Voting "Ford" or Against: Understanding Strategic Voting in the 2014 Toronto Municipal Election*

Nicholas J. Caruana, *The University of Western Ontario*

R. Michael McGregor, *Ryerson University*

Aaron A. Moore, *University of Winnipeg*

Laura B. Stephenson, *The University of Western Ontario*

Objective. We investigate the phenomenon of municipal-level strategic voting in a high-profile mayoral election with a nonpartisan ballot. The rate of strategic voting is calculated, and we investigate whether different types of anti-candidate attitudes (based on policy or personality) affect strategic behavior. *Methods.* We use survey data from the 2014 Toronto Election Study. *Results.* The estimated rate of strategic voting was 1.3 percent. Among those who did cast a strategic ballot, we find that anti-candidate attitudes did not affect the likelihood of voting strategically—until the source of the dislike is considered, at which point electors who dislike a candidate on the basis of personality are shown to be more likely to cast their ballots strategically. *Conclusions.* Strategic voting was minimal, and did not affect the election outcome. The type of dislike toward a candidate (either on the basis of policy or personality) affects strategic behavior.

Strategic voting, often a hot topic among voters and pundits during close election campaigns, is also a fertile topic in political science literature, especially when discussed in relation to plurality-rule electoral systems. Scholarship has considered it in theoretical terms and tested it with practical laboratory experimentation (Duverger, 1954; Riker, 1976; Cox, 1997; Blais, 2002; Blais, Young, and Turcotte, 2005; Blais et al., 2008; Palfrey, 2009; Sauger et al., 2012). While a winner-take-all electoral system combined with a close race may prompt some voters to hold their noses and vote for the least of *n* evils to defeat a candidate they strongly oppose, strategic voting may be found in almost all electoral settings (Leys, 1959; Blais and Carty, 1991; Cox, 1997; Gschwend, 2009; Irwin and Van Holsteyn, 2012).

One setting in which strategic voting has gone more or less unconsidered is municipal elections, specifically those not contested by parties. The 2014 Toronto mayoral election furnishes an excellent opportunity to study this phenomenon. Toronto's controversial and deeply polarizing incumbent mayor, Rob Ford, may have prompted anti-Ford voters to consider carefully the prospect of not voting sincerely, and to determine which candidate they would support in order to defeat him.[1] Indeed, significant media attention was

[1]His brother Doug, also a municipal politician and also controversial and polarizing, would eventually take his place on the ballot after Rob was diagnosed with cancer, and withdrew from the mayoral race to seek a

paid to the proportion of anti-Ford voters facing a strategic dilemma, and the possible influence of strategic voting on the election's outcome (Gee, 2014; Powell, 2014; Rebick, 2014).

In this article, we investigate the prevalence and correlates of strategic voting in a nonpartisan municipal election using data from the 2014 Toronto Election Study (TES), collected through the hitherto uncommon (Taylor and Schreckhise, 2003) practice of surveying municipal voters directly. We base our expectations on what is known about strategic behavior in partisan contests and what we know about municipal elections of the nonpartisan variety. Findings from nonpartisan but nonetheless "high-visibility" elections suggest that under such conditions some voters will seek to draw partisan links to candidates, despite the lack of party affiliations on the ballot (Rock and Baum, 2010). We extend the strategic voting literature by considering voters' motivations for casting a strategic vote; strategic voting depends upon voters' preferences over the candidates, but we do not know if the source of those preferences affects behavior. We draw upon the literature on anti-candidate voting and test whether there is a difference in strategic behavior if a voter dislikes a candidate on the basis of that candidate's policy positions compared to personal dislike. The Toronto 2014 election, while only a single electoral contest in a single setting, is an ideal case for a first attempt at this sort of analysis, since it featured one candidate (Ford) likely to be widely disliked for personal reasons, and two others likely to generate somewhat less personal antipathy.

In the following pages, we use TES data to determine the extent of strategic voting in the election and whether it influenced the outcome; to test our expectation that voters with a strong, stated dislike for a candidate are more likely to vote strategically; and to explore whether the source of that antipathy (personal dislike or hostility toward the candidate's policy positions) makes a difference for behavior. Our results suggest that strategic voting in this election was not nearly as widespread as journalistic accounts suggested it would be, and did not contribute to John Tory's victory. In fact, the estimated rate of strategic voting is considerably lower than previous estimates based upon federal and provincial electoral data in Canada. We also find that those who dislike candidates on the basis of personality are more likely to vote strategically than either individuals who dislike a candidate on the basis of policy, or those who have no strong dislike of a particular candidate, though this influence was not sufficient to affect the election's outcome. That different reasons for disliking a candidate can lead to different behaviors suggests that the extent of strategic voting in a particular election can in fact depend upon the nature and distribution of negative attitudes in the contest, and challenges the usual conception of an electoral contest as one primarily of policy ideas as opposed to personality and affect.

