

TOWSON UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

BAH, BAH BLACK SHEEP,
HAVE YOU ANY POLITICAL PULL?

by

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A thesis

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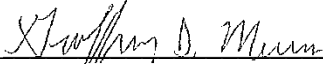
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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE


This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Michael DeWald entitled Bah, Bah Black Sheep, Have you any Political Pull? has been approved by the thesis committee as satisfactorily completing the thesis requirements for the degree Master of Arts.



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Abstract

BAH, BAH BLACK SHEEP,
HAVE YOU ANY POLITICAL PULL?

Michael DeWald

This study examined the Black Sheep Effect and its underlying causes in the context of political groups. 128 participants read a mock news article describing politicians in both the Republican and Democratic parties who had failed to cast their votes in sessions of congress. Participants provided lower approval ratings for ingroup black sheep politicians than for outgroup politicians indicating that the Black Sheep Effect does occur within political groups. However, hypotheses regarding the causes of this effect in political groups were not supported by the results. Implications of the Black Sheep Effect on political issues such as congressional gridlock and voter behavior are discussed.

Keywords: black sheep effect, ingroup derogation, political groups

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Bah, Bah Black Sheep, Have you any Political Pull?

Introduction

Group membership is one of the most powerful foundations in the development of a sense of identity. Nationalities, religious groups, and political parties are just a few of the groups that can provide individuals with what Tajfel (1982) refers to as their social identity. Tajfel claims that people use groups such as these to define themselves and others. Groups are often comprised of individuals who share common goals, interests, or ideas such as a political group like the Tea Party or a professional organization like the American Psychological Association. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1982), members of these groups expect a degree of homogeneity within the groups to which they belong as they are all supposedly brought together by commonalities. Group membership, however, does not always dictate behavior. History has shown repeatedly that groups can break down or splinter into separate groups due to a number of factors such as internal conflict or disagreement. Theories have arisen in social psychology to address these types of occurrences.

The Black Sheep Effect (BSE) refers to a phenomenon in social psychology which describes how members of a group will respond to so called “Black Sheep” within the group. Black sheep are group members who act in a manner that is inconsistent with norms associated with the group or cast the group in a negative light due to poor performance or unlikeability (Marques, Yzerbyt & Leyens, 1988). Black sheep tend to be rated or viewed very negatively by other members of their group. In fact, most people rate black sheep within their own group more negatively than comparable members of opposing groups. This study will examine the manner in which the BSE occurs in

political groups. Therefore, this paper will provide a thorough review of past research conducted regarding the BSE in addition to reviewing factors in politics such as motivated reasoning that may influence the underlying processes leading to the occurrence of the BSE.

The Black Sheep Effect

Early research regarding the BSE was conducted by Marques et al. (1988). They hypothesized that unlikeable ingroup members would be rated more negatively than unlikeable outgroup members. They tested this hypothesis by conducting three experiments. In the first experiment, Marques et al. asked Belgian undergraduate students to complete a questionnaire assessing the positive and negative traits of one of 6 possible groups on a 7 point likert-type scale. Some examples from the questionnaire included the words “pleasant, sociable, communicative, welcoming, and cheerful” (p. 9). The group title *Belgian Students* served as the ingroup while *North African Students* served as the outgroup. The ingroup and outgroup were each then divided into three subgroups: unlikeable, likeable, and control (no description in terms of being likeable or unlikeable). Participants were given no additional information about the groups and were asked to provide approval ratings for each group. It should be noted that the researchers claimed that North African immigrants were not held in high regard in Belgium at the time the study took place. Analyses demonstrated that participants rated unlikeable ingroup members significantly more negatively than unlikeable outgroup members.

In experiment 2, Marques et al. (1988) expanded on the broad descriptions of unlikeable or likeable to include specific behaviors regarding social norms that existed within the group being studied. Undergraduate college students served as participants.

They rated hypothetical individuals that were described as engaging in normative behaviors of students on that campus (likeable) or disregarding those group norms (unlikeable) in addition to the variables used in the first experiment. Examples included sharing or refusing to share lecture notes and demonstrating priority of academics over seeking enjoyment and vice versa. Participants again rated unlikeable ingroup members more negatively than unlikeable outgroup members.

