Party Identity in Political Cognition

by

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Abstract

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Despite the long-standing and prominent place of partisan identification (PID) in many aggregate- and individual-level models of voting behavior and political cognition in the United States, several basic features of this attachment remain poorly understood and significant controversies persist. The research presented here seeks to build upon the recent conceptualization of PID as a social identity (Green, Palmquist & Schickler, 2002; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy, Mason & Aaroe, 2010) in order to increase our knowledge of the ways in which it may function as such and to expand our understanding of partisan intensity and PID's biasing effects. This conceptualization is one that has been put to surprisingly limited use in political science. This work draws upon new data I have generated during my time as a doctoral student, making use of survey experimental paradigms and a new implicit measure. I call upon foundational and cutting-edge concepts and methods from social psychology in addressing several active research programs in political behavior. The first essay presents the most direct evidence to date regarding the presence of an affective identity component of PID (the way in which Campbell, Converse, Miller & Stokes (1960) conceived of the attachment), which sheds light on partisan intensity and measurement of it. Using data from a survey fielded among subjects in the Project Implicit research pool, it introduces a novel measure of implicit PID that directly measures the identity component as it is defined in balanced identity theory (Greenwald, Banaji, Rudman, Farnham, Nosek & Mellott, 2002), and compares it to standard PID measures. Among other things, the findings offer some confirmation that the traditional two-item, seven-point PID measure largely captures respondent identity levels. This is arguably the strongest evidence to date that the measure does, for the most part, what it was designed to do. I also find that Republican partisans, in the current political environment, are significantly stronger partisan identifiers than their Democratic

counterparts. The second essay brings new data from embedded survey experiments to bear, assessing, in the case of political party, the presence of the kind of group-based bias often associated with social identities. The manipulation and measure are designed to avoid the confounders present in prior studies that have allowed some to question the biasing effect of PID. Consistent evidence suggestive of group-based bias emerges. These findings establish a new benchmark in this research program by demonstrating, at a micro level, the extent to which partisans are susceptible to a set of standard mechanisms for rationalization, information dismissal and motivated processing. Beyond adding evidence to the debate regarding perceptual bias, though, this paradigm allows for more nuanced analysis of the nature of that bias and heterogeneity in its expression. The final essay uses the notion of "rooting interest" to link this perceptual bias with a social identity model of PID. A manipulation was used to vary the relative salience of an individual's personal and collective self-concepts (Ambady, Paik, Steele, Owen-Smith & Mitchell, 2004), the interplay between which is at the heart of psychological conceptualizations of identity. The effects of this manipulation on the level of bias observed suggest that the strength of rooting interest may vary somewhat, but that the nature of the variation depends upon the political saturation of the context and differs between Republicans and Democrats in the current political environment. The results 1) demonstrate that manipulation of self-concept salience and variations in background politicization can alter the magnitude of bias; 2) provide evidence that this bias is pronounced even in less politicized contexts and when the personal self-concept is made more salient; and 3) suggest that bias is asymmetric across the two parties, with Republicans showing a higher baseline level, but some propensity to have their bias level manipulated downward, and Democrats starting at a lower point, but with the potential to be manipulated upward. Taken together, these new data (from both the experimental and measurement work) demonstrate two important points that were not as apparent in prior studies using other methods. To begin with, it appears that partisans of various intensities (strong Democrat versus strong Republican, for instance) should not be thought of or analyzed as mirror images of each other. Furthermore, it appears that a meaningful "Identity Gap" may exist between Republicans and Democrats in the current political moment. These emergent findings suggest future areas of inquiry, ways in which we might reexamine prior findings, and new potential research programs.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Lilly and George Theodoridis, who nurtured a political junkie, and my best friend, Christine Switzer Theodoridis, who continues to tolerate one.

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Acknowledgments

As with any project of this duration, there are many to thank and even more who deserve thanks. I must begin with the members of my dissertation committee. My two co-chairs, Henry Brady and Eric Schickler, have gone far beyond what could be expected in supporting this research and my development as a scholar. Working with Henry on this and other projects has shaped me as a scholar in the most fundamental ways. Our regular meetings, first at the Survey Research Center and more recently at the Goldman School of Public Policy, provided far more than just thoughts and advice on my work (though there was plenty of that). Each conversation conveyed a genuine and infectious passion for the social science enterprise, a love for the pursuit of answers and the careful consideration of tough conceptual and methodological questions. Eric's work on this subject is, more than anything else, the intellectual source from which this research flows. The basic idea emerged from a careful reading of his work on partisanship and some surprise that other scholars had not done more to build upon that work. Eric's advice throughout this process gave the project its shape. He exerted precisely the right amount of pressure at precisely the right times to point me in all the right directions, both intellectually and professionally. From the very beginning, Jack Citrin has figured as prominently in my training as a scholar of political behavior and psychology as anyone. My time studying behavior and teaching political psychology under him, as well as engaging in fruitful discussions at the Faculty Club, developed my appreciation for the important theories and questions in these subfields. One of my goals throughout this process has been that this work adequately reflect that sensibility. Under Jack's leadership, the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) became both the physical space and intellectual community in which my work developed and a source of resources without which this research could not have proceeded. In particular, several of my experiments were fielded on modules of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study purchased by the IGS, and the other data collections were aided by funds provided as part of the Mike Synar Graduate Research Fellowship. Rob Van Houweling has been deeply involved in the development of the experiments and measures behind this work at every stage. Similarly, his advice has guided every bit of my data analysis. I have come across no other scholar as skilled in the interpretation of findings, and I have benefitted immensely from access to his keen eye. I am proud to be among his early graduate students. Rob MacCoun's mastery of the intersection of psychology and politics shaped the direction of this research from the very beginning. His guidance as I reached across disciplines has been invaluable. I am very much indebted to Jas Sekhon, although the limitations on committee size mean his name does not appear on the signature page. He has provided a great deal of feedback on various elements of this research. But, more than that, my time taking his courses and teaching under him have fundamentally influenced my approach to

Chapter 1

Introduction: Putting the 'I' in Party ID

"A political party is a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election."

<div align="right">ANTHONY DOWNS</div>

"In the context of public opinion research, the term *partisanship* is something of a double entendre, calling to mind both partisan cheering at sports events and affiliation with political parties."

<div align="right">GREEN, PALMQUIST AND SCHICKLER</div>

1.1 Overview

Party Identification (PID), which is central to most models of voting behavior in the United States, has increasingly been conceptualized and empirically studied as a social identity (Green et al., 2002; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010). But, our understanding of how it may function as such remains limited. This dissertation, *Party Identity in Political Cognition*, consists of a series of essays that examine

PID's operation as a social identity in light of experimental and theoretical advancements in this social psychology research program, especially balanced identity theory (Cvencek, Greenwald & Meltzoff, 2012; Greenwald et al., 2002). This research makes use of data I have generated by running several large-N online surveys fielded in recent years. Some of the analysis examines a newly developed application of the Implicit Association Test. The remainder focuses on a series of embedded survey experiments. I build strong empirical evidence supporting the claim that PID should be treated as a social identity for many voters, but show that it appears to operate differently among identifiers from the two parties. I also observe ways in which this identity has significant implications for political behavior and biased cognition, especially in a polarized political environment. In addition to contributing to our understanding of **biased information assimilation**, this research develops our (surprisingly limited) understanding of **partisan intensity**. Both of these are areas of inquiry that have been somewhat constrained by the limitations of existing evidence. This research offers improvements in our ability to cleanly measure these features. In the process, it highlights the presence of a substantial "identity gap" that appears to operate at several levels between Democrats and Republicans today. Using multiple measures (both implicit and explicit), I find that Republicans associate more strongly with their party and tend to have a higher default level of biased processing.

The first essay reports on the novel application of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to measure the extent to which a respondent's conceptualization of "self" is cognitively linked to a party group. An implicit link of this kind is a key microfoundational element of the self-esteem and group-based cognitive biases observed for social identities. The IAT has proven effective in using response latency to measure relative identity. This is accomplished when "self" becomes the attribute concept and the identity in question becomes the target concept (e.g. Devos & Banaji, 2005; Greenwald & Farnham, 2000; Nosek, Banaji & Greenwald, 2002). Using data from a study fielded among subjects in the Project Implicit research pool and an ANES pilot study, I generate evidence that leverages the conceptualization of PID as a social identity to shed light on the nature of partisan intensity. This work adds to the literature on measurement of PID (Burden & Klofstad, 2005; Craig, 1985; Dennis, 1988a,b; Green & Schickler, 1993; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Petrocik, 1974; Weisberg, 1980). Among other things, my findings offer some confirmation that the traditional two-item, seven-point PID measure largely captures respondent identity, but that the various items do so with substantially different levels of success. Generally speaking, this new measure provides the most compelling evidence to date that 1) PID is reasonably thought of as the "the individual's affective orientation to an important group-object in his environment," that Campbell et al. (1960, 121) described, and 2) that the measure those authors developed tends to capture that dimension of the attachment. Furthermore,

consistent with my other findings, I observe that Republican partisans, in the current political environment, are significantly stronger partisan identifiers than their Democratic counterparts.[1]

The second essay brings new data from embedded survey experiments to bear, assessing, in the case of political party, the presence of the kind of group-based bias often associated with social identities. The manipulation and measure are designed to avoid the confounders present in prior studies that have allowed some to question the existence of bias. The essay examines results from studies fielded through the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) (Ansolabehere, 2011), and a follow-up survey conducted independently by me through YouGov/Polimetrix. Subjects were asked to read a "news report," intentionally devoid of issue content, describing a relatively minor instance of campaign misconduct by an elected official, the party of whom was experimentally manipulated. Subjects were then asked about the impartiality of the report and whether the politician's actions were important, excusable and typical. Consistent evidence suggestive of group-based bias emerges. When hearing something negative about an ingroup representative they are more likely to dismiss the report as unfair and its author as biased, less likely to deem this kind of thing important in deciding which candidate to support, more likely to afford exculpatory credit to the transgressor for admitting to the misdeed, and less likely to find his actions "typical", suggesting less inclination to assign negative assessments to the groups with which they are associated. These findings establish a new benchmark in this research program (e.g. Bartels, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Gerber & Green, 1998, 1999) by demonstrating, at a micro level, the extent to which partisans are susceptible to a set of standard mechanisms for rationalization, information dismissal and motivated processing. Beyond adding evidence to the debate regarding perceptual bias, though, this paradigm allows for more nuanced analysis, both in these pages and future examination, of the nature of that bias and heterogeneity in its expression. The type of processing examined here has clear implications for perpetuating polarization, especially since it is related to a type of divergence that may be a particularly central feature of modern polarization: the tendency to question the fundamental character and fairness of representatives from the other side. These effects are, perhaps, also more relevant in a polarized world where individuals become increasingly accustomed to news reports that either favor one side or another or simply offer balance by juxtaposing the two poles. The variety of sources provides more free rein for some of the asymmetries shown here to operate.

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[1]This finding may be consistent with other research showing qualitative differences between conservatives and liberals Graham, Haidt & Nosek (2009); Haidt & Graham (2007); Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski & Sulloway (2003); MacCoun & Paletz (2009).

The final essay uses the notion of "rooting interest" to link this perceptual bias with a social identity model of PID. The survey experiment (which is linked to the one examined in the second essay) analyzed in this essay is designed to explore whether the magnitude of any partisan biases can be altered by manipulating the extent to which a subject's personal or collective self-concept is made salient. The essay asks: Can we exploit the identity component of PID to make respondents bring less pronounced rooting interest to an interaction with political information, or is it the case that, as soon as they face information with political content, they reflexively retract into a partisan shell? This represents the first examination of the role a perceiver's variable active self-concept may play in the processing of new information. A manipulation was used to vary the relative salience of an individual's personal and collective self-concepts (Ambady et al., 2004), the interplay between which is at the heart of psychological conceptualizations of identity. Subjects were randomly assigned to answer either 1) a series of "individuation" questions about themselves, 2) a series of control questions, or 3) questions about their political party (Ambady et al., 2004; Arbuckle, 2010), and these studies were run in more or less politicized contexts. In a setting in which they have already been processing political information, we see that Republicans are able to have their level of bias decreased (from baseline) when they are primed to think of themselves as individuals. This effect does not appear among Democrats. Instead, in a setting featuring no prior political information, their level of bias can be increased by priming party. The effects of this manipulation on the level of bias observed in the experiment described in the second essay suggest that the strength of rooting interest may vary somewhat, but that the nature of the variation depends upon the political saturation of the context and differs between Republicans and Democrats in the current political environment.

As a whole, the results of the final two essays 1) show that partisans on both sides are highly susceptible to mechanisms of differential perception and processing; 2) demonstrate that manipulation of self-concept salience and variations in background politicization can alter the magnitude of bias; 3) provide evidence that this bias is pronounced even in less politicized contexts and when the personal self-concept is made more salient; and 4) suggest that bias is asymmetric across the two parties, with Republicans showing a higher baseline level, but some propensity to have their bias level manipulated downward, and Democrats starting at a lower point, but with the potential to be manipulated upward.

Put more plainly, this dissertation looks at two related contentions regarding PID about which the discipline has rather strong expectations and made strong arguments, but for which the evidence has been problematic or limiting. The first of these is the

argument that PID functions as a social identity. This seems a reasonable claim (although it is in conflict with some of the models used to describe parties and their interaction with voters), but the evidence supporting the claim has been limited and the extension of the conceptualization has not, I believe, been pursued to its full potential. Far more ink has been spilled discussing the second contention – that PID produces perceptual bias. There is a great deal of evidence supporting this claim. But, even so, there are those who remain unconvinced. Each finding in support of a "perceptual screen" has been susceptible to theoretical or methodological complaints. As a whole, the body of evidence is quite large and compelling, but perhaps not dispositive. However, proving this rather basic point is not the most important contribution to be made in this area. The limitations of the data have not just permitted a set of doubters to persist, they have made it difficult to learn more about the nature of that bias. A "cleaner" experimental measure here allows for that.

In addition to contributing to our understanding of biased information assimilation, this dissertation develops our (surprisingly limited) understanding of partisan intensity and highlights the presence of a substantial "identity gap" that appears to operate at several levels between Democrats and Republicans today. That is because, brought together, the new data examined here allow us to observe things that were not readily apparent before. In particular, we are able to learn more about partisan intensity and heterogeneity in the way PID presents itself and operates. To begin with, it appears that partisans of various intensities (strong Democrat versus strong Republican, for instance) should not be thought of or analyzed as mirror images of each other. Intensity, as measured by the standard seven-point scale, appears to mean different things on each side of the aisle with regard to intensity of identification. I repeatedly find that Republicans associate more strongly with their party and tend to display a higher default level of biased processing. These emergent findings suggest future areas of study, ways in which we might reexamine prior findings, and new potential research programs.

Data and Analysis

All of the data analyzed in this dissertation are new and have not been reported on elsewhere. During the course of my doctoral research, I was able to place content on three modules of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (Ansolabehere, 2009, 2011; Citrin & Egan, 2009; Gerber, 2011; Van Houweling, 2011). In addition to this, I fielded two major studies of my own. One was an online survey, the Bias and Party Identity Study (Theodoridis, 2011), run through YouGov Polimetrix, with roughly 1000 respondents and a nationally representative sample. The second survey,

the Implicit Party Identity Study (Theodoridis, Sriram & Nosek, 2011), was fielded through Project Implicit, in collaboration with scholars at the University of Virginia. This study was also fielded online with roughly 1000 respondents and was drawn from a convenience sample of subjects signed up to take such surveys as part of the Project Implicit research pool. The sample draws subjects from around the United States. This research presented just scratches the surface in terms of analyzing the data I have collected during the course of my doctoral work. In particular, the Implicit Party Identity Study featured 15 minutes worth of survey content in addition to the Implicit Association Test. The initial presentation of that measure in this document only uses a few of the other measures. Future work will make use of many others. In time, all of these new data will be made available to other scholars who I hope will find use for them in their own research.

Some analyses are of embedded survey experiments while others look at a new implicit measure of PID. The analysis centers upon nonparametric techniques for the estimation of treatment effects and mean differences, as well as correlations. I am oddly pleased to note that, while I have estimated and examined a few, I do not report a single regression coefficient in this document.[2]

Parties as Teams

The team analogy is one to which I return several times. This is because the comparison is particularly evocative, and it serves to connect a Downsian (Downs, 1957) view of party with a view of partisanship as a social identity, as well as to connect both with early work in social psychology on group-based bias (Hastorf & Cantril, 1954). While our models of voting behavior tend to deviate from the basic, parsimonious framework that Downs presented, some of the most prominent theories of parties (e.g. Aldrich, 1995; Schwartz, 1989) and many very influential takes on the structure of PID (Achen, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Zechman, 1979) depend implicitly or explicitly on a Downsian spatial interaction between voters and partisan "teams" or coalitions (Downs, 1957) of elites.

The analogy is used here not just to connect with the relevant literatures, but to aid in exposition. The goal is to explore the ways in which our understanding of politics should comport with our understanding of a sporting event. Just like Downs, we will think of the teams as composed of elites (elected officials, candidates, operatives, donors, key interest group leaders). Those teams compete not just for votes, though

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[2]David Freedman would be proud.

they certainly do that, but for strategic position and imposition of political will. The line between the teams and the voters, however, is not as clear as the Downsian specification implies. One interpretation might compare voters with referees, possessing as little rooting interest as possible and assessing the actions of the players in a disinterested fashion prior to making determinations. Another sees partisans in the electorate as either fans with clear rooting interest, or even self-appointed team members (akin to Texas A&M's "12th Man"). The data support the latter, which, in many ways, is not surprising.

Cal students, for example, should not be expected to evaluate the Golden Bear athletic teams as a disinterested observer might. After all, the athletic team competes as a representative of a social group to which both students and players belong. So, many students have a strong rooting interest. Similarly, there are others (though perhaps too few in recent years) who support the Bears despite the fact that their connections to Cal are less evident, if they exist at all. There are many reasons for which one might develop a rooting interest. And, there are varying degrees to which that rooting interest may operate. But, a rooting interest during a sporting contest emerges from some sense of identification with the team or the groups the team represents. The same appears to be true in politics. A Cal fan wearing an Aaron Rodgers jersey to watch the game may feel like part of the team even though she does not run through the tunnel with the players. Similarly, a Democrat wearing a shirt that says "Friends don't let friends date a Republican" and driving a Prius with an Obama bumper sticker might feel like part of that team even though she will likely never run for office or even work for an election campaign.

The analogy suggests a voter for whom "rational" considerations may not be the only ones maintaining her partisanship, for whom issue positions may be as much the result of PID as they are the cause of it, and for whom PID takes on an us-versus-them flavor. It brings to mind a voter who is not periodically measuring the distance between her ideal point and the positions of the parties in Euclidean space, and for whom, barring major realignment, attachment to a party is not really contingent on specific platform positions or performance evaluations. This partisan's blood boils when the other side uses "unethical" tactics or appeals to the ignorance of voters, but is willing to overlook such things when her side does them.

A key difference, though, is that the winner and loser of the athletic contest is not dependent (at least not directly) upon securing the support of a majority of fans. This is what makes the understanding of the way in which this process applies to politics especially important, not just from a psychological perspective, but from a policy point of view. Not only are the stakes greater than those of a sporting event,

Figure 1.1: Team Paraphernalia?

but the nature of the two things differs so as to make the role of voters in politics far more important than that of fans in sporting events, at least as far as the outcome is concerned. This team dynamic is especially important to understand in a polarized world. Regardless of whether it is the cause or effect, the polarized political landscape makes the conflict between Democrats and Republicans more intense. It is less like an early-season game between Cal and some out-of-conference foe and more like the Big Game with Stanford, or a pennant-race series between the Red Sox and Yankees, a Tobacco Road hoops showdown between Duke and North Carolina, or even the clash of civilizations that occurs when Virginia plays Virginia Tech.

The first essay uses a new measure to show that partisans feel more like fans than referees. This association with the team imparts a rooting interest. The second essay explores the presence of the sort of bias that we expect to come with the inclination to root for one side over the other. The final essay brings these two lines of inquiry together, attempting to effect the level of bias by manipulating the fan-like association and, therefore, the level of rooting interest.

