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TOEING THE PARTY LINE: IDENTITY MISCLASSIFICATION
AND BEHAVIORAL INFLEXIBILITY IN POLITICAL DECISION MAKING

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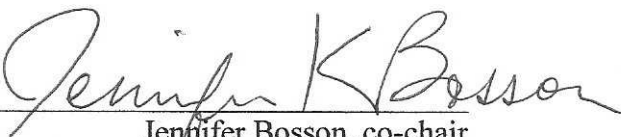
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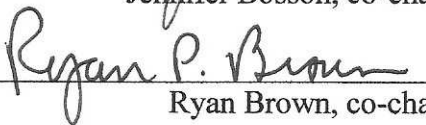
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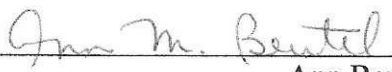
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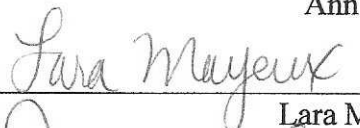
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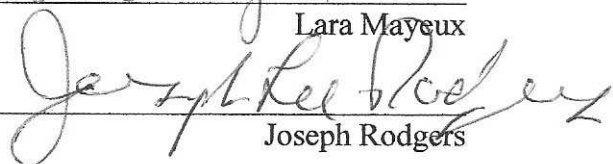
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Abstract

Although social role norms serve as helpful guides to appropriate social behavior, they can also limit people's behavioral flexibility. When role violators expect to be mistaken as a member of a devalued out-group (i.e., identity misclassification), they experience negative affect. However, if role violators forestall identity misclassification by disclaiming stigmatized status, then they should experience less discomfort violating group norms. In the current set of studies, I applied the identity misclassification framework to people's political decision making. In Study 1, Republicans who were randomly assigned to endorse an out-of-party candidate experienced threats to belonging and coherence. Wearing a "Proud to be a Republican" shirt reduced participants' experience of coherence threat, yet did little to quell their belonging threat. In Studies 2 and 3, the political affiliation of candidates influenced Republicans' choice of political candidate and evaluation of political speeches, respectively, regardless of their ability to disclaim. Discussion focuses on the limited utility of disclaimers for political partisans.

Toeing the Party Line: Identity Misclassification
and Behavioral Inflexibility in Political Decision Making

“It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson (1841)

“Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I ha' lost my reputation, I ha' lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial!”

-William Shakespeare's Cassio from Othello (1623)

The sentiments expressed in the above quotations can be characterized as opposite ends of a continuum. On the one side, Emerson praises freedom and flexibility of action, consequences be damned. On the other side, Shakespeare's Cassio reminds us that acting without regard for the possible penalties of our actions can lead to the most lamentable of consequences—a loss of reputation. In a sense, these two poles can be seen as two driving forces within the individual—one suggests a desire for self-determination and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and the other connotes a need to affiliate and be esteemed by others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Maslow, 1954). Theorists from many subfields of psychology have long acknowledged the underlying importance of these two self-motives in guiding people's personality and behavior (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Wiggins & Broughton, 1985). In addition, possessing both a sense of autonomy and positive relationships with others enhances psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), while overemphasizing one to the detriment of the other may signal a maladaptive personality (Ghaed & Gallo, 2006).

In line with Emerson's perspective, research suggests that people benefit from feeling that their actions are self-guided and freely chosen. According to self-determination theory, intrinsically motivated behaviors (i.e., those driven by a natural inclination toward an activity) provide the self with a sense of autonomy and increase psychological well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In line with Cassio's suggestion, people benefit from forming bonds and building close relationships with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1969). To sustain relationships with others, individuals must work to maintain group harmony. Therefore, by living up to the groups' standards for behavior and adhering to valued group norms, people help to maintain group cohesion and harmony (Blanton & Christie, 2003; Hogg, 2003).

Whereas adhering to group norms promotes harmony within the group, violating these norms often leads to social repercussions from both in-group members and society-at-large (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Schmidt & Branscombe, 2001). Thus, when people expect negative social repercussions for their role violating behavior, they increase their conformity to role appropriate behavior (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004), sacrificing their autonomy to avoid social sanctions. The purpose of the current research is to increase understanding of the mechanisms that promote role adherence, and in doing so, investigate the conditions under which people can act autonomously without hindering their fundamental affiliation needs. In previous research my collaborators and I found that when people are able to forestall belonging threats before engaging in a novel and challenging role violating activity, they experience an increased sense of autonomy (Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino, & Taylor, 2005). Thus, by examining the ways in which people can violate

arbitrarily restrictive role norms, without fear of social sanction, I aim to increase our understanding of the factors that promote psychological well-being.

In previous research, my collaborators and I investigated peoples' reactions to role violations that could lead to misclassification as a member of a devalued out-group, a circumstance that we refer to as *identity misclassification* (Bosson et al., 2005). According to our theorizing, when individuals violate group norms by enacting behaviors that are considered diagnostic of a devalued out-group, they experience two self-threats. More specifically, role violators face both a threat to belonging—stemming from the possibility of rejection and punishment from others—and a threat to psychological coherence—given that they are being seen inconsistently with their self-views (Bosson et al., 2005, Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). In the current investigation, I continue to explore the ways in which violating valued group norms affects the role violator both psychologically and behaviorally, and I investigate how reducing the interpersonal and intrapsychic costs of role violations can increase people's willingness to act out of intrinsic motivation.

The following sections outline the theoretical and empirical background of this research. I summarize work that investigates (1) how role norms become powerful guides for behavior, (2) the subjective experiences of those who violate role norms, and (3) ways to reduce the discomfort associated with role violations. Then, using this groundwork, I outline how reducing some of the threats associated with role violations may decrease people's discomfort with and increase people's willingness to violate role norms, thus conferring psychological benefits to the role violator.

The Power of Social Role Norms

Despite the use of the continuum analogy to understand the opening quotations, it is important to note that self-determination and belonging motives are not mutually exclusive. In most situations, these two major self-motives work in concert with one another, producing behavior that feels both autonomously-determined and consistent with others' expectations. Although research in social psychology demonstrates that people often forego their own inclinations to conform to group norms (e.g., Asch, 1955), for various reasons people often underestimate the extent to which their behavior is externally influenced (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). For example, cultural ideals of independence and self-reliance (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), a desire to feel autonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2000), or the need for predictability and control (Swann, 1990) may make people feel as if their behavior is internally guided, when in fact, their behavior stems from external motivations. Thus, despite the fact that people take the reactions of others into account when deciding how to act, they may still interpret these decisions as internally motivated.

Ryan and Deci (2000) suggest that although much of our behavior is extrinsically motivated, the extent to which people "take in" or identify with these external forces has important implications for psychological well-being. According to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), as children grow up and assimilate into society, many external motivators become incorporated into their self-conceptions. To the extent that individuals identify with the external guides of their behavior, they should feel as if their actions reflect their values and beliefs (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Social identity and self-categorization theories help to explain how many of these extrinsic forces become incorporated into the self-concept through the assimilation of group norms. Social identity theory asserts that people form social identities based on their membership in social groups, and these identities become an important source for bolstering and maintaining a positive self-view, via advantageous social comparisons and in-group biases (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, by seeing their in-group as superior in a given domain, because of a favorable inter-group comparison, individuals can increase their social self-esteem, thus increasing the positivity of that particular social identity. Aside from the self-esteem benefits they confer, these social identities serve many adaptive functions for the individual—e.g., providing one with a coherent understanding of the self (Swann, 1990), fulfilling an evolutionary need to affiliate with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995)—and thus should be protected and maintained in order to preserve self-integrity.

Once one identifies as a group member, this self-categorization leads people to adopt the group prototype as an integral part of their group identity, and thus this self-stereotyped group identity guides role appropriate behavior (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). This cognitive process, termed depersonalization, occurs when one's group identity is made salient, and represents a cognitive shift in which the individual, "assimilates [the] self to the in-group prototype" (Hogg, 2003; p. 468). In this sense, group role norms motivate behavior because they become incorporated into group members' understanding of the self (Hogg & McGarty, 1990).

Moreover, group members who incorporate the group prototype into the self face affective consequences when they do not live up to the group's ideal. According to

Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy theory, gaps between one's actual attributes or behavior and one's own or others' ideal attributes or behavior provoke negative affective reactions within the individual (i.e., either disappointment/depression or distress based on the source of the standards to which one compares the self). Thus, in an effort to avoid feelings of disappointment and anxiety, people should strive to meet the group prototype, as the prototype defines appropriate group behavior.

Given that social norms provide helpful heuristics for understanding how to act in social situations (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), thinking of the self in stereotypic group-based terms should be beneficial to the individual in several ways. First, relying on social norms when making decisions requires little cognitive effort. Thus, because people often use heuristics when making decisions (Tversky & Kahnemann, 1974), people may adhere to social norms because they are cognitively easy.

Another benefit to using stereotypic self-views when making decisions is that it provides a greater sense of predictability in social situations. In general, people possess a need for regularity and coherence (e.g., Guidano & Liotti, 1983; Popper, 1963), and meeting this need allows people to avoid the psychological threat of uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). More specifically, self theorists have long postulated a fundamental need for a coherent self-view (Lecky, 1945), stemming from the desire for predictability and control (Swann, 1990). By identifying with a given social group, an individual inherits a label and a corresponding set of standards for behavior, which helps to fulfill people's need to establish a coherent view of the self and to have others recognize and categorize them in a way that confirms their self-views (Swann, 1990). Given that many individuals with whom one interacts will know, understand, and adhere to the same

standards for behavior, buying into this collective identity should make social interaction more predictable and fulfill one's need for self-verifying feedback.

In addition to the intrapsychic reasons that people endorse and follow social role norms, role adherence fosters connections to others through collective identification with the group. Theorists suggest that people have a fundamental need to affiliate with others, because over our evolutionary history people who formed alliances with others survived and reproduced at higher rates than individuals who isolated themselves from others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Often people based these associations on similarity with others, distrusting people who appeared different as a way to protect themselves (Fox, 1992). Thus, the formation of social norms may have roots in our evolutionary past, arising from a need to identify allies and avoid foes.

Taken in this light, social norms not only provide individuals with a way to make decisions about their own behavior, but they also become criteria for judging others' behavior. Perhaps the most obvious reason that people conform to group norms lies in the interpersonal consequences of violating social roles. In this capacity, group norms serve as standards of conduct, used by other group members to judge individual group members' status as "true" members (Schmidt & Branscombe, 2001). Therefore, those who do not live up to the group's standards face derogation for being "black sheep" (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). For example, Marques and colleagues (e.g., Marques et al., 1988; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988) found that evaluators derogated a deviant in-group member more severely than a deviant out-group member, and the authors suggest that this serves to bolster in-group uniformity, and thus increase conformity to group norms. Indeed, when highly identified group members exhibit

non-prototypical behavior, they often react by subsequently reaffirming the group prototype (e.g. overconforming to group norms), even when doing so casts their own performance in a negative light (Schmidt & Branscombe, 2001). However, this most likely serves as an attempt to assert one's allegiance to group standards, as threats to one's prototypicality often result in attempts to demonstrate both one's status as an adequate group member (e.g., Cheryan, Cameron, Katagiri, & Monin, 2007) and one's intent to adhere to role norms in the future (e.g., Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). Thus, group members' reactions to both their own and others' role violations suggest a desire to increase group members' adherence to the valued norms, and thus promote uniformity and cohesion among group members.

Because of the evolutionary importance of social acceptance, people are theorized to have acquired affective monitors of their social inclusion and exclusion. Thus, hints of social rejection produce negative affect including low self-esteem (Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995), anger, hurt feelings, and physiological arousal (for review see Williams, 2001). Perhaps because of these negative affective consequences of rejection, many people possess an acute awareness of how their behavior impacts others' perceptions of them (Goffman, 1956; Snyder, 1974) and awareness of others' expectations should affect people's self-presentation (Baumeister & Jones, 1978; Jones & Jones, 1964). Therefore, the awareness that their behavior has interpersonal consequences sensitizes people to the normative behavior of social groups and leads them to resist deviating in negative ways from accepted social norms (Blanton & Christie, 2003).

In sum, role norm adherence confers many benefits to the individual, by contributing to a positive, coherent sense of self, fortifying bonds with others, and helping to avoid interpersonal rejection. In the following section, I elaborate on the experiences of role violators, and explore how violating social roles can threaten people's needs for belonging and coherence.

Role Violations and Identity Misclassification

As described in the previous section, role norms serve several intrapsychic and interpersonal functions. Consequently, when people violate group norms, they jeopardize these benefits, which can result in psychological strain on the individual. More specifically, my focus concerns role violations that lead to identity misclassification, or false categorization into a devalued social group. For example, when others mistake a heterosexual man who expresses affection toward a male friend as "gay," or a traditional woman who does not shave her legs as a "feminist," these role violating individuals become misclassified as out-group members. Although previous research has investigated the psychological threat experienced by role violators (e.g., Cheryan et al., 2007; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Swim, Ferguson, & Hyers, 1999), this work has almost exclusively focused on the threat to belonging that role violators anticipate. Thus, the identity misclassification framework offers a unique contribution to understanding the plight of the role violator by proposing a dual threat (i.e., threatening both role violators' need to belong and their need for coherence; Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). In this section, I elaborate on the threats to belonging and coherence associated with identity misclassification, and the resultant effects these have on the individual.

Just as role adherence contributes to a coherent self-view, role violations can conversely violate one's need for coherence. In the case of identity misclassified role violators, who are misperceived by others as members of a devalued out-group, this misperception should constitute a challenge to their understanding of self, or what Swann and his colleagues term an epistemic threat (Swann, Stein-Seroussi, & Giesler, 1992). According to self-verification theory, people seek information that corresponds to their firmly held self-views, and non-verifying feedback can threaten one's need for predictability and control (Swann, 1990). In addition, because role norms serve as guides for discerning "true" membership in groups (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988; Schmidt & Branscombe, 2001), role violations may in fact cause people to question their own status as adequate group members (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2004; Prewitt-Freilino, Bosson, & Burnaford, 2007a). Thus, role violators who face identity misclassification should experience negative arousal stemming from non-verifying feedback from others and the threat this poses to their need for a coherent self-view.

Beyond these coherence threats, and perhaps more obviously, identity misclassification poses threats to the role violator's need for belonging. Because people show bias toward in-group others in even minimal group situations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), being mistakenly seen as an out-group member on the basis of one's role violating behavior implies that one will encounter less favorable evaluations from in-group members. Classic research by Tajfel and Turner (1979) illustrated that people prefer and inequitably distribute advantage to in-group others, even when the basis of group membership is meaningless (e.g., based on whether one ostensibly over or underestimates the number of dots shown in a previous task). Thus, when individuals

jeopardize real, meaningful group memberships by becoming misclassified as an out-group member, they should be seen less favorably by in-group others.

In addition, when a role violation leads to misclassification into a socially stigmatized group, the individual may face especially harsh treatment from both in- and out-group others. According to Becker (1963), such individuals, labeled *falsely accused deviants*, can expect the same treatment that is afforded to actual “deviants”. Given that stigmatized individuals face a range of social sanctions—from social slights and insensitivity to overt verbal and physical abuse (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Goffman, 1963; Jones et al., 1984)—the role violator misclassified as stigmatized awaits the same fate.

Consistent with this idea, recent research by Rudman and Fairchild (2004) found that participants sabotaged gender role violators’ performance on a trivia game, by giving counterstereotypical individuals less helpful clues than gender stereotypical individuals. The authors note the impact that such punishments have on role violators’ behavior. Rudman and Fairchild assume that people’s anticipation of negative social sanctions for their counterstereotypical behavior, which they term *fear of backlash*, plays a major role in people’s adherence to role norms. Thus, they examined people’s reactions to a gender role violation (in which men and women ostensibly scored poorly on a gender-consistent task and well on a gender-inconsistent task). The authors found that gender role violators showed concern about how others would see them and this fear of backlash led gender role violating individuals to engage in self-presentational strategies to appear gender conforming (e.g., hiding their stellar gender-inconsistent performance, increasing their interest in gender-consistent careers and sports). Thus,

the authors argue that anticipation of the social repercussions of role violations helps to explain the ubiquity of role adherence.

Although Rudman and Fairchild (2004) asked participants to report their expectation of punishment from others, they did not ask participants to report the extent to which they expected identity misclassification. Therefore, with this previous research in mind, my collaborators and I (Bosson et al., 2005) investigated whether role violations indeed lead people to expect misclassification, and whether role violators who anticipate misclassification feel psychological discomfort for the reasons that we propose. In this prior research, we focused primarily on what is perhaps one of the most common examples of role violations that can lead to identity misclassification—heterosexual men’s performance of feminine activities.

Given that most people incorrectly conflate masculinity and heterosexuality (Herek, 1986; Kite & Deaux, 1987), most perceivers assume that men or boys who display gender inconsistent qualities or behavior are gay (e.g., Martin, 1990; McCreary, 1994). Thus, to the extent that men anticipate misclassification as gay when exhibiting feminine behaviors and attributes, they should feel uncomfortable because of the threats to belonging and coherence that misclassification poses. Although past research has not looked explicitly at men’s expectations of identity misclassification, findings confirm that men feel relatively uncomfortable violating the male gender role and often attempt to avoid such role violations. For example, masculine men avoided beneficial role violations and displayed high levels of discomfort when posing in gender inconsistent roles for a photograph (e.g., baking, childcare, etc.; Bem and Lenney, 1976). In assessing this past research, we presumed that men’s discomfort with gender role

violations stemmed primarily from their expectations of misclassification as gay (Bosson et al., 2005).

In order to investigate this possibility, we first had men and women report how they would feel engaging in gender role violating activities (Bosson et al., 2005; Study 1). Specifically, we asked heterosexual men and women to report their affective reactions to engaging in either masculine (e.g., watching football with friends, doing a strength workout) or feminine (e.g., sharing emotions, shopping with female friends) activities. Participants then reported the extent to which they expected others who saw them engaging in the particular activity to mistake them as gay/lesbian. We found that heterosexual men reported greater discomfort imagining themselves engaging in these hypothetical gender role violations than did heterosexual women, and this stemmed from their higher expectations of misclassification as gay.