Marques and Yzerbyt (1988) hypothesized that poor performance would yield similar results to the studies examining unlikability and norm violation. Two studies were conducted in which undergraduate law students listened to two brief recorded speeches and then rated the speeches as well as the speakers. One speech was poor, and the other was of higher quality. In the first experiment, participants were told that one speech was given by a student in their course of study, while the other was given by a student in an unrelated program. Results were consistent with the hypothesis as they rated ingroup members who gave poor speeches more negatively than outgroup members who gave poor speeches.

In Marques and Yzerbyt's (1988) second experiment, participants again listened to two speeches, one good and one poor. In the experimental group, which provided the lowest ratings, participants were told that the speeches were by students in their course of study. Participants in the control group, which provided less extreme ratings, were not provided with any information about the source of the speeches. These results supported the hypothesis that participants provide more negative ratings of Black Sheep from their group than they do poor performers that are not associated with them. It also broadened the possible motivations for the BSE through the inclusion of poor performance.

In an effort to further understand the processes that evoke the BSE, Lewis and Sherman (2010) conducted a study to investigate the effects of the perceived entitativity of a group on the BSE. They hypothesized that the BSE would only be seen in groups with high entitativity (i.e., those seen as a highly cohesive entity) and would not be seen as strongly in groups low in entitativity (i.e., those not seen as a highly cohesive entity), which is consistent with Tajfel's (1982) description of social identity. Participants were matched to groups based on membership in a fraternity or sorority as well as which section of a psychology class they attended. Participants were then asked to read two of four possible essays (two were poor and two were high quality). Participants were then informed that the authors of these essays either belonged to their sorority or fraternity at a different college (high entitativity) their section of the psychology class (low entitativity) or other Greek organizations or psychology sections to which they did not belong. Results were consistent with the hypothesis in that the high entitativity ingroup low quality essays were rated more negatively than the low entitativity ingroup low quality essays. Lewis and Sherman argue that this difference is due to the fact that people feel a stronger threat to their social identity when members of groups they strongly identify with are seen as poor performers. They, by belonging to the same cohesive group, believe they are similar to the black sheep and are resultantly susceptible to the same negative judgments. This is also consistent with claims made by Tajfel (1982) regarding social identity and how membership in various groups can affect how people are defined by others. In this sense, the BSE may be a strategy to create a degree of distance between the black sheep and the rest of the group as a means of protecting the group as a whole in addition to protecting oneself. This was confirmed by Eidleman and Biernat (2003).

Pinto, Marques, Levine and Abrams (2010) hypothesized that membership status of black sheep can also influence the BSE. They tested this hypothesis by examining the extremity of the BSE across different membership statuses in addition to investigating how the ingroup members intended to act in response to these black sheep. Their research demonstrated that the BSE was the most extreme when the black sheep were full members of the groups in question, as they were rated more negatively than new members or marginal members that were described as full members who were no longer invested in the group. They also investigated how groups intended to address these black sheep and found that participants reported a desire to punish the full members and a desire to negotiate with and educate the new members to bring them back to the fold. These results suggest that black sheep with full membership status pose a larger threat to social identity as they represent the core of the group. When taken together with Lewis and Sherman (2010), it seems that the intensity of the BSE is not static. It changes as a function of the threat posed to social identity. When a large threat is posed to social identity, the BSE becomes increasingly strong. When there is less of a perceived threat, the BSE has been shown to decrease. Therefore, the BSE should be present at varying degrees in groups from which members derive a sense of social identity.

Social Identity in Political Groups

Recently, Greene (1999; 2004; see also Brewer, 2001; Evans, 2003; Poole & Rosenthal, 2001) examined political party identification through the theoretical lens of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Greene (2004) demonstrated this connection by showing that the degree to which partisans identified with their political party significantly predicted a variety of political attitudes and behaviors such as

volunteering or posting signs advertising political candidates. The higher the level of identification, the more likely participants were to engage in such behaviors.

Furthermore, while not explicitly testing social identity theory; several other research efforts are consistent with the key features of the theory.

