

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

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## Abstract

This article exploits and evaluates a social identity conceptualization of party identification (PID) in presenting a novel implicit measure of party identity. With new nationally representative survey data, an Implicit Association Test is used to measure party identity more directly than previously possible. This yields the most compelling evidence yet regarding the presence of an affective identity component of PID. The measure also provides confirmation that the traditional seven-point PID measure captures identity, generating the strongest proof we have (if not the smoking gun) showing that the standard measure largely functions as intended. The measure also offers a means of examining partisan intensity, permitting comparisons across parties and revealing the relative position of “leaners”. Republicans identify more strongly than Democrats and “leaners” from both parties appear closer to partisans than to pure independents. Furthermore, comparison with a biased processing measure suggests that identity relates more strongly to behavior among Republicans.

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# 1 Introduction

Party identification (PID), perhaps the most important voter characteristic in American politics, has been increasingly conceptualized and empirically studied as a social identity (Green, Palmquist and Schickler, 2002; Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy, Mason and Aaroe, Forthcoming; Nicholson, 2012). The notion of PID as a psychological attachment dates back to *The American Voter* (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, 1960), where its presentation could be anachronistically described as an invocation of social identity theory and self-categorization theory. More recently, this conceptualization has been revived in the work of Greene (1999, 2000, 2004) and Huddy, Mason and Aaroe (Forthcoming) measuring PID as a social identity, as well as Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002), who discuss partisan stability as the product of “social identification”. The analysis presented here uses an identity approach to partisanship and a new measure to advance the exploration of partisan intensity.

While the characterization of PID as a social identity is frequently invoked in the political behavior literature, there is still much to be learned about *and from* this categorization. This article takes on this task by, for the first time, measuring party identity at a pre-introspection level. To begin with, the evidence that PID does, in fact, operate as a social identity has been limited, and alternative conceptualizations remain influential in political science (DeVries and Tarrance, 1972; Fiorina, 1981; Franklin, 1984; Franklin and Jackson, 1983; Jackson, 1975*a,b*; Key and Munger, 1959; Kroh and Selb, 2009; Page and Jones, 1979). This article both evaluates and exploits a social identity conceptualization of PID in presenting a novel implicit measure of party identity. With new nationally representative survey data, a version of the Implicit Association Test is used to measure party identity more directly than was possible previously. This yields the most compelling evidence yet regarding the presence of an affective identity component of PID. The measure also provides mixed confirmation that the traditional seven-point PID measure captures identity, generating the strongest proof we have (if not the smoking gun) showing that the standard measure largely functions as

intended by its creators. The measure also offers a powerful new tool for examining partisan intensity, allowing us to better understand the nature and microfoundations of PID levels. For instance, we can compare intensity across parties. And, we are able to weigh in with strong evidence on the important, and ongoing, effort to pinpoint and understand the relative position of “leaners” in the PID spectrum (Abrams and Fiorina, 2011; Keith, Magleby, Nelson, Orr and Westlye, 1992; Klar, 2013; Klar and Krupnikov, N.d.; Magleby and Nelson, 2012; Miller and Shanks, 1996; Norpoth and Velez, 2012; Petrocik, 2009).

Calling PID a social identity references a decades long (and still very active) literature in social psychology. This suggests questions to be asked and also offers theories, concepts and approaches to measurement that may be called upon. I focus on the heart of that conceptualization from both a measurement and theoretical perspective. Balanced identity theory (Greenwald, Banaji, Rudman, Farnham, Nosek and Mellott, 2002) provides us with a very elegant, intuitive definition of identity through which party identity can be explored. Identity, as described by Greenwald et al. (2002) in their enunciation of balanced identity theory, is nothing more and nothing less than the level of association in an individual’s mind between a category or group object and that individual’s self concept.<sup>1</sup> Using their parsimonious definition, this article advances the effort to most directly measure partisan identity through a new application of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) (Greenwald, McGhee and Schwartz, 1998). The IAT has been recently used to measure relative identity through response latency. To do this, the self is used as the attribute concept and a given identity (e.g. a party) is used as target concept (Devos and Banaji, 2005; Greenwald and Farnham, 2000; Nosek, Banaji and Greenwald, 2002). When applied to party identity, this provides a measure of how closely a respondent’s self-concept and a political party are cognitively linked. This approach has important measurement implications (vis-à-vis traditional explicit measures), and provides a window into the microfoundations of identity based cognitive biases.

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<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed discussion of balanced identity theory and the identity IAT generally, please see Theodoridis (2013b).

If our conceptualization of PID as a social identity accurately captures the true nature of this attachment in the political cognition of voters, such a link between self and party must exist. The approach presented here represents a significant advancement when compared to previous work on the identity dimension of PID ([Burden and Klofstad, 2005](#); [Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004](#); [Huddy, Mason and Aaroe, Forthcoming](#)).

This new IAT measure provides a mechanism for tapping directly into a micro-level affective association between one's self concept and one of the two major party groups. This approach, and the way it is applied here differs markedly from most common uses of the IAT. In many cases, the IAT is used to overcome social desirability bias. This is especially true when scholars seek to associate targets such as "black" and "white" with attributes such as "good" or "bad" for the sake of measuring implicit discrimination. The application presented here could certainly be used to combat social desirability effects in the case of partisanship, as there may well be partisans who claim to be pure independents to avoid admitting their partisan leaning. However, reconciling this sort of discrepancy between implicit and explicit measures of party identity is not the primary way in which the IAT is used in this article. Standard explicit measures of PID generally identify fewer than 20 percent of respondents as pure independents (and, presumably, some of those are genuinely independent). Despite their relatively small ranks, revealing the partisan leanings of these individuals is likely of value and it is one advantage mentioned here (for an example of work that focuses on independents, see [Hawkins and Nosek \(2012\)](#)). But, my focus is on 1) presenting a simple measure that effectively isolates the identity component of PID and 2) using that measure to advance our understanding of partisan intensity. If we think about identity as the way in which our minds link a group label with the self-concept, as it is defined in balanced identity theory, the IAT measure discussed here can be described as measuring the key behavioral outcome of identity – how quickly a subject is able to classify images and words related to the self-concept and the two political parties. The response latency exposes the relative

strength of this association. That association should play an important role in generating down-stream effects like ingroup favoritism, because, as, [Theodoridis \(2013b, 548\)](#) puts it: “If party and self are closely associated at an affective level in a partisan’s processing, an attack on one amounts to an attack on the other. Success for one is tantamount to success for the other.”

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

I begin by briefly discussing issues surrounding the definition and measurement of PID. I then introduce and discuss the details of a new measure of implicit party identity that directly taps into the identity component of PID. Using new data from a nationally representative online survey fielded through YouGov in the fall of 2013 ([Theodoridis, 2013a](#)), I then com-

pare this measure to more standard PID measures. Among other things, my findings offer some confirmation that the traditional two-item, seven-point PID measure generally captures respondent identity levels, but that the various items do so with differing levels of success and that the relationship appears different among Democrats and Republicans. This offers the strongest evidence to date (if not a smoking gun) that the measure largely does what it was designed to do. However, it should be noted that most of the measure’s success is generated by the introductory question and the follow-up “leaner” question, both of which serve to separate Democrats and Republicans from Independents. I find that Republican partisans, in the current political environment, are significantly stronger partisan identifiers than their Democratic counterparts, suggesting that the GOP may benefit from an “Identity Gap” at the moment. I show that “leaners” from both parties appear closer to partisans than to pure independents, bolstering claims that these individuals are best analyzed along with their co-partisans. Lastly, using an experimental manipulation developed in [Theodoridis \(2012\)](#), I compare the extent to which various measures are useful in “predicting” a key political behavior – biased processing. Explicit and implicit measures perform differently among Republicans and Democrats, perhaps hinting at a difference in the role of identity across the two parties. Specifically, identity appears to relate more strongly to behavior among Republicans than Democrats.

## 2 Defining and Measuring PID

“Party identification is the central theoretical component of the more general construct of partisanship. While partisanship connotes such dimensions as group membership, behavioral expressions of commitment, psychological closeness, policy agreement, and electoral support, the concept of party identification focuses on the individual’s self-definition ([Campbell et al., 1960](#); [Campbell, Munro, Alford and Campbell, 1986](#); [Green and Palmquist, 1990](#)).”