1.2 Seminal Work on PID

PID remains one of the most studied topics in political behavior and psychology. Studies have focused on a wide range of questions related to party ID: transmission from parents and via other agents and mechanisms of socialization, stability of party affiliation, signaling impact on vote choice, influence on the perception and assessment of political and social conditions and actors, and links to social identity theory. And, as elite and mass polarization appear to increase, our efforts to understand PID become even more relevant.

Much of the work on PID in the United States has been, directly or indirectly focused on whether this attachment represents the political cognition equivalent of Aristotle's "Unmoved Mover" (Aristotle, 1999) in terms of its stability and its dynamic centrality as it relates to other idea elements (to use the terminology of Converse (1964)). To what extent is it stable and to what extent does it exert force on other attitudes and attachments?[3] The examination of PID as a social identity speaks to the heart of this broader research program.

Source and Stability

The heavy focus on stability in voting behavior can be traced back, at least, to the work of "Columbia School" scholars Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944). Their "sociological" analysis of voter decision making in Eerie County, OH, noted surprise that very few voters seemed to change their mind at all. They concluded that more persistent social factors were really at the heart of the voting decision. Since at least the publication of *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960), political science has focused heavily on PID as a potential source of stability in voting behavior. In the Campbell et al. (1960) "funnel of causality", PID is seen as a lasting attitude that mediates between long-term characteristics and the vote choice. It is their strongest predictor of individual vote choice. While *The American Voter* predates social identity theory, which emerged in the 1970s, that work and the "Michigan Model" have a decidedly psychological take on PID, a take that focuses on individual group attachment and argues in favor of a "perceptual screen" protecting PID from conflicting information.

Campbell et al. (1960) concluded that PID was not just stable within an individual lifetime, but that it appeared to be passed from parent to child with great reliability. Both contentions would be subjected to review over the years. As it turns out, the authors of *The American Voter* likely overestimated the strength of the link between parental PID and the adult PID of their offspring. This may be because they, and others later, used second-hand reports of parental PID, and respondents may have resolved cognitive dissonance by assuming that their parents held the same partisan attachments as they did. Niemi & Jennings (1991), using long-term panel data (with surveys of both parents and children), showed that the lasting transmission of PID from parents to children was less significant than Campbell et al might have led us to expect, but analysis of the same data by Beck & Jennings (1991) showed that PID

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[3]The invocation of Aristotle even made it into the title of the Johnston (2006) review piece on the topic. That review offers a far more detailed and extensive presentation of the key debates surrounding partisanship than I endeavor to provide here.

was still significantly transmitted from parents to children. [4]

Long-term panel data also showed that PID remained quite stable for most individuals after they reached their mid-twenties. The observed period of openness during late adolescence and the early twenties is consistent with the less systematic prior evidence, such as that emerging from Theodore Newcomb's famous Bennington Study (Newcomb, 1971). Newcomb found that reference group dynamics enabled some college students to adjust their political leanings during that first venture away from their parents. It should be noted that this phase in the socialization process marks a moment when PID in the aggregate can be shaped by issues and political context. There is evidence that young people are very much influenced by the contours of the first few elections in their political life-cycle. Newcomb found that the national political environment during the formative college years was very impactful. So, as each election sees an influx of new voters, we can expect that the PID of those voters has been very much shaped by the context of the recent political past. Miller & Shanks (1996), in their qualified defense of *The American Voter* and PID's stability, use just such a generational replacement argument to explain the variation some scholars had observed in aggregate PID.

Even the stability of adult PID, though, has come under attack in the years since the publication of *The American Voter*. Evidence was presented supporting shifts among many respondents over short and long periods (Fiorina, 1981; Meier, 1975). In the 1970s and 1980s, numerous scholars observed that shifts in PID coincided with movements in other survey measures and this was widely interpreted as evidence of meaningful partisan instability (Brody & Rothenberg, 1988; Erikson, 1982; Fiorina, 1981; Franklin, 1984; Franklin & Jackson, 1983; Jackson, 1975a,b; Markus & Converse, 1979; Page & Jones, 1979). Green & Palmquist (1990, 1994), however, called this newly emerging *status quo* into question by demonstrating that much of the movement could be attributed to measurement error.

Beyond measurement and stability, the centrality of PID has not gone entirely uncontested. Nie, Verba & Petrocik (1980) advanced the claim that Campbell et al. (1960) had conducted their studies at a high point for PID and that issues had grown to matter more in ensuing decades. Wattenberg (1998) argued that the U.S. had moved into an era of media driven, candidate centered elections, and that PID was no longer as central a determinant of voting behavior. Others, though, have found

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[4]Recent evidence from studies of twins locates roots of PID even earlier in the development process, showing that there may be a genetic component to partisan predispositions (Alford, Funk & Hibbing, 2005).

the key role of PID to be persistent over time (Miller & Shanks, 1996). Bartels, for instance, systematically shows that PID remained quite strong in the American electorate (Bartels, 2000).

A great deal of observational work has attempted (with mixed results) to disentangle the causal link between PID and the other determinants of vote choice and other elements of political cognition. These relationships are central to understanding the ways in which PID may serve as a biasing force in political cognition. The fundamental question motivating that line of inquiry is: does PID shape things like issue orientation, candidate evaluation and even core values or is the causal arrow pointing in the opposite direction? Responding to the critiques (mentioned above) of Wattenberg (1998) and Nie et al. (1980), and taking the advice of Page & Jones (1979) that models must account for effects both on and of PID, Markus & Converse (1979) developed a recursive model that allowed for such effects. Their findings suggest that issue positions, and especially candidate evaluations, were important. However, those things were themselves fundamentally shaped by PID, so partisanship is said to influence cognition at a number of levels. Some research has found that, in the context of a campaign, when ideology conflicted with PID, the latter usually won out. Under certain conditions, PID has also been shown to shape core values (Goren, 2005).

Controversy still remains regarding the stability and scope of partisan identification, but more compelling questions center on the nature of and mechanism behind the stability that does exist.

Biasing Effect

The biasing effect of PID on political cognition presents another dimension of analysis that is both linked to and distinct from the issue of stability. Achen (2002); Fiorina (1981); Gerber & Green (1998, 1999); Zechman (1979) present PID as a running tally or Bayesian updating process, suggesting that, over time, stability can be achieved without bias. The arguments of these authors differ in some ways. Achen (2002) treats parental transmission as a young person's initial attempt at having a Bayesian prior and, unlike Fiorina, bases the voter's calculations on prospective, not retrospective, evaluations. Gerber and Green view Republican and Democratic PID as different starting points, but suggest that shifts in evaluations in light of new information are not especially biased (Gerber & Green, 1998, 1999; Green et al., 2002). Bartels (2002), takes issue with this general line of thinking and offers evidence that a true understanding of the nature of PID must account for bias. He shows that voters interpret new information and objective sociotropic conditions (which Kinder

& Kiewiet (1979) identify as central to voting decisions) very differently depending upon their PID.

Analysis of campaign events and their impact also suggests an important role for PID.[5] Debate viewers, for instance, are less likely to be independents, and the individual's assessment of debate performance is highly influenced by PID (Kenski & Stroud, 2005; Kraus, 1962; Sigelman & Sigelman, 1984). The same is true of other media outputs. The Zaller (1992) "Receive-Accept-Sample" model, for example, leaves room for the influence of PID on all new information. And, the findings of Ansolabehere and Iyengar about the turnout depressing effects of negative advertising are also partly shaped by PID (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1997; Ansolabehere, Iyengar, Simon & Valentino, 1994).

As the divide in the literature to date suggests, there is something of an observational equivalence problem hampering the effort to adjudicate between a model of PID that features a "perceptual screen" and one in which stability emerges from the weight of a prior in a "rational" updating process. This is especially true when our primary evidence is in the form of outcomes measured in cross-sectional and longitudinal surveys. One possible remedy is to design experiments and measures that allow us to observe the cognitive microfoundations of attitude change and that more fully call upon our accumulated knowledge regarding social identity, attribution error, group interaction and motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990; Lord, Ross & Lepper, 1979; Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Pettigrew, 1979; Robinson, Keltner, Ward & Ross, 1995; Ross, 1977a,b; Tajfel, 1969, 1982a,b; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy & Flament, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Tetlock, 1985).

Defining and Measuring PID

As mentioned above, Campbell et al. (1960, 121) came about as close as one could to describing PID in terms of social identity theory before social identity theory was developed:

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[5]Campaign effects generally have presented a bit of a puzzle to political scientists at least as early as Berelson et al (Berelson et al., 1954; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). On the one hand, public opinion moves significantly during the course of a campaign. On the other hand, the eventual outcome is generally predictable by various factors months before Election Day (almost as accurately as by opinion polls the night before voting). Recent literature in this area has focused on the ways in which campaigns get voters to the place where other indicators, including PID, would suggest they should end up.

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a ...

- ○ Democrat
- ○ Republican
- ○ Independent
- ○ Other

Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not so strong Democrat?

- ○ Strong Democrat
- ○ Not So Strong Democrat

Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not so strong Republican?

- ○ Strong Republican
- ○ Not So Strong Republican

Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic or the Republican Party?

- ○ The Democratic Party
- ○ The Republican Party
- ○ Neither

Figure 1.2: **The Standard Two-Item Measure of PID**: Respondents are divided into "strong" partisans, "not so strong" partisans "leaners" and "pure independents".

> Only in the exceptional case does the sense of individual attachment to party reflect a formal membership or an active connection with a party apparatus. Nor does it simply denote a voting record, although the influence of party allegiance on electoral behavior is strong. Generally this tie is a psychological identification, which can persist without legal recognition or evidence of formal membership and even without a consistent record of party support...
> In characterizing the relation of individual to party as a psychological identification we invoke a concept that has played an important if somewhat varied role in psychological theories of the relation of individual to individual or of individual to group. We use the concept here to characterize the individual's affective orientation to an important group-object in his environment.

In terms of definition, this was not the only entrant, even at that time. Key & Munger (1959) had offered a somewhat different conceptualization, describing partisanship as a "standing decision". Later, DeVries & Tarrance (1972) argued for a definition based more upon behavior, such as voting. The "running tally" or Bayesian updating models mentioned above (Achen, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Zechman, 1979), which may be conceptually more in keeping with Key's take, would emerge in reaction to the Michigan Model. It is actually not entirely clear that the discipline has coordinated on a dominant, precisely stated definition of PID. What is clear, though, is that the Michigan School's mechanism for measuring PID has dominated other approaches. In

this sense, that two-item survey measure, outlined in Figure 1.2 has become the *de facto* definition of PID.[6] [7]

There has been debate regarding measurement as well. Comparing partisans of different intensities in terms of political participation, Petrocik (1974) found that "intransitivities" emerged from the Michigan measure. Similarly, Lodge & Tursky (1979, 1981), in offering an alternative measure, argued that the standard scale distinguished unnecessarily between leaners and "not so strong" partisans. Keith, Magleby, Nelson, Orr & Westlye (1992) present similar findings. Numerous scholars have found that the standard measure failed to capture multidimensionality in partisanship (Craig, 1985; Dennis, 1988a,b; Jacoby, 1982; Katz, 1979; Valentine & Van Wingen, 1980; Weisberg, 1980). Green & Schickler (1993) show that a self-placement scale outperforms the standard scale in terms of measurement error. None of the concerns, though, have proved weighty enough to dislodge the standard measure, which has substantial disciplinary inertia attached to it.

1.3 PID as a Social Identity

Building upon the Michigan model of PID, Greene (1999, 2000, 2004) first applied a survey measure designed specifically for the assessment of identity to the case of PID in the United States.[8] The work of Green, Palmquist and Schickler (GPS), which describes PID as a "social identification", makes a compelling case for its underlying stability (Green & Palmquist, 1990, 1994; Green et al., 2002; Green & Schickler, 1993; Schickler & Green, 1997). They see it as an attachment that can change, but one that does so very infrequently because it is based upon persistent social identities. While GPS is commonly cited with regard to the conceptualization of PID as a social identity, their primary objective is to demonstrate that, in opposition to "revisionist" claims to the contrary, PID still remains a central, stable attachment. In so doing, they describe PID as a "social identification", but are explicit in distinguishing this from psychological theories of identity.

> Our perspective on social identification, it should be stressed, differs from
> what is commonly termed social identity theory (Hogg, Terry & White,

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[6]For an excellent discussion of the scholarly debate, into the 1980s, on defining and measuring PID, see Campbell, Munro, Alford & Campbell (1986)

[7]Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau & Nevitte (2001) offer a measure that seeks to measure partisanship cross-nationally.

[8]Kelly (1988, 1989, 1990a,b) had previously applied social identity to parties in Britain.

> 1995). The latter emphasizes an individual's drive to achieve positive self-esteem. People attach themselves to socially valued groups, and those who are trapped in low-status groups either disassociate themselves or formulate a different way of looking at groups, such that this group is more prized than others. This depiction is very different from ours. We focus on how people categorize themselves and remain agnostic about the underlying psychological motives that impel people to form social identities such as party attachment. Indeed, it seems to us unlikely that the pursuit of self-esteem drives the formation and adjustment of party attachments. One would think that esteem-seeking voters would climb aboard the victorious party's bandwagon after a landslide victory, yet we do not see citizens severing their party attachments in the wake of scandals or electoral defeats. Nor do we see adherents to the losing party resisting these bandwagon pressures by demonizing the victorious party and finding new virtues in their own. Instead, we find party identification to be stable amid changes in party fortunes, and we find that Democrats and Republicans' assessments of the parties' merits change in similar ways over time. Conceiving of party identification as the solution to a strategic problem of esteem-maximization seems to lead down a blind alley. At most, voters can be said to be maximizing the fit between their social mores and their self-conceptions, but even here, we must be careful not to overstate the degree to which people switch their attachments when the party's platform or performance goes awry. To paraphrase Lyndon Johnson, our party may be led by jerks, but they're *our* jerks. (Green et al., 2002, 11)

I see no reason to conclude that calling PID a social identity translates directly into the prediction that self-esteem maximizing voters will jump from one side to the other following electoral fortunes. For starters, while this kind of identity selection for the sake of self-esteem is part of social identity theory, it is not always treated in the same way in later work on social identities, especially balanced identity theory (Greenwald et al., 2002), which emerged after Green et al. (2002) were writing. In addition, it is worth noting that individuals may react to challenges simply by minimizing the importance of an identity. A Republican after a bad year, like 2008, might not be inclined to become a Democrat. However, she may focus on other identities, or shift to a slightly different object of identification, such as the Tea Party. It is also important to note that success on Election Day is only one of many ways in which the parties can be compared, so the self-esteem features of this identity need not be so straightforward. For example, while something like Watergate might lead some partisans to alter their party association, it is not clear that we should expect this after each election. Losing can even be interpreted as a positive: "I only wish more voters were

smart enough to join my party. Unfortunately, so many idiots fell for the dirty tricks and dumbed-down politics of the other side." Furthermore, even in its basic form, social identity theory stipulates that such movement will not occur when an individual is not able to switch. It is possible party falls under this category for some individuals.

I believe that a more complete understanding of PID and the role of partisanship in political cognition demands that we address the agnosticism referenced in the GPS passage above. It is rather surprising that more scholars have not sought to stand upon the broad shoulders provided by Green et al. (2002); Greene (1999, 2000, 2004). Political behavior can sometimes be accused of not taking full advantage of the conceptual and methodological tools available in that social psychology. Our examination of PID as a social identity has yet to fully leverage the decades-long literature in psychology. This work is designed to make progress in this direction. The next section mentions a few relevant highlights in that broad set of research programs.

1.4 Social Identity, Self-Categorization and Balanced Identity

The take on social identity applied here emerges partly from social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1969, 1974, 1982a,b; Tajfel et al., 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Turner, 1975), but largely from self-categorization theory (SCT) (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987; Turner, 1982, 1999; Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McGarty, 1994) and, more recently, balanced identity theory (BIT) (Cvencek et al., 2012; Greenwald et al., 2002).[9] These theories are very closely related, and my approaches do not particularly highlight the differences between them.

Identity, according to Tajfel (1974, 69) is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership." The similarity with the description of PID offered by Campbell et al. (1960) is striking. While this basic definition comes from the original expression of social identity theory, the social

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[9]A thorough review of the treatment of social identity in psychology would be neither possible nor appropriate here. Tajfel (1974) has been cited by over 9000 other works on Google Scholar. Turner et al. (1987) lists nearly 6000 citations. As a point of reference, Campbell et al. (1960) shows just over 5500 Google Scholar citations; Converse (1964) sits at roughly 5100. Thus, reviewing the work on social identity might seem, at a glance, to be somewhat more daunting than reviewing the entirety of the voting behavior literature. For partial reviews and histories, one might look to Brown (2000); Hogg (2006); Hogg et al. (1995).

psychology upon which my research is built and the ways in which my experiments and measures are operationalized emerge more directly from self-categorization theory and balanced identity theory. SCT focuses on the complex interaction between the "self" and group identities. As Turner & Onorato (1999, 20-21) describe it:

> The basic process postulated is *self-categorization*, leading to *self-stereotyping* and the *depersonalization* of self-perception. When people define themselves in terms of shared social category membership, there is a perceptual accentuation of intragroup similarities and intergroup differences on relevant correlated dimensions. People stereotype themselves and others in terms of salient social categorizations, and this stereotyping leads to an enhanced perceptual identity between self and ingroup members and an enhanced perceptual contrast between ingroup and outgroup members. Where social identity becomes relatively more salient than is personal identity, people see themselves less as differing individuals and more as similar, prototypical representatives of their ingroup category.

Balanced identity theory grew from the rather lofty goal of creating a "unified theory of implicit attitudes, stereotypes, self-esteem, and self-concept" (Greenwald et al., 2002, 3). As (Cvencek et al., 2012, 157-158) describe the theory:

> BIT has roots in three major mid-20th-century theories of cognitive-affective consistency: congruity theory (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955), cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), and balance theory (Heider, 1958). As described by Greenwald et al. (2002), balanced identity theory rests on three assumptions. First, social knowledge is defined as knowledge of persons (including self), groups, and their attributes (including valence) that can be represented as a network of associations using node (concept) and link (association) diagrams ... Second, the self is a central entity in the associative knowledge structure and is represented as a node that is highly connected in the structure. Third, positive and negative valence can be represented as nodes in the associative structure, permitting (for example) the representation of self-esteem as connections of the self node to positive or negative valence nodes.

The first and second points undergird much of my doctoral work. In particular, I will rely heavily on the conceptualization of associative links between self and political party groups. All three theories, especially, SCT and BIT, focus heavily on the position of the "self" in social cognition. This basic approach to identity, which is now at the heart of most research in this area, motivates much of the work described

in the pages that follow. The implicit measure of party identity I present depends upon this element of self-categorization. Similarly, the manipulation presented in the final essay is based upon the depersonalization, or deindividuation, process described in self-categorization theory and is rooted in refinements that have been added over the years.

The specific approach to identity vis-à-vis the "self" is drawn heavily from BIT. This is especially true in my first essay and the measure it presents. Balanced identity theory sees social knowledge as a complex collection of associations. An individual's "self" features associational links to many group objects. Self-esteem and assessment of the qualities of these objects (including the "self") are represented by associations with other concepts and evaluative properties. The associations can vary in strength. The practical definition of identity that emerges is much less burdensome and complicated than those from other theories. Simply put: when one associates the "self" with a group, that is an identity. The strength of that association is the intensity of identity. The definition does not depend upon any number of behavioral or cognitive outcomes of the association, some of which may be subject to heterogeneity. It is this conceptual parsimony of BIT that makes it such a useful source of leverage in the inquiry pursued in the pages that follow. And, from a measurement perspective, this makes the IAT ideally suited to capture identity.

Chapter 2

It's My Party: Partisan Intensity Through the Lens of Implicit Identity

2.1 Introduction

Party identification (PID) in the United States has been increasingly conceptualized and empirically studied as a social identity (Green et al., 2002; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010). While the conceptualization of PID as a social identity is frequently invoked in the political behavior literature, there is still progress to be made in unpacking the details and implications of this categorization. To begin with, the evidence that PID is, in fact, a social identity has been limited. Green et al. (2002) use the "social identification" notion in more of a descriptive sense, focusing far more on evidence of stability than evidence of identity formation. Greene (1999, 2000, 2004); Huddy et al. (2010) have added to the measurement of an identity component of PID, but more remains to be done.

