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Implicit Partisanship: Taking Sides for no Reason

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After spending 45 s studying the names of 4 members of a hypothetical group, subjects showed both implicit liking and implicit identification with the group. These effects of studying names were much larger than the mere exposure (R. B. Zajonc, 1968) effects of either 6 (Experiment 2) or 10 (Experiment 3) extra exposures to each name. This implicit partisanship effect differs from the minimal group effect (H. Tajfel, 1970) because its procedure involves no membership in the target group. It also differs from the mere exposure effect because the target stimuli are presented once as members of a group rather than multiple times as unrelated individuals. A plausible (but not established) interpretation is that the attitude and identification effects are consequences of mere categorization.

Channel surfing is the act of rapidly scanning television broadcast channels in search of something interesting to watch. For one of the authors, this pastime produced a repeated and puzzling observation: On arriving at and dwelling at least briefly on a televised sports contest between unfamiliar players or teams, he would often notice a near-immediate preference for one of the competitors—in effect, taking sides in the contest for no reason.

There are many possible explanations for such a rapidly formed preference. For example, the viewer may identify with a competitor who is similar on some noticeable attribute such as home town, age, or ethnicity; or the viewer may prefer (or, alternatively, be offended by) one competitor's appearance (such as physical features, clothing, hair style); or the viewer may identify with the competitor who is presently winning, giving the likely prospect of vicarious victory; or, just the opposite, the viewer may identify with a disadvantaged or trailing competitor, offering the potentially greater satisfaction of sharing vicariously in an against-the-odds victory.

It was easy to give this observation a name—*implicit partisanship*. It was not so easy to conceive of a method for demonstrating it in the laboratory. As a result, the idea of implicit partisanship lay dormant for several years—until a research model unexpectedly presented itself.[1]

Serendipitous Observations of Implicit Partisanship

Preliminary Experiment A

The research reported in this article arose from the partial failure of an attempt to develop a single-subject procedure for the minimal group effect. The minimal group effect is the finding that, after learning that they belong to the same group as do a set of strangers, subjects discriminate in favor of those groupmates (originally reported by Tajfel, 1970; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). The plan of Preliminary Experiment A was to establish membership in a fictitious group and then to observe preference for that group. More specifically, the experiment sought to determine whether the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) could measure the in-group favoritism that was expected to result from this procedure.[2] Preliminary Experiment A had two experimental conditions and a control condition, each with 8 undergraduate student subjects.

Method

All subjects initially learned the first names of members of two fictitious teams (Copleys and Dawsons) by practicing writing the names of each of the four members of each team five times, first for one team and then for the other. The team whose members' names were written first was to become the team to which subjects would later be assigned membership. The names used were Willard, Margot, Harlan, and Daphne (the Copley team) and Glenda, Duncan, Lucille, and Roland (the Dawson team). These currently uncommon first names were used to avoid matching the names of subjects' acquaintances.

After learning the names of the four players on each team, subjects in the *no group membership* control condition next sorted cards that contained all eight names into separate piles for each team. Subjects in the *postsorting*

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[1] A standard form of research report tells of theoretical inspiration followed by research efforts that culminate in the report of predicted results. This article tells of unpredicted results followed by research efforts that culminate in an unanticipated theoretical inspiration. This reversed sequence may occur more often than is apparent, possibly because researchers do not readily admit to such glaring lack of foresight. The reason for reporting this work in its actual sequence may be less a compulsion to tell the truth than an indication of the authors' inability to construct, within the standard research-story form, any plausible scenario that could produce the procedure of the central independent variable.

[2] The IAT turned out to be successful for this purpose, even though, as will be seen, not in the expected fashion. Recently, Ashburn-Nardo, Voils, and Monteith (2001) have independently demonstrated the usefulness of the IAT as a dependent measure for the minimal group procedure.

membership condition also did this and, immediately after the sorting, were asked to imagine being a member of one of the teams. In the *presorting membership* condition, the imagined membership instruction came before (rather than after) the sorting task and was reinforced by adding several cards labeled *myself* to the deck of to-be-sorted cards.

Measures of both attitude and identification were obtained using the IAT. The *attitude* IAT measure involved two classification tasks using as stimuli the eight names (the four Copley team members' names and the four Dawson team members' names) and eight words, four of which were pleasant in meaning (*smile, joy, pleasure, warmth*), and four of which were unpleasant in meaning (*death, grief, pain, agony*). One task required that subjects give the same computer keyboard response to either pleasant-meaning words or Copley names and a different keyboard response to either Dawson names or unpleasant-meaning words. The other task was similar but interchanged the response assignments of the pleasant-meaning and unpleasant-meaning words. Implicit attitudinal preference for (say) the Dawson team was indicated if subjects responded more rapidly for the task of giving one response to Dawson names and pleasant-meaning words (and the other to Copley names and unpleasant-meaning words) than for the task of giving one response to Copley names and pleasant-meaning words (and the other to Dawson names and unpleasant-meaning words).[3] The IAT measure of *identification* was obtained similarly but replaced the pleasant- and unpleasant-meaning words of the attitude measure with sets of four words representing the concepts of self (*me, self, myself, mine*) and other (*them, their, they, other*). Implicit identification with (say) the Dawson team was indicated if subjects responded more rapidly in the task that required the same response to Dawson names and self-referring words than in the task requiring the same response to Copley names and self-referring words.

Results

It was expected that in-group favoritism would be revealed by the IAT attitude measure for the two experimental conditions in which subjects were asked to regard themselves as members of one of the teams. This expected result did occur. That is, subjects responded noticeably (and statistically significantly) more rapidly when giving the same response to own-team names and pleasant-meaning words than when giving the same response to other-team names and pleasant-meaning words. Similarly, the IAT identification measure indicated that subjects implicitly identified, as expected, with their assigned team. That is, subjects responded more rapidly when they gave the same response to own-team names and self-referring nouns than when they gave the same response to other-team names and self-referring nouns. However, IAT results for the no group membership control condition contained a surprise. Subjects in that condition showed evidence of both implicitly identifying with and implicitly preferring the team to whose members' names they had been introduced first. This unexpected finding was initially regarded as a likely Type I error—a fluke.

Self-report measures of attitude and identification were also used. Unexpectedly, these showed no increase in either liking for or identification with the team of which the subject had become an imagined member. This suggested that IAT measures might be more sensitive to the minimal group effect than are self-report measures.

Preliminary Experiment B

A second experiment, using similar procedures, was conducted partly in the hope that its control condition would show no systematic preference for either team. The second experiment sought to replicate Preliminary Experiment A's minimal group effect on the IAT identification measure and, additionally, to determine whether subjects would be able to form an implicit identity bond with a group after first learning to associate that group with failure.

The procedure involved four steps. First, to familiarize themselves with the names and team groupings, subjects learned to associate one set of four names with the Copley team and another set of four names with the Dawson team. Second, so that subjects would treat one team as a winner and the other as a loser, subjects completed an association-formation task based on the IAT's procedures. In this task subjects practiced associating one of the teams with winning and the other with losing (but did not do a second task that switched these associations). Third, to get subjects to identify with one or the other team (the minimal group manipulation), a second IAT-based association-formation task was used, this one having subjects practice associating self with either the winning team or the losing team. Fourth and finally, subjects completed the same identification IAT as in Preliminary Experiment A to provide the test of whether implicit identification with the team of membership (established in the third step) had been influenced by whether that team was associated with winning or losing (in the second step).