Strategic Voting in a Nonpartisan Municipal Context

The classic model of strategic voting is presented most iconically in *Making Votes Count* (Cox, 1997), but can trace its roots back to Duverger (1954) and the study of electoral system effects. Among the psychological effects of electoral systems lies the possibility that

council seat instead. (He has since died of this illness.) While one or the other Ford might be the obvious target of anti-candidate voting, we wish to consider that all three candidates may have prompted some voters not to vote sincerely. John Tory's political career includes a stint as leader of the Ontario PC party, as well as a previous run for mayor of Toronto, and he was the target of strong criticism during both efforts. Similarly, Olivia Chow is well known for her federal political career with the New Democratic Party (NDP), whose late leader, Jack Layton, was also her husband. This prominent profile and personal connection to the NDP made her a lightning rod for criticism as well, both at the federal level and after moving to municipal politics.

voters will conclude that a favored candidate cannot win, and instead of voting for that candidate, will support a less-favored candidate in order to decrease the chance that a disfavored candidate will win. The study of the phenomenon expanded along with the study of electoral systems and their interface with voting behavior, including the calculus of voting (Downs, 1957; Leys, 1959; Riker, 1976), resulting in the development of a fertile field of research.

In Canadian federal and provincial elections, the rate of strategic voting is perhaps surprisingly low, but in line with comparative expectations (Alvarez and Nagler, 2000). Estimates of strategic voting in federal elections include "at least 6 percent" (Blais and Nadeau, 1996:39) in 1988, 3 percent in 1997 (Blais et al., 2001), and 5.6 percent and 4.5 percent in 2006 and 2008, respectively (McGregor, 2012). Studies of strategic voting at the provincial level have produced values of "a surprisingly low 4–6 percent" in Ontario (Blais et al., 2005) and 8.4 percent in Quebec (Daoust, 2015). According to Blais (2002:445), rates of strategic voting are "typically around 5 percent."

Some work has also focused on the consequences of strategic voting for election outcomes. Kim and Fording (2001) find a relatively constrained effect in Britain, while Herrmann, Munzert, and Selb (2015) suggest this is an underestimate and add nuance to the finding, notably that the efficacy of strategic voting can vary depending upon which groups (say, disparate camps of partisan supporters) dislike which frontrunner, and upon perceptions of competitiveness. In short, the effect of strategic voting is based not simply on its prevalence but also on its distribution (where the strategic votes are coming from and where they are going).

The existing literature has yet to consider, however, how various types of dislike affect rates of strategic voting. In a partisan setting, attitudes toward political parties may be relevant for strategic behavior. In a nonpartisan race, however, attitudes toward candidates become particularly important; personal dislike (as opposed to policy-based dislike) may become a more salient reason for hostility (and in turn preferences). In moving the study of strategic voting to a nonpartisan municipal arena, therefore, anti-candidate voting is thus a pertinent literature to consider, and one of the contributions of this article is to explicitly link the two literatures.

Conceptualized in a setting of more or less dyadic competition (presidential elections in the United States), anti-candidate voting is conventionally regarded as occurring when a voter's decision is predicated upon negative affect toward one candidate regardless of that voter's feelings about the alternative (Gant and Sigelman, 1985; Sigelman and Gant, 1989). In a multicandidate setting, however, voter calculations are more complex, as competition considerations become more important. In such a setting, not everyone has an incentive to abandon a preferred option in favor of a less-preferred option; the less-preferred option must be more competitive than the preferred option, which itself must be unlikely to defeat a disliked or rejected option.

Further complicating strategic decision making is the possibility that different forms of negativity may make affect the likelihood of strategic voting. Emerging scholarship on negativity shows that such attitudes may affect cognitive and affective decision-making processes, and can overpower positive affect (Baumeister et al., 2001; Grabe et al., 2000; Taylor, 1991). Among other things, negativity affects political involvement, information processing, and economic reasoning and, put simply, matters more than positivity (Baumeister et al., 2001; Loewen, 2010; Kahneman and Tversky, 1979; Kahneman et al., 1990; Soroka et al., 2013). Negativity may have multiple targets, so studying negative attitudes and strategic voting in a nonpartisan election is appropriate because it excludes the potential effects of negative partisanship, that is, a persistent dislike for a party (Medeiros and Noël,

2014; McGregor, Caruana, and Stephenson, 2015; Caruana, McGregor, and Stephenson, 2015).