## 2.1 The *Status Quo*

In terms of conceptualizing PID, the Michigan and social identity approaches have not been the only entrants. Key and Munger (1959) had offered a somewhat different view, describing partisanship as a “standing decision”. Later, DeVries and Tarrance (1972) argued for a definition based more upon behavior, such as voting. The “running tally” or Bayesian updating models (Achen, 2002; Fiorina, 1981; Zechman, 1979), which may be conceptually more in keeping with Key’s take, would emerge in reaction to the Michigan Model. Most recently, Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012) offer a theory that melds emotional and spatial accounts of PID, focusing on the informational role of party reputations. It is actually not entirely clear that the discipline has coordinated on a dominant, precisely stated definition of PID. What is clear, though, is that the Michigan School’s mechanism for measuring PID has dominated other approaches. In this sense, that two-item survey measure generating a seven-point scale has become the *de facto* definition of PID.<sup>2</sup> That measure classifies respondents as “strong” partisans, “not so strong” partisans “leaners” and “pure independents”, distinguishing between Democrats and Republicans and, presumably, between intensity levels within each party.

Our faith in this measure comes despite the fact that we do not fully understand its microfoundations. And, our use of it has persisted despite some suggestions that it may suffer from non-monotonicities or “intransitivities” (Petrocik, 1974), or mask multidimensionality (Craig, 1985; Dennis, 1988*a,b*; Weisberg, 1980), and indications that it may not dominate alternatives or combinations of measures in terms of measurement error (Green and Schickler, 1993). Part of the challenge is defining the underlying concept we are measuring and selecting

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<sup>2</sup>For an excellent discussion of the scholarly debate, into the 1980s, on defining and measuring PID, see Campbell et al. (1986).

outcomes to which it should or must correlate. In some cases the point of reference is something like candidate preference ([Green and Schickler, 1993](#)). In others, it has been participation ([Petrocik, 1974](#)). Certainly, we would like our underlying concept to correlate with behavior. But, we should also aspire to clarify the concept itself. According to [Campbell et al. \(1986, 100\)](#) the Michigan scholars took the following approach:

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

[Converse and Pierce \(1985, 145\)](#) describe this “self-identity” concept more precisely (and parsimoniously), saying an individual’s PID is one among those “attributes felt to be part of his or her persona, or definition of the social self.” As [Campbell et al. \(1960, 121\)](#) put it, they were seeking to measure “the individual’s affective orientation to an important group-object in his environment.” The definition of affect has been something of a moving target, so it is hard to know exactly how it is intended in this case. It likely refers to emotion or valence. It has also come, in the last few decades, to suggest automatic (or instinctual), fast, and perhaps pre-conscious processing ([Zajonc, 1980](#)).

Foundational work has been done to more directly measure the identity component of PID by manipulating the wording of the standard survey items ([Burden and Klofstad, 2005](#)), or by applying a scale developed by psychologists to measure identity ([Greene, 1999, 2000, 2004](#); [Huddy, Mason and Aaroe, Forthcoming](#)). But, tapping into the pre-introspection, early-iteration level of identity is something that has not been done prior to the present



application of the IAT. That is because standard explicit measures simply are not suitable for this task. They are, by their very nature, the product of introspection.

Particularly influential is the work of [Greene \(1999, 2000, 2004\)](#), who made extensive use of the Identification with a Psychological Group (IDPG) scale developed by [Mael and Tetrick \(1992\)](#). His approach and findings are not only seminal in this research program, but highlight some important features of the new IAT measure. This scale is built upon the ten items listed in the Appendix.<sup>3</sup>

Greene is able to examine the relative strength of identity with a respondent's chosen party. His findings on the relationship between PID and "identity" provided clarification on a number of fronts, including the "anomalous behavior and identity of partisan leaners" ([Greene, 1999](#), 393). For the sake of comparability to Greene's work, I included the IDPG scale for partisans in my study, allowing me to compare the measure to both the party identity IAT and standard PID measure.

While the IDPG and similar scales used since were once the best option available for measuring identity, they come with some important limitations as compared to the IAT presented here. For starters, they are still explicit measures. So, they cannot fully address concern regarding the addition of bias during introspection. Furthermore, they assume the direction of partisanship. If you indicate that you are a Democrat when faced with the standard measure, you will answer questions regarding your identification with Democrats. To ask a Democrat these questions about Republicans would not make sense, as they are not designed to measure identity with a group other than the one to which a respondent claims identification. Respondents would likely find the questions very confusing if they referred to their partisan outgroup. Thus, it is not possible with such measures for a respondent who reports being a Democrat to have an identity score that suggests otherwise. This is because,

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<sup>3</sup>Building on this work, [Huddy, Mason and Aaroe \(Forthcoming\)](#) have recently developed and tested a four-item measure and used it to examine the role of party identity in political engagement.

fundamentally, the IDPG measure is not an alternative to the standard measure, it is an extension of it. Its implementation is predicated on the results of the Michigan measure. Also, since the IDPG is not a relative measure, it only shows the level of identification with one group, and does not include the other side of that coin — distance from the outgroup or the extent to which association with the other group generates dissonance. The partisan version of this measure also does not work for pure independents. These are all limitations not suffered by the IAT measure used here.

## 2.2 Guidance on Theory and Measurement from Social Psychology

As this research seeks to build upon the social identity framework, we will look to social psychology for some guidance. The most commonly invoked treatments of identity emerge from social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1969, 1974, 1982 *a,b*; Tajfel and Turner, 2004; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy and Flament, 1971; Turner, 1975), and self-categorization theory (SCT) (Turner, 1982, 1999; Turner, Oakes, Haslam and McGarty, 1994; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher and Wetherell, 1987). Tajfel (1974, 69), saw identity as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership.” In SCT, which emerges directly from SIT, the key interaction is the one between the self-concept and a given social group: “The basic process postulated is *self-categorization*, leading to *self-stereotyping* and the *depersonalization* of self-perception” (Turner and Onorato, 1999, 20-21).

Returning to the question at hand: When it comes to PID, what is the underlying concept? For our purposes, it will be defined as a pre-introspection, early-iteration (in terms of cognitive processing) association between self and a partisan group. This focus, and the measurement strategy I use, comes from balanced identity theory (BIT) (Cvencek, Greenwald and Meltzoff, 2012; Greenwald et al., 2002) which builds upon SIT and SCT, but

differs from them in a few important ways:

Whereas the representational elements of the SCT are *self-categorizations*, BIT takes associations as its conceptual building blocks. In addition, within SCT, the self is conceived of as a hierarchical structure of self-categorizations at three levels of abstraction; within BIT, the self is understood as a nonhierarchical, associative structure...

Perhaps the greatest difference between the SIT and SCT on the one hand, and BIT on the other, comes from the research methods used in testing the theories. The research programs of SIT and SCT were developed well before researchers recognized the distinction between implicit and explicit measures. Consequently, research on SIT and SCT has occurred mostly with explicit measures. In contrast, tests of BIT have been carried out with both implicit and explicit measures, leading to (so far) consistent results showing that the relationships predicted by BIT are evident more strongly when tested with implicit measures of association strengths than when tested with parallel self-report measures. (Cvencek, Greenwald and Meltzoff, 2012, 162)

BIT defines identity in the simplest possible terms: It is the degree of association (in terms of self-categorization) between an individual's self-concept and any social category or group. Identity is by no means the only element of BIT, as that theory was forwarded to offer a "unified theory of implicit attitudes, stereotypes, self-esteem, and self-concept" (Greenwald et al., 2002, 3). In BIT, individuals associate themselves with a multitude of social objects. These associations can vary in strength. Both the self and the social objects are then also associated with attributes and valenced evaluations. This produces a complex social knowledge structure, within which consistency of associations is anticipated. Thus, if one associates the self with positive valence (i.e. positive self-esteem), and one strongly associates self with a group object, then one should accordingly associate that group object

with positive valence.<sup>4</sup> So, identity is a central feature of BIT, and it is the feature most relevant to the current discussion.

