

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**Within Identity Differences: An exploration of social identity
content's varying impact on group members**

Andrew Stewart

A thesis submitted to the Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science of the
London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Masters of Philosophy,
London, September, 2024

Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. Quotation from it is permitted, provided that full acknowledgement is made. This thesis may not be reproduced without my prior written consent. I warrant that this authorization does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that my thesis consists of 51,492 words, excluding acknowledgements, appendices, and references.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the concept of Within Identity Differences, a novel approach for examining how social identity content can lead to diverse expressions of group membership without necessarily constituting dissent or deviance. Through a mixed-methods approach, including experimental studies with Christians and qualitative interviews with political partisans, this research investigates how group members utilize varying aspects of identity content to navigate ambiguous situations. Across two studies on American Christians, I explored how identity content impacted moral decision making. While not yielding statistically significant behavioral differences, the findings demonstrated that religious primes can activate distinct aspects of identity content. Employing a novel methodological approach—BERTopic modeling—this research advances the study of identity content by adopting a multi-dimensional perspective and examining its role in ambiguous situations that do not have prescriptive norms. An in-depth field study on American political identity revealed that these partisans in the US (Republicans and Democrats) draw upon different dimensions of their political identity—including moral values, ideological positions, and policy preferences—when addressing complex social issues, even in the absence of clear prescriptive norms. Findings suggest that identity content serves as a flexible resource for meaning-making, allowing group members to express their 'groupness' in various ways while maintaining ingroup alignment. This work contributes to Social Identity Theory by offering a nuanced understanding of intra-group dynamics and challenging simplistic notions of group homogeneity. It opens new avenues for exploring how individuals make sense of their social identity content, particularly in ambiguous or novel situations.

Acknowledgements

This acknowledgement is written in the early hours of the morning, maybe my favorite time of day. The world outside is still and all is quiet. For as long as I can remember, this part of night has been my friend.

I feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to earn a PhD. This journey has been both incredibly unexpected and a long time coming. Even as a child, I dreamed of working toward something big and meaningful. My parents raised me this way—you can accomplish anything you put your mind to. The way they raised me, the opportunities they worked and scrounged for, the life they helped me build; I know I am beyond blessed to have the parents I have. I will never be able to return all that they have given me. I know that is the burden and joy of being a parent, but I still want to try. Hopefully this work is a drop in the bucket to taking every advantage and cherishing every moment they have given to me. Mom, thank you for always reading my writing. Dad, thank you for helping Mom keep up with technology to do so. I appreciate both of you for the unending love and support, even from half a world away. I love you. And to my siblings, my grandparents, and the rest of my family, thank you for your unending support.

This journey has been long, with many stops along the way, including working 3 different jobs, living in 5 different cities, and relying on many friends at each step. To my oldest friends, thank you for your support and sarcasm, for keeping me grounded, and helping me finish. To Marilyn Hugon, thank you for your support in this journey. I never could have taken the first step without your generosity. To my colleagues and bosses, thank you for helping me have the means to undertake this effort.

To Dr. Ilka Gleibs, thank you for your enduring patience and understanding. I deeply and sincerely appreciate every bit of grace, support, and inspiration that you have given me. I know I would not have been able to do this without you. From the early days in London to the finish line, you have always kept me in check. I am deeply indebted to your ideas, the times you shared, and the assistance you have given me. Thank you.

To my other academic supporters, including Dr. Andrew Porwancher, Dr. David Ray, Dr. Ryan Brown for inspiring me at OU. To Dr. Amara Amer, Dr. Sandra Obradovic, Dr. Celestine Okoroji, Dr. Nihan Albayrak-Aydemir, Dr. Maxi Heitmayer, and Dr. Bradley Franks for your support at LSE.

To Katie, thank you for your love and support. Thank you for helping me build a life I never knew I would have. I am so grateful to have you and Dobby in my life. Thank you for carrying me when I am down and celebrating me when I am up. Thank you for pushing me to be a better person every day. Your support means everything, forever.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Declaration</i> | 2 |
| <i>Abstract</i> | 3 |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | 4 |
| <i>List of Figures</i> | 9 |
| <i>List of Tables</i> | 10 |
| <i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i> | 11 |
| Thesis Aims | 16 |
| References | 19 |
| <i>Chapter 2: Social Identity and its Meaning</i> | 22 |
| 2.1 Social Identity Theory, Self-Categorization and the Importance of Prototypes | 24 |
| 2.2. Identification and Meaning | 31 |
| 2.2.1 Identification and Group Meaning in the Real World: Party Identification and Partisanship | 34 |
| 2.3. Identity Content and Its Impact..... | 36 |
| 2.4 Social Identity and Group Non-Conformity | 41 |
| 2.5 Why Individuals Deviate from Their Group? | 45 |
| 2.6 Within Identity Differences | 49 |
| 2.6.1 Research Questions: | 53 |
| 2.7 Context on Social Identities | 54 |
| References | 60 |
| <i>Chapter 3: Within Identity Differences: Diverging Moral Decisions Within a Group</i> | 68 |
| Introduction | 68 |
| Social Identity Approach | 70 |
| Morality and Moral decision making | 75 |
| Within Identity Differences: Competing Moral Values Within a Social Identity | 79 |
| Hypotheses | 81 |
| Study 1 | 84 |
| Method..... | 84 |
| Participants | 84 |
| Manipulation..... | 85 |
| Trolley Problem | 86 |
| Scales..... | 87 |
| Procedure | 87 |
| Results and Discussion | 89 |
| Hypothesis testing | 89 |
| Exploratory analysis | 91 |
| Textual Analysis..... | 93 |
| Discussion..... | 96 |
| Study 2 | 97 |
| Method..... | 97 |
| Participants | 98 |
| Results and Discussion | 98 |
| Hypothesis Testing | 98 |
| Exploratory Analysis | 101 |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Textual Analysis..... | 102 |
| Discussion..... | 104 |
| General Discussion | 105 |
| Limitations | 107 |
| References | 110 |
| <i>Chapter 4: What Does it Mean to Be Partisan?</i> | <i>120</i> |
| Preface | 120 |
| Introduction:..... | 122 |
| The Relationship between Political Party Membership, Partisanship, and Social Identity...125 | |
| Political Parties | 126 |
| Partisanship..... | 129 |
| Partisanship as Social Identity..... | 131 |
| Social Identity and Meaning..... | 134 |
| Within Group Differences in Partisans | 140 |
| Study 1 | 142 |
| Methods:..... | 142 |
| Participants | 142 |
| Procedure | 143 |
| Positionality Statement | 144 |
| Data Analysis..... | 145 |
| Findings & Discussions | 148 |
| Individual Expressions..... | 149 |
| Individual Positioning – Defining Individual Identity Against the Partisan Prototype..... | 149 |
| Social Expressions | 154 |
| Economic Positioning – Partisan Ideology in Economic Issues | 155 |
| Societal Positioning – Civil Rights and Social Issues | 159 |
| Political Expressions..... | 164 |
| Civic Positioning – Trust in The Election and the Role of Democracy | 164 |
| General Discussion | 168 |
| <i>Chapter 5: General Discussion.....</i> | <i>190</i> |
| Social Identity Content: Its Meaning..... | 191 |
| Social Identity Content: Its Context | 199 |
| Social Identity Content: Methodological Advancements..... | 204 |
| Synthesis of Research Findings: The Case for Within Identity Differences..... | 208 |
| Thesis Limitations | 211 |
| Directions for Future Research..... | 216 |
| Conclusion | 220 |
| References | 223 |
| <i>Bibliography.....</i> | <i>229</i> |
| <i>Appendix 1: Thematic Analysis Codebook</i> | <i>256</i> |
| <i>Appendix 2: Sample Interview Transcript</i> | <i>258</i> |
| <i>Appendix 3: Interview Guide.....</i> | <i>274</i> |

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Appendix 4: Fieldwork & Ethics Approval – Partisan Qualitative Work.....</i> | <i>277</i> |
| <i>Appendix 5: Research Ethics Form – Christian Primes Study.....</i> | <i>280</i> |
| <i>Appendix 6: Christian Priming Study Consent Form, Primes, & Questionnaire.....</i> | <i>290</i> |
| <i>Appendix 7: Christian Study Moderation Analysis Sample, Study 1.....</i> | <i>316</i> |
| <i>Appendix 8: Christian Study Moderation Analysis Sample, Study 2.....</i> | <i>319</i> |
| <i>Appendix 9: Partisan Study Participant Information</i> | <i>322</i> |

List of Figures

| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 1: Bar chart of Trolley Problem intervention rates by condition, Study 1 | 90 |
| Figure 2: XY Map of responses by BERTopic analysis, Study 1 | 95 |
| Figure 3: Bar chart of Trolley Problem intervention rates by condition, Study 2 | 99 |
| Figure 4: XY map of responses by BERTopic analysis, study 2 | 103 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1: Participant count by gender | 92 |
| Table 2: Participant count by political party | 101 |
| Table 3: Significance of Moderation Analyses for Study 1 | 142 |
| Table 4: Significance of Moderation Analyses for Study 2 | 142 |

Chapter 1: Introduction

I grew up in a small town in Oklahoma. Every Sunday that the church doors were open, I was there. My parents raised me in accordance with the teachings and trappings of everything that comes with it—hard work, love, community, and faith. This upbringing was wonderful and normal, steeped in American tradition. While my parents set the example to live in curiosity and generosity, they also emphasized the importance of purity and respect for my elders. This nurturing helped me in many ways, but perhaps none was more important than my faith. With my parents as models, I learned how to treat others with kindness, how to go above and beyond for myself and those around me, and how to strive to leave things better than I found them. While I know I regularly failed to meet this standard, the striving to live in grace with God and others was of utmost importance.

In 2015, I was watching the Republican Primary Debate on Fox News. As an active church-goer and even more politically active student at university, I threw a watch party with several friends. ‘Good Christian kids’ in Oklahoma at that time were (and still are) ardently Republican. While I watched this debate, my excitement turned to horror and frustration. During the two-hour debate, ‘God’ was mentioned some 19 times. While some of the answers by the candidates seemed sincere in their invocation, some were, most undeniably, not. However, towards the end of the debate, the moderator asked the question: “I want to know if any of them have received a word from God on what they should do and take care of first. Senator Cruz, we’ll start with you. Any word from God?” I could not believe my ears. I felt offended, frustrated, but mostly ashamed that the religion I believed in and followed dearly was being used as a ploy to garner support and votes for political candidates whose actions often failed to align with the religion they espoused. I felt my religion was being reduced to a cheap parlor trick that politicians could use to get the attention of voters, a slight of hand to

patronize Christians. This moment shocked me. As the debate concluded, I began to question so much about my life, my worldview, my religion, and my politics.

As the primary dwindled on, the same politicians who discussed the messages they heard from God slowly but surely threw their support behind Donald Trump. Though I was in the throes of reassessing many things in my life, I observed something interesting about the political party and faith as I was stepping back from both. The coalescence around Donald Trump seemed to be encouraged and even promoted from some of the most religious people I knew. This support eventually went mainstream, creating a dilemma: Christians, who have traditionally voted Republican, were to either vote for Trump, or for the Democrat candidate, Hilary Clinton. The problem with Trump as a candidate was that he did not embody the traditional Christian values of decency, charity, or monogamy, and even seemed to be unreligious. The problem with Hilary Clinton was that she was a Democrat. However, Trump managed to strike a deal with Christians—he would appoint justices to overturn abortion rights in the US and Christians would vote for him en masse (Mangan, 2016; Taylor, 2015). This pact seemed to work, as Trump won Christians by 19 points (58% to 39%) and won evangelical Christians by 65 points (81% to 16%; Pew, 2017).

Despite Trump lacking any religiosity and being an atypical nominee for US President, there were arguments about him being someone to stand up for Christians, like Cyrus in the Old Testament returning Jews back to Jerusalem (Burton, 2018). Opposite the growing support and popularity for Trump amongst Christians, there was a small but firm faction that refused to vote for someone who did not embody Christian values. These Christians argued that having an attitude of service instead of seeking power would serve the Christian mission more, being uncompromising in beliefs but not trying to dominate or bully others (Wehner, 2019). That being said, voting for or against Donald Trump did not necessarily make one more or less Christian, as voting was not necessarily central to one's

faith. These Christians had clearly differing perspectives on this somewhat ambiguous situation—is it okay to vote for someone who does not align with you religiously if they will instrumentally help you achieve some cultural goal? In trying to answer this question, evangelical Christians around the US were divided. This divide between Christians, though disheartening to me personally, inspired a question: how could Christians, citing the same scriptures, arrive at such opposing conclusions? What was it about their group function that could allow these people to disagree with each other without necessarily saying that the other side of the debate was no longer a Christian. Posed more broadly, it made wonder how people who are a part of the same identity group could diverge from each other about meaningful issues and still identify with that group?

Ingroup Differences in the Real World: Political Primaries

Political primaries in the United States offer another compelling example of how this phenomenon can manifest, as partisans work to gain the votes of their fellow party members without having to worry about the electorate at large. This unique but common circumstance proves to be a somewhat ambiguous situations, when it comes to being a ‘good’ Republican or Democrat, as these scenarios are designed to have ingroup fighting. During primary elections, members of the same political party must choose among multiple candidates who all claim to represent the party's values and interests. This process creates an ambiguous context where there is no clear, prescriptive norm for how a ‘good’ party member should behave or decide (Sides et al., 2018). In these circumstances, party members must rely on various aspects of their partisan identity to navigate the decision-making process. The primary election cycle thus provides a unique opportunity to observe how individuals within the same political group can express their group membership in divergent ways while still considering themselves loyal party members. This condition demonstrates that there are

certain situations where group members do not have a clear, prescriptive norm, creating many differing ways that they can express ingroup loyalty without necessarily dissenting from the group (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014).

For example, the 2016 Republican primary offers a vivid illustration of situation in action. The primary race featured a diverse array of candidates, 17 in total, each emphasizing different aspects of what it means to be Republican and advocating for different ways to be Republican. Donald Trump, a political outsider, emphasized nationalist and populist themes, appealing to voters who prioritized economic protectionism and strict immigration policies (Sides et al., 2018). In contrast, candidates like Ted Cruz focused on traditional conservative values and constitutional originalism, resonating with evangelical Christians and staunch conservatives (Sides et al., 2018). Meanwhile, John Kasich presented himself as a moderate alternative, emphasizing pragmatism and bipartisanship. These varied approaches allowed Republican voters to express their partisan identity in different ways, depending on which aspects of Republican identity meaning with which they most closely associated. Some valued anti-establishment sentiments, others traditional conservatism, and still others, governmental experience. Despite these differences, all considered themselves ‘good’ Republicans, demonstrating how that there are certain situations that can allow for diverse expressions of group membership even within a single political party (Green et al., 2002).

The 2020 Democratic primary provides another compelling example of this circumstance. This primary similarly featured a wide ideological spectrum of candidates, each appealing to different aspects of Democratic identity content. On one end, Bernie Sanders championed progressive policies like Medicare for All and free college tuition, resonating with Democrats who prioritized sweeping systemic changes (Sides et al., 2018). Elizabeth Warren similarly appealed to progressive values but with a focus on detailed policy proposals. In contrast, Joe Biden positioned himself as a moderate, emphasizing his

experience and electability, appealing to Democrats who prioritized defeating the incumbent Republican president (Azari, 2023). Meanwhile, candidates like Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar offered a middle ground, combining some progressive ideas with more moderate approaches. This diversity of candidates allowed Democratic voters to express their partisan identity in various ways, depending on whether they prioritized ideological purity, progressive or moderate values, experience, or electability. Despite these differences, all voters saw themselves as ‘good’ Democrats, negotiating with their fellow party members to determine the future of the Democratic party. This example also illustrates a situation where the diverse viewpoints within a single partisan identity can coexist (Iyengar et al., 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022)

These examples from recent primary elections demonstrate in real-world political contexts how ingroup members can differ from their fellow group members while still aligning with the overall idea of what it means to belong to either party. In both the Republican and Democratic primaries, we observe how party members navigate the ambiguity of choosing between multiple ingroup candidates by drawing on different aspects of their partisan identity. These circumstances allow for a range of expressions of group membership, all of which can be considered legitimate within the broader party identity. Though these situations are influenced by the leadership of the political parties and the entrepreneurship of what it means to be either a Republican or a Democrat, there are still some anchors or pieces of meaning that these candidates have to express. Similarly, party members who actually vote have to consider which candidate they associate with the most, in doing so they seem to rely on specific pieces of what it means to be a member of their political party. In each case, as well as the personal example, there seem to be differing and sometimes competing pieces of what it means to be a part of a social group that people can use to make sense of circumstances that do not necessarily have a prescriptive way they

should behave. In these circumstances, how do group members make sense of the ambiguity? How do they determine the ways to be a ‘good’ group member when there may be many ways to do so (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014)?

Thesis Aims

The phenomenon outlined in the above examples happen time and again throughout human history. Groups constantly seem to be negotiating what it means to be a member of that group (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Reicher et al., 2010). While groups have many ways for dealing with individuals (or groups of individuals) who disagree or rebel against the norms of the group, individuals also have ways of advocating for themselves within the group, such as arguing for change or even leaving the group (Dahling & Gutworth, 2017; Hornsey, 2008; Jetten & Hornsey, 2010; Marques et al., 1998; Pinto et al., 2010). However, this thesis will aim to explore a different explanation as to what happens when individuals within a group diverge in their expression of group membership. Specifically, is it possible for group members to express what it means to be a part of their group differently, while still aligning with principles found within a group?

In his treatise on Moral Pluralism, Isaiah Berlin (1958) argues that there is a plurality of values that humans can seek. He posits that these values are objective and numerous, and that when humans seek them, they can disagree in an honorable manner. He also goes on to contend that the opposite of plurality, and therefore the ability for humans to live peaceable, is monism, or the belief that there is a single set of truths that everything must fit. Monism, according to Berlin, robs society of its essential liberties. This thesis will explore differences within an identity group from the same perspective—that each identity has a plurality of values or meanings by which its members construct what it means to be a part of that group.

Based on the research to follow, I hope to introduce a new line of study concerning social identity and its related meaning, which I will call “Within Identity Differences.”

Within Identity Differences examines the diversity of meaning, or identity content, within a social group. Specifically, the premise is as follows: each identity group has a set of values or norms or meanings that help define the group and distinguish it from other groups (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Oakes et al., 1991; Stott & Drury, 2004; Turner et al., 1994). These group members, based on the array of meanings, have multiple attitudes they find acceptable, either as boundaries or as prescriptive ways its members should act. In many cases, there is a single value to employ. In other cases, there is a set of values that work in concert to instruct how ingroup members should act. However, in still other cases, there is not a specific value to employ, or there are multiple values that could be drawn on—some of which might lead ingroup members to arrive at different conclusions or express their group membership in differing ways. In these situations, ingroup members may still adhere to the set of values that the identity group finds as acceptable, while diverging with each other. When situations like this occur, it is not that ingroup members are necessarily disagreeing or dissenting from each other, or rebelling against the group’s prescriptive norms, but rather drawing on a different set of values that the group holds important. This disparity is Within Identity Differences.

Within-Identity Differences examines the diversity of meaning, or identity content, within a social group. Specifically, the premise is as follows: each identity group has a set of values or norms or meanings that help define the group and distinguish it from other groups (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Oakes et al., 1991; Stott & Drury, 2004; Turner et al., 1994). These group members, based on the array of meanings, have multiple attitudes, they find acceptable, either as boundaries or as prescriptive ways its members should act. In many cases, there is a single value to employ. In other cases, there is a set of values that work in

concert to instruct how ingroup members should act. However, in still other cases, there is not a specific value to employ, or there are multiple values that could be drawn on—some of which might lead ingroup members to arrive at different conclusions or express their group membership in differing ways. In these situations, ingroup members may still adhere to the set of values that the identity group finds as acceptable, while diverging with each other. When situations like this occur, it is not that ingroup members are necessarily disagreeing or dissenting from each other, or rebelling against the group's prescriptive norms, but rather drawing on a different set of values that the group holds important. This disparity is within-identity differences.

This thesis will employ the Social Identity Approach to study this dynamic, looking specifically at the relationship between an individual and the group with which they identify (Reicher et al., 2010). By relying on both Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory, this thesis will try to capture the complex nature of what it means to belong to a group and how that meaning affects individuals in ambiguous situations (Hornsey, 2008; Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). This thesis will attempt to extend the Social Identity Approach by offering a novel way to explore differences within an identity that does not necessarily constitute rebellion or dissent, and does not trigger other social conformity mechanisms such as the Black Sheep Effect or Subjective Group Dynamics (Jetten & Hornsey, 2010, 2014; Marques et al., 1998; Pinto et al., 2010). This thesis will focus on the meaning associated with social identities, known as identity content, to explore how individuals make sense of their group belonging in situations without a prescriptive norm. Whereas other Social Identity theories explore differences as a means to draw boundaries between dissenting faction, this line of research will explore how identities have the ability to be complex and varying instead of uniform when it comes to group expression in ambiguous situations.

References

- Azari, Julie. 2023 President and Political Parties. In *New Directions in the American Presidency*. 3rd Edition. Routledge.
- Berlin, I. 1997/1958. Two Concepts of Liberty. In *The Proper Study of Mankind*, ed. H. Hardy and R Hausheer, 191-242. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Burton, Tara. 2018, March 5. The Biblical story the Christian Right uses to defend Trump. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/3/5/16796892/trump-cyrus-christian-right-bible-cbn-evangelical-propaganda>
- Dahling, J. J., & Gutworth, M. B. (2017). Loyal rebels? A test of the normative conflict model of constructive deviance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(8), 1167–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2194>
- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204–222. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x>
- Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (Eds.). (2010). *Rebels in Groups: Dissent, Deviance, Difference and Defiance* (1st ed.). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444390841>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>

- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Mangan, Dan, 2016, October 19. Trump: I'll appoint Supreme Court Justices to overturn Roe v. Wade abortion case. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2016/10/19/trump-ill-appoint-supreme-court-justices-to-overturn-roe-v-wade-abortion-case.html>
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998). Social identity and intra-group differentiation: The “black sheep effect” as a function of subjective social control. In *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142).
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Reicher, S., Spears, R., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). The Social Identity Approach in Social Psychology. In *Sage Identities Handbook* (pp. 45–62).
- Stott, C., & Drury, J. (2004). The importance of social structure and social interaction in stereotype consensus and content: Is the whole greater than the sum of its parts? *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34(1), 11–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.183>
- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>

- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 173–190). Psychology Press.
- Taylor, Jessica. 2015, September 13. True Believer? Why Donald Trump is the Choice of the Religious Right. NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2015/09/13/439833719/true-believer-why-donald-trump-is-the-choice-of-the-religious-right>
- Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and Collective: Cognition and Social Context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 454–463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205002>
- Wehner, Peter. 2019, December 5. The Moral Universe of Timothy Keller. The Atlantic.
- West, E. A., & Iyengar, S. (2022). Partisanship as a Social Identity: Implications for Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 807–838. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09637-y>

Chapter 2: Social Identity and its Meaning

The theoretical framework of this thesis will concern two main themes in social psychology: social identity and its content. When considering the central question of this research—how individuals within groups can hold divergent norms, values, or behaviors while still maintaining their group membership—the main perspectives to be considered will explore how individuals navigate what it means to belong to a particular group and how the meaning of that group affects the ingroup members' evaluations and decision-making around ambiguous situations.

Our identities are central to our understanding of both ourselves and the world around us, as they are categorizations of the self into social units, helping “I” turn into “we” (Brewer, 1991). More specifically, social identities shape how individuals make sense of themselves and others in social settings (Tajfel, 1974). The meaning derived from an identity, also known as content, provides guidance to how individuals are supposed to behave or what they are supposed to believe as a consequence of being a part of an identity group (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner, 1999). One of the central pieces of content within an identity are the beliefs and decisions that come from being a part of a group (Durkheim, 1965; Galliher et al., 2017; Stets & Carter, 2012). This chapter will review literature on social identity, including what it is, how identification functions, and differences that may occur within a social identity. From there, this chapter will cover identity content, its documented components and effect, and attempt to synthesize how the literature can create a case for within identity differences, or the diverging ways in which can be a ‘good’ group member.

The guiding theoretical framework for this thesis is the Social Identity Approach (SIA), a model that combines Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Abrams, 1990; Reicher, Russell, Haslam, 2010). This approach considers both the group perspective and the individual perspective of how individuals belong to groups. SIT

argues social identity is the part of an individual's self-concept derived from their membership with a social group (Tajfel, 1978). This piece of understanding oneself contains some emotional and value significance as a part of that group membership (Tajfel, 1972). SCT argues that a cognitive process occurs by which individuals see themselves as the same as others based on some category (Leonardelli & Toh, 2015; Turner et al., 1987). By considering both how individuals see others, as well as how they see themselves, SIA accommodates both inter- and intra-group dynamics (Kreindler et al., 2012).

SIA arose as a way to integrate both the individual cognitive processes and group dynamics, offering multiple dimensions to assess how social categories affect an individual's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors (Kreindler et al., 2012; Reicher et al., 2010). Firstly, SIA is built on the notion of social identity, or how individuals identify with certain groups. Social identities are the central component of this approach, arguing that individuals naturally categorize themselves and others into groups and based on characteristics that contribute to positive self-esteem. Secondly, social structures are meaningfully constructed within this approach as factors that affect social identities and their positive distinctiveness, such as power or status. Thirdly, identity content, which describe the values, norms, and other attributes that guide behavior, shapes what it means to be a part of a social group. Additionally, the strength of identification plays an important factor in how an individual's social groups—and the meaning derived from it—affects them. Moreover, the context for an identity also influences these factors, as a social identity in one context may be viewed differently in another context. This list is not exhaustive, but rather an insight into the many dimensions that are considered by the Social Identity Approach (Kreindler et al., 2012; Reicher et al., 2010)

While SIA considers many factors as to what it means to be in a group and how that affects individuals, one understudied area of this approach is the content of the identity and

how the meaning associated with a particular social identity may influence ingroup members differently, as highlighted in the introduction (Turner-Zwinkles et al., 2015). Specifically, intra-group differences has been well investigated for why an ingroup member may deviate from other group members and how a group may handle that deviant behavior (see Abrams et al., 2003; Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988; Pinto et al., 2010 for an overview of different approaches). However, what it means to belong to a group and the prototype that represents a group is not necessarily a precise or well-defined list, even sometimes considered a “fuzzy set” of attributes that varies depending on context (Hogg & Reid, 2006). As such, what it means to be a part of a group is not necessarily a specific list of five or fifty or five hundred items that are immovable or immutable, but rather an array of values, norms, or other attributes that help distinguish between an ingroup and relevant outgroups depending on the context and circumstances (Hogg & Reid, 2006). If these values, norms, or other pieces of content are multiple and varied, then they may not always lead all group members to behave in the same way, especially in different contexts or ambiguous situations. Based on SIA, this thesis will aim to understand what happens when members of a group think, behave, or express their group membership in diverging ways, particularly when those ingroup members behave in diverging ways while still aligning to the norms or values of their group.

2.1 Social Identity Theory, Self-Categorization and the Importance of Prototypes

Social Identity Theory, one of the foundational theories of the Social Identity approach, originally formed as a way to explain intergroup behavior. It aimed to answer the question “why do group members malign out groups and what makes people often believe that their own group is better than others?” (Reicher et al., 2010, p. 18). Social Identity Theory, when first explored by Tajfel and colleagues (1971), demonstrated that in even the

most minimal of paradigms with trivial groups, group membership created ingroup favoritism, with individuals preferring their fellow group mates over those not in their group. These findings, among others, showed over and over again that individuals use their group membership to create a positive distinctiveness between their groups and other groups. These group memberships, as Tajfel and others argue, help individuals create and define a place in society (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As this group membership becomes a part of the way an individual defines themselves, it then helps them maintain a positive self-concept, as they work to see ‘us’ as different and better than ‘them’ (Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Since this initial conception, a large vein of research from SIT has explored how ingroup favoritism can lead to perceptions of higher status and more favorable opinions of those in one’s group (see Brewer, 2002, Brown, 2000 or Hornsey, 2008 for review). In essence, once an individual views themselves as a member of a group, it has a meaningful impact on the way they understand who they are as a person.

As defined by Tajfel (1978), social identity is the “part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group.” When an individual is a member of a social group, they have knowledge that they belong to a group and that knowledge, as a result, brings meaning to who they are as a person (Tajfel, 1972). In other words, social identity explains how self-perceived membership in a social group affects perceptions, attitudes, values, behaviors, and more (Greene, 1999). The meaning associated with this group membership helps inform individuals as to who they are similar to and who they are different from, things they find acceptable or unacceptable, and behaviors that are good or bad (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Hornsey, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010). As a result of this meaning, social groups have boundaries that help create clear categories as to who is or is not in a group.

Importantly, the ingroup/outgroup dynamic occurs because humans seem to instinctively categorize the world into dichotomous groups of *us* and *them* (Greene, 1999). Self-Categorization Theory, an extension and supplemental theory to SIT, argues that the process of categorization alone leads to perceived differences between ingroups and outgroups. For example, Wilder (1986) has argued that it is the combination of social categorization (“I am like others”) coupled with specific intergroup contexts that lead individuals to categorize others, or themselves, into such perceived groups. SCT aims to explain the relationship between personal and social identity, how and why people define themselves in terms of group membership, and how such social identification can produce ingroup consensus.

For self-categorization, it is largely dependent on features or cues upon which individuals can be differentiated. When those features can be distinguished, and the necessary context exists, a grouping (or categorization) will occur (Ellemers, Spears, Doosje, 2002; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). Notably, there are three kinds of categorization that can occur: ingroup/outgroup (or intergroup) categorization, ingroup only categorization, and outgroup only categorization (Leonardelli & Toh, 2015). Intergroup categorization is a commonly known “us vs. them” type of categorization where the features of an individual and the features of others can be placed in two distinct categories. Ingroup only categorization happens when individuals find themselves like others, based on some relevant feature, without the presence of an outgroup. Outgroup only categorization occurs when an individual finds that they are not like others within some salient category. Each process serves as a way for individuals to find their place in the social world.

As a result of these assessments of similarities and differences, self-categorization is argued to be the underlying psychological process of how individuals place themselves and others into groups. This process includes several dynamics that concern both the self and the

other. One of the important components in understanding the social category is the prototype of a group. In order to understand and identify social categories, individuals define what the prototype of a group is and what differentiates them from another group. This prototype is often not necessarily a specific individual, but instead a ‘fuzzy set’ of attributes that help define and distinguish one group from another (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Prototypes, in this perspective, describe an imaginary but ideal ingroup members (Hogg et al., 2004). Still, others have argued that a group’s prototypes tend to be exaggerated examples of individuals within that category, or they can be the exemplar individual within a category (Leonardelli & Toh, 2015). For example, individuals might say that the prototype of a political party would embody the key attributes of that political party, or the prototype would be the leader of that political party. A group’s prototype then helps to accentuates both the ingroup similarities and outgroup differences, establishing clear categorical boundaries.

Before progressing further on prototypes for social categories, it is necessary to address prototypes in general. Though there are numerous conceptual models of prototype theory (see Lakoff, 2007 or Lakoff, 2008, Ch.2 for an overview), this thesis will rely on ‘fuzzy set theory’ and prototype effects (Lakoff, 2008; Rosch, 1975, 1981; Zadeh, 1978). ‘fuzzy sets,’ in their original conception, are graded categories, or ones that have gradations of some characteristic (Zadeh, 1978). This conception of a prototype argues that prototypes are sets of characteristics that may be ostensive, but are difficult to operationalize (Zadeh, 1982). Complimentarily, prototype effects, as argued by Rosch (1978, 1981), are goodness-of-fit assessments where the prototype serves as a reference point for evaluating how similar something is to the prototype. Prototypes, in this conception, are largely superficial, in that they do not necessarily show anything about the nature of categorization or a theory of representation of categories, but rather are used to assess how similar something or someone is to the relevant prototype (Lakoff, 2007, 2008; Rosch, 1978) Taken together, prototypes are

approximated sets of attributes that are useful in determining how similar something is to the understanding of a specific category. In other words, the prototype of the category *bird* allows someone to evaluate how similar a specific bird is to the general notion of a bird (Lakoff, 2007).

In some of the earliest work on categorization and prototypes, researchers explored the relationship between semantic categories, using stimuli such as colors or words (Brown, 1958; Lakoff, 1972; Rosch, 1974; 1975). For example, in one set of experiments Rosch (1975b) was able to demonstrate that by varying primes (either a color or the name of a color) and then presenting participants with a set of colors, they could influence how individuals categorized colors. The associated body of research on prototype effects demonstrate that ‘goodness of fit’ is what gives someone the ability to distinguish between groups. As argued by Rosch (1978) prototypes are not sufficient on their own to represent a category, but rather it is the degree of prototypicality that helps determine whether or not something fits within a category. These attributes of a prototype provide the ability for an evaluation to be made about the similarities or differences between one category and another (Rosch, 1975). The relationship, then, between a prototype’s attributes and how well someone or something fits within that helps describe the process of categorization. This process has also been observed in ad-hoc groups or categories, indicating that this process need not be dependent on predetermined traits, but can be created in the moment to categorize new or unconventional categories (Barsalou, 1983, 1985). The same phenomenon is found in self-categorization as well, as individuals assess how well they fit within a particular or relevant social category based on their understanding of the prototype and then use that category to help define their social identity (Oakes, 1987; Oakes et al., 1991; Turner, 1985).

Just as with other categories, social categories are characterized by the distinctive and emergent properties of group relations and collective behavior (Oakes et al., 1991). This set

of attributes is important as it allows an individual to better understand how groups ‘fit’ together. This fit functions along two aspects: comparative fit and normative fit (Oakes et al., 1991). The first aspect of fit is the comparative fit, which clues an individual on how well they fit within a group of people, based on the perceived similarities or differences along specific categorical lines. This aspect of fit is entirely shaped by the intergroup context, where specific differences are highlighted depending on the differences between groups (Hogg & Reid, 2006). When shaping this aspect of fit, individuals rely on prototypes and the meta-contrast principle, which maximizes the ratio of intergroup differences to ingroup differences. Said differently, the differences between one group of individuals along some category is less than the differences between another group along the same category, individuals will perceive those individuals as a unitary social group (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Oakes et al., 1991).

The second aspect of fit is normative fit, which considers the social meaning of a categories. Though normative fit also includes a comparative function, normative fit looks specifically at the attitudinal, behavioral, or moral values that a group possesses (Oakes et al., 1991). Normative fit indicates that there is some sort of match between the content of a group and the values of an individual. It is in this way that an individual may be able to express their group membership. For example, Republicans and Democrats in the US political landscape are not only different in terms of their party affiliation, but also in terms of their ideological positions, such as being for or against social welfare programs or government regulation of economic issues (Sides et al., 2018). The categories create the comparative fit, but it is differing ideological positions that demonstrate how the identity content is different, allowing for normative fit to be evaluated. When placing oneself or others into a specific category, individuals rely on both aspects of fit and the relevant context to provide clues.

This process of categorizing individuals and whether they fit determines who is perceived to belong to a specific group (Reicher et al., 2010). One of the core processes of SCT is therefore self-stereotyping, or the process where an individual aligns their self-perception and behavior to more closely resemble the stereotypical norms of that category (Hogg & Turner, 1987). This process can take the form of individuals embodying the traits of their ingroup or distancing themselves from the characteristics of their outgroup (Brown & Turner, 1981; Cadinu et al., 2013). Thus, by understanding the prototype and then self-stereotyping to that prototype, ingroup members can increasingly conform. For example, research has shown that the prototypical position on a specific opinion or behavior can intensify how individuals conform to their group, as seen in settings of increased group polarization (Abrams & Hogg, 1990, McGarty et al., 1992, Turner & Oakes, 1986).

Thus far, Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory have been shown to explain how individuals see themselves as belonging in social contexts. Individuals find relevant social features and use those cues to place themselves into corresponding categories or groups. These theories help explain many aspects of intergroup dynamics and how individuals place themselves within particularly relevant groups. From the earliest research on minimal group paradigms, where individuals were placed into arbitrary groups and asked to evaluate ingroup and outgroup members to research on identity content's impact on ingroup members during social conflict, the majority of research has focused on intergroup contexts (Hornsey, 2008; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This research explores intergroup dynamics, attempting to explain why individuals seek group membership, how boundaries are drawn on such categories, and then how individuals place themselves into groups.

These theories lay the foundation for social identity research. In the next section, I will cover processes of identification and how individuals create meaning from their social

identities. Notably, Within Identity Differences builds on SIA by considering both SIT and SCT. Within Identity Differences considers the importance of social identity and its impact on ingroup members. It relies on the process of self-categorization and group prototypes to reflect how ingroup members conceive their own self-concept. The importance of prototypes as a ‘fuzzy set’ and the process for determining how similar something is to the prototype are fundamental pieces to this thesis.

2.2. Identification and Meaning

Social identification is the extent to which an individual attaches affective significance to a group to which he or she belongs (Van Veelen et al., 2016). In the early research on SCT, the research took a self-centric approach, assuming the perspective of “I am like my group” (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). This approach has led to the idea of self-stereotyping, or the process of assimilation of oneself to a group’s prototype. However, another pathway has been proposed that functions in the opposite direction of self-stereotyping, known as self-anchoring (Cadinu & Rothbart, 1996). This perspective takes the perspective of “my group is like me,” where an individual projects their personal perceptions onto their groups. A third alternative has been proposed that integrates both pathways, the Integrative Model of Social Identification (Van Veelen et al., 2016). Each of these processes informs the way an individual derives meaning from their group, which will be discussed at length throughout this section.

SCT proposes that an individual’s conception of their personal self and their social self are on opposite ends of a spectrum (Hornsey, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010). When a particular category becomes salient, an individual will see themselves or others as more or less interchangeable with the group’s prototype (Hornsey, 2008). This process is known as depersonalization. Just as someone may argue that all outgroup members are the same, citing

the group's prototype, that same person will view themselves in terms of the characteristics of their ingroup's prototype (Hogg et al., 2004). When the personal self shifts into the background and the social self emerges as salient, individuals will define themselves in accordance with the group's prototypical characteristics (Van Veelen et al., 2016). This process implies that an individual may define who they are based on attributes of the group. Research on Identity Fusion has demonstrated how this can occur, as individuals come to see who they are defined mostly by a particular group (Swann et al., 2010, 2012, 2014). The process of self-stereotyping is a top-down approach that leads individuals to seeing themselves aligned with the group's prototype.

Self-stereotyping is a process that occurs when an individual's social identity is salient (Onorato & Turner, 2004). This process follows the idea of "I am like my group" (Turner et al., 1987). In self-stereotyping, individuals shape their self-concept after the attributes or traits of the relevant social group. In doing so, aligning one's attitudes and behaviors with their group, ingroup members can bask in the esteem of the group, helping them have better self-esteem (Cadinu, Latrofa, & Carnaghi, 2013; Simon & Hamilton, 1994; Van Veelen et al., 2016). This process has also been argued to lead to the adoption of group norms for individuals who self-stereotype (Hogg et al., 2004; Hogg & Reid, 2006). In fact, self-categorization and self-stereotyping suggest that ingroup members change 'who one is' to become defined by the stereotypically attributes, values, and goals shared by others in the same social category (Reicher et al., 2010). Through self-stereotyping, an individual becomes a member of a group and takes cues as to the norms and attitudes from the group, leading them to increasingly act like a fellow ingroup member.

A different process is self-anchoring, which takes the perspective of social identification as "my group is like me" (Van Veelen et al., 2016). This process takes three central assumptions: firstly, that individuals process favorable beliefs about themselves.

Secondly, in certain contexts, individuals describe their ingroup as characteristics that are similar to their own characteristics. Lastly, combining these assumptions, individuals view their ingroup favorably compared to other outgroups (Cadinu & Rothbart, 1996; Van Veelen et al., 2016). This effect is particularly well-documented in group settings where there is minimal information about the comparative or normative aspects of the group (Cadinu & Rothbart, 1996; Van Veelen et al., 2016). As such, individuals rely on their own self-concept, with known attributes and values, and perceive their group as being similar to who they are. In this way, an individual creates meaning from their understanding of themselves and uses it to define their group, reinforcing their own attributes.

According to Van Veelen and team (2016), these two cognitive processes can occur distinctly and yet simultaneously to accommodate the tension between how an individual may perceive themselves as a member of some group (i.e., “I am like my group” vs. “my group is like me.”) This model helps resolve the discontinuity that is implied by self-stereotyping being the only method of identification, namely that as people become more strongly identified with a group, their self-concept becomes depersonalized to take on more traits of the group’s prototype (Onorato & Turner, 2004). Implied in this model, and crucial to the understanding of Within Identity Differences, is that an individual’s perception of a group is considered when attempting to understand what being a member of that group means.

Additionally, Van Veelen and colleagues (2016) argue when people search for ways to give meaning to who they are, both self-anchoring and self-stereotyping can fill gaps of either their personal self or their social self. Essentially, they argue, that both processes are ‘meaning making’ processes that help someone make sense of both their personal self-concepts and their relevant social group’s content. The process of self-stereotyping can provide meaning to an unknown or undefined part of an individual’s self-concept; the process

of self-anchoring does the opposite, by providing meaning to the unknown parts of an ingroup (Van Veelen et al., 2016). To extend their argument, being that both processes help make meaning, the process of identification itself is an attempt to create meaning for an individual by creating means through which they can belong to particular groups that either reflect who they believe they are, or utilize a social group's content to obtain that meaning. In all, identification with a group is a process that helps create meaning through social identity content. That content helps ingroup members better understand who they are, what the group stands for, and what these things mean together.

2.2.1 Identification and Group Meaning in the Real World: Party Identification and Partisanship

To synthesize SIA and processes of identification, I will draw on a real-world example that reflects how individuals identify with specific groups and what happens as those groups change. A notable example of the SIA and identification in practice is when individuals change their political affiliation from one party to another. According to Pew, from 2018 to 2020, some 9 per cent of Americans changed their party identification from Democrat to Republican, while, simultaneously, 9 per cent of Republicans changed their party identification to Democrat (Pew, 2020). At the time of the Pew study, the Democrats had a net favorability rating ranging from -8 to -2, according to an on-going Gallup poll. At the same time, Republicans had a net favorability rating ranging from -21 to +5. Though the groups had varying favorability, neither partisan group was sustainably more or less favorable than the other. Additionally, Pew data on partisanship showed that both political parties were becoming more ideologically coherent and more partisan. Pew's research showed that individuals increasingly sort themselves along liberal/conservative lines, while

the parties also move further to the left/right. Essentially, even though party evaluations were relatively close, individuals switched parties as the parties became increasingly partisan.

According to much research on party identification, partisan group membership is largely stable, except in times of marked change in the political landscape (Green et al., 2002; Leduc, 1981; Tucker et al., 2019). Tucker and colleagues (2019), when researching why individuals change political party, provided evidence that though the partisan identity tends to be stable, any change that does occur is largely related to recent evaluations of an individual's political party and of the current president. These factors, though influential, are much more influential among a certain population of partisans. Their research goes on to show that "true change occurs when considering shifts in the major identification categories, not simply as shifts between strong and not-strong identifiers" (Tucker et al., 2019, p.16). Based on public opinion at the time, and the equal number of individuals switching from both parties, normal tenets of SIT or SCT (e.g., self-esteem, identity management, depersonalization, etc.) may not explain why these individuals chose to switch political parties. However, the ISMI model, considering both self-anchoring and self-stereotyping, could be an explanation here. Based on the predictions from this model, individuals would be regularly trying to resolve the tension between the statements "I am like my group" and "my group is like me" (Van Veelen et al., 2016). While some people may resolve this tension through methods like Identity Fusion or other depersonalization tactics, others decide that they no longer fit within a group and have to change with which group they identify. When a major change occurs to a political party, individuals defect from that group to another group that holds the values they believe were central to their previous party, indicating a belief that someone is no longer like their group and therefore must find a new group (a notable example of this is the realignment between Republicans and Democrats in the American South during the Civil Rights Movement; Carsey and Layman, 2006; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2002).

This process of dual pathways for meaning as the outcome for social identification creates an opening in how identification with a group can create varied meaning for individuals. If all members of a group only take cues from the group's prototype as to what their attitudes, behaviors, and values should be, then all members in a group would think and act in the same way. Though the strength of an ingroup member's identification with that group can moderate the relationship between an ingroup member and their prototypicality, this strength of identification is codetermined by that social identity's content (Doosje et al., 1999; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Obst et al., 2011; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). In other words, an individual is not going to strongly identify with a particular social identity unless there is good normative fit, based on their personal self (Otten & Wentura, 2001; Van Veelen et al., 2011). Resolving the tension between "I am like my group" and "my group is like me" allows individuals to regularly assess their ingroup for similarities. The codetermination of identification with identity content implies that there are particular aspects of a group's prototype that an ingroup member may identify with more than others (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

Within Identity Differences relies on the 'fuzzy set' of attributes associated with a group's prototype and process of identification to show that there are different aspects of a social identity that an ingroup member can use to create meaning and affect their self-concept. The group's prototype is shaped by the content of that group, helping to distinguish the group from others and providing features along which someone can determine if they, or others, fit (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Oakes et al., 1990).

2.3. Identity Content and Its Impact

The core feature upon which the idea of Within Identity Differences is built is the notion of social identity content, or the specific meaning associated with a particular identity

(Reicher et al., 2010). As mentioned, a group's prototype is understood as and represented by a 'fuzzy set' of characteristics and attributes (Hogg & Reid, 2006). The prototype of a group essentially serves as the embodiment of that group's particular content. When considering elements of fit, both comparative and normative, the identity content serves as the set of attributes that are associated with the group. This content is internalized by group members and shared across the group, and determines in what way ingroup members are influenced by their group (Jetten et al., 2002; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). In this section, I will attempt to define what identity content is, how it relates to group prototypes, and how identity content impacts group members.

Social identity content encompasses the distinct attributes, values, and norms that characterize a social group, setting it apart from other groups in the intergroup context (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). Identity content has also been argued to refer to the identity's meanings, including characteristics, ideologies, and self-narratives (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). This set of characteristics is crucial as it provides individuals with a framework for understanding how groups 'fit' together within the broader social landscape, especially an ingroup members place in and relation to the world (Simon, Trötschel, & Dähne, 2008). Identity content goes beyond mere category labels, though, offering substantive meaning to social identities and shaping the cognitive representations that members hold about their group (Kreindler et al., 2012). As individuals internalize these shared beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, they begin to perceive and interpret their social world through the lens of their group's identity content, ultimately influencing how they think, feel, and act in alignment with their social identity. Identity content varies depending on the group and the members within that group (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). Identity content can also change over time. However, broadly speaking, identity content can refer to specific group beliefs, norms, attitudes, public opinions, moral values, and more.

The content of a group's identity is intrinsically linked to the group's prototype, which functions as a cognitive representation of the ideal or typical group member (Hogg & Reid, 2006). This prototype serves as a crucial element in the social categorization process, providing a benchmark against which group members and potential members are evaluated. The prototype embodies the central tendencies of the group's identity content, reflecting the attributes, behaviors, and attitudes that are most characteristic of the group in a given context (Turner et al., 1987). As individuals engage in the process of self-categorization, they rely on these prototypes to gauge their fit within the group, often leading to a phenomenon known as self-stereotyping (Hogg & Turner, 1987). This process involves individuals aligning their self-perception and behavior with the perceived group norm, effectively internalizing the group's identity content. As argued in the ISMI, self-anchoring can also provide meaning for unknown parts of a social identity's content, allowing individuals to project their own personal values or attributes onto the group's prototype (Van Veelen et al., 2016). The degree to which members conform to the prototype can vary, influenced by factors such as the individual's level of identification with the group, social context, and more (Ellemers et al., 2002). However, the clarity of the prototype can also impact this conformity, as a 'fuzzy set' with many attributes may challenge individuals to align with specific pieces and not all (Turner et al., 2006). Moreover, a 'fuzzy set' understanding of a group's prototype could also be a broader definition of that prototype, fitting more people inside the attributes that shape the group. Turner and colleagues (2006) argue that group prototypes are flexible, rather than rigid, that allow for individual variation while maintaining group cohesion. Importantly, the relationship between identity content and group prototypes is dynamic and reciprocal; as members enact and negotiate identity content, they simultaneously shape and reinforce the group's prototypical features, creating a feedback loop that continually refines the group's collective self-understanding (Reicher et al., 2010). Identity content, then, is virtually

synonymous with a group's prototype and that content helps an ingroup achieve the particular needs or goals of a given situation.

Functionally, identity content shapes the cognitive and behavioral landscape of group members, providing interpretive frameworks through which individuals perceive and interact with their social world (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). This set of shared beliefs, values, and norms serves as a cognitive filter, influencing how ingroup members process information and make decisions in various contexts. While the comparative function is crucial in shaping intergroup attitudes and behaviors, content often manifests as specific constructs that can lead to phenomena such as ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Menard, 2016; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). Importantly, the functional role of identity content is not static but rather dynamically responsive to changes in the social context, adapting to meet the evolving needs and goals of the group or the individual (Ellemers et al., 2002). Through identification with a social group, the ingroup member takes on more and more of the meaning of the group onto themselves, or begin to identify with particular aspect of that group to a greater extent (Leach et al., 2008). There is some nuance with the impact of identification, though, as Leach and colleagues (2008) have shown that identification has many components and therefore can impact some components of the self-concept and not others. As ingroup members can also push a group to change or adjust some of the attitudes, norms, or values, dissent (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). As such, identity content not only reflects the current state of the group but also plays a pivotal role in shaping its future trajectory, influencing collective action and social change processes.

While identity content often serves as a unifying force within groups, it can also be a source of intra-group conflict and contestation, reflecting the dynamic and sometimes fragmented nature of social identities (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). The specific attributes,

values, and norms that constitute a group's identity content are not necessarily fixed or universally agreed upon by all members, but rather subject to ongoing negotiation and reinterpretation (Turner et al., 2006). Though these attributes align with the group's prototype, that prototype can be understood in different ways by ingroup members, with such members relying on some but not all of the group's attributes to define what it means to be a part of that group (Haslam et al., 1998). Jetten and Hornsey (2014) have highlighted how intra-group dissent can arise from differing interpretations of identity content, with some members advocating for strict adherence to traditional norms while others push for more progressive interpretations. Their research demonstrates that such dissent, rather than always being detrimental, can sometimes serve important group functions, such as innovation and adaptation to changing circumstances. Different factions within a group may emphasize or prioritize different aspects of identity content, leading to divergent interpretations of what it means to be a prototypical group member (Hogg & Reid, 2006). These intra-group differences can manifest in various ways, from subtle variations in behavioral norms to more fundamental disagreements about the group's core values or goals (Ellemers et al., 2002). Jetten and Hornsey's (2010, 2014) work further suggests that the management of these identity content disputes often involves a delicate balance between maintaining group cohesion and allowing for constructive dissent that can potentially strengthen the group's identity in the long term.

Identity content, as discussed here, is the meaning associated with a particular group. This meaning allows individuals to decide the normative fit between how they conceive themselves and how they conceive the group's prototype. Identity content, being so associated with a group's prototype, can also be understood as a 'fuzzy set' of attributes. Ingroup members then use some amount of this social identity content to show in what ways they are ingroup members. However, crucial to Within Identity Differences, is that there is no

predefined or specific set of attributes derived from identity content (Haslam et al., 1998). Rather, identity content is varied depending on the context and which pieces an individual most identifies with, creating multiples ways in which an ingroup member can derive meaning from their social identity.

2.4 Social Identity and Group Non-Conformity

Within Identity Differences draws on the SIA as its foundation, but instead of looking at intergroup contexts, it focuses on individual-level processes that occur when ingroup members may rely on or employ differing pieces of identity content. While much research has studied conformity within a group, notably less research has focused on non-conformity (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). The research that has explored this phenomenon, which has argued that dissent is an important aspect of group functioning, looks at what groups do when an ingroup member deviates or dissents from the group consensus. The two main ideas of this phenomenon are the Black Sheep Effect and Subjective Group Dynamics (BSE; SGD; Abrams et al., 2003; Marques et al., 1988; Marques, Paez, et al., 1998). These ideas focus how groups react to sustain group conformity, which is particularly important from maintaining group status, especially in times of threat (Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This section will explore conformity, intra-group relations, and what literature currently says about ingroup members who deviate from their group.

The relationship between social identity and conformity is a complex and dynamic interaction that significantly influences individual behavior and group dynamics (Hogg & Reid, 2006). As individual's work to align their self-concept with what it means to belong to a group, it often manifests as conformity to the group's prototype (Turner et al., 1987). When ingroup members conform to their group's prototype, it is often done in a way that polarizes ingroup members away from outgroup members, helping to strengthen the social group's

status in intergroup contexts (Hogg & Reed, 2006; Turner et al., 1989). However, the degree of conformity is not uniform across all group members or situations, reflecting the ‘fuzzy’ nature of group prototypes and the variability in individual identification strength (Haslam et al., 1998). Research has shown that individuals with stronger group identification are more likely to conform to group norms, particularly when the group identity is salient or under threat (see Jetten et al., 2002). However, recent research has also highlighted the potential for individuals to selectively conform to certain aspects of group norms while maintaining distinctiveness in others, a process that reflects the complex negotiation of self-categorization (Brewer, 1991; Hornsey & Jetten, 2004).

A social group’s reaction to ingroup members that maintain some distinctiveness or deviate from their ingroup in some way has been the main focus of research on this phenomenon. One of the most prominent ideas explores what is known as the Black Sheep Effect. First presented in 1988, the Black Sheep Effect (BSE) shows that individuals in a group have more extreme evaluations of people within their group than those outside of their group (Marques et al., 1988; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). Marques and colleagues early research in this area demonstrate a phenomenon by which ingroup members are held to a standard that outgroup members are not held to, regardless of the presence of an outgroup. In other words, ingroup members are expected to conform to a set of standards derived from what it means to be an ingroup member. When an ingroup member adheres to these standards, whether agreeing with particular pieces of an identity’s content (descriptively) or behaving in a way that ingroup members expect others to behave (normatively), they are viewed more positively by those in their group than individuals who think or act in the same way and are not members of the group. Conversely, when an ingroup member deviates from the descriptive or normative expectations of the group, they are viewed more harshly than individuals who think or act in the same way but are not members of that group. When an

individual deviates from the norms of a group, their membership with the group is what determines whether they become marked as a black sheep.