A conceptual replication of this study demonstrated that even when we allowed participants to generate their own masculine and feminine behaviors, men exhibited greater discomfort violating their gender role than women did, due to men's greater expectation of being seen as gay (Bosson, Taylor, & Prewitt-Freilino, 2006). In addition, this follow-up study confirmed that expectations of misclassification predict discomfort during a gender role violation, even when controlling for theoretically relevant individual differences (e.g., strength of gender identification, homophobia, gender ideology). This suggests that the threat of identity misclassification is ubiquitous and not limited to a subset of individuals, as both men high and low in relevant individual difference variables reported that they would feel discomfort to the extent that they expected misclassification on the basis of their role violating behavior.

In an attempt to generalize our identity misclassification findings to other stigmatized groups, we also examined women's reactions to role violating behaviors diagnostic of hippies (e.g., holding a sign at a peace rally), nerds (e.g., joining a computer science club), and lesbians (e.g., getting a military-style haircut; Bosson et al., 2005). We found that non-stigmatized women's expectations of being seen as a nerd, hippie, and lesbian strongly predicted their discomfort with behaviors diagnostic of those groups. This confirmed that being seen as a member of both minimally stigmatized groups (i.e., hippies and nerds) and maximally stigmatized groups (i.e., lesbians; Frable, 1993) can elicit discomfort among role violators.

In sum, our previous research (Bosson et al., 2005) suggests that people's expectations of misclassification explain their discomfort with role violations. Given these findings, we assumed that mechanisms that reduce the likelihood of identity misclassification should decrease role violators' discomfort. In the following section, I elaborate on our previous research, in which we investigated ways to reduce role violators' discomfort.

Reducing Discomfort with Role Violations

Based on the assumption that reducing the threat of identity misclassification would reduce the psychological strain of role violations, we investigated the utility of *disclaimers* (i.e., explicit proclamations that communicate that one is not a member of a stigmatized group; Stokes & Hewitt, 1976). Below, I discuss past work on the efficacy of disclaimers, why we think they are effective, and other methods for reducing the strain of role violations.

In a study of stereotype threat, Bosson, Haymovitz, and Pinel (2004) had gay and straight men interact with children after either indicating their sexual orientation or not. Steele and Aronson (1995) propose that the existence of negative stereotypes about a particular group's performance in a given domain can negatively impact group members' performance when their group membership is made salient, and they refer to this effect as *stereotype threat*. In the Bosson et al. (2004) study, the authors expected gay men's interaction with children to be impaired when they indicated their sexual orientation, because being reminded of their homosexuality should make stereotypes about pedophilic gay men salient. Bosson et al. recruited heterosexual men as a control group, expecting that the manipulation should have little effect on their interaction with the children. In fact, Bosson et al. found that although gay men showed the predicted stereotype threat pattern of worse performance after indicating their sexual orientation, straight men showed the unpredicted opposite pattern—i.e., they performed better during the childcare task when they indicated their sexual orientation. Thus, reframing these findings in light of our identity misclassification framework, straight men in Bosson et al.'s study who did not report their heterosexuality experienced discomfort because they anticipated misclassification on the basis of their role violating behavior. To these men, engaging in a childcare task (i.e., a stereotypically feminine activity; Kite & Deaux, 1987) threatened their status as heterosexual men. Thus, by indicating their heterosexuality, men experienced little threat of misclassification and therefore could engage in the task without fear of being seen as gay.

Based on this finding, we designed a set of studies to investigate if allowing heterosexual men the opportunity to indicate their sexual orientation before engaging in

a gender role violating activity would buffer them against the threats of identity misclassification (Bosson, et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). We assumed that by indicating their heterosexual status, role violators communicated to others their non-stigmatized status, thus making it unlikely that they would be misclassified as gay. In our initial study, men performed one of two braiding tasks while being videotaped (see Bosson et al, 2005; Study 3). We designed these tasks to ensure similarity in their physical requirements, yet one constituted a gender role violation and the other did not. In the one framed as a feminine task, men performed a “hairstyling” task in which they braided a mannequin’s hair and secured it with a hair band. In the neutrally-framed “rope reinforcing” task, men braided three pieces of rope together and secured them with a rubber band. Before doing the braiding task, men completed a demographic questionnaire, which the experimenter later filmed; participants thus believed that their audience would have that information about them. In order to allow some men to disclaim homosexual status, we manipulated whether the questionnaire contained an item asking men to report their sexual orientation. When role violating men believed that their ostensible audience knew their sexual orientation, they reported less discomfort relative to role violating men whose filmed questionnaire did not contain the sexual orientation question. In contrast, for men who reinforced rope, the disclaimer had no effect on their discomfort. Thus, this study supported our claim that disclaimers effectively buffer the self against the negative affective consequences of identity misclassification.

In this initial behavioral study, we asserted that the disclaimer reduced role violators’ discomfort because it allowed individuals to communicate their non-

stigmatized status. However, the possibility remained that our disclaimer merely allowed role violators to be buffered against a self-threat by affirming a valued aspect of the self. In order to investigate this possibility, we conducted a follow-up study in which we compared the disclaimer's effectiveness to that of other self-protective strategies (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). A large body of research suggests that people can protect against self-threats by affirming positive self-aspects unrelated to the threatened domain (e.g., Hart, Shaver, & Goldenberg, 2005; Steele, 1988; Tesser & Cornell, 1991). For example, Steele (1988) found that merely wearing a white lab coat reduced cognitive dissonance among science majors. However, the lab coat had no effect on non-science majors, for whom the coat presumably held little relevance to the self. For our study, participants wrote about an important aspect of the self. Previous research suggests that reflecting on a personal value can minimize defensiveness in the face of self-threatening information (Cohen, Aronson, & Steele, 2000; Sherman & Cohen, 2002) and reduce negative affect among people who undergo self-threats (Steele & Liu, 1983). Thus, we assumed that our writing task would serve as an adequate self-affirmation. If so, one could argue that it should protect role violators from the discomfort of identity misclassification.

Despite the vast literature of support for the self-protective properties of self-affirmations (for review see Sherman & Cohen, 2006), we did not expect the self-affirmation to minimize the discomfort of identity misclassification. That is, we expected men who affirmed a valued self-aspect (unrelated to heterosexuality or masculinity) to experience discomfort during a role violation. Given our assumption that identity misclassified role violators face a dual threat to both their belonging and

coherence needs, we proposed that only strategies that effectively communicate one's non-stigmatized status could fully reduce discomfort with role violations. Based on this logic, in addition to our previous disclaimer manipulation, we also designed a masculinity affirmation condition to assess whether subtly communicating non-stigmatized status—by asserting one's in-group prototypical attributes—to one's audience effectively reduces discomfort with role violations.

To test the efficacy of these various self-protective strategies, we once again had men engage in the hairstyling task, but before violating their gender role, all men first completed a writing task, which served as our independent variable (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). Men in the control condition completed a mundane, non-affirming writing task, in which they gave directions from one location to another. Men in the disclaimer condition completed this same writing task; however, they also indicated their sexual orientation at the top of the writing task. Based on our previous research (Bosson et al., 2005), we predicted that men who indicated their sexual orientation would experience less negative affect during a role violation than men in the control condition.

Next, men in the masculinity affirmation condition wrote about their interest in one of four categories of masculine activities (e.g., athletics, hunting/camping, science/math, and cars/motorcycles). Given that most people mistakenly conflate heterosexuality and masculinity (Herek, 1986; Kite & Deaux, 1987), we expected men who asserted their masculinity to feel that they had communicated their heterosexual status to their ostensible audience, and thus be buffered from the threat of identity misclassification.

Finally, we fashioned the self-affirmation condition after previous research (e.g., Fein & Spencer, 1997) by having participants choose one of six self-affirming topics to write about (e.g., music/movies, academics, charity work, mental health, religion/spirituality, and spending time with family). Writing about one of these topics allowed participants to reflect on an important self-aspect, unrelated to heterosexuality or masculinity. Although previous research has demonstrated that affirmations protect the individual from a wide range of self-threats (Sherman & Cohen, 2006), we believe the expectation of identity misclassification to be a unique threat specifically because it threatens not only intrapsychic coherence, but also the need for interpersonal belonging. Thus, despite self-affirmations' apparent utility in combating coherence threats, we assumed that without communicating their non-stigmatized status to their audience, self-affirmed role violators continue to experience belonging threats. Therefore, these individuals should display levels of negative affect similar to men in the control condition.

As predicted, men in the disclaimer and masculinity affirmation conditions displayed less discomfort during and higher implicit self-esteem after the role violation than men in the control and self-affirmation conditions, suggesting that communicating non-stigmatized status—either directly or indirectly—minimizes the negative affective consequences of role violations (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). Furthermore, although men who self-affirmed displayed less coherence concerns than men in the control condition, they felt similar levels of belonging threat, and a mediational analysis confirmed that belonging and coherence concerns drove men's discomfort with the role

violation, supporting our assertions about the nature of the self-threats that identity misclassification elicits (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2004).

To summarize, role violators who face identity misclassification experience threats to their belonging and coherence, which explains their negative affective reactions to role violations. By communicating their non-stigmatized status to their ostensible audience, either through overtly disclaiming stigmatized status or subtly communicating their status as an adequate member of the in-group, role violators can avoid identity misclassification and its accompanying threats. In the following section, I outline some of the possible benefits of engaging in role violations and how these apply to the current investigation.

Benefits of Role Violations

As noted above, when role violators can communicate their non-stigmatized status to onlookers, they may violate social role norms without discomfort. Although reducing people's discomfort seems a noble goal, some critics might challenge its usefulness. After all, role norms serve as helpful guides for behavior and make life more predictable. Why is it important to investigate the factors that might reduce people's reliance on them?

Despite the utility of role norms, many social roles remain arbitrary and restrictive, limiting peoples' ability to act in their best interest or in line with their natural inclinations. If the primary motivation for adhering to a particular role norm stems from a fear of misclassification and its accompanying threats, then a lack of self-determination may leave people feeling relatively unautonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Theories of optimal functioning suggest that engaging in self-directed, intrinsically

interesting pursuits confers psychological benefits to individuals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Conversely, when people are concerned about punishment and are plagued by self-conscious preoccupation, they may experience impaired social and cognitive functioning (Cioffi, 2000; Schlenker & Leary, 1982) and decreased psychological well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1995). Thus, from a theoretical standpoint, engaging in novel and intrinsically interesting role violating activities should increase people's sense of autonomy, provided that they can steer clear of identity misclassification threats.

Focusing more specifically on the male gender role, rigid adherence to masculine role norms may stifle men's natural inclinations, and hinder psychological well-being. In his discussion of the male gender role, Pleck (1981) argues that despite the "social condemnation" that accompanies male role norm violations, rigidly adhering to the male gender role can lead to other types of threats. For example, overemphasizing one's career may degrade one's family life, or suppressing emotional expressions may make psychological coping more difficult. Thus, Pleck (1995) argues many men trade psychological well-being for the pursuit of an almost unattainable masculine ideal. In doing so, men may display less adaptability and thus hinder their cross-situational competence (Bem & Lewis, 1975).

In an initial investigation of the potential psychological benefits of engaging in role violations, we had heterosexual men perform the hairstyling task described above and measured their psychological well-being (see Study 4; Bosson et al, 2005). To measure psychological well-being, we administered items from the short form of Ryff's (1989) Scales of Psychological Well-Being, measuring participants' autonomy (i.e.,

feelings of volition) and personal growth (i.e., openness to new challenges). We reasoned that using a disclaimer would allow role violating men to benefit psychologically from the hairstyling task, because it should free them from the discomfort of identity misclassification. In the absence of discomfort, men should experience the intrinsic motivation associated with a novel, challenging activity. Thus, we once again had some participants indicate their sexual orientation to their ostensible audience on a demographic questionnaire, and others completed the questionnaire without the sexual orientation question. A third group completed the dependent measures, without completing the hairstyling task, to provide baseline rates of our psychological well-being measures.

In assessing the benefits of non-threatening role violations, we found that men who did not disclaim evidenced decreased personal growth following the hairstyling task relative to baseline level. However men who disclaimed before the gender role violation exhibited similar levels of personal growth to men in the baseline condition. On a measure of autonomy, an even more impressive pattern emerged. Men who disclaimed reported increased autonomy following the hairstyling task, relative to men in the baseline and control conditions. Thus our results suggest that individuals can benefit psychologically from role violations when unencumbered by identity misclassification threats. Taken together, our previous research highlights how a fear of being seen as a devalued other on the basis of a role violating behavior curtails behavioral flexibility. By forestalling identity misclassification, people feel more comfortable violating role norms and may benefit from increased feelings of autonomy (Bosson et al., 2005).

In addition to the fact that rigid role adherence can threaten people's autonomy, it may also limit people's ability to act in their own best interest. For example, in our research on women's reactions to nerd-like behaviors, women reported that they would feel uncomfortable studying in the library on weekend nights to the extent that they expected others to misclassify them as a nerd (Bosson et al., 2005). Arguably, studying confers benefit to the individual, yet people may avoid potentially beneficial behaviors to steer clear of belonging and coherence threats. A similar situation may plague many African American youth who report shunning academic pursuits, in part, to avoid being taunted as "white" (Ogbu, 2003). Because of the prevalent stereotypes about African Americans' poor academic performance, black youth often disidentify with intellectualism to avoid experiencing stereotype threat (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Thus, those African Americans engaged in academic pursuits may feel like social outcasts.

Thomas Frank (2004) expresses a similar notion in his book *What's the Matter with Kansas: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. Frank argues that many rural poor, who stand to benefit from the economic policies of Democrats (e.g., social welfare programs and increased educational funding), often vote Republican because of party loyalty and demonization of the "liberal left." Although Frank is not a research psychologist, recent psychological research supports the notion that political decision making often relies on party loyalty over rational weighing of evidence (Cohen, 2003; Westen, Blagov, Harenski, Kilts, & Hamann, 2006). This suggests that people sometimes disregard their own best interest to adhere to party norms.

In each of these examples, people act in line with group roles, perhaps to their own detriment. The explanation of this detrimental behavior may lie in group members' fear of being misclassified as an out-group member. For the avowed Republican who agrees with the Democratic candidate's stance on various issues, or the self-identified "sorority girl" who yearns to join the chess club, do these individuals worry that others will see them as something they are not? If so, these individuals may steer clear of these potentially beneficial behaviors to avoid misclassification. Just as previous research demonstrated that disclaimers increase role violators' feelings of autonomy (Bosson et al., 2005), can disclaimers also increase people's willingness to violate social role norms in situations in which a role violation objectively benefits them?

Current Investigation

In the current set of studies, I expand on our previous research on role violators who face identity misclassification in several ways. First, although we found self-report evidence that people other than heterosexual men experience identity misclassification when violating a social role norm (i.e., women who fear being seen as a hippie, nerd, or lesbian; Bosson et al., 2005), we have yet to explore actual role violations other than gender role violations. In order to argue that identity misclassification processes arise during many types of role violating behaviors and invite misclassification into various devalued groups, I explored whether identity misclassification affects populations other than heterosexual men, namely, people who profess strong political affiliation. In this sense, the current set of studies serves as an attempt to fortify our previous assertion that identity misclassification is a general process that can affect many types of role violators whose behavior is diagnostic of membership in a devalued out-group.

In line with this goal, I also attempt to establish that identity misclassification threats arise not only during misclassification into socially stigmatized groups (i.e., groups generally devalued by society as a whole), but also when a person faces misclassification into an out-group that is devalued in a much more circumscribed context. Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that in-group biases arise from a desire to bolster social self-esteem, and often out-groups acquire devalued status as a result of in-group biased social comparisons. Thus, given that social identity processes compel people to devalue out-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), role violators whose behavior might invite misclassification into an out-group should experience threats to belonging and coherence, despite the out-group's social acceptability in society in

general. For example, imagine the threat experienced by the staunch Republican who may be mistaken for a Democrat for endorsing a Democratic candidate. Although Democrats are not stigmatized in general, they often are by Republicans. Thus, Republicans should face threats to belonging and coherence when they endorse an out-of-party candidate.

An additional goal of the current research involves assessing whether factors that minimize the likelihood of identity misclassification increase people's tendency to act in a manner that benefits them objectively. Because of the threats associated with identity misclassification, many people may adhere to social norms strictly to avoid the interpersonal and intrapsychic penalties of misclassification. Does reducing these threats – by offering people an opportunity to use a disclaimer – increase people's willingness to engage in role violations that objectively benefit them? According to the identity misclassification framework, role violators' expectations of misclassification should dampen their ability to reap the benefits of their behavior, because they face coherence and belonging threats. People should also be less willing to violate role norms when they fear being misclassified. Thus, using disclaimers to forestall misclassification should increase people's willingness to deviate from group norms and allow people to profit from beneficial role violating behavior.

In addition, because the current investigation focuses on people's willingness to violate social role norms in the context of political decision-making, the current studies expand the real world applications of identity misclassification research. Political psychology is a growing field in social psychology. Not only did the 2006 Society for Personality and Social Psychology conference include an opening address and multiple

symposia sessions devoted to the topic of political decision making, but this focus earned the conference extensive media coverage (e.g. Carey, 2006; Vedantam, 2006).

One notable line of research highlights the social identity function of partisan identification. For example, Greene (2004) found that individuals' partisan social identity predicted political attitudes and behaviors over and above traditional measures of partisan strength, suggesting that the identity component of partisanship affects people's political decisions. Recall that a primary function of self-categorization and social identity processes involves distinguishing the in-group from the out-group via biased social comparisons (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). Thus unsurprisingly, theorists assert the crucial role that partisan biases play in "perpetuating and reinforcing sharp differences in opinion between Democrats and Republicans" (Bartels, 2002; p. 117).

Moreover, recent research by Westen and colleagues provides neurological evidence that people's reactions to candidates are motivated by strong emotional responses based on party loyalty, rather than a rational weighing of information (Westen et al., 2006). Similarly, previous research by Cohen (2003) suggests that party affiliation almost exclusively determines people's political decisions, regardless of policy implications and people's ideological beliefs. However, people remain relatively unaware of the extent to which party affiliation guides their decision-making. In addition, although people display little insight into the motivations for their own political choices, people readily point out the importance of party affiliation in determining their political rivals' political decisions (Cohen, 2003). Thus, the current research not only explores the effect of identity misclassification on people's

willingness to violate social roles, but does so in a context with real world applicability and widespread appeal.