We know that negative attitudes can influence behavior, and we contend that when negativity is held for a candidate, it contributes to preferences that are relevant to the decision to vote strategically. It may be worthwhile, however, to distinguish between the sources of that negativity. Specifically considering anti-candidate sentiment, we may see some voters who dislike a candidate for personal reasons, while others may be hostile to that candidate because they disagree on policy issues. If one of these motivations for negativity is more potent than the other or influences behavior differently, we want to know if such a difference influences the propensity to vote strategically. It may be, for example, that dislike based on policy grounds may simply not be as visceral as personal dislike; on the other hand, it is possible that disliking a candidate's policy positions could activate ideological thinking and thus, partisan considerations aside, reframe the question in terms of an "us versus them" sentiment in a way that personal dislike might not (Greene, 1999).[2] Plausible explanations could be concocted for an imbalance in either direction, but the point is that there is no strong reason to expect that policy-based dislike and personal dislike should influence the decision to vote strategically. One of our contributions to the literature thus consists of a more nuanced look at the effects of negativity, including different types of negativity that may inform the preferences that underlie strategic voting behavior.

The Study of Municipal Elections

A major goal and a novel contribution of this article is to operationalize the strategic dilemma in a "nonpartisan" (at least as far as the ballot is concerned) environment and estimate rates of strategic voting in the 2014 Toronto municipal election. While nonpartisan ballot municipal elections have a developed literature associated with them (Adrian, 1959; Gilbert, 1962; Hagensick, 1964; Pomper, 1966; Conway, 1969; Welch and Bledsoe, 1986; Raymond, 1992; Schaffner, Streb, and Wright, 2001, 2007; Taylor and Schreckhise, 2003; Rock and Baum, 2010), a good portion of it addresses the "usual suspects" in voting behavior, including models of vote choice and discussion of how partisanship may nonetheless have an influence on the electoral outcome. Direct treatment of strategic behavior in these elections is a notable lacuna in the academic literature, though at least in the case of the 2014 Toronto election, the mainstream media devoted plenty of space to the topic. Opinion pieces variously constituted admonitions against voting insincerely or retroactive laments about the polluting effect of strategic voting (Gee, 2014; Powell, 2014; Hepburn, 2014; Rebick, 2014; Lorinc, 2014). The seeming certainty among some media circles that strategic coordination was behind John Tory's consistently high polling numbers was likely a product of what could be considered the defining feature of this election, if not Toronto's politics for the previous four years: Mayor Ford himself.

The impact of the "Ford factor" is an important reason why this election is a good place to investigate anti-candidate motivations for strategic voting. Rob Ford was a polarizing and divisive figure throughout his entire political career thanks to a gaffe-prone public persona, highly ideological politics, personal difficulties (including chronic substance abuse), a

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[2]Naturally, this furnishes a challenge to the normative view of democracy as a contest between ideas and not personalities (see Lau and Redlawsk, 1997), and holds implications for the quality of democracy in general if personality or similar issues are playing a larger role than previously thought in influencing (perhaps in some cases deciding) electoral outcomes. On the other hand, in settings that feature a great deal of anti-candidate voting, affect may simply be a bigger influence than policy.

hostile relationship with the media, allegations and investigations of conflict of interest, and frequent embarrassing, racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic/transphobic public remarks (Mahoney, 2012; Dale, 2013; CBC News, 2013, 2014). In September 2014, a cancer diagnosis prompted Mayor Ford to withdraw from the mayoral race and instead run for his old council seat in Ward 2. Rob's older brother Doug Ford stepped in to represent the Ford family brand in the mayoral race. Doug's career has also been controversial, and he faced stiff criticism during the campaign for public comments laced with bigotry, including charges of misogyny and anti-Semitism (Dale, 2014; Dale and Pagliaro, 2014). He also faced his own allegations of conflict of interest and narcotics dealing in his youth (Doolittle and McArthur, 2014).

