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Political Trust and Presidential Voting: a Changing Political Environment Inducing the End of Traditional Politics in the United States

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Political trust and presidential voting, a changing political environment inducing the end
of traditional politics in the United States

By

Brett S. Juraszek

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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in Political Science
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Political climates are undoubtedly changing across the nation and creating volatile fluctuations of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. In a more entertaining season of presidential primaries, both parties – Democratic and Republican – have nominees that will once again be scrutinized by many across the country. I argue the levels of scrutiny will more likely than not be enhanced to new proportions. Since a consistent reliance on media involvement and attack ads have grown immensely amongst presidential candidates, this will translate into a wider gap in party polarization and subsequently tie into the trust of American citizens. Previous scholars have shown consistent data that political trust has no bearing on the actual turnout of presidential elections (Citrin 1974). But, historic distrustful ratings between major-party candidates may prove to alter political cultures for subsequent years. In this study, I thoroughly examine the growing significance of political trust on presidential voting in the United States.

DEDICATION

In memory of my late grandfather, Edward L. Juraszek. You exemplified all the characteristics of tough love and served your country with honor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I
LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Trust

Previous scholarly research has shown political trust to carry inconsistent patterns in determining a correlation to voter turnout. Aside from voter turnout, there is also a variation in whom – if any – benefits from a lack of [or surplus in] political trust. Hetherington (1998) finds that a manifestation of dissatisfaction begin at the roots of an American populous having low political trust. Further research brings to light low levels of political trust not only cause higher dissatisfaction percentages, but also leads to a volatile political environment (Hetherington 1998). In such an environment, Hetherington (1998) concludes this climate to be more difficult than not for elected officials to succeed.

So what do we infer about a political environment that includes a presidential candidate outside of the two-party dominated system in America? Historically, Democrats and Republicans have had little worry [if any at all] about third-party independents running in a general election. A potential exception is the 1992 Presidential Election between Incumbent George H.W. Bush [R], Bill Clinton [D], and Ross Perot [I]. Despite not picking up any electoral votes, Perot [I] was still able to carry almost twenty-million votes which made up roughly 19% of the electorate turnout. This has been a

topic of heavy debate for scholars who focus on political trust and presidential voting patterns.

While some believe the victory for Bill Clinton [D] was inevitable – based on President George H.W. Bush’s promise to America of “No New Taxes” and subsequent lack of trust based on economic adversity in the country – others seem to foster the idea that Perot’s candidacy as an ‘alternative option to major party politics’ is statistically significant. Furthermore, Hetherington (1999) shows that incumbent presidents suffer the most when there is a decline of political trust in America. Consistent with his previous studies, Hetherington (1999) continues the analyses by breaking down the meaning of the electoral context in terms of two-candidate races and three-candidate races. Main findings illustrate that the politically distrustful voters tend to support candidates from the non-incumbent party in a two-party race, and tend to support third-party candidates [Independents] in a three-party race (Hetherington 1999). In an increasing volatile political environment, one would be led to also expect future increases in three-party candidate vote percentages that are consistent with these findings.

Many Americans throughout the country look to our leaders not only for a sense of direction, but surely to govern effectively despite our harsh criticisms. The manner in which we carry out the process of evaluation is often in elementary form rather than a thorough unbiased process. Citrin (1974) believes this is an area of concern for future scholars in determining the significance of cynical attitudes at the micro and macro levels. He accepts previous scholarly findings in that political cynicism does have a relationship to the meaning of political trust, but not at the expense of donning a direct correlation. Citrin (1974) continues by providing insight on the separation of ‘political

trust in government' and 'political trust in a regime.' This perspective allows a closer look at the organic body of an institution and also the current incumbent's party within the presidency more accurately.

Most scholars agree that political trust can generally become divided into numerous subsections as long as the topics remain consistent in producing an accurate reflection of the people. A more prominent definition of political trust is attainable by seeking the numerous attributes that generally makeup one's trust percentage. Typically, this is where one determines how well government officials represent the people, whether government officials are viewed as crooked, whether government officials waste economic funding, whether public policy reflects the demands of the people, and a base question of whether one trusts the government or not. Conducted at the University of Michigan, this survey research has been essential in providing subsequent time-series analyses. It also allows a more thorough and accurate understanding of the electorate in attempting to quantify the importance of issues across history. Responses are in ordinal level data where scholars can subsequently utilize methods in interpreting future data sets, tables, and charts. One would expect much more accuracy and removals of subjective biases in this quantitative data as compared to the qualitative approach – face to face accumulation. Remaining consistent with the research, the most prominent definition of political trust is made up of people's evaluations of the government, how well they are going about their job, with a direct comparison to how the people feel their performance level should be at. Appendix A includes a better synopsis of the questionnaire provided by the American National Election Studies.

In a perfect world, there would be much more simplicity to determining exact levels of political trust. Utilizing interval level data measurements would then alter the ability for scholars to examine the effects of different factors on one's psyche in determining the significance of trust. Here, one would be able to see the distance between pivot points and further hypothesize the relationships of measurement for correlation and causation. Since there is no 'absolute zero' in political trust, one must also account for outside factors that effect this relationship. One must also account for the outside factors that continuously take place on Capitol Hill as well. Gridlock, known as the persistent inability to enact major legislation, can create heavier distrust between the people and government leaders (LeLoup and Shull 2003). Further studies display rather intriguing findings from a historical context.

Economics

Economics carry an effect, directly or indirectly, to all American citizens as it pertains to job opportunities, public policies, and yes, politics. Whether we see this, or not, remains a question of one's initiative in self-interests or the beneficial interest of all to some degree. This becomes an interesting component of political trust in determining the significance that citizens will trust government, not trust government, or hold an indifferent position based on the state of the economy within the country. In fact, some of the researched effects pertaining to economic performance on political trust have been drawn to the conclusion of being unbalanced and asymmetric of sorts (Hetherington and Rudolph 2008).

Since economics and income are relevant to the purchasing of goods and sustaining a livelihood, this is an issue that remains consistent at any point in time

throughout history. We, as Americans, tend to take certain liberties and rights for granted at times. More specifically, when economic times are good, we are less inclined to give credit to the government. Counter to that position, when economic times are adverse, we are more likely to take away credit from the government and also blame them for our shortcomings (Hetherington and Rudolph 2008). When the people evaluate government, much can be derived from the public attention given on issues that saliently dominate conversations.

A prior study by Hetherington (1998) remains consistent with the research outlined above with a more concrete example in modern political times. Notably, economic evaluations by the people had a dramatic effect on political trust during the 1988 Presidential Election between George H.W. Bush [R] and Michael Dukakis [D] when the economy was in a favorably-based [more positive than negative] environment. A potential explanation for the incumbent's party carrying this election is indeed the popularity of former President Reagan, his ability to forecast George H.W. Bush as the obvious choice, and the subsequent inclination of one to believe much economic prosperity would mirror that of the Reagan years in office. But, during the 1996 Presidential Election between Incumbent Bill Clinton [D] and Bob Dole [R] when the economic environment was good, there was no effect. The presence of Ross Perot [I] may have also contributed to such results; albeit, the quantification of significance may prove to be minute of sorts. Interestingly, backing up the work of Hetherington (1998), Citrin and Green (1986) find similar patterns.

In 1980, economic issues were more salient and had an effect on political trust levels in government by the people. During this slow, stationary economic environment,

the political environment was suffering for Incumbent Jimmy Carter [D]. Challenger Ronald Reagan [R] was better able to identify with the American people and provide a message of hope and strength in numbers. As such, the American people sought a change since much of the blame went towards the Carter Administration for their poor economic times. Thus, further illustrating the significant effect that poor economics led to much lower levels of political trust during a time of adversity, Americans tend to care more about times being bad as opposed to being good.

When economic times returned to a much stronger position in 1984, once again the levels of concerns amongst the American people were lowered. When this took place, the economic evaluations had no effect on political trust levels (Citrin and Green 1986).

The underlying rationale suggests that each individual will have a different propensity to respond in ways that differ based on economic threats. Economic issues tend to be more home-grown and are less likely to pose a threat to the political system as opposed to international affairs (Hetherington and Rudolph 2008). Some scholars even question the levels of political trust having an effect on the distribution of funding to social programs in the United States. Put another way, lowering political trust may indeed provide an advantage for an opposing party in the White House as well as Congress. And, if this were to occur, conclusions would show political trust to have a significant effect on political outcomes (Hetherington 2005).

Shaffer (1982) explains more thoroughly the complexity behind economic issues as it pertains to different levels of socioeconomic status, race, and geographic areas within the country. The cross-tabulation ran ensures the prevention of further

methodically artefactual conclusions and more accurate data interpretations (Shaffer 1982). The main finding illustrates differences between each citizen throughout the country based on preferences of policy and prevalence of issue importance. These findings also provide further backing of the constant evolution of political times and political environments in each area of the country. Through utilization of a multiple regression equation, these results were able to avoid much of the bias that troubles scholars of political trust [when attempting to correlate a sense of direction in liberal, conservative, and moderate positions]. Even though the study shows that there are no ideologically consistent differences between voters and non-voters, Shaffer (1982) does provide data illustrating a consistency in the argument of voters being more conservative on economic issues until the late 1960's. This bias of conservatism was only partially because of the 'more' conservative orientations of higher socioeconomic statuses compared to those of lower socioeconomic statuses throughout the country (Shaffer 1982).

International Events

International affairs, phenomena, and disasters are an intriguing subunit of political trust because more often than not these events are impossible to foresee. On many occasions, international crises can create an initial 'rally-round-the-flag' effect that boosts the political trust levels of the American public in political leaders (Berinsky 2009) (Merolla and Zechmeister 2009). During a period of higher political trust, it's important to note this also manifests into higher levels of public support. With the higher levels of public support, leaders in government are better able to make changes on the

battlefield, changing the conduct of the conflict, and potentially bringing forth a better outcome (Mueller 1973).

Mueller (1973) examined three important groups – followers, partisans, and believers - when conceptualizing the different types of public support towards a presidential leader. First, followers are more inclined to take the position of the nation’s leadership – especially the president. Second, partisans are people who go on the position of their own party’s leadership and position themselves accordingly. Lastly, believers focus on the issue while utilizing one’s own ideology, methodical view on foreign policy, and/or self-interest (Mueller 1973). By separating the groups with different identifiers, Muller (1973) was also able to indirectly distinguish between the fluctuating educated and uneducated respondents in the American public sample.

Accounting for the overall disinterest by most Americans in politics, Mueller (1973) conducted interviews and kept his unit of analysis on ‘households’ rather than people. This helps to proportionally represent those who are able to vote. Questions were also methodically calculated to be more simple in wording; thus, avoiding the potential to load a question in one direction or the other. Over a period of time with utilization of a trend analysis, Mueller (1973) allows future scholars to see shifts and views change.

Overall, Mueller (1973) confirms the ‘rally-round-the-flag’ phenomena did have a statistically significant effect on the presidential popularity levels. But, this is very much a more short-lived boost in popularity rather than a sustainment. After a certain period of time, the American opinion and behavior towards an international crisis can eventually shift course. Numbers in deaths, economic spending [tax hikes], prolonged media

coverage, and the geographic proximity to 'home' can quickly turn a positive public support position into a negative support position. Undoubtedly, presidents must take into account the views of their electorate to some degree in seeking to sustain popularity levels that are deemed acceptable by the public. Certainly, this is more easily said than accomplished with a constant fluctuation in political subcultures and climates from a national perspective.

