The Rise of Partisan Rigidity:

The Nature and Origins of Partisan Extremism in American Politics

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Dedication

To Karen and Estelle.

Abstract

As political elites have polarized, the American public has become more strongly partisan. Why has the American public become more extremely partisan, and what does this transformation of the electorate imply for the health of American democracy? In this thesis, I argue that elite polarization has strengthened the relationship between a basic psychological motivation for group membership—the need for certainty—and partisan strength, in-party favoritism, out-party derogation, and conformity to group leaders. Because the need for certainty is a form of motivated closed-mindedness, I argue that the American electorate today is increasingly composed of *rigid partisans*: partisans who are uncritically extremist, biased, and intolerant.

Across a number of distinct empirical studies, this thesis demonstrates that, (1) partisan strength, in-group favoritism, out-group derogation and partisan sorting have a strong basis in the psychological need for certainty, (2) in many cases this pre-political psychological variable has larger effects on partisan strength than explicitly political variables such as policy preferences, (3) that this effect occurs among both Democrats and Republicans, (4) that this has caused politically engaged respondents in particular to be rigid in their partisan identity, and (5) that this relationship has grown stronger over time as political elites have polarized and become more internally cohesive and distinct. In conclusion, I argue that the transformation of the public into rigid partisans weakens the competence of the American electorate and threatens the foundations of American democracy.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1

The Rise of Partisan Rigidity in American Politics

"Every generation gets the theory of party identification that it deserves."
—Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012, 4)

In the summer of 2014, the Pew Research Center published a report on "Political Polarization in the American Public." This report concluded that, "Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines – and partisan antipathy is deeper and more extensive – than at any point in the last two decades. These trends manifest themselves in a myriad of ways, both in politics and in everyday life." These findings echo the conventional wisdom about contemporary American politics: left and right are deeply divided and polarized, and this division fuels the acrimony and gridlock within American politics.

Most agree that this portrayal is accurate for political elites (Lee 2009; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006; Theriault 2013). Among elected officials, there is a much deeper and more persistent divide—in terms of both ideological disagreements and general partisan discord—than there was in the recent past. But there remains considerable debate about the extent to which the American public is polarized. When ideology is the focus of analysis, there is conflicting evidence about whether the American public has become more ideologically extreme. However, research has clearly shown that the American public has at the least sorted, i.e., aligned their (perhaps still moderate) policy preferences with their partisan identity (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Fiorina et al., 2006; Hill and Tausanovitch 2015; Levendusky 2009).

On its face, these changes seem to affirm the theory of responsible party government advocated by political scientists more than 60 years ago (APSA 1950). The parties present clear platforms to voters, and voters appear to have responded by aligning their partisan preference with their values. Yet recent research suggests something less sanguine may be afoot. As elites have polarized, and the public has sorted themselves into the correct team, policymaking has become gridlocked, and politics has become more vitriolic. Further, *these* changes have not been confined to political elites. The public too has become more extreme in terms of partisan feelings and expression, if not in terms of its ideological views.

The starting point of this dissertation is this recent observation that the American public is increasingly divided on the basis of *partisanship.* Research—which I review more below—shows that partisan strength is up, feelings toward the two parties are more extreme, partisans are more intolerant of the other side, and partisanship exerts more influence on public opinion and electoral behavior (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Webster 2016; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Brewer 2005; Hetherington 2001; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Jacobson 2008; Jacoby 2014; Mason 2015; Miller and Conover 2015). Furthermore, research indicates that elite polarization has contributed this divide by strengthening mass partisanship (e.g., Druckman et al. 2013; Lupu 2014; Rogowski Forthcoming; Rogowski and Sutherland Forthcoming).

This resurgence in partisan strength and antagonism is an important political phenomenon. For one thing, documenting and explaining these patterns in partisan

extremism is crucial for understanding the origins and meaning of polarization in American politics. For another, this change has a number of broad implications for the conduct and health of American democracy. That is because partisan extremists are important political actors that exercise disproportionate influence on the American political process. For example, strong partisans tend to turn out to vote the most in elections (Mutz 2002; Verba et al. 1995). Strong partisans are also the most involved in political activity beyond voting; for example, strong partisans contribute the most to political campaigns and are the most likely to discuss politics with their friends and co-workers (Fowler and Kam 2007; Mutz 2002; Verba et al. 1995). Research also suggests that political elites care most about the opinions of their strongest partisan supporters (e.g., Druckman and Jacobs 2015). Given this large role of strong partisanship in motivating political activity and influence, it is worth noting that strong Democrats and Republicans are less likely than others to support bipartisan compromise on public policy (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011). In many respects, then, this growth in partisan extremity is responsible for (or at least reinforces) both the acrimonious and gridlocked nature of contemporary American politics.

From the starting point that partisanship polarizes Democrats from Republicans today, my dissertation asks: how did we get here? What is it that causes an individual to identify strongly with one of the two parties, hold more extreme feelings toward the two parties, and even exhibit intolerance toward the political out-group? And, why has elite polarization caused a deeper divide between Democrats and Republicans over time? Additionally, I ask what the consequences of this partisan resurgence are for the health of

America's democracy. Does a strong partisan spirit help the public hold elites accountable and vote on the basis of the parties' ideological brands? Or, does strong partisanship lead to a more politically expressive but ideologically vacuous mass public, one that is more extreme, uncompromising, and rigid?

My theoretical argument is that elite polarization has caused a strengthening of the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and polarization on the basis of partisan identity This has led to what I label a more rigid mass partisanship.[1] I define partisan rigidity as a syndrome of related attitudes and behaviors (including in-group favoritism, out-group derogation, and conformity to group leaders) that individuals who are psychologically closed-minded and averse to uncertainty embrace because these attitudes reduce complexity and alleviate uncertainty. I argue that today, individuals with a certainty-seeking or closed-minded psychological orientation find the two parties appealing because polarized elites offer individuals confident beliefs and knowledge. As a result, I argue that basic psychological needs associated with an aversion to uncertainty—traits that lead individuals to be "group-centric" generally—provide a great deal of explanatory power over variation in partisan strength, extreme partisan feelings, and intolerance of the partisan out-group in today's setting where party elites are polarized. Therefore, as political elites have polarized, I argue that partisan rigidity (or affective polarization) has become much more commonplace due to a stronger relationship between the psychological need for certainty and extreme partisan identity.

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[1] For the most part, I use the terms rigidity, extremism, and affective polarization interchangeably throughout the dissertation.

This theoretical argument challenges the conventional view in both political science and in political psychology. First, contrary to the theory of responsible party government and other views in political science, I argue that it is not a greater capacity for ideological judgment that leads Democrats and Republicans to increasingly dislike each other (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Levendusky 2009). Rather, policy preferences have a limited role in driving partisan rigidity, while less ideologically substantive psychological motivations have a relatively larger effect. Second, this thesis contributes to research in political psychology by showing that psychological traits associated with the need for certainty causes both Democrats and Republicans to identify more strongly with their partisan team. This finding contributes to an already large and growing literature on the psychological antecedents of political beliefs (e.g., Jost et al. 2003). In contrast to most of this literature, I show that the epistemic need for closure and authoritarianism increase partisan *extremity* among both Democrats and Republicans. This finding challenges an important claim in the field that polarization between Democrats and Republicans is rooted in the fact that individuals on the left and right are psychologically *different*. I show that the opposite is true, at least with respect to authoritarianism and need for closure. With respect to these (by no means trivial) psychological variables, the most polarized Democrats and Republicans are psychologically similar.

Further, I argue that this rise in partisan rigidity has a host of negative consequences for competence of the American voter and the health of American democracy. First, my findings suggest that affective polarization is similar in origins and

kind to out-group prejudice more generally. Democrats and Republicans are not driven apart by divergent ideological agendas or clashing psychological worldviews; rather, Democrats and Republicans are divided on the basis of a non-substantive, "us" vs. "them" view of the world. From the perspective of representation, this thesis indicates that elites and masses are motivated by substantively different considerations.

Second, my findings suggest that affective polarization is largely an elite-led phenomenon. As elites polarize, partisanship becomes more appealing in terms of its psychological benefits; as a result, elite polarization promotes a more blind and unquestioning partisan attachment. Therefore, rather than masses leading elites (as in the canonical conception of democracy), this research suggests that polarized elites are more effective leaders of citizens. For example, chapter 2 of this dissertation shows that in conditions of polarized parties individuals are much more likely to simply follow their leader, regardless of whether their leader's position is ideologically consistent with the party identification of the respondent or not. These findings suggest that elite polarization may undermine the most basic and minimal theories of democracy (e.g., Schumpeter 1942).

In short, this research presents a new theory about the origins of partisan extremism and the "resurgence" in partisan spirit in American politics that challenges the conventional wisdom in both political science and political psychology. This theory further suggests that elite polarization and the strong partisanship it engenders hinders rather than helps the political competence of the American voter. In contrast to the theory of responsible party government (APSA 1950), this dissertation suggests that elite

polarization strengthens blind partisan loyalty and impairs the health of American democracy.

Elite Polarization and the Resurgence in Strong Partisanship

Before the 2000's, political scientists were frequently writing about the "decline" of parties in American politics. Partisan strength was on the decline, the number of pure independents was on the rise, and split-ticket voting was increasingly common (e.g., Greenberg and Page 1997; Wattenberg 2009). However, this trend was relatively short-lived. By dawn of the 21st century scholars had begun noticing the opposite trend—the growth or resurgence of partisan ties in the American public. For example, Bartels (2000) documented a steady rise in the *impact* of partisanship on voting behavior between 1972 and 1996. As another example, Hetherington (2001) documented a marked growth in the public's likes and dislikes of the two parties, a rise in straight-ticket voting for President and House, and a dramatic upswing in the percentage of the public who perceives important differences between the two parties, between 1972 and 1996. More recent studies have documented a continuation of this trend and a transformation of strong partisanship into more intense and extreme feelings of partisan antipathy, dislike, and intolerance (e.g., Abramowitz and Webster 2016; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Iyengar et al. 2012; Mason 2015; Miller and Conover 2015). In short, after a nadir in the early 1970's, the American public today is much more extremely partisan.

One of the first demonstrations of today's polarized nature of mass partisanship is the growing partisan divide in approval of incumbent presidents. While there has always been some partisan differences in presidential approval (Democrats tend to approve of

Democratic presidents more than Republicans, and vice versa), differences in presidential

approval between Democrats and Republicans have grown much more pronounced over

time (Jacobson 2008). To summarize Jacobson's analysis (2008, 7): the average partisan

gap in approval rating was 34 points for the presidencies between Eisenhower and Carter,

52 points for Reagan, 36 points for George H.W. Bush, 55 points for Clinton, and 61

points for George W. Bush, "the widest recorded for any president" at the time. Barack

Obama's presidency has continued the trend of deep and persistent partisan divisions in

approval rating, with an average approval gap of 70 points between Democrats and

Republicans (Jacobson 2011).[2]

This growing partisan divide has now extended more broadly into the public's

feelings toward the political parties. Iyengar et al. (2012) document this growing

affective divide between Democrats and Republicans using a number of indicators of

feelings towards the parties. The first is an analysis of feeling thermometers that ask

respondents to rate how warmly or coldly they feel towards various groups in society,

including the two major parties. Using this measure, Iyengar et al. (2012) demonstrate

that feelings toward the two parties have become more polarized over time. In particular,

Democrats' and Republicans' feelings toward the opposite party have grown much colder

or more negative over the past few decades. In another demonstration, Iyengar et al.

(2012) show that the percentage of respondents who state that they would be upset at

interparty marriage—a classic measure of out-group intolerance and dislike—has

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[2] Source: Gallup, "Obama Approval Ratings Still Historically Polarized." February 6, 2015. http://www.gallup.com/poll/181490/obama-approval-ratings-historically-polarized.aspx

experienced a rather dramatic growth over the past few decades. In 1960, only about 5 percent of Republicans (4 percent of Democrats) said they would be "displeased" if their son or daughter married a member of the opposite party. In 2010, 50 percent of Republicans (33 percent of Democrats) state that they would be "unhappy" at the prospect of a son or daughter marrying a member of the opposite party. As a final demonstration of over-time affective polarization, Iyengar et al. (2012) show that trait ratings (for example, perceptions of in-party and out-party members' intelligence or laziness) has also grown more divergent over time; "in comparison with 1960, Democrats and Republicans were nearly fifty percent more likely to associate negative traits with opponents than supporters in 2010." In short, across a number of unique indicators of partisan feelings and affect, Iyengar et al. (2012) demonstrate that the American public's evaluations of the two parties have become more polarized over time; Americans like their own party more, and the opposite party much less, than they did in the past.

Other research confirms these findings and extends them to other indicators of the growing partisan divide in American politics. For example, Mason (2015) shows that the percentage of "strong" partisans has grown fairly substantially between 1972 and 2004, while the percentage of pure independents has declined (see also Bafumi and Shapiro 2009). Mason also shows that strong partisanship is linked to higher levels of in-group favoritism and feelings of anger toward the presidential candidate of the opposite political party (see also Miller and Conover 2015). Abramowitz and Webster (2016) update many of these findings to 2012 in their analysis of "negative partisanship": party loyalty, perceptions of important party differences, and the difference between in-party and out-

party ratings all became even more extreme by 2012. Iyengar and Westwood (2015) show that partisan feelings are even highly polarized at an implicit level. Using a brief version of the Implicit Association Test (the BIAT), Iyengar and Westwood (2015) show that Democrats' and Republicans' implicit attitudes about the parties are highly divergent (respondents possess positive feelings of the in-party and negative feelings of the out-party); indeed, in a comparison of this measure to a measure of implicit attitudes about race, Iyengar and Westwood (2015, 7) conclude that, today, "party polarization exceeds polarization based on race."

Other research provides strong evidence that this growth in partisan strength and affective polarization is *caused* by polarization among political elites. For example, Lupu (2014) shows both cross-nationally and over-time in the United States that elite polarization is associated with stronger partisan attachments. Further, in a long-term panel study in the United States, Lupu (2014) provides solid evidence that elite polarization causes individuals to perceive greater differences between the parties, and that perceptions of party differences causes stronger partisan attachments. In an experiment, Rogowski and Sutherland (Forthcoming) show that polarized candidates increase affectively polarized candidate evaluations relative to convergent candidates. These studies provide strong causal evidence that polarization among political elites causes stronger partisan attachments and more polarized affective feelings about the political parties and candidates within the public.

This consistent evidence about the growth in partisan strength, loyalty, and polarized partisan feelings runs in sharp contrast to the conflicting evidence about the

extent to which the American public is ideologically polarized. Research agrees that the public is much more highly sorted ideologically; that is, the public increasingly shares the policy preferences that go along with their partisan affiliation. But for most citizens, these preferences continue to be moderate—few citizens hold preferences at the ideological extremes (e.g., Fiorina et al. 2006; Hill and Tausanovitch 2015; Levendusky 2009). Important subgroups are more extreme, however. Highly engaged individuals, in particular, hold more extreme ideological views than less engaged individuals (Abramowitz 2010). But the overall portrait of the public's ideological views is less clear and less consistent than that provided in the public's attitudes toward the parties: the public is more extreme in terms of partisan affect than in terms of ideology (Iyengar et al. 2012; Mason 2015).

Another way in which elite polarization appears to have strengthened partisanship is by increasing the power of party elites over the public's political decision-making. For example, a number of experimental studies have demonstrated that heightened elite competition (i.e., polarization) strengthens the pull of partisan cues on public opinion formation relative to other considerations, such as the strength of political arguments (Druckman et al. 2013; Mullinix Forthcoming; Slothuus and DeVreese 2010). In another analysis, on vote choice, Rogowski (forthcoming) shows that polarized candidates decrease the role of ideological considerations—and increase the role of partisanship—in electoral decision-making. These studies indicate, through experimental manipulation, that elite polarization strengthens the extent to which citizens rely more on their partisan identities when forming political opinions.

In sum, Democrats and Republicans have become increasingly divided and polarized over time. In the chapters that follow, I examine the causes and consequences of each of these changes in mass partisanship: partisan strength, polarized partisan feelings, and the effect of elite polarization on public opinion formation. Why have Democrats and Republicans become increasingly divided on the basis of partisan identity?

Competing Theories of Partisan Extremism

While the field has come to something close to a consensus about the facts on the ground regarding the growing partisan divide in American politics, there is much less consensus about what causes affective polarization. Below I review the two most popular explanations for this phenomenon. One emphasizes ideological disagreements as the primary motivator of strong partisan sentiment; the other focuses more on deep-seated psychological differences and clashing worldviews between partisans on the Left and Right.

Ideological Disagreements

One explanation for the growing divide between Democrats and Republicans is simply that ideological preferences cause individuals to be more extremely attached to one party or the other. This is a simple leap for those who argue that the public is ideologically polarized (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Webster 2016). But even those who see the public as only sorted—that is, Democrats and Republicans share the ideological outlook of their party but are not themselves ideologically polarized— have noted that sorted partisans have more extreme attitudes toward the parties than

unsorted partisans (Levendusky 2009). As elites have polarized, these scholars argue that

the ideological divisions between the two parties has become more clear, which helps

citizens choose the right party on the basis of their ideological orientation. As citizens

have sorted themselves into the correct ideological team, they have become more

strongly attached to their party and hold more negative attitudes toward the partisan out-

group. For simplicity, I label this thesis the "ideological disagreements" hypothesis.

While intuitive, this explanation has a number of shortcomings. For one thing,

research shows that many citizens have sorted by bringing their policy preferences into

alignment with partisan identity, not vice versa (e.g., Carsey and Layman 2006; Lavine et

al. 2012; but see Highton and Kam 2011 for conflicting findings). This suggests that

citizens are not joining the "correct" team on the basis of their ideological orientation;

rather, they are simply following the cues emanating from polarized party elites. In

chapter 2 of this dissertation I shed additional insight into the mechanisms driving

partisan sorting and provide further evidence that elite polarization increases blind

conformity to party leaders rather than ideological alignment.

Another shortcoming is the ambiguous nature of partisan-ideological sorting. A

lot rests on the interpretation one makes of self-identification as a "liberal" or a

"conservative." Are these labels themselves a social identity (e.g., Ellis and Stimson

2012; Mason 2015), or are they a reflection of a citizen's views about public policy? As I

show throughout this dissertation, I find considerable support for the finding that sorted

partisans are more extreme and rigid than unsorted partisans (though this effect is

typically equal to or smaller than the variables that measure variation in the psychological

need for certainty). However, given the ambiguity surrounding the ideological self-identification measure, it is difficult to provide a clear interpretation of this relationship (e.g., see Levendusky 2009 vs. Mason 2015).

A Clash of Psychological Worldviews

One concern levied at the "ideological" view of mass polarization is that, while there is clearly a greater partisan division within the American electorate, the public is less clearly divided by ideology (Fiorina et al. 2006; Levendusky 2009). This suggests that something different, perhaps deeper, lies behind the heightened antagonism between Democrats and Republicans in American politics. One argument that has become increasingly popular is that Democrats and Republicans today are divided on the basis of deep-seated factors which shape *who they are*, in other words, their basic psychological orientation and worldview (e.g., Alford, Funk, and Hibbing 2005; Barker and Carman 2012; Barker and Tinnick 2006; Carney et al. 2008; Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014).

This argument draws from a wealth of scholarship in political psychology showing that ideological orientation is a partly a reflection of deep-seated psychological traits and motivations (e.g., Hibbing et al. 2014; Jost et al. 2003). Building from these findings, scholars have argued that the reason Democrats and Republicans are so divided today is because they are psychologically different—different people with distinct ways of perceiving the world and diametrically opposed moral values (e.g., Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). It is because Democrats and Republicans are psychologically different, these scholars argue, that American politics

14

has become so heated and vitriolic, and why partisan compromise is so difficult to achieve.

Below I argue that this "psychological differences" hypothesis misses a set of important theoretical claims about both the nature of partisanship and the consequences of various psychological orientations such as authoritarianism and the need for cognitive closure. Specifically, I argue that partisanship is a social identity, embraced for the psychological benefits of group membership, and that a number of psychological variables such as authoritarianism and the need for closure predispose individuals to be "group-centric" and cause both Republicans and Democrats to be strong partisans with more polarized partisan feelings. As a result, I argue that the most extreme Democrats and Republicans are actually psychologically similar, not different.

Finally, let me note that while "ideological disagreements" and "psychological differences" represent two prominent and overarching theories for strong partisanship and affective polarization in American politics, other factors have certainly been identified and are important in explaining the rise of partisan extremity over time. Some of these other factors include negative campaigns (Iyengar et al. 2012), the emergence of explicitly partisan media (Levendusky 2013), and access to broadband internet and the echo chambers that media fragmentation has made more widely available (e.g., Lelkes et al. Forthcoming). While these factors surely matter, this dissertation focuses more on developing and testing a novel theory rooted in the psychological motivations of group membership (uncertainty reduction) and pitting that theory against the conventional

wisdom as represented by the ideological disagreements and clashing psychological differences hypotheses.

Theory: The Rise of Partisan Rigidity

The starting point for the theory I develop to explain affective polarization and partisan rigidity is that partisanship is (at least partly) a social identity, a product of familial socialization more than substantive ideological values (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002).[3] Despite the prominence of this theory of partisan identity, both the "ideological disagreements" and "psychological differences" hypotheses of affective polarization are—at root—substantive theories. This is clear in the ideological disagreements theory; this view claims that as partisans have sorted ideologically, partisanship has become much more politically substantive (e.g., Abramowtiz 2010; Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Perhaps less obvious is that the "psychological differences" theory also presumes that Democrats and Republicans are divided because they disagree over substantive issues. This is made clear by Hetherington and Weiler (2009), who argue that Democrats and Republicans have polarized over levels of authoritarianism because party elites have diverged over cultural *issues*—gay marriage, abortion, immigration, and foreign policy, in particular.

My argument is that these "substantive" theories understate the extent to which partisanship is a social identity and polarization is affective, not ideological. For example, research shows that even presumably "hot-button" cultural issues exert limited

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[3] Without getting too bogged down in this debate, let me note that my research suggests that there is heterogeneity (both across contexts and individuals) in the extent to which partisanship operates as a social identity rather than a summary judgment of citizens' explicit political values.

16

influence on partisan affect (see, Iyengar et al. 2012). Therefore, I argue that both conventional views are incomplete. To understand what motivates partisan rigidity from a social identity perspective, I develop the theory of partisanship more generally by raising the following question: What are the psychological benefits that people obtain from social identification?

Following a long line of research in social psychology, I argue that one function of social groups is to provide the psychological benefit of certainty; groups in many ways define our reality by prescribing beliefs, thoughts, and feelings (Kruglanski et al. 2006, 84; see also Bar-Tal 2000; Festinger 1950; 1954; Hogg 2012; Katz 1960; Levine & Higgins 2001; Sherif 1936). One's understanding of who they are, one's self-conception, is inevitably bound up with their group memberships (e.g., "I am a Democrat"). By providing a sense of identity and prescribing beliefs that others in the group also share, social groups provide a fundamental human need: the psychological need for certainty. Individuals are motivated to obtain beliefs about who they are and what they should value with certainty, and groups provide a readily accessible and highly effective mechanism for obtaining confident beliefs, feelings, and knowledge. Therefore, I argue that the psychological need for certainty represents a fundamental motivation for group membership, and that this need gives rise to partisan rigidity in contemporary American politics.

This argument is grounded in a number of theoretical claims which identify uncertainty, or the need for certainty, as a basic and fundamental driver of worldview defense, social identification, out-group discrimination, and conformity to group leaders

(Hogg 2012, 67; Kruglanski et al. 2006; Van den Bos 2009). According to these theorists, uncertainty is uncomfortable and aversive, and people are strongly motivated to both avoid uncertainty and to alleviate it when they experience it. Uncertainty—or the need to avoid uncertainty—generates "hot" cognitive processes that motivates information processing such that individuals "react in strong positive affective terms to people and events that bolster their cultural worldviews, and in strong negative affective terms to things, individuals, or experiences that violate those worldviews" (Van den Bos 2009, 199).

For many people, worldviews are generated and defined by group memberships. As Hogg (2012) and Kruglanski et al. (2006) demonstrate in a number of studies, uncertainty (or a conceptually related construct, the need for cognitive closure), motivates a number of basic processes of social identification. Indeed, Hogg et al. (2007, 136) note that "group identification may be a particularly efficient and immediate way to reduce or fend off [...] uncertainty." Through group identification, especially strong group identification, (and its companion, out-group derogation) one can acquire consensual and certain prototypes that define who one is and what one should value (e.g., "we" are like this, "they" are like that). The need for certainty—especially about the self—appears to be so central to social identification that it may be close to a necessary condition. For example, in an extension of the well-known minimal group paradigm (e.g., Tajfel et al. 1971), Hogg and colleagues demonstrate that identification with "minimal groups" increases in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination *only* when subjects also

experience uncertainty (e.g., Grieve and Hogg 1999; Mullin and Hogg 1998).[4] Similarly, across two independent samples, Shah, Kruglanski, and Thompson (1998) show that higher levels of the personality variable need for cognitive closure is associated with more positive feelings towards one's own ethnic group and more negative ratings of ethnic out-groups (see also, Federico et al. 2005; Golec et al. 2006). In short, strong in-group identity and out-group derogation are often embraced because social identification is a powerful—perhaps the most powerful—tool for reducing uncertainty and obtaining cognitive closure.

However, not all groups are equally effective at being certainty-providers. In particular, groups that are highly entitative (i.e., cohesive or homogenous) are especially effective at reducing uncertainty. Variation across groups in entitativity therefore has strong main effects on in-group identity strength and out-group derogation (Castano et al. 2003; Hogg et al. 2007; Yzerbyt et al. 2000). Furthermore, highly entitative and homogenous groups have especially pronounced effects on the group identities of individuals who are highly motivated to reduce uncertainty (e.g., Hogg et al. 2007; Kruglanski et al. 2002; Kruglanski et al. 2006). For example, a study by Jetten, Hogg, and Mullin (2000) shows that individuals in a state of uncertainty are more likely to identify with a highly homogenous group than with a less homogenous group. Kruglanski et al. (2002) also show that need for closure increases identity with and affect for homogenous groups that are perceived to be similar to oneself. These findings

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[4] Uncertainty in these studies has been manipulated in a number of different ways, including asking subjects to identify the number of objects in a picture with so many objects that they can only guess, or by asking subjects to directly think about things that make them uncertain.

demonstrate the extra power cohesive or homogenous groups have to "appeal to high need for closure individuals because of their potential for a shared reality" (Kruglanski et al. 2006, 91).

These theories and empirical findings motivate the three key theoretical claims and hypotheses of this dissertation. First is that the need for certainty represents a causal motivation driving a variety of social identity processes. Second, that variation across groups in cohesiveness or homogeneity—because cohesive groups are better certainty-providers—cultivates a stronger psychological bond among group members and therefore strengthens social identification. And third, that there is an interaction between individual-level uncertainty and group-level cohesiveness, such that the strongest processes of social identification occur when the motivation to reduce uncertainty is high and when groups are cohesive, capable of being an effective certainty-provider.

To the extent that partisanship is a social identity (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002), this theory suggests that the need for certainty should motivate strong partisan identity, in-group favoritism, out-group derogation, and a tendency to conform to group leaders, all of which I coalesce under the label partisan rigidity. Perhaps more central to this project is the idea that variation among party elites over time, as the parties have transformed from heterogeneous coalitions to highly homogenous partisan teams, has strengthened the psychological bonds underlying partisan attachment, and that it is through this mechanism that elite polarization causes higher levels of partisan strength and affective polarization (Lupu 2014; Rogowski and Sutherland Forthcoming).

Furthermore, the effect of elite polarization on partisan identity should be concentrated or strongest among individuals with a strong psychological need for certainty.

My central argument, then, is that the polarization of political elites has strengthened the psychological benefits of partisan identity and caused higher levels of mass partisan rigidity because polarized parties are better equipped than non-polarized parties at providing firm and certain convictions. Non-polarized parties are internally heterogeneous and lack clear boundaries; therefore, they do not provide certain knowledge about what it means to be a Democrat or a Republican. By contrast, polarized elites are more internally unified and have more clearly demarcated group boundaries. In polarized environments, elites send clear signals about who is one of "us" and who is one of "them," and polarized elites provide party members with greater certainty about the social world and their place within it. In short, polarized parties are much higher in their underlying entitativity. To the extent that this is true, the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and strong partisanship should grow stronger over time, transforming the electorate into rigid partisans.

Overview of Empirical Chapters

The rest of the dissertation is a series of papers, currently written to stand independently, that evaluates the three key theoretical claims outlined above. The first empirical chapter looks at the origins of partisan sorting: the extent to which Democrats and Republicans share the policy preferences of their party leaders. Partisan sorting is a widely acknowledged consequence of elite polarization (Levendusky 2010), but scholars are divided over the origins and meaning of partisan-ideological sorting. Is sorting rooted

in blind conformity to party elites, or in a greater capacity of citizens to bring their partisan affiliation into alignment with their ideological values? Based on the theory of partisan rigidity developed above, I hypothesize that both polarized elites and individual differences in the need for certainty will increase the power of party leaders to shape mass opinion. I find strong support for both hypotheses; therefore, I argue that partisan sorting is more a sign of heightened group loyalty than an indication that the American public is more ideologically competent.

The second empirical paper, "Authoritarianism and Affective Polarization: A New View on the Origins of Partisan Extremism," presents the first test of the relationship between psychological variables associated with the need for certainty—in this case, authoritarianism—and numerous indicators of partisan rigidity, specifically, partisan strength and feelings toward the two parties. In two separate studies, I find consistent evidence for the "group-centrism" hypothesis (that authoritarianism increases partisan strength for both Democrats and Republicans), and limited evidence for the "psychological differences" hypothesis (that Democrats and Republicans are polarized because they are psychologically different). These findings lead me to conclude that the most polarized and extreme partisans are characterized by a psychological orientation to divide the world into in-groups and out-groups and to see politics as a conflict between "us" and "them."

In the third and final paper, "The Rise of Partisan Rigidity: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory of the Partisan Resurgence in American Politics," I provide a more robust examination of the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and partisan

rigidity. Across a number of distinct studies, I show that the need for certainty—which

varies both as a disposition and across different environments—causes individuals to:

identify as a strong partisan, have more extreme feelings toward the parties, and exhibit

intolerance toward the political out-group. I also show that this relationship has grown

stronger over time: need for closure has no effect on partisan strength in 1988, but is a

significant predictor of strong partisanship in 2006, 2008, and 2010. Finally, I show that

elite polarization—or perceived party differences—has no effect on partisan rigidity

when respondents feel psychologically certain about themselves. These findings suggest

limits to both the "ideological disagreements" and the "psychological differences"

hypotheses, showing once again that the strongest Democrats and Republicans are

psychologically similar—in this case, high in the need for cognitive closure. These

findings also explain why Democrats and Republicans have become more divided over

time, as elite polarization increases strong partisanship among individuals with a strong

need for certainty.

In closing, I argue that the current generation of American partisanship is best

described as a closed-minded, group-centric, or rigid mass partisanship. The American

electorate today is strongly partisan for the psychological benefits of group membership,

not because the parties better represent individuals' instrumental values. As a result, elite

parties cultivate a more uncritically loyal, or blind, mass partisanship. Thus, contrary the

theory of responsible party government, I argue that elite polarization and the strong

partisan spirit it engenders impairs the competence of the American voter and weakens

the foundations of American democracy.

Chapter 2

Partisan Sorting: Blind Conformity or Ideological Alignment?

As political elites have polarized, the public has sorted—Democrats and Republicans increasingly share the policy preferences of their party. However, research is divided over the origins and meaning of partisan-ideological sorting. Have citizens sorted by blindly following party elites, or have they followed their policy views? Building from the psychological literature on social identity and group conformity, this paper develops a novel theory of party-elite opinion leadership rooted in the psychological need for certainty. In a survey experiment, I find that elite polarization as well as strong individual needs for certainty increase the extent to which citizens blindly conform to their party leaders. These findings delineate the conditions under which party elites have the greatest power to shape mass opinion, and shows that elite polarization causes partisan sorting by strengthening blind conformity to party leaders more than by aiding the public's ability to follow their ideological views.

One of the most important changes in American politics over the past few decades is the increasing extent to which the public has aligned their partisan affiliation with their policy preferences. Unlike decades past, citizens today largely share the views of party elites (Abramowitz 2010; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Fiorina et al. 2005; Hill and Tausanovitch 2015; Layman and Carsey 2002; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015). Many cheer this change as evidence of greater ideological competence; as party elites have polarized, some argue that it has become easier for citizens to align their partisan affiliation to match their policy preferences (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998; Abramowitz 2010; Levendusky 2009; 2010; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). However, others argue that the public has become more blindly partisan instead; accordingly, elite polarization has strengthened the pull of preexisting partisan loyalties on public opinion formation and vote choice (e.g., Carsey and Layman 2006; Druckman et al. 2013; Lavine et al. 2012; Lenz 2013; Rogowski, Forthcoming). Does elite polarization facilitate ideological reasoning, or has elite polarization strengthened blind conformity to party elites?

In this paper I adjudicate the "ideological alignment" and "blind conformity" perspectives by developing a new theory of party-elite influence and assessing this theory on partisan sorting in the American public. Building from the psychological literature on social identity and group conformity, I develop a new theory to explain when and why citizens conform to party elites. This theory states that one of the core functions of social groups is to provide their members with certainty: certain beliefs about who they are and what they should value (e.g., Hogg 2012; Kruglanski et al. 2006). Therefore, to the

25

extent that partisanship is a social identity and party-elite influence is rooted in more basic processes of intergroup relations, this theory helps to delineate the conditions under which citizens are most likely to conform to party elites: (a) when party cues provide certain (unambiguous) opinions, and (b) when individuals are highly motivated by a strong need for certainty. I argue that polarized parties provide more certain opinions; therefore, contrary to the "ideological alignment" thesis, I hypothesize that the public is *more*—not less—likely to uncritically follow party leaders in conditions of polarized parties than in conditions of non-polarized parties. I also hypothesize that individual differences in the need for certainty explains substantial heterogeneity in the extent to which individuals blindly follow partisan cues.

In a survey experiment that manipulates both the polarization of political elites and the ideological direction of party cues, and that also measures individual differences in the need for certainty, I find support for this broader theory of party elite influence on partisan sorting. First, I find that polarized elites (relative to non-polarized elites) cause citizens to share their party's view, regardless of whether that view is ideologically liberal or conservative. This indicates that rather than aiding the public's ability to reason ideologically, elite polarization strengthens conformity to party leaders. Second, individual differences in the need for cognitive closure—a measure of individual differences in aversion to uncertainty—substantially moderates the extent to which respondents uncritically rely on partisan cues when forming political opinions.

These findings contribute theoretically to a growing literature on the conditions in which party elites have influence over mass opinion (e.g., Arceneaux 2008; Arceneaux

26

and Vander Wielen 2013; Bartels 2002; Berinsky 2007; Bolsen et al. 2014; Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Bullock 2011; Carsey and Layman 2006; Ciuk and Yost 2015; Cohen 2003; Druckman et al. 2013; Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Gaines et al. 2007; Groenendyk 2013; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Kam 2005; Klar 2014; Lavine et al. 2012; Lenz 2013; Lodge and Taber 2013; Mullinix 2015; Nicholson 2011; 2012; Nyhan and Reifler 2015; Petersen et al. 2013; Slothuus and deVreese 2010; Zaller 1992). Specifically, this paper shows that both polarized parties and strong individual needs for certainty increase the likelihood that citizens blindly conform to party leaders and ignore substantive ideological information. Therefore, because party elites have greater influence over mass opinion in conditions of polarized parties, this paper indicates that the high levels of partisan-ideological sorting in the public today is more a badge of uncritical group loyalty than an indication that the public is more ideologically competent.

