

Manifestos and the “two faces” of parties: Addressing both members and voters with one document

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Abstract

It is commonplace to see references to parties' manifestos as their written issue “profiles,” and changes in such documents as constituting changes in the parties' “images” or “identities,” with the latter terms often used interchangeably to capture the role of platforms. This article argues, however, that projection of a party's “image” and its “identity” are two different functions for a manifesto, not just one, and that it is important for the building and testing of theory that this distinction be maintained. Parties are, after all, addressing two audiences simultaneously with one document, and the two dimensions provide two alternative objects of change which can be used strategically to please both audiences at once.

The article employs existing manifesto-based measures of parties' relative issue emphases and their positions on a range of issues as indicators of image and identity, respectively, and finds that the two are indeed empirically distinct. Then, an earlier test of the electoral performance hypothesis as applied to emphasis change is replicated with data designed to capture change in issue positions. The test provides evidence for the prudence of maintaining the distinction between emphasis and position as two different dimensions of party profile change.

Keywords

change, ideology, issue, manifesto, platform

Introduction

It has become commonplace to see references to manifestos as the parties' written issue “profiles,” and changes in such documents as constituting changes in the parties' “images” or “identities,” with the latter terms often used interchangeably to capture the role of platforms in politics and governing. We share the view that party platforms can serve as issue profiles that contain valuable information about parties' images and identities. Where we differ from much of the extant literature, however, is that we believe projection of a party's “identity” and its “image” are two

distinguishable functions for its manifesto, not just one, and that making changes in one or the other can be used strategically to address particular clienteles.

It is not unreasonable, after all, to assume that parties' platforms are written for two audiences: one internal and the other external. The idea that parties have more than one

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focus for their attention is certainly not new with us; Jean Charlot, for instance, has put it in terms of the “two faces” of parties.

All the political parties have two faces—a public face turned towards the media, the voters and the rest of the world, and an inward-looking face reserved for the initiated, activists, elected representatives and leaders, who have access to their secret garden—two faces and two publics in which the dividing lines pass between the sympathisers and activists of each party. (1989: 361)

If, as Charlot argues further, parties are constantly trying to “achieve the impossible focal adjustment” which will result in one clear profile from the two faces, it is reasonable to think that parties are well aware of the need to address both audiences when writing platforms (see also Dolezal et al., 2012: 879–880).

(Janda et al, 1995: 171) are, obviously, written in part (and perhaps in large part) for the external audience of potential supporters in the next election. But they are also written to satisfy current members and activists and to attract new ones. Although we ourselves have, in the past, used identity as a synonym for image (cite provided later), we now understand that those two words, when used correctly, can actually go far in capturing the distinction between two distinct purposes (and audiences) for platforms.

Gioia and Thomas (1996: 372) have done a good job of describing the identity/image distinction in the context of organizational literature:

Both concepts have been explored at various levels of analysis ... [C]orporate or organizational *identity* concerns those features of the organization that members perceive as ostensibly central, enduring, and distinctive in character that contribute to how they define the organization and their identification with it (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Sutton and Callahan, 1987) ...

Image generally has been defined in the organizational literature as how members believe others view their organization (Dutton et al., 1994) ... [O]rganizational image is tied to perceptions of how external constituencies view the organization, regardless of whether these views are normative or manipulated. (emphasis added)

It follows, then, that for a political party, the relevant audience for the party’s identity consists of its leaders and members; its image would be found in the eyes of the beholding electorate and others in the political system. For those who are “part of” the party—usually taken to include the membership but not those who are merely “supporters”—an intimate understanding of the party’s organization and mission may be expected to result from regular involvement in party activities. But for those who are “outside, looking in,” perceptions of the party are less intimate,

and may consist more of broad, vague outlines than of the “nitty gritty” of the party’s true self.

An underlying dimension of this distinction—and one which has important practical implications for party strategy—is, obviously, the difference between “content” and “packaging.” To the extent that a party’s *identity* is found in its platform, it is embodied largely, if not exclusively, in the *substantive content* of its issue *positions*.¹ The party’s *image*, on the other hand, is projected through the manifesto’s *packaging*, as indicated—in significant part—by the *relative emphases* placed across a range of issues.²

Although an election manifesto may be written primarily to project a desirable image to the electorate (i.e. the party’s supporters), its content cannot be written without regard for the membership as well. The most successful platforms—from the standpoint of appealing to both members and supporters, to make one clear, focused profile from the two faces—would seemingly be those that could optimize the public image of the party while accurately capturing the members’ preferred identity. The same content can come in many different “packages,” and this is no less true of party platforms than other consumer goods. Laver and Garry (2000: 620) have noted that “Two parties may have quite different substantive positions on the same issue, but emphasize this issue to precisely the same extent in their respective manifestos,” but it is equally true that two parties may have the same position on an issue but package it in very different ways (i.e. emphasize it to very different degrees). Hence, a given party identity can be packaged in many different ways—all equally acceptable to the membership, but not all equally inviting to the electorate. If this is so, then the objective of the platform writers must be to pick the best package for the “given” content.