The contents (listed in the Appendix) of the IDPG scale, and others like it, serve to highlight the benefit of applying BIT to this case. Each IDPG item might be better described as a down-stream effect of identity, rather than identity itself. Such effects may be expressed in heterogeneous ways. They only become markers of identity if identity is defined so as to include them. This makes measurement of identity rather definition dependent. Even if there is consensus that each of the IDPG items constitutes a feature of identity, and that this list is exhaustive, we must then wrestle with whether each deserves equal weighting as part of a scale. These issues are averted if we define identity as BIT does – as a simple association between the self-concept and group. This is useful, not just because it approaches Occam’s razor, but because, since measurement is definition dependent, a simpler definition can lead to more precise measurement. So, not only is this sort of definition intuitively appealing and parsimonious, but now it points directly to a measurement paradigm. [Greenwald et al. \(2002\)](#) offer the following rationale for using the IAT in their measurement of the associations involved in balanced identity theory’s social knowledge structure, of which the self-concept-to-group association is a central part:

First, some of the associative links of SKS [social knowledge structure] may not be available to introspection and may therefore not permit accurate assessment by self-report measures (cf. [Greenwald and Banaji, 1995](#)). Second, self-report measures are susceptible to artifacts (such as impression management and demand characteristics) that can distort reporting even of associations that are introspectively available.

These points allow the IAT to provide a meaningful advancement in the measurement of

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<sup>4</sup>For a more detailed discussion of BIT and the theory behind the identity IAT, see [Theodoridis \(2013b\)](#)

partisan *identity*, allowing us to more directly measure that which [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) had in mind.

## 3 Measuring Implicit Party Identity

### 3.1 The Implicit Association Test

Since its introduction in 1998, the IAT has fast become one of the most commonly used measurement tools in social psychology and related disciplines. Like all implicit measures, the IAT seeks to measure the intensity of an association without directly asking a respondent about it. It does this using response latency. All implicit measures that rely on response latency are based upon the following premises: 1) that less mental processing is required when a given task corresponds with associations that pre-exist in a respondent's mind, and 2) tasks that require less processing will take less time ([Donders, 1969](#)).<sup>5</sup>

Respondents participating in an IAT are asked to classify stimuli presented in rapid succession on a computer monitor. There are normally attribute concepts (such as Good and Bad) and target concepts (such as Black and White), each of which are represented by a set of words and images. The IAT proceeds in a series of blocks. As the respondent begins each block, she is provided with a set of instructions. The differences between these instructions between one type of block and another are the basis of the measure. In one type of block, a respondent will be asked to press a key with her left hand when presented with stimuli that represent Good and Black. That block would also include instructions to press another key with her right hand when she sees stimuli that represent Bad and White. This type of block is measuring the associations between Good and Black and White and Bad. When the

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<sup>5</sup>[Nosek, Greenwald and Banaji \(2007\)](#) and [Lane, Banaji, Nosek and Greenwald \(2007\)](#) are among many sources for more discussion of work using the IAT and the details of the test itself.

instructions are reversed (using one key/hand for Good and White and another for Bad and Black), the associations between Bad and Black, and Good and White are being measured. In each block, respondents are asked to classify the stimuli as quickly as they possibly can while making as few errors as possible (errors being defined as a failure to follow the classification instructions). When an error is made, a red “X” is typically displayed on the screen. The speed with which respondents are able to perform each type of block (as defined by the instructions) is not meaningful on its own. But, after several blocks with each attribute-to-target classification combination, we have the ability to compare the average latency across block types. And, given the assumption that tasks take longer when they conflict with the associations in our minds, this provides a measure of relative association.

[Smith and Nosek \(2011, 300\)](#) tell us “that, although explicit evaluations can be meaningfully parsed into affective and cognitive components, implicit evaluations are more related to affective than cognitive components of attitudes.” In particular, when faster affective reactions conflict with slower conscious ones, we expect the task to take longer. This implies that IAT measures are not produced by introspection the way explicit measures are. The more subject a measure is to introspection, the more potential for social desirability bias or higher-order cognitive control. In the case of party identity, this might be the difference between deciding that you prefer one party over the other on issue proximity as opposed to feeling at a gut level that one party or the other is part of your identity. [Cunningham, Zelazo, Packer and Van Bavel \(2007, 748\)](#) provides a relevant political illustration in relation to the iterative reprocessing model: “when a Democrat is conflicted about his marriage to a Republican (or visa [sic] versa), he can re-represent the relationship at a higher-level of analysis — they both share a passion for the American political system. As the computations become increasingly complex, additional explanatory factors can be created to organize and make sense of the factors at the first level.” The more iterations, the more potential there is for reprocessing. More reprocessing creates greater potential for noise when it comes to

measuring the early-iteration version of an attitude or association. So, the IAT may provide the clearest shot at measuring the “affective orientation” that [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) discussed.<sup>6</sup>

It should be noted that party identity measures hardly represent the first application of the IAT to politics. Even excluding work on race and ethnic politics and system justification, one finds no shortage of research being done on topics related to electoral politics, attitudes and ideology (For example, see: [Arcuri, Castelli, Galdi, Zogmaister and Amadori, 2008](#); [Burdein, Lodge and Taber, 2006](#); [Choma and Hafer, 2009](#); [Graham, Englander, Morris, Hawkins, Haidt and Nosek, 2012](#); [Iyengar and Westwood, 2014](#); [Karpinski and Hilton, 2001](#); [Nosek, Graham and Hawkins, 2010](#)).

### 3.2 Implicit Party Identity

The application of the IAT discussed in these pages is different from most common applications because it seeks to measure identity rather than an attitude. The IAT has been used successfully to measure identities (such as gender) when “self” is used as the attribute concept and a social category (e.g. Democrat or Republican) is used as the target concept ([Devos and Banaji, 2005](#); [Greenwald and Farnham, 2000](#); [Nosek, Banaji and Greenwald, 2002](#)). So, respondents are given instructions to associate terms such as “I”, “Me”, “Myself” and “They”, “Them” and “Others” with Democratic or Republican images.

This study also differs from standard IATs in that the brief IAT (BIAT) ([Sriram and Greenwald, 2009](#)) was used. The BIAT features a somewhat different procedure designed

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<sup>6</sup>Social neuroscience may eventually provide even more direct measures. In fact, one influential study on the neural correlates of self-referencing ([Mitchell, Macrae and Banaji, 2006](#)) uses a self to liberal/conservative IAT as a stimulus. For now, though, the role of neuroscience in this sort of research remains limited by the suitability of current imaging technology for large-N studies and the fact that reverse inferences require more certainty than we have about the relationship between neural structure and function ([Theodoridis and Nelson, 2012](#))

to decrease the time required to administer it, but the basic logic remains the same. While the standard IAT makes all four categories focal in its various blocks (normally seven), each BIAT block makes only two of the categories focal. In other words, when presented with a Democratic block of our BIAT, respondents are told to press one key on the keyboard for Democratic pictures and the words “I”, “Me”, “Myself”, and they are told to press another key for anything else. In the standard IAT, the other key would be designated for Republican pictures and “They”, “Them” and “Others”. In this study, pronouns referring to the self are always focal, while those referring to “other” are always nonfocal. This is because self associations have proven more reliable than “other” associations (Sriram and Greenwald, 2009). The BIAT substantially reduces the amount of time needed to complete the task and has proven quite reliable (Sriram and Greenwald, 2009).

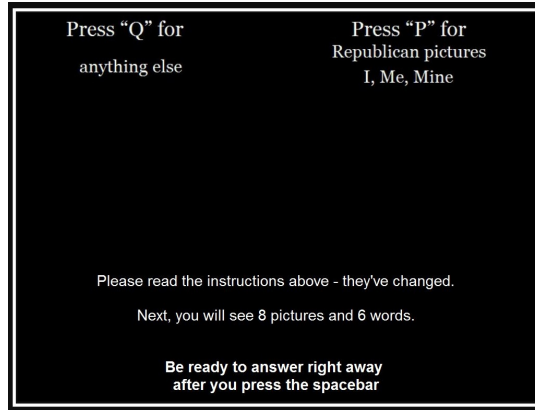
[Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 provides an example of a block in which respondents are told to associate self pronouns with Republican images. Each block presented respondents with eight pictures and six words. This measure uses six blocks, three in which self is to be associated with Democratic images and three in which self is associated with Republican images. The average response times for these two types of blocks are the components of the IAT D score that is the measure of relative identity:

$$D = \frac{\overline{Latency_{SelfDemocrat}} - \overline{Latency_{SelfRepublican}}}{SD} \quad (1)$$

This measure is a bounded version of Cohen’s d. In this case, it produces a summary measure with a theoretical range of  $-2$  to  $2$  for which positive values indicate a relative Republican identity and negative values indicate a relative Democratic identity. All measures discussed here (both implicit and explicit) are centered at zero and have negative scores that are associated with Democrats and positive scores associated with Republicans.