Elite Polarization, Partisan Sorting, and Voter Competence

How does elite polarization and the clear division of the parties into coherent and sharply distinct teams influence public opinion formation? Research suggests two possibilities: (1) *Ideological Alignment* - polarized parties send clearer ideological signals to the public, making it easier for citizens to align their party identification and vote choice on the basis of their policy preferences (Levendusky 2010; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012), or (2) *Blind Conformity* - polarized elites strengthen the partisan "perceptual screen" in opinion formation and vote choice (Druckman et al. 2013; Lenz 2013; Mullinix 2015; Rogowski Forthcoming; Slothuus and DeVreese 2010). Adjudicating

27

between these theories is crucial for understanding whether elite polarization aids or undermines the political competence of the American electorate.

The ideological alignment camp has its roots in the theory of responsible party government (APSA 1950). According to this theory, polarized parties send clearer information to the public about the parties' views and therefore help individuals align their partisan and candidate preferences to match their own values. Levendusky (2010) presents evidence consistent with this theory by showing that elite polarization causes citizens to line up on the same side of issues as their party (i.e., to "sort"), and thereby promotes higher levels of partisan-ideological constraint (Converse 1964). Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012) further argue that sorted partisans are now capable of reasoning in an ideologically coherent manner. Sorted—or programmatic—partisans, those who share the ideological view of their party, are thought to make voting decisions on the basis of the parties' programmatic reputations more than characteristics of individual candidates. Sorted partisans will even discount sharing a specific policy preference with a candidate in favor of a candidate who shares their partisan identity (Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012, 93). Sorted partisans do this, they argue, because choosing the candidate of their party is the best strategy to achieve their ideological views *all-in-all*. These findings seem to affirm the theory of responsible party government: elite polarization fosters an ideologically competent electorate.

However, other studies argue that elite parties increase blind conformity to in-party elites, not greater ideological competence. First, observational analyses of partisan sorting over time suggest that many citizens have sorted by changing their ideological

orientation to match their partisan affiliation, not vice versa (e.g., Carsey and Layman 2006; Lavine et al. 2012; but see Highton and Kam 2011 for conflicting findings).[5] Second, a number of experimental studies have demonstrated that heightened elite competition strengthens the pull of partisan cues on public opinion formation relative to other considerations, such as the strength of political arguments (Druckman et al. 2013; Mullinix 2015; Slothuus and DeVreese 2010). Finally, in an analysis of vote choice, Rogowski (forthcoming) shows that polarized candidates decrease the role of ideological considerations—and increase the role of partisanship—in electoral decision-making. These studies all suggest that elite polarization weakens rather than strengthens the ideological competence of the American voter.

Yet no study has directly adjudicated the ideological alignment and blind conformity hypotheses in an analysis of partisan sorting—the extent to which citizens share the views of party elites. The observational evidence on partisan sorting comes closest, but cannot isolate the effect of elite polarization on either process of partisan-ideological alignment, and this research itself presents conflicting evidence. Given these inconsistencies, this paper asks whether partisan sorting—one widely acknowledged consequence of elite polarization—derives from an alignment of ideology with partisanship, or by blind conformity to party elites, and why?

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[5] One important limitation of these observational studies is that they cannot isolate the impact of elite polarization on either ideology-driven or party-driven processes of partisan sorting.

The Need for Certainty and the Origins of Party Elite Influence

To answer these questions, I develop a new theory and conduct a new experimental test of the effect of elite polarization on partisan sorting. The theory I develop helps to delineate the conditions under which citizens rely on party cues in forming political opinions more broadly by specifying the psychological motivations underlying social and partisan identity generally. Specifically, building from research in social identity theory and other theories of intergroup relations, I argue that one function of partisan identity is to provide the psychological benefit of uncertainty reduction (e.g., Hogg 2012; Kruglanski et al. 2006). Human beings have a basic psychological need for certain knowledge about "themselves, their social world, and their place within it" (Hogg et al. 2007, 136). One highly effective way to obtain certain knowledge is by self-categorizing oneself as a group member and by conforming to the views of the group (Hogg, et al. 2013). Groups prescribe beliefs, thoughts, and feelings, and in doing so they help make the world and one's place within it more predictable and less uncertain.

Importantly, however, groups vary in their ability to provide members with the psychological benefit of certainty. Specifically, groups that are high on entitativity (i.e., groups that are highly cohesive) are best equipped to fulfill this psychological need. As Hogg (2012, 69) aptly summarizes:

> "an unclearly structured low entitativity group that has indistinct boundaries, ambiguous membership criteria, limited shared goals, and little agreement on group attributes will do a poor job of reducing [...] uncertainty. In contrast, a clearly structured high entitativity group with sharp boundaries, unambiguous membership criteria, tightly shared goals, and consensus on group attributes will do an excellent job."

Thus, individuals are motivated to identify with and conform to highly cohesive groups, as these groups are more effective at prescribing certain knowledge. In short, when groups are highly cohesive (which previous research has both manipulated and measured), individuals are more likely to identify strongly with and conform to group leaders as a means of enhancing group solidarity and obtaining more unambiguous beliefs and values (e.g., Castano et al. 2003; Hogg et al. 2007; Hogg et al. 2013; Kruglanski et al. 2002; Yzerbyt et al. 2000).

My central claim is that the polarization of political elites has strengthened the psychological benefits of partisan identity and increased conformity to party elites because polarized parties are better equipped than non-polarized parties at providing firm and certain convictions. Non-polarized parties are internally heterogeneous and lack clear boundaries, and therefore they do not provide certain knowledge about what it means to be a Democrat or a Republican. Polarized elites are more internally unified and have more clearly demarcated group boundaries. In polarized environments, elites send clear signals about who is one of "us" and who is one of "them," and polarized elites provide party members with greater certainty about the social world and their place within it. In short, polarized parties are much higher in their underlying entitativity.

Therefore, I argue that polarized elites have greater power to shape mass opinion because polarized parties are capable of prescribing beliefs, values, and opinions with certainty. When party leaders are unified in their stance on an issue (and diametrically opposed to the out-party), co-partisans in the electorate can obtain confidence in their own view by simply conforming to party leaders. As a consequence, elite polarization

31

should cause mass partisans to "sort" by changing their policy views to match the positions of party leaders. While consistent with other research showing greater partisan bias in polarized elite settings, this represents a novel theory with unique implications for why polarized elites strengthen blind conformity rather than ideological alignment as the source of partisan sorting in American politics.

One implication of this theory is that it leads directly to another hypothesis: individual differences in the need for certainty affects party elite influence. Psychological research on intergroup relations show that the motivation to reduce uncertainty at the individual level—much like variation across groups in levels of entitativity—increases in-group identity strength, out-group discrimination, and an individual's propensity to conform to group leaders (e.g., De Grada et al. 1999; Hogg 2000; Hogg and Mullins 2000; Shah et al. 1998). For example, in an extension of the well-known minimal group paradigm (e.g., Tajfel et al. 1971), Hogg and colleagues demonstrate that identification with minimal groups increases in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination *only* when subjects also experience uncertainty (e.g., Grieve and Hogg 1999; Mullin and Hogg 1998).[6]

One variable that closely captures differences in the motivation to reduce uncertainty—and how I operationalize this concept in the present paper—is the need for

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[6] Uncertainty in these studies has been manipulated in a number of different ways, including asking subjects to identify the number of objects in a picture with so many objects that they can only guess, or by asking subjects to directly think about things that make them uncertain.

cognitive closure (Webster and Kruglanski 1994). The need for closure measures stable individual differences in the motivation "for a definite answer on some topic, any answer as opposed to confusion and ambiguity" (Kruglanksi 1989, 14). Numerous studies show that individuals with a strong need for closure experience greater motivation for uniformity in group decisions (e.g., Kruglanski et al. 1993; 1999), establish more autocratic mechanisms of collaboration within groups (De Grada et al. 1999; Pierro et al. 2003), and have more favorable attitudes to in-groups and more negative attitudes toward out-groups (Kruglanski et al. 2002; Shah et al. 1998). Therefore, if the psychological need for certainty underlies party elite influence, then individuals with a strong need for cognitive closure should be most likely to blindly conform to the positions of party elites, regardless of whether party leaders adopt liberal or conservative issue positions.

In short, the theory of party elite influence developed in this paper posits that the psychological motivation to obtain certainty underlies conformity to party elites. Based on this theory, I argue that the extent to which people use partisan identity to obtain psychological certainty varies across: (1) the extent to which parties are capable of prescribing beliefs with certainty (which varies across levels of elite polarization), and (2) the extent to which an individual is chronically motivated to obtain unambiguous beliefs. First, the need for certainty can be fulfilled by conforming to party leaders when the parties are highly entitative or polarized—capable of prescribing shared and certain views to group members. Accordingly, polarized elites should cause party members to share the views of party leaders (i.e., to sort), regardless of whether those views are ideologically liberal or conservative.

Hypothesis 1: Polarization increases partisan sorting by strengthening blind conformity to party elites.

Second, being strongly averse to uncertainty—which varies across individuals as a stable personality trait, the need for cognitive closure—causes individuals to be more reliant on cues from group leaders as a means of obtaining unambiguous beliefs (Kruglanski et al. 2006). Therefore, the need for cognitive closure should also increase blind conformity to party elites.

Hypothesis 2: Increases in need for cognitive closure increase partisan sorting by strengthening blind conformity to party elites.

Below I test these claims on partisan sorting, the extent to which citizens share the policy preferences of their party leaders. I specifically adjudicate between the two modes of sorting identified earlier: ideological alignment vs. blind conformity. The key to adjudicating these theories is to manipulate both (a) elite polarization (high vs. low) and (b) whether party elites support an ideologically stereotypical or counter-stereotypical policy position. If elite polarization makes it easier for citizens to reason ideologically, then citizens should be *less* likely to adopt counter-stereotypical positions when elites are polarized. On other hand, if polarized elites strengthen blind conformity to party leaders, then citizens should be *more* likely to adopt counter-stereotypical positions when elites are polarized. By directly manipulating both elite polarization and the link between party labels and policy information, this experiment provides a more direct way of adjudicating competing claims about the effect of elite polarization on public opinion than previous observational analyses of partisan sorting or studies that do not manipulate the ideological positions of party elites.

34

Research Design

To assess these hypotheses, I conducted an experimental study on YouGov in the Fall of 2014 (October 23-30)[7] This study follows the research design of Levendusky (2010), which presents respondents with brief information about a policy and then solicits their opinion. Like Levendusky, I also present respondents with information about the parties' (presented as members of Congress) position on the issue, and manipulate whether the parties are depicted as polarized or not polarized over the issue[8] Figure 1 provides an example of the high and low polarization treatment conditions[9]

As is apparent in Figure 1, the only difference between the conditions is the depiction of party elites as polarized or not polarized, defined by the distance between the parties and homogeneity within each party (see Druckman et al. 2013; Levendusky 2010). In addition to this graphical depiction, I also describe the parties as either polarized or not polarized following the procedure of Druckman et al. (2013).

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[7] Yougov interviewed 1,358 respondents who were then matched down to 1,200 respondents on the basis of gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and political interest. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).

[8] Respondents assigned to the polarization treatment received the polarized treatment on all four issues, and likewise for respondents assigned to the non-polarized condition.

[9] I slightly changed the manipulations across issues to increase the believability of the experiment. The full manipulations for each issue are provided in the appendix.

High Polarization: As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. [Party A] strongly supports [the issue]; [Party B] strongly oppose [the issue]. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.

Low Polarization: As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. [Party A] tend to support [the issue]; [Party B] tend to oppose [the issue]. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

Respondents read information about four policy issues (presented in the following order): (1) legislation that would require mining companies to spend increased time reviewing the environmental impact of a new project prior to the commencement of mining operations, (2) legislation over whether to cut spending on Medicaid (i.e., government supported health insurance for the poor), (3) legislation that would roll back affirmative action laws by banning the use of racial criteria in college admissions, and (4) legislation to combat global warming. In addition to manipulating elite polarization, I also manipulated the side each party supported on each issue. On *each issue*, respondents were randomly assigned to read that their party supported either the ideologically stereotypical position (e.g., Democrats support Medicaid expansion) or the counter-stereotypical position (e.g., Democrats oppose Medicaid expansion). This manipulation enhances the believability of the study (relative to one in which all issues are counter-stereotypical). However, it is the counter-stereotypic condition that allows me to overcome the limitations of previous work on partisan sorting and to adjudicate whether elite polarization drives partisan sorting via ideological alignment or blind conformity to party elites (see also Bullock 2011; Cohen 2003; Lavine et al. 2012).

One concern about this design is that respondents may already know where the parties stand on the issues and will therefore have strong preexisting policy opinions. While there is some validity to this objection, many studies report opinion change even on highly familiar issues similar to those used in this study (see Bullock 2011, Table A1). To account for some heterogeneity in both awareness of the parties' typical stance and the presence of preexisting opinions toward these issues, I control for an index of political knowledge in the models below.

In some respects, then, and for individuals who have strong preexisting attitudes towards these issues, the use of salient issues may limit our understanding of the extent to which parties act as opinion leaders. However, the use of these issues also strengthens the inferences we can make about the conditions that promote or undermine party elite influence, as these issues present a particularly difficult test of blind partisan following. To the extent that citizens blindly adopt counter-stereotypical party cues even on salient issues such as Medicaid expansion or global warming (salient issues for which we would expect weaker average effects of party cues, see Ciuk and Yost 2015), we can more confidently make the argument that elites lead citizens, even on some of the core political debates in contemporary American politics.[10]

A related concern is that the counter-stereotypical research design is unrealistic and does not map on to political reality in a convincing fashion. However, Lee (2009)

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[10] Future research should examine more the mechanisms (and normative implications) behind party-elite influence; i.e., whether individuals willingly follow party elites or whether they unthinkingly rely on partisan heuristics.

documents a number of cases where party elites adopt policy positions because of their perceived political benefits rather than because the policy position corresponds to "liberal" or "conservative" policy change (see also Theriault 2013). For example, in 2003 George W. Bush and the Republican Party substantially expanded the welfare state through the expansion of Medicare—a move that was opposed almost unanimously by elite Democrats. Another example is the reversal between the two parties between 1993 and 2001 in support for federally sponsored testing in local public schools. Finally, recent political conflict over the debt ceiling represents an important case of party reversals over a highly salient policy issue. In 2006 during a Republican presidency, Democrats widely voted against raising the debt limit. Following Barack Obama's election, however, it is Republicans who have routinely voted against raising the debt limit. Senator Lindsey Graham provides the logic behind many of these reversals, "If it's a Democratic idea, I have to be against it because it came from a Democrat. And vice versa" (quoted in Brownstein 2007, 12; Lee 2009, 99). In short, the positions of party elites are often adopted based on what is deemed politically expedient rather than whether or not a policy is perceived to be liberal or conservative. Thus, while party switching on salient policy issues may be uncommon, it does happen and it is important to understand how co-partisans in the electorate respond—and the factors that condition mass responses—when party elites adopt ideologically counter-stereotypical positions.

More importantly, the counter-stereotypical condition is necessary for understanding what happens in *stereotypical* environments—where party elites take stands that dovetail with their ideological brand. That is because there are two competing

explanations for the finding that polarized elites increase the extent to which their supporters share their view: (1) ideological alignment (e.g., Levendusky 2010), or (2) blind conformity (Druckman et al. 2013; Lenz 2013). The counter-stereotypical condition allows for an examination of these two possibilities. In this condition, the ideological alignment hypothesis suggests that elite polarization will *decrease* partisan sorting; by contrast, the blind conformity hypothesis states that elite polarization will *increase* partisan sorting. In short, the counter-stereotypical research design both reflects an important real-world phenomenon and it provides a clear way to adjudicate competing predictions about the effect of elite polarization on partisan sorting.

Following exposure to the information and manipulations, respondents were asked to state their level of support for or opposition to the issue. The dependent variable is operationalized as whether or not a respondent is "sorted." Following Levendusky (2010), I define "sorting" by whether a respondent takes their party's position on this issue; i.e., whether they support/oppose or strongly support/oppose the policy, and are on the same side of the issue as their party leaders. This copies the difference between the high polarization and low polarization conditions, where what varies is *not* the side of the issue the parties are on, but how strongly divided party elites are in support of the issue. Because the dependent variable is a dichotomous indicator (1 – sorted; 0 – unsorted), I use logistic regression to estimate predictors of cue-taking. The following analyses thus has four observations for each of the 1,037 partisans in the survey (including partisan

leaners).[11] Because of this panel structure to the data, I account for both subject random

and issue fixed effects (omitting either of these subject/item effects does not affect the

substantive conclusions).[12] The reported standard errors below are also clustered by

respondent. In the general analysis of sorting, I control for whether or not the respondent

received the stereotypical or counter-stereotypical cue for each issue.[13]

To measure individual differences in the need for certainty, the study included a

15-item scale—developed to be used as a unidimensional measure—of the need for

cognitive closure (NFC) (re-scaled from 0-1, with higher values indicating a stronger

need for closure) (Cronbach's α = 0.89; Roets and Van Hiel 2011). [14] This measure is

widely used in the literature as a measure of aversion to uncertainty (e.g., Federico et al.

2012; Johnston et al. 2015; Jost et al. 2003; Thorisdottir and Jost 2011). Indeed, Johnston

et al. (2015, 15) describe need for closure as "an obvious choice as a measure of

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[11] Sample size varies because of some missing data on political knowledge and need for

closure.

[12] The analysis of panel data in STATA 13 does not allow for the inclusion of survey

weights. Therefore, the following analyses use unweighted data.

[13] The key results hold when controlling for demographic variables (all available upon

request).

[14] While the authors of the shortened scale specifically caution against using the measure

to look at the individual facets, I do find that each of the five facets have similar—though

substantively smaller—effects compared to the full scale (results available upon request).

uncertainty aversion." This measure thus represents a close conceptual approximation to individual differences in the need for certainty.

The study also included a 5-item measure of political knowledge (Cronbach's α = 0.61), that I include in each of the models to account for heterogeneity in awareness of the parties' pre-existing stance on these policies (re-scaled from 0-1, with higher values indicating greater political knowledge).[15] Because political knowledge increases awareness of the parties' typical position on these issues, I expect that it will decrease sorting on counter-stereotypical issues. At the end of the study, respondents were debriefed and informed that the information they read about the parties and their positions do not necessarily reflect the actual positions of the parties.

Results

Table 1 reports the results of the polarization treatment on partisan sorting across all cases (model 1), on issues where the party's position is ideologically stereotypical (model 2) and on issues where the party's position is presented as counter-stereotypical (model 3).

As is apparent in Table 1, going from the low to high polarization condition increases the probability of "sorting" ($b = 0.37$, $p<0.05$), and this effect holds across both stereotypical ($b = 0.31$, $p<0.10$) and counter-stereotypical ($b = 0.79$, $p<0.05$) party cues. It is the counter-stereotypical condition that is of the most theoretical interest, as this condition cleanly adjudicates between the ideological alignment and blind partisan conformity explanations for the effects of elite polarization on public opinion formation.

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[15] Precise question wording for these variables is provided in the Appendix.

Thus, model 3 in Table 1 shows that polarized parties increase partisan sorting even on ideologically counter-stereotypical issues. This result supports Hypothesis 1: polarized parties cultivate a stronger psychological bond among co-partisans and therefore increase blind conformity to party elites.

Figure 2 illustrates the difference between the non-polarized and polarized treatment conditions in the extent to which respondents blindly follow party leaders. In environments of non-polarized parties, the probability of conforming to party elites who take counter-stereotypical issue positions is 0.08. In polarized conditions, where the parties are higher in entitativity and prescribe more certain beliefs, the probability of blindly taking party cues nearly doubles to over 0.15. In other words, the probability that a respondent shares the ideologically incorrect policy position advocated by their partisan elites (e.g., Democrats oppose affirmative action) nearly doubles when moving from a non-polarized to a polarized political environment. This finding supports Hypothesis 1 and pushes back against the claim that polarized parties help citizens reason ideologically. If polarized elites helped citizens reason on the basis of ideological information, then partisan sorting in the counter-stereotypical condition should be weaker—not stronger—when elites are polarized. Consistent with the alternative theory that polarized elites strengthen blind partisan conformity, polarized parties increase the likelihood that respondents share the perceived views of party leaders, and this occurs regardless of the ideological position those party leaders advocate.

Table 2 extends the analysis by including individual differences in the need for closure. As indicated in Table 2, higher levels of need for closure increases partisan

sorting on issues where the parties' positions are counter-stereotypical. In the stereotypical condition ($b = 0.58$, p<*n.s.*), individuals low and high in need for closure do not statistically differ in the likelihood of sharing party elites' ideologically correct positions. However, on counter-stereotypical issues, where it is possible to more cleanly adjudicate between partisan cue-taking from reliance on substantive ideological information, there is a large and statistically significant effect of need for closure on partisan sorting ($b = 1.56$, p<0.05). Substantively, the probability of blindly adopting party elite cues on counter-stereotypical issues is just 0.05 for individuals with the weakest needs for closure. However, this probability quadruples to 0.20 among individuals with the strongest need for closure. This represents a dramatic change in the likelihood of adopting ideologically incorrect positions on these ideologically salient political issues. In short, these results support Hypothesis 2: individuals with a strong need for certainty are more likely to blindly conform to the positions of party elites than individuals with weak needs for certainty.

Robustness Checks

Below I present a number of robustness checks to verify these results. First, I control for another moderator of reliance on partisan cues—the need for cognition—and show that need for closure exerts significant effects on reliance on partisan cues even while controlling for this other variable. Second, I assess the substantive impact of the effect of need for closure by comparing the impact of this variable to a more direct measure of expressive partisan attachment: partisan social identity (Huddy et al. 2015). Finally, I assess whether there are any significant partisan differences in the impact of

43

need for closure on blind conformity to party elites. Contrary to the thesis that individuals high in the need for closure are conservative ideologues (e.g., Jost et al. 2003), this last analysis shows that in the presence of counter-stereotypical partisan cues, high need for closure Republicans are more likely to follow their partisan leaders and adopt liberal policy positions relative to low need for closure Republicans. In sum, these robustness checks verify the unique and powerful impact of the need for closure on party-elite opinion leadership relative to alternative theories and other variables of interest in political science.

First, it is important to show that need for closure captures something different from a related personality trait that previous research hypothesizes is important for understanding individual differences in reliance on partisan cues: the need for cognition (e.g., Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2013; Bullock 2011; Kam 2005). To measure need for cognition, the study included 5 questions from the larger need for cognition scale (Cacioppo and Petty 1982; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$). While need for closure and need for cognition are empirically related in expected ways (Pearson's R = -0.11), Appendix Table 1 shows that when pit against each other, need for closure continues to exert a positive and significant—though slightly diminished—effect on counter-stereotypical partisan cue taking ($b = 1.32$, p<0.05), while need for cognition in this study has a marginally significant negative effect on partisan cue-taking ($b = -0.62$, p<0.10.). Consistent with dual process theories and previous research, individuals who enjoy thinking are less reliant on partisan cues. However, the main point of this analysis is to show that need for closure has effects over and above need for cognition, a more widely adopted measure in

previous analyses of opinion formation. Thus, need for closure represents an important variable for understanding heterogeneity in conformity to party elite cues.

Just how strong of an effect does need for closure have on blind partisanship? To fully evaluate the magnitude of need for closure on partisan sorting, Table 3 presents a comparison of need for closure with a direct measure of partisan strength intended to capture individual differences in expressive partisan motivation: partisan social identity (Huddy et al. 2015). In their paper, Huddy et al. (2015, 34) show that stronger partisan identities (as measured with a social identity scale) increase campaign involvement and emotions in the face of perceived electoral competition. They also predict that as partisan identity intensifies, elite partisan influence will also be elevated. In Table 3 I test this prediction using the same 4-item partisan social identity measure developed by Huddy et al. (2015), and I compare the effect of this variable on blind partisanship to the need for cognitive closure. The four items used to measure the intensity of partisan social identity are: (1) "How important is being a [Democrat/Republican] to you?," (2) "How well does the term [Democrat/Republican] describe you?," (3) "When talking about [Democrats/Republicans], how often do you use 'we' instead of 'they'?," and (4) "To what extent do you think of yourself as being a [Democrat/ Republican]?" Following Huddy et al. (2015), I create an additive scale that ranges from 0-1, with a mean of 0.57 and a standard deviation of 0.23 (Cronbach's α=0.85).

In Appendix Table A.2, I present the table of results comparing need for closure with partisan social identity as a predictor of counter-stereotypical cue-taking. The coefficient estimate for need for closure on counter-stereotypical issues ($b = 1.44$,

p<0.05) is similar in size to partisan social identity strength (b = 1.28, p<0.05). Indeed, Figure 3 shows that the substantive effect of these variables is nearly identical.

Figure 3 shows that moving across the range of need for closure increases the probability of conforming to party elites from 0.06 (weak needs for closure) to 0.19 (strong needs for closure). Going from the weakest to the strongest partisan identity has essentially the same substantive effect, with the probability of blind partisanship going from 0.05 at the low end to 0.18 at the high end. Thus, need for closure, a measure of an individual's preference for order and certainty in their day-to-day lives that does not include any explicit political content, has just as strong of an effect on blind partisanship as a direct and well-validated measure of partisan social identity strength. This suggests that need for closure is a meaningful and important variable for understanding individual-level variation in susceptibility to party elite influence.

Finally, in Appendix Table 3, I estimate whether the effect of need for closure on blind partisan sorting varies by party. Given that need for closure is widely associated with ideological conservatism in the political psychology literature (e.g., Jost et al. 2003; 2009), it is important to show that in the presence of counter-stereotypical cues high need for closure Republicans adopt *liberal* policy positions. If, in the presence of Republican cues advocating liberal policy issues, high need for closure Republicans follow along, this would support the argument that need for closure predisposes individuals to be group-centric more than being committed conservative ideologues.

To assess this hypothesis, Appendix Table 3 interacts Republican partisanship with need for closure. As shown in Appendix Table 3, the coefficient on the interaction

term between Republican partisanship and need for closure is statistically insignificant (b = -0.26, p<*n.s.*). Need for closure increases blind partisan following among Democrats and Republicans alike. Therefore, need for closure predisposes individuals to follow their party leaders, which in some circumstances implies adopting liberal policy positions.

Finally, it is also worth briefly elaborating on the effects of political knowledge. In general, political knowledge increases sorting on stereotypical issues, and decreases blind conformity to party elites on counter-stereotypical issues. This last finding suggests that the knowledgeable are the least reliant on partisan heuristics when forming political opinions. While this finding is theoretically intuitive, it does run counter to some other findings in the literature which show that knowledge increase partisan bias and motivated reasoning (e.g., Slothuus and DeVreese 2010; Kahan 2015; Lavine et al. 2012; Lodge and Taber 2013; Miller et al. Forthcoming). One likely explanation for the finding in this paper that knowledge decreases partisan conformity is that individuals high in political knowledge know the parties' typical stance and have strong preexisting opinions toward these salient policy issues. Therefore, on highly salient issues such as those included in this study, politically knowledgeable respondents may be the most capable of resisting ideologically incorrect partisan cues.

Conclusion

This paper develops a novel theory of party elite influence as rooted in the psychological need for certainty. Consistent with this theory, this paper argues that polarized parties are more highly entitative and prescribe more certain beliefs and

opinions, and therefore polarized elites strengthen rather than weaken the power of party elites over mass opinion (H1). The illustration of heightened elite influence even on relatively salient issues such as global warming and Medicaid expansion indicates that this dynamic is not confined to lesser-known issues, but also operates on the central conflicts of partisan debate in American politics. In addition, this paper demonstrates that the need for cognitive closure explains substantial variance in the extent to which citizens adopt counter-stereotypical partisan cues (H2). Indeed, individual differences in need for closure has just as strong of an impact of partisan cue-taking as a direct measure of partisan social identity strength, and is not reducible to another personality variable of interest in studies of opinion formation: the need for cognition. These findings indicate that need for closure represents a crucial personality variable for understanding individual differences in reliance on partisan cues.

These findings have theoretical implications for our understanding of the dynamics of party elite influence as well as normative implications for the effects of elite polarization in American politics. With regards to elite influence, these findings help delineate the conditions under which partisans are blind followers of party leaders. In contexts where the parties are capable of providing certain opinions (i.e., in polarized political environments), and for individuals with a strong need for certainty, party cues have more power over mass opinion. This finding extends our understanding of the origins of party elite influence as rooted in fundamental psychological needs to belong, and specifies one such need as the need for certainty. This theory thus provides a new perspective on the motives underlying party influence and extends other applications of

social identity theory to understanding conformity to party leaders, such as the finding

that self-affirmation reduces partisan bias (e.g., Cohen et al. 2007; Nyhan and Reifler

2015; Sherman et al. 2000; Sherman and Cohen 2006).

Normatively, these findings challenge the view that elite polarization and partisan

sorting has improved the political competence of the American electorate by helping the

public bring their partisan affiliation into alignment with their policy preferences (e.g.,

Abramowitz 2010; APSA 1950; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Hetherington 2001;

Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Rather, and consistent with the blind

conformity perspective, this study demonstrates that when elites are polarized, partisans

are more likely to simply follow their party leaders. Therefore, while the American

electorate may be more "constrained" in their political views, policy preferences appear

to be more a badge of group loyalty than an expression of a citizen's beliefs or values.

Contrary to the theory of responsible party government, these findings indicate that

polarized parties may do more harm than good in helping the public meet the image of

the ideal democratic citizen.

Table 1. The Effect of Polarization on Partisan Sorting

VARIABLES	(1) Issue Sort	(2) Sort Stereotypical	(3) Sort Counter-Stereotypical
High Polarization	0.37**	0.31**	0.79**
	(0.085)	(0.156)	(0.168)
Political Knowledge	0.93**	2.75**	-0.87**
	(0.193)	(0.340)	(0.295)
Mining	-0.18*	-0.57**	0.38*
	(0.101)	(0.160)	(0.200)
Medicaid	-0.06	-0.50**	0.67**
	(0.103)	(0.169)	(0.217)
Affirmative Action	-0.14	-1.05**	1.09**
	(0.104)	(0.184)	(0.254)
Mining stereotypical	0.46**		
	(0.083)		
Medicaid stereotypical	0.55**		
	(0.084)		
AA stereotypical	0.42**		
	(0.084)		
Global Warming stereotypical	0.74**		
	(0.085)		
Constant	-1.71**	-1.18**	-3.31**
	(0.132)	(0.176)	(0.254)
Observations	3,896	1,913	1,983

Robust standard errors, clustered by respondent, in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are logit coefficients, accounting for subject-specific random effects.

Table 2. The Effect of Need for Closure on Partisan Sorting

VARIABLES	(1) Issue Sort	(2) Sort Stereotypical	(3) Sort Counter-Stereotypical
Need for Closure	0.66**	0.58	1.56**
	(0.269)	(0.495)	(0.523)
Political Knowledge	1.07**	2.89**	-0.56*
	(0.205)	(0.370)	(0.312)
High Polarization	0.36**	0.32**	0.75**
	(0.086)	(0.162)	(0.168)
Mining	-0.19*	-0.54**	0.28
	(0.105)	(0.169)	(0.208)
Medicaid	-0.07	-0.47**	0.61**
	(0.108)	(0.179)	(0.222)
Affirmative Action	-0.15	-1.04**	1.02**
	(0.107)	(0.190)	(0.219)
Mining stereotypical	0.49**		
	(0.084)		
Medicaid stereotypical	0.58**		
	(0.086)		
AA stereotypical	0.39**		
	(0.085)		
Global Warming stereotypical	0.74**		
	(0.087)		
Constant	-2.06**	0.87**	-4.06**
	(0.195)	(0.465)	(0.409)
Observations	3,600	1,752	1,848

Robust standard errors, clustered by respondent, in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are logit coefficients, accounting for subject-specific random effects.

Figure 1. Example of Low and High Polarization Treatments

Low Polarization (Democrat Support):

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

High Polarization (Democrat Support):

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)
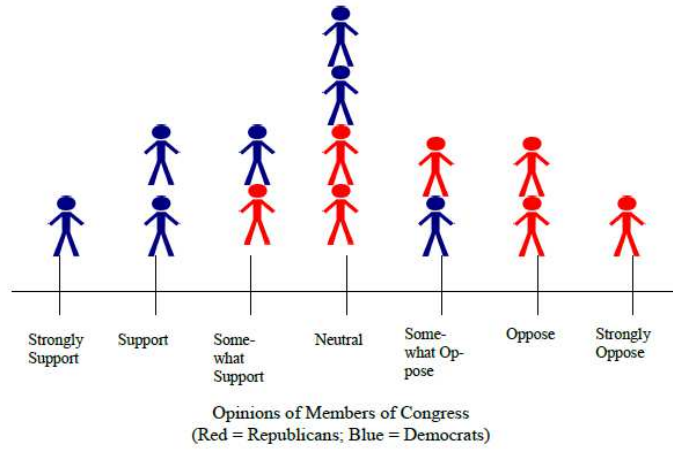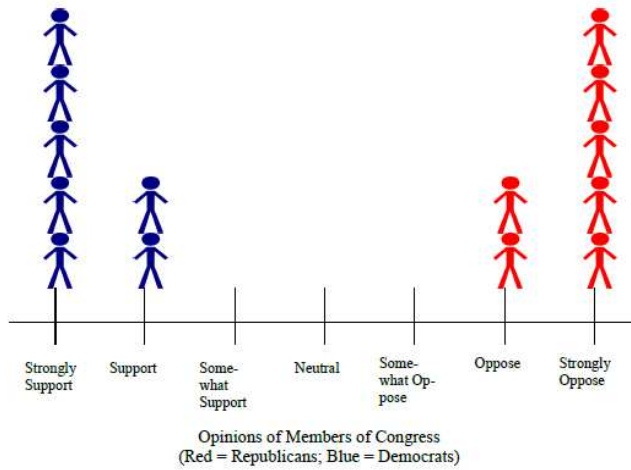
Figure 2. Counter-Stereotypical Party Cue-Taking in Non-Polarized and Polarized
Conditions
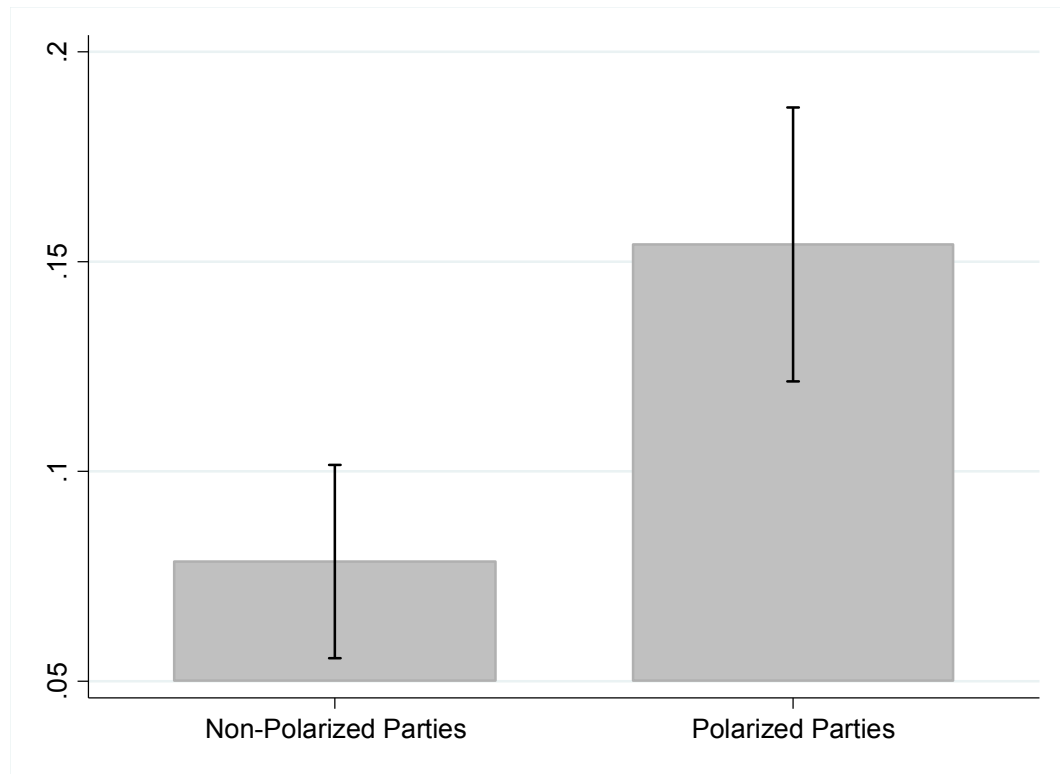
Note: Y-axis is the predicted probability of taking counter-stereotypical party cues. Bars represent 95%
confidence intervals.

