

## The tie that divides: Cross-national evidence of the primacy of partyism

SEAN J. WESTWOOD,<sup>1</sup> SHANTO IYENGAR,<sup>2</sup> STEFAAN WALGRAVE,<sup>3</sup>  
RAFAEL LEONISIO,<sup>4</sup> LUIS MILLER<sup>5</sup> & OLIVER STRIJTBIS<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Government, Dartmouth College, USA; <sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, Stanford University, USA; <sup>3</sup>Department of Political Science, University of Antwerp, Belgium; <sup>4</sup>Department of Political Science, University of the Basque Country and University of Deusto, Spain; <sup>5</sup>School of Economics and Business, University of the Basque Country, Spain; <sup>6</sup>Berlin Social Science Center (WZB), Germany

**Abstract.** Using evidence from Great Britain, the United States, Belgium and Spain, it is demonstrated in this article that in integrated and divided nations alike, citizens are more strongly attached to political parties than to the social groups that the parties represent. In all four nations, partisans discriminate against their opponents to a degree that exceeds discrimination against members of religious, linguistic, ethnic or regional out-groups. This pattern holds even when social cleavages are intense and the basis for prolonged political conflict. Partisan animus is conditioned by ideological proximity; partisans are more distrusting of parties furthest from them in the ideological space. The effects of partisanship on trust are eroded when partisan and social ties collide. In closing, the article considers the reasons that give rise to the strength of ‘partyism’ in modern democracies.

**Keywords:** polarisation; affect; partisanship

### Introduction

In democratic societies, political parties represent group interests. The classic account of party system formation in Europe (Lipset & Rokkan 1967) posits that the salient socioeconomic cleavages at the outset of the twentieth century shaped the positions taken by parties and that the persistence of these cleavages led to the ‘freezing’ of European party alignments and patterns of party competition. A similar historical account applies to party system development in the United States, where ‘realigning’ events (e.g., the Civil War and Great Depression) led to fundamental changes in the composition of the party coalitions, followed by periods of long-term stability (Key 1959; Burnham et al. 1967; Chambers & Burnham 1975).

Because parties exist to promote the agendas of particular groups, the concept of ‘group identity’ plays a vital role in explaining individuals’ party choices (Greene 1999; Green et al. 2002; Huddy et al. 2015). Those who identify as working class are more likely to be socially liberal, while voters on the opposite side of the class divide align with parties on the ideological right. In countries with longstanding, deep cleavages, and where these cleavages are reinforcing (rather than cross-cutting), multiple and politically consistent affiliations create a sense of ‘us against them’ (see Verba 1965; Lijphart 1968; Dahl 1982). Individuals acquire a strong sense of solidarity with their own reference group and a corresponding social distance from out-groups (see, e.g., Dunning & Harrison 2010). Under these conditions, dissatisfaction with economic or political outcomes leads group

members to demand political redress and autonomy – in some cases using violent forms of protest (Selway 2011; Gubler & Selway 2012). Recent manifestations of this pattern include the unrest in the Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine, the sectarian political conflict in Northern Ireland, and independence movements in the Basque and Catalonian regions of Spain and the Flanders region of Belgium.

Because the competing group interests defined by social cleavages give rise to party politics, it can be expected that the sense of identity and polarisation based on these cleavages carries over to partisan identity and polarisation. In deeply divided societies, strong in-group and out-group sentiments should spill over to the parties representing the groups in question. For example, in the Basque Country in Spain, where supporters of the separatist movement frequently resorted to violence and terrorism, we might expect equally high levels of distrust across the regional cleavage and across parties that support or oppose Basque independence. In more homogeneous societies, on the other hand, where the overarching sense of national identity takes precedence over social group affinities, group polarisation is expected to be weaker and partisan affiliations may form the strongest basis for polarisation. In fact, in these less-divided societies, the most overt conflict occurs between parties. Partisans are hence likely to develop stronger affective ties to their party than to the social groups the parties represent. This pattern of strong partisan identity or ‘partyism’ (Sunstein 2014) fits the case of the United States, where recent evidence demonstrates that polarisation is stronger for partisan affiliations than for racial or social class affiliations (Iyengar & Westwood 2014). It is, however, unknown whether this is an idiosyncratic pattern attributable to distinctive American institutions and practices or a more general phenomenon that holds true across the spectrum of democratic societies.

In this article, we show that party identity has in many cases come to dominate social cleavages. With evidence from four cases representing different democratic systems, levels of social conflict and matches between party systems and tested cleavages, we show that parties themselves have become the primary cleavage. Social divides are instrumental in the formation of parties, but the intensely competitive nature of democratic representation encourages parties to demonstrate overt hostility toward their opponents – hostility that is un-tempered by the social norms of respect and tolerance that regulate competition between most social groups. Over time, partisan ties have absorbed social ties, with partisanship now consistently dividing citizens to an extent that *exceeds* other salient social divides. We document this remarkable pattern by comparing the strength of group identity and polarisation at the level of political parties with identity and polarisation at the level of the social and cultural groups represented by parties. We do so in four countries varying in the strength of their social divides. In each of the four countries examined, we implement an experimental design to compare affective polarisation based on party affiliation with polarisation based on a salient social cleavage.

Contrary to expectations, we find that in divided and integrated societies alike, distrust based on party affiliation easily exceeds distrust based on social group ties. Partisanship exerts a stronger psychological bond than affiliation with racial, religious, linguistic or ethnic groups – even when those cleavages are highly conflictual and are the principle basis for the parties’ ideological positions and electoral appeals in the first place. Representative democracy, it is widely argued, cannot exist without parties and party loyalties (Mainwaring & Shugart 1997; Przeworski et al. 1999). Our results show that the sense of partisan

identity – however necessary for democratic representation and governance – has developed to an extent where it now fosters or constitutes a strong form of out-group prejudice and discrimination.

We proceed as follows. First, we elaborate on the related concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘affect’ as markers of group polarisation. Next, we explain our criteria for selecting the four cases in question, our experimental design, and our behavioural measure of group polarisation. We then present our results, which indicate that partisan polarisation is considerable in all four cases, that ideological proximity and coalition politics weaken polarisation in multiparty states, and that citizens are consistently more polarised by party than their regional, linguistic, ethnic or religious affiliations. In closing, we address the political implications of our findings and discuss reasons for the primacy of partisan affect.

### **Identity and affect as markers of group polarisation**

‘Partisanship’ refers to the identification of citizens with parties. In all countries, some citizens identify with parties while others do not. But the intensity and extent to which partisanship is formalised differs across nations. Partisan allegiances are strong in countries such as the United States, where voting generally requires party registration resulting in a strong allegiance. In other nations, including Belgium and Spain, partisanship is less formalised. This does not mean that citizens do not identify with parties in these countries or that partisanship is not a durable trait of voters, but rather that the majority of voters are not formally affiliated. Despite the absence of a registration rule, many voters are party loyalists who vote for the same party over a prolonged period. These differences in definitions of partisan affiliation across countries make comparisons across systems challenging. Therefore, in this study we do not employ the classic party identification (PID) measure used in the United States, but simply use the individual’s last vote as a measure of his or her partisanship. We find partisan animus effects even with this ‘weak’ measure, suggesting that our results would have been even stronger if we had used a measure of psychological attachment, such as party identification.

While early studies treated partisanship as a manifestation of other group affiliations (Berelson et al. 1954; Campbell et al. 1960), more recent work argues that party is an important form of social identity in its own right (Green et al. 2002; Iyengar et al. 2012; Huddy et al. 2015). As anticipated by social identity theorists (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel & Turner 1979), under conditions of competition, group membership inculcates positive evaluations of the in-group and correspondingly hostile evaluations of out-groups. Psychological theories of group dynamics take as axiomatic that all forms of group affiliation – even those based on involuntary membership – result in positive affect for fellow group members and animus for members of opposing groups (Tajfel & Turner 1979). In the United States, attitudes towards in- and out- parties have further diverged over the course of the past three decades (Iyengar et al. 2012).