The social identity approach to political partisanship suggests that political party identification guides evaluations of political information and perceptions of political events. That is, new political information is assimilated to the existing party commitment. Hulsizer, Munro, Fagerlin, and Taylor (2004) showed that political ideology predicted culpability and global attributions about what caused a politically-charged historical event (the National Guard shootings at Kent State on May 4, 1970; see also Skitka, Mullen, Griffin, Hutchinson, & Chamberlin, 2002). The idea that political categorization defines and prescribes opinions was demonstrated by Cohen (2003) who showed that liberal and conservative college students' attitudes about a welfare policy were almost entirely based on whether the policy was supported by liberals or conservatives and not on whether the policy itself was generous or stingy (see also Rahn, Krosnick, & Breuning, 1994). Misleading claims not only persist among the political group for whom the claim has favorable implications; they also become more deeply held and defended when challenged (Nyhan & Reifler, 2010). Partisans are also more suspicious when considering the behavior of a political outgroup leader than a political ingroup leader demonstrating a degree of ingroup favoritism (Munro, Weih, & Tsai, 2010; see also McGraw, Lodge, & Jones, 2002).

The social identity principle of ingroup favoritism among political partisans has been supported by studies showing that partisan biases exist in the processing of political

information. Bartels (2002) analyzed data from the National Election Studies and revealed partisan biases on a variety of political evaluation measures. Additionally, objective measures that measured partisans' perceptions of actual political events (e.g., whether the unemployment rate increased, decreased, or stayed the same during the Reagan presidency) suggested a partisan bias that is consistent with principles of social identity theory. Finally, the idea that ingroup favoritism is driven by self-enhancement biases is supported by research showing that political judgments operate via motivated reasoning principles that involve emotion (Lodge & Taber, 2005; Morris, Squires, Taber, & Lodge, 2003; Redlawsk, 2002). For example, evaluations of the strength of Bob Dole's and Bill Clinton's arguments during the first 1996 presidential debate revealed a clear partisan bias in which the argument evaluations were mediated by viewers' affective reactions to the debaters (Munro et al., 2002). Additionally, Westen, Blagov, Harenski, Kilts, and Hamann (2006) used neuroimaging to verify the role of emotion in the reasoning of partisans during the 2004 presidential campaign.

Webster and Kruglanski's (1994) need for cognitive closure model may serve as a bridge between the BSE and social identity view of political information processing. The need for closure is a dispositional state in which individuals demonstrate a strong preference for well-founded, unambiguous knowledge and disinclination towards uncertainty. Those with a high need for closure have been shown to be more likely to abide by social norms (Chao, Zhang & Chin, 2009) while viewing groups as being more homogenous (Fox & Elraz-Shapira, 2005). Therefore, those with a high need for closure would be more likely to view black sheep in a negative light as they violate the social norms and shatter the perception of homogeneity. Studies regarding need for closure and

politics have shown that those with a high need for closure are more likely to have rigid beliefs regarding politics and society (Chirumbolo, Areni & Sensales, 2004). This inflexibility of beliefs would likely increase the probability of some of the examples of motivated reasoning discussed above (See Cohen, 2003; Nyhan & Reifler, 2010; Hulsizer, et al., 2004).

The Present Study

A logical conclusion from an analysis of the studies cited above would be that the BSE will likely be observed in political groups. One important distinction that sets political groups apart from other groups that have been tested using the BSE is that political partisans may already expect outgroup members to view them negatively or suspiciously (Munro, Weih, & Tsai, 2010). If this is the case, partisans would likely not be concerned with protecting themselves or their ingroup from the negative judgments of outgroups. The BSE in political groups then is likely a function of the need to maintain consistent beliefs about one's ingroup. This is a much more internalized view of the BSE in which a partisan is attempting to separate the offending black sheep from the rest of their group thereby protecting their sense of homogeneity within their group. By engaging in this cognitive process, it is likely that participants will reaffirm previously held beliefs regarding their groups and experience a stronger sense of identification with their political groups as a result.