We assume, then, that parties are concerned about addressing two audiences, and not just one, at the time of writing a manifesto, and that the interests of one audience are sometimes in conflict with interests of the other. A further assumption is that, when the party considers making a change from the previous platform, it is likely driven by a desire to please one or both audiences with that change. In those instances when the change could please one audience but displease the other, the party obviously faces a dilemma. It is our central argument that in such instances, the party may find a solution in altering either its position on the issue *or* the relative emphasis it places on the issue, without doing both.

With those assumptions and arguments as background, it is our ultimate purpose here to investigate the relevance of the emphasis/position distinction for building theory of manifesto change, by applying the “electoral performance hypothesis,” already tested using Comparative Manifesto Project data on emphasis change (Janda et al, 1995), to other data designed to capture change in actual issue positions. If the hypothesis performs significantly differently for the two types of manifesto change, the test will provide

evidence that parties may indeed use the two types of change strategically for different purposes and will also provide evidence for the prudence of maintaining the distinction between emphasis and position as two distinct dimensions of party profile change.

Before producing the test of theoretical relevance, though, we must first establish the existence of effective measures of issue emphasis and issue position. Then, using those measures, we must further establish that emphasis and position are empirically distinct. Empirical analyses are based on election manifestos for the nine most significant parties of Britain (1950–1997), then West Germany (1949–1990), and the United States (1952–1992).³

Measuring issue emphasis and position

An important and rather flexible part of the packaging of manifestos consists of the relative amounts of space attributed to different issues/positions. The original “salience theory” of Robertson, Budge, and their colleagues (e.g. see Klingemann et al., 1994: 22–26) is grounded in this presumption. And it is particularly important for studies of party *change*, since it would seemingly be possible to change the relative amounts of space given to different issue positions, while leaving the actual positions unchanged, or to change positions without changing the proportion of the manifesto devoted to the issue. Hence, theories to explain why parties change their issue positions may not be so helpful in understanding changes in issue emphases, and vice versa.

Data produced by the Comparative Manifesto Project (hereafter CMP; formerly MRG; more recently MARPOR) directly tap a manifesto’s “relative emphases” on a range of issue concerns. Inspired by the CMP’s original “salience theory of party competition,” positing that parties “compete by accentuating issues on which they have an undoubted advantage, rather than by putting forward contrasting policies on the same issues” (1987, 391), the investigators’ focus was clearly upon salience (i.e. relative emphasis) rather than policy position.⁴ In keeping with that central focus, team members from the countries involved were charged with painstakingly classifying each statement (sentence or quasi-sentence) in a manifesto into 1 of 54 content categories, from which was then computed the percentage of the platform’s total statements devoted to each category.⁵ For some issues, such as “environmental protection,” all statements were coded into one content category (for “positive” statements) and the proportion of the manifesto attributed to such statements constitutes the issue’s relative emphasis. For other issues, such as “decentralization,” coders were offered two categories, one for positive and a second for “negative” statements; for such an issue, the relative emphasis reflects the totality of the statements on both sides (“total relative emphasis”).⁶

Like the CMP data, the issue data collected by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda’s Party Change Project (PCP) and used in this analysis are also based on election platforms.⁷ Unlike the CMP, though, researchers for the PCP used judgmental coding procedures to directly code each platform’s actual content (i.e. policy positions) on specific issues (<http://pols.tamu.edu/data-resources/party-issue-change-data/>). It was an underlying contention of the PCP that substantive content—unlike salience/emphasis—cannot be directly “counted,” whether in words or in statements. For the PCP, a position was ascertained and ultimately quantified by reading, interpreting, and then making a judgment as to which numerical code is appropriate. First, parallel coding schemes were prepared for each of 19 issues, with possible codes for each issue consisting of 11 positions arrayed from –5 (the most extremely “leftist” position in the case of left–right issues) to +5 (the most rightist position), with “0” indicating neutrality.⁸ After identifying, gathering, and reading all of a manifesto’s passages relevant to a given issue, coders then assigned the numerical code which, in their judgment, best reflected the overall content of those statements. A coder’s judgment, based on standardized application of detailed coding instructions to a manifesto’s actual *content* pertaining to a particular issue, was thus intended to provide a direct measure of the party’s substantive position on that issue in that particular program.⁹

The CMP and PCP thus employ very different measurement models, with each appropriate to the concept being measured: “counting” to establish relative emphases and “qualitative assessments” to determine substantive positions.