Method

The experiment was entirely computer administered, starting with presentation of a list of members' names for the two teams, displayed in a single, centered column with one team above the other. (The detail of one team's name being above the other was not initially expected to be significant.) While looking at the display of eight names, subjects were asked to examine and memorize the names of members for both teams. To confirm that they had studied the names, subjects were asked to write the four names for each team from memory.

Subjects next completed three categorization tasks: First, subjects rehearsed team members' names by doing a team sorting task, pressing a left-side key when the name of a member of one of the teams appeared in the center of the screen and a right-side key for each of the other team's members. The second categorization task was intended to establish association of one of the teams with winning. This used a *partial IAT* procedure, which was introduced by asking subjects to imagine that one of the two teams had won the vocabulary-game competition. To reinforce the association of one team with winning, subjects were asked to give the left-side response for names of members of that team and words representing *win* (*won, winners, success*) and the right-side response for names of members of the other team and words representing *lose* (*lost, losers, failure*). During this task, reminder labels were visible at the top left of the screen (e.g., "Copley or win") and at the top right (e.g., "Dawson or lose"). The third categorization task, which was intended to associate one of the teams with self—thereby providing the minimal group manipulation—also used a partial IAT procedure. Subjects were asked to imagine being a member of one of the teams, and, to learn this, they were asked to give the left-side response for names of members of that team and words representing *self* (*myself, mine, me, self*) and the right-side response for names of the other team and words representing *other* (*them, their, they, other*). Again, reminder labels (e.g., "Copley or self") were provided at the upper left and upper right sides of the display. For all three categorization tasks—team sorting, association with win/lose, and association with self/

[3] Procedures used for the IAT are not described in detail here, but—except for the use of smaller numbers of trials—were based closely on those introduced by Greenwald et al. (1998).

other—subjects received immediate feedback (the word *ERROR* in the center of the display) whenever they categorized a name or word incorrectly.

The intended effect of the second and third categorization tasks was to establish, for each subject, an association of self (third task) either with a team that had just been associated with winning or with one that had just been associated with losing (second task). The final task was the same implicit identification IAT that had been used in the Preliminary Experiment A. The purpose of this IAT measure was to observe whether strength of implicit team identification had been influenced by the two prior tasks, which established an in-group that had previously been associated with either winning or losing. It was expected that subjects might more readily identify with a winning than a losing team, and it was hoped that the IAT would prove sensitive to this.

Results

Results that were apparent midway through data collection made clear that Preliminary Experiment B would not achieve its intended purpose. The experiment was therefore discontinued. The problem was that it proved much easier for subjects to associate the names that they had seen at the top of the very first display screen with winning than with losing. (Recall that the purpose of that initial display was only to provide subjects the list of all names to be used in the experiment, at which time subjects were asked to memorize both sets of names.) Averaged over four blocks of 40 trials, subjects who were asked to give the same response to the first-listed team and win-related words were more than 100 ms faster than were subjects who were asked to give the same response to the first-listed team and lose-related words.

As a consequence of incomplete counterbalancing, the team to be associated with self in the third task was always the one that had been listed at the top on the opening display. For half of the subjects this team had been associated with winning in the second task, and for half it had been associated with losing. The authors erroneously expected that the initial display of names would cause subjects to study and to learn the names of both teams simultaneously and equally. However, the observation that initial listing order affected ease of association with winning had no plausible interpretation other than that most subjects must have rehearsed the set of names at the top before and/or better than rehearsing those that appeared lower on the screen.

Conclusion From the Preliminary Experiments

In retrospect, the two preliminary experiments supported the conclusion that learning team members' names produced an implicit identification with the team for which members' names were learned first. Although this undermined use of the experiments to test hypotheses relating to the minimal group effect, the possibility of having inadvertently discovered a research model of implicit partisanship—that is, forming an attachment to one of two teams for no apparent reason—made this disappointing outcome quite tolerable. Of course, neither of the two preliminary experiments had been designed to identify the procedure responsible for the observed effects. It is plausible that the unexpected findings could have been due to subjects' learning the names of one team's members better than those of the other team, or, more simply, it might have been due to subjects' being exposed to one team's names before the other's (i.e., primacy).

In addition to the serendipitous finding of apparent implicit partisanship, a valuable result of Preliminary Experiment B was its indication that a partial IAT procedure—the procedure that was used for the association with win/lose task—could serve as an experimental dependent measure. Recall that the original purpose of this partial IAT procedure was only to reinforce subjects' associations of one of the two teams with the concept of winning and of the other team with losing. When the latency data for this task showed an effect of the order of the introductory listing of the two teams, its potential usefulness as an experimental dependent measure was immediately apparent.

Overview of the Main Experiments

The three experiments that follow sought primarily to establish a sufficient cause for the implicit partisanship phenomenon observed in the two preliminary experiments. In the preliminary experiments, learning the names of one team's members was confounded with the order in which the names were encountered. The result of greater liking for the first-encountered team is interesting regardless of whether it was caused by studying and learning the names or by primacy of exposure to them. However, the goal of understanding the effect theoretically can obviously be advanced by identifying the conditions that produce it.

Experiment 1 was designed to test whether studying the names of one team's members, when unconfounded with order of initial exposure to this team's names, would produce an implicit partisanship effect. Experiment 2 was conducted both to replicate Experiment 1's result and to compare the effects of learning a team's members' names with the effects of receiving extra exposures to those names. Experiment 3 provided a stronger comparison of the exposure and name study procedures. Because Preliminary Experiment A had indicated that implicit measures were especially sensitive to the implicit partisanship effect, only implicit measures were used in the three experiments. In particular, the partial IAT procedure of Preliminary Experiment B was adapted to provide dependent measures for both implicit attitude and implicit identification.

Experiment 1: Effects of Studying Group Members' Names on Attitude and Identification

Experiment 1 used the same general format of the two preliminary experiments, starting by acquainting subjects with the names of members of two hypothetical teams. To avoid exposing subjects to the collection of names for one team before those of the other, subjects first encountered all of the names individually, twice each, in a random order. Only after those initial exposures were subjects asked to study names for just one team. Effects of studying the names on both implicit attitude and identification were then assessed with the partial IAT procedure of Preliminary Experiment B.

Method

Subjects

One hundred sixty-seven undergraduate students at the University of Washington participated individually in exchange for optional course credit. Data for 11 of these subjects were not analyzed, including 7 whose

data were accidentally lost during a changeover of laboratory computers, 2 others whose data were lost because of equipment failures, and 2 others who did not complete the experiment. Complete data were available for 156 subjects. Of these, 103 were women, 52 were men, and 1 did not have information about sex recorded.

Design

The procedure was built around two hypothetical four-person teams, one identified as Purple and the other as Gold. Because these two colors are the University of Washington's school colors, it was expected that there would not be strong preexperimental preferences for either. There were four between-subjects variables that involved counterbalancing of procedures: (a) studied team (Purple vs. Gold), (b) team associated with self (Purple vs. Gold), (c) team associated with winning (Purple vs. Gold), and (d) order of doing the two tasks of associating the teams with self or other and associating them with winning or losing (self/other first vs. win/lose first).

Procedure

After reading a brief overview of the upcoming experiment's procedures, each subject provided a few items of demographic information on a paper–pencil form and was then seated in a small laboratory room with a desktop computer. The experiment started with a computer-administered consent-to-participate statement, followed by a tutorial version of the categorization task that would be used (with variations) for the remainder of the experiment.

