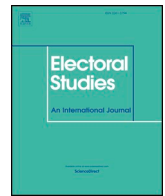




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An analysis of the changing social bases of America's political parties: Group support in the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections

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ABSTRACT

In this note I address two questions: 1.) what were the group bases of the U.S. electoral coalitions in 2012 and 2016? 2.) how have the group bases of support changed in the past decades? I determine social group memberships significantly influence individual partisanship with a multivariate analysis using ANES data. I then measure how many votes each politically relevant social group contributed to the party coalitions in each presidential election between 1972 to 2016. I go on to discuss how group contributions have changed and discuss the demographic and behavioral forces driving these changes. The defection of college educated whites from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party was the most pronounced change from 2012 to 2016, but the Democratic Party's steadily increasing reliance on ethnic and racial minority groups remains the most important long-term trend. Overall, I find that the party coalitions in 2012 and 2016 were relatively stable and most changes were continuations of decades long trends, despite perceptions there has been a sudden realignment.

American politics are in a period of transition. Many argue that demographic changes combined with the rise of Donald Trump's populist movement have dramatically reshaped the demographic makeup of the US party coalitions.¹ In this research note, I update previous work (Axelrod, 1972; Neimi and Stanley, 2010; Zingher, 2014) and assess how the party coalitions have changed in the two most recent presidential elections. To accomplish this, I ask and answer two questions: 1.) what were the group bases of the U.S. electoral coalitions in 2012 and 2016? 2.) how have the group bases of support changed in the past decade? Answering these questions is valuable for a number of reasons. Many of the narratives that arose from Obama's reelection in 2012 and Trump's victory in 2016 was that the parties' bases of electoral support have changed key ways. Establishing where each party's votes came from in 2012 and 2016 and how these patterns deviate (or do not deviate) from previous elections helps to establish the factual baseline needed to assess these narratives.

My effort proceeds in three sections. In the first section I conduct a multivariate analysis of ANES data where I test which group memberships predict vote choice in presidential elections spanning 1972–2016 (ANES 2018). Here, I establish what group memberships meaningfully shape vote choice and what group memberships do not. I also establish how the group determinants of vote choice have changed. I utilize Axelrod's (1972) method to calculate how many

votes each politically relevant social group contributes to each party's coalition in section two. I discuss what groups' contributions have changed and identify whether these changes are a result of changing group size (i.e. demographic shifts) or changing behavior (shifts in turnout of loyalty). In the third section, I assess how the results conform with popular media narratives surrounding the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. I conclude that despite a few noteworthy (and potentially ephemeral) changes in group support, the party coalitions in 2012 and 2016 largely reflected the continuation of decades long secular trends.

1. The group bases of political competition

It is difficult to discuss electoral politics in the United States without speaking in terms of social groups (Zingher, 2014, 272; Huddy, 2018). Party coalitions are typically thought of as aggregations of social groups (Axelrod, 1972; Manza and Brooks, 1999; Mason and Wronksi, 2018; Mason, 2018) and the social cleavages that characterize society are the same ones that typically structure its politics (Schattschneider, 1960; Lipset and Rokkan, 1964; Best, 2011). Some of the most dramatic political transitions occur when a group of voters that was once loyal to one party begins to support the other. However, individuals are members of multiple groups, and not all of these group memberships

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¹ See Charlie Cook's recent synopsis here: <https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-charts/demographic-trends-should-worry-republicans>.

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meaningfully shape political attitudes and behaviors. The first step in my analysis is to establish which group memberships are politically relevant and then focus the subsequent analyses on these politically relevant groups.

To accomplish this, I conduct a multivariate logit analysis where I regress Democratic presidential vote choice on a battery of group membership variables (all coded as binary) in Table 1 (full coding details can be found in the appendix). I report a separate regression for each decade. The logic behind these models is that group memberships are overlapping, an individual could be white, a college graduate, female, Catholic, non-Southern, and live in a rural area. I need some way to disentangle which group memberships are actually driving variations in vote choice and which ones are not. Not all groups serve as political reference points. This is where the multivariate regression comes in. The intuition here is that the effect of politically relevant group memberships on vote choice will be statistically significant while groups memberships that are less politically relevant will not (Neimi and Stanley, 2010; Zingher, 2014).

