

Pre-Publication PDF

THE
REPUBLICAN
EVOLUTION

FROM GOVERNING PARTY
TO ANTIGOVERNMENT PARTY,
1860–2020

KENNETH JANDA



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Pre-publication Reviews

This fascinating study traces the Republican Party's view of the world, and itself, from birth to the present. . . . Janda's scholarship provides information and insights that men and women of good intention can employ to save this fast-failing political institution, which in turn threatens American democracy. Indeed, this book belongs on the must-read list needed to save our two-party system and our democracy.

John W. Dean, Former Nixon White House Counsel

Competing political parties, committed to democratic values and institutions, are essential ingredients of pluralist democracy. But in recent years, as the highly respected comparative politics specialist Kenneth Janda shows, the Republican Party has been undermining, rather than upholding, essential democratic norms. *The Republican Evolution* is a timely analysis of a democracy in crisis, of how America got there, and of what needs to be done if the USA is to serve as inspiration rather than warning.

Archie Brown, Emeritus Professor of Politics, *University of Oxford*

Outstanding! This book represents the definitive analysis of the Republican Party, its policy commitments, changes that have taken place over time, and how the party has evolved from its birth in 1856 to the cult of Trump in contemporary times. It stands out for the quality, originality and comprehensiveness of its analysis. A tightly reasoned explanatory framework adds a historical perspective. . . . The book sets the standard for the field

William Crotty, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, *Northeastern University*

Professor Janda gives us the long view of changes in the Republican Party, with observations of critical points and periods of transformation well supported by close examination of historical documents and presenting statistical evidence. This is an illuminating work potentially of interest to a wide readership, with suggestions for Republicans to regain connection with and to honor their roles in forming America's heritage.

Jack Flynn, Professor Emeritus of History and Geography, *St. Catherine University*

Kenneth Janda's book is the culmination of decades of research. His detailed analysis of how the Republican Party has abandoned its historical roots from a party of freedom to an insurgent outlier that represents an ongoing threat to our democratic institutions is both timely and welcome.

John Kenneth White, Professor of Politics, *Catholic University of America*

An expansive and prescriptive study of the Grand Old Party since 1860, Janda's *The Republican Evolution: From Governing Party to Anti-Government Party 1860-2020* highlights how divisive issues define but divide the modern Republican Party. Examining party platforms since 1856, Janda maps the evolution of the Republican Party on issues like trade policy, law and order, and civil rights, adeptly demonstrating how the Party moved from being the "Party of Lincoln" to an anti-government party and diagnosing the ills of the Party system along the way. This book is important for scholars of political parties and a must read for anyone concerned about American democracy.

Brandon Rottinghaus, Professor of Political Science, *University of Houston*

Professor Janda stunningly combines scholarly discoveries with worrisome insights into the realities of contemporary politics. His research on Republican ideology from Lincoln to Trump is—in one word—the best study of party platforms ever published. But, sadly, his unique research also reveals the deterioration of the once Grand Old Party to an ethnocentric tribe and personality cult that threatens the future of all of American democracy.

Gerald Pomper, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, *Rutgers University*

Kenneth Janda's *The Republican Evolution* is a persuasive analysis of what has happened to one of our two great political parties. The GOP once governed with competence and compassion under Lincoln, TR and Eisenhower, and once was a "champion of national authority and political equality." But in the last half-century, Janda charts how it has become increasingly narrow and cramped, advocating states' rights, defending racial inequalities and—in the recent past—become dominated by corrosive tribal politics and the destructive personality cult of Donald J. Trump.

A pioneering scholar in using quantitative methods in his discipline, the author uses a large data set with all the planks from party platforms across the long history of the Republican Party, whose evolution he assesses in this important study.

David H. Bennett, Professor Emeritus of History, *Syracuse University*

A NOTE ON THE COVER

Both colors on the book's cover relate to Republican history. Originally, blue was the Republican color. The Union Army fought in blue uniforms against Confederate forces in gray. After the war, government soldiers enforcing reconstruction were called "the blues." The speaker at a 1888 Republican rally in Chicago praised the weather "as clear as the record of the Republican party" and the glorious blue sky, which was "True Republican blue at that."

In contrast, red symbolized the 1917 Russian Revolution. So it became associated with communism, socialism, and leftism. Into the 1920s, a "Red Scare" of communism filled American media. After World War II, Republican Senator Joe McCarthy led a second "Red Scare." In 1953, the Cincinnati Reds baseball team's owner officially changed its name to Redlegs. Founded in 1881, the team dared not reclaim its original name until 1961.

That history of hues led many political scientists to color Republican and Democratic victories blue and red respectively on election maps. The *Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections* website still plots all election results since 1789 in blue for Republicans and in red for Democrats.

Television reversed the historic colors for the two parties in reporting results for the historic 2000 election. The November 7 election was not decided until December 12. Jodi Enda in the *Smithsonian Magazine* wrote: "The 2000 election dragged on until mid-December, until the Supreme Court declared Bush the victor. For weeks, the maps were ubiquitous. Perhaps that's why the 2000 colors stuck."

Today's Republican Party celebrates a traditionally communism color. The cover captures the irony, **Republican in blue, Evolution** in red. Momus, the Greek god of mockery, must be smiling at the new "red scare" for Democrats.

Evolution can be defined as any net directional change or any cumulative change in the characteristics of organisms or populations over many generations—in other words, descent with modifications.

J. A. Endler, *Natural Selection in the World*

DEDICATION

My wife, Ann Janda, who helped with early chapters of this book, joins me in dedicating it to our teenage grandsons,

Leo Alexander Janda Milne and Benjamin Ryder Janda Milne.

We hope that they will live as adults under a democratic two-party system.

PREFACE

We all have biases in what we see, like, and think. Readers deserve to know some of mine. I admit to Democratic inclinations. I have usually—but not always—voted for Democratic candidates. I also am biased toward legislatures as instruments of democratic government and as objects of study. My doctoral dissertation dealt with the Indiana General Assembly. I felt then and now that legislatures have closer links to citizens than elected executives—e.g., governors or presidents. Legislatures are physical and visible. One can visit their chambers and talk to the legislators. In contrast, political parties (which I study now) are intangible, and invisible. They are leprechauns in the political forest.

In the spring of 1965, my bias toward legislatures made me receptive to a phone call from the conservative Washington think tank, the American Enterprise Institute. AEI invited me to contribute to its planned book on the U.S. Congress; to meet in Washington on the project in the summer; and to submit my work by early fall for publication in 1966. Involved at the time in other work, I initially declined, but promptly accepted, after learning that AEI would pay me \$2,000, about one-quarter of my Assistant Professor salary then at Northwestern University.

AEI undertook its book project in reaction to results of the 1964 presidential election. Democratic President Lyndon Johnson had won 61 percent of the popular vote and 90 percent of the electoral vote over Republican Barry Goldwater. Elevated to the presidency after John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963, Johnson was elected on his own in 1964 and was expected to run again in 1968. Anticipating rule by a liberal Democratic administration for two more presidential terms, AEI foresaw an onslaught of undesirable policies and looked to Congress as a shield. Adopting a defensive posture, the conservative think tank assembled an ideologically diverse group of scholars to write about the virtues of a strong Congress.

The ten other scholars who accepted AEI's generous invitation and gathered in Washington that summer of 1965 were established authors in American politics.¹ I had not written anything noteworthy in that field, but earlier that year I published the first book on computer applications in political research.² Accordingly, AEI asked me to write on improving Congress through computer usage. My piece appeared in AEI's book, *Congress: The First Branch of Government*, published in 1966.³ The Washington think tank quickly flooded the nation's newspapers with releases about Congress as the people's bulwark against executive rule. Each contributor received 16" by 20" montages made from scores of newspaper clippings from Maine to California.

Numerous clippings featured my contribution, "Information Systems for Congress." In the fall of 1967, the Association for Computing Machinery invited me to give a plenary address at its semi-annual conference in Anaheim, California.⁴ Later, AEI asked me to co-author a 1968 book on Congress' use of program budgeting, a method for tracking project revenues and expenses that was well-suited to computers.⁵ AEI even contributed modestly to my new NSF-funded cross-national study of political parties.

In November 1968, Republican Richard Nixon defeated Democrat Hubert Humphrey by 0.7 percent of the popular vote in the presidential election. Suddenly the American Enterprise Institute lost interest in Congress and in me. With Republicans now in charge of the presidency, AEI no longer viewed Congress as a bulwark against undesirable governmental policies. And so I learned, in a personal way, how party politics trumps political philosophy. I naively thought that AEI wanted to empower Congress—"the First Branch of Government"—as a matter of principle. However important

that was to the conservative think tank, it was less important than regaining control of “the Second Branch”—the presidency.

I once believed that both of our major parties valued maintaining the democratic foundation of our two party system above winning any election. Today, I fear that many Republican partisans favor winning office over adhering to the norms of democratic elections.

Unlike my other academic studies of cross-national political parties and comparative party politics, *The Republican Evolution: From Governing Party to Anti-Government Party, 1860-2020*, has a political purpose. It aims not to trash the party but to help restore the GOP to its former grandeur. By documenting the party’s original principles and how they changed over time, I hope to remind Republicans of their party’s history of promoting national unity while governing for the public good. Today, the party operates in reverse, opposing national government while sowing sectionalism by pursuing the Democrats’ old “states’ rights” philosophy.

Codifying Republican principles in 2,722 planks identified in all 41 party platforms since 1856, I describe the Republican Party’s experience over three different historical eras. The party’s illustrious *Nationalism* era lasted from 1860 to 1924, during which Republicans emphasized *Order* over *Anarchy*. In their *Neoliberalism* era from 1928 to 1960, Republicans downplayed government, favoring the *Individual* over the *State*. In 1964, the party entered an era of *Ethnocentrism*, demeaning national government and favoring *White Christians* over *Others*. During this era, Republicans have acted increasingly as a social tribe catering to their dwindling tribal base.

The Grand Old Party once governed the nation effectively and compassionately under presidents Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower. The party today moves in a different direction, chosen by presidential nominee Barry Goldwater, driven forward by President Ronald Reagan, and steered to the cliff’s edge by defeated incumbent Donald Trump. It opposes government policies that would reduce income inequalities, lessen social inequalities, advance health care, improve the environment, and combat climate change—ostensibly because such policies might infringe on personal freedom. Whereas in 1953, Eisenhower told Congress that Social Security was “an essential part of our economic and social life,” Goldwater in 1960 wrote that its six percent tax “compels millions of individual to postpone until later years the enjoyment of wealth they might otherwise enjoy today.”

As a citizen, I admit preferring Democratic policies. As a political scientist, I care more about maintaining the vigorous two-party system that has sustained our American version of democracy for over 200 years. Current Republican leaders are quick to abandon responsible party politics for short-term electoral gains. By studying Republicans acting as a *political party*, an *electoral team*, a *social tribe*, and a *personality cult*, I show how the Party of Lincoln has evolved to the Party of Trump. It behaves less like a principled political party whose electoral team accepts the outcome of democratic voting than like a social tribe or personality cult claiming transcendent superiority to rule.

Parties can change. For a century after the Civil War, the Democratic Party’s southern wing stained their national party with racism. Then in 1948, Democrats had a political epiphany; they awakened to their sordid silence on civil rights. The 1948 Democratic Convention adopted the party’s first civil rights plank, causing southern delegations to walk out of the convention. The Democrats gained far more in stature than they temporarily lost in electoral support. Perhaps my account of how their party reversed its principles will encourage some Republican activists to engineer a comparable Republican epiphany, to become the party’s new heroes, and to make the Grand Old Party grand again.

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INTRODUCTION

I admit to Democratic partisanship, but I am more loyal to democratic government. More than fifty years of research and writing on democracy and party politics have convinced me that no nation can practice democratic government in the absence of a responsible, competitive party system.⁶ Given its constitutional structure, the United States cannot endure as a democracy without two major parties that compete for popular votes, that accept election outcomes, and that govern responsibly.⁷ Until 2020, both major parties, at different times to varying degrees, admirably fulfilled those requirements. Now one doubts whether the Republican Party—the Grand Old Party of the republic—will continue to behave like a democratic party.

I wrote this book for contemporary Republican activists who are uneasy with the trajectory of their party, hoping some among them will act to restore the GOP's old grandeur. Of course my assessment reflects my personal views, but those views are informed by extensive research into the party's own principles, culled from 2,722 planks from all Republican Party platforms since 1856. Reviewing the planks from their party's past for themselves, Republican activists can discover how far the GOP has strayed from its proud history. I show when and why their party scrapped key principles. In some cases, the party changed course because the principles became historically and socially outdated. Other times, it temporarily slighted its principles to win votes. In 1964, however, Republicans deliberately deserted their honorable party's heritage and began catering to racial prejudices.

Before abandoning the party's founding principles in 1964, Republicans, unlike Democrats, could be justifiably proud of their party's past. Historically, the Democratic Party was saddled with a southern wing stained since the Civil War with racism. Nevertheless, the 1948 Democratic National Convention squarely faced its dark past and adopted its first civil rights plank, causing some southern delegations to walk out of the hall. By endorsing civil rights for minorities in 1948, Democrats began dismantling their sordid racial legacy. Perhaps knowing what Democrats did nearly 75 years ago will encourage Republican activists today to act to restore their party, to make it responsibly competitive.

My reading and assessment of Republican Party is not new. Other political analysts have shared their concerns about changes in the Republican Party since the Eisenhower era. Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein at the conservative American Enterprise Institute published several books about the party's dysfunctional role in government. *The Broken Branch* (2006)⁸ criticized both parties for failing to cooperate in Congress, but came down harder on Republicans. Mann and Ornstein in *It's Even Worse Than It Looks* (2012)⁹ described the Republican Party as an "insurgent outlier," and they (along with E. J. Dionne) showed in *One Nation After Trump* (2017) that the party's radicalization had been going on for decades before Trump.¹⁰ According to Geoffrey Kabaservice's book, *Rule and Ruin* (2012), the Republican Party underwent its fundamental change in the 1960s.¹¹ Most recently, in *At War with Government*, Amy Fried and Douglas Harris claim that Trump was continuing a war with government that began with Barry Goldwater in 1960.¹² My complementary study of the party's change is based on different information, new information, and takes note of Donald Trump's cult-like effect on the Republican Party.

The party's politics crystalized at the 1960 GOP convention that nominated Richard Nixon over Barry Goldwater. Facing Nixon's inevitable win, Goldwater supported Nixon's nomination but also challenged conservatives to "grow up" and "take back" the party. After Nixon's 1960 loss to John F. Kennedy, frustrated Republicans nominated Goldwater in 1964. Today, conservatives need to "own up"

to what has happened to their party in 1964. They should “take it back,” not with the hollow MAGA boast, making their party “Great Again,” but with a vision of reclaiming its former morality—of restoring grandeur to the GOP.

When a major political party changes its political philosophy, it impacts the public. Founded in 1854 to prevent the expansion of slavery outside southern states, the Republican Party won the 1860 elections for president and won both houses of Congress. In complete control of the national government, the Republican president fought the South’s attempt to secede from the Union. The Republican Party later guaranteed political equality to newly freed slaves. The Republican Party began as a governing party, one willing to use its power to shape the nation.

Today, the party has evolved into an anti-government party. In his book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Barry Goldwater, the 1964 Republican presidential nominee, laid out his libertarian views for limited government:

I have little interest in streamlining government or in making it more efficient, for I mean to reduce its size. I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them.¹³

He continued:

The government must begin to withdraw from a whole series of programs that are outside its constitutional mandate from social welfare programs, education, public power, agriculture, public housing, urban renewal and all the other activities that can be better performed by lower levels of government or by private foundations or by individuals.¹⁴

In his inaugural address on January 20, 1981, Republican President Ronald Reagan voiced his party’s understanding of the nation’s economic condition: “Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.” The party that had fought a Civil War against states’ rights on slavery and battled against states’ right arguments in enacting civil rights became an advocate of states’ rights and an opponent of government programs that serve the public and promote social equality.

The party did not change abruptly; it evolved over time. This book documents how the party’s principles evolved in 2,722 planks culled from 41 platforms from 1856 to 2016. It analyzes those principles over four organizational forms—Party, Team, Tribe, and Cult---that Republicanism has exhibited since 1856. The story divides into five parts.

Part I: Political Parties and Principles

Part I consists of three short chapters. Chapter 1 describes Republicans’ four organizational forms. At core is the *Party*—the organization that attracts activists to its political principles. A related but sometimes conflicting entity is the *Team* that aims at winning votes in elections. The Republican *Tribe* often aligns more closely with the Team than the Party. Very recently, a *Cult* formed around the person of President Donald Trump. After President Trump’s loss in the 2020 election, the Party entered an uneasy relationship with his Cult.

Chapter 2 identifies four principal benefits of government. Maintaining social *Order* is the original and fundamental benefit of government. Providing adequate *Freedom* to citizens while maintaining Order is not *per se* a benefit of government but an outcome of successful government.

Using government to promote *Equality* among citizens is a controversial benefit that did not emerge until the 19th century. In the 1780s, our Founding Fathers even failed to recognize equality among human beings, balking at ending the trade of slaves. After assuming control of government in 1860, however, the Republican Party promoted political equality among United States citizens. The fourth and final benefit of government is providing *Public Goods* (e.g., building roads, operating schools).

Chapter 3 inquires into how American political parties formulate their principles and announce them in party platforms, which foreign parties call “election manifestos.” Because American party platforms originate in a highly decentralized process involving party activists across the country, they provide the most authoritative statement of party principles and are more legitimate than speeches by presidential nominees.

Part II: Republican Party Planks

Part II has two short chapters. Chapter 4 considers and rejects historical analysis of party platforms on a liberal-conservative continuum. It examines at length John Gerring’s alternative classification of ideological epochs in the Democratic and Whig/Republican parties from 1828 to 1998.

Chapter 5 reports on cataloging 2,722 planks in 41 Republican platforms from 1856 to 2016. The planks were coded into 714 categories under four primary headings—Order, Freedom, Equality, and Public Goods. It also classified them under four secondary headings—Government, Military, Foreign Policy, and Symbolic.

Part III: Principles of Republicanism

Part III has eight chapters. Chapter 6, “Original Principles,” traces how the Republican Party, founded to prevent slavery’s spread outside the south, used national government to establish political equality within the United States, and then switched to being a states’ right party opposed to enforcing social equality.

Chapter 7, “Financing Government,” details two switches in party principles: (1) from embracing the Protective Tariff as its signature policy to becoming a Free Trade party, and (2) from proposing an income tax to provide additional revenue to opposing tax increases for erasing budget deficits.

Chapter 8, “Economic Affairs,” discloses that Republicans, backed by manufacturing industries, once closely regulated those industries before their party, as a defender of free enterprise, switched to opposing government regulations.

Chapter 9, “Law and Order,” examines the party’s complicated positions on death and life. On the surface, Republicans seem to favor using government power both to kill (favoring the death penalty) and to prevent killing (opposing abortion of a fetus). Incongruously, the party today opposes government action against buying firearms, while favoring government action against same-sex marriage.

Chapter 10. “Order and Culture,” considers shifts in Republican immigration policy. In the 19th century, the party welcomed immigrants, despite worries about admitting more Catholics. In the 21st century, the party shied from admitting non-Whites and non-Christians. Except for its successful

opposition against polygamy, the party generally lost its battles against the practice of alternative lifestyles in marriage and gender.

Chapter 11, “Conservation and Conservatives,” recounts the party’s retreat from championing conservation of the natural environment to advocating its development for economic gain.

Chapter 12, “Elections,” reviews the party’s changing positions on government’s responsibility to insure voting rights and the role of the Electoral College in choosing the president.

Chapter 13, “Evolving to Ethnocentrism,” reviews the findings of the six previous chapters and charts the Republican Party’s evolution from Gerring’s Nationalism epoch to its Neoliberalism epoch. I propose that in 1964 the Republican Party left Neoliberalism and entered an era of Ethnocentrism.

Part IV: Republicans as Team, Tribe, and Cult

Part IV has chapters on each of three organizational alternatives to the formal party organization. Chapter 14, the longest, analyzes the Republican Party as an Electoral Team. It identifies major occasions when the Republican Party chose between holding true to its principles and departing from them to win votes in presidential elections.

Chapter 15 relies on survey data to argue that many Republicans, originally attracted as fans to the Republican team, began to act like members of a Tribe. As tribal members, they intensified the difference between “we Republicans” and “those Democrats” in lifestyle as well as politics.

Chapter 16 sees the Republican tribe transforming into a Cult around the person of Donald Trump. Party principles became less important than personal pronouncements. Evidence took a backseat to assertions. Democracy lost.

Part V: Republican Restoration

Part V ends the book with two chapters. Chapter 17, “A Party in Peril,” assesses the state of the Republican Party in 2021, torn between fealty to former president Donald Trump and to others seeking to reestablish the party guided by principles not by personality.

Chapter 18, “A Republican Epiphany,” urges Republicans to acknowledge where their party stands morally and electorally. It contends that the GOP could improve its moral and electoral standings by abandoning its ethnocentric politics—if anyone could arise to lead the epiphany.

Epilogue: The New Republican Era

What might result from a Republican epiphany?

CHAPTER 1

Political Parties

The term “political party” deserves examination. It certainly implies an organization, a group of individuals who interact with one another to pursue a common goal with some division of labor and role differentiation. That’s true of all organizations. Parties differ from others by its goal: *to place its avowed representatives in government positions*.¹⁵ The term *avowed representatives* is important. It means that they must be openly identified with the party name or label. That excludes such organizations as the National Association of Manufacturers and the AFL-CIO, a federation of labor unions. Both endorse candidates in elections but do not nominate them to run as their avowed representatives. If they did, they would qualify as political parties.

Also, the term "placing" in government positions should be interpreted broadly to mean through the electoral process (when a party competes with one or more others in pursuing its goal) *or* by a direct administrative action (when a ruling party allows no electoral competition) *or* by forceful imposition (when a party subverts the system and captures the governmental offices).

Applying this definition and its interpretations allows ruling-out and ruling-in various organizations calling themselves parties. For example, the Black Panther Party, active in the 1960s to the 1980s, did not seek to place its members in government position, so did not fit the definition. A decade ago, some elected Republican members of Congress professed belonging to the Tea Party, which also did not nominate and run its own candidates.¹⁶ As a distinguished parties scholar wrote, “The recognizable label (which may or may not be on the ballot) is the crucial defining element,”¹⁷

What about political organizations that do not compete with others in elections, such as former Communist Parties in Russia and Eastern Europe? In his 1956 book, *Modern Political Parties*, Sigmund Neumann wrote, “Only the coexistence of at least one other competitive group makes a political party real,” and continued: “A one-party system is a contradiction in terms.”¹⁸ Nevertheless, Neumann’s book included an article on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Despite the way he defined a party, even Neumann found it awkward not to regard communist parties as political parties.¹⁹ If organizations seek to place their avowed representatives in government positions, they are political parties.

This thumbnail cross-national and cross-time review of political parties has relevance for studying party politics today. First, it establishes that not all organizations that call themselves parties qualify for the label; second, that parties differ in the extent they compete in elections and how well they perform; and third—and most important—political parties exist in governments across the world. That leads one to ask, why do they? Authoritarian regimes may create parties for the illusion of linking with citizens, but why do parties always arise in democratic governments?²⁰

John Aldrich addressed this question in his classic book, *Why Parties?*

Election requires persuading members of the public to support that candidacy and mobilizing as many of those supporters as possible. This is a problem of collective action. How do candidates get supporters to vote for them—at least in greater numbers than vote for the opposition—as well as get them to provide the cadre of workers and contribute the resources needed to win election? The political party has long been the solution.²¹

Winning a majority of votes from a large number of voters requires organized collective action from a set of individuals, hence the need for political parties. In democratic governments, contests for political office typically engender multiple parties, hence the creation of a party system. Every nation classified as a democracy has a system of at least two parties that seek to place its members in government by competing in elections. Since 1856, American politics has been structured by the same two competing parties: Republican and Democratic.

Parties, Teams, Tribes, and Cults

Granting that both parties want to elect their candidates to government positions, what binds Republicans and Democrats together in opposing parties? What motivates partisans to work collectively? Writers propose at least four different sources of motivation: *principle*, *winning*, *identity*, and *authority*. Each source underlies one of four organizational manifestations: *parties*, *teams*, *tribes*, and *cults*.

Parties: The most familiar term, political party, fits the popular view of politicians organized around common interests. Commenting on British politics in 1790, Edmund Burke held that parties joined politicians “united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principles in which they are all agreed.”²² We reserve the term, “political parties,” to such organizations, ones pursuing political principles. In truth, Burke wrote when parties were only factions within parliament. British political parties did not compete for votes in popular elections until the 1830s.²³ Nevertheless, Burke’s definition stands as the oldest, most accepted, and most noble rationale for their existence. This book inquires at length into the principles underlying the Republican Party.

Teams: Writing in the mid-1950s, Anthony Downs described parties as teams “seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.”²⁴ (That disqualifies any parties Burke knew.) Although Downs believed that parties proposed policies based on political principles, he argued that they mainly adopted policies and principles to win elections. Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the long-time Republican leader in the U.S. Senate, endorsed that pragmatic view. Speaking about candidates running in the 2020 elections (over a month after Donald Trump’s supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol and McConnell denounced President Trump’s role in the insurrection), McConnell said, “I personally don’t care what kind of Republicans they are, what lane they consider themselves in. What I care about is electability.”²⁵ For Downs, and presumably for McConnell, winning elections is key to implementing policies. This book documents times when the Republican Party sacrificed its principles in order to win elections.

Tribes: In two prominent 2018 publications, Lilliana Mason held that partisan behavior could be driven by another motivation: social identity—like belonging to a tribe.²⁶ When party identity links to social identity, party losses and wins become not just politically significant, but personally meaningful. Instead of contests between teams, elections become conflicts between tribes. Political symbolism acquires new meaning to members of warring tribes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, wearing or not wearing a mask became a social and political statement.²⁷ A national survey in mid-June 2020 found Republicans “much more likely than Democrats to say that masks should rarely or never be worn (23% vs. 4%).”²⁸ On the last day of the Minnesota state legislature’s special session in June, a reporter wrote: “Every Democrat entered the room with a face covering, but not one Republican wore a mask.”²⁹ A national survey a year later found 86 percent of Democrats vaccinated against COVID-19 versus 60 percent of Republicans.³⁰ Today, neither of our two national parties is actually a

tribe, but scholars have observed increases in tribal behavior among individual partisans, especially among Republicans. The question arises, do political tribes also have principles?

Cults: In 1922, the German sociologist Max Weber wrote on the concept of charisma, used to describe leaders with “expansive personalities who establish ascendancy over other human beings by their commanding forcefulness.”³¹ Their followers grant them wholesale authority to act for them on political matters. Adolph Hitler’s hold over the Nazi Party exemplified charismatic leadership, and scholars have referred to “The Cult of the Führer.”³² The term “personalist” refers to cult-like charismatic leadership in Latin America, where parties are sometimes named after their leaders—e.g., Juan Perón, whose followers were called Perónistas. These terms, charisma/cult/personalism, have not figured prominently in the history of American party politics. Certainly, Teddy Roosevelt attracted followers and even led them in a fruitless split from the Republican Party in 1912. His distant cousin, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, also had devotees, as did Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater. Independent presidential candidate Ross Perot also won 19 percent of the vote in the 1992 presidential election. Yet, the comprehensive review and analysis of personalist parties by Kostadinova and Levitt in 2014 mentions none of these names.³³ Before Donald Trump was elected president, American parties were not marred by personalist rule. Since then, waves of Republican partisans have succumbed to Trump’s authority, acknowledging that the Republican Party was “his” party and giving him the right to rule it, personally. Observers soon began writing that the party had become a cult.³⁴ Cults may not have scruples, but do they have principles?

Most definitions of “principle” refer to “a basic truth, law, or assumption” used as a foundation for a system of belief or behavior.³⁵ The “basic truth” need not be demonstrably “true” but only assumed to be true. Consider slavery. Slave-owners in colonial times and into the 19th century regarded slaves as fundamentally inferior beings. In southern states, slavery was a principle of the Democratic Party. Meanwhile, abolitionists in northern states believed that Negroes were fully human. On that principle, they formed the Republican Party in 1856 to prevent its expansion outside the South. In that sense, both parties were “principled,” but their principles were contradictory. A “principled” party may or may not be universally admired.

For the purposes of discussion, let me stipulate that all four political groups above have principles, but they vary:

Parties offer **philosophical** principles with social, economic, and military significance:

Consider the parties’ positions on slavery in the 19th century.

Teams create **instrumental** principles with electoral significance:

Think of the Republican Party’s opposition to statehood for Washington DC.

Tribes acquire **symbolic** principles to differentiate themselves from other tribes:

For example, Republicans’ refusal to wear masks.

Cults rely on **messianic** principles based on leaders’ pronouncements:

Donald Trump proclaimed a crisis in America and said, “Only I can fix it,” when accepting his 2016 Republican presidential nomination.

Throughout American history, Democrats and Republicans have acted mostly as political parties and teams. Each group of partisans coalesced around political principles they widely shared, and both typically campaigned on those principles to win elections. The Democratic and the Republican parties were founded at different times, but both were founded on philosophical principles that were very different from their principles today.

Founding Principles of America's Two Major Parties

If political parties have principles, they most likely appear in their party platforms.³⁶ Throughout most of its history, two major political parties have governed the United States, sporadically alternating in power. The Democratic Party was formed in 1828, a quarter-century before the Republican Party in 1854. Historians say that the Democrats adopted the world's first national party platform at its 1840 nominating convention.³⁷ Its brief platform consisted of nine resolutions, the first one stating:

That the federal government is one of limited powers, derived solely from the constitution, and the grants of power shown therein, ought to be strictly construed by all the departments and agents of the government, and that it is inexpedient and dangerous to exercise doubtful constitutional powers.

You read that correctly; the Democratic Party platform once resolved restricting federal power to those specifically granted in the U.S. Constitution. Its position, 180 years ago, was similar to what the Republicans believe in today—*limited government, separation of powers, federalism, and the rights of the people*—as stated in the party's 2016 platform and readopted in 2020.³⁸

That is not the only cross-over by the parties on a key principle. The Republican Party was formed to oppose slavery and its spread to new territories and states. Running on that platform in 1860, the Republican candidate, Abraham Lincoln, won election, became president, fought a war against southern states defending slavery, freed the slaves, and became a hero to Black citizens at the time and over the next century. But today, Black Americans no longer identify with “the Party of Lincoln.” Instead, they vote overwhelmingly for candidates of the once racist Democratic Party that had suppressed Blacks for over a hundred years.

There is no simple explanation for why—over time—the two major American parties crossed-over in their positions on such core political principles as the role of government and support for ethnic groups. Did party leaders truly change their political philosophy, or did they compromise on their principles in order to win elections? Did they behave more like a team than a party? Most of this book will deal with Republicans as a political party versus an electoral team. Later sections will consider when Republicans began to exhibit tribal behavior and cult traits.

CHAPTER 2

Government Benefits

The Republican Party styles itself as a conservative party. Conservative thought has a long history. Since time immemorial, rulers lived better than their subjects. Having much to conserve, ruling families were politically “conservative” in the sense of opposing change—one of many meanings of that multi-faceted term.³⁹ Monarchs sought to monopolize force to retain the *status quo*—the existing state of affairs. Over time in the western world, monarchical rule evolved into court-centered governments and eventually into representative governments chosen by restricted electorates. Their leaders, who still lived better than their citizens, remained politically conservative. Like monarchs, they maintained order by monopolizing force within government; governments maintained order to support rulers and leaders. To conservatives then, government was good.

Inevitably, ambitious citizens banded together in political parties hoping to win elections, gain office, and personally share in the benefits of government. Electorates expanded. In the United States today, aspiring politicians align with either the Republican or Democratic parties. The Republican Party is regarded as a conservative party, which ironically today casts itself as opposed to government—especially the government in Washington. Republicans cast the Democratic Party as a liberal party favoring a national government that intervenes in personal lives. This is an incomplete and incorrect assessment of the parties today, and it certainly does not apply to them historically.

Slavery had long been established in the South when the Democratic Party was founded in 1828 to elect Andrew Jackson president. Jackson was a southerner and owned slaves. Almost three decades later in 1854, northerners founded the Republican Party to oppose what was called the South’s “peculiar institution.” Seeking to maintain the *status quo* in the South, Democrats constituted the conservative party. They were opposed by Republicans, who pledged to confine slavery to southern states and to prevent slavery in new states, while retaining the Union in the process. Witness the 1856 Republican platform, which resolved against “establishing Slavery in the Territories of the United States by positive legislation, prohibiting its existence or extension therein.” The Republican Party did not begin as a conservative party. In today’s terms, it would be a liberal party.

From this point, the labels “liberal” and “conservative” will seldom reappear. Chapter 4 argues that they do not apply very well to politics across history. Instead, we analyze party politics using core values in governmental principles. The original principle of government was to maintain order—which matched the desires of monarchical rulers. While imposing order, rulers were forced to grant citizens some degree of freedom, which became a second principle. A third principle was to provide public goods and services to citizens. Eventually, a fourth principle arose: to promote equality among citizens—a principle that became very controversial. I incorporate these four core values into a framework for tracing and evaluating the trajectory of Republicanism over time.

Order as a Government Benefit

Government’s oldest and chief benefit has been *maintaining order*, a phrase rich with meaning. Let’s start with “law and order.” Maintaining order in this sense means establishing the rule of law to preserve life and protect property. To the seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, preserving life was government’s most important function. In his 1651 philosophical treatise, *Leviathan*, Hobbes described life without government as life in a “state of nature.”