Before turning to analyses of these data, it is noteworthy that there have also been a number of attempts to utilize computerized word-counting procedures to place parties left-to-right. Intuitively, it would seem that such procedures are better designed to measure relative emphases than actual left–right positions of parties, since both the CMP data and these more recent procedures are based on “counts,” first of sentences and then of words (see Benoit and Laver, 2003; Benoit et al., 2009; Budge and Pennings, 2007a; Laver and Garry, 2000; Laver et al., 2003; Slapin and Proksch, 2008).¹⁰ In any case, for our purposes, it is necessary only to correlate one valid measure of salience with one of position, and the CMP salience scores and PCP position scores—whose meanings are more readily apparent—suffice for this initial foray.

Empirical distinctiveness of emphasis versus position

As measured by the CMP and PCP respectively, are relative issue emphases and issue positions empirically distinct? Or do they correlate so highly as to suggest they are tapping the same dimension of party profile variability, and hence

Table 1. Correlations of Issue “Position” with “Emphasis”.

Manifesto Issue	Position v. Total Relative Emphasis	Position v. Net Relative Emphasis	N ^a
Foreign aid	0.20 ($p = 0.091$)	0.12 (0.303)	72
Defense spending	0.07 (0.508)	0.69 (0.000)	86
Centralization of power	0.01 (0.946)	-0.11 (0.346)	69
Social services	-0.42 (0.000)	-0.55 (0.000)	97
Education (Government role)	-0.04 (0.752)	-0.07 (0.592)	60
Personal freedoms	-0.07 (0.578)		62
Environmental protection	-0.26 (0.029)		70
Agricultural supports	-0.11 (0.305)		85
Cultural supports	-0.14 (0.192)		85
State ownership	-0.47 (0.000)		76
Regulation	-0.03 (0.770)		88

^aThe column headed *N* in the table represents the total number of manifestos that were jointly coded by the CMP and PCP for the nine parties in Britain (1950–1997), West Germany (1949–1990) and the United States (1952–1992).

reasonably thought of and used as mutually substitutable measures of the same thing?

Table 1, column 2, presents the first set of evidence: bivariate correlation coefficients for 11 issue *position* variables from the PCP and their *relative emphasis* counterparts from the CMP. For left–right issues, a negative relationship indicates that positions further to the left are associated with higher relative emphasis. While three of the relationships—those for social services, environmental protection, and state ownership—are relatively substantial and significant at the 0.05 level, none are large enough to support treating position and emphasis as mutually substitutable. Although there is no definitive standard (i.e. minimal threshold) for mutual substitutability, a correlation of 0.80 is a reasonable rule of thumb (based both on standards for reliability and for multicollinearity).¹¹ By that standard, none of the correlations approaches mutual substitutability.¹²

Thus far, though, we have considered only *total* relative emphasis on a particular issue. But since it is the *net* relative emphasis—involving the difference between positive and negative statements on a particular issue—which has actually been used by some as an indicator of policy *position*, it behooves us here to investigate that relationship as well. For the first five variables listed in Table 1, CMP coders were actually provided with two content categories for each variable: one for positive and the other for negative statements regarding the issue. By subtracting the one category from the other, one can develop a directional “net relative emphasis.”¹³ If position and relative emphasis are empirically indistinguishable, the relationships between PCP position scores and CMP “net relative emphases”

should be at or above (or at least near) the 0.80 rule of thumb. The actual correlations (column 3) fall short of that mark; only the coefficient for “defense spending” comes even close.

An illustrative example of the disparity that can exist between relative emphasis and actual position can be found in the 1970 platform of the Labour Party. Although only four-tenths of 1% of the platform’s statements are coded by the CMP as favoring nationalization, indicating only minimal emphasis relative to other concerns, the lines that are devoted to the issue include:

In the public sector large but essential investment programmes are being carried out in the railways, the national air-lines, the telecommunications industries, in the rapid exploitation of North Sea gas and in the supply of electricity ... The old restrictions on the activities of the nationalised industries are being removed ... Public enterprise also plays an important part in regional development and this we mean to extend ... The greatest danger in communications is the danger of growing concentration of private ownership, and the parallel danger of domination by commercial values.

Such statements indicate very strong support for nationalization, and hence PCP coders assigned a score of “–4” (i.e. strongly left-oriented). It is clear from this example that it is not necessary to say a lot in order to take a position that is strongly pro- or anti-¹⁴

Although net relative emphasis shares directionality with position, what it shares with total relative emphasis is equally defining; both variables based on “counting statements” are measures of relative emphasis and neither measures issue position. Indeed, it is our conclusion thus far that *position* and *relative emphasis*—whether in the “total” or the “net” variety—are both conceptually and empirically distinguishable.

Until now, though, we have only analyzed relationships between content- and emphasis-based measures at the level of individual issues, while Budge (1994) and his associates (Klingemann et al., 1994) and many others¹⁵ have worked primarily with composite left–right scores based on the difference between the sums of emphases for groups of 13 left- and 13 right-oriented concerns. The process is described in Klingemann et al. (1994: 39).

