God, Sex, and Especially Politics: Disentangling the Dimensions of Discrimination

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Abstract

How rampant is political discrimination, and how does it compare to other important sources of bias in apolitical interactions? We employ a novel conjoint experimental paradigm to compare the magnitude of various salient social categories in generating discrimination by partisans across a variety of largely apolitical scenarios. The conjoint framework is well suited to this purpose, as it enables one to simultaneously vary and identify the distinct causal effects of several factors, ceteris paribus. We find pronounced, consistent discrimination along the lines of religion (especially against Atheists, Muslims and Evangelical Protestants) and sexual orientation. We also see substantial desire for homophily and avoidance of out-group members along several dimensions. Perhaps most striking, though, is just how much discrimination emerges along political lines. Notably, that discrimination is not limited to partisan divides. In fact, counter-stereotypic ideological labels can moderate, and even erase, the discriminatory consequences of party.

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“Partisan identity is now stronger and more meaningful for many Americans than race, ethnicity or religious denomination – and a more legitimate justification for discrimination ... It is the return of ‘No Irish need apply,’ but with Republicans or Democrats replacing the Irish.”

– Jonah Goldberg, *Los Angeles Times*

“The neighborhood has regained much of its leafy, prosperous sheen, drawing families and young people alike. Hobart Street, where I live, celebrates this newfound identity with an annual block party featuring bouncy houses as well as drag queens. Residents kick off a parade by reciting: ‘I pledge allegiance to Hobart Street Northwest ... gay or straight, woman or man, all are welcome on Hobart Street – except for Republicans.”

– Ken Stern, *The Atlantic*

Party identity demarcates an especially salient cleavage in the American polity today. It has long been known to play a central role in shaping political attitudes and behaviors (Ahler and Sood 2018; Bartels 2002; Bolsen, Druckman and Cook 2014; Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960; Druckman and Bolsen 2011; Goggin and Theodoridis 2017; Henderson and Theodoridis 2017; Jerit and Barabas 2012; Nicholson 2012; Zaller 1992). Increasingly, it is characterized as a strong, expressive identity with attitudinal and behavioral consequences akin to other social identities (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002; Greene 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015; Mason 2018; Theodoridis 2017, 2013). The effects of this attachment can be seen in the pronounced “affective polarization” characterizing current American political cognition and discourse (Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2017; Druckman, Gubitz, Levendusky and Lloyd Forthcoming; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan Forthcoming; Levendusky 2018; Mason 2016). A growing literature shows that party identity can be an important dimension of social division even in apolitical environments (Fowler and Kam 2007; Huber and Malhotra 2017; Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; McConnell, Margalit, Malhotra and Levendusky 2018; Nicholson, Coe, Emory and Song 2016).

While anecdotal and scientific evidence of discrimination on the basis of political party are increasingly emerging, current observational and experimental data do not lend themselves
to fully understanding the nature of this phenomenon in some important ways. First, it is difficult to compare the power of political party affiliation as a discriminatory dimension with other salient dimensions. Second, and relatedly, it is hard to isolate the discriminatory effects specifically attributable to party (rather than statistically inferential in nature) when so many other identities and social categories are now correlated or associated (either correctly or erroneously) with the two parties and their partisans (Abramowitz 2011, 2018; Ahler and Sood 2018; Bishop 2008; Clifford 2017; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015, 2016, 2018; Mason and Wronski 2018; Zingher 2018). As a result, we know little about where exactly party and political identity more broadly are situated relative to, and in the presence of, a range of salient identity dimensions at play in most social contexts. Which descriptive dimensions do partisans rely on most when faced with choosing to engage with or reward other people in largely apolitical contexts? To what extent do political attitudes and groups matter as compared with the groups that compose, or are perceived to compose, the party coalitions? Answering these questions is an endeavor fraught with conceptual and measurement challenges.

To examine the relative place of political party affiliation among the dimensions of discrimination, we present results from a novel conjoint experiment (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015; Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2013; Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto 2015), fielded on a broadly representative sample of 2,654 YouGov panelists. The conjoint framework is especially well suited to this inquiry because, unlike observational research or traditional vignette-style experiments, conjoints permit the examination of each dimension’s independent effect ceteris paribus and in interaction with the others. This is a particularly important feature given the increased sorting of identities. This means that respondents are made to react to some combinations of attributes not commonly found in the political wild. While some of these combinations may be rare, very few are completely absent in the real world. Including them in our study provides unique causal leverage to fully examine the
effect of each theoretically important moving part. Furthermore, by including a wide range of dimensions, the conjoint paradigm provides a less direct measure of any one single form of discrimination, thus likely minimizing social desirability effects.