The Black Sheep Effect has been shown to influence several elements of group belonging and dynamics. Notably, this effect affects ideas of conformity and control within groups. Chekroun (2008) argued that the BSE is a mechanism of social control, as a deviant ingroup member can be perceived as a threat to the positive distinctiveness of that group. As such, those members are harsher and more derogative towards their fellow group members who threaten the thing that sets their group apart. The effort from ingroup members to make it more costly or punishable for their fellow group members to deviate becomes a natural part of intra-group workings, aiming to increase the conformity for their group. One example of this research explores what happens when partisan members in the US affirm or criticize their political party (Reiman & Killoran, 2023). This research found that for both Republicans and Democrats, ingroup members who aligned with their respective political party were judged more harshly than outgroup members (e.g., a Republican criticizing a Republican is viewed more negatively than a Republican criticizing a Democrat). To put a finer point on this research, Pinto, Marques, Levine, and Abrams (2010) have used the SGD model to show that the Black Sheep Effect comes into play when group members have higher standing in the group, or have been a member of the group longer. The ability to socialize and assimilate into the group appears to be a central factor to how group members evaluate each other.

In addition to the Black Sheep Effect, another prominent set of research on within group functioning is the aforementioned Subjective Group Dynamics (SGD). First introduced in 1998, SGD builds on the Black Sheep Effect by proposing that there are multiple, simultaneous operations that occur in an individual's evaluation of fellow ingroup members. Specifically, the evaluations that occur include both category differentiation and normative differentiation (Marques, et al., 1998). Category differentiation is the process of establishing

whether someone is a group member or not, such as being a fellow Republican or Democrat. Normative differentiation evaluates the adherence to the norms of their specific category, for example a Democrat espousing liberal principles. While further research has indicated that how long someone has been an ingroup member can affect normative differentiation, the effect has still shown strong evidence for group members regardless of standing (e.g., Abrams et al., 2003; Levine & Moreland, 2006; Pinto et al., 2010). The argument posits that in order to maintain a positive self-view, in intergroup contexts, group members will downplay, denigrate, or demean fellow group members who do not adhere to their norms and to presented a unified front, groups will push for conformity (Pinto et al., 2010).

Subjective Group Dynamics specifically focuses on what happens within a group when there is some form of deviance or disagreement. As noted above, the normative difference triggers the most meaningful and harshest reactions. Pinto and colleagues (2010) argue that the categorical evaluation plays an important role in defining relevant group members to contribute to a positive identity distinctiveness, but go on to demonstrate that individuals will appraise the relevance and level of adherence to that distinction with the other group. It is based on this reinforcement of creating a positive group esteem and identity that this process occurs.

However, through Social Identity Theory, Self-Categorization Theory, the Social Identity Approach, the Black Sheep Effect, and Subjective Group Dynamics—all efforts to describe what a group is, how we join group, and what happens when we disagree with those in the group—there is limited literature or discussion of why individuals within a group might disagree with each other, especially on themes that are central to the groups' identity. The majority of research reviewed thus far implies that in a given context, there are prescriptive ways that ingroup members should act to be good group members (Marques, et al., 1998).

However, the current literature offers little to say about how ingroup members are supposed to act in ambiguous situations, or situations without clear prescriptive norms from the group.

2.5 Why Individuals Deviate from Their Group?

Differences within a group are all a part of the normal course of existence for individuals and groups. While much of the traditional research and legacy studies have investigated conformity and the need to belong, these approaches have overlooked and obscured the fact that deviation and dissent are regular occurrences within groups (Jetten & Hornsey, 2011; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Haslam & Reicher, 2012). In the most comprehensive review of differences within groups, Jetten and Hornsey (2014) review classic work and make notable contribution by defining terms and reviewing the reaction to deviation. Even though the authors posit five reasons as to why individuals might deviate from their group (listed below), they also note that “far less is known about the motives that might lead people to deviate or dissent from groups [compared to the motives of conformity]” (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014, p.464).

Reasons for Deviance and Dissent in Groups:

1. Disengagement, disloyalty, or disrespect for the group
2. Loyalty and concern for the group
3. Moral rebellion—when personal moral convictions take precedence over group norms
4. Desire to express differences, individuality, and uniqueness
5. Tangible rewards and instrumental gain derived from dissent and deviance.

The aforementioned motives, though comprehensive, are not fully exhaustive. I will discuss some of these motives below.

One of the most prominent explanations of why an individual might disagree with their group on some dimension comes from individual differences, aligning with Motive #4

above (Brewer, 1991; Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). Specifically, individual differences such as personality traits can play a role in the level of conformity one has with their group. Research has shown that characteristics such as personal self-esteem, authoritarianism, and field dependence (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Reynolds, Tamir & Nadler, 2007; Truner, Haslam, & Ryan, 2001; Verkuyten & Hagendoon, 1998). These studies demonstrate that even though there is a level of conformity that occurs in adhering to a social group, individuals have to balance their individual attributes with those of a specific group. Further research has shown that these personality traits can even affect not just whether or not an individual identifies with a group, but also the degree to which they identify with that group (Dutton, Dukerich, Harquail, 1994). Thus, individual differences have been shown to have multiple effects social identification, with one thread predicting what kinds of groups an individual may identify with, based on their personality attributes (Bizumic et al., 2012; Halfhill, Nielsen, & Sundstorm, 2008). The other thread argues that the level of social identification is dependent on the personality traits an individual expresses (Ellemers et al., 2004; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). This notion also aligns with ISMI as individuals may self-anchor when identifying with a social group, as their personality may not fully align with the social group, limiting their ability to fully identify with a social group. This research shows that there is some dynamic relationship between who an individual is and the groups they associate with.

Beyond individuality and individual differences as a reason for deviance within a group, also mentioned in Jetten and Hornsey (2014) is that individuals can be disloyal to a group. This hypothesis is supported by several studies that demonstrate people who have low levels of identification with a group conform less and are more likely to deviate, or act in accordance with other relevant outgroups (Packer, 2008; Spears et al., 1997; Warren, 2003). Individuals who feel low levels of attachment to a group are much less likely to conform, making them prone to acting out in some way against the group. Conversely, some

individuals are motivated by an extreme sense of loyalty to the group, which causes them to deviate. These dissenters often attempt to change group norms or standing for the better, exhibiting a phenomenon known as ‘constructive deviance’ (Galperin, 2012). To these individuals, their groups relevance to their own personal identity (or self-esteem) is so crucial that when they feel the group is deviating from its core principles, they will attempt to change the group as a whole through their dissent. For example, the Republicans Against Trump group vehemently disagrees with Donald Trump and his political policies, even to the point of voting against him to “save the soul of the Republican Party” (Saldin & Teles, 2020, p.118). As Donald Trump became the face of the Republican Party, these partisans had a choice: abandon their party or abandon their principles. However, these members seem to have found a third option, as they still identify with their party and their principles. These partisans vote against Trump for president, but vote for other Republicans. Moreover, notable figures still advocate for other ideologically conservative policies. In fact, for many of these Republicans Against Trump, it is exactly because of their Republican beliefs that they are disinclined to vote for Trump, arguing that he is not a conservative (Lee, 2017; Saldin & Teles, 2020). Essentially, a threat to the status of their group may cause them to rebel against the group’s consensus as a way to fight against this threat. This form of difference within a group is admirable, but its explanation fits squarely under a typical Social Identity Approach.

Unspecified in Jetten and Hornsey’s (2014) review is the notion sometimes there are situations where there are not salient group norms that should prescribe behavior. They acknowledge that that identities content is complex, and that group members often negotiate and renegotiate the content of norms. Yet, their review does not mention how group members may diverge in ambiguous situations. An example of a current ambiguous situation for Republicans is that of the Ukraine war against Russia and American aid. For some Republicans, each nation should be sovereign and Russia is a geopolitical enemy, so aiding

Ukraine in their fight makes sense. For other Republicans, America should not intervene and should not spend US tax dollars on foreign wars. Both positions are seemingly valid, with 101 Republicans voting for aid in the most recent vote, while 112 voted against aid (US House of Representatives Clerk, 2024). In this situation, it seems that neither of the Republican factions are necessarily deviant, as both factions rely on differing pieces identity content to justify their positions and the party is nearly perfectly split. These partisans demonstrate the complexity of identity content, as they adhere to the ideological content of their political identity but diverge from their group when it comes to how to vote. This example is one of ambiguous situations where conceptions of group deviance do not seem to apply. Instead, identity content may offer an explanation to this phenomenon, as the meaning derived from being a Republican influences these members of the US Congress in differing ways.

Individual differences and group loyalty, among others argued by Jetten and Hornsey (2014) can play a role in how an individual conforms or deviates from their group. However, this explanation does not include identity content as a possible explanation for such differences within a group. Specifically, they argue that deviant behavior comes from disobeying a group norm that is salient. As mentioned in the previous example, though, there are times where a group norm is not salient and multiple pieces of identity content may provide guidance for behavior. In these situations, the current literature on SIA, group prototypes, and group non-conformity struggles to explain how ingroup should behave. As such, the notion of Within Identity Differences aims to explain what happens in these situations and how group members can draw on their social identity to provide meaning and guidance in these situations.

2.6 Within Identity Differences

As shown so far, social identities are a source of meaning for individuals, shaping their self-concept (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identities have prototypes based on specific attributes that help define that group, accentuating how a group individuals are similar along some category while also highlighting how that group individuals are different from others (Hornsey, 2008; Turner et al., 1978). This group prototype also provides meaning to individuals, helping them understand the attitudes, norms, and values associated with that particular identity (Hogg & Reid, 2006). The meaning associated with a social identity—its identity content—is derived from the group's prototype and functions like a 'fuzzy set' of attributes, rather than a specific checklist (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Turner et al., 2006). Social identity content, therefore, can be varied, as some pieces of content may be more appealing and impactful to a particular ingroup member than other pieces of identity content, especially in situations without a clearly defined, group-conforming outcome (Galliher et al., 2017; Turner et al., 2006; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). Within Identity Differences synthesizes these pieces of the Social Identity Approach focusing on ingroup disagreement or deviance not necessarily as rebellion or non-conformity, but rather as an individual's identity-aligning response to situations where a group does not have a consensus on how to respond. Specifically, Within Identity Difference hypothesizes that *ingroup members can draw on differing aspects of a group's identity content to make sense of or evaluate ambiguous situations. These differing pieces of identity content can result in different responses to the ambiguous situation among group members, even though the responses may normatively fit the social identity.*

Identity content has been an under-researched area of social identity due to the complexity of operationalizing something that is so singular yet different between groups (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). However, broadly understood, content relates to the norms,

morals, values, behaviors, attitudes, ideologies, beliefs, and other pieces of an identity that give it meaning (see Galliher et al., 2017; Jetten et al., 2002; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). While identity content has been shown to be an important in intergroup contexts, its impact on how individuals make meaning from that identity has had limited research (Galliher et al., 2017). However, work on the politicization of US citizens during the 2012 Presidential election, Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015) found that identity content can also serve as an intra-group function, allowing individuals to be influenced by the particular aspects of relevant social identities. Specifically, their research showed that individuals who become more politicized noted changes in their personal identity, demonstrating that what it means to be ‘me’ and what it means to be ‘politicized’ can become more aligned through certain pieces of identity content. In this way, identity content can help ingroup members better know how to think or act in specific scenarios based on what it means to be a part of that group. Identity content becomes particularly important in ambiguous contexts, as that is when individuals will rely on their social identity to help them navigate situations that arise (Van Veelen et al., 2016).

Building on SIA, when an individual identifies with a social group, that group’s status and esteem influences how they perceive themselves (Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Similarly, as Ellemers (2015) argued, group members want to be ‘good’ group members, as it helps them feel valued, they try to have good standing within their group to boost their self-esteem. As such, I argue that individuals strive to be ‘good’ group members when they identify with a group. This striving causes them to want to act in accordance with their social group’s meaning. However, that meaning is not always clear, and which pieces of content to rely can also be ambiguous.

When an individual identifies with a group, adhering to the group’s content serves an important social function that allows that individual to feel that they belong to the group, that

they are included, and that they are valued (Ellemers et al., 2002; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). In work on the moral content of social groups, Ellemers and Van Der Toorn (2015) argue that morality is a universal concept that helps distinguish ‘right’ from ‘wrong’ in human behavior. They argue that universal moral guidelines become specific values and standards when translated into group-specific and identity-defining prescriptions. Regardless of which moral framework one may explore (e.g., Moral Foundations Theory, Morality as a Combinatorial System, etc.), each framework claims that there are numerous values. However, these values mean little outside of the group-specific behaviors or attitudes that help define ‘proper’ group members from those who are not (Curry et al., 2022; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Graham et al., 2013). For example, the universal value of ‘do no harm’ becomes specified into ‘thou shall not kill’ in the case of Christians, while other forms of harm may be acceptable. In this case, the group norms give permission to certain forms of harm that may be viewed as instrumental or corrective¹, while still prohibiting murder. In other religions, such as Buddhism, any form of physical punishment is viewed as unacceptable (Keerthirathne, 2016). Identity content, in the example of morality, may have group-specific prescriptions, but morality itself is so diverse that every possible moral dilemma does not have a pre-defined, group-specific instruction ready to go. Rather, in these ambiguous situations, individuals will rely on the identity content to help them navigate the ambiguity. Without having a specific piece of content ready to employ, ingroup members have many options to choose from, following the ‘fuzzy set’ concept.

Another form of identity content that has been documented is the ideology within political parties. In a comprehensive review, Jost and colleagues (2009) define ideology as a “set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved” (Jost et al., 2009,

¹ For example, an acceptable form of harm among US Christians is spanking, where Christians often cite the proverb: “Spare the rod, spoil the child.” Proverbs 13:24.

p. 309). In work studying voting behavior, party membership, and policy preferences, these values and beliefs have been shown to shift and change over time (Lupton et al., 2020; Sides et al., 2018). Party membership, on the other hand, has been shown to be highly stable (Green et al., 2002; Lupton et al., 2020). The argument goes that a political party's ideology—the specific pieces of content at play—will remain directionally the same, but the actual policy preferences may change in light of the context and situations. For example, Sides and colleagues (2018) found that Republicans, who generally believe in less government involvement in society, had wildly different policy preferences on Medicare and Medicaid, a form of government-subsidized healthcare in the US. Their research showed that both the expansion and protection of Medicare and the reduction of it were acceptable positions for Republican party members. Essentially, Republicans had multiple pieces of their political identity content that they could draw on to justify their position.

To my knowledge, there is only one study that examines the topic of identity content in ambiguous situations. Van Tongeren and colleagues (2012) explored whether different aspects Christian beliefs can impact Christians differently in ambiguous situations. This work primed Christians with seemingly opposing values within the Christian moral framework: forgiveness and justice. These Christians were then asked to solve a series of moral problems, including a 'jury study' in which participants read morally ambiguous scenarios and were asked to imagine themselves as jury members and the Moral Judgment Test (Lind, 2000). The research showed that Christians could be primed to evaluate these scenarios in differing ways, depending on which value they were primed with. The research showed that Christians primed with forgiveness were more likely to give favorable or lenient solutions to these problems than Christians who were primed justice. Though the findings align with the notions of Within Identity Differences, the primes were not specific to the identity content, but rather generalized ideas of forgiveness and justice.

This perspective on using social identity as a source of meaning to navigate ambiguous situations currently differs from much of the research on Social Identity Approach to date (Reicher et al., 2010). While traditional Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory have primarily focused on intergroup dynamics and the ways individuals align themselves with ingroup norms, the concept of Within Identity Differences acknowledges the nuanced variations that exist within a single social identity. This approach recognizes that members of the same social group may interpret and enact their shared identity in diverse ways, particularly when faced with ambiguous situations that lack clear group norms or expectations. By exploring these intra-group differences, we may be able to gain more comprehensive understanding of how individuals use their social identities as flexible sources for meaning-making, rather than viewing them as monolithic constructs that uniformly shape behavior. This perspective not only enriches our understanding of social identity processes but may also offer new insights into the complexity of human social behavior in situations where group boundaries and norms are less clearly defined.

As demonstrated, identity content has multiple elements that an ingroup member can rely on when trying to solve a situation. In contexts where there is a clear outcome, we can expect group members to act fairly similarly. However, in situations where the context is ambiguous, ingroup members will rely on their group's content to help navigate the dilemma. It is in these ambiguous situations that ingroup members may draw on differing pieces of content. These different pieces of content can lead them act in divergent ways while still aligning to the content that the group shows. In order to better understand how identity content impacts individuals in ambiguous contexts, this thesis will focus on two core research questions.

2.6.1 Research Questions:

1. How does social identity content impact an ingroup member's decision making in ambiguous situations?

2. How might differences of identity content create differences in the expression of a group identity?

2.7 Context on Social Identities

In the two empirical chapters presented in the following, I focus on two social categories that are particularly interesting when studying within group differences: religious and political identities. This section will cover why these groups are especially relevant to this concept, review current literature on both categories of social identity, and talk about the similarities between the types of social identity.

Social identity encompasses a diverse array of categories that individuals use to define themselves and others within society (Deaux et al., 1995). These identities can be broadly categorized as either ascribed identities and acquired identities (Huddy, 2001). Ascribed identities, such as race, ethnicity, or gender, are typically assigned at birth and are often resistant to change. Acquired identities, on the other hand, are developed over time through socialization and personal choice (Schwartz et al., 2011; Huddy, 2001). Acquired identities can include identities such as occupation or social roles, but for this thesis, will focus on religious and political identities. One distinction between acquired and ascribed social identities is identity mobility, or the ability to shift between different identity categories. For ascribed identities, it is nearly impossible to change, while it remains more feasible for acquired identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For instance, if an individual's political party continues to lose elections, it is reasonable for that person to look for another political party to join. Consequently, individuals who choose to remain a part of an acquired identity group signify that they have a special connection to that group, one that indicates its impact on their self-concept. Additionally, religious and political identities require a high degree of normative fit – the extent to which an individual aligns with the perceived norms and expectations associated with that group (Oakes et al., 1991). This normative fit plays a crucial

role in shaping the content and significance of these identities for individuals, influencing their worldviews, behaviors, and social interactions. Again, these acquired identities often differ from ascribed identities in that they give clear prescription as to how to be a ‘good’ group member, which ascribed identities do not necessarily offer.

Religious identity is a form of an acquired identity that is based on religious faith around a particular belief. Ysseldyk and colleagues (2010) argue that religion is a particularly powerful source of social identity due to its comprehensive worldview and clearly defined moral framework. Unlike many other acquired identities, religious affiliation often provides a complete system of beliefs, rituals, and practices. This comprehensive set of identity content creates to a high degree of normative fit, as ingroup members have clear guidelines for behavior and belief. Additionally, other research explores how religious identity influences personal meaning-making and moral decision-making, highlighting the profound impact of religious norms on identity content (Bruce, 2013; Graham et al., 2011). According to this research, religious affiliation and belief is often more all-encompassing than that of other social identities, touching on fundamental questions of existence, purpose, and morality. Hogg (2010) has added to this understanding by demonstrating how religious identity can provide a sense of certainty and belonging, which reinforces its normative influence on ingroup member’s self-concept and the self-stereotyping around its content as individuals will rely on their religion to help reduce uncertainty. Moreover, Heloit and colleagues (2020) discuss the variety of and tension between particular concepts of what it means to be Christian, for example, discussing the balance between notions of sin and mercy. This depth and variety of content can lead to stronger internalization of religious norms and values, creating a particularly robust identity.

The relationship between normative fit and identity content in religious identities is complex, as it is precisely the norms of the religion that help people understand how they

should act as ‘good’ believers. Haidt and Graham's (2007, 2010) work on moral foundations theory provides insight into how religious identities shape moral frameworks, which in turn become central to the identity content of religious individuals. They argue that different religions emphasize various moral foundations, such as care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity, to varying degrees. This variation in moral emphasis contributes to the distinct normative expectations associated with different religious identities. This argument aligns with the idea that groups create specific meaning around universal moral frameworks to tell ingroup members how to be ‘good’ group members (Ellemers & Van der Toorn, 2015). Building on this, Haidt and Graham (2010) also argue that religions bind individuals into moral communities, creating strong ingroup cohesion and clear behavioral norms. These norms, deeply ingrained in religious teachings and practices, significantly influence the what it means to be a part of a religion for its ingroup members. Other research has offered a multidimensional approach to religiosity, identifying four key dimensions to religious identification: believing, bonding, behaving, and belonging. Each of these dimensions contributes to the overall normative fit of religious identity, shaping how individuals express their faith and interact with their religious community (Saroglou, 2011). The moral norms, religious practices, and other pieces of identity content for religion create wide-ranging meaning as to what it means to belong to a religious tradition. Each of these pieces of content play an important role in helping ingroup members make sense of what it means to believe in that particular religion.

Political identity, similar to religious identity, has been the subject of extensive research in social psychology and political science. The psychological processes of political identity formation is shaped by arguing individuals internalizing political beliefs and affiliations as core aspects of their self-concept (Huddy, 2001). This process often involves the development of a strong emotional attachment to political parties or ideologies. Work on

party identification further highlights this phenomenon, demonstrating how party affiliation can serve as a cognitive shortcut for processing political information and making electoral decisions (Greene, 1999). This work is supported by the work of Green and colleagues (2002), showcasing the stability of party affiliation, as well as the consensus of attitudes amongst ingroup members. The psychological impact of political identity extends beyond mere affiliation, as it can impact outgroup perceptions and partisan attitudes through affective polarization (Iyengar et al., 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022). This research shows that strong partisan identities can lead to increased hostility towards outgroup members, even in non-political contexts, demonstrates the influence of political identity on an ingroup member's self-concept. Complementing these perspectives, other research explores the concept of ideological social identity, examining how individuals derive meaning and self-esteem from their alignment with particular political philosophies (Devine, 2015). The overlap between party affiliation, partisanship, ideology, and social identity will be discussed at length in Chapter 4, but at a high level, these works demonstrate how political identity can serve as a social identity.

Again, similar to religious identity, the concept of normative fit is crucial in understanding the dynamics of political identity. Building on the work of Oakes et al. (1991), we can observe how individuals align their behaviors and beliefs with the perceived norms of their chosen political group. This alignment process is intricately linked to the identity content – the specific beliefs, values, and behaviors associated with a particular political identity. In the exploration of the 'partisan brain,' comprehensive research demonstrates how political identities can shape information processing and decision-making (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018). They argue that strong partisan identities can lead to motivated reasoning, where individuals selectively interpret information to reinforce their existing beliefs and group allegiances. This phenomenon is also discussed by Abramowitz and Saunders (2006)

in their work on the bases of partisan polarization. They argue that ideological sorting has strengthened the link between party identification and issue positions, leading to more homogeneous and distinct party identities. This increased clarity in identity content can reinforce normative fit, as individuals have a clearer understanding of what it means to be a 'good' Democrat or Republican. Moreover, the work of Huddy and colleagues (2015) on political identity strength shows how normative fit and identity content interact to create powerful, self-reinforcing political identities that resist change and strongly influence behavior. Overall, the normative aspects of political identities strongly shape what it means to be a part of a political identity.

In conclusion, religious and political identities contain notable similarities in their nature as acquired social identities, particularly in terms of their identity content and normative fit. Unlike ascribed identities such as race or ethnicity, religious and political identities are actively chosen and give ingroup members a guiding set of norms that ascribed identities may not offer (Huddy, 2001). This voluntary acquisition results in a more dynamic relationship between the individual and the identity. Importantly, the multifaceted nature of religious and political identity content allows for variation in how individuals interpret and enact their group membership. As Saroglou (2011) demonstrates with religious identity, and Devine (2015) with political ideology, these identities encompass multiple dimensions that individuals may prioritize differently. This complexity enables ingroup members to think or behave differently from their fellow group members while still maintaining overall alignment with their group identity. The concept of prototypes, as discussed by Hogg and Reid (2006), can offer insight here. As mentioned earlier, prototypes function as a 'fuzzy set' of attributes that define the 'ideal' member, rather than a rigid, uniform checklist of attributes. This prototypicality allows for a spectrum of 'acceptable' beliefs and behaviors within the group, fostering diversity while maintaining group cohesion. For instance, members of the same

political party might emphasize different aspects of the party platform, leading to varied policy preferences while retaining a shared party affiliation. Similarly, members of the same religion may prioritize different theological or moral aspects, resulting in diverse practices while still identifying strongly with their religion. Precisely because these identities offer such a rich set of norms and values for their ingroup members, they will be the main focus of this thesis.

References

- Abrams, D. (Ed.). (1990). *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances* (1. publ). Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Abrams, D., Rutland, A., Cameron, L., & Marques, Josém. (2003). The development of subjective group dynamics: When ingroup bias gets specific. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 21(2), 155–176.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/026151003765264020>
- Barsalou, L. W. (1983). Ad hoc categories. *Memory & Cognition*, 11(3), 211–227.
<https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03196968>
- Barsalou, L. W. (1985). Ideals, Central Tendency, and Frequency of Instantiation as Determinants of Graded Structure in Categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 11(4), 629–654.
- Bizumic, B., Reynolds, K. J., & Meyers, B. (2012). Predicting social identification over time: The role of group and personality factors. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53(4), 453–458. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.04.009>
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475–482.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167291175001>
- Bruce, Joshua Roberts (2013). Uniting Theories of Morality, Religion, and Social Interaction: Grid-Group Cultural Theory, the “Big Three” Ethics, and Moral Foundations Theory. *Psychology & Society*. 5(1), 37-50.
- Cadinu, M. R., & Rothbart, M. (1996). Self-anchoring and differentiation processes in the minimal group setting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(4), 661–677.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.4.661>

- Curry, O. S., Alfano, M., Brandt, M. J., & Pelican, C. (2022). Moral Molecules: Morality as a Combinatorial System. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 13(4), 1039–1058.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-021-00540-x>
- Deaux, K., Reid, A., Mizrahi, K., & Ethier, K. A. (1995). Parameters of Social Identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(2), 280–291.
- Doosje, B., Spears, R., Ellemers, N., & Koomen, W. (1999). Perceived Group Variability in Intergroup Relations: The Distinctive Role of Social Identity. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 10(1), 41–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779943000017>
- Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (2002). SELF AND SOCIAL IDENTITY. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 161–186.
- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>
- Galliher, R. V., Galliher, R., McLean, K. C., McLean, K., & Syed, M. (2017). Identity Content in Context. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(11).
<https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000299>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral Foundations Theory. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55–130). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00002-4>
- Greene, S. (1999). Understanding Party Identification: A Social Identity Approach. *Political Psychology*, 20(2), 393–403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00150>
- Hogg, M. A., Abrams, D., Otten, S., & Hinkle, S. (2004). The Social Identity Perspective: Intergroup Relations, Self-Conception, and Small Groups. *Small Group Research*, 35(3), 246–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496404263424>

- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms. *Communication Theory*, 16(1), 7–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00003.x>
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204–222.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x>
- Hornsey, M. J., & Jetten, J. (2004). The Individual Within the Group: Balancing the Need to Belong With the Need to Be Different. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8(3), 248–264. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0803_2
- Huddy, L. (2001). From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory. *Political Psychology*, 22(1), 127–156. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00230>
- Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>
- Jetten, J., Postmes, T., & McAuliffe, B. J. (2002). ‘We’re all individuals’: Group norms of individualism and collectivism, levels of identification and identity threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32(2), 189–207. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.65>
- Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 307–337.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163600>

- Keerthirathne. (2016). A Comparative Study of Punishment in Buddhist and Western Educational Psychology. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 3(4).
<https://doi.org/10.25215/0304.023>
- Kreindler, S. A., Dowd, D. A., Dana Star, N., & Gottschalk, T. (2012). Silos and Social Identity: The Social Identity Approach as a Framework for Understanding and Overcoming Divisions in Health Care. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 90(2), 347–374.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2012.00666.x>
- Lakoff, G. (2008). *Women_Fire_and_Dangerous Things.pdf*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lee, M. J. (2017). Considering Political Identity: Conservatives, Republicans, and Donald Trump. *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 20(4), 719–730.
<https://doi.org/10.14321/rhetpublaffa.20.4.0719>
- Leonardelli, G. J., & Toh, S. M. (2015). Social Categorization in Intergroup Contexts: Three Kinds of Self-Categorization: Three Kinds of Self-Categorization. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 9(2), 69–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12150>
- Levine, J. M., & Moreland, R. L. (Eds.). (2006). *Small groups: Key readings*. Psychology Press.
- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Lupton, R. N., Smallpage, S. M., & Enders, A. M. (2020). Values and Political Predispositions in the Age of Polarization: Examining the Relationship between Partisanship and Ideology in the United States, 1988–2012. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(1), 241–260. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123417000370>

- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., Paez, D., & Martinez-Taboada, C. (1998). The Role of Categorization and Ingroup Norms in Judgments of Groups and Their Members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 976–988.
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998). Social identity and intra-group differentiation: The “black sheep effect” as a function of subjective social control. In *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142).
- Marques, J. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (1988). The black sheep effect: Judgmental extremity towards ingroup members in inter-and intra-group situations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(3), 287–292. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180308>
- Marques, J. M., Yzerbyt, V. Y., & Leyens, J.-P. (1988). The “Black Sheep Effect”: Extremity of judgments towards ingroup members as a function of group identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180102>
- Menard, R. (2016). Analysing Social Values in Identification; A Framework for Research on the Representation and Implementation of Values. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 46(2), 122–142. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12087>
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>
- Obst, P. L., White, K. M., Mavor, K. I., & Baker, R. M. (2011). Social Identification Dimensions as Mediators of the Effect of Prototypicality on Intergroup Behaviours. *Psychology*, 02(05), 426–432. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2011.25066>
- Otten, S., & Wentura, D. (2001). Self-Anchoring and Ingroup Favoritism: An Individual Profiles Analysis. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37(6), 525–532. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jesp.2001.1479>

- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Reicher, S., Spears, R., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). The Social Identity Approach in Social Psychology. In *Sage Identities Handbook* (pp. 45–62).
- Reiman, A.-K., & Killoran, T. C. (2023). When group members dissent: A direct comparison of the black sheep and intergroup sensitivity effects. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 104, 104408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2022.104408>
- Rosch, E. (1975). Cognitive representations of semantic categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 104(3), 192–233. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.104.3.192>
- Saroglou, V. (2011). Believing, Bonding, Behaving, and Belonging: The Big Four Religious Dimensions and Cultural Variation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(8), 1320–1340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111412267>
- Stets, J. E., & Carter, M. J. (2012). A Theory of the Self for the Sociology of Morality. *American Sociological Review*, 77(1), 120–140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411433762>
- Swann, W. B., Gómez, Á., Buhrmester, M. D., López-Rodríguez, L., Jiménez, J., & Vázquez, A. (2014). Contemplating the ultimate sacrifice: Identity fusion channels pro-group affect, cognition, and moral decision making. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106(5), 713–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035809>
- Swann, W. B., Gómez, Á., Dovidio, J. F., Hart, S., & Jetten, J. (2010). Dying and Killing for One's Group: Identity Fusion Moderates Responses to Intergroup Versions of the Trolley Problem. *Psychological Science*, 21(8), 1176–1183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610376656>

- Swann, W. B., Jetten, J., Gómez, Á., Whitehouse, H., & Bastian, B. (2012). When group membership gets personal: A theory of identity fusion. *Psychological Review*, 119(3), 441–456. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028589>
- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 173–190). Psychology Press.
- Tucker, P. D., Montgomery, J. M., & Smith, S. S. (2019). Party Identification in the Age of Obama: Evidence on the Sources of Stability and Systematic Change in Party Identification from a Long-Term Panel Survey. *Political Research Quarterly*, 72(2), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912918784215>
- Turner, J. C., Reynolds, K. J., Haslam, S. A., & Veenstra, K. (2006). Reconceptualizing Personality: Producing Individuality by Defining the Personal Self. In T. Postmes & J. Jetten (Eds.), *Individuality and the Group: Advances in Social Identity*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446211946>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2015). Politicization During the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections: Bridging the Personal and the Political Through an Identity Content Approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(3), 433–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215569494>
- Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., Cadinu, M., & Hansen, N. (2016). An Integrative Model of Social Identification: Self-Stereotyping and Self-Anchoring as Two Cognitive Pathways. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868315576642>

- Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., & Hansen, N. (2011). Linking self and ingroup: Self-anchoring as distinctive cognitive route to social identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(5), 628–637. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.792>
- West, E. A., & Iyengar, S. (2022). Partisanship as a Social Identity: Implications for Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 807–838. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09637-y>

Chapter 3: Within Identity Differences: Diverging Moral Decisions Within a Group

Introduction

In 1954, Time Magazine featured a cover story on Billy Graham, calling him "the best-known, most talked about Christian leader in the world today, barring the Pope." Three years later, Time featured another Baptist pastor, Martin Luther King Jr., hailing him as "one of the nation's most remarkable leaders of men." Shortly after King was featured, Graham invited King to speak during one of his Crusades, hoping to garner support from Black and White Christians. King spoke, celebrating "a brotherhood that transcends race or color." King further commended Graham for his courageous work in "bringing the Christian Gospel to bear on the question of race in all its urgent dimensions." However, as their careers progressed, they began to disagree about what their faith required of them. While King demonstrated for equality under the law, the removal of Jim Crow Laws, and integration, Graham argued that Christians "have a responsibility to obey the law." Their devotion to Christianity brought them together early in their careers, and their understanding of Christianity ultimately drove them apart (Garrow, 2015)

How is it possible for both pastors to be so devout in their faith and yet arrive at differing conclusions? How can their group membership shape so much of how they viewed the world, and it still be so different from each other? While neither of these men explicitly stated that the other was not a Christian due to their behavior—though King was highly critical of Graham's faith in Letters from a Birmingham Jail—they still viewed the issue of Civil Rights in very different ways.

Traditionally, within the Social Identity Approach (Haslam, 2001), groups are seen to have shared qualities, values, and norms, which form the basis for social identification (Ashforth et al., 2008; Hogg, 2016; Turner et al., 1987a). In identifying with a group, an individual must “fit” within the relevant categories of that group, which includes both the

comparative fit and the normative fit. Comparative fit is shaped by the meta-contrast principle, which predicts whether a group will categorize an individual as an ingroup or outgroup member. This principle uses information about the qualities of a group to describe how well a target fits within a category, comparing the average difference of an individual and the ingroup to the average difference of an individual to an outgroup (Turner et al., 1994). Beyond comparative fit, normative fit also influences how clean the boundaries of a group can be drawn. Normative fit focuses on the social meaning of an individual's actions and attitudes, also referred to as content (Oakes et al., 1991). The combination of both factors helps shape whether or not an individual fits within a group. However, real world examples, as shown in the introduction, indicate that individuals can have differing normative positions within their group and still be a member. For example, when the content of identity is relatively wide or 'fuzzy,' as shown in the example above, individuals who are a part of the same group may arrive at differing positions and still perceive that they are acting in accordance with the normative fit of their identity.

Currently, most literature (e.g., Subjective Group Dynamics, Ingroup Projection Model, Common Ingroup Identity Model, etc.) focuses on how individuals evaluate and react to members of their group who diverge (Gaertner et al., 1993; Marques et al., 1998b; Walczus et al., 2003). These models aim to explain the dynamics of creating group conformity, both along the lines of comparative fit and normative fit. However, many groups have a wide-range of acceptable normative expectations or values for their group members, some that may lead to contradictory positions while still aligning with the group's norms. How then do differing pieces of identity content within an identity affect ingroup members, especially when faced with the same situation? To explore this aspect of social identity, this paper will look at the content of identity and how that content influences moral decision-

making. This paper explores how seemingly contradicting values within the same group, when made salient, may impact group members moral decision-making in differing ways.

Social Identity Approach

Social Identity Approach (SIA; Haslam, 2001) integrates Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Self-Categorization Theory (SCT), allowing both intergroup and intra-individual analysis. SIT focuses on how groups form and why people prefer their ingroup to their outgroup (Hogg, 2016; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Tajfel and Turner posit that individuals use social groups as a basis for social comparison, hoping to gain some sense of superiority over others based on the status of their group. SIT predicts that groups have clear boundaries and work together toward some goal (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008a). While SIT primarily pertains to social contexts, SCT considers the individual-level cognitions that occur with social identity (Turner et al., 1987a). SCT accounts for multiple levels of inclusiveness, regarding how individuals place themselves and others into categories, most often centered around the prototypical group member (Turner et al., 1987b). This prototype is a ‘fuzzy set’ of attributes that help distinguish between groups (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Using the prototype as a reference point helps other individuals anchor the categories and affords comparison. Prototypes accentuate the similarities and differences between groups, working to find the maximum distance between the two (Hogg & Reid, 2006). This ratio is also crucial for the metacontrast principle. From an individual's perspective, the range of acceptable fit between an individual in a position and the prototype is affected by perceived readiness comparative and normative fit (Turner et al., 1994). If an individual is too different from the prototype, they are not included in the group's category. Several extensions of SCT are based on this principle: Black Sheep Effect (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988), Subjective Group Dynamics

(Marques et al., 2006), the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner et al., 1993), and the Ingroup Projection Model (Waldzus et al., 2003).

The Black Sheep Effect first explored what happened when an individual group member diverged from the group's consensus (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). Based on the research, when an individual within a group disagreed with the group, they were treated like a 'black sheep.' In other words, ingroup members of a group were judged more harshly than outgroup members for violating group norms. This effect was extended into Subjective Group Dynamics to account for minor intra-group differences on normative fit (Marques et al., 2001). Specifically, SGD argues that in many situations, it is not feasible to derogate an ingroup member who deviates and recategorize them. As such, SGD outlines a process that allows for ingroup members to maintain the subjective validity of their group identity in intergroup contexts, even when there is intra-group differentiation. This idea advances SIA to focus on intra-group behavior, often by using the content of identity to draw the limits of what a group accepts. Identity content, as defined by Livingston and Haslam (2008), is the meaningful parts of identity and includes behavior, attitudes, or other elements, such as morality, that provide the identity with its significance and define what a particular group stands for or means. Identity content can have wide-ranging implications as it influences how an individual sees the world to sustain the importance of that identity (Van Bavel & Pereira, 2017). The content of an identity, though, can be diverse, especially regarding the norms and values within an identity (Franks & Stewart, 2020). Subjective Group Dynamics would argue that the content of identity, though having some room for disagreements, has bounds and limits, and members who cross those bounds or misuse the identity content can be ostracized from the group (Marques, 1998).

Subjective Group Dynamics focuses explicitly on what happens within a group when there is some form of deviance or disagreement in intergroup contexts (Marques et al., 2001).

This approach views ingroup differentiation as a threat to the positive evaluation of a social identity, especially in a context where there is a relevant outgroup. Ingroup members rely on both descriptive and prescriptive norms to evaluate ingroup members and determine if they should be derogated for their deviance. However, there are several factors that affect this phenomenon, including context, the salience of specific, prescriptive norms, and the presence of outgroups. For example, Pinto and colleagues (2010) found that ingroup members who were 'newer' to the group were given more lenience than established group members when they deviated from the group. This evaluation plays a vital role in defining how relevant group members contribute to a positive identity distinctiveness.

Another perspective on differences within a group is the Ingroup Projection model (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999; Walz et al., 2003). This model argues that group member's evaluation of their ingroup and an outgroup's specific attributes are derived from higher-order categories that include both groups. This higher-order category is known as a superordinate category. According to Wenzel, Mummendey, and Walz (2008), the relative attributes are compared based on the superordinate category and the core idea is that ingroups are viewed as more prototypical for the superordinate category than outgroups. Specifically, ingroup members often appear to *project* the view of their ingroup onto the superordinate group, ascribing specific characteristics of their ingroup to the superordinate group. As a result, the prototype of the superordinate group appears more similar to ingroup members than the given outgroup members. By viewing themselves as more alike with the prototype than outgroup members, the ingroup members create a positive view of themselves, possibly inflating their status and esteem compared to the given outgroup members.

Examples of this phenomenon play out across many different scenarios and identities. Devos and Banaji (2005) demonstrate that White Americans associated their ethnicity as "more American" than they did African Americans or Asian Americans. Wenzel,

Mummendey, Weber, and Waldzus (2003) found that psychology students viewed themselves as more prototypical of general "students" than business administration status, while business administration students viewed themselves as more prototypical of students. Wenzel and colleagues (2003) also found that primary school teachers viewed themselves as more prototypical of teachers than high school teachers, while high school teachers viewed themselves as more prototypical than primary school teachers. Research has shown this phenomenon is replicated in several different settings and groups (Curtis, 2024; Imhoff et al., 2011; Machunsky & Meiser, 2014; Steffens et al., 2011).

A further model that attempts to explain how individuals navigate differences within their groups is the Common Ingroup Identity Model. This model differs from Subjective Group Dynamics or Ingroup Projection Model in that it is focused on reducing bias between two groups. In this model, Gaertner & Dovidio (1993) argue that by creating a superordinate group, individuals of two different groups can see themselves as a part of a larger, more inclusive group. One influential paper on this model explored how White football fans and Black football fans respond to interviewers of the opposite race when wearing the home team's hat (the ingroup) than when not (Nier, Gaertner, Dovidio, Banker, & Ward, 2001). Once the superordinate group is created and individuals can recategorize themselves and their former outgroup members into the group, disagreements and biases between the individuals are reduced. Further research has shown the success of this approach has been found in mergers, high school students, and even step-families.

Each of these models seems to imply that there is one way to exemplify what it means to be a part of a group. With the Black Sheep Effect, individuals are subjected to social pressure to conform with the group consensus, or face exile (Marques et al., 1998). Subjective Group Dynamics similarly predicts that in situations with clear, prescriptive norms, ingroup members who deviate will be judged for potentially threatening the group

(Marques et al., 2001; Pinto et al., 2010). Both the Ingroup Projection Model and Common Ingroup Identity Model argue that individuals work to find a higher-order identity to ascertain similarities when there are differences between individuals (Gaertner et al., 1993; Walz et al., 2003). Essentially, based on the assumptions of each model, fitting into a group means conforming to or aligning with a group's prototype and its related content or being subjected to some sort of status-saving action by the group. However, groups regularly have disagreements, debates, and changes as to what it means to be a part of such a group.

In work on differences within a group, Jetten and Hornsey (2014) argue that it is a normal part of group functioning to have ingroup members deviate in some way, even going so far as to call it a healthy part of group life. Their work on dissent within groups posits five reasons why group members could deviate or dissent from their group, including group loyalty, disloyalty, moral rebellion, individuality, and instrumental gain (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). These differing reasons are recognized by group members and do not necessarily have to trigger one of the aforementioned phenomena. Instead, they argue, that dissenters can be admired by members of their group and contribute meaningfully to the group's norms. Their argument acknowledges a wide array of research that covers motivations for derogating dissenters and tactics for handling such ingroup members, but also cites a growing body of research that appreciates dissenters and explores the positive impact on the group. Notably, though, this argument is built on the importance of context, as what is viewed as deviant or dissenting may differ depending on the context. As such, Jetten and Hornsey (2014) argue group members negotiate the content of norms and determine when and where a norm may no longer be applicable.

Each of these perspectives has overlapping positions on the importance of group norms, the group prototype, and context. However, it is never explicitly discussed how ingroup members may navigate situations that do not have a clear prescription for how to

think, judge, or act. Though the dynamic relationship of group norms and context is discussed throughout these approaches, none of the models describe how individuals within a specific group might reasonably disagree with fellow ingroup members without necessarily becoming deviant. As shown in the introductory example, there might be enough nuance and variation in values or norms within an identity for individuals within a group to arrive at different conclusions based on their understanding of what those pieces of the identity mean, which pieces are more critical or prototypical, and how those pieces of an identity prescribe behavior. This phenomenon seems especially true in ambiguous situations without a clear prescription for behavior. As such, exploring the values or norms within groups, and how the decisions regarding those morals are made, can help clarify the SIA when it comes to the breadth of meaning within an identity.

Morality and Moral decision making

Norms and values are related to the concept of morality, a framework that helps people to distinguish between ‘right’ and ‘wrong,’ and help define attitudes and behaviors that are considered socially acceptable (Ellemers et al., 2019; Haidt, 2013). The moral norms or values differ among groups, especially political and religious groups (Ellemers, 2017). Moral situations are any scenario that relates to maintaining the social order (Ellemers et al., 2019). Moral decision-making concerns the process by which individuals reason, judge, or evaluate a moral situation. The moral decision-making process, then, dramatically affects social interactions, both how an individual perceives their social environment and how they navigate it (Ellemers, 2017). Typically, research on moral decision-making has focused on how the decision is made (Greene et al., 2001; Haidt, 2001). However, little research has focused on how an individual’s group identity shapes an individual's morality and how that identity-influenced morality influences such decisions.

The leading moral decision-making theories diverge over two main points: how decisions are made and how social groups affect the decisions. One theory, the Social Intuition Model (SIM), claims that moral decisions are an intuitive response followed by a post-hoc rationalization (Haidt, 2001). Another influential theory, Dual Process Theory, argues that intuition and reason compete and that the decision itself can explain which decision-making method occurred (Greene et al., 2001, 2004). Greene argues that an ostensible relationship with a rule-based outcome implies an intuition-based decision, while a more consequentialist outcome implies a reasoning-based decision. While the theories disagree on how moral decisions are processed, they also disagree on the importance of social groups. SIM posits that interactions with others, especially within an individual's social group, shape our moral intuitions (Haidt, 2001). Essentially, when read with literature on social identity, SIM argues that salient groups with which an individual identifies will shape their moral intuitions as they become more assimilated with their group. DPT, on the other hand, does not account for group membership or how the content of such memberships affects moral decisions, at least not explicitly. Moreover, SIM affords other motivations that might influence the decision-making processes, such as differing moral values, which DPT fails to consider. The differing moral decision-making theories posit differing predictions about the influence of social identity on moral decision-making.

Additionally, morality itself is a broad and diverse subject. Several theories of morality discuss the nuance and diversity within a moral framework (Curry et al., 2019; Graham et al., 2013, etc.). Many of these theories account for the social influence on morality but have limited explanations for how individuals negotiate between meaningful moral values within a particular identity.

For example, Curry's theory of morality as cooperation argues morality consists of biological and social solutions to problems recurrent in social life (Curry, 2016). According

to this theory, there are at least seven different types of moral values, including family values, group loyalty, and reciprocity. Curry furthers this argument by providing evidence for combinations of these values that vary in importance depending on the society, culture, and other social groups (Curry, 2019; Curry, Alfano, Brandt, & Pelican, 2021). Similarly, Graham and colleagues introduce the theory of Moral Foundations, which argues that there are at least five moral values (Care, Fairness, Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity; Graham et al., 2013). Graham and colleagues argue that an individual's moral foundations are innate ("organized in advance of experience"), influenced by their culture, intuitive, and pluralistic. Essentially, the five foundations are hardwired into human nature, but how they are applied depends on the culture an individual grew up in and their situation. They argue that these values are useful in predicting an individual's political ideology, as well as their affinity toward religion. Moral Foundations have been shown to have predictive power in determining an individual's political identity in the United States along conservative/liberal lines (see Graham et al., 2013, for a comprehensive list of studies).

Though some studies will focus on specific values, emotions, or behaviors, most fail to consider the social identities of the individual (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006; Haidt & Graham, 2007). As an exception, Ellemers and Van Der Toorn proposed to include social groups into a moral framework as moral anchors (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). That is, Ellemers and Van Der Toorn argue that groups define what is moral. According to their research, universal moral values—such as 'do not harm'—are broad and abstract, without specific and practical instructions. However, these universal principles can be shaped into group-specific and identity-defining values and convictions. Further, the specificity of a moral standard within a group can outline virtuous individuals, helping to define the group's prototype, and specific group morals can also create a particular avenue to determine who can be trusted to help maintain a group's distinct identity. Specifically, Ellemers and colleagues argue that the

moral content of an identity/group defines who is exalted as a 'good' group member and who is ostracized (Ellemers, 2017). For example, what it means to be a Christian, as discussed in the example above, comes with a large set of moral norms and values. While some of these values for Christians may be specified versions of fairly universal values (e.g., “thou shall not kill” as an identity-defined application of do not harm), others provide more uniqueness to the identity (e.g., “love your neighbor as yourself” as an identity-defined application of reciprocity). Another example of this application, for Christians, could be from the example in the introduction: obey the law of the land or rebel against the law of the land to further fairness. Identity provides specificity and application to morality, giving meaning of how morality is to function in defining the normative expectations for ingroup members.

Interestingly, there is limited discussion of how individuals can make moral, group-aligning decisions when multiple moral values may be in competition or when there is ambiguity around a moral judgment. As mentioned in the introductory example, there are certain situations when the content of one’s identity may lead them to different positions, just as it did for Billy Graham and Martin Luther King Jr. However, one study exploring this circumstance focuses on a specific social group that hones two differing values: forgiveness and justice (Van Tongeren et al., 2012). Their study reviewed how Christians evaluate morally ambiguous situations after being primed by general notions of forgiveness or judgment. Across several sets of problems, including mock jury scenarios and the Moral Judgment Test (see Lind, 1999), Van Tongeren and colleagues (2012) provided evidence for diverging moral judgments based on activating the different constructs related to an identity. Importantly, they showed that the group matters in applying morality to decisions, as justice and forgiveness are central to the group. However, in this study, Van Tongeren and colleagues (2012) did not use identity-specific content as primes, rather relying on generalized prompts of forgiveness and justice where participants were asked to remember a

time when they demonstrated one particular value. Still, this finding provides evidence for the idea of groups as moral anchors, demonstrating that the identity group gives specific value to the primes, and also the particular moral values that were cognitively available can impact the decision.

To summarize, the gap left by morality and moral decision-making literature around an identity-based framework to explain what should happen when a group member faces morally ambiguous situations is apparent. Said differently, if groups can possess a multitude of moral norms, then which norms do they use to make an ethical decision or judgment, and does it matter for their decision which ethical norms are salient?

Within Identity Differences: Competing Moral Values Within a Social Identity

Currently, there is limited research on social identity explaining how an individual can navigate an ambiguous situation while still adhering to their group norms. Moreover, there seems to be even less research addressing what happens when group members act in accordance with their group's morals but arrive at diverging behaviors or conclusions. In research on morality and moral decision-making, the overarching theories consider how social groups influence morality but has not seemingly made the connection of how social identity influences moral decision making in ambiguous situations. Ellemers (2017, 2019) provides a strong theoretical framework for how identities shape morality, Haidt (2001) provides further explanation of how identification within a group can shape a person's moral intuition. Moreover, Van Tongeren and colleagues (2012) demonstrated that differing values within a social group's moral frameworks can impact group members. However, these frameworks have yet to be synthesized together, taking the specific content within an identity and applying to moral situations.

To address this current gap, I propose to focus on differences within an identity in terms of its identity content, or the meaning ascribed to different parts of the identity and how that specific content relates to other content within the same identity (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008b; Marques et al., 1998a). As Ellemers puts forth, groups define what is moral (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). This specificity, the meaning given by a particular group on what is and is not moral, is identity content on morality. Whether looking at Moral Foundations, Morality as Cooperation, or moral emotions, each framework argues for an all-encompassing set of moral elements (Curry, 2016; Graham et al., 2013; Gray & Wegner, 2011; Moll & de Oliveira-Souza, 2007). These frameworks offer factors along which an individual can score high or low, or where the combination of factors creates specific perspectives on morality. For example, in Moral Foundations, individuals who score high on the Care foundation and low on the Authority foundation align with more liberal political groups, whereas individuals who score fairly average on all foundations align with more conservative political groups. These dimensions, in the absence of group-specific meaning, are unspecified pieces of a moral framework. It is not until the group provides specific intentions and understanding to the values that they provide ingroup members with specifics on how to act in accordance with the values.

Each of these moral frameworks have many dimensions. Though social groups can provide specificity as to which values or emotions are important, they still utilize each of the dimensions to some extent. As such, social groups and the identities associated with them often include many values, norms, or moral guidelines to follow. Initial research has shown that these different values within a group can cause diverging reactions when made salient (Van Tongeren et al., 2012). However, it is not clear what happens when specific content within an identity is in tension with another piece of identity content.

To explore this further, I hypothesize that the range of acceptable positions within a group is as diverse as the moral values of that group. Within Identity Differences argues that there can be multiple ways an individual can act in alignment with their group and use the identity's content to make decisions in ambiguous situations. Yet, I believe that in some scenarios, there is not one specific outcome that signals conformity or non-conformity. Instead, in some situations, several values could be applied to a problem, which could lead those group members to differing conclusions. Depending content of the identity determines which outcome is the most aligned with that specific identity content.

Hypotheses

Synthesizing ideas proposed by Ellemers (2015), Haidt (2001), and Van Tongeren (2012), I propose the concept of Within Identity Differences. Based on this concept of Within Identity Differences, the following studies attempt to explore what happens to individuals who are members of the same group but are cognitively primed with specific values associated with that group. To better understand this idea, I will build on the work of Van Tongeren, examining Christians. Christians were chosen due to the prior research of Van Tongeren and the notable moral guidelines within their social group (see the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, etc.; Wadell, 2016). Additionally, literature detailing the religious identity and its influence and importance in relation to morality has extended social identity to religious identity (King, 2003; Greenfield & Marks, 2007; Ysseldyk et al., 2010). Though Van Tongeren chose competing moral values (Justice and Forgiveness), the values were not specific to the Christian identity, as participants were asked to share about general scenarios of justice or forgiveness. To address this, I will use content specific to the social identity of Christians.

For this work, I will explore two opposing themes in Christianity, Sin and Grace. These tenets align well with ideas of justice and forgiveness, as noted by Van Tongeren (2012). For this experiment, primes will be used to make these concepts salient and elicit the expected reaction (Baldwin et al., 1990; Janiszewski & Wyer, 2014; Rand et al., 2014). Individuals who are concerned with sin, or individuals in situations where the idea or potential of sin is salient, tend to avoid something that would cause them to sin or is associated with sin. In research on sin, evidence shows that individuals are more avoidant of sexual immorality and other scrupulous behaviors (Fergus & Rowatt, 2015; McKay et al., 2011; Rand et al., 2014). Opposite of sin, the concept of grace and its salience have been shown to increase the likelihood of forgiveness, strengthen relationships and prosocial behaviors, and induce high self-evaluations (Bassett et al., 2019). Based on these influences, these values seem likely to create diverging reactions to morally uncertain situations.

