

2018

The Great and Widening Divide: Political False Polarization and its Consequences

Victoria Parker
park5210@mylaurier.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd>

 Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Parker, Victoria, "The Great and Widening Divide: Political False Polarization and its Consequences" (2018). *Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive)*. 2098.
<https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd/2098>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (Comprehensive) by an authorized administrator of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

The Great and Widening Divide:
Political False Polarization and its Consequences

By

Victoria A. Parker

Honors Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2013

THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Psychology

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Masters of Arts in Social Psychology

Wilfrid Laurier University

© Victoria A. Parker 2018

Abstract

American politics is becoming increasingly ideologically divided, and this cross-party hostility is reflected in pronounced partisan media outrage. However, while actual ideological polarization has indeed been rising, people estimate an ideological gap as being even larger than reality. We focus on whether part of this cross-party dislike can be explained by illusory perceptions of opposing party attitudes, attitudes the majority of the party members do not actually endorse. This illusory gap is referred to as false polarization; it is an interpersonal bias where a perceiver believes an opponent's position is much farther away conceptually from where that opponent actually reports their position to be. Over three studies, we explore in which instances false polarization occurs, as well as the downstream consequences of falsely perceiving opposing party attitudes. In Study 1 (N = 1235), we established that liberals and conservatives are likely to over-estimate the prevalence of opposing party attitudes when the partisan issues they are presented with are extreme, rather than mild. Study 2 (N = 816) replicated these patterns, and also revealed that the perception of opponent party agreement with extreme issues correlated with cross-party dislike, and unwillingness to engage (starting political discussions, sharing taxis, etc.). Additionally, the amount of time participants spent watching partisan media (Fox News or MSNBC) positively correlated with the degree of agreement perceived with conservative and liberal issues, respectively. In Study 3 (N = 300), false polarization findings were again replicated, and we found that participants attributed much of their dislike of opposing party members to their perceived (but over-estimated) agreement on extreme issues. As these consequences of false polarization pertain to the desire to interact with opposing party members, they have the potential to undermine the motivation to work towards communication and compromise which are fundamental to the democratic process.

Acknowledgements

I would first like to formally thank my funding sources for providing the means to conduct this research. Without contributions from the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), this project could not have been carried out. I would also like to extend my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Anne E. Wilson, who has been so much more than a mentor to me throughout this process, providing her guidance, expertise, and emotional support every step of the way. I could not have developed this research stream, or my own competencies as a researcher without her encouragement and direction. I would also like to thank Dr. Roger Buehler, and Dr. Justin Cavallo for being a part of my defense committee, and offering their suggestions and recommendations for not only this document, but future research projects as well. They were an integral part of the refinement and completion of this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank my family, friends, and partner, for being an army of support, encouraging me to continue whenever the process became difficult. I would like to thank my father especially; he inspired much of my scientific curiosity and desire to make sense of absurdity. Thank you to all of those mentioned; I am forever appreciative of your contributions.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	7
Introduction	8
Actual Polarization in the United States	8
False Polarization	10
Differential Exposure to News Stories	14
Heuristics and Biases in Information Processing, and Attitude Formation	16
Voicing Dissent	18
Hypotheses	19
Study 1	22
Method	23
Results	29
Study 1 Discussion	35
Study 2	37
Method	38
Results	42
Study 2 Discussion	47
Study 3	49
Method	50
Results	52
Study 3 Discussion	56
General Discussion	56
Tables	72
Figures	104
Appendices	105
References	149

List of Tables

Table 1	Study 1: Exploratory Measures
Table 2	Study 1: Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issues
Table 3	Study 1: Attitude Agreement Means By Condition and Political Affiliation
Table 4	Study 1: Action Agreement Means By Condition and Political Affiliation
Table 5	Study 1: Proportion of Liberals and Conservatives in Online and In-Person Social Circles
Table 6	Study 1: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues
Table 7	Study 1: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservative Issues
Table 8	Study 2: Social Desirability Correlations
Table 9	Study 2: Participant Ratings of Extremity
Table 10	Study 2: Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issues
Table 11	Study 2: Comparisons between Conservative's Personal Agreement with The Wall and other Extreme Items
Table 12	Study 2: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues
Table 13	Study 2: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservatives Issues
Table 14	Study 2: Liking of Opposing Political Party and Willingness to Engage
Table 15	Study 2: Liberal Estimates of Conservative Agreement, and Willingness to Engage
Table 16	Study 2: Conservative Estimates of Liberal Agreement and Willingness to Engage

Table 17	Study 2: Willingness to Voice Opinion by Affiliation, Item, and Type
Table 18	Study 2: Media Consumption and Perceived Agreement Estimations
Table 19	Study 2: Media Consumption and Perceived Agreement, by Item
Table 20	Study 3: Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issue
Table 21	Study 3: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues
Table 22	Study 3: Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservative Issues
Table 23	Study 3: Regression Model for Liberal Liking by Conservatives, Mild Items
Table 24	Study 3: Regression Model for Conservative Liking by Liberals, Mild Items
Table 25	Study 3: Regression Model for Liberal Liking by Conservatives, Extreme Items
Table 26	Study 3: Regression Model for Conservative Liking by Liberals, Extreme Items
Table 27	Study 3: Liking of Opposing Political Party Members, and Attribution of Liking to Stance on Issues
Table 28	Study 3: Liking of Opposing Political Party and Willingness to Engage
Table 29	Study 3: Liberal Estimation of Conservative Agreement and Willingness to Engage
Table 30	Study 3: Conservative Estimation of Liberal Agreement and Willingness to Engage

List of Figures

Figure 1 Study 3: 3-way interaction between issue type (party affiliation and extremity) and political affiliation, and liking attribution

The current political climate in the United States (and, increasingly, in other parts of the world) is becoming more and more characterized by extremes. Flip to any major American news station, and the airwaves will be filled with vitriol and outrage, most often directed at those with whom the talking heads strongly disagree, and the public is taking notice. Since the 1980's, Americans' feelings towards members of the opposing political party have steadily become increasingly negative, reaching an all-time low in 2016 (Abramowitz & Webster, 2018). Indeed, partisanship has replaced race as an overt and prevalent prejudice. While opposition to interracial marriage has dropped to minimal levels, a rising number of both Democrats and Republicans indicate that they would be distressed to learn their child planned to marry a person aligned with the opponent party (Graham, 2012). What is less clear is whether this growing dislike of political opponents is due to irreconcilable differences in values and policy preferences, or whether at least some of the polarization is imagined. This reflects a difference between actual political polarization (the divide between groups' actual beliefs and values) and *perceived* polarization (how wide a gap people believe there is). When people believe the gap is larger than it really is, they demonstrate *false* polarization. In the present thesis, I will demonstrate that at least some of the polarization between parties is based on the illusory perceptions of the attitudes of the opposing party. I argue that some of people's increasing dislike for members of the opposing party is rooted in their belief that a majority of their opponents hold views that most of them actually do not hold. I also examine potential processes that both cause and perpetuate this phenomenon (e.g., partisan media, willingness to dissent, unwillingness to engage).

Actual Polarization in the United States

Since 1994, Democrats and Republicans have been growing increasingly ideologically divided (Suh, 2014). A greater number of Americans report having a consistently liberal or

conservative view across a range of issues (size and scope of the government, environmental protection policies, etc.) with less and less middle ground between them. This polarization is particularly stark among political actors, as US Congress has demonstrated an increasing rift in partisan voting patterns (Ingraham, 2015). Up until the 1980's, Republicans and Democrats exhibited similar voting patterns and cross-party cooperation. However, starting in the 1990's to the present, representatives have been steadily moving farther from one another, with cross-party cooperation dwindling (and intra-party cooperation rising) and no indication that this pattern will cease. Both of these findings suggest that this rift continues to grow. Yet, there is little insight as to what the reasons are for this growth are.

Is this kind of polarization something that the American public should be concerned about? The short answer is “Yes”, as this growing fissure between the politically affiliated masses can lead to serious consequences. For example, political partisans are demonstrating increased hostility towards one another (Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012), a tendency toward dehumanizing name-calling (Crawford, Modri, & Motyl, 2013), and are actively separating themselves from opposing views both physically and psychologically (Bishop, 2008; Iyengar & Westwood, 2014; Motyl et al., 2014). This kind of animosity towards members of the opposing political party has the power to threaten the democratic process fundamentally. No one will be willing to compromise with someone they view with contempt and derision (Gutmann & Thompson, 2010).

This divide is exacerbated when group identity is considered. Researchers have found that since the 1960's, partisans are increasingly adopting the ideological stance of their party leaders (Levendusky, 2010), as voters are taking cues from the party elites to make sense of the political landscape. Levendusky found that this was done primarily when elites themselves were

polarized. Worse still, a recent study discovered that when partisans were given *false* information about which “side” their political party was taking on a partisan issue (e.g., Republicans supporting affirmative action, and Democrats opposing it), they shifted their own ideological position on the issue to mirror the position of their party (Luttig, 2018). Similarly, in a study by Cohen (2003), participants who were presented with a policy and told their party opposed it wrote negative editorials about it; this was compared to participants who were told nothing except the policy description (with policy content held constant). These studies suggest that if the ideological divide between parties and their leaders continues to grow, even regarding issues that may not be ideologically consistent with the party’s stated virtues, politically active Americans may feel compelled to polarize right along with them.

With actual polarization on the rise, what does this mean for the future of politics in the United States? Does this widening ideological divide mean that the chances of finding some middle ground are getting smaller and smaller? Not entirely. There has also been the suggestion from researchers that although real polarization is occurring (as the PEW Research Center, an organization that routinely surveys the American public, has found), at least *some* of the perceived divide is illusory (Westfall, Van Boven, Chambers & Judd, 2015); changes in *perceived* polarization between parties over time track very closely with changes in actual polarization. This suggests that partisans may, in fact, be perceiving a greater divide between the political parties than actually exists.

False Polarization

Researchers have recently found that the average American citizen perceives a greater divide between the parties than actually exists (Westfall, Van Boven, Chambers, & Judd, 2015).

From social services, to the military, participants consistently incorrectly assumed that each party

held a more extreme and divided position than they actually did. This misperceived gap is referred to as false polarization.

False polarization is the tendency to over-estimate just how different two groups are from each other, especially when it comes to attitudes and behavior (Levendusky & Malhotra, 2015). For example, Levendusky and Malhotra, in a study examining false polarization, found that participants had a tendency to over-estimate the degree to which Republicans would want capital gains taxes reduced (when compared to Republicans who provided their personal opinion), and to over-estimate the degree to which Democrats would want them increased (when compared to Democrats who provided their personal opinion). False polarization is essentially the gap between the actual responses given by Democrats and Republicans, and the estimations of their positions. It is an interpersonal bias where a perceiver believes an opponent's position is much farther away conceptually from where that opponent actually reports their position to be (Dawes, Singer, & Lemons, 1972; Monin & Norton, 2003). This phenomenon is not necessarily separate from actual polarization; the process of perceiving a larger gap between parties may, in fact, contribute to *actual* polarization over time. While only speculative, we believe that the perception of a divide that is not there could, indirectly, lead partisans to behave in ways that would exacerbate such a divide (such as showing outright inter-party dislike and hostility, attempts to avoid confronting or engaging with opposing party members, etc.). Typically, researchers (like Monin and Norton) have captured the effect by first obtaining the self-reported attitude by one group (in their case, people who had decided to bath during a water ban), and compared that to the attitude estimate by others. Levendusky has done something similar as well (as previously mentioned), where participants will provide their own position on a political issue, and then provide their estimations for the positions of Republicans and Democrats on the same

issue. The measured gap between the actual opinion/ position, and the perceived one, is the statistical representation of false polarization.

There has been some debate in the political science literature regarding whether or not polarization is indeed increasing or whether that contention is a myth (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2008; Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2008). One resolution suggests both may be true: partisans might be less ideologically divided than they think, but bitterly polarized at an affective level nonetheless (Mason, 2015). Largely in line with Mason, we suggest that false polarization may contribute to *affective* polarization (where there is an increase in cross-party animosity). We speculate that affective polarization might, at least in some cases, lead to actual ideological polarization over time, but this possibility would require further research.

Previous research has examined several moderators that affect the discrepancy between perceived and actual differences in political opinion. For example, whether or not a partisan issue is central to one's political ideology (e.g., social welfare programs for Democrats) will influence how far away an individual believes the opposing party's position to be (Chambers, Baron, & Inman, 2006). Perspective-taking (Dimdins, Montgomery, & Austers, 2005) and egocentrism (Chambers & De Dreu, 2014) may also be contributing to perceptions of differences between individuals' in-group and out-group. Dimdins and colleagues found that participants receiving information from a hypothetical individual in a first-person perspective (as if the individual was giving the information from the self) rated that information as more agreeable, positive, and well-supported than when the information was framed as coming from a member of an out-group. Egocentrism, in a similar vein, motivates participants to rely on their own attitudes when judging those of others, causing misperceptions of attitude opposition. This, according to Chambers and De Dreu, is because individuals think of themselves as completely rational, and

believe others in the world are also rational. When differences in attitudes arise, it is taken as an indication that the *other*, and not the self, is biased. Similarly, Nisbett and Kunda (1985) discussed the influence of extreme examples, egocentric knowledge of one's own position, and a tendency to over exaggerate differences with out-groups as factors contributing to inaccuracies in beliefs about others' attitudes as well. These findings, taken together, suggest that there are many antecedents to discrepancies between perceived and actual differences in opinions and attitudes.

This polarization – specifically over-estimating the degree to which an opponent holds a particular opinion – may be a misleading basis upon which people come to strongly dislike the opposing side, and which may dampen willingness to engage with them in discussion. This increased aversion to interaction is likely to keep people polarized, as they miss opportunities to learn that their beliefs about the other party are often false. Although researchers have shown that perception gaps can affect individuals' evaluations of out-group members (Chambers & Melnyk, 2006), there has been little exploration of its downstream consequences, or what can be done to mitigate these consequences. Further, while the current literature on false polarization has endeavored to explain how people arrive at these misperceptions, little is known about whether it contributes to actual polarization over time. It may be the case that the misperception of a wide ideological divide may cause partisans to become increasingly extreme in their own ideological stances, although this is just speculation and has not yet been tested.

To address these gaps, we looked at contemporary American society to account for why both actual and false polarization arise in the context of politics. The cognitive and intergroup processes that produce polarization and false polarization have been explored (the availability heuristic, and out-group homogeneity as examples, which will be discussed further), but these do not necessarily examine what the boundary conditions for false polarization are. We sought to

consider changes that have been occurring at a societal level, which may in turn influence the psychology of group perception and interpersonal factors. One of the most obvious factors playing a role in the perceptions of the different political parties and their members, was news media representation.

Differential Exposure to News Stories

The average American spends 70 minutes a day consuming news (Heimlich, 2010), increasingly from their ever-available mobile devices, and websites tailored to their political leanings (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). This means that American citizens are getting constantly exposed to a variety of ideas, stories, and reports, often gravitating towards and sharing pieces coming from sources that align with their preconceived views (Garrett, 2009; Knobloch-Westerwick & Lavis, 2017). However, this doesn't necessarily mean that individuals are being exposed to a variety of issues in equal proportions, nor are they being exposed to more than one perspective on those issues.

Starting, arguably, with the increasingly partisan leaning of Fox News (Brock & Rabin-Havt, 2012) in the mid-1990s, some news sources have become more and more partisan, and a host of commentators and talk radio shows have contributed to this phenomenon. People who prefer to consume media with a partisan leaning are likely to be exposed to reporting with a particular focus. More concerning, some news media has increasingly adopted a model of selectively reporting particularly egregious incidents coming out of the opponent party. This is problematic, as exposure to extreme stories has been shown to exacerbate polarization, with effects lasting several days (Levendusky, 2013). Describing this phenomenon as "the outrage industry," Berry and Sobieraj (2013) explore this style of reporting and some of its potential consequences from a sociological perspective. They argue that there is a tendency for partisan

media to report heavily on much more extreme attitudes and behaviours aligned with opponent party members, potentially giving viewers the false impression that these attitudes and behaviours are far more prevalent than they actually are (Berry & Sobieraj, 2013). The more egregious issues are often framed as the next major crisis, despite occurring relatively rarely; one need only to Google the term “Free speech on American campuses”, or “Racism since Trump election” to see the endless articles written about only a few instances of shutting down controversial speakers or discriminatory incidents, framed in a way that suggests that this is the next threat to civilization as we know it. There appears to be a difference in proportional coverage; something like healthcare or tax reform are topics relevant to everyone, whereas violent protests on campuses, or a business’s refusal to serve an immigrant, are relatively rare and affect only a small portion of the population. Additionally, some topics are easier to frame in extreme ways than others; Molotov cocktails inspire outrage, while healthcare reform does not (or at least, not to the same extent). The more vivid the coverage, the more viewers will remember the story.

Consumers also play a role in the diffusion of egregious headlines, ideas, and messages. Researchers have recently found that using moral-emotional language in social media posts (e.g., contempt at the injustices committed against others) increases their transmission across platforms by up to 20% per word (Brady et al., 2017). Americans may be receiving their morally outraged news from sources other than major networks, as their friends and family (and others they are connected to via social media) may be unwittingly spreading outrage from the comfort of their own Twitter and Facebook pages.

Heuristics and Biases in Information Processing, and Attitude Formation

What could this kind of exposure be doing to the American public psychologically? How is it affecting their judgement of others, or the way they process the information they are receiving? Imagine the typical liberal, scrolling through MSNBC's newsfeed on their smart phone, and seeing links to articles highlighting the particularly deplorable or bigoted views and behaviours of conservatives. Or, alternatively, envision the typical conservative viewing Fox news' coverage of liberal snowflakes' violent and censorious attacks on conservative speakers, and unjust instances of affirmative action. Because the media may push the most extreme and egregious stories and events into the attentional field of individuals at a rate out of proportion with their occurrence (Berry & Sobieraj, 2013), there are a number of psychological mechanisms that can lead people to believe that these events are more prevalent than they actually are. For example, the availability heuristic is a psychological shortcut that results in information that is most readily available informing the perceived frequency of events, or the perceived likelihood those events will occur again (Gabrielcik & Fazio, 1984; Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). Even imagining or visualizing an event, a process facilitated by watching similar events unfold on the news, can lead participants to have greater expectations that those events will occur (Carroll, 1978). In the case of the everyday American, this could mean that hearing various news stations cover the same outrageous, but rare or one-off events (ranging from Alt-Right marches to violent Berkley protests) could lead them to over-estimate the frequency of these events, and may foster the prediction that such events will continue to be prevalent in the future since the information about them is easily accessible from memory.

Exposure (and the heuristics that follow) is not the only cognitive mechanism at play here. People are not passive consumers of media but actively select their chosen information.

The Pew Research Center examined thousands of Americans, and found that those who aligned themselves politically with the left gravitated towards left-leaning news sources and found them to be more trustworthy than news sources from the right (and vice-versa for participants aligning themselves with the political right; Mitchell, Gottfried, Kiley, & Matsa, 2014). This differential trust of media may further skew people's attention to information aligned with their partisan preferences and to distrust and perhaps disregard any information that disconfirms their preference interpretation – an instantiation of classic confirmation bias processes (Flaxman, Goel, & Rao, 2013; Garrett & Stroud, 2014; Knobloch-Westerwick & Kleinman, 2011; Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2015; Nickerson, 1998).

The main implication of this actively biased selection of media sources is that people will not be exposed to all outrageous acts across party lines at a similar rate: partisan media will highlight the outrageous actions of the other side but not their own. If people are especially likely to see stories about the other side behaving badly, the psychological processes at play also involve intergroup psychology. Specifically, because these stories pertain to an out-group, people may be prone to out-group homogeneity effects (Park & Rothbart, 1982; Rubin & Badaea, 2012). This phenomenon reflects the tendency to assume members of an out-group are more similar to one another than members of one's in-groups (who are viewed as more heterogeneous). If this is the case, then exposure to extreme and egregious attitudes would colour people's assumptions about the out-group as a whole. For instance, being exposed to a few racist incidents perpetrated by conservatives may color one's perception of conservatives as a group, contributing to an automatic assumption that any conservative they meet is likely to be deplorable and bigoted. This perception is considerably attenuated when encountering information about in-group members, because people perceive their in-groups as more heterogeneous. Additionally,

researchers in the stereotyping literature have found that individuals encode stereotype-consistent information more effectively when it pertains to the out-group, and stereotype-inconsistent information more effectively when it pertains to the in-group, suggesting that individuals are more willing to accept variation and heterogeneity that strays outside of a stereotype for their in-group (Koomen & Dijker, 1997).

Further, should an individual come across damaging information regarding an in-group member, they may label the individual in question as a “Black Sheep” of sorts, acting as an individual separately from the in-group (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988).

This increased exposure to extreme and egregious news, combined with the psychological mechanisms that lead people to inflate the prevalence of these events (especially among out-group members), sets the stage for intergroup conflict. Partisans may become more likely to view their political opponent as an adversary with extreme and unwavering opinions, instead of someone open to level-headed discussion- possibly reducing their inclination to engage with these opponents at all. If partisans go into interactions with opposing party members with the impression that they hold extreme and unwavering opinions, they may be disinclined to engage with them at all.

Voicing Dissent

A final potential consequence of this process is what has been called the “spiral of silence” (Noelle-Neumann, 1974; Taylor, 1982). The “spiral of silence” is a theory that examines how the perception of public political opinion motivates an individual to share (or, in some cases, *not* share) their own thoughts on the topic. The theory suggests that if someone believes their opinion is in the majority, they feel more comfortable speaking out, however if they believe they are in the minority, they will remain silent. This is because individuals fear the potential

social isolation that may be invoked should they choose to share an opinion that is perceived to be held by a minority. The problem is that if an individual believes that their in-group holds a particular opinion to a greater extent than they actually do, they may begin to believe their own dissenting opinion is actually part of the minority (even when it isn't). That individual's subsequent decision to remain silent may perpetuate the perception (to both in-group and out-group members) that the majority of the group holds that opinion. When that opinion is something as egregious as, for example, outright racism, the decision not to express a dissenting opinion may contribute to false perceptions of agreement from the opposing side.

Hypotheses

False Polarization We hypothesized that false polarization would emerge when individuals were asked to estimate the prevalence of agreement from the opposing political party on issues framed in extreme and egregious ways, to mirror the reporting style seen in the media. We did not think that this would be the case for mild issues, but rather that opposing parties would be relatively accurate in their predictions of agreement. We expected both liberals and conservatives to over-estimate the prevalence of extreme (but not mild) attitudes of the opponent party particularly. We thought it was possible that people would also over-estimate the prevalence of extreme partisan issues for their own group, but did not have a strong hypothesis about the strength of this effect. People are likely to be aware of the publicized examples of extreme behaviour from their own party (possibly contributing to some over-estimation), but are likely to be exposed to these negative stories about their group less frequently, and may not be as prone to over-generalize negative actions to their entire group (likely detracting from the extent of over-estimation).

