

**THE 2016 ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF DONALD TRUMP: AN INSIGHT INTO
AMERICAN SOCIAL VALUES FROM 2004 TO 2016**

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1. Introduction

From the far right-wing Know Nothing Party to the left-wing People's Party, from Joseph McCarthy to George Wallace, populism represents a disruption in the political establishment. Donald Trump is the most recent example of far-right populism within the United States, who despite drawing ire from Democrats and prominent Republicans, such as George W. Bush, Mitt Romney, and John McCain, was not only the 2016 Republican party nominee but successfully elected president. Some label him as a racist, sexist, xenophobe, while others an opportunistic real estate developer continuing his business practices into politics. Despite these objections, millions of citizens were captivated by his personality and "tell it how it is" speeches.

Internationally, Trump is not an aberration. Boris Johnson, Victor Orban, and Jair Bolsonaro represent a recent turn towards far-right populism in established democracies. These parties, movements, and leaders use populist rhetoric to whip up support for their authoritarian governing tendencies that endanger liberal democracy. Previous studies show that ideologically extreme parties are more likely to emerge after an economic crisis. The attractiveness of alternative political movements seems to increase with voters' disillusionment with traditional political norms. Specifically, the need for order and stability makes far-right populism appealing. The attractiveness of these parties increases when those economically affected by the crisis observe the economic gains of other groups in society. In particular, radical right populism is more likely to emerge when citizens face 'positional deprivation,' or feeling powerless in the political process and with no avenues to alleviate their problems (Burgoon Noort, Rooduijn, and Underhill 2018 p. 32). This feeling of resentment towards the status quo opens the door for populists to gather political support.

At a glance, economic crises such as the 2008 financial crisis, and the consequences of globalization, have changed voters' values enough to change the American political climate and open the door for Donald Trump. Yet, others point to his success as a consequence of the current media environment. Examples of this are ubiquitous. A 2018 article entitled “How Russia Helped Swing the Election for Trump” appeared in the *New Yorker* (Mayer 2018). A year later in 2019, *Time* published an article with the headline: “Here’s What We Know So Far About Russia’s 2016 Meddling” (Abrams 2019). Even more academic outlets, such as the *Columbia Journal Review*, published “Don’t Blame the Election on Fake News. Blame it on the Media” (Watts and Rothschild 2017). Further interpretations simply consider Trump’s success as an odd event or, as *Forbes* put it, a “Super-Anomaly” (Hatkoff 2015).

This work tries to answer the following question: what explains the 2016 electoral success of Donald Trump? As one potential answer to this inquiry, I look particularly at the social value theory presented by Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, which argues that a cultural backlash has provided the grounds for the rise of far-right populists. Building upon this theory, I posit that individual American resentment existed and grew prior to 2016, thus opening the door for a far-right populist candidate like Donald Trump. I argue that Donald Trump was the conduit for a set of values influenced by economic and cultural conditions already present in American society. To test for this, I use data from the American National Election Studies from 2004-2016. From this survey, I explore feelings of institutional resentment, animosity towards minority groups, and beliefs about the role of government. My findings show that the unexpected support for Trump came from changes in social values prior to 2016 among Whites and self-identified Republicans. Specifically, the focus group’s resentment towards minority groups has grown since

the 2000's and institutional trust has declined. This growing animosity is coupled with the decreasing belief that the United States should assist in providing equal opportunities for all.

This work contributes to the nascent literature on populism in the United States. Since what we know about populism comes from outside the United States, it is unclear whether the explanations fit to understand the recent rise of populist support domestically. The bipartisan system in the U.S. diminishes voters' incentives for supporting alternative parties, mitigating the possibility that a candidate like Donald Trump is elected to office. Whether this conjecture is true remains unknown.

It is necessary to explore the extent to which individuals' voting values have changed in response to economic inequality and relative fairness to better explain recent American populist movements. An implication for this work is its understanding of populism as an international phenomenon. The theories, practices, and suggestions of other academics in a regional setting, are also applicable to understanding American and international populism.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a brief set of definitions before exploring the theoretical foundations of populism and the cultural, economic, and alternative theories that seek to explain its rise. Section 3 details the variables, data, and research design. Section 4 presents regression analysis findings. Finally, Section 5 reviews conclusions, implications, and areas of further research.

2. Theoretical Foundations

Populism is defined as a style of political rhetoric characterized by three criteria: anti-establishment sentiments, mobilization against the elite or other out-groups, and claims that

the legitimacy of power is derived from ‘the people’ (Norris and Inglehart 2019, Przeworski 2019). Populists create an anti-establishment rhetoric that challenges the legitimacy of the established political order. Populist movements also mobilize against the elite and other out-groups by attacking the media, bureaucrats, and experts. A common pattern across cases is the characterization of the media as untrustworthy to erode trust in institutions that might expose or hinder populists’ electoral success. Finally, populist leaders also claim that the true locus of authority in democracy is with ‘the people.’ The people, generally speaking, are some ethno-cultural majority united along common bonds such as nationality, race, gender, or religion. Namely, the collective will of the majority is the true moral and political compass of a nation, and only populists are able to right the ship as they alone represent this compass.

Equally as important to the definition of populism is the definition of authoritarianism. Colloquially, authoritarianism is used to describe ‘undemocratic’ acts or social behaviors characterized by strict, heavy handed values. However, Przeworski (2019) asserts that authoritarianism, in the context of populist movements, is a set of values that prioritize collective security above all else. Norris and Inglehart detail three values that create the core components of authoritarianism: “security against risks of instability and disorder, conformity to preserve conventional traditions and guard [our] way of life, and obedience towards strong leaders who protect the group and its customs” (Norris and Inglehart 2019 p. 7). Authoritarians capitalize off of populist’s fabrication of ‘the people’ and use fear to drive them towards feelings of collective security at the expense of civil liberty.

I will focus on right-wing, authoritarian populism only, and will use the words nationalism, nativism, and authoritarianism as proxies to describe a single strand of right-wing

populist movements. Focus is placed on right-wing populism because it is the form most successfully integrated into mainstream politics through Donald Trump, Brexit, and beyond.

Whether a country faces a popular movement from the right or the left depends on the type of crisis at the time (Rodrik 2018). Voters who are more sensitive to the economic effects of the crisis are more likely to support leftist populist movements, as exemplified by SYRIZA in Greece and Podemos in Spain. On the other hand, voters more concerned about cultural cleavages will be more likely to support right-wing populist movements, as exemplified by the Party for Freedom in The Netherlands and Fidesz in Hungary. As a result, we can understand why some countries witness the simultaneous rise of populist movements at both sides of the ideological spectrum. The U.S. illustrates this case, best exemplified by Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders.

An alternative explanation for the emergence of populism has to do with the manufacturing of crisis (Moffitt 2017). The manufacturing of crisis is a tool that populist leaders use to “perform and perpetuate a sense of crisis rather than simply [react] to external crisis” (Moffitt 2017 p. 118). This additional tool is used to devise a ‘people’ and entrench their governing style as the antidote. This is not to say that populists, such as Donald Trump, are able to unilaterally change social values as a result of manufactured crises, but that populists heighten a sense of crisis among individuals already impacted and dislocated.

In practice, populism is a rhetorical style that concerns who should govern and authoritarianism concerns how to govern. Leaders of authoritarian populism defend ‘the people’ by restricting others. Policy emphasis is placed on border control, military expenditures, and trade protectionism. Its impact on democracy is twofold. First, populism attacks the established democratic political order, subverting its legitimacy with subtlety. After populism calls into

question the legitimacy of democratic norms, then authoritarianism directly attacks civil liberties, elections, and out-groups in the name of security. It is important to clarify that populism on its face is not an undemocratic process and in some cases is beneficial to a democracy. However, when authoritarianism capitalizes on the mandate of the people, democracy is in crisis.

The enabling component of populist political reactions is resentment. Furthermore, resentment, and anger, appeared to be common themes among the most ardent supporters of Donald Trump. Piazza (2017) defines resentment towards the US political system, as depicted in right-wing rhetoric, as “corrupt, tyrannical, unresponsive and unaccountable, prompting political violence as resistance against ‘big government’ overreach and/or the exercise of political control by liberal-left government figures” (Piazza 2017 p. 54). As Hans-George Betz puts it: populists “critique of the interventionist state fuses *resentment* against the state, the bureaucracy, and politicians with [an] appeal to freedom and democracy” (Betz 1993 p. 7).