In the current set of studies, I focused specifically on Republicans, as opposed to Democrats. Despite my belief that both Democrats and Republicans undergo identity misclassification threats, and therefore should benefit from the increased behavioral flexibility that forestalling misclassification affords, there are several practical and theoretical reasons why I focus on Republicans in particular. First, there are fewer strongly identified Democrats than strongly identified Republicans in the University of Oklahoma psychology department's participant pool. Prescreening data from the last several semesters suggests that there are between two to three times as many strongly identified Republicans as there are strongly identified Democrats. Thus, from a practical perspective, including Democrats would require several semesters of data collection, in order to obtain a sufficient number of participants.

From a theoretical perspective, Republicans may hold greater expectations of misclassification than Democrats. For example, research on the psychological correlates of political conservatism suggests that conservatism predicts greater intolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty, less openness to experience, a greater need for order, structure, and closure, and less integrative complexity (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). Thus, given the strong link between political conservatism and identification as Republican (Treier & Hillygus, 2006), it is reasonable to assume that Republicans may in general possess these psychological tendencies to a greater degree than Democrats. Additionally, political theorists note the growing link between religious fundamentalism and Republican identification, compared to less evangelical

denominations (Layman, 1997). Thus, given that religious fundamentalists tend to possess a more rigid cognitive style than their orthodox counterparts (e.g., Brown, Barnes, & Judice-Campbell, 2007), Republicans may display greater cognitive rigidity than Democrats. This cognitive rigidity and intolerance for ambiguity may make Republicans feel more threatened by misclassification than Democrats, as coherence threats may be especially salient to Republicans.

Other evidence suggesting that Republicans may fear misclassification more than Democrats do comes from unpublished data from our previous research (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2005). In this work, we found that Republicans scored higher than Democrats on Altemeyer and Hunsberger's (1992) Right Wing Authoritarian Scale (the RWA, a measure of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism). Given that conventionalism involves placing value on social conventions (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992), Republicans may be less willing than Democrats to violate valued group norms. In this sense, Republicans may experience heightened coherence and belonging threats during identity misclassification, and thus in general be less likely to violate the role norms associated with their party affiliation. In support of this idea, in the same research in which we found a link between RWA and Republicanism, we also found that Democrats were more willing to support an out-of-party candidate (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2005).

Finally, independent of any dispositional tendencies that strongly identified Republicans may possess, the cultural context of Oklahoma may allow Democrats to be more flexible in their political decision-making than Republicans. Actual voting behavior suggests that Oklahoma Democrats may be likely to violate group norms by

voting for Republican candidates. For example, although as of November 1, 2004, a majority of registered voters in Oklahoma identified as Democrat (51.4%, compared to only 38.1% identified as Republican), a large majority of Oklahoma voters supported the 2004 Republican presidential (65.6%) and senatorial (52.8%) candidates as compared to their Democratic opponents (34.4% and 41.2%, respectively; Oklahoma State Election Board, n.d.). In fact, the number of Oklahoma voters supporting George W. Bush (i.e., the Republican candidate) in the 2004 presidential election surpassed the total number of Republicans registered within the state of Oklahoma, suggesting that many registered Oklahoma Democrats voted against their own political party's candidate. Thus, because in Oklahoma, there may be little social pressure among Democrats to vote along party lines, Republicans may feel more pressure than Democrats to conform to group norms and vote for an in-party candidate. For these reasons, the identity misclassification framework should apply particularly well to strongly identified Republicans.

Overview of Studies

In the current investigation I conducted three studies to explore Republicans' experience of identity misclassification. The first study serves as a conceptual replication of one of our basic studies, using violations of political party norms rather than gender role violations (Bosson et al., 2005). Strong partisans should feel uncomfortable endorsing an out-of-party candidate who objectively benefits them, in part because they anticipate identity misclassification. However, if they are able to disclaim their membership in the opposite political party, by indicating their political affiliation to their ostensible audience, they should feel less discomfort. Moreover, this

political disclaimer should allow role violators to benefit psychologically from supporting a candidate whose policies benefit them.

Whereas in Study 1, I induced people to endorse either an in-party or out-of-party candidate, in Study 2, I investigated people's freely chosen selection of candidate. I hypothesized that strongly-identified Republicans' ability to disclaim membership in the Democratic Party would increase their willingness to endorse a Democratic candidate who benefits them, because disclaiming should buffer participants against belonging and coherence threats. Finally in Study 3, I expanded the identity misclassification framework to other types of political behaviors beyond endorsement of an out-of-party candidate. Specifically, I predicted that when people publicly evaluate political candidates, their expectations of misclassification affect their willingness to give an unbiased assessment of a poorly performing political candidate. If people expect that others will misclassify them based on critical (but accurate) statements about an in-party candidate or overly generous assessments of a out-of-party candidate, then disclaiming should allow them to provide a more honest assessment of the candidate's performance. Taken together, these three studies address disclaimers' utility in allowing people more behavioral flexibility, whether that means endorsing an out-of-party candidate that benefits them or giving a more accurate assessment of a candidate's performance.

Power Analyses

I ran power analyses to estimate the total number of participants needed in each study. Our previous work on identity misclassification (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press) yielded an average interaction effect size of $f = .35$. Given

an alpha of .05 and setting power at .80, I estimated needing 65 to 67 total participants for each of the proposed 2 X 2 between subjects studies (depending on whether the analyses were for a 2-way analysis of variance or a chi-square test; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, in press). Thus, I planned to run 16 or 17 participants per cell for each of the following studies. In the following sections, I describe the methodology used to address the theoretical questions outlined above.

Study 1

In Study 1, I tested the generalizability of the identity misclassification formulation by investigating people's thoughts and feelings when they publicly endorsed an out-of-party political candidate. Specifically, strongly identified Republicans' endorsed, on videotape, either a Republican or Democratic candidate whose platform objectively benefited them. Moreover, to determine if reducing the likelihood of identity misclassification minimizes Republican role violators' discomfort while endorsing a Democratic candidate, I manipulated participants' ability to communicate their political party affiliation to their audience via a disclaimer. This study served as a conceptual replication of our previous work in which heterosexual men either informed or did not inform their audience of their heterosexuality before performing either a gender role violating "hairstyling task" or a gender neutral "rope reinforcing task" (Bosson et al., 2005). The primary goals of this study were thus to establish that people's expectations of identity misclassification play a role in driving their negative reactions to out-of-party political candidates, and to demonstrate the usefulness of disclaimers in reducing these negative reactions.

I induced Republican participants to write and recite a speech endorsing either a Democratic or Republican candidate, while wearing either a "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt or a blank t-shirt that communicated nothing about their political affiliation. Next, I assessed participants' (a) expectations of identity misclassification, (b) perceptions of threats to belonging and coherence, (c) feelings of discomfort, and (d) self-esteem. In addition to measuring participants' self-reported discomfort during their endorsement speech, I had independent raters code participants' nonverbal discomfort

during their speech and the quality of participants' speeches. Additionally, participants indicated the likelihood that they would appoint each candidate if given a choice.

Hypotheses

Expectations of Identity Misclassification

I expected that participants who violated a group norm by endorsing an out-of-party candidate would expect misclassification more than participants who endorsed the in-party candidate. Aside from this main effect of candidate's party, I also assumed that disclaiming, by wearing a political t-shirt, would reduce role violators' expectations of misclassification and the accompanying threats to belonging and coherence, but would have little effect on participants who endorsed the in-party candidate. In addition, I expected that Republicans who publicly endorsed a Democratic candidate while wearing a blank shirt would also experience more negative affect than their political t-shirt wearing counterparts. This would be evidenced by greater self-reported and non-verbal discomfort, as well as their lower implicit and explicit self-esteem. However, I expected the t-shirt to have little influence on the affect of Republicans who endorsed an in-party candidate.

Furthermore, I predicted that any increase in participants' discomfort and reduction in their self-esteem would stem from role violating Republicans' greater expectations of misclassification as a Democrat, when they wore the blank (i.e., non-disclaiming) t-shirt while giving their speech.

Preference for Endorsed Candidate

As a preliminary investigation of whether disclaiming influenced people's preference for a beneficial out-of-party candidate, I assessed people's preference for the

beneficial candidate, who they just endorsed. Role violating participants, who disclaimed by wearing the political t-shirt, should indicate more support for the beneficial out-of-party candidate than people unable to disclaim. (In Study 2, I assessed people's preferences for candidates more directly by having them actually choose one of the two candidates to support.)

Finally, in this study, raters coded the quality of the speeches that participants gave. Given that in all cases the experimenter asked participants to endorse a candidate that objectively benefited them, it should have been in the best interest of the participant to write a persuasive speech. However, when the objectively beneficial candidate came from the Democratic Party, Republicans may have felt insecure about whole-heartedly endorsing the out-of-party candidate for fear of being misclassified. Thus, one strategy Republicans could have used to avoid misclassification as a Democrat involves writing and reciting a relatively low-quality, unpersuasive speech when endorsing the out-of-party candidate. By giving a lackluster speech, participants may have assumed that they had communicated their less-than-enthusiastic feelings about the candidate. If, however, Republicans disclaimed Democratic status by wearing the political t-shirt, this may have enabled them to write more effectively in support of the Democratic candidate.

Method

Participants

A total of 81 strongly identified Republicans (55 women and 26 men; 95% Caucasian) completed the procedure described below. Of those who participated, 13 participants refused the experimenter's request to endorse an out-of-party candidate and

three participants in the blank t-shirt condition identified as Republican in their speech. Excluding these individuals left 65 participants (44 women and 21 men; 94% Caucasian) for my preliminary analyses.¹

I recruited students from the introductory psychology research participant pool on the basis of their scores on a measure of political affiliation, collected during the Psychology Department's prescreening at the beginning of the semester. One item required respondents to identify their political affiliation as "Democrat", "Republican", "Independent", or "Other/None of the above." Respondents then completed a modified version of Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) Collective Self-Esteem Scale. The five-item measure assessed the strength of respondents' identification with the reported political party (e.g., "Being a member of that political party is an important part of my self-image," and "Being a member of that political party is an important reflection of who I am") on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To qualify as eligible to participate, respondents had to identify themselves as Republican and obtain a mean score higher than the midpoint (i.e., 4.0) on the strength of identification items. I limited participation on the basis of these criteria to ensure that participants held strong identification with the Republican Party, and thus would likely consider Democrats to be a devalued out-group. I contacted respondents by email and phone to encourage their participation. In return for their participation, participants received one credit toward their research requirement for their psychology class.

Design

In Study 1, I utilized a 2 (Candidate's Party: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (Disclaimer: disclaimer vs. no disclaimer) between subjects factorial design, in which

subjects were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. The dependent measures included: participants' expectations of misclassification, perceptions of belonging and coherence threats, self-reported discomfort, implicit and explicit self-esteem, judges' ratings of participants' discomfort and speech quality, and participants' ratings of their likelihood of selecting each candidate.

Materials and Procedure

Upon arriving at the lab and giving their consent to participate, participants learned that they would participate in a political decision making task, and be videotaped reciting an endorsement speech for a candidate. To bolster the cover story that the primary focus of the research was political decision making, the experimenter explained that the researchers' interest lay in understanding how people take the same information and come to different conclusions. Specifically, what issues and candidate qualities are important in making political decisions? To investigate this, the experimenter explained that a position had opened up on the University of Oklahoma's Board of Regents and that participants would read about the two candidates who were being considered and then write and recite an endorsement speech for one of the candidates.

To make participants think that their decision could actually impact their lives, the experimenter explained that the Board of Regents serves as the governing body for the university and therefore, the decisions the Board makes impact the lives of students for years to come. To make participants think that members of their in-group would see them making their endorsement speech, the experimenter noted that in addition to the graduate research assistants who would watch the participant's video, Democratic and

Republican student groups had also expressed interest in seeing the tapes to know where students stand on this issue.

Disclaimer manipulation. Next, the experimenter explained that in order to reduce bias among the people coding the videos, the researchers had to standardize people's appearance so that nothing about the individuals' appearance would affect the coders' ratings. To do this, the experimenter explained that the researchers required everyone to wear the same thing. Depending on the participant's condition, the experimenter showed the participant either a blank (*no disclaimer condition*) or a "Proud to be Republican" (*disclaimer condition*) t-shirt. In the disclaimer condition, the experimenter asked if indeed the participant identified as Republican, as indicated in the experimenter's records. All participants in this condition indicated that they did identify as Republican. The experimenter then explained to participants in both conditions that when it was time to give their speech, they would pick an appropriately sized t-shirt from the box and wear it over their clothes. Although participants would not wear the shirts until later in the session, the experimenter introduced participants to their condition at this point so that they would know which t-shirt they were going to wear before writing their endorsement speech. I deemed this important because one aspect of the quality of the speech—one of the dependent measures—consists of how participants construct their speech. Thus, I wanted participants to be cognizant of whether or not they would be allowed to disclaim before they wrote their endorsement speech.

Candidate information sheet. As mentioned before, one of the primary goals of this investigation centers on whether forestalling identity misclassification allows

people to pursue beneficial role violations. In order to make one candidate appear more beneficial to the participant, the candidate information sheet stated that:

One of the major issues during this selection process concerns a hotly-debated policy change that would mandate comprehensive exams for graduating seniors at the University. This mandate would require graduating seniors to complete a cumulative exam in their major before graduating from the University. Students who failed the exam would not be allowed to graduate. To implement this procedure and offset the cost of creating and grading the exams, OU will have to raise tuition by an amount that is yet to be determined. This amount will most likely appear as an increase in student fees for all students at the university.

Participants then read two full paragraphs describing the background and history of two fictitious candidates, Richard Blanton and Tony James (see Appendix A), who appeared basically equal in terms of qualifications, experience, and proposed initiatives, except for two details. First, Richard Blanton always opposed the implementation of the comprehensive exams, while Tony James supported the exams. Thus, objectively students should want to select Richard Blanton over Tony James.

I chose to use the implementation of comprehensive exams to ensure participants' desire to support one candidate over the other, because past research by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) suggests that most students strongly oppose such measures. Moreover, when all information about the candidates' political party affiliation was removed, 93.6% of pilot participants (44 out of 47) selected Richard Blanton over Tony James on the basis of his stance on the comprehensive exams, $\chi^2(1, N=47) = 35.77, p <$

.001 (Prewitt-Freilino, Bosson, & Burnaford, 2007b). This preference was unrelated to respondents' political party affiliation, $\chi^2 < 1$.

The second difference among the candidates was their political affiliation. The candidate information sheet always indicated that one candidate allied with the Democratic Party and the other with the Republican Party. Participants in the in-party condition read that Richard Blanton (i.e., the beneficial candidate) identified as Republican and Tony James as Democrat, and participants in the out-of-party condition read that Richard Blanton identified as Democrat and Tony James as Republican. Thus, for participants in the in-party condition, the candidate that objectively benefited them—because of his stance on the comprehensive exam debate—identified with their political party, and for participants in the out-of-party condition, the out-of-party candidate benefited them.

Endorsement of candidate. Because in many ways Study 1 served as an attempt to replicate our previous research, in which we required men to either violate a gender role norm or not (Bosson et al, 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press), I needed some participants to endorse the in-party candidate and others to endorse the out-of-party candidate. Thus, as the participant read over the candidate information sheet, the experimenter shuffled through the experiment log. When participants indicated that they had finished reading about the candidates, the experimenter made an appeal to all participants. The experimenter explained that:

In this experiment, we need equal numbers of people to write and recite speeches endorsing each candidate. Looking over my log, I see that it would really help us out if you would write a speech endorsing Richard Blanton,

because we need more people in that condition. So, it would be great if you would write about Richard Blanton. However, if you really want to write a speech endorsing Tony James, you can do that.

In consistently asking participants to endorse Richard Blanton, the experimenter always requested that participants endorse the candidate who benefited them, i.e., the candidate who opposed the comprehensive exams. However, I manipulated whether the in-party candidate or the out-of-party candidate opposed the exams. Richard Blanton's political affiliation therefore served as the second independent variable. The experimenter asked participants in the *in-party condition* to endorse a person who both benefited them and identified with their political party, whereas the experimenter requested participants in the *out-of-party condition* to endorse a person who benefited them, but who identified with a different political party. Previous research indicates that, when faced with this type of request, people often comply, yet take responsibility for their decision because they have the opportunity to decline the request (e.g., Harmon-Jones, Brehm, Greenberg, Simon, & Nelson, 1996). Thus, I expected that most people would comply with the experimenter's request to endorse the objectively beneficial candidate, regardless of whether he was in their political party or not.

After making the request to endorse Richard Blanton, the experimenter gave participants a sheet on which to write their endorsement speech (see Appendix B). The sheet asked participants to write a few paragraphs, summarizing the important issues and qualities of the chosen candidate that would make him a good Regent. In addition to these written instructions, the experimenter asked all participants to not share any personal information about themselves in their speech, so that "the people who code

your speech will not be biased.” As participants composed their speech, the experimenter left the room and returned when they finished.

After returning, the experimenter instructed participants to pick a shirt that would fit them and put it on over their clothing. Recall that in the disclaimer condition, participants wore a “Proud to be Republican” t-shirt, while participants in the no disclaimer condition wore a plain white t-shirt with no writing. After preparing the camera, the experimenter filmed the participants reciting their speech, and once participants finished, they deposited the t-shirt back in the box and received a questionnaire with the final dependent measures.

Self-reported discomfort. The first measure on the final questionnaire assessed participants’ discomfort while giving their endorsement speech. The measure consisted of ten items drawn from our previous research on men’s discomfort with a gender role violation (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press), in which participants reported their agreement with each statement on a scale that ranged from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very much*). I modified the items to represent participants’ discomfort with the speech, and thus the measure included six items tapping into general feelings of negative affect and four items that assessed self-consciousness (see Appendix C). Because this ten-item measure displayed a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .91$), I averaged across the ten items to compute a single indicator of participants’ self-reported discomfort while giving their speech.

Candidate preference. After reporting their discomfort, participants then reported the extent to which “...you would select [*candidate’s name*] if you had the authority to appoint the next Regent to the OU Board of Regents,” for each of the

candidates from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 9 (*very likely*). In order to obtain a measure of participants' preference for their chosen candidate over the other candidate, I created a single indicator of candidate preference by subtracting participants' ratings of their likelihood of selecting Tony James (i.e., the non-beneficial candidate) from their likelihood of selecting Richard Blanton (i.e., the beneficial candidate, who participants were asked to endorse). Because I only included participants who complied with the experimenter's request to endorse the beneficial candidate, this indicator represented participants' preference for the candidate they endorsed in their speech. Thus, positive scores indicate a preference for the endorsed, beneficial candidate (regardless of party affiliation), and negative scores represented a preference for the non-beneficial candidate. As previously mentioned, this item served as a preliminary investigation into participants' willingness to support the objectively beneficial out-of-party candidate on the basis of their disclaimer status. I investigated this question more directly in Study 2.