Whether Budge and his colleagues originally meant to use their “emphasis” data as a substitute for actual issue positions, the usage that has since been made of their data could easily suggest that the available data on issue emphases are a reasonable substitute for unavailable data on parties’ actual substantive positions.¹⁶ It is then a small leap into the precarious territory where “relative emphasis” is seen as conceptually synonymous with “issue position,” and is used accordingly in the building of theory. As clearly stated by Laver and Garry:

Whatever subsequent use has been made of their data, MRG researchers set out to measure the *relative emphasis* placed on an issue by a party in a manifesto, not the party's *substantive position* on this issue. Position and emphasis are quite distinct parameters of party politics. (Laver and Garry 2000: 620, emphasis in original)

To assess empirically the relationship between composite left–right indices based in measures of salience and of position, we developed composite left–right measures for both position and emphasis.¹⁷ Left–right position was computed as the arithmetic mean of a manifesto's numerical codes for the four party change issues most obviously tied to a left–right, economic continuum: social services, taxes, state ownership, and regulation of the private sector. Because the manifesto project's own index based on 26 categories covers much more area than the limited “economic” content of our left–right position scores, we have correlated left–right position with not only their original left–right emphasis placements but also with emphasis placements based on a reduced set of nine economic categories.¹⁸ To make these emphasis-based scores consistent in sign with the Party Change Project's position data, we subtracted the total of “left” emphases from the total on the “right,” with the result that negative scores indicate manifestos with net emphasis on the left.

The resulting correlations between PCP left–right position scores and CMP composite left–right emphasis are 0.59 ($p = 0.000$) and 0.57 (0.000) for the original and modified emphasis measures, respectively. The latter correlations are well below the 0.80 anticipated if position and emphasis were synonymous.

So overall, the correlations between position and emphasis scores for individual issue variables fail the test for mutual substitutability and the findings regarding left–right composite measures might be regarded as “mixed” at best. Hardly the level of support necessary to conclude mutual substitutability of emphasis/salience and position!

Having determined the empirical distinctiveness of our operationalizations for manifesto substance and packaging, we turn next to a test of the theoretical relevance of that distinction.

Theoretical relevance: Application to performance hypothesis

Earlier, Janda et al. (1995: 185) set out to test a prominent hypothesis from the extant party change literature, positing that electoral defeat is a necessary but not sufficient reason for major change in manifesto packaging in electorally motivated parties. Already employing a distinction between “substance” and “packaging” similar to that discussed earlier here, the hypothesis then was limited to manifesto packaging because the only relevant longitudinal

data available at the time were the Comparative Manifestos Project's emphasis data.

But that study also suggested theoretical reasons for doubting that dramatic changes in issue substance would be as reliant upon, or even much associated with, periods following bad election performance. In sum, the argument was that when developing manifestos to lure more voters, a party's strategists might well consider that infighting over changing the substance of its more public statements of principle could be avoided by just downplaying some of its positions while playing up others. “This could have the effect of altering one dimension of the party's profile (the packaging) while leaving another (the substance) intact” (Janda et al. 1995: 178–179).

That earlier analysis provided substantial empirical support for the hypothesis that poor electoral performance is necessary (though not sufficient) for dramatic change in issue emphases; 15 of the 19 cases (78.9%) of manifesto pairs with highest amounts of emphasis change had disappointing or calamitous intervening elections. However, lack of position data precluded testing the presumption that poor performance would not be similarly linked to change in issue substance. Now, position data are available for the same manifestos covered in Janda et al.'s earlier work, thus equipping us for a quasi-replication of that study. This time, though, we are positing, for sake of direct comparison, that:

Hypothesis 1: Electoral defeat is a necessary but not sufficient condition for major change in manifesto substance in electorally motivated parties.

Our own expectation, based on the above reasoning, is that hypothesis 1 will be rejected and the null hypothesis will be supported in this case.

Although it might seem desirable to do an exact replication of the procedures used for Janda et al.'s (1995) article, the fact is that those procedures do not lend themselves to issue position data as they did to data on relative emphasis. The earlier study correlated percentages of statements devoted to various topics in a party's manifesto for one election with the corresponding percentages in the party's next manifesto; the lower the correlation, the greater the change in issue emphases from one manifesto to the next. The logic of using correlation coefficients for paired-manifesto relationships of emphasis distributions across a range of topics, where the total should always be a constant (1.00), does not apply for sets of issue position data. Here there is no constant sum of “scores,” such that a positive change for one issue would have to be offset by change(s) for other issues in the opposite direction. In fact, if a party moved consistently to the left or to the right on all issues, such that all issue codes were increased (or decreased) by some constant number of points, the correlation coefficient of 1.00 would hide the considerable change that occurred between the two platforms.

