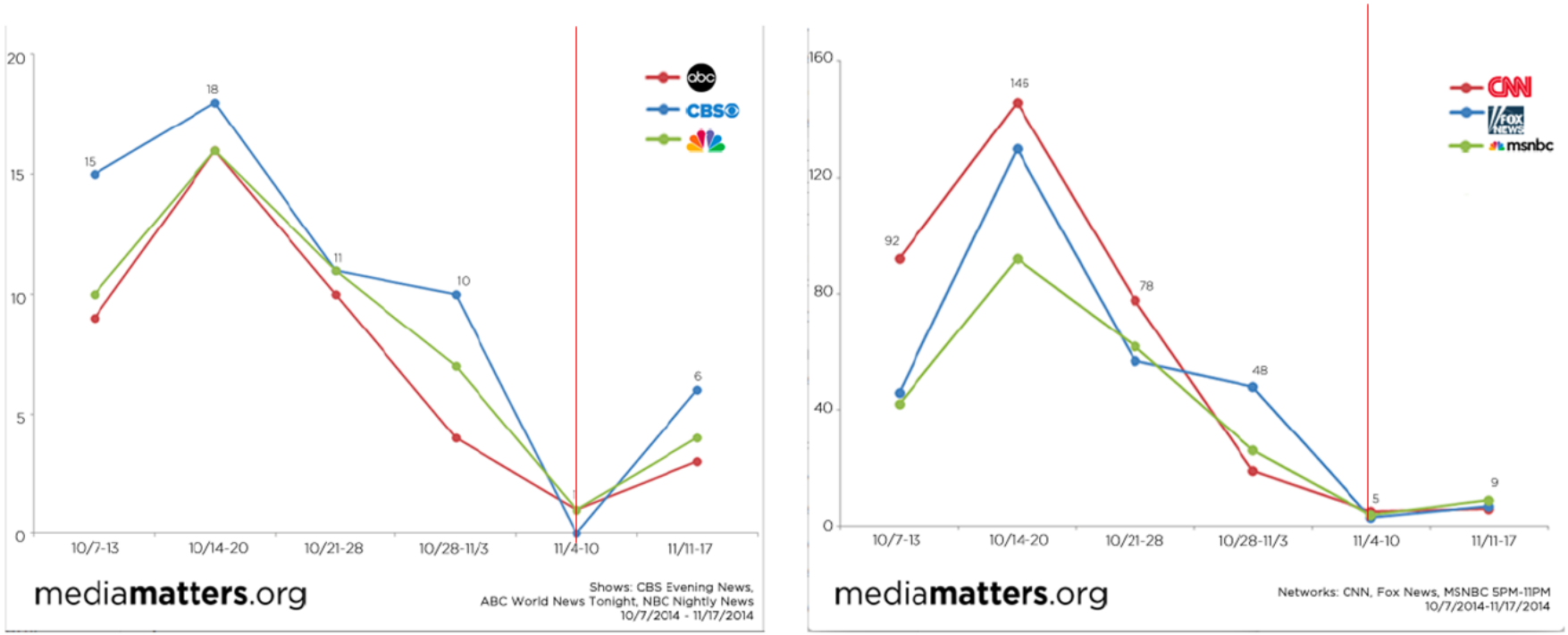
Ebola scare in the U.S.

Ebola scare in the U.S (cont.)



News about Ebola (broadcast + cable TV)

Questions

- Did Ebola-related panic influence voters?
- Which party benefited from the effect?
- Through what mechanism(s) did the effect operate?
- Did politicians use fear of Ebola for their electoral gain? If so how?
- Were these strategies effective?
- But how do we know Ebola *caused* all of this? How do we *measure* it?

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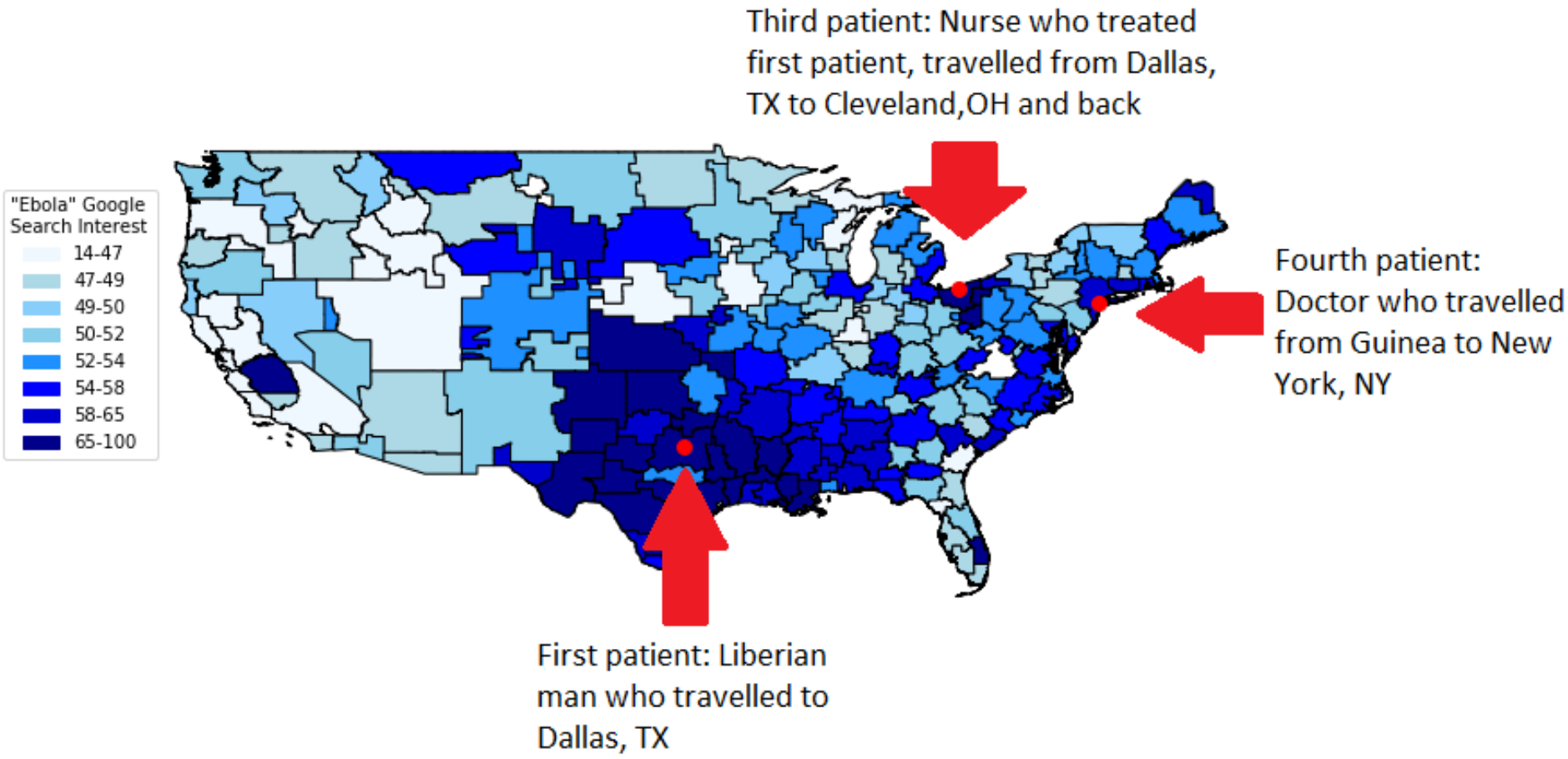
The timing and location of Ebola cases in the US

1. September 30, 2014: Center for Disease Control (CDC) announces that Liberian national Thomas Eric Duncan visiting the US was diagnosed with Ebola in Dallas, TX

2. October 14, 2014: Amber Joy Vinson, a nurse who had assisted Duncan, tests positive for Ebola. She had traveled to Akron, OH the previous weekend.

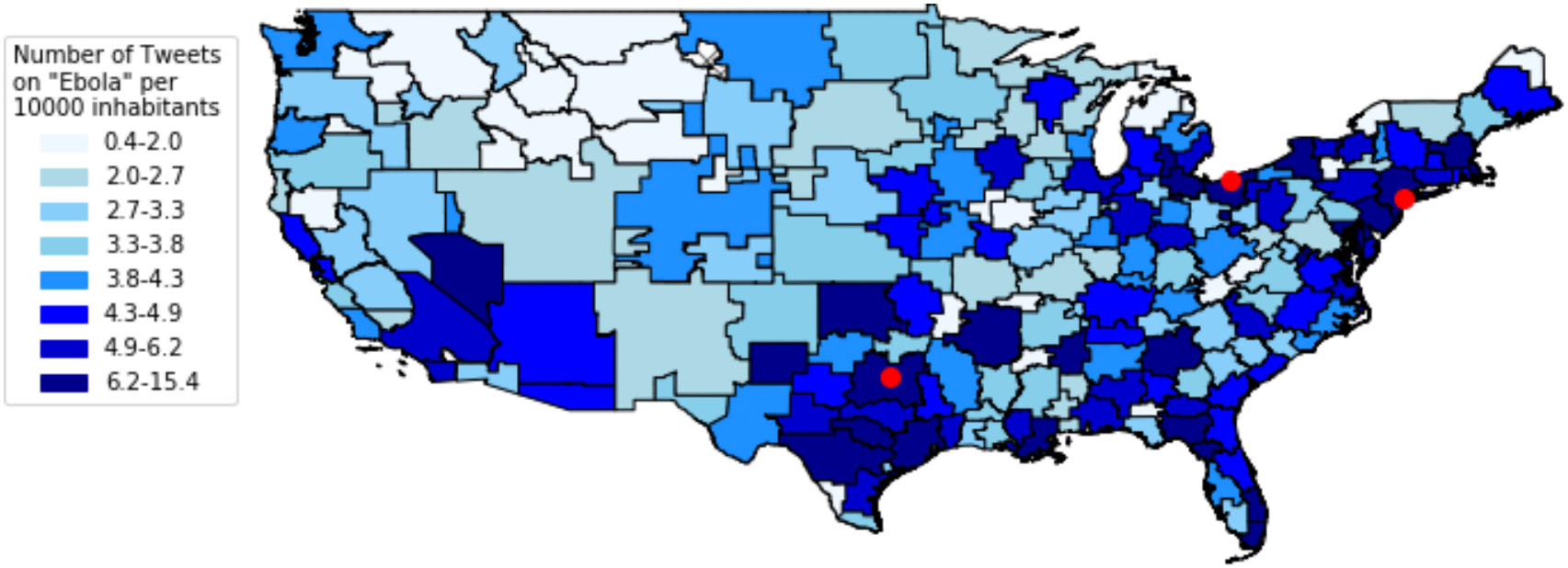
3. October 23, 2014: upon returning from Guinea, doctor Craig Spencer is diagnosed with Ebola in New York City, NY

