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Impact of Social Identity on Rape Legitimacy and Myth Acceptance

Rachael Rosenberg

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IMPACT OF SOCIAL IDENTITY ON RAPE LEGITIMACY AND MYTH ACCEPTANCE

RACHAEL C. ROSENBERG

(Under the Direction of Amy A. Hackney)

ABSTRACT

The current research assessed whether a statement by a deviant political ingroup (versus outgroup) member elicited measureable differences on trivialization, cognitive dissonance, rape myth acceptance, or decision to vote for that candidate, and if explicitly “debunking” the statement made by this politician further impacted these variables. Participants were randomly assigned to read a statement made by a Republican or Democratic politician, who would either be an ingroup or outgroup member based on the party affiliation of each participant. Results indicate that while there were no significant differences between Republican or Democratic participants overall, Republicans tended to trivialize the statements made by their ingroup politician more than Democrats. Contrary to the hypotheses, participants experienced similar levels of dissonance across voting decision after reading about a deviant ingroup member. However, consistent with theory, there was significantly lower dissonance among those who read about an outgroup politician and voted for an ingroup politician. While failing to reach statistical significance, a trend towards increased rape myth acceptance among participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and then voted for them was revealed, and this was fully mediated by level of trivialization. Implications for social identity and cognitive dissonance theories are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: social identity theory, cognitive dissonance, rape myth acceptance, political identification

IMPACT OF SOCIAL IDENTITY ON RAPE LEGITIMACY AND MYTH ACCEPTANCE

by

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B.A., Peace College, 2008

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Much psychological and political research is dedicated to understanding the basis of, and transmission of political preferences across generations (i.e., Verhulst, Hatemi, & Eaves, 2012; Hatemi, Funk, Medland, Maes, Silberg, Martin, & Eaves, 2009). Ongoing research in this area indicates that the genesis and development of political attitudes cannot be singularly attributed to one. Rather, attitudes are comprised of stable behavioral patterns which are then shaped by the social environment and form the basis of target specific attitudes (i.e., Verhulst, Hatemi, Eaves, 2012; Smith, Oxley, Hibbing, Alrod, Hibbing, 2011). Once these attitudes are formed we seek to maintain them by avoiding, distorting, or disregarding information which could contradict them, and thereby arouse dissonance (Sweeney, Melnyk, Miller, & Shepperd, 2010). Researchers refer to this as a defense motivation, as it is intended to prevent discomfort caused by information which may threaten one's beliefs or the self (Hart, et al., 2009).

However, there are times when we may be unable to avoid information or become aware of events which are inconsistent with our individual ideologies, which force us to reconcile ideals with reality. Comments made by several American politicians in the last year provide a timely example of the tendency to avoid or disregard, attitude discrepant information. For example, Senator Todd Akins (R-Missouri) and Representative Trent Franks (R-Arizona) have each made controversial remarks regarding rape, pregnancy, and abortion, the latter of which is a wedge issue in American politics. According to Akins, legitimate rape does not result in pregnancy due to innate mechanisms in the female body which "shut that whole thing down" (Ashley, Liptak, & Streitfeld, 2012). This belief was echoed by Franks when he stated that "incidents of rape resulting in pregnancy are very low" (Killough & Walsh, 2013). Senator

Saxton Chambliss (R-Georgia) used a similar script to make light of sexual assault in the military by blaming it on hormones (Ford, 2013).

Despite the overwhelming majority of the medical community rejecting the assertion that trauma from rape can prevent pregnancy (i.e., American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2012), this belief has been perpetuated by a variety of pro-life supporters (e.g., Rep. Henry Aldrige, Rep. Stephen Friend, etc.; Townsend, 2012). Beyond activists with clear motivations for propagating these beliefs, a group of conservative women lent support to Akins and his statements while simultaneously acknowledging them as medically inaccurate (McVeigh, 2012). Psychological mechanisms such as social identity and cognitive dissonance could explain ongoing electoral support for Akins, and politicians like him, despite the loss of party support from Republican leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this present research is to determine which psychological processes could contribute to ongoing support for a deviant political ingroup member. Particularly, is cognitive dissonance aroused, and if so, which route to dissonance reduction do participants take? Will they trivialize the behavior, reject the ingroup politician, or adjust their attitudes to match those of the ingroup politician? The current research assessed whether a statement by a deviant political ingroup (versus outgroup) member elicited measureable differences on trivialization, cognitive dissonance, or rape myth acceptance, or decision to vote for that candidate, and if explicitly “debunking” the statement made by this politician further impacted these variables.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE PAST LITERATURE

Social Identity Theory

Given the large role that socialization plays in the development of political ideology, it is important to understand the dynamics of social identity. Social categorizations of ingroup and outgroup membership allows individuals to organize their social environment and their role within it. According to social identity theory (SIT), an individuals' self-image is defined in part by the characteristics of a particular social group (i.e., Republicans or Democrats), as well as their role within that group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, someone who is a staunch member of the Democratic party, their ingroup, is likely to think of themselves in similar ideological terms as their political party (e.g., progressive, open-minded, etc.). SIT also posits that people gain self-esteem by positive assessments of their social group, and that their positive in-group evaluations are relative to their assessments of the outgroup, thus motivating them to assign negative judgments to the outgroup (Tajfel, 1982). Therefore, a member of the Democratic Party is likely to think of a Republican, their political outgroup, in negative terms (e.g. close-minded, anti-intellectual). Derogation of outgroup members has been repeatedly demonstrated in the literature and is consistent with our need to enhance our ingroup in order to maintain self-esteem (e.g., Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998; Branscombe & Wann, 1994).

However, deviant ingroup behavior can threaten our positive ingroup identity, resulting in either further ingroup enhancement or the decision to leave the ingroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Marques, Yzerbyt, and Leyens (1988) identified another means by which ingroup members maintain their positive self-concept in the face of negative ingroup behavior, and

labeled it the “black sheep effect.” This extension to SIT revealed that judgments of deviant ingroup members with negative behaviors were more extreme than judgments of outgroup members engaging in identical behaviors. They also found that the derogation of deviant ingroup members could result in such extreme consequences as that ingroup member being ostracized (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988). By derogating or ostracizing a deviant ingroup member, the other group members are able to maintain their positive group identity, allowing group members to remain loyal to the ingroup. For example, if a Christian family who is very religious and socially conservative discovers that their son or daughter is a homosexual, they are likely to ostracize that son or daughter because their identification as a homosexual threatens their conception of themselves as religious conservatives.

Likelihood of ingroup member derogation is mediated by perceived level of group cohesion, with ingroup members derogating the “black sheep” only when perceived cohesion and deviant behavior was high (Lewis & Sherman, 2010). In other words, the more cohesive group members perceive the group to be, the more likely it is that a deviant group member will be ostracized. This outcome is positively correlated with the level of deviance, such that the more cohesive the group and more deviant the behavior, the greater the likelihood that the “black sheep” will be ostracized. However, although Lewis and Sherman’s (2010) findings were statistically significant, the effect was only moderate in size, leading them to conclude that the potentially high costs of denigrating the deviant ingroup member means that there must be a tangible and substantial threat to the self before individuals would denigrate that member. Simply put, an ingroup member has to exhibit behavior which is extremely deviant before the black sheep effect would occur. Therefore, there are likely situations in which individuals perceive an ingroup member’s behaviors as deviant, but it may not be sufficiently deviant to

warrant action from the group. However, the lack of group action to address the deviance may have other consequences, such as dissonance arousal.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

The intragroup conflict described previously can result in cognitive dissonance if the ingroup, whether an individual or the group as a whole, violates one's personal beliefs (Glasford, Pratto & Dovidio, 2008). Cognitive dissonance theory (CDT; Festinger, 1957) posits that when individuals become aware of two conflicting attitudes or beliefs, they will experience dissonance, or psychological discomfort which is aroused when we become aware of competing thoughts, attitudes, or behaviors. For example, a person who believes they are a law-abiding citizen who finds they are driving over the speed-limit on the highway will experience cognitive dissonance. The two cognitions, that they are law-abiding and are breaking the law, are at odds with one another and must be addressed in order to reduce cognitive dissonance. Aronson (1997) extended CDT theory by adding that dissonance is strongest when the competing cognitions threaten an individuals' self-concept (i.e., believing oneself to be competent or fair) or their self-esteem. That is, people are motivated to see themselves as competent and moral; and dissonance will occur if they engage in behaviors which contradict these beliefs. Therefore, when Republicans were faced with a party member who expressed a deviant opinion regarding rape and conception, they experienced dissonance (i.e., McVeigh, 2012).

As demonstrated in media reports (i.e., McVeigh, 2012; Ford, 2013), most Republicans, party leaders and members alike, publicly denounced Akins. However, as previously noted, a minority of individuals continued to support Akins and even acknowledged an increase in their support for him. The factors which determine whether, and how, ingroup members will seek to

reduce dissonance caused by another ingroup member's violation of group standards vary depending on the issue and strength of ingroup members endorsement of the beliefs which were violated. Research indicates that these group members may disidentify from the group or adjust their attitude strength on a particular issue in an effort to reduce the dissonance (Glasford, Pratto & Dovidio, 2008; Glasford, Dovidio & Pratto, 2009).

In a series of experiments, Glasford et al. (2009) examined the effect of group identification on different methods of dissonance reduction. In Experiment 1 participants' level of group identification moderated the ability of group affirmation (opportunity to re-focus on positive group characteristics) to reduce the dissonance caused by intragroup deviance. While both the self-affirmation (focus on positive self characteristics) and group-affirmation conditions resulted in lower dissonance amongst participants, those who were highly identified with the group experienced greater dissonance reduction in the group affirmation condition. As noted by the authors, affirmation can reduce dissonance by increasing a sense of integrity; therefore, the affirmation task in their study allowed participants to refocus on the positive values associated with the ingroup and thereby reduce dissonance. Their results support this assumption, with group affirmation resulting in reduced dissonance, especially among participants who highly identified with the ingroup. In a second experiment, Glasford et al. (2009) manipulated level of group identification and found that in the high-identification condition, participants were more likely to engage in social identity enhancement, such as out-group derogation, when dissonance was present than to try and change ingroup behavior. In plain terms, ingroup members have a choice to attempt to change the group norm (and risk ostracizing themselves), relinquish their group membership due to the violation of their values, or adjust their beliefs to accommodate a deviant ingroup member. Likewise, in response to the statements of Akin, Republicans may

choose to leave their political party, or adjust their beliefs regarding rape and pregnancy to better align with his.