In our study, respondents were repeatedly shown profiles of two hypothetical individuals, each of whom had fully randomly assigned race, sex, age, party, ideology, region, hometown, career, marital status, and sexual orientation. For each pair, respondents were asked to choose which individual they would rather have as a relative, a neighbor, serve with them on a jury, receive a loan, or receive a grant for their favorite charity. Through a series of analyses that cut these data in a number of ways, we find pronounced, consistent discrimination along the lines of religion and sexual orientation. But, we find even more consistent and widespread discrimination along two key political dimensions – party and ideology.

We begin by looking at the behavior of partisans. We find pronounced religious discrimination, particularly among Republicans. Specifically, Republicans show more bias against Muslims than any other group. Republicans also discriminate against Atheists, and Democrats discriminate against Evangelical Christians. Sexual orientation emerges as another substantial discriminatory dimension, with Republicans discriminating against those identified as “LGBT or Homosexual.”

Perhaps most strikingly, though, our analyses show the choices of both Democrats and Republicans reflect profound discrimination by party at magnitudes greater than most other dimensions. Party, though, is not the only source of political discrimination. Our design allows for the examination of interactions that are difficult to explore otherwise. Along these lines, we examine the interplay between party and ideology. Interestingly, we find that ideology substantially moderates the effects of party. In fact, ideology has the potential to erase the biasing effects of party. Democrats show no bias against Republican targets who are socially liberal and no favoritism for socially conservative Democrats. The effect is even more pronounced for Republicans, who do not favor either socially or fiscally liberal Republicans
to socially or fiscally conservative Democrats. This finding suggests that the identity versus ideology dichotomy may be considerably more complex than previously thought, with both party and ideology operating as potentially distinct (though interrelated) facets of political identity (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; Lelkes and Sniderman 2016; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2018; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012).

We also break respondents down by their own identities to examine each factor’s contribution to in-group favoritism. We once again find that party and ideology play perhaps the most important roles, but also find that minority groups defined by race, sexual orientation and religion show meaningful desire for homophily, or the tendency to associate with similar others. Lastly, we examine each dimension as it is evaluated by respondents from its logical out-group(s). Here too, we find the most notable discrimination by religion, sexual orientation, and especially party and ideology.

Our empirical results have substantial implications for the theoretical conceptualization of party identity by scholars. Some work has tended to characterize partisanship as more group based, with party identity emerging for partisans through their other, more central, group identities (Achen and Bartels 2016; Ahler and Sood 2018; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Under this characterization, party is better described as a second-order, superordinate, umbrella identity. Other scholars tend to describe partisanship in ways that emphasize its power as an identity in and of itself (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015; Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Theodoridis 2017). And, some work seems to fall somewhere in the middle (Abramowitz 2011, 2018; Clifford 2017; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015, 2016, 2018; Mason and Wronski 2018; Zingher 2018). Our design’s ability to simultaneously separate and hold constant so many key dimensions gives our data a unique voice in this debate. Even controlling for many of the group and ideology based identity dimensions often associated with the party coalitions, party identity still packs a substantial punch of its own. But, even controlling for party, some groups still matter a great deal. And,
it is no accident, we suspect, that these groups (Muslims, Evangelicals, the LGBT) tend to be ones with substantial political relevance of their own.

Our findings also have important, and perhaps troubling, practical implications. In concert with mounting evidence that rank-and-file partisans can identify and stereotype each other (Ahler and Sood 2018; Evan and P. N.d.) and the increased sorting of party affiliation along ideological and other dimensions (Abramowitz 2011, 2018; Bishop 2008; Clifford 2017; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015, 2016, 2018; Mason and Wronski 2018; Zingher 2018), our findings paint a picture of an America in which political discrimination increasingly seeps into daily interactions among the body politic. This is especially concerning because they predict less and less interaction across political divides. And those interactions that persist may be characterized by tendencies to reward or punish according to political in- or out-group dynamics. The decrease in interactions, especially, could further short circuit some of the most effective mechanisms for overcoming group conflict – intergroup contact and deliberation.

**Party Identity and Discrimination**

Group categories are known to play a central role in how individuals relate to and understand the social world. Knowing that someone is a member of a specific group can make complex interactions and decisions less cognitively taxing, as people often consciously or subconsciously rely on this information in deciding how to feel and act toward others. Simply learning that someone is a member of an in-group can trigger positive feelings and favorable evaluations and learning that someone is a member of an out-group can result in negative and unfavorable evaluations and treatment (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel and Turner 1979). The impact of social groups on expressions of intergroup prejudice typically depends on how the social context influences the relative salience of a specific social group and identity (Ellemers, Spears and Doosje 2002; Klar 2013a, b, 2014b).
Party identification has become a particularly salient cleavage in today’s political environment, and is known to play a central role in shaping political attitudes and behaviors (Ahler and Sood 2018; Bartels 2002; Bolsen, Druckman and Cook 2014; Campbell et al. 1960; Druckman and Bolsen 2011; Goggin and Theodoridis 2017; Henderson and Theodoridis 2017; Jerit and Barabas 2012; Nicholson 2012; Zaller 1992). Rather than representing an amalgamation of policy positions, party identity has emerged as a strong, expressive identity with attitudinal and behavioral consequences akin to other social identities (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002; Greene 1999, 2000, 2004; Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015). Theodoridis (2017) shows that partisans today associate themselves with their party at a deep, pre-introspection level. The effects of this sort of attachment can be seen in the pronounced “affective polarization” observed today (Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2017; Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; Iyengar and Westwood 2015), and especially the profound increase in negative affect for opposing partisans (Abramowitz and Webster 2016; Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Lelkes, Sood and Iyengar 2017). Over the past decade, partisans have not only viewed members of the opposing party more negatively (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012), but they have also begun to attribute more negative stereotypes to the opposing party (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012; Levendusky and Malhotra 2016; Levendusky 2018).