Table 2. Electoral Performance and Issue Position Change.^a

Country	Party	Years	Cumulative difference ¹	Type of election	Hypothesis I
Germany	<i>CDU</i>	<i>1969–1972</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Disappointing</i>	+
	CDU	1976–1980	13	Tolerable	–
	CDU	1983–1987	12	Triumphal	–
	SPD	1957–1961	12	Disappointing	+
	<i>SPD</i>	<i>1976–1980</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Tolerable</i>	–
	FDP	1976–1980	14	Disappointing	+
	FDP	1980–1983	15	Triumphal	–
	<i>FDP</i>	<i>1983–1987</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Tolerable</i>	–
Britain	LAB	1983–1987	12	Calamitous	+
	CON	1955–1959	12	Gratifying	–
	CON	1966–1970	15	Disappointing	+
	CON	1974b–1979	14	Calamitous	+
USA	LIBDEM	1964–1966	17	Tolerable	–
	<i>DEM</i>	<i>1968–1972</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Disappointing</i>	+
	DEM	1976–1980	13	Gratifying	–
	REP	1952–1956	18	Triumphal	–
	REP	1956–1960	14	Gratifying	–
	REP	1960–1964	26	Disappointing	+
	<i>REP</i>	<i>1964–1968</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Calamitous</i>	+
	REP	1968–1972	18	Gratifying	–
REP	1972–1976	27	Triumphal	–	
REP	1976–1980	18	Disappointing	+	

^aThis table references the 22 cases with cumulative difference of 11 or above and the 17 cases (excluding those in italics) with cumulative difference of 12 or above.

Table 3. Correlations for left–right position versus composite left–right emphasis.^a

No. of issues missing (of 4 ^b):	≤3	≤2	≤1	≤0
Left–right emphasis (original)	0.59 (0.000)	0.69 (0.000)	0.75 (0.000)	0.75 (0.000)
Left–right emphasis (modified)	0.57 (0.000)	0.65 (0.000)	0.73 (0.000)	0.73 (0.000)
N	101	97	78	56

^ap-Value shown in parentheses.

^bThe correlations reported in the text are based on PCP left–right scores for all cases where at least one of the four separate issue scores is nonmissing. But as is apparent from the adjoining table, the parallel correlations are substantially improved when the cases with missing position data are removed from the analyses. While requiring a manifesto to have “nonmissing” values on all four issues would have the advantage of standardizing the meaning of the index score, an obvious negative consequence is the significant reduction in the number of cases, from 101 with at least one issue coded to just 56 with all four issues coded. More importantly, it is highly unlikely that the “missing issues” are distributed randomly across parties and manifestos, such that the 56 remaining cases are no longer representative of the total sample. In fact, German parties produced the bulk (33) of platforms with missing left–right indicators; only six German programs would remain. Furthermore, if a party addresses just one of the four issues with enough clarity to justify application of a nonmissing position code, then it is reasonable to understand that single code as indicating the manifesto’s true left–right position, as interpreted either internally by party operatives or externally by the electorate. We feel that the more valid results are the substantially lower (though admittedly still substantial) correlations based on all cases where at least one relevant issue was coded.

To capture the totality of change between manifestos in judgmental position data covering a range of issues, we simply sum the magnitudes of differences across the issues. This procedure is symbolized in the following equation:

$$\text{Cumulative difference} = \sum_{i=1}^n |\text{position}_{i,t+1} - \text{position}_{i,t}|.$$

Although this procedure does not duplicate that used for the emphasis data, we are confident that it maintains the essence of what was done in the earlier analysis. Where low correlation coefficients capture the total magnitude of a

party’s change in emphasis between two election manifestos, the sum of magnitudes of differences does the same for change in position.¹⁹

In all other ways, we are duplicating the procedures from Janda et al.’s study. Our samples consist of the same 3 countries, 8 parties, 26 elections, and 70 pairs of consecutive manifestos. We again employ the earlier classification of elections as calamitous, disappointing, tolerable, gratifying, and triumphal (Janda et al. 1995: 182–185), with the first two categories constituting “electoral defeat” (or “poor electoral performance”) for our hypothesis. In the

analysis of emphasis change, attention was focused upon the 19 lowest correlations (i.e. highest overall change) between adjacent election manifestos (Janda et al. 1995: 186, Table 5); for analysis of position change, we will focus upon the situations involving the highest “cumulative difference” scores, coming as close to the “19 highest” as is reasonable. Using the standard of a minimum of 12 units of change produces a set of 17 cases, while a minimum of 11 units of change produces a set of 22 cases; lacking a better decision rule, we report the relevant data for both in Table 2.

First evidence that dramatic cumulative change in issue position need not co-occur with dramatic emphasis change comes from the fact that only five manifesto pairs qualify for both Janda et al.’s (1995) top 19 cases of emphasis change and our expanded top 22 cases of position change (comparing our Table 4 with Table 5 in Janda et al. 1995: 186).²⁰ That in itself, though, would not automatically preclude the possibility of finding support for hypothesis 1. The fact that the hypothesis is not supported can be determined independently.