Without rules, Hobbes held, people would live as predators, stealing and killing for their personal benefit. In his classic phrase, life in a state of nature would be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” He believed that a single ruler, a sovereign, must possess unquestioned authority to guarantee the safety of the weak and protect them from the attacks of the strong. He believed that complete obedience to the sovereign’s strict laws was a small price to pay for the security of living in a civil society. Hobbes named his all-powerful government “Leviathan,” after a biblical sea monster.

Not everyone agrees that government is necessary for people to live in harmony. According to anthropologists, egalitarian stateless societies without rulers are “anarchist,” after the Greek term *anarchos* (“having no ruler”).⁴⁰ Hence, anarchism is defined as the absence of government. Anarchy results in lawlessness. Hobbes lived in a time perilously close to anarchy. The complicated English Civil wars (1642-1651) occurred between Royalists and Parliamentarians. Hobbes argued that a strong, absolute ruler could prevent civil war. Unfortunately for King Charles I, who was beheaded in 1649, he was not Leviathan-like. Eventually, a victorious parliament consented to restore the monarchy as a constitutional monarchy. Anarchism still has its fanatics who violently protest against authority, but most people prefer a high degree of order from their governments.

Relevance today: Relatively few politicians would say they were attracted to the Republican Party out of a desire to promote order, a vague philosophical value. However, that value defines one of four overarching political principles that encompass other specific principles embedded in practical politics that do motivate party partisans. Consider these examples of Republican platform policies embraced within the concept of order:

- Stopping crime and punishing criminals
- Controlling national borders
- Banning same-sex marriages
- Imposing tariffs on imported goods
- Mandating English as the national language

Such policies have, within recent times, been endorsed in Republican Party platforms. They all reflect the party’s concern with maintaining social and economic order in American society. We capitalize Order in subsequent discussion when it stands for an abstract value.

Freedom as a Check on Government

Governments at any level require citizens to surrender some freedom. Although some governments minimize infringing on personal freedom; no government seeks to maximize personal freedom. Governments exist to control; to *govern means* “to control.” Why do people surrender their freedom to this control? They do so to live in safety, but citizens do not surrender their freedoms completely.

Hobbes’s conception of life in the cruel state of nature led him to view government primarily as a means of guaranteeing people’s survival. Other theorists, taking survival for granted, believed that government should also preserve private property (goods and land owned by individuals) while allowing certain freedoms in economic and social life. Foremost among them was the English philosopher John Locke. In *Two Treatises on Government* (1690), he wrote that the protection of life, liberty, and property was the basic objective of government. Indeed, the state’s role in religious freedom was central to the

English Civil Wars. Locke's thinking strongly influenced the Declaration of Independence. It is reflected in the Declaration's famous phrase identifying "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" as "unalienable Rights" of citizens under government. Locke's defense of property rights became linked with safeguards for individual liberties in the doctrine of *liberalism*, which holds that the state should leave citizens free to further their individual pursuits.⁴¹

To John Locke, liberalism referred to limits on government. That was liberalism's meaning then, and it is still understood that way in other countries. British colonists in America knew about Locke's ideas, and wrote state constitutions "guarding against the apprehended mischief of the government" before the "Bill of Rights" was appended to the U.S. Constitution.⁴² Technically, rights—like dining in a public restaurant—require government to secure. Freedoms are practiced without government interference—like freedom of religion. So the Bill of Rights is more properly a Bill of Freedoms. Especially in recent years, Republicans have rallied around "freedom" as an abstract value—as witnessed in many Republicans' refusal to wear protective face masks to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Consider these other examples of contemporary policies embraced under the concept of Freedom:

- oppose restrictions on the purchase of firearms
- allow businesses to deny service to those who violate their religious beliefs
- protect private property against taking for public purposes
- reduce income tax rates
- support family choice of private over public schools

Such policies have become increasingly popular in Republican Party platforms. They all reflect the party's enhanced concern for personal Freedom, subsequently capitalized to stand for the value.

Benefits of Public Goods

After governments have established basic order and guarantee certain freedoms, they can pursue other ends. Using their coercive powers, governments can tax citizens to raise money to spend on *public goods*—benefits and services theoretically available to everyone, such as education, postal service, sanitation, and parks.⁴³ Public goods benefit all citizens but are not likely to be produced by the voluntary acts of individuals. The government of ancient Rome, for example, built aqueducts to carry fresh water from the mountains to the city. Road building was another public good provided by the Roman government, which also used the roads to move its legions and maintain order.

Government action to provide public goods can be controversial. During President James Monroe's administration in the first quarter of the 19th century, many people thought that building the Cumberland Road (between Cumberland, Maryland, and Wheeling, West Virginia) was not a proper function of the national government, the Romans notwithstanding. Over time, the scope of government functions in the United States has expanded. Although he was a Republican opposed to big government, President Dwight Eisenhower launched the massive interstate highway system at a cost of \$275 billion (in 2020 dollars). Yet some government enterprises that have been common in other countries—running railroads, operating coal mines, and generating electric power—are politically controversial or even unacceptable in the United States.

Studies show that governments in European countries generally spend a far larger share of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than the United States does.⁴⁴ Most of the difference occurs in fund

transfers to lessen household income inequality, but Europeans spend more for public goods too. Americans disagree about how far the government ought to go in using its taxing power to provide public goods and services. Parents with school-age children may support increased taxes for education more than adults without such children; and wealthier people may prefer to spend their money on private consumption rather than public goods. Studies also show that ethnic majorities are less supportive of public spending that benefits ethnic minorities.⁴⁵ Democrats and Republicans also differ in spending for public goods, and both parties devote much of their platforms to such issues. Recent Republican platforms have disagreed over:

- Extending broad-band capabilities across the nation
- Maintaining highways and bridges
- Conserving and developing natural resources
- Supporting Medicare for the elderly
- Funding the military

Relevance today: In truth, Republicans today do not seem as motivated to provide public goods as they have in the past. The very first Republican Party platform in 1856 proposed building a railroad to the Pacific Ocean and using government funds to improve rivers and harbors. During President Grant's administration in 1872, Republicans created the National Park system. The party's 1888 platform criticized the Democratic administration for refusing to start work on a canal to link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Assuming power in 1892, the party supported the canal's construction as "of the highest importance to the American people." In 1906, under Teddy Roosevelt, Republicans created new national parks and designated national landmarks and national monuments. Since World War II, only Dwight Eisenhower's Interstate Highway initiative in 1952 compares with those Republican expenditures for Public Goods, henceforth capitalized.

Equality: A Disputed Benefit

Private charity (voluntarily aiding the poor) has a strong basis in Western religious traditions; public welfare does not. Charles Dickens' 1838 novel, *Oliver Twist*, dramatized how England imprisoned poor people. Only in the twentieth century, in the aftermath of industrialization and urbanization, did the United States begin taking steps to promote equality—to improve life for the poor—and such actions proved controversial. Under the emerging concept of the welfare state, government's role expanded to provide individuals with medical care, education, and a guaranteed income "from cradle to grave." Sweden, Britain, and other nations adopted welfare programs aimed at reducing social inequalities.⁴⁶

Using government to enforce equality was a radical idea, set forth by Karl Marx as the ultimate principle of developed communism: "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."⁴⁷ This extreme has never been realized in any government, not even in communist states. But over time, taking from the rich to help the needy has become a legitimate function of most governments, but a very controversial function to some citizens.

People often oppose taxation for public goods (building roads and schools, for example) because of cost alone. Government spending for highways, schools, and parks benefits nearly every citizen, and such services merely cost money. People are more likely, and more strongly, to deny on *principle* funding government programs to promote economic and social equality. Using government to promote social equality—bussing school children to integrate schools, granting women equal rights, recognizing

same-sex marriages—has proved to be politically disruptive. The cost is greater than money; funding for social equality usually means a trade-off in basic values: such spending conflicts with Order and Freedom. These contemporary planks in Republican Party platforms exemplify Republican opposition to social equality:

- Opposed to raising the minimum wage
- Opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution
- Against using ethnicity as a factor in college admissions
- Against funding American and Alaska Native tribal governments
- Preventing same-sex couples to adopt children

Relevance today: Especially since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the government's role in redistributing income to promote economic and social equality has been a major source of policy debate in the United States. Whereas the Republican Party was founded in 1856 to end slavery and had a platform plank promising "liberty of conscience and equality of rights among citizens," equality as a principle occupies a lesser status in the party's values today. Equality too will be capitalized.

Republican Partisans

What causes people to identify with political parties? Whatever the factors, they have less influence today than in the early 1950s. In 1952, almost 75 percent of the electorate called themselves Democrats or Republicans. Almost 50 percent identified with Democrats and almost 30 percent with Republicans. In 2021, less than 60 percent identified with either party. Only about 33 percent remained Democrats, but about 25 percent were still Republicans. Did Republicans keep a better hold on their partisans because of their superior principles?

Research shows that about half of the electorate simply adopts their parents' party preference—much as they adopt their parents' religious affiliation. As a result, state counties with little population change over time tend to back the same parties over decades. When young people move away from parents, become educated, and have different life experiences, they depart from their parents' partisanship. Also, the electorate's social composition changes over time due to immigration and differential birth rates. These factors produce partisan change along with changes in party principles.

In the 1950s, people in small towns and rural areas, women, college-educated voters, and Blacks living in the South, were more likely to identify as Republican than Democrat. Today those relationships are reversed. Then the South was solidly Democratic; today it is strongly Republican. The Republican Party—once closely identified with Wall Street—now considers its base to be blue color wage earners and white Christians outside New York. In an earlier book, I analyzed the changing social bases of the Democratic and Republican parties since 1952.⁴⁸ In this book, I look for explanation to changes in Republican Party principles but not just since the 1950s. I study 2,722 planks included in all 41 Republican Party platforms since 1856.

CHAPTER 3

Party Platforms and Party Principles

A physical platform is an elevated place to stand. In early England, “platform” also referred to a plan.⁴⁹ *Safire’s Political Dictionary* said in the United States that the term described a set of political principles as early as 1803.⁵⁰ The U.S. Democratic Party was founded at Andrew Jackson’s election in 1828, and it formally adopted the world’s first party platform at its 1840 national convention. Since then, scores of different political parties in the United States formally adopted platforms announcing their political values and policies. Most minor party platforms from the past have been preserved in books.⁵¹ Today, all Democratic and Republican platforms are available on the Internet, courtesy of the American Presidency Project.⁵²

Party platforms are supposed to declare “the principles, objectives, and promises of the national party as proclaimed by the national convention,”⁵³ to provide “the single avenue by which parties can make their comprehensive policy positions known to voters,”⁵⁴ to “articulate party policy commitments,”⁵⁵ and—simply—to tell “what the party stands for.”⁵⁶ Writing in 1967, Gerald Pomper, a major student of the subject, said that the platform adopted at a national party convention “most fully represents the party’s intentions.” Nevertheless, he continued, platforms “have received more scorn than attention.”⁵⁷

Observers’ scorn for party platforms goes far back in American history. In 1888, James Bryce (later Britain’s ambassador to the United States) wrote, “neither platforms nor the process that produces them have a powerful influence on the maturing and clarification of public opinion.”⁵⁸ In 1902, Moisei Ostrogorski, another foreign observer of American politics, said, “The platform, which is supposed to be the party’s profession of faith and its programme of action is only a farce.”⁵⁹ In 1936, American Richard Browne’s doctoral thesis found that nearly everyone who wrote prior to 1912 substantially agreed “that the national party platform has had little or no significance.”⁶⁰

Writing thirty years after Browne, Pomper still found writers who dismissed a platform as “meaningless”⁶¹ frequently quoting the popular saying, “A platform is something to run on, not stand on.” Pomper was one of the first researchers to demonstrate that political parties actually deliver on most of their platform pledges. Since Pomper’s early work, a great deal of research has established that party platforms are reasonably good predictors of party behavior. While this book reviews some of that research, it does not rate Republicans’ fidelity to their party platforms. It focuses instead on how party principles, especially in the Republican Party, have changed over time.

Platform Contents

Describing the contents of a party platform in the simplest terms, Browne said, “It consists of three general parts:

1. An elaboration of the record and achievements of the party. [pointing with pride]
2. A denunciation of the opposing party, its record, or its proposals. [viewing with alarm]⁶²
3. Various statements on the issues of the day, ‘as to what the party believes in, approves, favors, advocates, stands for, demands, or pledges itself to do.’”⁶³

. Browne held that the platform’s heart lies in point 3, typically its longest part, which includes:

- a. Statements of general principles.
- b. Expressions of sympathy. [e.g., for Armenians in 1920]
- c. Actual statements of policy to be pursued, sometimes clearly stated, sometimes vague.⁶⁴

Later scholars expanded on classifying platform contents. Most have been based on Gerald Pomper's 1967 breakdown, given below (omitting Pomper's illustrative examples):

1. Rhetoric and Fact
2. Evaluations of the Parties' Records and Past Performances
 - (a) General Approval
 - (b) General Criticism
 - (c) Policy Approval
 - (d) Policy Criticism
3. Statements of Future Policies
 - (a) Rhetorical Pledges
 - (b) General Pledges
 - (c) Pledges of Continuity
 - (d) Expressions of Goals and Concerns
 - (e) Pledges of Action
 - (f) Detailed Pledges⁶⁵

Pomper updated his research in 1980 to include the 1976 platforms,⁶⁶ and Lee Payne extended Pomper's analysis of party platforms through 2008.⁶⁷ Subsequent researchers have adopted or expanded on Pomper's classification, with special attention on how specific were the party's "pledges."⁶⁸ Others have modified how pledges were interpreted. For example, Royed and Borelli scored economic pledges for proposing a policy change, adhering to the status quo, expanding, cutting, or reviewing.⁶⁹

Curiously, while virtually all American parties formulate platforms, parties in other countries do not write platforms; they issue "manifestos." The *Oxford Universal English Dictionary* says that "manifesto"—a public declaration of intentions—appeared in 17th century English. In 1848, the term famously appeared in German—*Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*. Perhaps the "Communist Manifesto" heritage led parties abroad to favor using that term. Regardless, "manifesto" is not mentioned in the 800+ page *Safire's Political Dictionary*. This minor difference in terminology (platform v. manifesto) accompanies a major difference in how party principles are studied by academics and employed in politics

Empirical research on the content of party platforms and party manifestos exploded following publication of Pomper's 1967 article and his 1968 book. Many studies, if not most, focused on how well governmental parties fulfilled their platform or manifesto pledges. Research of this type proved to be especially popular in countries with competitive parties and parliamentary systems, which often have coalition governments. Party scholars eventually banded together to create a "Party Manifesto Database" of over 4,000 manifestos drawn from about 50 countries—including the United States—to support cross-national research.⁷⁰

Studies soon focused on how well political parties kept pledges they made in party platforms and party manifestos. Petry and Collette identified and reviewed many such studies, asking, "Do political parties keep their campaign promises once elected?"

our review of 21 cases in 18 separate published studies reveals that parties fulfill 67 percent of their promises on average. Contrary to popular belief, political parties are reliable promise keepers. Why people underestimate the capacity of political parties to keep their election promises remains an open research question.⁷¹

One team of eleven scholars from multiple countries studied “fulfillment of over 20,000 pledges made in 57 election campaigns in 12 countries” and concluded:

Parties that hold executive office after elections generally fulfill substantial percentages, sometimes very high percentages, of their election pledges, whereas parties that do not hold executive office generally find that lower percentages of their pledges are fulfilled.⁷²

While research has established that most parties everywhere tend to fulfill their election pledges, scholars studying European manifestos place more importance on fulfilling pledges than those studying party platforms in America. Here, the nature of promises seems more politically significant than whether they are fulfilled.

Party Platforms v. Party Manifestos

American parties adopted platforms before European parties issued manifestos. The British Conservative Party was founded in 1832, only four years after the U.S. Democratic Party. Thackeray and Toye said that British parties did not publish manifestos until 1900. They noted that the new Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel wrote and distributed an election manifesto in 1834, but that was his personal statement and not a true party document.⁷³ By the end of the century, the practice of party leaders issuing election addresses became established in Britain. Nevertheless, Thackeray and Toye said, “manifestos became mere ‘shopping lists’ made without reference to general principles” until 1900.⁷⁴

British party manifestos also tend to be shorter than American party platforms. Thackeray and Toye counted words for 27 British manifestos from 1900 to 1997 for both the Conservative and Labour parties. Their counts can be compared with counts for 26 Democratic and Republican platforms from 1900 to 1996.⁷⁵ British manifestoes are much shorter. The average Conservative manifesto was 7,611 words to 12,014 for the average Republican platform. British Labour manifestos averaged 5,482 words to 11,222 for Democratic platforms. Over time, both British manifestos and American platforms increased in length, which narrowed the differences between the two party systems. However, the 2015 Conservative and Labour manifestos of 30,146 and 18,178 words respectively were still shorter than the 35,467 and 26,058 words in the 2016 Republican and Democratic platforms.⁷⁶

Are American party platforms longer than party manifestos in other countries because the U.S. is larger in size and population? While that factor may apply, the difference may be due more to the unique nature of American political parties. Both American political parties operate in a highly decentralized political system.⁷⁷ The United States has a federal form of government with 50 state governments, three co-equal branches of national government, and a national legislature with two co-equal branches. These factors, and the larger size of the U.S., disperse political power across the country.

Unlike most other parties across the world, both American parties also choose their candidates for congressional offices and nominate presidential candidates in public conventions by publicly elected delegates. This combination of governmental and party structure results in highly decentralized national political parties. Different people and groups can influence the policies of their preferred party at various points while building the platform for adoption at the party’s national convention.

Building Party Platforms

In comparing the processes of producing American party platforms and writing British party manifestos, two British scholars pointed to “The structural difference between the federal and unitary system,” citing many of the points above about the decentralization of power in the United States, and they noted “the importance of state representation in the making of national party policy.”⁷⁸ In sum, American party platforms differ from British party manifestos—and manifestos in other countries—mainly because the American governmental structure is decentralized, the party organization is decentralized, and the process of drafting the party document is itself decentralized.

In the United Kingdom, and especially in the Conservative Party, national party leaders figured prominently in starting and then influencing the drafting manifestos, and leaders are often pictured in glossy manifestoes.⁷⁹ In the United States, presidents and presidential candidates have often steered the content of their party’s platform, but they tended to exercise their influence at the end of the process rather than the beginning. The drafting process typically began by involving state and local activists and leaders.

Historically, partisans at the state and local levels were always involved in drafting party platforms. Richard Browne’s 1936 dissertation devoted a forty-page chapter to the process as practiced a century ago. Even then, it was too simple to say they “are adopted by the national party conventions after having been drafted by the Resolutions Committees of the conventions.” Instead, Browne said, “The actual drafting takes place only after weeks and months of preliminary work, dating back several months before the convention meets.”⁸⁰ He then outlined the work of various organizations, groups, and individuals who aided the drafting, devoting short sections to these participants

The National Committee . . . Advisory Committees . . . Dominant Candidates . . . Party leaders . . . State and Party Conventions . . . Non-party Organisations . . . Non-party Individuals . . . Public Hearings . . . Subcommittee on Drafting . . . The Resolutions Committee

Since Browne’s detailed 1936 study, later accounts have confirmed the decentralized nature of the complex drafting process. Cooke’s account of drafting the 1952 platforms stated:

With hundreds of persons officially involved, and scores of others working behind the scenes, we may at best ascribe certain areas to the craftsmanship of one or more of the main agencies involved in the platform-making process. The genesis of the Republican platform may be traced to the subcommittees, the drafting committee, the special advisers, the full committee, and the party legacy.⁸¹

The genesis of the Democratic platform goes back to the White House draft and the McCormack revision, the drafting committee, the special advisers, the full committee, and the legacy of past platforms.⁸²

In 1968, Paul David studied how both parties created their platforms. Because “the platform has to be voted by the platform committee of the convention before it can reach the floor,” David explained, “every platform committee in recent decades has involved a heterogeneous membership of more than 100, with two from every state delegation,” Moreover, “Since 1960, it has been customary for the platform committees of both parties to come into session at the beginning of the preconvention week, first to hold public hearings and then to complete committee work on the final text of the platform.”⁸³

Concerning the 1976 Democratic Platform, Jeff Fishel wrote that its construction began four years earlier in 1972:

When reform, anti-war, McGovern Democrats were bitterly opposed by major Figures in the AFL-CIO and by many party regulars like the Daley organization from Chicago . . .

Representatives of the Carter campaign came into the first national platform hearings, held in Washington, May 17-20, 1976 . . .

The actual hearing produced the typically large (more than 140) parade of witnesses, from Michael Harrington speaking for “Democracy ‘76” . . . to Hubert Humphrey.⁸⁴

Susan Fine’s study of 1988 party platforms focused on the role that non-party actors played. She stated:

The wheels of the platform writing process begin turning during the primary/caucus season. Each party holds regional hearings so that interested groups and individuals may express their views to the party executive committees which in turn draft the document. No restrictions are placed on who can testify.⁸⁵ A large portion of those outsiders testifying before the platform writing committees represent interest groups. An interest group whose perspective is reflected in a platform benefits in several ways because its view is endorsed by party leaders and delegates representing the party faithful.⁸⁶

Sandy Maisel, however, found that the parties produced more “presidential-centered platforms” in 1992.⁸⁷

Each party's platform went through three public drafts. Staff produced one draft; that draft went respectively to the subcommittees of the Republican Committee on Resolutions and to the Drafting Committee of the Democratic Platform Committee. The second draft emerged from the Republican subcommittees and the Democratic Drafting Committee. The third draft emerged from the two full committees and in each case was adopted by the national convention without amendment.⁸⁸

In truth, American party platforms have always been subject to presidential adjustment. Even in 1936, Browne wrote, “After the platform is adopted, it may be interpreted, perhaps altered, by the nominee himself.”⁸⁹ Part IV below discusses important impacts of presidential nominees on their election platforms.

Finally, we should note that non-party groups also influence the content of party platforms. A comparative study of organized groups’ testimony before platform committees found both parties’ platforms in 1996, 2000, and 2004 “responsive to organized interests that are ideologically similar to the party status quo and to those who have demonstrated loyalty to the party.”⁹⁰

The 2020 Party Platforms

Evidence of party leaders’ control, not just influence, emerged at both parties’ conventions in 2020. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Democratic and Republican parties did not gather thousands of delegates at national conventions to nominate their presidential candidates and adopt party platforms. By April, Senator Bernie Sanders had withdrawn as a presidential candidate in the Democratic Party, conceding the nomination to former Vice-President Joe Biden. While the Democrats’ nominee was no longer in question, the party platform had not been drafted. Knowing that the Democrats would not hold their customary convention, the party’s centrist candidate and presumptive nominee, Joe Biden, met with his left-of-center challenger, Bernie Sanders, to discuss the platform. They agreed to submit to the Platform Committee a 110-page document of policy recommendations

from a “joint task force.”⁹¹ After some confusion about procedures, the Democratic Party managed to endorse an unusually long platform made outside the usual drafting procedures. One cannot determine what to make of the 2020 Democratic Platform, which at 42,092 words was by far the longest in its history.

The Republican Party followed a comparably strange route. For the first time in their history, Republicans adopted no platform in 2020. Directed by President Donald Trump, the National Committee simply published resolutions about the missing platform prefaced by these remarks:

WHEREAS, All platforms are snapshots of the historical contexts in which they are born, and parties abide by their policy priorities, rather than their political rhetoric;
 WHEREAS, The RNC, had the Platform Committee been able to convene in 2020, would have undoubtedly unanimously agreed to reassert the Party's strong support for President Donald Trump and his Administration;

The RNC then resolved to continue “to enthusiastically support the President’s America-first agenda” and to adjourn the 2020 convention “without adopting a new platform until the 2024 Republican National Convention.” This was its concluding resolution:

RESOLVED, That any motion to amend the 2016 Platform or to adopt a new platform, including any motion to suspend the procedures that will allow doing so, will be ruled out of order.

In effect, the 2020 Republican Party decided to re-adopt its 2016 platform. Only the 2016 platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties will be considered in this book.

The pandemic year 2020 broke almost 200 years of tradition in drafting party platforms. True, Maisel found party platforms more “president-centered” in 1992, but drafting party platforms still originated in a highly decentralized process. That is clearly illustrated by considering who participated in drafting the 2016 platform of the Republican Party, its most recent platforms. Over several pages at the end of the document, the party named all the individuals who helped draft the document:

- The Republican Platform Committee, headed by RNC Chair Reince Priebus, consisting of 19 members.
- Two RNC members from each of 50 state and two RNC members from 6 territories and the District of Columbia for 110 members.
- The Platform Staff of 36 named employees.
- Others mentioned for “special thanks,” numbering 84.

A total of 249 people were identified by name as helping draft the 2016 Republican platform, which was later presented for adoption to 2,472 Republican delegates at the nominating convention. In 2020, however, neither party followed standard practices in drafting their platforms.

CHAPTER 4

Beyond Liberal and Conservative

Political observers across the world describe parties as being liberal or conservative, as being on the left or right on a political continuum. The Manifesto Database, discussed above, contains about twenty variables that indicate parties' left-right (L-R) ideological positioning. In his thoughtful appraisal of that project, Gemenis Kostas noted that Manifesto data "have been used in hundreds of PhD theses, monographs and journal articles," and said, "Undoubtedly, its popularity lies in the rich time-series data which run for more than two dozen countries since 1945 and include parties' positions on the L-R scale." Nevertheless, he continued, "the most criticised aspect of the project is its 'standard' scale measuring parties' and governments' L-R positions."⁹² He cited studies finding "that some scale items do not 'fit' in the underlying 'left' and 'right' dimensions" and "a lot of published evidence" that the L-R scores in the data sets "do not provide valid and reliable estimates regarding parties' L-R positions."⁹³

Manifesto data are more suitable for studies across space (different nations) than across time within the same nation. Although the Database contains thousands of manifestos for scores of countries, less than 5 percent date before 1950. This book does not use those data. It analyzes data specifically collected on 41 American party platforms since 1856 and avoids using the Left-Right continuum, despite its common use by political observers.

Many analysts view the Democratic and Republican parties on a left-right continuum or scale, in which the left-hand side represents the "liberal" position favoring more government and the right-hand side stands for the "conservative" position of less government. Placed on the left, the Democratic Party is called a liberal party, and the Republican, on the right, a conservative party. Mass media typically use these terms, as frequently do political scientists and historians. While the terminology has validity and utility for political analysis at given points in time, it fails miserably in trying to track the parties' ideology over long stretches of history. Verland Lewis indicts such research as succumbing to the "Static Spectrum Fallacy."⁹⁴

We begin by examining the concept of party ideology.⁹⁵ A political ideology can be defined as a coherent and consistent set of values and beliefs about the proper purpose and scope of government.⁹⁶ "Coherent" means that the values and beliefs are organized and logically constrain one another. "Consistent" means a person's opinion of the proper role of government on one issue matches the person's opinion on a different but similar issue. Although the term ideology has been used historically in other ways,⁹⁷ Frances Lee's research finds that in contemporary political science research it "denotes interrelated political beliefs, values, and policy positions."⁹⁸ Studying congressional politics, Lee counted references to ideology and to closely related terms—liberal and conservative—in professional journals and in the *New York Times* from 1900 to 2003. "Prior to the 1950s," she wrote, "scholars generally spoke only of particular liberal or conservative coalitions or legislators;" not until the 1960s were the terms commonly applied to "individual legislators' policy orientations."⁹⁹

Steeped in contemporary politics of ideological polarization, today's readers may be surprised—even astounded—by Lee's finding that legislators were not commonly described as liberal or conservative until the 1960s. Today, politicians are routinely painted as spendthrift liberals or backward conservatives. In the past, the words "liberal" and "conservative" were not so negatively colored.

Moreover, the further one goes back in history, the less the terms correspond to what we today would recognize as either liberal or conservative. Verlan Lewis’ comprehensive analysis of party positions since the republic’s founding convincingly demonstrates the changing meaning of the terms and the parties’ switches in positions “on virtually every enduring public policy issue in American history.”¹⁰⁰ Lewis wrote: “For the past eight decades or so, virtually whatever the Democratic Party does is termed ‘liberal’ and whatever the Republican Party does is termed ‘conservative.’”¹⁰¹ Although these terms differentiate the parties for their followers, their meanings have changed notably over history.

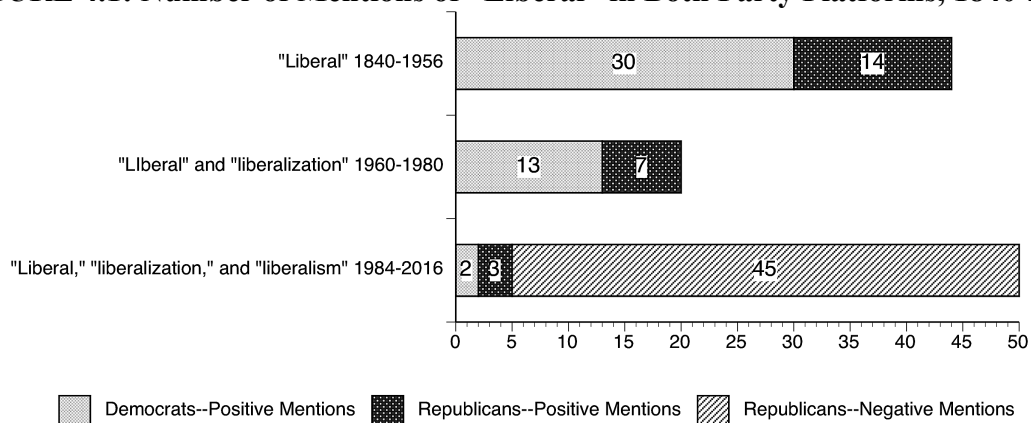
Ideological Terms in Party Platforms

The Democratic Party issued 45 election platforms since its first one in 1840 to 2016, and the Republican Party 41 platforms since its first in 1856. (Because the COVID-19 pandemic prevented both parties from holding a full national convention in 2020, each party’s national committee simply adopted its 2016 platform for the 2020 election campaign.) Although writers tend to link “liberal” with “conservative,” the terms have not appeared equally in party platforms. “Conservative” was mentioned only 14 times in both parties’ platforms since 1840, but both parties alluded to “liberal” 126 times in some form. This analysis focuses only on the term “liberal.”

Once upon a time—indeed, for over a hundred years—Republican Party platforms used “liberal” positively, and Republicans proudly wore the liberal mantle. In 1860, for example, the party favored a policy that “secures to the workingmen liberal wages.” In 1864, it favored “a liberal and just” immigration policy. Beginning with the second term of Reagan’s presidency in 1984, however, the Republican platforms’ usage of the root “liberal” dramatically shifted to the dark side.¹⁰² Meanwhile, the 44 Democratic Party platforms since 1840 staunchly—but not consistently—embraced the liberal label.

Liberal rhetoric in Democratic and Republican platforms over time can be divided into three eras, as shown in Figure 4.1. The first era, which extends from the parties’ first platforms might be called, “A Century of Consensus.” During 116 years from 1840 to 1956, the Democratic Party’s platforms used liberal 30 times. During the 100 years from 1856 to 1956, the Republican platforms mentioned liberal 14 times. Both parties throughout this period virtually always used liberal in a positive way—in the sense of “free in giving; generous; open-minded”—as listed in the *Oxford University English Dictionary* of 1937.

FIGURE 4.1: Number of Mentions of “Liberal” in Both Party Platforms, 1840-2016



The second era, which lasted the twenty years from 1960 to 1980, might be deemed “A Period of Adjustment.” During this time, both parties shifted to talking about *liberalization* instead of liberal. Before 1960, “liberalization” had previously occurred only once in 56 platforms of both parties. During the twenty years from 1960 to 1980, Democrats mentioned it thirteen times and Republicans seven. Following the Republican Party’s earlier practice, not once during this “Period of Adjustment” did a Republican platform use liberal in a negative way.

The third era, which has lasted a third of a century, began in 1984 and continued through 2016. It might be labeled the “Age of Attack and Avoidance.” For the first time in history, the 1984 Republican platform attacked Democratic opponents for being liberals. Since then, Republican platforms repeatedly used the term to deride Democrats. Examples include referring to “liberal experimenters” who “destroyed the sense of community” in 1984; “liberal attacks on everything the American people cherished” in 1988; “the liberal philosophy” that “assaulted the family” in 1992; and “the liberal agenda of litigious lawyers” in 1996. By word count, Republican platform attacks quadrupled from two to eight in 1988 and then almost doubled to fifteen in 1992.

In response, Democrats—who like Republicans had proudly claimed the liberal label before—now avoided it almost entirely in their party platforms, using “liberal” only once from 1980 to 2016. After Republicans began attacking all signs of liberalism, Democrats unilaterally removed the term from their vocabulary. Neither liberal nor liberalism appeared in the 2016 platform of the Democratic Party. The 2016 Republican platform invoked “liberal” pejoratively only twice and “conservative” approvingly only twice.

The point of this analytical review is to demonstrate that employing ideological labels in contentious discussions of politics is relatively new in American history. Frances Lee’s extensive historical analysis of scholarly articles and news stories about congressional politics found that individual members of Congress were not portrayed as liberals or conservatives until the 1960s. This inquiry into the terms’ usage in Democratic and Republican Party platforms found that Republicans did not castigate Democrats as “dirty rotten liberals” until 1984, when Democrats also began avoiding the term in their own platforms. Because the rhetoric of political ideology has permeated recent decades of discussion about American politics, we may think that the world of politics has always revolved about liberal v. conservative arguments, thought, and positions.