Additionally, we hypothesize that exposure to partisan media (Fox News and MSNBC in particular, as those are often heavily associated with the right and left respectively) will correlate with over-estimations of extreme attitudes, because these unflattering portrayals of the opponent party are likely to appear more frequently in partisan media. As mild issues are typically not as outrage-inducing as extreme ones, we do not expect that exposure to partisan media will predict these estimations. Specifically, we hypothesized that greater reported viewing of MSNBC will be correlated with greater perceptions of liberal agreement with extreme and egregious liberal issues, while greater reported viewing of Fox News will be correlated with greater perceptions of conservative agreement with extreme and egregious conservative issues.

Our classification requires some elaboration. Here we are defining “extreme” and “egregious” issues as ones that typically incite moral outrage when reported in the manner that we typically find featured in the media during the time this research was conducted (such as free-speech restrictions on college campuses, or racist discrimination toward immigrants in the USA). The issues we selected were drawn from our observations of current public discourse and, as a result, sacrifice experimental control in favour of current relevance. We recognize that because issue topics differ across mild and extreme conditions, and because “extremity” and “egregiousness” are confounded with topic itself, we cannot define these variables with a satisfying degree of precision. We suspect that these extreme and egregious issues are perceived as moral infractions increasing their incendiary impact, which may be the reason that partisan media gravitates towards these topics for disproportionate levels of reporting (as the more incendiary a topic, the greater the readership/ viewership). We recognize that “extreme” could refer to a variety of characteristics, however, including some that would call into question the current definition (for example, lack of access to healthcare could have consequences far more

extreme for many Americans that occasional instances of individual bigotry or censorship). As a result, we also emphasize that we deliberately framed the mild issues using fairly generic policy language (universal health care, taxation policy), while using more incendiary framing for extreme issues.¹

We also recognize that the distinctions we've made here, and our use of the terms "mild" and "extreme" are not ideal. As mentioned, there are a number of features that can be considered when deciding whether an issue is categorized as mild or extreme. Our use of these terms was partially informed by our own observations of the current discourse around partisan issues, and how that discourse is framed in media. Issues that are heavily reported, especially salient, or largely controversial have these features. However, which of these is the *key* feature that makes an issue mild or extreme is less clear.²

Lastly, we wanted to clarify that when we refer to partisan "issues", we are specifically referring to the perceived and reported attitudes towards those issues. We selected "partisan issues" where dominant issue support seemed associated with either the liberals or the conservatives; as such, when we explain results for "liberal issues" or "conservative issues", we are specifically referring to issues where liberals or conservatives tend to have a dominant positive view. We do not suggest the issues "belong" only to one party: the opposing political side will also have an attitude towards each of these issues.

¹ It is worth noting that some "mild" issues could be framed in a more outrage-inducing manner (for example, reports of "death panels" as a part of Obamacare or reports about NRA complicity in school shootings as a part of gun rights). This approach (framing the same issue as mild or extreme) would be a desirable step for future research.

² Some committee members suggested other terminologies to categorize these events, such as "rare," "salient," "moralized," or "controversial." Each suggestion has merit but none perfectly capture the distinction. Because "mild/extreme" was used in the research conceptualization and was measured in manipulation checks, we will continue to use "mild/extreme" while recognizing the terms' insufficiency.

Voicing Opinions We also hypothesized, as per the suggestions of the theory of the “spiral of silence”, that participants will be less likely to voice their opinion on own-party partisan issues when those issues are framed in extreme and egregious ways. In other words, liberal participants will be less willing to voice their opinion on extreme liberal issues than mild ones, while conservative participants will be less willing to voice their opinion on extreme conservative issues than mild ones. This prediction is contingent on the earlier prediction that relatively few partisans will actually support extreme views (thus voicing would often mean expressing dissent), yet they may not recognize how few of their in-group actually agree. People may hesitate to dissent because of a fear of being rejected by their partisan in-group for their views.

Cross-Party Dislike and Unwillingness to Engage We also hypothesized that over-estimation of opposing party agreement with extreme opinions would be correlated with greater reported dislike of members of the opposing party, as well as a decreased willingness to engage with them in various ways (e.g., having a discussion, shaking their hand, etc.).

Finally, we hypothesized that, when asked, individuals would attribute more of their reported dislike of opposing party members to their perceived stance on extreme issues (a position they may not actually hold) than their perceived stance on mild issues, as we believe it is the falsely perceived agreement with extreme issues that is driving much of the cross-party dislike.

Study 1

In Study 1, the primary goal was to determine whether false polarization only occurred when participants were presented with what we have conceptualized as extreme partisan issues, and not what we have conceptualized as mild ones. We believe that this is because the extreme

issues are the ones that often get the most media attention, and participants are therefore exposed to polarizing information in their day-to-day via their preferred news outlets. With this in mind, extreme issues presented in the study were framed in a way that mirrored how they are portrayed in the media; this was done to better capture the “version” of the extreme liberal and conservative that are often depicted in the news, and what we believe is largely contributing to the perception that more liberals and conservatives agree with extreme positions than actually do.

In addition, we also examined how this polarization was related to how likely participants were to voice their opinion on the issue they were presented with.

Method

Participants We tested an American sample from Mechanical Turk (N = 1235) ages 18 and above. Because our design included 4 conditions - Issue (Liberal, Conservative) x Type (Mild, Extreme) - and aimed to collect a sufficient number of liberals and conservatives to each condition, we aimed for a sample of at least 1000 participants, to ensure that our samples per cell were large enough to compare meaningfully. We collected additional participants with the assumption that some would be excluded because they did not identify as either liberal or conservative.

Participants were asked how they aligned themselves politically. 31.4% supported the Republicans, 48.5% supported the Democrats, 9.9% supported the Libertarians, 5% supported the Green party, and 5% were classified as “other” (often self-reporting that they were independent). For ease of analysis, we also asked participants whether they would classify themselves as more conservative (n = 383), more liberal (n = 690), or both equally (n = 162) on

most societal issues³. We decided to ask people to classify as liberal or conservative rather than simply relying on party affiliation for a few reasons. First, we suspected that some people would identify with mainly liberal or conservative values, but might not currently identify with the corresponding party (for example, if people are disillusioned about party politics or disapprove of current leadership). Second, we expected that some other-party members (e.g., Green, Libertarian, those who previously identified as Tea Party supporters) might self-categorize as mostly liberal or conservative, increasing the potentially useable sample size. Finally, and importantly, we used the terms liberal and conservative to describe the societal attitudes we assess, rather than affiliating them with a specific party. Although some of the issues (e.g., taxation, health care) are linked to party policy and explicit political platforms, others are more informally associated with the party (e.g., racism, free speech). Especially in their extreme form, it would be misleading to suggest that the attitudes are akin to political policy positions (e.g., no Republican policy encourages the overt racial discrimination mentioned in one issue; no Democrat policy encourages overt censorship of offensive positions as described in another extreme item, but both issues can be evaluated in terms of how often liberals and conservatives hold the views. We provided a definition of liberal as anyone who votes Democrat, Green, or generally supports liberal policies, and conservative as anyone who votes Republican, has supported the Tea Party, or generally supports conservative policies (and noted that Libertarians might support some but not other conservative views). The definition was left partially ambiguous so that participants could define it for themselves to some degree.

³ As we were asking participants specifically about their own position on a social issue, as well as the position of liberals and conservatives on that same social issue, we felt that their self-reported political alignment was a sufficient indicator of party affiliation.

Because our hypotheses focus on partisan differences in perceptions, only participants who self-categorized as mostly liberal or mostly conservative ($n = 1073$) were included in analyses; those who reported being both equally represented 13% of the data and were excluded. Not only was the “both equally” category irrelevant to a priori hypotheses, its n was too small to meaningfully analyse by condition.

Procedure After obtaining consent, participants were provided with brief definitions of the words “Liberal” and “Conservative” (see Appendix A for definitions and full study materials). This was to ensure all participants were working from the same conceptualization of the terms when asked about these groups, and categorizing themselves as one or the other. Then, participants reported their political affiliation. Following this, they answered exploratory personality questions (the NPI).

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of four conditions; Mild Liberal, Mild Conservative, Extreme Liberal, and Extreme Conservative. In each condition, participants were presented with a partisan issue, which was broken down further into two parts (one asking about agreement with the attitude, and another about agreement with corresponding actions). We aimed to select “mild” issues, based on informal assessment of media coverage, that could be considered fairly low extremity and commonplace (e.g., people have opinions on health insurance that vary across parties but the typical framing of these opinions does not come across as extreme or egregious, just as differences of opinion⁴). Issues selected as extreme were deemed more severe, and rarely-endorsed, and were also *framed* in a way that emphasised the issue’s egregiousness. The framing was deliberately chosen to mimic how the issue might be framed in

⁴ It should be noted that gun rights became considerably more controversial in public discourse following the Stoneman Douglas high school shooting. This study was conducted prior to that event.

partisan media. Because this study had a between-subjects design, participants were only presented with one issue.

Participants (both liberal and conservative) in the Mild Liberal Issue condition were asked about their opinions regarding “Universal Healthcare provided by the government”, and signing petitions that support it. In the Mild Conservative condition, participants were asked about “the right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment”, and protesting stricter gun control laws. In the Extreme Liberal condition, participants were asked whether “...controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses”, and engaging in violent protests to support this. Lastly, in the Extreme Conservative condition, participants were asked about “...expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background” and engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against them.

In each condition, participants were asked to first rate their degree of personal agreement. They were then asked to estimate the degree of agreement of both liberals and conservatives regarding the issue, on the same scale. Finally, they were asked to estimate what percentage of liberals and conservatives “at least somewhat agreed” with the partisan issue presented. Participants were then asked how likely they would be to voice their opinion on the partisan issue they were presented with, as well as how likely liberals and conservatives would be to voice their opinion.

Next, all participants filled out the Social Vigilantism Scale, the Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale, the Collective Narcissism Scale, and the Modern Racism Scale. These were primarily exploratory, and will not be reported in this manuscript (please see Table 1 for results where liberals and conservatives are compared).

Participants then estimated what percentage of their online and in-person social circles was made up of both conservatives and liberals; again, this measure was exploratory, and beyond the scope of this thesis, therefore will not be discussed further.

After this, all participants answered questions regarding their media consumption. Specifically, participants were provided with the list of news stations (and could input one of their own), and asked to select all the stations they watched. Following this, participants were asked to estimate how much time they spent reading online news, engaging with social media, and participating on online discussion boards.

Lastly, participants completed standard demographics questions (age, gender, race, religious beliefs, highest level of education, and annual household income), and were subsequently debriefed and compensated.

Materials All of the participants completed the survey online, which included the following measures.

Personal Agreement Participants were presented with a description of a partisan issue, and asked to rate on a scale of (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree the degree to which they agreed.

Other Agreement To assess the degree to which participants believed members of different political parties agreed with these same partisan issues, participants were asked the same question two different ways. First, they were asked to rate the degree to which both liberals and conservatives agreed with the partisan issue, on a scale of (1) Strongly Disagree, to (7) Strongly Agree. Then, they were asked to estimate the percentage of both liberals and conservatives who *at least somewhat agree* with the partisan issue, on a sliding scale ranging from 0% to 100%. This wording was chosen intentionally, as it reflects the “agree” scale points

of the Personal Agreement question. In past literature, this has been assessed using difference scores, subtracting perceived polarization (which was the difference between perceived Democrat and Republican positions on a given issue) from actual polarization (which were the mean agreement scores from participants) (Westfall et. al, 2015). The method we have proposed allows us to determine the proportion of liberals and conservatives who agree (based on their self-reported party affiliation), and then compare that to perceived party agreement, instead of just the size of the difference.

Voicing Opinion We also wanted to determine whether participants would be likely to voice their opinions on the social issues we asked them about. We believe this is part of the perpetuation of false polarization; if party members aren't expressing dissenting opinions, the opposing party has no reason to believe that anyone disagrees. To assess this, participants were asked to rate the likelihood that they would voice their opinion on the partisan issue that they were presented with on a scale ranging from (1) Extremely Unlikely, to (7) Extremely Likely. Additionally, they were asked to rate the likelihood that Liberals and Conservatives would voice their opinions on the issue (specifically if they disagreed) on the same scale.

Media Consumption At the end of the survey, participants were asked to read a list of television news stations, and to check-off the ones that they typically watch. This list consisted of ABC News, Bloomberg Television, CBS News, CNBC, CNN, Fox News, HLN, MSNBC, NBC News, and "Other" (where they could input stations that were not listed). Additionally, participants were asked how much time a day (ranging from 1-30 minutes, to More Than 7 Hours) they spent on social media, reading online news, and browsing online discussion boards.

Results

False Polarization To assess whether false polarization was occurring, the analyses were done two ways. First, we calculated a percentage prevalence for how many self-identified liberals and conservatives at least somewhat agreed with each issue, and compared those prevalence rates to liberals' and conservatives' estimates of prevalence. To obtain these estimates, we conducted frequency analyses for liberals and conservatives separately for each issue. Secondly, we determined the overall percentage of liberals and conservative who *personally agreed* with each issue by calculating the percentage of participants who scored between 5 (somewhat agree) and 7 (strongly agree). This percentage corresponds to the prevalence estimation question participants were asked (they were asked to estimate the percentage of liberals and conservatives who “at least somewhat agree” with each of the issues). This allowed us to compare an “actual” percentage agreement with the same participants' estimates of partisan agreement. One-sample t-tests were run to make meaningful comparisons between the percentage of liberals and conservatives who actually agreed, and the percentage estimates they made about partisan groups (please see Table 2 for complete agreement percentages).

Recall that we expected to see false polarization especially in the extreme conditions, and more minimally or not at all in the mild conditions. In the Mild Liberal condition, 95% of liberals personally agreed with universal healthcare provided by the government, and 88% of liberals personally agreed with signing petitions in support of it. Conservatives, when asked to estimate liberal agreement, believed that 80% of liberals at least somewhat agreed with universal healthcare ($t(97) = -7.93, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-19.21, -11.52]$), and that 75% of liberals at least somewhat agreed with signing petitions to that effect ($t(97) = -6.67, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-16.32, -$

8.84]). While the differences between actual reported liberal agreement and conservative estimates are significant, it is important to note that this is not false polarization. Conservatives are largely correct in their assumptions that the majority of liberals agree with these issues, and the significant difference is actually one of under-estimation (the opposite of what a false polarization effect would reveal). This pattern is broadly consistent with hypotheses (predicting that false polarization would not be especially evident in the mild condition), but the slight reversal was unpredicted. It is unclear whether the under-estimation reflects a psychological process of interest; it may appear because actual agreement is so close to ceiling.

Among those assigned to the Mild Conservative condition, similar patterns were found. Here, 92% of conservatives personally agreed with the right to own and use guns, and 66% agreed with protesting stricter gun control laws. Liberals, when asked to estimate conservative agreement, believed that 77% of conservatives at least somewhat agreed with gun rights ($t(170) = -9.87, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-18.42, -12.28]$), and that 60% agreed with protesting stricter gun control ($t(171) = -2.72, p = .007, 95\% \text{ CI } [-10.12, -1.60]$). Again, this is not false polarization, as liberals are quite accurate in their estimations of conservative agreement, again with some systematic under-estimation.

As predicted, the extreme conditions are where false polarization becomes apparent. In the Extreme Liberal condition, 34% of liberals personally agree that controversial speakers should be banned from college campuses, while 17% agree with violently protesting against them. Conservatives, when asked to estimate liberal agreement, believed that 63% of liberals at least somewhat agree with banning controversial speakers ($t(93) = 9.89, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [22.95, 34.48]$), and that 55% at least somewhat agree with protesting violently for that cause ($t(93) = 13.16, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [32.22, 43.67]$). In this case, there is a 29% and 38% over-

estimation, in contrast to the 13% and 15% under-estimation in the Mild Liberal condition. This gap in perception, between what liberals personally report, and what conservatives believe liberals endorse, is false polarization.

The Extreme Conservative condition shows the same pattern, consistent with hypotheses. Here, 22% of conservatives personally agree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes towards those of Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and 13% agree with actively discriminating against them. When asked to estimate conservative agreement, liberals believed that 57% of conservatives at least somewhat agreed with hostility towards those of Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds ($t(175) = 20.10, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [31.57, 38.44]$), and that 46% at least somewhat agree with discrimination against them ($t(174) = 17.20, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [29.51, 37.16]$). Again, here there is a 35% and 33% over-estimation, compared to the 15% and 6% under-estimation in the mild condition.

False Polarization: Mean Comparisons The second method that we can use to examine false polarization in this study is to conduct a 2 Affiliation (Liberal, Conservative) x 2 Issue (Liberal, Conservative) x 2 Type (Mild, Extreme) repeated measures analysis with agreement as the DV, to determine if a predicted 3-way interaction emerges. However, a typical 2 x 2 x 2 ANOVA as outlined would not test the comparisons we are most interested in. For example, one could compare estimated liberal agreement with mild issues with estimated conservative agreement with mild issues, and so on – but couldn't compare the relevant means – liberals' personal agreement with conservatives' estimates of liberal agreement, etc. As a result, we restructured the data and conducted targeted analyses on the relevant comparisons (please see Table 3 and Table 4 for a complete list of means).

A separate analysis was conducted to allow for targeted comparisons of interest. Specifically we compared individuals' personal agreement scores, and the opponent's estimated agreement for participants' partisan group. For example, in reorganizing the data set, we were able to compare liberal personal agreement with conservatives' estimates of what liberals believe in the mild and extreme liberal conditions (and the same set of comparisons for the conservative conditions). These analyses were conducted for agreement with attitudes and with behavior.

We first focused on the attitudes scores in the liberal conditions. When running a between-subjects ANOVA, there was a significant 2-way interaction between Views on Liberals (a variable that contained liberals' personal agreement scores, liberals' views on liberals, and conservatives' views on liberals) and extremity (either the mild or extreme liberal condition), $F(2,407) = 17.50, p < .001, \eta^2 = .079$. In the mild liberal condition, liberals' personal agreement scores for attitudes about healthcare ($M = 6.45, SD = 1.00$) were significantly higher than conservatives' estimates ($M = 5.84, SD = 1.31$), $p = .024$. There were no significant differences between liberals' estimates of other liberals, liberals' personal agreement scores, or conservatives' estimates. This indicates a significant under-estimation is being made by conservatives when asked to think about mild liberal attitudes.

In the extreme liberal condition, the gap between liberals' personal agreement scores, and conservative estimates was much larger, in the opposite (and hypothesized) direction. Liberals' personal agreement scores regarding attitudes about restricting freedom of speech ($M = 3.17, SD = 1.85$) were significantly lower than conservative estimates of liberals' views ($M = 4.88, SD = 1.74$), $p < .001$. This difference is indicative of false polarization; conservatives believe that liberals agree with restricting freedom of speech much more than they actually do. Additionally, liberals' estimates of other liberals ($M = 3.83, SD = 1.75$) was significantly greater than liberals'

personal agreement scores ($p = .005$), and significantly lower than conservatives' estimates ($p < .001$). This shows that liberals are also overestimating the agreement of other liberals, but less so than the conservative participants' estimates.

We then looked at the attitudes scores in the conservative conditions. A similar between-subjects ANOVA was run, and again, there was a significant 2-way interaction between Views on Conservatives (a variable that contained conservatives' personal agreement scores, conservatives' views on conservatives, and liberals' views on conservatives) and extremity (either the mild or extreme conservative condition), $F(2,339) = 10.54, p < .001, \eta^2 = .059$. In the mild conservative condition, there were no significant differences between conservatives' personal agreement scores for attitudes about gun rights ($M = 6.14, SD = 1.05$) when compared with both conservatives' estimates of other conservatives ($M = 6.09, SD = 1.24, p = ns$), or liberals' estimates of conservatives ($M = 5.82, SD = 1.34, p = ns$).

In the extreme conservative condition, as predicted, the gap between conservatives' personal agreement scores, and liberal estimates was significant. Conservatives' personal agreement scores regarding discriminating against immigrants ($M = 3.32, SD = 1.76$) were significantly lower than liberal estimates ($M = 4.58, SD = 1.61$), $p < .001$. Again, this difference is indicative of false polarization; liberals believe that conservatives agree with discriminating against immigrants much more than they actually do. Additionally, conservatives' estimates of other conservatives ($M = 3.47, SD = 1.86$) did not differ significantly from conservatives' personal agreement ($p = ns$), but were significantly lower than liberal estimates, $p < .001$.

These analyses were also run for the personal agreement and estimate scores for the action portion of each condition, and the false polarization patterns were replicated.

Voicing Opinion To determine whether political affiliation and condition were predicting the willingness of participants to voice their opinions on the partisan issues, we ran a 2 x 2 x 2 repeated measures ANOVA, with Type (mild or extreme) and Issue (Liberal or Conservative) as the within-subjects factors, and Affiliation (Liberal or Conservative) as the between-subjects factor, to determine whether these factors predicted the likelihood of participants voicing their opinions on the partisan issues.

We found a significant 3-way interaction between type, issue, and affiliation, $F(1,1056) = 18.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = .017$. Looking at the pairwise comparisons for conservative participants, we see that they are significantly more willing to voice their opinion on mild conservative issues ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.49$) than they are extreme conservative issues ($M = 4.48, SD = 1.78$) ($p = .043$). In other words, a conservative will be more willing to speak out about gun rights than they are racial discrimination. Additionally, conservatives are just as likely to voice their opinion on mild liberal issues ($M = 4.64, SD = 1.71$) as they are extreme liberal ones ($M = 4.44, SD = 1.95$) ($p = ns$). For liberal participants, they are, similarly, significantly more willing to voice their opinion on mild liberal issues ($M = 5.25, SD = 1.55$) than they are extreme liberal ones ($M = 4.48, SD = 1.58$) ($p < .001$). Additionally, liberals are also more likely to voice their opinion on extreme conservative issues ($M = 5.41, SD = 1.51$) than mild ones ($M = 4.70, SD = 1.61$) ($p < .001$).

These analyses suggest that participants are at least somewhat more disinclined to voice their opinion on extremely framed issues, relative to mild ones, and especially for those attitudes pertinent to their party. This matters, because people have more polarized misconceptions about extreme issues, and if people fail to voice the dissenting views that might challenge those misconceptions, this may reinforce the cycle of false polarization by inhibiting processes of correction.

Media Consumption In this study, media consumption was recorded using a dichotomous variable. Participants were presented with a list of news stations in a check-box format, and checked off stations that they watched. If the box was checked, it was coded as 1, and if it was not, it was coded as 0. Because of this, analyses beyond descriptive information was not conducted, as we would not be able to draw meaningful conclusions by correlating what they watched, with their perceptions of opposing political party members (as this does not account for the amount watched, or the frequency of viewing).

