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An Examination of Voter Groups That Make Up the Emerging Democratic Majority Thesis

Jason Waguespack
jwaguesp@uno.edu

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An Examination of Voter Groups That Make Up the Emerging Democratic Majority Thesis

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Department of Political Science

by

Jason Waguespack

B.A., University of New Orleans, 2003

M.A., University of New Orleans, 2007

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ABSTRACT

In 2002, John Judis and Ruy Teixeira published *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, a book that postulated that the United States was in the beginning of a political realignment that would spell the end of the Reagan-era coalition that gave Republicans an electoral advantage on the presidency. The authors claimed an electorate that would favor the Democratic Party would emerge to take its place. Since Senator Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election was powered by a coalition that looked much like the one Judis and Teixeira described, it appeared the authors' thesis was being borne out by actual election results. However, the events of the 2000s and early 2010s have lent both credibility and doubt to this possible realignment, and have drawn attention to the problems of regular realignment theory. Exploring the premise laid out by Judis and Teixeira from their work, *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, as well as observations about the changing composition of the American electorate, I analyze key groups in the American electorate to determine if these groups are trending more Democratic in presidential and congressional races since the 1988 presidential election. Findings showed several of these groups regularly supported Democratic candidates but did not consistently trend to the Democrats from year to year. Changes across time often depended on match-ups of nonconsecutive years, with Democrats in the year 2008 drawing especially strong support from hypothesized voter groups. While Democrats can count on the support of groups such as voters who achieve high levels of college education or voters with secular outlooks on life, their success still depends highly on candidate quality and advantage on issues and cannot be taken for granted.

Political realignment; The Emerging Democratic Majority; Republican Party; Democratic Party; voting behavior; American politics; American presidency; party systems; realignment theory

INTRODUCTION

History was made in the year 2008 when Barack Obama was elected President of the United States, the first African-American to attain the highest office in the country. Obama's coattails were also formidable, sweeping in eight Democratic Senators and twenty-one Democratic congressmen. History was made a second time, in a smaller fashion, when Obama was re-elected in 2012. Not since Andrew Jackson had a president been elected and then re-elected with a smaller popular vote percentage. While the 2010 midterm elections signaled a backlash against the Democratic Party, it did not presage an ultimate rejection of the Obama administration itself. In fact, Democrats gained two seats in the Senate and eight in the House during the 2012 congressional elections.

The Republicans' poor showing among Hispanic voters in 2012 became instantly noted as a continuing sign that the Republican Party was hitting a firewall with minority voters (Rodriguez 2012; Cillizza 2013). The wide gender gap, where women voted in greater numbers for Obama over Republican Mitt Romney, while men gave Romney a winning margin, was also noted (Jones 2012).

What led up to this historic re-election? Was it due to a durable coalition of voters that could not be pierced by a Republican party seen as catering only to whites? Such a coalition was postulated by John Judis and Ruy Teixeira in their 2002 book *The Emerging Democratic Majority*. With Republican woes in presidential races linked to underperformance among some of the very groups the authors discuss, an examination of their premise is even timelier.

The concept of realignment in American politics has separated periods of governance into different party systems, building from an initial concept put forth by V.O. Key that a critical election can change the political composition of the government and sustain it through several

electoral cycles. Many political scientists and scholars concur that five party systems have existed in American political history, the fifth being the New Deal system that stemmed from the election of Franklin Roosevelt. Much work and speculation has focused on determining the existence and composition of the party system that has followed the New Deal coalition, if one in fact emerged at all. In his book *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1970), published during the first term of the Nixon administration, Kevin Philips envisioned the New Deal coalition would break apart and a new party system that favored the Republican Party would take its place. This sixth party system is often identified with the victories of President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s and Republican congressional successes in the 1990s.

In recent years, political pundits and analysts suggest that a seventh party system has taken shape in the U.S. electorate. If the sixth party system consisted of a Republican majority that included winning most presidential elections, thanks to Republican strongholds in the South and the West, the seventh is seen as a Democratic majority coalition based upon affluent voters with socially liberal attitudes, white working class voters that previously voted Republican, and professionals such as teachers, nurses, and engineers, many of whom may have earned graduate or post-graduate degrees. This coalition was postulated by John Judis and Ruy Teixeira in their 2002 book *The Emerging Democratic Majority*.

The events of the 2000s and early 2010s have lent both credibility and doubt to this possible realignment. At the time of the publication of Judis and Teixeira's book, Republicans were about to make gains in the first midterm election of the George W. Bush presidency, so this pronouncement seemed ill-timed. The Democratic victories in both houses of Congress in 2006, however, reinvigorated the idea of a Democratic majority, and Senator Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential election was powered by a coalition that looked much like the one Judis

and Teixeira described. According to the CNN exit poll, Obama carried 58 percent among those with post-graduate degrees, his second highest in the education category just below those with no high school education. While Obama won with large margins among those on the lower end of the income scale, he also won a majority of those who made \$200,000 or more. Finally, McCain won white voters 55%-43%, but Obama won African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and other races by landslide margins, and together these groups made up 27 percent of the voting public, an increase from 23 percent in 2004¹.

But the elections of 2009 and 2010 seemed to cast some doubt on the “Emerging Democratic Majority” concept. Republican Bob McDonnell won the 2009 Virginia’s governor’s race 59%-41%, just a year after Obama carried the state by a 53%-47% margin. At the same time, the Republican candidate in New Jersey, Chris Christie, beat sitting governor Jon Corzine in New Jersey, a state Obama easily carried and which had never voted Republican since 1988. Then, in a shocking development, Republican Scott Brown won the Massachusetts senate seat opened up by the death of Ted Kennedy in a special election held in early 2010. That same year was capped by Republicans winning back the House of Representatives and cutting into Democratic margins in the Senate. The 2014 midterms also added a second Republican victory that reduced Democratic margins further in the House and gave Republicans control of the Senate.

These back-and-forth shifts between the parties call into question whether this emergence of a Democratic majority in the electorate had occurred at all, or whether the two parties are still

¹ CNN.com Election 2004 Exit Poll,
<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/US/P/00/epolls.0.html>
CNN.com Election 2008 Exit Poll,
<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls>

very strong and very capable of winning the presidency, the Congress, and many state offices with no side having an overriding advantage. Perhaps in the lead up to President Obama's historic victory, a large-scale shift over time among key voter groups actually did not take place. It is the aim of this work to answer this question. In examining the voting trends over time among key voting groups that Judis and Teixeira identify as the foundation for the *Emerging Democratic Majority*, I will follow the premise of the authors that these key groups will vote more Democratic over time, starting from the election of George H.W. Bush in 1988 and progressing to 2008 with the first election of Barack Obama. My analysis shall answer whether members of this possible new coalition, such as voters with high incomes, graduate and post-graduate degrees, and working class whites, have been trending more to the Democratic Party in presidential and congressional races in the past two decades.

If these hypotheses had been fully supported, my study would have given support to the assertion that a new realignment in American politics succeeds the Republican realignment of the late twentieth century, perhaps enough to withstand occasional Republican resurgences and allow Democrats concrete advantages in future elections. However, the end result of my analysis finds no evidence of steady, growing Democratic support among these voter groups. While I have tracked surges of Democratic support from one election to another, they tend to be between non-consecutive years, showing that the individual circumstances of election years, specifically the candidates running and the issues involved, are having greater impacts on voting decisions for my hypothesized voter groups, and that Democratic gains are not inevitable.

In their 2007 book *Divided America*, Black and Black concluded that the country was in the midst of a permanent power struggle between two evenly balanced political parties in which neither side could gain a large enough governing majority to fully satisfy the winning partisan

coalition. In practice, both parties are minority parties (259-260). In a sense, the findings of this dissertation will answer a question similar to the one Stanley and Niemi proposed after the 1992 presidential election. "...do changing patterns of party support suggest the beginning of a new, long-lasting form of coalitional behavior that will support continued Republican domination, or do they at least indicate competitive elections in which the majority in a series of elections shifts back and forth between the parties?" (Stanley and Neimi 1999, 387). For the moment, that question should be applied to President Obama and the Democratic Party.

CHAPTER 1

A HISTORY OF REALIGNMENT LITERATURE

The concept of realignment in American politics has its roots in a seminal article written by V. O. Key, Jr., “A Theory of Critical Elections” (1955). These realignments were described by Key as elections in which electoral involvement and voter concern had increased, and partisan coalitions changed as some groups shifted their party loyalties or became newly mobilized. Furthermore, the electoral results were so decisive that they would persist for a period of succeeding elections (Key 4). Succeeding authors have expanded upon Key’s concept (Burnham 1970; Sundquist 1983; Kleppner, et al 1981; Ladd and Hadley 1973; Ladd 1981). Part of this expansion of realignment literature involves grouping segments of American political history into party systems.

Party Systems

First, I will describe what is meant by “party system.” The term refers to a system of government by political parties in a democratic country. This can refer to a one party system, multi-party systems, or non-partisan systems. The United States has had for its history, largely due to the Electoral College, the first-past the post system, and lack of public campaign finance, two dominant political parties, so the country has what can be called a two-party system.

Developing along with the concept of realignment is the view that the United States has been divided into distinct eras of political competition. Typically, one party will dominate the other in most elections, with some degree of variation; the opposition party could still win the White House on occasion. Scholars generally agree that five party systems have existed in American history, with the New Deal party system being the last one that generates wide consensus (Ladd and Hadley 1973; Kleppner 1979; Kleppner, et al 1981; Ladd 1981; Kleppner

1987; Stanley and Neimi 1995; Aldrich and Neimi 1995). These divisions are separated by critical or realigning elections, marked by social turmoil or other factors.

The First Five Systems

The first five numbered party systems are easily defined. (Burnham 1967; Sternsher 1975). The first system spans the period from 1796 to 1816. This period grew out of political divisions that arose during George Washington's administration. Members of Washington's cabinet split on ideology. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson favored a less active role for government and formed the Democratic-Republican Party. By contrast, the Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton believed in a more active role for the executive branch, and the Federalist Party drew considerable influence from his ideas. After the 1800 Presidential election, the Democratic-Republicans gained major dominance for the next twenty years, and the Federalists slowly died off.

The second party system developed after the collapse of the Federalist Party. The Democratic-Republicans split into a faction that supported Andrew Jackson and became the present day Democratic Party, while the anti-Jackson faction broke off and started the Whig Party. The two sides competed from 1840 to 1856, with neither side being dominant. The issue of slavery caused great friction between both parties and eventually tore the Whig Party apart.

The third party system encompasses the period from the Civil War up to 1896. The country was divided between a Democratic-dominated South and the North, with the exception of some political machines, dominated by the Republicans. This era was dominated in its first half by Reconstruction and as a whole by issues of tariffs and political corruption but had little substantive differences in the role of government in an industrial society (Sundquist 154).

Presidential elections were often close, but Republicans generally won the White House with the exception of Grover Cleveland's two non-consecutive wins.

The fourth party system started from 1896 and lasted until 1932. Unlike the last system, the two parties became strongly polarized over economic issues. Democrats embraced a platform of populist initiatives including backing currency with silver and a close relationship with a growing labor union movement, while Republicans vigorously opposed those policies while remaining identified with business and industry (Sundquist 149-159). This period is characterized by Republican dominance in presidential races, kicked off by President McKinley's victory in 1896, only interrupted by Woodrow Wilson's two victories, the first due to Theodore Roosevelt splitting the GOP vote with Taft, the second a narrow victory over Charles Hughes in a fiercely contested race. This party system is notable because, a century later, political strategist Karl Rove hoped George W. Bush could emulate McKinley's victory as the start of a new Republican-dominated system (Ruy and Texieria 145).

The next party system began from the 1932 election, coinciding with the election of Franklin Roosevelt. The major switch occurred in the industrial cities in the north, among the working class and minority groups including unions, Catholics, African-Americans, and Jews. Black voters began leaving the Republican Party in 1934, but would not post Democratic majorities until after 1936 (Sundquist 214-219).

The time period that covers a possible "sixth party system," after the New Deal is said to be a Republican-dominated system (Kleppner, et al 1981) or a period in which the electoral system is more competitive and the outcomes more uncertain (Jensen 1981; Aldrich and Neimi 1995; Stanley 1988; Stanley and Neimi 1999). Despite these differences, it is generally agreed that a different political era emerged after the New Deal, most notably in the South where the

Democratic “Solid South” gave way to Republican dominance in presidential and later local elections.

A New Democratic Majority

Even as a sixth party system was being contemplated, scholars speculated on voter patterns that may follow even after the sixth system. It was in Walter Dean Burnham’s book *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (1970) that he discovered the possible seeds of a new Democratic majority, though they seemed to have only long range potential at the time. In examining voting behavior in the city of Baltimore in elections from 1960 to 1966, Burnham found that the 1966 city Democratic vote united an electoral alliance of middle to upper-middle class whites along with African-American and Jewish voters. “The Baltimore data in particular suggest the possibility of a pro-Democratic realignment among middle- and upper-income groups as the economic cleavages of yesteryear become increasingly subordinated to other issues” (Burnham 158). Although this alliance seemed less pronounced in 1968, Burnham suggested, “...they tend to support the thesis that a certain kind of realignment may be in the offing, one in which the Democratic Party may come to be increasingly the party of the technologically competent and technologically superfluous strata... while the Republican party may become more and more explicitly the partisan vehicle for the defense of white “middle-America” (Burnham 158).

In examining communities where college or university education is a dominant industry, Burnham found sharp realignment toward the Democrats (159). However, he remained somewhat skeptical about this coalition’s immediate chances to produce a Democratic majority. In examining the success of Liberal Party candidate John Lindsey in winning the New York City’s mayoral election with this top-down coalition, Burnham admitted that Lindsey’s victory

was still a plurality of the vote, reflecting what was still a minority force in politics. However, Burnham speculated that such a coalition could be in the offing “decades hence,” for a majority party system that could conceivably succeed the Republicans’ majority (165). “The long-range prospects that a top-bottom coalition could construct enough heterogeneous appeal to win national elections are probably good, since both appear to be growing at the expense of the middle” (166).

Such movements were also noted by Kevin Phillips in *The Emerging Republican Majority*. He specifically cited “Yankees, Megalopolitan silk-stocking voters and Scandinavians from Maine across the Great Lakes to the Pacific” as likely GOP defectors as the party’s new western-southern coalition took form (465). However, areas of the country that supported Nixon and gave George Wallace a healthy share of the vote were growing faster than the cities or the silk-stocking suburbs, leaving no real threat to immediate Republican prospects.

In the decades since scholars foretold of a Republican realignment, the political landscape has experienced a drastic if uneven change. The Watergate scandal reversed Republican gains, bringing a large class of new Democrats to Congress in the 1974 midterms that have been since dubbed the “Watergate babies.” The scandal also assisted Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter in winning the White House in 1976. The turbulence of this period cast doubt on the idea of realignment, causing some to suggest that the country was experiencing dealignment in its place (Stanley 1988; Wattenberg 1991; Neimi and Weisberg 1993). However, the Reagan victories of 1980 and 1984 and George H. W. Bush’s victory in 1988 suggested that the Republican majority had at last emerged, at least as far as the Electoral College was concerned. The Republican dominance was limited to the White House and from 1980 to 1986, the U.S. Senate, but the House of Representatives remained in Democratic hands. This divergence caused

a problem for realignment theory, and analysts sought to retool the theory to explain the Republican lock on the White House but a failure to win control of the Congress (Rosenof 134). Instead, analysts spoke of a “presidential” realignment, a “partial” realignment, or a realignment still “in progress” (Rosenof 135).

At the same time, the possibility of a Democratic realignment began to take hold. Kevin Phillips, who had authored the best known thesis for a sixth party system, began to speculate that the Democrats could capitalize on economic middle-class resentment produced by an economic downturn, a contrast to the cultural resentment the middle class experienced in the 1970s (Rosenof 147). As far back as 1982, Phillips believed that the global market would introduce economic turmoil that would render the old socioeconomic order defunct and in turn bring an end to the typical sequence of 28 to 36-year political realignments. Thus, even in the wake of the Reagan victory in 1980, Phillips was not optimistic that a long term Republican dominance was in the making (Phillips 1982 xv, xvi). The 1992 defeat of Bush and the victory of Bill Clinton seemed to spell an end to Republican dominance and confirm this thesis. Kevin Phillips noted the plunge in suburban support for the GOP ticket, particularly in areas hardest hit by the recession, and also the increasing political role of women and minorities in the 1992 election (Phillips 1994 248). However, he did not take the Democratic trends for granted, cautioning, “the favorable trends could dissipate quickly if the new administration failed to revitalize and sustain the economy” (Phillips 1994 249).

However, the 1994 congressional midterms put Republicans in control of Congress for the first time in forty years, and set the political community scrambling back to the idea of realignment. “To many analysts the 1994 contest was indeed a “critical election” signaling realignment (Rosenof 151).” The 1994 congressional midterms have been analyzed for years

since as a subject of realignment (Ladd 1995; Campbell 2006; Bullock, Hoffman, and Gaddie 2006). This continued even after the 1996 presidential election that saw both Clinton and a Republican Congress re-elected. The inability of the Democrats to win control of Congress back even as they held on to the presidency helped spark a period of competing theories for what was occurring in the electorate. Some thought that realignment was occurring, while others believed that a partisan deadlock had occurred by which neither party had much of an advantage (Ladd 1997).

Still, the idea of a Democratic Party-dominated seventh party system did not disappear. Even in the wake of Republican successes for the presidency the early 2000s, this idea was not without its merits. The 1988 election was the last time Republicans ever won a substantial Electoral College victory, and the last time a Republican candidate had carried substantially populated states in the North and on the West Coast, such as California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Michigan. Both the 2000 and 2004 GOP victories were conspicuously narrow, with 2000 especially fiercely contested with the Florida recount and George W. Bush not even winning the popular vote. Those two Republican victories were owed to the South, the West, Midwestern states such as Kansas and Nebraska, and even the long-time Democratic voting state of West Virginia. However, George W. Bush's coalitions also lacked the big electoral prizes of California, virtually any of the northeastern metro bloc², or the upper Midwest states of Michigan and Illinois. Despite the Republicans winning the Congress in 1994, their majorities in each

² George W. Bush won New Hampshire in 2000 but lost it to Democratic Senator John Kerry in 2004, the only state Bush carried in 2000 that flipped to the Democrats in 2004.

Source: Presidential General Election Results Comparison – New Hampshire.

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/compare.php?year=2012&fips=33&f=1&off=0&elect=0&type=state>

chamber remained small and easily threatened, as evidenced by the brief fifty-fifty split in the Senate after 2000, and finally expiring in the 2006 midterm elections.

In 2002, political analysts John Judis and Ruy Teixeira penned a book that created the popular conception of an emerging Democratic majority. This work, called *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, claimed that the 1992 presidential election was the counterpart to the 1968 election, in which a third party candidate split the traditional Republican coalition, providing an outlet for disaffected voters to not vote for the Republicans but not vote Democrat, either. In this case, Judis and Teixeira assert that the discontent caused by the economy caused the Republican coalition to fracture, particularly white working-class Democrats and professional Republicans, and over time, these voters moved to the Democratic Party (Judis and Teixeira 4). Furthermore, they also claimed that the culture war would ultimately send many high-income professionals from the Republicans to the Democratic Party due to their more liberal stands on social issues. Also, the gains Republicans made among the “Reagan Democrats” would subside and even reverse themselves. Finally, the increase in the Hispanic vote would also bolster Democratic gains. As the country became more diverse, the Democratic Party would be the beneficiaries of the influx of new Hispanic voters. In short, the Democrats could benefit from economic upheavals that would send the Reagan Democrats back to their ancestral party, the culture war would alienate social moderates from the Republicans, and the diversification of America would see a growing number of Hispanic votes for the Democratic Party (Judis and Teixeira 55, 57, 62-63).

The shifts among affluent voters and among the working class are two important components of this possible seventh party system, but the literature in the 2000s suggests different conclusions. For the moment, I will address the question of the working class. The shift

among the white working class to the Republican Party, and a possible shift back, has been the subject of study for decades, and the 2000s was no exception. For example, a 2008 study by Teixeira along with political scientist Alan Abramowitz claimed that the working class is shrinking and the upper middle class is rising, and both categories feature problems for the Republicans, as both are becoming more socially liberal, the working class because of the younger entrants, and the upper middle class because of professionals (Abramowitz and Teixeira 2008). Voter shifts among the white working class could be the product of attitudes or perhaps, as some studies suggest, the product of location.

Sorting of the Electorate

Larry Bartels' 2008 book *Unequal Democracy* suggests that Republican performance among the white working class was uneven, with the New Deal coalition dissolved almost entirely because of the Republican resurgence in the South, and that Republican and Democratic voter identification in the North among low-income whites is no different in 2008 than it was in 1952 (Bartels 76). Conversely, Republicans enjoyed a greater surge among the affluent and middle class than among the working class in the years between 1952 and 2004, with a greater disparity between the two categories in the non-Southern states (76). If anything, Bartels claims the white working class outside the South has become more loyal to the Democratic Party in the 1952-2004 period. "Republican gains have come not among "poorer folks" but among middle- and upper-income voters--and even those gains have been concentrated almost entirely in the South" (78). Bartels' conclusions lead to a regional explanation of the disparities in the working class vote, which actually may support some of the seventh party thesis, as the working class in urban areas are said to be trending Democratic.

However, Bartels does not hold to the notion that Republicans are losing the affluent, nor does Andrew Gelman's 2008 book *Red State Blue State Rich State Poor State*. Gelman analyzed states by income and found that the wealthy still were more likely to vote Republican in presidential elections. Rather, states with a higher average income are more likely to support a Democratic presidential candidate, whereas the Republicans will win the poorer states, but on the votes of the wealthiest in those states. At the poorest end of the income scale, Republicans win Mississippi. On the affluent end, Democrats win Connecticut. In the middle of the scale is Ohio, which swings back and forth between the two parties (Gelman 16-17). According to Gelman, this pattern has become even stronger over time. However, Gelman concludes that rich voters in Democratic-leaning states are still less likely to vote Republican than the wealthy in the poorer, so-called "red" states (167). Gelman answers that the two political parties have become more polarized ideologically, and this is causing the wealthier states, namely the Midwest, the West Coast, and Northeast, those that were more liberal to begin with, to simply begin voting more in line with the party that is closest to them ideologically, namely the Democrats (168).

The movement of like-minded individuals to a particular community can also serve to bolster the voting strength of a party in that community. Bill Bishop and Robert Cushing's *The Big Sort* (2008) explores how likeminded Americans are seeking communities that reinforce their beliefs. This mass movement has the effect of creating more landslide party victories in counties for one party or another. The authors make an observation of this "big sort" in action in the state of Colorado. According to the authors, the fast-growing counties around Denver received a greater influx of newcomers from Democratic areas of the country than the Republican-leaning areas of Colorado received from Republican-leaning states (Bishop and Cushing 2008 57). Colorado, once a Republican-leaning state, went Democrat in its state

legislative contests in 2004 and elected a Democratic governor in 2006, and also went for Obama in 2008. Bishop and Cushing attribute at least part of this to the Democratic newcomers.

Barack Obama's victory in the typically Republican states of North Carolina and Virginia was partially explained by migration (Hood and Mckee 2010). Those two states, along with Florida, received an influx of residents from the northeast, a more Democratic enclave, and thus brought voting habits that leaned less Republican than their native-born neighbors (Mckee 2009, 193). On North Carolina, Hood and Mckee conclude, "[o]ur claim is not that North Carolina is now a Democratic state in presidential politics, but rather because of population change through a continuing and substantial influx of migrants born outside the South, these voters are pushing the state in a competitive direction—essentially making it a swing state, or to stick with the colorcoded language, we contend that North Carolina has become a purple state in presidential elections" (Hood and Mckee 2010, 291). Their article, however, showed that the southern states with a large number of northeastern-born residents, namely Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, were more likely than the rest of the South to be swing states. "...the three Peripheral South states Obama won, have the largest percentage of residents born in the Northeast—the bluest region in the United States" (Hood and Mckee 2010, 293).

The 2008 Election

The initial analysis of the 2008 election led to some declaring that the new Democratic realignment had occurred. John Judis declared in a *New Republican* piece "The Democratic majority: It emerged!" (Judis 2008). In the aftermath of Obama's victory, Judis speculated that this realignment could be lasting and enduring.

"Will the Democratic realignment of 2008 be hard or soft?
Initially, it seemed it would be soft. Like the Reagan realignment,

it began in fits and starts—Clinton’s victory in 1992 was comparable to Richard Nixon’s victory in 1968, with Ross Perot playing the schismatic role that George Wallace had played in 1968. The Democratic trend was slowed by the Clinton scandals and interrupted by September 11. By this measure, 2008 seemed to be more analogous to 1980 than to 1932 or 1896. But the onset of the financial crisis may have changed this. The coming economic downturn may more closely resemble the depression of the 1930s than the relatively shallow recessions of 1980 or 1991. There are, sad to say, striking resemblances between the circumstances that led to the Great Depression and those that led to the current emergency.” (Judis 2008)

The recession brought about in the late 2000s would seem to conform to the theory advanced by Kevin Phillips and others that economic turmoil would work to the Democrats’ advantage, but the severe nature of the recession of the late 2000s could possibly cause a longer-lasting political effect than the shorter recessions of the 1990s, and thus fully realize what Phillips and company have speculated. The outcome of the 2016 presidential elections, however, may mitigate this theory, if the policies of the Obama administration are not seen as solving the economic problems that repelled voters from Republicans in the first place.

Democratic gains among younger people have also been conspicuous in the exit polls from the 2000, 2004 and 2008 presidential elections³. Strong support among the younger generation is considered key because political socialization theories hold that political identification can be developed at a younger age. The fact that Obama performed very well

³ CNN.com: Election 2000 Exit Poll.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20080430015935/http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2000/epolls/US/P000.html>

CNN.com: Election 2004 Exit Poll.

<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/states/US/P/00/epolls.0.html>

CNN.com: Election 2008 Exit Poll.

<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/polls>

among the younger vote was noted by Weisberg and Devine in their recent study, and as the authors note, could portend a realignment (Weisberg and Devine 2010). They compare it to the strong Republican performance among young people during the Reagan years, and theorize that the strong Democratic performance could persist as they get older. However, they also point out that the stronger shift for the Democrats was actually among 30-44 and 45-64 year olds.

Open Field Politics

Still, do these developments portend a real “Emerging Democratic Majority” or is it just an illusion? The elections of 2009 and 2010 seemed to throw the brakes on the “Emerging Democratic Majority” concept, or at least cast some doubt on it. Republican Bob McDonnell won the 2009 Virginia’s governor’s race 59%-41%, just a year after Obama carried the state by a 53%-47% margin. At the same time, the Republican candidate in New Jersey, Chris Christie, beat sitting governor Jon Corzine in New Jersey, a state Obama easily carried and had never voted Republican since 1988. Then, in a shocking development, Republican Scott Brown won the Massachusetts senate seat opened up by the death of Ted Kennedy in a special election held in early 2010. That same year was capped by Republicans winning back the House of Representatives and cutting into Democratic margins in the Senate.

The affluent suburbs that trended away from the Republicans in the 2006 and 2008 elections seemed much friendlier to them in 2009 and 2010. In Virginia, Republican gubernatorial candidate Bob McDonnell carried the three counties that make up the Northern Virginia metropolitan area, with a 4,466 vote margin in populous Fairfax County. Obama, by

contrast, carried the county 60%-39% just a year earlier.⁴ In 2010, the Democrats lost more House seats than either party had lost in a single election in seventy-two years (Trende xii).

An alternative to the seventh party system has been voiced by Michael Barone, who opined that the country post-2006 entered a period of “Open Field Politics” where both parties have equal chances to acquire a significant majority in the electorate (Barone 2007), a position he affirmed after the 2010 midterm elections (Barone 2011). Other opinions hold that the Emerging Democratic Majority is part of a theory that is faulty. In Sean Trende’s *The Lost Majority*, he agreed with David Mayhew’s stand on realignment and contended that realignments do not exist (182-183) and the certainty that possible components of the Emerging Democratic Majority will come together are dubious at best (141-150). Also, he claims multi-ethnic coalitions are fickle and can break up, citing the differing racial coalitions in New York City and Los Angeles that powered various Republican and Democratic candidates to victory (155-159). The fact that Democrats may gain among certain groups does not mean their pre-existing base of support will necessarily remain in place.

However, even if Trende’s assertion that the country is not in the making of a new Democratic-realignment is correct, that does not preclude the importance of these voter groups to the Democratic Party. It can be said, as a general rule in modern elections, that white evangelicals are heavily Republican, while African-Americans are heavily Democratic. Coalitions can still be reproduced in successive elections. A look at elections when presidents have won election and then won re-election show similar patterns in the re-election contests. Reagan won 51 percent and 59 percent, respectively, while the Democratic vote remained frozen at 40 percent in both contests. Clinton won two elections with under 50 percent of the popular

⁴ David Leip Virginia 2009
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/leftmenu.php?type=state&off=5&fips=51>

vote and with almost the same states, with the exceptions of swapping out Colorado, Georgia, and Montana for Florida and Arizona. The 1896 and 1900 elections of William McKinley, often cited by Karl Rove as an example of the kind of realignment he wished to pursue for George W. Bush (Traub 2006), were strikingly similar, a 51 percent victory against the same opponent, William Jennings Bryan, in both races⁵.

The question of whether realignment theory remains valid will not be solved in this study. In any case, the importance of voter coalitions remains valid, and this study will be devoted to examining those components that might help Democrats in the future.

In sum, observations in the 2000s have centered on whether voting patterns for the two parties in Congress and the presidency are an effect of income, education, mobility of citizens, ethnicity and increasing demographic change. The possibility of this new party system consists of some, if not all, of the following ingredients. Affluent citizens and those with graduate and post-graduate degrees will shift from voting for Republican candidates for president to the Democratic Party. Those identified as working-class Americans will also begin to trend back to the Democratic Party, but the quantity of their movement remains unclear. A slight trend back to the Democrats is likely, but a mass movement of these voters to the Democrats may be possible in the future. Nonetheless, it is a sign of the dissolution of the Reagan coalition. The question I seek to answer is whether the Democratic realignment is in fact happening, or whether the nation is experiencing a state of fierce competition between two sides that are moving further away from each other, in which case a durable majority for one party or another presently does not exist.

⁵David Leip 1896, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1896&off=0&f=1>
David Leip 1900, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1900&off=0&f=1>

A REVIEW OF PARTY IDENTIFICATION

Origins

The predominant view of party identification in the early years of voting behavior research was provided by the social psychological or “Michigan” model of electoral choice. The Michigan model was formulated by Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes in *The American Voter*. This model postulated that voters were heavily influenced by party identification. In their study, they postulated that voters developed their voter identification early in life through interaction with their families. Voters develop their party ID before they can actually vote, and largely through families who have an active identification already. Formulated by Campbell et al., the Michigan model emphasizes "the [prominent] role of enduring partisan commitments in shaping attitudes toward political objects" (1960, 135). For Campbell et al. (1960) and the work that has adopted their perspective (e.g., Goldberg 1966; Kelley and Mirer 1974; Miller and Shanks 1996), party identification is an “unmoved mover,” a deeply held psychological attachment that largely does not change over time and acts as a filter through which citizens view and interpret new political information. From this perspective, party identification shapes policy preferences and other political attitudes, but is largely unchanged by them.

But Campbell, et al, do not assume that all voters will retain their partisan label throughout life. They examine such factors as a change in one’s personal circumstances, or social milieu, or great cataclysmic shifts in the country itself. Such exogenous events can cause voters to re-evaluate their partisan allegiance. They cite the 1932 New Deal realignment as an example. These events can cause a realignment among younger voters, who will enter the electorate shaped by these events. When they looked at the growth of the Democratic Party, it came

primarily from younger voters, not defecting Republicans. Party ID change may also occur as one gets older. Older voters tend to be more intense about their identification than younger voters, but this will depend on the intensity the person has held on party ID throughout their life.

Challenges and Revisions

The view that party identification is principally unmoved has been challenged since the model's inception. Scholars have argued that party identification is shaped by other political attitudes and evaluations. Party ID is more of a running tally of citizen evaluations of other political objects and events (Fiorina 1981; Achen 1992). While party identification might be quite stable from one election to the next, it also may change over time in response to policy preferences, candidate evaluations, evaluations of party performance, and even voting decisions (Brody and Rothenberg 1988; Fiorina 1981; Franklin 1984; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Jackson 1975; Page and Jones 1979; Markus and Converse 1979). Policy issues, particularly emotional or salient ones, may move individuals to change party ID.

While this stream of research acknowledges that childhood socialization may make partisan identification long-term (Achen 2002; Fiorina 1981), that partisanship may shape expectations of future party performance (Fiorina 1981), or that party identification may cause policy preferences as well as be caused by them (Franklin 1984; Jackson 1975; Markus and Converse 1979; Page and Jones 1979), its overall conclusion is that partisanship is more a summary of other political attitudes than a shaper of them. Fiorina characterizes the revisionist view of party identification as "an evolving indicator of an individual's relationship to the parties" (2002, 98). As Bartels notes, such a "running tally may be a convenient accounting device, but it is not a moving force in politics" (2002, 119).

Dealignment

Years after the Michigan model was formulated, the theory emerged that party ID is actually in decline and voters are abandoning party labels to become independents (Stanley 1988; Wattenberg 1991; Neimi and Weisberg 1993). This theory of dealignment stems largely from the 1960s-1970s, during the turmoil of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandals. The theory suggests that as people become disillusioned with the two parties, they will increasingly choose to affiliate with neither one, referred to as the decline of the parties (Wattenberg 1986).

Reaffirmation

The dealignment theory fell into question in the 1980s and 1990s when studies by Miller, Bartels, etc, asserted that American voters, instead of falling away from the major parties, were experiencing a prolonged period of partisanship (Miller 1991; Bartels 2000). Miller's piece postulated that partisan identification remained stable outside the South. Bartels documented that party loyalty was as strong as ever in 1984 and 1988, and that partisan loyalty rebounded from the mid-1970s. Furthermore, party unity has been just as stable in the 1980s and 1990s as it was in the period studied in *The American Voter*.

Scholars have offered a few reasons for the decline of dealignment theory. First, the country has been experiencing a period of realignment in the South, where white men have been voting more Republican and blacks have been voting Democratic. The realignment has been from weak identifying Democrats to strongly voting Republicans, while Democratic partisans have remained unchanged (Stanley 1988; Miller 1991).

Secondly, Bartels argued that party voters have been taking cues from party leaders. As party leaders have grown more partisan, this behavior from political elites has trickled down to their voters. Thus it is no accident that the periods of strongest partisan unity occurred during

1981, with the election of Ronald Reagan, and 1994, with the partisan Republican Congress led by House Speaker Newt Gingrich (Bartels 2000). Conversely, periods where partisanship was the weakest occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, when partisanship in Washington was not as high. As the parties sorted themselves out over the years, partisan ties increased. The dealignment theory is explained away by Bartels as being birthed at a time when parties were at their nadir, but that time has passed.

The conclusion of the works of Green and his colleagues holds that party identification is analogous to religious identification (Green and Palmquist 1990, 1994; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002) and affirms that partisanship serves as a deeply rooted social identity that does not depend on other political evaluations, and that most citizens will hold to a political identity. Green and colleagues do depart from one key component of the Michigan perspective. They argue that Democratic and Republican identifiers update their political evaluations in similar ways, thus rejecting the idea that party identification serves as a perceptual screen which shapes the evaluation of new political information (Gerber and Green 1999; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002).

Independents

The role of independents in the American political system is contested. During the 1960s and 1970s there was a precipitous rise in independents which helped fuel the notion of dealignment. As I previously mentioned, scholars have called this the decline of the parties. Independents are seen as a transition point between parties. When the country is said to be experiencing factors that lead to realignment, voters of one major party may become independents but not crossover to the other major party. Other studies have made some independents out to be partisans that may swim in the mainstream of the opposite party

(Carmines, McIver and Stimson 1987), an assertion that was contested as not being representative of most independents (Mattei and Niemi 1991).

On the surface, the rise of independents would seem to show a disillusionment with the two major political parties. However, scholars have disputed that the growth of independent voters means that voters are growing more nonpartisan. The seven-point scale used by the Michigan model divides independents into three categories: pure independents, those who lean Republican, and those who lean Democratic. *The Myth of the Independent Voter* asserted that independents who describe themselves as leaners are partisans and not true “neutrals” in the political spectrum (Keith, Magleby, et al. 111). Also, the growth in independents has not actually translated to a growth in pure independents. Voters in that category have tended to make up only ten percent of voters in presidential elections (Keith, Magleby, et al. 64).

In sum, the literature has debated independents but the vast majority of scholars attribute some form of partisanship to many of them. To this day, independents are sought after by both parties and are often cited as a difference maker in elections. Citizens may also identify as independents because it has civic value (Keith, Magleby, et al. 109). The “independent” label can even extend to politicians themselves in their campaign rhetoric or policy positions, often to distance themselves from their parties or to provide a reputation that is appealing to self-identified independents. It is ironic that even independent leaners may in fact be more partisan than self-identified weak partisans (Keith, Magleby, et al. 65). This tells us that a partisan-leaning independent voter should not be regarded as being weak for his or her party.

Conclusions

Looking at decades’ worth of political literature shows that American citizens take their cues to vote for a candidate for political office from so many different factors, from their

background, ethnicity, race, gender, income level, education, and so on, with one alone or perhaps several mixing together to create a voting decision that the two major political parties sink millions of dollars to identify each election cycle. They try to identify those swing voter groups such as “security moms” that might swing a presidential race, and of course the oft-discussed registered independents, that, as the literature has shown, can be as partisan as registered members of both parties. It is the contention of the authors of *The Emerging Democratic Majority* and other scholars and pundits that out of this mass of citizen cues, a few have come together to create an electorate that will advantage the Democrats in their pursuit of the White House. Since the authors identify shifts in the 1990s and early 2000s that claim to support this assertion, I test this theory by looking at the key voter groups they identify and look at this time period to see if there is a build up of support for the Democratic Party leading up to Obama’s first election to the presidency.

Since Judis and Texiera specifically point out white voters among several categories, such as the working class (62-64), white working women (55) and urban whites (66), and as I do not expect large partisan shifts among minority populations, I have decided to restrict the voter groups in my hypotheses to white voters, although I do look at how increasing numbers of minorities will affect the fifty states. So the voter groups I identify in the individual-level analyses are all white, and since whites constitute the largest racial group in the United States (72 percent as of the 2010 census)⁶ shifts among these voters will be very consequential.

Due to the liberal cultural shifts Judis and Texiera identify (29-32; 54) among specific voter groups, I hypothesize that the composition of the Democratic-advantage realignment will be composed of voters with higher incomes, secular voters, voters who have earned graduate or

⁶ This information is sourced from the 2010 Census Briefs:
<http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-05.pdf>

post-graduate degrees. In addition, due to assertions that Democrats will retain an advantage among younger voters, my analysis shall single out voters who first became eligible to vote during each presidential election year I examine, to determine if these voters are more inclined to Democrats. Judis and Texieria claim economic concerns will drive white working class to the Democrats (62-64). For white female voters, I single out working women and single women specifically, but will also use all previous variables to measure the strength of the gender gap in the Democrats' favor. This means I examine high income white women, college-educated white women, and so on.