In fact, national surveys show that voters—and thus party identifiers—do not share any common understanding of the meanings of “liberal” and “conservative.” When people were asked to place themselves on a liberal-conservative scale, from one-quarter to one-third declined, saying they “haven’t thought much about it.”¹⁰³ Another survey asking respondents to discuss “the biggest difference between liberal and conservative views” found that 38 percent did not know or gave no answer.¹⁰⁴ Yet party identifiers are ready to align themselves with their party’s proclaimed ideologies. Verlan Lewis wrote:

Whatever the Republican Party does (even if it is the opposite of what Republicans did previously) is described as “conservative,” and whatever the Democratic Party does (even if it is the opposite of what Democrats did previously) is described as “liberal.” Thus, claims that the Democratic Party moved to the “left,” or that the Republican Party moved to the “right” are not helpful because they are tautological.¹⁰⁵

If both parties’ voters have fuzzy conceptions of ideology, both Democratic and Republican party leaders enjoy great latitude in formulating their policies. Such latitude is especially important to Republicans when they gain control of government. Verlan Lewis explains:

Notably, when a new party takes control of government, the members of the party in government will often exercise the powers at their disposal by enacting interventionist policies - even if their party's ideology during the campaign and in the early years of their control of government calls for limited government power and limited intervention.¹⁰⁶

He continues:

In 2017-2018, with unified control of government, Republican politicians passed legislation that set records for federal spending: topping 1 trillion for the first time in American history. Despite the fact that the US economy had pulled out of the Great Recession, Republicans in control of government decided to increase national government spending levels in real terms and as a percentage of GDP. Based simply on the ideas and attitudes articulated by the Republican Party before assuming control of unified government in 2017, we would have expected federal spending and deficits to decrease. But, knowing what we do about the tendency of almost all politicians to exercise and expand the powers at their disposal, the behavior of President Trump and his Republican Congress was perfectly predictable.¹⁰⁷

According to Lewis, dominant presidents—e.g., Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, and Donald Trump—determine party ideology. If they “change their party ideology in ways that justify the actions of their partisans and vilify the actions of their opponents,” they can succeed without worrying about departing from established party principles.¹⁰⁸

Ideological Epochs in American Parties

How did 19th century historians, writing almost 150 years ago, describe the parties they studied? In 1883, Walter Houghton at Indiana University published *A History of American Politics*.¹⁰⁹ Not once in his comprehensive 550 review of every presidential election from 1789 to 1880 did Houghton refer—in any way—to the parties’ alignment along a liberal-conservative continuum. In fact, he only mentioned those terms 37 and 17 times respectively, and 9 of the 37 references to “liberal” were to the Liberal Republicans who held a national convention in 1872.

If the parties’ liberal-conservative alignment was not seen in the last quarter of the 19th century, perhaps it was visible to political scientists writing in the first-third of the 20th century. In 1936, Richard Browne analyzed virtually all U.S. political party platforms to date in his 350-page dissertation. He used the terms “liberal” 14 times and *never* mentioned “conservative.” As argued above, only after World War II did observers begin assigning Democrats and Republicans to positions on a left-right, liberal-conservative continuum.

Some contemporary scholars have analyzed historical shifts in American party ideologies without resorting to the liberal-conservative continuum.¹¹⁰ Most significant is John Gerring’s 1998 study, *Party Ideologies in America, 1828-1996*. Early in his book, Gerring wrote:

If asked to describe the ideology of the major parties in America, most observers would identify the Republicans as conservative and the Democrats as liberal. Although there is nothing incorrect in this typology, there is surely much that is misleading.¹¹¹

Noting “the shortcomings of standard terminology (liberalism, conservatism),” Gerring proposed “a modest reconceptualization of American party ideology along historical lines.”¹¹² He studied “official party platforms as well as an extensive collection of campaign speeches [especially by presidential candidates], letters, and other publications issued by the Whig [the Whigs were the Republicans’

predecessors], Republican, and Democratic parties.”¹¹³ He sorted sentences in these documents into content categories [e.g., civil rights, small business] and then counted their occurrences.

Gerring’s subsumed these content categories under broader concepts, such as social order, liberty, equality, tyranny, patriotism, and economic growth. He included the core values of *order*, *freedom*, and *equality* (discussed above in Chapter 1) but not *public goods*, which Gerring treated under *welfare*. Gerring searched for changes in the “central dichotomy” confronting the parties at each presidential election year and for changes in the parties’ political “themes.” Unfortunately, Gerring failed to define “central dichotomy,” but it appears to represent a basic clash between political interests or states of affairs. He also failed to define “theme,” but that term seems to mean “principle.” He summarized his major findings in two tables—one for the Democratic Party from 1828 to 1992, and the other for the Whig/Republican Party from 1828 to 1992.

According to Gerring, Democratic Party principles changed substantially over time. It experienced ideological change over three “epochs” from 1828 to 1992. He called the period from 1828 to 1892, the Democrats’ *Jeffersonianism* epoch, during which the party defended “liberty” against “tyranny.” During its *Populism* epoch from 1896-1948, the party defended “the people” against “the interests.” In the *Universalism* epoch, from 1952 to 1992, Democrats championed “inclusion” over “exclusion.” Table 4.1 summarizes Gerring’s analysis.¹¹⁴

TABLE 4.1: Ideological epochs of the Democratic Party

Persisting theme:	equality
<u>JEFFERSONIANISM (1828-1892)</u>	
Central dichotomy:	liberty versus tyranny
Themes:	white supremacy, antistatism, civic republicanism
<u>POPULISM (1896-1948)</u>	
Central dichotomy:	the people versus the interests
Themes:	egalitarianism, majoritarianism, Christian humanism
<u>UNIVERSALISM (1952-1992)</u>	
Central dichotomy:	inclusion versus exclusion
Themes:	civil rights, social welfare, redistribution, inclusion

In citing “equality” as a “persisting theme” of the Democratic Party, Gerring noted this qualification: “Equal rights were to be extended to all white men, but not to inferior races.”¹¹⁵ One must perform mental gymnastics to reconcile “white supremacy” with “equality” in the first epoch, 1828-1892. The same goes for crediting the party with “egalitarianism” from 1896 to 1948, but Gerring seems to refer “primarily to economic matters” and to a classless society—not to racial matters.¹¹⁶ After southerners bolted from the party in 1948 and the national party became committed to civil rights, the party fully embraced the equality principle, without qualifications.

Most scholars credit the Republican Party’s founding in 1854 to the threat raised by the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which allowed slavery to expand into free territories. However, Gerring views the

Republican Party as a continuation of the Whig Party, itself formed from those who opposed President Andrew Jackson, elected in 1828. As the Whigs lasted only three decades, that difference should not materially affect his analysis. Gerring divides the Whig/Republican history into only two epochs as shown in Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2: Ideological epochs of the Whig/Republican Party

Persisting theme:	social order, economic growth, patriotism
<u>NATIONALISM (1828-1924)</u>	
Central dichotomy:	order versus anarchy
Themes:	Protestantism, moral reform, mercantilism, free labor, social harmony, statism
<u>NEOLIBERALISM (1928-1992)</u>	
Central dichotomy:	the individual versus the state
Themes:	antistatism, free market capitalism, right-wing populism, individualism

According to Gerring, the party’s *Nationalism* period lasted from 1828 to 1924, during which Republicans

were state builders and economic nationalists who believed that a strong federal government was necessary not only to preserve the union but also to achieve prosperity and preserve the fabric of American society.¹¹⁷

During this period, Republicans fought for order over anarchy, and “statism” was one of its principles.¹¹⁸

Gerring claimed that the party changed fundamentally in 1928, when Republicans entered its *Neoliberalism* epoch:

Whereas in the previous century the party had worked to contain the passions of the individual, largely through the actions of an interventionist state, now Republicans reversed this polarity: the individual was to be set free from the machinations of the state. Through Neoliberal eyes, all political measures flowed from the central assumption that government was dangerous and needed to be contained. In economic policy the party adopted the general philosophy of laissez-faire or, more practically, "as little government as possible."¹¹⁹

Beginning in 1928, the party championed the individual over the state, and *antistatism* became a party principle—replacing *statism* before 1928. Concerning “Right-wing populism,” Gerring describes it as attacking “special privileges, special interests, and various other expressions of elite control.”¹²⁰ Gerring includes presidential rhetoric in his analysis, and Eisenhower’s warning against the “military-industrial complex” exemplifies Republican populism.

Clearly, Gerring’s analysis offers a far richer interpretation of American political history than simply calling the Democratic Party “liberal” and the Republican “conservative.” He identifies ten principles (themes) that characterize the Democratic Party and ten for the Republican Party—totaling nineteen different principles for both parties. How well does his study describe the Republican Party today?

From the 20th to the 21st Century

Gerring exercised personal judgments in reading and categorizing candidates' speeches and party platforms—all the platforms and hundreds of speeches delivered from 1828 to 1992. Indeed, he reported consulting more than 1,200 texts “the vast majority speeches by the presidential candidates or their surrogate spokespersons.”¹²¹ Just from the parties' platforms, he classified over 10,000 sentences into 24 categories plus “unclassifiable”.¹²² Consequently, Gerring's research cannot be fully replicated—that is, repeated using exactly the same methods. However, his study invites redoing using only party platforms as a truer indicator of party principles. Would the results be similar?

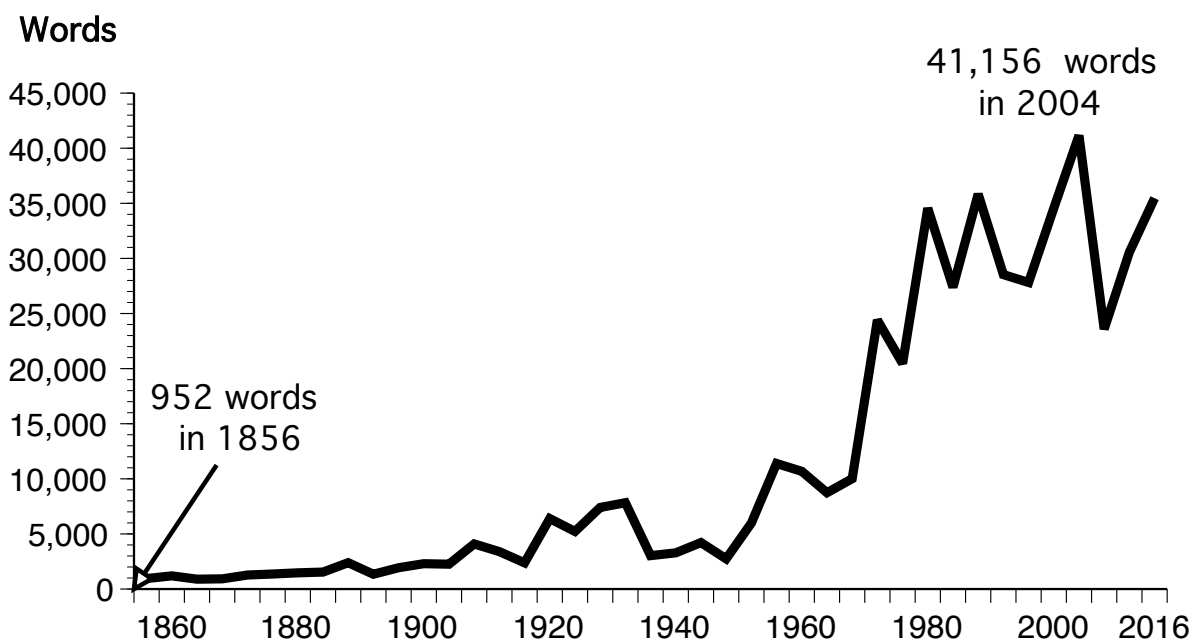
Given the availability of comparable data on party platform, could the personal judgments of researcher conducting a similar content analysis generate similar historical findings for the Democratic and Republican parties? If so, perhaps Gerring's study, which ended at 1992,¹²³ could be extended to the present. I try to do that over in the next chapter only for the Republican Party, using newly collected data on all Republican Party platforms from 1856 to 2016, the last year the Republican Party adopted a new platform.

CHAPTER 5:

Republican Platform Planks Since 1856

Both the Democratic and Republican party platforms have grown longer over time, especially since the 1970s. Using word counts posted by the American Presidency Project,¹²⁴ Figure 5.1 plots the number of words in 41 Republican Party platforms from 1856 to 2016. Computer programs for word processing, developed in the 1970s, probably invited writing longer platforms. The increased verbiage partly came from longer passages that “pointed with pride” to Republican accomplishments and “viewed with alarm” at past and future Democratic dangers, but parties also addressed a larger number of political issues over time.

FIGURE 5.1: Increased Length of 41 Republican Party Platforms, 1856-2016



A century ago, scholars scorned Democratic and Republican party platforms as ambiguous and inconsistent. Writing in 1936, Browne said, “Perhaps the most scathing attack of all levied upon American political parties is the charge that they are too much alike.” About Democrats and Republicans, one writer “referred to them as ‘Tweedledum and Tweedledee,’ two puppets of like character and form, who each four years engage in what is little more than a sham battle.”¹²⁵ In contrast, Browne cited solid research that found “clear-cut party issues dividing the voters” in half of the thirty-two elections from 1796 to 1924.¹²⁶ He personally found both parties differing on their platform “planks,” using a peculiarly American term referring to components of a political platform.¹²⁷

Defining and Cataloging Planks

A platform is a metaphor for announced party principles, and a plank is a metaphor for a platform statement that specifies or supports those principles. Just as “platform” is peculiar to American parties, so is “plank.” Robert Harmel’s 2018 guide to cross-national research with party manifestos does not mention “plank,”¹²⁸ nor does a different guide to the Manifesto Database.¹²⁹ Manifesto research focuses on party pledges. This study looks at party planks. Browne identified four types of planks:

1. Specific endorsements or condemnations of specified laws. . . .
2. Proposals which call for action and specify what form the action will take without endorsing a particular law. . . .
3. Proposals which call for legislative or executive action, or both, without stating in any way the form of the action. . . .
4. Expressions of sentiment which do not call for any action, either legislative or executive.¹³⁰

According to Pomper’s classification of pledges, type #1 would be evaluative, types #2 and #3 would be pledges of different specificity, and type #4 just rhetorical.

To find and catalog Republican Party planks I read through every Republican platform posted on the Internet by the American Presidency Project. Admittedly, “reading through” these lengthy files meant looking for positions on issues while skipping over long passages of party rhetoric. I captured relevant platform segments and dropped them into a spreadsheet of planks, indicating positive or negative positions on the issues.

I required (a) that the proposed plank had action implications, and (b) that it implied the party’s *position* on the issue. Concerning action implications, I excluded Republican endorsements of past accomplishments, such as praising passage of an act. Concerning the party’s position, the party had to indicate a policy stance: “fighting for the farmer” would not qualify. Identifying and cataloging party planks is an uncertain procedure, and other researchers probably would not have identified and cataloged exactly the same 2,722 planks that I did. (See Appendix A for an effort to validate my effort by comparing my party plank analysis with another, earlier study.)

I describe my cataloging process in two steps: first laying out the main headings and then detailing the specific codes applied to the planks. I created eight general categories for the planks, organized into two equal-sized groups. The primary group encompassed the four core values of Freedom, Order, Equality, and Public Goods (set forth in Chapter 2). Those four values underlie most issues of domestic political conflict, so they subsume most of Browne’s planks, but not all. The secondary group also had four general categories—Government, Foreign Policy, Military, and Symbolic. Technically, a Military is a Public Good, but military spending is huge and deserves separate treatment. These eight main headings are given in Table 5.1; each next to the first digit of a more detailed three-digit scheme.

TABLE 5.1: Major Code Headings for Classifying Party Planks

Code Type	General Category	General Category Description
1 - -	Freedom	Policies limiting government
2 - -	Order	Policies restricting citizens’ freedom
3 - -	Equality	Policies benefitting disadvantaged people
4 - -	Public Goods	Policies benefitting the public
5 - -	Government	Actions pertaining to the government
6 - -	Military	Actions benefitting the military
7 - -	Foreign Policy	Relations with foreign states
8 - -	Symbolic	Expressions of support, regret

Table 5.1 outlined the logic of my scheme for classifying Republican Party planks. Within the scheme, each plank was assigned one of 114 three-digit code numbers, presented in Table 5.2. The 114 codes are grouped under eight major headings: Freedom, Order, Equality, Public Goods, Government, Military, Foreign Policy, and Symbolic.

TABLE 5.2: All 114 Codes for Platform Planks, 1856 to 2016

Code	Description	Code	Description	Code	Description
1 --	FREEDOM			6 --	MILITARY
100	Expression/Privacy	306	Elderly	600	More spending
101	Religion	307	Children	601	Less spending
102	Ethnicity	308	Veterans	602	Navy
103	Immigration	309	LGBTQ	603	Army
104	Education	310	Indigenous	604	Air Force
105	Economy	4 --	PUBLIC GOODS	605	National Guard
106	Taxation	400	Education	606	Nuclear
107	Trade/Tariff	401	Transportation	607	Missiles
108	Labor	402	Environment	608	Space
109	Agriculture	403	Conservation	609	Intelligence
110	States' rights	404	Welfare	610	Command
111	Transgressions	405	Housing	611	Service
112	Alcohol/Drugs	406	Health	7 --	FOREIGN POLICY
113	Life/Death	407	Labor	700	World Organizations
114	Firearms	408	Communication	701	Europe
115	Lifestyle	409	Agriculture	702	NATO, SEATO, etc.
2 --	ORDER	410	Energy	703	Asia
200	Expression/Privacy	411	Shipping	704	Americas
201	Religion	412	Merchant Marine	705	Africa
202	Ethnicity	413	Indebtedness	706	Soviet/Russia
203	Immigration	414	Economy	707	China/Taiwan
204	Education	415	Spending/Deficit	708	Middle East
205	Economy	416	Banking & Currency	709	Wars post-WW2
206	Taxation	417	Public Lands +	710	Foreign aid
207	Trade/Tariff	418	Public Lands –	711	Treaties
208	Labor	419	Immigration	712	Monroe Doctrine
209	Agriculture	5 --	GOVERNMENT	713	Protect Citizens
210	National rights	500	Congress	714	Avoid war
211	Transgressions	501	Constitution	715	World Leadership
212	Alcohol/Drugs	502	Civil/Postal Service	8 --	SYMBOLIC
213	Life/Death	503	Expand govt	800	Presidents
214	Firearms	504	Reorganize govt	801	Nation
215	Lifestyle	505	Elections: + or –	802	Discrimination
3 --	EQUALITY	506	Interior	803	Atrocities
300	Non-Whites+	507	New States	804	Politicians
301	Non-Whites–	508	Territories	805	Treaties
302	Women	509	Native populations	806	Political Acts
303	Disadvantaged	510	Washington DC	807	Peace
304	Handicapped	511	Legal	808	Wars
305	Poor	512	Federal Courts	809	Other

Table 5.3 reports frequency and percentage usage of all the major coding categories for all 2,722 Republican planks. Twice as many party planks were assigned to the major code category, Public Goods, than to the next most common major code, Freedom, which was used slightly more often than Foreign Policy and Order. Only 10 percent of Republican planks referenced Equality—fewer than those mentioning Government Reorganization. Only a tiny number of planks fell in the Symbolic category. Chapters in Part III will discuss planks tagged with detailed codes.

TABLE 5.3: Distribution of 2,722 Republican Planks over Major Codes by Frequency of Usage

<u>Major Heading</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
4-- Public Goods	862	31
1-- Freedom	439	16
7-- Foreign Policy	402	15
2-- Order	383	14
3-- Equality	260	10
5-- Government	244	9
6-- Military	114	4
8-- Symbolic	18	1
Total	2,722	100%

To determine whether and how the Republican Party changed from 1856 to 2016, I divided the distribution above into time periods. Gerring contended that the party's principles remained largely intact over two lengthy epochs, changing only once. The change occurred between 1924 and 1928, when it left its Nationalism epoch and entered its Neoliberalism epoch. An analogy from old-fashioned photography suggests that Gerring used an extremely long shutter speed of nearly 100 years for his photo. In 1992—64 years later—the party was still in its Neoliberalism epochs. To capture change in Republican party principles, I study its platforms over shorter intervals, using faster shutter speeds.

Redoing Gerring's Analysis

Gerring's landmark study, *Party Ideologies in America*, argued that our two major parties, over nearly 170 years, showed more ideological stability than change. The Democratic Party's Jeffersonian epoch lasted 64 years (1828-1892); its Populism epoch (1896-1948) continued for 52 years; and its Universalism (1952-1992) ran for 44 years to the end of his study. He found the Republican Party even more stable, changing ideological orientations only once. The Republicans' Nationalism epoch lasted (1856-1924) lasted 68 years, while its Neoliberalism epoch was in its 64th year (1928-1992) when Gerring's research ended.

Writing now in 2021, I believe that the Republican Party in particular has changed in more fundamental ways than Gerring found since the start of its Neoliberalism epoch in 1928. Historians, journalists, and politicians write that today's Republican Party is vastly different from what it was during the Eisenhower presidency in the 1950s.¹³¹ While Gerring's study included far more information from candidate speeches than party platforms, I use only party platforms, as the authoritative expression of party principles, to study party change. Special note will be taken of times when Republican presidential candidates clashed with their party.

One cannot fruitfully analyze each platform separately, for early platforms were short and often contained few planks. To observe changes over time, I divided Republican planks into time periods. Choosing the appropriate period, or shutter speed, for such analysis is problematic. Nevertheless, displaying results for platforms grouped by adjacent eras may show continuities or discontinuities in party principles. All told, I analyzed the Republican party planks using shorter political “eras” covering thirty to thirty-four years based on six to seven presidential election cycles as shown in Table 5.4.

TABLE 5.4: Seven Platform Eras

<u>Eras</u>	<u>Presidential Elections</u>	<u>Number of Years</u>	<u>Politics of the Era</u>
1856-1876	6	24	began with the Republican Party’s origin and ended with the disputed 1876 election, making Hayes president while ending reconstruction
1880-1904	7	28	marked an era of Republican dominance during industrialization and ended with Teddy Roosevelt’s presidency
1908-1928	6	24	brought two terms of the Wilson presidency, otherwise Republican dominance until the stock market crash of 1929
1932-1956	7	28	began with the first of Democrat Franklin Roosevelt’s four elections and concluded with Republican Dwight Eisenhower’s pair of victories
1960-1980	6	24	includes two early Democratic wins (Kennedy and Johnson) and ends with Ronald Reagan’s first win
1984-2012	8	32	has eight cycles of presidential elections from Republican Ronald Reagan to Democrat Barack Obama is the longest era
2016-2020*	2	8	has only two election cycles beginning with Republican Donald Trump’s election
Totals	42	168	

*Republicans re-adopted their 2016 platform in 2020, so only different 41 platforms

The last two eras depart from the pattern and deserve some discussion. The 1984-2012 era contains eight elections, not seven, for two reasons. First, the platform in 1984 was under control of President Ronald Reagan’s forces, so it marked the start of a new era. Second, the era ended at 2012 to keep it separate from the 2016-2020 President Trump era. Note also that although Trump’s era contained two elections, the Republican Party drafted and adopted only one platform, that in 2016. In 2020, because of the pandemic, the party simply readopted its 2016 platform.

Overview of Republican Planks

Table 5.5 on the next page lists all seven eras in more detail alongside of Gerring’s “epochs” experienced by the Republican and Democratic parties.

TABLE 5.5: Seven Eras for Analyzing Republican Party Platform Planks

<u>Election Years</u>	<u>Janda's Eras</u>	<u>Republican Presidential Nominees (elected in capitals)</u>	<u>Gerring's Party Epochs</u>	
			<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democratic</u>
1856	1856-1876	John C. Fremont	Nationalism	Jeffersonianism
1860		ABRAHAM LINCOLN		
1864		ABRAHAM LINCOLN		
1868		ULYSSES S. GRANT		
1872		ULYSSES S. GRANT		
1876		RUTHERFORD B. HAYES		
1880		1880-1904		
1884	James G. Blaine			
1888	BENJAMIN HARRISON			
1892	Benjamin Harrison			
1896	WILLIAM McKINLEY			
1900	WILLIAM McKINLEY			
1904	THEODORE ROOSEVELT			
1908	1908-1928	WILLIAM H. TAFT	Neoliberalism	Universalism
1912		William H. Taft		
1916		Charles Evans Hughes		
1920		WARREN G. HARDING		
1924		CALVIN COOLIDGE		
1928		HERBERT HOOVER		
1932		1932-1956		
1936	Alfred M. Landon			
1940	Wendell Willkie			
1944	Thomas E. Dewey			
1948	Thomas E. Dewey			
1952	DWIGHT EISENHOWER			
1956	DWIGHT EISENHOWER			
1960	1960-1980	Richard Nixon	Neoliberalism	Universalism
1964		Barry Goldwater		
1968		RICHARD NIXON		
1972		RICHARD NIXON		
1976		Gerald Ford		
1980		RONALD REAGAN		
1984		1984-2012		
1988	GEORGE H. W. BUSH			
1992	George H. W. Bush			
1996	Robert Dole			
2000	GEORGE W. BUSH			
2004	GEORGE W. BUSH			
2008	John McCain			
2012	Mitt Romney			
2016	2016-2020	DONALD TRUMP	Neoliberalism	Universalism
2020		Donald Trump		

Finally we can report the distribution of all 2,722 planks cataloged in 41 Republican Party platforms since 1856. The distribution is displayed in Figure 5.3

FIGURE 5.3: All 2,722 Republican Planks for Seven Eras and by Eight Major Types

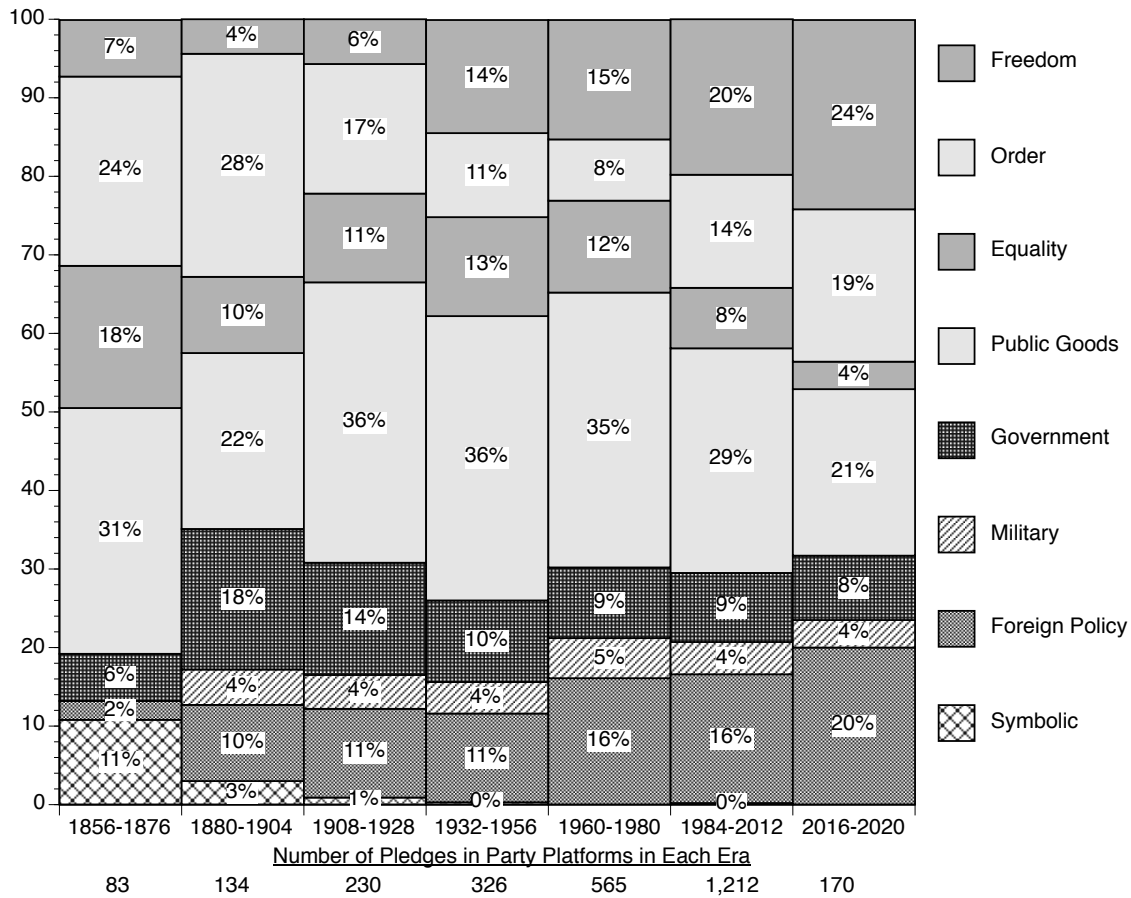


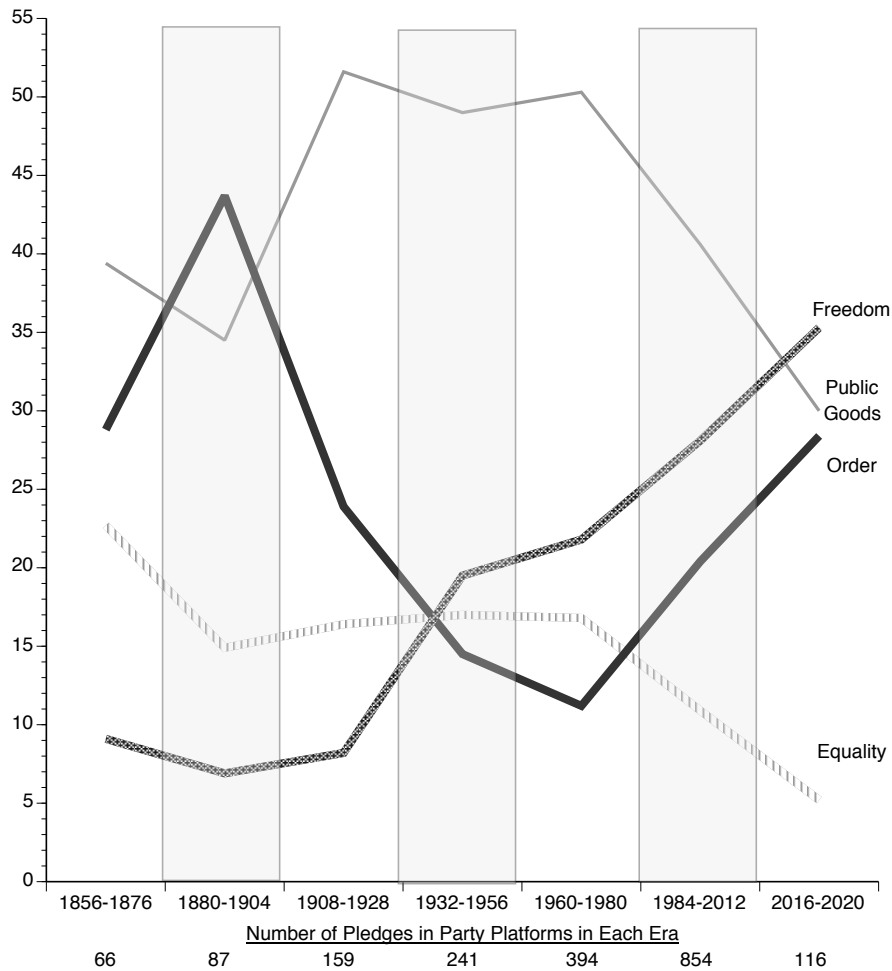
Figure 5.3 documents some systematic changes over time in what Republican planks covered. Most dramatic is the nearly steady increase in the percentages typed as Freedom. Almost as dramatic is the decline in the Equality category. The steady increase in Foreign Policy planks attests to the United States’ increasing prominence in world affairs. Interestingly, the percentage of Military planks has been virtually constant over time. There also has been little change in attention to Government over time, but Symbolic expressions, once common, have virtually disappeared.

Although Republican planks dealing with Foreign Policy have increased markedly over time, Foreign Policy planks were seldom distinctly partisan. The same is true for planks in the Government and Military categories, and neither party had Symbolic planks after 1900. Consequently, Figure 5.4 excludes those four major types of planks and only shows how the remain 1,917 Republican planks distributed over Public Goods, Freedom, Order, and Equality.

The findings in Figure 5.4 are striking. Whereas the Republican Party in its early days focused on Order more than Freedom, it increasingly emphasized Freedom after the 1908-1928 era. That dating strongly supports Gerring’s fixing of the party’s Neoliberalism era at 1928. However, tracking the Order line does not support his argument that Republicans favored “the individual over the state” in its Neoliberalism epoch. In fact, during the 1960-1980 era, the party swung sharply back toward Order and continued on that path henceforth. Meanwhile, Republican platforms contained fewer and fewer planks

concerning Public Goods and to Equality. Something happened in the 1960-1980 era that changed the party. During that era, the party embarked on its “Southern strategy.”

FIGURE 5.4: 1,917 Republican Planks for Seven Eras and by Four Major Types



Before considering further the politics behind the changes in Republican Party principles since 1928, we should examine in detail some of the party’s major principles and how they changed since the party’s founding. Part III reviews how platform planks reflected Republican principles over time.

CHAPTER 6

Original Principles

When the United States Constitution was ratified in 1787, nations across the world still permitted capture, trading, and use of slaves. Some governments moved toward outlawing slavery, but our Founding Fathers sidestepped the controversial practice by not mentioning it in the Constitution. However, the document acknowledged and abetted slavery's existence by counting only "three fifths of all other Persons" for congressional representation, by forbidding to stop the "importation" of persons before 1808, and by providing for the return to a state of a "person held to service or labor."