This increasing hostility across party lines is attributable to a variety of factors, including candidates’ reliance on negative media-based campaigns in which they routinely attack and denigrate their opponents and the prevalence of news sources with a clear partisan preference (Iyengar et al. 2012; Lelkes & Westwood 2017; Sunstein 2017). Alternative explanations for increased inter-party animus in America include ‘sorting’, or increased

congruence between voters' partisan and ideological identities (Levendusky 2010; Mason 2015), and overconfidence in beliefs (Stone 2017).

Interactions across race, religion, gender and other social divides are constrained by social norms (Maccoby & Maccoby 1954; Sigall & Page 1971), but there are no corresponding pressures or sanctions that mute disapproval of political opponents. Partisans therefore feel free to express animus and engage in discriminatory behaviour toward their opponents. In this article, we deploy an experimental design (economic games) that minimises possible social desirability effects (Iyengar & Westwood 2015). We see the absence of social norms that regulate partyism not as a problem of measurement, but as a major explanation for the development of partyism – the absence of social norms allows partyism to grow and flourish in the public consciousness.

While there is a growing body of scholarship on affective party polarisation in the United States, the comparative literature has largely sidestepped the question of affect, instead focusing almost exclusively on ideological polarisation and its consequences for voting behaviour. In fact, we know of only a handful of papers that address affective polarisation in a cross-national context. Early work on party system development acknowledged the importance of affect, noting that ideological disagreements could lead to 'deep personal antagonism' between party supporters (Stepan & Linz 1978: 44). The first study to provide evidence of partisan affect found that in the early 1980s, voters in two of three European democracies (Britain and the Netherlands) expressed greater hostility toward their partisan opponents than did Americans (Richardson 1991). The author concluded that because European party systems reflected longstanding social, cultural and religious cleavages, they generated more intense partisan conflict. More recent work, however, shows that this pattern has reversed; partisan divisions in the United States now exceed those in the United Kingdom (Iyengar et al. 2012).

The most recent work on partisan polarisation uses interpersonal trust as the relevant indicator of partisan bias. In a pair of studies conducted in the United States, Iyengar and Westwood (2014) found that distrust based on party affiliation exceeded distrust based on the deepest social divide: race. The extent of distrust based on party affiliation outside the United States has been examined by Carlin and Love (2013), who conducted trust games in an assortment of developing nations and the United States. They found significant levels of partisan mistrust, but idiosyncratic case selection and reliance on student samples limit the generalisability of this work. Finally, in an extension to a developing African society (Ghana), Michelitch (2015) shows that during periods of election campaigns, when voters' partisanship becomes especially salient, the effects of party support on interpersonal trust rival the effects of the principal social cleavage: tribal affiliation.

### **Case selection**

We focus on four cases that represent different levels and combinations of social and partisan polarisation. Our cases range from Great Britain (Britain, Scotland and Wales) – a weakly divided society and party system where there is meaningful cross-cutting between social and party cleavages – to Spain – a nation where partisan affiliation reinforces deep social (ethno-linguistic) divides. We also include two other intermediate cases. In the United States, party polarisation is strong and the party cleavage reinforces racial, religious and gender divides.

We also consider Belgium, which is divided into Francophone and Flemish regions, resulting in a strong linguistic cleavage that cannot contribute to partisan attachments because no parties compete in both regions. This set of cases allows us not only to document the magnitude of partisan polarisation in both divided and integrated societies, but also to benchmark the partisan divide against social cleavages of varying strength. Finally, unlike prior work, our evidence on partisan affect is based on national samples (regional, in the case of Spain).

We rely on vote choice as the measure of partisanship in our European cases. Because citizens are often not true party members, this creates a conservative test of the effects of partyism. Many Europeans have allegiances to multiple parties, but we mitigate this problem by only looking at major parties in our three European cases. Because voters who support multiple parties usually support either several smaller parties or one small party and the most ideologically similar major party, it is highly unlikely that voters would have allegiances to several major parties on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum.

We classified Belgium and Spain as socially divided societies and the United Kingdom and the United States as relatively integrated societies, consistent with standard measures of linguistic, religious and ethnic fractionalisation. Belgium and Spain have linguistic fractionalisation scores (Alesina et al. 2003) exceeding 0.5, while the United Kingdom and the United States rank near the bottom with scores of 0.05 and 0.25, respectively. Measures of ethno-geographic cross-cutting (i.e., confinement of ethnic groups to single regions or dispersion of ethnic groups across a nation) show similar results (Gubler & Selway 2012), with the United States (cross-cuttingness = 0.80) and the United Kingdom (cross-cuttingness = 0.86) classified as ethnically dispersed, while Belgium (cross-cuttingness = 0.56) and Spain (cross-cuttingness = 0.45) have ethnic groups concentrated in particular regions.

### *Great Britain*

Great Britain is a relatively homogeneous society. While social class was the principal cleavage during the era of pure two-party competition, class-based politics has all but disappeared (Franklin 1985; Evans & Tilley 2012). Explanations for this shift include increased affluence and economic mobility; the growing importance of crosscutting valence factors (e.g., candidate images) as voting cues (Sanders et al. 2011; Adams et al. 2012); and strategic movement toward the centre by both major parties, especially Labour under the leadership of Tony Blair in the 1990s.

Originally, the United Kingdom operated under a two-party system, with Labour and the Conservatives controlling nearly all the parliamentary seats. However, since the 1970s, it has devolved into a multiparty system, with the two major parties receiving only two-thirds of the popular vote in 2005. In the 2015 elections, the combined vote for the Liberal Democrats, Scottish Nationalist Party, the UK Independence Party and the Greens amounted to more than 31 per cent of the electorate.

The increased volatility of the British party system reflects shifting electoral fault lines (Evans et al. 1999; Dalton 2013). With the decline of class-based voting, the parties introduced new issues and divisions, including regional identities, the standing of Britain within the European Union, immigration and concerns over radical Islam.

### *United States*

The United States also represents a case of weaker social cleavages (Muste 2014) and party coalitions that cut across these cleavages (with the notable exception of race). However, unlike the United Kingdom, the weakness of strong social cleavages has not impeded party polarisation defined in either ideological or affective terms. Despite their ethnic heterogeneity, Americans – especially European Americans – are not strongly divided on ethnic cleavages. Post-1980, the elected representatives of the two parties have moved to the ideological extremes (McCarty et al. 2006), a process accelerated by the political transformation of the American South into a predominantly Republican region and by the adoption of primary elections – characterised by low turnout limited to the activist strata – as the method of nominating candidates. Unlike their elected representatives, partisan Americans have remained centrist in their policy preferences (Fiorina et al. 2005; for an opposing view, see Abramowitz & Saunders 2008). Nonetheless, they treat members of the opposite party as a disliked out-group (Iyengar et al. 2012; Iyengar & Westwood 2014). In fact, affective polarisation based on partisanship in the United States now exceeds polarisation based on race. Thus, the United States represents a relatively undivided, yet highly partisan, society.

### *Belgium*

Unlike the United Kingdom and the United States, Belgium is divided by a deep and highly conflictual social cleavage. Belgian politics revolves around the competing regional interests of Dutch-speaking Flanders and Francophone Wallonia. Until recently, this linguistic divide competed with the liberal-conservative economic cleavage and the Catholic versus free-thinker religious cleavage. Though the religious cleavage has withered since the 1990s, the left-right cleavage has remained salient and linguistic tensions have dominated the agenda since 2001 with the formation of the New Flemish Alliance (NV-A), a party advocating increased autonomy, even independence, for the Flanders region. In the 2014 national elections, the NV-A emerged as the largest Flemish party in terms of both votes and legislative seats. Whether the electoral success of the NV-A has deepened the language cleavage and increased Flemish support for separation of Belgium is unclear, but there is no doubt that the party has made the linguistic divide central to Belgian politics.

The multiparty system in Belgium reflects this divide. All parties exist only within each region, and party competition occurs along multiple points on the left-right continuum. However, because the NV-A's platform combines a conservative economic ideology with demands for an independent Flanders, it is possible to examine both ideological proximity and linguistic-regional affiliation as bases for affective partisan polarisation. The NV-A promotes both ideological and regional interests while all other major parties differ mostly on the former dimension; thus, relative to these parties, we should find greater animus between NV-A supporters and opponents.