Calling PID a social identity references a decades long (and still very active) literature in social psychology. This suggests questions we might ask and also offers theories, concepts and approaches to measurement that may be called upon to help improve our understanding of this central feature of American political behavior and psychology. This essay focuses on the heart of that conceptualization from both a measurement and theoretical perspective. This effort is advanced here through a new application of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998). The IAT has recently proven effective in using response latency to measure relative identity. This is accomplished when "self" becomes the attribute concept and

the identity in question becomes the target concept (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Greenwald & Farnham, 2000; Nosek et al., 2002). In the case of political party, this allows us to measure the extent to which a respondent's conceptualization of "self" is cognitively linked to a party. Not only is this link interesting from a measurement perspective (when compared to our traditional explicit measures), but it is a key microfoundational element of the self-esteem based ingroup/outgroup cognitive biases observed for social identities. The existence of such an association might be considered a requirement for the conceptualization of PID as a social identity. This approach offers a significant advancement in light of previous analysis of the microfoundations of PID (Burden & Klofstad, 2005; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010).

The goal of this measure is to tap directly into a micro-level affective association between one's self concept and one of the two major party groups. There may well be a social desirability bias pushing respondents toward claiming status as political independents, and this measure would be an effective method for overcoming that. However, this type of discrepancy between the implicit and explicit is not my goal in implementing this measure. This represents an important departure from many other applications of the IAT. When, for instance, one is measuring the implicit association between good/bad and black/white or math/humanities and male/female, the enterprise is largely designed to address the fact that respondents may not wish to admit to holding those associations or may not even be aware that they hold them. In the case of party, our standard two-item measure leaves us with a percentage of pure independents in the low teens. While the partisan associations of these respondents may be worth examining (for an example of work that does so, see Hawkins & Nosek (2012)), the relatively small number of pure independents in the electorate would make the measure discussed here of rather limited use if the primary objective were to discern a binary partisan association among those unwilling or unable to admit to it. The more important use (and the one highlighted in these pages) is in 1) providing a very pure measure identity defined in its most basic form, and 2) applying that measure to learn more about intensity of partisan attachments. The first goal relates to some very basic ways in which identity impacts cognition. If we conceptualize identity as the association between self and a group label, the IAT measure presented here can be thought of as a behavioral measure of identity. Response latency is used to determine precisely that relative association in the case of political party. To what extent is my conceptualization of "self" associated in my brain with one party or the other? Furthermore, an association of this sort is likely at the heart of many of the mechanisms behind ingroup favoritism and bias. If party and self are closely associated at an affective level in a partisan's processing, an attack on one amounts to an attack on the other. Success for one is tantamount to success for the other.

The prominence of affective and subconscious processing (and "hot" cognition) in research on political cognition has almost certainly been defined more by the extent to which it can be measured than by the significance of its impact. I believe this may mean that the role of affect is under-evaluated and, perhaps, under-appreciated in the discipline. Standard survey measures, which have dominated research in political psychology for decades, are not without limitations in their ability to assess processing at this micro level. An increase in experimental methods in political science has opened some new avenues for explorations of affect, but the scope still remains limited. Much of the foundational work that has been done on affect and subconscious processing has relied on standard explicit survey measures (e.g. Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse & Stevens, 2005; Marcus, Neumann & Mackuen, 2000), which impose notable limitations (Ladd & Lenz, 2008a, 2011). This essay presents a new measure that may begin to allow us to tap into this sort of processing when it comes to examining PID as an identity. As Burdein, Lodge & Taber (2006, 359) put it when describing their use of implicit measures to examine political cognition, they "enable us to measure some of the automatic and affective responses and predispositions that influence thoughts and behaviors outside of conscious awareness."

I introduce a new measure of implicit PID that directly measures the identity component of PID. Primarily using data from a survey fielded among subjects in the Project Implicit research pool (Theodoridis et al., 2011), I then compare this measure to our standard PID measures. Among other things, my findings offer some confirmation that the traditional two-item, seven-point PID measure generally captures respondent identity levels, but that the various items do so with differing levels of success and that the relationship appears different among Democrats and Republicans. This is arguably the strongest evidence to date that the measure largely does what it was designed to do. I also find that Republican partisans, in the current political environment, are significantly stronger partisan identifiers than their Democratic counterparts.

2.2 Defining and Measuring PID

"Party identification is the central theoretical component of the more general construct of partisanship. While partisanship connotes such dimensions as group membership, behavioral expressions of commitment, psychological closeness, policy agreement, and electoral support, the concept of party identification focuses on the individual's self-

definition (Campbell et al., 1960, 1986; Green & Palmquist, 1990)."

<div align="right">ANTHONY DOWNS</div>

The *Status Quo*

As Green & Schickler (1993, 505) put it, "Party identification is the central theoretical component of the more general construct of partisanship." When it comes to PID, the standard measurement has essentially become the *de facto* definition of the concept for political scientists. That definition is the seven-point "Michigan" scale emerging from the two-item measure depicted in Figure 1.2. In the end, voters are broken down into "strong" partisans, "not so strong" partisans "leaners" and "pure independents". Our faith in this measure comes despite the fact that we do not fully understand its microfoundations. And, our use of it has persisted despite some suggestions that it may suffer from "intransitivities" (Petrocik, 1974), or mask multidimensionality (Craig, 1985; Dennis, 1988a,b; Weisberg, 1980), and indications that it may not dominate alternatives or combinations of measures in terms of measurement error (Green & Schickler, 1993). Part of the challenge is defining the underlying concept we are measuring and selecting outcomes to which it should or must correlate. In some cases the point of reference is something like candidate preference (Green & Schickler, 1993). In others, it has been participation (Petrocik, 1974). Certainly, we would like our underlying concept to correlate with behavior. But, what is the concept itself? For guidance, let us recall the objective of those who developed the measure. In reviewing measurement of PID, Campbell et al. (1986, 100) describe the goals of the Michigan scholars this way:

> Partisanship was conceptualized as a psychological identification with a party. This party identification is an attachment to a party that helps the citizen locate him/herself and others on the political landscape. As thus conceived, partisans are partisan because they think they are partisan. They are not necessarily partisan because they vote like a partisan, or think like a partisan, or register as a partisan, or because someone else thinks they are a partisan. In a strict sense they are not even partisan because they like one party more than another. Partisanship as party identification is entirely a matter of self-definition.

Converse & Pierce (1985, 145) describe this "self-identity" concept more precisely (and parsimoniously), saying an individual's PID as one among those "attributes felt to be part of his or her persona, or definition of the social self." As Campbell et al. (1960, 121) put it, they were seeking to measure "the individual's affective orientation

to an important group-object in his environment." The definition of affect has been something of a moving target, so it is hard to know exactly how it is intended in this case. It likely refers to emotion or valence. It has also come, in the last few decades, to suggest automatic (or instinctual), fast, and perhaps pre-conscious processing (Zajonc, 1980). The link between the response latency measure produced by the identity IAT and emotion is not clear. The differences in latency measured by the IAT are likely to be influenced by consistency (or lack thereof) between fast affective reactions and slower conscious reactions. When the two don't match, the expectation is that the task in question takes slightly longer. Smith & Nosek (2011, 300) "suggest that, although explicit evaluations can be meaningfully parsed into affective and cognitive components, implicit evaluations are more related to affective than cognitive components of attitudes." Indeed, the key feature of implicit measures that distinguishes them from explicit ones is that they do not require introspection on the part of the respondent. Introspection is likely the entry point for social desirability bias or reconceptualization of partisan intensity in terms of something like issue proximity as opposed to visceral identification. Stated in terms of the Cunningham, Zelazo, Packer & Van Bavel (2007, 748) iterative reprocessing model, implicit measures may be tapping into initial (often valence based) iterations in neural processing: "when a Democrat is conflicted about his marriage to a Republican (or visa [sic] versa), he can re-represent the relationship at a higher-level of analysis — they both share a passion for the American political system. As the computations become increasingly complex, additional explanatory factors can be created to organize and make sense of the factors at the first level." Each succeeding iteration has the potential to add noise if what you wish to measure is the first-level "affective orientation". Given that this is our purpose, as handed down from both Campbell et al. (1960) and later explicit conceptualizations of PID as a social identity, the IAT provides a new way of excluding later iterations. In the future, neuroimaging may provide even more effective ways of doing this.[1] But, at the moment, neuroscience has not reached a level of familiarity with structure and function to allow the necessary reverse inferences, and the technology is not yet suitable for the necessary large-N studies (Theodoridis & Nelson, 2012).

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[1]There is some promise for this in the work identifying portions of the brain (especially certain parts of the cingulate cortex and the medial prefrontal cortex) involved in specific self-referencing activities, presumably an essential feature of the social categorization involved in identity (Decety & Sommerville, 2003; Gusnard, Akbudak, Shulman & Raichle, 2001; Heatherton, Wyland, Macrae, Demos, Denny & Kelley, 2006; Johnson, Raye, Mitchell, Touryan, Greene & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2006; Kelley, Macrae, Wyland, Caglar, Inati & Heatherton, 2002; Mitchell, Banaji & Macrae, 2005; Mitchell, Macrae & Banaji, 2006; Mitchell, Cloutier, Banaji & Macrae, 2006; Moran, Macrae, Heatherton, Wyland & Kelley, 2006; Northoff & Bermpohl, 2004; Northoff, Heinzel, de Greck, Bermpohl, Dobrowolny & Panksepp, 2006; Turk, Heatherton, Macrae, Kelley & Gazzaniga, 2003). In fact, Mitchell et al. (2006) uses a "self" to liberal/conservative IAT as the stimulus designed to generate self-referencing.

Tapping into this pre-introspection, early-iteration level of identity is something that has not been done prior to this application of the IAT. This is because standard explicit measures simply are not suitable for this task. They are, by their very nature, the product of introspection. One does not remove that feature by changing the wording of the PID items as Burden & Klofstad (2005) do, or by applying a scale developed by psychologists to measure identity, as (Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010). That is not to minimize the importance of that work, which is very much the inspiration for the work presented here. Much of that research was conducted before implicit measures had been developed, and almost all of it before the IAT was first used to measure relative identity (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Greenwald & Farnham, 2000; Nosek et al., 2002).

Standard PID	IDPG
Strong Democrat	1.60
Not So Strong Democrat	1.12
Lean Democrat	1.05
Lean Republican	1.21
Not So Strong Republican	1.22
Strong Republican	1.65

Table 2.1: **PID and IDPG**: This table presents "identity" level means found for various party identification categories. PID is produced using the standard seven-point scale and social identity is measured by use of the IDPG items. These figures are reported from Greene (1999).

As has been mentioned, my analysis here builds upon the work of (Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004). His approach and findings highlight some important features of the new IAT measure. He uses the Identification with a Psychological Group (IDPG) scale developed by Mael & Tetrick (1992), which includes the following ten items:[2]

1. When someone criticizes this group, it feels like a personal insult.
2. I don't act like the typical person of this group (reversed).
3. I'm very interested in what others think about this group.
4. The limitations associated with this group apply to me also.
5. When I talk about this group, I usually say "we" rather than "they."

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[2]Building on this work, Huddy et al. (2010) have recently developed and tested a four-item measure.

6. I have a number of qualities typical of members of this group.
7. This group's successes are my successes.
8. If a story in the media criticized this group, I would feel embarrassed.
9. When someone praises this group, it feels like a personal compliment.
10. I act like a person of this group to a great extent.

He is able to examine the relative strength of identity with a respondent's chosen party. On a scale that ranges from 0-3, he finds the relationship shown in Table 2.1 between PID and "identity" and is able to provide clarification on a number of fronts, including the "anomalous behavior and identity of partisan leaners" (Greene, 1999, 393).

This measure is limited, though, as compared to the IAT presented here. For starters, it is still an explicit measure. So it cannot address any concern regarding the addition of bias during introspection. Furthermore, it assumes the direction of partisanship. If you say you are a Democrat when faced with the standard measure, you will answer questions regarding your identification with Democrats. To ask a Democrat these questions about Republicans would not make sense, as they are not designed to measure identification with a group with which one does not claim to identify. Respondents would likely find the questions very confusing if they referred to the partisan outgroup. Thus, it is not possible with this measure for a respondent who reports being a Democrat to have an identity score that suggests otherwise. Also, since it is not a relative measure, it only shows the level of identification with one group, and does not include the other side of that coin — distance from the outgroup or the extent to which association with the other group generates dissonance. These are all limitations not suffered by the IAT measure used here.

Guidance on Theory and Measurement from Social Psychology

As my research seeks to build upon the social identity framework, we will look to social psychology for some guidance. Returning to the question at hand: When it comes to PID, what is the underlying concept? For our purposes, it will be defined as an early-iteration association between "self" and a partisan group. This focus, and the measurement strategy I use, emerges from balanced identity theory (BIT) (Cvencek et al., 2012; Greenwald et al., 2002) and the ways in which it differs from social identity theory (SIT) and self-categorization theory (SCT):

> Whereas the representational elements of the SCT are *self-categorizations*, BIT takes associations as its conceptual building blocks. In addition, within SCT, the self is conceived of as a hierarchical structure of self-categorizations at three levels of abstraction; within BIT, the self is understood as a nonhierarchical, associative structure...
> Perhaps the greatest difference between the SIT and SCT on the one hand, and BIT on the other, comes from the research methods used in testing the theories. The research programs of SIT and SCT were developed well before researchers recognized the distinction between implicit and explicit measures. Consequently, research on SIT and SCT has occurred mostly with explicit measures. In contrast, tests of BIT have been carried out with both implicit and explicit measures, leading to (so far) consistent results showing that the relationships predicted by BIT are evident more strongly when tested with implicit measures of association strengths than when tested with parallel self-report measures. (Cvencek et al., 2012, 162)

The contents (listed above) of the IDPG scale, and others like it, serve to highlight the benefit of applying BIT to this case. Those items depend on rather specific definitions of identity and they measure the behavioral expectations that emerge from those definitions. But, as with many outcomes, these may be subject to substantial heterogeneity in their expression. One might imagine, for instance, an individual who identifies with a group (Jews, for instance), but does not necessarily feel pride in the individual success of another member of that group. Should this be taken as an indication of weaker identity? Should we really treat each such self-reported outcome of identity as part of the way we measure its presence in the respondent? And, should we weight each of these items equally? These are questions of measurement that one avoids when thinking of identity as the simple association between a group and the "self" in the way that BIT does. This association is, after all, what we believe to be at the heart of the phenomena measured by the IDPG scale. If we have the ability to measure the association directly, why not do so? This is where the IAT enters our analysis. It is ideally suited to measure just this sort of association. Greenwald et al. (2002) offer the following rationale for using the IAT in their measurement of the associations involved in balanced identity theory's social knowledge structure (SKS), of which the self-concept to group association is a central part:

> First, some of the associative links of SKS may not be available to introspection and may therefore not permit accurate assessment by self-report measures (cf. Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Second, self-report measures are susceptible to artifacts (such as impression management and demand

characteristics) that can distort reporting even of associations that are introspectively available.

These are the very reasons behind my contention that the use of the IAT represents a meaningful advancement in the measurement of partisan *identity*, allowing us to more directly measure that which Campbell et al. (1960) had in mind.

2.3 Measuring Implicit Party Identity

The Implicit Association Test

The Implicit Association Test (IAT), is rooted in two relatively simple premises: 1) asking subjects a question directly may not be the best way to generate an accurate answer, and 2) tasks that take longer to process are more difficult (Donders, 1969). In fact, these statements are the basis for all implicit measures based upon response latency.[3] Use of the IAT, in particular, has exploded in social psychology and many other fields in the last decade. The fact that Greenwald et al. (1998) lists over 4200 citations at this point on Google Scholar offers some rough sense of just how popular the measure has become since its relatively recent discovery. There are many excellent reviews of IAT work and assessments of the test itself (e.g. Nosek, Greenwald & Banaji, 2007). One especially accessible and practical one can be found in Lane, Banaji, Nosek & Greenwald (2007).

Party identity measures hardly represent the first application of the IAT to politics. Even excluding work on race and ethnic politics and system justification, one finds no shortage of research being done on topics related to electoral politics, attitudes and ideology (For example, see: Arcuri, Castelli, Galdi, Zogmaister & Amadori, 2008; Burdein et al., 2006; Choma & Hafer, 2009; Graham, Englander, Morris, Hawkins, Haidt & Nosek, 2012; Karpinski & Hilton, 2001; Nosek, Graham & Hawkins, 2010).

The IAT generates a measure of relative association by having respondents rapidly classify stimuli presented to them on a monitor. The computer-based task typically includes attribute (e.g. Good and Bad) and target concepts (e.g. Black and White). Each of these will be represented by related words or images that serve as exemplars. The instructions are the key to the task and define a series of blocks. Each block will have its own instructions, which ask the respondent to categorize the attributes and targets in different combinations. Using the Good/Bad and Black/White example,

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[3]There are, of course, many implicit measures that do not use response latency.

a given block may ask respondents to press one key with their left hand for any Good or White exemplars and another key with their right hand for any Bad or Black exemplars. In this case, Good is associated with White and Bad associated with Black. Another block will instruct respondents to press one key when presented with Bad or White exemplars and another key for Good or Black exemplars. The exemplars will appear in the middle of the screen in rapid succession and respondents are asked to press the assigned buttons for each block accordingly. A red "X" typically is shown to indicate to a respondent that she has made an incorrect classification. After a series of such blocks, researchers will have response latency averages for each paired comparison. The presumption, again, is that respondents will be able to act more quickly when the instructions match the associations in their minds.

Implicit Party Identity

The IAT used here differs from most in that it measures identity rather than an attitude. To do this, we replace the attribute concept normally used in IATs with "self" and we make the identity of interest (Democrat or Republican) the target concept (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Greenwald & Farnham, 2000; Nosek et al., 2002). So, respondents are given instructions to associate terms such as "I", "Me", "Mine" and "They", "Theirs" and "Them" with Democratic or Republican images.

This study also differs from standard IATs in that the brief IAT (BIAT) (Sriram & Greenwald, 2009) was used. The underlying principles of this measure are the same as for the standard IAT, but the procedure is changed somewhat in order to decrease the length of the task. While the standard IAT makes all four categories focal in its various blocks (normally seven), each BIAT block makes only two of the categories focal. In other words, when presented with a Democratic block of our BIAT, respondents are told to press one key on the keyboard for Democratic pictures and the words "I", "Me", "Mine", and they are told to press another key for anything else. In the standard IAT, the other key would be designated for Republican pictures and "They", "Theirs" and "Them". In this study, pronouns referring to the "self" are always focal, while those referring to "other" are always nonfocal. This is because "self" associations have proven more reliable than "other" associations (Sriram & Greenwald, 2009). The BIAT substantially reduces the amount of time needed to complete the task and has proven quite reliable.