The present study had two primary goals. The first was to determine whether or not the BSE would occur within political groups. The second was to investigate the underlying processes of the BSE within political groups to determine if they differed from the underlying causes in other groups. This study used a multivariate design to test

four specific hypotheses. First, it was hypothesized that the BSE would be present in political groups. Second, it was also hypothesized that a high need for cognitive closure would lead to an increase in the intensity of the BSE, while a low need for closure would result in a decrease in intensity of the BSE. Third, it was hypothesized that the intensity of the BSE would increase as the size of the threat posed by the black sheep increased. Fourth, it was hypothesized that those with the highest need for closure and the most negative ratings of the black sheep would report the highest level of identification with their political group through a motivated reasoning process of reaffirmation of beliefs.

Method

Participants

194 participants volunteered and completed the measures online via Survey Monkey. Responses from 26 participants were excluded from analyses as they identified themselves as being politically independent or belonging to a party other than the Republican or Democratic parties. Responses from 40 other participants were also excluded because they either failed to complete the measures or had significant lie scores on the Need for Cognitive Closure Scale (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994) or the questionnaire.

This left a total of 128 participants (76 Democrat, 52 Republican) for analysis. Ages ranged from 18 – 66 ($M = 29.4$, $Mdn = 21$). The majority of participants were likely college students as 59.4% indicated “some college” as their highest level of education. The median age is consistent with this interpretation of the data as well. There were a total of 97 females and 31 males. Participants were not asked to provide any identifying information, allowing them to be anonymous.

Materials and Procedures

All data were collected using Survey Monkey. Each scale or article was contained on a single webpage. Participants were directed to the next section after completion of the prior section. They were not able to navigate backwards to pages they had already completed. After providing informed consent, participants were first asked to select the political party they most closely identify with from the choices of “*Republican, Democrat, Other.*” They then provided brief demographic information. Upon completion of this section, participants were sent to one of three possible articles written by the experimenter.

The articles described black sheep in both the Republican and Democratic parties that are performing poorly by failing to cast their votes in congress. The basic structure and the language of the articles remained as consistent as possible across conditions. For example, the poor performance behavior remained the same; however, the circumstances changed in order to manipulate the level of threat posed in each condition. Each article contained a brief description of the problem behavior, and a statement from unidentified party leaders chastising the black sheep from within their own parties. In the low threat condition, black sheep politicians were described that were failing to cast their votes in pro forma matters that are not likely to be debated (See Appendix A). While this is bad form, it is not vital to the goals of the party constituting a low level of threat. The moderate threat condition described black sheep politicians who were failing to cast their votes in matters of great import to their respective parties, but cited some kind of personal emergency outside their control as a means to excuse their absence. The issues being voted upon and the personal emergencies were not explicitly described in order to avoid

potential confounds such as desired outcome of the debate or resonance of the personal emergency for the participants affecting the ratings. In this case, the black sheep performed poorly, but this poor performance was due to forces outside of their control thereby mitigating the level of threat that is posed resulting in a moderate level of threat (See Appendix B). The high threat condition described black sheep politicians that were failing to cast their votes on issues of vital party interest without providing any reason for their absence posing the highest possible threat in this scenario (See Appendix C). Participants only read one of these articles selected at random using the skip logic function provided by Survey Monkey.

Participants then completed a brief questionnaire assessing approval or disapproval of the ingroup and outgroup black sheep. This questionnaire consisted of four items such as *“Please rate the Republican lawmakers that have been failing to cast their votes,”*; *“Do you agree with the negative statements made by the Democratic Party leaders about the lawmakers described in the article?”* Ratings were provided on a likert-type scale with endpoints at (1) *“strongly disapprove/disagree”* and (7) *“strongly approve/agree”*. Assessing both the participants’ approval and level of agreement with negative statements created a manipulation check as well (See Appendix D).

The Identification with a Psychological Group Scale (Mael & Tetrick, 1992) was then completed. This scale assessed the degree to which participants identified with their respective political parties (Republican or Democratic Parties). This scale focuses on shared attributes between the individual providing the ratings and the group at large. It consists of ten items such as *“When someone criticizes this group, it feels like a personal insult”* and *“I act like a person of this group to a great extent.”* Participants are asked to

indicate their level of agreement on a 4 point likert-type scale with end points at (0) “*strongly disagree*” and (3) “*strongly agree.*” It has been successfully used in studies examining politics (Greene, 2004).