Figure 3. The Effect of Need for Closure and Partisan Social Identity on Counter-

Stereotypical Party Cue-Taking
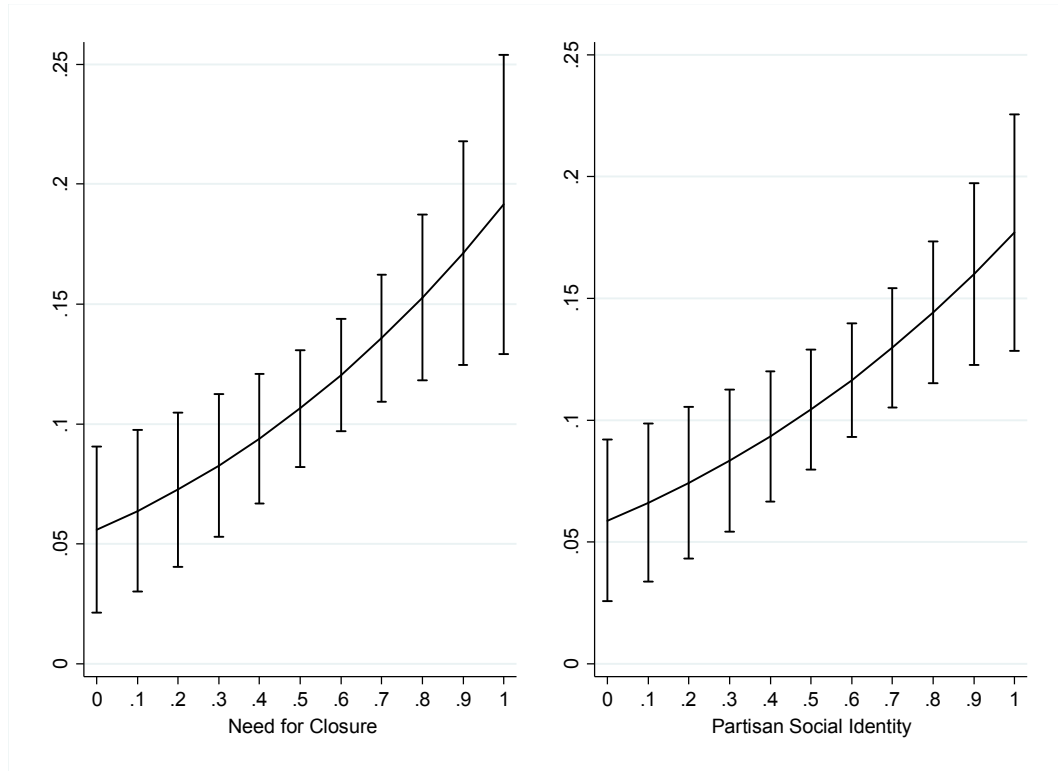
Note: Y-axis is the predicted probability of taking elites' position in the presence of counter-stereotypical party cues. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Chapter 3

Authoritarianism and Affective Polarization:

A New View on the Origins of Partisan Extremism

What drives affective polarization in American politics? One common argument is that Democrats and Republicans are deeply polarized today because they are psychologically different—motivated by diametrically opposed and clashing worldviews. In this paper, I argue that the same psychological motivations—specifically, authoritarianism—causes both Republicans and Democrats to be more polarized and extreme. Across an analysis of the American National Election Studies, I show that authoritarianism increases partisan strength and heightened affective polarization generally, regardless of party affiliation. Therefore, I demonstrate that the most polarized and extreme partisans on the left and right are psychologically similar, at least with respect to authoritarianism. As authoritarianism provides an indicator of underlying needs to belong, these findings support a view of mass polarization as non-substantive and group-centric, not driven by competing ideological values or clashing psychological worldviews.

A growing body of work indicates that the American public is affectively polarized. Partisan strength is up, feelings toward the two parties are more extreme, and partisans are more intolerant of the other side (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Brewer 2005; Hetherington 2001; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Jacobson 2008; Mason 2015; Miller and Conover 2015). What gives rise to strong partisanship and polarized partisan feelings in American politics?

One piece of conventional wisdom is that Democrats and Republicans are polarized because they are psychologically different (e.g., Alford, Funk, and Hibbing 2005; Barker and Carman 2012; Barker and Tinnick 2006; Carney et al. 2008; Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). One of the most important ways Democrats and Republicans vary psychologically is in their level of authoritarianism. Authoritarianism is a deep-seated and partly heritable predisposition that explains individual differences in a range of political outcomes, including how people relate to authorities, their tolerance of out-groups, and their ideological values (Adorno et al., 1950; Altemeyer 1996; Feldman 2003; Jost et al. 2003; Stenner 2005). Recently, authoritarianism has also become an important predictor of party identification (e.g., Altemeyer 1988; Barker and Tinnick 2006; Barker and Carman 2012; Cizmar et al. 2014; Federico and Tagar 2014; Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Democrats and Republicans have diverged in their levels of authoritarianism, and many argue that this growing psychological difference has caused the heightened levels of partisan acrimony

in American politics (e.g., Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014).

In this paper, I offer a competing theory and test a conflicting hypothesis—authoritarianism increases partisan strength and affective polarization for both Democrats and Republicans. This hypothesis is rooted in the theory that partisanship is a social identity as well as theories that authoritarianism represents a general predisposition to be biased towards in-groups and prejudiced towards out-groups. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, I find consistent support for this hypothesis and demonstrate that authoritarianism leads to partisan extremity for both Democrats and Republicans. As a result, this paper shows that the partisan divide in American politics is deepest between Democrats and Republicans with a similar—high authoritarian—psychological worldview.

These findings contribute to the study of authoritarianism and the nature of affective polarization in American politics. First, the findings shed new insight into authoritarianism, a variable that represents "a core political predisposition, on a par with party identification and political ideology as a lens through which the political world is perceived and evaluated" (Lavine et al., 2005, 237). Specifically, I show that authoritarianism simultaneously shapes left-right political views as well as partisan extremity. Second, this paper illuminates the nature of affective polarization. Namely, because authoritarianism is an indicator of basic psychological needs to belong, this paper shows that partisan extremity is similar to other forms of out-group prejudice. These findings indicate that partisan conflict is not simply driven by ideological

disagreements (e.g., Abramowitz 2010), nor does it derive from psychological differences between Democrats and Republicans (e.g., Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). Rather, the most polarized and extreme partisans on both the left and right are psychologically similar, not different. As a result, this paper shows that affective polarization and partisan extremity is rooted in a worldview that is predisposed to divide the world into in-groups and out-groups and to see politics as a conflict between "us" and "them."

Authoritarianism and Partisan Direction

Recent research linking authoritarianism to mass partisanship draws on a host of research showing that psychological traits shape political preferences (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950; Altemeyer 1996; Barker and Tinnick 2006; Carney et al. 2008; Gerber et al. 2010; Haidt 2012; Jost et al. 2003; 2009; Lakoff 2002; Mondak 2010; Stenner 2005). Specifically, strong authoritarians—characterized by a need for order and certainty, deference to authority, and intolerance of out-groups—tend to be right-wing, while non-authoritarians—characterized by comfort with ambiguity and uncertainty, a preference for personal autonomy, and tolerance towards out-groups—tend to be ideologically liberal. According to the "rigidity of the right thesis" (Tetlock 1989), ideological conservatism is a form of motivated social cognition, embraced because conservative policies provide a greater match or affinity with psychological needs for order, certainty, and security (e.g., Jost et al. 2003; 2009). Thus, strong authoritarians are consistent supporters of social uniformity (Stenner 2005), and they are conservative on a host of issues, particularly issues that address racial, cultural, or national "out-groups" (e.g.,

Barker and Tinnick 2006; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Huddy et al. 2005; Johnston et al. 2015; Jost et al. 2003; 2009; Kalkan et al. 2009).

Recently, as partisan elites have divided over these types of issues, authoritarianism has also come to shape vote choice and party identification (e.g., Cizmar et al. 2014; Federico and Tagar 2014; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Mockabee 2007). Thus, authoritarianism was unrelated to party identification through much of the 1980's and 1990's, but becomes a strong predictor of partisanship in 2004 (Hetherington and Weiler 2009). However, this remains an incomplete transition; not everyone has aligned their partisan affiliation to match their psychological orientation. Indeed, Federico and Tagar (2014) show that the alignment between authoritarianism and party identification has occurred only among highly educated respondents (see also, Federico et al. 2011).

Authoritarianism and Partisan Strength: Competing Theories

As strong authoritarians have aligned themselves with the Republican Party and weak authoritarians with the Democrats, the American electorate has simultaneously experienced a resurgence in partisan strength and a growing polarization in feelings toward the two parties. Many see these changes as linked; partisan vitriol is thought to be rooted in the fact that Democrats and Republicans are becoming increasingly different psychologically (e.g., Cizmar et al. 2014; Federico and Tagar 2014; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). Hetherington and Weiler (2009, 42) aptly summarize this argument:

> "the fundamental divide in America is not between two groups with the same psychological dispositions who merely disagree on the objects of their scorn. They do disagree on those objects. But, more fundamentally, they appear to be

59

animated by fundamentally different dispositions which, in turn, inform their dramatically different worldviews."

Below I label this theory the "psychological differences" hypothesis, as it asserts that the most extreme Democrats are psychologically different from the most extreme Republicans.

However, despite compelling evidence that authoritarianism is recently linked to partisan affiliation among highly educated voters (who tend to be less authoritarian), there has been little empirical analysis directly linking authoritarianism to partisan extremism. There is some evidence that authoritarianism shapes feelings toward the Republican Party (Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 150-153), but little clear evidence demonstrating that psychological differences between Democrats and Republicans contributes to affective polarization. Therefore, it remains unclear whether authoritarian-based partisan sorting (i.e., which party people identify with) is responsible for the growing polarization in partisan feelings in American politics (see Fiorina et al. 2005 and Levendusky 2009 for a related discussion about the distinction between sorting and polarization with respect to ideology).

In this paper I formally test the relationship between authoritarianism and partisan strength and affective polarization. I argue that the "psychological differences" argument misses a set of important theoretical claims about both the nature of partisanship and the consequences of authoritarianism. Specifically, I argue that partisanship is a social identity, embraced for the psychological benefits of group membership, and that authoritarianism predisposes individuals to be "group-centric" and to identify strongly

with their social groups. Therefore, I argue that authoritarianism increases partisan strength and affective polarization among both Republicans *and* Democrats.

First note that, despite authoritarianism being an important predictor of party identification today, there remains a substantial number of high authoritarian Democrats. In 2012, according to the American National Election Studies (ANES), 13 percent of white Democrats choose the authoritarian response to *each* of the four child rearing questions of the modern authoritarianism scale (described below), while a slightly higher percentage of white Republicans (19 percent) choose the authoritarian response to each item. Furthermore, in 2012, 1 out of every 3 white Democrats (and 1 out of every 2 white Republicans) are above the midpoint of the authoritarianism scale. On the flip side, 20 (40) percent of white Republicans (Democrats) are below the midpoint of the authoritarian scale. Figure A.1 graphically shows the distribution of authoritarianism among white respondents in each party.

Who are these strong authoritarian white Democrats? In Appendix Table A.1, I present the correlation between authoritarianism and a variety of demographic variables for both Democrats and Republicans in 2012. Strong authoritarian white Democrats are much less educated and lower income, and slightly older, relative to other Democrats. Partly because these citizens are less educated, it appears they simply have not changed their partisan identity on the basis of their authoritarian predisposition. Given that there continues to be a substantial number of high authoritarian Democrats (and low authoritarian Republicans), what is the relationship between authoritarianism and partisan polarization?

The starting point for the theory I develop in this paper is a long-standing critique of the "rigidity of the right" thesis in political psychology: being psychologically closed-minded causes individuals to be political extremists generally—on both the left and right (e.g., Eysenck 1954; Greenberg and Jonas 2003; Rokeach 1960; Shils 1954). According to these theorists, extremist views are uncompromising and facilitate easy cognitive categorization, and are therefore palliative for individuals who are psychologically closed-minded and prefer certainty to complexity. To the extent that authoritarians fit this general psychological profile, they should be attracted to extremist groups that facilitate quick categorization and the reduction of uncertainty. Indeed, some research in American politics has shown that extremists of both the left and right have a black and white, us vs. them, view of the world, and are therefore similar to how scholars today conceptualize strong authoritarians (see McClosky and Chong 1985).

This alternative theory that I develop in this paper—that authoritarianism increases partisan extremity on both the left and right—is also consistent with longstanding understandings of authoritarianism as a predisposition that causes individuals to be "group-centric." Adorno et al. (1950) conceived authoritarianism at least partly as an orientation for strong identification with in-groups and intolerance toward out-groups. Drawing from social identity theory (e.g., Tajfel and Turner 1979), Duckitt (1989) furthered this conception and argued that authoritarians have a strong need for in-group identity and that this need explains the relationship between authoritarianism and prejudice (see also Stellmacher and Petzel 2005).

More recent research also conceptualizes authoritarianism in terms of its relation to social groups. For example, Feldman (2003) conceptualizes authoritarianism as differences in the relative weight individuals place on personal autonomy and diversity, on one hand, vs. social cohesion and uniformity, on the other. Stenner (2005, 18) conceptualizes authoritarianism as a motivation to "be part of *some* collective, not from identification with a particular group, [...] not in commitment to a specific normative order." These various theories suggest that strong authoritarians are not necessarily motivated by specific (i.e., conservative) issues; rather, they are motivated to obtain a feeling of oneness and sameness with their social groups generally, regardless of the content of that group's normative commitments.

Other approaches to intergroup relations in psychology similarly place needs for order and certainty—motives at the heart of differences between authoritarians and non-authoritarians—as primary drivers of social identity and out-group prejudice (see Hogg 2012; Kruglanski et al. 2006). Kruglanski and colleagues' research on need for closure—a variable that is conceptually and empirically related to authoritarianism—demonstrates a tight link between need for closure and in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination (e.g. Kruglanski et al. 2002; Shah et al. 1998). Hogg's (2012) uncertainty-identity theory similarly argues that social identities are embraced because social groups reduce uncertainty. Numerous studies support this claim by finding that heightened uncertainty strengthens in-group identity and out-group derogation (e.g., Hogg et al. 2007; Hogg 2012).

Building from the longstanding theory that partisanship is a social identity, a product of familial socialization and upbringing more than ideological values, (e.g. Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002; Greene 1999; Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012; Mason 2015), this conception of authoritarianism as a predisposition for group-centrism rooted in needs for order and certainty leads directly to the hypothesis that authoritarianism increases partisan strength for *psychological reasons* (i.e., to obtain psychological order and certainty). By clinging strongly to a party and derogating the out-party, strong partisanship can be an effective mechanism for obtaining order and certainty. Since authoritarianism provides a measure of individual differences in the need for order and certainty (e.g., Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Johnston et al. 2015; Jost et al. 2003), I argue that authoritarianism represents a direct and exogenous indicator of these underlying motives for group attachment. In short, I argue that the *need to belong*—rooted in authoritarianism—underlies affective polarization for both Democrats and Republicans. I label this argument the "group-centrism" hypothesis, and it posits that the fundamental divide in America is between two groups with the same—strong authoritarian—dispositions, who do merely disagree on the objects of their scorn.

But note that this theory that authoritarianism is a predisposition for strong partisanship differs from most theories on the psychological origins of political rigidity. Like the rigidity of the right thesis (e.g., Jost et al. 2003; 2009), the extremism thesis in political psychology is typically framed around the psychological benefits of *ideology* (Eysenck 1954; Greenberg and Jonas 2003; Rokeach 1960; Shils 1954). In contrast, the theory I advance—that authoritarianism increases partisan strength and polarization—

posits that party identification, as a social identity, provides the psychological benefits of order and certainty to group members. Therefore, I argue that both culturally conservative policy views and strong partisanship can both be "motivated" attitudes, embraced for their psychological benefits . If so, authoritarianism may introduce cross-pressures among Democrats and contribute to the disconnect between ideology and affective polarization in American politics (e.g. Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Iyengar et al. 2012; Mason 2015).

Hypotheses

In summary, this paper presents two contrasting theories about the link between authoritarianism and affective polarization in American politics. The first is that, as the public has sorted itself into the parties on the basis of authoritarianism, partisans have also *polarized* psychologically, with the strongest Republicans possessing diametrically opposed psychological traits (characterized by strong authoritarian motivations) from the strongest Democrats (characterized by weak authoritarian motivations). The second theory is that authoritarianism is a predisposition for group-centrism that increases partisan extremity for both Democrats and Republicans. This theory conceptualizes affective polarization as rooted in basic needs to belong that partisanship fulfills as a function of being a social identity.

I adjudicate these hypotheses about the link between authoritarianism and partisan extremity in contemporary American politics. First, I assess competing hypotheses about this relationship among Democrats, where the distinction between the two hypotheses

leads to qualitatively different expectations about the effect of authoritarianism on partisan strength.

> Hypothesis 1 – "psychological differences": Among Democrats, strong authoritarian motivations *decrease* partisan strength and affective polarization.

> Hypothesis 2 – "group-centrism": Among Democrats, strong authoritarian motivations *increase* partisan strength and affective polarization.

Second, I assess the link between authoritarianism and partisan strength and affective polarization among Republicans. These results help to flesh out the relationship between authoritarianism and polarization in American politics, but they are less helpful in adjudicating the two theories as both claim that authoritarianism should increase extremity for Republicans.

Finally, I also assess the impact of authoritarianism on symbolic ideology and cultural policy preferences. Consistent with the theory that, on the left, strong partisanship alone—and not extremism *generally*—can be embraced for its psychological benefits (i.e., order and certainty), I hypothesize that authoritarianism does not increase ideological and cultural extremism, but rather increases conservatism for both Republicans and Democrats.

> Hypothesis 3: Authoritarianism increases ideological and cultural conservatism, not ideological extremism, among both Democrats and Republicans.

Data and Methods

I evaluate these competing hypotheses about the impact of authoritarianism on partisan strength across multiple waves of the American National Election Study (ANES). First, I conduct an exhaustive analysis of these hypotheses using the 2012 ANES. This survey is particularly appropriate for adjudicating these hypotheses because

66

of its large sample size (which is important for assessing these hypotheses separately among Democrats and Republicans) and well-validated measure of authoritarianism. Moreover, there is little reason to think that 2012 is biased towards the group-centrism hypothesis. Notably, Barack Obama generated intense opposition from strong authoritarian white Democrats in the 2008 Democratic primary (Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Presumably, therefore, strong authoritarians should be loathe to identify strongly with Democratic Party in 2012 *if* authoritarianism's impact on mass partisanship is rooted in strong authoritarians' cultural policy views and intolerance of racial out-groups.

Following an analysis of the 2012 ANES, I extend the analysis to the remaining waves of the ANES that include the child rearing measure of authoritarianism: 1992, 2000, 2004, and 2008 ANES. The examination of the remaining waves of the ANES helps to make the broadest claims possible about the link between authoritarianism and strong partisanship in American politics.

The dependent variables in the ANES analyses are as follows. First, to measure partisan strength, I fold the seven-point party identification scale into a four point scale and re-scale the variable to range from 0-1 (with 1 indicating strong partisans and 0 indicating pure independents). Second, I measure feelings towards the two parties using respondents' evaluations of "the Democratic Party" and "the Republican Party," respectively (re-scaled to range from 0-1, with 1 indicating the most positive feelings and 0 the most negative feelings towards the party). Ideology is measured with the standard 7-point ideological self-identity item, and the cultural policy items are measured with the standard ANES questions about abortion, aid to blacks, defense spending, and gay

marriage (all re-scaled to 0-1, with higher values more conservative; exact question

wording available in the appendix).

To measure authoritarianism, both studies rely on the now standard series of four

questions about child rearing values (e.g., Feldman and Stenner 1997; Hetherington and

Weiler 2009; Stenner 2005). These questions ask respondents to choose between two

otherwise desirable traits in children (e.g., "independence vs. respect for elders;"

"obedience vs. self-reliance;" "curiosity vs. good manners;" and "being considerate vs.

"being well behaved").[16] Some respondents voluntarily respond "both" to these items.

Like Hetherington and Weiler (2009), I include these as a middle category between the

non-authoritarian and authoritarian response. The main advantage of this measure, as

opposed to alternative measures such as the RWA scale (Altemeyer 1981), is that the

questions more cleanly capture the authoritarian predisposition (rather than authoritarian

attitudes). Furthermore, these child rearing items are not explicitly political, and

therefore should be (at least partially) exogenous from and prior to political

preferences—even partisanship (e.g., Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Stenner 2005).

Supporting this claim, research shows that while partisanship is often the "prime mover"

of policy preferences, with respect to some salient and stable predispositions like

authoritarianism (for example, feelings toward racial minorities) citizens *will* change their

partisan preference (e.g., Tesler 2013; Tesler 2015). This point is not intended to

adjudicate the exact nature of the causal relationships surrounding partisanship, but to

note that there is good reason to assume that some of the causal order is as likely to run

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[16] In the 2012 ANES, $\alpha = 0.60$.

from authoritarianism to partisanship as vice versa. I sum the four child rearing questions into an index and rescale the variable to range from 0 to 1.

In the 2012 analysis I control for respondents' attitudes toward a number of salient public policy issues. In all of the models I also control for partisan sorting, as past literature identifies this variable as an important central correlate of affective polarization in American politics (e.g., Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015). This takes the form of a dichotomous variable (1 – sorted partisan: e.g., liberal Democrat or conservative Republican; 0 – unsorted partisan). I also control for both political knowledge[17] and political interest, as well as standard demographic criteria: age, gender, income, and education. In 2012, because one-half of the sample received face-to-face interviews, and the other half received an internet survey, I control for survey mode (0 - face to face; 1 - internet). In each model I confine the analyses to white respondents given that the child rearing scale has a different interpretation among minorities and is therefore cross-racially invalid (Perez and Hetherington 2014).[18] In the analysis of partisan strength, I include Independents (as the lowest value), but I drop Independents in the analysis of partisan feeling thermometers. To present the clearest test of the two main hypotheses, I present the results separately for Democrats and Republicans. All of the analyses below apply the available survey weights.

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[17] In the 2012 ANES, $\alpha = 0.45$.

[18] However, it is worth noting that the results among non-whites are essentially identical to the results among whites (results available upon request).

Authoritarianism and Partisan Extremism, 2012

First, Table 1 assesses the impact of authoritarianism on partisan strength and partisan feelings among Democrats in 2012. Recall the two hypotheses about the impact of authoritarianism on partisan strength among Democrats. The "psychological differences" hypothesis posits that high levels of authoritarianism should *decrease* partisan strength among Democrats (and increase partisan strength among Republicans). This is what would lead to the strongest partisans on both sides of the partisan divide having "fundamentally different" levels of authoritarianism. The second hypothesis predicts that high levels of authoritarianism should *increase* partisan strength among Democrats and Republican alike, as strong partisanship is a psychological mechanism for order and certainty that authoritarians crave. Table 1 assesses these hypotheses by evaluating the impact of authoritarianism on partisan strength and partisan feeling thermometers among Democrats.

As evident in Table 1, higher levels of authoritarianism *increase*, not decrease, both partisan strength and affect for the Democratic Party among Democrats. This finding is strongly inconsistent with the notion that the strongest Democrats are characterized by diametrically opposed psychological characteristics (e.g., low levels of authoritarianism) from the strongest Republicans. Rather, these findings are supportive of Hypothesis 2: authoritarianism predisposes group members of both political persuasions to identify strongly with their party and to hold more extreme partisan feelings. Substantively, the effect of authoritarianism among Democrats is notable, in some cases surpassing the effect of partisan sorting. The predicted probability of

70

identifying as a "strong Democrat" increases by 0.14 (model 1) among Democrats when moving from the lowest to the highest value on authoritarianism. Going from the lowest to the highest value of authoritarianism also increases Democratic Party affect among Democrats by 11 percent (on a 0-100 scale). By comparison, going from not sharing the ideological outlook of the Democratic Party (i.e., being a conservative or moderate Democrat) to sharing the ideological outlook of the Democratic Party (i.e., being a liberal Democrat) only increases affect for the Democratic Party by 7 percent. In short, the strongest Democrats with the most favorable views of their party tend, on average, to have strong authoritarian motivations. However, there is no effect of authoritarianism on Republican Party affect among Democrats, which suggests that for Democrats the main impact of authoritarianism is in strengthening ties to the Democratic Party independently from feelings toward the Republican Party.

In Table 2 I assess the effect of authoritarianism on partisan strength and feeling thermometers among Republicans. Here, both hypotheses predict that authoritarianism will increase partisan strength and in-party affect among Republicans. Indeed, Table 2 shows that across all three outcomes (partisan strength, Democratic Party affect, and Republican Party affect) authoritarianism has a large and significant effect on partisan extremity for Republicans. Once again, the effect of authoritarianism is substantial. Going from the lowest value to the highest value of authoritarianism increases the probability of identifying as a "strong Republican" by 0.14 (model 1). Going across the authoritarianism scale also decreases affect for the Democratic Party by 6 percent (on a 0-100 scale) and increases affect for the Republican Party by 9 percent. Once again, these

effect sizes are similar to the substantive effect of moving from not sharing to sharing the ideological outlook of party elites. In other words, authoritarianism consistently has a direct, significant, and sizeable impact on strong partisanship and extreme partisan feelings, and this relationship occurs for both Democrats and Republicans. Contrary to the thesis that the strong partisan spirit in contemporary American politics reflects the psychological *differences* between Democrats and Republicans, these findings demonstrate that strong partisans on both sides of the partisan divide are psychologically similar. Thus, partisan conflict at the mass level is not rooted in clashing worldviews, but rather is rooted in more basic and less substantive needs to belong.

However, these results do suggest an important asymmetry between Democrats and Republicans. Specifically, authoritarianism shapes Republicans' feelings towards both parties, while for Democrats the effect appears limited to increasing in-party feelings. One likely explanation for this asymmetry is that authoritarianism among Democrats introduces cross-pressures between the need to belong and ideology, whereas among Republicans the group-centric and ideological effects of authoritarianism are more reinforcing. In Table 3 I assess how authoritarianism affects ideology and cultural policy preferences among Democrats and Republicans using the same data from the 2012 ANES.[19]

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[19] I confine the analysis to cultural policy issues because the effect of authoritarianism on *these issues* underlies the "psychological differences" hypothesis (e.g., Hetherington and Weiler 2009).

To assess whether the impact of authoritarianism on Democrats' and Republicans' preferences on these issues is the same, I interact authoritarianism with Democratic Partisanship. Thus, the coefficient for authoritarianism shows the effect of authoritarianism among Republicans, and the interaction between authoritarianism and Democratic Party identification shows how this effect varies among Democrats. Two findings from Table 3 are noteworthy. First, among Democrats, authoritarianism consistently increases ideological conservatism. In no case is the interaction between authoritarianism and Democratic Party identification negative and significant. These results do not support the claim that authoritarianism leads to political extremism generally. It is only with respect to partisanship that authoritarianism causes Democrats to be more politically extreme.

Second, the impact of authoritarianism on ideological conservatism (model 1), abortion (model 2), aid to blacks (model 3), and gay marriage (model 5) is actually significantly *larger* among Democrats than among Republicans. One possible explanation for this finding is that Republicans have many reasons for being ideologically conservative beyond their psychological motivations. Indeed, this result is consistent with Federico et al.'s (2012) analysis that need for closure (a variable closely related to authoritarianism) increases operational conservatism only among symbolic liberals. This finding suggests that authoritarian Republicans are not especially extreme ideologically. Rather, authoritarian Republicans are slightly more conservative than other Republicans, but are much more extremely partisan. As a result, this analysis suggests that the effect

of authoritarianism on partisan strength among Republicans is rooted in the need to belong, and is therefore similar in kind and origins to the relationship among Democrats.

To summarize, there is a positive correlation between authoritarianism and Republican partisanship in 2012, much like others have found in recent previous years (Cizmar et al. 2014; Federico and Tagar 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009). But this sorting on the basis of authoritarianism does not appear to fuel partisan strength and affective polarization in American politics. Rather, the strongest partisans on both sides of the divide are strong authoritarians. Therefore, the partisan divide is deepest among individuals who share similar—black and white, us vs. them—views of the world. However, authoritarianism does consistently increase ideological conservatism. Thus, the "rigidity of the right" hypothesis holds on ideology, but not party. Strong authoritarians cling strongly to their partisan group regardless of whether or not that group shares their substantive values.

Authoritarianism and Partisan Extremism, 1992-2008

In this study, I extend the analysis to the remaining waves of the American National Election studies that contain the child rearing measure of authoritarianism: 1992, 2000, 2004, and 2008. Because these years possess smaller sample sizes (and need to be further broken up by partisan subgroups and confined to white respondents), I conduct a cumulative analysis of these years.[20] To maximize sample size, I include a

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[20] Similar substantive results are apparent when analyzing the results separately by year.

more limited set of control variables: partisan sorting, age, education, income,[21] and gender (1 = female). I also include separate controls for three of the four years (1992, 2000, and 2004) to account for changes in partisan extremism. These surveys inconsistently measure policy preferences (and in some cases change question wording within and across years); therefore, I do not control for policy views in these analyses. The measurement and construction of the dependent variables are identical to those analyzed in 2012. Table 4 reports the results for both Democrats and Republicans.

The results in Table 4 are similar to those observed in 2012. Among both Democrats (model 1) and Republicans (model 4), higher levels of authoritarianism are associated with stronger partisanship. Substantively, the strongest authoritarians are 10 percent more likely to identify as a strong Democrat and 11 percent more likely to identify as a strong Republican, compared to the weakest authoritarians. Similarly, among both Democrats (model 2) and Republicans (model 6), higher levels of authoritarianism are associated with more positive in-group evaluations, increasing in-party affect by 5 percent among Democrats and 9 percent among Republicans. Once again, there is an asymmetry between Democrats and Republicans in the effect of authoritarianism on attitudes toward the other party. Strong authoritarian Republicans have more negative attitudes of Democrats (model 5), decreasing feelings towards Democrats by 4 percent. In contrast, strong authoritarian Democrats have more positive

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[21] I impute the mean income level to individuals who have missing observations on this variable to maximize sample size. Results are identical if these individuals are dropped instead.

evaluations of Republicans (model 3). This last finding is the only finding consistent with Hypothesis 1 and the "psychological differences" hypothesis. In earlier periods, strong authoritarian Democrats appeared to have more positive feelings towards both Democrats and Republicans – a finding which may reflect both the "group-centric" and "culturally" conservative elements of the authoritarian predisposition.

In short, Table 5 corroborates the central findings from the previous sets of analyses: authoritarianism increases partisan strength and in-party affect even among Democrats. The convergence of evidence across numerous samples and a variety of measures of partisan strength and affective polarization is consistent with the "group-centrism" hypothesis: partisan strength and affective polarization for both Democrats and Republicans is associated with strong authoritarian motivations. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, it is not the case that polarization in American politics is caused by the fact that Democrats and Republicans are psychologically different. Rather, the partisan divide is deepest among Democrats and Republicans with similar psychological—at least, high authoritarian—traits.

Conclusion

Scholars interested in the origins of political preferences have now thoroughly mapped the deep-seated psychological differences between liberals and conservatives. One of the most important of these psychological variables is authoritarianism, a predisposition that shapes individual differences in how people perceive the world and how they react to threats. This personality variable is closely associated with a wide variety of other personality traits as well as negativity bias that forms a core distinction

between liberals and conservatives (Hibbing et al. 2014). As authoritarianism has recently become linked to party identification, the growing authoritarian divide between Democrats and Republicans has been seen as crucial to understanding the polarized nature of partisanship in American politics (Cizmar et al. 2014; Federico and Tagar 2014; Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014).

However, across analyses of numerous samples of the American electorate, the results from this analysis does not support the argument that partisan extremity derives from psychological differences between Democrats than Republicans. Rather, among both Democrats and Republicans alike, strong authoritarianism leads to stronger partisanship and more polarized feelings about the parties. These findings indicate that affective partisan polarization has similar psychological origins to out-group prejudice more broadly. Therefore, the nature of the deep partisan divide in American politics is partly one of group-based intolerance rather than disagreements rooted in clashing psychological worldviews.

These findings have a number of implications. First, these findings have new implications for how we think of authoritarianism. Specifically, this paper shows that while strong authoritarians are ideological and cultural conservatives, they also and simultaneously tend to be strong partisans. Thus, these results suggest that the authoritarians of the left, the "Loch Ness Monster of political psychology" (Altemeyer 1996), can be strong Democrats, but not liberals. Consistent with the ideologue hypothesis (e.g., Tetlock 1989), authoritarianism does increase political extremism on both the left and right, but it does so only on partisanship specifically.

One implication of this finding is that the asymmetry between Democrats and Republicans in the extent to which partisanship and symbolic ideology are aligned (e.g., Abramowitz and Saunders 1998; Lelkes and Sniderman 2015; Levendusky 2009) may reflect the fact that many strong Democrats are also strong authoritarians and are therefore symbolically conservative. Furthermore, the recently observed link between authoritarianism and economic liberalism among some respondents (e.g., Johnston 2012; Malka et al. 2014), may explain why many strong Republicans can also be liberal on economic issues (Ellis and Stimson 2012). In short, this paper provides a theory for why many strong partisans need not share all of their party's policy views; specifically, because strong partisanship is rooted in the psychological benefits, rather than the policy rewards, of partisan affiliation. Future research should explore how partisans reconcile strong partisan identities in the presence of ideological disagreements with their party. Following theories of motivated reasoning in defense of partisan identity, one possibility is that partisans prioritize issues that they do share with their party and downplay inconsistent issues (e.g., Groenendyk 2013)

Second, contradicting an increasingly common explanation for affective polarization, this study indicates that the most polarized partisans on both sides of the divide have fundamentally similar authoritarian characteristics. Partisans are not divided over clashing personality traits and subsequent visions of what makes for a good society, but rather they are driven apart by more basic and less substantive group-centric impulses. By providing a direct measure of needs to belong, these results indicate that partisan extremism is partly rooted in psychological motivations, bolstering recent social

identity theories of partisan strength and affective polarization (e.g., Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Mason 2015). In that sense, the motives driving polarization within the electorate differ from the ideological debates that generate polarization at the elite level, supporting the view that there is a disconnect between public officials and the citizens they were elected to represent.

