Stony Brook University

‘My Kind of Partisan’ – The Role of Party Leaders in Shaping Party Attachments

A Dissertation Presented

by

Alexa Bankert

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

(Concentration – Political Psychology)

Stony Brook University

May 2016

Stony Brook University

The Graduate School

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Hardly any political scientist would disagree that partisanship is a key variable in political behavior research: It predicts vote choice, political attitudes and core values as well as party leader evaluations and political activism. We observe these effects especially among strong partisans – a segment of the American electorate that has notably increased in recent years. While the consequences of strong partisanship for political behavior are well-known, we still lack a theoretical framework as well as corresponding empirical evidence that explains why some partisans are deeply attached to their party whereas others lack that type of strong commitment. I address these gaps in three different ways:

First, I develop a social identity-based theory of partisan strength in which I argue that partisans' overlap with the party prototype shapes the intensity of their party attachments. These party prototypes exemplify the political and social attributes of party members that we perceive as *typical*. Party leaders are particularly influential in shaping our perception of what these attributes are, enabling partisans to estimate how well they fit in with the party. This judgement of similarity with the party prototype can ultimately lead to stronger party identification. Therefore, I predict that similarity to inparty leaders increases partisan identity strength.

Second, to reflect the identity-based conceptualization of partisan strength, I introduce a multi-item partisan identity scale that captures fine gradations in the intensity of party attachments better than the traditional strength measure. The scale's superior measurement properties allow researchers to measure partisan strength as a continuous variable and to detect even subtle treatment effects in experimental studies in which the strength of partisanship is the dependent variable.

Third, I test my theory with two experiments and find supportive evidence for the claim that similarity to the party prototype increases partisan identity strength whereby even similarity that is void of political content can strengthen party ties. These findings underline the social nature of political parties and partisans' desire to be representative of their party even with regard to attributes that are ostensibly irrelevant to politics.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the very first scholar in my life, my mother Kati Bankert:

I may have outlived you but I will never outgrow you.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

ANES – American National Election Study

APSA – American Political Science Association

APSR – American Political Science Review

AJPS – American Journal of Political Science

BES – British Election Study

CFA – Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI – Comparative Fit Index

EPC – Expected Parameter Change

GOP – Grand Old Party

GRM – Graded Response Model

IDPG – Identification with a Psychological Group

ICF – Item Characteristic Function

IIF – Item Information Function

IRF – Item Response Function

IRT – Item Response Theory

LORE – Laboratory for Opinion Research

MAPP – Meet A Politician Project

MGCFA – Multiple Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis

MTurk – Mechanical Turk

PID – Party Identification

RMSEA – Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

SCT – Social Categorization Theory

SIT – Social Identity Theory

TLI – Tucker-Lewis Index

U.K. – United Kingdom

U.S. – United States

Acknowledgments

Though I am listed as the sole author of this dissertation, many people have contributed to it in various ways. There are no words that could possibly express my gratitude for all those people who have supported me, personally and professionally, throughout the past five years.

My deepest gratitude is to my advisor, Dr. Leonie Huddy. I have been amazingly fortunate to have an advisor who helped me explore and develop my ideas with hands-on guidance. Leonie taught me to challenge myself and my thinking. At the same time, she never gave up on me when I fell short of these aspirations. I promise to pay it forward to my students.

My committee member, Dr. Stanley Feldman, has always had an open door for me and provided consistently helpful advice on my research, and academia in general. Graduate school would not have been as intellectually challenging without him. I particularly thank him for his role in the preparation of my job talk (which he sat through three times!).

I am also indebted to Dr. Matthew Lebo and his strong advocacy on my behalf in the last year(s). He was an ally in the seemingly insurmountable task of navigating the job market, and beyond. I was fortunate to experience his deep care for the graduate students at Stony Brook University.

I am also grateful to my outside committee member from NYU, Dr. Patrick Egan, who was so kind to agree being part of my committee without any hesitations. I will keep his generosity in mind next time someone asks me for a grand favor (such as reading through a 200+ page dissertation within a week and coming all the way to Long Island).

I am also thankful to other members of the Stony Brook Political Science faculty who supported me in so many different ways: Dr. Helmut Norpoth for giving me the chance to publish with him, Dr. Reuben Kline for being a great colleague and co-author, Dr. Yanna Krupnikov for reading my manuscripts, providing an abundance of useful advice on a variety of topics, and for promoting me as a scholar.

I would also like to acknowledge the attendees at various conferences such as MPSA, ISPP, NYU-CESS, APSA, AAPOR, and PolMeth for their valuable feedback on my research.

Many friends have helped me stay sane through these oftentimes difficult years in graduate school. Their unconditional support and encouragement empowered me to face tough challenges with confidence, to celebrate victories, and to get back on my feet after failures. While there is not sufficient space to name all of those special people, I would like to mention in particular: Tyler Corbett, Natalie Stenzoski, Joe Matarlo, Kate Pierson, Patrick Kraft, Tristan Delaney, David Stack, Johanna Willman, Katharina Paduck, Anita Laurisch, and Tiffany Noel.

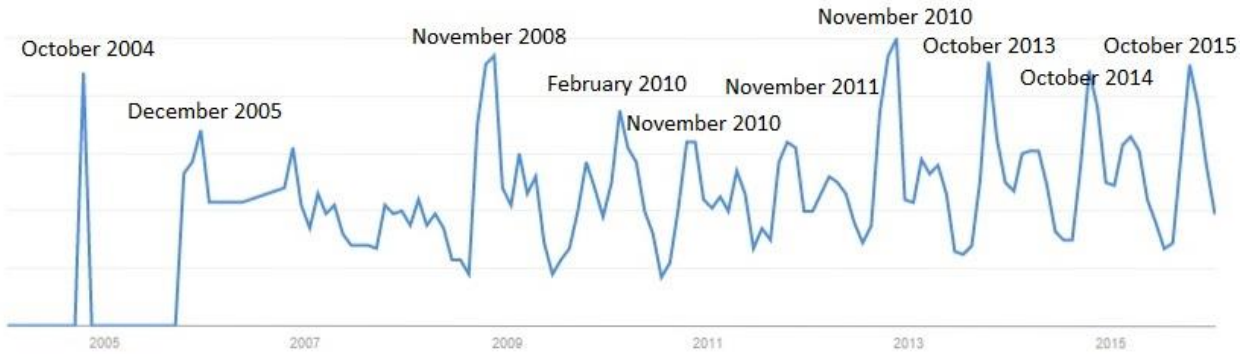
Thanks to all of you for being part of my journey.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> "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 partisan. In a strict sense, they are not even partisan because they like one party more than another. Partisanship as a party identification is entirely a matter of self-definition." (Campbell et al. 1986)

In the past few years, partisanship has received a substantial amount of attention inside as well as outside the realms of political science and academia: Numerous newspaper articles proclaim the reign of hyper-partisanship in American politics and the public appears to listen. A simple Google Trend analysis, demonstrated in Figure 1, provides some evidence for the notion that partisanship is a rising presence on the electorate's mind. The graph portrays the relative amount of Google searches that entail the term "Partisanship". Most commonly, the searches were aimed at learning about the definition of partisanship (e.g. "What is partisanship", "definition partisanship"). While we observe expected spikes in partisanship-related online searches in the months leading up to the general and congressional elections, it is also noteworthy that in contrast to the 2004 election, the number of partisanship-related searches no longer drops to 0. Instead, the relative minimum in searches steadily increased over the past ten years, suggesting that partisanship has become an omnipresent feature of the American political landscape – even in the absence of the heated political campaigning that tend to accompany the General Election.

Figure 1: Google Trends Analysis for the term “Partisanship”



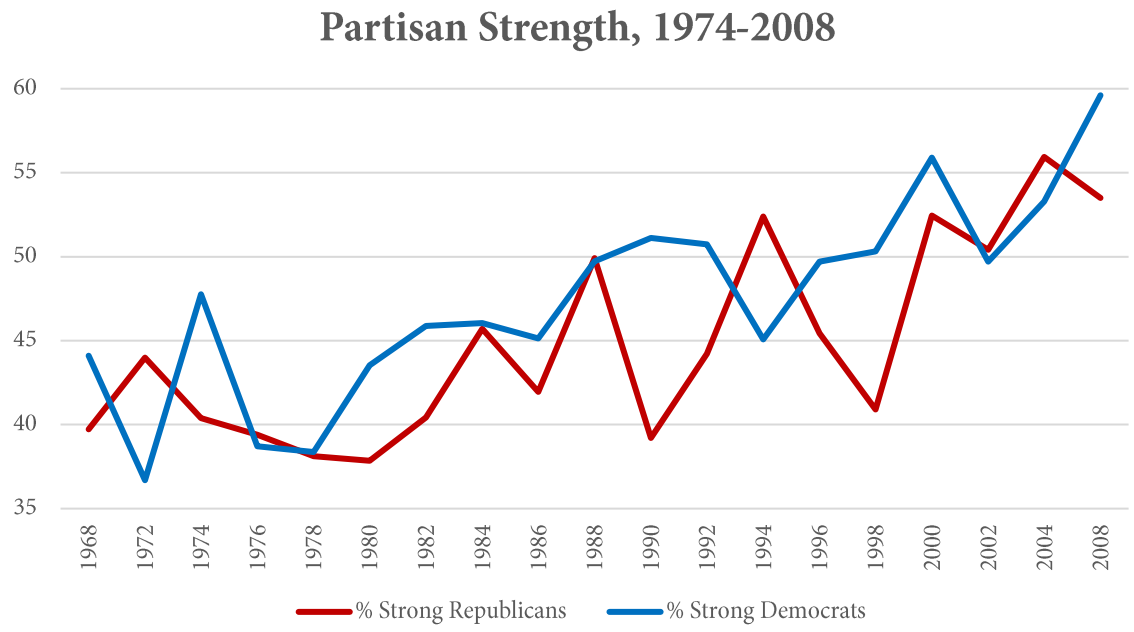
Note: Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart rather than absolute search volume. If at most 10% of searches for the given region and time frame were for "partisanship", these 10% would be considered 100.

This notion is reinforced by the increasing number of people in the American electorate who identify strongly with one of the two major political parties. Ironically, at the same time the overall number of Democratic (29%) and Republican (26%) identifiers is at or near historical lows while the number of self-proclaimed Independents reached 40% in 2011, and has stayed at or above that level for the past five years (Gallup 2016: “Democratic, Republican Identification Near Historical Lows”). While this trend appears to be contradictory to the statement that partisan attachments have intensified, past and current research continue to confirm that Independents behave very much like closet partisans. The negative connotation attached to partisanship seems to drive the desire to appear unbiased or neutral in the political arena (see Klar and Krupnikov 2016) and thus declare an Independent identification.

Nevertheless, data from the American National Election Study (ANES) reveals that the number of strong partisans has increased by almost 13% since 1978. This trend is detectable among both Democrats and Republicans as Figure 2 demonstrates. The number of strong Democrats rose

from 39% in 1976 to 60% in 2008. Similarly, the number of strong Republican identifiers increased from 39% to 53% in the same time period. While Figure 2 shows that this growth is not strictly monotonous, the overall surge in partisan strength is historically unprecedented.

Figure 2: Partisan Strength from 1974 to 2008



Note: Data taken from the ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File. Percentages are based on respondents who indicated a party preference in the initial party identification question.

While party attachments are oftentimes interpreted as a sign of a healthy representative democracy (Muirhead 2013; 2006), intensified party loyalties have also been identified as the source of partisan rivalry and incivility: A recent study by Miller and Conover showed that 41 percent of partisans surveyed agreed that simply winning elections is more important to them than policy or ideological goals, while just 35 percent agreed that policy is a more important motivator for them to participate in politics. At the same time, 24 percent valued both equally or expressed

no opinion, indicating that partisans in fact care more about their team winning than their policy or ideological preferences being implemented.

This openly tribal nature of partisanship is furthermore expressed in the intensified hostility and incivility between party supporters: In the same study, 38 percent of partisans agreed that their parties should use any means necessary to "win elections and issue debates." A follow-up question then asked about the specific means that these partisans would consider: The most commonly cited methods contained voter suppression, stealing or cheating in elections, physical violence and threats against the other party, lying, personal attacks on opponents, as well as not allowing the other party to speak and using the filibuster to gridlock Congress.

Partisanship in the Scholarly Debate

Given the pervasive effects of party attachments, it is not surprising that partisanship is one of the most intensively researched political phenomena in the discipline of political science. A simple Google Scholar search for the term "Partisanship" yields over 110,000 articles; 2,018 of them are published in the two top-tier political science journals, namely the American Journal of Political Science (AJPS) and the American Political Science Review (APSR), suggesting that the concept of partisanship is pivotal to research on political behavior and beyond. This notion is buttressed by the number of partisanship-related panels that are annually organized by the American Political Science Association (APSA): At the association's meeting in 2015, APSA included 5 separate paper sessions that discussed the role of partisanship in various contexts such as federalism, intergovernmental relations, public opinion, elections and voting behavior, race and ethnicity, as well as political psychology.

The Study of Partisanship – A Brief Overview

While the effects of partisanship are of concern to researchers across all subfields in the political science discipline, scholars in the field of political psychology have been especially preoccupied with the investigation of the nature and sources of partisanship. In the spirit of scientific discourse, several different – oftentimes conflicting – theories on the origins of partisanship have been developed over time: The very first comprehensive study of partisanship and its development and consequences was put forth by Campbell and colleagues (1960) in The American Voter in which the authors defined partisanship as a psychological attachment to a party. This was a radical departure from prior research which had focused on ideology and political issue preferences to explain the origins of partisanship. In contrast, as the opening quote by Campbell et al. (1986) suggests, The American Voter considered partisanship a function of people's self-definition which precedes instrumental considerations. From that perspective, partisanship constitutes the source rather than the consequence of vote choice and other political behaviors.

The psychological remodeling of partisanship triggered the emergence of a revisionist movement among political scientists who accused The American Voter of understating the importance of political issues and ideology in shaping partisanship (Downs 1957; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976; Fiorina 1981; Achen 1992) or an evaluation of party performance and candidates (Franklin 1984; Page and Jones 1979). Other theoretical approaches have incorporated components of The American Voter such as its emphasis on partisanship's stability and its early roots in childhood socialization (Jennings and Niemi 1981; Converse and Markus 1979).

The psychological conceptualization of partisanship has seen another revival in the political science literature through Green, Palmquist, and Schickler's work (2002) Partisan Hearts and Minds in which the authors explicate the relationship between social categorization processes

and party identification spelling out the psychological dynamics that Campbell et al. (1960) had remained silent about. Even more novel approaches towards the study of partisanship examine personality traits (Bakker et al. 2015; Gerber et al. 2011) and genetics factors (Hatemi and McDermott 2011; Hatemi et al. 2008) as sources of party identification.

Instrumental versus Expressive Partisanship

Besides this ostensible diversity in the existing theoretical accounts of the origins of partisanship, the current state of the literature is overall dominated by two major theories: The instrumental model of partisanship as supported by the early revisionists and the expressive model of partisanship as first outlined in The American Voter. Advocates of the instrumental model view partisanship as the sum of an individual's political issues preferences and core beliefs. From this perspective, members of the electorate consider themselves Democrats or Republicans because they favor their respective party's political platform. Partisanship, in this theoretical approach, is an instrument to summarize and implement preferred political issue preferences.

In the expressive model, on the other hand, partisanship is defined as a psychological attachment to a political party. This is because – similar to race, ethnicity, and religion – parties are social groups that offer their members a sense of belonging and shared reality. Thus, in this theoretical approach, partisanship turns into a partisan identity that partisans incorporate into their self-concept. Inferring from this assumption, party supporters should be motivated to defend and advance their party's positive status such as through voting in elections or political activism on behalf of their party. Partisanship is a tool to express or actively convey parts of the self. What distinguishes these two models from each other is the causal arrow between partisanship and

political issues preferences: In the instrumental model, the former is a function of the latter. If individual political preferences change, so does party identification. In contrast, the expressive model adds a causal arrow that flows from partisanship to political issue preferences, suggesting that partisans follow group cues and adopt the policy preferences that their party advocates for.

From Partisan Direction to Partisan Strength

The aim of this dissertation is not to resolve this debate. In fact, I circumvent the theoretical roadblock by moving away from the origins of the direction of party identification and instead focus on its strength. Given the amount of research that has been done on polarization among political elites (e.g. Hetherington 2001; Druckman et al. 2013) as well as among the American electorate (e.g. Layman and Carsey 2002), it is surprising that we know very little about the sources that drive the intensity of partisan attachments. In fact, most research on partisanship has remained focused on investigating the direction of partisanship and its sources even though "[…] it seems fairly clear [...] that [partisan] intensity varies more than direction does" (Johnston 2006). Even though partisan intensity shows greater variations, the sources of these variations have remained relatively unexplored.

Beyond the polarization literature, these stronger party attachments are also increasingly of interest to political scientists as they show to have implications on more forms of political behavior than simply the vote: Strong partisans are not just much more likely to vote for their party, they are also significantly more engaged in politics (Huddy et al. 2015), report emotional reactions such as enthusiasm and anger in the fact of electoral threat and reassurance (Mason 2015), and even perceive great polarization between the two parties (Westfall et al. 2015). Thus,

variations in partisan strength are consequential for the nature of party systems: Strong party identifiers have a greater motivation to defend their party's status, raising the likelihood of these partisans to become politically active on behalf of their party, especially in time of electoral threat. These observations are theoretically aligned with expectations derived from the expressive model of partisanship. As Huddy and colleagues (2015) put it: "Weakly identified fans may attend games when the team is doing well and skip those where defeat is likely, but strong fans hang on and participate, even when the team is sure to lose, in order to boost their team's chances of victory" (pp. 6-7). From this vantage point, strong partisan attachments pose a normative dilemma: On one hand, strong partisans are everything we want the ideal democratic citizen to be; they vote and are actively engaged in the political process through party activism. On the other hand, they are also more likely to express hostility towards to other party and its members, leaving less potential for inter-party compromise.

Even though the consequences of partisan strength are powerful, the study of partisan strength is limited to only a few theoretical accounts that try to explain the sources of variations in partisan strength. First and foremost, the political socialization literature considers partisan strength a function of an individual's life-cycle. From this perspective, repeated exposure to the political system through voting and political campaigns strengthens party attachments over time (Jennings and Niemi 1981; Converse 1969). In a somewhat complementary fashion, other explanations for variations in partisan strength have looked at individual differences in the process of developing party attachments. Huber and colleagues (2011) find personality traits such as openness to experience can have a bolstering effect on partisan strength. Similarly, some individual differences in genetic predispositions have been linked to stronger party attachments (Settle, Dawes and Fowler 2009, Hatemi et al. 2009). While these individual-level explanations seem to

dominate the literature on partisan strength, earlier research by Bowler and colleagues (1994) examined the effect of varying features in the setup of the electoral system, concluding that the two-party system was especially conducive for developing strong party loyalties.

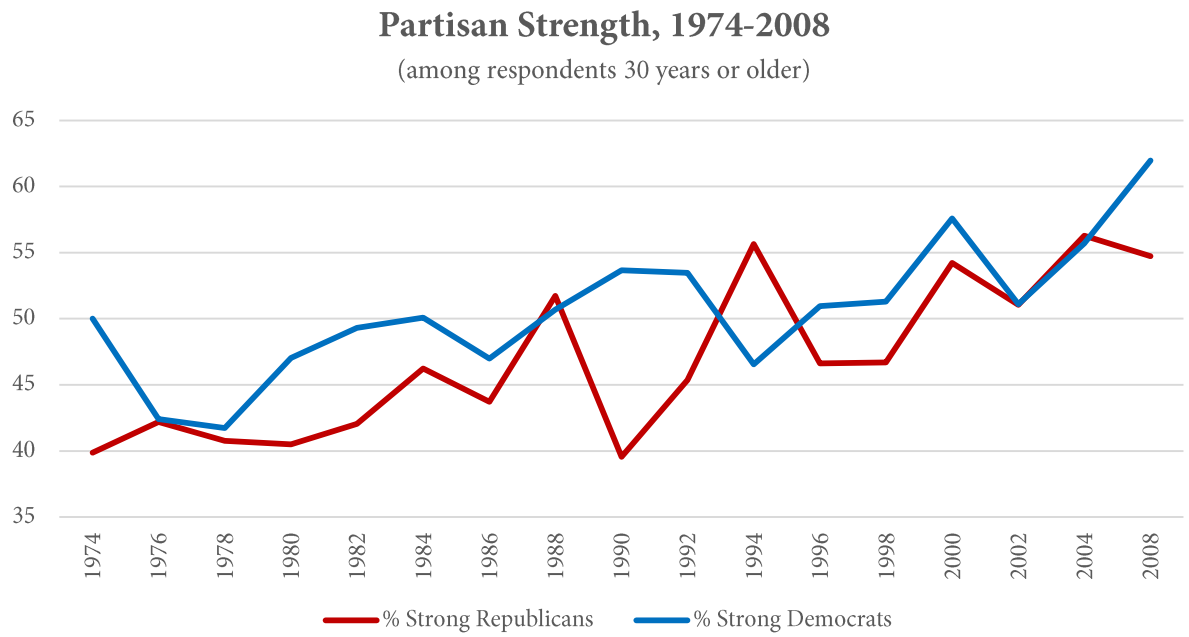
These explanations provide some insights into the factors that can promote stronger party attachments. Overall, however, they fail to specify the mechanisms by which people come to identify with a party to a weaker or stronger extent. This is partly because these prior theories do not take into account the interaction of the individual with an ever changing political environment. Individual predispositions such as personality traits and genetics are not deterministic. A person might score highly on a specific personality trait such as 'Openness to Experience' but that does not necessarily mean that this person is bound to become a strong partisan. Concrete interactions with the political environment appear to be a missing link that has not received much attention[1]. Accounting for features in the political environment might also shed light on the dynamic nature of partisan strength over time. As Figure 2 demonstrates, partisan strength varies greatly across time. For example, the percentage of strong Republican identifiers increased from 39% in 1990 to 53% in 1994 – that is a 14 percent growth within only 4 years. Similarly, strong Democratic identifiers increased in number from 50% in 2002 to 60% in 2008.

Critics might argue that these changes are simple fluctuations due to younger members of the electorate whose political attachments are not solidified yet. However, replicating Figure 2 with an age-restricted subset of respondents offers a very similar picture. As Figure 3 demonstrates, even among respondents of 30 years of age or older, these rapid increases and

[1] A notable exception comes from Hatemi and colleagues (2009) and their work on the transmission of political orientations over the life course, showing that genetic factors play an increased role as familial environmental influences diminish. However, particular features of the political environment are not considered in their work.

decreases in partisan strength prevail. Hence, the trend we observe is not merely a function of political socialization processes in which voters move along in their life-cycles.

Figure 3: Partisan Strength from 1974 to 2008 (age-restricted subset of respondents)



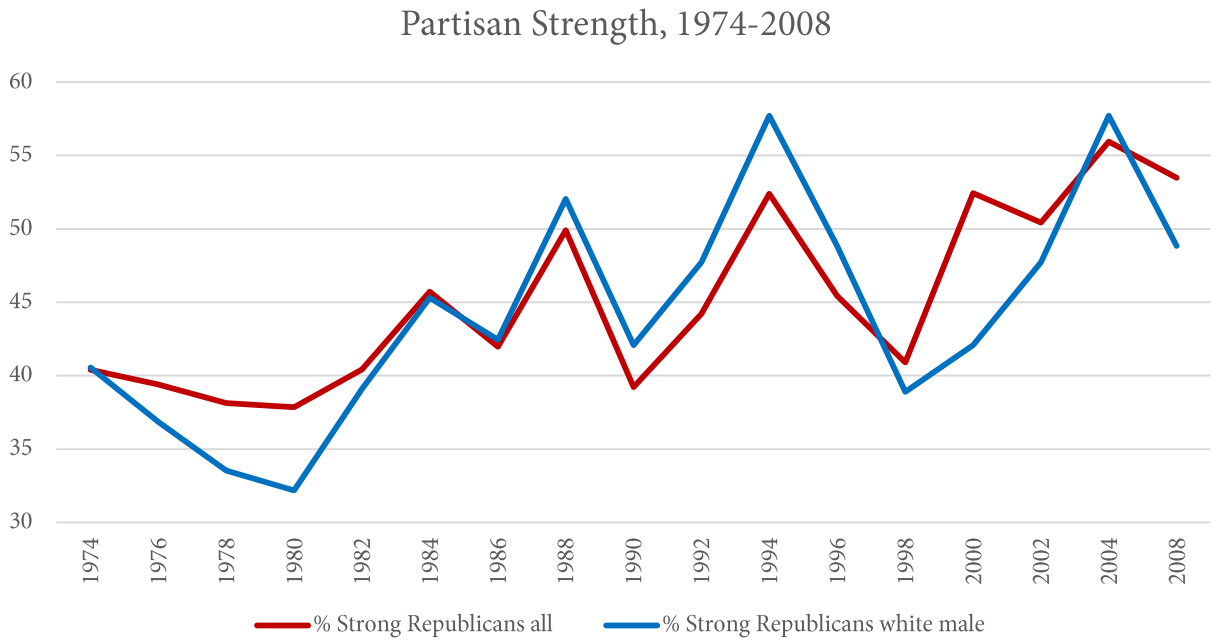
Note: Data taken from the ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File. Percentages are based on respondents who indicated a party preference in the initial party identification question.

Partisan Strength and Party Leadership – Some Trends

A closer inspection of Figure 2 and 3 reveals that these surges occur at a time of visible change in each party's leadership: For example, 1994 is marked as the year of the Republican Revolution in which the GOP succeeded in obtaining a net gain of 54 seats in the House of Representatives as well as eight seats in the Senate after the midterm elections. This electoral success was at least partially attributed to the Republican candidates' choice to rally behind a single national program and message fronted by Georgia congressman Newt Gingrich. Interestingly, the

surge in strong Republican identifiers was particularly pronounced among white males as Figure 4 demonstrates.

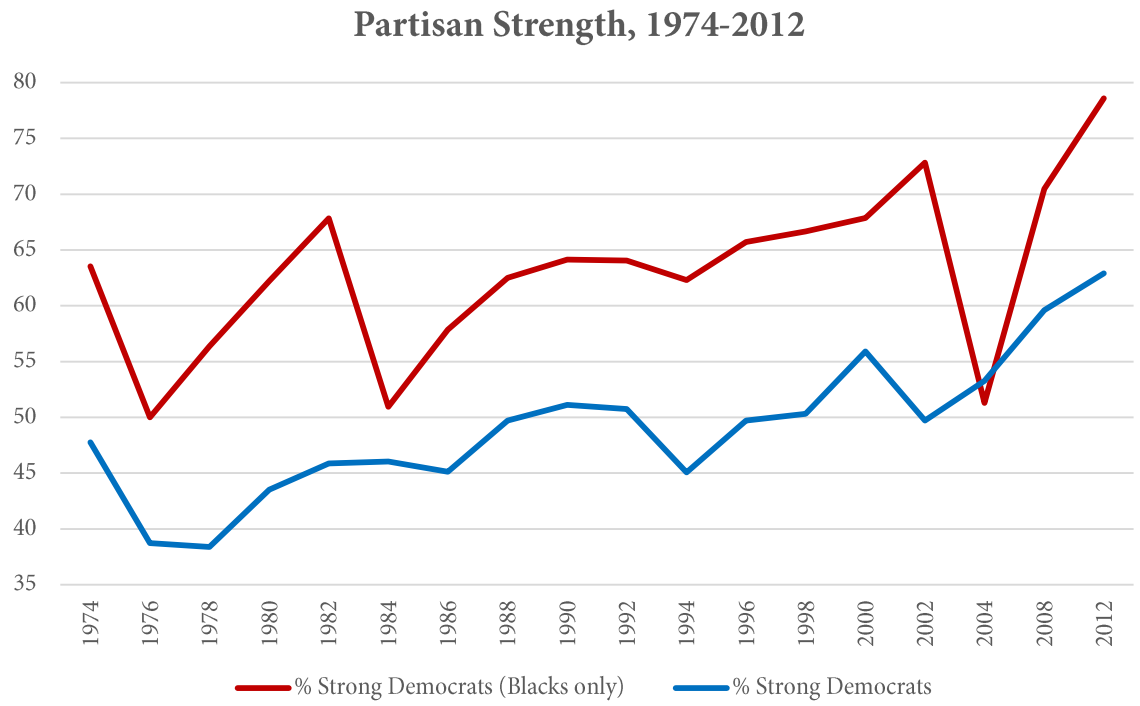
Figure 4: Partisan Strength among Republican Identifiers from 1974 to 2008



Note: Data taken from the ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File. Percentages are based on respondents who indicated a party preference in the initial party identification question.

Similarly, the 2008 election was a consequential election for the Democratic Party, leading to the highest number of strong Democrats reported in the history of the ANES. This growth in strong Democrats could feasibly be rooted in the role of Barack Obama as the first African-American leader of the Democratic Party and his ability to mobilize the African-American community. Similarly to Newt Gingrich's appeal among white male Republicans, we can also observe a much starker surge in strong Democratic identifiers among the African-American subset of ANES respondents (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Partisan Strength among Democratic identifiers from 1974 to 2012



Note: Data taken from the ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File. Percentages are based on respondents who indicated a party preference in the initial party identification question.

At face value, it thus appears that features in the political environment, such as party elite members, exert a substantial influence on the strength of party attachments. But what is the underlying mechanism that enables party elite members to shape party attachments in this way?

Main Argument

This dissertation will try to answer this question. Utilizing Social Identity Theory (SIT), I develop and test social identity-based theory of partisan strength in which I argue that partisans' overlap with the party prototype shapes the intensity of their party attachments. These party prototypes exemplify the political and social attributes of party members that we perceive as

typical. Party leaders are particularly influential in shaping our perception of what these attributes are, thereby providing a reference point for partisans to estimate how well they fit in with the party. This judgement of similarity with the party prototype can ultimately lead to stronger party identification. Therefore, I predict that similarity to inparty leaders increases partisan identity strength.

Similarly inferred from SIT, I predict that the type of similarity with the party prototype does not have to be strictly political in nature. Instead, indicators of similarity can be based on social characteristics such as age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity but also features that are seemingly trivial for the purpose of politics such as hobbies, style of dress, and other lifestyle choices (also see Huddy et al. 2015 for a similar argument). In a series of experiments on broad-based American populations, I investigate the influence of this type of social similarity, based on lifestyle and gender, to party leaders. To preview my results: I find that such non-political similarity does strengthen party identification even when similarity in political issue preferences is controlled for.

Theoretical Implications

These findings have important implications for the way we define and operationalize political parties and partisanship. In contrast to the normative idea of the rational democratic citizen who reasons in the pursuit of the collective good, politics is essentially tribal in nature. Put differently, political parties are not just represented by their political ideology and policy preferences but also by their members, especially on the elite level. As partisans, we have the desire to fit in with our political group, even on the basis of ostensibly irrelevant features. Thus,

the more we represent the party prototype, as exemplified by party leaders, the stronger our party attachments. From a theoretical standpoint, the arguments and results provided in this dissertation are strongly in favor of an expressive model of partisanship.

Beyond these theoretical developments, examples from the political world also illustrate the practical implications of this dissertation: The way party leaders behave provides cues about the type of person they are beyond their political agenda. For example, when George Bush Senior appeared to be amazed by supermarket technology as well as the price of a gallon of milk in 1992, many voters inferred from that behavior that he was out of touch with ordinary voters – a feature that is often attributed to the Republican prototype. In a similar vein, Donald Trump eating a pizza with fork and knife sparked a public controversy on Twitter, especially among New Yorkers – for many of whom this type of behavior violated a social norm. In sum, members of the electorate pay attention to these social, non-political, cues even if they seem trivial or ostensibly unrelated to politics.

Naturally, social cues are not always completely void of political content. For example, demographic features of a party's leadership are critically assessed by the public as well and have much greater political implications than the way party leaders navigate the grocery store. A recent episode can illustrate that point: When the GOP announced its all-white and all-male House leadership in 2012, even Newt Gingrich admitted that the GOP has a diversity problem. At the same time, House Minority leader Nancy Pelosi declared the 2013 Democratic caucus the most diverse in the 'history of civilized government' with its 61 women, 26 Hispanics, 11 Asians, and five gay, one bisexual and 43 black members. The media reported on this diversity asymmetry between the parties in various contexts, including the question as to whether the GOP has the ability to appeal to a broader coalition of voters. Thus, the social profile of a party's leadership

matters because it shapes the image of what is considered the typical party member. If a voter does not see himor herself being part of that image, party attachments can feasibly weaken even in the presence of agreement on political issues.

Social Cues – Instrumental or Expressive?

An instrumental approach to the study of social cues was offered by Popkin (1991) who underscores the importance of these cues in the evaluation of presidential candidates, illustrating his argument with the example of Bush Senior's faux pas of eating a still shuck-wrapped tamales: "In a multi-ethnic, polyglot society, with its inevitable bigotries and prejudices, showing familiarity with a voter's culture is an obvious and easy test of ability to relate to the problems and sensibilities of the ethnic group and to understand and care about them. Incidences involving such tests illustrate the kind of cues that voters use to make judgements on the fly […]" [Emphasis in the original] (p.3). Similar to the argument I make, Popkin advocates for the importance of social cues. However, for Popkin these social cues still convey political content and are thus still a part of the instrumental model of partisanship. For example, the presidential candidate who is accustomed with Hispanic culture and tradition is more likely to be familiar with the needs and grievances of the Hispanic community, essentially making the candidate a better representative of its members. From this perspective, people vote for the candidate who demonstrates familiarity with their culture because that type of social similarity conveys information about the political fit between the voter and the candidate in an indirect fashion. While I do not disagree with that logic, I aim to show in this dissertation that even cues that are void of political content can influence voters. Similarity with a political candidate based on simple characteristics such as hobbies, and

other lifestyle choices can increase partisan attachments since any dimension of similarity helps shape the perception among voters that a party is represented by people like them no matter the ostensible trivialities of such similarities. . Hence, the social cue does not necessarily have to lead to inferences regarding the quality of political representation.

Politically less relevant features of similarity have also been explored in the literature focusing on personality and political behavior. While earlier research has shown that people feel more closely connected to others they perceive to be similar to themselves in attitude and personality (e.g. Berscheid 1966; Byrne 1961; Tenney, Turkheimer, and Oltmanns 2009), recent work has extended these findings into the realms of politics: For instance, people seem to vote for politicians whose personality traits are similar to their own (Caprara, Vecchione, Barbaranelli, and Fraley 2007), particularly when they do not have much information about candidates and their positions at their disposal. Other findings even hint at the possibility that the "similarity creates liking" relationship applies to physiognomic features. If voters are unfamiliar with politicians they seem to prefer candidates in whose faces they recognize themselves (Bailenson, Iyengar, Yee, and Collins 2008). This string of research supports the notion that non-political cues such as perceived personality traits and even facial features can be relevant for the evaluation of political candidates. However, just like most work on candidate evaluation, these studies focus exclusively on vote choice as the outcome variable. Rather than simply looking at the effect of political leaders on vote choice, I argue that political leaders' impact reaches further. As representatives of their party, leaders also influence the strength of people's party attachments.

Contribution of this Work

Overall, the novelty of this research project is three-fold: First, throughout this dissertation partisan strength will be analyzed as the dependent variable rather than the independent variable as in the majority of studies on partisanship. While the directional component of partisanship is less susceptible to experimental manipulations, I will demonstrate that its intensity is more malleable and responsive to features of party leaders. Hence, rather than using partisan strength as an explanatory variable for partisan motivated behavior, I aim to identify sources of variation in partisan strength.

Second, this project analyzes party leaders' within their party context. Political leaders do not only have an impact on their party's brand name. Instead, party stereotypes also define the boundaries of a leader's ability to exert influence on party attachments since they define the group prototype. If political leaders do not comply with that prototype to a certain extent, their influence on partisans and their party loyalties is limited. Put differently, party leader's influence varies with their perceived typicality. From that vantage point, this dissertation owes a theoretical debt to prior accounts that focus on party leaders and candidate evaluations as influential factors in shaping partisanship.

Last, while a substantial amount of recent literature applies Social Identity Theory to political phenomena such as polarization (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; Mason 2015), and partisan bias (Goren et al. 2009), most of this work focuses on the relations between the parties. In contrast, this research project is primarily concerned with processes within the party and their effect on party identification, simultaneously extending the utility of SIT and opening the black box of intra-party dynamics.

Dissertation Outline

In the pursuit of these goals, the dissertation is organized in the following manner: In the next chapter, I will provide a justification for the decision to choose Social Identity Theory as the theoretical framework in this dissertation. For this purpose, I will provide a brief history of partisanship beginning with its inception in the American Voter and leading up to the most current controversies surrounding its origins. This aim will necessarily entail a brief description of both the instrumental and expressive model of partisanship. Through surveying the evidence for both models, I hope to convince the reader that the Social Identity approach holds considerable promise for the study of partisanship.

Subsequently, I lay out my predictions which are based on Social Identity Theory, in particular its cognitive underpinnings as postulated in Turner's Social Categorization Theory (SCT). Thus, the chapter will start with a brief review of SCT, followed by the role of prototypes in social categorization processes. I then apply these insights to party leaders and their impact on partisan attachments among supporters. The overall aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical foundation for the reasoning that led to the hypotheses tested in this dissertation.

These theoretical chapters are followed by several empirical analyses. As this dissertation aims to shift the focus from the direction of partisanship to its strength, I will first introduce a new measure of partisan strength and demonstrate its measurement properties as well as its predictive power for political behavior. In the context of this dissertation, these measurement analyses are essential since they provide a close inspection of my main dependent variable, namely partisan identity strength. Thus, the chapter aims to familiarize the reader with this identity-based measure of partisanship as well as its utility for predicting political behavior, especially in the context of experimental research, laying out the foundation for the following empirical chapters.

The subsequent two chapters entail two experimental studies that test the main argument of this dissertation: Partisan attachments can intensify through similarity to inparty leaders. While the similarity I focus on in both studies is generally speaking social in nature, the two studies differ somewhat in their operationalization of social similarity. The first one relies on features such as music and literature preferences to induce the perception of similarity. While this personalized type of similarity is much less attached to political content, it is also less accessible to the average voter. Thus, in the second experiment I rely on a broader conceptualization of similarity, namely sociodemographic features such as gender. From an experimental standpoint, study II provides more external validity but study I is better suited to truly isolate social similarity from any politically relevant content – which is more difficult to achieve with similarity based on sociodemographic features.

This dissertation concludes with a discussion of the results, in particular their theoretical and practical implications. I will integrate the evidence I gathered in favor of the expressive identity model into the current literature on the nature and origins of partisanship. Moreover, I lay down a map for a potential future research agenda that can benefit from the expanded application of Social Identity Theory.

Chapter II: A Brief History of Partisanship

What is partisanship? As I demonstrate in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, scholars and members of the public alike seek an answer to that question. In the public debate, partisanship often has a negative connotation as it is considered one of the leading causes of America's deep political divide. For political scientists, on the other hand, partisanship plays a key role in the study of American political behavior, even though scholars have not yet reached a consensus on the origins of party identification. Researchers' persistent efforts to define and measure partisanship are thus not surprising.

The ongoing dispute regarding the nature and origins of partisanship was first initiated by the authors of the seminal work *The American Voter*, Campbell and colleagues in 1960 who defined partisanship as a set of beliefs and feelings which form a psychological attachment to a political party. The authors gathered initial empirical support for their theory from the observation that partisanship remained relatively stable across election cycles even in the light of changing party platforms leading Campbell and colleagues to describe partisanship as an 'unmoved mover' that influences partisans' issue preferences rather than vice versa – a notion that was later on strongly contested by advocates of the revisionist model of partisanship (e.g. Fiorina 1981; Achen 2002).

In this chapter, I will review the literature most representative of how the study of partisanship evolved, while comparing and contrasting the expressive and instrumental model of partisanship. Overall, I aim to illustrate how the instrumental model of partisanship fails to provide an explanation for many forms of partisan behavior and how the expressive model performs as an alternative theory to address these shortcomings. At the same time, however, I show that most

theories on partisanship have remained somewhat silent about the determinants of partisan strength. Nevertheless, given the potential of Social Identity Theory for the study of partisanship, I ultimately provide the reader with a justification for my decision to examine partisanship and, partisan strength in particular, through the lens of Social Identity Theory.

The Nature of Partisanship

Most scholars agree that partisanship is a key predictor of the vote (Green et al. 2002; Brader and Tucker 2009), political issue preferences and core values (Goren 2005; Gerber et al. 2010), as well as political engagement (Huddy et al. 2015; Nicholson 2012). While the consequences of partisanship are generally well-understood, there is still a fierce debate regarding the direction of the causal arrow between partisanship and political issue preferences. Does partisanship change or is it changed by political preferences? And if it is not just determined by political issues, then what other factors could shape partisanship?

Currently, answers to these questions can roughly be categorized into two different schools of thought: the expressive model that considers partisanship the result of psychological processes and the instrumental model that regards partisanship as the sum of political and ideological preferences. This theoretical debate originated in the 1960s with *The American Voter* and its psychological conceptualization of partisanship, followed by the revisionist critique that sought to define partisanship as a rational choice, just to be proceeded by Partisan Heart and Minds and the increasing reliance on socio-psychological theories in the study of partisanship.

The American Voter

Besides its empirical sophistication, *The American Voter* has become known in the political science discipline for two major advances in the study of partisanship: First, Campbell and colleagues (1960) were the first to define partisanship as a psychological attachment to a political party. The psychological character of partisanship favors the prediction of enduring rather than malleable party loyalties that tend to transcend 'elements of historical circumstances' (Campbell et al. 1960:8). This resistance to short-term events unique to each historical period is grounded in selective information processing and perceptual distortion among partisans who attempt to be consistent with their prior party attachments, creating a form of echo chamber that filters, distorts, and projects information that is favorable towards the in-party.

While Campbell and colleagues emphasized the stable nature of partisanship, the authors did acknowledge that change in party identification is possible, albeit under extraordinary circumstances: "[O]nly an event of extraordinary intensity can arouse any significant part of the electorate to the point that its established political loyalties are shaken" (Campbell et al. 1960, p. 151). Such a prediction neatly aligned with the observed patterns of partisan change among Southern Democrats who gradually abandoned the Democratic Party in favor of the GOP in the 1960s.

The second major contribution of *The American Voter* related to its capability to present empirical evidence that echoed the notion that voters knew relatively little about specific policies, let alone ideological content. Not coincidentally, this finding provided additional support for the authors' conceptualization of partisanship as the 'unmoved mover' whereby partisans develop party preferences at an early stage in their political socialization cycle which subsequently makes them more likely to adopt the political issue preferences of their party rather than changing pre-

existing party preferences in response to changes in their political attitudes. Hence, while partisans' limited knowledge of specific policies as well as their lack of ideological preferences seemed to question the very foundations of party identification, this apparent juxtaposition was consistent with the way Campbell and colleagues defined partisanship. In fact, it underlined partisanship's self-standing albeit an absence of ideological or political issue preferences.

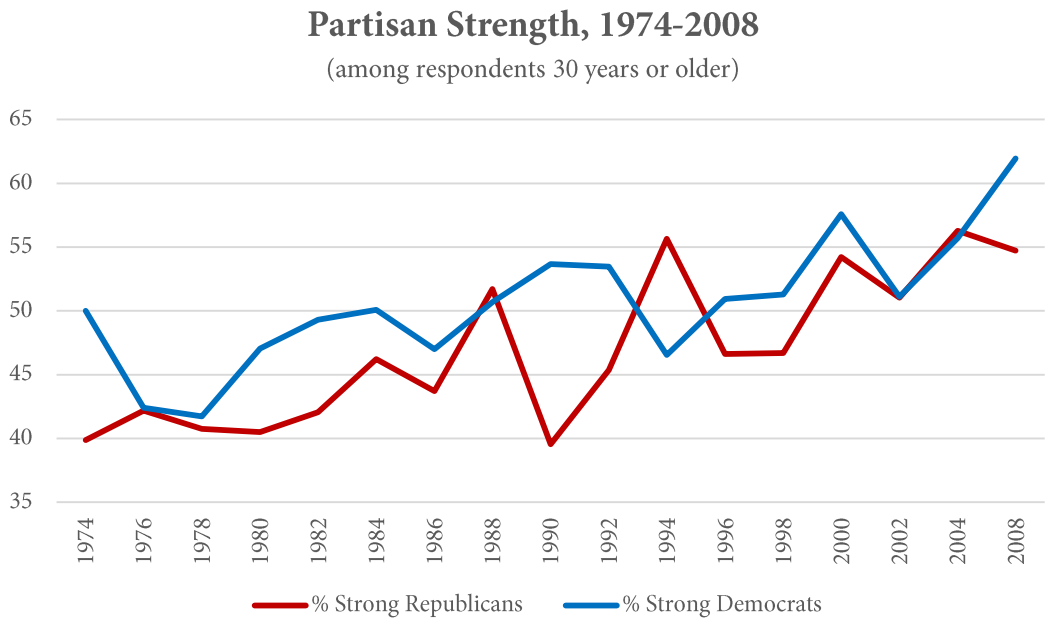
Partisan Strength in The American Voter

Although Campbell et al. (1960) initiated a complete redefinition of the nature of partisanship, the authors essentially treated partisan strength as fixed (see also Settle, Dawes, and Fowler 2009 for similar criticism) by using partisan intensity to estimate the relationship between political behavior and partisanship more precisely. However, the authors only speculate about the origins of the variations in partisan strength arguing that the strength of partisan attachment increases with age as an individual becomes increasingly active within social groups that have partisan ties (Campbell et al. 1960). This argument is familiar to most political scientists. Even before polarization became a common feature of the American political landscape, literature examining political socialization would have suggested that partisan strength is a function of the life-cycle whereby older people display stronger party attachments than their younger counterparts due to their longer exposure to and participation in the political process (Jennings and Niemi 1981; Converse 1969). This argument was first formulated by Converse (1969) who linked the partisanship acquisition process on the individual level to stable partisanship levels on the aggregate level. More specifically, the author demonstrated that even though young people start off with weaker partisan attachments, by the time their older – and more strongly attached – counterparts leave the electorate due to death, the younger partisans have politically matured and

acquired partisan strength levels similar to the older partisans they replace. Therefore, partisan stability reflects an equilibrium maintained by consistent cohort replacement whereby aggregate partisan strength remains stable albeit changing populations. On the individual level, this also means that partisanship becomes less responsive to current political forces as individuals age (Markus 1979; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Jennings and Markus 1984) developing stable partisan strength levels at the end of young adulthood when salient political events start exerting only marginal effects on political socialization, an observation that was captured in the impressionable years hypothesis (Sears 1981; Osborne et al. 2011).

If partisan strength was solely a function of age, we should therefore expect the highest volatility in partisan strength among young individuals and lower levels of volatility among individuals in their early 30ies as older individuals should have more stable levels of partisan strength given their anchored position in the political world. This expectation, however, contradicts the dynamic nature of partisan strength that we observe over time as displayed in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Partisan Strength among Respondents 30 years or older from 1974 to 2008



Note: Data is taken from the ANES cumulative file. Percentages are based on respondents who indicated a party preference in the initial party identification question.

Figure 7 clearly demonstrates that the shifts in the number of strong Democrats and Republicans is not just restricted to young members of the electorate. Even among ANES respondents 30 years and older, substantial movements in the number of strong partisans are detectable – an observation that the life-cycle model cannot account for.

However, Converse as well as other researchers in the field of political socialization implicitly assumed the absence of drastic changes in the political environment. In fact, Converse admits: "We do take for granted that 'other factors' can inhibit or stimulate the development of partisan loyalties at an individual level…" (1969:163). We could assume that any factors that inhibit or promote the learning process – for example, in the form of information that is incongruent with prior knowledge and experience with the parties – could similarly influence the

stability of partisan strength. Nevertheless, Converse leaves us with no specifics regarding what these 'other factors' are. Therefore, while the authors certainly anticipates the possibility of change in partisan strength – otherwise we would not see differing levels of partisan attachments across countries – he does not provide an explanation for the dynamic development of partisan strength presented in Figure 7. Thus, Converse's theory of partisan stability might hold true in stable political system in which political parties display a certain level of constancy in their political profile as well as in their party's leadership. While party identification is less susceptible to changes in these factors, partisan strength might well be.

Other work following Converse has shifted the emphasis on generational and period effects (e.g. Abramson 1976) as well as parental influence on the development of partisan strength (Niemi and Jennings 1991). Overall, however, these approaches operationalize partisan strength as a relatively fixed variable after an individual crosses a certain threshold in his or her political development. This presumed stability is at odds with the fluctuations in partisan strength that we observe over time, especially the increase in strong partisans among the American electorate.

Partisan Strength since Converse

A relatively new strand of research has focused on genetic sources and their contribution to the development of partisan intensity. Similar to the socialization literature, Hatemi and colleagues (2009) examined the transmission of political orientations over the life course. In accordance with the impressionable-years hypothesis, the authors find that the influence of family and other environmental influences dominate throughout adolescence but that at the point of early adulthood, the role of genetic factors increase as individuals leave the parental home. Subsequent work by Settle, Dawes, and Fowler (2009) has shown that genetic factors are also influential for the development of partisan strength. By comparing the similarity of partisan strength in identical

twins who share all of their genes to the similarity of partisan strength in non-identical twins who share only half of their genes, the authors find evidence that heritability accounts for almost half of the variance in strength of partisan attachment which contradict previous conceptions that considered partisan strength a function of political socialization, especially parental transmission (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1969; Niemi and Jennings 1991; Hyman 1959; Greenstein 1965). The authors extend this claim to even "…rule out common familial experience as a major contributing factor to partisanship strength" (2009:607) which implies that we should observe relatively stable partisan strength levels assuming that a large portion of variability in partisan strength is determined by genetic factors that provide partisan strength its enduring nature. From this perspective, Settle et al. (2009) do not contradict but fall in line with Converse's work by reaffirming that partisan strength is in fact stable. The authors speculate about a potential two-stage development to best describe the partisanship acquisition, composed of "…a direction component, which indicates the specific party with which an individual identifies; and a strength component, which reflects the intensity of that identification (Converse 1976). Our results suggest that partisan intensity is heritable but partisan direction is not" (2009:608). Note that this conception does not contradict Hatemi et al. (2009) who found genetic influences on political attitudes as familial environmental influences diminishes. In fact, as the authors suggest, the findings point at differing patterns of transmission and development for partisanship, partisan strength, and political attitudes.