When asked about whether participants watched Fox News, 61.4% of conservatives did, while only 14.1% of liberals reported doing so. When asked about whether participants watched MSNBC, only 10.7% of conservatives did, while 30% of liberals reported doing so.

In subsequent research (Study 2), we made the decision to focus exclusively on Fox News as the primary conservative network, and MSNBC as the primary liberal network, as the journalism literature has often presented them as such (Berry & Sobieraj, 2013; Lisher, 2007; Meirick, 2012). Additionally, on a continuum, MSNBC has been listed as the most liberal of the cable news networks, and Fox News as the most conservative (Blake, 2014).

Online and In-Person Social Circles Though not included in the primary analysis, we did examine what proportion of individuals' online and in-person social circles consisted of liberals and conservatives. Please see Table 5 for complete percentages. Both liberals and conservatives reported a larger proportion of their social circles who held like-minded views than diverging ones.

Study 1 Discussion

Our primary hypothesis was supported; participants showed false polarization when making estimations about the opposing political party's attitudes on extreme issues (framed in

ways that reflect media portrayal), and not mild ones. Liberals believed that the majority of conservatives agreed with racist and discriminatory attitudes and actions, when in reality, less than a quarter of them reported even somewhat agreeing with them. Similarly, conservatives believed the majority of liberals agreed with banning free speech, when in reality, only a third even somewhat did. We attempted a preliminary assessment of some societal and interpersonal factors that might contribute to these patterns. First, we theorized that part of the reason for an over-perception of extreme attitudes may be to the tendency for partisan media to highlight these egregious, outrage-producing incidents. The Outrage Industry (Berry & Sobieraj, 2013) highlights how partisan media actively sought rare but outrageous incidents to repeat with unrepresentative frequency. We speculated that participants who consume more partisan media (defined as Fox and MSNBC) might have starker prevalence misconceptions for egregious events. Due to the method in which we collected news consumption information, we could not establish that partisans did report different consumption of these networks, but were unable to directly examine a link between media consumption frequency and polarized views of opponents. This shortcoming will be addressed in the next study.

Also of interest, though not our primary concern, was the degree of over-estimation found when participants estimated the agreement of their own party with extreme issues. Partisans are not completely insulated from the portrayals of their in-group by the opposing side, and thus may be making their estimations with these stereotypes in mind. However, these over-estimations of agreement by in-group members were still significantly lower than the estimations of agreement made by the opposing party members (please see Table 6 and 7 for over-estimation means and t-tests). This pattern will be further explored in the general discussion.

Additionally, we found that participants are less willing to voice their opinion on extreme issues that are politically congruent with their political affiliation; liberals are less willing to voice their opinion on restricting freedom of speech than universal healthcare, and conservatives are less willing to voice their opinion on racist actions than nationwide gun rights.

This means that while participants are holding these incorrect assumptions about one another, they are also not providing the opposing political party with the correct information about their actual stance on the egregious issues (as they are not speaking up). This, then, could be perpetuating a cycle of misinformation, thus exacerbating false polarization.

Study 2

In Study 1, we selected only one issue to represent mild vs extreme for each party. Our intuitions about extremity (and observations of media coverage) guided the selections. Further, extremity framing was deliberately built into the phrasing so that mild events seemed mundane and reasonable relative to the more incendiary wording of extreme items. However, no manipulation check of extremity was obtained. Additionally, information regarding media consumption was relatively impoverished, barring us from making meaningful conclusions about how viewing certain stations might correlate with assumptions about opposing party members. In Study 2, our goal was not only to replicate the false polarization findings of Study 1, but to address these shortcomings by adding more issues in each (mild and extreme) partisan category, a manipulation check for extremity, and more detailed questions regarding media consumption. We also wanted to further explore what sort of downstream consequences could be predicted by these perception gaps between political parties. Specifically, we wanted to determine whether falsely believing the opposing political party holds more extreme views than they actually report was correlated with a participant's liking of their opponent party, their willingness to engage

with a member of the opponent party (shaking their hand, having political discussions, etc.), and their belief that they could change their mind on their position. As in Study 1, participants also reported how willing they were to voice their opinions on the partisan issues.

Some may question whether people's reports of their egregious attitudes, such as prejudice levels or intolerance of different viewpoints are actually as low as reported. It may be that people under-report their agreement especially for egregious issues, concerned about the ramifications of admitting to holding such attitudes (Furnham, 1986). Although we suspect the survey anonymity would reduce the likelihood of this issue, we sought to further address it by including a measure of social desirability (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012).

Method

Participants American participants from Mechanical Turk (N = 816) ages 18 and above were tested. Participants answered the same questions as Study 1 regarding political affiliation; 26.7% supported the Republicans, 51.2% supported the Liberals, 14.2% supported the Libertarians, 3.8% supported the Green party, and 4% were classified as "other" (self-reporting that they were independent or anarchist). Participants also classified themselves as either more conservative (n = 227), more liberal (n = 501), or both equally (n = 88) in regards to social issues specifically. Again, as our hypotheses focus on partisan differences in perceptions, only participants who self-categorized as mostly liberal or mostly conservative (n = 728) were included in analyses; those who reported being both equally represented 11% of the data and were excluded.

Unlike Study 1's between-subjects design, Study 2 presented participants with all attitudes from four conditions (Issue [Liberal Conservative] x Type [Mild, Extreme]) in a within-subjects design. We strove to collect a reasonably large sample size to have sufficient numbers of

liberals and conservatives, and to get a reasonably stable estimate of partisan prevalence of certain attitudes.

Procedure

False Polarization and Voicing Just as in Study 1, participants were presented with definitions for “Liberal” and “Conservative”, and asked to report their political affiliation by first selecting which party they support, and then classifying themselves as either more liberal, more conservative, or both equally in terms of social issues. Following this, participants completed the shortened Social Desirability scale.

Participants were then presented with a list of 16 partisan issues; these issues were selected by the researchers to be either liberal or conservative, and either mild or extreme (See Appendix B for complete list, and study materials). Participants first indicated their degree of personal agreement for each of the 16 issues. Next, as in Study 1, participants estimated the percentage of liberals and conservatives who at least somewhat agreed with each of the issues. Participants were then asked to rate the extremity of each issue on a scale from Very Mild (0) to Very Extreme (10), in order to determine whether our classifications matched the perceptions of the participants. After this, participants were presented with the complete list once more, and were asked to indicate how willing they would be to voice their opinion publicly on each one.

Liking, Engagement, and Changed Minds Participants then answered questions regarding how much they like and/or dislike members of both their own and the opposing party, their willingness to engage with members of the opposing political party, and how likely both their own and the opposing political party would be to change their mind on the issues presented.

Media Participants were asked about their media consumption habits (specifically asking them how often they watch certain networks), as well as general demographic information (including age, gender, highest level of education, and annual household income).

Materials All of the participants completed the survey online, which included the following measures:

Social Desirability Scale Participants completed the shortened Social Desirability (SD) scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972) in order to determine whether some of their responses to the personal agreement questions were due to SD demands. The scale consisted of 12 self-reflective items ($\alpha = .72$), and participants were asked to read them, and decide if each statement was “True” or “False”. For example, participants were presented with statements like “No matter who I’m talking to, I’m always a good listener.”

Personal Agreement As in Study 1, participants were asked their degree of personal agreement with partisan issues. However, this time, participants answered on a scale from (1) Strongly Disagree, to (6) Strongly Agree, to eliminate the neutral midpoint.

Other Agreement Again, as in Study 1, participants were asked to estimate the percentage of Liberals and Conservatives who agreed with the issues, on a sliding scale ranging from 0% to 100%.

Extremity In order to determine whether our own categorization of issues as either mild or extreme was in line with how participants were perceiving them, we asked participants to rate the issues on a scale ranging from (0) Very Mild, to (10) Very Extreme.

Voicing Opinion We asked participants about the likelihood of voicing their opinions. Specifically, we asked them how *willing* they would be to voice their opinions on the issues, on a scale ranging from (1) Completely Unwilling, to (6) Completely Willing.

Liking Participants were asked on a scale of (1) Not At All, to (5) Very Much how much they like Liberals and Conservatives. They were also asked to list what they like and dislike about members of both groups.

Engagement Participants were asked to answer five questions regarding how willing they would be to engage with members of the opposing political party. Specifically, they were asked, on scale from (1) Extremely Unwilling, to (6) Extremely Willing, whether they would be willing to have a political discussion, go out on a date, shake hands, and share a taxi with members of the opposing political party. As well, they were asked how they would feel about their son or daughter getting engaged to a member of the opposing political party on a scale ranging from (1) Extremely Negatively, to (6) Extremely Positively. We aggregated these five items for analyses ($\alpha = .69$).

Changing Mind Participants were asked to think about the likelihood that they would change their mind on partisan issues (e.g. if they initially agreed, how likely would they be to disagree) after having a discussion with a member of the opposing political party. They rated their likelihood on a scale ranging from Not Likely At All (0%) to Entirely Likely (100%). As it was not part of the primary research question, this measure was exploratory, and not included in this thesis.

Media Consumption Based on data from Study 1, we determined the most viewed television news stations were ABC News, MSNBC, CBS News, Fox News, and CNN (we also included “other”, with the opportunity to fill in one of their own). Participants were then asked to report how often they watched each of these news stations on a scale ranging from Never Watch (0 Minutes), to 6.5 Hours or More. Additionally, participants were asked to report whether the

news stations listed were liberal-leaning, centrist, or conservative-leaning. However, as was mentioned previously, analyses focused on MSNBC and Fox News.

We then asked participants to list their own top three sources of print or online news, whether each of the three were liberal-leaning, centrist, or conservative-leaning, and for how many hours a day they spend consuming news from those sources (on the same scale as above).

Finally, we asked participants to list their own top three social media sources or discussion boards where they either read about or engage in discussions about politics. They then answered the same questions regarding the sources' political leaning, and how much time they spent consuming news from those sources. Again, these questions were for demographic purposes, and will not be discussed in this thesis.

Results

Social Desirability There was some concern regarding whether participants were responding in socially desirable ways when asked about their personal agreement with the more extreme items (this would not be a concern with the mild items, as it was not considered controversial to endorse them). Though we assumed that the anonymous nature of the survey would be enough to deter socially desirable responding, bivariate correlations were run to determine whether higher social desirability scores predicted less agreement with the extreme items. Social desirability scores were not correlated with reported personal agreement for either the mild, or the extreme liberal and conservative items (please see Table 8 for correlations).

This suggests that participants were not responding in socially desirable ways when asked about their personal agreement with these items.⁵

⁵ Additionally, we ran the key analyses a second time, where Social Desirability was used as a covariate wherever possible. This did not have a significant impact on any of the reported results.

Issue Extremity As one of the limitations of the previous study was the fact that only a single issue was selected for each mild and extreme partisan category (impeding generalization and making it possible that effects were due to a single issue), participants rated multiple issues and were asked to rate the extremity of each of the issues listed (see Table 9 for a full list of mean extremity ratings). In the majority of cases, participants' extremity ratings lined up with our initial assumptions about which issues were more or less extreme. The item regarding safe spaces, initially created as a more extreme item, was actually interpreted as mild (as opposed to our intended extreme rating). In order to determine whether our extreme items were significantly more extreme than our mild items, we ran a paired-samples t-test comparing the lowest rated extreme item (excluding the safe spaces item) which was about affirmative action ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 2.86$), to the highest rated mild item, which was nationwide gun rights ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 2.78$). As these were significantly different from one another ($t(712) = -3.96$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-.82, -.28]), we regarded this as our cut-off for mild and extreme scores. As the Safe Spaces item was below our cut-off for extreme items, it was excluded from subsequent analyses.

False Polarization In this study, for brevity, false polarization was only assessed using the percentage comparison approach used in Study 1 (see Table 10 for a complete list of agreement scores). These percentages were calculated by taking the average personal agreement percentages (the % of each partisan group who at least somewhat agree with each issue) and compared to participants' average estimated percent agreement for each party.

Overall, the partisan issues that were correctly categorized as either mild or extreme (when compared to participants' ratings) followed the same pattern as was seen in Study 1. On average, 91% of liberal participants agreed with the mild liberal issues (healthcare, environmental protection policies, etc.), and conservatives estimated that 82% of liberals at least

somewhat agreed ($t(225) = -7.78, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [-11.36, -6.77]$). Rather than false polarization, results for mild issues reflected fairly high agreement and some mild (but significant) under-estimation. Similarly, 87% of conservatives agreed with the mild conservative issues (gun rights, limited government involvement in business, etc.), and liberals estimated that 75% of conservatives agreed ($t(500) = -14.03, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [-13.24, -9.99]$).

For the extreme issues, these averaged scores were calculated excluding the Safe Spaces item, as it did not fall in line with participants' extremity ratings.

On average, 23% of liberals agreed with the extreme liberal issues (restricting free speech, enforcing political correctness, etc.), while conservatives estimated that 62% of liberals agreed ($t(225) = 23.94, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [35.56, 41.94]$). Similarly, 43% of conservatives agreed with the extreme conservative issues (de-funding the public schools, outlawing abortion, The Wall, etc.), while liberals estimated that 56% of conservatives agreed ($t(500) = 17.57, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [14.53, 18.19]$). Once again as predicted, people over-estimated prevalence of extreme attitudes, reflecting an aspect of false polarization.

It should be noted in this case that there was a surprising percentage of conservatives who agreed with the construction of The Wall (73.5%); this was significantly more than the other extreme conservative items, even though it was rated as an extreme item (Please see Table 11 for t-test comparisons).

As in Study 1, there was also an over-estimation of own-party agreement with extreme issues. Again, these over-estimations were still significantly smaller than estimations made by opposing party members (See Tables 12 and 13 for means and t-test results).

Liking Generally speaking, liking patterns showed a typical in-group/out-group pattern: Liberals ($M = 3.94, SD = 0.84$) liked other liberals more than they liked conservatives ($M = 2.36,$

$SD = 0.91$), $t(481) = 25.68$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [1.45, 1.67]. Similarly, conservatives ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.76$) liked other conservatives more than they liked liberals ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.94$), $t(218) = -14.32$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-1.32, -1.00].

We hypothesized that liking of the opposing political party would be correlated with the degree to which a participant thought the opponent side agreed with extreme issues. For both liberals and conservatives, we found this to be the case, such that liberals who believed that a greater proportion of conservatives held extreme views reported greater dislike for conservatives ($r(486) = -.25$, $p < .001$), and conservatives who believed that a greater proportion of liberals held extreme views reported greater dislike for liberals ($r(226) = -.14$, $p = .03$).

For conservative participants, liberal dislike was also correlated with estimated liberal percent agreement on mild liberal issues, $r(226) = -.13$, $p = .04$. This may suggest that liberals are particularly influenced by their misperceptions of conservatives, and that conservatives dislike liberals for both their correctly perceived and misperceived attitudes.

Engagement Overall, the degree to which liberals liked conservatives was correlated with how willing they were to engage with them, such that greater liking predicted greater willingness to engage ($r(486) = .39$, $p < .001$). Similarly, for conservatives, greater liberal liking predicted greater willingness to engage ($r(227) = .37$, $p < .001$). Please see Table 14 for complete correlations with each scale item.

Further, for liberal participants, perceived conservative agreement with extreme conservative issues was negatively correlated with willingness to engage overall ($r(501) = -.091$, $p = .042$), but perceived agreement with mild conservative issues was not (See Table 15 for full correlations with individual engagement items). This was not the case for conservative participants; perceptions of liberal agreement, for either mild or extreme items, was unrelated to

willingness to engage overall (See Table 16 for full correlations with individual engagement items).

Voicing We ran a 2 x 2 x 2 repeated measures ANOVA, with Type (mild or extreme) and Issue (Liberal or Conservative) as the within-subjects factors, and Affiliation (Liberal or Conservative) as the between-subjects factor, to determine whether these factors predicted the likelihood of participants voicing their opinions on the partisan issues.

We found a significant 3-way interaction between type, issue, and affiliation, $F(1,717) = 121.10, p < .001, \eta^2 = .144$ (Please see Table 17 for complete list of means). This interaction indicates that liberal participants ($M = 4.37, SE = 0.05$) are willing to speak up about the mild liberal issues more than conservative participants ($M = 4.04, SE = 0.08$) ($p = .001$). Similarly, conservative participants ($M = 4.10, SE = 0.09$) are more willing than liberal participants ($M = 3.83, SE = 0.06$) to speak up about mild conservative issues ($p = .010$). As in Study 1, liberals ($M = 3.58, SE = 0.07$) were no more likely to speak up about the extreme liberal issues than conservatives ($M = 3.58, SE = 0.10$) ($p = ns$). However, liberals ($M = 4.26, SE = 0.07$) were far more likely to speak up about extreme conservative issues than conservatives ($M = 3.60, SE = .010$) ($p < .001$).

Media Consumption A partial correlation was run to assess relationships between media consumption and perceptions of partisans. Political affiliation was used a covariate in the analyses.

Overall, the more time a participant spent watching Fox News, the greater their perceived liberal agreement estimations for extreme liberal issues ($r(702) = .170, p < .001$). The more time a participant spent watching MSNBC, the greater their perceived conservative agreement estimations for extreme conservative issues ($r(702) = .117, p = .002$). Watching more MSNBC

or Fox News had no relationship with agreement estimates on mild conservative or liberal issues (please see Table 18 for correlations). For a full list of correlations between news station and each issue individually, please see Table 19.

Study 2 Discussion

As in Study 1, we found that false polarization was present when participants were making estimations about the opposing political party members' opinions on extreme issues, and not mild ones. Additionally, this only happened when participant ratings of extremity were congruent with our assumptions about which issues were mild and extreme. These findings extended the first study by including many more issues and empirically assessing which ones were deemed extreme to participants.

We created items that, based on our intuition, might be more mild or extreme, but relied on a manipulation check of severity to tell us whether our choices were correct. Most items we selected fell where expected in severity, with the exception of safe spaces. The other unexpected pattern emerged for "building the wall." Here, mean severity was high enough to place in the originally intended category, but subsequent analyses did indicate that severity was considerably lower for conservatives and higher for liberals. Because we did not plan to sort on that basis, we kept The Wall in the severe condition. However, whereas most of the severe items revealed fairly low support from partisans (in line with our view that they are egregious but rare), the Wall did not – a considerable majority of conservatives supported this issue. This item inflated the personal agreement scores for conservatives considerably. In retrospect, we determined that one reason for this divergence may be that we did not frame the Wall as overtly egregious – this could reflect our own bias (assuming it sounded egregious enough as it was), but it is possible it could be framed in a way that highlights the xenophobic attitudes underlying it. Further, we

speculate that unlike some other issues, the Wall may be viewed as pertaining to different values by liberals and conservatives – liberals may see it as a reflection of racism, and conservatives may see it as a reflection of law and order and job security (hence, the egregiousness of this topic may be more divided across party lines than some of the other egregious issues). Overall, this manipulation check also provided assurance that our conceptualization “extreme” was similar to how participants were conceptualizing the term.

This over-estimation of particularly extreme or egregious issues may have significant consequences. First, higher prevalence of over-estimation of the opponent party’s extreme attitudes predicted greater dislike of that party. Dislike was more strongly linked to extreme attitudes than mild ones; for instance liberals who thought conservatives agreed with issues like defunding the public school system, for example, disliked them more than if they believed conservatives agreed with reducing taxation. Further, the degree to which participants liked members of the opposing party then predicted how willing they would be to engage with them in activities ranging from having a political discussion, to sharing a taxi, to going on a romantic date (though their desire to engage in discussion is most relevant in the current political climate). Additionally, we found that, overall, participants were less willing to voice their opinions on the extreme issues congruent with their political affiliation than they were for the mild issues.

These findings suggests that a) participants dislike opposing party members more when they perceive greater agreement with extreme issues (attitudes that not all of them share), b) that this then leads to a decrease in willingness to engage with them, and c) that even if they do engage in discussion, in particular, they are not likely to disprove their own party’s assumed agreement with extreme partisan issues, as they are less likely to voice their opinion on the subject. The finding that partisans are less likely to voice dissenting opinions when believing

their own party holds extreme opinions may be, in part, perpetuating the cycle of false polarization. If, as our findings suggest, partisans are not voicing their opinion on the extreme issues, opposing party members will have no way of knowing that their perceptions of agreement are erroneous (leading to dislike, and further reduction in willingness to discuss).

Study 3

In Study 2, over-estimation of agreement with egregious issues predicted greater dislike of members of the opposing political party, as well as decreased willingness to engage with them. In Study 3, we wanted to determine if participants were consciously basing more of this dislike of the opposing political party on their perceived agreement with the extreme issues (issues we know they do not universally agree with). In other words, we were particularly interested in finding out whether a liberal is attributing their dislike of a conservative to their perceived agreement with more extreme and egregious attitudes (defunding the public school system, racial discrimination). This is meaningful, because if dislike is based on the perceived prevalence of these extreme attitudes, it also means people are basing their dislike on views that the opponent party holds to a far lesser degree than is assumed.

We do recognize that there tends to be, by-and-large, more agreement from conservatives on the extreme conservative issues than liberals (and vice-versa). One might argue, then, that it is legitimate to dislike the party on that basis. However, it is a minority that hold those views, which appears to be unrecognized by the opposing party (as is evident by their over-estimations). Just as one would caution against disliking all members of a stigmatized group (e.g., Muslims) because of the actions of a few extremists (e.g., Islamic terrorists), we suggest that the degree of dislike directed at the members of the opponent party is at least partly ill-founded if based on a misconception of extreme view prevalence.

As in Study 1 and 2, participants were presented with the list of partisan issues in order to replicate our previous findings. Items examining Voicing and Media Consumption were **not examined** to keep the study brief, and focused on a single research question.

Method

Participants American participants from Mechanical Turk (N = 300) ages 18 and above were tested. Participants answered the same questions as in previous studies regarding political affiliation; 30.7% supported the Republicans, 49.7% supported the Liberals, 11% supported the Libertarians, 4% supported the Green party, and 4.3% were classified as “other” (self-reporting that they were independent or anarchist). Participants also classified themselves as either more conservative (n = 98), more liberal (n = 169), or both equally (n = 33) in regards to social issues specifically. Again, as our hypotheses focus on partisan differences in perceptions, only participants who self-categorized as mostly liberal or mostly conservative (n = 267) were included in analyses; those who reported being both equally represented 11% of the data and were excluded.

Procedure Participants began with the definition of Liberal and Conservative, and were asked to provide their political affiliation.