(a) Republican Block Instruction Page



Figure 1: **Example Republican IAT Block** These screen captures show examples of the images presented to respondents during an IAT block in which they are instructed to associate self with Republican images. Figure 1(a) shows the instructions provided to subjects as they begin the task.

### 3.3 Issues Surrounding the Measure

This is a relative measure and that has important implications. It means that it is simply not possible to discern the extent to which one associates with one party as opposed to not associating with the other. All we can really see is the extent to which the task took longer under one set of instructions than the other, or that they took about the same under both sets of instructions. This amounts to a matter of calibration, as response latency for one item must be measured in relation to something else. While we may not often note it, explicit measures are limited in the same way. This feature is clear for our standard seven-point PID scale. Respondents are not asked how much they identify with one party and then the other. Rather they are asked to choose between the two. We have no way of knowing whether a subject is a strong Democrat because she strongly associates with Democrats or feels a great deal of distance from Republicans. That measure can't differentiate between the strong Republican who has no real feelings about Democrats but loves the Republican Party and the one who favors Republicans because she cannot stand Democrats. It is possible that the dichotomous nature of partisanship in the United States and the rise of polarization mean that proximity to one partisan group almost always translates into distance from the other. However, there is likely interesting variation to explore in this regard.<sup>7</sup> Other explicit measures, such as feeling thermometers, may not be as clearly limited in this way. If we see that a Democrat rates Democrats at 50 degrees on a feeling thermometer, but Republicans at 0 degrees, we might be able to infer something about whether her identity is negative or positive. However, we must still consider the matter of calibration — how to interpret a 50 relative to a 0 for that particular respondent. We can attempt to address this issue with survey instructions or anchoring on the basis of other items, but it is worth noting that the challenge is by no means unique to the IAT. Another limitation associated with this feature of the IAT is that it makes this measure less readily applicable to other party systems. In its

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<sup>7</sup>Some findings by [Haidt and Hetherington \(2012\)](#) and [Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes \(2012\)](#) suggest that, while positive feelings about one's own party have remained constant, negative ones about the outgroup have increased.

current form, the measure is limited to strong two-party systems. Both the single-item IAT and the Go/No-Go Association Task (GNAT) (Nosek and Banaji, 2001), provide options for these contexts, as they do not require dichotomous categories. This would make it possible to assess the microfoundations of this implicit association, distinguishing between negative and positive identity and would make the measure useful in multi-party contexts.

It is also important to note that IAT measures are likely better used in the aggregate than at the individual level. That is, if one were placing a bet on a particular individual's "true" PID, and the IAT identity measure and standard explicit measure indicated different parties, the smart money would likely be on the explicit measure. This is because, the IAT may be somewhat more subject to artifacts. For example, a given subject may not understand the instructions. This sort of issue may be of less concern for an explicit measure. On the other hand, the IAT has proven quite reliable, in terms of test-retest reliability, internal consistency and correlation with explicit or observed measures, in the aggregate (Greenwald et al., 2002). So, it is well suited to the use presented here — evaluation of explicit measures and exploration of relative intensity.

Common critiques of the IAT often focus on its interpretation. This is especially true when it is applied to topics such as racial attitudes (Arkes and Tetlock, 2004). There has been much discussion regarding whether response latency can be interpreted as discrimination or racial bias. This is an area in which the identity IAT, especially as applied to party, would seem to be less problematic. By defining the notion of party identity narrowly, we limit the leap that must be made between the measure and the concept. One particular line of criticism for IATs designed to ascertain attitudes emerges from the environmental association model, which posits that "the IAT may tell us what associations the person has been exposed to in his or her environment rather than the extent to which the person endorses the attitude object" (Karpinski and Hilton, 2001). Again, this is less problematic for the

party identity IAT presented here. The IAT purports to measure an association between things. In the case of race, it may not be clear whether the association it is measuring is the respondent's or that of the respondent's society.<sup>8</sup> When measuring the association between self and a party, it is not clear what environmental association would mean. It may imply that an individual does not think of herself as a Democrat, but believes the outside world thinks of her in that way. This is far less troublesome from an interpretation or measurement perspective than the distinction between a person believing that blacks are bad and her believing that most people in her environment believe blacks are bad. For starters, the inconsistency with regard to party seems much less likely than in the case of racial attitudes, mostly because it is harder to imagine many situations in which those around a person would identify her as a partisan when she herself does not. Also, even if this were the case, one would imagine that knowing that those around you categorize you a certain way might actually translate into you identifying with that category. For a more straightforward example, consider a respondent who is aware that those around her see her as overweight. While she may not objectively deem herself overweight, it is not clear that she would not identify with the category. The key distinction here is that the party IAT is asking respondents about themselves while the other versions are asking for attitudes regarding groups or concepts that may or may not be related to the respondent.

Some have expressed concern regarding the potential for individuals “gaming” the IAT in order to mask associations that may not be socially desirable. While it is possible (Kim, 2003), given the nature of the task and the level of temporal resolution (milliseconds), it would be exceedingly difficult for subjects to consciously manipulate their responses without extending latency so much as to make their efforts obvious. In other words, you could pause intentionally during the appropriate blocks if you wished to bias your score in a certain direction. But, doing so would likely make you take far too long and the pattern would

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<sup>8</sup>In some instances this distinction may not matter even when assessing race.

be discernible (Cvencek, Greenwald, Brown, Gray and Snowden, 2010). More important, though, are two other points regarding this concern. 1) Unlike the measures regarding race, this measure is not primarily designed to overcome social desirability bias. 2) A subject so concerned that she might appear to identify with the opposite party on a relatively meaningless online measure that she would go to the trouble of faking results is likely quite partisan.

### 3.4 The Data

The data examined here were gathered as part of the Implicit Party Identity Study (Theodoridis, 2013a), which was fielded through YouGov. This study was conducted online in September of 2013 using a nationally representative sample of 1200 respondents. The analyses presented in this article employ the sampling weights generated by YouGov to increase the representativeness of the sample and allow for more reliable population inferences.<sup>9</sup>

## 4 Partisanship through the Lens of Implicit Party Identity

Resting on the theoretical foundations discussed above, this measure is uniquely suited to address certain important questions regarding partisanship: 1) Is it reasonable to think of PID as a social identity in the sense described in balanced identity theory? 2) How well do the survey items we currently use to measure PID capture identity? 3) Does identity appear to operate in a similar way across the two parties, or are there differences? 4) Are “leaners” more similar to partisans or pure independents in terms of their intensity of party identity? And, 5) how does party identity relate to a behavior we might expect it to “predict” – biased processing of political information?

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<sup>9</sup>This measure was also used in studies fielded through an American National Election Study pilot and with subjects in the Project Implicit research pool. While those data are not discussed here, because they are either less representative or lack necessary covariates, the key results appear to be consistent across samples.

## 4.1 PID as a Social Identity?

Having established a direct measure of identity, we begin by exploring whether partisans appear to associate one party or the other more strongly with their self-concept. This is an association one might not expect to emerge for voters best described by non-Michigan School, non-identity views of partisanship. If partisanship is more of a “standing decision” or “running tally” among voters periodically choosing the more spatially proximate representative from the two parties in electoral contests, we would not expect the self-concept to become associated with the labels for these teams of elites. In fact, this sort of association should interfere with an individual’s ability to render a choices in such a disinterested fashion. On the other hand, such an association is essential if we are to believe an account of PID that represents a psychological attachment that generates perceptual bias, stereotyping and affective charge.

[Figure 2 about here]

In different ways, figures 2 and 4(b) show levels of association (as measured by the party identity IAT) for each point on the standard seven-point Michigan measure. One might note that the mean for political independents is not precisely zero, falling at  $-0.097$ . This should not be interpreted as a challenge to the calibration of the measure. It does not indicate that the true zero point for this measure is  $-0.097$ . The IAT measure and the D score, being a relative measure, is centered on zero at the individual level by construction. That is, if a respondent takes exactly as long for the Republican blocks as for the Democratic blocks, that individual’s score will be zero because the numerator of Equation 1 above will be zero. So, the deviation from zero seen here reflects the composition of the pure independents category. In this sample, those pure independents appear to associate more with Republicans on average. This result seems consistent with contemporary commentary suggesting that Republican leaners might be less inclined at the current moment to explicitly identify with their party.