While it is quite plausible that there is a genetic base to the propensity of strong group attachments, the behavioral genetics approach cannot explain the fluctuations in aggregate partisan strength over time as demonstrated in Figure 7. If the influence of genetic factors develops at the onset of adulthood and if partisan strength is primarily genetically determined, we would not

observe these substantial shifts among older respondents, unless genetic material interacts with environmental factors. In fact, there appears to be quite substantial room for environmental factors when only half of the variance in strength of partisan attachment is heritable. Nevertheless, the factors that contribute to the remaining 50% remain unclear even though they seem to exert a strong influence on partisan strength given that we do not observe stable partisan strength on the aggregate level.

Similar criticism can be applied to the argument that differences in personality traits, in particular, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness, account for variations in partisan strength (Gerber et al. 2012). Assuming personality traits are stable predisposition, their impact on partisan strength should remain constant over time unless they interact with environmental factors that moderate the effect which is most likely the case given prior research (e.g. Bekkers 2005; Mondak et al. 2010; Hetherington and Suhay 2011). These factors, however, remain unidentified. Moreover, while individual differences in partisan strength are interesting in and of itself, they do not provide an explanation for the substantial shifts in strength among the mass electorate. Thus, extant literature provides an account for the existence of variations in partisan strength at one moment in time. However, it fails to explain why partisan strength is – in contrast to expectations laid out here – not stagnant but in fact rather dynamic.

Given the impact of partisan intensity in American politics and beyond as well as the evident difference in partisan attachments across countries, it is surprising that hardly any research so far has investigated the features of the political environment that seem to drive varying levels of partisan strength. One of the very rare exceptions is work by Bowler and colleagues (1994) who make the case that the design of the electoral system affects levels of partisan strength whereby the two-party system is especially apt to engender strong partisanship. Nevertheless, the

institutional perspective on partisan strength implicitly still fails to address the dynamic nature of partisan strength over time as it is not clear what factors – short-term or long-term – can erode or strengthen partisan attachments. While the two-party system might set a higher threshold for partisan strength, it does not provide an explanation for the variations within the system.

The Revisionists – Bringing Political Issues Back

As political turmoil seemed to uproot existing party loyalties in the form of the Civil Rights Movement and the war in Vietnam, some scholars saw real-world evidence for the inability of *The American Voter* to account for the importance of political issues that a substantial share of the American public was so deeply concerned about. These so-called revisionists (e.g. Nie, Verba, and Petrocik 1976; Nie and Anderson 1974; Miller et al. 1976) argued that contested political issues had come to the forefront in the 1960s, motivating people to be guided by their political attitudes rather than party preferences. Moreover, and in sharp contrast to Campbell and colleagues' work as well as Converse's research on the structure of the public's belief systems (1964) – revisionists claimed an increase in ideologically consistent reasoning among American voters which turned partisanship progressively into a function of political issue preferences, reflecting people's informed understanding of the party's political platform and making partisanship more sensitive to current features of the political environment (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1981; Achen 2002).

From a theoretical standpoint, this conceptualization of partisanship is rooted in the rational choice paradigm which stresses utility maximization as the driving force behind political decision-making and involvement. In this model, various factors such as economic evaluations, presidential approval (MacKuen et al. 1989), policy preferences, and party performance (Fiorina 1981) as well

as candidate evaluations (Garzia 2013) affect party loyalties and can lead partisans to abandon their party preferences if the party no longer satisfies these instrumental considerations .

The instrumental model of partisanship is appealing because its predictions are generally uniform across members of the electorate and institutional variations in the design of electoral systems. Moreover, the rational voter in the revisionist model can base his decision on either ideological considerations or – in the absence of attitude constraint – a mix of various policy preferences, allowing for flexibility in voters' level of political sophistication and issue intensity.

With the implementation of the first American National Election Study panel survey starting in 1972, however, the revisionists' claims became directly testable with repeated observations of both party preferences and political attitudes. The panel data showed patterns clearly in favor of *The American Voter's* conceptualization of partisanship:

> *"Despite some decline in the average level of partisan loyalty (and despite the intervention of the Watergate scandal and the resignation and subsequent pardoning of Richard Nixon between 1972 and 1976), the stability of individual partisanship was just as great in the 1970s as in the 1950s. Meanwhile, the continuity of individual issue preferences (for issues included in both sets of surveys) was no greater in the 1970s than in the 1950s—and thus well below the corresponding level for party identification" (Bartels 2008:15).*

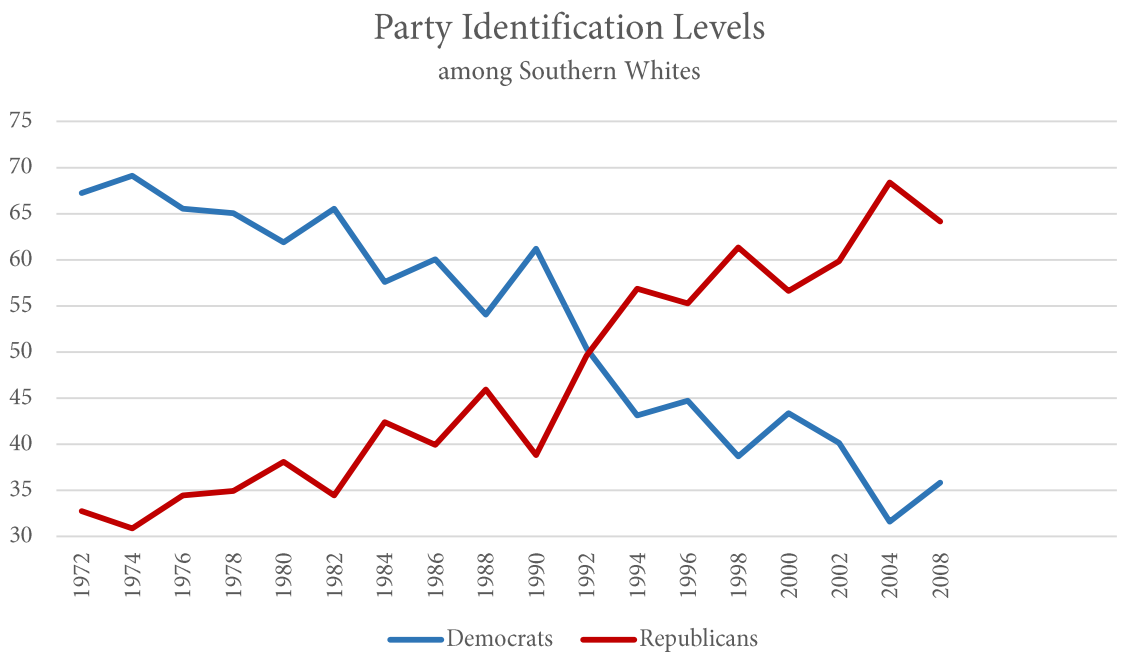
From that perspective, one of the major assumptions of the revisionist movement – partisanship is unstable – was invalidated, leaving the instrumental model unable to explain the extraordinary stability of partisanship in the face of volatile political attitudes.

The simple lack of fickle party identification is, however, not sufficient to disprove the instrumental model. After all, the model assumes that instability in party preferences can be caused by various factors, including short-term influences such as party scandals, poor party performances, or economic downturns and long-term changes such as changing party platforms

Similarly, voters can alter their positions on political issues, making them more likely to switch parties if the political issue at hand is important to them. However, unless there are actual changes in a party's political platform or performance, partisans have little incentives to change party loyalties. Hence, stable party identification is not at odds with the revisionists' approach.

The empirical reality, however, looks somewhat different, displaying partisanship as much more enduring and resistant to changes in the political environment than the instrumental theory would predict. Figure 6, for example, illustrates partisanship levels among Southern Whites who either score at or above the midpoint on an ANES "Aid to Blacks" scale. Higher values on that scale indicate that the respondent opposed government involvement in supporting minority groups. While the figure focuses on aggregate levels of party identification, it nevertheless demonstrates the sticky nature of partisanship.

Figure 6: Party Identification Levels among Southern Whites from 1974 to 2008



Note: Data taken from the ANES cumulative file. Graph includes Whites in the South only, who identify as both a strong or weak Democrat/Republican and who oppose government involvement in supporting minority groups.

The graph underlines one major development: Even though the GOP enjoyed several political successes in the South during the 1960ies, it was not until decades later that party identification tipped over to the Republican side. For example, the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964. In 1972, Nixon won every state in the Deep South with an overwhelming majority of more than 70%. In 1980, Reagan invoked the racially tinted stereotype of the welfare queen and won almost every state in the South except for Georgia. Regardless of these Republican electoral milestones in the South, it was not until 1992 when the partisan majority flipped in favor of the Republican Party. Hence, it took almost three decades before Southern Whites – on the aggregate level – abandoned their former loyalties to the Democratic Party.

Partisan Strength in the Revisionist Model

Within the revisionist model, partisan strength did not receive much attention as the base component of partisanship, namely its direction, was already seen as unstable and naturally prone to fluctuations due to various instrumental factors such as presidential approval, consumer sentiment, party performance, etc. (e.g. Fiorina 1981; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Mackuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1989; Page and Jones 1979). From that vantage point, strong party attachments might be perceived as a function of the importance that voters attach to political issues or the intensity of their ideological affiliation (for similar interpretation, see Huddy et al. 2015).

Ironically, while this perspective cannot account for the stability of the direction of partisanship, it could provide an explanation for the dynamic nature of its intensity component as partisans respond to changes in their party's emphasis on certain policy issues. For example, a

Democrat with strong attitudes on immigration might feel less attached to the party if its leadership does not emphasize the centrality of immigration policies in its party platform.

There are several reasons for why the revisionist explanation clashes with the reality of political decision-making. First, most partisans remain relatively unaware of changes in the party's platforms (Adams et al. 2011). If partisans do not recognize changes in their party's issue positions, it is unlikely they recognize changes in the salience of their party's issue positions.

Second, given the relatively large fluctuations in partisan strength over short periods of time, parties would have to almost constantly change the focus of their policy program and their partisans would have to follow and acknowledge these trends if the revisionist understanding of partisan strength was true. As the following discussions will show, though, most partisans align their issue positions with their inparty (e.g. Goren 2005; Goren 2009) rather than vice versa making it unlikely that partisan strength is a function of issue importance.

Last, if tested in a model predicting vote choice and political activism among partisans in the U.S., ideological issue intensity was a relatively weak predictor compared to a measure of partisan identity and the former correlated only weakly with the latter (Huddy et al. 2015) indicating that that the two concepts are not identical and vary in their predictive power.

The Instrumental Model and Individual (In-)Stability: Bayesian Priors

To reconcile the instrumental model with the seemingly sticky nature of partisanship, rational choice advocates utilized the mathematical concept of a Bayesian prior to refer to the sum of past beliefs, preferences, and attitudes towards a party that voters accumulate over the course of their political life (e.g. Achen 1992). This prior moderates the extent to which party

identification is susceptible to movements whereby weak priors allow for greater changes in party identification levels than strong priors.

This concession moved the instrumental model away from its claims of instability and back towards its original argument, namely that instrumental factors such as political issue preferences determine party preferences, even when the impact of these instrumental considerations can vary based on individual priors. Therefore, one of the major assumptions of the instrumental model remains, namely that voters ground their party loyalties in political issues and/or ideological preferences. This notion still requires people to be attentive to their political environment and to have specific political preferences that can inform their prior.

Prior research on political reasoning, however, has demonstrated that voters generally perform poorly when asked to place political parties on an ideological spectrum (Levitin and Miller 1979) or even to merely definethe parties' ideological orientations (Converse 1964), making them an unlikely source of partisan affiliations. Further evidence by Johnston et al. (2004) shows that conflicts between party identification and liberal-conservative ideology tend to be resolved in favor of the party which somewhat undermines the role of ideology in determining partisanship.

Supporters of the revisionist model might argue that ideological alignment with a political party is not a necessary requirement for a voter to count as "rational" and that support for a party's platform or even just a subset of political issues is a better indicator of partisan choice.

However, for this assumption to be valid, voters must pay attention and be knowledgeable of a party's political agenda. As prior evidence demonstrates, this is not necessarily the case as changes in policy positions advocated by political parties remain relatively unnoticed by the electorate (Adams et al. 2011) casting doubt on another basic foundation of the rational voter paradigm. Even when these platform changes are recognized, Markus and Converse (1979) show

that voters update their political issue positions only if these changes are in alignment with partisan priors. This is true even for novel high-salience issues, as Johnston et al. (2004) showed with rolling cross-section data at the example of the 2000 campaign and George W. Bush's Social Security investment proposal whereby we would expect these newly introduced political issues to cause stronger movements of the partisan prior if the instrumental model held true.

Bayesian Prior and Partisan Strength

Similar to the original revisionist model, the conceptualization of party identification as a Bayesian process primarily addresses the direction component of partisanship and hardly speaks to the development of variations in partisan strength. However, if partisan strength is determined by a prior that constitutes past experiences and impressions of parties' performances, then partisan strength, just like its direction, should be less moveable depending on the strength of a person's prior. This argument, however, begets the question of what determines the strength of that prior.

It seems fairly reasonable that as people grow older and repeatedly participate in the political process, their prior becomes stronger making them less susceptible to drastic changes in partisan strength albeit varying party performances. Thus we would observe less variations in strength among older individuals since they have developed a stronger prior that moderates the effects of new information about the parties. However, as already demonstrated in Figure 7, even among ANES respondents 30 years and older, we do see substantial fluctuations in partisan strength. From that perspective it is unclear to what extent the Bayesian prior analogy helps explain variations in partisan strength.

The Instrumental Model and Aggregate (In-) Stability: Macropartisanship

While individual panel data had increasingly painted a picture of stable party identification and raised questions about the ability of partisans to evaluate their political environment without partisan bias, the debate surrounding partisan stability was invigorated on the aggregate level as McKuen and colleagues (1989) demonstrated substantial shifts in mass party identification that seemed to develop in parallel with other, more short-term, factors such as presidential approval and consumer sentiment. This observation provided the impetus for the development of the macropartisanship hypothesis (McKuen et al. 1989), which started a line of research that focused exclusively on aggregate party identification levels rather than theorizing about individual-level mechanisms.

Given its limitation, it is not too surprising that one of the earliest critiques of the model was challenged its agnostic approach to the sources of individual-level change in party identification, especially in the face of accumulating evidence that individual party identification is incredibly stable. In fact, McKuen and colleagues concede that the shifts in mass partisanship are limited to a small segment of the entire electorate in the sense that "…most [citizens] are either fixed or changing in a noisy random-like fashion and a few are systematic, the signal is wholly the behavior of that few" (p.1129). From that perspective, macropartisanship does not necessarily provide evidence for the instrumental model of partisanship since the concept merely suggests that "a handful of exceptions" (p.1129) change party attachments in response to economic conditions and presidential approval. Thus, if only a small subgroup of the electorate is susceptible to these instrumental considerations, what happens to the rest of the electorate?

The claim that members of the electorate update their party identification based on presidential approval and economic performances lost traction as research accumulated

demonstrating partisan bias in the evaluation of the President. More specifically, Lebo and Cassino (2007) show "…partisans groups generally do reward and punish presidents for economic performances, but only those presidents of the opposite party". Similarly, Bisgaard (2015) demonstrates in the U.K. that while generally all party supporters were capable of admitting that the British economy had deteriorated between 2004 and 2010, they showed bias in their attribution of responsibility for the national downturn: Government party supporters were less likely to blame their inparty while oppositional party supporters considered the government to be the culprit. These are unequivocal signs of partisan motivated reasoning that seem to conflict with the mechanisms implicitly underlying by the macropartisanship argument.

Other studies that have focused on aggregate shifts in party identification echoed the notion that partisans are not very attentive to their political environment and that, in the rare cases of attitude change, attentive partisans follow party elite cues. For example, Layman and Carsey (2002) demonstrate that the increasing ideological consistency of Democratic and Republican elites provokes a shift in mass policy attitudes but only among politically aware voters and/or strong partisans whereas the rest of the electorate – feasibly the majority of it – does not respond to the party elites' issue convergence at all. These results reverse the causal arrow suggested by the revisionist model: Voters do not necessarily align their party identification with their ideological preferences causing party elites to become ideologically more extreme. Instead, voters' partisanship causes this alignment in response to elite-level polarization. The authors provide further evidence for the mass electorate's disregard for changes in the parties' political issue profiles since only the politically aware share of the electorate responds to the elite-level alignment of ideology and partisanship. While the question of the size of this share cannot be answered

conclusively, it is somewhat suggestive that out of 2,048 ANES respondents in 2008, only 38% were able to correctly identify the majority party in the House before the election.

Critics might further argue that political awareness is not a condition of the instrumental model as voters can utilize more abstract political principles and values such as limited government, and moral conservatism to judge which political party best represents their interest. In other words, rather than ideological orientations or political issue preferences – which might be more difficult to acquire – basic political values might help voters to develop attachments to the 'correct' political party. While this line of reasoning appears to be intuitive, Goren (2005) finds that party identification is more stable and enduring than any political value: Inferring from the notion that causes are more temporally stable than effects, Goren's results suggest that even the endorsement of political core values might be shaped by party elite cues. This argument is buttressed by the author's additional findings that party identification constrains political core beliefs such as limited government, and equal opportunity leading to a more ideologically coherent set of values – a result that is in accord with the conflict extension hypothesis put forward by Layman and Carsey (2002) as discussed above.

Partisan Strength and Macropartisanship

Given its focus on shifts in aggregate party identification, the macropartisanship framework provides little insights into partisan strength. Moreover, if presidential approval and economic conditions influence the direction of partisanship among only a small subset of voters, the theory appears to be limited in its applicability in the first place.

Partisan Heart and Minds

Given the insufficient explanations the instrumental model was able to give for party identification patterns on both the individual and aggregate level, Green, Palmquist, Schickler (1998; 2002) delivered a thorough challenge to the instrumental model in their by now seminal work Partisan Hearts and Minds. Similar to The American Voter, the authors argued that partisanship originates from psychological processes that lead to the formation of enduring partisan identities.

While Green, Palmquist, and Schickler (2002) built on the socio-psychological conception of partisanship, as first introduced by Campbell et al. (1960), they also significantly sharpened the original theory by specifying the cognitive processes that underlie the development of partisanship. Most notably, the authors make the distinction between an evaluation of a political party and an identification with a political party. This distinction allowed the authors to account for short-term factors that might impact partisans' attitudes of their inparty such as party performance and candidate evaluations without compromising the notion that partisan attachments are stable in the long-term. According to the authors, partisans "[…] do update their overall assessments of national conditions and the capacities of the parties to handle important problems. Moreover, partisanship does not prevent people from assimilating new information…" (p.7) even if that information is incongruent with their prior party attachments. The crux of the authors' argument is that partisans' evaluations of their party's performances are responsive to changes in the political environment but that the underlying identification with that party remains stable. Hence, a Democrat might even vote for a Republican and yet think of herself as a member of the Democratic team.

This revised model of partisanship differs in two ways from *The American Voter* model: First, voters are aware of and accept information about changes in their political environment even

if these changes are incongruent with their party identification. Thus, the extent of partisan motivated reasoning might have been overestimated by Campbell and colleagues (1960). Second, voters do update their evaluation of the inparty as predicted by many rational choice advocates. However, this updating process remains moderated by prior partisan attachments. For example, Democrats regularly express more positive evaluations of their inparty's competence than Republican supporters, especially when a Democratic is in power (Lebo and Cassino 2007). Nevertheless, both partisan groups update their evaluations based on changes in their political environment. Thus, the evaluation of the party might be volatile and responsive to current events, but the underlying identification with the party remains stable over time until an "…event of extraordinary intensity" (Campbell et al. 1960; p.151) challenges existing party loyalties such as the Realignment of the Southern Democrats.

From this vantage point, Green and colleagues (2002) explicitly conceptualized partisanship as a social identity, linking an individual's self-image to the social groups that are emblematic of each political party. The authors claim that the process by which people come to identify with a political party starts with the question: "What kinds of social groups come to mind as I think about Democrats, Republicans, and Independents? Which assemblage of groups (if any) best describes me?" (p.8) rather than "Which party best represents my political positions?" Therefore, the process proposed by Green and colleagues stands in sharp contrast to the instrumental model which assumes that citizens develop attachments to the party that best represents their political interests rather than their self-image. Nevertheless, Green and colleagues do not categorically rule out the importance of issue positions in shaping partisanship:

"To be sure, party issue positions have something to do with the attractiveness of partisan labels to young adults, much as religious doctrines have something to do with the attractiveness of religious denominations. But causality also flows in the other direction: When people feel a sense of belonging to a given social group, they absorb the doctrinal positions that the group advocates. However party and religious identification come about, once they take root in early adulthood, they often persist. Partisan identities are enduring features of citizens' self-conception" (2002:4).

The type of partisanship Green and colleagues refer to here is the result of self-categorization by which people sort themselves into one of the two parties based on various partisan stereotypes. While the topic of self-categorization will be the focus of the subsequent chapter, it suffices for now to describe the self-categorization process as a matching process whereby people compare their self-image to the types of people and social groups that are associated with each party. People sort themselves into the party where this matching process yields a relative fit. From that vantage point, stable party identification is primarily driven by stable partisan stereotypes which tend to be enduring unless a political party undergoes major changes: "By stressing how difficult is it is to alter the partisan balance, we do not mean to suggest that parties are altogether incapable of producing change. From time to time, a party alters the social group composition of its leadership and, by extension, its public persona…. (2002: p.13).

This model was most meaningfully applied to explain the pattern of slow partisanship change during the party realignment process in the American South: As African-Americans become incorporated into the Democratic Party's base, substantially altering partisan stereotypes, Southern whites who were determined to maintain the existing racial hierarchy, gradually abandoned the Democratic Party over an extended period. Other factors such as the increased presence of Southern leadership in the Republican Party further accelerated the Republicanization of the South by gradually changing the perceptions about which regional and racial groups "go

with" each party. This perceptual change, as pointed out earlier, took decades as partisan images change only gradually, fostering long-term stability in party identification.

Partisan Strength in Partisan Hearts and Minds

While Green et al. (2002) do not explicitly address the source of variations in partisan strength, their conceptualization of partisanship as an identity can be applied to explain how people turn into strong partisans. Since party identification is grounded in the identification with other associated groups, the strength of those identities should determine the strength of partisan identity. For example, a Latino who strongly identifies with his or her ethnicity might be a stronger Democrat since Latinos are associated with the Democratic Party to a larger extent than with the Republican Party. Similarly, strongly identified Evangelicals are more likely to be strong Republicans than their weakly identified counterparts as long as the Republican Party is seen as compatible with their faith. To that extent, partisan identity strength is the sum of other subgroup identities' strength. If these subgroup identities are strong, they also heighten the level of identification with the political party these subgroups or sub constituencies constitute.

While this approach has found some evidence in prior literature (see Lewis-Beck et al. 2008), Green et al. (2002) do not specify how their explanation can account for the sharp fluctuation in partisan strength that we observe over relatively short time periods. It seems unlikely that partisans' identification with underlying subgroups such as race, gender, and ethnicity vary so frequently causing an overall shift in partisan identity strength. At the same time, it is possible that certain events prime these subgroup identities, leading to stronger party ties.

Overall, Green et al. (2002) focus on the direction of partisanship and its stability but investigate to a lesser extent why some people develop strong party attachments while others do not.

Partisan Heart and Minds and Social Identity

While the authors of Partisan Hearts and Minds refer to partisanship as a social identity, they explicitly distance themselves from Social Identity Theory (SIT) developed by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel 1981; Turner 1996; Turner 1987) as a theory of intergroup behavior. In fact, Green et al. (2002) state that their theoretical approach differs from SIT: "The [theory] 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 dissociate themselves or formulate a different way of looking at groups. This depiction is very different from ours […we] remain agnostic about the underlying psychological motives that impel people to form social identities such as party attachments" (p.11).

A closer reading of SIT, however, uncovers that the process that Green and colleagues describe in their work is closely related to Social Categorization Theory developed by Turner (1987) which considers the self-categorization process as the cognitive foundation in the development of a social identity. Based on this self-categorization, identities form, and become part of an individual's self-image, eventually leading to the motivational processes that Green et al. put aside but that are central to Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory.

From that perspective, Green et al. (2002) define Social Identity Theory too narrowly by focusing exclusively on its motivational component although the social categorization process that

the authors describe in *Partisan Hearts and Minds* is almost identical to the cognitive underpinnings of Social Identity Theory. Therefore, Green and colleagues' work is compatible with Social Identity Theory even though the authors try to distance themselves from it. Nevertheless, the expressive model of partisanship established itself as a fruitful theoretical framework for the study of partisanship as an increasing number of scholars utilized SIT and its related theories to explain the various partisan behavior that remained unexplained by the instrumental model.

Especially for the study of partisan strength, social categorization theory offers a framework that entails potential explanations for the variations in party attachments which I will discuss in the following section.

Social Identity Theory, Partisanship, and Partisan Strength

The current form of the expressive model of partisanship was significantly shaped by the integration of Social Identity Theory which also coined the term "inparty" as a political analogy to the term "in-group" used in social psychology. The incorporation of SIT in political science was also fostered by the theory's compatibility with the political socialization literature to the extent that both approaches in conjunction would yield the argument that party identities develop early on and are subsequently held in place through partisan motivated reasoning (e.g. Huddy et al. 2015; Mason et al. 2015).

In social psychology, Social Identity Theory originated as a theory of intergroup behavior, identifying the psychological processes that promote group identifications in various contexts. Indeed, one of the major advantages of SIT lies in its versatile applications since identities

constitute such a fundamental part of human behavior: According to SIT, individuals are motivated to achieve a positive "social identity", defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1978). This version of social identity theory, developed by Tajfel (1981) and Tajfel and Turner (1979), stressed the role of status-enhancing motives that impel group members to endorse or abandon an existing group membership. Turner et al. (1987) have described this motivation as a need among group members "to differentiate their own groups positively from others to achieve a positive social identity" (p. 42).

Applied to the study of political parties, this theoretical framework considers partisanship a part of an individual's self-understanding that motivates the defense of the inparty's positive status, precisely because the party's status and the individual's self-esteem are so closely intertwined. While Green et al. remained agnostic towards these motivational underpinnings of social identity, they propose the very same cognitive mechanisms that underlie the formation of social identities in Turner's (1987) social categorization theory – an offshoot of SIT.

Social Identity Theory, both in its cognitive and motivational version, has recently been adopted by a substantial number of political scientists in an attempt to explain interparty dynamics and partisan behavior that are hard to reconcile with the rational choice paradigm such as inparty favoritism (Greene 2004; Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012), outparty hostility (Mason 2015; Westwood et al. 2015), and partisan motivated reasoning (Lebo and Cassino 2007; Bolsen et al. 2014; Druckman et al. 2013) even in newly formed (Carlson 2015) or politically changing democracies (Baker et al. 2015) where political socialization cannot explain the strong adherence to party loyalties.

Most importantly, the cognitive process that underlies Social Identity Theory, namely Social Categorization Theory can offer an explanation for variations in partisan strength which so far has remained unaddressed by prior theoretical approaches. In fact, an identity-based conceptualization of partisanship shifts the focus from solely the direction of party identification to its strength – a shift that is a function of how psychologists empirically and theoretically study identities (Greene 2002, 2004; Mael and Tetrick's 1992; Huddy et al. 2015) and that has become increasingly of interest to political scientists as the number of strong partisans in the U.S. has increased over the last decade (Mason 2015).

The Importance of Identity Strength within SIT

In a Social Identity Theory framework, variations in identity strength are relevant since they condition how strongly group members translate membership into specific political acts and attitudes: In the latter case, the degree to which individuals identify with the ingroup is an important determinant of intra- and intergroup attitudes and evaluations. In the political realm, this means that strong partisans will support inparty candidates to a greater degree than weaker partisans, and be more likely to negatively evaluate the outparty. For example, in 2008, 85% of strong Democrats and 91% of strong Republicans reported feeling proud of their party's presidential nominee while only 73% of weak Republicans and 64% of weak Democrats reported the same emotional response (ANES 2008); at the same time, they are also much more likely to negatively evaluate the outparty's leaders[2] with 55% of strong Republicans and 52% of strong

[2] Some researchers have argued, however, that ingroup favoritism does not have to be automatically associated with outgrop hostility (e.g. Brewer 1999). While I do not disagree with that notion on a theoretical level, empirical analyses of ANES data do show that strong partisans exhibit less positive attitudes to the outparty than weak partisans.

Democrats reporting a sense of anger at the other party's presidential nominee. Compare these numbers to the 35% of weak Republicans and 33% of weak Democrats who felt angry at the out-party's candidate. The strong relationship between partisan strength and inparty as well as outparty evaluations has found additional empirical support by very recent research on political polarization in the U.S. demonstrating that the increase in the number of strong partisans and outparty hostility develop in parallel (Miller and Conover 2015; Mason 2015; Iyengar and Westwood 2015).

A second major prediction produced by Social Identity Theory states that variations in identification strength also impact the extent to which members actively promote their ingroup's status. The rationale for this argument is simple: Positive ingroup status translates into higher levels of self-esteem among members, providing the motivational basis for action on behalf of the group. From that perspective, strong identifiers are most likely to actively support their group since their self-esteem is more closely intertwined with the group's status, leading to higher psychological benefits when the group's position in society improves.

This insight can be utilized to analyze partisan behavior: Strong partisans are much more likely to be politically engaged, especially on behalf of their inparty, than their weakly identified counterparts (Huddy et al. 2015; Bankert, Huddy, and Rosema 2016). This is especially valid for more effortful and resource demanding forms of political participation such as volunteering for a political campaign or donating money to a political candidate. For example, during the 2008 presidential campaign season, 53% of ANES respondents who attended political meetings or rallies identified themselves as strong partisans compared to only 18% who declared themselves to be weak partisans. In this regard, strong partisans are the model citizens that a democratic society relies on through active engagement with, and participation in, the political world.

At the same time, Social Identity Theory paints a rather ambiguous picture of strong ingroup attachments. While strong ingroup ties motivate members to support their group, they can promote the vilification of the out-group. From that perspective, strong partisanship is potentially harmful to the functioning of a democratic society as the motivation to defend and improve the inparty's status can also lead to behavior and attitudes that are detrimental to interparty relationships, dividing the electorate into 'us' versus 'them'. In fact, Tajfel and Turner developed SIT as a theory to explain intergroup dynamics, especially the ones that have gone awfully wrong, manifesting themselves in the form of racism, or even genocide.

While Democrats and Republicans have not (yet) engaged in violent conflicts, the political battle between supporters of the two parties has extended into their social lives. In 1960, the ANES asked respondents the question whether they would be pleased, displeased, or unmoved if their child married a supporter of the other political party. Merely 5% of Republicans and only 4% of Democrats admitted they would be displeased at the prospect of an interparty marriage. YouGov asked the same question again in 2008, demonstrating a drastic increase in respondents who said they would be upset: 27% of Republicans and 20% of Democrats. In 2010, this number rose to an almost majority share of 49% among Republicans and 33% of Democrats. These symptoms of intolerance are not just restricted to close family affairs. Levels of partisan incivility have generally increased in the media (e.g. Gervais 2014) as well as among the general electorate even when partisans actually agree on political issue preferences (Mason 2015). Therefore, it is certainly not coincidental that the potential for interparty conflict rises as the numbers of strong partisans in the American electorate increases. This phenomenon makes the study of partisan strength and its sources even more relevant to political scientists as it adds a normative component to the empirical question of how partisans develop strong party attachments.

Last, examining partisan strength can help to resolve the nature of partisanship, an ongoing puzzle in the scholarly debate. The origins of variations in partisan strength help to identify the factors that turn a weak partisan into a strong partisan. By showing that these factors can be *unrelated* to political issue preferences and their intensity, we gather evidence in favor of a socio-psychological component in the development of partisanship, supporting the validity of the expressive model in the study of partisanship.

This is not to say, however, that political issue preferences do not matter at all. As stated before, the instrumental and expressive model of partisanship are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, the major take-away point from reviews offered in the previous and current chapter is that instrumentalists have greatly underestimated the psychological nature of partisan attachments. This is an incredibly consequential for our understanding of American politics: If strong partisans are most responsive to and engaged in their political environment, then these are the people that impact American politics to a disproportionate extent. If the factors that turn partisans into *strong* partisans are expressive in nature, the instrumental model fails to account for a major force in the American electorate. Thus, the study of partisan strength allows to examine a timely development in American politics while simultaneously compare the performance of the instrumental and expressive model in explaining the process of becoming a strong partisan. In the following, I will review some of the consequences of strong party ties and demonstrate that these consequences are best explained by a Social Identity framework. Note that – in contrast to the instrumental model – these studies propose a causal arrow that flows from partisanship to politically relevant variables rather than vice versa.

The Mover: Consequences of an Expressive Partisanship

There is a growing literature documenting the pervasive effects of partisanship on political attitudes, and behavior, suggesting that partisanship influences these variables, as suggested by the expressive model, rather than being influenced by them, as predicted by the instrumental model. While some of these studies remain somewhat agnostic regarding the explicit origins and nature of partisanship, the majority of them provides empirical evidence in favor of an identity-based conceptualization of partisanship.

Political Attitudes and Values

Partisanship has been established as one of the most stable predictors of people's political attitudes and belief systems. In The American Voter, Campbell and his colleagues observed that "party has a profound influence across the full range of political objects to which the individual voters responds" (1960:128). This is because parties are used as an anchor or a reference for citizens by providing them with a basis for understanding and evaluating their political environment and forming decisions and judgements about political objects (Campbell et al. 1960; Goren et al. 2009). Hence, a fully informed or rational voter is not necessary in the expressive model since its advocates assume that "…most people do not analyze systematically the messages they encounter. Instead, they usually turn to simple heuristics such as whether or not they like or trust the source, when evaluating a message" (Goren et al 2009: 806).

These simple heuristics often involve party cues that guide and shape citizens' political attitudes. From the perspective of an expressive model of partisanship, partisans use party cues to align their policy preferences with the positions that their in-party advocates for. However, there

is such a strong correlation between partisanship and political attitudes (e.g. Bartels 2002; Erikson 2004; Wlezien, Franklin, and Twiggs 1997), that it is difficult to disentangle the causal direction between these two variables.

In an attempt to address this methodological challenge of endogeneity (Converse 1976; Fiorina 1981; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Kessel 1968; MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1989) as well as the possibility of an omitted variable that both affects partisanship and political beliefs (Bartels 2000; Fiorina 2002), Gerber and colleagues (2010) conducted a field experiment in which they sent a letter to unaffiliated voters in Connecticut which reminded them that they can only participate in a party's presidential primary if they register with that party. This letter was sent to a randomly selected subset of independents who felt "closer" to either the Democratic or Republican Party. The voters in this treatment group reported an increase in identification with the party they felt closer to compared to the pre-treatment stage of the experiment. This heightened level of partisan intensity was also accompanied by more partisan voting choices and more positive evaluations of partisan figures and institutions. Given their randomized field experiment which allows for causal inference, Gerber and colleagues (2010) interpret these results as evidence that partisanship shapes citizens' political attitudes and behavior rather than the other way around.

Reasonable criticism along the lines of the Bayesian prior argument made by the revisionists could point to the possibility that voters rely on these party cues simply because doing so has worked well for them in the past. Put differently, voters might have learned that adopting their in-party's position on a specific issue tends to be the "right" political attitude that they would have endorsed even without the party cue. From this vantage point, adopting the inparty's position is a result of a repeatedly successful match of the party's issue profile and the voter's preferences. Conceptually, this is different from the motivational process that the expressive model suggests by

which partisans adopt and support the in-party position because it strengthens a sense of belonging to that group.

While the latter explanation is much more difficult to prove, the former has already been addressed by several researchers who have investigated the effects of partisanship in newly emerging democracies where partisan cues have not yet developed the level of stability and reliability common in established electoral systems like the U.S. Carlson (2015), for example, demonstrates that partisanship is a "…psychologically meaningful identity that can inspire voters to engage in motivated reasoning" even in new (semi-) democracies such as Uganda. In particular, the author shows that partisans of the incumbent president's party systematically overestimate the benefits they obtained from the government, while opposition supporters tend to underestimate them. This is a fascinating result because it suggests that partisanship is a readily adoptable identity even in new electoral systems where partisan cues have not been "vetted" yet.

Critics might argue that the majority of most electorates in the world is inattentive to politics and lacks the motivation to develop stable political preferences, making them more prone to any type of cognitive shortcuts and rendering the stability of the political system irrelevant. However, partisanship also influences seemingly stable predispositions such as values. Empirical evidence for this argument was provided by Goren (2005) who uses the ANES panel data from 1992-1994-1996 to demonstrate that party identification is more temporally stable than political core values such as equal opportunity, limited government, family values, and moral tolerance. If causes are more stable than effects, these results suggest that political values are shaped by partisanship, in particular by the rhetoric of party elite members. As the author puts it: "… my results suggest that political elites activate latent partisan biases in the minds of citizens, which in

turn subtly affect their core political values. Party identification does not determine value positions, but it appears to shape them" (p. 894).

In a very similar vein, McCann (1997) shows that beliefs about equality and traditional morality are influenced by candidate evaluations. However, the author finds no comparable influence of these core values on candidate evaluations. Assuming that candidate evaluations are strongly colored by partisan biases, the impact of candidate evaluations on core beliefs provides indirect evidence for the proposition that partisanship affects these beliefs about equality and morality rather than vice versa. More direct evidence for this notion was further provided by Goren et al. (2009) who demonstrated with survey experiments that partisan cues shaped the level of support for equal opportunity, moral traditionalism and tolerance as well as beliefs in self-reliance, concluding that "while it is true that people can work out what they believe is best for society irrespective of their group loyalties, it seems fair to say that group attachments usually weigh rather heavily on such beliefs" (2009: 819). Overall, there is plenty of evidence supporting a key prediction of the expressive model of partisanship: Partisans align their political attitudes and core values with their political party using party elite cues to be consistent with their partisan identity.

Political Attitudes and Values Constraint

In his seminal essay "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics", Converse defines constraint "to mean the success we would have in predicting, given initial knowledge that an individual holds a specific attitude, that he holds certain further ideas and attitudes" (1964:207). In other words, attitude constraint refers to the level of consistency between attitudes within an individual belief system (Converse 1964). Attitude constraint has received attention since the early

studies of voting behavior (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964), especially as a measure of political sophistication.

There is an accumulating amount of research demonstrating that partisanship is associated with more consistent belief systems: For example, strong party identifiers are more likely to display ideologically consistent attitude structures as well as more extreme positions than their non-partisan counterparts (Baldassarri and Gelman 2008), indicating that parties sort individuals along ideological lines through party cues (Lupia 1994; Popkin 1994; Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Zaller 2004). While this observation is seemingly consistent with the instrumental model of partisanship, note the direction of the causal relationship in these studies: Partisans become ideologically aligned with their party through elite cues. Therefore, party preferences develop prior to the understanding of what ideology goes with which party.

We therefore expect to observe ideological preferences among strong partisans who are most susceptible to party elite rhetoric. In fact, in 2008, only 25% of strong partisans in the ANES had "not thought much" about their own ideological placement or reported not knowing what their ideological preference was. In contrast, almost 40% of pure independents were not able to identify an ideological preferences, underscoring the effect of partisan intensity on ideology.

The importance of party cues and the interaction of partisan intensity and political attentiveness are further demonstrated by Layman and Carsey (2002) in their conflict extension hypothesis, demonstrating that the increasing ideological consistency of Democratic and Republican elites is mirrored among politically aware voters and/or strong partisans. In fact, the 2016 ANES pilot study reveals that 73% of strong Democrats claim a liberal ideology. Compare this number to the 26% of strong Democrats who call themselves liberals in 1990 when parties did not yet overlap with one of the major ideologies. To reiterate this point: partisans are responsive

to and follow party elites and their cues on political issues and ideology which reverses the causal arrow suggested by the revisionist model. Voters do not necessarily align their party identification with their ideological preferences. Instead, it appears to be voters' partisanship that drives this increased ideological consistency in response to elite-level polarization. Similar results have been obtained by Goren et al. (2009) who show that partisanship has an equally tightening effect on political core values whereby the level of constraint increases in the presence of party cues (Goren et al. 2009).

Voting

While the vote has often been studied as a result of various instrumental considerations such as the economy, party performance, and policy preferences, the expressive model of partisanship considers voting primarily a function of partisans' motivation to secure and advance their party's positive status. Indeed, strong partisans are not only more likely to turn out to vote (Wattenberg and Brians 2002), they are also much more likely to vote for the party they identify with (Lewis- Beck et al. 2008; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002; Bartels 2000; Huddy et al. 2015) and, at the same time, are less likely to defect to another party. For example, in 2008 the vote percentage for the Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama among strong Democrats was 78% compared to merely 2% who voted for John McCain. Similarly, among strong Republicans, 78% voted for John McCain and 4% voted for Barack Obama (ANES 2008). Independents, on the other hand, are much more likely to switch parties in between election cycles. Among pure Independents, 23% for the Democratic nominee and 16% voted for the Republican nominee. 61% reported abstaining from the election in 2008 or refused to answer. Most notably,

the patterns remain stable across election cycles even as political parties change their leadership figures or substantive policy platform (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008)

As obvious as it seems, the notion that partisanship predicts voting behavior was contested in the early 1970s as political scientists observed an increase in the portion of survey respondents who declared themselves to be "independents" as well as an increase in the prevalence of split-ticket voting – both observations were interpreted as symptoms of partisan decline (Broder 1971; DeVries and Tarrance 1972). This trend, however, did not remain a permanent feature of the American electorate as Bartels (2000) demonstrates:

> *"…the impact of partisanship on voting behavior has increased markedly in recent years, both at the presidential level (where the overall impact of partisanship in 1996 was almost 80 percent greater than in 1972) and at the congressional level (where the overall impact of partisanship in 1996 was almost 60 percent greater than in 1978) […] 'partisan loyalties had at least as much impact on voting behavior at the presidential level in the 1980s as in the 1950s' (Bartels 1992, 249)-and even more in the 1990s than in the 1980s" (2000: 35).*

Since then, partisanship has been a stable key predictor of the vote in the U.S. (Green et al. 2002; Brader and Tucker 2009) and continues to grow in its influence on vote choice, especially as the number of strong party adherents has increased over the course of the last decade (Mason 2013).

It is also no surprise that the percentage of independents abstaining from the elections is higher compared to strong partisans. Social Identity Theory would predict that strong partisans seek out opportunities to actively support their party's status by increasing its chances of electoral success. Independents, on the other hand, do not consider either party their team, and therefore have fewer incentives to participate in the election. To illustrate this point: in the 2016 ANES, respondents were asked to rate their likelihood to vote in 2016 as well as to rank several issues according to perceived importance. Among all respondents who ranked abortion, gun control, gay

rights, the environment, and the national debt are one of the most important issues, strong partisans reported an average of 92% chance of voting in the 2016 election while Independents reported a significantly lower mean of 74%.

Advocates of an instrumental model of partisanship might argue that these patterns can also be grounded in evaluations of presidential performance or the strength of political attitudes. However, even if we account for variations in these factors, the data still favors partisanship as the main predictor of the vote. If we examine Republicans who strongly disapproved of George W. Bush's performance in office in 2004, 79% of these anti-Bush Republicans voted for another Republican, namely John McCain in 2008 similar to 55% of Republicans leaners. Therefore, presidential approval does not seem to be a great predictor of vote choice.

A very comparable conclusion can be drawn for Democrats who opposed gay rights legislation: among strong Democrats who reported being strongly opposed to laws against the discrimination of homosexuals, 93% voted for the Democratic nominee in 2008 while 94 % of strong Republicans who strongly favored these laws voted for the Republican nominee. Therefore, partisanship is a better predictor of vote choice than policy preferences or presidential performance evaluations. The instrumental model of partisanship would not be able to resolve these inconsistencies between a party's profile and a partisan's political attitudes.

Political Engagement

The effect of partisanship goes beyond the simple act of voting. It is also strongly related to a broad array of other forms of political engagement. In contrast to voting, political engagement is a continuous variable that can vary in its intensity: Citizens can be highly active on behalf of

their inparty by, for example, volunteering their time to support their candidate's political campaign or restrict their party activism to more low-effort forms of engagement such as voting or trying to persuade people in their social network to vote for their candidate. The expressive model would suggest that the intensity of political engagement is determined by the strength of party attachments whereby strong party supporters become active on behalf of their party, especially in times of electoral threat. In fact, recent work by Huddy et al. (2015) revealed that variations in partisan identity strength can account for varying levels of political engagement whereby stronger partisans display higher levels of party activism. At the same time, Independents tend to be less interested and involved in politics than their partisan counterparts. Data from the American National Election Study 2004 confirms this notion: Independents displayed lower interest in the 2004 election campaign than strong partisans, and they cared less about the election outcome (see Lewis- Beck et al. 2008; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Similarly, in 2008 20% of respondents who identified with a party (weak and strong partisans), reported having attended a political rally/campaign whereas only 5% of pure Independents reported to have done so (ANES 2008).

There are not just significant differences in the levels of engagement between partisans and Independents. There are also significant variations across partisan strength. Huddy and colleagues (2015) demonstrate that partisan strength (if measured as a social identity) is a more powerful predictor of political activity than commonly used alternative explanatory variables such as ideological issue intensity and educational attainment (Huddy, Mason and Aaroe 2015) – representing a finding that does not just conflict with the instrumental model of partisanship but also the popular resource models of political participation (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995). In addition to the experimental evidence provided by Huddy and colleagues, an examination of the

2008 ANES data yields very similar results: 13% of strong partisans reported having donated money to their inparty versus only 6% of weak partisans. This stark contrast holds true even when we only look at respondents with either a college/advanced degree or respondents with only a high school degree.

Social Identity Theory would in fact predict a strong relationship between partisan identity strength and political engagement due to the strong emotions that group identities can evoke. In fact, an outgrowth of Social Identity Theory (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000; Smith, Seger, and Mackie 2007), Intergroup Emotions Theory, deals specifically with the emotional processes related to group identities. Within this framework, research on emotions in the electoral context has demonstrated that they offer a strong motivational basis for action (Damasio 1994; Frijda 1986; Izard 1993) on behalf of the inparty in an attempt to secure the party's electoral victory (Groenendyk and Banks 2013; Huddy et al. 2007; Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus et al. 2000; van Zomeren, Spears, and Leach 2008; Valentino et al. 2008; Valentino et al. 2011).

From this perspective, it is not surprising that strong partisans are most likely to experience anger in response to electoral threats and defeats while the prospect of victory provokes a great deal of enthusiasm (Huddy, Mason and Aaroe 2013). Weaker partisans, on the other hand, report less intensive emotional experiences in response to threats to their party's status (Musgrove and McGarty 2008; van Zomeren, Spears and Leach 2008). For example, 87% of strong Democrats in the 2004 election reported having felt "angry" with the Republican nominee while 74% of weak Democrats report the same emotion towards the Republican nominee. On the Republican side, the differences look similar: 65% of strong Republicans reported feeling "anger" towards the Democratic nominee, compared to a significantly lower share of 41% among weak Republicans.

These numbers demonstrate the link between partisanship and action-oriented emotions which ultimately mediate various forms of political participation. From a normative viewpoint, this link underscores the importance of partisanship in providing people with a motivation to partake in the democratic process. Note that this effect is not a function of the strength of political attitudes: Even when Independents feel strongly about political issues such as laws against the discrimination of homosexuals, they are still not significantly more likely to be "very much" interested in the elections and their levels of political engagement are on average still lower than their partisan counterparts. Hence, for partisans, electoral participation appears to be less about implementing one's favored policy and more about seeing one's team win – a prediction that is in agreement with the expressive model of partisanship.

Partisan Animus

Partisan animus is likely one of the most prevalent political phenomena in current American politics that are quite difficult to reconcile with the instrumental understanding of partisanship. Strong party attachments seem to be accompanied by a strong sense of partisan rivalry. While instrumentalists might argue that this rivalry is a function of strong issue preferences, the expressive model has dominated as the theory of choice for researchers who aim to explain the increasing hostility that partisans report towards the outparty. Most convincingly, this choice has been validated by the observation of partisan animus even in the absence of disagreement on political issues (Mason 2015; Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012).

This interparty hostility is once again driven by powerful emotions, a key component in the expressive model of partisanship, in particular Intergroup Emotions Theory as previously

mentioned. For example Miller and Conover (2015) demonstrate that "…stronger partisan identities, more than ideological identities or issue preferences, are associated with a greater sense of partisan hostility—specifically, party rivalry and anger." Hence, even when issue and ideological preferences are accounted for, the strength of partisan identity remains the main predictor of feelings towards the outparty, especially when the inparty faces the prospect of an electoral loss.

In contrast to an instrumental understanding of politics, this anger arises to a much larger extent if partisans see the positive status of their "team" threatened compared to the threat of not seeing their preferred policy positions implemented (Huddy et al. 2015). In other words, strong partisans prioritize the status of their party, and continue to do so even as they agree with the outparty on political issues (Mason 2015). As Huddy and colleagues put it: "The social identity model of partisan politics is not very different from that advanced to explain the ardor and actions of sports fans. Weakly identified fans may attend games when the team is doing well and skip those where defeat is likely, but strong fans hang on and participate, even when the team is sure to lose, in order to boost their team's chances of victory" (2015:6-7).

From that perspective, partisan strength is a measure of the intensity of one's psychological attachment to the inparty (expressive model) rather than a measure of one's strength of political issue priorities (instrumental model).

Conclusion: Partisanship as a Social Identity

This chapter has demonstrated that the social identity approach to the study of partisanship is promising for researchers who wish to explore the origins and nature of party attachments. In

many regards, the identity-based conceptualization can provide explanations for partisan attitudes and behavior that we would not predict based on an instrumental model of partisanship. While both instrumental and identity-based components certainly play a role in shaping partisanship (Kroh and Selb 2009), the evidence reviewed here demonstrates the predictive power of an expressive model of partisanship for a multitude of political behaviors among partisans that the instrumental model fails to explain. Moreover, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of accounting for variations in partisan identity strength and how previous theories have failed to address the source of theses variations besides their importance for political behavior. At the same time, I have identified Social Identity Theory, in particular its cognitive offshoot Social Categorization Theory, as the most promising approaches for the study of partisan strength.

