

## Appendix B: Control Analyses

We first established whether the experimental conditions across the different experiments did not differ on any of the demographic and control variables.

### Experiment 1 (climate change)

Participants were equally distributed across the three experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message) in regard to age ( $F(2, 483) = 0.84, p = .432$ ), gender ( $\chi^2(2) = 0.47, p = .790$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(16) = 11.98, p = .746$ ), political ideology ( $F(2, 483) = 1.99, p = .138$ ), source liking ( $F(2, 483) = 1.19, p = .304$ ), satirical news consumption ( $F(2, 483) = 3.00, p = .051$ ) and regular news consumption ( $F(2, 483) = 1.32, p = .268$ ). Because the randomization was successful we did not include any of these demographics and control variables as covariates in the analyses.

### Experiment 2 (student loan debt)

Participants were equally distributed across the four experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message vs. non-humorous regular news message) in regard to age ( $F(3, 540) = 0.24, p = .866$ ), gender ( $\chi^2(3) = 0.69, p = .877$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(24) = 22.85, p = .529$ ), political ideology ( $F(3, 540) = 0.17, p = .918$ ), source liking ( $F(3, 540) = 0.55, p = .649$ ), satirical news consumption ( $F(3, 540) = 1.21, p = .306$ ) and regular news consumption ( $F(3, 540) = 1.19, p = .313$ ). Because the randomization was successful we did not include any of these demographics and control variables as covariates in the analyses.

### Experiment 3 (Brexit)

Participants were equally distributed across the four experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message vs. non-humorous regular news message) in regard to age ( $F(3, 537) = 0.93, p = .428$ ), gender ( $\chi^2(3) = 1.08, p = .783$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(24) = 32.73, p = .110$ ), political ideology ( $F(3, 537) = 1.59, p = .181$ ), source liking ( $F(3, 537) = 0.48, p = .696$ ), and regular news consumption ( $F(3, 537) = 1.61, p = .187$ ). However, participants were not equally distributed among the experimental conditions in terms of satirical news consumption ( $F(3, 537) = 3.72, p = .011$ ). Therefore we ran the analyses with and without satirical news consumption as a covariate. Using satirical news consumption as a covariate did not yield different results. Therefore the analyses in the main manuscript are reported without satirical news consumption as a covariate.

### Experiment 4 (climate change)



Participants were equally distributed across the three experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message) in regard to age ( $F(2, 486) = 0.49, p = .615$ ), gender ( $\chi^2(2) = 3.18, p = .204$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(14) = 17.38, p = .236$ ), political ideology ( $F(2, 486) = 0.24, p = .786$ ), source liking ( $F(2, 486) = 2.80, p = .062$ ), satirical news consumption ( $F(2, 486) = 1.26, p = .284$ ) and regular news consumption ( $F(2, 486) = 1.11, p = .330$ ). Because the randomization was successful we did not include any of these demographics and control variables as covariates in the analyses.

### **Experiment 5 (student loan debt)**

Participants were equally distributed across the four experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message vs. non-humorous regular news message) in regard to age ( $F(3, 539) = 0.51, p = .677$ ), gender ( $\chi^2(3) = 2.46, p = .482$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(24) = 25.94, p = .356$ ), political ideology ( $F(3, 539) = 1.10, p = .351$ ), source liking ( $F(3, 539) = 0.55, p = .649$ ), and satirical news consumption ( $F(3, 539) = 0.37, p = .778$ ). However, participants were not equally distributed among the experimental conditions in terms of regular news consumption ( $F(3, 539) = 3.03, p = .029$ ). Therefore we ran the analyses with and without regular news consumption as a covariate. Using regular news consumption as a covariate did not yield different results. Therefore the analyses in the main manuscript are reported without regular news consumption as a covariate.

### **Experiment 6 (Brexit)**

Participants were equally distributed across the four experimental conditions (humorous simile vs. humorous hyperbole vs. non-humorous satirical message vs. non-humorous regular news message) in regard to age ( $F(3, 532) = 0.74, p = .527$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(24) = 28.90, p = .224$ ), political ideology ( $F(3, 532) = 0.16, p = .924$ ), source liking ( $F(3, 532) = 1.08, p = .356$ ), satirical news consumption ( $F(3, 532) = 0.75, p = .522$ ) and regular news consumption ( $F(3, 532) = 1.53, p = .205$ ). However, participants were not equally distributed among the experimental conditions in terms of gender ( $\chi^2(3) = 8.84, p = .032$ ). Therefore we ran the analyses with and without gender as a covariate. Using gender as a covariate did not yield different results. Therefore the analyses in the main manuscript are reported without gender consumption as a covariate.