In these models, the base category is a white, male, Protestant, non-Southern, non-weekly church attending college graduate between the ages of 35 and 60.² The base category is what is left when all of the other independent variables are set to zero. The choice of base category is arbitrary. I chose white Protestant males to represent the base category so the regression analyses are directly comparable to those of Stanley et al. (1986) and Zingher (2014). Mathematically, the results would be the same regardless of what set of group characteristics are set as the baseline of comparison.

In the most recent decade, African American, Latino, female, Catholic, Jewish, union, over 60, and non-religious group memberships all pulled individuals towards Democratic candidates.³ Likewise, the effect of white non-college graduates, white Southerners, weekly church attenders, Asians, under 35 group memberships pushed voters was associated with greater support for Republican candidates, all else equal.⁴ Here, it is important to focus on the interpretation of what these coefficients mean. The coefficient for Asian might be negative (i.e. more Republican) but this does not imply a majority of Asian Americans voted for the Republican candidate. Rather, it implies that Asian Americans were more likely to vote Republican than one might expect when holding all other overlapping group memberships (income, age, etc.) at their means. An interpretation of this finding is that while more Asian Americans might support the Democratic Party over the Republican Party, they are as a group more likely to support Republican candidates than one might expect given all of their other characteristics. Fig. 1 displays the marginal effect of each group variable.

Some groups have been solidly in one camp for many decades. The coefficients for African Americans, Jews, and union members have been consistently positive and significant in each decade beginning in the 1970s. The coefficients for women and the non-religious have been positive and statistically significant in all but one of the five decades, which suggests these group memberships pull individuals towards the Democratic Party as well. On the Republican side, the

² Note: starting in 2008, the ANES stopped reporting whether an individual resides in a rural/suburban/urban area due to privacy concerns. Hence, the urban and rural variables are omitted from the post '2010s' regression model. Dropping the urban and rural variables from the earlier decade by decade models does not substantively affect the results.

³ Note: I was forced to drop Jews from the subsequent analysis due to small sample size despite the fact that the effect of identifying as Jewish has strong effect on vote choice.

⁴ I broke whites down into 'college graduates' and 'non-college graduates' in order to test many of the 2016 election that posit that the support of the white working class was uniquely key to Trump's victory. I did not divide other racial and ethnic groups by education because there is evidence that shows education does not explain other groups' votes in comparable ways.

Table 1

Logit Analysis Regressing Democratic Vote Choice on Group Memberships by Decade (year dummies included by not shown).

VARIABLES	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Black	.82* (.14)	.74* (.12)	.82* (.13)	1.00* (.10)	1.51* (.08)
Female	.05 (.07)	.22* (.07)	.35* (.07)	.33* (.06)	.27* (.04)
Inc Top Third	-.08 (.08)	-.12 (.08)	-.05 (.09)	-.11 (.08)	.06 (.06)
Inc Bottom Third	-.04 (.09)	-.00 (.08)	-.04 (.09)	-.02 (.07)	-.18* (.06)
White Southerner	-.24* (.09)	-.07 (.08)	-.10 (.09)	-.44* (.09)	-.43* (.06)
White No College	-.30* (.10)	-.51* (.09)	-.29* (.09)	-.51* (.08)	-.67* (.06)
Union Member	.46* (.08)	.67* (.07)	.65* (.09)	.45* (.09)	.41* (.06)
Jew	1.05* (.20)	.94* (.19)	1.47* (.25)	1.42* (.22)	.90* (.16)
Catholic	.44* (.09)	.44* (.08)	.41* (.09)	.30* (.09)	.17* (.07)
Weekly Church	.05 (.08)	.10 (.07)	-.26* (.08)	-.30* (.07)	-.63* (.06)
Non-religious	.32* (.14)	.30* (.11)	.25* (.09)	.03 (.08)	.29* (.05)
Urban	.14 (.09)	.34* (.08)	.21* (.09)	.17 (.14)	~ ~
Rural	.07 (.09)	.09 (.08)	-.09 (.08)	-.21 (.15)	~ ~
Under 35	-.13 (.08)	-.47* (.07)	-.44* (.08)	-.23* (.07)	-.27* (.05)
Over 60	-.09 (.11)	.08 (.09)	.29* (.09)	.18* (.09)	.27* (.06)
Latino	-.01 (.26)	.08 (.14)	.13 (.14)	-.13 (.11)	.17* (.07)
Asian	.46 (.51)	-.70 (.44)	-.29 (.34)	-.11 (.23)	-.42* (.15)
Constant	-1.45* (.14)	-1.36* (.13)	-1.01* (.13)	-.72* (.11)	-.43* (.07)
Observations	4953	5911	4199	5341	10,184