However, since the American president is not chosen by a popular vote of the voters but a composition of electors chosen by the states, I choose to look at how certain characteristics affect the state electorates. Some will follow the lead from variables used in analyses of the individual respondents, such as median income, percentage of state residents that attain a graduate or professional degree. The remaining variables look at how the economy and population shifts affect the states. Since Judis and Texieria put emphasis on post-industrialism, I calculate how much of a state's economy is post-industrial. In addition, my analysis examines how states are altered by rising numbers of residents and numbers of minorities.

CHAPTER 2

HYPOTHESES AND METHODS

Hypotheses

My examination of the literature surrounding what Judis and Teixeira consider to be an emerging Democratic realignment has led me to break down voter groups among different hypotheses. To reiterate, I refer to the changes in the electorate as a Democratic-advantage realignment rather than a seventh party system, since the literature does not firmly establish the existence of a sixth party system; however, I am operating off the assumption espoused by Judis and Teixeira that a Republican advantage existed in presidential elections that reached its end in 1992. Therefore, I would expect that growing Democratic trends in the electorate will begin in the 1992 presidential election. This assumption will be applied to all of my hypotheses. Also, since partisan strength can be measured by more than just a vote for that party's candidate for president, I will also measure Democratic partisan strength by an individual's vote for a Democratic member of Congress and an individual's identification with the Democratic Party. Also, in examining the makeup of the fifty states that may influence their electorates to vote for a Democratic presidential candidate, I will determine levels of Democratic support among state electorates. By taking such a broad sweep, I intend to look for nuances in a possible Democratic-advantage alignment that just voting for a Democrat for president will not show.

Each hypothesis will draw upon points made by *The Emerging Democratic Majority* or similar observations about a possible Democratic-favoring realignment made by other pundits and scholars and will examine a time period starting from George H.W. Bush's victory in 1988

and concluding with the election of Barack Obama in 2008⁷. The first set of hypotheses concerns groups of voters that will be analyzed on the national level. This set of analyses will examine trends in both presidential and congressional voting. As realignment literature speculates that trends in presidential elections generally precede changes in congressional voting behavior, a similar trend may manifest itself in this possible Democrat-advantage realignment.

The Top-Bottom Coalition

The importance of the “top-bottom” coalition to the 2008 Obama victory was observed by Michael Barone, co-author of the biannual *The Almanac of American Politics*. Barone’s analysis of the coalition that propelled Obama to victory seemingly confirms the forecasts Burnham and Phillips made in the 1970s.

Second, Obama created a top-and-bottom coalition. He carried voters with household incomes under \$50,000 and those with household incomes over \$200,000, while narrowly losing the 56 percent of voters with incomes in between. Fully 26 percent of voters reported incomes over \$100,000, and they were split 49 percent to 49 percent, an astonishing result for those of us old enough to remember when high earners voted heavily Republican. In the 1980s and early 1990s, high earners' opposition to tax increases led them to vote Republican by large margins. By the mid-1990s, cultural issues led many of them to vote Democratic. (Barone 2009)

This “top bottom” coalition should be the first component of the Democratic-advantage realignment to be analyzed. My first two hypotheses will deal with the “top” and the “bottom” respectively.

⁷ Except for analyses of the states, which will look at 1992 to 2008, due to limits of relevant data, which will be discussed on page 68.

The “Top” - High Income Voters

My first hypothesis is that the likelihood of higher income earners to vote for Democratic presidential candidates will increase starting from the 1992 presidential election. The possibility that higher income voters may trend Democrat was detected early on by Burnham and Phillips, and has been discussed frequently by scholars and analysts, so detecting movement toward the Democrats in this voter category, even if it is not as far as analysts believe, will be very important.

Hypothesis 1: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white voters in presidential elections on the higher income scale will be more likely to vote in a Democratic direction, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 2: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white voters in congressional elections on the higher income scale will be more likely to vote in a Democratic direction, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

The “Bottom” - The White Working Class

Democratic dominance among low-income minority groups has been well documented, so I do not expect there will be a significant change in their voting habits over the examined time period. However, elections have seen variations in the votes of lower income whites, and this is what my hypothesis and subsequent analysis will focus on.

The Republican coalition in the 1980s was fueled in part by the movement of the white working class, sometimes referred to as “Reagan Democrats” because of their support for President Reagan in the 1980 and 1984 elections. Judis and Teixeira chronicle a movement of the white working class to the Republicans in the 1980s, but many of those voters shifted back to the Democrats in 1992 and 1996, when Clinton won this group in both of his electoral contests.

Although Vice President Gore saw some erosion in this category from Clinton's performance, the Democrats saw an overall gain in their votes for Democrats from 1988 to 2000 in this group (2002, 62-64). If this is the case, it suggests that the white working class is no longer as strong for the Republicans as it had been in the 1980s, potentially endangering their electoral chances in states with a significant white working class populace.

Hypothesis 3: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, the white working class will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 4: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, the white working class will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Urban Residency

Judis and Teixeira also claim there is a pro-Democratic shift of white voters who reside within urban areas. The authors cite Gore's success among these voters by winning them 49-46 percent in 2000, a huge uptick from Dukakis' losing 44-57 percent to George H. W. Bush in 1988 (2002, 66). The ANES survey does include a question that breaks down respondents into urban, suburban, or rural areas. However it is only used up to 2000. Still, even with the exclusion of election years after 2000, this variable may be useful in detecting even the beginnings of a pro-Democratic trend.

Hypothesis 5: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white residents who live in urban areas will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2000, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 6: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white residents who live in urban areas will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2000, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Education

Voters who have received graduate or post-graduate degrees are another vital component of a Democratic-focused realignment. These voters were also cited by Burnham and Phillips as possible components of a new Democratic system, and Judis and Teixeira explicitly identify them as increasingly Democratic voters.

Hypothesis 7: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, voters with graduate and post-graduate degrees will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2000, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 8: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, voters with graduate and post-graduate degrees will be more likely to vote Democratic from 1988 to 2000 in congressional races, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Generations

The success of President Obama among younger voters has fueled speculation that Democrats will have an electoral majority that will last through the next generation. Democratic Party activists see the great potential for Democratic dominance, notably James Carville, who was one of President Clinton's top strategists. Shortly after Obama's victory, he had declared that Democrats will own the next generation of voters because of their support for Democratic presidential candidates in recent years (Carville 2009).

Carville's assertion draws its inspiration from the school of voting behavior popularized by *The American Voter*, which suggests that voting behavior is acquired in youth and steadily maintained throughout the adult life (Campbell, et al 1960). Such a notion has since been

challenged, with the advent of the Vietnam War, the rise of independents, and the concept of “dealignment.” Some literature has suggested changes in party ID with age (Abramson 1974; Knoke and Hout 1974; Converse 1976) while others have disputed this (Glenn 1976). Some literature suggests that adults retain consistent voting habits from their youth (Sears and Funk 1999) while others claim party ID is subject to varying factors (Franklin 1984; Niemi and Jennings 1991; Fiorina 1996). Since the possible Democrat-advantage realignment rests so heavily on younger voters bringing their voting habits with them as they age, this may be one of the most important variables I will analyze.

The events that shape the formative experiences of each generation will likely differ, resulting in different voting preferences among generations. Such divisions are usually broken down into cohorts. A cohort is defined as “people born during a particular time span who, because of their social and historical contexts, may develop values and behaviors that separate them from people born in preceding and succeeding birth years” (Frenk 2008, 3). These values and behaviors may induce a majority of the cohort to favor one party over another. Literature on the subject has shown that various cohorts will vote for one party over another (Converse 1976; Braungart and Braungart 1990; Wattenberg 1991; Geer 1991; Alwin and Krosnick 1991; Green et al 2002; Binstock 2005; Binstock 2006; Frenk 2008; Binstock 2009) and that cohorts can have a significant effect on vote choice (Frenk 2008; Binstock 2009). Such cohorts can be named for the defining experiences of the time they came of voting age. For example, Frenk used historically or culturally defined names for cohorts in his analysis, such as “Depression Kids” or “War Babies.” (Frenk 2008, 16).

Finally, while the literature suggests that these cohorts likely retain their voting preferences as they age, party preference is not universal among all cohort members.

Furthermore, cohort voting behavior may also change somewhat over time. Frenk discovered that as cohorts aged, they would become more conservative in their voting habits (Frenk 2008). Binstock has also explored whether cohorts would become more cohesive due to age-related issues like Social Security and Medicare, but such indications have not arisen yet (Binstock 2009). In sum, while cohorts may retain a partisan edge depending on their formative experiences, their voting habits cannot be taken for granted.

The 2008 election is too recent to determine whether President Obama has helped create a Democratic shift in the electorate, but I can go back to the 1992 election. According to Judis and Teixeira, Clinton's 1992 victory formed the rudiments of a coalition that would intensify in the 1996 election, when Clinton won wealthier voters in places that had supported Republicans previously (29-32). If the 1992 presidential election heralded a shift toward a Democrat-advantage realignment, then the voters who came of age in this election may have retained Democratic voting habits in the succeeding elections. Counting 1992, there have been five presidential elections up until the writing of this paper, so the voting habits of this cohort can be measured.

This stage of the analysis will track the voting habits of those that came of age in the 1992 and 1996 elections, the only elections in my timespan that produced Democratic victories that have cohorts that can be tracked in future years in my scale, and determine if a steady pro-Democratic voting pattern emerges. The boundaries of our age cohorts will be determined by the age they became eligible to vote for that election year, so they will be defined by those that were eighteen to twenty-one years old during that year. This will also serve to examine Frenk's finding that conservatism increased as cohorts aged (Frenk 2008).

Hypothesis 9: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, voters of cohorts that came of age during Democratic administrations will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 10: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, voters of cohorts that came of age during Democratic administrations will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Religiosity

The power of socially conservative voters has been cited as important in Republican breakthroughs in the South, fueled by the political power of evangelical groups and other conservative religious organizations. However, these developments have been seen as a detriment in the Northeast and in other sectors of the country where outward social conservatism is not popular.

Religiosity is generally defined in the literature as individuals who frequently attend religious or worship services or are otherwise frequent practitioners of religious duties. A more secular outlook on life is defined by a lack of such practices. Instead of looking at Catholics, Protestants, or Jews, this dichotomy groups members from all denominations together by frequency of religious attendance (Campbell 2002; Claassen and Povtak 2010). This way, Americans are measured by religious practice, regardless of what religion they actually belong to.

The rise of this conservative religious segment has been examined and analyzed by scholars (Hertzke 1988, Wald 1992, Wilcox and Larson 2006), including how conservative Christian groups persuade voters how to vote (Regnerus, Sikkink and Smith 1999). Important figures in this movement have included the Reverend Jerry Falwell, who launched the Moral

Majority in the 1970s, an organization devoted to getting Evangelical Christians involved in the political process. The Moral Majority's achievements included helping elect Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984 and assisting Senator Jesse Helms stave off a strong challenge against popular Democratic Governor Jim Hunt in 1984.

The Moral Majority would be disbanded in 1988, but that same year Pat Robertson, a prominent Christian broadcaster based out of Virginia, entered the Republican presidential primaries. After coming up short, Robertson founded the Christian Coalition, a group that united different denominations of Christians (Protestants, Catholics) to focus on socially conservative issues. The persistence of Christian conservatives has been cited in the Republican Party and credited with helping the Republicans win the Congress in 1994. As of the 2010s, the impact of evangelicals in particular is being felt in the Tea Party movement, as many Tea Party members embrace issues traditionally held by conservative Christians (Jones and Cox 2010). The term "teaevanglical," was popularly advanced by David Brody, the chief political correspondent for Pat Robertson's CBN news (Marrapodi 2012).

However, if social issues draw the more religiously observant toward the Republicans, some claim it repels voters who are not religiously observant or at least more subdued in their practices. According to Judis and Texiera, the impact of social conservatism has alienated moderate voters in high-income suburban areas and female voters who rate abortion as a salient issue (29-32; 54-55). The embrace of social conservatives on abortion by the Republicans thus turns off voters who are pro-choice or at least do not wear their religious faith openly.

Aside from moderate religious voters, there is also an increasing segment of American society that ascribes to no religious faith at all. As of the 2010s, they number about 15 percent of the population. Politically, they are socially liberal and economically moderate, and are seen as

politically cohesive. The shift in Republican policies toward social conservatives would have the effect of pushing this segment of Americans toward the Democrats. According to exit polls, Gore carried secular Americans with 61 percent in 2000, Kerry with 67 percent in 2004, and Obama with 75 percent in 2008 (Pew Research Center, A Look at Religious Voters in the 2008 Election). This increase forms the basis of my next two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 11: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, secular voters will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 12: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, secular voters will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

The Women's Vote

Since the 1980 presidential election, women have voted more Democratic than men in presidential and congressional elections (Kaufman 2002; Klein 1984; Manza and Brooks 1998). Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte characterize the gender gap as “real, persistent, and consequential” but also “modest in size, with women and men differing in their support for Democratic presidential and congressional candidates by 8 to 10 points on average” (2008, 31).

The women's vote is not homogenous, nor is it politically unified (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007) and there may be a number of gender gaps based on issues where women and men disagree (31 2008). The literature on the gender gap confirms that sub-groups of women vote differently from each other (Ladd 1997; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997; Howell and Day 2000; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007). These multiple gender gaps have been explained in a number of ways. Some studies have shown that women hold greater egalitarian values, which

draw them closer to policies that favor greater government intervention (Sapiro and Conover 1997; Seltzer, Newman and Leighton 1997; Howell and Day 2000, Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007). Also, a greater proportion of women are likely to hold government jobs and more likely to have caregiving responsibilities, thus making women in these positions more likely to benefit from government programs such as health care programs (Howell and Day 2000, Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007).

Some issues may have liberalizing effects on women, pulling them toward the Democratic Party, while others have conservatizing effects on men, attracting them to the Republicans (Howell and Day 2000). For example, regular churchgoing has a greater effect on drawing men to vote Republican (Howell and Day 2000). Welch and Hibbing found that men are more likely to vote on economic evaluations than women (1992). In the 1994 election, men's increase in identification with Republicans, as well as an increase in their mobilization and intensity, helped produce Republican majorities in Congress (Mattei and Mattei 1998).

For the next few hypotheses, I will examine a few of these "gender gaps" and try to determine whether they will have significant impacts on the possible Democrat-advantage realignment.

White Working Women

Judis and Teixeira identify white working women as another important component of a possible Democrat-advantage realignment (Judis and Teixeira 55). According to their analysis, the changes in the post World War II economy and the rise in women in the workforce led working women to trend more Democratic in presidential elections (50). The question for this hypothesis is whether this sub-group of women is going to be voting more Democratic as part of this seventh-party system.

Some scholars suggest women will feel more threatened by economic shifts and view Democrats as the party most likely to preserve government benefits. Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte called this the *economic vulnerability* hypothesis (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007). Some suggest that women may trend more leftward as they enter the workforce (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2007) although mediating factors will play a role in the intensity of their support for Democratic candidates (Manza and Brooks 1998).

The literature has been mixed on the effect of income on ideology. Other studies found that lower-income women had no greater Democratic identification than those with wealthier incomes (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007), or that Democratic party identification of white working class women has declined or has not proven to be a benefit to Democrats (Edlund and Pande 2002; Kenworthy, Barringer, et al, 2007). Income for women did not result in any great increase in liberal ideology, and in fact ideological distribution was found to be equal for women regardless of income, while unmarried women and women with college degrees were subgroups more likely to be Democratic (Norrander and Wilcox 2008).

This may be partly explained by the tendency of women to vote on the basis of national economic perceptions, while men are more likely to vote based on income, which does not necessarily translate into greater support for one party over the other (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008). To quote the authors from their 2008 article, in which they ran multivariate analyses on female voters from 1980-2004:

Initial analyses suggest that the gender gap is relatively uniform among women and men of different economic, racial and social backgrounds...At odds with the economic vulnerability hypothesis, the gender gap is no greater among low than high income individuals. Low income women, single women, and mothers are somewhat more supportive of Democratic candidates

than their male counterparts but a comparable gap is also found among high income women and men. (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008 13-15)

In the wake of the 2008 election, I want to see how lower-income working women have voted and whether there is a significant relationship between income and vote. The literature above suggests it may be otherwise, so this should prove one of the more significant findings of this study.

Hypothesis 13: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white working women will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 14: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white working women will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Single Women

Recent analysis on the 2008 election found that women who voted Republican were more likely to be married while women who voted Democratic were likely to be split evenly between married and unmarried (Weisberg and Devine 2010). The gender gap literature has also shown single women strongly support Democratic candidates (Weisberg 1987; Kingston and Finkel 1987; Plutzer and McBurnett 1991; Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef, and Lin 2004; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 2005; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007) and single women tend to be more liberal ideologically (Norrander and Wilcox 2008). These findings that suggest the existence of a marriage gap help support Judis and Teixeira's assertion that Democratic support is concentrated among single women (55). Analysts theorize that single women relate more to Democrats due to their greater support for government programs (Kingston and Finkel 1987; Box-Steffensmeier,

De Boef, and Lin 2004) or economic dependency, although other authors suggest economic dependency is not as significant as once thought (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2007).

Hypothesis 15: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, single women will be more likely to vote Democratic in presidential elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 16: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, single women will be more likely to vote Democratic in congressional elections from 1988 to 2008, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

An important caveat to 2008 must be added, in that this was also only the second time that a female was on a major party's presidential ticket. Governor Sarah Palin's presence cannot be overlooked in judging the votes of women in 2008, especially if the gender gap is not as great as in other presidential election years.

Party Identification, Alternative Hypotheses

With partisan identification seen as a part of many citizens' identity, perhaps functioning as a shortcut to one's vote choices, examining shifts in party identification will add to evaluating a Democrat-advantage realignment. In addition to examining whether specific groups of voters are voting more Democratic for president and Congress, I will evaluate these groups using the seven-point partisan scale employed by the ANES survey over the same time period as the individual analysis. Specifically, I am going to ascertain whether Democratic ID is rising among these groups.

Hypothesis 17: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, whites on the higher income scale will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 18: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, the white working class will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 19: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white residents who live in urban areas will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 20: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, whites with graduate and post-graduate degrees will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 21: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, whites of cohorts that came of age during Democratic administrations will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 22: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, secular whites will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 23: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, white working women will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Hypothesis 24: Starting from the 1992 presidential election, single white women will be more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Methods for Individual-level Analyses

These analyses will draw upon data from the American National Election Survey. The ANES conducted surveys on American voters in presidential elections dating back to 1948, and has created a cumulative file available on their website that consolidates their surveys. This file will be utilized for the analyses of individual voters. This will make for easy comparisons of variables across election years.

The individual respondent analysis will be divided into three parts, examining votes for presidential candidates, votes for congressional candidates, and the respondents' party identification. I will examine all respondents who identify as white in the ANES survey, as I

speculate that the most noticeable movements will occur with whites, since minority groups are already heavily Democratic. To do this, I will screen out all minority respondents from the ANES set and leave only white respondents. Since some hypotheses specifically look at white women, I will create another data set with the male respondents screened out, leaving only white women. All three parts will start with analyzing hypotheses that do not specifically pertain to white women, then use the white women data set with the previously used hypotheses plus the hypotheses that specify white women.

My dependent variable will be a dichotomous dependent variable where a vote for the Democratic candidate, presidential or congressional is coded as 1 and a vote for the Republican is 0. The objective is to discover whether there is a trend of positive coefficients from the 1988 election to 2008, with positive coefficients indicating a positive relationship to voting for Democratic candidates.

The first stage of my analysis involves estimating separate logistic models for each hypothesis and then combining them into a single parameter vector and simultaneous covariance matrix using the `suest` command in Stata. Since my study of votes and voter variables takes place across a span of years, my analysis necessitates separate models of the dependent/independent variables for each individual year. However, coefficients cannot be directly compared across years. By simultaneously estimating all the models using a seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) approach, it allows for correlations across the various models' error terms. So the initial `suest` table will only offer conclusions for the individual election year, while the subsequent analysis will allow for comparisons from an election year to any future year.

The purpose of directly testing election to election is to determine whether there is a significant trend in the hypothesized voter groups from year to year. I do not expect the

coefficients to uniformly increase in a Democratic direction. I would expect in years where Republican presidential candidates do well, Republican performance among certain groups may improve. However, coefficients may overall be higher in later election years relative to the 1988 election, the high-water mark of Republican presidential performance in the past twenty-six years. So while there may not be a perfect pro-Democratic trend that sees coefficients rise from one consecutive election to the next, there could be an overall increase in Democratic coefficients in these categories.

Direct testing across non-consecutive years will determine if there are any changes from one specific election to another. Since these are non-consecutive tests, the differences will be more specific to other factors such as individual candidate quality, the campaigns, and the political environment. If there is no consecutive trend and results point to non-consecutive factors, shifts may be witnessed depending on who specifically runs for office, instead of an overall party alignment.

The initial logistic models for presidential and congressional races will be marked by a number of asterisks corresponding to their level of p-value. For the direct-test models, p-values that are less than 1.00 will be marked by highlighting the individual cells that contain the significant coefficients.

The direct test tables will be broken down by election year. Each table will test a single year against a succeeding election year. For example, the presidential elections will see 1988 tests against 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008. The next table will show 1992 against 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008, and the progression will continue up to the 2008 elections. The congressional tests will follow the same pattern, except that the 2006 elections will not be

included since that year was not polled in the ANES survey and thus was not present in the cumulative data set.

Finally, in generating the new variables, I decided to remove the missing codes and “don’t know” responses so that the contrast between the 1 and 0s would be as sharp as possible.

DV = Vote for Democrat for President⁸

DV2= Vote for Democrat for Congress⁹

Higher Income Voters – Hypotheses # 1 and # 2

In their discussion of upper-income voters in “The Emerging Democratic Majority,” Judis and Texieria did not identify a specific percentage of the income scale that is likely to vote Democratic, focusing more tightly on certain demographic groups or occupations that would lead voters to support the Democrats. Gelman, who does not support the idea that the wealthy are voting more Democratic, identifies the “upper third” as a contested category, claiming that it voted for Bush in 2004 by ten points (Gelman 46).

Using the upper third of the income scale would allow me to make comparisons comparable to some of the analyses that Gelman conducted. However, I must also consider that analyzing the upper third may be a little broad and might include voters that are more “upper middle-class.” Distinctions by economic class are not precise and often vary depending on the

⁸ Dem_vote is the recode of ANES variable VCF0704a, where respondents who voted Democrat=1, Republican voters are = 0, and those who responded that they did not vote were dropped.

⁹ Demconvote is the recode of ANES variable VCF0707, where respondents who voted Democrat=1, Republican voters are = 0, and those who responded that they did not vote were dropped.

study. To try and draw a more exact conclusion, I will run my analysis on the top 10 percent of the income bracket. This will draw upon the profile of the “affluent voter” much more closely, and I expect to see greater voter shifts to the Democratic Party in this category.

IV = Highincome variable¹⁰

If the hypothesis is supported, the results would show that over time, the relationship between higher income and voting Democratic becomes stronger, with a greater expectation that the top ten percent will trend more Democratic than the top third. I would expect that as the election cycles progress, income would yield a higher probability that the voter would cast their ballot for the Democratic presidential candidate.

The White Working Class, Hypotheses # 3 and # 4

To conduct this analysis, I must operationalize “working class.” Scholars have defined “working class” broadly, using it to refer to income and also to job skills, education, and particular occupations, so I must address how this should be operationalized. According to Larry Bartels, there is no consensus as to how to properly define what the working class is. Some analysts, like David Brooks, have defined the working class by those who lack a college degree. However, this does not take income into account and has the effect of putting many middle class citizens into the working class category. Instead, Bartels suggests that “working class” should be operationalized according to income. He cites the fact that the terms low-income and working class are used interchangeably to refer to those with family incomes in the bottom third of the

¹⁰ Highincome is generated from the ANES variable VCF0114 where the top of the scale is coded to 1 and all others to 0. All subsequent ANES-generated variables have all alternative options coded as 0, except for missing codes, which are excluded to ensure greater contrast. Detailed description of coding is listed in Appendix B.

income distribution in each election year (Bartels 2008, 66-72). Bartels' definition works well for this study. It allows for income to be used as a controlling variable against education. It may reveal that vote performance among those with graduate and post-graduate degrees is variable according to income. Thus I will operationalize "working class" to mean those in the lower end of the income scale.

IV = workingclass¹¹

Urban Whites, Hypotheses # 5 and # 6

The ANES survey included an option for respondents to identify whether they lived in an urban, suburban or rural setting, up to the year 2000. As Judis and Teixeira identified the urban working class as a category likely to trend toward the Democrats, I am able to examine this for at least the elections up to 2000.

With suburban residency also included in the ANES cumulative file, I will also include those who live in the suburbs as a variable to contrast urbanism. Initial testing to include rural voters as a category in the multivariate model resulted in the rural variable being dropped, so only urban or suburban status will be included.

IV= urbanism¹²

IV2= suburbanism¹³

¹¹ workingclass is generated from the ANES variable VCF0114 where the bottom of the scale is coded to 1. Again, Appendix B has full details on coding.

¹² urban is generated from the ANES variable VCF0111 where residents who live in urban areas are coded to 1.

Education – Hypotheses # 7 and # 8

The ANES survey also splits college education into additional categories, presenting an opportunity to not just examine white voters who earn graduate and post-graduate degrees, but to look at levels of college education below that. So I shall add whites who attain bachelor's degrees, as well as whites who have only attained some level of college experience without having earned a degree yet. By utilizing all three of these variables, this will allow us an opportunity to see how lower attainment of education affects the outcome of voting for president or Congress. I may find that they vote much like the higher degree earners, or they may diverge and vote more Republican.

IV = Highdegree¹⁴

IV2= BAdegree¹⁵

IV3= somecollege¹⁶

¹³ suburban is generated from the ANES variable VCF0111 where the lowest income level is coded to 1.

¹⁴ Highdegree is generated from the ANES variable VCF0140a where respondents who have attained a post-graduate degree are coded to 1 and males are zeroed out.

¹⁵ BAdegree is generated from the same variable, by respondents who have attained a bachelor's degree.

¹⁶ somecollege is generated from the same variable, by respondents who have attained only some level of college experience.

Generations, Hypotheses # 9 and # 10

This stage of the analysis will track the voting habits of those that came of age during a specific election and track their progress through successive election years, except for 2008. This will entail examining the age groups in the exit polls to determine where the cohorts have aged to.

All age cohorts start at the year where voters first enter the electorate. The first year is coded 1 for voters ages 18 through 21. The second election year, the cohort is coded by advancing the voters four years, so the age range for the next presidential election will be 22 to 25. For example, for the 1988 cohort, the sequence coded as 1 is: 18-21 for 1988, 22-25 for 1992, 26-29 for 1996, 30-33 for 2000, 34-37 for 2004, and 38-41 for 2008. All cohorts will follow the sequence of age groupings for as many elections as they are tracked through.

Age cohorts will be similarly tracked through congressional elections. For the midterms in the ANES data that I will use, I will move the cohorts up two years. For example, the 1988 cohort begins at 18-21, but the 1990 election is coded 20-23. The 1994 elections are coded 24-27, and the 1998 elections are coded 28-32.

In addition to determining how far the pro-Democratic trend has spread among the electorate, this analysis will also address Frenk's point that voters may trend more conservative as they age. This contradicts, at least in part, the idea that age groups are largely set in their voting habits from the time they enter the electorate, so this is important to examine.

IV = 1988 cohort

IV2 = 1992 cohort

IV3 = 1996 cohort

IV4 = 2000 cohort

IV5 = 2004 cohort

IV6 = 2008 cohort

Religiosity, Hypotheses # 11 and # 12

For this analysis, I will use two different variables to measure possible secularization in voters. The first is coded from an ANES variable that asks respondents if they consider religion to be important in their lives¹⁷. This will be an “attitude” variable that measures a respondent’s personal views on religion. The second is coded from an ANES variable asking the respondents if they regularly attend religious services¹⁸. This will measure secularism more by practice.

IV = religionnotimp

IV2 = noregattendance

The next few hypotheses (13-16) deal specifically with white women. For this analysis, I created a new data set that excludes white males and simply looks at white women exclusively, so the dependent variable for these hypotheses will be different. I shall also include the variables in the previous hypotheses in the analysis for white females, to discuss the impact the gender gap has on earning high income, levels of college education, and so on. I would assume that looking

¹⁷ religionnotimp is generated from the ANES variable VCF0846. Respondents who do not consider religion important are coded as 1.

¹⁸ noregattendance is recoded from ANES variable VCF0130. Respondents who do not attend religious services are coded to 1.

at women to the exclusion of men would increase Democratic chances among these selected voter groups and contribute more to the findings of this research.

DV = white females

White Working Women, Hypotheses # 13 and # 14

To look at white working women, I will employ the same working class variable used in the multivariate model analyzing whites collectively. Since the dependent variable is changed to white women, it will only analyze the impact white working females have on voting for Democrats.

IV = White working class

Single Women, Hypotheses #15 and #16

For these hypotheses, single women will be separated from married women. This will allow us to see if the “marriage gap” is supported, or perhaps becomes more pronounced over time. For this analysis, I define “single” as women who have never been married, which would exclude women that have been divorced, widowed, or have unmarried partners, excluding any benefits that could be gained by having been married.

Since marriage is often cited as a positive influence on Republican vote performance, I will include it as a variable for comparison and discussion. Though the ANES data includes a partner option for respondents, unmarried couples will not receive the same benefits as married couples in all fifty states. While an unmarried couple may enjoy the benefits of two incomes, etc,

they may still be affected by lack of marital benefits such as spousal benefits, marital tax filings, hospital visits for a partner, etc. For those reasons, the marriage variable only measures women who are married, not divorcees or those with partners.

IV = nevermarried¹⁹

IV2 = Married²⁰

Table 1
Predicted Direction on Trending Democratic in Votes for Pres. and Congressional Candidates

Variable	Range	Prime Expectation	Secondary Expectation
High income	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
High degree	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
BA degree	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Some college	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Working class	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Urban	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Suburban	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Religion not imp	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
No reg attendance	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Never married	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Married	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
1988 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
1992 Cohort	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
1996 Cohort	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
2000 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
2004 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic

¹⁹ “nevermarried” is generated from the ANES variable VCF0147. Respondents who have never been married are coded as 1.

²⁰ Married,” is recoded from ANES variable VCF0147. Respondents who are married are coded to 1.

Party Identification, Hypotheses # 17-24

Following my analyses of voting for presidential and congressional candidates, I will turn to analyzing party identification during the 1988 to 2008 period I am studying for the variables, with a multivariate analysis employed that mirrors the analysis performed for individual voters, except the dependent variable will not be the respondent's vote for president, but their identification as a Republican, Democrat, or Independent. The alternative hypotheses will likewise mirror all the hypotheses for the individual voters, but will instead postulate that the hypothesized voter groups will be more likely to identify as Democratic over time.

DV = Democratic Party identification

Table 2
Predicted Direction on Trending Democratic in Party Identification

Variable	Range	Prime Expectation	Secondary Expectation
High income	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
High degree	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
BA degree	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Some college	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Working class	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Urban	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Suburban	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Religion not imp	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
No reg attendance	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Never married	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
Married	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
1988 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
1992 Cohort	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
1996 Cohort	0-1	+	General increase from 1988
2000 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic
2004 Cohort	0-1	-	Generally anti-Democratic

State-Level Analysis

In the remaining hypotheses, I will be only looking at whether a state voted Republican or Democratic in a presidential race. Examining the congressional votes for these states may be complicated due to the partisan tilt of the individual districts, the advantages of long-term incumbency, and the fact that these districts may have different economic structures than the state as a whole. The last group of hypotheses breaks down the composition of the fifty states by selected constituencies that could theoretically influence state electorates to vote for a Democratic candidate for president.

Median Income By State

In his study of the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, Gelman found the poorer states went to George W. Bush while the rich states were won by Gore or Kerry. Gelman found that the wealthy were still more likely to vote Republican in presidential elections, even in Democratic-leaning states (167). However, the wealthy in Democratic-leaning states were a little less likely to vote Republican. Gelman speculates that the rise of social conservatism in the Republican Party has caused wealthy voters in more liberal states to vote a little less Republican (168). As wealthy voters in more liberal states are more socially liberal, this may account for it (168). Furthermore, Gelman speculated that wealthy voters moving to the Sunbelt are perhaps more likely to be Republicans, although without individual-level data, this contention remains unverified (169). However, the idea of voter mobility to like-minded places in the country has been explored by other authors (Bishop and Cushing 2008), so Gelman's point has some support. If Gelman is right, that voters in the two parties are becoming more polarized on social issues, then this is a trend that should reveal itself over time as the wealthy and poor states sort out

between the two parties as Gelman had observed. This forms the basis of the seventeenth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 25: Starting in 1992, states with higher median income will be less likely to vote Republican in presidential races, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Median-income results alone are just a first step in analyzing the ever-changing landscape of the fifty states. The Emerging Democratic Majority thesis suggests further characteristics that should define states likely to produce increasing Democratic majorities. Drawing from other parts of this thesis and similar assertions, I will create and measure four additional variables.

The Economies of the States

The Democrat-advantage realignment thesis holds that Democrats are seeing an increase in vote performance in states that are moving toward a post-industrial economy. The concept of post-industrial study of states stems from the social theorist David Bell. The term “post-industrial” was popularized by Bell’s 1974 book, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. Everett Ladd described Bell’s concept of post-industrialism in his study of the 1994 presidential elections.

“industrial society is the coordination of machines and men for the production of goods," postindustrial society is "organized around knowledge." The key developments defining postindustrialism, Bell argued, are "the exponential growth and branching of science, the rise of a new intellectual technology, the creation of systematic research through R & D budgets, and...the codification of theoretical knowledge.” (Ladd 1995, 4)

Ladd goes on to point out that the New Deal system was a product of the industrial age. In his exploration of the post-industrial transition, Ladd saw it as an erosion of the Democratic majority, but not necessarily leading to a Republican majority. “The transformation in thinking about government which I see as social-structurally related to them move into postindustrialism doesn't posit a certain partisan winner-though in the short-term it has evidently weakened the Democrats' position.” (1995, 8) At the conclusion of his piece, Ladd said:

The United States is somewhere in the middle stages of a major political realignment, one precipitated in large part by the shift from an industrial to a postindustrial setting. Important features of the new party system are clearly defined. Party coalitions are drastically different from those of the New Deal years. Though not discussed here, party organization plays a far lesser role in the current system than in any of its predecessors, and the electronic media are a central instrumentality of the new politics. The Democratic party lost its once-clear majority status in the realignment's early stages. Whether any party will be able to claim firm majority status remains unclear, though we do know that voter ties to parties are weaker today than in times past and, almost certainly, permanently so. (Ladd 1995, 23)

It should be pointed out that this assessment of the weakening of the two parties was largely reversed by the late 1990s and through the 2000s, as the two parties became more polarized (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998, 2008; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Campbell 2006; Bullock, Hoffman, and Gaddie 2005, 2006; McKee 2008, 2009; Stoker and Jennings 2008). This has likewise made the concept that post-industrialism would weaken the parties obsolete.

At the time of the Republicans' ascendancy into majority status in Congress in 1994, analysts approached post-industrialism with uncertainty, reinforced by Clinton's re-election in 1996 (Ladd 1997) and seen as possibly even an indicator of support for more conservative, anti-

tax candidates (Boeckelman 1995). However, in the 2000s decade, the authors of the *Emerging Democratic Majority* suggest that post-industrialism will help the Democrats. Teixeira explains:

Together, professionals, women, and minorities, bolstered by blue-collar workers attracted to the Democrats' stands on economic issues, have formed powerful coalitions that now dominate the politics of many ideopolises. This politics emphasizes tolerance and openness. It is defined more by the professionals, many of whom were deeply shaped by the social movements of the 1960s, than by any other group. They worry about clean air and water, and when the market fails to provide these environmental goods, they call on government. They favor civil rights and liberties and good government. They disdain the intolerance and fundamentalism of the religious right (Teixeira 2003).

Primarily, post-industrial literature has focused on post-industrialism's impact on several sectors of society, such as welfare delivery, (Walmsley 1980), how the U.S. economy would react to changes in the global economy (Branfman 1984), and political change among generations in European nations (Inglehart 1971), but actual measurements of post-industrial growth in the United States or the individual fifty states have been scarce. Keith Boeckelman's article, however, is an exception. In his income analysis of the fifty states by economy, Boeckelman used "business consulting, investment, research and testing, engineering, architectural, management consulting, public relations, legal, advertising, and computer and data processing services" as the criteria for categorizing whether a state had a post-industrial economy (Boeckelman 1995). Boeckelman's description of the industries used to define a post-industrial economy is identical with how post-industrial economies in the U.S. are typically defined, so his work will serve as a basis for how I define a state as being industrial or post-industrial.

Based on Judis and Teixeira's expectations, I expect there to be a trend toward Democrats among these states with growing post-industrial economies that will increase from 1992 to 2008, with some variations that will be noted and discussed in the methods section.

Hypothesis 25: Starting in 1992, states with higher levels of post-industrial economies will be more likely to vote Democratic, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Rising State Percentage of Minorities

The growth of minority voters is often cited as a boon for Democrats and trouble for Republicans. Not all states have experienced a uniform growth in the minority vote, and some states will likely be affected to a greater degree than others. Such demographic change may contribute to the swing of one state from voting Republican in presidential races to voting Democratic. To cite Virginia's Fairfax County once again, the demographic profile of this county as reported by the U.S. Census has its non-Hispanic white population at 54 percent, its Asian population at 17.5 percent, Hispanics or Latinos at 15.6 percent, and African-Americans at 9.2 percent (Quickfacts, Fairfax County, Virginia). This county has seen an increase in foreign-born residents, including Koreans, Vietnamese, Ethiopians, Afghans, Salvadorans, and Mexicans, all of whom have altered a county that once was dominated by white Protestants (Barone 2011). These demographic changes were noted in the early 1990s, and a county that was once strongly Republican became competitive for both parties (Barone 1993, 1995). Then, in 2004, Fairfax

County broke a thirty-six year voting streak for Republicans in presidential races by voting for John Kerry, and gave a larger margin to Barack Obama four years later²¹.

I had considered using the proportion of a state's population that is African-American, Hispanic, or Asian as variables but rejected that idea. First, I am interested in the change in a state's electorate. Secondly, I do not expect that a state with a high minority population will actually be more Democratic. While the state's minority population will supply a strong Democratic vote, the white population may be strongly Republican. Also, when considering Hispanics, in some communities many are not citizens and do not vote. This will be a point to keep in mind even when studying the increase in Hispanic population. So for this variable, I will look at the fifty states by increases in minority population.

Hypothesis 26: Starting in 1992, states with rising minority populations will be more likely to vote Democratic, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Rate of Population Change

The increase in mobility in the United States has swelled the populations of some states, particularly in the South. From 2000 to 2009, the state of Florida increased its residents by 2,555,130. North Carolina saw an increase of 1,334,478. Texas experienced a jump of 3,930,484, an 18 percent increase. In the West, Nevada experienced an influx of 644,825, a 32 percent increase over nine years (U.S. Census).