For the ambiguous situation, this work will employ the Trolley Problem to moral decision-making (Foot, 1968; Thomson, 1985). This problem is a highly studied moral dilemma (see Barak-Corren et al., 2018; Bauman et al., 2014; Cikara et al., 2010; Greene et al., 2001; Lanteri et al., 2008; Swann et al., 2010). In this dilemma, individuals are given a scenario in which they must either witness five individuals die, or intervene to save the five individuals by killing one person. This scenario has no right or wrong answer and has been studied in many different ways, including ingroup/outgroup factors, moral philosophies, and across cultures and nations (Bago et al., 2022; Greene et al., 2009; Kahane et al., 2017; Swann et al., 2010). Across many countries, a large-scale study found that roughly 80% of people will intervene in the Trolley Problem, though that number has been observed as high as 92% (Awad et al., 2020; Mandel & Vartanian, 2008). Many factors have been shown to influence whether someone will intervene in the dilemma, making it a prime problem for psychological research, for example, Barak-Corren and colleagues (2018) found that the

more religious someone was, the less likely they were to intervene. There have been critics of the Trolley Problem, but it is still known to be a well-researched topic (Bauman et al., 2014).

In addition to the structure of these concepts, there may be other factors that can influence how an individual navigates uncertain situations. For example, the level of religiosity can affect how influential the identity content and primes are (see Berry et al., 2011; King & Crowther, 2004; etc.). Based on this research, self-identification, the attendance of religious services, and the reading of religious texts can serve as factors to understand how religious an individual is. Additionally, the Religious Problem Solving Scale has been proposed as a way to understand how individuals use their religious identity to solve problems in ambiguous situations, which may also influence how an individual will address the Trolley Problem (Pargament et al., 1988; Pargament et al., 2011). Lastly, the moral framework on which someone relies may be influential too. To capture this element of the problem, I will use the Moral Foundations Questionnaire to understand whether any particular moral foundation will influence how individuals solve the Trolley Problem. None of these elements are expected to be affected by the religious primes, but may explain the relationship between an individual's religious identity and their decision making. These aspects of social identity and morality could function as moderators on moral decision making.

Based on the theorizing above, I hypothesize that ingroup members, when primed with differing content from the relevant identity, will act in diverging ways. Based on the problems outlined, more specifically, I hypothesize the following:

H1: Christians primed with the concept of Sin will be less prone to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians.

H2: Christians primed with the concept of Grace will be more likely to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians.

H3: Religiosity (as measured through Religious Problem Solving, church attendance, or Bible reading) will function as a moderator to the decision in the Trolley Problem.

Similar to the Trolley Problem design used in Barak-Corren and colleagues' (2018) research, a control group will experience a neutral prime that is not expected to affect their decision making and create a baseline to compare the experimental groups.

Study 1

This study explores how differing values within the Christian religious identity can lead individuals who adhere to the identity to arrive at different moral decisions. To accomplish this goal, I combined the Trolley Problem with differing identity-based primes, as discussed above. Individuals will read a particular religious passage and then answer the Trolley Problem. The primes and the Trolley Problem are discussed at length below. This study was not preregistered.

Method

This study will examine only American Christians. In selecting this population, the study aims to pit differing moral ideas within the Christian worldview, such as love and mercy, or sin and judgment against each other. Participants will be primed with identity-specific content that is expected to nudge individuals in differing directions, as Christians who are primed with Grace will be more likely to intervene than Christians who are primed with Sin. Finding a difference between the decision outcomes will showcase differences within an identity.

Participants

The study included 320 participants (180 females, 134 males, 6 other/unspecified; M age = 38.84 years, SD = 13.05). Participants were gathered using MTurk and paid \$2 to complete the survey, in line with the minimum wage in the United States. The majority of participants identified as White/Caucasian (71.8%), followed by Black/African-American (13.4%), Hispanic (5.8%), Asian/Pacific Islander (3.4%), Native American (0.7%), and Other (1.4%). Educational attainment varied: 40% had some college education, 35.1% held a bachelor's degree, 13.1% had a postgraduate degree, 8% had a high school diploma, and 1.0% had some high school education. Regarding religious affiliation, the sample was diverse, with Protestant denominations (including Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.) being the most common, followed by Catholic. Political orientation was measured on a 7-point scale (M = 4.18, SD = 1.79), with 31.6% identifying as Republican, 32.6% as Democrat, 28.5% as Independent. Church attendance frequency varied widely, ranging from 18.6% attending once a week to 21.6% almost never, and the rest distributed across frequencies ranging between those options.

Manipulation

The manipulation in this experiment draws on work from Van Tongeren (2012), Watson, Morris, and Wood (1988), Rand and colleagues (2013), and Barak-Corren and colleagues (2018). Participants were randomly placed into one of three categories: Control, Sin, and Grace. One condition placed participants into a control condition where they simply had to select a button labeled “Middle.” For the experimental conditions, one presented the participants with Bible verses about sin and judgments, while the other condition presented participants with Bible verses about grace and forgiveness. For the "sin" condition, participants read Mark 9:42-48 and Matthew 5:21-22. For the "grace" condition, participants

read Luke 10:25-37.² After reading each prime, participants were asked to write a few sentences about what these verses meant to them in relation to their faith. The main objective of this manipulation was to elicit different pieces of identity content, and these activations of diverging values should lead to a noticeable change in moral decisions. The open-ended responses were analyzed to ensure that participants read the prime, understood its meaning, and took it seriously.

Trolley Problem

All participants, after the priming process, read the following Trolley Problem:

You are waiting at a train station on a platform. As you wait, you notice a runaway train that is quickly approaching a fork in the tracks. On the tracks extending to the left is a group of five individuals. On the tracks extending to the right is a single individual. From experience, you know that if you do nothing, the train will surely proceed to the left. However, within arm's length is a button that will force the train to proceed to the right. You have seen railway workmen use this button to switch between these two tracks many times in the past. You know that you are the only one who could reach this button in time and there is no other way to save them, and so the decision is yours.

After reading each of the scenarios, participants were asked what action they would take (i.e. whether or not they would intervene and switch the trolley's direction).

² Please see Appendix 6 for detailed description of the primes.

Scales

The *Religious Problem Solving Scale* (Pargament et al., 1988) was used to assess participants' religious coping styles. This 36-item scale measures three approaches to problem-solving: collaborative, self-directing, and deferring. Respondents rate items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). A sample item for the collaborative approach is, "When I have a problem, I talk to God about it and together we decide what it means." Scores for each subscale are calculated by summing the relevant items, then determining which category has the highest scores, indicating the preferential use of that particular coping style. The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency across the three subscales (α ranging from .91 to .94) and has shown convergent validity with other measures of religiosity and mental health outcomes (Pargament et al., 2011).

The *Moral Foundations Questionnaire* (Graham et al., 2013) was employed to assess participants' moral intuitions across five dimensions. This 30-item scale measures five moral foundations: Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, Loyalty/Betrayal, Authority/Subversion, and Sanctity/Degradation. Participants respond to statements on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scores for each foundation are calculated by averaging the relevant items, with higher scores indicating greater endorsement of that moral foundation. The scale has demonstrated acceptable internal consistency across the five subscales (α ranging from .65 to .84). Graham et al. (2013) reported the following means (and standard deviations) for the foundations in a large internet sample: Care/Harm ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.93$), Fairness/Cheating ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.85$), Loyalty/Betrayal ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.07$), Authority/Subversion ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.07$), and Sanctity/Degradation ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.37$).

Procedure

After giving consent, participants were asked to complete a captcha to ensure they were not a bot of any sort. Participants then gave some demographic information to confirm that they were a part of the identity group they claimed to be. Any participants who failed these steps were not allowed to continue.

Once the screening process was completed, participants were randomly assigned to one of three categories: no prime, sin prime, and grace prime. Both priming procedures, excluding the no prime group, were constructed of the Bible passages discussed above and an open-ended prompt to summarize the passage, followed by an open-ended prompt asking for “up to five (5) sentences about” what each prime meant to the participant (Hernandez, Fennema-Notestine, Udell, & Bates, 2001). The modification exclusive to the no prime group was a button that participants selected to continue onto the Trolley Problem scenario. This setup, including scripture choices and the open-ended question, follows a mixed design from Shariff and Norenzayan (2007) and Barak-Corren and colleagues (2018) adapted for this study.

Following the screening and priming stages, all participants then read and answered the Trolley Problem (Cikara et al., 2010; Cushman & Young, 2009; Lanteri et al., 2008; Mandel & Vartanian, 2008a). After responding to the Trolley Problem, participants rated their response to the Trolley Problem in terms of how confident and how conflicted they felt, following Mandel and Vartanian (2008a). This design is intended to measure the effectiveness of the scenario and the seriousness with which each participant had.

After completing the Trolley Problem, participants responded to the Religious Problem-Solving scale, the Moral Foundations Questionnaire, and their demographic information. The Religious Problem-Solving scale, designed by Pargament and colleagues (1988), was used to measure religiosity, as it captures how individuals use their religion to solve problems. The Moral Foundations Questionnaire was used to understand the moral

positions and as well as confirm the alignment with the stated political position of the participants (Graham et al., 2013; Haidt & Graham, 2007). The survey concluded with demographic information, and participants answered a question about naivete concerning the Trolley Problem.

In keeping with good practice with data quality for both MTurk (Sheehan, 2018) and the Trolley Problem (Barak-Corren et al., 2018), participants were excluded on a case-by-case basis. The first element of exclusion criteria was a participant's explanation for their decision in the Trolley Problem. If participants went outside the accepted rules for the dilemma, as defined by Barak-Corren and colleagues, they were excluded (Barak-Corren et al., 2018). Based on this, 11 participants were excluded. Several guidelines were given for data quality with MTurk, which were used here. Specifically, participants were asked basic demographic questions at the beginning and end of the survey. If these responses did not match, they were excluded; based on this, we excluded 3 individuals. If participants gave poor or repetitive answers, such as gibberish or incoherent responses, or did not complete the survey, they were excluded as well. In total, 16 participants were excluded, leaving 290 participants for the analysis.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis testing

I used a one-factorial design in which 87 participants were in the 'sin' condition, 96 participants were in the 'grace' condition, and 107 participants were in the control condition. Participants were given a choice in the Trolley Problem: do not intervene and let five individuals die (0) or intervene and kill one person (1). I am interested in how many people decide not to intervene, as stated in hypotheses 1 and 2.

To check whether participants took the Trolley Problem seriously and answered the questions genuinely (Mandel & Vartanian, 2008a), I correlated the levels of confidence and conflict and showed that they are inversely correlated, $r(290) = -.41, p < .001$. There was no correlation between the naivete of participants and their decision in the Trolley Problem, indicating that the participants were not swayed by previously answering the dilemma, $r(290) = -.064, p = .282$. (Bago et al., 2022; Kahane et al., 2017). Additionally, the correlation between Bible reading and church attendance was statistically significant, $r(290) = .891, p < .001$. These findings indicate that participants took the problem seriously, that there were no issues in their participation, and that the measures of religiosity had strong validity.

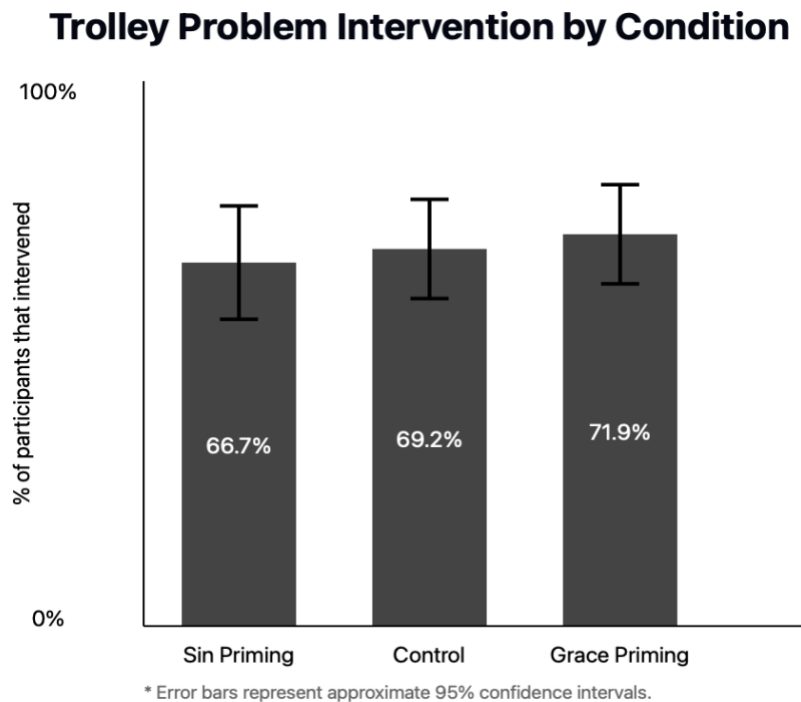
The first analysis failed to support the hypothesis that Christians primed with the concept of Sin would be less prone to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians. In the Sin-primed group, 33% ($n = 29$) of participants chose not to intervene, while in the control group, 31% ($n = 33$) did not intervene. A z-test of proportions revealed no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($z = 0.372, p = .356$, one-tailed). The difference of 2 percentage points in intervention rates falls within the range of what we might expect due to random chance, given the sample size. This finding suggests that priming Christians with the concept of Sin may not have a meaningful impact on their moral decision-making in the context of the Trolley Problem, at least as measured in this study.

The second analysis provided some support for the hypothesis that Christians primed with the concept of Grace would be more likely to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians, although these results did not reach statistical significance. In the Grace-primed group, 28% ($n = 27$) of participants chose not to intervene, while in the control group, 31% ($n = 33$) chose not to intervene. The z-test of proportions revealed seem to point in the right direction, but the difference was not statistically

significant ($z = -0.42, p = .337$, one-tailed). These results suggest that priming Christians with the concept of Grace may have a modest but not statistically significant positive effect on their likelihood to intervene in the Trolley Problem, but further research with larger samples would be needed to confirm this trend.

Figure 1.

Bar Chart of Trolley Problem Intervention Rate by Condition including 95% confidence intervals.



Exploratory analysis

In an exploratory analysis, I examined the potential influence of religious priming on moral decision-making in the Trolley Problem. A logistic regression model was employed to investigate whether priming Christians with concepts of Sin or Grace would affect their likelihood of intervention compared to a control group. The overall model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 290) = 0.584, p = .747$. Priming with the concept of Grace showed a slight positive trend towards increasing intervention likelihood ($b = 0.13, SE = 0.309, p = .672$), while priming with Sin exhibited a marginal negative trend ($b = -0.11, SE = 0.309, p = .711$). When accounting for all demographic variables, such as gender,

race/ethnicity, age, and education, the model improves slightly to $\chi^2(2, N = 290) = 2.747, p = 0.432$. Participants in the Grace-primed condition showed a non-significant tendency to intervene more often (71.9%, $n = 96$) compared to the control group (69.2%, $n = 107$), whereas those in the Sin-primed condition intervened slightly less frequently (66.7%, $n = 87$). However, these differences were minimal and not statistically significant. The results suggest that in this study, religious priming had no substantial effect on moral decision-making in the Trolley Problem scenario. These findings highlight the complexity of factors influencing moral choices and underscore the need for further research to better understand the relationship between religious concepts and ethical decision-making.

The final analysis examined potential moderation effects across a range of variables for both the Sin and Grace priming conditions. A moderation analysis was run across the five moral foundations (Care, Fairness, Loyalty, Authority, and Sanctity) from the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ), the three styles of religious problem-solving (Collaborative, Self-Directing, and Deferring), religious practices (Church Attendance and Bible Reading Frequency), and political orientation. Across all these variables, none were shown to have statistically significant moderation effects for either the Sin or Grace priming conditions (all $p > .05$). The lowest p -value observed was for the Self-Directing style in the Sin model ($p = .127$), but this still did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. These results suggest that the effects of Sin or Grace priming on intervention in the Trolley Problem were not significantly influenced by individual differences in moral foundations, religious problem-solving styles, religious practices, or political orientation. This lack of significant moderation effects indicates that the priming manipulations had relatively consistent effects across different subgroups within the sample.

Table 1.
Significance of Moderation Analyses for Study 1

| MODERATOR | SIN MODEL | GRACE MODEL |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| MFQ CARE | $p = 0.261$ | $p = 0.919$ |
| MFQ FAIRNESS | $p = 0.916$ | $p = 0.569$ |
| MFQ LOYALTY | $p = 0.660$ | $p = 0.274$ |
| MFQ AUTHORITY | $p = 0.309$ | $p = 0.685$ |
| MFQ SANCTITY | $p = 0.661$ | $p = 0.591$ |
| RPS - COLLABORATIVE | $p = 0.163$ | $p = 0.845$ |
| RPS - SELF-DIRECTING STYLE | $p = 0.127$ | $p = 0.438$ |
| RPS - DEFERRING STYLE | $p = 0.505$ | $p = 0.678$ |
| CHURCH ATTENDANCE | $p = 0.634$ | $p = 0.283$ |
| BIBLE READING FREQUENCY | $p = 0.212$ | $p = 0.703$ |
| POLITICAL ORIENTATION | $p = 0.701$ | $p = 0.544$ |

Note. This table shows the p-values for the interaction terms in each moderation analysis. * $p < .05$

Textual Analysis

To explore the effect of the primes on participants, I explored the open-ended item following the prompt that asked participants to explain what the previous passage meant to them in relation to their faith. I employed the BERTopic modeling to identify thematic clusters within our corpus (Grootendorst, 2022). This method allows the researcher to see how the open-ended responses of individuals relate to each other, showing how close or far apart these responses are, based on the words in the response. This approach leverages BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) embeddings to create representations of the responses and uses a multistep process that includes UMAP (Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection) for dimensionality reduction followed by HDBSCAN (Hierarchical Density-Based Spatial Clustering of Applications with Noise) for clustering (Lezniehina, 2023). This method has been shown to be effective at topic modeling both small and large bodies of text. For example, Lezniehina (2023) used this approach to topic model abstracts of nearly 3,000 academic papers to explore the increase of research

related to mental health. In a different strand of research, Cowan and colleagues (2022) used this method to explore unstructured speech samples to detect for mental illness. Overall, This process has been shown to effectively identify similar themes or topics in a sample of text through a naive process, meaning that the data is not necessarily pre-trained, nor the topics predetermined (Grootendorst, 2022).

The methodology here followed a multistep process to analyze all responses from participants. For an overview of the technical and mathematical process in this method, please see Grootendorst (2022) and Lezhnina (2023). For embeddings, I relied on the all-MiniLM-L6v2 model, the recommended default for BERTopic (Grootendorst, 2022). This model maps statements into a 384-dimensional dense vector space and is capable of capturing semantic similarities between words or paragraphs (Grootendorst, 2022; Lezhnina, 2023). Dimensionality reduction was conducted with UMAP with the default settings: 15 neighbors, five components, and the cosine similarity as a metric, as recommended in Lezhnina (2023). HDBSCAN was then used to cluster the topics, with the Euclidian distance as a metric. For HDBSCAN, the minimal cluster size was set to 20 and the minimal number of samples was set to 3, due to the sample size. Finally, topics were tokenized through the standard model in BERTopic and then placed on an XY chart through an additional, standard UMAP dimension reduction process to map how closely the responses are clustered within the topics (see Figure 2). For simplifying any potential biasing in the clustering, phrases that repeated the open-ended prompt were removed (e.g., “what the previous verses means to me,” “the main theme,” etc.). The BERTopic model identified three distinct topics within the corpus that were manually labeled: “Love and Compassion”, “Sin and Eternal Life”, and an unclustered group labeled “Noise.”

The two thematic topics align closely to the primes, indicating that participants’ identities were activated and that differing content was salient. Within the “Love and

Compassion” topic, 74% of the responses were from participants who were primed in the Grace scenario. Participants stated that the primes meant that they were supposed to love their neighbor or look out for fellow humans, with one participant writing,

“It means that to love our neighbors means to have pity and compassion on them. It is not just a feeling but an action. Jesus wants us to show kindness and compassion to others, sometimes even at the risk of our own lives. The priest and the Levite that passed on the other side showed that you can be religious and still not please God because you lack love for others.”

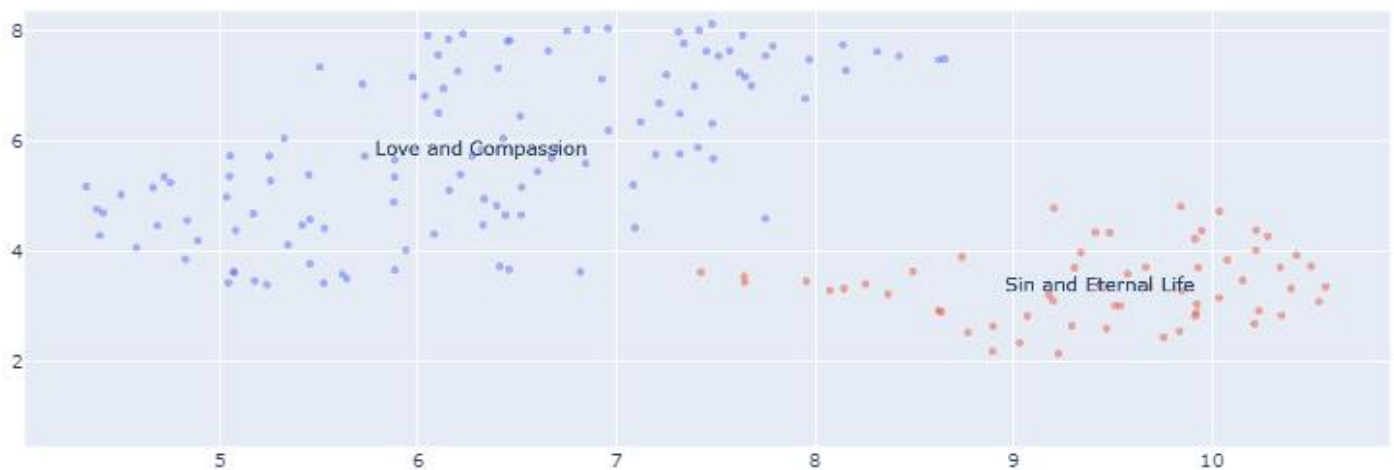
For this topic, the first five terms and their c-TF-IDF scores are ‘compassion’ (0.08), ‘neighbor’ (0.07), ‘love’ (0.05), ‘kindness’ (0.04), and ‘Jesus’ (0.04). For the second topic, “Sin and Mercy,” participants 82% of the responses were from participants who were primed in the Sin scenario. These participants discussed how they should avoid sin and expressed fear of hell, with one participant stating,

“When I read these passages, I feel fear. The suggested punishments are too severe. Everyone gets mad at family members, and everyone makes mistakes. I'd like to think that god would be understanding and forgiving of our mistakes. Still, my initial reaction to reading this is fear because I don't want to be punished.”

For this topic, the first five terms and their c-TF-IDF scores are ‘sin’ (0.09), ‘hell’ (0.08), ‘murder’ (0.05), ‘anger’ (0.04), ‘faith’ (0.03). The clusters were reflective of the primes themselves, demonstrating both that the primes elicited the desired response from participants and that there are different but still relevant pieces of identity content within an identity.

Figure 2.

XY map of responses by BERTopic analysis. Responses are clustered by topic and color coded with topic title. Each dot represents the XY coordinates of spatial outputs from the BERTopic process through the UMAP dimension reduction. “Love and Compassion” topics are colored blue, while “Sin and Eternal Life” topics are colored red.



Discussion

Though the findings of this analysis showed directional effects, none of the analyses showed any statistically significant effects. The only finding that was statistically significant was that participants took the problem seriously, as determined by the inverse levels of confidence and conflict in their decision (Mandel & Vartanian, 2008). The directional effects of the findings give some promise to the idea that priming identity content can impact a Christian’s decision in the Trolley Problem. However, with the differing rates of intervention failing to reach statistical significance, it may be unlikely that these pieces of content, the scenario, or that content itself is not powerful enough to cause ingroup members to act differently. Recently, there has been notable research on the effect of religious primes showing that religious primes may not be as effective or reliable as once thought (Shariff et al., 2016; Van Leeuwen & Van Elk, 2019; Weingarten et al., 2016). This finding may be one

reason why the main effect of the experiment was not observed. Secondly, there has been a growing body of literature that argues the Trolley Problem is so far-fetched and unrealistic that it may not be useful for studying moral decision-making (Kahane et al., 2017). While acknowledging both of those potential limitations of the design, a post-hoc power analysis was conducted using GPower software that revealed a statistical power of 0.100. This low power indicates that the study was underpowered, based on the effect size. As such, that will likely be an addressable issue.

Despite the lack of statistically significant findings, the topic modeling analysis found that participants read the primes meaningfully and that the primes elicited differing parts of their religious identity. This observation is important as it demonstrates how specific pieces of identity content can differ in what they mean to ingroup members. With the Christian primes, these pieces of content—Grace and Sin—are arguably opposing in nature. This finding advances Van Tongeren and colleagues' (2012) approach by utilizing identity-specific content.

Study 2

Study 1 showed that the study was underpowered based on the observed effect size. A Gpower calculation with the proportions observed in study 1 and a desired power of 0.80 showed that the number of participants needed to be adequately powered would be over 8000 respondents. Currently, it is unfeasible to obtain a sample size this large, but in order to better explore the hypotheses, this study will aim to double the number of participants. This study will replicate Study 1, including the same hypotheses and analyses, but have a larger sample size. This study was preregistered.

Method

The methodology for Study 2 replicates the methods and procedures used in Study 1. Only minor changes were made to the flow of the survey to improve usability and improvements on presentation. This study also examined only American Christians.

Participants

The study included 561 participants (341 females, 201 males, 19 other/unspecified; M age = 38.21 years, SD = 12.1). Participants were gathered using MTurk and paid \$2 to complete the survey, in line with the minimum wage in the United States. The majority of participants identified as White/Caucasian (74.8%), followed by Black/African-American (12.4%), Hispanic (3.8%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (3.4%). Educational attainment varied: 32.5% had some college education, 35.2% held a bachelor's degree, 17% had a postgraduate degree, 10% had a high school diploma, and 1.0% had some high school education. Regarding religious affiliation, the sample was diverse, with Protestant denominations (including Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.) being the most common, followed by Catholic. Political orientation was measured on a 7-point scale (M = 4.29, SD = 1.69), with 38% identifying as Republican, 33% as Democrat, 23% as Independent. Church attendance frequency varied widely, with 23.5% attending once a week, 14% almost never, and the rest distributed across other frequencies. Based on the same exclusion criteria from study 1, 39 participants were excluded from the analysis.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis Testing

After following the exclusion procedure described in Study 1, 522 participants remained in the sample for analysis. 161 participants read the sin prime, 161 read the grace

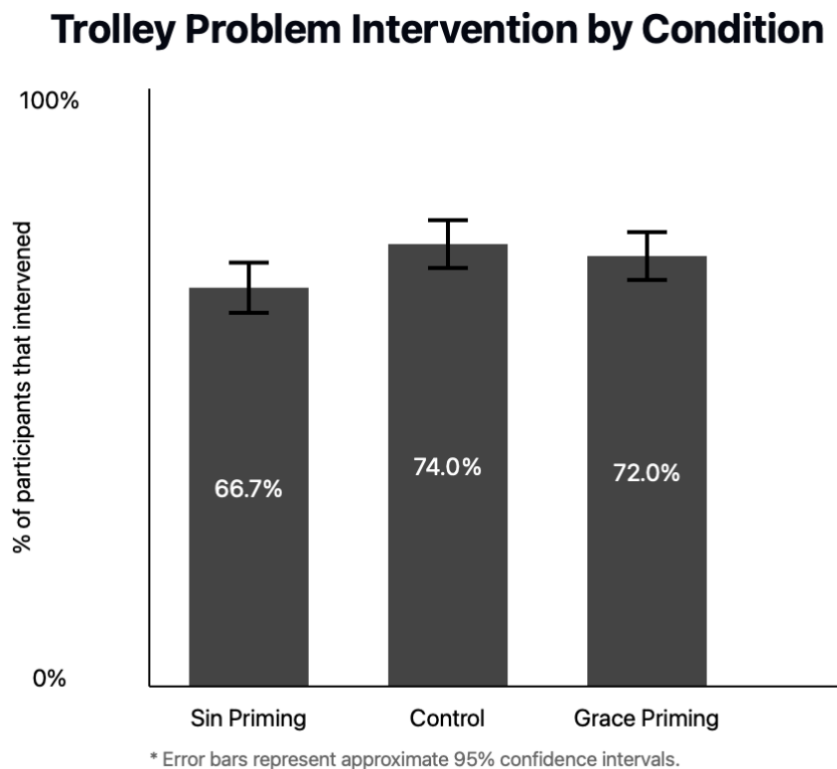
prime, and 200 were placed into the control scenario. After the manipulation, 53 participants (33%) in the sin condition refused to intervene in the Trolley Problem, 51 participants (26%) in the no prime condition declined to intervene, and 45 participants (28%) in the grace condition did not to intervene. Notably, the control group in this study had the lowest proportion of participants not responding, which differs from Study 1. However, the rates of non-intervention are relatively similar.

Just as in Study 1, the trolley decision was taken seriously and genuinely, with the confidence and conflict levels highly inversely correlated, $r(522) = -.39, p < .001$ (Mandel & Vartanian, 2008). There was no correlation between the naivete of participants and their decision in the Trolley Problem, indicating that the participants were not swayed by previously answering the dilemma, $r(522) = -.039, p = .388$ (Bago et al., 2022; Kahane et al., 2017). the correlation between Bible reading and church attendance was statistically significant, $r(522) = .687, p < .001$. Following Study 1, these findings indicate that participants took the problem seriously, that there were no issues in their participation, and that the measures of religiosity had strong validity.

Again, similar to study 1, the first analysis failed to support the hypothesis that Christians primed with the concept of Sin would be less prone to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians. In the Sin-primed group, 33% ($n = 53$) of participants chose not to intervene, while in the control group, 25.5% ($n = 51$) did not intervene. A z-test of proportions revealed no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($z = 1.54, p = .062$, one-tailed). Though there is a difference of over 7 percentage points of intervention rates in the expected direction, the effect is not statistically significant, given the sample size. This result suggests that priming Christians with the concept of Sin may have small, but not meaningful impact on their moral decision-making in the context of the Trolley Problem.

Figure 3.

Bar Chart of Trolley Problem Intervention Rate by Condition, Study 2, including 95% confidence intervals.



The second analysis provided some support for the hypothesis that Christians primed with the concept of Grace would be more likely to intervene in the Trolley Problem compared to a control group of Christians, although the results did not reach statistical significance. In the Grace-primed group, 28% ($n = 45$) of participants chose not to intervene, while in the control group, 25.5% ($n = 51$) opted not to intervene. This effect is not aligned with the expected effect and differs from the finding in Study 1, as the Control group had the highest rates of intervention. The z-test of proportions revealed no statistically significant

difference ($z = 0.534$, $p = .298$, one-tailed). The results of this analysis do not support the hypothesized effect and show no statistical impact of the religious prime on the decision.

Exploratory Analysis

Additionally, as with Study 1, an exploratory analysis was run to determine if there was any effect of the primes on participants' decision in the Trolley Problem, even when controlling for all demographic factors. This analysis was a logistic regression to compare the effect of the primes. The overall model was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 522) = 2.45$, $p = .294$. Priming with the concept of Grace showed a slight positive trend towards increasing intervention likelihood ($b = 0.13$, $SE = 0.239$, $p = .601$), while priming with Sin exhibited a marginal negative trend ($b = 0.36$, $SE = 0.233$, $p = .123$). When accounting for all demographic variables, such as gender, race/ethnicity, age, and education, the model is again not significant.

Finally, a moderation analysis was conducted to examine whether the moral foundations, religious problem solving style, frequency of Bible reading, church attendance, or political orientation moderated the relationship between the primes and the decision in the Trolley Problem. The analysis revealed no significant moderation effects for the sin model across all examined variables (all $p > .05$). Similarly, the grace model showed no significant moderation effects for most variables ($p > .05$), with one notable exception. A significant moderation effect was found for the Grace prime on the Collaborative subscale of the Religious Problem-Solving Scale (RPS) ($p = .011$). No other significant moderation effects were observed for either model on measures including the Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ) subscales, other RPS subscales, church attendance, Bible reading frequency, or political orientation. These findings suggest that while the relationships between the decision and the sin prime was not moderated by any factor, individuals primed with the grace content

seem to have that decision moderated when they have a collaborative style of problem solving. As argued by RPS, individuals who have a collaborative style of problem solving work through moral uncertainty in a collaborative style with ‘God,’ working together to find a solution.

Table 2.
Significance of Moderation Analyses for Study 2.

| MODERATOR | SIN MODEL | GRACE MODEL |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| MFQ CARE | $p = 0.641$ | $p = 0.610$ |
| MFQ FAIRNESS | $p = 0.481$ | $p = 0.674$ |
| MFQ LOYALTY | $p = 0.422$ | $p = 0.792$ |
| MFQ AUTHORITY | $p = 0.556$ | $p = 0.717$ |
| MFQ SANCTITY | $p = 0.191$ | $p = 0.860$ |
| RPS - COLLABORATIVE | $p = 0.805$ | $p = 0.011^*$ |
| RPS - SELF-DIRECTING STYLE | $p = 0.645$ | $p = 0.534$ |
| RPS - DEFERRING STYLE | $p = 0.818$ | $p = 0.404$ |
| CHURCH ATTENDANCE | $p = 0.392$ | $p = 0.311$ |
| BIBLE READING FREQUENCY | $p = 0.885$ | $p = 0.970$ |
| POLITICAL ORIENTATION | $p = 0.509$ | $p = 0.512$ |

Note. This table shows the p-values for the interaction terms in each moderation analysis. * $p < .05$

Textual Analysis

Again, following the same procedure in Study 1, I used the BERTopic model to identify four distinct topics from the attention check prompt, which were manually labeled: “Obey God,” “Love Your Neighbor,” “Sin and Hell,” and an unclustered group labeled “Noise.”

The three themed topics align closely to the primes themselves, with one topics associating with the Grace prime and one topic matching the Sin prime and an additional one relating to religiosity more broadly. These topics indicated that participants’ identities were activated and that differing content was salient. Within the “Obey God” topic, this topic was

split fairly evenly, with 56% of the responses were from participants who were primed in the Grace scenario and 44% of the responses from participants in the Sin scenario. Participants mentioned that the passage in the prime meant that they were supposed to love others or that it should be a guiding example of how to live out their faith. One participant expressed,

“You should follow the teachings of the bible. It is good and just to follow the teachings of many different lessons. It is not right to murder, to have anger, or to use certain terminology.”

For this topic, the first five terms and their c-TF-IDF scores are ‘love’ (0.07), ‘God’ (0.05), ‘obey’ (0.05) ‘others’ (0.04), and ‘help’ (0.03).

For the second topic, “Love Your Neighbor,” 86% of the responses were from participants who were primed in the Grace scenario. These participants discussed how they should care for their neighbors and the importance of this teaching. One participant shared,

“Love thy neighbor doesn't mean what some people think. It means love and respect for your fellow man. I cannot even think of someone in need or hurt or any have other afflictions and nit do something to help. Some act as if they do not see anything. For me, these verses are the teachings of our Lord. I take them seriously and feel love for mankind. This gives me hope that one day we as a whole will be at peace. The Lord guides me when I am listening and seeing. Not with my eyes or ears, but with my heart and soul.”

For this topic, the first five terms and their c-TF-IDF scores are ‘neighbor’ (0.12), ‘Samaritan’ (0.10), ‘love’ (0.08), ‘Jesus’ (0.04), ‘care’ (0.03).

For the third topic, “Avoiding Sin,” 87% of the responses were from participants who were primed in the Sin scenario. These participants discussed the severity of sin, its consequences, and how they should to avoid sinning. One participant wrote,

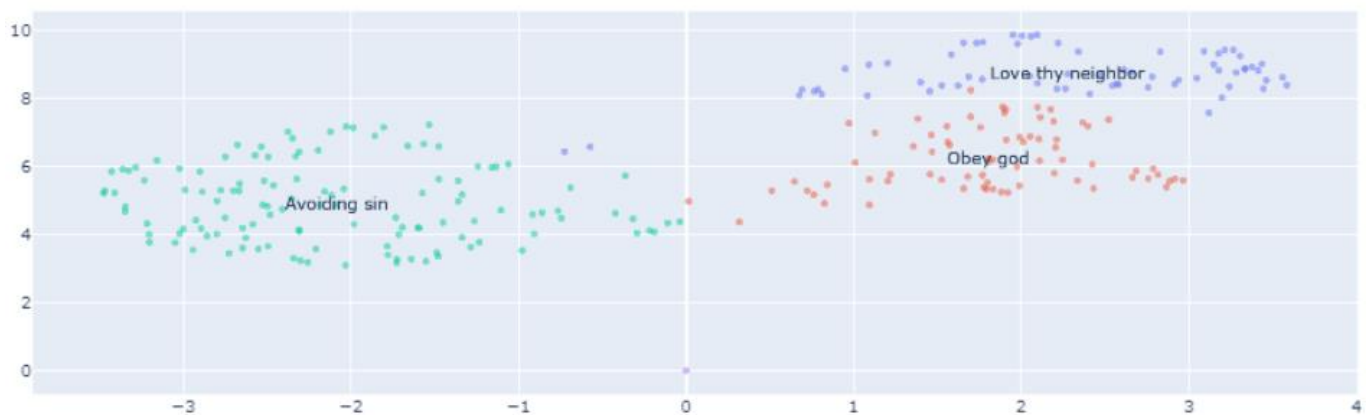
“Both verses kind of explain why you shouldn't sin. In the first verse, sinning meaning stumble. The first verse also can mean sinning physically, emotionally, or

even consciously. Get rid of your sinning behavior before you are to be judged in the end. The second verse is more of a detailed level of sin against someone close to you. From murder (of anyone) all the way to becoming angry with a brother or sister is answerable in court (God). Anybody who disagrees with that notion will go to hell.”

For this topic, the first five terms and their c-TF-IDF scores are ‘sin’ (0.07), ‘murder’ (0.06), ‘hell’ (0.05), ‘judgment’ (0.04), ‘God’ (0.03).

Figure 4.

XY map of responses, clustered by topic and color coded with topic title. “Obey God” is color-coded red, “Love Thy Neighbor” is color-coded in blue, and “Avoiding Sin” is color-coded in green.



Discussion

Similar to Study 1, the main hypotheses failed to reach statistical significance.

Though participants took the Trolley Problem seriously, there was no statistically significant difference between any of the primes (Mandel & Vartanian, 2008). In this study, the primes did not match the directionality that was predicted, differing from Study 1. The lack of significance makes it difficult to draw any conclusions from the rates of intervention.

However, in the exploratory analysis, there was one moderation that showed a statistically significant level, the Grace – Collaborating Style. For participants who were primed into the Grace scenario and had a Collaborating Style of Religious Problem Solving, the results indicated that they are statistically significantly likely to intervene than the control group. As argued by Pargament and colleagues (1998; 2011), individuals who have a Collaborative

Style are more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors and better at dealing with stress, as these individuals view God as their partner in solving problems. In this scenario, these participants may see God as being with them during their intervention, lessening their fear of sinning, and helping them feel it is okay or even right to intervene.

Additionally, as in Study 1, the BERTopic analysis showed distinct topics from the attention check that indicated the primes elicited the desired reaction. The three themed topics showcased that participants understood the primes and interpreted them to make salient differing parts of the Christian faith. In the reactions to the primes, the responses seem to indicate that participants were impacted differently, even though it does not have the desired effect on the rate of intervention in the Trolley Problem. Again, it seems the primes elicited varying pieces of identity content but are not effective enough to sway participants to decide differently.

General Discussion

The current work explores how making specific norms within an identity salient impacts moral decision-making. Christians who were primed with pieces of diverging identity content show no statistically significant effect on the moral decision in the Trolley Problem. The lack of effect here indicates that identity content may not be a potent enough prime to cause a statistically significant difference in the decision of participants. As mentioned in the discussion of Study 1, there have been several recent studies questioning the validity and impact of primes, especially on religious participants (Shariff et al., 2016; Weingarten et al., 2016). This paper may add to the questioning of the effect of religious primes.

The findings of this study also differ from the findings in Van Tongeren and colleagues' (2012) research on priming of differing content. There were two main differences

between this study and Van Tongeren's: the prime and the problem to be solved. In Van Tongeren's research, the primes were not based on any sort of identity content, focusing on general themes of forgiveness or judgment. In this study, I used specific scriptures to elicit the differing moral values, following similar priming techniques (Shariff et al., 2016). Moreover, through the BERTopic analysis in both studies, the primes created differing reactions to the primes, underscoring that these primes activated the expected content. Theoretically, the impact of a prime that is specifically related to identity content should have a greater impact on an ingroup member than a prime that has no specific relation to that identity, but the results in these two studies may cast doubt on the strength of that impact (Berry et al., 2011; Ellemers, 2017).

The second difference was the problem that individuals were asked to solve. In Van Tongeren and colleagues' (2012) research, participants were asked to respond to a jury study that aligned nicely with the values of justice and forgiveness (specifically, they were asked about situations concerning abortion, corruption, and a failed suicide). These situations differ from the Trolley Problem, though the abortion scenario is related to the Trolley Problem (Thomson, 1985). Still, the Trolley Problem differs slightly in that it is a situation that is highly unlikely and therefore perhaps unrealistic, while the problems in Van Tongeren's research were more realistic. Both factors may be influencing the lack of impact of the primes on the decision in the Trolley Problem. There may be better ambiguous situations in which the differing pieces of content can create diverging reactions in ingroup members, such as those used in Van Tongeren's research.

The impact of diverging identity content failed to show an effect in these studies. Though taking Ellemers' research on groups as moral anchors and the differing frameworks of morality with multiple factors should theoretically result in scenarios where an ingroup member could have diverging opinions from another ingroup member on a specific moral

problem, there may be flaws with the specific theory of Within Identity Differences (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Graham et al., 2013). One potential flaw is that identity content is more about creating conformity within the group than it is about providing meaning to an individual who identifies with that group (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Panagopoulos & Van Der Linden, 2016). Though these features are not mutually exclusive, when someone diverges from fellow ingroup members, they may subject themselves to phenomenon such as the Black Sheep Effect, where other ingroup members try to pressure them into adhering with the rest of the group. Consequently, anyone sort of within-identity difference actually negates belonging until the individual conforms. Another potential flaw with the theory is that identity content may only be effective in helping define group meaning in the presence of a relevant outgroup. Previous work on identity content has argued that outgroups are crucial to show specifically how the ingroup is different (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). Within Identity Differences, in this case, would not necessarily be possible, especially as deviance in the presence of outgroups is specifically what instigates reactions from the group, like the Black Sheep Effect.

Limitations

In addition to the potential flaw in the theory, there were several other limitations that could have impacted this study. Firstly, the data was collected with MTurk, and recently, the use of online platforms has been questioned (Sheehan, 2018; Smith et al., 2016). For example, research has shown that MTurk participants are less religious, more politically liberal, and from a higher socioeconomic demographic than the general population (Lewis et al., 2015; Sheehan, 2018). These leanings could have an effect, especially for research on religion. Though all measures of religiosity and self-identification should have mitigated

these impacts, there have been several studies covering the lack of religiosity among MTurk participants (Smith et al., 2016).

In this study, the content of an identity, though showing to be effective in the studies, may not have as large of an impact as previously hoped. The primes, though taken seriously by the participants, may not have been strong enough to change their moral decisions. As such, another possible solution is to use real-world scenarios instead of priming. For example, in continuing with the group explored here, it is possible to use a series of actual religious services to activate the identity content instead of simply the scripture itself. The Sunday Effect is one example of this phenomenon, which has shown that religious individuals are more prosocial and exhibit more religious behavior on Sunday than on other days of the week (Malhotra, 2010). Beyond the previously discussed concerns with priming, the actual content within an identity may be difficult to make salient. For example, in an extensive review of content priming, researchers found that while content priming—even the same kind of semantic content priming used in this study—had been commonly used, the specific prime can have an influence (Janiszewski & Wyer, 2014). In other words, the primes may be less effective at eliciting the desired content.

Lastly, the use of the Trolley dilemma could be an additional issue. Though the Trolley Problem is one of the most studied moral dilemmas, it has recently been scrutinized (Bago et al., 2022; Bauman et al., 2014). These scholars argue that the problem is too far-fetched to provide valuable insight into moral judgments, showing that the problem is not reflective of real-world scenarios and therefore nearly impossible to imagine how someone would act in this scenario. Moreover, dilemmas that are focused on sacrificing someone's life have yielded findings that are too focused on all-or-nothing, instead of something that is more generalizable. Additionally, there have been calls to move beyond the Trolley Problem when trying to understand moral decision-making (Kahane et al., 2017). Some of these scholars

argue that other problems, such as the Prisoner's Dilemma or more altruistic scenarios could be more insightful into handling moral dilemmas. Theoretically, any problem concerning a moral opinion should permit a divergence of opinions. However, the Trolley Problem could be so unrealistic that it does not matter what happens in theory.

As demonstrated by the studies in this paper, no effect was found to substantiate the idea that differing identity content could cause divergent choices. In order to address the criticisms of data collection and methodology, future studies should explore this effect in other manners, including more realistic scenarios or actual real-life examples. Additionally, research can better explore this topic by interacting with individuals at their place of worship (or other locations that exemplify an identity) or through conducting interviews to understand the nuances behind why certain decisions are made. I believe these methods will have greater external validity (Drury & Reicher, 1999; Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Malhotra, 2010).

Within Identity Differences can extend SIA to account for differences within an identity group in a way that differs from the Black Sheep Effect or other methods of using social identity to create conformity (Marques et al., 2001). This idea aims to extend work done by Ellemers and others (2015) on the relationship of group meaning and identity content in relation to morality. As expressed by the literature, there are numerous moral values that can provide meaning to a group. These differing moral values can have a differential impact on ingroup members, based on the pieces of that identity's content that is made salient. Though this phenomenon was not in this study, there are other ways that this concept can be explored to demonstrate that social identity can impact an ingroup member's self-concept in multiple and even differing ways.

References

- Bago, B., Kovacs, M., Protzko, J., Nagy, T., Kekecs, Z., Palfi, B., Adamkovic, M., Adamus, S., Albaloooshi, S., Albayrak-Aydemir, N., Alfian, I. N., Alper, S., Alvarez-Solas, S., Alves, S. G., Amaya, S., Andresen, P. K., Anjum, G., Ansari, D., Arriaga, P., ... Aczel, B. (2022). Situational factors shape moral judgements in the trolley dilemma in Eastern, Southern and Western countries in a culturally diverse sample. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6(6), 880–895. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-022-01319-5>
- Baldwin, M. W., Carrell, S. E., & Lopez, D. F. (1990). Priming relationship schemas: My advisor and the pope are watching me from the back of my mind. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 26(5), 435–454. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031\(90\)90068-W](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(90)90068-W)
- Barak-Corren, N., Tsay, C.-J., Cushman, F., & Bazerman, M. H. (2018). If You're Going to Do Wrong, At Least Do It Right: Considering Two Moral Dilemmas at the Same Time Promotes Moral Consistency. *Management Science*, 64(4), 1528–1540. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2016.2659>
- Bartlett, M. Y., & DeSteno, D. (2006). Gratitude and prosocial behavior: Helping when it costs you. *Psychological Science*, 17(4), 319–325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01705.x>
- Bauman, C. W., McGraw, A. P., Bartels, D. M., & Warren, C. (2014). Revisiting external validity: Concerns about trolley problems and other sacrificial dilemmas in moral psychology. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8(9). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12131>
- Berry, D. M., Bass, C. P., Forawi, W., Neuman, M., & Abdallah, N. (2011). Measuring Religiosity/Spirituality in Diverse Religious Groups: A Consideration of Methods.

- Journal of Religion and Health*, 50(4), 841–851. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-011-9457-9>
- Cikara, M., Farnsworth, R. A., Harris, L. T., & Fiske, S. T. (2010). On the wrong side of the trolley track: Neural correlates of relative social valuation. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 5(4), 404–413. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsq011>
- Curry, O. S. (2016). Morality as Cooperation: A Problem-Centred Approach. In T. K. Shackelford & R. D. Hansen (Eds.), *The Evolution of Morality* (pp. 27–51). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-19671-8_2
- Curry, O. S., Mullins, D. A., & Whitehouse, H. (2019). Is it good to cooperate?: Testing the theory of morality-as-cooperation in 60 societies. *Current Anthropology*, 60(1), 47–69. <https://doi.org/10.1086/701478>
- Cushman, F., & Young, L. (2009). The psychology of dilemmas and the philosophy of morality. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 12(1), 9–24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-008-9145-3>
- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (1999). The intergroup dynamics of collective empowerment: Substantiating the social identity model of crowd behavior. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430299024005>
- Ebstyne King, P. (2003). Religion and Identity: The Role of Ideological, Social, and Spiritual Contexts. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 197–204. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_11
- Ellemers, N. (2017). Morality and Social Identity. *The Oxford Handbook of the Human Essence*, 1(August), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190247577.013.5>
- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>

- Ellemers, N., van der Toorn, J., Paunov, Y., & van Leeuwen, T. (2019). The Psychology of Morality: A Review and Analysis of Empirical Studies Published From 1940 Through 2017. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868318811759>
- Ethier, K. A., & Deaux, K. (1994). Negotiating Social Identity When Contexts Change: Maintaining Identification and Responding to Threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(2). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.2.243>
- Fergus, T. A., & Rowatt, W. C. (2015). Uncertainty, god, and scrupulosity: Uncertainty salience and priming god concepts interact to cause greater fears of sin. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 46, 93–98.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbtep.2014.09.003>
- Franks, B., & Stewart, A. (2020). The divided we and multiple obligations. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X19002553>
- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Anastasio, P. A., Bachman, B. A., & Rust, M. C. (1993). The Common Ingroup Identity Model: Recategorization and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4(1), 1–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779343000004>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S., & Ditto, P. (2013). Moral Foundations Theory: The Pragmatic Validity of Moral Pluralism. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*.
- Gray, K., & Wegner, D. M. (2011). Dimensions of Moral Emotions. *Emotion Review*, 3(3), 258–260. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073911402388>
- Greene, J. D., Cushman, F. A., Stewart, L. E., Lowenberg, K., Nystrom, L. E., & Cohen, J. D. (2009). Pushing moral buttons: The interaction between personal force and intention

in moral judgment. *Cognition*, 111(3), 364–371.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2009.02.001>

Greene, J. D., Nystrom, L. E., Engell, A. D., Darley, J. M., & Cohen, J. D. (2004). The neural bases of cognitive conflict and control in moral judgment. *Neuron*, 44(2), 389–400.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2004.09.027>

Greene, J. D., Sommerville, R. B., Nystrom, L. E., Darley, J. M., Cohen, J. D., & Runyon-walter, D. (2001). *An fMRI Investigation of Emotional Engagement in Moral Judgment*. 293(5537), 2105–2108.

