



A Crisis In the Republic: The Shifting American Political System

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A Crisis In the Republic: The Shifting American Political System

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A Thesis in the Field of Government
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Abstract

The American Political System has undergone several changes throughout the two hundred plus years the country has been alive. One of those transformations has been a continuous development of party systems. The goal of this thesis is to determine if the United States is undergoing a transformation into its seventh party system and if this transformation was triggered by the election of Donald Trump in 2016. An exploration of party platforms, poll numbers, public statements by party leaders will be used to ascertain whether a shift is occurring, or even on the horizon.

In order to understand the existing political landscape, a historical examination of previous party systems will be done to see if there are any indicators during aforementioned shifts that can be applied presently to determine if the United States is currently undergoing a shift. An assessment of modifications in the party platforms to help uncover political ideology within each political party will be accomplished.

Public opinion of both the voting populace and leadership will be evaluated to track transformations occurring on both fronts. To evaluate changes in the general population, an examination of polling numbers associated to party affiliation as well as demographic information will be utilized. Public statements by party leaders will be used for evaluation to also track changes. Statements could come from speeches, interviews or other writings that illustrate leadership ideology on issues that are important in holding political parties together.

Frontispiece



Dick Campbell, "Photo of Joshua Hiatt during his campaign for State House Representative," 2018, Bangor, Maine.

Author's Biographical Sketch

A graduate from the University of Maine in Secondary Social Studies education, has been a teacher for fifteen years. However, beyond the classroom, Joshua has a number of passions, that have carved out a significant part of his life. Music has been one of his largest passions, and has been writing, recording, performing, and producing music since 2001. He has played in a number of bands that have played around New England and hopes one day to have a professional studio in his own home.

One of Joshua's greatest passions is to be involved in local and state politics. Joshua has run for the office of state representative twice and has been a leader in the Republican party in Maine as a county chair, and as a member of the state of Maine's GOP executive committee for four years. His passion in politics is a dedication to bringing people and parties together, despite their differences.

Joshua loves his family, and enjoys going on adventures with them including camping, Disney, and the beach. He is an active member at his local church, which has played a vital role in his development as a person.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this first to my mother Elizabeth Hiatt. She went to every baseball game, concert or any event growing up. She continually supported me and always believed that I could do great things.

I would like to dedicate this to my father, Wesley Hiatt, who passed 3 years ago, and imparted me with a love for intellectual pursuits. He raised me on classic American literature, showed me it was okay for men to cry, and encouraged me in everything I have ever done.

I would like to dedicate to my older brother, Sean Hiatt, who always pushed me in everything we did. He wouldn't let me win too frequently and made sure that I was tough enough to survive the world. He also imparted me with a passion for music, that is a cornerstone in my life.

I would like to dedicate to my older sister, Sarah Hiatt, who has always been my biggest fan, and has counseled me through several tough personal crisis. She imparts a compassion for people that I will always carry with me.

I would like to dedicate this to my younger brother John Hiatt, who helped develop my interest in the American political system, and I probably would not be writing on this subject if it was not for him.

I would like to dedicate this to my kids, Juliette, Scareltt and Dorothy. They continually teach me the importance of living life with excitement. They bring me great joy, and a remembrance of not to allow life to get too serious, but to have some fun.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife. The woman who has put up with countless hours of reading, writing, and stressing. The woman who is always there for me no matter what. The woman who challenges me to be a better person, and who is kind and generous to all, I love you.

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I first would like to acknowledge all of the people of Maine involved in Maine politics, who challenged me, helped me, taught me, and walked with me through victories and defeats. It is this special group of people that helped foster my interest in politics and certainly has had an impact on the writing of this thesis.

I would like to acknowledge professor, Mark Brewer, from the University of Maine, whose Political Parties and Elections class, served as a foundation for my knowledge of party systems and influenced the writing of this thesis.

I would like to acknowledge all of the wonderful professors I have had during my studies at the Harvard Extension School. They have pushed me in all of my classes. They have imparted me with wisdom on countless areas of life. I feel a great amount of gratitude to the professors, which has helped grow intellectually and as a person.

I would like to knowledge the great guidance I received from my thesis proposal advisor, Michael Minor, for preparing me properly for my thesis, making it a smooth transition into the writing process.

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Definition of Terms

Blue Dog: Members of the Democratic Party viewed as being center-right. Many of the Blue Dogs subscribe to many Democratic beliefs pre-1980; in particular, many of the Blue Dog Democrats are pro-life. However, a blue dog could be fiscally conservative and pro-choice but not typically a strong advocate for federally funded abortions.

Conservative Democrats: Democrats who hold some conservative views that do not align with the party platform. For instance, many Conservative Democrats may have some traditional social viewpoints but economically be more inclined to favor spending on safety net programs

Conservative Republican: Republicans who hold strict free-market capital ideas and have traditional views on marriage and are pro-life regarding abortion.

Convention: Each political party has a large meeting every presidential year in the summer. During this meeting, they nominate their candidate for the Presidential Election, and delegates vote on a new party platform.

Educational Divide: This is a term that refers to how voting patterns can align with the educational background of the voter. For example, the amount of education for Trump in 2016 was less than those who voted for Hillary Clinton.

Federalist Papers: It is a collection of essays written by some of the founding fathers, including Alexander Hamilton and James Madison. In the context of this research, the essay referred to the pitfalls of political parties and warned against them.

Globalists: These individuals can be in either party. Using this term will refer to individuals who believe in free trade, multinational support institutions, believe in the global citizenry and look to create uniform policies globally.

GOP: This is an old acronym for the Republican Party. It stands for the Grand Old Party.

H1B Visa: This Visa helps employ temporary foreign workers in specialty jobs.

Liberal Democrats: These are Democrats that ascribe to most of the Democratic Party platform.

Liberal Republican: Liberal Republicans are similar in nature to conservative Democrats in that the issues they are most likely to be different than other Republicans are in social issues.

Nationalists: Individuals who believe in maintaining a national identity based upon the culture of the dominant class. They are usually opposed to free trade and have strong preferences for products made at home.

Paleoconservatives: Paleoconservatives are nationalists who also are strong advocates for Christian ethics and regionalism.

Party Platforms: These are the documents that lay out each political party's core principles. The platform's contents are redefined every four years and are voted on by delegates from all 50 states.

Party Systems: Party systems are the beliefs and principles that each party is defined by over a long span of time. Party systems change periodically as society changes. There have been six-party systems throughout American political history.

Populist: Populists are people who make strong appeals to “ordinary” people in a country. Ordinary can be defined as people from the lower class to the lower middle class. They appeal to the concept that elitist politicians disregard their ideas and concerns who cater to traditionally influential groups.

Chapter I

Introduction

“Liberty is to faction, what air is to fire, an aliment, without which it instantly expires. But it could not be a less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourish faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.”¹

– James Madison

Background

Over the past 200+ years, we have seen dramatic shifts in political party systems. When The United States was created, there were no identified political parties, but political parties emerged as predicted in the Federalist Papers.² We have had six party systems since the first parties appeared at the turn of the 18th century. A party system is a way to describe the voting patterns and foundational principles of each political party in a democratic society. Each political party aligns itself behind a multitude of issues, and this conglomeration of issues defines the current party system. It is hard to predict if parties will shift and when.³ Because of the inevitability of political party shifts, it is essential to navigate our current system. Political parties, in essence, become collective sales agents

¹ James Madison, “Federalist Papers No. 10 (1787),” Bill of Rights Institute, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/primary-sources/federalist-no-10>.

² Madison, Federalist Papers No. 10

³ Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*, Seventh edition, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 20 – 21.

that pitch the populous policies driven by the changing societal norms.⁴ As these shifts occur, several catalysts always usher in a new party system. There are several questions that need to be answered regarding whether the United States is experiencing a new party shift. First, if we are experiencing a party system shift, when did we officially enter into a new party system. Did the election of Donald Trump in 2016 and his subsequent loss in 2020 signify the starting point of the new system. As many political analysts noted throughout his ascent, he did not fit the mold of a traditional mainstream Republican, which may be one indication that if we are not currently in a shift, we are at least going in that direction. Secondly, if a shift has transpired, what does this mean for the future of our political system.

Political scientists have identified six different two-party systems in the United States. The first occurred at the end of George Washington's presidency, in which two factions emerged predicated on the authority of the federal government: The Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. After the War of 1812 with Great Britain, America experienced a brief period of a dominant-party system that quickly emerged into the second party system with the ascension of the Whig party.⁵ This party-system's main cleavage point was the role of expansion and again challenged collective ownership by the states. As the Civil War approached, the divide between the industrial free North and the rural slave-owning South was the defining characteristic of the second party-system. The third party-system established our current two parties: Republican and Democrat. At the turn of the 19th Century, progressive policies and immigration became one of the

⁴ Russell J. Dalton. *Political Realignment: Economics, Culture, and Electoral Change*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 12 -14.

⁵ Mark D.Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel. 2016. *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*, Seventh edition, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield), 28-29.

defining themes of the fourth-party system. In 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected, and due to the Great Depression, he initiated a voluminous number of social programs.⁶ This concern generated a new divide between the Republican and Democratic parties. Lastly, the sixth party-system appeared to be multi-faceted in its new separation between the two major parties. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 initiated the transformation but was combined with emerging social issues commencing with the landmark Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade*. It is considerably easier to retroactively look back and attribute a party-system to previous eras, but it has been almost sixty years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964.⁷

Even though the current America political system has been affected by the rise of Trump in the Republican party, and there are some indications that we may be moving closer to a party-system shift, it appears that we are still operating under the sixth party-system. Movement in the Republican Party has been much more substantial than that within the Democratic Party, and if changes continue to trend it could push the Democratic Party to also respond and bring us into a party shift. Previous shifts have occurred or have been predicated mostly by the movement of one party, and it appears that the rise of the populist right lead by Trump, could have the potential to usher such a change. My thesis is based on a couple of factors. For decades, Republicans have supported low taxes, free trade, and military interventionism, but these positions are now losing traction within the Republican Party. Many of the key Republicans in the pre-Trump era, such as Mitch McConnell and John Thune, are still viable and significantly

⁶ Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*, Seventh edition, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 41.

⁷ Brewer and Maisel., *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*, 44-47.

influence the party and still hold many of the traditional positions from the sixth party-system. Many of the establishment Republicans are still the key decision makers as we have not seen a complete transformation. There will always be resistance to change, and those in control will try to maintain power, but of course, a shift will be needed in holding power. Those in power will always be looking for new constituencies because shifts are guided mostly by the need for leadership to increase their advantage in elections. The social issues during the 2020 election illustrated its command, and corporations became more associated with the Democratic Party. As Republicans attempted to distance themselves from the Black Lives Matter Movement, and the subsequent Defund the Police movement, corporations such as Coke, Nike, NBA, etc. became vocal advocates, championing the cause for equality.⁸

The thesis will be tested by analyzing events surrounding previous party shifts to look at events, laws, or other circumstances surrounding the shifts to give some historical backdrop. A review of the political party platforms from 1960 to 2020 to look at language changes and see if changes began to break from previous platforms over the past two conventions is essential. Issues that will be reviewed include platform discussion on education, immigration, international trade, and approach to foreign intervention. An investigation of to determine if voting patterns are changing will be done. Are more people aligning as an independent based upon information gathered on voting patterns? Do people do not feel like they fit in their party anymore but are not ready to jump to the other party. It will also be essential to look at prominent figures in each party. Is there a significant number of former party leaders or prominent politicians who have changed

⁸ “Black Lives Matter Themed Ads See Success,” *Ace Metrix*, last modified December 14, 2020, <https://www.acemetrix.com/insights/blog/black-lives-matter-themed-ads-see-success/>.

parties or have publicly aligned with the opposing party? It will be essential to look at statistics that display demographic alterations within the party from gender, race, ethnicity, education level, etc. Each demographic is not homogeneous but can be an indicator of transformation. All these angles of interest will be important to tackle because it will give us a holistic picture of the different components that drive political party ideology. If we witness significant movement in opinion polls, leadership's stances, party platforms and demographic changes, these variations will be an indication of a party shift.

If political parties are in the process of a shift what is happening to the dynamics of a party will also appear to shift. Inner-party conflict increases as factions within each party aiming to shape them in their preferred image. Democrats and Republicans are both struggling with the globalist/nationalist debate.⁹ For example, in the Republican Party, one of the hot topics between globalist Republicans and America First Republicans is the issuance of H1B visas. Democrats and Republicans are struggling with the influence of technology and the government's role/responsibilities in addressing these issues. Democrats and Republicans are both struggling with concepts of individual liberty verses. collectivism. We see these fundamental concepts that each party cannot collectively agree on.¹⁰ In the Democratic Party, there is significant debate on using protective tariffs. Even though it was under the Clinton administration, we saw the groundbreaking NAFTA trade deal, but more Republicans supported that deal, and many

⁹ Prior to the presidency of Donald Trump, protectionist tariffs were seen as being “unconservative” and a hinderance to the free market. Many individuals from the Democratic Party, primarily those who are strong advocates for unions, have supported tariffs. Within both parties we have seen a bit of a shift.

¹⁰ Ray Kiely, “Locating Trump: Paleoconservatism, Neoliberalism, and Anti-Globalization,” *Socialist Register* 55(2018): 126-149.

Democratic Labor Union supporters were in opposition. There are issues on both sides of the aisle, such as abortion, that lean more towards one party, which illustrate how social issues have been a large driver of the sixth party-system. Historically, the biggest driver in each party-system hinged upon economic issues. However, as there has been some modification in these areas, it is evident that further change will be required to generate an official declaration of a party shift.