Generally speaking, Whites who lived in southern states strongly supported slavery, on which their economy and lifestyle depended. While few northern Whites believed that black slaves were mentally and culturally their equal, many thought that slavery was morally wrong and should be abolished throughout the nation. Abolition, however, posed two serious problems.

Historian Joseph Ellis outlined both problems in his prize-winning book, *Founding Fathers*.¹³² The first problem was the financial cost in reimbursing slave-owners for their loss. The Constitution's Fifth Amendment said that no "private property be taken for public use, without just compensation," and most northerners conceded that slaves were "private property." Ellis estimated that the cost of emancipating the 694,280 slaves counted in the 1790 Census at \$170 million, when the federal budget was less than \$7 million.¹³³

The second problem was what to do with so many freed slaves. Some abolitionists favored sending them back to Africa. Others proposed sending them west to new territories. Relatively few thought that former slaves should remain where they were, become American citizens, and live alongside of Whites—much less mix with them. Abolitionists, nevertheless, firmly opposed extending slavery to territories likely to become states, and they found support in a Free Soil Party formed from Whigs and anti-slavery Democrats. Its 1848 platform accepted slavery in existing states but prohibited extending it beyond them. The Free Soil presidential candidate won only 10 percent of the 1848 popular vote and no electoral votes.

Republicanism's Finest Hour

On January 4, 1854 Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which increased chances for slavery in new states. Slavery's opponents quickly acted to create a party dedicated to their cause. Two Midwestern towns—Ripon, Wisconsin, and Jackson, Michigan—claim credit for founding the new Republican Party. Ripon's claim lies in a meeting of former Free Soilers, Whigs, and Democrats on March 20, 1854. Jackson boasts that it nominated Republican candidates in a state convention on June 6, 1854. Gatherings in both towns called themselves "Republicans." The eminent historian, Lewis Gould, said that the name provided two positive links to the past. First, it tied the party to Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republican political organization. Second, it related to romantic English and Italian ideas of a "republic"—citizens acting in the political sphere.¹³⁴

The Republican Party's first national convention in 1856 issued a platform based on their anti-slavery principle, and its text denounced slavery in five places. That became the party's finest hour in its nearly 170-year history. The platform's first paragraph acknowledged *the principles of Washington and Jefferson* and then immediately resolved to maintain *the principles promulgated in the Declaration of*

*Independence.*¹³⁵ It held to *the self-evident truth, that all men are endowed with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.* It referred to the “barbarism” of slavery and vowed in several places *to prohibit it in the Territories.*

In 1856, Republicans effectively fulfilled Edmund Burke’s classic definition of a political party and “united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principles in which they are all agreed.”¹³⁶ The party’s first presidential nominee, John C. Fremont, won only one-third of the popular vote, but its second nominee, Abraham Lincoln, won on a platform that attacked slavery in five places. After Lincoln’s assassination, every Republican platform to 1908 continued to mention slavery at least once, reminding voters’ of the party’s historical legacy. Below, verbatim, are the passages in Republican Party platforms from 1856 to 1908 mentioning slavery. (Hereafter, all quoted extracts from platforms will be italicized.)

1856

*opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; . . . to the extension of **slavery** into Free Territory our Republican fathers, when they had abolished **slavery** in all our National Territory, ordained that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law it becomes our duty to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it for the purpose of establishing **slavery** in the Territories we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislation, of any individual, or association of individuals, to give legal existence to **slavery** in any Territory it is both the right and the imperative duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism--Polygamy, and **slavery**.*

1860

*the new dogma that the Constitution, of its own force, carries **slavery** into any or all of the territories of the United States, is a dangerous political heresy our Republican fathers, when they had abolished **slavery** in all our national territory, ordained that "no persons should be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law we deny the authority of Congress, of a territorial legislature, or of any individuals, to give legal existence to **slavery** in any territory we brand the recent reopening of the African **slave** trade, under the cover of our national flag, aided by perversions of judicial power, as a crime against humanity in the recent vetoes, by their Federal Governors, of the acts of the legislatures of Kansas and Nebraska, prohibiting **slavery** in those territories, we find a practical illustration of the boasted Democratic principle of Non-Intervention and Popular Sovereignty*

1864

*as **slavery** was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this Rebellion, and as it must be, always and everywhere, hostile to the principles of Republican Government, justice and the National safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic we are in favor, furthermore, of such an amendment to the Constitution, . . . as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of **Slavery** we approve, especially, the Proclamation of Emancipation, and the employment as Union soldiers of men heretofore held in **slavery***

1872

*During eleven years of supremacy [the party] suppressed a gigantic rebellion, emancipated four millions of **slaves**,*

1876

*When . . . this land was to be purged of human **slavery**, . . . the Republican party came into power.*

1880

*[The party] . . . reconstructed the Union of the States, with freedom instead of **slavery** as its corner-stone. [The party] relieved Congress from the infamous work of hunting fugitive **slaves**, and charged it to see that **slavery** does not exist.*

*We affirm the belief, avowed in 1876, . . . that **slavery** having perished in the States, its twin brother, polygamy, must die in the territories.*

1884

*The Republican party, having its birth in a hatred of **slave** labor*

1888

*we send fraternal congratulations to our fellow Americans of Brazil upon their great act of emancipation, which completed the abolition of **slavery** throughout the two American continents*

1904

*Fifty years ago the Republican party came into existence dedicated among other purposes to the great task of arresting the extension of human **slavery**.*

1908

*This great historic organization, that destroyed **slavery**, preserved the Union*

By 1912, memories of the Civil War a half-century earlier had faded, so slavery went unmentioned. However, the Republican platform recalled *with a sense of veneration and gratitude the name of our first great leader, who was nominated in this city, and whose lofty principles and superb devotion to his country are an inspiration to the party he honored—Abraham Lincoln*. Slavery was never mentioned again until 1952, when the party warned against *Communist enslavement*, henceforth a staple warning in its platforms.

Democrats' Federal Refuge

The Democratic platform of 1856 mentioned slavery ten times and defended the practice through legal arguments. Democrats repeatedly sought reference to states' rights under the Constitution. Consider their platform's first resolution:

*That Congress has no power under the Constitution, to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States, and that such States are the sole and proper judges of everything appertaining to their own affairs, not prohibited by the Constitution; that all efforts of the abolitionists, or others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of **slavery** . . .*

Democrats sought refuge under federalism. Today, the terms "federal" and "national" are used interchangeably, and incorrectly. A federal structure entrusts certain powers to one central government and delegates other powers to provincial governments. So "federal government" includes both national *and* state governments.¹³⁷ Taking refuge in federalism's separation of governmental powers, Democrats in 1856 argued that only state governments could rule on the issue of slavery. Republicans in 1856 proposed to contain or end slavery under national powers.

Soon after Lincoln's election in 1860, southern politicians organized to secede from the United States. On February 8, 1861, seven slave states formed the Confederate States of America. A month after Lincoln's March inauguration, secessionist forces in South Carolina attacked U.S. Fort Sumter, starting the Civil War between twenty northern states and eleven in the south, four others having joined the confederacy.

In the ensuing Civil War, Republicans in the victorious north were able to fulfill their opposition to slavery, not only preventing slavery from extending to free territories but by ending it in southern states. To their credit, Democrats acknowledged the facts. The Democratic platform of 1868 began by "recognizing the questions of slavery and secession as having been settled for all time to come by the war." Then the party demanded *Immediate restoration of all the States to their rights in the Union*. For decades thereafter, the Democratic Party became known as the "states' rights" party.

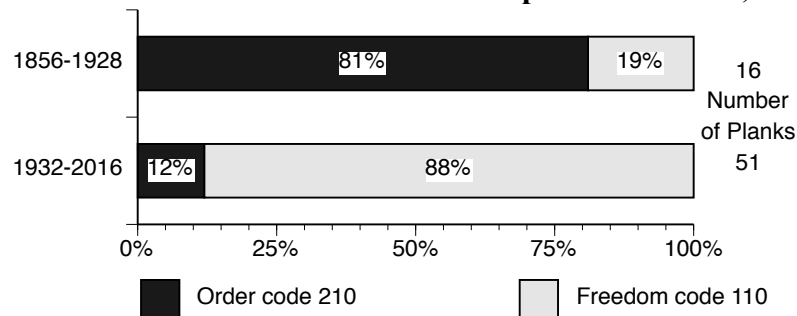
Democrats did not mention slavery again until 1952, denouncing *sweatshop slavery at starvation wages*. Then in 2000, the Democratic platform proposed creating a commission to *examine the history of*

slavery. While later Democratic platforms expressed concern about slavery's past and urged study, both parties had laid the once explosive issue to rest.

Republicans As a States' Rights Party

By opposing slavery across U.S. territories, the Republican Party pursued the principle of national order. Two of the main headings in the 114 codes for Republican platform planks are Order and Freedom (Table 5.1). Under the Order heading, code 210 stood for "National Order." Under Freedom, code 110 stood for "States' rights." Together, these codes were assigned to 67 of the 2,722 planks. They distributed by election years as shown in Figure 6.2.

FIGURE 6.1: Order and Freedom in Republican Planks, 1856-2016



Order (code 210) was assigned to 81 percent of 16 Republican planks from 1856 to 1928—e.g., to this statement in the 1884 platform: *The people of the United States, in their organized capacity, constitute a Nation and not a mere confederacy of States*. Code 210 also applied to this statement in 1928: *We believe in the essential unity of the American people. Sectionalism in any form is destructive of national life.*

Freedom (code 110) was assigned to 88 percent of 51 planks from 1932 to 2016. Its first usage occurred in 1868, the same year Democrats recognized that the Civil War had settled the slavery question. The corresponding Republican plank in 1868 read:

The guaranty by Congress of equal suffrage to all loyal men at the South was demanded by every consideration of public safety, of gratitude, and of justice, and must be maintained; while the question of suffrage in all the loyal States properly belongs to the people of those States.

Freedom code 110 was not applied again to Republican planks until its 1928 platform, after which it was used 47 times as shown in catalog of party planks below. (Only verbatim extracts from party platforms are italicized; abbreviated party planks are in plain text.)

- 1928 oppose federal government interfering with state activities
favors state over federal regulation
- 1932 we regard relief problem as one of State and local responsibility
- 1940 remove waste, discrimination from relief, through administration by the states
give federal grants-in-aid to states
- 1944 avoid federalization of government activities
return public employment-office system to the States
favor regulation and supervision of the business of insurance by the several States
- 1948 restore states rights to submerged lands
- 1952 popular education rests upon the local communities and the States.

- States should order and control their domestic institutions
- favor State rights beneath navigable inland and offshore waters
- 1956 opposed to unwarranted growth of centralized Federal power
- 1960 leave state and local governments handle their programs
- 1964 channel more Federal grants-in-aid through states
- 1964 rely on subordinate levels of government over federal agencies
- 1968 strengthen state and local law enforcement and preserve the primacy of state responsibility
- states use federal re-insurance against damage and fire caused by riots
- 1976 oppose federalizing the welfare system
- 1980 replace categorical aid programs with block grants
- favor block grants to states for elementary and secondary education
- pledge to return power to state and local governments
- transfer all welfare functions to the states with tax resources to finance them
- 1984 sell surplus public lands
- return programs to states
- 1988 favor block grants and revenue sharing
- return power from the federal government to State and local governments
- recognize states' rights in water law
- reduce public land held by government
- 1992 not initiate any federal activity that can be conducted better on the State or local level.
- seek to reduce the amount of land owned by the government
- 1996 smaller, more effective and less intrusive government
- consolidate federal training programs, transfer to states and local government
- government is too large
- 1996 return Medicaid to state management
- unify scattered federal grants to block grants
- 2000 Raise academic standards through increased local control and accountability to parents
- protect against federal intrusion and bullying
- turn over to local communities foreclosed and abandoned HUD properties
- give more control to states concerning public lands
- 2008 reaffirm traditional state authority over water allocations
- 2012 switch to block grants for Medicaid
- shift training programs to states financed by block grants
- 2016 shift regulation from federal to the states
- allow states to regulate local insurance markets
- convey some public lands to the states
- allow state and local officials to handle criminal justice
- favor more state and local control over public assistance programs

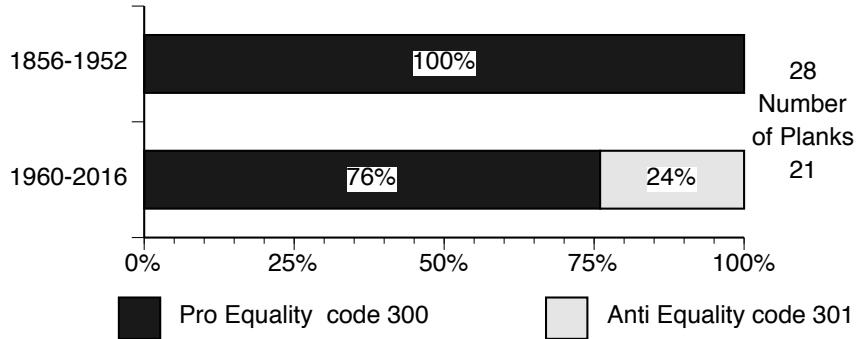
By 1928, the Republican Party began to rival the Democrats in favoring the states over the nation in America's federal form of government. After 1960, Republicans finally eclipsed Democrats in advocating states' rights. The party that began as champion of national rights turned into a party of states' rights.

Changing Stances on Equality

Slavery, of course, denied the equality of human beings. Up to 1952, Republican platforms were as likely to mention "equality" (27 times) as Democratic platforms up to 1948 (35 times). Afterwards, Democrats mentioned it twice as often as Republicans (67 to 32). Moreover, using the word in a party platform is not the same as incorporating the principle in a platform plank that takes an action-oriented position.

Table 5.2 in Chapter 5 listed all 114 codes applied to 2,722 Republican Party platform planks since 1856. Under the Equality heading, Non-White code 300 applied to *positive* steps toward equality for non-Whites, and Non-White code 301 to *negative* steps—away from equality. Of the 2,722 Republican planks, only 49 took a position on equality concerning non-Whites. Up to 1956, every plank was positive. The first plank against equality for non-whites came in 1960. The results are contained in Figure 6.1.

FIGURE 6.2: Equality Planks in Republican Platforms, 1856-2016



Whereas all 28 Republican planks up to 1956 favored racial equality, almost a quarter of its planks since 1960 objected to enforcing equality. Below are the five planks coded negatively since 1960; all dealt with school desegregation and “busing” children to school.

- 1960 oppose fixing a target date for school desegregation
- 1972 halt immediately all further court-ordered busing
- oppose busing for racial balance
- 1976 oppose forced busing
- 1980 condemn forced busing

Despite the party’s opposition to busing as a means to desegregate schools, every Republican platform since 1960 boasted of being “the party of Lincoln.”

Summary

This initial chapter in Part III, Principles of Republicanism, begins the detailed, factual analysis of the principles as expressed in 41 Republican Party platforms over 160 years—from 1856 to 2016. With the next seven chapters, it provides the empirical foundation for assessing what Edmund Burke said were the “particular principles” serving the “national interest” on which politicians “agreed” when joining to organize a political party. Part IV examines when and how the party departed from its historical principles when acting as an Electoral Team, a Social Tribe, and a Personality Cult rather than as a Political Party.

The Republican Party was founded on the principle of containing the spread of slavery in the United States, and it was willing to use the power of the national government to do so. As equality was understood at the time, the Republican Party recognized slaves to be politically equal to their owners. Over time, as equality applied to social relationships between people of color and those born white, the Republican Party backed away from using national power to enforce equality.

According to John Gerring’s study of political speeches and party platforms, the “Nationalism”

epoch of the Republican Party lasted to 1924. During this period, the “central dichotomy” was *order* versus *anarchy*. The party favored using national authority to impose order. After 1928, the party entered its “Neoliberalism” epoch, during which the central dichotomy was the *individual* versus the *state*. My independent analysis of Republican Party platform planks since 1856 coincides virtually perfectly with Gerring’s classification, as shown in Table 6.1

TABLE 6.1: National Authority v. States’ Rights by Electoral Eras

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956	1960-1980	1984-2012	2016-2020
National authority	National authority	National authority				
			States’ rights	States’ rights	States’ rights	States’ rights

Soon after its founding, the Republican Party controlled both the presidency and Congress, and it wielded national authority as a governing party. Not only did Republicans end slavery across the land, but they developed its economy and natural resources. About a century ago, the Republican Party abandoned its original principle of national government and completely reversed its political orientation, leaving states to govern as they may or may not. It evolved from a governing party to an anti-government party.

CHAPTER 7

Financing Government

Governments must raise revenue one way or another. One way is to tax people indirectly, e.g., by taxing goods imported into the country that people consume. Another way is to tax people directly, taking a percentage of their income. Indirect taxation through tariffs is less visible and less likely to arouse voters. Of course, the need for taxes depends on the amount of government spending. During the Republican Party's first fifty years, Republican governments spent government money freely and raised revenue accordingly. Thus, the Republican Party was the original "tax and spend" party. Nevertheless, Republicans were fiscally responsible during the first half of their party's existence.

Tariffs: A Double Reverse

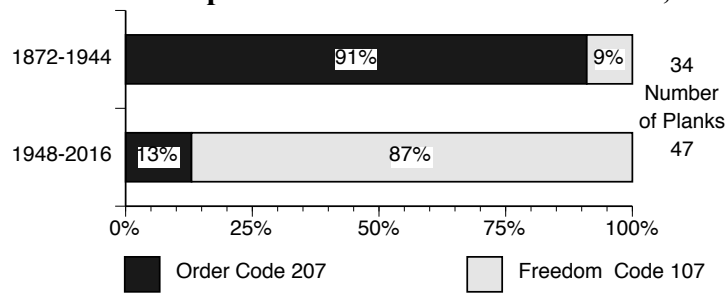
The first major piece of legislation in the 1789 Congress was the Tariff Act.¹³⁸ Tariffs on imported goods were the major source of receipts under the old Articles of Confederation, and the Tariff Act was designed to continue the money flow. Tariffs generated 80 to 90 percent of U.S. funds until the Civil War, when an income tax was enacted to bolster finances. The income tax expired in 1872, as spending returned to normal after the war. From 1875 to 1890 tariffs provided more than half the government's cost, with taxes on alcohol and luxuries providing most of the remainder.¹³⁹ Republicans, who usually controlled government after the Civil War, kept the tariff high to produce revenue and protect domestic industry. The "protective tariff" became a key party principle, opposed by Democrats, who saw high tariffs as harming consumers and farmers.

Historian Lewis Gould wrote, "One issue on which most Republicans agreed during the Gilded Age was the protective tariff."¹⁴⁰ He continued: "Protection was more than just an economic policy. In the hands of the Republicans, it sounded themes of nationalism and patriotic pride."¹⁴¹ The term, "protective tariff," itself did not appear in Republican platforms until 1900, at the end of the Gilded Age, but the concept appeared in the 1888 platform: *We are uncompromisingly in favor of the American system of protection.* The 1912 Republican platform praised its prominence in party principles:

*We reaffirm our belief in a **protective tariff**. The Republican tariff policy has been of the greatest benefit to the country, developing our resources, diversifying our industries, and protecting our workmen against competition with cheaper labor abroad, thus establishing for our wage-earners the American standard of living.*

A "protective tariff" reflected a desire for economic and political order; "free trade" reflected the opposite: a desire for economic and political freedom.

A total of 81 Republican planks on "Trade/Tariffs" were coded separately under Order and Freedom headings. Trade/Tariff code 207 under Order favored higher tariffs. Under Freedom, Trade/Tariff code 107 favored freer trade and reciprocal trade agreements. Figure 7.1 shows that Republican platforms almost always backed high, protective tariffs to World War II.

FIGURE 7.1: Republican Planks on Tariffs/Trade, 1872-2016

After the war, Republicans' views on international trade changed, becoming less protectionist. In 1980, the party reversed its position; it became a "free trade" party. Its 1980 platform denounced its former bedrock trade principle:

*The Republican Party believes that **protectionist tariffs** and quotas are detrimental to our economic well-being.*

Historian Gould wrote in 2003: "Once the party of the protective tariff, it is now the most reliable ideological proponent of free trade."¹⁴²

But Gould wrote before Donald Trump influenced the party's 2016 platform. Its section, "A Winning Trade Policy," foreshadowed a return to protectionist tariffs:

We need better negotiated trade agreements that put America first. When trade agreements have been carefully negotiated with friendly democracies, they have resulted in millions of new jobs here at home supported by our exports. When those agreements do not adequately protect U.S. interests, U.S. sovereignty, or when they are violated with impunity, they must be rejected.

As the party's presidential candidate, Donald Trump clearly put his personal "America First" stamp on the Republican Party platform. As president, he imposed taxes on imported products to protect American industries. In his acceptance speech to the 2020 Republican Convention, Trump said, "We will impose tariffs on any company that leaves America to produce jobs overseas."¹⁴³ The "free trade" banner no longer led the Republican parade. Although 56 percent of Republicans favored free trade in 2015, just 29 percent did by October 2016.¹⁴⁴

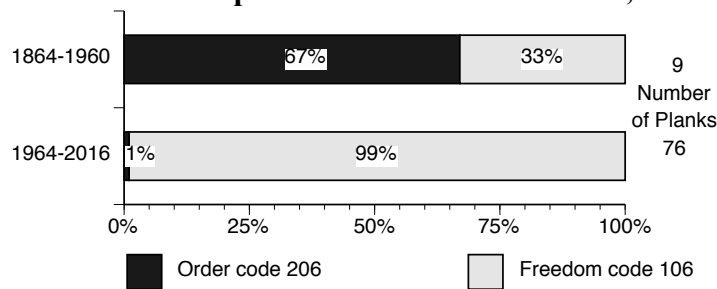
Republicans Invent, Resist, Income Taxes

Given Republicans' contemporary anti-tax rhetoric, Americans might think that Democrats invented the income tax. In truth, a Republican president and Congress imposed the first personal income tax in 1861 to help pay for the Civil War. Another act in 1862 raised the rates, but both acts were rescinded or repealed by 1872.

In 1894, a Democratic Congress and president (Cleveland) revived the Republican income tax, but the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in 1895. Early in the 20th century, progressive Republicans recognized the need for a new and more productive source of revenue, and in 1909 a Republican Congress, supported by a Republican president (Taft) proposed a 16th Amendment to the Constitution allowing an income tax. Democrats controlled Congress and the White House (Wilson) when the 16th Amendment was ratified in 1913. While Democrats did pass the law establishing a national income tax that year, Republicans actually began the practice of taxing personal incomes.

A total of 85 Republican planks on “Taxation” were coded separately under Order and Freedom headings. Over 105 years from 1864-1960, only 9 planks addressed taxation. Of those, four actually favored government action to increase revenue (Order Taxation code 206), and they were all before 1960. Beginning with the 1964 Republican platform of nominee Barry Goldwater, taxation attracted 76 planks, 99 percent were for lower taxes, coded 106 (under Freedom). The data are graphed in Figure 7.2.

FIGURE 7.2: Republican Planks on Taxation, 1856-2016



The 1980 (Reagan) and 1992 (Dole) platforms tied for a high of eleven planks calling for lower taxes. Here are the eleven planks from 1980:

1980

- favor tax incentives for contributions to cultural organizations
- Cut taxes, increase incentives to save, and stimulate capital investment to create jobs;
- supports reductions in personal income tax rates from 14-70 to 10-50 percent
- achieve lower tax rates for small businesses
- allow deductions for charitable contributions even if not itemizing
- call for a reduction in the estate tax burden
- eliminate estate taxes on inherited farm property between spouses
- lower tax rates on savings and investment income
- phase out tax on old oil
- repeal windfall profits tax for small volume owners
- simplify and accelerate depreciation schedules

Because most citizens prefer lower taxes to higher taxes, Republicans after 1960 deserve some credit for favoring lower taxes. Both parties in a two-party system should be guardians of the public purse, and voters should be free to choose which party fits the country’s need for government spending. Having one party restricting available revenue more than the other serves party competition. Republicans also consistently recorded their concern over government spending and budget deficits.

Republicans Deplore, Generate, Budget Deficits

People often confuse the budget deficit with the national debt. The United States government operates on an annual estimate of revenue and spending called a Fiscal Year (FY) that begins on October 1 and ends on September 30. The Fiscal Year is named for the year it ends. Thus FY2023 ends on September 30, 2023. If spending equals revenue, the budget is said to be “balanced” for that fiscal year. An budget deficit *for that year* results when spending exceeds revenue. In contrast, the national debt is the amount accumulated over all years that the government owes to lenders, both foreign and domestic. Republican platforms used the words “national debt” (21 times) and “budget deficit” (9 times), but they were most likely to refer to a “balanced budget” (35 times).

Spending/Deficit code 415 was assigned to 50 planks under the Public Goods heading. It was placed there because most people view spending in a general way, as a discretionary matter for all sorts of domestic programs. In actuality, most spending is committed to mandatory programs such as social security and Medicare. The largest discretionary expenditure is Military spending, which has amounted to roughly 15 percent of the entire national budget in recent years.

Not surprisingly, most (36) of the 50 Republican planks concerned with spending and the deficit came since 1964 (only 14 before then). Four Spending/Deficit planks came in the 1964 election year and four in 1980. Here are the four planks cataloged for 1964:

favor anti-deficit statute
reaffirm belief in a balanced budget
favor reducing Federal spending by five billion dollars
solve nation's balance of payment difficulties

Every Republican platform from 1984 to 2016 called for a balanced budget, and “balanced budget” appeared in one-third of the 36 Spending/Deficit planks. Republican concern about government spending beyond government revenue is admirable, and government spending beyond its income has been a real problem. Since World War II, only three presidents managed to achieve a balanced budget. Republican Eisenhower generated small surpluses in FY1956 and FY1957, and Democrat Johnson produced one in FY1969. Only Democrat Clinton produced sizable surpluses four years in a row, from FY1998 to FY2001. Nevertheless, Republicans succeeded in tagging Democrats as the “tax and spend” party. The 1984 Republican platform stated:

*Democrats claim deficits are caused by Americans' paying too little in taxes. Nonsense. We categorically reject proposals to increase taxes in a misguided effort to balance the budget. **Tax and spending** increases would reduce incentives for economic activity and threaten the recovery.*

In 1992, ironically the year President Clinton was first elected, the Republican platform stated:

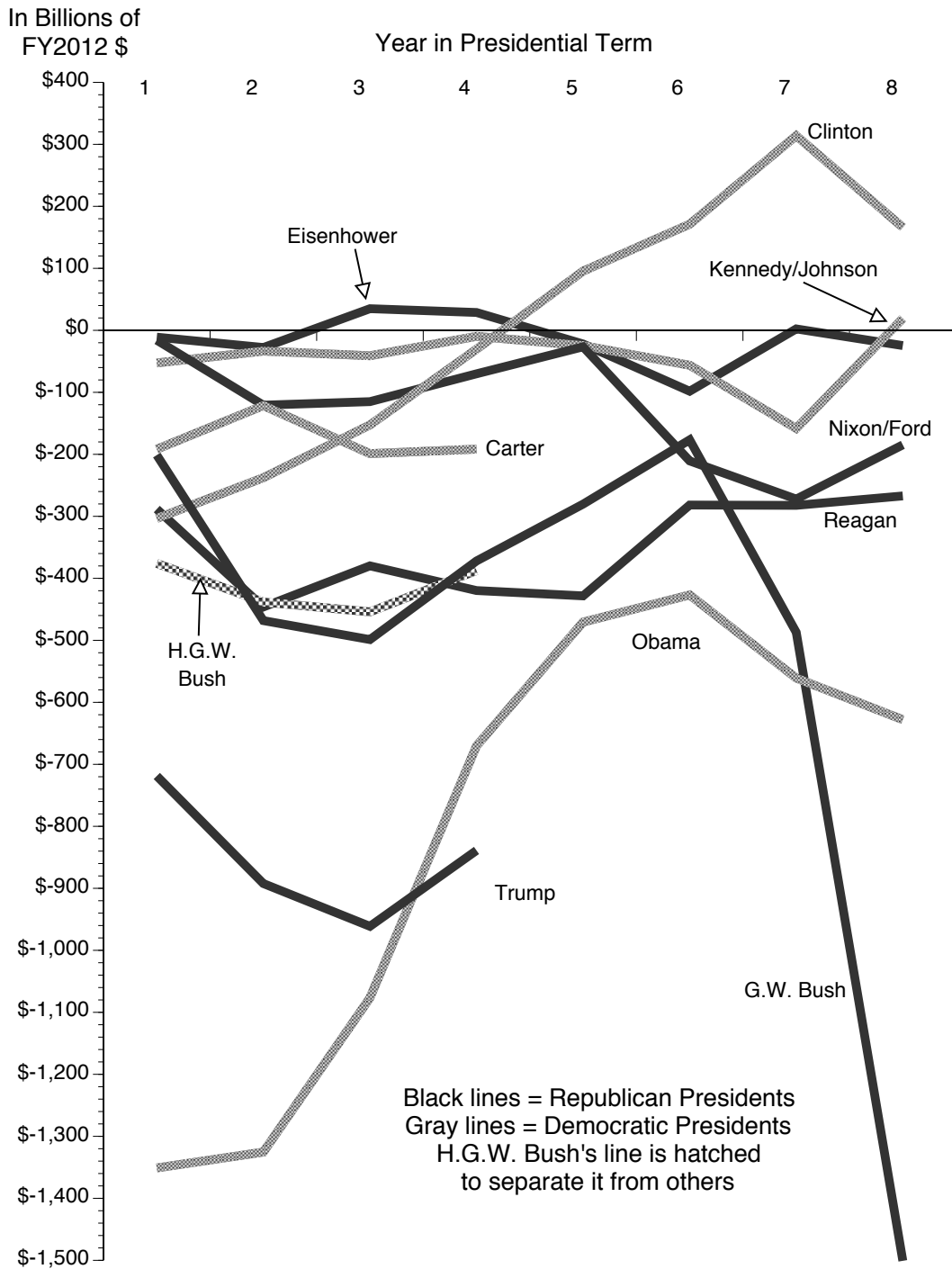
*Contrary to statist Democrat propaganda, the American people know that the 1980s were a rising tide, a magnificent decade for freedom and entrepreneurial creativity. We are confident that, knowing this, they will never consciously retreat to the bad old days of **tax and spend**.*

Clinton later succeeded in balancing the budget four years in a row. Nevertheless, Newt Gingrich, who led the party to take over the House of Representatives in 1994, sought to “smash ‘tax and spend liberalism’ which has dominated our domestic politics for sixty years.”¹⁴⁵

Republicans: Don’t Tax and Spend

If Democrats are the “tax and spend” party, Republicans are the “don’t tax and spend” party. That conclusion can be drawn from the U.S. Bureau of the Budget data on budgetary surpluses and deficits.¹⁴⁶ Figure 7.3 plots annual amounts for ten presidential administrations—six Republican and four Democratic—from the first year of their term to the last.¹⁴⁷ FY1954 represents the first budget drawn up by President Eisenhower’s administration; FY2021 represents the budget left by the Trump administration.¹⁴⁸ The amounts are expressed in “constant” FY2012 dollars to adjust for inflation

FIGURE 7.3: Annual Budget Surpluses/Deficits by President Since 1954



Three of the four Democratic presidents in Figure 7.3 experienced smaller budgetary deficits than five of the six Republican presidents. Only Eisenhower compares favorably with Clinton, Kennedy/Johnson, and Carter. While President Obama, the fourth Democrat, also had huge deficits, he inherited them from the 2008 economic collapse during George W. Bush's administration. President Obama steadily decreased annual deficits through most of his eight years. Figure 7.3 clearly demonstrates that Republican presidents ran up far larger budget deficits than Democratic presidents in fiscal years since 1954.

Do Deficits Matter?

In 1950, people making over \$200,000 paid 91 percent of their earnings above that amount as income tax. Movie star Ronald Reagan’s 1965 autobiography said that he quit making pictures for a year after he moved into that income bracket.¹⁴⁹ The top tax rate was still 70 percent when Reagan was elected president in 1980. In 1981, he signed a bill reducing it to 50 percent. Afterwards, Reagan ran substantial budget deficits in every year of his presidency. In 2001, George W. Bush further reduced the top rate to 35 percent. President Obama raised it to 39.6 percent, but President Trump reduced it to 37 percent. The message is clear: Republicans favor low taxes on high incomes.

Republicans argue that such a policy is good for the country. They expect low taxes to generate more revenue in the long run. Allowing wealthy people to keep more of their money enables them to invest it in productive businesses, which hire more people who make more money and subsequently pay more in taxes than produced by higher taxes on top incomes. This belief fits with “supply-side” economic theory: lower taxes generate enough extra government revenue to balance the budget without making spending cuts. Economist Gregory Mankiw, advisor to President George W. Bush (2001-2009), found that history failed to confirm the main conjecture of supply-side economics. Mankiw said, “When Reagan cut taxes after he was elected, the result was less tax revenue, not more.”¹⁵⁰

Figure 7.3 showed that the steepest and largest budget deficits occurred during the presidency of Republican G. W. Bush, who invaded Iraq, leading to a long and costly war. Despite the war’s initial and increasing costs, President Bush did not propose taxes to pay for it. Critics claimed, with justification, that the United States had never fought a major war without designating taxes to pay for it.¹⁵¹ According to Dick Cheney, President Bush’s Vice President, the accumulated and growing budget deficits posed no problem. Paul O’Neill, the Republican Secretary of Treasury, reported that Cheney said to him: "You know, Paul, Reagan proved deficits don't matter."¹⁵²

Summary

In the 19th century, Republicans believed that tariffs would raise sufficient revenue for the government and would protect fledgling domestic industries. By the beginning of the 20th century, tariffs failed to provide sufficient revenue for government, and Republicans turned to taxing incomes for additional revenue. Table 7.1 encapsulates the changes in party policies.