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 give examples of blocks in which respondents are told to associate "self" pronouns with Democratic and Republican images, respectively. Each block presented respondents with eight pictures and six words. This measure uses six blocks, three in which "self" is to be associated with Democratic images and three in
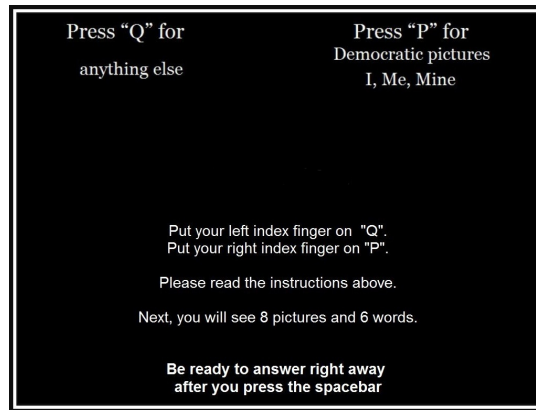
(a) Democratic Block Instruction Page

Figure 2.1: **Example Democratic IAT Block** These screen captures show examples of the images presented to respondents during an IAT block in which they are instructed to associate "self" with Democratic images. Figure 2.1(a) shows the instructions provided to subjects as they begin the task.
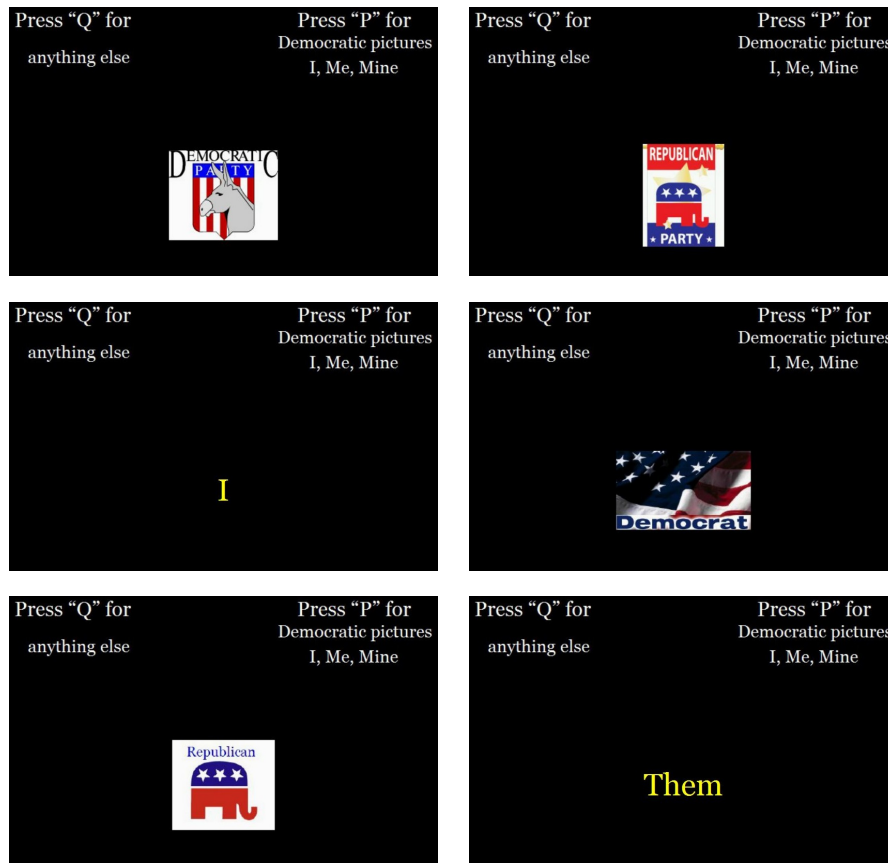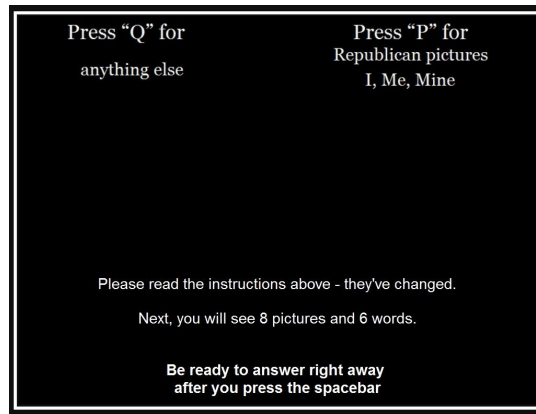
(a) Republican Block Instruction Page

Figure 2.2: **Example Republican IAT Block** These screen captures show examples of the images presented to respondents during an IAT block in which they are instructed to associate "self" with Republican images. Figure 2.2(a) shows the instructions provided to subjects as they begin the task.

which "self" is associated with Republican images. The average response times for these two types of blocks are the components of the IAT D score that is the measure of relative identity:

$$D = \frac{\overline{Latency_{SelfRepublican}} - \overline{Latency_{SelfDemocrat}}}{SD} \tag{2.1}$$

This measure is a bounded version of Cohen's d. In this case, it produces a summary measure with a theoretical range of -2 to 2 for which positive values indicate a relative Democratic identity and negative values indicate a relative Republican identity.

Issues Surrounding the Measure

This is a relative measure and that has important implications. It means that it is simply not possible to discern the extent to which one associates with one party as opposed to not associating with the other. All we can really see is the extent to which the task took longer under one set of instructions than the other, or that they took about the same under both sets of instructions. This amounts to a matter of calibration, as response latency for one item must be measured in relation to something else. While we may not often note it, explicit measures are limited in the same way. This feature is clear for our standard seven-point PID scale. Respondents are not asked how much they identify with one party and then the other. Rather they are asked to choose between the two. We have no way of knowing whether a subject is a strong Democrat because she strongly associates with Democrats or feels a great deal of distance from Republicans. That measure can't differentiate between the strong Republican who has no real feelings about Democrats but loves the Republican Party and the one who favors Republicans because she cannot stand Democrats. It is possible that the dichotomous nature of partisanship in the United States and the rise of polarization mean that proximity to one partisan group almost always translates into distance from the other. However, there is likely interesting variation to explore in this regard.[4] Other explicit measures, such as feeling thermometers, may not be as clearly limited in this way. If we see that a Democrat rates Democrats at 50 degrees on a feeling thermometer, but Republicans at 0 degrees, we might be able to infer something about whether her identity is negative or positive. However, we must still consider the matter of calibration — how to interpret a 50 relative to a 0 for that particular respondent. We can attempt to address this issue with survey instructions

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[4]Some initial findings by Haidt & Hetherington (2012) suggest that, while positive feelings about one's own party have remained constant, negative ones about the outgroup have increased.

or anchoring on the basis of other items, but it is worth noting that the challenge is by no means unique to the IAT. Another limitation associated with this feature of the IAT is that it makes this measure less readily applicable to other party systems. In its current form, the measure is limited to strong two-party systems. I am currently planning another study that might overcome these limitations. This will use the Go/No-Go Association Task (GNAT) (Nosek & Banaji, 2001), which is similar to the IAT, but does not require dichotomous categories. This would make it possible to assess the microfoundations of this implicit association, distinguishing between negative and positive identity and would make the measure useful in multi-party contexts.

Common critiques of the IAT focus on its interpretation. This is especially true when it is applied to topics such as racial attitudes (Arkes & Tetlock, 2004). There has been much discussion regarding whether response latency can be interpreted as discrimination or racial bias. This is an area in which the identity IAT, especially as applied to party, would seem to be less problematic. By defining the notion of party identity narrowly, we limit the leap that must be made between the measure and the concept. One particular line of criticism for IATs designed to ascertain attitudes emerges from the environmental association model, which posits that "the IAT may tell us what associations the person has been exposed to in his or her environment rather than the extent to which the person endorses the attitude object" (Karpinski & Hilton, 2001). Again, this is less problematic for the party identity IAT presented here. The IAT purports to measure an association between things. In the case of race, it may not be clear whether the association it is measuring is the respondent's or that of the respondent's society.[5] When measuring the association between self and a party, it is not clear what the environmental association would mean. It may imply that an individual does not think of herself as a Democrat, but believes the outside world thinks of her in that way. This is far less troublesome from an interpretation or measurement perspective than the distinction between a person believing that blacks are bad and her believing that most people in her environment believe blacks are bad. For starters, the inconsistency with regard to party seems much less likely than in the case of racial attitudes, mostly because it is harder to imagine many situations in which those around a person would identify her as a partisan when she herself does not. Also, even if this were the case, one would imagine that knowing that those around you categorize you a certain way might actually translate into you identifying with that category. For a more straightforward example, consider a respondent who is aware that those around her see her as overweight. While she may not objectively deem herself overweight, it is not clear that she would not identify with the category. The key distinction here is that the party IAT is asking respondents about themselves

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[5]In some cases this distinction may not matter even in the case of race.

while the other versions are asking for attitudes regarding groups or concepts that may or may not be related to the respondent.

Some have expressed concern regarding the potential for individuals "gaming" the IAT in order to mask associations that may not be socially desirable (in the case or race, for example). While it is possible (Kim, 2003), given the nature of the task and the level of temporal resolution, it would be exceedingly difficult for subjects to consciously manipulate their responses without extending latency so much as to make their efforts obvious. In other words, you could pause intentionally during the appropriate blocks if you wished to bias your score in a certain direction. But, doing so would likely make you take far too long and the pattern would be discernable (Cvencek, Greenwald, Brown, Gray & Snowden, 2010). More important, though, are two other points regarding this concern. 1) Unlike the measures regarding race, this measure is not primarily designed to overcome social desirability bias. 2) A subject so concerned that she might appear to identify with the opposite party on a relatively meaningless online measure that she would go to the trouble of faking results is likely quite partisan.

The Study

Nearly all of the data presented here were gathered as part of the Implicit Party Identity Study (Theodoridis et al., 2011), which was fielded through Project Implicit. This study was conducted online with a national convenience sample of roughly 1000 respondents. Subjects signed up to take such surveys as part of the Project Implicit research pool. The study was in the field from July 18-August 26, 2011. I also present one figure using data from a pilot of the American National Election Study done in conjunction with some of my collaborators at the University of Virginia. This study was fielded online by Knowledge Networks in May of 2008. These data are only used sparingly here because of their incompatibility with the primary objective of this essay. This incompatibility arises from the fact that respondents were not asked the standard two-item PID measure. Instead, they were simply asked the question normally presented to those who declare themselves as independents on the standard PID intro question. They were asked if they think of themselves as closer to "The Democratic Party", "The Republican Party" or "Neither". As a result, that ANES pilot study offers a three-point measure of PID, but neither the initial standard question nor anything that would produce the seven-point scale. I use the data here simply to illustrate that the overall finding is not uniquely a feature of the convenience sample composition.

2.4   Putting the Measure to Use

Resting on the theoretical foundations discussed above, this measure is uniquely suited to address certain important questions regarding partisanship: 1) Is it reasonable to think of PID as a social identity in the sense described by self-categorization theory and balanced identity theory? 2) How do the survey items we use to measure PID do at capturing identity? And, 3) Does identity appear to operate in a similar way across the two parties, or are there differences?

PID as a Social Identity?

Having established a direct measure, we begin by exploring whether partisans appear to associate one party or the other with their self-concept. This is an association one might not expect to emerge for voters best described by a revisionist view of party. If partisanship is more of a "standing decision" or "running tally" among voters periodically choosing the more spatially proximate representative from the two parties in electoral contests, it would not clearly follow that the self-concept would become associated with the labels for these teams of elites. On the other hand, such an association (according to BIT) is essential if we are to believe an account of PID that represents a psychological attachment that brings with it perceptual bias, stereotyping and affective charge.
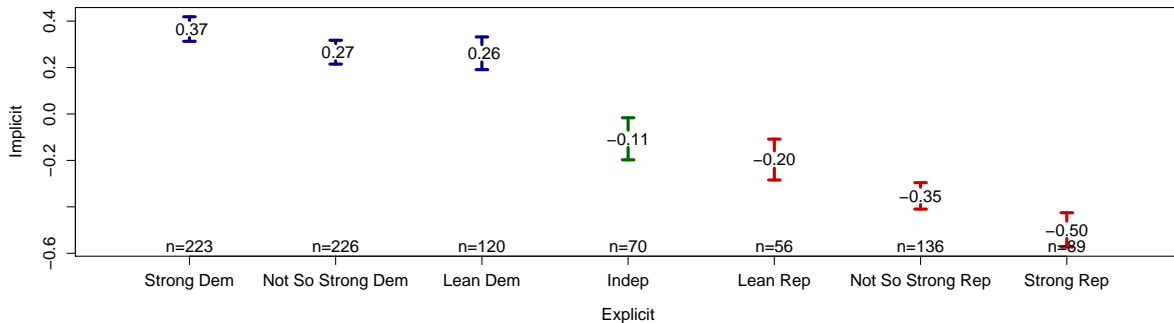

Figure 2.3: **Mean Levels of Implicit Identity by Seven-Point PID:** This plot shows the mean IAT D score at each level of the standard seven-point PID scale, with bars representing 95 percent confidence intervals. The data used are from the Implicit Party Identity Study.

Figure 2.3 shows mean levels of association (as measured by the party identity IAT) for each point on the standard Michigan measure). One might note that the mean for political independents is not precisely zero, falling at −.11. This should not be interpreted as a challenge to the calibration of the measure. It does not indicate that the true zero point for this measure is −.11. The IAT measure and the D score, being a relative measure, is centered on zero at the individual level by construction. That is, if a respondent takes exactly as long for the Republican blocks as for the Democratic blocks, that individual's score will be zero because the numerator of Equation 2.1 above will be zero. So, the departure from zero seen here reflects the composition of the pure independents category. In this sample, those pure independents appear to associate more with Republicans on average. This result seems consistent with contemporary commentary suggesting that Republican leaners might be less inclined at the current moment to explicitly identify with their party.

A few key observations stand out regarding Figure 2.3. For starters, we see no evidence of what Petrocik (1974) called "intransitivity". That is, at no point is the average for one category less than that for the category to the right of it. The closest we come is in comparing "not so strong" Democrats with Democratic leaners. Those two categories have statistically indistinguishable means. Otherwise, we observe monotonicity. The relationship is especially clear among Republicans, where .15 separates the mean for the "not so strong" from that for both leaners and strong Republicans. So, for Republicans, the scale appears to produce an interval-level variable with regard to identity. Among Democrats, both leaners and the "not so strong" are rougly .1 below the average for strong Democrats.

The standard measure appears to be precisely capturing identity among Republicans and capturing it, but in a less linear fashion, among Democrats. So, the measure can generally be said to work with regard to its goal. But, it should be noted that it does so differently on the two sides of the aisle. Furthermore, we see that strong Republicans are far stronger identifiers than are strong Democrats. This asymmetry also exists among the "not so strong", with Republicans in this category identifying roughly at the same level as strong Democrats. We, thus, see evidence that PID, as conventionally measured, means different things in terms of identity among Democrats and Republicans. And, we see evidence that there may be an "identity gap" separating the two parties at the moment.

Lest we be inclined to fear that these findings depend upon the convenience sample used in the Implicit Party Identity Study, I present a similar comparison in Figure 2.4 of the IAT D score with the only PID item collected as part of a 2008 ANES pilot study. Once again, it is clear that one thing distinguishing those who report that they
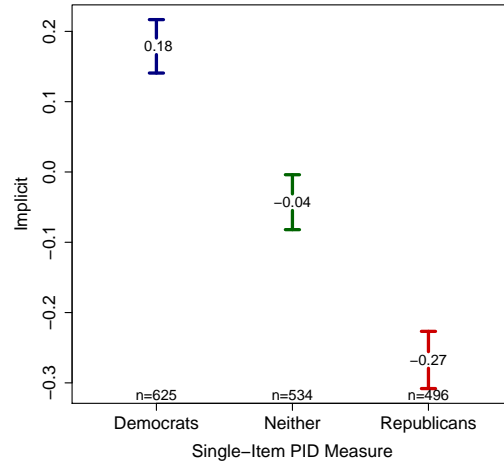
Figure 2.4: **Mean Levels of Implicit Identity by an Alternate Measure of Three-Point PID:** This plot shows the mean IAT D score at each level of a variation on the standard three-point PID scale, with bars representing 95 percent confidence intervals. The data used are from an American National Election Study pilot study and are presented here to illustrate that the main relationship observed in the Implicit Party Identity Study data (drawn from a convenience sample) are also evident in data using a representative sample (fielded through Knowledge Networks). Unfortunately, that pilot study, did not include the standard PID measure only asking subjects whether they are closer to "The Democratic Party", "The Republican Party" or "Neither".

"think of" themselves as "closer" to one of the parties (note the use of language that implies both cognition and a spatial relationship here) is identity. We also see further evidence of a gap in identity between Republicans and Democrats.

These findings strongly support the contention that PID behaves as a social identity. We see evidence for precisely the sort of implicit association between "self" and party that is called for by BIT.

Identity in the Standard Measures

Having shown a strong overall relationship between explicit PID and the new IAT measure, we will now examine the effectiveness of the Michigan measure, and its component parts, in measuring this association. Figure 2.5 is shown for comparison with
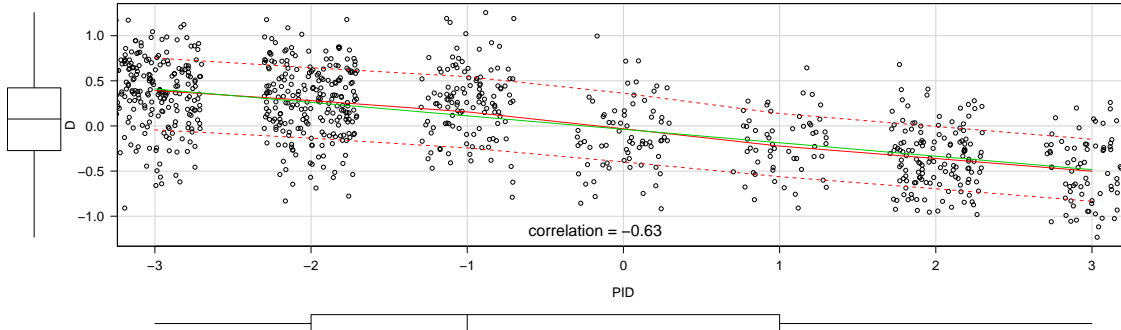
Figure 2.5: **Implicit and Explicit:** This jitter plot shows the relationship between the IAT D score and the standard seven-point PID scale.

similar figures (2.6) for the individual components. Unlike the earlier figures, these do not treat the seven-point scale as a categorical variable. The evidence provided so far supports the use of the scale as an ordinal variable (though perhaps not interval), as it pertains to measuring identity. Here, it is coded from −3 to 3,. Again, we see a relatively strong relationship between explicit seven-point PID and the IAT D score. The two are correlated overall at .63. Figure 2.6 shows how the responses to each component part of the Michigan PID measure correlate with implicit party identity. The introductory question (Figure 2.6(a)) captures the most variation. The implicit and explicit measures are correlated at .59. The leaner question (Figure 2.6(b) also captures meaningful variation, producing a .46 correlation. The two partisan strength items (Figures 2.6(c) and 2.6(d)) capture the least variation with correlations of .13 and .21, respectively. It is not surprising, given the earlier results, that this correlation is larger for Republicans. On the whole, though, it can be said that the standard scale captures most of the variation in identity with the intro question and the follow-up item for independents. However, the strength items add some value, especially among Republicans.

2.5 Discussion and Future Directions

It is often considered a failure of an IAT when the data it produces do not differ substantially from its explicit counterpart. Not so in this case. When the goal of the IAT is to measure attitudes that may be hidden by the introspection performed on an explicit measure, a tight match between explicit and implicit suggests limited use for the implicit measure. But, in this essay, the goal was not primarily to expose hid-
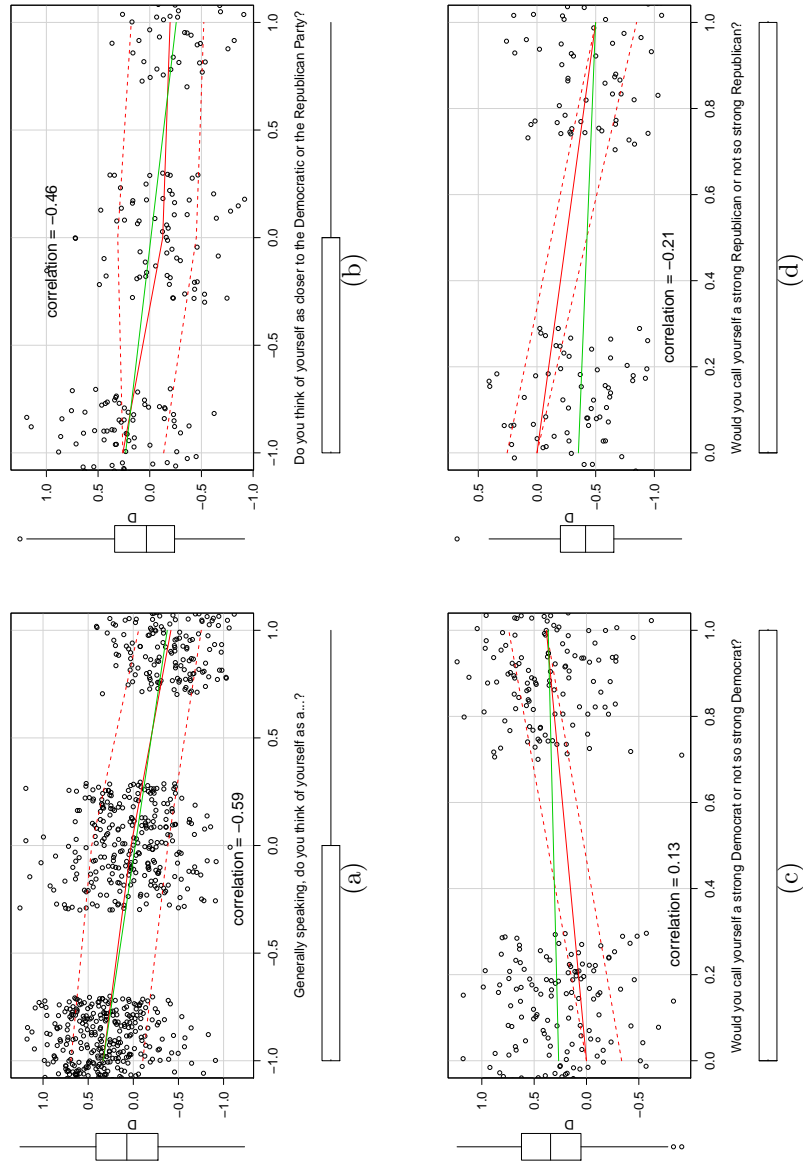
Figure 2.6: **Elements of PID** These jitter plots show the relationship between the IAT D score and respondent answers to the components of the two-item PID question.

den information, but rather to test the validity of the dominant measure using a new one with more conceptual clarity. The old measure has largely stood up to that test. From a measurement perspective, this means that the Michigan scholars accomplished their stated goal when devising the survey items that have become the definition of PID. From a theoretical perspective, given that the explicit measure *has* become the operational definition, this analysis is able to offer the most compelling evidence to date in support of an identity model of PID. In terms of the broader question, we see clear evidence of the sort of association among partisans that one expects from the fans at a sporting event, not from the referees.