Standard errors in parentheses * p < .05.

coefficient for white without a college degree has always been negative (i.e. pro-Republican) and significant, but the magnitude of the effect has doubled in recent years. The effect of other group memberships such as weekly church attenders and Southern whites has become more sharply Republican in recent decades. Additionally, those under 35 have been more likely to vote Republican than one would otherwise suspect (again, holding all other variables at their means).

Overall, African Americans, Latinos, women, union members, Catholics, the non-religious, white college graduates (the base category relative to white non-college graduates), and Jews have consistently been pro-Democratic groups, while white Southerners, whites without a college degree, weekly church attendees, Protestants, and men have been consistently pro-Republican. Most other groups do not have a consistent or statistically significant effect on vote choice. These findings are in line with other recent analyses (Zingher, 2014; Neimi and Stanley, 2010) and represent a strengthening of decades long secular trends (Zingher, 2018). In fact, as Tesler (2012, 2016) has noted, Barack Obama's 2008 election likely worked to further divide the party coalitions along racial lines, since Obama's race provided a cue about where the parties stand on racial issues that even the most uninformed citizen can follow. The results here are consistent with such an explanation. In fact, the model specification (which breaks objective group memberships down into 1/0 binary variables) might underestimate the effects of group membership on vote choice, since prior

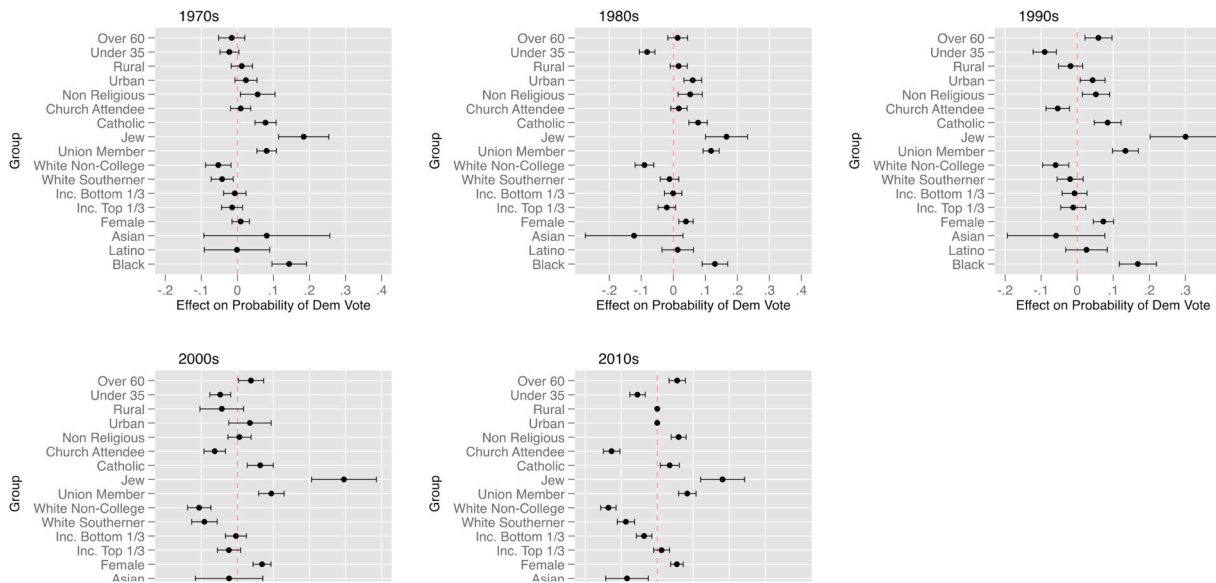


Fig. 1. The average marginal effect of group memberships on Democratic vote choice.

research (e.g. Mason and Wronski, 2018) has demonstrated that the strength of group attachments is important and that those with the strongest group attachments are often the most polarized.