²¹David Leip Fairfax 2004,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/statesub.php?year=2004&fips=51059&f=1&off=0&elect=0>
David Leip Fairfax 2008,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/statesub.php?year=2008&fips=51059&f=1&off=0&elect=0>

Bill Bishop's book "The Big Sort" argued that many counties in America receive new migrants that mirror that community's political attitudes (Bishop 5). In some cases, it can make a "red" county even "redder," and vice versa. However, there are also migration patterns that can change a county, a city, or a state's political climate from one party to another. Virginia's populous Fairfax County and North Carolina's Wake County have both attracted an influx of new residents that could be considered fiscally conservative, but socially libertarian (Ottenhoff 2007). Nevada, once a solidly Republican state in the 1980s, gave its victors narrow victories in every election since 1992 with the exception of Obama's twelve-point win²². During this time, a flood of newcomers poured into the state, making Nevada the fastest growing state in the country for two decades (Barone 2011).

Likewise, Colorado's political swings have been attributed to two waves of newcomers. The newcomers that arrived in the 1970s tended to be younger, more liberal, attracted to policies that protected the environment and promoted slower growth. These migrants helped elect Senator Gary Hart, Rep. Patricia Schroeder, Governor Dick Lamm, and Rep. Tim Wirth. Then, in the 1990s, a new wave made up of evangelicals and tech-savvy entrepreneurs flooded into Colorado Springs and swung the state to the Republicans in the 1990s-early 2000s. The trend in the late 2000s seems once again to favor Democratic-leaning voters, which was suggested to partially explain Obama's success in that state (Barone 2011, 288; Bishop 57).

Newcomers have also changed the composition of the once-solidly Republican south. The influx of voters born in the Northeast has been credited for helping Obama win the states of Florida, Virginia, and North Carolina, as well as provide a boost in Democratic margins from 2004 in the states of Georgia and South Carolina (Hood and McKee 2010). The authors claim:

²² David Leip 2008, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2008&off=0&f=1>

Historically, most Southern states have displayed the tendency of “swallowing up” newcomers—having more influence on these recent arrivals than vice versa (on this point, see Brown, 1988). This was typically the case because the native Southern population was so much larger. But similar to Florida, in a state like North Carolina, where many communities are now disproportionately non-Southern born, presidential voting patterns in these localities have reached a point where the native political influence is diminishing in electoral importance.” (Hood and McKee 2010)

Hood and McKee’s assertion forms the basis of my next hypothesis. Given that influxes of new residents could easily change a state’s political climate, I am interested in determining whether population changes have affected the votes in these states for presidential candidates. I assume that states with sharp rises in population are experiencing an influx in new residents from other states, and this will make those states more likely to vote for a Democrat for president.

I shall look at the rate of population change for all fifty states. Population statistics on the states will be compiled by information from the U.S. Census. This will allow me to calculate the rate of percentage growth by state. Rate of growth is calculated by rate of percentage change from previous year.

Hypothesis 27: Starting in 1992, states that experience the greatest rates of population growth will be more likely to vote Democratic, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Overall Education Level By State

The number of residents by state that possess graduate degrees could possibly impact how a state votes. I present Virginia and North Carolina as likely candidates. Durham, North Carolina, which is part of the Research Triangle and seated in Durham County, gave 76 percent

to Obama in 2008, with a popular vote margin of 71,103 votes²³. In the censuses taken from 2000 and in 2010, North Carolina residents that attained graduate or professional degrees rose from 7.2 percent to 8.7 percent. Bachelor's degrees saw an increase from 15.3 percent to 17.4 percent, and associate degrees went up from 6.8 to 8.3 percent (North Carolina QuickLinks, Social Characteristics). The development of the economy of Wake County, the county that includes the city of Raleigh, and its tendency to attract those with graduate degrees was noted back in 2007 (Ottenhoff 2007).

Similar observations were noted in Virginia. In 2007, Rep. Tom Davis, then the congressman whose district covered much of Fairfax County, and Gerry Connolly, the then-chairman of the county board of supervisors and successor to Davis in 2008, both noted their constituents were very well educated. "Twenty-seven percent of my constituents have a master's degree or better," Connolly said. Connolly also describes what he calls "technology specialty" firms in Fairfax County that attracted so many well-educated residents (Ottenhoff 2007). Connolly himself would benefit from this climate when he won the congressional seat Davis vacated in 2008 and survived a tough re-election challenge in 2010.

The overall education level of each state will be the first focus of this analysis. The U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, run by the U.S. Department of Education, provides state percentages of those with high school graduate (includes equivalency), some college w/ no degree, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, and graduate or professional degree by selected years. I will be able to run a test to determine whether there is a significant relationship between a state's education level and the percentage of presidential vote.

²³ David Leip North Carolina Durham 2008, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/statesub.php?year=2008&fips=37063&f=1&off=0&elect=0>

Hypothesis 28: Starting in 1992, states with higher percentages of graduate-level degree earners will be more likely to vote Democratic, evidenced by an increase in coefficients in successive election years.

Methods for State Level Analysis

These analyses will draw upon data from various sources, primarily the U.S. Census and other surveys provided by the U.S. government. However, in many instances data from 1988 was not available, so an analysis starting from 1988 will not be feasible. Instead, the timespan for analyzing the states will begin in 1992.

I will use two multivariate models will examine the states. The first will use the vote percentages of Democratic presidential candidates in the fifty states as a continuous variable. The second will be a logistical analysis that codes the dependent variable as a dichotomous variable with a state's vote for the Democratic candidate coded as 1 and a vote for the Republican is 0, with positive coefficients demonstrating a positive relationship to voting for Democratic candidates. As with the individual level analysis, both the regression and logistic analysis will be followed by a suest analysis that tests the coefficients from year to a succeeding year.

DV1 = Democratic vote percentage by state

DV2 = State Vote for Democrat²⁴

Median Income By State, Hypothesis # 25

To code the variable for this hypothesis, the first step is to determine the median income level of each state. They can be derived from census data that lists income levels by state. The

²⁴ Both dependent variables use 1992-2008 election results from David Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections. Electoral College votes are not taken into consideration, including any votes that deviate from the popular vote outcome.

Tables will be derived from the U.S. Census website (Census 2011, Income). 2009 and 2010 census data are already available via the factfinder function in the Census website (Census 2011, Factfinder database) while I can derive historical data on median household income from the historical Tables on the Census website (Census 2011, Historical Database).

For this analysis, I will use the median income of the states as in the independent variable.

$$IV = \text{Median income}^{25}$$

The Post-Industrial Economies of the States, Hypothesis # 26

I define “post-industrial” as an economy that has transitioned out of a manufacturing-based or other labor-based workforce to one where professional workers, scientists, creative-based professionals is in ascendancy. To properly measure post-industrialism and its possible impact on how state electorates vote, I have decided to create two variables. To that end, I will be looking at a proportion of a state’s economy that is post-industrial for the individual election years. Secondly, a variable will be created that shows the state’s rate of increase of a post-industrial economy, calculated by rate of change from the previous year.

To develop these two variables, I shall use the economic data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which lists economic statistics on all fifty states. The BLS contains current and historical tables that break down employment by industry over a time period that will cover my intended study²⁶. Following the example set by Boeckelman, I would calculate employment by

²⁵ Data derived from U.S. Census State Median Income tables.

²⁶ Except for 1988, so data from 1990, the closest available year, will be used instead.

state for the occupational categories that typify a postindustrial economy (Boeckelman 1995)²⁷. This calculation will be conducted by year, and it would be conducted for as many years as data is available.

I will create two variables. One is coded by the overall percentage of post-industrial employment. The second will look at the change in the rate of post-industrial employment from the previous year.

IV = Rate of post-industrial increase in state economy.²⁸

IV2 = Percentage of economy that is post-industrial.

If the hypothesis is supported, I expect there to be an increasing trend in the Democratic presidential vote that will grow from 1992 to 2008, allowing for possible variances in the trend line.

Minority Growth (Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians) Hypothesis # 27

The first part of this analysis will examine the minority populations of the states over the examined period of elections. Since the census breaks down minorities by different ethnicities and race, I found it useful to code three independent variables by three groups, blacks, Hispanics and Asians. With the rise in each group in different areas of the country, examining their rise by state may tell us which group is responsible for a possible Democratic upward trend across the time period studied.

²⁷ Boeckelman chose ten specific occupations: business consulting, investment, research and testing, engineering, architectural, management consulting, public relations, legal, advertising, and computer and data processing services (183).

²⁸ Data derived from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, QCEW Databases. 1990 numbers are used for 1988.

IV = Rising number of Blacks.²⁹

IV2= Rising number of Hispanics.

IV3= Rising number of Asians.

A caveat should be noted to these state-level analyses. While it is possible that the increase of minorities could shift states toward voting for the Democratic Party, some scholars have theorized that increases in minority voters have an effect of shifting whites toward the Republican Party (Giles and Hertz 1994; Arp, III, Simmons and Cottrell 1999; Campbell, Wong and Citrin 2006).

In order to flip a state from a pattern of usually voting Republican to voting Democratic, the minority population would have to exceed the number of white Republican leaners, and it is likely many states have not reached that threshold within the time period studied. Even Texas, with a minority plurality population, has still seen Republicans dominate state-wide races. Therefore, an increase in minority voters in a state may actually have the opposite effect.

Rate of population change, Hypothesis # 28

Population statistics on all fifty states will be compiled by information from the U.S. Census. I will be able to calculate the rate of percentage growth by state by estimating a change in population from the previous year. The independent variable will be the rate of population change from the last election year.

²⁹ Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2010, and Population Estimates, Race & Hispanic Origin. This also applies to Hispanic and Asian variables. Variables are the percentage increase in that group from one presidential election year to the next.

IV = Rate of Population Change³⁰

Overall education level by state, Hypothesis # 29

The independent variables will look at two levels of the education attainment of a state's population. One variable will look at graduate/post-graduate degree earners. The second will be compiled of the percentage of those who earned bachelor's degrees. Taking the lead from individual-level analysis, I will also examine how a lower level of college education affects a state electorate. This will allow us to see if a Democratic trend is emerging among the bachelor's degree earners as well.

Data was derived from the U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics. However, the degree percentages by state were not available for every election year. To rectify this as much as possible, I will use data from the closest possible available year. For 1988 and 1992, I used data from 1990. For 1996 and 2000, I used the numbers from 2000. Finally, for 2004 and 2008, I used the data from 2006.

IV = Grad degree by state.

IV2 = BA degree or some college level by state.³¹

³⁰ Sources: State Population Estimates and Demographic Components of Change: 1900 to 1990 Total Population Estimates, State and County Intercensal Estimates (1990-2000), and Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2010.

³¹ Percentages of the state population over a certain age who have earned graduate and bachelor's degrees.

Table 3
Predicted Direction on State Electorates Trending Democratic

Variable	Range	Prime Expectation	Secondary Expectation
Median income	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
BA Degree	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Grad or Prof	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Pi of workforce	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Rate of PI Growth	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Rate of Pop Change	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Rate of Hispanic	0-1	+	General increase from 1992
Rate of Black	0-1	+	General increase from 1992

CHAPTER 3

VOTING FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

Candidates for the American presidency are the leaders of their respective political parties, the prime setters of their party's ideological agenda, and the foremost politicians in the country, so such prominence would be more likely to provide clearer exploration of voting trends and changes to party preferences over voting for congressional candidates or other down ballot offices. Judging from the results of this chapter's analysis, my model of individual-level variables yielded no steady changes in the decisions of voters from 1988 to 2008, but there is evidence of lasting and significant changes for some variables if particular elections are compared across time. Coupled with the findings that specific variables will become significant in some elections but not in others, the results emphasize the idiosyncratic nature of American presidential elections. My discussion will focus on the impact of specific election years and relate it to how my hypothesized variables affected the votes of whites collectively and white women.

Our analysis starts with examining white respondents who cast a vote for presidential candidates in each election from 1988 to 2008. As I do not expect substantial shifts among minority voters, I have screened out all racial groups from the data set except for whites. The first analysis of this chapter starts with the self-reported votes for president in each election from 1988 up to 2008 from the National Election Survey. The dependent variable is coded 1 for a vote for Democrat and 0 for Republican candidates. My multivariate model of independent variables is drawn from those hypotheses that state that voters that exhibit a particular characteristic, be it economic circumstance, residency, education status, or when the voter became eligible to vote for the first time, will trend toward voting for Democratic presidential candidates as evidenced

by rising coefficients as the years progress. Specifically, I will be examining hypotheses 1 (high income), 3 (white working class), 5 (urban whites), 7 (graduate and post-graduate degree earners), 9 (whites of age cohorts during Democratic administrations), 11 (secular voters), 13 (white working women), and 15 (single women). The models are estimated using logistic regression by year, and explain voting behavior strictly for each individual election. The models are all simultaneously estimated using a seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) approach that allows for correlations across the various models' error terms. This approach is used to directly test differences in the effects of the variables across elections. In this way, changes in voting patterns across time can be clearly evaluated.

The results presented in Table 4 support most of the hypotheses, as most variables leaned toward their hypothesized political parties, except for high income voters, who continued to vote Republican. The analysis shows that the most significant variables affecting presidential vote choice include income, urban residence, level of education, and finally, the two secularism variables. In fact, voters that do not consider religion to be important in their personal life are more likely to vote for Democratic candidates in five out of six elections. Voters who do not attend religious services regularly motivated whites to vote for Democrats in four out of six. By contrast, working class status and age cohorts mattered less, and suburban residency did not matter at all. Working class status motivated whites toward the Democrats in 1996 and 2000. Out of the five age cohorts, only the 1988 age cohort significantly motivated whites more than once, in 1996 and 2000, and the 1996 cohort was a factor only in 2004.

The 1988 presidential election, in which Vice President George Bush defeated the Democratic candidate, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, produced five significant variables: high income voters and voters with bachelor's degrees or with only some college

leaned Republican, while urbanites and voters with secular/non-religious attitudes turned to the Democratic Party. Whites who earned bachelor's degrees or obtained some level of college education were inclined to vote for the Republican presidential ticket, and high income voters were in the Republican camp as well. As expected, both groups start out in a pro-Republican direction. The fact that urban and secular voters were more likely to support Dukakis is no surprise, and future elections show that Democratic candidates were able to build on these constituencies.

The 1992 election ended a twelve-year Republican hold on the White House with the victory of Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton over the incumbent President Bush, with 43 percent to 37 percent in the popular vote and 370 electoral votes.³² Texas businessman Ross Perot shook up the race with his independent candidacy, but despite winning 19 percent of the popular vote, he carried no states and won no electoral votes. Clinton's victory, while retaining the support of urban whites, also had the effect of wiping out significance for two variables that turned whites to Bush four years prior, high income earners and completion of some college. Both secular variables became significant factors, showing a spike in pro-Democratic support that could have been a backlash to Pat Buchanan's speech at the Republican National Convention. The speech, proclaiming the country was in the throes of a culture war, was controversial for emphasizing socially conservative stands on abortion and gay rights (Buchanan 1992; Wilcox and Larson 2006, 5). Clinton's victory, however, did not produce a clean sweep among college educated voters, as bachelor's degree earners stayed with Bush.

In 1996, President Clinton staved off first term troubles that saw the Democrats lose their majorities in Congress to come back and win a strong re-election victory over the Republican

³² David Leip 1992 Presidential Election, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1992&off=0&f=1>

candidate Senator Bob Dole. Clinton racked up a 49 to 41 percent victory in the popular vote and a strong 379 Electoral College vote victory.³³ Clinton's re-election was helped by a strong showing among the white working class and both types of secular/non-religious voters. This is also the first time that being part of one of my hypothesized age cohorts affected white voters. In this case, the 1988 age cohort went strongly for Clinton. The fact that these voters, and not the 1992 and 1996 age cohorts, swung to Clinton is surprising considering the theory that voters of an age cohort are more loyal to the party that was elected during their formative years. However, if voters change their preferences over time, or respond to a president's record or the particulars of a presidential campaign over this result is not particularly surprising given the strength of the US economy at the time. Still, Senator Dole could count on support from whites who earned bachelor's degrees or completed some college. There is no sign of pro-Democratic support among the college educated yet.

The 2000 and 2004 elections in which George W. Bush prevailed in hotly contested contests against his Democratic opponents, most notably with a controversial and crucial recount in Florida in 2000, was also the time period when the *Emerging Democratic Majority* (Judis and Teixeira, 2004) was published and initially discussed. If nothing else, Table 4 confirms that many of the groups the authors identified as Democratic gainers were important parts of the Democratic coalition, namely graduate degree earners, working class whites, urban whites, and secular voters, but the absence of an urban variable for 2004 makes it impossible to test whether urban whites were as strong for Kerry as they were for Gore in 2000. The fact that grad degree earners both showed significance and swung to Gore and Kerry helps support the hypothesis that the "professional class," made up of high degree earners are looking more favorable to

³³ David Leip 1996 Presidential Election, <http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1996&off=0&f=1>

Democratic candidates in recent years. High income earners, however, stuck with Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, and the 1988 age cohort came back for the Republicans in 2000. The events of Clinton's second term seem to have had a negative effect on the latter group, who were more likely to support him in 1996 but then turned toward the GOP in 2000. Conversely, in 2004, voters of the 1996 age cohort backed Democratic candidate Senator John Kerry.

By 2008, Judis proclaimed the Emerging Democratic Majority "had emerged" (Judis 2008), but judging from the 2008 logit results, few of these variables were significant factors in choosing Senator Barack Obama over his Republican opponent Senator John McCain. The big surprise in this election is that high income voters voted strongly against the Democratic presidential candidate. This runs contrary to the idea that high wealth earners are trending more Democratic. If anything, they seem to have been very loyal to the Republicans throughout the 2000s. The coefficients are even greater in 2000 and 2008 than 1988, so there is the possibility high wealth earners are trending more Republican, not less.

This examination of six presidential elections finds almost none of our hypothesized variables switch direction between the two parties. Only the 1988 cohort moved whites to one party and later flipped in another election; in this case the Democrats in 1996 and the Republicans in 2000. Otherwise, my variables were consistent in sticking with one party or the other. Also, my hypothesized variables seemed to drop off or emerge as voting motivators depending on the era. College education below graduate degree level moved whites toward Republicans from 1988 to 1996, but dropped out as a significant motivator in 2000. Graduate degree attainment became a significant Democratic factor the same year, and continued into 2004. High income earning was a help to Bush in 1988, disappeared as a significant factor for

the Clinton years, and then returned for Republicans during the following decade. Secular whites measured by those who do not consider religion important, however, were significantly more likely to opt for the Democratic candidate for all elections, with no drop-off for any election year. Urbanism was also a consistently factor that aided Democratic candidates, proving to be significant in three out of the four models which included the variable. Finally, only three of the variables significantly motivated whites in the historic 2008 election, two of which were secular variables that have been supporting Democrats up to this point, and the third was the high-income variable, which remains strongly related to voting Republican, in contrast to the hypothesized erosion in Republican strength. If wealth is measured by income earnings, then wealthy voters do not seem to be moving toward the Democrats.

Table 4
Democratic Vote Choice in Presidential Elections

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	-0.436	(-0.153)	-0.104	(-0.153)	-0.066	(-0.459)	-0.485	(-0.172)	-0.574	(-0.195)	-0.627	(-0.162)
High income	-0.781*	(0.401)	-0.327	(0.291)	-0.453	(0.299)	-1.019***	(0.332)	-0.529*	(0.314)	-1.017***	(0.329)
Grad Degree	0.119	(0.260)	-0.020	(0.238)	-0.182	(0.248)	0.557**	(0.269)	0.705**	(0.295)	0.414	(0.272)
BA Degree	-0.465**	(0.195)	-0.666***	(0.195)	-0.512**	(0.209)	0.216	(0.213)	-0.136	(0.269)	-0.050	(0.210)
Some College	-0.537***	(0.183)	-0.269	(0.187)	-0.344*	(0.202)	-0.023	(0.205)	-0.266	(0.240)	-0.255	(0.193)
Working Class	-0.150	(0.259)	0.294	(0.271)	0.704**	(0.282)	0.470*	(0.275)	0.124	(0.296)	0.405	(0.267)
Urban	0.483**	(0.211)	0.437**	(0.201)	0.068	(0.218)	0.687***	(0.249)	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.154	(0.166)	-0.135	(0.166)	-0.029	(0.177)	0.172	(0.184)	—	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.079	(0.244)	1.003***	(0.183)	0.565***	(0.200)	0.166	(0.196)	0.423*	(0.225)	0.411**	(0.182)
Religion not important	0.331*	(0.182)	0.473**	(0.207)	0.711***	(0.218)	0.920***	(0.216)	0.623**	(0.248)	0.870***	(0.197)
1988 Cohort	-0.045	(0.480)	0.460	(0.399)	1.190***	(0.406)	-0.931***	(0.338)	-0.713	(0.504)	0.082	(0.314)
1992 Cohort	—	—	0.250	(0.511)	0.086	(0.459)	-0.146	(0.379)	-0.495	(0.383)	0.130	(0.322)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.789	(0.667)	0.309	(0.482)	0.916**	(0.364)	0.167	(0.310)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.603	(0.589)	0.241	(0.389)	0.387	(0.335)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.319	(0.553)	0.364	(0.357)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.509	(0.464)
No. of Obs:	848		894		745		734		537		748	
R2	0.0227		0.0778		0.0602		0.0630		0.0627		0.0693	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p < .10. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

Total no. of observations = 4506.

To reiterate, I separated out white women into a single data set so I can measure the working class variable against white females, as well as the two marriage variables. Table 5 employs the first use of the white women data set for this analysis, and adds the two marriage variables into the already existing variable set. Major differences between Table 4 and 5 occur among our college education variables. In Table 4, the grad degree variable was not significant until 2000, while in Table 5, it is a significant factor among white women in 1988, but not again until 2008. Working class status did not matter for any election. Finally, married women were significantly more likely to vote Republican in 2000 and 2008, but never-married status among white women did not move partisan choice in any election.

In Table 4, high income, bachelor's degrees and secularism showed significance, while they did not in Table 5. Conversely, white women with some college tended to vote Republican and white female suburbanites tended to vote Democratic, while these two variables did nothing to motivate whites collectively. With the two ends of the college education scale represented, I find that white women with graduate degrees voted more for Dukakis while those with just some college voted for George H. W. Bush, continuing the trend of lower college education skewing Republican but higher levels leaning Democratic. Interestingly, there is little difference between urban and suburban women, as both were inclined to vote for Dukakis.

During the two Clinton elections non-religious voters – as indicated by a lack of religious service attendance - were a bigger boon for Democrats among women than personal attitudes on religion. Judging by the relatively large coefficient compared to the ones presented in Table 4, religious attitudes seemed to be a more prominent factor for white women relative to whites as a whole. This tells us that lack of religious practice was a more important factor for white women during the two elections that elected Bill Clinton president than for whites as a whole. However,

unlike all whites collectively, urban status and working class status were not significant factors among white women. Bachelor's degree earners in 1992 and 1996 and those with some college in 1996 did vote more Republican. Finally, the 1988 cohort of women is also pro-Democratic, a little more so than all whites.

2000's tight election contest is the first of two instances where being married was a significant factor in the votes of white women. In both cases it turned white women toward Republicans, as expected. The most striking result is how urbanism moved white women so strongly toward Vice President Gore. The coefficient is even bigger for white women than it is for all whites, telling us urban white women in particular were strongly supportive of Gore over Bush. Also, high income white women were slightly more likely than all whites in this category to vote Republican, showing a gender gap that actually favors Republicans.

White women in 2004 showed a few divergences from all whites. Income and higher college education variables, significant in Table 4, were not significant in Table 5. Conversely, Table 5 shows some college experience as a significant factor. A pro-Democratic 1996 age cohort, significant for all whites in 2004, was not significant for white women, while a pro-Republican 1992 age cohort was for that same year. White women with only some college experience again turned more Republican, finishing off the pattern that lower levels of college education work well to attract whites, both female and collectively, to Republican presidential candidates.

By 2008, it becomes clear that dividing up white respondents by gender changes the relationship between income and partisan voting. High income women were about as likely as high income whites as a whole to vote against Democrats. Education, however, was a different story. Earning a graduate degree became significant for white women, but not for all white

voters. So post-grad education was a factor for white women and, as expected, it turned them in a Democratic direction. Secular attitudes and practice also turned white women from the Republicans, but unlike all whites, the coefficients for both were almost equal in number, so the pro-Democratic direction each variable produced was nearly the same.

To sum up the findings here, there is very little change from all whites in how the variables affect white women's presidential vote choice. High income, a bachelor's degree, and some college attainment were all significant factors for white women to vote for Republicans, while graduate degree attainment, urban residency, and secularism all turned white women toward Democrats. Secularism remained the most consistent factor, statistically significant a total of nine times across the two variables, five for no religious attendance and four for no personal religious influence. The effect of some college attainment was also consistent for white women, significant at three intervals across time, putting secularism and lower levels of college education at the top of voting influences. Since secularism is a consistent and more constant Democratic leaner, this is actually good news for Democratic presidential candidates. Aside from some college attainment, no other pro-Republican variable affected white women in more than two elections. Conversely, some pro-Republican variables such as marriage and high income earnings become significant in the 2000 election and onward, while the same is only true for the pro-Democratic grad degree variable in 2008. Therefore, Republicans appear to be gaining ground among more groups of white women in recent elections than the Democrats.

Table 5
Democratic Vote Choice in Presidential Elections,
White Females

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	-0.739	(0.285)	0.250	(0.259)	0.270	(0.298)	-0.087	(0.276)	0.030	(0.329)	-0.238	(0.266)
High income	-0.520	(0.496)	0.144	(0.373)	-0.289	(0.454)	-1.105*	(0.603)	0.232	(0.479)	-0.936*	(0.556)
Grad Degree	0.830*	(0.426)	0.162	(0.351)	0.158	(0.410)	0.381	(0.369)	0.428	(0.417)	0.748*	(0.410)
BA Degree	-0.416	(0.288)	-0.594**	(0.290)	-0.714**	(0.329)	0.126	(0.306)	-0.535	(0.389)	-0.088	(0.282)
Some College	-0.683***	(0.250)	-0.207	(0.248)	-0.493*	(0.276)	-0.061	(0.279)	-0.711**	(0.326)	-0.271	(0.258)
Working Class	-0.164	(0.340)	-0.167	(0.351)	0.337	(0.383)	0.012	(0.358)	0.022	(0.416)	-0.234	(0.364)
Urban	0.548*	(0.310)	0.239	(0.275)	-0.025	(0.325)	1.059***	(0.387)	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.575**	(0.229)	-0.230	(0.227)	-0.236	(0.258)	0.269	(0.253)	—	—	—	—
Married	0.180	(0.245)	-0.369	(0.231)	-0.115	(0.262)	-0.446*	(0.254)	-0.314	(0.294)	-0.432*	(0.243)
Never Married	0.568	(0.376)	0.415	(0.402)	0.620	(0.445)	-0.174	(0.393)	-0.231	(0.438)	-0.151	(0.316)
No Regular Attendance	0.002	(0.344)	1.092***	(0.263)	1.214***	(0.308)	0.467*	(0.280)	0.583*	(0.333)	0.664***	(0.245)
Religion not important	0.285	(0.278)	0.503	(0.329)	0.671*	(0.384)	0.729**	(0.351)	0.667*	(0.393)	0.680**	(0.272)
1988 Cohort	-0.679	(0.651)	0.134	(0.581)	1.297**	(0.646)	-0.203	(0.429)	-0.107	(0.576)	0.056	(0.413)
1992 Cohort	—	—	-0.881	(0.790)	0.143	(0.625)	0.144	(0.567)	-0.967*	(0.504)	-0.119	(0.425)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-1.137	(0.883)	0.363	(0.633)	0.786	(0.504)	-0.200	(0.415)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.843	(0.652)	-0.556	(0.714)	0.551	(0.409)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.075	(0.842)	0.613	(0.514)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.434	(0.876)
No. of Obs:	457		482		387		388		291		427	
R2	0.0436		0.0773		0.1001		0.0761		0.0833		0.0912	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p < .10. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

Total no. of observations = 2432.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: All Whites

Table 4 and 5 showed how the variables influenced voters by elections, measured in specific, stationary moments in time. Now I am ready to analyze partisan movement across time. Since the previous models were estimated simultaneously to allow correlated error terms, it is possible to conduct chi-square tests to compare a coefficient from one year and test it against a coefficient of that same variable in a succeeding year. These tests will produce p-values that will tell us if these two coefficients are significantly different from each other, confirming that a significant change has occurred from one year to the next one. Our primary interest is in discovering continuous trends of increasing significant coefficients. Such a trend would appear in a progression from 1988 to 1992, 1992 to 1996, 1996 to 2000, 2000 to 2004, and 2004 to 2008, informing us that a voter group is progressing steadily in one direction or another. However, it is likely our variables may change partisan direction at least once or twice, so a trend may not be exactly uniform.

I will also be looking at any changes in party direction from one year to another, even if they are not directly successive from the previous election. To take 1988 as an example, this means I will be studying chi-square test results from 1988 to 1992, 1988 to 1996, 1988 to 2000, 1988 to 2004, and 1988 to 2008. The particular circumstances of the two elections compared, the candidates, issues, and other idiosyncratic factors, may dictate partisan movement rather than a long-term, steady trend across the entire time period.

The first round of direct testing, laid out in Tables 6.1-6.4, does not reveal a trend that reaches across all consecutive election years for any of the variables, restricting conclusions to non-consecutive results. Beginning with 1988, our model of seventeen variables produced a total of forty-six comparisons against a subsequent election year, eight of which yielded significant p-

values. This means in only eight instances, or 17 percent of the tests, did one of our hypothesized variables significantly move white voters toward or away from one of the major parties compared to 1988. Findings are similar for the next two elections. Comparing 1992 with subsequent elections found 6 significant changes over time out of a total 40 tests (15%), and testing 1996 against future elections produced 5 significant changes out of 32 (16%). No significant changes were found subsequent to the 2000 or 2004 elections, so changes in whites' voting behavior are limited to the 1988, 1992, and 1996 elections onward. Overall, most of the hypothesized variables that were expected to vote more Democratic over time did so, primarily among secular variables and graduate degree earners, with significant movement for urban and working class whites in a single case each.

Table 6.1 starts off testing 1988 to 1992-2008. Chi-square tests find significant changes to all years except 2004. Three variables experienced significant change from 1988 to 1996, the most for any year. The fact that more change is evident in 1996 than 1992 may likely be due to the more partisan atmosphere of the Clinton-Dole contest. The third party candidacy of Ross Perot was a larger factor in 1992, but by 1996, Perot's share of the popular vote fell 10 and a half percentage points.³⁴ The first term of President Clinton, coming off contentious battles with the Republican Congress, may have increased the saliency of certain variables by 1996. The specific groups of white voters that moved to Clinton included the working class, voters who entered the electorate in 1988, and secular voters.

³⁴ Calculated from popular vote from presidential results:

David Leip 1992 Presidential Election

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1992&off=0&f=1>

David Leip 1996 Presidential Election

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1996&off=0&f=1>

Partisan movement from the first President Bush's successful election in 1988 to his son's in 2000 is limited to secularism and mid- to lower levels of college education. Lower levels of college education generally continue to help Republicans, as some college experience moves whites toward George W. Bush, but earning a bachelor's degree moved whites more Democratic, an indication that growing discontent among the college educated toward Republicans may be manifesting. The lack of any movement of variables toward either party in Bush's re-election, and only a single pro-Democratic turn of nonreligious voters in 2008, demonstrates the lack of any clear partisan trend among my selected variables between 1988 and the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Table 6.2 shows significant changes among college-educated and secular voters between the 1992 election and the elections of 2000, 2004, and 2008, but not all in the Democrats' favor. While I would expect secular voters to trend more Democratic, those secular/non-religious voters measured by lack of religious attendance actually decreased in Democratic support. 1992 is actually the highest level of support for the Democratic presidential candidate, with support declining in all three future elections, so there is not a building trend away from Republicans. The aforementioned controversy surrounding Pat Buchanan's RNC speech is a likely explanation, but it is noteworthy that their Democratic support is not as high when the younger Bush ran. The fact that George H. W. Bush collapsed to 35 percent in the popular vote, while his son garnered 48 and 51 percent³⁵ respectively, may also be a factor. The younger Bush simply managed to hold his coalition together much better than his father's losing effort, including earning the support of more secular voters. However, there is a pro-Democratic jump in the

³⁵ David Leip 2000 Presidential Election

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2000&off=0&f=1>

David Leip 2004 Presidential Election

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2004&off=0&f=1>

coefficient between 2000 and 2004, so I can conclude some recent discontent with Republicans occurred here.

When it comes to college education, the higher degree a respondent earned, the more likely they were to vote for a Democrat for president. That was especially true if you look at the greater level of support graduate degree earners provided the Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry in 2004 than Bill Clinton in 1992, giving some support to the assertion that these voters are trending toward the Democrats. By contrast, the drop in support among bachelor's degree earners in 2008 relative to 2000 suggests support for Republican candidates is increasing among that group.

Table 6.2 fails to offer any direct significant changes from 1992 to 1996, so there is no evidence that our model of voter variables shifted the votes of whites between President Clinton's two elections. Table 6.3, however, provides significant movement among four variables from 1996 to 2000. Both President Clinton in 1996 and Vice President Gore, running in 2000, garnered almost the same popular vote percentage³⁶, yet there is definite movement of college educated voters and urban whites toward Gore relative to Clinton's second showing. Only voters from the 1988 age cohort turned Republican. Even though Clinton and Gore performed about the same in the popular vote, there were real shifts among our variables between the two contests. However, the absence of any significant chi-square tests for the remaining election years leaves us with no evidence of my hypothesized variables moving whites as a whole, in either party's direction.

³⁶ Clinton received 49.23 percent of the popular vote, while Gore received 48.38 percent.
David Leip 1996 Presidential Election
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2000&off=0&f=1>
David Leip 2004 Presidential Election
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2004&off=0&f=1>

Table 6.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1988	to	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008
High income	-0.781		-0.327	-0.453	-1.019	-0.529	-1.017
Grad Degree	0.119		-0.02	-0.182	0.557	0.705	0.414
BA Degree	-0.465		-0.666	-0.512	0.216	-0.136	-0.05
Some College	-0.537		-0.269	-0.344	-0.023	-0.266	-0.255
Working Class	-0.15		0.294	0.704	0.47	0.124	0.405
Urban	0.483		0.437	0.068	0.687	—	—
Suburban	0.154		-0.135	-0.029	0.172	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.079		1.003	0.565	0.166	0.423	0.411
Religion not important	0.331		0.473	0.711	0.92	0.623	0.87
1988 Cohort	-0.045		0.46	1.19	-0.931	-0.713	0.082

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 6.2
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1992	to	1996	2000	2004	2008
High income	-0.327		-0.453	-1.019	-0.529	-1.017
Grad Degree	-0.02		-0.182	0.557	0.705	0.414
BA Degree	-0.666		-0.512	0.216	-0.136	-0.05
Some College	-0.269		-0.344	-0.023	-0.266	-0.255
Working Class	0.294		0.704	0.47	0.124	0.405
Urban	0.437		0.068	0.687	—	—
Suburban	-0.135		-0.029	0.172	—	—
No Regular Attendance	1.003		0.565	0.166	0.423	0.411
Religion not important	0.473		0.711	0.92	0.623	0.87
1988 Cohort	0.460		1.190	-0.931	-0.713	0.082
1992 Cohort	0.250		0.086	-0.146	-0.495	0.130

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 6.3
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1996	to	2000	2004	2008
High income	-0.453		-1.019	-0.529	-1.017
Grad Degree	-0.182		0.557	0.705	0.414
BA Degree	-0.512		0.216	-0.136	-0.05
Some College	-0.344		-0.023	-0.266	-0.255
Working Class	0.704		0.47	0.124	0.405
Urban	0.068		0.687	—	—
Suburban	-0.029		0.172	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.565		0.166	0.423	0.411
Religion not important	0.711		0.92	0.623	0.87
1988 Cohort	1.19		-0.931	-0.713	0.082
1992 Cohort	0.086		-0.146	-0.495	0.13
1996 Cohort	-0.789		0.309	0.916	0.167

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 6.4
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	2000	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
High income	-1.019		-0.529	-1.017		-0.529		-1.017
Grad Degree	0.557		0.705	0.414		0.705		0.414
BA Degree	0.216		-0.136	-0.05		-0.136		-0.05
Some College	-0.023		-0.266	-0.255		-0.266		-0.255
Working Class	0.47		0.124	0.405		0.124		0.405
No Regular Attendance	0.166		0.423	0.411		0.423		0.411
Religion not important	0.92		0.623	0.87		0.623		0.87
1988 Cohort	-0.931		-0.713	0.082		-0.713		0.082
1992 Cohort	-0.146		-0.495	0.13		-0.495		0.13
1996 Cohort	0.309		0.916	0.167		0.916		0.167
2000 Cohort	-0.603		0.241	0.387		0.241		0.387
2004 Cohort	—		—	—		0.319		0.364

Note: No significant results.

The final result of Tables 6.1-6.4 shows no continuous trends across time, yet confirmation of movement does exist if I look at specific year to year comparisons. I find college education and secularism did the most to affect change in whites' voting decisions, while urban

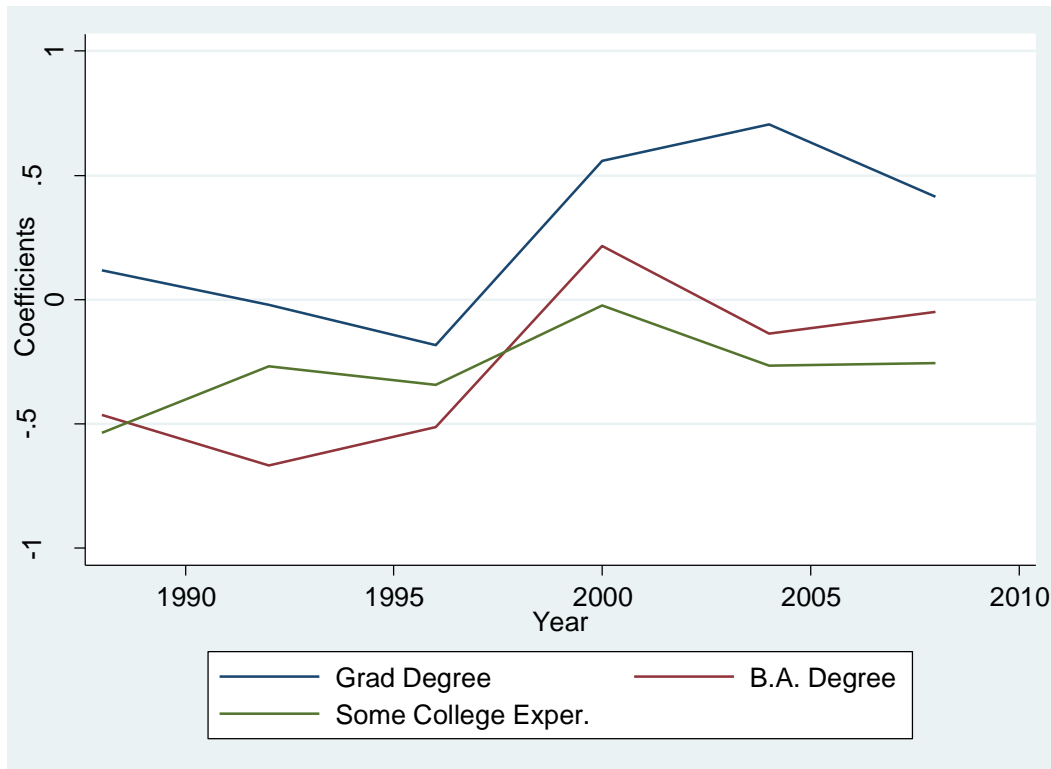
residency and age cohorts contributed little to change over time, and high income earners did not change at all. College education, in particular, consistently affected voting decisions in each of the tables, mostly to the Democrats' benefit, particularly with graduate degree earners, whose sequence of movement (1992-2004, 1996-2000, 1996-2004), displayed in Figure 1, shows that these voters turned in greater numbers to Democratic presidential candidates relative to 1988. There is also smaller, but definite movement of the lower education variables toward the Democrats. Bachelor's degree earners progressed to the Democrats in 1988-2000, 1992-2000, 1992-2008 and 1996-2000, ending with slighter higher Democratic support in 2008 than 1988. Whites with some college experience tracked a single Democratic shift from 1988 to 2000, though ending with a negative coefficient indicating this group still supported Republicans, if narrowly. However, no significant movement to 2004 or 2008 exists for this variable, so I cannot say it has progressed further in the Democrats' direction.

