

## **How passionate is the electorate?**

### **A study of emotion based voting in party-centered politics**

Martin Rosema

Department of Political Science and Research Methods  
University of Twente  
P.O. Box 217, 7500 AE Enschede, The Netherlands  
[m.rosema@utwente.nl](mailto:m.rosema@utwente.nl)

**abstract** The last quarter of a century has brought a stream of research that shows that voters' choices at the polls are strongly influenced by their emotions. The evidence, however, is almost exclusively based on data concerning candidate-centered elections, in particular those for the American presidency. This paper examines the role of emotions in party-centered politics. It utilises data from the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study 2006, which asked voters to rate their feelings of enthusiasm, anxiety (worry), irritation, and pride for three major political parties. These measures help explain party evaluations, even if social identity, ideology, and policy preferences are taken into account. In line with the theory of affective intelligence, voters whose primary emotional response was one of anxiety showed stronger effects of cognitive factors, in particular perceived ideological agreement. Contrary to expectations, negative feelings as indicated by low evaluation scores were not so much the result of irritation or worry, but of the absence of enthusiasm. This suggests that feeling thermometer scales are not bipolar measures of positive and negative affect, but unipolar measures of positive affect.

## 1. Introduction

In political science, many different answers have been provided to the question why people vote the way they do. Most of these answers have two features in common. First, they are based on a “dispassionate view” of the voter’s mind (cf. Westen, 2007; see also Catt, 1997). That is to say, they are based on the assumption that voters by and large make rational decisions, albeit on the basis of incomplete and sometimes inaccurate information. Second, they are based on the assumption that those decisions are made on the basis of the information that voters have stored in their memory. Hence, most electoral research is based on the idea that the key to understanding voting behaviour, is in the information stored in voters’ memory and the rational processes through which this is converted into a vote decision.

One of the most crucial developments in electoral research in the last quarter of a century has been the rise of studies that challenge this view. There are two streams of research that are particularly relevant. The first concerns research about the online model of candidate evaluations, which started with the paper by Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh (1989). They challenged the common view that voters’ preferences are based on the information they have stored in memory and the degree to which this information is evaluated positively or negatively. What matters, they argued, is not what information is *stored* in memory, but what information has been *processed* in memory. This distinction is important, because the latter may well be forgotten, while its impact lasts. Consequently, assessing what voters know about political objects (e.g., political parties, candidates, and issues), which has been the strategy in virtual all election studies, is not the right basis to explain voters’ choices at the polls.

The second stream consists of studies on the role of emotions in voting, which started with the paper by Abelson, Kinder, Peters, and Fiske (1982). They showed that voters’ emotions affect their electoral preferences, even if factors such as ideological positions, policy preferences, and party identification had already been taken into account. New insights reached in other fields, in particular neuroscience, has inspired other researchers to also explore the impact of emotions (most notably, see Marcus et al., 2000). Several studies have confirmed that emotions have impact on vote choice (Marcus, 1988; Ragsdale, 1991; Marcus & MacKuen, 1993; Goren 1997; Glaser & Salovey, 1998; Marcus et al., 2000; Isbell & Ottati, 2002; Brader, 2005, 2006; Redlawsk, 2006).

The aim of this paper is two-fold. The first is to integrate both visions on the voter's mind into a single theoretical model. After all, the challenge that electoral researchers face is not to come up with many theories that address a single aspect of the vote decision, but a single theory that addresses many aspects of the vote decision.

The second aim is to find out whether the conclusions drawn in research on the impact of emotions can be generalised beyond the context in which the theoretical ideas were developed and tested. The image that emerges from studies on the impact of emotions on voting is that voters are strongly directed by their emotions. However, the evidence is almost exclusively based on studies focused on American politics. The study by Abelson et al. (1982), for example, utilised data on the 1980 U.S. presidential elections. The most authoritative theory on emotions and voting today – Affective Intelligence (Marcus et al., 2000) – has also been tested on the basis of American data. The question arises whether the image that has thus been portrayed, is an accurate picture for voters at large across the globe, or whether it applies solely to the particularities of American politics.

Of all features of the American political system that might induce the impact of emotions, arguably the most important one is the fact that American politics is candidate-centered politics. This is tellingly illustrated by the fact that candidate evaluations are the strongest predictor of vote choice. If voters identify with one party but like better the candidate of the other party, they mostly vote for the latter candidate. The question is whether in political systems and elections in which candidates play a less important role, similar processes can be observed. Hence, the aim of this article is to assess the impact of emotion on vote choice in a rather different context. Does emotion have as strong an impact on electoral preferences in party-centered politics?

In order to test this, it makes sense to shift our attention to western European parliamentary systems. These have a long history of political parties, which are known to play highly important roles in elections. In this paper the Netherlands has been selected for obvious but unscientific reasons (the author of this paper was born, lives, and works in that country). There are, however, also some more fundamental reasons that make it an appropriate case. The first reason is that the Netherlands has a long history of political parties. Furthermore, because the major parties have been allied with cleavage-based social groups, their position in the political system has been strong. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) referred to the Netherlands as the most typical case of cleavage-based voting. It is certainly true that those cleavages and linkages have weakened, but the same parties still play a central role in Dutch politics. Second, in the Netherlands voters base their choices on their

judgements of the competing political parties, not their leaders or other candidates (Rosema, 2006). This is illustrated by the fact that if voters consider one party more attractive than any other, but who prefer the party leader of another party, nine out of ten vote for the party they like best rather than the candidate. So it is not a coincidence that the classic study that posited that partisanship and vote choice cannot be meaningfully distinguished outside the American context (Thomassen, 1976) concerned the Netherlands. Dutch voters simply vote for the party they like best, irrespective of their feelings about the candidates.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. First, I discuss the on-line model of candidate evaluations. This model has major implications for modelling vote choice, including the role of emotions. Second, I discuss the theories developed to model the impact of emotions on voting and the measures used to operationalise emotional response. Third, I outline a new model that describes how emotional responses are integrated into overall evaluations of parties and candidates and thereby influence vote choice. The paper then moves on to the empirical analysis of the impact of emotions in party-centered politics. So fourth, I describe the measures used to assess the emotional responses in the Netherlands and present the results. Fifth, I analyse the impact of these emotions on party evaluations and vote choice. Finally, in the discussion section the results are summarised and conclusions are drawn.

## **2. The on-line model of candidate evaluations and its anomalies**

### *2.1 The on-line model of candidate evaluations*

Most theories of voting are based on the assumption that voters make rational decisions (Catt, 1996, chap. 2). The notion of rationality may then comprise several elements. One, for sure, is the idea that decisions are not based on emotions. Additionally, there are several other assumptions that most models of voting share (Rosema, 2004). One such assumption concerns the idea that voters simply vote for the party or candidate they like best. This means that the task of electoral researchers shifts from explaining vote choice to explaining party and candidate evaluations. Another assumption shared by most electoral research concerns the basis for those evaluations.

The explanations provided for party and candidate evaluations in electoral research generally build on the idea that voters have certain images of parties and candidates, and their appraisal of these images determines how much they like or dislike them (see, for example,

Campbell et al., 1960). This means that party and candidate evaluations are assumed to be memory-based. With respect to candidates there is evidence that this assumption is (at least partly) false. The on-line model of candidate evaluations outlined by Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh (1989) posits that when voters process information about candidates, they immediately adjust an overall judgement of the candidate; in other words, they “update a running tally” that indicates how much they like or dislike the candidate. A key difference with the traditional view is that voters may forget the information they have processed, while the effect on candidate evaluations remains. This implies that the overall evaluation of the candidate need not be in balance with the information voters have stored in memory. With respect to voting the on-line model implies that the only thing voters do when deciding for whom to vote, is comparing their candidate evaluations; they only have to “retrieve the on-line tally” (Lodge et al., 1989, p. 416). An implication of the on-line model is that the reasons voters themselves provide to motivate why they like or dislike candidates, or why they voted for them, should be seen as rationalisations (Rahn et al., 1994).