Location of Ebola cases and Google searches



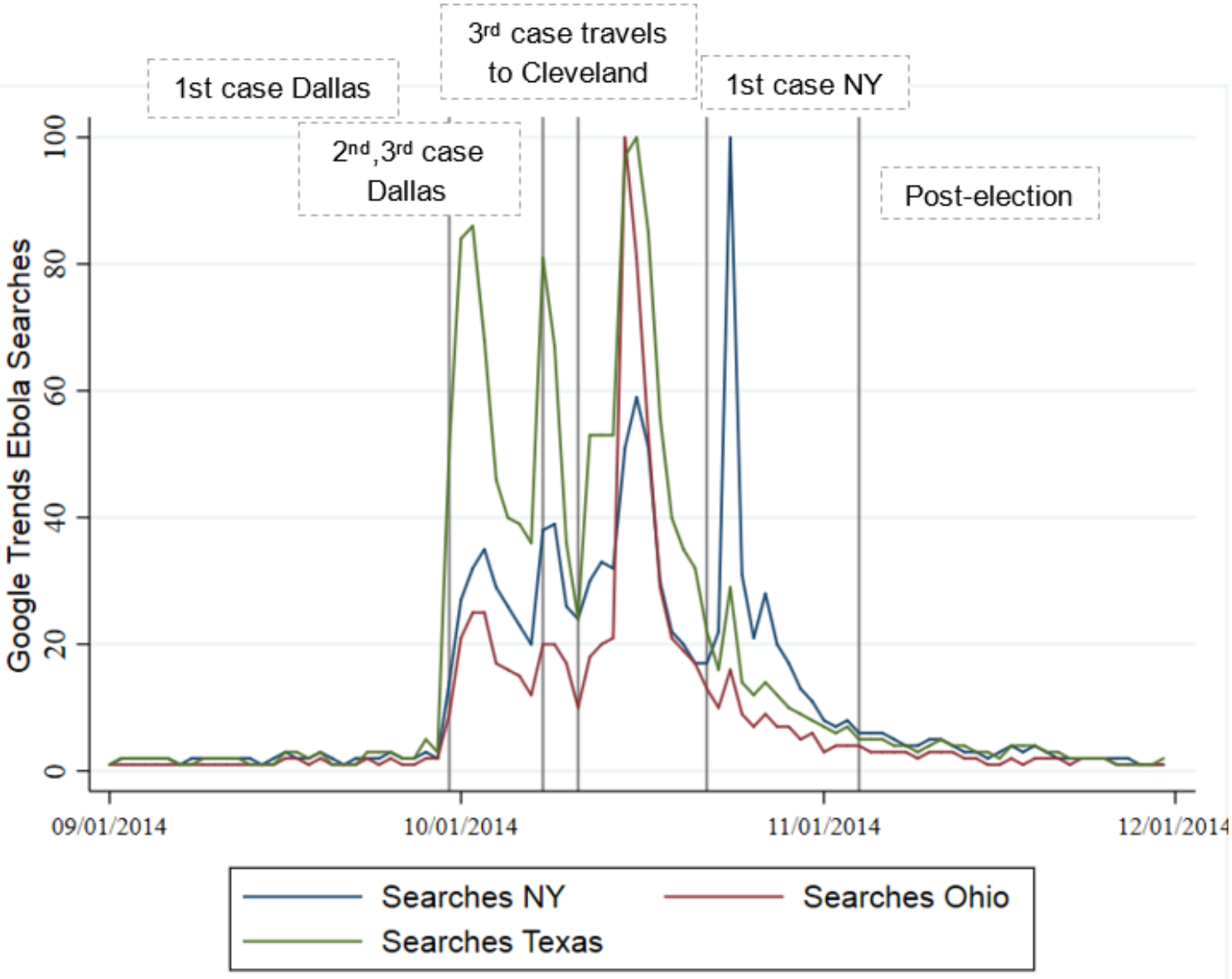
Google Searches about Ebola prior to 2014 Elections by DMA

Location of Ebola cases and Tweets



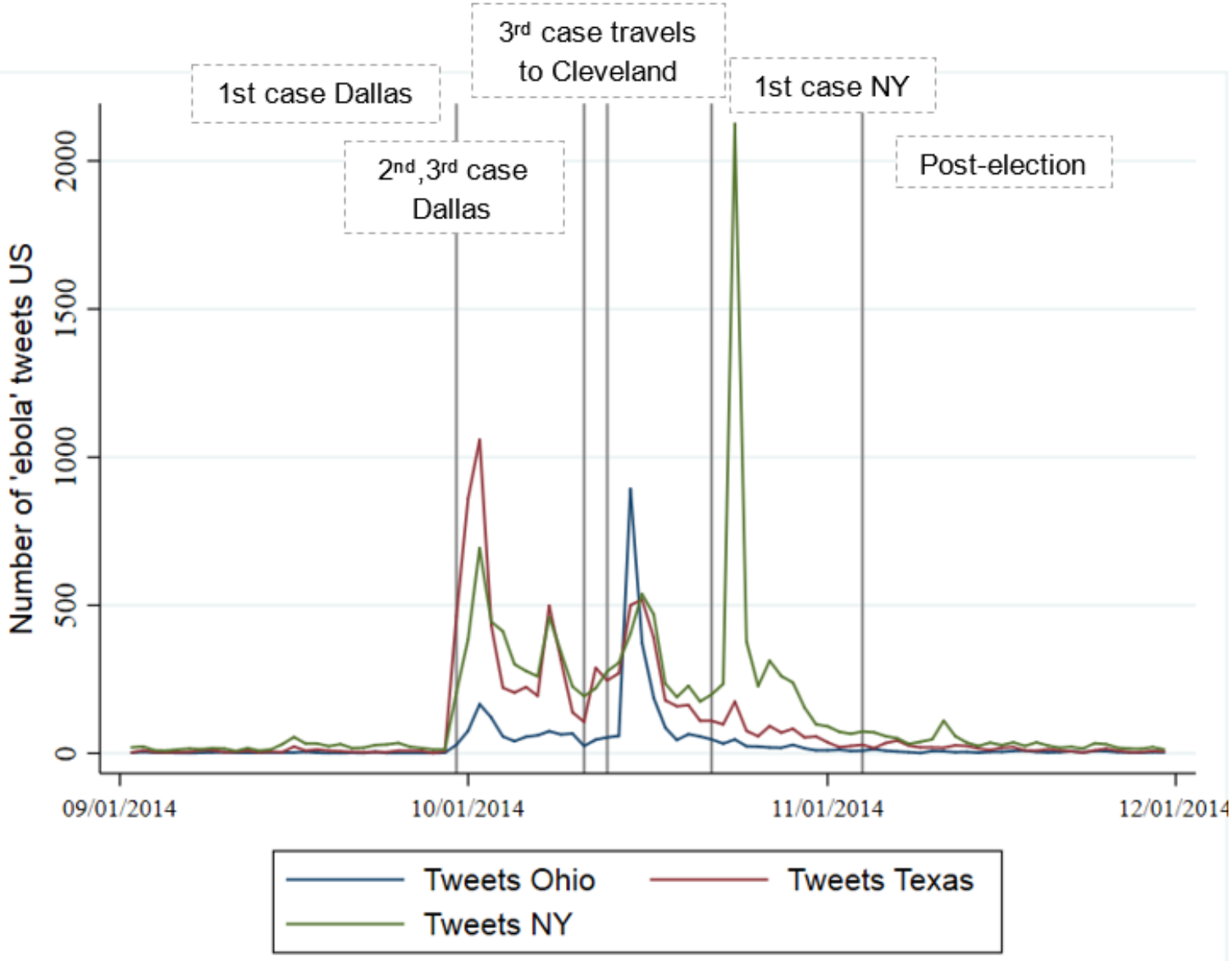
Tweets about Ebola prior to 2014 Elections by DMA

Timing and location of Google searches about Ebola



Evolution of Ebola Google searches in Texas, Ohio, and New York

Timing and location of Tweets about Ebola



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Ebola and Vote

- We use distance to the nearest Ebola case as a (conditional) predictor of Ebola concerns (searches, tweets):
  - Uncorrelated with Ebola concerns *before* US cases
  - Uncorrelated with previous electoral outcomes
- Greater Ebola concerns led to lower Democratic vote share in House, Senate, gubernatorial elections
  - One-standard-deviation increase in concerns led to 4.3 percentage-point drop.
  - This would have swung 15 races won by GOP, eliminated all GOP gains between 201 and 2014.