However, as already mentioned, Republicans could also respond by politically labeling Akins as a “black sheep”. Indeed, the party officially withdrew its support for Akins following his deviant comments (Carey, 2012). For the minority of Republican Party members who did not denounce Akins, an alternate route of attitude adjustment appears to have been activated (i.e., McVeigh, 2012). In doing so these group members appear to trivialize the inaccurate science behind Akins claims. For example, one woman stated that “I’m not a scientist, but there are a lot of contradictions...I don’t buy into science.” (McVeigh, 2012). Research has shown that trivialization, as demonstrated by these women, is a frequently employed and effective cognitive route to dissonance reduction (Simon, Greenbert, & Brehm, 1995). For example, Simon et al. (1995) found that when participants’ preexisting attitudes were made salient prior to a counterattitudinal behavior task, they were more likely to trivialize their engagement in the behavior (study 1). Furthermore, the mode of dissonance reduction (trivialization versus attitude change) depended upon the options presented to participants first (study 2), but that the ability to engage in self-affirmation resulted in trivialization as a means to reduce dissonance (study 3). However, making issue importance salient after participants engaged in counterattitudinal behavior increased the likelihood of engaging in trivialization, regardless of whether participants were able to self-affirm or not (study 4). The authors hypothesized that this was because the specific issues made salient were not personally valued by the participants. Attitude change was only likely to occur when preexisting attitudes were not highly salient, when participants were required to express their attitude prior to any opportunity to trivialize, their ability to self-affirm was restricted, and when dissonant attitudes were not related to an important issue. Issue

salience is essential, so individuals must be aware that there is dissonant information regarding abortion present. Therefore, only when statements regarding legitimate rape are known to be inaccurate will individuals experience dissonance.

Political Socialization and Identity

With social identity defined in terms of political affiliation in this current research, it is important to understand both the psychological, and political science perspectives, on the genesis and development of individuals' political party identification.

As noted by Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009), politics in America are divided between two opposing parties with competing ideologies which originate in social, emotional, and religious differences. From the psychological perspective, ingroup or outgroup status is defined simply by our perceived membership in a particular social group (e.g. "hipsters", "band geeks") or institution (e.g., Republican/Democratic party). The development of political affiliation is considered to be a bottom-up process, based on underlying psychological constructs (i.e., moral foundation; Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009) or needs, which are expressed or fulfilled by membership in a particular political party (Jost, Federico & Napier, 2009).

From a political science perspective, membership in a political group is seen as the outcome of a process of political socialization, wherein individuals learn political behaviors and beliefs from others. Historically, research on political socialization has focused on the role of parents and institutions (i.e., schools) as transmitters of political beliefs, particularly during childhood (Hyman, 1959). However, this perspective has been abandoned to some extent due to inconsistencies in, and misinterpretation of the empirical research (Niemi & Hepburn, 1995).

More recent research focuses on the development of political beliefs and party membership specifically in regards to an individuals' overall social network versus parental and institutional transmission (Settle, Bond, & Levitt, 2011). This perspective represents a top-down approach, in that political attitudes develop via a framework constructed by those in authority (i.e., parents, political elites; Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009).

In considering the approaches of psychology and political science in understanding political identification, it is important to consider the continued transformation of political identity in America, particularly in the South where the majority of the sample for this research will be drawn from. The divisions which currently distinguish the Republican and Democratic parties in the South have their roots in continued resentment towards Federal interference during the Civil Rights movement, shifting demographics, and southerners own shifting perceptions of party ideologies (Black & Black, 1976; Black & Black, 2002; Hayes & McKee, 2008).

American's perception of party ideology has changed dramatically since the 1990s, particularly in the South. While southerners' self-perception of being moderates has remained stable, perceived liberalism of the Democratic Party has increased dramatically, despite its former identity as the face of the South, and of Georgia specifically (Hayes & McKee, 2008; Bullock & Rozell, 2010, Chapter 2). This shift in identity has resulted in Republicans now being viewed as more conservative than the average southerner, but with less of a distance in ideology than that of the liberal Democrats and the average southerner (Hayes & McKee, 2008). The beginnings of the ideological association of conservatism with Republicans began in the 1960s, as Civil Rights legislation was passed in to law while a Democrat was in the White House (Black & Black, 2002). The traditionally Democratic, and conservative South, perceived this as a betrayal by Party leadership; however, given the electoral monopoly the Democrats had over

politics in the south, and their ability to control and distribute resources to their constituents, drastic changes in party membership were not seen until the 1990s (Black & Black, 2002).

Georgia specifically is an example of this paradigm shift, having seen some of the most dramatic changes in Republican control over the last twenty years, now holding a strong majority of political offices in the state and an increasing voter base (Bullock & Rozell, 2010, Chapter 2). As indicated above, this realignment of party dominance, particularly for Republicans, has its roots is in the changing perceptions of the parties, rather than an actual ideological shift in the electorate (Hayes & McKee, 2008; McKee, 2010). Additionally, due to these shifting perceptions and associated changes in party identification between Republicans and Democrats, participant behavior based solely on their party identification may not always be consistent.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STUDIES

The goal of the present research is to determine which psychological processes could contribute to ongoing support for a deviant political ingroup member. Particularly, what role does social identity as either a Republican or Democrat play in the evaluation of a political ingroup or outgroup members' statement regarding rape, decision to vote for that ingroup/outgroup politician, and cognitive processes activated by this decision? When cognitive dissonance is aroused, which route to dissonance reduction would participants take? Will they trivialize the statement, reject the political ingroup member, or adjust their attitudes in order to match those of the ingroup member? Continuing with the previous political exemplar, it is proposed that increased support for Akins has come at the cost of adjusted beliefs regarding rape, in particular, rape myth acceptance. Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald (1999) found that rape myth acceptance functions as system justification by trivializing rape, reassigning blame from perpetrator to victim, and discounting it as a deviant and rare act. Endorsing a "legitimate rape" standard in determining access to abortion not only serves as justification for reduced access to abortion, but as a reaffirmation of the belief that rape is indeed a rare and deviant event.

Endorsing the belief that rape trauma can prevent pregnancy serves as a system justification, and individuals are motivated to ignore information which contradicts it. However, it is difficult for anyone to avoid all information which contradicts this belief, and in this case, there was continual national media coverage which "debunked" Akins statement, arousing dissonance for members of his party. Akins statement regarding rape was medically inaccurate, and these medical inaccuracies were addressed by the American Congress of Obstetricians in a statement released to the media ("Statement on Rape," 2012). As utilized in the current

methodology, debunking is defined as a process by which deviance from a social norm is made salient, in which information is presented which explicitly addresses this deviance.

In response, to their ingroup members' deviance, individuals could leave their political party, reject the specific politician as being a "black sheep", or adjust their rape myth acceptance to incorporate the dissonant cognitions. Given that abortion is a political wedge issue, and a lack of highly similar alternatives to their current political party affiliation, it is not likely that individuals will leave the ingroup. Rather, when presented with information which debunks the deviant ingroup members statements regarding legitimate rape, dissonance will be aroused by the competing cognitions between their political party and the individual politician. Ingroup members will reduce dissonance by either rejecting the deviant ingroup member, or adjusting their attitudes, as reflected by increased rape myth acceptance, in order to realign their cognitions. Conversely, if an outgroup member endorses the legitimate rape standard, ingroup members will simply reject the outgroup member because there is no threat to the ingroup identification or individual self-concept.

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for that ingroup politician, and were then debunked, levels of dissonance, trivialization, and time two IRMA scores would be significantly higher than for those who vote for the ingroup politician and are not debunked. In contrast, participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the outgroup politician, levels of dissonance would be higher, but they would have significantly lower levels of trivialization and IRMA scores at time 2, regardless of debunking. For participants who read about a deviant outgroup member and chose to vote for their ingroup politician, it was hypothesized that they would

experience significantly less dissonance and trivialize less than participants who voted for the outgroup politician, and that this effect would be seen regardless of debunking and with no changes expected on the IRMA at time two. Conversely, participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician will not vote for the outgroup politician, regardless of debunking, with no differences expected on dissonance or trivialization measures, or IRMA scores at time two.

Overview of Studies

In an attempt to acquire a politically diverse sample, participants were recruited from two sources: Georgia Southern University and Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is an online forum where jobs, referred to as Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs) are posted for workers to complete for pay. Studies indicate that this service is increasingly being used in psychological research as a means to recruit a large, nationally representative sample, and results are comparable to traditional data collection methods (Mason & Suri, 2012; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). Participants from Georgia Southern University were recruited from introductory and social psychology courses. Participants from both subject pools were given a link to an online survey which was completed using Qualtrics online survey software.

In order to test for any changes in scores on the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999), data were collected in two phases, completed two weeks apart. Two weeks after completion, participants were given a link to the questionnaire for phase two. Participants from Georgia Southern University were sent the link for phase two via email. For participants recruited through MTurk, this link was posted via a new HIT, with instructions to only complete the new HIT if they had completed phase one.

To ensure that only participants who had completed phase one completed the HIT for phase two, a special code was required to be entered at the beginning of the questionnaire. However, given the format of MTurk, it is impossible to prevent workers who did not participate in phase one from completing the second phase. Because of this, an additional 80 participants from MTurk completed phase two only, only completing the IRMA scale at time 2. These participants were not excluded from analyses as all manipulations and remaining dependent variables were measured at time two. However, the responses of these participants, who did not complete time 1 IRMA, were analyzed separately when appropriate. Overall, there were a total of 248 participants. Of these, 87 participants were Georgia Southern University students and 161 were participants from MTurk. Of the Georgia Southern University students, 77 were recruited during the Spring 2013 semester. Due to an error in the programming of Qualtrics, all of the students who participated during the Spring 2013 semester were assigned to the debunking condition. The data from this sample was therefore analyzed separately from all other participants and is described in Study 1A below. The MTurk participants were randomly assigned to the debunking or no debunking conditions. An additional ten participants from Georgia Southern University were recruited from a Summer 2013 social psychology course. The data from these participants are described in Study 1B.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 1A

Method

Participants

There were a total of 77 participants from the Georgia Southern University student sample collected in the Spring 2013 semester. All participants in this sample were assigned to the debunking condition. Of the 77 participants, ten were removed from analysis due to answering the manipulation check question regarding debunking incorrectly. These participants inaccurately reported that, according to the ACOG statement, the act of rape can prevent pregnancy. Therefore, 67 participants were included in data analyses.