To test the model, Lodge and his colleagues (Lodge et al., 1989; Lodge et al., 1995; McGraw et al., 1990) conducted a series of experiments. Individuals were typically asked to read a brochure of a fictitious candidate for Congress, which listed the candidate’s party affiliation, policy positions, and some biographical information. Individuals were asked while reading to rate how much they liked or disliked the various policy positions (Lodge et al., 1989), or how strongly they agreed or disagreed with them (McGraw et al., 1990), using single bipolar scales. After a distraction task, individuals were asked to evaluate the candidate in terms of an overall evaluation and in terms of various traits related to the candidate’s competence and integrity. Next, individuals’ recall about the candidate was assessed by asking them to indicate which policy positions were in the brochure. The analyses indicated, as hypothesised, that candidate evaluations could be predicted better on the basis of all information voters had processed than on the basis of recalled information. Moreover, when individuals had been instructed in such a way that they formed a general impression of the candidate, the impact of recalled information in addition to processed information was virtually absent. Lodge et al. (1989) assumed that in real life voters form overall impressions of candidates, and that the on-line model explains better what psychological process underlies their liking or disliking of candidates.

## *2.2 Anomalies in the on-line model*

Although the on-line model has undoubtedly contributed to our understanding of the psychological processes underlying the formation of electoral preferences, some comments can be made. One objection that has been made is that the evidence provided concerns experimental settings, which may differ from the real world (Redlawsk, 2001). As important is that the studies did not take into account the role of emotions. Evaluation is conceived of in terms of a single bipolar dimension; as if the only response that voters may experience is one of liking versus disliking. How other affective responses, such as discrete emotions like anger, disgust, fear, joy, hope, and pride may affect candidate evaluations, is neglected in the research. Moreover, tests of the on-line model have failed to take into account two important ways in which memory may still play a role (see also the Appendix, which discusses the conceptualisation of memory).

First, voters may use information processed to form general images of the parties or candidates and base their evaluations on those general images. For example, when information about a candidate's issue stands is processed, voters may conclude that the candidate is a conservative. Voters may forget which issue stands the candidate took, while they remember that the candidate is a conservative. When asked to evaluate the candidate, they may base the evaluation on the image stored in memory, which says that the candidate is a conservative. The evaluation would then be memory-based, although the initial information could be forgotten and the recalled stands of the candidate need not be in line with the evaluation. Such processes underlie the working of memory (Schacter, 1996). Individuals do not remember all information they process as such, but use it to create or update general images of persons, objects, situations, and so on. Hence, a first assumption that underlies the tests of the on-line model and that may well be false is that the image of a candidate consists (only) of information as it was processed.

The second way in which memory may play a role is that information that has been stored in memory may be retrieved and could then influence the evaluation in a similar way as when it would have been processed after visual or auditory perception. If, for example, voters process information from a television broadcast about a party, this information will trigger other information that voters had already stored in their memory. This may establish an adjustment of evaluations in the same way as information that is perceived through the senses. These ideas match with Damasio's (2000) discussion about how the brain works. On the basis of neurological research he came to the conclusion that the thought of a

phenomenon and the actual encounter of that same phenomenon evoke emotional responses in a similar way. A similar observation was already made by James (1890b). He emphasised that objects of emotions can be those actually present as well as those only thought of.

With emotions, the mere memory or imagination of the object may suffice to liberate the excitement. One may get angrier in thinking over one's insult than at the moment of receiving it; and we melt more over a mother who is dead than we ever did when she was living. In the rest of the chapter I shall use the word object of emotion indifferently to mean one which is physically present or one which is merely thought of. (James, 1890b/1950, pp. 442-443)

Hence, information recalled from memory may affect party and candidate evaluations in a similar way as information that reaches voters through their senses. Memory, then, plays a more important role than the on-line model presumes.

### **3. Modelling and measuring the impact of emotions on vote choice**

#### *3.1 Affective and semantic components*

The on-line model of candidate evaluations can be seen as a response to the widely adopted assumption that the images of parties and candidates that voters have stored in their memory are the key to understanding their party and candidate evaluations. This assumption is in itself biased in another way, namely in terms of the kind of information in memory that electoral researchers have taken into account. In psychology it is common to distinguish between different kinds of memory (Squire, 1987; Schacter, 1996; LeDoux, 1998). Distinctions that are important in the context of this paper are those between cognitive and affective or emotional memory, and between semantic and episodic memory. Electoral research focuses primarily on 'cognitive' and 'semantic' memory; 'affective' and 'episodic' memory are mostly neglected.

The distinction between semantic and episodic memory corresponds with that between 'facts about' and 'experiences with'. Semantic memory concerns the image of a party or candidate in terms of traits and characteristics or other facts, whereas the episodic memory concerns memories of one's past experiences with those parties and candidates. Voters not only have an image about what parties are like and what they stand for, but they

may also remember things the parties have done in the past. What matters is not only the image, but also the memories one has of a party. Therefore, not only the semantic memory but also the episodic memory is relevant when studying voters' minds.

An exception to the neglect of episodic and affective memory is the landmark study by Abelson et al. (1982) on the impact of emotions on vote choice. They compared the effects of semantic judgements and affective responses with respect to six American presidential candidates (Carter, Kennedy, Connally, Reagan, Bush, and Baker), and found emotions to be highly influential. The study made use of voters' reports about whether competing U.S. presidential candidates had evoked certain emotional responses. The following questions were asked.

Now I want to ask you about (candidate). Think about your feelings when I mention (candidate). Now, has (candidate) – because of the kind of person he is or because of something he has done – ever made you feel: Angry? ... Happy? ... Proudful? ... (and so on) (Abelson et al., 1982, pp. 620-621)

The emotions included were: fear, anger, disgust, uneasiness, pride, pride, and sympathy. For each emotion the answers were coded as 'yes' or 'no'. Note that the phrase "because of the kind of person he is" links up to semantic memory, whereas the phrase "because of something he has done" links up to episodic memory.

Abelson et al. (1982) showed that the emotional responses represented two factors that were to a considerable extent independent of each other: one factor corresponded with positive emotions (pride, hope, and sympathy) and the other with negative emotions (fear, anger, disgust, and uneasiness). Indices for positive and negative emotions were constructed by counting the number of different emotions that candidates had evoked. The authors examined the relationship between these emotion indices and candidate evaluations, which were operationalised as feeling thermometer scores that ranged between 0 and 100. It was found that both indices strongly correlated with candidate evaluations. On average across the six candidates examined each positive emotion increased the evaluation by 9 points, whereas each negative emotion decreased it by 7 points.

Even more interesting is that the emotion scores contributed substantially to the prediction of evaluation scores in addition to perceived positive and negative traits – respondents had also been asked to rate candidates in those terms. Apparently, what mattered with respect to whether voters liked or disliked the candidates was not solely their image of



the candidates in terms of candidate characteristics, but also the extent to which the candidates had evoked emotions. The independence of positive and negative emotions that Abelson et al. (1982) found came somewhat as a surprise for two reasons. First, with respect to traits, research had shown that positive and negative judgements correlated negatively. Second, emotions had previously been conceptualised in terms of a single bipolar valence dimension. It was expected that the experience of positive and negative emotions would be correlated negatively to each other.

A study that focused on emotions with respect to three Australian political leaders, showed that in one case (Bob Hawke) the negative emotions represented two factors: one for feeling angry and disgusted, and another for feeling afraid and uneasy (Innes & Ahrens, 1994). The overall evaluations correlated more strongly with the factor that represented anger and disgust, but none of the emotion measures added to the predictive power of trait measures. These findings do not, however, violate the conclusion that emotions at least may play a role with respect to how much voters like or dislike candidates and parties.

### *3.2 Affective intelligence*

To understand why positive and negative emotions were largely independent, insight in how emotions operate is helpful. The studies by Marcus and his colleagues (Marcus, 1988; Marcus & MacKuen, 1993; Marcus et al., 2000) have provided useful insight. They emphasised that emotions stem from two independent systems in the brain. The disposition system scans for success (and failure) in engaged actions and has emotions like enthusiasm and excitement as output. The surveillance system continuously scans the environment for threat and has emotions like anxiety and fear as output. Marcus emphasised that as different emotions originate in different systems, we need not expect them to be correlated.

In his first study, Marcus (1988) made use of the same emotions and similar question wordings as Abelson et al. (1982) had used. He found that positive and negative emotions both played a role, but in different ways. Positive emotions stemming from the disposition system affected candidate evaluations, whereas negative emotions stemming from the surveillance system affected the impact of issues on the vote. The effects could not be accounted for by party identification, policy preferences, and perceived candidate characteristics. In a study that focused on the 1988 U.S. presidential election Marcus and MacKuen (1993) conceptualised the emotional responses not as positive and negative

emotions, but as enthusiasm and anxiety. To operationalise these, the following question was asked.