Greenfield, E. A., & Marks, N. F. (2007). Religious Social Identity as an Explanatory Factor for Associations Between More Frequent Formal Religious Participation and Psychological Well-Being. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 17(3), 245–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508610701402309>

Grootendorst, M. (2022). *BERTopic: Neural topic modeling with a class-based TF-IDF procedure* (arXiv:2203.05794). arXiv. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2203.05794>

Haidt, J. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108(4), 814–834.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X>

Haidt, J. (2013). Moral psychology for the twenty-first century. *Journal of Moral Education*, 42(3), 281–297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2013.817327>

Haidt, J., & Graham, J. (2007). When morality opposes justice: Conservatives have moral intuitions that liberals may not recognize. *Social Justice Research*.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-007-0034-z>

Hogg, M. A. (2016). Social Identity Theory. In S. McKeown, R. Haji, & N. Ferguson (Eds.), *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory: Contemporary*

- Global Perspectives* (pp. 3–17). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6_1
- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms. *Communication Theory*, 16(1), 7–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00003.x>
- Janiszewski, C., & Wyer, R. S. (2014). Content and process priming: A review. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 24(1), 96–118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2013.05.006>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>
- Kahane, G., Everett, J. A. C., Earp, B. D., Caviola, L., Faber, N. S., Crockett, M. J., & Savulescu, J. (2017). Beyond Sacrificial Harm: A Two-Dimensional Model of Utilitarian Psychology. *Psychology Review*, 125(2), 131–164.
- King, J. E., & Crowther, M. R. (2004). The measurement of religiosity and spirituality: Examples and issues from psychology. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(1), 83–101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810410511314>
- Lanteri, A., Chelini, C., & Rizzello, S. (2008). An experimental investigation of emotions and reasoning in the trolley problem. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(4), 789–804.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-9665-8>
- Lewis, A. R., Djupe, P. A., Mockabee, S. T., & Su-Ya Wu, J. (2015). The (Non) Religion of Mechanical Turk Workers. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 54(2), 419–428. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12184>
- Lezhnina, O. (2023). Depression, anxiety, and burnout in academia: Topic modeling of PubMed abstracts. *Frontiers in Research Metrics and Analytics*, 8, 1271385.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/frma.2023.1271385>

- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008a). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008b). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Malhotra, D. (2010). (When) are religious people nicer? Religious salience and the “Sunday Effect” on pro-social behavior. *Judgment and Decision Making*, 5(2).
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1297275>
- Mandel, D. R., & Vartanian, O. (2008a). Taboo or tragic: Effect of tradeoff type on moral choice, conflict, and confidence. *Mind and Society*, 7(2), 215–226.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11299-007-0037-3>
- Mandel, D. R., & Vartanian, O. (2008b). Taboo or tragic: Effect of tradeoff type on moral choice, conflict, and confidence. *Mind & Society*, 7(2), 215–226.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11299-007-0037-3>
- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., & Serôdio, R. G. (2001). Being better by being right: Subjective group dynamics and derogation of ingroup deviants when generic norms are undermined. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.3.436>
- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., & Serodio, R. G. (2006). Being Better by Being Right: Subjective Group Dynamics and Derogation of Ingroup Deviants When Generic Norms are Undermined. In J. M. Levine & R. L. Moreland (Eds.), *Small Groups* (pp. 157–176). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>

- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998a). Social identity and intra-group differentiation as subjective social control. In J. Morales, D. Paez, J. Deschamps, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998b). Social identity and intra-group differentiation: The “black sheep effect” as a function of subjective social control. In *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142).
- Marques, J. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (1988). The black sheep effect: Judgmental extremity towards ingroup members in inter-and intra-group situations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(3), 287–292. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180308>
- McKay, R., Efferson, C., Whitehouse, H., & Fehr, E. (2011). Wrath of God: Religious primes and punishment. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 278(1713), 1858–1863. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2010.2125>
- Moll, J., & de Oliveira-Souza, R. (2007). Moral judgments, emotions and the utilitarian brain. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11(8), 319–321. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2007.06.001>
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>
- Panagopoulos, C., & Van Der Linden, S. (2016). Conformity to implicit social pressure: The role of political identity. *Social Influence*, 11(3), 177–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15534510.2016.1216009>
- Pargament, K., Feuille, M., & Burdzy, D. (2011). The Brief RCOPE: Current Psychometric Status of a Short Measure of Religious Coping. *Religions*, 2(1), 51–76. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2010051>

- Pargament, K. I., Kennell, J., Hathaway, W., Grevengoed, N., Newman, J., & Jones, W. (1988). Religion and the Problem-Solving Process: Three Styles of Coping. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 27(1), 90. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387404>
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Rand, D. G., Dreber, A., Haque, O. S., Kane, R. J., Nowak, M. A., & Coakley, S. (2014). Religious motivations for cooperation: An experimental investigation using explicit primes. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 4(1), 31–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2013.775664>
- Shariff, A. F., Willard, A. K., Andersen, T., & Norenzayan, A. (2016). Religious Priming: A Meta-Analysis With a Focus on Prosociality. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(1), 27–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868314568811>
- Sheehan, K. B. (2018). Crowdsourcing research: Data collection with Amazon’s Mechanical Turk. *Communication Monographs*, 85(1), 140–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2017.1342043>
- Smith, S. M., Roster, C. A., Golden, L. L., & Albaum, G. S. (2016). A multi-group analysis of online survey respondent data quality: Comparing a regular USA consumer panel to MTurk samples. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.002>
- Sven Waldzus, Waldzus, S., Amélie Mummendey, Mummendey, A., Michael Wenzel, Wenzel, M., Ulrike Weber, & Weber, U. (2003). Towards tolerance: Representations of superordinate categories and perceived ingroup prototypicality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39(1), 31–47. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0022-1031\(02\)00507-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0022-1031(02)00507-3)

- Swann, W. B., Gómez, Á., Dovidio, J. F., Hart, S., & Jetten, J. (2010). Dying and Killing for One's Group: Identity Fusion Moderates Responses to Intergroup Versions of the Trolley Problem. *Psychological Science*, 21(8), 1176–1183.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610376656>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Organizational Identity: A reader* (pp. 33–47).
- Thomson, J. J. (1985). The Trolley Problem. *The Yale Law Journal*, 94(6), 1395.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/796133>
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987a). A Self-Categorisation Theory. In *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorisation Theory* (pp. 42–67). Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987b). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Blackwell.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2073157>
- Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and Collective: Cognition and Social Context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205002>
- Van Bavel, J., & Pereira, A. (2017). The partisan brain: An Identity-based model of political belief. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*.
- Van Leeuwen, N., & Van Elk, M. (2019). Seeking the supernatural: The Interactive Religious Experience Model. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 9(3), 221–251.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2018.1453529>
- Van Tongeren, D. R., Welch, R. D., Davis, D. E., Green, J. D., & Worthington, E. L. (2012). Priming virtue: Forgiveness and justice elicit divergent moral judgments among

religious individuals. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(5), 405–415.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2012.707228>

Waldzus, S., Mummendey, A., Wenzel, M., & Weber, U. (2003). Towards tolerance:

Representations of superordinate categories and perceived ingroup prototypicality.

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 39(1), 31–47.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031\(02\)00507-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(02)00507-3)

Weingarten, E., Chen, Q., McAdams, M., Yi, J., Hepler, J., & Albarracín, D. (2016). From

primed concepts to action: A meta-analysis of the behavioral effects of incidentally

presented words. *Psychological Bulletin*, 142(5), 472–497.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000030>

Ysseldyk, R., Matheson, K., & Anisman, H. (2010). Religiosity as Identity: Toward an

Understanding of Religion From a Social Identity Perspective. *Personality and Social*

Psychology Review, 14(1), 60–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309349693>

Chapter 4: What Does it Mean to Be Partisan?

An exploration of the meaning and content of political identities in America

Preface

The exploration of Within Identity Differences began with an examination of religious identity, specifically focusing on Christians in Chapter 3. This initial study provided valuable insights into how different aspects of religious identity content can be activated and potentially influence moral decision-making. However, the results, did not yield statistically significant behavioral differences in the Trolley Problem scenario. This outcome prompted a reconsideration of how to best capture and demonstrate the nuances of Within Identity Differences in real-world contexts. As mentioned, the absence of a relevant outgroup may be one limitation with the study, as well as hypothetical scenario of the Trolley Problem. To avoid those issues, I will instead focus on the other social identity discussed in the literature review, political identities.

The decision to shift focus to partisan identities in Chapter 4 was motivated by several factors. First, political identities, particularly in the United States, have become increasingly salient and influential in shaping individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and social interactions (Iyengar et al., 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022). The growing polarization and the "Big Tent" nature of American political parties provide a rich context for examining how individuals within the same group can express their identity in diverse ways. Second, partisan identities often involve navigating complex and ambiguous social and political issues, offering a more naturalistic setting to observe how individuals draw upon different aspects of their identity content. As I was able to study these identities during the 2020 US Presidential election, when they are expected to be highly salient. Finally, the study of partisan identities allows for an exploration of Within Identity Differences in a context where the consequences of group membership are more immediately observable in everyday life, from policy preferences to

voting behaviors. This transition from religious to partisan identities thus offers an opportunity to examine the concept of Within Identity Differences in a highly relevant and dynamic social context.

Introduction:

Pew Research has shown in multiple surveys and studies that political partisanship in the USA is growing, increasing in intensity as well as the distance between both political groups (Pew, 2017; Pew, 2019). Even through the 2020 election, Pew found that nearly 8 in 10 registered voters believed the other side did not hold core America values, with nearly 9 in 10 registered voters, on both sides, worrying that a victory for the other side would be detrimental to the future of the USA (Pew, 2021). This longitudinal research has shown an increasing partisan divide of the American population and demonstrates a growing problem with partisanship in America—that the sides are moving farther and farther apart, becoming more entrenched in their views. This growing divide between the two major parties has many commentators speculating what it means and how it will impact the US.³ This divide forces citizens to pick a side: are you a Republican? Or a Democrat?

Currently, there are 161 million registered voters in the United States, split with 49% as Democrat and 48% as Republican (Pew, 2024). However, being a member of a group is not the same as identifying or sympathizing with a group (Sides, Tesler, & Vavreck, 2018). As Sides and colleagues (2018) further discuss, political parties in the United States are becoming more ideologically aligned, especially concerning partisan opinions, social identities, and attitudes toward other groups. In the Green and colleagues (2002) seminal book on political parties and social identity *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, the authors argue that party membership exerts a powerful influence on a group members ideological positions, evaluation of political actors, and voting decisions. Iyengar and West (2019; 2022) have recently proposed partisanship, or the manifestation of a nation's divide across ideological

³ New York Times, “Is the Partisan Divide Too Big to be Bridged”; Washington Post, “A New Measure of the Bleak, Alarming Partisan Divide in America”; USA Today, “Divided We Fall”

lines, as a social identity, highlighting how Democrats and Republicans have become increasingly antagonistic toward each other. They argue that, as Social Identity Theory (SIT) would predict, partisan identity represents an important piece of an ingroup member's self-concept. Furthermore, their research shows that these ingroup members are displaying ingroup favoritism and outgroup animosity (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). So, while simply being a *registered* Democrat or Republican does not mean one necessarily identifies with that group, there is growing evidence that political group membership becomes an important predictor of attitudes and behaviors within citizens in the United States.

These party group members often choose between the major parties in the US, often as an expression of their political attitudes or ideologies. As such, the research on partisanship functioning like a social identity focuses individuals increasingly identifying with a political party that aligns with ideological positions (Levendusky, 2006; Iyengar, 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022). This research shows that Americans are becoming more identified with their political party than with other identities that they may have. This process of identification shapes the way individuals view themselves and their group (Haslam & Reicher, 2016; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). As a result, an individual's partisan identity has become more predictive of their attitudes toward their partisan rival, toward the evaluation of America, and how these ingroup members understand the world around them (Iyengar, 2012; Iyengar, 2019; Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018; West & Iyengar, 2022).

Within each partisan identity in America, though, there are still a wide array of opinions, attitudes, and values that shape the political groups. These opinions, attitudes, and values comprise the content of such partisan identities (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). As argued by Huddy (2001), that meaning is shaped and created over time by culture, history, ingroup members, outgroup dynamics, and more. The meaning of that identity, therefore, is neither stable nor uniform. Sides and colleagues (2018)

demonstrate that both Democrats and Republicans have experienced changes in what it means to be a member of that political group and who/what that political group represents. In their overview of the 2016 presidential campaigns, they note that “political parties are [a] collection of interest groups with different agendas” (2018, p.39). These interest groups have differing, competing, and sometimes even conflicting aims. Particularly in the United States, the political parties are often metaphorically described as a “Big Tent,” having space for many different factions with differing priorities while still working together toward the same good in elections (Disalvo, 2010; Glenn, 2008; King, 2022; Sager, 2006; Stout & Garcia, 2015). Moreover, the set of values and ideals represented by the two political parties in the United States are multiple and wide, influencing public opinion, perceptions of voting behaviors, and party identification (Bonneau & Cann, 2015; Claassen et al., 2021; Greene, 2004). Recently, some research has begun to explore how these sets of values affect what it means to be a part of a political party, mostly through the lens of dissent (Filindra & Harbridge, 2020; McDowell, 2020; Merkley, 2020). However, with the array of values accepted within these political parties, surely it is possible to employ one value over another and still be a good group member (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Ypi, 2016). That is the aim of this paper: to better understand how the content of a partisan identity influences an individual’s attitudes and behaviors.

This paper will begin by outlining the relationship between political party, partisanship, and social identity. From there, I will discuss the current political landscape in the United States and the growing importance of political identities. The paper will then explore voters in the United States perspectives on partisan identity, its relationship to content, and how that content is used to make sense of the 2020 election through over 50 interviews conducted during the 2020 election cycle. This paper will conclude by delving into the implications of content and how it can be used to better explore the effects of identity. I

will try to answer the question, “How do individuals use their partisans utilize the content of this identity to assess or navigate ambiguous situations?”

The Relationship between Political Party Membership, Partisanship, and Social Identity

In order to disentangle the ideas of group membership and clarify their definitions (or lack thereof) with political identity in the US, this section will detail the current state of literature on the relationship between political party membership, partisanship, and its relationship to social identity. To begin, this research aligns with the critique put forth by Huddy (2001) on the importance of exploring what it means to be a part of a social group, not only the boundaries between social groups. Political party membership in the United States requires minimal effort to vote in elections; in fact, the standards for formal membership in either of the majority political parties in the US are “meager” or “venal,” as it is commonly a step in registering to vote in most states (Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002, p.25-26). Partisanship, on the other hand, speaks directly to a collective phenomenon more generally, one that is established when the interest in values or projects is shared by others (Ypi, 2016). More specifically, in the US political landscape, partisanship has been seen as the affiliation with a political party (Green et al., 2002). Due to the affiliation with a political party, several works have shown the similarities and even synonymous nature of partisanship and social identity (Campbell, et al., 1960; Green et al., 2002, West & Iyengar, 2022). These works attempt to demonstrate how partisanship can and does impact one’s self-concept, as individuals view themselves readily as an ingroup member of a political party and behave accordingly. To distinguish between these ideas, I will begin by discussing political party membership, then explore partisanship and its importance, and lastly show how ideas have been shown to function as social identities.

Political Parties

Political party membership in the United States is often a prerequisite to vote and to participate in some other political activities (Green et al., 2002). While this may not be the case in other places around the world, it creates a circumstance where even expressing the most basic of civil liberties and participating in a democracy requires an affiliation to one of the political groups in the US. This membership is one that is largely adopted, which can have notable implications on what it means when someone chooses which political party to join (Huddy, 2001). However, someone becoming a member in a political party, often due to it being a prerequisite and there being little other requirements than ticking a box, does not automatically mean someone identifies with their political party. In fact, research on identification related to political parties has regularly distinguished between membership in a political party and identifying with that group (see *The American Voter*, Ch. 6 & 12, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, Ch. 2, & *The American Voter Revisited*, Ch. 11; Campbell et al., 1960; Green et al., 2002; Huddy, 2001; Lewis-Black et al., 2008). These works all address the question of being a member of a political party in the US without necessarily identifying with that party. Notably, some reasons for this membership without identifying with a group include factors related to upbringing, socioeconomic class, race or ethnicity, or other group memberships such as religion (Green et al., 2002).

However, as shown by most of the work just mentioned, in most cases, individuals who are members of a particular political party in the US identify with that group at some level. For example, in public opinion work dating back to 1973, individuals who expressed that they were a Democrat initially during a survey, 87% of those respondents later confirmed they were of the same party later on in the survey. Similarly, 79% of Republicans said the same thing. These findings have been shown to be consistent over time (Green & Palmquist, 1994; Green et al., 2002). More recently, work from 2018 looking at the consistency of

political party membership found extremely high consistency in data from the 1980s, when looking at categorical response⁴ (error-corrected correlations of 0.98; Tucker et al., 2019). This research went on to find that though there is some change in self-identification with political parties across a 7-point scale, the change is modest and that a specific subset of respondents accounted for the majority of the change. While these findings highlight the stability of group membership, further work has shown that group membership can constrain political values, such as equal opportunity and limited government, but that influence is not reciprocated (Goren, 2005). This work demonstrates that political group membership creates some sort of emotional attachment to one's self-concept, as party membership influences long-term political attitudes too. The relative stability of political group membership combined with the evidence that mere party membership can shape political values that there is some tacit relationship between party membership and identification with a group.

Furthermore, an individual's political party seems to impact their civic behavior and perception of political events. Some of the earliest data on this phenomenon in the US dates back to 1936, when some 83% of Republicans polled believed that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 'New Deal' policies were launching the country toward dictatorship, while only 9% of Democrats believed the same thing (Green et al., 2002; Key, 1961). This same finding has been repeated in numerous polls, with some stark and almost comical results. For example, in the Michigan Survey of American Consumers, between the day that Trump won the presidential election in 2016 until the day he was inaugurated, Democrat consumer sentiment dropped by 30 points, while Republican sentiment rose by 40 points. The same but inverted phenomenon was observed when Biden won the presidential election in 2020, with Democrat consumer sentiment rising by over 30 points and Republican sentiment dropping

⁴ In the each of the surveys reviewed, participants were asked whether they considered themselves Republican, Democrat, or Independent, or something else.

by over 20 points. Furthermore, the same thing is seen in voting patterns. This effect is sustained during the term of the president, with gaps between the parties averaging roughly a 40-point gap in sentiment. In essence, the mere fact that a party member's presidential candidate wins the election and is in office can swing their view of the economy by 20+ points. Similarly, In the 2020 presidential election, Biden won 95% of registered Democrats while Trump won 94% of registered Republicans. The mere affiliation with a political party impacts the way an individual in the US thinks and behaves, especially when it comes to political settings. These findings, along with many others, demonstrate how party membership in the US regularly goes beyond a requisite for voting and becomes something more meaningful to its members (Bonneau & Cann, 2015; Camobreco & He, 2022; Carsey & Layman, 2006; Gerber et al., 2010; Green et al., 2002; Kane et al., 2021; Sides et al., 2018).

Though it may be of no surprise that party membership predicts attitudes on political policies, voting patterns, and the perception of the economy, party membership's impact is spilling into the rest of US society and culture. In summary work of political polarization, Iyengar and West (2019; 2022) cite a breadth of evidence of a social 'sorting' occurring in the US. Notably, offspring are more likely to have the same party membership as their parents, increasingly less likely to marry a member of the opposite party, and more likely to sort along demographic factors, such as race, religion, and socioeconomic status (Iyengar et al., 2019; Levendusky, 2009; Mason, 2015, 2018; Roccas & Brewer, 2002; West & Iyengar, 2022). These findings all indicate that party membership is creating social distance between Americans as they sort themselves along party lines. In turn, party membership has become predictive of someone's race, ethnicity, religion, who they will marry, and more. All in all, party membership can does not necessarily have to impact an individual's self-concept, but there is a large and growing body of evidence that it does, at least in the US.

Partisanship

The notion of partisanship is a well-discussed phenomenon in political science and political philosophy (Muirhead & Rosenblum, 2020; White & Ypi, 2016). According to White and Ypi, partisanship is an ongoing, associative practice that is formed and sustained by groups of people who share a particular understanding and interpretation of the public good, including around normative principles and aims of articulating how power should be exercised (White & Ypi, 2010; Ypi, 2016). These authors differentiate partisan associations from interest groups in that partisans have a shared belief in working toward the good of the society, not just those in their group (Ypi, 2016). This definition creates a broad foundation on which to conceptualize partisanship in the United States. To sharpen this concept, though, *The American Voter*, argues that partisanship is better understood as a psychological identification with a political party (Campbell et al., 1960). This understanding of partisanship aligns tightly with social identity, implying that to be partisan is to both identify with a political party and to support it and its positions (Green et al., 2002). In essence, partisanship in the realm of US politics, with its two-party system, means picking one political party or the other and supporting that parties' positions and candidates.

How someone becomes partisan has also been the subject of much research. One approach to understanding how an individual becomes partisan is by examining their demographic factors. In *Identity Crisis*, Sides and colleagues (2018) demonstrate the impact that demographic markers such as race, gender, class, and education level all affect someone's partisan attitudes and behaviors. Their work demonstrates that race and class—especially when combined—were highly predictive factors in someone's voting choice in the 2016 US presidential election, with lower-class White citizens voting for Trump by wide margins and lower-class non-White citizens voting for Clinton. These demographic markers were also used by Green and colleagues (2002) to examine the parent-to-offspring

relationship. Their findings were that, though there are some changes, the political party that one's parents held was also likely to be the same political party with which an individual identifies. Green and colleagues go on to analogize partisanship to religion, arguing that the ebbs and flows of news, current affairs, and political events seem to have little influence on an individual's partisanship. Iyengar and colleagues (2019, 2022) furthermore argue that the origins of partisanship seem to be the natural outcome of the two-party system in the US, partisanship functions as a social identity

However, there is considerable and growing literature that an individual's values have a considerable and meaningful impact on one's partisan choice (Lupton et al., 2020). Research has shown that citizens rely heavily on their core political values to evaluate and shape their views on public officials (Alvarez & Brehm, 2002; Feldman, 1998; Goren, 2005). These works often draw on Schwartz's work on values, which has at least 10 domains of discrete but interrelated values that satisfy needs that confront all humans and societies. This work is not dissimilar to Moral Foundations Theory, which has also been shown to affect and predict someone's partisan leanings (Amormino et al., 2022; Graham et al., 2013; Haidt, 2012). This vein of research indicates that individuals have relatively stable values that predispose them to a partisan affiliation.

Further underscoring the influence of partisanship in the US is the growing alignment between political party affiliation and political ideology. Political ideology, here, can be understood as a belief system about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved (Erikson & Tedin, 2003, p.64). These ideologies help partisans organize their mental models of political attitudes, opinions, and values (Converse, 1964; Jost et al., 2008; Sides et al., 2018). Rather than being a strict definition of what liberalism or conservatism means, political ideologies seems to function as a way to better understand 'what goes with what' (Sides et al., 2018). Further research has shown that people behave in ideologically

meaningful ways, similar to how a native speaker can follow their language's rules without necessarily being able to completely define them (Jost et al., 2009). Taken together, political ideology functions as a meaningful way to sort political positions and this influence extends to someone's self-concept. Work by Levendusky (2009) and others demonstrates that partisans have increasingly become sorted along ideological lines, with Republicans being more conservative and Democrats being more liberal (Iyengar et al., 2019; Roccas & Brewer, 2002). Over time, partisanship has a reinforcing relationship with political party membership, as partisans shape their values and ideological positions based on the feedback from their political party membership (Goren, 2005; Jost et al., 2009)

Partisanship as Social Identity

In the US, that partisan affiliation is becoming more and more ideologically aligned, as, over time, individuals with more 'liberal' values have come to align with the Democratic party, while those more 'conservative' values have come to align with the Republican party. Pew has released several longitudinal studies that demonstrate the increasing nature of partisanship in the United States (Pew, 2017; Pew, 2019; Pew, 2021). These studies show that the difference between political party membership and partisanship in the US has diminished over time, as further demonstrated by the previous sections. Though an individual may not necessarily identify with the political party with which they are registered, a large body of research shows that that is increasingly unlikely in the modern age. As such, the terms for political party membership and partisanship can largely be used interchangeably to mean similar and nearly aligned topics. Moreover, the way that these terms are converging indicates that they are also more likely to be used to describe the political identity that someone has.

Partisanship “raises a perpetual screen through which an individual tends to see what is favorable to his [or her] partisan orientation. The stronger the party bond, the more exaggerated the process of selection and perceptual distortion will be” (Campbell et al., 1960, p.60). Even dating back to early work on the relationship between partisanship and identity, researchers noticed the impact that partisanship had on an individual. There is notable evidence for this phenomenon in everyday life. As previously mentioned, the party of the US president can drastically alter someone’s view of the economy, depending on their party membership (University of Michigan, 2024). Similarly, a citizen’s partisanship is highly (and increasingly) predictive of who they will vote for in the presidential election each (Pew, 2021). Beyond these examples, though, other research has shown that partisanship affects attitudes toward policy. The early finding on FDR’s policy in 1936 was the first of many findings that are found to be replicated in nearly any Gallup or Pew poll (see Pew on Ukraine, 2023; Gallup on same-sex marriage, 2024; etc.). Partisanship clearly affects partisans view of the political world.

Within experimental work, this impact has been further underscored in research on the ‘partisan brain’ (Van Bavel & Cunningham, 2012; Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018). This research summarizes the influence that partisanship has on an individual’s understanding of non-political events, including the impact on scientific literacy, numerical abilities, cognitive reflection, and mathematical abilities (see Kahan, 2013; Kahan, 2017; etc.; Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018). One particular study demonstrated that liberals were better at solving math problems when the outcome aligned with their political opinions on guns, while conservatives were better at the math problems when the outcome was aligned with their position on guns. This motivated reasoning demonstrates that partisanship functions similarly to other identities that individuals hold (Xiao et al., 2016)

Political partisanship is only one part of an individual's self-concept. However, Egan (2019) has found that Americans are adjusting the non-political pieces of their identity, including their beliefs and values, to accommodate their political identity's values. Specifically, what has traditionally been non-political in American life—where you live, who you befriend, who you marry, who you do business with—has recently become more predicted by an individual's political identity than ever before (Devine, 2015; Egan, 2019; Huber and Malhotra, 2017; Huddy, Mason, and Aaroe, 2015; Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes, 2012; Iyengar and Westwood, 2015; Klofstad, McDermott, and Hatemi, 2012; Malka and Lelkes, 2010; Mason, 2018). In fact, recent research by Pew has shown that no other demographic factor influences an individual's political values more than their partisan identity; race, religion, educational attainment, age, gender, and others fall significantly short when compared to party identification (Pew, 2019). This divide, however, has not always existed. Twenty-five years prior to this study, it showed an effect of only half the current size (Pew, 2019).

The impact of partisanship, then, goes beyond just how an individual registers to vote and has a real impact on their self-concept (West & Iyengar, 2022). It shapes the way they see the world around them and can shape the way they see themselves (Campbell et al., 1960; Green et al., 2002; Greene, 1999). Partisanship has also been shown to affect a partisan's understanding of those who are similarly (and dissimilarly) identified (Iyengar, 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022). Specifically, longitudinal work in the US has shown an increase in the social distance between partisans of opposite parties and more alignment from parents to children in terms of their party affiliation (Iyengar et al., 2012; Iyengar et al., 2018). Similarly, experimental and observational work has shown increased discrimination and animosity toward the opposite political party, while simultaneously finding a rise in ingroup favoritism as well (Iyengar et al., 2019). In all, these findings demonstrate that

partisanship, synonymous with political party membership, functions as a social identity, informing how an individual thinks about themselves and others based on their group membership (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Additionally, the ideological alignment seems to have a reinforcing effect for partisans on both sides. Though partisans may initially choose their political group based on their values, there is a learning, or specification, that occurs to apply those values to political positions (Dennis, 1987; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Goren, 2005; Lupton et al., 2020). Partisans seem to process information in a manner that results in the “correct” political positions (Goren, 2005). Partisans may take social cues from their fellow group members, group leaders, or from their outgroup as a means for being correct, and therefore ‘good’ group members (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Goren, 2005; Zaller, 1992). Other work on how groups can inform their ingroup members of this information draws from social identity work on identity content, prototypes, or even moral decision making (e.g., Social Intuitionist Theory; Haidt, 2001; Hornsey, 2008; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

These descriptions and outcomes of political party membership and partisanship demonstrate how it functions as a social identity. For the sake of this paper, these terms will be used interchangeably but refer to the same thing: the political affiliation an individual has that affects how they understand themselves as well as others, especially in the US political context. The next section will detail how even though social identities can inform an individual’s sense of self, the expectations and norms of that identity are not always clear, which can result in partisans disagreeing on certain topics while still aligning with their understanding of that identity.

Social Identity and Meaning

Social Identity Theory argues that the groups an individual is a part of can impact their self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). These groups can be anything from race or ethnicity, to gender, to their role at work, to the political party someone supports, and everything in between. Each group within those broader categories has a set of characteristics that help draw a boundary between one group and the other (Hogg & Reid, 2006). This process, of perceiving the characteristics and creating categories within which individuals can be placed is known as Self-Categorization theory. These characteristics also serve as a way to understand into which group a person may “fit” (Oakes et al., 1991). Self-Categorization Theory has extended and deepened Social Identity Theory by integrating an internal process of placing individuals, including oneself, into different groups, based on the collection of characteristics that best describe the group. Both theories combine to create the Social Identity Approach, which is what will be used to conceptualize social identity for this research (Kreindler et al., 2012; Reicher, Spears, & Haslam, 2010; Turner, Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 1999).

Social Identity Approach affords different components of social relationships and meanings as it contains multiple crucial dimensions. Firstly, SIA includes, social identity. Secondly, social structure importantly affects this approach, as factors such as power and status affect social identities. Thirdly, identity content, which describe the values, norms, and other attributes that guide behavior, shapes what it means to be a part of a social group. Next, the strength of identification plays an important factor in how an individual’s social group—and the meaning derived from it—affects them. Lastly, the context for an identity also influences these factors, as an identity in one context may be viewed differently in another context. This list offers a snapshot into the many dimensions considered in the Social Identity Approach (Kreindler, 2012). For the question in this paper, identity content brings forth the main point of contention.

Identity content, or the specific set of characteristics, beliefs, values, and norms, that guide behavior and shape the meaning derived from a particular group, are multiple and varied (Galliher et al., 2017; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). For example, as discussed above, partisans have a collective and understood set of values by which they abide. Democrats, on one hand, stand for ‘liberal’ values, while Republicans, on the other hand, fight for ‘conservative’ values (Green et al., 2002). These liberal values, when examined by Pew, relate to topics like civil rights, while conservative values tend to cover topics like limited government and free market (Pew, 2021). Due to the partisan sorting that has happened in the US, the identity content associated with each political party has become clearer and produced less overlap between the parties (Kane et al., 2021; Lupton et al., 2020). However, the content of partisan identities has remained complex, and sometimes the particular values or attitudes associated within a partisan identity can lead to differing conclusions (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; Van Tongeren et al., 2012).

One example of this phenomenon came when seven Republicans voted to convict Trump for Impeachment in 2021 for attempting to overturn the election on January 6th. These Republicans, when asked why they voted to impeach their party’s president, all cited some allegiance to democracy as a core value of their political party and stated that Trump chose to violate the value (NY Times, 2021). In this example, these Republicans adhered to one particular value over other functions of their partisan identity, pulling on one particular piece of content over another. This example crucially underscores the importance of identity content. Though these Republicans may be seen as rebels to their group, the fact they rebelled while still citing particular values of the Republican Party—signifying their allegiance to being a Republican while still dissenting—demonstrates that identity content can be a cause for differences within an identity group (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014).

Another piece of Social Identity Approach that informs how people see themselves belonging to a particular group related to the stereotypical elements of their identity (Oakes et al., 1991; Van Veelen et al., 2016). According to Hogg and Reid (2006), individuals cognitively represent social categories as prototypes. These categories are understood as ‘fuzzy sets’ or a collection of closely related but not necessarily clear checklist, of attributes that define one group and distinguish it from other groups. When those features can be distinguished, and the necessary context exists, a naturally grouping (or categorization) will occur (Ellemers, Spears, Doosje, 2002; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994). These prototypes, being a similar but not perfectly defined set of attributes, allows for some uncertainty in the importance of attributes and thus a small amount of difference in how individuals perceive the group’s definitions.

As members work to remain in good standing with their group, ingroup members often take on the attitudes of their group more meaningfully (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Gerber et al., 2010). This further adoption of the group’s specific values and attitudes provides specific meaning to the values that an individual may have used to first identify with that group (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). In terms of partisanship, an individual may see the stereotypical element of ‘fairness’ as extremely important to how society should function (Graham et al., 2013). In looking at the prototypes of each political party, this person would be more likely to identify with the Democratic party. As a result of identifying with the Democratic party, they would see the application of the value of fairness in terms of civil rights, advocating for sexual or racial equality (Pew, 2021). The alignment of prototypes in representing a group, and the understanding of how content functions, shows how basic group functioning, according to Social Identity Approach, can shape how individuals make sense of politics in the US by leaning on their partisan identity.

A further important note on social identity and meaning in US politics is the relationship between identity content and the prototype. In Haslam and colleagues (2011) four-dimensional model of identity leadership, they argue that leaders 1) create a shared sense of ‘we’ among followers, 2) embody the group prototype, 3) champion the group, and 4) help group members feel like the identity matters (Haslam et al., 2011; Haslam et al., 2020; Sewell et al., 2022). This approach has been extended to specifically address political leaders, as political leaders go to great lengths to demonstrate how representative they are of the group they are trying to lead (Mols et al., 2023). These group leaders will often accentuate the prototypicality of their group as much as possible, highlighting how their group is different and better than the outgroup. In doing so, these leaders may new or different ways of being a group member, informing what it means to belong to the ingroup as they rise to power (Mols et al., 2023).

The influence of the leader is also highly dependent on the social context, especially which group the politician is trying to lead (e.g., political party, state office, national office; (Mols et al., 2023). In this way, political leaders try to express a sense of ‘we-ness’ based on their constituency—which group of people are considered ‘us’ (Mols et al., 2023; Turner, 1991). In the US, this dynamic notably occurs during the presidential primaries. During these campaigns, many would-be political leaders compete to become a political party’s presidential nominee. Over the course of the campaigns, partisans typically are seen as trying to out-flank each other to their respective ideological side, working to demonstrate how they are the right leader for their party. Then, once nominated, the candidate works their way back to the middle, with more moderate policies and positions. This changing context also demonstrates how what it means to be a good Republican or Democrat can be based on the context and the group’s leader themselves (Sides et al., 2018). These attitudes or policy positions inform partisan group members about their party stands for during the election

cycle, demonstrating how a group's leader can influence the meaning associated with a social identity.

Lastly, this process of ingroup assimilation described above that is seemingly exhibited by partisans, aligns well with the Social Intuitionist Model of moral decision-making (Haidt, 2001). Specifically, as argued in *Partisan Hearts & Minds* and shown through several experimental studies, partisans hold their political affiliation quite stably over time, even as the values that underlie the group are less stable (Evans & Neundorff, 2020; Goren, 2005; Lupton et al., 2020; Sides et al., 2002). The model argues that individual's moral decision-making is shaped by how their judgments are received by those socially close to an individual (Haidt, 2001). Ingroup members fit this definition of 'socially close' and the evidence presented by the literature shows that being in a partisan group can impact how these partisans make moral judgments, as party members often become increasingly partisan over time (Baray et al., 2009; Iyengar, 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022).

All in, social identity has been shown to create a deep impact on individuals, greatly influencing their self-concept. Through different methods, social identities provide differing sources of meaning to ingroup members. The different pieces of what it means to identify with a particular group help individuals better understand with which groups they fit. Once an individual identifies with a group, the leader of that group as well as their fellow ingroup members exert influence on their values, attitudes, and more. As such, these ingroup members become more aligned with fellow group members. However, the meaning derived from a social identity is not uniform, neither in its prescription or description, as the content of an identity reflects the 'fuzzy set' of attributes that best define the group.

Within Group Differences in Partisans

As laid out in the previous section, identity content and other prototypical characteristics of an identity are ‘fuzzy’ and not necessarily a straightforward list (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Huddy, 2001). With the growing impact of partisanship in the US, how someone’s partisan identity impacts their voting, policy preferences, and political attitudes becomes more and more important (West & Iyengar, 2022). Research on within-group differences, especially for partisans, largely focused on dissent and how ingroup members will work to create conformity amongst non-conforming group members (Filindra & Harbridge, 2020; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988; McDowell, 2020; Merkley, 2020; Pinto et al., 2010). This line of research differs from the previous research by looking at differences in understanding of group expectations or identity content not as dissent, but as an alternative expression of being a good group member. As such, when a partisan differs from their fellow party members, they can do so in a way that offers a competing piece of content.

Partisans may differ from their fellow party members along several different dimensions. For example, political ideology, one of the central pieces of partisan identity, has varying components that inform how a partisan can think about the order of society or policy options (Sides et al., 2018). Beyond ideology, though, moral values have also been shown to influence political attitudes and party identification, as Republicans and Democrats seem to rely on differing sets of values, favoring some values over others (Graham et al., 2011). Additionally, political attitudes about particular situations, including ingroup favoritism and outgroup antagonism have been shown to be affected by political identity. Each one of these types of identity content has varying substance that helps individuals understand their group-specific norms (Ellemers & Van der Toorn, 2015). These varying types of identity content are all used when trying to express group membership.

As mentioned, every four years, the US political parties undergo a highly disruptive process, working to select a new presidential candidate. Both the Republican and Democratic parties each have a system by which candidates earn the nomination of their party. Though there are typically frontrunners, for example if someone is the sitting US president. However, when there is parity, the parties devolve into a months-long primary, where candidates work to out partisan each other as they vie for their party's nomination. These candidates attempt to rally specific factions toward them in hopes of building a coalition to then lead their party (Sides et al., 2018). During this process, it is not uncommon for the candidates to adopt ever increasingly partisan positions that alienate those who are not in their party. In the 2020 Democratic Primary, Bernie Sanders, a left-wing candidate, ran for the Democratic nomination, along with more than 10 other candidates. His highly progressive policies forced other candidates to advocate for similar policies, even if they had not ever advocated for that position during their entire political career. Once Biden earned the nomination, he had to track back toward more moderate policies in the hopes of winning the election.

This process is a clear example of the differences within an identity that compete to shape what it means to be a partisan within a particular party. Different values and attitudes that are relatively important to ingroup members have differing priorities. Individuals who express one value over another are not necessarily seen as outgroup members for expressing that idea, nor are they subjected to derogation or other ways groups will push for conformity (Jetten & Hornsey, 2010, 2014); instead they are viewed as good group members even if they disagree with their fellow ingroup members. Currently, there is a gap for research of this kind, as many other elements of partisanship and group behavior have been explored.

Study 1

This paper investigates the meaning and content of political identities during a 3-month period surrounding the United States General and Presidential election of 2020. Conducting the study during an election proves to be a good context to explore political identity as citizens are actively encouraged to consider and participate in political activities, including supporting their political party (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; West & Iyengar, 2022). The salience of political identity peaks around this time, as political commentary dominates both traditional media and social media (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). This paper seeks to understand the meaning of political identities to those who intended to or had participated in the election, as well as those who are active in their communities. The study aims to understand the nuances and differences that exist within the two major political parties in the United States, Republicans and Democrats. The study will aim to avoid comparing the differences between Republicans and Democrats and focus on their Within Identity Differences.

Methods:

Participants

52 Participants were chosen based on their self-identification of political identity, religious identity, race/ethnicity, gender, and voting intent. Though the political identity was the driving choice, the other selection criteria were also used when selecting participants. The sample included 24 females and 28 males, 58% of the participants identified as White, and 22 identified as Democrat with 16 identifying as Republican. The remaining participants were “non-political” or registered independents. The participants ranged in ages from 22-72 ($M = 46.7$).

Table 3.
Participant count by gender

| Gender | Participants |
|--------|--------------|
| Male | 28 |
| Female | 24 |

Table 4.
Participant count by political party

| <i>Political Identity</i> | <i>Participants</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Republicans | 16 |
| Democrats | 22 |
| Independent | 14 |

Procedure

During the 6 weeks prior to and 6 weeks after the 2020 United States General and Presidential election, 52 interviews were conducted in New Orleans, Louisiana, as well as other places in the Southern region of the United States. Participants were recruited in partnership with HousingNola, a 501c3 nonprofit. They were asked to assist in a survey to “better understand how housing solutions motivate voting behavior.” The participants were told the interview would last one hour, and they were conducted in either a Covid-safe environment or over Zoom. Participants were compensated with \$15 gift cards to Amazon for their time, which was calculated based on the minimum wage in United States.

Potential participants completed a short survey prior to the interview where they were asked basic demographics, consented to the interview, and chose the location for the interview. Participants could complete the 60-minute interviews in either a Covid-safe environment or remotely over Zoom. The Covid-safe environment included both the participant and the interviewer having a negative rapid antigen test, wearing KN95 masks, sitting more than six feet apart, and conducting the interview in a well-ventilated room. All

Covid-safe materials were provided by the interviewer at no cost to the participants. For interviews conducted over Zoom, participants selected a time and were given a link for the interview. All interviews were recorded both on Zoom and with a transcription service, Otter.ai.

All data was collected via semi-structured interviews and explored for themes related to identity, identity meaning (content), and political affiliation. The interviews were designed to understand both the content of their political identity and how it relates to their worldview, and their views on the practical application of housing. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, with the help of otter.ai.

Positionality Statement

As a white male researcher, aged 25, I acknowledge that my personal identity and background inevitably influence my perspectives and interpretations within this study. Having grown up in a conservative, middle-class Christian family, I have an intimate familiarity with the intersection of religion and political identity, particularly within conservative communities. Although I have personally distanced myself from these religious beliefs, my upbringing grants me insight into conservative worldviews. Today, identifying as politically liberal, I recognize my capacity to navigate and comprehend perspectives across the political spectrum. Throughout this research, I have engaged in ongoing self-reflection, carefully managing potential biases stemming from my upbringing and current positionality.

This research constitutes a significant component of my PhD work, situated in psychology with a focus on social identities and morality. My initial interest in exploring partisan identities emerged from personal experiences observing the interplay between religious beliefs and political orientations within my family and community. Being an outsider to the specific communities studied, I recognize potential power imbalances in my

interactions with research participants. To ethically address these dynamics, I consistently prioritize transparency, clearly communicating research objectives and participant awareness, while remaining sensitive and responsive to participants' lived experiences and perspectives.

My ideological journey has shifted significantly over time, from a conservative upbringing to my current identification as politically liberal. This trajectory allows me a nuanced understanding of both conservative and liberal viewpoints, facilitating a balanced approach in my analysis and interpretations. While my present ideological orientation is liberal, my upbringing provides critical context, enabling a comprehensive understanding of partisan identities. Conscious of how my evolving political stance may influence interpretation, I actively maintain reflexivity and strive for fairness in representing diverse perspectives throughout my analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis, as conceptualized by Braun and Clarke (2006), presents several methodological advantages that make it particularly suitable for analyzing extensive interview datasets. The method's theoretical flexibility allows researchers to operate within various epistemological frameworks without adherence to prescriptive analytical constraints, facilitating exploration of diverse participant experiences across substantial qualitative data (Nowell et al., 2017). Clarke and Braun (2017) emphasize that this flexibility enables researchers to maintain analytical coherence while accommodating the emergent nature of qualitative inquiry. The systematic framework provides methodological rigor through iterative processes of familiarization, coding, and theme development, which proves essential for maintaining analytical consistency across large datasets (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Crucially, the method's tolerance for ambiguity and multiplicity allows researchers to preserve the inherent complexity of participant narratives rather than forcing reductive interpretations (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This capacity to hold contradictory themes in

productive tension proves particularly valuable when managing extensive interview collections where participants may express conflicting or nuanced perspectives that resist singular interpretation (Clarke & Braun, 2018).

Nevertheless, Thematic Analysis faces significant methodological critiques that warrant consideration. Antaki et al. (2003) argue that the method's flexibility can result in analytical superficiality, where researchers may conflate summary with analysis, particularly problematic when handling voluminous data. The very ambiguity that enables nuanced interpretation has been criticized by scholars who argue for greater analytical precision and replicability (Guest et al., 2012). Holloway and Todres (2003) contend that the lack of prescribed theoretical underpinnings may lead to epistemological confusion and analytical inconsistency, especially when multiple researchers engage with large datasets. The subjective nature of theme identification has drawn criticism from scholars advocating for more systematic approaches to qualitative analysis, who argue that thematic saturation and theme validation remain insufficiently theorized within Braun and Clarke's framework (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Additionally, the method's embrace of multiplicity, while philosophically defensible, can create challenges for researchers seeking clear analytical outcomes or policy recommendations (Terry & Hayfield, 2021).

Despite these methodological limitations, Thematic Analysis remains optimal for this investigation's extensive interview dataset due to its capacity to balance analytical depth with interpretive sophistication. Terry et al. (2017) demonstrate that the method's iterative nature facilitates comprehensive engagement with large qualitative datasets while maintaining analytical transparency. The approach's philosophical commitment to preserving participant voice multiplicity proves essential when working with diverse populations whose experiences may not conform to unified theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Jackson and Mazzei (2012) argue that this methodological embrace of ambiguity reflects a more

sophisticated understanding of social reality, where meaning-making processes are inherently complex and contradictory. The method's capacity to accommodate what Clarke and Braun (2018) term "messy realities" becomes particularly advantageous when analyzing extensive interview data where participants' lived experiences resist neat categorization. Recent methodological developments have addressed earlier critiques through enhanced guidelines for managing analytical complexity while maintaining scholarly rigor (Braun & Clarke, 2022), positioning Thematic Analysis as increasingly suitable for research requiring systematic analysis of substantial qualitative data while preserving the interpretive depth and multiplicity essential for meaningful theoretical contribution to contemporary social research.

Thematic analysis also offers an advantage to other methodologies as it is not tied to any specific theoretical framework. As noted in Braun and Clark (2006), there are some explicit decisions that must be discussed when using thematic analysis, including what counts as a theme, inductive or theoretical analysis, and semantic- or latent-level analysis. For the purposes of this research, a theme is a concept or idea that is discussed across multiple interviews and shows some level of importance and relevance to the topics in the interviews. This research will also rely on an inductive framework across all the data, but it is important to note here that in order to address the research aims properly, the data sets will have to be divided based on the partisan identity of the participant. Additionally, this research will rely on semantic analysis.

A codebook was generated by reviewing all interviews. Once completed, the codebook showed three global themes, 7 themes, and 15 codes. As Braun and Clarke note, the themes are consciously selected as they represent some level of patterned response or meaning in relation to the overarching research question. These themes are drawn from the specific structure of the interviews and the general topic of discussion. Therefore, the

researcher acknowledges the coding decisions as reflecting the theoretical perspective of the researcher.

Findings & Discussions

All participants discussed topics such as the election of 2020, Covid-19 and the pandemic, their perspective on morality, and housing policy. Participants were also each asked to define what it means to their identity and what it means to them. The interviews were designed to take place around the election, which was specifically chosen to make a participant's political identity particularly salient. There was little novel found when reviewing the attitudes and opinions between Republicans and Democrats, as the partisans aligned with the political values associated with their identity (Pew, 2021; Sides et al., 2002). However, there were notable nuances in how individuals discussed numerous topics from their specific group positions. This observation is the central finding from this paper: partisan identity functions both as creating meaning for individuals and providing them a reference point from which they might diverge with their group's prototype.

There were three global themes derived from the interviews, each focusing on how identity content can be used to create differing form of group expression. The data collected in this study was analyzed through the lens of differences within the partisan identities themselves, rather than exploring differences between the political parties. The first theme of status concerned individual expression, exploring how an individual views themselves in relation to the prototypical Republican or Democrat. The second theme focused on social expression of group membership, delving into economic and social issues. The final theme of expression concentrates on the political expression of group membership, discussion the 2020 US Presidential election and faith in democracy. These findings demonstrate that identity content is varied and can be used as the basis for differing expressions of group membership

within a political party. In essence, there are different ways for partisans to be good group members,

Individual Expressions

Individual Positioning – Defining Individual Identity Against the Partisan

Prototype

The content of a participant's political identity shapes the way they viewed their individual position in relation to others in their group. At times, they used it to establish how they were similar or different to the prototype within their group, or how they were similar or different to others in the group. Partisans on both sides relied on their perspective of themselves (i.e. their personal identity) and the group (i.e. the partisan prototype) to describe how their partisan identity affects the way they view themselves. For Democrats, the first thing many participants did was place themselves on the political spectrum concerning their liberalness.

Interviewer: "So you've told me that you consider yourself a member of The Democratic party. What does it mean to you to be a member of The Democratic party?"

6 – "I'm a Democrat, but I guess I'm closer to the moderates, on a moderate spectrum. I'm kind of in the middle of things. The Democratic party, we are about fairness, we're about equity with the right inclusion, we're about, you know, supporting all communities. We are a party that believes that, that everyone should have the opportunity to succeed...And more than anything, I think that we're the party of, of everyone can join everyone has a seat at the table. I think that, you know, some of my friends on the other side, are not as inclusive, or as tolerant. So those are the things I think of when it comes to the Democratic party."

12 – "I recently registered as a Democrat. I was not a registered Democrat...because I was unhappy with the party. I worked for the Party as an organizer and felt completely alone. I am really into leftist politics...and it was hard...but I probably like a government that proactively

helps, rather than a government that works to create an environment in which commerce can happen. Which, I understand is, like, the basic idea of our government that, like, uses creative legislation to protect the people from the worst and worst impulses of business at a minimum. And that's what I would like. And so, you know, I think part of that is like, legislation that supports organized labor. And healthcare system that isn't horrible. Yeah, in terms of people being actually able to, like have access to medical care.”

In both examples listed above, each Democrat uses an element of what the party stands for to describe how they align as well as how they differ from the prototype of the group. Notably, Participant 6 references broad values that encompass many aspects of morality, but leans heavily on the idea of inclusivity and fairness. These values have been shown to be appreciated more by those who identify as liberal and are Democrats in the US than by conservatives (Graham et al., 2013). These broad values, though, allow the Participant to view themselves as more ‘moderate’ than other Democrats might, by arguing that the Democratic Party is for “everyone.” The Participant even qualifies their statement to focus on positions that may not sound as ideologically extreme (e.g. ‘equity with the right inclusion’ as opposed to ‘equity’ used plainly).

Contrastingly, Participant 12 appears to focus on specific policy issues and preferences after talking about recently returning to the Democratic Party. Instead of focusing on the values that align, the Participant cites specific political issues that they like. These policies, according to polling from Pew (2020), skew heavily along partisan lines, with some 54% of Democrats agreeing that the government is responsible in ensuring healthcare for all citizens through a single government program, as opposed to 15% of Republicans.⁵ This helps show alignment with the Democratic Party. However, additional research by Pew (2020) on this topic shows that this support varies by *how liberal* a Democrat is. This survey

⁵ The 2 items from Pew read: 1) Do you think it is the responsibility of the federal government to make sure all Americans have healthcare coverage? 2) Should health insurance be provided through a single national health insurance system run by the government?

found that among Democrats who identified as conservative or moderate Democrats, some 43% agreed with this topic, while 77% of very liberal Democrats agreed with the topic. In this same way, the Participant, who early in their statement states that they are “really into leftist politics” is expressing that they are Democrat who is very liberal, signaling that they are different from other types of Democrats as well. The content expressed in each example demonstrates an appreciation for different aspects of the partisan identity (values and policy issues; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2017). As these individuals express the particular content that they identify most with, they are also indicating what type of Democrat they are, and how they both align and differ with their conception of the prototype of a Democrat (Oakes et al., 1991; Rahn, 1993).

For Republicans, the same pattern appeared, as participants tried to define how the political identity functioned for them based on their personal position:

Interviewer: “So you’ve told me that you consider yourself a member of The Republican party. What does it mean to you to be a member of The Republican party?”

21 – “I consider myself very liberal socially, but quite conservative fiscally...I think our country is best when we have strong, ethically responsible political parties...You know, it's like, Trump's environmental policies are not actually supported by things like the auto industry. And in the energy industry. I mean, they made this big brouhaha about, Biden says we're phasing out we're facing away from oil and gas, oil and gas companies are doing right now. They're phasing away from oil and gas. Yeah, it would say it, but you look at what they're doing. They're already doing it. Trump, you know, rollback all the Obama automakers standards. The sheer cruelty of the immigration policies and the stupidity of you know, the cruelty in terms of, you know, putting children in cages and separating from their families.

the stupidity of we now block virtually all immigration. This country has always been immigrants. It's always counted on immigrants. It's hard for me to be a Republican right now.”

28 – “The reason why I say [I am a Republican] is that I’m in the Army and that’s something I’ve learned more honestly over the last four years. I am much more conservative than I was when I was younger...I find more of those conservative values that are in the Republican party that are part of who I am...One of them that's really resonate with me is the, the issue around abortion, it's a very it's a very tricky conversation because yes I am a woman. And I, yes I don't agree that anybody but myself and my doctor should have a decision when it comes to what happens in my body, but at the same time I understand that. You also have to in society, right, if you don't have some sort of norm. Everybody's pretty much it's gonna do all these things that may not necessarily be in their best interest”

Republicans, similar to Democrats, tried to define what type of Republican they were based on their specific aspects of the Republican Party that they valued or disagreed with the most. In the example of Participant 21, they first described some of their personal values, claiming that they are “very liberal socially but quite conservative fiscally.”⁶ They then proceed to talk about the importance of strong and ethical political parties. This participant then goes on to express how the Republican leader, Trump, undercuts a lot of these principles. Still, they identify as a Republican, even though they admit that it is hard for them to do so. This behavior aligns with what Green and colleagues (2002) found concerning the stability of partisan identity over time, even in the face of changing political circumstances.

⁶ This phrase has been used since at least the 1980s to signify a kind of libertarianism or independent-thinking, but often is most associated with Republican voting (Maddox & Stuart, 1984).

The partisan identity and all of its meaning remains stable over time, even as the current political landscape may change (Carsey & Layman, 2006; Green et al., 2002).

The second Republican example was Participant 28 who cited that being in the Army helped her realize that she is more conservative than she thought she were. The Participant states very clearly that “conservative values” are a part of who they are. When citing a specific example, she referenced that her stance on abortion was more aligned with Republicans. By referencing both values and a specific policy example, as well as a traditionally more conservative group (the US Army), this Participant exemplifies prototypical identification and alignment with the Republican party (Lupton et al., 2020). However, when providing nuance, the participant references her gender identity and acknowledges that her stance on abortion may be different from others in the Republican party, even though there are some elements that she does agree with. This expression of content demonstrates even with broad alignment with her group, this partisan still finds a way to showcase her individuality and how she is different from the prototypical Republican.

Across many interviews, a consistent theme of identifying with a partisan group and still contrasting oneself against the group’s prototype was found. These partisans managed to use specific aspects of the prototypical understanding of what it means to be a Republican or Democrat to both express identification as well as differentiation. One possible reason for this observed phenomenon is the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, which argues that individuals work to achieve a balance between the need to assimilate into their group’s categories and the need to remain distinct (Brewer, 1991). In this case, though individuals are understanding that they fit within specific categories based on partisan ideologies, they also work to remain distinct from the group and retain their personal identity, avoiding depersonalization (Hogg & Tindale, 2001).

Another possible explanation as to why these partisans discussed their identity this way could be that in their process of identifying with their group, they are trying to balance the processes of self-anchoring and self-stereotyping (Rahn, 1993; Van Veelen et al., 2011, 2014, 2016). Self-anchoring is an alternative that has been offered by Van Veelen and colleagues (2011) that argues for a cognitive pathway of identification that begins with someone's personal identity. As mentioned earlier, and in several of the examples, specific personal values were discussed that give the impression of an individual considering what matters most to them personally, then looking for a political group that aligns with those values. Essentially, as Van Veelen proposes, the partisan is trying to answer the statement "my group is like me" (Van Veelen et al., 2016). Many participants attempted to clarify their personal standing in relation to the political identity by describing where they stand in relation to the prototypical partisan member. This attempt to align but also clarify shows how partisans navigate issues of status and perception. Each of these issues are important factors in Social Identity Theory, aimed at establishing and securing self-esteem through belonging to a group that has good status (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, at the time of the election, both presidential candidates were viewed by less than 50% of the American population as being "favorable" (Gallup, 2020). As such, demonstrating ingroup loyalty while distinguishing oneself from the party's leader can be a way to manage self-esteem and perception, especially without knowing the political affiliation of the person you may be talking to. The content of participants' political identity seems to serve as the anchor for how they understand themselves and how they relate to others within their group. These participants seemed to work through the meaning of their identity and how they relate to it as a process of defining who they are.

Social Expressions

Economic Positioning – Partisan Ideology in Economic Issues

The second global theme was that of the social perspective of the group, including the groups' opinions on issues around the economy, civil rights, and homelessness. In each of these discussion points, both Democrats and Republicans had beliefs that were not fully aligned with the prototype of their group. Economic issues appeared as topics that induced sharp, well-defined opinions, even if those opinions differed from their fellow partisan ingroup members. While the application of differing opinions around economic and financial problems informs ideas on taxes and monetary or fiscal policy positions, the philosophical foundations offer an insight into the meaning created by political identities (Green et al., 2002; Lupton et al., 2020; Sides et al., 2018) For Republicans, the best way to improve economic problems in America is for government to let things happen naturally and not intervene.