If a meaningful strategic dilemma for a voter faced with a nonpartisan ballot should be found anywhere, it is in the Toronto 2014 municipal election. A large portion of voters disliked Rob Ford and were offered multiple options upon which to coordinate to keep his brother from taking office. Conservative voters who disliked challenger Olivia Chow and wished to prevent her victory likewise had a pair of alternatives; it is conceivable that some "Ford Nation" voters, believing that their candidate was doomed, may have opted instead for John Tory, also a right-wing candidate. It is also conceivable that some centrist voters, who might otherwise be natural Tory supporters, misread the race and underestimated his chances of winning, shifting support to Chow or Ford depending upon which candidate they wanted to defeat.

The case for studying Toronto is readily understood. First, as noted above, municipal elections in the city are nonpartisan contests. Second, Toronto's City Council is large and influential, and the issues it debates may at times be of national import, and have analogues in issues critical to other major cities around the world. Thus, lessons learned here should be applicable to other cities with nonpartisan ballot elections. Finally, the polarizing effect of the Ford brothers makes it an ideal setting for a study that considers the sources and nature of anti-candidate negativity and the consequences of different motivations for strategic voting.

Specifically, this article seeks to answer the following questions: What was the extent of strategic voting in the 2014 Toronto mayoral election, and did it have an effect upon the outcome? What is the effect of a voter's stated strong dislike for a candidate upon the likelihood of voting strategically? Finally, does the effect of strong dislike depend upon whether the voter dislikes the candidate's policies or dislikes the candidate personally?

Data and Methodology

The data employed for our analysis are from the TES. The TES is a two-wave Internet survey, loosely modeled after similar national and provincial election studies such as the Canadian Election Study (see Fournier et al., 2011) and the Comparative Provincial Election Project (Wesley, 2011). Several thousand eligible voters were interviewed in the weeks before election day, and most of those respondents also completed the postelection wave of the survey, which was administered in the week after the election.[3] The TES contains a variety of questions about attitudes and behavior, including questions that allow us to identify strategic voters. We thus are able to estimate the rates and effects of strategic voting, and to consider whether and how different anti-candidate attitudes influenced strategic behavior. Note that all survey questions used in the analysis here are listed in the Appendix.

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[3]The first wave was administered from September 19 until October 26, while the second was administered from October 28 until November 3.

In line with the classic approach to identifying strategic voters, we use what Blais et al. (2005) refer to as the "direct" method of measurement, which employs measures of candidate rankings, perceived competitiveness, and vote choice. In the first stage of this method, respondents are classified as *potential* strategic voters if their most preferred candidate is seen as least competitive of the three major candidates. In the second stage, the individuals in this subsample who vote for their second most preferred candidate are labeled strategic voters. From the pool of potential strategic voters we can identify two different groups: strategic voters and other voters.[4] Candidate preferences and competitiveness were measured prior to the election in the TES, and vote choice was measured after.[5]

We test the effects of anti-candidate attitudes by using measures drawn from two questions (details about the wording of questions used in the analysis can be found in the Appendix). First, respondents were asked in the preelection questionnaire if there was a candidate for whom they would absolutely not vote. If respondents indicated that such a candidate existed, they were asked why they would not vote for that person—because they disliked the candidate personally, or on the basis of policy.[6] We divide respondents into three groups based on these questions: those who do not have a candidate who they would not vote for, those who would not vote for a candidate on the basis of policy, and those who would not vote for a candidate on the basis of personality. We use this information to determine whether expressing a strong dislike for a particular candidate and having a strong dislike for either personal or policy reasons have differential effects upon the behavior of potential strategic voters.

Several minor methodological notes should be addressed before we present our results. First, we control for the preference ratings and expected chances of winning of each respondent's most and least preferred candidates when evaluating the effect of candidate dislike upon the behavior of potential strategic voters. Second, all results are weighted for age, gender, and education to maximize representativeness, and we also use those demographic variables as controls in our analysis. Finally, the TES was administered online and contained a quality-control question to weed out respondents who were not taking the survey seriously. Those individuals who failed this question (3.1 percent of the sample) are excluded from all analyses here.

## Results

Describing Strategic Voting

Before considering the effects of disliking a candidate upon strategic voting, we use the TES data to estimate the rate of strategic voting and to determine if it had an effect upon

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[4]We hesitate to term this "other" group sincere, since some of these individuals may have a variety of reasons not to support their favorite candidates (e.g., they may be protest voters, or their vote choice may be based on some factor other than candidate evaluations). This group also includes those individuals who are unable to rank the candidates or provide estimates of the competitiveness of each candidate—without such information one cannot be considered a strategic voter. As our theoretical interest is in strategic voting, we do not disaggregate this "other" group.