A few key observations stand out regarding Figures 2 and 4(b). For starters, we see one case of non-monotonicity, or what Petrocik (1974) called “intransitivity”. That is, in only one case is the average for one category greater than that for the category to the right of it. While the difference is not statistically significant, it appears that “not so strong” Republicans identify less strongly with their party than do Republican leaners. Otherwise, we observe monotonicity. The relationship is especially clear among Democrats, where the scale produces a near interval-level variable with regard to identity. The standard measure appears to be precisely capturing identity among Democrats and capturing it, but in a far less linear fashion, among Republicans. So, the seven-point scale can generally be said to work with regard to its goal. But, it should be noted that it does so differently on the two sides of the aisle, and is most effective in differentiating between the two parties as opposed to identifying variation in intensity within each party. The Michigan measure’s success in capturing the identity dimension is even more clear in Figure 4(a), which shows the average D score by three-point PID, and in the discussion below regarding the survey items used to generate the three- and seven-point PID scales. As a whole, the relationship between the party identity IAT and the standard PID measure also supports the contention that PID behaves as a social identity. We see evidence for precisely the sort of implicit association between self and party that is called for by BIT. One could argue that this is the “smoking gun” political scientists have been seeking to simultaneously confirm both the role of identity in what PID has come to mean and the ability of the standard measure to identify that identity dimension.

[Figure 3 about here]

Figure 3 shows the relationship between the party identity IAT measure and the IDPG scale. It should be noted that the clear clustering of respondents by party is not a product of the IDPG scale. As is discussed above, the IDPG is really an extension of the standard, two-item PID measure. It assigns respondents as Democrats or Republicans on the basis

of the Michigan measure. Thus, the relationship of interest here is the relationship within each party (illustrated here by the two regression lines). The most notable feature of the relationship between these two measures is that there isn't much of one. So, these two measures seem to be capturing somewhat different things.

#### 4.1.1 Identity Gap?

We also are able to compare relative identity across the two parties. We see that Republicans of every intensity appear to be stronger identifiers than are their Democratic counterparts (though the difference is not statistically significant for each level of PID strength). We, thus, see evidence that PID, as conventionally measured, means different things in terms of identity among Democrats and Republicans. And, we see evidence that there may be an “identity gap” separating the two parties at the moment. This too is more clear in Figure 4(a). The gap between Republicans and Democrats in magnitude of identity is 0.07, with a bootstrapped p-value of 0.009. The observation of a gap in identity and intensity is consistent with other recent findings (Theodoridis, 2012) and is one we could not make using either the standard PID measure or the IDPG scale used by Greene (1999, 2000, 2004). In fact, the seven-point PID scale might lead to a very different conclusion. Forty-seven percent of Democrats rate themselves as “strong” partisans, as compared with only 34 percent of Republicans. So, the skew of the intensity distributions might lead one to conclude that *Democrats* are the stronger identifiers when using just the standard measure. The IDPG scale averages (which range from zero to four) within the various levels of the seven-point and three-point PID scales also do not expose any remarkable differences. In this sample, the average IDPG scores for Democrats (1.97) and Republicans (1.94) are nearly identical. The comparison of average IDPG score by seven-point PID, shows that only Republican leaners (1.77) identify more strongly than their equivalent Democrats (1.58).



## 4.2 Identity and the Building Blocks of PID

[Figure 4 about here]

Having shown a solid overall relationship between explicit PID and the new IAT measure (correlation = .61), we will now examine the effectiveness of the Michigan measure's component parts in measuring this association. Figure 5 shows how the responses to each item of the Michigan PID measure relate to implicit party identity. The introductory question (Figure 5(a)) captures the most variation. The implicit and explicit measures in this case are correlated at .56. The leaner question (Figure 5(b)) also captures meaningful variation, producing a .52 correlation. The two partisan strength items (Figures 5(c) and 5(d)) capture the least variation with correlations of .08 and .11, respectively.

[Figure 5 about here]

On the whole, it can be said that the standard scale captures most of the variation in identity with the intro question and the follow-up item for independents. The strength items add only modest value. The non-monotonicity discussed above involving Republican leaners is produced by the way in which the items interact to generate a seven-point scale. So, in this sense, the final seven-point product is somewhat less than the sum of its parts. The two-item measure does exceptionally well at distinguishing those with Democratic identity from those with Republican identity (due to the effectiveness of the introductory question and the "leaner" question). It is less effective in terms of separating out levels of identity within the two parties.

## 4.3 Closet Partisans?

The effectiveness of the "leaner" question also offers substantial support for the contention that "leaners" are best thought of (and analyzed) as partisans when it comes to attachment

to their party. This is especially clear on the Republican side, in light of the breakdown of identity levels by seven-point PID discussed above and shown in Figures 2 and 4(b). And, while there is no non-monotonicity on the Democratic side, “leaners” are far closer to the “not so strong” Democrats than they are to either pure independents or zero. While many scholars have argued that “leaners” are, in fact, partisans (Keith et al., 1992; Magleby and Nelson, 2012; Norpoth and Velez, 2012; Petrocik, 2009), some have offered evidence casting doubt on this claim (Abrams and Fiorina, 2011; Miller and Shanks, 1996), and Campbell et al. (1960) even grouped “leaners” with pure independents. Others (Klar, 2013; Klar and Krupnikov, N.d.) have shown that “leaners” are more like partisans in some ways (e.g. preferences) and more like pure independents in others (e.g. participation). One reason for disagreement on this point may be that there has been no consensus outcome to use in comparing “leaners” to partisans. Should it be vote choice on which we examine proximity? Split-ticket voting? Participation levels? Given the intentions of the Michigan scholars, identity level seems an eminently defensible choice for comparison of intensity. And, as this new measure and these new data demonstrate, “leaners” are more like partisans than they are like pure independents on this important dimension. This is not meant to suggest that “leaners” and partisans are the same in every way. Obviously they are not. But, it should provide guidance in terms of how scholars use the seven-point scale, especially those seeking to collapse it into a three-category variable. Since the stated goal of the PID items was to ascertain partisan *identity*, it appears far more appropriate to group “leaners” with partisans rather than pure independents when collapsing the scale.

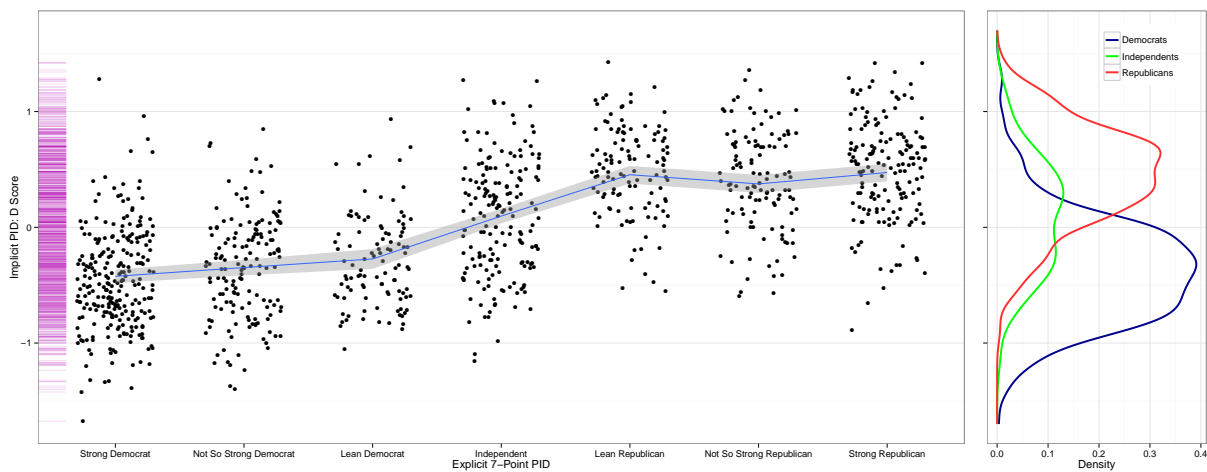


Figure 2: **Implicit and Explicit:** These plots illustrate the distribution of D scores emerging from the party identity IAT. The jitter plot shows the relationship between the D score and the standard 7-point PID measure, while the rug plot along the y axis displays the overall distribution of D scores. The density plot to the right shows the distribution of D scores for each 3-point PID category, with leaners included as partisans. YouGov sampling weights were used to generate both the loess (with 95-percent confidence intervals, and  $\alpha = .5$ ) and the density lines. The data used are from the Implicit Party Identity Study.