The average participant age was 19.94 years ($SD = 3.28$), and ranged from 18-41. Participants were 81% European American (White), 18.2% African American (Black), and 1.3% Asian American. The majority of participants indicated their household income (including parents' income if they were still considered a dependent) was under \$25,000 (28.6%), or between \$50,001-100,000 (27.3%). A majority of participants were Republican (53.2%), and the remaining were Democrats (46.8%). Due to the methodology of this research, participants were not given additional options regarding party affiliation (e.g., independent, libertarian, tea party). Overall, participants considered themselves only somewhat affiliated (39%) with their stated political party, 1.3% were very affiliated, and 7.8% were very unaffiliated. On the liberal-conservative scale, most participants indicated they were moderate/middle of the road (41.6%). However, another 20.8% indicated they were conservative and 9.1% identified as liberal. The majority of participants indicated that they were registered to vote (72.7%), while 27.3% indicated they were not registered to vote.

An independent samples t-test comparing self-reported liberal or conservativeness by political party was conducted. Results indicated a significant difference in self-reported liberal or conservativeness based on political party $t(75) = -5.44$ $p < .01$, $d = 1.24$. As expected, participants who identified as Republicans reported they were more conservative than the midpoint of 4.0 ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.20$) while participants who identified as Democrats reported they were more liberal than the midpoint of 4.0 ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.23$).

Dependent Measures

Rape Myth Acceptance.

Rape myth acceptance was measured using the IRMA (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 2009). Participants' level of rape myth acceptance was measured at time 1, and again following the manipulation and all other dependent measures at time 2. All filler items for the IRMA scale were removed prior to analysis of reliability. Initial analysis of the retained 40-item IRMA at time 1 revealed excellent reliability ($\alpha = .95$). Analysis of time 2 IRMA was also highly reliable ($\alpha = .97$). See Table 1 for the means and standard deviations for all measures, and Table 2 for correlations between all measures. See Appendix H for the full IRMA scale.

Cognitive Dissonance.

Immediately after receiving the debunking statement from ACOG, all participants indicated their affective response, at present, on a scale from 1 (*does not apply at all*) to 8 (*applies very much*). Participants were given a list of adjectives and short statements and asked to indicate the extent to which they were feeling that way “*right now*.” The dissonance related items were taken from Glasford, Dovidio, & Pratto (2009). In accordance with Glasford et al.

(2009), neutral filler items (i.e., “impartial” were added by the researchers as they were not included in their original methodology. In keeping with Glasford et al. (2009), the items were averaged to measure both dissonance-related psychological discomfort and negative self-directed emotion. Dissonance related items were “uncomfortable,” “uneasy,” and “bothered” ($\alpha = .78$). Negative self-directed dissonance items were “angry with myself,” “dissatisfied with myself,” “disgusted with myself,” and “annoyed with myself” ($\alpha = .90$). See Table 1 for the means and standard deviations for all measures, and Table 2 for correlations between all measures.

Trivialization.

Participants completed the trivialization items following the cognitive dissonance measures. Trivialization was measured using a five-item questionnaire created by the researchers, designed to measure participants’ trivialization of the politicians’ statement regarding rape. See Appendix G for the complete five-item scale. Initial analysis of the five-item trivialization scale revealed Cronbach’s alpha of .19. Therefore, items 4 (“This politician should be kicked out of his political party) and 5 (“Sometimes ‘science’ gets it wrong”) were removed and analyzed separately. The retained three-item scale showed good reliability ($\alpha = .77$). See Table 1 for the means and standard deviations for all measures, and Table 2 for correlations between all measures.

Procedure

Phase One.

After giving their consent to participate in this research, participants completed the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; Payne, Fitzgerald, & Lonsway, 1999). Following completion, participants who wished to complete phase two of the research were asked to provide their GSU email address where the researchers could send the link for phase two. Participants who did not wish to participate in phase two were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Phase Two.

After again giving their consent to participate in this research, participants completed the demographic information. Next, they were randomly assigned to either the Republican or Democrat condition, and then read the statement regarding rape which was attributed to a Republican or Democratic politician by their assigned condition. Participants were then asked to indicate how strongly they would endorse the politician after reading the statement. Next, they were asked to imagine they were about to vote in an upcoming congressional election, and to indicate whether they would vote for the candidate, their opposition, or not vote at all. Immediately following this, all participants read the American Congress of Obstetricians (ACOG) statement regarding rape, and then asked to rate their agreement with the ACOG statement on a 7-pt Likert-type scale (*1 = very strongly disagree, 7 = very strongly agree*). Then participants completed the cognitive dissonance measure in which they were asked to indicate their affective response *right now* on a scale ranging from 1 (*does not apply at all*) to 7 (*applies very much*). Following the method used in Glasford, Dovidio, and Pratto (2009), dissonance-related discomfort items were “uncomfortable,” “uneasy,” and “bothered” and the negative self-

directed emotion items were “angry with myself,” “dissatisfied with myself,” “disgusted with myself,” and “annoyed with myself”. Additional neutral filler items were interspersed with the dissonance related items. Next, participants were asked to think about the politicians statement they read and to indicate their agreement with several statement. Responses were given on a 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*) scale. Items were “the media twisted his words in to something different than what he really meant,” “He didn’t really mean what he said,” “What he said wasn’t really a ‘big deal’,” “This politician should be kicked out of his political party,” and “sometimes ‘science’ gets things wrong”. Following the trivialization items, participants completed the IRMA. Then participants completed a manipulation check where they were asked to recall which political party the politician they read about belonged to, with response options of *Republican* or *Democrat*. Immediately following this, participants completed the debunking check, where they indicated whether the ACOG statement indicated that the trauma of rape could actually prevent pregnancy. Response choices were *True* or *False*. Next, participants were asked to indicate their current affiliation with their political party, using a visual analog (see Appendix J for response options). Finally, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to determine if participant party affiliation (Democrats vs. Republicans) was related to strength of party affiliation, IRMA at time 1, Trivialization, Cognitive Dissonance Discomfort, Negative Self Directed Cognitive Dissonance, or IRMA at time 2. See Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations for all measures.

Table 2 presents all correlations between measures as a function of party affiliation. Both levels of trivialization and time 2 IRMA scores differed by party affiliation, with Republicans trivializing the issue more than did Democrats and Republicans reporting a greater belief in rape myths at time 2 than Democrats. Given the similarity in responding between Republicans and Democrats on all other measures and on the strength and direction of correlations between all measures, participant political party was not analyzed during the hypothesis testing to save statistical power.

Testing of Hypotheses

The full design of this study for hypothesis testing was a 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) between groups design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two politician identities. In the current methodology, participant vote is employed as a categorical independent variable rather than as a dependent variable. This was done as it was expected that a participant's decision to vote for either an ingroup or outgroup member would itself influence levels of dissonance, trivialization, and IRMA scores. All participants received the debunking statement from ACOG. The dependent variables assessed were cognitive dissonance (general discomfort), cognitive dissonance (self-directed negative emotion), trivialization, and time 2 IRMA. The results are presented in order of the dependent variables as they were completed by the participants.

Cognitive Dissonance.

It was hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for that politician, and were then debunked, would report higher levels of cognitive

dissonance than participants who voted for the ingroup politician and were not debunked. Since all participants in the sample were debunked, this hypothesis could not be tested. It was also hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the outgroup politician, regardless of debunking, would have significantly higher levels of cognitive dissonance compared to participants who voted for their ingroup politician. This increase in dissonance was expected as participants would be voting in a manner that was inconsistent with their political party identity. Participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and chose to vote for their ingroup politician were expected to have significantly lower levels of cognitive dissonance, as they would be voting in a manner that was consistent with their political party identity.

Dissonance Discomfort.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on level of dissonance discomfort revealed no main effect of politician identity, with no significant difference between participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 2.91$; $SD = 1.75$) and participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 2.90$; $SD = 1.43$), $F(1, 62) = .01$, $p = .94$, $\eta^2 = .00$. There was also no main effect of participant vote, with no significant differences observed between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 3.02$; $SD = 1.51$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 2.96$; $SD = 1.90$), and those who chose not to vote ($M = 2.56$; $SD = 1.58$), $F(2, 62) = .41$, $p = .66$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Contrary to hypotheses, there was no significant interaction between politician identity and participant vote, $F(1,62) = .584$, $p = .45$, $\eta^2 = .01$.

Negative Self-Directed Emotion.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on level of negative self-directed emotion revealed no main effect of politician identity, with no significant differences observed between participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 2.24$; $SD = 1.57$) and those who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 1.97$; $SD = 1.38$), $F(1, 62) = .27$, $p = .61$, $\eta^2 = .00$. There was no main effect of participant vote, with no significant differences observed between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 1.99$; $SD = 1.33$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 2.78$; $SD = 2.16$), and those who chose not to vote ($M = 1.97$; $SD = 1.34$), $F(2, 62) = .84$, $p = .44$, $\eta^2 = .03$. Contrary to hypotheses, there was no significant interaction between politician identity and participant vote, $F(1,62) = 2.09$, $p = .15$, $\eta^2 = .03$.

Trivialization.

It was hypothesized that trivialization would be significantly higher for participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and were debunked than those who were not debunked. Since all participants in the sample were debunked, this hypothesis could not be tested. It was also hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for that politician would trivialize the issue more than participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for an outgroup politician or not cast a vote. This increase in trivialization was expected to serve as justification for voting for a deviant ingroup member. It was further hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant outgroup

politician and voted for their ingroup politician would trivialize the issue less than those who voted for the outgroup politician, regardless of debunking.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on level of trivialization revealed no significant main effect of politician identity. Participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 2.60$; $SD = .98$) trivialized the issue at similar levels as did participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 2.15$; $SD = .91$), $F(1,61) = .72$, $p = .40$, $\eta^2 = .01$. The main effect of voting decision was also not significant, with no significant differences in trivialization between participants who voted for the ingroup politician ($M = 2.26$; $SD = .99$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 2.11$; $SD = .73$), and those who chose not to vote ($M = 2.76$; $SD = .94$), $F(2, 61) = 2.63$, $p = .08$, $\eta^2 = .08$. As predicted, results showed a significant interaction of politician identity and participant vote on trivialization of the issue, $F(1,61) = 5.30$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .08$.