Given these considerations, the remainder of this dissertation will examine partisanship through the lens of the expressive model, relying on Social Categorization Theory to form predictions about the factors that drive strong party attachments and compare their impact on partisan strength to instrumental influences such as policy preferences.

Chapter III: Partisan Strength and Self-Categorization

As the previous chapter demonstrated, Social Categorization Theory offers a novel and promising approach to studying the effects and sources of variations in partisan strength.

In the following, I review and build on Social Categorization Theory (SCT) to derive predictions about the sources of variations in partisan intensity. These predictions will focus on features of the party's leadership and their effect on partisans. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the implications of my hypotheses for the study of partisanship as well as for the current political world in which questions regarding party leadership has been at the heart of the public debate on the future of the Republican Party.

Social Categorization Theory and Party Identification

In political science, Social Identity Theory and Social Categorization Theory are primarily used to explain intergroup behavior such as discrimination, stereotypes, and, more recently, polarization and partisan animosity. Processes *within* a group, or political party, however, have largely been neglected. As Hogg (2001:188) points out: "Intragroup behavior was generally treated as an unproblematic by-product of intergroup relations; ingroups were largely treated as homogenous and undifferentiated." As the 2016 presidential elections come closer, it becomes increasingly self-evident that ingroups – both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party's leadership as well as their supporters – are anything but homogenous.

Social Categorization Theory can be utilized to open up the ingroup black box and derive predictions about intragroup dynamics, especially with regards the strength of group attachments. On a most basic level, categorization can be described as a fundamental cognitive process by which we organize information. Given the vast amount of stimuli that we encounter on a daily basis, categorization is a necessary to simplify information processing by disregarding certain dissimilarities and emphasizing – in some cases even exaggerating – certain similarities between objects. This simplification allows us to think and act more efficiently particularly in environments with an abundance of stimuli that compete for our attention. For example, we might look for a utensil to write with. In this particular context, it does not matter to us whether this utensil is a fountain pen, ballpoint pen, a colored pencil, a graphite pencil, a grease pencil, or a mechanical pencil, or even a highlighter. During our search for something to write with, we ignore all the differences between these utensils such as their color or material in order to quickly establish their commonality, namely their ability to write. Cognitively, we create a category of 'things to write with' in which we organize every object that can serve the purpose of writing, making these objects equivalent regardless of their individual differences.

While Tajfel's earlier work examined nonsocial stimuli, the categorization process for social stimuli follows a very similar logic albeit some caveats. First, when categorizing social stimuli such as people, we apply our values and social norms which is not the case for, let's say, categorizing writing utensils. For example, a White supremacist might place only White people into his category of 'U.S. Americans' or a Democrat might place all Southerners in the category of 'Republicans'. Therefore, it is not just about the features of the people we are asked to categorize that determines the placement into a certain category but also our evaluation and expectation of these features.

Closely related to that, the categorization of people is also influenced by our relationship to them. If we categorize people we identify with, this category becomes relevant to our status (Taylor and Moghaddam 1994). Members of high status groups are more likely to enforce category boundaries in an attempt to prevent the dilution of their group through the exclusion of outgroup members that are perceived as low status. The result of this process is two-fold: First, the category remains 'pure' or internally homogeneous with regard to the commonality that the category describes. At the same time, this homogenization leads to clear-cut distinctions between the own group and other groups, maximizing intergroup distinctiveness. For example, a strongly identified Conservative might be motivated to exclude Trump supporters from this category of 'Conservatives' since that would not just change his group's status but it would also change what it means to be Conservative. Thus, our example Republican would be motivated to protect his category and exaggerate the differences between a 'true' Conservative and a Trump supporter.

Social Category Boundaries and Partisan Identity Strength

It is important to note that the strength of one's group attachment influences the level of motivation to enforce category boundaries whereby strong identifiers are more motivated to keep the ingroup uniform and distinct from outgroup. The reason for this relationship is two-fold.

First, strongly identified group members perceive the group as central to their own-understanding. Thus, if the category that defines the group changes, strong identifiers are directly impacted. For example, many political pundits argue that Donald Trump changes the way we define what it means to be a Republican. A strongly identified Republican might feel threatened by this change because his ingroup conflicts with his self-perception.

In addition, strong identifiers also tend to see themselves as an exemplar of the social category or group, meaning that they fit the category to a great extent. This category fit makes ingroup members particularly central to and influential within their group (Hogg 2001). To return to the example of the White supremacist: In a world in which being American is determined by race, Whites would be on top of society's status hierarchy. This advantage diminishes, however, as the definition of 'American' expands and becomes more inclusive to people of all races, and ethnicities. Similarly, if being fiscally and socially conservative characterized the Republican Party, then the members who exhibit both of these features are most influential in shaping the direction and image of the party. This influence can be exerted in various ways, including voting for politicians that best represent the category.

Therefore, Social Categorization Theory echoes the ambiguous nature of strong group identities. On one hand, strong identifiers are motivated to protect the distinctiveness and positive status of their category. As we have seen in previous chapters, strong partisans were more likely to become active on behalf of their party than weakly attached party supporters. On the other hand, strong identifiers are also more likely to vilify the out-group and exclude members who do not fit the group's category characteristics. These dynamics handsomely describe some of the developments we currently observe in the Republican Party. If Donald Trump becomes the presidential nominee of the Republican Party, the composition and perception of the category 'Republicans' will change dramatically, potentially weakening party attachments among formerly strong identifiers who fit the prior prototype – a point I shall return to later.

Party Prototypes and their Impact on Party Identification

So far, I have discussed the function and dynamics of social categorization: On a most basic level, the process of social categorization perceptually segments the social world into ingroups and outgroups. But how do people know whether they belong in a certain category? For certain groups, there might be features that visibly distinguish ingroup members from outgroup members such as race, ethnicity, or gender. For other groups, category boundaries appear to be much more ambiguous. For example, what makes a Republican a Republican? Who decides what a Republican looks like?

In Social Categorization Theory parlor, groups are cognitively represented by prototypes. These prototypes are context specific, multidimensional fuzzy sets of attributes that define and prescribe attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that characterize one group and distinguish it from other groups (Hogg 2001). In other words, prototypes are group members that are most representative of or typical for the group. Note though that there are no hard rules to identify a prototype. Instead, they are 'context-specific' and 'multidimensional fuzzy sets'. These components of the prototype definition have three implications for our understanding of how a prototype is constituted.

First, a prototype depends on the context. What we perceive as the prototype of a group will partly be determined by the comparative baseline of any given situation. For example, a supporter of the Republican Party in rural Wisconsin might be perceived as fitting the Republican prototype to a lesser degree if the context of comparison focuses on Republicans in suburban areas like Long Island. Therefore, prototypes are not rigid templates that are universally valid. Instead, our perception of what is prototypical for a party relies heavily on the context in which we identify commonalities among party members.

Additional complexity in the study of prototypes is introduced by their multidimensional nature. For example, when thinking about the prototype of the Democratic Party, we might first focus on the policy dimension and determine that the Democratic prototype entails progressive social policy preferences. That is, however, only one dimension of a potential Democratic prototype. There is an array of other dimensions we could employ the construct the prototype such as certain economic policy preferences, or personality traits that we expect the typical Democrat to have as well as various sociodemographic factors that we are more likely to associate with the Democratic Party's members such as race, and gender. Thus, we can draw from several categories of commonalities that we can use to define the prototype of a political party. Which category we choose from will most likely depend on the context that makes a certain type of commonality more salient. This point also reiterates the potentially conflicting nature of prototypes. For example, when examining sociodemographic commonalities among Republican supporters, we might conclude that Donald Trump fit the category 'Republican' quite well; like the majority of his party's members, he is White, relatively old, wealthy, and a man. However, if the dimension we use to construct the prototype describes the ideological profile of the Republican Party, Donald Trump would lose his prototypical status since he does not favor the economically conservative policy profile that his party is known for.

These prior elaborations result in the term 'fuzzy sets' that Hogg (2001) uses to illustrate the fluid character of prototypes. Rather than a precise check list of all the features that a typical party member must portray in order to fit the category 'Republican' or 'Democrat', prototypes are often indistinct or vague due to their multidimensionality and context-dependency. While there are central tendencies that we observe among party members' profiles, there is no hard threshold at which a party member is perceived as typical or atypical. Nevertheless, there are several ways in

which we learn about a party's prototype albeit its complexity which I will address in the following section.

How We Learn About Party Prototypes: Party Leaders

As elaborated in the preceding sections, prototypes incorporate several dimensions ranging from policy positions to personality traits. We gather information about these dimensions primarily through the portrait of party leaders. Especially in a candidate-centered electoral system like the U.S., party elite members have a disproportionate influence on how their party is perceived by the public. Therefore, a party prototype is shaped by the cumulative effect of information people obtain about a party's leadership.

If plotted over time, a function of information amount would most plausibly peak around the time of the general election as presidential candidates attempt to increase their appeal among the electorate through campaign ads, rallies, debates, and other public events. Through these outlets as well as people's own experiences with the party over the course of their life span, voters develop a mental image of a party's prototype. For the purpose of simplification, I examine two main dimensions of that prototype: First, the political dimension that incorporates the issue positions that the party typically represents, and second, the social dimension which provides information about what the typical party member looks like in terms of their sociodemographic profile and other social cues.

The Political Dimension of the Party Prototype

How do we know that a typical Republican is pro-choice? Or that a typical Democrat is pro-gun control? These issues reflect the political dimension of a party prototype whereby we

determine what a typical party member stands for politically. Through campaign ads (e.g. Brians and Wattenberg 1996; Henderson 2014) and presidential debates (Shaw 1999) people learn the specific issue positions that party elite members stand for and to what extent they align with the party's overall platform. For example, a pro-choice Republican presidential candidate is less typical than his pro-life counterpart. Similarly, a Democrat opposing gun control is perceived as less of a typical Democrat. This idea is very closely related to the concepts of partisan stereotypes and issue ownership which – based on how Republicans and Democrats portray themselves or are portrayed by the media – shape future expectations regarding party's candidates and their profile (Campbell et al. 1960; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Rahn 1993). These expectations can be related to political issues that the party has become known for, gaining the reputation to be particularly competent in handling them (Petrocik 1996).

Overall then, party leaders provide two different types of information about the political dimension of a party prototype: First, the party's most prominent political issues and second, their stances on a broad array of political issues. We know, for example, that Republicans are oftentimes considered more qualified in handling the economy, especially with regards to tax policies as well as national defense while Democrats are expected to promote policies on environmental protection and education (Petrocik 1996; Hayes 2005). Thus, each party's policy focus as well as their stances on salient issues shape what we perceive the party prototype.

To the extent that political issue competencies and stances are also used to infer personality traits, a party's political issue profile can extend beyond purely political information about the party prototype. In fact, voters might use their knowledge about the party's political profile to infer personal attributes of the party's candidates, generating "…expectations about the *kinds* of personal attributes a party's nominees will have. If a candidate fails to live up to those expectations,

[…], he will suffer at the polls." (Hayes 2005:920). This insight reiterates the complex nature of prototypes. The various dimensions of a party prototype interact rather than act on their own. Therefore, the political dimension of a prototype can influence other dimensions as well and vice versa. Hayes (2005) formulated this insight in his theory of trait ownership confirming that Republicans – due to their focus on military defense, and security – are considered stronger leaders whereas Democrats are characterized as compassionate and empathetic given their emphasis on welfare, and other equality-enforcing policies. The author also suggests that these partisan traits can be modified if the underlying issue ownership changes. Thus, political aspects of the party prototype can influence non-political dimensions of the prototype as well. What has been studied to a much lesser extent is the question of how non-political aspects contribute to a party's prototype.

The Social Dimension of the Party Prototype

While political typicality – based on the party's issue profile – has received quite a substantial amount of attention in prior research, the role of non-political typicality is less explored. Non-political features entail personal characteristics of party leaders such as gender, age, style of dressing, religion, and race. These features can be used as well to assess the party prototype. In fact, among voters who are less attentive to politics, these social information can be particularly useful to quickly construct a mental imagery of a party in the absence of political content to construct a party prototype[3]. Popkin (1994), for example, illustrates how Mexican-American voters watching President Gerald Ford bite into an unshucked tamale likely led them to infer that

[3] Note though that I predict social cues to have an equally substantial impact on sophisticated partisans. I elaborate on this argument at a later point in the chapter.

Ford was rather ignorant of their culture, potentially influencing the way Mexican-Americans perceived the social dimension of the Republican Party's prototype.

As hinted at earlier, party leaders not only shape party prototypes. They are also somewhat restricted by them, especially with regards to immutable factors such as sociodemographic features. For example, to supporters of the Republican Party, a female or African- American presidential candidate might seem like a mismatch with the dominant party stereotype of the white male (and old) Republican, potentially resulting in lower electoral chances resembling the demise of Carly Fiorina's and Ben Carson's presidential bid.

Prior research has supported this notion as well. For example, McDermott (1997) demonstrates that women candidates perform better among liberals but worse among conservatives than do male candidates of the same party. These results are further buttressed by previous findings that women are usually elected to the House from more liberal and more urban districts (Welch 1985; Rule 1981). In addition, research investigating the effect of gender in the 1990 House elections has shown that both Republican and Democratic women candidates perform much better in election in liberal districts, and significantly worse in conservative districts than their male counterparts (McDermott 1995). Koch (2000) identifies the underlying mechanism that might lead to these findings, showing that women are generally perceived as more liberal than men. These studies serve as examples of how social information can convey political content about the party prototype rather than vice versa as was the case with issue and trait ownership.

Admittedly, it is difficult to clearly distinguish between political and non-political typicality. Both dimensions are necessarily intertwined. This notion is echoed by Green and colleagues (2002) who take the example of party realignment in the South to argue that "distinguishing issue evolution from evolution in group imagery is difficult, and both

interpretations contribute to the explanation of partisan change in the South. […] Younger white Southerners are more Republican not because they are more conservative but because their attachments formed during a period when Republicans were more likely to be regarded as an attractive social group" (pp.160-161).

This notion is echoed by recent work examining the effect of increasing sociodemographic diversity among the elite members of the Democratic Party: As the numbers of women, minorities, and non-Protestant Christians in their ranks increased, White citizens with higher levels of authoritarian dispositions sorted into the more homogeneous Republican Party which was better able to satisfy authoritarians' inherent need for order and group cohesion (Wronski 2015). While the author focuses on authoritarians, the results also point at the possibility that a change in the social component of the party prototype generally impact partisan identification among the mass electorate. Thus, changes in the party prototype can entail both altered issue profiles but also – potentially in a more visible way – modifications in the social image of the party leading to substantial changes in who is regarded as a typical Republican or Democrat with eventual consequences for the way people identify with the party.

Overall, this section conveyed three main points. First, there is a social and political component in what we perceive to be a party prototype. Second, these two dimensions also interact and influence each other, oftentimes blurring the lines between what is purely political and purely social.

Party Leaders and Partisans

The previous sections formulated the idea that party leaders act as agents of their party, conveying the social and typical features that describe the party prototype. In this section, I briefly

review prior research on party leaders on partisan behavior, in particular vote choice. This review is supposed to illustrate how preceding research remain largely atheoretical and does not take into account the social nature of political parties as well as the psychological attachment partisans form towards their inparty. I then move on to make predictions about the effects of party leaders on partisan attachments from a Social identity Theory perspective.

Prior research on the effects of party leaders is diverse and largely limited to the vote showing that charismatic or popular elite members positively affect the vote share for their party (Essaiasson 1985; Stewart and Clarke 1992; Mughan 1993; McAllister 1996, 2007; Evans 2005). Other researchers have made the claim that as parties have declined in their ability to generate enduring partisan loyalties, the ability of charismatic party leaders to sway voters has increased (Wattenberg 1991, 1998; Mughan 2000; Clark et al. 2004).

In contrast to these results, many other researchers found inconclusive or insubstantial effects of party leaders on vote choice and no increase in leaders' influence despite claims of increasing personalization of elections (Crewe and King 1994; Bartle and Crewe 2000; Brettschneider and Gabriel 2002; Curtice and Holmberg 2005). These contradictory results can at least partially be explained by the difficulty faced in identifying leadership effects (King 2002). The majority of research studies on the topic rely on observational data, making it difficult to disentangle the effects of partisanship and leader appraisal.

In addition to these methodological challenges, there is also a vast number of leadership characteristics that could be of interest to researchers, leading to varying conclusions about the impact of political leaders ranging from demographic features (e.g. Popkin 1994; Enelow and Hinich 1982) to perceived personality traits (e.g. Ohr and Oscarsson 2003; Bean and Mughan 1989; Miller et al. 1986). In the former case, researchers have argued that demographic

characteristics serve as "…low-information cues for estimating the policies of a candidate" (Popkin 1994). Interestingly, Cutler (2002) finds that even after controlling for partisanship, economic perceptions, and policy positions, voters were still more likely to vote for parties whose leaders were more like them. In a very similar vein, Caprara and Zimbardo (2004) find that voters select politicians whose traits match their own traits and values implying that

These results point at the role of perceived similarity to party leaders in voters' decision-making process. However, the psychological mechanisms that drive partisans to support candidates that they feel similar to as well as their impact on party attachments are to date still unknown.

Similarity to the Party Prototype

Conceptualizing party leaders as prototypes of the party has implications for the way we think about the way people attach to parties. Moreover, it sheds some light on prior results that demonstrated various effects of party leaders on the vote but never explored implications for party attachments in general.

Social Categorization Theory predicts that individuals may use these prototypes to learn about the defining features of typical party members and estimate their own level of similarity to the party prototype. In this framework, the strength of party attachments is a function of category match whereby a high match facilitates categorizing oneself as a party members and strengthens party attachments. Put differently, high similarity with the party leaders places partisans in the center of a typicality distribution, allowing them to embody the party's defining characteristics.

Therefore, I predict that a high overlap or match of the self and the party profile leads to stronger party attachments than if this overlap is low. Note that I expect this process to be valid for partisans of all sophistication levels as the need to belong to the party is a psychological motivation that remains relatively unaffected by political sophistication. While politically knowledgeable partisans might have a better understanding of what the party prototype looks like, they are as responsive to social cues as their less attentive counterparts. Similarly, partisans who are unaware of their party leaders' specific issue profiles might simply infer the candidate's positions from the party's general platform (see Feldman and Conover 1983; Krosnick 1990).

Prior research in social psychology provides some preliminary support for this hypothesis demonstrating that more prototypical group members tend to identify more strongly and thus display more pronounced group behaviors; they will be more normative, show greater ingroup loyalty, and ethnocentrism, and generally behave in a more group serving manner (Hogg 2001; Hogg and Hardie 1992; Hogg and Hardie 1991; Hogg, Hardie, and Reynolds 1995).

In political science, Theiss-Morse (2009) similarly illustrated that people with strong national identities not only tend to perceive themselves to be more of a typical American but they also place more restrictive limitations on who counts as an American. This is because strong identifiers have an interest in enforcing these boundaries in an attempt to maintain the image of the group and their status within it.

Social and Political Similarity to the Party Prototype

Similar to the idea that a party prototype has a social and political component, similarity to the party prototype can be both social and political in nature. The former case is intuitive and

resembles the instrumental model of partisanship: If a party leader represents a partisan's issue positions and/or ideological preferences, political similarity with that leader is high. As the instrumental model suggests, partisan strength should increase in this scenario due to the close match of a partisan's set of issue preferences and the party leader's issue agenda. From that perspective, political similarity is related to the political platform of a party, ranging from its specific issue positions to its ideological orientation. These political features of the party prototype are important for partisans to estimate their political overlap with their inparty whereby those who align with their party on most issues should be stronger partisans than those who do not. Given the multidimensional nature of prototypes, partisans cannot just be politically similar to the party prototype but also socially. Social similarity can be defined in many terms, including broad evident categories such as sociodemographic features but also individual features such as hobbies and lifestyle preferences. This type of extra-political similarity can be inferred from party leaders' behavior and appearances in the media. Similar to political similarity, partisans utilize these social cues to estimate how well they fit in with the party. In particular, a partisan who fits the social profile of his or her party is expected to identify more strongly with the inparty than the socially less typical partisans when political similarity is given. This is because in absolute terms, the partisan who fits the social and political profile of the party prototype scores higher on am hypothetical similarity score than the partisan who fits the political profile only.

A related idea was proposed by Popkin (1994) who made the claim that voters use informational shortcuts such as personal information that they receive about political leaders during elections campaigns to rationally choose between candidates. These shortcuts can be seemingly as trivial such as eating a slice of pizza with cutlery, as did Donald Trump in 2011 followed by a wave of public criticism, or not knowing the price of gallon of milk – a faux pas

with critical implications for the way George Bush Sr. was perceived by working class Americans in 1992. Relying on the notion of low information rationality, Popkin suggests that voters use these personal information to assess to what extent a political candidate will represent their interests once in office. From this perspective, personal attributes are used as indicators signaling political similarity to the voter.

However, note that social categorization would predict that such personal information does not have to have a direct political connotation which is a crucial departure from prior literature on social cues in low-information environments. While political similarity is most relevant to the identification with a political party, Social Categorization Theory predicts that any type of similarity that fosters a sense of belonging to the party can potentially strengthen party identification even when that similarity might appear unrelated to politics. In fact, there are various example in the political world that could serve as anecdotal evidence for that conception: Facebook groups like 'Pet Lovers for Obama' is full with comments about how the President's affection for his dog makes him more appealing as a politician. It is questionable to what extent an affinity for dogs is a politically relevant cue.

This example also points at the role of the media as a filter. While any type of similarity might be beneficial for the strengthening of party identification, voters only learn about those social features of their inparty leaders that the media is willing to report on. Therefore, the amount of purely social information might be limited in the first place if the media does not consider it relevant. Nevertheless, we do not lack information about our party leaders' lifestyle preferences.

We know about the President's summer reading list[4], his passion for basketball[5], as well as his preference for St. Louis deep-dish pizza[6]. Once again, it is debatable to what extent these types of social cues provide ground for political inferences. In fact, based on Social Identity Theory, these social similarities – as trivial as they seem – might motivate partisans to feel closer to their party, strengthening their attachment to the party.

Interacting Social and Political Similarity

While Social Categorization Theory would predict any type of similarity to strengthen party ties, the theory also acknowledges that the domain that most dominantly defines the group is most salient to ingroup members when they categorize themselves and others. In the context of political parties this domain would be political. Therefore, when partisans are asked to categorize themselves or other people into Democrats and Republicans, they will examine their political issue and ideological preferences, estimating the political similarity to either the Democratic or Republican Party. Once political similarity is given, social similarity can add to the strengthening of party attachments. For example, a Democrat who is politically aligned with her party and recognizes a significant number of women in the Democratic leadership would be politically and socially similar to the Democratic prototype, fostering stronger ties to the inparty than a female Democrat who is not exposed to female leaders within her inparty.

[4] Nakamura, David: *Here are the 6 books on President Obama's summer reading list* https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/08/13/here-are-the-6-books-on-president-obamas-summer-reading-list/ (last accessed 05/16/2016).
[5] Crouch, Ian: *Understanding Obama through basketball*: http://www.newyorker.com/news/sporting-scene/understanding-obama-through-basketball (las accessed 05/16/2016).
[6] Ta, Leanne: *Obama's Pie Preference Sparks Pizza War:* http://www.nbcmiami.com/the-scene/food-drink/Obamas-Pie-Preference-Sparks-Pizza-War.html (last accessed 05/16/2016).

Note that this example also implicitly illustrates the preeminence of political similarity. If partisans do not feel politically similar to their party, social similarity remains ineffective. A female Democrat who does not perceive herself to be politically similar to her party does not identify more strongly if the number of women in the Democratic leadership increases. Political issues matter as the basis of identification. They do, however, not exclusively contribute to the strengthening of party identification Social similarity in addition to political similarity can produce much stronger partisan attachments than political similarity on its own.

From that perspective, there are four different scenarios that result from the interaction of political and social similarity to the party prototype. First, partisan attachments are strongest if both political and social similarity is given. If either political similarity or social similarity is given, partisan attachments will be positively affected by political similarity even in the absence of social similarity. Partisan attachments remain unaffected, however, if social similarity is given in the absence of political similarity. Last, partisan attachments remain unaffected if neither political nor social similarity is given.

Typical Party Leaders versus Atypical Party Leaders

From a Social Identity Theory perspective, there is one important caveat that conditions the relationship between similarity to party leaders and the strength of party attachments. In particular, party leaders need to be perceived as fitting the party prototype themselves. This points at the endogenous nature between party leaders and party prototypes: Party leaders are influential in shaping and reinforcing the party prototype. At the same time, party members who fit the party prototype are more likely to emerge as leaders, and to be perceived as more effective leaders than

less prototypical party members (Hogg 2001; Hains, Hogg, and Duck 1997). This reciprocal relationship indicates that party prototypes can both empower as well as limit party leaders' influence. Put differently, party elites shape their party's prototype but are also restricted by it to the extent that prior party prototypes – based on the historical developments and performances of the party – determine what type of party member has the potential to become a party leader.

The former case seems more intuitive as leaders by definition are individuals who have disproportionate power and influence to set agenda, define the group's identity, and mobilize ingroup members to become active collectively on behalf of the group (Hogg 2001). The very status of being a leader, however, is the result of intra-group processes (see also Chemers 2001) that have a priori defined what features the leader of a group has to embody. Hogg (2001) proposes that prototypicality – the extent to which one fits the group prototype – is a strong predictor of a leader's influence over his/her ingroup members. This is because of the immediate effects of social categorization: As group membership becomes salient, social categorization of the self and other ingroup members activates a depersonalization process whereby individual differences are ignored for the sake of emphasizing group commonalities resulting in an alignment of ingroup members' perception, cognition, and behavior with the ingroup prototype.

From this perspective, people who are perceived to occupy the most prototypical position are perceived to best embody the attitudes and behaviors to which other, less prototypical members are conforming. As a result, the extent to which group members fit the group prototype equates their potential influence whereby the most prototypical members exercise disproportionate influence over less prototypical members. At the same time, this means group members who do not conform to the group prototype will exercise less power over ingroup members as long as the group prototype remains constant.

Prior work by social psychologists largely supports this idea. For example, Hains, Hogg, and Duck (1997) conducted a laboratory study in which they manipulated various factors, including leader typicality following a minimal group paradigm. Anticipating small discussion groups, participants were told that a randomly selected group leader was either typical or atypical in terms of group attitudes. Participants who were assigned a typical group leader identified more strongly with the group that participants in groups with atypical leaders.

In a similarly constructed experiment, Hogg, Hains, and Mason (1998) find that the extent to which group leaders fit the group prototype was an important determinant of the leader's endorsement by group members, especially in cohesive groups with which people identify more strongly. Interestingly, the authors also discover that strong group identifiers were more likely to perceive prototypical similarities between the leader and ingroup members, pointing at a potential feedback loop whereby strong group identifiers are motivated to endorse prototypical group leaders as they reinforce their central position within the group. Replications of these studies as well as related experiments that investigated the role of prototypicality reinforce the notion that prototypicality is an influential determinant of group leaders' power and influence within the group (e.g. Platow and van Knippenberg 1999; Duck and Fielding 1999; Platow, Reid, and Andrew 1998; Haslam et al. 1998).

Applying these insights to the political context, party elite members who fit the party prototype to a lesser extent are also less influential, diminishing their ability to strengthen party attachments. In fact, Hogg (2001) calls this phenomenon the 'pitfall of prototype-based leadership' (p.195) as social minorities based on race, gender, or ethnicity might find it difficult to assume leadership positions when their group's prototype renders them intrinsically 'atypical' (see also Hogg and Terry 2000).

Given the social and political dimension of party prototypes – as discussed above – party leaders need to be politically and socially typical of their party in order to exercise the maximum amount of influence over partisans. Just like a pro-choice Republican candidate might have a hard time convincing the party's supporters, a female Republican candidate might not be able to entice the enthusiasm of the party's base given the fact that women have not been and still do not have a strong presence in the Republican Party's leadership. From that perspective, even a candidate with a political agenda that resembles the Republican Party's platform to a great extent might not be as effective in motivating partisans if he/she does not "look" like a typical Republican. Thus, similarity to a typical party leader is not just based on that leader's political profile but also to what extent the leader embodies the party's current sociodemographic profile. If both dimensions of similarity are present, party leaders can strengthen party attachments more effectively compared to being politically similar only.

These considerations lead to my second hypothesis that perceived prototypicality of a party leader moderates the effect of partisan similarity. To reiterate this point: Prototypicality is both defined in social and political terms, requiring party leaders to satisfy both dimensions in order to be perceived as prototypical. For example, the prototypical member of the Republican Party advocates for certain political issues that are most emblematic of the Republican Party such as pro-life, and pro-gun policies. On a social level, the Republican prototype could be defined as White, old, wealthy, and male. Note that while this obviously is a simplification, it fits a large majority of the Republican leadership. If this party prototype is valid, party leaders who do not display these prototypical features might be perceived as less typical, which prevents partisans' similarity to this atypical party leader from strengthening party attachments. This is because being similar to an atypical party leader does not improve the partisan's standing within the party. Therefore, the effect

of similarity to inparty leaders should be conditioned on the perceived typicality of the inparty leader.

Objective versus Subjective Perceptions of Typicality

The previous discussion on perceived typicality underlines the importance of subjective perception of typicality which might not always align with objective measures of typicality. Based on media coverage, the perception of the party prototype might be skewed. For example, given the high profile positions of prominent Democratic leaders such as Hillary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi, people might overestimate the number of women in their party's leadership. A similar case can be made for President Obama and his impact on the perception of the Democratic Party's prototype whereby the number of African-Americans among the party's elite might be overestimated since the President is such an influential figure within the party. Therefore, partisans' estimate of the party prototype is largely subjective as it is conditioned on their mental representation of the party's composition.

At the same time, there might be a motivational component to the formation of the party prototype to the extent that partisans are motivated to perceive themselves as part of the inparty's prototype as the image of the inparty impacts partisans' self-perceptions To maintain a positive self-image, partisans might be more susceptible to prototype messages that are aligned with their own individual profile (see Hogg 2001 for a similar argument). For example, a female Republican might overestimate the number of women in the Republican leadership in an attempt to see her gender as adequately represented by the inparty's prototype. From that perspective, it is especially important to account for subjective perceptions of the party prototype rather than trying to measure

typicality objectively. If partisans are motivated to see themselves are representative of the party, the objective representation and composition of the inparty does not reflect partisans' social reality.

At the same time, these subjective perceptions cannot be biased indefinitely. Similar to the concept of the affective tipping point (Redlawsk et al. 2010), partisans who receive a significant amount of information that is incongruent with their mental representation of the party alter their perception of the party prototype correspondingly. Therefore, objective typicality matters most in scenarios in which the party prototype drastically changes such as the Democratic Party's prototype after the Southern Realignment as well as the Republican Party's prototype as the party's leadership was increasingly represented by Southerners.

Overall, perceptions of the party prototype can vary among members of the inparty. In order to capture this variance, subjective measures of typicality are preferable over objective measures.

Consensuality of Party Prototypes

The prior considerations assumed that the group prototype is somewhat consensual among group members. Otherwise, it would not be possible to estimate to what extent inparty leaders fit the party prototype. However, as we currently witness at the example of the Republican Party, the party prototype can be challenged and potentially modified in the long run. While some political pundits predict a realignment in the Republican Party[7], the specific effect of Donald Trump on the party's identity will remain unclear until the convention in Cleveland in July this year.

[7] Baylor, Christopher: *Is Donald Trump leading a realignment of the GOP? Maybe not*: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/21/is-donald-trump-leading-a-realignment-of-the-gop-maybe-not/ as well as http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-02-04/the-great-gop-realignment (last accessed 05/16/2016).

Nevertheless, Social Identity Theory predicts that the uncertainty about what it means to be Republican could be detrimental to partisan attachments.

The rationale for this is that identification with the party via self-categorization is more difficult when the prototype that prescribes cognition, affect and behavior, is unclear (Hogg et al. 2005). In other words, partisans will have a harder time estimating to what extent they fit in with the party if the definition of being Republican is so highly contested. The flipside of this argument states that groups with clear, simple, and prescriptive prototypes tend to foster stronger group attachments (Hogg 2001). Therefore, when the party prototype is unambiguous, the process of self-categorization is facilitated, making it easier for partisans to estimate how well they fit in with the party. If, on the other hand, several party leaders compete for the ability to define what it means to be Republican, uncertainty about the party prototype is introduced.

In the case of the Republican Party, Donald Trump might introduce major changes to the political dimension of the party prototype. For example, Trump calls into question some of the ideological pillars of the Republican Party such as its stances on issues like free trade and welfare entitlements which have characterized the party's political profile for decades. Similarly, Trump's stances on social issues such as abortion have oftentimes been out of sync with the party's conservative platform. Instead, Trump defies any ideological consistency in his policy profile, mixing protectionism with right-wing populist, and nativist elements. If Trump becomes the nominee of the Republican Party, he might drastically change the political dimension of its party prototype.

At the same time, Trump reflects some of the core social elements of the Republican Party's prototype that might explain his consensual prestige among a large share of the Republican electorate. He is a White, elder, and most importantly wealthy businessman who attempts to

present himself as the embodiment of the American Dream. Thus, while Trump lacks the strong religious ties of many of his Republican predecessors, his profile includes many other factors that seem relevant to the Republican prototype.

From this perspective, it is not surprising that strong conservatives turn away from Trump and reject him as a potential leader of the Republican Party while he enjoys much greater support among ideologically less motivated Republicans. A different interpretation could make the claim that some features of the party prototype are more definitional of the party than others which would allow for greater flexibility in the profiles of party leaders. Would Trump have gathered so much support among Republicans if he was a woman? Or an African-American? These features would have conflicted with some of the most visible elements of the Republican prototype. Given the early withdrawal of Carly Fiorina and Ben Carson from the primary elections, it appears that the social dimension of the party prototype exerts substantial influence on candidate's ability to gather support within the party.

Contributions of this Study

Overall, this study has theoretical and practical implications for political science as well as for the current political landscape in the U.S. From a theoretical standpoint, this dissertation advances research on partisanship in several ways: First, by focusing on the effects of party leaders, we open the black box of intra-party dynamics. Rather than treating an ingroup as a given feature in intergroup behavior, this work examines how party prototypes empower and constrain ingroup members, which in turn influences attitudes and behaviors towards the outparty to a great extent. Hence, integrating these intraparty processes into analyses of interparty relationships provides a more comprehensive picture of party politics.

Second, the following studies might contribute to the ongoing debate between advocates of the instrumental and expressive model of partisanship. Scholars might have overstated to what extent this debate entails two contradictory approaches that cannot be reconciled. In fact, I expect both instrumental considerations as well as identity-related factors to contribute to the development of strong party attachments. Demonstrating that both components are necessary for strong and enduring party loyalties can expand the research agenda to focus on questions that explicitly embrace both approaches such as when do instrumental considerations matter more (or less) than expressive considerations in developing party attachments or to what extent can we construct a typology of partisans that illustrates the various combinations by which instrumental and/or expressive considerations can serve as the basis of partisanship.

Third, this dissertation also covers relatively new ground by exploring partisanship as the dependent variable rather than the independent variable. As stated earlier, the majority of prior research has examined the effects of partisanship on the vote, political attitudes, and other forms of political engagement but there is only a handful of researchers who put partisan identification on the left-hand side of the equation. This is partly because party identification so far has been treated as a binary variable, indicating whether respondents stuck with the prior party choice or whether they abandoned their inparty in favor of the outparty. In observational studies, it is difficult to control for potential confounding variables whereas in experimental research, it is virtually impossible to design a treatment that is externally valid and at the same time sufficiently effective to shift party identification. Thus, focusing on partisan strength rather than the direction enables researchers to detect the more subtle effects their treatments might have on party attachments. These effects might not induce a change in party identification but they could feasibly lead to variations in party attachments, separating weak partisans from strong partisans.

Last, this research also advances the study of leadership effects. As most prior work relies on observational data to quantify the effect of party leaders on vote choice, this study attempts to determine the causal mechanisms underlying leaders' influence by utilizing an experimental setup. From a conceptual standpoint, this dissertation also provides a novel theoretical framework, namely social categorization and identity theory, to derive predictions about the impact of party leaders.

The more practical contributions of this dissertation relate to the current U.S. presidential election campaigns. The assortment of Republican presidential candidates has never been more diverse in its sociodemographic composition: While it might just be anecdotal evidence, it is still telling that the only female candidate among the Republican contenders has already suspended her campaign after low levels of support in the primary in Iowa and the caucus in New Hampshire. Similarly, Ben Carson – the only African-American candidate – has electorally been rather unsuccessful among Republican primary and caucus goers. Even though both candidates embraced the typical standpoints of the Republican Party, their unconventional (i.e. atypical) sociodemographic profile might have posed a hindrance to their political careers in the Republican Party. From this perspective, this dissertation also aims to deliver insights on current politics in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Chapter IV: Measuring Partisanship as a Social Identity

Given the importance of partisanship as a main predictor of political behavior in the U.S. and elsewhere, it is surprising that since the *American Voter* and its proposed wording of the partisanship indicator, only a few researchers have tried to re-examine and evaluate the way we measure partisan attachments (e.g. Greene 1999; 2004). This is even more astounding given that at the core of the partisanship debate lies the question of whether or not we observe fluctuation in aggregate partisanship levels and if so, whether their magnitude is substantial or not – questions that inevitably will have to entail some discussion of measurement theory in an attempt to evaluate and potentially improve current measures of partisanship. As Johnston put it: "Although one can work out sensible reasons for fluctuation or variation in party identification, focused plausible comparisons are rare. The heart of the problem is measurement. The canonical U.S. measure is controversial at home, and matters only get worse when analysts cross borders" (p. 338-339).

This chapter speaks to this problem of measurement: In the following sections, I introduce an identity-based measure of partisanship, starting with its theoretical underpinnings grounded in the expressive model of partisanship, and illustrating its empirical merits as predictors of political behavior. I will demonstrate that the most important merit in the context of this research project lies in the measure's ability to capture more fine-grained variations in the strength of partisan attachments which allows for a more precise estimation of the relationship between partisanship and political behavior. This is especially important for the subsequent experimental studies presented in this dissertation since a more fine-grained measure of partisan attachments allows to detect even small treatment effects.

The chapter starts with a short introduction of the current measures of partisan strength in the U.S. and three European multi-party systems, followed by a discussion of these measure's weaknesses which add to the controversial evidence on the nature of partisanship and its predictive power, especially outside the U.S. Subsequently, I introduce an identity-based measure of partisanship, evaluating its measurement properties as well as empirical performance in three European multi-party systems which, in contrast to the U.S. two-party system, serves as a more difficult test of the measure's empirical validity. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion on the contribution of the measure to the current debate on partisanship as well as its role in the remaining chapters of this dissertation.

Current Measures of Partisanship and Partisan Strength

In the U.S. Two-Party Context

In the U.S., the partisanship indicator entails both direction as well as intensity of party attachments, creating a seven-point scale that ranges from "Strong Republican" to "Strong Democrat". This measure essentially offers three degrees of partisan strength for both Republican and Democratic supporters: independent leaning, weak partisan, and strong partisan. The midpoint of the measure represents pure Independents. While this survey instrument of partisanship is widely used in the U.S., there is no consensus regarding the contribution of the intensity component to the debate on the nature of partisanship even though it seems intuitive that the strength of party attachments is more susceptible to changes in the political environment than its direction (Johnston 2006). Identifying these variations and their sources can reveal to what extent partisanship is

grounded in psychological attachments to a party (expressive partisanship) or in individual issue preferences (instrumental partisanship). Put differently, the higher volatility in partisan strength allows us to ask the question whether partisanship is responsive to changes in party's issue-preferences (instrumental partisanship) or to changes in the party's social status which partisans are motivated to defend especially in times of electoral threat (expressive partisanship).

The current debate on polarization in the U.S. political system has provided some answers to that question by examining the increasing numbers of strong partisans in both parties as well as the growing partisan animus between them. Mason (2014), for example, shows that partisan polarization is mainly grounded in partisan-ideological sorting – the alignment of party loyalties and ideological orientation – which operates independently from political issue preferences. Scholars still debate the existence and magnitude of an issue-based polarization, even though there appears to be an emerging consensus that issue positions in the mass public have experienced relatively small increases in polarization (Fiorina and Abrams 2008; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005, 2008; Fiorina and Levendusky 2006; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2013; Wolfe 1998) while levels of partisan strength, bias, and animus have increased substantially (Abramowitz 2006; Abramowitz and Saunders 2005, 2008; Brewer 2005; Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009).

These findings provide evidence for the psychological nature of partisanship that is not reflected by political issue preferences. At the same time, it questionable to what extent this psychological aspect is accurately captured by the current three point strength measure used in the American partisanship indicator. If partisanship is an identity or psychological attachment to a party, then it is essential to capture more fine-grained variations of partisan identity strength by using multiple items rather than just one – a common practice among psychologists (Huddy 2001). By doing so, measurement error can also be significantly reduced (Achen 2002).

Similarly problematic is the possibility that the current one-item measure of partisan strength does not accurately distinguish between expressive and instrumental model of partisanship. Thus, using the current measure of partisan strength might conflates evidence for an instrumental and expressive understanding of partisanship. Since the current measure does not explicitly gauge partisan *identity*, it is impossible to tell whether respondents report their sense of belonging to the party or the degree of importance they attach to a certain political issue put forth by their inparty. Thus, testing the empirical validity of a purely identity-based measure of partisanship can contribute to a more precise picture of the nature of partisanship.

In the European multi-party context

The partisanship indicator is much more complex in the context of European multi-party systems where members of the electorate might develop attachments to multiple parties of the same ideological family (Meffert and Geschwend 2012) or governing coalitions of parties (Hagevi 2015). Hence, the unidimensional U.S. measure is difficult to apply outside the two-party system it originated from. In addition to the measurement complexity, there is also the question to what extent the multi-party system fosters the development of a psychological attachment to a political party in a similar way as the U.S. two-party system does (e.g. Bowler 1994). Some researchers have even questioned the validity of the standard partisanship measure that asks respondents to "think of themselves as" supporters or members of a certain party in the context of European electoral systems (e.g. Shively 1972; Hagevi 2015; Holmberg 1994; Thomassen 1976).

Due to this lack of consensus, it is not surprising that the cues for partisan orientation vary drastically across Europe: For example, in Sweden strong partisans are "strongly convinced

adherents" of a party whereas in Denmark, respondents report how closely attached they feel to party (for a comprehensive overview of the various partisanship prompts in Europe, see Johnston 2006). Given this variability, there is an obvious need to standardize the measurement of expressive partisanship in Europe. The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) asks respondents' in numerous countries to indicate whether they are close to a party, or closer to one than another, using a standard set of questions (Dalton and Weldon 2007). But this approach has not been widely adopted in single-country election surveys in Europe where the wording, as well as the specific combination of items used to gauge partisan attachments, varies across countries. Overall, the measurement of partisanship in Europe suffers from a lack of standardization as well as a more theory-driven investigation into the nature and measurement of partisanship stimulated by multi-party systems. Demonstrating that a psychological measure of partisanship has predictive power outside the U.S. is a first step towards addressing these shortages in the literature.

For the purpose of this dissertation, applying the identity-based measure to multi-party systems adds to the measure's validity since the partisanship concept is much more disputed in Europe than in the U.S. Put differently, demonstrating the measure's utility outside the U.S. two-party context yields evidence that is supportive of the notion that partisanship is a psychological group attachment rather than a mere sum of political issue preferences.

An identity-based measure of partisanship

The expressive approach to partisanship is grounded in social identity theory (Green et al. 2002; Huddy et al. 2015). Within the expressive model, partisanship is viewed as a social identity that motivates the defense of the party in order to maintain its positive standing. Expressive partisanship generates political activity in support of the inparty, rests on biased political

reasoning, and leads to vilification of out-parties. Most importantly, these cognitive and motivational processes reinforce prior party attachments resulting in a relatively stable political identity, making it less likely a partisan will modify their partisanship in response to a party's shift on issues or poor performance in office especially when such attacks stem from partisan rivals (Greene 2002). A partisan identity is likely to strengthen over time as a young voter consistently supports one party over others in successive elections (Dalton and Walden 2007; Dina 2015).

The expressive partisanship model has generated a new multi-item measure of partisan identity in the United States (Huddy et al. 2015). From an identity standpoint, measuring gradations in social identity strength is crucial to identifying the individuals who are most likely to engage in expressive partisan activities such as taking action in defense of the party (Huddy 2001; 2013). As a consequence, psychologists typically measure social identities with multiple items to create a fine-grained scale of identity strength. Several identity scales have been developed to assess partisan identity in the U.S. Steven Greene (2002, 2004) developed a ten-item scale of partisan social identity, based on Mael and Tetrick's (1992) *Identification with a Psychological Group* Scale, which had good measurement properties and proved to be a better predictor than the standard partisanship measure of a range of political variables including political involvement. Huddy and colleagues (2015) developed a four-item scale with items that tap identity importance and sense of party belonging (see also Huddy and Khatib 2007). This scale is also a better predictor than the standard partisanship measure of campaign activity and emotional reactions to partisan threat and reassurance. In this dissertation, I apply the *Identification with a Psychological Group* (IDPG) scale created by Mael and Tetrick (1992), and adapted by Green for partisan identity, to the European multi-party context in an attempt to demonstrate that a purely psychological measure of partisanship has similar empirical traction as in the U.S. two-party system, supporting the notion

that the concept of partisan identity is universally applicable and not just restricted to the U.S. By comparing the predictive power of this identity-based measure and the currently used one-item strength measure, I also demonstrate the importance of accounting for more fine- grained variations in partisan strength.

Multi-item partisan identity scales have, in fact, proven to be quite effective in predicting political outcomes in the U.S., suggesting that the traditional partisanship measure underestimates the partisan nature of political activity. But there are reasons to question whether or not such a partisan identity scale is needed and will be equally successful in predicting political outcomes in Europe. Partisan identity may be more complex in Europe than in the U.S. because of the existence of multi-party systems that could dampen loyalty to any one party (Niemi et al. 1991; Weisberg 1980). Moreover, frequent coalitional governments aligned along ideological lines may also blur loyalty to a single party (Hagevi 2015; Meffert et al. 2012; Gonzalez et al. 2008). To determine the value of a partisan identity scale in Europe, I utilize the partisan identity scale as a main predictor of political behavior, namely the vote and political participation, among the electorate in the U.K., Sweden, and the Netherlands.

Methods

Item Response Theory

I draw on Item Response Theory to analyze the measurement properties of a partisan identity scale. In essence, the IRT model determines to what extent responses to scale items accurately reflect the underlying latent trait that the scale attempts to measure such as partisan identity strength.

Due to the polytomous nature of our data, we first apply the Graded Response Model (Samejima 1969), specifying "the probability of a person responding with category score x_j or higher versus responding on lower category scores" (de Ayala 2009: 218) whereby higher category scores indicate higher values on the latent trait. The *probability of agreeing* with a response category or a higher response category on a given item j is based on both an individual's score on the latent trait and attributes of the items used to assess the latent trait (see Alen and Yen 1979; de Ayala 2009). More formally, this cumulative probability can be expressed as:

$$P_{x_j}(\theta) = \frac{e^{\alpha_j(\theta - \delta_{x_j})}}{1 + e^{\alpha_j(\theta - \delta_{x_j})}}$$

where θ is the latent trait, α_j is the discrimination parameter for item j, and δ_{x_j} is the category boundary location for category score x_j.[8] The item discrimination parameter indicates how strongly related the item is to the latent trait whereas the category boundary location can be viewed as the boundary between two adjacent response categories k and k-1 (for a more detailed discussion, see de Ayala 2009). To obtain the probability of responding in a particular category k (i.e. the option response function), we calculate p_k, which is the difference between the cumulative probabilities for adjacent response categories and can be stated as:

$$p_k = P_k - P_{k+1}$$

[8] In the following, I largely follow the discussion and notation in de Ayala (2009), pages 209-236.

Note that P_k is P_{x_j} from the previous equation. This change in notation is due to the fact that we use lowercase "p" to indicate the probability of responding to a particular category, and uppercase "P" to refer to the cumulative probabilities we discussed earlier.

The probability of agreeing with a certain response category as a function of the latent trait θ can be plotted for each response option, graphing the underlying latent trait on the *x* axis and the probability of picking that option on the *y* axis. Typically, all functions of an item's response options are plotted on the same graph to indicate the relationship between the latent trait and the probability of choosing a certain response category.

Subsequently, we plot the item information function (IIF), which represents the information provided by a specific item *x*, across the range of the latent trait. With polytomous data like ours, it is also possible to first determine the amount of information provided by each response category. Formally, the category information function for graded responses (Samejima 1969) is expressed as:

$$I_{x_j}(\theta) = \left\{-\frac{\partial^2 \ln p_k}{\partial \theta^2}\right\} p_k \ ,$$

where θ denotes the latent trait, x_j refers to the response category j of the ordinal manifest variable *x* and p_k refers to the probability of an individual picking a particular response category. The sum of these option information functions equals an item's overall information (IIF) and is defined as:

$$I_j(\theta) = \sum_{x_{j=0}}^{m_j} I_{x_j}(\theta)$$

Graphing the item information function illustrates an item's difficulty (i.e. location on the latent trait continuum) as well as an item's discrimination (i.e. the item's information) in measuring the underlying latent trait. Hence, the item information function identifies items that are good at detecting high but not low, low but not high, and middling levels of the trait as well as their ability to do so reliably. In essence, a peak in an item's information function indicates that a specific level of the underlying trait is captured with high precision. From that vantage point, an ideal scale entails items with narrowly peaked item information functions at locations across the latent trait's range to construct a scale that is highly discriminating and provides considerable information about the trait overall (de Ayala 2009:230).

Last, the individual item information functions can be further summed to generate an information function for the entire scale, indicating how well it discriminates among values of the latent trait:

$$I(\theta) = \sum_{j=1}^{L} I_j(\theta).$$

Methods: Invariance Analysis

To test the scale's invariance we employ a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to determine if the underlying latent trait is measured in the same way across countries. Invariance is defined here as "whether or not, under different conditions of observing and studying phenomena, measurement operations yield measures of the same attribute" (Horn and McArdle 1992:117). Measurement invariance is established by comparing the fit of a series of hierarchical CFA models with increasingly stringent equality constraints (Cheung and Rensvold 1999; Vandenberg and Lance 2000).

