

Mutual Receptiveness to Opposing Views

Bridges Ideological Divides in Network Formation

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Abstract

We examine whether and how an individual difference—receptiveness to opposing views—enables individuals to form close professional relationships across ideological divides. Although prior work has linked receptiveness to willingness to engage information from opposing ideological perspectives, its consequences for network formation have yet to be explored. In a time-lagged field study conducted at three professional schools where students span the ideological spectrum ($N = 599$), we find that individual receptiveness does not always translate into politically heterogeneous relationships. Instead, such relationships tend to form when two individuals are *mutually receptive*. Importantly, mutual receptiveness predicts relationship formation above and beyond other well-researched individual differences and does so across different levels of ideological disagreement. We discuss implications for research on personality and social networks. We further offer suggestions for how these findings can be leveraged to decrease political polarization in organizations.

Keywords: receptiveness, social networks, political ideology, homophily, group dynamics

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“By way of introduction, I’d told him, ‘I’m from Berkeley, California, a sociologist, and I am trying to understand the deepening divide in our country. So, I’m trying to get out of my political bubble and get to know people in yours.’ Mike nodded at the word ‘divide,’ then quipped, ‘Berkeley? So y’all must be communist!’”

– Arlie Russell Hochschild, *Strangers in Their Own Land*

Recent research and world events have shone a spotlight on the unprecedented level of antipathy and distrust that holders of opposing ideological positions harbor toward each other. Findings from across academic disciplines demonstrate that people are more divided across partisan lines than ever before, with opponents living in different neighborhoods (Brown & Enos, 2021), trusting in different news sources (Stroud, 2011), making different healthcare decisions (Lerman et al., 2017), and generally striving to minimize contact with each other (Iyengar et al., 2012). In the quote above, Hochschild (2016) shared one experience from her deliberate and perseverant journey to form close relationships with people who inhabited an ideological bubble distant from her own.

The effects of worsening polarization on our political climate are widely recognized and discussed. A growing body of scholarly research warns that the propensity to retreat to our own ideological bubbles may also increasingly undermine our business and work relations. For example, there is evidence that sellers demand higher prices for the same good when interacting

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with a member of an opposing political party (Michelitch, 2015). Companies are more likely to interview a job applicant who belongs to their own ideological majority rather than one from an opposing minority (Gift & Gift, 2015). People are more willing to collaborate on tasks with ideologically aligned partners, even if the task has nothing to do with politics (Lelkes & Westwood, 2017), and believe them to have superior professional judgment relative to ideological opposites (Yeomans et al., 2020). Organizations also have identifiable political ideologies that influence their openness to protests from social activists and the evenness with which they allocate resources internally (Gupta et al., 2018; Gupta & Briscoe, 2020). In sum, antipathy toward ideological opponents influences business transactions and likely impedes the potential for productive collaboration.

Some industries and organizations may be particularly vulnerable to these dynamics. For example, organizations that rely on a geographically distributed workforce and thus require collaboration from people in different parts of the country or the world (Hinds & Bailey, 2003), or organizations that are part of the “knowledge economy” (Powell & Snellman, 2004), may especially suffer from barriers to close collaboration erected by ideological homophily. Relatedly, the higher education industry—a trillion-dollar market that serves as a training ground for the world of work, driving economic growth and national wealth (Valero & Van Reenen, 2019)—embraces the free and open exchange of divergent ideas as a key element of student learning and knowledge production. But while universities offer students unprecedented opportunities to engage with a variety of perspectives, identify career opportunities, and build professional networks, they are particularly vulnerable to political polarization and its negative ramifications. A 2016 survey conducted by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute found that the entering college freshman class that year was the most politically polarized in the 51-

year history of the survey (Eagan et al., 2016). Similarly, in a recent survey of U.S. college students, a majority (72% of conservatives, and 55% of liberals) reported engaging in self-censorship to avoid ostracism from peers (The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education & RealClearEducation, 2020). Finally, in another survey, 38% of Republican students and 12% of Democratic students reported feeling unsafe on campus because of their political views (Zheng, 2019). Such problems deserve particular attention not only because of the direct impact universities have on hundreds of thousands of students and the myriad indirect ways they shape society at large, but also because they illustrate and presage similar challenges in work organizations.

In the present research, we study patterns of close relationship formation among ideologically opposed students in professional schools, focusing in particular on the role of “receptiveness to opposing views”—a newly identified individual difference that captures people’s tendency to engage with counter-attitudinal ideas (Minson et al., 2020). Our approach integrates theory and methods from psychological and sociological research to illuminate how people who are prone to receptiveness can potentially bridge ideological divides in organizational settings. Our research offers unique insights for organizations whose productive potential may be constrained by partisan polarization.

Individual Differences and Network Formation

Previous research on personality and social networks has linked personality traits, such as self-monitoring and extraversion, to the structure of social networks in work and professional education (Feiler & Kleinbaum, 2015; Mehra et al., 2001; Selden & Goodie, 2018). For instance, self-monitoring has been shown to influence one’s propensity for network centrality (Mehra et al., 2001) and leadership emergence (Day et al., 2002), and, perhaps, thereby the propensity to

broker relationships between colleagues from different and otherwise disconnected functional areas (Sasovova et al., 2010). Upon entering professional education, people who are more extraverted tend to accumulate more new friends who were also previously unknown to another and are drawn to other extraverts, which results in quickly growing friendship networks (Feiler & Kleinbaum, 2015).

It remains an open question, however, whether individual personality characteristics, such as extraversion, self-monitoring orientation, or receptiveness, would be sufficient to bridge the chasms borne of partisanship. For reasons elaborated in the following section, a potent combination of cognitive biases and affective aversions have been long shown to repel partisans from collaborative engagement with one another. In simple terms, it appears difficult for ideological opponents to keep one another's company long enough to form a close relationship. As illustrated by our opening quote, even if one party is curious about the perspective of another with whom they disagree, their ideological opponent might not have as much reciprocal patience or interest. Below, we discuss research on a newly identified individual difference that may help to overcome such tendencies and support the formation of ideologically diverse close relationships.

Receptiveness to Opposing Views

Classic research in social and cognitive psychology, negotiation, and judgment and decision making has demonstrated that individuals tend to give preferential treatment to ideas and people that support rather than oppose their prior beliefs (Hart et al., 2009; Lord et al., 1979; Nickerson, 1998; Ross & Ward, 1995). Specifically, when given access to a balanced set of arguments, individuals prefer to engage with information that confirms their prior beliefs rather than contradicts them (Frey, 1986; Hart et al., 2009). Indeed, people will even forego real money

to avoid consuming content they disagree with (Frimer et al., 2017). This tendency goes beyond information avoidance, with individuals habitually processing and evaluating information in a way that is biased by their ideological convictions (Ditto & Lopez, 1992; Kahan, 2013, 2015; Lord et al., 1979) and negatively judging those on the other side of controversial debates (Robinson et al., 1995; Ross & Ward, 1995, 1996).

However, recent work by Minson, Chen, and Tinsley (2020) shows that people vary in the extent to which they fall prey to these tendencies. Specifically, these researchers find that the willingness to expose oneself to opposing ideological views, carefully consider those views, and evaluate them in an even-handed manner varies from person to person and can be predicted with a self-report scale of *receptiveness to opposing views*. In laboratory studies, more receptive individuals have been more willing to consume information from political leaders in the opposing party, reported less mind wandering when watching a speech that they disagreed with, and more impartially evaluated policy arguments regardless of whether they agreed or disagreed with the speaker's conclusions.

The receptiveness scale consists of 18 self-report Likert scale items, which reliably load onto four subscales: (1) a diminished propensity to experience negative emotions when exposed to opposing ideological views; (2) curiosity about the nature of such views; (3) willingness to make positive inferences regarding holders of opposing ideologies; and (4) a willingness to engage with seemingly “taboo” topics. (See Appendix for scale items.)

Importantly, receptiveness to opposing views has been distinguished from other constructs, including components of the Big Five Inventory, need for cognition, and actively open-minded thinking (e.g., Cacioppo et al., 1984; Davis, 1980; Gürçay-Morris, 2016; John & Srivastava, 1999; Roets & Van Hiel, 2011). These distinctions are both empirical and

conceptual. Empirically, Minson et al. (2020) demonstrated that the receptiveness scale is a better predictor of individual cognitive engagement with opposing ideological views than numerous other related measures (for list of comparators, see Minson et al., 2020 Table 3, page 3075). Conceptually, the distinction lies in the fact that receptiveness predicts the context-specific tendency to engage with *opposing* views on hotly contested, self-relevant issues. By contrast, other measures, such as agreeableness or openness to experience, capture more global individual differences, such as being generally forgiving and sympathetic, or curious and imaginative, irrespective of whether the target of attention agrees or disagrees with one's own beliefs (John & Srivastava, 1999). Thus, because receptiveness captures how people respond to ideologically opposing perspectives, it is a promising candidate for enabling relationship formation across political divides.

How might individual receptiveness relate to relationship formation across partisan divides?

Although laboratory research suggests multiple reasons to predict that receptiveness may enable people to form close relationships with ideologically opposed counterparts, there are also important forces that might prevent such an outcome from emerging in the field. We turn next to elaborating both sets of arguments.

On one hand, prior research demonstrates that people often experience powerful negative emotions when exposed to others who hold opposing views and thus seek to avoid such interactions (Dorison et al., 2019; Frimer et al., 2017; Hart et al., 2009). Because higher receptiveness has been shown to predict more emotionally tolerant processing of opposing ideas (Dorison et al., 2019), receptiveness may mitigate the negative emotional reactions individuals normally anticipate when engaging with holders of opposing views. More positive interactions

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may create a virtuous cycle, leading to more frequent engagement and greater comfort with ideologically opposed others.

Furthermore, higher receptiveness includes a component of intellectual curiosity, which may motivate individuals to seek out and understand alternative perspectives, even in the face of potential negative affect. People who are more receptive have been shown to seek out more diverse information sources in laboratory contexts by, for example, being willing to read the webpages of senators from the opposing party or consult a broader variety of political news sources (Minson et al., 2020). Such intellectual curiosity may extend beyond passive information consumption to interpersonal behavior, with more receptive people being more willing to seek out relationship partners who can inform them about opposing perspectives, for example.

Finally, classic psychology research demonstrates that most people believe themselves to be reasonable and relatively objective; therefore, they expect other reasonable and objective people to agree with their views. The implication, then—documented in the research literature on the phenomenon of “naïve realism”—is that those who disagree with them must be wrong-minded, blind to the facts, or morally corrupt (Hastorf & Cantril, 1954; Robinson et al., 1995; Ross et al., 1977; Ross & Ward, 1995, 1996). To the extent that receptiveness involves making more charitable attributions toward holders of opposing views, it may mitigate these biases and enable opposing partisans to see each other in a more positive light. This prediction is supported by prior findings, wherein individuals higher in self-reported receptiveness who considered opposing arguments regarding immigration policy offered more positive evaluations those arguments’ authors than did participants who were lower in receptiveness (Minson et al., 2020).

Despite these reasons to anticipate that receptiveness may increase the likelihood of relationship formation among ideological opponents, such an outcome is far from guaranteed.

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Prior research on receptiveness has been conducted under laboratory conditions, enabling researchers to carefully isolate the link between one's motivational tendencies and the cognitive and interpersonal evaluation measures collected within the same experimental session. By contrast, the formation of close relationships "in the wild" must overcome at least three powerful countervailing forces that cannot be examined in the laboratory.