Thus, there is recent evidence for increasing polarization along class lines among whites (as measured by education), as well as continued evidence of a racial divide between whites and minorities, and a growing secular/religious divide between the non-religious and regular church attendees. Overall, despite a few noteworthy changes in the group determinants of party support, last two elections largely reflect the continuation of long-term secular trends. In the next section, I assess how many votes each of these groups contributes to the respective party coalitions and evaluate how these contributions have changed in the most recent elections.

2. Group contributions to the party coalitions

Robert Axelrod (1972) developed a measure that combines group size, turnout, and party loyalty to create one combined measure of group's contribution as a proportion of a coalition.⁵ Axelrod's purpose was to facilitate direct comparisons of group contributions and provide a factual baseline for the discussion of American mass politics. The formula is depicted below:

$$\text{Group Contribution} = \frac{\text{Group size} * \text{GroupTO} * \text{Group Loyalty}}{\text{NationalTO} * \text{National Loyalty}}$$

If one works through the math, this formula simplifies to the following form (Axelrod, 1972, pg. 12):

⁵ The measures of group size, national turnout, and national loyalty (measured as party share of the vote) are all obtained from the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. The group turnout and loyalty measures are derived from the ANES survey but corrected to reflect national turnout and loyalty measures. It is typical that more individuals report having voted on surveys than actually did in reality, likewise, more individuals typically report having voted for the election winner than actually did in reality. In order to correct for the over-reporting of voting, the group turnout and loyalty rates derived from the raw ANES data are adjusted in order to make them congruent with the known national totals. According to Axelrod (1972, pg. 13), "The adjustment procedure is an iterative process by which a contingency table with given marginal distributions while preserving the nature and strength of the association, as measured by appropriate criteria." The technique was initially developed by Mosteller (1968).

$$\text{Group Contribution} = \frac{\text{Voters in Group for Party}}{\text{Voters for Party}}$$

The final product of the equation is a measure of total group contribution as measured by the proportion of a party's votes that are cast by the group.

Table 2 displays the calculation of each group's respective contribution to the Democratic or Republican coalition in the last five presidential elections. There have been some pronounced changes over the past two decades. Ultimately, these changes in group contributions are driven by some combination of changes in group size, turnout, or loyalty. The full results, including estimates of each groups turnout, size, and loyalty dating back to 1972 can be found in the appendix.

Starting with the Democrats, Latinos and African Americans have been contributing an increasing number of votes to the party's coalition in recent years. More than a quarter of the Democrats' votes have come from African Americans in the last three elections, up from 20 percent in 2000 and 2004. The Latino contribution has increased in each of the last five elections, growing from 8 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2016. For Latinos, this increase is largely the product of the fact that the group is growing in size. Latinos have grown from 13 percent of the country's population in 2000 to 18 percent in 2016. African Americans' contribution has increased due to increased turnout and loyalty to the Democratic Party (opposed to a change in group size). The Democrats also saw a large increase in support from both the non-religious and whites with college degrees in 2016. Both of these groups (of which there is a high degree of overlap) contributed nearly 30 percent of the Democratic Party's votes in 2016, which is up from less than 20 percent in each of the two previous elections. This shift was largely the result of increasing loyalty among white college graduates and the increasing loyalty, turnout, and group size of the non-religious. 2012 and 2016 also saw the continuation of declining contribution of two groups that were once central to the Democratic coalition: union members and Catholics. These trends are largely explained by declining group size.⁶ Women have contributed a stable proportion of the Democratic Party's votes over the past several decades (roughly 55%). Overall, the Democratic Party is obtaining a greater proportion of its support from ethnic and racial minority

⁶ This seeming stability among Catholics is somewhat misleading, seeing as how Catholic identification among whites has declined and a rapidly increasing proportion of American Catholics are now Latinos.

Table 2
Group contributions to the party coalitions 2000–2016^a.