What distinguishes right-wing populists from their left-wing counterparts is the alternative they offer to replace the status quo. Both left- and right-wing populism prop up the idea of “the people,” but the right does so in a nativist way and the left is largely critical of global capitalism. A key difference between left- and right-wing populism in this regard, is the right’s willingness to erode democratic processes in favor of replacing them with authoritarian ones. The basis of these attacks is available as a result of resentment towards the established democratic forces, seen as democratic and economic oppressors. Betz further asserts, “undoubtedly, the general malaise towards politics and political parties and a growing crisis of political representation has benefited radical right-wing populist parties” (Betz 1993 p. 8). The impact or eroding democratic norms as a result of right-wing populism, is enough to warrant additional investigation into more nuanced economic and cultural explanations.

Previous literature that seeks to explain populist political reactions fall into one of two categories: economic (Rodrik 2018, Piazza 2007, Wilkinson 2019) or cultural (Inglehart & Norris 2019, Hochschild 2016, Moffit 2016). Typically, right-wing populists have focused on immigration and other socially conservative problems, while remaining economically liberal. However, in recent years far-right populists have added economic protectionism to their usual tools of law and order. Therefore, both economic and cultural theories are valuable to understanding Trump's 2016 electoral success. In this section, I will first discuss economic and cultural theories, before discussing alternative theories that seek to explain populism outside of these two dominant camps.

Many economic explanations of populism consider the consequences of globalization. For example, Dani Rodrik claims that late-stage globalization is generally prone to populist movements. Rodrik's thesis builds on the Stolper-Samuelson trade theorem, which asserts that the gains of one sector in trade are at the cost of other sectors losing (Rodrik 2018 p. 3). In the context of the United States, the theorem proves that low-skill, labor-intensive industries, who are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of trade liberalization and globalization, will be hurt. Such damage could be compensated by welfare statism, as observed in many European countries. Given the different social security programs in Europe, the populist reactions to globalization may differ from American populists in their political targets. However, this is not entirely the case. Although not all European countries have the same degree of welfare statism, the populist movements closely resemble the American cases. This raises doubt as to economics being the sole motivator for populism, and instead points to the additional factor of culture which will be explored later.

Although important, trade liberalization and globalization are not the only factors generating this resentment. Technological advancement, de-unionization, and wage differentials have certainly contributed to the generation of resentment. However, these factors are symptoms of globalization and thus Rodrik's assertion of economic theory "gives us strong reason to believe that advanced stages of globalization are prone to populist backlash," (Rodrik 2018 p. 2).

Building upon Rodrik's ideas on the consequences of globalization, Piazza (2007) argues that right-wing populism relies upon economic grievances and hardship, especially among low-income, working-class sectors living in rural areas (Piazza 2007). Economic hardship creates feelings of fear, anger, and hopelessness that are then exploited by right-wing populists. Piazza uses Dyer (1997) and Gurr (1970) to assert that White individuals from areas that have been affected by "poverty and structural changes in the US economy" find strong attachment to right-wing rhetoric attacking big government, minorities, women, and conspiracies for the "destruction of traditional employment and sources of prosperity" (Piazza 2007 p. 4). I will draw upon the typology created by Piazza (2007) and apply it to an American context for my empirical analysis.

What traditional economic theories fail to explain is the idea of economic fairness. Starmans, Sheshkin, and Bloom (2018) argue that although individuals in a small group setting support equal distribution of resources, on a large scale they support an unequal distribution. This adds to the existing conversation by arguing that it is not absolutely raw inequality but inequity that concerns individuals. Therefore, economic fairness is the perception that although trade liberalization and globalization result in winners and losers, all players in the game should adhere to an agreed upon set of rules. Outsourcing labor to developing economies to capitalize upon poor labor and environmental standards is a common practice among manufacturing

industries. This argument is best articulated by auto, steel, and tech production facilities relocating to Latin America and Asia. To the average low-skill, blue collar American worker, the question is not necessarily “why are things unequal?” but “why are things unfair?” It is the inequality of the application of economic rules, in addition to the precise capacity of economic inequality, that contributes to the feelings of resentment in the American voter. It would also seem that economic inequality is necessary for a backlash, such that if material conditions were satisfactory for all, then the resentment over unfairness would exist to a lesser degree. Therefore, populists capitalize upon perceived feelings on economic unfairness in conjunction with absolute economic losses to gather support.

Another way to consider unfairness and resentment is through a thought experiment Arlie Russell Hochschild presents in *Strangers in Their Own Land*. The experiment consists of so-called “line cutters.”

“You're waiting in line for the American dream. It's as if on a pilgrimage, looking at the top of the hill at which stands this much desired American dream, and you're not in the back of the line, but it hasn't moved for many, many years. Some people I interviewed hadn't gotten a raise in two decades. So, your feet are getting tired. You feel like you don't bear grudges to any particular group. You're a good person. You've worked hard. You've played by the rules, and you deserve the prize at the top of the hill.

Then, you see some people that seem to you to be cutting in line. Well, who are they? They are blacks, who now through federally mandated, affirmative action programs, have access to jobs that used to be reserved for whites. Even worse, women who through federally mandated affirmative action now have access to jobs that used to be available only to men. And then you have immigrants, and then you have refugees. So, all these intruders.

And then, another moment of the right's deep story. Barack Obama, supervisor of this line, seems to be waving to the line cutters. In fact, you know, isn't he sponsoring these line cutters, and isn't he a line cutter? Many people said to me, “How did a single mother, his mother, pay for a very expensive education at Harvard and Columbia. Something fishy.” So, they felt that he too wasn't obeying by the rules” (Hochschild 2016 p. 182).

Though Hochschild's accounts are anecdotal and based around a series of interviews with Tea Party supporting Louisianians, it still serves as a snapshot into the forces generating resentment in the United States. Individual's sold on the idea of the American dream are witnessing the crumbling of their perceived society as a result of deindustrialization, urbanization and globalization.

Ideas of unfairness and resentment are intertwined with urbanization and modernization. As Will Wilkinson (2019) writes, urbanization spatially organizes individuals along both economic and cultural cleavages, as seen with the relative homogeneous class and ethnic pockets found within geographic regions. Moreover, urban areas are highly diverse and generally socially liberal. What is more important is that the process of urbanization is both self-motivated and self-reinforcing. Individuals from rural areas, who perhaps have socially liberal tendencies, or just wish to escape the material deprivation will relocate to urban areas. As Wilkinson (2019) puts it, “leavers leave and stayers say,” but the individual personality traits that determine if you’re a leaver or stayer can also predict a liberal or conservative tendency. This results in rural areas becoming extremely dense with homogeneous, like-minded individuals, but it also results in urban areas experiencing “self-reinforcement” as any form of urban economic success validates urbanization relative to their rural counterparts. The urban versus rural divide further contributes to resentment generating forces by creating two distinctly separate American socio-economic spheres. Populists are able to capitalize upon this separation in fabricating “us versus them” mentalities. This is exemplified by Trump’s campaign claims of coastal elites with malicious attitudes towards rural Americans (Decker 2017).

An alternative factor missing from both economic and cultural explanations of populism is the role of the media in populist movements. Moffitt (2016), breaks down the relationship between media and populism into three segments: mediatization, mass media, and new media. Mediatization is the growing propensity of news itself, and its interconnectivity with politics. The last decade has witnessed a truly global network of information that ignores traditional boundaries of time and location. Media touches all aspects of everyday life and “politics has certainly not been immune” (Moffitt 2016 p. 75). Moffitt continues by arguing that politics is

“influenced, shaped, and colonized by media logic” (Moffitt 2016 p. 76). For Moffitt, media logic is the dramatization of political coverage and the sports-based attitude of elections, policy, and parties.

Media logic also contributes to the second segment on how populists seek to control and be made celebrities through traditional mass media. Through the mediatization of politics, comes the desire to control such media. On one hand, populists label the media as members of the elite and establishment, but on the other populists often seek to present themselves as a celebrity for ‘the people’ on traditional media sources. Donald Trump’s show *The Apprentice* is an extreme example of celebrity mediatization, with more traditional examples being Hugo Chavez’s show *Alo Presidente*.

The third segment is the rise of new media. Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have expedited the proliferation of media not only from the top-down but also between supporters. Additionally, new media lacks the institutional checks inherent in traditional media. Previous populists would rely upon control of state-run media agencies to disseminate their ideologies. However, with social media populist leaders are able to organize support through an app on their phone. Two recent examples of the power of social media and the organization of political support are the Arab Spring ((Bruns, Highfield, and Burgess 2013) and January 6th riots on Capitol Hill (Fuchs 2021). Both the Arab Spring and the January 6th events on Capitol Hill used social media to organize support, facilitate interaction between groups, and disseminate information from populist leaders.

However, it is important to note that the media can both be a friend and foe to populists. The media is a friend as it helps manufacture support for issues, but it is a foe as it can be hostile towards populists. Regardless, discussions of populism can no longer treat the media as a “side

issue” and must instead be placed at “the center of analysis” along with other factors (Moffitt 2016 p. 94). Although my argument will not focus on the specific role of media in the 2016 election, the inclusion of the media’s role offers significant implications towards an expansion of contemporary populism's conceptualization.