Party identity has also emerged as a critical social division in apolitical environments as well (Huber and Malhotra 2017; Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012). In recent decades, the proportion of individuals with cross-cutting political and social identities has decreased as individuals’ ideological, social, and partisan identities have converged (Abramowitz 2011, 2018; Bishop 2008; Clifford 2017; Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 2018; Levendusky 2009; Mason 2015, 2016, 2018; Mason and Wronski 2018) and political behavior has become more

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1Party identification is also incredibly consequential for the perception and processing of ostensibly factual information, as motivated reasoning based on one’s party can shape what is learned (Bolsen, Druckman and Cook 2014; Druckman, Leeper and Slothuus 2018; Druckman and Bolsen 2011; Khanna and Sood 2017; Prior, Sood, Khanna et al. 2015; Sood and Iyengar 2018).
nationalized (Hopkins 2018). This has created an environment in which individuals feel more strongly attached and closely connected to their partisan identity (Mason and Wronski 2018). Party identity now appears to shape interactions well beyond traditional political contexts. In surveys, partisans display a desire for increased social distance from opposing partisans in apolitical settings (Iyengar and Westwood 2015). Partisan animosity has been shown to impact interactions in the real world, as individuals are more likely to date a co-partisan (Huber and Malhotra 2017) and favor co-partisans in employer and consumer markets (McConnell et al. 2018). None of these contexts are directly relevant to political outcomes or expressly political, yet partisans use party identity of the object to formulate decisions on whether they are willing to interact with or reward an individual. Recent evidence even suggests that partyism may be a more powerful source of group discrimination than racism (Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Sunstein 2015).

Differentiating the Dimensions of Discrimination

Challenges of Measurement

Measuring the relative power of various dimensions of discrimination presents a few special challenges. To begin with, we must contend with the associations in the minds of respondents between various dimensions. For example, a party label in a vignette may lead respondents to infer sex, race, religion, socio-economic status, etc. Ideally, we would like to measure the effects of each factor, *ceteris paribus*. Doing so in separate experiments that manipulate one factor at a time is difficult, because respondents are known to infer information well beyond what is provided in the treatment (Dafoe, Zhang and Caughey Forthcoming). The composite nature of most treatments produces a phenomenon known as “aliasing,” which makes it difficult to confidently attribute effects to one dimension or another (Hainmueller, Hopkins
and Yamamoto 2013). Holding all other relevant dimensions constant in such studies is both cumbersome (if not impossible) and limits the extent to which inferences can be generalized beyond the scope of a particular study. It is important, though difficult from an experimental design perspective, to simultaneously vary all of the dimensions of interest.

It is also worth noting that party identity differs in important ways from many group identities. For starters, party identity is something that one chooses,\(^2\) rather than an identity with which one is born, such as race, gender, sexual orientation\(^3\), or ethnicity. This differentiates party identity not only in terms of how one comes to identify with the group, but also with regard to how one might be treated as a member of that group. Specifically, this different type of identification can facilitate different social norms of group treatment and prejudice, in that social norms of tolerance and equality may not necessarily apply to “opt-in” groups. Furthermore, party identity has not been a source of centuries of historical, social and institutional discrimination in the way race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation have. And, unlike many traditional dimensions of identity, parties in the American political system do not feature an obvious status gradient. That is, there is no clearly dominant category or group. All of these factors have led to establishment of social norms against overt discrimination along many identity dimensions\(^4\), but not necessarily political party affiliation. As a result, people might be more willing to blame or punish someone for identifying as a partisan compared to identifying as a specific race or gender (Iyengar and Westwood 2015).

The difference in social norms and tolerance across these types of identities can have implications on how willing people are to express prejudicial attitudes and behaviors toward

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\(^2\)Evidence of parental transmission (Jennings, Stoker and Bowers 2009) and even heritability (Alford, Funk and Hibbing 2005) notwithstanding.