Contrary to our expectations, follow up simple effects testing for participants who read about an ingroup politician revealed no significant difference in trivialization between those who voted for the ingroup politician ($M = 3.00$; $SD = .99$), those who voted for the outgroup politician ($M = 2.11$; $SD = .73$), and those who chose not to vote at all ($M = 2.64$; $SD = 1.05$), $F(2, 27) = 2.11$, $p = .14$, $\eta^2 = .14$. Follow up simple effects testing showed that for participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and voted for that politician trivialized the issue more ($M = 3.00$; $SD = .99$) than participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and voted for their ingroup member (the political opponent; $M = 2.03$; $SD = .88$), $t(40) = 2.76$, $p = .02$, $d = 1.04$, a large effect.

Follow up simple effects testing also showed that for participants who read about an outgroup politician, those who chose to vote for the opposing politician (their ingroup member) trivialized the issue less ($M = 2.03$, $SD = .88$) than those who chose to not vote at all ($M = 3.08$, $SD = .50$), $F(1,34) = 5.40$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .14$. No participants in this condition chose to vote for the outgroup politician.

This politician should be kicked out of his political party.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on the trivialization item “this politician should be kicked out of his political party” revealed no significant main effect of politician identity. Participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.31$), had similar attitudes about the politician as did participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.45$), $F(1, 61) = .39$, $p = .54$, $\eta^2 = .00$. The main effect of voting decision was also not significant, with no significant differences in attitudes toward the politician between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.46$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.39$), and those who did not vote ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.16$), $F(2, 61) = .47$, $p = .63$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was also no significant interaction between politician identity or participant vote on attitudes toward the politician, $F(1, 61) = .96$, $p = .33$, $\eta^2 = .02$.

Sometimes ‘science’ gets it wrong.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on the trivialization item “sometimes ‘science’ gets it

wrong” revealed no significant main effect of politician identity. Participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.43$), trivialized science at similar levels as did participants who read about an outgroup member ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.24$), $F(1, 62) = 1.32$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .02$.

The main effect of participant vote was also not significant, with no significant difference in trivialization of science between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.31$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.32$), and those who did not vote ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 1.44$), $F(1,62) = .02$, $p = .98$, $\eta^2 = .00$. There was also no significant interaction between politician identity or participant vote on trivialization of science, $F(2, 62) = 1.62$, $p = .21$, $\eta^2 = .03$.

IRMA time 2

It was hypothesized that for participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician, chose to vote for that politician, and were debunked, that the change in IRMA scores from time 1 to time 2 would be significantly higher than that of participants who voted for the ingroup politician and were not debunked. Since all participants in the sample were debunked, this hypothesis could not be tested. It was also hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the outgroup politician would have lower IRMA scores at time 2, compared to participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the ingroup politician, regardless of debunking.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) factorial ANOVA on IRMA scores at time two revealed no main effect of politician identity, with no significant difference between participants who read about an ingroup

politician ($M = 2.88$; $SD = .92$), and those who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 2.65$; $SD = 1.00$), $F(1, 62) = .06$, $p = .81$, $\eta^2 = .00$. There was no main effect of participant vote, with no significant difference between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 2.70$; $SD = .97$), those who voted for the outgroup ($M = 2.78$; $SD = .86$), and those who chose not to vote ($M = 2.89$; $SD = 1.04$), $F(2, 62) = .30$, $p = .74$, $\eta^2 = .01$. As expected, there was a significant interaction between politician identity and participant vote, $F(1, 62) = 5.03$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .08$.

Contrary to expectations, follow up simple effects testing for participants who read about an ingroup politician revealed no significant difference in IRMA time 2 scores between those who voted for an ingroup politician ($M = 3.20$; $SD = .74$), those who voted for the outgroup member ($M = 2.78$; $SD = .86$), and those who did not vote ($M = 2.68$; $SD = 1.10$), $F(2, 27) = .91$, $p = .42$; $\eta^2 = .06$. Follow up simple effects testing showed marginal effects such that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and voted for that politician tended to endorse a greater belief in rape myths ($M = 3.20$; $SD = .74$) than participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and voted for their ingroup member ($M = 2.50$; $SD = .99$), $t(41) = 1.91$, $p = .06$, $d = .80$. Although the significance level does not reach standard levels of statistical significance, this test was underpowered, and showed a large effect size.

To test whether trivialization mediated these effects, the simple effects test was repeated while controlling for trivialization in an ANCOVA. Results showed that trivialization of the issue fully mediated the effects of voting for a deviant ingroup politician on increased rape myths at time 2. The effects of voting for a deviant ingroup politician on time 2 rape myths became nonsignificant when controlling for trivialization, $F(1, 40) = .54$, $p = .47$. The mediating effect of trivialization on IRMA scores at time 2 is noteworthy and warrants further examination,

particularly given the differences on trivialization scores between Republicans and Democrats found in the preliminary analyses. However, given the lack of statistical power when adding this variable to the model, the mediation was not explored further. See Appendix K for a proposed conception of this process.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 1B

Method

Participants

There were a total of 171 participants in this sample. Participants came from two populations: a Georgia Southern University (GSU) social psychology course and Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Preliminary analyses indicated that the GSU sample ($N = 10$) differed significantly from the MTurk participants on all dependent variables. Therefore, these ten participants were excluded from further analyses as the sample was too small for conducting separate analyses. Differences between both samples on each dependent measure are shown in Table 3. The remaining analyses using the MTurk sample included 161 participants.

Because GSU participants were excluded from all analyses prior to hypothesis testing, demographic information is provided for MTurk participants only. The average MTurk participant age was 29.77 years ($SD = 9.96$), and ranged from 19 to 68. Forty-three percent of participants categorized themselves as Other race or ethnicity, 37.9% as Asian American, 9.9% as European American (White), and 6.8% as African American (Black). The majority of participants indicated their household income was under \$25,000 (45.3%), followed by \$25,000-\$50,000 (20.5%), \$50,001-\$100,000 (19.3%), and the 8.7% with income above \$100,000, and 5.6% who were unsure or preferred not to answer. A majority of participants were Democrats (57.8%), and the remaining were Republicans (42.2%). Due to the methodology of this research, participants were not given additional options regarding party affiliation (e.g., independent, libertarian, tea party). Overall, participants considered themselves somewhat affiliated (30.4%) with their stated political party, 20.5% were neither affiliated nor unaffiliated, 28.6% were

affiliated, 4.3% were very affiliated, and 4.3% were very unaffiliated. On the liberal-conservative scale, the majority of participants indicated they were moderate/middle of the road (28%), 23.6% were somewhat conservative, 3.1% were very conservative, and 6.8% were very liberal. The majority of participants indicated that they were registered to vote (88.8%), and 11.2% indicated they were not registered to vote.

An independent samples t-test comparing self-reported liberal or conservativeness by political party was conducted. Results indicated a significant difference in self-reported liberal or conservativeness based on political party $t(157) = -2.49, p = .01, d = .40$. As expected, participants who identified as Republicans reported they were more conservative ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.57$) than the scale midpoint of 4.0 while participants who identified as Democrats reported they were more liberal than the scale midpoint of 4.0 ($M = 3.76, SD = 1.49$).

Dependent Measures

Rape Myth Acceptance.

Rape myth acceptance was measured using the IRMA (Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald, 2009). Participants' level of rape myth acceptance was measured at time 1, and again following the manipulation and all other dependent measures at time 2. Eighty-one of the 161 participants completed the IRMA at both time 1 and time 2. All participants completed the IRMA at time 2. The scale consists of 45-statements regarding rape (i.e., "rape isn't as big a problem as some feminists would like people to think"), with five filler items interspersed throughout. Responses are given on a 1 (not at all agree) to 7 (very much agree) scale. All filler items for the IRMA scale were removed prior to analysis of reliability. Initial analysis of the retained 40-item IRMA

at time 1 revealed excellent reliability ($\alpha = .97$). Analysis of time 2 IRMA was also highly reliable ($\alpha = .98$). Scores for IRMA time 1 were averaged across all conditions ($M = 4.19$; $SD = 1.02$). Scores for IRMA time 2 were averaged across all conditions ($M = 4.32$; $SD = 1.09$). See Table 3 for the means and standard deviations for all measures, and Table 4 for correlations between all measures. See Appendix H for all IRMA scale items.

Cognitive Dissonance.

Immediately after receiving the debunking statement from ACOG, all participants indicated their affective response, at present, on a scale from 1 (*does not apply at all*) to 8 (*applies very much*). Participants were given a list of adjectives and short statements and asked to indicate the extent to which they were feeling that way “*right now*.” The dissonance related items were taken from Glasford, Dovidio, & Pratto (2009). In accordance with Glasford et al. (2009), neutral filler items (i.e., “impartial” were added by the researchers as they were not included in their original methodology. In accordance with Glasford et al. (2009), the items were averaged to measure both dissonance-related psychological discomfort ($M = 4.52$; $SD = 1.55$) and negative self-directed emotion ($M = 3.86$; $SD = 1.77$). Dissonance related items were “uncomfortable,” “uneasy,” and “bothered” ($\alpha = .72$). Negative self-directed dissonance items were “angry with myself,” “dissatisfied with myself,” “disgusted with myself,” and “annoyed with myself” ($\alpha = .88$). See Table 3 for the means and standard deviations for all measures, and Table 4 for correlations between all measures.

Trivialization.

Participants completed the trivialization items following the cognitive dissonance measures. Trivialization was measured using a five-item questionnaire created for the purpose of the current research, designed to measure participants' trivialization of the politician's statement regarding rape. Trivialization items were "the media twisted his words into something different than what he really meant," "he didn't really mean what he said," "what he said wasn't really a 'big deal'." "this politician should be kicked out of his political party," and "sometimes 'science' gets things wrong." Responses were given on a 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree) scale. Initial analysis of the five-item trivialization revealed Cronbach's alpha of .74. Therefore, item 4 ("This politician should be kicked out of his political party") was removed. The retained four-item scale showed good reliability ($\alpha = .80$). Scores on these four items were combined for an average trivialization score across all conditions ($M = 3.67$; $SD = 1.06$). See Appendix G for the complete five-item scale.

Procedure

Phase One.