Before moving on, it is important to lay out the framework for which social consequences will be measured. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris’s 2019 work about a cultural tipping point and consequent backlash is cemented in the ideas of material and post-material values. Whereas material values prioritize economic and physical security, and socially conservative beliefs, post-material values prioritize individual liberties, environmentalism, and socially liberal beliefs. Inglehart asserts that, following World War II, rising economic prosperity in Western industrialized countries gradually leads to a replacement of material values with post-material ones.

Dubbed “birth cohorts,” each generation would adhere to stronger post-material values and replace the space occupied by the previous dying generation. Thus, each generation gradually shifted the underlying cultural values. To give an example, in the baby boom following World War II generational defining events such as the Great Depression, global fascism, and other existential threats were still fresh on people’s minds. However, Baby Boomers grew up in the shadow of such events and experienced more financial and physical security comparatively. As a result, they were more open to socially liberal beliefs such as changing gender roles, environmental protections, and other personal liberties. This replacement was continued with the next generation experiencing slightly more security and being more socially liberal than their parents. This is not to say that presently Baby Boomers and Generation Xs are socially liberal by

today's standards, but it suggests that with each new generation experiencing a more prosperous life than the previous one, society will generally become more post-material.

While the social liberalization of values appears to be inevitable given further economic prosperity, access to public education, expanding gender roles, and urbanization, the consequences of this phenomena are more concerning. Inglehart and Norris denote a variety of reactions groups have to the generational value replacement, with the “tipping point” among social conservatives being the most pertinent. Expanding public education, urbanization, and other socially liberal values have estranged vast swaths of society, making them feel like strangers in their own land. Social conservatives established the status quo, and with their relative share of the population decreasing, their cultural hegemony is too. Eventually, this relative share reaches a tipping point, and deep cultural and political conflicts will result in disruption. It is important to note that although social conservatives' share of the overall population is declining, they still remain one of the strongest voting blocs. Moreover, this voting bloc, now disgruntled by their perceived alienation, as well as their underlying resentment, primes the environment for opportunistic populist movements (Norris and Inglehart 2019). However, it remains uncertain if the American backlash is a result of the previously mentioned conditions or a pendulum swing to the right after the country's first Black President.

As important as generational replacement is, short term shocks to economic and physical security, or period effects, also change individual's values. Norris and Inglehart discuss period effects, such as the 2008 financial crisis, on cultural values, and find that they can “accelerate the authoritarian reflex,” or the tendency for an individual to support an authoritarian political leader (Norris and Inglehart 2019 p. 42). Combining the previously mentioned economic results of

globalization, the 2008 global financial crisis, and resentment, it is clear to see the story unfolding as to the far-right populist responses around the world.

How political institutions react to resentment is equally as important as the forces that generate resentment itself. In numerous Western democracies, resentment has gone unaddressed by traditional political parties and institutions, opening the door for populist movements. If traditional governments had responded to these grievances, perhaps its impact on outside political movements would be minimal. If traditional governments had responded, their policies would have changed, but their position as the ruling class would not have. However, we know this not to be the case, as authoritarian populist movements have taken shares of power from traditional political voices across numerous democracies.

In summary, as a result of globalization, the economy has changed and left thousands in economic limbo, while social conservatives' cultural hegemony is being replaced with each new generation and threatened by urbanization leading to a backlash. This backlash is compounded with the recent period effects of the 2008 financial crisis that contribute to an authoritarian reflex. Finally, traditional political forces have failed to address these needs, and as a result, the door has been opened for authoritarian populist leaders to capitalize upon these voices, turn the resentment towards the status quo, immigrants, elites, and retake traditional cultural values.

Samir Gandesha (2018) points out a potential limitation of Norris and Inglehart's argument in the framing of populism as right-wing. Although it is established that populism can take both left and right-wing forms, Norris and Inglehart specifically focus on right-wing populism. As cultural cleavages are more commonly associated with right-wing populism, Norris and Inglehart's findings that "cultural values...provide the most consistent and parsimonious explanation for voting support for populist parties" might be limited in scope (Gandesha 2018 p.

52). Gandesha continues his critique by stating if populism is a backlash by older White males, Norris and Inglehart's theory fails to explain why "53% of White women voters opted for Trump" and the growing youth support for populists in the European "*Génération Identitaire*" and the American alt-right (Gandesha 2018 & Nagle 2017 p. 52). Gandesha's final critique is the institutionality of populism in mainstream politics. In keeping with the theory of generation replacement, Norris and Inglehart claim that "history is on the side of the forces of progress" (Gandesha 2018 p. 54). Although Norris and Inglehart acknowledge the potential long-term implications of a generational divide, Gandesha argues they might have missed how integrated right-wing populism already is in American society specifically. Consequences of right-wing populism, such as gerrymandering, voter suppression, and the de-legitimization of the judicial and electoral systems are all factors existent in American politics (Gandesha 2018 p. 55). Such institutional changes all pose significant threats to human and civil rights, and "the transformation of the rules of the game would be especially dramatic in the case of a major socio-economic or political crisis" (Gandesha 2018 p. 55). An anecdotal confirmation of this observation is the January 6th, 2021 armed riots on the U.S. Capitol Building during disputed election results and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gandesha's critique does not invalidate Norris and Inglehart's theory, but instead adds another complexity to the theory that I will utilize. I will have a more inclusive approach when building an American populist typology, and any conclusions must look towards its institutionalization.

3. Data and Research Design

As a far-right populist, Donald Trump attacked the party establishment, exemplified by his campaign remarks against the character and political morals of Mitt Romney, Jeb Bush, and other prominent members of the Republican party. Furthermore, Trump's attacks against electoral integrity symbolize the rhetoric populists use to discredit the political order. He then mobilized against the elite and other out-groups by attacking the media, bureaucrats, and experts. Donald Trump's label of "fake news" best highlights this attack. Trump then inserted himself as the political antidote to these ailments as the true voice of the people. Based on the literature of Norris and Inglehart 2019, Przeworski 2019, and Rodrik 2018, Donald Trump's success is based on these economic and cultural theories of populism. I hypothesize that social values, such as animosities towards outgroups and distrust in the political establishment, changed prior to 2016 thus predicated Donald Trump's 2016 electoral success.

To further test for explanations of Trump's 2016 electoral success, I will use the American National Election Studies (ANES) post electoral polls on American's social values and feeling thermometers. The ANES was chosen specifically because of its ease of access, variety of survey questions, and well-established time-series. Other surveys were considered, such as the Gallop Daily public opinion polls, but a more complicated nature presented a barrier to analysis that was not present with the ANES.

The ANES database contains surveys from each U.S. presidential electoral cycle and the scope of this analysis is from 2004 to 2016. In order to conduct a sufficient time-series analysis, 2004 was determined as the proper starting date because it is the first election prior to the 2008 financial crisis. From the ANES database, 11 dependent variables were identified as it relates to topical American social values. These variables include attitudes towards big interests, the

satisfaction with American democracy, and feeling thermometers for groups within American society. As well as various demographic, employment, and education variables.¹

The following contains variables with generalized trends that will be explored to a greater extent in the next section using regression analysis.

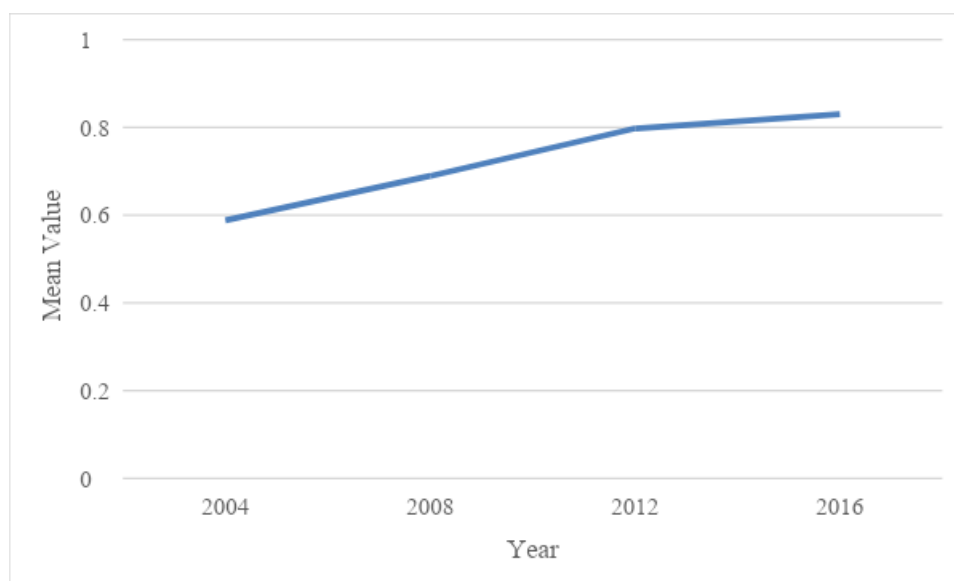


Figure 1: National Mean of Belief Government Works for Big Interests (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: “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?” Answers are coded in a 0-1 scale, where 0 means “the benefit of all people” and 1 means “the benefit of big interests”