### *Spain*

Spain is at the leading edge of our typology of nations. It is split by ethno-linguistic fault lines, so much so that there are full-fledged independence movements in Catalonia and the

Basque Country. The separatist cause has a more prolonged history in the Basque region, where violence and terrorism by pro-Basque activists resulted in more than 800 deaths prior to the 2011 cease fire.

We focus on the Basque Country for two reasons. First, unlike the Belgian case, the region is home to both Basque parties and national parties. Voters in the Basque Country can choose between national parties supporting a unified Spain and Basque parties supporting either maximal devolution or complete independence. The parties also diverge on the left-right continuum; however, the past 30 years of Basque politics have been dominated by the ethno-nationalist cleavage, with the left-right cleavage only playing a secondary role (Strijbis & Leonisio 2012). Second, the Basque region exemplifies a divided society. The intensity of the cleavage and the associated history of violence make this case an especially stringent test of partisan affect; if there is any region where social group affiliation should take precedence over party affiliation, it is the Basque Country.

Within the Basque Country, party politics not only divides Basques from non-Basques, but also splits these ethnic groups by left-right ideology. The four major parties in the Basque Country reflect the intersection of these cross-cutting cleavages; there is one major party in each of the possible cells derived from crossing the left-right cleavage with the Basque-Spanish cleavage. There are leftist and rightist parties supporting Basque independence and leftist and rightist national Spanish parties supporting the status quo (i.e., maintaining current levels of Basque autonomy within the framework of a unified Spanish state).

Because party politics in the Basque Country features both rightist and leftist Basque and Spanish parties appealing to Basque and non-Basque voters, we are able to compare the effects of ethnicity and party ideology on group polarisation. We can also examine their joint effects when the cleavages are reinforcing, via similarities in both ethnicity and ideology, or when they are cross-cutting, via similarity in one cleavage but dissimilarity in the other.

### **Theoretical expectations and formal hypotheses**

First, we expect partisans to exhibit the standard group polarisation syndrome. They will display trust in co-partisans and prejudice against opposing partisans. We further anticipate that the trust divide based on partisan affiliation will exceed the corresponding divide based on social group affiliation, especially in the relatively undivided societies of the United Kingdom and the United States. In Belgium and the Basque Country, where the relevant social cleavage runs deep and has provoked prolonged political conflict, we expect that polarisation based on regional and ethnic affiliation will rival polarisation based on partisanship. From this, we derive the following hypotheses: *xat*

*H1*: Partysm (as measured with trust games) exists across nations.

*H2*: Partisan bias is greater in magnitude than biases from social cleavages.

*H3*: Partisan bias will be larger where partisanship overlaps underlying social divides.

### **Method**

We deploy the classic trust game (Berg et al. 1995) to assess levels of partisan and social polarisation. Behavioural games are used extensively to assess group cooperation and

conflict, measured in terms of willingness to donate money to individuals with varied group affiliations (Berg et al. 1995; Fershtman & Gneezy 2001; Habyarimana et al. 2007). Typically, participants are given a cash allocation and are told that they can give ‘some, all or none’ of the money to a second player. They are also told that the researchers will *triple* any amount given by Player 1 to Player 2.<sup>1</sup> Player 2 could, at her discretion, return some, all, or none of the money back to Player 1. Thus, the more Player 1 trusts or expects reciprocity from Player 2, the more Player 1 should allocate to Player 2. The behavioural economics literature suggests that Player 1, contrary to the axioms of rationality, typically allocates non-trivial amounts (Johnson & Mislin 2011; Wilson & Eckel 2011) and that the allocation varies depending on attributes of Player 1 and the group affiliation of Player 2 (Fershtman & Gneezy 2001; Fong & Luttmer 2011).

Participants completed a simple set of demographic questions and read detailed instructions about the trust game. They were then given several scenarios and answered a series of comprehension questions. Each participant was told that they would play with several other people who happened to be completing the survey at the same time. Because demographic questions were asked at the start of the study, the information provided in each Player 2 profile could have ostensibly come from other individuals completing the study.<sup>2</sup> Each participant completed a randomly ordered set of trust game scenarios – a within-subjects design. To avoid order effects and feedback-based allocations, each participant only played as Player 1. They were told that they would learn of Player 2’s allocations at the end of the games and were fully debriefed at the end of the experiments. Participants were allocated \$10 in the United States, £10 in Great Britain and €10 in Belgium and Spain.<sup>3</sup> We estimated treatment effects on cash allocations with multilevel models that included a participant random intercept. It is important to note that our within-subjects design controls for individual-level variation in generosity, sense of egalitarianism and other relevant predispositions (Habyarimana et al. 2007).

The profiles shown to participants included information on political party support or a characteristic that cued a particular social divide (race in the United States, religion in the United Kingdom and ethnicity in both Belgium and Spain). To make our interventions less obvious and to increase the plausibility of the player descriptions, we also included gender, age and income in Player 2 profiles. We randomly assigned gender (except in the United States, where gender was fixed as male), randomly drew income within a narrow band around the median income in each nation, and randomly assigned ages ranging between 25 and 35. Participants were told that Player 2 and Player 1 would see the same set of information.<sup>4</sup>

## Samples

For the study in Great Britain, we drew a sample from the Survey Sampling International (SSI) online panel.<sup>5</sup> The sample (N = 923) was drawn to approximate national demographics and included participants from Great Britain. Participants completed the trust games in November 2013.

For the American study, we drew two samples from the SSI national online panel. In the first sample (N = 814), we oversampled Republicans so that there were an approximately equal number of Democrats and Republicans in the sample. This study compared allocations based on partisanship and race. We excluded Independents from the sample and grouped



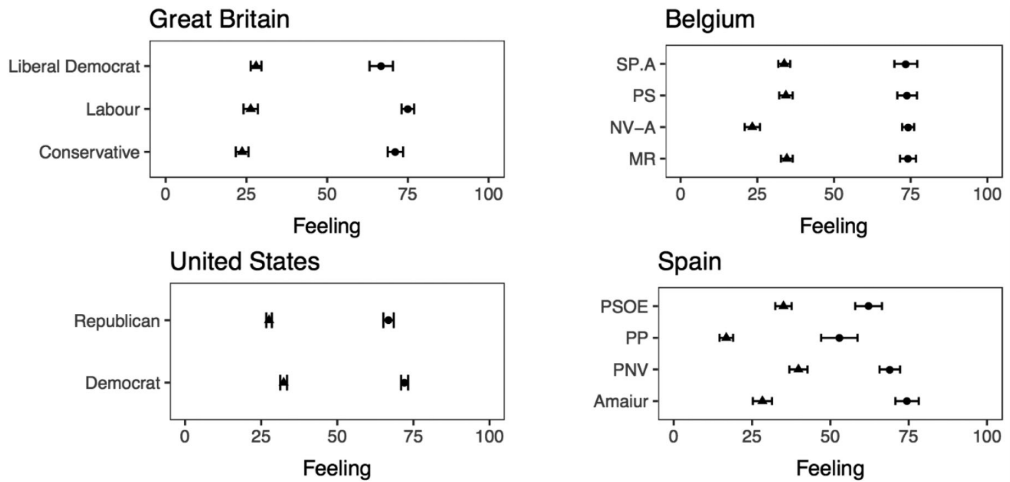


Figure 1. Partisan affect.

Note: In-groups are plotted as circles (always to the right) and out-groups are plotted as triangles (always to the left).

leaners with partisans, making our results more conservative. We also stratified the sample by race, age, region and income so that the distribution of these background variables approximated census data. The second sample ( $N = 1,252$ ) added a control condition, thus allowing comparisons between in-group and out-group allocations.

We drew the sample of participants for the Belgian study from the SSI online panel to approximate national demographics. A total of 763 partisan participants, drawn evenly from the two major regions, completed the study. Respondents from Flanders completed the study in Dutch; those from Wallonia did so in French. The study was fielded in late June and early July of 2014.

The Spanish study – conducted exclusively in the Basque Country – was administered by the market research firm Nice Quest. They drew a representative sample of adult residents of the Basque Country between January and February 2015. A total of 412 partisans (including leaners) completed the survey. Unaffiliated partisans were excluded from the sample.