Political Corruption and Fairness Concerns

Political scandal and a sense of corruption can not only increase the likelihood of a president losing a seat in office, but it can create long-lasting effects on an American public that already has minimal interests in the political sector (Rose-Ackerman 1999). This is directly related to the self-interest and public interest conflict, and under normal conditions, create concerns amongst the populous. When concerns are heightened, public policy tends to be preferred that is beneficial towards one's own interest [solely] rather than a collective effort. When concerns are lowered, the counter happens, and public policy tends to be preferred that is beneficial towards the interest of all (Stone 2002). The concerns of citizens may prove to be an indicator that government is not effectively managing their job, and the appearance of corruption does not help in the slightest.

The appeal of a candidate is heightened when there is consistency in the policy and ritualistic approach during advertising a brand and debate (Ginsberg and Stone 1996). In a nation-wide sample approach, Katz and Warshel (2001) find that the ability for a presidential candidate to maintain visibility and a sense of transparency help allow more people to build a potential sense of trust and coalition of support around. Still, there are a number of issues that lead to scrutiny and basic theorization about a person and

society about how to actually win an election beyond these measures (Katz and Warshel 2001). Once again, one can see that a national perspective on politics is not an easy task to accomplish with a plethora of concurring or dissenting views. But, avoiding corruption is surely a firm beginning.

History provides a few concrete examples of how presidential elections can quickly become controversial based on the outcomes. For example, based on the 2000 Presidential Election between George W. Bush [R] and Al Gore [D], we see a clearly controversial election that was extremely close. President elect, George W. Bush, actually won the presidency based on the Electoral College despite not receiving more votes than Al Gore. Let alone the controversy behind a recount taking place in Florida, media networks went back and forth on who was actually leading or going to win the presidency. Confusion soon took place thereafter in the days to come that ultimately led to the Supreme Court's involvement that determined the final say in the 2000 presidential election (Gillman 2002).

In a subsequent study to the perceived electoral fairness of George W. Bush in 2000, Craig, Martinez, Gainous, and Kane (2006) conducted a legitimization experiment amongst the winners and losers of the election. Utilizing a selected number of datasets from the National Election Study surveys [1964-2004], their research was able to examine a time period of forty years. Consistent with previous data and research, their findings help provide support that show those who voted for the loser in a presidential election will perceive the election as unfair. Also, along with the unfairness of the election, supporters of losing candidates will be more dissatisfied with the state of democracy. Supporters of losing candidates will exhibit much lower levels of political

trust than those who supported the winning candidate of the presidential election (Craig, Martinez, et al. 2006) (Anderson and LoTempio 2002). Meanwhile, those who supported the winner of a presidential election are more inclined to view the election as fair and be satisfied with the state of democracy.

Confidence in government was also found to be an issue amongst those who supported a losing candidate as opposed to a winning candidate in the 2000 presidential election (Craig, Martinez, et al. 2006). During a lack of confidence, those who display this characteristic are more likely than not to rationalize legitimacy issues with the nature of the ruling bodies in which presidents are elected into office. The supporters of losing candidates are also more inclined to mention a lack of ‘options’ offered in the election, or choice of candidates. Overall, the interpretations of voters show the relationship between being on a side of victory as opposed to a side of defeat.

The more controversial an election also raises the propensity and likelihood of rationalizations, political distrust, and questions about government legitimacy in future elections to come. The attitudes of the electorate coupled along with interpretation of electoral fairness, serves as an indicator between behavior tendencies of political support and candidate preferences (Craig, Martinez, et al. 2006). Elections are supposed to provide the people with a sense of belonging, making a difference, and obviously a legitimate blueprint for those representing our interests. Political cynicism can then manifest through the suggestions of losing candidates, their supporters, and the mainstream media. A similar study by Avery (2007) on the 2000 presidential election confirms the views of losing candidates. Findings further illustrate that blacks in particular perceived the Supreme Court’s decision on Bush v. Gore (2000) to be

illegitimate; therefore, continuing a lack of political trust (Avery 2007). Certainly, one does not have to go far back in history to view another presidential election as controversial and historic, simultaneously.

Consistent with the findings of Craig, Martines, Gainous, and Kane (2006), Nunnally (2011) also finds there are voting irregularities amongst voters who express political distrust. The 2008 presidential election between Barack Obama [D] and John McCain [R] was both historical and highly publicized. For the first time in history, African Americans watched along as a pragmatic black candidate was able to win over the hearts of citizens throughout the country. Despite being an underdog, Obama delivered on the highest of stages during the primary season in defeating favorite, Hillary Clinton [D]. His eloquent speaking, tactical debate approach, and message of hope provided many with the opportunity of voting outside the Clinton and Bush dynasties that dominated the previous two decades.

Obama was also a candidate that many felt would better proportionally represent the Democratic Party substantively since almost 90% of blacks identify as Democrat voters (Nunnally 2011). The core issue was to overcome the idea of voter dilution that plagued the political trust levels of numerous blacks and other minorities. This is statistically significant since whites are already more likely to vote than blacks – especially the older, more affluent, and better educated. The results of having voter dilution carried out for so many years which oppressed blacks' right to vote is something future research should surely seek and attempt to quantify. Yet, despite the political oppression for many generations, Nunnally (2011) finds that there were no racial differences in how registered voters fear or do not fear voting irregularities.

Since race is a non-factor in determining the fear of voting irregularities, one must now look towards what makes up the blueprint of such. Nunnally (2011) also finds more to the point data, that being, all citizens – regardless of race – process information in a similar fashion. The availability of this information is what separates one’s ability to further process an educated opinion and view on a particular issue. Cable television, social media, and other modern technology device access leads to a higher propensity of one not only being able to form an opinion, but also become active in the political sector. More likely than not, this is where higher socioeconomic statuses help provide access to these tools; thus, providing an individual the necessary means of achieving an end-goal of having a political voice and avoiding the likelihood of displaying fear of voting irregularities.

Media Bias and Party Polarization

The media, much like any other institution or business organization, has its own agenda set with goals to achieve throughout the course of an annual year. Political climates, subcultures, fiscal economics, international affairs, and other mainstream news are observed to maintain relevance in modern times. Looking at the media in terms of a market, the apparent goal is to not only maintain what you already have [viewers], but to also branch out and attract new viewers within that same ideological framework that does not compromise the satisfaction of what’s already there in place. It’s not foreign to note the discrepancies in delivery of the ‘news’ from one network to the other. Ipso facto, mainstream media networks deliver what they want you to see and hear.

Surprisingly, newspapers are more bias leaning than television networks, and this strong sense of partisanship attracts those individuals who are stronger party advocates,

Democrats or Republicans (Shaffer 1981). The strength of one's political ideology and efficacy level also translates to the very nature of politics - who gets what, when and where. The ability for one to discern certain elements of media bias and formulate an opinion based on factual evidence is truly at the heart of democracy. This is counterintuitive in American political cultures since there is already the issue of a prevalent [and growing] disinterest in politics. Question remaining, can we trust televised media to have a positive effect on our political efficacy levels while merely seeking to lower the sense of political distrust in the country?

In a study presenting the exposure of televised political disagreements having an effect on the American public's social norm of constructive debate, Mutz and Reeves (2005) provide an intriguing outlook on this phenomena. Concerned with the quality of political debate and the leaders, Mutz and Reeves (2005) raise light to the concerns that many Americans may have throughout the country when viewing politics – whether they can trust the government or not. Once again, the research focuses on the civility, incivility, and embodiments of government leaders and the way the people perceive them to be. The main focus - showing whether or not televised incivility has an effect on the evaluative methods of the people on candidates – further provide a direction of the importance in one's personality characteristics during the debate process. To account for an authentic view and to produce stimuli for the study, professional actors were hired to play the roles of candidates and a moderator relaying the questions accordingly.

Detrimental effects occur when uncivil political debate and discourse are shown to viewers that statistically relate to their political trust levels. Along with the attitudes being affected, but also the levels of support for the institutions and government together

were lowered in numbers (Mutz and Reeves 2005). The more attacking, outrageous based commentary, and enhanced perception of arguing had a negative effect on the view of a candidate. The general manner in which these disagreements took place strongly suggests that people do care about the presidential character of candidates. Consistent with previous research, Mutz and Reeves (2005) do show political trust levels to be much higher during the course of civil debate as opposed to uncivil debate.

It's well worth mentioning that this study also provided rather fascinating results pertaining to the level of interest in politics. As we know, and have previously stated, Americans are already extremely disinterested in politics. But, this study shows that respondents were much more likely to become engaged in politics when the content of debate was uncivil as opposed to civil. Despite not trusting the candidates that displayed uncivil behavior, statistically speaking, candidates were much more likely to be viewed as entertaining. This entertainment theoretically translates to not only much more interest in the political sector, but also to political cynicism in a fashion that keeps one in politics by utilizing unorthodox measures.

For most, politics all in its own does not generate enough merit to sufficiently compete with the entertainment of other mainstream shows on television networks (Mutz and Reeves 2005). Future theoretical implications may show more candidates in modern times – such as Donald Trump [R] – to adopt a new methodology in rallying the people with high-energy political uncivility. The expense of uncivility as opposed to civility is highly debatable in determining the actual likelihood of becoming elected. What we are unable to discredit are the empirical facts that individuals are driven by the entertainment involved in mainstream media networks and the potential belief amongst those of being

correct based on the information relayed by producers. Highly passionate and stubborn separation of views in the electorate is what creates a growing gap, otherwise known as ‘party polarization.’

Party polarization continues to separate not only the constituencies across the country, but also elected government officials in their decision making from politics to public policy. What all seek is an outcome where the quality or ‘product’ of government is enhanced to better proportions on a daily basis. Partiality to one’s party and ideology makes this an extremely difficult task to accomplish. Let alone the wants and agenda of one’s party, lobbyists and donors are sure to be heard in the decision-making process through their contributions to campaigns. Super PACs, a major factor in elections through massive contributions that on many occasions is exempt from specific donor identification information, more than likely add to a growing party polarization (Herrnson 2016).

The ideas of political participation along with roles citizens have in electoral processes must be rethought in order to make government more responsible, and potentially restore some element of trust we have in the institution (Clifford 2013). Until this takes place, ‘quality’ of government, based on public policies and institutions, will be unable to be solved in a realistic and human effort (Rothstein 2011). An argument provided by Rothstein (2011) illustrates the moral basis as a blueprint for construction of policies that all individuals, interests groups, and parties can back to some degree. Statistically significant research findings with a p-value of (<0.001) further shows when authorities ‘help people,’ then they are much more likely to be viewed as trustable. Since Democrats are more inclined to provide economic support for those of lower income

levels and minorities, this poses an advantage of sorts in the electorate's view of polarization between the two major parties.