When we talk to people about the major Presidential candidates, they use different words to describe how they feel about them. For both Vice President Bush and Governor Dukakis, I'd like to read you some pairs of words. For each pair, let's use one (1) for the lowest possible rating and 100 as the highest possible rating. Let's start with Vice President Bush. Would you say you feel "unenthusiastic" or "enthusiastic" about him? One (1) would be the most unenthusiastic rating and 100 would be the most enthusiastic rating. (Marcus & MacKuen, 1993, pp. 674-675)

Voters rated the candidates using four pairs of words: enthusiastic–unenthusiastic, interested–indifferent, anxious–safe, and upset–comfortable. The scores of the first two pairs were transformed into a single score for enthusiasm, and the other two into one for anxiety. The main effect of anxiety was that it discouraged reliance on habitual cues and stimulated attention and learning. Enthusiasm stimulated interest in the campaign and influenced candidate evaluations as such (and thereby the direction of the vote).

On the basis of these findings Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen (2000) developed a theory about how emotions direct (political) behaviour. According to the theory they labelled Affective Intelligence people rely heavily on habits and routine actions. If the disposition system, which monitors successes and failures of behaviour, detects success, feelings of enthusiasm or satisfaction result, whereas failures result in depression or frustration. Simultaneously, the surveillance system scans the environment for novelty and threat and if it detects novel circumstances, it draws attention to them and consequently individuals no longer rely on their habitual behaviour. Instead, they involve in more deliberate reasoning processes. Hence, emotions such as anxiety, uneasiness, and fear lead voters to pay closer attention and learn more about the situation. As long as such responses are not evoked, calmness and relaxation are the typical outcomes of the system. This theory implies that there is a double role for emotions: they influence candidate evaluations as such (through enthusiasm), and they have an impact on the influence of cognitive judgements (through anxiety). This view implies that reason and emotion are not each other's opposites: they operate in tandem against habitual behaviour.

### *3.3 Emotional response and feeling thermometers*

According to Marcus et al. (2000) the emotional outcomes of the two brain systems can be conceptualised best as two unipolar dimensions. This means that depression is nothing but the absence of enthusiasm, and calmness is nothing but the absence of anxiety. They furthermore argued that conceptualising emotional response along a bipolar valence dimension is misleading and consequently the use of the feeling thermometer scale is inappropriate. Their arguments link up to those of Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson (1997), who argued that attitudes, which are usually conceived of as a single bipolar dimension, can be represented better in terms of two unipolar dimensions (one for positive and one for negative evaluative processes).

Although it may be true that emotion cannot be conceptualised best as one bipolar valence dimension, this does neither imply that the emotional output of the two systems is unipolar, nor that feeling thermometer scales have to be abandoned. An alternative would be two bipolar dimensions. The frustration of people's goals detected by the disposition system could lead to emotional responses such as anger (see Marcus, 2003). Because anger clearly does not point merely to the absence of enthusiasm, anger and enthusiasm could be seen as the opposites of a bipolar dimension. In a similar way one could argue about the possible opposite of anxiety and fear. Aristotle (335 B.C./1991) already argued that two important opposite emotions are phobos and tharsos, which have been translated as fear and confidence. Another possibility is to regard emotional response as four unipolar dimensions, by separating the aforementioned positive emotions from their negative opposites. Yet another possibility is that some emotions concern a bipolar dimension, whereas others concern a unipolar dimension. So even with the two brain systems as a starting point, there are alternatives to the conceptualisation of emotion.

One could go one step further and argue that emotional response is more varied than the emotions discussed above. This argument relates to the distinctions that have been made between different so-called discrete emotions. Several scholars have argued that there is a limited number of 'basic emotions', such as fear, anger, disgust, joy, and sadness (see Ekman & Davidson, 1994). Other emotions, such as shame or guilt, have been conceived of as specific mixtures of basic emotions, and correspondingly distinctions have been made between 'primary' and 'secondary' emotions (Plutchik, 1980). To analyse their impact, different emotions may thus also be conceptualised and analysed as distinct phenomena, rather than transforming them into scores for positive and negative emotions, or for

enthusiasm and anxiety. The least that can be done by electoral researchers is to also explore the impact of emotions on voting on the basis of this theoretical framework.

Another matter is whether feeling thermometer scales are appropriate measurements for emotional response. Several studies confirm that emotional response cannot be conceived of as a single bipolar dimension (see Marcus et al., 2000). This, however, does not imply that feeling thermometer ratings are not valuable. To come to that conclusion, it would first of all be necessary to show that there exists no such thing as liking or disliking candidates (or other objects). This is not what the studies on the impact of emotions have shown. Emotional responses in terms of anxiety, fear, enthusiasm, disgust, and anger may well exist next to positive and negative affect as tapped by feeling thermometer scales. Consequently, it may be useful to study the latter additionally. Furthermore, even if positive and negative affect exist largely independently of one another, they may still be studied in terms of ratings along a single bipolar evaluative dimension (Cacioppo et al., 1997). So although feeling thermometer ratings do not reflect the variety of emotional responses that voters may show, the measure may still be useful for assessing an existing overall evaluation.

#### **4. Theory: The Emotion-Integration Model of Party and Candidate Evaluations**

##### *4.1 Conceptualisation of emotion*

If liking and disliking exist next to emotional responses as anxiety, fear, hope, enthusiasm, pride, disgust, and anger, the question arises how these phenomena relate to each other. In order to answer that question, it may be useful to outline a taxonomy of emotion. This can be done by combining two distinctions made in emotion research. The first distinction is that between emotional response as an acute or temporary state and emotional response as a more enduring or permanent state, which is often referred to by the notion of a trait. According to Lazarus (1994, p. 79), of the many distinctions that have been made between different kinds of emotion phenomena, that between stable and unstable, or between state and trait, is the least controversial. Another distinction that can be used to classify emotions is whether or not the emotion is related to a specific object or event (intentionality). Emotions that lack an object are often distinguished and referred to by the notion of moods.

Frijda's (1994) classification of emotional or affective phenomena into four categories is based on these two distinctions. With respect to emotions that involve a specific object or event, Frijda distinguished between emotion episodes (temporary states) and sentiments

(enduring states). The notions of love and hate, and likes and dislikes, he regarded as typical examples of this latter category (although these words may be used also to refer to temporary states). Emotional responses that do not involve a particular object may be referred to as moods (temporary states) and personality or temperament (enduring states). A classification of emotion based on these two distinctions is provided in Figure 1. Emotional phenomena are divided first on the basis of the temporal dimension into states and traits. Emotion states and traits are both in turn divided on the basis of the question whether they are directed at a particular object. Emotion states that lack an object are referred to as moods, while those directed at a particular object are referred to as emotion episodes. Emotion traits that lack an object are called temperament, while those concerning a particular object are called sentiments.

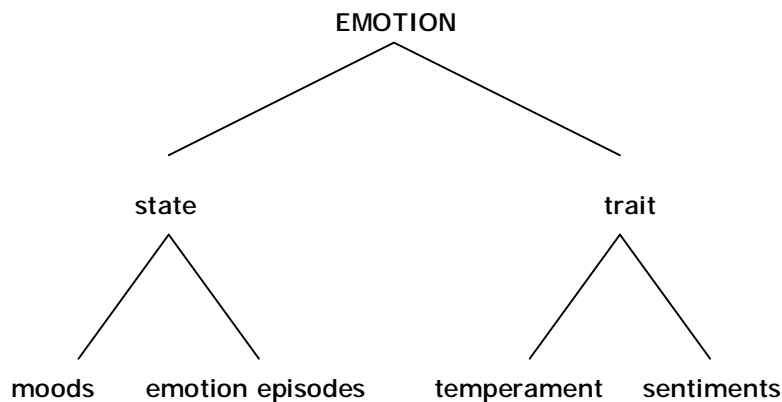


Figure 1. Taxonomy of emotion (based on Lazarus, 1994, and Frijda, 1994)

The taxonomy is illuminating with respect to the study of emotions in relation to candidate evaluations. The measures used by Abelson et al. (1982) and Marcus (1988) concern emotion episodes (has the candidate ever made you feel angry?), while the measures used by Marcus and MacKuen (1993) presumably concern sentiments (do you feel enthusiastic about the candidate?). Hence, in studies that examined the impact of emotion different phenomena were focused on. Some analyses concerned the impact of temporary emotional states, whereas others concerned more permanent emotional traits.