Of the 17 cases of manifesto pairs with cumulative differences greater than 11, 10 had intervening elections that would be classified as tolerable, gratifying, or triumphal. The seven cases (41.2%) involving disappointing or calamitous elections are hardly sufficient to justify continued confidence in a hypothesis that poor electoral performance is a necessary precursor of dramatic cumulative change in parties’ issue positions.²¹ Analysis of the expanded set of 22 manifesto pairs with cumulative differences greater than 10 reveals that 12 had good or tolerable intervening elections, with 10 (45.5%) involving poor elections, again supporting the same conclusion: lack of support for the electoral performance hypothesis.

Conclusion

Our finding of nonsupport for linking dramatic position change to poor election performance stands in clear contrast to Janda et al.’s earlier finding of considerable evidence that bad performance may be necessary for dramatic change among emphases. To use the more general language of that article, whereas packaging change seems to be a response to poor electoral performance, dramatic substantive change occurs frequently in the absence of bad elections, and hence requires other explanation. In fact, the contrasting findings of the two studies are quite consistent with our arguments that a party’s internal identity and public image are distinct dimensions of its issue profile (an argument that is also supported by our analysis of relationships between content- and emphasis-based measures at the level of individual issues) which can be altered separately and strategically to serve different purposes for the single manifesto. It appears from our analyses, compared to those of Janda et al. (1995), that “poor electoral performance”

alone goes further in explaining change in image than is so for identity. Since identity is to “internal” as image is to “external,” it seems reasonable to at least speculate that the principal keys to understanding change in identity are to be found within the party itself. Given the supposed difficulty in getting insiders to change their party’s identity in any significant way, it may be that dramatic identity change is conditioned upon a major shift in the dominant faction or coalition, or some similar internal stimulus.²²

We are certainly not alone in arguing that it may be in some ways easier for parties to change their image (i.e. the packaging) than their identity (or substance). Klingemann et al., for instance, have argued that:

Parties will be wary of repudiating previous positions outright, to be sure. But there is much less to prevent them from selectively emphasizing or de-emphasizing issues in their policy inventory. (1994: 24)

As repositories of parties’ profiles, including aspects of both image and identity, election programs are useful sources of data on parties and party change. The manifesto data that we have analyzed in this article come from two different projects and are of two quite different types. We have contended, and found, that emphasis-based measures and content-based measures are in fact measuring different aspects of the party’s public profile. Further, we have found it very reasonable to think that the relative emphases tap external image while actual positions reflect the internal identity and to assert that a party may have different reasons for changing the one than for changing the other. It follows that parties may indeed address their two faces with one document and that changing relative emphases or changing actual issue positions may be used strategically so as to please both audiences simultaneously. Whether for studies of party change, of coalition behavior, or of strategies for competition, an understanding of the dual dimensionality of party manifestos can and should make them an even more valuable tool in the building and testing of empirical theory.

Finally, we cannot end without noting another plausible explanation for our finding of differences between the CMP measure of issue salience and the PCP measure of issue position. Considerable attention has been paid recently to the quality of data produced by the manifestos project, with suggestions of a significant error component in the resulting attempt to measure ideological positions of parties.²³ While some of the suggested problems apply specifically to the CMP, reliability issues must be considered for both the CMP and the PCP, since both rely on human coding using complex coding schemes. Indeed, in both cases, the strongest argument for considering the data reliable rests not on a quantitative indicator, but rather in care that has been exercised in training coders and in providing multiple checks during the coding process. So, is it possible that the

mis-matches between CMP and PCP data reported here could be due, at least in part, to measurement error—perhaps in both data sets? We must, regrettably, recognize that possibility. Perhaps ironically, it is our findings from the dual testing of the “electoral performance” hypothesis that may provide the strongest argument in defense of our ultimate interpretation. The two data sets not only performed differently, but they performed differently in exactly the direction we predicted theoretically, with CMP “salience” data supporting the hypothesis and PCP “position” data failing to do so.

So while our findings are better considered “suggestive” than “conclusive” for the above reason, we believe they—in combination with the argument underlying the analyses—are at least credible enough to spur development of even better measures and further exploration of the theoretical importance of treating issue salience and position as two distinct dimensions of manifesto variability. Until more evidence is accumulated, the prudent approach is to treat the two data sets as indicators of different concepts, reflecting two different faces of the party.

Authors' Note

Data from the Party Change Project can be accessed at <http://pols.tamu.edu/data-resources/party-issue-change-data/>. Questions pertaining to data and methods used for this article should be addressed to Alexander C Tan, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, New Zealand. Alexander C Tan is Professor of Political Science in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand and University Chair Professor (adjunct) in the Department of Political Science at the National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan.