When a shift does occur, it will be paramount that all key players, including the voters, begin to conceptualize this shift. Considering that the United States is predominately a two-party system, the variance within each party does not have clean cleavages in many areas. Still, each party's broader areas of consensus will need to be defined. Of course, the parties will utilize this information for future elections and policymaking to maintain control of a large segment of the population. There needs to be parity for the party-system to function; however, each party desires to eliminate this parity to influence overall policy-making decisions. This dominance is achieved by understanding the electorate and gaining various demographics. The dance between the voters and the party is responsive to economic, social, and environmental factors. Both parties and the voters adapt in a manner akin to the “invisible hand” proposed by Adam Smith regarding what moves market prices.¹¹ Parties want to know the demand for a particular product, while the electorate will be looking to acquire the most satisfactory system for themselves.

¹¹ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, edited by Sálvio M. Soares, (London, Metlibri, 2007), 349–50, https://www.ibiblio.org/ml/libri/s/SmithA_WealthNations_p.pdf

Literature Review

Since the modern emergence of democracy in the 18th century, people have organized themselves into factions to gain more significant influence in policy decisions. These allegiances are not static and will periodically shift depending on economic, societal, and international circumstances. The number of fragmentations in which alignment occurs can vary, and the study of these fragmentations emerged as European scholars began to examine the American experiment in democracy.¹² Some of the various party systems include: a one-party system, a dominant party system, a two-party system, a multi-party system, and a non-party system.¹³ The American political system has effectively been a two-party system since the election of John Adams in 1796. There is currently a limited consensus that throughout the past 200+ years, America has moved through six different two-party systems.

In the 2003 book *Diverging Parties*, the authors detail the shifts in demographics regionally and how this shift, in conjunction with social issues, spurred the 6th realignment in party systems.¹⁴ Social issues championed by the religious right as Ronald Reagan emerged victorious in 1980 spearheaded this transformation. However, one notion espoused was that the 6th system was still realigning, and the realignment was close to completion. They argued the shift will take time to complete due to the number of components that need to transform for the alignment to be completed. For example, the political party leaders, voters, and party platforms all must take shape in a new direction.

¹² Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, “Cleavage Theory Meets Europe's Crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the Transnational Cleavage”. *Journal of European Public Policy* 25 (2018): 109–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310279>.

¹³ “Party System,” *Wikipedia*, July 8, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_system.

¹⁴ Jefferey M. Stonecash, Mark D. Brewer, Mack Mariani, . *Diverging parties: social change, realignment, and party polarization*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2003), xiii – ix, 27 82-83.

As with change in all areas of life, people are resistant to it, and with party shifts we are dealing with people. The authors do not spend too much time foreshadowing when exactly the shift would be complete, or how long it potentially would last once completed, but that the system at the time was almost completed.¹⁵

In the book *The American Political Party System*, Michael Lemay discusses the uniqueness of Donald Trump's candidacy and his election in 2016. Lemay argues but does not conclusively state that a shift has occurred in the political system, but Trump attacked the establishment Republicans, particularly the party elites. As is customary in politics, the party leaders have significant influence over platforms and the party's direction.¹⁶ For example, several of the Republican Party darlings, including the Bush dynasty, were ravaged consistently by Trump's aggressive ad hominem attacks, which left many of the traditional leaders in the party ineffectual in garnering widespread support from the rank-and-file Republicans across America.

Author Alan Ware sees today's American political system as more stable than its predecessors. He argues that flexibility in the current design allows "a conservative Democratic state legislator from Oklahoma to remain in the same party as a liberal legislator in the Massachusetts state assembly." Because both the Republican and Democratic Parties offer such big tents, there is little incentive to leave a party. The big tent philosophy is undoubtedly a strength of the two-party system, which keeps each successive party system from being too volatile. Ware does not address that parties may

¹⁵ Jefferey M. Stonecash, Mark D. Brewer, Mack Mariani, *Diverging parties : social change, realignment, and party polarization*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2003), 120 – 129.

¹⁶ Michael C. Lemay, *The American Political Party System: A Reference Handbook*. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2017), 47, 73-34, 172.

have some shifting ideas but merely a continuance of a two-party system.¹⁷ However, even though Ware does not discuss or foreshadow a party shift, his discussion of the variance within each party does open the possibility for passionate leaders or voters to push for more disciplined stances and leverage power. The variance illustrates that people are looking for a party to make their home.

Lee Drutman, author of the book *Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop: the case for Multi-Party Democracy in America*, argues that we have already experienced an inner-party shift but not a complete system change. After the 2000 presidential election, he stated that we went from a four-party system (Liberal Democrats, Conservative Democrats, Conservative Republicans, and Liberal Republicans) to more centralized political parties. Although his breakdown into two parties is more theoretical, it does exemplify a trend that could be the root of the next party shift.¹⁸ If parties are already divided into multiple segments, this sets up an opportunity for leaders, voters, and others to try and reconsolidate parties to gain greater influence over issues they are passionate about. Centralization or, the attempt of centralization of power is part of the nature of political parties.

The effect of minor parties on Party alignment is indirectly discussed by Richard Davis in *Beyond Donkeys and Elephants*. Davis states that when a political party is on the ropes, which many have argued about the Republican Party in 2008 and then again in 2018, it will be a natural course to absorb the ideology of a minor party. This tendency is particularly relevant as we have seen a rise in the influence of the Libertarian Party on the

¹⁷ A. Ware, *Political Conflict in America*. 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US: Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 103, 107 -111.

¹⁸ Lee Drutman, *Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop: The Case for Multiparty Democracy in America*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 83-104.

Republican Party.¹⁹ Much of this influence has been due to the lack of third-party electability, many Libertarians or Libertarian leaning individuals have found a home in the Republican Party due to their fiscal ideology. The Republican Party has become increasingly non-interventionist, and this is partly due to the influx of Libertarian leaning Republicans such as Rand Paul and Thomas Massie from Kentucky. Recently about one-quarter of House Republicans failed to vote for an aid package to support Ukraine in their defense against the Russian invasion.²⁰ Libertarian influence can be seen as well in shifting opinions on the legalization of marijuana in the Republican Party, although this would not be owed exclusively due to the Libertarian influence, but also a natural extension of the preference of voters in the states in which laws have been passed to legalize.

One of the largest influences on an individual's voting habits and their ideology is and person's educational background. Shifting political party alignment will therefore be also influenced by the educational composition of America. The diploma divide is evident during the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections and is explored in Mark Brewer's article "Trump Knows Best: Donald Trump's Rejection of Expertise and the 2020 Presidential Election." The strong populist movement that Trump carried over the past five years shows the movement of an uneducated populace into the Republican Party and vice versa into the Democratic Party. If the dramatic shift continues or sustains, it could be a significant factor in a brand-new party system. Since uneducated individuals make

¹⁹ Richard Davis Davis, *Beyond Donkeys and Elephants: Minor Political Parties in Contemporary American Politics*. (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2020), 10-11, Project Muse.

²⁰ Katherine Fung, "Full List of Republicans Who Have Always Voted against Ukraine Aid," *Newsweek*, May 13, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/full-list-republicans-who-have-always-voted-against-ukraine-aid-1706463>.

less money, economic and populist policies can strongly influence party systems. Brewer pointed to the educational level as a defining factor in the growing shift in both political parties and asserted that Trump’s populist message catered to the uneducated working class. He stated that “Their struggles had been exacerbated by both the Great Recession and the ever-increasing pace of globalization. Trump appealed to non-college-educated whites on economic grounds early and often throughout the campaign, promising to look out for their interests by ending bad trade deals and bringing manufacturing jobs back to the United States.”²¹ Manufacturing jobs historically in the United States did not require a college education, so the lure of new, blue-collar jobs, is an enticing proposition to those without a degree.

A few of the only scholars that begin to argue that we are potentially in a new party system are Mark Brewer and Sandy Maisel in the most recent and ninth edition of their book *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*. This book has been a staple in many undergraduate programs. It gives an in-depth look at the electoral process and outlines the parameters of all the previous party systems.²² Like many others, and in line with Brewer’s Article “Trump Knows Best,” the authors discuss the influence of Donald Trump on the Republican Party and how that has affected the alignment of those in the Republican Party in the Democratic Party as well. They do not give any specifics as to why some believe that a new party system is emerging, but say that it is merely

²¹ Brewer, Mark D, “Trump Knows Best: Donald Trump’s Rejection of Expertise and the 2020 Presidential Election” *Society* 57 (2020): 657–61, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-020-00544-w>.

²² Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*. Seventh edition. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020)

speculative at this point, and that due to Trump being such an anomaly, it will be worth exploration.²³

Reason for Evaluation

Political scientists point to critical events and elections initiating change as each party-system materializes. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 illustrates a restructuring event. Experts in the electoral process were perplexed by Trump's victory precipitating all the talking heads to dive deeper into the American electorate. When he announced his candidacy for president in the Summer of 2015, pundits far and wide mocked his chances of winning, demonstrating that the experts did not fully understand how the electorate was changing. A *New York Times* article on June 15th of, 2015 broke down his candidacy and classified the reasons why Trump would win; the author proclaims, "We are stumped. And we really tried."²⁴ Experts being wrong is certainly nothing out of the ordinary regarding the social sciences; President Harry S Truman can attest to that; however, the widespread confusion by so many close to the pulse of electoral politics the anomalous nature of his victory. Karl Rove, the former senior advisor to George W. Bush, opined in an editorial that "He could win the primaries but would get creamed in the presidential election," which attests to the cross-party viewpoint on the legitimacy of Trump's presidential candidacy.²⁵ This surprise in

²³ Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: the Electoral Process*. Seventh edition. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 42.

²⁴ Maggie Haberman, "What Donald Trump Would Need to Do to Win," *New York Times*, June 16, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/16/us/elections/donald-trump.html>.

²⁵ Karl Rove, "Trump Is the Democrats' Dream Nominee," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 9, 2015, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-is-the-democrats-dream-nominee-1449704915>.

nomination of Trump gives us a window into how establishment leaders were unable to understand how the electorate was shifting.

Republicans during the sixth party system had been in staunch opposition to tariffs and government spending (at least in theory). They had been extraordinarily interventionist as neoconservatives became the dominant block within the party. This dominance within the party by neoconservatives began approximately in the mid 1990s after emerging in the 1970s.²⁶ However, at the onset of his campaign, Trump challenged the foundations of the Republican Party in which he was seeking the nomination.

Universal Health Care has long been a policy idea bemoaned by Republicans; Trump, early in his campaign, supported UHC publicly and continued to grow his sizable lead over other Republicans in the primary. Trump bemoaned insurance companies in a way no serious conservative candidate had done by stating “the insurance companies are making a fortune because they have control of the politicians.”²⁷ Republican and Democrat analysts proclaimed that his statement would finally torpedo his candidacy, but that never came to pass. Chuck Todd from NBC’s Meet the Press pronounced Trump “has nowhere to go but down” regarding problematic statements on health care, gun control, and abortion.²⁸ Which does not necessarily prove that a political party shift has occurred or is beginning to occur, but such an anomaly creates the environment to begin to question if it has.

²⁶ Max Fisher, “Twilight of the Neoconservatives,” *Vox*, March 10, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/10/11189350/twilight-of-the-neoconservatives>.

²⁷ Andrew Ross Sorkin, “A Company Backs a Cause. It Funds a Politician Who Doesn’t. What Gives?,” *New York Times*, July 21, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/business/dealbook/corporate-political-donations.html>.

²⁸ Andrew Kirell, “Could These Be the Issues to Take down Donald Trump?,” *Mediaite*, July 9, 2015, <https://www.mediaite.com/online/could-these-be-the-issues-to-take-down-donald-trump/>.

Moreover, Donald Trump, during his presidency, made several moves regarding creating protectionist-style tariffs that drew a significant amount of ire from the establishment leaders yet had no effect on his popularity within the “new” Republican Party. The disdain for tariffs did not produce any public admonition from party leaders toward President Trump due to the president's popularity within the party; this type of confrontation never occurred, making protectionism the default stance within the Republican Party. Although organization such as the Reagan Foundation a leader in the communication of conservative values aligned with the sixth-party system, have declared that the Republican Party is still the party of free trade, putting in question whether Trump protectionism was here to stay.²⁹ Since FDR, Labor Unions have been a crucial voting block for the Democrats and have been staunch opponents of free trade agreements, which Trump has decided to crossover into stances typically taken by Democrats. Simply put, “Voters who get hurt from the high protection are against such a tariff platform and respond by casting their ballots in favor of the party’s political rivals.”³⁰ Whether or not Trump calculated that there could be significant gains in voting base by catering to groups that have perceived free trade as a detriment to their economic standing, he made it a position that could be proclaimed safely on the right side of the aisle.

The election of Trump was not the only ingredient in catapulting Americans into a new party system. COVID-19’s effects on our society are amalgamated into every aspect of our lives. As alternative infrastructure methods were needed to carry out the plethora

²⁹ Phil Levy, “Is the GOP Still the Party of Free Trade?,” The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute. Accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/reagan-institute/publications/is-the-gop-still-the-party-of-free-trade>

³⁰ Miaojie YuYu, “Trade Protectionism and Electoral Outcome” *The Cato Journal* 29 (3): 523–57

of societal functions, it highlighted the new reliance on big tech. Companies such as Facebook, Twitter, Amazon, etc., showed their value in our lives as Americans attempted to stay close while being socially distanced. The stereotypical Republican in the early 2000s would demonstrate enormous support for technology and significant corporate autonomy. However, as these organizations began to take stronger stances in the arena of social issues, the relationship between Republicans and corporate America became strained. Large companies such as Coca-Cola, Major League Baseball, Delta, and others began to cater toward principles more closely aligned with the Democratic Party Platform. One was the promotion of the Black Lives Matter movement during the Summer of 2020. MLB in response to voting changes in Georgia decided to move its All-Star game from Georgia in 2021 to the State of Colorado.³¹ This shift is not necessarily due to a desire to bolster the Democratic Party but primarily due to the interest of their consumers.³² Due to our increased social media usage, this messaging was spread far and wide. As Professor Mark Brewer pointed out, the diploma divide was growing. Because of this, corporations understood that they needed to accommodate those with greater education because that is where the money originated.