[5]The Toronto municipal election included three major candidates. Together, they received over 97 percent of votes cast in the election. As the TES does not include measures of opinions toward the dozens of minor candidates who contested the election, we focus here upon these three individuals, and respondents who voted for these candidates, only. We also drop those respondents who say that they had a strong dislike for a candidate other than Chow, Ford, or Tory (this constitutes 0.7 percent of respondents).

[6]Note that respondents are also given an open-ended opportunity to list an "other" reason why they would not support a candidate. In the majority of such cases, responses can be classified as either personal or policy based, and those cases that cannot are dropped from this part of our analysis (this includes just 5.3 percent of respondents who claimed there was a candidate for whom they would not vote).

FIGURE 1

Candidate Ratings and Evaluations of Competitiveness

Ⓩ Ford ■ Chow ↘ Tory
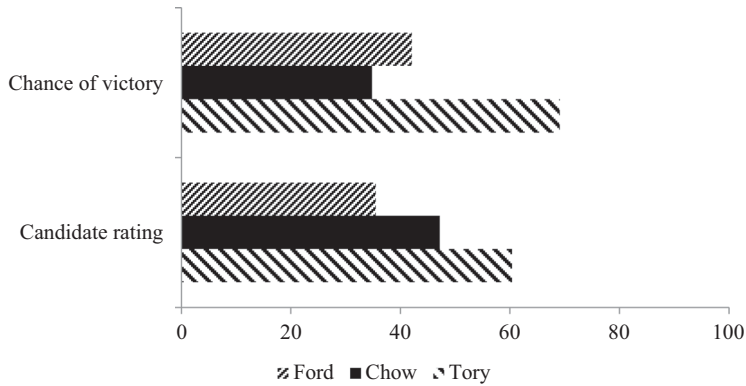
the outcome of the 2014 election. Most polls in the days and weeks leading up to election showed Tory and Ford as the clear front-runners, and much of the discussion in the media was about how Chow supporters might abandon her in favor of Tory to prevent a Ford victory (Gee, 2014; Powell, 2014; Hepburn, 2014; Rebick, 2014). TES data suggest that this discussion may have been warranted. In the preelection survey, respondents were asked to estimate the chances of each candidate winning the election, as well as to rate each candidate (both on a scale from 0 to 100). Figure 1 shows the average values for voter responses to these questions for each candidate.

On the whole, voters saw Chow as the least competitive of the three candidates, giving her a 34.8 percent chance of winning. Tory was seen as the most competitive, with a 69.1 percent chance of victory, while Ford was in the middle at 42.1 percent. Not surprisingly, the candidate seen as most competitive also received the highest rating from voters; Tory had an average rating of 60.4. However, though Chow was seen as the least likely to win the election, she did not receive the lowest rating (47.2). This distinction belongs to Ford, who received a score of only 35.5.

TES data therefore confirm media speculation that this election was a case where one might expect to see strategic voting, particularly among Chow supporters. Though Chow was the second most popular, she was also seen as the least competitive. If voters did indeed see Tory as the best option for defeating Ford, then Chow supporters might reasonably have decided to opt to support him, instead of their most preferred candidate.

Come election time, John Tory carried the day, winning 40.3 percent of the popular vote (City of Toronto, 2014). Doug Ford was second, with 33.7 percent, while Olivia received 23.2 percent support. The margin of Tory's victory over Ford was 6.6 percent, meaning that at least that much strategic voting must have occurred in order for it to have had an impact upon the outcome of the election. TES data reveal, however, that this is not the case. In fact, the estimated rate of strategic voting in the election, according to the procedure outlined above, is a mere 1.3 percent. This figure is significantly lower than estimates, discussed above, based upon Canadian federal and provincial data (the lowest of which was 3 percent from Blais et al., 2001). Tory was the largest beneficiary of strategic voting, receiving 81.1 percent of such votes. Ford and Chow received some support from strategic voters, but captured only 15.9 percent and 3.2 percent of such votes, respectively. The 1.3 percent of ballots cast strategically were not enough to overcome Tory's 6.6 point

TABLE 1

Candidate Ranking and Perceived Competitiveness

		Most Preferred Candidate		
		Ford	Chow	Tory
Chances of Winning	Ford	71.5%	32.1%	32.4%
	Chow	26.7%	53.5%	31.9%
	Tory	57.1%	60.7%	78.6%
	N	344	300	747

margin of victory, even if all such votes had been taken away from Tory and given to Ford (the second-place candidate).