The most basic type of invariance, *configural invariance*, is established if the same items load on the same factor across countries. Put differently, configural variance ensures that items measure the same construct in all countries. Once configural invariance is established, the next most stringent form of invariance is *metric invariance* which assumes that all items load on the same factor (as in configural) but that their loadings are constrained to be equal in each country. Metric invariance is established if the metric invariance model is no worse a fit to the data than the baseline model that establishes configural invariance (Hirschfeld and Brachel 2014; Asparouhov and Muthén 2014). Evidence for metric invariance indicates "…that the people in different nations understand the items in the same way" (Davidov 2009: 69). While metric invariance allows researchers to compare analytic models across countries, it does not guarantee that observed differences in the mean levels of the scale reflect differences in the mean levels of the underlying latent trait. Thus, the final step in a hierarchical invariance analysis involves testing for scalar invariance. In this model, factor loadings and the intercepts are constrained to be equal. If the fit of the scalar variance model is not significantly worse than the fit of the metric invariance model, there is evidence that the scale's scores can be compared across countries.

Hypotheses

I first examine the measurement properties of the partisan identity scale in the Netherlands, Sweden and the U.K. and expect each scale item to provide more complete information about partisan strength than the traditional single party identification item. In terms of the IRT analysis, this means each item's information function will be more peaked and contain greater information than the standard single measure of partisan strength. In the three European multi-party systems

under study, I expect both lower and higher levels of partisan intensity to remain less well detected when measured with the traditional item

Second, I examine the scale's configural, metric, and scalar invariance in the three countries. We expect the partisan identity scale to exhibit all three types of invariance, which means that the fit of the metric invariance model will be no worse than the fit of the configural model, and that the fit of the scalar model will be no worse than that of the metric model.

Third, I test the partisan identity scale's predictive validity. I expect partisan identity to more powerfully predict in-party voting and political engagement than the traditional party identification item. I also expect the partisan identity scale to better predict political behavior than a multi-item indicator of ideological intensity in support of an expressive model of partisanship. If successful, this last test also helps to rule out the possibility that the identity scale has greater predictive validity than the traditional single-item because of its better measurement properties.

Sample

Netherlands: Data from the Netherlands was obtained from the Dutch Parliamentary 2012 Election Studies conducted with data from the Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS) panel. The LISS contains 4,691 households, entailing 8,000 individuals, drawn as a true probability sample of households in the national population register maintained by Statistics Netherlands. Non-computer households are provided with a computer and internet connection and the panel members complete monthly online surveys and receive payment for each completed questionnaire. I examine data from 4,691 respondents interviewed in August 2012 which included

the partisan identity items, after the national election in September 2012, and again as part of a values and politics module in December 2012.

Sweden: Swedish data were drawn from the Swedish Citizen Panel, a largely opt-in online panel run by the Laboratory of Opinion Research (LORE) at the University of Gothenburg. I utilize data from Panel 8 which was conducted between the 14th of November 2013 and 18th of December 2013, and add-on Panel 8-2 conducted between December 10, 2013 and January 7, 2014. 16,130 panelists were invited to take the Panel 8 survey and 9,279 completed it for a completion rate of 64%. The add-on Panel 8-2 was sent out to 2,000 panelists, of which 1,496 answered the survey. The partisan identity module had a split sample and was run in two steps: 2,000 respondents in Citizen Panel 8 and 2,000 in Citizen Panel 8-2. Of these 4,000 respondents, 2,464 completed the battery of items.

United Kingdom: Data for the U.K were taken from the 2015 British Election Study (BES), an online panel study conducted by YouGov. I draw on data from pre-election wave 4 of the BES, conducted in March 2015. In total, 16,629 respondents participated in wave 4 and 3,500 of them completed the partisan identity module.

Measures

Partisanship Strength

The partisanship question was asked differently in each of the three countries, underscoring the lack of uniformity in its assessment. In the Netherlands, respondents in the pre-election survey were first asked if they supported a party. If yes, they were asked how strongly they supported it (very strongly, strongly, not so strongly). If they did not support a party, they were asked if they

were attracted to one and if yes how strongly (very strongly, fairly strongly, not so strongly). In Sweden, respondents were asked if they felt close to a particular political party. If they named a party, they were then asked if they felt very close, rather close, or not very close. U.K. respondents were asked "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat or what?" If no party was provided, respondents were asked "Do you generally think of yourself as a little closer to one of the parties than the others? If yes, which party?" Respondents who listed a party in response to either question were then asked "Would you call yourself very strong, fairly strong, or not very strong [partisan]?" The partisan strength item thus had at least three categories in each country.

Comparable and large numbers of respondents indicated some level of partisanship. In the Netherlands, 90% of respondents indicated a preference for a party (supporters, attracted, had voted for a party in the last election), in Sweden, 91% indicated that they were close to a party, and 86% of those in the U.K. indicated a party preference. It is difficult to compare partisan strength with this measure, however, because of the differing way in which it was asked and constructed in each nation. In the U.K., partisans and those close to a party were asked partisan strength in a single question. In contrast, the Dutch were asked a series of differing questions to get at partisan strength. In order to make the traditional partisanship measure comparable across countries, I created a three-item measure in Sweden and the U.K., ranging from very close/very strong to not very close/not very strong. As seen in Table 1, these numbers are comparable indicating that a majority or near-majority placed themselves in the middle of the strength scale. In the Netherlands, I created a three-level partisanship measure (supporter, not a supporter but attracted to a party, neither supporter nor attracted but had voted for the party in the last election). When constructed in this way, the number of supporters in the Netherlands is comparable to those

who said they were very close or strong partisans in Sweden and the U.K., but overall the responses suggest lower levels of affiliation in the Netherlands. From this three-level measure, I created a 0-1 measure of partisan strength with 1 representing the strongest partisan.

Table 1: Partisan Strength By Country (Traditional Partisanship Measure)

	Netherlands (Supporter)	**Sweden (Close)**	**United Kingdom (Strong)**
Supporter/very close/very strong	24	17	26
Attracted/rather close/fairly strong	47	63	48
Voted for Party/not very close/not very strong	29	20	26
N	4,680	2,405	3,460

Note: Entries are the percentage of respondents who provided a party preference in each country. Numbers are calculated for those asked the partisan identity questions. Numbers for the U.K. are based on wave 4. See text for details.

Partisan Identity Items

The partisan identity items were asked of respondents who had indicated a party preference in response to the standard partisanship question. This resulted in 4,691 respondents who completed the partisan identity battery in the Netherlands, and 2,464 in Sweden. In the BES, a randomly selected 24% of respondents with a party preference were randomly assigned to the partisan identity module resulting in an effective sample of 3,500 respondents

The partisan identity index is composed of eight items such as "I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party" and "When I speak about this party, I usually say 'we' instead of 'they.'" Unfortunately, the response options differ between the UK ("agree-disagree") and the Netherlands and Sweden (frequency response format). Table 2 provides wording and responses to all 8 partisan identity questions in each of the three countries. There is considerable variance across

countries in response to the partisan identity questions (although this is also coterminous with differing response formats). Partisan strength is highest in the U.K., followed by Sweden, and then the Netherlands. For example, when asked if they say 'we' rather than 'they' when talking about their party, only 25% of those in the BES strongly disagree whereas 79% of the Dutch and 65% of Swedes say they never feel this way.

Table 2: Partisan Identity Items by Country

	Netherlands				Sweden				United Kingdom (Wave 4)			
	Always	Often	Some-times	Never	Always	Often	Some-times	Never	Strongly agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree
When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they".	2	5	14	79	5	10	20	65	6	19	52	23
I am interested in what other people think about this party.	3	22	51	24	7	30	45	19	11	61	22	7
When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult. *	1	3	23	74	1	6	33	59	5	23	50	23
I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party.	3	26	46	25	2	33	50	14	12	67	15	5
If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined.	1	5	29	65	1	3	20	77	3	15	55	27
When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person. *	2	14	44	40	3	24	52	21	7	53	30	11
When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party". *	1	6	17	76	3	7	17	73	5	17	54	25
When people praise this party, it makes me feel good. *	5	24	44	28	6	21	42	30	7	46	33	14
N	4,691				2,464				3,500			
x̄ (St. Err)	1.66 (0.5)				1.79 (0.5)				2.32 (0.59)			
Alpha	0.86				0.83				0.89			
Traditional Partisan Strength												
x̄ (St. Err)	1.94 (0.72)				1.97 (0.61)				2.00 (0.71)			

Note: Entries are percentages. * Items included in the short four-item partisan identity scale.

. When asked if they feel connected with someone who supports their party, 57% of wave 3 BES respondents agree; 27% of Swedes and 16% of the Dutch say they feel this way always or often. I created an additive partisan identity scale from these eight items. The scale ranges from 0 to 1 with 0 representing no party identity and 1 representing the strongest identity. All three data sets include the complete eight item partisan index.

The Measurement Properties of the Partisan Identity Scale

Since each item in the partisan identity scale contains four response categories (i.e. rarely/never, sometimes, often and always), we apply a Non- Rasch Model for ordered polytomous data, namely the Graded Response Model (Samejima 1974). Based on the estimated item response function for each item's response categories, we generated an information function for each item and then for the scale as a whole within each country. Figure 8 contains the graphical representation of each item information function by country. Graphs were created using the ltm package (Rizopoulos 2006) in R (see Figure A1 in the Online Appendix for item response functions).

Dichotomous items tend to generate unimodal item information functions in IRT but polytomous items, as in this scale, tend to have multiple peaks, as seen in Figure 1. The multiple peaks occur because adjacent response functions for a specific item are combined to form an overall item information curve. The peaks in Figure 8 represent the location on the underlying partisan identity trait at which an item provides the greatest amount of information. Put differently, the amount of information in Figure 1 is an indicator of an item's ability to measure a certain range

of the latent trait reliably. This is because the standard error of measurement (i.e. the variance of the latent trait level) is the reciprocal of information. Thus, more information means less error.

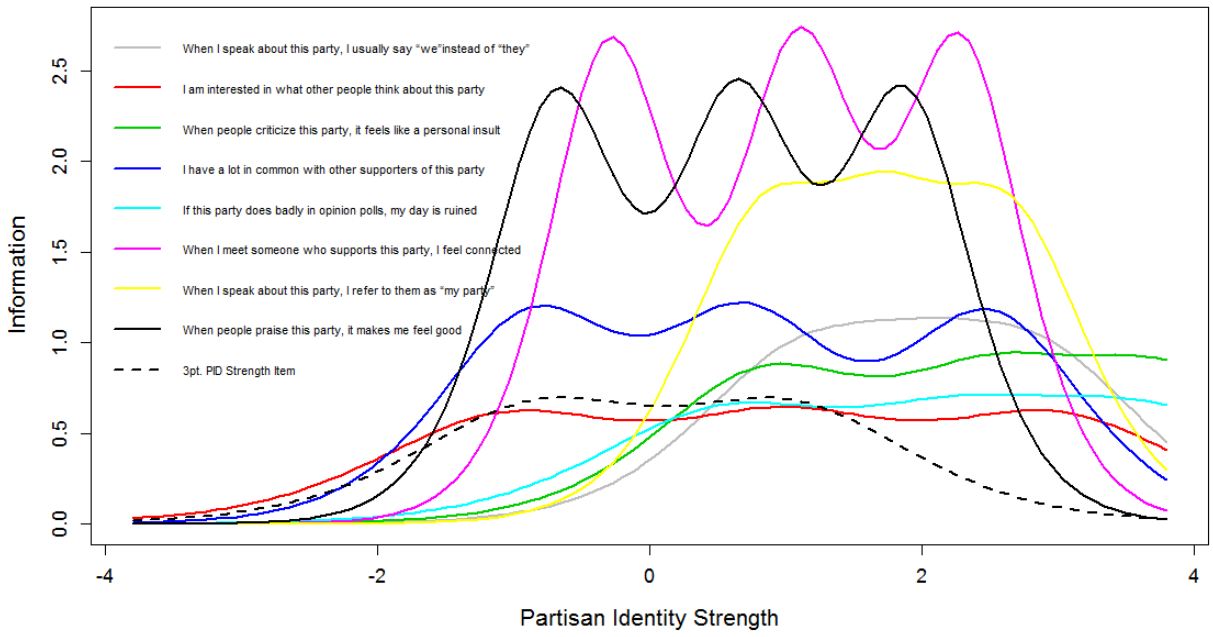
The latent trait along the x-axis (partisan identity strength in our example) has, in its transformed scale of theta, a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1 with a somewhat arbitrary range that covers the latent trait that is being measured. In our case, the theta for partisan identity can range from – 4 to 4, with those closer to -4 displaying lower levels of partisan identity strength and those closer to 4 displaying higher levels of partisan identity strength. Thus, an information function that peaks closer to 4 provides a considerable amount of information when measuring high levels of partisan identity strength whereas an information function that peaks closer to -4 is more suitable for capturing lower levels of partisan identity strength. Finally, For example, an information function that peaks in the midpoint of the latent trait suggests an item with considerable ability to distinguish middling from higher and lower levels of identity strength.

While the amount of information provided by an item represents its ability to differentiate between partisans of different strength, the distance between each peak suggests how much of the range of partisan identity is covered by an item. If the distance between two adjacent peaks is large, the item provides less information about levels of partisan identity in between peaks. When the distance is smaller and the peaks are located more closely together on the latent trait continuum, the loss of information becomes less severe. Thus, ideal items should cover a wide range of partisan identity strength and be able to discriminate effectively among different levels. To compare the information provided by each item in the partisan identity scale with the traditional three-point strength measure, we added the item information function for the latter to each figure. Figure 1, Panels A, B, and C depict the item information function for all eight scale items and the traditional strength measure in the Netherlands, Sweden, and U.K. respectively.

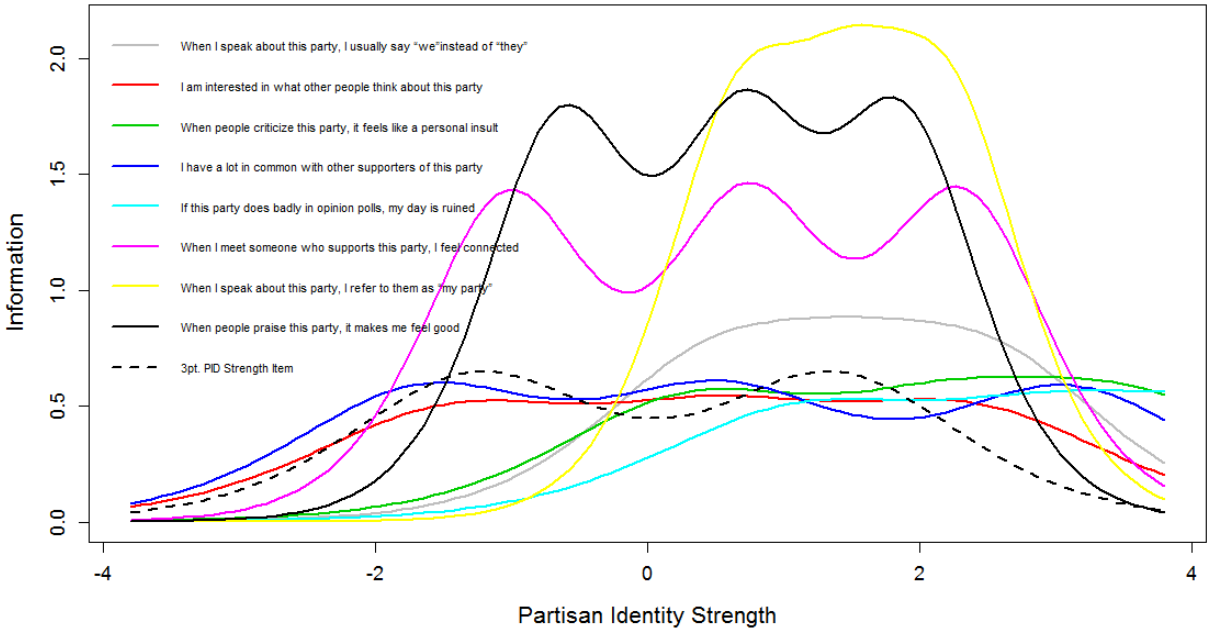
My first hypothesis concerns the ability of the items in the partisan identity scale to provide more information than the standard single measure about partisan strength across its full range. Figure 1 demonstrates that the eight items supplement each other to cover a broad range of the underlying partisan identity trait in each country. The individual items vary in amount of information as well as in their ability to capture high or low levels of partisan identity (equivalent to an item's level of difficulty in IRT parlance).

Figure 8: Partisan Identity Item Information Functions

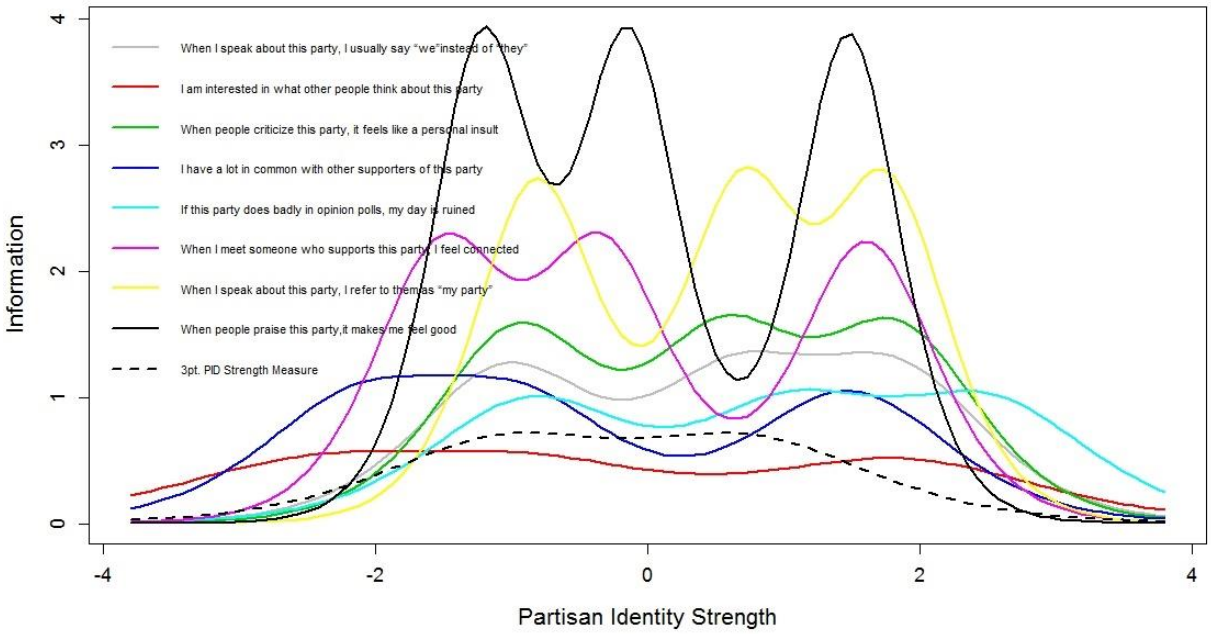
A. Netherlands



B. Sweden



C. United Kingdom



In all three countries, two items display multiple peaks below the midpoint of the latent trait continuum and thus, provide especially good coverage of lower levels of partisan identity: "When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected", indicated in purple, and "When people praise this party it makes me feel good" indicated in black. A third item, "I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party," indicated in dark blue, also provides reasonable information at lower levels of partisan identity. In contrast, the item "When I speak about them, I refer to them as my party" provides good coverage of higher levels of partisan identity in all three countries.

Combining these items into a scale helps to compensate for weaknesses in any one item. For example, there is a large gap in the U.K. (Panel C, Figure 1) between 0 and 1 on the partisan identification continuum for the item "When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected." This gap is covered, however, by the item "When I speak about this party, I refer to them as 'my party'". The remaining four items in the scale vary in the amount of information they provide about partisan identity. The item "I am interested in what other people think about this party" (red line) is by far the weakest, providing little information and failing to discriminate among those at low, middling or high levels of partisan identity. Thus, the combination of several items provides the scale with the ability to cover a broad range of party identification levels while effectively differentiating among them.

Interestingly, the information function for the weakest of the 8 items ("I am interested…") looks very similar to the information function for the traditional partisan strength measure, depicted as a black broken line in Figure 1. This demonstrates that the simple three-point measure provides little information and poorly discriminates across the range of the latent partisan identity trait, in support of our first hypothesis. In the Netherlands (Panel A), the traditional strength

measure is characterized by a wide bell curve ranging from -2 to 2 on the latent trait continuum. This shape suggests that the measure captures party identification strength at both the low and high end respectively but that it does not provide a great deal of information relative to the scale items. Partisan strength performs a little better in Sweden (Panel B) but provides similarly modest information in the U.K. – as shown in Panel C. The single strength items performs best in Sweden where it provides additional information on both sides of 0, suggesting that it does discriminate between weak and strong partisans to a greater degree than in the Netherlands or the U.K. Overall, the partisan identity scale measures partisan identity well across its range, a distinction that is captured far more poorly by the traditional single-item of partisan strength.

Cross-National Partisan Identity Scale Invariance

We next consider the partisan identity scale's cross-national properties in a test of our second hypothesis, beginning with the scale's configural invariance, the weakest level of invariance. We then move to assess more stringent invariance tests (Davidov 2009). We expected the partisan identity scale to exhibit all three levels of invariance We conducted a multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the *lavaan* package in R.[9] [10] *Lavaan* provides several fit measures that are widely used in measurement invariance analyses (e.g. Davidov 2009; Perez and Hetherington 2014; Coenders and Scheepers 2003) such as the Chi-square statistic, the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), as well as Gamma-hat and the Root Mean

[9] Due to similar wording of some items, we allowed the error terms of certain pairs of items to covary. These pairs are: "When I speak about this party, I usually say 'we' instead of 'they'" and "When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party."; "When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult" and "When people praise this party, it makes me feel good" as well as "I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party" and "When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person."

[10] For detailed instructions on how to use the *lavaan* package, see Hirschfeld and von Brachel (2014).

Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) which we present for each invariance model in Table 3.

Table 3: Scale Invariance Fit Measures

Model	Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	Adj. Gamma Hat
Configural Invariance	386.119	48	0.997	0.998	0.045	1.000
Metric Invariance	542.325	62	0.996	0.997	0.048	1.000
Scalar Invariance	3566.214	92	0.983	0.981	0.105	1.000

Note: Items are treated as ordered categorical in the analysis.

The fit indices for the configural invariance model presented in the first row of Table 3 indicate a good model fit. The TLI, CFI are above the cutoff value of 0.95 (Hu and Bentler 1999) and the RMSEA value is below 0.05, a threshold commonly to determine model fit (Kenny et al. 2014; Browne and Cudeck 1993). The Chi-square statistic is relatively high given the degrees of freedom but in contrast to other fit indices the test is more sensitive to overall sample size, differences in sample sizes between groups, non-normality and model complexity (e.g. Hu and Bentler 1999, 1998; Bentler and Bonnet 1980). Hence, we rely on the alternative fit indices to evaluate the model performance. From this vantage point, we cannot reject the configural model and conclude that the partisan identity scale measures the same construct in the Swedish, Dutch and British sample with all items loading on one factor in each country.

The fit indices for metric invariance are presented in the second row of Table 3. In this model, factor loadings for all items are constrained to be equal across countries. Once again, we cannot reject the metric model because there are minimal changes in the fit indices between it and the configural model (e.g. ΔCFI = 0.001; ΔTLI= -0.001). In fact, the RMSEA increases by as little

as 0.003 and the Gamma-Hat remains constant. The Chi-square difference again indicates a significant increase in this model ($p < .05$) but, as noted, large sample sizes can generate large Chi-square differences. Thus, we do not apply the Chi-square difference test as a measure of fit (Cheung and Rensvold 2002; Dovidov 2009). Table 4 summarizes the invariant factor loadings for the Dutch, Swedish and British samples. All factor loadings are substantial and significant. These results suggest that the partisan identity scale has the same metric across countries. In other words, a unit increase in the partisan identity scale means the same thing in the Netherlands, Sweden, and the U.K.

Table 4: Metric Invariance in the Partisan Identity Scale

Scale Item	Partisan Identity Factor Loading
When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they".	1.000
I am interested in what other people think about this party.	0.967
When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult.	1.117
I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party.	1.102
If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined.	1.056
When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected.	1.309
When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party".	1.231
When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.	1.368

Note: Entries are unstandardized factor loadings in the metric invariance model in which loadings are constrained to be equivalent across countries. All coefficients are significantly different from 0 ($p<.01$).

Finally, I test the most stringent model: scalar invariance. In this CFA model, the intercepts of the eight scale items are constrained to be equal across countries (in addition to prior constraints placed on the factor loadings). This model tests whether a given observed value of the partisan identity scale indicates the same level of the latent partisan identity trait in each country. In other words, if the scale is arrayed from 0 to 1, zero would mean the complete absence of identity and 1

would indicate maximum identity strength across countries. Fit indices presented in Table 3 provide mixed evidence on this point. The CFI, TFI, and the Gamma-Hat values indicate a good fit. The RMSEA value, however, is above the cutoff point of 0.05[11].

It is difficult to advocate cross-national use of the partisan identity scale in the absence of scalar invariance and we turn to an alternative test. Following Oberski (2014), we examine invariance sensitivity, "…the likely impact of measurement differences on substantive comparisons of interest" (Oberski 2014:3). Sensitivity analyses are used to supplement the results of traditional invariance tests which often rely on arbitrary cutoff lines (for a thorough critique of cutoff values for fit measures, see Barrett 2007). We thus compute the EPC-interest which is a measure of the expected change in the parameter of interest, partisan identity in this case, when freeing a particular equality constraint. With the EPC-interest we can evaluate whether it is feasible to compare partisan identity means across countries by estimating the change in partisan identity if certain invariance restrictions (such as equivalence constraints on a scale item's intercept) are removed. Put differently, the EPC-interest evaluates directly whether a violation of measurement invariance also leads to biased estimates of partisan identity in different countries (Oberski 2014).

In the previous invariance analyses, RMSEA was above the cutoff point indicating that the scalar invariance model was a poor fit to the data. Table 5 shows the EPC-interest values that exceeded .01 when the scalar invariance restrictions of equal factor loadings and intercepts are relaxed. As can be seen in Table 5, very few items shift in terms of the mean value of the latent partisan identity trait. Overall, dropping the equivalence restrictions on item 1 ("When I talk about this party, I say 'we' instead of 'they'.") in the U.K. and the Sweden increases very slightly the

[11] To understand which item may cause the scalar invariance, we re-ran the invariance analysis while dropping item-by-item from the partisan identity scale. Results suggest that item 8 ("When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.") is major cause for the poor model fit of the scalar invariance model.

mean value of latent partisan identity in the Netherlands and Sweden. Dropping the intercept equivalence restrictions for item 8 ("When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.") in the U.K. decreases the latent partisan identity score slightly in Sweden and the Netherlands, whereas dropping the same restriction in Sweden leads to a slight decrease in latent partisan identity in Sweden and a slight increase in the Netherlands. Finally dropping the intercept equivalence restriction in the Netherlands for item 6 ("When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected.") slightly decreased the mean value of partisan identity in Netherlands. Overall, these changes are minor in magnitude with all EPC-interest values at or below 0.028 in absolute value. This number is significantly smaller than the latent mean differences of partisan identity across countries indicating that substantive conclusions regarding the comparison of partisan identity across countries are not changed by potential model misspecifications. Even when the requirements of the scalar invariance model are relaxed the magnitude of partisan identity remains relatively constant. Overall, these results provide evidence for our claim that the partisan identity scale exhibits features of scalar invariance, in addition to configural and metric invariance. This means that the partisan identity scale works similarly in all three countries.

Table 5: Changes in Mean Level of Latent Partisan Identity

	Equivalence Assumption Dropped For:				
	Item 1 in UK sample	Item 1 in Sweden sample	Item 8 in UK sample	Item 8 in Sweden sample	Item 6 in Netherlands sample
Sweden	**0.025**	**0.028**	**-0.018**	**-0.015**	**--**
Netherlands	**0.019**	**0.017**	**-0.020**	**0.003**	**-0.013**

Note: Entries are EPC-interest values, or expected change in the mean value of partisan identity in each country, as the equivalence constraint on the listed item's intercept and factor loading is removed. The partisan identity scale ranges from 0 to 1.

In-Party Voting

Surveys were conducted at different stages of the electoral cycle in each country. In the Netherlands, respondents were asked if they had "voted in the most recent parliamentary elections held on September 20, 2012." 85% of Dutch respondents said they had. They were then asked which party they had voted for and were scored 1 if they voted for their party. In Sweden and the U.K., respondents were asked prospective questions about their likely vote. In Sweden, respondents were asked "How likely are you to vote in next year's Swedish election?" and regardless of whether they intended to vote or not were asked "Which party do you intend to vote for in next year's Swedish national election?" 91% said they were very likely to vote. Those intending to vote for their party were coded 1 on the in-party vote variable. In the U.K., respondents were asked "And if there were a U.K. General Election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" In-party vote was coded 1 for those who indicated that they would vote for their party. In-party voting was highest in Sweden (88%), intermediate in the UK (76%), and lowest in the Netherlands (61%).

Political Participation

Political participation was gauged differently in each country. In the Netherlands, respondents were asked if they had raised a political issue or influenced politicians or government over the past five years in one of four ways: (1) by making use of a political party or organization, (2) through participation in a government-organized public hearing, discussion or citizen participation meeting, (3) contacting a politician or civil servant, or (4) participating in a political discussion or campaign by Internet, e-mail or SMS. These questions were included in the post-

election values module administered in late 2012 and early 2013. 12% had performed at least one activity. A scale was created by adding all four items and rescaling form 0 to 1.

In Sweden, only a subset of respondents was randomly assigned to receive the political participation questions. In total, 915 Swedish respondents answered four questions concerning whether they had ever undertaken certain political actions: (1) contacted a politician, (2) given/raised money to/for a political organization, (3) contacted a civil servant, or (4) attended a political rally. All four questions were asked in each of the three survey waves. All 12 items (4 items in 3 waves) were additively combined and rescaled on a 0 to 1 scale.

In the U.K., all respondents in wave 4 were asked whether in the last four weeks they visited the website of a candidate or party and whether they signed up or officially registered online to help a party or candidate in their campaign and if so, which party. Both items were coded 1 if the respondent (1) visited their in-party's website and (2) signed up online to help their in-party. Wave 4 also included questions on whether the respondent had read or found information in the last four weeks tweeted by (1) political parties or candidates, (2) a personal acquaintance, or (3) others, such as a commentator, journalist, or activist. The same three questions were repeated for election information obtained on Facebook. Five additional questions asked whether the respondent has shared political information through (1) Facebook, (2) Twitter, (3) email, (4) instant messaging or (5) another website or online platform. All 13 questions were combined additively and rescaled on a 0 to 1 scale. These questions clearly reflect a heterogeneous set of activities and time frames across countries. Data from all three countries is combined in the following analysis and dummy variables for country are included as a control for such differences in the nature of political participation.

Ideological Intensity

An ideological intensity scale was constructed that reflects the respondent's ideological strength and alignment with the in-party so that higher values reflect intensity and consistency with the in-party's ideological stance. In the U.K., this scale consists of 5 left-right values such as "Government should redistribute incomes" and "Management will always try to get the better of employees". All five items were combined on a -.5 to +.5 scale, with -.5 representing the most right-leaning position and .5 representing the most left-leaning position, and then folded around 0. Respondents whose overall score was at odds with their party preference were given a score of 0. Thus, a Labour supporter who strongly agreed with all five left-leaning items received an ideological intensity score of 1. A Labour supporter who disagreed on average with the left-leaning items received an ideological intensity score of 0.

In Sweden, the ideological intensity scale was created from five ideologically tinged issues, including the reduction of the public sector, lowering taxes, and increasing unemployment benefits. The same steps were followed as in the U.K. The items were combined to reflect a left-right dimension and then folded around 0 to reflect intensity. Once again, those whose average score conflicted with their party's left-right stance received a score of 0. In the Netherlands, there were no items available to create a multi-item ideological scale. Thus, I instead used the respondent's self-placement on a left-right dimension to assess ideological intensity. Those whose left-right placement conflicted with that of their party received a score of 0.

Results: In-Party Voting

I begin by analyzing the determinants of in-party voting in all three countries combined. Given the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, I utilize a logistic regression model. The results are shown in Table 6.

The first column in Table 6 estimates an equation in which in-party voting is regressed on partisan identity; the second column contains the same analysis replacing partisan identity with the single-item measure of partisan strength. Both coefficients are significant and both forms of partisanship dramatically increase the likelihood of voting for one's party. As noted at the outset, the binary nature of vote choice makes it a difficult test of the greater political effects of partisan identity. Put differently, the continuous nature of the partisan identity scale is best utilized to predict continuous forms of political behavior such as the level of political participation (for the U.S. case, see Huddy et al. 2015). Nonetheless, when the predicted values of in-party voting are plotted across the range of the partisan identity scale for each country, with other values in the equation in Table 6 set at their mean, it is apparent that in-party voting better predicts voting for the party than partisan strength.

Table 6: Determinants of In-Party Voting and Political Participation

	In-Party Vote		Political Participation	
	1	***2***	***3***	***4***
Party Identity	**2.91 (0.22)**	---	**0.28 (0.01)**	--
Partisan strength	---	**2.04 (0.12)**	---	**0.12 (0.00)**
Ideological intensity	**0.21 (0.08)**	0.08 (0.08)	**0.06 (0.00)**	**0.07 (0.00)**
Country				
Netherlands	0.00 (0.11)	**-0.52 (0.08)**	**0.07 (0.00)**	0.01 (0.00)
Sweden	**1.87 (0.21)**	**1.50 (0.18)**	**0.38 (0.01)**	**0.31 (0.01)**
Country X Party Identity				
Netherlands X Party Identity	0.26 (0.32)	---	**-0.11 (0.02)**	--
Sweden X Party Identity	0.36 (0.76)	---	**0.11 (0.04)**	--
Country X Partisan Strength				
Netherlands X Partisan Str.	---	-0.14 (0.16)	---	**-0.05 (0.01)**
Sweden X Partisan Strength	---	-0.17 (0.37)	---	**0.09 (0.02)**
Education	0.11 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)	**0.09 (0.00)**	**0.09 (0.00)**
Gender (Female)	0.00 (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)	**-0.02 (0.00)**	**-0.02 (0.00)**
Age	0.03 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	**-0.00 (0.00)**	**-0.00 (0.00)**
Employed	**0.15 (0.05)**	**0.13 (0.06)**	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Constant	**-0.58 (0.17)**	-0.11 (0.16)	**-0.04 (0.01)**	0.01 (0.01)
Pseudo R- squared/ R- squared	0.10	0.12	0.33	0.32
N	8,459	8,459	7,962	7,962

Note: Logistic regression was used to analyze in-party vote; political participation is analyzed with OLS regression. The U.K. is the omitted country in columns 1 and 2. Bolded coefficients are significant at $p < 0.05$ in a two- tailed test. All variables are scaled between 0 and 1 for ease of interpretation, except for age which is measured in decades.

As seen in Figure 9, the probability of voting for one's party ranges from a low of approximately .45 in the Netherlands and .5 in the U.K. at the lowest levels of partisan identity to a high of .9 for those at the highest levels. This means that someone with the highest level of partisan identity is almost certain to vote for their party. In contrast, the probability of in-party voting changes somewhat less dramatically across the range of partisan strength, ranging from a low of .4 to a high of .75 across the range of strength in the Netherlands, and just under .6 to above.8 in the U.K. The effect of both partisan strength and identity on in-party voting is reduced in Sweden where voter partisan loyalty was high across the board, as seen in the top panel of Figure 4. There is one other noteworthy aspect of the trends depicted in Figure 4. Voting for one's party

increases rapidly at lower levels of partisan identity and tends to decelerates at higher levels. This trend is less apparent for partisan strength, suggesting that the partisan identity scale's ability to better detect partisanship across its range improves its predictive validity.

Figure 9: Predicted Probability of In-Party Voting

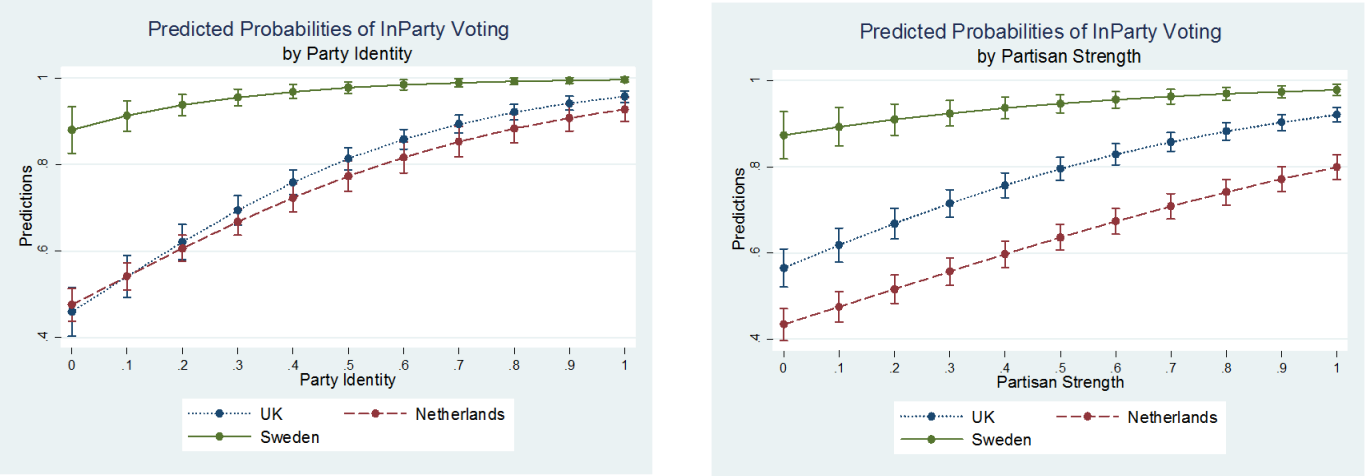
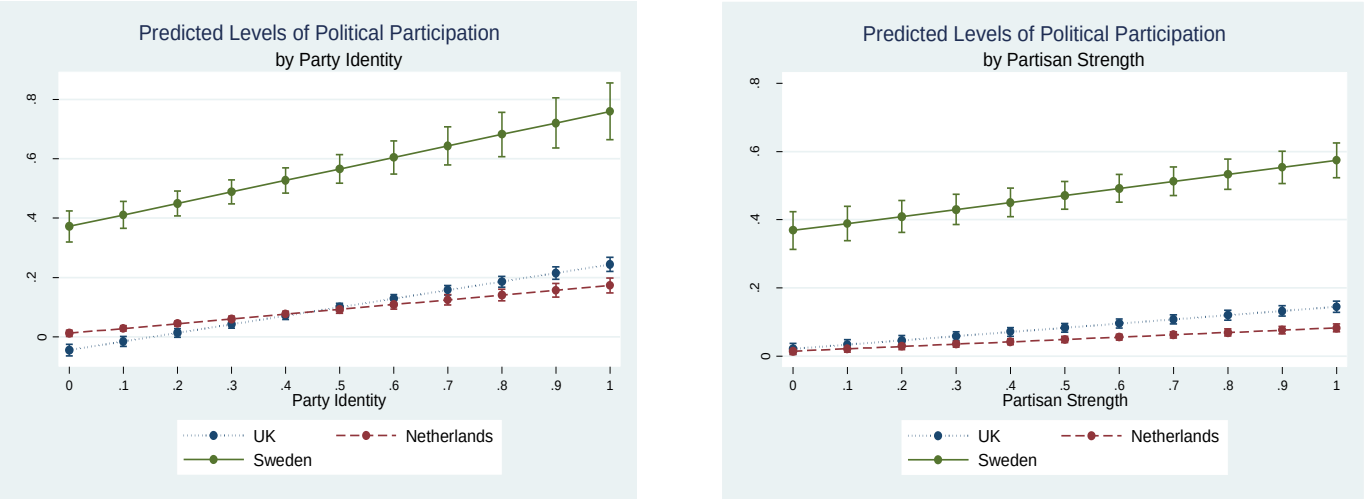


Figure 10: Predicted Level of Political Participation



Holding a strong ideological position that is consistent with one's party also significantly increases in-party voting, as seen in Column 1 of Table 6, although this effect evaporates in column 2 when paired in the equation with partisan strength. While comparisons across non-linear models are not valid, these results may suggest that the political effects of partisan strength but not partisan identity overlap with that of ideological intensity. In that sense, partisan identity may provide a conceptually cleaner, less instrumental measure of partisanship than the traditional partisan strength item. The effects of ideological intensity are also far weaker than those of partisan identity as can be seen in Table 4: The probability of in-party voting changes only from .75 (0.01) to .78 (0.01) across the range of ideological intensity. In contrast, the probability of voting for one's party ranges from a low of .54 (0.01) at the lowest levels of partisan identity to a high of .96 (0.00) for those at the highest levels. Overall, these results provide evidence for an expressive approach to partisanship in several European contexts.

Table 7: Predicted Probability of In-Party Vote by Country

Pr(In-Party Vote)	**Value of Partisan Identity Scale**		**Value of Partisan Strength**		**Value of Ideological Intensity**		**Value of Short Partisan Identity Scale**	
	0	*1*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*1*
Netherlands	0.41 (0.01)	0.87 (0.02)	0.38 (0.01)	0.72 (0.01)	0.47 (0.01)	0.70 (0.02)	0.43 (0.01)	0.85 (0.02)
Sweden	0.87 (0.02)	0.99 (0.00)	0.87 (0.02)	0.97 (0.00)	0.95 (0.01)	0.95 (0.01)	0.89 (0.02)	0.99 (0.00)
United Kingdom	0.45 (0.02)	0.95 (0.00)	0.56 (0.02)	0.92 (0.00)	0.81 (0.01)	0.72 (0.02)	0.52 (0.02)	0.94 (0.00)

Note: Entries are predicted probabilities (and standard errors in brackets) based on analyses presented in Table 6. Values are calculated for the minimum (0) and maximum (1) value of the full eight-item partisan identity scale, partisan strength, ideological intensity, and the short four-item version of the partisan identity scale.

Results: Determinants of Political Participation

The analysis of political participation unfolds in parallel to that of in-party voting, although analyses are estimated using ordinary least squares regression, making it possible to directly compare the size of parameter coefficients. As seen in columns 3 and 4 of Table 6, both partisan identity and strength are significant predictors of political engagement, although the effects of partisan identity are roughly twice as large as those of strength. Predicted levels of participation across the range of party identity and partisan strength (based on equations in columns 3 and 4) are shown in Figure 10. This figure makes clear the greater power of partisan identity than partisan strength to drive political participation. The effects of party identity and strength also differ by country. A negative interaction between the Netherlands and party identity and a positive interaction between Sweden and party identity, as seen in column 3 of Table 6, indicates the greater power of partisan identity in Sweden and reduced effects in the Netherlands. Similar interactions exist between the two countries and partisan strength. These trends are depicted in Figure 5, showing the dramatic effect of partisan identity on participation in Sweden where participation goes from .37 at the lowest level of partisan identity to .75 at the highest. In contrast, the effects of partisan strength in Sweden are more muted with participation ranging from .36 to .57 across the range of partisan strength. Figure 10 also makes clear that the differing time frames within which political activity was assessed ("ever" in Sweden compared to shorter time frames in the U.K. and Netherlands) affected mean levels of reported activity, not surprisingly.

Ideological intensity has a small significant effect on participation but its coefficient (.06) is far smaller than the coefficients for the two partisan variables (.28 for identity and .12 for strength). As noted, ideological intensity is better measured by multi-item issue/value scales in the U.K. and Sweden than in the Netherlands where it was based on a single self-placement left-right

intensity measure. This may have led to an underestimation of the effects of ideological intensity in the combined analyses shown in Table 3 because the estimated effects of ideological intensity are greater in Sweden and the U.K. than in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, the coefficient for partisan identity is more than twice the size of that for ideological intensity in the Netherlands and almost 3.5 times as large in Sweden. These findings provides ample support for the expressive partisan model and its more fine-grained partisan strength measure.

Finally, to underscore the additional predictive power of the partisan identity measure, I regress in-party voting and participation on partisan identity, country, the interaction between country and partisan identity and basic demographics at each level of partisan strength (i.e., "not so strong", "fairly strong" and "very strong"). Results from this regression model are provided in Table 8, demonstrating that partisan identity predicted in-party vote and participation at each level of partisan strength providing additional information about the dependent variable. Among weak, moderate, and strong partisans, partisan identity has a significant positive effect on in-party voting and political participation.

Table 8: Variation Explained by the Partisan Identity Scale At Each Level of Traditional Partisan Strength

	In-Party Vote	**Political Participation**
Among "not very strong" identifiers		
Party Identity	**0.80 (0.43)**	**0.09 (0.02)**
Netherlands	**-0.37 (0.17)**	0.01 (0.01)
Sweden	**1.74 (0.38)**	**0.35 (0.02)**
Netherlands X Party Identity	0.19 (0.71)	-0.04 (0.04)
Sweden X Party Identity	0.25 (1.94)	0.05 (0.12)
Constant	0.15 (0.29)	0.01 (0.01)
N	2,132	2,091
Among "fairly strong" identifiers"		
Party Identity	**1.85 (0.37)**	**0.18 (0.02)**
Netherlands	-0.05 (0.19)	**0.05 (0.01)**
Sweden	**1.53 (0.31)**	**0.39 (0.02)**

Netherlands X Party Identity	-0.93 (0.53)	**-0.08 (0.04)**
Sweden X Party Identity	0.15 (1.04)	-0.04 (0.06)
Constant	-0.11 (0.26)	0.00 (0.02)
N	4,239	3,870
Among "strong" identifiers		
Party Identity	**2.41 (0.61)**	**0.39 (0.04)**
Netherlands	-0.21 (0.40)	**0.13 (0.03)**
Sweden	**2.28 (1.19)**	**0.47 (0.05)**
Netherlands X Party Identity	0.13 (0.82)	**-0.22 (0.06)**
Sweden X Party Identity	0.45 (2.85)	-0.00 (0.10)
Constant	0.66 (0.51)	**-0.11 (0.04)**
N	2,088	2,001

Note: In-party vote was estimated using a logit model whereas Political Participation was estimated using an OLS regression. Control variables include: Ideology, education, age, gender and working status. Bolded coefficients are significant at $p < 0.05$ in a two- tailed test. All variables scale from 0 to 1 for ease of interpretation, except for age which is measured in decades.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I revisited the measurement and conception of partisanship, providing evidence for the validity of an identity-based measure of partisanship as well as the importance of accounting for more fine-grained variations in partisan identity strength, especially when the political outcome variable is continuous such as political participation. Other graded political behaviors that can be predicted more precisely by the partisan identity scale include political efficacy, political interest, and candidate evaluations.

The greater predictive validity of the identity scale, especially in accounting for political participation but also in-party voting, provides a powerful rationale for the broad adoption of a multi-item scale of partisan identity. In particular, however, the ability of the partisan identity scale to capture additional variations in identity strength among independent leaners, weak partisans, and strong partisans – that is not accounted for by the traditional one-item strength measure – provides a strong reason for its inclusion in political behavior research. The scale – as I will show

in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation – proves to be especially useful in experimental studies in which many experimental treatments depend on the strength of partisan identity prior to the experimental treatment. Hence, heterogeneous treatment effects can be detected more precisely if partisan strength is evaluated on a continuous scale rather than an ordinal one. In a similar vein, the partisan identity scale offers a sufficiently fine-grained account of partisan strength so that shifts in partisan strength – caused by an experimental treatment – are more feasibly detectable. This is because it is easier to detect movements in partisan strength on a continuous scale that ranges from 0 to 1 than on an ordinal scale that entails only three response categories. From this vantage point, the partisan identity scale creates the possibility of a new research agenda that is not just confined to the study of the effects of partisanship but instead investigates the sources of variations in partisan strength. Last, a robust measure of partisan identity that functions in a similar fashion across countries may also prove to be an important theoretical and empirical addition to the study of partisanship and political engagement in a comparative setting.

In addition to these measurement aspects, the predictive power of the partisan identity scale as shown in this chapter also underscores the promise of social identity theory as an approach towards studying the sources and consequences of partisanship: Partisan identity was a far better predictor of political behavior than a measure of ideological intensity, at odds with an instrumental model of partisanship. Partisan identity was also an especially good predictor of political activity in support of the expressive approach supporting the notion that strong identifiers remain loyal to their party and continue to support it electorally. At the highest levels of partisan identity, this electoral support is almost universal regardless of country. But it is also the case, that in-party voting was much reduced at lower levels of identity.

The accurate measurement of partisanship is also important from a normative democratic perspective. In the current research project, strong partisan identities increased political activity in all three European countries. If partisanship is part of the glue that anchors citizens in their electoral system, the decline in party attachments (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000) is cause for considerable concern and a worthy topic for further investigations.

For the remainder of this dissertation, this chapter has also laid out the measurement foundation for the following two main studies in which I try to identify ways to strengthen partisan identity in an experimental setting. Given the implications of partisan strength for political behavior, it is important to track partisan identity with the most precise measures available in order to understand what features of the political environment partisan strength is responsive to and why. Identifying these potential sources of variations is the aim of the next two chapters.

Chapter V: The Impact of Social Similarity on Partisan Identity Strength

In the previous chapter of this dissertation, I argued for the crucial role of accounting for variations in partisan identity strength in order to obtain more accurate predictions regarding the relationship between partisanship and political behavior such as the vote and political participation. The chapter concluded with the assertion that the partisan identity scale captures the intensity of party attachments better than the traditional 3-point partisan strength measure. Benefitting from the scale's superior measurement properties, I showed that even in European multi-party systems, strong partisans are not just more likely to vote for their inparty but they are also politically more engaged than their weakly attached counterparts.

Instead of using partisan identity strength as a predictor variable, this chapter examines party attachments as the dependent variable exploring the sources of variations in partisan strength. I present the results of an experiment testing my first hypothesis that social (i.e. non-political) similarity to in-party leaders increases partisan identity strength above and beyond similarity that is grounded in political similarity only. More specifically, I first test the effect of both types of similarity to an inparty leader on partisan identity strength and contrast it to the impact of being similar to an outparty leader. If party leaders function as party prototypes, we would expect higher partisan identity level when people feel similar to their party leader. I then test my core hypothesis that social similarity in particular enhances partisan identity strength to a larger extent that political similarity. To test for potential heterogeneous treatment effects, I conclude my analyses with a comprehensive model that takes prior partisan strength into account.