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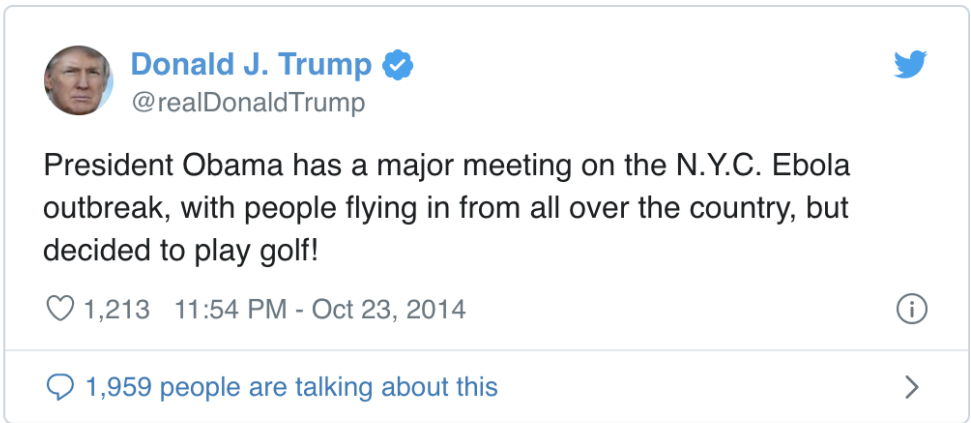
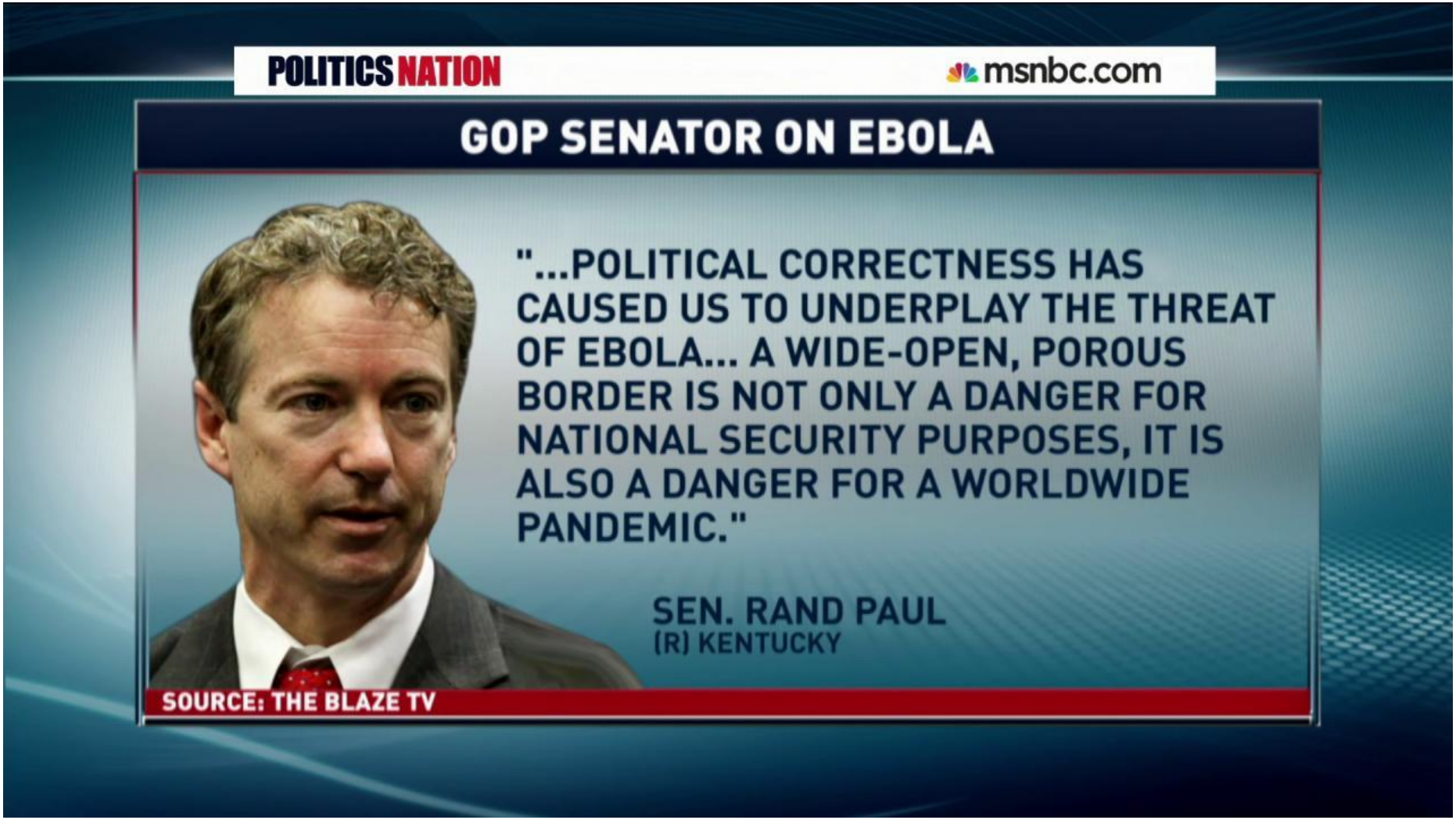


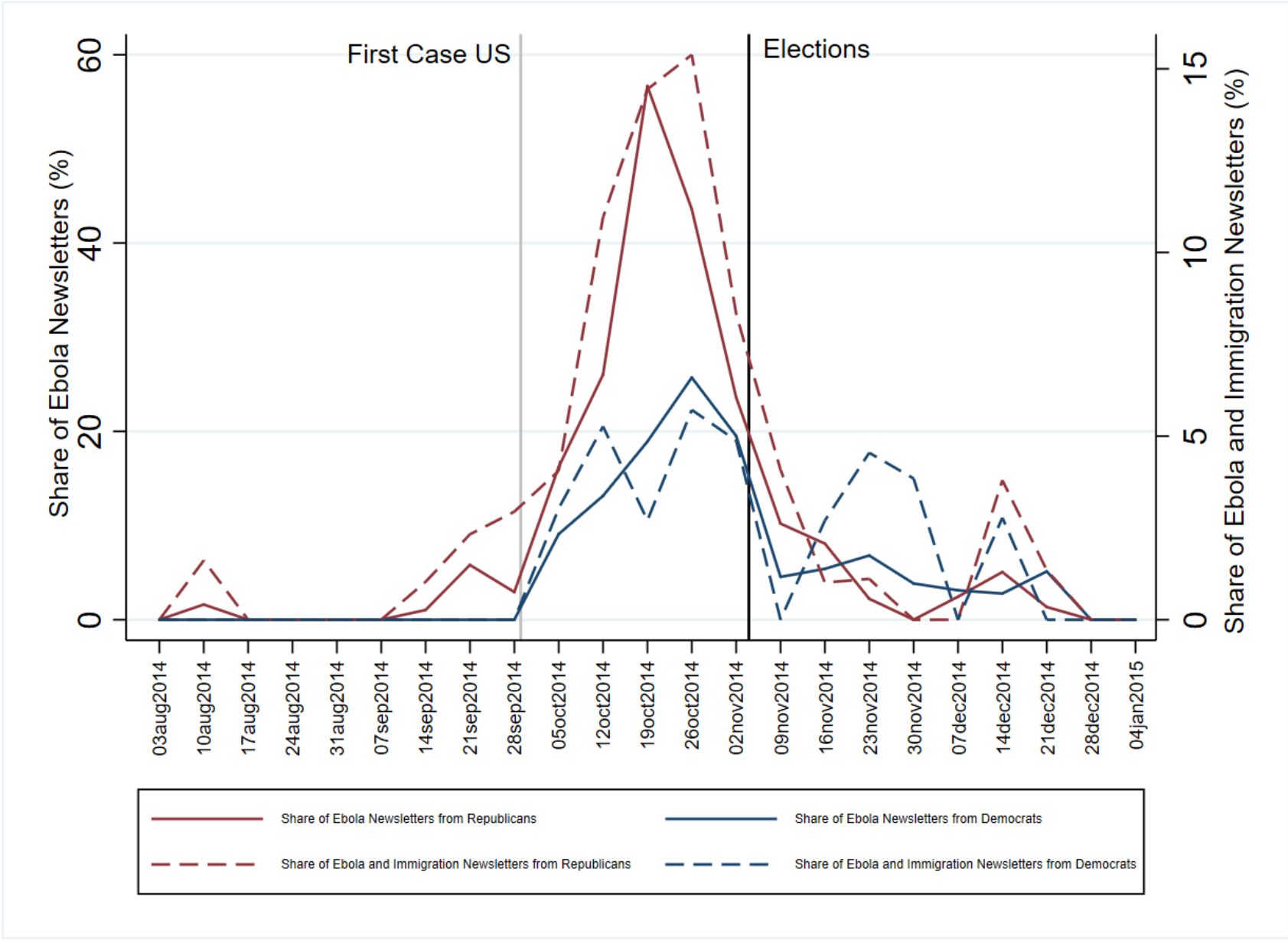
Did voters blame incumbents?