Expectations of misclassification and identity misclassification threats. Next, participants indicated the extent to which the "people who watch the videotape of your speech will assume that you are a Democrat" on a scale from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 9 (*very likely*), as a measure of their expectations of being misclassified as a Democrat. I also included four items to assess identity misclassification threats, two of which addressed belonging threats ("During my speech, I felt like I was not living up to other Republicans' standards for how a 'good' Republican should act," and "I suspect that other Republicans (who do not know me) might evaluate me negatively if they saw my speech") and two of which assessed coherence threats (e.g., "Giving the speech posed a challenge to my personal sense of who I am," and "During my speech, I felt like I was

not living up to my own personal standards for how a “good” Republican should act”). Each of these four items required participants to indicate their agreement on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very much*). To acquire composite measures of both belonging and coherence threats, we averaged the two items for each measure, yielding alphas of .84 and .89 respectively. Although ultimately I expected expectations of misclassification and the accompanying threats to mediate people’s reactions to their endorsement speech, I placed these items after the primary dependent measure of discomfort to reduce participants’ suspicions about the true purpose of the study.

Measures of self-relevant affect. Then, participants rated their liking for the letters of the alphabet from 1 (*I dislike this letter very much*) to 9 (*I like this letter very much*). People’s ratings for their initials, relative to the average rating of those letters, served as an indirect measure of self-relevant affect. According to previous research, people’s preference for their initials serves as an indicator of the spread of self-relevant affect to stimuli associated with the self (Nuttin, 1985). Given that the purpose of the letter rating task is not immediately obvious to participants, name letter preferences provide a relatively unbiased measure of self-relevant affect. Name letter preferences display adequate test-retest reliability (see Bosson, Swann, & Pennebaker, 2000), and have been used in previous research to effectively measure people’s reaction to self-threats (e.g., Jones, Pelham, Mirenberg, & Hetts, 2002; Koole, Dijksterhuis, & van Knippenberg, 2001; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). I computed people’s preference for their first and last initials by calculating the difference of participants’ own ratings of their first and last initial from the average rating for that particular letter. Because people’s preference for their first and last initials were correlated, $r(64) = .40$,

$p < .01$, I summed the two ratings to obtain a single indicator of implicit self-esteem ($\alpha = .55$), with higher scores indicating greater preference for one's initials and thus a more positive self-assessment.

To obtain ratings of people's explicit self-esteem, I had participants respond to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; 1965). The RSES requires participants to report their agreement with ten statements (e.g., "I am able to do things as well as most other people," and "I take a positive attitude toward myself") on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*).² Because the ten items demonstrated sufficient internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$), I averaged them to yield a single indicator of explicit self-esteem.

Demographic information and debriefing. After completing the indicators of self-relevant affect, participants indicated their gender, age, and race/ethnicity and let the experimenter know they finished the questionnaire. The experimenter asked participants if, during the experiment, they "had any ideas about the specific hypotheses or what we expected to find" and if at any point they felt suspicious or that they were being lied to, and none of the participants reported a high level of suspicion. The experimenter then explained the purpose of the study and asked participants in the no disclaimer—i.e., blank t-shirt—condition if they identified as Republican, to ensure that our prescreening measures effectively screened participants. Indeed, all participants indicated their affiliation as Republican.

Independent ratings of discomfort and quality of speech. After data collection was complete, I transferred the video recordings of participants' speeches to DVD. Despite the fact that participants could spend as much or as little time as they wanted

creating and giving their speech, participants' speeches generally lasted between 45 seconds and one minute. Two independent raters, naïve to all hypotheses, assessed participants' discomfort and the quality of the participants' speeches. One rater coded all of the videos and the second coded 25 (or 38%) of the speeches to allow for the calculation of inter-rater reliabilities of each of the measures. Before transferring the videos to DVD, I obscured the raters' view of participants' shirts by superimposing a plain white box over the shirt, so that the coders were blind to the participants' condition.

Past research suggests that people's self-reports of their affective experiences do not always coincide with their non-verbal display of anxiety (Bosson et al., 2004). Thus, in their ratings of discomfort, coders rated the extent to which a participant displayed seven individual indicators of discomfort (fidgeting, a shaky voice, swaying or rocking back and forth, stumbling over words, rushed speech, a nervous or embarrassed facial expression, and stiff posture) on a scale from 1 (*none*) to 5 (*a lot; did this for most of the coding period*), as previous research suggests these types of behaviors capture people's affective reactions (Bosson et al, 2004). In addition the coders also made a global assessment of the participants' discomfort on a scale from 1 (*no discomfort*) to 5 (*a lot of discomfort*). To create a single indicator of non-verbal discomfort, I analyzed the internal consistency of the eight discomfort items and found that two of the items (swaying or rocking back and forth and rushed speech) reduced the scale's internal consistency for both the primary and secondary coder. Thus, after excluding those two items, I computed the mean of the remaining six items to yield a single indicator of discomfort ($\alpha = .77$ for both the primary and secondary coder). The

inter-rater reliability of the discomfort measure was acceptable, $r(25) = .68$, and thus I used the primary coder's scores as an indicator of participants' non-verbal discomfort.

To assess the quality of the speech, the coders rated the extent to which the speech was well-written, well-spoken, presented with enthusiasm, presented with sincerity, presented in a persuasive manner, and persuasive on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Given that the quality ratings yielded a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$ and $.89$ for the primary and secondary coder, respectively), I collapsed across all six items to create a single measure of speech quality. The inter-rater reliability exceeded the acceptable level, $r(25) = .86$, and thus I used only the primary coder's ratings on these six items as an indicator of the quality of participants' speeches.

Results

Table 1 displays the intercorrelations of all the dependent measures from Study 1, and Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of all dependent measures by condition.

Expectations of Misclassification and Associated Threats

Because Republicans who endorsed the Republican candidate did not violate any group norms, they should have relatively low expectations of misclassification as Democrat compared to Republicans who endorsed an out-of-party candidate. In addition, role-violating Republicans who wore the political t-shirt should anticipate a lower likelihood of misclassification compared to role violators who wore the blank t-shirt, because they have communicated their non-stigmatized status to their audience. Furthermore, because threats to belonging and coherence accompany expectations of

misclassification, non-disclaiming role violators should experience these threats more than disclaiming role violators.

Table 1. *Intercorrelations of Dependent Measures from Study 1*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. IM	---								
2. Coherence	.29*	---							
3. Belonging	.39**	.73**	---						
4. Discomfort	.28*	.27*	.28*	---					
5. Implicit SE	-.16	.16	-.04	.13	---				
6. Explicit SE	-.10	-.23	.18	-.20	-.02	---			
7. Preference	-.43**	-.48**	.39**	-.24*	-.07	.17	---		
8. Non-verbal	-.19	.02	.20	.36**	-.06	-.20	-.07	---	
9. Quality	.12	.14	.03	-.39**	-.04	.14	.05	-.53**	---

Note. IM = identity misclassification; Coherence = coherence threats; Belonging = belonging threats; Discomfort = self-reported discomfort; Implicit SE = implicit self-esteem measured using people's preferences for their initials; Explicit SE = explicit self-esteem, as measured by the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale; Preference = participants' preference the beneficial candidate over the non-beneficial candidate; Non-verbal = coder's rating of participants' non-verbal discomfort during the speech; Quality = coder's rating of the quality of participants' speech; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$.

To test these predictions, I conducted a series of 2 (candidate's party: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (disclaimer: disclaimer vs. no disclaimer) factorial analyses of

variance (ANOVAs) on participants' expectation of misclassification scores. In this model, the significant main effects for both candidates' party, $F(1, 61) = 39.07, p < .001$, and disclaimer condition, $F(1, 61) = 5.52, p = .02$, were qualified by a significant interaction, $F(1, 61) = 5.48, p = .02$.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics of the Dependent Measures from Study 1 by Condition*

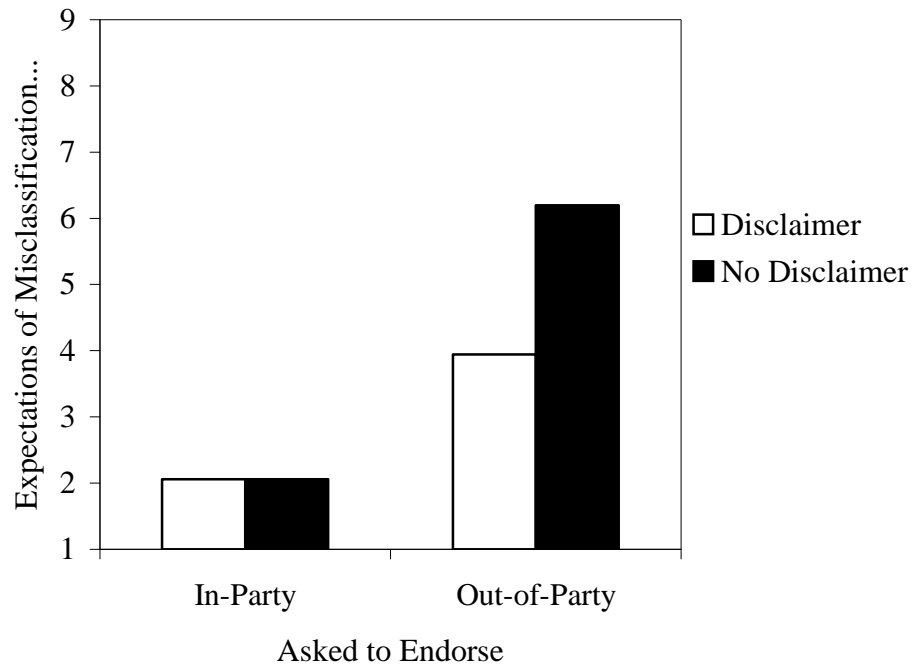
	In-party		Out-of-party		Total
	Disclaimer	Control	Disclaimer	Control	
IM	2.06 (1.60) _a	2.06 (.93) _a	3.94 (2.54) _b	6.20 (2.27) _c	3.51 (2.53)
Coherence	2.47 (1.44) _a	2.03 (1.50) _a	2.88 (2.17) _a	4.86 (2.71) _b	2.99 (2.20)
Belonging	2.88 (1.43) _a	2.84 (2.13) _a	4.65 (2.23) _{ab}	5.43 (2.07) _b	3.92 (2.24)
Discomfort	4.62 (1.70)	3.50 (1.79)	4.63 (1.26)	4.51 (2.07)	4.32 (1.74)
Implicit SE	2.97 (3.64)	3.23 (3.38)	3.02 (3.37)	2.41 (3.71)	2.93 (3.45)
Explicit SE	7.95 (.76)	8.06 (.99)	8.05 (1.09)	7.71 (1.32)	7.95 (1.03)
Preference	6.18 (1.70) _a	6.06 (2.05) _a	2.18 (4.11) _b	1.93 (5.09) _b	4.12 (3.97)
Non-verbal	2.83 (.81)	2.54 (.95)	2.43 (.63)	2.28 (.67)	2.53 (.78)
Quality	2.38 (.74)	2.82 (1.22)	2.48 (.80)	3.23 (.99)	2.71 (.98)

Note. Values represent mean (standard deviation); IM = identity misclassification; Coherence = coherence threats; Belonging = belonging threats; Discomfort = self-reported discomfort; Implicit SE = implicit self-esteem measured using people's preferences for their initials; Explicit SE = explicit self-esteem, as measured by the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale; Preference = participants' preference the beneficial candidate over the non-beneficial candidate; Non-verbal = coder's rating of participants' non-verbal discomfort during the speech; Quality = coder's rating of the quality of participants' speech. Means within a row whose subscripts differ indicate a significant difference at $\alpha = .05$.

To investigate the nature of the significant interaction for participants' expectation of misclassification scores, I used contrast coding (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) to test my specific predictions. First, I tested the main effect of candidate's party by assigning participants in the in-party conditions a code of +1 and participants in the out-of-party conditions -1, and submitting this contrast to a series of regression analyses predicting expectations of misclassification. Then, to investigate my primary theoretical question of whether the disclaimer affected expectations of misclassification among participants who endorsed the out-of-party candidate, I tested the difference between participants who wore the blank and political t-shirts by assigning codes of +1 and -1, respectively, and assigning in-party endorsers a code of 0. Finally, I entered the last orthogonal contrast, comparing disclaiming and non-disclaiming participants who endorsed an in-party candidate by assigning them codes of +1 and -1 respectively, and assigning participants who endorsed an out-of-party candidate a code of 0.

In this model predicting expectations of misclassification, the first contrast proved highly significant, $\beta = .60$, $t(61) = 6.25$, $p < .001$, revealing that Republicans who endorsed a Democratic candidate felt much more likely to be seen as a Democrat, than candidates who endorsed the Republican candidate (see Figure 1). In addition, the contrast between role violating Republicans who either disclaimed or did not reached significance, $\beta = -.32$, $t(61) = -3.29$, $p = .002$, suggesting that among people who endorsed the out-of-party candidate, participants who wore a blank t-shirt felt more likely to be mistaken as a Democrat than participants who wore the political t-shirt. Finally, this disclaimer manipulation appeared to have no effect on expectations of misclassification for individuals who endorsed a fellow Republican, $t < 1$.

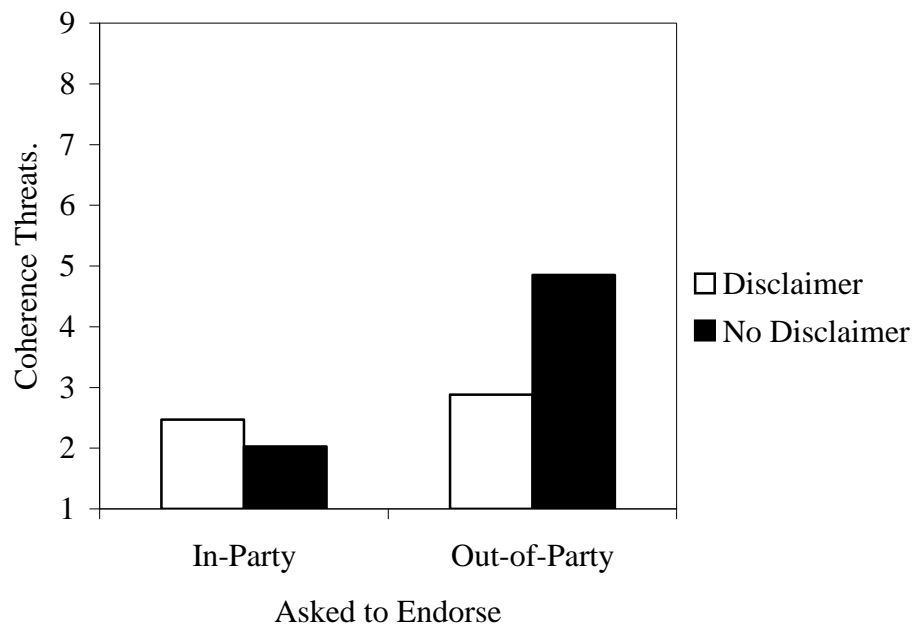
Figure 1. Mean level of expectations of misclassification as a function of candidate party and disclaimer condition in Study 1.



To determine if coherence and belonging threats fit this same pattern, I submitted participants' coherence and belonging scores to the same two-way factorial ANOVA described above. In the analyses on people's experience of coherence threats, both the main effect of candidate's party, $F(1, 61) = 10.51, p = .002$, and the interaction term reached significance, $F(1, 61) = 5.84, p = .02$. However, the main effect of disclaimer condition was non-significant, $F(1, 61) = 2.36, p = .13$. To assess the nature of the significant interaction, I entered the same set of contrasts into a regression model predicting participants' coherence threat scores. In this model, the first contrast assessing the main effect of candidate's party reached significance, $\beta = .37, t(61) = 3.24, p = .002$, indicating that when Republicans endorsed a Democratic candidate they

were more likely to experience an intrapsychic challenge to their identity as a Republican than participants who endorsed an in-party candidate. Moreover, the second and third contrasts revealed that disclaiming during their endorsement speech buffered role violators from coherence threats, $\beta = -.31$, $t(61) = -2.74$, $p = .008$, yet had no effect on those who endorsed an in-party candidate, $t < 1$ (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Mean level of coherence threat as a function of participants' candidate and disclaimer condition in Study 1.



In the ANOVA model assessing participants' experience of belonging threat, neither the interaction term, $F(1, 61) = .70$, $p = .41$, nor the main effect of disclaimer condition, $F(1, 61) = .58$, $p = .45$, reached significance. Only the main effect of candidate's party emerged, $F(1, 61) = 19.49$, $p < .001$, suggesting that regardless of whether participants were able to disclaim or not, people who endorsed an out-of-party

candidate ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 2.64$) anticipated more interpersonal penalties from in-group members than people who endorsed an in-party candidate ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.30$).

Given the current findings, it appears that participants who disclaim while endorsing an out-of-party candidate have lower expectations of misclassification and experience less coherence threats than their non-disclaiming counterparts. However, disclaiming does not buffer role violators from belonging threats.

Self-reported Discomfort and Self-Esteem Measures

Because Republicans who endorse an out-of-party candidate expect misclassification more than individuals who endorse an in-party candidate, these role violators should also experience more negative affect during their endorsement speech. In addition, because disclaiming Democratic status, by wearing the “Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt, reduces the likelihood of misclassification, it should also reduce the negative affective consequences of role violations.

To test these predictions, I submitted participants’ discomfort and implicit and explicit self-esteem scores to a series of 2 (candidate’s party: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (disclaimer: disclaimer vs. no disclaimer) factorial ANOVAs. Contrary to predictions, none of the main effects or interactions for these analyses reached significance, all $F_s \leq 2.09$ and $p_s > .15$.³

Candidate Preference

To test my prediction that disclaiming increases people’s willingness to violate group norms, I assessed participants’ preferences for the beneficial candidate by submitting their preference scores to a two-way factorial ANOVA. Both the main effect of disclaimer and the interaction failed to reach significance, $F_s < 1$, and only the

main effect of candidate's party proved significant, $F(1, 61) = 21.99, p < .001$. As expected, participants showed a stronger preference for the beneficial candidate when he was a member of their own political affiliation ($M = 6.12, SD = 1.85$) than when he was affiliated with the other political party ($M = 2.06, SD = 4.52$).