### Partisan affect in our cases

We begin by documenting the level of partisan polarisation in the four countries under investigation using a standard survey indicator of partisan affect: a 101-point feeling thermometer rating of partisans. We use data collected within each of our survey experiments. As shown in Figure 1, partisans in each country register a strong affective bond with co-partisans and express significant dislike for members of the political opposition. Clearly, party affiliation is an important basis for group identity. The average level of party polarisation is greatest in the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, Belgium and Spain. None of the between-nation differences are significant. The thermometer data thus do not suggest that party polarisation is dependent upon the strength of social cleavages.

## Results: The primacy of partyism

Parties serve as principal agents in social groups' ongoing contest for policy benefits, which, we show, manifests in partyism (confirming *H1*). Consistent with our expectations, we find that the impact of the partisan divide on trust exceeds that of the social divide.<sup>6</sup> Despite the vast differences in political and electoral institutions and levels of social discord, party affiliation consistently polarises individuals to a greater extent than prominent social cleavages, thus corroborating *H2*. Contrary to our expectations, partisan polarisation dominates social polarisation in the deeply divided societies of Belgium and the Basque Country and in the integrated societies of the United States and the United Kingdom. Although in Belgium and Spain measures of divisions due to partisanship overlap those due to social divides, we do not find that partisan animosity is larger in these cases; therefore, we do not find evidence supporting *H3*. Also, contrary to expectations, the scope of the partisan divide is similar across the four nations, with all at nearly one unit of currency. While the social divide in three of the four cases (United States, Belgium and Spain) is indistinguishable from zero, the religious social divide in Great Britain is considerable, amounting to 57 per cent of the partisan divide. Contrary to assumptions that Britain is a homogeneous society, the Christian-Muslim divide there is stronger than the white-black (United States), Flemish-Walloon (Belgium) and Basque-Spanish (Basque region) divides.<sup>7</sup> We now explain our results in more detail by first dealing with the four countries separately, and then showing how the partisan divide trumps a prominent social divide in each country.

### The divisiveness of party affiliation in each country

#### *Great Britain*

Britons demonstrated a significant degree of discrimination against opposing partisans in the trust game (see Figure 2A). The pattern of discrimination is not symmetric; prejudice against partisan opponents far exceeds in-group favouritism. When compared with the control (non-partisan) condition, the co-partisan bonus for Labour supporters amounted to 8 per cent, while the out-party penalty imposed on Conservative supporters was four times larger (approximately 34 per cent). Thus, for both major parties, the out-group penalty proved dramatically larger than the in-group bonus.

Parties' positions on the ideological spectrum significantly influenced the pattern of allocations. In multiparty systems, in which parties position themselves across a wide ideological space, ideological proximity is likely to weaken out-party animus; supporters of parties with similar ideologies will express greater trust in each other. At the time of our study, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives were aligned in a governing coalition even though Liberal Democrats are generally recognised as closer in ideology to Labour (Sanders et al. 2011). This relative proximity appears to moderate the behaviour of Labour supporters; they are less prone to discriminate against a Liberal Democrat than a Conservative supporter. Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, appear torn between ideological proximity and the logic of *realpolitik*; they penalise both Conservative and Labour supporters. Compared to their allocations in the control condition, Liberal Democrats penalised Conservative supporters by 19 per cent and Labour supporters by

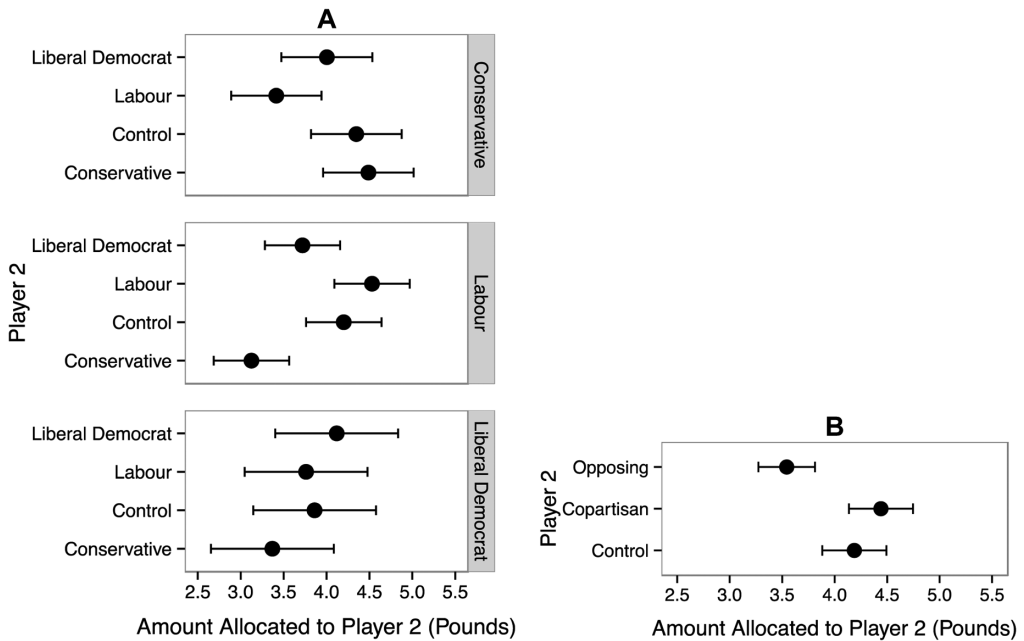


Figure 2. Great Britain: Trust allocations.  
 Note: Means and 95 per cent confidence intervals. Values in pounds sterling.

9 per cent. For their part, Conservatives were significantly more trusting of Liberal Democrats than Labour supporters.

The general pattern in Great Britain is clear: partisanship represents a strong basis for distrust. Partisans discriminate against their political opponents to a significant degree but are disinclined to act in a manner that favors their co-partisans. Figure 2B shows the relevant aggregate allocation of bonuses and penalties observed in Great Britain. In comparison to a non-partisan Player 2, the average co-partisan bonus amounted to £0.25, while the average opposition penalty was £0.65.

*United States*

The United States also represents a case of relatively weak social divides, with the exception of race; however, unlike the United Kingdom, there is strong political polarisation. In contrast to the ideological heterogeneity that characterised the parties in the 1950s and 1960s, which led scholars to characterise their behaviour as ‘irresponsible’, Democrats and Republicans have now developed distinct and opposing policy platforms. While there is ongoing debate over the extent to which ideological polarisation at the elite level has trickled down to the electorate, recent work (Huddy et al. 2015; Iyengar & Westwood 2015) documents that partisans treat their opponents as a disliked out-group and that party-based sentiments are stronger than those associated with other group memberships.

We find that American partisans, like their counterparts in Britain, demonstrate animosity toward their opponents; however, they are more generous with co-partisans (see

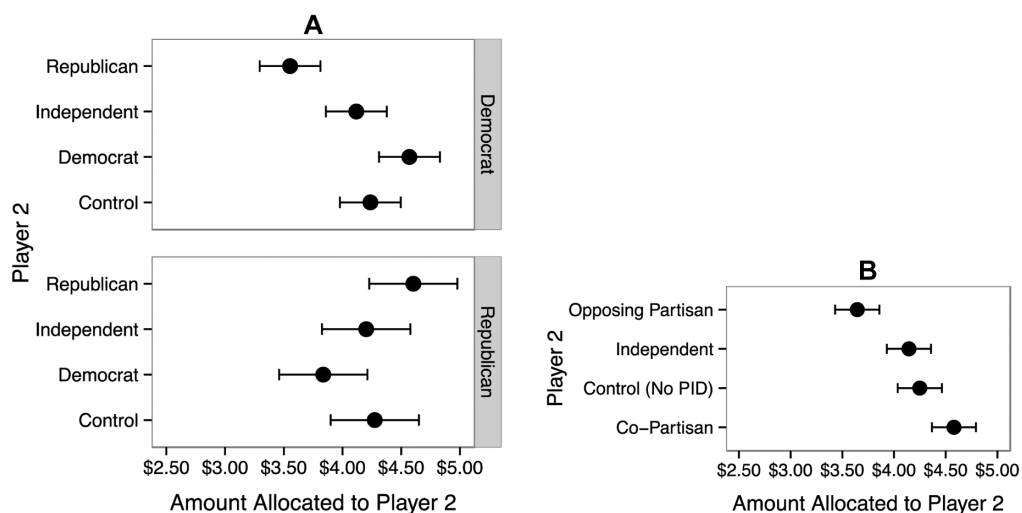


Figure 3. United States: Trust allocations.