\(^3\)According to a 2013 Gallup Survey, 56% of Democrats believe sexual orientation is something one is born with, while 48% of Independents and 35% of Republicans believe the same. Overall, 47% of Americans believe sexual orientation is something one is born with (Jones 2013).

\(^4\)Though this conscious suppression of group prejudice may not reflect automatic attitudes (Devine 1989)
a group. This creates an added challenge in measuring them in relation to each other, making it perilous to do so with direct self-reports and even with standard survey experimental paradigms, in which respondents may often discern the dimension of interest and which can produce demand effects. Since there are strong social norms against explicit and blatant racism, for instance, individuals might be less inclined to express discrimination against other races (Crandall, Eshleman and O’Brien 2002) in these contexts. As a result, this societal difference in what is and is not an acceptable basis for discrimination confounds efforts to determine the relative effects of different dimensions, as respondents look to control their implicit prejudices against some groups and not others (Dunton and Fazio 1997). To better understand how the effects of partyism in largely apolitical contexts compare to other group based prejudices, some of which go against generally agreed upon social norms, a more subtle measure is needed.

**Advantages of the Conjoint Framework**

Conjoint studies, once used primarily in product marketing research, are increasingly being employed in political science (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015; Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2013). The conjoint framework is especially well suited to our endeavor for a number of reasons. Conjoint experiments may be able to alleviate respondent concerns about being seen as discriminatory (Wallander 2009). In some ways, they are comparable to list experiments (Gonzalez-Ocantos, De Jonge, Meléndez, Osorio and Nickerson 2012; Kuklinski, Cobb and Gilens 1997) in that respondents are not being asked to directly reveal discrimination on the basis of any particular factor, giving them license to do so. Conjoint designs like ours ask respondents to repeatedly evaluate hypothetical profiles of individuals that can include many different dimensions and points of comparison (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2013). Each time respondents see a profile, some or all of the characteristics
presented change. Respondents are presented with several different pieces of information about an individual and rather than asking them to reveal which pieces of information influence their choice, the survey only requires them to register a decision based on the totality of the given information. Because this decision could be the result of any piece of information presented to the respondent, the conjoint provides a greater sense of anonymity, even beyond that provided by the online survey mode. The factors entering into the respondents choice are, in fact, indiscernible at the individual level. As respondents recognize this feature of the design, the incentive to hide their social group prejudices may be reduced allowing us to circumvent problems that might otherwise influence obtrusive and direct questions about social group prejudices. This is also true of traditional vignette-based survey experiments, but to a lesser extent, because respondents can often deduce the dimension of interest when there are fewer moving parts. And, from a practical perspective, standard survey experiments make it easier for social desirability bias to peek through. Respondents can more readily adopt response strategies that serve to mask a particular form of discrimination. In a conjoint study, where many factors are manipulated at once, and in which respondents are exposed to multiple choice tasks in sequence, it is far more difficult to imagine what form such strategies might take. Short of literally blinding themselves to a particular factor, large-scale purposeful efforts to avoid appearing discriminatory would reveal themselves in aggregate reverse discrimination.

Furthermore, since conjoint experiments provide a lot of information about the object of evaluation, these types of experiments can decrease the availability of cognitive resources in the decision-making process. Encountering a lot of information about a single object can be cognitively overwhelming for individuals, and as a result, their cognitive processing ability or willingness to engage in effortful cognitive processing can decrease.\footnote{According to Miller (1956), five unique pieces of information are enough to alter an individual’s cognitive processing capabilities, and the ability to engage in deliberate decision making decreases even further when}
processing capacity and ability (and potential willingness) to engage in effortful evaluations are low, individuals are more likely to rely on group stereotypes when making judgments and evaluations of others (Bargh and Burrows 1996; Dunton and Fazio 1997; Hilton and Von Hippel 1996; Sherman, Macrae and Bodenhausen 2000). Due to the amount of different information provided about the two objects of comparison, the conjoint design may create an environment of “hot cognition,” where individuals are not able or willing to engage in deliberative judgments and rely, instead, on group heuristics and stereotypes to form snap judgments and choices, thus decreasing differential social desirability bias across dimensions.

On the other hand, one critique of conjoint experiments is that they present a decidedly artificial interface. Reading that a potential neighbor is Latino in a table is very different than meeting that individual in person. However, Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto (2015) find that conjoint studies, and especially paired comparisons like ours, do especially well at replicating real-world behavior.