Another thing to note is that it was not emotions as such that the reported studies examined, but memories of emotions. The questions of the American National Election Studies indicated whether voters recalled having experienced certain emotional responses. It

is well known that memories are constructions that are influenced by current thoughts and feelings (Schacter, 1996). This also applies to memories of emotions (Robinson & Clore, 2002a). In the electoral context Levine (1997) confirmed this. Voters who remained loyal to Ross Perot after the 1992 U.S. presidential election underestimated how sad and angry they initially had been (according to their own earlier reports). This implies that memories of emotions may be distorted and hence self-report measures may be considered problematic. On the other hand, Levine's findings are encouraging at the same time. The recalled emotions were biased, but nevertheless considerable stability was observed. This means that the reports may, despite some distortion, still be reasonably accurate.

#### *4.2 From emotion episodes to sentiments*

A highly relevant question is how the emotional phenomena distinguished relate to each other. The relationship between emotion episodes and sentiments is particularly interesting, as voters' feelings towards political parties fit those categories. Moreover, party evaluations may be considered an example of the emotion phenomenon that is referred to as sentiments; both concern a degree of liking or disliking.

The most important way in which emotion episodes and sentiments are related, is that the former may become integrated into the latter (Frijda, 1994, p. 65). The framework provided by Russell (2003) sheds light on this. According to Russell, at the heart of what we call emotion is what he calls core affect. This refers to a person's state that is characterised by a particular level of arousal and a particular level of pleasure. It concerns the extent to which a person feels good or bad, energised or enervated. Core affect may be viewed as a position in a two-dimensional space that combines the dimensions of pleasure–displeasure and activation–deactivation (see also Russell, 1980; Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Russell (2003) argued that whenever individuals notice a change in their core affect, they attribute this change to a particular event or object. He used the notion of attributed affect to refer to the linking of a change in core affect to its perceived cause. Furthermore, he argued, on the basis of these processes individuals make inferences about the capacity of particular events or objects to change their core affect. In other words, people know whether certain things can make them feel good or bad. This knowledge he referred to as perception of affective quality. People supposedly classify objects in those terms, or at least in terms of the pleasure dimension (p. 157).

Russell's (2003) framework links up well to the taxonomy of emotion provided. His distinction between core affect and attributed affect is related to that between moods and emotion episodes, while his distinction between attributed affect and affective quality is related to that between emotion episodes and sentiments. Russell assumed that emotion episodes are all built on core affect. Each emotion episode is associated with particular levels of arousal and pleasure. Moreover, his framework implies that sentiments can be viewed as perceptions of affective quality that are based primarily on the core affect attributed to the objects involved. This means that past emotional experiences with an object explain people's evaluations of that object. So what matters is to what extent objects make people feel good or bad, energised or enervated. These are integrated into sentiments. This paper refers to these by the notion of (party and candidate) evaluations.

#### *4.3 Emotion-integration model of party and candidate evaluations*

Two major shortcomings in traditional theories of voting have been identified. They neglect the role of emotions, and they do not take into account the possibility that party and candidate evaluations are influenced by information that is no longer stored in voters' memory. The on-line model, on the other hand, neglects the role that information stored in long-term memory plays. Moreover, this model is as silent about the role of emotions as most traditional theories of voting. To explain why voters evaluate parties as they do and illuminate the psychological processes involved, these limitations have to be overcome. This may be done by formulating a model that synthesises the various ideas presented.

The resulting model builds on the idea that it is possible to distinguish between long-term memory and short-term memory (or working memory), as well as between episodic memory and semantic memory (see Appendix). Furthermore, it builds on the idea that a distinction can be made between temporal emotional states (emotion episodes) and enduring emotional states (sentiments). Party and candidate evaluations are examples of enduring states. According to the model, party and candidate evaluations are formed as well as changed on the basis of temporary emotional responses that result from information-processing in working memory. Information may reach working memory in two ways: through sensory perception (for example, by reading a newspaper or speaking with friends) and through retrieval of information that has been stored in long-term memory (see Figure 2).

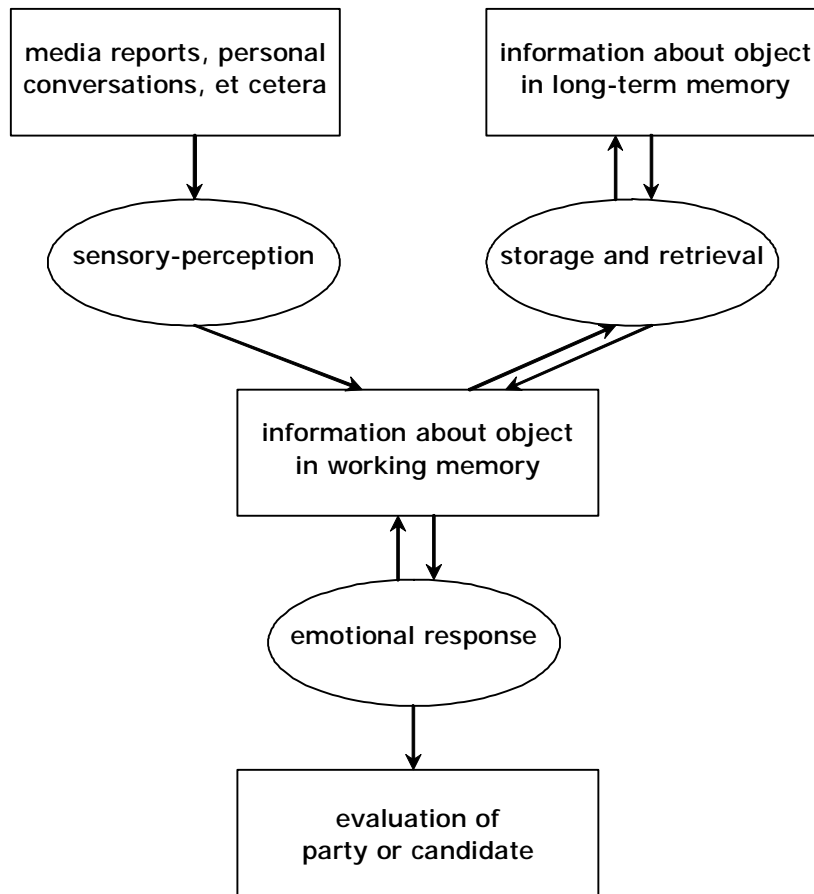


Figure 2. The Emotion-Integration Model of Party and Candidate Evaluations

Working memory and long-term memory are related to each other reciprocally; information flows in both directions. First, information processed in working memory may be stored in long-term memory. This may happen both in terms of the encounter itself (episodic memory) as well as in more general terms, dissociated from that particular moment (semantic memory). Information with respect to parties may be stored as such in long-term memory, but may also be used to create or update the images of parties. Second, information stored may travel back from long-term memory to working memory. Whenever information is processed in working memory, information from long-term memory is more or less automatically retrieved. Information retrieved from memory is used to comprehend and interpret information from media messages and personal communication.



When individuals process information, they automatically evaluate the information (cf. Zajonc, 1980, 1984). This may be referred to by the notion of emotional response. Often the response will be rather weak. In that case we may speak about liking or disliking the information. If the response is strong, this may lead to so-called emotion episodes (cf. Russell, 2003). For example, if voters hear about a policy proposal made by a particular party, they may occasionally respond with emotions as sadness, disgust, anger, happiness, enthusiasm, and so on. What kind of emotion individuals experience, as well as the intensity of the response, depends on the cognitive processes involved (Ortony et al., 1988). In as far as such temporary emotional responses are attributed to political parties, they may lead to an adjustment of the evaluation of that party and thus have a lasting impact. These are the processes that Russell (2003) referred to by the notions of attributed affect and perception of affective quality; Frijda (1994) referred to the latter as sentiments.

The model indicates that the information that leads to an emotional response may be information perceived, but also information retrieved from memory. The latter is also automatically evaluated. The resulting emotional response may establish an adjustment of the party evaluations in the same way as information that reaches individuals through the senses. For example, if voters think about something a particular party has proposed, they may (again) experience a certain emotion.

The emotional response may become represented in working memory. This means that individuals become conscious of their emotional response: they know whether they liked or disliked the information they processed and they know whether it made them disgusted, angry, enthusiastic, and so on (LeDoux & Phelps, 2000, pp. 167-168). The knowledge of those feelings may as such be stored in long-term memory. These are the memories that Abelson et al. (1982) focused on.