In the following, I first describe the sample recruitment process and composition, as well as the experimental design and lay out how its features help to test my hypotheses. Subsequently,

I present the results and conclude the chapter with a discussion of their implications. To presage my findings: Results do indicate that social similarity increases partisan identity strength, especially among weak partisans. This effect is accentuated among respondents who perceived the inparty leader to be highly typical of their party.

Sample Composition

205 undergraduate students from Stony Brook University participated in an extra-credit study that was advertised as the "Meet a Politician Project" (MAPP). All of them were recruited from the extra-credit subject pool in the Department of Political Science. Out of 205 participants, 197 completed the study. 21 participants are excluded from the following analyses because they were not U.S. citizens *and* did not complete their high school education in the U.S. I use high school attendance as an indicator of the degree to which participants were socialized in the U.S. and are familiar with the American party system. This yields an effective sample size of 176 subjects. 71% of them self-identified as Democrats and 29% self-identified as Republicans whereby a relatively large proportion of 63% identified themselves as Independent Leaners and 27% of participants describe themselves as weak partisans and 10% as strong partisans. The patterns of party identification correspond to the ideological composition of the sample according to which 73% of the students describe themselves as Liberals and 27% as Conservatives. This sample imbalance in party identification as well as ideological leanings might be problematic since it neither allows me to fully account for heterogeneous treatment effects across partisans nor to make generalized statements about the partisan population as a whole. However, since I obtain

similar results in my second experiment with a vastly different sample, I am somewhat less worried that the first experiment's results are merely a function of my young and overly liberal sample.

The median age of participants was 20 years old. The sample was evenly balanced with regards to gender whereas the racial composition of the sample was skewed with a plurality of 42% Asian, 37% White, 9% Hispanic, and 5% African American. The racial characteristics of the sample reflect the overall distribution of the Stony Brook student population. Thus, the racial asymmetries are not a product of faulty sampling. Another sample feature common among Stony Brook students is the high rate of foreign born students. Respondents reported being moderately interested in politics (mean value of 2.89 on a scale from 1 to 5).

Experimental Design

To test my core hypothesis, the experimental design must allow for a distinction of political and social similarity. This is easier said than done since social and political similarity might be closely intertwined as elaborated on in the prior theory chapter.

In his book, *The Reasoning Voter*, Popkin (1994) makes the argument that even ostensibly irrelevant pieces of information can be used by voters as shortcuts to assess the proximity between their political preferences and a candidate's political platform. For example, the media still refers to the *Great Tamales Incident* in which former President Gerald Ford committed a faux pas by eating a tamales and its husk. While the causal effects of this cultural mishap are difficult to identify, the fact that Ford merely obtained 18%[12] of the Hispanic vote in 1976 seems to support the notion that the tamales incident negatively affected Ford's electoral success among Hispanics.

[12] Roper Center for Public Opinion Research: *How groups voted in 1976*: http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/polls/us-elections/how-groups-voted/how-groups-voted-1976/ (last accessed 05/16/2016).

Hence, social and political information might *conceptually* be different from each other. In daily political life, however, voters might use social cues especially in the absence of sufficient political information to evaluate a political candidate.

To disentangle the impact of social and political information, I employ a 2X2 factorial design in which participants are matched to a fictional elite member (see Figure 15) of their inparty or outparty based on either political or social similarity. The former refers to similarity based on political issue preferences whereas social similarity is based on non-political preferences such as music and literature genres[13]. Provided respondents perceive the elite member as representative of their party, similarity to an inparty leader should increase partisan identity strength. By establishing a social and political information condition, I can specify this argument and compare the effects of both types of similarity on partisan identity strength.

To provide subjects with more context regarding the purpose of the experiments, they are told that they are participating in one of the first trials of the "Meet A Politician Project" (MAPP) – which supposedly matches them to politicians based on *similar preferences*. The phrasing of the study's purpose was purposefully ambiguous in order to provide a description of the study that is valid for both the social and political similarity condition. The precise language of the introductory text can be seen in Figure 12. After the introduction, respondents answer a host of pre-treatment batteries of questions that are used to create political and social similarity between the respondent and the mock party leader. For the political similarity component, respondents are asked about their attitudes on abortion, gay rights, and immigration and to rank their political issue preferences from most important to least important.

[13] One can argue that music and literature preferences might provide some cues about political attitudes, rendering the social (i.e. non-political) condition political. I address this concern in the discussion section of this chapter.

For the social similarity component, subjects answer various questions about their upbringing such as the type of neighborhood they grew up in (e.g. urban, rural, or suburban), their favorite subject in high school, as well as their current leisure activities, music, and literary preferences. Table 1 provides an overview of the attributes used to construct the political and social similarity condition. Note that regardless of what condition participants are assigned to, all of them answer questions about both their political and social preferences.

Table 9: Overview Political and Social Similarity

Political Similarity	**Social Similarity**
Attitudes on Abortion	Neighborhood (urban/rural/suburban)
Attitudes on Homosexuality	Favorite Subject in High School
Attitudes on Gay Rights Expansion	Hobbies
Attitudes in Immigration	Music Preference
Political Issue Priorities	Literature preference

Note: Responses to these political issues and social preferences were used to construct the political and social similarity treatment. See text for more information.

At the end of the pre-treatment questionnaire, all participants were matched to a mock party leader displayed in Figure 11. While the photo of this mock politician remained identical across conditions, the party leader randomly belonged either to the respondent's inparty or outparty.

Figure 11: Picture of John Kane, the fictional party elite member

Note: The picture remained identical across conditions. The picture was pre-tested to guarantee that the mock politician seemed both like a credible Republican or a credible Democrat.

After respondents were exposed to the picture and learned about the name of the mock Congressman[14], they were given the rationale behind their match, stating explicitly their similarity with regards to political issue preferences (political similarity) or their similarity with regards to various aspects of their lifestyle such as music and literary preferences (social similarity). To ensure that respondents pay attention to the treatment, the ">>" button to get to the next page of the survey was disabled for 1.5 minutes which is approximately the amount of time it would take to read the complete description of the Congressman. After that amount of time passed, participants were able to proceed with the survey. The treatment was immediately followed by the partisan identity scale items which constitute the dependent variable throughout the subsequent analyses.

[14] Note that the mock party leader's gender is deliberately male since the distribution of female party leaders is unequal between the Democratic and Republican Party. Hence, by choosing a male politician, I keep the perception of typicality somewhat constant which allows me to focus on the effects of similarity to a typical party leader.

While using a mock politician might take away from the external validity of the results since respondents are not matched to a real political party member, it is a preferable approach in this experiment since it reduces the potential for confounding factors such as differences in physical appearance across party elite members, or respondents' prior knowledge of their inparty leaders, including their past legislative behavior: By utilizing a mock politician I can control for these variations since respondents do not have any prior knowledge of the person they are matched to[15]. In a similar vein, since the same picture is used across treatments, the information provided about the mock politician can be the only source of variations in the dependent variable, namely partisan identity strength.

Figure 12: Introductory Text

Welcome to MAPP - the *Meet A Politician* Project

What is MAPP?

You are participating in one of the first trials to test out a project that helps you identify politicians around the country whom you may wish to follow over time based on their political views, approach to politics, and other personal characteristics. By doing so, we hope to encourage people to learn more about national policymakers.

What is the motivation behind MAPP?

Americans have an increasing number of opportunities to shape national politics through many different channels: online petitions, donating to political campaigns and fund-raising via social media. By all of these, Americans are increasingly engaged in politics beyond their local and state boundaries.

[15] A pitfall of the experiment is that it did not include a question that asks respondents whether they had heard of the mock politician John Kane. Hence, it is possible that people mistook the mock politician for a real politician they are familiar with. However, given the relatively low levels of political interest among respondents of this sample, the confounding threat resulting from this pitfall might be minimal.

The MAPP is testing ways in which Americans can locate politicians they like in different geographic areas and learn about ways in which they can support them.

Construction of the Political Similarity Treatment

The treatment was constructed using the information gathered in the pre-treatment battery of questions by embedding respondents' answers in the treatment's text. For this purpose, I utilized the dynamically generated content feature provided in *Qualtrics*. The treatment's text for the political similarity condition is displayed in Figure 13 below. For example, if a participant indicates that she opposes abortion, the paragraph about the mock politician's attitudes on abortion states that "Congressman Kane *agrees* with the notion that abortion is never a legitimate option…" whereas a participant who supports abortion rights learns that "Congressman Kane *disagrees* with the notion that abortion is never a legitimate option." By piping in the respondent's answers to the questions from the pre-treatment part of the survey, the treatment is always worded in a way that allows the mock politician to be represented as similar to the respondent's political profile (see Table 9).

Construction of the Social Similarity Treatment

The social similarity treatment was constructed in an identical fashion using respondents answers to pre-treatment questions about their personal hobbies and lifestyle choices such as the characterization of the neighborhood (i.e. rural, urban, suburban) they grew up in, hobbies, literature preferences, as well as music taste. Once again, answers were collected and embedded in the treatment's text so that, for example, if a respondent indicated growing up in a rural neighborhood, the first paragraph of the social similarity treatment stated that "Congressman Kane grew up in a rather *rural* area…" whereas a respondent who grew up in an urban neighborhood learned that John Kane grew up in an urban environment. Participants chose their favorite hobby, music, and literary preferences from a list that was built to be as exhaustive as possible while excluding options that could convey political preferences in any way. By doing so, the social similarity treatment was as void of political content as possible, reducing the chance that participants inferred political preferences from the mock politician's social preferences. The exact wording of the social similarity treatment is displayed in Figure 14.

It is important to note that in both treatments, the mock politician is described as a popular member within his party both in Congress as well as among his state's electorate (e.g. "…gaining support from almost 75% of all voters"; "… one of the more popular Democrats in the House of Representatives."). This description is supposed to emphasize the party leader's influence and power within the party – symptoms of highly prototypical group leaders as Hogg's elaboration on leadership from a Social Identity Theory perspective indicated (see Chapter 3).

Figure 13: Political Similarity Treatment

What do you have in common with this guy?

Based on your stance on different policy issues and your issue priorities, we matched you with Democratic Congressman John Kane from Iowa.

In the last Congressional election, Kane won easily in his heavily Democratic district gaining support from almost 75% of all voters, making him one of the more popular Democrats in the House of Representatives. ***Politically****, you are very similar to him and share many opinions on a range of economic and also social issues with him.*

Attitudes on Abortion
Congressmen Kane [agrees/disagrees] with the notion that abortion is never a legitimate option - but he also admitted that the topic is very sensitive and complex: "It's easy to blame the other side but this is not how political discourse works."

Attitudes on Immigration
Most Democrats in his Iowa district have also been very supportive of Kane's legislative action on immigration. In a recent interview, Kane said: "As a Democrat - but also as a fellow American - I [oppose/favor] the notion that immigration can be a burden to our country's economic well- being but we should not ignore the humanitarian aspect in this debate." Kane and his colleagues are currently trying to sponsor a bill in Congress that would reflect that sentiment.

Attitudes on Gay Rights
The Democratic Congressmen has also been shaping the debate on homosexuality. As Kane recently noted: "While I work for all Americans - regardless of their sexual orientation or their opinions on sexuality -
I [strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree] that as a society we need to establish norms that individuals should use as guidelines for their own lives." That is why Congressman Kane [strongly opposes/opposes/favors/strongly favors] the expansion of gay rights.

Political Issue priorities
When asked about his political issue priorities in the upcoming legislative term, Kane cited [piped in answer choice e.g. Affirmative Action, immigration, abortion, gay rights, etc.] as a top priority.

Figure 14: Social Similarity Treatment

What do you have in common with this guy?

Based on your ***hobbies, movie, music and literature preferences as well as personality traits****, we matched you with Democratic Congressman John Kane from Iowa.*

Last election, 80 percent of Democrats in Iowa voted for Kane making him one of the popular members of the Democratic Party. ***Personality- wise****, you are very similar. You share many similar background characteristics, personal preferences and interests:*

Growing up
Democratic Congressmen Kane grew up in a rather [urban/suburban/rural] area which, according to Kane, significantly shaped his understanding of what "community" means. In a recent personal interview, Kane recalled: "There was a local bookstore that I would go to all the time. The owner would help me look for new [piped in answer choice e.g. comic, crime, fantasy, etc.] books. They are still my favorites!"

Personal hobbies and interests
Even now, during his free time away from Capitol Hill, Kane still enjoys reading a lot but he also admitted being a big fan of [piped in answer choice e.g. playing the guitar, singing, surfing, etc.]: "It helps me get my mind off politics for a while", according to Kane.

High school
While Kane studied political science in college, Kane's favorite subject in high school was actually [piped in answer choice e.g. Physics, Geography, Biology, Art, etc.]: "It's funny. People from high school always keep telling me how surprised they were when I first went into politics because they remember me being so much into [piped in answer choice e.g. Physics, Geography, Biology, Art, etc.]. I guess they don't see the connection to politics and honestly, neither do I sometimes!"

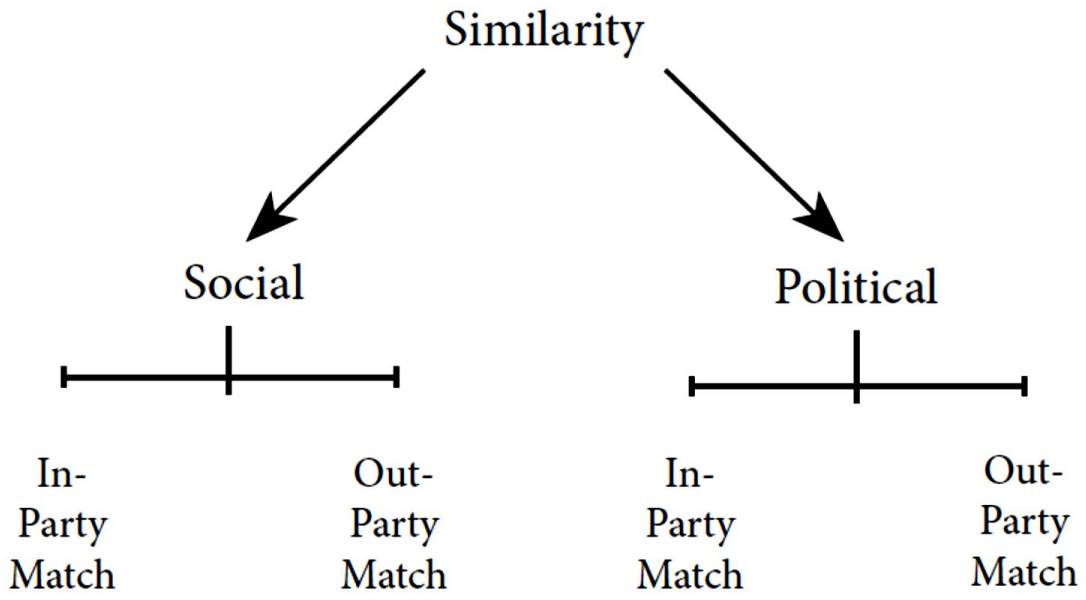
Music
When Kane was spotted at a recent [piped in answer choice e.g. Jazz, Rock, Pop music, etc.] festival with his fiancée, he told a reporter who had playfully questioned the politician's music taste: "Look, the reason I went into politics was because I thought it would be a good idea if young people are represented by – well – a young person. I am sure my constituents will forgive my taste in music."

Variation of Ingroup and Outgroup Match

In addition to assigning participants randomly to a mock politician based on political or social similarity, I also vary the target of that similarity so that subjects are matched to a politician of either their inparty or their outparty while the description of the mock politician remains identical across both condition. This feature of the design allows to test for potentially varying effects of similarity interacting with partisanship. While my hypothesis predicts similarity to an inparty leader to strengthen party attachments, I remain ambiguous about the effect of similarity to outparty leaders. For example, similarity to an outparty leader might reduce partisan attachments. Alternatively, it might not have any discernable effect since partisans can engage in motivated reasoning to either downplay or even dismiss the notion of similarity.

Including the inparty and outparty condition yields four treatment groups. An illustration of the resulting experimental conditions is displayed in Figure 15. Respondents can be matched to a member of their inparty based on either political or social similarity or they can be matched to a member of their outparty based on either political or social similarity.

Figure 15: Overview of Experimental Design



Measures

In the following analyses, the main dependent variable is partisan identity strength which is measured by the 8-item partisan identity scale discussed in Chapter 3 (see also Table 3). As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the scale allows to pick up even fine-grained variations in partisan strength which is crucial to detect the oftentimes subtle effects of experimental treatments.

Given the experimental nature of this study, the independent variables are determined by a respondent's assignment to one of the four treatment groups. Hence, to detect treatment effects I look at differences in partisan identity means across treatments. This yields four different mean values that I initially examine: Social Similarity X Inparty Leader, Social Similarity X Outparty Leader, Political Similarity X Inparty Leader, and Political Similarity X Outparty. The assignment to one of the treatment groups is the main predictor of partisan identity strength in this experiment.

However, since respondents do not participate in these studies without any prior political experience, it is possible that the treatment's effect will be impacted by respondents' prior party attachments. For this reason, I will also account for respondents' prior partisan strength which is asked at the beginning of the study and interact it with the experimental treatment. This choice is motivated by the expectation that the effect of any treatment related to partisanship and partisan strength will be conditioned on respondents' prior partisan attachments. For example, weak partisans might obtain more information from learning that they are similar to an inparty leader than strong partisans since the latter might have already somewhat expected or assumed that. From a statistical standpoint, it might also be easier to detect treatment effects among weak partisans due to ceiling effects among strong partisans.

Results I: Inparty versus Outparty Leader Match

After random assignment of respondents, the distribution of the sample across treatment groups is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 10: Sample Distribution across Conditions

	Inparty Match	**Outparty Match**
Social Similarity	51 (29)	40 (23)
Political Similarity	47 (27)	38 (22)

Note: N = 176. Numbers represent frequencies. Numbers in brackets represent percentages.

The frequencies and percentages in each cell are relatively balanced across all conditions, ranging from a minimum sample size of 38 subjects in the Political Similarity X Outparty treatment to a maximum number of 51 subjects in the Social Similarity X Inparty condition.

To assess the general level of partisan identity strength in the sample, Table 11 entails the response patterns for each item of the partisan identity scale.

Table 11: Partisan Identity Scale

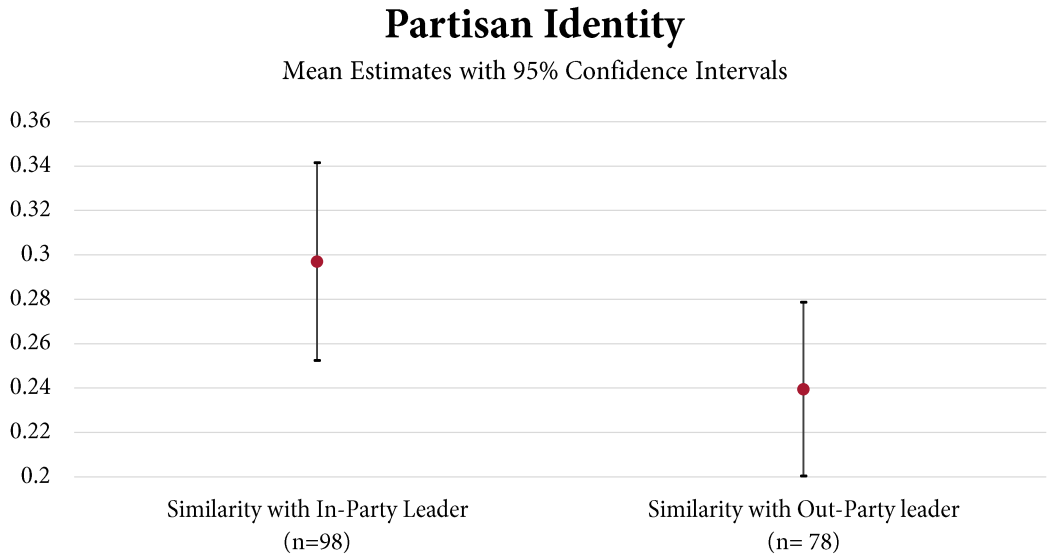
Partisan Identity Scale	Rarely/Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they".	65	23	8	4
I am interested in what other people think about this party.	20	48	27	5
When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult.	58	32	7	3
I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party.	12	53	33	2
If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined.	79	17	4	0
When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person.	30	53	14	3
When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party".	67	21	9	4
When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.	40	41	16	3

Note: Numbers are percentages based on the entire sample.

My first hypothesis stated that similarity to an inparty leader should strengthen party attachments. In order to test this expectation, I first examine the differential effects of an inparty versus outparty leader match by comparing the mean scores of partisan identity strength in both

conditions. As Figure 16 demonstrates, partisans who are matched to an inparty leader report somewhat higher levels of partisan identity strength than partisans who are matched to a mock candidate of their outparty.

Figure 16: Effect of Similarity across Inparty and Outparty Match



Note: Partisan identity strength is scaled to range between 0 and 1. Differences between treatment groups are marginally significant at $p < 0.06$.

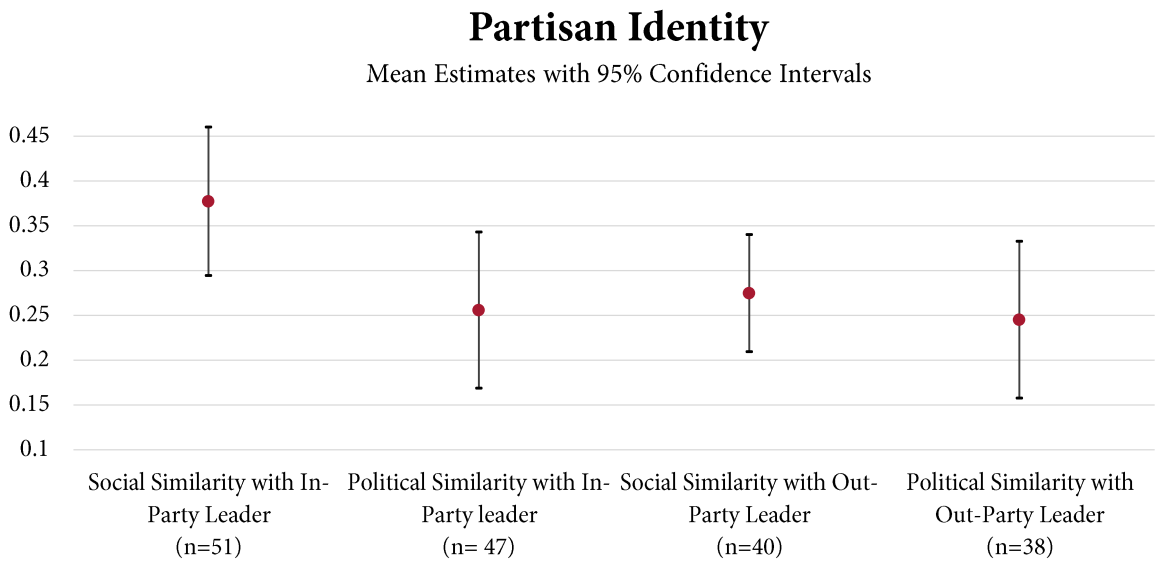
The mean level of partisan identity in the inparty leader condition differs from the mean value of partisan identity in the outparty condition at a (marginally) significant level $p < 0.06$ which provides some, albeit not strong, evidence for my hypothesis that similarity to inparty leaders strengthens party attachments. Initially, this first simple comparison of mean values suggests that *both* types of induced similarity with a party leader can raise the level of self-identification with the inparty. However, what is not initially clear from the graph in Figure 16 is whether similarity

with an inparty leader boosted partisan identity levels or whether similarity with an outparty leader reduced partisan identity levels. I will address that question in the following sections.

Results II: Social and Political Similarity across Party Leader Match

While the earlier results reported in Figure 6 indicated that induced similarity to an inparty leader increases partisan identity strength, my second hypothesis states differential effects of social and political similarity on partisan identity strength. In fact, comparing the effect across types of similarity reveals that these shifts are almost exclusively driven by the social similarity condition as demonstrated in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Effect of Social and Political Similarity across Inparty and Outparty Match



Note: Partisan identity strength is scaled to range between 0 and 1.

Looking at the two types of similarity in the inparty leader condition, the mean difference between partisan identity levels in the social and political similarity condition are statistically significant at $p<0.05$ with partisan identity levels being significantly higher in the social similarity condition than in the political similarity condition. For the outparty match, however, there are no discernable differences between partisan identity levels in the social and political similarity condition. At the same time, reported partisan identity means in both outparty conditions do not differ from partisan identity levels measured in the Political Similarity X Inparty condition.

Intuitively, the first pair of results makes sense: Respondents did not learn any new information in the political similarity X inparty condition since they already are familiar with their inparty's stances on such high salience issues like abortion, immigration, and marriage equality. Hence, the treatment in this condition might not have increased similarity as participants were already aware of their political similarity to the inparty's leadership.

To allow for empirical tests of this possibility, the manipulation check asks respondents to indicate their level of perceived similarity to the mock politician on a scale from 1 to 7. As expected, reported mean levels of perceived similarity were significantly lower in the political similarity condition (mean: 4.10; SD: 1.37) than in the social similarity condition (mean: 4.77; SD: 1.24) when matched to an inparty member. Note that these differences are not grounded in different perceptions of typicality since there is no statistically significant difference in perceived typicality of the inparty leader across the political and social similarity condition[16]. From this perspective, the political match to an inparty leader functions as a baseline group that we can compare the other treatment groups to. This step also allows us to solve the puzzle that originated from Figure 16: If

[16] Among Republicans, the mean of perceived typicality was 60 (SD= 22.63) in the political similarity condition and 61.2 (SD= 21.19) in the social similarity condition. Among Democrats, the mean of perceived typicality was 59 (SD=21) in the political similarity condition and 61 (SD= 14.55) in the social similarity condition.

there is no difference between partisan identity levels in the inparty X political similarity condition and the two outparty conditions, then the only possible source of increased partisan strength can be the social similarity to an inparty leader. Hence, similarity to an outparty leader does not *reduce* partisan identity strength as initially considered an option based on Figure 16. Instead, (social) similarity to an inparty leader *increased* partisan identity strength.

It is more difficult, however, to explain the psychological mechanisms underlying these patterns. Why would respondents report similar levels of partisan identity when they were matched to an outparty leader – regardless of the type of similarity – and when they were matched to an inparty leader based on political similarity? Assuming the treatment induces similarity to an outparty leader, we would have expected lower levels of partisan identity in the conditions in which participants were matched to an outparty leader.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings could be caused by motivated reasoning whereby partisans immediately dismiss the idea of being similar to an outparty leader. While the experimental design did not provide for a measure to test that option, there are two ways to buttress the notion that partisans engaged in motivated reasoning: First, respondents who were matched to an outparty leader based on social similarity (i.e. hobbies, music preferences, etc.) reported slightly lower levels of perceived similarity to the mock politician than respondents who were matched to an outparty leader based on political similarity. While this difference does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, the trend could be interpreted as partisans' attempt to distance themselves from the outparty – a desire that is more pronounced when the similarity is based on such personal lifestyle preferences.

Second, an open-ended comment box at the end of the survey can also shed light on partisans' reactions when they were matched to an outparty leader. Some respondents did express

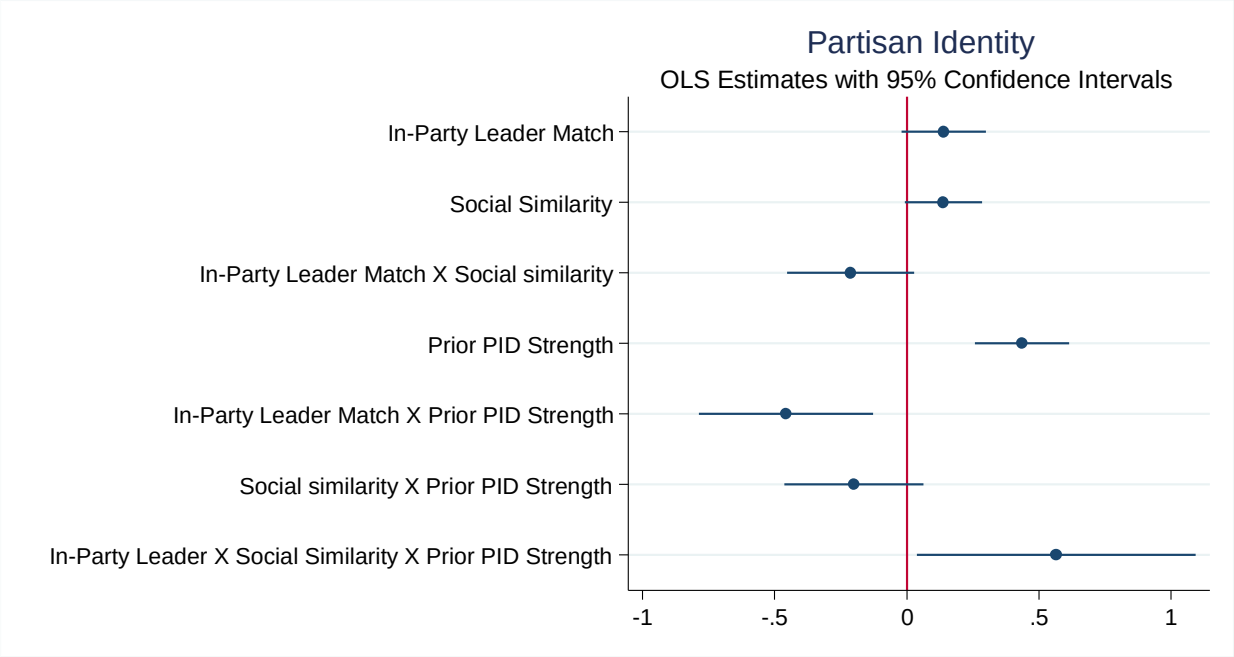
disbelief about their apparent mismatch. For example, one comment stated: "I can't believe you matched me with a Republican. That's just a wrong match." The respondent had identified himself as a strong Democrat at the beginning of the survey. Hence, partisan motivated reasoning might have led him to doubt the treatment's validity (i.e. similarity to a Republican leader), leaving partisan identity levels unchanged.

Results III: Accounting for Prior Partisan Strength

Prior research demonstrates that variations in partisan strength matter for political behavior to the extent that strong partisans are more likely to vote for their party and to become politically active on behalf of the inparty (Huddy et al. 2015). Similarly, variations in the strength of partisan attachments influence partisans' susceptibility to attitude change and motivated skepticism in the face of information that is inconsistent with prior partisan attitudes (Lodge and Taber 2000; Lebo and Cassino 2007; Bolsen and Druckman 2014). Therefore, it is possible that the treatment's effects vary based on the strength of respondents' party attachments prior to the experiment. My third hypothesis addresses this possibility by examining the effect of social and political similarity on partisan identity strength across Independent leaners, weak, and strong partisans.

To detect these potential variations, I specify a regression model in which I regress partisan identity strength on a three-way interaction consisting of the two experimental conditions (inparty/outparty and social/political similarity) and respondent's prior party attachments. The OLS regression results are presented in Figure 18 (the corresponding table can be found in Table A1 the Appendix).

Figure 18: OLS Regression Results, Comprehensive Model



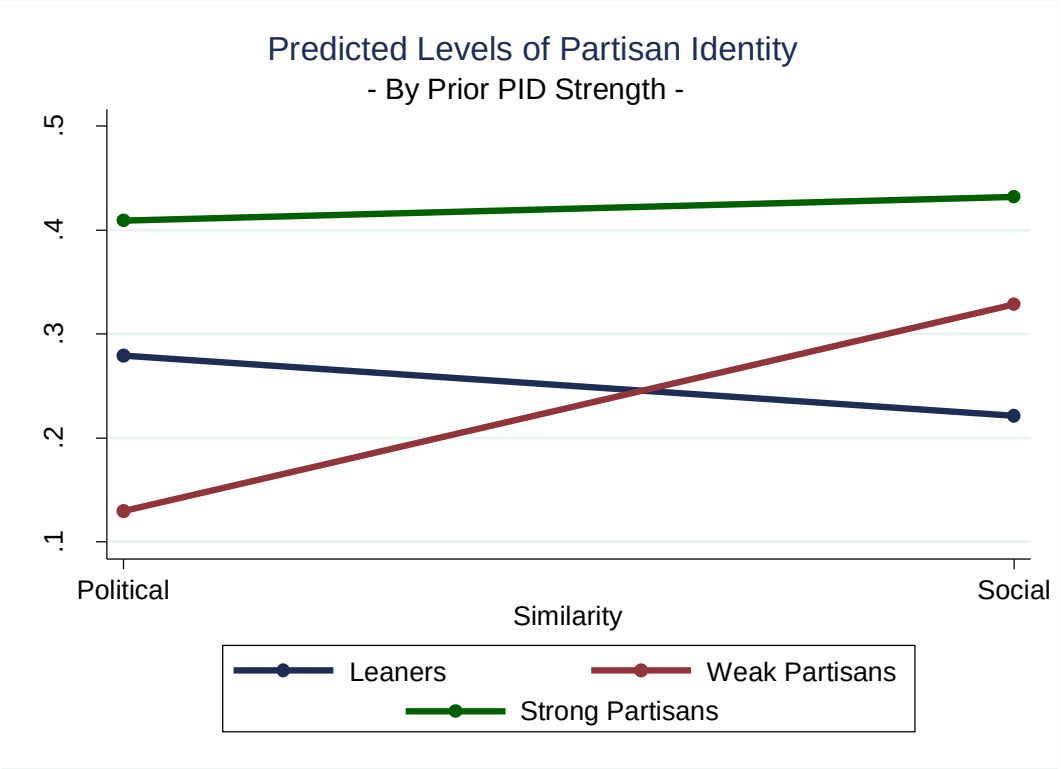
Note: Partisan identity strength is scaled to range between 0 and 1.

Figure 18 illustrates that the coefficient for the three-way interaction term is statistically different from 0 and positive. Thus, this model provides the first piece of supportive evidence for the claim that the effect of similarity to an inparty leader is conditioned on respondents' prior partisan strength. Yet it is unclear what subset of partisans (i.e. leaners, weak, or strong) are most susceptible to the effect of the treatment. Moreover, given the higher order interaction included in the model, it is difficult to interpret the remainder of the coefficients as their meaning changes in the presence of interaction terms.

Thus, I estimate predicted levels of partisan identity strength by each partisan strength level among respondents who were matched to an inparty leader. I restrict the sample to subjects in the inparty match condition since Figure 16 and Figure 17 previously demonstrated that the outparty match did not alter the strength of partisans' attachments. The predicted levels in Figure 19 show

the predicted response in partisan identity strength for either leaners, weak, and strong partisans when shifting from the political and social similarity condition.

Figure 19: Predicted Levels of Partisan Identity Strength After Inparty Match



Note: Respondents who were matched to an outparty politician are excluded from this model. Partisan identity strength is scaled to range between 0 and 1.

In Figure 19, the most striking finding appears to be the substantial increase in partisan identity strength among weak partisans. In other words, weak partisans were most susceptible to the information about their social similarity to an inparty leader. In contrast to that, independent leaners show slightly lower levels of partisan identity strength in the social similarity condition

while strong partisans do not show any difference in party attachments between both similarity conditions.

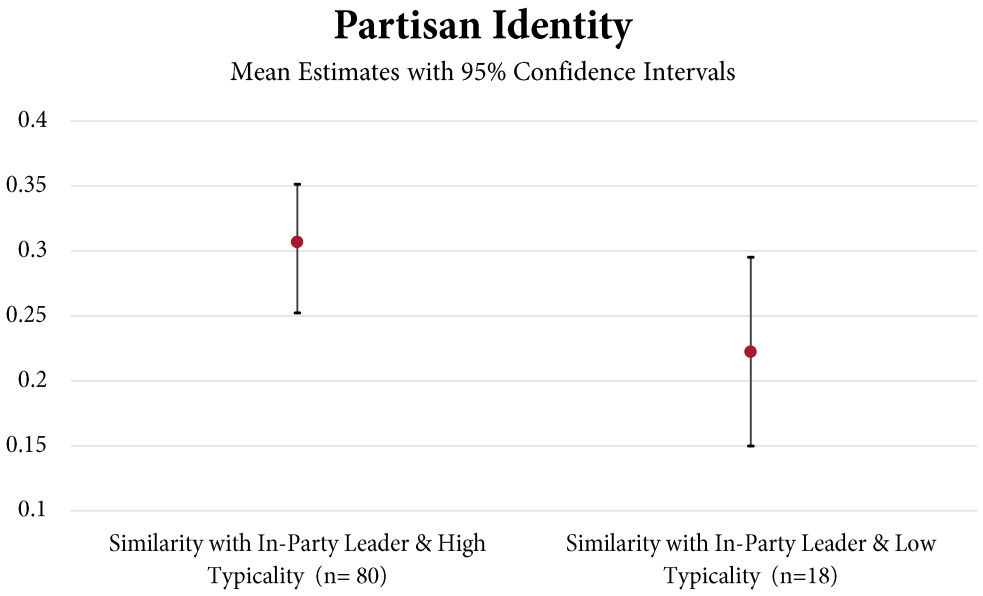
There are a few feasible explanations for why we observe these patterns. Strong partisans might be unaffected by either treatment since they already assumed high levels of both political and social similarity to their party's leadership members. From this vantage point, we do not observe any differences in party attachments across the political and social similarity condition because strong partisans' fill in the gaps, rendering both similarity treatments more or less ineffective. The Independent leaners, however, present a more complicated picture. While the difference in identity levels between the social and political similarity condition among leaners is not statistically significant, the negative impact of the social similarity information is puzzling. One potential explanation could be that independent leaners reject strong attachments to political parties. This is especially true for young people who not just tend to lack strong partisan ties because of their age but also because of the highly polarized political environment that might attach a negative connotation to party affiliations (e.g. Dalton 2013, 2015). Thus, young Independent leaners in this study might be more likely to question political parties' validity in the first place or even interpret the social similarity condition as too partisan.

Last, weak partisans represent the middle ground between the leaners and strong partisans: They are more attached to the inparty than the leaners but they are not yet as committed as the strong partisans. From this perspective, weak partisans benefitted the most from the social similarity condition as it introduced them to new information. One could spin this argument further and propose that partisans are weakly attached to their party partly because they feel politically but not socially similar to the party's leadership. These arguments, however, remain speculative and demand more investigation in future projects.

A Preliminary Look at Typicality

An implicit assumption in these prior analyses has been that the mock politician is perceived as a typical party elite member. The typicality of the mock politician is crucial in the theoretical framework I propose: similarity to the party prototype increases partisan strength. The flipside of this argument is that similarity to an atypical party member should be ineffective in strengthening party attachments. Therefore, a key component of the experiment concerns the extent to which the mock politician is perceived as fitting the party prototype. As a manipulation check, respondents were asked to rate the typicality of the mock politician Kane as an inparty representative. On a scale from 0 to 100, the mean value was 51.24 (SD=21.51). The low level of average perceived typicality might have reduced the effect of the treatment. In fact, when the sample is divided into two groups based on the assessment of Kane's typicality, partisan identity is significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) among respondents who considered the mock politician typical for their inparty. The means for both groups are graphed in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Partisan identity levels based on inparty leader typicality



Note: Respondents who were matched to an outparty candidate are excluded from this model. Partisan identity strength is scaled to range between 0 and 1.

Respondents who assigned the mock politician a typicality score of at least 50 or higher reported higher levels of partisan identity strength than respondents who considered the politician atypical (i.e. typicality score below 50). These results indicate that the perceived typicality of the mock party leader moderates the impact of the similarity treatment.

A brief look at the profile of these typical inparty leaders provides some information about the potential sources of their high typicality evaluation: 90% of the Democratic inparty leaders who scored a typicality rating of 50 or above were portrayed as pro-choice, 88% favored the expansion of gay rights, and 81% took a positive stand on immigration. While it is much easier to judge typicality based on political issues, some patterns emerge in the social profiles of typical Democrats as well: 21% like pop music, for 21% History was their favorite subject in High School,

11% described computer games as their hobby followed by 8% of typical Democrats who like dancing and basketball, and 57% who grew up in suburban areas[17].

On the Republican side, highly typical inparty leaders are less aligned with their party: 34% are pro-life, 35% oppose the expansion of gay rights, and 42% have skeptical views on immigration. With regard to the social profile, 21% liked Hip Hop followed by 19% who preferred Country music, for 25% History was their favorite subject in school, and 58% grew up in suburban areas[18]. The less conservative profile among Republican respondents is not too surprising given that the sample is composed of young college students who tend to be liberal on social issues even if they identify with the Republican Party. Given that the treatment was constructed using Republican respondents' issue preferences, the Republican inparty leader might have been perceived as less typical, reducing the impact of the similarity effect. However, the perceived typicality of the inparty leader reported by participants did not differ across the political and social similarity condition. Therefore, it is unclear what factors contributed to the evaluation of typicality.

It is possible that strong partisans are motivated to evaluate their inparty as typical since they want to feel typical for their party. If the inparty leader is similar to them, then evaluating his typicality automatically entails an evaluation of their own typicality. However, the distribution of partisan strength does not vary much along the typicality continuum. Among Republicans who perceived their inparty leader as highly typical, 61% were leaners, 25% were weak partisans, and 13% were strong partisans. These numbers remain relatively unchanged among participants who perceived the inparty leader as atypical[19]. Thus, it seems unlikely that the high typicality ratings

[17] Note that these numbers are a function of the sample. Stony Brook students mostly live on Long Island, a suburban area.
[18] The similarity between the social profile of Democrats and Republicans is grounded in the relative homogeneity of the sample (i.e. Long Island college student who major in Political Science).
[19] Note though that the number of Republican respondents who assigned a typicality score of less than 50 is too small (N=4) to make valid comparisons.

are driven by strong partisans who are motivated to perceive themselves and their preferences as typical.

Another possibility is that the young age of the sample members affects their perception of typicality. Given students' inexperience with the political system and political parties at that early stage in their political socialization, they might not yet know about the various political and social features that constitute a typical Republican. At the same time, typicality is a subjective assessment that might vary across respondents, especially if they are young. I investigate the sources of typicality more thoroughly in the next study in which I utilize a more broad-based sample.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the big picture, this study aimed to demonstrate the social nature of partisanship. Making partisans feel socially similar to an inparty leader, based on non-political features such as music and literary preferences, raised the strength of their party attachments significantly more than similarity that is based on political issue preferences only. This result was pronounced among weak partisans who responded to the social similarity treatment with higher partisan identity levels than their leaning and strong counterparts. These two findings in particular lend support to my core hypothesis regarding the effect of social similarity. However, the study also speaks to a more general body of literature on the nature of partisanship: If partisanship was merely a sum of political issue preferences, we would not have expected partisans to feel more strongly attached to their party because an inparty leader shares similar hobbies and lifestyle preferences with them. This response indicates that parties are social groups that partisans want to be representative of even with regard to attributes that are ostensibly trivial for politics.

However, no study is without limitations. There are a few caveats that might limit this study's validity: First, the texts conveying social and political similarity in the treatment entailed the same amount of words but they were not identical as can be seen in Figures 4 and 3. Ideally, the social similarity condition would have entailed the same information as the political similarity treatment in addition to the social information. Such a setup would have allowed for a more valid comparison between treatment groups. However, since respondents were matched to an inparty leader, it is likely that the mock politician's issue preferences were known even in the social similarity condition where they were not mentioned. While the experimental design did not entail a question to check the validity of this proposition, it is likely that partisans are familiar with their party's stance on highly salient political issues such as abortion, immigration, and marriage equality.

At the same time, partisans in the social similarity condition could have also inferred political attitudes of the inparty leader based on his social features such as music taste and hobbies. For example, the Republican inparty leader who was presented as an ardent country music fan might be perceived as having more (or less, based on the inferences) conservative political attitudes than the respondent. However, this would have reduced the perception of similarity, weakening the effect of social similarity. From that perspective, the magnitude of the results presented here might be conservative estimate.

Another caveat relates to the external validity of the study. The treatment is tailored to the respondent's personal and political preferences. In the political world with its overload on political (non-) information, however, this type of personalized information about a party leader is hard to obtain. Unless they follow party leader's Facebook or Twitter profile, partisans might not know about a politician's music and literary preferences. Nevertheless, given that politically neutral cues

such as literary preferences reinforced partisan identity strength, social similarity based on more accessible features such as broad sociodemographic categories (e.g. race, and gender) could feasible also increase partisan identity strength – a possibility I investigate in the next chapter.

Chapter VI: The Effect of Typicality and Similarity on Partisan Identity Strength

In the previous chapter, I acquired supportive evidence for my hypothesis that non-political (i.e. social) similarity to an inparty leader strengthens party attachments. The chapter also concluded with a preliminary look at the role of typicality indicating that similarity to an inparty leader is much more effective in increasing partisan identity strength if the party leader is perceived as typical or representative of the party's profile. This notion will be investigated more rigorously in the present chapter culminating in a test of my second hypothesis that inparty leaders influence partisan identity strength only if they are perceived as typical members of their party.

While we frequently use the word "typical" when evaluating political candidates and their political profile, I conceptualize typicality in both political and social terms. For example, the political profile of the Republican Party is marked by a strong opposition to reproductive rights of women, as well as gun control. These high salience issues define what a typical Republican politically stands for. However, there is also a social aspect to typicality such as sociodemographic characteristics that define the social profile or image of a political party. For example, when we are asked to think of a typical Republican, we probably imagine a white man of older age such as Mitch McConnell or John Boehner. Similarly, the Democratic prototype might be embodied by Democratic elite members such as Hillary Clinton or Harry Reid – party leaders that not only have powerful positions within the national leadership but who are also frequently featured in the media, allowing partisans to learn what their party stands for (political typicality) and what their party looks like (social typicality). Hence, party leaders' typicality can be assessed both in terms of their political and social fit with the party's image.

Prior evidence on the political dimension of typicality is established by the literature on partisan stereotypes and heuristic processing (Rahn 1993; Conover and Feldman 1989; Flanigan, Rahn, and Zingale 1989; Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985). Rahn (1993), for example, demonstrates that even information that is extremely inconsistent with the party label of fictional candidate does not motivate voters to question the validity of the party cue suggesting that party prototype are enduring even in the face of conflicting information. As Rahn (1993) put it: "These results suggest that party stereotypes are particularly "strong" political categories, not easily dislodged by inconsistency on a few issues, even if those issues are seen as defining the stereotype. Indeed, even when individuating policy information is made available in conjunction with stereotypes, it is ignored and even distorted" (p.492). The author goes on to illustrate that point with examples of past episodes in which parties have tried to alter partisan expectations "…through such tactics as riding a tank (the Democrats in 1988), preaching about responsibility (the Democrats in 1992), or talking about a "big tent" with respect to the abortion issue (the Republicans post-Webster)" – without much success. Therefore, party prototypes are shaped by the party's political platform.

There is less research on the social component of party prototypes. In chapter 3, I reviewed some of the literature that examines the interaction of gender, traits, and partisan stereotypes indicating that candidates with social profiles that conflict with their party's stereotypes fare electorally worse (e.g. Republican women) than the ones who are aligned with their party's stereotypes (e.g. Democratic women). Indeed, open-ended responses from the 2012 ANES Time Series panel confirm that notion that there is a social component to party prototypes, especially with regard to sociodemographic factors such as gender and race. For example, when asked what respondents liked about the Democratic Party, many answers included references to gender

diversity such as: "Considering that I am a women I feel they have my best interest at heart"[20] , "…the party looks like America", "…it is more inclusive and has more diversity and recognizes the diversity of the people of the United States", as well as "[their] predominant equal relationship between men and women meaning there is more representation of men and women in Congress, […] they are open to alternative life styles in their candidates…".

At the same time, when asked about their specific reasons for disliking the Republican Party, respondents often mentioned the lack of diversity in the Party's leadership: "We can't afford to elect a 50+ white man as our own citizens have changed, blacks and Hispanics need to have their concerns addressed", "The Republican [Party]…Most people in that party are white. You see very few of other colors", as well as "Why can't they get some decent candidates to run? [I] keep looking for them, they never appear always rich white men. Republican needs to reinvent itself be more encompassing of everyone […] Hispanics women gay, lesbians…"

In the following study, I account for both the social and political dimensions of typicality. Moreover, I utilize a less tailored form of similarity than in the previous study. More specifically, I base social similarity on gender which is a type of similarity that is more easily accessible to party followers than, let's say, a party leader's hobbies or childhood preferences. Given the current presidential campaign season, the effect of similarity to an inparty leader of the same gender is a timely topic that will most likely gather more significance as Hillary Clinton moves closer to becoming the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party.

[20] Spelling mistakes were corrected for the ease of understanding.

Experimental Design

To test my hypotheses, I conducted an experimental survey with 508 respondents on Amazon Mechanical Turk. Respondents received $1 for their participation in the study. The experiment was programmed using the *Qualtrics* software. A couple of screening questions at the beginning of the survey ensured that only White respondents were directed to the actual survey in an effort to reduce the potential for confounding factors in the evaluation of party leaders such as race. Through the implementation of quotas, the screener also excluded Democrats after their quota had been met[21]. This was done in an attempt to achieve approximately equally sized subsamples of Democrats and Republicans which is necessary to account for the possibility of heterogeneous treatment effects across the two partisan groups.

Constructing Political Similarity

The introductory screen of the study contained background information regarding the purpose of the study (introductory text is included in Figure A2 in the Appendix). The experiment was again presented as a "match maker" between respondents and party leaders based on the respondents' political issue preferences. In this version of the *Meet A Politician Project*, however, every respondent is matched to an inparty leader since the previous study has found no discernable effects of being matched to an outparty leader. To gauge their political preferences for the construction of political similarity, subjects initially received a battery of questions regarding their opinions on political issues such as abortion, immigration, and health care. These political issues

[21] The quota for Democrats was filled much more quickly than the quote for Republicans. Hence, I had to disqualify Democratic MTurk workers from the survey.

primarily relate to social policies rather than economic ones because I expect most respondents to be more familiar with their party's stance on social issues, especially given their high salience. A summary of all political issue preferences used in the treatment can be found in Table 12.