First, extensive sociological research has documented that people tend to splinter into groups of like-minded others—those who hold similar values, beliefs, and political preferences—that are often referred to as "echo chambers" (Baldassarri & Bearman, 2007; DellaPosta et al., 2015). Because the like-minded also tend to live in similar parts of the country and are drawn to similar work, educational, civic, or leisure groups and organizations, they are even less likely to be exposed to people who differ from them (Blau & Schwartz, 1997; Kossinets & Watts, 2009; McPherson et al., 2001; Wimmer & Lewis, 2010). Structural factors, such as the tendency of "friends of friends" to also become friends, may have as much, if not more, influence on relationship formation than individual preferences (Kossinets & Watts, 2009). Thus, employees in organizations or students on college campuses may be so ensconced in networks of ideologically aligned others that they simply lack opportunities to form close relationships with holders of opposing views, even when they are motivated to do so.

Second, the dramatic levels of affective polarization documented by recent research (Iyengar et al., 2019) suggest that forming close relationships with ideological opponents might require one to engage in persistent emotion regulation. While receptiveness is characterized by relatively lower levels of negative affect in the face of opposing evidence, we cannot know whether it can overcome the effects of frequent and protracted interactions with someone who genuinely and vocally endorses an opposing ideology. It is one thing for a conservative student

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to read a liberal newspaper to gain a more well-rounded perspective on current issues. It is quite another to become close friends with a liberal who regularly advocates for greater abortion access and more open immigration policies.

Third, although receptive people may be willing and able to build close relationships with ideologically opposed others, they may be too concerned about potential social sanctions by members of their own ingroup to act on their preferences—particularly in organizational settings, such as universities, where peer relationships are readily observed and serve as conduits to valuable professional connections and opportunities. Prior scholars have argued that the motivated avoidance and discounting of opposing views that characterize many policy debates is partly intended as a signal of one's ingroup (Hart et al., 2020; Kahan et al., 2016; Lundgren & Prislin, 1998). In other words, people may avoid holders of opposing views not only because they find such interactions personally aversive but also because they do not want to lose standing with their own ingroup. If this dynamic is a significant driver of relationship formation, then the connections between receptiveness and private behavior observed in a laboratory might fail to translate into observable relationships in a public setting like an organization or a university.

In sum, whereas prior laboratory results suggest that an individual's level of receptiveness is a promising variable for predicting willingness to engage with holders of opposing views, the likelihood that higher receptiveness will promote the formation of close relationships between ideological opponents in the field is far from certain. Such a result would depend on whether: (1) receptiveness is a sufficiently strong driver of relationship-building behavior; and (2) the barriers to formation of close relationships across ideological divides are primarily a matter of individual preferences or instead of structural and/or reputational considerations. We therefore believe that it is important to understand how these competing

forces will play out in the field. Moreover, we also propose that a move from the laboratory to the field requires us to look beyond a focal individual's receptiveness and take into account their potential interaction partner's receptiveness.¹

How might counterpart receptiveness relate to relationship formation across partisan divides?

Recent research on personality in social network formation has urged consideration of how personality influences both the behavior of focal actors ('ego') and the perceptions of potential partners ('alter'; Kleinbaum et al., 2015; Selden & Goodie, 2018). Therefore, beyond the considerations reviewed above, in the present work we theorize that an important barrier to bridging ideological divides in social networks arises from the fact that forming a close relationship requires the active participation of two individuals: *both* ego and alter. As illustrated by our opening quote, while ego's receptiveness may predict a propensity to pursue a relationship—or, at least to seek contact—the likelihood of a friendship forming may also depend on the alter's propensity to reciprocate.

Thus, in a departure from prior work focusing on the receptiveness of individuals, here we examine the role of *mutual* receptiveness in the formation of close relationships across ideological divides. In line with our predictions about the individual motivational tendencies associated with receptiveness, we theorize that more highly receptive egos will be more likely to make relationship overtures to more ideologically opposed alters. However, we argue that the success of overtures made to an ideologically opposed alter will additionally depend on the alter's receptiveness. Therefore, we propose a shift in analytic attention from individual to

¹ Following the terminology used in social network research, we also use the term "ego" to refer to the focal individual and "alter" to refer to the potential interaction partner.

mutual receptiveness in understanding which potential relationships between ideological opponents will ultimately materialize.

Overview of Present Research

In the remainder of the manuscript, we report the details of a field study investigating whether receptiveness to opposing views predicts the formation of close relationships in samples of different types of professional students (e.g., business, public policy) collected across three ideologically diverse American universities. After measuring the self-reported receptiveness of incoming students, we examined the close professional relationships that they reported forming several weeks into the semester. In line with prior work on affective polarization and homophily in network formation, we expected to observe a strong tendency toward ideologically homophilous networks such that ideological alignment would exhibit a strongly positive—and ideological opposition a strongly negative—effect on close relationship formation. In other words, we expected professional students to engage in the same type of ideological sorting observed in society at large, even at the risk of limiting the social, educational, and professional opportunities that their networks would yield.

We then examined whether self-reported receptiveness moderates this tendency. Do students who report being more receptive form relationships irrespective of ideological alignment or opposition with others? In line with our theorizing, we find supporting evidence for this moderating role of receptiveness, such that relationship formation between ideological opponents tends to occur among dyads that are *mutually* receptive to opposing views. In other words, overcoming the antipathy that members of opposing political ideologies feel toward each other requires dispositional propensity on the part of both parties.

Along with receptiveness, we measure extraversion and self-monitoring, two personality

characteristics that have been most extensively studied in the network formation literature (Fang et al., 2015; Feiler & Kleinbaum, 2015; Oh & Kilduff, 2008; Roberts et al., 2008; Sasovova et al., 2010). Although we replicate prior findings regarding the role of extraversion and self-monitoring on network size, we do not find that these variables play the same role as receptiveness in enabling relationships between holders of opposing views.²

In our work, we build on and extend psychological research on factors that mitigate reluctance to engage with holders of opposing views. Whereas prior research has predominantly focused on measuring individual-level attitudes and behavioral intentions in laboratory settings, we focus on a more consequential and long-lasting social dynamic: the formation of close relationships in organizational settings. Close relationships between ideological opponents are rare, to the point that they are sometimes treated as inspirational case studies (Galofaro & Linderman, 2021). Such relationships take time to both form and document, requiring a longitudinal or time-lagged study design. Importantly, such work requires interdisciplinary collaboration: Tools and concepts from sociological network analysis must be combined with an understanding of psychological processes. Yet, understanding the formation of such close relationships is imperative, as they provide important channels for social support, information, and long-term career opportunities (Podolny & Baron, 1997), and are thus crucial for repairing the social fabric torn by ideological strife.

Finally, in our conclusion, we discuss implications for research on personality and social networks, as well as future extensions of this work to illuminate mechanisms of relationship

² In a supplemental laboratory study, we test for the effects of receptiveness on the willingness to form friendships, controlling for agreeableness and openness to experience (John & Srivastava, 1999)—two other personality characteristics associated in some contexts with brokering ties (Selden & Goodie, 2018). Controlling for agreeableness and openness to experience, we again found a significant and distinctive contribution of receptiveness on the propensity to form relationships with ideological opponents. See Supplemental Materials for details.

formation across partisan divides. We further propose concrete steps that organizations might take based on this research to overcome partisan polarization that hampers effective decision-making, collaboration, and belonging.

Main Study

Method

Empirical setting and sample. We conducted a time-lagged field study to examine whether individual differences in receptiveness predicted the formation of close relationships across ideological divides.³ We collected data from the entering cohorts of three professional schools that varied in political orientation: two majority liberal and one majority conservative. Of the 657 eligible graduate student participants, 607 responded to surveys (92.4%), of which 599 (91.7%) provided complete data and were retained in our final sample. This sample was well-suited to our research aims for two reasons. First, the individuals we studied were generally encountering one another for the first time. Thus, we could study the formation of *de novo* relationships. Second, newcomers to these programs were fully immersed in their new environments and focused on building relationships with others in their cohort. As a result, the boundaries of the network were clearly delineated (Marsden, 1990).

We collected data from all participants through surveys implemented at two time points. The first survey was administered at the beginning of each program, before students started meeting with their new classmates. In this survey, individuals answered questions about their own receptiveness, political orientation, and additional personality attributes (described below). Several weeks later, we administered a second survey in which students identified the peers with

³ Study materials have been made available on the Open Science Framework (OSF).

whom they had formed close relationships.⁴ To mitigate recall bias, we used the roster method to elicit these contacts (Marsden, 2011). We also collected additional measures (described below) that served as control variables.

Dependent variable. Consistent with our theoretical focus on close relationship formation as a function of mutual receptiveness, our main analyses are conducted at the dyadic rather than individual level (Mizruchi & Marquis, 2006). At the beginning of the second survey, participants viewed a screen with a roster of all students in their section (i.e., the subset of their graduating class with whom they took courses during their first year) and read the following prompt: “Please click on a name if you have formed a close or very close relationship with any of these classmates (e.g., you discuss with them matters that are personally important to you).” Participants then viewed randomly ordered rosters for each additional section until they had considered every classmate. Our dependent variable was set to 1 if a participant indicated that they had a relationship with a given peer and to 0 otherwise. For these analyses, we focused on dyads in which both individuals were from the same school. In other words, the risk set of relationship nominations that an individual could make was restricted to peers in the same school. In network-analytic terms, we thus analyzed the directed network of peer relationships.

Independent variables. In line with prior research (American National Election Studies, 2010; Dorison et al., 2019; Ehret et al., 2018; Minson et al., 2020), we measured political orientation using a seven-point scale ranging from “Very Conservative” to “Very Liberal.” For ease of presentation, we rescaled this measure such that a response of zero denotes someone who

⁴ We did not have full control over the timing of when surveys were administered: for two of the schools, the second survey was administered about three to four weeks after students’ initial interactions; for the other school, it was administered after six weeks. However, the additional two weeks for this school did not appear to result in more relationship nominations than would have been expected. Even so, we account for school- and section-level differences using school-section fixed effects in our regressions.

is neither conservative nor liberal, positive values correspond to a more liberal orientation, and negative values to a more conservative orientation. We measured receptiveness using the 18-item scale from Minson et al. (2020) (see items in Supplemental Materials).

Control variables. We controlled for variables that may confound the relationship between receptiveness and close relationship formation across ideological opposition. Given the well-documented tendency for people to form ties on the basis of gender and country of origin (McPherson et al., 2001), we included indicators of whether two members of a dyad were of the same gender or both hailed from the United States. We also controlled for two other constructs that might play a role in people’s tendency to cross ideological divides and have been extensively studied in social networks research: extraversion and self-monitoring orientation (e.g., Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998; Fang et al., 2015; Feiler & Kleinbaum, 2015; Mehra et al., 2001; Sasovova et al., 2010).⁵ We measured extraversion using eight items from the Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999) and self-monitoring orientation using 13 items developed by Lennox and Wolfe (1984).