- No effect on GOP incumbents
- Precisely estimated zero effect on Obama's approval rating
  - Daily variation in Gallup ratings

Did politicians strategically use the fear of Ebola?



Members of Congress Newsletters



Members of Congress Newsletters

- Republicans start sending more newsletters mentioning Ebola after first case
- Republicans *in competitive races* start sending more newsletters mentioning Ebola after first case
- Republicans start sending more newsletters mentioning Ebola *along with immigration and Obama* after first case

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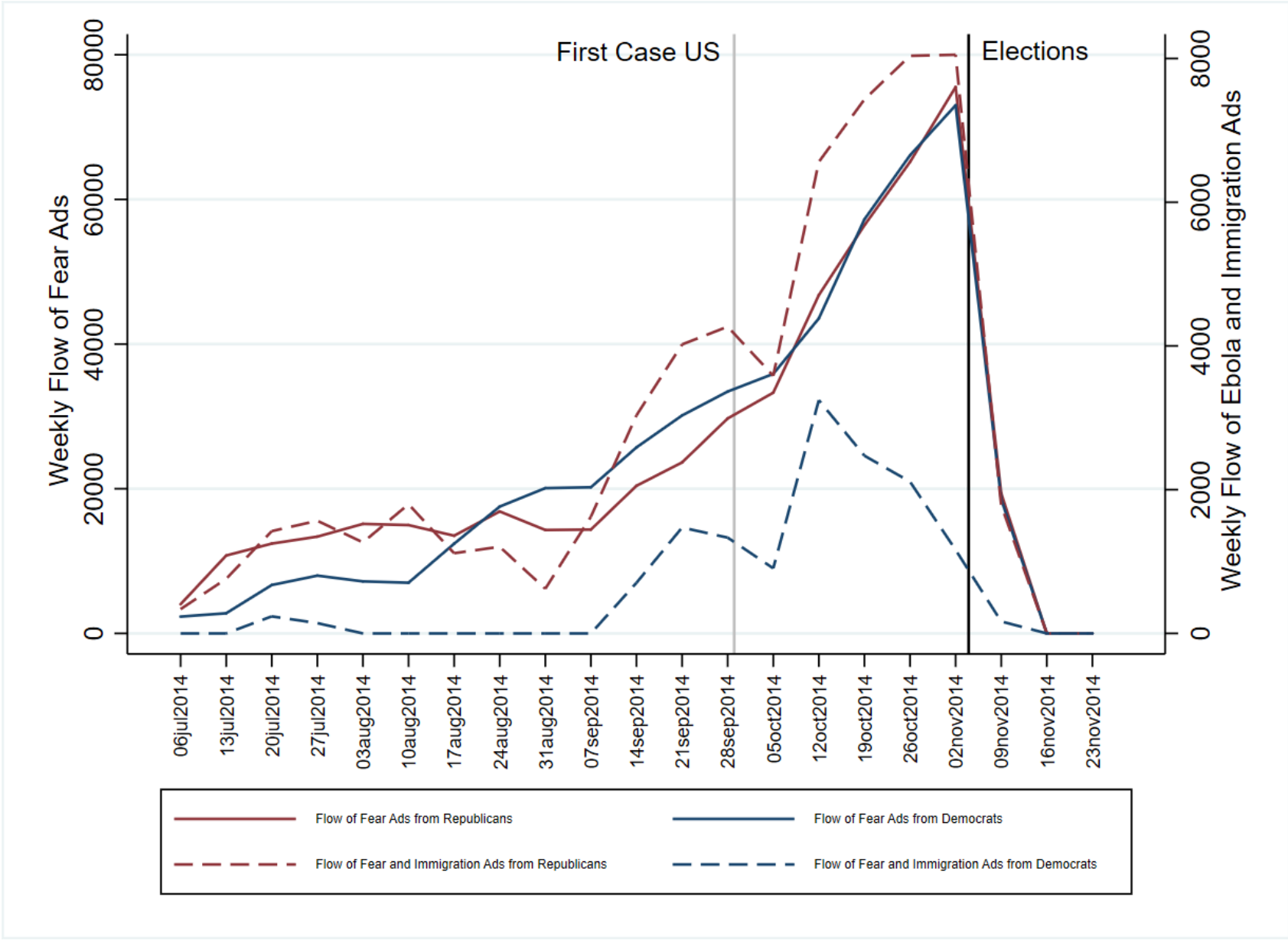
Campaign Ads



Campaign Ads

- Republicans start broadcasting more ads with fear content after first case
- Republicans *in competitive races* start broadcasting more ads with fear content after first case
- Republicans start broadcasting more ads with fear content *mentioning immigration and Obama* after first case

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Did Ebola make voters more conservative?

	Anti-Immigration	Pro-Gun	Religious	Anti-gay Marriage	Conservative	Dissaprove Obama
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-0.034**	0.003	-0.005	-0.000	-0.002	0.005
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.17
Observations	71931	71931	71931	71931	71866	71931
Number of Clusters	2370	2370	2370	2370	2369	2370

In Sum

- Significant effect of fear on voting. Favors Republicans over Democrats
- Effect not driven by general disappointment with incumbent
- Effect not driven by voters becoming generally more conservative
- Evidence of strategic behavior of Republican politicians who try to link Ebola to other issues
- Only the issue of immigration, primed by the link with Ebola, seems to stick

What Does It Mean in 2020?

- Important differences: economic and policy shocks are much bigger now
- But fear factor should be much bigger now too!
  - "Foreign" disease
- Key question: other associations possible?

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QUESTIONS?

Appendix

Data

- Google searches
  - Volume of Google searches about Ebola (on 0-100 scale relative to the highest value in the series)
  - Jan-Dec 2014, weekly, by DMA (207)
- Twitter
  - Geo-referenced Tweets about Ebola (containing Ebola or #Ebola)
  - March-Aug 2014 and Sep-Dec 2014, weekly, by DMA, total: 190,000 tweets
- Electoral data
  - Turnout and vote shares for 2014 and two prior elections (House, Senate, Gubernatorial), by county. Source: Lieps' Election Atlas
- Presidential approval
  - Date on president's rating; daily. Source: Gallup

Data (cont.)

- Congressmen's newsletters
  - Official e-newsletters from every member of Congress
  - Info: name of politician, chamber, party, state, district, full text
  - Aug-Nov 2014, 2,300 newsletters, 208 mentioning Ebola. Source: DCBox
- Campaign ads
  - Data on all campaign ads by candidates in all 2014 electoral races
  - Info: candidate, date, time, length, topic, sponsor(s), qualitative info
  - 5,593 individual ads, 2.68M impressions. Source: Wesleyan Media Project
- Competitiveness of elections
  - Cook Partisan Voting Index: measures how competitive each electoral race is (toss-up, lean, likely). Consider score issued on Sep, 19 2014 before first case)
- Controls
  - pop. density, median age, share white, share with college, income p.c., unemployment, cable penetration, Google searches for "anxiety" and"virus"

Impact of Ebola concerns on voting: empirical strategy

$$Vote_{c,d}^{2014} = \alpha + \beta Ebola_d + \gamma Vote_{c,d}^{2010} + \lambda' X_c + \theta' D_d + \epsilon_{d,c}$$

$$Ebola_{c,d} = \pi_0 + \pi_1 ln(Dist.Ebola)_d + \pi_2 Vote_{c,d}^{2010} + \pi_3' X_c + \pi_4' D_d + \epsilon_{d,c}$$

- $Vote_{c,d}^{2014}$: Democratic vote share in county c in DMA d in 2014
- $Ebola_d$: Google searches/tweets about Ebola in DMA d in the 5 weeks pre-election
- $Vote_{c,d}^{2012-10}$: Democratic vote share prior election in county c in DMA d
- $ln(Dist.Ebola)_d$: log of distance of DMA d's centroid from closest Ebola case
- X_c: vector of county-level controls
- D_d: vector of pre-treatment DMA-level controls

	Disapproves Barack Obama's job as president					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.002			0.006		
	(0.018)			(0.011)		
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		0.006		-0.002		
		(0.012)		(0.008)		
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC			-0.003	0.001		
			(0.010)	(0.007)		
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Nearest Case					-0.003	0.005
					(0.007)	(0.004)
Survey	Gallup	Gallup	Gallup	Gallup	Gallup	CCES
Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
County FE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Individual-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.17
Observations	8037	7984	7591	24168	24168	71931
Number of Clusters	183	184	183	184	184	2370

Coincidence?

- Placebo periods (pre-treatment)
  - Non-significant effects of Ebola Searches and Tweets before first case US.
  - Robust effects including Google Searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus' as control variables.
- Alternative Outbreaks
  - Non-significant relation between distance to Ebola cases and Swine Flu Google Searches 2009.
  - Non-significant relation between distance to Ebola cases and Swine Flu Tweets 2009.
- Vote pre-trends
  - Non-significant relation between distance to Ebola cases and the 2014-2010 or 2012-2010 changes in Democrat Vote Shares.