Information that has been stored in long-term memory need not be kept. It may lose its accessibility and ultimately be forgotten. This applies in particular to information in episodic memory: after a few weeks such information is usually no longer available (Robinson & Clore, 2002b). This does not mean, however, that the effect the information had on the evaluations of the parties involved is lost as well. After all, party evaluations are stored in memory independently of the other (cognitive) information about the party stored in long-term memory. Consequently, party evaluations may be affected by information that voters have once processed but no longer remember. This view is shared with Lodge et al. (1989). It also shares with Lodge et al. the presumption that the only thing that voters need to do when

casting their vote, is compare the evaluations of the competing parties or candidates and vote accordingly (cf. Brody & Page, 1973).

The model is referred to as the emotion-integration model of party and candidate evaluations, because these evaluations are considered a result of emotions experienced with respect to those parties and candidates; these emotions are integrated by individuals into general evaluations of those parties and candidates. The model in a sense integrates the traditional idea that there is a relationship between the image of a party or candidate as stored in long-term memory and the evaluation of that party or candidate, and the idea from the on-line model that evaluations are based on information processed in working memory. It adds to this the idea that voters' emotional responses play a key role, because these are what party and candidate evaluations are based on. Note that the model does not indicate what kind of information about parties or candidates voters respond to emotionally, neither which type of emotional response they show. These are the kind of additional questions that can only be answered in a specific context.

## **5. Results: The impact of emotional responses towards political parties**

### *5.1 Emotional response towards political parties*

This paper will not test the Emotion-Integration Model in all its details. The empirical analyses focus on the most crucial element, namely the hypothesis that evaluations of political parties and their candidates are formed and transformed on the basis of emotional responses. Given the preoccupation of past research with the impact of emotions on candidate evaluations, this paper focuses on political parties instead. As mentioned in the introduction, the case selected is the Netherlands. The empirical analysis proceeds in three steps. First, measures of emotional response are discussed, and findings indicating how often each emotion is experienced are presented. Second, it is analysed whether emotional responses indeed are correlated with party evaluations and whether data provide support for the hypothesis that positive and negative emotions are integrated into (positive and negative) evaluations of those same parties. Third, it will be examined whether anxiety induces the effect of cognitive processes (rational considerations, if you like), as hypothesised by the theory of affective intelligence (Marcus et al., 2000).

There is a wide variety of emotions that voters may experience in response to political parties and pilot studies in Europe have shown that they do (Capelos, 2007). The Dutch

Parliamentary Election Study 2006 included four items for three political parties.<sup>1</sup> Political parties included are the Christian Democrats (CDA), Labour Party (PvdA) and Liberal Party (VVD). These three parties represent the three major ideological movements in the Netherlands. Their pivotal role is illustrated by the fact that in the Netherlands ideology has often been conceived of as a triangle (social democrats, Christian democrats, liberals). The emotions included are enthusiasm, pride, irritation, and worry. These emotions have been selected in order to ensure that positive and negative feelings are both represented by two items, and the two dimensions of enthusiasm and anxiety (cf. Marcus et al., 2000) as well as aversion (cf. Marcus, 2003; Rosema, 2004) are included. The survey respondents were asked to indicate *how often* they had experienced particular feelings in terms of a seven-point rating scale; the extreme values indicated they either never (1) or almost always (7) experienced that particular feeling. The question read as follows.

Now I will ask some questions about the feelings that a couple of political parties evoke in you. We start with the Labour Party. Could you please indicate on a line from 1 to 7 how often you become enthusiastic by what the Labour Party is like, or by what the Labour Party has done? Here 1 means never and 7 means almost always. [...] And how often do you become irritated by the Labour Party?

In Table 1 the responses have been transformed into three levels of emotional response: low (0-2), medium (3-4), and high (5-7). The overall pattern is that most scores are distributed normally: many voters report intermediate levels of emotional response, and the other responses are divided fairly equally across the more positive and more negative categories. The second observation is that for all three parties the emotion of pride is an exception: feelings of pride are experienced less often than enthusiasm, irritation, and worry. Third, there are some minor differences between the three parties. Positive emotions of enthusiasm and pride are reported more often for the Christian Democrats and less often for the Liberals, whereas the pattern for the negative emotions of worry and irritation is reversed: these are reported more often in response to the Liberals and less often towards the Christian Democrats. The Labour Party takes an intermediate position.

---

<sup>111</sup> The data of the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies are deposited at DANS, The Hague. Details about the 2006 study are available at the website [www.dpes.nl](http://www.dpes.nl).

Table 1. Levels of emotional response towards political parties (% reporting a particular score)

	Christian Democrats			Labour Party			Liberal Party		
	high	medium	low	high	medium	low	high	medium	low
enthusiasm	21	57	22	18	59	23	15	53	31
pride	13	45	42	11	41	48	8	42	50
irritation	19	58	23	22	58	20	23	56	22
worry	17	58	26	19	57	24	21	54	25

Note: Seven-point scales of emotional response have been transformed into three categories: low (1-2), medium (3-5), and high (6-7).

Let us shortly return to the low frequencies of pride being reported. There are two straightforward explanations for this. One explanation would be that the Dutch word “pride” (trots) involves a rather intense experience. If one would ask about irritation, anger, and fury, presumably the latter would be reported less frequently simply because a high intensity is involved. Although in principle such an explanation could account for differences in emotions reported, there is little reason to believe this is really the case. Another, more plausible, explanation would be that it is not the intensity of the emotion, but its nature that makes that it is experienced less frequently. Pride presumably requires a certain level of identification with the party, as well as a positive evaluation of its performance. As the other emotions do not have such identification as a prerequisite, it should be no surprise that more citizens experience those other emotions.

A straightforward way to map the emotional response of an individual towards a particular political party is to examine which of the four emotions listed is experienced most frequently. Figure 3 shows the results for each party. With respect to the Christian Democrats (CDA) the emotion experienced most strongly most often is that of enthusiasm (45%). The other positive emotion, pride, is not experienced most strongly that often (9%). Consequently, 54% of all voters reported either of both positive emotions as experienced most frequently. The others more often experienced negative emotions, being either irritation (28%) or worry (18%). The emotional response with respect to the other two parties shows a similar pattern: enthusiasm is experienced most often, pride seldom, and irritation somewhat more often than worry. The key difference is that in response to the Christian Democrats (CDA) positive emotions are reported a bit more often than negative emotions, whereas for the Labour Party (PvdA) en Liberal Party (VVD) the pattern is reversed.