Political parties do contribute a great deal in American politics on a national level and they tend to advocate different policies and ideologies through the course of their relationships with one another in Washington D.C. between congressional and presidential offices (Mayhew 2005). Consistent with President Woodrow Wilson's curiosity of a successful government being possible with divided party control between branches, Mayhew (2005) sought to better explain whether this was possible when party polarization is prevalent, especially between the president and congress. Since congressional oversight and much more heated debates are to take place under a divided government, Mayhew accounted for this factor by developing a control variable of 'unified' government. The results were rather shocking to note that despite unified or divided control of government; 'major' enactments did not suffer in the policy-making process. Instead, the control variable of 'unified' government provided an unstable coefficient that was counter to the original research hypothesis; thus, concluding the inability to reject the null hypothesis.

When non-statistically significant relationships are concluded, this tends to draw upon more theories and debate amongst scholars to combat the growing gap. For example, looking at phenomena that effect American democracy more directly – I.e. expansion of the vote, modernizing voter registration methods, and moving the day of the election – are some ideas that Mann and Ornstein (2012) develop. Obviously, this would be done through reconstruction of the US Constitution in some elements, but worth noting due to an electorate that majority wise prefers term-limits amongst congressional

leaders. As previously mentioned by scholars, voters must act ‘strategically’ and reward leaders with problem solving skills and punish those who obstruct the process of policy-making (Mann and Ornstein 2012). Congress, not having the glamour or prestige of the presidency, is more often than not viewed as the problem when government comes to a standstill and bipartisan work is not conducted (Binder 1999).

The source of legislative gridlock and the subsequent effect it has on the American public is often obscure. In an effort to better develop answers rather than uncertainty, Bowling and Ferguson (2001) sought to better correlate the relationships between interest representations and divided government on gridlock. Their findings are consistent with previous data – divided government all by itself does not prevent the production of major policy – but the breakdown is further extrapolated in measures beyond branch to branch relations. When executives were faced with opposition from a legislature, there were more tendencies to have prolonged debate and make governing more difficult for the executive. But, when there was a division between the inter-chamber relations of a legislature, there was a positive [non-significant] relationship which did not lead to more difficulties for an executive to govern (Bowling and Ferguson 2001). These findings illustrate that despite differences between parties, bi-partisan work can produce quality policies with an effort on the ideal of helping the people. Bowling and Ferguson (2001) also state the significant importance of always accounting for the positioning and influence of interest groups in the political sector. A challenge is to quantify the proliferation of their appearance and degree of influence on the actual policy itself.

Inactive Voters and Active Voters

Inactive voters are individuals who are registered to vote, and able to vote, but choose not to do so (Verba and Nie 1987). Typically, in order to keep up with national voter rolls and data, an individual is deemed 'inactive' after missing two consecutive federal elections. Voting precincts and county registrars seek to minimize this group of the populous by updating personal information. This is conducted by mailing out voter registration cards with a specific emphasis for voters to update their addresses. If the postcard is not returned, an individual will remain in the statistical category of inactive until the update information has been obtained.

Active voters are those who are registered to vote, and actually make their way to the polls to cast a ballot (Verba and Nie 1987). These voters are also broken down into a plethora of categories that have a fluctuation of political involvement beyond voting. Whether a voting specialist [one who votes but is not involved in any other sort of activism] or complete activist, active voters provide a better sense of direction in a democracy with their voice being heard.

Politically Efficacious and Non-Politically Efficacious

Political efficacy is a belief that one can have an impact on the political arena and their influence can ultimately shape the decisions and methodology of others (Luskin 1987). Political efficacy can also be broken down into two separate units, internal and external political efficacy. Internal political efficacy is focusing on the belief that an individual has the capacity to understand what's going on in politics based on their own competence; and, external political efficacy is more focused on beliefs of the government and governmental leaders being responsive to the needs of citizens (Craig, Niemi and

Silver 1990). Clearly, the two units are related but have different areas of belief.

Scholars seem to differ in opinion whether or not to distinguish the two, but Craig, Nemi, and Silver (1990) illustrate the importance of doing such in an attempt to minimize contradictory conclusions. Despite their efforts, main findings still show their opposing view to carry unreliable and validity issues. Scholars continue to seek quantification methods in an attempt to better define and conceptualize political efficacy in this regard.

Those who are non-politically efficacious do not have the belief that they are able to make a difference in politics. The non-politically efficacious also have a much lower propensity to influence others in the political arena, if at all. Individuals at this level of efficacy could be categorized as such for a multitude of reasons. Some of these reasons include, but are not limited to: age, education level completed, race, and socioeconomic status. Typically, the younger generations coupled with a low-education level completed show minimal interest in politics and therefore are more likely than not to be non-politically efficacious. Also, those of lower socioeconomic statuses coupled with being a minority, raise the likelihood that one will also be non-politically efficacious.

Presidential Voting

The presidency itself can be viewed from many different perspectives, but assuming this position is maintained solely would be fallible. The executive branch receives most of the credit when times are good and most of the blame when times are bad. By default, the president inherits much of the praise and scrutiny that comes along with being the commander-in-chief of the United States. The very moment a president is sworn into office is also the very same moment he must determine how to utilize skill and other powers to work in his favor (Neustadt 1960). Regardless of agenda, what a

president must seek to avoid is being representative in a manner that is conducive only to a select few which serve the best interests of his initiatives.

Communication skills and the ability to display high character can mobilize an entire base along with defining a presidency as a whole (Skowronek 1997). Political subcultures carry different variants in time as the needs and policy concerns of an electorate on a national level change. The ability for a president to obtain the trust of the people is vital. Combating against economic setbacks, international fallouts, showing empathy for the common citizen, and not leaning too liberal or conservative are commonalities that successful president re-elects have shown in previous election cycles. The connections a president is able to make with the populous, regardless of right-wing or left-wing ideologists, help to create momentum prior to taking office.

By the time a president takes office, the public has already developed a sense of perception on his character and what type of leader he will actually become. It becomes more-clear in years subsequent that we are better able to not only evaluate a president on his tenure in the oval office, but also what type of individual the president was while ruling the country (Barber 2009). What we [the people] want, and what Washington D.C. wants, often can differ in policy and perspective. The presidency is the only one of its kind that takes into account an electorate on the national level as opposed to any state or district within state level. Anticipated positions on the presidency show a wanted representation of the people based on their ‘popular’ will (Nelson 2010). Presumably, opinions and political activism levels can fluctuate depending on how much one actually trusts the government that may or may not be reflective of an electorate.

Fascinating results, drawn from the research of Abravanel and Busch (1975), provide scholars with an unorthodox view of what many may have previously hypothesized. Based on political competence and trust levels pertaining to voting, the higher politically confident individuals tend to show higher averages of political interest, but also show lower levels of political trust which incline them to more unconventional methods of political strategies (Abravanel and Busch 1975). This translates to political competence not necessarily leading one to trust government, nor benefiting an incumbent president holding office. Also, just as intriguing are the findings that individuals who are more involved in stronger party identification ties are less likely to trust government than those who have never been involved in partisan activity. Question rising: What are the most statistically significant indicators of lower presidential voting turnout?

A study conducted by Shaffer (1981) is one likely explanation of the most statistically significant factors that affect voter turnout. Bivariate and multivariate analysis help to show results over a period of time that could have independent effects that are more data credible than others. Careful question wording and systematic measurements can help minimize inconsistent results that may have previously overlooked certain phenomena credible to a study by posing similar, yet different, meanings (Abramson and Finifter 1981). Dealing with the methodical concerns, political trust failed to portray a statistically meaningful effect in any portion of the study (Shaffer 1981). Even more fascinating was the sample taken from the southern voters showing lower political trust levels than any other portion of the country and their elevation in voter turnout percentages (Shaffer 1981).

Political behavior on a national electorate population is more difficult to measure when accounting for outliers such as the ‘deviant’ south. Although voting is a rather simple act, the registration [or burden of becoming registered] itself is far more of a barrier than simply casting a ballot. The institutional requirement and then the act of actually casting a ballot are a two-tier process that takes place at different locations across different time frames (Timpone 1998). Research on separating these two criteria provided by Timpone (1998) help add to the logic of outside factors determining whether one goes to the polls or not. More unique than previous scholarly work, Timpone (1998) finds that political efficacy – both the internal and external levels – along with the strength of one’s partisanship [party identification] does not indicate whether one will be able to vote as much as length at residence. Since one must first be registered to vote prior to casting a ballot, this brings light to adversities individuals may face when moving from one geographic area to the next.

Statistically significant results indicate the structural process and institutional requirements of registering to be an interesting discussion for future debate. Maybe when the knowledge and passage of information age is then brought forth to a higher base, this will in return mobilize a national constituency even beyond the record numbers we have seen in recent presidential primary election contests. Overall, voter turnout and political trust have still been unimpressive in numbers since the 1960 presidential election between John F. Kennedy [D] and Richard Nixon [R]. Taking a closer look at individual-level behavior and requirements by the government may indicate more attention towards policy such as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. Coming to

light with more determinants of political behavior and their relationship to the presidency as both an individual, and an institutional branch, may correlate to less political cynicism.

Beneficial to any president, the economic conditions are more likely to hurt congressional leaders than the commander-in-chief. Surely, the president answers to the economy like any other politician, but the leash is much shorter for those who are already viewed more negatively [congressmen and congresswomen] than the president. Also, since any House of Representative Member remains under a two-year term, their constant involvement in Washington D.C. along with their home district is under review. The short-term fluctuations in voting behavior by default are much more likely to then punish congressional leaders during poor economic times (Kramer 1971). Same party affiliations between legislative and executive branches do play a role in helping a president seek reelection.

The same can be said of executive to legislative branch relations as well. But, once again, a president inherits a much more 'prestigious' office and is more prone to survive poor performances by his congressional leaders than congressional leaders surviving poor performances by the president. When economic times are great, both congressional leaders of the president's party and the president benefit despite the president carrying most of the credit. These are identified as presidential coattails and can attract more votes in the future for the president and his party through methodical campaign strategies by running well ahead of time (Kramer 1971).

Presidents can help their own cause of obtaining votes in the future by utilizing their time during the 'honeymoon' phase effectively. This phase is the early onset of a presidential term, typically in his first two years holding office where one will enjoy

more positive evaluations than negative evaluations. During this phase, the populous is more inclined to trust the president and support his initiatives for policy. Chanley, Rudolph, and Rahn (2000) illustrate this concept in a governmental experiment showing people who do not trust the government are also more likely to leave less positive evaluations and show less support for government policies. These findings, consistent with Hetherington (1998) point out a correlation between political trust and public policy mood within the electorate. In other words, if the public is more trusting, then the president will more likely than not be able to push his agenda [with the public support of his domestic policy stance], and generally speaking, there will be more support for the government (Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000).

Political evaluations of government and a president are especially influenced by the appearance of political scandal, economic booms, and crime control (Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000). These factors are shaped not only at the individual-level of political behavior but also on a city-to-city level that help provide a much more clear picture of economic inequalities, political polarization, racial differences, and populations (Rahn and Rudolph 2005). Rahn and Rudolph (2005) further extrapolate the importance of political representation amongst different individual views in cities throughout the country. The importance of race and proportional representation also seems to be a concern amongst citizens throughout the country as well. With America's growing diversity, one would think there is a more willing attitude to understand the ideologies of an opposite; albeit, debate on many occasions can become heated amongst others. But, more diversity translates to the growing polarization in political ideologies which makes the oval office a rather difficult branch to manage. Leaders are better able to get their

agenda accomplished with flexibility when communities are more homogeneous across the country (Rahn and Rudolph 2005).