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Notes

1. Our use of the term “identity” shares much with its use by Klingemann et al. (1994), when they note that “parties sustain an identity that is anchored in the cleavages and issues that gave rise to their birth” (24) and argue that while parties may change the emphasis they place on different issues, they “cannot dissociate themselves entirely from the past history and ideology—they cannot directly repudiate their founding identity and the issues they espoused in the past” (27). They argue that while Downs believed that party leaders were driven by office goals and were “ideologically indifferent to policy,” in fact leaders “are in their own party rather than another one for some particular reasons—and belief in and loyalty to its goals and traditions are very strong ones.”
2. We should note here that while our concern is how parties package issues so as to impact the electorate’s image of the party, another literature—that dealing with issue framing—is concerned with whether parties can, through sponsorship of issue frames, affect public opinion concerning *particular issues*. For more on that literature, see Slothuus and de Vreese (2009).
3. Included are Britain’s Conservative, Labour, pre-Alliance Liberal, and post-Alliance Liberal Democrats; West Germany’s CDU, FDP, Greens, and SPD; and America’s Democratic and Republican parties. The analyses establishing empirical distinctiveness of position and emphasis employ data for all platforms during these time periods, covering all manifestos for which Party Change Project position data have been coded. Analyses produced for establishment of theoretical relevance of the conceptual distinction are limited to manifestos produced during the period covered by Janda et al.’s (1995) test of performance theory: 1950 through 1987.
4. According to Klingemann et al. (1994: 23), the Comparative Manifesto Project relied heavily on “saliency theory” in its research on party platforms. This theory suggests that, contrary to Downs (1957), parties don’t really alter their issue positions when they are competing for elections so much as “selectively emphasizing or de-emphasizing issues in their policy inventory” (Klingemann et al., 1994: 24). The extent to which these issues are emphasized in a party manifesto indicates their “salience” in the platform and thus to the electorate. “These packaging strategies by the parties present electors with the task of deciding which of the competing bundles of issues is most important rather than deciding what specifically to do about any of the contents” (Klingemann et al., 1994: 26). By expressing the proportion of a manifesto statements dealing with each thematic category, the manifestos data were initially intended to reflect how parties packaged issues, not what positions the parties took on those issues.
5. Chapter 2 and Appendix B of Budge, Robertson, and Hearl (1987) discuss in detail the research procedures of the party manifesto project.
6. To compute a total relative emphasis score that would be conceptually similar to “Foreign Aid” in the Party Change Project data, we actually summed the relative emphases for two pairs of opposing categories from the Comparative Manifesto Project data. Specifically, we summed the proportions for “Foreign Special Relationships: Negative”, “Internationalism: Negative”, “Foreign Special Relations: Positive,” and “Internationalism: Positive.”
7. Other issue data were coded for the PCP on the basis of secondary literature. Only the issue variables coded on the basis of election manifestos are included in the analyses for this article.
8. Verbal descriptions were provided for at least half of the possible values for each issue. See <http://pols.tamu.edu/data-resources/party-issue-change-data/forcodingdetails>.