Although the pharmaceutical industry would also be under the category of big business and historically friendly with Republicans, it is crucial to address this shift separately. In recent years however, Republicans have begun aversive to supporting the industry and even at times demonizing its purpose. Under Ronald Reagan, companies

³¹ James Wagner, "Activism Was Unusual for Baseball, but Not for Sports," *New York Times*, April 3, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/03/sports/baseball/all-star-georgia-voting-law.html>.

³² Terry Nguyen, "After Georgia, Companies Are Banding Together to Condemn Restrictive Voting Laws," *Vox*, April 5, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2021/4/5/22368566/corporate-response-georgia-sb202>.

that manufactured vaccines were given the ability to create and distribute without the liability if injuries were to occur from a dose given.³³ Most of the lukewarm relationship the Democrats previously had with large pharmaceutical companies was the desire to push cheaper forms of medication. “One of the clouds on Big Pharma's horizon is the prospect that the new Democratic regime will act to restrain drug prices,” a writer for the *Insider Business Daily* sounded off.³⁴ Vaccinations are at the heart of this divide as the topic of mandatory vaccinations accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic but have its roots in the debate on the HPV vaccine.³⁵ Republican governor Rick Scott attempted to make Gardasil, an HPV vaccine, mandatory for girls entering sixth grade, which became a tipping point as people within his party moved away from compulsory vaccines, bringing the country to the current vaccine battle. Trump and many Republicans politicized the pandemic protocols, Republicans became anti-government intervention, while Democrats assumed the position of government intervention to keep Americans safe.

Certainly, a party shift does not happen overnight, and one person's election cannot be the cause of an entire party shift, however, events and elections can be catalysts to mobilize a movement that was already happening. Trump, a sometimes-larger-than-life figure, lives up to that legacy with the effect he has had on reshaping the American political system. Just as World War I and the infamous Spanish Influenza eventually paved the way for the emergence of how people viewed the role of government, the most

³³ “Text - H.R.5546 - 99th Congress (1985-1986): National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986” Accessed April 12, 2022, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/99th-congress/house-bill/5546/text>

³⁴ Peter Benesh “Gains By Democrats Put Pharma On Edge,” *Investor's Business Daily*, November 17, 2008.

³⁵ “Safe Sex' for the Whole Nation: Why Mandating the HPV Vaccine Is Not a Good idea,” *Christianity Today* 51, no.4 (April 2007): 26.

recent pandemic has put Americans in the same position. Due to the unexpected nature of Trump, in the most prominent, and difficult positions to attain, it is essential to reflect on how it occurred and if there are major systemic changes in the American political party system. If we have not shifted into a seventh system, that would mean the sixth party-system would be nearly double the average of all the previous systems in American history. Although nothing is entirely inevitable, based upon the political climate, the election of Trump and the time in which we have hovered in the sixth-party system warrants an attempt to uncover out how close we are getting towards a different party system.

Research Methods and Limitations

Because of the expansive ramifications, deciphering changes in the political alignments is complicated. Before looking at this most recent party system shift, the first step is to analyze previous party shifts to look at events, laws, or other circumstances surrounding the shifts to give some historical backdrop and potentially see similarities. Each shift will have unique circumstances leading to changes; however, it will be invaluable to look at potential threads that tie previous party system movements.

Although understanding whether the American political system is going through a shift will be the goal of this research, it will be essential to review some potential reasons as to how we have arrived at this place. One of the most influential pieces to the reasons why an individual thinks or votes in a particular pattern is one's educational background. First a brief inspection of the development of the American educational system will be done to see if any systemic changes have occurred that may have perpetuated a shift towards a political party based upon an individual's educational experience. An

investigation of how voters view key issues that appear to be shifting and how these viewpoints connect to their education background. Lastly, we will survey how the viewpoints on each particular issue have changed based upon the voter's educational background.

Political parties reevaluate their beliefs and establish their party platforms every presidential election year. The first party platforms began in 1832 but became a regular occurrence in the 1840 election.³⁶ After a historical analysis of party system transitions, I will look at the party platforms since the sixth party system, tracking changes in the language since 1960.³⁷ Changes in how each respective party discuss or supports various issues every four years. There will be some issues in using these platforms to look for current changes. For example, if one an earlier platform illustrates support for free trade policies, but then in later version of the same party's platform, there is a shift towards opposition of free trade, or maybe a less staunch stance, this would illustrate a shift in the party's ideology. Since the party system transformation that I am hypothesizing is occurring is in process. Indeed, statewide party platforms should be viewed to see trends occurring as the next national party platform will not be completed until 2024.

Another element that will illustrate a shift in party alignment will be voting patterns. Even though minority groups, gender groups, socioeconomic status, and education groups may not vote homogeneously, changes in voting patterns within these groups can illustrate shifting voting patterns. Other voting patterns will also need to be reviewed to get a more holistic view. An analysis of which issues are most important to

³⁶ "National Party Platforms, 1832–1932." CQ Press. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre1932011300>.

³⁷ James F. Ward, "Toward a Sixth Party System? Partisanship and Political Development" *The Western Political Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (1973): 385–413, <https://doi.org/10.2307/446428>.

members of each political party and a comparison of existing platforms will need to be completed by reviewing public opinion surveys. One difficulty in culling through the number of surveys and opinion polls will be finding consistent questioning. As we have seen in the previous two elections, polling data has become increasingly difficult to conclude. However, by utilizing the polling data available and it will be important to see if there is any significant sustained change in how particular minority groups are voting or are in agreement with the current political parties.

One of the most striking elements of the current political environment is the continued infighting between party leaders in public. In the Democratic party, we constantly see disagreement between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and progressive leaders such as Alexandria Ocasio Cortez.³⁸ In the Republican Party, the battle between Trump and the establishment leaders like Mitt Romney illustrates a growing tension regarding the party's direction.³⁹ Even though party moderates like Susan Collins and Joe Manchin have always found resistance within their party, attacks have certainly increased, making it harder for them to remain in the graces of the voters in their party.⁴⁰ An evaluation of public statements from party leaders that indicate shifting alliances will be executed. The difficulty in parsing through public comments is two-fold. First, I will need to narrow down the list of leaders I will be tracking, and the criteria I will choose to track will be challenging to establish. Secondly, I will need to select a limited number of

³⁸ Susan Page, "Inside Nancy Pelosi's War with AOC and the Squad," *POLITICO*, April 30, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/04/15/nancy-pelosi-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-481704>

³⁹ David Jackson, "Romney Blasts Trump as a 'Fraud' Clinton Would Beat," *USA Today*, March 3, 2016. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2016/03/03/mitt-romney-donald-trump-hillary-clinton-republican-party/81256620/>.

⁴⁰ "Crossing Lines, Manchin Endorses Murkowski's Senate Campaign," *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media, February 6, 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/lisa-murkowski-donald-trump-joe-biden-alaska-senate-b2008856.html>.

sources, as some sources may be too biased, and the number of available sources would be too time-consuming to go through.

Ultimately, in order to decipher whether we have entered into a new party-system and not just a slight alteration of the previous system we will be looking at specific changes to have occurred or are currently occurring. If we see upon discovery that in regard to demographics that the composition of each party is trending continually in the direction of change of the composition that will be the first indicator. This change does not have to be a complete transformation of any demographic, but the trend should be continuous over the past ten years. Another indicator that will indicate a system change will a change in how members of each respective party have changed in their opinions on at least five key political issues. The change should be a shift of at least ten percent or more to be considered transformation and it should have been trending for at least two presidential cycles. Upon analysis of party platforms over the past forty years, language should mirror the changes we have seen in public opinion polls on key political issues by members of their respective parties. Lastly, there must be record of leaders of their respective parties that are using language publicly to pursue and push policy that is contrarian to the established norms of their respective parties.

Previous party-system shifts have varied on the indicators that allowed political analyst to declare a political shift has occurred. During the transition from the first party-system to the second party-system the marker of separation was quite clear. When the Federalist-Party dissolved shortly before the 1820 Presidential Election, there was very little doubt that a party shift had occurred. So, the dissolution of a political party certainly can be an indicator of a political party shift. Due to the power vacuum created by the

dissolution, the Whig Party, which arose entirely as an opposition to the election of Andrew Jackson. Just like the first party shift, the largest indicator, that America was undergoing a second system shift was the dissolution of the Whig party. This dissolution was the result that regional differences due to the emerging debate over slavery, was a stronger than differences regarding protective tariffs, building infrastructure or having a national bank, which were large disagreements between the Whigs and Jacksonian Democrats.⁴¹

The evolution into the fourth party-system is less clear than the emergence of both the second and third party-systems. After the emergence of the Republican Party, due to regional differences, both major political parties were immersed in the idea of expanding industry and using the influence of the federal government. However, the large shift came within the Democratic Parties desire to cater to rural Southern and Western farmers, bucking the universal desire to grow urban centers. The third party-system, which some may argue as the most competitive electoral eras, persuaded many Democrats to find new issues or to take up a stronger stance protecting farmers. However, in this shift, there was very little movement in the platforms of the Republican Party and was mostly created by shifts in philosophy of the Democratic Party. Due to the limited scope of each party platform, and the mostly non-existent polling data, the greatest indicator of shift was hinged upon the newly strengthened support of farmers and the promotion of the silver standard.⁴²

⁴¹ Harry L. Watson, "Democrats and Whigs," In *The Oxford Handbook of American Political History*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020), 65 – 76, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199341788.013.2>.

⁴² Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 38; "Democratic Party Platform," 1896: The Silver Democratic Platform, Accessed June 4, 2023, <http://projects.vassar.edu/1896/chicagoplatform.html>.

After about thirty years of the third party-system, and Republican dominance during that time, the Great Depression hit, once again transforming the party-system. Now both parties, due to the severity of the Great Depression, felt the need to take some sort of governmental intervention to combat the growing crisis. However, just as the Democrats took the lead in ushering in the third party-system, they began to put in place the most transformative period in how the United States government operated. During this Shift, one of the largest indicators of a shift in philosophy, was the countless number of legislations that was put forth by FDR and the rest of the Democratic Party.⁴³ Another indicator of change was that for the first time since African Americans had acquire the right to vote, they began the initial process of exodus out of the Republican Party. This migration was also true of many other minorities at the time including other ethnic Americans, Jews, and Roman Catholics. The new conglomeration that was making up the Democratic Party was referred to as the New Deal Coalition. Although it was not as clear of a shift as a dissolution of a party system, the dramatic change in legislative patterns coupled with the remarkable change in demographics were strong indicators that a party shift had occurred.

Indicators of a shift to the sixth party system began in the 1960s due to a push towards backing civil rights legislation. The emergence of social issues such as the equal rights amendment, abortion and protections for the gay and lesbian community however became the catalyst for a shift in party systems. The social issue rises in the political sphere in the 1960s into the 1970s influenced dramatics shifts in who was voting, not necessarily a shift in the previous issues such as foreign policy, trade, taxation, education,

⁴³ “The New Deal Realignment,” ICPSR, accessed February 2, 2023, <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/pages/instructors/setups/notes/new-deal.html>.

and other issues that had maintained steadfast throughout this transition. The largest indicator of shift was present in the southern Democratic stronghold transforming into a force for the new religious right.⁴⁴ While this was occurring, we saw an equally transformative period happening to the northern Republican monopoly that had been prominent during the entire fifth party-system.

There are several challenges that make pinpointing a shift in party system in this modern era compared to some of the previous shifts. Up until the sixth party system, the breadth of issues that encompassed each party system, was much more limited, and therefore in this day in age, there are many more issues that are needed to track. A one issue change, today, would most likely not have the ability to make a complete party shift as with the issue of slavery for the emergence of the third-party system or the focus on rural farmers by the Democrats ushering in the fourth party-system. It is also much easier to identify a shift when a political party dissolves and new ones emerged. In essence, we can certainly look to previous shifts, to look for similar indicators to give us a clue as to when a shift has officially occurred, but with the increasing complexity of each current major political party, a more nuanced analysis is needed. The last shift was mostly due to the emergence of new issues that were not previously political, while previous issues stayed static. It would probably be prudent to use the most recent party shifts to glean information from rather than the initial shifts, to give us clarity on a whether a wholesale shift is occurring.

⁴⁴ Jerome Himmelstein, *To The Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), 97-98, <https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft5h4nb372&chunk.id=d0e1651&toc.depth=1&brand=ucpress>

Chapter II.

The Growing Educational Divide

To the extent that we are all educated and informed, we will be more equipped to deal with the gut issues that tend to divide us⁴⁵

- Caroline Kennedy

The Education Boom

There are approximately five thousand colleges and universities generously sprinkled throughout the United States.⁴⁶ The ratification of the U.S. Constitution occurred right as the Industrial Revolution was gaining steam, placing the nation's birth in a globally transformative period. As dramatic changes occurred across its history, there have also been equally essential developments in the realm of the American political landscape. As each party system emerges, there is a multitude of ingredients that usher the repositioning; some include economic changes, slavery, the scope of governmental authority, and social issues. One of the principal disagreements that field the initial party shift was rooted in the conflict between rural America and the uncontrollable intensity of the Industrial Revolution.⁴⁷ Just as the early American educational system played a crucial role in assisting the growth of Industry, this second educational revolution must

⁴⁵ Romesh Ratnesar, "Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg: Champion of Civility," *CNN*, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/time/1999/07/26/jfk.sister.html>.

⁴⁶ Staff. "How Many Universities & Colleges Are in the US?," Education Unlimited Blog, August 5, 2019, <https://www.educationunlimited.com/blog/how-many-universities-colleges-are-in-the-us/>.

⁴⁷ Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 22 – 28.

also cause reverberations on the foundations of each respective political party.⁴⁸ The question is how much impact this educational propagation has had, and could this impression have contributed to a party system shift?