Finally, the Need for Cognitive Closure Scale (NFCS) (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994) was completed. This scale consists of 47 items. Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement on a likert-type scale with endpoints at (1) “*strongly disagree*” and (6) “*strongly agree.*” Some examples of the items in the scale include, “*I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways,*”; “*I prefer to socialize with familiar friends because I know what to expect from them*” (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). This measure has been shown to be highly reliable and is used effectively across different cultures (Mannetti, Pierro, Kruglanski, Taris, & Bezinovic, 2002).

Results

In order to prepare the data for analysis, the scores for level of agreement with negative statements were reverse scored. A reliability analysis was then computed on the ingroup approval ratings ($M = 2.17, SD = 1.33$) and the reversed ingroup agreement levels ($M = 2.59, SD = 1.21$) indicating that these two values were consistent (Cronbach’s Alpha = .55). A second reliability analysis computed on the outgroup approval ratings ($M = 2.18, SD = 1.21$) and the reversed outgroup agreement levels ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.43$) indicated that these measures were also consistent (Cronbach’s Alpha = .64). The approval ratings and agreement ratings were then summed to create an approval index for both the ingroup and the outgroup black sheep. A paired samples t -test was then computed on the approval indices, $t(127) = 2.55, p < .05$, indicating that approval index

values for outgroup black sheep ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 2.28$) were significantly higher than approval index values for in\group black sheep ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 2.11$) supporting the first hypothesis that the BSE would be present in political groups. To ensure that overall approval ratings were not affected by party affiliation, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed on the approval index values with political party (Republican or Democrat) serving as the independent variable. Political party did not have a significant effect on the approval ratings, $F(1, 125) = .15$, $p = .70$.

For the next analysis, the ingroup approval index values were subtracted from the outgroup index values in order to create a difference score representing the intensity of the BSE. In order to test both the second and third hypotheses, a regression analysis was computed in which the difference score served as the outcome variable and the NFCS (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994) scores along with the threat level of the article served as predictor variables. The overall model was not significant, $R^2 = .012$, $p = .77$. Neither scores on the NFCS ($\beta = .08$, $p = .76$) nor level of threat ($\beta = .39$, $p = .65$) significantly predicted the outcome. The interaction between the two was also insignificant ($\beta = -.30$, $p = .73$.) The data violated the assumptions of the linear regression model as they did not fit a linear trend, however, subsequent analysis of variance computations also failed to demonstrate an effect of either level of threat, or of scores on the NFCS indicating that in the case of the second and third hypotheses, the null hypothesis should be accepted.

In order to test the fourth hypothesis that an increase in psychological identification with one's political party will be present with the occurrence of the BSE, a second multiple regression analysis was conducted using scores from the Identification with a Psychological Group scale (Mael & Tetrick, 1992) as the outcome variable.

Scores from the NFCS (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994) and difference scores served as the predictor variables. The overall model was not significant, $R^2 = .061$, $p = .12$. Neither the NFCS scores ($\beta = .16$, $p = .112$) nor the difference scores ($\beta = -.79$, $p = .45$) were significant predictors indicating that in the case of the fourth hypothesis, the null hypothesis should be accepted. The interaction between the two was also not statistically significant ($\beta = .92$, $p = .37$). Correlations and descriptive statistics can be referenced in Table 1.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that the BSE is indeed present in political parties. These results are consistent with past research on the BSE (Marques, et al., 1988; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988; Lewis & Sherman, 2010) and extend these findings to a previously untested population. This group in particular is interesting as the BSE occurs even when the expectation of negative judgments exists (Munro, et al., 2010). These results open up possibilities for other novel applications of the BSE as it has held constant across a variety of groups, the majority of which do not have this expectation. Participants reported low approval index values in general for black sheep in both the ingroup ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 2.11$) and outgroup ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 2.28$). Both sets of scores were well below the midpoint of 7 within the possible range of 2 – 14 indicating that participants likely saw the failure to cast a vote on the part of the politicians as poor performance.