Note: Mean allocations and 95 per cent confidence intervals. Values are US dollars.

Figure 3A). Compared to the control condition, in which no partisan information was offered for Player 2, the co-partisan bonus was approximately 8 per cent for Democratic and Republican participants, and the penalty imposed on opposing partisans was nearly 16 per cent for Democratic participants and nearly 10 per cent for Republican participants. Allocations to Independents were closest to the allocations made to control Player 2s.

Overall, out-group animosity exceeds in-group favouritism for American partisans (see Figure 3B). The difference in allocations for co-partisans and opposing partisans is nearly \$1, with opposing partisans receiving only 79 per cent of allocations made to co-partisans. Unlike Great Britain, where only the out-partisan penalty differed significantly from the allocation to non-partisans, both the co-partisan bonus and out-party penalty in the United States differed significantly from the allocation in the control (non-partisan) condition.

### Belgium

Belgium is a divided society in which linguistic, geographic and cultural cleavages collectively define the three distinct regions of Flanders, Wallonia and bilingual Brussels. Partisan divides are confined to each of the regions, as there are no national political parties. There are parallel left-right political divides within each region, but these region-specific parties have different platforms and positions. Dutch-speaking citizens can only vote for Flemish parties and Francophones must choose between Walloon and Brussels parties. Our design consists of intraregional comparisons of political parties of differing ideologies and interregional comparisons of political parties of both similar and dissimilar ideologies, allowing us to demonstrate that the party divide is more powerful than the regional divide. This design also allows us to test for the reinforcing effects of regional and political affiliation.

Belgians consistently behaved generously toward co-partisans and discriminated against members of other parties (see Figure 4A). The total allocation to co-partisans proved

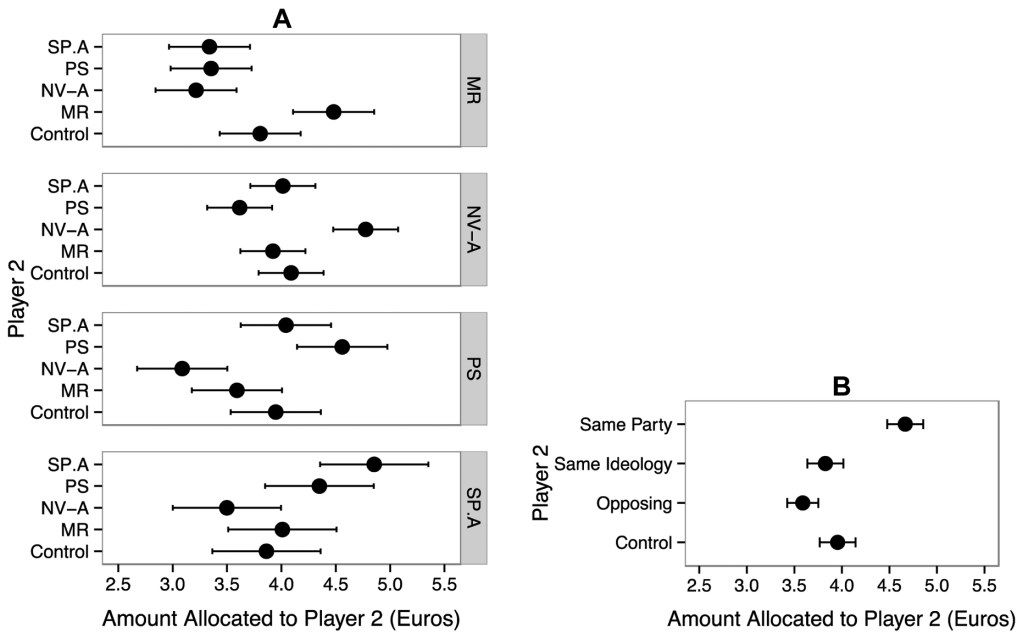


Figure 4. Belgium: Trust allocations.  
 Note: Mean allocations and 95 per cent confidence intervals. Values are euros.

remarkably similar across parties. Unlike Britain, where co-partisan bonuses were small and insignificant, Belgian participants treated co-partisans preferentially, to a degree greater than that observed in the United States. The co-partisan bonus amounted to nearly 18 per cent for Reformist Movement (MR), 17 per cent for NV-A, 15 per cent for Socialist Party (PS) and 26 per cent for Socialist Party Anders (SP.A). However, consistent with the British and American cases, out-party penalties were consistently large.

Because there are parties at similar points on the left-right divide in both regions, we can compare the partisan and ideological affinities of the participants and Player 2s, separating the effects of ideology and region on allocations by pairing participants with a second player representing either of the two regions. In general, Belgians allocated smaller amounts to players who supported a different party. In two of four cases, participants allocated the smallest amount of money to the Player 2 of the opposite region *and* ideology. NV-A (right-wing, Flemish) supporters were the least generous to PS (left-wing, Francophone) supporters, and PS supporters reciprocated by making their smallest allocation toward NV-A supporters. This suggests that polarisation increases when both regional and party identities differ. Alternatively, higher levels of distrust between PS and NV-A supporters may reflect the fact that, compared to all other possible party dyads in Belgium, their interactions in the media and in the Belgian parliament were particularly hostile.

NV-A voters also treated MR partisans more harshly, despite the two groups' ideological similarity; thus, region trumped ideology as a basis for identity. SP.A (left-wing, Flemish) supporters also singled out supporters of NV-A (right-wing, Flemish); in this case, the distrust is based on ideology alone. During the 2014 electoral campaign preceding our survey, the N-VA pledged to avoid forming a coalition with socialists and to work to keep them

from gaining power. Thus, in Belgium, the confluence of ideological and regional cleavages, as well as short-term factors related to the election campaign, amplified distrust across the party divide. The differences in allocations to supporters of non-preferred and preferred parties proved significant. However, differences in allocations between each of the three non-preferred parties are not significantly different.

When we group parties based on their ideology, we find that participants are consistently more trusting of individuals who support more proximate parties (see Figure 4B). Leftists give more to fellow leftists, and rightists give more to fellow rightists, regardless of Player 2's regional/ethnic identity. For example, PS and SPA supporters, which are both left-wing but are on opposing sides of the regional border, donated more to each other than to supporters of opposing ideologies. The penalty for players from ideologically proximate out-parties is smaller than the penalty for supporters of ideologically distant out-parties; however, this difference is not significant.

### *Spain*

In the Basque Country, parties affiliated with the national Spanish parties compete with exclusively regional Basque parties. The most important dimension of electoral competition is the divide between those in favour of a unified Spanish state and those in favour of full Basque independence – a position which divides the regional wings of the Spanish national parties from the purely Basque parties. A second divide exists between leftist and rightist parties. Our design compares partisan divisions (operationalised as the party supported in the last election) with ethnicity (operationalised in terms of Basque or Spanish surnames).<sup>8</sup> We used surnames in our Spanish Player 2 profiles to make our ethnic treatment less obvious and because explicitly noting that Player 2 is Basque or Spanish would raise questions as to how we defined Basque or Spanish identity. Participants were paired with a Player 2 who was similar on either ethnicity or partisanship (cross-cutting condition), or similar on both attributes (reinforcing condition).

Our results reveal strong partisan biases in cash allocations. Despite the history of conflict between ethnic Basques and ethnic Spaniards, it is partisanship rather than ethnicity that exerts the largest effect on trust. For all four parties represented in the study, respondents treated a Basque co-partisan no differently than a Spanish co-partisan (Figure 5A). Participants did, however, allocate significantly more to co-partisans and less to opposing partisans in three of the four cases (the exception was People's Party (PP) supporters).<sup>9</sup>

Basque party supporters consistently gave the most to fellow Basque party supporters, with a smaller amount given when the party was located on the opposing side of the left-right divide. Similarly, Spanish party supporters in the Basque region offered smaller rewards to co-partisans and smaller penalties to opposing partisans.