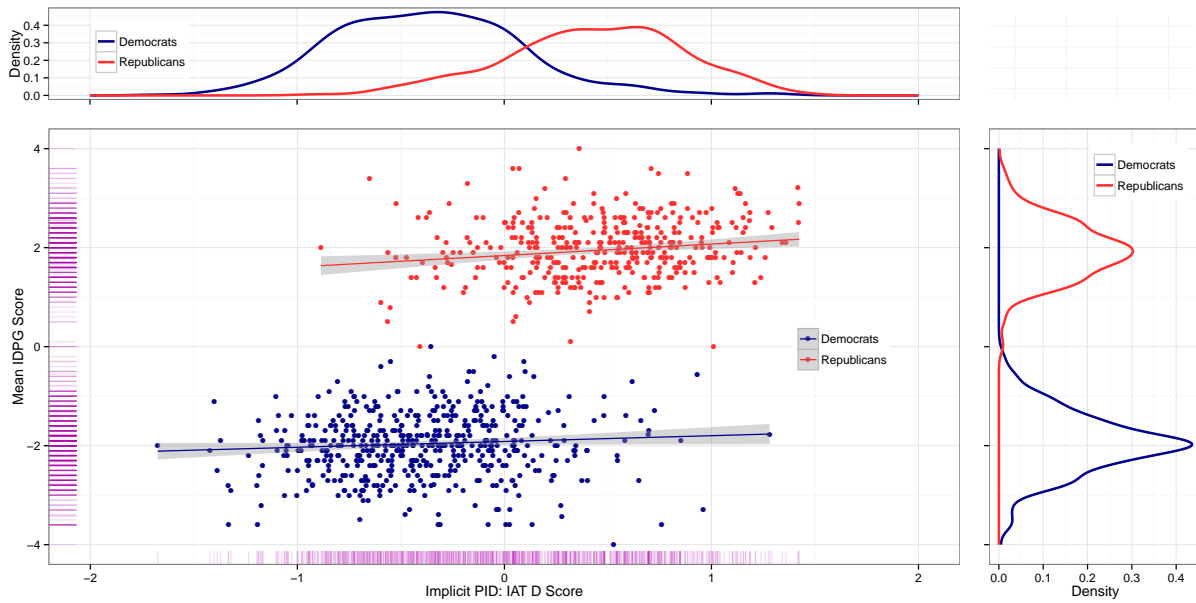
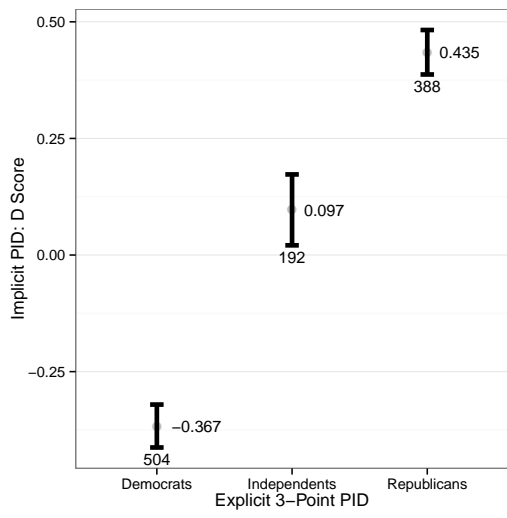
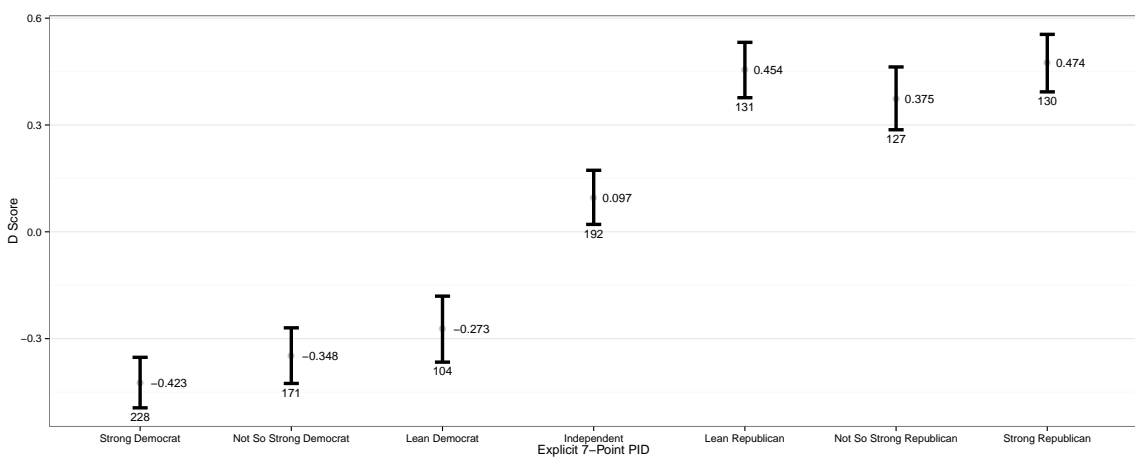


Figure 3: **IAT and IDPG:** These plots illustrate the distribution of D scores emerging from the party identity IAT in relation to the IDPG scale previously used to examine the identity dimension of PID. The scatter plot shows the relationship between the D score and the IDPG scale, while the rug plot along the axes display the overall distributions. The marginal density plots shows the distributions by PID category, with leaners included as partisans. YouGov sampling weights were used to generate both the regression lines (with 95-percent confidence intervals) and the density lines. The data used are from the Implicit Party Identity Study.



(a)



(b)

Figure 4: **Mean Levels of Implicit Identity by PID:** These plots show the mean IAT D score at each level of the standard three-point and seven-point PID scales, with bars representing 95 percent confidence intervals. Leaners are included as partisans for three-point PID. The data used are from the Implicit Party Identity Study and sample weights were used.

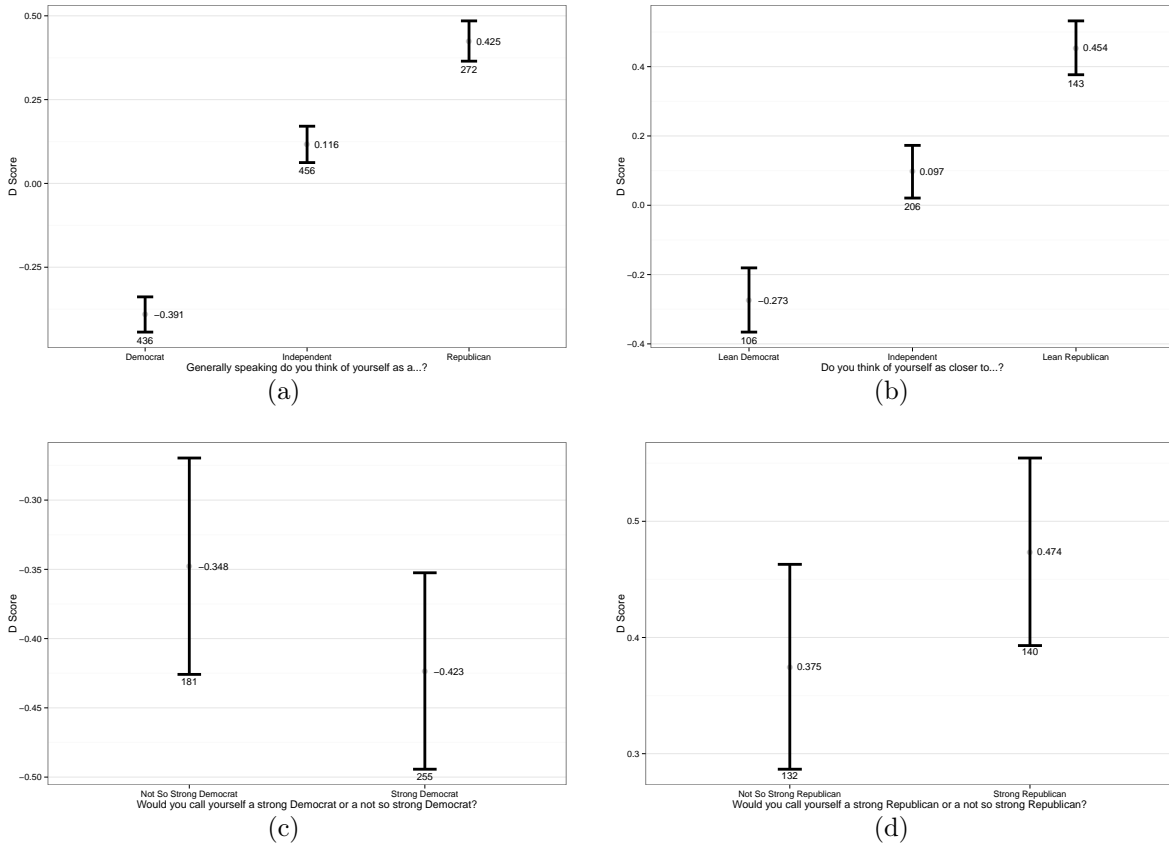


Figure 5: **Building Blocks of PID** These plots show the relationship between the IAT D score and respondent answers to the components of the two-item PID question. Bars represent 95 percent confidence intervals. Estimates are generated using YouGov sampling weights.

