Appendix B: Pre-post belief in free and fair election

To predict change in beliefs about election fairness as function of moderation tag condition (-0.5 = control, 0.5 = disputed) and time (-0.5 = pre, 0.5 = post), we computed linear mixed models separated by voter group. As before, models included random intercepts of participant; maximal models with random slopes were overparametrized or yielded a singular fit. Although two-way interactions between condition and time were not significant for Trump voters and third-party and non-voters, bs = -0.06 and -0.07, SEs = .06 and .10, ts = 1.05 and 0.73, ps = .294 and .465, we found marginal evidence close to conventional statistical significance for Biden voters, b = 0.06, SE = .03, t = 1.96, p = .0503. Follow-up tests indicated no change in fairness beliefs among Biden voters in the control condition, b = -0.02, SE = .02, t = 0.95, Bonferroni adjusted p = .689, 95% CI [-0.07, 0.02], and a non-significant increase in the disputed tag condition, b = 0.04, SE = .02, t = 1.84, Bonferroni adjusted p = .132, 95% CI [-0.003, 0.08]. No other potential effects were observed, ts < 1.33, ps > .187.

Including political knowledge (mean-centered) and its interactions with moderation tag condition and time in these models produced a significant three-way interaction for third-party and non-voters, b = 0.11, SE = .04, t = 2.86, p = .005, a marginally significant three-way interaction for Trump voters, b = 0.05, SE = .03, t = 1.81, p = .071, and no three-way interaction for Biden voters b = -0.02, SE = .02, t = 1.46, p = .144 (see Figure 1 of Appendix B). In the disputed tag condition, third-party and non-voters demonstrated a decrease in perceived election fairness when low in political knowledge (-1 SD), b = -0.24, SE = .09, Bonferroni adjusted p = .025, 95% CI [-0.43, -0.05], but not when high in political knowledge (+1 SD), b = 0.06, SE = .10, Bonferroni adjusted p = 1.000, 95% CI [-0.14, 0.26]. In the control condition, third-party and non-voters low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) in political knowledge demonstrated no change in perceived election fairness, bs = 0.11 and -0.15, SEs = .10 and .09, Bonferroni adjusted ps = .585 and .225, 95% CIs [-0.09, 0.30] and [-0.34, 0.04]. Additionally, in the control condition, Trump voters demonstrated a marginally significant increase in perceived election fairness when low (-1 SD), b = 0.13, SE = .07, Bonferroni adjusted p = .096, 95% CI [0.001, 0.27], but not high (+1 SD) in political knowledge, b = -0.05, SE = .06, Bonferroni adjusted p = .838, 95% CI [-0.17, 0.07]. Trump voters in the disputed tag condition demonstrated no change in perceived election fairness, irrespective of whether they scored low (-1 SD) or high (+1 SD) in political knowledge, bs = -0.04 and -0.01, SEs = .05 and .06, Bonferroni adjusted ps = .827 and 1.000, 95% CIs [-0.14, 0.06] and [-0.12, 0.10].

Lastly, we computed between-subjects ANOVAs to compare belief in election fairness across voter groups at each time point. These models yielded significant effects of voter group at time 1, F(2, 1075) = 708.75, p < .001, η_p^2 = .569, and time 2, F(2, 1075) = 691.69, p < .001, η_p^2 = .563. Pairwise comparisons indicated that Trump voters were less likely to perceive the election as fair (Ms = 2.08 and 2.09, SDs = 1.26 and 1.27) compared to Biden voters (Ms = 4.59 and 4.60, SDs = 0.71 and 0.72), Bonferroni adjusted ps < .001, and third-party and non-voters (Ms = 3.30 and 3.23, SDs = 1.30 and 1.35), ps < .001. However, Biden voters were more likely to perceive the election as fair than third-party and non-voters, Bonferroni adjusted p < .001.
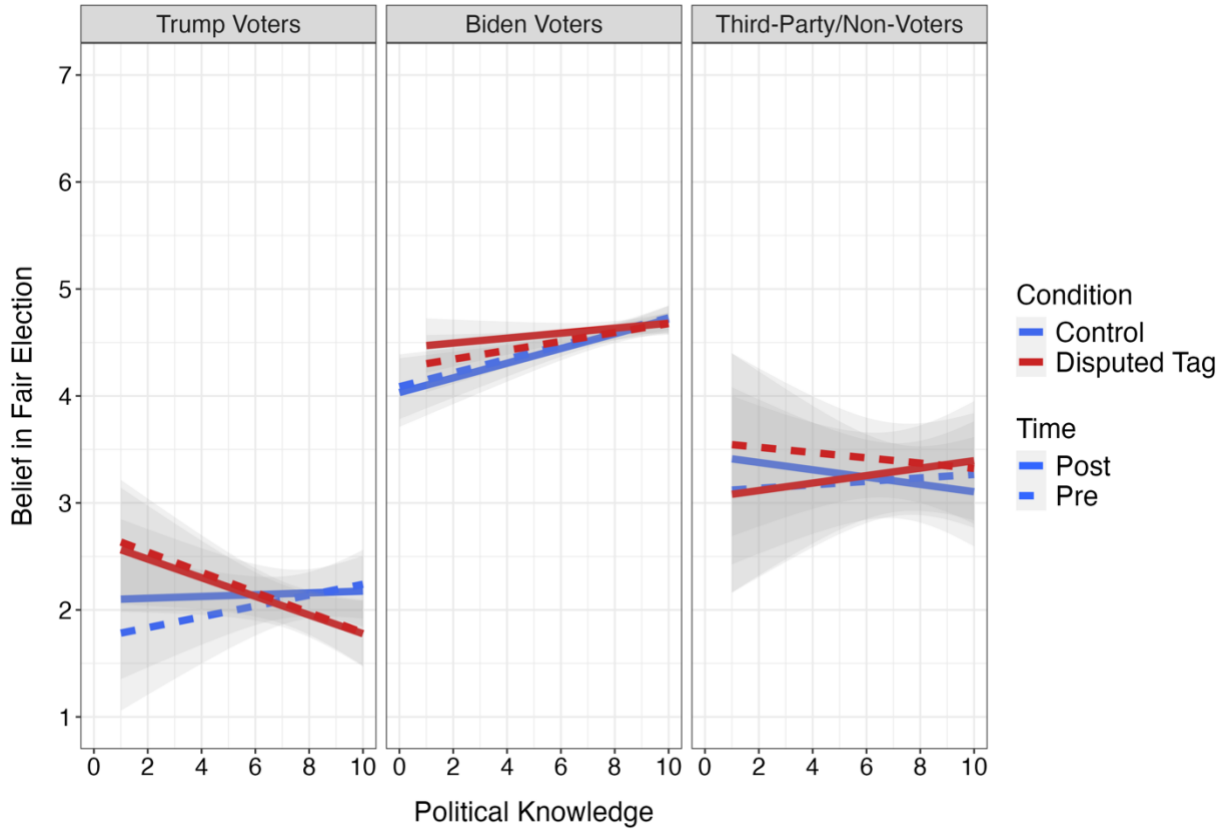
Figure B1. Pre-post belief in fair election as a function of voter group, political knowledge, and moderation tag condition, 95% Cis.