Table 12: Political Issue Positions Used in the Treatment

Self-assessed ideology with regards to social issues
Attitudes on abortion
Attitudes on marriage equality
Attitudes on immigration
Attitudes on Affordable Care Act (i.e. 'Obamacare')
Political issue priority

Throughout this first part of the experiment, respondents' answers are saved as embedded data and included in the vignette of the experimental treatment displayed in Figure 21 below. To generate political similarity, the embedded data from the respondent's prior answers is piped into the description of the party leader's political stances. For example, if the respondent chose the answer option "strongly support" for the question regarding stricter immigration laws, the politician in the treatment will have drafted a bill that "recognizes the urgency to protect our borders and American workers". If the respondent chose "strongly oppose" to that question, the inparty representative's bill will address "the urgency to reunite families and pave a path to citizenship for hardworking immigrants".

Figure 21: Treatment Vignette

First elected in 2004 with an overwhelming majority of Democratic votes in her district, Congresswoman Alexandra Kane has been a rising presence in the Democratic Party's national leadership and in American politics: Since her election, she has earned the trust of her constituents and praise on Capitol Hill for her hard work and leadership, quickly establishing herself as a [conservative/moderate/liberal] voice in the Democratic Party.

Kane's political agenda embodies the Democratic Party's values but also reflects the diversity of its members: For example, the Congresswoman has fought for the rights of [women/unborn children, working closely with national pro-choice/pro-life groups]. Since the beginning of her political career, she has also been very outspoken about her belief in [traditional marriage/marriage equality].

Recently, Kane drafted a bill that would address the nation's broken immigration system: The bill - if implemented - introduces comprehensive legislation that recognizes [the urgency to protect our borders and American workers/the urgency to reunite families and pave a path to citizenship for hardworking immigrants]. Members of her constituency were particularly supportive of her decision to [vote in opposition to Obamacare/in support of Obamacare].

When asked about her priorities on the political agenda in the upcoming legislative term, Kane cited [pipe in respondent's issue priority] as a top priority.

Note: The partisanship of the introduced politician depends on the respondent's party identification. Respondents who report identifying with a party are matched to an inparty politician while Independents are randomly assigned to either a Democratic or Republican politician. Specific question wording can be found in the Appendix.

Constructing Social Similarity

While the information about the political profile of the matched politician remains identical for all participants, the gender of the mock politician randomly varies so that a respondent is matched to an inparty leader of the same or different gender. Pictures of both the Congressman and Congresswoman are displayed in Figure 22. The pictures portray actual members of Congress to make the treatment more credible. Both pictures were pre-tested to guarantee that respondents are unfamiliar with the two politicians as well as to ensure equal assessments of core features such as attractiveness, perceived competence, liking, and trustworthiness. This pre-test included 22 respondents. None of them was able to either identify Mary Bono or Ron DeSantis based on their pictures. These two members of Congress were also chosen based on what percentages of the pre-test sample was able to infer a partisanship of each person just based on the picture. 32% of respondents thought Ron DeSantis was a Democrat, 27% of respondents thought he was a

Republican, and 41% could not guess what party he belongs to. 24% of respondents thought Mary Bono was a Democrat, 37% of respondents thought Mary Bono was a Republican, and 39% could not guess what party she belongs to. More details about the pre-test and its results can be found in the Appendix.

Overall, the pre-test ensured that the pictures do not introduce any confounding factors that could diminish the impact of the treatment. Additionally, I changed the name of the two politicians so that they are as similar as possible: the male party leader is named Alex Kane while the female party leader's name is Alexandra Kane.

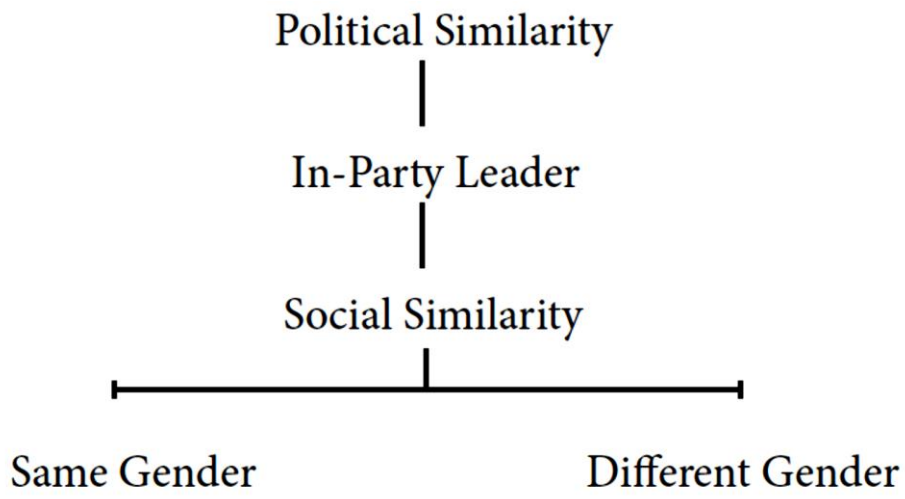
Figure 22: Picture of Congressman Ron DeSantis and former Congresswomen Mary Bono

Note: Pictures were pre-tested to ensure equal perception of the Congressman and Congresswoman with regards to characteristics that might influence candidate perception (e.g. likeability, trustworthiness, attractiveness, etc.)

As can be seen in Figure 22, the inparty politician is – regardless of gender – presented as a highly influential member of the in-party's leadership (e.g. "…overwhelming majority of Democratic votes in her district, Congresswoman Alexandra Kane has been a rising presence in the Democratic Party's national leadership."). This is an important aspect of the design since my theory would predict that similarity to a party leader intensifies partisan attachments only if that party leader is seen as highly typical or representative of the inparty.

In sum, every political issue preference used to describe the mock politician in the treatment was based on the respondent's prior answers in the political question battery creating a high level of political similarity between the respondent and the inparty politician. Within each partisan group, social similarity was created by matching respondents to an inparty leader of the same gender whereas social dissimilarity is constructed by introducing an inparty leader of the different gender. I also created a control condition in which participants were not matched to any politician resulting in three conditions, namely the social match (i.e. same gender), social mismatch (i.e. different gender), and control (no match). Note that the control condition will not be considered in the subsequent analyses since variables like the typicality of the inparty leader are missing for participants in that group. However, it constituted an important baseline that I utilized to ensure that key independent variables were not influenced by the treatment. An overview of the experiment's main logic is provided in Figure 23.

Figure 23: Overview of the Experiment



After the experimental treatment, two attention checks followed which 94 percent of the sample answered correctly[22]. Respondents were subsequently asked the partisan identity scale items, as well as questions relating to their degree of similarity to the mock politician and his or her degree of partisan typicality.

Sample

Over the course of three days, 508 respondents[23] finished the experimental survey online in August 2015 on Amazon Mechnical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is commonly used for survey experiments, because it provides researchers with access to somewhat national samples that are considerably more diverse than traditional student samples, even though they are clearly not

[22] Results do not change regardless of whether I include the 6% of the sample that failed the attention check or not.
[23] One respondent took the survey twice so the data from his second trial was excluded.

demographically representative of the U.S. population. For example, participants in this study tended to be young (average age = 35), and well-educated (50 percent had more than a high school degree). 98% of the sample was comprised of American nationals; the majority of the remaining 2% had been in the U.S. for 11 years. 37% of the sample included female respondents while 62% contained male respondents. With regards to race and ethnicity, 98% reported to be White/Caucasian, 1% reported to be Hispanic and less than 1% reported to be Native American. An overwhelming share of the sample (48%) indicated not being religious, followed by 33% of Christians, and 10% of Roman Catholics. Most importantly, the sample was somewhat balanced with regards to partisanship: 29% of the sample consists of Republicans, 33% of Democrats, 34% of Independents, and 15% supporters of minor parties such as Libertarians and Socialists. When the latter as well as Independent were asked the follow-up question, 24% indicated feeling closer to the Republican Party, 37% feeling closer to the Democratic Party, and 38% not feeling closer to any of the two parties. Combining these two questions yields 194 Republicans, 46 of them leaners (24%), 83 weak partisans (43%), and 65 strong Republican partisans (33%). On the Democratic side, the sample included 240 individuals, including 71 leaners (29%), 84 weak partisans (35%), and 86 strong partisans (36%). The remaining 73 respondents reported not feeling closer to any of the two major parties. Concerning ideology on social issues, 54% of respondents indicated being liberal, 23% moderate, and 23% conservative. This picture looks somewhat different when asked about the respondent's economic ideology: 35% reported a liberal ideology, 25% a moderate one, and 36% a conservative economic ideology.

If broken down by party identification, 11% of Republican identifiers reported a liberal economic ideology, 14% moderate, and 75% a conservative ideology on most economic issues. This patterns is reversed for Democrats whereby 69% indicated being liberal on most economic

issues, 25% moderate, and 6% conservative. For ideological preferences on social issues, respondents are also aligned with their party identification: 14% of self-identified Republicans reported liberal preferences, 33% a moderate, and 56% a conservative ideology. Among Democratic identifiers, 91% considered themselves liberal on social issues, 7% moderate, and 2% conservative.

Measures

In the following empirical analyses, the key dependent variable is partisan identity strength as measured with the partisan identity scale introduced in the previous chapters. The scale's values are recoded so that the variable ranges from 0 to 1. The main independent variable is social similarity as constituted by the treatment group the respondent is assigned to. If respondents are assigned to a mock inparty leader of the same gender, the social similarity measure takes on a value of 1 (gender match). If respondents are assigned to a mock inparty leader of a different gender, the social similarity measure takes on a value of 0 (gender mismatch).

Another key independent variable reflects the degree to which the mock politician is perceived as typical. I measure typicality in two different ways: First, I gauge perceived typicality with one item that directly asks respondents: "On a scale from 0 to 100, to what extent does Representative Kane represent a typical [Republican/Democrat]?". I refer to this variable as "global typicality" or "perceived typicality". The variable originally scales from 0 to 100. For ease of interpretation, it is rescaled to range from 0 to 1 in the regression analyses. While this measure provides an overall assessment of the inparty leader's typicality, it is also a rather crude measure for two reasons. First, the item does not establish a baseline that respondents can use to evaluate

the level of typicality. In other words, it is unclear what the respondent's image of a typical Republican or Democrat looks like when s/he evaluated the typicality of the mock politician Kane. Second, the typicality item also does not reveal what components went into the assessment of typicality. If typicality has a political and social aspect to it, then the overall assessment of typicality is not able to reflect that. Therefore, I additionally construct a more objective typicality measure that reflects the degree to which the mock politician represents both the political and social profile of the political party.

Political typicality is based on the respondent's five policy preferences and the ideological self-identification that were piped in the vignette of the experimental treatment to describe the inparty leader's political profile. Each preference is coded as either liberal or conservative. For example, if the politician was presented as pro-life, s/he will receive a 1 while a liberal attitude on immigrations is coded as -1. This issue-based typicality measure represents the sum of all eight issue preferences utilized in the treatment so that a value of -1 represents a consistently liberal ideology whereas a value of 1 represents a conservative ideology. From that vantage point, political typicality is closely related to ideological consistency. I then link this measure to a respondent's party identification to indicate the overlap between the respondent's and his or her inparty's political profile. For example, a self-identified Republican with consistently liberal preferences receives a score of 0 on the political typicality measure whereas a self-identified Republican with consistently conservative attitudes receives a score of 1.

In addition to political typicality, I also create a measure to reflect the social typicality of the inparty leader. Since gender is the only feature that is experimentally manipulated in this study, I operationalize social typicality as the extent to which the inparty politician's gender is represented in the party's leadership. I measure this gender distribution by asking respondents directly to assess

the percentage of men and women in their inparty's leadership, using the following question wording: "Thinking of the members of the Democratic/Republican[24] leadership, what percentage of them are women and what percentage of them are men?" Using this information, I take the ratio of these percentages and allow the variable to range from 0 to 1 whereby 1 reflects that the mock politician's gender was seen as the only gender present in the party's leadership (e.g. 100% women in the Democratic Party) and 0 reflects the respondent perceived the politician's gender group to be completely absent in the party's leadership (e.g. 0% women in the Republican Party leadership).

To sum up, the main variables in the following analyses are partisan identity strength gauged by the partisan identity scale, social similarity as determined by the gender match/mismatch treatment, and three different instruments to measure typicality. These measures as well as their component questions are also summarized in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Overview of Typicality Measures

Typicality Measure	Scale components
Global typicality	To what extent does Representative Kane represent a typical Democrat/Republican?
Ideological typicality	Extent to which respondent's five policy preferences and the ideological self-identification matches respondent's party id.
Gender Typicality	Thinking of the members of the Democratic/Republican leadership, what percentage of them are women and what percentage of them are men?

[24] The question referred to the respondent's inparty's leadership.

Descriptives

Table 14 illustrates the distribution of respondents across treatment groups and partisanship, including Independent leaners. Note that subjects in the gender match or mismatch condition were always matched to an inparty leader. In contrast, subjects in the 'no match' condition constitute the control group.

Table 14: Cell Sizes per Treatment Group and Party Identification

"Match" assignment	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	N
Gender Match	75	57	27	159
Gender Mismatch	84	69	23	176
No match	81	68	15	164
N	240	194	65	499

Note: Two people are excluded from the sample because they did not indicate any gender preference. Seven other people are excluded because they identified with other political parties. Numbers represent frequencies for each treatment and control group.

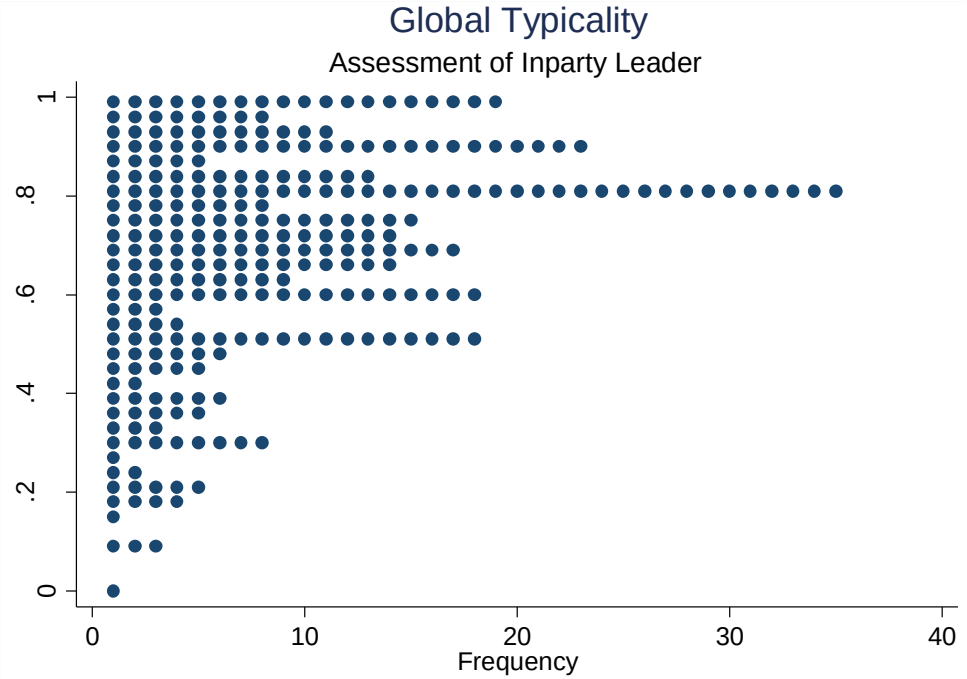
An initial look at the table reveals a sample size of 499 respondents, falling slightly short of the 508 completed surveys. Two people were excluded from the sample because they did not indicate any gender preferences. I removed seven more respondents from the sample since they identified with third parties such as the Green Party and the Libertarians. One could argue that they should be counted as Independents. However, Independents and third party identifiers might differ in ways that could impact the effect of the treatment. For example, I expect Independents with no partisan leaning to be considerably more susceptible to the development of party attachments than respondents who already identify with a third party. In case of the latter, dissatisfaction with the

two major parties might be much more pronounced than among pure Independents. Therefore, the following analyses exclude these eight respondents. However, given their small share of the overall sample, I have no reason to believe that including the third party identifiers would yield different results.

I also exclude pure Independents from the subsequent analyses. This decision is motivated by my theoretical interest in partisans. Moreover, for Independents data on the main dependent variable, partisan identity strength, is missing since these respondents do not feel closer to any party. Thus, asking Independents to answer items from the partisan identity scale would have been untenable.

To gauge the amount of variation in all three typicality measures, I first examine their distribution. Figure 24 illustrates the distribution of the global typicality measure which asks respondents to assess the overall typicality of the inparty leader they were matched to. It is apparent that there is a substantial amount of variation in the perception of typicality.

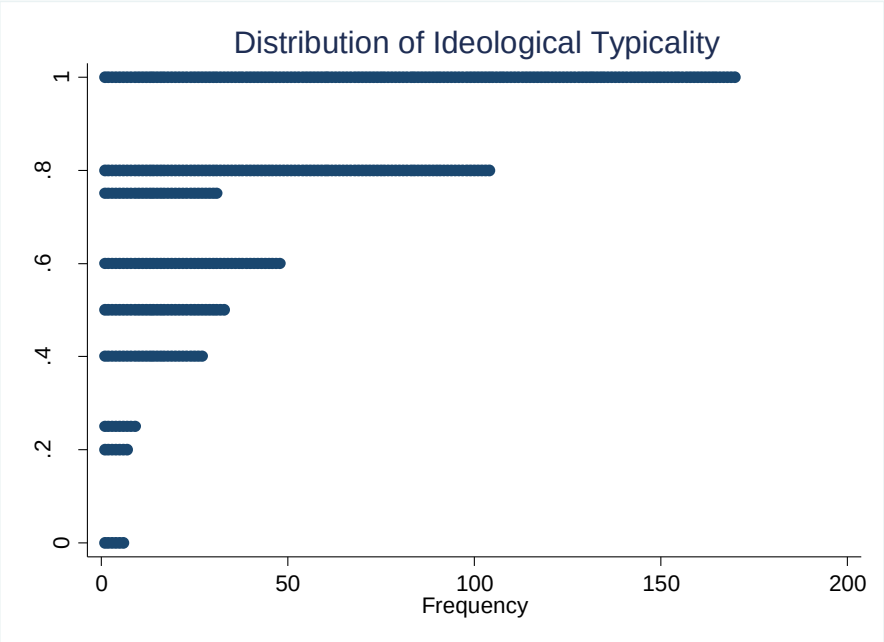
Figure 24: Distribution of Global Typicality



Note: Global typicality was measured on a scale from 0 to 100 but rescaled to range from 0 to 1.

To obtain preliminary evidence for the sources of this variation, I additionally examine the distribution of the ideological and gender typicality variables. A first glance, the distribution of the ideological typicality variable in Figure 25 reveals that the majority of respondents closely matched the political issue profile of their inparty even though there is some variation in the lower levels of political typicality as well.

Figure 25: Distribution of Ideological Typicality



Note: Ideological typicality is scaled to range from 0 to 1 whereby 1 indicates a consistently conservative or liberal ideology if respondents identified as Republicans or Democrats respectively. See text for more details. Distribution of ideological typicality across parties can be found in Figure A6 in the Appendix.

Similarly, the perceived gender distribution of the Republican and Democratic leadership features some variation but overall strongly suggests that women are perceived as much more dominant in the Democratic Party's leadership as in the Republican Party. As Table 15 suggests, a relative majority of Republican respondents estimate that women make up about 21%-30% of the Republican leadership whereas almost 34% of Democratic respondents estimated that women constitute 41% - 50% of their inparty's leadership.

Table 15: Gender Distribution

Perceptions of Gender Distribution in Inparty's Leadership

Female Leaders	Male Leaders	Among Republican Respondents	Among Democratic Respondents
0% - 10%	90%-100%	18.09%	1.91%
11% - 20%	80%-89%	18.09%	7.75%
21%-30%	70%-79%	19%	12.91%
31%-40%	60%-69%	18.01%	19.93%
41%-50%	50%-59%	14.02%	33.95%
51%-60%	40%-49%	8.58%	20.61%
61%-70%	30%-39%	1.8%	1.11%
71%-80%	20%-29%	2.26%	1.85%
81%-90%	10%-19%	0%	0%
91%-100%	0%-9%	0%	0%
Mean of Estimated Percentage of Female Leaders in Inparty		29%	39%

Note: Table shows the perception of male and female politicians' presence in the inparty's leadership.

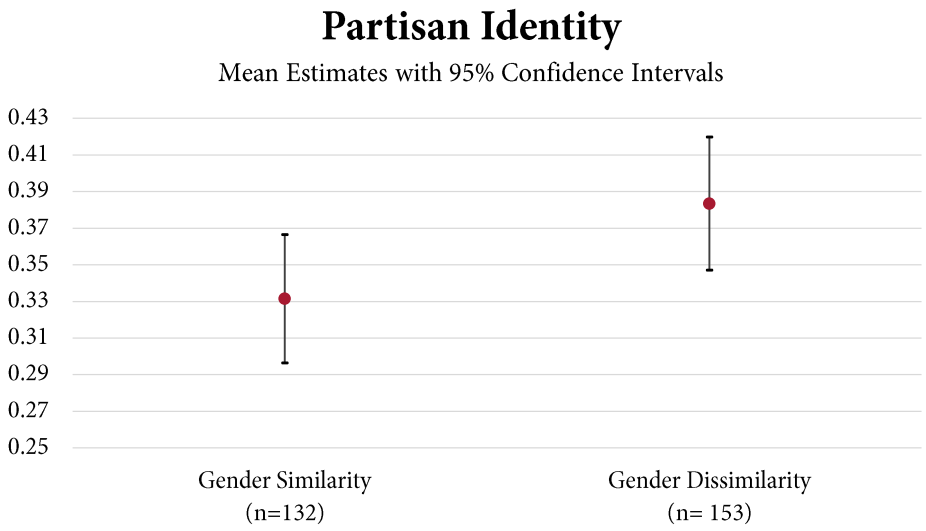
Note that both partisan groups grossly overestimate the percentage of female politicians in their party's leadership. Currently, there are merely 104 women holding seats in the 114th Congress, comprising 19.4% of the 535 members. Out of these 104 women, 76 are Democrats and 28 are Republican. These numbers drop significantly in the Senate where only 20% of all members are women. This small groups is once again primarily Democratic (14) while only 6 Senate women belong to the Republican Party (Center for Women and Politics, Rutgers University[25]).

[25] For more information, see http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/levels_of_office/congress.

Results I: Role of Gender Similarity

The first question I address concerns the direct effect of being matched to a mock in-party politician of the same gender on partisan identity strength. Based on the partisan sample, I calculate and plot the mean scores of partisan identity for the gender match and mismatch condition, displayed in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Mean Value of Partisan Identity across Experimental Conditions



Note: Partisan identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Independents are excluded since they were not given the partisan identity scale items.

Surprisingly, partisan identity is significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) in the gender mismatch condition. In other words, respondents indicated feeling more strongly attached to their in-party when matched to a leader from the opposing gender. To investigate these counterintuitive results, I examine the effect of gender similarity for the two partisan groups individually. The results are

displayed in Table 16. Republican men in the sample report significantly higher partisan identity levels when matched to an inparty leader of the same gender than Republican women. Similarly, for self-identified Democrats, male respondents reported significantly higher partisan identity levels when matched to a male Democrat while female Democrats reported lower levels of partisan attachment when they were matched to an inparty leader of the same gender. The substantial difference in the effect of gender similarity among respondents of both parties in the sample could be explained by the relative gender imbalance in each party's leadership ranks, hinting at the role of gender typicality. In fact, a simple regression model in which I regress partisan identity on the gender of the mock inparty leader yields significant results for the Republican respondents but not for the Democratic respondents. These results can be found in Table 17A and 17B for Republican and Democratic respondents respectively.

Table 16: Partisan Identity Strength across Conditions

	Democrats		**Republicans**	
Respondent's Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Social Similarity (i.e. same gender)	1.99 (0.65)	2.21 (0.65)	2.16 (0.41)	2.35 (0.70)
Social Dissimilarity (i.e. different gender)	2.24 (0.53)	1.88 (0.48)	2.48 (0.77)	2.18 (0.65)
No match	1.93 (0.61)	2.05 (0.46)	2.41 (0.72)	2.11 (0.68)

Note: Partisan Identity Strength ranges from 1 to 4. Numbers show mean of partisan identity strength across conditions. Numbers in brackets are standard deviations.

Table 17: OLS Regression Results, Gender and Partisan Identity across Partisans

A) Republicans

	Partisan Identity
Gender of mock inparty leader	**-0.28 (0.12)**
Constant	**2.37 (0.08)**
R^2	0.04
N	126

Note: Partisan identity ranges from 0 to 1. Gender is a dichotomous variable that reflects the gender of the mock inparty leader. Bolded coefficients indicate statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

B) Democrats

	Partisan Identity
Gender of mock inparty leader	0.09 (0.09)
Constant	**1.9 (0.06)**
R^2	0.00
N	160

Note: Partisan identity ranges from 0 to 1. Gender is a dichotomous variable that reflects the gender of the mock inparty leader. Bolded coefficients indicate statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

The asymmetry in these regression results across both Democrats and Republican identifiers appears to solidify the importance of perceived typicality. Among Republican respondents, women were perceived much less typical than their male counterparts. This notion is further corroborated by the estimated gender distribution among the Republican and Democratic Party's leadership. Therefore, being matched to an atypical inparty leader, a female Republican in particular, might have diminished the sense of centrality in the typicality distribution among Republican respondents regardless of the respondent's gender.

At the same time, however, the male inparty leader was perceived as less typical than the female inparty leader among Democratic identifiers but the gender of the fictional inparty leader does not predict partisan identity strength among Democratic respondents. These inconsistencies could hint at the role of subgroup identities whereby the Democratic Party's big tent type of

prototype allows men and women to feel equally represented by their inparty's leadership. While this might be the case for gender, there are other characteristics that could make a Democratic inparty leader appear sufficiently atypical to lower partisan identity levels among Democratic identifiers, especially if these traits are associated with the Republican Party such as religion. I will examine these inter-party differences in some of the subsequent analyses. It is noteworthy though that a combined analysis of both Democratic and Republican respondents does not yield a significant coefficient on the gender variable as can be seen in Table 18 below. This result suggests a special role of gender within the Republican Party.

Table 18: OLS Regression Result, Gender and Partisan Identity

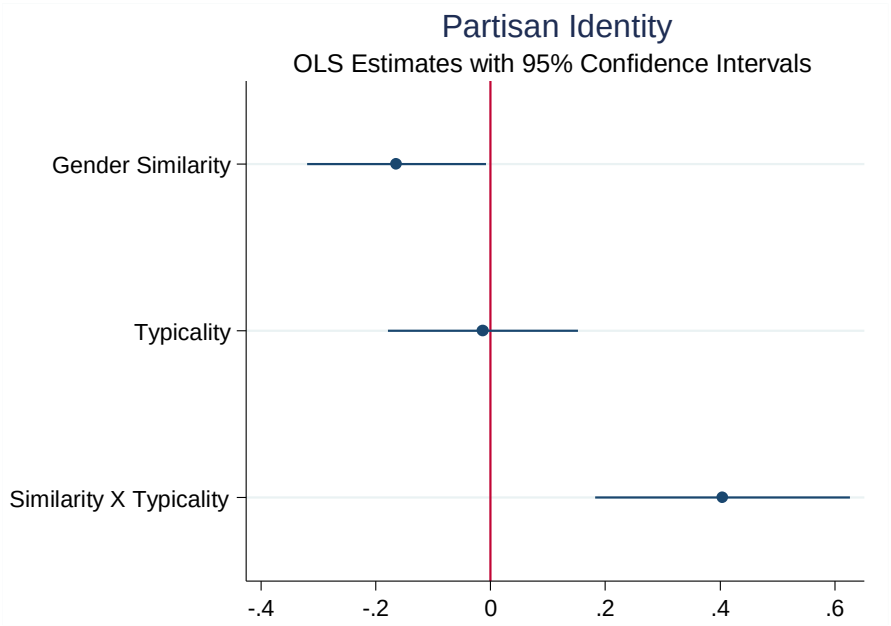
	Partisan Identity
Gender of mock inparty leader	-0.02 (0.02)
Constant	**0.37 (0.01)**
R^2	0.00
N	286

Note: Partisan identity ranges from 0 to 1. Gender is a dichotomous variable that reflects the gender of the mock inparty leader (0 male and 1 female). Bolded coefficients indicate statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

Results II: The Role of Typicality

The previous results emphasized the ambiguous effect of similarity on levels of party attachments. To account for the role of typicality, I regress partisan identity strength on the experimental condition (gender match/mismatch), the global typicality assessment, and their interaction. The results are plotted in Figure 27. The corresponding table is included in the Appendix (Table A4).

Figure 27: OLS Regression Results, Effect of Typicality and Similarity



Note: Partisan identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Independents are excluded since they were not given the partisan identity scale items.

The interaction between gender similarity and typicality assessment is positive and statistically significant which suggests that being matched to an inparty leader of the same gender who is perceived as typical of the inparty yields stronger partisan attachments. Figure 27 also

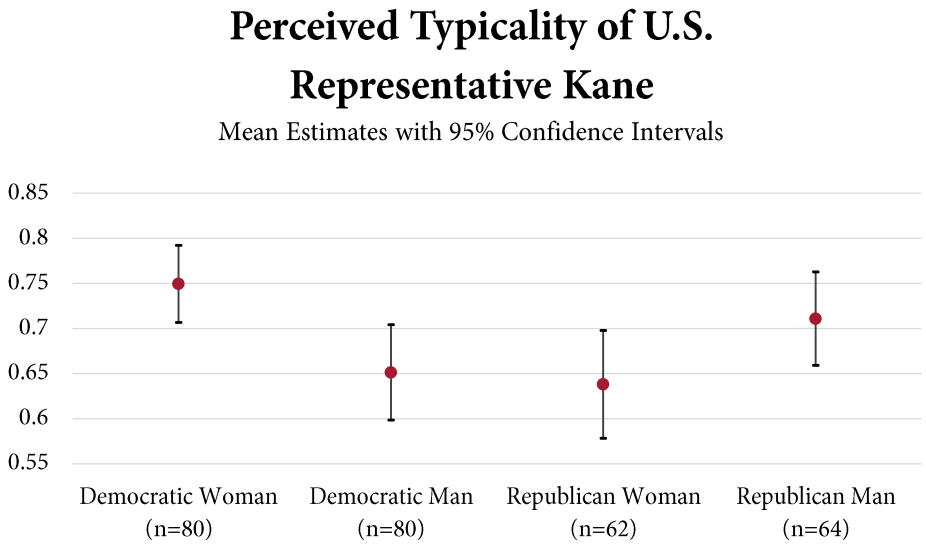
replicates the earlier puzzling finding that gender similarity on its own is associated with lower levels of partisan identity strength as the coefficient for similarity is negative. While the coefficient for the typicality assessment is not statistically significant, it is also negative which suggests an interesting trend: if the inparty leader is perceived as atypical in the gender match condition, partisan identity might slightly decrease as we have seen in Figure 26.

Results III: What predict Typicality?

In the prior analysis, typicality was measured with one item asking respondents to assess the typicality of the mock party leader on a scale from 0 to 100 as a representative of the inparty. However, as mentioned before, this global evaluation does not allow for a distinction between the social and political form of typicality.

In Figure 28, I plot the mean scores of the global typicality assessment across party affiliation and gender of the mock politician which reveals that the female Democrat is perceived as significantly more typical than the male Democrat ($p<0.01$). The exact opposite is true for the Republican Party: the Republican woman is considerably less typical than the Republican man ($p<0.05$).

Figure 28: Perceived Typicality across Partisanship and Gender

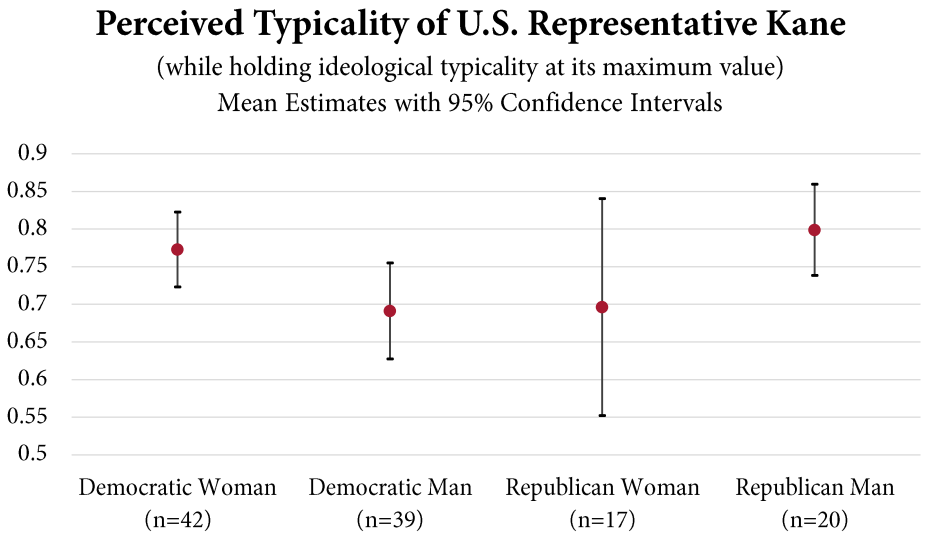


Note: Perceived typicality is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Pure Independents are excluded. P-values are obtained through a two-independent sample test.

The first possible explanation for these patterns relates to the mock politicians' issue profiles. Since the treatment vignette was dynamically constructed using the respondent's issue preferences, the variation in typicality might be grounded in varying levels of ideological consistency. The ideological typicality measure described in the measurement section reflects that variation whereby 0 indicates that the mock politician's political profile was absolutely atypical for his/her party affiliation and 1 indicates absolute consistency with the inparty's profile. Given the high salience issues utilized in the treatment vignette, it is not surprising that the absolute majority of respondents scored a value of at least 0.5 on the ideological typicality variable (Figure 25). I replicate the graph in Figure 28 but limit the sample to respondents who scored a maximum score of 1 on the ideological typicality variable. In these cases, the mock politician's political profile was either consistently liberal or consistently conservative. Note that if a respondent

identified as a Democrat but had consistently conservative issue preferences, the ideological typicality score of the matched politician would be 0.

Figure 29: Typicality across Gender and Partisanship with Ideological Typicality

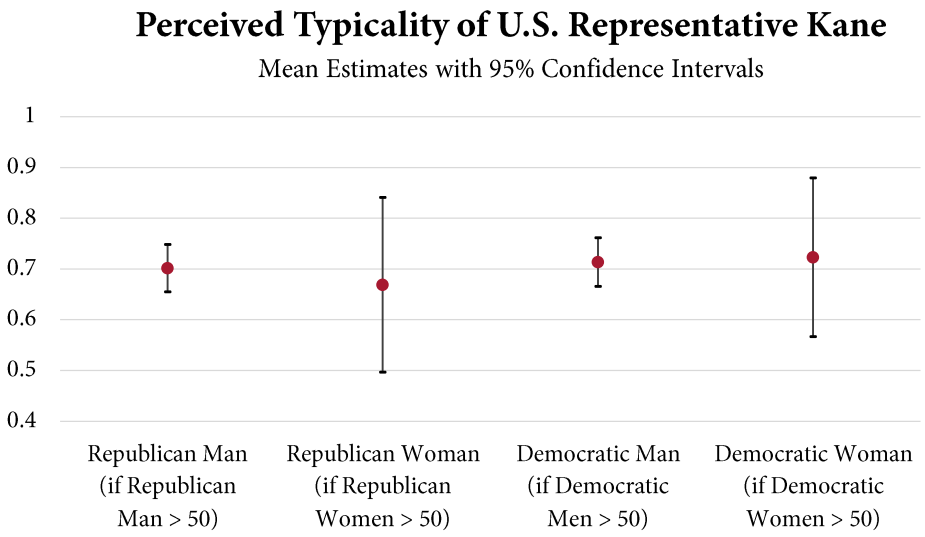


Note: Perceived typicality is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Pure Independents are excluded. P-values are obtained through a two-independent sample test.

Figure 29 uncovers the multi-faceted nature of partisan typicality. Even when inparty leaders were completely aligned with their respective party's political profile, there are still significant differences across gender: The female Democratic leader is still considered more typical than the male Democratic leader ($p < 0.05$). The difference between the Republican female and male politician somewhat decreases when ideological typicality is held at its maximum but the typicality difference remains marginally significant at $p < 0.1$. Therefore, typicality is not exclusively predicted by ideological consistency.

To account for the social dimension of partisan typicality, I add the gender typicality variable to the analyses. Note that this variable reflects the respondent's perception of the ratio of men and women in the inparty's leadership. For example, if a respondent was matched to a female inparty leader and reports that about 60% of the inparty's leadership is composed of women, then the gender typicality variable would take on a value of 0.6. Once again I replicate Figure 28 with two modifications: I limit the sample to respondents with an ideological typicality score of at least 0.5 to account for the political dimension of typicality. In addition, I only examine respondents who perceived the gender of their matched inparty leader to make up at least 50% of their inparty's leadership. The mean differences in global typicality assessment are plotted in Figure 30.

Figure 30: Typicality Predicted by Political and Social Typicality

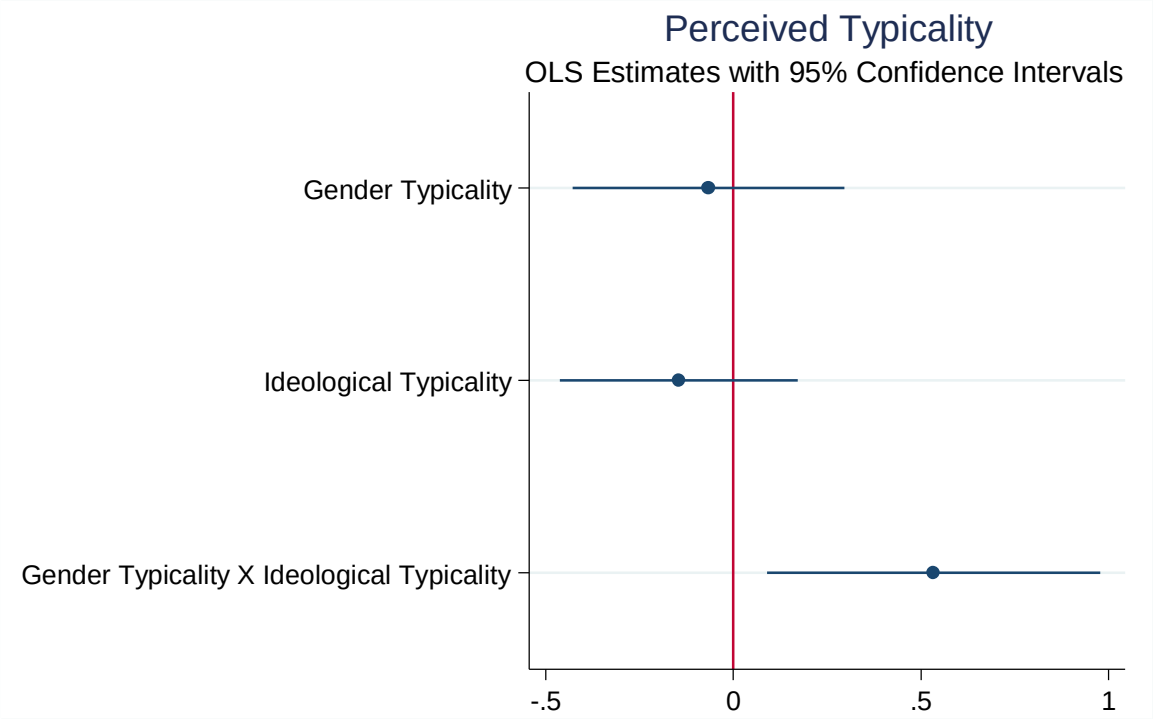


Note: Perceived typicality is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Pure Independents are excluded. P-values are obtained through a two-independent sample test.

Once political and social typicality are accounted for, the initially observed differences in global typicality assessment across gender disappear which lends support to the notion that partisan typicality consists of both political and social components.

To maximize sample size, I additionally specify a regression model in which I regress global typicality on gender typicality, ideological typicality, and their interactions. The results are visually portrayed in Figure 31 (numerical values can be found in Table A5 in the Appendix). Aligned with the results from Graph 30, the regression model shows a positive and statistically significant coefficient for the interaction term, corroborating the notion that global typicality assessments have both a political as well as social component to them which is captured by typical party positions as well as the gender distribution within the inparty's leadership respectively.

Figure 31: OLS Regression Results, Comprehensive Model, Predicting Typicality

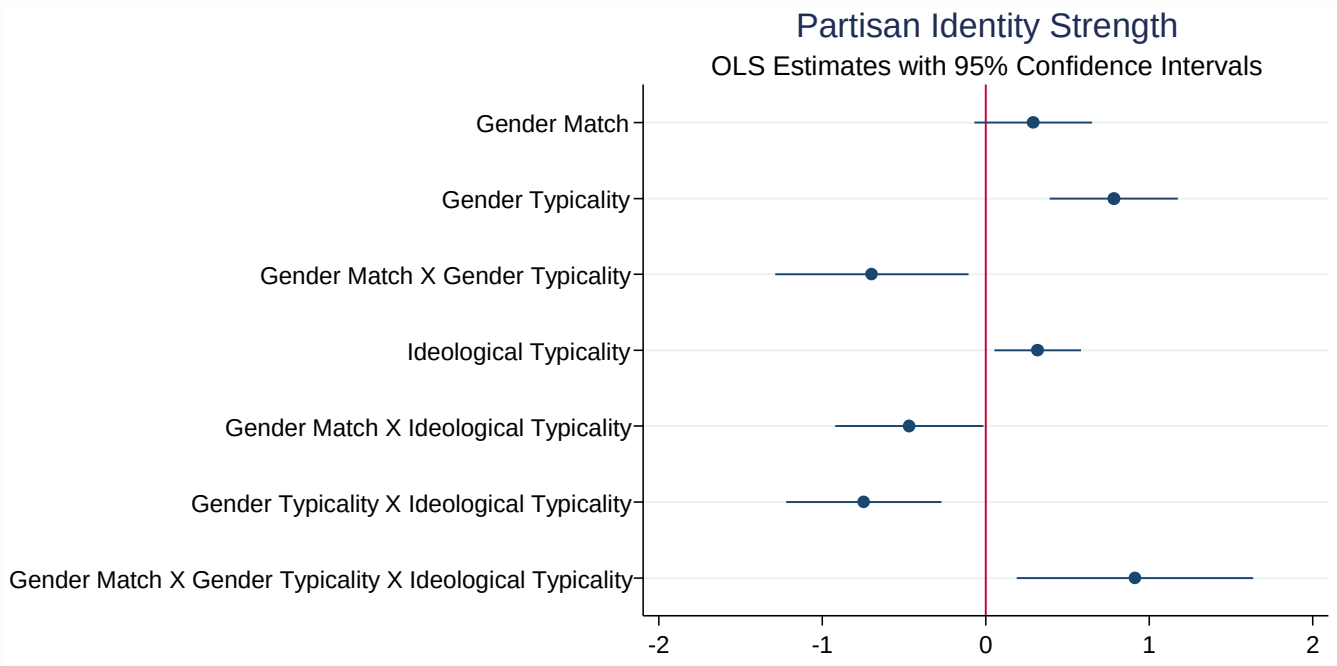


Note: Gender Typicality, Ideological Typicality, and Perceived Typicality are continuous variables that range from 0 to 1.

Results III: Similarity and Typicality

The next step consists of bringing the various aspects of typicality and their interaction with similarity together in a comprehensive analytical model to predict partisan identity strength. Now that I have identified the components of typicality, I can include them as predictors of partisan identity strength. For this purpose, I regress partisan identity on the experimental similarity manipulation (i.e. gender match/gender mismatch), the gender typicality variable, and the ideological typicality variable, as well as their interaction. The results of this regression model are displayed in Figure 32.

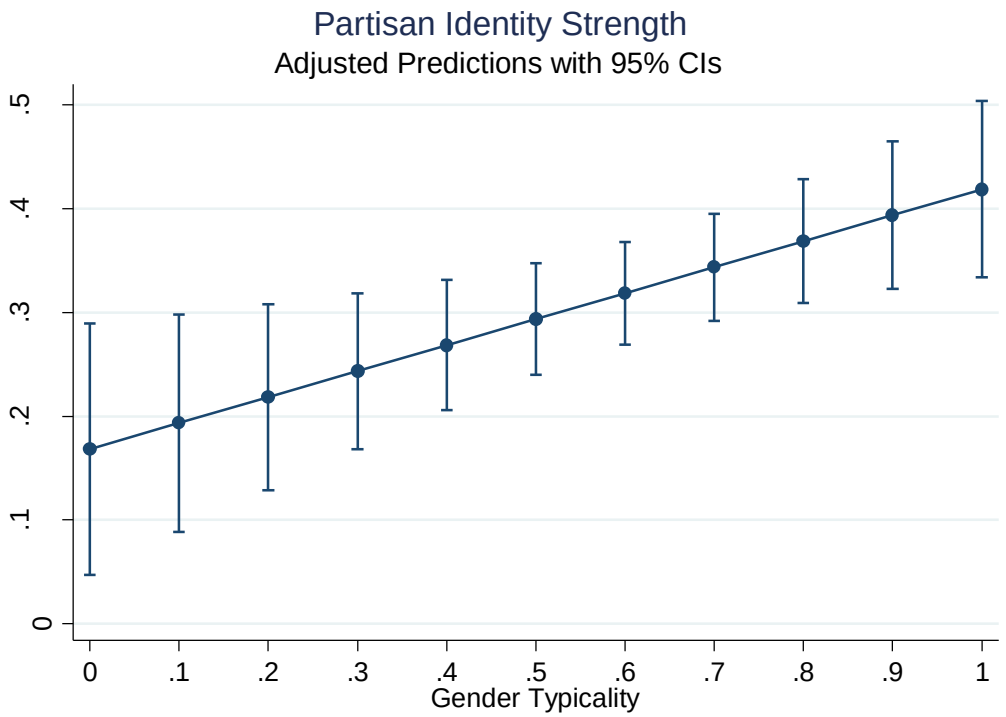
Table 32: OLS Regression Results, Comprehensive Model Predicting Partisan Identity Strength



Note: Partisan Identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Pure Independents are excluded.

Figure 32 shows a positive and significant three way interaction between gender typicality, ideological typicality, and the gender similarity condition. For better illustration, I calculated and graphed the predicted levels of partisan identity strength and their confidence intervals for respondents in the gender match condition as gender typicality among the inparty leadership increases (Figure 33) while holding ideological typicality at its maximum value.

Figure 33: Predicted Levels of Partisan Identity at High Levels of Ideological Typicality

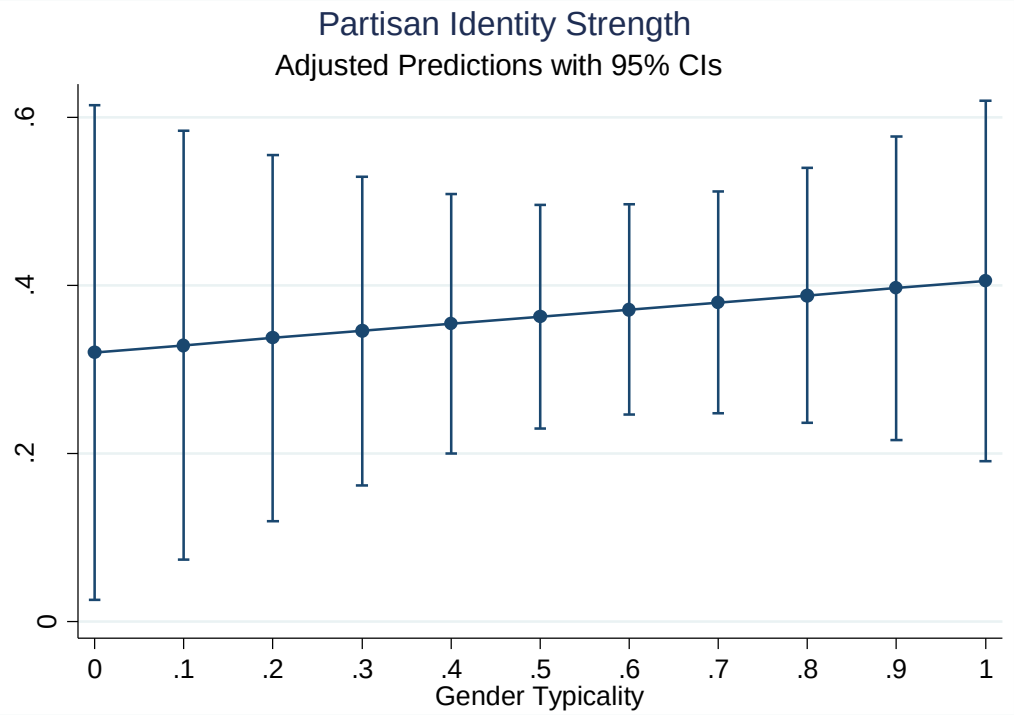


Note: Graph displays effect of gender typicality in the gender match condition while holding ideological typicality at its maximum value. Typicality is operationalized as the ratio of men and women in the inparty leadership based on the percentages reported by the respondents.

To illustrate the interaction of gender and ideological typicality, I also examine the predicted levels of partisan identity strength among respondents in the gender match condition as

their gender typicality increases while holding ideological typicality at its minimum value of 0. The results are depicted in Figure 34.