**Experimental Design: Situating and Isolating “Partyism”**

We employed a novel conjoint experimental paradigm (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2013) to examine the relative power of various dimensions of discrimination. In our design, respondents are shown profiles of two hypothetical individuals, presented side-by-side in a table format. Figure 1 shows a sample of the conjoint task interface. The tables describe each individual along ten dimensions or factors. Each of those ten factor values was drawn from a set of several possible levels. To increase verisimilitude, respondents were told that this information was drawn from surveys filled out by the individuals. The full list of factors individuals are asked to compare two different stimuli that differ in multiple ways (Miller 1956).
and levels in the experiment is shown in Table 1. For each factor, in addition to providing various types of groups within each type of social group category, we also included the level “Not Asked.” This category was included in order to provide a neutral baseline from which we could compare the relative effects of all other groups within a social group category and to minimize satisficing, specifically the tendency to reduce cognitive effort by focusing only on one factor. Each individual had one of the levels for the factors randomly inserted into each category. “Not Asked” was assigned to appear in each factor only 12.5% regardless of how many other levels were used in a factor. The order of the factors was randomly assigned at the level of the respondent. Each respondent was presented with five paired choices.

Broadly speaking, we chose this set of factors for two reasons. First, the majority of these factors are important sources of group discrimination and how people navigate the social world. Second, the majority of these group factors, except for perhaps some careers and marital status, are closely aligned with the two partisan coalitions (Campbell, Green and Layman 2011; Mason 2016, 2018). Race and gender have historically been sources of group discrimination in both the American social environment and the political world. Furthermore, in previous works on partisan discrimination, partyism has been compared to racial discrimination in order to assess the strength of discrimination based on party (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012). In the last several decades, sexual orientation has emerged as a focal point of societal discrimination. Social class, which we approximate using career, has been central to how people treat and interact with others in the social world (Triandis and Triandis 1960). An argument could be made for using specific issue positions instead

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6These levels were fully randomized. Factor levels were specifically chosen to minimize the probability that implausible combinations would appear.

7This low level of 12.5% was chosen to minimize the number of profiles that had a large number of factors missing, as it would reduce realism for respondents.

8See, for example, a variety of studies summarized in Baert (2018) that find discrimination on many of these factors.
of the ideological categories we present. Future research should certainly pursue this line of inquiry for the sake of identifying the role of specific issue publics (Converse 1964), especially since some evidence suggests that, while most salient issue positions are associated with party and ideology, others are not (Broockman 2016). However, since ours represents the first examination of its kind, broad categories are more appropriate. This design choice also makes an already complex task slightly less so and likely boosts realism in the interface.

To test whether context affects respondents' tendency to engage in partisan discrimination relative to other factors of social group discrimination, we also randomly assigned respondents to one of five different contexts. These five contexts vary on two dimensions: the extent to which they are personal and the extent to which they are apolitical. Respondents were asked to choose which individual they would rather have as a relative, a neighbor, serve with them on a jury, receive a loan, or receive a grant for their favorite charity. Each respondent was only exposed to one of these contexts, but completed that task five times. Thus, if asked to choose a neighbor in the first paired comparison, the respondent would be selecting a neighbor in the remaining four pairs as well. The specific question wording for each of these contexts in Table 2.

Our study was fielded in December 2017 on a sample of 2,654 YouGov respondents. Since each respondent was asked to choose between two individuals in one of our five contexts five times, our data include 2,654 observations per context, 13,270 observations across all contexts, and 26,540 displayed target persons. This provides us substantial statistical power to detect not only the main effects of each level of each factor, but also these effects across contexts and blocked by relevant respondent characteristics.

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9Figure I in the Appendix roughly locates each of our contexts along these two dimensions. Our goal is not to pinpoint these contexts on these two dimensions, merely to highlight that there is important variation across the tasks on these dimensions. Some of these contexts, particularly jury service, loan, and charity, could all be construed as somewhat political, depending on their interpretation.

10In keeping with the suggestions of Miratrix, Sekhon, Theodoridis and Campos (2018) the analyses presented here do not use sampling weights.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Black, White, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Female, Male, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Continuous 26-75, Not Asked (15 Percent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>Democrat, Republican, Independent, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Fiscally Conservative, Socially Conservative, Fiscally Liberal, Socially Liberal, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where they Grew Up</td>
<td>Big City, Small Town, Suburbs, Medium Size City, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Atheist, Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Spiritual, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>Carpenter, Professor, Teacher, Lawyer, Doctor, CEO, Retail Manager, Receptionist, Small-Business Owner, Farmer, Factory Foreman, Construction worker, Engineer, Lobbyist, Political Staffer, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martial Status</td>
<td>Married, Single, Divorced, Widowed, Not Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Homosexual, Gay, or LGBT, Straight (Mentioned twice as much as Gay), Not Asked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Experimentally Manipulated Factors and Levels
Table 2: Question Wording for Each Context in Conjoint Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>Here is some information about two people who have taken surveys in the past. Which one would you prefer to have as a close relative by marriage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>Here is some information about two people who have taken surveys in the past. Which individual would you prefer to have live on your street as a neighbor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan</td>
<td>Here is some information about two people who have taken surveys in the past. Both individuals are interested in getting a loan that is about 5% of their salary. They both have good credit scores and are financially dependable. If it were up to you, which individual would get the loan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>Here is some information about two people who have taken surveys in the past. They have applied for a community foundation grant of $1000 for their favorite charity. If it were up to you, which individual would receive the grant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury</td>
<td>Here is some information about two people who have taken surveys in the past. Imagine you have been selected to serve on a jury for a trial that is projected to last for a couple of weeks. Which of these two people would you rather have serve on the jury with you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: God, Sex, and Especially Politics