TABLE 7.1: Revenue by Tariff v. Income Tax

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928**	1932-1956*	1960-1980*	1984-2012	2016-2020
Tariff	Tariff	Tariff				
Income Tax*		Income Tax	Income Tax	Income Tax	Income Tax	Income Tax

*Introduced to fund the Civil War. **Thirteenth Amendment for an income tax ratified in 1913

Unfortunately, Republicans’ willingness to adopt the new source of revenue was not matched by a willingness to impose sufficient taxes to avoid perennial debt.

At the start of the 20th century, the United States was exiting a domestic agricultural economy and entering a world of international trade. A protective tariff, which had been the party’s bedrock principle, was an “antiquated policy” for that world. The party noted this in its 1988 platform:

Unfortunately, international markets are still restricted by antiquated policies: protective tariffs, quotas, and subsidies. To its credit, the Republican Party scrapped its venerable principle, the Protective Tariff, in the 1980s. Figure 7.2 shows the timing of the shift.

TABLE 7.2: Protective Tariff v. Free Trade by Eras

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956	1960-1980*	1984-2012	2016-2020
	Protective tariff	Protective Tariff	Protective Tariff	Protective Tariff		Tariff protection
					Free trade	

*1980 plank denounced the protective tariff at the end of that era.

The word “tariff” did not appear in the 2016 Republican Party platform. While it committed the party *to the principles of open markets . . . in which free trade will truly be fair trade for all concerned*, the platform also said: *A Republican president will insist on parity in trade and stand ready to implement countervailing duties if other countries refuse to cooperate*. When President Trump imposed tariffs on foreign goods to protect American industries, he—in effect—changed Republican policy. The party’s orientation had evolved from nationalist to internationalist after World War II, and back to nationalist after Trump.

CHAPTER 8

Economic Affairs

Founded in 1856 to prevent slavery from expanding outside the agricultural South, the Republican Party drew its support from the industrial north. After the Civil War ended slavery, the party championed a new issue: economic growth. The celebrated historian, Lewis Gould, wrote that “Republicans expanded the power of the national government in the economic sphere.”

They established a national banking system, imposed an income tax, created a system for dispersing public land in the West, and started a transcontinental railroad. The role of the national government in promoting economic growth went beyond even what the Whigs had contemplated.¹⁵³

Even as the Civil War raged in 1862, a Republican Congress passed the Morrill Act that provided grants of land to states to finance the establishment of colleges specializing in “agriculture and the mechanic arts.”

The Economy as a Public Good

Government actions to promote economic growth vary in their political implications. Governments usually spend money on public goods without much controversy. Although “conservative” and “liberals” might differ over such government spending, they seldom clash over it. They are more likely to fight furiously over economic policies that prohibit economic activity (e.g., restricting ownership), or that serve private interests (e.g., selling public lands to private owners). I categorized the less controversial type of Republican platform planks on the “Economy” under Public Goods code 414. The more controversial fall under Public Goods 205 Order and 105 Freedom.

The 2,722 Republican planks divide into two almost equal halves: from 1856 to 1980 and from 1984 to 2016—about 1,350 planks in each half. Only 54 of the total were coded 414, Economy. Three-quarters of those occurred in the party’s first 125 years, from 1856 to 1980, when Republicans were spending for the Public Good in general. Listed below are the very first eight planks after 1856:

- 1860 develop industrial interests of the whole country
- 1868 administer government with strictest economy
 improve credit to gain low interest
- 1872 promote the industries, prosperity, and growth of the whole country
 secure full protection and the amplest field for capital
 secure full protection and the amplest field for labor, the creator of capital
- 1876 promote interests of labor and advance prosperity of whole country
- 1888 support the fishing industry

These eight Economy planks reflected the party’s early intent to serve “the whole country.” As the 19th century ended and the 20th century began, Republicans struggled over their connection to business, which came to mean “big” business dominated by corporations, such as the New York Central Railroad (founded 1853), Standard Oil (1870), AT&T (1883), General Electric (1892), U.S. Steel (1901), Ford (1903), and General Motors (1908). Although leaders of these corporations donated heavily to Republicans, the party tried to regulate their commercial activities. Consider these verbatim extracts from Republican platforms:

- 1872 *We are opposed to further grants of the public lands to corporations and monopolies,*
- 1876 *We reaffirm our opposition to further grants of the public lands to corporations and monopolies*
- 1880 *no further grants of the public domain should be made to any railway or other corporation;*
- 1884 *The principle of public regulation of railway corporations is a wise and salutary one for the protection of all classes of the people*
- 1904 *new laws insuring reasonable publicity as to the operations of great corporations*
- 1916 *The Republican party has long believed in the rigid supervision and strict regulation of the transportation and of the great corporations of the country*

Eventually, Gould said, the party abandoned its belief in “harmony of workers and capitalists” and replaced it

with an economic order where division between capital and labor widened and social conflict became more of a fact of life. It wasn’t that the party and its defenders had forsaken their original ideology, but that their identification with American business strengthened as the late nineteenth century unfolded.¹⁵⁴

After the Republican Party became more economically focused on business, fewer general Economy planks appeared in its platforms. Gould noted the increasing “identification of the Republicans with the ambitions and power of the business community in the North and Middle West:”

A party that began as an attack on the existing order became an organization that believed in an identity of the interests of capitalists, workers, and farmers. Over time, the commitment to business outweighed the concern for other elements in the economy.

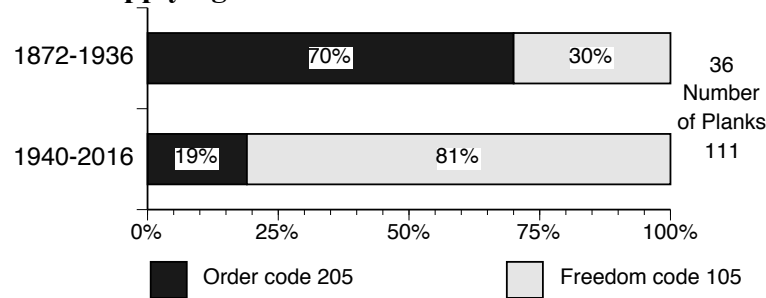
Accordingly, party planks later became more targeted. Here are the last eight planks before 2016:

- 1996 committed to resurgence of small business
pledge monetary policy to stabilize prices
enforce U.S. trade laws
- 2000 fight European Community's restrictions of our farm products
go beyond arguments that pitted bilateral deals against global trade rules
launch new round of multilateral negotiations
- 2004 support making manufacturing a top priority
- 2012 favor free trade but fair trade

Increasingly, the party adopted a *laissez faire* approach to economic regulation.

An Orderly But Free Economy

There is no clear point at which 147 Republican platform planks switched from emphasizing Economic Order (code 205) to Economic Freedom (code 105). Figure 8.1 divides them at 1936-1940. Before 1940, almost 70 percent of 36 Republican planks imposed governmental order of some form on economic activity. Since 1940, over 80% of 111 party planks favored less government control.

FIGURE 8.1: Applying Order and Freedom Codes to 147 Economy Planks

The previous section quoted six passages in Republican platforms from 1872 to 1916 on regulating corporations. The same six passages were also coded as party planks and were among the 70 percent in Figure 8.1. Below are nine examples of planks coded 205 for Order from 1920 to 1936.

- 1920 approve existing Federal Legislation against monopoly and combinations in restraint of trade
- 1920 centralize federal agencies for public health
- 1928 support railroad regulation through the Interstate Commerce Commission
- 1928 prevent monopolies in the control and utilization of natural resources
- 1932 strengthen bank supervision
- 1932 favor Supervision, regulation and control of interstate public utilities
- 1936 enforce laws against monopolies and trusts
- 1936 favor also Federal regulation of the interstate activities of public utilities
- 1936 favor Federal regulation of marketing securities to protect investors

After 1940, Republicans favored Economic Freedom more than Economic Order, and 81 percent of the party's planks on the economy were tagged with Freedom code 105. Listed below are *only* the fourteen planks so coded just for the Republican's 2016 platform:

- 2016 eliminate federal grants imposing conditions on state and local governments
- oppose taking private property for "public purpose" as well as "public use"
- protect citizens from asset forfeiture
- allow purchase of health insurance across state lines
- rein in regulations of the FDA
- transform the EPA into an independent bipartisan commission, like the Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- oppose mandatory labeling of genetically modified food
- oppose rules for producing and marketing milk, meat, poultry, and livestock
- oppose EPA WOTUS rules concerning water on private property
- reduce occupational licensing laws
- remove over-regulation of start-ups, excessive licensing requirements
- repeal the Dodd-Frank Law
- require both houses to approve regulations imposing significant costs
- repeal FATCA that seizes personal financial information

By the end of the 20th century, Republican Party platforms embraced unfettered free enterprise.

The Small Business Party

In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge publicly stated, "The chief business of the American people is business." Whatever that meant, the Republican president reinforced his party's linkage to thriving

corporations. The stock market crash in 1929 and the Great Depression of the 1930s worked against Republicans campaigning as the party of business.

During World War II, Republicans distanced themselves from corporations by branding themselves as the “small business” party. A journalist who tracked the term’s appearance in digitized books since 1800 found that “the phrase ‘small business’ didn’t come into general use until the latter part of the 19th century. Its usage grew rapidly in two distinct time periods: (1) From 1920 to 1940 and (2) From 1970 until the present.”¹⁵⁵

That search for “small business” in books since 1800 corresponded to my search in Republican and Democratic platforms since 1856. Neither party mentioned the term before 1940, when both parties used it for the first time. Since then, Republicans used “small business” 232 times—98 more times than Democrats. The Republicans’ first three usages occurred in 1940:

Small Business

*The New Deal policy of interference and arbitrary regulation has injured all business, but especially small business. We promise to encourage the **small business** man by removing unnecessary bureaucratic regulation and interference.*

The phrase was used only once in 1944 and 1948 and four times in 1952, but “small business” appeared 223 times since 1956. Its 2016 platform alone mentioned “small business” thirteen times.

Republicans can and should be proud of their support of small businesses. They were properly worried in their 2016 platform when stating: *More businesses are closing in our country than are starting.* The Republican platform attributed this trend to *the effect of capital gains and to occupational licensing laws that shut untold millions of potential workers out of entrepreneurial careers.* Republicans ignored the fact that giant companies like Amazon and Walmart were forcing small businesses to close. Even national corporations like Home Depot and Lowe’s drove out local hardware stores just as Walgreens and CVS drove out local pharmacies. Remaining businesses are more likely to be headed by salaried managers rather than sole proprietors. Some observers fault government and both parties for not invoking anti-trust legislation.¹⁵⁶

Summary

In 1860, before the Civil War, the Republican Party platform addressed the need for adequate revenue *to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country.* After the war, the party’s 1872 platform sought additional revenue *to aid in securing remunerative wages to labor, and to promote the industries, prosperity, and growth of the whole country.* The Republican Party clearly intended to be a governing party. To that end, it sought to raise additional revenue through taxes on personal income, even proposing a Constitutional Amendment to insure the legality of an income tax. Although the Republican Party was firmly aligned with manufacturing interests and corporations, the party regulated their actions through national legislation. Republican President Teddy Roosevelt drew fame for “trust-busting.”

In the second half of the 20th century, Republican Party platforms denigrated economic regulations and extolled free enterprise, cloaked under the mantle of small business. My independent analysis of Republican platform planks again corresponds with Gerring’s characterization of the Republican Party entering an epoch of Neoliberalism in 1928, with free market capitalism as a major

theme. The distribution of Republican planks on economic regulation and deregulation is given in Table 8.1.

TABLE 8.1: Economic Regulation v. Deregulation Planks by Eras

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956*	1960-1980*	1984-2012	2016-2020
Favor Regulations	Favor Regulations	Favor Regulations				
			Oppose Regulations	Oppose Regulations	Oppose Regulations	Oppose Regulations

*Up to 1936, 69% of Economy planks favored regulation; Since 1940, 81% opposed them.

Concerning economic affairs, the Republican Party shifted from its original position of governing to its current anti-government position. The party evolved from being pro-business with regulations to being pro-business without regulations.

CHAPTER 9

Law and Order

The Republican Party adopted contradictory positions concerning law and order versus personal freedoms. It favors imposing the death penalty, imprisoning lawbreakers, and forcing women to give birth to unwanted children. However, many Republican officials oppose requiring people to wear facemasks to prevent against COVID-19 infections, and the party generally opposes regulating citizens' ownership and use of deadly weapons. Thus it surrenders government's monopoly of force require to impose law and order.

In the 17th century, Thomas Hobbes described life without government as “solitary, poor, nasty, brutal, and short.” Formed to protect people against violence from other people, governments sought to “monopolize” violence—to own all instruments of force and to lawfully administer force as needed.¹⁵⁷ Early in the 20th century, German sociologist Max Weber said that “the state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory.”¹⁵⁸ A century later, American scholars acknowledged Weber's classic assertion.¹⁵⁹ Many wrote on this theme as “the monopoly of violence” or “the monopoly of force.”

Lawful Execution

Historically, governments have legitimately killed citizens convicted of capital crimes, real or imagined. Many governments still do. By one count, 56 of almost 200 countries maintained the death penalty in 2020.¹⁶⁰ No Western European country still allows the practice. The United States stands with countries in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia) and Far East (China, Pakistan, North Korea). For a time in the 1970s, the Supreme Court invalidated existing death penalty laws, holding that they violated the Eighth Amendment prohibiting cruel and unusual punishment in the manner of execution. After some states revised their methods, executions resumed on a limited basis in the 1980s.

The Republican Party took issue with the court's decision in 1972 and has supported executing criminals for major crimes in all platforms since 1980:

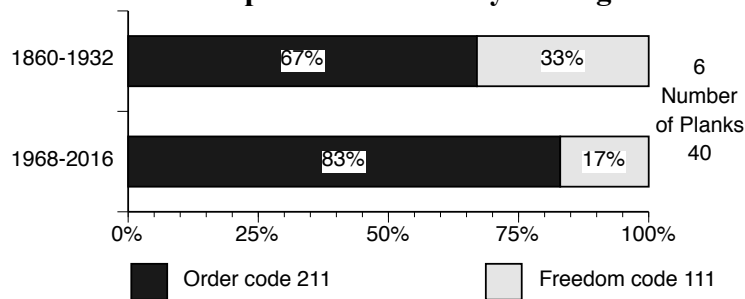
- 1980 *We believe that the **death penalty** serves as an effective deterrent to capital crime and should be applied by the federal government and by states which approve it as an appropriate penalty for certain major crimes.*
- 1984 *the Republican Senate has overwhelmingly passed Administration-backed legislation which would . . . Restore a constitutionally valid federal **death penalty**;*
- 1988 *We will reestablish the **death penalty**.
impose the death penalty for drug kingpins and those who kill federal law enforcement agents.*
- 1992 *[Democrats] refuse to enact effective procedures to reinstate the **death penalty** for the most heinous crimes.
We therefore support the stiffest penalties, including the **death penalty**, for major drug traffickers.*
- 1996 *We believe it is time to revisit the Supreme Court's arbitrary decision of 1977 that protects even the most vicious rapists from the **death penalty**.*
- 2000 *Within proper federal jurisdiction, the Republican Congress has enacted legislation for an effective deterrent **death penalty***
- 2004 *We support courts having the option to impose the **death penalty** in capital murder cases.*
- 2008 *We object to the Court's unwarranted interference in the administration of the **death penalty** in this country for the benefit of savage criminals whose guilt is not at issue.
Courts must have the option of imposing the **death penalty** in capital murder cases*

- 2012 *Courts should have the option of imposing the death penalty in capital murder cases.*
- 2016 *The constitutionality of the **death penalty** is firmly settled by its explicit mention in the Fifth Amendment.*

Historically, governments legitimately used force to apprehend and imprison lawbreakers. In the 19th century, Republicans did not need to confirm in their platforms that citizens could be punished for transgressing laws. In the 20th century, however, Republicans frequently went on record against various types of lawbreakers.

Republican planks about Transgressions fell under Order code 211 and Freedom code 111. The party’s first 20 platforms to 1932 contained only 6 planks on this topic under either code. In 1860, for example, Republicans denounced *lawless invasion by armed forces* in Kansas supporting slavery, which was coded Transgressions 211 under Order. In 1868 and again in 1872 it favored *the removal of the disqualifications and restrictions imposed upon the late rebels*, coded Freedom 111. Then a gap of 36 years occurred, from 1932 to 1968, before the party’s next Transgression plank. Both codes were used 40 times in the next 13 platforms. Figure 9.1 displays the distribution of Transgression planks for both eras.

FIGURE 9.1: Republican Planks by Transgression Codes



Only seven of forty planks since 1968 reflected leniency, and most of them decried high lawyers’ fees in “frivolous” medical malpractice suits. Republicans were quick to punish transgressions in 33 of the 40 planks (83%) since 1968. These 33 planks reflect the party’s tough stance on lawbreakers:

- 1968 apprehend, prosecute, convict and punish the overlords of organized crime in America
pledge an all-out, federal-state-local crusade against crime
- 1972 Accelerate the drive against organized crime
pledge a tireless campaign against crime to restore safety to our streets
support of local police and law enforcement agencies
- 1976 penalize airplane hijacking as terrorism
- 1984 make punishment certain and swift
- 1988 penalize those who contribute tainted blood
emphasize pre-emptive anti-terrorist measures
favor tougher laws against drunk driving
suspend drivers' licenses for convicted users
- 1992 pass tougher state laws against drunken drivers
restore severe penalties for heinous crimes, give mandatory sentences to criminals
penalize welfare fraud
give law enforcement funds to do their job
- 1996 condemn desecration of church buildings and arson
consider juvenile nocturnal curfews as effective law enforcement
prevent inmates from government entitlements while in prison
require violent felons to serve 85% of terms

- revoke pension rights of public officials convicted of crimes
- support community policing
- tough law enforcement
- tougher standards on statutory rape
- 2000 bring individual terrorists to justice
- isolate and punish terrorists and sponsors
- make imprisonment a threat to crime
- punish juvenile offenders, open criminal proceedings to victims
- support a resolute but not impulsive response to terrorism that makes no concessions
- 2004 jail time is an effective deterrent to drug use
- 2008 call for stronger enforcement and determined prosecution of gang conspiracies.
- support mandatory sentencing for gang conspiracy crimes
- 2012 support mandatory prison sentences for major crimes
- 2016 give mandatory prison time for all serious injuries to law enforcement officers

When it comes to transgressions, the Republican Party favors strong government to impose law and order.

Gun Control

Most governments try to maintain a monopoly on violence by limiting lawful access to lethal weapons. Only three countries have constitutions that grant the right to own a gun. They are Mexico, Guatemala, and the United States, and only the U.S. has no constitutional restrictions.¹⁶¹ The Second Amendment to the Constitution reads: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Nevertheless, throughout most of its history the Republican Party regulated the use of firearms.

The word "arms" appeared in early Republican platforms concerning the Civil War and in later platforms concerning international rearmament, but not in the context of personal weapons. Some people owned handguns (often in cities) and many people owned rifles and shotguns (usually outside of cities). Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Republican platforms never mentioned the Second Amendment. In 1934 Congress passed a Firearms Act that banned sawed-off shotguns (favored by prohibition gangsters). In 1938, the Supreme Court supported the Act, explaining that "the Framers included the Second Amendment to ensure the effectiveness of the military."¹⁶² The National Rifle Association (NRA), founded in 1871 as a recreational group for rifle shooting, had backed the 1934 law.¹⁶³

After President Kennedy's 1963 assassination with a mail-order rifle, Congress passed the Gun Control Act of 1968, also supported by the NRA.¹⁶⁴ Apparently, the Republican Party accepted this law, for its 1968 platform favored "*Enactment of legislation to control indiscriminate availability of firearms, safeguarding the right of responsible citizens to collect, own and use firearms for legitimate purposes.*" That statement launched the first of five Republican planks favoring some degree of gun control.

- 1968 control availability of firearms but safeguard gun rights
- 1972 prevent criminal access to all weapons, including cheap handguns
- 1996 extend point-of-purchase check
- 2000 support background checks to ensure that guns do not fall into the hands of criminals
- 2004 support the instant background check system

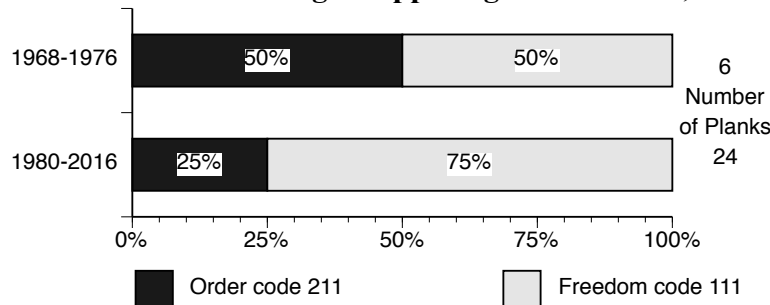
After President Reagan was seriously wounded by a handgun in 1981, Washington, DC, acted to ban handguns. This time the NRA silently opposed the legislation. In 2008, the Court by a 5-4 vote struck down the Washington DC ban on handguns as violating the right to possess firearms under the Second Amendment. By another 5-4 vote in 2010, it struck down a similar ban in Chicago. This time the NRA actively opposed the Chicago ban.

The Second Amendment first appeared in a Republican platform in 2000. Since then, it has been mentioned fifteen times in every subsequent platform. Moreover, Republicans produced 22 planks since 1972 that opposed gun control or supported guns rights:

- 1972 recognize right of owning firearms for legitimate purposes
- 1976 oppose federal registration of firearms
support the right of citizens to keep and bear arms
- 1980 oppose registration of firearms
- 1984 continue to defend the constitutional right to keep and bear arms
- 1988 defend right to keep and bear arms
- 1992 support right to bear arms
- 1996 defend right to keep and bear arms
keep guns from convicted felons
- 2000 affirm right of individuals to carry arms
oppose federal licensing of law-abiding gun owners and national gun registration
- 2004 oppose federal licensing of gun owners
strongly support an individual right to own guns
- 2008 oppose federal licensing of law-abiding gun owners and national gun registration
support right to keep and bear arms
- 2012 support the right to bear arms
oppose limiting capacity of clips or magazines
oppose registration of gun owners
- 2016 defend the right to bear arms
support right to carry laws
oppose frivolous lawsuits against arms manufacturers

Figure 9.2 graphs the number of Republican planks on gun control. It finds more planks opposing gun control over time.

FIGURE 9.2: Favoring v. Opposing Gun Control, 30 Planks



Historically, government sought to maintain their monopoly of violence by restricting citizens from carrying weapons. Swords were once frequent instruments of domestic violence,¹⁶⁵ now firearms are. Before the 2008 Supreme Court interpreted the Second Amendment to limit control of firearms, the Republican Party supported limited forms of control. Since then it has become a highly partisan issue,

with Republicans opposing governmental efforts to limit the availability, possession, capability, or use of firearms.

Forcing Birth

Physicians, theologians, and philosophers take positions on both sides of the question concerning when life begins—at conception or at birth.¹⁶⁶ During its first 116 years, the Republican Party never mentioned abortion in its platforms. Then in 1976 abortion appeared 5 times, beginning with: *Because of our concern for family values, we affirm . . . a position on abortion that values human life.* In all, abortion appeared 118 times from 1976 to 2016. Few key policy terms appeared as often.

The Republican Party backed up its rhetoric with actions. In just eleven platforms during that time period, the party managed to offer 37 planks relating to abortion:

- 1976 favors a continuance of the public dialogue on abortion
adopt a position that values human life
supports amendment to protect life of unborn children
- 1980 favor constitutional amendment to protect life of unborn children
- 1984 oppose public revenue for abortions
support amendment to protect rights of the unborn
- 1988 oppose use of public revenue for abortion
support amendment to protect the unborn
- 1992 oppose using public funds for abortion
oppose school programs on birth control or abortion
favor amendments to protect the unborn child
- 1996 not fund international organizations involved in abortion
oppose using public funds for abortion
stop cash payments to unmarried teens with children
- 2000 not fund any agency engaged in abortion
oppose school-based clinics giving referrals, counseling, on contraception and abortion
replace "family planning" programs for teens with increased funding for abstinence education
favor amendment to protect life of unborn children
- 2004 oppose abortion
oppose funding international organizations engaged in abortion
ban on human cloning and on the creation of human embryos
support human life amendment to the constitution
- 2008 oppose funding international groups engaged in abortion
support a human life amendment
- 2012 oppose public funds for abortion
oppose funding international organizations that perform abortions
allow courts to impose the death penalty
ban human cloning
ban use of body parts from fetuses
oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide
favor an amendment to protect the unborn
- 2016 oppose using public funds for abortion
teach abstinence until marriage
ban human cloning
ban sale of fetal body parts
oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide
support amendment to protect the unborn

The 1976 platform addressed abortion following the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which held that a state statute outlawing abortion violated a woman's right to privacy, implicit in the due process clause of the Constitution. Republicans have fought that decision. Claiming to protect life, they argue that government can force a woman to give birth to a child she does not want.

Summary

For most of its existence the Republican Party endorsed the principle that government should hold the "monopoly of force." President Lincoln conscripted an army to prevent the attempted secession of southern states from the Union. From the beginning, Republicans approved of the death penalty. Since 1856, Republican platforms have consistently backed governmental use of force in apprehending, imprisoning, and executing lawbreakers.

Control over deadly weapons is inherent in monopolizing force. Over the first century of the party's existence, gun control was not a prominent political issue. When it surfaced after President Kennedy's assassination, the party supported gun control to some extent. Heavily lobbied by the NRA, the party changed its position. It opposed strengthening controls even after President Reagan was shot. While life did not become "solitary, poor, nasty, brutal, and short" for all American citizens as a result, it became unpredictably brutal and short for many.

Since the abortion issue surfaced in the 1970s, the party's platforms have consistently backed governmental efforts to force women to give birth. Laws against abortions empower the government to force a woman to give birth, but Republicans view it as preserving life. In sum, the party today backs strong rules against transgressors and against women who do not want to give birth. The party favors weak or no regulations against possessing or using firearms of any type.

This chapter discusses three issues—the death penalty, gun control, and abortion—that became controversial and partisan only in the middle of the 20th century. They were not relevant to party politics during what John Gerring called the party's Nationalism epoch, which he said ended in 1924. In fact, these issues also did not arise early in his Neoliberalism epoch, which began in 1928. Moreover, they do not seem to match any of that epoch's themes, which Gerring's listed as *antistatism, free market capitalism, right-wing populism, and individualism.*"

Instead, Republicans' support of the death penalty and its opposition to gun control and abortion herald a new theme: *cultural defense*. The party that began in 1856 to overthrow the centuries-old culture of slavery in southern states, turned a century later into a defender of 19th century cultural norms. In the middle of the 20th century, those old norms clashed with changing values. Just as Republicans judged slavery to be morally wrong in the mid-1800s, citizens in western nations and many in the United States in the mid-20th century judged the death penalty to be morally wrong. Despite the Supreme Court's 2008 decision upholding the Second Amendment as a barrier against gun control, many citizens clamored for controls in the wake of mass shootings. As religious leaders in the 1970s declared that life begins at conception and viewed abortion as murder, women proclaimed their right to decide whether or not to have and raise a child. The party that had been born committed to cultural change in the South evolved to one defending traditional culture against change nationwide. Additional evidence comes in the next chapter, "Order and Culture."

CHAPTER 10

Culture and Order

“Order,” in the phrase “law and order,” implies preserving the status quo. That includes maintaining the dominant culture, with force if necessary. Sociologists define culture as “the languages, customs, beliefs, rules, arts, knowledge, and collective identities” of a society.¹⁶⁷ Social conservatives *demand* government action to preserve the dominant culture. Social conservatives want government to limit immigration and to discourage threatening lifestyles. Increasingly since World War II, Republican platforms have reflected the wishes of social conservatives in opposing cultural changes.

Immigration

Early on, Republicans generally welcomed immigration and all types of immigrants. Its 1860 platform resolved:

That the Republican party is opposed to any change in our naturalization laws or any state legislation by which the rights of citizens hitherto accorded to immigrants from foreign lands shall be abridged or impaired; and in favor of giving a full and efficient protection to the rights of all classes of citizens, whether native or naturalized, both at home and abroad.

Throughout its history, Republicans mostly, but not always, treated immigration as a Public Good, a benefit. The United States had more land than people and needed help from outside to develop its potential for all. Consider these 20 planks tagged with Public Good code 419, Immigration:

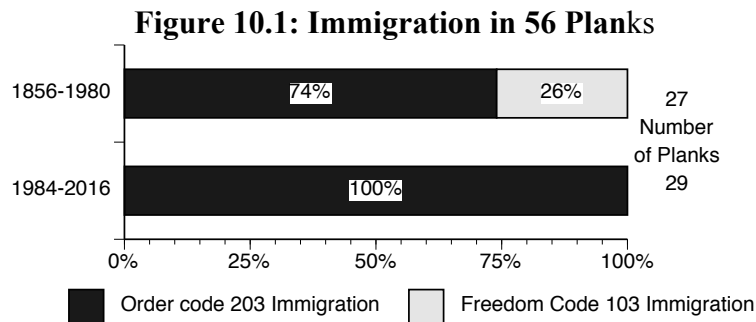
- 1864 favor liberal and just policy
- 1868 favor liberal and just policy
- 1872 for careful encouragement and protection of voluntary immigration
- 1876 protect immigrants
- 1880 same protection as to citizens of birth
- 1884 same protection as to citizens of birth
- 1924 regulate immigration and improve immigration laws
- 1956 supports providing a haven for oppressed peoples
- 1960 judge applicants on their merits
- 1964 re-unite families and continuation of the "Fair Share" Refugee Program;
- 1996 ensure laws reflect America's national interest
set immigration at manageable levels
- 2000 emphasize skills
increase number of H-1B visas and expand H-2A programs for farm workers
give priority to spouses and children, not extended family
- 2004 enforce the law while welcoming immigrants
supports reforming the immigration system to ensure that it is legal, safe, orderly and humane
- 2008 integrate legal immigrants into American life
update the H-1B visa program to gain specialists from abroad
- 2012 grant more visas to highly educated

None of these twenty planks raised issues of Freedom v. Order; all aim to promote immigration as a Public good.

In truth, however, Republicans saw bad sides to immigration. Delivering his annual message to Congress in 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt spoke bluntly:

We cannot have too much immigration of the right kind, and we should have none at all of the wrong kind. The need is to devise some system by which undesirable immigrants can be kept out completely, while desirable immigrants are properly distributed throughout the country.¹⁶⁸

Immigration planks were also coded separately under different codes to capture Republican platforms' discriminatory actions. Order code 203 indicated restrictions on immigration, and Freedom code 103 marked welcoming planks. These planks reveal that about one quarter of Republican planks before 1984 supported immigrants' rights, while none of 29 planks did after 1984.



Here are all seven planks in Republican platforms prior to 1984 that welcomed immigration:

- 1860 oppose abridging immigrant rights
- 1868 support immigrant rights
- 1960 increase immigration to stimulate growth; abandon use of 1920 census guidelines
- 1968 support the 1965 act make it more equitable and non-discriminatory
- 1972 support right to emigrate from all countries
- support the 1965 Immigration Act; non-discrimination against national origins
- 1980 recognize citizens from Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe and Asian-Americans

Space does not allow listing all later Republican planks coded under Order that restricted immigration. Every platform after 1984 referred to border control, and the 2016 platform had the most planks, seven:

- 2016 *build a wall to secure our borders*
- impose stiffer penalties on illegals who re-enter*
- make gang membership a deportable offense*
- Make E-Verify mandatory*
- oppose amnesty in any form*
- secure our borders, enforce our immigration laws, and properly screen refugees*
- stop federal funds to sanctuary cities*

The party that began welcoming immigrants changed its stance—possibly responding to bad behavior by immigrants, possibly reacting to Republican voters opposed to immigration.

Religion

The colonialists were overwhelmingly Protestant, as were most immigrants for a few decades after independence. Famine in Ireland in the 1840s caused many Irish Catholics to migrate to the United States. Later in the century, Catholic immigrants came from Central and Southern Europe. Whereas Catholics were only five percent of the population in 1850, they were seventeen percent by 1906.¹⁶⁹ For many Protestants, the influx of Catholics became a political issue, but “Catholic” did not appear in a Republican platform until 1988, and then to defend the Catholic Church against unfair taxation.

Readers today might be surprised that the Republican Party rarely referred at all to religion in any way during its first century. Not until 1880 did a Republican platform mention religion. When it did, it was to forbid support of religious schools. Here’s the passage:

The Constitution wisely forbids Congress to make any law respecting the establishment of religion, but it is idle to hope that the Nation can be protected against the influence of secret sectarianism while each State is exposed to its domination. We, therefore, recommend that the Constitution be so amended as to lay the same prohibition upon the Legislature of each State, and to forbid the appropriation of public funds to the support of sectarian schools.