Higher education in America began with the establishment of Harvard University in 1636 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Even though there is a rich history of education at the post-secondary level in the United States, early forays into the post-secondary model initially consisted of more significant opportunities to advance in theological studies, normal schools to develop teachers for the expanding public school system. and individuals that were more elite in their scholastic abilities. This dynamic began to change rapidly in the 20th century, and around the time of the last party shift, fall enrollments totaled 3,639,847 in the United States. Since this period, the population of the United States has doubled, while the enrollments of individuals at the post-secondary level have increased close to six times the level of enrollment in 1960.⁴⁹ In 2010, it appears that the enrollment boon has begun to plateau, a significant descent has occurred, but it is uncertain if this development will sustain. However, the escalation from three and a half million to slightly under twenty million enrollments must be investigated for its electoral impact due to the influential nature of education on an individual's worldview.

⁴⁸ The first educational revolution was when compulsory education became the normative nationally. The second educational revolution is a reference to the movement in which the federal government took an active role in making it easier for individuals to have access to loans.

⁴⁹ Thomas D. Snyder and National Center for Education Statistics, "120 Years of American Education : a Statistical Portrait," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993); Melanie Hanson, "College Enrollment and Student Demographic Statistics," Education Data Initiative, July 26, 2022, <https://educationdata.org/college-enrollment-statistics>.

The influence that post-secondary education has on individuals can span economic opportunity, expansive worldview, and one's political ideology. During the emergence of the Cold War and the rise of McCarthyism, a closer analysis began by those fearful of communist takeover of professors' political leanings. Attacks on government officials and various entertainers garnered a significant amount of attention during this era, but academics also experienced a significant level of targeting during what was coined the "difficult years" according to the book *The Academic Mind: Social Scientist in a Time of Crisis*.⁵⁰ It was hypothesized that Academia, in particular, the professors had politically left political leanings. A study done by the Carnegie Commission on higher education in 1969 sought to discover the political tendencies of the academic world. In that study, the authors revealed that 45% of professors identified as liberal, 36% as moderate, and 19% as conservative.⁵¹ In subsequent follow-up studies done by the same foundation, the numbers continued to trend in the direction of an increasingly liberal faculty.⁵² These numbers are important, because school systems whether they are elementary, secondary or post-secondary play a significant role in the socialization of individuals. Of course, professors and other educators on a whole work hard to provide their students with unbiased information, however, it is only human nature that bias will be transmitted via teacher to student. Not only via instruction but much of the research developed by university professors would naturally follow the path of their views, influencing through literature utilized for further research.

⁵⁰P F Lazarsfeld and W Thielens, *The Academic Mind; Social Scientists in a Time of Crisis*, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958), 35-71, Internet Archive

⁵¹ Everett Carl Ladd, Seymour Martin Lipset and Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, *The Divided Academy : Professors and Politics*, (New York: Norton, 1976), 26.

⁵² Neil Gross, *Why Are Professors Liberal and Why Do Conservatives Care?*,(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press,2013), 31.

Due to the extreme societal upheaval in the 1960s, there was an increased interest in the study of the social sciences in hopes of bringing about changes, as many Americans were inspired by social movements. Funding was increased in research in all phases of the social sciences, spearheaded by the administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.⁵³ Although this windfall for social science was short-lived, the increase in fields in social science, including social work was dramatically affected by the deinstitutionalization of individuals struggling with mental illness. The upward trend in jobs in the field of social work continues to grow and projects to grow even more in the near future.⁵⁴ The increase in enrollments in the social sciences also influences political competition in the post-secondary realm. Professors on average are more likely to lean to the left of the political spectrum, and the likelihood is even more pronounced in the social sciences. This increase in individuals in the Social Sciences, combined with a much higher percentage of faculty being left leaning can contribute greatly to the socialization process of students at the university level. If the bubble that students live in at a key juncture in their lives in which they begin to start making decisions for themselves is one that is predominately lead by those with a liberal framework, it will naturally have some impact on the shaping of those same students.

A study conducted for the Econ Journal Watch discovered that liberal faculty significantly outnumber conservative faculty.⁵⁵ Invitations for conservative speakers to

⁵³ Cynthia MacDonald, "Hampered by 'Scientism?' Researcher Examines the History of American Social Science," Phys.org, April 13, 2022, <https://phys.org/news/2022-04-hampered-scientism-history-american-social.html>.

⁵⁴ "Social Work - Employment Trends - School of Social Work - University of Maine." School of Social Work, Accessed October 11, 2022, <https://umaine.edu/socialwork/graduate-programs/social-work-employment-trends/>.

⁵⁵ Mitchell Langbert, Anthony J. Quain, and Daniel B. Klein, "Faculty Voter Registration in Economics, History, Journalism, Law, and Psychology," *Econ Journal Watch* 13, no.3 (2016): 422–51.

come on campus were in much lower numbers than liberal leaning speakers, including commencement addresses.⁵⁶ When guest speakers come to a university, they can bring about a significant amount of excitement, and although many who attend these speaking engagements often align with the speakers' viewpoints, a smart, intellectual, charismatic speaker can have influence over their audience. In addition to the lower number of conservative speakers that are invited to universities across the country, protest towards speakers that appear to be more conservative than the audience have received a considerably more disruptions and protests according to a study done by the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, thus illustrating a general progression of universities positioning themselves as more liberal.⁵⁷

Leadership and Party Platforms

There certainly have been battle lines drawn in the educational sphere by conservatives stricken with a red-scare mentality, however, the push for university education has been rather bipartisan in nature. Political parties and their respective platforms are shaped by members but party leaders, in particular leaders on the national level can greatly influence the composition of its membership. Both the Republican and Democratic parties put a strong emphasis on the need for funding in all aspects of education in America including greater provision for grants, loans, and tax breaks associated with a college education in their respective party platforms for the first twenty

⁵⁶ Sean Salai, "Elite Colleges Shun Conservative Speakers; Biden Officials, Liberals Take Center Stage at Graduation," *The Washington Times*, April 1, 2022, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/apr/1/conservatives-shut-out-2022-commencement-invites/>.

⁵⁷ Johanna Alonso, "Shouting Down Speakers Who Offend," *Inside Higher Ed*, April 13, 2023, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/free-speech/2023/04/13/shouting-down-speakers-who-offend>.

years of the sixth party system. In 1980, under the leadership of President Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party platform called for the “deregulation by the federal government of public education and encourages the elimination of the federal Department of Education.”⁵⁸ Although this call to action does not imply an abandonment of education as an essential institution, the optics brought some general distrust from party members. While the Democratic Party showed continued support for federal educational initiatives and stated, A “new Department of Education was created to give education a stronger, more direct voice at the federal level, while at the same time reserving control over educational policymaking and operations to states, localities, and public and private institutions.” Creating a cabinet level position for education was a significant step for education and demonstrated the desire by those in the Democratic Party to put the federal government at the forefront of the direction of education in America.

In 1980, we see the Democratic Party taking an even stronger and more robust stance towards education. In the 1980 Democratic Party platform mentions or refers to education almost triple the number of times we see in the Republican Party platform. In each instance it is always spoken of in a positive manner, and that increased funding should be the normative approach to handling educational development. For example, in the 1980 platform it is praise that “Federal aid to education has increased by 73 percent—the greatest income increases in such a short period of time in history.”⁵⁹ It appears that 1980 is the juncture at which we see the initial shift in the respective party’s philosophies

⁵⁸ “Republican Party Platform of 1980.” The American Presidency Project, July 15, 1980. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980>.

⁵⁹ “1980 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 11, 1980, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1980-democratic-party-platform>.

shifting towards some opposing ideology regarding the roles and responsibilities of the federal government and education.

Language in the Republican Party Platform by 2016, under the support of candidate Trump, became much more aggressive regarding creating battle lines in the sphere of education.⁶⁰ As with most political party platforms, it lacked specifics on policy initiatives but the language addressing academia was admonishing and produces defensive mechanisms for the academic community. The 2016 platform attacked federal involvement in the initiation of student loans, blasted the indoctrination in all realms of education, and pushes strongly to remove the federal influence from kindergarten to post-secondary education. Republican leadership accused opponents of doing “immense damage” in education and stated clearly that they believe “The federal government should not be a partner in that effort, as the Constitution gives it no role in education.”⁶¹ This vehement language towards a cherished institution in America has come across as anti-education, and even from some lifelong Republicans, as anti-science. Former ambassador and governor of Utah, Jon Huntsman Jr. stated that “The minute that the Republican Party becomes the party – the anti-science party, we have a huge problem. We lose a whole lot of people who would otherwise allow us to win the election in 2012.”⁶²

⁶⁰ Leigh Ann Caldwell, “Trump Campaign Supports GOP Platform That Moved Further Right,” *NBCNews.com*, NBCUniversal News Group, July 13, 2016. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/trump-campaign-supports-gop-platform-moved-further-right-n608271>.

⁶¹ “2016 Republican Party Platform.” The American Presidency Project, July 18, 2016. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2016-republican-party-platform#families>.

⁶² Scott Wong, “Huntsman: GOP Can't Become 'Anti-Science' Party,” *POLITICO*, August 21, 2011, <https://www.politico.com/blogs/politico-now/2011/08/huntsman-gop-cant-become-anti-science-party-038575>.

In the 2016, Democratic Party platform we not only see a desire to continue to increase the scope of the influence of education by the federal government but there is a push to begin funding higher education as well. “Democrats are unified in their strong belief that every student should be able to go to college debt-free, and working families should not have to pay any tuition to go to public colleges and universities.”⁶³ Now the support of higher education has not changed in the sense that it is something deemed necessary for a healthy America, but the focus of funding is a marked change. At the beginning of the sixth party-system both parties demonstrated definite support for continued development of our educational system, but over the past forty years the Republican Party has become much more averse to support by the federal government, while the Democratic Party has increased their focus on intervention in education by the federal government.

The Politics of the Uneducated

The increasing percentage of educators in institutions of higher education that can be classified as left-leaning or liberal has been equally met by an increase of college-educated voters who identify as being left-leaning or liberal. This increase is considerably more pronounced when looking at white voters with a college degree. Data on voting patterns based on educational level were not common until the middle of the 20th century. The National Council for American Education was created to “eradicate Socialism, Communism, and all forms of Marxism from the schools and colleges of

⁶³ “2016 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, July 21, 2016, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2016-democratic-party-platform>.

America, and to stimulate sound American education.”⁶⁴ No stone was left unturned by the zealous anti-communist movement of the 1950s.

However, based on data that exist, white, college-educated voters had voted Republican in presidential elections from the 1956 election until the election of Trump in 2016. Since 1998, the percent of college educated voters above the age of twenty-five that are registered as a Democrat has more than doubled from twenty-three percent to forty-eight percent, while in the Republican party we have seen not percentage change.⁶⁵ In 2016, fifty-five percent of white, college educated voters cast their ballot in favor of Clinton, according to a Pew Research poll done a few weeks after the presidential election. In the 2016 election and the 2020 election over sixty eight percent of Trumps voters were without a college degree illustrating how the growing disparity of educated voters in the Republican party, at least in presidential elections.⁶⁶ Biden on the other hand in 2020 had close to an even split between voters who had a four-year degree and those without a college degree. Of course, the growth of those attending and/or graduated from college has increased significantly over the past thirty years has not only changed the composition of the university but also the voting base.

Party platforms have transformed and highlighted each respective party’s general opinion on education, as we have seen an increase of professors leaning left. However, the variance mostly deals with how education is overseen and less about the actual value

⁶⁴ Ben Heineman, “The University in the McCarthy Era,” *The Harvard Crimson*. Accessed October 24, 2022. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1965/6/17/the-university-in-the-mccarthy-era/>.

⁶⁵ Daniel A. Cox et al., “The Democratic Party’s Transformation: More Diverse, Educated, and Liberal but Less Religious,” The Survey Center on American Life, March 31, 2023, <https://www.americansurveycenter.org/research/the-democratic-partys-transformation-more-diverse-educated-and-liberal-but-less-religious/>.

⁶⁶ Ruth Igielnik, “Behind Biden’s 2020 Victory,” Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy, June 30, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/>.

of education, as an educated citizenship is nearly universal. One piece of the puzzle in understanding the shift from the GOP's dominance of the educated vote towards the Democratic Party is an analysis of how educated voters think about the major issues. It will be important to look at not only a shift in the poll numbers but also how the sheer numbers increased in the number of college graduates and how that correlate to an overall increase within a political party. It will be important to look at the viewpoint of college educated voters on abortion, climate change, immigration, trade policy, etc.

Since *Roe v. Wade*, people's opinions on abortion have been extremely in important in predicting one's party affiliation. A pro-life stance for Republicans and a pro-choice stance for Democrats has been codified in their respective party platforms for over forty years. Opinions on abortion on a whole have been mostly static, however, when it comes to college graduates, we have seen a continued shift towards a pro-choice view. In 1995, a Pew Research poll sixty-one percent of college graduates stated that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. The same question was asked in 2021 by Pew Research, and college graduates had increased their support for abortion to seventy-four percent an increase of thirteen percent.⁶⁷ A Gallup poll done in 1975, fifty-six percent of college graduates stated that abortion should be legal under any circumstance. When this poll was redone in 2021 the number of college graduates that believed abortion should be legal in any circumstance had catapulted to a staggering eighty percent.⁶⁸ This shift in how college graduates feel on the issue of abortion, is one indication of why they

⁶⁷ Reem Nadeem, "Nearly a Year after Roe's Demise, Americans' Views of Abortion Access Increasingly Vary by Where They Live," Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy April 26, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/04/26/nearly-a-year-after-roes-demise-americans-views-of-abortion-access-increasingly-vary-by-where-they-live/>.

⁶⁸ Gallup, "Abortion," Gallup, February 15, 2023, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1576/abortion.aspx>.

have shifted towards the Democratic Party. Now certainly, those who are pro-choice have continued to be housed under the umbrella of the Democratic Party, but it is a piece of the puzzle as to why the educational demographic has been shifting amongst both respective parties.