## 5 Identity and Bias

“Identification with a party raises a perceptual screen through which the individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation. The stronger the party bond, the more exaggerated the process of selection and perceptual distortion will be.” - [Campbell et al. \(1960, 133\)](#)

Group identities are frequently associated with the presence of perceptual biases and motivated reasoning that favor the ingroup over the outgroup (See, for example [Hastorf and Cantril, 1954](#); [Pettigrew, 1979](#)). And, as the quote above from *The American Voter* points out, the Michigan scholars expected their affect and identity based partisan identification to be no exception. The party identity IAT allows us to examine the extent to which the intensity of identity (“the party bond”) relates to the opacity of any perceptual screen. Of course, this also requires a measure of partisan bias. For this, I use an experimental manipulation developed and detailed in [Theodoridis \(2012\)](#) to measure precisely this process of motivated perceptual bias. I then compare the extent to which the various measures discussed here are useful in “predicting” biased processing of political information. As part of the bias measure, subjects are asked to read a “news” report designed to look roughly like a clipping from a newspaper and respond to a series of Agree/Disagree items about it. [Figure 6](#) shows the content of this report. Reports are identical across experimental conditions except that the party of the politician is randomly manipulated. Respondents are then presented with a series of statements with which they could agree or disagree:

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

[Figure 6 about here]

Responses were registered on a 9-point scale, with alternating points labeled “Agree Strongly,” “Agree,” “Neither Agree nor Disagree,” “Disagree,” and “Disagree Strongly.” The responses to these items were then additively combined to generate a single scale in which larger values indicate more negative evaluation of the transgressing Senator. The estimands of interest here are:  $\widehat{Bias}_D = \overline{x_{Dr}} - \overline{x_{Dd}}$  and  $\widehat{Bias}_R = \overline{x_{Rd}} - \overline{x_{Rr}}$  where  $D$  and  $R$  indicate the party of the respondents and  $d$  and  $r$  indicate the party of the Senator in the news report. This measures the total bias shown by partisans on any given measure. In each case, the bias is measured by subtracting the mean under the outgroup report from that under the ingroup report.

[Figure 7 about here]

Figures 7 and 8 show the relationship between the three measures of party identity and this experimental measure of bias. In these figures, both the IAT D score and the IDPG scale are collapsed into six-point scales, divided by quantile. In the case of the IAT, the zero point is used as the midpoint. The use of equal quantiles is arbitrary, but it is also agnostic as to the appropriate distribution of cut points. All three measures are used to generate “Low”, “Medium”, and “High” intensity-level categories. For the standard measure, these levels correspond to “Lean”, “Not So Strong” and “Strong”, respectively. The IDPG and seven-point PID measures exclude pure independents, as this measure of bias requires a party affiliation, and those measures do not provide a mechanism for assigning pure independents to one party or another. The IAT allows us to include pure independents as they can be classified as partisans on the basis of the charge of their D score. This highlights another useful feature of this measure, a use highlighted in [Hawkins and Nosek \(2012\)](#). In this sample, roughly 17 percent of respondents were pure independents. They are included



as partisans in the IAT-bias comparison.

[Figure 8 about here]

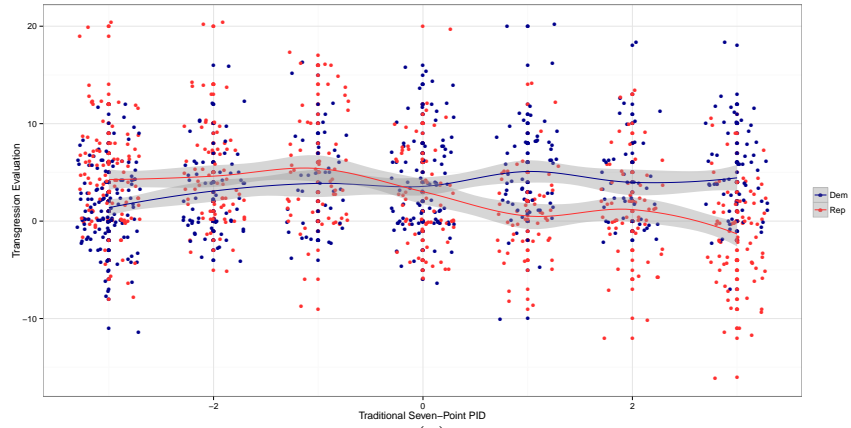
The IAT measure appears to do best in predicting bias among Republicans. The IDPG measure seems to offer some differentiation as well. Seven-point PID does rather poorly, and findings are consistent with the non-monotonicity observed earlier. Among Democrats, none of the measures do particularly well at differentiating levels of bias. Seven-point PID seems to produce the most stepwise progression, but the levels of bias are relatively similar between levels of intensity. Bias is also quite similar across the levels of intensity as determined by the identity IAT, but the levels do not progress in a stepwise fashion. Thus, the IAT measure does not appear to effectively capture variation in bias among Democrats. The IDPG-based intensity levels seem to identify those with the most bias, but do not capture variation between those at low and medium intensity levels.

These results could be interpreted in a number of ways: 1) The overall level of bias on the Democratic side is lower, so there may just not be as much meaningful variation to measure. 2) This could be a feature of the current political moment. That is, fluctuation between levels of explicit PID may be subject to the current state of things in ways that make the explicit intensity measures more reliable right now among Democrats than Republicans. 3) The IAT measure taps more into affective identity than PID 7, and the IDPG gets at identity, but still using an explicit measure. It may be that bias among Democrats currently operates less at an affective level than it does on the Republican side. 4) Relatedly, [Amodio, Jost, Master and Yee \(2007\)](#) argue that political liberals demonstrate greater levels of cognitive control than do conservatives. This executive neural function could lead Democratic respondents to censor their impulse to bias in favor of their party and against the other party, ultimately producing a less pronounced relationship between the intensity of identity and the expression of bias. All of these interpretations require further exploration and some of

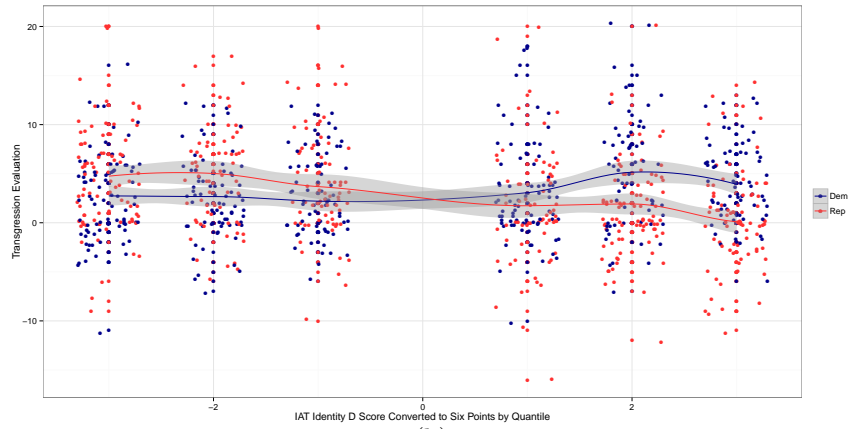
that exploration will demand longitudinal data not yet available. What we can say, though, is that bias appears to relate to identity in a more pronounced way among Republicans than among Democrats at the current moment.