There may well be differences between this implicit measure and the standard measure that warrant examination in future work.[6] Only time and further study will tell whether this is the case. But, while it does not substantially conflict with the explicit measure, the party identity IAT measure may show us more about things the seven-point scale is not well suited to measure. In particular, we are able to observe differences between Republicans and Democrats in intensity of identity that could not be observed with the measure itself. We see that Republicans appear to identify more strongly with their party, especially at the level of strong partisans. We also observe the general finding that implicit identity and our explicit measure operate slightly differently in each party. Democratic and Republican partisan strength, that is, should not necessarily be thought of as mirror images of each other. Other measures of "identity" could theoretically have made these differences apparent. However, the nature of those studies and perhaps the fact that explicit measures are susceptible to some of the same "introspection bias" as the original measure, likely made differences harder to observe. Recall, for example the results from Greene (1999) shown in Table 2.1. In retrospect, the averages he generated using the IDPG scale to measure partisan identity are suggestive of some of the differences I observe. While it is not mentioned in that article, it should be noted that the average Republican IDPG values "stochastically dominate" those for Democrats at each PID level. But, this relationship did not stand out clearly (or emerge as statistically significant) using this explicit measure the way it does using the new implicit one. This may be because the relationship has changed over time, or it may be the result of the measurement approach and limits of statistical power.

One limitation of the primary study discussed here is that it relies on a convenience sample. While the basic overall finding is confirmed by the ANES pilot data, drawn from a representative sample, those data are limited by the inadequacy of the covariates collected, especially the basic PID measure. Of particular concern is the

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[6]One recent study suggests that this is the case for pure independents (Hawkins & Nosek, 2012).

disproportionate representation of Democrats. This imbalance is common in online convenience samples (e.g. Amazon's Mechanical Turk), but it still allows for questions regarding bias, especially among the subset of Republicans participating. For this reason, a project is currently underway to field this measure using a representative sample.

Chapter 3

The Political World Through Red and Blue Colored Glasses

3.1 Introduction

The rooting of PID in social identity and other work in this vein (Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010) invokes a decades long (and still very active) literature in social psychology. This suggests questions we might ask and also offers theories, concepts and approaches that may be called upon to help improve our understanding of this central feature of American political behavior and psychology. It is worth noting that the conceptualization of PID as a social identity at the level of the electorate conflicts in meaningful ways with a Downsian top-down description that sees parties as teams composed of ambitious politicians seeking office (Downs, 1957). Our image of voters shifts between the paradigms from that of individuals judiciously choosing amongst elite agonists on the basis of spatial proximity to that of fans with significant personal rooting interest, or even self-appointed team members.

In the process of adding more clarity to our understanding of the ways in which PID operates, this essay addresses one of the more vibrant debates in American political behavior: the one surrounding the effect of partisan attachments on the processing or assimilation of political information. The effort to adjudicate between a model of PID that features a "perceptual screen" and one in which stability emerges without biased processing has been somewhat limited by the fact that our primary evidence has come in the form of outcomes measured in cross-sectional and longitudinal surveys.

A social identity based PID would be expected to go hand-in-hand with a rooting interest on the part of partisan identifiers. This is in stark contrast with a model

of information processing in which partisans on both sides update, in a relatively disinterested fashion, when presented with new information, regardless of the charge and partisan content of the information. In the case of the former, the partisan has an interest in preserving the good name or status of the group because of her own membership in that group. In the latter case, she describes herself as a partisan when asked primarily because her experience and previously compiled information has demonstrated to her that representatives of that group are a better fit with her views or the characteristics she desires in candidates. The studies presented here use an experimental manipulation to examine the extent to which subjects appear susceptible to a series of mechanisms consistent with the first account, but not the second. Our evidence of this sort of bias remains limited enough that plausible arguments continue to be made for the more disinterested updating model. The most compelling evidence of bias, much of which has emerged from experimental work, tends to blend prior party affiliation with previously held issue positions or prior evaluations (Lodge & Hamill, 1986; MacCoun & Paletz, 2009; Malhotra & Kuo, 2008; Van Houweling & Sniderman, 2007). This makes it difficult to establish with certainty the extent to which we are seeing products of the kind of party based rooting interest one expects when PID becomes a social identity. The studies described here were explicitly designed to more narrowly isolate the role of party, improving upon the prior evidence of biased processing where existing issue position or views of specific political actors confound that isolation. These experiments are designed to employ experimental design to add clear evidence regarding the existence of group-based rooting interest and bias in processing of political information.

This essay presents results from studies fielded through the Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (Gerber, 2011) and University of California, Berkeley (Van Houweling, 2011) modules of the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) (Ansolabehere, 2011), as well as a follow-up survey conducted independently through YouGov/Polimetrix (Theodoridis, 2011).

The manipulation was used to assess the presence of group-based bias in the processing of information related to allegations of campaign wrongdoing. Subjects were asked to read a "news report" describing an admission of campaign misconduct by an elected official. The party of the official was experimentally manipulated. Subjects were then asked about the impartiality of the report and whether the politician's actions were important, and typical, as well as whether the official deserved credit for admitting to the misconduct. These items were designed to assess susceptibility to common mechanisms through which bias can emerge. Partisan subjects of all intensities show substantial susceptibility to several stages of partial processing in this setting.

When hearing something negative about an ingroup representative they are more likely to dismiss the report as unfair and its author as biased. If the subject is from the ingroup, they are less likely to deem this kind of thing important in deciding which candidate to support. They are more likely to afford exculpatory credit to the ingroup transgressor for admitting to the misdeed. If the candidate is from their side, they are less likely to find his actions "typical", suggesting less inclination to assign negative assessments to the groups with which they are associated. So, if the other side does it, it is assigned to that group's "tally", but perhaps not as much so when the transgression comes from one's own side. Lastly, further evidence of the overall effect of this bias may emerge in the fact that the experimental condition had almost no discernible effect on favorability ratings for "Democrats" and "Republicans" provided by subjects after Study 2.

This type of processing has clear implications for perpetuating polarization, especially since it is related to a type of divergence that may be a particularly central feature of modern polarization: the tendency to question the fundamental character and fairness of representatives from the other side. These effects are, perhaps, also more relevant in a polarized world where individuals become increasingly accustomed to news reports that either favor one side or another or simply offer balance by juxtaposing the two poles. The variety of sources provides more free rein for some of the biases shown here to operate. From a theoretical perspective, this portion of my findings establishes a new benchmark in this vibrant research program (e.g. Bartels, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Gerber & Green, 1998, 1999) by demonstrating, at a micro level, the extent to which partisans are susceptible to assimilating political information in a fashion shaped by their prior allegiance and the partisan content of the information.

Clarification

The term "bias" now comes preloaded with a great deal of normative and measurement based baggage. It has been associated with assertions of "correctness" in perception. This paper does not seek to weigh in on how citizens ought to process information. "Bias" has also become linked to the notion of adherence to or deviation from a Bayesian updating framework. This is a specification that makes a great deal of sense in many ways for modeling political updating, but does not seem intuitively well suited to capturing or excluding types of partial processing that are clearly material to political cognition.

To be clear, the issue dealt with here is a rather straightforward one: to what extent is the way political information is processed (including both perception and

evaluation) a function of the features of the stimulus interacting with the pre-existing characteristics of the consumer (including previous beliefs or group affiliation)? This is what Zaller (1992, 241) referred to as the tendency among voters "to accept what is congenial to their partisan values and to reject what is not." This is also especially relevant in terms of shaping public opinion in a polarized political environment. "Bias" is used here to refer to a judgement not rooted in a situation's objective evidence (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002). This is more inclusive than a definition that requires irrationality, but it is also far more relevant to the issue of overall stability and change in opinion. From a practical perspective, what matters is the extent to which Democrats and Republicans are inclined to see the world through blue and red colored glasses, respectively. Of course, the imbalance measured in these studies does not necessarily reveal bias, so the research presented here only examines bias indirectly. Democrats could be unbiased in taking certain transgressions by Republicans more seriously. And, Republicans could be unbiased in concluding that certain behaviors are more typical of Democrats. The content of the studies is designed to minimize the potential for this sort of thing, but, more importantly, the presence of mirror-image reactions from Democrats and Republicans to the same information is certainly evidence of bias somewhere. The term "rooting interest" is used here as something of a rhetorical and conceptual link between identity and bias. Identity generates a rooting interest, which can manifest itself in bias.

It is also worth noting that the studies presented here do not purport to directly show the extent to which partisans actually engage political information in different ways based upon group affiliation. Rather, they are designed to demonstrate susceptibility to common motivated processes. It is entirely possible that, without prompting, these subjects would not have gone through this process of favoring one side versus the other. However, I would argue that, in a polarized media environment, the rationalization mechanisms presented to subjects here are likely to be readily available to even the most casual consumers of political information. Thus, when it comes to considering external validity, susceptibility may become tantamount to pursuit.

3.2 Scholarship on Bias

An especially notable amount of ink has been spilled discussing the potential biasing effect of PID in political cognition. Campbell et al. (1960) saw it as a "perceptual screen." Zaller (1992, 241) argues that "people tend to accept what is congenial to their partisan values and to reject what is not." Others, though, have taken issue with such characterizations. Zechman, Achen, and Fiorina have presented PID as a

running tally or as the product of a Bayesian updating process (Achen, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Zechman, 1979). Proponents of this "revisionist" view, as it has been called, suggest that, over time, stability can be achieved without bias. The arguments of these authors differ substantially in some ways. Achen treats parental transmission as a young person's initial attempt at a Bayesian prior and, unlike Fiorina, bases the voter's calculations on prospective, not retrospective, evaluations (Achen, 2002). The general "revisionist" take on PID as the product of a more disinterested updating process became, it could be argued, the dominant view of the way in which partisans incorporate new information. Gerber and Green highlight weaknesses of both the "perceptual screen" and "revisionist" views and point out that the evidence for biased processing has been rather limited and subject to critique. They view Republican and Democratic PID essentially as different starting points, but suggest that the movement with new information does not appear to be especially biased (Gerber & Green, 1998, 1999; Green et al., 2002). Bartels (2002), takes issue with both the "revisionist" view and Gerber and Green's take. He presents evidence suggesting that a true understanding of the nature of PID must account for bias, and shows that voters interpret new information and objective sociotropic conditions very differently depending upon their PID.

The vibrant debate that has raged for years, and which is very briefly described above, (especially regarding the extent to which PID could be described as a Bayesian updating process) may have been something of a distraction in terms of developing a richer conceptual understanding of partisanship and a stronger empirical grasp on its role in political cognition. Quoting Gerber and Green, Bartels (2002) puts it this way: "At some point...it seems very hard to think of Bayesian consistency as a sufficient condition for rationality in the sense of plain reasonableness. Opinion change in accordance with Bayes' rule may often be biased, and in extreme cases it may approach delusion, as long as it does not manifest internal contradictions. The more interesting issue, from the perspective of politics, is whether and how 'observers with different preconceptions interpret the same piece of evidence in ways that conform to their initial views' (Gerber & Green, 1999, 197)." My examination of rooting interest and bias here emerges from full agreement with this assessment. The "team" analogy points to a canonical example of the type of bias the studies described here attempt to capture. In their article, "They saw a game: A case study", Hastorf & Cantril (1954) analyze the differences in perceptions of a particularly physical football game between Dartmouth and Princeton, among students from the two institutions. The authors found substantial enough divergence of accounts and assessments between the two groups to conclude that different observers were essentially watching "different games" (Hastorf & Cantril, 1954, 132).

Some evidence has built up regarding the potential biasing effects of PID. Much of this has emerged from panel or aggregate data. As was mentioned earlier, Bartels (2002) looks at both panel performance evaluation data and aggregate factual recall data in concluding that strong evidence exists for partisan bias. Lebo & Cassino (2007) show that aggregate presidential approval numbers appear consistent with motivated processing by partisans. Fischle (2000) presents public reaction to Clinton before and after the Lewinsky scandal as evidence of motivated reasoning on the part of voters. Haider-Markel & Joslyn (2009) find evidence for the dominance of partisan motivation over accuracy motivation in respondent answers to factual questions regarding current events, showing that education often served to heighten inaccuracy. Gaines, Kuklinski, Quirk, Peyton & Verkuilen (2007) use panel data to show that more informed voters were better able to interpret facts to reinforce prior partisan assessments. Shani (2006) shows that greater knowledge is correlated with greater partisan bias in responses to factual items, and Jerit & Barabas (2010) show that people build up knowledge that supports prior political views. Blais, Gidengil, Fournier, Nevitte, Everitt & Kim (2010), on the other hand, do not find that higher levels of information are correlated with more bias in their analysis of response to scandal among Canadian voters. Other important experimental work has been done on motivated reasoning processes in political cognition (Redlawsk, 2002; Taber & Lodge, 2006). Some limited evidence of motivated reasoning in political cognition has even emerged, indirectly, from social neuroscience. Westen, Blagov, Harenski, Kilts & Hamann (2006), in the process of studying the "Neural Bases of Motivated Reasoning," employ political stimuli. As part of a functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging study, 30 strong partisans are walked through a motivated reasoning process with statements about the 2004 presidential candidates. The focus here is on establishing neural correlates, but some evidence of bias appears in responses to survey items used for validation. The minute sample size and selection bias make it difficult to conclude a great deal from that portion of this study. Taken together, these studies have not firmly established the presence of party based rooting interest in the processing of new political information. An important challenge in this regard is the elimination of confounding factors, such as prior issue positions and evaluations of specific political actors. In the case of the observational work, these issues are inherent and largely unavoidable. The experimental work, upon which the present studies hope to build, has not tended to focus exclusively on party based bias.[1]

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[1]MacCoun & Paletz (2009) present results suggesting that group-based rooting interest shows through even when in conflict with prior beliefs. Subjects whose opinions on particular issues contradicted their ideological side's view on that issue reacted to new information in ways typical of their overall ideology and not their specific issue position. This study focuses on ideology and not party, but leads one to expect similar results in that case, as well, especially given the likely overlap between the two associations.

Examples of Bias and Limitations for Inference

The findings regarding implicit party identity would lead one to expect what Green et al. (2002, 110) describe as "a defensive psychological reaction whereby partisans resist political information that paints their group in a negative light." But, given the strong expectation of bias in the case of a group identity, it is noteworthy that the work most commonly associated with the conceptualization of PID as a social identity Green et al. (2002) seems unconvinced that PID generates especially notable perceptual bias.

> Curiously, given this proposition's long pedigree, the perceptual screen argument has seldom been subjected to a direct empirical test. Reviewing the literature on perceptual bias, Gerber and Green (1999) point out that of the various studies that purport to demonstrate perceptual bias through laboratory experiments or surveys, only a handful actually adduce evidence that contradicts the Bayesian learning model presented above, and these studies are either flawed or contradicted by others that fail to replicate the pattern of biased learning.

> Most studies that claim to find evidence of perceptual bias in fact find something quite consonant with the Bayesian model: People whose prior beliefs or tastes differ continue to disagree after receiving new information....

> Selective perception must also be distinguished from rational updating based on divergent prior beliefs. Political scandals, for example, may evoke divergent reactions from adherents of each party because each group of partisans harbors different priors about the susceptibility of certain politicians to misbehavior. Those who believed Nixon to be a scoundrel before Watergate were naturally more prone to think that he knew of the break-in at Democratic headquarters by those connected with his reelection campaign. Partisan differences could reflect perceptual bias, but they could just as well reflect the fact that people draw different conclusions when they start with different initial assumptions. When perceptual bias is being studied, holding tastes constant is a critical component of an effective research design. (Green et al., 2002, 126-128)

Debates

The best political analogue to Hastorf and Cantril's Ivy League gridiron contest may be a candidate debate. And, in fact, research has shown a substantial relationship with observer PID in this setting. Debate viewers are less likely to be independents, and the individual's assessment of candidate debate performance is highly correlated with her PID (Kenski & Stroud, 2005; Kraus, 1962; Sigelman & Sigelman, 1984). But, Green et al. (2002) argue that these differences need not be attributed to bias. A viewer, they note, may well see her party's candidate as "winning" the debate simply because she agrees with that candidate on the issues discussed.

> For example, the often-cited fact that Democrats and Republicans each tend to declare their party's presidential nominee the more effective debater is not convincing evidence of selective perception because each group of partisans doubtless applies different ideological criteria when evaluating the candidates' ideas. If Republicans like the sound of a cut in the capital gains tax and Democrats do not, they will react differently when the candidates announce their disagreement on this issue. These divergent reactions are not a matter of perceptual bias. Each voter may correctly perceive the candidates' positions on this issue but react differently, depending on his or her views about such a tax cut...

> If in a college dormitory half the students like Mexican cuisine and the other half do not, we would not cite mixed reviews of the lunch menu when tacos are served as evidence of perceptual bias. The issue of perceptual bias hinges on how evaluations change when the same dish is prepared by a gourmet chef; presumably, both those who like and dislike Mexican cuisine should like the food better. (Green et al., 2002, 126-128)

Economic Assessment

We know that partisans tend to report on economic conditions in ways that benefit their side. Divergent economic assessment has been another "oft-cited" case for the presence of partisan bias.[2] In fact, it is an area on which Bartels (2002) focuses when arguing for an account of partisanship that takes bias seriously. He shows that

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[2]The importance of economic assessments on the voting decision has also received a great deal of attention in political science (see, for instance (Fiorina, 1978, 1981; Kiewiet & Rivers, 1984; Kinder & Kiewiet, 1979, 1981; Kramer, 1971, 1983; Lewis-Beck, 1988; Lewis-Beck & Paldam, 2000; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000; MacKuen, Erikson & Stimson, 1992; Nadeau & Lewis-Beck, 2008)). The precise nature of this relationship remains a source of important debate among political behavior scholars.

voters interpret new information and objective sociotropic conditions very differently depending upon their PID .

But, even this example is not as straightforward as it may seem. While there is substantial evidence demonstrating the relationship between partisanship and economic assessment (Bartels, 2000, 2002; Campbell et al., 1960; Conover, Feldman & Knight, 1986, 1987; Gerber & Huber, 2009, 2010; Prior, 2007), we do not yet have a complete understanding of the sources of this relationship. We know that partisans tend to assess the economic world differently, but we do not fully understand the process behind that divergence.