Analytical Strategy

Our analyses focus on how mutual receptiveness moderates the effects of ideological alignment (or opposition) on tie formation. While a common approach to studying alignment effects is to regress the outcome variable of interest on difference scores—e.g., the absolute difference in political orientation—such scores are inherently ambiguous. For example, an absolute difference of ‘3’ in political orientation could be observed in very different dyads: e.g., ones with ‘Very conservative’ and ‘Neither conservative nor liberal’ members ($\{-3, 0\}$) and ones

⁵ In robustness checks, we directly examined whether these individual differences attenuated political homogeneity effects in a similar manner as receptiveness. As reported below, we find receptiveness contours network formation in a manner that is independent and distinct from that of these constructs.

with ‘Slightly conservative’ and ‘Somewhat liberal’ dyad ($\{-1, 2\}$) members. As a result, difference score approaches fail to account for where in the joint distribution of ego and alter receptiveness alignment and misalignment effects occur. Polynomial regression and response surface analysis (Edwards, 2002; Edwards & Parry, 1993) are better-suited for studying such alignment effects, as these methods permit more flexible examination of the three-dimensional relationships among component measures and the outcome of interest (see Edwards, 1994 for a more thorough discussion of these issues). We use a specific form of this technique, moderated polynomial regression, which can help assess how such effects are moderated by other independent variables—in our case, how the effects of political congruence are moderated by receptiveness (Bono & Colbert, 2005; Edwards, 1996; Edwards & Rothbard, 1999; Wilson et al., 2018).

Polynomial regression models take the following general form:

$$Z = b_0 + b_1X + b_2Y + b_3X^2 + b_4XY + b_5Y^2 + e \quad (1)$$

where Z is the outcome, and X and Y are the bases of the alignment effects of interest. After obtaining estimates of model coefficients, researchers can prepare three-dimensional plots of the response surface (Z) in terms of base terms X and Y . Model coefficients can be used to analyze key features of the response surface such as its shape along the *congruence* and *incongruence lines*—that is, where values are the same ($X=Y$) or the opposite of each other ($X=-Y$).

Specifically, Cohen, Nahum-Shani, and Doveh (2010) show the curvature along the incongruence line is equal to a linear combination of model coefficients ($b_3 - b_4 + b_5$). For our purposes, congruence and incongruence correspond to ideological alignment and opposition, and we label these lines accordingly.

For our analysis, Z is the formation of a relationship between the focal actor (ego) and the

focal target (alter), and X and Y are the political orientation of ego and alter, respectively.

Because of ideological homophily, the likelihood of relationship formation should be highest along the ideological alignment line (where political orientations of ego and alter are the same), and it should plummet along either side of the ideological opposition line (where political orientations diverge). This pattern of negative curvature along the ideological opposition line can be assessed visually and through statistical tests.

Moderated polynomial regression models extend the baseline model by including a moderator (W) as a covariate and interacting the moderator with each of the terms described in Equation 1 (Edwards, 1996):

$$Z = b_0 + b_1X + b_2Y + b_3X^2 + b_4X \times Y + b_5Y^2 + b_6W + b_7XW + b_8YW + b_9X^2W + b_{10}XYW + b_{11}Y^2W + e \quad (2)$$

This can be reduced to a model in the form of Equation 1, as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} Z &= (b_0 + b_6W) + (b_1 + b_7W)X + (b_2 + b_8W)Y \\ &+ (b_3 + b_9W)X^2 + (b_4 + b_{10}W)XY + (b_5 + b_{11}W)Y^2 + e \\ &= d_0 + d_1X + d_2Y + d_3X^2 + d_4XY + d_5Y^2 + e \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

By substituting desired levels of the moderator W (such as the mean and one standard deviation above and below the mean), the model is then in terms of X , Y , and Z only and can be more easily analyzed and interpreted. The compound coefficients d (e.g., $d_1 = b_1 + b_7W$) can be used to analyze key features of the response surface described above, such as the curvature along the ideological opposition line.

In our case, we are interested in how two variables—ego *and* alter receptiveness—jointly moderate the alignment (and opposition) effects of political orientation on relationship formation. Accordingly, we included ego and alter receptiveness in our moderated polynomial

regression models and interacted each of these moderators with the political orientation terms (i.e., ego political orientation, alter political orientation, their interaction, and higher order terms). We also included interactions between ego and alter receptiveness and their respective squared terms. We implemented our analyses with and without the control variables described above (Becker, 2005); when we did include control variables, we entered the values of those controls for ego and alter as separate regressors, just as with receptiveness and political orientation. To visualize and analyze key features of the response surface, we computed compound coefficients using chosen levels of ego and alter receptiveness: both at the average level, both at low levels (i.e., one standard deviation below the mean), and both at high levels (i.e., one standard deviation above the mean) receptiveness. We describe our estimating equations and analytical strategy in more detail in the Appendix.⁶

Estimation. Because the dependent variable in all models is dichotomous, we estimated logistic regression models. Although there are potential difficulties in interpreting interactions in nonlinear models (Norton et al., 2004), polynomial regression is less concerned with the interpretation of individual coefficients and more focused on the shape of the response surface, which we assess visually and with tests on linear combinations of the coefficients (described below).⁷ Following Edwards (2002), we obtained bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals

⁶ As an alternative to moderated polynomial regression, we also estimated models following the approach of Fafchamps and Gubert (2007), which includes both dyad-level sums variables and absolute-value differences of individual-level variables. In this approach, we examined how the negative coefficient associated with ideological difference was positively moderated by the dyad-sum of receptiveness. In yet another alternative estimation approach, we modeled relationship formation as a function of indicators of ideological opposition (i.e., ego and alter were on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum), indicators of high and moderate dyad receptiveness, and interactions among these indicators. We obtained an identical pattern of evidence regardless of which modeling approach we used.

⁷ We reach the same conclusions using linear probability models (ordinary least squares).

by performing 10,000 bootstrap replications of regression models (Efron & Tibshirani, 1993; Mooney & Duval, 1993; Stine, 1989).

Results

Descriptive statistics. The scales we used in our study achieved the usual high levels of internal validity (receptiveness $\alpha = 0.83$; extraversion $\alpha = 0.83$; self-monitoring $\alpha = 0.87$). Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and correlations for the individual-level variables. While receptiveness is positively and significantly correlated with extraversion ($r = 0.140, p < 0.001$) and self-monitoring ($r = 0.121, p = 0.003$), these correlations are not large in magnitude. Receptiveness is positively correlated with the number of reported relationships ($r = 0.081, p = 0.05$), suggesting highly receptive individuals may form more relationships in general; however, this correlation is considerably lower than the correlation between extraversion and number of relationships ($r = 0.241, p < 0.001$) or the correlation between self-monitoring and number of relationships ($r = 0.209, p < 0.001$). We find a modest negative correlation between political orientation (rescaled from -3: “Very Conservative” to 3: “Very Liberal”) and individual-level receptiveness ($r = -0.193, p < 0.001$), indicating that the more liberal individuals in our sample tended to be less receptive.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the dyad-level variables used in our analysis. The variable *Relationship Formed* is the indicator set to one if a focal actor (ego) indicated she had formed a close relationship with a focal target (alter). The other variables (e.g., *Receptiveness*) were entered in the model twice: once for the ego member of the dyad, and once for the alter. Because each participant appears as ego and alter an equal number of times in our directed dyads, the distributions for the ego and alter versions of these variables are identical.

Thus, we report descriptive statistics for half of the dyad (ego) only.⁸

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Mutual Receptiveness Moderates the Effects of Ideological Alignment and Opposition on Relationship Formation

Since the coefficients from our logistic regression models serve chiefly as inputs to our response surface analysis, we report these models in the Appendix only (see Table A1). Table 3 summarizes compound coefficients consistent with those described in Equation 3 above, except that we incorporated two sets of moderator interaction effects instead of one. Additional details about our full models appear in the Appendix. These coefficients were computed at selected values of receptiveness for both ego and alter: both at the average level (Column 1), both at low levels (a standard deviation below the mean; Column 2), and both at high levels (a standard deviation above the mean; Column 3).

[Insert Table 3 about here]

The coefficients have an intuitive interpretation. From Column 1 of Table 3, we see positive coefficients for ego and alter political orientation (d_1 and d_2) and negative coefficients for the quadratic terms (d_3 and d_5), suggesting a ridge-like surface. The three-dimensional response surface plot and accompanying contour plot corresponding to these coefficients appear in Figure 1a. Indeed, we see that the predicted probability of relationship formation tends to be highest as dyad members have similar political orientations and lowest when political orientations diverge. In the contour plot, we see that the principal axis corresponding to the “true” ridgeline—indicated by the dashed line—has a similar slope and intercept as the

⁸ The reason that the individual-level (Table 1) and dyad-level (Table 2) distributions of some variables—such as receptiveness—differ slightly is because locations had different numbers of participants and thus different numbers of dyads.

ideological alignment line. This visual evidence is consistent with our baseline expectation that ideological alignment is associated with a higher likelihood of relationship formation than ideological opposition. A statistical test of the curvature along the ideological opposition line (see Table 3, Column 1) corroborates this interpretation: the curvature is negative (-0.067), and the bias-corrected 95% bootstrapped confidence interval for this value ([-0.085; -0.049]) excludes zero. In all, this pattern of results is consistent with our expectation of political homophily in relationship formation.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

An unexpected feature of this response surface is the positive and statistically significant slope along the ideological alignment line (0.090, CI [0.012; 0.53]). This suggests that conservatives were generally less likely to form relationships—with anyone—than were liberals and that they were less sensitive to political orientation in forming relationships (i.e., the descent from the ridgeline was less steep for conservatives than for liberals). We hesitate to generalize from this feature, as it may merely reflect the fact that conservatives were in the minority for two of our three locations. More important for our purposes is the fact that the alignment effect pattern persists for conservatives as for liberals, albeit less dramatically: that is, when conservatives were forming relationships, they—like liberals—were still most likely to do so with other conservatives.⁹

We now turn to our key question by examining how the response surface changes when the members of the dyad are both low or both high in receptiveness. In Column 2 of Table 3, we see a similar pattern of coefficients for the low receptiveness condition as in the average

⁹ As seen in Table 3, Column 1, there is statistically significant negative curvature along the ideological alignment line as well (-0.030, CI [-0.042; -0.017]), but inspection of the response surface suggests that this curvature is slight and not substantive, and would impact the surface outside the range of the observed data only (e.g., for theoretical values of political orientation greater than 3).

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condition, but with higher magnitudes, especially for compound coefficients describing curvature (d_3 , d_4 , and d_5). Indeed, in Figure 1b, we again see a ridge-like response surface generally maximized near the ideological alignment line, but with even sharper plummets in the likelihood of relationship formation as political orientations diverge. The curvature along the ideological opposition line is -0.119, and the confidence interval for this value ([-0.155; -0.084]) is disjointed from that of the model based on average receptiveness (-0.067, CI [-0.085; -0.049]). This offers evidence for the idea that the political homophily observed under average conditions is amplified in the presence of mutually low receptiveness to opposing views.

The response surface for the model using mutually high receptiveness is quite different. In Column 3 of Table 3, we see a contrasting pattern of coefficients: only the coefficient for alter political orientation is statistically significant. As is seen in the corresponding plots (Figure 1c), the surface is much flatter, with a slight, positive slope as alter political orientation moves from conservative to liberal. Most strikingly, highly mutually receptive dyads experiencing the most ideological opposition (i.e., very liberal evaluators considering very conservative targets, and vice versa) have considerably higher predicted probabilities of relationship formation than dyads with average or low receptiveness. Statistical tests corroborate this interpretation of the response surface: the curvature along the ideological opposition line for this response surface is not significantly different from zero, meaning that when both members of the dyad are highly receptive, ideological opposition does not significantly change the likelihood of relationship formation. The confidence interval for the curvature term is disjointed from that of the other two surfaces, providing further support that receptiveness significantly moderates the effects of ideological alignment and opposition.