Figure 1 shows the share of respondents who view the government as run by either the public good or for big interests from 2004 to 2016. The figure shows the rising number of citizens agreeing with the statement. This variable is important insofar as it points to popular political discontent. Specifically, if individuals believe the government no longer represents their

¹ See the appendix below for the complete list of variables as well as their coding scheme within the constructed database.

interests, or effectively works for them, one can expect that the parties comprising the government also no longer represent citizens' interests. Furthermore, if individuals increasingly believe that the government can no longer work towards representing their interests, it opens the door for populist candidates, who market themselves as the much-needed antidote to insert popular beliefs back into government. In the case of Donald Trump, this can best be exemplified with his phrase of "drain the swamp."

Another way of measuring citizens' perception of the system is to look at their satisfaction with democracy.

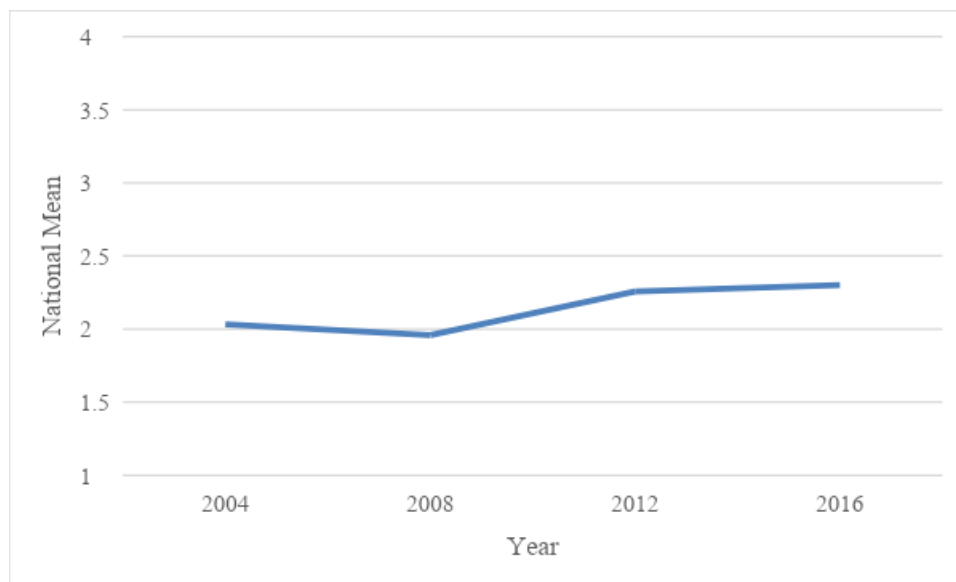


Figure 2: National Mean on Dissatisfaction with American Democracy (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: "As a whole, are you [satisfied/not] with the way democracy works in the United States." are coded in a 1-4 scale that range from "very satisfied" (1) to "not at all satisfied" (4).

Figure 2 represents the mean response value for the country respondent by year. Whereas a lower score means a higher degree of satisfaction. This variable is asked post-election. The national trend points to a slight dip in 2008 before increasing in 2012 and 2016. Of note within that trend is the election of Barack Obama was not met with a large increase of satisfaction. One

might expect that trend to increase with the election of the United States' first Black President. Two potential reasons for this could be the resentment felt during the 2008 financial crisis, or a backlash among the predominantly White political status quo. An implication of democratic dissatisfaction is an environment ripening for populists. Moreover, dissatisfaction with American democracy might aid the development of far-right populists as democratic it opens the door to nondemocratic alternatives. That is, individuals might be more willing to accept nondemocratic political avenues to their unanswered grievances. Although in the United States, Donald Trump is not a true autocrat, he does embody nondemocratic norms such as eroding trust in election results and targeting specific outgroups.

In that case, one might expect democratic dissatisfaction to be felt most acutely by those who are most dissatisfied with democracy. In other words, those who have lost the most or have been excluded from democratic participation to the largest degree, would also have the highest degree of dissatisfaction. Among Whites, this variable follows a similar trend to that of the national beliefs, except it declines again slightly in 2016. All other races experienced an increase in 2016. This is perhaps explained by the variable being asked post-election, such that Trump's electoral victory would correspond to an increase in democratic dissatisfaction. Upon closer inspection, in 2016, whereas the Northeast and Western census regions experience an increase in dissatisfaction, the Midwest and Southern census regions experience a decrease, meaning they are more satisfied. At the surface level this corresponds to the bastions of political support, whereas the Southern and Midwestern states predominantly supported Trump. When controlling for political parties, a similar trend occurs such that self-declared Independents and Democrats gradually grow dissatisfied, Republicans are more satisfied in 2016.

A third way of exploring citizens' perceptions of the system is to explore their opinion about whether it matters who is in power. This variable is important in that it provides a general snapshot towards individuals feelings towards democratic satisfaction and animosity. If there is a more acute belief that it does not matter who is in power, those individuals might be more likely to support alternative options in populists or authoritarians.

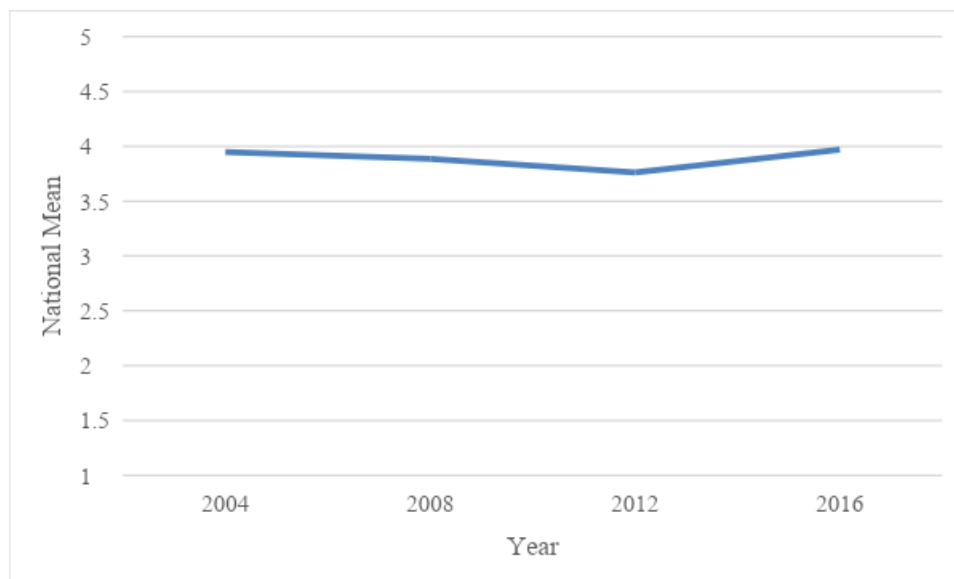


Figure 3: National Mean on the Importance of the Difference of Power (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: “Some people say that it doesn’t make any difference who is in power. Others say that it makes a big difference who is in power. Using the scale in the booklet, where would you place yourself?” Responses are coded in a 5-point scale that range from “dissatisfied” (4) to “satisfied” (1).

As Figure 3 shows, there is no discernable trend among individuals nationally. The figure slightly dips in 2008 and 2012 but bounces back in 2016. This bounce in 2016 could potentially be explained by the needs individuals felt in 2016 to vote for or against Donald Trump. This idea is further supported when the above trend is filtered by party alignment, with self-declared Independents, Democrats, and Republicans all felt the strongest towards the importance of the difference in power.

After picturing citizens' disappointment with the system, we now focus on whom they focus their frustration. In particular, we explore citizens' feelings towards specific minority groups using feeling thermometers. The first group examined is illegal immigrants.