Context Doesn’t Matter

We observe virtually no differences in results across our five contexts. Two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests reveal few differences between the effect estimates in each individual condition. Specifically, we find that all pairwise comparisons between estimated effects on the tasks result in non-significant KS-test p-values, $p > .1$. The sole exception is the loan task, which significantly differed from all four of the other tasks, $p < .05$. We see the largest divergence between this task and the others in the role of career, as it appears respondents approached the loan task quite differently depending on the career background of the target individual. Otherwise, it appears that survey respondents engaged with the same factors in making their choices across these varied contexts. This suggests that respondents were largely reacting to the stimuli, rather than engaging in discrimination by statistical inference. In other words, there is no evidence that respondents used the provided information to infer context-specific information. For instance, the overall lack of difference between our neighbor condition and the others suggests that respondents were not simply using one of the factor levels as a proxy for something directly relevant to that context, such as propensity to keep a tidy lawn or host raucous parties. The one exception to the cross-context consistency is also telling. Career is relevant to the loan question, not by inference but directly. So, the fact that respondents appear to use career more in that condition than the others suggests that they were taking the task, conditions, and information provided seriously. Due to the general lack of difference between tasks, the analyses below display effects collapsed across all five choice tasks. Figure IV in the Appendix displays the tasks separately for reference.
Discrimination by Partisans

We next hone in on the discriminatory tendencies of partisans. The main first-order results of our conjoint task are shown in Figure 2. For the sake of clarity, we show only the most relevant (i.e. those for which results emerged or those of most theoretical interest) factors and levels. Full results for all factors and levels can be found in Figure II in the Appendix. Figure 2 displays the marginal effects of each different social group category on the probability that a respondent selected an individual across all tasks relative to the omitted “Not Asked” level.\textsuperscript{11} We show the marginal probability effect of each factor level on individual selection, with respondents separated by partisanship to account for co-partisan favoritism and hostility toward opposing partisans. Within each level, the marginal effect of a level among Republican respondents is shown first, and the marginal effect of a level among Democratic respondents is shown last.

From the results in Figure 2, it is evident that both a hypothetical individual’s political identity and attitudes play a prominent role in affecting how respondents make interpersonal apolitical decisions. Both Democrats and Republicans display significant and strong partisanship. They are both substantially more likely to reward or interact with an individual who self-identifies as a co-partisan than an individual whose partisan identity was “Not Asked,” and more likely to punish or avoid an individual who is an opposing partisan. Beyond partisan identity based discrimination, both Democrats and Republicans express in-group favoritism and out-group derogation toward hypothetical individuals who adhere to the political ideologies of their party and the opposing party, respectively. Republicans (Democrats) are less likely to express favoritism toward individuals with either socially or fiscally liberal (conservative) policy beliefs, but express a preference for those with conservative (liberal) labels.

\textsuperscript{11}All analyses contained in this paper report Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCE), estimated with OLS regression with standard errors clustered at the level of the respondent. This recovers a non-parametric probability estimate for each factor level.
Figure 2: Effect of Social Group Membership on Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts

For Democrats, however, the marginal effect of “Fiscally Conservative,” while negative, is not significantly different from “Not Asked.”

Furthermore, the magnitude of these political marginal effects is quite large when compared to the marginal effects of other social groups. Among Democrats, opposing party membership produces the largest negative marginal effect across all our social group categories, larger than the discrimination expressed toward an Evangelical Protestant or a Lobbyist. Identifying as a social conservative, while negative and significant, has a smaller substantive effect, and is around the same magnitude as Evangelical Protestant. While Democrats do favor self-identified Democrats, they are most likely to favor self-identified socially liberal individuals. Beyond political identity, Democrats are also more likely to favor females, African
Americans, and a host of occupations, and less likely to favor evangelical protestants and lobbyists. However, the marginal negative and positive effects of each of these other social group memberships are relatively smaller than the effect sizes of the two overtly political dimensions. Overall, partisan labels and political attitudes have substantively large effects on how Democrats make apolitical decisions even when compared to other social group memberships.