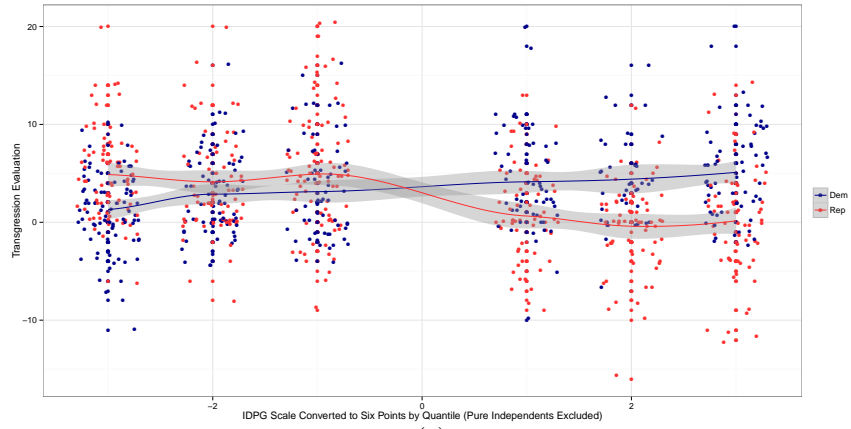
Figure 6: The Democratic version of the report seen by respondents prior to filling out the Agree/Disagree grid.



(a)

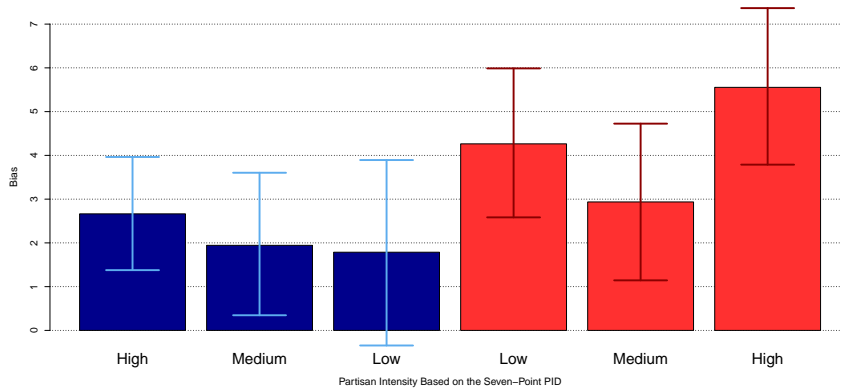


(b)

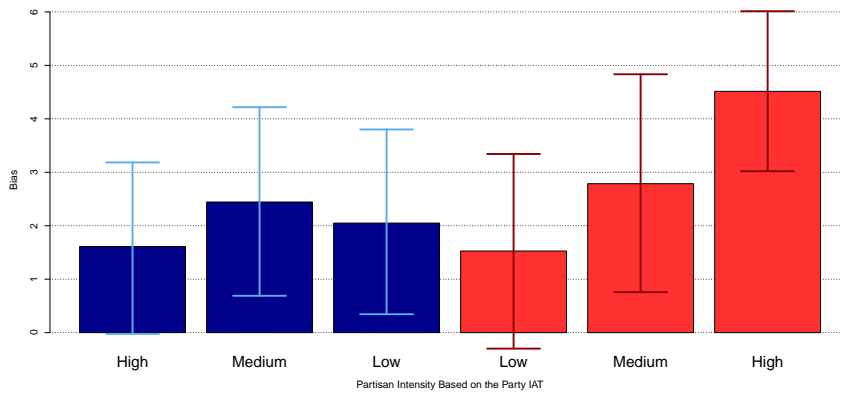


(c)

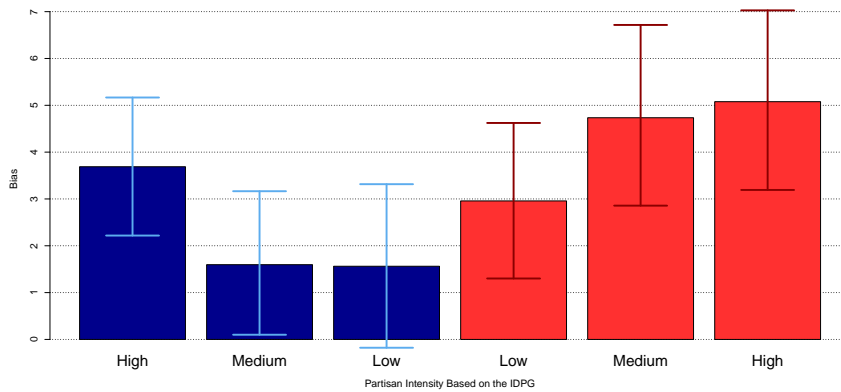
Figure 7: **Evaluation and Identity:** These figures show the overall relationship between evaluation of a transgressing Senator and three measures of party identity. The IDPG and IAT scales are broken into six levels by quantile, for the sake of comparability.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 8: **Bias and Identity:** These figures show the level of bias by three measures of partisan intensity. In the case of seven-point party identification, “Low”, “Medium”, and “High” intensity corresponds to “Lean”, “Not So Strong” and “Strong”, respectively. The IDPG and IAT scales are broken into six levels by quantile, for the sake of comparability. Error bars show bootstrapped (10,000 resamples) .95 confidence intervals.

## 6 Discussion and Future Directions

This article has called upon the social identity conceptualization PID in presenting a novel implicit measure of party identity. With new survey data, the measure allowed us to explore partisan intensity and assess the *status quo* explicit measures of PID and partisan identity as they relate to both each other and an indicator of biased processing of political information. With guidance from balanced identity theory, the IAT is employed to directly measure party identity in a fashion that is consistent with the way in which [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) conceived of PID.

It is sometimes considered a failure of an IAT when the data it produces do not differ substantially from its explicit counterpart. After all, why use an implicit measure when an explicit one captures the important variation? This is not so in the case of the party identity IAT. When the goal of the IAT is to measure attitudes that may be hidden by the introspection performed on an explicit measure, a tight match between explicit and implicit suggests limited use for the implicit measure. In this article, however, the goal was not primarily to expose hidden information, but rather to test the validity of the dominant measure of PID by using a new one that provides more conceptual clarity and a direct measure of the underlying dimension. The old measure has largely stood up to that test. From a measurement perspective, this means that the Michigan scholars accomplished their stated goal when devising the survey items that have become the definition of PID. From a theoretical perspective, given that the explicit measure *has* become the operational definition of the concept, this analysis is able to offer the most compelling evidence to date in support of an identity model of PID.

However, the match between the most common explicit measure (and the IDPG scale used by previous scholars) is not perfect. In particular, the relationship between seven-point PID and the IAT party identity measure appears to be imperfect among Republican iden-

tifiers. “Leaners” appear to identify more intensely than do “Not so Strong” Republicans, producing a case of non-monotonicity. The seven-point scale “works” in a stepwise manner with regard to the IAT on the Democratic side. However, the Michigan measure generally is most successful at distinguishing Democrats and Republicans from each other, and slightly less so at distinguishing between levels of intensity within a party. In a related point, this measure offers perhaps the strongest evidence to date that partisan “leaners” are closer to partisans than pure independents in terms of the critical identity dimension of partisanship. Asymmetry can also be seen in the relationship between implicit party identity and a measure of biased processing. Among Democrats, no PID/identity measure does particularly well, with the standard seven-point measure performing best. Among Republicans, however, the IAT party identity measure and, to a lesser extent, the IDPG scale seem to relate to bias.

We are also able to observe differences between Republicans and Democrats in intensity of identity that could not be observed with earlier explicit measures. We see that Republicans appear to identify more strongly with their party. We also observe the general finding that implicit identity and our explicit measure operate slightly differently in each party. Democratic and Republican partisan strength, that is, should not necessarily be thought of by scholars as mirror images of one another.

There are likely many other differences between the implicit measure presented here and the standard explicit measures that warrant examination in future work.<sup>10</sup> In particular, this measure deserves examination with regard to heterogeneity in the role of identity among partisans when it interacts with other characteristics, such as political engagement and knowledge. Time and further examination will reveal these second-order applications of this new measure. But, while it does not substantially conflict with the explicit measure, it is clear that the party identity IAT has the potential to add meaningful depth to our

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<sup>10</sup>One recent study suggests that this is the case for pure independents ([Hawkins and Nosek, 2012](#)).

understanding of partisanship, party identity and intensity.

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## 7 Appendix

### 7.1 IDPG Scale Items

1. When someone criticizes this group, it feels like a personal insult.
2. I don't act like the typical person of this group (reversed).
3. I'm very interested in what others think about this group.
4. The limitations associated with this group apply to me also.
5. When I talk about this group, I usually say "we" rather than "they."
6. I have a number of qualities typical of members of this group.
7. This group's successes are my successes.
8. If a story in the media criticized this group, I would feel embarrassed.
9. When someone praises this group, it feels like a personal compliment.
10. I act like a person of this group to a great extent.