Judges' Ratings of Discomfort and Speech Quality

To test my prediction that disclaiming could reduce role violators' discomfort during their endorsement speech and allow people to give a better prepared, more passionate endorsement of a beneficial out-of-party candidate, I submitted the indices of participants' non-verbal discomfort and speech quality to the two-way ANOVAs described above. For the coder's ratings of participants' non-verbal discomfort, neither the main effect of disclaimer condition nor the interaction proved significant, $F_s(1, 61) \leq 1.34, p_s \geq .25$. However, the main effect of candidate's party approached significance, $F(1, 61) = 3.00, p = .09$. Contrary to my hypothesis, participants appeared somewhat more uncomfortable when endorsing a fellow Republican ($M = 2.69, SD = .88$), than when endorsing a Democrat ($M = 2.36, SD = .64$).

In the model assessing ratings of speech quality, the main effect of candidate's party and the interaction term were non-significant, $F_s(1, 61) \leq 1.17, p_s \geq .28$. Only the main effect of disclaimer reached significance, $F = 6.43, p = .01$, surprisingly suggesting that wearing the "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt ($M = 2.43, SD = .76$) led to a decrease in speech quality compared to those wearing a blank t-shirt ($M = 3.03, SD = 1.11$).

Mediational Model

Given that none of the measures of negative affect (i.e., self-reported

discomfort, implicit self-esteem, explicit self-esteem, and non-verbal discomfort) reached significance for the predicted interaction pattern, my primary proposed mediational model that expectations of misclassification explain people's affective reactions to role violations could not be tested. However, I used Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps for testing mediation to investigate whether people's expectations of misclassification mediated the link between their experimental condition and their experience of coherence threat. I first entered contrast 2 (comparing the disclaimer and control conditions among people who endorsed the out-of-party candidate) into a regression model predicting people's experience of coherence threat, and found it to be significant, $\beta = -.28$, $t(62) = -2.37$, $p = .02$. Next, I examined whether this contrast also predicted the proposed mediator (i.e., expectations of misclassification), and again found disclaimer use among role violators to significantly predict people's expectations of misclassification, $\beta = -.29$, $t(63) = -2.39$, $p = .02$. Finally, when I entered both the predictor (contrast 2) and the proposed mediator (expectations of misclassification) simultaneously into the model predicting coherence threats, both the contrast, $\beta = -.23$, $t(61) = -1.83$, $p = .07$, and expectations of misclassification, $\beta = .22$, $t(61) = -1.80$, $p = .08$, fell to marginal significance. Thus, it does not appear that a reduction in expectations of misclassification fully explain how wearing a "Proud to be a Republican" shirt assuaged role violator's experience of coherence threat.

Discussion

The findings from Study 1 provide only partial support for my hypotheses. First, as expected, endorsing a beneficial out-of-party candidate increased people's expectation of being mistaken as a Democrat by others and the extent to which they

experienced threats to belonging and coherence. Among those out-of-party endorsers, disclaiming reduced Republicans' anticipation of being seen as a Democrat, and this was accompanied by a corresponding drop in their experience of coherence threats. Despite the promising pattern of results for expectations of misclassification and coherence threats, role violators found little protection from belonging threats by wearing the political t-shirt. Perhaps wearing a "Proud to be a Republican" convinced participants of their own adequacy as Republicans, but left them wondering whether others would question their status as "true" Republicans. Because the measure of expectations of misclassification asked specifically if participants believed others would mistake them as a Democrat, it is unclear whether participants wondered if others would see them as a member of some other devalued group (e.g., an Independent or a "flip-flopping" Republican). Another possible reason that disclaiming participants remained concerned about how other Republicans would judge them is that the t-shirt was not a strong enough disclaimer. Perhaps if participants had given an additional speech about their Republican identity or an endorsement of a prominent Republican politician, they would experience less concern about how other Republicans would judge them.

With regard to the measures of affect (self-reported discomfort, implicit self-esteem, and explicit self-esteem), the manipulations appeared to have little effect. Despite the fact that Republicans who endorsed a Democratic candidate reported greater experience of belonging and coherence threats, those role violating individuals did not report more discomfort or decrements in their self-esteem compared to individuals giving an endorsement speech for a fellow Republican. Because the procedure required participants to violate a group role norm in the context of giving a speech, participants'

affective reactions to the task may have been affected by their prior experience with and attitudes about public speaking. Given that I did not collect any information about participants' concerns about public speaking in general, I cannot assess whether individual differences in their affective responses may have dwarfed any differences between the experimental groups. However, our previous research with heterosexual men (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press) suggests that people's past experience with a specific activity can affect their discomfort with a role violating task. Thus, rather than drawing firm conclusions that endorsing an out-of-party candidate entails no more distress than endorsing an in-party candidate, I suggest further investigation will be necessary to determine how violating the norms of one's political party affectively impacts individuals.

As a supplement to these self-reported measures, I collected and analyzed an independent judge's ratings of participants' non-verbal discomfort and the quality of the speech. Although I anticipated that endorsing an out-of-party candidate would elicit more non-verbal discomfort and diminished speech quality unless individuals had the ability to disclaim, I instead found a trend for Republicans to display more discomfort when endorsing a fellow Republican, and wearing a "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt decreased the apparent quality of participants' endorsement speech. Given that participants reported a greater preference for the beneficial candidate when he was a member of their own political party, perhaps those who endorsed the beneficial in-party candidate appeared nervous and uncomfortable because they wanted to do a good job persuading their audience.

As for the finding that wearing a "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt led to

decreased speech quality, one possible explanation is stereotype assimilation. Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) found that priming participants with a particular social category could lead them unknowingly to adopt behavior prototypical of a group's stereotype. For many college-aged Republicans, George W. Bush likely serves as a prototypical exemplar of a Republican, and he is widely known to have a less formal speech style (Weisberg, 2004). Participants who were primed with their Republican identity may have assimilated their behavior to this stereotype, and thus given speeches of a lower quality. Alternatively, participants may have merely felt silly or awkward wearing the "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt and therefore were less confident and enthusiastic in their speeches. Then again, Republican participants who were identified as such on the basis of their t-shirt may have been concerned that they would be unfairly scrutinized by others. Given that data collection for Study 1 coincided with several Republican scandals (e.g., the Mark Foley page scandal, political bribes of lobbyist Jack Abramoff, Scooter Libby's perjury trial), participants may have been distracted from the task, as they worried that others would judge them negatively on the basis of their Republican identity. Because I did not predict that wearing the "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt would lower ratings of participants' speeches, I can only speculate about this finding.

Finally, as a preliminary look at whether disclaiming could increase people's willingness to select a beneficial out-of-party candidate, I investigated people's preference for the beneficial candidate over the non-beneficial candidate. Perhaps unsurprisingly, people showed a marked preference for a beneficial in-party candidate over a beneficial out-of-party candidate and, contrary to predictions, disclaiming did not

increase their preference for the beneficial out-of-party candidate over the non-beneficial in-party candidate. In Study 2, I expand on this work by measuring people's actual choice of candidate to endorse.

Study 2

In Study 2, my primary goal was to determine people's willingness to violate social role norms when the likelihood of misclassification is low—i.e., when they have used a disclaimer to forestall identity misclassification. Although our previous research on heterosexual men's reactions to gender role violations explored the nature of the self-threat experienced by role violators and some of the psychological benefits of role violations (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press), we did not explore people's willingness to violate role norms. If strategies for reducing identity misclassification not only reduce people's discomfort with role violations, but also increase their willingness to engage in role violating behavior, then the range of practical applications of this research increases dramatically.

As in Study 1, participants once again read about two candidates for the OU Board of Regents who varied on two issues, their position on implementing mandatory comprehensive exams and their political affiliation. However, in this study, the experimenter did not ask participants to endorse a particular candidate. Instead, I manipulated the candidates' political affiliation such that, in the *in-party condition*, participants read about a beneficial in-party candidate, and in the *out-of-party condition*, the out-of-party candidate benefited the participant. The primary dependent variable was participants' choice of candidate, but I also collected their ratings of the likelihood of selecting each candidate and measured their implicit self-esteem.

As an initial study of people's willingness to violate group role norms, we conducted a pilot study of Democrats' and Republicans' willingness to endorse a beneficial out-of-party candidate when compared to a non-beneficial in-party candidate

(Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, 2005). In our pilot study neither Democrats nor Republicans displayed a greater willingness to endorse the out-of-party candidate when they disclaimed out-party status. Democrats were likely to endorse the beneficial out-of-party candidate whether or not they disclaimed, while Republicans seemed driven by consistency concerns. Specifically, Republicans displayed a greater tendency to endorse the in-party candidate in the disclaimer condition than in the control condition, suggesting that being reminded of their Republican identity via indicating their political affiliation on a demographic questionnaire compelled them to behave in line with this identity (e.g., Festinger, 1957). On a more subtle measure of likelihood of selecting each candidate (described in Study 1), Democrats did display the predicted pattern, reporting a greater tendency to select the out-of-party candidate when they disclaimed than when they did not. However, Republicans once again seemed driven by consistency concerns, becoming more likely to endorse the in-party candidate when they disclaimed than when they did not disclaim.

Despite these findings, several design issues of the pilot study may have hindered our ability to find the predicted results and limited the study's ecological validity. First, neither Democrats nor Republicans showed reluctance to endorse the out-of-party candidate. Only Republicans who disclaimed endorsed the in-party candidate as much as the out-of-party candidate. Pilot participants' general willingness to violate group norms and endorse an out-of-party candidate may stem from our method of selecting participants. To select strongly identified Democrats and Republicans, we asked respondents in the psychology department's prescreening pool to report their political affiliation, and then report the strength of their political

affiliation on a single item from 1 (*my party affiliation is very weak*) to 7 (*my party affiliation is very strong*). We required that respondents score at least a four or higher on this strength item to be eligible.

In the current set of studies, I tightened the criteria for inclusion by including questions that assess the extent to which one's political affiliation represents a meaningful part of one's self-concept. Recall, as described in the Method section of Study 1, that eligible participants rated the strength of their identification as Republican using a five item modified version of Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) Collective Self-Esteem Scale, and I only selected respondents who scored above the median on this composite measure. Thus, whereas the pilot participants may not have considered the endorsement of an out-of-party candidate to be a role violation, these new criteria should limit participation to only strongly identified Republicans. Thus, these criteria should make it much more difficult for participants to endorse the out-of-party candidate, given that their political affiliation serves as a meaningful part of their self-concept.

As mentioned above, another concern about the pilot study involves the fact that Republicans showed a greater likelihood of endorsing the in-party, rather than the out-of-party, candidate when they disclaimed. Reflecting on our methodology, the candidate information and endorsement procedure may have produced this unexpected effect. For example, all the participants learned that they were in a low information condition and received only information pertaining to the candidate's political affiliation and stance on the comprehensive exam issue, rather than the full two paragraph descriptions described in Study 1. In addition, rather than being videotaped

while giving an endorsement speech about the candidate they chose, participants merely read aloud the name of their chosen participant on camera. Thus, because participants possessed little information on which to make their choice and we gave them no opportunity to justify their choice, they may have reacted differently than they would when making real world political decisions.

In actual political decision making, people have access to ample information on which to base their political decisions. Despite evidence that people's political decision making stems from emotional, rather than rational reactions (Westen, et al., 2006), people believe they utilize the full extent of information available to them (Cohen, 2003), and thus may react differently from the way they normally would when they realize they must make a decision based on only two pieces of information. In this low information situation, we suspect that participants become aware that they must choose between political party loyalty versus personal gain. In this sense, Republicans who were reminded of their political identification, via the disclaimer, may have felt compelled to act in line with social role norms, putting group harmony above personal gain, because they had no additional information with which to justify their choice to other in-group members.

In addition to the above concerns, the disclaimer manipulation from the pilot study may have insufficiently buffered Republicans against identity misclassification threats. We fashioned our pilot study's disclaimer manipulation after our studies with heterosexual men (Bosson et al., 2005). Specifically, participants either indicated their political affiliation (disclaimer) or their hometown (no disclaimer) on a demographic questionnaire, which the experimenter filmed before participants indicated their choice

of candidate. This particular manipulation may have merely made participants' political affiliation salient, without sufficiently communicating non-stigmatized status to their audience. If the disclaimer failed to communicate non-stigmatized status, yet made participants' political affiliation salient, we should find exactly the pattern of results we found with Republicans. Therefore, in Study 2, I once again had people wear either the blank or political t-shirt as a more salient manipulation of disclaimer.

Hypotheses

As noted above, some participants encountered a beneficial in-party candidate and others a beneficial out-of-party candidate. When the in-party candidate benefited the person, I expected all participants, regardless of disclaimer condition, to support that particular candidate. However, when the out-of-party candidate benefited the participant, the disclaimer should influence people's likelihood of selecting the candidate. More specifically, people who disclaimed by wearing a political t-shirt should feel little threat of identity misclassification, and therefore, be more likely to act in their best interest (by supporting the candidate who opposes the mandatory comprehensive exams) than people who wore a blank t-shirt. Thus, I predicted a significant effect of disclaimer on choice of candidate within the out-of-party condition, yet I expected the effect of disclaimer to be non-significant in the in-party condition, as all participants should endorse a beneficial in-party candidate. In addition, I expected a significant effect of candidate's party, stemming from participants' decreased willingness to support an out-of-party candidate when they are unable to disclaim.

Furthermore, I expected that when confronted with a choice of a beneficial out-of-party candidate versus a non-beneficial in-group candidate, Republicans would

experience negative affect, as they should feel torn between wanting to act in their own best interest and simultaneously wanting to avoid misclassification as Democrat. However, because Republicans in the disclaimer condition knew they would wear a “Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt when giving their endorsement speech, they should feel less threat of misclassification and therefore less negative affect. To test for this threat, I measured participants’ immediate reactions to their political dilemma, by having them complete a measure of implicit self-esteem before they indicated their choice of candidate. I expected that participants’ self-relevant affect would mediate the link between the effects of their experimental condition—tested using planned contrasts—and their choice of candidate.

Method

Participants

I recruited a total of 69 participants from the psychology department’s introductory psychology research participant pool who reported a strength of identification as Republican above the median on the identification scale. One of these 69 participants identified as Democrat during the study procedure, and was thus removed from analyses, leaving 68 (38 female and 30 male, 93% Caucasian) strongly identified Republicans.

Design

I utilized a 2 (beneficial candidate’s affiliation: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (disclaimer: disclaimer vs. no disclaimer) factorial design, and participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. Although participants’ choice of candidate served as the primary dependent measure, I also assessed

participants' rating of their likelihood of selecting each candidate before they indicated their choice of candidate, as a more subtle measure of preferences for candidates.

Finally, I also collected participants' implicit self-esteem, prior to publicly indicating their choice of candidate, to test my assumption that threat mediates the link between participants' condition and their choice of candidate.

Procedure

Just as in Study 1, upon arriving at the lab, participants learned that they would choose between two candidates for a position on the OU Board of Regents and give an endorsement speech supporting one of the two candidates. They once again saw the t-shirt that they would wear during the speech and received the same candidate information sheet as in Study 1.⁴ When handing the participant the sheet, the experimenter explained that the participant should "read over this form and let me know when you are finished." When participants finished reading over the sheet, the experimenter did not ask them to endorse either candidate, as in Study 1. Instead, the experimenter explained to participants that before they could write their endorsement speech for either of the candidates, they needed to fill out a quick questionnaire.

On this questionnaire, participants completed the letter-rating task described in Study 1, as a measure of implicit self-esteem. I included the implicit self-esteem measure at this particular point in the procedure to assess people's immediate affective reactions to the political decision task. I assumed that when faced with a decision between a beneficial out-of-party candidate and a non-beneficial in-party candidate, participants should experience this conflict of interest as threatening. Because this particular implicit self-esteem measure assesses self-relevant affect, without tapping

into participants' consciously held beliefs or attitudes (Bosson et al., 2000), participants' were unlikely to know the purpose of the task. Thus, I used implicit self-esteem as an indirect measure of self-threat (see Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press) and assumed that the measure would arouse few suspicions about the true purposes of the experiment before participants completed the primary dependent measure (i.e., choice of candidate).

After rating the letters, participants completed ratings of the likelihood that they would select each candidate, using the measure described in Study 1. I used these two items to compute a single indicator of participants' preference for the beneficial candidate by subtracting the ratings of Tony James (the non-beneficial candidate) from the ratings of Richard Blanton (the beneficial candidate). Thus, positive scores indicate a greater preference for the beneficial candidate, and negative scores indicate greater preference for the non-beneficial candidate.

After participants completed their ratings of the candidates, the experimenter instructed them to write their endorsement speech for their chosen candidate and gave them the same instruction sheet from Study 1 (see Appendix B), except I included the statement "We ask that you not include any personal information about yourself in the speech, to reduce any bias by the people who will be coding your speech" on the essay sheet to reduce the likelihood of people indicating their political affiliation during their speech (as several participants in Study 1 ignored the verbal request by the experimenter, see Footnote 1). The experimenter then once again explained that participants should not share personal information in their speech. After composing their speech, participants read their speech on camera, wearing either the blank or

“Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt and then completed a demographic questionnaire that asked about their age, gender, and political affiliation (to ensure that the selection criteria had correctly identified Republicans). Finally, the experimenter probed participants for suspicion and debriefed them on the true purpose of the experiment.

Results

Primary Analyses

Candidate choice. To assess the distribution of candidate choice across the levels of beneficial candidate and disclaimer conditions, I conducted a series of chi-square analyses. Mimicking my contrasts in Study 1, I first investigated the effect of the candidate’s party affiliation on choice. I assumed that participants faced with a beneficial in-party candidate would be more likely to select the beneficial candidate than participants presented with a beneficial out-of-party candidate. In line with this prediction, a trend emerged, such that participants chose the beneficial in-party candidate more often than the beneficial out-of-party candidate, $\chi^2 (1, N = 68) = 3.24, p = .07$. Whereas 30 of the 34 participants faced with a beneficial in-party candidate chose the beneficial candidate, only 24 out of 34 faced with a beneficial out-of-party candidate chose the beneficial candidate (see Table 3).