Ebola tweets and Closest Distance interaction to a Reported Ebola case

Table: Ebola Tweets and Distance to Reported Ebola Cases

	Ebola Tweets				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas * Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.101***			-0.062***	
	(0.026)			(0.022)	
Post-Onset Cleveland * Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		-0.031***		-0.040***	
		(0.010)		(0.008)	
Post-Onset NYC * Distance (in logs) to NYC			-0.022**	0.020***	
			(0.010)	(0.007)	
Post-Onset First Case * Distance (in logs) to Closest Case					-0.068***
					(0.013)
Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.61	0.50	0.49	0.55	0.56
Observations	6177	6177	6177	19596	19596
Number of Clusters (DMA)	213	213	213	213	213

Notes: the table reports the coefficient of the interaction between the distance (in logs) to an Ebola Case and a dummy indicating the post-onset of that case. The dependent variable is the number of ebola related tweets per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA (using 2010 census population). The unit observation is a DMA-day. The coefficients are estimated from separate regressions in which we control for DMA fixed effect, day fixed effect, and DMA-specific linear trends while restricting the sample as a function of the proximity each Ebola Case. The sample includes daily data by DMA 15 days before and 15 days after the ebola diagnosis of the case. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses.

Ebola Concerns and Closest Distance to a Reported Case (First-Stage)

Table: Ebola Concerns and Distance to Nearest Case (First-Stage)

	Ebola Searches					Ebola Tweets	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Distance (in logs) to Nearest Case	-5.999**	-8.450***	-7.949***	-7.793***	-6.065***	-1.879***	-1.314***
	(2.425)	(2.195)	(1.695)	(1.678)	(1.631)	(0.320)	(0.420)
County-Level Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Elections Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Region FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.38	0.57	0.61	0.63	0.45	0.80	0.55
Observations	3077	3076	3071	3071	3071	3073	3073
Number of Clusters (DMA)	203	203	202	202	202	203	203

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

Table: Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

	Pre-treatment		Swine flu	Previous Elections: Democratic Vote Share		
	Ebola Searches	Ebola Tweets	Searches	House 2012	Senate 2012	Gubern. 2010
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Closest Distance to a Reported Ebola Case	1.433	-0.002***	-0.222	0.553	0.223	0.480
	(2.491)	(0.001)	(0.437)	(0.656)	(0.773)	(0.700)
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Distance	1.76	-0.00	-0.27	0.68	0.31	0.61
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Election Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.40	0.46	0.43	0.70	0.77	0.68
Observations	3071	3073	3071	3016	1863	2134

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Ebola newsletters and proximity to Ebola cases

	Ebola Newsletter from:					
	Any Member		Republican Member		Democrat Member	
	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-0.011	-0.040*	-0.041**	-0.107**	0.005	-0.008
	(0.010)	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.045)	(0.009)	(0.017)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.22	0.78	0.24	0.80	0.18	0.72
Observations	5505	5505	3270	3270	2235	2235
Number of Clusters	367	367	218	218	149	149

Ebola concerns and distance to nearest case

	Ebola Searches	Ebola Tweets
Distance (in logs) to Nearest Case	-7.860***	-1.879***
	(1.645)	(0.316)
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes
Previous Elections Controls	Yes	Yes
Population Weights	Yes	Yes
Region FE	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.63	0.80
Observations	3071	3073
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	203

Ebola concerns and Democratic vote share (House, OLS)

	Democratic Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ebola Searches before First Case US	-0.008						
	(0.182)						
Ebola Searches		-0.352**	-0.361***	-0.313***	-0.177***		
		(0.169)	(0.101)	(0.089)	(0.060)		
Ebola Tweets						-1.247***	-0.906***
						(0.340)	(0.181)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.64	20.64	20.64	20.65	20.65	20.65	20.65
Std Dev Ebola (Searches or Tweets)	14.19	11.92	11.92	11.92	11.87	2.75	2.75
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches/Tweets	-0.11	-4.17	-4.28	-3.71	-2.09	-3.43	-2.49
County-Level Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Elections Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	-0.00	0.04	0.50	0.56	0.78	0.55	0.78
Observations	3060	3060	3059	3053	3053	3055	3055
Number of Clusters (DMA)	204	204	204	202	202	203	203

Ebola concerns and Democratic vote share (House, IV)

	Democratic House Vote Share 2014	
	(1)	(2)
Ebola Searches	-0.370***	
	(0.090)	
Ebola Tweets		-1.555***
		(0.369)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.61	20.61
Std Dev Ebola (Searches or Tweets)	11.86	2.75
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches/Tweets	-4.39	-4.27
Adjusted-R^2	0.73	0.73
Observations	3053	3055
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	203

Ebola concerns and Democratic vote share (other, IV)

	Democrat Vote Share in 2014				Turnout Rate	
	Senatorial Race		Gubernat. Race		in 2014	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ebola Searches	-0.232*		-0.256**		-0.109**	
	(0.128)		(0.099)		(0.049)	
Ebola Tweets		-1.122*		-1.209***		-0.465**
		(0.589)		(0.453)		(0.181)
Std Dev Vote Share	17.68	17.68	15.68	15.68	10.50	10.50
Std Dev Ebola (Searches or Tweets)	13.49	3.03	13.09	2.93	11.99	2.76
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches/Tweets	-3.13	-3.40	-3.35	-3.54	-1.31	-1.28
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Elections Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.76	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.76	0.77
Observations	2271	2273	2134	2136	3088	3090
Number of Clusters (DMA)	153	154	172	173	202	203

Ebola concerns and Democratic vote share (House, OLS)

Table: Ebola Concerns and Democratic Vote Share (OLS)

	Democratic Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ebola Searches before First Case US	-0.007						
	(0.182)						
Ebola Searches		-0.352**	-0.362***	-0.313***	-0.099		
		(0.169)	(0.101)	(0.089)	(0.075)		
Ebola Tweets						-1.245***	-0.787***
						(0.340)	(0.184)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.60	20.60	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61
Std Dev Ebola (Searches or Tweets)	14.14	11.85	11.85	11.85	11.85	2.75	2.75
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches/Tweets	-0.11	-4.17	-4.29	-3.71	-1.17	-3.42	-2.16
County-Level Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Elections Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	-0.00	0.04	0.50	0.56	0.78	0.55	0.78
Observations	3072	3072	3071	3065	3065	3067	3067
Number of Clusters (DMA)	204	204	204	202	202	203	203

Notes: All specifications are weighted by DMA population. The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Ebola Searches/Tweets and Democrat Vote Share (IV)

Table: Ebola Concerns and Democratic Vote Share (IV)

	Democratic Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ebola Searches	-0.326*	-0.357***	-0.359***	-0.446***	-0.581***		
	(0.185)	(0.079)	(0.077)	(0.118)	(0.165)		
Ebola Tweets						-1.904***	-2.883***
						(0.562)	(1.008)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	18.67	20.61	18.67
Std Dev Ebola Searches	11.85	11.85	11.85	11.85	10.43		
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches	-3.87	-4.23	-4.26	-5.29	-6.06		
Std Dev Ebola Tweets						2.75	2.11
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Tweets						-5.23	-6.09
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weight	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Region FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.43	0.54	0.54	0.56	0.40	0.55	0.39
Observations	3070	3065	3065	3065	3065	3067	3067
Number of Clusters (DMA)	203	202	202	202	202	203	203

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. All regressions but those on columns (4) and (6) are weighted by DMA population. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Ebola Searches and Incumbent Vote Share

Table: Ebola Searches and Incumbent Vote Share

	Incumbent Vote Share in 2014 Election					
	House		Senatorial		Gubernatorial	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ebola Searches	0.210	-2.248***	0.290**	-0.448**	0.219*	-1.096**
	(0.145)	(0.781)	(0.114)	(0.198)	(0.118)	(0.475)
Incumbent	All	Democrat	All	Democrat	All	Democrat
Std Dev Vote Share	16.64	16.60	18.18	13.49	16.53	14.97
Std Dev Ebola Searches	12.15	7.22	13.49	8.43	13.09	7.88
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches	2.55	-16.22	3.92	-3.77	2.87	-8.64
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change Dem. Vote Share at Baseline	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weight	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.24	0.29	0.25	0.63	0.22	0.54
Observations	2926	566	2271	1092	2134	548
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	100	153	94	172	66

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. All regressions are weighted by DMA population. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Disapprove Barack Obama's job as president

Table: Disapprove Barack Obama's job as president

	Disapproves Barack Obama's job as president				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.002			0.006	
	(0.018)			(0.011)	
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		0.006		-0.002	
		(0.012)		(0.008)	
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC			-0.003	0.001	
			(0.010)	(0.007)	
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case					-0.003
					(0.007)
Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	8037	7984	7591	24168	24168
Number of Clusters (DMA)	183	184	183	184	184

Notes: Samples in Columns 1 to 3 include Gallup' daily individual data 15 days before and 15 days after the ebola diagnosis of each case. Samples in columns 4 and 4 include all daily data between September 1st, 2014 and the midterm election. The dependent variable takes value of 1 if the individual disapproves Barack Obama's job as president, 0 otherwise. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. Individual-level controls are age and indicators for gender, employed, married, black, and hispanic.