The American public carries unique tendencies into election cycles given the plethora of civil liberties that are enjoyed on a daily basis. With poor turnout percentages comes much debate on how, and why, this seems to occur. In a country with a two-party dominated system, Americans can sometimes hold the position of not having a viable option to select which brings forth dissatisfaction with representation (Miller and Listhaug 1990). This coupled with a lack of faith in the political system could lead to more individuals skipping out on Election Day. Previous scholars have undoubtedly analyzed political trust to be significant or non-statistically significant through empirical research on the effect towards presidential voting.

The prior research tends to focus on how negative political trust hurts presidential initiatives and their approval ratings all while creating a lack of faith in government at unique levels of relevance. But, what if the lack of representation actually brings forth voter turnout by means we have never witnessed in elections past? What if the distrustful voters are so passionate about one candidate [not obtaining office] that they are willing to vote for the opponent - despite not giving their endorsed support? Can political distrust lead to an increase in presidential voter turnout percentages and subsequently create an advantage for Democrats or Republicans? Remarkably unique characteristics of current political times and subcultures throughout the country have created a demand to reconsider the significance of political trust in determining the next President of the United States.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the effect of political trust on the 2016 presidential vote selection, I utilize data from the American National Election Studies, Gallup, Pew Research Center, and Five-Thirty-Eight. These outlets provide a much more specific illustration of particular demographics of interest that allows one to theorize the potential impact of political trust on the 2016 vote selection. By comparing the data, I am better able to recognize and interpret political times based on different variables that may or may not have been as significant thru different points in history. More specifically, I will investigate and examine how party identification, education levels, ‘most important issue,’ ideology, and age all tie into political trust levels and how this subsequently relates to the presidential vote selection over time. This forecast will provide one with a better sense of how voters prioritize their selections based on the unique demographics in this unique presidential election.

My demographics of interest include party identification, education levels, most important issue, ideology, and age. By party identification, I conceptualize as the political party in which one most identifies. With regards to education levels, I’m interested in the different ranges of highest education completed. Most important issue is conceptualized as what one feels is the ‘most important’ thing government needs to address in government at the time. Ideology, being straight forward, is where one aligns

on the political ideology scale (far left being more liberal and far right being more conservative). Age, also being pretty straight forward, is the age level that one falls into at the time of voting selections.

My independent variable, political trust, is conceptualized in a manner that remains consistent with previous scholarly research. I focus on the views that relate to government being run in the best interest of all, or a select few, the levels of government wasting funds (tax dollars), whether or not government officials are viewed as crooked, and the overall trust levels that reflect views towards the federal government. Based on previous scholarly work, I feel it is important to note government officials and the federal government as those of authority, decision makers and leaders. To provide one with a better sense of illustration, I include figures in Chapter III, Data and Results.

My dependent variable, presidential vote, is conceptualized as the presidential vote selection that one chooses on Election Day. The focus here is to see whether or not a correlation can be drawn from political trust to presidential voting based on the categorical variables listed above. I also seek to assess the effect of political trust having an effect on the percentages drawn towards third-party candidates, also known as the candidates within the Independent Party. A focus of illustration is also imperative for readers to see the fluctuation in this variable as well. For this reason, I include figures for this variable in Chapter III, Data and Results, too.

Through this model, I am seeking to better provide a representative view of well-calculated, current political views and opinions towards presidential candidates in the 2016 General Election with a direct emphasis on the categorical variables listed above. In a political climate that currently remains volatile and unique of sorts from any previous

election, I hope to draw upon previous trends, situations, and circumstances that can relate some sense of similarities to what's taking place in the 2016 General Election. The feelings of voters and their range of opinions, coupled with views, more likely than not will determine the direction of not only this election, but subsequent elections to follow due to the paradigm extremes of the left-winged and right-winged candidates from the primaries (i.e. Bernie Sanders, Democratic 'Socialist,' and Donald Trump, 'Republican Nationalist'). Undoubtedly, traditional party politics may hinder the majority of voters in this country to not only trust government, but also create a demand for reform and realignment (especially within the Republican Party due to the country shifting more Democratic by the year).

I hypothesize that individuals who have a party identification of Democrat will overwhelmingly support the Democratic Candidate, Hillary Clinton. I couple this hypothesis with logistical reasoning behind the coattails of current President Barack Obama and party unification amongst Democrats. Since President Obama currently holds office, lower levels of political distrust will be exhibited amongst Democrats towards Hillary Clinton. Meanwhile, those with a party identification of Republican will show higher levels of political distrust in current political times and towards Democratic Candidate, Hillary Clinton. Consistent with the logistical reasoning of Democrats to support Incumbent President Obama, and his endorsement of Hillary Clinton, Republicans will counter with not only high political distrust levels towards Clinton, but also show lower levels of political distrust towards Republican Candidate, Donald Trump and Independent Candidate, Gary Johnson.

My second hypothesis are those with higher levels of education completed, particularly those with a college degree, are more likely to support the Democratic Candidate, Hillary Clinton, as opposed to supporting the Republican Candidate, Donald Trump.

My third hypothesis takes a closer look at the ‘most important issue’ facing the country today. Voters who are more concerned about foreign affairs and immigration will more likely than not be supportive of Donald Trump and show lower levels of political distrust in his regard. I suspect that the focus of this year’s election will be based around immigration and the economy, first and foremost. This same group of voters will also exhibit much higher levels of political distrust towards Hillary Clinton. Voters who are most concerned about domestic social issues (i.e. equal pay for women, police and community relations) are more likely to not only support Hillary Clinton, but also show high levels of political trust towards her. I suspect this group to also show overwhelming distrust levels for Donald Trump.

With regards to political ideology, those who align more with left-winged politics will support Hillary Clinton in an overwhelming fashion when compared to Donald Trump. The same goes for the political trust levels being higher for Hillary Clinton and lower for Donald Trump. Voters who align more with right-winged politics will support Donald Trump more than Hillary Clinton, but not in an overwhelming fashion. I suspect that many self-identifying conservatives are more willing to back Independent Candidate Gary Johnson based on the lower political trust levels from conservatives in their views of Donald Trump. This obviously creates an advantage in theory for Hillary Clinton (earning more of the political trust within her own ideological base) when compared to

opposing candidate Donald Trump earning the trust within those who identify as conservatives. This variable alone could prove to be detrimental in determining the next president since a significant portion of conservatives will seek an 'alternative option' in selecting a presidential candidate.

Moderate voters, otherwise known as independents, may once again decide the outcome of this next election. I suspect those with middle-of-the-road ideologies will support Independent Candidate, Gary Johnson, if political distrust levels are high. This would hurt Donald Trump in the election more so than Hillary Clinton since there is a majority within the populous that shifting towards liberalism. If political distrust levels are low amongst those who are moderate in ideology, these voters will be more inclined to vote for Hillary Clinton. Since traditional party politics do not have as much partisanship pull on moderates, as compared to Democrats and Republicans, independent voters will better be able to remove subjective party biases and make a rational decision based on the experience and leadership qualities of each candidate as their form of rational reasoning. This would further create an advantage for Hillary Clinton.

My fifth and final hypothesis looks at age. In recent years, President Barack Obama was able to mobilize not only minorities and blue-collared, middle-classed workers, but also younger voters and those who are students in college. I expect this group to play another significant role in the upcoming 2016 General Election. I suspect that first-time voters, those within the millennials generation, to vote Democrat at a much higher propensity than Republican. As such, creating an advantage for Hillary Clinton, she will be able to enjoy an overwhelming statistically significant support percentage from those who are younger in age, still in college, and potentially younger professionals.

For those who are older in age, I expect much more support to align with the Republican Party. More often than not, those sixty-five years of age and older, identify with the Republican Party more than the Democratic Party. This group of individuals are also much more inclined to vote than those of younger generations due to the daily schedule of the younger populous (i.e. school, work). But, the proportions in which this age group once dominated voter-turnout has been closing in more recent years due to the mobilization efforts of Democrats mentioned above.

Since there is no absolute, definite answer to political times, I must address potential concerns with the model setup. From decade to decade, political times undoubtedly vary based on the conditions, policies, and beliefs of the populous here and far between. In noting this, it becomes subjective if one relies too heavily on assumption rather than the factual beliefs of statistics and data provided. Taking this into account, I will interpret the data 'as is,' while attempting to draw comparisons across the time-series analysis.

Data accumulation itself can become bias-leaning and skewed based on the plethora of outlets that provide political information on daily basis. For this reason, I rely more heavily on independent research provided by the American National Election Studies and by world renowned statistician, Nate Silver (via 538 blog). This is with hopes of keeping a complete bipartisan look on data, interpretations, and implications for future scholarly research. Accounting for these potential concerns should help, more likely than not, throughout the entire research process and the subsequent building upon this research in future studies. Once again, the goal is to derive information that is

accurate, non-subjective (as much as possible), and to provide indicators for decision-makers in years beyond now.

CHAPTER III

DATA AND RESULTS

The fluctuations throughout previous decades can be better explained by taking a look at figure 3.1 which breaks down political trust. In the latter portion of the 1950's, political trust was higher than any other decade we have seen in recent times. The first decline may have had a relation to the assassination of then President John F. Kennedy during his first term in office [November 1963]. There remained a continuation of this decline thru the LBJ Presidency and obviously the Nixon Presidency with heightened media coverage unfolding the Watergate Scandal logistics.

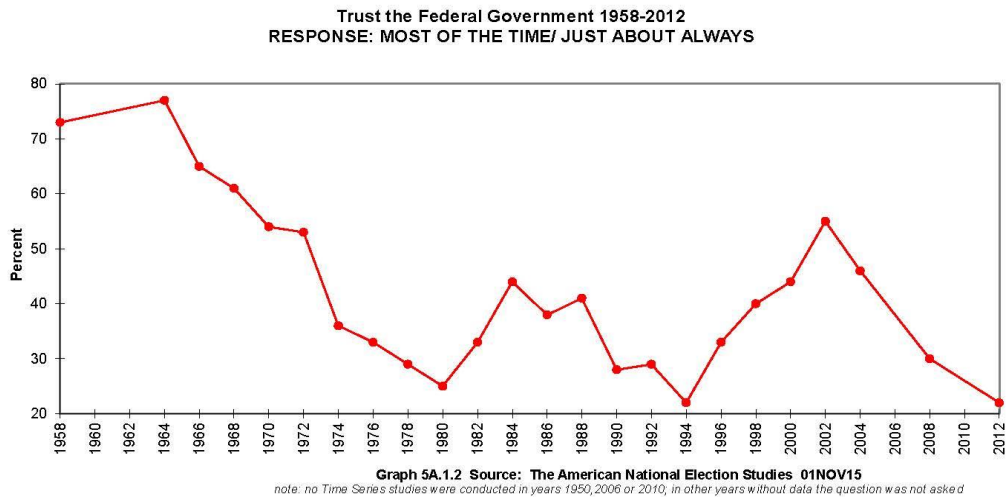


Figure 3.1 Trust in Federal Government

Source: (ANES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior 2015)

People did not respond well to trusting the federal government again until the defeat of Incumbent President Jimmy Carter by Ronald Reagan [R] in the 1980 Presidential Election. More likely than not, the Iran Hostage Crisis played a significant role in the defeat Carter endured. The lack of his administration to resolve the underlying issues overseas did not bode well with the populous in America. Reagan's years in office had leveled out political trust percentages around 50%. Another sharp decline took place shortly after when President George H.W. Bush made the decision to compromise with a Democratic controlled Congress in the 1990 budget agreement. This was subsequent to his promise of "no new taxes" at the 1988 Republican National Convention. Trust hit an all-time low in 1994, when Republicans gained control of both chambers of Congress for the first time in forty years.