While some scholars see the data as evidence of selective or biased perception (Lodge & Hamill, 1986; Lord et al., 1979; Rahn, 1993), several possible explanations for the observed difference have been proposed that would not amount to bias. The endogenous partisanship explanation considers the potential that partisanship changes because of changes in economic assessment (Erikson, MacKuen & Stimson, 1998; Fiorina, 1981; Wattenberg, 1998). It has also been posited that individuals associated with the two parties may come to the assessment process with different criteria for evaluation (Gerber & Green, 1999). Democrats may care more about one feature of the economic world (e.g. unemployment) while Republicans may care more about another (e.g. the NYSE). Thus, they would assess the same economy differently because they weight the characteristics differently. It is also possible that partisans are exposed to different economic information (De Boef & Kellstedt, 2004; Duch, Palmer & Anderson, 2000; Ladd & Lenz, 2008b; Larcinese, Puglisi & Snyder Jr., 2007; Redlawsk, 2004). An individual watching FoxNews may receive very different economic information than one watching MSNBC. Furthermore, Democrats and Republicans may be impacted by the economy in different ways, leading them to view it differently. With regard to prospective assessments, it is possible that partisans view the economic future differently because they hold genuinely differential opinions of the economic competency of the party in power (Gerber & Huber, 2010). Lastly, there is the possibility that survey responses can reflect non-genuine partisan "cheerleading" (Palmer & Duch, 2001; Sears & Lau, 1983). This implies that, when faced with a question (even a seemingly objective one), partisans are actually interpreting the question as an opportunity to express their partisanship.[3]

Research has focused on, among other topics, whether voters focus on the likely economic future or the recent past when making judgements (Lewis-Beck, 1988) and whether the most impactful assessments and conditions are personal/"pocketbook" or sociotropic (Kinder & Kiewiet, 1979; MacKuen et al., 1992).

[3]There is also a survey research literature on the importance of question placement and contamination when it comes to the relationship between political and economic questions. Some have

In short, the evidence for partisanship's perceptual screen is more problematic, and less compelling to some than we would like. The experimental manipulation presented here is designed to be less subject to doubts, such as those expressed by Green et al. (2002), than prior observational studies. This enterprise is important not just for the sake of convincing those inclined to question the perceptual screen account of partisanship, but also for the sake of measuring bias so that we can better understand the ways in which it manifests itself.

3.3   Studies and Design

Study 1 was fielded via the Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (Gerber, 2011) and University of California, Berkeley (Van Houweling, 2011) modules of the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) (Ansolabehere, 2011). The respondents from these two modules are pooled ($N = 2065$) in the analysis presented here. Study 2 ($N = 1061$) was conducted as part of the Bias and Party Identity Study (Theodoridis, 2011) through YouGov/Polimetrix. The primary purpose of this follow-up study relates to the next essay. However, the portion of the data analyzed here can be used to highlight the consistency of the observed effects.

Study 1

Subjects were asked to read a "news" report designed to look roughly like a clipping from a newspaper and respond to a series of Agree/Disagree items about it. Figure 3.1 shows the content of this report. Reports were identical except that the party of the politician was randomly assigned, with a third of respondents reading a report that did not specify a party. Respondents were then presented with a series of statements with which they could agree or disagree:

1. This report seems fair.
2. The person who wrote this is probably biased.
3. This sort of thing is important to me when deciding which candidate to support.
4. The Senator deserves credit for admitting this.
5. The behavior that got the Senator in trouble is typical.

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suggested that the potential for contamination is substantial (Lau, Sears & Jessor, 1990; Sears & Lau, 1983; Wilcox & Wlezien, 1993). Others have challenged this result (Lewis-Beck, 1985).

Figure 3.1: The Democratic version of the report seen by respondents prior to filling out the Agree/Disagree grid.

Responses were registered on a 9-point scale, with alternating points labeled "Agree Strongly," "Agree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Disagree," and "Disagree Strongly."

The items and report were scripted such that they would measure susceptibility to various mechanisms of biased processing, thus providing a window into a potential bias generating process at the micro level. The report was drafted such that it would provide evidence of both balance and bias in the coverage. The transgression was chosen such that it would not 1) consistently interact with the issue stands or reputation of one party or the other, 2) bring to mind specific prominent cases, and 3) feature a subject on which respondents would have well established, strongly held beliefs. An admission of adultery, for example, would not satisfy these requirements: A Republican transgressor might be accused of greater hypocrisy because of that Party's focus on family values; Respondents might readily think of a recent well-known revelation and bring the details of that case into their considerations; And, subjects may have long ago decided that marital infidelity is or is not acceptable or relevant among elected officials.

The first two response items provide a straightforward measure of perceptions of fairness and bias. The third item was designed to discern asymmetry with regard to the weight placed on a category of transgression. This is of special importance; As Green et al. (2002, 126) point out in their discussion of Bayesian learning models: "Biased learning, by contrast, means that the weight assigned to new information (K) is a function of whether new information conforms to prior beliefs." Item four measures how readily subjects differentially incorporate exculpatory information.

The final item addresses the issue of typicality and is somewhat less straightforward than the others. Given that there exists a true distribution for such behavior for each party and for the pertinent overall categories (e.g. Senator or politician), inconsistency on the part of both Democrats and Republicans is evidence that one group or the other (or both) is processing new information in a biased fashion. There is more than one possible mechanism. It could be that subjects arrive with incorrect perceptions of the true distributions for each party. That could lead to both sides assigning more typicality in the case of the outgroup transgressor. But, this result is not possible if both sides correctly perceive the true distribution. Another possibility is that the category for which typicality is assessed changes depending upon the party of the transgressor. A Democrat faced with a Democratic transgressor might think in terms of politicians generally. Both mechanisms, though, lead to the same result: when the same action is systematically viewed as more typical for the outgroup, the transgression is more likely to be noted on that group's "tally". If subjects deem the behavior more typical when presented with an outgroup transgressor, this could suggest a greater tendency to attribute negative outgroup information to the dispositional rather than the situational. Thus, this item may provide an indirect measure of susceptibility to the ultimate attribution error (Pettigrew, 1979).

Study 2

The follow-up study ($N = 1061$) was explicitly designed to reduce the baseline politicization. For starters, it was fielded in the summer of 2011, an electoral off-year. And, it was designed so that subjects were not exposed to any political items prior to participating in the study. YouGov/Polimetrix maintains basic data for members of their subject pool. This meant that a pre-treatment seven-point PID measure was available without exposing subjects to even the standard two-item measure prior to the experiment.[4] To improve statistical power for key subgroup analyses, the "no-

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[4]Subjects were also asked their PID after the study was completed. The 49 subjects who switched from one party to the other in the two measures were removed from the analysis, as some of the

party report" condition was dropped in Study 2.

3.4   Results

As the histograms in Figure 3.2 illustrate, the responses to the items do not appear to suffer from any overall floor or ceiling effects, nor did they produce too great a central tendency. Any of these limitations would have significantly constrained the ability of these data to measure bias. All outcome variables are recoded such that zero indicates "neither agree nor disagree," and so that bias against the outgroup would predict a higher score. The "Overall" variable is a simple summation of the five Agree/Disagree items. The summation is used despite the fact that the items do not seem to move consistently ($\alpha = .52$), because the summary variable is not designed to group measures of a single underlying construct, but rather to capture overall susceptibility to these group-based differences. While there may be heterogeneity in terms of the degree to which subjects respond to each item, the goal is to measure the overall susceptibility to bias.

Bias

There are a variety of possible results one might imagine emerging from this portion of these studies. One might observe respondents processing in an asymmetric manner that reflected greater harshness to the ingroup transgressor. In other words, they may be particularly troubled by information about a senator from their own party, making the information more important and the exculpatory statement less appealing. On the other hand, one might expect to observe responses that favor the ingroup, matching with findings on cognitive dissonance, motivated reasoning and attribution error. One might also hypothesize heterogeneous effects, observed either across respondents within a particular item or between items. In particular, we might expect to observe that respondents are able to satisfy their motivations via a subset of the items, thus reducing the inclination to pursue that motivation on subsequent items. For example, a respondent may successfully dismiss threatening new information by concluding that the report was unfair or biased and then no longer need to dismiss the importance of this kind of transgression or assign the senator any exculpatory credit for admitting to the lie. And, lastly, the potential existed for no significant asymmetries to emerge.

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content assigned to them was based upon their earlier identification and, thus, would not function according to the study's design.
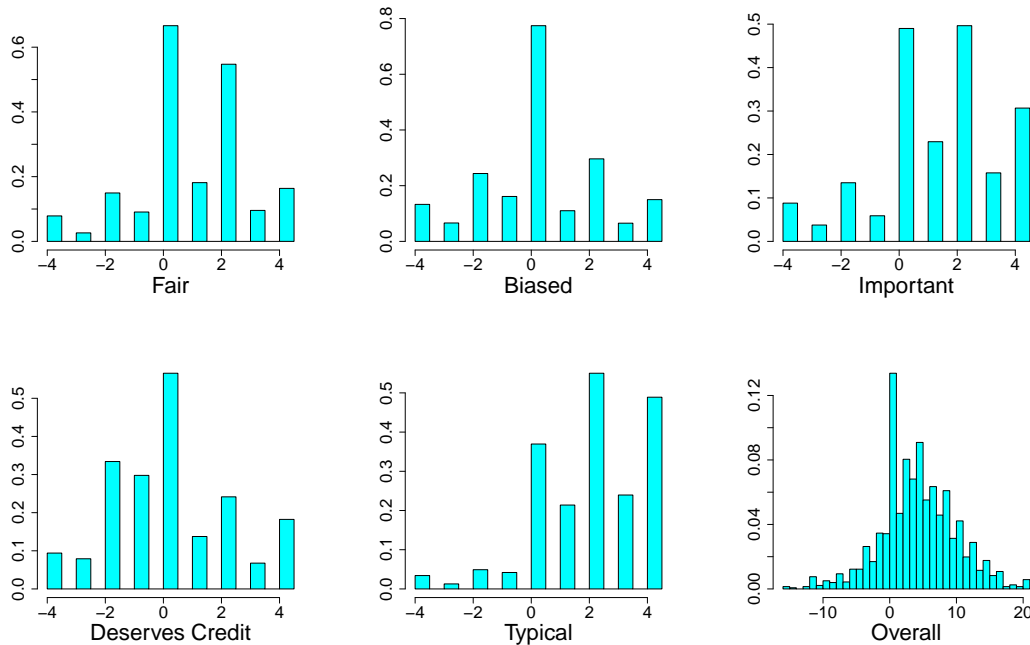
Figure 3.2: These histograms present the distribution of responses to each of the Agree/Disagree items for all respondents in both studies. The histogram on the bottom right displays the distribution for the sum of each respondent's selections.

As Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show, the results of both studies strongly, and consistently support the hypothesized bias in favor of the ingroup and/or at the expense of the outgroup. The focus here is on the partisans, although the independents are included for reference, and the key difference is that observed between the two experimental conditions in which partisan information was provided.

Figures 3.3(a), 3.4(a), 3.3(b) and 3.4(e) show strong evidence of differential perception of fairness and, to a lesser extent, bias. Information, thus, appears to be discounted asymmetrically. There is strong evidence of bias with regard to weight placed on the issue in Figures 3.3(c) and 3.4(b). So, respondents appear to be momentarily discounting the overall category of offense. Strong evidence of differential assignment of exculpation appears in Figures 3.3(d), and 3.4(c), as subjects are more likely to give an ingroup transgressor credit for admitting his misdeed. The results in Figures 3.3(e) and 3.4(d) suggest that respondents are more likely to see the outgroup senator's behavior as typical, which could contribute to the tendency to assign negative impressions to the group/dispositional rather than the individual/situational.

The estimands of interest here are: $\widehat{Bias_D} = \overline{x_{Dr}} - \overline{x_{Dd}}$ and $\widehat{Bias_R} = \overline{x_{Rd}} - \overline{x_{Rr}}$ where D and R indicate the party of the respondents and d and r indicate the party of the senator in the news report. This measures the total bias shown by partisans on any given measure. In each case, the bias is measured by subtracting the mean under the outgroup report from that under the ingroup report. These estimands are strongly statistically significant in all cases under both studies.

The findings here amount to evidence of susceptibility to several stages of bias by partisans in a setting like this one. When hearing something negative about an ingroup representative they are more likely to dismiss the report as unfair and its author as biased. If the subject is from the ingroup, they are less likely to find this kind of thing important. They are more likely to afford exculpatory credit to the ingroup transgressor. They are less likely to assign negative assessments to the groups with which they are associated. So, if the other side does it, it is assigned to that group's "tally", but perhaps not as much so when the transgression comes from one's own side. There is no evidence of motivations being satisfied. If anything, greater evidence of asymmetry emerges in the later items.

Both parties are clearly very susceptible to the various modes of partiality, but the baseline level of bias appears to be greater among Republicans in these studies. That is, the sum total of their favoritism for the ingroup and punishment of the outgroup is larger than that for Democrats. This is true in both studies (CCES and follow-up). Figure 3.5 illustrates a bootstrapped statistical test for this difference in means. The primary point here is not to compare Democrats and Republicans in any broad sense and conclusively declare one more biased than the other. After all, this is by no means an exhaustive list of the methods by which partisans could interpret the world differently. But, the overall amount of differential processing shown on these measures is a relevant comparison, especially given the individuation manipulation mentioned earlier. In terms of that, the greater the magnitude of the bias, the more room to manipulate. In terms of overall significance of this observed difference, it is *suggestive* that Republicans, at this particular moment in political time, may come to the table with significantly more rooting interest than do Democrats.

Updating Overall Favorability

On the one hand, we might not expect to see a great deal of effect from these treatments on this overall evaluation of the two partisan groups. After all, the study has manipulated but one piece of political information among many likely consumed

Figure 3.3: **Study 1: Bias** These figures show mean values for the various Agree/Disagree items by respondent 3-point PID (indicated along the horizontal axis) and experimental condition (indicated by bar color). Leaners are included as partisans. Bars show .95 confidence intervals.
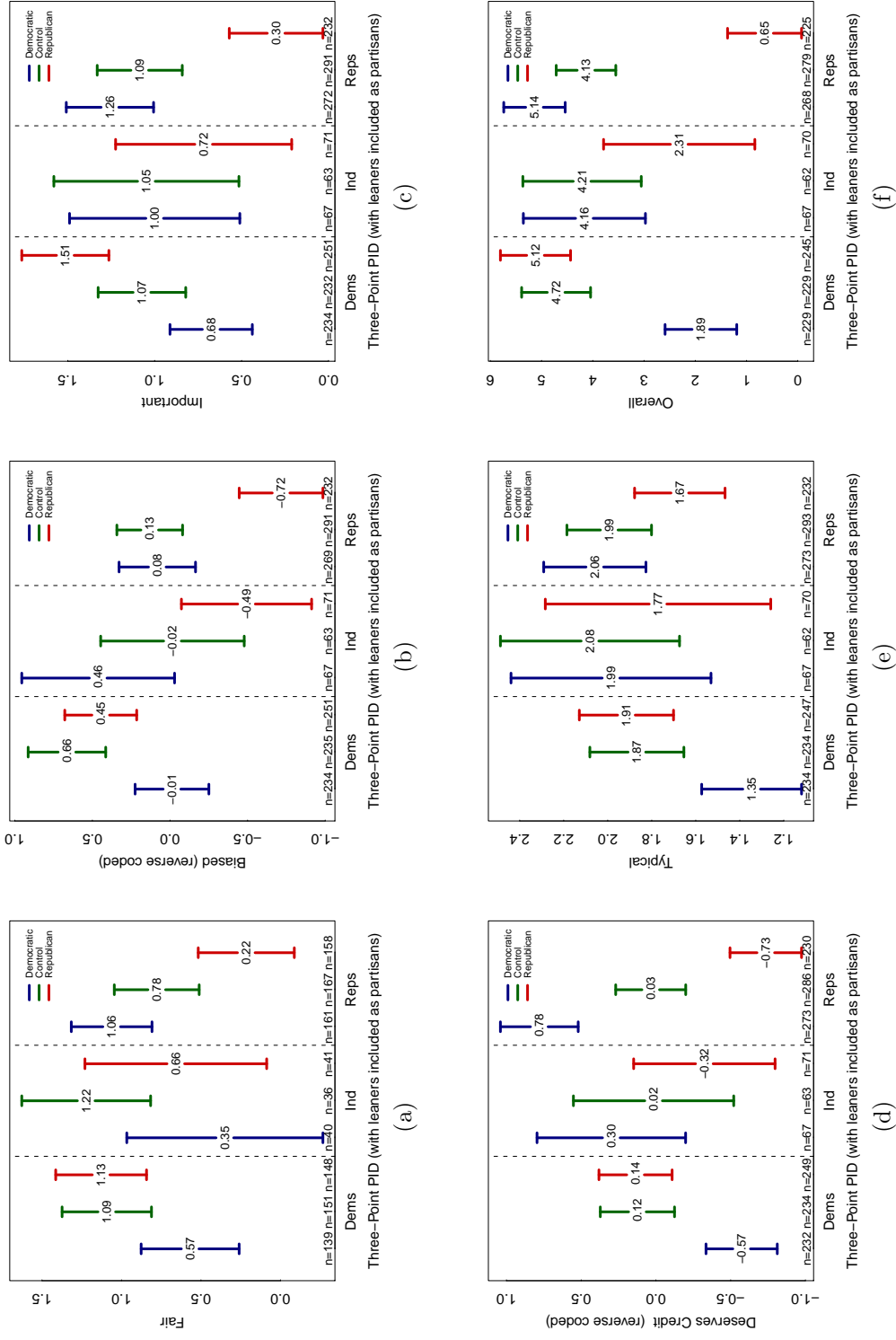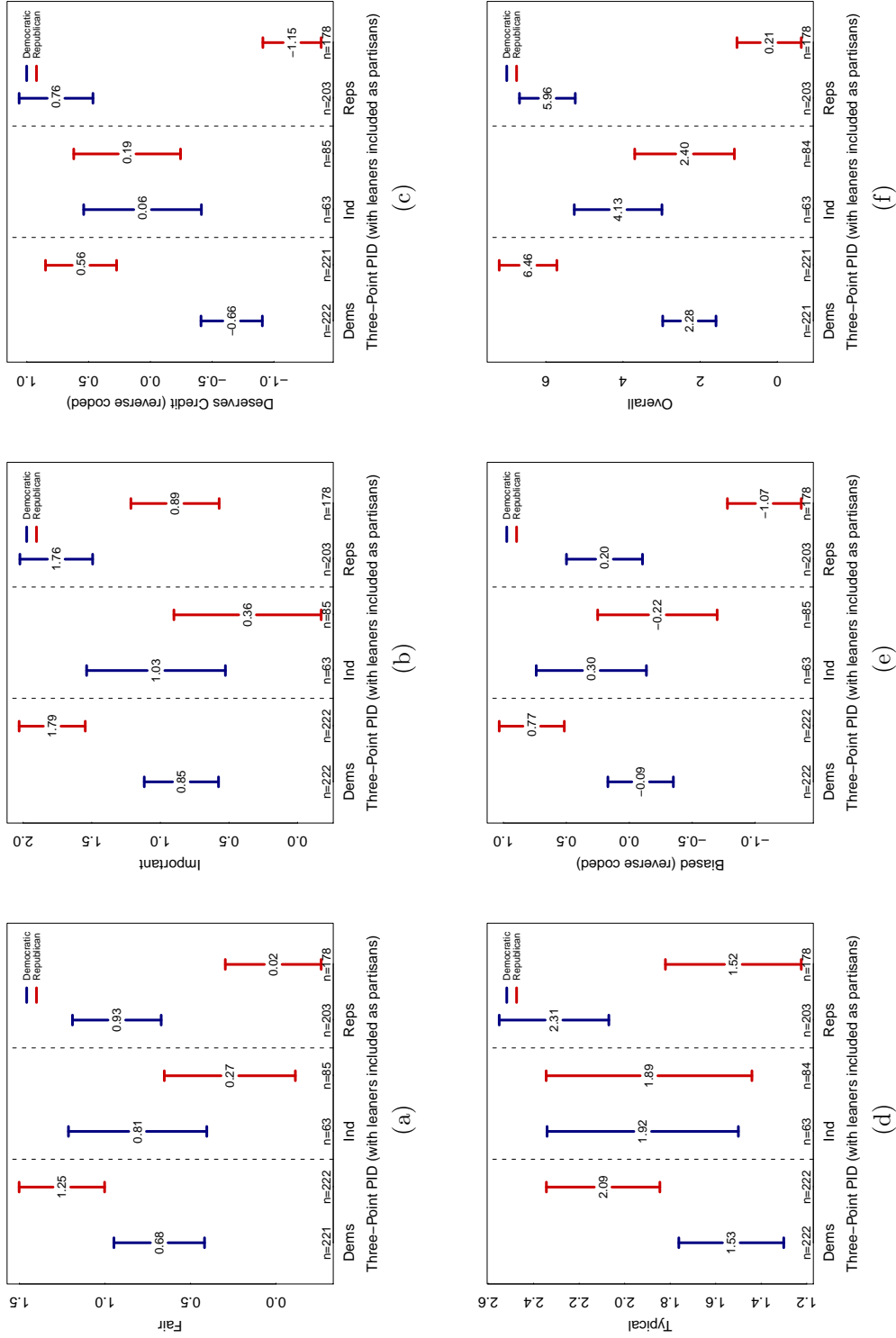
Figure 3.4: **Study 2: Bias** These figures show mean values for the various Agree/Disagree items by respondent 3-point PID (indicated along the horizontal axis) and experimental condition (indicated by bar color). Leaners are included as partisans. Bars show .95 confidence intervals.
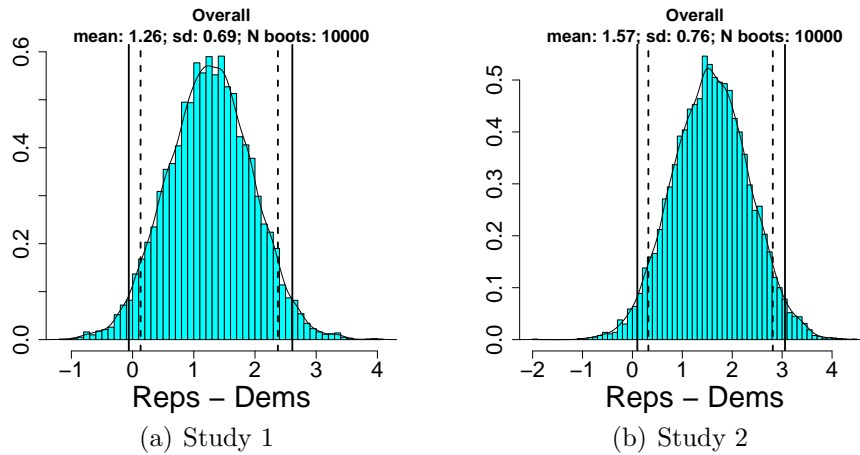
(a) Study 1   (b) Study 2