In recent years, the Republican Party has been consistently pegged as the anti-science party in America. Obviously, such overgeneralizations are problematic and flawed because no political party operates in a monolithic manner. One of the reasons for such a characterization is the predominant view by registered Republicans on climate change. Climate change was not really part of the American lexicon at the beginning of the seventh party system. Moreover, the issue of climate first entered the Democratic Party platform in 1992 and has increasingly become a key issue in each successive party platform.⁶⁹ While the Republican party has only vaguely spoken about addressing the issue of climate change. The 2000 presidential debate between George Bush and Al Gore was the first presidential debate in which climate change was discussed.⁷⁰ The Yale Program on Climate Changes survey's Americans regularly to discover their opinions on

⁶⁹ "1992 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, July 13, 1992, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1992-democratic-party-platform> ; "1996 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, August 26, 1996, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1996-democratic-party-platform>; "2000 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, August 14, 2000, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2000-democratic-party-platform>; "2004 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, July 27, 2004, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2004-democratic-party-platform>; "2008 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, August 25, 2008, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2008-democratic-party-platform>; "2012 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, September 3, 2012, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2012-democratic-party-platform>; "2016 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, July 21, 2016, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2016-democratic-party-platform>; "2020 Democratic Party Platform," The American Presidency Project, August 17, 2020, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2020-democratic-party-platform>.

⁷⁰ "Tell Obama: Lead on Climate," Climate Silence, accessed May 3, 2023, <http://climatesilence.org/data/debates/#1988>.

climate change. In a survey done in 2020, they revealed that eighty-one percent of college graduates stated that global warming is happening, while only sixty-two percent of those without a college degree believed that global warming existed.⁷¹ A report done in 2020, by Pew Research, asking Americans if climate change was a major threat, showed that seventy-seven percent of college graduates said it was a major threat, while only fifty-six percent of non-college graduates concurred.⁷² Since the politics of climate change was not part of the sixth party-system, and now has presented itself as an emerging issue, in a similar fashion to the social issues of the sixth party-system, those with an a college degree have migrated towards the Democratic Party, partly due to the Republican stance on climate change.

The transformation into a global economy has brought about the outsourcing of a number of jobs in the United States that did not require a college education primarily in the service and manufacturing industries. Since this transformation occurred, slowly both major political parties have taken a stronger stance in favor of free trade. One indicator on whether a person supports free trade is whether or not they have a college degree. A survey done in 2016 by the Pew Research Center found that fifty-eight percent of college graduates believed that free-trade agreements have been good for the country, compared to only forty-four percent of those who have not attended college.⁷³ Which does illustrate

⁷¹ Anthony Leiserowitz et al., “Global Warming's Six Americas, December 2022” *Yale Program on Climate Change Communication*, March 14, 2023, <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/global-warmings-six-americas-december-2022/>.

⁷² Alec Tyson, Cary Funk, and Brian Kennedy, “What the Data Says about Americans' Views of Climate Change,” Pew Research Center, April 18, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/04/18/for-earth-day-key-facts-about-americans-views-of-climate-change-and-renewable-energy/>.

⁷³ Bradley Jones, “Support for Free Trade Agreements Rebounds Modestly, but Wide Partisan Differences Remain,” Pew Research Center, August 28, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/04/25/support-for-free-trade-agreements-rebounds-modestly-but-wide-partisan-differences-remain/>.

that there is a difference between how educational level does impact one's view on trade policy, it is not a stark contrast, but may be at least a contributing factor to the shift of college graduates from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party.

Americans have long cherished the Bill of Rights and the freedoms that they have provided for everyone. The second amendment, like many other issues in our modern world, have created a significant amount of polarization amongst the people. The desire for stricter gun laws in America had been close to a 50/50 split for a long time, until fairly recently, in which a newer poll showed that sixty percent of Americans favor stricter gun laws. The divide on stricter gun laws is even greater between those with a college degree and those without. According to a Pew Research poll done in 2019, seventy percent of adults with a college degree believe that we need to implement stricter gun laws. While only fifty-seven percent of those without a college education are for stricter gun laws, which is under the overall average.⁷⁴ Similarly to the issue of trade, the disparity between college graduates and those without a college degree are not vast, but certainly a contributing factor to a more educated Democratic Party.

Immigration has been an integral part of the history of the United States. As Senator and former presidential candidate Mitt Romney said “We are a nation of immigrants. We are the children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the ones who wanted a better life, the driven ones, the ones who woke up at night hearing that voice telling them that life in that place called America could be better.”⁷⁵ However,

⁷⁴ Katherine Schaeffer, “Share of Americans Who Favor Stricter Gun Laws Has Increased since 2017,” Pew Research Center, May 28, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/10/16/share-of-americans-who-favor-stricter-gun-laws-has-increased-since-2017/>.

⁷⁵ Mitt Romney, “Transcript: Mitt Romney's Acceptance Speech,” *NPR*, August 31, 2012, <https://www.npr.org/2012/08/30/160357612/transcript-mitt-romneys-acceptance-speech>.

Immigration is an issue that has polarized American's and even members within the same political party. From the nativism that plagued the late 19th century to the immigration act of 1924, we have seen that immigration can divide a nation. Currently about fifty-seven percent of Americans feel that the "growing number of newcomers from other countries strengthen American society" However, if we look at how college graduates and non-college graduates feel about this issue, we discover that college graduates sixty-seven percent are in favor of adding immigrants, while only forty-seven percent of non-college graduates feel the same way.⁷⁶ The twenty-percent disparity illustrates another significant factor on why college graduates are becoming a stronger voting bloc in the Democratic Party.

The diploma divide that has been shifting over the past twenty years not only is an indicator of predicting what political party one is affiliated with, but it has proved to be instrumental in shaping the views in areas such as trade, climate change and immigration. Due to the mass migration of individuals towards the Democratic Party in terms of educational background, the Republican Party in essence via Trump recruited new voting blocks to keep up with educational exodus to the Democratic Party. As many first-time voters, that lack college education are surging towards Trump's Republican Party, the Republican stance on issues will naturally evolve.

⁷⁶ Sara Atske, "*Views on Race and Immigration*," Pew Research Center, May 27, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/12/17/views-on-race-and-immigration/>.

Chapter III

Race, Gender, and other Demographic Trends

“Let us close the springs of racial poison. Let us pray for wise and understanding hearts. Let us lay aside irrelevant differences and make our nation whole. Let us hasten that day when our unmeasured strength and our unbounded spirit will be free to do the great works ordained for this nation by the just and wise God who is the Father of us all.”⁷⁷

– Lyndon Johnson

Movement Along Racial Lines or Lack Thereof

The metamorphosis into the sixth-party system was largely guided by the Civil Rights Movement and other social issues, separating itself from previous shifts predicated mostly on economic factors.⁷⁸ After the countries governmental reconstruction due to the Great Depression, new battle lines were needed to be drawn to control and influence the direction of the country. Some of the developments also can be related to the economic growth during the post-World War II era, paving the way for new fractures to emerge. As society became more affluent, and technology gave individuals greater comfortability new wedges were necessary to acquire power in the government. Of course, not all would agree that society was living in affluence but the perception of such a society paved way for new battles outside the economic sphere.

⁷⁷ Lyndon Johnson, “Lyndon Baines Johnson Quotes,” LBJ Museum, November 4, 2021, <https://lbjmuseum.com/exhibits/online-exhibits/lyndon-baines-johnson-quotes/>.

⁷⁸ Mark D. Brewer and Louis Sandy Maisel, *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 42-48

In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska act was passed, creating the two territories, paving way for western expansion of slavery, and ultimately motivating northern abolitionist in the creation of the Republican Party.⁷⁹ The Republican Party had very little presence in the south, due to the overwhelming presence of slavery in the south. However, it was not only slavery that produced great division between the North and South, but economic systems were operated much differently. The Southern economic system was heavily dominated by the influence of slavery. While in the North, industry, textile mills and burgeoning cities were at the heart of economic affairs. Although sides had been drawn in the debate over slavery, and many of the individuals who had taken the abolitionist cause up were noble in their pursuits, however if the systems of economics were more congruent with one another, one could speculate if that slavery debate would have even emerged.

However, virtually all scholars of slavery now believe that slavery, broadly speaking, was profitable to slaveholders and that the behavior and values of slaveholders, by and large, were either animated by—or at least consistent with and explicable via—market logic, considerations relating to the so-called cash nexus, and barefaced, even blunt, profit and loss concerns.⁸⁰

Regardless of the intentions of northern Republicans and the purity of their pursuits, for the seventy years that followed the American Civil War, ethnic minorities, in general would more commonly punch the ticket for the Republican candidate. It was not until the sixth party system that we see this fully swap. This future transformation was not only

⁷⁹ Ronald Brownstein, “Where the Republican Party Began,” *The American Prospect*, November 22, 2017, <https://prospect.org/power/republican-party-began/>.

⁸⁰ Peter A. Coclanis and Stanley L. Engerman, “Would Slavery Have Survived Without the Civil War?,” *Southern Cultures* 19, no.2, (2013): 66–90. <https://doi.org/10.1353/scu.2013.0019>.

one that dealt with minority voting patterns, but also illustrated a shift in regional differences as well.

Before FDR, African Americans had overwhelmingly voted for Republicans in local, state, and federal elections. Even as Herbert Hoover's popularity was destroyed by the looming Great Depression, in which extended inadequate relief to the African American population, he still garnered between sixty-five and seventy-five percent of the black vote in the north. African-American loyalty to the Republican party, rooted in the historic nature of the Party slowly began to wane in 1936.⁸¹ John R. Lynch, a African American state legislator in the state of Mississippi stated "The colored voters cannot help but feel that in voting the Democratic ticket in national elections they will be voting to give their indorsement [sic] and their approval to every wrong of which they are victims, every right of which they are deprived, and every injustice of which they suffer."⁸² In the 1932 Presidential Election, Roosevelt only received approximately twenty-one percent of the African American vote. However, in the subsequent election, FDR, was able to increase that total to an incredible seventy-six percent, an increase of almost four times of the previous election.⁸³

voters were likely influenced by Roosevelt's efforts to be more attentive to the needs African Americans through efforts such as the formation of the "Black Cabinet." The Roosevelt administration sought out African American activists and leaders to serve in this newly formed group of public policy advisors to the President.

⁸¹ "The 'Fulfillment of White's Prophecy'," US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives, accessed July 13, 2023, <https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/BAIC/Historical-Essays/Keeping-the-Faith/Party-Realignment--New-Deal/>

⁸² "The 'Fulfillment of White's Prophecy'."

⁸³ Vernon Robinson and Bruce Eberle, "The Year the Black Vote Switched: Will 2020 Be 1936 in Reverse?," *Washington Examiner*, November 14, 2019, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/the-year-the-black-vote-switched-will-2020-be-1936-in-reverse>.

In analyzing the racial movement along party lines, much of the early discussion focuses on the African American population due to the influence they had on election because of the numbers they held. At the time of the 1936 Presidential election there was a significant population of Latin Americans due to language barriers, and the limitations of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, their participation was mostly mitigated until the extension of the Voting Rights Act was signed in 1975. “Extending voting rights protections to Latinos made it possible to translate registration materials into Spanish, launching larger Latino voter registration drives.”⁸⁴ Other minority groups combined for just a fraction of the voting populace, and had similar barriers to entry, making their impact on elections negligible. Political parties did not invest significant time catering to groups that did not produce vote totals, and therefore will not be discussed in regard to political party shifts until those reforms were executed. The African American population at the time of FDR was close to ten percent of the American population according to the 1930 census.

The final straw, in which black voters shifted almost entirely into the voting ranks of the Democratic Party was a response to the passage of the voting rights bills of the 1960s under the leadership of President Lyndon B Johnson. Republican Candidate for president in 1964, Barry Goldwater, opposed civil rights legislation, further contributing to the decline of black voters that identified as Republicans. Even though Goldwater’s decision to vote against the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was not because he sided with segregationist in the South, the public perception of such opposition was easily utilized as

⁸⁴ Suzanne Gamboa, “For Latinos, 1965 Voting Rights Act Impact Came a Decade Later,” *NBCNews.com*, August 6, 2015, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/latinos-1965-voting-rights-act-impact-came-decade-later-n404936>.

tool for the Democratic Party. Rick Perlstein, historian commented regarding Goldwater's vote that he was "a shaken man afraid he was signing his political death warrant, convinced that the Constitution offered him no other honorable choice."⁸⁵

However Goldwater still placated to the Republican strategy to

do nothing to include the Negroes in their vision of America, they enter any future Presidential race with more than one ninth of the nation locked against them. Their alternatives now are clear-either to try again to divide the Negro vote with the Democrats or accept the Negro vote as permanently hostile and make strategy accepting that hostility and appealing only to whites.⁸⁶

This became the nail in the coffin for Republicans for the African American vote.

After the 1964 election, the Democratic Party became the permanent home for African American voters. In each subsequent election, the percentage of black voters voting for the Democratic presidential candidate remained above eighty-five percent and more recently ninety percent. The Goldwater influence loomed large, political science professor Vince Hutchings opined "African Americans heard the message that was intended to be heard. Which was that Goldwater, and the Goldwater wing of the Republican party were opposed not only to the Civil Rights Act, but to the civil rights movement, in large part, as well."⁸⁷ This dramatic change in the voting populace was essential in ushering in the sixth party system. Moreover, since the beginning of the sixth party system, other ethnic minorities have become a greater contributing factor in

⁸⁵ Louis Menand, "He Knew He Was Right," *The New Yorker*, March 19, 2001, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/03/26/he-knew-he-was-right>.

⁸⁶ "LBJ Fights the White Backlash," National Archives and Records Administration (National Archives and Records Administration), accessed January 26, 2023, <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2001/spring/lbj-and-white-backlash-1#nt114>.

⁸⁷ Karen Grigsby Bates, "Why Did Black Voters Flee the Republican Party in the 1960s?," *NPR* (NPR, July 14, 2014), <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/07/14/331298996/why-did-black-voters-flee-the-republican-party-in-the-1960s>.

influencing elections. Rapidly growing populations in the Latino and Asian American communities with increased access to voting opened a new dynamic in voter analysis.