As for my primary prediction that disclaiming would increase the likelihood of participants selecting a beneficial out-of-party candidate, the results did not confirm my expectation, $\chi^2 (1, N = 34) = .57, p = .35$, as participants who disclaimed and those who did not were similar in their likelihood of supporting the beneficial candidate at 13 and 11, respectively. Thus, disclaiming did not, in fact, make participants more willing to choose a beneficial out-of-party candidate. However, wearing a “Proud to be a

Republican t-shirt” appeared to make participants less likely to endorse a non-beneficial out-of-party candidate, $\chi^2(1, N = 34) = 4.53, p = .05$, as no participants who wore the political t-shirt broke with party lines, but four out of 17 participants wearing the blank t-shirt endorsed the non-beneficial out-of-party candidate. Although it is unclear why participants would select a non-beneficial out-of-party candidate, perhaps wearing the “Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt made participants faced with a beneficial in-party candidate feel less willing to stray from the party line.

Table 3. *Choice of Candidate by Candidate’s Affiliation and Disclaimer Condition*

Beneficial Candidate is:	Chose Beneficial Candidate?		Total
	Yes	No	
In-party			
Political t-shirt	17	0	17
Blank t-shirt	13	4	17
Total	30	4	34
Out-of-party			
Political t-shirt	13	4	17
Blank t-shirt	11	6	17
Total	24	10	34
Overall Total	54	14	68

Note. Table 3 displays the number of participants who selected each candidate by experimental condition.

Table 4. *Descriptive Statistics for Preference and Affect Scores by Condition*

Beneficial candidate is:	Candidate Preference	Self-relevant Affect
In-party		
Political t-shirt	5.88 (2.23)	2.22 (3.14)
Blank t-shirt	3.29 (4.30)	2.98 (3.19)
Total	4.59 (3.62)	2.60 (3.14)
Out-of-party		
Political t-shirt	1.24 (4.55)	2.24 (2.84)
Blank t-shirt	1.41 (5.24)	3.70 (3.03)
Total	1.32 (4.83)	2.97 (2.99)
Total		
Political t-shirt	3.56 (4.24)	2.23 (2.95)
Blank t-shirt	2.35 (4.82)	3.34 (3.09)
Overall	2.96 (4.55)	2.79 (3.05)

Note. Table 4 displays the means and standard deviations for the measure of participants' preference for the beneficial candidate (over the non-beneficial candidate) and their self-relevant affect.

Candidate preference. To test whether participants' experimental condition affected their preferences for the beneficial candidate, I submitted participants' preference score to a 2 (beneficial candidate's affiliation) X 2 (disclaimer) factorial ANOVA. Only the main effect of the beneficial candidate's affiliation reached

significance, $F(1, 64) = 10.12, p = .002$, suggesting that Republicans showed a greater preference for the beneficial candidate when he was a fellow Republican ($M = 4.59, SD = 3.62$) than when he was a Democrat ($M = 1.32, SD = 4.83$), all other $ps > .18$. Thus, the current findings suggest that disclaimers have little effect on participants' preference for or choice of candidate (see Table 4).

Self-relevant affect. In order to assess participants' experience of threat when faced with a beneficial out-of-party candidate, I conducted a 2 (beneficial candidate's affiliation) X 2 (disclaimer) factorial ANOVA on the combined indicator of participants' ratings of their first and last initials. Neither of the main effects nor the interaction reached significance, all $ps > .13$, suggesting that the manipulations did not affect participants' self-relevant affect as expected.

Mediational Analyses

Given my initial hypothesis that people's experience of identity misclassification threats drives their preference for and choice of candidate, I planned to test a mediational model with people's self-relevant affect scores serving as an indicator of threat using Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps for establishing mediation. I proposed that people's experience of threat should mediate the link between their experimental condition (using the contrasts described in Study 1) and their choice of candidate and preference for the beneficial candidate, using a linear and logistic regression respectively. However, given the findings reported above that participants faced with a beneficial out-of-party candidate did not evidence greater threat on the self-relevant affect measure, I did not conduct the proposed mediational analyses, knowing that

people's experience of threat could not explain their greater preference for and choice of a beneficial in-party candidate over a beneficial out-of-party candidate.

Discussion

The results from Study 2 suggest that although the political affiliation of a beneficial candidate does influence people's preference for and choice of candidate, it does not elicit negative self-relevant affect during political decision-making. Moreover, among Republicans' faced with a beneficial Democratic candidate, disclaiming did not increase their preference for or choice of the Democratic candidate. However, when faced with a non-beneficial Democratic candidate, participants selected the Democrat more when they wore the blank t-shirt than the "Proud to be a Republican" shirt, suggesting the political t-shirt may limit people's willingness to endorse a non-beneficial out-of-party candidate.

Taken together with Study 1, the current findings suggest that although people may anticipate a greater likelihood of misclassification when endorsing an out-of-party candidate, wearing a t-shirt that communicates one's political affiliation does not appear to increase their preference for or likelihood of choosing a beneficial out-of-party candidate. Once again, one possible explanation for these findings concerns the political t-shirt not serving as a strong enough disclaimer to reduce the likelihood of misclassification. Given that we told participants that the experiment required everyone to "wear something similar" to reduce bias in our coders, the participants might have been concerned that the "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt did not convey unique information about them, since everyone would be wearing something similar. If on the other hand, participants had been allowed to convey something about their personal

identity as a Republican by either giving a speech about their Republican identity or choosing to wear the Republican shirt (knowing that others may have chosen differently), then perhaps they would have felt they had communicated their identity adequately.

It is important to note that although the disclaimer did not make participants more likely to endorse the beneficial candidate, participants overwhelmingly chose to endorse the beneficial candidate over the non-beneficial candidate. Thus, even when faced with a beneficial out-of-party candidate and a non-beneficial in-party candidate, more participants chose the beneficial out-of-party candidate. This suggests that perhaps the participants in Study 2 felt relatively free from misclassification concerns in general, despite their endorsement of an out-of-party candidate. Given that the current situation involved a relatively non-partisan position (i.e., a Regent at a university), many participants may have reasoned that the candidate's political affiliation was not relevant to the job. It is unclear whether this would be the case with political decision making in general. Thus, in Study 3, I aimed to assess participants' reactions to a more directly political situation.

As for the unexpected finding that Republicans were more likely to choose a non-beneficial, out-of-party candidate when wearing the blank t-shirt as opposed to the "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt, it is possible that wearing the political t-shirt aroused consistency concerns that limited people's ability to stray from the party line (especially when faced with a beneficial in-party candidate). According to cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), people often attempt to avoid the distress associated with inconsistency between their attitudes and behavior by changing their attitudes.

Knowing that they would wear a “Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt, participants faced with a beneficial in-party candidate may have felt pressure to demonstrate consistency between their behavior (wearing the political shirt) and their attitudes (endorsement of an in-party candidate). Given that participants wearing the blank t-shirt had not publicly identified their Republicanism, perhaps they were less burdened by consistency concerns and thus felt freer to flaunt their uniqueness.

This pressure to be consistent may also help to explain the lack of an effect of the disclaimer when faced with a beneficial out-of-party candidate. Perhaps Republicans choosing between a beneficial Democratic and a non-beneficial Republican candidate faced a dual threat. On the one hand, participants who knew they would wear the political t-shirt faced little threat of misclassification, but endorsing the out-of-party candidate should pose consistency concerns. On the other hand, participants who wore the blank t-shirt should experience relatively little dissonance compared to those wearing the “Proud to be a Republican” shirt, but may anticipate others mistaking them as a Democrat if they endorse the beneficial Democratic candidate. Thus, the presence of these two different types of concerns may have made it difficult to detect either, in that they cancelled each other out.

In Study 2, I did not find that disclaiming—at least the method of disclaiming used in the current work—increased Republicans’ willingness to endorse a beneficial out-of-party candidate. Instead, I found that participants were quite willing to endorse an out-of-party candidate, despite the possibility of misclassification. In Study 3, I expanded my exploration of political decision-making to examine how identity misclassification might impact how people evaluate political candidates.

Study 3

In an attempt to extend the current research beyond candidate endorsement, Study 3 examined whether the threat of identity misclassification influences people's reactions to a political speech. In Study 1, I found that participants who endorsed an out-of-party candidate expected misclassification and experienced greater threats to their belonging and coherence than participants who endorsed an in-party candidate. In the current study, I explored whether identity misclassification threats similarly arise when merely evaluating, rather than endorsing, political candidates. Just as endorsing an out-of-party candidate may invite misclassification as a member of the out-group, so might publicly giving a poor evaluation of an in-group candidate. For example, imagine a Republican making critical public remarks about a fellow Republican in a politically relevant context. Unless the individual asserts his party loyalty, others may mistakenly assume the critical Republican to be a Democrat.

In Study 3, I had people rate a poorly-written political speech attributed to either an in-group (i.e., *in-party condition*) or out-group (i.e., *out-of-party condition*) political candidate. All participants made public ratings of the speech, however some participants disclaimed by communicating their political affiliation (i.e., *disclaimer condition*) and others were unable to disclaim (i.e., *control condition*). Because publicly criticizing an in-group other could invite misclassification, group members may soften their criticism to reduce the likelihood of misclassification. By contrast, public assessments of an out-group other may become even more negative when participants are unable to indicate their group affiliation, as overly sympathetic ratings of an out-group member may similarly lead to misclassification. Thus, if disclaiming

reduces the discrepancy between participants' public evaluations of in- and out-group political candidates, these findings could help to explain how identity misclassification processes contribute to in-group biases.

In addition to expanding the scope of the possible influence of identity misclassification on political decision-making, Study 3 assessed the role of strength of identification in political decision making. In Studies 1 and 2, I recruited only highly identified Republicans to participate. In the current study, I recruited both strongly and weakly identified Republicans as a preliminary investigation of whether strength of participants' identification as Republican influences the extent to which a candidate's political affiliation and their ability to disclaim affects their evaluations of political candidates.

Hypotheses

In Study 3, I expected that Republicans who indicated their political affiliation before publicly rating a poorly written speech by either a fellow Republican or a Democrat would display less in-group bias or out-group derogation, respectively, than participants who were unable to communicate their political affiliation. Given that publicly derogating a member of one's in-group, without first identifying as a member of that in-group, could invite misclassification, group members may avoid derogating in-group members to avoid misclassification. However, if Republicans make their political affiliation public when publicly rating a candidate, they should experience little threat of misclassification as Democrat, and can therefore give a more accurate assessment of the candidate's speech than their non-disclaiming counterparts. Thus, I expected participants in the control condition to give more positive ratings to an in-

party candidate (in the in-party condition) and more negative ratings to an out-group member (in the out-of-party condition), than their disclaiming counterparts. In sum, I expected a significant interaction of disclaimer and candidate, such that the control condition would increase the favorability of ratings of the speech and candidate in the in-party condition relative to the disclaimer condition, but decrease the favorability of ratings in the out-of-party condition.

In predicting the absolute difference in ratings of in-party and out-of-party candidates in the disclaimer condition, two theoretical perspectives presented logical possibilities. First, the social identity literature suggests that participants should display a tendency to prefer and confer advantage to in-group others (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Thus, even when unbothered by identity misclassification concerns (as participants in the control condition should be), individuals may still display a tendency to rate a poorly performing in-group member more positively than a poorly performing out-group member. Alternatively, research on the “black-sheep” effect suggests that group members derogate deviant in-group others more harshly than deviant out-group members (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). Thus, if Republicans view the Republican candidate’s poor performance as deviant (because of its poor quality), participants in the control condition who rate an in-party candidate may assign him/her ratings that are as harsh or harsher than control group participants’ ratings of an out-of-party candidate. Thus, my investigation of the discrepancy between the in- and out-of-party conditions within the control condition speaks to the circumstances under which people choose to punish or reward poorly performing in-group members.

Finally, this study allowed me to explore whether the strength of a candidate’s

political affiliation affects how identity misclassification threats affect people's judgments of and attitudes about political candidates.

Method

Participants and Design

In Study 3, I recruited 117 individuals (83 women and 34 men, 85% Caucasian) who identified as Republican in the departmental prescreening. Of those 117, a total of 16 participants indicated their affiliation as Democrat or Independent/Other on the demographic sheet at the end of the experiment, and thus were excluded from analyses.⁵ This left 101 Republicans (73 women and 28 men, 88% Caucasian) for analyses. I randomly assigned participants to one of four conditions. In this study, I utilized a 2 (candidate: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (disclaimer: disclaimer vs. control) factorial design. The dependent measures assessed the quality of the candidate's speech and perceptions of the candidate.

Procedure

After participants arrived at the lab in groups of up to six at a time, and signed an informed consent form agreeing to be photographed, the experimenter explained that the current research investigates people's political opinions. The experimenter continued asserting that similar to a focus group or market testing, the current study assesses people's reactions to a political speech given recently by one of two local political candidates. The researcher then explained that some participants would read a speech from one candidate and others would read a speech by his opponent. In fact, all participants read the same fictional speech, merely attributed to either a Democrat or Republican candidate. The researcher continued, saying that, "Just as in marketing

research, in which the market researchers will not tell people the brand of product they are evaluating to prevent people's biases from affecting people's true ratings, I cannot reveal the identity of these candidates until you complete your evaluations." However, to make the scenario more realistic, the experimenter told participants that once they had finished filling out the packet, they would learn the identity of the candidate. In order to make participants feel as if their rating would be seen by other in-group members, the experimenter then told participants that in addition to several research assistants, several Democrat and Republican student groups would look over the packets.

Next, participants received a response packet. For all participants, the packet had a cover page requiring participants to write their name and OUID number, as well as a box in the center of the page indicating that participants' photographs would be attached. The experimenter explained that participants would have their photograph taken and that the pictures would later be printed out and attached to the front page of their response packet. The experimenter then went around the room and took pictures of everyone. Again, this was done to make all participants feel like their ratings of the speech would be "public," in that a picture of their face would ostensibly be attached to their rating form. In fact, the camera had no film, and after they completed all their responses, participants removed the coversheet to assure them that their responses would remain anonymous. Finally, the experimenter instructed participants to work through the items in the packet in the order presented, and remain seated until everyone finished.

Disclaimer manipulation. As mentioned above, all participants received packets

with a cover page. In the disclaimer condition, the cover page contained an open-ended item requesting participants to report their political affiliation. Participants in the control condition did not have this political affiliation item on the cover page.

Questionnaire packet. The first page of the packet (after the cover page) included a one-page speech attributed to either a Democratic (out-of-party condition) or Republican (in-party condition) candidate. In constructing the speech, I tried to use generic political language, and thus make it conceivable that either a Democrat or Republican could have made the speech. In addition, I constructed the speech to contain informal language, improper grammar, and logical inconsistencies so that participants could recognize the poor quality of the speech (see Appendix D).

After reading the speech, participants completed ratings of the candidate's speech and the candidate's personal qualities. Participants rated the quality of the speech by reporting the extent to which they agreed with fifteen statements (see Appendix E), on a scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 9 (*Strongly Agree*). After reverse coding negatively worded items, I computed the internal consistency of the measure. Given that the items displayed a high internal consistency ($\alpha = .92$), I used the mean of these fifteen items as a single indicator of participants' perceptions of the speech's quality. After rating the quality of the speech, participants next rated the extent to which the candidate possessed eight positive and eight negative qualities on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very much*). I borrowed fourteen of the items from a card sorting measure used by Showers (1992), as that work deemed these attributes to be unambiguously positive and negative qualities of individuals. I added two additional positive items (i.e., "enthusiastic" and "likable") to create the 16-item measure (see

Appendix F). After reverse coding negative attributes, I computed the mean of all 16 items to yield an indicator of positive perceptions of the candidate ($\alpha = .89$). After completing their rating participants received a separate sheet on which they reported their gender, age, and race, as well as their political affiliation to ensure that my selection procedures accurately identified eligible candidates. In addition the sheet asked participants to report their ideas about the purpose of the study and indicate any suspicions they felt during the study. None of these responses warranted a participant's exclusion from the study.

Debriefing. After all participants completed the questionnaire, the experimenter explained the true purpose of the experiment, including all the deceptions necessary for conducting the experiment, and had participants remove the first page of the questionnaire and dispose of it in any manner they wanted. This should have assured participants that neither their name nor photograph would be connected to their questionnaire packet.

Results

Strength of Political Affiliation

Of the 101 Republicans who participated, roughly half ($N = 48$) met the criteria used in Studies 1 and 2 to qualify as a strongly identified Republican—namely, possessing a score higher than the midpoint of the political identification measure. The other half ($N = 53$) were classified as weakly identified, given that their strength of identification score fell at or below the scale's midpoint. To determine if participants' level of identification as Republican moderated the impact of the manipulations on their ratings of the speech and candidate, I entered participants' continuous strength of

identification scores along with my two primary independent variables and all possible interactions into two regressions, predicting participants' ratings of the speech and evaluations of the candidate. I used the continuous measure of strength of political identification, rather than merely comparing weakly versus strongly identified participants, because of the problems associated with dichotomizing continuous variables (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher, & Rucker, 2002).

In order to test for moderation, I first centered participants' strength of political identification scores by subtracting the mean from their score (Aiken & West, 1991). I then entered this centered score along with two dichotomous indicators of participants' experimental condition (0 versus 1 representing disclaimer versus control and in-party versus out-of-party, respectively) in the first block of the models. In order to create two-way interaction terms, I multiplied participants' strength of identification scores by the two other dichotomous variables, and I created a three-way interaction term by multiplying all three variables together. Next, I entered all of these interaction terms into the second block of the models. In neither model did participants' level of identification or its interaction with the independent variables reach significance, $ts < 1$. Given that participants' strength of identification did not moderate the effect of the manipulation condition on their evaluations, I collapsed across level of identification for my primary analyses.

Speech Quality and Perceptions of Candidate

In order to assess the effectiveness of the disclaimer at reducing in-group biased responding, I conducted separate 2 (candidate: in-party vs. out-of-party) X 2 (disclaimer: disclaimer vs. control) factorial ANOVAs on participants' ratings of the

candidate's speech and their perceptions of the candidate. I anticipated a significant interaction, such that the control condition would produce the highest ratings of any condition when participants rated an in-party candidate and his speech, and the lowest ratings when participants assessed the out-of party candidate and his speech. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of participants' ratings of the candidate's speech quality and evaluations of the candidate by condition.