Participants were then provided with a list of 17 partisan issues; the list included the same items from the list used in Study 2, however, three items were changed. First, the Wall item (which we hypothesized that conservatives were interpreting as more to do with national security, rather than something potentially racist) was replaced with an item about DACA/ The Dreamer Program. Second, the abortion item was split into two separate items (one that was more moderate/ mild, and one that was more extreme); this was done because participants may have felt like the extreme item was the only way they could express their disagreement with

abortion, causing a falsely inflated response rate. Third, the Safe Spaces item was re-written to be more extreme (Please see Appendix C for complete list of items, and full study materials). As in previous studies, participants indicated their degree of personal agreement with each item, followed by their percentage estimates of Liberal and Conservative agreement.

Finally, participants answered the Liking and Engagement questions from Study 2. Following this, participants rated the degree to which their “liking” of liberals and conservatives was based on each group’s stance on each of the 17 issues.

In order to keep this study brief, and focused only on participants’ reasons for dislike opposing party members, no questions regarding media consumption or voicing opinions were asked.

Materials All of the participants completed the survey online. The measurement of interest was as follows:

The Personal Agreement, Other Agreement, and Engagement scales were the same ones used in Study 2.

Motive for Liking Participants were asked “How much of your like or dislike for [liberals][conservatives] has to do with their position on the following issues? That is, if their position makes you like or dislike them more, then you would indicate a higher place on the scale”, followed by a list of 17 partisan issues. They then responded for each issue on a sliding scale ranging from (1) None, to (7) Very Much. Participants were first asked about liberals, then conservatives.

Liking The “liking” scale was adjusted to range from (0) Not At All, to (100) Very Much; this was done so that more variance could be captured.

Results

False Polarization False polarization was assessed using the percentage comparison approach that was used in studies 1 and 2.

Overall, the false polarization findings followed the same pattern as was seen in Studies 1 and 2. See Table 20 for a complete list of agreement scores.

On average, 91% of liberal participants agreed with the mild liberal issues, and conservatives estimated that 80% of liberals at least somewhat agreed ($t(97) = -5.80, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [-14.72, -7.21]$). Similarly, 76% of conservatives agreed with the mild conservative issues, and liberals estimated that 73% of conservatives agreed ($t(168) = -2.29, p = .023, 95\% \text{ CI} [-6.26, -0.46]$). Once again, findings reflected slight but significant under-estimation of the prevalence of mild attitudes, and considerable accuracy.

On average, 29% of liberals agreed with the extreme liberal issues, while conservatives estimated that 69% of liberals agreed ($t(97) = 18.22, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [35.24, 43.86]$). Similarly, 42% of conservatives agreed with the extreme conservative issues, while liberals estimated that 58% of conservatives agreed ($t(168) = 9.33, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [12.59, 19.35]$).

Again, participants made significant over-estimations regarding their own party's agreement with extreme items compared to their personal agreement scores. These estimations were significantly smaller than the estimations made by the opposing party (please see Table 21 and 22 for means and t-test results).

Liking As in Study 2, liberals ($M = 73.55, SD = 21.55$) liked other liberals more than they liked conservatives ($M = 25.88, SD = 21.07$), $t(166) = 18.73, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [42.64, 52.69]$. Similarly, conservatives ($M = 76.22, SD = 18.10$) liked other conservatives more than they liked liberals ($M = 25.64, SD = 23.09$), $t(95) = -13.89, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} [-57.81, -43.36]$.

For both liberals and conservatives, we found that higher prevalence estimates for extreme attitudes predicted greater dislike. Liberals estimates of extreme conservative views predicted disliking conservatives ($r(167) = -.25, p = .001$), and conservatives' estimates of extreme liberal views predicted disliking liberals ($r(97) = -.45, p < .001$).

For liberal participants, conservative dislike was also correlated with estimated conservative agreement on mild conservative issues, $r(167) = -.19, p = .01$.

Additionally, we wanted to make sure that participants' own personal agreement with the items was not having some kind of indirect effect on the relationship between perceived agreement with the items, and liking of the opposing political party. To assess this, we ran linear regressions that included both personal agreement, and estimation of opposing party agreement in the model. This allowed us to examine whether partisans like the opposite party more when a) they personally agree more with the opponents' issues, or b) when they over-estimate the prevalence of the opponent group's agreement.

For the mild items, the more a conservative personally agreed with mild liberal issues, the more they liked liberals (See Table 23 for full model). This was the case for liberals as well; the more they personally agreed with mild conservative issues, the more they liked conservatives (See Table 24 for full model). When personal attitude was entered, perceptions of opponent party no longer predicted liking. For the extreme items, over-estimating opponents' prevalence of agreement predicted dislike for both parties: the more conservatives believed liberals agree with the extreme liberal items, the less they like them (even controlling for their own personal agreement which became non-significant (See Table 25 for full model). Again, this was also the case for liberals, in that the more they believed conservatives agreed with the extreme

conservative items, the less they like them even when controlling for their own personal agreement, which in this case remained significant as well (See Table 26 for full model).

One surprising finding was that personal agreement predicted liking (over and above agreement estimations) with mild issues for both parties. It is possible that this is a variance issue; there is less variance in the mild conditions, as estimations of opponent prevalence are relatively high, so personal agreement scores may become better predictors of liking of opposing party members. It is also possible that because there is an underlying assumption that the majority of opposing party members agree with the mild issues, that personal agreement ratings (which did show variability, even for the opponent party) become more relevant to the participant in considering how much they like them. Further study here is needed.

Motive for Liking Examining correlations is one way to assess the link between liking and prevalence estimates, however we cannot know if these relations are causal (it could be that dislike predicts prevalence estimates or that a third variable predicts both ratings). It also does not reveal whether people consciously link their dislike to certain issues.

We assessed this latter question by asking directly what people base their dislike on. To determine whether participants were attributing more of their liking and disliking of members of the opposing political party to their perceived stance on mild and extreme issues, we ran a 2 (Type [Mild or Extreme]) x 2 (Issue [liberal or conservative]) x 2 (Affiliation) repeated measures ANOVA, with the motive for disliking items as the within-subjects factors, and affiliation as the between-subjects factor. We found a significant 3-way interaction, $F(1,263) = 146.52, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$ (See Figure 1). Liberals attributed more of their dislike of conservatives on their perceived stance on extreme conservative issues ($M = 4.62, SE = 0.13$) compared to mild ones ($M = 4.23, SE = 0.12$) ($p = .001$), while conservatives attributed more of their dislike of liberals

on their perceived stance on extreme liberal issues ($M = 4.65$, $SE = 0.17$) compared to mild ones ($M = 3.97$, $SE = 0.16$) ($p = .001$).

We know from the “liking” analysis that perception of agreement for extreme items predicts greater dislike of members of the opposing political party. We ran a bivariate correlation between liberal and conservative liking and attribution of dislike to the mild and extreme items; we split the file between liberals and conservatives so that we were only looking at liking for opposing party members. Here, we found that liberal and conservative liking of members of the opposing political party predicts greater attribution of dislike to agreement with extreme items, and not mild ones (see Table 27 for complete correlations).

Engagement Again, overall, the degree to which liberals liked conservatives was correlated with how willing they were to engage with them, such that greater liking predicted greater willingness to engage ($r(167) = .40$, $p < .001$). Similarly, for conservatives, greater liberal liking predicted greater willingness to engage ($r(97) = .31$, $p < .001$). Please see Table 28 for complete correlations with each scale item.

As in Study 2, for liberal participants, perceived conservative agreement with extreme conservative issues was negatively correlated with willingness to engage overall ($r(169) = -.173$, $p = .024$), but perceived agreement with mild conservative issues was not (See Table 29 for full correlations with individual engagement items). Again, this was not the case for conservative participants; perceptions of liberal agreement, for either mild or extreme items, was unrelated to willingness to engage overall (See Table 30 for full correlations with individual engagement items).

Study 3 Discussion

Again, false polarization findings were replicated; participants consistently over-estimated the degree to which the opposing political party members held egregious attitudes. This over-estimation was not present when looking at mild issues.

As well, just as in Study 2, participants who believed opposing party members agreed with extreme issues reported disliking them more, and that this dislike was predictive of a unwillingness to engage with them. Additionally, we found that participants attributed more of their dislike of the opposing party members to their perceived stance on the extreme issues, a stance we know that many partisans do not actually hold.

This suggests that participants, who are aware of the reasons for their dislike of their opponents, are actually grounding this dislike in a falsehood, an illusory attitude that does not exist. They are then less likely to discuss, shake hands, or even share a taxi with their opponents, thereby denying their opponents the opportunity to share their true opinions and dispel the myth.

General Discussion

The polarization of political parties in the United States has the potential to disrupt the democratic process; neither side will be willing to compromise on important social and economic issues if they perceive an ever-widening divide between one another. False polarization, the perception of a gap between individuals or groups with opposing views (a gap which does not reflect reality) may be a contributing factor, and warrants additional study.

Across the three studies presented in this thesis, false polarization findings were consistent: Partisans assumed more of their opponents held the most extreme and egregious views that their party espoused. When participants were asked about the opposing party's endorsement of mild items (like tax reduction and healthcare), they were relatively accurate at

estimating what percentage of the opposing party would agree. For instance, participants knew that most liberals would endorse universal healthcare, and most liberals indeed reported feeling this way. In fact, there was a slight *under*-estimation, in that participants estimated that fewer opposing party members agreed with those mild items than actually reported agreeing. This mild underestimation, then, does *not* reflect false polarization. In contrast, false polarization emerged when comparing opposing party agreement estimates and personal agreement scores for the extreme items only. When participants were asked about the opposing party's endorsement of extreme items (like discrimination or restricting free speech), they consistently *over*-estimated the percentage of the opposing party who agreed (when compared to their personal reported agreement). For example, liberal participants consistently believed that around half of conservatives believed in actively discriminating against Latin American and Muslim immigrants, but less than a quarter of them actually reported feeling this way. Additionally, this gap between perceived agreement and reported agreement could not be accounted for by socially desirable responding; social desirability did not predict personal agreement. These findings suggest that the image that partisans have of opposing party members may, in fact, be partially based on an illusion. This means, essentially, that partisans are (at least some of the time) judging the opposing party members on opinions and attitudes they do not actually hold (or at least not to the extent believed). If a liberal's conceptualization of a conservative is based on their (incorrect) assumption that they would endorse egregious attitudes (like completely defunding the public school system), then any downstream consequences that follow are *also* based on an incorrect assumption.

This was demonstrated in studies 2 and 3. These studies suggested that false polarization may underlie serious intergroup consequences. In Study 2, believing that a larger percentage of

the opposing political party members endorsed extreme items correlated strongly with inter-party dislike, and this dislike was correlated with an unwillingness to engage. In other words, a conservative who believes that the majority of liberals agree with extreme liberal issues is likely to also report disliking liberals, and will be less willing to have a conversation, share a taxi, shake their hand, etc. This suggests that at least part of the rise in hostility between partisans may be because of false polarization.

Further, in Study 3, we demonstrated that the reason that participants disliked opposing party members was at least partially because of their perceived agreement with the extreme items. Liberals reported that much more of their dislike for conservatives was based on their perceived stance on extreme conservative issues, as opposed to mild ones. In other words, partisans reported basing their dislike on attitudes that a majority of the opponent group did not even hold. Regressions also demonstrated that this relationship between perceived agreement with extreme items and dislike was still strong even when controlling for the participant's own personal agreement with those items.

Additionally, in studies 1 and 2, we demonstrated that partisans were less likely to voice their opinion (which would often be dissent) on the extreme own-party issues. For example, liberals reported that they would remain silent when the conversation was about free speech, and similarly, conservatives would be quiet when the discussion centered on racism and discrimination. It's possible that this, too, is contributing to false polarization, in that members of the opposing political party (who partisans believe have egregious opinions) are not willing to voice their true opinion on those topics, which is that they largely disagree. This may be because partisans tended to believe that more of their *own* party agreed with those extreme items than actually report doing so (however, these estimations are still smaller than the estimations made

by the opposing side). Further study would be needed to clarify the root cause of this belief; regardless, if partisans over-estimate their own party's adherence to egregious views, they may not voice their own dissent for fear of being rejected by their party.

These studies also attempted to provide some explanation as to why false polarization might be occurring. We speculated that exposure to partisan media would lead participants to believe that opposing party members held more extreme attitudes than they actually did, and this speculation was supported by preliminary evidence. Participants who reported watching more Fox News were more likely to believe that liberals endorsed the extreme liberal attitudes, while participants who watched more MSNBC were more likely to believe that conservatives endorsed extreme conservative attitudes (even when controlling for participants' own political orientation). This is consistent with past findings that exposure to opinionated news sources can sway the viewer's own opinion in the direction that was presented to them (Feldman, 2011). This suggests that if a participant finds themselves in a news bubble, they're likely to be exposed to vivid portrayals of partisans, with no counter examples (like, for example, the many stories of liberals attempting to ban free speech on college campuses, with no reports of open-minded liberals), they're more likely to begin to hold the resulting perception of liberals, just like the ones they saw on the news. This makes these illustrative examples more cognitively available. Further, previous work has shown that partisans have stronger directional goals than accuracy ones, meaning that they are motivated to seek out and process information that is consistent with their pre-existing beliefs, regardless of whether this information is accurate (Lord, Ross & Lepper, 1979; Meirick, 2012; Stroud, 2011). This suggests that partisans who watched these news stations might have held on to these unflattering examples of opposing party members (as they were consistent with preconceived notions on what a liberal or conservative looks like), and

that these vivid examples become overgeneralized and inform their perceptions on the prevalence of extreme opinions.

All together, these findings paint an interesting and complex picture of the process a partisan is potentially going through when considering what kind of people make up the opposing political party. Let's say that Derrick the Democrat, after tuning into MSNBC, is about to go to a party where he knows people with conservative perspectives will be in attendance. Because of the exposure to partisan media, he already has some idea of what these conservative individuals will be like, what attitudes they'll have, and what opinions they'll hold, especially since the latest piece aired was on an apparent upsurge of hate-crimes since Trump's election. Once at the party, Derrick reflects on what he "knows" about conservatives before deciding on interacting with any; he remembers the hate-crime piece, and assumes that many conservatives are likely to support bigoted actions including hate crimes. He becomes filled with intense dislike, and decides that for the rest of the evening, he will not bother to introduce himself to (let alone discuss political topics with) any of the conservatives in attendance. Derrick has, in effect, denied himself the opportunity to correct his own assumptions about conservatives by talking to one, and discovering that they are, in all likelihood, not a racist bigot.

Similarly, Rebecca the Republican is also at this party. She, after watching a piece on the dissolution of free-speech protection on college campuses on Fox News, has similarly negative views of most liberal intolerant snowflakes. She, too, is determined not to introduce herself to, or even shake hands with anyone who identifies as a liberal at this party, as she has decided she dislikes the majority of them. Again, her assumption will never be corrected due to her own self-segregation from members of the opposing political party.

Finally, neither Derrick nor Rebecca will be likely to speak up and vocally dissent when conversations turn to the supposed extreme stances of their own political parties, thereby indirectly perpetuating the idea that the majority of liberals are fine with free speech restriction, and that the majority of conservatives are nonchalant about discrimination against immigrants. Rebecca is never exposed to Derrick's disagreement, and vice-versa, so both individuals will leave the party with their image of the "typical" liberal and conservative intact. Since their social circles are made up of like-minded people, the chance of spontaneous exposure to incongruent information about opposing party members is relatively low.

This may be a simplified illustration of how our findings may play out *in vivo*, but our belief is that each piece of the process plays a significant role in the initial formation, and the perpetuation of these incorrect attitudes regarding members of the opposing side.

Issues of interpretation. One important aspect to note is that, generally, people are relatively accurate in their predictions about what kinds of issues liberals and conservatives agree with. For instance, when tracking how personal agreement and perceived agreement correlate across the issues, liberals seem to have a good idea when conservatives will agree with something more than they do, and vice-versa; the trend-lines follow similar paths. Based on our current study design, it would be difficult to tease apart the degree to which downstream consequences are influenced by either the accuracy of perceived agreement, or the inaccuracy in prevalence estimates. For instance, the average conservative seems to know that liberals DO agree with restricting freedom of speech *more* than other conservatives (though the overall percentages are small), and this knowledge of the slight mean difference may be driving their dislike of liberals (rather than the large over-estimate of prevalence). We suspect that the important component here is not the relative accuracy (that one group tends to score higher than

the other on average), but the idea that partisans are assuming the majority of the opposing party members are endorsing extreme opinions. Given that in many cases opponents agreed with one another more than they disagreed on extreme issues (in many cases a mean party difference reflected a difference between ‘strongly’ and ‘somewhat’ disagree, rather than between ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’), we suggest that it is the overestimate of agreement prevalence that is driving at least some of the dislike and unwillingness to engage. However, we recognize the need for further testing in order to determine what kind of role this accuracy in tracking plays in dislike, as well as in polarization more generally.

Additionally, it is important to address the proportion of liberals and conservatives who did actually report agreeing with the extreme items. We do not want to suggest that the low percentages of agreement mean that egregious views are irrelevant. In fact, many would argue that 5%, 10%, or 20% of people even ‘somewhat agreeing’ with racism or censorship is still too much. It is conceivable that the conclusions of this research come across as dismissive of this issue. We do not aim to dismiss these concerns at all, however we suggest that over-estimation may perpetuate the problem further by increasing dislike, disengagement, and unwillingness to voice dissent. Engaging with opponents and (perhaps especially) with in-group dissenters may be key routes to encouraging extreme partisans to moderate their views. For this reason we suggest it is important to emphasize the relatively low prevalence of these beliefs, to counter the effects of pluralistic ignorance.

It is also possible that some of our over-estimation scores may simply be a statistical artifact produced by the low number of participants who actually agree with extreme views. If (hypothetically) only 5% of people are doing something, it could be that there is no room for error except in the direction of over-estimation of the prevalence of that behaviour (since it’s

already so rare). This could produce some of the over-estimation, especially since some over-estimates were also observed for the in-group. It is less clear that this artifact could produce the considerably larger over-estimate for the out-group. It is conceivable that in the absence of information to the contrary, people simply estimated around the midpoint (~50%) for an unknown out-group and lower for their (more familiar) in-group. However, the relation between media consumption and over-estimate is at least one piece of evidence against an artifactual account. Further research (perhaps examining both positive and negative extreme events) should further attempt to tease apart alternative explanations for the extremity findings.

Limitations There were some basic limitations across all three studies due to our participant sample and our recruitment method. All of the participants were American, so there is some question as to whether these findings are generalizable to other nations as well. Studies were also conducted at a time of particularly high polarization for the US content, coinciding with the Trump presidency. Additionally, the issues themselves were selected specifically because of their relevance in the United States, so it is difficult to say whether “extreme” or “mild” issues in other countries would yield similar results, particularly if media does not play as large a role in public political discourse.

The samples in each study were recruited exclusively from MTurk. Based on our own demographic information, the majority of participants from MTurk had a tendency to lean liberal, which suggests that our samples may not be a representative sample of all of the US. It is also the case that our participants were making estimations for liberal and conservative Americans, not necessarily liberal and conservative MTurkers (which we then compared to their personal agreement scores); it may be that this is an unfair comparison, especially because we are then making generalizations for all Americans. In future studies, we will aim to get the most

representative sample possible, such as paying for participant pools from a survey site like Qualtrics with equal numbers of conservatives and liberals (falling more objectively on either side of the political spectrum). Additionally, past research has found that liberal and conservative MTurkers are almost identical to liberal and conservative Americans, and are thus a reasonably valid sample to be used in research on political ideologies (Clifford, Jewell, & Waggoner, 2015).

Finally, all three studies were conducted online, which may affect the quality of responses. However, we suspect that the online format of the surveys actually enhanced willingness to privately report their views without the pressures of social desirability.

We tried, with each successive study, to cover or address the shortcomings of the previous one, but there are certain limitations that could not be addressed within the scope of this package. One such limitation is that the methods used in the current studies do not allow us to address the debate regarding the symmetry or asymmetry of effects across political parties. Some have argued that there is more propensity for conservatives to be biased because of their psychological features (cognitive rigidity, need for order, tolerance of uncertainty, etc.) (Jost, 2017). Others argue that bias is basically equal between liberals and conservatives, and may just emerge in different domains (Ditto et al., 2017). Further, some argue that there is asymmetry at the level of political elites and media (Brock & Rabin-Havt, 2012; Hacker & Pierson, 2017) – that Republicans have strategically pushed toward extremes and forced the exacerbation of polarization. We do not currently have data to speak to these issues. However, it is notable that one of the interesting asymmetries built into our own study design was the nature of the extreme items themselves; the extreme liberal items (safe-spaces, free-speech, etc.) rarely make it into policy, whereas many of the extreme conservative items (defunding the public school system,

DACA, discrimination against immigrants, etc.) are issues that have been introduced into Republican policy in the past or currently.

Additionally, it is worth emphasizing that this research was conducted with Americans, and some of the causes and consequences could be particularly relevant to American politics. Different political systems (such as the Canadian parliamentary system) maybe less vulnerable to the effects of polarization. However, we suspect that some of the interpersonal and intergroup consequences of polarization are likely to generalize to countries other than the US.

In the current package, the degree of false polarization (how wide the gap was between personal agreement and perceived agreement) between liberals and conservatives was not compared. It may be the case that one party is more susceptible to false polarization than the other. This would be something to address in future studies. This kind of comparison is difficult to do directly, as they hold different issues as central to their ideology, and we cannot be sure that those central issues can be compared fairly (are they equal in extremity, for example). This is actually an issue more generally, as the extremity ratings were not all the same within the mild and extreme categories. Here, we decided to sacrifice control (e.g., by using more comparable issues across conditions or parties) for ecological validity (using issues highly relevant to current political discourse). In doing this, the studies are more realistic, and pertain to daily American life.

A second possible limitation is specifically the way that we have classified who is considered liberal and conservative. We provided participants with a description of both political parties, in order to ensure everyone was working off of the same definition. However, this doesn't necessarily mean everyone has the same conception of who the typical liberal or conservative is, and whether that conceptualization is who they have in mind when answering

the perceived agreement questions. The definitions we provided participants described liberal and conservative in terms of which political parties they would be likely to vote for (either Democrat or Republican), but did not go into detail regarding possible personality traits, typical opinions held by either party, etc. This was intentional; we did not want participants to be biased to our own idea of what constitutes the typical liberal or conservative. However, this may mean that we're inadvertently comparing apples and oranges when comparing perceived agreement scores (where a participant will have their own image of a typical party member) and actual agreement (where the real party member is responding). This would be especially pertinent if people tend to envision an extreme stereotype as the typical partisan. Bringing to mind the extreme may bias people's extremity ratings for the other party's views. It is less clear whether bringing to mind a stereotyped extreme should account for prevalence estimates – this would suggest that they believe the opponent party is made up of a majority of stereotype consistent individuals.