Ebola Newsletters Before and After the First Case in the US

Table: Ebola Newsletters Before and After the First Case in the US

	Ebola Newsletter Indicator	Number of Ebola Newsletters	Number of Time Ebola is Mentioned	Any Newsletter Indicator	Number of Newsletters
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Onset First-Case in the US x Republican	0.064***	0.071***	0.348***	-0.005	-0.024
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.127)	(0.026)	(0.033)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Y
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.22	0.23	0.16	0.58	0.62
Observations	5505	5505	5505	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. The variable Ebola Newsletter Indicator takes value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning ebola, 0 otherwise. The variable Number of Ebola Newsletter accounts for the number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent that week by the member of the congress. The variable Number of Time is Mentioned account for the number of time ebola is mentioned in the newsletters sent that week. The variables Any Newsletter Indicator and Number of Newsletters consider all newsletter regardless of their contents. The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in Dallas and an indicator taking value 1 if the member of the congress is republican, 0 otherwise. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters, Competitiveness of the Race and Timing of Ebola in the US

Table: Ebola Newsletters, Competitiveness of the Race and Timing of Ebola in the US

	Ebola Newsletter		
	Indicator	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican	0.058***	0.064***	0.221***
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.044)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican x Competitive Race	0.247***	0.305**	0.383
	(0.073)	(0.122)	(0.253)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Competitive Race	-0.040	-0.039	0.061
	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.086)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.22	0.23	0.79
Observations	5505	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. The variable Ebola Newsletter Indicator takes value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning ebola, 0 otherwise. The variable Ebola Newsletter Flow accounts for the number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent that week by the member of the congress. The variable Ebola Newsletter Stock accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent since August 2014

Ebola Newsletters, Other Issues, and Timing of Ebola in the US

Table: Ebola Newsletters, Other Issues, and Timing of Ebola in the US

	Newsletter (Indicator) About					
	Terrorism	Immigration	Obama	Ebola and Terrorism	Ebola and Immigration	Ebola and Obama
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican	-0.052**	-0.009	-0.048**	0.010	0.025**	0.033**
	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.24	0.33	0.35	0.09	0.10	0.15
Observations	5505	5505	5505	5505	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 370 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. The dependent variables are indicators taking value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning the subjects listed in each column. The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in Dallas and an indicator taking value 1 if the member of the congress is republican, 0 otherwise. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters and Constituents' Proximity to Ebola

Table: Ebola Newsletters and Constituents' Proximity to Ebola

	Ebola Newsletter from:					
	Any Member		Republican Member		Democrat Member	
	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-0.011	-0.040*	-0.041**	-0.107**	0.005	-0.008
	(0.010)	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.045)	(0.009)	(0.017)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.22	0.78	0.24	0.80	0.18	0.72
Observations	5505	5505	3270	3270	2235	2235
Number of Clusters	367	367	218	218	149	149

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. Columns 1 and 2 focus on all members. Columns 3 and 4 focus on republicans whereas columns 5 and 6 focus on Democrats. The variable Ebola Newsletter Stock accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent since August 2014 by the member of the congress. The main independent variables accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of ethe first-case in the US and the distance from each member's constituents to the location of the closest case. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters and Democrat Vote Share (OLS)

Table: Ebola Newsletters and Democrat Vote Share (OLS)

	Democrat Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Ebola Newsletters	-7.287***	-6.066***	-4.897***	-3.940**	-3.478**
	(1.884)	(1.564)	(1.569)	(1.639)	(1.440)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	18.66
Std Dev Ebola Newsletters	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Newsletters	-2.97	-2.47	-2.00	-1.61	-1.43
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Change Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	No	Yes	No	No	No
State FE	No	No	Yes	No	No
DMA FE	No	NO	No	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.53	0.55	0.68	0.69	0.65
Observations	3065	3065	3065	3077	3077
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	202	202	207	207

Notes: The variable Ebola Newsletters is a dummy equal to 1 if the term 'ebola' is mentioned in a political newsletter sent a by Republican House Representative in Congressional District during Aug.-Dec.2014. All regressions but the one in column (5) are weighted by DMA population. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Campaign Ads and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Race Variation

Table: Campaign Ads and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Race Variation

	Issue Mentioned in Ad							
	Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama		Religion	
	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	0.035**	5.928**	0.025	13.491**	0.155***	66.656***	0.002	3.508
	(0.014)	(2.933)	(0.018)	(6.753)	(0.020)	(14.472)	(0.016)	(4.394)
Republican	0.004	0.483	0.041***	10.127***	0.144***	52.184***	0.024***	5.730***
	(0.004)	(0.904)	(0.011)	(3.418)	(0.019)	(10.893)	(0.008)	(2.170)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.17	0.10	0.24	0.18	0.35	0.33	0.18	0.12
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 597 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the firt case in the US and an indicator taking value 1 if the candidate is republican, 0 otherwise. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Race Variation

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Race Variation

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	22.270**	54.731	7.334***	38.324***	9.105*	82.496***	54.730***	436.360***
	(11.175)	(77.217)	(2.605)	(11.709)	(4.650)	(23.045)	(10.862)	(74.970)
Republican	-1.741	32.471	2.027**	5.015*	7.475***	44.348***	35.219***	202.082***
	(9.912)	(48.031)	(0.831)	(3.004)	(2.260)	(12.176)	(7.386)	(48.852)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.68	0.80	0.09	0.33	0.17	0.38	0.27	0.44
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 597 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music. The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and an indicator taking value 1 if the candidate is republican, 0 otherwise. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Candidate Variation

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Ebola Outbreak: Within-Candidate Variation

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	21.130*	44.775	7.704***	41.030***	9.425**	85.016***	56.346***	439.189***
	(11.176)	(73.992)	(2.713)	(12.538)	(4.778)	(23.774)	(11.736)	(77.132)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.76	0.94	0.16	0.52	0.34	0.73	0.45	0.79
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 624 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and an indicator taking value 1 if the candidate is republican, 0 otherwise. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Competitiveness of the Race

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Competitiveness of the Race

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	-6.058	-121.642	2.465	10.171*	2.414	8.868	26.745***	159.228***
	(9.344)	(83.294)	(1.497)	(5.318)	(3.387)	(15.742)	(7.882)	(42.831)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican x Competitive Race	61.741**	377.579***	11.903**	70.026**	15.920	172.818***	67.102***	634.490***
	(24.276)	(123.469)	(6.031)	(27.615)	(10.118)	(52.202)	(24.811)	(160.399)
Post-Onset First Case x Competitive Race	-7.025	-91.239	-0.610	-15.311	-1.758	-34.678	-24.911**	-256.472***
	(23.105)	(70.047)	(1.706)	(11.325)	(6.143)	(25.187)	(10.094)	(74.141)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.77	0.94	0.16	0.53	0.34	0.73	0.46	0.80
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 597 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and an indicator taking value 1 if the candidate is republican, 0 otherwise. Based on the 2014 House Race and Senate Race Ratings for Sept. 19, 2014 (right before first-ebola case) by the Cook political report, the variable Competitive Race takes value 1 if the race is classified as 'Toss Up' or 'Lean', 0 otherwise. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Timing of Each Case

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Timing of Each Case

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset Dallas x Republican	19.847*	26.233	7.406**	26.086***	7.811	57.791***	51.338***	298.606***
	(10.532)	(62.336)	(3.210)	(8.271)	(5.600)	(16.329)	(11.610)	(54.225)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Republican	-6.400	10.167	2.407	16.715***	5.940	28.815**	29.451***	156.091***
	(17.199)	(23.722)	(2.891)	(5.728)	(8.309)	(13.017)	(10.531)	(29.622)
Post-Onset NYC x Republican	13.207	33.689	-2.893	14.107**	-4.806	28.203***	-31.789**	134.466***
	(17.137)	(29.406)	(3.129)	(5.778)	(6.953)	(8.491)	(12.830)	(24.915)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.76	0.94	0.16	0.52	0.34	0.73	0.46	0.79
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 624 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and an indicator taking value 1 if the candidate is republican, 0 otherwise. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Proximity to Ebola

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Proximity to Ebola

	Number of Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	11.374	18.353	1.549	2.734	3.035	5.668	2.058	1.516
	(7.087)	(15.018)	(1.270)	(2.342)	(2.262)	(4.931)	(4.094)	(8.639)
Candidate Sample	All	Republican	All	Republican	All	Republican	All	Republican
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.76	0.76	0.16	0.20	0.34	0.40	0.44	0.52
Observations	8624	4410	8624	4410	8624	4410	8624	4410
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	187	228	187	228	187	228	187

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 597 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and and the distance (in logs) to the closest ebola case. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Proximity to Ebola Cases and Attitudes in CCES

Table: Proximity to Ebola Cases and Attitudes in CCES

	Anti-Immigration	Pro-Gun	Religious	Anti-gay Marriage	Conservative	Dissaprove Obama
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-0.034**	0.003	-0.005	-0.000	-0.002	0.005
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.17
Observations	71931	71931	71931	71931	71866	71931
Number of Clusters	2370	2370	2370	2370	2369	2370

Notes: Sample includes all CCES's respondents for years 2013 and 2014. The variable Anti-Immigration (pro-gun)[religious] corresponds to the first principal component of responses to 5 (5)[3] questions regarding immigration (disagreement with gun-control measures)[importance of religion]. The variable Anti-gay Marriage takes value of 1 if respondent is against gay marriage. The variable conservative takes value of 1 if respondent is conservative or very conservative, 0 otherwise. The variable disapprove Obama takes value 1 if the respondent strongly disapproves or disapproves Obama, 0 otherwise. (all related questions are described in the appendix) The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between the distance (in logs) to the closest Ebola Case and a dummy indicating the onset of that case. Individual-levels control are age and a set of indicators variables for male, white, hispanic, college or higher education, married, and annual income above US median (i.e., usd 59,000). Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the county-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Summary Statistics