In the tutorial, subjects practiced a classification that was unrelated to any of the subsequent experimental tasks—they were asked to classify snakes versus birds by pressing a left-side key (*D*) with their left index finger for each snake name and a right-side key (*L*) with their right index finger for each bird name. In addition to providing practice at the type of categorization task that would be used in the remainder of the experiment, this task also introduced subjects to the experiment's method of dealing with errors. For any error, the computer immediately displayed *ERROR* in red in the center of the screen and waited for the subject to make the correct response.

For neither the initial tutorial nor any of the following categorization tasks did the instructions stress responding rapidly. However, the unstated task demand was to produce correct responses quickly. Also, it became obvious to subjects early in the procedure that the experiment could take a long time if they responded at a leisurely pace. In all blocks, latencies from stimulus onset to the subject's pressing the key for the correct response were recorded for each trial (this included the time required to change an incorrect response to the correct response). Trials were scored as errors if the subject pressed the incorrect key before pressing the correct one. The interval between pressing a key for the correct response and appearance of the stimulus for the next trial was 150 ms for this and the following categorization tasks.

Name-study task. Subjects next received instructions that read, in part,

> Imagine that you live in a dormitory with other students, and that two teams from the dormitory play a vocabulary game once a week to improve their vocabularies. . . . You will be shown a series of names with arrows indicating to which team each player belongs. . . . Press the left key if the person belongs to the team on the left . . . and the right key if the person belongs to the team on the right. . . . Before long you will need to categorize the team names without the arrows.

Subjects then did a total of 16 trials, during which each of eight names appeared once in each of two groups of eight trials, in random order. Two male and two female names were members of the hypothetical Purple team (Glenda, Laurel, Milton, and Alfred), and four others were members of the Gold team (Janice, Ella, Roland, and Wilbert). As in the preliminary experiments, these uncommon names were used to reduce the likelihood that subjects would encounter names of acquaintances. After completing the 16 trials, subjects then proceeded to the name-study task, for which the instructions advised that an upcoming team sorting task would

> be easier if you memorize the names of the players on one team. The names of the Purple team members will be presented on the following page for 45 seconds. Please try to memorize the names of the members of the Purple team, then we'll continue the task of associating names with teams.[4]

The names of the four members of just one of the two teams were then displayed as a centered, vertical list that remained on screen for 45 s.

Team sorting task. Subjects next did three blocks of 40 trials of the team sorting task. In each block, the names of the four Gold team players and the four Purple team players each appeared five times in a quasi-random order in which no name was repeated on consecutive trials and members of the same team did not appear on more than two consecutive trials. Subjects were asked to use these trials to learn to sort the names correctly. They were instructed to press the *D* (left) key for each name that belonged to the Purple team and the *L* (right) key for each name that belonged to the Gold team.

Subjects next proceeded either to the task of associating one of the teams with *win* and the other team with *lose* or to the task of associating one team with *self* and the other with *other*. These tasks both used Preliminary Experiment B's partial IAT procedure, in which subjects practiced two associations, each involving two categories of items, by responding with the same key to exemplars of both. For example, the association with win/lose task could involve subjects responding with the left key for either Purple team names or words related to losing while also responding with the right key for either Gold team names or words related to winning. All subjects did both the association with win/lose task and the association with self/other task. The order of these two tasks was counterbalanced orthogonally to other counterbalancing variables.

Association with win/lose task. The instructions were as follows:

> Now we would like you to imagine that the Gold team has won the game. It is important for the experiment that you memorize that the Gold team has won. For the next several categorization blocks, categorize win words such as "winner" and "success" with the Gold team, and . . . words such as "lose" and "failure" with the Purple team.

The immediately following instructions reminded subjects which key to press for each of the four categories of items, as did positioned labels that remained at the top of the screen during the task. This task extended over three 40-trial blocks, each including 10 trials of each of four types—Gold team players' names, Purple team players' names, *win* words (*won, winners, success*) and *lose* words (*lost, losers, failure*)—in a quasi-random order that avoided more than three repetitions of the same (left or right) response.

Association with self/other task. The instructions were as follows:

> Now we would like you to imagine that you are a member of the Purple team. It is important for the experiment that you memorize that you are on the Purple team. For the next several categorization blocks, categorize self words such as "me" and "myself" with the Purple team, and . . . other words such as "other" and "them" with the Gold team.

This task extended over three 40-trial blocks, each including 10 trials of each of four types—Gold team players' names, Purple team players'

[4] At any place in instructions in which a team's color is mentioned, use of the colors Purple and Gold was counterbalanced as stated in the *Design* section. To keep the text comprehensible, readers will not be repeatedly reminded of these counterbalancing variations in describing instructions and so forth.

names, *self* words (*myself, my, me, mine, self*), and *other* words (*they, them, their, other*)—in a quasi-random order that avoided more than three repetitions of the same (left or right) response.

Preparation of data for analysis. Data for the two dependent measures, association with self/other and association with win/lose, were filtered using procedures that have been used routinely for full versions of the IAT (e.g., Greenwald et al., 1998). These included (a) recoding latencies under 300 ms to 300 ms and those over 3,000 ms to 3,000 ms, (b) using latencies from all trials (i.e., including ones on which errors occurred)[5] except for the first two trials of each data-collection block, which tend to have atypically high latencies, and (c) using logarithm transformations of latencies for statistical significance tests because of their reduced statistical noise.[6] For ease of comprehension, all descriptions of results in text or figures retain the untransformed millisecond units of the latency measures. However, all significance tests used the log-transformed data.

Results

As a reminder of the basic procedure: Subjects studied the names of members of one of the two teams. Then, after practice associating names with their respective teams (Purple or Gold), subjects either (a) associated the names of members of one team with *win* (and the other team with *lose*) or (b) associated the names of members of one team with *self* (and the other team with *other*). Their next task was the other of these two. The dependent variables in the experiment were the ease of associating the studied team with self or other and with win or lose. Ease of making these associations was measured by latency of response in the partial IAT task. For example, the measure of ease of associating a team with *self* was provided by subjects who, in the association with self/other task, were asked to give one response to words referring to *self* and names of that team's members (while also giving another response to words referring to *other* and the names of the other team's members).

Analysis of Covariance

The experiment included two pretreatment tasks for which response latencies could be used to predict treatment-unrelated variance in the latency-dependent variables. These two preliminary measures were (a) subjects' mean latency in the tutorial categorization task (snake vs. bird) and (b) their mean latency in the team sorting task that preceded the tasks that measured association with self/other and association with win/lose. Analysis of covariance was permissible because analyses of variance of each of the two potential covariates showed no statistically significant main or interaction effects for any of the experiment's independent variables (all F ratios <1.67, $df = 1, 152$). Further, analysis of covariance was desirable because the covariate-adjusted dependent measures had error variance reduced by the substantial portion of variance that was predictable from the covariates.[7] Analyses of covariance are reported for the series of experiments, including use of adjusted means in bar graphs. With only two exceptions, the results to be described using analyses of covariance were also clearly apparent in the corresponding analyses without covariates. The covariance-adjusted data for Experiment 1 appear in Figure 1.