Table 4 reports the results obtained with additional controls, and Figure 2 reports the

corresponding response surface and contour plots. We again find visual evidence in support of the receptiveness moderation effect described above: we see a steeper ridgeline for the low receptiveness model (Figure 2b) and a flatter surface overall for the high receptiveness model (Figure 2c). The curvature along the ideological opposition line becomes steeper with low receptiveness (-0.128, CI [-0.163; -0.093]) and flatter with high receptiveness (-0.027, CI [-0.056; 0.001]), although the confidence interval for this value for the low receptiveness model overlaps with that of the average receptiveness model [-0.096; -0.059]. Again, the contrast between the low and high receptiveness models supports the moderating role of receptiveness.

Individual versus mutual receptiveness. The previous analysis has focused on the effects of dyads having the same level of receptiveness: both average, both low, both high. We conducted additional analyses to examine whether high receptiveness on one side of the dyad only is sufficient to bridge ideological divides. Using our polynomial regression model described above, we estimated predicted probabilities of relationship formation for dyads in which the members held opposing political orientations (e.g., {-3,1}, {-3,2}, etc.) and prepared a new response surface plot using aggregates of these predictions. In this case, we used receptiveness of ego and alter as the bases of the plot rather than political orientation. Essentially, this plot allows us to see how the predicted probability of relationship formation across the ideological divide varies with changes in the receptiveness composition of the dyad.

Figure 3 reports this plot and its accompanying contour plot. As shown in the figure, the predicted probability of relationship formation among ideologically opposed individuals is highest when both members of the dyad are highly receptive. Particularly, we see that it is not until both members have receptiveness levels of about 5 or greater (corresponding to the upper 34 percent of the distribution) that the probability of ideologically opposed partners forming a

relationship begins to increase substantively. In all, it does not appear that the receptiveness of ego or alter alone is sufficient: both are necessary.

Additional analyses. An alternative interpretation of our results is that receptiveness partially reflects one's propensity to be more outgoing (i.e., extraversion) or to exercise chameleon-like adaptability in engaging with diverse interaction partners (i.e., self-monitoring orientation). To assess these possibilities, we performed analyses similar to those reported above but examined variation in extraversion and self-monitoring rather than receptiveness. Specifically, we assessed whether mutual extraversion and mutual self-monitoring countered the negative effect of ideological opposition on relationship formation to a similar degree as mutual receptiveness. In analyses reported in our supplementary materials, we find that neither variable significantly bridges ideological divides in the manner that receptiveness does above. While extraversion and self-monitoring appear to increase the likelihood of relationships forming among all kinds of dyads—including ideologically opposed dyads—this increase is especially pronounced for political moderates viewing other political moderates, and the improved likelihood for the most ideologically opposed dyads (e.g., very conservative individuals viewing very liberal individuals) is still less than that observed for receptiveness.

General Discussion

At a time in history when the advancement of knowledge and innovation is urgently needed, widening ideological polarization is impeding people's ability to work together to their highest potential. The ability to build positive cooperative relationships with holders of opposing positions is a pervasive challenge facing all human social endeavors, from healthy family bonds to productive teamwork and prosperous business transactions to the peaceful governing of states. This ability is particularly important among knowledge workers and in organizations, such as

institutions of higher learning, whose work is centered on collaborative problem-solving and information sharing. Importantly, the present research provides insight into how such divides might be bridged. We have shown that individual differences in receptiveness to opposing views (Minson et al., 2020) increase individuals' willingness to form close relationships with ideological opponents and, more specifically, that mutual receptiveness is the linchpin to counteracting the divisive effects of partisanship on close relationship formation.

Contributing to scholarship on personality and social network formation, we find that the effect of receptiveness in enabling close friendships between ideological opponents goes above and beyond the effects of extraversion and self-monitoring—two well-researched individual differences that may be theorized to have similar effects. In an additional study reported in the online supplemental materials, we explored the effect of two other potentially related individual differences: agreeableness and openness to experience (John & Srivastava, 1999). Specifically, we measured participants' levels of receptiveness, agreeableness, and openness, and then presented them with a personality profile of a potential relationship partner, including that partner's levels of agreeableness, openness, and receptiveness. Our key manipulation consisted of presenting the partner as belonging to the same or opposing political party as the participant. We again found that participant receptiveness moderated the general tendency to prefer to form relationships with same-party partners. Although participants who were more agreeable and open reported a higher willingness to form relationships overall, these two traits did not moderate their tendency to favor same-party relationship partners, offering further evidence that receptiveness appears to be unique in this regard.

In sum, we find that mutual receptiveness uniquely moderates the repulsion that ideological opponents commonly feel toward each other. The fact that our results emerged in a

field setting, where relationship formation is subject to a variety of countervailing forces, represents a consequential discovery that opens up urgently needed avenues for research and practice on how to combat ideological polarization and intolerance.

Contributions

Our work documents that previously demonstrated effects of receptiveness on individuals' willingness to engage with opposing perspectives extend beyond laboratory settings and are perseverant enough—if reciprocated—to survive the challenges of social relationship formation across ideological divides. Our findings thus broaden the literature on micro-to-macro links between individual differences and social structure (Burt et al., 2013; Coleman, 1990; Feiler & Kleinbaum, 2015; Gosling et al., 2011; Hedström & Swedberg, 1998; Sasovova et al., 2010; Selden & Goodie, 2018; Srivastava & Banaji, 2011). Beyond adding receptiveness as another key individual difference that shapes the development of social networks, we extend the literature on psychological barriers to engagement with opposing views by looking beyond individual effects to the dyadic level of analysis (for work that also focuses on both ego and alter, see Kleinbaum et al., 2015). We find that receptiveness inheres not only within individuals but also between pairs of prospective interaction partners. This broadening of the scope of the construct opens the door to novel theorizing about and measurement of the construct at the level of work groups and organizations.

The finding that antipathy toward forming close relationships with holders of opposing views—a powerfully persistent effect driven by multiple forces—is moderated by mutually reciprocated personality characteristics opens new windows for conceptual and practical progress on the “echo chamber” conundrum. From a conceptual perspective, the findings of this research suggest that scholars of partisan conflict should look beyond mechanisms related to

psychological biases (Babcock & Loewenstein, 1997; Kteily et al., 2016) and interpersonal interaction (Chen et al., 2010; Yeomans et al., 2020) to include strategies for the social engineering of relationships that bridge partisan divides (White et al., 2020). From a practical perspective, this research suggests new avenues for the design of organizational interventions.

We see at least two avenues through which organizations might use a better understanding of receptiveness to encourage effective working relationships between partisans. First, receptiveness might be a valuable consideration for the selection of people into job roles that require or would benefit from a capacity to form close relationships across ideological divides. This might include global corporations with operations that span countries with histories of partisan conflict. Similarly, professionals in public and governmental affairs may be more effective when they have the capacity to build trust with stakeholders from across the ideological spectrum. In university context, educators could consider anonymous data on the distributions of receptiveness in an entering cohort, as well as demographic information and measures of ideological alignment, to construct sections and work groups in ways that decrease the likelihood of students splintering into politically homogeneous clusters.

Second, the receptiveness scale could be used as a learning and development tool to help organizational members recognize and reflect on the psychological and emotional barriers to engagement with ideologically diverse others. For example, onboarding programs and socialization efforts for new hires could incorporate modules on receptiveness to enhance self-awareness and foster an organizational culture that values engagement and collaboration across divides. Evidence that such interventions might prove effective come from recent work by Collins, Dorison, Gino, and Minson (2021), which suggests that people are more willing to engage with (i.e., be receptive to) holders of opposing views when those individuals express a

willingness to learn about and understand the focal person's perspective. In other words, in a similar vein as the work reported here, these authors find that receptiveness is best achieved in the presence of a receptive counterpart. These findings have important training implications, suggesting that receptiveness is most likely to take root when organizations focus on interventions that increase individuals' receptiveness by making them believe that their relationship-building overtures will be well-received by counterparts.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Our research is not without limitations, which also point to avenues for future investigations. First, although we drew upon data from three different field settings that varied in political orientation, the sample was largely North American. Given our graduate student sample and potential concerns about student privacy, we were constrained in terms of which demographic characteristics we could control for beyond gender and country of origin. It is also important to note that the conservative students who choose to enroll in a liberal university and the liberal students who opt to join a conservative university likely differ in important respects from the general populations of conservatives and liberals. Replications of this design across a wide range of social groups are needed to assess the robustness of these findings and to identify potential scope conditions of our theory.

Although we collected survey data on receptiveness before network relationships began to form, we cannot make strong causal claims. Prior work has demonstrated that receptiveness remains relatively stable over time (Minson et al., 2020). Thus, as with many prior investigations of individual differences, we are led to rely on time-lagged correlational evidence collected with appropriate controls and robustness checks. There remains, however, the possibility that unobserved heterogeneity—for example, opportunity structures that we could not observe in our

data such as membership in various student clubs and groups—might have differentially channeled receptive individuals, relative to non-receptive individuals, to form heterogeneous networks. Our study design mitigates against this possibility. Given that we investigated the formation of relationships among new entrants to exogenously and largely randomly assigned cohorts on three ideologically and professionally diverse campuses, it is hard to imagine how such unobserved opportunity structures would account for our pattern of effects. That said, the antecedents of receptiveness are not fully transparent. It is possible that as-yet-undocumented situational factors that foster a dispositional propensity to receptiveness (e.g., positive intergroup work experiences, Barlow et al., 2012) could provide a deeper explanation of the observed effects of mutual receptiveness on bridging ideological gaps in network formation.

The design of the experimental study reported in the supplement implicitly controlled for opportunity structures and provides convergent evidence. Again, we found that more receptive individuals were more willing to form close relationships with ideological opponents, even when randomly assigned to counterparts with varying personality characteristics. Further research is needed to identify the antecedents of receptiveness and to more firmly pin down the causal role of mutual receptiveness in enabling close relationship formation among partisans.

A final noteworthy limitation is that our methods relied on survey-based measures of network formation. Although we used the roster method to mitigate recall bias in the measurement of our dependent variable (Marsden, 2011), self-report bias may still exist in our data (Feld & Carter, 2002). Future work could address this limitation by pairing a network survey with network measures derived from electronic communications among group members (Goldberg et al., 2016; Kossinets & Watts, 2009; Quintane & Kleinbaum, 2011). Such data would also allow researchers to examine the extent to which mutual receptiveness leads to the

formation of relationships between ideologically opposed others that are prone to persisting, rather than decaying, over time. Furthermore, it might enhance our ability to understand how receptiveness manifests in the language of interpersonal interactions and becomes recognizable to prospective counterparts (Srivastava et al., 2018; Yeomans et al., 2020).