Certainly, no racial or ethnic minor is completely monolithic in how they view the world. Regional differences, places of origin, and personal preferences make it problematic for any political scientist to encapsulate any group into one political party box. Latin American voting patterns compared to individuals who identify as black have appeared to show a greater dynamic in the political parties they tend to support. This trend is mostly due that underneath the umbrella of Latin America there are a whole plethora of countries of origin that everyone is closely tied. There are thirty-three countries from Central and South America are currently categorized as Latin American.⁸⁸ “The Latino vote in Florida is different from the Latino vote in California, and from Nevada, Arizona—and so to make broad strokes, or using this pan-ethnic term, can be problematic, and the same trend was evident 10 years ago,” stated Marisa Abrimajo, who teaches at UC San Diego.⁸⁹ However, initially, as with African Americans in the post New Deal era, Latin Americans across the board largely supported Democratic candidates, just not with the same high percentages.

As noted earlier, black Americans shifted significantly towards the Democratic Party, with the mass exodus from the Republican Party beginning under FDR and

⁸⁸ “Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean,” Worldometer, accessed January 26, 2023, <https://www.worldometers.info/geography/how-many-countries-in-latin-america/#:~:text=There%20are%2033%20countries%20in,the%20United%20Nations%20official%20statistics>); The following countries are Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. This list does not include all of the other dependencies and territories.

⁸⁹ Jasmine Aguilera, “Why the Complexities of 2020 ‘Latino Vote’ Were Overlooked,” *Time*, November 10, 2020, <https://time.com/5907525/latino-vote-2020-election/>.

completing its course under Lyndon Johnson. Poll numbers in recent years have shown that his identification for black Americans within the Democratic Party has remained rather stable. Pew Research has done polling data on party identification for over thirty years. In 1994, eighty-one percent of black Americans were either registered as a Democrat or leaned toward the Democratic Party. Twenty-five years later we see an increase of two percent to eighty-three, showing the stability of the Black American vote in the United States. However, some new polling data, is showing some significant changes to how Black Americans are at the very least viewing Joe Biden, the default leader of the Democratic Party. At the time when Biden took office in 2021, he had a favorability rating of eighty-four percent, which in March of 2023 had dipped down to seventy-four percent.⁹⁰ Certainly favorability ratings can ebb and flow depending on the current political climate or economic situation, but it may also illustrate a changing perception of the Democratic Party. However, Trump's unfavourability rating skyrocketed among the Black population to ninety-three percent in the Summer of 2020, amongst the backdrop of COVID and the George Floyd associated protest that occurred. In March of 2023, Trump's unfavourability rating had dropped to sixty percent, demonstrating the high fluctuations that can occur in association with an individual rather than an entire political party.⁹¹ Even amongst this fluctuation, there does not appear what one would deem a wholesale change in the way black Americans are voting. Certainly, in close elections like our last two presidential elections a few percentages shift can be the

⁹⁰ Philip Elliott, "Black Voters Gave Biden the White House. They May Determine Whether He Stays There," *Time*, April 12, 2023, <https://time.com/6270949/biden-black-voters-tim-scott-2024/>.

⁹¹ Elliott, "Black Voters Gave Biden the White House"

difference maker in getting to 270 electoral votes, we are not seeing a continued shift of significant black voters towards the Republican Party.

One of the most contentious issues in America today, and has been for some time is immigration, in particular immigration occurring at the Southern border. Obviously, some of the contention comes in the form of fear of drug infiltration, employment strains, cultural impacts, and other dynamics whether these issues are real or rooted in myth. However, one of the biggest elements that has both sides of the political aisle warring over immigration, is the potential political impact, as we see large numbers of immigrants from Latin America coming to the United States for opportunity. Voting trends in the Latin American population on a whole has been mostly static since the early 1980s with a bit of fluctuation during the mid 1990s. Some of the stereotypes that many Republicans have parroted that because Latin America is conservative, and therefore the Republicans are poised to make strong pickups in the Latin American community. Unfortunately for Republicans, there has not been a wholesale change in the voting patterns of Latin Americans not counting the intermittent regional differences.

Chapter IV

Globalism vs. Populism

“Where did China get that \$20 billion? From consumers at Walmart and all of us who purchase goods made in China. That \$20 billion is just 1 percent of the \$2 trillion in trade surpluses Beijing has run up with the United States over two decades.”⁹²

– Pat Buchanan

NAFTA, Unions, and the Decline of American Manufacturing

“Everybody is sad when their side loses the election. But the day after, we have to remember, that we’re actually on the same team,” opined former president Barack Obama in the aftermath of the 2016 Presidential Election.⁹³ This speech was partly purposed to put some water on the pandemonium that was developing due to the surprise victory by Trump in 2016. The “how” Trump won in 2016 was largely attributed to the promise of trade renegotiations globally, starting with the demonized North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement. Wisconsin had not voted for a Republican candidate in a Presidential Election since 1984. Both Michigan and Pennsylvania had also failed to punch the ticket for the GOP since 1988, making it thirty-two and twenty-eight years respectively. Journalist, and Senior Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations stated that “He won the presidency promising to overturn what he’s called ‘decades of failed leadership’ on this

⁹² Buchanan, Patrick J, *Suicide of a Superpower : Will America Survive to 2025?* 1st ed. (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2011),18.

⁹³ Barack Obama, “Watch Pres. Obama’s Full Response to Trump’s Win,” *NBCNews.com*, January 21, 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/video/watch-pres-obama-s-full-response-to-trump-s-win-804812867679>.

issue.”⁹⁴ What many talking heads, and political gurus began to wonder after this upset victory, is will the Republican Party no longer be the self-proclaimed party of free-trade, or did Trump’s victory symbolize a shift in the GOP’s relationship with free trade and labor unions.

The industrial revolution and poor working conditions produced an environment for the emergence of labor unions. The earliest documented strike occurred in 1768, in New York, when some tailors protested wage reductions. It was not until 1794 that the Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers, the first trade union was established, in Philadelphia.⁹⁵ In 1866, the National Labor Union the first national labor union was established in Baltimore, Maryland attempting to lobby congress to put in place an eight-hour workday.⁹⁶ However, in its infancy, labor unions were not entirely partisan, and partisanship associated with unionization was primarily regional. For instance, coalitions in the south that sought to bring together small farmers, industrial workers, sharecroppers, and African Americans were terrorized by the prevailing racial alliances that were predominant in the South.⁹⁷ Shared economic plight has the potential to unite people who otherwise not be grouped together.

⁹⁴ Edward Alden, “The Biggest Issue That Carried Trump to Victory,” *Fortune*, April 25, 2021, <https://fortune.com/2016/11/10/trump-voters-free-trade-globalization/>.

⁹⁵ History.com Editors, “Labor Movement,” History.com and A&E Television Networks, October 29, 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/labor>.

⁹⁶ “This Month in Business History: Founding of the National Labor Union and the 1st National Call for a 8-Hour Work Day,” Research Guides, Accessed November 7, 2022, <https://guides.loc.gov/this-month-in-business-history/august/national-labor-union-8-hour-work-day#:~:text=The%20National%20Labor%20Union%20was,an%208%2Dhour%20work%20day>.

⁹⁷ Matthew Hild, “The 19th Century Labor Movement That Brought Black and White Arkansans Together,” What It Means to Be American, March 28, 2019, <https://www.whatitmeanstobeamerican.org/encounters/the-19th-century-labor-movement-that-brought-black-and-white-arkansans-together/>.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt shepherded the nation as the American and world economies went into a spiral at the start of the 1930s. He also oversaw a significant shift towards the acceptance and support of labor unions nationally. While he was not zealous in the necessity of labor unions, with his support, congress passed, in 1933, The National Industrial Recovery Act, which provided the ability for collective bargaining. In 1935, congress passed the Wagner Act, which was essential in requiring Businesses to negotiate in good faith with unions.⁹⁸

Under Roosevelt, union membership rose a dramatic 500% and galvanized its membership. A textile worker famously told the media “Mr. Roosevelt is the only man we ever had in the White House who would understand that my boss is a son-of-a-bitch.”⁹⁹ It was at this point in which the Democratic Party became the default party for labor unions and its leadership. Of course, in the early 20th century, during the emergence of the Progressive Era, political machines sought to gain influence in labor, but it was not until FDR that this relationship became national.

The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 under Harry S Truman struck a significant blow to labor unions. Truman attempted to veto the bill that weakened the power of unions. However, a significant number of Democrats voted in favor of the bill, with many votes coming from the Southern Democrats. A total of one hundred and six Democrats voted to override Truman’s veto in the house, while twenty Democrats also voted to override the

⁹⁸ “Labor Unions during the Great Depression and New Deal: Great Depression and World War II, 1929-1945: U.S. History Primary Source Timeline: Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress: Library of Congress,” The Library of Congress, Accessed November 14, 2022, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/great-depression-and-world-war-ii-1929-1945/labor-unions-during-great-depression-and-new-deal/>.

⁹⁹ Rebecca Erbelding, “FDR4Freedoms: The Life, Times, and Vision of Franklin D. Roosevelt,” *Journal of American History*, Volume 103, Issue 3, December 2016, Pages 869–870, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jaw494>.

president's veto. This vote, however, does not necessarily illustrate an abandonment of labor unions by the Democratic party. Still, at the time, it was sold as a common-sense measure to create a better balance of power between businesses and workers. It also came at a time when the fear of communism in America began to loom large and union activity was often seen as communist activity.

Union memberships began to decline at the start of the 1960s. In the early 1950s, close to one-third of workers in the United States belonged to a labor union, moreover, by 2012, that percentage had dropped to eleven percent.¹⁰⁰ Some of this was due to the impact of legislation such as the Taft-Hartley Act, but due to a large number of members belonging to unions in the industry, and the decline of industry in the United States, unions take a great hit. In 1970, twenty-six percent of the United States' employment was in manufacturing, by 2012, that number had shrunk to a meager ten percent.¹⁰¹ Other union memberships have grown during this time period, which has continued to make the union voting block relevant and important in winning elections. Teacher unions, for example have grown to almost universal membership in public schools.

When discussing unions, it is important to distinguish the difference between unions that would be classified as blue-collar workers and union members from the intellectual class including teachers, nurses, and other health-care professionals. Union membership in the blue-collar segment of society is where we have seen the largest decrease in overall membership. This distinction is important to make note of since unions have become less monolithic in their voting patterns and it is along this fault line

¹⁰⁰ Bruce Western, 2012. "Workers of the World Divide: The Decline of Labor and the Future of the Middle Class," *Foreign Affairs*, 91, no.3, (2013): 88–99.

¹⁰¹ "Percent of Employment in Manufacturing in the United States (Discontinued)," FRED, June 10, 2013, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/USAPEFANA>.

that were we begin to see the largest differences. As unions emerged out of the industrial revolution and into the FDR era, voting patterns within unions were extremely homogenous. However, union membership in fields like teaching started later than in blue collar union jobs and did not pick up full steam until membership in trade unions were beginning to decline.¹⁰² In any case, the globalization of America had not begun to take off yet, and even though trade policy certainly was important to members of labor unions, most of the focus during the fifth party-system on into the sixth party-system geared towards the relationship between the producers and owners of production.

Economics both domestic and internationally play a central role in voting patterns and how political parties align themselves. Each successive party system has had some element of trade interwoven into the collective ideology of each party, as having consensus on such a key economic element appears to be elusive. Trade policy specifically has been the instrumental element fostering some of the most heated debates that have been the basis for party systems. In the 19th century as US industry was working hard to compete with the well-established industrial giant, the British Empire, trade policies were implemented at various times to help new industries grow. “Hamilton published his famous Report on Manufactures, which laid out a strategy of using tariffs and other trade regulation mechanisms to promote America’s “infant industries” against their European competitors.”¹⁰³ Protective tariffs did not take a permanent home in any of the political parties, but protective tariffs at the time of the Civil War was pushed predominately by northern business leaders, which were mostly associated with the

¹⁰² Livia Gershon, “The Rise of Teachers Unions,” JSTOR Daily, May 9, 2016, <https://daily.jstor.org/the-rise-of-teachers-unions/>.

¹⁰³ Phillip Magness, “Home - Essential Civil War Curriculum,” Essential Civil War Curriculum. Accessed November 28, 2022, <https://www.essentialcivilwarcurriculum.com/>.

Republican party. However, at the end of the 19th century the became a major rift within the Republican party regarding factions, the Stalwarts who were pro-protective tariff and the Half-breeds who were in opposition protective tariffs.¹⁰⁴

However, it was under FDR, in connection with his new deal policies that protective tariffs began to find a more permanent spot in the Democratic Party platform. The Reciprocal Trade Act of 1934 gave President Roosevelt the ability to adjust tariff rates and negotiate bilateral trade agreements.¹⁰⁵ As with many current economic issues that lie within the Democratic Party Platform, they have their roots in the New Deal era. This relationship of course stems from the growing relationship the Democratic Party had with labor unions due to unions desire for policies that protected industries fostering a competitive advantage. Issues surrounding government financial intervention, taxes, tariffs, labor unions, and other economic issues-maintained continuity in the Democratic Party during the fifth- and sixth-party systems.

During the sixth party system and under the momentum of the Reagan revolution, there began a growing movement to create more liberalized trade agreements internationally paving the way for agreements such as NAFTA. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade initiated the movement in 1947, motivated partially by the emerging Cold War, and common desire to foster economic relationships at the end of World War II.¹⁰⁶ While free trade is not unique to the late 20th century, it was during this period that free trade began to become the trend similarly to the widespread movement of

¹⁰⁴ Allan Peskin, "Who Were the Stalwarts? Who Were Their Rivals? Republican Factions in the Gilded Age," *Political Science Quarterly* 99, no. 4 (1984): 703–16, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2150708>.