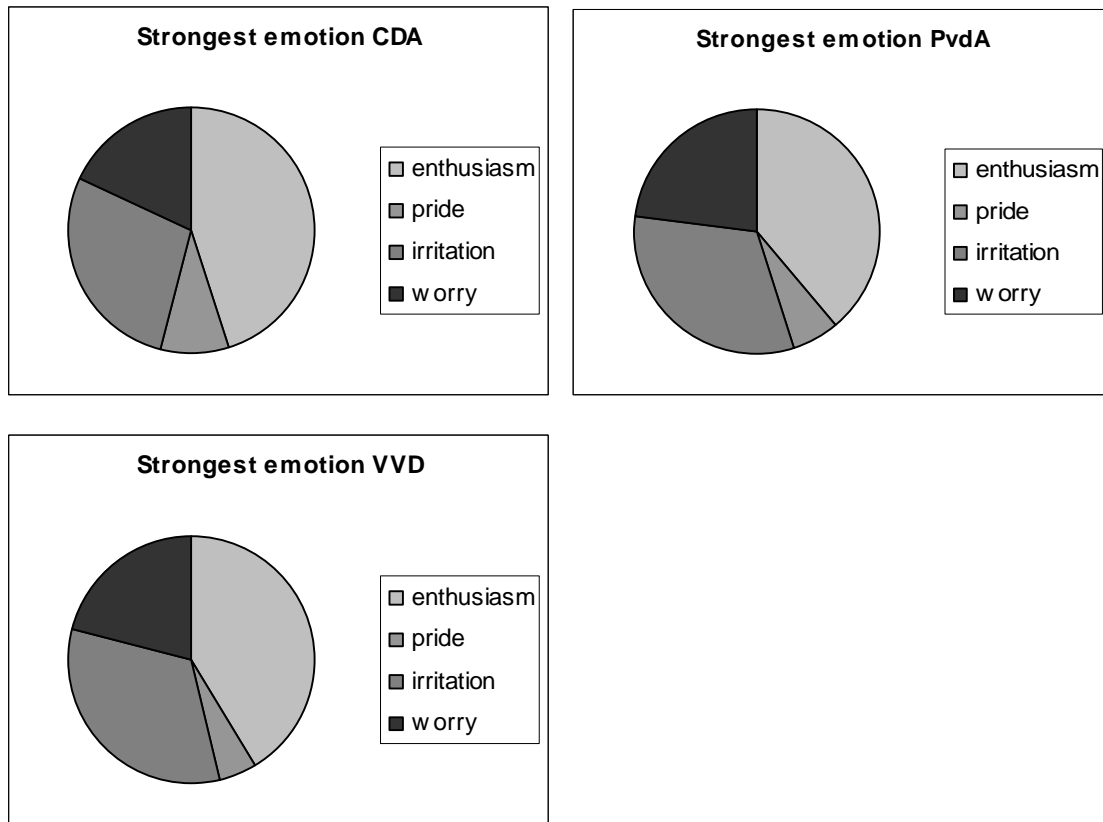


Figure 3. Strongest emotion in response to three political parties

### 5.2 Emotional response and party evaluations

According to the Emotion-Integration Model, emotions influence vote choice through their impact on party and candidate evaluations. This means that we may expect positive and negative emotions to be correlated with party evaluation scores. Additional hypotheses can be formulated by building on the argument that affective space is in fact two-dimensional and positive and negative affect are distinct and largely independent factors (Cacioppo et al., 1997). If discrete emotions are integrated into general feelings of love and hate or liking and disliking, one might expect that citizens who feel positive about a particular party and citizens who feel negative about a particular party have formed their evaluations on the basis of different emotions. More specifically, one may expect that negative feelings are shaped by negative emotions like irritation and worry, whereas positive feelings are shaped by emotions like enthusiasm and pride.

These hypotheses can be tested by analysing the relationship between the emotion scores discussed above with party evaluation scores, and next examining whether the four emotions have different effects on evaluation scores of citizens who feel positive about a particular party than on evaluation scores of citizens who feel negative about a particular party. This will be done on the basis of the emotion scores discussed above and party evaluation measures. In the DPES 2006 party evaluations have been measured on the basis of an eleven-point rating scale with values ranging between 0 and 10. Values below 5 are supposed to indicate negative evaluations, whereas values above 5 are supposed to indicate positive feelings.

Table 2 shows that for all three parties all four emotions are correlated with voters' overall judgement of these parties. Increased levels of enthusiasm and pride positively affect evaluation scores, whereas irritation and worry negatively affect evaluation scores. Furthermore, the results of the regression analyses reported suggest that the effect of enthusiasm on party evaluations is by far the largest. The effect size of enthusiasm (as indicated by beta coefficients) is as large as the combined effects of the three other emotions. Of the three other emotions the effects of worry are weakest.

Table 2. Explaining party evaluation scores on the basis of emotional response (results of multiple regression analyses)

	Christian Democrats			Labour Party			Liberal Party		
	all scores	high scores	low scores	all scores	high scores	low scores	all scores	high scores	low scores
enthusiasm	0,53	0,40	0,37	0,49	0,36	0,36	0,49	0,36	0,34
pride	0,19	0,24	0,08	0,15	0,20	0,10	0,20	0,20	0,17
irritation	-0,12	-0,13	-0,11	-0,18	-0,20	-0,15	-0,10	-0,13	-0,06
worry	-0,08	-0,07	-0,03	-0,08	-0,06	-0,08	-0,10	-0,08	-0,10
constant	3,41	5,15	2,91	4,41	5,77	3,43	3,38	5,38	2,77
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0,58	0,43	0,21	0,54	0,40	0,24	0,54	0,34	0,25

Note: Party evaluation scores have been measured as ratings on an 11-point feeling thermometer scale (0-10); emotional responses have been measured on the basis of a 7-point rating scale (1-7). Low party evaluation scores concern the 0-5 range; high party evaluation scores concern the 5-10 range.

Table 2 also reports separate analyses for voters who evaluated a party positively and for those who evaluated a party negatively. One key finding is that the differences between

the predictive power of the four emotions hardly differs between positive and negative evaluation scores. It is no surprise that among voters who evaluate a party positively, the degree to which the party is evaluated positively depends primarily on the level of enthusiasm experienced. However, the same holds for voters who evaluate a party negatively. The degree to which they do does not primarily depend on negative emotion of irritation, but also on the level of enthusiasm. The impact of enthusiasm is virtually identical for both groups of voters. The pattern for irritation is similar in the sense that there are no large differences. To the extent that differences can be observed (and there are some), they are in the opposite direction as expected: irritation has a slightly stronger effect on evaluations of citizens who like a party than among voters who dislike a party. The same holds for pride, but as this is a positive emotion this does not come unexpected. Again, however, the differences are limited. Finally, the impact of worry is of rather limited size among both groups. Concerning the explanatory power, the key finding is that knowing emotions experienced enables better to predict how much citizens like party of they like it, than to predict how strongly citizens dislike a party if they dislike it.

A final observation concerns differences between Christian Democrats, Labour Party, and Liberal Party with respect to how voters who did not experience any of the four emotions evaluate the party (this is reflected in the constant of the equations). It turns out that these voters rate the Labour Party considerably higher than the Christian Democrats and Liberal Party. A straightforward explanation for this pattern would be that the Labour Party is closer to the ideological centre than the other two, which are further to the right. Hence, as there are relatively many voters in the centre, Labour on average receives more positive scores than the Christian Democrats and Liberal Party.

The next question to be examined is whether emotions predict party evaluations beyond the level expected on the basis of traditional factors, such as social identity, ideological positions, and policy preferences. Table 3 shows that they do. If we compare the explanatory power of models that do not include emotions (models 1, 2, and 3) with the model that additionally takes emotions reported into account (model 4), the increase in the explanatory power is substantial. Apparently, the effects of emotional response cannot be accounted for by factors such as ideological positions and policy preferences. On the other hand, the effects of ideology and policy preferences on party evaluations appear to be mediated by the emotions resulting from similarities and differences in ideology and policy preferences between voter and party. The coefficients that indicate the effects of ideology and

policy preferences are considerably weaker (and sometimes no longer significant) once emotions have been taken into account (compare beta coefficients of models 3 and 4).

Table 3. Explaining party evaluation scores: the impact of social identity, policy preferences, and emotional responses (results of multiple regression analyses)

model	Christian Democrats				Labour Party				Liberal Party			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<i>social identity</i>												
religiosity	.27	.26	.20	.05	-.14	-.10	-.05	n.s.	n.s.	.07	n.s.	.04
social class	.16	.11	.05	.04	-.11	-.07	n.s.	n.s.	.20	.11	.10	.06
<i>policy preferences</i>												
euthanasia		n.s.	n.s.	n.s.		-.07	-.08	-.05		-.10	-.08	-.04
income		.17	.07	.04		-.15	-.14	n.s.		.30	.17	.09
minorities		.13	.07	n.s.		-.18	-.09	-.07		.15	.08	n.s.
nuclear pl.		.10	.06	n.s.		-.12	-.10	n.s.		.10	.05	n.s.
<i>ideological agreement</i>												
left-right			-.39	-.18			-.35	-.15			-.44	-.21
<i>emotional responses</i>												
enthusiasm				.39				.36				.33
pride				.19				.21				.19
irritation				-.14				-.17				-.09
worry				-.06				-.08				-.08
constant	5.65	5.78	6.60	4.09	6.13	5.88	6.58	4.67	5.45	5.41	6.51	3.97
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.10	.16	.29	.58	.03	.12	.24	.52	.04	.18	.35	.56

Note: n.s. = not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Variables have been removed using the backward procedure.

### 5.3 Anxiety and the impact of emotions on party evaluations

According to the theory of Affective Intelligence (Marcus et al. 2000), voters who experience high levels of anxiety are inclined to more strongly rely on cognitive judgements, whereas those who experience little anxiety stick more strongly to their habitual behaviour. We can



test whether anxiety has indeed such an effect, by analysing the impact of emotional as well as cognitive factors on party evaluations for different groups of voters. Building on the above analysis, we distinguish between voters whose primary feeling concerning a particular party was enthusiasm, voters whose primary feeling was irritation, and voters whose primary feeling was worry. The hypothesis derived from the theory of Affective Intelligence is that the third group of voters (worry dominates) shows larger impact of policy preferences and ideological agreement than the two other groups.