Conclusion

As illustrated in our opening quote, this research illuminates the importance of receptive individuals acting in concert to counteract the forces that lead people to naturally retreat into cognitively and emotionally reassuring ideological bubbles. For those who aim to prevent the splintering of working groups or prospective business or collaboration partners along ideological divides, this work reinforces the importance of addressing this challenge from a social-structural perspective. Along with the psychology of partisanship, we need to consider the structural factors that can amplify the ability of mutual receptiveness to interrupt partisan divides. Programs and interventions that channel the ideologically opposed and receptive into common social spaces may be a channel for weakening the walls of our echo chambers.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Pairwise Pearson Correlations – Individual Level

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Med.</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Number of Relationships	14.361	12.273	11.000	0.000	97.000						
2. Receptiveness	4.616	0.820	4.611	1.889	7.000	0.081					
3. Political Orientation	0.998	1.730	2.000	-3.000	3.000	-0.020	-0.193				
4. Female	0.404	0.491	0.000	0.000	1.000	-0.125	-0.145	0.269			
5. From U.S.	0.715	0.452	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.146	-0.159	-0.050	-0.014		
6. Extraversion	3.429	0.837	3.500	1.250	5.000	0.241	0.140	0.026	0.013	-0.031	
7. Self-monitoring	3.606	0.586	3.615	1.154	5.231	0.209	0.121	0.114	-0.002	-0.027	0.220

Note. $N = 599$. Correlations greater than 0.1 in absolute magnitude are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Political orientation ranges from “Very Conservative” (-3) to “Very Liberal” (3).

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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics – Dyad Level

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Med.</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
Relationship Formed	0.067	0.251	0.000	0.000	1.000
Receptiveness	4.614	0.831	4.556	1.889	7.000
Political Orientation	1.213	1.584	2.000	-3.000	3.000
Female	0.420	0.494	0.000	0.000	1.000
From U.S.	0.698	0.459	1.000	0.000	1.000
Extraversion	3.425	0.837	3.500	1.250	5.000
Self-monitoring	3.653	0.594	3.615	1.154	5.231

Note. $N = 127,550$. Because each participant appears as ego and alter an equal of times, the distributions for receptiveness, political orientation, female, from U.S., extraversion, and self-monitoring are identical for the ego and alter versions of the variables. Descriptive statistics for these variables are thus reported for half of the dyad (ego) only.

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Table 3

Compound Coefficients Derived from Logistic Regression

	<i>Average Receptiveness</i>	<i>Low Receptiveness</i>	<i>High Receptiveness</i>
$d_1 = b_1 + b_8RE + b_{13}RA$	0.033* [0.010; 0.052]	0.039 [-0.023; 0.054]	0.027* [0.015; 0.080]
$d_2 = b_2 + b_9RE + b_{14}RA$	0.057* [0.028; 0.070]	0.055 [-0.006; 0.072]	0.059* [0.031; 0.098]
$d_3 = b_5 + b_{10}RE + b_{15}RA$	-0.031* [-0.048; -0.029]	-0.058* [-0.083; -0.046]	-0.003 [-0.029; 0.004]
$d_4 = b_6 + b_{11}RE + b_{16}RA$	0.018* [0.012; 0.022]	0.037* [0.030; 0.049]	-0.000 [-0.013; 0.004]
$d_5 = b_7 + b_{12}RE + b_{17}RA$	-0.018* [-0.031; -0.012]	-0.023* [-0.043; -0.006]	-0.012* [-0.035; -0.002]
Ideological Alignment Line			
Slope ($d_1 + d_2$)	0.090* [0.051; 0.108]	0.093* [0.005; 0.093]	0.086* [0.067; 0.158]
Curvature ($d_3 + d_4 + d_5$)	-0.030* [-0.055; -0.030]	-0.045* [-0.071; -0.026]	-0.015* [-0.058; -0.014]
Ideological Opposition Line			
Slope ($d_1 - d_2$)	-0.024 [-0.048; 0.015]	-0.016 [-0.081; 0.047]	-0.033 [-0.064; 0.031]
Curvature ($d_3 - d_4 + d_5$)	-0.067* [-0.096; -0.059]	-0.119* [-0.163; -0.093]	-0.015 [-0.056; 0.001]

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.10$. Bias-corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals appear below statistics of interest. All models from which statistics are derived include school-section fixed effects. ‘POE’ and ‘POA’ refer to political orientation of ego and alter, respectively, and RE and RA refer to receptiveness of ego and alter.

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Table 4

Compound Coefficients Derived from Logistic Regression: With Additional Controls

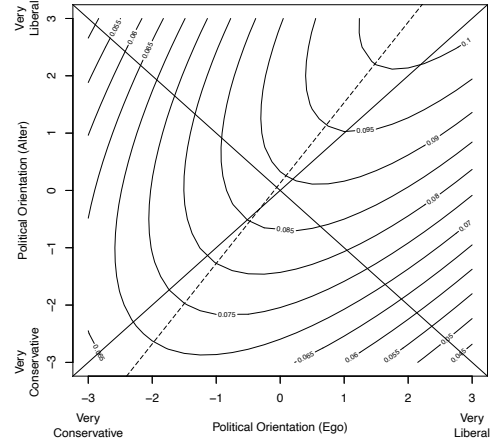
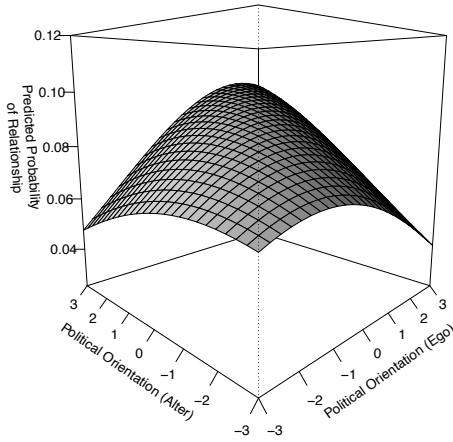
	<i>Average Receptiveness</i>	<i>Low Receptiveness</i>	<i>High Receptiveness</i>
$d_1 = b_1 + b_8RE + b_{13}RA$	0.031* [0.010; 0.052]	0.015 [-0.023; 0.054]	0.048* [0.015; 0.080]
$d_2 = b_2 + b_9RE + b_{14}RA$	0.048* [0.028; 0.070]	0.033 [-0.006; 0.072]	0.064* [0.031; 0.098]
$d_3 = b_5 + b_{10}RE + b_{15}RA$	-0.038* [-0.048; -0.029]	-0.064* [-0.083; -0.046]	-0.013 [-0.029; 0.004]
$d_4 = b_6 + b_{11}RE + b_{16}RA$	0.017* [0.0122; 0.022]	0.039* [0.030; 0.049]	-0.005 [-0.013; 0.004]
$d_5 = b_7 + b_{12}RE + b_{17}RA$	-0.022* [-0.031; -0.012]	-0.024* [-0.043; -0.006]	-0.019* [-0.035; -0.002]
Ideological Alignment Line			
Slope ($d_1 + d_2$)	0.080* [0.051; 0.108]	0.048* [0.005; 0.093]	0.112* [0.067; 0.158]
Curvature ($d_3 + d_4 + d_5$)	-0.043* [-0.055; -0.030]	-0.049* [-0.071; -0.026]	-0.036* [-0.058; -0.014]
Ideological Opposition Line			
Slope ($d_1 - d_2$)	-0.017 [-0.048; 0.015]	-0.017 [-0.081; 0.047]	-0.016 [-0.064; 0.031]
Curvature ($d_3 - d_4 + d_5$)	-0.077* [-0.096; -0.059]	-0.128* [-0.163; -0.093]	-0.027 [-0.056; 0.001]

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, †p < 0.10. Bias-corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals appear below statistics of interest. All models from which statistics are derived include school-section fixed effects. ‘POE’ and ‘POA’ refer to political orientation of ego and alter, respectively, and RE and RA refer to receptiveness of ego and alter. Additional controls include the gender, country of origin (indicator of United States resident or not), extraversion, and self-monitoring of ego and alter.

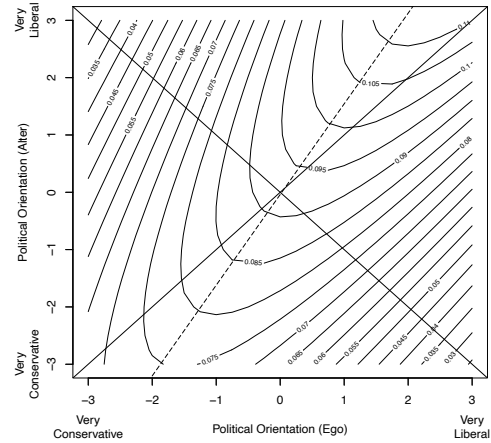
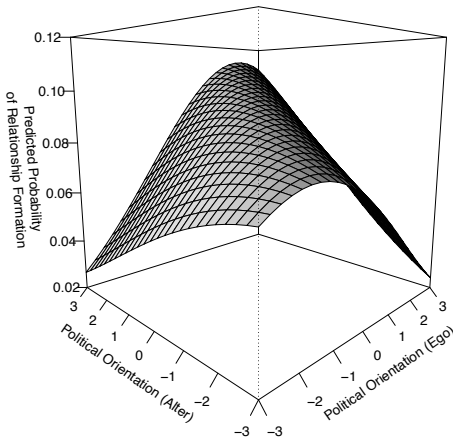
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Figure 1.

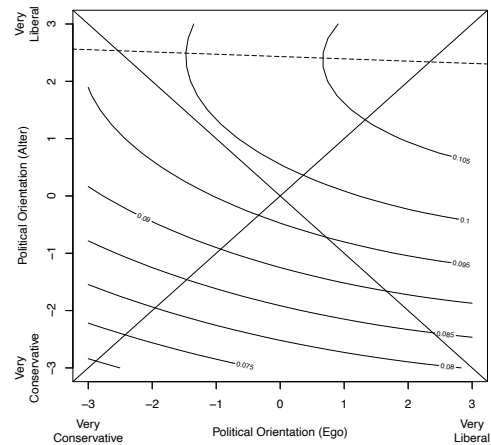
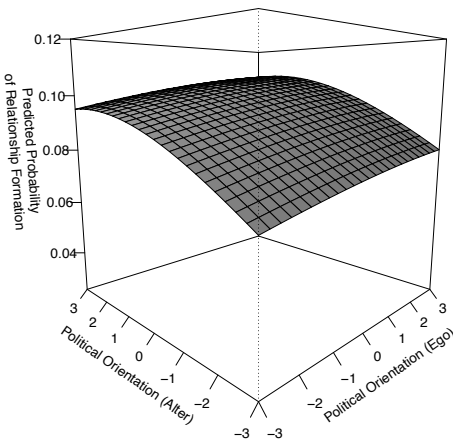
Predicted Probability of Relationship Formation across Political Orientation and Receptiveness Profiles



(a) Both Dyad Members Have Average Receptiveness



(b) Both Dyad Members Have Low Receptiveness



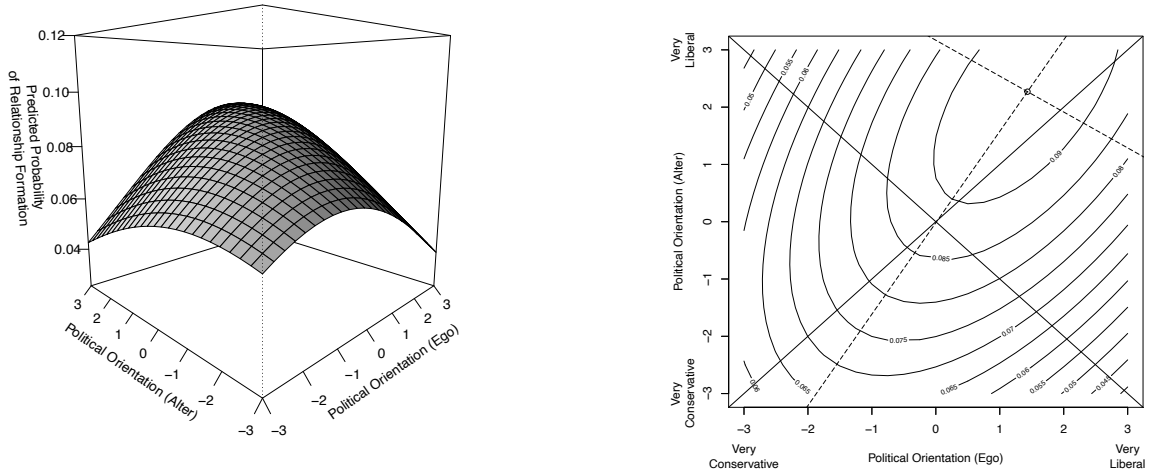
(c) Both Dyad Members Have High Receptiveness

Note: Solid diagonal lines indicate ideological alignment and opposition lines. Dashed lines indicate visible principal axes. ‘low’ and ‘high’ receptiveness correspond to one standard deviation below and above average, respectively.