A growing economy during the Clinton [D] years in office began the upward climb of political trust. Despite his involvement with an intern, President Clinton still provided America with a sense of once again trusting the federal government [an outlier of sorts]. Undoubtedly, President George W. Bush's ability to unify the country in response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 provided the populous with a sense of unity, trust in federal government, and a more willing attitude to sacrifice certain civil liberties to ensure a safe environment. Like any prolonged international crisis, these can quickly create a turn in an adverse direction. It most certainly did as the involvement in Afghanistan rolled over into Iraq.

Not finding any weapons of mass destruction, coupled with an economy that was beginning to suffer, proved to show one of the more unique paradigm shifts of political trust in any administration. By the time President Barack Obama took office, the Great

Recession was underway and Americans had already showed their emphatic distrust in the federal government once again. One can see where political trust has once again dipped to lower levels at or around 20% with regards to the federal government.

As expected from the first hypothesis, those with a party identification of Democrat are more likely than Republicans to support their own candidate running for president. One can clearly see in figure 3.2 that Clinton is obtaining 91% of her own party's identifiers while Trump is only obtaining 85% of his party's identifiers. Also, it is important to point out that Clinton is obtaining a 3% 'party swing vote' advantage over Trump. By party swing vote, I mean, those who are in support of a candidate from the rival party in which you most identify.

Demographic differences in support for Trump and Clinton

If you had to choose between ____ who would you vote for? (%)

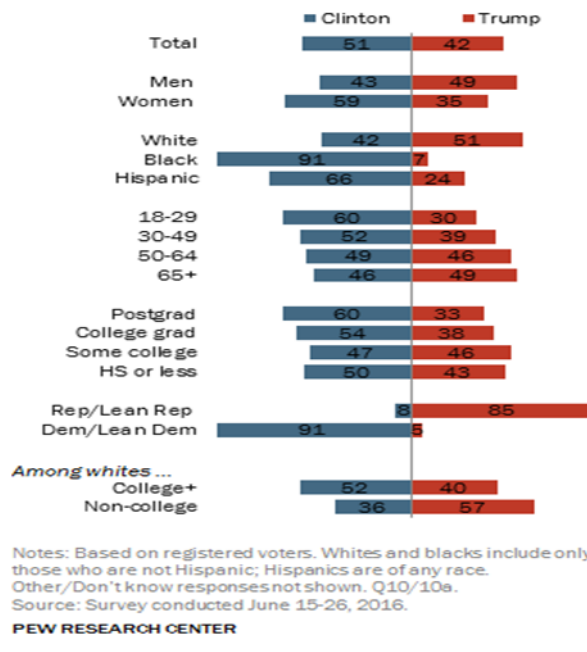


Figure 3.2 Differences (Demographics) in support for Trump and Clinton

Source: (Voter General Election Preferences 2016)

One can also see that education levels in figure 3.2 provide an interesting dynamic in the 2016 presidential election race, too. Once again, as expected, those with higher education levels are more likely to support Clinton over Trump. Synonymous with the second hypothesis, the higher the education level one obtains is also a growing portion of support in the direction of Clinton. Even individuals with lesser amounts of education, ‘some college’ and ‘high school diploma or less,’ show stronger support for Clinton than Trump. The percentages are undoubtedly closer in the lower levels of education - particularly those who have ‘some college’ education [47% Clinton to 46% Trump].

Age may very well be an interesting dynamic in this election. Much more emphasis has been placed on new millennial voters and their mobilization efforts to get

out and vote. Table 3.1 provides a more detailed, in-depth breakdown of the age dynamic with comparisons in trends from the previous two presidential elections. One can see where younger voters [those 18-29 years of age] are more inclined to vote for Clinton than Trump by a 60% to 30% margin. Surely the margins could be tightened for those who are undecided or do not know who they will be voting for at this given time. But, even if Trump were to obtain that portion of voters, he would still be at a -20% margin differential.

Continuing with the age dynamic, as expected, those of sixty-five years of age or older are more inclined to vote for Trump as opposed to Clinton. But, an overwhelming majority is not prevalent here. Going against hypothesized expectations, those of 65+ years of age are not creating a more clear-cut advantage for Trump as opposed to the young millennial voters creating an advantage for Clinton. One can see that voters 65+ years of age only favor Trump over Clinton by 49% to 46% with 5% being undecided, respectively. Romney and McCain were both able to obtain at least a 7% margin differential in their favor with regards to the 65+ year old vote during the previous two presidential elections.

Table 3.1 Vote Preferences in June 2008, 2012, and 2016

Vote preferences in June of 2008, 2012 and 2016

If you had to choose between ___ who would you vote for?

| | June 2008 | | | | June 2012 | | | | June 2016 | | | |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|--------|------------|-------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|------------|-------------------|--------|
| | Obama % | McCain % | Other/ DK % | Margin | Obama % | Romney % | Other/ DK % | Margin | Clinton % | Trump % | Other/ DK % | Margin |
| Total | 48 | 40 | 12 | D+8 | 50 | 46 | 5 | D+4 | 51 | 42 | 7 | D+9 |
| Men | 45 | 44 | 11 | D+1 | 43 | 53 | 4 | R+10 | 43 | 49 | 8 | R+6 |
| Women | 51 | 37 | 13 | D+14 | 55 | 40 | 5 | D+15 | 59 | 35 | 7 | D+24 |
| White | 40 | 48 | 13 | R+8 | 41 | 54 | 5 | R+13 | 42 | 51 | 7 | R+9 |
| Black | 90 | 3 | 7 | D+87 | 96 | 1 | 3 | D+95 | 91 | 7 | 3 | D+84 |
| Hispanic | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 66 | 24 | 9 | D+42 |
| 18-29 | 56 | 36 | 8 | D+20 | 57 | 38 | 5 | D+19 | 60 | 30 | 9 | D+30 |
| 30-49 | 52 | 39 | 10 | D+13 | 52 | 43 | 5 | D+9 | 52 | 39 | 8 | D+13 |
| 50-64 | 45 | 42 | 13 | D+3 | 48 | 48 | 3 | even | 49 | 46 | 5 | D+3 |
| 65+ | 37 | 44 | 19 | R+7 | 43 | 52 | 5 | R+9 | 46 | 49 | 5 | R+3 |
| Men 18-49 | 49 | 41 | 10 | D+8 | 47 | 48 | 6 | R+1 | 49 | 42 | 9 | D+7 |
| Women 18-49 | 58 | 34 | 8 | D+24 | 60 | 36 | 5 | D+24 | 62 | 30 | 9 | D+32 |
| Men 50+ | 40 | 48 | 12 | R+8 | 40 | 57 | 2 | R+17 | 38 | 56 | 6 | R+18 |
| Women 50+ | 43 | 39 | 18 | D+4 | 51 | 43 | 5 | D+8 | 57 | 39 | 5 | D+18 |
| Men 18-34 | 52 | 37 | 11 | D+15 | 51 | 44 | 5 | D+7 | 51 | 40 | 10 | D+11 |
| Women 18-34 | 59 | 34 | 6 | D+25 | 66 | 32 | 3 | D+34 | 69 | 25 | 6 | D+44 |
| Married men | 36 | 52 | 12 | R+16 | 38 | 60 | 2 | R+22 | 37 | 56 | 7 | R+19 |
| Unmarried men | 57 | 33 | 10 | D+24 | 51 | 43 | 6 | D+8 | 51 | 42 | 8 | D+9 |
| Married women | 46 | 42 | 12 | D+4 | 47 | 47 | 6 | even | 53 | 41 | 5 | D+12 |
| Unmarried women | 56 | 30 | 14 | D+26 | 65 | 31 | 4 | D+34 | 65 | 28 | 7 | D+37 |
| Postgrad* | 47 | 44 | 10 | D+3 | 53 | 43 | 3 | D+10 | 60 | 33 | 7 | D+27 |
| College grad | 46 | 45 | 9 | D+1 | 50 | 47 | 3 | D+3 | 54 | 38 | 8 | D+16 |
| Some college | 48 | 41 | 11 | D+7 | 49 | 47 | 4 | D+2 | 47 | 46 | 8 | D+1 |
| HS or less | 49 | 36 | 15 | D+13 | 49 | 45 | 6 | D+4 | 50 | 43 | 6 | D+7 |
| <i>Family income</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$100,000+ | 39 | 49 | 12 | R+10 | 44 | 52 | 4 | R+8 | 51 | 43 | 6 | D+8 |
| \$75,000-\$99,999 | 47 | 45 | 8 | D+2 | 50 | 47 | 4 | D+3 | 46 | 46 | 8 | even |
| \$30,000-\$74,999 | 51 | 43 | 7 | D+8 | 48 | 49 | 4 | R+1 | 47 | 45 | 8 | D+2 |
| <\$30,000 | 56 | 29 | 15 | D+27 | 59 | 35 | 7 | D+24 | 62 | 33 | 5 | D+29 |

Notes: Based on registered voters. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. In 2008 and 2012 there was insufficient sample size to report on Hispanics. In 2008, postgrad include those with some postgraduate experience but no degree; 2012-2016 includes only those with a postgraduate degree. Q10/10a.
Source: Survey conducted June 15-26, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: (Voter General Election Preferences 2016)

Those in the age range of 30-49 were more inclined to support Obama as opposed to McCain and Romney in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. The same goes for their support towards Hillary Clinton in modern 2016 presidential election percentages.

One can tell that as age levels rose, so did the likelihood of supporting a Republican Candidate. There's a shift that begins to take place from the age range of 30-49 and the

age range of 50-64 that starts to build momentum for Republican candidates. This dynamic illustrates the need for Republicans to not only obtain a majority of these voters, but also do it in overwhelming fashion. If this does not take place, more likely than not, Republicans will continue to lose presidential elections in years to come for not obtaining this statistically significant percentage.

Another interesting dynamic is where the populous tends to believe federal government should focus attention. There are a plethora of issues that face the country on a day-to-day basis all while new issues arise. Some issues prove to be more consistent than others throughout history. Confirming the hypothesis pertaining to most important issue facing the country, a recent Gallup poll shows the two most prevalent issues Americans feel need to be addressed are ‘the economy’ and ‘immigration.’ Table 3.2 further extrapolates on the percentage breakdown by showing the economy obtaining nearly one-fifth of the attention – right at 19% overall.

A close second to the economy, immigration, obtained 14% of the attention within the populous. Surprisingly, earning wages, decline of the middle-class, and terrorism were not overwhelming issues that many Americans felt needed to be addressed by remaining at the bottom around 6% and 5%, respectively.