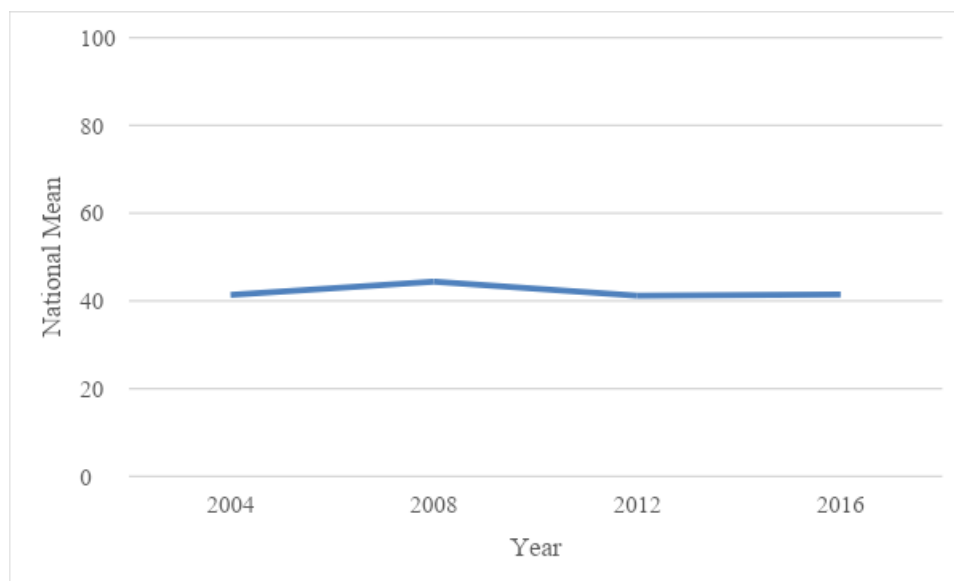


Figure 4: National Mean Feeling Thermometer for Illegal Immigrants (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: “How would you rate: Illegal Immigrants?” Respondents type a number from 0-100 whereas 0 is “very cold or unfavorable,” 50 is “no particular (un)favorability,” and 100 is “very warm or favorable.”

Of all feeling thermometers, illegal immigrants represented the lowest absolute mean and thus favorability of the groups examined. As Figure 4 shows, there is a 3-point increase in 2008 and subsequent drop in 2012. However, this spike is not opposite of what one might expect as individuals actually felt more positively about immigrants in this period compared to other periods. Among racial groups, there appeared to be no national trends denoting changes in attitudes.

If economic insecurity, feelings of unfairness, and raw monetary inequality are predictors for resentment, then one might expect an increase in dislike for the wealthy.

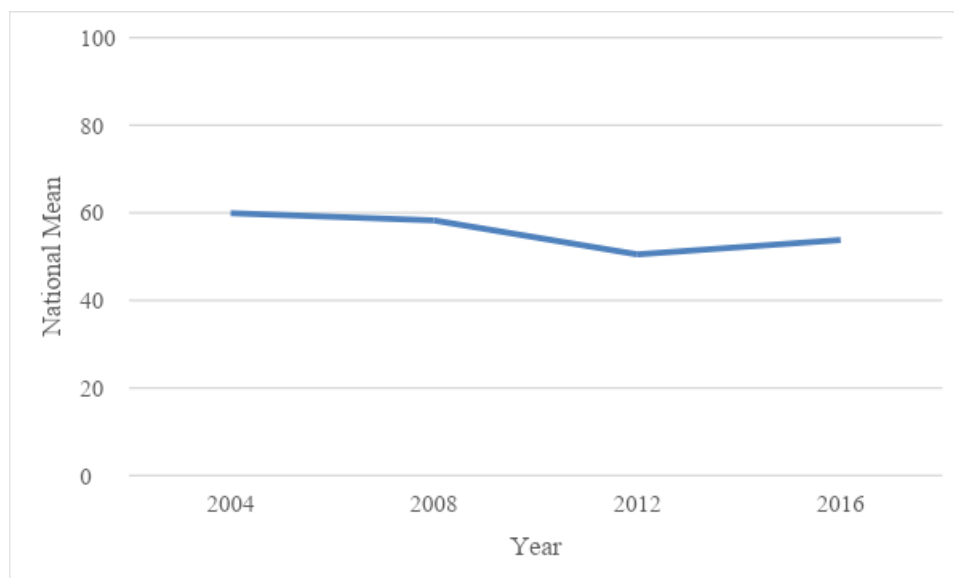


Figure 5: National Mean Feeling Thermometer for Rich People (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: “How would you rate: Rich People?” Respondents type a number from 0-100 whereas 0 is “very cold or unfavorable,” 50 is “no particular (un)favorability,” and 100 is “very warm or favorable.”

As shown in Figure 5, the national trend for the feeling thermometer towards “rich people” has declined, but in recent years appears to increase again. The upward trend is marginal but the overall decline from 2004 suggests growing animosity towards the wealthy members of society. This could be explained by the growing resentment among individuals who have experienced economic loss, stagnation, or uncertainty while witnessing other’s gains.

If economic factors, namely ideas of economic inequality and fairness, motivate these underlying trends of resentment and dissatisfaction, then one might expect ideas about equal opportunities to fluctuate accordingly.

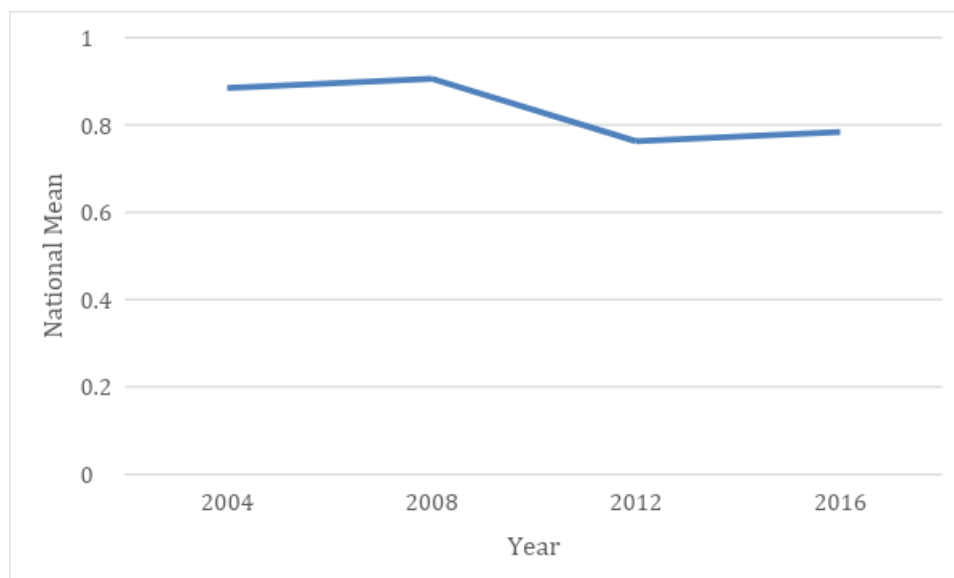


Figure 6: National Mean Belief on Providing Equal Opportunities (Source: ANES).

Note: The figure shows the mean response by survey-wave to the question: “Do you agree/disagree that our society should do whatever is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.” Responses are coded on a 5-point scale from 1 “agree strongly” to 5 “disagree strongly.” The figure has been specially coded whereas 0 is those who “disagree” and 1 is those who “agree.”

Figure 6 shows a dramatic decrease after 2008, dropping from just above .90 to the middle .70s. It might appear counterintuitive that in the face of unequal opportunities that individuals would believe in equal opportunities to a lesser degree. This phenomenon could best be described by the animosity’s individuals feel when others receive opportunities and metaphorically pass them in the line for the ‘American Dream.’ The implications of this idea are that those who feel they have been cheated in line for opportunities will perhaps be more willing to support candidates who appeal to the “passed” majority. In the example of Trump, these are predominantly rural white Americans who call themselves the silent majority.

4. Research Findings

The findings section interprets the results of regression analysis using the ANES variables and seeks to highlight any changes in social value trends or lack thereof. The demographic variables are race, employment status, gender, education level, party identification, census region, and age. The baseline for each demographic variable is as follows: other races, employed, male, independent, and the North East respectively. The demographic variable education level deserves special attention as the coding is categorized into a scale ranging from: “8th Grade or Less” to “Advanced Degree (Including LLB).”

The first variable examined regards the share of respondents who view the government as run by either the public good or for big interests. A negative coefficient means an individual has a stronger belief that the government works for the benefit of all, and a positive coefficient means an individual has a stronger belief that the government works for big interests.