Democrats have also made lasting gains among secular whites, as shown in Figure 2. This is not a steady or climbing trend, as secular voters who don't hold religion as important in their lives had coefficients of 0.92 in 2000 and 0.87 in 2008 in Table 6.1. This tells us these voters moved more Democratic relative to 1988, but not that they were more Democratic in 2008 than they were in 2000. Likewise, Figure 2 illustrates the massive spike among whites who do not regularly attend religious services in 1992 but had since plummeted sharply, bottoming out in 2000 before rising again slightly in 2004. However, if the partisan movement of these two secular variables has progressed over time is observed, it is clear Democrats have made gains that have not been completely reversed.

Finally, the absence of movement among high income voters, even though they were significant in Table 6, tells us that the particular circumstances of those elections put special

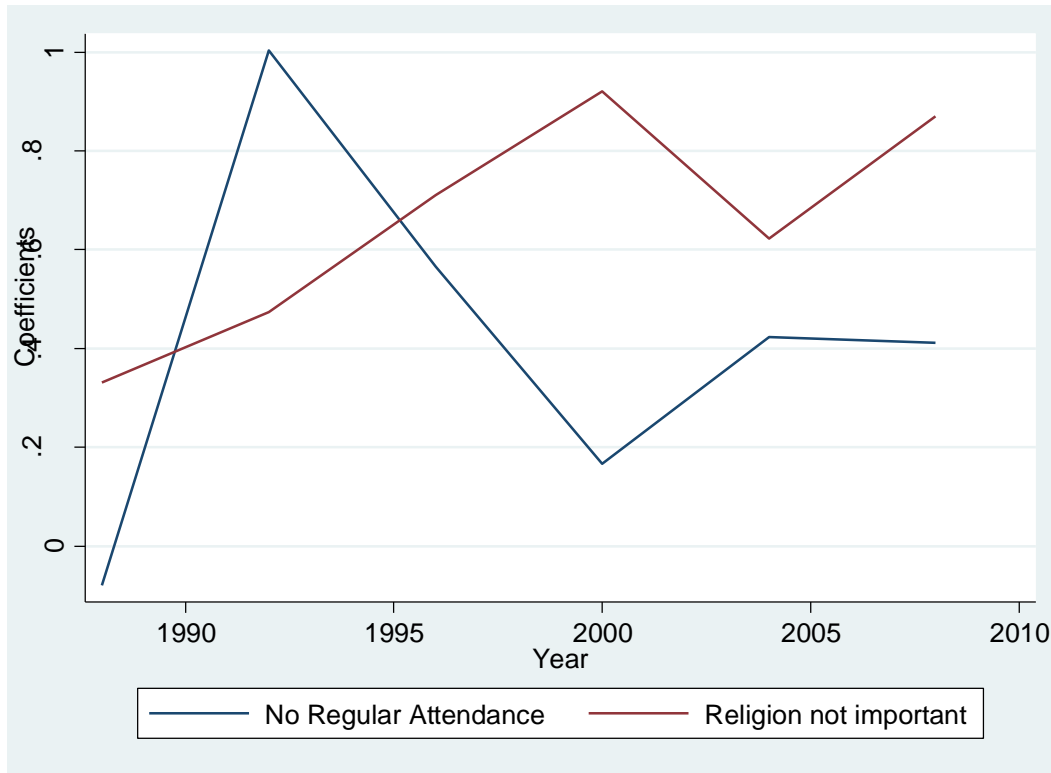
emphasis on high income earnings, but this specific economic status yielded no discernable movement in between election years. Thus there is no evidence whites who earn high income are exhibiting any kind of changes over time.

Figure 1
Partisan Direction –College Education



Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Figure 2
Partisan Direction – Measures of Secularism



Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: White Women

This round of direct testing employs the variable coefficients from Table 5. Since I have added the two marriage variables to the existing set of variables, I expected larger percentages of significant chi-square tests, given the two additions to the existing model of variables, but the results actually produce fewer than our direct tests of all whites. In 1988, significant changes were discovered in 8 out of 56 tests (14%); for 1992, 3 out of 48 produced significant changes over time (6%); for 1996, 4 out of 38 (11%); and 2000, 1 out of 26 (4%), again discounting 2004 with no significant movement to its succeeding election year 2008.

Suburban residency was not a factor for all whites in Table 6.1, but our analysis of white female respondents did produce some significant results in Table 7.1. These voters went from being more supportive of Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis to turning toward George H. W. Bush in 1992 and Bob Dole in 1996. The result is interesting as Bush performed much better in the suburbs in 1988 than in 1992, so I would expect suburban residency to be a bigger boon for Republicans for that year. On the other hand, Clinton ran two points behind Dukakis in the popular vote in 1992, due in part to Ross Perot's third party candidacy.

Table 7.1 also provides the only instance of significant movement among married white women. Unsurprisingly, marriage moves white women toward Republicans, in two instances, in 2000 and 2008. As with suburban white women, married white females showed a pro-Democratic result in 1988, even if narrowly. Given Bush's solid victory in 1988, I would have expected married white women to be more Republican. These results suggest a large gender gap in 1988, and that Dukakis may have had a greater appeal among certain groups of white women that reversed to Republicans in future years.

Secularism also did more to help Democrats among white women than among all whites collectively, taking a large step toward Clinton from George H. W. Bush and trending even more towards Clinton for his re-election. The movement of these secular women voters to 1996 is larger than it was for all white voters in Table 6.1. Once again, the gender gap assists Democrats.

While my hypothesized variables in Table 6.2 significantly changed from 1992 to 2000, 2004, and 2008, Table 7.2 only tracked significant partisan movement to 2000, so I can only conclude how variables moved white women from Clinton's first election to George W. Bush's first election. Earning high income turned white women toward George W. Bush, while earning bachelor's degrees and urban residency moved women toward Vice President Gore, none of

which comes as a surprise. Similar results are repeated in Table 7.3 for urbanism and bachelor's degree earners. However, Clinton's re-election did yield a less Democratic result compared to 2000 among women who do not attend religious services. Although there is no corresponding move in Table 6.3, there is a 1992 to 2000 result in Table 6.2 that shows a similar decrease in pro-Democratic coefficients, so this movement is not unusual. Again, secular voters in 2000 may have been more comfortable voting Republican than in the nineties.

The sole movement of a voter group from 2000 to 2004 was among high income women toward the Democrats, giving us the only instance so far of a movement among high income voters that benefits the Democratic presidential candidate. Again, for 2004 to 2008, no movement of variables was apparent. While the scope of our conclusions is a bit broader by examining white women, many of the partisan movements among variables across time, in addition to being fewer than in Tables 6.1-6.4, are not all that different. The pro-Democratic shifts among college educated and seculars persisted. However, high income had a significant on women voters that was not evident among all whites: upper-income women voted more Republican in 2000 than in 1992, but more Democratic in 2004 than in 2000. Add to the increased Democratic coefficients among urban and secular white women compared to just white respondents, and this confirms the gender gap in almost all cases continues to work for Democrats.

Table 7.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Females

	1988	to	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008
High income	-0.52		0.144	-0.289	-1.105	0.232	-0.936
Grad Degree	0.83		0.162	0.158	0.381	0.428	0.748
BA Degree	-0.416		-0.594	-0.714	0.126	-0.535	-0.088
Some College	-0.683		-0.207	-0.493	-0.061	-0.711	-0.271
Working Class	-0.164		-0.167	0.337	0.012	0.022	-0.234
Urban	0.548		0.239	-0.025	1.059	—	—
Suburban	0.575		-0.230	-0.236	0.269	—	—
Married	0.180		-0.369	-0.115	-0.446	-0.314	-0.432
Never Married	0.568		0.415	0.620	-0.174	-0.231	-0.151
No Regular Attendance	0.002		1.092	1.214	0.467	0.583	0.664
Religion not important	0.285		0.503	0.671	0.729	0.667	0.68
1988 Cohort	-0.679		0.134	1.297	-0.203	-0.107	0.056

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 7.2
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Females

	1992	to	1996	2000	2004	2008
High income	0.144		-0.289	-1.105	0.232	-0.936
Grad Degree	0.162		0.158	0.381	0.428	0.748
BA Degree	-0.594		-0.714	0.126	-0.535	-0.088
Some College	-0.207		-0.493	-0.061	-0.711	-0.271
Working Class	-0.167		0.337	0.012	0.022	-0.234
Urban	0.239		-0.025	1.059	—	—
Suburban	-0.230		-0.236	0.269	—	—
Married	-0.369		-0.115	-0.446	-0.314	-0.432
Never Married	0.415		0.620	-0.174	-0.231	-0.151
No Regular Attendance	1.092		1.214	0.467	0.583	0.664
Religion not important	0.503		0.671	0.729	0.667	0.68
1988 Cohort	0.134		1.297	-0.203	-0.107	0.056
1992 Cohort	-0.881		0.143	0.144	-0.967	-0.119

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 7.3
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Females

	1996	to	2000	2004	2008
High income	-0.289		-1.105	0.232	-0.936
Grad Degree	0.158		0.381	0.428	0.748
BA Degree	-0.714		0.126	-0.535	-0.088
Some College	-0.493		-0.061	-0.711	-0.271
Working Class	0.337		0.012	0.022	-0.234
Urban	-0.025		1.059	—	—
Suburban	-0.236		0.269	—	—
Married	-0.115		-0.446	-0.314	-0.432
Never Married	0.62		-0.174	-0.231	-0.151
No Regular Attendance	1.214		0.467	0.583	0.664
Religion not important	0.671		0.729	0.667	0.68
1988 Cohort	1.297		-0.203	-0.107	0.056
1992 Cohort	0.143		0.144	-0.967	-0.119
1996 Cohort	-1.137		0.363	0.786	0.551

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 7.4
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Females

	2000	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
High income	-1.105		0.232	-0.936		0.232		-0.936
Grad Degree	0.381		0.428	0.748		0.428		0.748
BA Degree	0.126		-0.535	-0.088		-0.535		-0.088
Some College	-0.061		-0.711	-0.271		-0.711		-0.271
Working Class	0.012		0.022	-0.234		0.022		-0.234
Married	-0.446		-0.314	-0.432		-0.314		-0.432
Never Married	-0.174		-0.231	-0.151		-0.231		-0.151
No Regular Attendance	0.467		0.583	0.664		0.583		0.664
Religion not important	0.729		0.667	0.68		0.667		0.68
1988 Cohort	-0.203		-0.107	0.056		-0.107		0.056
1992 Cohort	0.144		-0.967	-0.119		-0.967		-0.119
1996 Cohort	0.363		0.786	0.551		0.786		0.551
2000 Cohort	-0.203		-0.967	-0.200		-0.967		-0.200
2004 Cohort	—		—	—		-0.107		-0.119

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Conclusion

The use of statistical analysis, from our logit analysis to chi-square tests from year to year, did not reveal any variable exhibiting a continuous trend. There is no straight line from 1988 to 1992 to 1996 to 2000 to 2004 to 2008. However, this does not discount the importance of our hypothesized variables in these six elections. In fact, many variables assisted Democratic presidential candidates and produced important changes over time. Other variables, such as our two secularism variables or earning a graduate degree, would emerge on the scene later than 1988. It is not necessarily that these groups have been trending more Democratic, but that the factors unique to each presidential campaign changed how people voted.

In breaking down the “top-bottom coalition,” my results find high income voters stay with the Republicans even into the 2000s. There is nothing to show these voters are less disposed to voting Republican in the 2000s decade than they were in the 1990s or in 1988. Dividing the working class by gender did nothing, as I discovered no motivation or movement among white working women regarding presidential candidate vote choice.

Our three college education variables supported the assertion that graduate degree earners are moving to the Democratic Party. These voters moved to the Democratic Party during George W. Bush’s re-election, but the absence of significant movement to Obama’s 2008 election leaves us with no indication if they moved any further. There is also no indication of large movement to the Democrats from the lower levels of college education, save the movement of bachelor’s degree earners away from George W. Bush in 2000.

Secularism was always a Democratic factor, and many election years found it to be a significant influence on vote choice. However, I do not find a consistent trend further toward the Democrats. In fact, based on the movement between elections, 1992 represented something of a

high point for Democrats with these voters. However, this spike in Democratic support occurred specifically with voters who do not attend religious services. For succeeding elections in Table 4, voters who did not consider religion important to their personal lives showed greater Democratic support than lack of religious attendance. This suggests that more recent Democratic gains among secular voters are due to attitudes and beliefs, not actions, and that the 1992 turn of secular voters to Clinton was due to the specific events of that campaign. Finally, a separate analysis of white women increased the saliency of secularism, so Democratic support among those with lack of religious practice or belief was amplified by the gender gap.

Dividing whites between urbanites and suburbanites found urban residents to be consistently Democratic while suburban residency did very little for voting choice. Urban whites did not steadily grow more Democratic over time, but did spike in pro-Democratic support from 1992 and 1996 to 2000, suggesting Democrats may be gaining among this group. The gender gap also helped Democrats here, as urbanism produced a higher Democratic coefficient for white women than for whites as a whole.

There was little to say about married women or women who have never been married. Having never been married played no part in voter choice at all. The few results for married women confirm they typically lean Republican, but it was surprising how it did not matter much in our analysis. The fact that it significantly motivated white women only in the 2000s may point it up as a recent phenomenon.

I did not find results for any age cohort originating in the 2000s, so I could not measure how young voters of this time period were motivated during the George W. Bush years and the lead up to Obama's first election. Results were concentrated among the 1988, 1992 and 1996 cohorts. These tended to move whites toward the Republicans, but not always, as the 1988 cohort

moved to Clinton in 1996. The 1988 to 1996 result affirms voters of age cohorts of a particular election are not tied to that year's winning presidential candidate's party and a strong incumbent of the opposite party can make inroads among those voters.

Although I did not discover constant trends toward voting for Democratic presidential candidates, I can say that particular groups in the American electorate have changed their voting decisions since the election of President George H. W. Bush in 1988. What I did not discover was a "climax" of sorts by 2008. Not much significant movement of my hypothesized variables occurred to the year Barack Obama was elected to the presidency. It is possible his election was due more to qualities that he brought to the ticket and less about the public's affection for the Democratic Party. This brings our look at the Democratic-advantage alignment to our next chapter, in which congressional elections from the same period will move front and center.

CHAPTER 4

VOTING FOR CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES: ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

While the American president is seen as a national figure, members of Congress, despite being part of the national lawmaking branch of government, have a number of ways to escape the full scrutiny of the national political agenda. They can rely on their strengths on local and state issues, plus the benefits of long-term incumbency, and their own specialization in certain fields or issues important to the district. These strengths are cited as the reason partisan realignment lagged down the ballot (Wattenberg 1987; Born 2000), so I would expect my hypothesized variables to exhibit a slower rate of influence on voting behavior behind presidential elections. Instead, variables would influence congressional vote choices in different ways. Sometimes a variable influenced voters in a more Democratic direction in a congressional contest than in the corresponding presidential race, or in other instances a variable would influence voters in congressional elections but not for the presidential election in the same year.

This chapter will examine the hypotheses that focus on respondents voting for candidates for the House of Representatives³⁷. Because congressional elections occur every other year, I will expand the years studied to include every even-numbered year from 1988 to 2008, except for 2006, since that year was not available in the ANES cumulative data set³⁸. My analysis begins by examining whites who voted for congressional candidates in each election from 1988 to 2008, using a dependent variable coded 1 for a vote for Democrat and 0 for Republicans. My dependent variable will be measured against my variables drawn from hypotheses 2 (high

³⁷ Study of senatorial elections is excluded because only a third of Senate seats are up every two years. At times, large sectors of the country are excluded if no Senate election is present, which makes for an irregular comparison to the nationwide presidential elections.

³⁸ The 2006 survey was a pilot study to test new questions and not part of the biennial time series (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/21440/version/1>).

income whites), 4 (white working class), 6 (urban whites), 8 (white graduate and post-graduate degree earners), 10 (whites of age cohorts during Democratic administrations), 12 (secular white voters), 14 (white working women), and 16 (white single women). These hypotheses speculate that these groups voted increasingly Democratic during the decade between 1988 and 2008.

I start off by examining which of these variables significantly affected vote choices in each election, beginning with the 1988 congressional elections, which returned a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives with a two-seat gain. Although George H. W. Bush won forty states against his Democratic opponent Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, he had no coattails for Republican House candidates, reinforced by Table 8's results that suburban whites, not just urban whites, skewed Democratic for the 1988 congressional election. Only working-class status significantly influenced whites to support congressional Republican candidates. Otherwise, my model of hypothesized variables yielded no significant influences on voters this election..

The 1990 election, the sole midterm for the first President Bush, took place after the 1990 budget deal in which Bush famously broke his "no new taxes" pledge but before the start of the first Gulf War in which America led an international coalition to liberate Kuwait from an invasion led by Iraq's dictatorial president Saddam Hussein. Democrats picked up seven seats, a not unusual result given that the party controlling the White House usually loses seats in Congress in midterms. This race galvanized more significant results from my voter groups over 1988. Whites with high incomes supported the Republicans, while bachelor's degree completion and urban residency turned whites to the Democrats. In particular, the pro-Democratic shift among bachelor's degree earners runs counter to their pro-Republican position in the previous chapter, more evidence of the ticket-splitting phenomenon that helped Democrats keep the

House even while Republicans won the White House. The budget deal, coupled with the tax increase, did not alienate high income whites from voting for Republican candidates, nor voters from the 1988 cohort. If these voters, still young at the time, had an unfavorable judgment against Bush, it was not evident in their attitudes toward Republican congressional candidates. It is possible they even approved of the deal or voted on other issues such as the impending Gulf War.

In addition to coinciding with the election of President Clinton, the 1992 congressional elections took place after the 1990 round of reapportionment, so states with more than one congressional district³⁹ redrew their maps to account for the results of the latest U.S. Census. Some of the new maps helped Republicans, as several southern states redrew maps to pack more minority voters into congressional districts to help elect more African-American candidates to Congress, but the result also deprived neighboring districts of black voters that could help white Democratic candidates (Barone and Ujifusa 1993, xl; Niemi and Abramowitz 1994). Although the Democrats retained a House majority, they lost nine seats.

Surprisingly, voters of the 1992 age cohort actually were strongly Republican, even more so than voters of the 1988 cohort. Despite coming of age during Clinton's first election, the third party candidacy of Ross Perot may have diverted voters of this cohort from developing a strong partisan bent. If younger whites preferred Republicans to start out with, the results could also have presaged the Republicans' showing in 1994. I should also note many members of Congress from both parties were caught up in a check kiting scandal involving the House Bank (Krauss 1992) in the 1990-1992 term, so dissatisfaction with Congress could have manifested from more than just national policy.

³⁹ States with only one district encompass the entire state and are considered "at-large," so no congressional map is needed.

The 1994 midterm election is well known as the historic election that broke forty years of Democratic dominance on the House, with a gain of fifty-four seats for the Republicans, the largest for the party since 1948, eclipsed later in 2010 (Trende 128). White voters who do not consider religion important voted more Democratic, the first time secularism became significant in Table 8. Graduate degree earners were strongly Democratic as they were in 1990. The Republicans' strongest support in this model comes, once again, from the 1988 and 1992 age cohorts. Voters of these age cohorts, now roughly aged 20-28 and who grew up in the Reagan and Bush 41 years, helped fuel the GOP sweep.

The voting public elected Republicans to another majority term in 1996, but after a stormy two-year term punctuated by a budget showdown between Congress and President Clinton. The president balked at what he considered to be budget cuts to the Medicare program, a point made in television ads against congressional Republicans⁴⁰ lavished by the AFL-CIO. However, few of my voter variables turned whites in either party's direction. Whites who did not consider religion important in their lives tended to vote Democratic, as did the 1988 age cohort, showing some level of discontent among the older age cohort I have measured, while the 1992 age cohort stayed Republican. With only three significant variables, my hypothesized model does not demonstrate a strong movement to throw many Republicans out. The prospect of divided government may have been seen as a positive development.

The second midterm for President Clinton was an unusual case, as the Democratic Party actually picked up five seats in the House, contrary to common expectations that the party occupying the White House would suffer midterm losses in Congress. This has commonly been

⁴⁰ The AFL-CIO poured money into running ads against as many as 102 House Republicans in 1996 and endorsed only Democratic candidates (Edsall 1998), criticizing Republicans for "cuts" in Medicare (Barone and Ujifusa 1998 24-26).

attributed to a backlash against Republican efforts to impeach Clinton as a result of the Monica Lewinsky scandal. This election may have had a longer term galvanization among some voters, as it kicked off a streak, except for 2004, of all college education variables influencing white voters toward Democratic candidates. Unlike in presidential races, college voters seem to have a more consistent lean for Democrats in congressional races. Meanwhile, Republicans continue to garner support among the 1992 and 1996 age cohorts. In an ostensibly pro-Democratic year, the result that these voters of these age cohorts would be Republican seems odd. Still, the Republicans' loss of House seats and poor performance relative to other midterms obscures the fact that as badly as the 1998 midterms turned out for Republicans, they still returned almost all their incumbents to office and a party majority in the House.

The 2000 congressional elections coincided with the hotly contested presidential race between Vice President Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush. Democrats were optimistic they could close the gap and win the House majority, but their efforts only produced a net two-seat gain (Barone and Cohen 2002 41, 895). While Democrats were assisted by college educated voters and urbanites, Republicans were helped by high income voters, the first time since 1992 that this variable tested as significant. This variable significantly influenced Republicans in the presidential race and it appears these voters had a strong interest in 2000 in voting for Republicans up and down the ticket. Dividing whites into my age cohorts also did nothing to help Democrats. Whites from the 1988, 1992 and 1996 cohorts all supported Republicans, with the 1988 cohort voting the least Republican, the 1992 the most, and 1996 in the middle.

The 2002 election was eventful and unusual. It was the first national election held since the September 11th terrorist attacks, bringing issues of war, terrorism and domestic security to the public's consciousness. President George W. Bush, having ordered the American invasion of

Afghanistan and subsequent toppling of its ruling Taliban regime that harbored Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network, enjoyed approval ratings as high as sixty percent going into the election according to the Roper Center Public Opinion Archives (Roper Center, Bush Presidential Approval). However, the country was also reeling from a number of high-profile corporate scandals taking place at Global Crossing, Tyco, and the energy company Enron. The fact that former Enron CEO Kenneth Lay, later to be indicted for securities fraud and wire fraud, was also a close friend of the Bush family and had hosted fundraisers for George W. Bush spelled potential trouble for the Republicans (Oppel Jr. and Van Natta Jr 2002). Finally, the election also took place under a new congressional map influenced by Republicans in control over state legislatures and governorships in key states like Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Florida. This allowed them to exert a more favorable influence on the new maps. For example, Republicans in Michigan crafted a map that turned a 9-7 Democratic margin into a 9-6 Republican edge (Barone and Cohen 2004 809).

Unfortunately, the absence of income data for 2002 from the ANES cumulative file means it will not be possible to test income as an influencing factor for white voters. However, almost every other voter group in Table 8 did show significance except for whites who did not hold religion as important in their lives. Every age cohort in the model tended to support Republicans, the first time any year has showed such unanimity among my selected generations. Voters that came of age during Bush 43's election just two years prior were the strongest Republican supporters, while those whose formative age was during his father's 1988 election were actually the weakest. In this case, it is the youngest age cohort in my model that actually helps Republicans. This is also the only instance thus far of the 2000 age cohort significantly affecting whites' vote choice; it was not a significant factor in presidential contests. Perhaps, as

Democratic strategist Paul Begala noted on election night 2002, President Bush had indeed “stitched himself a pair of coattails” (CNN November 6, 2002). Conversely, all three levels of college education turned whites to the Democrats. The rise of the war on terrorism and the debate over a second war against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq regime did not pull college educated toward Republicans; in fact it may have repelled them.

The 2004 congressional election took place alongside George W. Bush’s re-election and yielded three Republican pickups in the House, but for a special reason. In 2003, the state legislature in Texas, urged by the House majority leader and Republican power Tom Delay, passed a new redistricting map that favored Republicans. The end result caused five Democrats to lose general re-election races⁴¹, motivated Democratic Rep. Ralph Hall to switch to the Republicans, and another, Rep. Jim Turner, to retire, turning a 17-15 Democratic edge to a 22-11 Republican margin (Barone and Cohen 2006 1575). Without this new map, it is an open question whether House Republicans would have picked up any seats, as the result would have been a net three seat loss for the Republicans if all Texas Democrats had retained their seats or in the case of Ralph Hall, not switched parties.

While the 2004 presidential election was hotly contested, the match for the House of Representatives turned out to be a quieter affair outside of Texas, with only three incumbents in all ousted in the general election. While the election results benefited Republicans, voters overall did not seem in the mood for big change, perhaps explaining why Table 8 only discovered three variables influencing white voters, all toward the Republicans, with none of them differing much from earlier elections, except that voters in the 1988 age cohort showed a coefficient of over 1,

⁴¹ Two Texas House Democrats, Ciro Rodriguez and Chris Bell, lost re-nomination contests for their redrawn districts, but their respective seats stayed in Democratic hands (Barone and Cohen 2006 1575).

indicating that this age group was very Republican in 2004. This runs counter to earlier elections when this cohort was actually weak for Republicans. This may reflect a more contented mood toward the Republican House, a mood that would not last.

Given that George W. Bush's second midterm election in 2006 returned Democratic control of the House of Representatives with a net gain of thirty House seats from the Republicans (Trende 61), the absence of 2006 data is unfortunate as my hypothesized variables might have shown some important shifts in how they influenced voters. The 2008 election, held alongside Obama's historic victory, increased the Democrats' hold on the House with a twenty-one seat gain (CNN Election Center 2008). However, despite the robust Democratic House majority, high income voters stuck with the Republicans, as they had in that year's presidential race. All levels of college education turned whites to Democratic candidates, diverging from the 2008 presidential results where graduate degree earners also leaned Obama, yet no other college education variables tested significantly. While Obama campaigned heavily for young, college educated voters (Pace and Thomas 2012), the college educated seemed to do even more for Democrats down the ballot.

Examining these ten congressional elections did not discover many groups of white voters switching between parties; they remained consistent in leaning toward one party or the other. However, coefficients in some years were lower than others, indicating lower levels of support. Although whenever high income was significant, it moved whites toward Republicans, the coefficients, were smaller in the 2000s than in the 1990s, suggesting that my direct tests may find significant change in the Democrats' direction. Some variables had greater influence on white voters for congressional elections than in presidential elections. College attendance and earning a bachelor's degree were significant factors in much of the 2000s, which was not the

case for presidential races. Age cohorts also surged in importance. Congressional elections opened up the 2000 cohort for the 2002 election, and they swung whites more Republican than any cohort in Table 8. Other variables had weaker or no impacts on voting compared to Table 4. Lack of religious service attendance did not significantly influence whites at all, not even during 1992 when support turned heavily against the Republicans. Whatever problems this particular group of secular voters may have had with George H. W. Bush in 1992, it did not trickle down to the congressional races. And except for 1988, working class status did not significantly influence white voters at all.

Overall, Table 8 affirmed key factions of the parties' coalitions: Republicans win high income earners and usually do well among whites of various age cohorts from 1988 to 1996, with 2000 emerging as a special case in 2002, while Democrats win urban whites, nonreligious voters, and college degree earners. However, Table 8 also broke with the presidential results in showing all levels of college education helped Democrats on the congressional level, not just grad degree earners. Congressional elections also vary the instances of party support compared to corresponding presidential years. Secularism as a whole was not as important for congressional races, while Democrats won among graduate degree earners even when this group did not significantly influence them in corresponding presidential years. Conversely, the older age cohorts showed stronger support for Republicans; for example white voters of the 1988 and 1992 cohorts often supported congressional Republicans in 1992, but they did not back presidential candidate of either party in the same year (as shown in Table 4 in Chapter 3).

Table 8
Democratic Vote Choice in Presidential Elections

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1990</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1994</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>1998</u>	
Constant	-1.072	(-0.136)	-1.089	(-0.14)	-0.802	(-0.119)	-1.498	(-0.161)	-1.112	(-0.153)	-1.73	(-0.217)
High income	-0.37	(-0.352)	-0.852**	(-0.337)	-1.031***	(-0.265)	-0.295	(-0.304)	0.007	(-0.284)	0.036	(-0.308)
Grad Degree	0.203	(-0.242)	0.297	(-0.262)	0.523***	(-0.199)	0.708***	(-0.231)	0.029	(-0.227)	0.751***	(-0.278)
BA Degree	0.064	(-0.182)	0.350*	(-0.19)	-0.098	(-0.159)	0.295	(-0.193)	-0.095	(-0.185)	0.564**	(-0.258)
Some College	-0.036	(-0.16)	0.155	(-0.167)	0.079	(-0.137)	0.164	(-0.176)	-0.159	(-0.173)	0.568**	(-0.231)
Working Class	-0.483**	(-0.204)	-0.26	(-0.203)	-0.265	(-0.175)	-0.105	(-0.214)	0.259	(-0.208)	-0.46	(-0.298)
Urban	0.710***	(-0.189)	0.680***	(-0.187)	0.635***	(-0.151)	0.408**	(-0.181)	0.221	(-0.185)	0.714***	(-0.225)
Suburban	0.661***	(-0.146)	0.034	(-0.152)	0.12	(-0.126)	0.045	(-0.165)	0.194	(-0.155)	-0.152	(-0.203)
No Regular Attendance	-0.198	(-0.189)	-0.181	(-0.152)	0.005	(-0.129)	0.074	(-0.165)	-0.249	(-0.167)	0.246	(-0.226)
Religion not important	-0.123	(-0.149)	-0.154	(-0.172)	0.168	(-0.14)	0.414**	(-0.175)	0.537***	(-0.169)	-0.125	(-0.236)
1988 Cohort	-0.628	(-0.391)	-0.925***	(-0.345)	-0.447*	(-0.24)	-1.221***	(-0.356)	0.446*	(-0.262)	-0.694	(-0.459)
1992 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-1.013***	(-0.356)	-1.500***	(-0.533)	-0.962**	(-0.397)	-1.801***	(-0.609)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.781	(-0.499)	-1.162**	(-0.485)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
No. of Obs:	1214		1287		1578		1244		1158		887	
R2	0.0269		0.0308		0.0301		0.0355		0.0201		0.0539	

Table 8
Continued

	<u>2000</u>		<u>2002</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	-1.38	(-0.161)	-1.538	(-0.157)	-1.099	(-0.183)	-1.51	(-0.164)
High income	-0.523**	(-0.282)	—	—	-0.445	(-0.273)	-0.650**	(-0.307)
Grad Degree	1.065***	(-0.239)	0.837***	(-0.231)	0.666**	(-0.261)	1.121***	(-0.252)
BA Degree	0.778***	(-0.191)	0.549***	(-0.199)	0.34	(-0.244)	1.032***	(-0.194)
Some College	0.333*	(-0.183)	0.448**	(-0.192)	0.108	(-0.211)	0.344**	(-0.177)
Working Class	-0.345	(-0.254)	—	—	-0.127	(-0.249)	0.308	(-0.213)
Urban	0.703***	(-0.206)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.109	(-0.17)	—	—	—	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.066	(-0.179)	-0.182	(-0.198)	0.033	(-0.195)	0.126	(-0.171)
Religion not important	0.122	(-0.185)	0.551***	(-0.202)	0.633***	(-0.207)	0.356**	(-0.175)
1988 Cohort	-0.592**	(-0.285)	-0.842***	(-0.32)	-1.633***	(-0.627)	-0.446	(-0.309)
1992 Cohort	-1.095***	(-0.365)	-1.033**	(-0.415)	-0.5	(-0.374)	-0.505*	(-0.29)
1996 Cohort	-0.798**	(-0.395)	-1.210**	(-0.54)	0.071	(-0.314)	-0.244	(-0.283)
2000 Cohort	-0.386	(-0.458)	-2.214**	(-1.035)	-0.284	(-0.328)	-0.05	(-0.294)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.569	(-0.477)	-0.145	(-0.308)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.604	(-0.454)
No. of Obs:	1117		1150		746		1079	
R2	0.0486		0.0414		0.0398		0.0429	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

No. of observations = 11460.

White Women Voters

Judging from my analysis in Table 9, I can understand the vote choices of white women if I look mostly at income, education, urban residency and age cohorts. Working class status was a greater significant factor for women than for all whites, and it actually moved women away from Democratic candidates (1988-1992 and 2000), even during elections when Democrats won a House majority. Nor did high income do anything to move white women to the Democrats. This variable turned white women against Democratic congressional candidates in all three significant years (1990, 1992 and 2008). In fact, the coefficient in 2008 is higher than for Table

8, so high income was a greater disincentive for white women to vote Democratic even in a year where Democrats were adding to their House majority.

But if upper-income and working class status was not a help for Democratic candidates, urbanism and many, though not all, college education variables mostly moved white women to Democrats. Urbanism was significant for all years, which was not the case for whites collectively in Table 8 (it excluded 1996) so it was a more consistent factor for white women. Among women, college education did more to move white women to support Democrats than whites generally, with a few exceptions. Whites in general were more likely to support Democrats over white women among graduate degree earners in 1998, 2000 and 2002, and for bachelor's degree earners in 2000.

Secularism and age cohorts also mattered less to white women than to whites as a whole, specifically in 1996, 2000 and 2002. 2002 is starkly different from Table 8 in that only the 1988 cohort of white women voted significantly more Republican. All age cohorts supported Republicans when those variables were significant. Also, there were no significant results for the 2000 age cohort and later cohorts, so conclusions are confined to the 1988-1996 cohorts⁴². Secularism/non-religiosity was rarely significant, with only 1994, 1996 and 2004 showing any significance at all, again confined to personal attitudes and beliefs about religion and not lack of religious attendance.

Finally, as with the presidential election analysis, the two marriage variables produced almost no significant results at all. Marriage was only a factor in the 2000 election, where it, expectedly, moved white women in a Republican direction. Having never been married did not

⁴² In running the analysis, Stata showed that the 1996 age cohort perfectly predicted a negative result for the 2002 election and was dropped from the table. As a result, the 1996 age cohort is listed as omitted in Table 9 for 2002.

significantly influence white women at all. As with presidential races, being single (never married) does not affect voting for one of the two major party candidates.

Table 9
Democratic Vote Choice in Congressional Elections,
White Females

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1990</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1994</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>1998</u>	
Constant	-1.176	(-0.241)	-0.732	(-0.228)	-0.842	(-0.204)	-1.375	(-0.276)	-1.272	(-0.255)	-1.769	(-0.343)
High income	-0.576	(-0.466)	-1.085**	(-0.496)	-1.016***	(-0.381)	-0.103	(-0.427)	0.463	(-0.377)	0.058	(-0.46)
Grad Degree	0.757**	(-0.359)	0.151	(-0.409)	0.627**	(-0.302)	0.866**	(-0.344)	0.441	(-0.326)	0.724*	(-0.401)
BA Degree	0.455*	(-0.269)	0.344	(-0.28)	0.147	(-0.24)	0.459*	(-0.276)	0.035	(-0.26)	0.376	(-0.377)
Some College	-0.03	(-0.217)	0.162	(-0.22)	0.096	(-0.193)	-0.034	(-0.241)	-0.127	(-0.231)	0.693**	(-0.298)
Working Class	-0.676**	(-0.284)	-0.643**	(-0.262)	-0.406*	(-0.238)	-0.138	(-0.289)	0.196	(-0.279)	-0.673	(-0.445)
Urban	0.698**	(-0.27)	0.565**	(-0.263)	0.831***	(-0.214)	0.510**	(-0.252)	0.472*	(-0.258)	1.073***	(-0.312)
Suburban	0.703***	(-0.195)	-0.058	(-0.202)	0.164	(-0.175)	-0.019	(-0.225)	0.227	(-0.215)	0.035	(-0.283)
Married	0.158	(-0.212)	-0.27	(-0.193)	0.029	(-0.176)	-0.095	(-0.225)	0.028	(-0.22)	-0.082	(-0.27)
Never Married	-0.077	(-0.313)	-0.055	(-0.3)	0.189	(-0.284)	0.112	(-0.315)	0.025	(-0.315)	-0.126	(-0.47)
No Regular Attendance	0.195	(-0.259)	-0.184	(-0.199)	-0.005	(-0.178)	0.244	(-0.222)	-0.141	(-0.221)	0.382	(-0.309)
Religion not important	-0.331	(-0.231)	0.275	(-0.235)	0.254	(-0.215)	0.491*	(-0.252)	0.479**	(-0.235)	-0.302	(-0.345)
1988 Cohort	-0.64	(-0.532)	-0.706*	(-0.4)	-0.642*	(-0.362)	-2.060***	(-0.588)	0.575	(-0.351)	-0.508	(-0.635)
1992 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-1.170**	(-0.522)	-1.486*	(-0.759)	-0.419	(-0.485)	-2.434**	(-1.023)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.313	(-0.651)	-1.782*	(-0.963)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
No. of Obs:	654		690		817		652		618		471	
R2	0.0483		0.0394		0.0470		0.0597		0.0276		0.0834	

**Table 9
Continued**

	2000		2002		2004		2008	
Constant	-0.904	(-0.239)	-1.463	(-0.25)	-0.534	(-0.286)	-1.406	(-0.259)
High income	-0.469	(-0.452)	—	—	0.019	(-0.437)	-0.932**	(-0.47)
Grad Degree	1.143***	(-0.339)	0.798**	(-0.325)	0.438	(-0.373)	1.469***	(-0.361)
BA Degree	0.630**	(-0.267)	0.634**	(-0.274)	-0.257	(-0.377)	1.073***	(-0.26)
Some College	0.345	(-0.24)	0.555**	(-0.253)	-0.406	(-0.285)	0.193	(-0.235)
Working Class	-0.638*	(-0.325)	—	—	-0.531	(-0.363)	0.164	(-0.284)
Urban	0.864***	(-0.275)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.065	(-0.233)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Married	-0.599**	(-0.235)	-0.204	(-0.218)	-0.354	(-0.259)	0.088	(-0.222)
Never Married	-0.331	(-0.338)	-0.091	(-0.383)	-0.145	(-0.402)	-0.019	(-0.266)
No Regular Attendance	0.183	(-0.237)	-0.086	(-0.271)	-0.1	(-0.281)	0.27	(-0.225)
Religion not important	-0.159	(-0.267)	0.37	(-0.3)	0.758**	(-0.314)	0.224	(-0.236)
1988 Cohort	-0.236	(-0.398)	-0.904*	(-0.49)	-1.320*	(-0.726)	-0.642*	(-0.378)
1992 Cohort	-0.929*	(-0.509)	-0.818	(-0.544)	-0.281	(-0.484)	-0.925**	(-0.409)
1996 Cohort	-1.047*	(-0.572)	OMITTED		0.275	(-0.434)	-0.241	(-0.379)
2000 Cohort	-0.015	(-0.565)	-1.538	(-1.11)	-0.384	(-0.543)	0.188	(-0.38)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.987	(-0.821)	-0.204	(-0.42)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.093	(-0.587)
No. of Obs:	587		616		402		600	
R2	0.0610		0.0325		0.0532		0.0597	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

No. of observations = 6107.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: All Whites

The coefficients from Table 8 will be tested from one year to a consecutive or future one just as I tested the coefficients from the presidential elections. Again, I seek to determine if my voter groups are continuously trending toward the Democratic Party from one year to another. A continuous trend would progress across a sequence of years as follows: 1988-1990, 1990-1992, 1992-1994, 1994-1996, 1996-1998, 1998-2000, 2000-2004, and 2004-2008. However, it is more likely that results will show movement toward one party or another across non-consecutive pairings, such as 1988-1990, 1988-1992, and so on. The results confirm this expectation; as with presidential elections, variables did not consecutively trend whites in the Democrats' direction,

and at times, some variables experienced no change whatsoever from year to year. High income earners, high college degree earners, bachelor’s degree earners, and those who do not consider religion to be important remained the most important significant variables.