Unlike supporters of the national parties, supporters of Basque political parties allocated a co-partisan bonus significantly above the allocation to players lacking a partisan affiliation. The bonus amounted to 32 per cent for Amaiur supporters and 17 per cent for Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) supporters. Out-party penalties, however, proved consistent across the regional and national parties, ranging between 12 per cent for PNV supporters playing with PP supporters, and 29 per cent for Amaiur supporters playing with PP supporters. These results indicate a stronger effect of ethnicity among Basques than Spaniards; although

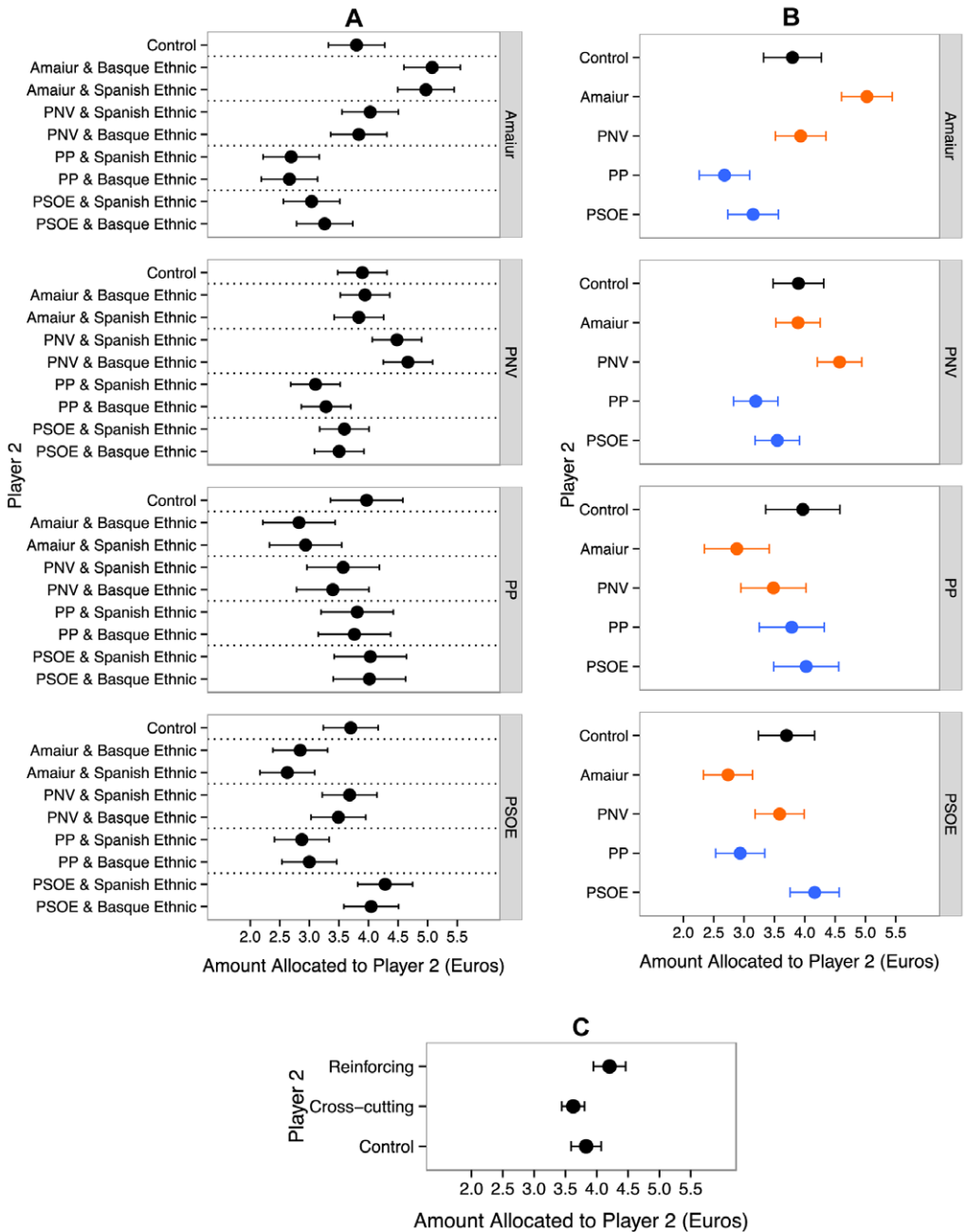


Figure 5. Spain: Trust allocations.

Notes: Mean allocations and 95 per cent confidence intervals. Values are euros. The left column (A) shows how participants allocate resources to Player 2s of specific ethnicities and parties. The right column (B) pools over ethnicity. The panels (rows) show the party supported by the participant. Spanish national parties are coloured blue, and Basque parties are coloured orange. [Colour figure can be viewed at [wileyonlinelibrary.com](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com)]

ideology matters to Basque ethnics, Basque partisanship matters more than left-right placement. In general, Spain represents a case where co-partisan bonuses and out-partisan penalties are both substantial.

Figure 5C shows how the effects of cross-cutting cleavages (playing with a player who is similar on either ethnicity or ideology but differs on the other measure) compare with the effects of reinforcing cleavages (playing with a player from the same ethnicity and ideology). We find that reinforcing identities exacerbate distrust. When Player 2 resembled the participant on both ethnicity and ideology, he or she received a significant bonus. In the cross-cutting condition, where similarity between players occurred on only one attribute, Player 2 was penalised. Thus, polarisation is strengthened when multiple identities converge and vice versa.

Overall, we find that Spanish and Basque partisans are more trusting of co-partisans than opposing partisans – a pattern that is stronger for Basques. When partisan and ethnic identities conflict, partisanship proves more influential as a basis for trust. Participants give more to co-partisans regardless of co-partisans' ethnic identity (i.e., a Spanish and Basque co-partisan are treated no differently). Partisans are similarly indifferent to the ethnicity of opposing partisans. For all but Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) supporters, opposing partisans from the same side of the devolution debate are evaluated less harshly than partisans on the opposite side of the devolution debate. In sum, partisanship and agreement on devolution contribute to interpersonal trust in the Basque Country far more than does ethnicity.

### **Comparing the strength of partisan and social divides**

To this point we have shown that partisanship significantly affects interpersonal trust in all four nations under investigation, but just how large is the party divide compared to other social divides? To answer this question, we compare the partisan divide with an important alternative social divide in each country. In the United Kingdom, we compare partyism with trust differences towards Christians and Muslims. This divide is not the foundation of the British party system (the socioeconomic divide is), but it is a relevant conflict in British politics, as indicated by the anti-immigrant-sentiment-driven Brexit vote. In the United States, we compare partyism with trust towards European-Americans and African Americans. Again, race may not be the basis of the American party system, but it is a relevant and lively cleavage in American politics and society – consider, for example the recent Black Lives Matter controversy. In Belgium, we compare partyism with the linguistic divide. Arguably, the linguistic and regional tensions between Flemings and Francophones are the most important driving force of Belgian politics; they form the basis of the Belgian party system in the sense that all parties only compete on 'their' side of the language border. Additionally, the identities of some parties on both sides are based on linguistic conflict. NV-A is a radical Flemish nationalist party pleading for Flemish independence. On the other side of the language border, the MR is the staunchest defender of Belgian unity and strongly opposes further devolution. In the Basque region, the ethnic divide is both the primary cleavage and the basis of the party system. We include two Basque parties (Amaiur and PNV) that aim for Basque independence and two Spanish parties (PP and PSOE) that wish to keep Spain together.



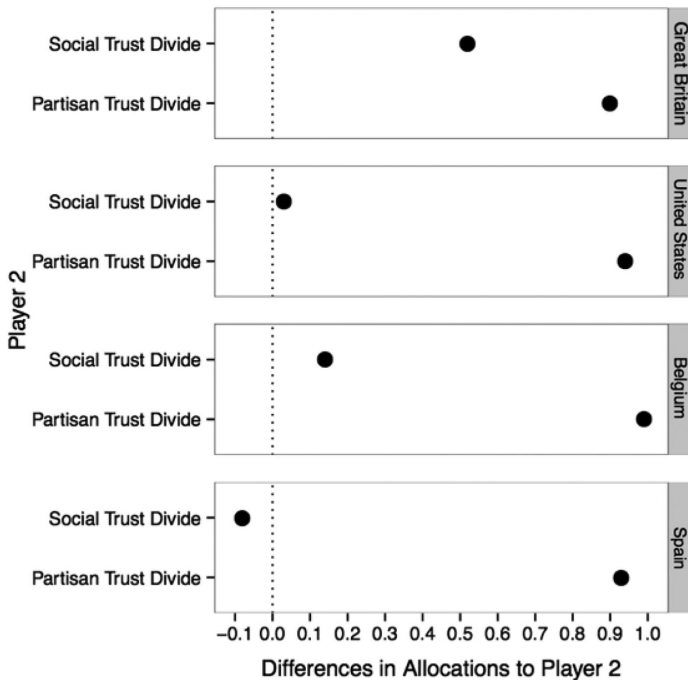


Figure 6. Partisan and social trust divides.