Table 1: Regression Results for the Belief that the Government Works for Big Interests.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	-0.052 (0.073)	-0.147 ** (0.057)	-0.032 (0.042)	-0.057 * (0.022)
Black	0.063 (0.083)	-0.114 (0.060)	0.119 ** (0.045)	0.062 * (0.029)
Hispanic	-0.128 (0.093)	-0.061 (0.060)	0.030 (0.045)	0.075 ** (0.028)
Unemployed	0.007 (0.059)	0.062 * (0.030)	-0.001 (0.029)	0.022 (0.020)
Other Employment	0.011 (0.037)	0.042 (0.027)	0.009 (0.028)	0.016 (0.015)
Female	-0.070 *	0.045 *	0.027	-0.004

	(0.030)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.012)
Education Level	0.019	-0.036 **	-0.011	-0.006
	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.006)
Democrat	0.068	-0.048	0.056 *	0.077 ***
	(0.053)	(0.034)	(0.024)	(0.014)
Republican	-0.229 ***	0.035	-0.040	-0.030 *
	(0.054)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.015)
Midwest	-0.085	0.035	0.030	-0.038 *
	(0.045)	(0.040)	(0.036)	(0.019)
South	-0.101 *	0.082 *	-0.010	-0.010
	(0.043)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.017)
West	0.060	0.061	0.033	-0.017
	(0.047)	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.019)
Age	0.030	-0.039 ***	0.006	-0.010
	(0.016)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.006)
N	1003	1971	1747	3840
R2	0.1255	0.0347	0.0375	0.0475

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

As Table 1 shows, party identification is an important predictor of these beliefs.

Self-identified Republicans increasingly believe the government works for the benefit of all and self-identified Democrats increasingly believe the government works for big interests. However, party identification was activated post-2008 for Democrats, and increased in strength up to 2016, suggesting growing resentment for the government's complicity with big business. Alternatively, party identification was activated in only 2004 and 2016 for Republicans. The feelings in 2004 could be residual from the period of national unity following 9/11. The feeling in 2016 suggests

that there is a renewed belief that successful election of Republicans would serve public interests. In context, party identification helps explain two beliefs stated by Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump. Bernie Sanders campaigned against Wall Street and big business; thus, it is no surprise that he performed well among self-identified Democrats in 2016. On the other side of the aisle, Donald Trump's supporters, though upset at the perceived 'swamp' of Washington, D.C., believed that their supported candidate would work for their interests. The idea of party identification is elaborated upon further in the following variables. Table 1 also highlights the relationship race provides into the idea of the "line cutters" as discussed in a prior section. While Whites increasingly believe that the government works for the benefit of all, minorities believe that the government works for big interests. This is explained, in part, by the close relationship between race and party identification, but it also suggests the idea that the metaphorical line is for White Americans, and the government has taken few actions to rectify any racial or ethnic discrepancies. Thus, any attempts to alter the status quo of the line would spark a cultural outrage among Whites.

I now explore the variation on citizens' perceptions on their opinion about whether it matters who is in power. A lower coefficient corresponds to a stronger belief that it does not make a big difference who is in power and a larger coefficient corresponds to a stronger belief that it does matter. Values on the survey result range from "No Difference" (1) to "Big Difference" (5). The most striking result is the clear activation of party differences. Both self-identified Republicans and Democrats more strongly believe that it makes a difference who is in power. At first glance, the lack of an opposing trend between Democrats or Republicans, is unexpected. Given the popularity of populist movements, one might expect one or both self-identified party adherents to have stronger beliefs that it does not matter who is in power

because they feel resentful towards the traditional party establishment and more unwilling to support such establishment. This is explained by the formalization of populism into mainstream politics, as the Tea Party and Donald Trump are not insurgents, but the Republican party figureheads. Therefore, self-identified Republicans are more willing to believe that it makes a difference who is in power. It is also important to note that party identification appears to be activated after 2004, which could generally be explained by the growing polarization of American politics, as well as the feeling to vote against another party or the “lesser of two evils.”

Table 2: Regression Results for the Belief that it Matters Who is in Power.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	0.160 (0.174)	-0.007 (0.146)	-0.117 (0.108)	-0.015 (0.068)
Black	0.021 (0.197)	0.173 (0.153)	0.231 * (0.116)	0.012 (0.087)
Hispanic	0.223 (0.218)	0.030 (0.155)	-0.041 (0.116)	-0.021 (0.085)
Unemployed	0.020 (0.138)	-0.068 (0.078)	0.049 (0.075)	-0.059 (0.059)
Other Employment	0.106 (0.089)	0.038 (0.070)	0.054 (0.073)	0.021 (0.043)
Female	0.104 (0.070)	0.064 (0.053)	0.107 (0.055)	0.115 *** (0.034)
Education Level	0.090 * (0.036)	0.130 *** (0.028)	0.090 ** (0.028)	0.067 *** (0.017)
Democrat	0.077 (0.125)	0.553 *** (0.085)	0.379 *** (0.064)	0.266 *** (0.042)

Republican	0.243 (0.128)	0.342 *** (0.093)	0.464 *** (0.081)	0.327 *** (0.043)
Midwest	0.083 (0.107)	0.095 (0.104)	-0.308 ** (0.094)	-0.066 (0.055)
South	0.066 (0.103)	0.225 * (0.090)	-0.240 ** (0.080)	0.002 (0.051)
West	0.151 (0.111)	0.228 * (0.097)	-0.124 (0.094)	0.071 (0.056)
Age	-0.120 ** (0.039)	0.061 * (0.029)	0.029 (0.030)	0.108 *** (0.019)
N	1039	2012	1719	3294
R2	0.0335	0.0494	0.0676	0.0486

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

The next group of variables are all in the category of feeling thermometers. These feeling thermometers measure favorability towards a specific group of society by asking respondents to rank between “Not Favorable” (0) and “Highly Favorable” (100). With crisis or populist social division, one might expect the favorability of minority or out groups of society to decrease.

Table 3: Regression Results for the Feeling Thermometer for Illegal Immigrants.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	-4.557 (3.636)	-9.781 ** (3.058)	-5.307 * (2.485)	-3.472 * (1.689)
Black	-0.248 (4.122)	0.270 (3.220)	8.657 ** (2.686)	5.598 * (2.181)

Hispanic	15.075 ***	17.096 ***	17.359 ***	16.025 ***
	(4.534)	(3.242)	(2.690)	(2.130)
Unemployed	-6.383 *	2.955	-0.652	-2.041
	(2.882)	(1.635)	(1.719)	(1.490)
Other Employment	-2.517	1.077	2.855	1.107
	(1.855)	(1.471)	(1.670)	(1.089)
Female	1.385	2.146	2.382	-0.047
	(1.471)	(1.109)	(1.269)	(0.867)
Education Level	3.014 ***	2.582 ***	1.543 *	3.104 ***
	(0.749)	(0.589)	(0.648)	(0.444)
Democrat	4.051	2.861	3.071 *	9.870 ***
	(2.617)	(1.803)	(1.461)	(1.064)
Republican	-4.483	-6.581 ***	-8.620 ***	-11.312 ***
	(2.673)	(1.948)	(1.855)	(1.088)
Midwest	-5.774 **	-1.932	-4.165	-0.430
	(2.233)	(2.162)	(2.149)	(1.368)
South	-2.787	-0.725	-2.715	0.804
	(2.150)	(1.881)	(1.840)	(1.276)
West	-0.671	3.8751	0.542	3.609 *
	(2.320)	(2.027)	(2.153)	(1.401)
Age	0.448	-0.858	-0.237	-1.677 ***
	(0.823)	(0.619)	(0.685)	(0.490)
N	1018	1967	1711	3265
R2	0.1111	0.2055	0.1693	0.2002

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

As Table 3 shows, we find more favorability towards illegal immigrants among Hispanics and educated respondents. On the other hand, Whites and Republicans reported the least favorable feelings towards illegal immigrants. Additionally, it supports the argument that individuals believe illegal immigrants might occupy jobs, receive federal assistance, or be given preferential treatment that native born Americans could feel entitled to. This also supports the idea of the “line-cutter” idea such that should illegal immigrants receive any aforementioned benefits, they are cutting the line. Interestingly, region is a variable that is not activated, which furthers this argument as it points to a generalized feeling among activated groups instead of a localized instantiation of animosity. All of these underlying trends of growing animosity towards illegal immigrants are exploited by far-right populist rhetoric. This is exemplified by Donald Trump’s claims of a “caravan of immigrants” or other metaphors of a war on America’s Southern border. As a result, Trump’s rhetoric on tightened border security and “build the wall” resonated well among supporters.

Continuing the discussion of group animosities from Table 3, Table 4 shows the feelings towards Hispanics in general. If there is growing animosity among White self-identified Republicans perhaps there is a similar feeling towards Hispanics in general. However, the trend is not as clear as Table 3. Whites are only briefly, but strongly, activated in 2008, and party is less continuously activated. Additionally, employment status becomes activated post 2012. The conclusions drawn from Table 4 alone are slightly lackluster, but put in the context of Table 3, and a more coherent argument begins to form. In continuing with the ideas of line-cutters and party identification, those that feel minorities are given preferential treatment experience

animosity towards them. Table 4 adds to this discussion by including those who are unemployed post 2012 and continues the findings related to political party in Table 3.