One finding that was not addressed in the main results section, but is still of note, is that participants over-estimated their *own group's* agreement with the extreme items. While this over-estimation was smaller than the estimations made by the opposing political party members, it still has a distinct consequence: pluralistic ignorance. Pluralistic ignorance is the idea that individuals in a group may each privately reject a norm or an attitude, but believe that most others in the group accept it, as evidenced by their behaviour (Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003; Prentice & Miller, 1996). In this case, individuals are reporting disagreement with the extreme items (private rejection), but estimate that a larger proportion of other in-group members agree than themselves. As mentioned previously, these in-group members are unlikely to voice their dissenting opinions on those extreme topics, and so their silence may be being misconstrued by

their fellow in-group members as acceptance of these egregious ideas. While this effect has been observed, this package does not address any potential consequences pluralistic ignorance may have on a party member's attitude or opinion towards their own party.

This over-estimation of own-party beliefs warrants further comment. Why would an individual make the same kind of over-estimation of their *own* party's opinion on extreme issues, as they do with the opposing party's opinion? It's possible, as mentioned previously, that it is because of individual exposure to stereotypical portrayals of members of their in-group. For example, even though liberals may not be avidly watching news stations that portray them as overly-sensitive snowflakes, this does not mean they are completely unaware of the fact that they're being portrayed that way. It is also possible that because of their affiliation, both in-person and online, with members of their own party (something we know is happening based on our data), they may actually be encountering the few partisans who do hold extreme attitudes (they may also be among the most vocal about their views), and are generalizing those opinions to the rest of the party; these could be the people they have in mind when making their estimations of own-party agreement. While these are plausible explanations, more research is needed to clarify the cause. Additionally, even though this over-estimation exists, over-estimations made by the opposing party were still greater.

Finally, there is a "moving target" problem with the issues we chose to present to participants. As was mentioned in an earlier footnote, some issues like gun control, due to recent events (well after data collection had occurred) have made it difficult to conceptualize some issues as mild, especially with these issues carrying a strong moral component (equating lack of gun restrictions with the aiding and abetting of school shootings, as an example). While this does make exact replication of our studies difficult, we felt that the appeal to external validity was

worth this lack of control over our variables. This does, however, point to a related issue; political elites may be handling these topics differently than the American public. For example, while the average American (particularly conservatives) may not completely agree with the racial discrimination of immigrants, the recent move for the US Government to separate immigrant children from their parents has arguably cast the conservative elites in a racist light. This might, for some partisan perceivers, raise the question: “If the party you support is behaving in racist ways, does supporting them also make you a racist?” This question is, perhaps, beyond the scope of this thesis, but is an important aspect to consider when interpreting how our perception of conservative agreement with discrimination variable correlates with dislike and unwillingness to engage.

Future Directions Beyond the previously discussed facets that require further investigation, there are three main areas in this line of research that would benefit most from additional exploration.

The first is what other possible causes there are for why individuals may have these false impressions of members of the opposing political party (that then feed the cycle of false polarization). In this package we have examined media’s potential role (specifically, television news), but there are certainly other sources fueling the illusion. For example, prominent political leaders are renowned for influencing their fellow party members; Trump, as an example, has done an effective job at continuously describing Democrats in increasingly outrageous ways, from wanting to “abolish all police” (Embury-Dennis, 2018), to being outright “Un-American” and “Treasonous” (Pramuk, 2018). For loyal Republicans, hearing this kind of messaging from the leader of their party may colour their image of Democrats in negative (and untrue) ways. At the same time, these prominent politicians sometimes enact the extreme behaviour that informs

false polarization – if a leader is a prototype of a party member, then extreme leaders would prompt more false polarisation.

Another interesting but unexplored possible cause for these false impressions is the rise in social media usage, and the insulated opinion bubbles that the algorithms have formed for their users. There has been much speculation about whether the formation of these “filter bubbles” exacerbates ideological polarization (Spohr, 2017), as well as whether it played a role in the 2016 election (El-Bermawy, 2017), but this connection between selective social media exposure and polarization has yet to be examined experimentally.

Secondly, it would be of interest to determine whether there are other downstream consequences to false polarization, particularly if these consequences have practical implications. For instance, does having an illusory image of the typical liberal or conservative then affect what kinds of policies partisans would agree with supporting, especially if the policy came from a Republican or a Democratic member of congress? It may be that believing opponents to be extreme leads partisans to double down on their own party’s more extreme views in response. Past literature has found that partisans in polarized environments (where political elites are highly polarized) rely on party endorsements of opinions more than substantive evidence when making policy-related decisions (Druckman, Peterson, & Slothuus, 2013). This would suggest that polarization can indeed have a direct impact on the kinds of policies that are implemented, as well as the number of laws passed (Cloninger, Leibo, & Amjad, 2017).

Additionally, while we examined partisans’ willingness to engage with one another, we did not ask participants about their willingness to compromise with opposing party members, nor did we ask about their willingness to engage in conflict resolution. For example, it would be interesting to see if, when presented with a policy where compromise would be beneficial to both

parties (both Democrats and Republicans), individuals would engage in compromise with someone who was explicitly a member of the opposing party. There is some research that suggests that those who identify strongly with their party prefer political leaders who stand firm on principles instead of compromising (Wolf, Strachan, & Shea, 2012), but the factors that motivate partisans to compromise with opposing party members (or accept compromise from their leaders) has not been explored as deeply. Since compromise is a key element of a well-functioning democracy, this particular line of research has important political implications.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, future studies should focus on attempting to mitigate the negative consequences following false polarization. In our other studies (not discussed in this paper), attempts were made to “debias” participants by providing them with correct information regarding the prevalence of the extreme attitudes (and pointing out that their own estimations were incorrect), with the hopes that this would decrease their dislike, and increase their willingness to engage. In the first iteration, participants reported not believing us regarding the actual attitudes of the opposing party members for extreme items, and thus our key dependent variables remained unaffected. In the second iteration, even after emphasizing that ethically, we are not allowed to provide them with false information, the dependent variables were unmoved (though participants did report believing us). This would suggest that even when provided with correct information, participants are unwilling to quickly incorporate it into their schemas of opposing party members, since it was incongruent with their previous beliefs. Future studies may need to provide more vivid examples of opponents who do not hold extreme views, or might attempt to debias in an alternate way such as appealing to emotion.

The present thesis highlights the impact of false polarization on attitudes towards opposing party members, attitudes that can then disrupt an individual’s desire to build

relationships with, or even engage with, those with whom they may disagree. In order to resolve conflict effectively, and to negotiate and reach fair compromises, these false and exaggerated differences (often perpetuated by partisan media) should be dispelled. Identifying *when* false polarization is more likely to happen (when asked to estimate opposing party member agreement on extreme issues compared to mild ones, for example) is a small but significant step towards achieving this goal.

Table 1:
Exploratory Measures (Study 1)

Scale	Political Affiliation	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Intellectual Humility	Liberal	3.634	.020	3.596	3.672	27.331	<.001
	Conservative	3.464	.026	3.412	3.515		
Collective Narcissism	Liberal	3.034	.038	2.961	3.108	13.565	<.001
	Conservative	3.265	.050	3.167	3.364		
Social Vigilantism	Liberal	5.061	.045	4.973	5.149	2.087	.149
	Conservative	4.953	.060	4.835	5.070		
Modern Racism	Liberal	2.147	.053	2.043	2.252	441.441	<.001
	Conservative	4.014	.071	3.875	4.154		
NPI	Liberal	1.81	.007	1.80	1.83	4.585	.032
	Conservative	1.79	.009	1.77	1.81		

Note: For NPI, lower scores indicate greater narcissism.

Table 2:
Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issues (Study 1)

		% of Liberals: Personal Agreement	% of Cons: Personal Agreement	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Conservatives	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Conservatives
Mild Issues	Healthcare	95%	54%	80%	80%	32%	46%
	Signing Healthcare Petitions	88%	48%	75%	79%	31%	41%
	Gun Rights	52%	92%	35%	48%	77%	81%
	Protesting Gun Control	44%	66%	41%	52%	60%	62%
Extreme Issues	Banning Speakers	34%	15%	63%	50%	35%	27%
	Violently Protesting	17%	8%	55%	28%	26%	19%
	Racism Against Immigrants	4%	22%	25%	19%	57%	34%
	Discrimination	5%	13%	20%	13%	46%	27%

Table 3:
Attitude Agreement Means By Condition and Political Affiliation (Study 1)

Condition	Political Affiliation	Agreement	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Mild Liberal	More cons.	Personal	4.290	.162	3.972	4.609
		Est. Liberal	5.806	.154	5.504	6.109
		Est. Cons.	3.688	.163	3.368	4.008
	More liberal	Personal	6.389	.123	6.147	6.630
		Est. Liberal	6.080	.117	5.851	6.309
		Est. Cons.	2.623	.124	2.381	2.866
Mild Cons.	More cons.	Personal	5.939	.157	5.631	6.248
		Est. Liberal	2.869	.149	2.576	3.162
		Est. Cons.	6.111	.158	5.801	6.421
	More liberal	Personal	4.331	.119	4.097	4.566
		Est. Liberal	3.738	.113	3.516	3.961
		Est. Cons.	5.820	.120	5.585	6.055
Extreme Liberal	More cons.	Personal	2.330	.164	2.007	2.652
		Est. Liberal	4.934	.156	4.629	5.240
		Est. Cons.	2.462	.165	2.138	2.785
	More liberal	Personal	3.527	.120	3.290	3.763
		Est. Liberal	4.036	.114	3.811	4.260
		Est. Cons.	3.018	.121	2.780	3.255
Extreme Cons.	More cons.	Personal	2.989	.167	2.661	3.316
		Est. Liberal	2.648	.158	2.337	2.958
		Est. Cons.	3.330	.168	3.001	3.658
	More liberal	Personal	1.329	.119	1.096	1.563
		Est. Liberal	1.867	.113	1.645	2.089
		Est. Cons.	4.763	.120	4.528	4.998

Table 4:
Action Agreement Means By Condition and Political Affiliation (Study 1)

Condition	Political Affiliation	Agreement	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Mild Liberal	More cons.	Personal	4.330	.162	4.011	4.649
		Est. Liberal	5.577	.162	5.260	5.895
		Est. Cons.	3.536	.172	3.199	3.873
	More liberal	Personal	5.994	.127	5.744	6.244
		Est. Liberal	6.019	.127	5.770	6.268
		Est. Cons.	2.766	.135	2.502	3.030
Mild Cons.	More cons.	Personal	4.854	.163	4.534	5.175
		Est. Liberal	3.698	.163	3.379	4.017
		Est. Cons.	4.823	.173	4.484	5.162
	More liberal	Personal	4.077	.123	3.835	4.318
		Est. Liberal	4.225	.123	3.984	4.465
		Est. Cons.	4.734	.130	4.478	4.989
Extreme Liberal	More cons.	Personal	1.835	.168	1.506	2.164
		Est. Liberal	4.604	.167	4.277	4.932
		Est. Cons.	2.011	.177	1.663	2.359
	More liberal	Personal	2.418	.125	2.174	2.663
		Est. Liberal	2.812	.124	2.569	3.055
		Est. Cons.	2.836	.132	2.578	3.095
Extreme Cons.	More cons.	Personal	2.378	.169	2.047	2.709
		Est. Liberal	2.322	.168	1.993	2.652
		Est. Cons.	2.767	.178	2.417	3.117
	More liberal	Personal	1.339	.121	1.101	1.577
		Est. Liberal	1.661	.121	1.424	1.898
		Est. Cons.	4.397	.128	4.145	4.648

Table 5:

Proportion of Liberals and Conservatives in Online and In-Person Social Circles (Study 1)

	Liberal Participants		Conservative Participants	
	Online	In-Person	Online	In-Person
Liberal	66.9%	67.4%	37.5%	36.2%
Conservative	29.8%	30.2%	59.2%	62.5%

Table 6:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues (Study 1)

	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Liberals		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
Extreme Liberal Attitude, Personal Agreement (34%)	49.74	23.76	8.71	172	<.001	12.17	19.31
Extreme Liberal Action, Personal Agreement (17%)	27.55	24.14	5.75	172	<.001	6.93	14.18

	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Conservatives		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
Extreme Liberal Attitude, Liberal Estimates (49.74%)	62.71	28.15	4.46	93	<.001	7.21	18.74
Extreme Liberal Action, Liberal Estimates (27.55%)	54.95	27.95	9.50	93	<.001	21.66	33.11

Table 7:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservative Issues (Study 1)

	Conservative Agreement Estimates by Conservatives		95% Confidence Interval				
	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
Extreme Con Attitude, Personal Agreement (22%)	33.84	23.36	4.81	89	<.001	6.95	16.74
Extreme Con Action, Personal Agreement (13%)	27.30	24.92	5.44	89	<.001	9.08	19.52

	Conservative Agreement Estimates by Liberals		95% Confidence Interval				
	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
Extreme Con Attitude, Con Estimates (33.84%)	57.00	23.10	13.30	174	<.001	19.73	26.60
Extreme Con Action, Con Estimates (27.30%)	46.34	25.63	11.89	174	<.001	19.21	26.86

Table 8:
Social Desirability Correlations (Study 2)

		Personal Agreement with Mild Liberal Issues	Personal Agreement with Extreme Liberal Issues	Personal Agreement with Mild Conservative Issues	Personal Agreement with Extreme Conservative Issues
	<i>r</i>	-.033	-.042	-.057	-.020
Social Desirability Scores	<i>p</i>	.368	.261	.124	.588
	N	727	724	727	727

Table 9:
Participant Ratings of Extremity (Study 2)

		Overall		Conservatives		Liberals	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mild Liberal Issues	Social safety net	4.19	2.55	4.69 _a	2.48	3.96 _b	2.54
	Universal healthcare	5.37	2.84	6.20 _a	2.75	5.00 _b	2.80
	Environmental protection policies	3.88	2.86	4.74 _a	2.69	3.48 _b	2.85
	Equal rights for LGBTQ community	3.95	3.17	5.03 _a	3.17	3.46 _b	3.06
Mild Conservative Issues	Reduced taxation	4.30	2.48	4.33	2.62	4.29	2.42
	Limited government regulation	4.68	2.51	4.11 _a	2.49	4.93 _b	2.48
	Nationwide gun rights	5.45	2.78	5.06 _a	2.84	5.62 _b	2.74
	Supporting a strong military	3.98	2.78	4.13	3.08	3.91	2.63
Extreme Liberal Issues	Restricting freedom of speech	7.33	2.68	7.39	2.64	7.31	2.70
	Strictly enforcing political correctness	7.34	2.77	7.60	2.75	7.22	2.77
	Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	6.00	2.86	6.84 _a	2.70	5.62 _b	2.85
	Prioritizing safe spaces	5.27	3.01	6.35 _a	3.04	4.77 _b	2.86
Extreme Conservative Issues	Construction of The Wall	7.44	2.76	6.16 _a	2.67	8.01 _b	2.61
	De-funding public school system	7.70	2.79	6.98 _a	2.92	8.02 _b	2.67
	Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	7.72	2.89	6.71 _a	3.09	8.20 _b	2.68
	Discriminating against some groups	7.91	2.84	7.34 _a	2.92	8.17 _b	2.77

Note: Subscripts denote significant differences between score, at the $p = .05$ level or smaller.

Table 10:
Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issues (Study 2)

		% of Liberals: Personal Agreement	% of Cons: Personal Agreement	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Conservatives	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Conservatives
Mild Liberal Issues	Social safety net	89%	62%	79%	82%	25%	40%
	Universal healthcare	87%	33.5%	82%	80%	24%	30%
	Environmental protection policies	94%	57%	79%	84%	30%	41%
	Equal rights for LGBTQ community	93%	59%	86%	86%	28%	36%
Mild Conservative Issues	Reduced taxation	61%	88%	41%	50%	69%	72%
	Limited government regulation	30%	80%	29%	33%	68%	76%
	Nationwide gun rights	40.5%	87.5%	27%	28%	80%	80%
	Supporting a strong military	56%	94%	36%	43%	83%	85%
Extreme Liberal Issues	Restricting freedom of speech	13%	18%	50%	29%	44%	30%
	Strictly enforcing political correctness	24.5%	17%	65%	41%	32%	26%
	Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	31%	14%	70%	52%	18%	21%
	Prioritizing safe spaces	67%	27%	77%	69%	17%	25%
Extreme Conservative Issues	Construction of The Wall	9.5%	73.5%	17%	11%	68%	74%
	De-funding public school system	5.5%	28.5%	19%	11%	51%	41%
	Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	8%	48%	18%	12%	66%	63%
	Discriminating against some groups	5.5%	21%	16%	10%	51%	35%

Table 11:
Comparisons between Conservative's Personal Agreement with The Wall and other Extreme Items (Study 2)

	Mean	SD	df	t	p	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
De-Funding Schools	2.61	1.50	223	-17.36	.000	-1.94	-1.54
Outlawing Abortion	3.53	1.81	220	-6.70	.000	-1.06	-.58
Discrimination	2.34	1.56	220	-18.93	.000	-2.21	-1.80

Note: The test value was 4.35, the mean conservative agreement score for The Wall.

Table 12:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues (Study 2)

	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Liberals		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
Restricting Freedom of Speech, Personal Agreement (13%)	28.85	28.24	12.39	486	<.001	13.34	18.37
Enforcing PC, Personal Agreement (24.5%)	41.31	30.65	12.15	490	<.001	14.09	19.52
Affirmative Action, Personal Agreement (31%)	52.33	27.85	16.94	488	<.001	18.86	23.81
Safe Spaces, Personal Agreement (67%)	68.68	25.32	1.48	500	.138	-.54	3.90

	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Conservatives		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
Restricting Freedom of Speech, Liberal Estimates (28.85%)	50.32	36.35	8.86	224	<.001	16.69	26.24
Enforcing PC Test Value, Liberal Estimates (41.31%)	64.51	32.93	10.55	223	<.001	18.86	27.53
Affirmative Action, Liberal Estimates (52.33%)	70.47	27.85	9.79	225	<.001	14.49	21.79
Safe Spaces, Liberal Estimates (68.68%)	76.92	24.29	5.093	224.	<.001	5.06	11.44

Table 13:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservatives Issues (Study 2)

	Conservative Agreement Estimates by Conservatives		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
The Wall, Personal Agreement (73.5%)	74.07	21/80	.394	225	.694	-2.28	3.43
Defunding School, Personal Agreement (28.5%)	40.63	28.87	6.29	223	<.001	8.32	15.93
Outlawing Abortion, Personal Agreement (48%)	63.22	28.48	8.00	223	<.001	11.47	18.97
Discrimination, Personal Agreement (21%)	35.17	30.02	7.05	222	<.001	10.21	18.14

	Conservative Agreement Estimates by Liberals		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD				Lower	Upper
The Wall, Con Estimates (74.07%)	67.84	24.01	-5.79	497	<.001	-8.35	-4.12
Defunding School, Con Estimates (40.63%)	51.46	26.04	9.29	498	<.001	8.54	13.12
Outlawing Abortion, Con Estimates (63.22%)	66.18	26.15	3.28	500	.001	1.55	6.14
Discrimination, Con Estimates (35.17%)	50.98	28.87	12.23	498	<.001	13.27	18.35

Table 14:
Liking of Opposing Political Party and Willingness to Engage (Study 2)

Engagement Items		Conservative Liking of Liberals	Liberal Liking of Conservatives
Political Discussion	<i>r</i>	.040	.108*
	<i>p</i>	.552	.018
	N	225	483
Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	<i>r</i>	.338**	.256**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000
	N	227	483
Going on a Date	<i>r</i>	.298**	.385**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000
	N	226	481
Shaking Hands	<i>r</i>	.259**	.302**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000
	N	227	484
Sharing a Taxi	<i>r</i>	.307**	.298**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000
	N	227	485
Engagement Composite	<i>r</i>	.373**	.391**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000
	N	227	486

Table 15:
Liberal Estimates of Conservative Agreement, and Willingness to Engage (Study 2)

		Political Discussion	Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	Going on a Date	Shaking Hands	Sharing a Taxi	Engagement Composite
Perceived Agreement with Mild Conservative Issues	<i>r</i>	.144**	-.111*	-.133**	.190**	.236**	.072
	<i>p</i>	.001	.014	.003	.000	.000	.110
	<i>N</i>	497	498	495	499	500	501
Perceived Agreement with Extreme Conservative Issues	<i>r</i>	-.027	-.053	-.078	-.068	-.079	-.091*
	<i>p</i>	.552	.240	.084	.131	.076	.042
	<i>N</i>	497	498	495	499	500	501

Table 16:
Conservative Estimates of Liberal Agreement and Willingness to Engage (Study 2)

		Political Discussion	Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	Going on a Date	Shaking Hands	Sharing a Taxi	Engagement Composite
Perceived Agreement	<i>r</i>	.073	-.187**	-.203**	.246**	.319**	.032
with Mild Liberal	<i>p</i>	.278	.005	.002	.000	.000	.631
Issues	N	224	226	225	226	226	226
Perceived Agreement	<i>r</i>	.079	-.141*	-.110	.132*	.129	.008
with Extreme Liberal	<i>p</i>	.240	.034	.101	.047	.054	.908
Issues	N	224	226	225	226	226	226

Table 17:
Willingness to Voice Opinion by Affiliation, Item, and Type (Study 2)

Affiliation	Item	Type	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Conservative	Liberal	Mild	4.043 _a	.083	3.880	4.206
		Extreme	3.583 _{bd}	.105	3.377	3.790
	Conservative	Mild	4.098 _a	.091	3.919	4.277
		Extreme	3.595 _b	.108	3.382	3.808
Liberal	Liberal	Mild	4.367 _c	.056	4.257	4.476
		Extreme	3.579 _d	.071	3.440	3.718
	Conservative	Mild	3.827 _d	.061	3.707	3.948
		Extreme	4.262 _c	.073	4.119	4.405

Note: Subscripts denote significant differences between score, at the $p = .05$ level or smaller.

Table 18:
Media Consumption and Perceived Agreement Estimations (Study 2)

		ML –Lib Agreement	MC – Con Agreement	EL – Lib Agreement	EC – Con Agreement
Watches FOX News	<i>r</i>	-.067	-.037	.170**	.019
	<i>p</i>	.077	.323	.000	.620
	N	702	702	702	702
Watches MSNBC	<i>r</i>	-.060	-.007	-.025	.117**
	<i>p</i>	.115	.859	.510	.002
	N	702	702	702	702

Note: this was controlling for political affiliation.