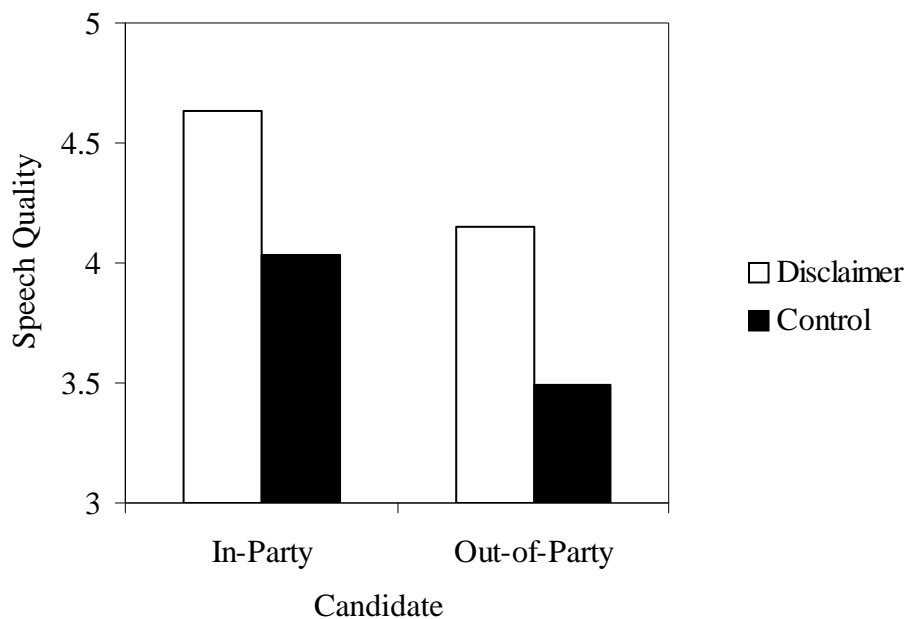
Table 5. *Descriptive Statistics for Speech Quality and Candidate Evaluation by Condition*

		Speech Quality	Candidate Evaluation
In-party	Disclaimer	4.63 (1.43)	6.14 (1.24)
	Control	4.03 (1.33)	5.75 (1.17)
	Total	4.32 (1.40)	5.94 (1.21)
Out-of-party	Disclaimer	4.15 (1.15)	5.86 (1.07)
	Control	3.49 (1.13)	5.52 (1.07)
	Total	3.82 (1.18)	5.69 (1.07)
Total	Disclaimer	4.39 (1.31)	6.00 (1.15)
	Control	3.76 (1.25)	5.64 (1.12)
	Overall	4.07 (1.31)	5.82 (1.14)

Note. Table 5 displays the means and standard deviations for the measure of participants' ratings of the quality of the speech given by the candidate and the positivity of participants' evaluations of the candidate.

In the case of ratings of the quality of the speech, both the main effect of candidate's affiliation, $F(1, 97) = 6.23, p = .01$, and the main effect of disclaimer, $F(1, 97) = 3.99, p = .05$, reached significance. However, the interaction effect did not emerge, $F(1, 97) = .02, p = .90$. As can be seen in Figure 3, participants consistently rated in-party candidates ($M = 4.39, SD = .18$) higher than out-of-party candidates ($M = 3.76, SD = .18$), and participants who publicly indicated their Republican identification ($M = 4.33, SD = .18$) rated the quality of the candidate's speech higher than participants who did not identify as Republican ($M = 3.82, SD = .18$).

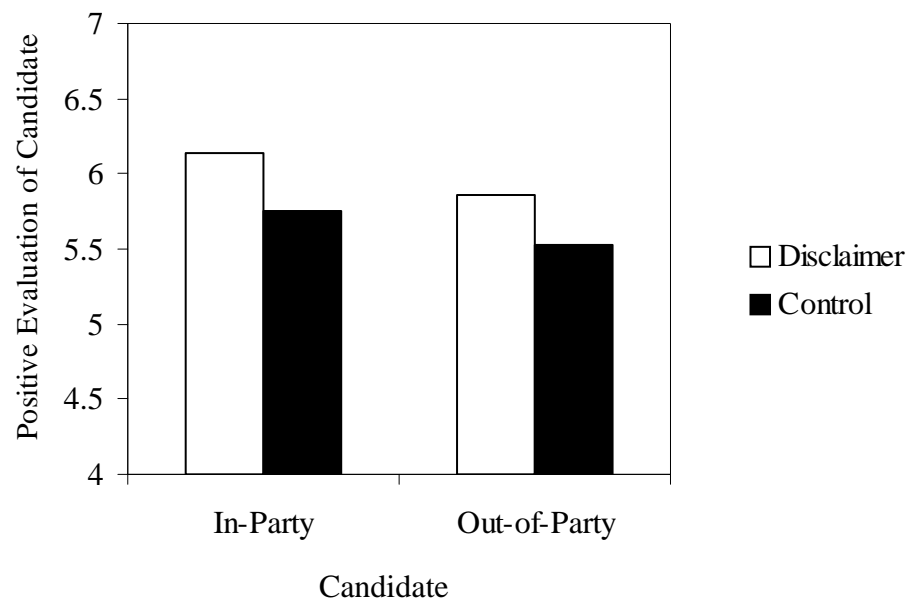
Figure 3. Mean ratings of speech quality as a function of candidate affiliation and disclaimer condition in Study 3.



Although I accurately predicted that participants would rate an in-party candidate's speech higher than an out-of-party candidate's, I did not anticipate that

indicating Republican status in general would increase ratings of the quality of the speech. Thus, despite the fact that disclaiming did not make participants more critical of an in-party candidate as I predicted, a one-tailed t -test revealed a trend for participants rating an out-of-party candidate's speech to give more generous evaluations if they were able to disclaim than if they were not, $t(49) = 1.55, p = .06$, lending partial support to my hypothesis that disclaiming would reduce in-group biased responding.

Figure 4. Mean ratings of the positivity of participants' evaluation of the candidate as a function of candidate affiliation and disclaimer condition in Study 3.



In the model investigating the effects of the manipulations on participants' evaluations of the candidate, the interaction term was not significant, $F(1, 97) = .01, p = .92$, and although both of the main effects failed to reach significance, $F_s \leq 2.50, p_s > .11$, the pattern of participants' evaluations of the candidate closely mirrored their

assessment of speech quality (see Figure 4). In fact, participants' ratings of the quality of the speech correlated quite highly with their assessment of the candidate ($r = .76, p < .001$), suggesting that their appraisals of the quality of the speech closely aligned with their attribution of positive qualities to the candidate.

Discussion

In Study 3, I investigated whether the identity misclassification framework applies to a wider array of social behaviors than previously explored—namely people's public evaluations of political candidates. I had hoped to demonstrate that disclaiming could reduce in-group biased evaluations of candidates, in that participants who were able to disclaim would rate an in-party candidate less generously and an out-of-party candidate less harshly than participants who had not publicly identified as Republican. Although disclaiming did not allow Republicans to give harsher evaluations to a fellow Republican, it did allow them to be slightly more generous in their assessments of an out-of-party candidate. In addition, I found that people consistently rated the speeches of in-party candidates as being of higher quality than those of out-of-party candidates. This finding supports the assertions of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) that individuals display in-group biased responding as a way to bolster their own self-evaluations, rather than the black sheep effect (Marques et al., 1988) which would predict that participants would judge the poorly performing in-group member more harshly than the poorly performing out-group member.

Unexpectedly, reporting their Republican identity to their ostensible audience also increased participants' ratings of the quality of the speech. This occurred both when participants rated a Republican and a Democratic candidate, suggesting that some

aspect of publicly indicating affiliation with the Republican party led participants to assess the candidate's speech more positively in general. Recall that in Study 2, participants who wore a "Proud to be a Republican" t-shirt gave lower quality speeches than participants wearing a blank t-shirt. Combining this previous finding with the findings from Study 3, perhaps reminding participants of their Republican identity increased their attraction to an informal, off-the-cuff sounding speech. Given that I did not predict either of these findings, any explanation for the current patterns remains speculative.

Finally, the current study suggests that participants behaved similarly regardless of the strength of their political affiliation. In my introduction of Study 2, I discussed a pilot study that found that in general, Democrats and Republicans appeared generally willing to endorse a beneficial out-of-party candidate. I reasoned that perhaps participants' willingness to endorse the out-of-party candidate stemmed from the rather lax eligibility criteria for inclusion in the study. Thus, in Studies 1 and 2, I created stricter criteria to ensure that only strongly identified Republicans participated, reasoning that these individuals should be averse to endorsing an out-of-party candidate. However, Study 2 demonstrated that even these strongly identified partisans tended to endorse a beneficial candidate (even when he affiliated as an out-of-party member), suggesting little difference in strongly and weakly identified Republicans. Perhaps the similarity among weakly and strongly identified Republicans in Study 3 is not surprising given our previous research finding that the strength of men's gender identity did not moderate the effect of expectations of misclassification on their discomfort with a gender role violation (Bosson et al., 2006). Thus, the current findings suggest that

mere identification as Republican, rather than the strength of that identification, affects people's evaluation of political candidates.

General Discussion

Taken together, the three studies presented here address how people's experience of identity misclassification influences their experience of role violations and their willingness to violate group norms. Although in many situations, adhering to group norms contributes to a coherent sense of self (Turner et al., 1987) and makes people feel a stronger connection to their in-group (Hogg & McGarty, 1990), group norms can also hinder people's intrinsic motivations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, strategies that allow people to violate social roles, without experiencing belonging and coherence threats, should increase people's sense of autonomy (Bosson et al., 2005) and ultimately allow them to act in their best interest.

In the current work, I attempted to build on our previous work with heterosexual men who feared misclassification as gay (Bosson et al., 2005; Bosson et al., 2006; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press) by examining Republicans' expectations of misclassification as Democrat. Specifically, Study 1 assessed the consequences of violating the norms of one's political party by publicly endorsing a beneficial out-of-party candidate. In Study 2, I expanded the scope of the identity misclassification framework to assess whether disclaiming could increase political partisans' willingness to endorse an out-of-party candidate. Finally, in Study 3, I investigated how partisans may use in-group biased evaluations of a political candidate's speech as a strategy to combat identity misclassification.

Summary of Findings

The findings from Study 1 suggest that Republicans who publicly endorse a Democratic candidate expect other Republicans who do not know them to misclassify

them on the basis of their role violating behavior. Moreover, accompanying this expectation of misclassification, people experience increased threat to both their belonging and coherence when endorsing the out-of-party candidate. Although wearing a t-shirt that communicated their Republican identity reduced Republicans' expectation of misclassification and concern about living up to their own standards for how a Republican should act, this disclaimer did little to assuage participants' concern over what other Republicans might think of them.

As mentioned above, one possible reason for participants' lingering belongingness threats concerns participants' worrying, even after disclaiming, that they might be misclassified into some devalued group other than Democrat (e.g., Independent, "bad" Republican). Given that participants could assume that wearing the t-shirt communicated nothing about their unique identity as Republican, knowing that we had all the participants wear similar shirts, Republicans may have been concerned that others would not know their genuine Republican identity. Therefore, in future research I would change the nature of the disclaimer to allow participants to communicate their political identity more fully and with obvious sincerity. This may increase the effectiveness of the disclaimer in communicating non-stigmatized status to others.

Although participants reported a greater expectation of misclassification and experienced greater threats to both their belonging and coherence when endorsing an out-of-party candidate, they did not experience or display more self-conscious discomfort when endorsing the out-of-party candidate. Similarly, participants in both Study 1 and 2 did not experience decreases in the positivity of their self-evaluations

following endorsement of an out-of-party candidate. One major limitation of the current study was that I did not collect any information about participants' general discomfort with public speaking. Thus, I cannot determine if the failure to detect significant effects of the manipulations on participants' discomfort and self-evaluations stems from excessive variability in participants' pre-existing experience with and attitudes concerning public speaking. Had I asked participants to report their attitudes toward public speaking, I could have controlled for this, just as we controlled for heterosexual men's experience with and exposure to our hairstyling task (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). As it stands, I can only speculate that controlling for people's fear of public speaking would have allowed the effects of the disclaimer on participants' negative affect to emerge.

In both Study 1 and Study 2, Republican participants displayed a greater preference for the beneficial candidate when he affiliated with the Republican Party as opposed to the Democratic Party. Not surprisingly then, Study 2 participants chose the beneficial in-party candidate more often than the beneficial out-of-party candidate. However, for both the preference and choice measures, wearing a t-shirt that advertised their political affiliation (as opposed to a blank t-shirt) did *not* increase participants' preference for or choice of a beneficial out-of-party candidate. Instead, the participants in Study 2 seemed willing to choose the beneficial candidate, even when he was an out-of-party candidate, suggesting that their concerns of identity misclassification may have been relatively low, even when they were unable to communicate their Republican identity.

Why did Republican participants feel free to endorse a beneficial Democratic

candidate, even when they were unable to communicate their Republican identity? Perhaps the particular circumstances of choosing between two similar candidates for a non-partisan position did not arouse the same identity concerns as might arise when choosing between candidates for an elected political office in which political affiliation should be more relevant. Another possibility is that the reliance on freshmen college students (*Md* age=19) as participants produced a sample of people who had yet to fully establish their own independent political affiliation free of their parents' and friends' influence. Thus, older, more established partisans may experience a greater threat to their Republican identity when breaking with party lines.

Despite people's willingness to endorse a beneficial candidate (Study 2), Republicans still displayed a tendency to evaluate a speech given by a fellow Republican more positively than the exact same speech given by a Democrat (Study 3). Thus, when a Democratic candidate objectively benefited them more than the Republican candidate, Republicans were able to put aside their political affiliation and endorse the beneficial Democratic candidate. However, with all things equal, participants consistently evaluated the performance of an in-party candidate in a more positive light, despite an identical performance.

With regard to the primary prediction that a disclaimer would reduce participants' in-group biased evaluations, I found that disclaiming did not consistently reduce in-group biased responding. For example, in Study 3, political partisans who disclaimed did not display a tendency to evaluate a fellow in-group member's speech more harshly, but disclaiming did increase partisans' ratings of the quality of an out-group member's speech. Given that I did not directly assess participants' experience of

identity misclassification in Study 3, these findings leave open several possible interpretations.

First, perhaps participants did expect misclassification, yet the disclaimer used in the current study did not provide strong enough protection against identity misclassification threats to allow participants to negatively evaluate a fellow in-group member. Thus, participants' tendency to rate an in-party candidate higher than an out-of-party candidate, even after disclaiming, may have resulted from a failure of the disclaimer to adequately communicate non-stigmatized status. Alternatively, participants may have been relatively free of misclassification concerns and merely displayed an in-group bias as a way to bolster their own self-evaluation, as social identity theory would predict (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Because I did not assess identity misclassification concerns directly, it remains unclear whether Republicans' bias toward a fellow Republican's speech emerged as a tactic to stave off misclassification or an attempt to reinforce a positive self-image.

Another possible reason for the relative ineffectiveness of the disclaimer concerns Study 3's methodology for making participants feel as if their role violation was public. In previous research (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press), we videotaped people engaging in role violations to make them feel as if others would see their role violating behavior. In Study 3, participants merely believed their name and picture would be attached to their response packet, and thus, they may not have perceived their ratings to be highly public, as our videotaped participants likely did. If participants felt relatively anonymous while making their ratings, they should feel little concern about how others might judge them on the basis of their evaluations,

and thus experience little threat of identity misclassification.

Despite Republicans' ability to endorse an overtly beneficial Democratic candidate, Republicans preferred and chose a beneficial candidate more if he identified as Republican than if he identified as Democrat and disclaiming did not reduce this tendency (Studies 1 and 2). Similarly, Republicans in Study 3 rated the same speech of lower quality when given by a Democrat, regardless of whether they disclaimed. Thus, partisan identification clearly plays a role in reactions to political candidates, regardless of situational factors that might reduce the chances of misclassification. Given the limited utility of disclaimers in reducing Republicans' in-party biased political decision-making, the extent to which identity misclassification plays a part in adherence to in-party norms remains unclear.

Although I only recruited strongly identified Republicans in Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 allowed me to compare the reactions of strongly and weakly identified Republicans. In the current work, the strength and importance of Republicans' political affiliation mattered little, in that both strongly and weakly identified Republicans gave overly generous evaluations to a fellow Republican's poorly written speech. This suggests that a Democratic candidate may have a difficult time persuading even moderate or weakly identified Republican voters, given partisans' tendency to discount an out-group member's performance.

In addition to the findings relevant to my primary predictions, the current work yielded some unexpected results. Results from Studies 2 and 3 demonstrated that partisans gave lower quality speeches and rated a candidate's poorly written speech higher after having publicly identified as a member of their political party. Although

any explanation of these findings remain speculative, participants may have assimilated to the behavioral characteristics of a readily accessible exemplar of Republicanism—namely George W. Bush’s relatively informal style of public speaking (Weisberg, 2004). Alternatively, having been identified as proud Republicans, these participants may have attempted to distance themselves from “liberal elitists” (see Frank, 2004; Ross, 2006; Yoon, 2004) by trying not to appear too “proper” in their speeches.

Reconciling the Current Work with Previous Research

So, why did research on Republicans’ concerns of being misclassified as a Democrat for the most part fail to replicate our past work on heterosexual men who fear being seen as gay? One response to this question could be that partisans simply do not experience identity misclassification threats as heterosexual men do. However, Study 1 demonstrated that strongly-identified Republicans *do* expect identity misclassification, as well as feelings of belonging and coherence threats, when they endorse an out-of-party candidate. Yet despite these threats, Study 2 participants seemed willing in general to endorse a beneficial out-of-party candidate over a non-beneficial in-party candidate (although less willing than participants who could endorse a beneficial in-party candidate). So, perhaps the differences in current and previous findings lie in discrepancies in how people negotiate their group membership as heterosexual or as political partisans respectively.

In the case of sexual orientation, most people view sexual orientation as a more static and perhaps even innate characteristic. In contrast, because the criteria for determining what makes someone a Democrat or a Republican may be less defined and agreed upon, people can readily choose and change their political affiliation. Given the

prevalence and rigidity of the male gender role (Pleck, 1981), men who violate this role should expect misclassification as gay (Bosson et al., 2005). However, when people endorse an out-of-party candidate, are they engaging in a role violating behavior that is diagnostic of a devalued out-group, or merely being an educated and independent thinking citizen?