The number and percentages of significant chi-square tests are presented in Table 10. Overall, chi-square tests resulted in greater percentages of significant results than the corresponding presidential elections for the same years, indicating that my variables did more to influence voting trends in congressional elections than for the presidential elections. The spike in 1996 is particularly notable, due to a swell of significance of education variables compared to future elections. Interestingly, midterms always produced fewer percentages of significant movement than presidential elections except for 2002, when it rose one percent from 2000. Presidential election years appear to produce greater interest among voter groups that spills over onto congressional races. The fact that 2002 showed greater movement than 2000 is again likely to the heightened political climate following the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Table 10
Percentages of Significant Chi-squared Tests Presented in Tables 11.1-11.8

1988	22	out of	82	27%
1990	15	out of	72	21%
1992	17	out of	69	25%
1994	5	out of	58	9%
1996	24	out of	52	46%
1998	6	out of	28	21%
2000	3	out of	31	10%
2002	2	out of	18	11%
2004	2	out of	12	17%

The results from Table 11.1 show significant changes for three or more variables compared to 1996, 2000, 2002, and 2008 with only two or fewer rounding out the rest. 1988 compared to 1996 shows urbanities, suburbanites, and voters from the 1988 age cohort moved in a more Republican direction, but working class voters and those who did not consider religion to

be personally important all turned more Democratic. The shift from 1988 to 1996 among voters who did not consider religion important could be the result of a backlash against the domination of southerners and social conservatives in the House Republican caucus. On the other hand, urban and suburban whites were more likely to vote Republican in 1996 than in 1988, perhaps due to the fact that voters in 1996 were returning a Republican House majority rather than a Democratic one in 1988.

Comparing 1988 to 2000 discovers voters with bachelor's degrees and some college turned more Democratic, while Republican candidates in Congress benefited from increased suburban support, though particular elections do not line up fully with my expectations for those years. I expected that suburban voters would be more Republican in 1994 relative to 1992 because of 1994's large GOP victory, or that they would be more Democratic in 1998, when Republicans lost House seats. Still, Democrats held their highest support among suburban voters in 1988. Democratic decline among suburbanites helps to explain their loss of the House and subsequent minority status.

White voters who do not consider religion important to their personal lives moved more Democratic from 1988 to 1994 and 1996, skipping 1998 and 2000 before resuming onward to 2002 through 2008. If suburban whites turned Republican, secular whites went in the opposite direction. They voted continuously more Democratic in succeeding elections until 2008, when Democratic support declined. While this result supports the idea that secular voters are moving more Democratic, the slight drop in 2008 casts doubt that a continuous Democratic climb is evident.

Results from Table 11.2's examination of the 1990 election evidenced only one significant change to each future year except for 1996 and 2008. Even though 1990 elected a

Democratic House majority and 1996 elected a Republican one, Democrats in 1996 made gains among some of my hypothesized groups of voters, even mirroring Democratic gains among the same variables from 1988 to 1996, so for much of the first Bush administration, working class whites and secular voters with a nonreligious attitude toward their lives were more Republican in 1990 than they would be in 1996. Perhaps more important, normally Republican-leaning higher income voters moved more Democratic from 1990 to 1996 and 1998. Voters who earned bachelor's degrees were mixed, going Republican in 1992 and in 1996 before switching in a more Democratic direction in 2008. Finally, secular voters, measured as those who do not consider religious important to their lives, progressed to the Democrats in 2004 and by a smaller margin in 2008, again echoing a change from 1988 to 2004 and 2008.

Table 11.3 tracked five significant changes from 1992 to 1996, the most number of significant chi-square tests from 1992 across time, showing that the most change occurred between the two successful election years of President Clinton. The public's positive endorsement of a second term for Clinton seems to have extended to Democratic congressional candidates. Although Democrats did not win the House in 1996, all significant changes from 1992 to 1996 were in the Democrats' direction, even normally pro-Republican variables like high income voters. Voters earning bachelor's degrees also moved more Democratic to all future years. Only whites from the 1988 age cohort showed pro-Republican growth relative to 1992, specifically in 1994 and 2004, both pro-Republican years in general.

Figure 3
Partisan Direction – Income Levels



Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

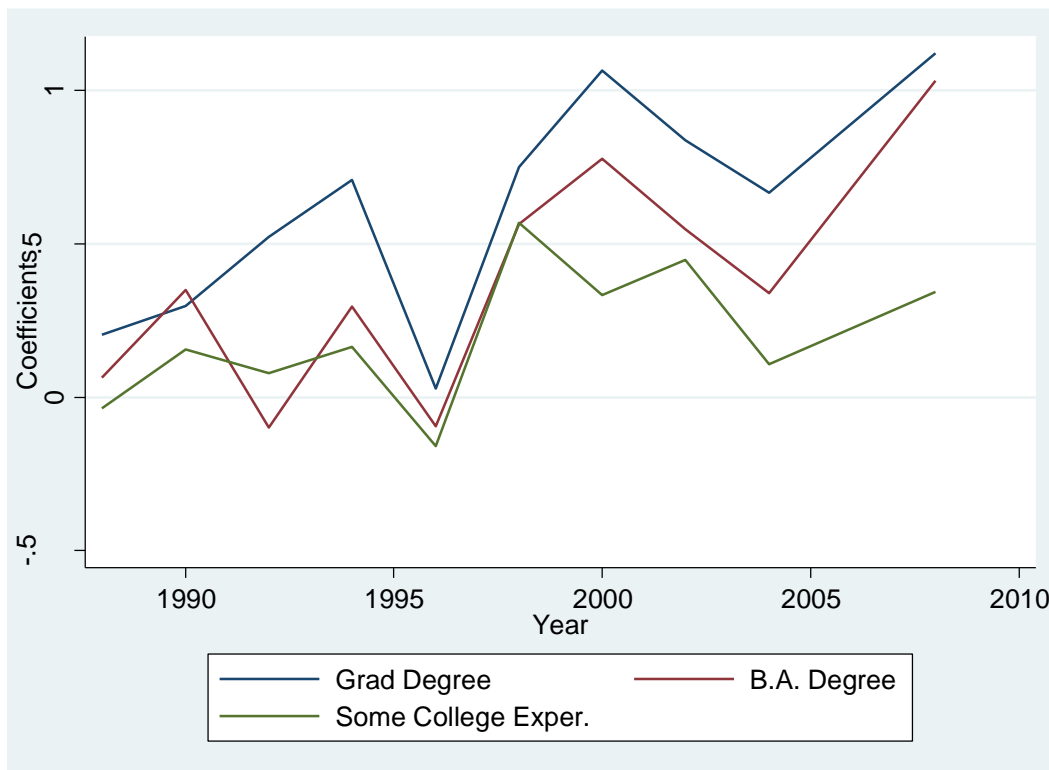
Table 11.4's analysis of 1994 resulted in the lowest percentage of significant changes to future elections. Movement was limited to just one voter group to a succeeding election except for 1996 with significant change of two voter groups, and 2002 and 2004, which had no significant changes at all compared to 1994. The few results show some Democratic losses in the near term, such as grad degree earners in 1996 and voters with nonreligious/secular attitudes in 1998 turning more Republican. In contrast, voters who earned bachelor's degrees turned Democratic in 2000 and even more in 2008. The 1988 age cohort of whites moved toward Democrats in 1996 with such a large chasm between coefficients that tells us while the year of

the Republican Revolution saw many whites of this cohort vote for their candidates, 1996 did a lot to change their minds.

Previous tables have shown 1996 is the year of greatest change from previous elections, so it is little surprise that Table 11.5 shows that 1996 ends up with the most significant changes to succeeding elections, particularly to the years 1998 and to 2000. In every significant instance, variables always influence whites toward the same party. All three college education variables, urban residency, and lack of religious attendance moved whites to the Democrats, while working class whites, those who don't consider religion important to their lives, and those from the 1988 cohort all turned more Republican.

Figure 4 shows the movement of my three college education variables over time. The large dip in the trendlines for all three education variables for 1996 is well illustrated, and shows how these variables influenced whites toward the Democrats in future years. However, the trend is not uniform. All three variables showed increased Democratic support up to 1998, but while the size of the coefficients in 2000 for graduate and bachelor's degree earners is even higher, voters with some college experience dipped in Democratic support. The results are slightly reversed if I go on to 2002. Graduate and bachelor's degrees were less Democratic, while Democratic support increased for those with some college experience. And by 2004, there is no significant movement for mid- or lower- levels of college education, while graduate degree earners slip more toward the Republicans. Move on to 2008, and only bachelor's degree earners show significant change from previous years, in a sharply Democratic direction. So overall, even though the gains are not steady and in some years college education isn't shown to be a factor, congressional Democrats have experienced definite gains in support from college-educated voters over time.

Figure 4
Partisan Direction – College Education

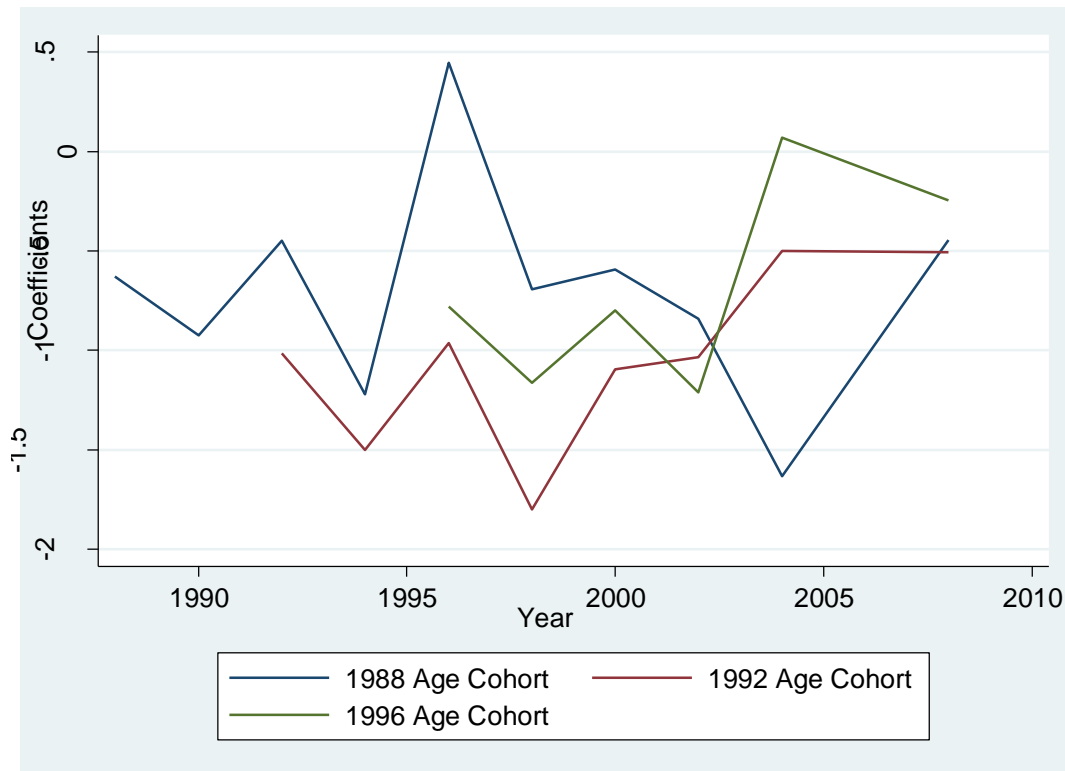


Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Table 11.5 also showed the 1988 age cohort compared significantly from 1996 to all future elections, with all future years more Republican to varying degrees. So far, logistic coefficients have confirmed only a single time when whites of this cohort were willing to back Democrats, in 1996. This trendline is illustrated by Figure 5, with the large pro-Democratic spike in 1996 and the deep valley in 2004 indicating Republican support. By contrast, whites of the 1992 and 1996 cohorts have been more likely to support Democrats whenever there was significant change. Figure 5 displays this trend with the high peak prior to 2005 among the 1992 cohort and the ascent from 1998 to 2004 and 2008 for the 1996 cohort. While no age cohort of

the 2000s showed significant movement across time, I do find some evidence that whites of certain age cohorts, even if they are among my older hypothesized cohorts, are willing to more greatly support Democratic candidates as election cycles progress. This means Frenk's contention that age cohorts may turn more conservative with age is not necessarily the case.

Figure 5
Partisan Direction – Age Cohorts

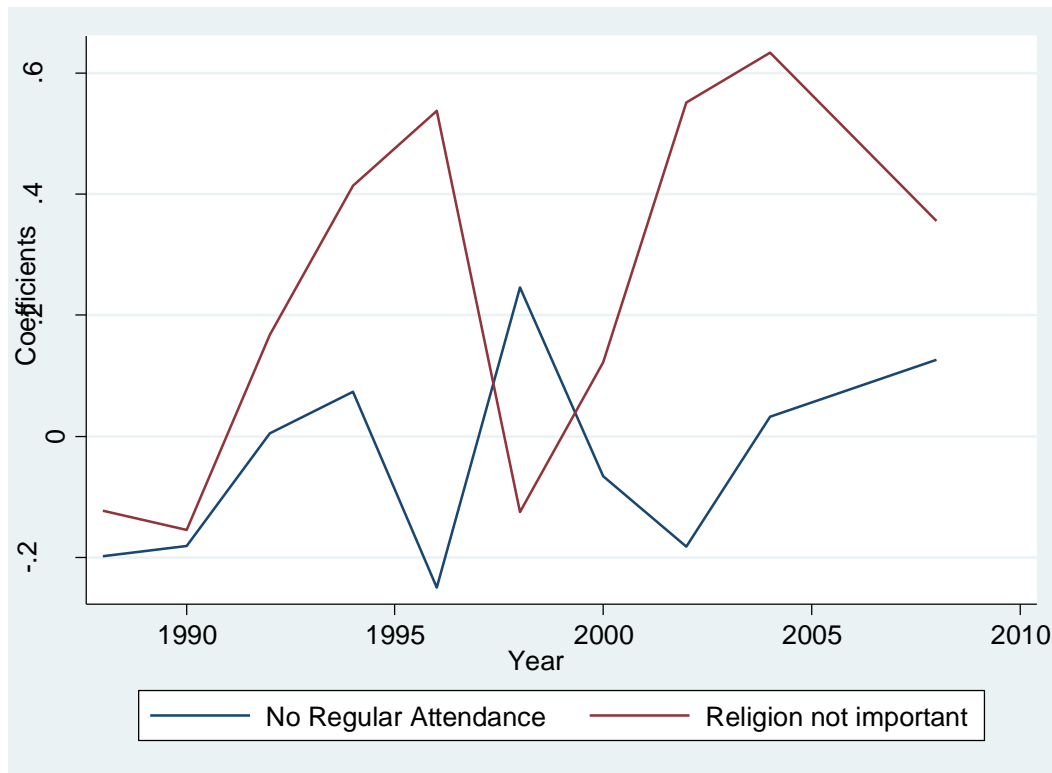


Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

The results from Table 11.6's look at 1998 show significant drop-offs in significant changes relative to 1996; there are actually no significant chi-square tests made to the next consecutive year of 2000. Unlike 1996, the 1998 election showed no movement of college educated voters to the Democratic Party, instead focusing on age cohorts and voters who do not consider religion personally important.

With age cohorts already addressed in Figure 5, I will focus now on secular voters. Results from 1998 shows whites who do not consider religion important to their personal lives moved toward Democrats in 2002 and 2004, a reversal when these voters were trending Republican in 1998 compared to 1994 and 1996. Figure 6 illustrates the brief pro-GOP turn of these voters in 1998 before they turn back to the Democrats in future years, showing once again that while Democrats are making substantive gains among some groups as hypothesized, the route to those gains can involve declines in certain election years. Results for voters who do not regularly attend religious services were limited to a single significant pro-Democratic shift from 1996 to 1998, as illustrated by the sharp ascent from the trendline's lowest point in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Partisan Direction – Secularism



Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Finally, the 2000, 2002 and 2004 congressional elections evidenced the fewest significant changes except for 1994, in part due to the declining number of future elections to test. The few voter groups that did test significantly all went Democratic: bachelor's degree earners from 2002 and 2004 to 2008, the white working class from 2000 to 2008, secular voters with nonreligious attitudes toward their lives from 2000 to 2004, and voters of the 1996 age cohort from 2000 and 2002 to 2004. These few results mirror previous pro-Democratic results in previous tables.

In sum, there is discernable movement toward the Democrats in some congressional races, and although not continuous, Democrats have made gains among college educated and secular voters that have not been reversed to 1988 levels. In some cases, variables will influence whites to vote Republican in earlier progressions, such as bachelor's degree earners from 1990 to 1992 or 1996, but will affect whites to support Democrats further down the timeline, such as from 1988 to 2002 or 2004. This is partially because more elections are available to test than the six presidential races for the same time period. This makes more variation possible. Sometimes a particular election will be an outlier, with 1996 the prime example. Urban residency produces significant changes in voting behavior to the Democrats in all instances except for any test of an election year to 1996. In all three cases (1988, 1990, 1992), the preceding election had sent a Democratic majority to the House of Representatives, while 1996 re-elected a Republican one.

Table 11.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1988	to	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.37		-0.852	-1.031	-0.295	0.007	0.036	-0.523	—	-0.445	-0.65
Grad Degree	0.203		0.297	0.523	0.708	0.029	0.751	1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	0.064		0.35	-0.098	0.295	-0.095	0.564	0.778	0.549	0.34	1.032
Some College	-0.036		0.155	0.079	0.164	-0.159	0.568	0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.483		-0.26	-0.265	-0.105	0.259	-0.46	-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.71		0.68	0.635	0.408	0.221	0.714	0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	0.661		0.034	0.12	0.045	0.194	-0.152	0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.198		-0.181	0.005	0.074	-0.249	0.246	-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	-0.123		-0.154	0.168	0.414	0.537	-0.125	0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.628		-0.925	-0.447	-1.221	0.446	-0.694	-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.2
Direct Tests of 1990 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1990	to	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.852		-1.031	-0.295	0.007	0.036	-0.523	—	-0.445	-0.65
Grad Degree	0.297		0.523	0.708	0.029	0.751	1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	0.35		-0.098	0.295	-0.095	0.564	0.778	0.549	0.34	1.032
Some College	0.155		0.079	0.164	-0.159	0.568	0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.26		-0.265	-0.105	0.259	-0.46	-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.68		0.635	0.408	0.221	0.714	0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	0.034		0.12	0.045	0.194	-0.152	0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.181		0.005	0.074	-0.249	0.246	-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	-0.154		0.168	0.414	0.537	-0.125	0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.925		-0.447	-1.221	0.446	-0.694	-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.3
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1992	to	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-1.031		-0.295	0.007	0.036	-0.523		-0.445	-0.650
Grad Degree	0.523		0.708	0.029	0.751	1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	-0.098		0.295	-0.095	0.564	0.778	0.549	0.340	1.032
Some College	0.079		0.164	-0.159	0.568	0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.265		-0.105	0.259	-0.460	-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.635		0.408	0.221	0.714	0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	0.120		0.045	0.194	-0.152	0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.005		0.074	-0.249	0.246	-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	0.168		0.414	0.537	-0.125	0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.447		-1.221	0.446	-0.694	-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446
1992 Cohort	-1.013		-1.500	-0.962	-1.801	-1.095	-1.033	-0.500	-0.505

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.4
Direct Tests of 1994 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1994	to	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.295		0.007	0.036	-0.523	—	-0.445	-0.650
Grad Degree	0.708		0.029	0.751	1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	0.295		-0.095	0.564	0.778	0.549	0.340	1.032
Some College	0.164		-0.159	0.568	0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.105		0.259	-0.460	-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.408		0.221	0.714	0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	0.045		0.194	-0.152	0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.074		-0.249	0.246	-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	0.414		0.537	-0.125	0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-1.221		0.446	-0.694	-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446
1992 Cohort	-1.500		-0.962	-1.801	-1.095	-1.033	-0.500	-0.505

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.5
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1996	to	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	0.007		0.036	-0.523	—	-0.445	-0.650
Grad Degree	0.029		0.751	1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	-0.095		0.564	0.778	0.549	0.340	1.032
Some College	-0.159		0.568	0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	0.259		-0.460	-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.221		0.714	0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	0.194		-0.152	0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	-0.249		0.246	-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	0.537		-0.125	0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	0.446		-0.694	-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446
1992 Cohort	-0.962		-1.801	-1.095	-1.033	-0.500	-0.505
1996 Cohort	-0.781		-1.162	-0.798	-1.210	0.071	-0.244

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.6
Direct Tests of 1998 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1998	to	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	0.036		-0.523	—	-0.445	-0.650
Grad Degree	0.751		1.065	0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	0.564		0.778	0.549	0.340	1.032
Some College	0.568		0.333	0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.460		-0.345	—	-0.127	0.308
Urban	0.714		0.703	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.152		0.109	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.246		-0.066	-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	-0.125		0.122	0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.694		-0.592	-0.842	-1.633	-0.446
1992 Cohort	-1.801		-1.095	-1.033	-0.500	-0.505
1996 Cohort	-1.162		-0.798	-1.210	0.071	-0.244

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.7
Direct Tests of 2000 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	2000	to	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.523		—	-0.445	-0.650
Grad Degree	1.065		0.837	0.666	1.121
BA Degree	0.778		0.549	0.340	1.032
Some College	0.333		0.448	0.108	0.344
Working Class	-0.345		—	-0.127	0.308
No Regular Attendance	-0.066		-0.182	0.033	0.126
Religion not important	0.122		0.551	0.633	0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.592		-0.842	-1.633	-0.446
1992 Cohort	-1.095		-1.033	-0.500	-0.505
1996 Cohort	-0.798		-1.210	0.071	-0.244
2000 Cohort	-0.386		-2.214	-0.284	-0.050

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 11.8
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	2002	to	2004	2008	2004	to	2008
High income	—		—	—	-0.445		-0.650
Grad Degree	0.837		0.666	1.121	0.666		1.121
BA Degree	0.549		0.340	1.032	0.340		1.032
Some College	0.448		0.108	0.344	0.108		0.344
Working Class	—		—	—	-0.127		0.308
No Regular Attendance	-0.182		0.033	0.126	0.033		0.126
Religion not important	0.551		0.633	0.356	0.633		0.356
1988 Cohort	-0.842		-1.633	-0.446	-1.633		-0.446
1992 Cohort	-1.033		-0.500	-0.505	-0.500		-0.505
1996 Cohort	-1.210		0.071	-0.244	0.071		-0.244
2000 Cohort	-2.214		-0.284	-0.050	-0.284		-0.050
2004 Cohort	—		—	—	-0.569		-0.145

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: White Women

Direct tests of the coefficients from Table 9 did not show any group of white women voters continuously trending Democratic or conversely, Republican, across the 1988-2008 time period. The listing of percentages of significant changes across time in Table 12 showed

percentages were generally lower than the percentages for all whites listed in Table 10, except for 1994 and 2000. Overall, percentages of changes were not great, with only 1988 and 1996 breaking twenty percent. Once again, 1996 is the year with the most significant changes to future years with 1988 the runner-up. Table 10 showed 1994 was the lowest, while Table 12 resulted in 1998 and 2002 tying for the lowest number of significant changes among voter groups.

Table 12
Chi-squared Tests Presented in Tables 13.1-13.8

1988	21	out of	100	21%
1990	10	out of	88	11%
1992	9	out of	83	11%
1994	8	out of	70	11%
1996	15	out of	62	24%
1998	4	out of	48	8%
2000	6	out of	37	16%
2002	2	out of	24	8%
2004	2	out of	14	14%

College education influenced whites collectively, and as the direct tests of Tables 13.1-13.8 show, they do so again for white women. Figure 7 illustrates how these variables tracked across time. Graduate degree earners showed significant changes from 1988 to 1998, 2000, 2004, and 2008, and in all instances, the coefficient was higher than 1988. Democratic support was actually highest in 2000 before sliding in 2004, and then increasing slightly in 2008. Mid- and higher- level college education did not produce much partisan movement among white women. For example, in 1988, graduate degree earners did not move in either direction as they did for all whites. Bachelor's degree earners also dropped off in the 1990 table for all years except 2008. In 1996, where movement took place among grad and bachelor's degree earners for all whites, for white women they did not until 2008. Conversely, white women with some college experience not only experienced movement in the same years as whites collectively, they showed movement

in additional years: the 1994 to 1998 and 2002 elections, in a more Democratic direction, 1998 to 2004, 2000 to 2004, 2002 to 2004, which progressed more Republican. This tells us that lower levels of college education mattered more for white women while the mid and upper levels did not, with largely the exception of 2008, when white women graduate degree earners moved Democratic from 1990, 1992, 1996, and 2004.

Figure 7
Partisan Direction
College Education – White Women

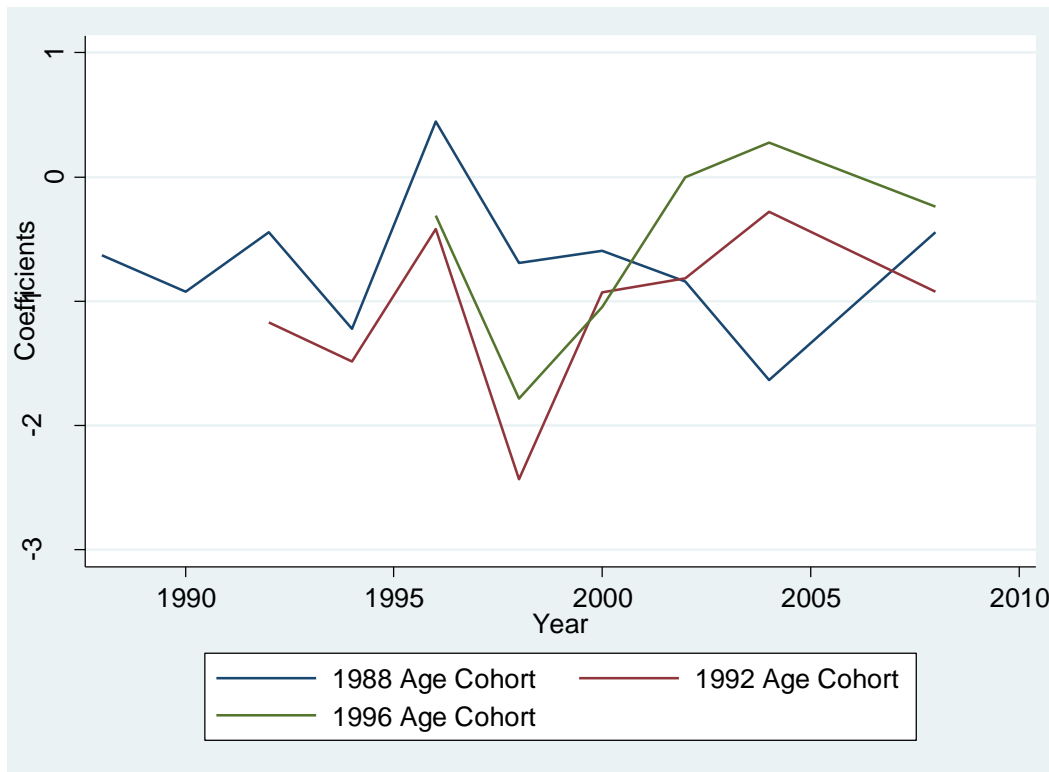


Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Looking at marriage variables, having never been married did not factor into voting decisions and thus showed no significant changes across time, which was not the case for married white women. From 1988, 1992, and 1996 to 2000, marriage moved white women in a more Republican direction, which is generally expected, and the fact that 2000 was the key year indicated this is a late development. However, 2000 to 2008 swung them more Democratic, perhaps helping to reinforce the coalition that supported and increased the Democrats' House majority.

Only the 1988, 1992 and 1996 age cohorts affected the votes of white women, with no cohorts of the 2000s reaching significance, not even the 2000 cohort that influenced all whites in 2002. The 1988 cohort is shown overwhelmingly as the greater influence across time. Figure 8 illustrates that the movement of the 88 cohort actually mirrors the movements of this cohort for all whites collectively, with the same pro-Democratic peak at 1996 and the pro-Republican valley in 2004, before leveling off in 2008. There is also partisan movement among white women that does not occur among all whites, with the 1992 cohort influencing white women in a strongly Republican direction in 1998, as evidenced by the deep dip in the trendline in Figure 8.

Figure 8
Partisan Direction
Age Cohorts - White Women



Positive coefficients indicate votes for Democratic presidential candidates; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

The 2008 election is another example of the influence a particular election can exert over voters with certain economic or social backgrounds. With white women, 2008 pulled a number of previously Republican variables into the Democratic orbit. For example, 2008 is the sole year that moved high income white women in a Democratic direction. Also, many white women with graduate degrees moved more Democratic to 2008 relative to four previous years (1990, 1992, 1996, 2004); otherwise, graduate degree earners barely showed any significant change over time. The same is true for bachelor's degree earners, with six significant chi-square tests from one election (1988, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004) to 2008, almost every instance where a significant

change occurred for this particular group. In addition to pulling certain voters toward the Democrats, 2008 also had the effect of “activating” certain voter characteristics. In other words, college educated voters had special reason to look at voting for Democrats to the House of Representatives in 2008, whereas college education was not so strong a factor in many prior races in my timespan.

Table 13.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections - White Female Respondents

	1988	to	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.576		-1.085	-1.016	-0.103	0.463	0.058	-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.757		0.151	0.627	0.866	0.441	0.724	1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.455		0.344	0.147	0.459	0.035	0.376	0.63	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	-0.03		0.162	0.096	-0.034	-0.127	0.693	0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.676		-0.643	-0.406	-0.138	0.196	-0.673	-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	0.698		0.565	0.831	0.51	0.472	1.073	0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	0.703		-0.058	0.164	-0.019	0.227	0.035	0.065	—	—	—
Married	0.158		-0.27	0.029	-0.095	0.028	-0.082	-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	-0.077		-0.055	0.189	0.112	0.025	-0.126	-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	0.195		-0.184	-0.005	0.244	-0.141	0.382	0.183	-0.086	-0.1	0.27
Religion not important	-0.331		0.275	0.254	0.491	0.479	-0.302	-0.159	0.37	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	-0.64		-0.706	-0.642	-2.06	0.575	-0.508	-0.236	-0.904	-1.32	-0.642

Table 13.2
Direct Tests of 1990 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections - White Female Respondents

	1990	to	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-1.085		-1.016	-0.103	0.463	0.058	-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.151		0.627	0.866	0.441	0.724	1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.344		0.147	0.459	0.035	0.376	0.63	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	0.162		0.096	-0.034	-0.127	0.693	0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.643		-0.406	-0.138	0.196	-0.673	-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	0.565		0.831	0.51	0.472	1.073	0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.058		0.164	-0.019	0.227	0.035	0.065	—	—	—
Married	-0.27		0.029	-0.095	0.028	-0.082	-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	-0.055		0.189	0.112	0.025	-0.126	-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	-0.184		-0.005	0.244	-0.141	0.382	0.183	-0.086	-0.1	0.27
Religion not important	0.275		0.254	0.491	0.479	-0.302	-0.159	0.37	0.758	0.224
1990 Cohort	-0.706		-0.642	-2.06	0.575	-0.508	-0.236	-0.904	-1.32	-0.642

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.3
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	1992	to	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-1.016		-0.103	0.463	0.058	-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.627		0.866	0.441	0.724	1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.147		0.459	0.035	0.376	0.630	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	0.096		-0.034	-0.127	0.693	0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.406		-0.138	0.196	-0.673	-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	0.831		0.510	0.472	1.073	0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	0.164		-0.019	0.227	0.035	0.065	—	—	—
Married	0.029		-0.095	0.028	-0.082	-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	0.189		0.112	0.025	-0.126	-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	-0.005		0.244	-0.141	0.382	0.183	-0.086	-0.100	0.270
Religion not important	0.254		0.491	0.479	-0.302	-0.159	0.370	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	-0.642		-2.060	0.575	-0.508	-0.236	-0.904	-1.320	-0.642
1992 Cohort	-1.170		-1.486	-0.419	-2.434	-0.929	-0.818	-0.281	-0.925

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.4
Direct Tests of 1994 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	1994	to	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.103		0.463	0.058	-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.866		0.441	0.724	1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.459		0.035	0.376	0.630	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	-0.034		-0.127	0.693	0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.138		0.196	-0.673	-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	0.510		0.472	1.073	0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.019		0.227	0.035	0.065	—	—	—
Married	-0.095		0.028	-0.082	-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	0.112		0.025	-0.126	-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	0.244		-0.141	0.382	0.183	-0.086	-0.100	0.270
Religion not important	0.491		0.479	-0.302	-0.159	0.370	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	-2.060		0.575	-0.508	-0.236	-0.904	-1.320	-0.642
1992 Cohort	-1.486		-0.419	-2.434	-0.929	-0.818	-0.281	-0.925

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.5
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	1996	to	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	0.463		0.058	-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.441		0.724	1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.035		0.376	0.630	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	-0.127		0.693	0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	0.196		-0.673	-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	0.472		1.073	0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	0.227		0.035	0.065	—	—	—
Married	0.028		-0.082	-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	0.025		-0.126	-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	-0.141		0.382	0.183	-0.086	-0.100	0.270
Religion not important	0.479		-0.302	-0.159	0.370	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	0.575		-0.508	-0.236	-0.904	-1.320	-0.642
1992 Cohort	-0.419		-2.434	-0.929	-0.818	-0.281	-0.925
1996 Cohort	-0.313		-1.782	-1.047	0.000	0.275	-0.241

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.6
Direct Tests of 1998 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	1998	to	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	0.058		-0.469	—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	0.724		1.143	0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.376		0.630	0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	0.693		0.345	0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.673		-0.638	—	-0.531	0.164
Urban	1.073		0.864	—	—	—
Suburban	0.035		0.065	—	—	—
Married	-0.082		-0.599	-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	-0.126		-0.331	-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	0.382		0.183	-0.086	-0.100	0.270
Religion not important	-0.302		-0.159	0.370	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	-0.508		-0.236	-0.904	-1.320	-0.642
1992 Cohort	-2.434		-0.929	-0.818	-0.281	-0.925
1996 Cohort	-1.782		-1.047	—	0.275	-0.241

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.7
Direct Tests of 2000 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	2000	to	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.469		—	0.019	-0.932
Grad Degree	1.143		0.798	0.438	1.469
BA Degree	0.63		0.634	-0.257	1.073
Some College	0.345		0.555	-0.406	0.193
Working Class	-0.638		—	-0.531	0.164
Married	-0.599		-0.204	-0.354	0.088
Never Married	-0.331		-0.091	-0.145	-0.019
No Regular Attendance	0.183		-0.086	-0.1	0.27
Religion not important	-0.159		0.37	0.758	0.224
1988 Cohort	-0.236		-0.904	-1.32	-0.642
1992 Cohort	-0.929		-0.818	-0.281	-0.925
1996 Cohort	-1.047		0.000	0.275	-0.241
2000 Cohort	-0.015		-1.538	-0.384	0.188

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 13.8
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections
White Female Respondents

	2002	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
High income	—		0.019	-0.932		0.019		-0.932
Grad Degree	0.798		0.438	1.469		0.438		1.469
BA Degree	0.634		-0.257	1.073		-0.257		1.073
Some College	0.555		-0.406	0.193		-0.406		0.193
Working Class	—		-0.531	0.164		-0.531		0.164
Married	-0.204		-0.354	0.088		-0.354		0.088
Never Married	-0.091		-0.145	-0.019		-0.145		-0.019
No Regular Attendance	-0.086		-0.100	0.270		-0.100		0.270
Religion not important	0.370		0.758	0.224		0.758		0.224
1988 Cohort	-0.904		-1.320	-0.642		-1.320		-0.642
1992 Cohort	-0.818		-0.281	-0.925		-0.281		-0.925
1996 Cohort	0.000		0.275	-0.241		0.275		-0.241
2000 Cohort	-1.538		-0.384	0.188		-0.384		0.188
2004 Cohort	—		—	—		-0.987		-0.204

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Conclusion

The lack of continuous trends across all or even most consecutive years suggests that there is no uniform trend among the various groups of white voters examined, and more valid conclusions can be drawn if non-consecutive elections are compared. Thus while there are some measurable trends in voting behavior across time, they are interrupted by other factors such as individual candidate quality, the campaigns, and the political environment. Congressional results tended to produce greater percentages of significant changes than the tests of presidential elections, though this is largely because more elections were available to test over the same time period. Also, variables that did not produce significant results in a presidential race sometimes would do so in the congressional contest the same year, showing that congressional contests are by no means dependent solely on the presidential contest atop the ballot.

My review of the “top-bottom coalition,” shows high income voters again stay Republican even into the 2000s while working class status was more elastic. Working class status moved whites more Republican in congressional races in the mid nineties, but returned them to the Democrats from 1998 and 2000 to 2008, so those results help support the idea that progress for Democrats among the white working class is occurring. Analyses did not result in significant influence or movement among white working class women regarding presidential candidate vote choice, but some did exist for choosing congressional candidates. Generally, they were more likely to vote for Republicans, but again they turned Democratic going into 2008. So Democrats made clear gains among the working class that have not been reversed to 1988 levels.