Interviewer: "So, help me understand how you see whether government should be involved in the affairs of individuals or the economy? Do you have any examples that come to mind?"

32 – "Less government regulation is good. And I think there needs to be more of an orientation, where government is the last piece to come in. So, we're starting to shift now to 'P3 orientation.' Okay, that's a public private partnership, where the government may help incentivize private investment. That's okay, but it can't be the other way around, where the government tells us what to do. So, it is my very firm belief that we will not address and solve the problem without the private sector. Period."

21 – "People need to learn how to get on their feet, be self-sufficient. Government handouts don't help anyone learn that, you know? Someone who doesn't work and doesn't want to

work, it's a problem, yes, but it should be the community that takes care of them. Churches, nonprofits, those sorts of things. Our tax dollars shouldn't have to go to that."

In the above quotes, these Republicans offer differing ways in which they believe the government should or should not be involved in economic matters. In the first example, Participant 32 explains how less government regulation in the economy is good, but not that the government should never be involved. The Participant expresses a desire for government to incentivize specific investments and partner with the private sector to structure how investments are made. This position aligns with a traditionally understood Republican ideology, but also highlights a pattern of behavior described as "symbolically conservative but operationally liberal" (Ellis & Stimson, 2009; Sides et al., 2018). This behavior represents a specific group of conservatives that vote Republican, but do not support government spending when it comes to Social Security, education, and infrastructure. By aligning with this position, while still acknowledging that 'less government is good', the participant is able to draw out a unique piece of identity content around political attitudes.

Next, Participant 21 draws a harder line on the role of the government being involved with economic matters, this time referencing 'government handouts.' This position is one that has long been held by conservatives in the US, dating back to the 1970s (Shannon, 2017; Sherman, 1995). Here, rather than expressing an interest in the government helping individuals in need, the participant indicates that it is the individual's own responsibility to solve their problems—or if they do receive help, that is should be through some private institution. In looking at how they address the topic of how government participates in economic issues, these Republicans differ from each other. One participant believes that the government should partner with individuals and the private sector to improve communities, while the other believes the government has no role in that at all. While the participants

broadly believe that less government is better, the varying degrees with which they believe that should be implemented cause them to differ from each other.

Democrats, on the other hand, seem to believe that the individual and the society should work together to solve economic problems, and that the government should be more involved.

However, the role the government should play varies depending on different pieces of content in the identity.

Interviewer: “So, help me understand how you see whether government should be involved in the affairs of individuals or the economy? Do you have any examples that come to mind?”

2 – “The government saved our economy at the start of Covid, and it is saving it today.

Without our federal government, without local officials, our economy would not have survived the shutdown. This is the exact reason that we, well, that we have these programs and these things in place. It was a reminder of the importance of having a government that takes care of its citizens. And I wish we would continue having the government help like that.”

9 – “We need to find ways to use policy, use the government, to incentivize better solutions.

Fixing the structure of the issue can make a big difference, not just banning or legalizing something. The government can help induce demand, it can subsidize things. There are so many ways that we can be creative with our government, and like, how we use it.”

In the excerpt by Participant 2, they reference how the US government implemented and extended several economic policies to help people during the Covid-19 pandemic. While it may not be particularly partisan to recognize the role the government played in supporting

the economy during the pandemic, the final part of the statement leans into a notable position for Democrats. The US government took several specific actions regarding the economy, including bailing out several industries, providing multiple rounds of direct financial assistance to citizens, and extending health coverage to all citizens (CBPP, 2023). The desire of this participant represents a more liberal position for Democrats, with some 79% favoring this type of government support, compared to 59% of more conservative Democrats (Pew, 2020; Schwander & Vlandas, 2020; Yeung, 2024).

Contrastingly, Participant 9 talks about the government favorably still, signaling a good Democratic belief, but positions the role of the government differently than Participant 2. Specifically, Participant 9 suggests that the government should be a force to help the market behave differently. This approach aligns with a particular aspect of the Democratic policy positions, one that has been deemed more pragmatic (Stiglitz, 1998; Tavits, 2007; Tavits & Letki, 2014). The particular expression of Democratic opinions, solving economic issues using the government in a way to support the market, distinguishes this type of Democrat from the other example. The understanding of the role government plays in influencing the economy appears to be a point divergence, even within the Democratic Party.

Both Republicans and Democrats hold distinct beliefs around the best way to solve economic issues in society. Identity content, in this case, is focused more on specific policy positions related to the partisan identity. The content around this specific topic seems to shape the tensions between the role the government plays from both perspectives. Though neither partisan explicitly mentioned their political party or identity, the way they expressed their views on the relationship between the government and the economy both aligned with the prototypical views of their party while still differing from each other within their party (Green et al., 2002; Sides et al., 2018). For the Republicans, the participants represented two differing but accepted views on the role government in economic issues. As discussed by

Sides and colleagues (2018), the factions within the Republican party vary across economic ideologies, ranging from libertarian to more moderate on government intervention. These two participants exemplify this divergence in the Republican identity, solving economic issues differently while still adhering to the main tenets of their partisanship.

Similarly, Democrats also showed a divergence in their views on the government's role in influencing economic issues. Both of these positions normatively fit within the partisan group. However, one position implies that the government should be the backstop, heavily involved in economic issues, consistently supplying funds, while the other views the government as a tool to help businesses and the market operate more efficiently (Cebul, 2019). Though these policy positions are often understood as falling somewhere along an ideological spectrum, the way the identity content influences individuals does not necessarily mean that the individual can also be placed on an ideological spectrum. Rather, it seems, identity content again functions as a 'fuzzy set' of accepted ideas that ingroup members can select from in order to still be a good group member, even if they disagree with each other.

Societal Positioning – Civil Rights and Social Issues

In addition to the content of political identities affecting the way ingroup members view the role of the government, these partisans also showed how their identity content affects issues of civil rights. Some of the broad themes touched on issues of sex and gender, race, and homelessness. These topics have been the subject of much research in political science and social identity, so their alignment with partisan positions is well documented (see Green et al., 2002, Lewis-Black et al., 2008; Sides et al., 2018 for overviews). Within these partisans, though, there were topics where they seemed to view their group's position differently than others.

Democrats expressed a broad concern for race, both in terms of historical problems as well as modern day. The content seemed to center around elements of care, equality, and social harmony.

Interviewer: “What do you think is the most pressing problem facing America?”

9 – “So the other day, I was talking to our CEO is a 65-year-old white man, who, of course, I’m not [white], of course, but he is. So the discussion was about, I think about the term Black Lives Matter. So, his concept of Black Lives Matter means only Black Lives Matter. And when I’m in the meeting, I say no, it doesn’t it actually means only Black Lives Matter...But the messaging behind the messaging but the, the concept of ‘black lives matter, too,’ like, we’re also wanting to be treated equally. So ultimately, I think it really is dependent on how do you how do you craft the message in a way that is more inclusive to more people? And we as liberals do have to do a better job of that we’re going to continue to have these issues, and you’re going to have the far, far end of both political parties, to bring together.

1 – “When I think about the problems that are facing America, I think there are very distinct divides that face us, and I think it’s all tied to race. But us Democrats, I mean, we have played the race card so much and I don’t think it will continue to work. We need to think about these things as economic issues, as community issues, not as race issues. If we cannot rely on race, which will only divide us further, then maybe, I think, we can make a difference.

In the above example, Participant 9 shares a conversation they had with an older, White superior at work. In the conversation, they explained what the Black Lives Matter movement was about. As the Participant reflected on the conversation, they seemed to lean

into values of fairness and care, both for Black lives as well as how to share the message better. These values align with the Moral Foundations that have been shown to shape liberal thinking more than other values (Graham et al., 2013). Participant 9 seems to imply that by showing how Black people are fighting for equality, and framing in that way, individuals who are not receptive to this message may be persuaded (Cormack & Gulati, 2024; Mazumder, 2018). This value is extremely important to liberal partisans and an example of how that expression of identity content can come to light.

Participant 1, while agreeing that there are major racial issues in the US, takes a notably different perspective on how to share and communicate these issues. Specifically, this partisan expresses that their group has focused too much on race and it has not been as effective in bridging the divide. While still caring about fairness and the harm for minorities in the US, this partisan indicates that other framings of the issues facing minority communities will be more influential in solving the racial inequality (Graham et al., 2013). There has been some research supporting this hypothesis, showing that framing problems in racial terms actually lowers the likelihood that someone will be persuaded by the message (Winter, 2008). Additionally, the implication here is that individuals care more about economic problems than racial problems, and by creating consensus around the economic problem an individual can make a difference (Nelson & Kinder, 1996). All in, Participant 1 is able to signal that they have the same values as other Democrats, while still differentiating themselves in how they believe this issue should be addressed. Each partisan in this case plays to the Democratic belief that race is a problem in the US, however, they differed notably on how to actually persuade others to address the issue.

Another social issue that was raised during the interviews was homelessness. This research project was done in partnership with a housing nonprofit, so it was a specific point of

conversation. For Republicans, the issue of homelessness and unhoused people was one of the most discussed civil rights and social issues.

Interviewer: “What do you think is the most pressing social problem facing America?

24 – “Well, I mean, that's the amount of homelessness in any community is certainly an indication of the amount of care in a community. So, I'm not certain that the way San Francisco, or New York, deal with homeless is the right way to do this. You know I've worked very closely with some...But it's a, it's a, there's a difference between a homeless center that, that takes federal funding, and our homeless center that's faith based. That's where the best work is done.”

27 – “Almost nobody wakes up one day and says, you know, I think today I want to become homeless. Nobody, there are people now who have been homeless so long, that they are more comfortable than being homeless. So most of the people that, almost everybody who's homeless, got there because of some reason. So whether it's economic, mental health, physical health, you know, those, I think those are probably the three main drivers of it. I get that we have a grossly inadequate mental health care system in the United States. I also get that no one wants to see a homeless person on the corner with a sign in your car window. But you know, at some point the government has to do something about it.”

In the first quote, Participant 24 expresses how the unhoused population in a community reflects that community itself. The participant here goes on to contrast how they and their local community works with homeless individuals by comparing it to stereotypical ‘liberal’ community. Additionally, this participant makes a distinction between government-funded centers and faith-based ones. These comparisons align well with the ‘binding’ values

(purity, authority, and ingroup loyalty) in Moral Foundations, which has shown that conservatives have a preference for their local community (Graham et al., 2013; Lupton et al., 2020). This participant also suggests that the groups that make the largest difference for homeless people is faith-based, a further example of conservative identity content (Graham & Haidt, 2010; Shannon, 2017; Sherman, 1995).

Participant 27 was also seemingly sympathetic to the plight of homeless individuals. This participant expressed a different perspective on the cause and the fix for homeless, calling on the government to intervene. This opinion typically does not align with a conservative position, directly contradicting the other Republican. However, the later comments on ‘no one wants to see a homeless person’ demonstrates themes that are reflective of conservative attitudes of disgust (Inbar et al., 2009, 2012; Schnall et al., 2008). This research has been extended to directly explore homelessness, finding that conservatives are more sensitive to the homeless and more likely to support exclusionary policies. This approach is notably divergent from the other conservatives, while still aligning with conservative identity content.

Both Democrats and Republicans in this sample talked about social issues and expressed solutions that aligned well with the prototypical attitude and policy positions of their respective party. Each group, though, had a variety of positions that both aligned with the ‘fuzzy set’ of prototypical positions that diverged from each other. In the expression of their opinions on social issues, these partisans seem to prefer which pieces of identity content they employ or express. As noted in work on ideological alignment with political parties, the ideological factions are not uniform (Sides et al., 2018). Ideology is supposed to help individuals understand what goes with what, but, in having multiple things that can go together, it is also possible for partisans to lean on different parts of a political ideology to assess and understand problems.

The social identities here meaningfully impact the partisans. They fit within their group, both comparatively and normatively (Oakes et al., 1991). However, due to the wide-array of acceptable norms and attitudes within each identity, the content seems to have produced different outcomes for the partisans when evaluating social problem (Bouché, 2018; Galliher et al., 2017; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). In these contexts, the identity content largely dominates the way individuals understand themselves and the problem. In working to be good group members, they express attitudes that align with their partisan identity (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015).

Political Expressions

The final noticeable theme of identity content within these partisan identities concerned political issues, specifically around the election and democracy. The topics in this theme focus on how trust in the election, the role of voting in democracy, and how each partisan group views democracy. The themes in this section seem to be more activated content, prompting sharper reactions and opinions than the other sections.

These interviews were taken during the six weeks prior to the election and the six weeks after the election. The election also took place at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused election officials to run the election with many different approaches (such as extended early voting, expanded mail-in voting, increased hours for voting, etc). These changes sparked a debate between the political parties as to how to conduct the election properly.

Civic Positioning – Trust in The Election and the Role of Democracy

Republicans exhibited conflicting opinions about the election and how it was happening. For some, there was frustration with the process, as they expressed skepticism around the validity of the voting process.

Interviewer: “Can you describe situations that you find frustrating about the way democracy works in our country?”

32 – “I didn’t like the idea of mail-in ballots, I just, this isn’t the right thing to say, but no one was prepared to deal with the process, period. So we’re doing the best we can. But mailing ballots, drop boxes, all of this chaos, I’m not sure if I trust how things will play out. I don’t know how to fix it, so I guess we will have to deal with it, but its not good.”

21 – “And, another thing that drives me crazy about the Republicans is why in a democracy would you be so committed to making it more difficult for people to vote? We are supposed to be the party of free will, of free speech, of individual liberty. A part of that is being able to vote. I don’t get why all of these Republicans are making such a fuss about it. It’s hypocritical if you ask me.”

Participant 32 expresses suspicion and distrust about the election almost immediately, citing concerns about voting by mail and drop boxes, or secure locations where someone could drop their ballot. Though the Participant acknowledges it is a difficult circumstance with the pandemic, this type of thinking was prevalent amongst conservatives throughout and following the 2020 election (Blankenship et al., 2021; Justwan & Williamson, 2022; Stewart, 2022). This phenomenon has been found prior to 2020 (Balliet et al., 2018; Berlinski et al., 2023; Edelson et al., 2017). It became pronounced with President Trump suing for voter fraud over 60 times throughout the US, losing all cases. However, his insistence the he was

cheated has played into this belief. In this case, the partisan exemplified the political attitude of their group extremely well.

Participant 21, on the other hand, takes a completely opposing position on the election compared to their fellow partisan. This Participant talks about the frustration they feel with their fellow party members in some of their behavior and decisions to limit access to voting. These beliefs, though notably different than Participant 32, align well with foundational values of the Republican Party (Freeman, 1986; Jarvis & Jennings, 2017; Mullinix, 2018). This conflict in opinion presents a divergence in how consistent identity content can influence individuals (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). It seems as though for some Republicans, these circumstances triggered ideas of fraud, reinforced by the leader of the party. For others, though, idea of voting being a patriotic duty for all citizens exhibited itself. These competing pieces of content within the Republican identity demonstrate the plethora of values within an identity. These issues could also fall under the normative conflict model of dissent, with each of these Republicans fighting over what the party actually stands for.

Democrats also presented conflicting opinions about how the election was occurring. To some, there was distrust with the federal government because of who was in charge (Trump, a Republican). To others, they also expressed a duty they felt to participate in elections.

Interviewer: “Can you describe situations that you find frustrating about the way democracy works in our country?”

17 – “I don’t trust Trump, I don’t trust the voting system. I don’t know what’s going to happen on Election Day in this country. They’ve made changes in light of the pandemic...but

I'm still worried about voter suppression across this country. Trump and his cronies are doing everything they can to screw this, you can just tell. He will do anything it takes to win."

13 – "I vote in every election, I vote in person and by mail. This is what I'm supposed to do, so I do it. Democrats are about democracy, so I feel like I have to vote in order to be a good Democrat. It's how we can participate, so it's what I do."

In the first Democrat quote, Participant 17 talks about the changes that have happened in light of the pandemic. This Participant conveys a concern that Trump, the sitting President, would interfere in the election. This belief would be validated over time, as Trump continually worked to undermine the certification of the election. However, at the time, 76% of Democrats felt differently, that the election would be trustworthy (Gallup, 2022). This position does represent a phenomenon observed by some, that if not for Democrats preparing for this situation, it may have turned out differently (Kalmoe & Mason, 2022; Persily & Stewart, 2021). This participant seems to be utilizing their identity to shape how they view the election, leading to outgroup animosity and distrust (Iyengar et al., 2019; Levendusky, 2018).

In the second quote, Participant 13 somewhat dismisses the notion of trust in the election, focusing more on voting as a duty. Democrats, though known for being less patriotic, still value the importance of democracy and civic duty (Balliet et al., 2018; Stewart, 2022). This Participant perceives the election almost completely differently than their fellow partisan, focusing more on the importance of voting than the distrust of those who are running the election. This perspective matches Ypi's notion of 'associative obligation of partisanship,' which argues that partisans have certain obligations to maintain a civil society.

While this is different from their fellow partisan, Participant 13 seems to be fully embracing the notion of duty associated with being a Democrat.

These Democrats, similar to their Republican counterparts, emphasized the patriotic duty of voting, no matter the circumstances. Yet, similar to the Republicans, the pieces of content that became salient during the discussion of the election were not uniform. To some, the duty of voting outweighed any concern about the election. To others, the concern for the integrity of the election was the graver issue. Each group referenced the importance and the meaning of being a Democrat when discussing these issues. It is interesting that with this theme, there are Republicans who seem more similar to their Democratic counterparts than some of their fellow Republicans. Elements of identity content here reflect some of the findings from Livingstone and Haslam (2008) on how identity content influences ingroup members during times of intergroup conflict, which the US political landscape and presidential election aligns with well.

For both partisan identities, however, there were competing pieces of content. This example presents a clear dilemma into how predictably content can influence outcomes (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2017). In some instances, certain parts of an identity (patriotism) can affect a partisan's identity; in other cases, a different piece of identity content (distrust of the outgroup) can shape a partisan's opinions. The fact that this phenomenon exists for both political identities provides evidence for this being a more common experience. As such, there may be a confluence of factors that lead to which piece of content is salient. Additionally, with these same pieces of content coming to light, it provides evidence that this phenomenon is found in partisans across the US.

General Discussion

This paper set out to explore how identity content can create differing expressions of group membership within partisans in the US. Through more 50 interviews, I was able to draw out three global themes in how partisans can use differing pieces of the content within their identity when discussing their views across several topics. The main focus of the interviews were around partisan attitudes at more ambiguous and open-ended situations, such as social and political issues. These issues allowed for partisans to express their group membership, while still affording them the chance to distinguish themselves from other group members. Political parties are diverse groups, which allows group members to express different meanings to the group's identity (Huddy, 2001). The findings indicate that individuals can draw upon differing pieces of their social identity to inform their group expression and because of the differing pieces of content, these partisans express their group affiliation differently.

The first major topic found from the data focused on the balancing act between identifying with a group's prototype while still distinguishing oneself from that prototype. In this theme, both Republicans and Democrats found ways to demonstrate how they aligned with their group's prototype, while also discussing how they were different. These findings align work on Optimal Distinctiveness, which argues that group members work to balance their need to belong with their need to be unique (Brewer, 1991). Partisans in each case tried to express that they were good group members while still discussing the ways that they differed, citing differing pieces of identity content along the way.

The second major topic focused on economic issues, with partisans being more focused on political policy. However, as consistent with the first theme, these partisans also expressed their group membership in differing ways, with some aligning more with a prototypical response, and others differing. By focusing on policy solutions, these partisans found ways to use their political identity and its related ideology to solve specific social

problems (Carsey & Layman, 2006; Cohen, 2003; Sides et al., 2018). Through differing policy preferences, these partisans were again able to express their group membership differently while still signifying their partisan identity.

The third topic discussed looked at social issues, where partisans expressed their group membership through moral values. Relying on Moral Foundations Theory as a framework to categorize comments, the participants coalesced around their predicted partisan lean (Clifford & Piston, 2017; Graham et al., 2013; Graham & Haidt, 2010). However, there were nuances within that, as some Republicans expressed Authority or Purity of higher concern than other values; similarly, some Democrats expressed Care or Fairness as of greater importance. This balancing act also reflects the idea of prototype attributes as being ‘graded’ and ‘fuzzy’ rather than specific and clear (Huddy, 2001; Lakoff, 1987).

The final topic explored faith in the 2020 US election and general thoughts on democracy itself. Again here, there were polarizing opinions even within the partisan groups. Curiously, though, the positions that Republicans and Democrats took were quite similar, but for differing reason. In this case, unlike the other topics, the partisans seemed to rely on entirely different categories of identity content. Some partisans referred to values such as duty and individual freedom, while others anchored their responses in outgroup animosity, while still others framed their positions based on prototypical behaviors of their group. This section demonstrates a new observation, that rather than relying on differing pieces of content within the same category, group members can actually employ different types of identity content to derive meaning and express their group membership.

This research also extends the current literature on intra-group differences. Firstly, these findings indicate that group members can disagree with each other without necessarily being categorized as ‘rebels’ (Dahling & Gutworth, 2017; Jetten & Hornsey, 2010). Rarely throughout the interviews did group members try to express any of the five forms of dissent

proposed by Jetten and Hornsey (2014). Instead, these group members largely expressed differing opinions while still trying to show they were ‘good’ group members. This distinction of focusing on within identity differences through identity content opens the door for future research to understand whether differing positions are due to dissent or due to different pieces of content. Secondly, these findings also may indicate that group members use differing paths of meaning making to discuss their political identity (Van Veelen et al., 2016). Though it will need to be studied more in depth, these themes suggest that the tension between the statements “I am like my group” and “my group is like me” creates an ongoing need for both self-stereotyping and self-anchoring when discussing what it means to identify with a group.

Currently, there is limited literature that addresses this phenomenon that mostly focuses on dissent and how to use partisan identity to create conformity (Filindra & Harbridge, 2020; McDowell, 2020). This research demonstrates that political identity, specifically partisan identity, can be used to create meaning, not only conformity. If a social identity is the part of an individual’s self-concept that is informed by the social groups they are a part of, then that identity should inform what it means to be a part of that group (Tajfel, 1979). This research adds to the critique offered by Huddy (2001) on exploring group boundaries without exploring group meaning. These findings bolster that notion by demonstrating that partisans create meaning, solve problems, and express opinions that may be varied from each other, while still aligning with their partisan identity.

Partisanship is growing in America. Citizens are becoming more polarized and more aligned with their political party. While this phenomenon is increasingly impacting how Americans live, partisanship does not seem to create uniformity within the parties. Hence, whereas the boundaries between groups might become more visible, the diversity within each group did not decrease. As discussed to start this paper, identity content is the piece of a

social identity that shapes its meaning, including values, opinions, attitudes, behavior, and more (Galliher et al., 2017; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). This content helps an individual assess the norms of that group and assess whether they fit within that group or another (Oakes et al., 1991). The idea of ‘fit’ with a social identity is dependent on the prototype of that group which takes on a ‘fuzzy set’ of attributes that best represent the group (Hogg & Reid, 2006).

As shown throughout this research, a ‘fuzzy set’ creates uncertainty and flexibility within what it means to be a member of a specific group. Within each group, there appears to be a range of acceptable positions, views, or attitudes that can shape how an individual who identifies with that group understands the groups norms. In the realm of partisanship, Republicans and Democrats are clearly different from each other in terms of their values, norms, and policy preferences. However, as shown repeatedly, there is also variation among Republicans or among Democrats in how that partisan identity is brought to life. These within group differences show that it is possible to be a ‘good’ group member—one that exhibits prototypical pieces of content—in multiple ways.

Limitations

A significant limitation of this research pertains to the participant sampling strategy, specifically regarding the demographic and geographic constraints inherent to the sample. The participants were recruited in partnership with a community-based nonprofit, focusing predominantly on individuals located within New Orleans, Louisiana, and surrounding regions in the Southern United States. This sampling approach potentially constrains the diversity of perspectives collected, limiting the generalizability of the findings to broader populations (Marshall, 1996; Robinson, 2014). Moreover, due to the specificity of the regional and cultural context, especially given the unique sociopolitical dynamics of the U.S. South around the 2020 presidential election, insights drawn from this study may not extend

readily to other geographic areas, contexts, or populations with differing political, social, or cultural backgrounds (Sides, Tesler, & Vavreck, 2018). Recognizing these constraints, future research could benefit from a more expansive or diverse sampling strategy to enhance the representativeness and applicability of findings.

Another critical limitation of this study arises from the methodological reliance on qualitative interviews. Interviews inherently depend upon participants' self-reports, which may introduce social desirability bias, wherein respondents alter their responses to appear more favorable, aligned, or acceptable according to perceived social norms or expectations (Paulhus, 2002). Moreover, memory inaccuracies and retrospective distortions may also compromise the reliability of participants' accounts, particularly when discussing emotionally charged or politically sensitive topics (Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski, 2000). Additionally, while qualitative interviewing is adept at capturing participants' consciously articulated attitudes and expressed beliefs, this method is less capable of accessing implicit psychological processes, such as unconscious biases, automatic associations, or underlying emotional reactions that significantly shape partisan identities and moral reasoning (Nosek, Hawkins, & Frazier, 2011; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Consequently, the depth and complexity of implicit processes influencing participants' social identities remain potentially underrepresented in this research approach.

A further limitation of this research stems from inherent researcher subjectivity in thematic analysis, which depends heavily on interpretative decisions made during the coding and analytical processes. As Braun and Clarke (2006) have underscored, thematic analysis involves an active role for the researcher in selecting, interpreting, and presenting themes from qualitative data, introducing the risk of subjective biases shaping outcomes. My positionality as a researcher, having transitioned from a conservative upbringing to a currently liberal ideological stance, potentially influences how participant responses were

interpreted, particularly in politically charged discussions of identity (Berger, 2015; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). Despite efforts to engage in reflexive practices to manage and mitigate these biases, complete objectivity remains unattainable in qualitative research. Therefore, interpretations presented within this study should be understood as inherently shaped by my background, experiences, and ideological positioning, necessitating cautious consideration and reflection when generalizing or extrapolating from these findings.

This research was specifically conducted during the uniquely charged political environment surrounding the 2020 U.S. presidential election, thus inherently embedding contextual and temporal limitations. The heightened salience of political identities during election periods, especially during contentious campaigns, significantly influences how participants perceive, articulate, and reflect upon their partisan identities and related moral values (Sides, Tesler, & Vavreck, 2018; West & Iyengar, 2022). While conducting research in this context provides valuable insights into identity dynamics under politically intense conditions, the specificity of this timing inevitably restricts the broader applicability and generalizability of the findings beyond this particular sociopolitical moment. Consequently, participant responses and emergent themes may reflect temporary or reactive positions rather than enduring or stable attitudes and beliefs (Levendusky, 2009; Mason, 2018). Future research could benefit from longitudinal approaches or comparative contexts to evaluate the persistence and stability of the identified phenomena across varying political climates.

Finally, a notable methodological limitation inherent in qualitative interviewing and thematic analysis is the trade-off between depth and breadth. While qualitative methods excel in providing rich, detailed accounts of individual experiences, attitudes, and social identities, these methods inherently limit researchers' capacity to quantify findings, statistically generalize results, or conclusively establish causal relationships (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2017). The depth provided by qualitative analysis allows a nuanced

exploration of complex identity dynamics, yet this strength simultaneously constrains the ability to draw broader conclusions about populations or trends. Consequently, while this study offers detailed insights into participants' lived experiences and perceptions of partisan identities and morality, it cannot definitively validate broad-scale patterns or generalize findings beyond the specific sample studied. Future research employing mixed-method designs, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods, could complement the current findings and enhance generalizability, rigor, and comprehensiveness (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

References

- Amormino, P., Ploe, M. L., & Marsh, A. A. (2022). Moral foundations, values, and judgments in extraordinary altruists. *Scientific Reports*, 12(1), 22111. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-26418-1>
- Antaki, C., Billig, M., Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (2003). Discourse analysis means doing analysis: A critique of six analytic shortcomings.
- Balliet, D., Tybur, J. M., Wu, J., Antonellis, C., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2018). Political Ideology, Trust, and Cooperation: Ingroup Favoritism among Republicans and Democrats during a US National Election. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 62(4), 797–818. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002716658694>
- Baray, G., Postmes, T., & Jetten, J. (2009). When I equals we: Exploring the relation between social and personal identity of extreme right-wing political party members. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(4), 625–647. <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466608X389582>
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 15(2), 219-234.
- Berlinski, N., Doyle, M., Guess, A. M., Levy, G., Lyons, B., Montgomery, J. M., Nyhan, B., & Reifler, J. (2023). The Effects of Unsubstantiated Claims of Voter Fraud on Confidence in Elections. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*, 10(1), 34–49. <https://doi.org/10.1017/XPS.2021.18>
- Blankenship, B. T., Davis, T., Areguin, M. A., Savaş, Ö., Winter, D., & Stewart, A. J. (2021). Trust and tribulation: Racial identity centrality, institutional trust, and support for candidates in the 2020 US presidential election. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 21(1), 64–98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.12256>

- Bonneau, C. W., & Cann, D. M. (2015). Party Identification and Vote Choice in Partisan and Nonpartisan Elections. *Political Behavior*, 37(1), 43–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-013-9260-2>
- Bouché, V. (2018). From Categories to Context: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement*: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement. *Social Science Quarterly*, 99(2), 711–727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12457>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, 11(4), 589–597.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative psychology*, 9(1), 3.
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475–482.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167291175001>
- Camobreco, J. F., & He, Z. (2022). The Party-Line Pandemic: A Closer Look at the Partisan Response to COVID-19. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 55(1), 13–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096521000901>
- Carsey, T. M., & Layman, G. C. (2006). Changing Sides or Changing Minds? Party Identification and Policy Preferences in the American Electorate. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2), 464–477. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2006.00196.x>
- Cebul, B. (2019). Supply-Side Liberalism: Fiscal Crisis, Post-Industrial Policy, and the Rise of the New Democrats. *Modern American History*, 2(02), 139–164.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/mah.2019.9>

- Claassen, R. L., Djupe, P. A., Lewis, A. R., & Neiheisel, J. R. (2021). Which Party Represents My Group? The Group Foundations of Partisan Choice and Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 43(2), 615–636. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-019-09565-6>
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The journal of positive psychology*, 12(3), 297-298.
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2018). Using thematic analysis in counselling and psychotherapy research: A critical reflection. *Counselling and psychotherapy research*, 18(2), 107-110.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis?. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 18(3), 328-352.
- Clifford, S., & Piston, S. (2017). Explaining Public Support for Counterproductive Homelessness Policy: The Role of Disgust. *Political Behavior*, 39(2), 503–525. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-016-9366-4>
- Cohen, G. L. (2003). Party Over Policy: The Dominating Impact of Group Influence on Political Beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(5), 808–822. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.5.808>
- Cormack, L., & Gulati, J. (2024). Black lives matter messaging across multiple congressional communication mediums. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 12(4), 896–920. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2023.2265896>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications
- Dahling, J. J., & Gutworth, M. B. (2017). Loyal rebels? A test of the normative conflict model of constructive deviance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(8), 1167–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2194>

- Dennis, J. (1987). Groups and political behavior: Legitimation, deprivation, and competing values. *Political Behavior*, 9(4), 323–372. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988211>
- Disalvo, D. (2010). The Politics of a Party Faction: The Liberal-Labor Alliance in the Democratic Party, 1948–1972. *Journal of Policy History*, 22(3), 269–299. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0898030610000114>
- Edelson, J., Alduncin, A., Krewson, C., Sieja, J. A., & Uscinski, J. E. (2017). The Effect of Conspiratorial Thinking and Motivated Reasoning on Belief in Election Fraud. *Political Research Quarterly*, 70(4), 933–946. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917721061>
- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>
- Ellis, C., & Stimson, J. A. (2009). Symbolic ideology in the American electorate. *Electoral Studies*, 28(3), 388–402. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2009.05.010>
- Evans, G., & Neundorf, A. (2020). Core Political Values and the Long-Term Shaping of Partisanship. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(4), 1263–1281. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123418000339>
- Filindra, A., & Harbridge, L. (2020). How Do Partisans Navigate Elite Intra-group Dissent? Leadership, Partisanship, and the Limits of Democratic Accountability. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3570984>
- Freeman, J. (1986). The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties. *Political Science Quarterly*, 101(3), 327–356. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2151619>
- Galliher, R. V., Galliher, R., McLean, K. C., McLean, K., & Syed, M. (2017). Identity Content in Context. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(11). <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000299>

- Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., & Washington, E. (2010). Party Affiliation, Partisanship, and Political Beliefs: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 104(4), 720–744. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055410000407>
- Glenn, N. D. (2008). How Big Can the Democratic Party Tent Be? *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 37(5), 393–395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009430610803700502>
- Goren, P. (2005). Party Identification and Core Political Values. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(4), 882–897.
- Graham, J., & Haidt, J. (2010). Beyond Beliefs: Religions Bind Individuals Into Moral Communities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14(1), 140–150. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309353415>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral Foundations Theory. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55–130). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00002-4>
- Greene, S. (2004). Social Identity Theory and Party Identification *. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(1), 136–153. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.08501010.x>
- Greenwald, A. G., & Banaji, M. R. (1995). Implicit social cognition: attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological review*, 102(1), 4.
- Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. Sage.
- Haidt, J. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108(4), 814–834.
- Haslam, S. A., & Reicher, S. D. (2016). Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity. *Daedalus*, 145(3), 21–34. https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00394

- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms. *Communication Theory*, 16(1), 7–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00003.x>
- Hogg, M. A., & Tindale, R. S. (Eds.). (2001). *Group processes*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative research*, 3(3), 345–357.
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204–222.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x>
- Huddy, L. (2001). From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory. *Political Psychology*, 22(1), 127–156. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00230>
- Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D. A., & Bloom, P. (2009). Conservatives are more easily disgusted than liberals. *Cognition & Emotion*, 23(4), 714–725.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930802110007>
- Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D., Iyer, R., & Haidt, J. (2012). Disgust Sensitivity, Political Conservatism, and Voting. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(5), 537–544. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611429024>
- Iyengar, S., Leikes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>

- Jarvis, S. E., & Jennings, J. T. (2017). Republicans *Should* Vote: Partisan Conceptions of Electoral Participation in Campaign 2016. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(6), 633–644. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764217720481>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (Eds.). (2010). *Rebels in Groups: Dissent, Deviance, Difference and Defiance* (1st ed.). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444390841>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 307–337. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163600>
- Justwan, F., & Williamson, R. D. (2022). Trump and Trust: Examining the Relationship between Claims of Fraud and Citizen Attitudes. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 55(3), 462–469. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096522000221>
- Kalmoe, N., & Mason, L. (2022). *Radical American Partisanship*. University of Chicago Press.
- Kane, J. V., Mason, L., & Wronski, J. (2021). Who’s at the Party? Group Sentiments, Knowledge, and Partisan Identity. *The Journal of Politics*, 83(4), 1783–1799. <https://doi.org/10.1086/715072>
- Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical teacher*, 42(8), 846-854.
- King, J. B. (2022). Divisions in the Big Tent: Group Sentiments and Candidate Preferences within the Democratic Party. *American Politics Research*, 50(4), 488–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X221081481>

- Kreindler, S. A., Dowd, D. A., Dana Star, N., & Gottschalk, T. (2012). Silos and Social Identity: The Social Identity Approach as a Framework for Understanding and Overcoming Divisions in Health Care. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 90(2), 347–374. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2012.00666.x>
- Levendusky, M. S. (2018). Americans, Not Partisans: Can Priming American National Identity Reduce Affective Polarization? *The Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1086/693987>
- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Lupton, R. N., Smallpage, S. M., & Enders, A. M. (2020). Values and Political Predispositions in the Age of Polarization: Examining the Relationship between Partisanship and Ideology in the United States, 1988–2012. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(1), 241–260. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123417000370>
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), 522–526.
- Marques, J. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (1988). The black sheep effect: Judgmental extremity towards ingroup members in inter-and intra-group situations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(3), 287–292. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180308>
- Mazumder, S. (2018). The Persistent Effect of U.S. Civil Rights Protests on Political Attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 62(4), 922–935. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12384>
- Mazzei, L. A., & Jackson, A. Y. (2012). Complicating voice in a refusal to “let participants speak for themselves”. *Qualitative inquiry*, 18(9), 745–751.

- Mcdowell, N. J. (2020). *Partisan Differences in Responses to Ingroup Dissent* [Masters Thesis]. University of Illinois, Chicago.
- Merkley, E. (2020). Learning from Divided Parties? Legislator Dissent as a Cue for Opinion Formation. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 73(2), 342–362.
- Mols, F., Haslam, S. A., Platow, M., Reicher, S., & Steffens, N. K. (2023). The Social Identity Approach to Political Leadership. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, J. S. Levy, & J. Jerit (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd Edition, pp. 804–842). Oxford University Press.
- Muirhead, R., & Rosenblum, N. L. (2020). The Political Theory of Parties and Partisanship: Catching Up. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23(1), 95–110.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041916-020727>
- Mullinix, K. J. (2018). Civic Duty and Political Preference Formation. *Political Research Quarterly*, 71(1), 199–214. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917729037>
- Nelson, T. E., & Kinder, D. R. (1996). Issue Frames and Group-Centrism in American Public Opinion. *The Journal of Politics*, 58(4), 1055–1078. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2960149>
- Nosek, B. A., Hawkins, C. B., & Frazier, R. S. (2011). Implicit social cognition: From measures to mechanisms. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 15(4), 152–159.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 16(1), 1609406917733847.
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>

- Paulhus, D. L. (2002). Socially desirable responding: The evolution of a construct. In H. Braun, D. N. Jackson, & D. E. Wiley (Eds.), *The Role of Constructs in Psychological and Educational Measurement* (pp. 49–69). Erlbaum.
- Persily, N., & Stewart, C. (2021). The Miracle and Tragedy of the 2020 U.S. Election. *Journal of Democracy*, 32(2), 159–178. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2021.0026>
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Rahn, W. M. (1993). The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(2), 472. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111381>
- Robinson, O. C. (2014). Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: A theoretical and practical guide. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 11(1), 25–41.
- Roccas, S., & Brewer, M. B. (2002). Social Identity Complexity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 6(2), 88–106. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327957PSPR0602_01
- Schnall, S., Haidt, J., Clore, G. L., & Jordan, A. H. (2008). Disgust as Embodied Moral Judgment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(8), 1096–1109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167208317771>
- Schwander, H., & Vlandas, T. (2020). The Left and universal basic income: The role of ideology in individual support. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 36(3), 237–268. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ics.2020.25>
- Sewell, D., Ballard, T., & Steffens, N. K. (2022). Exemplifying “Us”: Integrating Social Identity Theory of Leadership with Cognitive Models of Categorization. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 33(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101517>

- Shannon, S. K. S. (2017). Punishment, Religion, and the Shrinking Welfare State for the Very Poor in the United States, 1970–2010. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 3, 237802311774225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023117742259>
- Sherman, A. L. (1995). Will Conservative Welfare Reform Corrupt Religious Charities? *Policy Review*, 74, 58–63.
- Stewart, C. (2022). Trust in Elections. *Daedalus*, 151(4), 234–253.
https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_01953
- Stiglitz, J. (1998). Distinguished Lecture on Economics in Government: The Private Uses of Public Interests: Incentives and Institutions. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 12(2), 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.12.2.3>
- Stout, C. T., & Garcia, J. R. (2015). The Big Tent Effect: Descriptive Candidates and Black and Latino Political Partisanship. *American Politics Research*, 43(2), 205–231.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X14547933>
- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 173–190). Psychology Press.
- Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 151–165.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2007.00243.x>
- Tavits, M., & Letki, N. (2014). From Values to Interests? The Evolution of Party Competition in New Democracies. *The Journal of Politics*, 76(1), 246–258.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S002238161300131X>
- Terry, G., & Hayfield, N. (2021). *Essentials of thematic analysis*. American Psychological Association.

- Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, 2(17-37), 25.
- Tourangeau, R., Rips, L. J., & Rasinski, K. (2000). The psychology of survey response.
- Tucker, P. D., Montgomery, J. M., & Smith, S. S. (2019). Party Identification in the Age of Obama: Evidence on the Sources of Stability and Systematic Change in Party Identification from a Long-Term Panel Survey. *Political Research Quarterly*, 72(2), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912918784215>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F. M., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2017). The moral dimension of politicized identity: Exploring identity content during the 2012 Presidential Elections in the USA. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56(2), 416–436. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12171>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2015). Politicization During the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections: Bridging the Personal and the Political Through an Identity Content Approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(3), 433–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215569494>
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H., & Bondas, T. (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & health sciences*, 15(3), 398-405.
- Van Bavel, J. J., & Cunningham, W. A. (2012). A Social Identity Approach to Person Memory: Group Membership, Collective Identification, and Social Role Shape Attention and Memory. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(12), 1566–1578. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167212455829>
- Van Bavel, J. J., & Pereira, A. (2018). The Partisan Brain: An Identity-Based Model of Political Belief. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 22(3), 213–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2018.01.004>

Van Tongeren, D. R., Welch, R. D., Davis, D. E., Green, J. D., & Worthington, E. L. (2012).

Priming virtue: Forgiveness and justice elicit divergent moral judgments among religious individuals. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(5), 405–415.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2012.707228>

Van Veelen, R., Hansen, N., & Otten, S. (2014). Newcomers' cognitive development of social identification: A cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of self-anchoring and self-stereotyping. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 53(2), 281–298.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12038>

Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., Cadinu, M., & Hansen, N. (2016). An Integrative Model of Social Identification: Self-Stereotyping and Self-Anchoring as Two Cognitive Pathways. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(1), 3–26.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868315576642>

Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., & Hansen, N. (2011). Linking self and ingroup: Self-anchoring as distinctive cognitive route to social identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(5), 628–637. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.792>

West, E. A., & Iyengar, S. (2022). Partisanship as a Social Identity: Implications for Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 807–838. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09637-y>

White, J., & Ypi, L. (2016). *The Meaning of Partisanship*. Oxford University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199684175.001.0001>

Winter, N. J. G. (2008). *Dangerous Frames: How Ideas about Race and Gender Shape Public Opinion*. University of Chicago Press.

<https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226902388.001.0001>

- Xiao, Y. J., Coppin, G., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2016). Perceiving the World Through Group-Colored Glasses: A Perceptual Model of Intergroup Relations. *Psychological Inquiry*, 27(4), 255–274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2016.1199221>
- Yeung, E. S. F. (2024). Can Conservatives Be Persuaded? Framing Effects on Support for Universal Basic Income in the US. *Political Behavior*, 46(1), 135–161. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-022-09824-z>
- Ypi, L. (2016). Political Commitment and the Value of Partisanship. *American Political Science Review*, 110(3), 601–613. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199684175.001.0001>

Chapter 5: General Discussion

In this thesis I have explored more deeply the relationship between social identity content and its impact on ingroup members. As argued, Within Identity Differences offers a different way to understand divergent attitudes or behavior within a social group without categorizing it as deviance, dissent, or even disloyalty (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). Instead, Within Identity Differences argues that ingroup members can draw on different aspects of a social identity's content to fill in gaps or give them clues on how to resolve ambiguous situations while still being a 'good' group member (Ellemers et al., 2013; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). Specifically, social identity content is shown to have a qualitatively, and in some specific cases, quantitatively differing impact on its ingroup members, leading them to diverging positions when trying to make sense of ambiguous situations. Though each both central chapters can stand on their own as an empirical study, this conclusion will attempt to synthesize the findings by addressing the evidence, connecting it to theoretical contributions, and offering further ways to explore social identity content and how ingroup members may diverge from a Within Identity Differences perspective.

This thesis attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. How might differences of identity content create differences in the expression of a group identity?
2. How does social identity content impact an ingroup member's decision making in ambiguous situations?

Chapter 3 explored how specific social identity content for Christians can impact moral decision making in the Trolley Problem. Though the evidence in this study was not significant, there was some directional support that diverging social identity content can influence moral decision making. Chapter 4 examined the first research question through 52

interviews of Republicans and Democrats during the 2020 election. This study explored the relationship between an individual's partisan identity, the content associated with that identity, and how that content impacted ingroup members evaluations of differing political issues. The findings of this chapter indicate that both Republicans and Democrats have an array of ways that their partisan identity can influence how they express what it means to be a member of the respective partisan group. For this chapter, I will comment on how this line of research can inform ways to think about identity content, then discuss the importance of the social context, and then try to synthesize Within Identity Differences as a viable line of this research. Lastly, I will offer directions for future research to more deeply explore this phenomenon.

In this thesis, I have attempted to demonstrate that identity content can serve as a vehicle for providing ingroup members clues to ingroup on how to act, behave, or think in ambiguous situations. Due to the flexible and changing nature of a social identity's content, these attributes or norms create a set of options for ingroup members to rely on when trying to be 'good' group members in situations that do not have clear norms or expectations. As such, without prescriptive norms to guide behavior or expressions of group members, 'good' group members may have differing ways of expressing their social identity, based on the different elements of identity content. This thesis contributes to the literature on social identity by demonstrating that group members can diverge without dissenting, offering a novel way to explore differences within an identity.

Social Identity Content: Its Meaning

Social identity content represents a crucial aspect of group belonging and an ingroup member's self-concept, encompassing the multifaceted elements that define group membership and what it means to be a 'good' group member (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn,

2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). As discussed throughout this thesis, identity content provides meaning to ingroup members which can be used to assess the normative fit within a group (Ashmore et al., 2004; Oakes et al., 1991; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). This content provides group-specific meaning to attitudes, norms, and values that ingroup members associate with their social identities and self-concept (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). Social identity content plays a crucial role for understanding the complex processes through which group membership influences individual attitudes and behaviors (Hogg & Reid, 2006). As research in social identity has evolved, it has become increasingly clear that social identity content plays a pivotal role in shaping intergroup relations, self-categorization and how well someone fits within a group, social change, voting behaviors, and more (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Oakes et al., 1991; Reicher et al., 2010; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). This section will synthesize the findings from this thesis and connect it back to the literature, arguing that the meaning derived from social identity content can contribute to a better understanding of social identity and intra-group differences. Specifically, this section will argue that this thesis contributes to the literature by furthering the types and substance of content that have been explored, by demonstrating that content can be used to make sense of ambiguous situations, and that the combination of differing types of content can cause ingroup members to express their group membership differently.

Identity content serves to fill in the conceptual gaps of group membership, providing meaning and emotional attachment to social identities beyond categorization (Oakes et al., 1991; Reicher et al., 2010). In this process, the group prototype often functions as a cognitive anchor, around which the various elements of identity content coalesce and derive meaning (Hogg & Reid, 2006). The prototype, representing the ideal or most typical group member, embodies the central tendencies of the group's identity content and serves as a reference point for members to understand and express their group membership (Haslam et al., 1998; Oakes

et al., 1991; Obst et al., 2011; Turner et al., 1987). Identity content, in this way, can be seen to function similarly to a group's prototype. As suggested in work on social identity and group norms, a social identity's prototype forms the foundation of what it means to belong to a specific group (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Oakes et al., 1991). In Chapter 3, the religious primes were found to prompt similar themes, with Christians referencing Jesus and what scriptures meant. In Chapter 4, partisans frequently referenced different aspects of what a Democrat or Republican should believe or do, invoking their group's prototype. The group's prototype draws on the content of particular social group to create shared norms, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that help define in what ways someone can be a 'good' group member (Reicher et al., 2010; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). By building on this, this research helps reinforce the notion that a group's prototype is derived from that group's content.

However, it is crucial to recognize that the relationship between identity content and the group prototype is dynamic and reciprocal (Haslam et al., 1998). While the prototype anchors identity content, the content itself can shape and refine the prototype over time as what it means to be a part of a group may shift or change. This interaction allows for a certain degree of flexibility in how group members interpret and express their social identity, accommodating individual differences while maintaining group coherence (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). Moreover, the 'fuzzy' and context-dependent nature of prototypes means that different aspects of identity content may become more or less salient in various situations, allowing for varying responses to changing social contexts (Oakes et al., 1991; Turner et al., 2006). This flexibility and context-dependent usage also aligned with the notion of 'ad-hoc categories,' which demonstrates that content can be spontaneous and applied in novel ways to navigate ambiguous situations while still fitting within a group. Identity content, in this way, is an important and understudied aspect of the Social Identity Approach.

In Chapter 3, though the identity content was unable to cause Christians to act differently in the Trolley Problem, the topic modeling analysis demonstrated that the primes were successful in activating differing pieces of identity content. Building on Van Tongeren and colleagues' (2012) approach, this finding shows that there are different and sometimes even opposing values within religious identity. Furthermore, these different values can meaningfully affect how Christians conceive their religious identity, with some expressing that their faith should inspire them to love others and help them, while other Christians discussed the importance of avoiding 'sin' at all costs. Though these different aspects of Christian identity content did not statistically affect behavior, the differing pieces of content appeared to be successfully activated. This finding may suggest that even though identity content can be activated in different ways, it may not always be enough to actually influence behavior. Identity content, therefore, may be able to help create meaning but not always be able to influence behavior.

In Chapter 4, there were three notable findings about identity content and how partisans can differ from their fellow ingroup members in terms of their expressions of what it means to belong to a partisan group. Firstly, this research expanded work on identity content to find that it can inform ingroup meaning in ambiguous situations. Partisans (both Democrats and Republicans) balanced identifying with their group's prototype while distinguishing themselves from it. They balanced expressing their group membership while highlighting their unique positions, using different pieces of identity content.

Secondly, identity content was shown to affect how partisans tried to navigate societal problems, both economic and social issues. Partisans expressed different views on economic issues while still aligning with their party's overall ideology. Republicans differed on the degree of government involvement in the economy, while Democrats varied in how they believed the government should influence economic issues. On social issues like civil rights

and homelessness, partisans expressed views that aligned with their party but showed internal differences. Democrats differed on how to address racial issues, while Republicans had varying approaches to homelessness. Lastly, these partisans also expressed competing pieces of content when discussing the 2020 election and democracy. Some emphasized patriotic duty, while others focused on distrust of the outgroup or election integrity concerns, balancing differing aspects of their political identity while still trying to express being a ‘good’ group member. In all, these partisans were able to discuss many different aspects of what it means to be a Republican or Democrat, drawing on notions of moral values, ideological positions, and policy preferences. These findings underscore the varying types of identity content, as well as the substance within those types.

Taken together, these observations indicate that partisans have multiple pieces of identity content that they can express when trying to navigate issues that do not have specific, prescriptive norms readily available. Similar to how Barsalou (1984) describes ad-hoc categorization, partisans are seemingly able to draw on different pieces of identity content to help them assess and navigate ambiguous situations. These pieces seem readily available and serve as anchor points for ingroup members to form opinions or attitudes in such situations. Due to the complexity of identity content and what it means, identity content appears to allow for a range of acceptable positions within each partisan group. As long as ingroup members seem to be directionally aligned in their opinions with the group prototype, they are able to make sense of uncertain situations. Specifically, there are different types of identity content (values, policy preferences, group behaviors, etc.) that can be used to express group membership. From this complexity and variance, partisans can disagree with each other while still being ‘good’ group members. This diversity of meaning, explained through the concept of identity content, affords a ‘fuzzy set’ of attributes that define group membership and allow

for multiple ways to be a ‘good’ group member. The findings suggest that political identity creates meaning, not just conformity, within partisan groups.

Based on the findings from this thesis, identity content is multifaceted in its type and substance. These findings align with previous work on identity content, affirming that there are many dimensions that ingroup members can use to define what it means to be a part of a specific identity (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Reicher et al., 2010). This thesis contributes to the literature by identifying several specific dimensions that have been previously discussed, but not expressed as being available. Specifically, whereas research such as that from Livingstone & Haslam (2008) or Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015) explores one dimension at a time, this thesis shows that multiple types of identity content can be activated when navigating an ambiguous situation. Specifically, in Chapter 4, some Republicans, when asked about their faith in the election, argued that voting is a patriotic duty, while other Republicans moved to outgroup antagonism, denigrating Democrats. These are arguably two different types of content, but both were still sourced to help partisans make sense of their political identity. Moreover, as shown in both chapters, different pieces of content within the same type of content can be reasonably activated in response to ambiguous situations, whether that be care or fairness for Democrats, or sin or love for Christians. As such, identity content is an incredibly complex facet of social identity, one of many different types and varying substances that gives group members specific clues as to what it means to identify with that social group (Ellemers & Van der Toorn, 2015).

Identity content is also used by ingroup members to make sense of ambiguous and uncertain situations. The meaning and norms associated with a particular identity can help ingroups members figure out how to be ‘good’ group members, even in the absence of prescriptive norms or expectations from their group. Research on uncertainty reduction has argued that individuals can be more drawn to their social identity when facing uncertainty

(Hogg, 2000; Hogg et al., 2007, 2010). As argued by Hogg and Reid (2006), group prototypes not only *describe* behaviors, but they also *prescribe* behaviors, informing ingroup members how they ought to act as group members. However, there are moments in life when there is not a clear prescription for how someone should act as a Republican or Democrat or Christian, such as moral dilemmas or novel circumstances. In these moments, it seems that group members can rely on their social identity and its related content to navigate the situation (Hogg, 2000). As shown in this thesis, the type of identity content used to make sense of ambiguous situations seems to vary, as well as the substance, due to the lack of prescription from the group.

Previous research has argued that social identity is multidimensional and that individuals can identify with or latch onto differing dimensions to shape their self-concept (Ashmore et al., 2004; Leach et al., 2008; Obst et al., 2011). By understanding identity content as a type of these dimensions, it makes sense that there may be particular types of identity content that are more central to the way someone perceives their group prototype than other types. The exact mechanism of this process has yet to be studied, but building on the literature and findings from this thesis, it appears that the types of identity content are likely dependent on the context, as partisans drew on relevant pieces of knowledge when discussing specific policy positions in Chapter 4. It seems that group members try to ascertain the appropriate type of identity content that can help them align their behavior in the group prototype, striving to be directionally correct when there is no specific known way to be correct.