We compare partyism with a single social cleavage in each country to keep the comparison as clean as possible. Because this alternative cleavage is deeper in some countries than it is in others and because it forms the basis of the party system in some countries but not in others, it rivals partyism in some countries more than it does in others. In Belgium and the Basque Country, we can test whether partyism has come to dominate the original underlying cleavages, and in the United States and the United Kingdom, we can compare partyism to a non-foundational divide. Finding that partyism trumps the alternative cleavage both in countries in which the alternative social divide is very salient and in countries where it is less salient would strongly reinforce our point that partyism is an important source of polarisation, regardless of country or party system differences.

This is in fact what we found. In each case, partisan mistrust consistently exceeded mistrust based on the alternative social divide. Thus, the British discriminate more against opposing partisans than Muslims, white Americans are more mistrusting of out-party supporters than African-Americans, Belgians show greater partisan polarisation than linguistic polarisation, and Basques and Spaniards alike display greater animus toward party opponents than toward each other. There are no notable differences in results between countries in which the ethnic/religious/linguistic cleavage is the basis of the party system (Belgium, the Basque Country) and countries in which it is not (United Kingdom, United States).

Figure 6 graphs the difference in trust game allocations between in-group and out-group members for the partisan and social divides in each country.<sup>10</sup> We compute the differences in mean allocations for in-groups and out-groups on the social and partisan divides from our

*Table 1.* Comparison of partisan and social divide coefficients

Case	$\chi^2$	P
Great Britain	6.6	<0.01
United States	23.3	<0.001
Belgium	24.7	<0.001
Spain	15.4	<0.001

games. In all cases, the substantive difference between in-group and out-group allocations for partisans were large (nearly a single unit of currency) while substantive differences between in-group and out-group allocations on the social divides were small, with Britain being the exception. Full model results comparing partisanship and social divides are included in the Online Appendix and are not presented here for space concerns

Although these results show clear substantive dominance of partisanship as a source of mistrust, we proceed to formally test for the primacy of partyism with likelihood ratio tests. These tests show that coefficients for partisan divides are significantly different from coefficients for social divides (Table 1).

## Discussion

In divided and unified societies alike, citizens are more trusting of co-partisans and less trusting of opposing partisans; furthermore, partisanship influences trust far more than ethnic, linguistic and religious attributes do. Partyism thus dominates other forms of out-group prejudice even when using a measure (last vote) that only captures a relatively weak form of party identification.

The nature of the underlying social cleavages can either exacerbate or weaken partisan animosity. When social and partisan cleavages are reinforcing, partisans are especially distrusting of their opponents. Conversely, under cross-cutting cleavages, partisan hostility diminishes, as in the case of the Basque Country. However, the nature of the underlying cleavages appears to alter only the intensity and not the existence of partisan hostility. It is important to note that, on average, we find higher levels of partyism; in absolute terms, the number of people willing to discriminate on party lines is larger than those willing to discriminate on religious/ethnic/racial lines. This does not mean that party extremists are more violent or dangerous than religious/ethnic/racial extremists. Nevertheless, partisanship is a source of measurable bias in the behaviour of citizens.

Despite their general tendency to act harshly toward out-partisans, partisans moderate their behaviour when political opponents signal ideological similarity. Supporters of parties that are positioned closer to the partisan's favoured party receive more equitable treatment, relative to co-partisans, than supporters of more ideologically distant parties. Thus, in multiparty states, the spectrum of mistrust depends on ideological distance.

Just what is it about the bond between voters and their preferred party that intensifies group polarisation to a degree unmatched by other prominent cleavages? As we have already noted, unlike race, gender and other social divides where group-related attitudes

and behaviours are constrained by social norms, there are no corresponding pressures to moderate disapproval of political opponents. In fact, the rhetoric and behaviour of party leaders suggests to voters that it is perfectly acceptable to treat opponents with disdain. In this sense, individuals have greater freedom to discriminate against out-party supporters. Second, unlike social group affiliations related to religion, ethnicity and language, which are ascriptive or inherited at birth, partisanship is acquired by choice. People are therefore more likely to be held responsible for their party affiliation than group affiliations based on immutable characteristics. A person's partisan preference is also a good indicator of who that person is, their values and what they think. Because partisan affiliation is voluntary, it is a much more informative measure of attitudes and belief structures than, for example, knowing what skin colour someone has. It makes sense that people express more animus against others whose world view they know.

Other potential contributing factors include the frequency of election campaigns and the steady encroachment of American-style campaign tactics on democracies everywhere. Personalisation of the party appeal and the increasing use of communications that attack opponents may induce a similar negativity among party supporters. Exposure to campaign communication strengthens both in-party favouritism and out-party animus (Iyengar & Westwood 2014; Lelkes & Westwood 2017; Lelkes et al. 2017). Hostile elite rhetoric and hostile attitudes among voters are reinforcing. Elections and party competition are inherently conflictual. For example, the 2015 elections in the United Kingdom and Israel were both characterised by periods of inflammatory rhetoric typical of American campaigns. We suspect that as negative campaigning increases, partisan affective polarisation will continue to rise.

This article largely focuses on detecting the existence of partyism and the situations that exacerbate or attenuate the effects of partyism, but the normative implications of our results are clear. Party conflict divides citizens more than the social divides parties were formed to represent. Parties exist both to act as agents for like-minded citizens and to elicit hostility between partisans and their opponents. Our results suggest that party affiliation represents a consequential source of bias and mistrust among citizens in representative democracies. Although we cannot say that representative democracy and partyism are inseparable, the range of societies spanned by the cases investigated here and by other scholars suggests that partyism is a common outcome in democracies (Carlin & Love 2013).

Note that most of the potentially negative consequences of partyism depend on the visibility of party affiliation. Language and surname are observable signals of region and ethnicity in Belgium and Spain, but party affiliation is not as transparent and requires interpersonal interaction to be recognised. Of the four societies examined here, it is only in the United States that voters frequently display their political affinity through bumper stickers, yard signs and other campaign paraphernalia. In other societies, citizens' limited awareness of their fellow citizens' political affiliations is a factor that weakens the divisive impact of partyism.

In closing, we acknowledge that our findings are subject to several limitations. Lacking longitudinal data, we are not able to examine the persistence of partisan mistrust or compare election periods, when partisanship is most salient, with non-election periods, when partisanship might wane (Michelitch 2015). Our results are further limited to the

major parties in each nation. In Belgium, there are 11 parties, but we focused on only four. Similarly, in Spain we included only four of 13 parties.<sup>11</sup> One possible reason we find stronger partisan affect in Belgium and Spain is that we compare ideologically distinct parties on opposing sides of the left-right divide. Had we chosen centrist parties in Belgium or Spain, the results might have been less stark. Additionally, we opted to compare the partisan divide with the ethnic/religious/linguistic cleavage in each country. We are not sure if the finding that partyism is a stronger driver of distrust than this alternative cleavage would hold if we compared it with another cleavage, such as the socioeconomic divide.

Subject to the limitations noted above, our findings indicate that despite the longstanding importance of ethnic, linguistic, racial and class-based divisions to electoral politics, these cleavages have been overshadowed by party affiliation as a form of group identity in its own right. Defined in terms of affect, voters' sense of partisanship seems to represent a dominant divide in modern democracies and the strongest basis for group polarisation.

## Supporting Information

Additional Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's web-site.