Figure 34: Predicted Levels of Partisan Identity at Low Ideological Typicality

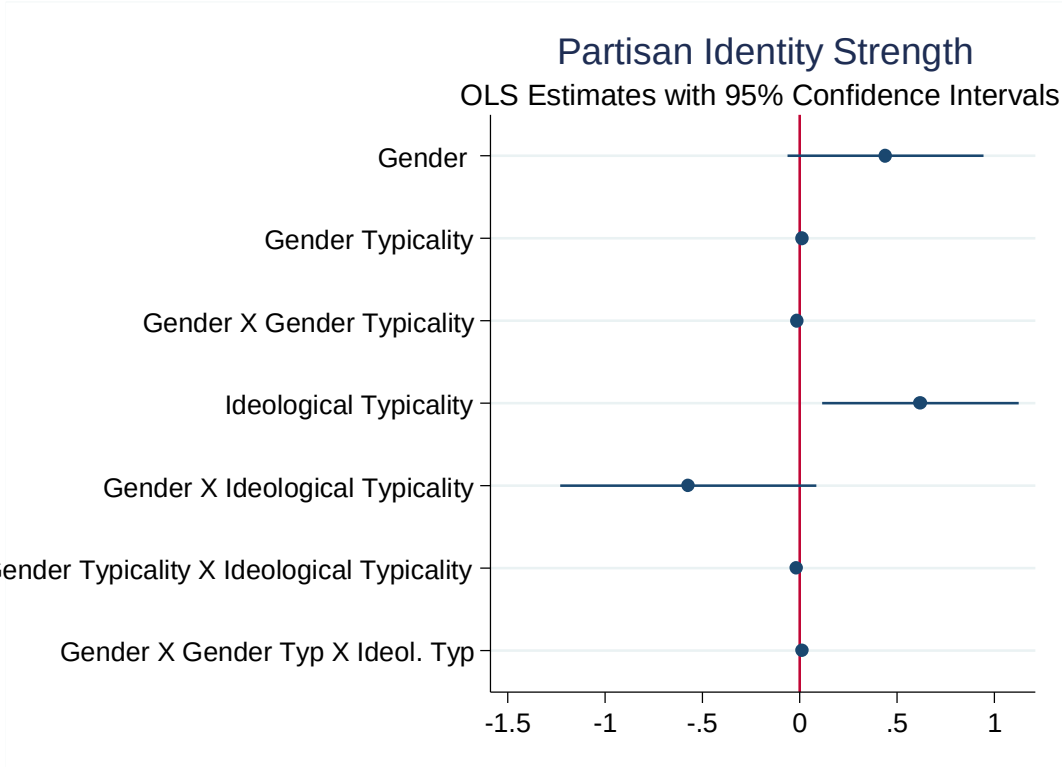


Note: Graph displays effect of gender typicality in the gender match condition while holding ideological typicality at its minimum value. Typicality is operationalized as the ratio of men and women in the inparty leadership based on the percentages reported by the respondents.

Both graphs emphasize an important point: The effect of social similarity (i.e. gender similarity) is minimal in the absence of ideological typicality even when the respondent's gender is highly typical in the party's leadership. Therefore, political similarity appears to be a prerequisite for social similarity to unfold its impact on partisan identity strength.

Given the results in Table 17 A and B, however, it is possible that I overestimate the effect of gender similarity. If the perception of typicality is the key to increased levels of partisan identity strength, then it seems irrelevant whether that inparty leader shares the respondent's gender. To examine this option I replicate the analysis in Figure 32 but replace the gender similarity variable with a variable that reflects the gender of the mock inparty leader rather than the gender match between the inparty leader and the respondent.

Figure 35: OLS regression results, alternative model



Note: Partisan Identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. Pure Independents are excluded. The variable "Gender" reflects the gender of the fictional inparty leader whereby 1 indicates a female party leader and 0 a male party leader.

As the results in Figure 33 suggest the three way interaction of the gender of the inparty leader, as well as ideological, and gender typicality is not statistically significant which underlines the importance of the interaction between similarity and typicality in in strengthening partisan identity.

Overall, the combined analyses emphasize that gender similarity is not sufficient to strengthen partisan attachments. If a partisan's gender is not perceived as typical among the inparty's leadership, gender similarity can even have a negative impact on partisan identity strength. However, if, for example, a female party supporter perceives her gender to be strongly represented among the inparty elites, female inparty politicians can intensify attachments among female partisans under the condition that their political issue preferences are considered typical for the party. This findings lends support to my second core hypothesis that social similarity to inparty leaders can strengthen partisan identity if their political and social features are aligned with the party's profile.

Conclusion and Discussion of Results

This study has demonstrated that similarity to a prototypical party leader can strengthen partisan identity strength. The definition of prototypicality is two-fold: On one hand, the extent to which a party leader is perceived as typical is predicted by his/her political issue profile and its overlap with the party's platform. On the other hand, typicality is also defined by non-political or social attributes such as the gender of the party leader. If these two types of typicality are given, similarity to such a party leader can lead to higher levels of partisan identity strength. This finding

has several implications both for the theoretical debate on the nature of partisanship as well as for current political developments.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the notion that partisanship is grounded in more than just political issue and ideological preferences. Instead, social features of a party's leadership can strengthen the sense of belonging and attachment that partisans feel towards their party. Thus, these results provide further evidence for the validity of the Social Identity approach towards studying the development and consequences of partisanship.

In addition, this study offered a less common application of Social Identity Theory to intraparty processes such as inparty leaders and their effect on other partisans. Within the literature on polarization of both the American electorate and its party elites, most researchers have utilized Social Identity Theory to explain interparty phenomena such as outparty hostility, and ingroup bias. In contrast, the theoretical perspective of this dissertation highlights the importance of inparty leaders, and partisan stereotypes, as well as their impact on partisan identity. More specifically, this chapter has emphasized the role of typicality for both party leaders and partisans, suggesting that typical partisans – those who match their party's political and social profile – develop stronger party attachments than their atypical counterparts. The analyses in particular demonstrated that political typicality is a necessary condition for this mechanisms to work. Put differently, social similarity is not effective if political similarity is not given. This finding emphasizes the importance of political issue preferences in the development of strong party ties. At the same time, we have observed relatively strong effects of social similarity if political similarity was at its maximum value. Therefore, both components seem to drive partisan identity strength.

Given these insights, I encourage political behavior researcher to examine the role of typicality as a predictor of party leader's influence as well as party identity strength. In case of the

former, we can gain insights on which members of a party's leadership are most likely to shape the party's prototype which, in turn, will be used by partisans to assess their fit to the party, influencing their level of partisan identity strength. Monitoring this process can help us trace even slight changes in intra-party dynamics which will inevitably impact inter-party relationship as well.

From a more applied perspective, these findings can shed light on the political demise of Carly Fiorina's presidential candidacy during the primary season beginning last year. While Fiorina was applauded for her contribution to a more diverse gender composition of the Republican Party, her campaign never caught sufficient momentum to keep her in the race for the nomination. In fact, Fiorina's campaign fell short of generating the expected support from female voters that would have been necessary to establish her as a front-runner. For female Republican voters, gender simply was not a significant factor in their voting decision. This notion is emphasized by various polls showing Fiorina with just 1% support of GOP women.

In contrast, Hillary Clinton has gathered a substantial amount of support from women, in particular older female Democrats above the age of 45 while younger women tend to favor Bernie Sanders. This generational divide illustrates the intersectionality of various identities. In this particular case, the convergence of age and gender may make older Democratic women feel more similar to Hillary Clinton while younger women lack the similar age and the corresponding experiences of gender discrimination that have shaped women of previous generations, including Hillary Clinton. Regardless of the age divide among Clinton's female support base, many women openly declare their support for her in part because she is a woman. Gender, as this debate shows, is a substantial factor in the Democratic primaries whereas its brief presence in the Republican primaries was quickly purged and forgotten with the suspension of Carly Fiorina's presidential bid

which was supposed to be a pathway to women for the Republican Party[26]. While an actual win of the nomination might have been a long stretch for Carly Fiorina in the first place, a longer run for the nomination might have altered the GOP's prototype in favor of women, strengthening partisan attachments among female Republicans. At the same time, this positive effect might have come at the expense of partisan strength among Republican men. There are similar predictions on the Democratic side: Hillary Clinton's appeal is much more widespread among women[27], aggravating the Democratic Party's "White Men Problem[28]" which has left the GOP with an advantage of 21% in party identification levels among white men[29]. Put differently, if Hillary Clinton becomes the nominee of the Democratic Party, we might see a weakening of parties among white male Democrats who do not feel similar to a female party prototype. From that perspective, this research can speak to the dynamics of the presidential campaign season and make predictions about potential consequences for party identification, especially with regards to gender.

In addition to the insights on gender and its effects on partisan identity, this study also hints at the impact of ideological consistency. Participants with consistently liberal or conservative issue preferences encountered a mock politician who reflected their ideologically consistent attitudes. This consistency was an important determinant of the perceived typicality of the inparty leader. From that perspective, party leaders with a more extreme political agenda might be able to exert

[26] Peters, Jermey: *Carly Fiorina offers Republicans a pathway to reach women:* http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/18/us/politics/carly-fiorina-gains-traction-in-debate-and-republicans-may-seize-on-her-appeal.html?_r=0 (last accessed: 05/16/2016).
[27] Jones, Jeffrey: *Hillary Clinton Retains Strong Appeal to American Women*: http://www.gallup.com/poll/182081/hillary-clinton-retains-strong-appeal-american-women.aspx (last accessed 05/16/2016).
[28]Henderson, Nia-Malika: *Jim Webb and the Democrats' white-man problem*: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/01/05/jim-webb-and-the-democrats-white-man-problem/ (last accessed 05/16/2016).
[29] Pew Research Center: *A Deep Dive Into Party Affiliation*: http://www.people-press.org/2015/04/07/a-deep-dive-into-party-affiliation/ (last accessed: 05/16/2016).

more power over fellow partisans than party leaders with political agendas that borrow from both sides of the ideological spectrum and might, hence, offer more room for bipartisanship.

Closely related to the issue of partisan typicality is the question regarding the potential for change of what we perceive as typical for a Republican or a Democrat. If only typical party leaders increase partisan identity strength, then uncommon political and social features among the party leadership should weaken partisan attachments. This prediction is buttressed by Green and colleagues in their by seminal work on party identification: "The stability of partisanship, […], may reflect the persistence of citizen's images of Democrats and Republicans. Citizens learn about which sorts of social, economic, or ideological groups affiliate with each party, while at the same time, sorting out which group labels properly apply to themselves" (2002: 137). The knowledge of these images is acquired at an early stage in the political development cycle making them resistant to change (Hilton and von Hippel 1996). Green et al. (2002) suggest a tipping point model whereby partisans maintain their identities as long as their image of the type of people who support that party remains stable. From this perspective, only dramatic changes in the partisan composition such as the defection of Southern Whites from the Democratic Party in the 1960ies can alter partisan images, ultimately motivating people to gradually abandon their party loyalties.

Given the endurance of these images, however, it is difficult to manipulate them in an experimental setting. Nevertheless, future research should try to pin down the effect of variations in partisan stereotypes on partisan identity strength. Some political parties, for example, might generate a clearer partisan image than others because of their narrow and well-defined constituency and/or their ideologically consistent agenda. In the case of the latter, this could even extent to single-issue parties in multi-party systems. The degree to which the partisan image is clear might,

in turn, influence the ease with which partisans can evaluate the typicality of party leaders, and eventually develop party attachments.

To sum up, similar to other social groups, party leaders' influence is shaped and restricted by the extent to which they conform to party norms which consist of both the political issues that the party stands for as well as sociodemographic features of the party's leadership. Partisans who are similar to party leaders who fulfil these norms are more likely to develop strong party attachments than those who do not seem themselves represented among the inparty's leadership. This mechanism might lead to a feedback loop whereby strong partisans are likely to defend their central position within the party, reinforcing the partisan stereotype.

Chapter VII: Conclusion, Discussion of Results, and Future Research

This dissertation started with a simple question: Can similarity to inparty leaders strengthen partisan attachments even if that similarity is not directly related to political preferences? Guided by social categorization theory (Turner 1987, 1985), I derived and tested predictions about the effect of this type of apolitical, or social, similarity on partisan identity strength. For this purpose, I first introduced a multi-item scale to capture more fine-grained variations in partisan identity strength. The scale outperformed the traditional partisan strength item in its measurement properties as well as its predictive power. More importantly, the multi-item scale allowed me to examine partisan identity as the dependent variable since it captures even minor shifts in partisan identity strength – a feature that seems advantageous for detecting the potentially minimal effects of experimental stimuli.

Following the measurement analyses, I presented two experimental studies that aimed at testing my major hypotheses. Study I found confirmatory evidence for the positive effect of social similarity on partisan identity strength. Even seemingly trivial features such as sharing similar hobbies or childhood experiences with inparty leaders intensified identity strength among partisans. Study II specified this relationship further and demonstrated that the positive effect of similarity to party leaders only holds if that party leader is perceived as a typical (i.e. 'prototypical') member of the inparty. Without that perception of typicality, similarity did not increase partisan identity strength.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this dissertation have implications for the way political scientists study political parties and partisanship. In agreement with Social Identity Theory, the previous studies' findings illustrated the social nature of parties, specifying one of the possible psychological processes that turn people into partisans. These findings stand in contrast to the conventional rational choice approach that would have defined partisanship exclusively in terms of political issue preferences and ideology. From that vantage point, commonalities that are not related to political content should have had no effect on the intensity of party attachments. The partisans I studied in two experiments, however, reported higher levels of partisan identity strength when they felt politically and socially similar to an inparty leader. Put differently, political parties – just like other social groups – are objects of identification. The process of group identification, by definition, entails the association or linking of oneself with members of the target group. By emphasizing similarities with typical party members, this association is facilitated. The current research has shown that similarity does not have to be political per se. Instead, even commonalities unrelated to politics can strengthen partisans' sense of belonging to the party.

These commonalities, however, are not always purely political or purely social. As mentioned throughout this dissertation, voters can use social cues to infer political information about their inparty leader. In Study I, this could have been the case, for example, the inparty leader's favored type of music. It is indeed part of a partisan stereotype that Republicans favor Country music while Democrats prefer more modern music such as Hip Hop or Pop music. To a lesser extent, this might have also been the case in Study II whereby voters infer from the candidate's gender that she will be more liberal on gender issues. However, the experiments presented in this dissertation fixed respondents' political preferences so that inferences about the

political profile of the mock party leaders was limited. Moreover, since respondents were matched to an inparty leader, they might have assumed a high level of political similarity a priori. Therefore, I am confident that the higher levels in partisan identity strength in the social similarity conditions are induced by the added sense of matching the party's social prototype.

This insight can shape studies of partisanship in several ways. First, rather than maintaining the theoretical divide between the revisionist and identity- based operationalization of partisanship, political scientists can acknowledge that both political issues as well as identity play a role in developing party attachments. In fact, it is possible that some people are more likely to ground their party loyalties in instrumental considerations while others are more susceptible to develop a partisan identity that is grounded in the need to belong and defend the party's status. Investigating these heterogeneous mechanisms as well as conditions that favor instrumental over expressive partisanship or vice versa would advance the theoretical debate on partisanship and open up new channels of investigation.

Moreover, this dissertation has demonstrated the usefulness of Social Identity Theory and Social Categorization Theory to examine intra-party processes. So far, SIT has primarily been applied to inter-party dynamics, especially polarization as well as out-party hostility and ingroup favoritism. However, the conceptual foundation of SIT considers the ingroup as the reference point by which the social world, including other groups, are evaluated. Thus, in order to explain inter-group conflict, it is crucial to investigate intra-group processes and the type of identity they produce. Social identity Theory would postulate that there are various factors regarding the nature of the ingroup that can influence the development and strength of group attachments such as level of distinctiveness (e.g. Brewer 1993; Abrams 1994), group size (e.g. Brewer and Kramer 1996; Brewer 1991), permeability of group boundaries (e.g. Jackson et al. 1996; Ellemers et al. 1988),

and the status of the group in society (e.g. Ellemers et al. 1999; Steele et al. 2002). These factors potentially vary not just between political parties within an electoral system but also between electoral systems and the types of parties they produce. Social Identity Theory has not been sufficiently applied to these questions even though earlier studies seemed promising. For example, Abrams (1994) finds that supporters of minority political parties in the U.K. and Scotland are more committed, and perceived their party to be more representative of themselves than supporters of majority parties, a pattern that is also associated with stronger party attachments. Abrams uses Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer 1991; 2003) – an outgrowth of Social Identity Theory – to derive his predictions, demonstrating empirically that minor parties are more capable of striking the optimal balance of inclusion and distinctiveness within and between political groups, leading to higher levels of party identification.

These insights are valuable for our understanding of minor parties such as nationalistic and ethnic parties and their electoral survival, especially in European multi-party systems. At the same time, Optimal Distinctiveness Theory would raise questions about the party attachments in the U.S. where two major parties might provide distinctiveness between Democrats and Republicans but potentially less so within each partisan group. A related and somewhat conflictual question would ask about the role of group entitativity (i.e. "groupiness") as well as ingroup members' motivation to reduce within-group differences. From that perspective, are homogeneous parties such as the Republican Party at an advantage when fostering party attachments? Do the Democrats in the U.S. have a psychological "Big Tent" problem or is the party's diverse coalition a way to achieve both interparty and intraparty distinctiveness? As we can see, many questions prevail. Not all of them can fully be answered from the cognitive perspective of Social Identity Theory as group attachments are influenced by a variety of factors that go beyond the "cognitive automatons"

(Abrams 1989) that SIT and SCT make people out to be. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that focusing on dynamics within a political party cannot just shed light on inter-party relationships but also provide a platform for a more comparative research agenda that can aim to explain varying levels of partisan strength across countries.

Practical Implications

Given the recent political climate in the U.S., I claim that the results presented in this dissertation also have very current and practical implications. For example, the results seem to support the notion that politicians should appeal to ordinary citizens not just to increase their vote share but also to strengthen attachments to their party. This is of course no news to politicians who constantly try to appear like regular people in an attempt to connect to voters. President Obama, for example, oftentimes publishes pictures on Facebook or Twitter showing himself and his family engaging in family activities. Similarly, it does not take long before one can find pictures of the President using a selfie-stick or drinking a Guinness at a pub with his wife. These casual acts might appear meaningless or trivial at first glance but as the first experimental study in this dissertation has shown, the cumulative effect of these social cues can increase the extent to which partisans identify with their party if they seem themselves reflected in them.

While political parties naturally have an interest in candidates that can appeal to a broad audience, they also target specific sociodemographic subgroups by pointing out their commonalities with these group members. In Study II, this commonality was based on gender similarity. Other factors that could feasibly follow a similar mechanism are race, age, and potentially religion though the former two are much more easily identifiable than the latter.

Overall, the idea is that if we see our inparty led by elite members who are similar to us, we feel more attached to the party. As Study I and Study II have demonstrated, the base of that similarity can vary from very personalized commonalities (e.g. literature preferences) to very broad overlaps in sociodemographic features such as gender.

While these studies have made a strong case for the power of similarity, this dissertation has also shown that the effect of similarity to inparty leaders does not function for any type of party leader. Instead, party leaders need to be considered typical members of the inparty before the positive effect of similarity can unfold. This typicality perception hinges both on the political and social party prototype, making some leaders more typical of their party than others even when both represent very similar political platforms.

At the same time, this raises questions about the interplay of these two types of similarity. Which dimension is more important in raising partisan strength? As the previous chapter showed social similarity was ineffective when political similarity was completely absent. From that vantage point, social similarity to the party prototype unfolds its potential under the condition that some level of political similarity is given.

The complexity of social and political similarity as well as typicality is illustrated by the often cited diversity of the GOP primary candidates. Even though the race for the Republican nomination included a female and an African-American candidate, Carly Fiorina and Ben Carson respectively, their presidential bid hardly produced any momentum among women and African-Americans. In fact, Republican women on average report a value of 49 on the feeling thermometer scale for Carly Fiorina indicating a lack of positive evaluations. Similarly, most Black Republican partisans included in the ANES 2016 Pilot Study report feeling unfavorably towards Ben Carson with an average reported score value of 48 on the feeling thermometer. Contrast this number with

white Republicans who on average report a score of 62 for Ben Carson. Thus, political similarity on its own would not help these unconventional candidates as they are considered fringe members of their party. Still, Ben Carson gathered a substantial amount of support from evangelical voters which hints at the primacy of political similarity in this context.

A similar argument can be made for the supporters of Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump. Neither of these two candidates have much in common with their supporters. Sanders is much older compared to his mostly young followers while Donald Trump – a wealthy, Ivy-League educated businessman – draws support from mostly uneducated, blue-collar voters. Here, political and social similarity appear to be at odds. However, if political similarity is indeed a necessary criterion for social similarity to be impactful, these patterns are not too surprising. Sanders represents the political issue preferences of young, liberal voters such as college education, and economic inequality while Trump captures the economic realities of many members of the middle class, especially those who struggle financially. Thus, the absence of social similarity is not detrimental to their electoral success though it raises questions about their impact on party attachments.

More specifically, the potential for change in the perceptions of the party prototype is an important topic to follow in the months leading up to the conventions. The GOP is well aware of its lack of sociodemographic diversity, not just among the party leadership but also among the electorate: 87% of all ANES respondents who identified as Republicans are White, 56% are Protestants, and 70% are at least 40 years old or older (ANES 2016). Not surprisingly, the Republican Party has been struggling to expand its voter coalition. Given what political scientists have discovered from examining the effects of the Southern Realignment, changes in the party prototype, let alone partisanship, occur only gradually over the course of a long time period.

Similar to the deliberate addition of Southerners to the Republican leadership in the 1960s, it might require conscious efforts by the Republican leadership to bring women, racial, ethnic, and religious minorities to the forefront of the GOP's public stage. Without this type of affirmative action, these underrepresented groups will remain invisible to the Republican electorate and hence, will never have a chance to obtain the kind of authority that comes with being considered a core member of the GOP elite.

Donald Trump, on the other hand, fits the social prototype of the Republican Party while standing in sharp contrast to the party's political profile. If the party moves towards Trumpian populism, this could have severe consequences for party attachments among Conservatives who considered the GOP their ideological home; even though Trump might look like them, they do not feel similar to him due to their political discrepancies. In fact, the orthogonal constellation of the political and social dimension of the Republican prototype becomes most apparent at the example of Marco Rubio who attempted to change the social dimension of his party's prototype by representing the demographic and generational change that the GOP so desperately needs. At the same time, Rubio's political platform remained emblematic of the conservative ideology that underlies the political dimension of the Republican prototype. As *The Atlantic* put it: "Rubio assembled a Republican rainbow coalition of supporters led by Asian American Governor Nikki Haley, African American Senator Tim Scott, and white male Representative Trey Gowdy, all 51 or younger. Against that backdrop, the 44-year-old Cuban American senator delivered a compelling message (and visual representation) of generational and demographic change. But

Rubio has wrapped that dynamic message around an agenda that, with only a few innovative exceptions, mostly embraces conventional conservative positions[30]."

From that perspective, the GOP finds itself in a bind. If the Republican leadership and its conservative supporters reject Trump because he defies the political dimension of the party's prototype, then the GOP loses support among a large portion of its constituency who think of themselves as politically similar to the GOP through the image of Donald Trump. If the Republican leadership embraces Trump, then it risks losing support among its conservative base who have been at the core of defining the party's political prototype. Overall, future political developments in the US will serve as great cases for the study of party prototypes.

Limitations

While experimental studies offer the chance to test causal mechanisms, the potential for generalizable results depends on many factors. In the two studies I presented in this dissertation, I relied on a convenience sample of undergraduate students as well as an Amazon Mechanical Turk sample. In behavioral research, student samples have frequently been criticized as too narrow (Sears 1986) as undergraduate students are not just much more homogenous from the overall population we wish to sample from but in particular lack the political experience of their older counterparts. Both features pose a problem to the generalizability of the results obtained in Study I: The majority of respondents identified as Democrats, and even the small share of Republican identifiers reported to follow a liberal ideology on social issues. In addition, their relative

[30] Brownstein, Ronald: *Trump Is Redefining the Republican Party*: http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/02/trump-is-redefining-the-gop/470883/ (last accessed: 05/16/2016).

inexperience with politics might make them particular susceptible to the treatment, overstating its effect. From that perspective, the results from Study I might not hold for a more representative sample of the U.S. population. Nevertheless, the findings might still be useful to understand the process of partisanship acquisition among political novices.

In contrast to student samples, Mechanical Turk provides a much more heterogeneous sample (Huff and Tingley 2015; Krupnikov and Levine 2014) but faces its own type of threats to generalizability such as the potentially unlimited number of studies that MTurk workers can take, turning them into professional survey takers (Krupnikov and Levine 2014; Paolacci and Chandler 2014). Moreover, MTurkers tend to be younger and more educated than the overall population. To that extent, the results obtained in Study II might again overestimate the magnitude of the effects, assuming younger people are more susceptible to identity-related features of politician. However, most research on political development agrees that people develop crystallized attitudes by the age of 30. Given that the medium age of MTurk workers in my second experiment was 31, I do not consider the sample's age distribution a serious threat to the validity of the results.

However, the relatively high levels of education among MTurk workers might be problematic as educated partisans are more aware of the profile of a typical Republican and Democrat – both in terms of their social and political characteristics. From that perspective, predicting perceived typicality with ideological and gender typicality would work only for politically sophisticated people who think of political issue preferences as well as the social profile of a typical inparty leader when they are asked to evaluate the typicality of their constructed inparty[31] leader in the treatment of the second experimental study. Replicating similar results with

[31] This could also be the case because MTurkers might have been exposed to a multitude of similar studies.

a more representative and diverse sample would ensure that the relationship between similarity and typicality holds true across various subgroups of the population.

Last, critics might argue that – in addition to sample features – both experimental studies in this dissertation also lack external validity in the sense that the causal relationship between similarity and partisan identity strength would not hold outside the laboratory environment where partisans are typically not directly presented with inparty leaders that are similar to them on the basis of political or social characteristics. Instead, partisans would have to seek out that type of information by either following the latest developments within their inparty leadership or following inparty leaders on social media outlets to learn about their social preferences. Put differently, partisans might already have to be 'hooked' or attached to a party before they are exposed to the kind of information used in the treatment vignettes of the previous two experimental studies. This is a caveat I cannot fully resolve in this dissertation. In fact, my theoretical framework focuses on partisans – people who are already attached to a party in some way. Partisans tend to be more engaged and interested in politics than their nonpartisan counterparts, making them more likely to identify an inparty leader they feel similar to both in terms of policy preferences and social characteristics.

Further Research on Prototypes and its Characteristics

Besides these weaknesses in the experiments' design and sample choices, the findings presented in this dissertation also raise interesting questions that should be explored in further research such as the development and impact of party prototypes on the acquisition and strengthening of party attachments. For example, Lupu (2013) uses the term *party brands* to refer

to the political prototype of a party, emphasizing the importance of a well-defined profile: "Party brands also have some variance around them, which is updated as individuals observe party behavior. We can think of this variance as the strength of the party brand, the precision with which the party signals its position. As the variance decreases, voters become more certain about the party's position, develop a clearer image of its prototypical partisan [...]. As voter uncertainty about the party's position increases, the party appears to be more heterogeneous, perhaps containing multiple prototypes, and the brand becomes weaker or diluted" (Lupu 2013). From that perspective, weak or equivocal party prototypes might diminish party attachments or even hinder their development as the party's profile no longer provides clear signals to voters about the party's platform. This argument also allows for asymmetries between political parties whereby one party might be represented by a more well-define prototype than the other.

In fact, prior research by Grossman and Hopkins (2015) makes the argument that the Democratic and Republican Party do not simply differ in their policy positions but also in their internal structure whereby the Republicans are described as an ideological movement that emphasizes its conservative identity while the Democrats are a loose alliance of distinct social groups that are united under the big tent of the Democratic Party. If we translate these insights into the context of prototypes, the Republican Party's identity might be more likely to produce consistent party prototypes that are clearly defined by its conservative values and principles while the Democratic Party appears to be an amalgam of various sub-identities that give its prototype a more kaleidoscopic nature. In the following, I will briefly review the consequences of these asymmetries in the parties' prototype from a Social Categorization Theory standpoint.

A Brief Theoretical Look at Social Identity Theory and Prototypes

Social Categorization Theory posited that ingroups and outgroups are cognitively represented by group categories or group prototypes that summarize the central features and characteristics of each group's members. Hence, these prototypes serve important functions in the development of group identities as they provide quick access to commonly shared understanding of who belongs to a certain group and who does not, thereby maximizing the group's distinctiveness (Hogg et al. 2007; Hogg and Reid 2006). Hence, political parties have an interest in maintaining a clear image of their party in the minds of voters[32].

Diluted prototypes, however, reduce the level of distinctiveness to a party's identity which is detrimental to the intensity of inparty ties as the desire of group members to be distinct from other groups in society is fundamental to the development of group identities. Hogg (2001) therefore concludes that "simple and more clearly focused prototypes are less open to ambiguity and alternative interpretations…" (p.191) of what it means to be an ingroup member. Throughout this dissertation, I have been arguing that the party brand or prototype is not just defined by its political platform but also by the social features of its elite members. To that extent, a dilution of a party's social prototype might be equally damaging to the development of party attachments as the dilution of its political complement. But what would a diluted social prototype look like and how could we measure it?

[32] There are different theoretical justifications for that. First, one could argue that clear prototypes reduce the cognitive load of voters which is supported by literature on political processing in low-information environments (e.g. Lupu 2013; Schaffner et al. 2002; Conover and Feldman 1989). Second, unambiguous prototypes also satisfy people's motivation to reduce uncertainty about the social world (e.g. Hogg 2000; Hogg et al. 2007).

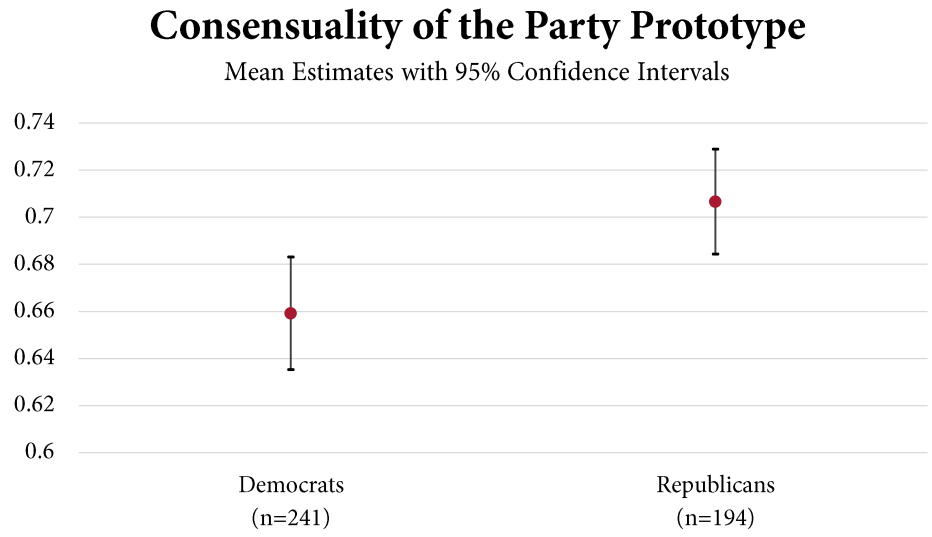
A Brief Empirical Look at Consensuality of Prototypes

In Study II, I attempted to gain some preliminary insights to these aforementioned questions. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to sum up the qualities that best describe the character, style, and spirit of their party. Note that this question does not mention the party's political issues or ideological tendencies. As the open-ended answers to this item indicate, many Republican respondents described their party as the defender of traditional ways of living. Most notably, however, they tended to use the pronoun 'we' when referring to the members of the Republican Party. For example: "We are conservative. We continue to have old-fashioned values that reflect our founding fathers values. We will continue to make this world a better place to live, and won't back down on what we believe!" The frequent use of 'we' indicates a strong attachment to the Republican Party which is why the partisan identity scale entails an item that directly asks respondents to what extent they say 'we' when talking about their party. The response patterns of Democratic respondents, on the other hand, stand in sharp contrast to their Republican equivalents. When asked to describe the party, Democrats would not only refrain from using 'we', they, in fact, reference other groups of people: For example, "Hippies, hipsters, and old people" or "The Democratic Party seems more caring about a more diverse section of people overall". The absence of ingroup references in these descriptions are striking, especially compared to the Republican responses. In fact, only 11% of Democratic respondents indicated that they always or often say 'we' instead of 'they' when talking about their party, compared to 36% of respondents on the Republican side.

To capture the differences in these qualitative answers, respondents were subsequently asked (1) how easy it was to generate their descriptions of the inparty, (2) how confident they are that their description is correct, and (3) to estimate the percentage of fellow party members who

would agree with their description of the party. Based on these three items, I created a scale that I called 'Consensuality' since the items aim at gauging the level of consensus among ingroup members about the attributes (i.e. prototype) of their group. In Figure 36, I plotted the mean estimates of the consensuality scale for Democratic and Republican respondents from Study II.

Figure 36: Prototype consensus across Democrats and Republicans

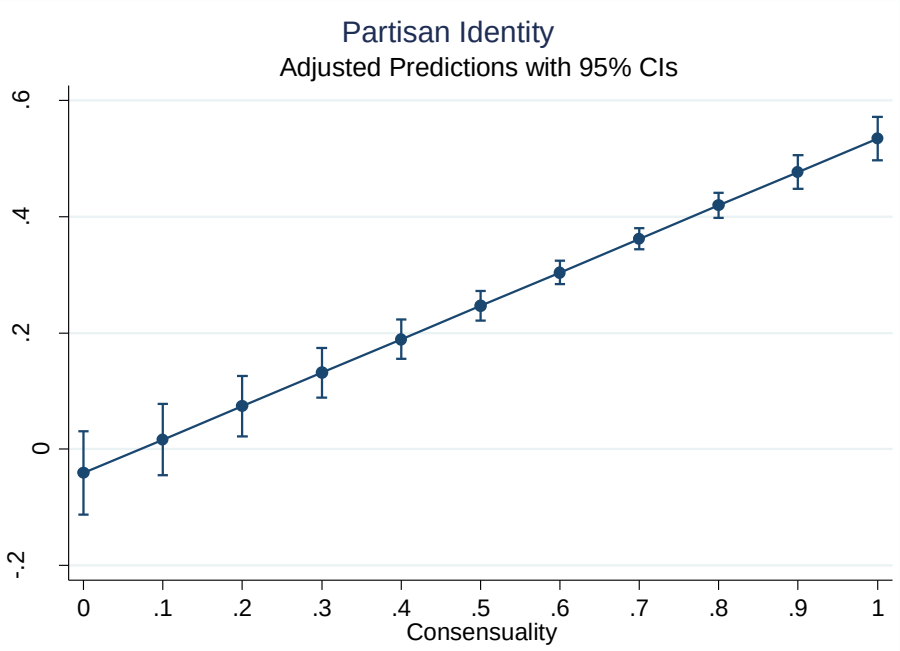


Note: Consensuality is a multi-item scale that ranges from 0 to 1. See text for details on specific items.

As Figure 36 shows, the difference in consensuality between the two partisan groups is substantial and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) suggesting that – compared to the Democratic party supporters – Republicans find it easier to define their inparty prototype and are more

confident that their fellow partisans agree with their description of the inparty[33] (plotted mean estimates for each item of the consensuality scale is included in the Appendix). What are the consequences of these differences for partisan identity strength? In a simple bivariate regression, the consensuality of the party prototype was a strong, positive, and highly significant predictor of partisan identity strength. The predicted levels of partisan identity are graphed in Figure 37.

Figure 37: Predicted levels of Partisan Identity across Consensuality



Note: Consensuality and Partisan Identity range from 0 to 1. See text for details on the construction of the consensuality scale.

[33] Also see Stern et al. (2014) in which the authors demonstrate that "…conservatives possess a stronger desire to share reality than liberals and are therefore more likely to perceive consensus with politically like-minded others even for non-political judgments."

Since these results are merely observational, a definite conclusion regarding the relationship between the party prototype and partisan identity would be on shaky grounds. Moreover, while I do find that Republican respondents in the MTurk sample show significantly higher levels of partisan identity strength, this difference disappears in other samples[34].

There are alternative theories within the Social Categorization framework that could explain strong parties ties among Democrats besides the party's ambiguous or diverse prototype. After all, African-Americans have traditionally been strong Democrats even though the Party's leadership has never been predominantly Black. The same can be said for women who make up only a small share of the Democratic Party's leadership albeit its number of prominent female leaders such as Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Elizabeth Warren. One possible explanation for these patterns could lie in ingroup members' tendency to differentiate each other into distinct subgroups (Huddy and Virtanen 1995; Park, Ryan, and Judd 1992; Park and Judd 1990). In particular, Huddy and Virtanen (1995) argue that this process of subcategorization allows ingroup members to define the membership in their ingroup more narrowly by simply excluding the members of other subgroups. If that is the case, identification with the subgroup might supersede identification with the ingroup as a whole. The authors test this hypothesis at the example of Latinos which serves as a broad ingroup category that encompasses several subgroups such as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. Results show that these subgroups were equally likely to identify and feel more similar to members of their own rather than other subgroups (Huddy and Virtanen 1995). Moreover, Latino respondents even rated the term Hispanic as more applicable to

[34] Huddy et al. (2015) use a shorter and slightly modified version of the partisan identity scale. Comparing values on this scale for Democratic and Republican identified in a nationally representative sample yields no significant difference in partisan identity strength.

their own subgroup rather than to others, which could be interpreted as a sign of appropriating the ingroup label..

These results provide some insights into how even diverse parties could promote party attachments. If a Black Democrat believes that the term Democrat describes him better than other subgroups of the Democratic Party, then this restrictive and subgroup specific prototype allows subgroup members to feel representative of their party without being dominant among the party's leadership. In fact, Grossman and Hopkins (2015) make a very similar argument stating that "…minority voters to be more attracted to the coalitional nature of the Democratic Party as long as they perceive themselves as belonging to a discrete social group with distinctive political interests, complicating Republican efforts to win a significantly greater share of their support" (p.135) From that perspective, consensuality of the prototype could be high among the members of the Democratic Party's various subgroups albeit its overall coalitional nature.

At the same time, it appears that the ingroup's size influences the necessity of these subgroup identities. Optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer 1991), for example, argues that very large social groups such as nations are not always optimal sources of self-definition, potentially weakening group attachments. This is because large groups can be overly inclusive, and thus fail to simultaneously provide their members with crucial feelings of distinctiveness (Brewer, Manzi, and Shaw 1993) while smaller groups may be better able to satisfy these countervailing needs (i.e. inclusion and distinctiveness). Indeed, identification with large (overly inclusive) groups is typically weaker than with smaller groups (Brewer 1991) which makes the identification with subgroups particularly important for these large groups in order to develop strong group loyalties in the first place.

In the context of political parties, the U.S. two party system produces two major parties that encompass most Americans Therefore, the subgroup identities might be particularly prominent within these two large social groups allowing partisans to feel strongly attached to their party through the identification with their subgroup despite a diverse composition of the party overall as is the case in particular for the Democratic Party.

The question remains though to what extent subgroup identities help or hinder political parties such as the Democrats in fostering strong party attachments compared to more homogeneous parties like the GOP. As Grossman and Hopkins (2015) point out the ideological purity that has defined the GOP's image for so long might also be a breeding ground for intraparty conflicts about who truly embodies the party's conservative identity. The ousting of former House speaker John Boehner is most emblematic of this type of identity-related conflict whereby ingroup members enforce strict group boundaries to maintain a well-defined group protoype. From this perspective, homogenous large groups such as political parties might have to balance the demands for a distinctive party brand that party supporters can identify with while allowing for the intra-party diversity that large social groups are bound to be characterized by. In fact, the Republican Party suffers from this tension at the moment as its presumptive nominee Donald Trump is anything but fitting the conservative prototype that other party leaders such as Paul Ryan, John Kasich, and even Ted Cruz would have embodied to a much larger extent.

Hogg et al. (2001) notes that "…although groups that embrace diverse roles, subgroups, or nested categories often contain the seeds of subgroup conflict, this is certainly not always the case. This kind of diversity may help avoid many pitfalls of overly consensual groups for group decision making and may actually improve group decision making" (p.261) This angle portrays diverse groups with distinctive subgroups as a positive features, potentially because it prevents the type of

identity controversies that the Republican Party is experiencing. Therefore, it is not clear which party has an advantage in fostering strong party attachments, if any. On the one hand, the Republican Party might promote strong parties ties among those who perceived themselves to embody the strictly defined party prototype. We should see an erosion of partisan strength among these people, however, as the party prototype becomes more defined by Donald Trump's profile. On the other hand, the Democratic Party is not defined by a clear prototype but might provide a platform for its party supporters to develop subcategory identities that are sufficiently distinctive for partisans to extrapolate their subgroup identity to the ingroup as a whole.

This also raises the question regarding changes to the party prototype. Weber and Crocker (1983) investigated the process by which stereotype inconsistent information about group members changes the stereotype of the group as a whole or whether it leads to the development of subtypes. This research question is directly applicable to the current situation that the Republican leadership finds itself in. Will Donald Trump change the definition of what it means to be a Republican or will he create a subtype of Republicans that are somewhat nested within the Republican Party? Weber and Crocker (1983) find in their experimental studies on occupational stereotypes that members who strongly disconfirm the group's stereotype are viewed as unrepresentative of the overall group and are subtyped which leaves the group's superordinate stereotype unaffected. Nevertheless, this impact is moderated by the degree of deviation from the stereotype: Slight deviations from the stereotype may not be perceived as "disconfirming" because individual differences are somewhat expected, especially in large groups such as parties. However, group members who dramatically disconfirm the stereotype will potentially change stereotypes more because they are clearly disconfirming. Given Trump's vast lack of ideological alignment with the Republican Party as well as the powerful position he will presumably occupy after the

GOP convention in Cleveland this year, these insights point at the possibility of a rebranding of the Republican Party, rather than just the creation of a subcategory as happened during the incorporation of the Tea Party. Future research should investigate the sources and effects of these differences in party prototypes both with experimental and observational data. The latter could rely on data from the 1997 American National Election Study pilot study which includes a battery of questions to assess the degree to which the electorate stereotypes various sociodemographic groups in terms of their partisan loyalty which could serve as a measure of prototype clarity. These groups include blacks, whites, men, women, Christian fundamentalist, as well as gays and lesbians. Respondents were first asked how they thought each group generally tended to vote in each national election: Democratic, Republican, or evenly split.

If respondents chose one of the parties, they were then randomly assigned to one of the two follow-up question formats. In the first one, respondents were asked whether 'almost all' of the group voted Democratic (or Republican) with the response options 'yes' or 'no'. In the second format, respondents indicated what percentage of the group voted Democratic (or Republican). The percentage had to range between 50 and 100 percent.

For the purpose of a preliminary analysis, I followed the procedure proposed by Rahn and Wessel (1998) and created a variable that reflects the perceived diversity of the in-party's voter base. The variable was scored -1 if respondents replied that most of the group's members (i.e. white, black, men, women, etc.) vote Republican or if respondents who received the percentage follow-up question estimated that 75% or more of the group's members vote Republican. The variable was scored +1 if respondents replied that most of the group's members (i.e. white, black, men, women, etc.) vote Democratic or if respondents who received the percentage follow-up question estimated that 75% or more of the group's members vote Democratic. Respondents who

picked “evenly split” to the first question were assigned a value of 0 as were those who replied 50% to the percentage estimate follow up. Respondents who said “no” in response to the question whether most of the group’s members voted Republican were given a score of -0.5 as were those who indicated a percentage estimate between 51% and 74%. In a similar procedure, respondents who said “no” in response to the question whether most of the group’s members voted Democratic were given a score of +0.5 as were those who indicated a percentage estimate between 51% and 74%.

I created this variable for each of the six groups that respondents were asked to evaluate partisan loyalties for and combined all six of them into one variable that scaled from -1 (very Republican) to +1 (very Democratic) . I then folded this scale at the midpoint so that 0 reflects the lowest level of prototype clarity across each party’s voter base and 1 reflects the highest level of prototype clarity across each party’s voter base.

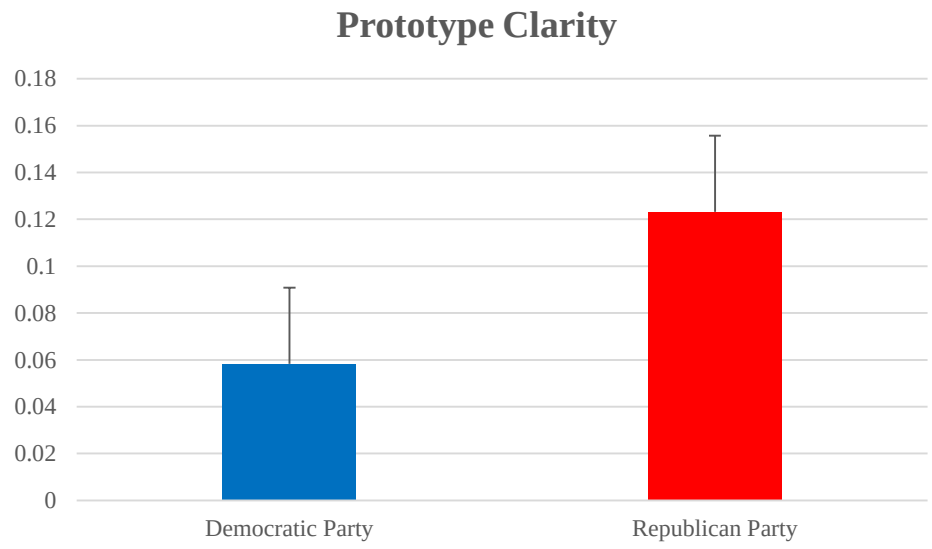
Note that this definition of prototype clarity is not uncontested. One could argue that the clear association of multiple subgroups with a certain party indicates an ambiguous prototype as not just one but several sociodemographic groups are seen as an integral part of the Democratic or Republican Party’s voter base. However, as the discussion of subgroup identities indicated prototypes can be well-defined within the boundaries of these subgroups. These sharp intragroup boundaries provide a clear image of the various groups that built the party’s prototype. From that perspective, perceiving a certain group as unequivocally belonging to one party over another is more beneficial for the perception of a clear prototype than perceiving a group as split between the two parties.

Another point of contention lies in the theoretical expectation of the source of prototypes. This dissertation has treated inparty leader as conveyors of prototypical images. The above-

mentioned operationalization of prototype clarity is based on a party's voter base. More specifically, it relies on the social groups that we associate with each party. While this approach differs from mine, it is nevertheless used in prior research on party composition and might thus be a valid source of party prototypes as well (Ahler and Sood 2016).

A preliminary look at the levels of prototype clarity shows significant differences between the Democratic and the Republican Party.

Figure 38: Significant differences in perceived homogeneity across parties

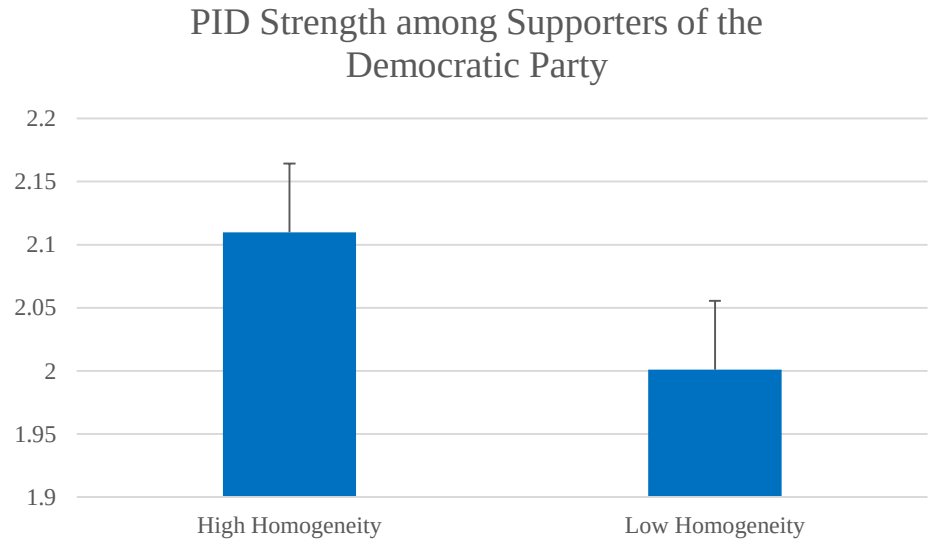


Note: Data is taken from the ANES 1997 Pilot Study. The sample includes 551 respondents. Prototype clarity scales from 0 to 1.

The higher level of prototype clarity among the Republican voter base is especially driven by the strong association of Christian fundamentalists with the Republican Party – a group that scores a value of -0.4 on the original scale that ranged from -1 (most Republican) to +1 (most Democratic). For the Democratic Party, gays and lesbians were rated as mostly Democratic (+0.4). These results somewhat mirror the patterns of consensuality shown in Figure 36 to the extent that the Republican Party is associated with a more distinct voter base.

To examine whether these differing levels in prototype clarity correspond to differing levels in partisan strength, I examine respondents' partisan strength for each political party conditioned on either high or low prototype clarity whereby high and low clarity is defined as above or below the midpoint of the prototype clarity scale (Figure 39).

Figure 39: PID strength conditioned on prototype clarity

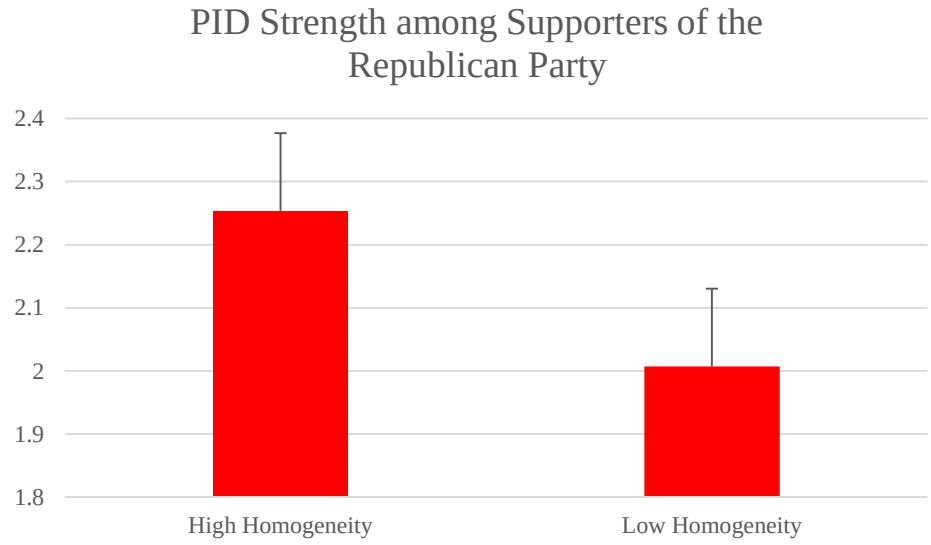


Note: Data is taken from the ANES 1997 Pilot Study. The sample included 298 respondents who identified with the Democratic Party. Independents were excluded. PID strength scales from 1 (independent leaning Democrat) to 3 (strong Democrat). Low and high homogeneity were defined as below or above the mean of the Democratic Party's prototype. .

As Figure 39 demonstrates, the level of prototype clarity (i.e. homogeneity) is linked to varying significant differences in partisan strength among the Democratic Party whereby respondents who perceive their party's voter base to be distinct show higher levels of partisan strength than those who do not perceive clear associations between the Democratic Party and various subgroups among the electorate.