Lastly, building on the previously mentioned findings that identity is multifaceted and that in ambiguous situations group members use varying pieces of content to help them be as close to their prototype as possible, it is possible for group members to have differing ways of being a good group member when there is not a prescriptive norm to follow. The multiple

ways to make meaning from a social identity in ambiguity affords group members numerous ways that they could act in accordance with their group. Jetten and Hornsey (2014) argue that group members negotiate the content of their social identity to determine which norms should guide behavior. While their argument is used to shape what it means to deviate or dissent with a group, this negotiation could also be understood differently, instead as the way that group members try to create consensus around group norms in ambiguous situations. Until there is a clear prescription, there can be multiple ways that group members may express their ‘groupness’ without actually being seen as deviant or dissenting.

Building on these findings, this thesis contributes to our understanding of social identity content by focusing on its role in shaping ingroup behavior and attitudes. The flexibility and context-dependent nature of identity content, as revealed in this work, aligns with the Social Identity Approach and how individuals create meaning through their social group memberships (Reicher et al., 2010; Turner et al., 1994). By demonstrating the multifaceted nature of identity content, its application in ambiguous situations, and its potential for creating diverse expressions of group membership, this research extends our understanding of how social identity content can create meaning in complex social contexts. Furthermore, the findings suggest that identity content serves not only as a means of conformity but also as a resource for individual expression within group boundaries, echoing ideas proposed by Hornsey and Jetten (2004) on balancing individuality and group membership. Moreover, these findings demonstrate that there can be multiple ways to be a ‘good’ group member by exploring the ways in which someone expresses their identity (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). Ultimately, this research underscores the importance of considering the differing types and substance of identity content in understanding the complex relationship between individual and their social group members.

Social Identity Content: Its Context

Identity content, as discussed in previous literature and throughout this thesis is also highly influenced by the context. As argued by Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015), the role of context in shaping social identity content is a critical yet often understudied aspect of social identity theory. While there has been much research focused on the context-dependency of social identities and other research content of social identities, less attention has been paid to the relationship between social context and social identity content (see Galliher et al., 2017; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Stott & Drury, 2004; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2017). Specifically, this thesis extends the literature by exploring how varying contexts can activate, modify, or afford different aspects of social identity content (Turner et al., 2006; Reicher et al., 2010). Context, in this sense, refers to both the social circumstances (such as intergroup or intra-group context) and any situation or problem that needs to be addressed. Understanding the relationship between context and identity content is crucial for comprehending how individuals navigate their social world, make decisions, and express their group memberships. This thesis contributes to this understanding by examining how different contexts – intergroup, non-intergroup, and ambiguous situations – can influence the salience and expression of identity content among partisans and religious group members. By exploring these varied contexts, we can gain insight into the dynamic nature of social identity content and its role in shaping individual and group behavior (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

Intergroup contexts have traditionally been a primary focus in social identity research, emphasizing the role of comparisons between groups in shaping identity content (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg & Reid, 2006). These contexts often heighten the salience of specific aspects of identity content, particularly those that differentiate the ingroup from relevant outgroups. As argued in Livingstone & Haslam (2008), chronic social conflict as

characterized negative identity interdependence between the social groups, a perceived zero-sum environment, and the ingroup's relationship to the outgroup comprises a meaningful aspect of the ingroups identity. Based on this definition, it is reasonable to see the partisan environment in the US in the same light, as highlighted by the growing partisanship and affective polarization in recent years (Carsey & Layman, 2006; Iyengar et al., 2019; West & Iyengar, 2022). Though it was not made explicit in the interviews, the broader social context—conducting the interviews during the 2020 US Presidential Election—has been used elsewhere to understand identity content, as partisans become more politicized due to the increasingly salient intergroup context. As such, with the intergroup context as the social background, Republicans and Democrats drew upon distinct pieces of identity content when discussing issues like economic policy or social welfare. For instance, Republicans emphasized values of individual responsibility and limited government intervention, while Democrats highlighted notions of collective care and social equity. This activation of specific content in intergroup settings serves to reinforce group boundaries and enhance ingroup cohesion (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). However, these partisans were not necessarily using their identity content to draw boundaries between their political ingroup and the outgroup. Instead, they often used their identity content to make sense of how to resolve social problems while still being a good group member. In this way, the intergroup context seems to make partisans members want to express their political identity, and, due to the varying meanings derived from identity content, they are able to express their group membership in varying ways. These findings underscore how intergroup contexts can shape which elements of identity content become most prominent and influential in guiding group members' attitudes and behaviors (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

While intergroup comparisons have been central to social identity research, this thesis also highlights the impact of non-intergroup contexts in shaping the expression and

understanding of identity content. In Chapter 3, though, this study more clearly has no intergroup context, as only Christians were allowed to participate in the study and the primes were specific Bible verses. This study demonstrated that it is possible to activate varying pieces of identity content successfully, without the need for a relevant outgroup. This observation aligns with Leonardelli and Toh's (2015) argument for differing types of self-categorization, in this case the ingroup-only categorization. These intra-group variations demonstrate that identity content can be rich and multifaceted, allowing for diverse expressions of group membership even within a single social identity (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). Despite the successful activation of differing aspects of the Christian identity, these contents were unable to get Christians to decide in diverging ways. The partisan study in Chapter 4 revealed that meaningful differences in identity content can emerge even in the absence of explicit outgroup comparisons. Though the intergroup backdrop may be chronic and unavoidable, the interview guides did not explicitly ask for or reference the outgroup. Democrats showed varying interpretations of how to address racial issues, with some emphasizing direct confrontation of racism while others advocated for more economically-focused solutions. Similarly, Republicans differed in their approaches to homelessness, with some prioritizing individual responsibility and others acknowledging a role for government intervention. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that it is possible to activate differing pieces of identity content, however, without a relevant outgroup, the content may not be enough to actually alter ways ingroup members think or behave. Still, this intra-group perspective on identity content offers a more nuanced understanding of how individuals navigate their group memberships, suggesting that being a 'good' group member can take multiple forms within the same overarching identity (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). Such findings challenge simplistic notions of group homogeneity and underscore the importance of considering intra-group dynamics in the study of social identity content.

Beyond the intergroup or intra-group contexts, this thesis also explored ambiguous situations that do not have clear norms prescribing specific ingroup behavior. These ambiguous situations present a unique challenge for group members, requiring them to navigate how to be a ‘good’ group member in the absence of a clear expectation. For example, for partisans in the 2020 US election, who they vote for president has an exceptionally clear prescriptive behavior—vote for your party’s candidate (Carsey & Layman, 2006; Sides et al., 2018). However, what is less clear is how to handle specific social problems, such as homelessness or the Covid-19 pandemic. Similarly, Christians were asked how they would react in the Trolley Problem, an ambiguous situation with no prescription based on their faith. Both studies demonstrated how group members use identity content in ambiguous situations. Partisans relied on different aspects of their political identity to navigate complex social issues, while Christians drew on varying religious concepts when faced with the Trolley Problem. This comparison highlights how Within Identity Differences operates across different types of ambiguity, an understudied phenomenon in SIA research.

This thesis demonstrates that identity content plays a crucial role in such scenarios, serving as a flexible resource for meaning-making and decision-making. As observed in both the partisan and religious studies, individuals drew upon various aspects of their identity content to make sense of ambiguous situations. In Chapter 4, partisans faced with questions about the 2020 election and democratic processes showed divergent responses, with some emphasizing patriotic duty while others focused on outgroup distrust or concerns about election integrity. Similarly, in Chapter 3, although the Trolley Problem did not yield statistically significant behavioral differences, the topic modeling analysis revealed that Christians activated distinct aspects of their religious identity content when primed with concepts of sin or grace. These findings align with the notion of ‘ad-hoc categorization’ (Barsalou, 1983), suggesting that group members can spontaneously apply relevant pieces of

identity content to novel or ambiguous situations. This flexibility allows individuals to maintain a sense of group alignment while adapting to uncertain contexts (Turner et al., 2006). The ability to draw upon multiple dimensions of identity content in ambiguous situations highlights the complex and dynamic nature of social identities, demonstrating how group members can express their 'groupness' in various ways without necessarily deviating from or dissenting against group norms (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). This adaptive use of identity content in ambiguous contexts underscores its importance as a cognitive and social resource for navigating the complexities of group life.

The findings from this thesis underscore the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between context and identity content. Different contexts activate various aspects of content, while the content itself can shape how individuals perceive and respond to their social environment. This dynamic interaction between content and context observed in this thesis demonstrate that there is a flexible application of identity content across various situations, enabling group members to adapt their expressions of group membership (Reicher et al., 2010). Moreover, the reciprocal nature of this relationship suggests that as group members consistently apply certain aspects of identity content in specific contexts, these associations may become strengthened or negotiated over time, potentially leading to shifts in the overall group prototype (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). This dynamic perspective on context and content interaction has significant implications for understanding group behavior and attitudes. It suggests that group norms and values are not static constructs but rather flexible resources that can be selectively emphasized or de-emphasized depending on the situational demands. Such flexibility allows groups to maintain coherence while adapting to changing social landscapes, potentially explaining how social identities can remain stable over time while also accommodating change or nuance (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

In conclusion, this thesis highlights the critical role of context in shaping the expression and understanding of social identity content. By examining how identity content functions across intergroup contexts, contexts without an outgroup, and ambiguous situations, this research contributes to a more nuanced and dynamic view of social identity processes. The findings demonstrate that identity content is not a static construct but a flexible resource that group members can draw upon to navigate various social situations. This thesis adds to the literature by highlighting that differing contexts can create varying responses from ingroup members, due to the flexible nature of identity content. This flexibility allows for diverse expressions of group membership while maintaining ingroup member identification. It underscores the importance of considering both the content of social identities and the contexts in which they operate to fully comprehend the complexities of social identification. As social landscapes continue to evolve and present new challenges, the adaptive nature of identity content may prove crucial in helping groups and individuals maintain a sense of identity while responding to changing circumstances.

Social Identity Content: Methodological Advancements

As noted by Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015), the field of research on identity content has been hampered by the complex nature of identity content itself. Identity content has been challenging to study due to the idiosyncratic nature of the content, varying in both type and substance. For example, political ideology may be the distinguishing type of identity content for partisans, but religious belief is the defining type of identity content for religious identity. Moreover, the substance of the content will also vary, both between groups (e.g. Republicans and Democrats differ in their political ideologies) and within groups (e.g. Democrats have different aspects of the Democrat identity that they may internalize (Turner-Zwinkles et al., 2015)). Due to this complexity, the study of identity content is often limited to

a single, predetermined or pre-validated piece of identity content (e.g. Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). Though some advancements have been made to accommodate the varying type and substance of identity content, there are still many opportunities for progress in the study of identity content and its impact, some of which this thesis has attempted to establish through multiple methods, including a multidimensional approach, the use of identity content in ambiguous situations, and a mixed-methods approach that includes the novel use of topic-modeling.

Firstly, this thesis advances the study of identity content by adopting a multi-dimensional approach, examining multiple aspects of identity content simultaneously rather than focusing on a single dimension, as argued by Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015). This comprehensive method allows for a more nuanced understanding of how different types of content interact and may influence group expression or decision making. In Chapter 3, I explored how different aspects of religious identity content, such as concepts of sin and grace, could be activated and expressed. Then, as moderators, I measured elements of religiosity, morality, and religious problem solving. Though there was no statistical main effect or interaction, this methodology can be used to study identity content from multiple angles at the same time. This multi-dimensional approach aligns with and extends previous work on the complexity of social identities and identity content (Ashmore et al., 2004; Leach et al., 2008; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). In Chapter 4, the semi-structured interview allowed participants to draw upon multiple facets of their political identity, including moral values, ideological positions, and policy preferences, when discussing social and political issues. By examining how these various dimensions of content interact and become salient in different contexts, this research provides a more holistic view of identity content's role in shaping ingroup members behaviors and expression of group membership.

Next, studying identity content in ambiguous situations represents a meaningful way to explore how social identity content impacts ingroup members. Both studies in this thesis demonstrate innovative ways to examine how individuals utilize identity content when faced with uncertain or novel contexts, where clear group norms or expectations are absent. Chapter 3 explores ambiguous situations by employing the Trolley Problem. As demonstrated by participants, regardless of prime, there was no clear ‘right’ answer from a religious perspective. While the behavioral results were not statistically significant, the study's design adds to Van Tongeren and colleagues’ (2012) initial design by examining how religious-specific identity content might influence decision-making in morally ambiguous scenarios. In Chapter 4, participants were presented with contentious issues such as the 2020 election integrity, approaches to racial inequality, and responses to homelessness. These topics lack clear-cut, universally accepted solutions within partisan groups. By examining how partisans navigate these ambiguous situations, the study reveals the flexible application of identity content. For instance, when discussing election integrity, some Republicans emphasized traditional conservative values like individual responsibility and limited government, while others prioritized party loyalty and support for specific leaders. This approach allows researchers to observe how individuals spontaneously draw upon various aspects of their identity content to make sense of and respond to unclear situations. Ambiguous situations offer a novel step in studying identity content as they create circumstances by which ingroup members have to make sense of how to use their social identity to navigate problems in the absence of prescriptive norms. This approach can create opportunities for future research to explore how identity content can further serve as a cognitive resource for ingroup members.

Lastly, the mixed methods approach in Chapter 3 advances the study of identity content by exploring how differing aspects of content can activate different perceptions of the identity. This approach differs from others, even those offered by Turner-Zwinkels and

colleagues (2015), by allowing ingroup members to discuss what specific norms mean in relation to their identity. The employment of BERTopic modeling for textual analysis offers a more sophisticated way to identify latent themes in participants' expressions of identity content compared to the more traditional content analysis that force ingroup members to respond quantitatively (Grootendorst, 2022). This method allows the research to see how the open-ended responses of individuals relate to each other, showing how close or far apart these responses are, based on the words in the response. This approach differs from many others, allowing for a nuanced examination of how individuals interpret and express different aspects of their religious identity when primed, providing insights into the underlying identity content activation. Though the primes were shown not to be effective at altering the decision making of participants, the method for analyzing what pieces of identity content are activated, this chapter offers a novel way for studying identity content.

This thesis offers several methodological advancements in studying social identity content. As shown in both chapters, studying identity content from a multidimensional perspective is important to capture the complex nature of identity content. This perspective aligns closely with the current understanding of identity content as having multiple dimensions of what it means to belong to an identity and offers a different way to study identity content than what is offered by Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015). Secondly, by studying identity content in ambiguous situations, this line of research allows identity content to be seen in action, as ingroup members rely on it to make sense of circumstances where there is no prescriptive norm. Finally, by employing BERTopic, a novel topic modeling approach, Chapter 3 also showcases a way to explore how ingroup members make sense of content independently from other group members, as well as the effectiveness of identity primes (Grootendorst, 2022). Together, these approaches to studying identity content offer novel ways to capture the complex nature of such content.

Synthesis of Research Findings: The Case for Within Identity Differences

All in all, this work opens the door for a line of research that can potentially better explain how differences within a group arise, especially in ambiguous situations. The notion of Within Identity Differences accommodates for subtle differences within a group without necessarily categorizing those differences as dissent, deviance, or anything of the sort (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Marques et al., 1998). By drawing on group norms and prototypical assumptions, identity content has been shown throughout this work to vary in nature, to function as a source of meaning for ingroup members, and to affect expressions of group identity, even without specific reference to a relevant outgroup. These findings also reinforce the idea that identity content is also like a ‘fuzzy set’ instead of a set checklist of prescriptions for ingroup members, tying back to the relationship between identity content and a group’s prototype (Galliher et al., 2017; Oakes et al., 1991). This work extends research on identity content and intra-group differences by connecting the two concepts, showing that identity content can be a source of meaning for individuals in varying ways. As such, there are different ways to be ‘good’ group member, and in the absence of clear group norms or expectations, identity content offers many ways that an ingroup member can be a ‘good’ group member.

Firstly, across the literature review, and in both studies, identity content has been shown to function as a source for meaning-making, influencing ingroup members self-concept. The variation here refers both to the *type* of content and the *substance* of content. Identity content has been shown to be many different types of content (e.g., ideologies, characteristics, self-narratives, traits, attributes, morals, etc.; Ashmore et al., 2004; Oakes et al., 1991; Reicher et al., 2010; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). In this case, the normative meaning within a social group has many different aspects when it comes to the types of content one can expect to possess. This finding was particularly prominent in Chapter 4,

where participants cited prototype traits, moral values, policy preferences, and belief in the election all as different types of content that one could discuss when expressing their partisan group membership. The substance of content, here, refers to the specifics of how these types of content are applied through a group in order to give meaning to ingroup members (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). For example, as discussed in Chapter 4, Republicans and Democrats both rely on certain moral values to explain how to view a particular social problem (Graham et al., 2013). However, in trying to be a ‘good’ group member, the specifics of those moral values that demonstrate being a proper Republican or proper Democrat can vary. As discussed, this variability in how individuals express their group membership, showcases how there are multiple ways to be a ‘good’ group member, without necessarily dissenting from the group. Moreover, as shown in Chapter 3, differing substance of identity content can be activated through identity-specific primes. In these studies, participants made sense of their identity through differing primes, even if those primes did not produce differing outcome in the moral dilemma. This finding further underscores how identity content can vary both by type and by substance. This variability aligns with the notion of a ‘fuzzy set’ and affords ingroup members optionality in how to demonstrate that they are a ‘good’ group member. Together, these studies illustrate how Within Identity Differences operates across social identities to capture the type and substance of identity content.

Next, this thesis has shown that the context of identity also influences its impact. Similar to the work by Livingstone and Haslam (2008) and Turner-Zwinkles and colleagues (2015), intergroup contexts can be a catalyst for how identity content impacts ingroup members. This finding is not novel, but reinforces the role that identity content plays in chronic social conflicts. However, this thesis does contribute to the literature by showing that identity content can help create meaning in the absence of outgroups. Work on identity

content has shown there is greater consensus among ingroup members as to what identity content is relevant in intergroup contexts (Haslam et al., 1998; Hornsey, 2008; Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). This work has also shown that content helps ingroup members understand how they are different from outgroup members (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). However, this does not mean that identity content is no longer a source of information or meaning outside of intergroup contexts. To the contrary, this thesis demonstrates that making social identity salient can allow identity content to provide meaning and norms to ingroup members, even when a relevant outgroup is not explicit. This observation does not disagree with previous research on the subject, but rather demonstrates an opportunity to advance how individuals reconcile their personal and social selves, and how the social self can inform the personal. In contexts with both a relevant outgroup and without an outgroup, identity content plays a role in helping ingroup members make sense of how to align with their group.

Furthermore, ambiguous situations create circumstances that permit ingroup members to behave in differing ways without diverging from the group. These situations are ones without prescriptive group norms that ingroup members can use for how they ought to act. Uncertainty in social situations has been shown to elicit identity affirming behavior from group members, often through their social group (Hogg, 2000). Across both chapters, ingroup members, when faced with an ambiguous situation, utilized their social identity to make sense of the situation, often in differing ways. This finding is crucial to the notion of Within Identity Differences, as these situations seem to cause ingroup members to look for some way to signal they belong to their group even though there is not a clear-cut way to do so. As such, ingroup members may rely on different pieces of their identity content to make sense of how to think or behave in these kinds of circumstances. Across both studies, the absence of prescriptive norms afforded ingroup members the space to express what it means to be a ‘good’ group member in differing ways.

Additionally, Within Identity Differences takes a different perspective from current work on intra-group differences by arguing that these differences can exist as way to make meaning in ambiguous situations. This approach differs from current work like the Black Sheep Effect or Subjective Group Dynamics, which argue that differences within a group are a threat to social groups and therefore trigger ingroup derogation to create conformity (Marques et al., 1998; Pinto et al., (2010). Instead, Within Identity Differences argues that there are multiple ways to be a ‘good’ group member, in which identity content becomes less about conformity and more about meaning-making. Additionally, this perspective differs from work by Jetten and Hornsey (2010, 2014) by demonstrating that intra-group differences do not always equate to some form of dissent or deviance. Instead of seeing variation of group norms as rebellion, Within Identity Differences argues that it is precisely the nature of identity content itself that can create such variation. In this way, Within Identity Differences argues that identity content can be used as a source of meaning in the absence of prescriptive norms, which differs from other positions on intra-group differences.

Thesis Limitations

Conceptually, there may be some limitations to the notion of Within Identity Differences. Firstly, as shown in Chapter 3, the differing pieces of identity content that were used failed to produce differing results in the Trolley Problem. As mentioned in the previous section, this could be due to the lack of a relevant outgroup in the context, as this study only focused on one identity group. Livingstone and Haslam (2008), among others, argue that an intergroup context is particularly important to understand the effect of identity content. Additionally, in the thorough discussion of importance of intergroup contexts on group categorization and prototypes (see Allidina & Cunningham, 2023; Bouché, 2018; Hornsey, 2008; Oakes et al., 1991), it is precisely because there is a relevant outgroup that gives ingroup members the ability to distinguish themselves through identity content. In this case,

though Within Identity Differences may be useful in understanding how identity content can impact group expression, it may not be able to help explain identity content's influence on decision-making, especially in situations without a relevant outgroup.

A second limitation to Within Identity Differences comes from the current lack of exploration of the negotiation of group norms. In both studies, participants only operated within their self-conception of their social identity. At no point were they confronted with information about the group prototype, fellow ingroup attitudes, or relevant outgroup attitudes. As such, there was no negotiation of group norms, but rather a projection of how each participant understood their social identity and its associated meaning. Jetten and Horsey argue that group norms are regularly being negotiated, and in ambiguous situations with no particularly relevant others, there is no negotiation of norms in these studies. This may be a limitation of the current work as well as the notion of Within Identity Differences. Specifically, this concept may only be relevant as a self-defining or self-perceiving concept instead of one that can actually explain intra-group behaviors. When ingroup members are confronted with differing positions from their fellow group members, there is likely to be a discussion or debate around the identity content, which may not allow for such varying positions within an identity. Instead, the negotiation itself could trigger phenomena like the Black Sheep Effect or Subjective Group Dynamic, as the group members could begin to assess their fellow ingroup members according to the perceived prototype (Marques et al., 1998; Pinto et al., 2010). In this case, Within Identity Differences would be a way to explore an individual's perceptions of their group's meaning and less about actual differences in how a group handles intra-group differences.

Methodologically, one limitation of this dissertation is the constrained generalizability inherent in the samples and contexts used throughout the research. Specifically, the studies focused exclusively on American samples, including Christians and political partisans within

a distinct sociopolitical environment surrounding recent U.S. elections. Such context-specific sampling may limit the external validity and broader applicability of the findings to other populations and sociocultural environments (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Sides, Tesler, & Vavreck, 2018). The dynamics observed within these particular groups are undoubtedly shaped by culturally and temporally situated factors, such as the intensity of partisan polarization in the United States and specific religious narratives prevalent in American Christian communities. Consequently, while the findings contribute significantly to understanding identity differences within these specific contexts, caution is required when extrapolating these insights globally or across other identity-based groups. Future research could benefit from replicating these studies in diverse cultural, political, and religious settings to enhance the generalizability and robustness of the theoretical framework presented here (Iyengar & West, 2022; Van Veelen et al., 2016).

An additional methodological limitation arises from the complexity inherent in integrating mixed-method research designs, particularly the synthesis of qualitative thematic analysis with quantitative experimental methodologies. Although the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provides rich, multifaceted insights into identity content and its varying impacts, effectively merging these distinct data sources is notably challenging (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Qualitative data inherently capture nuanced, context-rich descriptions, while quantitative methods prioritize precise measurement and statistical validation. As such, translating qualitative insights, such as the complexities of partisan or religious identity expressions, into quantifiable hypotheses or clearly measurable constructs is inherently difficult and can lead to oversimplification or loss of detail (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Conversely, quantitative methods alone may inadequately address the subjective, context-dependent nature of social identity phenomena. Thus, despite methodological rigor, the integration across methodological boundaries poses ongoing

interpretative challenges, potentially constraining the depth and comprehensiveness of the mixed-method conclusions. Future research could further refine methodological strategies to improve the coherence and integration of mixed-method approaches, thus enhancing both interpretability and practical utility of combined qualitative and quantitative insights (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

A further methodological constraint relates to the sensitivity of measures and experimental manipulations utilized in this dissertation. Specifically, the experimental studies examining the impact of religious identity content on moral decision-making (i.e., the Christian priming studies involving the trolley problem) did not yield statistically significant behavioral differences, highlighting potential limitations in the operationalization or measurement sensitivity of key constructs (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). Complex psychological constructs, such as identity content and moral decision-making, may require more refined or multidimensional measurement approaches to capture subtle yet theoretically significant variations (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Additionally, the strength or specificity of experimental manipulations might have been insufficient to robustly activate particular dimensions of identity content, contributing to the absence of observable differences. Given these considerations, future research could benefit from employing more precise or varied manipulations, as well as incorporating supplementary measures (e.g., implicit assessments, physiological responses) that could sensitively detect nuanced shifts in identity salience or moral reasoning processes (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Nosek, Hawkins, & Frazier, 2011).

A notable limitation of this dissertation is the potential for interpretative bias stemming from researcher positionality, particularly within the qualitative thematic analysis. As the primary researcher, my personal trajectory from a conservative Christian upbringing to my current liberal ideological position inevitably influences my interpretations of the qualitative data concerning political identities and partisan expressions. Despite employing

strategies aimed at methodological rigor and reflexivity, including systematic coding practices and reflective journaling, complete objectivity remains unattainable in qualitative research (Berger, 2015; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, themes identified and interpretations made in this research are inherently filtered through my personal lens, shaped by lived experiences and evolving ideological beliefs. This positionality potentially highlights certain aspects of participants' narratives while inadvertently deemphasizing others, introducing subjective biases into thematic interpretation. Future research could mitigate this limitation through collaborative coding approaches, triangulation of interpretations with independent researchers, or explicit participant validation strategies to strengthen the reliability and credibility of thematic findings (Tracy, 2010).

A final limitation of this research is its reliance on cross-sectional data collection, which restricts the ability to draw conclusions regarding the stability and temporal evolution of identity differences observed within groups. While the dissertation provides detailed, contextually rich snapshots of identity expression and the role of identity content in specific sociopolitical and religious moments, such cross-sectional designs inherently limit the exploration of changes in identity dynamics over time (Levendusky, 2009; Mason, 2018). Identity content, particularly in relation to politically or morally charged social groups, may be subject to substantial fluctuation depending on external events, internal group dynamics, or broader societal shifts. Consequently, findings reported herein may represent transient or contextually specific phenomena rather than enduring patterns of social identification or group behavior (Sides, Tesler, & Vavreck, 2018). Future longitudinal research could provide essential insights into the persistence or evolution of within-group identity differences, offering a more robust and dynamic understanding of social identity content as a continually evolving process rather than a static phenomenon (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015).

Directions for Future Research

Within Identity Differences, through the findings of this thesis, opens several avenues for future research on social identity content and its relationship with context. One important direction is to further explore the boundaries of context-dependent content activation. While this research has demonstrated the flexibility of identity content across different situations, it remains unclear whether there are limits to this adaptability. Future studies could investigate whether certain core aspects of identity content remain stable across all contexts, or if there are specific situations that might challenge or disrupt the usual patterns of content activation (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). For example, employing other ambiguous situations such as the Moral Judgments Test or jury studies utilized by Van Tongeren and colleagues (2012) or other economic games or moral dilemmas (Lind, 1999). This line of future research could also delve deeper into the cognitive processes underlying the flexible application of identity content in ambiguous situations. Building on the idea of ad-hoc categorization (Barsalou, 1983), studies could investigate the specific mechanisms by which individuals select and apply relevant pieces of identity content when faced with novel or uncertain contexts. This could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the cognitive underpinnings of social identity processes and their role in decision-making and behavior (Turner et al., 2006; Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015). This research could examine potential hierarchies of content across different contexts, investigating whether certain types of content consistently take precedence in specific situations. For instance, do moral values override policy preferences in certain contexts for partisans, or does religious doctrine trump personal interpretation for believers in particular scenarios?

The concept of Within Identity Differences also highlights the potential for intra-group variation in the negotiation of what it means to be a member of a specific group. As

argued by Jetten and Hornsey (2014), group members negotiate their content and norms that should guide behavior. As seen in the partisan study, members of the same political party sometimes arrived at different conclusions or emphasized different values when discussing complex issues. This variation suggests that the negotiation of shared meaning is not a simple process of conformity to a single, predetermined interpretation, but rather a nuanced deployment of individual perspectives within the broader framework of group identity. Future research could explore this negotiation process more explicitly, perhaps by examining how group members communicate and justify their interpretations of ambiguous situations to one another, or by investigating how groups collectively construct new norms or guidelines for navigating novel contexts (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Such research could provide valuable insights into the processes of social influence, group decision-making, and the evolution of group norms over time. Additionally, it could shed light on how groups maintain cohesion and adapt to changing circumstances while allowing for a degree of individual variation in the expression of group membership. This line of research could be particularly insightful for work on political polarization, disruption within political parties (e.g. political primaries), and more.

Additionally, though the level of identification was measured in Chapter 3, the process of identification could offer an interesting way to understand how Within Identity Differences may come about. As mentioned in the introduction, self-stereotyping and self-anchoring are two differing processes of how someone identifies with a social group. The integrative model proposed by Van Veelan and colleagues (2016) could be adapted to explore how individuals navigate and express diverse aspects of their group identity. In the context of Within Identity Differences, the Integrative Model of Social Identification (IMSI) could help explore how group members balance their personal attributes and values (self-anchoring) with their understanding of group norms and prototypes (self-stereotyping) when faced with

ambiguous situations. For instance, in studying partisan identities, researchers could examine how individuals' personal moral values (self-anchoring) interact with their perception of party ideology (self-stereotyping) to produce varied expressions of party membership. The IMSI's emphasis on cognitive pathways could be particularly useful in understanding the mental processes underlying the selection and application of different identity content in such situations. Furthermore, the model's consideration of identity formation and maintenance over time aligns well with the dynamic nature of Within Identity Differences, potentially revealing how individuals develop and adjust their unique expressions of group membership through ongoing interactions between personal attributes and group norms. By applying the IMSI to Within Identity Differences, researchers could gain insights into the cognitive mechanisms that allow for diversity within group identification, the factors that influence whether individuals lean more towards self-anchoring or self-stereotyping in different situations, and how these processes contribute to the overall flexibility and adaptability of social identities.

Another fruitful area for future research for Within Identity Differences lies in the recently proposed network-based approach to attitudes and polarization (Lüders et al., 2023). This perspective on polarization and political identities argues that attitudes and emotions are flexible and dynamic, and that they are negotiated in interaction with a given context. Over a set of attitude-based items that have been used to predict partisan differences, they show that individuals' partisan identification and outgroup bias can be predicted based on these items. They employ a novel methodology, Response Item Network approach, that combines Item Response Theory with Belief Network Analysis (Carpentras et al., 2021; 2022; 2024). This analytical method takes every possible item response to a likert-style and treats it as a single nominal variable. From there, the method creates a correlation network between all chosen and not chosen options, such that a 10-item, five-point scale survey becomes a network of 50

nodes (for a full overview, see Carpentras et al., 2021 or Lüders et al, 2023). Through this method, it is possible to identify how central to a group's prototype specific attitudes or norms are. This methodology would allow the exploration of the relationship between of multiple types of identity content or multiple substances of identity content to be explored, seeing how correlated differing items are. From there, it would be possible to see how similar or different a particular ingroup position might be when compared to the group's prototype, or how identity content functions in relation to intra- or intergroup contexts. This analytical method offers what is arguably the most exciting potential for studying differences of identity content with a social group.

Interestingly, it may be possible to combine both the process of identification via ISMI with the Response Item Network analysis to see how identification affects the network of attitudes that ingroup members have. In Lüders and colleagues (2023) article on the attitude networks of partisans, they argue that political attitudes can be both top-down and bottom-up, with self-stereotyping as a method for managing the identity and self-anchoring as a way of constructing the identity. By testing this claim from an identity content perspective via IMSI, it would be possible to study how identification affects the attitude network of individuals, how identification affects the views of other members, the negotiation of specific identity content in ambiguous situations, and more. For instance, by forcing members of a specific group to go through a self-stereotyping or self-anchoring exercise, followed by a measurement of attitudes about specific topics, it would be possible to see if the pathway for identification could be an explanation for Within Identity Differences. Additionally, this combination of an identification process and analytical method could explore how group members negotiate norms in ambiguous contexts by allowing group members to see how other ingroup members connect their pieces of identity content. This type of scenario could allow for one of the aforementioned limitations to be addressed. The

analytical method, combined with the process of identification, could address how cognitive pathways of identification and categorization are influenced by identity content, or vice versa, in ways that have not been studied before.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the concept of Within Identity Differences, examining how identity content can create varying expressions of group membership, particularly in ambiguous situations. Through a combination of qualitative interviews with partisans and experimental studies with Christians, this research has demonstrated that social identity content is multifaceted in both type and substance, allowing for diverse interpretations and expressions of group membership (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). The findings from Chapter 4 revealed that partisans draw upon different aspects of their political identity content – including moral values, ideological positions, and policy preferences – to navigate complex social and political issues, even in the absence of clear prescriptive norms. Similarly, Chapter 3 showed that while religious primes successfully activated different aspects of Christian identity content, these differences did not translate into significant behavioral changes in moral decision-making. These results underscore the flexibility of identity content and its role as a resource for meaning-making within groups, rather than solely as a means of enforcing conformity (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Hogg & Reid, 2006).

The research presented in this thesis contributes to our understanding of social identity content by highlighting its context-dependent nature and its role in intra-group dynamics. While previous studies have often focused on identity content in intergroup contexts (see Livingstone & Haslam, 2008; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015; etc.), this work demonstrates that identity content can provide meaning and guide behavior even in the

absence of explicit outgroup comparisons. The partisan study in Chapter 4 revealed that meaningful differences in identity content can emerge within political groups when discussing complex social issues, without necessarily referencing the opposing party. Similarly, the Christian study in Chapter 3 showed that different aspects of religious identity content could be activated without an intergroup context. These findings extend our understanding of how identity content functions in various social contexts, suggesting that it serves not only to differentiate the ingroup from outgroups but also as a flexible resource for intra-group meaning-making and decision-making in ambiguous situations (Ellemers & Van Der Toorn, 2015; Turner et al., 2006).

This thesis also advances the methodological approaches to studying identity content, addressing some of the challenges highlighted by previous researchers (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). By adopting a multidimensional approach, this work examined multiple aspects of identity content simultaneously, providing a more comprehensive understanding of its complexity and variability. The use of ambiguous situations in both studies offered a novel way to explore how individuals apply identity content when clear, prescriptive group norms do not exist. Additionally, the mixed-methods approach in Chapter 3, particularly the use of BERTopic modeling, demonstrated an innovative technique for analyzing how different aspects of identity content are activated and expressed (Grootendorst, 2022). These methodological advancements contribute to the field by offering new ways to capture the nuanced and context-dependent nature of identity content, paving the way for future research to further explore Within Identity Differences. By demonstrating that ingroup members can express their group membership in varying ways while still adhering to their group's norms, this research challenges simplistic notions of group homogeneity and conformity, offering a more nuanced understanding of intra-group dynamics and the role of identity content in shaping individual and group behavior (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Jetten & Hornsey, 2014).

Within Identity Differences aims to extend the Social Identity Approach by focusing specifically on the meaning associated with a particular identity. Identity content has been shown to be an understudied area of social identities that can highlight not only how much someone identifies with a group, but also in what ways they identify (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). As such, this thesis shows that identity content serves as a tool for meaning-making more than a tool for creating conformity. This meaning-making process is not always straightforward and may involve negotiating tensions between different aspects of identity content or reconciling group norms with personal values (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). The outcome of this process can vary among group members, potentially leading to diverging interpretations and responses within different ingroup members (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). This variability highlights the fuzzy nature of identity content, especially in ambiguous situations where established norms may not directly apply. The intersection between identity content and ambiguous situations demonstrates how identity content can create varied meaning within group members.

References

- Allidina, S., & Cunningham, W. A. (2023). Motivated Categories: Social Structures Shape the Construction of Social Categories Through Attentional Mechanisms. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10888683231172255.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683231172255>
- Ashmore, R. D., Deaux, K., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130(1), 80–114. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.130.1.80>
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 15(2), 219-234.
- Bouché, V. (2018). From Categories to Context: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement*: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement. *Social Science Quarterly*, 99(2), 711–727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12457>
- Carpentras, D., Lueders, A., & Quayle, M. (2024). Response Item Network (ResIN): A network-based approach to explore attitude systems. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 589. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03037-x>
- Carsey, T. M., & Layman, G. C. (2006). Changing Sides or Changing Minds? Party Identification and Policy Preferences in the American Electorate. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2), 464–477. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2006.00196.x>
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.
- Ellemers, N., Pagliaro, S., & Barreto, M. (2013). Morality and behavioural regulation in groups: A social identity approach. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 24(1), 160–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2013.841490>

- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>
- Galliher, R. V., Galliher, R., McLean, K. C., McLean, K., & Syed, M. (2017). Identity Content in Context. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(11). <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000299>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral Foundations Theory. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55–130). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00002-4>
- Greenwald, A. G., & Banaji, M. R. (1995). Implicit social cognition: attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological review*, 102(1), 4.
- Grootendorst, M. (2022). *BERTopic: Neural topic modeling with a class-based TF-IDF procedure* (arXiv:2203.05794). arXiv. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2203.05794>
- Haslam, S. A., Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Reynolds, K. J., Eggins, R. A., Nolan, M., & Tweedie, J. (1998). When do stereotypes become really consensual? Investigating the group-based dynamics of the consensualization process. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28(5), 755–776. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-0992\(199809/10\)28:5<755::AID-EJSP891>3.0.CO;2-Z](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199809/10)28:5<755::AID-EJSP891>3.0.CO;2-Z)
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world?. *Behavioral and brain sciences*, 33(2-3), 61-83.
- Hogg, M. A. (2000). Subjective Uncertainty Reduction through Self-categorization: A Motivational Theory of Social Identity Processes. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 11(1), 223–255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792772043000040>
- Hogg, M. A., Adelman, J. R., & Blagg, R. D. (2010). Religion in the Face of Uncertainty: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory Account of Religiousness. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14(1), 72–83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309349692>

- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms. *Communication Theory*, 16(1), 7–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00003.x>
- Hogg, M. A., Sherman, D. K., Dierselhuis, J., Maitner, A. T., & Moffitt, G. (2007). Uncertainty, entitativity, and group identification. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 43(1), 135–142. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2005.12.008>
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204–222.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x>
- Hornsey, M. J., & Jetten, J. (2004). The Individual Within the Group: Balancing the Need to Belong With the Need to Be Different. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8(3), 248–264. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0803_2
- Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*, 33(7), 14–26.
- Leach, C. W., Van Zomeren, M., Zebel, S., Vliek, M. L. W., Pennekamp, S. F., Doosje, B., Ouwerkerk, J. W., & Spears, R. (2008). Group-level self-definition and self-investment: A hierarchical (multicomponent) model of ingroup identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(1), 144–165. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.95.1.144>

- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Lüders, A., Carpentras, D., & Quayle, M. (2023). Attitude networks as intergroup realities: Using network-modelling to research attitude-identity relationships in polarized political contexts. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, bjso.12665.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12665>
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998). Social identity and intra-group differentiation: The “black sheep effect” as a function of subjective social control. In *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142).
- Nosek, B. A., Hawkins, C. B., & Frazier, R. S. (2011). Implicit social cognition: From measures to mechanisms. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 15(4), 152–159.
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>
- Obst, P. L., White, K. M., Mavor, K. I., & Baker, R. M. (2011). Social Identification Dimensions as Mediators of the Effect of Prototypicality on Intergroup Behaviours. *Psychology*, 02(05), 426–432. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2011.25066>
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Reicher, S., Spears, R., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). The Social Identity Approach in Social Psychology. In *Sage Identities Handbook* (pp. 45–62).

- Stott, C., & Drury, J. (2004). The importance of social structure and social interaction in stereotype consensus and content: Is the whole greater than the sum of its parts? *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34(1), 11–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.183>
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2010). Overview of contemporary issues in mixed methods research. *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 2, 1-44.
- Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight “big-tent” criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 16(10), 837-851.
- Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and Collective: Cognition and Social Context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 454–463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205002>
- Turner, J. C., Reynolds, K. J., Haslam, S. A., & Veenstra, K. (2006). Reconceptualizing Personality: Producing Individuality by Defining the Personal Self. In T. Postmes & J. Jetten (Eds.), *Individuality and the Group: Advances in Social Identity*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446211946>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F. M., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2017). The moral dimension of politicized identity: Exploring identity content during the 2012 Presidential Elections in the USA. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56(2), 416–436.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12171>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2015). Politicization During the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections: Bridging the Personal and the Political Through an Identity Content Approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(3), 433–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215569494>
- Van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (2008). Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-

psychological perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(4), 504–535.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.4.504>

West, E. A., & Iyengar, S. (2022). Partisanship as a Social Identity: Implications for Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 807–838. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09637-y>

Bibliography

- Abrams, D. (Ed.). (1990). *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances* (1. publ). Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (1990). An introduction to the social identity approach. *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances*, 1(9).
- Abrams, D., Rutland, A., Cameron, L., & Marques, Josém. (2003). The development of subjective group dynamics: When ingroup bias gets specific. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 21(2), 155–176.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/026151003765264020>
- Allidina, S., & Cunningham, W. A. (2023). Motivated Categories: Social Structures Shape the Construction of Social Categories Through Attentional Mechanisms. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10888683231172255.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683231172255>
- Amormino, P., Ploe, M. L., & Marsh, A. A. (2022). Moral foundations, values, and judgments in extraordinary altruists. *Scientific Reports*, 12(1), 22111.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-26418-1>
- Ashmore, R. D., Deaux, K., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130(1), 80–114. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.130.1.80>
- Azari, Julie. 2023 *President and Political Parties*. In *New Directions in the American Presidency*. 3rd Edition. Routledge.
- Bago, B., Kovacs, M., Protzko, J., Nagy, T., Kekecs, Z., Palfi, B., Adamkovic, M., Adamus, S., Albalooshi, S., Albayrak-Aydemir, N., Alfian, I. N., Alper, S., Alvarez-Solas, S., Alves, S. G., Amaya, S., Andresen, P. K., Anjum, G., Ansari, D., Arriaga, P., ... Aczel, B. (2022). Situational factors shape moral judgements in the trolley dilemma in

- Eastern, Southern and Western countries in a culturally diverse sample. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6(6), 880–895. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-022-01319-5>
- Baldwin, M. W., Carrell, S. E., & Lopez, D. F. (1990). Priming relationship schemas: My advisor and the pope are watching me from the back of my mind. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 26(5), 435–454. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031\(90\)90068-W](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(90)90068-W)
- Balliet, D., Tybur, J. M., Wu, J., Antonellis, C., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2018). Political Ideology, Trust, and Cooperation: Ingroup Favoritism among Republicans and Democrats during a US National Election. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 62(4), 797–818. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002716658694>
- Barak-Corren, N., Tsay, C.-J., Cushman, F., & Bazerman, M. H. (2018). If You're Going to Do Wrong, At Least Do It Right: Considering Two Moral Dilemmas at the Same Time Promotes Moral Consistency. *Management Science*, 64(4), 1528–1540. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2016.2659>
- Baray, G., Postmes, T., & Jetten, J. (2009). When I equals we: Exploring the relation between social and personal identity of extreme right-wing political party members. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(4), 625–647. <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466608X389582>
- Barsalou, L. W. (1983). Ad hoc categories. *Memory & Cognition*, 11(3), 211–227. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03196968>
- Barsalou, L. W. (1985). Ideals, Central Tendency, and Frequency of Instantiation as Determinants of Graded Structure in Categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 11(4), 629–654.

- Bartlett, M. Y., & DeSteno, D. (2006). Gratitude and prosocial behavior: Helping when it costs you. *Psychological Science*, 17(4), 319–325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01705.x>
- Bassett, R. L., Komerek, V., Davison, A., Costanza, J., Draper, B., Macmillen, A., ... & Vitalia, J. (2019). Grace and forgiveness: Like lightning and thunder?. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity*, 38(4).
- Bauman, C. W., McGraw, A. P., Bartels, D. M., & Warren, C. (2014). Revisiting external validity: Concerns about trolley problems and other sacrificial dilemmas in moral psychology. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8(9). <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12131>
- Berlin, I. 1997/1958. Two Concepts of Liberty. In *The Proper Study of Mankind*, ed. H. Hardy and R Hausheer, 191-242. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Berlinski, N., Doyle, M., Guess, A. M., Levy, G., Lyons, B., Montgomery, J. M., Nyhan, B., & Reifler, J. (2023). The Effects of Unsubstantiated Claims of Voter Fraud on Confidence in Elections. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*, 10(1), 34–49. <https://doi.org/10.1017/XPS.2021.18>
- Berry, D. M., Bass, C. P., Forawi, W., Neuman, M., & Abdallah, N. (2011). Measuring Religiosity/Spirituality in Diverse Religious Groups: A Consideration of Methods. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 50(4), 841–851. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-011-9457-9>
- Bizumic, B., Reynolds, K. J., & Meyers, B. (2012). Predicting social identification over time: The role of group and personality factors. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53(4), 453–458. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.04.009>
- Blankenship, B. T., Davis, T., Areguin, M. A., Savaş, Ö., Winter, D., & Stewart, A. J. (2021). Trust and tribulation: Racial identity centrality, institutional trust, and support for

- candidates in the 2020 US presidential election. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 21(1), 64–98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.12256>
- Bonneau, C. W., & Cann, D. M. (2015). Party Identification and Vote Choice in Partisan and Nonpartisan Elections. *Political Behavior*, 37(1), 43–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-013-9260-2>
- Bouché, V. (2018). From Categories to Context: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement*: Identity Meaning and Political Engagement. *Social Science Quarterly*, 99(2), 711–727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12457>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475–482.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167291175001>
- Bruce, Joshua Roberts (2013). Uniting Theories of Morality, Religion, and Social Interaction: Grid-Group Cultural Theory, the “Big Three” Ethics, and Moral Foundations Theory. *Psychology & Society*. 5(1), 37-50.
- Burton, Tara. 2018, March 5. The Biblical story the Christian Right uses to defend Trump. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/3/5/16796892/trump-cyrus-christian-right-bible-cbn-evangelical-propaganda>
- Cadinu, M. R., & Rothbart, M. (1996). Self-anchoring and differentiation processes in the minimal group setting. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(4), 661–677.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.4.661>
- Cadinu, M., Latrofa, M., & Carnaghi, A. (2013). Comparing Self-stereotyping with Ingroup-stereotyping and Outgroup-stereotyping in Unequal-status Groups: The Case of Gender. *Self and Identity*, 12(6), 582-596.

