

# Political Affiliation and Political Intolerance

Research Report: SPAS-002 | July 17, 2020

## Background

Is political party identification associated with tolerant attitudes towards individuals with different political views?

We surveyed American adults that identify with the Republican or Democratic party, and asked them to (1) identify which political group they think has views most different from their own, and (2) how irritated they would be if a member of that group was socially close to them (e.g., was a co-worker).

## Methodology

### Data Source

- Social and Political Attitudes Study (SPAS)
- A nationally representative sample reflecting the U.S. adult population in terms of educational attainment, ethnicity, gender, and household income.

### Participants

- 491 Republicans and Democrats. This excludes 17 Democrats and Republicans that chose “other” (e.g., Green Party) as the category of their oppositional group.
- 52% Male, 48% Female
- Average age = 48 years (range 18 to 85 years)

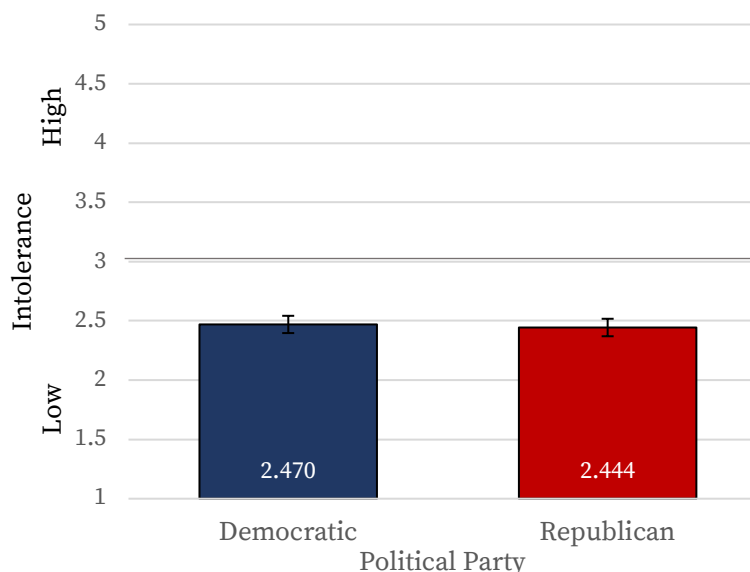
### Measures

1. *Self-identified Political Group*: which political group they identify with.
  2. *Oppositional Political Group*: which political group they think is most different/opposed to their own political views.
  3. *Political Intolerance*: an average of four questions on how irritated they would be if a member of the oppositional political group was dating a member of their family, was their neighbor, co-worker, or local elected official. Higher scores indicate greater irritation by those circumstances.
- For technical (e.g., statistical) information not included in this document, view the [supplemental page](#) for this report.

## Summary of Findings (see figures)

1. For the most part, *Democrats and Republicans reported tolerant attitudes towards members of their perceived oppositional political group*. In other words, Republicans and Democrats stated, on average, that they would not be irritated by having a person with opposite political views socially close to them (see Figure 1).
2. Specifically, this means that most Democrats and Republicans said they “slightly disagree” that they would be irritated if a member of the opposite party was dating a member of their family, was their neighbor, co-worker, or local elected official.
3. Intolerance was low regardless of whether Republicans or Democrats reported that the oppositional group member was from their own party or a different party (see Figure 2).
4. Taken together, neither Democrats nor Republicans in this sample are likely to express socially intolerant attitudes.

Figure 1. Political Affiliation and Intolerance



## SKEPTIC

This report was brought to you by the **Skeptic Research Center** and the Worldview Foundations Research Team.

### Become Involved

[skeptical.com/research-center/become-involved](https://skeptical.com/research-center/become-involved)

### Researchers

Anondah Saide, PhD  
Kevin McCaffree, PhD  
[research@skeptic.com](mailto:research@skeptic.com)

### Suggested Citation

Saide, A., & McCaffree, K. (2020). Political Affiliation and Political Intolerance. Skeptic Research Center, SPAS-002.

### Become Involved

[skeptical.com/research-center/become-involved](https://skeptical.com/research-center/become-involved)

### Researchers

Anondah Saide, PhD  
Kevin McCaffree, PhD  
[research@skeptic.com](mailto:research@skeptic.com)

### Suggested Citation

Saide, A., & McCaffree, K. (2020). Political Affiliation and Political Intolerance. Skeptic Research Center, SPAS-002.

Figure 2. Intolerance and Oppositional Political Group