Table 19:
Media Consumption and Perceived Agreement, by Item (Study 2)

		Watches MSNBC	Watches FOX News
Social safety net - Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.055	-.056
	<i>p</i>	.157	.154
	N	659	659
Reduced taxation – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	.030	-.025
	<i>p</i>	.438	.515
	N	659	659
Restricting freedom of speech – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.014	.137**
	<i>p</i>	.717	.000
	N	659	659
Construction of The Wall – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.030	.027
	<i>p</i>	.440	.487
	N	659	659
Universal healthcare – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.037	.000
	<i>p</i>	.338	.991
	N	659	659
Limited government regulation – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	.022	-.007
	<i>p</i>	.570	.848
	N	659	659
Strictly enforcing political correctness – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.005	.149**
	<i>p</i>	.899	.000
	N	659	659
De-funding public school system – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	.127**	.103
	<i>p</i>	.001	.008
	N	659	659
Environmental protection policies – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.059	-.025
	<i>p</i>	.127	.521
	N	659	659
Nationwide gun rights – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.036	-.061
	<i>p</i>	.355	.116

	N	659	659
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	<i>r</i>	-.043	.096*
– Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>p</i>	.265	.014
	N	659	659
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest) – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	.010	-.033
	<i>p</i>	.806	.402
	N	659	659
Equal rights for LGBTQ community – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.099*	-.093*
	<i>p</i>	.011	.017
	N	659	659
Supporting a strong military – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.070	-.061
	<i>p</i>	.072	.117
	N	659	659
Prioritizing safe spaces – Perceived Liberal Agreement	<i>r</i>	-.037	.026
	<i>p</i>	.342	.511
	N	659	659
Discriminating against some groups – Perceived Conservative Agreement	<i>r</i>	.140**	.034
	<i>p</i>	.000	.383
	N	659	659

Note: this was controlling for political affiliation.

Table 20:
Complete Percentage Scores for Personal Agreement, Estimated Liberal Agreement, and Estimated Conservative Agreement with Partisan Issue (Study 3)

		% of Liberals: Personal Agreement	% of Cons: Personal Agreement	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Conservatives	Liberal % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Liberals	Conservative % Agree Estimate by Conservatives
Mild Liberal Issues	Social safety net	91%	59%	78%	80%	29%	40%
	Universal healthcare	86%	39%	79%	77%	26%	29%
	Environmental protection policies	94%	57%	79%	83%	35%	37.5%
	Equal rights for LGBTQ community	93%	56%	85%	84.5%	31%	39%
Mild Conservative Issues	Reduced taxation	58%	85%	38.5%	51%	71%	75%
	Limited government regulation	33%	70%	33%	34%	66%	63%
	Nationwide gun rights	39%	80%	26%	30%	77%	78%
	Supporting a strong military	55%	86%	35%	48.5%	84%	80%
	Limiting Abortion	25%	61%	32%	24%	65%	56%
Extreme Liberal Issues	Restricting freedom of speech	22%	19%	57%	32%	40%	27.5%
	Strictly enforcing political correctness	29%	22%	69.5%	41%	29%	25%
	Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	31%	13%	73%	48%	18%	22%
	Ensuring people have "safe spaces" for anything offensive	32%	17%	74%	49%	22%	20%
Extreme Conservative Issues	Forcing immigrants in DACA to leave America	14%	62%	19%	16.5%	66%	67%
	De-funding public school system	10%	33%	22%	13%	50%	35%

Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	6.5%	47%	15%	12%	61.5%	56%
Discriminating against some groups	8%	28%	20%	13%	53%	34.5%

Table 21:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Liberal Issues (Study 3)

	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Liberals					95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
Restricting Freedom of Speech, Personal Agreement (22%)	31.95	27.87	4.63	167	<.001	5.71	14.20
Enforcing PC, Personal Agreement (29%)	41.39	29.45	5.42	165	<.001	7.88	16.90
Affirmative Action, Personal Agreement (31%)	47.75	27.66	7.82	166	<.001	12.53	20.98
Safe Spaces, Personal Agreement (32%)	48.76	27.97	7.79	168	<.001	12.51	21.00
	Liberal Agreement Estimates by Conservatives					95% Confidence Interval	
	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
Restricting Freedom of Speech, Liberal Estimates (31.95%)	57.07	31.29	7.95	97	<.001	18.85	31.39
Enforcing PC, Liberal Estimates (41.39%)	69.46	29.03	9.52	96	<.001	22.22	33.92
Affirmative Action, Liberal Estimates (47.75%)	72.62	26.87	9.11	96	<.001	19.45	30.28
Safe Spaces, Liberal Estimates (48.76%)	74.19	25.21	9.93	96	<.001	20.34	30.51

Table 22:

Degree of Over-estimation between Personal Agreement and In-group Estimation, and between In-group and Out-group Estimation for Extreme Conservative Issues (Study 3)

	Conservative Agreement Estimates By Conservatives		95% Confidence Interval				
	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
DACA, Personal Agreement (62%)	67.02	23.20	2.21	96	.029	.53	9.88
Defunding School, Personal Agreement (33%)	35.16	26.17	.815	96	.417	-3.11	7.44
Outlawing Abortion, Personal Agreement (47%)	55.81	29.69	2.94	97	.004	2.85	14.76
Discrimination, Personal Agreement (28%)	34.46	26.46	2.41	96	.018	1.13	11.79

	Conservative Agreement Estimates by Liberals		95% Confidence Interval				
	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Lower	Upper
DACA, Con Estimate (67.02%)	66.14	24.66	-.466	168	.642	-4.63	2.86
Defunding School, Con Estimate (35.16%)	49.85	27.90	6.85	168	<.001	10.46	18.93
Outlawing Abortion, Con Estimate 55.81%	61.48	28.00	2.63	168	.009	1.42	9.92
Discrimination, Con Estimate (34.46%)	54.42	29.06	8.93	168	<.001	15.55	24.38

Table 23:
Regression Model for Liberal Liking by Conservatives, Mild Items (Study 3)

Liking	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	95% CI
<hr/>						
Liberal Liking by Conservatives						
<hr/>						
Step 1						
Liberal Agreement Estimates	-.175	.125	-1.736	95	.086	[-.464, .031]
Step 2						
Liberal Agreement Estimates	-.095	.128	-.915	94	.363	[-.371, .137]
Personal Agreement	.275	2.364	2.482	94	.015	[1.173, 10.562]
<hr/>						

Table 24:
Regression Model for Conservative Liking by Liberals, Mild Items (Study 3)

Liking	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	95% CI
<u>Conservative Liking by Liberals</u>						
Step 1						
Conservative Agreement Estimates	-.189	.084	-2.479	165	.014	[-.375, -.042]
Step 2						
Conservative Agreement Estimates	-.058	.079	-.806	164	.421	[-.219, .092]
Personal Agreement	.462	1.611	6.462	164	<.001	[7.230, 13.592]

Table 25:
Regression Model for Liberal Liking by Conservatives, Extreme Items (Study 3)

Liking	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	95% CI
<hr/>						
Liberal Liking by Conservatives						
<hr/>						
Step 1						
Liberal Agreement Estimates	-.449	.098	-4.877	94	<.001	[-.672, -.283]
Step 2						
Liberal Agreement Estimates	-.465	.111	-4.438	93	<.001	[-.715, -.273]
Personal Agreement	-.033	2.181	-.311	93	.756	[-5.011, 3.653]
<hr/>						

Table 26:
Regression Model for Conservative Liking by Liberals, Extreme Items (Study 3)

Liking	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	95% CI
<u>Conservative Liking by Liberals</u>						
Step 1						
Conservative Agreement Estimates	-.279	.072	-3.700	162	<.001	[-.406, -.124]
Step 2						
Conservative Agreement Estimates	-.242	.067	-3.442	161	.001	[-.361, -.098]
Personal Agreement	.371	1.563	5.284	161	<.001	[5.171, 11.343]

Table 27:
Liking of Opposing Political Party Members, and Attribution of Liking to Stance on Issues (Study 3)

		Liking Based on Mild	Liking Based on Extreme
		Issues	Issues
Liberal Liking by Conservatives	<i>r</i>	-.137	-.222*
	<i>p</i>	.180	.030
	N	97	96
Conservative Liking by Liberals	<i>r</i>	-.073	-.273**
	<i>p</i>	.348	.000
	N	167	167

Table 28:
Liking of Opposing Political Party and Willingness to Engage (Study 3)

Engagement Items		Conservative Liking of Liberals	Liberal Liking of Conservatives
Political Discussion	<i>r</i>	.083	.238**
	<i>p</i>	.428	.002
	N	94	167
Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	<i>r</i>	.299**	.379**
	<i>p</i>	.003	.000
	N	96	167
Going on a Date	<i>r</i>	.288**	.446**
	<i>p</i>	.004	.000
	N	97	166
Shaking Hands	<i>r</i>	.191	.145
	<i>p</i>	.061	.062
	N	97	167
Sharing a Taxi	<i>r</i>	.232*	.161*
	<i>p</i>	.022	.038
	N	97	167
Engagement Composite	<i>r</i>	.307**	.404**
	<i>p</i>	.002	.000
	N	97	167

Table 29:
Liberal Estimation of Conservative Agreement and Willingness to Engage (Study 3)

		Political Discussion	Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	Going on a Date	Shaking Hands	Sharing a Taxi	Engagement Composite
Perceived Agreement with Mild Conservative Issues	<i>r</i>	-.004	-.078	-.186*	.236**	.246**	.033
	<i>p</i>	.958	.316	.016	.002	.001	.675
	N	169	169	168	169	169	169
Perceived Agreement with Extreme Conservative Issues	<i>r</i>	-.130	-.159*	-.230**	-.021	-.024	-.173*
	<i>p</i>	.092	.039	.003	.788	.757	.024
	N	169	169	168	169	169	169

Table 30:
Conservative Estimation of Liberal Agreement and Willingness to Engage (Study 3)

		Political Discussion	Child's Engagement to Opp. PP	Going on a Date	Shaking Hands	Sharing a Taxi	Engagement Composite
Perceived Agreement with Mild Liberal Issues	<i>r</i>	-.023	-.212*	-.288**	.410**	.298**	.036
	<i>p</i>	.826	.037	.004	.000	.003	.727
	N	95	97	98	98	98	98
Perceived Agreement with Extreme Liberal Issues	<i>r</i>	-.051	-.202*	-.288**	.188	.075	-.088
	<i>p</i>	.623	.047	.004	.064	.462	.389
	N	95	97	98	98	98	98

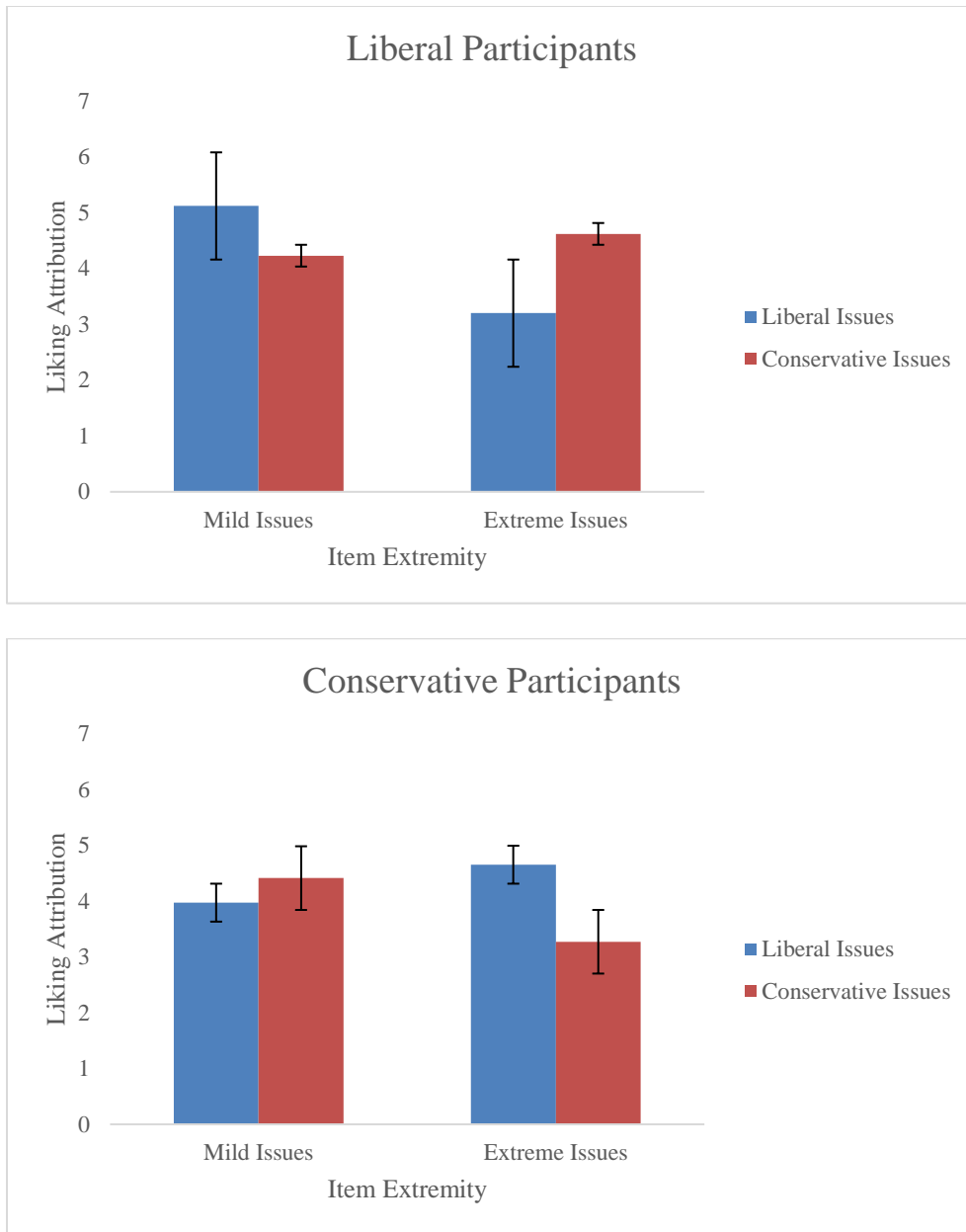


Figure 1: 3-way interaction between issue type (party affiliation and extremity) and political affiliation, and liking attribution (Study 3)

Appendix A

Study 1 Materials

Definitions

Before you get started, we would just like to take a moment to go over some definitions of words you may encounter during this survey.

When we use the word **liberal**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Democrat, the Green Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold liberal perspectives and opinions.

When we use the word **conservative**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Republican, have supported the Tea Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold conservative perspectives and opinions. People who typically vote Libertarian may align with some conservative views but not others.

With this in mind, please hit the arrow button to continue.

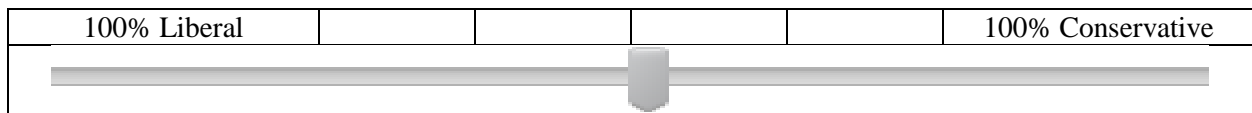
If I were to support a political party in the USA, I would support...

- The Republican Party
- The Democratic Party
- The Libertarian Party
- The Green Party
- Other: _____

Using the scale below, please indicate the strength of your political affiliation.





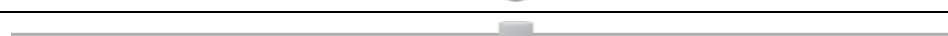
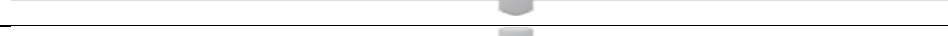
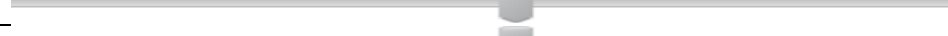

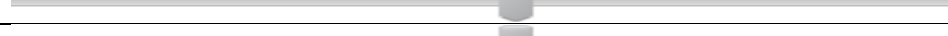
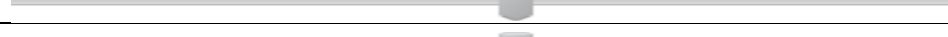



Not At All Affiliated						Strongly Affiliated
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Using the following slider bar, please indicate (by sliding the dot) the point that you believe best represents your overall political orientation.



Please indicate the extent to which you feel positively or negatively towards each issue. Scores of 0 indicate greater negativity, and scores of 100 indicate greater positivity. Scores of 50 indicate that you feel neutral about the issue.

	Greater Negativity			Neutral				Greater Positivity			Don't Know	
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90		100
Abortion												
Limited Government												
Military and National Security												

Religion		
Welfare Benefits		
Gun Ownership		
Traditional Marriage		
Traditional Values		
LGBTQ Rights		
Business		
Patriotism		
Multiculturalism		
Environmental Protection		
Police		
Taxation		
Affirmative Action		

On average, on most societal topics, are you:

- More conservative
- More liberal
- Both equally

NPI

Read each pair of statements below and place and select the one that comes closest to describing your feelings and beliefs about yourself. You may feel that neither statement describes you well, but pick the one that comes closest.

1. ___ I really like to be the center of attention
 ___ It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention

2. ___ I am no better or no worse than most people
 ___ I think I am a special person

3. ___ Everybody likes to hear my stories
 ___ Sometimes I tell good stories

4. ___ I usually get the respect that I deserve
 ___ I insist upon getting the respect that is due me

5. ___ I don't mind following orders
 ___ I like having authority over people

6. ___ I am going to be a great person
 ___ I hope I am going to be successful

7. ___ People sometimes believe what I tell them
 ___ I can make anybody believe anything I want them to

- 8. ___ I expect a great deal from other people
 ___ I like to do things for other people
- 9. ___ I like to be the center of attention
 ___ I prefer to blend in with the crowd
- 10. ___ I am much like everybody else
 ___ I am an extraordinary person
- 11. ___ I always know what I am doing
 ___ Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing
- 12. ___ I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people
 ___ I find it easy to manipulate people
- 13. ___ Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me
 ___ People always seem to recognize my authority
- 14. ___ I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so
 ___ When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed
- 15. ___ I try not to be a show off
 ___ I am apt to show off if I get the chance
- 16. ___ I am more capable than other people
 ___ There is a lot that I can learn from other people

Self-Esteem

To what extent to you agree with the statement: I have high self-esteem.

Very Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Moderately Agree	Very Strongly Agree
------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	---------------------	---------------------------

Mild Liberal Condition

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have expressed certain opinions regarding healthcare. Specifically, some people tend to believe that all US citizens have a right to universally affordable healthcare, provided by the government.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **liberals in general** agree that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. If a liberal **does not support** the view that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government, other liberals are likely to judge them:

Very Poorly			Neither Well nor Poorly			Very Well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I think **conservatives in general** agree that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** that all US citizens have a right to affordable healthcare provided by the government.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have endorsed certain actions regarding healthcare. Specifically, some people have signed petitions in favor of providing US citizens universally affordable healthcare, provided by the government.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** with the act of signing petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **liberals in general** agree with the act of signing petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** with the act of signing petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government, and think it is a legitimate act.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. I think **conservatives in general** agree with the act of signing petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** with the act of signing petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government, and think it is a legitimate act.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

6. For liberals who disagree with the opinion in favor of affordable healthcare, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. For conservatives who disagree with the opinion in favor of affordable healthcare, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. How likely are **you** to **voice your opinion** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Did you have any comments regarding this viewpoint that you would like to share? If so, please use the textbox below.

Mild Conservative Condition

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have expressed certain opinions regarding the right to gun ownership. Specifically, some people tend to believe that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **conservatives in general** agree that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
--	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----



Percentage of Liberals	
------------------------	--

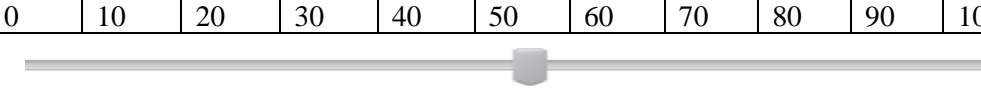
4. If a conservative **does not support** the view that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment, other conservatives are likely to judge them:

Very Poorly			Neither Well nor Poorly			Very Well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I think **liberals in general** agree that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have endorsed certain actions regarding the right to gun ownership. Specifically, some people tend to protest whenever a politician tries to implement greater restrictions on gun ownership/ stricter gun control.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** the act of protesting against stricter gun control and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **conservatives in general** agree with the act of protesting against stricter gun control and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** with the act of protesting against stricter gun control and think it is a legitimate act.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. I think **liberals in general** agree with the act of protesting against stricter gun control and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** with the act of protesting against stricter gun control and think it is a legitimate act.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

6. For conservatives who disagree with the opinion in favor of the right to own guns, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. For liberals who disagree with the opinion in favor of the right to own guns, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. How likely are **you** to **voice your opinion** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Did you have any comments regarding this viewpoint that you would like to share? If so, please use the textbox below.

Extreme Liberal Condition

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have sometimes prioritized political correctness over freedom of speech. Specifically, at times, public figures have expressed views (often conservative) that are controversial and offensive to oppressed groups in society. Some people believe these public figures should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** that that controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **liberals in general** agree controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** that controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. If a liberal **does not support** banning controversial speakers from college campuses, other liberals are likely to judge them:

Very Poorly			Neither Well nor Poorly			Very Well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I think **conservatives in general** agree that controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** that that controversial (often conservative) public figures who may be offensive to oppressed groups should be banned from speaking on college campuses.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have sometimes prioritized political correctness over freedom of speech. Specifically, at times, public figures have expressed views (often conservative) that are controversial and offensive to oppressed groups in society. Some people have started violent protests in response to a controversial public figure being invited to speak at college campuses.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** with the act of protesting violently against controversial speakers, and think it is legitimate.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **liberals in general** agree with the act of protesting violently against controversial speakers, and think it is legitimate.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** with the act of protesting violently against controversial speakers, and think it is legitimate.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. I think **conservatives in general** agree with the act of protesting violently against controversial speakers, and think it is legitimate.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** with the act of protesting violently against controversial speakers, and think it is legitimate.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

6. For liberals who disagree with the opinion in favor of banning controversial speakers, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. For conservatives who disagree with the opinion in favor of banning controversial speakers, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. How likely are **you** to **voice your opinion** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Did you have any comments regarding this viewpoint that you would like to share? If so, please use the textbox below.

Extreme Conservative Condition

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have expressed certain opinions about people of certain ethnic backgrounds in their communities. Specifically, some individuals have expressed hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their citizenship status.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their immigration status.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **conservatives in general** agree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their immigration status.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives at least somewhat agree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their immigration status.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. If a conservative **does not support** the view that all US citizens have a right to purchase and own guns, in accordance with the Second Amendment, other conservatives are likely to judge them:

Very Poorly			Neither Well nor Poorly			Very Well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I think **liberals in general** agree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their immigration status.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Please estimate what percentage of liberals at least somewhat agree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, regardless of their immigration status.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

The following questionnaire asks you about beliefs held by people in society that may tend to identify with particular political parties. Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible.