It is worth noting which candidate these strategic voters abandoned—Whom would these electors have supported had they voted sincerely? We find that most strategic voters (74.1 percent) listed Olivia Chow as their most preferred candidate. In contrast, 25.9 percent of strategic voters abandoned Ford, and not a single respondent in our sample abandoned Tory. Combining information on the first preferences of strategic voters with their eventual vote choice, we can determine the net benefit and loss each candidate experienced as a result of strategic voting. This reveals that Chow and Ford suffered from strategic voting (losses of 0.9 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively), while Tory was a net beneficiary, though he received a boost of only 1.1 percent. Meanwhile, 58.8 percent of strategic voters ranked Ford lowest of the three major candidates (the comparable values for Chow and Tory are 22.5 percent and 18.8 percent, respectively). These findings strongly suggest that the goal of most strategic voters was to prevent a Ford victory. Simply put, it seems that Ford's unpopularity led to a net shift in support from Chow toward Tory—thus, negativity seems to have factored into preference formation and affected strategic behavior.

Why was strategic voting so uncommon? The reason appears to be many respondents' poor understanding of how competitive their most preferred candidates were, which made the pool of potential strategic voters very small (only 5.2 percent of voters saw their preferred candidate as the least competitive). Blais (2002) has identified a misunderstanding of competitive circumstances as an important reason why strategic voting is rare in national elections, and we find the same pattern in Toronto 2014. Table 1 shows how competitive each candidate was perceived to be by those voters who ranked them as first, second, or third preferences.[7]

Table 1 provides compelling evidence that candidate preference was strongly related to perceived competitiveness. In each instance, voters believed their preferred candidate to be more competitive than did the supporters of other candidates.[8] While Chow supporters did not see her as having the best chance of winning, they did believe that she was more likely to win than Ford (despite the fact that polls had indicated as much for the entirety of the campaign). Similarly, Ford supporters believed that he was the most competitive of the three candidates. Voters cannot be expected to abandon their first preference for strategic reasons if they do not believe that candidate to be uncompetitive, and the failure of Chow supporters, in particular, to recognize their candidate as such seems to have led to a very low

[7]Theoretically, the values in the columns should sum to 100, as respondents are asked how much of chance each candidate has of winning, *as a percentage*. However, most survey respondents seem to have missed this, and most assign values greater than 100 percent, between the three candidates.
[8]All differences between values on the diagonal and those in the same rows are significant at $p < 0.01$.

rate of strategic voting in this election. One might also conjecture that the competitiveness of a contest is more difficult to gauge in the absence of a history of partisan performance in past elections.

Anti-Candidate Attitudes and Voter Behavior

In Toronto 2014, there were few strategic voters, but also few *potential* strategic voters. Recall that respondents are considered potential strategic voters if their most preferred candidate is seen as less competitive than the other two. Only for these voters does it make sense to abandon a favored candidate in order to defeat some other candidate. A mere 5.2 percent of voters met this criterion, largely because supporters of third-place candidate Olivia Chow were very unlikely to see her as less competitive than Tory and Ford. Of these potential strategic voters, 25.4 percent voted strategically. As is standard when examining the correlates of strategic voting (see Blais, 2002; Merolla and Stephenson, 2007), it is these potential strategic voters who are the focus of our remaining analysis. This limitation is necessary as we are only interested in the effect of negative attitudes upon those individuals with an incentive to vote strategically. While this leaves us with a small sample size, revealing statistically significant results despite this limitation would provide strong evidence of a relationship between negative attitudes and strategic voting, and furnish an important chance to understand negative voter motivations even if they were not sufficient to change the electoral result.

We now turn to consider whether anti-candidate attitudes, and the nature of those attitudes, affect the behavior of potential strategic voters. Recall that our key explanatory variables of interest are whether or not these voters claim that there is a candidate they would not support, and whether this attitude is based upon a dislike of the candidate personally, or on the basis of policy. A plurality of voters (47.9 percent) indicated that they would not vote for a candidate on the basis of policy, while 37.7 percent disliked a candidate personally.[9]