Table 1. Authoritarianism, Partisan Strength, & Affective Polarization: Democrats 2012 ANES

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Democratic Party FT	(3) Republican Party FT
Authoritarianism	0.89**	0.11**	-0.01
	(0.274)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Political Interest	0.78**	0.05*	-0.10**
	(0.301)	(0.029)	(0.030)
Political Knowledge	-0.66	-0.10**	0.02
	(0.457)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Partisan Sorting	1.95**	0.07**	-0.08**
	(0.155)	(0.015)	(0.017)
Government Services	-0.78*	-0.07*	0.09**
	(0.436)	(0.042)	(0.038)
Government Jobs	-0.72*	-0.07**	0.10**
	(0.369)	(0.033)	(0.035)
Health Care	-0.37	-0.06	0.15**
	(0.381)	(0.037)	(0.036)
Abortion	0.18	0.02	0.03
	(0.285)	(0.028)	(0.031)
Aid to Blacks	-0.79**	-0.04	-0.04
	(0.342)	(0.030)	(0.033)
Defense	-0.12	0.01	0.11**
	(0.360)	(0.037)	(0.031)
Gay Marriage	-0.27	-0.09**	0.05
	(0.276)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Education	-0.29	-0.06**	0.03
	(0.285)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Income	0.67**	0.00	-0.05*
	(0.287)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Age	0.09**	0.00	-0.00
	(0.026)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Female	0.15	0.01	0.01
	(0.149)	(0.014)	(0.014)
mode	-0.23	-0.02	-0.07**
	(0.167)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Constant cut1	-1.08*		
	(0.610)		
Constant cut2	0.26		
	(0.610)		
Constant cut3	1.74**		
	(0.610)		
Constant		0.80**	0.29**
		(0.054)	(0.061)
Observations	1,177	906	905
R-squared		0.15	0.30
Adj. R-squared	0.14	0.13	0.29

** p<0.05, * p<0.10 Robust standard errors in parentheses.
Note: Model 1 entries are Ordinal Logit coefficients. Models 2-3 entries are OLS regression coefficients. Analysis confined to white respondents. Variables (except age) on a 0-1 scale.

Table 2. Authoritarianism, Partisan Strength, & Affective Polarization: Republicans 2012 ANES

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Democratic Party FT	(3) Republican Party FT
Authoritarianism	0.85**	-0.06**	0.09**
	(0.250)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Political Interest	0.73**	-0.06**	0.02
	(0.265)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Political Knowledge	-0.46	-0.08**	-0.08**
	(0.431)	(0.036)	(0.039)
Partisan Sorting	2.31**	-0.08**	0.07**
	(0.167)	(0.018)	(0.016)
Government Services	0.18	-0.22**	-0.04
	(0.364)	(0.043)	(0.037)
Government Jobs	-0.50	-0.03	-0.00
	(0.354)	(0.031)	(0.033)
Health Care	1.13**	-0.09**	0.08**
	(0.357)	(0.040)	(0.038)
Abortion	0.24	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.202)	(0.020)	(0.021)
Aid to Blacks	0.51	-0.10**	0.02
	(0.330)	(0.034)	(0.036)
Defense	0.80**	-0.03	0.14**
	(0.324)	(0.031)	(0.033)
Gay Marriage	0.71**	-0.08**	0.07**
	(0.214)	(0.020)	(0.021)
Education	-0.07	0.01	-0.05**
	(0.259)	(0.024)	(0.025)
Income	0.23	0.07**	-0.03
	(0.268)	(0.025)	(0.027)
Age	-0.03	0.00	-0.00
	(0.022)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Female	0.44**	0.02	0.04**
	(0.133)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Mode	0.20	-0.05**	0.01
	(0.153)	(0.015)	(0.016)
Constant cut1	2.45**		
	(0.518)		
Constant cut2	4.25**		
	(0.528)		
Constant cut3	5.61**		
	(0.537)		
Constant		0.90**	0.47**
		(0.046)	(0.054)
Observations	1,420	1,149	1,149
R-squared		0.30	0.17
Adj. R-squared	0.17	0.29	0.16

** p<0.05, * p<0.10 Robust standard errors in parentheses.
Note: Model 1 entries are Ordinal Logit coefficients. Models 2-3 entries are OLS regression coefficients.
Analysis confined to white respondents. Variables (except age) on a 0-1 scale.

Table 3. Authoritarianism, Partisanship, & Ideological Values – 2012 ANES

	(1) Ideology	(2) Abortion	(3) Aid to Blacks	(4) Defense	(5) Gay Marriage
Authoritarianism	0.04**	1.21**	0.05*	0.10**	1.54**
	(0.020)	(0.248)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.234)
Democrat	-0.42**	-1.79**	-0.28**	-0.19**	-2.47**
	(0.017)	(0.228)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.217)
Democrat × Authoritarianism	0.18**	0.60*	0.14**	0.03	0.86**
	(0.029)	(0.350)	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.355)
Education	-0.03	-0.08	-0.07**	-0.09**	-0.43**
	(0.018)	(0.195)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.204)
Income	0.02	-1.06**	0.08**	0.02	-0.05
	(0.018)	(0.194)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.192)
Age	0.01**	-0.00	-0.00	0.01**	0.10**
	(0.001)	(0.015)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.016)
Female	-0.01	0.04	0.01	0.01	-0.14
	(0.009)	(0.098)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.100)
Mode	0.00	0.03	0.04**	-0.04**	
	(0.010)	(0.104)	(0.013)	(0.012)	
Constant cut3		1.89**			
		(0.318)			
Constant cut1		-0.78**			-0.01
		(0.306)			(0.265)
Constant cut2		0.01			1.97**
		(0.304)			(0.274)
Constant	0.64**		0.72**	0.59**	
	(0.027)		(0.037)	(0.035)	
Observations	2,521	2,606	2,382	2,448	2,606
R-squared	0.50		0.22	0.21	
Adj. R-squared	0.50	0.09	0.22	0.21	0.17

** p<0.05, * p<0.10 Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients. On the abortion and gay marriage dependent variables, entries are ordinal logit coefficients. Higher values on the dependent variable = more conservative preferences. Analysis confined to partisans (including leaners) and white respondents. Variables (except age) on a 0-1 scale.

Table 4. Authoritarianism, Partisan Strength, & Affective Polarization, 1992-2008 ANES

	Democrats			Republicans		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Partisan Strength	Dem FT	Rep FT	Partisan Strength	Dem FT	Rep FT
Authoritarianism	0.51**	0.05**	0.05**	0.50**	-0.04**	0.09**
	(0.107)	(0.016)	(0.020)	(0.164)	(0.017)	(0.016)
Partisan Sorting	1.27**	0.03**	-0.08**	1.11**	-0.08**	0.05**
	(0.062)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.102)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Age	0.02**	0.00**	-0.00**	0.01**	-0.00	0.00**
	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.003)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Education	0.57*	-0.07*	-0.06	1.22**	-0.17**	-0.05
	(0.302)	(0.041)	(0.052)	(0.464)	(0.051)	(0.045)
Income	0.03	-0.04*	0.02	0.62**	-0.04	0.03
	(0.159)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.245)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Female	0.27**	0.04**	0.01	0.26**	0.02**	0.05**
	(0.061)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.090)	(0.009)	(0.008)
1992	-0.33*	0.03	0.11**	-0.82**	0.15**	0.01
	(0.169)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.257)	(0.029)	(0.025)
2000	0.08	0.00	0.09**	0.12	0.02	0.03**
	(0.089)	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.123)	(0.013)	(0.011)
2004	0.49**	0.01	0.02	-0.21	0.03**	0.05**
	(0.091)	(0.013)	(0.017)	(0.151)	(0.015)	(0.013)
Constant cut1	0.02			-1.39**		
	(0.171)			(0.299)		
Constant cut2	1.96**			1.68**		
	(0.172)			(0.269)		
Constant cut3	3.35**			3.18**		
	(0.176)			(0.276)		
Constant		0.62**	0.37**		0.51**	0.51**
		(0.025)	(0.032)		(0.026)	(0.024)
Observations	5,069	2,324	2,318	2,254	2,187	2,196
R-squared		0.05	0.09		0.06	0.08
Adj. R-squared	0.06	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.06	0.08

** p<0.05, * p<0.10 Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Note: On the partisan strength dependent variable, entries are ordinal logit coefficients. On the Democratic Party and Republican Party feeling thermometer dependent variables, entries are OLS regression coefficients. Analysis confined to white respondents. Variables (except age) on a 0-1 scale.

Chapter 4

The Rise of Partisan Rigidity: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory of the Partisan

Resurgence in American Politics

As political elites have polarized, the American public has become more strongly partisan and more polarized on the basis of affective partisan feelings. What gives rise to this resurgence in partisan strength, and does strong partisanship help or hinder the competence of the American voter? This paper presents a new theory—rooted in uncertainty-identity theory—to explain resurgent partisan strength, in-party bias, and out-party derogation. I argue that elite polarization has strengthened the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and resurgent mass partisanship. I assess and find support for this theory across a number of distinct studies. This paper shows that the psychological bonds of partisanship are stronger today as polarized parties better fulfill voters' basic psychological needs. Therefore, and contrary to the theory of responsible

84

party government, I argue that elite polarization has strengthened the group-centric basis of mass opinion and cultivated a more rigid partisan voter.

Partisanship in the American electorate is resurgent. As political elites have polarized (e.g., McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006), the American electorate has responded by becoming more intensely partisan in political outlook. Partisans identify more strongly with their party (e.g., Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Brewer 2005; Hetherington 2001; Lupu 2014; Mason 2015) and are increasingly polarized on the basis of partisan affect and feelings (Abramowitz and Webster 2016; Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Lelkes et al. Forthcoming; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015; Miller and Conover 2015; Rogowski and Sutherland Forthcoming). This resurgence in partisan strength has a number of implications for the conduct of American politics, as strong partisans participate the most in elections, exercise disproportionate influence on political elites, and are the least open to political compromise (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011; Huddy et al. 2015; Verba et al. 1995). While scholars agree that partisanship has become stronger, the origins—and therefore the meaning—of this resurgence in partisan strength remains unclear. What motivates strong partisan feelings in contemporary American politics, and do strong partisan ties help or hinder the political competence of the American voter?

In this paper I develop a new theory of partisanship that explains the motivations behind, and the growth over time in, partisan strength and affective polarization in American politics. Specifically, I argue that resurgent mass partisanship is rooted in a stronger relationship between a basic psychological motivation for group membership—

the need for certainty—and partisan attachment. The need for certainty is a core

psychological motivation in theories of social identification, on par with needs for self-

esteem or positive distinctiveness (e.g., Hogg 2012; Kruglanski et al. 2006). Following

from the longstanding theory that partisanship is a social identity, I argue that the

psychological need for certainty gives rise to strong partisanship and affective

polarization. Because the need for certainty represents a form of motivated closed-

mindedness, I label those partisans whose political identities are psychologically

motivated by the need for certainty as "rigid" partisans: extremist, biased, and intolerant.

As party elites have polarized, I argue that the relationship between the

psychological need for certainty and partisan rigidity has grown stronger. Today, party

elites are much more sharply divided and possess clear group boundaries; internally, the

parties are now much more cohesive and homogenous. To be a Democrat means holding

consistently liberal policy preferences, while being a Republican means holding

consistently conservative preferences (e.g., McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006). This

divide between elites provides greater clarity about what it means to be a Democrat or

Republican, and therefore increases the psychological certainty individuals can derive

from identifying strongly with their party. To the extent that partisanship is a social

identity rather than a "running tally" of policy preferences, this theory identifies a unique

and important predictor of individual-level variation in partisan attachment, the

psychological need for certainty. Therefore, I evaluate the effect of the need for

certainty—which varies both as a disposition and across environments (Webster and

Kruglanski 1994)—on strong partisanship, in-group favoritism, and out-group derogation in American politics, a syndrome of related attitudes that I label partisan rigidity.

This argument—that the need for certainty drives strong partisanship and affective polarization—challenges two alternative accounts about the origins and nature of partisan conflict in American politics. The first is that contemporary partisanship is increasingly substantive or "programmatic." Rooted in the theory of responsible party government (APSA 1950), many argue that polarized parties have helped citizens reason about politics on the basis of their ideological values (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Bartels 2000; Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012) specifically argue that elite polarization has transformed the electorate—especially politically knowledgeable citizens—into "programmatic partisans." Programmatic partisans share the views of their party leaders and give their party a "reputational premium" in the voting booth, voting for their party's candidate even if the opposing candidate is spatially closer to the respondent on a specific policy issue. Thus, one common view is that the resurgence in mass partisanship is a "programmatic" response to ideological polarization among party elites, and that this change ultimately benefits the competence of the American voter.

A second common perspective states that Democrats and Republicans today are divided on the basis of deep-seated factors which shape *who they are*, in other words, their basic psychological orientation and worldview (e.g., Alford, Funk, and Hibbing 2005; Barker and Carman 2012; Barker and Tinnick 2006; Carney et al. 2008; Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). This argument draws from a

wealth of scholarship in political psychology showing that ideological orientation is a partly a reflection of deep-seated psychological traits and motivations (e.g., Hibbing et al. 2014; Jost et al. 2003). Building from these findings, scholars have argued that the reason Democrats and Republicans are so divided today is because they are psychologically different—different people with distinct ways of perceiving the world and diametrically opposed moral values (e.g., Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). It is because Democrats and Republicans are psychologically different, these scholars argue, that American politics has become so heated and vitriolic, and why partisan compromise is so difficult to achieve.

In contrast to both of these claims, I argue that the psychological need for certainty represents a general motivation for social identification that—more than ideology or policy preferences—leads to strong partisanship, in-group favoritism, and out-group derogation on both the political left and right in today's era of polarized parties. This view theoretically extends classic accounts of partisanship as a social identity (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002; Greene 1999; Gerber et al. 2010), and presents a new theoretical perspective on the view that partisan conflict is a product more of group allegiance than substantive disagreements (e.g., Carsey and Layman 2006; Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Mason 2015; Miller and Conover 2015). This theory also provides a novel insights into the political consequences of psychological closed-mindedness. Contrary to the "rigidity of the right thesis" (Tetlock 1989), wherein ideological conservatism is a form of motivated social cognition driven by psychological needs for order, certainty, and security (e.g., Jost et al. 2003; 2009), I

show that the psychological need for certainty increases partisan rigidity among both Democrats and Republicans. Therefore, I demonstrate that partisan extremists on both sides are psychologically closed-minded and rigid.

The implication of this thesis is that the current generation of strong and divisive partisan identity in American politics primarily reflects group-centric—not ideological—motivations. The resurgent partisan spirit in American politics is not a product of conflicting views about the proper role of government, nor does it derive from clashing psychological worldviews. Rather, strong partisans are motivated more by an ideologically vacuous psychological motivation to divide the world into in-groups and out-groups and to see politics as a conflict between "us" and "them." Normatively, this implies that elite polarization has strengthened the psychological bonds of partisanship and weakens the willingness of the electorate to hold their party electorally accountable.

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows: the next section elaborates this theory of party identification as rooted in the psychological need for certainty. Then, I argue that individuals who are engaged in politics should be most likely to link their dispositional need for certainty with their partisan identity. Empirically, I evaluate a number of hypotheses across a range of studies. First, I examine the hypothesis that the dispositional need for certainty increases partisan rigidity among politically engaged respondents. Second, I examine the hypothesis that the relationship between the need for certainty and partisan strength has grown stronger over time. Third, I examine the effect of situational needs for certainty on partisan rigidity. Cumulatively, these studies demonstrate that, (1) partisan strength, in-group favoritism, and out-group derogation

have a strong basis in the psychological need for certainty, (2) in many cases this pre-political psychological variable has larger effects on partisan strength than explicitly political variables such as policy preferences, (3) that this effect occurs among both Democrats and Republicans, (4) that this has caused politically engaged respondents in particular to be inflexible in their partisan identity, and (5) that this relationship has grown stronger over time as political elites have polarized and become more internally cohesive and distinct. Based on these findings, I argue that elite polarization has transformed partisans into rigid partisans, weakening—not strengthening—the political competence of the American voter.

The Need for Certainty and the Motivational Origins of Partisan Rigidity

The starting point for the theory I develop to explain the rise of partisan rigidity is the longstanding claim that partisanship is (at least partly) a social identity, a product of familial socialization more than substantive ideological values (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002). To understand what motivates partisan rigidity from this social identity perspective, I develop the theory of partisanship more generally by raising the following question: What are the psychological benefits that people obtain from social identification?

Following a long line of research in social psychology, I argue that one function of social groups is to provide the psychological benefit of certainty. Groups in many ways define our reality by prescribing beliefs, thoughts, and feelings (Kruglanski et al. 2006, 84; see also Bar-Tal 2000; Festinger 1950; 1954; Hogg 2012; Katz 1960; Levine & Higgins 2001; Sherif 1936). One's understanding of who they are, one's self-conception,

is inevitably bound up with their group memberships (e.g., "I am a Democrat"). By providing a sense of identity and prescribing beliefs that others in the group also share, social groups provide a fundamental human need: the psychological need for certainty. Individuals are motivated to obtain beliefs about who they are and what they should value with certainty, and groups provide a readily accessible and highly effective mechanism for obtaining confident beliefs, feelings, and knowledge. Therefore, I argue that the psychological need for certainty represents a fundamental motivation for group membership, and that this need gives rise to partisan strength in contemporary American politics.

This argument is grounded in a number of theoretical claims which identify uncertainty, or the need for certainty, as a basic and fundamental driver of worldview defense, social identification, out-group discrimination, and conformity to group leaders (Hogg 2012, 67; Kruglanski et al. 2006; Van den Bos 2009). According to these theorists, uncertainty is uncomfortable and aversive, and people are strongly motivated to both avoid uncertainty and to alleviate it when they experience it. Uncertainty—or the need to avoid uncertainty—generates "hot" cognitive processes that motivates information processing such that individuals "react in strong positive affective terms to people and events that bolster their cultural worldviews, and in strong negative affective terms to things, individuals, or experiences that violate those worldviews" (Van den Bos 2009, 199).

For many people, worldviews are generated and defined by group memberships. As Hogg (2012) and Kruglanski et al. (2006) demonstrate in a number of studies,

uncertainty (or a conceptually related construct, the need for cognitive closure), motivates a number of basic processes of social identification. Indeed, Hogg et al. (2007, 136) note that "group identification may be a particularly efficient and immediate way to reduce or fend off [...] uncertainty." Through group identification, especially strong group identification and its companion out-group derogation, one can acquire consensual and certain prototypes that define who one is and what one should value (e.g., "we" are like this, "they" are like that). The need for certainty—especially about the self—appears to be so central to social identification that it may be close to a necessary condition. For example, in an extension of the well-known minimal group paradigm (e.g., Tajfel et al. 1971), Hogg and colleagues demonstrate that identification with "minimal groups" increases in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination *only* when subjects also experience uncertainty (e.g., Grieve and Hogg 1999; Mullin and Hogg 1998).[22] Similarly, across two independent samples, Shah, Kruglanski, and Thompson (1998) show that higher levels of the personality variable need for cognitive closure was associated with more positive feelings towards one's own ethnic group and more negative ratings of ethnic out-groups (see also, Federico et al. 2005; Golec et al. 2006). In short, strong in-group identity and out-group derogation are often embraced because social identification is a powerful—perhaps the most powerful—tool for reducing uncertainty and obtaining cognitive closure.

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[22] Uncertainty in these studies has been manipulated in a number of different ways, including asking subjects to identify the number of objects in a picture with so many objects that they can only guess, or by asking subjects to directly think about things that make them uncertain.

However, not all groups are equally effective at being certainty-providers. In particular, groups that are highly entitative (i.e., cohesive or homogenous) are especially effective at reducing uncertainty. Variation across groups in entitativity therefore has strong main effects on in-group identity strength and out-group derogation (Castano et al. 2003; Hogg et al. 2007; Yzerbyt et al. 2000). Furthermore, highly entitative and homogenous groups have especially pronounced effects on the group identities of individuals who are highly motivated to reduce uncertainty (e.g., Hogg et al. 2007; Kruglanski et al. 2002; Kruglanski et al. 2006). For example, a study by Jetten, Hogg, and Mullin (2000) shows that individuals in a state of uncertainty are more likely to identify with a highly homogenous group than with a less homogenous group. Kruglanski et al. (2002) also show that need for closure increases identity with and affect for homogenous groups that are perceived to be similar to oneself. These findings demonstrate the extra power cohesive or homogenous groups have to "appeal to high need for closure individuals because of their potential for a shared reality" (Kruglanski et al. 2006, 91).

These theories and empirical findings motivate the two key theoretical claims of this paper. First is that the need for certainty represents a causal motivation driving a variety of social identity processes. And second, that there is an interaction between individual-level uncertainty and group-level cohesiveness, such that the strongest processes of social identification occur when the motivation to reduce uncertainty is high and when groups are internally cohesive and distinct, capable of being an effective certainty-provider.

To the extent that partisanship is a social identity (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002), this theory suggests that the need for certainty should motivate strong partisan identity, in-group favoritism, and out-group derogation, a syndrome of related attitudes that I label partisan rigidity. In addition, variation among party elites over time, as the parties have transformed from heterogeneous coalitions to highly homogenous partisan teams, should strengthen the link between the psychological need for certainty and partisan attachment, and it is through this mechanism that elite polarization may cause higher levels of partisan strength and affective polarization (Lupu 2014; Rogowski and Sutherland Forthcoming). In other words, the effect of the psychological need for certainty on strong partisan identity should have become stronger over time as political elites have polarized.

My central argument is that the polarization of political elites has strengthened the link between the psychological need for certainty and partisan identity. Non-polarized parties are internally heterogeneous and lack clear boundaries, and therefore they do not provide certain knowledge about what it means to be a Democrat or a Republican. By contrast, polarized elites are more internally unified and have more clearly demarcated group boundaries. In polarized environments, elites send clear signals about who is one of "us" and who is one of "them," and polarized elites provide party members with greater certainty about the social world and their place within it. In short, polarized parties are much higher in their underlying entitativity. To the extent that this is true, the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and partisan rigidity should

have grown stronger over time, causing the resurgent partisan spirit that defines contemporary American politics.

Political Engagement, the Need for Certainty, and Partisan Rigidity

According to the above theories, the need for certainty is a fundamental psychological motivation that causes individuals to cling strongly to in-groups and to be prejudiced towards out-groups. I expect that the extent to which this psychological need generates motivations for strong partisan attachment will vary across individuals in their level of political engagement. Highly engaged respondents, I argue, should be the most capable of linking their dispositional needs with their partisan identity. Politically engaged citizens know more about politics, care more about politics, and are more personally invested in the political arena. For these reasons, highly engaged citizens should be the most likely to use partisan identity for their chronic needs or goals. This expectation is consistent with numerous demonstrations that political engagement strengthens the relationship between predispositions and political preferences like party identification (e.g., Berinsky 2007; Burke et al. 2013; Federico and Goren 2009; Federico et al. 2011; Federico and Tagar 2014; Johnston et al. Forthcoming; Jost et al. 2009; Sniderman et al. 1991; Tesler Forthcoming; Zaller 1992).

By contrast, partisan identity among the unengaged may be more malleable and therefore more responsive to environmental variation in the need for certainty. This expectation is consistent with findings that the less engaged possess less stable partisan identities and are more likely to change their political attitudes in response to

experimental treatments (e.g., Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Bechtel et al. 2015; Goren

2013; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Kinder and Sanders 1990; Kriesi 2002; Luttig and

Lavine 2015; Sniderman and Theriault 2004). As strong and rigid partisans, the highly

engaged may, by definition, resist change (Krosnick and Smith 1994; Miller and Peterson

2004; Visser et al. 2006). In short, I expect political engagement to increasing the effect

of dispositional needs for certainty on partisan rigidity, and to decrease the effect of

situational needs for certainty on partisan rigidity.

Study 1: Political Engagement, the Need for Certainty, and Partisan Rigidity

In this section, I use several contemporary nationally representative surveys to

assess the effect of the need for certainty on partisan rigidity across levels of political

engagement.

Hypothesis 1: Among politically engaged respondents, the dispositional need for certainty increases partisan strength, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation.

To assess this hypothesis I rely on three independent sources of data which contain

measures of need for closure—a personality variable that most closely measures the core

concept of the need for certainty. Need for closure has been conceptualized as a stable

tendency to "seize" and "freeze" on information (Kruglanski and Webster 1996), or

alternatively as a preference for "firm" knowledge (Kruglanski 2004). As such, need for

closure reflects a deep-seated and stable measure of individual differences in the

psychological need to acquire and maintain certainty (Kruglanski 2004). Indeed,

Johnston et al. (2015, 15) describe need for closure as "an obvious choice as a measure of

uncertainty aversion." Importantly, the measure of need for closure contains no explicit

political content. Rather, questions ask respondents to agree or disagree with statements

about the structure of their daily lives, like "I don't like situations that are uncertain," and "I prefer to be with people who have the same ideas and tastes as myself." Therefore, to the extent that this pre-political trait affects partisan strength and polarization, we can be fairly confident that it operates as a causal force behind political attitudes and identities.

I commissioned the first source of data specifically to evaluate hypothesis 1 in the Fall of 2014. A sample of 1,200 total respondents were recruited using YouGov's online panel.[23] The study included a well-validated 15-item measure of the need for closure (α=0.89; Roets and Van Hiel 2011). Four dependent variables were included in the study that measure various features of partisan rigidity: strong partisan identity, in-group favoritism, and out-group derogation.

First, I included a measure of **partisan strength** that asked respondents, "On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the weakest and 10 being the strongest, how strongly do you identify with the [Democratic/Republican] Party," with partisans being asked only about the strength of identification with their own party. Second, I adopted a scale of **partisan social identity** from Huddy et al. (2015, 9; see also Huddy and Khatib 2007) that measures "an internalized sense of party membership." This measure provides an even more fine-grained indicator of partisan *identity* strength than traditional partisan strength

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[23] Yougov uses sample matching techniques to generate "representative" samples from non-randomly selected pools of respondents. For this study, Yougov interviewed 1,358 respondents who were then matched down to 1,200 respondents on the basis of: gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and political interest. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2010 American Community Survey (ACS). Although Yougov samples contain non-randomly selected respondents, it can in some respects be treated like a random sample and frequently produces estimates comparable to random samples such as the American National Election Studies (Ansolabehere and Rivers 2013; Vavreck and Rivers 2008). In all of the following analyses, I apply the available survey weights.

measures. The four items used to measure the intensity of partisan social identity are: (1) "How important is being a [Democrat/Republican] to you?," (2) "How well does the term [Democrat/Republican] describe you?," (3) "When talking about [Democrats/Republicans], how often do you use 'we' instead of 'they'?," and (4) "To what extent do you think of yourself as being a [Democrat/ Republican]?" Out of these items I create an additive scale that ranges from 0-1, with a mean of 0.57 and a standard deviation of 0.23 (α=0.85). When partisan strength is analyzed, I include pure independents, coded at "0."[24] For partisan social identity, I exclude pure independents since the study did not measure independent social identity and because independents are often treated as lacking a sense of partisan social identity (e.g., Huddy et al. 2015; Miller and Conover 2015).[25]

Third, I include measures of in-party and out-party feeling thermometers that I turn into a difference measure of **affective partisan polarization** by subtracting out-party from in-party feeling thermometers (Mason 2015), re-scaled to range from 0-1 with higher values indicating more in-group favoritism.[26] Fourth, I include an item of **partisan intolerance** which asks "How would you feel if your son or daughter were to enter into marriage with a [Democrat / Republican]?" This question reflects the growing partisan vitriol in America (Iyengar et al. 2012). For this question, respondents were given the following response options: 1) Not Upset at all; 2) Somewhat Upset; 3) Very

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[24] The results are identical if independents are instead excluded.
[25] The results are identical if independents are instead included as the lowest point of the scale.
[26] This follows Iyengar and Westwood's (2015) definition of affective polarization as viewing out-partisans negatively and co-partisans positively.

Upset; 4) Not Sure. I re-code this into a dichotomous variable where (1) equals somewhat upset or very upset, and (0) equals not upset at all or not sure. When these two variables are analyzed as the outcome variable, I exclude pure independents, as pure independents in this case are more a moderator of partisan feelings.

The second source of data was collected by Knowledge Networks in the summer of 2008 (see, Federico et al. 2012). This study includes a 14-item measure of need for closure ($\alpha=0.81$; Pierro and Kruglanski 2006). The dependent variable in this analysis is **partisan strength**. Because the traditional partisan strength measure has difficulty measuring partisan leaners specifically (Huddy et al. 2015), here I turn the partisan strength measure into a dichotomous variable, "1" equals strong partisan, "0" equals not a strong partisan. Given that this is a measure of partisan strength, independents are included in this analysis at "0."

The third source of data I analyze is the 2012 American National Election Study (ANES). This study includes a single-item measure of need for closure that closely resembles questions from the larger need for closure scale (Webster and Kruglanski 1994): "Of the situations when you see two people disagreeing with one another, in how many of them can you see how both people could be right?" This question provides the following response options: "always; most of the time; about half the time; some of the time; never."[27] Those who are more open to the possibility that both people could be right are scored as lower in the need for closure. I analyze the effect of this measure of

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[27] This item is closely related to a number of items from the original 42-item scale developed by Webster and Kruglanski (1994). For example, "In most social conflicts, I can easily see which side is right and which is wrong." And, "I feel irritated when one person disagrees with what everyone else in a group believes."

need for closure on two dependent variables: **partisan strength**, a dichotomous measure of strong vs. not strong partisans, and **affective partisan polarization**, created by subtracting out-party from in-party feeling thermometers. Following what is done above, pure independents in this study are included in the partisan strength analysis, and dropped in the affective polarization analysis.

In all three studies I assess the moderating role of political engagement with two separate measures: political knowledge and political interest. Both knowledge and interest have been used as proxies for awareness of and engagement with politics in prior literature, and assessing the effect of need for closure across both sets of variables provides a valuable robustness check (Berinsky 2009; Zaller 1992) In the Yougov study, political knowledge is based on 5 factual questions about politics ($\alpha=0.61$); political interest is based on single item of how closely the respondent pays attention to politics. In the Knowledge Networks study, political knowledge is based on eight factual questions about politics ($\alpha=0.65$); political interest is based on a single item measuring how closely an individual follows government. In the 2012 ANES, political knowledge is measured with 5 factual questions about politics ($\alpha=0.45$); political interest is based on a single item of how often a respondent pays attention to politics.[28]

In the Knowledge Networks study, I also measure the extent to which political identity is important to the individual, *political self-expression*, measured with the following two questions: "My political attitudes and beliefs are an important reflection of who I am," and "In general, my political attitudes and beliefs are an important part of my

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[28] Specific questions are shown in the Appendix.

self-image" (α=0.84). This political self-expression scale is highly correlated with both political knowledge (r=0.33, p<0.01) and political interest (r=0.52, p<0.01), and more directly captures the extent to which politics forms an important component of respondents' worldview and self-image. Like political engagement, and for the same reasons, I anticipate that need for closure will increase strength of partisan identification among individuals who explicitly say that political attitudes are important to them.

In each of the models below I first assess whether need for closure has a main effect on each indicator of partisan rigidity included in this paper: partisan strength, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation. Then I estimate the moderating effect of both measures of political engagement on need for closure. This tests the main hypothesis that need for closure increases partisan strength primarily among politically engaged respondents. In each study I also control for partisan-ideological sorting (i.e., a dichotomous indicator of whether or not a respondent shares the ideological outlook of his or her party),[29] and an index of policy extremism.[30] To the extent that partisanship today is programmatic, these substantive variables should drive strong partisan feelings in contemporary American politics. (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Policy extremism is an index of policy issues, each folded such that

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[29] Following others (e.g., Mason 2015), I code pure independents as a "0" on the sorting scale.

[30] In the YouGov study, policy extremism is derived from attitudes on four issues: government jobs, government services, defense spending, and immigration. In the Knowledge Networks study, the issues include: government services, defense spending, government jobs, government aid to blacks, gender equality, government regulation on business, abortion rights, and protection for gays and lesbians from discrimination. In the 2012 ANES, policy extremism is composed of attitude extremism towards: abortion, government services, defense spending, aid to blacks, health care, gay marriage, and government jobs.

higher values indicate more extreme issue preferences and lower values more moderate attitudes. This variable is coded from 0 (weakest issue positions) to 1 (most extreme issue positions). I also interact the political engagement measures with both sorting and policy extremism to control for the possibility that political engagement strengthens the ideological and policy basis of partisan strength and rigidity (e.g., Abramowitz 2010; Levendusky 2009). Finally, in all of the models I control for a number of demographic variables: age, income,[31] education, race (white), gender (female), and a dummy variable for Republican partisanship. All variables in the following analyses are re-scaled to range from 0-1.

Before going into the main analysis, let me briefly note that need for closure in these studies is positively correlated with Republican partisanship, which is consistent with the "psychological differences" hypothesis. In the 2014 YouGov study, there is a correlation between need for closure and partisan identity (measured on a 3-point scale, from Democrat to Republican) of 0.11. In the 2008 Knowledge Networks study, the correlation between need for closure and a 3-point measure of partisan identity is 0.12. This correlation is even weaker in the 2012 ANES study, 0.02. However, and as the modest size of these correlations suggest, there are a considerable number of high need for closure Democrats and low need for closure Republicans. In the Appendix, I plot the distribution of need for closure among Democrats and Republicans in each study. In short, there is a great deal of variation of the need for closure variable within each party.

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[31] In the 2014 YouGov study, I impute the mean income level for respondents who did not report their income. Results are essentially identical if these respondents are dropped instead.

To the extent that strong partisanship is rooted in the psychological need for certainty, the strongest Republicans and Democrats should have strong needs for closure, which would make them psychologically similar on this variable, not different.

Table 1 presents the main effect on need for closure on partisan rigidity using the YouGov data.[32] As apparent in Table 1, in only one case (partisan strength) is there a significant main effect ($b = 0.17$, p<0.05). Going from the lowest to the highest value on need for closure increases partisan strength by 17 percent. I assess hypothesis 1 using the YouGov data in Table 2, that the effect of need for closure on partisan rigidity is strongest among politically knowledgeable and interested respondents.

As evident in Table 2, there is support for this hypothesis across the other three dependent variables: strong needs for closure increase partisan social identity, affective partisan polarization, and unhappiness about interparty marriage among politically engaged respondents. Thus, among politically knowledgeable and interested respondents, partisan rigidity varies as function of stable, pre-political psychological dispositions for certainty. Indeed, among politically engaged respondents, need for closure frequently has larger effects than more politically substantive variables like partisan sorting and policy extremism.

To simplify the presentation of substantive effects, Figure 1 plots the average marginal effect of need for closure, partisan sorting, and policy extremism for individuals

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[32] Sample sizes vary across models because fewer respondents answered the feeling thermometer questions, and because many respondents answered "not sure" to the marriage item. Sample size varies as a function of including or not independents, and because some respondents did not completely answer the need for closure, policy items, or political sophistication questions.

at the maximum level of political knowledge (35% of the sample) for each of the three

significant dependent variables (in the appendix I provide a replication across levels of

political interest). In each case, extreme partisanship varies more as a function of the pre-

political disposition need for closure than the substantive political variables partisan

sorting or policy extremism. For example, the average marginal effect of need for

closure on affective polarization among politically knowledgeable respondents is 0.22,

while the effects of partisan sorting and policy extremism is 0.14 and 0.05, respectively.