Republicans also express strong partisan bias. When compared to Democrats, though, Republicans seem more likely to express substantial bias toward other groups as well. Republicans express the most bias (whether for or against) toward Muslims, a finding consistent with other work on partisans’ attitudes toward religious groups (Karpowitz, Monson and Patterson 2016). They are far less likely to select an individual if they are Muslim, by almost four times the probability of not selecting a Democrat. “LGBT or homosexual” and “Atheist” also produce significantly negative marginal effects on the probability of being selected among Republicans, but the negative marginal effects of these group memberships are more comparable to the negative marginal effect size of the socially and fiscally liberal categories. Republicans favor Republicans, the fiscally and socially conservative, several occupations, and heterosexuals. Thus, Republicans do express a strong preference for political in-group members, but their group discrimination is not necessarily as limited to politics as is that of Democrats.

**Homophily and Non-Party Outgroups**

While Figure 2 shows how the partisan identity of respondents shapes relative social group discrimination, it does not control for other social group similarities and differences between respondents and the hypothetical individuals they evaluate in the conjoint tasks. To truly get a sense of how partisan and ideological discrimination compare to other salient dimensions, we must also examine the other dimensions when pairing them with respondents
from their natural in- and out-groups. That is, to provide a "fair" comparison with party and ideology, we must see how members of various groups pursue homophily, or preference for similar others, and the extent to which targets from each category are discriminated against by members of their logical out-groups.

First, to further compare across social group affinity, we calculated the probability that a respondent would select an individual from their own social group across several different factors. As shown in Figure 3, when we examine shared social group status by levels within each of the social group categories, the extent to which individuals express a preference for political and religious similarity compared to other social group affiliation similarities is quite clear. Partisan identity similarity is still quite large and produces a positive significant effect on the probability of selecting an individual for both Republicans and Democrats, but the difference between partisan discrimination and other social group discrimination becomes less apparent. For ideological groups, we see similarly-sized affinity effects, with the largest being that of socially liberal individuals.\textsuperscript{12} With respect to the religious categories in the conjoint, we see that nearly all have positive and significant effects, particularly for smaller religious groups.

LGBT or homosexuals prefer someone of their similar sexual orientation just as much as Democrats prefer other Democrats, and to a greater extent than Republican in-party preference. Minority racial groups also express a significant in-group preference, as African-Americans and Latinos/Hispanics both are more likely to select someone from their racial group. Whites, on the other hand, are less likely to select someone from their racial group, though not significantly so. This same minority status occurs when looking at gender based preferences, as females are significantly more likely to select a female individual compared to

\textsuperscript{12}The ideological affinity was coded based on a general 5-point symbolic ideology identification of respondents combined with the ideological manipulation in the conjoint. As a result, we do not know whether the individuals who listed themselves as liberal (or conservative) do so on fiscal or social groups, or both.
Figure 3: Effect of Social Group Membership Affinity on Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts

NOTE: Ideological affinities are based on a 5-point respondent ideological scale. Religion is coded as direct correspondence to respondents’ denominational affiliation, with evangelicals coded as those responding as “born again” protestants. Age is coded as respondents within ±5 years of the target person. Out-group ratings are included as controls, but not displayed for space, meaning all effects are relative to “not asked” condition. See Figure 4 for these effects.

Figure 4 displays out-group ratings for race, sex, sexual orientation, partisan, ideological, and religious categories. Once again, we see the effects of dimensions defined by political

13 Not all social groups for respondents are included here, as some contain too few respondents to obtain
identities, religion and sexual orientation emerging as dominant. Heterosexuals and the LGBT discriminate against each other. Several religious groups discriminate against each other. Evangelical Protestants are less likely to pick Atheists and Muslims. Catholics are less likely to select Atheists, Muslims and Evangelicals. And, Atheists avoid Evangelicals. Once again, political dimensions are perhaps the most consistent in terms of discrimination. Democrats and Republicans discriminate against each other, as do liberals and conservatives.

meaningful estimates.
Figure 4: Effect of Social Group Membership on Outgroup Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts

NOTE: Ideological affinities are based on a 5-point respondent ideological scale. Religion is coded as direct correspondence to respondents’ denominational affiliation, with evangelicals coded as those responding as “born again” protestants. In-group ratings are controlled for in the model (but not displayed here for space), meaning all comparisons are versus “not asked” categories. See Figure 3 for these effects.
Disentangling the Dimensions of Political Discrimination: Ideological Purity Moderates “Partyism”

We have seen, through various analyses, that both party and ideology are among the most prominent, consistent vectors of group-based discrimination. Disentangling the effect of ideology from party is especially important for understanding the nature of political identity and its consequences (Klar 2014a; Mason 2018). This is particularly true given the potential for ideology to be the source of its own identity dimension (Malka and Lelkes 2010; Mason and Wronski 2018). The ability to do so is a particular strength of our design. In reality, ideology and party are highly correlated today. Fewer than 5 percent of 2016 ANES Republican respondents identified as “liberal” and fewer than 10 percent of Democrats identified as “conservative.” So, these dimensions are especially difficult to disentangle with existing data.