After giving their consent to participate in this research, participants completed the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; Payne, Fitzgerald, & Lonsway, 1999). Following completion, participants who wished to complete phase two of the research were asked to provide their Amazon Mechanical Turk worker ID or GSU email address so that the researchers could send the link for phase two. Participants who did not wish to participate in phase two were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Phase Two.

After again giving their consent to participate in this research, participants completed the demographic information. Next, they were randomly assigned to either the Republican or Democrat condition, and then read the statement regarding rape which was attributed to a Republican or Democratic politician by their assigned condition. Participants were then asked to indicate how strongly they would endorse the politician after reading the statement. Next, they were asked to imagine they were about to vote in an upcoming congressional election, and to indicate whether they would vote for the candidate, their opposition, or not vote at all. Immediately following this, participants were randomly assigned to be debunked or not debunked. Participants who were assigned to the debunking condition read the American Congress of Obstetricians (ACOG) statement regarding rape, and then asked to rate their agreement with the ACOG statement on a 7-pt Likert-type scale (*1 = very strongly disagree, 7 = very strongly agree*). All participants then completed the cognitive dissonance measure in which they were asked to indicate their affective response *right now* on a scale ranging from 1 (*does not apply at all*) to 7 (*applies very much*). Following the method used in Glasford, Dovidio, and Pratto (2009), dissonance-related discomfort items were “uncomfortable,” “uneasy,” and “bothered” and the negative self-directed emotion items were “angry with myself,” “dissatisfied with myself,” “disgusted with myself,” and “annoyed with myself”. Additional neutral filler items were interspersed with the dissonance related items. Next, participants were asked to think about the politicians statement they read and to indicate their agreement with several statement. Responses were given on a 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*) scale. Items were “the media twisted his words in to something different than what he really meant,” “He didn’t really mean what he said,” “What he said wasn’t really a ‘big deal’,” “This politician

should be kicked out of his political party,” and “sometimes ‘science’ gets things wrong”. Following the trivialization items, participants completed the IRMA. Then participants completed a manipulation check where they were asked to recall which political party the politician they read about belonged to, with response options of *Republican* or *Democrat*. Immediately following this, participants who were debunked completed the debunking check, where they indicated whether the ACOG statement indicated that the trauma of rape could actually prevent pregnancy. Response choices were *True* or *False*. Next, participants were asked to indicate their current affiliation with their political party, using a visual analog (see Appendix J for response options). Finally, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to determine if participant party affiliation (Democrats vs. Republicans) was related to strength of party affiliation, IRMA at time 1, Trivialization, Cognitive Dissonance Discomfort, Negative Self Directed Cognitive Dissonance, or IRMA at time 2. Table 3 presents all means and standard deviations by participant party affiliation as well as the correlations between all measures as a function of party affiliation. Only levels of trivialization differed by party affiliation, with Republicans trivializing the issue more than did Democrats. Given the similarity in responding between Republicans and Democrats on all other measures and on the strength and direction of correlations between all measures, participant political party was not analyzed during the hypothesis testing to save statistical power.

The initial design of this study was a 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) x 3 (debunked: debunked vs. not debunked) between groups design. As with study 1A, participant vote is used as a categorical independent variable rather than as a dependent variable as it was expected that a participant's decision to vote for either an ingroup or outgroup member would itself influence levels of dissonance, trivialization, and IRMA scores. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two politician identities (ingroup or outgroup member), and then randomly assigned to a debunking condition (read the ACOG statement or did not read ACOG statement). Participant political party and participant vote were participant variables. However, analyses of the debunking manipulation check showed that 37 (44.5%) of the participants randomly assigned to read the debunking statement answered the manipulation check correctly, while 46 (55%) of the participants randomly assigned to read the debunking statement answered the manipulation check incorrectly. Seventy-five participants were randomly assigned to the no debunking condition. We reasoned that the 46 participants who were debunked but inaccurately reported that the ACOG statement indicated that trauma of rape *can* prevent pregnancy may be particularly likely to trivialize the issue, and express higher rape myth acceptance compared to the 37 participants who were debunked and accurately stated that the ACOG statement reported that rape *cannot* prevent pregnancy and compared to the 75 participants who were not debunked. In support of this concern, participants' time 1 IRMA scores were significantly related to whether they answered the debunking manipulation check correctly or not. Higher scores on the IRMA time 1 were associated with answering the manipulation check incorrectly, $r(46) = .30, p = .04$.

The resultant number of cells in the design of the study increased to 18, with a 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. no vote) x 3 (debunked: debunked vs. not debunked) between groups design. Given that only 161 participants completed the study, the number of participants per cell decreased to an average of 9. In order to preserve statistical power while still testing the main hypotheses, we made an *a priori* decision before hypotheses testing to collapse two levels of participants' voting choice. Specifically, we reasoned that theoretically, from a social identity perspective, participants who chose to leave their political party ingroup by either voting for the political opponent or not voting at all would be psychologically more similar to each other, and psychologically distinct, from participants who chose to vote for their ingroup member. As participants were asked to imagine they were voting in a real election, their decision to vote for anyone other than their political party candidate would take votes away from their ingroup party and reduce their chances of electoral success. This decision resulted in the final design for hypotheses testing, a 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 2 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup/ no vote) x 3 (debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) between groups design, which allowed us to have an average of 13 participants per cell.

Testing of Hypotheses

Cognitive Dissonance.

It was hypothesized that for participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician chose to vote for that politician, and were debunked, that cognitive dissonance would be significantly higher than for those who voted for the ingroup politician and were not debunked. Participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the outgroup

politician would also have significantly higher levels of cognitive dissonance, regardless of debunking. Participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and chose to vote for their ingroup politician were expected to have significantly lower levels of cognitive dissonance.

Dissonance Discomfort.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 2(participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup/no vote) x 3(debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) factorial ANOVA on level of dissonance discomfort revealed no main effect of participant vote, with participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 4.52$; $SD = 1.51$) experiencing similar levels of dissonance as those who voted for the outgroup or did not vote ($M = 4.51$; $SD = 1.60$), $F(1,147) = .00$, $p = .99$, $\eta^2 = .00$. There was no significant main effect of politician identity, with participants who read about an ingroup member ($M = 4.47$; $SD = 1.60$) experiencing similar levels of dissonance as an outgroup member ($M = 4.57$; $SD = 1.50$), $F(1,147) = 1.13$, $p = .29$, $\eta^2 = .01$. There was no significant main effect of debunking, with participants who answered the debunking manipulation check incorrectly ($M = 4.56$; $SD = 1.33$) trivializing the issue at the same level as those who answered the manipulation check correctly ($M = 4.91$; $SD = 1.52$), and those who were not debunked ($M = 4.30$; $SD = 1.66$), $F(1,147) = 1.64$, $p = .20$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was no significant interaction between participant vote and politician identity, $F(1,147) = .85$, $p = .36$, $\eta^2 = .01$. There was no significant interaction between participant vote and debunking, $F(2,147) = .98$, $p = .38$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Results showed a significant interaction between politician identity and debunking $F(2,147) = 3.65$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .05$.

Follow up simple effects testing showed that for participants who read about an outgroup politician, those that answered the debunking manipulation check correctly ($M = 5.60$; $SD = 1.19$) experienced more dissonance discomfort than did participants who answered the debunking manipulation check incorrectly ($M = 4.49$; $SD = 1.11$), and those who were not debunked ($M = 4.17$; $SD = 1.66$), $F(2,75) = 5.84$, $p = .00$, $\eta^2 = .14$. The follow up simple effects testing for participants who read about an ingroup member showed that there were no significant differences in dissonance discomfort between those who answered the debunking manipulation check correctly ($M = 4.38$; $SD = 1.56$), those who answered the manipulation check incorrectly ($M = 4.65$; $SD = 1.60$), and those who were not debunked ($M = 4.42$; $SD = 1.66$), $F(2,78) = .18$, $p = .84$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

Dissonance: Negative Self-Directed Emotion.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 2(participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup/ no vote) x 3(debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) factorial ANOVA on level of negative self-directed emotion revealed no main effect of participant vote. Participants who voted for the ingroup politician ($M = 3.97$; $SD = 1.68$) had similar levels of negative self-directed emotion as those who voted for the outgroup politician or did not vote ($M = 3.73$; $SD = 1.90$), $F(1,148) = .86$, $p = .36$, $\eta^2 = .01$. There was no significant main effect of debunking, with participants who answered the debunking manipulation incorrectly ($M = 4.09$; $SD = 1.66$) experiencing similar levels of negative self-directed emotion as those who answered the debunking manipulation check correctly ($M = 3.61$; $SD = 1.60$), and those who were not debunked ($M = 3.85$; $SD = 1.92$), $F(2,148) = .67$, $p = .51$, $\eta^2 = .01$. There was no main effect of

politician identity, with participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 3.94$; $SD = 1.83$) experiencing similar levels of negative self-directed emotion as those who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 3.79$; $SD = 1.71$), $F(1,148) = 1.34$, $p = .25$, $\eta^2 = .01$. There was no significant interaction between debunking and politician identity, $F(2, 148) = .80$, $p = .45$, $\eta^2 = .01$, no significant interaction between debunking and participant vote, $F(2,148) = .32$, $p = .73$, $\eta^2 = .00$, no significant interaction between politician identity and participant vote, $F(1,148) = 1.04$, $p = .31$, $\eta^2 = .01$, nor was there a significant three-way interaction between participant vote, politician identity, and debunking, $F(2,148) = .16$, $p = .86$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

Trivialization.

It was hypothesized that trivialization would be significantly higher for participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and were debunked than those who were not debunked. Participants who voted for a deviant ingroup member would have significantly higher trivialization. Participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and vote for their ingroup politician would trivialize significantly less than those who voted for the outgroup politician, regardless of debunking.