These findings indicate that strong partisanship is not primarily rooted in "programmatic"

considerations like ideology or policy preferences. Rather, strong partisanship today is

rooted in less politically substantive psychological needs associated with a closed-minded

cognitive style. Thus, partisans today are better characterized as rigid than programmatic

partisans.

In addition, need for closure increases partisan rigidity among both Democrats

and Republicans. In the appendix I present a replication of all analyses separately among

Democrats and Republicans to show that these effects operate on both sides of the

partisan divide. I illustrate this partisan *symmetry* in Figure 2, where I show the impact of

the need for closure partisan social identity among the most politically interested. Figure

2 shows that need for closure increases partisan identity for both politically interested

Democrats and Republicans. This finding pushes back against the "psychological

differences" hypothesis: it is not necessarily the case that Democrats and Republicans are

polarized because they are psychologically different. Rather, this study shows that the

most polarized partisans on both sides are characterized by strong needs for group

104

membership, which this study measures with variation in the basic psychological need for certainty. Thus, the heated nature of the current partisan divide is rooted in a psychological disposition to see the world as a conflict of "us" vs. "them," and is not characterized by a clash of diametrically opposed psychological worldviews.

Moving to the other datasets, Table 3 assesses the relationship between need for closure, political engagement, and partisan strength on the Knowledge Networks data. Model 2 examines how the effect of need for closure varies across the political self-expression moderator, while Models 3 and 4 examines the moderating effect of political knowledge and interest.

Table 3 first shows no support for a main effect of need for closure on partisan strength. However, as Models 2-4 plainly show, there is a statistically significant interaction between need for closure and political self-expression ($b = 7.86$, p<0.05) as well as political knowledge ($b = 4.07$, p<0.10) and political interest ($b = 5.28$, p<0.05) on partisan strength. Once again, the substantive effect of need for closure on strong partisanship among highly engaged respondents is greater than the more politically substantive variables, partisan sorting and policy extremism. As in the previous study, this relationship once again operates for both Democrats and Republicans. In sum, the Knowledge Networks study provides a valuable robustness check on the YouGov study by establishing these relationships with an additional measure of need for closure, more measures of political engagement, and a traditional measure of partisan strength.

Table 4 presents the final examination of hypothesis 1 on the 2012 American National Election Study. Table 4 once again shows limited main effects of need for

closure on partisan rigidity; need for closure significantly increases affective partisan polarization (b =0.05, p<0.05), but not partisan strength (b = 0.30, p = *n.s.*). However, there is consistent evidence for hypothesis 1. The interaction between political knowledge and interest with need for closure is significantly associated with both partisan strength and affective partisan polarization. For example, among individuals at the maximum level of political knowledge (14% of the sample), going from the lowest to the highest value of need for closure (using this single-item measure) increases the probability of being a "strong" partisan by 0.24, and increases affective partisan polarization by 11 percent. Once again, these effects—even using this single-item measure of need for closure—are similar in size to the ideological variables: partisan sorting and policy extremism. Thus, for politically knowledgeable respondents, the need for certainty is a central causal force motivating strong and polarized mass partisanship.

Let me briefly note that partisan sorting also exerts a notable influence each of these outcomes. Democrats and Republicans who share the ideological outlook of their party are stronger partisans. Is this evidence in favor of the "programmatic" argument? I am skeptical. For one thing, ideological self-classification itself has many hallmarks of a social identity (e.g., Ellis and Stimson 2012; Malka and Lelkes 2010; Mason 2015). Thus, one prominent argument is that partisan sorting has reduced the public's identity cross-pressures, and that the impact of aligned identities (i.e., partisan-ideological sorting) on strong partisanship is a basic process of social identification (Mason 2015). Second, a great deal of research has shown that the way sorting has occurred is that Democrats and Republicans have changed their ideological views to match their party,

106

not vice versa (e.g., Carsey and Layman 2006; Druckman et al. 2013; Lavine et al. 2013; Lenz 2013; Levendusky 2009). This suggests that partisanship remains the "prime mover" of mass opinion, shaping rather than being caused by ideology. Regardless, need for closure represents a more direct and less ambiguous indicator of group-centric impulses, and among engaged respondents this disposition regularly trumps partisan sorting, and always outperforms policy extremism, as a predictor of partisan rigidity.

In short, there is consistent evidence for hypothesis 1 across three separate samples, numerous measures of need for closure, and a variety of indicators of partisan rigidity. Among politically knowledgeable and interested respondents, strong partisanship, in-party bias, and out-party derogation often varies more as a function of the need for closure than variables such as partisan sorting and policy extremism. These conclusions are also robust across model specifications. In the appendix I present a replication without any control variables to show that the present results are not driven by post-treatment bias. In the appendix I also show that the effect of need for closure on partisan rigidity persists while controlling for related personality variables: authoritarianism, need for cognition, and the Big Five personality traits. Thus, the partisan divide in American politics is deepest among individuals with a strong psychological need for certainty, a trait that causes individuals to be closed-minded and group-centric generally. As a result, the label "rigid partisanship" seems to best fit the nature and origins of the strong partisan spirit in American politics today.

Study 2: The Need for Certainty and Partisan Strength over Time

107

Has the need for certainty come to play a stronger role as a predictor of partisan strength as party elites have polarized? Study 1 establishes that, in the present era, need for closure increases partisan rigidity among politically engaged respondents. In this study I assess whether this relationship is stronger in the present than in the past. If the polarization of party elites has strengthened the extent to which individuals use their partisan identity as a source for psychological certainty, then the impact of the need for certainty on partisan strength should be greater today than in the past environment of less polarized and cohesive parties.

> *Hypothesis 2:* The impact of the need for certainty on partisan strength is greater in today's era of polarized parties than in the past.

To assess this hypothesis, I draw on data from the General Social Survey (GSS). In 1988, and again in 2006, 2008, and 2010, this survey asked respondents their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "Right and wrong are not simply a matter of black and white; there are many shades of gray." Increasing agreement with this statement is indicative of comfort with ambiguity and a corresponding weaker need for certainty. As a measure that has been used as a proxy for need for closure in previous research (e.g., Brandt and Reyna 2010; Peterson et al. 2009), the measurement of this item in distinct time periods provides an opportunity for assessing whether the link between the need for certainty and partisan strength is stronger in today's era of polarized parties. I re-scale this measure to range from 0-1, with higher values indicating a stronger need for certainty.

As a dependent variable, the General Social Survey contains a measure of **partisan strength**, operationalized as a dichotomous indicator of strong vs. not strong

partisans. Like the other studies above, I also control for a number of key variables:

partisan sorting, age, race (white), income,[33] education, gender (female), a dummy

variable for Republican partisanship, and year fixed-effects (pure independents are once

again included, scored as "0"). This is the same set of control variables I used above,

except for a measure of policy extremism, excluded because the GSS did not consistently

measure policy preferences.

To assess hypothesis 2, I first evaluate the impact of need for closure on partisan

strength in 1988 (model 1) and in 2006-2010 (model 2). Table 5 presents these results.

[Table 5]

As Table 5 shows, there is no effect of need for closure on partisan strength in 1988 ($b = -

0.09$, p<$n.s.$), but a significant effect in the present era (2006-2010) ($b = 0.30$, p<0.05). In

the present era, this corresponds to an increase in the probability of identifying as a strong

partisan by 0.05 in moving from the lowest to the highest value of need for closure. This

supports hypothesis 2. In the present era, as the public has come to perceive sharp

differences between the parties (e.g., Hetherington 2001; Lupu 2014), the psychological

need for certainty has come to have a larger effect on partisan strength. Briefly, let me

note that the mean and distribution of this measure of need for closure appears to be

stable over time (see Appendix). This is consistent with my broader argument: the

growth in partisan strength over time derives from a stronger relationship between the

need for certainty and partisan strength evident in Table 5.

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[33] To maximize sample size, I impute missing values on income to the mean level.
Income is the only variable included that contained significant amounts of missing
observations.

Using education as a proxy for political sophistication (e.g., Sniderman et al. 1991; Zaller 1994; Zaller and Hunt 1995), I can also evaluate hypothesis 1: whether the politically engaged are more likely to use partisan identity as a source of psychological certainty. As expected, Model 3 shows no interaction in 1988 between education and need for closure on partisan strength ($b = -0.23$, p<*n.s.*). By contrast, model 4 shows—much as Tables 2-4 show—that in the present era, the link between the need for closure and partisan strength is enhanced by political engagement (qua education) ($b = 1.368$, p<0.10).

Finally, model 5 estimates whether—for individuals at or above the median of education—the effect of the need for certainty on partisan strength is significantly stronger in the present than in 1988. To assess whether the effect of need for closure is significantly greater today, I interact a dummy variable for present years (2006, 2008, 2010) with the measure of need for closure, and run the analysis on those at or above the median of education. The positive and statistically significant coefficient on this interaction ($b = 0.75$, p<0.06) supports hypothesis 2: the impact of the need for certainty on partisan strength is significantly stronger today than in the past among politically aware and engaged respondents. In total, these results support hypotheses 1 and 2: for politically engaged respondents, the psychological need for certainty increases partisan strength. Moreover, the impact of the need for certainty on partisan strength is significantly stronger in today's era of polarized parties than in the recent past. This finding follows directly from uncertainty-identity theory: as the parties have become

more polarized and distinct, they have caused a resurgence in mass partisan strength because polarized parties are more effective providers of psychological certainty.

Study 3: How Psychological Certainty Reduces Partisan Rigidity

In this final study, I examine the link between elite polarization and the psychological need for certainty on partisan rigidity in an experimental study that primes thoughts of self-certainty. Based on the uncertainty-identity theory outlined above, I test both the direct effect of psychological certainty on partisan rigidity as well as the effect of an interaction between perceptions of political polarization and psychological certainty. To the extent that partisanship is motivated by the need for certainty, experimentally primed thoughts of psychological certainty should directly reduce partisan rigidity. In addition, if perceptions of the parties as highly divergent increases partisan rigidity because polarized parties are better certainty-providers, then the link between perceptions of the parties as distinct and partisan rigidity should be reduced in conditions where psychological certainty is high.

In addition, I posit that the link between temporarily provided psychological certainty and partisan rigidity may actually be strongest among the least politically engaged. As the previous studies show, for politically engaged respondents, partisanship is rooted in dispositional needs for certainty. This should cause the partisan identities of engaged respondents to be rigid, i.e., intransigent and unyielding. Another way to think about the attitudes of highly engaged respondents is that they are "pretreated" by their dispositional needs (Druckman and Leeper 2012). The engaged link their dispositional need for certainty with their partisan identity, leading them (if the need for certainty is

111

strong) to develop extreme and rigid partisan identities, which as a strong attitude should, "by definition, persist and resist change" (Druckman and Leeper 2012, 877; Krosnick and Petty 1995).

For unengaged respondents, by contrast, partisanship is not linked to dispositional needs and are therefore less rigid or strong, which by definition should make their partisan identities more malleable. For these reasons, the political attitudes of less engaged respondents may generally be less stable and more susceptible to persuasion than the attitudes of highly engaged respondents (e.g., Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Bechtel et al. 2015; Goren 2013; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Kinder and Sanders 1990; Kriesi 2002; Luttig and Lavine 2015; Sniderman and Theriault 2004). In short, because engaged respondents use their partisan identity to meet their dispositional needs, they may be less willing to update their partisan identity in response to situational variations in their psychological motivations.

Given these theoretical claims, this study examines the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: Compared to a control group, *certainty* will *decrease* strong partisanship, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation.

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between perceptions of elite polarization and strong partisanship, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation will be weaker in the certainty condition than in a control condition.

Hypothesis 5: The link between elite polarization, psychological certainty, and partisan rigidity will be especially strong among individuals less engaged in politics.

In sum, this study evaluates the main effect of psychological certainty on partisan rigidity as well as the interaction between perceptions of elite polarization and psychological

112

certainty on partisan rigidity. Finally, I once again examine the moderating role of political engagement. Because highly engaged respondents have developed rigid partisan identities that fulfill dispositional needs, I argue that it is the less engaged whose attitudes will be most susceptible to the experimental treatment of psychological certainty.

I assess these hypotheses on the same 2014 YouGov study described above. As part a pretreatment survey, respondents were asked, "How different do you feel Democrats are from Republicans?" This measure of *perceived party differences* provides a direct measure of the public's perception of political polarization over time (see Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Hetherington 2001; Lupu 2014).

Following the pretreatment survey, 292 respondents were randomly assigned to the certainty experimental treatment, while 908 respondents form a control group.[34] The experimental treatment is adopted from a standard priming technique regularly employed by social identity theorists (e.g., Hogg et al. 2007), which first asks respondents to "please spend a few moments thinking about those aspects of your life that make you feel the most *certain* about yourself, your future, or your place in the world," and subsequently asks respondents to write down the three things that make them feel the most *certain*. Random assignment appears to have been successful, as there is no

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[34] This study also included an *uncertainty* condition. However, this condition rarely differed significantly from the control group (results available on request). Therefore, and to ease interpretations of the analysis, I collapse the uncertainty and control conditions into one. The null effects of uncertainty might suggest that the state of respondents in the control condition is similar to respondents in the uncertainty condition. Moreover, this is the first study from this research paradigm that I am aware of that manipulates both uncertainty and certainty (i.e., most studies just compare an uncertainty to a certainty condition). It is quite plausible, then, that most studies would find similar effects to those reported here.

significant correlation between condition assignment and perceived party differences or other political or demographic variables.[35]

I evaluate the effect of this experimental treatment, *psychological certainty*, on each of the four measures of partisan rigidity described in study 1: partisan strength, partisan social identity, affective polarization, and being upset at interparty marriage (partisan intolerance). I first evaluate the main treatment effect on all four outcomes. Second, I evaluate the effect of perceived party differences on partisan rigidity across the conditions. In all cases I include political engagement—here measured with the same political knowledge variable described above—as a moderator. In the partisan strength analysis—which is the only one that includes pure independents—I control for individuals who indicate they are a pure independent in the pretreatment survey to account for the fact that, by definition, their strength of partisanship will not vary in response to the experimental treatment.[36]

The first column under each dependent variable presents the main treatment effect of assignment to the certainty condition on partisan rigidity relative to the control group, across levels of political knowledge. Among individuals low in political engagement (qua knowledge), there are two significant main treatment effects. For less knowledgeable respondents, psychological certainty directly decreases partisan strength and affective polarization, consistent with hypothesis 3. Figure 3 presents the effect of

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[35] The correlation between perceived party differences and assignment to the certainty condition is 0.0043 (p<*ns*).

[36] As above, pure independents are dropped from the other three dependent variables.

the certainty condition on both in-party and out-party feelings among individuals below the median of political knowledge.

Figure 3 shows that psychological certainty has a dramatic effect on the level of affective polarization among less engaged respondents. Compared to the control group, respondents in the certainty condition have more moderate feelings towards their own party (10 percent less positive), and more positive feelings about the opposite party (13 percent more positive). At high levels of engagement, however, psychological certainty has no effect on partisan strength or affective polarization. Highly engaged respondents link their dispositional needs for certainty to their partisan identity. One consequence of this is that their political attitudes are less malleable in response to experimental treatments. Less engaged respondents, by contrast, respond in a more rational way to psychological certainty. When psychological certainty is available from a source besides partisan identity, the need for extreme partisanship subsides and partisan feelings become more moderate. This finding therefore provides support for one the key tenets of the uncertainty-identity theory developed in this paper: extreme partisanship is embraced as a mechanism for obtaining psychological certainty.

The second column under each dependent variable examines the effect of perceived party differences—a proxy for perceptions of political polarization (see, Hetherington 2001; Lupu 2014)—on partisan rigidity, across the control and certainty conditions. The negative and significant interaction between psychological certainty and perceived party differences on the partisan strength, affective polarization, and partisan social identity variables indicates that the effect of perceived party differences on partisan

rigidity is significantly weaker in the certainty condition than in the control condition. Because interpreting the full 3-way interaction can be difficult, Figure 4 illustrates how the effect of perceived party differences on partisan rigidity varies across the control and certainty conditions on each of these three outcome variables, among respondents below the median of political knowledge.

Figure 4 shows that in the control group, perceived party differences directly increases partisan strength, affective polarization, and partisan social identity. In each case, the effect of perceived party differences on partisan rigidity is statistically significant. This finding is consistent with other research; as party elites have polarized, the public has come to perceive the parties as sharply different, and this has caused higher levels of partisan strength and affective polarization (Hetherington 2001; Lupu 2014; Rogowski and Sutherland Forthcoming). In each case, this effect of perceived party differences on partisan rigidity is completely negated—for unengaged respondents—in the psychological certainty condition. This finding indicates that the reason polarized parties generate strong partisanship is because polarized parties alleviate uncertainty. When self-certainty is high, partisan strength does not significantly vary across perceptions of the parties as polarized or different. As a reminder, the perceived party differences variable was measured prior to the certainty treatment and partisan rigidity variables, so it is not the case that the certainty treatment affects perceptions of perceived party differences. Rather, under conditions high psychological certainty, perceived party differences simply becomes a less important—indeed, insignificant—predictor of partisan rigidity among unengaged respondents.

116

In sum, the results from study 3 provide support for the three hypotheses above as well as the broader uncertainty-identity theory of the partisan resurgence in American politics developed in this paper. Psychological certainty directly decreases partisan rigidity, and it also weakens the effect of elite polarization on partisan rigidity. These findings indicate strong partisanship—like other social identities—is rooted in the psychological need for certainty. Polarized parties are better certainty-providers, and the reason polarized parties strengthen mass partisanship is for the benefit of psychological certainty, not because the parties present clearer ideological platforms. Finally, these findings of temporary variations in partisan rigidity are evident only among less engaged respondents. The engaged link their dispositional need for certainty to their partisan identity; this makes the politically engaged rigid partisans, unresponsive to the demands of their situation or environment.

Conclusion

Over the past few decades scholars have documented a dramatic resurgence in mass partisan strength in American politics. One common explanation for this partisan resurgence is that elite polarization has made it easier for voters to link their ideological orientation with their partisan affiliation, strengthening the substantive basis of mass partisanship and improving the political competence of the American voter (e.g., Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Has elite polarization transformed the electorate into "programmatic" partisans?

This paper argues that today's public is not ideologically programmatic; rather, I argue that public has become more group-centric and rigid instead. This paper identifies

a novel root cause of resurgent partisan strength, the psychological need for certainty. As party elites have polarized, I argue that the parties have become more effective certainty-providers. As a result, I argue that the psychological need for certainty underlies and gives rise to strong partisanship, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation in American politics.

I found broad support for these hypotheses. In study 1, through an examination of three nationally representative surveys, I found that the need for cognitive closure is an important correlate of partisan strength, affective polarization, and intolerance of the out-party in contemporary American politics. This variable is always a more important predictor of partisan rigidity than policy extremism, and frequently outperforms partisan-ideological sorting as well. Second, study 2 showed that this relationship between the need for closure and strong partisanship is greater today than in 1988. As party elites have polarized over time, respondents with a strong need for closure have come to link their psychological dispositions with the strength of their partisan identity. Finally, study 3 showed that environmentally primed psychological certainty directly reduces partisan strength and affective polarization, and negated the impact of perceiving differences between the parties on partisan rigidity. In conditions of certainty, perceptions of elite polarization does not affect the strength of partisan attachment.

Moreover, it is the most—not the least—politically knowledgeable and interested whose political attitudes are motivated by this dispositional need for group membership. Thus, unlike most indictments of the American voter, I argue that the most engaged are in many respects less competent than the unengaged. Indeed, study 3 shows that it is less

engaged citizens whose political identities are most responsive to environmental variations in the need for certainty. For engaged citizens, political identities are expressive and form an important component of one's worldview and self-image. For this reason, the politically knowledgeable and interested use their partisan identities as a mechanism for obtaining dispositional needs for certainty and closure. This finding bolsters evidence elsewhere that political sophistication increases partisan bias rather than provide citizens the cognitive tools and motivation to engage in open-minded evaluations of facts and evidence (Kahan 2015; Lodge and Taber 2013; Lavine et al. 2012; Slothuus and de Vreese 2010). The rigidity of highly engaged respondents may explain why some studies find the political attitudes of highly engaged respondents to be less susceptible to political persuasion than those of the unengaged (e.g., Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Bechtel et al. 2015; Goren 2013; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Kinder and Sanders 1990; Kriesi 2002; Luttig and Lavine 2015; Sniderman and Theriault 2004).

Furthermore, the psychological need for certainty causes resurgent mass partisanship among both Democrats and Republicans. This finding pushes back against what is becoming the conventional wisdom in political psychology, that Democrats and Republicans disagree so fiercely because they differ psychologically. Within this body of scholarship, the need for cognitive closure is a central variable thought to differentiate liberals and conservatives and make it difficult for those on the left and right to disagree peacefully (e.g., Jost et al. 2003; Hibbing et al. 2014). Yet this study shows that the need for cognitive closure increases partisan rigidity for both Democrats and Republicans. In

other words, the most extreme and closed-minded partisans are psychologically similar, high in the need for cognitive closure.

Finally, I argue that these findings are normatively problematic. As elites polarize, partisanship becomes more appealing in terms of its psychological benefits; as a result, elite polarization promotes a stronger partisan electorate for the benefits of group membership, not by strengthening the public's ideological capacities. Indeed, research shows that conditions of polarized parties cause individuals to be more blindly attached to their own party and less capable of reasoning ideologically (see, Druckman et al. 2013). This paper adds to this finding by documenting how and why elite polarization strengthens mass partisanship more generally. Both the higher levels of party-elite opinion leadership and the higher levels of partisan rigidity documented in this paper suggest that the resurgent partisan electorate in American politics will be unwilling to take an open-minded evaluation of facts and evidence and to make retrospective decisions that hold elites accountable. It is this closed-mindedness, coupled with blind partisan loyalty and out-party intolerance, that makes partisans whose identities are motivated by the need for certainty rigid partisans. In short, elite polarization has not transformed the electorate into ideologically programmatic partisans; rather, partisans today are motivated by psychological needs for group membership and have therefore become more closed-minded, intolerant, and rigid in their partisan identity.

Table 1. The Need for Certainty and Partisan Rigidity (YouGov Study)

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Affective Polarization	(3) Partisan Identity	(4) Marriage
Need for Closure	0.17**	0.05	0.03	0.38
	(0.078)	(0.052)	(0.058)	(0.631)
Partisan Sorting	0.30**	0.09**	0.09**	1.20**
	(0.027)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.272)
Policy Extremism	-0.04	0.11**	0.06*	0.50
	(0.057)	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.414)
Political Knowledge	-0.15**	0.02	-0.09**	0.00
	(0.060)	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.492)
Political Interest	0.16**	0.08**	0.12**	0.43
	(0.055)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.414)
Income	0.02	0.07*	0.03	0.03
	(0.058)	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.527)
Education	-0.02	-0.04*	-0.09**	0.05
	(0.046)	(0.025)	(0.033)	(0.390)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.01*
	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.006)
White	-0.12**	-0.03	-0.05**	-0.43*
	(0.030)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.251)
Female	0.07**	0.04**	0.05**	0.25
	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.208)
Republican	0.07**	-0.09**	-0.02	-0.07
	(0.026)	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.219)
Constant	0.31**	0.50**	0.50**	-1.63**
	(0.064)	(0.053)	(0.055)	(0.657)
Observations	1,011	757	884	882
R-squared	0.32	0.18	0.13	
PseudoAdj. R-squared	0.31	0.17	0.12	0.07

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Partisan strength, affective polarization, and partisan identity are OLS models. Partisan prejudice is a dichotomous variable, so the reported coefficients are from a logit model. All variables (except age) are on a 0-1 scale.

Table 2. The Need for Certainty, Political Engagement, and Partisan Rigidity (YouGov Study)

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Affective Polarization	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Partisan Identity	(6) Partisan Identity	(7) Marriage	(8) Marriage
Need for Closure (NFC)	0.05	0.14	-0.38**	-0.14	-0.30*	-0.13	-2.53	-2.13
	(0.209)	(0.184)	(0.138)	(0.118)	(0.180)	(0.138)	(1.549)	(1.385)
NFC × Knowledge	**0.13**		**0.60****		**0.47****		**4.17****	
	(0.260)		**(0.172)**		**(0.226)**		**(2.047)**	
NFC × Interest		**0.04**		**0.32****		**0.28^**		**4.23****
		(0.244)		**(0.158)**		**(0.191)**		**(1.883)**
Political Knowledge	-0.22	-0.16**	-0.34**	0.02	-0.39**	-0.09**	-1.56	-0.02
	(0.189)	(0.060)	(0.130)	(0.041)	(0.154)	(0.044)	(1.603)	(0.479)
Partisan Sorting	0.08	0.25**	-0.04	0.05	-0.01	0.10**	1.65**	1.57**
	(0.074)	(0.069)	(0.054)	(0.040)	(0.049)	(0.036)	(0.704)	(0.599)
Sorting × Knowledge	0.29**		0.18**		0.14**		-0.69	
	(0.094)		(0.069)		(0.068)		(0.920)	
Policy Extremism	0.16	-0.02	0.30**	0.15*	0.14*	0.04	1.34	0.80
	(0.136)	(0.136)	(0.077)	(0.089)	(0.085)	(0.060)	(1.231)	(1.228)
Extremism × Knowledge	-0.28*		-0.25**		-0.11		-1.07	
	(0.171)		(0.105)		(0.122)		(1.464)	
Political Interest	0.15**	0.12	0.08**	-0.12	0.12**	-0.05	0.47	-1.32
	(0.053)	(0.183)	(0.033)	(0.116)	(0.035)	(0.125)	(0.413)	(1.784)
Income	0.02	0.02	0.07**	0.07*	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.10
	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.523)	(0.520)
Education	-0.02	-0.02	-0.03	-0.04	-0.07**	-0.08**	0.16	0.17
	(0.046)	(0.045)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.391)	(0.381)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.01*	-0.01
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.006)	(0.006)
White	-0.13**	-0.12**	-0.03*	-0.03	-0.05**	-0.05**	-0.39	-0.39
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.250)	(0.238)
Female	0.07**	0.07**	0.03**	0.03*	0.05**	0.04**	0.23	0.20
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.206)	(0.207)
Republican	0.08**	0.08**	-0.09**	-0.09**	-0.02	-0.03	-0.12	-0.12
	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.219)	(0.218)
Sorting × Interest		0.08		0.07		-0.01		-0.72
		(0.100)		(0.058)		(0.055)		(0.862)
Extremism × Interest		-0.04		-0.08		0.03		-0.45
		(0.174)		(0.109)		(0.091)		(1.612)
Constant	0.38**	0.34**	0.74**	0.61**	0.72**	0.60**	-0.62	-0.63
	(0.144)	(0.128)	(0.100)	(0.088)	(0.115)	(0.093)	(1.245)	(1.271)
Observations	1,011	1,011	757	757	884	884	882	882
R-squared	0.33	0.32	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.14		
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.32	0.31	0.20	0.18	0.14	0.13	0.08	0.08

Robust standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10, ^p<0.10(one-tailed)

Note: Partisan strength, affective polarization, and identity are OLS models. Marriage is a dichotomous variable, so the reported coefficients are from a logit model. Variables (except age) are on a 0-1 scale.

Table 3. The Need for Certainty, Political Engagement, and Partisan Rigidity (KN Study)

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Partisan Strength
Need for Closure (NFC)	0.34	-4.98**	-2.70	-3.80**
	(0.547)	(1.511)	(1.835)	(1.640)
NFC × Political Expression		**7.86****		
		(2.120)		
NFC × Knowledge			**4.07***	
			(2.324)	
NFC × Interest				**5.28****
				(2.025)
Political Expression		-2.19		
		(1.348)		
Political Knowledge	0.02	-0.08	-3.74**	0.04
	(0.429)	(0.434)	(1.537)	(0.430)
Political Interest	1.93**	1.23**	1.92**	-1.40
	(0.331)	(0.356)	(0.330)	(1.348)
Partisan Sorting	1.81**	1.34**	1.63**	1.26**
	(0.209)	(0.466)	(0.669)	(0.508)
Sorting × Expression		0.74		
		(0.718)		
Policy Extremism	1.13**	0.96	-1.15	0.57
	(0.376)	(1.078)	(1.123)	(1.166)
Policy Extremism × Expression		0.04		
		(1.549)		
Income	0.12	0.20	0.14	0.13
	(0.419)	(0.414)	(0.421)	(0.421)
Education	0.02	-0.24	-0.18	0.13
	(0.624)	(0.615)	(0.614)	(0.624)
Age	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
White	-0.16	-0.15	-0.14	-0.17
	(0.223)	(0.227)	(0.222)	(0.228)
Female	0.55**	0.52**	0.55**	0.56**
	(0.161)	(0.163)	(0.161)	(0.162)
Republican	0.02	-0.00	-0.02	0.01
	(0.164)	(0.168)	(0.162)	(0.166)
Sorting × Knowledge			0.27	
			(0.858)	
Policy Extremism × Knowledge			3.16**	
			(1.490)	
Sorting × Interest				0.76
				(0.672)
Policy Extremism × Interest				0.71
				(1.454)
Constant	-4.22**	-1.88*	-1.36	-1.73
	(0.715)	(1.046)	(1.279)	(1.132)
Observations	1,382	1,371	1,382	1,382
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.18	0.21	0.19	0.19

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$ The reported coefficients are from a logit model. Variable on a 0-1 scale.

Table 4. The Need for Certainty, Political Engagement, and Partisan Rigidity (2012 ANES)

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Affective Polarization	(6) Affective Polarization
Need for Closure (NFC)	0.30	-2.06**	-0.59	0.05**	-0.09	0.02
	(0.249)	(0.818)	(0.652)	(0.017)	(0.069)	(0.045)
NFC × Knowledge		**3.43****			**0.20****	
		(1.110)			**(0.090)**	
NFC × Interest			**1.34^**			**0.05**
			(0.904)			**(0.067)**
Political Knowledge	-0.60**	-3.08**	-0.59**	-0.01	-0.17**	-0.01
	(0.287)	(0.951)	(0.287)	(0.021)	(0.080)	(0.021)
Political Interest	1.36**	1.34**	0.98	0.09**	0.09**	0.07
	(0.212)	(0.212)	(0.768)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.053)
Partisan Sorting	1.55**	0.87**	1.15**	0.08**	0.03	0.05**
	(0.120)	(0.365)	(0.288)	(0.008)	(0.029)	(0.020)
Sorting × Knowledge		1.02*			0.08**	
		(0.523)			(0.040)	
Policy Extremism	0.81**	0.93	1.80**	0.14**	0.15*	0.19**
	(0.261)	(0.908)	(0.753)	(0.019)	(0.077)	(0.056)
Extremism × Knowledge		-0.17			-0.02	
		(1.274)			(0.104)	
Education	-0.53**	-0.51**	-0.55**	-0.05**	-0.04**	-0.05**
	(0.194)	(0.194)	(0.194)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Income	-0.28	-0.28	-0.30	-0.03**	-0.03*	-0.03**
	(0.200)	(0.201)	(0.200)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Age	0.05**	0.05**	0.04**	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Female	0.49**	0.50**	0.49**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
White	-0.53**	-0.51**	-0.55**	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.122)	(0.122)	(0.122)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Republican	-0.19	-0.21*	-0.19*	-0.07**	-0.07**	-0.07**
	(0.115)	(0.115)	(0.115)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Mode	0.16	0.15	0.17	0.03**	0.03**	0.03**
	(0.118)	(0.119)	(0.118)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Sorting × Interest			0.63			0.05*
			(0.409)			(0.029)
Extremism × Interest			-1.50			-0.09
			(1.023)			(0.077)
Constant	-2.56**	-0.93	-2.29**	0.55**	0.65**	0.56**
	(0.354)	(0.712)	(0.642)	(0.025)	(0.063)	(0.044)
Observations	3,542	3,542	3,542	3,133	3,133	3,133
R-squared				0.17	0.18	0.17
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.17	0.17	0.17

Robust standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10, ^ p<0.10 (one-tailed)

Note: Partisan strength entries are logit coefficients. Affective Polarization entries are OLS coefficients. All variables (except age) are on a 0-1 scale.

Table 5. The Effect of the Need for Certainty on Partisan Strength, Over Time (GSS)

	(1) Partisan Strength 1988	(2) Partisan Strength 2006-2010	(3) Partisan Strength 1988	(4) Partisan Strength 2006-2010	(5) Partisan Strength (Educated)
Need for Closure (NFC)	-0.09	0.30**	0.05	-0.61	-0.16
	(0.216)	(0.114)	(0.821)	(0.514)	(0.354)
NFC × Education			-0.23	1.36*	
			(1.277)	(0.745)	
NFC × 2006-2010					0.75*
					(0.384)
2006-2010					0.02
					(0.157)
Partisan Sorting	0.69**	1.28**	0.69**	1.28**	0.89**
	(0.132)	(0.072)	(0.132)	(0.073)	(0.087)
Age	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.003)
White	-0.81**	-0.63**	-0.81**	-0.64**	-0.55**
	(0.170)	(0.084)	(0.170)	(0.084)	(0.108)
Income	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.01
	(0.026)	(0.016)	(0.026)	(0.016)	(0.021)
Education	-0.58	0.51**	-0.52	0.13	-0.21
	(0.451)	(0.235)	(0.568)	(0.328)	(0.441)
Female	-0.09	0.28**	-0.09	0.28**	0.32**
	(0.129)	(0.069)	(0.129)	(0.069)	(0.083)
Republican	-0.01	-0.08	-0.01	-0.09	-0.24**
	(0.139)	(0.076)	(0.139)	(0.077)	(0.086)
yr2006		-0.01		-0.01	-0.01
		(0.081)		(0.081)	(0.105)
yr2008		0.20**		0.20**	0.04
		(0.089)		(0.089)	(0.117)
Constant	-1.32**	-2.90**	-1.36**	-2.64**	-1.51**
	(0.406)	(0.235)	(0.455)	(0.280)	(0.418)
Observations	1,418	6,682	1,418	6,682	3,812
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.05	0.09	0.05	0.09	0.05

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Entries are logit coefficients. All variables (except age) are on a 0-1 scale.