Table 4. Explaining party evaluation scores: the impact of social identity, policy preferences, and emotional responses (results of multiple regression analyses)

<i>strongest emotion</i>	Christian Democrats			Labour Party			Liberal Party		
	<i>enthusiasm</i>	<i>irritation</i>	<i>worry</i>	<i>enthusiasm</i>	<i>irritation</i>	<i>worry</i>	<i>enthusiasm</i>	<i>irritation</i>	<i>worry</i>
<i>social identity</i>									
religiosity	.06	.02	-.09	-.08	.03	-.06	.05	.12	.04
social class	.06	-.02	.14	.07	-.04	.05	.09	.02	.09
<i>policy preferences</i>									
euthanasia	.11	.03	.05	-.03	-.04	-.05	-.02	-.17	-.07
income	.00	.10	.04	.02	-.04	-.03	.09	.16	.16
minorities	-.01	-.02	-.12	-.16	-.03	-.14	-.08	.00	.05
nuclear pl.	-.01	.05	-.14	.04	.00	-.10	-.04	.06	.04
<i>ideological agreement</i>									
left-right	-.14	-.12	-.26	-.14	-.13	-.22	-.19	-.16	-.18
<i>emotional responses</i>									
enthusiasm	.35	.27	.28	.21	.34	.36	.27	.40	.28
pride	.09	.24	.19	.26	.22	.13	.12	.09	.13
irritation	-.13	-.17	-.04	-.15	-.17	-.06	-.05	-.05	-.06
worry	-.03	-.04	-.01	.00	-.11	.04	-.01	-.03	-.09
constant	5.46	4.16	3.78	5.81	4.43	2.96	5.16	2.88	4.25
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.24	.29	.30	.25	.32	.38	.20	.36	.31

This is exactly what we can see if we focus on ideological agreement for two of the three parties (Table 4). For the Christian Democrats and the Labour Party among voters who are either primarily enthusiastic or primarily irritated, the beta coefficients that indicate the effect of left-right ideology varied between 0.12 and 0.14, whereas among voters who are primarily worried this coefficient equalled 0.22 or 0.26. In other words, the effect of left-right ideology on party evaluations that could not be accounted for by emotional responses was about twice as large among worried voters as among those who felt enthusiastic or irritated. Although with respect to policy preferences the differences are not that pronounced, there are some differences and for both parties on average these are in the expected direction. With respect to the Liberal Party the effects of ideology and policy preferences did not differ that much.

## **6. Conclusion**

The start of this paper was the observation that there is growing empirical evidence of the impact of emotions on vote choice, but this evidence is almost exclusively based on American data. The question is whether similar observations can be made in party-centered politics. In order to examine this, first a model was outlined that indicates what voters are emotional about (information perceived or retrieved from memory) and how these emotions affect party and candidate evaluations: through a process in which emotional responses are integrated into overall evaluations. The central hypothesis is that voters form and transform evaluations of political parties and their candidates on the basis of the emotional responses these parties and candidates evoke. As previous research (Rosema, 2006) has shown that party evaluations strongly correlate with vote choice, any evidence for the impact of emotions on party evaluations can be considered evidence for the impact of emotions on vote choice.

The impact of emotions was analysed on the basis of data from the 2006 Dutch Parliamentary Election Study, which asked how often three political parties (Christian Democrats, Labour Party, and Liberal Party) had evoked particular emotions (enthusiasm, pride, irritation, and worry). The findings show that all emotions were experienced with respect to all three parties, though worry to a much lesser degree than the other three. As hypothesised, these emotional responses correlated with party evaluations and they added to the ability to explain party evaluations, even if factors like social identity, policy preferences, and perceived ideological agreement had been taken into account. The strongest effect

concerned enthusiasm, which affected party evaluations as strongly as the three other emotions combined.

Building on the emotion-integration model, the hypothesis was formulated that negative party evaluations can be explained best on the basis of negative emotions (irritation, worry), whereas positive evaluations can be explained best on the basis of positive emotions (enthusiasm, pride). The analyses provided no support for these hypotheses. Positive and negative evaluation scores were affected about equally by the four emotions distinguished. So, how much voters dislike a particular party depends not so much upon how often the party makes the voter irritated or worried, but primarily by how often the party makes the voter enthusiastic. This suggests that negative evaluation scores indicate not the presence of negative feelings, but the absence of positive feelings. The major implication of these findings is that party evaluation ratings or feeling thermometer scores should not be conceived of as unipolar measures of positive affect, rather than as bipolar measures than mix positive and negative affect.

The final matter examined concerned the role of emotions regarding the impact of cognitive factors on party evaluations. According to the theory of Affective Intelligence (Marcus et al., 2000), anxiety induces reliance on cognitive judgements. Hence, it was hypothesised in this paper that voters who feel primarily worried about a particular political party, hold party evaluations that are more strongly influenced by policy preferences and perceived ideological agreement than voters whose primary emotion is enthusiasm or irritation. The findings indicated that this indeed was the case. In particular, worried voters' party evaluations were determined by ideological perceptions about twice as strongly as evaluations held by voters who were primarily enthusiastic or irritated (pride was seldom experienced and hence not analysed). Hence, also in party-centered politics high levels of anxiety make voters more attentive to their cognitive judgements.

## Appendix: Conceptualisation of memory

To understand how parties are represented in memory, and how this may affect voters' evaluations of these parties, it may be useful to provide a classification of memory based on three distinctions: long-term versus short-term memory, primary versus secondary memory, and episodic versus semantic memory (see Figure A).

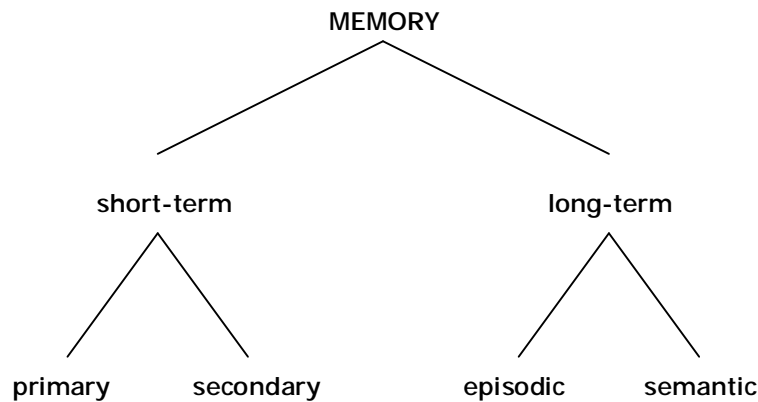


Figure A. Taxonomy of memory (based on Squire, 1987, and James, 1890a)

In *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) James distinguished between primary and secondary memory. Information that is perceived through the senses, and which individuals become consciously aware of, concerns primary memory.

An object of primary memory is not thus brought back; it was never lost; its date was never cut off consciousness from that of the immediately present moment. In fact it comes to us as belonging to the reaward portion of the present space of time, and not to the genuine past. (James, 1890a/1950, pp. 646-647)

Secondary memory concerns the recollection of that same information after it has dropped from consciousness.

Secondary memory [...] is the knowledge of a former state of mind after it has already once dropped from consciousness; or rather it is the knowledge of an event, or fact, of which meantime we have not been thinking, with the additional consciousness that we have thought or experienced it before.  
(James, 1890a/1950, p. 648)

The fact that information can be recalled implies that it has been stored. This points to the distinction between short-term and long-term memory. Primary and secondary memory both concern what today is commonly referred to as short-term or working memory (Squire, 1987, chap. 10). Information that is present in conscious awareness concerns short-term memory. Information that is stored, which can be retrieved and thus become secondary memory, concerns long-term memory.

Squire (1987, chap. 11) proposed to categorise long-term memory in turn on the basis of two divisions, which reflect the fact that different systems in the brain are involved. The first division is that between declarative and procedural memory. The former concerns memory for facts and experiences that can be expressed verbally, whereas the latter includes skills and abilities (which cannot be expressed verbally). Since the latter are not of interest in this context, procedural memory will be ignored here. With respect to declarative memory, Squire further distinguished between episodic and semantic memory (cf. Tulving, 1972). The former is associated closely with personal experiences, the latter with knowledge of facts.

Episodic memory refers to memory for past events in an individual's life. This system represents information concerning temporally dated episodes that can later be recollected. Episodic memory stores the cumulated events of one's life, an individual's autobiography. Semantic memory refers to knowledge of the world. This system represents organized information such as facts, concepts, and vocabulary. The content of semantic memory is explicitly known and available for recall. Unlike episodic memory, however, semantic memory has no necessary temporal landmarks. It does not refer to particular events in a person's past. (Squire, 1987, pp. 169-170)

Although the distinction between episodic and semantic memory has proven controversial, in particular regarding the question whether different brain systems are involved, in social psychology the distinction has been considered useful (Carlston & Smith, 1996, p. 185).