¹⁰⁵ "The Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act of 1934," US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives, Accessed November 28, 2022, <https://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1901-1950/The-Reciprocal-Trade-Agreement-Act-of-1934/>.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Zeiler, Zeiler, *Free Trade, Free World: The Advent of GATT* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 2 – 5.

progressivism in the early part of the century, crossing party lines. While the number of free-trade agreements that have been signed over the past half-century by the United States have been numerous, none have garnered as much attention as NAFTA, which was initiated by Ronald Reagan, but the terms of agreement were signed under President George H.W. Bush in 1992. President Bill Clinton sent the agreement to congress and was eventually ratified with bipartisan support in November of 1993.¹⁰⁷

Even though there was bi-partisan support for NAFTA and other subsequent free-trade agreements, an emerging populism developed, spearheaded by workers associated with labor unions. Within the Republican party individuals such as Pat Buchanan and Henry Ross Perot began to rise as opponents of the global free-market enterprises that began to emerge. Perot warned “You implement that NAFTA, the Mexican trade agreement, where they pay people a dollar an hour, have no health care, no retirement, no pollution controls...and you’re going to hear a giant sucking sound of jobs being pulled out of this country.”¹⁰⁸ There was also a fairly equal number of Democrats who expressed opposition to NAFTA but also were not the majority of those within the party. Representative William D. Ford, Democrat from Michigan cried "There are very few factories you can't put on a truck and take south of the border to Mexico...People out there in the industrial Midwest know that in their gut. They know what is already happening."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Congress.gov. "H.R.3450 - 103rd Congress (1993-1994): North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act." December 8, 1993, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/3450>

¹⁰⁸ Harley Shaiken, “The 'Giant Sucking Sound' of NAFTA: Ross Perot Was Ridiculed as Alarmist in 1992 but His Warning Turned out to Be Prescient,” *The Conversation*, November 16, 2022, <https://theconversation.com/the-giant-sucking-sound-of-nafta-ross-perot-was-ridiculed-as-alarmist-in-1992-but-his-warning-turned-out-to-be-prescient-120258>.

¹⁰⁹ Kenneth J Cooper and Peter Behr, “Sun Belt Vs. Rust Belt; Trade Pact Debate Causes Regional Conflict,” *The Washington Post*, November 6, 1993.

Division within each party set up a situation that gave potential gains for the political party that began to understand the opposition to NAFTA and the free-trade movement by labor unions. As globalization became the predominant economic force and seen as a mechanism to elevate standards of living throughout the world, free trade became a popular tenet on both sides of the political spectrum. Michael Hirsh, the editor of *Politico* magazine, stated “there was only the all-too-self-confident movement of both political parties toward a full-on embrace of policies that further promoted the brutally unequal society that America is today. First, the Republicans became ardent free traders, then the Democrats under Clinton, with Obama following suit.”¹¹⁰ While initially there were protest against the NAFTA and globalism, it quickly shifted to being the normative position by the United States. This policy, naturally, like other long-standing policies, particularly in economics, fostered a rise of populist, protectionist philosophy. Author and Harvard University professor Jeffrey Frieden opined this notion calling 2016 “a watershed moment” in the reactionary nature of protectionism, pointing out that “Bernie Sanders’ attitude toward globalization was not that different from Donald Trump’s. And during the campaign, we saw Hillary Clinton take more and more protectionist stances, culminating in her disavowing a treaty (TPP) that she herself had negotiated.”¹¹¹

The election of Trump also highlighted the stark contrast between the establishment Republicans and his supporters regarding the pursuit of greater protectionist policies. Trump has been a longtime opponent of free trade policies and

¹¹⁰ Michael Hirsh, “Why Trump and Sanders Were Inevitable,” *POLITICO*, February 28, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/02/why-donald-trump-and-bernie-sanders-were-inevitable-213685/>.

¹¹¹ Jeffrey Frieden, “Jeffrey Frieden on Globalization, the Rise of Populism, and the Future of Democracy,” Harvard Kennedy School, July 2, 2023, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/programs/growthpolicy/jeffrey-frieden-globalization-rise-populism-and-future-democracy>.

other macroeconomic decisions that appear to benefit other nations and not the United States. “A lot of people are tired of watching other countries ripping of the United States,” Trump opined in a 1988 interview with Oprah as he discussed trade agreements with Japan at the time.¹¹² In one of his first messages after his election he stated he would put forth an America First agenda and negotiate “fair, bilateral trade deals that bring jobs and industry back on to American shores.”¹¹³ It was not until the January 22nd, 2018, when the first set of tariffs were imposed. This tariff which affected the importation of washing machines and solar panels was a result of failed trade talks with China but was imposed globally.¹¹⁴

Trump, as President of the United States, had an extremely large megaphone that was very successful in shaping the direction of the Republican Party. However, it is unclear if his messaging and doctrine in regard to more protectionist policies has had sustained impact on the Republican Party. Particularly since the Reagan revolution free trade has been the normative stance of the Republican party. The 1980 Republican Party platform states, “The international exchange of goods and services must take place under free and unfettered conditions of market entry.”¹¹⁵ This resolve to create freer trade was essential to the Republican Party during the Sixth Party System, and no Republican president or Republican presidential nominee any protectionist policies. In 1988, Reagan

¹¹² Patrice Taddonio, “Trump's Tariff Strategy Can Be Traced Back to the 1980s,” *PBS*, May 6, 2019, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/trumps-tariff-strategy-can-be-traced-back-to-the-1980s/>.

¹¹³ S.A. Miller, “Donald Trump Vows to Cancel Trans-Pacific Partnership as President, Puts NAFTA on Notice,” *The Washington Times*, June 28, 2016, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/jun/28/donald-trump-vows-to-cancel-trans-pacific-partners/>

¹¹⁴ “Timeline: Key Dates in the U.s.-China Trade War,” *Reuters*, January 15, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china-timeline/timeline-key-dates-in-the-u-s-china-trade-war-idUSKBN1ZE1AA>.

¹¹⁵ “Republican Party Platform of 1980.” The American Presidency Project, July 15, 1980, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980>.

pronounced “one of the key factors behind our nation’s great prosperity is the open trade policy that allows the American people to freely exchange goods and services with free people around the world,” during a Thanksgiving address to the nation.¹¹⁶ Chuck Grassley, U.S. Senator from Iowa claimed that there has been no shift for the Republican Party towards protectionist ideology. “[President Trump] hasn’t changed the Republican Party. We’re still a party of free trade,” proclaimed Senator Grassley.¹¹⁷

However, it is not completely clear if free trade was completely in the column for Republicans and protectionism for Democrats. While Republicans have appeared more sympathetic to the cause of free trade, we never saw complete free trade even when Republicans were in power. Democrats, certainly with their strong historic ties to labor unions, had in theory been the party in favor of protectionist trade policy, but there were some Republican outliers prior to the election of Donald Trump. Patrick Buchanan, former Republican and Reform Party presidential candidate was one of a few Republicans that outwardly voiced opposition to the tide of free trade. “Free trade is the serial killer of American manufacturing and the trojan horse of world government. It is the primrose path to the loss of economic independence and national sovereignty. Free trade is a bright shining lie,” Buchanan opined in his book titled *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency*.¹¹⁸ Even though Buchanan was a significant candidate for the Republican Party presidential nomination in both 1992 and 1996, he was not able to garner a

¹¹⁶ Phil Levy, “Is the GOP Still the Party of Free Trade?,” The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute, accessed April 15, 2023, <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/reagan-institute/publications/is-the-gop-still-the-party-of-free-trade/>.

¹¹⁷ Levy, “Is the GOP Still the Party of Free Trade?”

¹¹⁸ Patrick J. Buchanan, *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency* (New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books, 2004). p.171

significant enough support in each respective primary. Buchanan was not necessarily a fringe candidate either, garnering over twenty percent of the primary vote each time, but his protectionist vision became more and more an outlier as we moved into the 21st century.

The question lies is whether Trumps victory in 2016 and his continued influence in the Republican Party in regard to the issue of trade has pushed the needle into a majority protectionist position. Pew research did a poll prior during the 2016 primary season, asking whether free trade agreements between the United States and other countries have been good or bad. Overall, respondents had a slightly more positive view of United States free trade policies compared to those with a negative opinion.

Respondents who were either Hillary Clinton backers or Bernie Sanders supporters had a generally positive opinion on United States trade policies. However, when looking at how supporters of John Kasich, Ted Cruz, and Trump, viewed free trade policies, we see that there was an overall negative view of free trade policies. Trump voters in particular had an even more significant negative viewpoint of free trade policies compared to his Republican counterparts.¹¹⁹ A poll done by Harvard at the same time of the Pew research poll discovered that eighty-five percent of Republicans believed that free trade policies have cost more U.S. jobs than it has created.¹²⁰

Peter Navarro, former senior policy advisor to Trump and professor of economics at University of California Irvine declared that “There’s been a schism for a long time

¹¹⁹ Bruce Stokes, “Republicans, Especially Trump Supporters, See Free Trade Deals as Bad for U.S.,” Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, July 28, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/03/31/republicans-especially-trump-supporters-see-free-trade-deals-as-bad-for-u-s/>.

¹²⁰ Benjamin Oreskes, “Harvard Poll: Amid Trump's Rise, GOP Voters Turn Sharply Away from Free Trade,” *POLITICO*, September 24, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/09/politico-harvard-poll-free-trade-trump-gop-228600>

between registered Republicans and the party leadership. That was the essence of the primary election. You had a group of insider politicians singing the same old globalization song. And one candidate saying the emperor has no clothes.”¹²¹ The observation that there was a growing rift within the Republican party regarding free trade was noted not only by Navarro but numerous other political analysts. Due to this sudden more mainstream rejection of free trade agreements, some leaders in the Republican party are not willing to concede this territory but instead help the party faithful navigate back to the free trade consensus. Former chief strategist for Mitt Romney, Stuart Stevens attacks the change by stating “I think it’s a disaster across the board for the Republican Party, because you’re betting against all these trends [in globalization] that are not going to stop.” He argues that it is not necessarily a shift that cannot be stopped but can be restored if the people at the top do a “good job of selling” the policy.¹²²

The weakness of the position of free trade in the Republican party was not only challenged by Pat Buchanan, but it has been hovering in the balance, but failed to take center stage until the election of Trump. “There’s always been a vulnerability in that position, and Donald Trump blew a massive hole in that position,” asserted Thea Lee, the Deputy Undersecretary for International Affairs, and former Deputy Chief of Staff at the AFL-CIO.¹²³ The 2004 Republican Party platform championed as the idea of free trade, arguing “consumers have benefited – recent trade agreements save the average family of four \$2000 per year by lowering regulatory barriers, eliminating tariffs, and

¹²¹. Benjamin Oreskes, “Harvard Poll: Amid Trump's Rise, GOP Voters Turn Sharply Away from Free Trade,” *POLITICO*, September 24, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/09/politico-harvard-poll-free-trade-trump-gop-228600>

¹²² Oreskes, “Harvard Poll: Amid Trump’s Rise, GOP Voters Turn Sharply Away From Free Trade.”

¹²³ Oreskes, “Harvard Poll: Amid Trump’s Rise, GOP Voters Turn Sharply Away From Free Trade.”

providing more consumer choices.”¹²⁴ A poll done by The Wall Street Journal and NBC in October of 2007, illustrated that a majority of Republican voters had a negative view of free trade agreements.¹²⁵ This poll showed a growing trend that many Republicans began to distrust the merits of free trade. However, even though there was a shift bubbling within the Republican Party, in the 2008 version of the party platform they continued to promote free trade. The platform reads “with 95 percent of the world's customers outside our borders, we need to be at the table when trade rules are written to make sure that free trade is indeed a two-way street. We encourage multilateral, regional, and bilateral agreements to reduce trade barriers that limit market access for U.S. products, commodities, and services.”¹²⁶ Lastly, in 2012, the Republican party platform is still pushing for expansion of free trade agreements including a Trans-Pacific partnership, which was eventually demonized by both parties in the 2016 election. Even though in the 2012 edition there was a greater caution of free trade with “hostile” countries, it still promoted the strengths of free trade. “The Free Trade Agreements negotiated with friendly democracies since President Reagan's trailblazing pact with Israel in 1985 facilitated the creation of nearly ten million jobs supported by our exports.”¹²⁷ Based upon the continued presence a free trade message in the platform, but the trending poll numbers towards a more protectionist philosophy by Republican voters, there appeared to be a rift between the leadership and the voters.

¹²⁴ “2004 Republican Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 30, 2004, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2004-republican-party-platform>.

¹²⁵ Scott Horsley, “Poll: Republican Voters Cool to Free Trade,” NPR (NPR, October 9, 2007), <https://www.npr.org/2007/10/09/15110980/poll-republican-voters-cool-to-free-trade>.

¹²⁶ “2008 Republican Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, September 1, 2008, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2008-republican-party-platform>.

¹²⁷ “2012 Republican Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 27, 2012, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2012-republican-party-platform>.

The Democratic Party platforms have slowly become more in favor of free trade, with a few more caveats explaining the need to make sure free trade promotes fairness. In the 1988 Democratic Party platform we see a strong desire to keep jobs in America by stating “We Believe that America needs more trade, fair trade, an Administration willing to use all the tools available to better manage our trade in order to export more American goods and fewer American jobs.”¹²⁸ However, shortly after the passage of NAFTA the Democrats exclaimed in 1996 that “we must continue to expand trade, and not retreat from the world. America's markets are open to the world, so America has a right to demand that the world's markets are open to our products,” in their party platform.¹²⁹ By the time of the 2016 party platform, the Democrats lettered a significant amount of vague language about making existing trade agreements stronger, but very little discussion on whether free trade should be pulled back. Free trade, in all actuality, at least on the party establishment level, was consistent between both parties. Democratic leadership would often make open statements that given a nod to labor unions who sought to have more protections for their respective industries.