Individuals in the USA have endorsed certain actions toward people of certain ethnic backgrounds in their communities. Some have engaged in blatant discrimination and harassment against individuals with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds. In certain cases, this has led to verbal or physical aggression, regardless of their citizenship status.

Some people and groups agree with this, and some do not. Please indicate how strongly you agree with this belief and how strongly you think other people within different groups agree with this belief below.

1. I **agree** with the act of engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I think **conservatives in general** agree with the act of engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Please estimate what percentage of conservatives **at least somewhat agree** with the act of engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and think it is a legitimate act..

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Liberals											

4. I think **liberals in general** agree with the act of engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and think it is a legitimate act.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Please estimate what percentage of liberals **at least somewhat agree** with the act of engaging in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds, and think it is a legitimate act.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Conservatives											

6. For conservatives who disagree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. For liberals who disagree with expressing hostile and unwelcoming attitudes toward those of Latino/Hispanic or Middle Eastern background, **how likely** are they to **voice their opinions** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. How likely are **you** to **voice your opinion** on the subject?

Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Did you have any comments regarding this viewpoint that you would like to share? If so, please use the textbox below.

Personal Frequency Questions

1. How frequently do **you** sign petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

2. How frequently do **you** attend protests against stricter gun control laws?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

3. How frequently do **you** violently protest against controversial (often conservative) speakers being invited to speak at college campuses?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

4. How frequently do **you** engage in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/ Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

Frequency Questions

1. How frequently do **liberals** sign petitions in favor of affordable healthcare provided by the government?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

2. How frequently do **conservatives** attend protests against stricter gun control laws?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

3. How frequently do **liberals** violently protest against controversial (often conservative) speakers being invited to speak at college campuses?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

4. How frequently do **conservatives** engage in blatant discrimination and harassment against those with Latino/ Hispanic and Middle Eastern backgrounds?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

Social Vigilantism

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using the scale provided.

(1: Disagree Very Strongly – 10: Agree Very Strongly)

1. I feel as if it is my duty to enlighten other people.
2. I feel that my ideas should be used to educate others.
3. I feel a social obligation to voice my opinion.
4. I need to win any argument about how people should live their lives.
5. Those people who are more intelligent and informed have a responsibility to educate the people around them who are less intelligent and informed.
6. I like to imagine myself in a position of authority so that I could make the important decisions around here.
7. I try to get people to listen to me, because what I have to say makes a lot of sense.



8. Some people just believe stupid things.
9. There are a lot of ignorant people in society.
10. I think that some people need to be told that their point of view is wrong.
11. If everyone saw things the way that I do, the world would be a better place.
12. It frustrates me that many people fail to consider the finer points of an issue when they take a side.
13. I often feel that other people do not base their opinions on good evidence.
14. I frequently consider writing a "letter to the editor."

Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

1. I feel small when others disagree with me on topics that are close to my heart.
2. When someone contradicts my most important beliefs, it feels like a personal attack.
3. When someone disagrees with ideas that are important to me, it feels as though I'm being attacked.
4. I tend to feel threatened when others disagree with me on topics that are close to my heart.
5. When someone disagrees with ideas that are important to me, it makes me feel insignificant.
6. I am open to revising my important beliefs in the face of new information.
7. I am willing to change my position on an important issue in the face of good reasons.
8. I am willing to change my opinions on the basis of compelling reason.
9. I have at times changed opinions that were important to me, when someone showed me I was wrong.
10. I'm willing to change my mind once it's made up about an important topic.
11. I can respect others, even if I disagree with them in important ways.
12. I can have great respect for someone, even when we don't see eye-to-eye on important topics.
13. Even when I disagree with others, I can recognize that they have sound points.
14. I am willing to hear others out, even if I disagree with them.
15. I welcome different ways of thinking about important topics.
16. I respect that there are ways of making important decisions that are different from the way I make decisions.
17. My ideas are usually better than other people's ideas.
18. For the most part, others have more to learn from me than I have to learn from them.
19. When I am really confident in a belief, there is very little chance that belief is wrong.
20. On important topics, I am not likely to be swayed by the viewpoints of others.
21. I'd rather rely on my own knowledge about most topics than turn to others for expertise.
22. Listening to perspectives of others seldom changes my important opinions.

Collective Narcissism

Please **think** about the **political party you identify most with** while responding to the items of the scale.

(1: Totally Disagree – 6: Totally Agree)

1. I wish other groups would more quickly recognize the authority of my group.
2. My group deserves special treatment.
3. I will never be satisfied until my group gets the recognition it deserves.
4. I insist upon my group getting the respect that is due to it.
5. It really makes me angry when others criticize my group.
6. If my group had a major say in the world, the world would be a much better place.
7. I do not get upset when people do not notice the achievements of my group.
8. Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of my group.
9. The true worth of my group is often misunderstood.

Modern Racism Scale

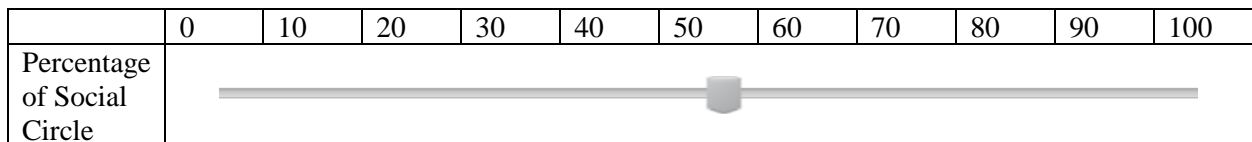
Please read and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

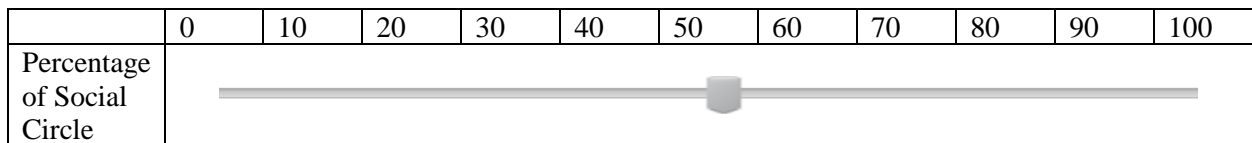
1. Discrimination against racial minorities is no longer a problem in the United States.
2. It is easy to understand the anger of racial minorities in the United States.
3. Racial minorities have more influence than they ought to have.
4. Racial minorities are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.
5. Racial minorities should not push themselves where they are not wanted.
6. Over the past few years, racial minorities have gotten more economically than they deserve.
7. Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect to racial minorities than they deserve.

Social Circle

1. What percentage of your **online social circle** (individuals you interact with online) hold **mostly liberal** views?



2. What percentage of your **online social circle** (individuals you interact with online) hold **mostly conservative** views?



3. What percentage of your **in-person social circle** (people you interact with on a daily basis) hold **mostly liberal** views?

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Social Circle											

4. What percentage of your **in-person social circle** (people you interact with on a daily basis) hold **mostly conservative** views?

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage of Social Circle											

Demographics and Media Consumption

Please indicate your age: _____

Please indicate your gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other: _____

Please indicate your country of residence:

- Canada
- United States
- Other: _____

What country were you born in? _____

From the following, please select the racial group with which you primarily identify.

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian
- Hispanic/ Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Aboriginal
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Other: _____

To which religion or worldview do you currently subscribe or belong?

- Atheism
- Agnostic
- Baha'i
- Buddhism

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Jainism
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Wicca
- Spiritual but not religious
- Other: _____
- None
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

- Primary school
- High school
- College/University degree
- Post-graduate degree
- Prefer not to answer

What is your combined annual household income?

- Less than 15,000
- 15,000 -- 29,999
- 30,000 – 39,999
- 40,000 – 49,999
- 50,000 – 59,999
- 60,000 – 69,999
- 70,000 – 79,999
- 80,000 – 89,999
- 90,000 – 99,999
- 100,000 --120,000
- Over 120,000
- Prefer not to disclose

Which television news networks do you watch the most often?

Click all that apply.

- ABC News
- Bloomberg Television
- CBS News
- CNBC
- CNN
- FOX News
- HLN
- MSNBC
- NBC News
- Other: _____

Please list the name of the specific news program (television show) that you prefer to get your news from:

How many hours a day do you spend on social media (e.g. Facebook, instagram, snapchat, etc.)?

- 1 - 31 minutes
- 31 minutes - 1 hour
- 1 - 2 hours
- 3 - 4 hours
- 5 - 6 hours
- More than 7 hours
- I don't use social media

How many hours a day do you spend reading online news (e.g. News websites like Breitbart, Fox, New York Times, or Washington Post)?

- 1 - 31 minutes
- 31 minutes - 1 hour
- 1 - 2 hours
- 3 - 4 hours
- 5 - 6 hours
- More than 7 hours
- I don't read online news

Please indicate the sources of online news you are most likely to read regularly: _____

How many hours a day do you spend browsing online discussion boards and forums (e.g. Reddit)?

- 1 - 31 minutes
 - 31 minutes - 1 hour
 - 1 - 2 hours
 - 3 - 4 hours
 - 5 - 6 hours
 - More than 7 hours
 - I don't browse discussion boards
-

Comments

Before you finish the survey, we did want to give you the opportunity to share some of your thoughts with us.

Political issues, such as the ones we outlined in this study, are extremely complex. We tried (to the best of our abilities) to capture a number of aspects, from a number of political perspectives. However, we recognize that we may not have gotten the complete picture, and are interested in your ideas!

Was there anything in particular you felt that we missed in this study? Please share your thoughts here:

END OF SURVEY

Appendix B

Study 2 Materials

Definitions

Before you get started, we would just like to take a moment to go over some definitions of words you may encounter during this survey.

When we use the word **liberal**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Democrat, the Green Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold liberal perspectives and opinions.

When we use the word **conservative**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Republican, have supported the Tea Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold conservative perspectives and opinions. People who typically vote Libertarian may align with some conservative views but not others.

With this in mind, please hit the arrow button to continue.

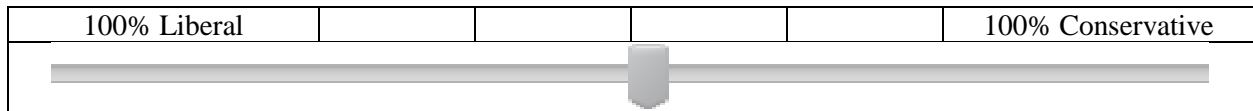
If I were to support a political party in the USA, I would support...

- The Republican Party
- The Democratic Party
- The Libertarian Party
- The Green Party
- Other: _____

Using the scale below, please indicate the strength of your political affiliation.

Not At All Affiliated						Strongly Affiliated
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Using the following slider bar, please indicate (by sliding the dot) the point that you believe best represents your overall political orientation.



On average, on most societal topics, are you:

- More conservative
- More liberal
- Both equally

Social Desirability

Read each item and decide whether it is true or false for you.

1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. (T/F)
2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. (T/F)
3. On a few occasions, I have given up something because I thought too little of my ability. (T/F)
4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. (T/F)
5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. (T/F)
6. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone. (T/F)
7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake. (T/F)
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (T/F)
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. (T/F)
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. (T/F)
11. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me. (T/F)
12. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. (T/F)

Partisan Issues

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Some issues are more moderate and others more extreme. The issues described do not reflect the researchers' opinions; we simply want to give you a chance to express a full range of your views.

Please indicate the degree to which you **personally agree or disagree** with each one on the scale provided.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed						
Reduced taxation						
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)						
Construction of The Wall (Dividing USA and Mexico)						
Universal healthcare provided by government						
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry						
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it						
De-funding public school system						
Environmental protection policies						
Nationwide gun rights						

Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	
Equal rights for LGBTQ community	
Supporting a strong military and national defense	
Prioritizing safe spaces for oppressed groups	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Please indicate **what percentage** of liberals **at least somewhat agree** with each one on the scale provided.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed											
Reduced taxation											
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)											
Construction of The Wall (Dividing USA and Mexico)											
Universal healthcare provided by government											
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry											
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it											
De-funding public school system											
Environmental protection policies											
Nationwide gun rights											
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit											
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)											
Equal rights for LGBTQ community											

Supporting a strong military and national defense	
Prioritizing safe spaces for oppressed groups	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Please indicate **what percentage of conservatives at least somewhat agree** with each one on the scale provided.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed											
Reduced taxation											
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)											
Construction of The Wall (Dividing USA and Mexico)											
Universal healthcare provided by government											
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry											
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it											
De-funding public school system											
Environmental protection policies											
Nationwide gun rights											
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit											
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)											
Equal rights for LGBTQ community											
Supporting a strong military and national defense											

Prioritizing safe spaces for oppressed groups	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

Consider the issues we've listed here. For each issue, please rate on the following scale how **mild** or **extreme** it would be to hold the position of "**strongly agree**" for that issue.

	Very Mild			Neither Mild nor Extreme				Very Extreme			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed											
Reduced taxation											
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)											
Construction of The Wall (Dividing USA and Mexico)											
Universal healthcare provided by government											
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry											
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it											
De-funding public school system											
Environmental protection policies											
Nationwide gun rights											
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit											
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)											
Equal rights for LGBTQ community											
Supporting a strong military and national defense											
Prioritizing safe spaces for oppressed groups											

Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	
--	--

Are there other partisan issues that liberals and conservatives feel strongly about that we've missed? Please list any you can think of here.

Issues **liberals** feel strongly about: _____
 Issues **conservatives** feel strongly about: _____

Voicing Opinion

Imagine you are in a situation where you **could publicly voice (in person or online) your personal opinion on each of the issues below**. How likely would you be to voice your true personal opinion publicly?

How willing would you be to **voice your opinion publicly** on the following issues:

	Completely Unwilling	Moderately Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Moderately Willing	Completely Willing
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed						
Reduced taxation						
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)						
Construction of The Wall (Dividing USA and Mexico)						
Universal healthcare provided by government						
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry						
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it						
De-funding public school system						
Environmental protection policies						
Nationwide gun rights						

Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	
Equal rights for LGBTQ community	
Supporting a strong military and national defense	
Prioritizing safe spaces for oppressed groups	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

Willingness to Engage

Please respond to the following hypothetical scenarios as though they were happening in your life. If the circumstances reflect your actual life situation, respond based on what you would do. However if circumstances are different from your real life, please respond hypothetically regarding what you would do if you were actually in that situation.

- Imagine, hypothetically, that you have a chance to engage in political discussion on some of the topics listed previously. How willing would you be to **have a political discussion** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

- Imagine, hypothetically, that you have a young adult son or daughter. How negatively or positively would you feel **if your child got engaged** to a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Negatively	Negatively	Somewhat Negatively	Somewhat Positively	Positively	Extremely Positively
1	2	3	4	5	6

- Imagine, hypothetically, that you were interested in meeting potential dating partners. How willing would you be to **go out on a date** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. How willing would you be to **shake hands** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. How willing would you be to **share a taxi** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

Liking

How much do you like **liberals** in general?

Not At All	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
1	2	3	4	5

What do you **like** about them? _____

What do you **dislike** about them? _____

How much do you like **conservatives** in general?

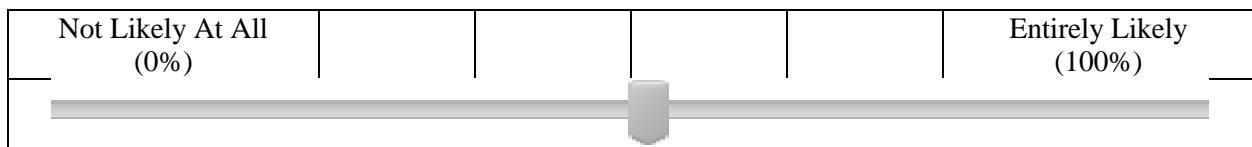
Not At All	Very Little	Some	Quite a Bit	Very Much
1	2	3	4	5

What do you **like** about them? _____

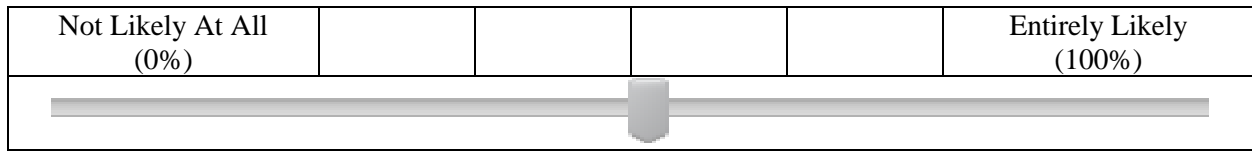
What do you **dislike** about them? _____

Changing Minds

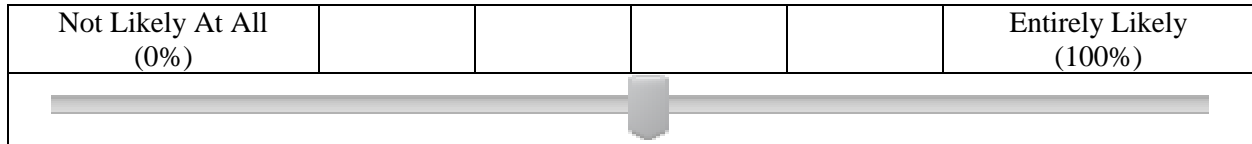
1. Think about the previously listed issues. For the ones that you personally agreed with, what is the percent likelihood that you would **change your mind** about the issue (eg. if you initially agreed, how likely would you be to disagree) after a discussion with someone who holds the opposing view?



2. Think about the previously listed issues. For the ones that you thought **liberals** agreed with, what is the percent likelihood a **liberal** would change their mind about the issue (eg. if they initially agreed, how likely would they be to disagree) after a discussion with a conservative?

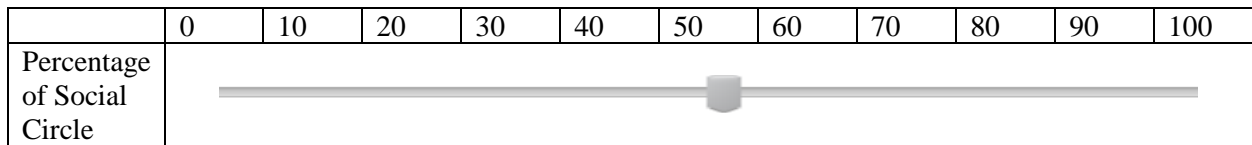


3. Think about the previously listed issues. For the ones that you thought **conservatives** agreed with, what is the percent likelihood a **conservative** would change their mind about the issue (eg. if they initially agreed, how likely would they be to disagree) after a discussion with a liberal?

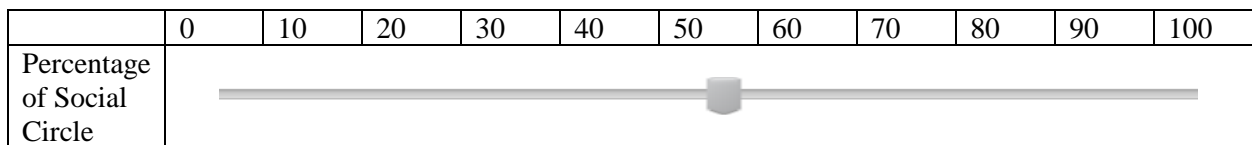


Social Circle

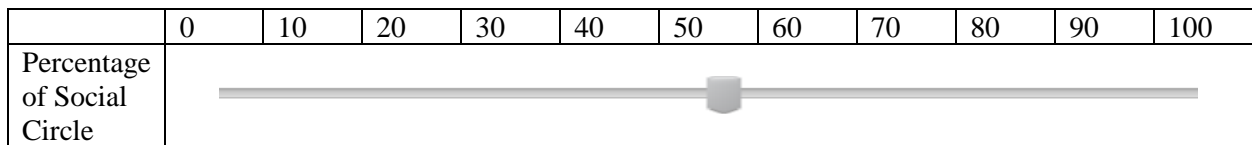
5. What percentage of your **online social circle** (individuals you interact with online) hold **mostly liberal** views?



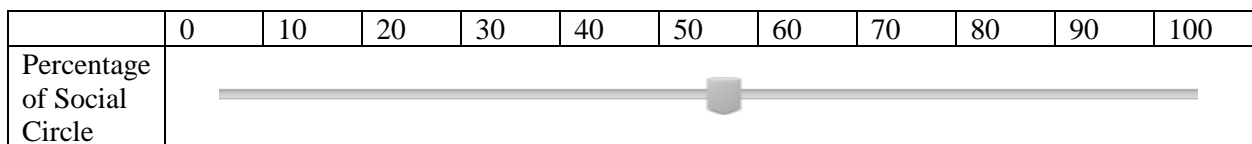
6. What percentage of your **online social circle** (individuals you interact with online) hold **mostly conservative** views?



7. What percentage of your **in-person social circle** (people you interact with on a daily basis) hold **mostly liberal** views?



8. What percentage of your **in-person social circle** (people you interact with on a daily basis) hold **mostly conservative** views?



Voting Tactics

Imagine the political party you **most support** was considering various tactics for winning the next election. Some were fair and honest (e.g., explaining their party policies in detail, explaining the shortcomings of the opposing party's policies). Others were strategically likely to increase success but dishonest or unfair (e.g., spreading falsehoods about opposing candidates, making efforts to restrict voting access for members of the opposing party).

How much would you support the following tactics?

(1: Not At All – 7: Extremely)

1. Tactics that emphasize fairness and honesty regardless of likelihood of winning
2. Tactics that emphasize winning regardless of fairness or honesty

Imagine the political party you **least support** was considering various tactics for winning the next election. Some were fair and honest (e.g., explaining their party policies in detail, explaining the shortcomings of the opposing party's policies). Others were strategically likely to increase success but dishonest or unfair (e.g., spreading falsehoods about opposing candidates, making efforts to restrict voting access for members of the opposing party).

How likely is it that your least supported political party will engage in each tactic?

(1: Not At All Likely – 7: Extremely Likely)

1. Tactics that emphasize fairness and honesty regardless of likelihood of winning
2. Tactics that emphasize winning regardless of fairness or honesty

Media Consumption

How much time do you spend watching the following television news networks in a typical day?

Never watch (0 min)	1-30 min	31 min-1 hr	1-2 hr	2.5-4 hrs	4.5-6 hrs	6.5 hrs or more
---------------------	----------	-------------	--------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

1. ABC News
2. MSNBC
3. CBS News
4. Fox News
5. CNN
6. Other: _____

How would you categorize the political leaning of each of these news networks?

(Left-leaning – Centrist/ Unbiased – Right-leaning)

1. ABC News
2. MSNBC
3. CBS News
4. Fox News
5. CNN
6. Other (if you indicated one previously)

Please list your 3 favorite sources of print or online news (Eg. New York Times, Brietbart, Huffington Post, etc.). You may leave these blank if you do not read print or online news.