Table 4: Regression Results for the Feeling Thermometer for Hispanics.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	4.783 (2.969)	-7.267 ** (2.483)	-0.236 (2.077)	0.173 (1.431)
Black	9.026 ** (3.356)	-1.727 (2.615)	9.737 *** (2.241)	4.043 * (1.847)
Hispanic	22.825 *** (3.689)	13.550 *** (2.633)	20.560 *** (2.248)	13.824 *** (1.804)
Unemployed	-2.704 (2.332)	-0.414 (1.335)	0.866 (1.438)	-2.882 * (1.264)
Other Employment	1.997 (1.505)	0.707 (1.198)	3.349 * (1.397)	0.300 (0.924)
Female	1.020 (1.189)	2.334 * (0.907)	2.429 * (1.061)	1.185 (0.736)
Education Level	2.859 *** (0.607)	1.647 *** (0.482)	3.278 *** (0.542)	3.235 *** (0.377)
Democrat	2.759 (2.125)	4.280 ** (1.475)	2.185 (1.222)	3.767 *** (0.902)
Republican	4.218 (2.164)	1.826 (1.593)	-0.945 (1.549)	-2.162 * (0.923)
Midwest	-1.058 (1.816)	1.151 (1.764)	-1.085 (1.799)	-0.141 (1.161)
South	-0.730	0.958	-1.178	0.966

	(1.741)	(1.539)	(1.538)	(1.083)
West	-0.937	1.520	3.583 *	2.678 *
	(1.886)	(1.656)	(1.802)	(1.189)
Age	0.366	-0.329	-0.418	0.231
	(0.667)	(0.506)	(0.573)	(0.416)
N	1015	1967	1707	3258
R2	0.082	0.148	0.168	0.079

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

The next question asked is: does this animosity towards minorities extend to other minority groups? To answer this question, Table 5 examines the feeling thermometer for Blacks. Table 5 continues the party identification dynamic identified in the previous Table, but with a new addition. In 2004 both parties had a positive coefficient correlating to a more favorable view of Blacks. However, in 2008 a dichotomy began between the two parties. Self-identified Democrats continued to have a favorable view, but self-identified Republicans began to show a less favorable view. This view among self-identified Republicans culminates after 2012 when Republicans and Democrats have opposing directions. Party identification is a better predictor over time than other demographic variables with regards to feelings towards Blacks. This further cements the line-cutter argument. Recalling the ideas of the argument, through federally mandated affirmative action programs, Blacks are receiving education and achieving jobs that were once reserved for Whites.

Table 5: Regression Results for the Feeling Thermometer for Blacks.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	1.889	-4.228	-4.740 *	-1.212

	(2.831)	(2.350)	(2.036)	(1.398)
Black	19.967 ***	14.260 ***	18.264 ***	13.878 ***
	(3.202)	(2.473)	(2.197)	(1.820)
Hispanic	9.937 **	-0.336	-1.797	0.012
	(3.529)	(2.494)	(2.213)	(1.799)
Unemployed	-0.024	-1.017	0.171	-1.062
	(2.219)	(1.261)	(1.411)	(1.223)
Other Employment	1.393	1.239	2.284	-0.259
	(1.453)	(1.134)	(1.365)	(0.894)
Female	3.114 **	3.968 ***	2.499 *	2.650 ***
	(1.143)	(0.857)	(1.040)	(0.712)
Education Level	2.098 ***	0.761	-0.775	-0.471
	(0.584)	(0.455)	(1.820)	(1.274)
Democrat	5.188 *	3.881 **	3.072 *	4.671 ***
	(2.026)	(1.398)	(1.194)	(0.873)
Republican	4.625 *	-0.136	-1.477	-2.927 **
	(2.066)	(1.511)	(1.516)	(0.892)
Midwest	-0.252	1.623	-0.960	-0.730
	(1.742)	(1.677)	(1.760)	(1.122)
South	0.212	3.152 *	-1.820	1.012
	(1.678)	(1.468)	(1.509)	(1.047)
West	-0.941	2.436	1.552	2.145
	(1.814)	(1.578)	(1.768)	(1.151)
Age	0.329	0.797	-0.082	0.215
	(0.642)	(0.478)	(0.562)	(0.403)
N	1020	1974	1707	3257
R2	0.1414	0.1838	0.2018	0.1011

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
 $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

A compounding effect is created when Whites view Barack Obama as the author and a beneficiary of the federal programs. The idea of line-cutters, as supported by the previous Tables, is then exploited by far-right populist leaders, such as Donald Trump, who appear to speak for the individuals who feel cheated.

Table 6: Pivot Table for the Feeling Thermometer for Whites among Party ID.

	Other	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics	NA	Total
Independents	36.6%	29.3%	16.1%	27.3%	24.4%	3755
Democrats	37.5%	31.4%	77.4%	51.3%	34.8%	5768
Republicans	20.8%	36.4%	03.7%	16.9%	20.9%	3758
NA	04.9%	02.7%	02.6%	04.25	19.7%	437
Total	833	8621	2189	1989	86	13718

Table 6 shows a pivot table for the feeling thermometer for Whites among party identification. What is worth noting is the connection between race and party affiliation. This connection is the view that the threatened cultural hegemony of social conservatives is felt by Whites. Likeminded Whites and Republicans are more inclined to feel culturally threatened by “line-cutter” minorities and thus have a more positive view of what might constitute “the people.”

The next variable concerns any animosity between classes. Table 7 concerns the feeling thermometer for rich people. If there is animosity towards specific minority groups, then perhaps there is similar animosity towards economic elites.

Table 7: Regression Results for the Feeling Thermometer for Rich People.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	0.436 (3.164)	-2.282 (2.623)	1.910 (2.107)	-1.349 (1.393)
Black	9.043 * (3.571)	4.422 (2.763)	3.966 (2.276)	0.163 (1.808)
Hispanic	12.505 ** (3.939)	-0.147 (2.787)	-0.708 (2.287)	0.151 (1.778)
Unemployed	-5.369 * (2.452)	-2.192 (1.421)	-1.044 (1.461)	-2.034 (1.212)
Other Employment	-0.610 (1.608)	-0.498 (1.281)	0.608 (1.420)	1.038 (0.891)
Female	2.259 (1.262)	2.474 * (0.964)	1.224 (1.078)	1.077 (0.709)
Education Level	2.635 *** (0.646)	0.144 (0.514)	2.462 *** (0.552)	-1.415 (1.255)
Democrat	0.831 (2.255)	-1.346 (1.573)	-2.079 (1.245)	-3.055 *** (0.867)
Republican	8.542 *** (2.302)	3.516 * (1.699)	7.896 *** (1.581)	7.654 *** (0.890)
Midwest	-0.084 (1.927)	1.829 (1.888)	-0.350 (1.823)	-0.766 (1.120)
South	-0.094 (1.853)	4.234 * (1.645)	1.996 (1.562)	0.119 (1.043)
West	0.389 (2.003)	5.653 ** (1.767)	4.902 ** (1.836)	0.030 (1.147)

Age	3.666 *** (0.709)	2.241 *** (0.541)	1.444 * (0.583)	2.102 *** (0.401)
N	1022	1965	1715	3278
R2	0.094	0.035	0.057	0.069

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

With regards to Table 7, the item of note is, again the activation of party identification post 2012. In keeping with the established definition of populism, the favorability of rich people is connected to the social or economic cleavages of crisis. As left-wing populism is more motivated by economic crisis, the negative trend points towards an environment suitable for Bernie Sanders' platform. Conversely, the positive favorability experienced by Republicans might point to an environment favorable for an established businessperson, like Donald Trump.

The last variable examined regards the degree to which individuals think the nation would be better off if we provided equal opportunities for everyone to succeed. Where values range from "Disagree" (0) to "Agree" (1). This corresponds to a negative coefficient meaning an individual believes America would not be better off, and a positive coefficient meaning America would be.

Table 8: Regression Results for Providing Equal Opportunities.