## Notes

1. We use the labels 'Player 1'/'Player 2' and not 'sender'/'receiver' (Johnson & Mislin 2011) only because the former are more common in political science journals.
2. We use identical instructions to familiarise participants with the game, and measures of trust (see Online Appendix for English instructions).
3. These amounts represent different levels of purchasing power; however, the proportion of the money allocated by Player 1 to Player 2 is remarkably similar across cases. We therefore do not rescale to a common level of purchasing power. This makes our estimates easier to interpret.
4. Participants were told 'the more money you obtain, the more successful you will bet, but were never promised an actual return. We utilised deception because of budgetary concerns.
5. Full sample descriptives are included in the Online Appendix.
6. The results from Spain are marginal fitted means from experiments that crossed the social and political identities of Player 2. The American social divide results are from an experiment in which race was crossed with party. The American partisan divide data are from a second experiment in which race was not manipulated.
7. We present figures for all results and discuss the key findings. Full models and tables corresponding to each figure are included in the Online Appendix.
8. For example, Spanish ethnicity was cued with names like 'González' and 'Rodríguez', while Basque ethnicity was cued with names like 'Urrutia' and 'Etxebarria'.
9. We pooled the two observations for each party corresponding to Spanish surname and Basque surname as these conditions yielded equivalent results.
10. The results from Spain are marginal fitted means from experiments that crossed the social and political identities of Player 2. The American social divide results are from an experiment in which race was crossed with party. The American partisan divide data are from a second experiment in which race was not manipulated.
11. Though it is the case we always selected the largest parties in each of the nations.

## References

- Abramowitz, A.I. & Saunders, K.L. (2008). Is polarization a myth? *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 542–555.
- Adams, J., Green, J. & Milazzo, C. (2012). Has the British public depolarized along with political elites? An American perspective on British public opinion. *Comparative Political Studies* 45(4): 507–530.
- Alesina, A. et al. (2003). Fractionalization. *Journal of Economic Growth* 8(2): 155–194.
- Berelson, B.R., Lazarsfeld, P.F. & McPhee, W.N. (1954). *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential election*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Berg, J., Dickhaut, J. & McCabe, K. (1995). Trust, reciprocity and social history. *Games and Economic Behavior* 10(1): 122–142.
- Burnham, W.D., Chambers, W.N. & Sorauf, F.J. (1967). *The American party systems: Stages of political development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, A. et al. (1960). *The American voter*. New York: John Wiley.
- Carlin, R.E. & Love, G.J. (2013). The politics of interpersonal trust and reciprocity: An experimental approach. *Political Behavior* 35(1): 43–63.
- Chambers, W.N. & Burnham, W.D. (1975). *The American party system: Stages of political development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dahl, R.A. (1982). *Dilemmas of pluralist democracy: Autonomy vs control*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Dalton, R.J. (2013). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- Dunning, T. & Harrison, L. (2010). Cross-cutting cleavages and ethnic voting: An experimental study of cousinage in Mali. *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 21–39.
- Evans, G. & Tilley, J. (2012). How parties shape class politics: Explaining the decline of the class basis of party support. *British Journal of Political Science* 42(1): 137–161.
- Evans, G., Heath, A. & Payne, C. (1999). Class: Labor as a catch all party? In G. Evans & P. Norris (eds), *Critical elections: British parties and voters in long-term perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fershtman, C. & Gneezy, U. (2001). Discrimination in a segmented society: An experimental approach. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 116(1): 351–377.
- Fiorina, M.P., Abrams, S.J. & Pope, J.C. (2005). *Culture war?* New York: Pearson Longman.
- Fong, C.M. & Luttmer, E.F. (2011). Do fairness and race matter in generosity? Evidence from a nationally representative charity experiment. *Journal of Public Economics* 95(5): 372–394.
- Franklin, M.N. (1985). *The decline of class voting in Britain: Changes in the basis of electoral choice, 1964–1983*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Green, D., Palmquist, B. & Eric, S. (2002). *Partisan hearts and minds: Political parties and the social identities of voters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Greene, S. (1999). Understanding party identification: A social identity approach. *Political Psychology* 20(2): 393–403.
- Gubler, J.R. & Selway, J.S. (2012). Horizontal inequality, crosscutting cleavages and civil war. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(2): 206–232.
- Habyarimana, J. et al. (2007). Why does ethnic diversity undermine public goods provision? *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 709–725.
- Huddy, L., Mason, L. & Aarøe, L. (2015). Expressive partisanship: Campaign involvement, political emotion and partisan identity. *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 1–17.
- Iyengar, S. & Westwood, S.J. (2014). Fear and loathing across party lines: New evidence on group polarization. *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 690–707.
- Iyengar, S., Sood, G. & Lelkes, Y. (2012). Affect, not ideology: A social identity perspective on polarization. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3): 405–431.
- Johnson, N.D. & Mislin, A.A. (2011). Trust games: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Economic Psychology* 32(5): 865–889.
- Key, V.O. (1959). Secular realignment and the party system. *Journal of Politics* 21(2): 198–210.
- Lelkes, Y. & Westwood, S.J. (2017). The limits of partisan prejudice. *Journal of Politics* 79(2): 485–501.

- Lelkes, Y., Sood, G. & Iyengar, S. (2017). The hostile audience: The effect of access to broad-band internet on partisan affect. *American Journal of Political Science* 61(1): 5–20.
- Levendusky, M.S. (2010). Clearer cues, more consistent voters: A benefit of elite polarization. *Political Behavior* 32(1): 111–131.
- Lijphart, A. (1968). Typologies of democratic systems. *Comparative Political Studies* 1(1): 3–44.
- Lipset, S.M. & Rokkan, S. (1967). Cleavage structures, party systems and voter alignments: An introduction. In *Party systems and voter alignments: Cross-national perspectives*. New York: Free Press.
- Maccoby, E.E. & Maccoby, N. (1954). The interview: A tool of social science. In G. Lindzey (ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology, Volume 1: Theory and method*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Mainwaring, S. & Shugart, M.S. (1997). *Presidentialism and democracy in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mason, L. (2015). ‘I disrespectfully agree’: The differential effects of partisan sorting on social and issue polarization. *American Journal of Political Science* 59(1): 128–145.
- McCarty, N., Poole, K.T. & Rosenthal, H. (2006). *Polarized America: The dance of ideology and unequal riches*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Michelitch, K. (2015). Does electoral competition exacerbate interethnic or interpartisan economic discrimination? Evidence from a market price bargaining experiment in Ghana. *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 43–61.
- Muste, C.P. (2014). Reframing polarization: Social groups and ‘culture wars’. *Political Science and Politics* 47(2): 432–442.
- Przeworski, A., Stokes, S.C. & Manin, B. (1999). *Democracy, accountability and representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richardson, B.M. (1991). European party loyalties revisited. *American Political Science Review* 85(3): 751–775.
- Sanders, D. et al. (2011). Downs, stokes and the dynamics of electoral choice. *British Journal of Political Science* 41(2): 287–314.
- Selway, J.S. (2011). The measurement of cross-cutting cleavages and other multidimensional cleavage structures. *Political Analysis* 19(1): 48–65.
- Sigall, H. & Page, R. (1971). Current stereotypes: A little fading, a little faking. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 18(2): 247–255.
- Stepan, A. & Linz, J. (1978). *The breakdown of democratic regimes*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Stone, D.F. (2017). Just a big misunderstanding? Bias and affective polarization. *Social Science Research Network*. Available online at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2760069>
- Strijbis, O. & Leonisio, R. (2012). Political cleavages in the Basque country: Meaning and salience. *Regiona* 22(5): 595–611.
- Sunstein, C.R. (2014). Partyism. *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 2015(2): 1–26.
- Sunstein, C.R. (2017). *#Republic: Divided democracy in the age of social media*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tajfel, H. (1970). Aspects of national and ethnic loyalty. *Social Science Information* 9(3): 119–144.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner, J.C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W.G. Austin & S. Worchel (eds), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Verba, S. (1965). Organizational membership and democratic consensus. *Journal of Politics* 27(3): 467–497.
- Wilson, R.K. & Eckel, C.C. (2011). Trust and social exchange. In J.N. Druckman et al. (eds), *Cambridge handbook of experimental political science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Address for correspondence:* Sean J. Westwood, Department of Government, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03855, USA. E-mail: sean.j.westwood@dartmouth.edu