Table: Summary statistics

County-level variables	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
2014 Democratic Vote Share - HOUSE	3103	33.029	18.685	0.000	100
2014 Democratic Vote Share - GOVERNOR	2146	35.228	14.213	1.075	88.153
2014 Democrat Vote Share - SENATE	2287	32.897	17.188	0.000	87.765
Population Density	3143	255.481	1708.543	.039	69357.68
Median Age	3143	39.862	4.922	18	62.5
Share of white population	3143	0.787	0.198	0.012	1.000
Share of college population	3143	0.190	0.087	0.037	0.710
Income per capita	3142	22505.45	5409.365	7772	64381
Share of unemployed population	3143	0.075	0.034	0.000	0.309
DMA-level variables	**Obs**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Min**	**Max**
Ebola Concerns (Google Trends)	204	53.966	9.464	14	100
Ebola Concerns (Tweets per capita)	208	3.974	2.08	0	15.447
TV penetration	204	92.011	1.81	86.1	96.9
Anxiety (Google Trend, 2013)	205	70.844	8.384	44	100
Virus (Google Trend, 2013)	205	77.298	8.904	58	100
2009 Swine Flu Concerns (Google Trends, 2009)	204	41.083	9.967	16	100
Placebo Ebola Searches (Google Trends, Aug.2014)	204	52.907	12.636	25	100
Placebo Ebola Tweets (Twitter, Aug.2014)	208	.013	.017	0	.116
Distance to closest reported ebola case (Km., in logs)	204	5.991	.818	2.52	7.424

Ebola Tweets and Democrat Vote Share (OLS)

Table: Ebola Tweets and Democrat Vote Share (OLS)

	Democrat Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ebola Tweets before First Case US	202.701						
	(131.765)						
Ebola Tweets		-0.424	-1.551***	-1.546***	-1.550***	-1.241***	-1.002**
		(1.195)	(0.539)	(0.337)	(0.329)	(0.335)	(0.413)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.60	20.60	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	18.67
Std Dev Ebola Tweets	0.01	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.11
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Tweets	2.74	-1.17	-4.26	-4.25	-4.26	-3.41	-2.11
County-Level Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weights (DMA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.02	0.00	0.42	0.53	0.53	0.55	0.42
Observations	3078	3078	3077	3067	3067	3067	3067
Number of Clusters (DMA)	207	207	207	203	203	203	203

Notes: The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Ebola Tweets and Closest Distance to a Reported Case (First-Stage)

Table: Ebola Tweets and Closest Distance to a Reported Case (First-Stage)

	Ebola Tweets				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-1.712***	-1.754***	-1.754***	-1.883***	-1.326***
	(0.449)	(0.337)	(0.337)	(0.319)	(0.413)
Std Dev Distance Closest Case	1.23	1.23	1.23	1.23	0.80
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Distance	-2.10	-2.15	-2.15	-2.31	-1.06
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change Dem. Vote Share 2010-2012	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.61	0.74	0.74	0.80	0.55
Observations	3078	3073	3073	3073	3073
Number of Clusters (DMA)	204	203	203	203	203

Notes: Notes: The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Ebola tweets and Closest Distance interaction to a Reported Ebola case

Table: Ebola tweets and Closest Distance interaction to a Reported Ebola case

	Ebola Tweets				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas * Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.023**			-0.015**	
	(0.009)			(0.008)	
Post-Onset Cleveland * Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		-0.007**		-0.009***	
		(0.003)		(0.002)	
Post-Onset NYC * Distance (in logs) to NYC			-0.007**	0.005**	
			(0.003)	(0.002)	
Post-Onset First-Case * Distance (in logs) to Closest Case					-0.019***
					(0.004)
Adjusted-R^2	0.45	0.35	0.36	0.39	0.40
Observations	6177	6177	6177	19596	19596
Number of Clusters (DMA)	213	213	213	213	213

Notes: the table reports the coefficient of the interaction between the distance (in logs) to an Ebola Case and a dummy indicating the onset of that case. The dependent variable is the number of ebola related tweets per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA (using 2010 census population). The unit observation is a DMA-day. The coefficients are estimated from separate regressions in which we control for DMA fixed effect, day fixed effect, and DMA-specific linear trends while restricting the sample as a function of the proximity each Ebola Case. The sample includes daily data by DMA 15 days before and 15 days after the ebola diagnosis of the case. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses.

Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

Table: Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

	Treatment		Pre-treatment		Robustness	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Ebola Searches	Ebola Tweets	Ebola Searches	Ebola Tweets	Swine flu Searches	Δ Dem. VS 2012-2010
Distance (in logs) to Closest Case	-6.265***	-1.154***	-0.525	-0.003	-0.579	1.309
	(1.298)	(0.356)	(1.318)	(0.002)	(0.952)	(0.964)
Std Dev Distance Closest Case	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Distance	-5.15	-0.95	-0.43	-0.00	-0.48	1.08
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change House Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.43	0.45	0.12	0.03	0.24	0.09
Observations	202	203	202	203	202	202

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

Table: Distance to Ebola Cases and Selected Outcomes

	Pre-treatment		Swine flu	Previous Elections: Democratic Vote Share		
	Ebola Searches	Ebola Tweets	Searches	House 2012	Senate 2012	Gubern. 2010
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Closest Distance to a Reported Ebola Case	1.433	-0.002***	-0.222	0.553	0.223	0.480
	(2.491)	(0.001)	(0.437)	(0.656)	(0.773)	(0.700)
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Distance	1.76	-0.00	-0.27	0.68	0.31	0.61
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Previous Election Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.40	0.46	0.43	0.70	0.77	0.68
Observations	3071	3073	3071	3016	1863	2134

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Ebola Concerns and Democrat Vote Share (IV-Fixed Effects)

Table: Ebola Concerns and Democrat Vote Share (IV-Fixed Effects)

	Democrat Vote Share in 2014 House Reps. Election					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ebola Searches	-0.359***	-0.446***	-0.226*			
	(0.077)	(0.118)	(0.129)			
Ebola Tweets				-1.768***	-1.904***	-1.096*
				(0.435)	(0.562)	(0.620)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61
Std Dev Ebola Searches	11.85	11.85	11.85			
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Searches	-4.26	-5.29	-2.67			
Std Dev Ebola Tweets				2.75	2.75	2.75
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Tweets				-4.86	-5.23	-3.01
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Change House Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
State FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.54	0.56	0.66	0.53	0.55	0.65
Observations	3065	3065	3065	3067	3067	3067
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	202	202	203	203	203

Notes: The variable Ebola Searches accounts for the google search volume of the term 'ebola' during the 5 weeks before the 2014 election. The variable Ebola Tweets accounts for the number of tweets about 'ebola' per 10,000 inhabitants in DMA during the same period. All regressions but those on columns (4) and (6) are weighted by DMA population. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the DMA-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests. County-level controls are population density, median age, share of white population, share of population with college degree, income per capita, and unemployment. DMA-level controls are cable TV penetration 2010, Ebola Searches/Tweets before first case in the US, and google searches for the terms 'anxiety' and 'virus', both in 2013.

Newsletters After the Midterm Elections

Table: Newsletters After the Midterm Elections

	Ebola Newsletter Indicator	Number of Ebola Newsletters	Any Newsletter Indicator	Number of Newsletters
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post Midterm Election x Republican	-0.084***	-0.090***	-0.042	-0.027
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Y	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.13	0.13	0.57	0.61
Observations	8441	8441	8441	8441
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and December 2014. The variable Ebola Newsletter Indicator takes value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning ebola, 0 otherwise.The variable Number of Ebola Newsletter accounts for the number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent that week by the member of the congress. The variables Any Newsletter Indicator and Number of Newsletters consider all newsletter regardless of their contents. The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-midterm election period and an indicator taking value 1 if the member of the congress is republican, 0 otherwise. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters and Timing of the Cases in the US

Table: Ebola Newsletters and Timing of the Cases in the US

	Ebola Newsletter							
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Onset First-Case (Dallas) in the US x Republican	-0.041	-0.048					0.038	0.070***
	(0.052)	(0.031)					(0.025)	(0.026)
Onset Cleveland x Republican			0.133**	0.110***			0.069**	0.221***
			(0.059)	(0.037)			(0.030)	(0.041)
Onset NYC x Republican					0.010	-0.010	-0.113***	0.066**
					(0.061)	(0.031)	(0.025)	(0.032)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.35	0.85	0.29	0.91	0.37	0.97	0.23	0.79
Observations	1468	1468	1468	1468	1468	1468	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367	367	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters: (1) 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after the ebola diagnosis of the case in columns 1 to 6, and (2) between August 2014 and the midterm election in columns 7 and 8. The variable Ebola Newsletter Flow accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola in week.The variable Ebola Newsletter Stock accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent sine August 2014 by the member of the congress. The main independent variables account for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the each ebola case and an indicator taking value 1 if the member of the congress is republican, 0 otherwise. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters, Timing and Proximity to Ebola Cases

Table: Ebola Newsletters, Timing and Proximity to Ebola Cases

	Ebola Newsletter							
	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.004	0.001					-0.025	-0.090***
	(0.045)	(0.023)					(0.019)	(0.035)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland			-0.052	-0.023			-0.022*	-0.079**
			(0.041)	(0.026)			(0.013)	(0.033)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC				0.022	0.017	0.009	0.007	
					(0.023)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.017)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.35	0.85	0.28	0.91	0.37	0.97	0.22	0.78
Observations	1468	1468	1468	1468	1468	1468	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367	367	367	367	367