To condense descriptions of results, three simplifications are used here. First, the team for which subjects memorized names is referred to as the *studied team.* Second, the dependent measure tasks are usually described in terms of just one of the two teams and one of the two concepts involved in the task. For example, the task in which the studied team was associated with *self* could equally be referred to as the task in which the nonstudied team was associated with *other*. Third, faster responding by subjects who associated the studied team with a concept, compared with the group that associated the nonstudied team with that same concept, are referred to as an *effect favoring the studied team*—that is, an effect indicating stronger association of the studied team (than the nonstudied team) with the concept.

Effect of Name Study on Association With Self/Other

Figure 1A shows that subjects who associated the studied team with *self* responded more rapidly than did subjects who associated the studied team with *other*. In the figure, this contrast is collapsed over all counterbalanced procedural variables, none of which was associated with any statistically significant effect. The effect favoring the studied team was a 135-ms difference (871 − 736), $F(1, 138) = 64.5$, $p = 10^{-13}$, Cohen's $d = 1.29$.

Effect of Name Study on Association With Win/Lose

Figure 1B shows that subjects who associated the studied team with *win* responded more rapidly than did subjects who associated the studied team with *lose.* The effect favoring the studied team was a difference of 88 ms (871 − 783), $F(1, 138) = 24.0$, $p = 10^{-6}$, Cohen's $d = 0.79$.

The type of effect just reported for both dependent measures—faster responding for those associating the studied team's names with self or with winning—is abbreviated as a *name-study congruence* effect. The name-study congruence effect for association with win/lose was smaller than that for association with self/other, $F(1, 138) = 4.97$, $p = 0.03$, difference in Cohen's $d = 0.50$. This difference between effect magnitudes was, however, not statistically significant in the corresponding analysis without covariates—one of the two exceptions (in this article) to the generalization that the same significant effects were found in both analyses with covariates and analyses without covariates.

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[5] At the request of a reviewer, all analyses for Experiment 1 were repeated on a data set for which error trials were omitted. The covariance-adjusted mean latencies for treatments shown in Figure 1 were unchanged in this analysis, and values of F ratios were affected only in minor fashion, not altering any conclusions. The four statistically significant F ratios reported in the following *Results* section are, respectively, 64.5, 24.0, 4.97, and 5.51. For the corresponding analyses without error trials, these four F ratios were, respectively, 73.4, 30.0, 4.76, and 5.51. Despite some of the latter F ratios being larger, the analyses including error trials were retained because this has been standard procedure in research using the IAT.

[6] As an example of noise reduction by the logarithm transformation, analyses of covariance in Experiment 1 accounted for 62.5% and 64.7% of variance of the main dependent measures when done with untransformed data, compared with 67.4% and 69.2% when done with log-transformed data.

[7] To illustrate the effects of using covariates: Analyses of the two log-transformed dependent measures without covariates accounted for 23.9% and 16.2% of variance. With the two covariates added, the percentages of dependent measure variance accounted for were 67.4% and 69.2%, respectively.

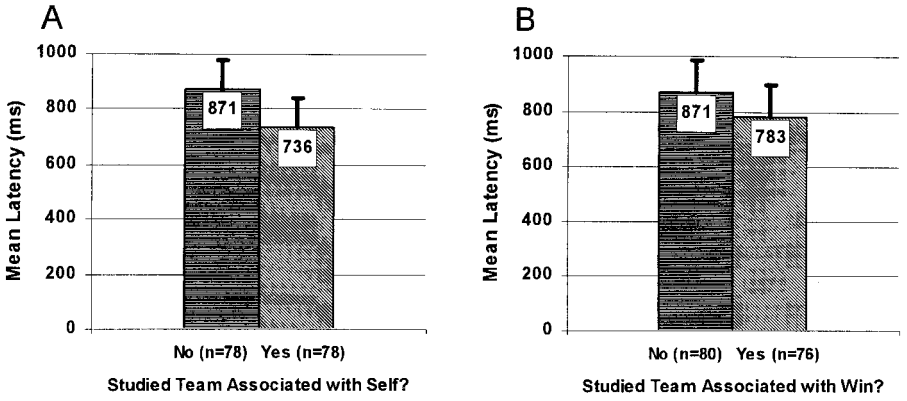

Figure 1. Mean latencies for dependent measures of Experiment 1. Subjects performing the task that required giving the same response to names studied at the beginning of the experiment and words referring to *self* responded more rapidly than did those who had to give the same response to studied names and words referring to *other* (A). Similarly, associating the studied names with *win* was easier (more rapid) than was associating them with *lose* (B). Error bars are standard deviations.

Effect of the First Task's Name-Study Congruence on the Second Task

Half the subjects did the self/other association task first, and half did the win/lose task first. In doing their second association task, half the subjects had previously done the first association task in a name-study congruent form (i.e., associating *self* or *win* with the studied team's names), and the remainder had done the first task in a name-study incongruent form (studied team associated with *other* or *lose*). This made it possible to test whether name-study congruence of the first test affected performance on the second. This analysis yielded two interesting results. First, the name-study congruence effect was still clearly apparent on the task that was done second (averaging 92 ms) for subjects who had just completed a name-study incongruent first task. Second, there was a significant three-way interaction effect, indicating that the name-study congruence effect for the second task was especially large (averaging 164 ms, $d = 1.47$) when subjects did the self/other task first and then did the win/lose task in the same congruence form as for the self/other task. By contrast, when subjects did the self/other task first and had to switch name-study congruence for the second (win/lose) task, the name-study congruence effect for the win/lose (second) task was especially small (averaging 34 ms, $d = 0.30$), three-way interaction $F(1, 146) = 5.51$, $p = 0.02$. A related effect is reported in Experiment 3, and these effects are considered in the General Discussion.

Discussion

Experiment 1 confirmed expectations based on the two preliminary experiments. Studying the names of members of one of two fictitious teams produced effects on both a measure of ease of associating names of that team's members with self and a measure of ease of associating those names with winning. These were large effects ($d = 1.29$ and $d = 0.79$, respectively).

The measure of association with self (vs. other) corresponds to the concept of implicit identity (Greenwald, Banaji, Rudman, Farnham, Nosek, & Mellott, 2002). The measure of association with win (vs. lose) corresponds to the concept of implicit attitude. Because the idea of partisanship encompasses both identification with and favorableness toward a group, the finding of name-study congruence effects for both these implicit identity and these implicit attitude measures is consistent with using *implicit partisanship* as a shorthand label for these findings.

When these findings are combined with those of the two preliminary experiments, there seems little doubt that the implicit partisanship effect that results from name study is both substantial and easily produced. The finding that the name-study congruence effect was stronger for the self/other measure than for the win/lose measure suggests that the name-study procedure has more impact on implicit identity than on implicit attitude. Remarkably, subjects even found it easier to associate the names of the members of the studied team with *self* than with *other* after having practiced associating the studied team with losing.

Experiment 1's establishment of name study as a sufficient condition for implicit partisanship is a first step toward theoretical interpretation. In contemplating the remaining work that may be needed to establish a theoretical interpretation, readers might bear in mind that the procedurally simple and empirically well-established mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968) remains without an established theoretical interpretation after more than 30 years of research, and it was more than 20 years before there appeared an explanation—in terms of perceptual fluency (Bornstein, 1989)—that appeared to be a strong candidate. Experiments 2 and 3 sought, in part, to advance theoretical interpretation by trying to relate the new effect to conditions that produce mere exposure effects.