A 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 3 (participant vote: ingroup vs outgroup/ no vote) x 3 (debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) factorial ANOVA on level of trivialization revealed a main effect of participant vote. Participants who voted for the ingroup politician trivialized the issue more ($M = 3.85$; $SD = .97$) than those who voted for the outgroup or did not vote at all ($M = 3.43$; $SD = 1.14$), $F(1,149) = 4.92$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .03$. There

was also a main effect of debunking with participants who answered the debunking manipulation check incorrectly trivializing the issue more ($M = 4.03$; $SD = .83$) than those who were not debunked ($M = 3.66$; $SD = 1.06$), and those who answered the manipulation check correctly ($M = 3.25$; $SD = 1.19$), $F(2,149) = 3.49$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .04$. There was no significant main effect of politician identity, with participants who read about in ingroup politician ($M = 3.71$; $SD = 1.10$) trivializing the issue at similar levels than did participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 3.62$; $SD = 1.03$), $F(1,149) = 2.48$, $p = .12$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was no significant interaction between participant vote and politician identity, $F(2,149) = 1.07$, $p = .30$, $\eta^2 = .01$, no significant interaction between participant vote and debunking, $F(2, 149) = .45$, $p = .64$, $\eta^2 = .01$, no significant interaction between politician identity and debunking, $F(2,149) = .67$, $p = .52$, $\eta^2 = .01$, nor was there a significant three-way interaction between participant vote, politician identity, and debunking, $F(2, 149), = 1.38$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .02$.

This politician should be kicked out of his political party.

A 2(politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 2(participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup/no vote) x 3 (debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) factorial ANOVA on the trivialization item “this politician should be kicked out of his political party” revealed no significant main effect of politician identity. Participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.34$) reported similar levels as did participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 1.19$), $F(1,146) = .09$, $p = .76$, $\eta^2 = .00$. The main effect of voting decision was also not significant, with no significant differences in attitudes toward the politician

between participants who voted for the ingroup ($M = 2.77$; $SD = 1.15$) and those who voted for the outgroup or did not vote ($M = 2.97$; $SD = 1.40$), $F(1,146) = 1.45$, $p = .23$, $\eta^2 = .01$. The main effect of debunking was also not significant, with no significant differences in attitudes toward the politician between participants who answered the debunking manipulation check incorrectly ($M = 2.77$; $SD = 1.12$), those who were not debunked ($M = 3.01$; $SD = 1.36$), and those who answered the manipulation check correctly ($M = 2.66$; $SD = 1.24$), $F(2,146) = 1.18$, $p = .31$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was no significant interaction between politician identity or participant vote, $F(1,146) = .54$, $p = .47$, $\eta^2 = .00$, no significant interaction between politician identity or debunking, $F(2,146) = .06$, $p = .95$, $\eta^2 = .00$, and no significant interaction between debunking and participant vote, $F(2, 146) = .38$, $p = .68$, $\eta^2 = .01$, nor was there a significant three-way interaction between debunking, participant vote, and politician identity, $F(2,146) = .26$, $p = .77$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

IRMA time 2.

It was hypothesized that participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician, chose to vote for that politician, and were debunked, IRMA scores at time 2 would be significantly higher than participants who voted for the ingroup politician and were not debunked. Participants who read about a deviant ingroup politician and chose to vote for the outgroup politician would have lower IRMA scores at time 2, regardless of debunking. Participants who read about a deviant outgroup politician and chose to vote for their ingroup politician were not expected differ significantly on IRMA scores at time 2.

A 2 (politician identity: ingroup vs. outgroup member) x 2 (participant vote: ingroup vs. outgroup/no vote) x 3 (debunked: correct vs. incorrect vs. not debunked) factorial ANOVA on IRMA scores at time two revealed a significant main effect of debunking, with participants who answered the debunking manipulation check correctly ($M = 3.83$; $SD = 1.22$) indicating significantly lower scores on IRMA time 2 than participants who answered the debunking manipulation check incorrectly ($M = 4.65$; $SD = .85$) and those who were not debunked ($M = 4.46$; $SD = .87$), $F(2,149) = 4.57$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Given this significant finding additional analyses were conducted to determine if there was a significant change in IRMA scores from time 1 to time 2 based on the debunking condition. A 2 (IRMA: time 1 vs. time 2) x 3 (Debunking: debunk check correct vs. debunk check incorrect vs. not debunked) mixed ANOVA with repeated measures on the first factor was conducted to test for significant differences in IRMA scores. There was no significant main effect of time on IRMA scores, $F(1,78) = 1.91$, $p = .17$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was a significant interaction between debunking and time, $F(2,78) = 3.21$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Follow-up simple effects testing revealed that for those who were debunked and answered the debunking check correctly, there was no significant differences in IRMA scores from time 1 ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.19$) to time 2 ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.15$), $F(1,21) = 1.74$, $p = .20$, $\eta^2 = .08$. For those who were debunked but answered the debunking check incorrectly, there was no significant differences in IRMA scores from time 1 ($M = 4.45$, $SD = .88$) to time 2 ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.00$), $F(1,25) = 1.92$, $p = .18$, $\eta^2 = .07$. While these results did not reach the conventional levels of statistical significance, they trended in the expected direction, with participants who were debunked and answered the debunking check correctly having lower IRMA scores at time 2, and those who were debunked and answered the debunking check incorrectly having higher

IRMA scores at time 2. Interestingly, those who were not debunked showed a significant decrease in IRMA scores from time 1 ($M = 4.23$, $SD = .96$) to time 2 ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.06$), $F(1,32) = 5.53$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .15$.

There was a significant main effect of politician identity, with participants who read about an ingroup politician ($M = 4.43$; $SD = 1.14$) indicating significantly higher scores on IRMA time 2 than participants who read about an outgroup politician ($M = 4.20$; $SD = 1.14$), $F(1,149) = 5.18$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .03$. There was no significant main effect of participant vote, with participants who voted for the ingroup member indicating similar IRMA scores at time 2 ($M = 4.45$; $SD = .95$) as participants who voted for the outgroup or did not vote ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 1.24$), $F(1,149) = 3.56$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .02$. There was not a significant interaction between debunking and politician identity, $F(2,149) = .65$, $p = .53$, $\eta^2 = .01$, no significant interaction between debunking and participant vote, $F(2,149) = .11$, $p = .90$, $\eta^2 = .00$, no significant interaction between politician identity and participant vote, $F(1,149) = .04$, $p = .85$, $\eta^2 = .00$, nor was there a significant three-way interaction between debunking, politician identity, and participant vote, $F(3,149) = .32$, $p = .73$, $\eta^2 = .00$.

Additional analyses were conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between time 1 IRMA scores for participants who completed both phases of the study and time 2 IRMA scores for those who only completed phase two. This analysis gave us another method of assessing the effects of the experimental procedure. By comparing the time 2 IRMA scores of participants who only completed phase 2, with the time 1 scores of the participants who completed both phases, we were able to assess the effects of the experimental procedure on

IRMA scores without the contamination of the previous measurement of IRMA scores. Results revealed significantly lower IRMA scores at time 1 for those who completed both phases ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.02$) than time 2 IRMA scores for those who only completed phase 2 ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.03$), $t(159) = -2.10$, $p = .04$, $d = .33$.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Summary and Implications for Theory and Research

This thesis attempted to determine whether deviant behavior from a political ingroup member would arouse dissonance from party members, and which routes to dissonance reduction they would take. Across both studies, the only observable difference between Republicans and Democrats was on levels of trivialization and IRMA scores at time 2. Republicans from both studies trivialized the politicians' behavior significantly more than did Democrats. Republicans also had higher scores on IRMA at time 2, but only for participants in the GSU sample. While additional analysis of these findings would have contributed significantly to the current research, methodological limitations made it impossible to explore these differences further without risk of Type 1 errors. However, there was a trend in the correlations between IRMA and trivialization scores, such that higher scores on one were correlated with higher scores on the other.

Significant differences in trivialization were seen as a main effect of participant vote, with those who voted for the ingroup trivializing the politicians statement more than participants who voted for the outgroup politician. This is consistent with *social identity theory*, in that there was no motivation for participants who voted for an outgroup member to trivialize the statements made by the politician. However, this finding was not consistent with the lack of significant differences in trivialization based on whether the politician himself was an ingroup, versus outgroup member. Consistent with theory, no participants who read about an outgroup politician then decided to vote for the outgroup politician. Most interesting are the demonstrated differences in trivialization based on political affiliation, with Republicans trivializing the

politicians' statement regarding rape more than Democrats, regardless of whether the politician the statement was attributed to was a political ingroup or outgroup member. Perhaps basic ideological differences regarding abortion can account for the increased trivialization seen for Republican participants. Given that the Republican Party is pro-life, they may be more likely to trivialize the inaccurate statement regarding the relationship between rape and pregnancy in order to maintain support for their pro-life position, even if the statement was attributed to a Democratic politician. Democrats, on the other hand, are pro-choice and may be less likely to trivialize the statement because there is no need to defend it in order to maintain support for their stance on the issue.

Contrary to the hypotheses there was no main effect of dissonance in response to the politicians' statement based on his ingroup or outgroup status. Participants indicated similar levels of dissonance regardless of whether they read about a deviant ingroup or outgroup politician. This finding is also at odds with *social identity theory*, in that participants who read about an ingroup member should have experienced significantly more dissonance than those who read about an outgroup member, regardless of who they decided to vote for. This finding warrants further investigation. It is possible that reading about a topic such as abortion, or "legitimate rape" was itself enough to arouse cognitive dissonance, and could explain the similar levels across conditions as all participants read about the same issue. There was a significant difference in dissonance scores for the MTurk sample based on debunking, with those who read about an outgroup member and were debunked and answered the manipulation check correctly experiencing more dissonance discomfort than those who answered incorrectly, or were not debunked.

Perhaps some of the most interesting findings involved changes on IRMA scores. For participants in both samples, reading about an ingroup politician was associated with significantly higher scores on the IRMA at time 2. Significant differences in IRMA at time 2 were also seen as a function of debunking, but this effect could only be seen in the MTurk sample as all participants in the GSU sample were debunked. Those who answered the debunking manipulation check correctly had significantly lower IRMA scores at time 2 than did participant who answered this incorrectly, or were not debunked. There was a mediating effect of trivialization on voting for a deviant ingroup politician and the increase in IRMA scores at time 2, such that for those who read about a deviant ingroup politician and then voted for that ingroup member trivialized the issue itself, which then resulted in increased rape myth acceptance. On the other hand, for those who read about a deviant outgroup member and the voted for their ingroup member trivialized the issue less, and exhibited less rape myth acceptance. This mediating effect of trivialization has the potential for big consequences to the electoral process and on political polarization. Trivializing a politician's or political party's inaccurate stance on any given issue (e.g., racial inequality, over-regulation of industry) could result in attitude change, as demonstrated by this research, simply as a means of justifying a vote for a political ingroup member.