Analysis of the three college education variables continued to support the hypothesis that graduate degree earners are moving to the Democratic Party. The 1992 and 1996 to 2004 tests in Tables 7 and 8, respectively, showed grad degree earners from the Clinton years were moving to

vote more Democratic during Bush 43's re-election. More importantly, my analysis evidenced Democratic support among lower levels of college education that did not occur in presidential elections. In all, congressional Democratic candidates gained among the college educated and likely helped to build their House majority in the late 2000s.

My urban and suburban variables tested similarly to presidential results. Urban residents were consistently Democratic though not necessarily much more over time. Urban white support seemed to decline for Democrats in congressional races in the mid-nineties but picked up again in 1998 and 2000. Suburban residency did little, except to show a pro-Republican move from 1988 to future years that helped explain the coming loss of the House for the Democrats in 1994.

While the 1992 presidential election sparked a strong anti-Republican reaction among whites who did not attend religious services, the same reaction did not manifest for congressional races. Instead, secularism emerged as an influence on whites and white women in 1994, during the year Republicans won the House of Representatives, and generally showed significant changes in 2000, 2002 and 2004 relative to previous years, mostly among secular voters who did not hold religion to be important to their personal lives. These changes illustrate that secularism, particularly those voters with a secular attitude towards their lives, developed as a factor in congressional races primarily in the mid-1990s and grew in the 2000s.

As with presidential races, there was little to say about married women or women who have never been married. The few results for married women generally show Republican support up to 2000 with a move toward the Democrats in 2008, while women who have never been married showed no significant preference for candidates of either party. While married women have generally been claimed to be a Republican constituency, the pro-Democratic shift in 2008,

when the Democrats gained House seats, evidenced these voters can be persuaded to abandon Republican candidates.

No age cohort originating in the 2000s approached significance, so I could not measure how young voters of this time period were influenced during the Bush 43 years and the lead up to Obama's first election. The 1988, 1992 and 1996 white voter cohorts generally supported Republicans, but not always, as the 1988 cohort moved all whites collectively to vote for congressional Democrats in 1996, and many age cohorts did trend less Republican to 2008, which given the robust Democratic majority elected that year, is not surprising.

The possibility of a continuous, unbroken trend toward Democrats over time among my hypothesized voter groups is not supported by vote choice in either congressional or presidential races, but Democrats have made lasting changes among certain hypothesized voter groups into the year 2008 that helped the party elect Barack Obama to the presidency along with a Democratic House majority in 2006 that was built on in 2008. This and the previous chapter affirmed that key voter groups are important for either major party's success, and that individual elections are the driving forces that affect the behavior of voters. Still, measures of long term partisan change are not confined to simply voting for political candidates. The next chapter will tackle the question of how respondents identify with either the Republicans or the Democrats over time.

CHAPTER 5

PARTY IDENTIFICATION: ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

Political party identification is considered by some scholars to operate like a social identity much like religious or ethnic identification and is influenced by one's identification with social groups (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002) or chosen as a result of one's ideology and issue stands (Abramowitz and Saunders 2005). Either perspective works well for my alternate analysis of my selected voter groups; if they are more likely to vote for Democratic candidates over time, it makes sense that they may also choose to identify more with the Democratic Party, a premise this chapter confirms. However, party ID and vote choice are rarely perfectly in sync. Although voters are very likely to support the candidate of the party the voter identifies with, some divergence may occur, as presidential or congressional candidates may run ahead of the partisan identification of voters, or even win support of groups that identify with the other party. Findings not only show that selected voter groups are identifying more with the Democratic Party, but that some groups are willing to cross party lines to vote for Democratic candidates.

My dependent variable is coded by the respondent's identification with the Democratic Party. Drawing from all the partisan identifiers from the ANES seven-point survey⁴³, all Democratic identifiers are collapsed into one category and coded = 1 with Republicans = 0. Party identification is measured against the same model of variables used to test the voting behavior of white voters and white women⁴⁴, using logistic analyses per year followed by direct testing of those coefficients from year to year. The same even year-timeframe used for congressional

⁴³ Again, while excluding pure independents, whose party leanings cannot be determined.

⁴⁴ Specifically, Hypotheses 17 (high income whites), 18 (white working class), 19 (urban whites), 20 (white graduate and post-graduate degree earners), 21 (whites of age cohorts during Democratic administrations), 22 (secular white voters), 23 (white working women), and 24 (white single women). These hypotheses speculate that these groups will identify more Democratic during the decade between 1988 and 2008.

analyses is used here, showing how party identification moves across time during presidential and congressional elections. Previous limitations on not having income variables for 2002 and not having survey results for the year 2006 in the NES data set will also apply here. Finally, I will also use line graphs to illustrate how variables differ in influencing partisan identification compared to vote choice.

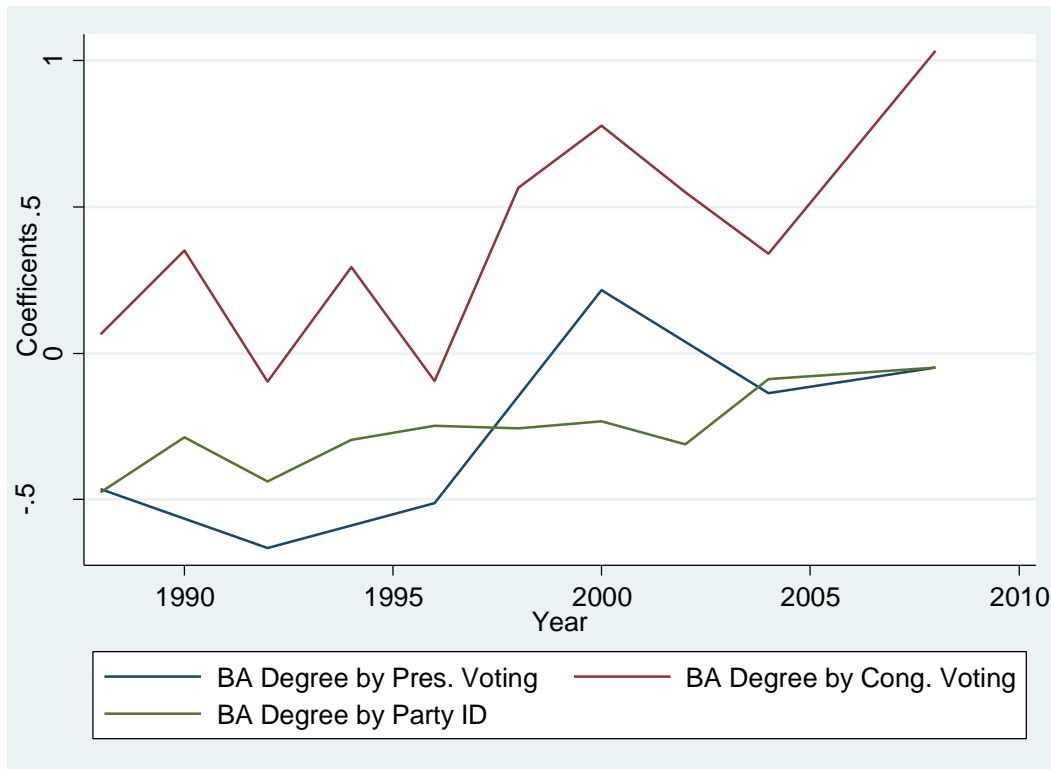
The logistic analysis of whites collectively in Table 14 shows my variables generally aligned with the same political parties as in the presidential analysis, while diverging more with their partisan choices in congressional elections. High income whites identified as Republicans each year the results were significant, even in 2008 when the Democratic majority was said to have emerged (Judis 2008). Whites in each of the hypothesized age cohorts also identified Republican, except for the 1996 cohort in 2004, which identified with the Democrats. Conversely, urban, secular, and working class whites identified Democratic, paralleling their pro-Democratic support in voting for the party's candidates in previous chapters.

Some variables affected party identification more than vote choice. Urbanism significantly influenced whites to identify Democratic in 1996 but did not affect presidential voting choice that same year. Likewise, working class whites identified Democratic in 1992 and 2008 but were not significantly more likely to vote for Democratic presidential candidates in those years. The divergence between party identification and vote choice is starker in congressional elections. Working class whites were more likely to support Democratic congressional candidates only in 1988, and low income whites also are more likely to identify with the Democratic Party than to vote for its candidates.

Mid- and lower- levels of college educated whites identify Republican and at times tracked closely with presidential vote choice. Graphing the coefficients of party identification,

presidential vote, and congressional vote, Figure 9 illustrates that party ID for bachelor's degree earners ran closer to presidential vote choice than to congressional candidate choice. In all significant years, whites of this education level identified Republican while supporting Democrats for Congress, especially in later years.

Figure 9
Bachelor's Degree Earners by Party ID, Presidential and Congressional Voting

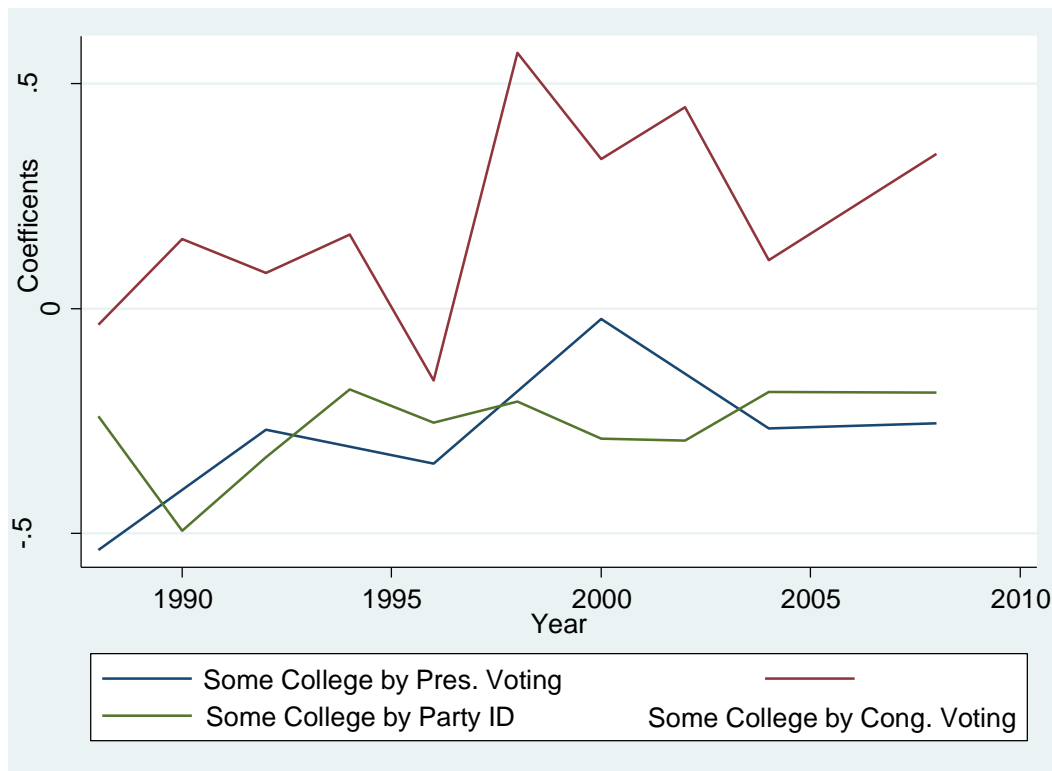


Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Similar results occur for whites with college experience but no degree attainment. This group identified Republican and voted for Republican presidential candidates in all years this group showed significant results, but this group would vote Democratic for Congress in the 2000s after backing Republicans in the 1990s.

It is important to note that these two levels of college education stopped significantly affecting party identification and presidential voting in 2004 and 2008 while still influencing their votes for Democratic congressional candidates in the same years. This is another case of how particular elections can appeal to specific voter backgrounds and draw those voters toward one political party. In this case, Democrats appealed to these voters in House races in a way they did not for the presidency or to identify with their party.

Figure 10
Some College Experience by Party ID, Presidential and Congressional Voting



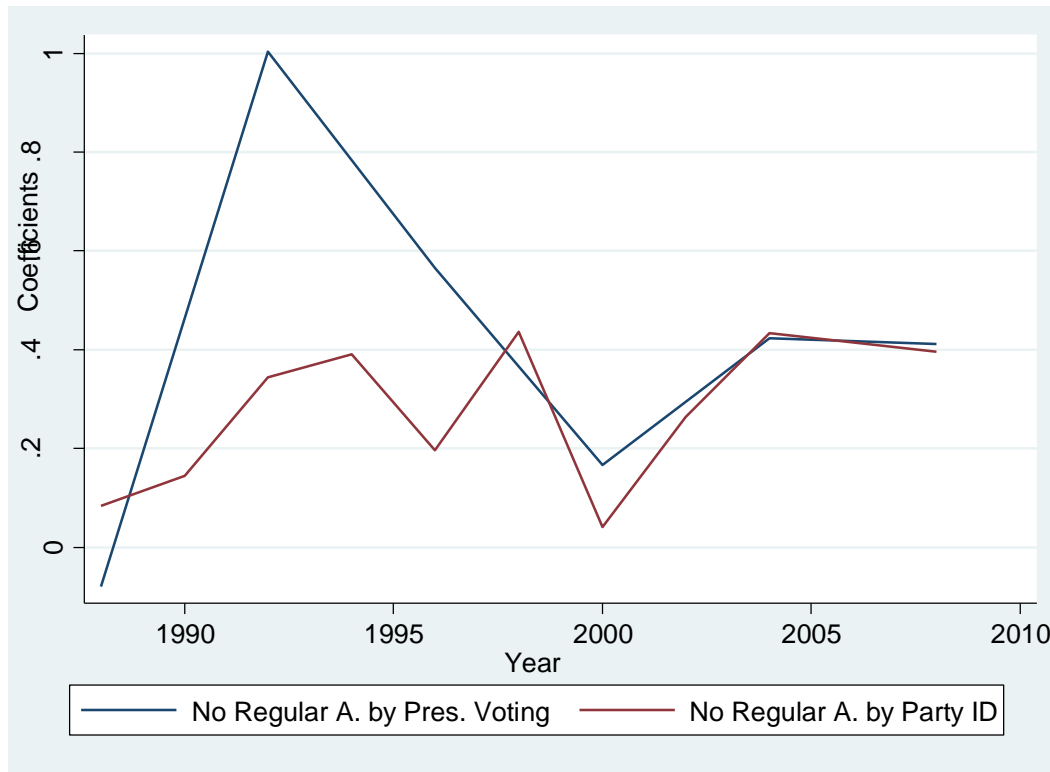
Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Secular voters universally identified with the Democratic Party, though the two secularism variables were rarely significant at the same time. Lack of religious attendance was significant from 1992 to 1994 and then again in 1998, but in 2000 significance switched to

secularism measured by those who did not consider religion important to their lives. This remained the case until 2004, when both groups identified Democratic at the same time. Also, while lack of religious attendance gave Democratic party identification greater support than my secularism attitude variable, attitude had trumped lack of religious attendance in backing Democratic presidential candidates. So secularism measured by lack of religious attendance does more to influence whites to identify with Democrats, while lack of religious belief would provide greater support to voting for Democratic presidential candidates.

Figure 11 illustrates how whites who do not regularly attend religious services tracked for party ID and presidential vote choice. Since no coefficients for congressional voting showed significance, they are not included. The large 1992 spike when these voters supported Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton dwarfs these voters' identification for the Democratic Party. These voters reacted negatively to the Republican president George Bush but did not revolt to such a degree against his party. However, the two lines converge almost completely by 2004 and remain very close in the last years of the 1988-2008 timespan, showing that Democrats have made important gains both in vote choice and identification, marking these voters as an important part of their coalition.

Figure 11
No Regular Attendance of Religious Services by Party ID and Presidential Voting

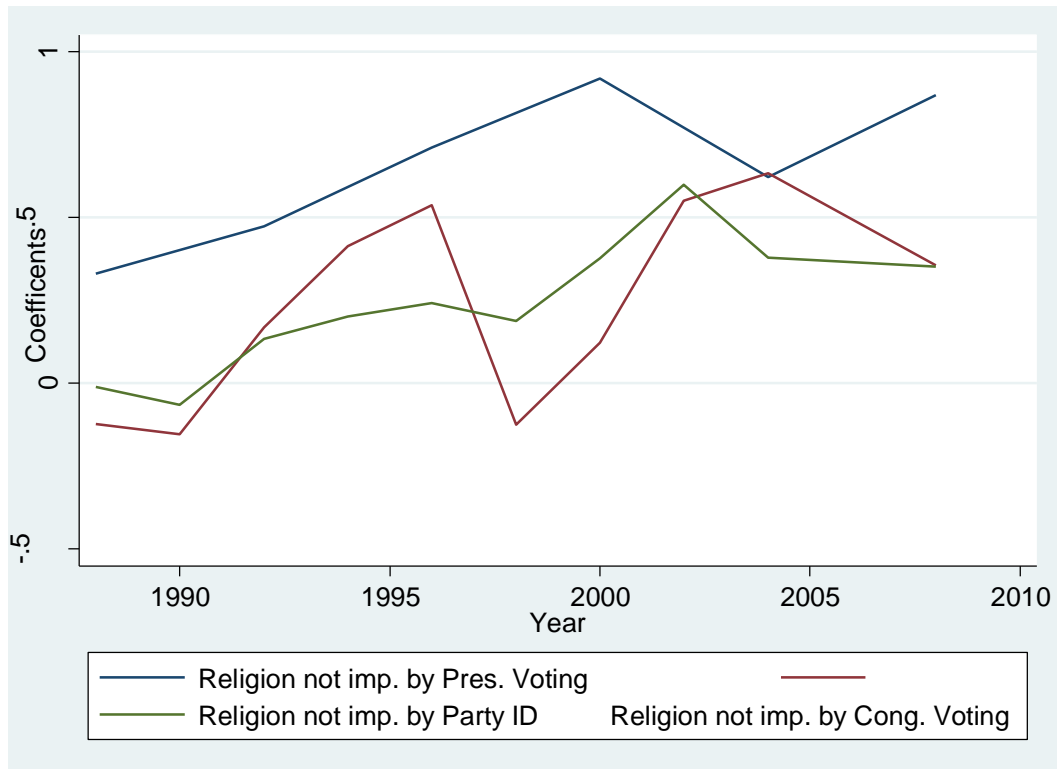


Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Whites who did not consider religion important to their lives showed significance across all three analyses, so Figure 12 compares how these voters differed across all three tracks. This time, the results actually show party ID closer to congressional vote choice than presidential, particularly in 2008, where these voters showed a pro-Democratic coefficient of 0.870 in Table 4 (presidential races), but only a 0.351 in Table 14 (party ID) and 0.356 in Table 8 (congressional races), all illustrated at the end of the graph. These secular voters were more likely to vote for Democratic candidate Barack Obama, but not as likely to identify Democratic or vote for Democratic congressional candidates that same year, so this is one group President Obama may have attracted ahead of the Democratic norm for that year. This illustrates how presidential

candidates can sometimes show unique appeal beyond partisan identification or the performance of the party's candidates downballot.

Figure 12
Religion Not Important by Party ID, Presidential and Congressional Voting



Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

That party ID and presidential vote choice can track closely in several instances may point to greater partisan decision making on voting for presidential candidates than congressional candidates, as members of Congress are also evaluated on local issues apart from the national agenda. The fact that party identification sometimes ran behind the level of support for the presidential candidates illustrates that candidate appeal and exogenous events can exceed the regular partisan composition of the country.

Table 14
Democratic Party Identification

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1990</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1994</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>1998</u>	
Constant	-0.408	(-0.122)	-0.066	(-0.119)	-0.287	(-0.111)	-0.487	(-0.130)	-0.172	(-0.133)	-0.086	(-0.153)
High income	-0.933**	(-0.391)	-1.211***	(-0.300)	-0.722***	(-0.240)	-0.694**	(-0.291)	-0.498*	(-0.267)	-0.364	(-0.271)
Grad Degree	0.192	(-0.238)	0.066	(-0.244)	0.217	(-0.194)	-0.017	(-0.219)	0.024	(-0.207)	-0.377	(-0.234)
BA Degree	-0.475***	(-0.177)	-0.287*	(-0.171)	-0.439***	(-0.151)	-0.295*	(-0.166)	-0.249	(-0.168)	-0.257	(-0.200)
Some College	-0.239	(-0.150)	-0.494***	(-0.150)	-0.331**	(-0.132)	-0.18	(-0.146)	-0.253*	(-0.153)	-0.207	(-0.176)
Working Class	0.245	(-0.175)	0.172	(-0.168)	0.303*	(-0.162)	0.460***	(-0.171)	0.569***	(-0.191)	0.017	(-0.204)
Urban	0.334*	(-0.177)	0.695***	(-0.178)	0.563***	(-0.147)	0.284*	(-0.157)	0.294*	(-0.167)	0.227	(-0.190)
Suburban	0.130	(-0.135)	-0.066	(-0.130)	-0.061	(-0.119)	0.008	(-0.138)	-0.180	(-0.137)	-0.276*	(-0.158)
No Regular Attendance	0.084	(-0.178)	0.145	(-0.138)	0.344***	(-0.122)	0.391***	(-0.141)	0.197	(-0.148)	0.436**	(-0.169)
Religion Not important	-0.011	(-0.144)	-0.065	(-0.155)	0.133	(-0.136)	0.202	(-0.154)	0.241	(-0.159)	0.187	(-0.183)
1988 Cohort	-0.766*	(-0.368)	-0.108	(-0.235)	-0.136	(-0.223)	-0.012	(-0.233)	0.328	(-0.261)	0.083	(-0.331)
1992 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.436	(-0.275)	-0.037	(-0.298)	0.189	(-0.273)	-0.323	(-0.308)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.226	(-0.375)	-0.607**	(-0.301)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
No. of Obs:	1208		1282		1570		1240		1156		881	
R2:	0.017		0.035		0.034		0.026		0.025		0.028	

Table 14
Continued

	<u>2000</u>		<u>2002</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	-0.262	(-0.133)	-0.288	(-0.122)	-0.550	(-0.159)	-0.495	(-0.132)
High income	-0.551**	(-0.276)	—	—	-0.281	(-0.25)	-0.971***	(-0.290)
Grad Degree	-0.007	(-0.223)	-0.246	(-0.207)	0.525*	(-0.25)	0.339	(-0.235)
BA Degree	-0.232	(-0.171)	-0.312*	(-0.167)	-0.088	(-0.219)	-0.049	(-0.176)
Some College	-0.289*	(-0.155)	-0.293*	(-0.159)	-0.185	(-0.191)	-0.186	(-0.153)
Working Class	0.710***	(-0.201)	—	—	0.219	(-0.226)	0.534***	(-0.195)
Urban	0.754***	(-0.203)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.133	(-0.148)	—	—	—	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.041	(-0.151)	0.264	(-0.165)	0.433**	(-0.178)	0.396***	(-0.149)
Religion Not important	0.378**	(-0.163)	0.600***	(-0.176)	0.379*	(-0.196)	0.351**	(-0.159)
1988 Cohort	-0.529**	(-0.248)	-0.907***	(-0.266)	-0.442	(-0.384)	-0.227	(-0.254)
1992 Cohort	-0.540**	(-0.267)	-0.493*	(-0.293)	-0.056	(-0.326)	-0.129	(-0.251)
1996 Cohort	-0.156	(-0.310)	0.254	(-0.339)	0.600**	(-0.302)	-0.057	(-0.256)
2000 Cohort	-0.127	(-0.391)	-0.167	(-0.402)	0.310	(-0.286)	0.218	(-0.261)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	0.336	(-0.412)	0.305	(-0.283)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.218	(-0.372)
No. of Obs:	1107		1121		737		1069	
R2:	0.037		0.033		0.038		0.037	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

No. of observations = 11371.

White Women

As with previous chapters, analyzing white female respondents results in fewer significant variables compared to whites collectively, even with the marriage variables added to the model. Some years only produced a single variable to motivate a respondent's party identification. The number of significant variables are all at least five or higher in 1988, 2000, 2002, and 2008. In all but 2002, these years correspond with presidential elections with no incumbent running, while 2002 was the first midterm since the September 11th terrorist attacks. So for white women, my hypothesized variables made a greater difference on party identification

during open seat elections for president. This is not the case for all whites collectively in Table 21, where the largest number of significant groups (seven) was actually in 1992, when incumbent George H.W. Bush lost to Bill Clinton.

The significant variables affecting white women's partisanship are not much different from those affecting how white women chose to vote for presidential and congressional candidates. Urbanites, working class respondents, grad degree earners and both secular groups identify Democratic. White women with some college experience skewed Republican in all significant years, continuing the pattern of those with lower college education favoring the GOP in specific election years while graduate earners are Democratic, even into 2008. That year white women with graduate degrees or some college were significantly more Democratic, unlike whites collectively.

Marital status affects white women's party ID more than it affects their vote choices. Married women identified more Republican in 1992 and 2008, and were more likely to vote for Republicans in the 2000 congressional elections. Single women, conversely, identified more Democratic in 1996 and 2002. While my two marriage variables were not often influential, the results suggest they do more in shaping political identity than directly affecting voting choices.

Finally, there were almost no positive results for age cohorts except for two pro-Republican results for the 1988 cohort, in 1988 and 2002. So the year of white women's entry into the electorate had almost none of the hypothesized effects on their party identification.

Table 15
Democratic Party Identification by White Female Respondents

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1990</u>		<u>1992</u>		<u>1994</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>1998</u>	
Constant	-0.391	(-0.223)	0.056	(-0.207)	-0.034	(-0.194)	-0.136	(-0.228)	0.08	(-0.218)	0.088	(-0.252)
High income	-0.539	(-0.456)	-0.993**	(-0.409)	-0.549*	(-0.327)	-0.614	(-0.414)	-0.25	(-0.384)	-0.598	(-0.419)
Grad Degree	0.641*	(-0.376)	0.099	(-0.378)	0.384	(-0.294)	0.272	(-0.327)	0.508	(-0.338)	-0.208	(-0.337)
BA Degree	-0.521**	(-0.265)	-0.153	(-0.261)	-0.207	(-0.228)	-0.26	(-0.246)	-0.313	(-0.244)	0.073	(-0.276)
Some College	-0.394*	(-0.202)	-0.349*	(-0.202)	-0.268	(-0.181)	-0.296	(-0.196)	-0.324	(-0.208)	-0.16	(-0.237)
Working Class	0.215	(-0.234)	-0.064	(-0.218)	0.036*	(-0.224)	0.243	(-0.241)	0.063	(-0.259)	-0.144	(-0.288)
Urban	0.471*	(-0.257)	0.777***	(-0.254)	0.396	(-0.209)	0.139	(-0.221)	0.313	(-0.247)	0.249	(-0.258)
Suburban	0.28	(-0.181)	-0.043	(-0.177)	-0.131	(-0.163)	-0.159	(-0.188)	-0.354*	(-0.191)	-0.306	(-0.219)
Married	0.018	(-0.199)	-0.278	(-0.179)	-0.172***	(-0.171)	-0.152	(-0.193)	-0.082	(-0.201)	-0.295	(-0.221)
Never Married	-0.289	(-0.302)	0.459	(-0.291)	0.239	(-0.279)	0.407	(-0.291)	0.651*	(-0.301)	0.001	(-0.353)
No Regular Attendance	-0.019	(-0.254)	0.138	(-0.186)	0.471	(-0.172)	0.552***	(-0.196)	0.739***	(-0.202)	0.664***	(-0.247)
Religion not important	0.146	(-0.218)	-0.01	(-0.226)	0.124	(-0.212)	0.138	(-0.239)	0.042	(-0.241)	-0.002	(-0.277)
1988 Cohort	-1.705***	(-0.647)	-0.053	(-0.307)	-0.16	(-0.307)	-0.127	(-0.328)	0.155	(-0.364)	0.39	(-0.478)
1992 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.500	(-0.43)	-0.013	(-0.464)	-0.13	(-0.411)	-0.434	(-0.38)
1996 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.351	(-0.61)	-0.248	(-0.468)
2000 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
No. of Obs:	649		685		809		649		616		467	
R2:	0.035		0.039		0.031		0.035		0.051		0.039	

Table 15
Continued

	2000		2002		2004		2008	
Constant	0.016	(-0.22)	0.019	(-0.194)	-0.164	(-0.273)	-0.038	(-0.217)
High income	-0.842*	(-0.471)	—	—	0.584	(-0.421)	-0.838**	(-0.423)
Grad Degree	0.115	(-0.318)	-0.42	(-0.296)	0.673*	(-0.375)	0.769**	(-0.35)
BA Degree	-0.532**	(-0.245)	-0.531**	(-0.231)	0.029	(-0.331)	-0.072	(-0.237)
Some College	-0.447**	(-0.211)	-0.654***	(-0.211)	-0.305	(-0.258)	-0.391*	(-0.207)
Working Class	0.586**	(-0.263)	—	—	0.352	(-0.312)	0.193	(-0.254)
Urban	0.622**	(-0.286)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suburban	0.150	(-0.204)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Married	-0.138	(-0.207)	-0.155	(-0.189)	-0.39	(-0.25)	-0.415**	(-0.201)
Never Married	0.263	(-0.317)	0.650**	(-0.331)	0.075	(-0.362)	-0.105	(-0.249)
No Regular Attendance	0.055	(-0.213)	0.483**	(-0.229)	0.425	(-0.258)	0.649***	(-0.204)
Religion not important	0.437*	(-0.253)	0.312	(-0.265)	0.565*	(-0.309)	-0.034	(-0.222)
1988 Cohort	-0.197	(-0.355)	-0.823**	(-0.37)	-0.345	(-0.522)	-0.116	(-0.31)
1992 Cohort	-0.24	(-0.387)	-0.374	(-0.378)	-0.239	(-0.437)	-0.121	(-0.33)
1996 Cohort	-0.672	(-0.43)	0.279	(-0.465)	0.633	(-0.439)	-0.130	(-0.372)
2000 Cohort	-0.397	(-0.5330)	-0.682	(-0.59)	-0.554	(-0.479)	0.382	(-0.342)
2004 Cohort	—	—	—	—	-0.609	(-0.59)	0.210	(-0.373)
2008 Cohort	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.566	(-0.678)
No. of Obs:	581		613		397		593	
R2:	0.048		0.047		0.065		0.051	

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

No. of observations = 6059.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: All Whites

My first round of testing coefficients from Table 14 over time tracks changes in partisan identification over the 1988-2008 timespan just as I tracked the voting choices of my selected voter groups. Table 16 lines up the percentages of significant changes across time and found smaller percentages of across-the-year comparisons in the top half of the table than in the bottom half, showing partisan identification changes were more likely to occur from 1996 onward. This is a change from the presidential analysis, where the percentages tended to taper off toward the last years of the timespan.

Table 16 also reverses the pattern seen in Table 10 (significant changes in congressional elections) of significant change percentages dropping for midterms following presidential years. Table 16 shows that all midterms actually produce greater percentages of significant changes from the last presidential year. Utilizing party ID resulted in fewer significant comparisons across time than the congressional analysis, which covered the exact same years, and also produced fewer percentages of significant groups than the corresponding presidential analysis years of 1988, 1992 and 1996, but more than 2000 and 2004. So with few exceptions, one's party identification is less likely to change over time than one's choice for a major party candidate.

Table 16
Percentages of Significant Chi-squared Tests Presented in Tables 17.1-17.8

1988	8	out of	82	10%
1990	11	out of	72	15%
1992	4	out of	69	6%
1994	5	out of	58	9%
1996	8	out of	52	15%
1998	10	out of	40	25%
2000	3	out of	31	10%
2002	3	out of	18	17%
2004	2	out of	12	17%

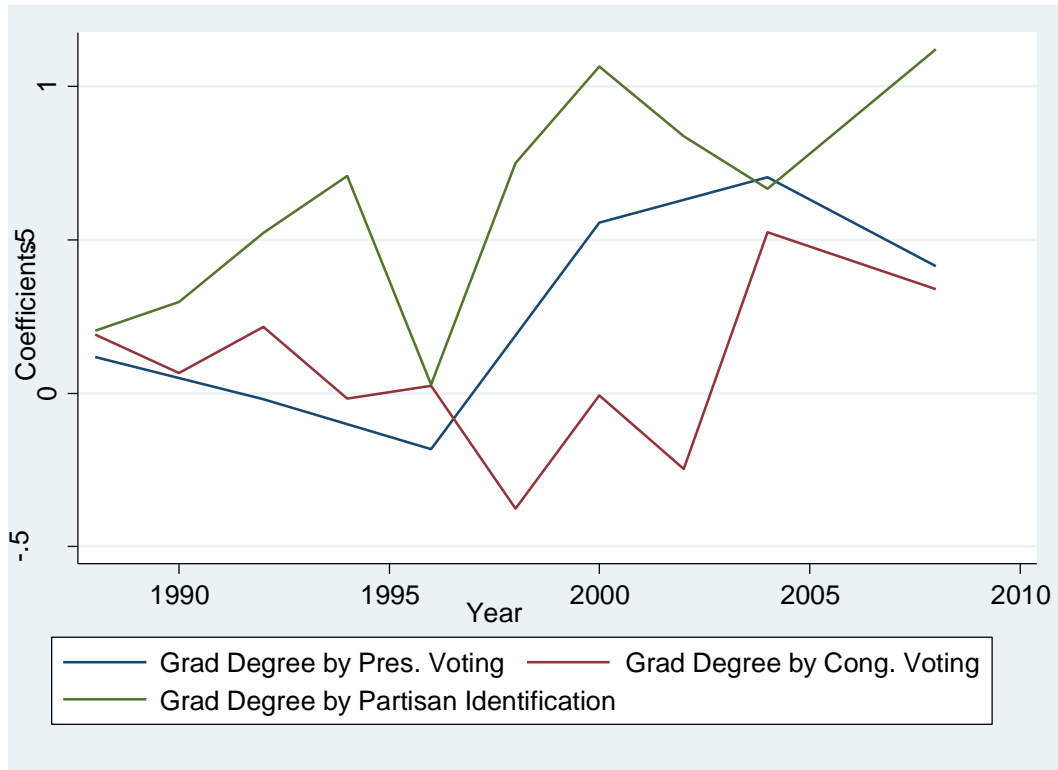
Results show no continuous trends toward one party or another. In fact, there are no significant chi-square tests from one year to the consecutive one until 1996-1998. However, many groups do show a pro-Democratic shift across non-consecutive years, once again mirroring trends in previous chapters.

In examining the “top-bottom coalition” of high and low-income whites, results show higher income earning tended not to matter much at all, shifting more Democratic from 1990 to 1996, 1998 and 2004, but shifting Republican from 2004 to 2008. Working class/low income whites moved more Republican in 1998 relative to 1994 and 1996, but Democratic in 2000 relative to 1988, 1990 and 1998. Again, this corresponds to Judis’ and Teixeira’s assertion that

white working class voters may trend more to the Democrats (66) and as with urban whites, they did in 2000. The absence of significant results after 2000 indicates that the trend may not have progressed any further.

Significant movement for college education groups was limited to graduate degree earners, except for a single 1992-2008 test for whites who attained bachelor's degrees. Grad degree earners identified more Republican from 1988 and 1992 to 1998, but otherwise all of the significant change was in the Democrats' direction, with additional evidence of recent movement from 2002 to 2004 and 2008. There were no such significant changes for the same years in the congressional analysis or the 2000 to 2004 or 2008 period in the presidential table. For the last few years of the timespan, these respondents were more likely to think of themselves as Democrats while not necessarily being as likely to vote for Democratic candidates. Also, Figure 13 illustrates that grad degree earners, unlike the lower two levels of college education in Figures 9 and 10, did not track closely to presidential voting choices or even to congressional vote choice.

Figure 13
Grad Degree Earners by Party ID, Presidential and Congressional Voting



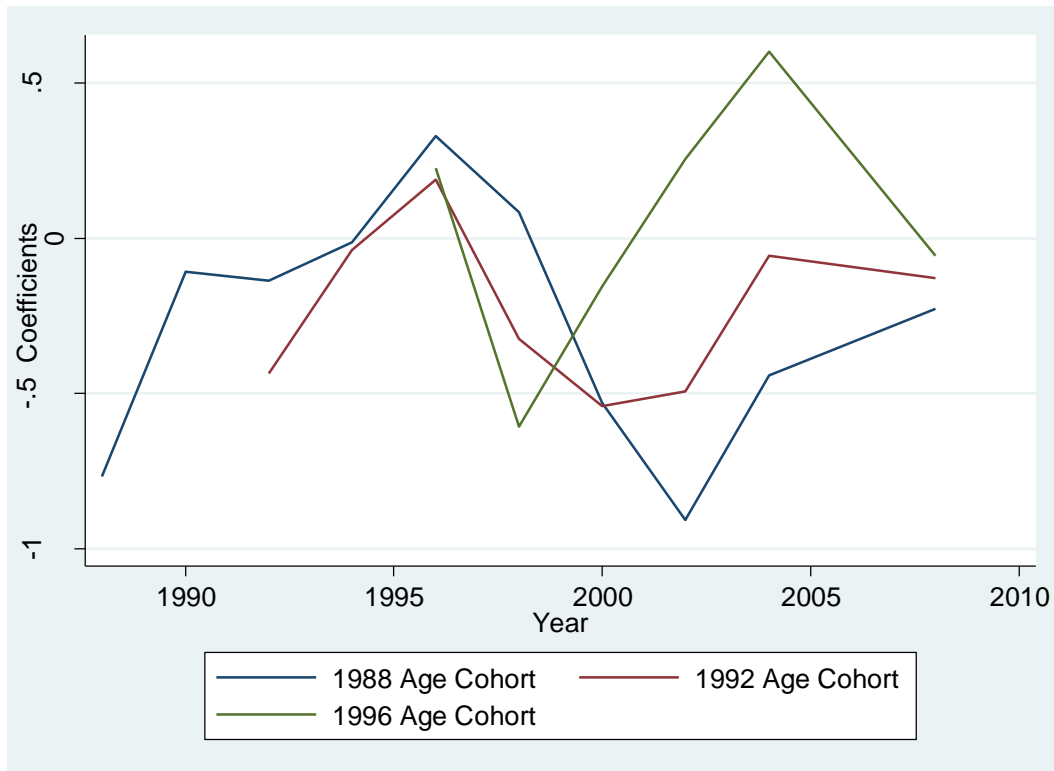
Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Urban whites took a mixed course to an ultimately more Democratic gain in 2000. These respondents identified more Republican in 1994 and 1998 relative to 1990, but then turned Democratic in 2000 relative to 1994, 1996 and 1998. Urban whites had been identified by Judis and Texieria as a Democratic-trending group (65), which is supported this analysis of party identification.

Figure 14 plots the paths of the first three age cohorts. The 1988 cohort moved Democratic from 1988 to 1994, 1996, and 1998, but turned to the Republicans from 1994 to 2002, from 1996 to 2000, from 2002 and 2004, and from 1998 to 2002, before switching back to the Democrats from 2002 to 2008, a result not seen in the congressional analysis. The 1992

cohort identified more Republican from 1996 to 2000 and 2002, while the 1996 cohort moved more Democratic from 1998 to 2000 and 2004, and 2000 to 2004. The changes for the 1996 cohort parallel similar pro-Democratic changes for congressional races in Chapter 4 (1998, 2000 and 2002 to 2004) so this further establishes this cohort as consistently Democratic-leaning, while the previous cohorts are more likely to switch between the parties.