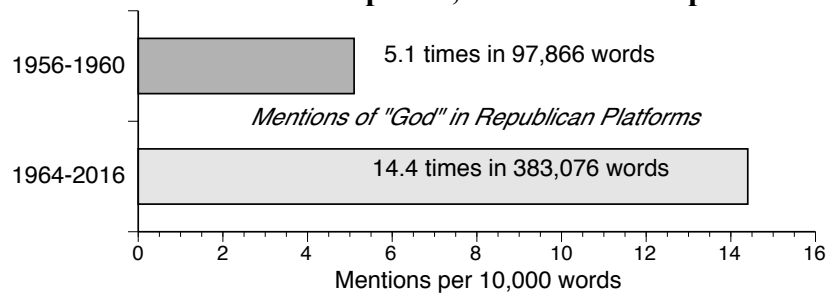
The next mention was in 1912. After 1936 virtually every platform endorsed freedom of religion. Readers may be even more surprised that the party never mentioned “God” in its platform until 1908. The next usage was in 1948. Beginning in 1964, “God” became used multiple times in virtually every platform, culminating in 10 mentions in 2012 and these 15 in 2016:

1. *We believe that people are the ultimate resource — and that the people, not the government, are the best stewards of our country's **God**-given natural resources.*
2. *Every time we sing, "**God** Bless America," we are asking for help. We ask for divine help that our country can fulfill its promise.*
3. *The Declaration sets forth the fundamental precepts of American government: That **God** bestows certain inalienable rights on every individual, thus producing human equality;*
4. *that government exists first and foremost to protect those inalienable rights; that man-made law must be consistent with **God**-given, natural rights;*
5. *and that if **God**-given, natural, inalienable rights come in conflict with government, court, or human-granted rights,*
6. ***God**-given, natural, inalienable rights always prevail;*
7. *that there is a moral law recognized as "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's **God**";*
8. *It is the solemn compact built upon principles of the Declaration that enshrines our **God**-given individual rights*
9. *In a free society, the primary role of government is to protect the **God**-given, inalienable rights of its citizens.*
10. *Only a Republican president will appoint judges who respect the rule of law expressed within the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, including the inalienable right to life and the laws of nature and nature's **God***
11. *The Free Exercise Clause is both an individual and a collective liberty protecting a right to worship **God** according to the dictates of conscience.*
12. *Lawful gun ownership enables Americans to exercise their **God**-given right of self-defense*
13. *the Republican Party reaffirms the moral obligation to be good stewards of the **God**-given natural beauty and resources of our country*
14. *Strong families, depending upon **God** and one another, advance the cause of liberty by lessening the need for government in their daily lives.*

15. *A young person's ability to succeed in school must be based on his or her **God**-given talent and motivation*

Over all 41 platforms, Republicans referred to God 61 times (plus two for “Godless” communism) versus 35 times in Democratic platforms, the first in 1924. Of course, platforms were longer in later year, proving more opportunity for heavenly references. Figure 10.2 reports the number of times per 10,000 words in the platforms.

FIGURE 10.2: Mentions of “God” per 10,000 Words in Republican Platforms

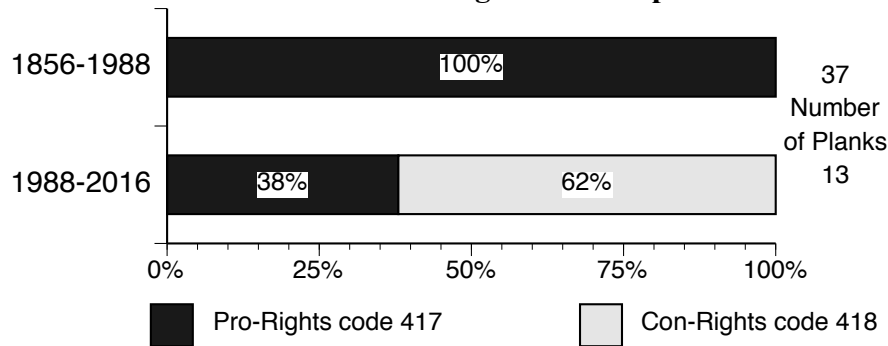


Today’s readers are apt to think of religion playing a larger role in daily life during the 19th century, and that is certainly true. Nevertheless, Republican Party platforms over one hundred years ago seldom mentioned religion and never mentioned God before the 20th century.

Interestingly, the word “Christian” was not used in Republican platforms until 1976, after which it appeared 19 more times. Throughout the 19th century, the United States population was overwhelmingly Protestant in religion. In the middle of the 20th century, Protestants were dominant in the Republican Party, while most Catholics voted Democratic. By the end of the 20th century, Catholics began moving toward Republicans, while the Democratic Party attracted more non-Christian voters. In turn, Republicans attracted more white Christians, especially Evangelicals, committed to a literal interpretation of the Bible.¹⁷⁰ In every election since 1980, “majorities of white Christians—including not just evangelicals but also mainliners and Catholics—voted for Republican candidates.”¹⁷¹ By the 2016 election, 77 percent of white Evangelical Protestants voted for Donald Trump;¹⁷² the percentage increased to 84 in 2020. In 2016, 64 percent of white Catholics voted for Trump.¹⁷³ Even in 2020, 57 percent chose Trump over the practicing Catholic Joe Biden.

Women’s Rights

Sociologists sometimes describe women as carriers of the dominant culture. Traditionally, their role was to marry, raise children, keep house, and feed the family. Women were denied the right to vote in national elections until 1920, and their employment opportunities were drastically limited. For most of its history, the Republican Party’s platforms supported women’s rights, in the sense of political equality—like equal rights for former slaves. Republican platform planks fell under the Equality heading. Women code +302 applied to supportive planks, while Women code –302 indicated opposition. From 1856 to 1988, 40 of 45 planks supported women’s rights, again meaning political equality. Opposition arose after women clamored in the 1970s for social equality, pushing for an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. All five planks in opposition came after 1988. Figure 10.3 displays the results.

FIGURE 10.3: Women's Rights in 50 Republican Planks

Consider these platform statements”

- 1872 *The Republican party is mindful of its obligations to the loyal **women** of America for their noble devotion to the cause of freedom. Their admission to wider fields of usefulness is viewed with satisfaction, and the honest demand of any class of citizens for additional **rights** should be treated with respectful consideration.*
- 1876 *The Republican party recognizes with approval the substantial advances recently made toward the establishment of equal **rights for women**,*
- 1896 *The Republican party is mindful of the **rights and interests of women**, and believes that they should be accorded equal opportunities, equal pay for equal work, and protection to the home.*

The party's position on the Equal Rights Amendment deserves special attention. In 1923, Congress received a bill for a Constitutional Amendment. It stated, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." It failed to pass, but the 1940 Republican platform affirmed, *We favor submission by Congress to the States of an amendment to the Constitution providing for equal rights for men and women.* That did not happen. The party specifically reaffirmed its support of such an amendment in 1948, in 1960, and in 1972—the year that Congress proposed the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

Republican activist Phyllis Schlafly campaigned against the Equal Right Amendment and succeeded in enacting this weak plank in the 1980 platform:

- 1980 *We acknowledge the legitimate efforts of those who support or oppose ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.
We reaffirm our Party's historic commitment to equal rights and equality for women. . . .
Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is now in the hands of state legislatures, and the issues of the time extension and rescission are in the courts. The states have a constitutional right to accept or reject a constitutional amendment without federal interference or pressure.*

Christian historian Du Mez said, "It's hard to overstate Schlafly's significance in marshalling the forces of the Religious Right." Years before celebrity pastors entered the fray, Schlafly "helped unify white Christians around a rigid and deeply conservative vision of family and nation."¹⁷⁴

By 1992, Republican platforms spoke against women's equality:

- 1992 *oppose placing women in combat positions*
 1996 *exempt women from ground combat areas*
 2000 *support a reasonable approach to Title IX without affecting men's teams*
 2004 *favor exempting women from combat*

2008 *exempt women from ground combat units*

The party's 2012 and 2016 offered no planks on women's rights.

Lifestyles

Although early party platforms did not denigrate religions (except for Mormons), they certainly backed some religious prohibitions. They related to marriage, pre-marriage, alcohol, and drugs.

Polygamy

From the beginning, nearly all Americans were Christians, and they believed in the biblical injunction to "be fruitful and multiply," but that applied to monogamous marriages. Polygamy refers to plural unions or marriages, typically between one man and multiple women. In the middle of the 19th century, polygamy was practiced within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose members were commonly called Mormons. The very first Republican platform in 1856 promised to prohibit the spread of *those twin relics of barbarism--Polygamy, and slavery*. Republicans repeated their promise in 1876, 1880, and 1884. Located in the Utah territory, the Mormon Church officially ended the practice to gain Utah's admission as a state in 1896.

Although Republican platforms condemned polygamy as practiced by Mormons, the party restrained from criticizing their religion, referring to Mormons only twice. Of course, the 2012 Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Same-sex Marriages

Monogamy refers to a sexual relationship with one person at a time. Most religions assumed that a monogamous marriage involved spouses of different sexes. When two people of the same sex sought to marry each other, most pastors and priests refused to perform the ceremony. The Republican Party took positions on the issue in 1992 and 2000, saying:

1992 *We oppose any legislation or law which legally recognizes same-sex marriages and allows such couples to adopt children or provide foster care.*

2000 *We support the traditional definition of "marriage" as the legal union of one man and one woman,*

In 2004, the first legal same-sex marriage occurred in Massachusetts. Later that year, the Republican Platform backed The Defense of Marriage Act and stated:

We urge Congress to use its Article III power to enact this into law, so that activist federal judges cannot force 49 other states to approve and recognize Massachusetts' attempt to redefine marriage.

Republican platforms in 2008, 2012, and 2016 urged restoring marriage to a union between a man and a woman, but that ship had sailed a decade earlier.

Prohibition

Drunkenness can be considered a negative lifestyle, one with dangerous consequences. Some pious souls also regarded drinking as sinful and sought to prohibit the consumption of alcohol

nationwide through a constitutional amendment. Although the amendment passed both chambers of Congress with bipartisan support, only Republicans backed temperance in their party’s platforms—in 1888, 1892, and 1896.

The Eighteenth Amendment, ratified in January 1919, prohibited “the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors” nationwide. In 1933, after more than a decade without legal alcohol but with illegal alcohol and related crime, an amendment passed both chambers of Congress with bipartisan support. It was ratified the same year.

Summary

Throughout the 19th century, the Republican Party welcomed immigrants (except Asians), but it became more exclusionary in the 20th century and increasingly so in the 21st. Republican platforms were surprisingly secular in the 19th and to the middle of the 20th Century. The party embraced religion in the 21st century. Concerning lifestyles, the party successfully opposed polygamy; it unsuccessfully opposed same-sex marriages; and it successfully backed prohibition. However, the party backtracked on prohibition as the nationwide policy produced circumvention and corruption. The pattern is summarized in Table 10.1.

TABLE 10.1: Cultural Change v. Cultural Defense

1856-1876*	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956	1960-1980**	1984-2012	2016-2020
Cultural change						
				Cultural defense	Cultural defense	Cultural Defense

*Ended slavery. **1976 opposed gun registration; 1980 endorsed death penalty, opposed abortion and ERA.

Chapter 11

Conservation and Conservatives

The Republican Party once led efforts for conserving public lands for the Public Good. In 1862, while the Civil War was raging, Republicans passed the Morrill Act granting public lands for colleges devoted to agriculture and mechanic arts. Under President Grant, it established Yellowstone National Park in 1872. Under Republican presidents Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt, Congress created Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks in 1890, Mount Rainier in 1899, Crater Lake in 1902, Wind Cave in 1903, Mesa Verde in 1906, Glacier in 1910, and Rocky Mountain in 1915—the last four under Roosevelt’s administration. In the 1970s, President Nixon backed environmental legislation to protect the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the soil on which we live. However, party platforms did not always employ terms that we use today.

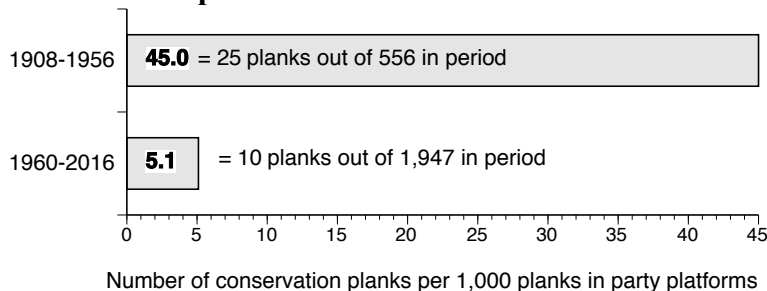
Conservation

“Conservation” was first mentioned in the 1908 Republican platform, which recognized President Roosevelt for *the conservation of the natural resources of the country*.¹⁷⁵ Although Democratic President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park System into law in 1916, the official NPS website recognizes Republican President Theodore Roosevelt as the “conservationist president,” saying:

Conservation increasingly became one of Roosevelt's main concerns. After becoming president in 1901, Roosevelt used his authority to protect wildlife and public lands by creating the United States Forest Service (USFS) and establishing 150 national forests, 51 federal bird reserves, 4 national game preserves, 5 national parks, and 18 national monuments by enabling the 1906 American Antiquities Act. During his presidency, Theodore Roosevelt protected approximately 230 million acres of public land.¹⁷⁶

Only 35 Republican platform planks ever called for conservation of natural resources. They were coded 403 under Public Goods. The first one came in 1908; the next 48 years to 1956 accounted for 24 more. The last 60 years produced only 10 more planks. Adjusting for the number of conservation planks per 1,000 platform planks, we find that Republican platforms were nine times more likely to adopt a conservation plank before 1956 than after 1960. Table 11.1 shows the results.

FIGURE 11.1: Republican Planks on Conservation of Resources



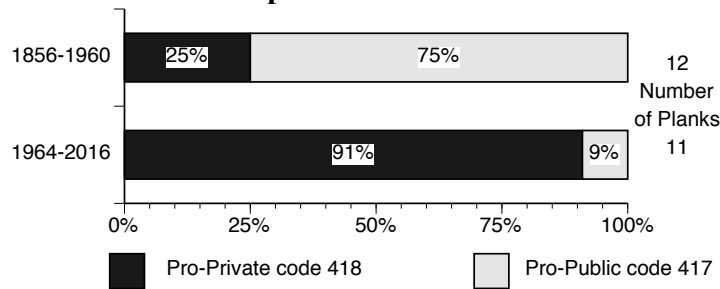
Public Lands

The United States owned vast tracts of land across the nation, mostly in western states. In the mid-1800s, the government granted portions of these “public lands” to railroad companies to promote railroad construction. Private companies benefited but so did the public. Public lands were also granted

to individuals who would settle on the land and farm it. Other individuals sought to profit commercially from the government's generosity. Although "conservation of natural resources" and "disposition of public lands" are closely related, I coded them separately.

Under Public Goods, Public Lands code 417 was for disposing public lands to favor the general public. Code 418 tagged planks that opened public lands to development for private gain. Figure 11.2 reports the coding for 23 planks.

FIGURE 11.2: Disposition of Public Lands in 23 Planks



The 1860 Republican platform came out strongly in favor of the settlers, declaring:

That we protest against any sale or alienation to others of the public lands held by actual settlers, and against any view of the free-homestead policy which regards the settlers as paupers or suppliants for public bounty;

That statement underlies the nine Pro-Public code 417 planks adopted to 1960:

- 1860 oppose sale of public lands held by settlers
- 1888 favor giving public lands to citizens
- 1892 favor giving public lands to citizens
- 1900 favor giving public lands to citizens
- 1908 favor giving public lands to citizens
- 1912 favor giving public lands to citizens
- 1924 favor constructing roads and trails in national forests for their protection and utilization.
- 1928 favor the construction of roads and trails in our national forests
- 1952 favor citizens to use public lands

Planks were coded as Pro-Private 418 if they viewed the public lands for "multiple uses." Even "recreational use" meant additional traffic and often granting commercial concessions to provide food, fuel, and accommodations. More damaging was opening them to extracting mineral resources. Here are the ten (of eleven) planks coded 418 since 1964:

- 1968 manage public lands to use both as economic resources and recreation
- 1976 use public lands for multiple uses
- 1980 favor multiple uses of public lands
- oppose withdrawing federal lands from development
- 1992 support multiple uses of public lands
- 1996 favor multiple uses of public lands
- 2000 support multiple use of public lands
- 2012 make federal lands available for harvesting timber
- 2016 encourage ranching on public land
- support permitting process for mineral production on public lands

The Environment

During the 19th century, no Republican or Democratic platform addressed the quality of the environment in which people lived. In fact, none addressed environmental quality until the middle of the 20th century, when in 1940 Republicans approved a plank for *the orderly development of reclamation and irrigation*. That plank was coded Environment +402 to indicate positive governmental actions on the environment as a Public Good. Environment code –402 was applied to negative actions or actions benefitting private interests. Figure 11.3 shows the distribution of codes by election years.

FIGURE 11.3: Positive and Negative Codes in 63 Environment Planks,

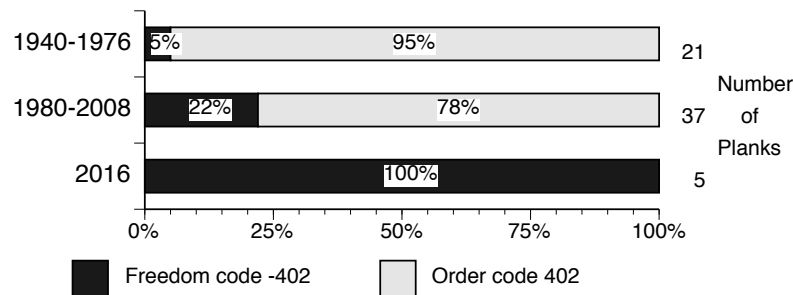


Figure 11.3 shows that prior to 1980, almost all Republican planks proposed government action to improve the environment. The 1972 Republican platform alone accounted for 15 of the 21 planks. Listed below, they indicate strong government action to improve environmental quality under President Nixon's administration:

1. conserve and develop water supplies
2. control dangerous substances
3. create clean-burning gasoline engines
4. Establish realistic environmental standards
5. identify and protect endangered wildlife
6. make containers biodegradable
7. manage ocean fisheries
8. pass a Federal noise Control Act
9. preserve the coastal environment
10. prohibit dumping of wastes into the oceans, estuaries and the Great Lakes;
11. protect and conserve marine mammals
12. protect the oceans from pollution
13. support physical development of urban areas
14. urge the fair and energetic enforcement of all fire-prevention laws
15. work with the UN on ocean activities

Since 1980, Republican platforms evidenced little interest in government action to improve the environment. Instead, they were concerned with preserving property rights, as in this ambiguous passage from the 1996 platform:

Because we view the careful development of our country's natural resources as stewardship of creation, we believe property rights must be honored in our efforts to restore, protect, and enhance the environment for the generations to come.

No environmental planks were coded at all for the party's 2012 platform, which mocked President Obama for elevating

"climate change" to the level of a "severe threat" equivalent to foreign aggression. The word "climate," in fact, appears in the current President's strategy more often than Al Qaeda, nuclear proliferation, radical Islam, or weapons of mass destruction.

Figure 11.3 has a third row for these five environmental planks in the Republican Party's 2016 platform:

- downplay climate change as a national security issue
- forbid the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide
- oppose overreach of Endangered Species Act
- remove provisions of National Environmental Policy Act that drive up transportation costs
- end the legal practice of "sue and settle" [aimed at environmental lawsuits]

All five planks were coded as negative:

Summary

Soon after its founding, Republican governments led in the conservation of natural resources. Thanks to their efforts, Americans today enjoy visiting over 400 sites in a system of National Parks, Monuments, Battlefields, Historic Sites, and so on covering more than 50 million acres in all fifty states. Under Republican presidents Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush, the party also passed laws to protect the environment against pollution. Afterward, the party took very few steps toward conservation or environmental protect while avoiding issues of climate change.

After Theodore Roosevelt, only one Republican president, Richard Nixon, stands out as a steward of the land for backing legislation to protect our environment. Others took little notice of conservation or saw economic opportunities in public lands. The gross trends are reflected in Table 11.1.

TABLE 11.1: Land Steward v. Property Agent

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956	1960-1980*	1984-2012	2016-2020
Public Good	Public Good	Public Good	Public Good	Public Good		
					Private Benefit	Private Benefit

*1972 platform had 15 planks for protecting the environment.

The party that began as the champion of conservation, using government power to create national parks and protect the environment evolved into a party that granted economic opportunities to private interests on public lands and that blocked environmental safeguards.

CHAPTER 12

Elections

In 1869, a Republican Congress, opposed by a Democratic President (Andrew Johnson), introduced a bill that resulted in the 15th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1870. It stated, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” During the reconstruction era, Republicans enforced the voting rights of former slaves throughout the South.

Until World War II, Republican platforms seldom adopted planks concerning national elections, except occasionally decrying restrictions on Blacks voting in southern states. Partisanship crept into the topic by 1960, but voting in national elections was not a salient issue that divided Democrats and Republicans. It became one in 2020 after Republican President Donald Trump lost the popular vote and the electoral vote to Democratic challenger Joe Biden. President Trump denied the results, claimed that the election was illegitimate, and urged his supporters to “stop the steal.” On January 6, 2021, as Congress met to count the states’ electoral votes and certify Joe Biden’s election, Trump’s supporters stormed the Capitol. Terrified lawmakers fled the mob but reconvened later in the day to confirm Joe Biden’s victory.

On January 13, Democrats in the House voted for the second time to impeach President Trump, this time on the charge, “incitement of insurrection.” Ten House Republicans joined the impeachment vote, but the Republican Senate failed to convict him. Representative Liz Cheney of Wyoming was one of the ten House Republicans voting for impeachment. At the time, she chaired the House Republican Conference and ranked third in the Republican House leadership.

After President Biden’s inauguration, former president Trump continued to deny the 2020 election results, claimed personal leadership of the party, and attacked those who believed in the election’s validity. Many Republicans in Congress sided with the former president, as did most of his voters. Representative Cheney did not. She continued to denounce him for failing to accept his election defeat. The evening of May 11, 2021, she delivered these remarks on the House floor:

Today we face a threat America has never seen before. A former president, who provoked a violent attack on this capital in an effort to steal the election, has resumed his aggressive effort to convince Americans that the election was stolen from him.

She continued:

The Electoral College has voted. More than 60 state and federal courts, including multiple judges the former president appointed, have rejected his claims. The Trump Department of Justice investigated the former president's claims of widespread fraud and found no evidence to support them. The election is over. That is the rule of law. That is our constitutional process. Those who refuse to accept the rulings of our courts are at war with the Constitution. Our duty is clear. Every one of us who has sworn the oath must act to prevent the unraveling of our democracy.¹⁷⁷

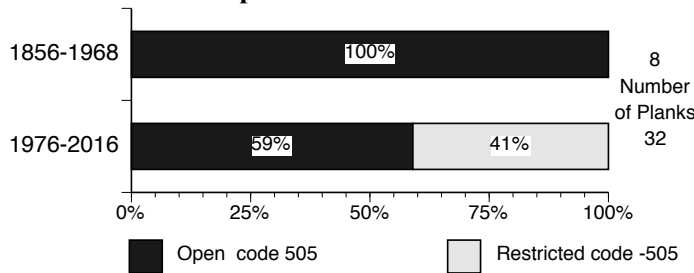
On May 12, 2021, the House Republican Conference voted to oust Representative Cheney as its Chair. The decision was by voice vote and took about fifteen minutes. After the vote, she said: “The party’s going to come back stronger, and I’m going to lead the effort to do it.”¹⁷⁸

Later the same day, Republican Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, following a meeting with President Biden and others at the White House, said to reporters: “I don’t think anybody is questioning the legitimacy of the presidential election.”¹⁷⁹ McCarthy was anxious to move the party from the past election to future elections. The previous day, however, the press reported that Republicans had introduced hundreds of voting-restriction bills in 48 state legislatures. Nearly 90 percent of the bills were sponsored primarily or entirely by Republicans.¹⁸⁰

Platform Planks

Only 40 of 2,722 planks in 41 Republican platforms took a position on the topic of national elections. Planks that favored expanding the electorate and easing the act of voting fit under the Government heading and tagged code +505, Open Elections. Planks restricting the reach of elections or voting got code -505, Restricted Elections. Figure 12.1 shows the distribution of these codes over time.

FIGURE 12.1: Open v. Restricted Elections in 40 Planks



Here are the eight Republican planks up to 1968 coded as favoring “Open” elections:

- 1896 support voting rights
- 1900 support voting rights
- 1904 support voting rights
- 1912 prohibit corporations from contributing funds to federal election campaigns
- 1928 promise to keep our elections clean, honest and free from taint of any kind
- 1968 favor new election reform act to restrain political spending
- remove unreasonable requirements, residence and otherwise, for voting
- lower age groups should be accorded the right to vote

Here are the thirteen planks since 1976 coded as “Restricted:

- 1976 oppose federal post card registration
- 1980 support the repeal of restrictive campaign spending limitations
- strongly oppose national postcard voter registration
- 1984 oppose public funding of campaigns
- 1988 oppose public funding of campaigns
- 1992 oppose public funding of campaigns
- 1996 oppose the Motor-Voter Act
- end taxpayer subsidies for campaigns
- 2008 oppose restoration of the franchise to convicted felons
- 2012 applaud requiring photo IDs to vote
- oppose restricting political contributions
- 2016 repeal restrictions on campaign contributions
- support proof of citizenship and Voter ID photos to vote

If one regards voting as a civic act (as I do), one might responsibly argue against mail-in ballots. Voters engage directly in the democratic process when they vote alongside their neighbors at local polling stations. Encouraging in-person voting while providing for true absentee ballots is a defensible reason for eliminating widespread voting by mail. Curbing it for unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud is not.

Platform Texts

Platform planks come from platform text, and the full text tells more than abbreviated planks. The importance of elections to democratic government and the fissure in the Republican Party over the legitimacy of the 2020 election call for examining all 66 mentions of “elections” in the party’s platforms since 1856. Not all mentions are relevant: 9 were to non-government elections (e.g., in unions); 19 to foreign countries (e.g., Cuba, Iraq); 9 to specific elections (e.g., “After the elections of 1994”); 5 to prospects of elections in American territories (e.g., Guam), and so on. Nevertheless, some passages deserve to be quoted at length. Consider these four ringing endorsements of the role of elections and voting in our democracy, all of which came during the Republican Party’s first hundred years.

- 1888 *We reaffirm our unswerving devotion to the National Constitution and the indissoluble Union of the States; . . . and especially to the supreme and sovereign right of every lawful citizen, rich or poor, native or foreign born, white or black, to cast one free ballot in public elections, and to have that ballot duly counted.*
- 1892 *We demand that every citizen of the United States shall be allowed to cast one free and unrestricted ballot in all public elections, and that such ballot shall be counted and returned as cast; that such laws shall be enacted and enforced as will secure to every citizen, be he rich or poor, native or foreign-born, white or black, this sovereign right, guaranteed by the Constitution.*
- 1928 *There will not be any relaxing of resolute endeavor to keep our elections clean, honest and free from taint of any kind. The improper use of money in governmental and political affairs is a great national evil.*
- 1944 *The payment of any poll tax should not be a condition of voting in Federal elections and we favor immediate submission of a Constitutional amendment for its abolition.*

Republicans objected to the poll tax in 1944 when they were still campaigning for Black votes as “the Party of Lincoln.” Republicans’ commitment to expanding elections’ democratic character extended into the 1960s, when the party called for reforming the Electoral College and favoring congressional representation for Washington, DC, as shown by these statements:

- 1960 *We favor a change in the Electoral College system to give every voter a fair voice in presidential elections. Republicans will continue to work for Congressional representation and self-government for the District of Columbia and also support the constitutional amendment granting suffrage in national elections.*
- 1968 *. . . we propose to reform the Electoral College system, establish a nation-wide, uniform voting period for Presidential elections, and recommend that the states remove unreasonable requirements, residence and otherwise, for voting in Presidential elections. We specifically favor representation in Congress for the District of Columbia.*

But the tone and content of Republican platforms changed in the 1980s. Whereas in 1928 the party regarded as “evil” the improper use of money in elections, in 1980, the party said that *restrictive campaign spending limitations created obstacles to local grass roots participation*. In 1984, it sought to reverse the federal role in supervising elections:

- 1980 *We support the repeal of those restrictive campaign spending limitations that tend to create obstacles to local grass roots participation in federal elections. We also oppose the proposed financing of Congressional campaigns with taxpayers' dollars.*
- 1984 *We will remove obstacles to grass-roots participation in federal elections and will reduce, not increase, the federal role.*

Republican platforms cited higher voting turnout as evidence of voting fraud. They worried about the integrity of voting by mail, yet assured troops that their mailed-in ballots would be counted.

- 2012 *. . . we applaud legislation to require photo identification for voting and to prevent election fraud, particularly with regard to registration and absentee ballots. States or political subdivisions that use all-mail elections cannot ensure the integrity of the ballot. We affirm that our troops, wherever stationed, be allowed to vote and those votes be counted in the November election and in all elections.*

Also in 2012 and again in 2016, the Republican platform backtracked on its promises in the 1960s to reform the Electoral College.

- 2012 *We oppose the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact or any other scheme to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College. We recognize that an unconstitutional effort to impose "national popular vote" would be a mortal threat to our federal system and a guarantee of corruption as every ballot box in every state would become a chance to steal the presidency.*
- 2016 *Honest Elections and the Electoral College: We oppose the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact and any other scheme to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College.*

Electoral College

Whereas the 1960 Republican platform favored *a change in the Electoral College system to give every voter a fair voice in presidential elections*, the 2012 Republican platform opposed any *scheme to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College*. What caused Republicans to change their position? The simple answer is that Republican presidents George W. Bush and Donald Trump lost the popular vote respectively in 2000 and 2016 but won their elections because each gained a majority of votes in the Electoral College.

A presidential election is not national election but a *federal* election. A candidate is not chosen president by national popular vote but by a majority of the states' electoral votes.¹⁸¹ Each of the fifty states is entitled to one elector for its senators (100 senators) and one for each of its House members (435 members), totaling 535 electoral votes. In addition, the Twenty-Third Amendment awarded three electoral votes (the minimum for any state) to the District of Columbia, although it elects no voting members of Congress. The total number of electoral votes therefore is 538. The Constitution specifies that a candidate needs a majority of electoral votes, or 270 today, to win the presidency. Unfortunately, having an even number of electoral votes creates the possibility of a tie, 269 to 269, throwing the decision into the House of Representatives.

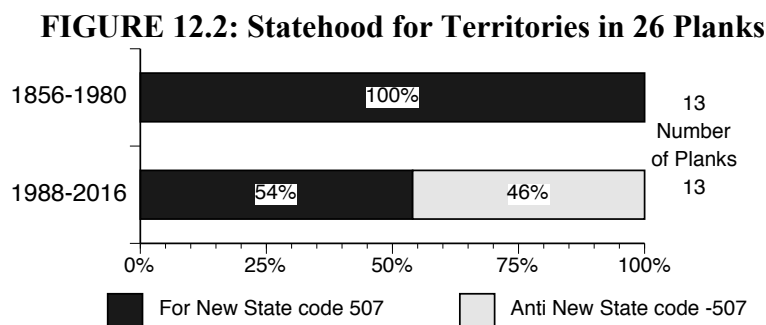
Because every state, regardless of population, has three electoral votes—two for its senators and one for its representative—the electoral vote is biased toward territory, not population. In fact, the smallest fifteen states in population, with a combined population of about 20 million inhabitants, hold 56 electoral votes. The state of California, with a population of 40 million, has only 55 electoral votes, one fewer. In recent decades, voters in small states have favored Republican presidential candidates. For

example, in 2016 Democrat Hillary Clinton won almost three million more popular votes than Republican Donald Trump, but he won a majority of the states’ electoral votes, 306 to 232. In effect, Trump won more states; Clinton won more votes.

In 2000, Republican George W. Bush also became president by winning a majority of the electoral vote while losing the popular vote to Democrat Al Gore by a half million votes. The Republican Party understands the critical role of the Electoral College in determining its chances of victory in future elections. That factor has altered its position on admitting new states to the union.

Voting on Statehood

In 1856, only 31 states formed the United States. Settled territories were clamoring for admission as states, so granting statehood became a major political issue in the 19th century and into the 20th. In 1959, Alaska and Hawaii became the 49th and 50th states. Two codes under Government applied to Statehood, code +507 favoring admission and code -507 opposing it. Most of the 26 Republican Statehood planks were “omnibus” planks, mentioning multiple territories as candidates for statehood. As shown in Figure 12.2, all Republican planks up to 1980 favored admission of the territories they named.



As early as 1940, Republican platforms saw statehood as a logical aspiration for the people of Puerto Rico. Concerning the District of Columbia, Republicans seemed ready to give Washington DC home rule, congressional representation, but not statehood. Here is the passage:

The principle of self-determination also governs our positions on Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia as it has in past platforms. We again support statehood for Puerto Rico, if that is the people's choice in a referendum, with full recognition within the concept of a multicultural society of the citizens' right to retain their Spanish language and traditions; and support giving the District of Columbia voting representation in the United States Senate and House of Representatives and full home rule over those matters that are purely local.

In the 1970s, Congress sent to the states a District of Columbia Voting Rights Amendment, but it failed ratification. By 1988, Washington DC and Puerto Rico were still candidates for statehood and mentioned in 13 planks. The Republican Party favored admitting Puerto Rico in 7 planks, but opposed Washington DC in the other 6. Granting statehood through legislation was the normal procedure, but the party’s 2016 platform vigorously opposed that method and required a constitutional amendment:

Statehood for the District can be advanced only by a constitutional amendment. Any other approach would be invalid. A statehood amendment was soundly rejected by the states when last proposed in 1976 and should not be revived.

The 2016 Republican platform spoke very differently about Puerto Rico:

We support the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign state. We further recognize the historic significance of the 2012 local referendum in which a 54 percent majority voted to end Puerto Rico's current status as a U.S. territory, and 61 percent chose statehood over options for sovereign nationhood. We support the federally sponsored political status referendum authorized and funded by an Act of Congress in 2014 to ascertain the aspirations of the people of Puerto Rico. Once the 2012 local vote for statehood is ratified, Congress should approve an enabling act with terms for Puerto Rico's future admission as the 51st state of the Union.