Table 3.2 Most significant single issue president needs to address

| | Mentioning |
|---|-------------------|
| | % |
| The economy | 19 |
| Immigration | 14 |
| Healthcare/Healthcare costs/Healthcare reform | 10 |
| Defense/National Defense/Homeland security | 9 |
| Education | 8 |
| The federal deficit/The budget | 7 |
| Wages/Earning a decent wage/Decline of middle class | 6 |
| Jobs/Unemployment | 6 |
| Terrorism | 5 |

May 18-22, 2016

GALLUP

Regardless of who wins the election, what single issue or challenge are you most interested in having the next president address when he or she takes office next January?
[OPEN-ENDED]

| | Mentioning |
|---|-------------------|
| | % |
| The economy | 19 |
| Immigration | 14 |
| Healthcare/Healthcare costs/Healthcare reform | 10 |
| Defense/National Defense/Homeland security | 9 |
| Education | 8 |
| The federal deficit/The budget | 7 |
| Wages/Earning a decent wage/Decline of middle class | 6 |
| Jobs/Unemployment | 6 |

Table 3.2 (Continued)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Terrorism | 5 |
|-----------|---|

May 18-22, 2016

GALLUP

Source: (Presidential Election 2016: Key Indicators 2016)

If more Americans continue to vote with their wallets as opposed to other avenues, this could prove to give Trump a bit of a boost from the populous. His unethical, business-like approach has surely stimulated an interest in those who are more likely than not passionate about securing the southern border of the country from illegal immigrants and boosting our economy to more prosperous levels. It's well worth mentioning and noticeably significant to point out that despite 'the economy' being at the forefront of issues facing the country, 'the federal deficit' only pulled in 7% of mentions from the populous. This could potentially be a shortcoming if individuals have the inclination of believing the federal deficit will have no direct or indirect bearing on their savings for the future. It's difficult to directly point out the preferred choice of presidential candidate amongst the different issue variables. But, one can infer in which direction the populous would be more inclined to vote based on the statistical percentages provided, and the policy propositions dealing with each presidential candidate.

Perhaps political ideology is a demographic that deserves more attention in illustration of recent political climates throughout the entire country. As we know, party polarization has grown immensely and can be further illustrated below in Figures 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 by illustrating ideological shifts in the Democratic and Republican bases.

U.S. Political Ideology -- Recent Trend Among Democrats

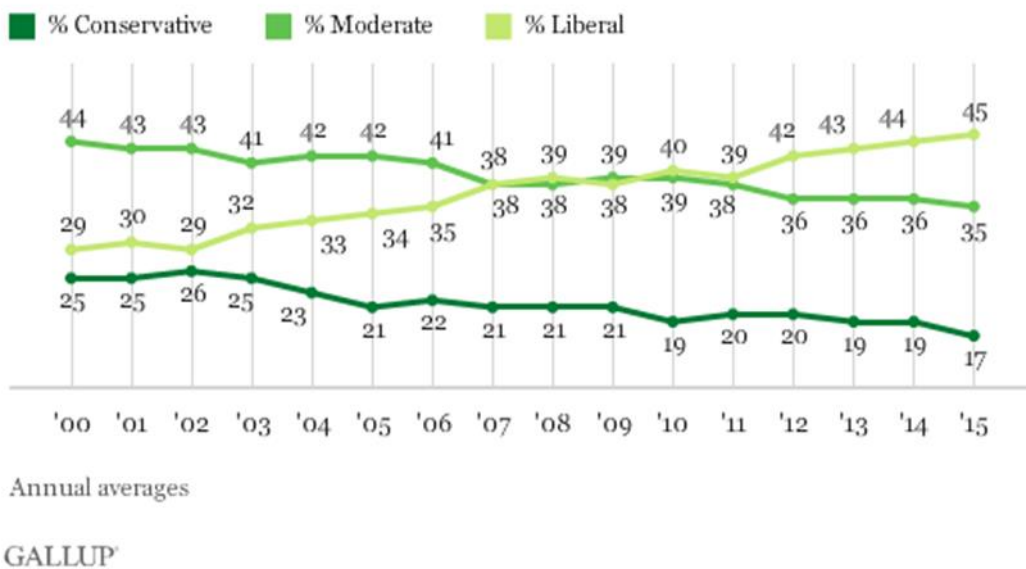


Figure 3.3 U.S. Political Ideology, recent trend amongst Democrats

Source: (Saad 2016)

Since the year 2000, moderate ideologies amongst Democrats have taken the back seat to liberal ideologies. Moderate ideologies amongst Democrats have dropped roughly 9% during the fifteen year span. The liberal momentum rise amongst Democrats occurred in the latter portion of the Bush Administration and only continued to grow during the first and second terms of the Obama Administration. One can see where liberal ideologies amongst Democrats now make up roughly 45% of the party as compared to the moderate 35%. This is not to overshadow the subsequent result it has on conservatives amongst Democrats. The drop here over a fifteen year span went from one out of every four Democrats being ideologically conservative to now only accounting for 17% of the Democratic base.

The Republicans have similar results that show the significance of growing polarization within the base as well. Figure 3.4 shows a statistically significant percentage rise in conservative ideologies.

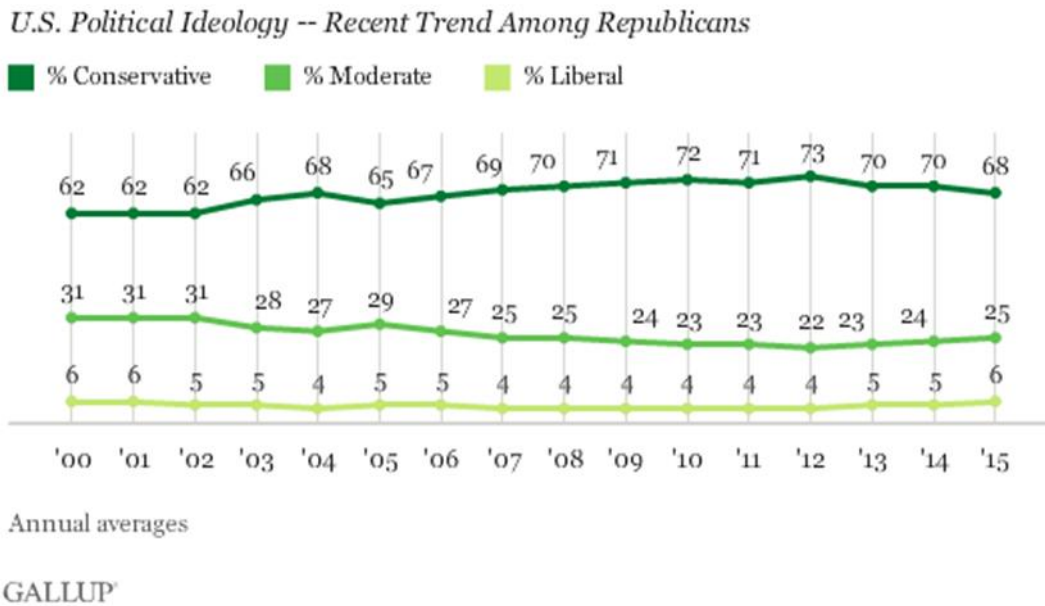


Figure 3.4 U.S. Political Ideology, recent trend amongst Republicans

Source: (Saad 2016)

Even though the moderate ideologies amongst Republicans have only dropped 6% as opposed to the Democrats dropping 9%, this is still relevant. For obvious reasons, the growing gap between pivots in politics continues to separate rather than unite. For the most part, those within the Republican Party have remained more homogeneous in terms of their ideological breakdown. This is better understood by simply looking at the liberal ideological identifiers amongst Republicans over a fifteen year span – which remains at

6%. Conservative ideologies were more prevalent during the Obama Administration as compared to the Bush Administration.

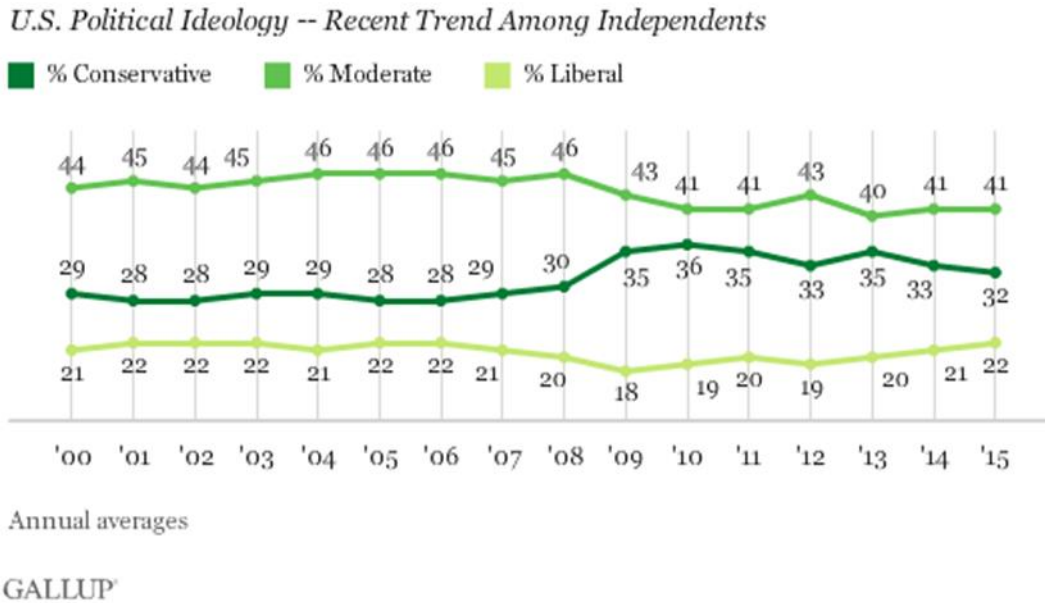


Figure 3.5 U.S. Political Ideology, recent trend amongst Independents

Source: (Saad 2016)

The moderate vote amongst Independents has dropped a few percentage points over a fifteen year span. Once at 44% back in 2000, those amongst Independents now identifying as moderate only make up 41% of the independent base. To provide a better understanding of what this means, we can take a look at the conservative and liberal growth in terms of ideology in this base. Conservatives enjoy a 3% advantage in growth over a fifteen year span for those amongst Independents, but a 10% overall differential by 2015. This is significant because more likely than not conservatives will back Republican candidates as opposed to Democratic candidates running for the presidency.

Similar parallel logic indicates that liberals are more likely to back Democratic candidates running for president as opposed to Republican candidates. Moderates create a curveball effect in elections, year in, year out. This is where the majority of campaigning focuses on deriving the most out of their efforts. Typically, as illustrated in the figures above, Republicans are going to back Republicans, and Democrats are going to back Democrats. The battle is over the moderate voters, those who may have the ability to be swayed in one direction or the other, those who have not made up their minds and are ‘undecided’ voters. These findings provide one with a better understanding of the propensities that lead individuals to a preferred presidential vote selection.

Historically speaking, Clinton and Trump are two of the most disliked candidates we have seen in quite some time [potentially overall]. Figures 3.6 and 3.7 provide a time-series analysis of unfavorable ratings and net strong favorable ratings with regards to current and previous presidential nominees. One would be quick to point out that Trump has eclipsed the 50% threshold of being disliked by the populous, but Hillary Clinton is still right under 40% which leads one to believe she’s not doing herself any favors. Disregarding the current standings of disliked percentages amongst the 2016 candidates, interesting enough, many previous presidential nominees were able to overcome higher ‘disliked’ percentages on their way to the White House. George H.W. Bush in the 1992 Presidential Election, and Al Gore in the 2000 Presidential Election, are the only two nominees who were never able to secure reelection or the election over this time-series analysis.