Table 6. Psychological Certainty Reduces Partisan Rigidity among the Less Engaged

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Partisan Strength	Partisan Strength	Affective Polarization	Affective Polarization	Partisan Identity	Partisan Identity	Marriage	Marriage
Political Knowledge	-0.03	-0.21**	0.02	-0.07	-0.02	-0.19	0.70	-2.13*
	(0.031)	(0.085)	(0.044)	(0.109)	(0.041)	(0.127)	(0.501)	(1.290)
Certainty Treatment	**-0.17****	0.20	**-0.22****	0.04	**-0.09**	0.33**	**0.00**	-0.25
	(0.082)	(0.152)	**(0.057)**	(0.134)	**(0.081)**	(0.165)	**(0.704)**	(1.813)
Certainty × Knowledge	0.16	-0.34	0.23**	0.04	0.09	-0.38*	-0.26	-2.61
	(0.108)	(0.256)	(0.069)	(0.178)	(0.100)	(0.212)	(0.842)	(2.438)
Party Diff		0.06		0.28**		0.15		-2.22
		(0.067)		(0.122)		(0.120)		(1.356)
Knowledge × Party Diff		0.22**		0.06		0.18		3.76**
		(0.109)		(0.140)		(0.153)		(1.654)
Certainty× Party Diff		**-0.51****		**-0.40****		**-0.59****		0.49
		(0.242)		**(0.187)**		**(0.255)**		(2.408)
Certainty × Party Diff × Knowledge		0.70**		0.34		0.69**		2.91
		(0.357)		(0.239)		(0.320)		(3.095)
Independent	-0.74**	-0.71**						
	(0.010)	(0.013)						
Constant	0.77**	0.73**	0.70**	0.53**	0.64**	0.55**	-1.23**	0.41
	(0.025)	(0.049)	(0.037)	(0.094)	(0.033)	(0.099)	(0.416)	(1.040)
Observations	1,121	1,121	831	831	974	974	972	972
R-squared	0.67	0.71	0.07	0.22	0.01	0.13		
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.67	0.71	0.06	0.21	0.00	0.12	0.01	0.04

Robust standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Partisan strength, affective polarization, and partisan identity are OLS models. Marriage is a dichotomous variable, so the reported coefficients are from a logit model. All variables are on a 0-1 scale.

Figure 1. Changes in Partisan Rigidity across Need for Closure, Partisan Sorting, and Policy Extremism
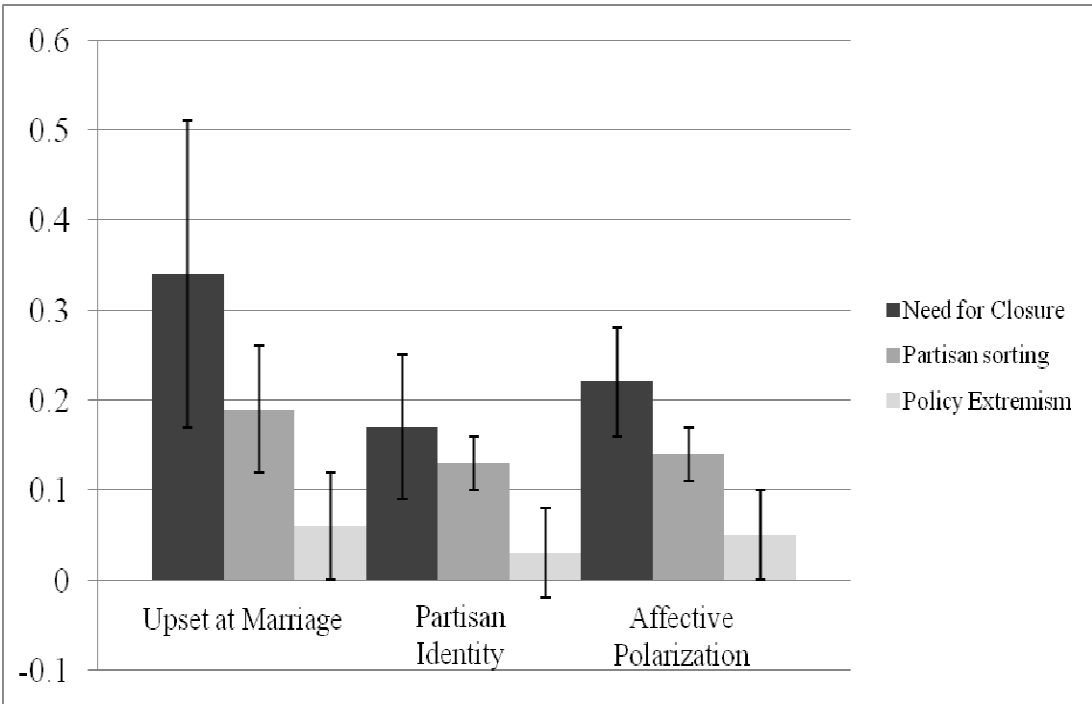
Note: Bars represent the average marginal effect (going from the minimum to maximum value) of need for closure, partisan sorting, and policy extremism among individuals with the highest level of political knowledge (35% of the sample). Source: 2014 YouGov Survey.

Figure 2. Need for Closure Increases Partisan Rigidity for both Democrats and Republicans
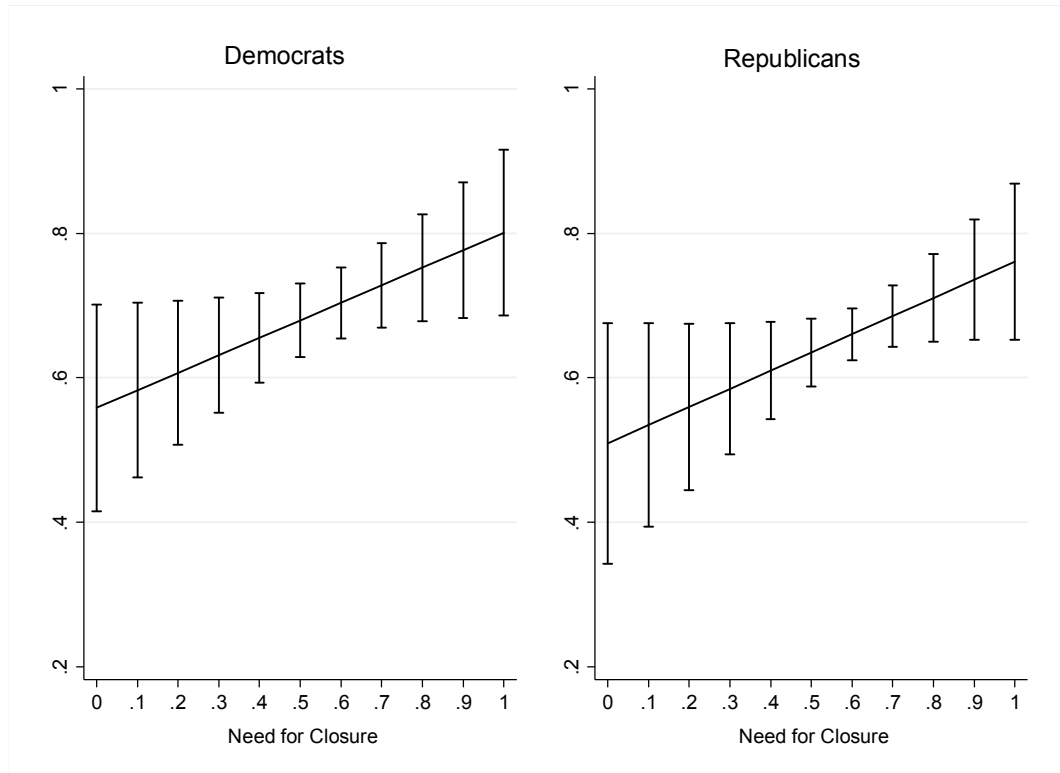
Note: Y-axis is the predicted value of partisan social identity among individuals at the highest level of political interest. Source: 2014 YouGov survey.

Figure 3. Psychological Certainty Reduces Affective Polarization among the Less Engaged
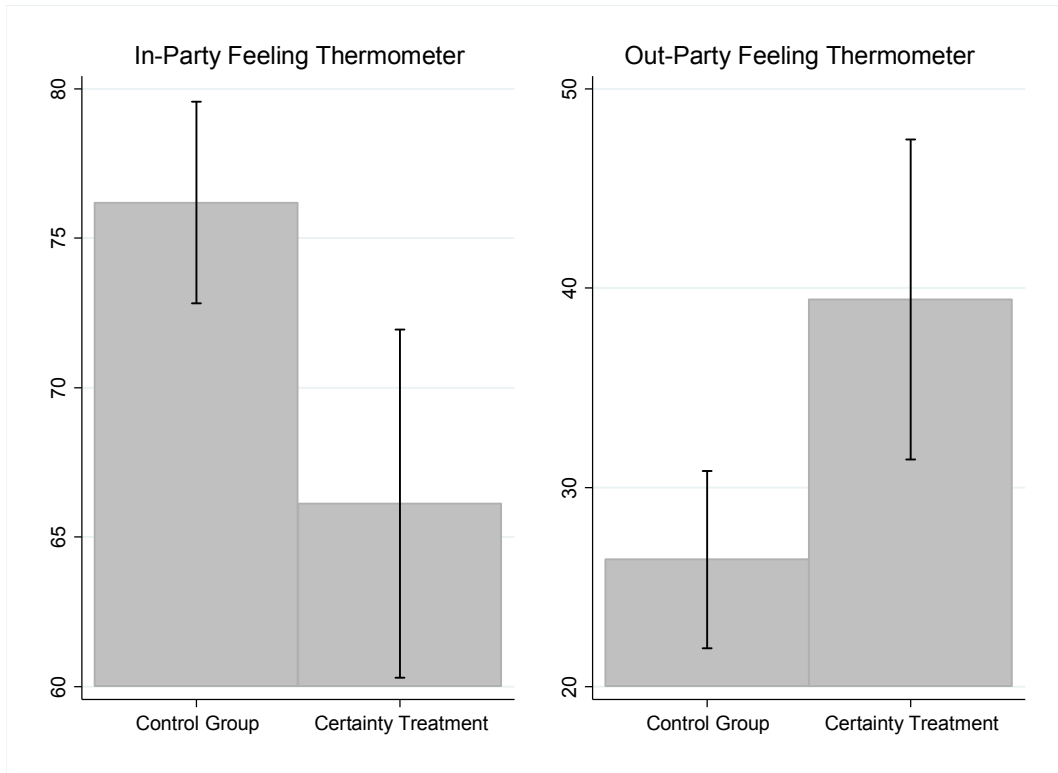
Note: This figure presents the predicted mean value of in-party and out-party feeling thermometers in the control and certainty condition among respondents below the median of political knowledge. 95% confidence intervals are shown. 2014 YouGov Study.

Figure 4. Psychological Certainty Weakens the Link between Elite and Mass Polarization
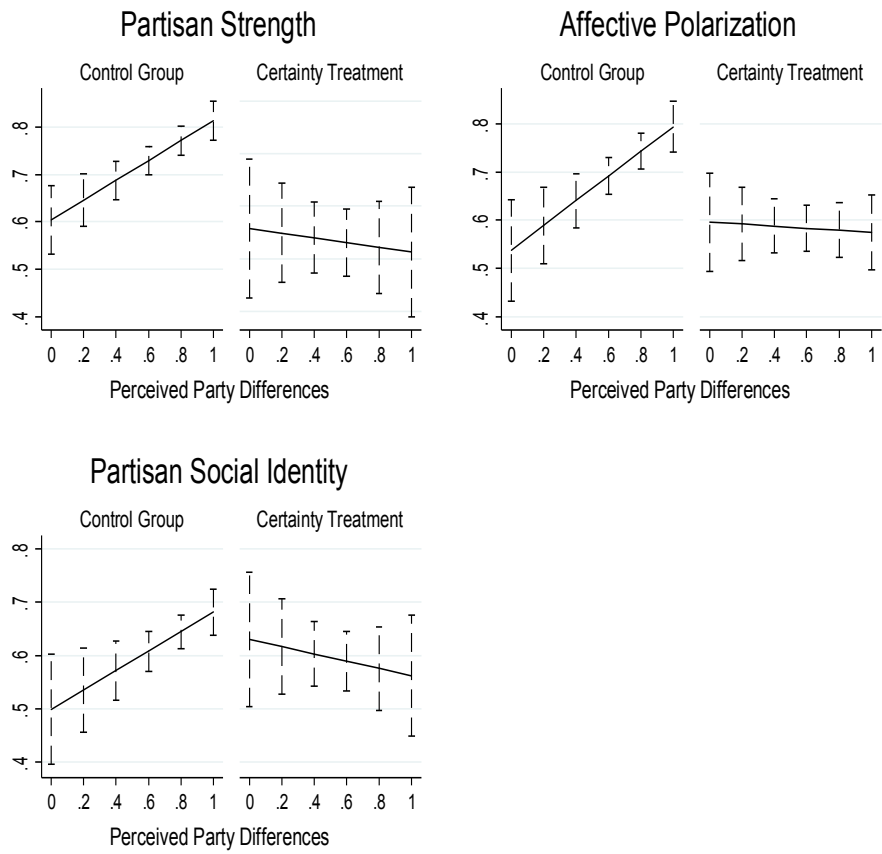
Note: Y-axis is predicted value of outcome variable (on a 0-1 scale), among respondents below the median of political knowledge. 95% confidence intervals are shown. Source: 2014 YouGov study.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This dissertation set out to examine the origins and consequences of the partisan resurgence in American politics. What is it that causes an individual to identify strongly with one of the two parties, hold more extreme feelings toward the two parties, and even exhibit intolerance toward the political out-group? And, why has elite polarization caused a deeper divide between Democrats and Republicans over time? Additionally, I ask what the consequences of this partisan resurgence are for the health of America's democracy. Does a strong partisan spirit help the public hold elites accountable and vote on the basis of the parties' ideological brands? Or, does strong partisanship lead to a more politically expressive but ideologically vacuous mass public, one that is more extreme, uncompromising, and rigid?

This dissertation presents a new theory and a number of novel conclusions about the origins of resurgent partisan strength and partisan extremism in American politics. To summarize, the three key theoretical claims and hypotheses of this dissertation are as follows. First, that the need for certainty represents a causal motivation driving partisan identity strength, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation. Second, that variation across party elites in cohesiveness or levels of polarization—because polarized parties are better certainty-providers—cultivates a stronger psychological bond among partisans and therefore strengthens partisan identification and conformity to group leaders. And third, that there is an interaction between individual-level uncertainty and elite-level polarization, such that the strongest processes of social identification occur when the

131

motivation to reduce uncertainty is high and when the parties are cohesive or polarized, capable of being an effective certainty-provider.

Throughout this dissertation, I found consistent support for these hypotheses. In chapter 2 I showed that elite polarization increases partisan sorting by strengthening blind conformity to party elites, not because elite parties make it easier for citizens to reason ideologically. This chapter further shows that the psychological need for certainty—in this case measured with the need for closure—also increases blind partisan bias in public opinion formation. These studies suggest that partisan sorting may be a product, rather than a cause, of strong partisan attachment and identity. These findings are difficult to reconcile with responsible party government and its current advocates, which state that elite polarization has transformed the electorate into ideologically "programmatic partisans" (Abramowitz 2010; Levendusky 2009; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012).

In chapter 3 I begin an examination of the link between psychological motivations and affective polarization. I specifically look at the relationship between authoritarianism—perhaps the central trait in the field of political psychology and a variable at the heart of the "psychological differences" hypothesis—and partisan strength. Contrary to the conventional wisdom (e.g., Hetherington and Weiler 2009), I find that authoritarianism increases partisan extremism among both Republicans and Democrats. This suggests that the electorate is not divided over clashing worldviews rooted in diametrically opposed psychological dispositions. Rather, the most extreme partisans are group-centric, predisposed to divide the world into in-groups and out-groups and see politics as a conflict as "us" vs. "them."

132

In the final empirical chapter, I provide a more robust examination of the link between the psychological need for certainty and partisan rigidity (partisan strength, in-party favoritism, and out-party derogation). First, across numerous studies, I show that the dispositional need for certainty increases partisan rigidity, especially among politically engaged respondents. Second, I show that the relationship between the psychological need for certainty and partisan rigidity is stronger in recent years (2006, 2008, 2010) than in the past (1988). Third, I show that heightened contexts of psychological certainty decrease partisan rigidity among less engaged respondents, and that the effect of perceived party differences on partisan rigidity is completely negated in environments of psychological certainty. This last study provides the strongest causal evidence for the claims that, (1) the need for certainty motivates strong partisanship, and (2) that elite polarization strengthens partisan rigidity because polarized elites are better certainty-providers. This last study also demonstrates the rigidity of engaged respondents, as their partisan identities are inflexible in the face of experimental treatments.

Suggestions for Future Research

These findings raise a number of intriguing questions to be developed in future research. A first question for future research is whether support for the "psychological differences" hypothesis may be found when looking at other personality traits. A particularly interesting set of psychological traits may be the distinct moral foundations that liberals and conservatives prioritize (Haidt 2012). Do the most extreme Democrats and Republicans possess diametrically opposed moral foundations? Or, in line with the

group-centrism thesis developed in this dissertation, do the most extreme Democrats and Republicans place a high moral value on the authority and in-group loyalty foundations? Examining the link between psychological dispositions and partisan extremism across more psychological dispositions is one obvious avenue for future scholarship interested in examining the "psychological differences" hypothesis more generally.

A second question more broadly for the field of political psychology is whether we can conceptualize personality in terms of a single, unified concept. Recent research suggests that those personality traits most closely linked to political orientation (e.g., openness to experience, conscientiousness, authoritarianism, need for closure) can all be conceptualized in terms of an umbrella concept of negativity bias (Hibbing et al. 2014). Much of the rationale for this conception is that all of these personality traits differentiate liberals and conservatives and, as I show, moderates from extremists (i.e., these personality traits all have the same political effects). However, in an extension of the research reported here, I show that authoritarianism and the need for closure have distinct effects among the politically engaged: among the highly engaged, authoritarianism increases right-wing partisanship while the need for closure increases partisan extremism generally. I argue that this is suggestive of a two-factor model of psychological dispositions and political attitudes, with one factor reflecting existential motivations (e.g., the need for security), and the other reflecting epistemic motivations (e.g., the need for certainty) (see also, Jost et al. 2003; 2007; 2009). I speculate that the reason these variables have distinct effects on politics among the engaged is because elite political

conflict is more explicitly divided around threat-related issues than certainty-related issues. I hope to develop this finding into a stand-alone paper in the future.

One implication of my research is that many strong Democrats and Republicans often disagree with their party on policy issues. This implication is most fleshed out in the authoritarianism paper, where I show that authoritarianism among Democrats simultaneously causes both strong Democratic partisanship and conservatism on cultural issues. One question for future research, then, is how strong partisans manage to maintain strong partisan identities when they disagree with their party leaders on policy issues. One hypothesis is that partisans prioritize party-consistent issues and give less weight to issues on which they disagree with their party (i.e., issue prioritization, Groenendyk 2013). This suggests that the current debate about whether American politics is experiencing a class war or a culture war (e.g., Bartels 2006 Frank 2007; Gelman 2009) may miss an important aspect of mass political reasoning: that the issue-content of partisan preference is a *rationalization* of social identification with a political team, not a rationale that drives political behavior (e.g., Lodge and Taber 2013).

Another question more generally for the field is whether there are partisan asymmetries in political information processing. Since need for closure increases partisan bias, and this trait is more common among Republicans, one implication of this dissertation is that Republicans may be more susceptible to party-elite influence than Democrats. Indeed, in the data collected for the study discussed in chapter 2 (which contained a total of four issues), I find support for this partisan asymmetry on 3 of the 4 policy issues (global warming, Medicaid, and iron mining). However, on the affirmative

action issue, I find an asymmetry in the opposite direction: Democrats are more susceptible to party-elite influence than Republicans. This represents a puzzle: why does the partisan asymmetry of reliance on partisan heuristics vary across issue domains? One possibility—which I think merits future research—is that the extent to which Democrats and Republicans follow party cues is conditioned by the level of importance Democrats and Republicans place on an issue. Recent research shows that Democrats and Republicans place different levels of importance on distinct issues, with Republicans considering moral issues most important, and Democrats prioritizing economic issues (e.g., Jacoby 2014). Since issue importance moderates the effect of party cues (Mullinix 2015), evidence regarding partisan asymmetries may somewhat reflect the issues being evaluated. On issues that Republicans consider important (i.e., those dealing with morality), Republicans may be less willing to blindly follow party leaders and vice versa for Democrats on those issues they consider most important (i.e., those dealing with economic security).

Theoretical Implications

The present research makes a number of contributions to a variety of literatures in political science and political psychology, including theories of party identification, personality and politics, affective polarization, political information processing, and the attitudinal consequences of political engagement. This study advances the study of mass partisanship by introducing a new theory of partisan identity, rooted in the psychological need for certainty. This represents a novel theoretical motive in scholarship on mass partisanship, and incorporating this motive into our theory of party identification is

helpful for explaining variation in partisan strength and hostility over time (as the parties have polarized) and heterogeneity across individuals (across levels of need for closure). The key benefit of this theory is that it allows us to understand the nature and origins of the current generation of partisan identity. Today's polarized parties offer their members clearer distinctions and more certain convictions, and in doing so they cause partisans to identify more strongly with their party for the epistemic benefits of group membership, cultivating a more rigid mass partisanship.

These findings also contribute to the growing personality literature by identifying a stable personality trait associated with partisan rigidity and strength. In contrast to the bulk of the literature on personality, (e.g., the "rigidity of the right" hypothesis in particular, Tetlock 1989), that psychological motivations associated with managing uncertainty increase support for political conservatism (e.g., Gerber et al. 2010; Hibbing et al. 2014; Jost et al. 2003; 2009; Mondak 2010; Thorisdottir and Jost 2011), this dissertation demonstrates that the dispositional need for certainty lead to *partisan* strength and rigidity on both the left and the right. Because parties are social groups, both need for closure and authoritarianism cause individuals to identify strongly with their partisan identities and derogate the out-party as a mechanism for certainty and closure, and this occurs for Democrats and Republicans alike. These findings are an important contribution to the field of political psychology which has long been concerned with the political consequences of psychological closed-mindedness, and specifically whether this trait leads to right-wing political attitudes or political extremism generally. I argue that conceptualizing partisanship as an identity rather than an ideology leads to

137

novel insights; specifically, this leads to the identification of left-wing authoritarians and support for the more general claim that political extremism can be palliative to individuals motivated by a psychological need for certainty.

Because authoritarianism and need for closure lead to partisan strength and affective polarization among both Democrats and Republicans, these findings contradict an emerging and increasingly popular view that the polarized partisan spirit in American politics reflects the psychological differences between Democrats and Republicans (e.g., Haidt 2012; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Hibbing et al. 2014). In contrast, this dissertation shows that the most polarized partisans on both sides of the divide are characterized by the same—not opposed—psychological needs for certainty and closure, psychological motivations that social psychologists indicate cause individuals to be "group-centric" generally. In short, this dissertation pushes back against the claim that the vitriolic nature of mass partisanship is a "culture war" rooted in distinct psychological traits, goals, and style. Rather, what varies between the most polarized Democrats and Republicans is simply the designation of "us" and the designation of "them."

In addition to partisan extremism, this dissertation also shows that the psychological need for certainty affects the manner in which individuals process political information, and specifically that the need for certainty empowers party leaders over public opinion formation. Thus polarized elites, as better certainty-providers, increase the extent to which the public blindly conforms to party elites. The psychological need for certainty, as measured by the personality variable need for cognitive closure, also increases the extent to which citizens take party leader cues rather than engage in a more

thorough processing of political information. These findings provide a new theoretical explanation for the effect of elite polarization on public opinion formation (e.g., Druckman et al. 2013) and identify a novel personality variable for explaining heterogeneity in partisan bias.

Moreover, this paper indicates that it is the most politically knowledgeable who embrace strong and rigid partisanship as a mechanism for obtaining the psychological rewards of group membership. For engaged citizens, political identities are expressive and form an important component of one's worldview and self-image. Thus, it was repeatedly demonstrated that political sophisticates use their partisan identities as a mechanism for obtaining the psychological benefit of certainty and closure. This finding bolsters evidence elsewhere that political sophistication increases partisan bias rather than provide citizens the cognitive tools and motivation to engage in open-minded evaluations of facts and evidence (Kahan 2015; Lodge and Taber 2013; Lavine et al. 2012; Slothuus and de Vreese 2010). Thus, political knowledge may in some respects be a double-edged sword. On one hand, knowledgeable citizens are more likely to follow politics and participate in the political process (e.g., Abramowitz 2010). But knowledgeable citizens are also the strongest "team players," and may be least likely to hold their party accountable for their actions. These findings suggest that we may need to reconsider the normative value of political knowledge in an era of polarized parties, as it may not always function as the "currency" of good democratic citizenship as generally presumed (e.g., Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996).

Normative Implications

Many believe that elite polarization has been a major boon to the competence of the American voter and the health of American democracy. For example, Abramowitz (2010, 159) argues that, "the conditions for responsible party government in the United States have largely been met. The Democratic and Republican parties today offer the voters a clear-cut choice between coherent policy packages, one liberal and one conservative, and most voters appear to have little difficulty choosing the party who is more to their liking." Levendusky (2009, 125) argues that, "elite polarization, by increasing voter consistency, has positive consequences for the health of American democracy." Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012) argue that the partisan voter today is a "programmatic" partisan, one who reasons on the basis of ideology rather than group-centric considerations or blind partisan affect. To the extent that elite polarization is problematic, these theorists place the entirety of the blame on political elites.

I argue that these accounts are incomplete in their explanation of what motivates the strong partisan spirit in American politics; therefore, these diagnoses about the health of American democracy are inaccurate. The public does not appear more capable of ideological thinking in polarized elite environments; rather, elite environments strengthen the pull of blind partisan loyalty. As a result, I argue that the partisan voter today in American politics is a rigid partisan, uncritically loyal to their party and intolerant of the political out-group. This rise of partisan rigidity may undermine even the most minimal theories of democracy and representation which requires a public that can hold elected officials accountable for their actions.

In short, I believe the evidence contained within this dissertation suggests that elite polarization—by strengthening the link between the psychological need for certainty and partisanship—leads to a lower quality public opinion by making citizens rigid partisans. Rigid partisans are group-centric, they see politics as a conflict as us vs. them, they are blindly loyal to their party, and they do not want to associate with the other side. In short, rigid partisans are likely to prioritize partisan purity over sound solutions to pressing social and economic problems. This is problematic, as this mindset reinforces and even rewards political gridlock among elites, even in cases like the debt ceiling and gun control where the failure to enact the correct policy—i.e., the one that best achieves universally desired end-states (i.e., economic stability and public safety)—may have devastating societal effects. In other words, we cannot lay all of the blame for the failures of a polarized political system on elites. In a democracy, power is vested in the public to hold elites accountable and to vote for policies that improve society. But when partisan loyalty trumps a critical evaluation of facts and evidence—as is likely among rigid partisans—we must also acknowledge the limitations of voters so as to offer correct prescriptions to improve the health of American democracy.

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Appendix Chapter 2

Partisan Sorting: Blind Partisanship or Ideological Alignment?

1. Experimental manipulations and question wording
2. Question wording of need for cognitive closure and political engagement
3. Summary statistics of YouGov Sample
4. Robustness Checks

1. Experimental manipulations and question wording

A) High Polarization Condition
Mining Stereotypical:
"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would require mining companies to spend more time than they currently do reviewing the environmental impact of a new project prior to starting mining operations. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed this proposal that would require that mining companies spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project than they are currently required to in order to start new mining operations. Here's how they responded:"

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly support the proposed additional requirements on mining companies; Republicans strongly oppose the proposed additional requirements on mining companies. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal that would require mining companies to spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project prior to starting new mining operations?

1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal

158

7- I strongly oppose the proposal

Mining Counter-Stereotypical:
"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would require mining companies to spend more time than they currently do reviewing the environmental impact of a new project prior to starting mining operations. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed this proposal that would require that mining companies spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project than they are currently required to in order to start new mining operations. Here's how they responded:"

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly oppose the proposed additional requirements on mining companies; Republicans strongly support the proposed additional requirements on mining companies. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal that would require mining companies to spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project prior to starting new mining operations?

1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal

6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal

Medicaid Stereotypical:

"The federal government is currently considering legislation over whether to cut spending on Medicaid (government supported health insurance for the poor). Some people support cutting spending on Medicaid. Others oppose cutting spending on Medicaid.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed cutting spending on Medicaid. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly oppose cutting spending on Medicaid; Republicans strongly support cutting spending on Medicaid. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.
What is your opinion on the proposal to cut Medicaid spending?
1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal

160

Medicaid Counter-Stereotypical:

"The federal government is currently considering legislation over whether to cut spending on Medicaid (government supported health insurance for the poor). Some people support cutting spending on Medicaid. Others oppose cutting spending on Medicaid.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed cutting spending on Medicaid. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly support cutting spending on Medicaid; Republicans strongly oppose cutting spending on Medicaid. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.
What is your opinion on the proposal to cut Medicaid spending?
1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal

Affirmative Action Stereotypical
"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would roll back affirmative action laws by banning the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

161

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Here's how they responded.

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly oppose the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions; Republicans strongly support the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Affirmative Action Counter-Stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would roll back affirmative action laws by banning the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Here's how they responded.

Strongly Support   Support   Some-what Support   Neutral   Some-what Op-pose   Oppose   Strongly Oppose

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly support the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions; Republicans strongly oppose the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Also, most members of each party are on the same side as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Global Warming Stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation to combat global warming. Some people support legislation to combat global warming, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed legislation to combat global warming. Here's how they responded:

163

Strongly Support   Support   Some-what Support   Neutral   Some-what Op-pose   Oppose   Strongly Oppose

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly support legislation to combat global warming. Republicans strongly oppose legislation to combat global warming. Also, most members of each party are on the same side of as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on legislation to combat global warming?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Global Warming Counter-stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation to combat global warming. Some people support legislation to combat global warming, others oppose it.

164

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed legislation to combat global warming. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is stark on this issue, as the parties are very far apart. Democrats strongly oppose legislation to combat global warming. Republicans strongly support legislation to combat global warming. Also, most members of each party are on the same side of as the rest of their party on this issue.

What is your opinion on legislation to combat global warming?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

B) Low Polarization Condition

Mining Stereotypical

165

"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would require mining companies to spend more time than they currently do reviewing the environmental impact of a new project prior to starting mining operations. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed this proposal that would require that mining companies spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project than they are currently required to in order to start new mining operations. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to support the proposed additional requirements on mining companies; Republicans tend to oppose the proposed additional requirements on mining companies. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue. What is your opinion on the proposal that would require mining companies to spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project prior to starting new mining operations?

1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal
Mining Counter-stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would require mining companies to spend more time than they currently do reviewing the environmental impact

of a new project prior to starting mining operations. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed this proposal that would require that mining companies spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project than they are currently required to in order to start new mining operations. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to oppose the proposed additional requirements on mining companies; Republicans tend to support the proposed additional requirements on mining companies. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue. What is your opinion on the proposal that would require mining companies to spend more time reviewing the environmental impact of a project prior to starting new mining operations?

1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal
Medicaid Stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation over whether to cut spending on Medicaid (government supported health insurance for the poor). Some people support cutting spending on Medicaid. Others oppose cutting spending on Medicaid.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed expanding nuclear power production in the United States. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to oppose cutting spending on Medicaid; Republicans tend to support cutting spending on Medicaid. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.
What is your opinion on the proposal to cut Medicaid spending?
1 - I strongly support the proposal
2- I support the proposal
3- I somewhat support the proposal
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal
6 - I oppose the proposal
7- I strongly oppose the proposal

Medicaid Counter-stereotypical
"The federal government is currently considering legislation over whether to cut spending on Medicaid (government supported health insurance for the poor). Some people support cutting spending on Medicaid. Others oppose cutting spending on Medicaid.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed expanding nuclear power production in the United States. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to support cutting spending on Medicaid; Republicans tend to oppose cutting spending on Medicaid. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal to cut Medicaid spending?

1 - I strongly support the proposal

2- I support the proposal

3- I somewhat support the proposal

4- Neutral

5 - I somewhat oppose the proposal

6 - I oppose the proposal

7- I strongly oppose the proposal

Affirmative Action Stereotypical:

"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would roll back affirmative action laws by banning the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to oppose the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions; Republicans tend to support the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Affirmative Action Counter-Stereotypical
"The federal government is currently considering legislation that would roll back affirmative action laws by banning the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Some people support this proposal, others oppose it.
We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. Here's how they responded:

170

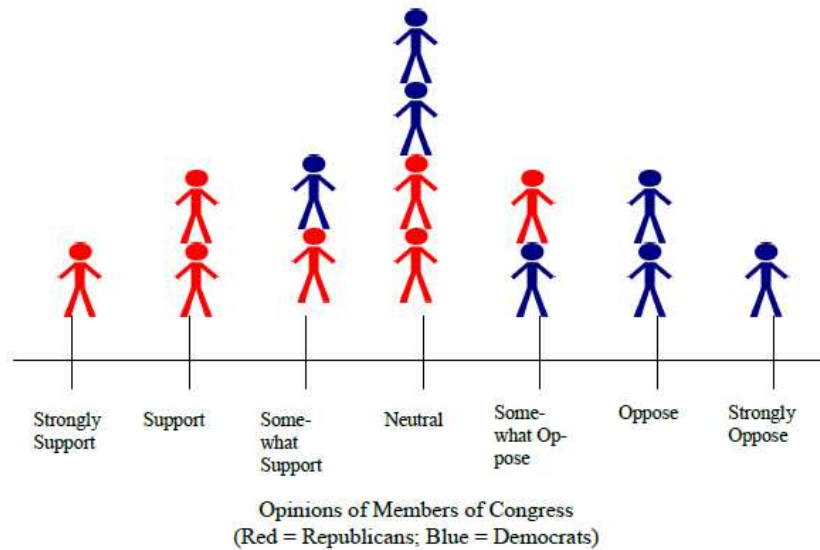Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to support the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions; Republicans tend to oppose the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

What is your opinion on the proposal to ban the use of racial criteria in college admissions?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Global Warming Stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation to combat global warming. Some people support legislation to combat global warming, others oppose it.

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed legislation to combat global warming. Here's how they responded:

Strongly Support | Support | Some- what Support | Neutral | Some- what Op- pose | Oppose | Strongly Oppose

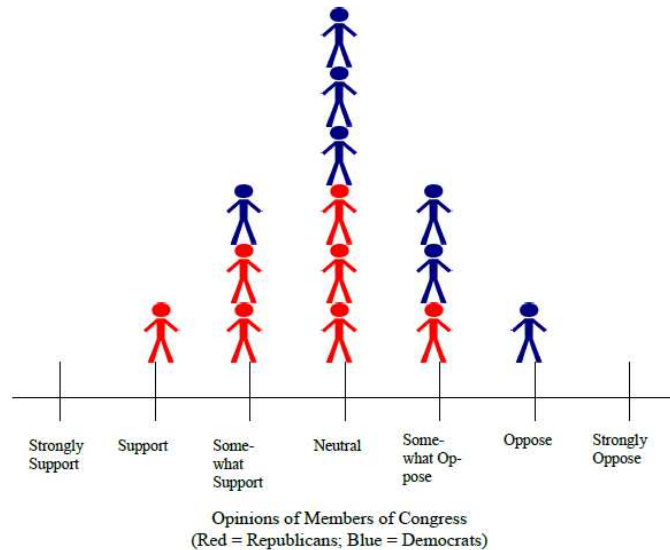Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to support legislation to combat global warming. Republicans tend to oppose legislation to combat global warming. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

What is your opinion on legislation to combat global warming?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

Global Warming Counter-stereotypical

"The federal government is currently considering legislation to combat global warming. Some people support legislation to combat global warming, others oppose it.

172

We asked members of Congress whether they supported or opposed legislation to combat global warming. Here's how they responded:

Opinions of Members of Congress
(Red = Republicans; Blue = Democrats)

As you can see, the partisan divide is not stark on this issue, as the parties are not very far apart. Democrats tend to oppose legislation to combat global warming. Republicans tend to support legislation to combat global warming. However, members of each party can be found on both sides of the issue.

What is your opinion on legislation to combat global warming?