Although Puerto Rico’s two main political parties were not called “Republican” and “Democratic,” they align informally with the Republican and Democratic parties on the mainland. The stronger one aligned with Republicans favors statehood, which might explain Republicans supporting admission. The party’s opposition to statehood for the District of Columbia lies in its voting history. Eligible to vote in presidential elections since 1964, Washington DC voted for the Democratic presidential nominee every time. So statehood would not further affect Republican chances in presidential politics, but it would affect congressional politics. Democrats in the Senate would almost certainly gain two additional senators.

If Washington DC did become a state, the chance of a 269-269 tie in the electoral vote would end. Making the District of Columbia a state would reduce the total electoral vote from 538 to 537. Washington’s three electoral votes awarded by Constitutional Amendment would turn into three through congressional representation: two senators and one representative. The Senate would increase to 102 members, while the House would remain fixed at 435—with DC’s seat coming from a state’s loss following decennial reapportionment.¹⁸² All citizens should regard avoiding a tie in electoral votes as a Public Good.

Summary

The Republican Party freed slaves after a Civil War, gave them the right to vote, and—for a time—enforced that right in southern states in the mid-1800s. By the mid-1900s, it evolved into a party that curtailed voting rights of slaves’ descendants. The party that had pledged to reform the Electoral College became a party that vowed to oppose any change to its procedures. Table 12.1 shows how the Republican Party has evolved over time on elections in American government.

TABLE 12.1: Open Elections v. Restricted Elections

1856-1876	1880-1904	1908-1928	1932-1956	1960-1980*	1984-2012**	2016-2020
Open Elections	Open Elections	Open Elections	Open Elections			
				Restricted Elections	Restricted Elections	Restricted Elections

*1976 opposed mail registration. **2012 required voter ID.

Unlike most countries in the world, our federal government—nation and states—elects most national, state, and local officials every two years, more frequently than anywhere else. As a result, American voters become bored, confused, and have lower turnout rates than anywhere else. The United States does not have a problem of too many people voting but of too few voting.

CHAPTER 13

Evolving to Ethnocentrism

The Republican Party is almost 170 years old. Political parties, like people, change over time. So it is not surprising that the Republican Party today does not hold the same political positions that it did when founded in 1854. What is surprising is that the party has reversed some key positions. Most notably, a party that began favoring national government over states' rights now distrusts national government and defends states' rights. The Republicans' reversal on its founding principle and its changes on other policies did not occur through a revolutionary shift. It evolved over time. This book documents that evolutionary process through a detailed study of the party's platform planks.

John Gerring also examined party platforms, but his book, *Party Ideologies in America 1828-1996*, relied more heavily on hundreds of speeches by Democratic and Republican party leaders. Our studies overlap, but mine produces new information by analyzing party platforms more closely and by extending the analysis to the present. Our findings about the Republican Party are mutually reinforcing in that they agree on most conclusions about the party's ideological posture into the 1920s.

Gerring contended that the Republican Party experienced two major epochs of governing behavior, dramatically changing only once. Up to the election of 1924, Gerring said that the party was in its "Nationalism" epoch, distinguished by what he called a "central dichotomy," pitting order against anarchy. As detailed more below, my findings substantiate his description. In 1928, Republicans entered a "Neoliberalism" epoch, with the central dichotomy becoming the individual versus the state.

We also agree on his characterization the party's Neoliberalism epoch. We differ in how long that epoch lasted. Gerring held that it lasted up to 1996. I argue that the party changed fundamentally in the 1960s. In that decade, Republicans entered what I call its Ethnocentrism epoch, with the central dichotomy becoming *White Christians* versus *Others*. To support my claim, this chapter reviews evidence in Part III's preceding chapters and then outlines the Republican Party's new epoch since the 1960s.

Recapping Principles in Platform Planks

The preceding chapters analyzed thousands of planks in Republican platforms since 1856, thus documenting the party's major principles throughout its history. (In truth, the chapters did not report on all 2,722 planks in the 41 Republican platforms. The rest are covered in Appendix C.) The summaries from the preceding chapters warrant restating for convenient review.

Chapter 6, Original Principles

The Republican Party was founded on the principle of containing the spread of slavery in the United States and was willing to use the power of the national government to do so. As equality was understood at the time, the Republican Party recognized slaves to be politically equal to their owners. Over time, as equality applied to social relationships between people of color and those born white, the Republican Party backed away from using national power to enforce equality.

Chapter 7, Financing Government

In the 19th century, Republicans believed that tariffs would raise sufficient revenue for the government and that tariffs would protect fledgling domestic industries. At the start of the 20th century,

the United States was exiting a domestic agricultural economy and entering a world of international trade. A protective tariff, which had been the party's bedrock principle, was an "antiquated policy" for that world. The party noted this in its 1988 platform: *Unfortunately, international markets are still restricted by antiquated policies: protective tariffs, quotas, and subsidies.* To its credit, the Republican Party scrapped its venerable principle, the Protective Tariff, in the 1980s.

Chapter 8, **Economic Affairs**

In 1860, before the Civil War, the Republican Party platform addressed the need for adequate revenue *to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country.* After the war, the party's 1872 platform sought additional revenue *to aid in securing remunerative wages to labor, and to promote the industries, prosperity, and growth of the whole country.* The Republican Party clearly intended to be a governing party. To that end, it sought to raise additional revenue through taxes on personal income, even proposing a Constitutional Amendment to insure the legality of an income tax. Although the Republican Party was firmly aligned with manufacturing interests and corporations, the party regulated their commercial activities through national legislation. Republican President Teddy Roosevelt drew fame for "trust-busting."

In the second half of the 20th century, Republican Party platforms denigrated economic regulations and extolled free enterprise, cloaked under the mantle of small business. My independent analysis of Republican platform planks again corresponds with Gerring's characterization of the Republican Party entering an epoch of Neoliberalism in 1928, with free market capitalism as a major theme.

Chapter 9, **Law and Order**

For most of its existence the Republican Party endorsed the principle that government should hold the "monopoly of force." President Lincoln conscripted an army to prevent the attempted secession of southern states from the Union. From the beginning, Republicans approved of the death penalty. Since 1856, Republican platforms have consistently backed governmental use of force in apprehending, imprisoning, and executing lawbreakers.

Control over deadly weapons is inherent in monopolizing force. Over the first century of the party's existence, gun control was not a prominent political issue. When the topic surfaced after President Kennedy's assassination, the party supported it to some extent. Heavily lobbied by the NRA, the party changed its position. It opposed strengthening gun controls even after President Reagan was shot. While life did not become "solitary, poor, nasty, brutal, and short" for all American citizens as a result, life became unpredictably brutal and short for many from the proliferation of handguns and assault rifles.

Since the abortion issue surfaced in the 1970s, the party's platforms consistently backed governmental efforts to force women to give birth. Laws against abortions empower the government to force a woman to give birth, but Republicans view it as preserving life. In sum, the party today backs strong rules against transgressors and against women who do not want to give birth. The party favors weak or no regulations against possessing or using firearms of any type.

Chapter 10, **Order and Culture**

Throughout the 19th century, the Republican Party welcomed immigrants (except Asiatics), but its immigration policy became more exclusionary in the 20th century and increasingly so in the 21st. Regarding religion, Republican platforms were surprisingly secular in the 19th and to the middle of the 20th Century. The party became religious in the 21st century. Concerning lifestyles, the party successfully opposed polygamy; it unsuccessfully opposed same-sex marriages; and it successfully backed prohibition. However, the party backtracked on prohibition as the nationwide policy produced circumvention and corruption.

Chapter 11, **Conservation and Conservatives**

Soon after its founding, Republican governments led in the conservation of natural resources. Thanks to their efforts, Americans today enjoy visiting over 400 sites in a system of National Parks, Monuments, Battlefields, Historic Sites, and so on covering more than 50 million acres in all fifty states. Under Republican presidents Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush, the party also passed laws to protect the environment against pollution. Afterward, the party took few steps toward conservation or environmental protect and avoided confronting issues in climate change.

After Theodore Roosevelt, only one Republican president, Richard Nixon, stands out as a steward of the land for backing legislation to protect our environment. Others took little notice of conservation or saw economic opportunities for exploitation and profit.

Chapter 12, **Elections**

The Republican Party freed slaves after a Civil War, gave them the right to vote, and—for a time—enforced that right in southern states in the mid-1800s. By the mid-1900s, it evolved into a party that curtailed voting rights of slaves' descendants. The party that had pledged to reform the Electoral College became a party that vowed to oppose any change to its procedures. In 2020, Republican officeholders became the first to challenge the outcome of a presidential election won by a candidate with clear majorities in both the popular and Electoral College votes.

Entering a New Epoch: Ethnocentrism

From its beginning and for most of its history, the Republican Party was a party of national government. It imposed political equality on the southern states. The party raised and spent national funds on public goods. It funded building a railroad linking the east and west coasts, created national parks, and even supported digging a canal across the Isthmus of Panama for public benefit. Republicans regulated interstate commerce and broke-up monopolistic trusts. Republicans also favored a constitutional amendment granting equal rights to women and backed some measures for gun control. In addition, Republicans initiated the tax on personal incomes to raise government revenue.

As reported above in Chapter 4, John Gerring said the “Nationalism” epoch in Republican history lasted to 1924. During which, according to Gerring, Republican principles centered on “order versus anarchy.” Its major themes were “Protestantism, moral reform, mercantilism, free labor, social harmony, and statism.” He said that epoch ended around 1924. Gerring fixed the start of the party’s “Neoliberalism” epoch in 1928.

Scholars have problems convincing readers what they see in their research, such as describing an evolution in party politics that extends over a century. Small changes happen at different times in the

same direction can culminate in a major shift in a party's orientation. The timeline in Figure 13.1 may help in picturing the shift. It draws lines from Republican Party platform reversals, named for the new policy, to specific years when they occurred. It depicts twelve significant changes in Republican platforms since 1924.

FIGURE 13.1: Timeline of Changes in Republican Platforms since 1924



Gerring fixed 1928 as the start of his new “Neoliberalism” epoch, during which party principles centered on “the individual versus the state.” The epoch’s major themes were “anti-statism, free market capitalism, right-wing populism, and individualism.” Figure 13.1 supports Gerring’s classification and themes. It shows that the Republican platform backed states’ rights in 1928 and opposed economic regulations in 1940. The shift in 1960 from favoring racial equality to opposing a date to end school desegregation meshes with the theme of right-wing populism. Opposing firearms registration in 1976 aligns with individualism. Gerring’s right-wing populism theme could embrace other post-1960 changes: the anti-abortion amendment, abandoning the ERA, and restricting immigration. All this evidence conforms with Gerring’s Neoliberalism epoch.

The flurry of changes, however, suggests more than a simple extension of Neoliberalism. I disagree with Gerring, who wrote, “Radicals’ like Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan adhered to the same general precepts as their more moderate colleagues,” and should be regarded as “the continuation of an older, more established ideological tradition.”¹⁸³ I contend that Goldwater reversed the party’s principles and Reagan extended the reversal. Others have argued similarly. Noted historian Heather Cox Richardson wrote, “From 1964 to 1980, Movement Conservatives took over the Republican Party. It was not an obvious or inevitable outcome.”¹⁸⁴ In 1964, the party entered a new epoch (using Gerring’s term) that can be called *Ethnocentrism*. Its central dichotomy (again Gerring’s terminology) became *White Christians* versus *Others*. Ethnocentrism’s themes are *Christianity*, *social order*, *anti-intellectualism*, and *antigovernment*. These themes, salient in Republican politics since the 1960s, require discussion.

Christianity: Gerring cited “Protestantism” as a Republican theme during the party’s Nationalism era. Protestantism involved piety, of course, but he meant adhering to the Protestant ethic of hard work, thrift, efficiency, and morality in worldly callings.¹⁸⁵ People inclined to that ethic gravitated to the Republican Party. Not until the end of the 19th century did Protestantism suggest electoral support from a religious grouping. In that sense, Republican supporters were also overwhelming Protestant.

Gerring did not include Protestantism as a theme in the party’s later Neoliberalism epoch. Nevertheless, religion was a source of partisan division, spiking in two notable elections. In 1928, Democrats nominated Catholic Al Smith as their presidential candidate and lost, as Protestants voted overwhelming for Republican Herbert Hoover. In 1960, Democrats nominated another Catholic, John F. Kennedy, but enough Protestants voted Democratic to elect him. Soon

after Kennedy's assassination in 1963, however, many devout Catholics were drawn to religious appeals of groups aligned with the Republican Party.

As religious precepts became more important than Christian denominations, Christianity—not just Protestantism—became a Republican theme in the 1960s, when the party turned toward Ethnocentrism. David Bennett, historian of the Far Right in American politics, quoted Evangelical Protestant Jerry Falwell as saying, “Catholics in this country do not differ with the views of the moral majority . . . Pope John is on our side and the people are on our side. . . Evangelicals, fundamentalists, conservative Catholics and Mormons are all working together now.”¹⁸⁶ United in religious views as Evangelical Christians,¹⁸⁷ they could combat secular and competing values held by growing ranks of non-believers and non-Christians.

Although the South was historically Protestant and even anti-Catholic, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* held:

The southern white conservative religious movement is composed primarily of evangelical Protestants and sizable numbers of conservative Catholics, who believe that secular forces are undermining their way of life and who seek to advance their beliefs, values, and interests through partisan politics.¹⁸⁸

Social Order: Social changes in the 1960s severely threatened the social order. The religious right blamed “secular humanism” for undermining traditional roles of men and women in marriage, the family, employment, and society; traditional status arrangements between whites and people of color; and traditional lifestyles and norms of expression. As the new Christian alignment crusaded “against secular humanists and “enemies of ‘traditional values,’” the religious right’s influence grew within the Republican Party.¹⁸⁹

Anti-intellectualism: Defined as a “social attitude that systematically denigrates science-based facts, authority of the intellectual ‘elite,’ and the pursuit of theory and knowledge,”¹⁹⁰ anti-intellectualism is not new to American politics. In 1963, historian Richard Hofstadter won a Pulitzer Prize for *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*.¹⁹¹ Intellectualism overlaps with secular humanism, but anti-intellectualism is much broader than opposition to secular humanism, which is concerned mainly with cultural traditions. Anti-intellectualism underpins distrust of policy experts, denial of climate change, suspicion of vaccinations, opposition to wearing facemasks to control spreading air-borne viruses, and so on. Historian Bennett wrote that academic elites “are responsible for the very programs the New Rights rejects: antipoverty, school busing, and consumer protection.”¹⁹²

Denying advice of medical experts in combatting the COVID-19 virus may have cost thousands of lives. Perhaps an even more serious consequence of Republicans’ anti-intellectualism will come in their denial of climate change. A 2020 Pew survey found Republican identifiers less likely than Democrats to blame human activity (22 to 72 percent) and less likely (35 to 89 percent) to say the government is doing too little to reduce the effects of climate change.¹⁹³ Republican activists are beginning to recognize the party’s position as “a political liability.”¹⁹⁴

Anti-Government: This theme differs significantly from Gerring’s anti-statism. According to Gerring, *statism* characterized the Republican Party in its Nationalism epoch, which ended in 1924. The party embraced *anti-statism* in the following Neoliberalism period. He wrote:

The turn from statism to antistatism was accompanied by a parallel shift in political style within the Republican party. Whereas earlier Whig-Republicans had upheld a stately, nineteenth-century vision of politics in which a tacit division between leaders and followers was observed, modern Republicans adopted a strident populism. . . . To the "pressure of groups" represented by the Democratic party, Republicans counterposed "the conscience of the individual."¹⁹⁵

In the creed of antistatism, certain key words—among them *community, participation, local, state, the personal element, voluntary associations, citizens, the people, private*, and, perhaps most prominently, *family*—gained talismanic status.¹⁹⁶

Statism does not suggest government domination over people and *anti-statism* does not denote people's hostility to government. During the party's Ethnocentrism epoch, however, hostility toward government was widespread among Republican activists. In 1964, Barry Goldwater laid the basis for that hostility in accepting the Republican presidential nomination, saying:

And this party, with its every action, every word, every breath, and every heartbeat, has but a single resolve, and that is freedom—freedom made orderly for this nation by our constitutional government; freedom under a government limited by laws of nature and of nature's God;

I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.

In effect, Goldwater was encouraging his audience to aggressively oppose governmental rules and laws that, in their view, contradicted those made by nature or God.

By the 1980s, Republican office holders spoke more explicitly against government, especially the national government.

In his 1981 Inaugural Address, Republican President Ronald Reagan said, "In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem, government IS the problem."

In 1994, the House Republicans' "Contract with America" promised "the end of government that is too big, too intrusive, and too easy with the public's money."

In 2016, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump promised to deconstruct the "deep state" of career civil servants that silently controlled the government in Washington.

David Bennett begins his book, *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History*, by citing a bumper sticker sold in Missouri: "I Love My Country, But I Fear My Government," and then quoting a Michigan militia commander interviewed on television: "it is not anger we feel, it is fear, 'fear' of the federal government."¹⁹⁷ Responding to President Trump's cry to "stop the steal" of the 2020 election he lost to Democrat Joe Biden, thousands of Trump's supporters stormed the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021 to prevent the lawful counting of state electoral votes certifying Biden's election. In May 2021, a majority of Republican members of the House and Senate opposed the creation of a bipartisan commission to investigate that insurrection.

Anti-government attitudes, not just anti-statism, characterizes the Republican Party in its current Ethnocentrism epoch. This era started in 1964, with Barry Goldwater's acceptance

speech at the Republican nominating convention. Part IV examines the conditions that led to Goldwater's nomination and to the party's continuing along the direction he headed.

Summary

Party platforms and planks only reflect Republican principles. As described in Chapter 3, American party platforms emerge from a decentralized process. Hundreds of party activists have a hand in writing every Republican platform. They debate at length over what to include and how to word it. At the end, every Republican platform reflects Republican activists' basic values and even their value conflicts. However, some contributors have more influence than others in shaping the final product. Of course, frontrunners for the party's presidential nomination exert more influence than others, and Republican presidents running for re-election can control what gets included and omitted from the platform.

At times however, party activists far below incumbent presidents or potential nominees significantly affected individual platform planks. In 1980, Republican activist Phyllis Schlafly's campaign against the Equal Rights Amendment kept the party from endorsing the ERA. In 1948, freshman Senator Hubert Humphrey engineered the Democratic Party's acceptance of an historic civil rights plank. Neither of these efforts, however, would have been accepted if opposed by a majority of delegates at the parties' conventions.

Party platforms and planks at given times only reflect party principles at those times. To fully understand how platforms, planks, and principles originated and perpetuated, one must consider the politics and politicians of the times. Sometimes Republicans redesigned their platforms to win national elections. Democrats did too. Part IV considers how Republicans have functioned as an Electoral Team to win elections, as a Social Tribe for group identity, and as a Personality Cult loyal to Donald Trump.

CHAPTER 14

Electoral Teams

The preceding chapter ended Part III by reviewing planks adopted in 41 Republican platforms since 1856. It showed that the Republican Party governed the nation in a progressive manner for much its history. This chapter begins Part IV, which considers Republicans acting not as a party organization but alternatively as an Electoral Team, a Social Tribe, and a Personality Cult. It starts with Electoral Teams.

Two distinct Republican entities are involved in presidential elections: a single *party organization* and multiple *electoral teams*. The Republican *Party* has endured across elections; Republican *Electoral Teams* are temporary, formed to contest individual elections. *Party* fits Edmund Burke's view of politicians "united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principles in which they are all agreed."¹⁹⁸ *Team* fits Anthony Downs' description of organizations "seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election."¹⁹⁹ Different Republican electoral teams arose to contest each of the 42 presidential elections since 1856. In the process, they sometimes influenced the direction of the party platform, often affecting its planks' content and wording, and even altering the party's basic principles. Nevertheless, electoral teams came and went.

The Republican National Committee (RNC), which supposedly heads the entire party organization, is virtually never on a presidential electoral team. The RNC functions mainly as a party bureaucracy, keeping records, setting dates for the party convention, making local arrangements, and so on. That is true for the Democratic Party too. Both national committees deserve the title of a book about their activities, *Politics Without Power*.²⁰⁰ Republican presidential aspirants, independently of the RNC, attract politically savvy advisers to plan winning the party's nomination for the next presidential election. The successful nominees then attract other experienced politicians, sometimes from the teams of their defeated primary opponents, to plan for winning office.

Almost all presidential nominees and their electoral teams tinker with the party platform, but few have the desire or the power to change party principles. Although Dwight Eisenhower's electoral victories in 1952 and 1956 returned Republicans to the presidency after two decades of losses, he and his team failed to instill "Modern Republicanism" in the party, having it embrace government's role in providing social services.²⁰¹ Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan were three presidential nominees who did change party principles in significant ways. So did Donald Trump.

Republican Dominance to 1928

Electoral teams were not needed in the mid-1800s. A noted historian wrote that even "Putting a party organization together was relatively easily done once a sufficient number of like-minded men agree to act in concert."²⁰² Although Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, backed Abraham Lincoln for the 1860 Republican nomination and Lincoln had numerous advisers, historians agree that he conducted his nomination and election campaigns.²⁰³

By 1896, candidates' circles of political consultants enlarged, but they still did not constitute an electoral team. Although some writers have placed Ohio industrialist Mark Hanna behind the electoral

success of Republican President William McKinley, party historian Gould said that Hanna “neither made the key decisions nor set the overall strategy.”²⁰⁴

Warren Harding’s getting the 1920 Republican presidential nomination and then winning election provides an early example of a team effort. Party leaders fused their personal ambitions with a desire to recapture the presidency after two terms of Democrat Woodrow Wilson’s presidency. Elected in 1912 and re-elected in 1916, Wilson and his party were unpopular. Observers at the time believed any Republican candidate could win against any Democrat. However, top-level Republican activists failed to agree on the lucky nominee. A prominent Ohio Republican, Harry M. Daugherty, promoted Ohio Senator Warren Harding, himself lukewarm to the prospect.²⁰⁵ In a fabled “smoke-filled” Chicago hotel room, Republican leaders compromised on Harding as their candidate.

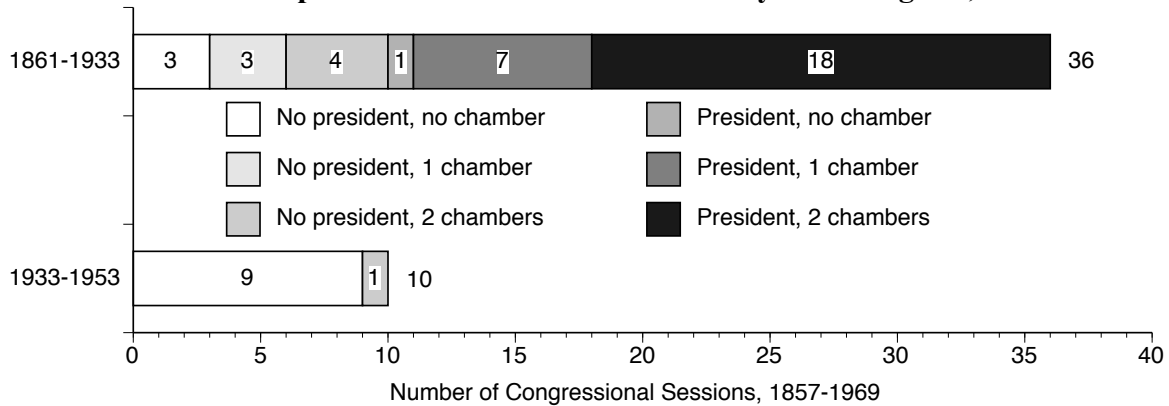
More to the point, Harding’s general election campaign was supervised by a small electoral team assembled by Daugherty and managed by Indiana Republican activist Will Hays that employed Albert Lasker’s advertising skills.²⁰⁶ They planned a “front porch” campaign with Harding staying in Marion, Ohio, and saying as little of substance as possible. Hays and Daugherty employed party workers to deliver speeches and canvass voters, and to mount “a massive publicity program, involving parades, billboards, magazine advertisements, motion pictures, newspaper statements, phonograph appeals, posters, telephone conferences, Girl Scout babysitters, and motor corps to carry voters to the polls.” One scholar wrote, “The Republican campaign was so thoroughly planned and executed that it stands as a model of smoothness and efficiency.”²⁰⁷

As anticipated in 1920, the electorate voted overwhelmingly for the Republican ticket of Warren Harding and his running mate, Calvin Coolidge, over the Democratic ticket of James Cox and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Republicans won over 60 percent of the popular vote, more than 75 percent of the electoral vote, and carried almost every northern state despite losing almost every southern state. Republicans easily captured the presidency again in 1924 and 1928, getting over 70 percent of the electoral vote both times. After losing to the Democrats and Woodrow Wilson in 1912 and 1916, Republicans reestablished their dominance of the electorate.

In eighteen presidential elections from 1860 to 1928, Republicans lost to only two Democratic candidates: to Grover Cleveland in 1884 and 1892, and to Woodrow Wilson. So Republicans outscored Democrats 14 to 4 in presidential victories. Republicans also won most of the House and Senate elections from 1860 to 1930. In fact, Republican presidents enjoyed having party majorities in both chambers almost two-thirds of the 36 congressional sessions. Only once did a Republican president (Rutherford Hayes, 1879-1881) face a Democratic Congress.

Republican electoral fortunes, however, changed dramatically after Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s victory in 1932. For the next twenty years, Republicans failed to elect a president and controlled Congress only once (1947-1949), during Democrat Harry Truman’s presidency. The string of losses in federal elections was a blow to a proud party that had dominated national government since its founding. As portrayed in Figure 14.1, Republicans held the presidency for more than 70 percent of all 36 congressional sessions up to 1952. Moreover, Republicans controlled the presidency and *both* houses of Congress for half the sessions.

FIGURE 14.1: Republican Control of the Presidency and Congress, 1861-1953



Losing and Regaining Status

To Republican leaders in business, communications, and society across the United States, politics in the 1940s had turned upside. Their venerable Republican Party—the Grand Old Party, the party that saved the Union and freed the slaves—had lost its rightful dominance to what they saw as a disloyal, treasonous party: Democrats tried to secede from the United States of America in the 1860s and enacted their accursed socialist and anti-American “New Deal” in the 1930s.²⁰⁸ Although 63 percent of the country’s newspapers (owned by wealthy publishers and run by conservative editors), endorsed Republican presidential nominees (versus 20 percent for Democratic nominees),²⁰⁹ the GOP lost the 1940, 1944, and 1948 elections..

Republicans had strived to field a winning electoral team in every election during the 1940s. In 1940, they declined to nominate Ohio Senator Robert Taft, son of the former president, isolationist, leader of the party’s conservative wing, and honored as “Mr. Republican.” Instead, they sought to win votes by nominating Wendell Willkie, a former Democrat, New York lawyer, and internationalist. Again in 1944, Republicans nominated popular New York Governor Thomas Dewey, leader of the party’s moderate wing over Senator Taft, a front-runner before the convention. In 1948, the party again chose Dewey over Senator Taft. In 1952, Mr. Republican Taft lost his party’s nomination once more to General Eisenhower, a party newcomer and avowed internationalist. Republicans desperately wanted a win and they were sure they found a winning candidate, former five-star General and WWII hero, Dwight David Eisenhower.

Gould wrote: “For the fourth time in succession, the Republicans had turned to the candidate with the best perceived chance of victory in the autumn instead of the politician who reflected the real philosophy of the party.”²¹⁰ This time the Republican electoral team finally succeeded. Their 1952 ticket of General Eisenhower and Senator Richard Nixon, acknowledged anti-communist, won a resounding victory. Re-electing Eisenhower in 1956 by an even larger margin, the team managed to win four states in the old Confederacy: Florida, Louisiana, Texas, and Virginia.

Heading into the 1960 election, most Republicans regarded Vice-president Nixon as Eisenhower’s heir-apparent, although the president personally never took to him. Nixon’s main challenger was thought to be Nelson Rockefeller of the party’s eastern liberal wing, while many party conservatives favored a long-shot: Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater. Led by Leonard Wood and Robert H. Finch, Nixon’s electoral team headed off a convention challenge by Nelson Rockefeller.²¹¹ Lacking a formal opponent—both Rockefeller and Goldwater declining to oppose him—Nixon was nominated in

1960 by a vote of 1,321 votes to 10.²¹²

Nixon's convention vote was larger than it was enthusiastic. Delegates conceded that he earned points for being Vice-President and for dutifully serving the party organization. They also granted that Nixon was thoroughly anti-communist, but many doubted that he was sufficiently conservative. Fervent conservatives wanted Senator Barry Goldwater, whose new book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, devoted chapters to defending states' rights, opposing civil rights, attacking unions, favoring low taxes, and disdaining welfare.²¹³ Goldwater got the 10 dissenting votes at the 1960 convention.

Goldwater's name had actually been placed before the 1960 convention, but he withdrew from nomination in a stirring speech, which ended: "Let's grow up, conservatives. If we want to take this Party back, and I think we can someday, let's get to work." GOP historian Gould commented:

Goldwater did not say from whom the Republican Party should be reclaimed, but he meant Rockefeller and by extension Richard Nixon. For Goldwater the task was to make a conservative political party even more conservative.²¹⁴

Flush with the success of winning the last two presidential elections, Republicans looked forward to winning votes in southern states, an opportunity handed them in 1948 by northern Democrats who chose to act as a Party, supporting a principle, and not as a Team, seeking to maximize votes.

Democrats Surrender the South

In 1877, Republicans had closed the door to campaigning for southern votes when they compromised over the disputed 1876 election. Democrat Samuel Tilden led Republican Rutherford Hayes slightly in popular votes, but unresolved differences in the electoral vote count produced no president by March, 1877. To settle the dispute, Hayes "made it clear that he would not continue to support Republican regimes in the South with military power."²¹⁵ Hayes became president and Gould's history of the GOP said:

Although the outcome in 1877 did not signify complete Republican abandonment of black Americans, it did mark an important turning point in the nation's approach to race. Over the next quarter of a century, the South became less Republican and more segregated. Civil rights would not return to the region for seventy-five years.²¹⁶

Republicans continued to maintain an organizational presence in all southern states for the following seventy-five years by sending delegates from southern states to the national Republican convention. That perpetuated the helpful fiction that the Republican Party was a national party.

In the South, few blacks could vote after Reconstruction ended, but most were personally loyal to "the party of Lincoln." In the North, Black migrants to urban areas retained that loyalty, and Wilson's segregationist policies provided no reason to change. Northern Blacks were entitled to vote, however, and Republicans saw a chance to court them in the 1920 election. Gould noted the opportunity and the catch:

The dilemma was that the policies that spoke to one group alienated the other. If Republicans such as Harding promised to support measures in Congress to stamp out lynching, they risked the wrath of southern whites who would flow back toward their Democratic home.²¹⁷

As long as northern Democrats allowed southern Democrats to practice racial politics at home, Republicans had little chance to crack what was popularly called the “Solid South” through the 1950s. *The Rise of Southern Republicans* explains the phrase, “Solid South”:

It is easy to forget how thoroughly the Democratic party once dominated southern congressional elections. In 1950 there were no Republican senators from the South and only 2 Republican representatives out of 105 in the southern House delegation.²¹⁸

Then in 1948, the Democrats opened the door to the South that the Republican had closed in 1877.

Since the end of the Civil War, southern delegates to the National Democratic Convention managed to keep the words “civil rights” out of the Democratic Party platform. The draft platform submitted to the party’s 1948 convention was again silent. Hubert Humphrey, then the young mayor of Minneapolis, rejected advice against fighting on the convention floor for a civil rights plank. To general surprise, he won! The convention approved this simple statement, which amounted to a monumental shift in Democratic Party policy:

We again state our belief that racial and religious minorities must have the right to live, the right to work, the right to vote, the full and equal protection of the laws, on a basis of equality with all citizens as guaranteed by the Constitution.

As mild as that statement seems today, Humphrey biographer Arnold Offner reported that after the convention reconvened in the evening, “Handy Ellis, chair of the Alabama delegation announced, ‘We bid you goodbye,’ whereupon half of its delegation and all of Mississippi’s walked out of the convention, intent to form a new party.²¹⁹

A States’ Rights Party was indeed formed to contest the 1948 election. Naming South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond as its presidential candidate, the party won 39 electoral votes from four southern states: South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. All four states, however, swung back to the Democrats in 1952 and all but Louisiana voted Democratic for president in 1956. After President Eisenhower employed the Arkansas National Guard to support the integration in 1957, and signed the 1957 Voting Rights Act, he made it harder for white southerners to vote for Republicans.

An event during the 1960 election campaign between Republican Richard Nixon and Democrat John Kennedy changed the party preferences of Whites in the South and Blacks everywhere. In October, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was arrested in Georgia for participating in a sit-in and sentenced to four months’ hard labor. Both candidates learned of King’s arrest while campaigning. Nixon avoided taking a stand on his imprisonment; Kennedy did not. Theodore White’s *The Making of the President 1960* described John F. Kennedy’s role in releasing King from jail. Kennedy’s action won over Martin Luther King, Sr., “who had come out for Nixon a few weeks earlier on religious grounds.”²²⁰ Kennedy’s action arguably won enough Black votes to gain him victory in a razor-close election. Kennedy’s action helped Democrats with the Black electorate, while Nixon’s inaction helped Republicans with the southern white electorate.