Most models of voting as well as the on-line model consider the way that parties and candidates are represented in voters' memory relevant for how they evaluate them. However, they differ in terms of the kind of memory focused on. Traditional theories of voting have focused primarily on long-term memory, in particular semantic memory. Research on the on-line model has emphasised the role of short-term memory, in particular primary memory. To understand well why voters evaluate parties or candidates as they do, however, all four aspects have to be focused on.

### **Acknowledgements**

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP), 4-7 July 2007, Portland, Oregon, USA. I am grateful to participants in that conference for their valuable comments.

### **References**

- Abelson, Robert P., Donald R. Kinder, Mark D. Peters, & Susan T. Fiske (1982). Affective and semantic components in political person perception. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42 (4), 619-630.
- Aristotle (1991; originally approximately 335 B.C.). *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bargh, John A. (1997). The automaticity of everyday life. In Robert S. Wyer (Ed.), *Advances in Social Cognition. Volume 10* (pp. 1-61), Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brader, Ted (2005). Striking a responsive chord: How political ads motivate and persuade voters by appealing to emotions. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(2), 388-405.
- Brader, Ted (2006). *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brody, Richard A., & Benjamin I. Page (1973). Indifference, alienation and rational decisions: The effects of candidate evaluations on turnout and the vote. *Public Choice*, 15, 1-17.

- Cacioppo, John T., Wendi L. Gardner, & Gary G. Berntson (1997). Beyond bipolar conceptualizations and measures: The case of attitudes and evaluative space. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 1 (1), 3-25.
- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, & Donald E. Stokes (1960). *The American Voter*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Capelos, Tereza (2007). *The Way You Make Me Feel*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Carlston, Donald E., & Eliot R. Smith (1997). Principles of mental representation. In E. Tory Higgins & Arie W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles* (pp. 184-210), New York: The Guilford Press.
- Catt, Helena (1996). *Voting Behaviour: A Radical Critique*, London: Leicester University Press.
- Damasio, Antonio R. (1994). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*, London: Picador.
- Damasio, Antonio (2000). *The Feeling of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness*, London: Vintage.
- Ekman, Paul, & Richard J. Davidson (Eds.), *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Frijda, Nico H. (1994). Varieties of affect: Emotions and episodes, moods, and sentiments. In Paul Ekman & Richard J. Davidson (Eds.), *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions* (pp. 59-67), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Frijda, Nico H. (2000). The psychologists' point of view. In Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotions. Second Edition* (pp. 59-74), New York: The Guilford Press.
- Glaser, Jack, & Peter Salovey (1988). Affect in electoral politics. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2 (3), 156-172.
- Goren, Paul. (1997). Gut-level emotions and the presidential vote. *American Politics Quarterly*, 25 (2), 203-229.
- Innes, J. M., & C. R. Ahrens (1994). Political perception among young Australians: Affective versus cognitive appraisal. *Journal of Psychology*, 128 (2), 197-207.
- Isbell, Linda M., & Victor C. Ottati (2002). The emotional voter: Effects of episodic affective reactions on candidate evaluation. In Victor C. Ottati et al. (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Politics* (pp. 55-74), New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- James, William (1890a). *The Principles of Psychology, Volume One*, New York: Henry Holt. Reprinted in 1950 by New York: Dover Publications.

- James, William (1890b). *The Principles of Psychology, Volume Two*, New York: Henry Holt.  
Reprinted in 1950 by New York: Dover Publications.
- Lazarus, Richard (1994). The stable and the unstable in emotion. In Paul Ekman, Richard J. Davidson (Eds.), *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions* (pp. 79-85), New York: Oxford University Press.
- LeDoux, Joseph (1998). *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life*, Reprinted in 1999 by London: Phoenix.
- LeDoux, Joseph E., & Elizabeth A. Phelps (2000). Emotional networks in the brain. In Michael Lewis & Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotions. Second Edition* (pp. 157-172), New York: The Guilford Press.
- Levine, Linda J. (1997). Reconstructing memory for emotions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 126 (2), 165-177.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin, & Stein Rokkan (1967). Cleavage structures, party systems, and voter alignments: An introduction. In Seymour M. Lipset & Stein Rokkan (Eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (International Yearbook of Political Behavior Research, Volume 7) (pp. 1-64), New York: The Free Press.
- Lodge, Milton, Kathleen M. McGraw, & Patrick Stroh (1989). An impression-driven model of candidate evaluation. *American Political Science Review*, 83 (2), 399-419.
- Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, & Shawn Brau (1995). The responsive voter: Campaign information and the dynamics of candidate evaluation. *American Political Science Review*, 89 (2), 309-326.
- Marcus, George E. (1988). The structure of emotional response: 1984 presidential candidates. *American Political Science Review*, 82 (3), 737-761.
- Marcus, George E. (2003). The psychology of emotion and politics. In David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, & Robert Jervis (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (pp. 182-221), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marcus, George E., & Michael B. MacKuen (1993). Anxiety, enthusiasm, and the vote: The emotional underpinnings of learning and involvement during presidential campaigns. *American Political Science Review*, 87 (3), 672-685.
- Marcus, George E., W. Russell Neuman, & Michael MacKuen (2000). *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgement*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



- McGraw, Kathleen M., Milton Lodge, & Patrick Stroh (1990). On-line processing in candidate evaluation: The effects of issue order, issue importance, and sophistication. *Political Behavior*, 12 (1), 41-58.
- Ortony, Andrew, & Gerald L. Clore, Allan Collins (1988). *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Plutchik, Robert (1980). *Emotion: A Psychoevolutionary Synthesis*, New York: Harper & Row.
- Ragsdale, Lyn (1991). Strong feelings: Emotional responses to presidents. *Political Behavior*, 13 (1), 33-65.
- Rahn, Wendy M., Jon A. Krosnick, & Marijke Breuning (1994). Rationalization and derivation processes in survey studies of political candidate evaluation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 38 (3), 582-600.
- Redlawsk, David P. (2001). You must remember this: A test of the on-line model of voting. *The Journal of Politics*, 63 (1), 29-58.
- Redlawsk, David (Ed.) (2006). *Feeling Politics: Emotion in Political Information Processing*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Robinson, Michael D., & Gerald L. Clore (2002a). Belief and Feeling: Evidence for an accessibility model of emotional self-report. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128 (6), 934-960.
- Robinson, Michael D., & Gerald L. Clore (2002b). Episodic and semantic knowledge in emotional self-report: Evidence for two judgment processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83 (1), 198-215.
- Rosema, Martin (2004). *The Sincere Vote: A Psychological Study of Voting* (unpublished dissertation), Leiden: Leiden University.
- Rosema, Martin (2006). Partisanship, candidate evaluations, and prospective voting. *Electoral Studies*, 25 (3), 467-488.
- Russell, James A. (1980). A circumplex model of affect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39 (6), 1161-1178.
- Russell, James A. (2003). Core affect and the psychological construction of emotion. *Psychological Review*, 110 (1), 145-172.
- Schacter, Daniel L. (1996). *Searching for Memory: The Brain, the Mind, and the Past*, New York: Basic Books.
- Squire, Larry R. (1987). *Memory and Brain*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Thomassen, Jacques (1976). Party identification as a cross-national concept: Its meaning in the Netherlands. In Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe, & Dennis Farlie (Eds.), *Party*

- Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition* (pp. 63-79), London: John Wiley & Sons.
- Tulving, Endel (1972). Episodic and semantic memory. In Endel Tulving, Wayne Donaldson (Eds.), *Organization of Memory* (pp. 381-403), New York: Academic Press.
- Van Holsteyn, J. J. M. (1994). *Het woord is aan de kiezer: Een beschouwing over verkiezingen en stemgedrag aan de hand van open vragen*, Leiden: DSWO Press, Leiden University.
- Watson, David, & Auke Tellegen (1985). Toward a consensual structure of mood. *Psychological Bulletin*, 98 (2), 219-235.
- Wegner, Daniel M. (2002). *The Illusion of Conscious Will*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Westen, Drew (2007). *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation*, New York: PublicAffairs.
- Zajonc, R. B. (1980). Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. *American Psychologist*, 35 (2), 151-175.
- Zajonc, R. B. (1984). On the primacy of affect. *American Psychologist*, 39 (2), 117-123.