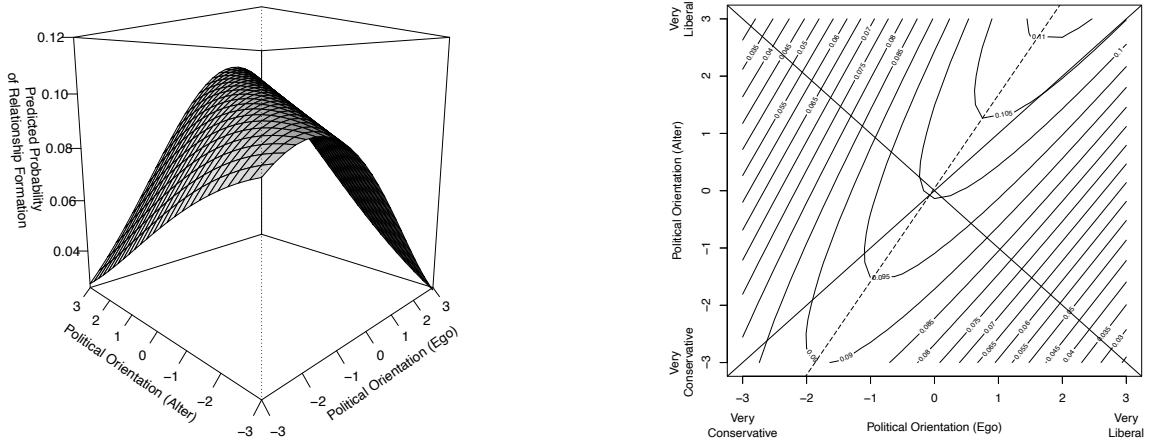
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Figure 2

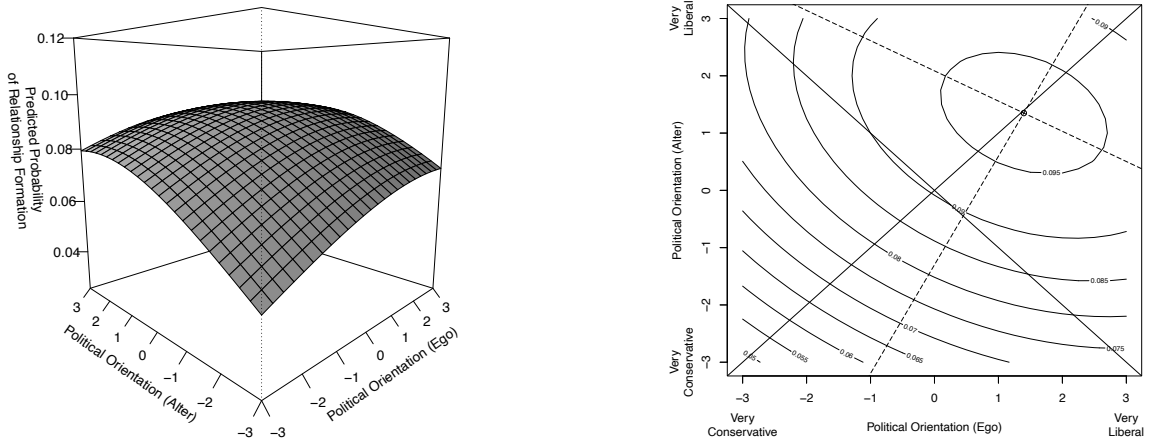
Predicted Probability of Relationship Formation across Political Orientation and Receptiveness Profiles – Models with Additional Controls



(a) Both Dyad Members Have Average Receptiveness



(b) Both Dyad Members Have Low Receptiveness

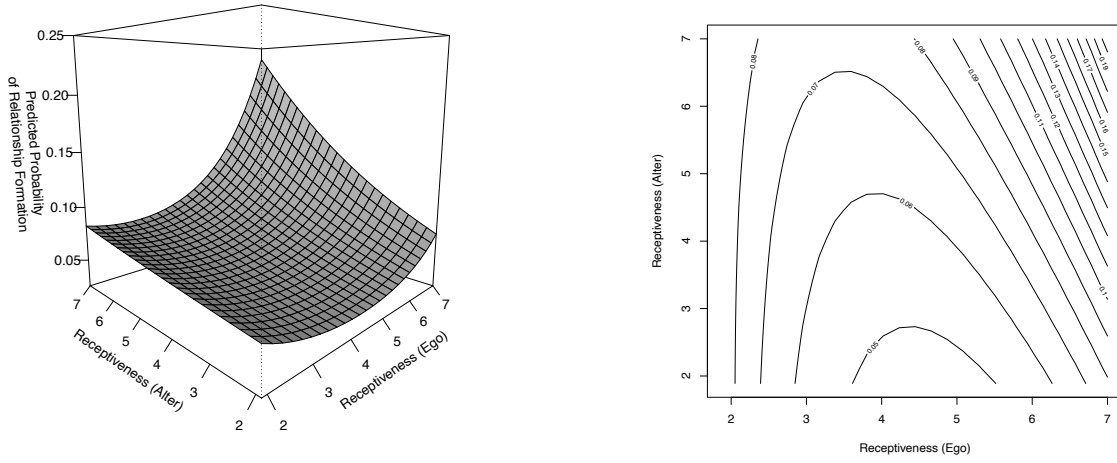


(c) Both Dyad Members Have High Receptiveness

Note: Solid diagonal lines indicate ideological alignment and opposition lines. Dashed lines indicate visible principal axes. ‘low’ and ‘high’ receptiveness correspond to one standard deviation below and above average, respectively.

Figure 3

Predicated Probability of Relationship Formation in Ideologically Opposed Dyads, by Receptiveness Profiles



APPENDIX

Data Transparency Statement

The data reported in this manuscript have not been previously published and were collected by the authors. No concurrent or forthcoming papers use these data. Access to the data and the code used to replicate analyses have been provided to the editor.

Additional Model Details

We began with a baseline model that includes political orientation and receptiveness of the focal actor (ego) and focal target (alter), as well as higher-order terms and interactions among complementary ego/alter variables:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}\{Relationship\} = & b_0 + b_1POE + b_2POA + b_3POE^2 + b_4POE \times POA + b_5POA^2 \\ & + b_6RE + b_7RA + b_8RE^2 + b_9RE \times RA + b_{10}RA^2 + e \end{aligned} \quad (A2)$$

Here, *POE* and *POA* denote the political orientation of ego and alter, respectively, and *RE* and *RA* denote ego and alter receptiveness. This model allows dyad-member attributes to have nonlinear effects on the likelihood of relationship formation. In our moderated polynomial regression models, we extended this baseline model by interacting ego and alter receptiveness with each set of five terms for ego and alter political orientation in Equation 1:

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$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{logit}\{Relationship\} = & b_0 + b_1POE + b_2POA + b_3POE^2 + b_4POE \times POA + b_5POA^2 \\
 & + b_6RE + b_7RA + b_8RE^2 + b_9RE \times RA + b_{10}RA^2 \\
 & + b_{11}POE \times RE + b_{12}POA \times RE + b_{13}POE^2 \times RE + b_{14}POE \times POA \times RE + b_{15}POA^2 \times RE \\
 & + b_{16}POE \times RA + b_{17}POA \times RA + b_{18}POE^2 \times RA + b_{19}POE \times POA \times RA + b_{20}POA^2 \times RA + e
 \end{aligned} \tag{A2}$$

In later versions of these models, we also included the additional control variables described above; we report our results with and without these controls (Becker, 2005).

Table A1 reports estimates of the models described above using logistic regression. Model 1 contains estimates of the baseline model described in A1 above. To assess initial support of moderation effects, we evaluated improvement of model fit after introducing each set of polynomial terms and receptiveness interactions (Bono & Colbert, 2005; Edwards, 2002). Model 2 introduces the ego receptiveness interactions, and Model 3 introduces the alter receptiveness interactions. According to likelihood ratio tests, both Model 2 ($\chi^2(5) = 29.4, \text{Pr}(> \chi^2) < 0.001$) and Model 3 ($\chi^2(5) = 28.1, \text{Pr}(> \chi^2) < 0.001$) provide statistically significant improvement in model fit over Model 1. Model 4 retains both sets of ego and alter receptiveness interactions, and Model 5 extends Model 4 by including additional control variables (gender, country of origin, extraversion, and self-monitoring of ego and alter). Model 4 provides model fit superior to both Model 2 ($\chi^2(5) = 28.2, \text{Pr}(> \chi^2) < 0.001$) and Model 3 ($\chi^2(5) = 29.4, \text{Pr}(> \chi^2) < 0.001$), and Model 5 provides better fit than Model 4 ($\chi^2(8) = 1060.7, \text{Pr}(> \chi^2) < 0.001$). This gives early evidence supporting the moderating role of receptiveness.