We consider the effect of different types of anti-candidate attitudes upon the behavior of strategic voters through a series of three logistic regression models in Table 2. The dependent variable for all models is a dummy variable with the values of strategic and other vote (positive values in the table thus indicate an association with strategic voting). The first model addresses the comparison between those individuals who did not identify a candidate for whom they would not vote and those who did identify such a candidate. In the second model, we further differentiate anti-candidate sentiment by identifying those individuals who disliked a candidate personally and those who disliked on the basis of policy. For both Models 1 and 2 the baseline category is those individuals with no strong dislike for a candidate. To compare those individuals who dislike a candidate on the basis of personality to those who dislike a candidate's policies, we include a third model, where policy dislike is the baseline category. Control variables include the perceived competitiveness and rating of one's preferred candidate, as well as the most disliked candidate (Blais, 2002),[10] as well as controls for age, gender, and education. All independent variables are coded from 0

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[9]The vast majority (94 percent) of respondents who identified a candidate for whom they would not vote selected the third-ranked candidate.

[10]Including ratings of one's least preferred candidate is especially important in this study, as it is conceivable that disliking a candidate on the basis of personality may be associated with different ratings than dislike on the basis of policy. In fact, TES data reveal that this is the case. Voters who dislike a candidate personally assign that candidate an average rating of 8.2/100, which value is 15.2 for those voters who dislike a candidate on the basis of policy.

TABLE 2

Behavior of Potential Strategic Voters—Marginal Effects

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Dislike	0.19 (0.16)		
Dislike personally		0.27 (0.15)†	0.39 (0.08)**
Dislike policy		−0.11 (0.17)	
No dislike			0.11 (0.17)
Chances of preferred candidate	0.11 (0.45)	0.21 (0.36)	0.21 (0.36)
Rating of preferred candidate	0.21 (0.31)	0.27 (0.24)	0.27 (0.24)
Chances of least preferred candidate	−0.16 (0.32)	−0.04 (0.26)	−0.04 (0.26)
Rating of least preferred candidate	0.50 (0.32)	0.37 (0.35)	0.37 (0.35)
Over 50	0.06 (0.14)	0.05 (0.11)	0.05 (0.11)
Female	0.08 (0.12)	0.10 (0.12)	0.10 (0.12)
University educated	−0.08 (0.12)	−0.06 (0.10)	−0.06 (0.10)
N	80	80	80
Pseudo-R^2	0.0525	0.2293	0.2293

Entries show marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses).
*$p < 0.01$; †$p = 0.058$.

(minimum) to 1 (maximum). Note that the values in Table 2 represent marginal effects, and can thus be interpreted as the full effect of each variable upon the likelihood of voting strategically among potential strategic voters.

Recall that we expect dislike of a candidate to lead to strategic voting. Model 1 suggests that, as a whole, those potential strategic voters who express such a dislike behave no differently from those who do not—the "dislike" variable is insignificant. Merely holding a strong dislike for a particular candidate does not appear to affect the behavior of potential strategic voters.

When we differentiate between types of dislike for a candidate, however, we see some significant results. Models 2 and 3 suggest that there is significant value in determining why voters may dislike a candidate. There is a noteworthy increase in the R^2 value from Model 1 to Models 2 and 3, indicating that differentiating between personal and policy dislike adds significantly to the explanatory power of our model. Model 2 provides some evidence that disliking a candidate personally, as compared to not disliking a candidate, is associated with strategic voting; potential strategic voters who dislike a candidate personally are 27 percentage points more likely to vote strategically ($p = 0.058$). Additionally, Model 3 points to significant differences between those individuals who dislike candidates on the basis of personality and policy. Those individuals who dislike a candidate personally are an estimated 39 percentage points more likely to vote strategically than are those individuals with a policy dislike (the p-value in this instance is <0.01). Finding statistically significant results with such a limited sample size speaks to the robustness of this pattern. Only after we differentiate between respondents on the basis of *why* they dislike a candidate do the "anti-candidate" variables help to explain the behavior of potential strategic voters, though this remains a small share of the electorate, certainly too small to change the outcome.

Discussion

Data from the TES suggest that strategic voting was rare in the 2014 Toronto mayoral election, and that even if all voters had cast their ballots sincerely, the overall outcome of the

election would not have changed. As noted, all three major candidates saw some portion of their support bleed to other candidates as a result of strategic voting. Tory was, as the pundits suggested, the main beneficiary of strategic voting, and the findings of this analysis suggest that many of them specifically abandoned Chow for Tory and did so because they disliked Ford. This was not, however, why Tory won, since his support from sincere voters was itself enough to win.