The level of threat variable did not seem to have any effect on the BSE in this study. While the differences were not significant between these different levels, an examination of the means indicates that the low threat article had the lowest ingroup

approval ratings ($M = 2.09$, $SD = 1.30$) while the moderate threat article had the highest ingroup approval ratings ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.40$). Ingroup approval ratings for the high threat article ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 1.30$) were slightly lower than that of the moderate threat article. These results indicate that the low threat article produced the most negative ratings while there was very little difference between the moderate and high threat articles. The implications of these results are somewhat unclear as there are several possible explanations. One possibility is that the articles did not pose the intended threat levels. This experiment may have benefited from the use of a pilot study to more accurately establish which scenarios posed the highest and lowest levels of threat. It is also worth noting that these measures were taken during a period of historically low approval ratings for congress according to polls conducted by Gallup (2013). The average rating over the course of the study was 78% disapproval (Gallup, 2013). This statistic indicates that people are likely to already hold a rather negative view of politicians and how they are performing their duties. This already negative view may diminish interest in the circumstances surrounding the perceived failure of the black sheep to perform their duties leading to the lack of a significant effect of threat level posed by the articles.

Need for cognitive closure also had no effect on the BSE. These results suggest that there may not be a stark difference between the BSE as it occurs in politics and the BSE as it occurs in other groups in terms of the underlying causes. Although previous research suggests that partisans expect members of outgroups to harbor negative perceptions of them (Munro, et al., 2010), the expectation may not necessarily eliminate the need partisans feel to protect their group from those negative judgments. These

results do not necessarily suggest an alternative moderator as very little was found beyond the BSE. Similarly, the BSE did not seem to have an effect on the level of psychological identification indicating that the reaffirmation did not occur as hypothesized. The fact that both of these variables were not significant indicates that the BSE in political groups may not be the result of motivated reasoning processes. Future research should be conducted in order to identify the underlying processes of the BSE in previously studied groups. Not only will this provide a better understanding of the BSE, it will also allow for testing in more novel applications such as political groups.

The BSE, as it occurs in politics, may offer some insight into the polarization of congress. Moderate Republican lawmakers that were willing to work with Democrats have been losing their seats to more extreme “Tea Party” Republicans that are much less interested in compromise. Willingness to vote across party lines might be seen by voters as a violation of party norms which would likely lead to the formation of negative opinions regarding those politicians. This may result in a desire for politicians more willing to take a “hard line” (e.g., for Republican policies and against the policies of the Democratic Party). An awareness of these factors could put pressure on politicians to operate within the confines of those expectations under fear of being ousted in a similar fashion to that of their predecessors. One possible result of the combination of these factors related to the BSE is a party presenting a mostly united front in their refusal to compromise. This likely contributes to the very serious problem of congressional gridlock. Future research designed to establish more explicit links between the BSE and voting behavior would likely produce results that may serve to further our understanding of not only ingroup derogation, but may also shed light on a costly societal problem.

Appendix A

The following is an article taken from a regional newspaper in the Northwestern US. The headline has been omitted. Please read it carefully and then move on to the next section.

In the increasingly partisan landscape of American government, it may come as a surprise to learn that there are a number of lawmakers in both of the major parties that are failing to attend sessions of congress and the senate to cast their votes on pro forma matters that are not hotly contested. While most of these votes are not vital to party interests, it is expected that lawmakers do their part and attend. While the issue has not been given a great deal of attention in most media outlets, Republican Party leaders have been vocal in their criticisms of these “absentee politicians” stating “If they can’t be troubled to cast votes, they shouldn’t expect their constituents to cast any for them.” Democratic Party leaders have echoed these sentiments regarding lawmakers in their party referring to these lawmakers as “an embarrassment to our party.” Leaders from both parties agree that this kind of behavior is a serious problem at such a critical time in our nation’s history when many are already disillusioned with politics, and voter apathy is a constant problem in the general population.

Appendix B

The following is an article taken from a regional newspaper in the Northwestern US. The headline has been omitted. Please read it carefully and then move on to the next section.