Experiment 2: Name Study Compared With Extra Exposures to Names

Experiment 2 had two purposes: (a) to replicate Experiment 1, and (b) to compare the effect of studying a team's members' names with the effect of receiving extra repeated exposures to the names. Experiment 2 had two conditions, a *name-study* condition that exactly replicated Experiment 1, and an *exposure* condition that, in place of the name-study procedure, gave subjects extra exposures to the names of members of one team.

Method

Subjects

Seventy-three undergraduate students at the University of Washington participated individually in exchange for optional course credit. Data for 9 of these subjects were not analyzed, including 7 whose data exhibited excessively long latencies and 2 who were later discovered to have participated previously in an experiment that used similar tasks. Complete data were analyzed for 64 subjects (44 women and 20 men).

Procedure

Name-study condition. This condition exactly replicated Experiment 1. As a reminder, the name-study procedure had two components: (a) first, a brief sorting task in which all eight names were presented twice, accompanied by arrows that indicated whether each was to be classified with the Purple team (arrow pointing left) or the Gold team (arrow pointing right), and (b) next, the instruction to spend 45 s studying the names of four members of one of the two teams.

Exposure condition. The exposure condition differed as little as possible from the name-study condition, by replacing the 45-s period of name study with an exposure task that presented names of members of one team four times as often as those of the other team. The instructions for the exposure task started just as did those for the name-study task: "Imagine that you live in a dormitory with other students, and that two teams from the dormitory play a vocabulary game once a week to improve their vocabularies." The instructions continued:

> To help you learn the names of the students who will be playing the game, we will have you categorize the names based on whether they are male or female. You will be shown a series of names. Please categorize each name according to whether it is a male or female name.

Subjects were asked to press the left key for male names and the right key for female names. There followed a single block of 40 trials that presented the names of each of the four members of one of the teams twice and the names of each of the four members of the other team eight times. Each team consisted of two male names and two female names. At the time that this exposure task was done, subjects did not yet know the team affiliations (Purple or Gold) for any of the names.

In both conditions, the first task after the treatment (name study or exposure) was the team sorting task, consisting of three blocks of trials in which subjects practiced assigning the eight names correctly to the Purple team and the Gold team. This was followed by either the win/lose task (associating one team with winning and the other team with losing) or the self/other task (associating one team with *self* and the other team with *other*) and then the remaining one of these two tasks. Preparation of data for analyses was the same as for Experiment 1.

Results

The two covariates used for Experiment 1, mean latency in the tutorial task and mean latency in the team sorting task that preceded the dependent measures, were both available in Experiment 2. However, analysis of variance of the tutorial measure showed a significant effect of one design factor. This was necessarily Type I error, because no independent variable treatments had been administered prior to the tutorial task. Accordingly, only the team sorting measure was used as a covariate in the analyses to be reported.

Effect of Name Study (Replication of Experiment 1)

Figure 2 provides the data for the name-study condition. As in Experiment 1, subjects who were asked to associate the studied team with *self* responded more rapidly than did those who were asked to associate the studied team with *other*. This effect favoring the studied team was a 147-ms difference (891 − 744), $F(1, 15) = 16.6$, $p = 0.001$, $d = 1.46$. Similarly, subjects who were asked to associate the studied team with *win* responded 152 ms more rapidly (882 − 730) than did those who were asked to associate the studied team with *lose*, $F(1, 15) = 24.5$, $p = 0.0002$, $d = 1.61$.

Like Experiment 1, the name-study congruence effect was clearly apparent on the second association task (averaging 142 ms), even for subjects who had immediately before that performed a name-study incongruent task. Experiment 2 did not replicate Experiment 1's finding that the effect of name study was greater on implicit identification (association with self) than on implicit valence (association with winning). To the contrary, the effect on implicit valence was very slightly larger. Also unlike Experiment 1, there were no significant effects of name-study congruence

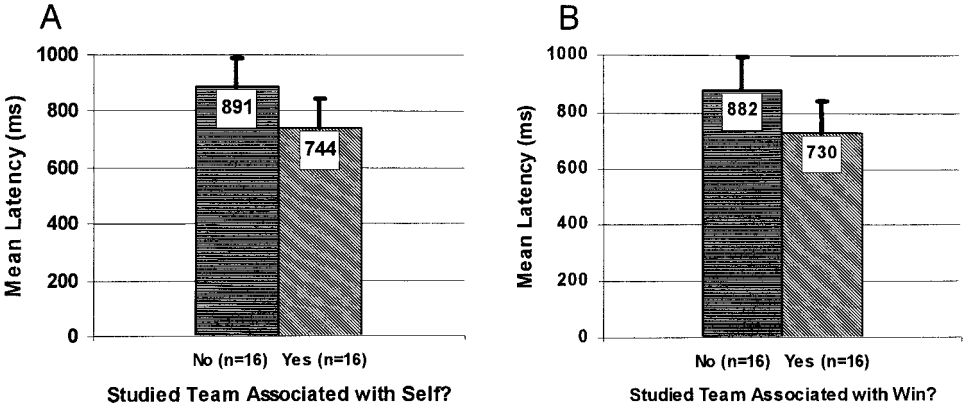

Figure 2. Mean latencies for the name-study condition of Experiment 2, which replicated Experiment 1. Again, names were classified much more rapidly when the task was to associate studied names with *self* or *win* than with *other* or *lose.* Error bars are standard deviations.

of the first task on magnitude of the name-study congruence effect for the second task.

Effect of Extra Name Exposures

There was no indication that six extra exposures to each of one team's names had any effect on the ease of associating that team's names either with *self* (latency difference = −5 ms), $F(1, 15) = 0.01$, $p = .92$, $d = -0.03$, or with *win* (latency difference = 89 ms), $F(1, 15) = 0.92$, $p = 0.35$, $d = 0.50$. It is, of course, not appropriate to accept the null hypothesis for either measure. However, only the effect of exposure on the win/lose measure was large enough to prompt suspicion that an experiment with greater power might have found it to be statistically significant.

Effects of Name Study Versus Effects of Exposure

The name-study treatment produced a stronger effect on the measure of implicit association with self (147 ms) than did the exposure treatment (−5 ms), $F(1, 31) = 7.29$, $p = 0.01$. The name-study treatment also produced a stronger effect on the measure of association with winning (152 ms) than did the exposure treatment (89 ms). However, this latter difference was not statistically significant, $F(1, 31) = 0.44$, $p = 0.51$.

Discussion

Experiment 2 replicated Experiment 1's implicit partisanship effect—the benefit of studying a team's members' names on subsequently associating that team either with winning or with self. Experiment 2 did not replicate an interesting secondary finding from Experiment 1—that studying a team's names has a greater effect on implicit identify than on implicit attitude. It is appropriate to examine this comparison again in Experiment 3 before venturing a conclusion.

Where Experiment 2 fell short of expectations was in shedding light on the possible relationship of the implicit partisanship effect to the well-established mere exposure effect. The problem was that no mere exposure effect was obtained. The higher exposure level consisted of six more exposures to each of the four names for one team. Because repeated exposure effects often reach their maximum at relatively small numbers of exposures (Bornstein, 1989), it may have been a mistake to expect the added six exposures of each name to make a difference. Also, the extra exposures of names in Experiment 2's exposure condition occurred in the context of subjects being asked to classify the names by sex. This differed from the procedures of most mere exposure experiments, which have not asked subjects to make judgments or other responses to repeatedly exposed stimuli. Nevertheless, exposure effects have occurred in experiments that provided exposures in the context of judgment tasks (e.g., Seamon et al., 1995).