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 367 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. In columns 1 to 6, the analysis focuses in 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after the diagnosis of each ebola case. The variable Ebola Newsletter Indicator takes value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning ebola, 0 otherwise. The variable Ebola Newsletter Stock accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent since August 2014 by the member of the congress. The main independent variables accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of each ebola case and the distance from each member's constituents to the location of the case. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola Newsletters, Timing and Proximity to Ebola Cases by Party

Table: Ebola Newsletters, Timing and Proximity to Ebola Cases by Party

	Ebola Newsletter from			
	Republican Member		Democrat Member	
	Indicator	Stock	Indicator	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-0.034	-0.076	0.014	-0.044
	(0.023)	(0.050)	(0.029)	(0.037)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland	-0.049**	-0.111**	-0.001	-0.006
	(0.022)	(0.055)	(0.017)	(0.035)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC	0.046**	-0.046	0.004	0.007
	(0.019)	(0.053)	(0.008)	(0.014)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.24	0.80	0.18	0.72
Observations	3270	3270	2220	2220
Number of Clusters	218	218	148	148

Notes: The unit of observation is member of congress - week. The sample focuses on 370 member of the congress (i.e., senators and house representatives) who sent sent at least one official e-newsletters between August 2014 and the midterm election. The variable Ebola Newsletter Indicator takes value 1 if the member of the congress sent that week a newsletter mentioning ebola, 0 otherwise. The variable Ebola Newsletter Stock accounts for the accumulated number of newsletter mentioning ebola that were sent since August 2014 by the member of the congress. The main independent variables accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of each ebola case and the distance from each member's constituents to the location of the case. Newsletter controls are the number of words and accumulated number of words. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the member of congress-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and *

Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Proximity to Ebola

Table: Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear and Proximity to Ebola

	Number of Ads Making an Appeal to Fear									
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-15.288	-25.401							-19.997	-41.273
	(15.215)	(17.549)							(16.594)	(32.897)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland			5.003	-3.287					4.153	-2.032
			(12.869)	(16.323)					(9.706)	(14.759)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC					-12.730	-2.445			-6.136	-13.625*
					(10.950)	(18.363)			(5.856)	(7.869)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case							11.374	18.353		
							(7.087)	(15.018)		
Sample Candidates	All	Republican	All	Republican	All	Republican	All	Republican	All	Republican
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.80	0.80	0.84	0.90	0.83	0.86	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76
Observations	2464	1260	2464	1260	2464	1260	8624	4410	8624	4410
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	187	228	187	228	187	228	187	228	187

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 597 candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and and the distance (in logs) to the closest ebola case. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Terrorism and Proximity to Ebola

Table: Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Terrorism and Proximity to Ebola

	Number of Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Terrorism				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-1.444				-7.400*
	(3.199)				(4.371)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		1.688			-0.930
		(3.119)			(2.023)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC			-1.566		-1.400
			(2.928)		(2.516)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case				2.734	
				(2.342)	
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.35	0.36	0.36	0.20	0.20
Observations	1260	1260	1260	4410	4410
Number of Clusters (Races)	187	187	187	187	187

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 306 republican candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and and the distance (in logs) to the closest ebola case. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Immigration and Proximity to Ebola

Table: Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Immigration and Proximity to Ebola

	Number of Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Immigration				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	-8.005				-6.647
	(11.435)				(5.047)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		1.387			4.747
		(7.514)			(5.594)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC			-2.173		-6.997
			(5.745)		(4.491)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case				5.668	
				(4.931)	
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.57	0.67	0.57	0.40	0.40
Observations	1260	1260	1260	4410	4410
Number of Clusters (Races)	187	187	187	187	187

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 306 republican candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and and the distance (in logs) to the closest ebola case. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Against Obama and Proximity to Ebola

Table: Republican Campaign Ads Appealing to Fear-Against Obama and Proximity to Ebola

	Number of Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Anti-Obama				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Post-Onset Dallas x Distance (in logs) to Dallas	2.879				-47.736**
	(22.440)				(21.577)
Post-Onset Cleveland x Distance (in logs) to Cleveland		-9.769			9.420
		(13.791)			(10.628)
Post-Onset NYC x Distance (in logs) to NYC			5.574		-9.321
			(15.449)		(7.619)
Post-Onset First-Case x Distance (in logs) to Closest Case				1.516	
				(8.639)	
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candidate FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.62	0.70	0.70	0.52	0.52
Observations	1260	1260	1260	4410	4410
Number of Clusters (Races)	187	187	187	187	187

Notes: The unit of observation a candidate - week. The sample focuses on 306 republican candidates for congress (house or senate) and state governor who aired at least campaign ad between August 2014 and the midterm election. The coding of an ads appealing to fear is based on codding by Political Advertising in 2014 (Wesleyan Media Project) in two dimensions: 1) whether any ominous/tense music is played during the ad, or 2) there is direct appeal to fear in ads regardless of the music.The main independent variable accounts for the interaction between a dummy indicating the post-onset of the first case in the US and and the distance (in logs) to the closest ebola case. Ad controls are the number of ads and their total time in week as well as the accumulated number of ads and their total time since August 1st 2014. Heteroskedasticity robust standard error estimates clustered at the race-level are reported in parentheses; *** denotes statistical significance at the 1% level, ** at the 5% level, and * at the 10% level, all for two-sided hypothesis tests.

Ebola newsletters and competitive races

	Ebola Newsletter		
	Indicator	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican	0.058***	0.064***	0.221***
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.044)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican x Competitive Race	0.247***	0.305**	0.383
	(0.073)	(0.122)	(0.253)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Competitive Race	-0.040	-0.039	0.061
	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.086)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.22	0.23	0.79
Observations	5505	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367

Newsletters: Ebola and other issues

	Newsletter (Indicator) About					
	Terrorism	Immigration	Obama	Ebola and Terrorism	Ebola and Immigration	Ebola and Obama
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Post-Onset First-Case in the US x Republican	-0.052**	-0.009	-0.048**	0.010	0.025**	0.033**
	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong. FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memb. of Cong.- Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newsletter Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.24	0.33	0.35	0.09	0.10	0.15
Observations	5505	5505	5505	5505	5505	5505
Number of Clusters	367	367	367	367	367	367

Campaign ads and Ebola (within-race variation)

	Issue Mentioned in Ad							
	Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama		Religion	
	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow	Indicator	Flow
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	0.035**	5.928**	0.025	13.491**	0.155***	66.656***	0.002	3.508
	(0.014)	(2.933)	(0.018)	(6.753)	(0.020)	(14.472)	(0.016)	(4.394)
Republican	0.004	0.483	0.041***	10.127***	0.144***	52.184***	0.024***	5.730***
	(0.004)	(0.904)	(0.011)	(3.418)	(0.019)	(10.893)	(0.008)	(2.170)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.17	0.10	0.24	0.18	0.35	0.33	0.18	0.12
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Campaign ads appealing to fear and Ebola

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock "
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	22.270**	54.731	7.334***	38.324***	9.105*	82.496***	54.730***	436.360***
	(11.175)	(77.217)	(2.605)	(11.709)	(4.650)	(23.045)	(10.862)	(74.970)
Republican	-1.741	32.471	2.027**	5.015*	7.475***	44.348***	35.219***	202.082***
	(9.912)	(48.031)	(0.831)	(3.004)	(2.260)	(12.176)	(7.386)	(48.852)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.68	0.80	0.09	0.33	0.17	0.38	0.27	0.44
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Campaign ads appealing to fear and competitiveness

	Ads Making an Appeal to Fear and Issue Mentioned							
	All Issues		Terrorism		Immigration		Against Obama	
	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock	Flow	Stock
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican	-6.058	-121.642	2.465	10.171*	2.414	8.868	26.745***	159.228***
	(9.344)	(83.294)	(1.497)	(5.318)	(3.387)	(15.742)	(7.882)	(42.831)
Post-Onset First Case x Republican x Competitive Race	61.741**	377.579***	11.903**	70.026**	15.920	172.818***	67.102***	634.490***
	(24.276)	(123.469)	(6.031)	(27.615)	(10.118)	(52.202)	(24.811)	(160.399)
Post-Onset First Case x Competitive Race	-7.025	-91.239	-0.610	-15.311	-1.758	-34.678	-24.911**	-256.472***
	(23.105)	(70.047)	(1.706)	(11.325)	(6.143)	(25.187)	(10.094)	(74.141)
Week FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race-Specific Linear Trends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ads Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.77	0.94	0.16	0.53	0.34	0.73	0.46	0.80
Observations	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624	8624
Number of Clusters (Races)	228	228	228	228	228	228	228	228

Ebola newsletters and Democratic vote share (OLS)

	Democratic Vote Share in 2014 House Election				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Ebola Newsletters	-4.093***	-3.985***	-3.824***	-2.974*	-1.786
	(1.491)	(1.379)	(1.353)	(1.604)	(1.141)
Std Dev Vote Share	20.61	20.61	20.61	20.61	18.66
Std Dev Ebola Letters	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.40
Effect of Std Dev Δ in Letters	-1.66	-1.62	-1.55	-1.21	-0.72
County-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DMA-Level Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Change Dem. Vote Share 2012-2010	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Weights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region FE	No	Yes	No	No	No
State FE	No	No	Yes	No	No
DMA FE	No	NO	No	Yes	Yes
Adjusted-R^2	0.78	0.78	0.82	0.83	0.80
Observations	3065	3065	3065	3077	3077
Number of Clusters (DMA)	202	202	202	207	207