Figure 3.5: **Difference in Overall Bias,** *Democrats − Republicans*: These histograms show the distribution of bootstrapped samples of the difference in total bias on the Agree/Disagree items between Democrats and Republicans. The solid lines indicate the thresholds for statistical significance at the .05 level, two-tailed, and the broken lines indicate the threshold for statistical significance at the .1 level, also two-tailed. Ten thousand bootstrapped resamples were drawn. The means and standard deviations of the estimands are noted.

by these individuals, even in just the recent past. On the other hand, the new information might play a disproportionately prominent role given its temporal proximity and, thus, availability. When evaluating Republicans, we might expect negative information about a Democrat to produce either no movement or a slight uptick in favorability, while negative information about a Republican might be expected to downgrade the evaluation. The reverse would apply to evaluations of Democrats.

Figure 3.6 shows the mean results for these items by PID and experimental condition. Neither group appears to update substantially, a finding consistent with, but not necessarily demonstrative of, the hypothesis that partisans process new information such that it preserves their existing assessments. Only in the case of Democrats evaluating Republicans do we see a statistically significant (at the .1 level) treatment effect. In this case, Democrats are assigning a lower GOP favorability rating after having read the Republican report as compared to their evaluation after reading the Democratic report. Thus, the only evidence of updating we have suggests that Democrats may be doing so selectively when it offers them an opportunity to downgrade the outgroup.

Overall, the evidence suggests, but cannot prove, that the new information pre-

sented through the study is not prompting partisans to update substantially. If they are updating, they are doing so in ways that counterbalance across experimental conditions. One major shortcoming of this portion of the study is the absence of a true "control" condition. Ideally, we would compare favorability ratings for respondents who read the Democratic and Republican reports with respondents who read no report. Unfortunately, that would have been costly in terms of statistical power for the other portions of the study. This omission leaves open the possibility that respondents are relatively equally upgrading or downgrading both parties as a result of both pieces of information. This shortcoming will need to be addressed in future work.
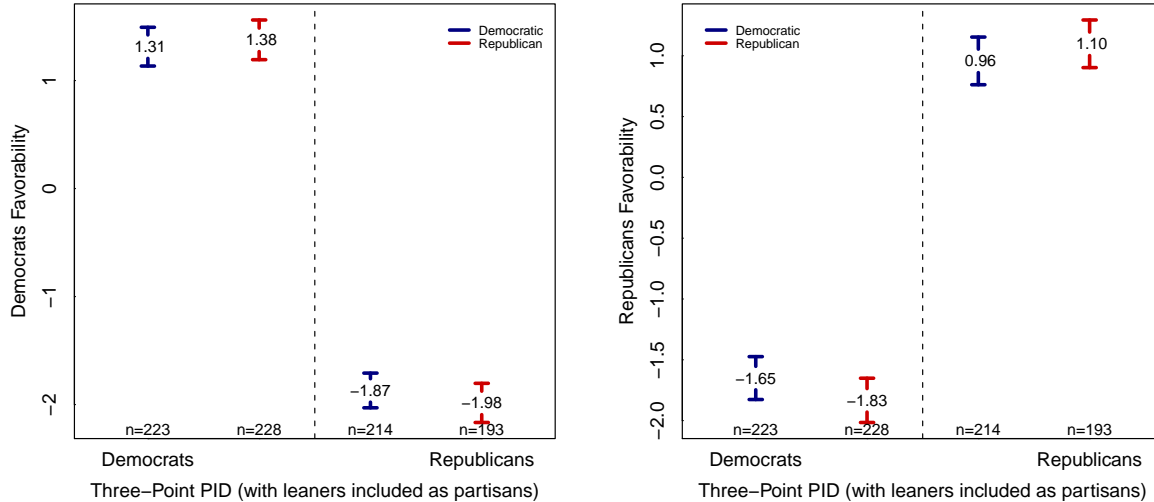
Figure 3.6: **Updating:** These figures show mean values for the Democratic and Republican favorability items by respondent PID (indicated along the x-axis) and experimental condition (indicated by bar color). Leaners are included as partisans. Bars show .95 confidence intervals.

3.5 Discussion and Future Directions

This essay assesses the presence of group-based differences in the processing of information related to a case centered on character and procedural fairness in a campaign setting, a class of information increasingly central to the political discourse but not well covered by existing research in our discipline. It bears repeating that the

stimulus here was decidedly free of issue content and did not reference (or aspire to evoke) a particular elected official. Thus, that simple experiment has isolated evidence of susceptibility to specifically party based processing. Partisan subjects of all intensities show substantial susceptibility to several forms of biased processing in this setting. It is worth noting that the baseline level of partiality appears to be greater among the Republicans in these studies. That is, the sum total of their favoritism for the ingroup and/or punishment of the outgroup is larger than that for Democrats. This difference, and differences in the effects observed in the other portions of these studies suggest that we might do well to pay more attention to potential differences in the ways PID operates in each of the two parties at any given time.

These findings provide perhaps the clearest evidence to date in favor of the biased assimilation view of PID. The multiple layers of bias observed here have clear implications for perpetuating polarization, particularly in an environment in which news reports tend to either have their own partisan or ideological slant or claim balance by simply pairing countervailing voices. The increasing variety of sources and interpretation of facts provides more space in which these biases can operate.

One critique of these findings might focus on the external validity of the experimental results. Respondents here are reacting to very limited information about the candidate and the transgression with nothing real at stake. Furthermore, while this study tracks how respondents react to the prompts provided them, we do not have evidence that they pursue this line of thinking when interpreting new information on their own. On the other hand, these limits in validity could actually tend to decrease the effects observed here. In real cases, such processing would take place in a context of issue stands, candidate histories and actual political consequences. All of these things, though, and especially a partisan individual's perception of them, would presumably tend to be highly correlated with prior associations and, thus, to amplify the biases observed here. Also, the polarization of media sources and adversarial nature of modern commentary likely provide most consumers of such political information with ample opportunity to pursue the processing mechanisms studied here.

Another general critique might concern the extent to which survey responses are genuine or reflect "cheerleading" on the part of respondents (Palmer & Duch, 2001; Sears & Lau, 1983). This is a critique that has more weight in other contexts. When scholars are attempting to evaluate economic assessments or evaluations, for instance, the genuineness of the response is important. In this case, though, even if these differences can be partially explained in this way, one can imagine little more compelling evidence of a strong rooting interest than a propensity to engage in "cheerleading".

Further analysis of these data, especially with regard to potential mediators, will likely reveal additional sources of heterogeneity in the presentation of bias. This sort of analysis might, in particular, help shed light on the ways in which the differences observed between Democrats and Republicans emerge from the different composition of the two populations. Another study is underway that will improve upon the party favorability updating results by including a true control group not exposed to any information at all.

Chapter 4

Manipulating Rooting Interest Through Identity Salience

This essay seeks to more fruitfully link the literature on partisan bias (e.g. Bartels, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Gerber & Green, 1998, 1999) with the growing body of work conceptualizing party identification (PID) in the United States as a social identity (Green & Palmquist, 1990, 1994; Green et al., 2002; Green & Schickler, 1993; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010; Schickler & Green, 1997). The research presented here moves toward a more complete understanding of the role of partisanship in political cognition by examining one set of implications of PID and the degree to which they can be impacted by the relative activation of the personal self-concept as opposed to the collective or partisan self-concept. A social identity based PID would be expected to go hand-in-hand with a rooting interest on the part of partisan identifiers. The studies upon which I report here attempt to manipulate that rooting interest and examine the implications for bias.

The bias measure used is the one presented in the prior essay. These experiments are designed to explore whether the magnitude of any partisan perceptual bias can be altered by manipulating the extent to which a subject's personal or collective self-concept is activated. Or, put another way: can we induce partisans to show more or less bias in favor of their group by making them think of themselves more as individuals or group members. This work calls upon prior research on social identity, self categorization, attribution error, minimal group effects and motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990; Lord et al., 1979; Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Pettigrew, 1979; Robinson et al., 1995; Ross, 1977a,b; Tajfel, 1969, 1982a,b; Tajfel et al., 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Tetlock, 1985), as well as experimental work in political science that has shed light on the biasing effects of PID (Lodge & Hamill, 1986; MacCoun & Paletz, 2009; Malhotra & Kuo, 2008; Van Houweling & Sniderman, 2007).

This essay explores the extent to which perceiver context may impact the level of susceptibility to bias. Much of the work mentioned above related to the biasing effects of PID has focused on variation based upon individual perceiver characteristics, or differences in the type of information provided, but none has examined the extent to which variation may exist in the same perceiver from one moment to another, holding the content of the new information constant. This portion of the studies is theoretically rooted in vast literatures in social psychology dealing with conceptions and implications of social identity. In particular, self-categorization theory (e.g. Turner et al., 1987; Turner, 1999; Turner et al., 1994), which remains the dominant theory of group identity, highlights the interplay between an individual's personal self-concept and her various collective self-concepts. The activation of one version of the self-concept in a certain context tends to be associated with the deactivation of the others in most cases.[1] Balanced identity theory (Greenwald et al., 2002) also highlights this interaction of the self to group objects. In the language of BIT, the manipulation here attempts to temporarily manipulate the strength of the association between the self-concept and a partisan group.

Another portion of these studies looks at ways in which changes in the perceiver's context can impact the level of partiality shown. Specifically, the studies presented here feature variation in the level of politicization at the time of administration, and the extent to which the personal versus collective self-concept are made salient. These attempts at manipulation offer some sense regarding the extent to which rooting interest (and thus bias) may vary from one moment to the next. This is especially important to explore given that most of our data at this level of analysis will, by necessity, emerge from artificial lab or survey research settings. It is useful to know how a perceiver's processing may differ in various contexts. Can we exploit the identity component of PID to make respondents bring less pronounced rooting interest to an interaction with political information? Or, is it the case that, as soon as they face information with political content, they reflexively retract into a partisan shell?

To this end, a manipulation was used to vary the salience of an individual's personal or collective self-concept (Ambady et al., 2004; Arbuckle, 2010). The effects of this manipulation on the level of bias observed in reactions to the "news report" suggest that the level of bias can be altered. Furthermore, it seems the effect may differ by party. As was reported earlier, both parties are clearly very susceptible to the various modes of biased processing, but the baseline level of bias appears to be greater

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[1]For a possible exception, see Ambady et al. (2004); Swann Jr, Gómez, Huici, Morales & Hixon (2010); Swann Jr, Gómez, Seyle, Morales & Huici (2009).

among Republicans in these studies. That is, the sum total of their favoritism for the ingroup and punishment of the outgroup is larger than that for Democrats. This is true in both studies (CCES and follow-up). Because of this higher starting point, we see that Republicans are able to have their level of bias decreased (from baseline) by the individuation process, especially in an already politicized context. Democrats, on the other hand, appear to have a baseline (control) level that is most similar to their individuated condition and is lower than that for Republicans. As a result, the effect we see is an increase from the individuated condition to the partisan condition in the less politicized setting. Bias persists under all conditions. But, as discussed above, there appears to be movement, although it is not consistent across the two parties.

This essay represents the first examination of the role a perceiver's variable active self-concept may play in coloring the processing of new information. The results of these studies: 1) demonstrate that manipulation of self-concept salience and variations in background politicization can alter the magnitude of bias; 2) provide evidence that this bias is pronounced even in less politicized contexts and when the personal self-concept is made more salient; and 3) suggest that bias is asymmetric across the two parties, with Republicans showing a higher baseline level, but some propensity to have their bias level manipulated downward, and Democrats starting at a lower point, but with the potential to be manipulated upward.

4.1   Roots of Individuation

Work in recent decades has focused on mechanisms for reducing intergroup bias. Most of the methods employed to this end relate to altering the information being presented or altering the perceiver's view of the perceived.[2] Methods have attempted to reduce bias and encourage empathy by highlighting the individual characteristics of the perceived or focusing attention on cross-cutting or superordinate identities. Such approaches do not suit the goals of the current study, as they do not hold the content of the information provided constant.

More recently, scholars have begun to explore manipulations that alter the way in which the perceiver conceptualizes herself (Ambady et al., 2004; Arbuckle, 2010; Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds & Turner, 1999; Ybarra & Trafimow, 1998). One such process that has shown effects is self affirmation (e.g. Sherman & Cohen, 2002). Boosting a subject's self-esteem is thought to decrease the extent to which that subject relies

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[2]For a thorough review, see Hewstone et al. (2002).

Study:	1	2
N	2065	1061
Subjects exposed to prior political content	Yes	No
Experimental Manipulation of Report	Democrat, No Party, Republican	Democrat, Republican
Experimental Manipulation of Self-Concept	Self, Control	Self, Control, Party
Agree-Disagree Battery	Yes	Yes

Table 4.1: Comparison of Studies

upon group identities to derive self-esteem, thus making those memberships temporarily less central to her self-concept. Another approach exposes subjects to an individuation, or personalization, process designed to make the personal self-concept relatively more salient (Ambady et al., 2004; Arbuckle, 2010). This is the method used in the studies presented here.

4.2   Studies and Design

Study 1 was fielded via the Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (Gerber, 2011) and University of California, Berkeley (Van Houweling, 2011) modules of the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) (Ansolabehere, 2011). The respondents from these two modules are pooled ($N = 2065$) in the analysis presented here. Study 2 was conducted as a follow-up survey through YouGov/Polimetrix (Theodoridis, 2011). Study 2 adds another source of variation in that subjects were not exposed to any political questions prior to participating in the study. The initial study uses a 3 x 2 factorial design and the follow-up study features a 2 x 3 design. Subjects were randomly assigned to answer either 1) a series of "individuation" or "personalization" questions or 2) a series of control questions (Ambady et al., 2004). In the follow-up study an additional condition was added in which subjects answered questions about their own political party.

Study 1

With the goal of examining whether partisans are able to be encouraged to interact with political information in a less partisan manner through manipulation of their active self-concept, I sought a manipulation that would focus on the level of identification with the partisan group on the part of the perceiver. The approach used here

exposes subjects to an individuation, or personalization, process designed to make the personal self-concept relatively more salient (Ambady et al., 2004; Arbuckle, 2010). This process has been previously shown to reduce the effect of stereotype threat and group based bias. Subjects in the treatment condition respond to a series of questions designed to make them think of themselves more in terms of their personal self-concept. The treatment and control conditions, which directly preceded the bias study discussed above for all subjects, appear below. These are the precise items developed by Ambady et al. (2004). The control condition is included for comparability, and the negative items at the end are intended to exclude self-affirmation effects.

- Treatment:
  - Your favorite food
  - Your favorite movie
  - Your favorite book
  - Your favorite hobby
  - What are three positive and three negative characteristics/traits that describe you?

- Control:
  - What do lions eat?
  - What is the name for a group of lions?
  - Where can lions be found?
  - What kind of animal is a lion?
  - What are three positive and three negative characteristics/traits that describe lions?

Study 1 can also be said to have occurred in a relatively politicized context in both timing and design. It hit the field in the wake of the 2010 mid-term elections, so respondents had just been subjected to a campaign season and the post-election coverage. Furthermore, respondents participated in this experiment after answering several minutes of politically oriented questions.

Study 2

The follow-up study ($N = 1061$) was explicitly designed to reduce the baseline politicization. For starters, it was fielded in the summer of 2011, an electoral off-year. And, it was designed so that subjects were not exposed to any political items prior to participating in the study. YouGov/Polimetrix maintains basic data for members

of their subject pool. This meant that a pre-treatment seven-point PID measure was available without exposing subjects to even the standard two-item measure prior to the experiment.[3] To improve statistical power for key subgroup analyses, the "no-party report" condition was dropped. A third condition was added to the self-concept manipulation. In addition to the "self/individuated" and "control" condition, a third of subjects were exposed to the following items, for which their pre-treatment PID (with leaners included as partisans) was used to assign the target party.

- Party Condition:
    - What animal is the Democratic/Republican Party symbol, an elephant or a donkey?
    - Are Democrats/Republicans generally more conservative or liberal?
    - Would most Democrats/Republicans prefer Ronald Reagan or John F. Kennedy?
    - Name a place where many Democrats/Republicans live.
    - What are three positive and three negative characteristics/traits that describe Democrats/Republicans?

Individuation Results

In the initial study, see Figure A.1, the overall difference in bias, between the control and "individual" conditions generally persists among Republicans, leading to a reduction in overall bias (Figure 4.1). Figure 4.3 illustrates a bootstrapped statistical test for this difference in means. In the follow-up study, see Figure A.2, a pattern of difference between the "party" condition and the "individual" condition emerges overall. Among Democrats, the effect is a relatively consistent difference between the "party" condition and the "individual" condition, but the latter produces similar levels as those found in the control condition. Figure 4.4 illustrates a bootstrapped statistical test for this difference in means among Democrats. Among Republicans, the control condition seems to produce the highest total levels of asymmetry, but the differences between the conditions are not statistically significant.