The estimated rate of strategic voting in this election was lower than rates observed in federal and provincial elections in Canada, and this is largely because those voters who preferred Olivia Chow had unrealistic expectations about her chances of victory. Such a finding is not shocking, given that voters are known to be less than adept at forming accurate competitive expectations, particularly for weak candidates or parties (Blais and Turgeon, 2004). As a result, the pool of potential strategic voters, and the rate of strategic voting, was minimal.

We suggest that the nonpartisan nature of the election may have contributed to the seemingly poor understanding of the competitive circumstances of the race on the part of many voters. Blais and Bodet (2006) note that, in federal elections, voters rely on polls and the outcome of the previous election when forming competitive expectations. However, in a nonpartisan contest, voters have little, if any, historical evidence to inform their competitive perceptions. Unless the candidates are the same from one election to the next, voters cannot rely upon past election results to inform their competitive considerations in the same way as they can when races are contested by the same parties in consecutive elections. Without this source of information, voters must find other information on which to base their competitive expectations, and the quality of their evaluations may suffer. It may be the case that strategic voting is generally less common in nonpartisan elections.[11]

In addition to revealing a very low rate of strategic voting, TES data show that different types of anti-candidate sentiment have differential effects upon the choices of potential strategic voters. Without distinguishing between voters who dislike candidates personally or on the basis of policy, electors with strong dislike appear no different than those who have no dislike. It is only when the "dislike" group is broken down that a difference appears. The major distinction is that those whose dislike is personal are notably more likely to vote strategically than those with no dislike of a candidate, and there is also suggestive evidence ($p = 0.058$) that this group differs from those individuals who dislike a candidate on the basis of policy. Students of political behavior might do well to consider the consequences of this tendency for the optimistic view of electoral democracy as being driven primarily by reasoned debate.

Future research should seek to better understand our findings by studying the differences between those individuals who dislike candidates either personally or on the basis of policy. One might hypothesize that voters whose antipathy is based on policy (and thus are likely devoting much of their reasoning about vote choice to an evaluation of policy platforms) may be engaged in a deliberation process that is more cognitive than affective, but more work needs to be conducted to test this possibility. Future work should also consider the possibility that the "policy dislike" group is, for whatever reason, composed of less "movable" voters: Is it the case that people who emphasize policy are less likely to abandon their preferred candidate?

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[11] Future research should replicate our analysis in partisan elections, as it may be the case that affect plays a different role such settings. In a partisan race, party labels provide information on ideology and policy. Absent party cues, however, it may be that anti-candidate affect takes on increased importance, as voters seek out some other basis on which to formulate their decisions.

The implications of this study for future research hinge, in part, upon the factors that distinguish this election from other contests: in particular, a high-profile, polarizing quasi-incumbent prone to attracting anti-candidate sentiment. Indeed, 58.1 percent of voters who claimed there was a candidate for whom they would not vote selected Ford (compared to 32.1 percent for Chow and 9.8 percent for Tory). Doug Ford was also the only candidate who was more disliked personally than on the basis of policy: 63.3 percent of voters who disliked him disliked him personally, while the comparable values are 32.8 percent and 14.3 percent for those who disliked Tory and Chow, respectively. At the same time, as was noted above, most strategic voting involved voters acting to prevent Doug Ford from winning. Since the context of the Toronto election was unique, our findings should be tested in other arenas. In particular, the finding that antipathy toward a candidate can have different effects when motivated by personal dislike than when motivated by policy disagreement ought to be examined in settings in which the "Ford factor" is absent.

Appendix

Toronto Election Study Survey Questions

Candidate rankings: How would you rank the mayoral candidates? (Respondents rank options—Olivia Chow, Doug Ford, John Tory, other, don't know).
Candidate evaluations: How would you rate each of the following candidates? Use a scale from 0 to 100, where zero means you really dislike the candidate, and one hundred means you really like the candidate.
Candidate competitiveness: What are the following candidates' chances of winning the mayoral race? Use a scale from 0 to 100, where zero means the candidate has no chance of winning, and one hundred means the candidate is certain to win.
Vote choice: Which mayoral candidate did you vote for? (Olivia Chow, Doug Ford, John Tory, other, did not vote for a mayoral candidate, don't know/don't remember).
Candidate dislike: Is there a mayoral candidate you would absolutely not vote for? (no, Olivia Chow, Doug Ford, John Tory, other, don't know or haven't decided). What is the main reason that you would not vote for this person? (Dislike him/her personally, dislike his/her policy ideas, other (please specify)).

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