- Camobreco, J. F., & He, Z. (2022). The Party-Line Pandemic: A Closer Look at the Partisan Response to COVID-19. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 55(1), 13–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096521000901>
- Carpentras, D., Lueders, A., & Quayle, M. (2024). Response Item Network (ResIN): A network-based approach to explore attitude systems. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 589. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03037-x>
- Carsey, T. M., & Layman, G. C. (2006). Changing Sides or Changing Minds? Party Identification and Policy Preferences in the American Electorate. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(2), 464–477. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2006.00196.x>
- Cebul, B. (2019). Supply-Side Liberalism: Fiscal Crisis, Post-Industrial Policy, and the Rise of the New Democrats. *Modern American History*, 2(02), 139–164.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/mah.2019.9>
- Cikara, M., Farnsworth, R. A., Harris, L. T., & Fiske, S. T. (2010). On the wrong side of the trolley track: Neural correlates of relative social valuation. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 5(4), 404–413. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsq011>
- Claassen, R. L., Djupe, P. A., Lewis, A. R., & Neiheisel, J. R. (2021). Which Party Represents My Group? The Group Foundations of Partisan Choice and Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 43(2), 615–636. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-019-09565-6>
- Clifford, S., & Piston, S. (2017). Explaining Public Support for Counterproductive Homelessness Policy: The Role of Disgust. *Political Behavior*, 39(2), 503–525.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-016-9366-4>
- Cohen, G. L. (2003). Party Over Policy: The Dominating Impact of Group Influence on Political Beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(5), 808–822.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.5.808>

- Cormack, L., & Gulati, J. (2024). Black lives matter messaging across multiple congressional communication mediums. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 12(4), 896–920.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2023.2265896>
- Curry, O. S. (2016). Morality as Cooperation: A Problem-Centred Approach. In T. K. Shackelford & R. D. Hansen (Eds.), *The Evolution of Morality* (pp. 27–51). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-19671-8_2
- Curry, O. S., Alfano, M., Brandt, M. J., & Pelican, C. (2022). Moral Molecules: Morality as a Combinatorial System. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 13(4), 1039–1058.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-021-00540-x>
- Curry, O. S., Mullins, D. A., & Whitehouse, H. (2019). Is it good to cooperate?: Testing the theory of morality-as-cooperation in 60 societies. *Current Anthropology*, 60(1), 47–69. <https://doi.org/10.1086/701478>
- Cushman, F., & Young, L. (2009). The psychology of dilemmas and the philosophy of morality. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 12(1), 9–24.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-008-9145-3>
- Dahling, J. J., & Gutworth, M. B. (2017). Loyal rebels? A test of the normative conflict model of constructive deviance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(8), 1167–1182. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2194>
- Deaux, K., Reid, A., Mizrahi, K., & Ethier, K. A. (1995). Parameters of Social Identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(2), 280–291.
- Dennis, J. (1987). Groups and political behavior: Legitimation, deprivation, and competing values. *Political Behavior*, 9(4), 323–372. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988211>
- Disalvo, D. (2010). The Politics of a Party Faction: The Liberal-Labor Alliance in the Democratic Party, 1948–1972. *Journal of Policy History*, 22(3), 269–299.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0898030610000114>

- Doosje, B., Spears, R., Ellemers, N., & Koomen, W. (1999). Perceived Group Variability in Intergroup Relations: The Distinctive Role of Social Identity. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 10(1), 41–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779943000017>
- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (1999). The intergroup dynamics of collective empowerment: Substantiating the social identity model of crowd behavior. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430299024005>
- Ebstyle King, P. (2003). Religion and Identity: The Role of Ideological, Social, and Spiritual Contexts. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 197–204. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_11
- Edelson, J., Alduncin, A., Krewson, C., Sieja, J. A., & Uscinski, J. E. (2017). The Effect of Conspiratorial Thinking and Motivated Reasoning on Belief in Election Fraud. *Political Research Quarterly*, 70(4), 933–946. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917721061>
- Ellemers, N. (2017). Morality and Social Identity. *The Oxford Handbook of the Human Essence*, 1(August), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190247577.013.5>
- Ellemers, N., & Van Der Toorn, J. (2015). Groups as moral anchors. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 6, 189–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.08.018>
- Ellemers, N., Pagliaro, S., & Barreto, M. (2013). Morality and behavioural regulation in groups: A social identity approach. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 24(1), 160–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2013.841490>
- Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (2002). SELF AND SOCIAL IDENTITY. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 161–186.
- Ellemers, N., van der Toorn, J., Paunov, Y., & van Leeuwen, T. (2019). The Psychology of Morality: A Review and Analysis of Empirical Studies Published From 1940 Through

2017. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868318811759>
- Ellis, C., & Stimson, J. A. (2009). Symbolic ideology in the American electorate. *Electoral Studies*, 28(3), 388–402. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2009.05.010>
- Ethier, K. A., & Deaux, K. (1994). Negotiating Social Identity When Contexts Change: Maintaining Identification and Responding to Threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(2). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.2.243>
- Evans, G., & Neundorff, A. (2020). Core Political Values and the Long-Term Shaping of Partisanship. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(4), 1263–1281.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123418000339>
- Fergus, T. A., & Rowatt, W. C. (2015). Uncertainty, god, and scrupulosity: Uncertainty salience and priming god concepts interact to cause greater fears of sin. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 46, 93–98.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbtep.2014.09.003>
- Filindra, A., & Harbridge, L. (2020). How Do Partisans Navigate Elite Intra-group Dissent? Leadership, Partisanship, and the Limits of Democratic Accountability. SSRN Electronic Journal. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3570984>
- Franks, B., & Stewart, A. (2020). The divided we and multiple obligations. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X19002553>
- Freeman, J. (1986). The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties. *Political Science Quarterly*, 101(3), 327–356. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2151619>
- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Anastasio, P. A., Bachman, B. A., & Rust, M. C. (1993). The Common Ingroup Identity Model: Recategorization and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4(1), 1–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779343000004>

- Galliher, R. V., Galliher, R., McLean, K. C., McLean, K., & Syed, M. (2017). Identity Content in Context. *Developmental Psychology*, 53(11).
<https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000299>
- Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., & Washington, E. (2010). Party Affiliation, Partisanship, and Political Beliefs: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 104(4), 720–744. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055410000407>
- Glenn, N. D. (2008). How Big Can the Democratic Party Tent Be? *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 37(5), 393–395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009430610803700502>
- Goren, P. (2005). Party Identification and Core Political Values. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(4), 882–897.
- Graham, J., & Haidt, J. (2010). Beyond Beliefs: Religions Bind Individuals Into Moral Communities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14(1), 140–150.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309353415>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral Foundations Theory. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 47, pp. 55–130). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00002-4>
- Gray, K., & Wegner, D. M. (2011). Dimensions of Moral Emotions. *Emotion Review*, 3(3), 258–260. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073911402388>
- Green, D. P., & Palmquist, B. (1994). How stable is party identification?. *Political behavior*, 16, 437-466.
- Green, D. P., Palmquist, B., & Schickler, E. (2004). *Partisan hearts and minds: Political parties and the social identities of voters*. Yale University Press.
- Greene, J. D., Cushman, F. A., Stewart, L. E., Lowenberg, K., Nystrom, L. E., & Cohen, J. D. (2009). Pushing moral buttons: The interaction between personal force and intention

- in moral judgment. *Cognition*, 111(3), 364–371.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2009.02.001>
- Greene, J. D., Nystrom, L. E., Engell, A. D., Darley, J. M., & Cohen, J. D. (2004). The neural bases of cognitive conflict and control in moral judgment. *Neuron*, 44(2), 389–400.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2004.09.027>
- Greene, S. (1999). Understanding Party Identification: A Social Identity Approach. *Political Psychology*, 20(2), 393–403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00150>
- Greene, S. (2004). Social Identity Theory and Party Identification *. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(1), 136–153. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.08501010.x>
- Greenfield, E. A., & Marks, N. F. (2007). Religious Social Identity as an Explanatory Factor for Associations Between More Frequent Formal Religious Participation and Psychological Well-Being. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 17(3), 245–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508610701402309>
- Grootendorst, M. (2022). BERTopic: Neural topic modeling with a class-based TF-IDF procedure (arXiv:2203.05794). arXiv. <http://arxiv.org/abs/2203.05794>
- Haidt, J. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108(4), 814–834.
- Haidt, J. (2013). Moral psychology for the twenty-first century. *Journal of Moral Education*, 42(3), 281–297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2013.817327>
- Haidt, J., & Graham, J. (2007). When morality opposes justice: Conservatives have moral intuitions that liberals may not recognize. *Social Justice Research*.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-007-0034-z>
- Haslam, S. A., & Reicher, S. D. (2016). Rethinking the Psychology of Leadership: From Personal Identity to Social Identity. *Daedalus*, 145(3), 21–34.
https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00394

- Haslam, S. A., Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Reynolds, K. J., Eggins, R. A., Nolan, M., & Tweedie, J. (1998). When do stereotypes become really consensual? Investigating the group-based dynamics of the consensualization process. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28(5), 755-776.
- Hogg, M. A. (2000). Subjective Uncertainty Reduction through Self-categorization: A Motivational Theory of Social Identity Processes. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 11(1), 223–255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792772043000040>
- Hogg, M. A. (2016). Social Identity Theory. In S. McKeown, R. Haji, & N. Ferguson (Eds.), *Understanding Peace and Conflict Through Social Identity Theory: Contemporary Global Perspectives* (pp. 3–17). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29869-6_1
- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. (2006). Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms. *Communication Theory*, 16(1), 7–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00003.x>
- Hogg, M. A., & Tindale, R. S. (Eds.). (2001). *Group processes*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Hogg, M. A., Abrams, D., Otten, S., & Hinkle, S. (2004). The Social Identity Perspective: Intergroup Relations, Self-Conception, and Small Groups. *Small Group Research*, 35(3), 246–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496404263424>
- Hogg, M. A., Adelman, J. R., & Blagg, R. D. (2010). Religion in the Face of Uncertainty: An Uncertainty-Identity Theory Account of Religiousness. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14(1), 72–83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309349692>
- Hogg, M. A., Sherman, D. K., Dierselhuis, J., Maitner, A. T., & Moffitt, G. (2007). Uncertainty, entitativity, and group identification. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 43(1), 135–142. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2005.12.008>

- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social Identity Theory and Self-categorization Theory: A Historical Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 204–222.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x>
- Hornsey, M. J., & Jetten, J. (2004). The Individual Within the Group: Balancing the Need to Belong With the Need to Be Different. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8(3), 248–264. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0803_2
- Huddy, L. (2001). From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory. *Political Psychology*, 22(1), 127–156. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00230>
- Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D. A., & Bloom, P. (2009). Conservatives are more easily disgusted than liberals. *Cognition & Emotion*, 23(4), 714–725.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930802110007>
- Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D., Iyer, R., & Haidt, J. (2012). Disgust Sensitivity, Political Conservatism, and Voting. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(5), 537–544. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611429024>
- Iyengar, S., Lelkes, Y., Levendusky, M., Malhotra, N., & Westwood, S. J. (2019). The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 129–146. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051117-073034>
- Janiszewski, C., & Wyer, R. S. (2014). Content and process priming: A review. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 24(1), 96–118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2013.05.006>
- Jarvis, S. E., & Jennings, J. T. (2017). Republicans Should Vote: Partisan Conceptions of Electoral Participation in Campaign 2016. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(6), 633–644. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764217720481>

- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (2014). Deviance and Dissent in Groups. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 65(1), 461–485. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115151>
- Jetten, J., & Hornsey, M. J. (Eds.). (2010). *Rebels in Groups: Dissent, Deviance, Difference and Defiance* (1st ed.). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444390841>
- Jetten, J., Postmes, T., & McAuliffe, B. J. (2002). ‘We’re all individuals’: Group norms of individualism and collectivism, levels of identification and identity threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32(2), 189–207. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.65>
- Jost, J. T., Federico, C. M., & Napier, J. L. (2009). Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 307–337. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163600>
- Justwan, F., & Williamson, R. D. (2022). Trump and Trust: Examining the Relationship between Claims of Fraud and Citizen Attitudes. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 55(3), 462–469. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096522000221>
- Kahane, G., Everett, J. A. C., Earp, B. D., Caviola, L., Faber, N. S., Crockett, M. J., & Savulescu, J. (2017). Beyond Sacrificial Harm: A Two-Dimensional Model of Utilitarian Psychology. *Psychology Review*, 125(2), 131–164.
- Kalmoe, N., & Mason, L. (2022). *Radical American Partisanship*. University of Chicago Press.
- Kane, J. V., Mason, L., & Wronski, J. (2021). Who’s at the Party? Group Sentiments, Knowledge, and Partisan Identity. *The Journal of Politics*, 83(4), 1783–1799. <https://doi.org/10.1086/715072>
- Keerthirathne. (2016). A Comparative Study of Punishment in Buddhist and Western Educational Psychology. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 3(4). <https://doi.org/10.25215/0304.023>

- King, J. B. (2022). Divisions in the Big Tent: Group Sentiments and Candidate Preferences within the Democratic Party. *American Politics Research*, 50(4), 488–502.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X221081481>
- King, J. E., & Crowther, M. R. (2004). The measurement of religiosity and spirituality: Examples and issues from psychology. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(1), 83–101. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810410511314>
- Kreindler, S. A., Dowd, D. A., Dana Star, N., & Gottschalk, T. (2012). Silos and Social Identity: The Social Identity Approach as a Framework for Understanding and Overcoming Divisions in Health Care. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 90(2), 347–374.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2012.00666.x>
- Lakoff, G. (2008). *Women_Fire_and_Dangerous Things.pdf*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lanteri, A., Chelini, C., & Rizzello, S. (2008). An experimental investigation of emotions and reasoning in the trolley problem. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(4), 789–804.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-9665-8>
- Leach, C. W., Van Zomeren, M., Zebel, S., Vliek, M. L. W., Pennekamp, S. F., Doosje, B., Ouwerkerk, J. W., & Spears, R. (2008). Group-level self-definition and self-investment: A hierarchical (multicomponent) model of ingroup identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(1), 144–165. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.95.1.144>
- Lee, M. J. (2017). Considering Political Identity: Conservatives, Republicans, and Donald Trump. *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 20(4), 719–730.
<https://doi.org/10.14321/rhetpublaffa.20.4.0719>
- Leonardelli, G. J., & Toh, S. M. (2015). Social Categorization in Intergroup Contexts: Three Kinds of Self-Categorization: Three Kinds of Self-Categorization. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 9(2), 69–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12150>

- Levendusky, M. S. (2018). Americans, Not Partisans: Can Priming American National Identity Reduce Affective Polarization? *The Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 59–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/693987>
- Levine, J. M., & Moreland, R. L. (Eds.). (2006). *Small groups: Key readings*. Psychology Press.
- Lewis, A. R., Djupe, P. A., Mockabee, S. T., & Su-Ya Wu, J. (2015). The (Non) Religion of Mechanical Turk Workers. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 54(2), 419–428. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12184>
- Lezhnina, O. (2023). Depression, anxiety, and burnout in academia: Topic modeling of PubMed abstracts. *Frontiers in Research Metrics and Analytics*, 8, 1271385.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/frma.2023.1271385>
- Lind, G. (2000). *Review and appraisal of the moral judgment test (MJT)*. Konstanz: FB Psychologie-University of Konstanz.
- Livingstone, A., & Haslam, S. A. (2008). The importance of social identity content in a setting of chronic social conflict: Understanding intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(1), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X200419>
- Lüders, A., Carpentras, D., & Quayle, M. (2023). Attitude networks as intergroup realities: Using network-modelling to research attitude-identity relationships in polarized political contexts. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, bjso.12665.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12665>
- Lupton, R. N., Smallpage, S. M., & Enders, A. M. (2020). Values and Political Predispositions in the Age of Polarization: Examining the Relationship between Partisanship and Ideology in the United States, 1988–2012. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(1), 241–260. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123417000370>

- Malhotra, D. (2010). (When) are religious people nicer? Religious salience and the “Sunday Effect” on pro-social behavior. *Judgment and Decision Making*, 5(2).
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1297275>
- Mandel, D. R., & Vartanian, O. (2008a). Taboo or tragic: Effect of tradeoff type on moral choice, conflict, and confidence. *Mind and Society*, 7(2), 215–226.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11299-007-0037-3>
- Mangan, Dan, 2016, October 19. Trump: I'll appoint Supreme Court Justices to overturn Roe v. Wade abortion case. CNBC. <https://www.cnn.com/2016/10/19/trump-ill-appoint-supreme-court-justices-to-overturn-roe-v-wade-abortion-case.html>
- Marques, J. M., & Yzerbyt, V. Y. (1988). The black sheep effect: Judgmental extremity towards ingroup members in inter-and intra-group situations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(3), 287–292. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180308>
- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., & Serôdio, R. G. (2001). Being better by being right: Subjective group dynamics and derogation of ingroup deviants when generic norms are undermined. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.3.436>
- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., & Serodio, R. G. (2006). Being Better by Being Right: Subjective Group Dynamics and Derogation of Ingroup Deviants When Generic Norms are Undermined. In J. M. Levine & R. L. Moreland (Eds.), *Small Groups* (pp. 157–176). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Marques, J. M., Abrams, D., Paez, D., & Martinez-Taboada, C. (1998). The Role of Categorization and Ingroup Norms in Judgments of Groups and Their Members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 976–988.
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998a). Social identity and intra-group differentiation as subjective social control. In J. Morales, D. Paez, J. Deschamps, & S.

- Worchel (Eds.), *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Marques, J. M., Paez, D., & Abrams, D. (1998b). Social identity and intra-group differentiation: The “black sheep effect” as a function of subjective social control. In *Current Perspectives on Social Identity and Social Categorization* (pp. 124–142).
- Marques, J. M., Yzerbyt, V. Y., & Leyens, J.-P. (1988). The “Black Sheep Effect”: Extremity of judgments towards ingroup members as a function of group identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180102>
- Mazumder, S. (2018). The Persistent Effect of U.S. Civil Rights Protests on Political Attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 62(4), 922–935. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12384>
- Mcdowell, N. J. (2020). *Partisan Differences in Responses to Ingroup Dissent* [Masters Thesis]. University of Illinois, Chicago.
- McGarty, C., Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., David, B., & Wetherell, M. S. (1992). Group polarization as conformity to the prototypical group member. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 31(1), 1-19.
- McKay, R., Efferson, C., Whitehouse, H., & Fehr, E. (2011). Wrath of God: Religious primes and punishment. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 278(1713), 1858–1863. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2010.2125>
- Menard, R. (2016). Analysing Social Values in Identification; A Framework for Research on the Representation and Implementation of Values. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 46(2), 122–142. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12087>
- Merkley, E. (2020). Learning from Divided Parties? Legislator Dissent as a Cue for Opinion Formation1 2. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 73(2), 342–362.

- Moll, J., & de Oliveira-Souza, R. (2007). Moral judgments, emotions and the utilitarian brain. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11(8), 319–321.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2007.06.001>
- Mols, F., Haslam, S. A., Platow, M., Reicher, S., & Steffens, N. K. (2023). The Social Identity Approach to Political Leadership. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, J. S. Levy, & J. Jerit (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political psychology* (3rd Edition, pp. 804–842). Oxford University Press.
- Muirhead, R., & Rosenblum, N. L. (2020). The Political Theory of Parties and Partisanship: Catching Up. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23(1), 95–110.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041916-020727>
- Mullinix, K. J. (2018). Civic Duty and Political Preference Formation. *Political Research Quarterly*, 71(1), 199–214. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917729037>
- Nelson, T. E., & Kinder, D. R. (1996). Issue Frames and Group-Centrism in American Public Opinion. *The Journal of Politics*, 58(4), 1055–1078. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2960149>
- Oakes, P. J., Turner, J. C., & Haslam, S. A. (1991). Perceiving people as group members: The role of fit in the salience of social categorizations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(2), 125–144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1991.tb00930.x>
- Obst, P. L., White, K. M., Mavor, K. I., & Baker, R. M. (2011). Social Identification Dimensions as Mediators of the Effect of Prototypicality on Intergroup Behaviours. *Psychology*, 02(05), 426–432. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2011.25066>
- Onorato, R. S., & Turner, J. C. (2004). Fluidity in the self-concept: The shift from personal to social identity. *European journal of social psychology*, 34(3), 257–278.
- Otten, S., & Wentura, D. (2001). Self-Anchoring and Ingroup Favoritism: An Individual Profiles Analysis. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37(6), 525–532.
<https://doi.org/10.1006/jesp.2001.1479>

- Panagopoulos, C., & Van Der Linden, S. (2016). Conformity to implicit social pressure: The role of political identity. *Social Influence*, 11(3), 177–184.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15534510.2016.1216009>
- Pargament, K. I., Kennell, J., Hathaway, W., Grevengoed, N., Newman, J., & Jones, W. (1988). Religion and the Problem-Solving Process: Three Styles of Coping. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 27(1), 90. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387404>
- Persily, N., & Stewart, C. (2021). The Miracle and Tragedy of the 2020 U.S. Election. *Journal of Democracy*, 32(2), 159–178. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2021.0026>
- “Behind Biden’s 2020 Victory.” Pew Research Center, Washington DC. (2021).
<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/>
- “In a Politically Polarized Era, Sharp Divides in Both Partisan Coalitions.” Pew Research Center, Washington DC. (2019). <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/12/17/in-a-politically-polarized-era-sharp-divides-in-both-partisan-coalitions/>
- “The Partisan Divide on Political Values Grows Even Wider.” Pew Research Center, Washington DC. 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2017/10/05/the-partisan-divide-on-political-values-grows-even-wider/>
- “The Partisanship and ideology of American Voters.” Pew Research Center, Washington DC. (2024). <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/04/09/the-partisanship-and-ideology-of-american-voters/>
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(1), 107–119. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018187>
- Rahn, W. M. (1993). The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(2), 472.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2111381>

- Rand, D. G., Dreber, A., Haque, O. S., Kane, R. J., Nowak, M. A., & Coakley, S. (2014). Religious motivations for cooperation: An experimental investigation using explicit primes. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 4(1), 31–48.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2013.775664>
- Reicher, S., & Hopkins, N. (2001). Psychology and the end of history: A critique and a proposal for the psychology of social categorization. *Political Psychology*, 22(2), 383–407.
- Reicher, S., Spears, R., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). The Social Identity Approach in Social Psychology. In *Sage Identities Handbook* (pp. 45–62).
- Reiman, A.-K., & Killoran, T. C. (2023). When group members dissent: A direct comparison of the black sheep and intergroup sensitivity effects. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 104, 104408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2022.104408>
- Roccas, S., & Brewer, M. B. (2002). Social Identity Complexity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 6(2), 88–106. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327957PSPR0602_01
- Rosch, E. (1975). Cognitive representations of semantic categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 104(3), 192–233. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.104.3.192>
- Saroglou, V. (2011). Believing, Bonding, Behaving, and Belonging: The Big Four Religious Dimensions and Cultural Variation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(8), 1320–1340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111412267>
- Schnall, S., Haidt, J., Clore, G. L., & Jordan, A. H. (2008). Disgust as Embodied Moral Judgment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(8), 1096–1109.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167208317771>
- Schwander, H., & Vlandas, T. (2020). The Left and universal basic income: The role of ideology in individual support. *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 36(3), 237–268. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ics.2020.25>

- Sewell, D., Ballard, T., & Steffens, N. K. (2022). Exemplifying “Us”: Integrating Social Identity Theory of Leadership with Cognitive Models of Categorization. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 33(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101517>
- Shannon, S. K. S. (2017). Punishment, Religion, and the Shrinking Welfare State for the Very Poor in the United States, 1970–2010. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 3, 237802311774225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023117742259>
- Shariff, A. F., & Norenzayan, A. (2007). God is watching you: Priming God concepts increases prosocial behavior in an anonymous economic game. *Psychological science*, 18(9), 803-809.
- Shariff, A. F., Willard, A. K., Andersen, T., & Norenzayan, A. (2016). Religious Priming: A Meta-Analysis With a Focus on Prosociality. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(1), 27–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868314568811>
- Sheehan, K. B. (2018). Crowdsourcing research: Data collection with Amazon’s Mechanical Turk. *Communication Monographs*, 85(1), 140–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2017.1342043>
- Sherman, A. L. (1995). Will Conservative Welfare Reform Corrupt Religious Charities? *Policy Review*, 74, 58–63.
- Sides, J., Tesler, M., & Vavreck, L. (2018). *Identity crisis: The 2016 presidential campaign and the battle for the meaning of America*. Princeton University Press.
- Simon, B., & Hamilton, D. L. (1994). Self-stereotyping and social context: the effects of relative ingroup size and ingroup status. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 66(4), 699.
- Smith, S. M., Roster, C. A., Golden, L. L., & Albaum, G. S. (2016). A multi-group analysis of online survey respondent data quality: Comparing a regular USA consumer panel

- to MTurk samples. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(8).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.002>
- Stets, J. E., & Carter, M. J. (2012). A Theory of the Self for the Sociology of Morality. *American Sociological Review*, 77(1), 120–140.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411433762>
- Stewart, C. (2022). Trust in Elections. *Daedalus*, 151(4), 234–253.
https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_01953
- Stiglitz, J. (1998). Distinguished Lecture on Economics in Government: The Private Uses of Public Interests: Incentives and Institutions. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 12(2), 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.12.2.3>
- Stott, C., & Drury, J. (2004). The importance of social structure and social interaction in stereotype consensus and content: Is the whole greater than the sum of its parts? *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34(1), 11–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.183>
- Stout, C. T., & Garcia, J. R. (2015). The Big Tent Effect: Descriptive Candidates and Black and Latino Political Partisanship. *American Politics Research*, 43(2), 205–231.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X14547933>
- Sven Waldzus, Waldzus, S., Amélie Mummendey, Mummendey, A., Michael Wenzel, Wenzel, M., Ulrike Weber, & Weber, U. (2003). Towards tolerance: Representations of superordinate categories and perceived ingroup prototypicality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39(1), 31–47. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0022-1031\(02\)00507-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0022-1031(02)00507-3)
- Swann, W. B., Gómez, Á., Buhrmester, M. D., López-Rodríguez, L., Jiménez, J., & Vázquez, A. (2014). Contemplating the ultimate sacrifice: Identity fusion channels pro-group

- affect, cognition, and moral decision making. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106(5), 713–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035809>
- Swann, W. B., Gómez, Á., Dovidio, J. F., Hart, S., & Jetten, J. (2010). Dying and Killing for One's Group: Identity Fusion Moderates Responses to Intergroup Versions of the Trolley Problem. *Psychological Science*, 21(8), 1176–1183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610376656>
- Swann, W. B., Jetten, J., Gómez, Á., Whitehouse, H., & Bastian, B. (2012). When group membership gets personal: A theory of identity fusion. *Psychological Review*, 119(3), 441–456. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028589>
- Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 173–190). Psychology Press.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In *Rediscovering social identity* (pp. 173–190). Psychology Press.
- Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 151–165. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2007.00243.x>
- Tavits, M., & Letki, N. (2014). From Values to Interests? The Evolution of Party Competition in New Democracies. *The Journal of Politics*, 76(1), 246–258. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002238161300131X>
- Taylor, Jessica. 2015, September 13. True Believer? Why Donald Trump is the Choice of the Religious Right. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2015/09/13/439833719/true-believer-why-donald-trump-is-the-choice-of-the-religious-right>

- Thomson, J. J. (1985). The Trolley Problem. *The Yale Law Journal*, 94(6), 1395.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/796133>
- Tucker, P. D., Montgomery, J. M., & Smith, S. S. (2019). Party Identification in the Age of Obama: Evidence on the Sources of Stability and Systematic Change in Party Identification from a Long-Term Panel Survey. *Political Research Quarterly*, 72(2), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912918784215>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2015). Politicization During the 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections: Bridging the Personal and the Political Through an Identity Content Approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(3), 433–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215569494>
- Turner-Zwinkels, F. M., Van Zomeren, M., & Postmes, T. (2017). The moral dimension of politicized identity: Exploring identity content during the 2012 Presidential Elections in the USA. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56(2), 416–436.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12171>
- Turner, J. C., & Oakes, P. J. (1986). The significance of the social identity concept for social psychology with reference to individualism, interactionism and social influence. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 25(3), 237-252.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987a). A Self-Categorisation Theory. In *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorisation Theory* (pp. 42–67). Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987b). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. Blackwell.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2073157>

- Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., & McGarty, C. (1994). Self and Collective: Cognition and Social Context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 454–463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167294205002>
- Turner, J. C., Reynolds, K. J., Haslam, S. A., & Veenstra, K. (2006). Reconceptualizing Personality: Producing Individuality by Defining the Personal Self. In T. Postmes & J. Jetten (Eds.), *Individuality and the Group: Advances in Social Identity*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446211946>
- Van Bavel, J. J., & Cunningham, W. A. (2012). A Social Identity Approach to Person Memory: Group Membership, Collective Identification, and Social Role Shape Attention and Memory. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(12), 1566–1578. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167212455829>
- Van Bavel, J. J., & Pereira, A. (2018). The Partisan Brain: An Identity-Based Model of Political Belief. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 22(3), 213–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2018.01.004>
- Van Leeuwen, N., & Van Elk, M. (2019). Seeking the supernatural: The Interactive Religious Experience Model. *Religion, Brain & Behavior*, 9(3), 221–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2153599X.2018.1453529>
- Van Tongeren, D. R., Welch, R. D., Davis, D. E., Green, J. D., & Worthington, E. L. (2012). Priming virtue: Forgiveness and justice elicit divergent moral judgments among religious individuals. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(5), 405–415. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2012.707228>
- Van Veelen, R., Hansen, N., & Otten, S. (2014). Newcomers' cognitive development of social identification: A cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of self-anchoring and self-stereotyping. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 53(2), 281–298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12038>

- Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., & Hansen, N. (2011). Linking self and ingroup: Self-anchoring as distinctive cognitive route to social identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(5), 628–637. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.792>
- Van Veelen, R., Otten, S., Cadinu, M., & Hansen, N. (2016). An Integrative Model of Social Identification: Self-Stereotyping and Self-Anchoring as Two Cognitive Pathways. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868315576642>
- Van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (2008). Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(4), 504–535. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.4.504>
- Verkuyten, M., & Yildiz, A. A. (2007). National (dis) identification and ethnic and religious identity: A study among Turkish-Dutch Muslims. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, 33(10), 1448-1462.
- Waldzus, S., Mummendey, A., Wenzel, M., & Weber, U. (2003). Towards tolerance: Representations of superordinate categories and perceived ingroup prototypicality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39(1), 31–47. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031\(02\)00507-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(02)00507-3)
- Wehner, Peter. 2019, December 5. The Moral Universe of Timothy Keller. *The Atlantic*.
- Weingarten, E., Chen, Q., McAdams, M., Yi, J., Hepler, J., & Albarracín, D. (2016). From primed concepts to action: A meta-analysis of the behavioral effects of incidentally presented words. *Psychological Bulletin*, 142(5), 472–497. <https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000030>

- West, E. A., & Iyengar, S. (2022). Partisanship as a Social Identity: Implications for Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 807–838. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09637-y>
- White, J., & Ypi, L. (2016). *The Meaning of Partisanship*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199684175.001.0001>
- Wilder, D. A. (1986). Social categorization: Implications for creation and reduction of intergroup bias. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 19, pp. 291–355). Academic Press.
- Winter, N. J. G. (2008). *Dangerous Frames: How Ideas about Race and Gender Shape Public Opinion*. University of Chicago Press.
<https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226902388.001.0001>
- Xiao, Y. J., Coppin, G., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2016). Perceiving the World Through Group-Colored Glasses: A Perceptual Model of Intergroup Relations. *Psychological Inquiry*, 27(4), 255–274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2016.1199221>
- Yeung, E. S. F. (2024). Can Conservatives Be Persuaded? Framing Effects on Support for Universal Basic Income in the US. *Political Behavior*, 46(1), 135–161.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-022-09824-z>
- Ypi, L. (2016). Political Commitment and the Value of Partisanship. *American Political Science Review*, 110(3), 601–613.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199684175.001.0001>
- Ysseldyk, R., Matheson, K., & Anisman, H. (2010). Religiosity as Identity: Toward an Understanding of Religion From a Social Identity Perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14(1), 60–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309349693>

Appendix 1: Thematic Analysis Codebook

| Codes | Basic Themes | Description | Global Themes |
|--|--|---|--|
| I like my party and my party's candidate | Perception and status of political party | Participants talk about their feelings and attitudes toward their party and the party's candidate for US president | Individual Positioning within group expression |
| I dislike my party and my party's candidate | | | |
| My political history has remained the same / has changed over time | Understanding of personal values or attitudes and how they align with party | Participants shared how their political attitudes had changed over time | |
| I see myself as similar to other party members | Comparison to prototype/other group members | Participants discussed the ways in which they are similar to their follow party members, and ways in which they are different | |
| I see myself as different than other party members | | | |
| Th government has a responsibility to be involved in social issues | How involved the government should be in taking care of social issues across America | Participants expressed that there are varying ways in which | Social Positioning within group expression |
| The community should handle social problems on their own | | | |
| Economic issues should involve the government to some extent | How involved the government should be in addressing economic issues across America | Participants shared how the government can help individuals and the greater economy | |
| Local community organizations should help those around during times of economic hardship | | | |
| Homelessness is a problem that should be addressed by individuals | Extreme crises call for additional support from all parties, | Participants talked about the government as a resource to help ensure that | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| The government has a responsibility for taking care of citizens | including the community, local organizations, and the government | individuals were not left to die | |
| Covid is an issue that the government and society need to work together to fix | | | |
| The election will be safe, secure, and fair | The election is unique and will have many challenges | Participants expressed that voter suppression and Covid rules were affecting their perception of the election | Political Positioning within group expression |
| The other party is doing things that make me doubt the election | | | |
| Voting is a part of who we are | Voting is central to political identity | Participants viewed voting as a core piece of what it means to be partisan | |
| I have a duty to vote | | | |

Appendix 2: Sample Interview Transcript

00:01

Andy: Okay, and we are alive. All right, well, thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it. For this interview, what we'll do is I'll start off with a brief introduction into myself, what I'm doing my work, things like that. And then what we'll be talking about today. From there, we will dive right in and start off with, you know, just some general questions and go from there. If you have questions or concerns at any time, just let me know, if you don't want to answer a question, we can skip over it as well. Just let me know. So we'll go ahead and get started. I am Andy Stewart, I am a PhD student at the London School of Economics. My work focuses on the relationship between identity and decision making. So how the groups that we're a part of affect the way we view and understand the world around us. Working in psychology, it's nice and neat. And doing stuff in the lab is fun, but I wanted to try to do some stuff in the real world. So I partnered with housing Nola. And this project is focusing on identity and decision making specifically concerning the election and housing. So that's what we'll be talking about today. Kind of those three things identity, the election and then close out with things about housing Sound good? Yeah,

01:34

Brandon: absolutely. All right.

01:36

Andy: Well, we'll go ahead and get this thing going, then why don't you tell me a little bit about yourself, where you're from where you grew up? What do you do? Oh,

01:47

Brandon: well, again, I'm Brandon. I live here in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, I serve as the Community Development Director for HomeBank own bank is based in life yet, we've got 40 branches throughout South Louisiana and Mississippi. But again, boy raised here in Baton Rouge, went to Catholic High School here at LSU. And I guess to my career, I worked for Raising Canes in the marketing department for a couple of years. And I worked for a credit union for 10 years, doing marketing, business development, PR stuff. And then now I'm at HomeBank doing kind of mainly running our community reinvestment and development work. So how we you're engaged with small business, lower income folks in the community in general. So that's essentially my story.

02:41

Andy: Okay, so you are you Baton Rouge through and through?

02:45

I'm very Baton Rouge through and through. I am I am a baton rouge-er is okay.

02:50

Andy: I most of my interviews thus far have come from people who are new orleanians. And that's, you know, that's a big badge of pride for them to be from New York. Is it the same in Baton Rouge? Or is it D? Do you guys like have the same kind of, you know, no, you weren't born here attitude?

03:09

Brandon: No, well, well, I will say the question that you normally normally get if you live here, or if you visit here or whatnot, is, oh, what's your name? And the question, the next question is, where's your high school? Okay, so we went to college, we went to high school. So, um, I think that that is there's a there's a level of pride. I don't know if it's if it is deep and rich as New Orleans. But I mean, you know, these guys are from LSU or went to Southern there. That's a mark of pride for them.

03:41

Andy: Yeah.

03:43

Brandon: Who you tailgate with is a status symbol. Yeah. So yeah, absolutely.

03:50

Andy: Okay, interesting. I love it.

03:52

Brandon: I love it.

03:54

Andy: I went to the University of Oklahoma for my undergrad. So I very much get the whole tailgating kind of thing and like, where your spot is, and all of that. So.

04:03

Andy: Oh, is that the one in Norman? Yeah. Okay. Yeah,

04:06

Brandon: I've got some friends over there. Okay. Very nice. Yeah, awesome. Okay, so,

04:13

Andy: first thing I want to talk about really is identity. And, I mean, being from Baton Rouge, you know, still living there. I'm gonna assume that's a big part of who you are. But to you what is maybe most central to the way that you're seeing yourself and, you know, the the most important identity that you hold?

04:33

Brandon: Ah, that's an interesting, I don't know if I've ever really examined that. But, you know, Baton Rouge is part it's a part of me. Um, I think, you know, being specifically being from what Baton Rouge is, is something I'm prideful of, and I think it's kind of shaped a little bit of who I am. I think, you know, I'll say it. I mean, you know, my race my African American heritage is a is a strong part of who I am. And, you know, again, just my family, you know, I think I'm proud of the Kelly family. And yeah, you know, and those roots are really valuable to me in that they're they really shaped a lot of my identity.

05:17

Andy: Let's let's focus in on one of those identities maybe your race? What does it mean to you to have African American Heritage? What, What does that mean?

05:29

Brandon: I'll say this, I think that one it does speak to just a strength and the enduring nature of, of our people. And in all that, you know, they've gone through and I think, of course, it is a tale of struggle, but I think it's also a tale of triumph as well. So I mean, I've listened to stories that, you know, my grandparents told me about this, or, or even my parents, you know, whether it's time during the rights movement, or whatever, I think it's a, it's a pretty strong narrative of how power rich are Heritage's. And not only that, but that, while again, they've trumped issues and struggles and had triumphs as well. There's still this continuing movement to how do you move us as a people forward in a way that we, you know, that you're you're lifting that we're consistently lifting up, and creating wealth and creating better outcomes for our future? Our future children and whatnot?

06:42

Andy: Yeah, that's, that's beautiful. I love it. Do you think that the the way you identify or the way you see yourself has changed over time any,

06:51

however, how's that?

06:54

Brandon: Well, so let me let me give a little bit. Well, I mean, kind of step back a little bit. So I had this really weird that I was a weird story. But so, you know, again, I grew up in North Baton Rouge, predominately African American neighborhood, but I also went to predominantly white Catholic schools, okay. So it to, you know, I think there was only one other guy in my class, there was a color and there were four or five girls. And I went to predominantly white high school, and I went to LSU. So there's, there's definitely this duality in terms of, you know, what I went home to, and mine, and where, and kind of my friends and whatnot. I mean, you know, I'll even say this. So like, from pre k there to ninth grade, my best friend in the world was a white guy. And High School, you know, he went to one school, I went to another and I friends changed a little bit. But, you know, I had this really interesting thing that I, I engage different types and different, different people all the time. So and I'll even say that so and as time has gone on, I've learned or become more read, will read and whatnot. You know, there's definitely I think my identity, but more than that, just my views on, on social issues, and even even job that I'm right now, in terms of our work with low to moderate income communities, has definitely kind of given me a stronger push for social justice and support for lower income folks, and how we can, you know, appreciate, in value their experiences, as well as provide more resources out there. So, you know, again, I think, you know, I will always say, I think that that old adage, that if you're not growing, you're dying, really is important. So I think I'll always have this evolution of, you know, where I am on the spectrum, or what my beliefs are, and, and what not,

08:56

Andy: yeah, that's, that's really interesting. Do you think that the, these kind of, you know, very different contexts and settings that you have experienced, does it feel like you're still yourself whenever you're in these, you know, very different settings? Or does it feel like you have to be someone else depending on the scenario,

09:16

Brandon: let's say this, so, you know, what, the term "code switching,"

09:20

Andy: yeah, you know,

09:22

Brandon: here's a bit, yes. Well, I you will ask, will my cadence or my demeanor be slightly different? You know, if I'm in a professional setting, as with my friends at church or the friends of mine, possibly sure. But I still think that that's at the end of the day, it's still me, you know, even though my language may vary a little bit. I think these are just, I guess, I believe that we're all of these different selves. Yeah. And it's important to understand even you know, that you may be this this Self with one group is as well as, as another situation. It's still you. And I don't think that it's really. And I don't think it's bad. I don't think it's a bad thing that you can communicate yourself differently in different different things. I think the question is, is what is the authenticity? Yeah. So am I at least being my authentic self. And I don't believe that language is the greatest determinant of your authentic self. I think the the greatest determinant of it is your reaction to things is your engagement is how you communicate. But more importantly, what does the end result get to? And if the end result is the same? I think you're you're still being your most authentic. So

10:48

Andy: yeah, absolutely. I think that's a good way to describe it. Okay, so I want to transition now and talk a little bit about politics in the election. You've told me that you're, in the demographics, you said that you're a Democrat, you're a member of the Democratic Party. What does that mean to you to be a democrat? Um,

11:09

Brandon: I think so I from I am a Democrat. I'm, I guess I'm closer to the moderates on a moderate spectrum. But I think the Democratic party, we are about fairness, we're about equity when right inclusion, we're about, you know, supporting all communities. We are a party that believes that, that everyone should have the opportunity to succeed. I think that we are definitely the party that encourages, you know, people to be their authentic selves. And more than anything, I think that we're the party of, of everyone can join everyone has has a seat at the table. I think that, you know, some of my friends on the other side, are not as inclusive, or as tolerant. So those are the things I think of when it comes to the Democratic party

12:14

Andy: what do you think is maybe the best thing the democrats have done recently?

12:19

Brandon: Mmm hmm.

12:20

Yeah, um, well, I

12:21

mean, I guess, you know,

12:22

let's, if we go before, you know, before the current administration, I think ACA was probably one of the greatest things that, you know, and it was it the perfect, absolutely not, but I think that the providing that reach those resources, especially to low income, folks, has been transformative. And I think it's continuing to provide great health outcomes for for folks. So I think that's that's definitely been a strong thing. Absolutely.

12:57

Andy: Okay. I like that. Whenever you think about the Affordable Care Act, and, you know, saying people actually get health care, how does that make you feel?

13:06

Brandon: I think it's empowerment,

13:07

I think it's empowering that we are giving people an opportunity to be successful. Yeah. From a from a health standpoint. And again, I think, here's the thing, I think there are some folks, and I'll just put it like this, I think that there's certain certain folks and again, I would say that I'm a moderate, there folks that are to the extreme left, that just wants to give everybody free stuff. And I'm not in that mindset that everybody gets free stuff. I do think that I do think that people should work. And I think we should provide pathways so that folks can, can live their best life. And you know, and we do need to add incentives, and carrots for folks to be successful. But I also I really think that just this concept of giving people the opportunity to be successful, but I think that's one of the biggest issues in our country, is that, you know, we say that we're the land of opportunity. But, are we really setting people up for success? Are we giving them resources? I mean, here's the thing. And I'll say this, you know, I've been exceptionally blessed. I went to some of the best schools in the state. I have a great education. And I have a lot, and I think I'm bringing a lot to the to every table that I'm a part of, but everyone doesn't have that opportunity. And the more ways that we can provide opportunity, especially to folks of color, and my people, you know, bipoc however you want to call it. I think that's how we've we've become a true democracy.

14:52

Andy: Yeah. Okay. Thinking about this past election, what were some of the most important issues for you that were on the table.

15:04

Brandon: Um, well, I will say this and, you know, I yes, there, there are lots of things that are, there are a lot of policies that I really care about. And I will say a one of the strongest issues that I had in this election was character, and Trump was, Donald Trump is not a man of character, and I think he's taken our country into, you know, we're always going to be, you know, a party of you know, that 50% on one side, or some other or are some, you know, deviation that whether it's 55/45, or whatever, it will always be that, but we the chasm between the two, the lack of morals, the the us versus them, within our borders, I think is just, it's just been, it's atrocious. It's horrible.

Andy: Yeah.

Brandon: So I think that was a major, you know, a major issue for me. Now, going down now, from a policy standpoint, I will say, you know, you know, increase making for Affordable Care Act, a much more robust and stronger and, and better from is going to be as

important to me. I think nailing down immigration, and having a smart and common sense immigration policy is going to be is very important for me. I think criminal justice reform is going to be a critical thing. I think specifically, how do we lift up? How do you lift up low income communities? How do we provide more opportunity is, is a is very valuable and important to me. Those are kind of the key thing. That, you know, from a policy standpoint, I'm looking forward to in this administration.

16:58

Andy: Now, this is just going to be a shot in the dark.

17:01

But

17:02

did you vote for Joe Biden?

17:04

Brandon: I did. Okay. Probably.

17:07

Andy: Yeah, I was a

17:08

little sarcastic there. So So thinking about Biden's platform, and the issues that you, you know, are important to you? How do you think he fares on those issues?

17:21

Brandon: I mean, ultimately, I think at the end of the day, the question is, I mean, I get I'm a little bit of a political junkie.

Andy: Okay.

Brandon: Do you know that at the end of the day, if you don't have a Senate, that that is willing to be engaged in the process, You're going to have a problem. I think I, I think Donald Trump is has shown us the power of the executive order. Yeah, I'll be honest with you, I didn't realize the true power of the executive orders. And then what I've learned in the last four years, so I think that there will be some really great things that will, we'll be able to get done in with it with executive order, but I'll say this, unless the Dems do take over the Senate, I think we're have gridlock. Now, of course, from a stock market standpoint, oh, but, you know, this community loves to ride the tax cuts. Um, but I think that the one thing I will say is I, I have a lot of trust that there Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, will put together a team of experts, both from a cabinet level and senior advisors that are going to steer the country in the right way. Yeah, we just let them do what they need to do.

18:49

Andy: Okay, I like that. So let's, let's think about the election more as a process now, unless politically, given the pandemic and everything that's going on, did this affect the way you participated in the election?

19:05

Brandon: Um, no, not really. I mean,

19:08

well, no, I can't say. So. I have generally, probably. For the most part. I have voted on the day of. Okay. Um, that I did. I spent 30 minutes in line. waiting to go vote because I knew that I wanted to go vote. I wanted to go early. Every once while I voted early, but for the most part, I'm a day of guy. Yeah. But absolutely. I was like, No, I want to make sure my my vote is put in I want to I want it counted. And yeah,

19:40

Andy: yeah. Okay. And this year, did you vote on the day as well?

Brandon: No, I

19:45

voted or 30 minutes. Yeah.

19:47

Okay. So you voted okay.

19:50

This is one of the very few times that I do. I do go Yeah.

19:53

Andy: So what do you think about all the accommodations and adaptations that were given? Do you think there was another Should there have been more? How do you feel?

20:03

Brandon: I'm gonna be honest with you. So Louisiana. Um, yeah, I know that Louisiana was a little different that you couldn't just request you had to have a reason to request an absentee ballot. And Coronavirus was not a was not a an acceptable reason. Um, but I will say Louisiana probably doesn't have a great does have a great election system. Like I actually said this on Facebook a while ago. But the fact is, is that I think there's an embarrassment in this country that anyone has to stand in line for more than two hours just to vote. Yeah, even on playback. And I've never seen that here in Louisiana. Um, I you know, even you know, even at the worst polling places, in early voting, I think the most I read someone was standing now was that I would stay in line was for about an hour. And And honestly, even on the day of, I think most people I talked to, they were in and out within five minutes. Oh, wow. So we did I you know, I have a lot of issues with my state, but from a voting standpoint, we do things our roads do. They did a good job. Okay. That's good to hear. I think it's elsewhere, I think is really it's an embarrassment.

21:20

Andy: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. So New Orleans was hit with hurricanes ADA, just a few days before the election. Like I, I'm just a block off magazine Street in uptown and I was without power for like, three or four days. Say that would have the hurricane would have hit like the day before the election. If you were in charge, how would you adjust for this? How would you adapt the election with a natural disaster?

21:53

Brandon: I mean, that's a rough one. That's a rough one. Yeah. I think, you know, you know, does it can you feasibly move an election date for a city or for a state because of the natural disaster? Honestly, I guess you probably I guess I would advocate out federal elections are different. I don't know how you manage that for federal election. But I mean, heck with the Coronavirus, we moved, we moved elections, we moved them back a couple of weeks or whatnot. So I think that sometimes those situations you if you can open up that day, but I think you allow for folks to vote even afterwards, you're able to vote.

22:37

Andy: Okay.

22:39

What do you think it means to be a voter, thinking about the election and politics? What does it mean to you to participate in this?

22:50

Brandon: I honestly think it's a respect issue.

Andy: Okay,

Brandon: respect for your country and respect for the people around you. And the folks that look like you those that don't look like you. Yeah, I think that it's all respectable. And I think it's actually a sign of disrespect, that you know, for the people that are around you, that you're not exercising your rights. Oh, because, you know, you're lazy. I will say just as a country, we have a problem we have a significant problem with with our apathy and our lack of care for one another. I, you know, and I think it's a one sided with, you know, just inequities. But I think on the other side, you've got folks that just feel like they're not engaged and I think, sincere sign of disrespect. So yeah.

23:36

Andy: So if there is, you know, if it is disrespectful, do you think that voters have a, like, a moral responsibility to participate in elections? Or is it more of hands off for you?

23:49

Brandon: No, I think it's a my big you have a moral obligation? I absolutely. So, okay, that's

Andy: for the

23:55

record. I do too. Okay, awesome. So the last question for this section, it concerns democracy and the way that, you know, our political setup runs. Sometimes it can be quite frustrating seeing everything play out, and you know, how it operates. Can you think of any times that you've been frustrated by democracy in our country?

24:22

Brandon: Um, well,

24:23

I mean, I would say the last four years on the fact that we just talked about it the power of the executive order. Executive Order. I think that's it. That's, that's been troubling to me. I think

that I think that even with a Justice Ginsburg, and you know, in effect that you can that you can rush through a nominee in this circumstance he had But then

24:52

four years ago after mean for the Merrick Garland situation, that you won't even here's it I guess I'll just say this. I don't I don't mind that they're both blocked that the Merrick Garland vote, because elections do have consequences. Yeah, the problem is, is that they wouldn't even bring a bill wouldn't even brought up to. too big to the Congress.

25:20

Yeah, they didn't even allow a vote.

25:22

Yes, yes. Yeah. Let people vote and then you've done your due diligence. But you've done you were able to bring in Barrett, you know, within 30 days. Yeah.

25:35

Andy: Yeah, absolutely. So, let's transition now and talk about housing. Before we really dive in, though, I'd like to know some more about your housing experience. Have you ever faced any difficulties with it? You know, been housing and secure renter homeowner kind of what's your experience?

25:54

Brandon: me no, um, you know, I live with my parents. I was 26. I moved out. I'm actually I bought a house. I bought a condo. And I moved to my wife's house. I still rent that, that condo. So I'm, I'm blessed to say I've never had never been housing insecure.

26:15

Andy: Okay, that's awesome. But you so you are currently a homeowner and you have your landlord you you rent? Okay. What's that? Like? Have you ever had any difficulties with tenants?

26:27

Brandon: And, you know, again,

26:30

my, my goodness, my market rate is a little bit higher than market rate. But I've definitely had some situations, I've had some, some renters that I've had two incredible renters. And I've had three that I two that literally just lift in the middle of the night and never came back.

Andy: Oh, God

Brandon: didn't say anything. And I'm calling and calling and calling. Yeah. So I've had some bad experiences. But for the most part, it's been it's been fine. Okay.

27:05

Andy: Good. So when thinking about the the issue of housing that we have here in America, and the this problem, how do you view it? Do you think it's a moral problem? Is it political? Is it economic? How would you discuss it?

27:21

Brandon: let me say this, I

27:24

I think it's a mix of, I do think that everyone should have access to a safe, decent house definitely have a place to live. Yeah, I definitely think so. But I also understand that a landlord should have the ability to make money, in the place available. And I think that there should be some, there has to be some, some middle ground. In order to do that. I just think that we get as a country, we've got to find a better balance of, you know, providing resources so that we can have affordable decent housing, but also inspire folks for homeownership inspire folks to, you know, to provide, hey, you can do this, understand that, you know, provide more resources to help people get out of credit, a credit issue. Yeah, and whatnot. So I think it's a little it's a mix of it all.

28:27

Andy: Okay. What do you think about homeless people or homelessness in general?

28:34

Brandon: here's the thing we've got,

28:36

I mean, we do have a homeless crisis. And I applaud a lot of the organizations that are doing some really strong work to finding permanent supportive housing. But I also think that the homeless situation is it's a it's a greater it, there's a there's a greater not it's not just the housing situation. I think it's an economic situation, but providing folks with with a livable wage, and providing job opportunities. I think that's a critical piece. I think there's a definite mental health issue, that there are a significant number of homeless individuals had mental health issues and they're in homelessness, because they can't have they don't have access to quality mental health services. So I think that's a that's a layer of it. That's really important.

29:28

And again, you know,

29:30

the other side is that we do not have there's a significant number, a drought of affordable places for folks that that are making pennies or not making pennies at all. Yeah, to live so we have to find resources. But again, this is my moderate hat back on. I also think that we do have people that abused the system, but I think they're also have to be checks and balances for folks that aren't using the system? Yeah,

30:04

Andy: what do so thinking about some of those, you know, things that are done for people to have an affordable place to live? What do you think about the projects or like section eight type housing?

30:16

So, um, I, you know,

30:17

I'm a fan of, I'm a fan section 8. I like section 8, I think section is actually a great program. Um, I am, I struggle, I personally struggle with projects in this sense that you by lumping, you know, 500 people in a structure, and all 500 of these people are low income folk. And, you know, of course, generally, oftentimes, that you have these project developments, and they're not in, they're not kept up. They're not, you know, I just think it's a recipe. I'm a fan of mixed use. I'm not mixed use mixed income housing. Yeah, I love mixed income housing, because I think that's how you live the people because there's something they can aspire to. And ultimately, I having a mix of incomes, there's a greater likelihood that the standard of living and the quality of the product is, is can be more sustainable for more.

31:28

Andy: Okay, so then what about like, I mean, I there's some popping up in Baton Rouge, but here in New Orleans, especially all the new condo complexes and apartment complexes that are you know, being built, what do you think about those?

31:42

I think that I, you know, again, I think it can be a mixed income concept. In those condos in those, you know, where we can't we're mixing though, because I know, a buddy of mine was saying the story that during Katrina, their house flooded, and they moved into the mix unit mixed income housing, and they literally, they would walk around and like, okay, I don't even know, who is low income and who's not. But, but that that was the power. That was the power of building true mixed income. So I don't, you know, again, for for these really big condos where they're there they are well above my paygrade. If there's a market, there's a market, but I think that, um, I do think that from a policy standpoint, if we can limit these massive developments that are well out there, again, I'll just say this, I don't think that these condos, they're well above market market rate are sustainable in the long run for at least for at the at the rate that they're growing. Yeah. So I think that their their policy issue that can be made for how do we, you know, I don't know if it's inclusionary zones or, or what, but I think there's a policy strategy that that local governments or state governments can make to say, Hey, you know, we need to be building affordable, as well as, or there's there's only a certain number of permits that we will allow for condos that are above market rates. It's not mixed income, there are tax repercussions that are whatnot, did, there's different ways we could do it. Yeah, I think that's the strategy. Okay.

33:32

Andy: So

33:34

being a Democrat. How do you think Democrats view this problem with housing?

33:42

I think for the most part, we definitely, I mean, there, it aligns with kind of my belief, understanding then that we need options we need affordable, we need to provide, I guess, I think that the given the democratic strategy of using policy to help aid that is the right path. I think that, you know, again, the Republican side would be you know, no government interference, whatnot. I think the democratic process of providing sound policy and how we develop and having a smart growth development strategy is how that's how you can alleviate some of those issues.

34:26

Andy: So when when you see democrats put forth policy, you feel like oftentimes it aligns with what you think is a good decision. Seeing that alignment does that does that make you feel like okay awesome. Like I love being a democrat like that's great or is there feel like there's still some disconnect? Well, I think

34:47

Brandon: I think let me say I think that Democrats as a party, we've not we doing a a crappy I was gonna curse sign

34:56

here. Fine. they do a shitty job.

35:01

From a communication shot, yeah, um, and, and terms of what is the benefit for the whole, I think a lot of time, folks in the middle of things, folks, the right they see affordable housing, housing as a gimme. And it's an I, I see affordable housing, and how that is a way of us to lift communities up. And if we're not, and we've got to, we've got to find ways to live communities up. So ultimately, you know, I wish that the democrats do a better job of communicating the why not what, and if don't get a better job of communicating why, how this benefits the entire community, how affordable housing lifts up and hasn't had a stronger economic development for the entire community benefit. That is how we start winning these back. Because I mean, let's just let's just put, let's just put out there, hey, we love that they were great. Joe Biden lost Florida, in part because he lost the Cuban American vote, because they were using, because we probably can successfully use this socialist term. And, you know, we as a party did not do enough to come back the concept that we are socialist, and we are not. Yeah, I think that happened across the country. I mean, he's like, I have a lot of friends on both sides. And I have some friends and I keep them and my friends, hey, because they comment on Facebook, on all of our stuff. And, and I've got one old, she was a mentor of mine in college, she's probably 70 years old. And she's heavily Trump, and she has something to say about everything, but she has a heart of gold. And again, I they believe this concept of socialism, ya know, your kinds are socialist and all that it's something, again, I think is a communication issue more than

36:59

Andy: Why do you think that there is this disconnect between being able to discuss or explain the what, and being able to explain the why.

37:11

Brandon: So I think he's messaging on one. So I'm giving very example. And this is just it's related, but it's not really. So we just started adversity community committee, Mr. Office, okay. And his current or we're about to evolve, but it is five folks of color. And our CEO, and our CEO is a 65 year old white white man, who, of course, we're not, of course, but he is. And

37:37

Andy: I mean, he runs a bank, it's.

37:41

Brandon: So the discussion was about, I think about the term Black Lives Matter. And we talked about defunding the police, too. So his concept of Black Lives Matter means Black

Lives Matter. Oh, yeah. And when I'm in the meeting, I say no, it doesn't it actually means blacklivesmatter. Yeah. You know, there's a kind of concept of defend the police, and in essence, different agrees again, I will never say the final point. Okay, that's wildly inappropriate concept. But met the the messaging behind or that the messaging but the, the concept behind different place is more about reallocating money to social services and social workers and, and conflict resolution and social programs, whatnot. So ultimately, I think it really is dependent on how do you how do you craft the message in a way that is more palatable to more people? Yeah. And we do a better job of that we're going to continue to have these issues, and you're going to have the Far, far end of both political parties, political parties to bring this together. Yeah, absolutely. that's

38:57

Andy: a that's a great example. I think that's, yeah, I think that's a really good example. Okay, so earlier, you said that, you know, Democrats are really good at, you know, the values that they hold our inclusion and equity and making sure everyone has a seat at the table. How do you see these values affecting the way they approach the problem of housing?

39:25

Brandon: Well, I think here's the thing. I think that

39:29

when it comes to housing, but let's say I think everyone needs a seat at the table when we talk about housing, because there's a developer community that needs to be a part of this discussion. And housing. There are you have your government officials that need to be a part of the housing but as I see the table what happened but the actual people in the housing need to it that are that will be living in the towns. low income individuals need to see that the table about what what True affordability and what true quality looks like. And I think that the Dems have I think that had a better approach to bring people to the table, as opposed to telling, I have a problem with folks that tell people, this is how you're supposed to do it, when it affects them. I think we have a, we have a problem with telling people, you can hate poor people. This is how you're supposed to do that. Yeah. Um, when you've never been, or you've never, you've never seen those struggles and whatnot. So I definitely think that that do a better job of being more inclusive, and having more people at the table.

40:48

So what what value would you say is maybe leading the the way that they view housing, right, if there's still room to go, there's still ground to make up what has led the way thus far, what has been the most important value in the way that they're approaching housing? Well, I think,

41:07

Brandon: um, the value of providing, again, housing, I think housing is fundamentally important, because housing, if your house if you if you were not home secure, nothing else matters. Yeah, work does not matter. your quality of life does not matter if you are housing insecure. So by having a focus on homes, housing, security, I think, and by by again, the Dems have been successful, because they've been able to stitch together a coalition of folks that include folks that have lower means folks that are of color folks that, you know, in LGBT or whatever that that mix, that funky coalition looks like. I think I've been very inclusive about that. And the Dems are attempting to date they're not there. They're not you know, and I was in a party is not perfect, by any stretch of the imagination. But by

understanding that by bringing those folks to the table and understanding that as a whole, that's the value that I think there was, is the leading piece than understanding that home insecurity affects everything. Yeah. And we can find ways to affect to positively positively address that. Nothing else matters.

42:37

Andy: Okay. I like that. So what do you think is the best thing that Democrats can do to support those who struggle with housing?

42:47

Brandon: So I think one policy, policy will always be always be important. And that's policy on this local, state and national level, we have to be very more, a lot more intentional about those powers. And that's one, I think, I guess from a Louisiana standpoint, investing in the Housing Trust Fund, is going to be a really great way. I think we've got to also be very creative with how we, how we provide those policies and how we allocate those trust funds. And more importantly, how do we encourage mixed income housing? I think that's a critical piece. But ultimately, as I said before, communication, again, I'm a marketing guy. That's my background. That is what I do. I'm a marketing communications guy. Yeah, we got a we got to do a better job of communicating. And it's not us versus them. It's us. And that's how, that's how I think that's how you move the needle. Yeah. Cuz then if you move it away from us versus them, and it's just us, then, and you communicate why these are that housing is just that basic meaning for us for to create a better economy. That's how you look for

44:07

Andy: what do you what do you think is a way that we can kind of show everyone Hey, we are on the same team?