	2004	2008	2012	2016
White	-0.0731 (0.0490)	-0.0562 (0.0358)	-0.0443 (0.0314)	-0.0308 (0.0274)
Black	-0.0618 (0.0555)	-0.0186 (0.0376)	0.0320 (0.0339)	-0.0115 (0.0353)
Hispanic	-0.0175	0.0068	-0.0126	-0.0099

	(0.0616)	(0.0380)	(0.0340)	(0.0342)
Unemployed	0.0452	0.0288	0.0392	0.0137
	(0.0392)	(0.0191)	(0.0218)	(0.0240)
Other Employment	0.0378	0.0187	-0.0279	0.0062
	(0.0253)	(0.0173)	(0.0211)	(0.0176)
Female	-0.0088	0.0082	0.0257	0.0270
	(0.0200)	(0.0130)	(0.0161)	(0.0140)
Education Level	-0.0098	-0.0033	-0.0215 **	0.0178 *
	(0.0103)	(0.0069)	(0.0082)	(0.0072)
Democrat	0.0523	0.0274	0.0539 **	0.0731 ***
	(0.0354)	(0.0210)	(0.0185)	(0.0172)
Republican	-0.0379	-0.0532 *	-0.0050	-0.1234 ***
	(0.0362)	(0.0228)	(0.0236)	(0.0177)
Midwest	0.0285	0.0296	0.0132	-0.0156
	(0.0305)	(0.0255)	(0.0273)	(0.0222)
South	-0.0168	0.0066	0.0247	0.0102
	(0.0293)	(0.0222)	(0.0234)	(0.0206)
West	-0.0505	-0.0164	0.0408	0.0053
	(0.0318)	(0.0239)	(0.0274)	(0.0227)
Age	-0.0070	0.0116	0.0097	0.0377 ***
	(0.0112)	(0.0073)	(0.0087)	(0.0079)
N	1041	2015	1736	3303
R2	0.0340	0.0374	0.0387	0.0529

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. ***
p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

As shown in Table 8, the only variables of note are party identification. Table 8 provides the strongest support for the line-cutter and cultural backlash argument. Table 8 suggests that

individuals are only concerned with securing opportunities for themselves and those within their group, specifically the group of party identification. Democrats more strongly believe that we should provide equal opportunities for all, and Republicans do not. Party-identification was activated post-2008 for Democrats, and in 2008 and 2016 for Republicans. The 2016 number is especially strong for Republicans. Given inequality, unfairness, and crisis, one might expect that more people would agree that the nation would be better off if everyone was given an opportunity to succeed. However, Table 8 disproves that idea. Instead, federal aid, employment, and cultural hegemony are viewed as a finite resource such that any aid to another group is less aid to one's own. Although this view appears selfish, it is rooted in a more palatable self-defense. The traditional American cultural hegemony has waned and mixed with feelings of economic uncertainty; self-identified Republicans respond with backlash.

5. Conclusions, Limitations, and Implications

While the 2016 election of Donald Trump came as a surprise to many, when viewing this victory through a comparative lens, America's turn towards far-right populism is unsurprising. The cultural and economic theories alike, provide an explanation for Donald Trump's electoral success. Specifically, American social values have changed thus opening the door for Trump. In regard to the question of what explains the electoral success of Donald Trump, the findings of a "line cutter" typology among White self-identified Republicans provides compelling evidence. Figure 1 and Figure 5 suggest that there are some motivations of resentment that begin prior to 2008. These motivations are related to the belief that the government works for big interests and growing animosity towards the wealth and economic winners of society. These motivations combined with the evidence provided above to suggest that after the period effect of the 2008

financial crisis, social values did change, prompting an environment suitable for populism. The evidence provided documents the country's political dissatisfaction, animosity towards minority groups, and a strong belief in the "line-cutter" idea. This feeling is felt most acutely by self-identified Republicans and Whites. To my surprise, region was not a relevant factor.

These findings support Norris and Inglehart's cultural backlash theory of populism. Importantly, party identification is associated with material and post-material values. Where socially liberal Democrats are more likely to favor post-material values, and socially conservative Republican's favor material values. An additional conclusion that can be extracted from the regression analysis about how party identification relates to the formation of 'the people.' In the context of Donald Trump, 'the people' is a set of socially conservative, White, self-identifying Republicans. For scholars, this finding is important because it reinforces a typology and target group of those more likely to support alternative political reactions. For the United States in a larger context, it suggests that there is a large population that is actively dissatisfied with their condition. This dissatisfaction poses an economic, political, and cultural problem for American politics moving forward.

A limitation is the size and source of the dataset. A more inclusive approach that factors in additional polling data sources, economic and demographic statistics, as well as a more accurate location variable, would create a more focused approach towards exploring individual social values. As previously discussed in Gandesha's critique, social value approaches to right-wing populism can be self-fulfilling, therefore including a strong economic component might overcome this limitation. This work can be extended by including a deeper analysis into how future typologies of populism in the American context should seek to recognize how

authoritarian populism normalizes itself into mainstream politics. Another area of extension is Trump's relation to the theory of political media as discussed before.

Although the election of Joe Biden removed Donald Trump from the White House, the underlying resentment and forces that generated Trump's 2016 campaign is alive and well. From gerrymandering to electoral integrity, authoritarianism has been institutionalized in the American political process. There is reason to believe that the causes and effects of the 2016 presidential election have yet to fully unfold. The events of January 6th at the U.S. Capitol only serve as additional proof that large groups of American society continue to feel left out and left behind by economics and politics. Without redressing American resentment, we will see more far-right populism.

6. Appendix: Variables

All variables come from the American National Election Studies (ANES).

Dependent Variables

Big Interest

“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?” (1= Run by a few big interests, 2=For the benefit of all people). Variable was dummy coded to focus on those that believe the government works for big interests.

Satisfaction

“On the whole, are you [very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied / not at all satisfied, not very satisfied, fairly satisfied, or very satisfied] with the way democracy works in the United States?” (1=Very satisfied, 2=Fairly satisfied, 3=Not very satisfied, 4=Not at all satisfied).

Different Power

“Some people say that IT DOESN’T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE who is in power. Others say that IT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE who is in power. Using the scale in the booklet, (where ONE means that it doesn’t make any difference who is in power and FIVE means that it makes a big difference who is in power), where would you place yourself?” (1 It doesn’t make any difference who is in power, 2, 3, 4, 5 It makes a big difference who is in power).

Equal Opportunities

“Our society should do whatever is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.’ Looking at page [PRELOAD: page] in the booklet. Do you [agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly / disagree strongly, disagree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, agree somewhat, or agree strongly] with this statement?” (1=Agree strongly, 2=Agree somewhat, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 4=Disagree somewhat, 5=Disagree strongly).

Feeling Thermometers

“Using the same thermometer scale which you used earlier in the interview, how would you rate: [insert group]. For each feeling thermometer, they are coded the same. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the group. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don’t feel favorable toward the group and that you don’t care too much for that group. You would rate the group at the 50-degree mark if you don’t feel particularly warm or cold toward the group.” This holds true for all feeling thermometers used (illegal immigrants, whites, blacks, Asians, Hispanics, rich, and poor)

Independent Variables

Region

No question provided from the ANES. (1=Northeast, 2=Midwest, 3=South, 4=West)

Race

“Please choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be: - white, - black or African American, - American Indian or Alaska Native, - Asian, or - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander?” (1=White, 2=Black, 3=Hispanic, 4=Other). In order to condense survey respondents into more workable categories. I combined Native American, Asian American, and Other into the Other category, as they were the smallest three individual groupings.

Gender

“What is your gender?” (1=Male, 2=Female).

Education

“What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?” (1=8th Grade or less, 2=9th-11th, 3=High school diploma or test, 4=More than 12th NO degree, 5=Junior or community college, 6=Bachelor’s degree NO advanced, 7=Advanced degree).

Employment

“We’d like to know if you are working now, temporarily laid off, or are you unemployed, retired, permanently disabled, a homemaker, a student, or what?” (1=Employed, 2=Not employed, 3=Other).

Age

“What is your age?” Survey respondents recorded their age at the time of completing the form.

Party

“Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as [a Democrat, a Republican / a Republican, a Democrat], an independent, or what?” (1=Democrat, 2=Republican, 3=Independent).

7. Appendix: Summary Table

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>Dependent Variables</i>					
Big Interest	13051	1.225	0.417	1	2
Satisfaction	12167	2.2	0.765	1	4
Different Power	12254	3.86	1.162	1	5
Equal Opportunities	12295	1.77	1.032	1	5
Feeling Illegal	12125	41.82	26.95	0	100
Feeling Whites	12118	72.33	19.58	0	100
Feeling Blacks	12117	68.91	21.58	0	100
Feeling Hispanics	12107	67.34	21.83	0	100
Feeling Asians	12054	66.85	20.30	0	100
Feeling Rich	12153	53.55	22.12	0	100
Feeling Poor	12148	71.72	20.15	0	100

Independent Variables

Region	13718	2.705	0.991	1	4
Race	13632	2.391	0.807	1	4
Gender	13677	1.531	0.499	1	2
Education	13595	4.433	1.585	1	7
Employment	9827	1.667	0.871	1	3
Age	13492	48.94	17.20	17	93
Party	13281	2	0.752	1	3

*****The complete database, R script, and regression models are available upon request**

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