These results are almost identical to the patterns in partisan strength that we observe for the Republican Party. As Figure 40 shows, partisan strength among Republican identifiers is much higher when the prototype is clear (i.e. high homogeneity) compared to when the prototype is ambiguous (i.e. low homogeneity).

Figure 40: PID strength conditioned on prototype clarity



Note: Data is taken from the ANES 1997 Pilot Study. The sample included 217 respondents who identified with the Republican Party. Independents were excluded. PID strength scales from 1 (independent leaning Republican) to 3 (strong Republican). Low and high homogeneity were defined as below or above the mean of perceived homogeneity of the Republican voter base respectively.

In subsequent analyses, this data set allows me to specify a regression model in which I regress partisan strength on the level of prototype clarity, including various control variables such as race, education, gender, age, and religion. However, given the crude measure of partisan strength in the ANES data sets, I can also replace the partisan strength variable with a feeling thermometer item for the inparty. This dependent variable provides sufficient variation to detect

potential relationships between the levels of prototype clarity and the reported feelings towards the inparty.

For a more stringent test of this relationship, I can also match respondents based on their political issue preferences such as abortion, environmentalism, homosexuality, and welfare spending. In an effort to ease the matching procedure and to save sample, the number of political issues in one matching model should remain relatively small. However, other political issues can be used in robustness checks such as defense spending as well as immigration attitudes

Using exact matching, I can examine the effect of prototype clarity on partisan strength or feeling thermometer values while matching respondents on an array of variables that might affect these dependent variables, creating two groups that are almost identical on all covariates. The only difference between the groups is the level of prototype clarity which is divided into low and high values by cutting the scale at its midpoint. By simply comparing the differences between these groups, I can estimate the causal effect of low versus high prototype clarity.

While this type of analysis allows me to examine the effect of prototypes on partisan strength, it disregards the role of similarity which has been a central concept throughout this dissertation. I can incorporate this factor by focusing on the respondents who belong to the groups that are evaluated in the prototype clarity scale. For example, using predicted values I can examine the effect of perceiving all women (or a clear majority of them) to be Democratic voters on partisan strength among female Democrats. To increase sample size, I can combine all respondents from these various groups (i.e. Whites, Blacks, women, men, etc.) and create a variable that reflects the extent to which the respondent perceives his/her demographic groups to be primarily Democratic or Republican depending on the respondent's party identification. I expect higher partisan strength and feeling thermometer values towards the inparty when the respondent considers his/her

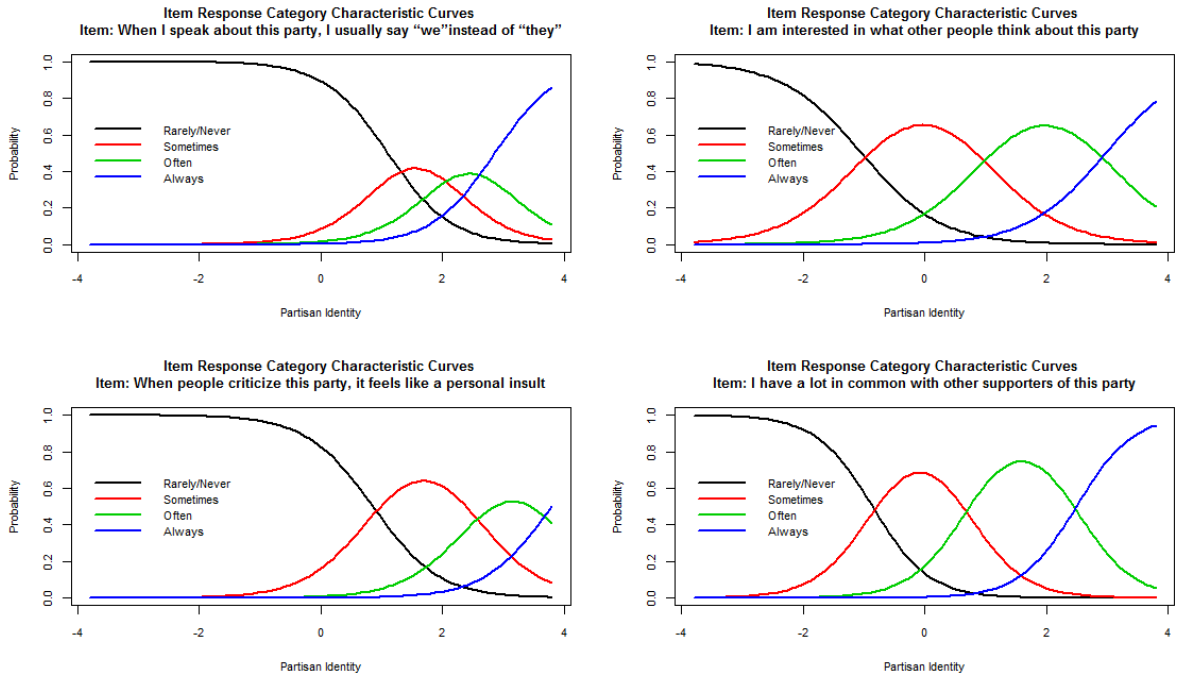
demographic group to be clearly Democratic or Republican compared to evenly split or even associated with the outparty.

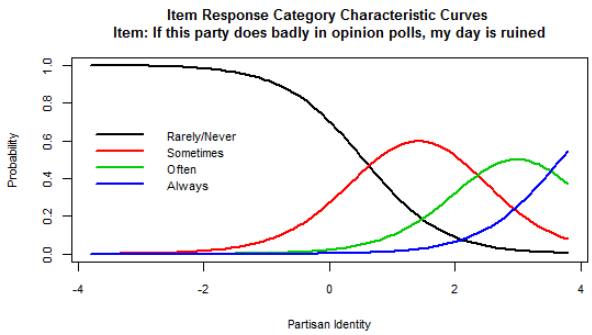
In addition to these observational analyses, experimental data could shed light on the interaction of typicality and similarity. This could entail, for example, an experiment in which the distinctiveness of the party prototype is experimentally manipulated. In fact, such an experiment could borrow from current developments: the lack of diversity in the Republican Party's leadership has been a re-occurring topic for political pundits. When the House GOP members announced their committee chairmen for the 114th Congress in 2014, it was most notable that all of these recommended committee chairs were white and male. This episode is emblematic of a Republican prototype that is rather narrow and very distinct. In contrast, conservative pundits have been pointing at the diverse Republican primary field which included a woman, an African-American, and two Hispanics. Whether these short-lived spikes in the Republican Party's diversity pulse line have an impact on the party prototype is questionable. However, an experimental study could entail a treatment that manipulates the party prototype by providing participants with information that randomly varies the levels of diversity among the party's leadership or even among party followers. If these variations in the party's social profile lead to shifts in partisan identity, we can make substantial predictions about the impact of party leaders in shaping the party prototype and partisan attachments. Such findings would be especially insightful as we anticipate one of the major changes in the Republican Party's prototype in the form of Donald Trump. As the Grand Old Party is being forcefully transformed, research on party prototypes as well as partisans' reactions to a redefinition in their party's prototype will find a receptive audience not just among scholars but among the general public as well.

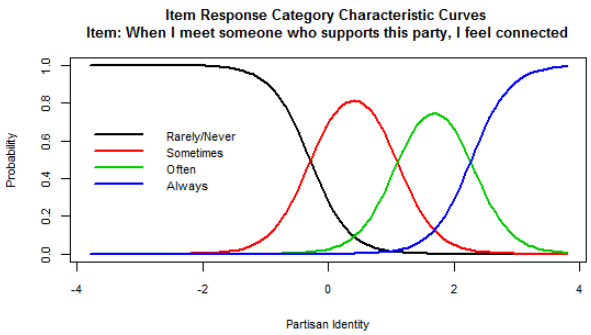
Appendix

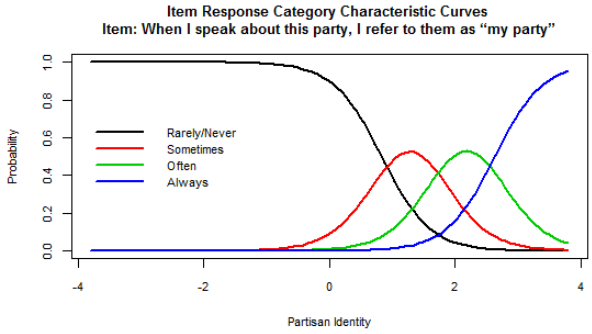
Figure A1: Item Response Functions

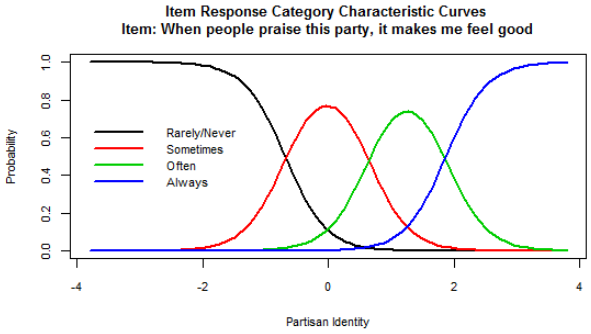
A) Netherlands



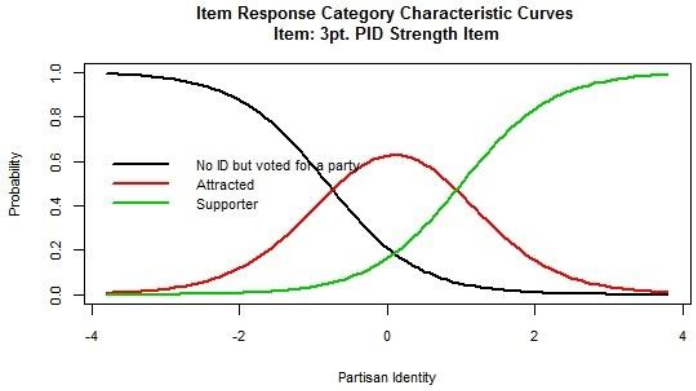




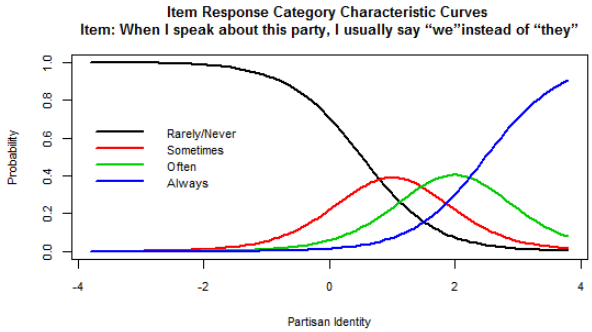


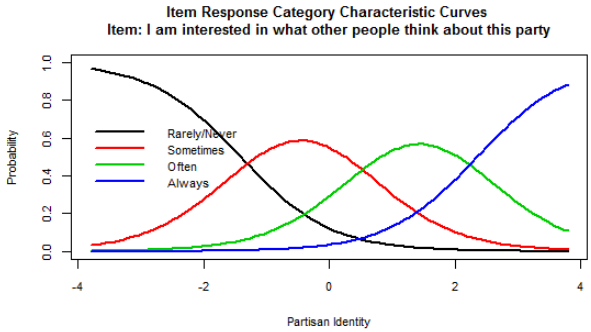


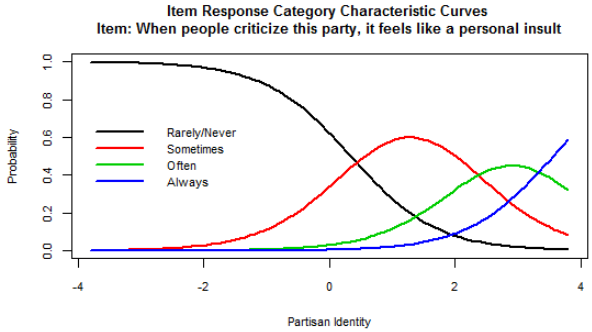
Netherlands Traditional PID Strength Item

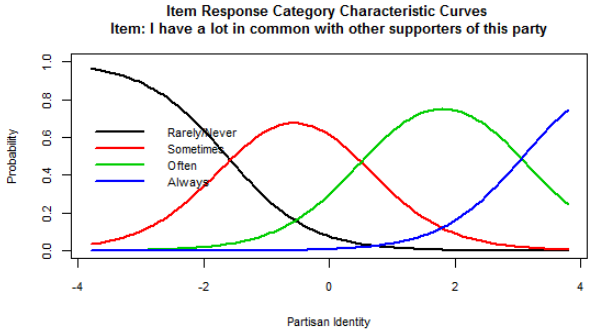


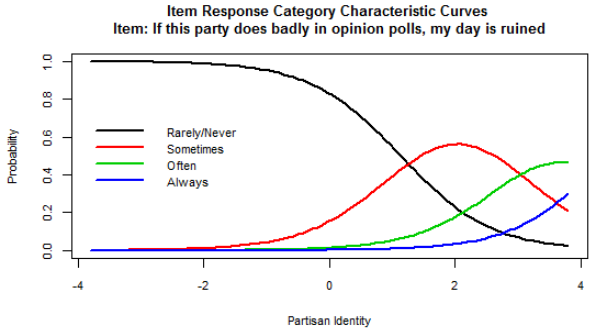
B) Sweden

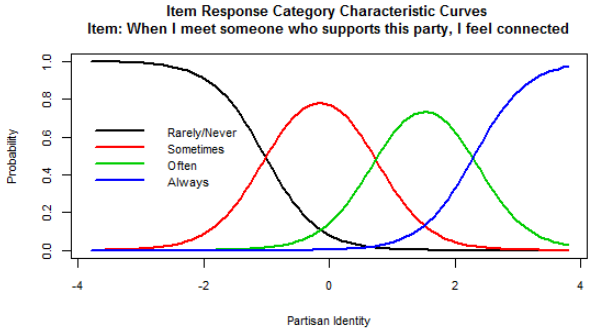

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: When I speak about this party, I usually say “we”instead of “they”
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

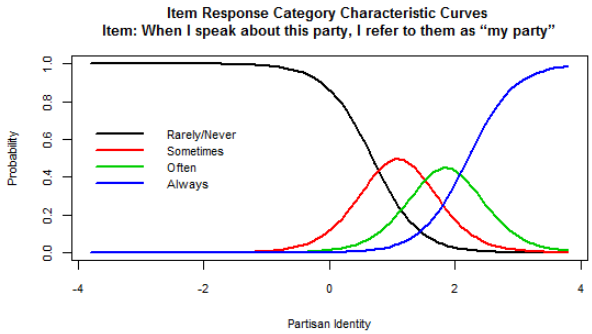

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: I am interested in what other people think about this party
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

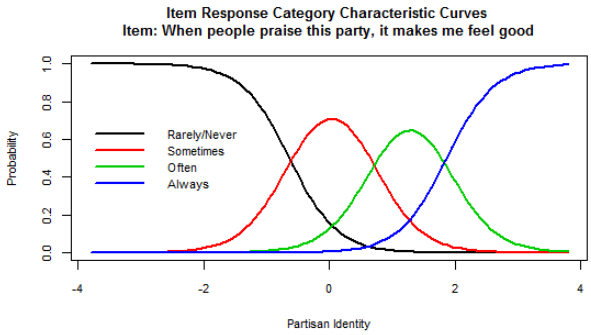

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always


Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

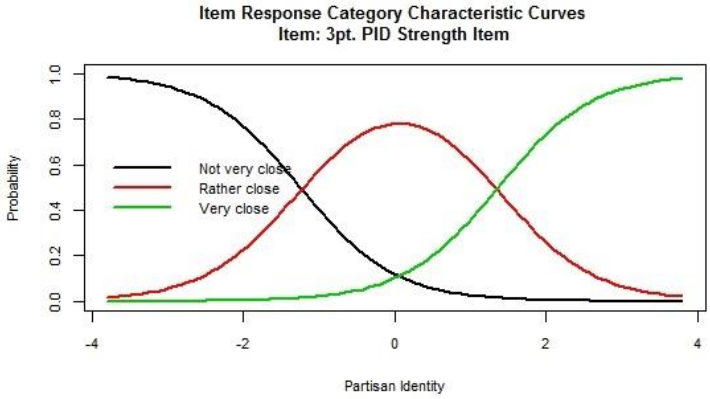

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always


Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

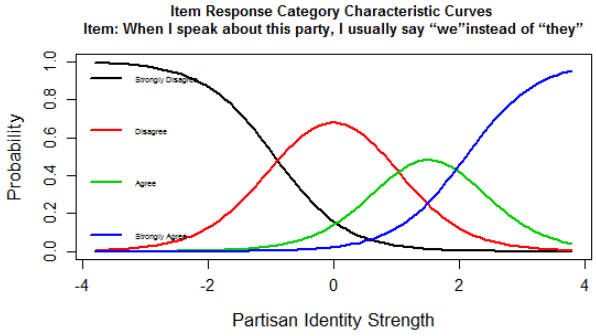

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: When I speak about this party, I refer to them as “my party”
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

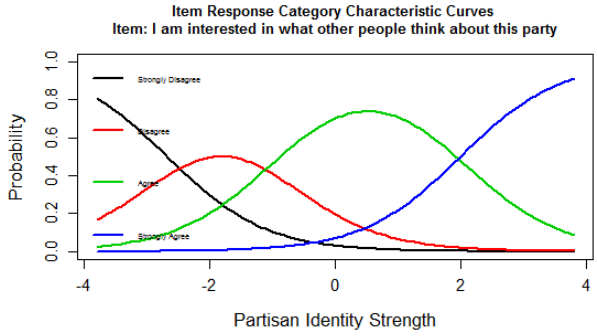

Item Response Category Characteristic Curves
Item: When people praise this party, it makes me feel good
Probability
Partisan Identity
Rarely/Never
Sometimes
Often
Always

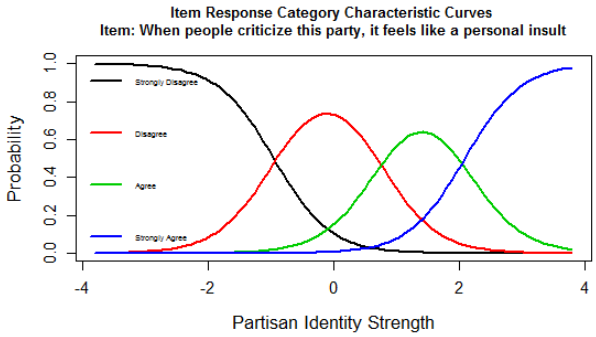
Sweden Traditional PID Strength Item

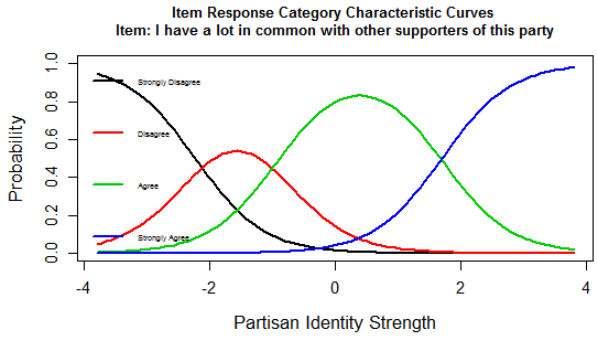


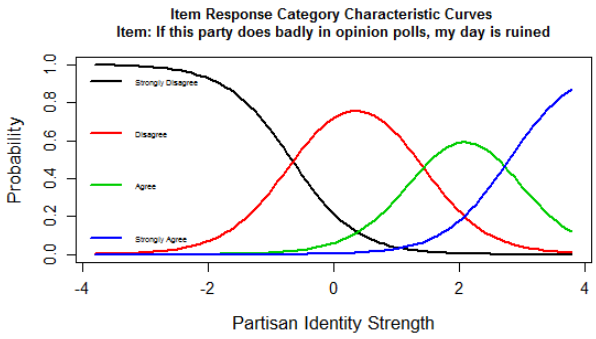
C) United Kingdom

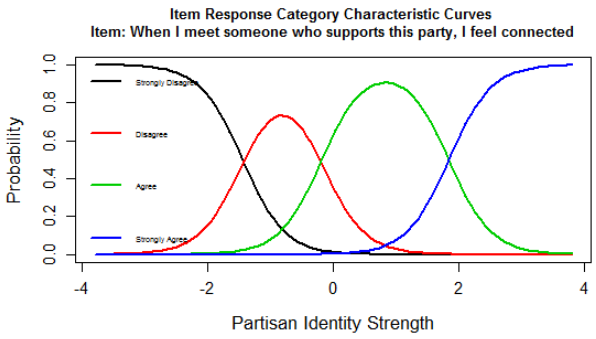


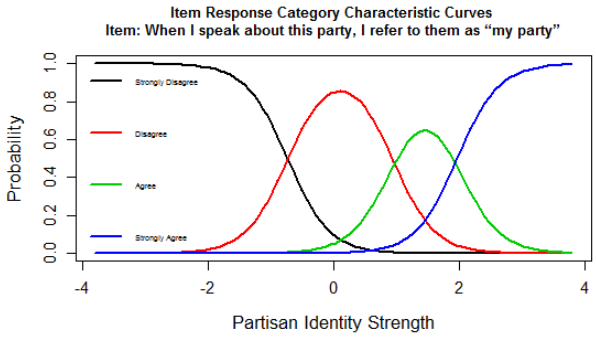


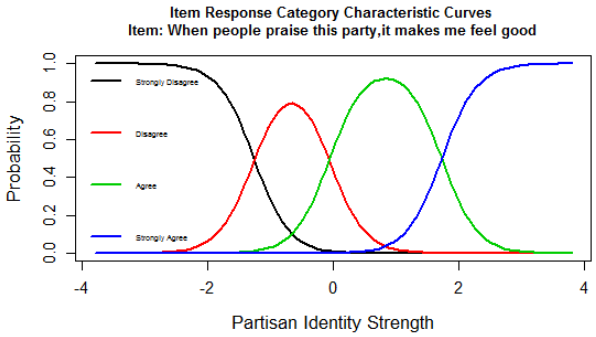












United Kingdom Traditional PID Strength Item (Wave 3)

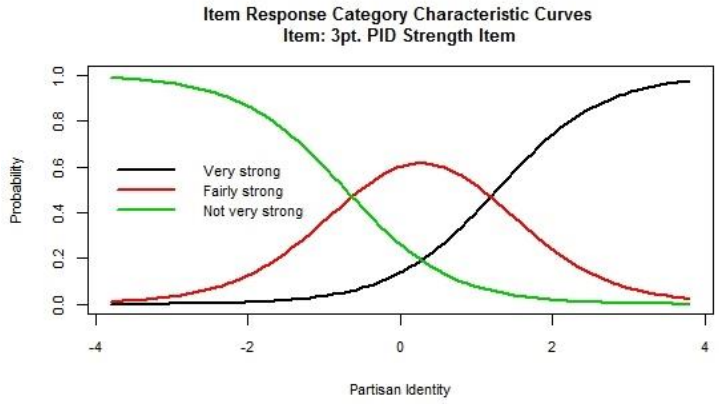


Table A1: Corresponding Table to Figure 8 OLS Regression Results

	Partisan Identity Strength
Prior PID Strength	0.43 (0.08)***
Social Similarity Match	0.13 (0.07)+
InParty Leader Match	0.14 (0.08)+
Social Similarity X InParty Leader	-0.21 (0.12)+
Social Similarity X Prior PID Strength	-0.19 (0.13)
InParty Leader X Prior PID Strength	-0.45 (0.16)**
Social Similarity X InParty Leader X Prior PID Strength	0.56 (0.26)**
Constant	0.12 (0.04)***
R2	0.33
N	176

Note: + denotes statistical significance at $p < 0.1$ * at $p < 0.05$ ** at $p < 0.01$ and *** at $p < 0.001$. All variables scale from 0 to 1.

Table A2: Model corresponding to Figure 9 Predicted Levels of Partisan Identity Strength

	Partisan Identity Strength
Prior PID Strength	-0.03 (0.04)
Weak Partisans	0.24 (0.05)
Strong Partisans	
Social Similarity Match	0.00 (0.03)
Social Similarity X Prior PID Strength	
X Weak Partisans	0.13 (0.06)*
X Strong Partisans	0.00 (0.08)
Constant	0.23 (0.02)***
R2	0.21
N	98

Note: + denotes statistical significance at $p < 0.1$ * at $p < 0.05$ ** at $p < 0.01$ and *** at $p < 0.001$. All variables scale from 0 to 1. Model includes inparty match only.

Figure A2: Introductory Text, Study II

Welcome to MAPP - the *Meet A Politician* Project

What is MAPP?

You are participating in one of the first trials to test out a project that helps you identify politicians around the country whom you may wish to follow over time based on their political views, approach to politics, and other personal characteristics. By doing so, we hope to encourage people to learn more about national policymakers.

What is the motivation behind MAPP?

Americans have an increasing number of opportunities to shape national politics through many different channels: online petitions, donating to political campaigns, and fund-raising via social media. By all of these, Americans are increasingly engaged in politics beyond their local and state boundaries.

The MAPP is testing ways in which Americans can locate politicians they like in different geographic areas and learn about ways in which they can support them.

Please click on "Continue" to begin the study.
Thank you very much for your participation!

Figure A4: Questionnaire, Study I

PART A: Political similarity

1) ISSUE POSITIONS

First we would like you to answer some questions about your opinions about political issues. Please answer the following questions. [The following questions will be asked twice – once as a pretest attitude measure, and again at the end of the study to measure attitude change. Participants will respond to all of the following questions on a 1 – 7 Likert style scale ranging from strongly agree/favor to strongly disagree/oppose.]

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that by law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice?

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that by law, abortion should never be permitted?

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established?

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that homosexual partners should have the right to marry one another?

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children?

6. To what extent do you favor or oppose increased gay rights?

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class?

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that most blacks who receive money from welfare programs could get along without it if they tried?

9. To what extent do you favor or oppose affirmative action in general?

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical expenses for everyone?

11.To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans?

12.To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that we should get rid of government provided unemployment insurance altogether?

13.To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that we should greatly increase unemployment insurance?

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that we should greatly increase government regulation of the financial industry?

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that we should get rid of financial regulations altogether?

2) ATTITUDE STRENGTH

[Participants will respond to the following questions about a subset of the views expressed above on a 1 – 5 Likert Style scale ranging from Not at all to Extremely (minor variations of the response options will be based on specific question wording). The following questions will be used to assess the attitude objects of abortion, gay rights, affirmative action, government health care insurance, unemployment benefits, and government regulation of the financial industry.]

We would like to ask you some more specific questions about some of these issues.

Please answer the following questions about your views about [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.].

1. How important is/are [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.] to you personally?

2. How much do you personally care about [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.]?

3. Some people are very certain of their views on [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.]?Others are not at all certain about their views on this issue. How certain are you of your views about [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.]?

4. To what extent do you feel "torn" between the two sides of [affirmative action/abortion/gay right/etc.]?

3) PARTISANSHIP/ STRENGTH

Generally speaking, how do you think of yourself? (Strong Democrat, Democrat, Weak Democrat, Weak Republican, Republican, or Strong Republican?)

1. Strong Democrat

2. Weak Democrat

3. Independent leaning Democrat

4. Independent leaning Republican

5. Weak Republican

6. Strong Republican

4) IDEOLOGY

When it comes to politics, how would you describe yourself? (Very Liberal, Somewhat Liberal, Slightly Liberal, Slightly Conservative, Somewhat Conservative, or Very Conservative?)

1. Very Liberal

2. Somewhat Liberal

3. Slightly Liberal

4. Slightly Conservative

5. Somewhat Conservative

6. Very Conservative

5) POLITICAL INTEREST

How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics? (Extremely interested, very interested, moderately interested, slightly interested, or not interested at all?)

1. Extremely interested

2. Very interested

3. Moderately interested

4. Slightly interested

5. Not interested at all

6) EVALUATION OF THE TWO PARTIES

On a scale from 1 to 100, where would you place the Democratic Party?

On a scale from 1 to 100, where would you place the Republican Party?

Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the party. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the party and that you don't care too much for that party. You would rate the party at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the party.

7) VOTE

Have you ever voted? If so, how many times? Do you remember who you voted for?

PART B: SOCIAL SIMILARITY

1) Lifestyle

We would like to know a little bit about your lifestyle and interests.

What state do come from? _____

Now think about the neighborhood you grew up in. Which of the following terms would best describe your neighborhood: urban, suburban, or rural?

1. Urban
2. Suburban
3. Rural

We are interested in the kinds of things you do for recreation.

What is your favorite cuisine? (closed-ended)

What are your favorite books? (closed-ended)

What are your favorite movies? (closed-ended)

What are your favorite bands? (closed-ended)

What are your hobbies? (closed-ended)

What are your favorite TV shows? (closed-ended)

Who is your favorite actor/ actress? (closed-ended)

What kind of sports do you like? (closed-ended)

What was your favorite subject in high school? (closed-ended)

Do you consider yourself Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, another religion, or are you not religious?

1. Protestant Christian
2. Catholic
3. Jewish
4. Muslim
5. Buddhist
6. Hindu
7. Another religion _____
8. None/Not Religious

How often in the last month did you attend religious services?

1. Several times a week (more than 4 times)

2. Once a week (4 times)

3. 2-3 times

4. Once

5. None

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other

Please provide your race or ethnicity.

White/Caucasian

Black/African American

Hispanic

Asian or Pacific Islander

Native American

Other

PART C: DEPENDENT VARIABLES (post treatment)

1) **PARTISANSHIP/ STRENGTH**

Generally speaking, how do you think of yourself? (Strong Democrat, Democrat, Weak Democrat, Weak Republican, Republican, or Strong Republican?)

1. Strong Democrat

2. Weak Democrat

3. Independent leaning Democrat

4. Independent leaning Republican

5. Weak Republican

6. Strong Republican

2) EVALUATION OF THE (MOCK) POLITICIANS

On a scale from 1 to 100, where would you place John Kane?

Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward them. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward them and that you don't care too much for them. You would rate the party at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the politicians.

3) EVALUATION OF THE TWO PARTIES

On a scale from 1 to 100, where would you place the Democratic Party?

On a scale from 1 to 100, where would you place the Republican Party?

Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the party. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the party and that you don't care too much for that party. You would rate the party at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the party.

4) SOCIAL IDENTITY

Thinking about [RESPONDENT'S PREFERRED PARTY], to what extent do the following statements apply to you?

1) When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they". (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

2) I am interested in what other people think about this party. (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

3) When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult. (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

4) I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party. (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

5) If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined. (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

6) When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person. (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

7) When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party". (Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

8) When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.(Response options: Rarely/ Never, Sometimes, Often, Always)

5) POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

How likely is it that you will give money to John Kane in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely is it that you will give money to their party in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely is it that you will volunteer your time to work for John Kane in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely is it that you will volunteer your time to work for their political party in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you to wear a campaign button or display a sticker John Kane in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you to wear a campaign button or display a sticker for their political party in the next election? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you to talk to others and convince them to support John Kane in the elections? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you to talk to others and convince them to support their political party in the elections? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you going to post an article about John Kane on your facebook page? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How likely are you going to post an article about their political party on your facebook page? (very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, very unlikely)

How interested would you be in following John Kane on facebook or twitter? (very interested, somewhat interested, slightly interested, not interested at all)

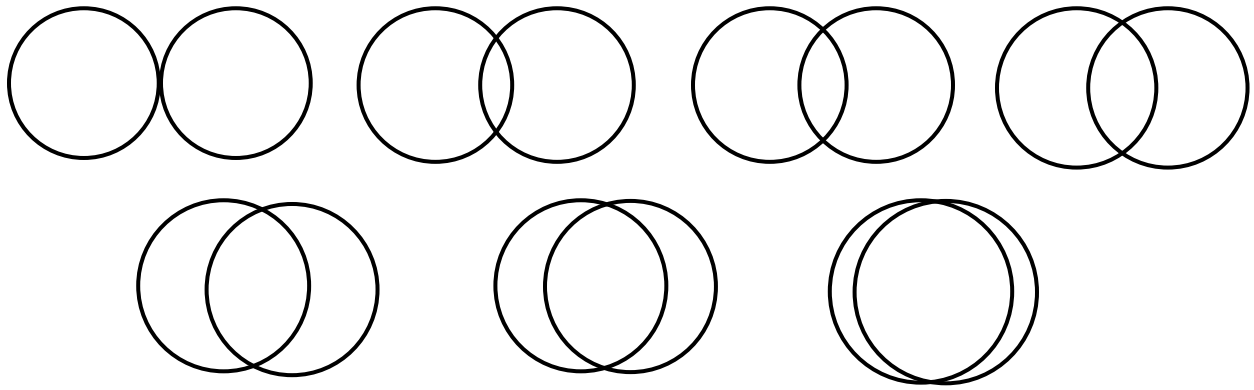
How interested would you be in following their political party on facebook or twitter? (very interested, somewhat interested, slightly interested, not interested at all)

How interested would you be working for John Kane? (very interested, somewhat interested, slightly interested, not interested at all)

How interested would you be working for their political party? (very interested, somewhat interested, slightly interested, not interested at all)

PART D: MANIPULATION CHECK

Please select the diagram below that best describes the overlap between you and John Kane.



Please select the diagram below that best describes the overlap between you and the Republican/ Democratic Party.

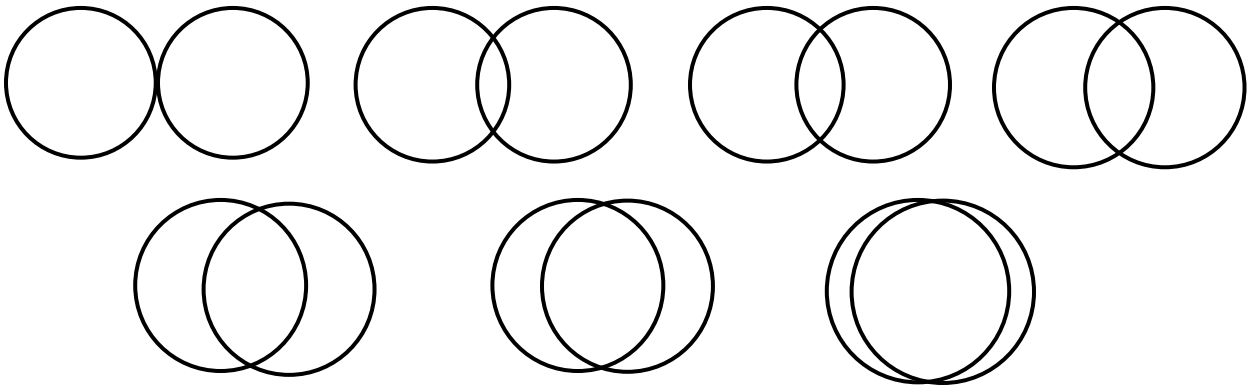


Figure A5: Questionnaire, Study II

1. Were you born in the US?
   Yes
   No

   If YES, skip to Q4 "What state do you live in?"

2. How long have you been in the US?
3. Did you go to High School in the US?
4. What state do you live in?
5. Do you consider yourself Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, another religion, or are you not religious?

   If NOT RELIGIOUS or OTHER, skip to Q7 "What is your gender?"

6. How important is being PIPE IN ANSWER FROM Q5?
7. What is your gender?
8. How important is being PIPE IN ANSWER FROM Q7?
9. What is your race/ethnicity?
10. How important is being PIPE IN ANSWER FROM Q9?
11. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

    If "Independent" or "Other party", skip to Q13 "Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?"

12. Would you call yourself a "strong" or "not so strong" PIPE IN ANSWER FROM Q11?

    Skip to Q14.

13. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?
14. When it comes to ECONOMIC issues (e.g. deficit spending) do you consider yourself very liberal – very conservative?
15. When it comes to SOCIAL issues (e.g. abortion and gun control) do you consider yourself: very liberal – very conservative?
16. How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics?
17. Now, we would like you to answer some questions about your political opinions. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
    - By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.
    - Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.
    - Homosexuality should be discouraged by society.

18. Please rank the following issues based on how important they are to you. The higher the place of the issue in the list below, the more important it is to you (i.e. 1 = most important issue to you; 6 = least important issue to you) : Abortion, Health insurance, Affirmative Action, Affordable education, Marriage equality, the regulation of the financial sector
19. Recently, Congress voted again extending unemployment benefits and exempting the first $2,400 of unemployment benefits from taxation. Do you agree or disagree with this decision?
20. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is a society's responsibility to take care of their veterans.
21. To what extent do you support or oppose the right of homosexual couples to get legally married?
22. To what extent do you support or oppose more restrictive immigration policies?
23. We would like to ask you some more specific questions about some of these issues. How important are affirmative action, abortion, affordable education, health insurance, addressing the gridlock in Washington, D.C. as well as the regulation of the financial sector to you personally?

Table A3: Pre-test results, Study II

Mary Bono - former U.S. Representative for California's 45th congressional district

Member of the Republican Party

Out of 22 respondents, no one was able to identify her.

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived attractiveness: 2.68 (0.94) (scale ranges from 1 = very attractive to 7= very unattractive)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived friendliness: 3.18 (1.43) (scale ranges from 1 = very friendly to 7= very unfriendly)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived likeability: 3.27 (1.20) (scale ranges from 1 = very likeable to 7= very unlikeable)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived competence: 2.90 (1.01) (scale ranges from 1 = very competent to 7= very incompetent)

24% of respondents thought Mary Bono was a Democrat

37% of respondents thought Mary Bono was a Republican and 39% could not guess what party she belongs to.

When asked to give reasons for their partisanship guess, respondents answered:

"I can't place her name but from past work I've done with candidate photos I'm pretty sure I've seen her before and she's a Republican."
"Put together."
"she looks cold as ice, but i am really hedging on whether she's a dem or rep."
"She is a woman."
"aggressive but conservative look."
"just a hunch-- hair/outfit ring republican."
"Long hair, fairly conservative color scheme, seems to be projecting traditional femininity."
"It was a wild guess."

Ronald Dion "Ron" DeSantis – U.S. Representative for Florida's 6th congressional district

Member of the Republican Party

Out of 22 respondents, no one was able to identify him.

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived attractiveness: 3.95 (1.21) (scale ranges from 1 = very attractive to 7= very unattractive)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived friendliness: 3.30 (1.21) (scale ranges from 1 = very friendly to 7= very unfriendly)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived likeability: 3.54 (1.18) (scale ranges from 1 = very likeable to 7= very unlikeable)

Mean value and standard deviation of perceived competence: 3.23 (0.88) (scale ranges from 1 = very competent to 7= very incompetent)

32% of respondents thought Ron DeSantis was a Democrat.

27% of respondents thought he was a Republican and 41% could not guess what party he belongs to.

When asked to give reasons for their partisanship guess, respondents answered:

"Seems like a fun guy."
"Looks like he has a stick up his ....Republican"
"He's a somewhat young guy but he's got that leathery-skin thing going on...I would bet my life that dude is a Republican."
"he looks constipated -- which I guess should make him a Republican. But my gut thought Democrat." "Who wears a bright yellow tie!?!?!"
"Red lapel pin"
"Wasp/latino look. Very uptight attire."
"Slicked back hair, kind of a sleazeball look about him"
"Red lapel pin."
"looks intentionally manly, military lapel pin, conservative dress/hairstyle"
"Wild guess"

Table A4: Regression table corresponding to Figure 27

	Partisan Identity
Gender Similarity	-0.18 (0.07)**
Typicality	-0.01 (0.14)
Gender Similarity X Typicality	0.41 (0.20)**
Constant	0.55 (0.05)***
R^2	0.05
N	285

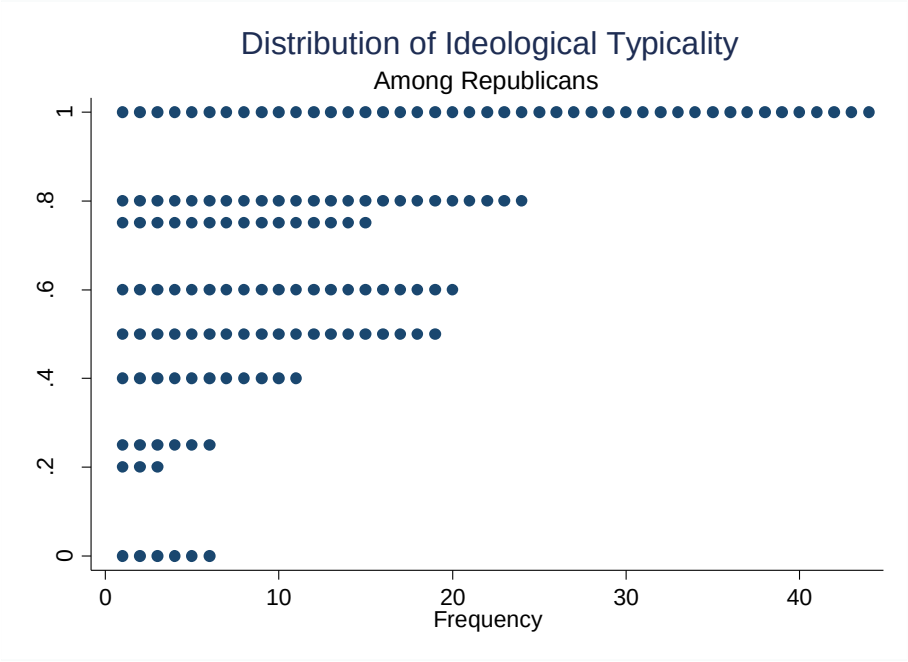
Note: Partisan identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. * indicates statistical significance at p < 0.1, ** p< 0.05, and *** < 0.01.

Table A5: Regression table corresponding to Figure 31

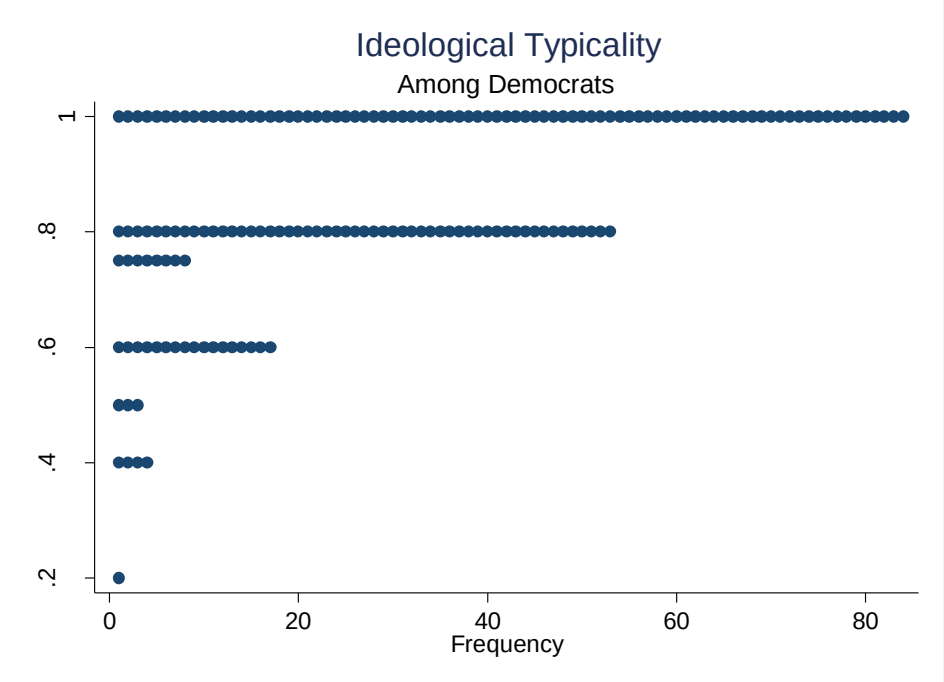
	Perceived Typicality
Gender Typicality	-0.06 (0.18)
Ideological Typicality	-0.14 (0.16)
Gender Typicality X Ideological Typicality	0.53 (0.22)**
Constant	0.56 (0.13)***
R^2	0.18
N	285

Note: Partisan identity is scaled to range from 0 to 1. * indicates statistical significance at p < 0.1, ** p< 0.05, and *** < 0.01.

Figure A6: Distribution of Ideological Typicality across Parties



Note: Ideological typicality measures the extent to which the respondent's issue preferences and party identification are aligned.



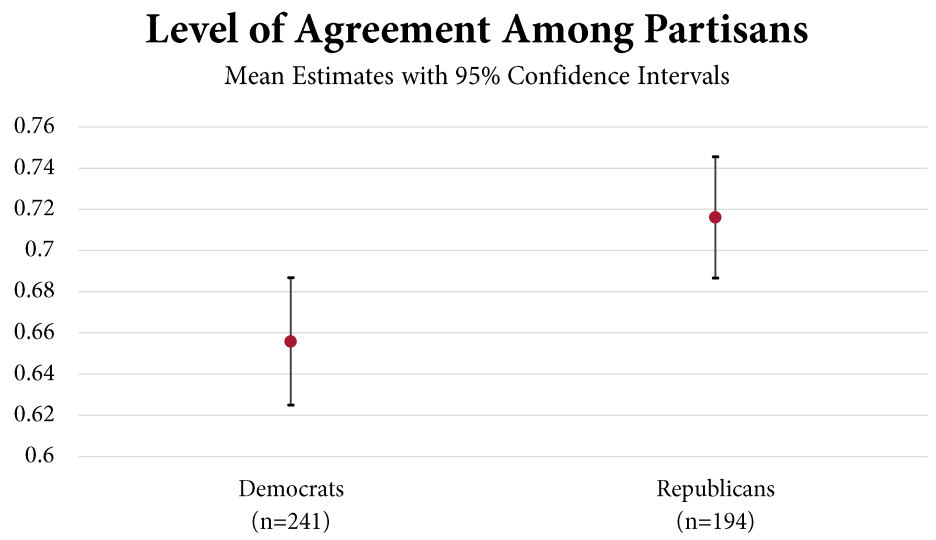
Note: Ideological typicality measures the extent to which the respondent's issue preferences and party identification are aligned.

Table A6: OLS Regression Results, corresponding to Figure 32

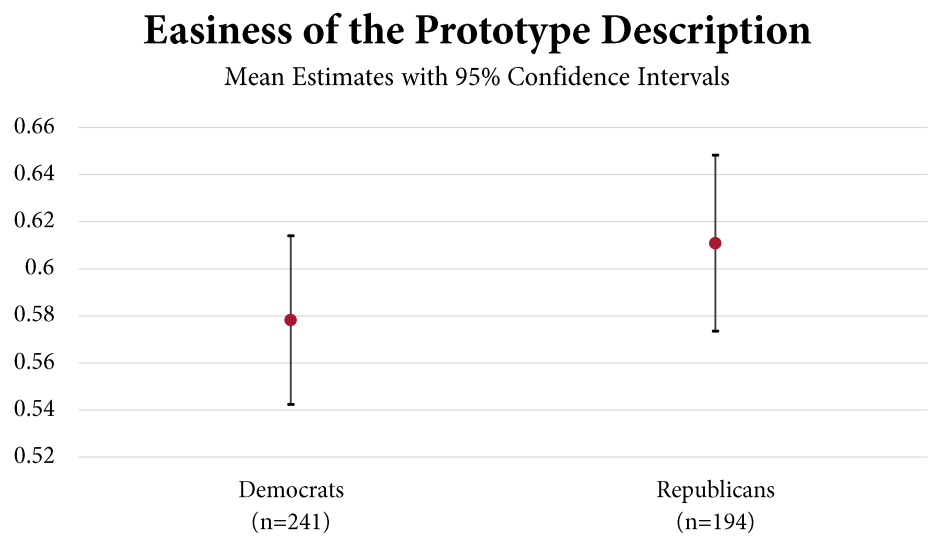
	Partisan Identity
Gender Match	-0.28 (0.18)
Gender Typicality	0.78 (0.19)***
Ideological Typicality	0.31 (0.13)*
Gender Match X Gender Typicality	-0.69 (0.30)*
Gender Match X Ideological Typicality	-0.46 (0.23)*
Gender Typicality X Ideological Typicality	-0.74 (0.24)**
Gender Match X Gender Typicality X Ideological Typicality	0.91 (0.36)*
Constant	0.03 (0.10)
R^2	0.11
N	285

Note: Partisan identity ranges from 0 to 1. Gender Match is a dichotomous variable whereas Gender Typicality and Ideological Typicality are continuous.

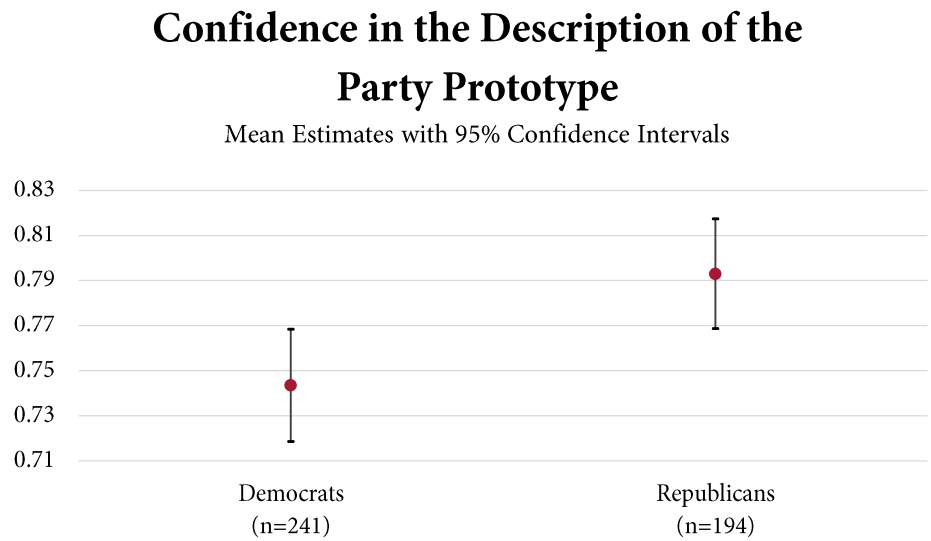
Figure A7: Mean Estimates of Consensuality Scale Components



Note: The extent to which respondents expect other partisans to agree with their description of the inparty ranges from 0 to 1. See text for more details.



Note: The easiness of providing a description of the inparty ranges from 0 to 1. See text for more details.



Note: The confidence in the description of the inparty ranges from 0 to 1. See text for more details.

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