We then computed and compared models of the response surface by substituting different levels of ego and alter receptiveness into equation 2, observing that this equation can be rewritten as a simpler model, as follows:

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$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{logit}\{Relationship\} &= (b_0 + b_6RE + b_7RA + b_8RE^2 + b_9RE \times RA + b_{10}RA^2) \\
 &+ (b_1 + b_{11}RE + b_{16}RA)POE + (b_2 + b_{12}RE + b_{17}RA)POA + (b_3 + b_{13}RE + b_{18}RA)POE^2 \\
 &+ (b_4 + b_{14}RE + b_{19}RA)(POE \times POA) + (b_5 + b_{15}RE + b_{20}RA)POA^2 + e \\
 &= d_0 + d_1POE + d_2POA + d_3POE^2 + d_4POE \times POA + d_5POA^2 + e
 \end{aligned} \tag{A3}$$

After obtaining different estimates of the compound coefficients (d) for varying levels of ego and alter receptiveness—mean, low, and high—we plotted the corresponding three-dimensional response surfaces and analyzed key features of these surfaces, including the slope and curvature along the ideological alignment ($POE = POA$) and opposition ($POE = -POA$) lines, which involves computing linear combinations of the d coefficients (Edwards & Cable, 2009; Wilson et al., 2018). We describe these results in the main text of the article

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Table A1

Logistic Regressions: Relationship Nomination – Directed Dyads

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
b_0 Constant	1.097* (0.475)	1.354* (0.556)	0.652 (0.562)	0.904 (0.631)	-1.073 [†] (0.644)
b_1 POE	0.035*** (0.010)	0.193** (0.060)	-0.093 [†] (0.056)	0.066 (0.081)	-0.059 (0.082)
b_2 POA	0.056*** (0.010)	-0.026 (0.054)	1.122* (0.060)	0.044 (0.080)	-0.039 (0.081)
b_3 POE ²	-0.028*** (0.005)	-0.177*** (0.030)	-0.038 (0.028)	-0.186*** (0.041)	-0.182*** (0.041)
b_4 POE x POA	0.034*** (0.005)	0.099*** (0.030)	0.178*** (0.031)	0.244*** (0.043)	0.279*** (0.044)
b_5 POA ²	-0.016*** (0.005)	0.013 (0.027)	-0.072* (0.031)	-0.048 (0.040)	-0.037 (0.041)
b_6 RE	-0.794*** (0.123)	-0.910*** (0.147)	-0.752*** (0.126)	-0.865*** (0.149)	-1.093*** (0.151)
b_7 RA	-0.325* (0.127)	-0.277* (0.129)	-0.177 (0.153)	-0.129 (0.155)	-0.198 (0.157)
b_8 RE ²	0.061*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.012)	0.062*** (0.011)	0.075*** (0.012)	0.092*** (0.012)
b_9 RE x RA	0.065*** (0.016)	0.055** (0.017)	0.055** (0.017)	0.043* (0.018)	0.041* (0.018)
b_{10} RA ²	0.003 (0.011)	0.004 (0.011)	-0.007 (0.013)	-0.006 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.013)
b_{11} POE x RE		-0.033** (0.013)		-0.034** (0.013)	-0.006 (0.013)
b_{12} POA x RE		0.017 (0.011)		0.017 (0.011)	0.017 (0.011)
b_{13} POE ² x RE		0.032*** (0.006)		0.032*** (0.006)	0.030*** (0.007)
b_{14} POE x POA x RE		-0.014* (0.006)		-0.014* (0.006)	-0.021*** (0.006)
b_{15} POA ² x RE		-0.006 (0.006)		-0.006 (0.006)	-0.004 (0.006)
b_{16} POE x RA			0.026* (0.012)	0.026* (0.012)	0.025* (0.012)
b_{17} POA x RA			-0.013 (0.013)	-0.014 (0.013)	0.002 (0.013)
b_{18} POE ² x RA			0.002 (0.006)	0.001 (0.006)	0.001 (0.006)
b_{19} POE x POA x RA			-0.031*** (0.006)	-0.031*** (0.006)	-0.032*** (0.007)
b_{20} POA ² x RA			0.012 [†] (0.007)	0.012 [†] (0.007)	0.007 (0.007)
Additional Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes
AIC	59090.905	59071.534	59072.827	59053.379	58008.663
BIC	59442.131	59471.541	59472.834	59502.168	58535.501
Log Likelihood	-29509.453	-29494.767	-29495.413	-29480.690	-28950.331
Deviance	59018.905	58989.534	58990.827	58961.379	57900.663
Num. obs.	127550	127550	127550	127550	127550

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, [†] $p < 0.10$. Standard errors appear in parentheses. All models include school-section fixed effects. ‘POE’ and ‘POA’ refer to political orientation of ego and alter, respectively, and RE and RA refer to receptiveness of ego and alter. Additional controls include the gender, country of origin (indicator of United States resident or not), extraversion, and self-monitoring of ego and alter.

Supplemental Materials for “Mutual Receptiveness to Opposing Views Bridges Ideological Divides in Network Formation”

Receptiveness to Opposing Views Scale

The following section describes the receptiveness to opposing views scale.

Instructions to Participants

“The questions below address the manner in which you deal with contrary views and opinions on social and political issues that are important to you. When answering these questions think about the hotly contested issues in current social and political discourse (for example: universal healthcare, abortion, immigration reform, gay rights, gun control, environmental regulation, etc.). Consider especially the issues that you care about the most.

“Please click the radio button below each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.”

Items and Scoring

Table S1 summarizes the receptiveness items. Items 6-18 are reverse coded (R); responses on the 18 items are then averaged to create a total receptiveness index. Subscale 1 (Negative Emotions) is comprised of items 15-18. Subscale 2 (Intellectual Curiosity) is comprised of items 1-5. Subscale 3 (Derogation of Opponents) is comprised of items 6, 7, 8, 13, and 14. Subscale 4 (Taboo Issues) is comprised of items 9-12.

[Insert Table S1 about here]

Pre-registered Experimental Study

The pre-registered experimental study was designed to test whether greater receptiveness to opposing views will reduce the well-documented aversion to forming relationships with ideologically opposed others.¹ To test this idea, we recruited a balanced sample of political liberals and conservatives and asked them to report their political orientation and respond to the receptiveness scale (Minson et al., 2020), as well as measures of agreeableness and openness to experience (John & Srivastava, 1999). Participants were then randomly assigned to view the personality profile of a target individual containing the same four measures they had just completed. The personality profiles were constructed from a large sample of prior survey takers who had completed these four measures in past research by Minson et al. (2020). We manipulated the political orientation of these profiles so that they were either aligned with or opposed to the participant's own political orientation. After reviewing the target profile, participants were asked to report their willingness to form a relationship with that person.

Randomly assigning participants to potential relationship targets enabled us to test the effects of receptiveness on the propensity to form relationships without the confounding effects of opportunity structures for interaction. By presenting participants with personality profiles of real individuals, we were able to maintain natural co-variation between the underlying personality dimensions. Moreover, including measures and manipulations of agreeableness and openness to experience afforded us an opportunity to distinguish the effects of receptiveness from two well-established personality measures that might also explain a propensity to bridge disparate communities (Selden & Goodie, 2018).

¹ Our (blinded) pre-registration is available at <http://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=5e36zz>. Data and code have been added to the Open Science Framework (OSF).

Method

Participants. We recruited a balanced sample of politically liberal and conservative participants for an online study about personality.² In line with our pre-registration, we excluded participants who failed an attention check in the beginning of the survey or a comprehension quiz in the middle of the survey, as well as those who reported a different political orientation during the survey than they reported during the pre-screening on the survey platform. These exclusion criteria left us with a final sample of 1,793 participants ($M_{age} = 35.2$, 56.7% Female).

Procedure. Participants learned that they would complete several personality scales and then view the personality profile of another individual. We told them that the purpose of the study was to think about how “people with different personalities think about each other.” After reading survey instructions, participants reported their political orientation on a 7-point scale anchored at “Very Conservative” and “Very Liberal.” To be consistent with our main study, we rescaled this measure such that positive values correspond to a more liberal orientation, and negative values to a more conservative orientation. This measure, which is used in the American National Election Studies survey, has been shown to be highly correlated with partisan behavior and preferences (American National Election Studies, 2010). Participants further completed the receptiveness to opposing views scale (Minson et al., 2020) as well as the openness and agreeableness subscales of the Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999).

² We pre-registered collecting 2,000 participants with equal numbers of political liberals and conservatives before exclusions. After beginning data collection on Prolific and easily attaining our target sample size of liberals, we realized that the Prolific participant pool did not have enough conservatives to meet our target. Thus, we augmented our Prolific sample of conservatives with conservatives from mTurk. We made this decision based on our pre-registration and without looking at the data. Conducting analyses with or without the additional sample of conservatives from mTurk did not suggest a different conclusion than we report below.

Participants then read a page of information explaining the personality traits that each of the three scales measures. For example, the agreeableness subscale was explained in the following manner:

“Agreeableness measures the extent to which you are cooperative, polite, kind, and friendly. People high in agreeableness are more trusting, affectionate, and altruistic, and often do things for the benefit of others. They are particularly empathetic, show great concern for the welfare of others, and are the first to help those in need.”

After reading this information, participants answered three questions testing their comprehension of the three personality scales. Participants had to answer all three questions correctly to advance in the survey and received five opportunities to do so. In line with our pre-registration, we blocked participants who failed the comprehension quiz five times from providing further data.

We then presented participants with a personality profile of a target individual. These target personality profiles were based on a sample of 205 mTurk participants who had participated in an earlier study and had provided their responses to the same scales that participants in the current study had completed. Each personality profile consisted of calculated agreeableness, openness, and receptiveness scores for one of the 205 prior participants presented on a 1 to 5 scale.³

In addition to the scores on the personality measures, participants also learned about the target’s political affiliation. Specifically, each participant viewed a profile purportedly belonging to a moderately conservative or moderately liberal individual. As a result, each of our participants saw one randomly selected personality profile out of a possible 410 (205 original profiles, each presented as belonging to a liberal or a conservative). This procedure ensured that

³ Although receptiveness is normally measured on a 1-7 scale, we transformed the responses of the target participants to a 1-5 scale to enable participants to more easily compare the three measures.

half of our participants encountered a target who shared their political affiliation and half encountered a target with an opposing political affiliation. Because the profiles were drawn from real prior participants, we were able to preserve the natural covariation between the three personality variables of interest. Prior research has not found statistically significant differences in the receptiveness of liberals and conservatives (Minson et al., 2020).

We then asked participants to imagine meeting the target individual and to consider what it would be like to interact with them. Finally, participants responded to four items about their relationship-formation intentions toward the target, providing their responses on 5-point Likert scales. Specifically, we asked participants: “If you were to meet, how willing would you be to discuss important topics with this person?” and “If you were to meet, how willing would you be to become friends with this person?” on scales ranging from 1 = “Not at all” to 5 = “Very willing.” We also asked: “If you were to meet, how likely are you to enjoy working with this person?” and “If you were to meet, how likely would you be to form a relationship with this person?” on scales from 1 = “Very unlikely” to 5 = “Very likely.”

Participants finished by completing a set of demographic items, including gender, age, level of income, and level of education. They then exited the survey and received payment.

Results

As anticipated in our pre-registration, the four items we used to measure relationship formation intentions were highly correlated ($\alpha = .85$), so we averaged them into a single measure of *Propensity to Form a Relationship*. The scales we used in our study achieved the usual high levels of internal validity (receptiveness $\alpha = 0.882$; agreeableness $\alpha = 0.804$; openness to experience $\alpha = 0.833$). As planned, we also created a variable (*Ideologically Opposed*), indicating that the participant and the target had opposing political ideologies (0 =

ideologically aligned [IA]; 1 = ideologically opposed [IO]). Table 1 reports descriptive statistics and correlations for experimental study variables.

[Insert Table S2 about here.]

Table S3 reports regression coefficients estimated through ordinary least squares. Model 1 is a minimal model regressing the measure of the propensity to form a relationship on IO, the participant's self-reported level of receptiveness, and the target's reported level of receptiveness. In Model 2, we introduce interactions of $IO \times Evaluator\ Receptiveness$ and $IO \times Target\ Receptiveness$. As expected, participants in general were less interested in forming relationships with targets who had opposing (as compared to aligned) ideological perspectives ($b = -1.419, SE = 0.265, t = -5.354, p < 0.001$). More (as compared to less) receptive participants were more inclined in general to form relationships with the target ($b = 0.051, SE = 0.023, t = 2.170, p = 0.030$). Importantly, and in line with our theorizing, receptiveness moderated the negative effect of opposing ideology on relationship formation ($b = 0.260, SE = 0.036, t = 7.237, p < 0.001$). Participants were also more willing to form relationships with targets who were more receptive ($b = 0.215, SE = 0.048, t = 4.504, p < 0.001$); however, we did not find evidence that target receptiveness moderated the negative effect of IO ($b = -0.050, SE = 0.071, t = -0.699, p = 0.485$).