The differences in dissonance discomfort and IRMA scores at time 2 as a function of debunking condition have important implications for both the current and future research. While changes were not seen on all dependent variables based on debunking, these changes are consistent with *cognitive dissonance theory*. When reading the statement regarding legitimate rape and abortion, participants must be aware that there are facts which contradict it in order for dissonance to occur. For those who were not debunked, it is likely that lower dissonance scores

reflect a lack of this awareness, or at least a lowered awareness which makes it easier for them to discount any dissonance which occurs. Higher levels of dissonance make attitude change more likely, and there appears to be some evidence for attitude change based on the increased rape myth acceptance seen at time 2.

Interestingly, participants who read about an outgroup member, were debunked, and answered the debunking manipulation check correctly experienced more dissonance discomfort than those who answered the manipulation check incorrectly or were not debunked, regardless of who they decided to vote for. Perhaps participants who answered the debunking manipulation check correctly internalized the debunking information, and that this internalization increased the salience of the issue for them, which in turn made them uncomfortable regardless of whether they read about an ingroup or outgroup politician. Conversely, for those who were debunked and answered the debunking check incorrectly may have been experiencing reactance to the debunking information itself and felt less uncomfortable overall because they dismissed the information.

Limitations

The current research is limited by several factors. First among them is the small sample size. The number of participants required in order to adequately address statistical limitations in this model was not reached within the time frame allowed for this project. Many of the planned analyses which would have fully tested the hypotheses would also have been severely underpowered. Despite initial results which revealed only a significant difference across participant party on trivialization, it is possible that a larger sample would reveal significant

differences between Republicans and Democrats on all dependent variables. In addition to the small sample size, failure to add the debunking condition to study 1A limits the understanding of its effects and the comparison across samples.

Participant demographics may also have played a crucial role in the similarities on all measures across participant party. While past research has shown that participants recruited from MTurk do not differ significantly from those recruited via more traditional methods, it is important to note that MTurk workers come from around the globe. The current research required that MTurk participants be U.S. citizens, but was not possible to screen out non-citizen participants prior to completing the survey. They could only be excluded during analyses, which could also have severely limited the current research. If participants were not actually U.S. citizens, it cannot be assumed that they would have an understanding of the ideological differences between American political parties. However, as indicated in the preliminary results, participant self-reported liberal or conservativeness was consistent with the associated political parties, which lessens this concern.

Future Directions.

While there are several research findings with interesting implications for *social identity theory* and *cognitive dissonance theory*, the current study is limited in many ways that should be addressed before fully considering their impact. First, methodological flaws such as the programming error which resulted in all participants in the GSU sample being debunked should be corrected. The study could also be replicated with a larger sample size to determine if the findings discussed here are consistent. Specifically, it should be determined whether the

similarities between Republicans and Democrats, particularly in regards to trivialization, holds true with a larger sample, and with one in which all participants can reasonably be assumed to have an affiliation with one party or the other. Including an issue which is more associated as being a controversial “Democratic” one (i.e., global warming) may be useful in providing a contrast to the issue utilized in the current study.

Additionally, changes in the order of the presentation of the dependent measures should be made, such that participants can choose to vote for a political candidate either before or after they are debunked in order to better understand the changes seen in dissonance and trivialization. Currently, participants were required to vote for a candidate immediately after reading the politicians statement regarding rape. For all participants, the simple act of choosing to vote for either an ingroup or outgroup member could increase or decrease their levels of cognitive dissonance or trivialization, but would be undetectable using the current methodology. In regards to the trivialization measure, there is no standardized measure available which has been empirically validated. As demonstrated in the current research, this measure was not reliable across samples and required modification from study 1A to 1B. One possible solution is to create a reliable measure of trivialization, and use it in a replication of the current research.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations by Population

Measure	Republicans		Democrats	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. IRMA T1	2.98	.75	2.65	.87
2. IRMA T2	2.99	.97**	2.50	.90**
3. Dissonance Discomfort	2.90	1.66	2.92	1.49
4. Negative Self- Directed Emotion	1.80	1.28	2.41	1.60
5. Trivialization	2.79	.76**	2.33	.87**

** $p < .05$

APPENDIX B

Table 2

Correlations between all Dependent Variables by Political Party

Measures	1	2	3	4	5
Republicans					
1. IRMA T1	---	.85**	-.10	.00	.42*
2. IRMA T2	---	---	-.01	.13	.70**
3. Dissonance Discomfort	---	---	---	.56**	-.22
4. Negative Self-Directed Emotion	---	---	---	---	.03
5. Trivialization	---	---	---	---	---
Democrats					
1. IRMA T1	---	.91**	.15	.21	.65**
2. IRMA T2	---	---	.31	.40*	.62**
3. Dissonance Discomfort	---	---	---	.79**	.07
4. Negative Self-Directed Emotion	---	---	---	---	.14
5. Trivialization	---	---	---	---	---

**p<.05

*p<.01

APPENDIX C

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations by Population

Measure	Georgia Southern University		Amazon Mechanical Turk	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. IRMA T1	2.00	.79	4.19	1.02
2. IRMA T2	1.82	.71	4.32	1.09
3. Dissonance Discomfort	2.90	2.06	4.52	1.55
4. Negative Self-Directed Emotion	1.65	.87	3.86	1.06
5. Trivialization	2.18	.77	3.67	1.06

Note. All differences are significant at the $p < .05$ level

APPENDIX D

Table 4

Correlations between all Dependent Variables by Political Party

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
Republicans							
1. IRMA T1	---	.84**	.14	.42**	.66**	4.22	1.11
2. IRMA T2	---	---	.24	.52**	.70**	4.50	.94
3. Dissonance Discomfort	---	---	---	.65**	.31*	4.58	1.57
4. Negative Self-Directed Emotion	---	---	---	---	.45**	4.13	1.77
5. Trivialization	---	---	---	---	---	4.00	.85
Democrats							
1. IRMA T1	---	.90**	.14	.43**	.63**	4.17	1.11
2. IRMA T2	---	---	.20	.56**	.76**	4.18	1.18
3. Dissonance Discomfort	---	---	---	.59**	.24**	4.47	1.54
4. Negative Self-Directed Emotion	---	---	---	---	.62**	3.67	1.75
5. Trivialization	---	---	---	---	---	3.43	1.14

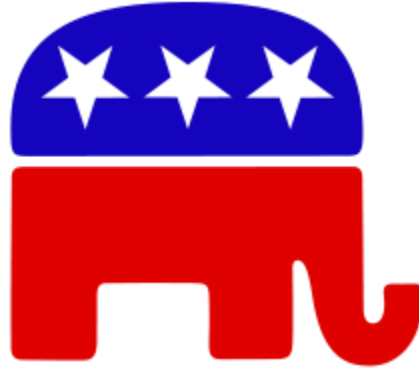
**p<.05

*p<.01

APPENDIX E

MANIPULATIONS

REPUBLICAN CONDITION



The following statement was recently made by a Republican member of the United States Congress. Please read the statement carefully.

“Most women either are not fertile during sexual assault or do not become pregnant because the trauma prompts a hormonal response that prevents ovulation. The fact is that women who are raped – who are truly raped – the juices don’t flow, I mean, the body functions don’t work and they don’t get pregnant. The odds that a woman who is raped will get pregnant are one in millions and millions and millions. The traumatic experience of rape causes a woman to secrete a certain secretion that tends to kill sperm. Concern for rape victims is a red herring because conceptions from rape occur with approximately the same frequency as a snowfall in Miami.”

After reading this statement, how strongly would you endorse this politician?

I would strongly oppose

I would oppose

I would somewhat oppose

I would somewhat support

I would support

I would strongly support

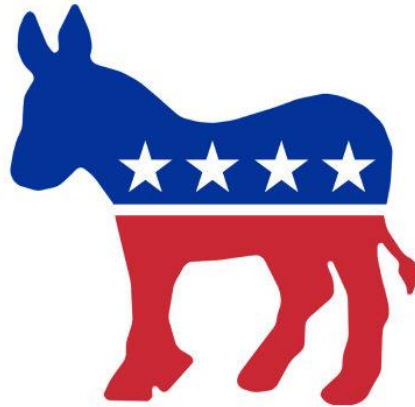
Please indicate below which decision you are most likely to make (circle one):

Vote for Republican Candidate

Vote for Democratic Opponent

Not vote at all

DEMOCRATIC CONDITON



The following statement was recently made by a Democratic member of the United States Congress. Please read the statement carefully.

“Most women either are not fertile during sexual assault or do not become pregnant because the trauma prompts a hormonal response that prevents ovulation. The fact is that women who are raped – who are truly raped – the juices don’t flow, I mean, the body functions don’t work and they don’t get pregnant. The odds that a woman who is raped will get pregnant are one in millions and millions and millions. The traumatic experience of rape causes a woman to secrete a certain secretion that tends to kill sperm. Concern for rape victims is a red herring because conceptions from rape occur with approximately the same frequency as a snowfall in Miami.”

After reading this statement, how strongly would you endorse this politician?

I would
strongly
oppose

I would
oppose

I would
somewhat
oppose

I would
somewhat
support

I would
support

I would
strongly
support

Please indicate below which decision you are most likely to make (circle one):

Vote for Democratic
Candidate

Vote for Republican
Opponent

Not vote at all

ACOG STATEMENT



The following is a statement from the **American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)**, the nation's leading group of physicians providing health care for women. It was issued in August, 2012. Please read it carefully.

“Recent remarks by a member of the US House of Representatives suggesting that “women who are victims of ‘legitimate rape’ rarely get pregnant” are medically inaccurate, offensive, and dangerous. Each year in the US, 10,000-15,000 abortions occur among women whose pregnancies are a result of reported rape or incest. An unknown number of pregnancies resulting from rape are carried to term. There is absolutely no veracity to the claim that “If it’s a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to shut that whole thing down.” A woman who is raped has no control over ovulation, fertilization, or implantation of a fertilized egg (i.e., pregnancy). To suggest otherwise contradicts basic biological truths. Any person forced to submit to sexual intercourse against his or her will is the victim of rape, a heinous crime. There are no varying degrees of rape. To suggest otherwise is inaccurate and insulting and minimizes the serious physical and psychological repercussions for all victims of rape.”