The starting point for Republicans (i.e. the level of bias they show under the control condition) seems to be comparable to the level of bias they show under the group

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[3]Subjects were also asked their PID after the study was completed. The 49 subjects who switched from one party to the other in the two measures were removed from the analysis, as some of the content assigned to them was based upon their earlier identification and, thus, would not function according to the study's design.
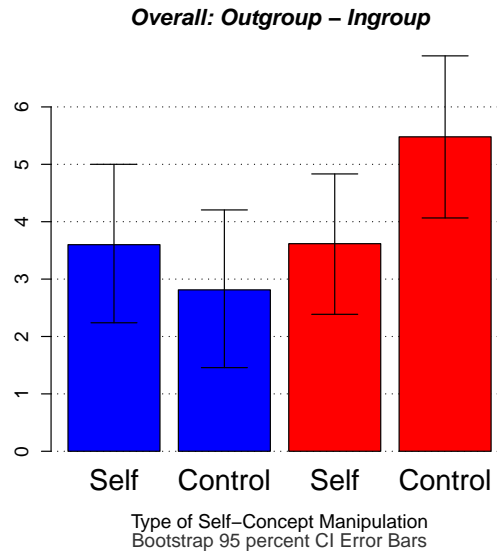
Figure 4.1: **Study 1 Overall Individuation Effects:** Red bars (to the right) indicate Republican respondents and blue bars (to the left) indicate Democratic respondents. Leaners are included as partisans. The self-concept manipulation is indicated along the horizontal axis. Error bars show bootstrapped (10,000 resamples) .95 confidence intervals.

(partisan) condition in the follow-up. Because of this, and the overall greater magnitude, we see that Republicans are able to have their level of bias decreased (from baseline) by the individuation process, especially in an already politicized context. Democrats, on the other hand, appear to have a baseline (control) level that is most similar to their individuated condition. As a result, the effect we see is an increase from the individuated condition to the partisan condition in the less politicized setting. Bias persists under all conditions. But, as discussed above, there appears to be movement, although it is not consistent across the two parties.

The results of this manipulation suggest that marginal change in group-based bias may be achieved by encouraging partisans to think of themselves as either individuals or partisan group members. These effects, however, differ by party and are mediated by the extent of political saturation level at the time of administration. Substantial overall bias persists even when the personal self-concept is activated. In other words, the level of rooting interest is relatively difficult to manipulate in the face of political information. These findings furthermore suggest that the role of identity in producing asymmetric processing may operate very differently in partisans from each party.
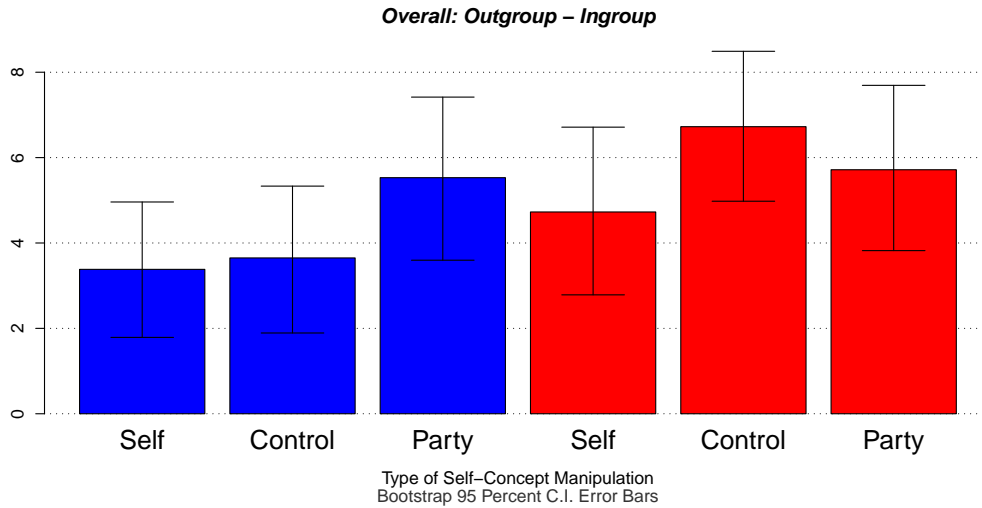
Figure 4.2: **Study 2 Overall Individuation Effects:** Red bars (to the right) indicate Republican respondents and blue bars (to the left) indicate Democratic respondents. Leaners are included as partisans. The self-concept manipulation is indicated along the horizontal axis. Error bars show bootstrapped (10,000 resamples) .95 confidence intervals.

4.3   Discussion and Future Directions

The survey experiments analyzed in this paper were designed to explore whether the magnitude of bias be altered by manipulating the extent to which a subject's personal or collective self-concept is activated at different levels of background politicization? Or, put another way, can we make partisans show less bias by making them think of themselves as individuals rather than group members, and in what context?

A manipulation in these studies was used to explore the extent to which bias can be increased or decreased by priming subjects to think of themselves as individuals rather than partisans. The results of this manipulation suggest that marginal change in group-based bias may be achieved by encouraging partisans to think of themselves as either individuals or partisan group members. These effects, however, differ by party and are mediated by the extent of political saturation level at the time of administration. Substantial overall bias persists even when the personal self-concept is activated. In other words, the salience of a perceiver's partisan identity may be relatively difficult to manipulate in the face of political information.
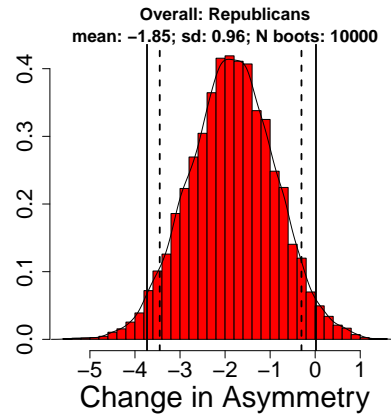
Figure 4.3: **Study 1: Individuation Effect Among Republicans** This histogram
shows the distribution of bootstrapped samples of the difference in total asymmetry
on the Agree/Disagree items between "individuated" and "control" Republicans. The
solid lines indicate the thresholds for statistical significance at the .05 level, two-tailed,
and the broken lines indicate the threshold for statistical significance at the .1 level,
also two-tailed. Ten thousand bootstrapped resamples were drawn. The means and
standard deviations of the estimands are noted.

These findings furthermore suggest that the role of identity in producing biased
processing may operate very differently in partisans from each party. In a setting in
which they have already been processing political information, we see that Republicans
are able to have their level of bias decreased (from baseline) when they are primed
to think of themselves as individuals. This effect does not appear among Democrats.
Instead, in a setting featuring no prior political information, their level of ingroup
favoritism can be increased by priming party.

These individuation results represent the first analysis of this type with regard to
party. While the full implications of this research are not fully developed, there are
clear practical ramifications of such results. This provides evidence that the way in
which a citizen interacts with new information at a political rally, or in the context
of a political poll, may differ substantially from the way in which she interacts with
it while having dinner with her family. And, the nature of these differences appears
to vary between the two parties. This is information that could perhaps inform the
communications strategies of political campaigns trying to relay positive and negative
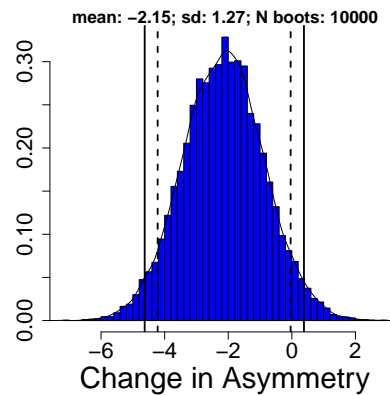information to voters on both sides.

Figure 4.4: **Study 2: Individuation Effect Among Democrats** This histogram shows the distribution of bootstrapped samples of the difference in total asymmetry on the Agree/Disagree items between Democrats in the "individuated" and "party" conditions. The solid lines indicate the thresholds for statistical significance at the .05 level, two-tailed, and the broken lines indicate the threshold for statistical significance at the .1 level, also two-tailed. Ten thousand bootstrapped resamples were drawn. The means and standard deviations of the estimands are noted.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Overview

Building upon the conceptualization of PID as a social identity (Green et al., 2002; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy et al., 2010) the essays contained in this thesis have sought to expand our understanding of partisan intensity and PID's biasing effects. This work has relied upon new data generated during my time as a doctoral student, making use of survey experimental paradigms and a new implicit measure of PID. I have also called upon theories in social psychology that have emerged since social identity theory (Tajfel, 1969, 1974, 1982a,b; Tajfel et al., 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 2004; Turner, 1975) was proposed. In particular, this work has been motivated by descriptions of the relationship between the self-concept and group objects in self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987; Turner, 1982, 1999; Turner et al., 1994) and, more recently, balanced identity theory (Cvencek et al., 2012; Greenwald et al., 2002). Specifically, I gain leverage by 1) focusing on the interaction of the "self" and group, and 2) by narrowly defining identity as an association between these two elements of an individual's social knowledge structure.

The objective of the first essay was to evaluate the extent to which PID (as defined by the standard seven-point scale) could be thought of as a social identity (as described by self-categorization and balanced identity theory). Using a new implicit measure that detects the association between "Self" and party, I find strong evidence that PID should be thought of as a social identity. Partisans can be said to associate with the party "team" in the way that we expect from fans, not referees. Since measuring identity was the goal of the Michigan School scholars in developing the standard two-item measure, this effort served to test, and confirm, the validity of that measure vis-à-vis its originally stated purpose. The second essay presents results from

embedded survey experiments to provide new evidence and new analytic power in addressing the question of perceptual bias emerging from PID. A series of measures and a manipulation designed to avoid many of the confounders present in other studies show consistent evidence of biased assimilation. More than just adding evidence to the debate regarding the very presence of perceptual bias, this paradigm permits further analysis of heterogeneity in the expression of bias. In particular, it appears that Republicans are more susceptible to the mechanisms tested for here. This asymmetry persists across more- or less-politicized contexts.

The final essay links this perceptual bias with a social identity model of PID focused on the interaction of "self" and party. A manipulation was used to vary the relative salience of an individual's personal and collective self-concepts (Ambady et al., 2004). The effects of this manipulation on the level of bias observed suggest that the strength of rooting interest may be altered somewhat, but that the nature of the variation depends upon the political saturation of the context. Once again, the effects differ substantially across the two parties. Republicans start off with a higher default level of bias. But, by elevating the salience of the personal self-concept, we are able to reduce that bias, especially in a more politicized setting. Democrats begin at a lower default level. But, in a low-politicization setting, the priming of party can generate an increase in bias.

While it is clear that Republicans and Democrats do view the world through red and blue colored glasses, respectively, we see that the thickness of the lenses varies by party, by the politicization of the moment, and by the relative salience of the personal and partisan self-concepts. These findings certainly suggest mechanisms by which polarization might be heightened. But, they also suggest that there may be benefits for scholars and political elites in more carefully considering content and context of political messages with regard to their role in raising or lowering the "perceptual screen". Democratic elites might want to prime party more often when addressing their flock. Democratic persuasive messages intended for the ears of Republican identifiers might benefit from some effort at "individuation". Republicans might make it a point to reach out to Democrats in less politicized contexts.

5.2   Of Carnival Mirrors and Identity Gaps

In the course of these analyses, the data across the various studies have been relentless in speaking of a pair of related findings. 1) Partisanship does not operate in exactly the same way across the two parties. And, 2) Republicans in recent years

seem to identify more strongly with their party than do Democrats. These findings first appear in examination of the IAT results presented in the first essay, but they are also clear from the results regarding bias and self-concept manipulation. To be clear, both sides identify with their party, and both sides are quite susceptible to bias. But, the level of identity for Democrats appears to be lower. Not surprisingly, so is the starting point with regard to bias.

For scholars, these general findings have a few important implications: For starters, they call into question the practice of treating partisan strength across the two parties as mirror-image phenomena. It is often convenient, and statistical power preserving (or perhaps generating), to simply fold the seven-point scale over. This research suggests that we should take great care when doing so, as there are clear differences in the magnitude and structure of intensity. This practice has been common, so there are likely things to be learned from reevaluation of past analysis done in this way.

The findings also open a series of new research questions regarding the causes and temporal consistency of the asymmetry. Is it the case that this results largely from the composition of the two parties? Or, is it a feature of the current political moment? Does identity rise and fall with conditions such as control of government or electoral success? For example, one might suspect that the current position of the Republican Party and its brand, may be the source of this asymmetry.

Furthermore, we might ask what the system-wide implications of this identity gap are? Does it generate a larger "electoral blind spot" (to borrow the language of Bawn, Cohen, Karol, Masket, Noel & Zaller (2012)) in which Republican elites can operate? Or, is it the presence of a consistent message that generates the strong sense of identity? There is certainly fruitful research to be done on questions such as these. It is my hope that the measures and paradigms presented here will facilitate these inquiries going forward.

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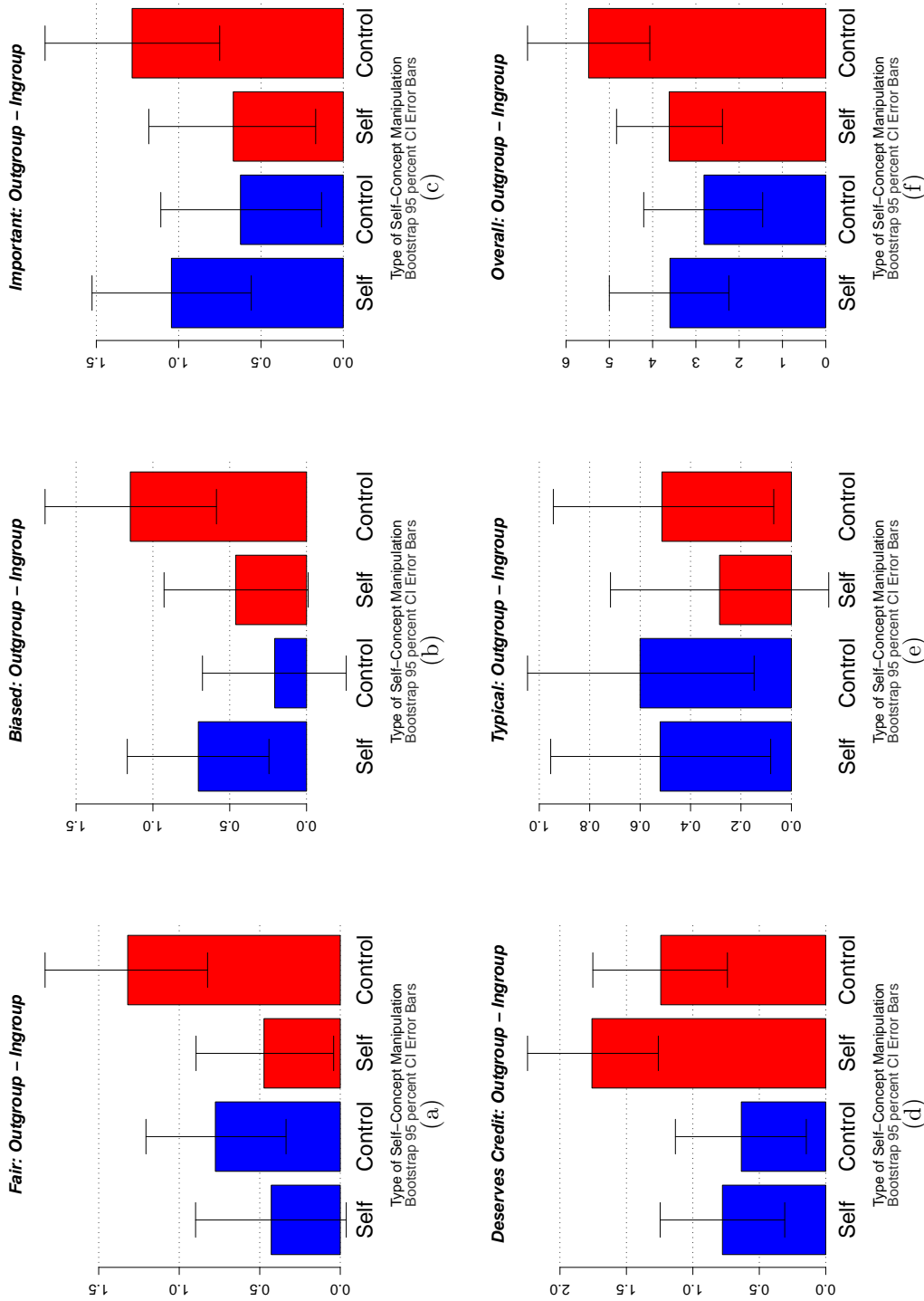
Appendix A

Full Individuation Results

Figure A.1: **Study 1 Individuation Effects:** Red bars (to the right) indicate Republican respondents and blue bars (to the left) indicate Democratic respondents. Leaners are included as partisans. The self-concept manipulation is indicated along the horizontal axis. Error bars show bootstrapped (10,000 resamples) .95 confidence intervals.
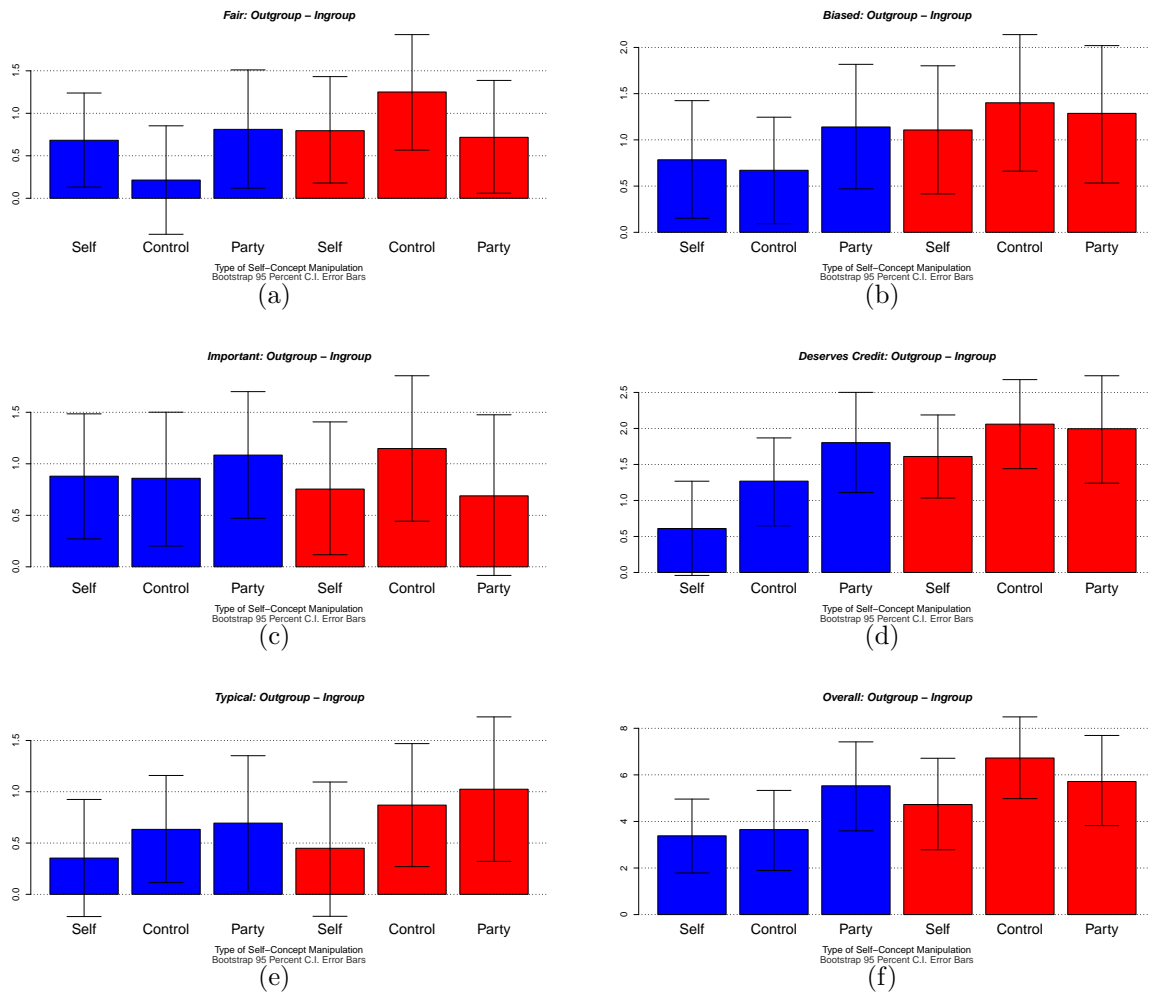
Figure A.2: **Study 2 Individuation Effects:** Red bars (to the right) indicate Republican respondents and blue bars (to the left) indicate Democratic respondents. Leaners are included as partisans. The self-concept manipulation is indicated along the horizontal axis. Error bars show bootstrapped (10,000 resamples) .95 confidence intervals.