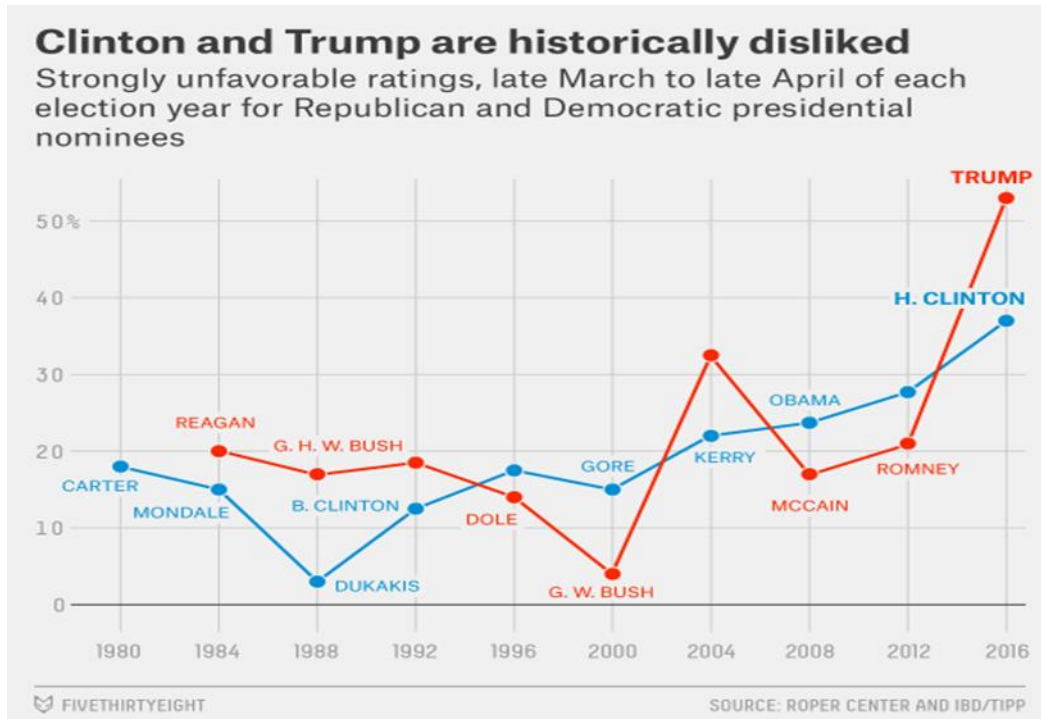


Figure 3.6 Clinton and Trump, historically disliked

Source: (Enten 2016)

A couple potential shortcomings should be pointed out from this figure. First, the data accumulation was obtained from late March to late April of each election year. But, there are many things that can happen over the course of a few month to shift public opinion polls in one direction or the other. One must remember that the election does not take place until the first Tuesday, after the first Monday, in November.

Secondly, from the sample within the population, one can only theorize to an extent the likelihood of those who will actually show up to the polls and vote. For example, if voter turnout is high, there is much more of a chance for proportional representation, and we would be better able to accept the data if voters from both sides reflect the actual views of the populous. But, if voter turnout is low, one may be led to

put more weight into data that may or may not be reflective of the actual populous feelings of those going to the polls and voting. Put more specifically, ‘disliked’ percentages can certainly hurt a candidate, but only if those who are opposed to a candidate actually mobilize and vote will this be a problem. Otherwise, there would be less relevance in disliked percentages despite a candidate not having the intention of creating a less than liked image.

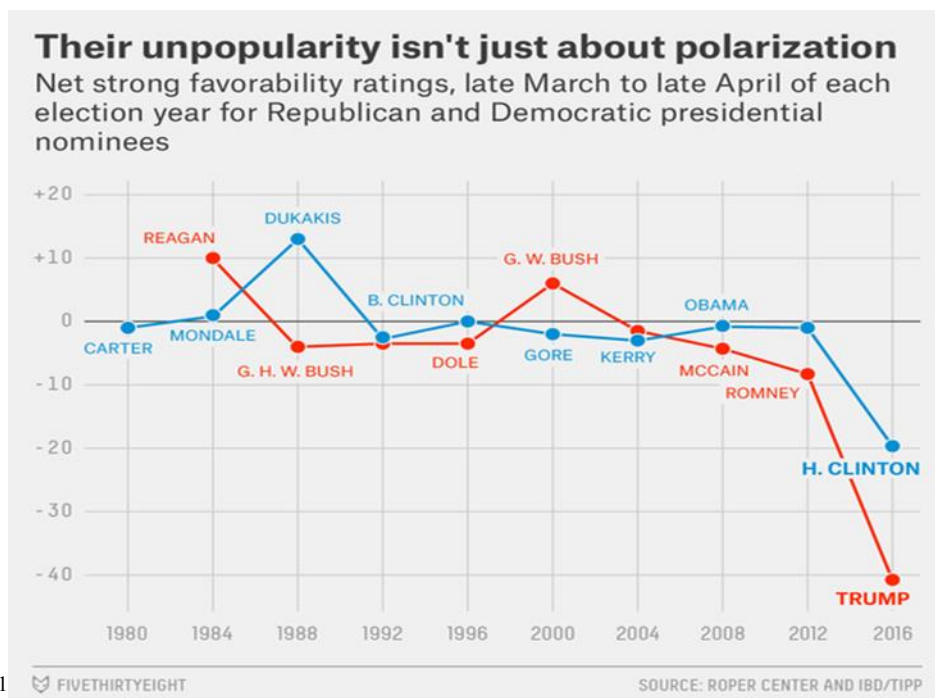


Figure 3.7 Clinton and Trump, favorability ratings

Source: (Enten 2016)

¹ These values are % strongly favorable minus % strongly unfavorable.

Even favorable ratings have portrayed Clinton and Trump to be much less over the past 36 years in comparison to other presidential nominees. As suggested by Harry Enten, party polarization does not count for the absolute reasoning behind lower favorable statistic percentages. The populous is more likely unsatisfied with not only the two candidates, but their often controversial statements with regards to the opposition or their methods of campaigning. Figure 3.7 goes on by further illustrating the importance of having highly favorable momentum going forward towards the election as opposed to being ‘disliked.’

It sounds counterintuitive, but one can be ‘disliked’ and still be highly favorable in terms of preferred candidate running for president. We have seen this in previous years with Ronald Regan [R] in 1984 being disliked more than Walter Mondale [D], but still holding onto a more highly favorable image during the same late March to late April study. This also holds true in 1996 with Bill Clinton [D] being more disliked than Bob Dole [R], but retaining a more highly favorable image. George W. Bush [R] was also more disliked than his rival John Kerry [D] in 2004, albeit able to obtain a more highly favorable rating. The same can be said for Barack Obama [D] in 2008 as compared to John McCain [R] and subsequently in 2012 as compared to Mitt Romney [R]. All of the above nominees [presidents] who were able to counter being disliked by having an intense core of people rating them more highly favorable than their opponent went on to winning the general election in November later that particular year. In this year’s election, it remains yet to be seen if Donald Trump is able to overcome being more disliked and viewed as less favorable than his rival, Hillary Clinton, by obtaining a majority in the Electoral College.

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study proposes intuition on how presidential politics in the future must take into account the trust levels within the populous. Among Democrats age 40 and older who are likely voters, 32% prefer someone other than Clinton as the nominee, while 60% of young Democrats also favor a different nominee. Election Day will provide scholars with a more theoretical context of what voters felt based on the outcome in different states throughout the country. At least one thing is for certain; both candidates have been viewed as untrustworthy of sorts. The untrustworthiness of both candidates have hurt both camps, Democratic and Republican.

Table 4.1 Pleased with Clinton as Democratic Presidential Nominee, by age, Democratic leaning ID

Pleased With Hillary Clinton as Democratic Presidential Nominee, by Age
Among Democrats/leaners

| | Pleased Clinton is the nominee | Wish someone else were the nominee |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | % | % |
| 18 to 39 | 38 | 60 |
| 40+ | 67 | 32 |

GALLUP, AUG. 15-16, 2016
Source: (Newport 2016)

Older voters are more likely to vote than those of younger generations. But, discounting the importance of young voters supporting Clinton could prove to become a shortcoming. There is a high portion of individuals within Democratic leaning party identifiers that wish someone else aside from Clinton was the party's nominee for president. Those 40+ years of age, which are more likely to vote, make up 32% of individuals with a Democratic Party leaning ID that wish someone aside from Clinton was the nominee. A potential lack of trust from the nomination process more likely than not stirred up animosity when then rival, Bernie Sanders was able to gain an immense amount of momentum (especially with young millennial voters in the populous). Clinton will need to overcome these unbalanced percentages within her own party to also subsequently increase her chances at the presidency in November.

Table 4.2 Pleased with Donald Trump as Republican Presidential Nominee, Republican leaning ID

Now thinking about the candidates for president this year, are you pleased that Donald Trump is the Republican nominee, or do you wish someone else were the nominee?

| | Republicans/Leaners |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | % |
| Pleased Trump is the nominee | 46 |
| Wish someone else were the nominee | 52 |
| Don't know/Refused | 3 |

GALLUP, AUG. 15-16, 2016

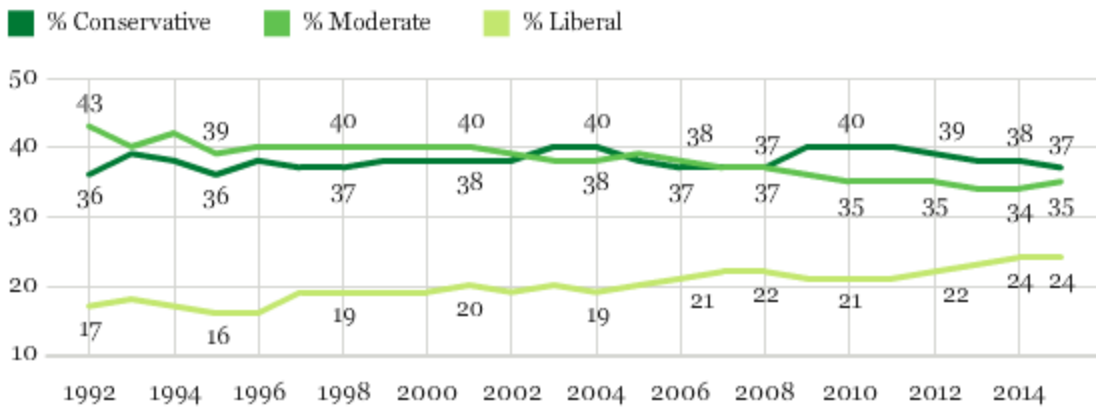
Source: (Newport 2016)

In comparison to Hillary Clinton obtaining support from within her own Democratic base, Donald Trump has not fared so well in his Republican base, either. To no surprise, only 46% of Republican leaning identifiers are pleased with Trump as the party nominee. One can see that only 3% 'did not know' or 'refused' to answer the question. This means that a plurality of Republicans wishes their party's nominee were someone else. Trump's ability to earn the trust of his fellow Republicans, and ultimately, those within populous could prove to be the deciding factor in whether he stands a chance in obtaining the 270 mark of Electoral Votes this November.