[Insert Table S3 about here.]

Figure S1 displays the how the effect of ideological opposition on the propensity to form relationships is moderated by evaluator receptiveness. Evaluators that are high and low in receptiveness (two standard deviations above and below the sample mean) have a similar willingness to form a relationship with an ideologically aligned target (3.62 and 3.82, respectively). Whereas evaluators with low receptiveness have a significantly lower propensity to form a relationship with an ideologically opposed target (2.58), highly receptive evaluators do

not (3.79). Together, Model 2 and Figure S1 support the moderating role of evaluator receptiveness on the negative effect of ideological opposition.

[Insert Figure S1 about here.]

Model 3 extends Model 2 to include the participant's self-reported agreeableness and openness scores, the target's agreeableness and openness scores, and all other controls (participant gender, age, income level, education level, and indicators of the data source [Prolific vs. Amazon Mechanical Turk]). The positive interaction between ideological opposition and evaluator receptiveness remains robust to including these additional controls.

Model 4 tests whether receptiveness predicts the propensity to form relationships with IO others above and beyond the effects of agreeableness or openness to experience. We extend Model 3 to include four interactions of IO target with participant and target agreeableness and participant and target openness to experience. We continue to find support for our expected moderating relationship, specifically that evaluator receptiveness positively moderates the negative effect of IO on the willingness to form a relationship with the target ($b = 0.259$, $SE = 0.036$, $t = 7.092$, $p < 0.001$). Participants who reported higher agreeableness were more willing to form relationships with the targets they evaluated ($b = 0.250$, $SE = 0.039$, $t = 6.358$, $p < 0.001$), as were participants who reported higher Openness to Experience ($b = 0.106$, $SE = 0.036$, $t = 2.941$, $p = 0.003$). Similarly, participants overall were more willing to form relationships with targets described as higher in agreeableness ($b = 0.212$, $SE = 0.031$, $t = 6.946$, $p < 0.001$) and openness to experience ($b = 0.065$, $SE = 0.033$, $t = 1.985$, $p = 0.047$). Importantly, however, we observed no significant interaction effects of these measures with our indicator of ideological opposition, with the exception of evaluator agreeableness, for which the interaction is *negative* and statistically significant ($b = -0.165$, $SE = 0.055$, $p = 0.003$). This interaction suggests that if

anything, agreeableness widens the divide between an evaluator and an ideologically opposed target. In sum, one's own level of receptiveness to opposing views was the only variable that meaningfully improved individuals' willingness to form relationships with holders of opposing views, and it did so while we controlled for other personality variables that prior researchers theorized to be relevant to this behavior.

Discussion

As predicted, we found that more receptive participants were more willing to form relationships with holders of opposing views than their less receptive counterparts. We were able to demonstrate this effect while controlling for agreeableness and openness to experience, scales that predict a propensity for relationship formation but importantly do not interact with ideological disagreement. By controlling for participants' exposure to targets' profiles and drawing those profiles from a naturally occurring sample, we are able to eliminate a variety of alternative explanations that would arise in a strictly correlational design or a design featuring fictitious relationship partners.

Importantly, participants considering IO partners did not seem particularly sensitive to the role that their partner's receptiveness might play in forming a successful relationship. While we found a positive main effect for target receptiveness—suggesting people valued receptive partners—the absence of an interaction between ideological opposition and target receptiveness suggested people did not appreciate that partner receptiveness may be particularly desirable or even necessary for relationships between ideologically opposed counterparts. And although we theorized that mutual receptiveness is an important pre-requisite for relationship formation, the design of our experimental study does not allow us to observe partner reactions to the overtures

of our participants. We turn to this question in our field study, described in the main body of the article.

Table S1*Receptiveness to Opposing Views Items*

Item	Subscale
1. I am willing to have conversations with individuals who hold strong views opposite to my own.	2
2. I like reading well thought-out information and arguments supporting viewpoints opposite to mine.	2
3. I find listening to opposing views informative.	2
4. I value interactions with people who hold strong views opposite to mine.	2
5. I am generally curious to find out why other people have different opinions than I do.	2
6. People who have opinions that are opposite to mine often have views which are too extreme to be taken seriously. (R)	3
7. People who have views that oppose mine rarely present compelling arguments. (R)	3
8. Information from people who have strong opinions that oppose mine is often designed to mislead less-informed listeners. (R)	3
9. Some points of view are too offensive to be equally represented in the media. (R)	4
10. Some issues are just not up for debate. (R)	4
11. Some ideas are simply too dangerous to be part of public discourse. (R)	4
12. I consider my views on some issues to be sacred. (R)	4
13. People who have views that oppose mine are often biased by what would be best for them and their group. (R)	3
14. People who have views that oppose mine often base their arguments on emotion rather than logic. (R)	3
15. Listening to people with views that strongly oppose mine tends to make me angry. (R)	1
16. I feel disgusted by some of the things that people with views that oppose mine say. (R)	1
17. I often feel frustrated when I listen to people with social and political views that oppose mine. (R)	1
18. I often get annoyed during discussions with people with views that are very different from mine. (R)	1

Table S2

Descriptive Statistics and Pairwise Pearson Correlations (Experimental Study)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Propensity to Form a Relationship	3.450	0.808	3.500	1.000	5.000												
2. Political Orientation	0.275	2.135	1.000	-3.000	3.000	-0.041											
3. Receptiveness	3.996	0.970	4.000	1.000	6.944	0.222	-0.179										
4. Agreeableness	3.792	0.669	3.889	1.000	5.000	0.191	-0.085	-0.039									
5. Openness to Experience	3.743	0.670	3.800	1.000	5.000	0.110	0.174	0.049	0.169								
6. Female	0.567	0.496	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.114	-0.113	0.086	0.023							
7. Age	35.152	13.219	32.000	16.000	80.000	0.017	-0.350	0.031	0.149	-0.001	0.052						
8. Income Level	3.228	1.858	3.000	1.000	7.000	0.048	-0.145	0.097	0.071	0.027	-0.092	0.236					
9. Education Level	4.403	1.467	5.000	1.000	8.000	0.053	0.044	0.004	0.023	0.065	0.006	0.159	0.358				
10. Target Liberal	0.500	0.500	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.101	0.001	-0.003	0.037	0.017	0.000	-0.026	0.008	0.000			
11. Target Receptiveness	3.175	0.468	3.200	1.900	4.400	0.122	0.014	0.026	-0.019	-0.002	0.012	0.010	-0.006	-0.040	-0.017		
12. Target Agreeableness	3.746	0.736	3.800	1.400	5.000	0.181	-0.006	-0.025	-0.016	-0.002	0.028	0.018	-0.017	0.000	0.000	-0.124	
13. Target Openness to Experience	3.695	0.716	3.700	1.800	5.000	0.120	0.013	-0.013	-0.022	0.032	0.022	0.005	-0.014	0.000	0.012	0.149	0.147

Note. $N = 1793$. Correlations greater than 0.047 in absolute magnitude are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Political orientation ranges from "Very Conservative" (-3) to "Very Liberal" (3).

Table S3

OLS Regressions: Propensity to Form a Relationship (Experimental Study)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	2.398*** (0.137)	2.838*** (0.180)	1.024** (0.335)	0.775* (0.346)
Ideologically Opposed (IO)	-0.538*** (0.035)	-1.419*** (0.265)	-1.279*** (0.251)	-0.737 [†] (0.414)
Evaluator Receptiveness	0.175*** (0.019)	0.051* (0.023)	0.033 (0.023)	0.020 (0.023)
Target Receptiveness	0.196*** (0.036)	0.215*** (0.048)	0.255*** (0.044)	0.257*** (0.044)
IO × Evaluator Receptiveness		0.260*** (0.036)	0.231*** (0.036)	0.259*** (0.036)
IO × Target Receptiveness		-0.050 (0.071)	-0.058 (0.067)	-0.067 (0.068)
Evaluator Agreeableness			0.164*** (0.028)	0.250*** (0.039)
Target Agreeableness			0.215*** (0.022)	0.212*** (0.031)
Evaluator Openness to Experience			0.092*** (0.028)	0.106** (0.036)
Target Openness to Experience			0.082*** (0.024)	0.065* (0.033)
IO × Evaluator Agreeableness				-0.165** (0.055)
IO × Target Agreeableness				0.006 (0.044)
IO × Evaluator Openness to Experience				-0.030 (0.055)
IO × Target Openness to Experience				0.025 (0.047)
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes
AIC	3992.854	3943.124	3790.262	3786.021
BIC	4020.312	3981.566	3960.503	3978.228
R^2	0.173	0.198	0.283	0.286
Adj. R^2	0.172	0.195	0.271	0.274
Num. obs.	1793	1793	1793	1793

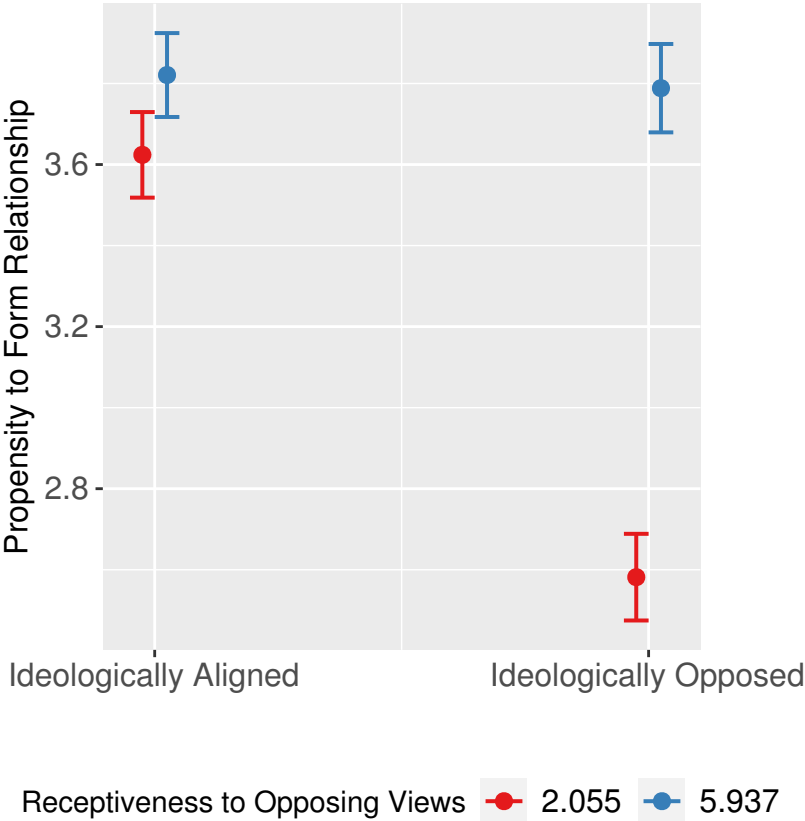
*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, [†] $p < 0.10$.

Note. Robust standard errors appear in parentheses. Additional controls include gender, country of origin (U.S. vs. non-U.S.), political orientation, age, income level, education level, and indicators of the source of data collection (e.g., Prolific vs. Amazon Mechanical Turk).

Figure S1

Predicted Propensity to Form Relationship by Ideological Alignment and Evaluator

Receptiveness to Opposing Views



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