44:15

Brandon: Again, I think, um,

44:18

Brandon: I think it's so so it is super storytelling, some of it is, is communicate. Okay, so I guess a great example of that in New Orleans is the Pythian, which is great mixed income housing. I think that's a really great story of how you have low income and medium and Middle and upper income all living in one and it's a strong develop. I think that's going to be a critical, critical piece. I think, you know, engineering thousand dollar, they're doing some really great work providing those policy reports and things like that, but I think it goes down even deeper. I think you really have to communicate to folks What is the economic case? I don't think we do a good job of what is the economic case points. We say, Hey, this is going to help low income folks. And that's great. And I think people want to help low income folks. That's not enough. People care. I mean, let's just say if this economic is election itself, prove to us that people's name for a lot of folks, their main objective of the economy, I would say, probably, and maybe I'm wrong, but I'll say this, I think that 30% I would say at least 50% of Trump's the people around her, and I'm just saying this, but 50% don't really like the guy. Um, they don't. But they they have they they have been lulled into this belief. He has been beneficial for their for their pocketbooks. Yeah, that is why they're voting for and weren't voting for Donald Trump. They were voting for the Republican Party. I think half of my friends that I talked to that are Trump has said that to me privately, and I don't like the guy, but I like what he's done. I think again, I don't think they'll do. Right. from an economic standpoint, but that's neither here nor there. Again, this is a this is a messaging story. Yeah.

He has done whatever you Whatever you say, he's done a phenomenal job with messaging why his policy is effective?

46:36

Andy: Okay, so adjust the messaging and find economic messages that resonate with people, especially for those economic issues. Do you think it matters whether or not it's going to be a net positive and revenue? Or is it okay, if it's, you know, subsidized through taxes? I mean, what what messaging do you think is going to be most effective for conveying this issue on how to help?

47:08

Sure.

47:09

Brandon: I mean, I don't know. I think that, you know, um, I think I think people understand that, you know, that section eight, for example. I mean, people understand that. It, you know, subsidized things are okay. I think it really shouldn't, I think it becomes how does this, how does affordable housing as putting together sound housing policy, help the overall economics of a community?

47:42

Andy: Yeah.

47:43

Brandon: And that's the thing is the thing that we've not done a great job with is, what happens when folks are if we lift more people out of housing insecurity? And how and what is that effect? What effect does that have on the economy as a community as a whole? I think that there's lots of research out there and communicate that we've had to do a better way, we have to do a better job of communicating that and getting more allies that are that are in the middle or slightly to the right, to come to understand that this is an economic case for you not just a giveaway.

48:23

Andy: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Okay, awesome. Well, that's really all the questions that I have for you, Brandon. Also, do you have any final thoughts on kind of this nexus of identity and politics and housing? You know,

48:37

Brandon: I think at the end of the day, you know, I said before, I think the communication is important, and I really look forward to the day when people can understand that folks have lesser means are still valuable. And they're still important. And they still, and they still want to live, to have a sense of dignity of where they live.

49:07

Yeah. And who they are.

49:10

And I think once we start moving towards that, and even then, and how do we communicate that, that I you know, again, I yes, I'm moderate income. But I still I still want to live a dignified life. Yeah. And, and come and how do you connect? And I think honestly, the

dignity word is an important thing. How do you communicate that? affordable housing is about providing dignity to folks. Yeah. Dignity ultimately does yield to other outcomes, other you know, on wanting to live a better life, wanting to have a job, wanting to be more productive in you're living. So I just think that making sure that we communicate Because ultimately, whoever you are, all you want in life is to be different. And you want to Yeah. How do we communicate that and and understand that, that having a house is about having didn't take the time.

50:19

Andy: Yeah, that's that's a really interesting kind of final comment because a lot of the more conservative people that I talked to republicans especially talk about, like how, you know, there, there's individual mobility, and it's like individual rugged, rugged individualism that kind of, you know, we want to enable here in America, and they talk about how you know, hard work brings dignity and you know, it's up to you to, you know, make it up. And whenever you do, it shows that you have, like, earned these things. And so there's a lot of their conversation really kind of centers around this idea of being dignified. And so it's interesting to hear someone who is a Democrat, talk about things in the same terms and like put equity in that same conversation with hard work via dignity. That's, that's a really interesting connection that you're making for, like, several of the other conversations that I've had over the past few weeks. So I really like at point.

51:13

Okay, good, good. Awesome.

51:14

Okay. Well, as I said, that's all that I have for you. I really appreciate your time. Thank you so much. If you have any final thoughts or comments or anything, just shoot me an email. But again, thank you so much. I it's been wonderful,

51:27

guys to do it. Awesome. We'll see you later.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

Republican/Democrat Topic guide

Background:

1. To start us off, could you tell me a little bit about yourself, where you're from and where you grew up?

Identity:

When we talk about these things, we're talking about pieces of your identity, whether that is personal or social.

2. In terms of social identity, how do you see yourself?
 - What is important to who you are and how you see yourself?
 - Expand/Explain
 - Has the way in which you identify yourself changed over time in any way? Why?
 - Would you say any particular parts of your identity to be more important than others? Which parts? Why?
 - What values do you think are most important to being a part of that identity?
 - What do you think is the most pressing problem facing America?
3. Does who you are seem to change in different settings? If so, can you give some examples?
 - How does it feel to you when it changes?
 - Does it feel like you are someone else, or does it feel like you are the same but you just have different ways of thinking in different contexts?

Political views:

4. So you've told me that you consider yourself a member of XX party. What does it mean to you to be a member of XXX party?
 - What values do you think are most important for the XX party?
 - What are some of the best things the XXX have done recently?
 - How does that make you feel?
5. Thinking about the upcoming election, what are some of the most important issues for the election?
 - If you don't mind me asking, who will you be voting for?
 - Which issues do you think are most important?
 - What do you think of your candidate's platform?
6. Given the pandemic situation, how, if at all, do you think you will do anything differently when it comes to your participation in the upcoming election?
 - If yes; what do you think that those who organize elections should adapt or change how the election is run this year?
 - What sort of adaptations do you think would be useful (if needed prompt; timing, access to polling stations, safety of polling stations or anything else)?

- There was much controversy about the election following Katrina. Do you remember it?
 - Imagine that an election was taking place directly in the aftermath of a major environmental disaster like Katrina, what do you think should be done about the organisation of the election in such a case?
 - If you now think of elections following a major terrorist attack and with fears that more attacks might occur imminently, what sort of adjustments would you like to be made?
7. How would you describe the role of a voter in your own words?
- Do you think voters have a specific moral responsibility as part of that role?
 - Are there any behaviours that would be considered morally unacceptable as a voter?
8. Sometimes, the way democracy works in our country can feel quite frustrating. Can you describe situations that you find frustrating about the way democracy works in our country?
- When you think of what people do to make democracy works better, is there anything you feel you could or should be doing differently yourself?
 - How about other people?

Housing in general:

Me: Now I'd like to move on to some questions that are specifically about social issues, such as housing, food and other resources that Americans might struggle to access

9. Tell me about how your housing history.
- Have you ever rented before?
 - How many places did you live growing up?
 - Were there ever any difficulties concerning your housing, food or other necessities growing up?
 - o If so, what was that like?
10. How do you think your party views the problems of housing, food, and other necessities that people struggle with?
- Why is that?
 - Do you agree with this perception?
 - Can you name any recent action by your party to help others concerning these issues?
 - Is your party always consistent on these issues? Or does it seem to change?
 - o If so, why?
 - How do you feel about this? Is it normal, or does it make it harder to fully identify with your party?
11. How do you view the problem of housing specifically?
- Do you think it is a moral problem, an economic problem, or a political problem?
 - What do you think of homeless people, or homelessness in general?
 - What about the projects, or Section 8 housing?
 - What about condos and all the new apartment complexes?

- Do you think more should be done to help people who struggle with housing?

12. Earlier you said that your party holds these values?

- How do you see these values affecting the problem of housing?
- If this value is most important, how does that play out?
- What about if this other value is most important?

13. What do you think is the best thing your party can do to support those who struggle with housing?

Resistance:

14. What are your thoughts on the data I just presented?

- What can be done to solve this problem?

15. Do you think that housing should be a bigger issue in the upcoming election?

- Why/why not?

16. Why do you think this problem is not talked about much?

17. After seeing this data, has your perspective on the housing problem changed at all?

Final questions/wrap up:

18. Are there things I have not asked that you think I should?

19. Is there anything you would like to add?

End

Ask more questions about the developmental history of New Orleans, how have development patterns based on elections, segregation, mayoral decision, etc.

HousingNOLA should focus on policymakers and legislators, long term build a government group

Appendix 4: Fieldwork & Ethics Approval – Partisan Qualitative Work

Request for REC approval to resume face-to-face fieldwork/research activities

For studies which began prior to the COVID19 outbreak, please send the completed template to the Research Ethics Committee via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

For new studies, please complete an ethics review form in the usual way (see guidelines [here](#)) and send that and the completed template below to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

| |
|--|
| 1. PI name (and name of person submitting the request if not the PI) |
| Andrew Stewart |
| 2. Title of study |
| The effect of social identity on moral decision making in America |
| 3. Research ethics review approval date (month/year) |
| 15/09/2020 |
| 4. Department approval or REC? If REC, please provide REC ref no. |
| Departmental Approval |
| 5. Location in which fieldwork takes place (country + area/region as appropriate) |
| New Orleans, Louisiana |
| 6. Brief description of the research |
| I will be interviewing individuals about their judgments on the local issue of housing, which is both a prominent issue in the city, as well as an issue that will be on the ballot in November for voting. |
| 7. What national and/or regional restrictions and public health regulations are currently in place, and what is the local level of transmission? [Please provide links to any relevant restrictions/ guidelines/statistics] |
| New Orleans is currently in “Phase 3” of their reopening. This means that schools, along with the majority of businesses are allowed to reopen at 75% capacity, with social distancing and masks still required. Bars are allowed to reopen at 25% capacity as well. This phase will be in place for a month, until Oct. 9 th , when they will move to the next phase, as long as the positivity rate stays below 5%. The current rate is <u>1.6%</u> |
| 8. Who will carry out in-person data collection: local partners (please specify, e.g. research associates, enumerators, etc.) or yourself? (In all cases a risk assessment will also need to be completed (as the School has a duty of care where 3rd parties are being engaged). Please contact the <u>Health and Safety</u> team for guidance. |
| The research will be carried out by myself, in conjunction with a larger project run by the organization HousingNOLA. |
| 9. Why is in-person data collection necessary, as opposed to being conducted remotely/online? |
| Though the some of the interviews could be conducted online (and will be), I am working with different organizations across the city that are back to having in-person meetings. These interviews will be run during/after their in-person meetings. I believe I will have a much |

higher response rate by meeting my participants where they are, as opposed to setting things up online.

10. If contact was not already made prior to the epidemic, can initial contact with/recruitment of participants be conducted remotely/online (to make absolutely sure that participants are comfortable with engaging with the proposed in-person contact)

Yes. Initial contact and recruitment of the participants will occur mostly remotely.

11. Do you consider that the national/local public health rules/norms provide adequate protection for participants? If no, what measures are you taking to ensure that your research activities pose no additional/unnecessary risk to your research participants and to yourself?

Yes. All participants will be asked to wear a mask, as will I. Additionally, we will take each participants temperature before conducting the interviews and maintain proper social distance. For the interviews that will take place indoors, the location will be properly ventilated.

12. Please ensure that your informed consent documentation (or script in the case of verbal consent) makes clear any additional risks to participants due to COVID-19, and attach a copy here.

Study Information

This project investigates moral decision making in the United States of America (USA). It is conducted by Andrew Stewart from the Department of Behavioural and Psychological Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom.

All questions should be answered spontaneously and intuitively. Please be honest – it's all about your own experiences. There are no right or wrong answers.

How will my privacy and confidentiality of my research records be protected?

Please be assured that your responses are confidential and anonymous, and that the information you provide in this interview will not be tied to you in any way. The information in this interview will be used strictly for research purposes, and the responses you provide will be stored only on the computers of the researchers. As such, we hope that you can be honest about your thoughts and feelings on the topics in this interview.

Can I refuse to participate in this research?

Yes, you can. Your decision to participate in this research is voluntary and completely up to you. You can also withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reasons, by informing the principal investigator and all your data collected will be discarded.

What happens when the research study stops?

We hope to publish the results of this study in a scientific journal. We may also present the results at a scientific conference or a seminar in a university. We may also publish results on our website.

What if there is a problem and who should I contact for further information?

Any complaint or concern about any aspect of the way you have been dealt with during the course of the study will be addressed; please contact Andrew Stewart: a.stewart1@lse.ac.uk. If you have any concern or complaints regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the LSE Research Governance Manager via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

COVID Precautions

In accordance with local, state, and federal guidelines, all interviews will be conducted either via Zoom or in person. For interviews that are conducted in person, social distance will be maintained. Participants will be required to wear masks and have their temperature taken upon arrival for the interview. Additionally, contact tracing will be performed if necessary.

By signing below, you are confirming that you agree to the following:

You are 18 years of age or older

Your participation is voluntary

You understand your right to stop and withdraw at any point up until the study is completed

You understand that your data will be anonymous and used for research purposes only

You understand the information provided

Appendix 5: Research Ethics Form – Christian Primes Study

Word version at: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/resEthPolProForm.docx>

Annex B: Research Ethics Review

This form should be completed for every research project that involves human participants or the use of information relating to directly identifiable individuals.

PART I - CHECKLIST

The Checklist is designed to identify the nature of any ethical issues raised by the research.

This checklist must be completed before potential participants are approached to take part in any research.

1. Name of Researcher: Andrew Stewart

| | | | | |
|--|--|------------------|-----------------|--|
| Status (mark with an 'X' as appropriate) | Undergraduate student | | Masters student | |
| | Research degree student | X | Staff | |
| Email | a.stewart1@lse.ac.uk | Telephone number | 07397234801 | |
| Department | Psychological and Behavioural Sciences | | | |

2. Student Details if applicable

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Degree programme: | PhD in Psychology | | |
| Supervisor's name: | Bradley Franks | Supervisor's email: | b.franks@lse.ac.uk |
| Supervisor's department: | Psychological and Behavioural Sciences | | |

3. Title of the proposal and brief abstract

i) Title: Within Identity Differences: a study on social identity and its effect on moral decision-making

ii) Abstract

(approx. 150-200 words. Your abstract should outline in non-technical language **the purpose of the research** and the **methods** that will be used.)

Identity is commonly treated as a monolithic. However, Social Identity Approach argues that social identities are complex and nuanced. We explore the varying content within identities to understand the relationship between identity and moral decision-making. This paper is comprised of 6 studies (data to be collected using online platforms, such as MTurk and Prolific Academic) using identity priming focusing on differing content of the same identity and the Trolley Problem—a commonly used method of evaluating moral decision making. The first study surveys Christians; the second study, Muslims; the third study surveys religious Jews; the fourth surveys atheists; the fifth and sixth studies survey self-identifying conservatives and liberals, respectively. Data will be analysed using a combination of ANCOVAs, t-tests, and correlative measures. Specifically, this paper utilizes divergent values within an identity's moral system to elicit differing behaviour. The focus on values already in existence, rather than trying to create superordinate values or identities makes a necessary first step in understanding how social identity affects individuals' moral decision-making. This paper informs literature on both social identity

and moral psychology. We suggest further research on Within Identity Differences, especially concerning moral contexts.

4. Funding

Is it proposed that the research will be funded? Yes

If so by whom? The research will be funded by a combination of collaborators funds, self-funded. I am also applying for RIFF funding

5. Where the research will be conducted

In what country/ies will the research take place? (See Note 1)

United States

6. Data Management Plans

Please confirm whether you have completed a Data Management Plan and submitted to Datalibrary@lse.ac.uk ? (See Note 2) Yes / No

| | <i>Please mark an X in the appropriate right-hand column/box</i> | Yes | No | Not certain |
|--|--|-----|----|-------------|
| 7. Research that <i>may</i> need to be reviewed by an external (non-LSE) Ethics Committee | | | | |
| i | Will the study require Health Research Authority approval? (See Note 3) | | X | |
| ii | Does the study involve participants lacking capacity to give informed consent? (See Note 4) | | X | |
| iii | Is there any other reason why the study may need to be reviewed by another external (non-LSE) Ethics Committee? If yes, please give details here: | | X | |
| If your research will be reviewed by an external (non-LSE) ethics committee, you may not need to complete the rest of this LSE review form – please email research.ethics@lse.ac.uk for guidance. | | | | |
| 8. Consent (See Note 5) | | | | |
| i | Does the study involve children or other participants who are potentially or in any way vulnerable or who may have any difficulty giving meaningful consent to their participation or the use of their information? (See Note 6) | | X | |
| ii | Are subjects to be involved in the study without their knowledge and consent (e.g. through internet-mediated research, or via covert observation of people in public places)? | | X | |
| iii | Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (Answer 'yes' to this question only if the involvement of a gatekeeper in your study might raise issues of whether participants' involvement is truly voluntary or of whether the gatekeeper might influence potential participants in some other way.) | | X | |
| 9. Research Design / Methodology | | | | |
| i | Does the research methodology involve the use of deception? (See Note 7) | | X | |
| ii | Are there any significant concerns regarding the design of the research project? For example: | | X | |

| | <i>Please mark an X in the appropriate right-hand column/box</i> | Yes | No | Not certain |
|---|---|-----|----|-------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where research intrudes into the private sphere or delves into some deeply personal experience; • where the study is concerned with deviance or social control; • where the study impinges on the vested interests of powerful persons or the exercise of coercion or domination; or • where the research deals with things that are sacred to those being studied that they do not wish profaned. | | | |
| iii | Does the proposed research relate to the provision of social or human services? | | X | |
| 10. Financial Incentives | | | | |
| | Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants that might have an impact on the objectivity of the research? | | X | |
| 11. Research Subjects | | | | |
| i | Could the study induce unacceptable psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life? | | X | |
| ii | Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? For example (but not limited to): sexual activity, illegal behaviour, experience of violence or abuse, drug use, etc.). (Please refer to the Research Ethics Policy, § 13). | | X | |
| iii | Are drugs, placebos or other substances to be administered to study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind? | | X | |
| 12. Confidentiality | | | | |
| i | Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given? | | X | |
| ii | Is there ambiguity about whether the information/data you are collecting is considered to be public? | | X | |
| iii | Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use? | | X | |
| iv | Will the research involve the use of visual/vocal methods that potentially pose an issue regarding confidentiality and anonymity? | | X | |
| 13. Legal requirements | | | | |
| | Is there any reason why the research will NOT comply with the requirements of current data protection legislation? (<i>See Note 8</i>) | | X | |
| 14. Dissemination | | | | |
| | Are there any particular groups who are likely to be harmed by dissemination of the results of this project? Or is there any potential for misuse of the findings? | | X | |
| 15. Risk to researchers | | | | |
| | Does your research pose any risks to your physical or psychological wellbeing, or that of others working with you? | | X | |
| 16. Sensitive research materials | | | | |
| | Will the research involve accessing security-sensitive material, such as material related to terrorism or violent extremism of any kind? (<i>See Note 9</i>) | | X | |

Please continue to Part II

PART II: Low Risk, Departmental/centre/institute certification and/or next steps

Please note that there are certain circumstances where Self-certification of ethics review is not appropriate. Please see Note 10.

A If, after careful consideration, you have answered **No** to all the questions, you do not need to complete the questionnaire in Part III, unless you are subject to some external requirement that requires you to seek formal approval from the School's Research Ethics Committee. You can select **A** in the **Low risk, Departmental/Centre/Institute Certification Section** below, sign as appropriate and submit the form to the appropriate approver in your Department, Centre or Institute. Occasional audits of such forms may be undertaken by the School.

B If you have answered **Yes** or **Not certain** to any of the questions in sections 8-16 of the checklist you will need to consider more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research. Answering the relevant questions in the Questionnaire in Part III below may assist you. If having done so you are wholly assured that adequate safeguards in relation to the ethical issues raised can and will be put in place, you may select **B** in the Low risk/Departmental/Centre/Institute certification Section below, sign as appropriate and submit the form to the appropriate approver in your Department, Centre or Institute. Occasional audits of such forms may be undertaken by the School.

C If you have answered Yes in section 7 that your research will be subject to review by an external (non-LSE) ethics committee, please select **C** below and send the Checklist (questions 1-7) to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk. You should submit your research for ethics approval to the appropriate external body. Once approval is granted please send a copy of the letter of approval to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

D If **Departmental/Centre/Institute certification is not appropriate** you should complete the questionnaire in Part III below, the '**Refer to Research Ethics Committee Section**' at the end of the form, and then submit the form to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk

LOW RISK, DEPARTMENTAL/CENTRE /INSTITUTE CERTIFICATION

Select A, B or C (delete as appropriate):

I have read and understood the LSE Research Ethics Policy and the questions contained in the Checklist above and confirm:

A that no significant ethical issues are raised by the research, or

Please complete the box below and sign the relevant section

i) Summary of any ethical issues identified and safeguards to be taken

ii) Details of relevant experience or training in this area

Low risk/Departmental / Centre / Institute Certifications should be approved as follows:

- MSc (or undergraduate) student review forms should be approved/signed by the academic supervisor. (PhD students cannot approve ethics review forms);
- PhD student review forms should be approved/signed by the supervisor
- Research staff who are not PIs should have their review forms approved/signed by the PI;
- Faculty and any research staff who are PIs on grants should have their review forms counter-signed by a designated research ethics champion in their Department / Centre or Institute, for example its research director

| | | | |
|--|--|-------|--|
| Signature of researcher (whether student or staff): | | Date: | |
| Approved by (name) | | | |
| Approved by (signature)*: | | Date: | |

*By signing here the approver confirms that to the best of their understanding any ethical issues have been adequately addressed in the research design, and the researcher has been made aware of her/his responsibilities for the ethical conduct of her/his research. If in doubt, please refer to your departmental ethics champion, or to the Research Governance Manager, research.ethics@lse.ac.uk

Part III - QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire enables you to explain how the ethical issues relating to your research will be addressed. If you are intending to submit your proposal to the Research Ethics Committee it needs to be completed in full.

17. Research aims

Please provide brief (no more than approx.500 words) details in non-technical language of the research aims, the scientific background of the research and the methods that will be used. This summary should contain sufficient information to acquaint the Committee with the principal features of the proposal. A copy of the full proposal should nonetheless be attached to this document in case it is required for further information.

| | |
|---|---|
| | |
| 18. Informed consent | |
| i. | Has information (written and oral) about the study been prepared in an appropriate form and language for potential participants? At what point in the study will this information be offered? (<u>See Note 5</u>) |
| | |
| ii | Will potential participants be asked to give informed consent <i>in writing</i> and will they be asked to confirm that they have received and read the information about the study? If not, why not? <i>Please attach your proposed information sheet and consent form.</i> |
| | |
| iii. | If the research takes place within an online community, explain how informed consent will be obtained? What arrangements are in place for ensuring that participants do not include vulnerable groups or children? |
| | |
| iv. | How has the study been discussed or are there plans to discuss the study with those likely to be involved, including potential participants or those who may represent their views? |
| | |
| v | Will potential participants be clearly informed that no adverse consequences will follow a decision not to participate or to withdraw during the study? |
| | |
| vi | What provision has been made to respond to queries and problems raised by participants during the course of the study? |
| | |
| 19. Research design and methodology | |
| i | Where the research involves the use of deception (or the withholding of full information about the study), how does the research methodology justify this? |
| | |
| ii | How will data be collected and analysed during the project? |
| | |
| iii | How have the ethical and legal dimensions of the process of collecting, analyzing and storing the data been addressed? |
| | |
| iv | If agencies, communities or individuals may be directly affected by the research (e.g. participants, service users, vulnerable communities or relations), what means have you devised to ensure that any harm or distress is minimized and/or that the research is sensitive to the particular needs and perspectives of those so affected? |
| | |
| 20. Ethical questions arising from the provision of incentives | |
| | Are any incentives being offered to participants? If so, please provide details |

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| | |
| 21. Research participants | |
| i | Who do you identify as the participants in the project? Are other people who are not participants likely to be directly or indirectly impacted by the project? |
| | |
| ii | Are there any specific risks to research participants or third parties? If so, please give details |
| | |
| iii | If the research involves pain, stress, physical or emotional risk, please detail the steps taken to minimize such effects. |
| | |
| 22. Confidentiality | |
| i. | What arrangements have been made to preserve confidentiality and anonymity for the participants or those potentially affected, and compliance with data protection law? |
| | |
| ii | Have you considered the limits to confidentiality, if, for instance, a participant should disclose information which suggests that they or someone else may be at significant risk of harm? |
| | |
| 23. Dissemination | |
| | Will the results of the study be offered to those participants or other affected parties who wish to receive them? If so, what steps have been taken to minimize any discomfort or misrepresentation that may result at the dissemination stage. |
| | |
| 24. Risk to researchers | |
| | Are there any risks to researchers? If so, please provide details. |
| | |

REFER TO RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Approval is required by the Research Ethics Committee on one or more of the following grounds (please mark with an 'X' in the appropriate place in the right-hand column):

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| a. | <p>Significant ethical issues are raised by the research, including research characterised by one or more of the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Research involving deception of participants, or which is conducted without their full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out or when the data is gathered, or which involves the use of confidential information. (ii) Research where informed consent will be obtained orally but not in writing; | |
|----|--|--|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | (iii) Research involving any of the following: vulnerable groups; personally intrusive or ethically sensitive topics; groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members (where involvement of the gatekeeper might raise issues of whether participants' involvement is truly voluntary); research which would induce undue psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation cause more than minimal pain; (iv) Research involving more than minimal risk of harm to the researcher(s) | |
| b. | The researcher wants to seek the advice of the Research Ethics Committee | |
| c. | External obligations (for instance, funder requirements, data access requirements) require it | |
| d. | Research undertaken by a student or member of staff who has not received appropriate training or has insufficient experience in research ethics and has been unable to access appropriate advice or support. | |
| Please submit your review form, research proposal and your planned Information Sheet and Consent form to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk for review by the Research Ethics Committee. | | |

NOTES

1. If the research will be conducted abroad you will need to complete a Notification to Travel form. If you will be travelling to a high risk destination you may need to complete a risk identification form and a risk assessment form. Please see: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Risk-and-Compliance-Unit/Health-and-Safety/Fieldwork-overseas-travel-and-off-site-activities> . Note that if the location or nature of the research presents a high degree of risk, the Research Ethics Committee may check with the Health and Safety team that a risk assessment is underway.

2. If you have not already done so, please complete a Data Management Plan (DMP). We recommend using the templates provided on DMPonline: <https://dmponline.dcc.ac.uk/> Guidance on writing a DMP and using DMPonline can be found on the Library webpages at:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Library/Research-support/Research-Data-Management/What-is-a-Data-Management-Plan-and-how-do-I-write-one> Unless you have a research funder that is listed, selected the generic DMP option. Please submit your completed DMPs to the Data Librarian on Datalibrary@lse.ac.uk

3. If your research involves participants identified from, or because of, their status as patients of the NHS or other health services of the UK Devolved Administrations, and/or the relatives of such patients then it will most likely fall under the remit of the Health Research Authority; similarly, social care research involving adults children or families and some proposals for social science studies situated in the NHS will fall under the remit of the Social Care Research Ethics Committee. There is an easy-to-use tool to help you ascertain whether or not you need HRA approval or not at: <http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/ethics/> For further guidance see: <http://www.hra.nhs.uk/research-community/before-you-apply/determine-which-review-body-approvals-are-required/>

4. Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, research involving adults aged 16 or over with learning difficulties or who otherwise 'lack capacity' will be subject to approval by an NHS REC if that research is deemed to be 'intrusive'. For guidance see: <http://www.hra.nhs.uk/resources/research-legislation-and-governance/questions-and-answers-mental-capacity-act-2005/>

5. Please refer to the LSE guidance on Informed Consent (which includes a sample template) here:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/policies/pdfs/school/infCon.pdf>. Note that if you will **not** be obtaining **written** consent then your ethics application will need to be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for review.

6. Please note that we follow the ESRC definition of vulnerability which is as follows: ‘Vulnerability may be defined in different ways and may arise as a result of being in an abusive relationship, vulnerability due to age, potential marginalisation, disability, and due to disadvantageous power relationships within personal and professional roles. Participants may not be conventionally ‘vulnerable’, but may be in a dependent relationship that means they can feel coerced or pressured into taking part, so extra care is needed to ensure their participation is truly voluntary.’ <https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/frequently-raised-topics/research-with-potentially-vulnerable-people/>

Please also note that as general guidance, research participants under the age of 18 may be vulnerable. If your research will involve children or other potentially vulnerable participants please refer to the LSE Safeguarding policy at: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/safPol.pdf>

Also, see Note 4 above regarding the Mental Capacity Act.

7. Deception can occur at a variety of levels: for example, at one level, experimental methods may depend on participants being deliberately misled as to the true nature or purpose of the research in which they are taking part; at another, covert participant observation may entail an implicit deception as to the true identity and role of the researcher. Deception may be a legitimate and necessary feature of social scientific research, but its use must always be properly justified. Any research involving deception must be submitted to the LSE Research Ethics Committee for review.

8. Please refer to the School’s guidance on Data Protection and research: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/datProRes.pdf>

9. Where staff or students are planning research projects that will entail accessing security-sensitive material, it is important we ensure that the necessary safeguards are in place to protect both the researcher and the School. Even where there are no ethical issues raised by the research (inasmuch that there are no human participants) it is very important that we have a log of any such research so that students or staff do not run the risk of being wrongly accused of accessing such materials for other/non-research reasons. If your research will involve accessing such material please email research.ethics@lse.ac.uk

10. Applications relating to the following kinds of research should always be subject to review by the Research Ethics Committee:

- (i) Research involving deception of participants, or that is intentionally conducted without their full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out or when the data are gathered
- (ii) Research which involves or may lead to the publication of confidential information
- (iii) Research where informed consent will be obtained orally but not in writing
- (iv) Research involving any of the following:
 - research involving vulnerable groups ;
 - research involving sensitive topics ;
 - research involving groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members (where involvement of the gatekeeper might raise issues of whether participants’ involvement is truly voluntary);
 - research which would induce undue psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause more than minimal pain.
- (v) Research involving more than minimal risk of harm (whether emotional or physical) to the researcher(s)

Appendix 6: Christian Priming Study Consent Form, Primes, & Questionnaire

Christian Identity MTurk

Start of Block: Introduction

Consent

Study Information

This project investigates moral decision making in the United States of America (USA). It is conducted by Andrew Stewart from the Department of Behavioural and Psychological Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom.

All questions should be answered spontaneously and intuitively. Please be honest – it's all about your own experiences. There are no right or wrong answers.

How will my privacy and confidentiality of my research records be protected?

Please be assured that your responses are confidential and anonymous, and that the information you provide in this survey will not be tied to you in any way. The information in this survey will be used strictly for research purposes, and the responses you provide will be stored only on the computers of the researchers. As such, we hope that you can be honest about your thoughts and feelings on the topics in this survey.

Can I refuse to participate in this research?

Yes, you can. Your decision to participate in this research is voluntary and completely up to you. You can also withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reasons, by informing the principal investigator and all your data collected will be discarded.

What happens when the research study stops?

We hope to publish the results of this study in a scientific journal. We may also present the results at a scientific conference or a seminar in a university. We may also publish results on our website.

What if there is a problem and who should I contact for further information?

Any complaint or concern about any aspect of the way you have been dealt with during the course of the study will be addressed; please contact Andrew Stewart: a.stewart1@lse.ac.uk. If

you have any concern or complaints regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the LSE Research Governance Manager via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

Consent By continuing onto the next page, you confirm that:

You are 18 years of age or older

Your participation is voluntary

You understand your right to stop and withdraw at any point up until the study is completed

You understand that your data will be anonymous and used for research purposes only

You understand the information provided

☐ I consent (1)

☐ I do not consent (2)

Click to write the question text

Page Break

Education:

- ☐ Some High School (1)
 - ☐ High School Diploma (2)
 - ☐ Some College (3)
 - ☐ College degree (Bachelors) (4)
 - ☐ Postgraduate degree (MBA, PhD, MD, etc.) (5)
-

Do you identify with any religion?

- ☐ Christian (2)
- ☐ Jewish (5)
- ☐ Muslim (6)
- ☐ Other religion (7) _____
- ☐ No religion (8)

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Control



Please select the middle button to continue:

- ☐ Top (4)
- ☐ Middle (5)
- ☐ Bottom (6)

End of Block: Control

Start of Block: Sin Prime

Please read the following selections:

“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where “the worms that eat them do not die,
and the fire is not quenched.”
- Mark 9:42-48

"You have heard that it was said to people long ago 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says 'you fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."

- Matthew 5:21-22

Please write a few (up to 5) sentences about what these verses mean to you in relation to your faith:

End of Block: Sin Prime**Start of Block: Grace Prime**

Please read the following selections: “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with

all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." - Luke 10:25-37

Please write a few (up to 5) sentences about what these verses mean to you in relation to your faith:

End of Block: Grace Prime

Start of Block: Manipulation Check



Please describe the main theme of the previous texts you have read:

End of Block: Manipulation Check

Start of Block: Intermediation

Thank you for your answers to the first part of our survey.

In the second part of the survey, we would like you to carefully read the story at the next page and answer the following questions.

End of Block: Intermediation

Start of Block: Trolley Regular

Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

Please read the following story carefully and select which action you would take: You are waiting at a train station on a platform. As you wait, you notice a runaway train that is quickly approaching a fork in the tracks. On the tracks extending to the left is a group of five individuals. On the tracks extending to the right is a single individual. From past experience, you know that if you do nothing, the train will surely proceed to the left. However, within arms length is a button that will force the train to proceed to the right. You have seen railway workmen use this button to switch between these two tracks many times in the past. You know that you are the only one who could reach this button in time and there is no other way to save them, and so the decision is yours. Please select next to make your decision.

Page Break

Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

Do you push the button to save the five individuals while killing the one individual?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Page Break

Please rate how confident you are in the decision above:

| | Not Confident (1) | Not very confident (2) | Slightly Confident (3) | Somewhat Confident (4) | Fairly Confident (5) | Very Confident (6) | Absolutely Confident (7) |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Select level of confidence (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please rate how conflicted you felt about the decision above:

| | Not Confident (1) | Not very Conflicted (2) | Slightly Conflicted (3) | Somewhat Conflicted (4) | Fairly Conflicted (5) | Very Conflicted (6) | Absolutely Conflicted (7) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Select level of conflict (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene:

| | Not Obligated (214) | Not very Obligated (215) | Slightly Obligated (216) | Somewhat Obligated (217) | Fairly Obligated (218) | Very Obligated (219) | Absolutely Obligated (220) |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Select level of obligation (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Display This Question:

If Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene: = Slightly Obligated

Or Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene: = Somewhat Obligated

Or Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene: = Fairly Obligated

Or Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene: = Very Obligated

Or Please rate how obligated you felt to intervene: = Absolutely Obligated

You said you felt a slight obligation or greater. Who or what comes to mind when you feel this sense of obligation?

Please explain your decision in the previous story:

End of Block: Trolley Regular

Start of Block: RPS

Please read the following statements and rate how frequently you do the following activities:

| | Never (1) | Rarely (2) | Sometimes (3) | Mostly (4) | Always (5) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| When it comes to deciding how to solve a problem, God and I work together as partners. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When considering a difficult situation, God and I work together to think of possible solutions. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Together, God and I put my plans into action. (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When I feel nervous or anxious about a problem, I work together with God to find a way to relieve my worries. (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| After solving a problem, I work with God to make sense of it. (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When I have a problem, I talk to God about it and together we decide what it means. (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

After I've gone
through a
rough time, I
try to make
sense of it
without
relying on
God. (7)

☐☐☐☐☐

When I have
diffiulty, I
decide what it
means by
myself without
help from
God. (8)

☐☐☐☐☐

When faced
with trouble, I
deal with my
feelings
without God's
help. (9)

☐☐☐☐☐

When deciding
on a solution, I
make a choice
independent of
God's input.
(10)

☐☐☐☐☐

When thinking
about a
difficulty, I try
to come up
with possible
solutions
without God's
help. (11)

☐☐☐☐☐

I act to solve
my problems
without God's
help. (12)

☐☐☐☐☐

Rather than
trying to come
up with the
right solution
to a problem
myself, I let
God decide
how to deal
with it. (13)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

In carrying out
solutions to
my problems, I
wait for God
to take control
and know
somehow He'll
work it out.
(14)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I do not think
about different
solutions to
my problems
because God
provides them
for me. (15)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When a
troublesome
issue arises, I
leave it up to
God to decide
what it means
for me. (16)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When a
situation
makes me
anxious, I wait
for God to take
those feelings
away. (17)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I don't spend
much time
thinking about
troubles I've
had; God
makes sense of
them for me.
(18)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

End of Block: RPS

Start of Block: MFQ

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking? Please rate each statement using this scale:

| | Not at all relevant (1) | Not very relevant (2) | Slightly relevant (3) | Somewhat relevant (4) | Very relevant (5) | Extremely relevant (6) |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Whether or not someone suffered emotionally: (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not some people were treated differently than others: (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not someone's action showed love for his or her country: (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority: (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency: (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not someone was good at math: (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable: (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Whether or
not someone
acted
unfairly: (8)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
did
something
to betray his
or her
group: (9)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
conformed
to the
traditions of
society: (10)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
did
something
disgusting:
(11)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
was cruel:
(12)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
was denied
his or her
rights: (13)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
showed a
lack of
loyalty: (14)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not an action
caused
chaos or
disorder:
(15)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Whether or
not someone
acted in a
way that
God would
approve of:
(16)



Page Break

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking? Please rate each statement using this scale:

| | Strongly disagree (1) | Moderately disagree (2) | Slightly disagree (3) | Slightly agree (4) | Moderately agree (5) | Strongly agree (6) |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue: (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be ensuring that everyone is treated fairly: (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am proud of my country's history: (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Respect for authority is something all children need to learn: (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed: (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It is better to do good than to do bad: (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

One of the
worst things
a person
could do is
hurt a
defenseless
animal: (7)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

Justice is the
most
important
requirement
for a society:
(8)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

People
should be
loyal to their
family
members,
even when
they have
done
something
wrong: (9)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

Men and
women each
have
different
roles to play
in society:
(10)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

I would call
some acts
wrong on
the grounds
that they are
unnatural:
(11)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

It can never
be right to
kill a human
being: (12)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

I think it's
morally
wrong that
rich children
inherit a lot
of money
while poor
children
inherit
nothing:
(13)

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

It is more
important to
be a team
player than
to express
oneself: (14)

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

If I were a
soldier and
disagreed
with my
commanding
officer's
orders, I
would obey
anyway
because that
is my duty:
(15)

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

Chastity is
an important
and valuable
virtue: (16)

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

End of Block: MFQ

Start of Block: Demographics



Age
Finally, some demographic details...

Age:

Gender Gender:

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Please specify: (3) _____
-

Nationality:

- ☐ American (1)
- ☐ Other (2) _____
-

Ethnicity:

- ☐ White/Caucasian (1)
- ☐ Black/African-American (2)
- ☐ Hispanic (3)
- ☐ Native American (4)
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (6)
-

How frequently do you read the Bible?

- ☐ Almost never (1)
 - ☐ Once or twice a year (2)
 - ☐ Every several months (3)
 - ☐ Once a month (4)
 - ☐ Every week or two (5)
 - ☐ Once a week (6)
 - ☐ Several times a week (7)
 - ☐ Daily (8)
-

Q235 How frequently do you attend Church or other religious functions?

- ☐ Almost never (1)
 - ☐ Once or twice a year (2)
 - ☐ Every several months (3)
 - ☐ Once a month (4)
 - ☐ Every week or two (5)
 - ☐ Once a week (6)
 - ☐ Several times a week (7)
 - ☐ Daily (8)
-

Please state with which sect of Christianity you most closely identify:

Please rate your political orientation:

| | Extremely Liberal | Liberal | Moderate Liberal | Moderate | Moderate Conservative | Conservative | Extremely Conservative |
|-------------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|----------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Response () | | | | | | | |

Please select which party you most identify with:

- ☐ Republican (1)
- ☐ Democrat (2)
- ☐ Independent (3)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (4) _____

Q234 Education:

- ☐ Some High School (1)
- ☐ High School Diploma (2)
- ☐ Some College (3)
- ☐ College degree (Bachelors) (4)
- ☐ Postgraduate degree (MBA, PhD, MD, etc.) (5)

Have you ever heard of or completed this Trolley dilemma before?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: MTurk ID

Q249 Here is your ID: \${e://Field/RandomID}

Copy this value to paste into MTurk.

When you have copied this ID, please click the next button to submit your survey.

End of Block: MTurk ID

Appendix 7: Christian Study Moderation Analysis Sample, Study 1

The following analysis is a sample from the moderation analysis that was run as a part of the Christian Priming study. This specific analysis shows the effect of Church Attendance on participants in the Grace prime.

Case Processing Summary

| Unweighted Cases ^a | | N | Percent |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----|---------|
| Selected Cases | Included in Analysis | 195 | 67.2 |
| | Missing Cases | 95 | 32.8 |
| | Total | 290 | 100.0 |
| Unselected Cases | | 0 | .0 |
| Total | | 290 | 100.0 |

a. If weight is in effect, see classification table for the total number of cases.

Dependent Variable Encoding

| Original Value | Internal Value |
|----------------|----------------|
| .00 | 0 |
| 1.00 | 1 |

Categorical Variables Codings

| | | | Parameter coding | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Frequency | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| ethnicity | Asian/Pa | 8 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Black/Af | 27 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Hispanic | 14 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Native A | 4 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 |
| | Other | 2 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 |
| | White/Ca | 140 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| education | College | 74 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | |
| | High Sch | 15 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | | |
| | Postgrad | 27 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | | |
| | Some Col | 79 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | | |
| gender_orig | Female | 109 | .000 | | | | |
| | Male | 86 | 1.000 | | | | |

Block 0: Beginning Block

Classification Table^{a,b}

| Observed | | | Predicted | | Percentage Correct |
|----------|--------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------------|
| | | | trolly_response .00 | 1.00 | |
| Step 0 | trolly_response | .00 | 0 | 57 | .0 |
| | | 1.00 | 0 | 138 | 100.0 |
| | Overall Percentage | | | | 70.8 |

a. Constant is included in the model.

b. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|--------|----------|------|------|--------|----|-------|--------|
| Step 0 | Constant | .884 | .157 | 31.537 | 1 | <.001 | 2.421 |

Variables not in the Equation

| | | | Score | df | Sig. |
|--------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------|----|------|
| Step 0 | Variables | age | .868 | 1 | .352 |
| | | gender_orig(1) | 5.124 | 1 | .024 |
| | | ethnicity | 10.365 | 5 | .066 |
| | | ethnicity(1) | .276 | 1 | .599 |
| | | ethnicity(2) | 7.752 | 1 | .005 |
| | | ethnicity(3) | .444 | 1 | .505 |
| | | ethnicity(4) | 1.687 | 1 | .194 |
| | | ethnicity(5) | .835 | 1 | .361 |
| | | education | 2.684 | 3 | .443 |
| | | education(1) | .911 | 1 | .340 |
| | | education(2) | .255 | 1 | .614 |
| | | education(3) | .374 | 1 | .541 |
| | | grace_dummy | .311 | 1 | .577 |
| | | church_att | .006 | 1 | .940 |
| | | interact_grace_church_att | .003 | 1 | .959 |
| | Overall Statistics | | 18.469 | 13 | .140 |

Block 1: Method = Enter**Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients**

| | | Chi-square | df | Sig. |
|--------|-------|------------|----|------|
| Step 1 | Step | 19.831 | 13 | .100 |
| | Block | 19.831 | 13 | .100 |

| | | | |
|-------|--------|----|------|
| Model | 19.831 | 13 | .100 |
|-------|--------|----|------|

Model Summary

| Step | -2 Log likelihood | Cox & Snell R Square | Nagelkerke R Square |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 215.809 ^a | .097 | .138 |

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 20 because maximum iterations has been reached. Final solution cannot be found.

Classification Table^a

| | | | Predicted | | Percentage Correct |
|--------------------|-----------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------------|
| | | | trolly_response .00 | 1.00 | |
| Step 1 | Observed | | | | |
| | trolly_response | .00 | 12 | 45 | 21.1 |
| | | 1.00 | 8 | 130 | 94.2 |
| Overall Percentage | | | | | 72.8 |

a. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|----|------|---------------|
| Step 1 ^a | age | -.009 | .013 | .480 | 1 | .489 | .991 |
| | gender_orig(1) | .691 | .356 | 3.765 | 1 | .052 | 1.996 |
| | ethnicity | | | 5.989 | 5 | .307 | |
| | ethnicity(1) | -.840 | .800 | 1.102 | 1 | .294 | .432 |
| | ethnicity(2) | -1.007 | .453 | 4.942 | 1 | .026 | .365 |
| | ethnicity(3) | .201 | .703 | .082 | 1 | .775 | 1.223 |
| | ethnicity(4) | 19.813 | 19918.178 | .000 | 1 | .999 | 402555034.886 |
| | ethnicity(5) | 20.421 | 28342.038 | .000 | 1 | .999 | 738836971.161 |
| | education | | | 1.313 | 3 | .726 | |
| | education(1) | -.686 | .631 | 1.183 | 1 | .277 | .503 |
| | education(2) | -.278 | .532 | .274 | 1 | .601 | .757 |
| | education(3) | -.279 | .401 | .486 | 1 | .486 | .756 |
| | grace_dummy | .976 | .669 | 2.129 | 1 | .145 | 2.655 |
| | church_att | .068 | .116 | .346 | 1 | .556 | 1.071 |
| | interact_grace_church_att | -.183 | .170 | 1.153 | 1 | .283 | .833 |
| | Constant | .932 | .762 | 1.497 | 1 | .221 | 2.540 |

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: age, gender_orig, ethnicity, education, grace_dummy, church_att, interact_grace_church_att.

Appendix 8: Christian Study Moderation Analysis Sample, Study 2

The following analysis is a sample from the moderation analysis that was run as a part of the Christian Priming study. This specific analysis shows the effect of a Collaborative Style of Religious Problem Solving on participants in the Grace prime.

Case Processing Summary

| Unweighted Cases ^a | | N | Percent |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----|---------|
| Selected Cases | Included in Analysis | 346 | 66.3 |
| | Missing Cases | 176 | 33.7 |
| | Total | 522 | 100.0 |
| Unselected Cases | | 0 | .0 |
| Total | | 522 | 100.0 |

a. If weight is in effect, see classification table for the total number of cases.

Dependent Variable Encoding

| Original Value | Internal Value |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1.00 | 0 |
| 2.00 | 1 |

Categorical Variables Codings

| | | | Parameter coding | | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Frequency | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| ethnicity | Asian/Pa | 11 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Black/Af | 41 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Hispanic | 16 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Native A | 4 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 |
| | Other | 5 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 |
| | White/Ca | 269 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| education | College | 135 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | High Sch | 37 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | Postgrad | 58 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | Some Col | 112 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | .000 | |
| | Some Hig | 4 | .000 | .000 | .000 | 1.000 | |
| gender_orig | Female | 220 | .000 | | | | |
| | Male | 126 | 1.000 | | | | |

Block 0: Beginning Block

Classification Table^{a,b}

| | | Predicted | | Percentage Correct |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------|--------------------|
| | | trolly_response 1.00 | 2.00 | |
| Step 0 | Observed | | | |
| | trolly_response 1.00 | 251 | 0 | 100.0 |
| | 2.00 | 95 | 0 | .0 |
| Overall Percentage | | | | 72.5 |

a. Constant is included in the model.

b. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|--------|----------|-------|------|--------|----|-------|--------|
| Step 0 | Constant | -.972 | .120 | 65.054 | 1 | <.001 | .378 |

Variables not in the Equation

| | | Score | df | Sig. |
|--------------------|----------------------------|--------|----|------|
| Step 0 | Variables | | | |
| | age | .622 | 1 | .430 |
| | gender_orig(1) | 2.726 | 1 | .099 |
| | ethnicity | 3.194 | 5 | .670 |
| | ethnicity(1) | 1.924 | 1 | .165 |
| | ethnicity(2) | .708 | 1 | .400 |
| | ethnicity(3) | .121 | 1 | .728 |
| | ethnicity(4) | .012 | 1 | .912 |
| | ethnicity(5) | .401 | 1 | .527 |
| | education | 5.191 | 4 | .268 |
| | education(1) | .515 | 1 | .473 |
| | education(2) | 2.679 | 1 | .102 |
| | education(3) | .103 | 1 | .748 |
| | education(4) | .012 | 1 | .912 |
| | grace_dummy | .153 | 1 | .696 |
| | collab_ps_2 | .695 | 1 | .405 |
| | interact_grace_collab_ps_2 | 2.103 | 1 | .147 |
| Overall Statistics | | 17.852 | 14 | .214 |

Block 1: Method = Enter**Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients**

| | | Chi-square | df | Sig. |
|--------|------|------------|----|------|
| Step 1 | Step | 18.241 | 14 | .196 |

| | | | |
|-------|--------|----|------|
| Block | 18.241 | 14 | .196 |
| Model | 18.241 | 14 | .196 |

Model Summary

| Step | -2 Log likelihood | Cox & Snell R Square | Nagelkerke R Square |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 388.480 ^a | .051 | .074 |

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 5 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

| | | | Predicted | | Percentage Correct |
|--------------------|-----------------|------|-------------------------|------|--------------------|
| | | | trolly_response 1.00 | 2.00 | |
| Step 1 | Observed | | | | |
| | trolly_response | 1.00 | 248 | 3 | 98.8 |
| | | 2.00 | 91 | 4 | 4.2 |
| Overall Percentage | | | | | 72.8 |

a. The cut value is .500

Variables in the Equation

| | | B | S.E. | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------|-------|----|------|--------|
| Step 1 ^a | age | .004 | .011 | .159 | 1 | .691 | 1.004 |
| | gender_orig(1) | -.364 | .269 | 1.821 | 1 | .177 | .695 |
| | ethnicity | | | 2.993 | 5 | .701 | |
| | ethnicity(1) | -1.139 | 1.075 | 1.123 | 1 | .289 | .320 |
| | ethnicity(2) | -.503 | .419 | 1.442 | 1 | .230 | .605 |
| | ethnicity(3) | .230 | .586 | .154 | 1 | .695 | 1.259 |
| | ethnicity(4) | -.409 | 1.193 | .118 | 1 | .732 | .664 |
| | ethnicity(5) | .354 | .970 | .134 | 1 | .715 | 1.425 |
| | education | | | 4.482 | 4 | .345 | |
| | education(1) | .485 | .426 | 1.296 | 1 | .255 | 1.624 |
| | education(2) | .706 | .358 | 3.887 | 1 | .049 | 2.027 |
| | education(3) | .344 | .307 | 1.259 | 1 | .262 | 1.411 |
| | education(4) | -.310 | 1.218 | .065 | 1 | .799 | .734 |
| | grace_dummy | .902 | .392 | 5.304 | 1 | .021 | 2.464 |
| | collab_ps_2 | .356 | .355 | 1.011 | 1 | .315 | 1.428 |
| | interact_grace_collab_ps_2 | -1.297 | .516 | 6.308 | 1 | .012 | .273 |
| | Constant | -1.509 | .546 | 7.630 | 1 | .006 | .221 |

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: age, gender_orig, ethnicity, education, grace_dummy, collab_ps_2, interact_grace_collab_ps_2.

Appendix 9: Partisan Study Participant Information

| Name | Gender | Age | Ethnicity | Political Party |
|------------------------------|--------|-----|------------------------|-----------------|
| Julianna Padgett | F | 69 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Lois W. Adams | F | 67 | Black/African-American | Independent |
| LORRAINE WASHINGTON | F | 64 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Kelly G Butler | F | 50 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Arthur J Johnson | M | 66 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Machelle Hall | F | 45 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Jackie Dadakis | F | 37 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Keith Hardie | M | 70 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Betty DiMarco | F | 72 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Alexis T. Reed | F | 22 | Black/African-American | Republican |
| Quentin L Messer Jr | M | 52 | Black/African-American | Independent |
| Simcha Ward | M | 32 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Julius E. Kimbrough, Jr. | M | 48 | Black/African-American | Republican |
| Camille Robinson | F | 28 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Robert L Stickney | M | 31 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Jan Moller | F | 51 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Michael Swack | M | 66 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Jessica Freeman | F | 58 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Janine Barrett | F | 57 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Susan Camille Manning-Broome | F | 42 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Alexandra Stroud | F | 52 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Joshua David Collen | M | 46 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Louis David | M | 38 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Marina Manzanares | F | 37 | Hispanic/Latino | Republican |
| Nathan Rupp | M | 64 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| George Dupuy | M | 61 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Rosalind Magee Peychaud | F | 71 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Brandon Kelly | M | 38 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Colin Felsman | M | 33 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| John Sullivan | M | 40 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Erin Hansen | F | 31 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Casius Pealer | M | 26 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Keith Twitchell | M | 64 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Jack Largess | M | 27 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Kahlida Lloyd | F | 35 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Seth Knudsen | M | 38 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Nandi Ameena Dmaya Wilkerson | F | 33 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Emily Carroll | F | 47 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Paul Richard | M | 26 | White/Caucasian | Republican |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|----|------------------------|-------------|
| Alaina DiLaura | F | 37 | White/Caucasian | Democrat |
| Lindsey Navarro | F | 35 | Hispanic/Latino | Independent |
| Jackson Braught | M | 31 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| William McCasland | M | 34 | White/Caucasian | independent |
| Rick Johnson | M | 58 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Nicholas Furman | M | 31 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Jonathan Kaleka | M | 39 | Black/African-American | Democrat |
| Adam O'Boyle | M | 64 | White/Caucasian | Independent |
| Rebecca Brown | F | 42 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Ed Asplund | M | 49 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Benjamin McGill | M | 57 | White/Caucasian | Republican |
| Richard Dobson | M | 60 | Black/African-American | Independent |
| Hannah Hampton | F | 55 | Black/African-American | Independent |