In seeking to correlate data to a general election outcome in November, Clinton will place an emphasis on voter turnout and mobilization efforts. Looking at figure 4.1 demonstrates how more American's identify as conservative (compared to being liberal). Of course, much importance will be placed on pulling the moderate vote away from Third-Party Candidates, Gary Johnson and Jill Stein. Over the course of twenty-three years, one can notice a shift in ideologies.

Americans' Self-Identified Political Ideology -- 1992-2015

How would you describe your political views -- [very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal or very liberal]?



Based on annual averages of Gallup multiday telephone polls

GALLUP®

Figure 4.1 U.S. Political Ideology, Americans' self-identified ideology

Source: (Saad 2016)

Moderate ideologies, once making up a majority in 1992 with 43% of self-identified Americans, is now a close second to recently conservative ideologies (37%). The importance to note here is not only the statistical drop in moderate and conservative ideologies, but the net growth in liberal ideologies (from 17% in 1992 to 24% in 2015). Liberalism in America is growing, but the significance this will have on actual voter turnout and the presidential election is yet to be seen. Never the less, if Clinton is able to mirror the mobilization efforts of Barack Obama in 2008, she will increase her chances of retaining the White House for Democrats. But, if voter turnout does not increase in comparison to previous open-seat presidential elections, this could prove to be significant in the event Donald Trump wins the presidency.

The same can be said if voter turnout is low amongst Trump supporters, too. It all depends on if there is a rise from the 2012 statistics pertaining to general election votes and who actually shows up to the polls amongst the different demographic groups. Both campaigns (much similar to recent presidential elections), have a strategy of operating by means of attack, or not campaigning solely on the issues. Table 4.3 provides a better extrapolation on recent data pertaining to voter turnout in presidential elections. There has been a constant rise in presidential voting percentages amongst the voting age population since 1996 with the exception of the last presidential election in 2012. One can see that open-seat elections are of the utmost significance in voter turnout by showing a +9 million average in total votes (from re-election in '96 to open-seat in '00 and re-election in '04 to open-seat in '08). The results of the 2016 presidential votes and percentage of voting age population will provide much more direction as to what the country desired.

I expect that a higher participation amongst the voting age population, coupled with the total of votes will benefit Democrats and Independents more so than Republicans. The reasoning behind this would be a mobilization of millennials, minorities, and other first-time voters to participate in this year's election. Higher distrust and satisfaction with both Clinton [D] and Trump [R] has been beneficial towards third-party candidates, but not increase in terms of actual polling percentages that would statistically give a chance of obtaining the presidency. But, the longer Gary Johnson and Jill Stein remain in the race will hurt Clinton's numbers more so than those of Trump by pulling away more libertarian leaning voters. Whoever has supported Trump from the beginning is more likely to be supportive up to Election Day. The same holds true for

Clinton. Moderates and independents that are dissatisfied and view the two prominent candidates as distrustful could swing the 2016 election in favor of Democrats or Republicans (along with the future of public policy through the Supreme Court Appointments).

Table 4.3 Number of votes cast in recent U.S. Presidential Elections

Number of Votes Cast in Recent U.S. Presidential Elections

| | Total vote | Turnout |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| | (millions) | (% of voting age population) |
| 1996 (re-election) | 96 | 49.0 |
| 2000 (open-seat) | 105 | 51.2 |
| Change (pct. pts.) | +9 | -- |
| 2004 (re-election) | 122 | 56.7 |
| 2008 (open-seat) | 131 | 58.2 |
| Change (pct. pts.) | +9 | -- |
| 2012 (re-election) | 129 | 54.9 |
| 2016 (open-seat) | NA | NA |
| Change (pct. pts.) | NA | NA |

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT VOTER TURNOUT DATA

Source: (Tarrance 2016)

Table 4.4 provides a clear view of how liberals, conservatives, and moderates are leaning in this year’s presidential election. As originally hypothesized, one can see that liberals are backing the Democratic Nominee, Hillary Clinton, at a higher percentage than conservatives backing Republican Nominee, Donald Trump. Clinton is pulling in roughly 73% of the liberal ideology vote with only 12% of this ideology going towards Trump. Meanwhile, with regards to conservatives, Donald Trump is only pulling in 68%

of the vote with up to 17% going towards Clinton. From just the two ideological standpoints, this clearly indicates an advantage for Clinton not just amongst her own party's general base, but also another advantage in pulling away some portion of conservative votes from Trump's base.

Table 4.4 Presidential Vote Choice %'s by Ideology

BY IDEOLOGY

Liberals

73% Clinton
12 % Trump

Moderates

45% Clinton
36% Trump

Conservatives

17% Clinton
68% Trump ²

Source: (Alcantara, Uhrmacher and Guskin 2016)

Moderates, by ideological preference in the presidential vote, also confirm the latter portion of this hypothesis by backing Clinton over Trump in statistical percentages. Clinton is showing a 45% to 36% advantage with those of a moderate ideology which creates a tall wall to climb for Donald Trump to overcome in seeking the presidency. Surely, something will have to change sooner than later for statistical percentages to swing not only in his favor, but away from Clinton to ensure a true net gain in votes. Undoubtedly, the populous is favoring Clinton over Trump in liberal and moderate

² Percentages are based on a four-way vote choice (Gary Johnson and Jill Stein) among registered voters.

ideologies, and even potentially amongst some conservatives whom may be seeking an alternative option rather than their own party's nominee.

The most important issue(s) facing the country, coupled with the preferences of the populous show interesting results in who is more preferred to handle each task, Clinton or Trump. As shown in Table 4.5, more of the populous is leaning towards Democratic nominee, Clinton, to handle the everyday job of the presidency based on the plethora of issues within the United States. It is also important to note the discrepancies within the statistical percentages in each categorical issue. On liberal issues, Clinton is expected to carry a significant advantage in percentage of preference, which she certainly has illustrated in this table. But, surprisingly, Trump has not carried a significant advantage in percentage of preference on conservative issues.

Clinton shows advantages in categorical issues as high as +35 in percentage points (treatment of minority groups within the country), while Trump only shows an advantage as high as +9 in percentage points (the federal budget deficit, and government regulation of Wall Street and banks). Arguably the most interesting dynamic of this table is brought to light by focusing on the economy – once again the most important issue facing the country in data accumulation provided by the populous during the 2016 presidential election season. Considering the professional background Trump has in higher levels of economic prosperity and business, one would be inclined to believe that his advantage within this issue (in terms of percentage points) would be much higher than it shows – at only +3 in percentage points. Immigration, the second most important issue facing the country based on 2016 presidential election data accumulation, shows that Clinton has obtained a favorable +13 percentage point advantage over her opponent.

This suggests that based on the two most important issues facing the country, Clinton is preferred by at least +10 percentage points amongst those within the populous.

Table 4.5 Voter’s perceptions of candidate best able to handle issues

Registered Voters' Perceptions of Which Candidate Is Best Able to Handle Key Issues

Regardless of which presidential candidate you support, please tell me if you think Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump would better handle each of the following issues.

| | Prefer Hillary Clinton | Prefer Donald Trump | Advantage |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| | % | % | pct. pts. |
| The treatment of minority groups in this country | 65 | 30 | Clinton +35 |
| Climate change | 62 | 29 | Clinton +33 |
| Social issues such as gay marriage and abortion | 63 | 33 | Clinton +30 |
| Foreign affairs | 61 | 35 | Clinton +26 |
| Education | 61 | 36 | Clinton +25 |
| Healthcare and the Affordable Care Act | 56 | 41 | Clinton +15 |
| Immigration | 55 | 42 | Clinton +13 |
| The distribution of income and wealth in the U.S. | 50 | 44 | Clinton +6 |
| Trade with other nations | 51 | 47 | Clinton +4 |
| Terrorism and national security | 48 | 47 | Clinton +1 |
| The federal budget deficit | 44 | 53 | Trump +9 |
| Government regulation of Wall Street and banks | 43 | 52 | Trump +9 |
| The size and efficiency of the federal government | 44 | 52 | Trump +8 |

Table 4.5 (Continued)

| | | | |
|---------------------|----|----|----------|
| Gun policy | 45 | 52 | Trump +7 |
| Taxes | 45 | 51 | Trump +6 |
| Employment and jobs | 47 | 51 | Trump +4 |
| The economy | 47 | 50 | Trump +3 |

GALLUP, SEPT. 14-18, 2016

Source: (Auter 2016)

These percentages could further provide implications that Trump is at a significant deficit in terms of obtaining the votes needed for the presidency. When looking at table 4.5 as a whole, the populous has clearly provided the notion that despite the scandals, and constant controversial missteps with campaigning, Clinton is still trusted to run the country better than businessman, Trump. He will more likely than not lose the presidency based on the inability to unify his own party, create a favorable image of himself, and capitalize on conservative principles in overwhelming statistical proportions. Both of the candidates are historically disliked and distrusted. Clinton and Trump are also not preferred by many ideologically moderate voters (let alone voters within their own party bases, Democratic and Republican). Despite the historically low levels of political trust in the country, there will still be a president elected from the major two-party system in the United States. All indicators at this point show that Hillary Clinton will be the first woman president of the United States in our nation's history. Nevertheless, the political landscape and climates throughout the country are changing and traditional politics are coming to an end.

Potential shortcomings of this study may include the emphasis placed on dissatisfaction and favorable ratings amongst the candidates. On so many different occasions, events (i.e. presidential debates) can play a significant role in the decisions of the electorate for which one is unable to truly account for until Election Day statistics begin to develop. By looking at polling data, one must be aware of the dates leading up to the election. Methodology surely varies from institution, and it's also debatable whether or not to place more significance on state polling averages, or national poll averages. Those individuals participating in survey data may be more likely to participate in general elections, but there is no guarantee in this regard. Too often than not, one has the tendency to answer questions based on what he or she feels is the 'correct' answer without actually being truthful. This is something that can negatively skew data and lower confidence intervals immensely.

Future research should focus on the results of this upcoming 2016 Presidential Election and better combat against the limitations of data accumulation from the electorate. A forecast may be more essential and significant when comparing issues across a city to rural area populous on a state and national perspective. Also, more personable and qualitative data may provide a more accurate sense of the electorate as opposed to quantitative data. Surely, these are great tools for measurement but there is never an absolute until the results from Election Day are provided to us all. From here, theoretical explanations and practical implications are sure to remain debatable amongst scholars. Overall, the masses within the electorate are demanding changes that illustrate the importance of presidential candidates earning trust in order to secure the presidential election.

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APPENDIX A
AMERICAN NATIONAL ELECTION STUDIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Political Trust Index Questions

"People have (1958,1964: I'd like to talk about some of the) different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to democrats or republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas."

VCF0604: "How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right-- just about always, most of the time or only some of the time?"

VCF0605: "Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?"

VCF0606: "Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?"

V608: "Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are (1958-1972: a little) crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked (1958-1972: at all)?"

Source: The American National Election Studies (www.electionstudies.org). The ANES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies [producer and distributor].