Depending on the situational circumstances, endorsing a particular candidate may or may not threaten peoples' partisan identity, given that even staunch political partisans view their own political decisions as free from bias (Cohen, 2003), and likely believe such decisions should be made on the basis of issues rather than party affiliation. Thus, in a situation like that of Study 2, where it would be hard to deny partisan bias when endorsing a non-beneficial candidate over the objectively beneficial candidate, individuals may feel justified in choosing an out-of-party candidate. Therefore, partisans may display a greater willingness to violate party norms, as the standards for appropriate political party behavior are likely less rigidly defined than those for heterosexual male behavior.

Another explanation for partisans' general willingness to endorse a beneficial candidate may rest in participants' inability to predict their own affective reactions to giving a role-violating endorsement speech. In our previous research (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press) role violators reported their negative affective reactions following the role violating behavior. Given that people are generally bad forecasters of their future emotional reactions (Bosson & Pinel, 2006; Gilbert, Pinel, Wilson, Blumberg, & Wheatley, 1998), Study 2 participants may not have correctly judged how endorsing an out-of-party candidate would make them feel.

Thus, participants may have displayed a willingness to endorse the beneficial out-of-party candidate because they did not anticipate negative affective reactions.

Furthermore, this same concept may help to explain the lack of effectiveness of the disclaimer in allowing people to endorse an out-of-party candidate. Perhaps participants did not initially realize that wearing a t-shirt could help to protect them against feelings of discomfort and threat. However, an equally plausible explanation for the general ineffectiveness of the disclaimer in the current studies concerns what participants might be proclaiming when they identify as Republican.

Over the course of data collection for these studies, George W. Bush's approval ratings declined to the point that even many Republican politicians running for office in fall of 2006 made marked attempts to distance themselves from the President (Hammer, 2006). Perhaps the Republicans in the current studies worried that publicly identifying themselves as Republican (without simultaneously distancing themselves from the unpopular Bush administration) could lead others to judge them negatively. In the face of stigmatization for being seen as a Bush supporter, many Republicans may face not only a fear of being seen as Democrat, but a fear of being seen as the wrong type of Republican. This could perhaps explain some of the unexpected findings from the current studies. For example, the tendency of Republicans to give lower quality speeches could result from concern over others judging them more negatively on the basis of their Republican identity. Furthermore, the tendency for Republicans to rate a candidate's speech of higher quality following a public disclaimer could reflect a desire to appear as a generous person to deflect possible negative evaluations from others. For whatever reason, the disclaimers used here appear to have little impact on political

decision making and limited utility in reducing in-group biased responding. Thus, many questions are left unanswered and require further investigation.

Directions for Future Research

The current study investigated the role of identity misclassification in people's political decision-making. Despite the obvious in-group bias displayed throughout the three studies, the findings from Study 2 suggest that candidates may be able to win voters from a rival political party if they offer clear and relevant benefits not offered by the rival party's candidate. Although these results are promising, it is unclear how likely these results are to translate into real world political decision making. In Study 2, I created a situation in which the candidates primarily differed on only two dimensions—their stance on implementing mandatory comprehensive exams for graduating seniors and their political affiliation. In real world political decisions, political contenders advertise their stances on a myriad of issues, and candidates' platforms on a given issue may be quite similar or quite different. Thus, the likelihood of actual political candidates being able to clearly distinguish themselves as the sole beneficial candidate is probably quite low. Therefore, future research should investigate the techniques candidates use to craft themselves as beneficial and the effectiveness of these techniques in wooing out-of-party voters.

In any social psychological research, investigators should take into account the impact of societal shifts on people's thoughts, feelings, and behavior. All too often, researchers mistakenly assert findings to be universal and generalizable despite coming from a circumscribed set of controlled studies. In studying political decision-making, it becomes even more important to consider how current political events impact how

decisions are made. In the current work, I predicted that allowing strongly identified Republicans to advertise their Republicanism should alleviate concerns about being seen negatively by others. As noted, however, increasing disapproval of the Bush administration and several prominent Republican scandals may have left some Republicans concerned about how others would perceive them while wearing a “Proud to be Republican” shirt. Thus, in future research I want to explore the extent to which current events play a role in the negotiation of partisan identity.

Focusing more squarely on the identity misclassification framework, one of the primary goals of the current work centered on determining the extent to which misclassification into a myriad of social groups and categories—including those *not* widely stigmatized—threatens individuals. I assume that expectations of identity misclassification can arise in many everyday, mundane situations. For example, might the Kappa Sigma member who compliments the Lambda Chi homecoming float, or the vegetarian left sitting at a meat-filled table, worry about misclassification? In these situations, perhaps off-hand comments or mundane behaviors may arouse identity misclassification threats. Although the current work leaves unanswered many questions about the extent to which Republicans experience misclassification when making political decisions, it is at least likely that strongly identified members of both major political parties consider the other party to be a devalued identity. In future research, I hope to not only track how people respond to situations in which they face misclassification, but find new ways to assess the psychological mechanisms underlying those responses to have a better understanding of how identity misclassification shapes everyday experience.

Although the identity misclassification framework theoretically applies to membership in any number of social groups and categories, the current work only explored the experiences of people who identified as Republicans. Therefore, the findings presented here may not generalize to the experiences of Democrats, Independents, and members of other political parties. In fact, given the characteristic psychological differences between political liberals and conservatives (Jost et al., 2003), Democrats may in fact react quite differently to identity misclassification than Republicans do. Thus, future research is needed to explore whether the current results replicate when Democrats' face the possibility of misclassification as Republican. Furthermore, given the young age of many of the Republicans in the current work, participants may not yet have fully established their political identity. Therefore, the extent to which the current findings generalize to more seasoned Republican partisans who face identity misclassification remains unclear.

Another possible extension of the current work includes exploring the nature of disclaimers. In our previous work with heterosexual men, we found that writing an essay about their masculine interests and activities reduced men's negative affective reactions to a gender role violation just as indicating their sexual orientation had (Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). In the current work, the disclaimer manipulation did little to reduce partisan biases in political decision-making and reactions to political candidates. However, would strategies that allow people to convincingly communicate their authentic political party membership to others reduce their biased responding? For example, if participants had been able to choose a t-shirt that reflected their unique political identity or write an essay in support of a prominent Republican candidate,

perhaps they would have felt more willing to endorse a beneficial candidate or evaluate a poor performing in-party candidate more critically.

Another question concerns the extent to which people choose to use disclaimers to ward off identity misclassification threats. In everyday interactions, people may advertise their social identities via group identifying clothing, bumper stickers, statements, etc. How often do people use these advertisements to communicate their non-stigmatized status in the face of identity misclassification? In the current research, I assigned participants to either disclaim or not, similar to our previous research assessing the utility of a disclaimer (Bosson et al., 2005; Prewitt-Freilino & Bosson, in press). However, future research should examine whether people choose to use disclaimers to ward off misclassification (e.g., would participants in the current study have chosen to wear the “Proud to be a Republican” t-shirt if given a choice?).

Furthermore, are these methods effective? Thus far, we have only looked at the experiences of role violators who face the possibility of being misclassified. Although disclaiming appears to assuage role violators’ expectation of being misclassified, it may not actually reduce a bystander’s likelihood of misclassifying someone. Thus, future research needs to investigate the real world interaction process between role violators and the people who witness the role violating behavior.

Conclusion

In sum, the current investigation sought to determine the circumstances and situations that allow people to act in their best interest, without fear of social sanction or intrapsychic distress. Ultimately, allowing people to violate overly restrictive social roles should free them to benefit psychologically from an increased sense of autonomy,

greater behavioral flexibility, and an ability to act in their own best interests. Although the Republican partisans in the current study displayed an in-party bias when making political decisions, situational factors—like the policy implications of selecting a particular candidate—can override political bias and allow people to step across party lines.

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Footnotes

¹ Although the experimenter asked all participants to endorse Richard Blanton (i.e., the beneficial candidate), 13 of the 45 participants who had been asked to endorse the out-of-party candidate refused the request and endorsed the in-party candidate. Among those asked to endorse an out-of-party candidate, no differences emerged between the political and blank t-shirt conditions in terms of people's likelihood of endorsing the non-beneficial in-party candidate, $\chi^2(1, N = 78) = 1.83, p = .24$. The refusal rates from Study 1 resemble those of past studies in which the experimenter asks participants to publicly endorse a position they do not agree with (Harmon-Jones et al., 1996). Because the primary objective of Study 1 involves assessing participant's reactions to role violations, and people who endorsed the in-party candidate did not violate a role norm, their data were excluded from the primary analyses. In addition, I excluded three participants in the blank t-shirt condition for mentioning their political affiliation in their speech, as these participants in fact used a disclaimer in the no disclaimer condition. Finally, one participant did not complete the back of the questionnaire sheet and therefore, that individual's data are not included in the coherence threat, implicit and explicit self-esteem analyses.

² After collecting most of the data for Study 1, I realized that I did not modify the RSES items to assess state levels of self-esteem (e.g., "Right now, I feel I am able to do things as well as most other people"). Because the RSES was not the only measure of self-relevant affect, and to maintain consistency with the data already collected, I left the items in trait form for the remainder of Study 1.

³ After collecting the data for this study, I realized that I had neglected to collect information about participants' comfort with public speaking in general. Given that there is likely considerable variability in people's prior experience and pre-existing affective reactions to public speaking, it may be difficult to detect group differences on my discomfort and self-esteem measures. In our previous research, we used prior exposure to the hairstyling task as a covariate to reduce the variability within groups. A

similar procedure here may have allowed me to reduce in-group variability and detect differences between participants in different conditions.

⁴ To assess the extent to which order of presentation of the two candidates affected participants' choice of candidate, I counterbalanced the order of presentation. So, half of participants read about the beneficial candidate first, and the other half read about the non-beneficial candidate first. A chi-square analysis revealed no effect of order of presentation, $\chi^2(1, N = 68) = .36, p = .77$, suggesting that participants' choice of candidate was not affected by the order in which the two candidates were presented.

⁵ Although the inclusion of these 16 participants did not dramatically impact the pattern or significance of results, I wanted to briefly review several factors that may have contributed to participants switching identification from the prescreening to the experiment, and justify my exclusion of these participants. One possible explanation concerns participant response error. Although it is possible that either participants' initial response during pre-screening or their response during the experiment resulted from mistakenly indicating the wrong affiliation, perhaps more likely is that participants' political identification changed over the weeks and months between the initial pre-testing and their participation in the experiment. Supporting this idea, weakly-identified Republicans changed their identification more often than strongly-identified Republicans, $\chi^2(1, N = 101) = 4.65, p = .03$. Given that one's affiliation with a given political party is a dynamic characteristic that can change with shifts in political climate, and that the current sample is largely composed of college freshmen (who may still be searching to find their political identity), the number of participants who changed identifications seems reasonable. Whether participants switched identification because of response error or due to an actual shift in their political identification, participants must identify with a particular group to exhibit in-group biased responding or for disclaiming to effectively reduce any misclassification threats. Thus, I excluded participants who switched identification because theoretically, they should respond differently than identified partisans.

Appendix A: Candidate Information Sheet

This year, the governor will appoint a new member to the OU Board of Regents to replace Dr. Robert Ellis, who is retiring after 13 years of service on the Board. One of the major issues during this selection process concerns a hotly-debated policy change that would mandate comprehensive exams for graduating seniors at the University. This mandate would require graduating seniors to complete a cumulative exam in their major before graduating from the University. Students who failed the exam would not be allowed to graduate. To implement this procedure and offset the cost of creating and grading the exams, OU will have to raise tuition by an amount that is yet to be determined. This amount will most likely appear as an increase in student fees for all students at the university. While the current decision about comprehensive exams is an important one, the term of service for a Regent is generally quite long and thus whoever is selected will have an impact on the future of the University for many years to come.

Please read the following summaries about the candidates for the OU Board of Regents. After reading this, you will be asked to endorse one of the two candidates by writing a speech about why you think that candidate would make a good Regent. You will be videotaped reading your speech.

Candidate A: Richard Blanton

Richard Blanton was born in Bartlesville, Oklahoma in 1948. He worked as a medical doctor for nine years at a private practice. As an active member of the (*Democratic/Republican*) Party for many years, Richard Blanton eventually decided to run for political office and won a seat in the State Senate in 1992. At a recent function for the (*Democratic/Republican*) Party, Blanton noted his intentions to obtain the newly opened position on the Board of Regents at OU. During an interview, Senator Blanton made the following statements about his position on the implementation of mandatory exams for graduating seniors:

“As Regent of OU, I will work to make OU the national institution that it deserves to be. As a state, Oklahoma needs to do everything we can to make sure that our educational system is excellent. Concerning recent proposals at the University to implement mandatory comprehensive exams, I agree that high educational standards are important, but I also believe that such dramatic policy changes are not in the best interest of our students at this time. It will cost too much money and may end up actually reducing the number of students who earn a college degree in our state.”

Candidate B: Tony James

Anthony James (known as Tony James) was born in Chickasha, Oklahoma in 1951. After spending a few years as a prosecuting attorney, he was elected as a District Judge in Oklahoma County. In 1994, Tony James ran for the State House of Representatives on the (*Republican/Democratic*) ticket and won. Representative James was one of the leading (*Republicans/Democrats*) in the State House, and he now seeks a position as a member of the Board of Regents here at OU. In response to an interview earlier in the month, Representative James highlighted his stance on several issues regarding higher education at the University of Oklahoma, including some changes that the current administration has been discussing implementing.

“I seek to bring a higher standard of excellence to this University and thus the entire state of Oklahoma. I feel we need to raise the standards for graduation at all levels of education from elementary schools through the college level. Therefore, I support the institution of mandatory comprehensive exams for seniors. The sooner these new standards are implemented, the sooner we can begin to change the reputation of this state. I understand that implementing these comprehensive exams will necessitate a raise in tuition for all OU students. Nonetheless, I believe that this is a necessary step.”

Appendix B: Essay Sheet

Please use the front of this page to write a paragraph or two about why you think your candidate would make a good Regent. You will be using this essay as a speech that you will give on camera, so make sure to write in a clear and straightforward manner about the qualities that make your candidate a strong choice for the OU Board of Regents. This task may take several minutes, so don't rush yourself. Please ring the bell when you finish.

Please indicate (by circling) which candidate you are endorsing, and then write your speech in the space below:

Richard Blanton (Candidate A) or **Tony James** (Candidate B)

Appendix C: Self-reported Discomfort

Now that you are finished giving your speech, we are interested in how you felt while giving your speech. Please rate your agreement with the following statements. Please use the scale below to make your ratings:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at all very much

1. ___ I felt pleasant during my speech.
2. ___ I felt proud of myself while giving my speech.
3. ___ During my speech, I felt concerned about the impression I might make on the people who will view my videotape.
4. ___ I felt self-conscious during my speech.
5. ___ I felt silly during my speech.
6. ___ I enjoyed making the speech.
7. ___ During my speech, I felt worried about what others might think of me.
8. ___ I felt embarrassed during my speech.
9. ___ Giving the speech felt quite natural to me.
10. ___ I had fun giving my speech.

Appendix D: Candidate's Speech

The following is a word-for-word transcription of a speech given by a local (*Democratic/Republican*) candidate for political office. The speech appears below precisely as it was actually spoken by this candidate. However, references to people and places have been removed.

Hello everybody. I am so glad to be here with you all on such a pretty day like today. It's great to be out here and see all your smiling faces. I wanted to start talking today by talking about what I think it means to be an American. So ever since I was a boy, growing up in [state's name], I knew I could do anything I wanted to in life, because in America, what makes America great, we can all get an education, be successful, and make a better life for our children and their children. Generations and generations has made America what it is and I can help keep that up. I believe in this beautiful country because living here means we have freedoms that others don't have. You know, I like talking about [state's name] because I think that, as the heart of America, [state's name] *is* the heart of America, a big part of this country and it deserves some recognition. Being a proud [member of state] means working hard. We have a lot to do to make this state better—better schools, better roads, better healthcare, and less crime. But we can do it together because we, as the people, have the drive to make this a better place. If you share my vision on this, I think you should vote for me. My opponent, [opponent's name], says a lot of ideas about how he can do the job better than me. He says we are off the track and going in the wrong direction. I ask you, what does he know? I believe this is a great country and a great state. One thing I am a little worried about is the morals and ethics of our people today. I don't like a lot of what I hear going on lately and I want things to change and I am willing and able to lead that change. We need more jobs in this state, better economy, less crime and a whole lot more, and I intend to make it happen. Now, I don't want to take too much of your time, because we got other people who need to talk, but I want to let you know that a vote for [candidate's name] means good things to come. So vote for me. Thanks.

Appendix E: Ratings of Speech Quality

Please rate your agreement with the following statements, using the scale below to make your ratings:

1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....	6.....	7.....	8.....	9
Strongly				Neither				Strongly
disagree				agree nor				agree
				disagree				

- ___ 1. The candidate's speech was persuasive.
- ___ 2. The candidate touched on issues I find most important when making political decisions.
- ___ 3. The speech seemed poorly constructed.
- ___ 4. The speech was well-written.
- ___ 5. The speech was convincing.
- ___ 6. The candidate really held my attention through the entire speech.
- ___ 7. The candidate ignored many important issues in his speech.
- ___ 8. The speech was of a poor quality.
- ___ 9. The speech helped me to connect with the candidate.
- ___ 10. The speech seemed cliché.
- ___ 11. The candidate seemed sincere in his speech.
- ___ 12. The candidate seemed to really care about people like me.
- ___ 13. The speech was weak and ineffective.
- ___ 14. The speech seemed to flow well.
- ___ 15. The speech made me have a favorable impression of the candidate.

Appendix F: Perceptions of Candidate

Please rate the extent to which you think the candidate exhibits the following qualities, using the following scale:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at all very much

- ___ 1. Friendly
- ___ 2. Immature
- ___ 3. Confident
- ___ 4. Comfortable
- ___ 5. Disorganized
- ___ 6. Likable
- ___ 7. Capable
- ___ 8. Tense
- ___ 9. Enthusiastic
- ___ 10. Incompetent
- ___ 11. Self-centered
- ___ 12. Intelligent
- ___ 13. Insecure
- ___ 14. Organized
- ___ 15. Indecisive
- ___ 16. Disagreeable