In the increasingly partisan landscape of American government, it may come as a surprise to learn that there have been several lawmakers from both of the major parties that have failed to attend sessions of congress and the senate to cast their votes on issues with seemingly clear lines dividing the two parties. When reached for comment, they cited “personal emergencies outside of their control” that prevented them from attending. Hard fought battles over tax increases and budget cuts are frequently coming down to small margins making it difficult for either Republicans or Democrats to make any progress without the full support of their respective parties. While the issue has not been given a great deal of attention in most media outlets, Republican Party leaders have been vocal in their criticisms of these “absentee politicians” stating “If they can’t be troubled to cast votes, they shouldn’t expect their constituents to cast any for them.” Democratic Party leaders have echoed these sentiments regarding lawmakers in their party referring to these lawmakers as “an embarrassment to our party.” Leaders from both parties agree that this kind of behavior is a serious problem at such a critical time in our nation’s history when many are already disillusioned with politics, and voter apathy is a constant problem in the general population.

Appendix C

The following is an article taken from a regional newspaper in the Northwestern US. The headline has been omitted. Please read it carefully and then move on to the next section.

In the increasingly partisan landscape of American government, it may come as a surprise to learn that there are a number of lawmakers in both of the major parties that are failing to attend sessions of congress and the senate to cast their votes on issues with seemingly clear lines dividing the two parties. Hard fought battles over tax increases and budget cuts are frequently coming down to small margins making it difficult for either Republicans or Democrats to make any progress without the full support of their respective parties. While the issue has not been given a great deal of attention in most media outlets, Republican Party leaders have been vocal in their criticisms of these “absentee politicians” stating “If they can’t be troubled to cast votes, they shouldn’t expect their constituents to cast any for them.” Democratic Party leaders have echoed these sentiments regarding lawmakers in their party referring to these lawmakers as “an embarrassment to our party.” Leaders from both parties agree that this kind of behavior is a serious problem at such a critical time in our nation’s history when many are already disillusioned with politics, and voter apathy is a constant problem in the general population.

Appendix D

Please select the answers that most closely reflect your opinions on the newspaper article you recently completed reading.

1. Please rate the Republican lawmakers that have been failing to cast their votes.

	Strongly Disapprove		Neutral		Strongly
	Approve				
1	2	3	4	5	6
					7

2. Please rate the Democratic lawmakers that have been failing to cast their votes.

	Strongly Disapprove		Neutral		Strongly
	Approve				
1	2	3	4	5	6
					7

3. Do you agree with the statements made by Democratic Party leaders regarding the absentee politicians in their party?

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly
	Agree				
1	2	3	4	5	6
					7

4. Do you agree with the statements made by Republican Party leaders regarding the absentee politicians in their party?

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly
	Agree				
1	2	3	4	5	6
					7

5. Please indicate your age:

6. Please indicate your gender:

7. Please indicate the highest level of education you have completed:

Appendix E



Date: Monday, May 20, 2013

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

TO: Michael DeWald **DEPT:** PSYC

PROJECT TITLE: *Bah, Bah Black Sheep, Have You Any Political Pull?*

SPONSORING AGENCY:

APPROVAL NUMBER: 13-A065


The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants has approved the project described above. Approval was based on the descriptive material and procedures you submitted for review. Should any changes be made in your procedures, or if you should encounter any new risks, reactions, injuries, or deaths of persons as participants, you must notify the Board.

A consent form: is is not required of each participant

Assent: is is not required of each participant

This protocol was first approved on: 20-May-2013

This research will be reviewed every year from the date of first approval.


Justin Buckingham, Member
Towson University Institutional Review Board

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Table 1

Correlations Between Measures

Measure	Difference Score	NFCS	Identification	Threat
Difference Score	1.00	.005	.086	.069
NFCS	.005	1.00	.202*	.062
Identification	.086	.202*	1.00	.058
Threat	.069	.062	.058	1.00

Note. * $p < .05$

Curriculum Vita

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Presentations

DeWald, M. (2013). *Political Black Sheep*. Poster session presented at the meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, New York City.

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