1 - I strongly support it
2- I support it
3- I somewhat support it
4- Neutral
5 - I somewhat oppose it
6 - I oppose it
7- I strongly oppose it

2. Question wording of need for cognitive closure and political knowledge

Need for Cognitive Closure:
Please rate how much you agree or disagree with these statements

1) I don't like situations that are uncertain
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

2) I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

3) I find that a well ordered life with regular hours suits my temperament.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

4) I feel uncomfortable when I don't understand the reason why an event occurred in my life.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

5) I feel irritated when one person disagrees with what everyone else in a group believes.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree

6 - Strongly Agree

6) I don't like to go into a situation without knowing what I can expect from it.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

7) When I have made a decision, I feel relieved
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

8) When I am confronted with a problem, I'm dying to reach a solution very quickly.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

9) I would quickly become impatient and irritated if I would not find a solution to a problem immediately.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

10) I don't like to be with people who are capable of unexpected actions.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

11) I dislike it when a person's statement could mean many different things.

1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

12) I find that establishing a consistent routine enables me to enjoy life more.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

13) I enjoy having a clear and structured mode of life.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

14) I do not usually consult many different opinions before forming my own view.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

15) I dislike unpredictable situations.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

Political Knowledge:
"Here are a few questions about the government in Washington. Please answer these questions to the best of your ability."
1) Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Harry Reid?
   A) Vice President

B) Supreme Court Justice

C) Majority Leader in the Senate

D) Speaker of the House of Representatives

2) Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not? Is it the president, the Congress, or the Supreme Court?
   A) President
   B) Congress
   C) The Supreme Court

3) How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House to override a presidential veto?
   A) 1/2
   B) 2/3
   C) 3/4

4) Which of the two major parties would you say is more conservative?
   A) Democrats
   B) Republicans
   C) Neither

5) Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Jack Lew?
A) Attorney General
B) Minority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives
C) United States Secretary of the Treasury
D) U.S. Court of Appeals Judge

<p style="text-align:center">3. Summary statistics of YouGov Sample</p>

	Central Tendencies and %s
Median Age	44
Male	47%
Black	11.42%
White	70.92%
Mean Political Engagement (0-1)	0.67
Mean Need for Cognitive Closure (0-1)	0.59
Percent Republican	35.17%
Percent Democrat	51.25%
Percent Independent	13.58%
Median Income	50K-59K
Median Education	Some College

Note: Yougov uses sample matching techniques to generate samples from non-randomly selected pools of respondents. For this study, Yougov interviewed 1,358 respondents who were then matched down to 1,200 respondents on the basis of: gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and political interest. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).

4. Robustness Checks

Appendix Table 2.1. The Effect of Need for Closure and Need for Cognition on Partisan Sorting

VARIABLES	(1) Issue Sort	(2) Sort Stereotypical	(3) Sort Counter-Stereotypical
Need for Closure	0.63**	0.71	1.26**
	(0.273)	(0.507)	(0.517)
Need for Cognition	0.27	1.28**	-0.72*
	(0.213)	(0.411)	(0.423)
Political Knowledge	1.07**	2.87**	-0.58*
	(0.203)	(0.369)	(0.318)
High Polarization	0.35**	0.32*	0.70**
	(0.085)	(0.162)	(0.167)
Mining	-0.19*	-0.53**	0.21
	(0.106)	(0.169)	(0.209)
Medicaid	-0.05	-0.45**	0.60**
	(0.108)	(0.180)	(0.220)
Affirmative Action	-0.12	-0.99**	1.01**
	(0.107)	(0.192)	(0.218)
Mining Stereo	0.51**		
	(0.084)		
Medicaid Stereo	0.56**		
	(0.085)		
AA Stereo	0.41**		
	(0.085)		
Global Warming Stereo	0.69**		
	(0.086)		
Constant	-2.17**	0.09	-3.44**
	(0.239)	(0.407)	(0.468)
Observations	3,524	1,713	1,811

Robust standard errors, clustered by respondent, in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are logit coefficients, accounting for subject-specific random effects.

Appendix Table 2.2. The Effect of Need for Closure and Partisan Social Identity on Partisan Sorting

VARIABLES	(1) Issue Sort	(2) Sort Stereotypical	(3) Sort Counter-Stereotypical
Need for Closure	0.44*	0.17	1.44**
	(0.257)	(0.494)	(0.504)
Partisan Social Identity	1.41**	2.42**	1.28**
	(0.206)	(0.402)	(0.430)
Political Knowledge	1.01**	2.79**	-0.55*
	(0.194)	(0.359)	(0.299)
High Polarization	0.38**	0.35**	0.77**
	(0.084)	(0.159)	(0.168)
Mining	-0.19*	-0.53**	0.28
	(0.105)	(0.168)	(0.208)
Medicaid	-0.07	-0.46**	0.60**
	(0.107)	(0.178)	(0.222)
Affirmative Action	-0.15	-1.01**	1.02**
	(0.107)	(0.189)	(0.218)
Mining Stereo	0.50**		
	(0.082)		
Medicaid Stereo	0.59**		
	(0.083)		
AA Stereo	0.41**		
	(0.083)		
Global Warming Stereo	0.72**		
	(0.084)		
Constant	-2.84**	-0.44**	-4.80**
	(0.276)	(0.375)	(0.489)
Observations	3,600	1,752	1,848

Robust standard errors, clustered by respondent, in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are logit coefficients, accounting for subject-specific random effects.

Appendix Table 2.3. Need for Closure Increases Partisan Cue-Taking Among Democrats and Republicans

VARIABLES	(1) Sort Counter-Stereotypical
Need for Closure (NFC)	1.33**
	(0.733)
Republican	0.93
	(0.637)
Political Knowledge	-0.82**
	(0.315)
NFC × Republican	-0.26
	(0.315)
High Polarization	0.72**
	(0.164)
Mining	0.27
	(0.205)
Medicaid	0.59**
	(0.219)
Affirmative Action	0.99**
	(0.219)
Constant	-4.26**
	(0.478)
Observations	1,848

Robust standard errors, clustered by respondent, in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: This analysis is confined to counter-stereotypical conditions. Entries are logit coefficients, accounting for subject-specific random effects.

Appendix Chapter 3

Authoritarianism and Affective Polarization:

A New View on the Origins of Partisan Extremism

1. Question Wording – 2012 ANES
2. Table A.1 Correlation Between Authoritarianism and Demographic Variables in 2012 ANES
3. Mean and Distribution of Authoritarianism by Party in 2012 ANES

1. Question Wording – 2012 ANES

<u>Authoritarianism (all years):</u>
Although there are a number of qualities that people feel that children should have, every person thinks that some are more important than others. I am going to read you pairs of desirable qualities. Please tell me which one you think is more important for a child to have:

  (1)   Obedience or Self-Reliance
  (2)   Independent or Respect for Elders
  (3)   Curiosity or Good Manners
  (4)   Considerate or Well-Behaved

<u>Party Identification:</u>
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?
Democrat
Republican
Independent
Other Party

IF CONSIDERS SELF A DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN
Would you call yourself a strong Democrat/Republican or a not very strong Democrat/Republican?
Strong Democrat/Republican
Not very strong Democrat/Republican

IF CONSIDERS SELF AN INDEPENDENT
Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?
Yes, Democratic
Yes, Republican

<u>Democratic & Republican Party Affect:</u>
I'd like to get your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news these days. I'll read the name of a person and I'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person. If we come to a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate that person. Just tell me and we'll move on to the next one.
"The Democratic Party"
"The Republican Party"
<u>Abortion (2012 ANES):</u>

"There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose."
1 - By law, abortion should never be permitted
2 - The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in   danger.
3 - The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's   life, but only after the need for abortion has been clearly established.
4 - By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.

Government Jobs (2012 ANES):
Some people think the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government should see to jobs and standard of living
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Government should let each person get ahead on own

Government Services (2012 ANES):
Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Government should provide many fewer services
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Government should provide many more services

Defense (2012 ANES):
Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government should decrease defense spending
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Government should increase defense spending

Health Care (2012 ANES):

There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some people feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans like Blue Cross or other company paid plans. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7.
And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government Insurance Plan
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Private Insurance Plan

Aid to Blacks (2012 ANES):
Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government should help blacks
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Blacks should help themselves

Gay Marriage (2012 ANES):

"Which comes closest to your view?"

1. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to legally marry.
2. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to form civil unions but not legally marry.
3. There should be no legal recognition of a gay or lesbian couple's relationship.

Political Interest (2012 ANES):

"How often do you pay attention to what's going on in government and politics?

1. Always
2. Most of the time
3. About half the time
4. Some of the time
5. Never

Political Knowledge (Questions 1 and 3 are open-ended)

1) Do you happen to know how many times an individual can be elected President of the United States under current laws?
2) Is the U.S. federal budget deficit—the amount by which the government's spending exceeds the amount of money it collects—now bigger, about the same, or smaller than it was in the 1990s?
      1 – Bigger
      2 – About the Same
      3 – Smaller

3) For how many years is a United States Senator elected—that is, how many years are there in one full term of office for a U.S. Senator?
4) What is Medicare?
      1. A program run by the U.S. federal government to pay for old people's health care

2. A program run by state governments to provide health care to poor people
3. A private health insurance plan sold to individuals in all 50 states
4. A private, non-profit organization that runs free health clinics

5) On which of the following does the U.S. federal government currently spend the least?

1. Foreign aid
2. Medicare
3. National defense
4. Social Security

Appendix Table A2.1 – Correlation Between Authoritarianism and Demographic Variables – 2012 ANES

White Democrats:

	Authoritarianism
Authoritarianism	1.00
Education	-0.43*
Income	-0.21*
Age	0.06*
Female	0.04
South	0.03
Internet Mode	0.02

* = p<0.05

White Republicans:

	Authoritarianism
Authoritarianism	1.00
Education	-0.27*
Income	-0.11*
Age	0.00
Female	-0.01
South	-0.01
Internet Mode	0.05

* = p<0.05

Appendix Figure A2.1 Histogram of Authoritarianism among Whites, by Party, 2012 ANES

White Democrats
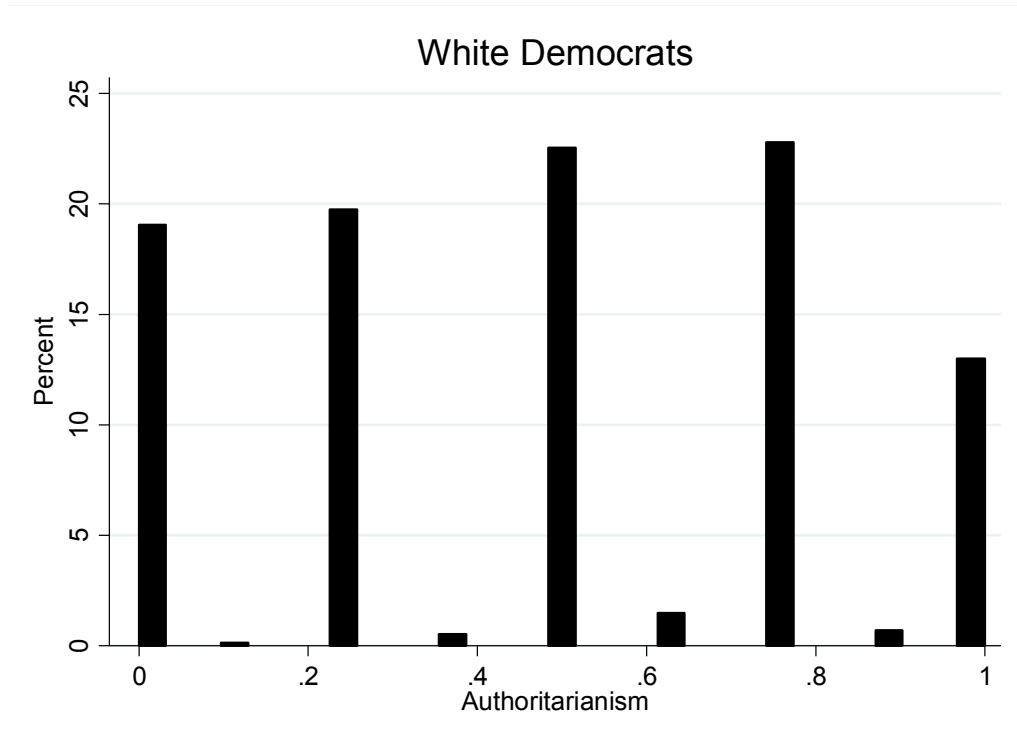
Note: Mean (0.48), standard deviation (0.33), N = 1286.

White Republicans
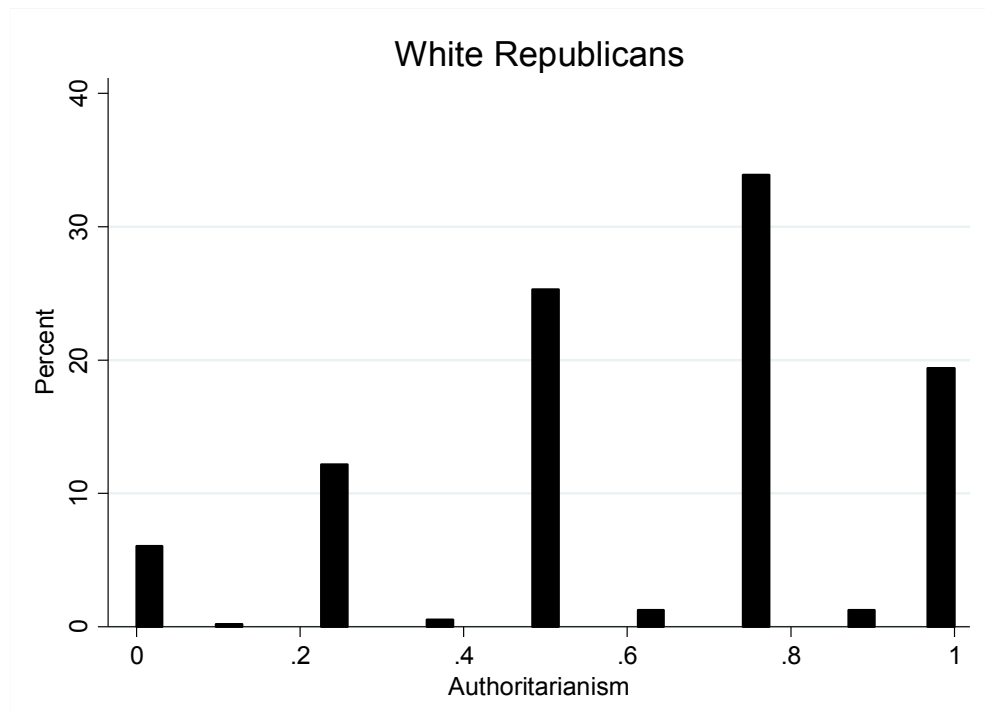
Note: Mean (0.63), standard deviation (0.28), N = 1506.

Appendix Chapter 4

**The Rise of Partisan Rigidity: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory of the Partisan
Resurgence in American Politics**

Question Wording
1. 2014 YouGov Study
2. 2008 Knowledge Networks Study
3. 2012 American National Election Studies
Robustness Checks
4. Results confined to Democrats
5. Results confined to Republicans
6. Check for post-treatment bias
7. Controlling for related personality variables: authoritarianism, need for cognition, the
Big Five
Figures
8. Distribution of Need for Closure among Democrats and Republicans in each survey
9. Replication of Figure 1 at highest level of political interest
10. The level of Need for Closure has not changed over time (GSS)

1. Question Wording – 2014 YouGov Study
Partisan Strength
On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the weakest and 10 being the strongest, how strongly do you identify with [Democrats/Republicans]?
Party Feeling Thermometers
Next I'd like to ask you about your feelings toward the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Ratings between 50 degrees-100 degrees mean that you feel favorably and warm toward the group; ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorably towards the group and that you don't care too much for that group. If you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward a group you would rate them at 50 degrees.

1) "How do you feel about the Democratic Party?"
2) "How do you feel about the Republican Party?"
Partisan Social Identity
1) "How Important is being a [Democrat/Republican] to you?"
   a) Extremely Important
   b) Very Important
   c) Not very Important
   d) Not Important at all

2) "How well does the term [Democrat/Republican] describe you?"
   a) Extremely well
   b) Very well
   c) Not very well
   d) Not at all

3) "When talking about [Democrats/Republicans], how often do you use "we" instead of "they"?"
   a) All of the time
   b) Most of the time
   c) Some of the time
   d) Rarely
   e) Never

4) "To what extent do you think of yourself as being a [Democrat/Republican]?"
   a) A great deal
   b) Somewhat
   c) Very little
   d) Not at all

Interparty Marriage

How would you feel if your son or daughter were to enter into marriage with a [Democrat/Republican]?

1 - Not Upset at all
2 - Somewhat Upset
3 - Very Upset
4 - Not Sure

Need for Cognitive Closure:
Please rate how much you agree or disagree with these statements

1) I don't like situations that are uncertain
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

2) I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

3) I find that a well ordered life with regular hours suits my temperament.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

4) I feel uncomfortable when I don't understand the reason why an event occurred in my life.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree

6 - Strongly Agree

5) I feel irritated when one person disagrees with what everyone else in a group believes.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

6) I don't like to go into a situation without knowing what I can expect from it.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

7) When I have made a decision, I feel relieved
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

8) When I am confronted with a problem, I'm dying to reach a solution very quickly.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

9) I would quickly become impatient and irritated if I would not find a solution to a problem immediately.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

10) I don't like to be with people who are capable of unexpected actions.

1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

11) I dislike it when a person's statement could mean many different things.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

12) I find that establishing a consistent routine enables me to enjoy life more.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

13) I enjoy having a clear and structured mode of life.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

14) I do not usually consult many different opinions before forming my own view.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree
5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

15) I dislike unpredictable situations.
1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Moderately Disagree
3 - Slightly Disagree
4 - Slightly Agree

5 - Moderately Agree
6 - Strongly Agree

Political Knowledge
"Here are a few questions about the government in Washington. Please answer these questions to the best of your ability."
1) Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Harry Reid?
    E) Vice President
    F) Supreme Court Justice
    G) Majority Leader in the Senate
    H) Speaker of the House of Representatives

2) Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not? Is it the president, the Congress, or the Supreme Court?
    D) President
    E) Congress
    F) The Supreme Court

3) How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House to override a presidential veto?
    D) 1/2
    E) 2/3
    F) 3/4

4) Which of the two major parties would you say is more conservative?
    D) Democrats
    E) Republicans
    F) Neither

5) Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Jack Lew?
A) Attorney General
B) Minority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives
C) United States Secretary of the Treasury
D) U.S. Court of Appeals Judge

Political Interest
How often do you pay attention to politics and elections?

A) Always
B) Most of the time
C) About half the time
D) Some of the time
E) Never

Policy Preferences
Now, we have a few questions about your general political beliefs.

1) Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 - Government should provide many fewer services
2 -
3 -
4 -
5 -
6 -
7 - Government should provide many more services

2) Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 - Government should see to jobs and standard of living
2 -
3 -
4 -
5 -
6 -
7 - Government should let each person get ahead on their own

3) Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 - Government should decrease defense spending

2 -

3 -

4 -

5 -

6 -

7 - Government should increase defense spending

4) Which comes closest to your view about what government policy should be toward unauthorized immigrants now living in the United States?

1. Make all unauthorized immigrants felons and send them back to their home country.

2. Have a guest worker program that allows unauthorized immigrants to remain in the United States in order to work, but only for a limited amount of time.

3. Allow unauthorized immigrants to remain in the United States and eventually qualify for U.S. citizenship, but only if they meet certain requirements like paying back taxes and fines, learning English, and passing background checks.

4. Allow unauthorized immigrants to remain in the United States and eventually qualify for U.S. citizenship, without penalties.

2. Question Wording – 2008 Knowledge Networks Study
Partisan Strength
1) Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a
        Democrat, an independent, or what?

1. REPUBLICAN
2. DEMOCRAT
3. INDEPENDENT
4. OTHER PARTY [SPECIFY]
5. NO PREFERENCE

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

1. STRONG
2. NOT VERY STRONG

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

1. STRONG
2. NOT VERY STRONG

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

1. CLOSER TO REPUBLICAN
2. NEITHER
3. CLOSER TO DEMOCRATIC

Need for Closure
1) In case of uncertainty, I prefer to make an immediate decision, whatever
        it may be.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

2) When I find myself facing various, potentially-valid alternatives, I

decide in favor of one of them quickly and without hesitation.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

3) I prefer to decide on the first available solution rather than to ponder
    at length what decision I should make.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

4) I get very upset when things around me aren't in their place.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

5) Generally, I avoid participating in discussions on ambiguous and
    controversial problems.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

6) When I need to confront a problem, I do not think about it too much and
    I decide without hesitation.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE

4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

7) When I need to solve a problem, I generally do not waste time in
      considering diverse points of view about it.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

8) I prefer to be with people who have the same ideas and tastes as myself.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

9) Generally, I do not search for alternative solutions to problems for
      which I already have a solution available.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

10) I feel uncomfortable when I do not manage to give a quick response to
      problems that I face.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

11) Any solution to a problem is better than remaining in a state of

uncertainty.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

12) I prefer activities where it is always clear what is to be done and how
      it needs to be done.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

13) After having found a solution to a problem I believe that it is a
      useless waste of time to take into account diverse possible solutions.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

14) I prefer things that I am used to over things I am unfamiliar with.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. MODERATELY DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. SLIGHTLY AGREE
5. MODERATELY AGREE
6. STRONGLY AGREE

Political Knowledge
Now we have a set of questions concerning the government and
      various public figures. We want to see how much information about them gets
      out to the public from television, newspapers, and the like.

1) What job or political office does DICK CHENEY currently hold?

1. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2. WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF
3. VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

2) What job or political office does JOHN ROBERTS currently hold?

1. ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
2. CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT
3. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

3) What job or political office does GORDON BROWN currently hold?

1. PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
2. PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA
3. PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

4) What job or political office does NANCY PELOSI currently hold?

1. SENATE MAJORITY LEADER
2. SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3. SECRETARY OF STATE

5) Which political party currently has the most members in the Senate in
       Washington?

1. THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY
2. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

6) Which political party currently has the most members in the House of
       Representatives in Washington?

1. THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY
2. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

7) How long is the term of office for a U.S. senator?

1. TWO YEARS
2. FOUR YEARS
3. SIX YEARS

8) Whose responsibility is it to nominate judges to the Federal Courts — the
       President, the Congress, or the Supreme Court?

1. THE PRESIDENT
2. THE CONGRESS
3. THE SUPREME COURT

Political Interest
Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public
affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others
aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government
and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or
hardly at all?

1. MOST OF THE TIME
2. SOME OF THE TIME
3. ONLY NOW AND THEN
4. HARDLY AT ALL

Political self-expression
1) My political attitudes and beliefs are an important reflection of who I
am.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE
5. SLIGHTLY AGREE
6. AGREE
7. STRONGLY AGREE

2) In general, my political attitudes and beliefs are an important part of my
self-image.

1. STRONGLY DISAGREE
2. DISAGREE
3. SLIGHTLY DISAGREE
4. NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE
5. SLIGHTLY AGREE
6. AGREE
7. STRONGLY AGREE

Policy Preferences
Next, we'd like you to respond to a series of questions about your views on a number of
political and social issues. Please respond to each of the scales provided.
1) Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in
areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Other people

feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. FEWER SERVICES; REDUCE SPENDING
2. SHOULD STAY THE SAME AS IT IS NOW
3. MORE SERVICES; INCREASE SPENDING

Should the government reduce services and spending a great deal or (reduce services and spending) only some?

1. A GREAT DEAL
2. ONLY SOME

Should the government increase services and spending a great deal or (increase services and spending) only some?

1. A GREAT DEAL
2. ONLY SOME

2) Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. DECREASE DEFENSE SPENDING
2. SHOULD STAY THE SAME AS IT IS NOW
3. INCREASE DEFENSE SPENDING

Should the government decrease defense spending a lot or a little?

1. A LOT
2. A LITTLE

Should the government increase defense spending a lot or a little?

1. A LOT
2. A LITTLE

3) Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every

person has a job and a good standard of living. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE TO JOBS AND STANDARD OF LIVING
2. IT DEPENDS
3. GOVERNMENT SHOULD LET EACH PERSON GET AHEAD ON OWN

Do you feel strongly that the government should see to it that every
        person has a job and a good standard of living, or not so strongly?

1. STRONGLY
5. NOT STRONGLY

 Do you feel strongly that the government should just let each person
        get ahead on their own, or not so strongly?

1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

4) Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every
        effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Others feel that
        the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they
        should help themselves. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you
        thought much about this?

1. GOVERNMENT SHOULD HELP BLACKS
2. IT DEPENDS
3. BLACKS SHOULD HELP THEMSELVES

Should the government help blacks to a great extent or only to some
extent?
1. GREAT EXTENT
5. ONLY SOME

Should blacks have to help themselves to a great extent or only to some
        extent?

1. GREAT EXTENT

2. ONLY SOME

5) Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry, and government. Others feel that a woman's place is in the home. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?
1. WOMEN AND MEN SHOULD HAVE EQUAL ROLES
2. IT DEPENDS
3. A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that men and women should have equal roles?
1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that a woman's place is in the home?
1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

6) Some people think we need much tougher government regulations on business in order to protect the environment. Others think that current regulations to protect the environment are already too much of a burden on business. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. TOUGHER REGULATIONS ON BUSINESS NEEDED TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT
2. IT DEPENDS
3. REGULATIONS TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT ALREADY TOO MUCH A BURDEN ON BUSINESS

Do we need to toughen regulations to protect the environment a lot, or just somewhat?
1. A LOT
2. SOMEWHAT

Are regulations to protect the environment way too much of a burden on business or just somewhat of a burden?
1. WAY TOO MUCH
2. SOMEWHAT

7) Some people feel that the government should not restrict a woman's right

to an abortion, and that women should be able to have them whenever they choose. Others feel that abortion is wrong and should not be allowed under any circumstances. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT RESTRICT ABORTION RIGHTS
2. IT DEPENDS
3. ABORTION SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that the government should not
        restrict a woman's right to an abortion?
1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that abortion is wrong and should
        not be allowed under any circumstances?
1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

8) Some people feel that gays and lesbians should be protected from bias and
        discrimination. Others feel that homosexuality is wrong and that the
        government should not pass laws protecting gays and lesbians. Which is closer
        to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

1. GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROTECT GAYS AND LESBIANS FROM BIAS
2. IT DEPENDS
3. GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT PROTECT GAYS AND LESBIANS FROM BIAS

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that the government should protect
        gays and lesbians from bias?
1. STRONGLY
2. NOT STRONGLY

Do you feel strongly or not strongly that the government should not
        protect gays and lesbians from bias?
1. STRONGLY
5. NOT STRONGLY

3. Question Wording in the 2012 American National Election Studies
Partisan Strength
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

Democrat
Republican
Independent
Other Party

IF CONSIDERS SELF A DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN
Would you call yourself a strong Democrat/Republican or a not very strong Democrat/Republican?

Strong Democrat/Republican
Not very strong Democrat/Republican

IF CONSIDERS SELF AN INDEPENDENT
Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

Yes, Democratic
Yes, Republican

Party Feeling Thermometers
I'd like to get your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news these days. I'll read the name of a person and I'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person. If we come to a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate that person. Just tell me and we'll move on to the next one.

"The Democratic Party"

"The Republican Party"

Need for Closure
"Of the situations when you see two people disagreeing with one another, in how many of them can you see how both people could be right?
1- Always
2 – Most of the time
3 – About half the time

4 – Some of the time
5 – Never

Political Knowledge (Questions 1 and 3 are open-ended)
1) Do you happen to know how many times an individual can be elected President of the United States under current laws?
2) Is the U.S. federal budget deficit—the amount by which the government's spending exceeds the amount of money it collects—now bigger, about the same, or smaller than it was in the 1990s?
     1 – Bigger
     2 – About the Same
     3 – Smaller

3) For how many years is a United States Senator elected—that is, how many years are there in one full term of office for a U.S. Senator?
4) What is Medicare?
     1. A program run by the U.S. federal government to pay for old people's health care
     2. A program run by state governments to provide health care to poor people
     3. A private health insurance plan sold to individuals in all 50 states
     4. A private, non-profit organization that runs free health clinics

5) On which of the following does the U.S. federal government currently spend the least?

     1. Foreign aid
     2. Medicare
     3. National defense
     4. Social Security

Political Interest

How often do you pay attention to politics and elections?

A) Always
B) Most of the time
C) About half the time
D) Some of the time
E) Never

Policy Preferences

<u>Abortion:</u>

"There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose."

1 - By law, abortion should never be permitted

2 - The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in   danger.

3 - The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's   life, but only after the need for abortion has been clearly established.

4 - By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.

Government Jobs:

Some people think the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Government should see to jobs and standard of living

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7. Government should let each person get ahead on own

Government Services:

Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Government should provide many fewer services

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7. Government should provide many more services

Defense:
Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government should decrease defense spending
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Government should increase defense spending

Health Care:

There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some people feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans like Blue Cross or other company paid plans. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7.
And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government Insurance Plan
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Private Insurance Plan

Aid to Blacks:
Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?
1. Government should help blacks
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Blacks should help themselves

Gay Marriage:

"Which comes closest to your view?"

1. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to legally marry.
2. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to form civil unions but not legally marry.
3. There should be no legal recognition of a gay or lesbian couple's relationship.

4. Results Confined to Democrats:

Replication of Table 1 – Democrats

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Affective Polarization	(3) Partisan Identity	(4) Marriage
Need for Closure	0.07	0.03	0.07	0.12
	(0.077)	(0.075)	(0.078)	(0.846)
Partisan Sorting	0.11**	0.08**	0.11**	0.90**
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.340)
Policy Extremism	0.11*	0.11**	0.06	0.46
	(0.063)	(0.054)	(0.046)	(0.521)
Political Knowledge	-0.12**	-0.05	-0.18**	-0.20
	(0.056)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.623)
Political Interest	0.11**	0.12**	0.14**	0.53
	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.039)	(0.574)
Income	-0.07	0.02	0.01	0.19
	(0.069)	(0.049)	(0.054)	(0.708)
Education	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03	0.55
	(0.066)	(0.036)	(0.045)	(0.522)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.01
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.008)
White	-0.07**	-0.03	-0.03	-0.46
	(0.029)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.338)
Female	0.05**	0.04*	0.05**	0.08
	(0.022)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.288)
Constant	0.53**	0.52**	0.48**	-1.59*
	(0.063)	(0.070)	(0.073)	(0.948)
Observations	510	433	510	509
R-squared	0.19	0.17	0.17	
Pseudo R-squared	0.17	0.15	0.16	0.06

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 2 – Democrats

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Affective Polarization	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Partisan Identity	(6) Partisan Identity	(7) Marriage	(8) Marriage
Need for Closure	-0.20	-0.05	-0.54**	-0.20	-0.32	-0.12	-1.22	-1.70
	(0.147)	(0.137)	(0.143)	(0.145)	(0.212)	(0.172)	(1.878)	(1.754)
Political Knowledge	-0.20	-0.13**	-0.54**	-0.06	-0.55**	-0.19**	-0.64	-0.24
	(0.164)	(0.055)	(0.151)	(0.054)	(0.179)	(0.056)	(2.042)	(0.599)
NFC x Knowledge	0.38*		0.88**		0.59**		2.19^	
	(0.226)		(0.193)		(0.271)		(2.612)	
Partisan Sorting	0.04	0.09	-0.06	0.03	0.00	0.08*	1.66**	1.45**
	(0.056)	(0.062)	(0.059)	(0.055)	(0.068)	(0.046)	(0.793)	(0.700)
Sorting x Knowledge	0.09		0.20**		0.14		-1.13	
	(0.086)		(0.075)		(0.090)		(1.039)	
Policy Extremism	0.42**	0.28**	0.38**	0.15	0.16	0.07	1.05	-0.20
	(0.127)	(0.113)	(0.076)	(0.107)	(0.108)	(0.079)	(1.283)	(1.420)
Extremism × Knowledge	-0.45**		-0.36**		-0.13		-0.69	
	(0.210)		(0.115)		(0.164)		(1.577)	
Political Interest	0.10**	0.10	0.11**	-0.15	0.13**	-0.09	0.55	-1.47
	(0.049)	(0.187)	(0.046)	(0.140)	(0.038)	(0.165)	(0.568)	(2.246)
Income	-0.05	-0.06	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.21	0.27
	(0.062)	(0.069)	(0.041)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.054)	(0.715)	(0.705)
Education	-0.01	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02	0.64	0.74
	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.043)	(0.046)	(0.522)	(0.509)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.01	-0.00
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.008)	(0.008)
White	-0.06**	-0.07**	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03	-0.38	-0.41
	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.022)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.334)	(0.305)
Female	0.04**	0.04*	0.03	0.04	0.05**	0.04**	0.03	-0.00
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.287)	(0.286)
NFC x Interest		0.23		0.43**		0.36		3.45
		(0.223)		(0.200)		(0.252)		(2.410)
Sorting x Interest		0.04		0.10		0.05		-1.04
		(0.096)		(0.077)		(0.072)		(1.028)
Extremism × Interest		-0.31*		-0.08		-0.01		1.23
		(0.181)		(0.130)		(0.128)		(1.926)
Constant	0.59**	0.55**	0.81**	0.67**	0.70**	0.60**	-1.42	-0.71
	(0.104)	(0.110)	(0.104)	(0.107)	(0.133)	(0.117)	(1.527)	(1.559)
Observations	510	510	433	433	510	510	509	509
R-squared	0.22	0.20	0.25	0.19	0.20	0.18		
Pseudo R-squared	0.20	0.18	0.23	0.17	0.18	0.16	0.07	0.07

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10, ^p<0.10 (one-tailed)

Replication of Table 3 – Democrats

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Partisan Strength
Need for Closure	0.23	-4.73*	-3.70	-3.61
	(0.799)	(2.464)	(2.459)	(2.278)
Political self-expression		-1.63		
		(2.182)		
NFC x Political self-expression		7.51**		
		(3.412)		
Partisan Sorting	1.18**	0.46	0.66	0.18
	(0.271)	(0.715)	(0.904)	(0.710)
Sorting x political self-expression		1.18		
		(1.117)		
Policy Extremism	0.83	1.38	0.66	0.46
	(0.594)	(1.715)	(1.784)	(1.779)
Extremism x political self-expression		-0.95		
		(2.437)		
Political knowledge	0.45	0.37	-2.50	0.58
	(0.585)	(0.601)	(2.238)	(0.595)
Political interest	1.77**	1.15**	1.87**	-1.69
	(0.456)	(0.471)	(0.453)	(1.962)
Income	-0.15	-0.32	-0.16	-0.13
	(0.607)	(0.602)	(0.611)	(0.616)
Education	1.24	0.83	1.12	1.27
	(0.846)	(0.861)	(0.859)	(0.847)
Age	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
White	-0.40	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40
	(0.284)	(0.285)	(0.288)	(0.290)
Female	0.54**	0.49**	0.51**	0.59**
	(0.233)	(0.238)	(0.234)	(0.236)
NFC x Knowledge			5.33*	
			(3.098)	
Sorting x Knowledge			0.72	
			(1.171)	
Extremism x Knowledge			0.20	
			(2.444)	
NFC x Interest				5.23*
				(2.789)
Sorting x Interest				1.40
				(0.940)
Extremism x Interest				0.44
				(2.231)
Constant	-4.48**	-2.51	-2.20	-2.05
	(1.024)	(1.699)	(1.905)	(1.651)
Observations	612	607	612	612
Pseudo R-squared	0.14	0.17	0.15	0.15