Figure 14
Age Cohorts by Party ID

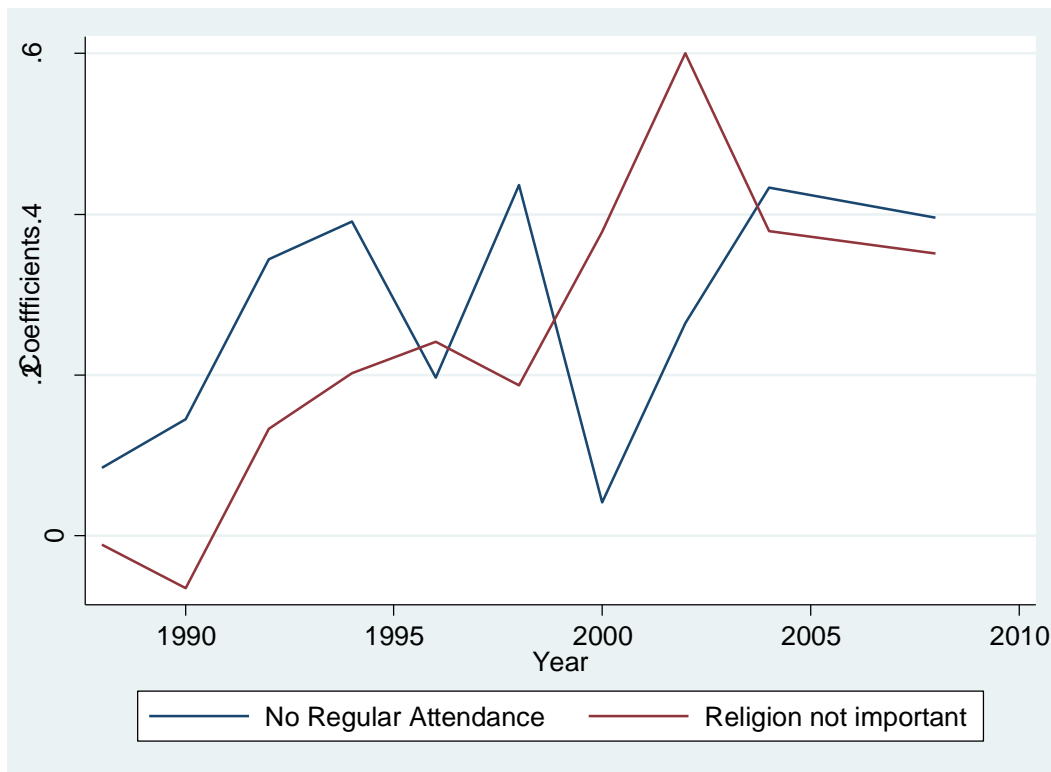


Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Party identification diverged between the two secular variables. Whites who did not regularly attend religious services actually identified more Republican from 1994 and 1998 to 2000, but switched toward the Democrats from 2000 to 2004 and 2008. Once again, a single year is an outlier where groups move to the Republicans while in all other instances significant changes over time go to the Democrats. It is important that all the pro-Democratic moves among

these secular voters are recent; this reinforces my hypothesis that secular voters are a growing Democratic constituency. However, voters who did not view religion as important to their lives always identified more Democratic relative to the previous year, but movement tended to take place over longer periods of time, from the first four years of my timescale to 2000, 2002 or 2008. So secular practice shifted party identification more quickly between elections than secular attitude.

Figure 15
Secular Voters by Party ID



Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

Table 17.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1988	to	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.933		-1.211	-0.722	-0.694	-0.498	-0.364	-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	0.192		0.066	0.217	-0.017	0.024	-0.377	-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.475		-0.287	-0.439	-0.295	-0.249	-0.257	-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.239		-0.494	-0.331	-0.18	-0.253	-0.207	-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.245		0.172	0.303	0.46	0.569	0.017	0.710	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.334		0.695	0.563	0.284	0.294	0.227	0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	0.13		-0.066	-0.061	0.008	-0.18	-0.276	0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.084		0.145	0.344	0.391	0.197	0.436	0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	-0.011		-0.065	0.133	0.202	0.241	0.187	0.378	0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.766		-0.108	-0.136	-0.012	0.328	0.083	-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.2
Direct Tests of 1990 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1990	to	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-1.211		-0.722	-0.694	-0.498	-0.364	-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	0.066		0.217	-0.017	0.024	-0.377	-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.287		-0.439	-0.295	-0.249	-0.257	-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.494		-0.331	-0.18	-0.253	-0.207	-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.172		0.303	0.46	0.569	0.017	0.71	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.695		0.563	0.284	0.294	0.227	0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.066		-0.061	0.008	-0.18	-0.276	0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.145		0.344	0.391	0.197	0.436	0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	-0.065		0.133	0.202	0.241	0.187	0.378	0.6	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.108		-0.136	-0.012	0.328	0.083	-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.3
Direct Tests of 1992 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1992	to	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.722		-0.694	-0.498	-0.364	-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	0.217		-0.017	0.024	-0.377	-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.439		-0.295	-0.249	-0.257	-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.331		-0.180	-0.253	-0.207	-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.303		0.460	0.569	0.017	0.710	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.563		0.284	0.294	0.227	0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.061		0.008	-0.180	-0.276	0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.344		0.391	0.197	0.436	0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	0.133		0.202	0.241	0.187	0.378	0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.136		-0.012	0.328	0.083	-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227
1992 Cohort	-0.436		-0.037	0.189	-0.323	-0.540	-0.493	-0.056	-0.129

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.4
Direct Tests of 1994 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1994	to	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.694		-0.498	-0.364	-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	-0.017		0.024	-0.377	-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.295		-0.249	-0.257	-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.180		-0.253	-0.207	-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.460		0.569	0.017	0.710	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.284		0.294	0.227	0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	0.008		-0.180	-0.276	0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.391		0.197	0.436	0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	0.202		0.241	0.187	0.378	0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.012		0.328	0.083	-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227
1992 Cohort	-0.037		0.189	-0.323	-0.540	-0.493	-0.056	-0.129

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.5
Direct Tests of 1996 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1996	to	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.498		-0.364	-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	0.024		-0.377	-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.249		-0.257	-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.253		-0.207	-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.569		0.017	0.710	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.294		0.227	0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.180		-0.276	0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.197		0.436	0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	0.241		0.187	0.378	0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	0.328		0.083	-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227
1992 Cohort	0.189		-0.323	-0.540	-0.493	-0.056	-0.129
1996 Cohort	0.226		-0.607	-0.156	0.254	0.600	-0.057

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.6
Direct Tests of 1998 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	1998	to	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.364		-0.551	—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	-0.377		-0.007	-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.257		-0.232	-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.207		-0.289	-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.017		0.710	—	0.219	0.534
Urban	0.227		0.754	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.276		0.133	—	—	—
No Regular Attendance	0.436		0.041	0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	0.187		0.378	0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	0.083		-0.529	-0.907	-0.442	-0.227
1992 Cohort	-0.323		-0.540	-0.493	-0.056	-0.129
1996 Cohort	-0.607		-0.156	0.254	0.600	-0.057

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.7
Direct Tests of 2000 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	2000	to	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.551		—	-0.281	-0.971
Grad Degree	-0.007		-0.246	0.525	0.339
BA Degree	-0.232		-0.312	-0.088	-0.049
Some College	-0.289		-0.293	-0.185	-0.186
Working Class	0.710		—	0.219	0.534
No Regular Attendance	0.041		0.264	0.433	0.396
Religion not important	0.378		0.600	0.379	0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.529		-0.907	-0.442	-0.227
1992 Cohort	-0.540		-0.493	-0.056	-0.129
1996 Cohort	-0.156		0.254	0.600	-0.057
2000 Cohort	-0.127		-0.167	0.310	0.218

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 17.8
Direct Tests of 2002 and 2004 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years

	2002	to	2004	2008	2004	to	2008
High income	—		—	—	-0.281		-0.971
Grad Degree	-0.246		0.525	0.339	0.525		0.339
BA Degree	-0.312		-0.088	-0.049	-0.088		-0.049
Some College	-0.293		-0.185	-0.186	-0.185		-0.186
Working Class	—		—	—	0.219		0.534
No Regular Attendance	0.264		0.433	0.396	0.433		0.396
Religion not important	0.600		0.379	0.351	0.379		0.351
1988 Cohort	-0.907		-0.442	-0.227	-0.442		-0.227
1992 Cohort	-0.493		-0.056	-0.129	-0.056		-0.129
1996 Cohort	0.254		0.600	-0.057	0.600		-0.057
2000 Cohort	-0.167		0.310	0.218	0.310		0.218
2004 Cohort	—		—	—	0.336		0.305

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: White Women

The tests for white women produced lower percentages of significant changes than for whites collectively (see Table 18 compared to Table 16). The exception is 1988: 22 percent of the changes over time from 1988 are significant, and that is the highest percentage of all. Percentages plunged after that, only increasing in 1996 and then nearly doubling in 1998 before

falling again in 2000. The dearth of significant results suggests my hypothesized variables did not influence party identification much at all, certainly not in the early 1990s, where some years only produced two significant changes in partisan preference over time.

Table 18
Percentages of Significant Chi-squared Tests Presented in Tables 19.1-19.8

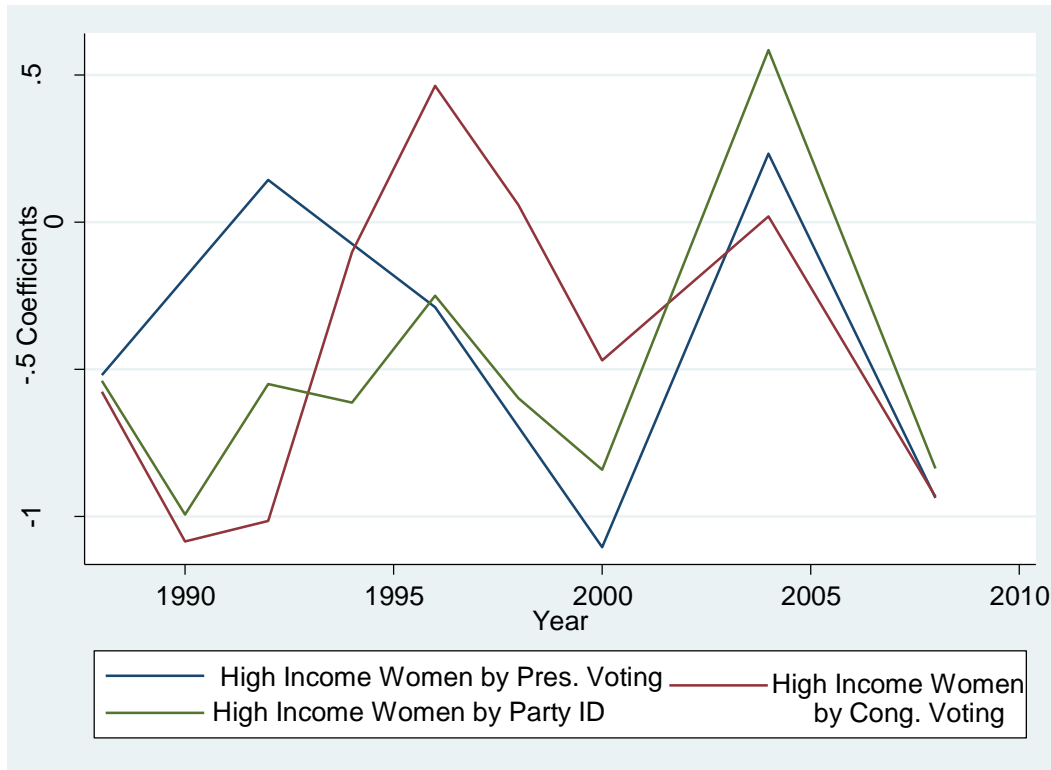
1988	22	out of	100	22%
1990	6	out of	88	7%
1992	2	out of	83	2%
1994	2	out of	70	3%
1996	5	out of	62	8%
1998	7	out of	48	15%
2000	3	out of	37	8%
2002	3	out of	22	14%
2004	1	out of	14	7%

1988 was the only year to produce multiple changes for single white women. Pro-Democratic changes occurred to 1990, 1994, 1996, and 2002, showing a Republican lean for this group at the start of my time scale with a pro-Democratic shift following in later years. However, single white women actually identified more Republican from 1996 and 2002 to 2008. The fact that this group identified more Republican toward 2008 is a major departure from expectations. It is possible Democratic identification was particularly high in the 1990s and early 2000s and could not ultimately be sustained.

Upper-income white women made a decided shift toward the Democratic party in 2004. Every previous year but 1996 (2002 was an exception because income was not included as a variable for that year) tested significantly for pro-Democratic changes leading to 2004. High income white women in 1990 and 1992 had also moved more Democratic in 2004 for congressional elections (the presidential results did not show any movement to 2004 for either party), so a parallel exists here. The lack of significant results for the presidential race suggests

these voters may have had a greater problem with the Republican Party itself and with Republican House candidates for this time period.

Figure 16
High Income Women by Party ID, Presidential and Congressional Voting



Positive coefficients indicate Democratic support; negative coefficients indicate Republican support.

As with whites collectively, certain groups increased in Democratic identification leading up to the year 2000, depending on the year. White working women were more likely to identify Democratic from 1990 and 1998 to 2000. 1988 saw suburban white women shift more Republican to all years but 1990 and 2000, while a significant change to Democrats does occur from 1996 to 2000.

Table 19.1
Direct Tests of 1988 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years - White Female Respondents

	1988	to	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.539		-0.993	-0.549	-0.614	-0.25	-0.598	-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.641		0.099	0.384	0.272	0.508	-0.208	0.115	-0.42	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.521		-0.153	-0.207	-0.26	-0.313	0.073	-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.394		-0.349	-0.268	-0.296	-0.324	-0.16	-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	0.215		-0.064	0.036	0.243	0.063	-0.144	0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.471		0.777	0.396	0.139	0.313	0.249	0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	0.28		-0.043	-0.131	-0.159	-0.354	-0.306	0.15	—	—	—
Married	0.018		-0.278	-0.172	-0.152	-0.082	-0.295	-0.138	-0.155	-0.39	-0.415
Never Married	-0.289		0.459	0.239	0.407	0.651	0.001	0.263	0.65	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	-0.019		0.138	0.471	0.552	0.739	0.664	0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	0.146		-0.01	0.124	0.138	0.042	-0.002	0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	-1.705		-0.053	-0.16	-0.127	0.155	0.39	-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116

Table 19.2
Direct Tests of 1990 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years - White Female Respondents

	1990	to	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.993		-0.549	-0.614	-0.25	-0.598	-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.099		0.384	0.272	0.508	-0.208	0.115	-0.42	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.153		-0.207	-0.26	-0.313	0.073	-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.349		-0.268	-0.296	-0.324	-0.16	-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	-0.064		0.036	0.243	0.063	-0.144	0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.777		0.396	0.139	0.313	0.249	0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.043		-0.131	-0.159	-0.354	-0.306	0.15	—	—	—
Married	-0.278		-0.172	-0.152	-0.082	-0.295	-0.138	-0.155	-0.39	-0.415
Never Married	0.459		0.239	0.407	0.651	0.001	0.263	0.65	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.138		0.471	0.552	0.739	0.664	0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	-0.01		0.124	0.138	0.042	-0.002	0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	-0.053		-0.16	-0.127	0.155	0.39	-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.3
Direct Tests of 1992 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	1992	to	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.549		-0.614	-0.250	-0.598	-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.384		0.272	0.508	-0.208	0.115	-0.420	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.207		-0.260	-0.313	0.073	-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.268		-0.296	-0.324	-0.160	-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	0.036		0.243	0.063	-0.144	0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.396		0.139	0.313	0.249	0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.131		-0.159	-0.354	-0.306	0.150	—	—	—
Married	-0.172		-0.152	-0.082	-0.295	-0.138	-0.155	-0.390	-0.415
Never Married	0.239		0.407	0.651	0.001	0.263	0.650	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.471		0.552	0.739	0.664	0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	0.124		0.138	0.042	-0.002	0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	-0.160		-0.127	0.155	0.390	-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.500		-0.013	-0.130	-0.434	-0.240	-0.374	-0.239	-0.121

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.4
Direct Tests of 1994 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	1994	to	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.614		-0.250	-0.598	-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.272		0.508	-0.208	0.115	-0.420	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.260		-0.313	0.073	-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.296		-0.324	-0.160	-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	0.243		0.063	-0.144	0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.139		0.313	0.249	0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.159		-0.354	-0.306	0.150	—	—	—
Married	-0.152		-0.082	-0.295	-0.138	-0.155	-0.390	-0.415
Never Married	0.407		0.651	0.001	0.263	0.650	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.552		0.739	0.664	0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	0.138		0.042	-0.002	0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	-0.127		0.155	0.390	-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.013		-0.130	-0.434	-0.240	-0.374	-0.239	-0.121

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.5
Direct Tests of 1996 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	1996	to	1998	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.250		-0.598	-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.508		-0.208	0.115	-0.420	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.313		0.073	-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.324		-0.160	-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	0.063		-0.144	0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.313		0.249	0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.354		-0.306	0.150	—	—	—
Married	-0.082		-0.295	-0.138	-0.155	-0.390	-0.415
Never Married	0.651		0.001	0.263	0.650	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.739		0.664	0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	0.042		-0.002	0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	0.155		0.390	-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.130		-0.434	-0.240	-0.374	-0.239	-0.121
1996 Cohort	0.351		-0.248	-0.672	0.279	0.633	-0.130

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.6
Direct Tests of 1998 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	1998	to	2000	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.598		-0.842	—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	-0.208		0.115	-0.420	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	0.073		-0.532	-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.160		-0.447	-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	-0.144		0.586	—	0.352	0.193
Urban	0.249		0.622	—	—	—
Suburban	-0.306		0.150	—	—	—
Married	-0.295		-0.138	-0.155	-0.390	-0.415
Never Married	0.001		0.263	0.650	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.664		0.055	0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	-0.002		0.437	0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	0.390		-0.197	-0.823	-0.345	-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.434		-0.240	-0.374	-0.239	-0.121
1996 Cohort	-0.248		-0.672	0.279	0.633	-0.130

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.7
Direct Tests of 2000 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	2000	to	2002	2004	2008
High income	-0.842		—	0.584	-0.838
Grad Degree	0.115		-0.42	0.673	0.769
BA Degree	-0.532		-0.531	0.029	-0.072
Some College	-0.447		-0.654	-0.305	-0.391
Working Class	0.586		—	0.352	0.193
Married	-0.138		-0.155	-0.39	-0.415
Never Married	0.263		0.65	0.075	-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.055		0.483	0.425	0.649
Religion not important	0.437		0.312	0.565	-0.034
1988 Cohort	-0.197		-0.823	-0.345	-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.24		-0.374	-0.239	-0.121
1996 Cohort	-0.672		0.279	0.633	-0.13
2000 Cohort	-0.397		-0.682	-0.554	0.382

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 19.8
Direct Tests of 2002 and 2004 Coefficients to Succeeding Election Years
White Female Respondents

	2002	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
High income	—		—	—		0.584		-0.838
Grad Degree	-0.420		0.673	0.769		0.673		0.769
BA Degree	-0.531		0.029	-0.072		0.029		-0.072
Some College	-0.654		-0.305	-0.391		-0.305		-0.391
Working Class	—		—	—		0.352		0.193
Married	-0.155		-0.390	-0.415		-0.390		-0.415
Never Married	0.650		0.075	-0.105		0.075		-0.105
No Regular Attendance	0.483		0.425	0.649		0.425		0.649
Religion not important	0.312		0.565	-0.034		0.565		-0.034
1988 Cohort	-0.823		-0.345	-0.116		-0.345		-0.116
1992 Cohort	-0.374		-0.239	-0.121		-0.239		-0.121
1996 Cohort	0.279		0.633	-0.130		0.633		-0.130
2000 Cohort	-0.682		-0.554	0.382		-0.554		0.382
2004 Cohort	—		—	—		-0.609		0.210

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Conclusion

The results of this chapter confirm voters of certain economic and socio-backgrounds are not just voting more Democratic over time but are choosing to identify more with the Democratic Party as well. While not continuous, Democrats experienced gains in identification among graduate degree earners, urbanites, and secular voters. Results have also shown some variables affected partisan identity more than vote choice, particularly marital status for both married and single white women. This alternative analysis of my hypothesized variables has also singled out a number of swing groups that may identify with one party but not vote for their candidates with the same intensity. As previously shown, President Obama outran Democratic partisan identification among secular whites in the 2008 presidential election.

Analysis of the “top-bottom coalition” discovered high income whites generally stay with the Republicans even into the 2000s in presidential races, but were more likely to identify Democratic than vote for their candidates. Working class whites identified with different parties depending on the election year, but ultimately identified more Democratic by the year 2000. Taken with similar Democratic gains in vote choice in presidential and congressional races, it can be concluded Democrats have made gains among the white working class in both party identity and support at the polls.

White working women leaned Democratic in identification for significant years, for both individual elections and for significant changes over time, while voting Republican during congressional elections⁴⁵, suggesting low income does more to shape Democratic political identity among white women than to influence them to elect their candidates. This is important

⁴⁵ Again, no significant results for presidential elections.

as any group that identifies Democratic but has a history of crossing party lines is sure to be marked as a key swing group.

Analysis of college-educated whites continued to show graduate degree earners, both collectively and women only, moving to the Democratic Party in the recent years of the timespan. Republicans continue to have support among lower levels of college experience in specific elections, but there was very little change in party identification from year to year. Whites who attained bachelor's degrees shifted Democratic from 1990 to 2008 while white women with the same education achievement moved Republican from 1992 and 1998 to 2002. College experienced whites showed no changes at all. In addition, analysis of party ID found an instance where college educated white women may be engaging in crossover voting. In 2002, women who attain bachelor's degrees and those with some college experience supported Democrats for congressional races, while they identified as Republicans for the same year. Again, these results could mark these voters as a swing group.

Urban residents consistently identified Democratic, but not necessarily much more over time. Coefficients started out strong, then dropped before increasing to 2000, indicating a "Gore surge" at work that affected other groups, showing that these voters were especially attracted to the candidacy of Vice President Gore. Meanwhile, suburban residency did little for party identification. Among suburban white women, there were pro-Republican changes in Table 19.1 (1988) and a pro-Democratic shift from 1996 to 2000 in Table 19.5.

Another pro-Democratic surge leading up to the year 2000 occurs for whites who do not view religion to be important to their lives, shown in Tables 17.1-17.4 (1988-1994), which coupled with other groups showing Democratic surges to 2000 gives us an impression that the Bush/Gore contest did a lot to sway partisan opinion for several key groups of voters. Although

direct tests did not reveal significant changes all the way to 2008, results show Democrats made gains in party identifiers relative to 1988 that have shown no signs of reversal.

Marriage helped Republicans with white women in identification as well with vote choice. Single white women, on the other hand, were not distinctive in their vote choices, nor were they consistent in moving toward one party or the other. Results showed single white women moving to the Democrats in earlier years of the timescale but then shifting to the Republicans from 1996 and 2002 to 2008.

Results for age cohorts remained concentrated among the 1988, 1992 and 1996 cohorts, with no significant findings for cohorts coming of age in the 2000s. These cohorts tended to influence whites to identify Republican in specific election years while moving whites more Democratic over time. The gender gap helps Democrats here as white women changed more Democratic across time than whites collectively.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 complete my look at individual-level voting behavior and political identity. For the final analysis of this work, I will demonstrate how my hypothesized variables have an effect at the state level, and show how these variables can influence a presidential candidate's winning coalition in the states.

CHAPTER 6

THE STATES: ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

The emphasis on the importance of voting in American presidential elections obscures the fact that no American actually votes for the President. Instead, citizens cast ballots for their state's slate of electors that are pledged to vote for a presidential candidate when the Electoral College convenes in December of that year. The national popular vote is an illusion of direct democracy; in reality the American electorate is more like a jigsaw puzzle assembled out of the fifty states⁴⁶ to attain at least 270 electoral votes for the winning presidential candidate. This chapter focuses on how my hypothesized variables affect how that puzzle is assembled, and the end result shows some of these variables create welcoming electorates in some states for Democratic presidential candidates, particularly states with large post-industrial economies, high numbers of graduate degree earners, and high growth rates in the Hispanic population.

These hypotheses, drawn from literature and speculation of the American electorate from pundits, state that these states will vote more Democratic during the time period between 1992 and 2008, specifically, Hypotheses 25 (median income of states), 26 (state percentages of graduate degree earners)⁴⁷, 27 (proportion of state economies that are post-industrial)⁴⁸, 28 (rate of population increase by state)⁴⁹ and 29 (increase in minorities by state). Since some census data was not available for 1988, the analyses cover only 1992-2008, from the first election of

⁴⁶ And the District of Colombia.

⁴⁷ As with individual-level voters, I am again including percentage of bachelor's degree earners as an alternative variable to see how Democrats perform with lower level of college education.

⁴⁸ I define post-industrialism by the number of employees by state that work in the following areas of the private sector: information, financial activities, professional and business services, education and health services, and leisure and hospitality. These statistics are compiled from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages QCEW Data Files and organized by year. Post-industrial growth is calculated by increases in the percentage of employees in these fields from the previous year.

⁴⁹ Calculated by increase of residents from previous years converted to a percentage.

President Clinton to President Obama's 2008 victory. Although this omits the successful 1988 election of George H. W. Bush, I believe there are still enough years to find progressive Democratic trends among my hypothesized variables, if any exist.

This chapter's regression and logit analyses, with accompanying direct chi-square tests, look at selected characteristics of the fifty states that are hypothesized to increase their states' vote for Democratic presidential candidates. The first analysis will take the vote percentages for Democratic presidential candidates, by state, and use them as a continuous, dependent variable in a regression analysis against my slate of independent variables. The results emphasize post-industrial economies and college education as significant factors, with lesser significance for population change, almost none for racial population growth⁵⁰, except for Asians, and no significance for median income at all. State percentages of graduate or professional degree earners were significant for all five elections and influenced state electorates to vote for Democratic candidates. The percentage of a state's economy that is post-industrial had the second most consistently significant results, for four years, again making state electorates more likely to favor the Democrats.

The number of significant variables per year was fairly constant, with three for 1992, four for 1996, three for 2000 and 2004, and four for 2008. For each year, at least one level of college education and at least one post-industrial variable was a significant factor. Bachelor's degree attainment had helped Republicans in many instances with individual voters, and Table 20 continues that pattern by showing that the higher the percentage of B.A. earners in a state, the more likely that state will swing toward the Republican candidate. Conversely, higher rates of graduate or professional degree attainment influenced state electorates to support Democratic

⁵⁰ Minority growth is broken down into rate of growth from the previous year for blacks, Hispanics, and Asians.

candidates, for every year from 1992 to 2008. College education as a whole, however, decreases in importance after 2000. Only a state's percentage of graduate degree earners continues to be a significant factor from 2004 on, and coefficients actually indicate less Democratic support than in 1992.

Although median income showed no significant findings, I decided a further exploration of income by state was necessary. Gelman's findings from *Rich State Poor State* showed a paradox in the American electorate: wealthy states tend vote Democratic, with poor states more likely to vote Republican, explained by the tendency for wealthy voters in poor states to vote more Republican than those in rich states, and for lower-income voters in wealthy states to vote more Democratic than those in poor states.. It is possible that median income may have different effects in rich states and poor states, but the analyses might not show these effects because they cancel each other out. As such, I believed my analysis should more properly differentiate between the rich and poor states. To test for this possibility, I coded a dummy variable that divides the fifty states into the top and bottom halves of the median income scale: the top are designated "rich," or 1, while the bottom half is "poor" or 0. I then added an interaction variable where median income variable is combined with the dummy variable, represented by the formula $\text{interact} = \text{medianincome} \times \text{dummy}$.

However, adding these two variables to my two multivariate analyses resulted in almost no significant results. Median income was not significant. My logistical analyses showed my income dummy and interaction variables produced no significant results for any election years. Regression analysis only showed dummy and interaction significance for the year 2008, with coefficients of 0.022 (for the dummy) and 0.047 (for the interaction). Thus median income by itself produced no useful results, and accounting for rich and poor states specifically added very

little to my analysis, so I did not find it necessary to present the table. Still, the role of income earning and how it influences state electorates remains important, as evidenced by Gelman's body of work, and future analyses should take it into consideration.

Post-industrialism was measured by its proportion of the state economy and by rate of growth per year, giving us a look at states by their current proportion of post-industrialism as well as those states that are becoming more post-industrial. Results show the proportion of a state's economy that is post-industrial had significant impacts in more elections (four) than a state's post-industrial growth (two). Both were only significant in the same year in 2004, also with the highest coefficients for both variables, showing that post-industrialism boosted Democratic Party performance in 2004 more than in any other election. This suggests post-industrialism in both proportion and growth had a particularly negative effect on Republican state vote percentages and a positive one on Democrats in 2004, pointing once again to the particular circumstances of one election over continuous trends. In this case, post-industrialism caused state electorates to have an unfavorable reaction to President George W. Bush's re-election and a positive one to his Democratic challenger Senator John Kerry.

Finally, population growth variables did little to assist Democratic vote percentages. Growth in minority populations by state actually had little impact on vote percentages. Only Asian population growth proved significant in any election, with mixed results. In 1996, Asian population growth made states more likely to vote for incumbent President Bill Clinton, but in 2000 and 2008 it actually influenced state electorates to support Republican presidential candidates. Also, I had hypothesized that large rates of population growth would make those states more likely to swing more Democratic in presidential elections. But the rate of population growth not a significant factor for any year except 2008, and the effect was in the opposite

direction from that hypothesized. In that year when Obama won a resounding victory, population growth actually led to greater electoral support for his Republican opponent. Since this variable measures the rate of increase from the previous year and not the number of residents, smaller states could be included at the top of the scale and not just the mega-states like California and Florida. So states that are experiencing high rates of population growth are not necessarily more likely to vote Democratic.

Table 20
Regression Analysis of Democratic State Vote Percentages in Presidential Elections

	<u>1992</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	0.400	(0.057)	0.364	(0.090)	0.164	(0.080)	-0.124	(0.090)	-0.049	(0.089)
Median income	-1.40E-07	(1.68E-06)	-2.09E-06	(1.97E-06)	1.81E-07	(2.55E-06)	1.22E-06	(1.81E-06)	-2.54E-07	(1.86E-06)
BA Degree	-0.016***	(0.005)	-0.009**	(0.004)	-0.016***	(0.005)	-0.006	(0.004)	0.001	(0.004)
Grad or Prof	0.027***	(0.005)	0.016***	(0.005)	0.027***	(0.005)	0.012**	(0.006)	0.012*	(0.007)
Pi of workforce	0.124	(0.159)	0.497***	(0.165)	0.763***	(0.192)	1.166***	(0.205)	0.964***	(0.235)
Rate of PI Growth	0.633***	(0.158)	-0.192	(0.857)	-1.037	(1.650)	1.448***	(0.533)	0.939	(0.938)
Rate of Pop Change	-0.092	(0.195)	-0.548	(0.193)	-0.558	(0.378)	-0.448	(0.391)	-0.597**	(0.293)
Rate of Hispanic	-1.890	(3.366)	0.172	(1.058)	0.875	(1.209)	-1.273	(1.858)	0.681	(1.732)
Rate of Black	1.902	(3.363)	2.618	(2.134)	1.292	(2.279)	0.294	(2.158)	2.572	(1.688)
Rate of Asian	-2.363	(2.174)	1.864***	(0.436)	-0.299*	(0.155)	0.119	(0.538)	-2.736***	(0.999)
No. of Obs:	50		50		50		50		50	
R2	0.4203		0.5735		0.6001		0.6638		0.6893	

Notes: Cell entries are regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p < .10. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

Total no. of observations = 250.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: State Democratic Vote Percentages

Direct tests of Table 20 coefficients showed 1992 experienced the highest percentage of significant changes over time, nine in all, or 25 percent. For 1996, five significant changes occurred out of twenty-seven tests (19%), for 2000, four out of eighteen (22%) and for 2004, one out of nine (11%). Democrats attained their greatest gains among states with high percentages of post-industrial economies, with smaller gains in states with high percentages of bachelor's degree earners.

Significant changes among education variables are the opposite of what previous chapters have typically shown. With individual voters, bachelor's degree earners typically, but not always, backed Republicans and graduate degree earners supported Democrats, but here it is reversed, as analyzing the states showed graduate degree attainment moves state electorates toward Republicans but bachelor's degree earners contribute to state Democratic vote percentages. However, the coefficients are not numerically large, showing the actual change in either party's direction is not great. These small changes are probably partially accounted for because percentages of graduate and bachelor's degree earners by state were not available for every election year and had to be employed by the closest available year⁵¹.

Significant change for states with high percentages of post-industrial economies was the greatest from 1992 and 1996 to 2004. The fact that there was no short-term change from 2000 and 2004 suggests a more long term change is taking place among high post-industrial states. The absence of significant change for states with growing post-industrial economies shows they have no effect on Democratic vote percentages.

⁵¹ To reiterate, the 1990 percentages are used for 1992, the 2000 percentages are used for 1996 and 2000, and the 2006 percentages are used for 2004 and 2008.

No changes take place for rates of black or Hispanic growth. Rate of Asian growth makes states more likely to back Democrats from 1992 to 1996, but switches to influence voters to support Republicans from 1996 to all subsequent years, as well as from 2000 and 2004 to 2008. Also contradicting my hypotheses is a pro-Republican shift among states with high rate of population growth, from 1992 to 1996. The overall results show that population growth of any kind, general or specifically broken down by minority groups, does not support or assist state Democratic vote percentages, either with static results by year in Table 20 or the significant changes over time in Tables 21.1-21.3.

Table 21.1
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1992	to	1996	2000	2004	2008
Median income	-1.40E-07		-2.09E-06	1.81E-07	1.22E-06	-2.54E-07
BA Degree	-0.016		-0.009	-0.016	-0.006	0.001
Grad or Prof	0.027		0.016	0.027	0.012	0.012
Pi of workforce	0.124		0.497	0.763	1.166	0.964
Rate of PI Growth	0.633		-0.192	-1.037	1.448	0.939
Rate of Pop Change	-0.092		-0.548	-0.558	-0.448	-0.597
Rate of Hispanic	-1.89		0.172	0.875	-1.273	0.681
Rate of Black	1.902		2.618	1.292	0.294	2.572
Rate of Asian	-2.363		1.864	-0.299	0.119	-2.736

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 21.2
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1996	to	2000	2004	2008
Median income	-2.09E-06		1.81E-07	1.22E-06	-2.54E-07
BA Degree	-0.009		-0.016	-0.006	0.001
Grad or Prof	0.016		0.027	0.012	0.012
Pi of workforce	0.497		0.763	1.166	0.964
Rate of PI Growth	-0.192		-1.037	1.448	0.939
Rate of Pop Change	-0.548		-0.558	-0.448	-0.597
Rate of Hispanic	0.172		0.875	-1.273	0.681
Rate of Black	2.618		1.292	0.294	2.572
Rate of Asian	1.864		-0.299	0.119	-2.736

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 21.3
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	2000	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
Median income	1.81E-07		1.22E-06	-2.54E-07		1.22E-06		-2.54E-07
BA Degree	-0.016		-0.006	0.001		-0.006		0.001
Grad or Prof	0.027		0.012	0.012		0.012		0.012
Pi of workforce	0.763		1.166	0.939		1.166		0.964
Rate of PI Growth	-1.037		1.448	1.023		1.448		0.939
Rate of Pop Change	-0.558		-0.448	-0.617		-0.448		-0.597
Rate of Hispanic	0.875		-1.273	0.89		-1.273		0.681
Rate of Black	1.292		0.294	2.401		0.294		2.572
Rate of Asian	-0.299		0.119	-2.736		0.119		-2.736

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Logistic Analysis of State Vote Choice

Looking at Democratic candidates' victories and defeats by state, the logistic analysis in Table 22 shows results that are similar to the analysis of Democratic vote percentages (Table 20). Also, the logistic analysis in Table 22 produces almost as many significant variables (18) as in Table 20 (17); however, the results displayed in Table 22 are not as evenly distributed across years. Instead, the most significant results came at the two ends of the time period, with five significant variables, the second most for a single year, in 1992 and seven, the most, in 2008. There is a steady decrease in significant results from 1992 to 2004 before a surge in 2008, which, as previous chapters have shown, points to 2008 as a unique and important election. The steady distribution of results by year in Table 20 suggests that party vote percentages are not as likely to produce varying changes in the electorate. Using dichotomous vote choice emphasizes the specific choice presidential elections offer to the electorate and as a result, can produce more varied results.

College graduation rates again influence the states' presidential winners and losers in Table 22. Higher rates of bachelor's degrees are significantly related to Republican victories in every year up to 2000 and again in 2008, while in Table 20 they are not significant after 2000. Also, while percentage of graduate degree earners helped Democrats in both Table 22 and Table 20, the coefficient in Table 22 is larger, showing that a stronger relationship between vote choice and college education exists over state vote percentages.

In 2004, the two post-industrial variables significantly made state electorates more likely to support Democrats in Table 20 but were not significant factors for either party in Table 22. Conversely, results from Table 22 show both variables strongly turned states toward Democratic candidate Barack Obama in 2008, while only post-industrial portion of the state economy affected Democratic state vote percentage in Table 20 for the same year. The use of Democratic candidate choice as the dependent variable confirms again that Obama had a particular influence on the electorate that previous presidential candidates did not exhibit.

Once again, rate of population growth did not help Democrats; contrary to the hypothesis, higher growth rates bring more support to Republican candidates. While it only influenced state electorates in 2008 in Table 20, Table 22 shows population change was significant for multiple years. Throughout the 2000s states with higher rates of population growth were more likely to end up in the Republican column, with the highest level of Republican support in the 2008 election.

Once again, African-American population growth is not a significant factor, and this time neither was Asian growth. However, Hispanic growth by state did show significant influence on state electorates in 1992 and 2008, and with very different results. In 1992, it influenced state electorates to support Republican George Bush for re-election, but in 2008 they would turn

electorates to vote for then Senator Barack Obama. This is important as the results affirm that Hispanic growth can make a state electorate more likely to choose a Democratic presidential candidate.