	Democratic Groups						
	AA	U	C	L	F	NR	WCG
2000	.20	.18	.26	.08	.53	.18	.25
2004	.21	.19	.26	.13	.54	.19	.22
2008	.27	.14	.25	.15	.56	.18	.16
2012	.29	.15	.22	.16	.52	.19	.19
2016	.27	.13	.22	.19	.56	.31	.29

	Republican Groups				
	WNC	P	SW	WC	M
2000	.54	.46	.36	.54	.57
2004	.55	.47	.35	.49	.53
2008	.63	.50	.47	.53	.51
2012	.55	.48	.38	.54	.54
2016	.53	.45	.40	.53	.54

L = Latinos.

F = Female.

NR = Non-Religious.

AA = African American.

U = Union.

C = Catholic.

WCG = White College Graduate.

WNC = White non-college.

P = Protestants.

SW = Southern White.

WC = Weekly Church Attendee.

M = Male.

^a A note on interpretation. There is a considerable amount of overlap between these categories (e.g. college educated whites and the non-religious) so these proportions cannot be just 'added up' to assess the contribution of two (or more) groups combined. Rather, this would require a new analysis that identified members of both groups (non-religious white college graduates) and compared them to all other non-group members.

groups and professional class whites (i.e. the non-religious and college graduates) while obtaining less support from Catholics and union members.

The Republican coalition has been more stable. Most core Republican groups have contributed a consistent proportion of votes across the last five elections. Whites without college degrees, white Protestants, weekly church attendees, and males have all contributed a relatively consistent proportion of Republican votes. This stability, however, is somewhat misleading, because white non-college graduates, white Protestants, and weekly church attendees represent a declining share of the electorate. In 1972, white non-college graduates were 73 percent of the population. They were just 41 percent in 2016. This is a dramatic change, which is the result of both increasing rates of college graduation and an increasingly racially diverse population. The Republican Party has offset these declines in group size by increasing loyalty among group members. However, this strategy has limits. In 2016 the Republicans achieved high levels of loyalty and turnout from all of their core groups and only won 46 percent of the popular vote.

In the next section I assess how these findings comport with popular narratives surrounding the 2012 and 2016 elections.

3. The 2012, 2016 presidential elections in context

Much of the media coverage surrounding the 2016 presidential election focused on how much the group bases of the political parties had changed since the 2012 election. One of the key narratives was that Trump was able to attract a large number of working-class white voters, many of who had voted for Democrats in previous elections, into his coalition. Obviously there are a number of ways one could conceptualize class, but if we focus on whites without a college degree (as does Lamont, 2000), the thing that is striking about Trump's performance is how ordinary it was.

Trump underperformed Romney both among whites without a college degree and among whites overall. This is true both in terms of turnout and loyalty. In fact, Trump's performance among whites was roughly on par with the last several Republican presidential candidates. What is more striking is that Trump's performance cratered among whites with college degrees. Obama won 39 percent of the vote among this group in 2012. Clinton won 53 percent in of the vote among whites with college degrees. This fourteen-point swing is unprecedented among any group in last several decades. The 'education gap' among whites in 2016 was the result of college educated whites leaving the Republican Party, rather than Trump overperforming among the white working class.

Trump was able to win in part because turnout among some key Democratic groups was down. African American turnout dropped from 62 percent in 2012 to 58 percent in 2016. This decline in black turnout doomed the Clinton campaign. Obama won in part because of record high African American turnout. Clinton was not able to duplicate Obama's performance here. Clinton's performance among African Americans represents a reversion to the mean more than an unprecedented decline. Black turnout in 2016 (58%) was still higher than the national average (56%). One underappreciated aspect of both of the Obama campaigns, and especially his 2012 reelection, was just how important record high black turnout actually was. The decline in black turnout was especially problematic for Clinton because there are large African American populations in many key swing states that she ended up losing. Clinton out performed Obama among some groups (Latinos and college educated whites in particular), but the problem was these groups were concentrated in states that were not electorally competitive and did not help Clinton carry more states in the Electoral College.