No Longer the Policemen of the World

Presidents from both the Republican and Democratic Parties have been the presiding commander and chief of the armed forces during war and have given the executive call to intervene conflicts. One of the most fundamental functions of an effective government is their ability to protect its people from outside threats whether it

¹²⁸ “1988 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, July 18, 1988, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1988-democratic-party-platform>.

¹²⁹ “1996 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 26, 1996, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1996-democratic-party-platform>.

be through military conflict or through diplomacy. At the formation of the United States, it was policy to proceed with an isolationist foreign policy. Over the centuries, from the Monroe Doctrine to the Roosevelt Corollary to the Bush Doctrine, the United States international conflict strategy became increasingly more interventionist. Starting with the sixth party neither party appeared to be anti-intervention, just mostly provided political opposition to the president's political party. However, due to the finale of the Cold War spearheaded by Reagan, the first Persian Gulf conflict under George H.W. Bush and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ushered by George W. Bush at least in perception the Republican Party was more closely linked to interventionist policy than the Democratic Party. With exception of 1964 Republican presidential nominee Barry Goldwater and presidential candidate Buchanan, the Republican party official stance showed ardent support of the policeman strategy.

Buchanan, whom some deem as the pioneer of the modern populist movement was one of the first notable Republicans to begin actively speaking out against foreign wars opting for an isolationist strategy. During his 1992 candidacy in which he challenged the incumbent Bush, he spoke very sternly about the need to get involved in the Persian Gulf war. In his book *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency*, his disdain for interventionist ideology can be illustrated in this quote from the book "The price of your occupation of Iraq, the price of your empire in the Muslim world, is terror. The Islamic terrorists of 9/11 were over here because we were over there."¹³⁰ However, this was the exception to the rule within the Republican party. The Neoconservative movement,

¹³⁰ Patrick Buchanan, *Where the Right Went Wrong: How the Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2004). p.85

which included a very hawkish foreign policy continued to hold steady up until the election of Trump.

George W. Bush had a large fingerprint on the 2000 Republican Party Platform, demonstrating a strong desire to continue the ideology spearheaded by Reagan that the United States had a responsibility to spread Democracy global and eliminate threats to peace globally. “Almost all Americans know they cannot prosper alone in the world. They know that America is safest when more and more countries share a profound belief in political and economic liberty, human dignity, and the rule of law, when more and more nations join the United States in an emerging fellowship of freedom.”¹³¹ In contrast, the 2000 Democratic Party platform states “Mired in the past, the Republican Party fails to realize that ensuring peace and security for Americans today does not just mean guarding against armies on the march. It means investing in building the global peace.”¹³² By the time the United States was fully engaged in conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, it highlighted the stark differences in the philosophies of each party. However, in the 2008 and 2012 Democratic party platforms, we do see language that opposes unilateral action in non-self-defense situations, such as the war in Iraq, but there is a shift in language, which is also calling for the need for the United States to spread democracy through military strength if necessary.¹³³

¹³¹ “2000 Republican Party Platform.” The American Presidency Project, July 31, 2000.

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2000-republican-party-platform>.

¹³² “2000 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 14, 2000,

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2000-democratic-party-platform>.

¹³³ “2008 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, August 25, 2008,

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2008-democratic-party-platform>; “2012 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, September 3, 2012,

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2012-democratic-party-platform>.

During the Trump presidency, there was a lot of debate on whether he was the first modern president to not start any new wars as claimed by Trump himself, and a whole plethora of his supporters.¹³⁴ Regardless of the truth of that statement, as many point to Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford as examples that contradict it, but it does elucidate a general shift in the talking points by Republicans.¹³⁵ Prior to Trump's election in 2016, on the campaign trail he began to put forth his America First foreign policy to the public. Trump opined that "We're rebuilding other countries while weakening our own."¹³⁶ It was also clear that Trump not only wanted to remove itself from nations in which America was trying to build democracies, he also stated numerous times of a desire to leave the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, due to it not being in America's interest, including what Trump felt as an unfair amount of money spent compared to other NATO members.¹³⁷ "NATO was set up at a different time. NATO was set up when we were a richer country. We're not a rich country anymore. We're borrowing, we're borrowing all of this money," Trump proclaimed during a discussion he had with the Washington Post during his 2016 presidential campaign.¹³⁸ However, even with Trump's megaphone, it has not appeared to sway the majority of the Republican Party to distance itself from foreign entities like NATO to establish a new philosophy on foreign policy. In

¹³⁴ Loren Thompson, "Love Him or Hate Him, President Trump's Defense Legacy Is Profound," *Forbes*, December 15, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2020/12/15/love-him-or-hate-him-president-trumps-defense-legacy-is-profound/?sh=23276d5a795a>.

¹³⁵ Noah Y Kim, "Fact-Check: Is Trump the 'first President in Modern History' Who Didn't Start a New War?," *Statesman*, February 3, 2021, <https://www.statesman.com/story/news/politics/politifact/2021/02/03/donald-trump-jr-distorts-fathers-war-record-president-fact-check/4371243001/>.

¹³⁶ Ryan Teague Beckwith, "Read Donald Trump's 'America First' Foreign Policy Speech," *Time*, April 29, 2021, <https://time.com/4309786/read-donald-trumps-america-first-foreign-policy-speech/>.

¹³⁷ Julian E. Barnes and Helene Cooper, "Trump Discussed Pulling U.S. from NATO, Aides Say amid New Concerns over Russia," *New York Times*, January 15, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/14/us/politics/nato-president-trump.html>.

¹³⁸ Shayna Freisleben, "A Guide to Trump's Past Comments about NATO," *CBS News*, April 12, 2017, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-nato-past-comments/>.

2019, when a house resolution was made to reestablish, the United States support of NATO, only twenty-two Republicans voted against it.¹³⁹ That is a significant number of people to vote against something that historically would have received unanimous Republican support, however, it still is only a small percentage of the Republicans in the house.

Recently, during the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we have seen some more push back by individual's that are part of Trumps' unofficial America First team in congress in regard to supporting the Ukrainian's. In the Spring of 2022, a forty-billion-dollar humanitarian package was put on the table in Congress to support Ukraine. This package received fifty-seven no votes from Republicans, in a situation that, fifteen years ago, would most likely have been a unanimous vote. This vote total is also an increase, compared to the number of people who opposed the NATO support a few years earlier. Some of this is due to a running a trend of conspiracy against Ukraine and their dealings with the Biden family, but mostly due to a growing number of Trump populist who are seeking to invest less in foreign conflict. However, still three quarters of all the Republicans in the House were in favor of supporting Ukraine with a forty-billion-dollar aid package. Mitch McConnell responded to the reluctance of Republicans to aide Ukraine by stating "There have always been isolationist voices in the Republican Party, and there were prior to World War II, and that's perfectly alright," McConnell said. "This is a debate worth having. It's an important subject. And I think one of the lessons we

¹³⁹ Jim Thompson, "Gaetz Explains Vote on NATO Resolution," *The Northwest Florida Daily News*, January 23, 2019, <https://www.nwfdailynews.com/story/special/special-sections/2019/01/23/gaetz-explains-vote-on-nato-resolution/6218256007/>.

learned from World War II is not standing up to aggression early. It's a huge mistake.”¹⁴⁰

It's clear in McConnell's tone, that he is aware of a faction of isolationist within the Republican Party but is speaking from a position of the majority.

¹⁴⁰ Deirdre Walsh, *McConnell Says the Senate Will Pass the Largest Ukraine Aid Package yet on Wednesday*, NPR, May 15, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/15/1099018706/mcconnell-says-the-senate-will-pass-the-largest-ukraine-aid-package-yet-on-wedne>.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The importance of understanding whether America is going through a new party shift is extremely important not just for the political junky, or operative, but also for the citizen as they make their choice each fall for people and parties to represent them. Past party shifts have completely transformed the social and economic landscape of America. The competition that formed in the first party shift, brought about grassroots campaigning and the introduction of party platforms. The second party shift further entrenched the regional differences between the North and the South. The most recent shift was instrumental in the mobilization of the Civil Rights movement and subsequent social movements.

Past indicators of party shifts, while they may be helpful in guiding us, and informing us of the potential of future changes, the complexities of the modern world, and being in the present space make it tremendously difficult in deciphering. This thesis explored factors that might give us intel on whether we have gone through a shift. Elements that were explored in this thesis was a deep dive into the party platforms to ascertain shifts in language that might point to philosophical changes within each major political party. An analysis of poll numbers on various political issues was investigated to see how Republicans and Democrats potentially are shifting on issues, if they are. Also surveyed was statements and opinions of leadership within each political party to assess if they are signaling changes within the party system. An ethnic demographics overview was also explored as a possible factor in demonstrating elements of a party-system shift.

Lastly, it was important to look at the affect that college education has on a prospective shift in the party-system and the subsequent political party affiliation of those.

First, the analysis of the party platforms was done to review the language utilized on key topics from education, trade, foreign policy, climate change, etc. Although the language every four years was either more elaborate, or organized differently, or certain issues may have garnered a greater focal point, there was not an entire wholesale change in any one issue. For the most part, after reading through the party platforms of the past forty years, it does not seem to be an excellent tool to analyze. One of the reasons, was that the language is mostly written in vague political speak that even when there are changes being made, those changes are often hedged hard. For example, in the Democratic Party platforms throughout the past twenty years there has been a shift in positive language towards globalization, moreover, it also frequently lends a nod to the labor unions and discusses the benefit of trade policies that does not kill labor union jobs. Similarly in the 2016 Republican Party platform, there is a shift in discussion on striving for fairer trade, and renegotiating trade deals, but it does not advocate for protectionist policies that many America First Republicans have advocated for. Lastly, one of the biggest difficulties in the analysis, is the Republicans did not incorporate a new platform in 2020, they just readopted the 2016, and it would have been the 2020 platform that would have had the strongest Trump influence.

Ethnic demographic shifts have been a hallmark of the past two previous shifts, but it appears there has not been a sustained, significant shift in the past twenty years, or even since the election of Trump. There was a theorized shift by many Republicans that due to conservative Catholic values brought to America by many individuals from Latin

America, that at least there would be a significant increase in Latino voters in the column for Republicans. However, based upon the polling data, and voter affiliation, the Latino voter population has remained mostly static, apart from some more localized voting patterns, on a national level, there was not a migration to the Republican Party. The demographic shift with other large racial and ethnic groupings also continued the disparity that had started during the sixth party-system. There was some movement during the first couple years of the Joe Biden presidency, but fluctuation in demographics in response to the current popularity of the executive is a normal occurrence and does not signify the sustained growth needed to call for a demographic shift.

The one point of significant transformation, which has been ongoing for some time is the connection between educational level and party affiliation. The numbers are clear on this shift, and it is a shift that has been sustaining. It was during the 2016 Presidential Election that we see the first seeing college educated white males going for the Democratic presidential candidate since before the sixth party system. There also appears to be a shift in the viewpoints of the college educated, which coincides with the shift towards a different party. Social institutions have a significant impact on the way a society thinks and interacts with one another, and this trend will be one that will be important to track in the coming years.

Party leadership with exception of Trump and his affiliates still appear to take most of the stances they have been standing for during the entire sixth party-system. While many leaders are fearful of how it might look to criticize Trump publicly and the backlash from his loyalist, the issues, however, have not changed dramatically if at all.

What we are really seeing is a continuance of the increasing polarization of extreme factions from each party, and not necessarily a new dramatic shift.

At this point, it does not appear that have entered a new party shift. This absence of a shift does not mean that there are not indicators of change, or that the possibility of a shift is not plausible. As with all of the previous party shifts, it was not apparent until after the fact. Hindsight will give us a greater window into the status, but also time will need to transpire to truly establish when America enters a new party system. One element that will need to be reviewed to see if the party's shift, is if Trump's influence will continue, and will his faction of America First populist grow. The current populist faction of the Republican Party is still in the minority, particularly when we discuss leadership, but if this trend towards a more isolationist, protective tariff, America First movement continues and grows, it could be enough to push America into a new party system. It does not necessarily take two parties to initiate the shift, but it can be a dramatic change in one party, or a new issue that becomes more prominent that can lead to a shift. The movement into the third party-system was initiated by slavery. The movement into the fourth party-system was hinged upon a rural focus by the Democrats. So, it is conceivable for the rise of a faction in the Republican Party to perpetuate this seventh party-system, but unfortunately at this point it is inconclusive, and we will need more time to transpire to make the call.

For a shift to complete or happen in the future, it is hinged upon a continued development of the populist right. Currently the composition of both chambers of congress only has a small fraction that one would consider to be an America First legislator. It will be important to watch out what will transpire in the 2024 presidential

election cycle. If Trump is able to secure the nomination for the Republican presidential candidate, his influence will only increase. Particularly if in 2024, he not only wins the nomination in the Republican Party but is able to secure a victory in the general election. Trumps influence would only grow in stature, and many people to stay in the Republican Party, would need to be closer in lock step with his opinions and viewpoints. Remember the second party system was initiated by the emergence of what many deem as a reaction to the forceful style of Andrew Jackson. If elected, it would appear that a shift would potentially happen quite dramatically.

Currently, Republican leadership such as Mitch McConnell and Kevin McCarthy have been savvy in maintaining stances which would appease both establishment Republicans as well as catering enough to the populist to maintain their leadership. One of the biggest resistances within the Republican Party from the populist right becoming a larger factor within the party, and completely transforming it, is the old guard within the party maintaining its power within the party. Throughout the country state legislatures have played a tremendous role in preventing third parties from gaining legitimacy. It is within the very nature of political parties to continue to try and acquire control of legislative authority. However, if it is shown to the rest of those in the Republican Party that taking a populist message can lead to victory, and that Trump indeed wins the general election again, it will be a natural course of action that the party will begin to coalesce around the populist ideology. We would also see a more significant contribution towards the development of the party platform. Republicans did not even generate a new party platform in 2020 because of the limited number of people involved in the

convention due to COVID restrictions, but we could expect an even greater populist influence on a new platform.

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