In Figure 5, we examine how the party and ideological manipulations interact, as we expect that certain ideological signals may have different meanings to respondents depending on the partisanship of the target individual. As we see across Democratic, Independent, and Republican respondents, there is little interactive effect of ideology, yet the main effects presented in Figure 2 may obscure important variation. We see that, among Democratic respondents, there are clear main effects of the expressed partisanship of the target, and there is a clear preference ranking of socially liberal, fiscally liberal, fiscally conservative, and socially conservative individuals, in that order. The effects of ideology are potent enough to entirely counteract the effects of party in certain circumstances. For Independent respondents, we see little role of party, yet respondents quite strongly prefer ideologically conservative individuals when they are listed as Independents. For Republican respondents, again we see little interactive effect, but strong enough main effects of ideology to erase the effects of party for those targets who are described as liberal when Republican or conservative when Democrats.
Figure 5: Interaction of Party and Ideological Manipulations on Choice
Furthermore, Democrats and Republicans seem to favor different elements of ideological identity. These results suggest that Democrats weigh social ideologies more than fiscal ideologies when evaluating both Republican and Democratic targets. Democrats express more hostility toward social conservatives than fiscal conservatives and feel slightly more positively toward social liberals than fiscal liberals, regardless of the party of the target. Republicans, on the other hand, seem to consider being fiscally conservative/liberal as slightly more of a positive attribute than being socially conservative/liberal. This suggests that Democratic and Republican respondents emphasize different aspects of one’s ideological identity, which, in turn, can affect how they feel toward an individual.

**What Dimensions do Respondents **Think** They Use?**

After completing our series of conjoint tasks, respondents were asked which dimension was most important in their consideration. Respondents were given a list of all the potential factors (but not specific levels within factors) that described each of the hypothetical individuals they had been asked to judge. This allows us to capture which social groups respondents believe (or are willing to admit) are most central to their choices. Figure 6 shows the percentage of respondents who selected each factor as the most important when making their conjoint task selection decisions.

The largest percentage of respondents selected “None of the above.” This 1) suggests that many people either prefer to not state which group dimensions matter to them or are not aware of any systematic preferences, and 2) highlights the importance of measuring discrimination of this sort with a less direct measure such as our conjoint. Following “None of the above,” 22% of Republicans and 21% of Democrats stated that their most important consideration when selecting a hypothetical individual was ideology. After ideology, around 10% of Republicans and Democrats said that they based their decisions on either an individ-
ual’s career, party, or religion. The results of our conjoint study suggest that respondents are likely correct in reporting that they use ideology to a great extent. They may, on the other hand, be understating the extent to which they rely on party, religion and sexual orientation when making choices.
Discussion

The finding that religion, sexual orientation, and especially politics emerge as the most notable dimensions of discrimination is consistent throughout all of our analyses. We see this pattern in our analysis of partisans, our examination of homophily, and our look at discrimination toward each group by members of its logical out-group(s).

Notably, political discrimination is not limited to partisan divides. In fact, counter-stereotypic ideological labels can moderate, and even erase, the discriminatory consequences of party. Democrats show no bias against Republican targets who are socially liberal and no favoritism for socially conservative Democrats. Republicans do not favor either socially or fiscally liberal Republicans and do not discriminate against socially or fiscally conservative Democrats. This finding suggests that the identity versus ideology dichotomy may be a false one, with both party and ideology operating as potentially distinct (though interrelated) facets of political identity.

The results of our study suggest that partisan identity and associated political ideological positions play prominent roles in how Americans decide to interact with and reward others even when information on other social group membership is present. Both Democrats and Republicans emphasize the importance of political homophily across a wide variety of apolitical interactions, from living next to someone to giving someone a loan. Regardless of whether this apolitical interaction requires more personal interaction or not, partisans hold a strong desire to engage with members of their political party and avoid members of the opposing party. Even controlling for many of the group and ideology based identity dimensions often associated with the party coalitions, party identity still packs a meaningful punch of its own. On the other hand, even controlling for party, some other groups still matter a great deal. And, it is no accident, we suspect, that these groups (Muslims, Evangelicals, the LGBT) tend to be ones with substantial political relevance of their own.
From a practical perspective, with partisans able to identify and stereotype each other in terms of other social groups, and the increased phenomenon of partisan sorting along ideological and other dimensions, our findings suggest that political discrimination will increasingly seep into daily interactions among Americans.
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A Online Appendix

Figure I: Task Dimensions
Figure II: Effect of Social Group Membership on Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts, Full Results
Figure III: Effect of Social Group Membership on Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts, Among Non-Black Respondents
Figure IV: Effect of Social Group Membership on Discrimination in Apolitical Contexts, By Scenario
Figure V: Main Effects by Respondents Who Listed No “Most Important Factor” in Explicit Question
Figure VI: Main Effects by Number of “Not Asked” Items in Profile
Figure VII: Effects by Respondent and Target Partisanship