At the macro level, the coalitions in the electorate in 2016 closely resembled the party coalitions in other recent elections. The Democratic Party's reliance on support from ethnic and racial minority groups continued to grow, but this is the continuation of a decades long trend, rather than something endemic to 2016 (and 2012) in particular. The defection of college educated whites from the Republicans to the Democrats between 2012 and 2016 was the most important short-term change. Whether this shift endures when Trump is no longer on the ballot remains to be seen. Overall, the outcome was highly unusual, but the parties' bases of support were not.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to dedicate this article to his late uncle Gary Zingher, who died shortly after this manuscript was accepted. Gary always encouraged the author's academic pursuits and for that the author is deeply grateful.

Appendix Table 1. Core Groups in the Democratic Coalition

Year	Contribution						Turnout						Loyalty						Size						National					
	AA	U	C	L	F	NR	WCG	AA	U	C	L	F	NR	WCG	AA	U	C	L	F	NR	WCG	AA	U	C	L	F	NR	WCG	T.O.	Dem %
1972	.24	.27	.29	.05	.53	.20	.12	.51	.56	.57	.36	.54	.85	.67	.87	.46	.41	.51	.41	.62	.37	.11	.22	.26	.05	.50	.08	.10	.55	.37
1976	.17	.28	.31	.06	.47	.09	.11	.42	.57	.54	.36	.50	.48	.71	.95	.65	.57	.82	.51	.61	.35	.11	.20	.27	.06	.50	.08	.13	.54	.50
1980	.25	.27	.29	.06	.52	.08	.15	.50	.55	.53	.34	.50	.51	.82	.93	.55	.43	.54	.45	.38	.30	.12	.20	.28	.06	.50	.09	.14	.53	.41
1984	.22	.28	.33	.06	.55	.14	.22	.45	.60	.58	.37	.53	.56	.79	.90	.57	.45	.50	.44	.50	.38	.12	.18	.28	.07	.50	.11	.15	.53	.40
1988	.18	.23	.33	.10	.51	.16	.20	.39	.55	.54	.43	.48	.51	.80	.91	.58	.51	.64	.49	.58	.37	.12	.16	.27	.08	.50	.12	.16	.50	.46
1992	.22	.22	.30	.07	.53	.16	.18	.48	.66	.59	.37	.54	.52	.76	.90	.64	.47	.50	.46	.57	.42	.12	.16	.26	.09	.50	.13	.17	.55	.43
1996	.18	.24	.28	.12	.55	.16	.20	.35	.60	.54	.38	.47	.44	.72	.98	.73	.51	.71	.56	.61	.42	.12	.15	.25	.11	.50	.14	.18	.49	.49
2000	.20	.18	.26	.08	.53	.18	.25	.43	.56	.57	.32	.48	.49	.74	.91	.60	.46	.51	.54	.57	.46	.13	.14	.24	.13	.50	.16	.18	.50	.48
2004	.21	.19	.26	.13	.54	.19	.22	.51	.62	.56	.44	.56	.62	.75	.87	.65	.50	.55	.52	.49	.43	.13	.13	.25	.14	.50	.17	.19	.56	.48
2008	.27	.14	.25	.15	.56	.18	.16	.64	.62	.56	.43	.60	.51	.76	.99	.58	.53	.65	.56	.58	.34	.13	.12	.25	.16	.50	.18	.19	.57	.53
2012	.29	.15	.22	.16	.52	.19	.19	.62	.63	.54	.40	.53	.43	.70	.97	.58	.50	.65	.54	.60	.39	.13	.11	.23	.17	.50	.20	.20	.54	.52
2016	.27	.13	.22	.19	.56	.31	.29	.58	.61	.57	.42	.57	.56	.74	.94	.57	.48	.69	.52	.66	.53	.13	.11	.21	.18	.50	.23	.21	.56	.48

L = Latinos.
 F = Female.
 NR = Non-Religious.
 AA = African American.
 U = Union.
 C = Catholic.
 WCG = White College Graduate.