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 4 – Democrats

	Partisan Strength	Partisan Strength	Partisan Strength	Affective Polarization	Affective Polarization	Affective Polarization
Need for Closure	0.64*	-2.89**	-0.80	0.01	-0.16*	-0.02
	(0.362)	(1.147)	(0.921)	(0.025)	(0.091)	(0.062)
Political Knowledge	-0.45	-4.13**	-0.44	-0.02	-0.23**	-0.02
	(0.389)	(1.210)	(0.390)	(0.028)	(0.096)	(0.028)
NFC x Knowledge		5.21**			0.25**	
		(1.552)			(0.117)	
Partisan Sorting		-0.49	0.29		-0.04	0.03
		(0.483)	(0.394)		(0.035)	(0.028)
Partisan x Knowledge		2.48**			0.17**	
		(0.692)			(0.048)	
Policy Extremism	0.77*	1.57	1.93*	0.12**	0.14	0.17**
	(0.397)	(1.204)	(1.088)	(0.029)	(0.092)	(0.080)
Extremism x Knowledge		-1.09			-0.02	
		(1.716)			(0.127)	
Political Interest	1.57**	1.52**	0.52	0.10**	0.10**	0.09
	(0.303)	(0.302)	(1.089)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.071)
Education	-0.61**	-0.63**	-0.65**	-0.03	-0.03*	-0.03
	(0.278)	(0.282)	(0.282)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Income	-0.24	-0.28	-0.29	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03
	(0.286)	(0.292)	(0.287)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.020)
Age	0.09**	0.10**	0.09**	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Female	0.41**	0.42**	0.40**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.153)	(0.154)	(0.154)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
white	-0.89**	-0.94**	-0.95**	-0.04**	-0.04**	-0.04**
	(0.159)	(0.160)	(0.157)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Mode	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.163)	(0.163)	(0.162)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Partisan Sorting	1.14**			0.07**		
	(0.155)			(0.011)		
NFC x Interest			2.20*			0.03
			(1.302)			(0.096)
Sorting x Interest			1.38**			0.06
			(0.570)			(0.040)
Extremism x Interest			-1.83			-0.09
			(1.483)			(0.109)
Constant	-2.27**	0.15	-1.51*	0.60**	0.74**	0.61**
	(0.524)	(0.920)	(0.909)	(0.036)	(0.076)	(0.063)
Observations	1,745	1,745	1,745	1,743	1,743	1,743
R-squared				0.14	0.15	0.14
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.12	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.15	0.13

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

5. Results Confined to Republicans:

Replication of Table 1 – Republicans

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Affective Polarization	(3) Partisan Identity	(4) Marriage
Need for Closure	0.15*	0.08	-0.01	1.01
	(0.081)	(0.063)	(0.079)	(1.013)
Partisan Sorting	0.06**	0.12**	0.07**	2.09**
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.486)
Policy Extremism	0.01	0.10**	0.07*	0.77
	(0.048)	(0.044)	(0.039)	(0.667)
Political Knowledge	0.07	0.18**	0.10	0.60
	(0.070)	(0.063)	(0.067)	(0.832)
Political Interest	0.15**	0.02	0.08	0.38
	(0.061)	(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.607)
Income	0.12**	0.14**	0.08	-0.46
	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.057)	(0.773)
Education	-0.10**	-0.07**	-0.17**	-0.74
	(0.038)	(0.035)	(0.040)	(0.560)
Age	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.02**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.009)
White	-0.04	-0.03	-0.08**	-0.52
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.392)
Female	0.03	0.03	0.05**	0.35
	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.312)
Constant	0.42**	0.31**	0.47**	-2.36**
	(0.076)	(0.082)	(0.084)	(1.021)
Observations	374	324	374	373
R-squared	0.16	0.23	0.15	
Pseudo R-squared	0.14	0.20	0.13	0.11

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

217

Replication of Table 2 – Republicans

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Affective Polarization	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Partisan Identity	(6) Partisan Identity	(7) Marriage	(8) Marriage
Need for Closure	0.29	0.12	0.00	-0.16	-0.50*	-0.36**	-7.95	-4.21
	(0.217)	(0.220)	(0.243)	(0.156)	(0.281)	(0.149)	(5.742)	(2.808)
Political Knowledge	0.10	0.07	0.11	0.19**	-0.24	0.10	-4.01	0.93
	(0.215)	(0.067)	(0.245)	(0.063)	(0.278)	(0.064)	(4.536)	(0.789)
NFC x Knowledge	-0.18		0.09		0.64*		11.38*	
	(0.259)		(0.286)		(0.334)		(6.563)	
Partisan Sorting	-0.12	0.11*	0.12	0.07	0.03	0.13**	3.58**	3.39**
	(0.088)	(0.060)	(0.106)	(0.054)	(0.078)	(0.049)	(1.736)	(1.187)
Partisan Sorting x Knowledge	0.24**		0.00		0.05		-1.82	
	(0.118)		(0.129)		(0.105)		(2.224)	
Policy Extremism	0.12	-0.10	0.08	0.16*	0.18	0.02	1.73	3.01*
	(0.165)	(0.144)	(0.149)	(0.093)	(0.140)	(0.082)	(2.233)	(1.649)
Extremism x Knowledge	-0.14		0.02		-0.16		-1.54	
	(0.198)		(0.190)		(0.180)		(2.697)	
Political Interest	0.15**	0.11	0.02	-0.21	0.09	-0.20	0.66	-0.70
	(0.061)	(0.222)	(0.037)	(0.172)	(0.054)	(0.164)	(0.628)	(2.709)
Income	0.11**	0.12**	0.14**	0.14**	0.07	0.08	-0.53	-0.51
	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.056)	(0.057)	(0.756)	(0.750)
Education	-0.10**	-0.10**	-0.07*	-0.06*	-0.16**	-0.16**	-0.57	-0.65
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.557)	(0.545)
Age	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.02**	-0.02**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.009)	(0.009)
White	-0.05*	-0.04	-0.03	-0.03	-0.08**	-0.07**	-0.48	-0.52
	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.382)	(0.362)
Female	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04**	0.04*	0.34	0.26
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.304)	(0.305)
NFC x Interest		0.03		0.36*		0.53**		7.72**
		(0.261)		(0.210)		(0.200)		(3.700)
Sorting x Interest		-0.09		0.07		-0.10		-1.85
		(0.092)		(0.085)		(0.078)		(1.620)
Extremism x Interest		0.17		-0.09		0.07		-3.43
		(0.188)		(0.132)		(0.123)		(2.212)
Constant	0.41**	0.44**	0.36*	0.46**	0.73**	0.65**	1.10	-1.80
	(0.144)	(0.159)	(0.210)	(0.123)	(0.210)	(0.124)	(3.931)	(2.051)
Observations	374	374	324	324	374	374	373	373
R-squared	0.18	0.17	0.23	0.24	0.17	0.18		
Pseudo R-squared	0.15	0.14	0.19	0.20	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.14

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 3 – Republicans

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Partisan Strength
Need for Closure	0.77	-6.28**	-0.42	-5.12**
	(0.844)	(2.205)	(3.585)	(2.576)
Political self-expression		-4.89**		
		(2.307)		
NFC x self-expression		10.66**		
		(3.099)		
Partisan Sorting	1.82**	1.10	0.80	1.87**
	(0.357)	(0.874)	(1.183)	(0.847)
Sorting x self-expression		1.15		
		(1.335)		
Policy Extremism	1.41**	0.23	-4.05**	0.87
	(0.506)	(1.538)	(1.977)	(1.403)
Extremism x self-expression		1.53		
		(2.312)		
Political knowledge	-0.35	-0.34	-6.62**	-0.40
	(0.648)	(0.651)	(2.925)	(0.633)
Political interest	2.13**	1.32**	2.07**	-1.40
	(0.487)	(0.540)	(0.488)	(2.020)
Income	0.81	1.19**	0.82	0.84
	(0.613)	(0.608)	(0.631)	(0.621)
Education	-1.89**	-1.95**	-2.10**	-1.65*
	(0.923)	(0.913)	(0.947)	(0.913)
Age	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
White	0.04	0.02	0.14	-0.01
	(0.392)	(0.419)	(0.378)	(0.399)
Female	0.54**	0.54**	0.54**	0.51**
	(0.225)	(0.229)	(0.230)	(0.226)
NFC x knowledge			1.43	
			(4.381)	
Partisan sorting x knowledge			1.65	
			(1.675)	
Extremism x knowledge			7.37**	
			(2.541)	
NFC x interest				7.09**
				(3.221)
Partisan sorting x interest				-0.07
				(1.109)
Extremism x interest				0.62
				(1.835)
Constant	-3.16**	0.58	1.37	-0.30
	(1.055)	(1.610)	(2.286)	(1.659)
Observations	600	595	600	600
Pseudo R-squared	0.13	0.17	0.15	0.14

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 4 – Republicans

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Affective Polarization	(6) Affective Polarization
Need for Closure	-0.01	-2.42*	-1.14	0.09**	-0.02	0.06
	(0.367)	(1.356)	(0.958)	(0.024)	(0.104)	(0.065)
Political knowledge	-0.55	-1.95	-0.53	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.453)	(1.602)	(0.452)	(0.031)	(0.092)	(0.031)
NFC x knowledge		3.33*			0.15	
		(1.778)			(0.133)	
Partisan sorting	1.35**	2.03**	1.12**	0.09**	0.12**	0.06**
	(0.212)	(0.684)	(0.458)	(0.012)	(0.049)	(0.027)
Sorting x knowledge		-1.03			-0.05	
		(1.012)			(0.071)	
Policy extremism	1.04**	0.45	1.44	0.16**	0.22**	0.24**
	(0.370)	(1.450)	(1.097)	(0.026)	(0.107)	(0.074)
Extremism x knowledge		0.72			-0.09	
		(1.948)			(0.144)	
Political interest	1.20**	1.24**	0.31	0.07**	0.07**	0.08
	(0.306)	(0.308)	(1.097)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.078)
Education	-0.70**	-0.68**	-0.70**	-0.06**	-0.06**	-0.06**
	(0.289)	(0.288)	(0.290)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Income	-0.27	-0.25	-0.28	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03
	(0.310)	(0.311)	(0.313)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Age	0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Female	0.58**	0.58**	0.58**	0.02*	0.02*	0.02*
	(0.154)	(0.154)	(0.155)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
White	0.22	0.24	0.23	0.03*	0.03**	0.03*
	(0.223)	(0.218)	(0.222)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Mode	0.42**	0.42**	0.41**	0.04**	0.04**	0.04**
	(0.175)	(0.176)	(0.175)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
NFC x interest			1.65			0.03
			(1.282)			(0.098)
Sorting x interest			0.35			0.06
			(0.650)			(0.044)
Extremism x interest			-0.60			-0.13
			(1.471)			(0.106)
Constant	-3.25**	-2.24*	-2.64**	0.40**	0.40**	0.39**
	(0.538)	(1.161)	(0.916)	(0.035)	(0.072)	(0.052)
Observations	1,391	1,391	1,391	1,390	1,390	1,390
R-squared				0.21	0.21	0.21
Adj. R-squared	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.20	0.21	0.21

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

5. Check for Post-treatment Bias:

<u>Replication of Table 1</u>

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Affective Polarization	(3) Partisan Identity	(4) Marriage
Need for Closure	0.19**	0.04	0.13*	0.04
	(0.082)	(0.053)	(0.078)	(0.537)
Constant	0.51**	0.65**	0.44**	-0.92**
	(0.052)	(0.032)	(0.049)	(0.341)
Observations	1,104	955	1,105	1,103
R-squared	0.01	0.00	0.01	
Pseudo R-squared	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 2

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Partisan Strength	Partisan Strength	Affective Polarization	Affective Polarization	Partisan Identity	Partisan Identity	Marriage	Marriage
Need for Closure	-0.06	0.03	-0.21	-0.15	-0.31	-0.10	-3.61*	-2.95**
	(0.238)	(0.203)	(0.172)	(0.121)	(0.243)	(0.213)	(1.997)	(1.429)
Political knowledge	-0.15		-0.13		-0.34*		-2.56	
	(0.198)		(0.139)		(0.197)		(1.577)	
NFC x knowledge	0.43		0.41*		0.67**		5.48**	
	(0.307)		(0.213)		(0.302)		(2.524)	
Political interest		0.02		-0.08		-0.07		-2.03*
		(0.183)		(0.104)		(0.187)		(1.209)
NFC x interest		0.34		0.38**		0.46		5.09**
		(0.286)		(0.165)		(0.291)		(1.928)
Constant	0.59**	0.47**	0.72**	0.69**	0.67**	0.47**	0.71	0.27
	(0.157)	(0.133)	(0.114)	(0.077)	(0.162)	(0.138)	(1.275)	(0.906)
Observations	1,032	1,101	889	953	1,032	1,102	1,030	1,100
R-squared	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.06		
Pseudo R-squared	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.03

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication of Table 3

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Partisan Strength
Need for Closure	-0.83*	-6.01**	-4.96**	-4.13**
	(0.489)	(1.597)	(1.767)	(1.652)
Political self-expression		-0.42		
		(0.955)		
NFC x self-expression		8.03**		
		(2.263)		
Political knowledge			-1.13	
			(1.075)	
NFC x knowledge			5.73**	
			(2.262)	
Political interest				0.07
				(0.901)
NFC x interest				5.21**
				(2.005)
Constant	-0.17	0.22	0.70	-0.38
	(0.224)	(0.672)	(0.848)	(0.755)
Observations	1,487	1,474	1,382	1,487
Pseudo R-squared	0.00	0.10	0.03	0.08

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Replication Table 4

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Affective Polarization	(6) Affective Polarization
Need for Closure	0.38**	-1.10**	0.01	0.05**	-0.10**	0.02
	(0.177)	(0.529)	(0.453)	(0.014)	(0.051)	(0.035)
Political knowledge		-1.11**			-0.12**	
		(0.469)			(0.042)	
NFC x knowledge		2.36**			0.24**	
		(0.776)			(0.069)	
Political interest			1.26**			0.06*
			(0.390)			(0.031)
NFC x interest			0.59			0.06
			(0.649)			(0.052)
Constant	-0.85**	-0.16	-1.60**	0.68**	0.76**	0.65**
	(0.107)	(0.316)	(0.272)	(0.009)	(0.031)	(0.021)
Observations	5,461	5,325	5,458	4,719	4,622	4,717
R-squared				0.01	0.01	0.03
Adj. R-squared	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.01	0.03

Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

6. Controlling for other personality variables-

1. Authoritarianism and need for cognition

	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Affective Polarization	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Partisan Identity	(6) Partisan Identity	(7) Marriage	(8) Marriage
Need for Closure	-0.04	0.22	-0.40**	-0.14	-0.36*	-0.12	-3.45*	-2.08
	(0.229)	(0.180)	(0.162)	(0.126)	(0.204)	(0.147)	(1.765)	(1.657)
Political knowledge	0.13	-0.12*	-0.16	0.01	-0.25	-0.07	-0.32	-0.15
	(0.225)	(0.064)	(0.143)	(0.046)	(0.182)	(0.048)	(2.266)	(0.510)
NFC x knowledge	0.29		0.65**		0.53**		5.16**	
	(0.297)		(0.205)		(0.261)		(2.371)	
Authoritarianism	0.08**	0.01	0.04*	0.03	0.04*	0.02*	0.24	-0.17
	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.024)	(0.012)	(0.391)	(0.251)
Authoritarianism x know	-0.10**		-0.05*		-0.04		-0.36	
	(0.043)		(0.029)		(0.030)		(0.454)	
Need for cognition	0.44**	0.54**	0.03	-0.03	0.14	0.05	1.44	0.83
	(0.201)	(0.145)	(0.117)	(0.109)	(0.141)	(0.091)	(1.842)	(1.513)
Cognition x knowledge	-0.37		-0.09		-0.11		-2.73	
	(0.238)		(0.140)		(0.177)		(2.215)	
Partisan sorting	0.11	0.26**	0.03	0.09**	0.02	0.12**	1.56*	1.44**
	(0.081)	(0.067)	(0.061)	(0.043)	(0.052)	(0.037)	(0.831)	(0.639)
Sorting x knowledge	0.25**		0.10		0.10		-0.61	
	(0.101)		(0.077)		(0.072)		(1.075)	
policyextremism01	0.13	-0.03	0.29**	0.14	0.12	0.04	0.82	0.49
	(0.143)	(0.123)	(0.080)	(0.091)	(0.092)	(0.063)	(1.369)	(1.400)
Extremism x knowledge	-0.26		-0.25**		-0.10		-0.44	
	(0.181)		(0.108)		(0.130)		(1.596)	
Political interest	0.12**	0.51**	0.08**	-0.01	0.11**	0.01	0.78*	-0.34
	(0.057)	(0.185)	(0.035)	(0.154)	(0.037)	(0.155)	(0.451)	(2.038)
Income	0.00	-0.01	0.05	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.10
	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.551)	(0.548)
Education	-0.03	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03	-0.07*	-0.07**	0.36	0.36
	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.407)	(0.394)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.01*	-0.01**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.006)	(0.006)
White	-0.12**	-0.11**	-0.03	-0.03	-0.04**	-0.04*	-0.48	-0.47*
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.292)	(0.278)
Female	0.08**	0.08**	0.03*	0.03*	0.05**	0.05**	0.33	0.26
	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.215)	(0.214)
Republican	0.09**	0.09**	-0.09**	-0.09**	-0.03	-0.03	-0.04	-0.06
	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.232)	(0.225)
NFC x interest		-0.07		0.37**		0.25		3.86*
		(0.245)		(0.170)		(0.208)		(2.256)
Auth x interest		-0.01		-0.04*		-0.02		0.19
		(0.032)		(0.022)		(0.019)		(0.330)
Cognition x interest		-0.65**		-0.05		0.01		-2.41
		(0.188)		(0.134)		(0.128)		(1.968)
Sorting x interest		0.07		0.03		-0.04		-0.49
		(0.097)		(0.062)		(0.057)		(0.924)
Extremism x interest		-0.05		-0.09		0.01		-0.02
		(0.160)		(0.113)		(0.096)		(1.812)
Constant	-0.02	-0.03	0.61**	0.56**	0.55**	0.49**	-1.30	-0.53
	(0.180)	(0.147)	(0.114)	(0.129)	(0.144)	(0.115)	(1.855)	(1.522)
Observations	942	942	702	702	820	820	818	818
R-squared	0.35	0.35	0.23	0.22	0.15	0.14		
Pseudo R-squared	0.34	0.33	0.21	0.20	0.13	0.12	0.09	0.09

Robust standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.05, * p<0.10

2. Big Five personality traits

|	(1) Partisan Strength	(2) Partisan Strength	(3) Partisan Strength	(4) Affective Polarization	(5) Affective Polarization	(6) Affective Polarization
Need for Closure	0.29	-2.01**	-0.60	0.05**	-0.08	0.02
	(0.251)	(0.828)	(0.644)	(0.017)	(0.069)	(0.044)
Political knowledge	-0.57*	-7.32**	-0.55*	-0.01	-0.21	-0.01
	(0.290)	(2.238)	(0.289)	(0.021)	(0.182)	(0.021)
NFC x knowledge		3.38**			0.19**	
		(1.130)			(0.089)	
Extraversion	0.55**	-0.64	0.52	0.01	-0.04	-0.04
	(0.245)	(0.829)	(0.652)	(0.017)	(0.066)	(0.044)
Extraversion x knowledge		1.65			0.06	
		(1.126)			(0.084)	
Conscientiousness	0.28	-0.36	-0.44	0.00	-0.07	-0.01
	(0.369)	(1.195)	(0.973)	(0.024)	(0.096)	(0.062)
Cons x knowledge		1.02			0.10	
		(1.685)			(0.128)	
Openness	0.14	0.53	0.66	0.04*	0.16*	0.06
	(0.343)	(1.107)	(0.864)	(0.024)	(0.089)	(0.062)
Openness x knowledge		-0.48			-0.17	
		(1.524)			(0.118)	
Agreeableness	0.30	-1.72	0.34	0.01	-0.03	0.02
	(0.358)	(1.146)	(0.997)	(0.023)	(0.089)	(0.061)
Agreeableness x knowledge		3.06**			0.06	
		(1.557)			(0.114)	
Neuroticism	-0.11	-1.46	-0.27	-0.00	0.00	0.03
	(0.275)	(0.968)	(0.740)	(0.017)	(0.067)	(0.043)
Neuroticism x knowledge		1.98			-0.00	
		(1.315)			(0.088)	
Partisan Sorting	1.54**	0.80**	1.14**	0.08**	0.03	0.05**
	(0.120)	(0.361)	(0.287)	(0.008)	(0.029)	(0.019)
Sorting x knowledge		1.13**			0.08**	
		(0.521)			(0.040)	
Policy Extremism	0.78**	1.00	1.88**	0.14**	0.15*	0.19**
	(0.264)	(0.859)	(0.759)	(0.020)	(0.076)	(0.056)
Extremism x knowledge		-0.20			-0.02	
		(1.225)			(0.104)	
Political interest	1.29**	1.28**	0.49	0.08**	0.08**	0.05
	(0.216)	(0.215)	(1.958)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.128)
Education	-0.60**	-0.57**	-0.61**	-0.05**	-0.05**	-0.05**
	(0.199)	(0.199)	(0.199)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Income	-0.32	-0.31	-0.35*	-0.03**	-0.03*	-0.03**
	(0.202)	(0.203)	(0.202)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
Age	0.04**	0.05**	0.04**	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Female	0.44**	0.43**	0.43**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.110)	(0.110)	(0.111)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
White	-0.52**	-0.49**	-0.54**	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02*
	(0.124)	(0.124)	(0.124)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Republican	-0.18	-0.21*	-0.19	-0.06**	-0.07**	-0.06**
	(0.118)	(0.118)	(0.118)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Mode	0.21*	0.19	0.22*	0.03**	0.03**	0.03**
	(0.120)	(0.120)	(0.120)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
NFC x interest			1.36			0.05
			(0.900)			(0.067)
Extraversion x interest			0.04			0.07
			(0.895)			(0.062)
Consc x interest			1.11			0.02
			(1.376)			(0.088)
Openness x interest			-0.79			-0.03
			(1.230)			(0.091)
Agreeableness x interest			0.03			-0.00
			(1.337)			(0.086)
Neuroticism x interest			0.25			-0.04
			(1.021)			(0.063)
Sorting x interest			0.62			0.05*
			(0.410)			(0.029)
Extremism x interest			-1.64			-0.09
			(1.032)			(0.077)
Constant	-3.33**	1.06	-2.84*	0.50**	0.63**	0.52**
	(0.580)	(1.598)	(1.475)	(0.040)	(0.133)	(0.095)
Observations	3,533	3,533	3,533	3,124	3,124	3,124
Pseudo/Adj. R-squared	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.17	0.17	0.17

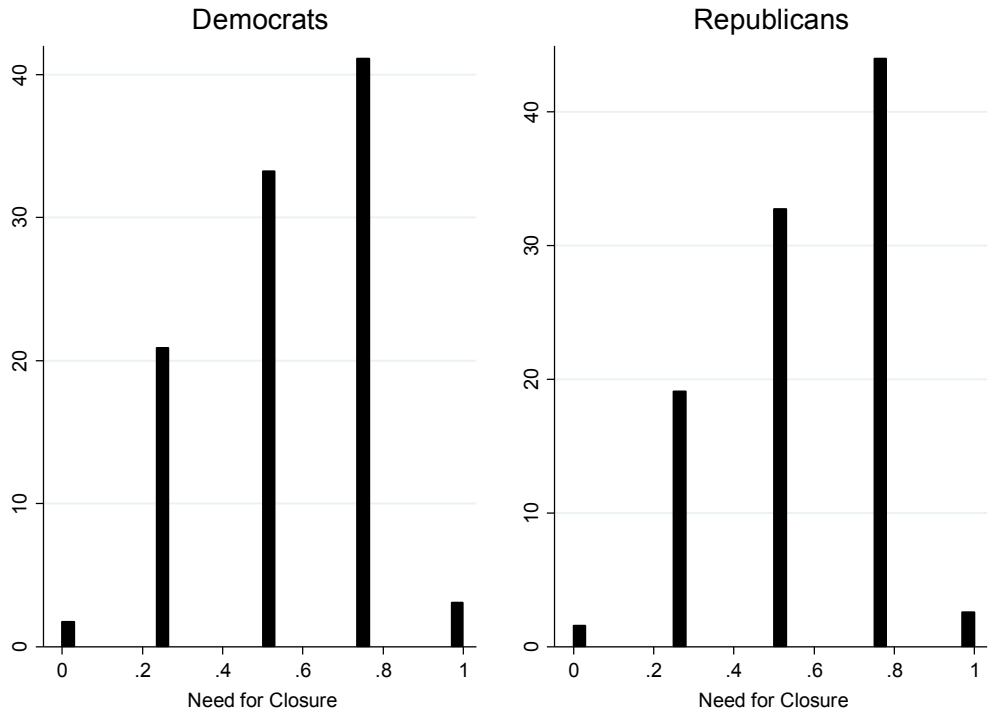Robust standard errors in parentheses
** p<0.05, * p<0.10

8. Distribution of Need for Closure among Democrats and Republicans in each survey
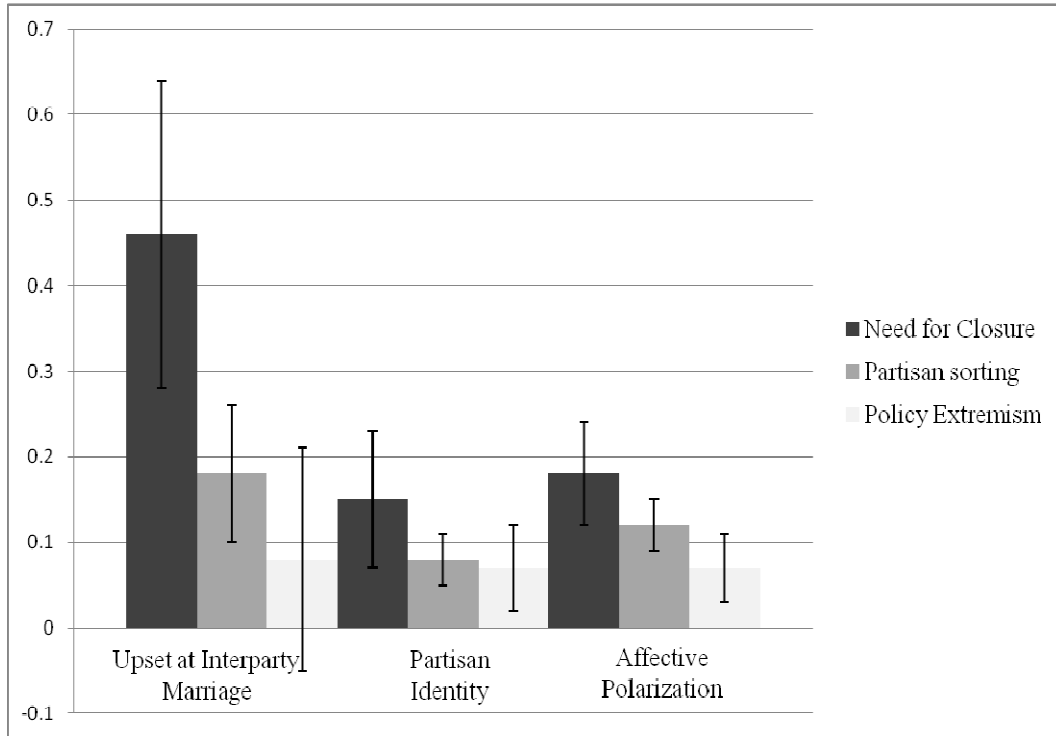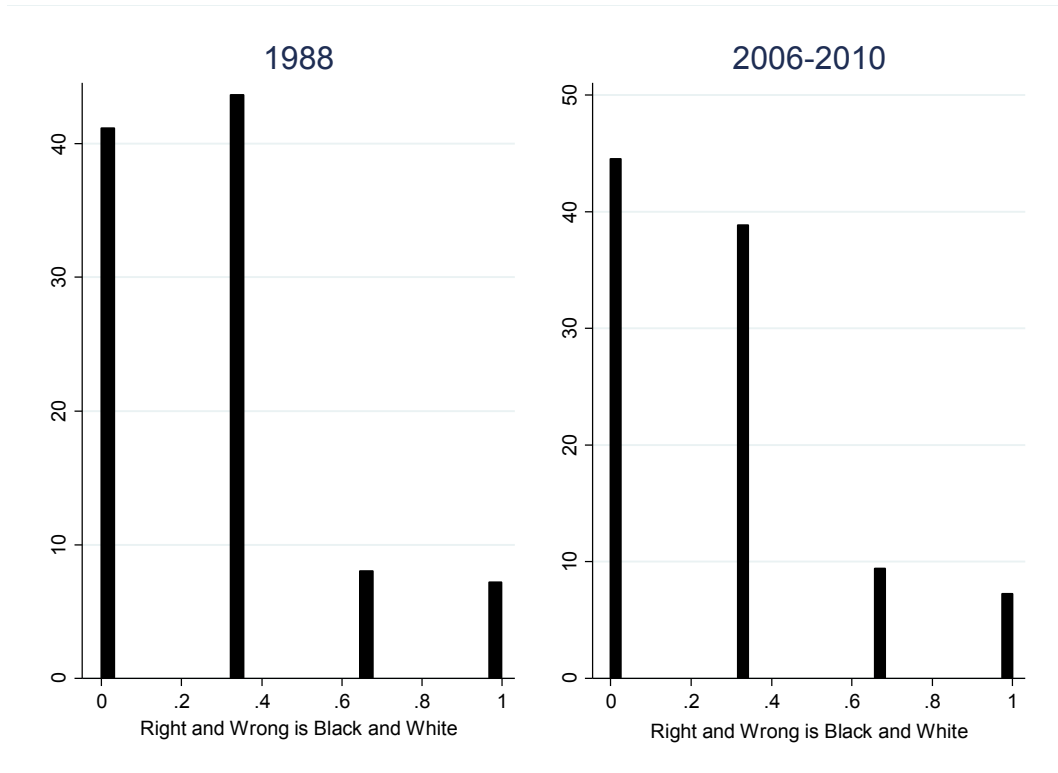<u>2014 YouGov Survey</u>
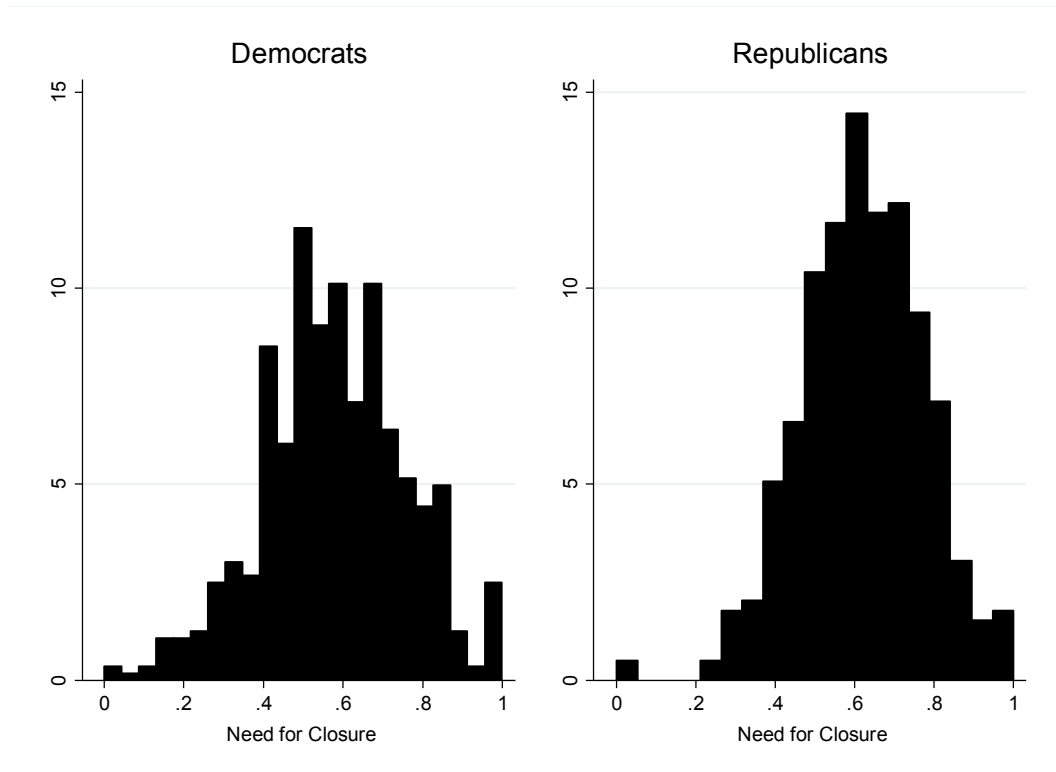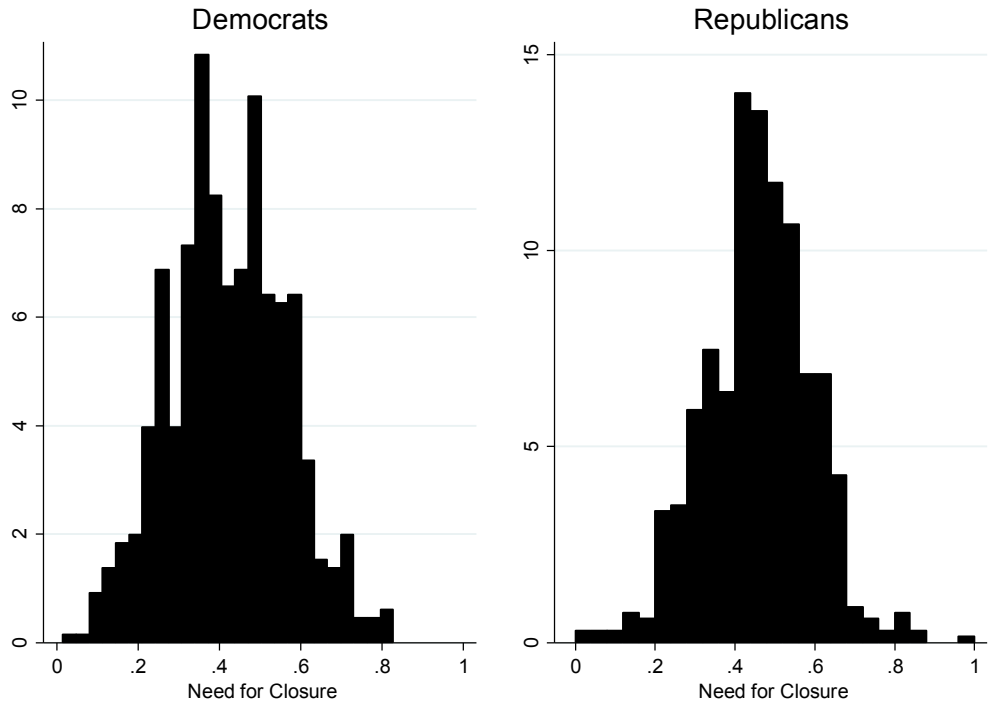
2008 Knowledge Networks

Replication of Figure 1 at highest level of Political Interest

The level of Need for Closure has not changed over time

Note: the Y-axis is the percentage. The mean level of need for closure in 1988 is 0.27; the mean level of need for closure in 2006-2010 is 0.26.