1. List your first source here: _____
2. List your second source here: _____
3. List your third source here: _____

How would you categorize the political leaning of each of the print or online news sources you listed?

(Left-leaning – Centrist/ Unbiased – Right-leaning)

1. (First source piped in)
2. (Second source piped in)
3. (Third source piped in)

How many hours a day do you spend reading print or online news?

Never watch (0 min)	1-30 min	31 min-1 hr	1-2 hr	2.5-4 hrs	4.5-6 hrs	6.5 hrs or more
---------------------	----------	-------------	--------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

Please list your 3 favorite online social media or discussion boards (Eg. Reddit, US Message Board, twitter, Facebook, etc.) where you either read or discuss current events or politics. List only sites where you engage in news consumption or discussion, not sites devoted solely to other interests or social activity. You may leave these blank if you do not have preferred social media or discussion boards.

1. List your first source here: _____
2. List your second source here: _____
3. List your third source here: _____

How would you categorize the political leaning of the current events discussed on each of the discussion board/ social media sources you listed?

(Left-leaning – Centrist/ Unbiased – Right-leaning)

1. (First source piped in)



2. (Second source piped in)
3. (Third source piped in)

Modern Racism vs Symbolic Racism Scale

Please read the following statements, and think about what judgments you might make about a person who indicates that they **at least somewhat agree** with the statement. You may personally agree or disagree with the statements themselves; however we are asking you to indicate your impression of **someone else who agrees with the statement**. There are no right or wrong answers - we are simply interested in the range of impressions these statements make.

Definitely Racist	Probably Racist	Unsure	Probably Not Racist	Definitely Not Racist
----------------------	--------------------	--------	------------------------	--------------------------

If someone **at least somewhat agrees** with the [following] statement, would you classify them as a racist?

1. "Everyone, regardless of what group they belong to (gender, race, religion, etc) should have equal rights under the law."
2. "Discrimination against racial minorities is no longer a problem in the United States."
3. "Racial minorities should not push themselves where they are not wanted."
4. "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if minorities would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites."
5. "It is preferable for people to marry within their own racial group."

Demographics

Please indicate your age: _____

Please indicate your gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other: _____

Please indicate your country of residence:

- Canada
- United States
- Other: _____

What country were you born in? _____

From the following, please select the racial group with which you primarily identify.

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian
- Hispanic/ Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander



- Aboriginal
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Other: _____

To which religion or worldview do you currently subscribe or belong?

- Atheism
- Agnostic
- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Jainism
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Wicca
- Spiritual but not religious
- Other: _____
- None
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

- Primary school
- High school
- College/University degree
- Post-graduate degree
- Prefer not to answer

What is your combined annual household income?

- Less than 15,000
- 15,000 -- 29,999
- 30,000 – 39,999
- 40,000 – 49,999
- 50,000 – 59,999
- 60,000 – 69,999
- 70,000 – 79,999
- 80,000 – 89,999
- 90,000 – 99,999
- 100,000 --120,000
- Over 120,000
- Prefer not to disclose

Comments

Before you finish the survey, we did want to give you the opportunity to share some of your thoughts with us.

Political issues, such as the ones we outlined in this study, are extremely complex. We tried (to the best of our abilities) to capture a number of aspects, from a number of political perspectives. However, we recognize that we may not have gotten the complete picture, and are interested in your ideas!

Was there anything in particular you felt that we missed in this study? Please share your thoughts here:

END OF SURVEY

Appendix C

Study 3 Materials

Definitions

Before you get started, we would just like to take a moment to go over some definitions of words you may encounter during this survey.

When we use the word **liberal**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Democrat, the Green Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold liberal perspectives and opinions.

When we use the word **conservative**, we are referring to individuals who typically vote Republican, have supported the Tea Party, or who don't necessarily vote, but hold conservative perspectives and opinions. People who typically vote Libertarian may align with some conservative views but not others.

With this in mind, please hit the arrow button to continue.

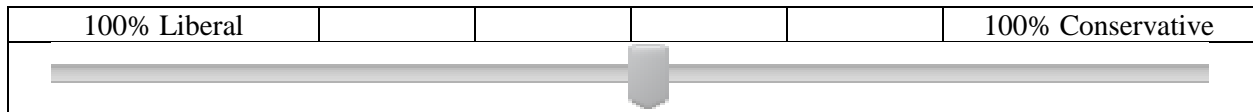
If I were to support a political party in the USA, I would support...

- The Republican Party
- The Democratic Party
- The Libertarian Party
- The Green Party
- Other: _____

Using the scale below, please indicate the strength of your political affiliation.

Not At All Affiliated						Strongly Affiliated
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Using the following slider bar, please indicate (by sliding the dot) the point that you believe best represents your overall political orientation.



On average, on most societal topics, are you:

- More conservative
- More liberal
- Both equally

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Some issues are more moderate and others more extreme. The issues described do not reflect the researchers' opinions; we simply want to give you a chance to express a full range of your views.

Please indicate the degree to which you **personally agree or disagree** with each one on the scale provided.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed						
Reduced taxation						
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)						
Forcing undocumented immigrants and children in the Dreamer/ DACA programs to leave America						
Universal healthcare provided by government						
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry						
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it						
De-funding public school system						
Environmental protection policies						
Nationwide gun rights						
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit						
Imposing carefully considered limits on free access to abortion						
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)						
Equal rights for LGBTQ community						
Supporting a strong military and national defense						
Ensuring people have "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings" for anything even slightly offensive						
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment						

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Please indicate **what percentage of liberals at least somewhat agree** with each one on the scale provided.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed											
Reduced taxation											
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)											
Forcing undocumented immigrants and children in the Dreamer/ DACA programs to leave America											
Universal healthcare provided by government											
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry											
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it											
De-funding public school system											
Environmental protection policies											
Nationwide gun rights											
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit											
Imposing carefully considered limits on free access to abortion											
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)											
Equal rights for LGBTQ community											
Supporting a strong military and national defense											
Ensuring people have "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings" for anything even slightly offensive											
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by											

denying service or employment	
-------------------------------	--

Below are a number of issues on which opinions are divided. Please indicate **what percentage of conservatives at least somewhat agree** with each one on the scale provided.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed											
Reduced taxation											
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)											
Forcing undocumented immigrants and children in the Dreamer/ DACA programs to leave America											
Universal healthcare provided by government											
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry											
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it											
De-funding public school system											
Environmental protection policies											
Nationwide gun rights											
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit											
Imposing carefully considered limits on free access to abortion											
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)											
Equal rights for LGBTQ community											
Supporting a strong military and national defense											
Ensuring people have "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings" for anything even slightly offensive											

Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	
--	--

Liking

How much do you like **liberals** in general?

Not At All		Very Much
------------	--	-----------

What do you **like** about them? _____
 What do you **dislike** about them? _____

How much do you like **conservatives** in general?

Not At All		Very Much
------------	--	-----------

What do you **like** about them? _____
 What do you **dislike** about them? _____

Reason for Liking/ Disliking

Sometimes our like or dislike of people hinges on their beliefs or attitudes on particular topics. Some of these beliefs or attitudes may have a bigger impact on our like or dislike than others.

How much of your like or dislike for **Liberals** has to do with their position on the following issues?

That is, if their position makes you like or dislike them **more**, then you would indicate a **higher** place on the scale.

	None		Very Much
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed			
Reduced taxation			
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)			
Forcing undocumented immigrants and children in the			

Dreamer/ DACA programs to leave America	
Universal healthcare provided by government	
Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry	
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it	
De-funding public school system	
Environmental protection policies	
Nationwide gun rights	
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	
Imposing carefully considered limits on free access to abortion	
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	
Equal rights for LGBTQ community	
Supporting a strong military and national defense	
Ensuring people have "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings" for anything even slightly offensive	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

How much of your like or dislike for **Conservatives** has to do with their position on the following issues?

	None		Very Much
Social safety net for the poor or unemployed			
Reduced taxation			
Restricting freedom of speech (e.g., college campuses banning speakers with views that may be offensive)			
Forcing undocumented immigrants and children in the Dreamer/ DACA programs to leave America			
Universal healthcare provided by government			

Limited government regulation in business, finance, and industry	
Strictly enforcing political correctness and punishing (e.g. public shaming, expulsion, firing) those who violate it	
De-funding public school system	
Environmental protection policies	
Nationwide gun rights	
Affirmative Action quotas that prioritize race over merit	
Imposing carefully considered limits on free access to abortion	
Outlawing abortion (even for rape and incest)	
Equal rights for LGBTQ community	
Supporting a strong military and national defense	
Ensuring people have "safe spaces" and "trigger warnings" for anything even slightly offensive	
Discriminating against some groups (eg. Muslims or Latin Americans) by denying service or employment	

Willingness to Engage

Please respond to the following hypothetical scenarios as though they were happening in your life. If the circumstances reflect your actual life situation, respond based on what you would do. However if circumstances are different from your real life, please respond hypothetically regarding what you would do if you were actually in that situation.

- Imagine, hypothetically, that you have a chance to engage in political discussion on some of the topics listed previously. How willing would you be **to have a political discussion** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

- Imagine, hypothetically, that you have a young adult son or daughter. How negatively or positively would you feel **if your child got engaged** to a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Negatively	Negatively	Somewhat Negatively	Somewhat Positively	Positively	Extremely Positively
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Imagine, hypothetically, that you were interested in meeting potential dating partners. How willing would you be to **go out on a date** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

9. How willing would you be to **shake hands** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

10. How willing would you be to **share a taxi** with a committed member of the opposing political party (a liberal if you're a conservative, and a conservative if you're a liberal)?

Extremely Unwilling	Unwilling	Somewhat Unwilling	Somewhat Willing	Willing	Extremely Willing
1	2	3	4	5	6

Demographics

Please indicate your age: _____

Please indicate your gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other: _____

Please indicate your country of residence:

- Canada
- United States
- Other: _____

What country were you born in? _____

From the following, please select the racial group with which you primarily identify.

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian



- Hispanic/ Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Aboriginal
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Other: _____

To which religion or worldview do you currently subscribe or belong?

- Atheism
- Agnostic
- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Jainism
- Judaism
- Sikhism
- Wicca
- Spiritual but not religious
- Other: _____
- None
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

- Primary school
- High school
- College/University degree
- Post-graduate degree
- Prefer not to answer

What is your combined annual household income?

- Less than 15,000
- 15,000 -- 29,999
- 30,000 – 39,999
- 40,000 – 49,999
- 50,000 – 59,999
- 60,000 – 69,999
- 70,000 – 79,999
- 80,000 – 89,999
- 90,000 – 99,999
- 100,000 --120,000
- Over 120,000
- Prefer not to disclose

Comments

Before you finish the survey, we did want to give you the opportunity to share some of your thoughts with us.

Political issues, such as the ones we outlined in this study, are extremely complex. We tried (to the best of our abilities) to capture a number of aspects, from a number of political perspectives. However, we recognize that we may not have gotten the complete picture, and are interested in your ideas!

Was there anything in particular you felt that we missed in this study? Please share your thoughts here:

END OF SURVEY

References

- Abramowitz, A. I., & Saunders, K. L. (2008). Is Polarization a Myth? *The Journal of Politics*, 70(2), 542-555
- Abramowitz, A. I., & Webster, S. W. (2018). Negative partisanship: Why Americans dislike parties but behave like rabid partisans. *Political Psychology*, 39, 119-135.
doi:10.1111/pops.12479
- Berry, J. M., & Sobieraj, S. (2013). *The Outrage Industry: Political Opinion Media and the New Incivility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blake, A. (2014, October 21). *Ranking the media from liberal to conservative, based on their audiences*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/10/21/lets-rank-the-media-from-liberal-to-conservative-based-on-their-audiences/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.65d067e53bc8
- Bishop, B. (2008). *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart*. Boston: Mariner Books.
- Brady, W. J., Wills, J. A., Jost, J. T., Tucker, J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2017). Emotion shapes the diffusion of moralized content in social networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(28), 7313-7318. doi:10.1073/pnas.1618923114
- Brock, D., & Rabin-Havt, A. (2012). *The Fox Effect: How Roger Ailes Turned a Network into a Propaganda Machine*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Carroll, J. S. (1978). The effect of imagining an event on expectations for the event: An interpretation in terms of the availability heuristic. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 14(1), 88-96. doi:10.1016/0022-1031(78)90062-8

- Chambers, J. R., & Melnyk, D. (2006). Why do I hate thee? Conflict misperceptions and intergroup mistrust. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(10), 1295-1311. doi:10.1177/0146167206289979
- Chambers, J. R., & De Dreu, C. K. (2014). Egocentrism drives misunderstanding in conflict and negotiation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 51, 15-26. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2013.11.001
- Clifford, S., Jewell, R. M., & Waggoner, P. D. (2015). Are samples drawn from Mechanical Turk valid for research on political ideology? *Research & Politics*, 2(4), 1-9. doi:10.1177/2053168015622072
- Cloninger, S. C., Leibo, S. A., & Amjad, M. (2017). *Understanding Angry Groups: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on their Motivations and Effects on Society*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Cohen, G. L. (2003). Party over policy: The dominating impact of group influence on political beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(5), 808-822. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.85.5.808
- Crawford, J., Modri, S., & Motyl, M. (2013). Bleeding-heart liberals and hard-hearted conservatives: Subtle political dehumanization through differential attributions of human nature and human uniqueness traits. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 1(1), 86-104. doi:10.5964/jspp.v1i1.184
- Dawes, R. M., Singer, D., & Lemons, F. (1972). An experimental analysis of the contrast effect and its implications for intergroup communication and the indirect assessment of attitude. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 21(3), 281-295. doi:10.1037/h0032322

- Dimdins, G., Montgomery, H., & Austers, I. (2005). Differentiating explanations of attitude-consistent behavior: The role of perspectives and mode of perspective taking. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 46(2), 97-106. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9450.2005.00440.x
- Ditto, P. H., Liu, B., Clark, C. J., Wojcik, S. P., Chen, E. E., Grady, R. H., & Zinger, J. F. (2017). At least bias is bipartisan: A meta-analytic comparison of partisan bias in liberals and conservatives. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2952510
- Druckman, J. N., Peterson, E., & Slothuus, R. (2013). How elite partisan polarization affects public opinion formation. *American Political Science Review*, 107(1), 57-79. doi:10.1017/s0003055412000500
- Embury-Dennis, T. (2018, June 30). *Donald Trump says Democrats want to see 'all police' abolished in early morning Twitter rant*. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-abolish-ice-police-migration-ms13-democrats-twitter-a8424421.html>
- Feldman, L. (2011). The opinion factor: The effects of opinionated news on information processing and attitude change. *Political Communication*, 28(2), 163-181. doi:10.1080/10584609.2011.565014
- Fiorina, M. P., Abrams, S. A., & Pope, J. C. (2008). Polarization in the American Public: Misconceptions and Misreadings. *The Journal of Politics*, 70(2), 556-560. doi:10.1017/s002238160808050x
- Flaxman, S., Goel, S., & Rao, J. M. (2013). Ideological segregation and the effects of social media on news consumption. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2363701

- Furnham, A. (1986). Response bias, social desirability and dissimulation. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 7(3), 385-400. doi:10.1016/0191-8869(86)90014-0
- Gabrielcik, A., & Fazio, R. H. (1984). Priming and frequency estimation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 10(1), 85-89. doi:10.1177/0146167284101009
- Garrett, R. K. (2009). Echo chambers online?: Politically motivated selective exposure among Internet news users. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(2), 265-285. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01440.x
- Garrett, R. K., & Stroud, N. J. (2014). Partisan paths to exposure diversity: Differences in pro- and counterattitudinal news consumption. *Journal of Communication*, 64(4), 680-701. doi:10.1111/jcom.12105
- Graham, D. A. (2012, September 27). *Really, would you let your daughter marry a Democrat?* Retrieved May 17, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/09/really-would-you-let-your-daughter-marry-a-democrat/262959/>
- Gutmann, A., & Thompson, D. (2010). The mindsets of political compromise. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(4), 1125-1143. doi:10.1017/s1537592710003270
- Hacker, J. S., & Pierson, P. (2017). *American amnesia: How the war on government led us to forget what made America prosper*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks.
- Heimlich, R. (2010, September 12). *Americans spending more time following the news*. Retrieved May 16, 2018, from <http://www.people-press.org/2010/09/12/americans-spending-more-time-following-the-news/>
- Ingraham, C. (2015, April 23). *A stunning visualization of our divided Congress*. Retrieved May 18, 2018, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/04/23/a-stunning-visualization-of-our-divided-congress/>

- Iyengar, S., Sood, G., & Lelkes, Y. (2012). Affect, not ideology: A social identity perspective on polarization. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 76(3), 405-431. doi:10.1093/poq/nfs038
- Iyengar, S., & Westwood, S. J. (2014). Fear and loathing across party lines: New evidence on group polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3), 690-707. doi:10.1111/ajps.12152
- Jost, J. T. (2017). Ideological asymmetries and the essence of political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 38(2), 167-208. doi:10.1111/pops.12407
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., & Kleinman, S. B. (2011). Preelection selective exposure. *Communication Research*, 39(2), 170-193. doi:10.1177/0093650211400597
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., & Lavis, S. M. (2017). Selecting serious or satirical, supporting or stirring news? Selective exposure to partisan versus mockery news online videos. *Journal of Communication*, 67(1), 54-81. doi:10.1111/jcom.12271
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Mothes, C., Johnson, B. K., Westerwick, A., & Donsbach, W. (2015). Political online information searching in Germany and the United States: Confirmation bias, source credibility, and attitude impacts. *Journal of Communication*, 65(3), 489-511. doi:10.1111/jcom.12154
- Koomen, W., & Dijkster, A. J. (1997). Ingroup and outgroup stereotypes and selective processing. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 27(5), 589-601. doi:10.1002/(sici)1099-0992(199709/10)27:53.0.co;2-y
- Lambert, T. A., Kahn, A. S., & Apple, K. J. (2003). Pluralistic ignorance and hooking up. *Journal of Sex Research*, 40(2), 129-133. doi:10.1080/00224490309552174
- Levendusky, M. S. (2010). Clearer cues, more consistent voters: A benefit of elite polarization. *Political Behavior*, 32(1), 111-131.

- Levendusky, M. S. (2013). Why do partisan media polarize viewers? *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(3), 611-623. doi:10.1111/ajps.12008
- Levendusky, M. S., & Malhotra, N. (2015). (Mis)perceptions of partisan polarization in the American public. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(S1), 378-391. doi:10.1093/poq/nfv045
- Lisher, M. (2007). Is Keith Olbermann the future of journalism? *American Journalism Review*, 29(1), 36-41.
- Lord, C. G., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. (1979). Biased assimilation and attitude polarization: The effects of prior theories on subsequently considered evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(11), 2098-2109. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.37.11.2098
- Luttig, M. D. (2018). The “Prejudiced Personality” and the origins of partisan strength, affective polarization, and partisan sorting. *Political Psychology*, 39, 239-256. doi:10.1111/pops.12484
- Marques, J. M., Yzerbyt, V. Y. and Leyens, J. (1988). The “Black Sheep Effect”: Extremity of judgments towards ingroup members as a function of group identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 1-16. doi:10.1002/ejsp.2420180102
- Mason, L. (2015). "I Disrespectfully Agree": The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(1), 128-145.
- Meirick, P. C. (2012). Motivated misperception? Party, education, partisan news, and belief in “Death Panels”. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90(1), 39-57. doi:10.1177/1077699012468696
- Mitchell, A., Gottfried, J., Kiley, J., & Matsa, K. E. (2014, October 21). *Political polarization & media habits*. Retrieved May 17, 2018, from <http://www.journalism.org/2014/10/21/political-polarization-media-habits/>

- Mitchell, A., Gottfried, J., Barthel, M., & Shearer, E. (2016, July 07). *Pathways to news*. Retrieved May 16, 2018, from <http://www.journalism.org/2016/07/07/pathways-to-news/>
- Monin, B., & Norton, M. I. (2003). Perceptions of a fluid consensus: Uniqueness bias, false consensus, false polarization, and pluralistic ignorance in a water conservation crisis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(5), 559-567.
doi:10.1177/0146167203029005001
- Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Oishi, S., Trawalter, S., & Nosek, B. A. (2014). How ideological migration geographically segregates groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 51, 1-14.
doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2013.10.010
- Nickerson, R. S. (1998). Confirmation bias: A ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(2), 175-220. doi:10.1037//1089-2680.2.2.175
- Nisbett, R. E., & Kunda, Z. (1985). Perception of social distributions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48(2), 297-311. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.48.2.297
- Noelle-Neumann, E. (1974). The Spiral of Silence: A Theory of Public Opinion. *Journal of Communication*, 24(2), 43-51. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00367.x
- Park, B., & Rothbart, M. (1982). Perception of out-group homogeneity and levels of social categorization: Memory for the subordinate attributes of in-group and out-group members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42(6), 1051-1068. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.42.6.1051
- Podsakoff, P. M., Mackenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2012). Sources of Method Bias in Social Science Research and Recommendations on How to Control It. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 63(1), 539-569. doi:10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100452

- Pramuk, J. (2018, February 05). *'Un-American' and 'Treasonous': Trump goes after Democrats who didn't clap during State of the Union*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/05/trump-calls-democrats-un-american-and-treasonous.html>
- Prentice, D. A., & Miller, D. T. (1996). Pluralistic ignorance and the perpetuation of social norms by unwitting actors. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 28, 161-209. doi:10.1016/s0065-2601(08)60238-5
- Rubin, M., & Badaea, C. (2012). They're all the same!. . . but for several different reasons. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21(6), 367-372. doi:10.1177/0963721412457363
- Spohr, D. (2017). Fake news and ideological polarization: Filter bubbles and selective exposure on social media. *Business Information Review*, 34(3), 150-160. doi:10.1177/0266382117722446
- Stroud, N. J. (2011). *Niche News: The Politics of News Choice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Suh, M. (2014, June 12). *Section 1: Growing ideological consistency*. Retrieved May 17, 2018, from <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/section-1-growing-ideological-consistency/#interactive>
- Taylor, D. G. (1982). Pluralistic ignorance and the spiral of silence: A formal analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 46(3), 311-335. doi:10.1086/268729
- Tversky, A., & Kahnema, D. (1973). Availability: A heuristic for judging frequency and probability. *Cognitive Psychology*, 5, 207-232.

Westfall, J., Van Boven, L., Chambers, J. R., & Judd, C. M. (2015). Perceiving political polarization in the United States. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 10*(2), 145-158.

doi:10.1177/1745691615569849

Wolf, M. R., Strachan, J. C., & Shea, D. M. (2012). Forget the good of the game: Political incivility and lack of compromise as a second layer of party polarization. *American Behavioral Scientist, 56*(12), 1677-1695. doi:10.1177/0002764212463355