Appendix Table 2. Core Groups in the Republican Coalition

Year	Contribution					Turnout					Loyalty					Size					Contribution	
	WNC	P	SW	WC	M	WNC	P	SW	WC	M	WNC	P	SW	WC	M	WNC	P	SW	WC	M	T.O.	Rep%
1972	.79	.58	.28	.50	.54	.54	.50	.50	.59	.56	.68	.75	.74	.68	.65	.73	.63	.25	.42	.50	.55	.61
1976	.70	.65	.25	.51	.54	.52	.55	.49	.62	.57	.51	.62	.54	.51	.49	.69	.62	.25	.42	.50	.54	.49
1980	.67	.60	.30	.53	.56	.49	.53	.53	.61	.55	.61	.67	.63	.60	.59	.65	.61	.26	.42	.50	.53	.55
1984	.69	.57	.28	.53	.53	.52	.52	.50	.66	.53	.67	.74	.68	.61	.63	.63	.58	.26	.41	.50	.53	.59
1988	.66	.57	.27	.52	.56	.48	.51	.43	.62	.53	.61	.71	.66	.56	.57	.61	.55	.26	.41	.50	.50	.54
1992	.64	.62	.29	.57	.55	.54	.58	.49	.62	.56	.41	.55	.47	.47	.40	.59	.52	.26	.40	.50	.55	.37
1996	.57	.56	.33	.62	.60	.47	.54	.49	.60	.51	.44	.56	.52	.52	.47	.55	.49	.26	.40	.50	.49	.41
2000	.54	.46	.36	.54	.57	.47	.53	.53	.58	.52	.57	.63	.66	.60	.55	.52	.47	.26	.39	.50	.50	.50
2004	.55	.47	.35	.49	.53	.54	.59	.58	.61	.55	.61	.72	.66	.58	.55	.48	.44	.26	.39	.50	.56	.51
2008	.63	.50	.47	.53	.51	.55	.61	.61	.66	.54	.66	.77	.76	.55	.50	.45	.41	.27	.38	.50	.57	.46
2012	.55	.48	.38	.54	.54	.51	.59	.53	.62	.55	.64	.74	.68	.60	.50	.43	.41	.27	.37	.50	.54	.47
2016	.53	.45	.40	.53	.54	.51	.61	.57	.62	.54	.64	.71	.66	.61	.50	.41	.40	.27	.36	.50	.56	.46

WNC = White non-college.
 P = Protestants.
 SW = Southern White.
 WC = Weekly Church Attendee.
 M = Male.

Appendix. Variable Coding

Group	Coding
White	White respondents were identified using the "Race" variable (VCF0105b). Whites were coded as a 1 if "VCF015b" equaled 1
African American	African American respondents were identified using the "Race". African Americans were coded as a 1 if "VCF0106a" equaled 2
Latino	Latino respondents were identified using the "Race" variable (VCF0105b). Latino was coded as a 1 if "VCF0105b" equaled 3.
Asian	Asian was coded using the detailed "Race" variable (VCF0105a). Asian was coded 1 if VCF0105a equaled 3
The South	Southern respondents were identified using the when the variable (VCF0112 = = 3). South is defined as occupying the 16 State "Southern" Census region.
Southern Whites	Southern White respondents were identified using the "Race" and "South" variables (VCF0105b = = 1 and VCF0112 = = 3 respectively).
Protestant	Protestant respondents were identified using the "Religion" variable (VCF0128). Protestant was coded as a 1 if VCF0128 equaled 1.
Catholic	Catholic respondents were identified using the "Religion" variable (VCF0128). Catholic was coded as a 1 if VCF0128 equaled 2
Jews	Jewish respondents were identified using the "Religion" variable (VCF0128). Catholic was coded as a 1 if VCF0128 equaled 3
Gender	Gender was coded using variable (VCF0104). Female was coded as a 1 if VCF0104 equaled 2.
Income	Grouped into thirds using the family income variable (VCF0114). The bottom third of the income distribution are respondents in category 1&2. The middle third of the income distribution are respondents who answered 3. The top third of the income distribution are respondents in the category 4 & 5.
Non-Religious	Non-Religious voters were identified using the religion variable (VCF0128 = = 5)
Weekly Church Attendees	Weekly Church Attendees were identified using the church attendance variable. Weekly Church was coded 1 if VCF0130 equaled 1.
White College Graduates	White College Graduates were identified using the education (VCF0140) and race (VCF0105b) variables. White College Graduate was coded 1 if VCF0140 equaled 6 and VCF0105b equaled 1
Union	Union members were identified using the "Union" variable (VCF0127). Union was coded 1 if VCF0127 equaled 1.

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