Even though the exposure treatment did not work as expected, the finding of greater effects for name study than for exposure on both measures and the finding that this difference was statistically significant for the implicit identification measure strongly suggested that the effect of the name-study procedure is not due just to the exposure to names that it provides.

Experiment 3: Name Study Opposed to Extra Exposures to Names

Experiment 2 both replicated the implicit partisanship effect and found that effect to be considerably stronger than the effect of extra exposures to one team's names. However, the exposure condition of Experiment 2, which compared the effect of 4 versus 10 initial exposures to names on liking for the group associated with those names, was not a very powerful one. Experiment 3 reexamined the effect of repeated exposures with both a stronger exposure manipulation and a procedure that allowed exposure and implicit partisanship effects to work in opposition. An added feature of Experiment 3 was a condition designed to determine whether the implicit partisanship effect (a) was attached entirely to the originally studied names that established the effect or (b) was attached also to the group to which those names belonged. This was done by introducing, late in the experiment, a new set of names that were presented as other members of the same group. Finding that the effect extends to these new names would show that the effect was attached to the group as a generalized entity rather than just to the group's original members.

Method

Subjects

One hundred four undergraduate students at the University of Washington participated individually in exchange for optional course credit. Data for 8 of these subjects were not analyzed, including 4 whose data included excessively large error rates, indicating that they may not have understood one or more of the tasks, and 4 others whose data were redundant—3 whose places in the counterbalancing design had already been filled and a 4th who was later discovered to have participated in the experiment twice. (For the last subject, data for the first participation were analyzed.) The final group of 96 subjects included 61 women and 35 men.

Procedure

As with the previous two experiments, Experiment 3 used a procedure in which subjects participated individually at computers and were introduced to the imagined situation of a student dormitory in which teams gathered regularly to play a vocabulary game. The procedures for all conditions started with the same tutorial task of the previous experiments, in which subjects practiced categorizing snakes versus birds. The vocabulary game scenario was then described, after which the three conditions diverged.

Three sets of relatively unfamiliar female and male names constituted the teams used in the experiment. The Purple (Janice, Laurel, Milton, Arthur) and Gold (Glenda, Lucille, Duncan, Roland) teams were always opposed in the final two tasks that provided the implicit identity and implicit attitude dependent measures. A third team (Margot, Daphne, Harlan, Willard) had a supporting role in each condition. The following descriptions are stated as if all subjects studied the names of players on the Purple team. In the counterbalanced design, however, the studied names were equally often those of the Gold team.

Study before exposure condition. After learning about the weekly vocabulary game, subjects were asked to spend 45 s studying the names of players on the Purple team. They next practiced distinguishing the members of the Purple and Gold teams. This team sorting practice consisted of two blocks of 40 trials in which the eight names of the two teams' players were presented in quasi-random order, with instructions to press the left key for each Purple team name and the right key for each Gold team name. The name of each member of both teams appeared 10 times in these two blocks. Next, a procedure that gave subjects substantial additional exposure

to the names of players on the Gold (nonstudied) team started with these instructions:

> We want you to become familiar with the names of ALL of the students who will be playing the Vocabulary Game. To help you learn the names of the students who will be playing the Vocabulary game, we will have you categorize the names based on whether they are MALE or FEMALE.

Subjects then practiced sorting eight names as male or female by pressing one key for male and the other for female. The eight names included the four Gold team players and the four players on the extra (third) team. The names of the Purple team's players did not appear in this block. In this fashion, subjects received 10 additional exposures to each of the names for the Gold team, intended to counter the effect of the single 45-s exposure to the names of the Purple team's players in the name-study procedure. The tasks then continued with the two dependent measures (described later).

Exposure before study condition. In this condition the practice in classifying names by sex, which gave extra exposures to the Gold team's members, preceded (rather than followed) both the 45-s name study for the Purple team and the team sorting practice. Putting the exposure procedure before name study was intended to give the extra exposures whatever added benefit might be due to primacy.

Name substitution. A still greater effect of exposure was expected in the third condition, which was mostly identical to the exposure before study condition. However, in place of the 45-s study of the Purple team's names, subjects in the name substitution condition studied the names of the extra team's players while being told that these were the players of the Purple team. This name study was followed by the instructions for the team sorting practice. However, before doing the team sorting task, subjects encountered these instructions:

> For the purposes of this experiment, it is necessary to introduce new players to the game. The members of the GOLD team have not changed, but we have introduced new players to the PURPLE team. Please do your best on the upcoming categorization tasks, associating these new members with the Purple team.

Without any introduction to the new Purple team names—which, at this point, could be identified only by their unfamiliarity due to lack of prior appearance in the experiment—the subjects proceeded with two blocks of 40 trials each, classifying the names of the Purple and Gold team players. As a consequence of this sequence of procedures, subjects in the name substitution condition both (a) had 10 exposures to the names of each Gold team player before encountering any of the Purple team's players' names and (b) never received the 45-s exposure to Purple team names received by subjects in the other two conditions.

Dependent measures. The procedure for measuring implicit identity (association with self relative to other) and implicit attitude (association with winning relative to losing) differed from those for Experiment 2 in only one respect: Subjects were asked to associate the same team with self as with winning. For half the subjects, the team to be associated with self and winning was the studied team. For the remainder, the team to be associated with self and winning was the team that had more name exposures. Half of the subjects in each condition did the implicit identity (self/other) task first, and the remainder did the implicit attitude (win/lose) task first.

Results

Experiment 3 had three potential covariates for analyzing the main two dependent measures. These were the latency measures from (a) the tutorial task (classifying snakes vs. birds), (b) the exposure task of classifying names by sex, and (c) the team sorting task of classifying names as belonging to the Purple or Gold team. However, the tutorial task measure was not useful as a covariate because it was uncorrelated with the dependent measures, and the sex-classification task could not be used as a covariate because it showed two statistically significant effects of design factors. The following analyses therefore used only the subject's mean latency for the team sorting task as a covariate.

Effects of Name Study Versus Exposure

Figure 3 presents the data for the study before exposure and exposure before study conditions. Both of these conditions contrasted the effect of a 45-s period of study of the names of one team with the effect of 10 extra exposures to the names of the other team. Because results did not differ for these two conditions, they are combined in Figure 3. It is apparent in Figure 3 that the 45-s period of name study was the much more potent procedure, causing subjects to rapidly classify names together with self (rather

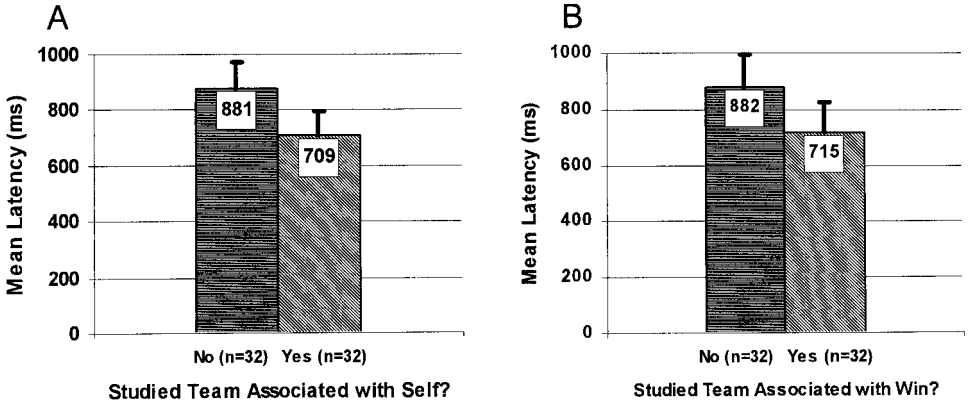

Figure 3. Mean latencies for Experiment 3's conditions that opposed effects of a 45-s name-study period with effects of 10 extra exposures to names. These results indicated a stronger effect of name study than of repeated exposures. Unlike Experiments 1 and 2, all subjects who associated studied names with *self* in one of the dependent measure tasks (A) also associated studied names with *win* in the other task (B). Error bars are standard deviations.