9. According to the Principal Investigators (PI) of the Party Change Project: for the parties of the United States and United Kingdom, two coders—graduate research assistants at Texas A&M University—independently coded all platforms for all issues for the 1950–1992 period. For instances where the coders assigned different codes, final judgments were made jointly by co-PI Harmel and the two original coders, after re-reading and discussion of the relevant passages and coding instructions. According to the PI's of the Party Change Project West Germany, coding was done by a research assistant under supervision of Thomas Poguntke. Coders were instructed to prepare paragraph-length statements to support each numerical code assigned.
10. While evidence from comparisons of the word-counting and sentence-counting procedures actually suggest that the two approaches may not be measuring exactly the same thing (Budge and Pennings 2007a), we are nonetheless loath to simply assume the word-count scores are measures of left–right positions. It is beyond our scope here to empirically analyze the relationship of word-count scores to the Party Change Project position scores.
11. For purposes of measurement theory, the simple correlation between two variables is read directly as α , the coefficient of reliability. DeVellis (2003: 95–96) sets his personal comfort range-for reliability of scales with multiple items as “below 0.60, unacceptable; between 0.60 and 0.65, undesirable; between 0.65 and 0.70, minimally acceptable; between 0.70 and 0.80, respectable; between 0.80 and 0.90, very good; much above 0.90, one should consider shortening the “scale”. Because we are primarily concerned with the importance of maintaining the distinction for theoretical reasons, it is also relevant that in discussions of multicollinearity, it is noted that correlations between independent variables in excess of 0.80 result in redundant explanation and imprecise parameter estimation (for instance, see Kennedy, 2003: 208–209; Gujarati, 2003: 359–362). One recommended solution for the problem is to remove one of those independent variables, thereby allowing the other to “stand in” for the pair; hence, our terminology of “mutual substitutability.”
12. Although total relative emphasis devoted to an issue may not be mutually substitutable with a party's actual position on that issue, a related but separate question is whether total emphasis given to a particular issue might at least be mutually substitutable with the “extremeness” of the party's position on that issue, regardless of whether the extremeness is on the left or on the right. Using the distance between a party's actual position and the abstract “center position” (0) as a measure of extremeness on a given issue, computed simply as the absolute value of the party's position on a scale from –5 to +5, the correlations with total relative emphasis (followed immediately by significance probability and number of cases) are as follows: foreign aid (–0.19, 0.104, 72), defense spending (0.42, 0.000, 86), centralization of power (–0.08, 0.498, 69), social services (0.36, 0.000, 97), education (–0.08, 0.553, 60), personal freedoms (0.19, 0.139, 62), environmental protection (0.31, 0.009, 70), agricultural supports (0.27, 0.014, 85), cultural supports (0.12, 0.290, 85), state ownership (0.32, 0.005, 76) and regulation (–0.09, 0.390, 88). So for 5 of the 11 variables analyzed, the relationship between extremeness and total emphasis is statistically significant at the 0.05 level; it is beyond the scope of this article to report more than “mixed results” on the hypothesized relationship between total emphasis and extremeness of position.
13. To compute a net relative emphasis score that would be conceptually similar to “Foreign Aid” in the Party Change Project data, we summed the net relative emphases for two pairs of opposing categories from the Comparative Manifesto Project data. Specifically, the sum of proportions for “Foreign Special Relationships: Negative” and “Internationalism: Negative” was subtracted from the sum of proportions for “Foreign Special Relations: Positive” and “Internationalism: Positive.”
14. Since this article is premised on the argument that parties may strategically change one of salience or position, without changing both, it behooves us to provide at least a few illustrative cases. The United Kingdom's Labour Party devoted 5.6% of the coded manifesto to the issue of foreign relations in 1970, dropping the emphasis to just 1.0% and then 0.3% in the two manifestos of 1974; the party held a position coded as –4 throughout that entire period. The Republican Party of the United States in 1952 devoted 8.0% of its platform to agriculture; in 1964, only 2.8% dealt with agricultural issues. In both 1952 and 1964, the Republicans' position on agriculture was coded as +1.
15. As accurately put by Gemenis (2013: 4), the Comparative Manifesto Project approach has been used “in hundreds of PhD theses, monographs and journal articles to test important questions regarding political representation, government coalition formation and spatial models of voting behavior . . .”
16. Indeed, the Comparative Manifesto Project data have come to be called the “standard” (Bara, 2001) and even the “gold standard” (Pennings, 2011) by which to judge the validity of other attempts to measure parties' policy positions.
17. As argued by Laver and Garry (2000: 620):

Recent expressions of saliency theory do assert a strong relationship between party position on, and party emphasis of, an issue—and even that “emphases equal direction” in a particularly forthright statement of the model (Budge, 1999). This, however, is acknowledged to be an empirical proposition to be tested as part of the evaluation of saliency theory. Testing the proposition, furthermore, requires independent estimates of direction and emphasis, rather than an indicator that conflates the two.
18. The five economic concerns associated with the “left” are regulation of capitalism, economic planning, controlled economy, nationalization and social services expansion (+). The four economic concerns associated with the “right” are enterprise, incentives, economic orthodoxy and social services expansion (–).

19. We should probably note here that we are again distinguishing between concepts (i.e. change in emphasis and change of position) that Budge would merge. In his 1994 article on spatial theory of party competition, he asserts that “Policy change consists in de-emphasizing previous priorities and taking up new ones” (455; emphasis added).
20. The five manifesto pairs that qualify for both sets of “greatest change” are UK Conservatives 1966–1970 and 1974b–1979, US Democrats 1968–1972, and US Republicans 1960–1964 and 1964–1968.
21. It should be noted that we assume here that “no mention” of an issue in a manifesto would not be intended to, and in fact would not, convey “neutrality.” (In coding the data we are using for this article, the Party Change Project coded neutrality as “0” and “no mention” as missing.) In keeping with that assumption, it would be inappropriate to treat a change from/to some nonneutral position to/from “no mention” (i.e. missing) as though it was a change to/from the neutral position (i.e. “0”). While such a shift would clearly indicate a change in emphasis (and was treated that way in Janda et al., 1995), the lack of mention of the issue in one of the platforms might create public ambiguity but could not be taken as an indicator of a change in position. (Indeed, party leaders may deliberately create public ambiguity by changing emphasis—even to the point of silence—while maintaining internal coherence by leaving the party’s actual position unchanged.) Hence, for our analyses, all such shifts are treated as contributing no change in actual positions. For example, a shift from a position coded “–4” to “missing” is treated as zero change for purposes of computing the cumulative differences score.
22. For more discussion of internal factors in party change, see Harmel and Janda (1994), Harmel et al. (1995), Demker (1997) and Muller (1997).
23. See especially Gemenis (2013) who synthesizes the arguments and offers recommendations including the dual suggestion that the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) data should be used for “estimating quantities other than parties’ policy positions” and “we need to find a replacement for the CMP’s role in estimating positions of political parties.”

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