APPENDIX F

COGNITIVE DISSONANCE MEASURE

For each item below, indicate the extent to which you feel that way *right now*.

1) Uncomfortable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

2) Agreeable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

3) Angry with myself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

4) Jovial

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

5) Dissatisfied with myself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

6) Proud

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

7) Annoyed with myself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

8) Nice

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

9) Uneasy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

10) Enthusiastic

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

11) Bothered

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

12) Impartial

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

13) Disgusted with myself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

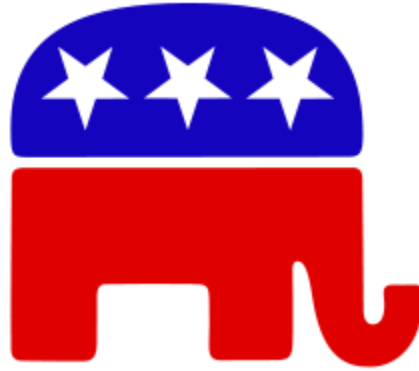
14) Fine

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Does not apply at all							Applies very much

APPENDIX G

TRIVIALIZATION SCALE

REPUBLICAN CONDITION



Now think about the statement you previously read from the Republican Congressman. On the following items, please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement:

The media twisted his words into something different than what he really meant.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

He didn't really mean what he said.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

What he said wasn't really a "big deal."

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

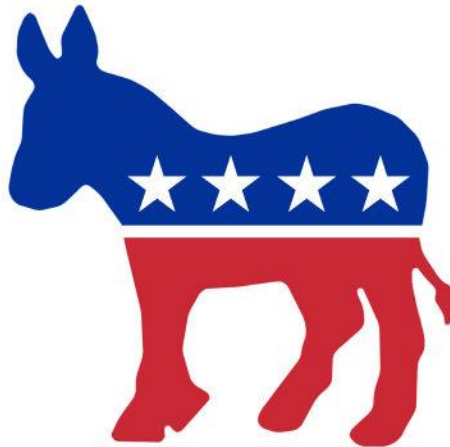
This politician should be kicked out of his political party.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

Sometimes "science" gets things wrong.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

DEMOCRATIC CONDITON



Now think about the statement you previously read from the Democratic Congressman. On the following items, please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement:

The media twisted his words into something different than what he really meant.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

He didn't really mean what he said.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

What he said wasn't really a "big deal."

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

This politician should be kicked out of his political party.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

Sometimes "science" gets things wrong.

Very strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Very strongly agree
------------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------	-------	---------------------

APPENDIX H

THE IRMA SCALE

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control. | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 2. | Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally find being physically forced into sex a real "turn-on." | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 3. | When men rape, it is because of their strong desire for sex. | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 4. | If a woman is willing to "make out" with a guy, then it's no big deal if he goes a little further and has sex | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 5. | Women who are caught having an illicit affair sometimes claim that it was rape. | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 6. | Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and "changed their minds" afterwards. | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
| 7. | Many women secretly desire to be raped. | Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |

8. Rape mainly occurs on the “bad” side of town.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
9. Usually, it is only women who do things like hang out in bars and sleep around that are raped.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
10. If a woman doesn’t physically fight back, you can’t really say that it was rape.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
11. Men from nice middle-class homes almost never rape.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
12. Rape isn’t as big a problem as some feminists would like people to think.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
13. When women go around wearing low-cut tops or short skirts, they’re just asking for trouble
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
14. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
15. A rape probably didn’t happen if the woman has no bruises or marks.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
16. Many women find being forced to have sex very arousing.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|

17. If a woman goes home with a man she doesn't know, it is her own fault if she is raped.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
18. Rapists are usually sexually frustrated individuals.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
19. It is usually only women who dress suggestively that are raped.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
20. Some women prefer to have sex forced on them so they don't have to feel guilty about it.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
21. If the rapist doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it a rape.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
22. When a woman is a sexual tease, eventually she is going to get into trouble.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
23. Being raped isn't as bad as being mugged and beaten.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
24. Rape is unlikely to happen in the woman's own familiar neighborhood.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
25. In reality, women are almost never raped by their boyfriends.						
Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree

26. Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
27. When a man is very sexually aroused, he may not even realize that the woman is resisting.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
28. A lot of women lead a man on and then they cry rape.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
29. A lot of times, women who claim they were raped just have emotional problems.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
30. If a woman doesn't physically resist sex—even when protesting verbally— it really can't be considered rape.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
31. Rape almost never happens in the woman's own home.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
32. A woman who "teases" men deserves anything that might happen.
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
33. When women are raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was ambiguous..
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Very strongly agree | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Very Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------|

34. If a woman isn't a virgin, then it shouldn't be a big deal if her date forces her to have sex.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

35. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

36. A woman who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man tries to force her to have sex.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

37. Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

38. A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on the first date is implying that she wants to have sex.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

39. Many women actually enjoy sex after the guy uses a little force.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

40. If a woman claims to have been raped but has no bruises or scrapes, she probably shouldn't be taken too seriously.

Very strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
---------------------	----------------	-------	----------------------------	----------	-------------------	------------------------

APPENDIX I

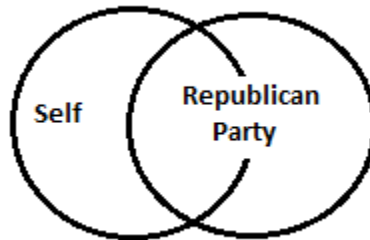
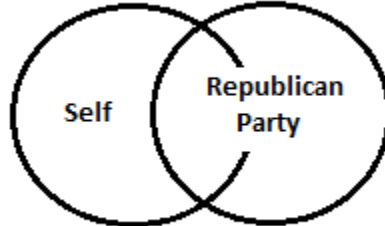
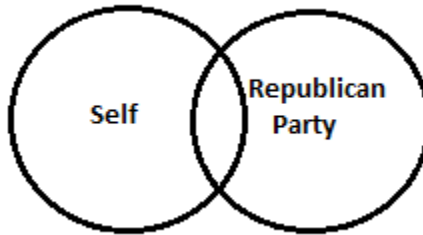
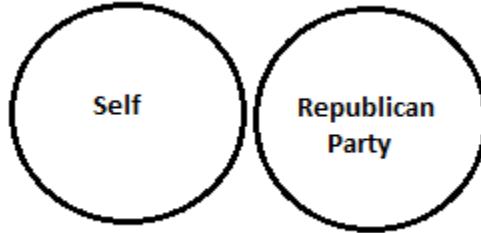
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

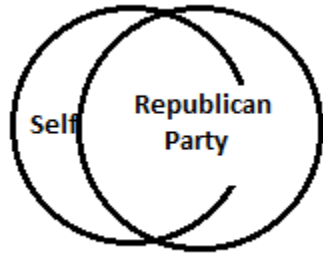
- 1) How old are you? (in years) _____
- 2) Please indicate which of the following race categorizations you most closely identify with:
- ____European American (White) ____African American (Black)
- ____Asian American ____Latino(a) ____Native American
- ____Other (write-in) _____
- 3) Please indicate your average earnings per year. If you are currently considered a dependent of your parent/guardian, indicate your parent/guardians average earnings per year.
- ____ under \$25,000 ____\$25,000-50,000 ____\$50,001-100,000
- ____\$100,001-250,000 ____\$250,000+ ____Unsure/prefer not to answer
- 4) Which political party do you most closely affiliate with? Please choose one of the two options below.
- ____Democrat ____Republican
- 5) Using the scale below, please indicate how strongly you affiliate with the political party you chose above:
- | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Very | Strongly | Somewhat | Somewhat | Unaffiliated | Very |
| Strongly | Affiliated | Affiliated | Affiliated | | Unaffiliated |
| Affiliated | | | | | |
- 6) Are you registered to vote?
- ____yes ____no

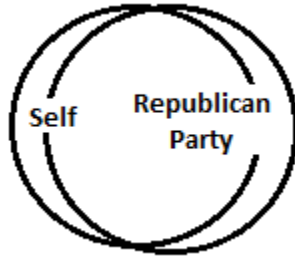
APPENDIX J

*REPUBLICAN AFFILIATION STRENGTH
VISUAL ANALOG*

Please choose the picture below that best describes how you currently view the relationship between you and your political party:

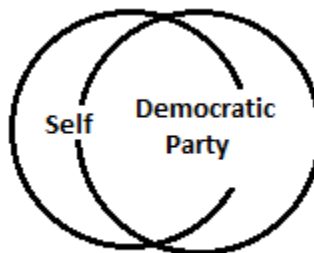
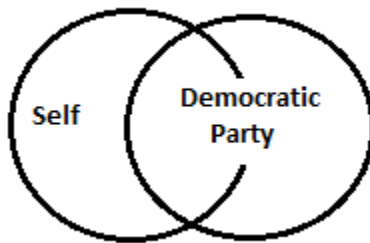
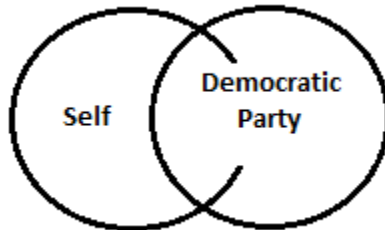
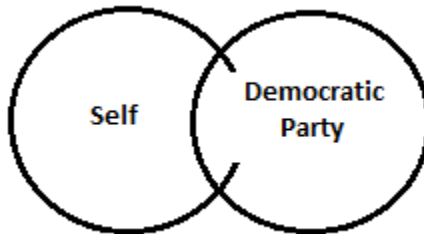
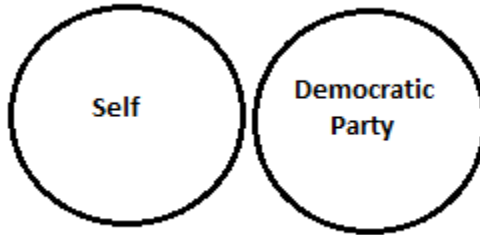


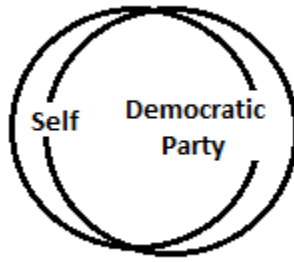




*DEMOCRATIC AFFILIATION STRENGTH
VISUAL ANALOG*

Please choose the picture below that best describes how you currently view the relationship between you and your political party:





APPENDIX K

MEDIATION PROCESS FOR RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