than other) or with winning (rather than losing). The effect favoring the studied team on the self/other task was a 172-ms difference (881 − 709), $F(1, 47) = 58.8$, $p = 10^{-9}$, $d = 1.94$. Similarly, subjects who were asked to associate the studied team with winning responded 167 ms more rapidly (882 − 715) than did those who were asked to associate the studied team with losing, $F(1, 47) = 42.0$, $p = 10^{-7}$, $d = 1.50$.

In addition to the results that appear in Figure 3, two other findings emerged from analysis of the two name-study conditions. First, subjects were generally faster on the dependent measures when exposure preceded name study than when name study came first. This result, which was statistically significant in the analysis of covariance but not the analysis of variance (the second of the two such discrepancies in the present research), is not easily interpretable. Fortunately, it does not qualify the results shown in Figure 3. Second, there was an effect of the order in which the two dependent measures were done. The name-study congruence effect (greater speed of associating studied names with self or with winning) on the first measure was stronger when the first measure was association with self/other (232 ms) than when it was association with win/lose (109 ms), $F(1, 55) = 4.86$, $p = 0.03$. However, for the measure that was completed second, the reverse was true—a stronger name-study congruence effect was found for association with win/lose (224 ms) than for association with self/other (115 ms), $F(1, 55) = 4.02$, $p = 0.05$. This difference in pattern as a function of order of the two tasks was itself statistically significant, as indicated by the interaction of order of the two tasks and whether the studied team was associated with self and winning (rather than other and losing), $F(1, 47) = 4.82$, $p = 0.03$. Interpretation of this pattern is deferred to the Discussion section.

Effects of Substitution for Studied Names Versus Exposure

In the name-substitution condition, immediately after the name-study procedure, the four studied names were replaced with previously unseen names. Subjects then practiced classifying the four substitute names and the four names previously used for the sex classification task into their respective (Purple and Gold) teams, before completing the two dependent measure tasks. Two opposed expectations for the name-substitution condition were that either (a) the implicit partisanship effect due to name study would be inherited by the substitute names, thereby showing that the effect occurred for the group rather than—or in addition to—occurring just for individual studied names or (b) a mere exposure due to substantially greater exposure to the other set of names would overpower any implicit partisanship effect.

The results revealed neither the inherited effect of name study nor the exposure effect. This could mean either (a) that neither effect occurred or (b) that both effects occurred at approximately equal levels. An observation supporting the conclusion that neither effect occurred was the generally much slower latencies for the name-substitution condition than for the other two conditions. Compared with the four means shown in Figure 3, the corresponding four means in the name-substitution condition averaged between 28 and 213 ms slower.

Discussion

In summary of Experiment 3, the implicit partisanship effect of Experiments 1 and 2 was again observed at strong levels in the two conditions that used the name-study procedure. Further, and also in support of results obtained in Experiment 1, the name-study congruence effect on the ordinally first dependent measure was noticeably stronger when that first measure was association with self/other than when it was association with win/lose. The observation that the effects on the second dependent measure showed exactly the reverse pattern—greater name-study congruence for win/lose than for self/other—can be understood in terms of Experiment 3's design, which always associated the same team with self and win. This meant that the subjects who strongly associated the studied team with self on the first dependent measure showed a similarly strong tendency to associate that same team with winning on the second measure. Contrastingly, subjects who (not so strongly) associated the studied team with winning on the first measure showed a similar, not so strong tendency to associate the studied team with self on the second measure. A possible interpretation is that associating the studied team with self on the first measure may have reinforced the implicit partisanship effect, such that it was also observed strongly on the subsequent test for association with winning.

General Discussion

The three experiments consistently showed that spending 45 s studying a group of names led to both greater ease of associating those names with the concept of self than with the concept of other and greater ease of associating the names with the concept of winning than with the concept of losing. This result has been labeled *implicit partisanship.*

Interpretation of the Dependent Measures as Implicit Partisanship

Justification for the implicit partisanship label requires (a) that the latency dependent measures used in the research are valid indicators of the two components of partisanship—identification with a group and positive attitude toward that group—and (b) that this partisanship can be interpreted as implicit—that is, the actor lacks awareness of its causes (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

Because the present dependent measures were based on the IAT, their interpretation as measures of identification with and favorable attitude toward a group rests on evidence for the construct validity of IAT measures. Greenwald et al. (2002) recently summarized the theory underlying (a) interpretation of IAT measures as measures of association strength and (b) definition of the basic constructs of social cognition (attitude, stereotype, self-concept, and self-esteem) in terms of associations between concepts (such as self, groups, and attitude objects) and attributes (including valence). Greenwald and Nosek (2001) reviewed evidence for validity of IAT measures, summarizing approximately 30 studies, most of which supported the construct validity of association-strength interpretations of IAT measures.

A possible basis for concern about the implicit attitude measures of the present studies is that, instead of using a diverse set of words with positive and negative valence, they used words representing the specific concepts of winning and losing. Nevertheless, the measure obtained with these stimuli is reasonably interpreted as a measure of attitude (i.e., association with valence) because positive versus negative valence is what distinguishes winning from losing.

Also, recall that Preliminary Experiment A's results were obtained with a full IAT measure that used the standard (diverse) set of valenced stimulus items.

IAT measures are considered implicit because they do not rely on subjects' awareness of the causes of the associations revealed by the measures. Also supporting the implicit label is the observation that subjects in the two preliminary experiments gave no indication of partisanship on self-report measures.

Is the Effect Stronger on Implicit Identity Than Implicit Attitude?

In Experiment 1, the name-study procedure had a stronger effect on implicit identity than on implicit attitude. In Experiment 3, implicit partisanship effects were stronger for subjects who were tested first on associations with self/other (i.e., identity) than for those tested first on associations with win/lose (i.e., attitude). Although both of these findings suggested that the name-study procedure had a stronger or more direct effect on identity than on attitude, clarity of the evidence for that conclusion was reduced considerably by Experiment 2's lack of a similar finding. For further evidence, data from Experiment 2 were examined to determine whether differential effects on the two measures could be observed in the very first block of trials that followed the name-study manipulation. This analysis showed that, indeed, the implicit partisanship effect was larger for the identity measure ($M = 150$ ms) than for the attitude measure ($M = 124$ ms). However, this relatively small difference between magnitudes of the two effects was far from being statistically significant ($F < 1$). Any conclusion about implicit partisanship occurring more strongly on measures of identity than on measures of attitude must await more decisive evidence.