Table 22
Logit Analysis of State Choice of Democratic Presidential Candidates

	<u>1992</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2008</u>	
Constant	-14.222	(5.418)	-7.359	(5.937)	-15.470	(4.890)	-27.861	(12.244)	-75.725	(31.888)
Median Income	0.00024	(0.0002)	-5.60E-05	(0.00012)	9.67E-05	(9.1E-05)	0.00024	(0.0002)	0.00093*	(0.00052)
Bachelor's Degree	-1.057***	(0.392)	-1.325***	(0.490)	-0.125	(0.245)	0.062	(0.327)	-1.534**	(0.674)
Grad or Prof. Degree	0.967*	(0.546)	0.653	(0.418)	0.826**	(0.348)	0.248	(0.658)	2.084***	(0.786)
PI of Work Force	41.867**	(18.517)	69.039***	(20.341)	19.449	(14.124)	28.866	(22.576)	52.874**	(23.927)
Rate of PI Growth	60.358***	(22.771)	-181.653*	(94.856)	-95.104	(97.724)	99.639	(69.614)	816.717*	(443.268)
Rate of Pop Change	6.056	(15.750)	-2.974	(12.525)	-79.064***	(28.935)	-60.998**	(27.576)	-194.264*	(112.502)
Rate of Hispanic	-516.271**	(226.882)	-190.221	(153.659)	134.309	(94.035)	37.508	(131.644)	987.366*	(577.747)
Rate of Black	-710.696	(537.142)	-194.760	(230.181)	44.903	(119.183)	192.207	(174.168)	850.804	(637.764)
Rate of Asian	123.993	(126.010)	565.242	(476.044)	-11.054	(8.785)	-5.434	(50.056)	-181.216	(124.073)
No. of Obs:	50		50		50		50		50	
R2	0.4194		0.487		0.5039		0.5938		0.7713	

Notes: Cell entries are regression coefficients. Simultaneously estimated robust standard errors are presented in parentheses.

*p < .10. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

Total no. of observations = 250.

Direct Testing for Significant Trends: State Vote Choice for Democratic Candidates

The direct testing of Table 22's coefficients result in an increase in significant changes over tests of coefficients from Table 20, with twenty-five to the previous analysis's nineteen. Testing 1992 to future election years resulted in eleven significant changes over time, or 31 percent. For 1996, ten significant changes occurred out of twenty-seven tests (37%), for 2000, two out of eighteen (11%) and for 2004, two out of nine (22%). Except for 2000, testing a state's vote for Democratic candidates over Democratic vote percentages directly increased the percentages of significant changes. State college graduation rates, population growth rate, post-industrial economic growth rate, and Hispanic population growth rate all increasingly influence a state's presidential vote choice. Graduate and professional degree attainment, in contrast, has a declining effect, while Asian population growth rate does not move a state's presidential vote choice over time.

College graduation rates differ in their influence over time according to how the dependent variable is measured. When it is measured as the Democratic candidate's percentage of the state's vote, bachelor's degree attainment influenced state electorates to favor Democratic candidates (Tables 22.1 and 22.3). However, when the dependent variable is dichotomous vote choice, the results are mixed. Tracking changes from 1992 and 1996 to 2000 and 2004, higher college graduation rates move state electorates to the Democrats, but changes in graduation rates from 2000 and 2004 to 2008 actually increase support for Republicans (Tables 23.1 and 23.3). Conversely, moving from 2004 to 2008, higher graduate degree attainment increases support for Democratic candidates.

Results show the rate of post-industrial growth strongly affects state-level presidential voting. Using vote choice analysis changes how the two post-industrial variables affect

Democratic fortunes from the previous analysis. Democratic vote percentages increase with the proportion of a state's economy that is post-industrial, but not with the post-industrial growth rate. On the other hand, Democrats are increasingly likely to be victorious in states with higher post-industrial growth rates, while the extent of post-industrial economic activity has no significant influence over time. Except for 1992 to 1996, when post-industrial growth moved state electorates to the Republicans, all significant changes go to the Democrats, with the largest coefficient in 2008.

States with high levels of Hispanic growth were more likely to choose Democratic presidential candidates from 1992 and 1996 to 2000-2008. The coefficients for the 2000s show varying levels of pro-Democratic growth, a strong increase to 2000, a smaller one to 2004, and finally a much larger spike to 2008. Republicans did not reverse direction in any year in the 2000s, so even if George W. Bush did better among Hispanic voters in 2004, the pro-Democratic coefficient for that year is still larger than 1992 or 1996; therefore Democratic candidates have made solid gains among Hispanics over time that Republicans have not been able to reverse.

High growth rate of African-American residents moves states to support Democrats in only one instance, from 1992 to 2008. The election of then Senator Barack Obama as the country's first African-American president makes this instance noteworthy. Combined with the large spike in Democratic support in increasingly Hispanic states that same year, these results confirm that Obama was able to rally minority voters, and given that this occurs in states where blacks and Hispanics are growing, it suggests states with changing demographic profiles may be more likely to favor Democrats in the future. However, the fact that the result for blacks is specific to Obama's victory could suggest the circumstances of 2008 were unique. Even the large spike in Democratic support among increasingly Hispanic electorates could be attributed to

Obama's candidacy. Democratic candidates Vice President Gore and Senator Kerry benefited from Hispanic growth in prior years, but the level of support for Obama was so large that it looks to be an outlier explained by the circumstances of that year.

Table 23.1
Direct Tests of 1992 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1992	to	1996	2000	2004	2008
Median income	0.000235		-5.60E-05	9.67E-05	0.00024	0.00093
BA Degree	-1.057		-1.325	-0.125	0.062	-1.534
Grad or Prof	0.967		0.653	0.826	0.248	2.084
Pi of workforce	41.867		69.039	19.449	28.866	52.874
Rate of PI Growth	60.358		-181.653	-95.104	99.639	816.717
Rate of Pop Change	6.056		-2.974	-79.064	-60.998	-194.264
Rate of Hispanic	-516.271		-190.221	134.309	37.508	987.366
Rate of Black	-710.696		-194.760	44.903	192.207	850.804
Rate of Asian	123.993		565.242	-11.054	-5.434	-181.216

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 23.2
Direct Tests of 1996 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	1996	to	2000	2004	2008
Median income	-5.60E-05		9.67E-05	0.00024	0.00093
BA Degree	-1.325		-0.125	0.062	-1.534
Grad or Prof	0.653		0.826	0.248	2.084
Pi of workforce	69.039		19.449	28.866	52.874
Rate of PI Growth	-181.653		-95.104	99.639	816.717
Rate of Pop Change	-2.974		-79.064	-60.998	-194.264
Rate of Hispanic	-190.221		134.309	37.508	987.366
Rate of Black	-194.76		44.903	192.207	850.804
Rate of Asian	565.242		-11.054	-5.434	-181.216

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Table 23.3
Direct Tests of 2000 and 2004 Election Coefficients to Succeeding Elections

	2000	to	2004	2008		2004	to	2008
Median income	9.67E-05		0.00024	0.00093		0.00024		0.00093
BA Degree	-0.125		0.062	-1.534		0.062		-1.534
Grad or Prof	0.826		0.248	2.084		0.248		2.084
Pi of workforce	19.449		28.866	52.874		28.866		52.874
Rate of PI Growth	-95.104		99.639	816.717		99.639		816.717
Rate of Pop Change	-79.064		-60.998	-194.264		-60.998		-194.264
Rate of Hispanic	134.309		37.508	987.366		37.508		987.366
Rate of Black	44.903		192.207	850.804		192.207		850.804
Rate of Asian	-11.054		-5.434	-181.216		-5.434		-181.216

Note: Shaded cell entries have coefficients with p-values <.01.

Conclusion

Measuring Democratic electoral success by Democratic state vote percentages and then the state electorates' choice to vote for a Democratic presidential candidate produced a clear result: with vote percentages, Democrats do well, with vote choice, Democrats do even better. State electorates, if composed of the right mix of Democrat-friendly voter groups, will respond well to the party's candidate, but the individual nature of specific elections is more likely to polarize the electorate and provoke certain voter groups to support Democratic candidates even more than usual. For example, results from Tables 21.1-21.4 showed that African-American growth did not affect Democratic vote percentages, but it did influence states' presidential winners and losers, in this case from 1992 to 2008 in Table 23.1. Hispanic population growth also made state electorates more likely to choose a Democratic presidential candidate; however, it did not affect Democratic vote percentages in any significant way.

This makes year to year comparisons of states' vote percentages less important than the states' overall choice among presidential candidates. It is easy to compare, for example, the

difference between President Obama's 0.33 percent margin in North Carolina in 2008 and his 2.04 percent loss four years later⁵² and imagine just a switch among a few voters was needed to keep the state in the Democratic column a second time. However, the composition of a state's citizens who cast votes is never precisely the same, as each election is separated by four years in which some voters die off, new ones enter the electorate, some voters leave the state, others enter, some are turned off by politics entirely and decide not to vote again, and of course, exogenous events occur that change the public's opinion of the incumbent in office. Coupled with those facts is the specific appeal of candidates to particular voter groups. One group may turn out at a lower level one year and then turn out at higher level the next year. Earlier, I likened the composition of a winning Electoral College coalition to a jigsaw puzzle. Likewise, I would characterize the composition of the voters that come to the polls each election as puzzles, as coalitions of different groups of voters that each major party attempts to assemble in their preferred way and that are never assembled exactly the same way in the next election.

However, the emphasis on state vote choice does not make a study of state vote percentages unimportant. Certain attributes of a state can contribute to an increase in state Democratic vote percentages, it just does not mean that they will determine both Democratic vote percentages and Democratic vote choice at the same time. For example, post-industrial economies and growth of such economies affected Democratic vote percentages in 2004, but not in 2008. Change the analysis from vote percentage to vote choice, however, and post-industrial economies and growth became significant factors making voters more likely to support Barack Obama at the polls.

⁵² David Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections, Presidential General Election Results Comparison - North Carolina
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/compare.php?year=2012&fips=37&f=1&off=0&elect=0&ty pe=state>

College-educated state electorates have, in general, trended more Democratic in presidential elections. However, college education levels affected state-level presidential voting patterns differently, depending on how the vote was measured. When the dependent variable indicates who won the state vote overall, the results show Democratic candidates were increasingly likely to win as the bachelor's degree completion rate increased (though the graduate degree completion rate only increased Democrats' chance of winning between 2004 and 2008). However, if Democratic candidate support is measured by vote percentage, then the percentages of bachelor's and graduate degree earners will influence the vote in opposite directions: States with more bachelor's degrees vote increasingly Democratic, while those with more graduate degrees vote increasingly Republican.

Results also show population and demographic changes are more likely to affect vote choice than vote percentages. Adding up direct tests of population change and increases of minority groups found vote percentages yielded only seven significant changes over time, but vote choice produced fourteen, eight of which made electorates more likely to vote for Democrats. So changes in a state's population more directly affect voter choice, and given how all the pro-Democratic changes occur because of increases in minorities, this confirms Democrats benefit especially from minority growth in the fifty states. However, even this result depends on the particular candidate Democrats nominated, as Democratic support by minority growth spiked sharply when the Democrats put up a candidate of African-American descent as opposed to the support Vice President Gore and Senator Kerry received.

Overall, when the hypothesized groups increased their support for Democratic presidential candidates over time, the effect was enhanced when that support was measured according to who won the state, as opposed to the percentage of votes received. This reinforces

the point made by the previous three chapters, that specific presidential elections, driven by particular candidates, campaigns and issues, are going to drive the behavior of voter groups over any inexorable cycle of movement. These issues will be explored further in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 7

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Anyone looking for an easy and decisive answer to whether the American electorate has shifted to give Democratic candidates an advantage will not find one, and while results of recent elections at the time of this work show Republicans making gains in Congress, casting further doubt that a durable Democratic majority is being created, my results discovered such a thesis was doubtful even looking at the electorate in the run-up to 2008. This does not mean that Democrats were not drawing on increasing support from many of the voter groups John Judis and Ruy Teixeira (2002) identified, but there was no steady trend in the Democrats' favor among white voters⁵³. Democrats did enjoy strong increases in support among graduate degree earning whites in 2000 and 2004, but some groups of white voters actually became more likely to support Republicans in 2008, particularly high income whites regardless of gender. In some elections, many voter groups actually did not significantly impact the contest at all. Looking at changes in the electorate, the growth of minority populations in the states showed increased Democratic support in states with rising Hispanic populations and, if Obama's 2008 victory is factored in, states with rising black populations moved more to the Democratic presidential ticket, showing that demographic changes in the electorate can also boost Democratic presidential fortunes.

⁵³ Again, due to the overwhelming loyalty of African Americans voters, I did not perceive any great shifts in how this group voted, so blacks are omitted from the analyses in this study. The large majorities Democrats enjoy in other minority groups also warranted their omission; my theory is that the greater shifts in the electorate would occur among whites, and Judis and Teixeira specifically mention whites on several occasions, most notably urban whites and the white working class, both whites collectively and white women.

The Composition of the Democratic-Advantage Realignment

College-educated whites, as hypothesized, tended to support Democratic candidates and identify with the party. Those with graduate degrees were most consistent in their Democratic support, and toward 2008, other college-educated whites also became increasingly likely to vote and identify Democratic. Urban and secular whites almost always backed Democratic candidates. In state-level analyses, states with post-industrial economies provided welcoming electorates for Democrats as did states with growing Hispanic populations. Sometimes state electorates only supported Democrats in specific years. States with growing black populations were more likely to back a Democratic presidential candidate only in 2008, when Obama was atop the ticket. This significant change was unique, and likely due to Obama's candidacy as the first African-American to be nominated by a major political party.

Significant movement of partisan loyalties across time was mixed for some voter groups. High income whites did not move in either party's direction in presidential races, but high income-earning white women trended toward voting Republican between 1992 and 2000, and toward voting Democratic between 2000 and 2004. For congressional races and party identification, high income whites, both women and collectively, trended Democratic moving toward every year except for 2008, which makes it unlikely high income whites are uniformly progressing Democratic, especially if they turned back to the Republicans in the year Barack Obama won the presidency. And while the white working class was increasingly likely to identify with or vote Democratic in congressional elections⁵⁴ toward 2008, that trend did not begin until 1998.

⁵⁴ Presidential results showed no significant changes across time for the white working class, for whites collectively or white women.

In addition to the lack of consistent trends, some voter groups did not show any significant change toward either political party. Presidential⁵⁵ and congressional⁵⁶ elections lacked consecutive changes for any voter group in five match-ups, and party identification had even more with ten year-to-year match-ups showing no change at all⁵⁷. This dearth of consecutive changes in some cases means there is no regular cycle of partisan change on the part of voter groups.

Specific Elections Are Key

The absence of regular cycles points to specific elections as instigators of electoral change. I'll briefly summarize key years from my 1988-2008 timespan and demonstrate the different results of each.

1992

Looking at 1992, this year saw the largest significant change of whites who did not regularly attend religious services, to Clinton between 1988 and 1992 (Table 6.1) and an even greater change for secular white women (Table 7.1). No other change over time for secular white voters--whether measured by lack of attendance or by personal attitude-- equaled or surpassed the increase in support that Clinton received.

1996

The presidential race of 1996 was noteworthy for having the most significant changes to a consecutive election. Chapter 4's look at congressional elections found 1996, more than any

⁵⁵ Table 6.2 (1992-1996), Table 6.4 (2000-2004, 2004-2008), Table 7.2 (1992-1996), and Table 7.4 (2004-2008) in Chapter 3.

⁵⁶ Table 11.6 (1998-2000), Table 11.7 (2000-2002), Table 13.2 (1990-1992), Table 13.6 (1998-2000), and Table 13.7 (2000-2002) in Chapter 4.

⁵⁷ Table 17.1 (1988-1990), Table 17.2 (1990-1992), Table 17.3 (1992-1994), Table 17.4 (1994-1996), Table 17.7 (2000-2002), Table 19.2 (1990-1992), Table 19.3 (1992-1994), Table 19.4 (1994-1996), Table 19.5 (1996-1998), and Table 19.7 (2000-2002) in Chapter 5.

other year, showed the most significant changes to that year and following it, a feat not duplicated when party identification is examined. Also, the 1996 congressional election marked a partisan split among white voter groups. Working class whites, whites of the 1988 age cohort, and whites who did not consider religion important to their lives actually moved in a more Republican direction in the elections following 1996, while college educated whites, graduate and bachelor's degree earners, and urban whites became increasingly likely to back Democrats, as seen in Table 11.5 in Chapter 4.

2002

The first midterm since the September 11th terrorist attacks also showed the most significant results for its voter groups for the specific 2002 election, as displayed in Table 8, only omitting significance for one out of nine groups.⁵⁸ It was the only election when every age cohort was a significant factor, with all or them backing Republican candidates. Conversely, despite the favorable political climate where Republicans gained seats in Congress, all levels of college education maintained Democratic leanings.

2000 and 2004

The two successful elections of George W. Bush showed graduate degree earners were more likely to vote for Democratic presidential candidates Al Gore in 2000 and John Kerry in 2004 than for Democratic candidates in previous years. There is evidence of both significance for these particular elections (Table 4) and significant movement from previous years (Table 6.2 and 6.3), demonstrating, along with the 2002 midterm results for college educated whites, that this group of voters was willing to back Democrats even in years when Republicans were doing well.

⁵⁸ Again, both income groups were excluded due to unavailability in the ANES data set, dropping the number of groups analyzed by two.

2008

College educated voters did not show significant movement to President Obama, contrary to earlier trends. Surprisingly, the shift toward Democrats among the college educated actually occurred in congressional races. There is strong evidence that Democratic support among lower levels of college education increased sharply in 2008, particularly bachelor's degree earners for both whites collectively and white women. Graduate degree earners, however, were split by gender, as whites collectively did not trend to the Democrats, but female grad degree earners did. Conversely, 2008 saw a decrease in Democratic support among high income whites, in both presidential voting and party identification, which disputes the hypothesis that high income whites are trending to the Democrats.

Party Identification

Results from Chapter 5's analysis of party identification showed that in four instances when significant results were available for presidential elections, congressional elections, and party identification across the 1988-2008 timespan for a specific group of voters, party identification tracked very close to presidential voting, while in two years it tracked close to congressional voting, and in one year, party ID, presidential voting, and congressional voting all ended up tracking closely together.⁵⁹ In two instances party identification showed greater Democratic support than presidential vote performance.⁶⁰ Bachelor's degree earners' Democratic Party identification ran ahead of their presidential vote, then dropped behind, and finally seemed

⁵⁹ Bachelor's degree earners (Figures 9), those with some college experience (Figure 10), and those who did not regularly attend religious services (Figure 11) all end up with party identification close to presidential voting. Those who do not consider religion important to their lives (Figures 12) and graduate degree earners (Figure 13) had party identification run close to congressional voting. Finally, high income women (Figure 16) ended up with party identification, presidential and congressional voting run very close to one another.

⁶⁰ Graduate degree earners (Figure 13) and Bachelor's degree earners (Figures 9).

to almost perfectly align with it,⁶¹ while among grad degree earners it ran ahead of congressional vote performance⁶² and among secular whites, it actually was less Democratic than the presidential vote.⁶³ The fact that the party identification ran closer to presidential voting choice than with congressional voting choice among some college educated voters helps support the findings of scholars like Warren E. Miller who found that the correlation between party identification and presidential voting was very strong (Miller 1991),⁶⁴ but my findings that showed grad degree earners and voters who do not consider religion important to their lives demonstrate party ID and presidential voting do not always track close together. That party identification should run so close to presidential vote choice in a plurality of cases indicates the strength of the relationship between partisan identity and presidential vote choice. Among some voter groups, almost as many voters are willing to say they are Democrats as are willing to vote for Democratic presidential candidates. That congressional voting seems to be so divergent from party ID and presidential voting suggests there is a great deal more ticket splitting occurring at the congressional level.

The Trouble With Regular Realignment Theory

Political realignments, according to the literature on party systems, occur in regular thirty-year cycles and are presaged by changes in political issues, economic or social upheavals, and the rise of third parties. Critics, however, have pointed to numerous problems with this approach, pointing out that events that portend changes in the existing American party system tend to occur far more frequently than in regular thirty year cycle intervals. In their 1980 work

⁶¹ High income women (Figure 16).

⁶² Graduate degree earners (Figure 13).

⁶³ Those who did not regularly attend religious services (Figure 11) and those who do not consider religion important to their lives (Figures 12).

⁶⁴ Miller's research specifically focused on the United States electorate from 1952 to 1988.

Partisan Realignment: Voters, Parties, and Government in American History, Jerome Clubb, William Flanagan and Nancy Zingale analyzed national realigning and deviating elections and interactive change in the two parties' presidential and congressional vote and found evidence that electoral change occurred more frequently than the regular cycle of realignment would suggest. "Far more indications of realigning change appear than can seemingly be tolerated by any simple view of American history as characterized by prolonged periods of stability punctuated by occasional electoral upheavals" (Clubb, Flanagan and Zingale 105).

In *The Lost Majority*, Sean Trende claimed the question "Why not -?" is realignment theory's fatal flaw, that one could substitute a different outcome to an election, policy decision, or choice of a candidate to run for office that could render a different outcome to political shifts in the electorate (187). David Mayhew addressed how realignment theory claims event-driven issues could shuffle party size or the mix of voters, and brings up many examples of years and issues that do not correspond to the regular cycle of realignments but are significant nonetheless, such as: the country's reaction to John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry (1860), the question of whether to settle for victory or a compromise in voting for Lincoln or McClellan (1864), and debates over how to handle the domestic crises of 1918-1920 that included strikes and a red scare (1920), to name a few (Mayhew 2002, 92-4). Trende framed the question of elections as the sum of many choices on the part of voters that affect the outcomes, not just for that specific election, but in future election cycles as well:

Every election presents a party, the country, and the candidates with choices. The party must decide whom to nominate. The American people must choose whom to elect-and while they do so as individuals, there are clearly clustered coalitions that form around these choices. The candidate and his party must then choose how to run and, if they win, how to govern. Each of these

choices also leaves behind a road not taken, an alternate course of action that would bring potentially different results (Trende 191).

He goes on to offer possible counterfactuals based on how presidents and parties might have chosen to govern differently, or what might have happened if different candidates had been elected during times of adversity. What if Theodore Roosevelt had won the Republican nomination and the election in 1912, for example, leading the country into World War I instead of Woodrow Wilson? Or what if Herbert Hoover had chosen to run as a Democrat and not a Republican (193-4)? These thought experiments render political realignments as anything but inevitable. Suppose that then Senator Hillary Clinton, and not Obama, had won the Democratic nomination. It would have been possible, perhaps likely, that she would not have gotten the spike in support in states with fast-growing black populations that Obama did (see Chapter 6). Conversely, she could have received greater support among single women or perhaps even married women as well that no other Democratic candidate had received. If the difference comes down to a different candidate being nominated or a different policy implemented to address an issue, then political alignments are not inexorable forces at all.

Assembling the Puzzle

In Chapter 6 (state electorates), I likened the American electorate to a giant puzzle, with each presidential candidate trying to assemble enough of the fifty states to create an Electoral College majority. But there are also puzzles to be assembled within those states, and judging from the divergent results in my 1988 to 2008 timespan, those puzzles are never assembled quite the same way for each election. The fact that presidential candidates of the same party may be elected within two decades of each other does not mean that all voter groups will align in the same way. The winning coalitions for the last three Democratic candidates to win the White House are not alike. In 1976, Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter showed his great strength among

southern voters by sweeping the South except for Virginia and much of the Northeast except for New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Vermont, while losing the West entirely⁶⁵. In 1992 and 1996, Clinton carried all the northeastern states while picking off just four states from the Old Confederacy each time⁶⁶. In 2008, Barack Obama won Indiana and Virginia, which neither Clinton nor Carter had been able to accomplish, while losing all of the Deep South, a region Clinton and Carter had been able to win at least a part of⁶⁷. The circumstances of particular elections plus the candidates' individual appeals work to create coalitions that are not automatically transferable to another of the same party.

Yet as of this writing, candidates for the presidency in 2016 are emphasizing the need to recreate previous winning coalitions. In 2015, former senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced her second bid for the Democratic nomination for president. For her second campaign, Clinton and her campaign staff are specifically attempting to assemble the same coalition that propelled Obama to the nomination and to the White House by emphasizing strong progressive stands on issues such as immigration, gay marriage, abortion, and climate change while eschewing the centrist rhetoric of her husband from his political campaigns (Gearan 2015; Goldstein 2015). Likewise, some Republican candidates seek to rebuild the old coalition that successfully elected Ronald Reagan. Texas Senator Ted Cruz, a Republican presidential candidate and favorite of Tea Party activists, made reassembling the Reagan coalition part of his pitch to Republican primary voters (Boyle 2015).

⁶⁵ David Leip 1976,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1976&off=0&f=1>

⁶⁶ David Leip 1992,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1992&off=0&f=1>
David Leip 1996,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1996&off=0&f=1>

⁶⁷ David Leip 2008,
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2008&off=0&f=1>

Whatever the outcome, it is doubtful the coalition of voters that elects the new president in 2016 will be a carbon copy of victories of even the recent past. Even the first Reagan victory did not include the state of West Virginia. Fast-forward to 2008 and 2012, and the same state voted for the losing candidacies of Senator McCain and Governor Romney, with Romney even carrying every county in the state, a feat Reagan could not even accomplish in 1984 when he carried it along with forty-eight other states.⁶⁸ Likewise, the differences in the Carter-Clinton-Obama victories have already been noted, and it is even possible a winning Hillary Clinton coalition would be different still from these three successful candidates.

Changing the Puzzle

However, assembling the pool of existing voters in a way that benefits a candidate or party is just part of the equation. The American electorate remains a dynamic entity that absorbs new voters and loses others when they pass on, so changes in voting patterns are bound to be influenced by new entrants. One of the two key factors cited as a mechanism for changing the electorate to suit the Democrats is the growth of a younger electorate that is more disposed to supporting Democrats. However, I did not find this to be the case for many of the cohorts that came of age during Democratic presidential victories. Most cohorts became more likely to vote for Republicans with a few exceptions, such as the 88 cohort (which became eligible to vote during a Republican, not a Democratic presidential victory) from 1988 to 1996 in presidential races (Table 6.1 and 7.1) and in congressional races, 1988-94 to 1996 (Tables 11.1-11.4 and Tables 13.1-13.4).

⁶⁸ David Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections, Presidential General Election Results Comparison – West Virginia.
<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/compare.php?year=2012&fips=54&f=1&off=0&elect=0&type=state>

There is stronger evidence that growth of minorities in the fifty states helps Democrats, though I could only draw a general conclusion of Hispanic growth, as it helped Democratic presidential candidates in all instances where it significantly moved the state electorates, from 1992 to 1996, 2000 and 2004 (Table 23.1-23.2). Asian growth produced more mixed results, only helping Democrats from 1992 to 1996 (Table 21.1) and 1996 to 2004 (Table 21.2) but influencing state electorates to Republicans in all other instances. Meanwhile, growth of black populations only moved state electorates toward Democrats from 1992 to 2008 in Table 23.1, and with Obama's candidacy in 2008, it is an exception so notable that the Illinois senator's presence on the ticket cannot be discounted.

However, states that have large influxes of population in general, without regard to rising numbers of minority groups, have actually assisted Republican presidential candidates. When I boiled it down to whether a state electorate voted for a Democratic candidate or not, in both specific elections (2000, 2004 and 2008 in Table 22) and significant change from 1992 to 2000, 2004, and 2008 (Table 23.1-23.2), rate of population growth made state electorates more likely to vote Republican. So just on the state level, Republicans in the 2000s have benefited from larger numbers of new citizens.

These analyses suggest that future research on political realignment should focus on general rises and falls in population throughout the country and also on demographic changes. For individual analyses, future research could calculate the rate of growth of voter groups hypothesized to be more likely to vote for Democrats and examine whether that has any bearing on changing the electorate to favor one party or the other. Again, in addition to emphasizing that candidates may not be able to reassemble old coalitions because their personal appeals or issue stands may be different, the electorate that created those coalitions may simply no longer exist.

Full Circle

To illustrate how thinking on realignment can change with the times, I go right back to the authors of the *Emerging Democratic Majority*. In the aftermath of the successful 2012 re-election of Barack Obama, the book's co-author Ruy Teixeira suggested demographic changes have paid off well for the Democrats, with graduate and post-graduate educated professionals, minority voters and women paying dividends for Democrats that could persist into future elections (Teixeira 2012).

Just two years later, after the 2014 midterm elections in which Democrats lost control of the Senate and suffered further losses in the House of Representatives and among governorships, co-author John Judis struck a decidedly pessimistic tone. On January 2015, Judis wrote a piece in which he actually repudiated his earlier thesis and declared that the Democratic majority he envisioned is in fact dead.

After the 2008 election, I thought Obama could create an enduring Democratic majority by responding aggressively to the Great Recession in the same way that Franklin Roosevelt had responded in 1933 to the Great Depression. Obama, I believed, would finally bury the Reagan Republican majority of 1980 and inaugurate a new period of Democratic domination.

In retrospect, that analogy was clearly flawed. Roosevelt took power after four years of the Great Depression, with Republicans and business thoroughly discredited, and with the public (who lacked any safety net) ready to try virtually anything to revive the economy. Obama's situation was very different. Business was still powerful enough to threaten him if he went too far in trying to tame it. Much of the middle class and working class were still employed, and they saw Obama's stimulus program--which was utterly necessary to stem the Great Recession--as an expansion of government at their expense.

In the wake of the dramatic gains Republicans have made during Obama's presidency, I now read the history of the last 80 years much differently. The period of New Deal Democratic ascendancy from 1933

to about 1968 may well prove to have been what historians Jefferson Cowie and Nick Salvatore have called the "long exception" in American politics. It was a period when Americans, panicked about the Depression, put on hold their historic aversion to aggressive government economic intervention, when the middle and bottom of the American economic pyramid united against the top, and when labor unions could claim the loyalty of a third of American workers. That era suffered fatal fissures in 1968 and finally came to a close with Reagan's landslide in 1980.

It now appears that, in some form, the Republican era which began in 1980 is still with us. Reagan Republicanism--rooted in the long-standing American distrust of government, but perhaps with its roughest theocratic and insurrectionary edges sanded off for a national audience--is still the default position of many of those Americans who regularly go to the polls. It can be effectively challenged when Republicans become identified with economic mismanagement or with military defeat. But after the memory of such disasters has faded, the GOP coalition has reemerged--surprisingly intact and ready for battle (Judis 2015).

Still, Judis argues Democrats have a chance to retain the presidency if Republicans run a candidate off-putting to certain groups of voters. "The Democrats' best chances in next year's elections will come if Republicans run candidates identified with the Religious Right or the tea party or the GOP's plutocratic wing," a description that actually supports the findings of this research, particularly with Democrats' enduring success among secular voters. He also says, "In presidential elections, the Democratic coalition remains formidable, and the ranks of minorities and professionals--both Democratic constituencies--continue to swell (Judis 2015)." Again, findings in previous chapters that show increasing Democratic support among graduate degree earners and among state electorates with swelling minority populations, primarily Hispanics, support his assertions.

Judis' repudiation of his own thesis draws on the circumstances that have taken place in the country. He describes the problems of the economy and the subsequent alienation among key voter groups. The circumstances of 2008 created public mistrust of Republican policies, but that

mistrust eroded with the passage of time, and Republicans came back to win Congress and many governorships and state offices, and to give Obama a credible, if unsuccessful re-election contest. Sean Trende, commenting on Judis' 2015 article, claimed the thesis of Judis and Teixeira that the electorate was shifting to favor Democrats depended on Clinton-style centrist ideology to succeed rather than concrete demographic destiny.

I think Judis and Teixeira's point about the strength of progressive centrism is a powerful one; in fact, if the theme of the book had been more "this is what the Democratic majority will look like when Democrats are successful," I would agree (and indeed, a hefty portion of the book is dedicated to just that argument). Today, however, a large portion of the Democratic Party's intellectual class seems more interested in the weaker, predictive part of Judis and Teixeira's book rather than the prescriptive portion of it. That is, they see demographics both as destiny and as an opportunity for abandoning Clinton-style centrism. But if the book is correct, this is exactly backwards: Clinton-style centrism is the way to harness these demographics. Abandon it, and you risk abandoning the majority. (Trende 2015)

The composition of the Democratic electoral coalition has not been fully discredited, but rather its ability to consistently form a winning coalition, a conclusion reinforced by my findings. Trende also says in his 2015 piece that American political coalitions are "inherently unstable. Issues that bind groups together in one election disappear, while new issue cleavages threaten to break groups off. Coalitions are ultimately like water balloons: When you press down on one side, another side pops up. The Democratic coalition of the late aughts proves to be no exception (Trende 2015)." Even the coalitions of Bill Clinton and Obama, as demonstrated, are not precisely the same.

Conversely, Judis cites a group of voters that as of the mid 2010s is becoming more Republican. "The more surprising trend is that Republicans are gaining dramatically among a

group that had tilted toward Democrats in 2006 and 2008: Call them middle-class Americans...In exit polling, they can roughly be identified as those who have college--but not postgraduate--degrees and those whose household incomes are between \$50,000 and \$100,000.” Tables 4 and 5 in Chapter 3 showed this group has actually been more Republican than graduate or post-graduate degree earners before 2008, though they would move to support Obama in 2008, so this may be an indication of a formerly Republican-leaning group heading back to the party that more closely supports its stands on issues, which makes this a case of Republicans reversing Democratic gains.

In short, the American electorate is not destined for an inevitable Democratic majority, but a strong Democratic-supporting coalition does exist, and my examination of that proposed Democratic majority finds its share of durable supporters (whites who reside in urban areas, are secular in outlook and practice, earn graduate degrees) and occasional converts (the white working class, collectively and among white working women, lower levels of college education), but that coalition, in whatever form it takes, depends on the candidates and the issues of the particular campaign.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF SOURCES

Hypotheses 1-24: The American National Election Studies (www.electionstudies.org) TIME SERIES CUMULATIVE DATA FILE [dataset]. Stanford University and the University of Michigan [producers and distributors], 2010.

<http://www.electionstudies.org/studypages/cdf/cdf.htm>

Hypothesis 25:

Data derived from U.S. Census State Median Income tables.

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/statemedian/>

Hypothesis 26:

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages QCEW Data Files.

<http://www.bls.gov/cew/datatoc.htm>

Hypothesis 27:

U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates, Intercensal Estimates.

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/intercensal/index.html>

Hypothesis 28:

Sources: State Population Estimates and Demographic Components of Change: 1900 to 1990 Total Population Estimates.

http://www.census.gov/popest/data/state/asrh/1980s/80s_st_totals.html

State and County Intercensal Estimates (1990-2000).

<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/intercensal/st-co/index.html>

U.S. Census Population Estimates.

<http://www.census.gov/popest/index.html>

Hypothesis 29:

U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics, The World of Statistics.

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_011.asp

Presidential Election Results:

The scale was composed using 1988-2008 election results from David Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections.

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/>

APPENDIX B

CODING FROM ANES VARIABLES

For all variables derived from ANES variables, assume that all options not coded as 1 will be coded as 0, and that missing values are deleted from the variable.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 1-4, 13-14, 17-18 and 23 are coded from ANES variable VCF0114, labeled as Family Income. The available options are as follows: 1. 0 to 16 percentile, 2. 17 to 33 percentile, 3. 34 to 67 percentile, 4. 68 to 95 percentile, and 5. 96 to 100 percentile.

The independent variable for Hypotheses 1-2 and 17 (high income earners) is coded as option 5 with all other options equal to 0. The independent variable for Hypothesis 3-4 and 18 (white working class) is coded as option 1 with all other options equal to 0. This variable is also used in the analysis of white females (Hypotheses 13-14, and 23) to count as white working women.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 5-6 and 19 (urban residency) are coded from ANES variable VCF0111, labeled as Urbanism. The available options are as follows: 1. Central cities, 2. Suburban areas, and 3. Rural, small towns, outlying and adjacent areas.

The independent variable for these hypotheses is coded as option 1 = 1. A secondary variable is coded as suburban residency, with 2 = 1, with all other options equal to 0.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 7-8 and 20 (graduate or post-grad degree earners) are coded from ANES variable VCF0140a, labeled as R Education 7-category. The general questions revolve around levels of education attained by the respondent. The available options are as follows: 1. 8 grades or less ('grade school'), 2. 9-12 grades ('high school'), no diploma/equivalency, 3. 12 grades, diploma or equivalency, 4. 12 grades, diploma or equivalency plus non-academic training, 5. Some college, no degree; junior/community college level degree (AA degree), 6. BA level degrees, and 7. Advanced degrees incl. LLB.

The independent variable for these hypotheses is coded as option 7 = 1. Two additional variables are coded to examine the impact of lower levels of college education. One looks at those respondents who only attained a bachelor's degree, which codes 6 = 1. The second looks at those respondents who only attained some level of college education, coding 5 = 1.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 9-10 and 21 (generational cohorts) are coded from ANES variable VCF0101, labeled as Respondent Age. Options are labeled as 17-96. Age as coded (1992: 91 is 91 or older). 97. 97 years old (1952, 1974, 1996 and later: or older), 98. 98 years old (1958-1962, 1966, 1968: or older), and 99. 99 years old (1976-1990,1994,2002: or older).

These hypotheses break down respondents who became eligible to vote during a specific election year. Each cohort is advanced by two years to the next congressional or presidential election, except from 2004 to 2008, as 2006 was not available in the data set.

1988 cohort = 18-22 for 1988, 20-24 for 1990, 22-26 for 1992, 24-28 for 1994, 26-30 for 1996, 28-32 for 1998, 30-34 for 2000, 32-36 for 2002, 34-38 for 2004, 38-42 for 2008.

1992 cohort = 18-22 for 1992, 20-24 for 1994, 22-26 for 1996, 24-28 for 1998, 26-30 for 2000, 28-32 for 2002, 30-34 for 2004, 34-38 for 2008.

1996 cohort = 18-22 for 1996, 20-24 for 1998, 22-26 for 2000, 24-28 for 2002, 26-30 for 2004, 30-34 for 2008.

2000 cohort = 18-22 for 2000, 20-24 for 2002, 22-26 for 2004, 26-30 for 2008.

2004 cohort = 18-22 for 2004, 22-26 for 2008.

2008 cohort = 18-22 for 2008.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 11-12 and 22 (secular voters) are coded from ANES variables VCF0130 labeled as Church Attendance 6-category 1970-later, and VCF0847, labeled as How Much Guidance Does R Have from Religion.

For VCF0130, the general questions revolve around how often the respondent attends religious services. The available options are as follows: 1. Every week (Except 1970: almost every week), 2. Almost every week (no cases in 1970), 3. Once or twice a month, 4. A few times a year, 5. Never (1990 and later: 'No' in filter), and 7. No religious preference (1970-1988). I generate the “no regular attendance” variable, also referred to as the “secularism by practice” variable, coding 5 = 1.

For VCF0846, the question posed to the respondent reads, Would you say that (1996-LATER: Would you say your) religion provides some guidance in your day-to-day living, quite a bit of guidance, or a great deal of guidance in your day-to-day living. The available options are as follows: 1. Some, 2. Quite a bit, 3. A great deal, and 5. Religion not important. I generate the “religion not important” variable, also referred to as the “secularism by attitude” variable, coding 5 = 1.

Independent Variables in Hypotheses 7-8 and 24 (single women) are coded from ANES variable VCF0147, labeled as Marital Status of R. This variable questions the marital status of the respondent. The available options are as follows: 1. Married, 2. Never married, 3. Divorced, 4. Separated, 5. Widowed, and 7. Partners; not married (VOLUNTEERED [exc.1986]).

The variable that looks at single women codes 2 = 1, while the variable that looks at married women codes 1 = 1. These variables are only employed in the white women data set.

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VITA

Jason Waguespack received a B.A. in English in 2003 and a M.A. in political science in 2007.