Difference of Implicit Partisanship From Minimal Group and Mere Exposure Effects

In common with the minimal group effect (Tajfel et al., 1971), the implicit partisanship effect involves both identification with and attitudinal attachment to a group. The main difference between the two effects is that identification with a group is part of the procedure that produces the minimal group effect (i.e., it is part of the independent variable manipulation), whereas identification is a dependent measure in the implicit partisanship experiment.

In common with the mere exposure effect, the implicit partisanship effect involves attraction resulting from exposure to a set stimuli. Further, both effects share the characteristic that this attraction appears seemingly for no reason.[8] Nevertheless, three differences between the mere exposure effect and the implicit partisanship effect suggest that they are psychologically different. First, the mere exposure effect involves stimuli that are presented individually, whereas stimuli are presented as a group for the implicit partisanship effect. Second, the mere exposure effect occurs most strongly when multiple exposures are separated in time (Bornstein, 1989), whereas the implicit partisanship effect (as implemented in the present research) involves a single, sustained exposure. Third, although both effects are observed on attitude measures, the implicit partisanship effect occurs additionally on a measure of association with self.

Further indication that the implicit partisanship effect differs from the mere exposure effect comes from results of the present Experiments 2 and 3. In Experiment 2, the name-study condition had a strong effect on the dependent measures, and the mere exposure condition had little or no effect. In Experiment 3, repeated exposure and name-study procedures were put into opposition, with the clear finding that name study had the stronger effect. Both of these results suggest that conditions conducive to the implicit partisanship effect are not the same as those conducive to the mere exposure effect. If the mere exposure and implicit partisanship effects have a common basis in exposure to the stimuli, then a minimal expectation for Experiment 3 is that the exposure effect should at least have matched the name-study effect rather than being strongly overpowered by it.

Relations to Natural Social Phenomena

Although the search for a laboratory implicit partisanship effect was initially inspired by natural observations (see the introduction), the present laboratory procedure lacks obvious similarity to natural social phenomena. This circumstance should not be considered a disaster. That is, the laboratory implicit partisanship effect can have value in exploring theoretical questions even if it lacks superficial similarity to natural occurrences of implicit partisanship (cf. Mook, 1983). Nevertheless, the laboratory implicit partisanship effect will have even greater value if it can be tied to natural phenomena. This thought prompted reversing the question with which this research started. The original question was, "How can implicit partisanship be investigated in the laboratory?" The reversed question is, "Are there natural phenomena that resemble the laboratory implicit partisanship effect?"

Typically, we know more names of people in groups with which we identify than in groups with which we do not identify. For example, sports enthusiasts typically know names of the members of their preferred teams better than those of other teams. As a thought experiment, imagine that the entire rosters of two teams in the same city (such as baseball's New York Yankees and New York Mets) were suddenly switched. Now consider the case of preswitch supporters of either team. After the switch, which team will they prefer? Perhaps many allegiances would switch.

Most people know the names of historical and currently popular figures from their own country much better than those from any other country. It is plausible that either (a) learning these names was motivated by a preexisting national identity or (b) the same experiences that produced national identity also led to better knowledge of the names. By comparison, a third possibility, that (c) attachment (i.e., partisanship) is a consequence of better knowledge of the names, may seem implausible. However, the present research encourages taking this third possibility seriously.

The present research also suggests the possibility that the implicit partisanship effect could be applied in the area of international attitudes. For example, a newly established country might be wise to mount an information campaign directed at educating

[8] This is in contrast with the minimal group effect, in which attraction or favoritism has some rational basis in expectations of reciprocal favoring among those who share a group membership (e.g., Gaertner & Insko, 2000).

audiences (perhaps both domestic and foreign) about the names of its leading personalities and its major place names. Likewise, a country that is hosting an international Olympic competition might use the intensive media focus to advertise its place names and its historical figures. Related to these suggestions, is it possible that the many name changes of political entities in Eastern Europe and Africa make it difficult for outsiders (and perhaps even insiders) to feel attachment to those regions? Further, might the strategies just suggested for a newly established country also work well for other newly established entities, such as corporations?

A Mere Categorization Effect?

The preceding thoughts about sports teams and international attitudes perhaps seem more related to the mere exposure effect than to the implicit partisanship effect. However, the just-discussed natural situations involve exposures to sets of stimuli that are related by a shared category membership. This is an important difference from mere exposure effects, in which the repeatedly exposed items either (a) do not have a shared category or group membership or (b) are members of the same category as unexposed control items (such as Chinese characters, random polygons, or abstract art works). The shared category or group membership property of items that benefit from the name-study procedure is central enough to the implicit partisanship effect to suggest the possibility of conceiving the effect instead as a *mere categorization* effect.

Several recent IAT experiments provide an additional basis for suggesting that mere category membership carries attitudinal benefits. Rothermund and Wentura (2001) reported results indicating that nonwords (which lacked category membership) were evaluatively more negative than the neutral words (members of the category *words*). It is somewhat more surprising that Brendl, Markman, and Messner's (2001) findings suggested that nonsense items (pronounceable nonwords that had no category membership) were attitudinally more negative than were category *insect names.* In both of these studies, the nonword items could be regarded as evaluatively handicapped, in mere exposure terms, by their unfamiliarity. However, it is also possible that they were handicapped by their lack of category membership. Both Ashburn-Nardo, Voils, and Monteith (2001) and Gregg (2000) have shown that pronounceable nonwords can acquire implicit positive valence that is detectable by IAT measures—after subjects learn to categorize these items into a group. These several findings all point toward the conclusion that there is an implicit evaluative benefit of category membership.[9] This possible evaluative benefit of mere categorization also fits with longstanding conceptions of the value of mental categories (e.g., Allport, 1954; Bruner, 1957).

The above observations notwithstanding, the present evidence for a mere categorization effect is at best suggestive and circumstantial. Furthermore, characterization of the present research's name-study procedure as mere categorization is arguable, because the procedure included details that exceeded simple learning of a new category—specifically, it included the use of a fictitious scenario involving competition between imaginary teams and the request that subjects imagine that they lived in the same dormitory with members of the two teams. It is clearly appropriate to consider other interpretations. One alternative that merits consideration comes from research on mere ownership, which shows that taking possession of an object increases the object's perceived value (Beggan, 1992; Feys, 1991; Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1990). Studying the set of names might be conceived as taking mental ownership of them. A virtue of this interpretation is its built-in explanation for the association-with-self component of implicit partisanship—ownership is an association with self (see Greenwald & Banaji, 1995, pp. 11–12).

Conclusion

The program of research on what later came to be called a *minimal intergroup situation* (Turner, 1975) was originally described by Tajfel et al. (1971) as research on social categorization. The present research adds yet another set of studies to the many confirmations of Tajfel's (1970) insight about the importance of social categorization. Nevertheless, the phenomenon demonstrated in the present research differs from the one demonstrated by Tajfel and colleagues. In operationalizing social categorization, Tajfel et al. made subjects members of a group for which no individuating information about other members was available. The present name-study procedure was almost exactly complementary. The 45-s name-study procedure provided individuating information (names) about four members of a group with which subjects had no membership relation.

Many regard the lesson of the minimal group effect as discouraging, because it reveals that simple membership in a group plants seeds of intergroup conflict. The lesson of the implicit partisanship effect may be more encouraging—the effect establishes that knowledge about a group of which one is not a member can plant seeds of attraction to that group.

[9] Both Brendl et al. (2001) and Rothermund and Wentura (2001) offered nonassociative interpretations of their findings. Their preferred interpretations do not imply an evaluative benefit of mere categorization.

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