Vice-president Lyndon Johnson, a Democrat and southerner, became president after John Kennedy’s assassination and vowed to complete his predecessor’s civil rights agenda. That included passing the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. President Johnson understood the far-reaching consequences of that legislation and reportedly said, “I think we have just delivered the

South to the Republican party for a long time to come."²²¹ Two weeks after the bill's passage, the Republican Party convened to nominate its 1964 presidential candidate.

Senator Barry Goldwater arrived at the 1964 Republican National Convention fresh from voting against the Civil Rights Bill. His conservative forces managed to "take back" the party in a bitterly divided convention. Goldwater won handily with 883 votes out of 1,308 (67 percent). The remaining third split among seven other less conservative candidates. Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton led with 214 votes, followed by Nelson Rockefeller with 114.²²²

The Ethnocentrism Era Begins

"The 1964 election constituted a Rubicon for the Republican Party; and its crossing marked off an era."²²³ So claimed Kevin Phillips in his 1969 book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, which focused on the South as "an important presidential base of the Republican Party."²²⁴ Dedicated to President Richard M. Nixon and Attorney General John N. Mitchell, Phillips' 480+ page book, with 143 charts and 47 maps, was not a fanciful puff-piece. Nevertheless, it was widely poo-hooed by academics and journalists at the time.

A review by Nelson Polsby, a highly respected political scientist, stated:

The apparent purpose of this weighty volume is to demonstrate that the "research directors, associate professors, social workers, educational consultants, urbanologists, development planners, journalists, brotherhood executives, foundation staffers, communications specialists, culture vendors, pornography merchants, poverty theorists, and so forth"—whom Phillips identifies as the main beneficiaries of the New Deal era—are numerically too few to elect a president in the near future.²²⁵

Warren Weaver, Jr., a political reporter for the *New York Times* referred to the book as a "tract" that was clumsily written, highly tendentious, full of questionable charts, and a few egregious mistakes."²²⁶ Weaver also said:

It is not a little depressing to read a serious 480-page book on politics based largely on the theory that deep divisive conflicts between black and white, Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Irishman, East and South are immutable, that such differences cannot be harmonized and that the politician should thus simply plan upon them to his own advantage.

What is depressing today is how relevant Kevin Phillips' analysis, a half century ago, is to contemporary politics.

By nominating a true conservative in 1964, Goldwater Republicans acted more like a true *Political Party* than just an *Electoral Team*. Rockefeller Republicans and Rockefeller himself believed that the party was embarking on a "program based on racism and sectionalism" that was "fantastically short-sighted."²²⁷ In contrast, Goldwater's supporters thought that they would win the election by turning out new voters. Republican and conservative reporter Stewart Alsop wrote that if Goldwater lost, "the notion that the Republican Party is the minority party because it is not conservative enough would be exposed as a myth." Alsop had his doubts about Goldwater's chances. He titled his August 1963 *Saturday Evening Post* article, "Can Goldwater Win in 64?" It noted that Goldwater's "candidacy is squarely based on the assumption that he could carry the South and, in so doing, defeat John F. Kennedy." Alsop summarized Goldwater's reasoning: "The industrial East is lost anyway, sure to

support Kennedy. So is the northern Negro vote, overwhelmingly Democratic. Therefore, in Goldwater's words, the Republicans should 'stop trying to outbid the Democrats for the Negro vote.'²²⁸

The Goldwater campaign did not invent what was called Republicans' "Southern Strategy." In some detail, political scientist Daniel Galvin fixed its origin in "Operation Dixie," started by Dwight Eisenhower soon after his 1952 election.²²⁹ Eisenhower's efforts, however, were aimed at starting and funding state party organizations, not at targeting and converting voters by racial appeals. Operation Dixie organizational efforts continued into 1964.

Northern "establishment" Republicans largely shunned Goldwater's 1964 campaign. America's newspaper publishers and editors, who typically endorsed Republican presidential candidates, backed Democrat Johnson over Republican Goldwater 42 to 35 percent.²³⁰ For his campaign manager, Goldwater chose the relatively inexperienced Denison Kitchel, a personal friend. Kitchel's aides, Dean Burch and Richard Kleindheist, were politically attuned but also Goldwater loyal.²³¹ Without consulting at length with his team, Goldwater chose as his runningmate, William Miller, Chairman of the Republican National Committee. Miller lived in New York, a state Goldwater could not hope to win by his choice, and Miller was obliged to resign from the RNC, underscoring the difference between the party organization and an electoral team.

Goldwater's "team of amateurs" did well only in mobilizing friendly southern voters. A member of the press pool reported on a rally in Montgomery, Alabama:

Some unsung Alabama Republican impresario had hit upon an idea of breathtaking simplicity: to show the country the "lily-white" character of Republicanism in Dixie by planting the bowl with a great field of white lilies—living lilies, in perfect bloom and gorgeously arrayed.

He also said:

These were not really political rallies—they were revels, they were pageants, they were celebrations. The aim of the revellers was not so much to advance a candidacy or a cause as to dramatize a mood, and the mood was a kind of joyful defiance, or defiant joy. By coming South, Barry Goldwater had made it possible for great numbers of unapologetic white supremacists to hold great carnivals of white supremacy.²³²

Historian Gould agreed that Republicans nominated Goldwater more for his principles than his electability. Gould summarized the situation:

In other years at other Republican conventions, unity had been the theme after the nominee was chosen. Conservatives had been made to swallow Wendell Willkie, Thomas E. Dewey twice, Dwight D. Eisenhower twice, and then Richard Nixon. Even when Eisenhower had led them to victory, winning seemed come at the price of principle.²³³

Now principle trumped winning. Two polls taken a month before the 1964 Republican Convention showed only 20 percent of respondents for Barry Goldwater and more than 70 percent for President Lyndon Johnson. Two July polls revealed slight gain for Goldwater, trailing only 30 percent to 60 percent.²³⁴ Little changed before the November election, which Johnson won, 61 to 39 percent. Although Goldwater lost in a landslide to Democrat Lyndon Johnson, the 1964 election marked the beginning of the Republican Party's Ethnocentrism era and the end of the Neoliberalism epoch that

began in 1928. The maps in Figures 14.2 and 14.3 show that Republicans dominated everywhere but the South in the 1928 elections; in 1964, they won only in the South.

FIGURE 14.2: 1928 Republican Votes

Hoover won 58% of popular vote, 84% of electoral vote

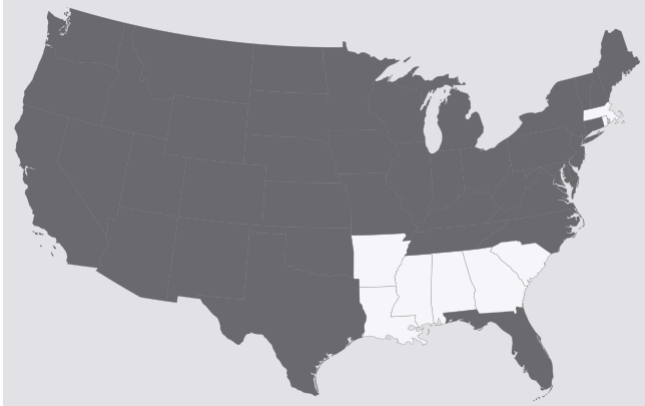
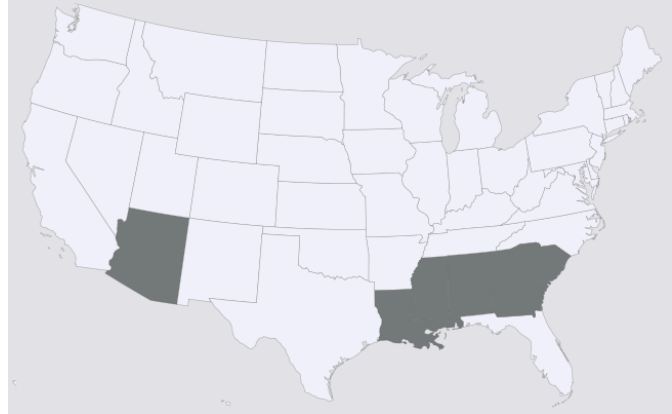


Figure 14.3: 1964 Republican Votes

Goldwater won 39% of popular vote, 10% of electoral vote



The 1964 election marked the end of the Republicans' Neoliberalism epoch and the start of its Ethnocentrism era not because the electorate reversed its voting patterns but because the party reversed its principles. The 1960 Republican Party platform contained 14 paragraphs on "civil rights," including a pledge *to guarantee the right to vote to all citizens in all areas of the country*. The party's 1964 platform, drafted before Goldwater won the nomination, devoted only five lines to the defense of civil rights. The party's 1968 platform did not even mention civil rights. In 1964, the Republican Party contradicted its founding principle—political equality among the races. Thus, the Republican Party entered its Ethnocentrism era.

Republicans' Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism in sociology means believing that one's own cultural norms, values, ideology, customs, and traditions are superior to those of other cultures. Sociologists grant that most people are ethnocentric to varying degrees, depending on their life experiences. From colonial times to the 1960s, Americans were overwhelming White and Christian, and government ethnocentrically favored their race and religion. Today, white Christians constitute a minority of the population, but many in that minority still want government to continue favoring their racial prejudices and religious precepts.

Ethnocentrism in the context of Republican politics means appealing to the norms, values, ideology, customs, and traditions of white Christians, rather than seeking votes from the general public. Of course, each political party caters to certain groups of voters. The legendary "Roosevelt coalition" drew votes from blue-collar workers, Catholics, Jews, urban dwellers, southerners, and northern Blacks. Assembled in the 1930s, this coalition still worked for Democrats up to the 1960s. Alexrod contrasted Roosevelt's "coalition of the poor" with the Republicans' coalition of the "nonpoor": "Whites, nonunion families, Protestants, Northerners, and those outside the central cities."²³⁵

In 1968, prospective candidate Richard Nixon reoriented Republicans' southern strategy toward partisan realignment, hoping to build a "New Majority" for the party. Nixon was not a racist in the mold of Strom Thurmond and other prominent southern politicians. Thirsting for the Republican nomination and the presidency, however, Nixon was open to a racial electoral strategy. By promising to nominate

strict constructionist justices to the Supreme Court and by offering other assurances, Nixon got Thurmond's support for the nomination, and the services of Harry Dent, Thurmond's aide, in crafting a strategy to carry southern states in the election and to win votes from northern Whites who had been inclined to vote Democratic.²³⁶

For Nixon, the new strategy was not to re-impose white supremacy and not just to win the South. It was to develop a way to win the presidency by catering to population movements in the electorate from the Northeast to the South and West. Kevin Phillips, who worked on Nixon's 1968 campaign, dispassionately explained the strategy in his 1969 book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*:

The Republican future is also greatly aided by demographic trends not only internally shaping the Northeast but diminishing the region's national influence. Chart 142 [one of 143 charts] shows how the voting power of the big Northeastern cities diminishes as population shifts to suburbia, local and distant.²³⁷

Phillips granted that "that the new populist coalition includes very few Negroes,"²³⁸ but he said that appealing to white voters fit with hallowed political traditions:

Ethnic polarization is a longstanding hallmark of American politics, not an unprecedented and menacing development of 1968. As illustrated throughout this book, ethnic and cultural division has so often shaped American politics that, given the immense midcentury impact of Negro enfranchisement and integration, reaction to this change almost inevitably had to result in political realignment.²³⁹

Phillips wrote on his last page of text: "Now it is Richard Nixon's turn to build a new era on the immense middle-class impetus of Sun Belt and suburbia."²⁴⁰

As president, Richard Nixon did not fulfill conservatives' dreams. He imposed regulations on environmental pollution, offending economic libertarians. He recognized "Red China," offending anti-communists and isolationists. Moreover, he failed to connect with Protestant and Catholic religious groups and advance their traditionalist agendas. He even signed the law (Title IX) banning gender discrimination in education. Nixon campaigned for the white vote, not the religious vote.

During Nixon's campaign and his presidency, 80 percent of the electorate was white and Christian, divided 55 percent Protestant and 25 percent Catholic. So campaigning for the white vote implied campaigning for the Christian vote, except that religion then was not tied closely to public policy. In 1973, the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion changed the politics, but not immediately. The 1976 Republican platform had said, *The question of abortion is one of the most difficult and controversial of our time*, and avoided taking a position either way. The same platform reaffirmed the party's

support for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Our Party was the first national party to endorse the E.R.A. in 1940. We continue to believe its ratification is essential to insure equal rights for all Americans.

Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign was chaired by Paul Laxalt, structured by political consultant and pollster Richard Wirthlin and advised by Stuart Spencer. Reagan's election consolidated the link between Republican conservatives and the religious right. In *The God Strategy*, Domke and Coe wrote "a new religious politics was born" on July 17, 1980. At the end of Ronald Reagan's speech accepting the Republican presidential nomination, he paused and seemed to depart from his prepared

remarks. He spoke about a Divine Providence and then cautiously asked thousands of enraptured but subdued convention delegates, “Can we begin our crusade joined together in a moment of silent prayer?” Heads bowed, the auditorium hushed, and Reagan concluded, “God bless America.”²⁴¹

Some observers suspected that Reagan’s performance “was deliberately and carefully crafted in cooperation with his campaign team.”²⁴² For a presidential candidate to say “God bless America” was certainly novel then. A study of 229 major presidential speeches from Roosevelt in 1933 to Carter in 1981 found only one previous usage of the phrase by a president: Richard Nixon ended with it in 1973, trying to control damage from the Watergate scandal. Then from Reagan’s 1981 inauguration to 2008, 49 of 129 presidential speeches concluded with “God bless America.”²⁴³

Reagan also advocated policies dear to the evangelical movement, such as tax-exempt status of private schools.²⁴⁴ His 1980 Republican platform was modified to address concerns of evangelical Protestants and Catholics across the country who opposed abortion and the E.R.A., which threatened women’s fulfilling their traditional roles in society.²⁴⁵ Although white Protestants and Catholics had already declined to about 70 percent of the electorate, they constituted an important constituency. The 1980 Republican platform now endorsed *a constitutional amendment to restore protection of the right to life for unborn children*. It also backed away from supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, simply noting, *Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is now in the hands of state legislatures*, without recommending ratification. In contrast, the Democrats in 1980 strongly favored a woman’s “right to choose” and the E.R.A. Evangelical preachers, such as Jerry Falwell, Jimmy Swaggart, and Pat Robertson, praised the divorced and remarried Hollywood actor.²⁴⁶

Like Goldwater and Nixon before him, Ronald Reagan appealed to white voters without using racial rhetoric. He, like Goldwater and Nixon, talked in a code that Whites understood. Reagan favored “law and order”; he criticized “welfare queens.” When he told a crowd in Neshoba County, Mississippi, “I believe in states’ rights,” they understood he was on their side.²⁴⁷ When he said in his 1981 inaugural address, “Government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem,” everyone understood that the Republican Party was no longer the party of Lincoln. A history of Ronald Reagan and the New Right in 1977-1984 held, “What Franklin Roosevelt had been to liberalism in the 1930s, Reagan was to conservatism in the 1980s. The Republican Party became the vehicle for the growing conservative movement.”²⁴⁸

Summary

Party organizations do not monopolize the ability to change party principles. Presidential electoral teams, even losing teams, can also change the party’s direction. The Republican Party’s Neoliberalism epoch ended in 1960 and its Ethnocentrism era began with the 1964 presidential election. By nominating Barry Goldwater as its presidential candidate, the party embraced Goldwater’s libertarian, anti-government stance and his ethnocentric campaign strategy to appeal for votes from white southerners. That meant turning against descendants of former slaves that the party freed a century earlier and, by extension, appealing to racial prejudices of many white northerners. Losing election by a landslide, Goldwater himself could not carry through on the party’s new course.

Richard Nixon stuck to Goldwater’s southern strategy in 1968 and—due to the tragedy of the Vietnam War and upheavals in the Democratic Party—succeeded in winning the election and cementing the party’s ethnocentrism. Nixon, however, did not share Goldwater’s libertarian views, and Nixon

backed government regulations opposed by party conservatives. Nixon's personal flaws led to his resignation from the presidency, which freed the party to return to its anti-government direction.

Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 and his landslide victory in 1984 allowed the party to proceed on the course set by Goldwater in 1964. The new Republican president viewed government as a problem, not as a solution, and appealed openly to Christians and covertly to Whites. The pre-eminent scholar of the Republican Party wrote:

The GOP by the 1980s had detached itself from most of its history. There were occasional references at party gatherings to Abraham Lincoln, a quotation or two from Dwight D. Eisenhower, and respectful comments about Gerald Ford. Theodore Roosevelt had vanished from the Republican record, as had the executives of the 1920s and Richard Nixon. The ideological turmoil that had marked the 1940s with Wendell Willkie and Thomas E. Dewey had not left even faint traces. Moderate Republicans had disappeared as if they had never been a force in party affairs; for the moment, conservatism among Republicans dominated all that came before it.²⁴⁹

Goldwater and Reagan epitomized the Republicans' Ethnocentric era, which cultivated the existence of Social Tribes—both Republican and Democratic—described in the next chapter. In 2016, the Republican *Party*—the organization concerned with *principles*—concluded that demographic changes were working against its Ethnocentrism era and laid out plans as an electoral team to increase the size of its tent. Enter presidential aspirant Donald Trump, who had other ideas. That story is told in Chapter 16.

CHAPTER 15

The Social Tribe

Whereas parties' electoral teams come and go, their social bases endure. Losing electoral teams soon plan to win the "next game," but loyal party voters suffer at length after each defeat. Those sharing a social trait may—like a tribe—bond over their partisanship, commiserating after electoral defeats and celebrating after victories. More than two decades ago, scholars found partisans in both political parties exhibiting such tribal behavior.²⁵⁰ In academic terms, partisan voters were reflecting their "social identity," which refers to "*an individual's self-image* that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself [or herself] as belonging."²⁵¹ As applied to politics, social identity theory suggests that some people identify with political parties less for the policies they advocate than for their social attraction.²⁵² Several studies have equated such partisan acts with tribal behavior.²⁵³ The key feature of which is "loyalty to their group."²⁵⁴ Voting for the tribe regardless of policies or issues is not confined to Republicans. Democrats exhibit social identity too. Tribal behavior reinforces voting choice.

Before proceeding further, we must separate social identity theory from the popular and emotionally charged term, "identity politics." Bernstein says:

The term identity politics is widely used throughout the social sciences and the humanities to describe phenomena as diverse as multiculturalism, the women's movement, civil rights, lesbian and gay movements, separatist movements in Canada and Spain, and violent ethnic and nationalist conflict in postcolonial Africa and Asia, as well as in the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe.²⁵⁵

Whereas "identity politics" is commonly associated with political demands to grant rights to disadvantaged people,²⁵⁶ "social identity" refers to an individual's emotional attachment to a social world, "a sense of shared identity with a particular group."²⁵⁷ Huddy, Mason, and Aaroe state:

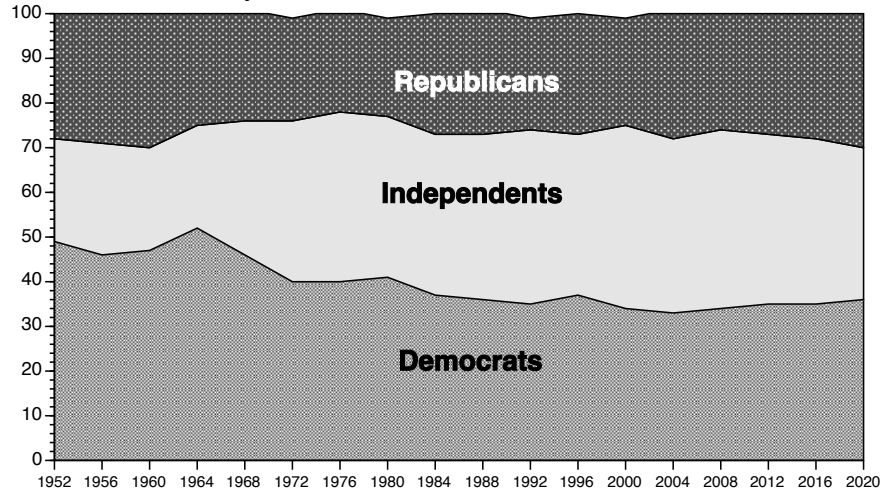
A social identity involves a subjective sense of belonging to a group that is internalized to varying degrees, resulting in individual differences in identity strength, a desire to positively distinguish the group from others, and the development of ingroup bias. Moreover, once identified with a group or, in this instance, a political party, members are motivated to protect and advance the party's status and electoral dominance as a way to maintain their party's positive distinctiveness.²⁵⁸

Identifying with a political party provide some voters with a sense of belonging. They imagine membership in a prestigious social tribe, not just a political party.

Social Identity and Political Partisans

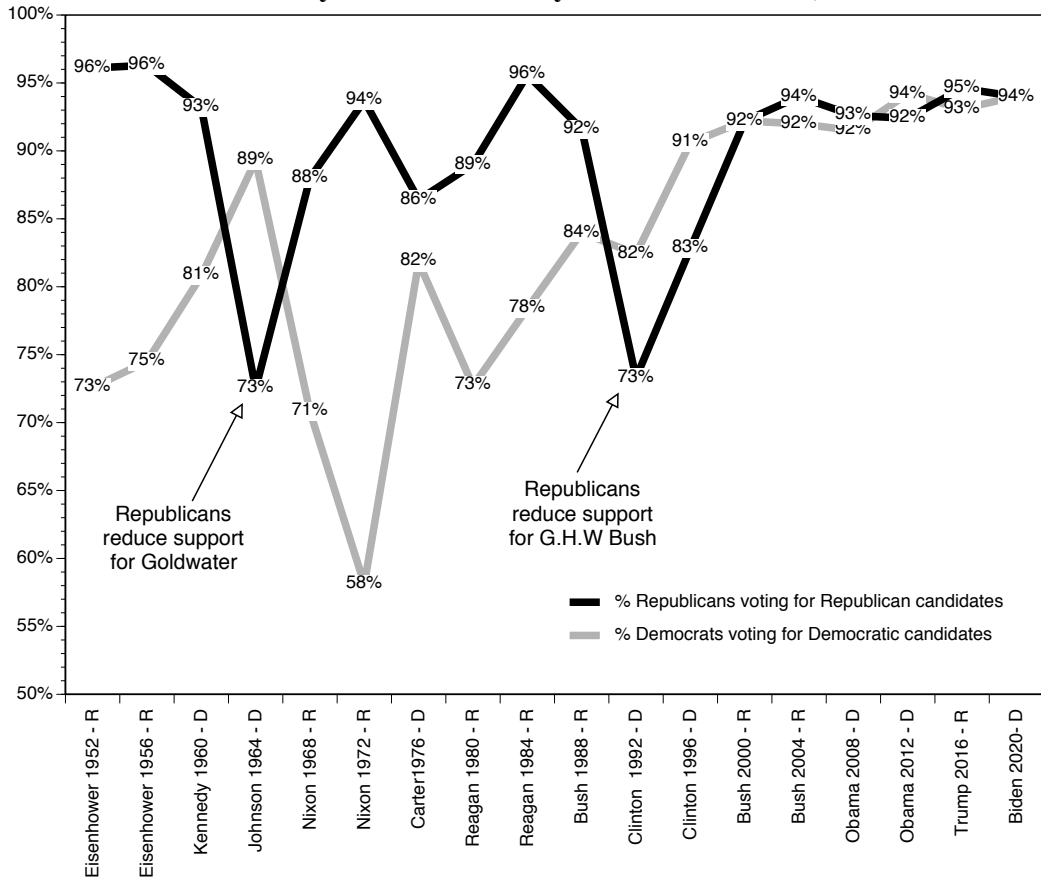
In every presidential election from 1952 to 2020, the American National Election Studies (ANES) asked a national sample of voters, "*Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?*"²⁵⁹ Their answers reflected their self-images. Figure 15.1 displays how American voters described themselves from the 1952 presidential election to 2020. Those who thought of themselves as Republicans fluctuated around 25 percent over the years, while Democratic identifications declined from almost 50 percent to under 40 percent. Independents (those lacking a partisan identity) grew from about 20 to 35 percent of the electorate.

FIGURE 15.1: Party Identification of American Voters, 1952-2020²⁶⁰



The researchers who devised the measure of partisan identification distinguished between party identity (a psychological state) and voting choice (a physical behavior).²⁶¹ People could think of themselves as belonging to one party while defecting to vote for another party because of its candidates or policies. For half a century that theoretical distinction held in practice, but beginning in 2000 and for six consecutive elections as portrayed in Figure 15.2, over 90 percent of all Republican identifiers voted for Republican presidential candidates, while over 90 percent of all Democratic identifiers voted for Democratic presidential candidates.

FIGURE 15.2: Party Identification by Presidential Vote, 1952-2020²⁶²

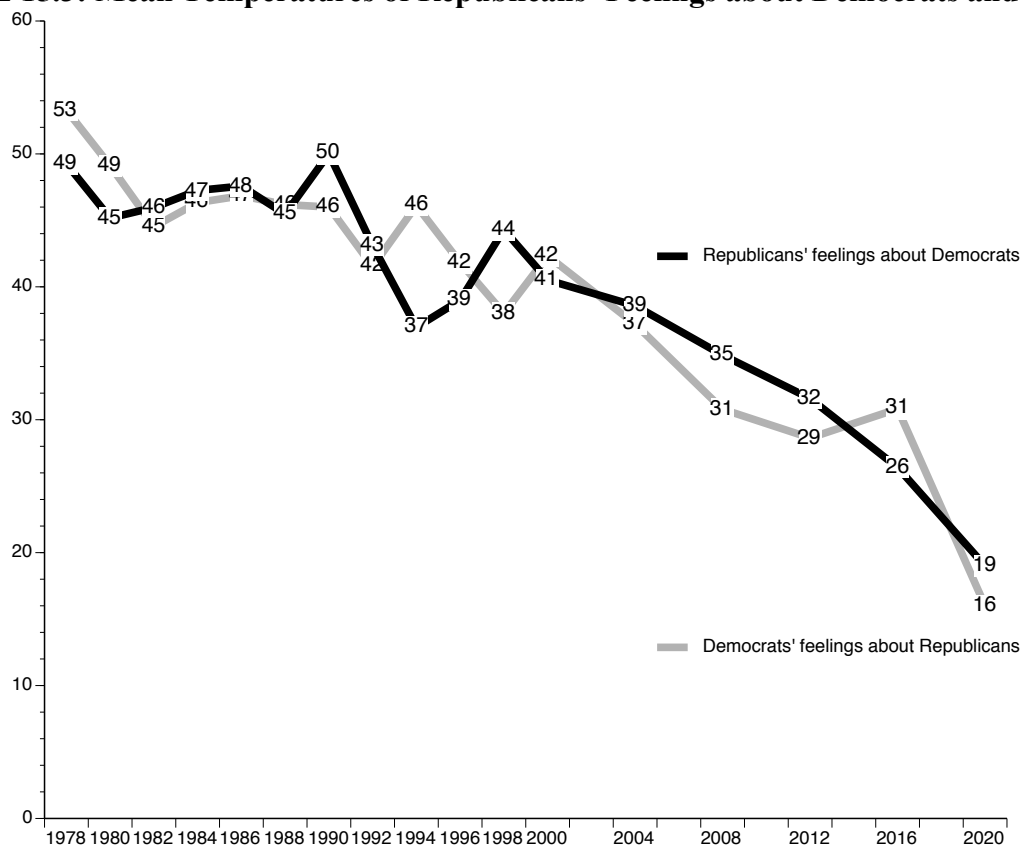


The extraordinary change in voting behavior demonstrated in Figure 15.2 suggests that voters' social identity and party loyalty dictated their candidate choices. Since 2000, voters in both parties have consistently behaved as members of a tribe, uncritically loyal to its leaders, rather than as discerning citizens in a common nation.

Consider Republicans' vote in the 2020 presidential election. In 2019, President Donald Trump was impeached by the House of Representatives, controlled by Democrats, for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Although Senator Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee, voted for Trump's conviction, the Republican-controlled Senate voted against conviction. The nation's major dailies (usually Republican) endorsed Trump's Democratic opponent by a ratio of 47 to 7,²⁶³ and a long list of former Republican office-holders came out against Trump's re-election.²⁶⁴ Still, more than 90 percent of Republicans voted in 2020 for a discredited president seeking re-election.

Since 2000, both Democratic and Republican partisans have voted "their" candidates over 90 percent of the time. Moreover, Republican and Democratic partisans now share similar negative opinions of those in the other party. Since the 1978 congressional election, the ANES survey began asking about respondents "feelings" toward members of other groups using a "feeling thermometer." Given a card with the image of a thermometer, respondents were asked how "cold" or "warm" they felt toward those groups according to degrees on the thermometer. For example, picking 100 degrees meant "very warm," 50 meant "no feeling at all," and 0 meant "very cold."²⁶⁵ Figure 15.3 reports the mean temperatures of Republicans toward Democrats, and vice versa, in surveys to 2020.²⁶⁶

FIGURE 15.3: Mean Temperatures of Republicans' Feelings about Democrats and Vice Versa



In the late 1970s, Republicans and Democrats both rated the opposite party at about 50 degrees, harboring neither negative nor positive feelings. Both partisans' feelings towards opponents' parties fluctuated on a downward slope to 2000 and then plummeted pretty steadily thereafter. Now both parties' followers, on average, feel "quite cold" to the opposition. In 2019, the Pew Research Center reported results from a panel survey of over 10,000 persons interviewed from 2014 to 2018.²⁶⁷ Its report began:

Three years ago, Pew Research Center found that the 2016 presidential campaign was "unfolding against a backdrop of intense partisan division and animosity." Today, the level of division and animosity – including negative sentiments among partisans toward the members of the opposing party – has only deepened.

Page after page listed how negatively the two social tribes viewed each other. Here are some examples:

- 55% of Republicans say Democrats are "more immoral" when compared with other Americans; 47% of Democrats say the same about Republicans.
- Republicans are more likely than Democrats to ascribe negative characteristics to people in the opposing party, with one exception: 75% of Democrats say Republicans are "more closed-minded" than other Americans, while 64% of Republicans say the same about Democrats.
- Republicans are substantially more likely to characterize Democrats as more unpatriotic than other Americans than Democrats are to say this of Republicans: 63% of Republicans view Democrats as more unpatriotic.

Other studies show that both parties' partisans dislike and distrust other party elites even more than other party voters.²⁶⁸ Moreover, all Americans have stereotypic misconceptions of the two parties' composition. Based on a national 2015 survey, Ahler and Sood wrote: "Americans believe that 32% of Democrats are gay, lesbian, or bisexual (only 6.3% are in reality), and that 38% of Republicans earn over \$250,000 per year (just 2.2% do in reality).²⁶⁹ So voters may become Republicans because they dislike LGBT people or may become Democrats because they abhor rich capitalists.

Republicans and Democrats form different opinions about the world because they draw their political news from very different sources. A 2020 Pew survey found Democrats naming more sources of national news than Republicans: "About nine-in-ten of those whose main source is Fox News (93%) identify as Republican, very close to the 95% of those who name MSNBC and identify as Democrats."²⁷⁰ However, a majority of Democrats named six other sources—ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, NPR, and the *New York Times*. None of these was named by a majority of Republicans. The two sets of partisans also watch different entertainment programs. In 2019 a marketing research firm stated: "*Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, with its diverse cast, is the top Democratic comedy, and *Last Man Standing*, starring a father with conservative views taking jabs at liberals, is the top comedy for Republicans."²⁷¹

The Rise of Tribal Politics

In the past, American citizens proudly associated themselves with one or the other of the nation's major parties. Republicans boasted of their "Grand Old Party," and Democrats praised Franklin Delano Roosevelt for leading the country out of the Great Depression. Given that Republicans were often employers and Democrats their employees, Republican pride was biased toward wealth. Republicans bonded in boardrooms and golf courses. Excepting on some university faculties, upper class Democrats enjoyed few opportunities to bond over their common party identification.

What happened around 2000 that caused some Republican and Democratic partisans to behave like social tribes and make “we-them” distinctions of the opposition? People smarter than I am have tried to account for the rise in tribal politics. Briefly, they cite five major factors:

1. *Decades of migration within the U.S. “sorted” people into homogeneous communities:*

In his 2008 book, *The Big Sort*, Bill Bishop found that over time, prosperous and economically secure Americans who moved “reordered their lives around their values, their tastes, and their beliefs, . . . clustering in communities of like-mindedness, and not just geographically.”²⁷² Churches, voluntary associations and political parties all became more homogeneous.

2. *Decline in civic associations that promoted sense of community:*

In his 2000 book, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam documents the decline of social clubs and fraternal organizations that had cross-cut social divisions, bolstered democratic institutions, and fostered feelings of community.²⁷³ Two decades later, in *The Upswing*, he returned to the topic and summarized the situation: “Organizational records suggest that for the first two thirds of the twentieth century Americans' involvement in civic associations of all sorts rose steadily, stalled only temporarily by the Great Depression.”²⁷⁴ Citizens today have fewer civic connections.

3. *The growth of cable television has increased viewers' choices: which news, or no news?*

Before 1980, only three television networks—ABC, CBS, and NBC—broadcast political news across America. Network gatekeepers then tended to choose the same events to report, and all three networks interrupted regularly programmed entertainment to cover major Presidential addresses. All viewers, regardless of religion, race, region, or party were exposed to essentially the same information. By 2000, more than half of all households had cable television, which offered different sources of political news. Some cable channels selected and reported stories slanted to viewers' biases. Cable also offered the chance to avoid such news entirely and watch entertainment. As Samuel Kernell and Laurie Rice found, audiences for presidential addresses not only shrank but became more homogeneous as presidents were “preaching to a choir” of their partisans.²⁷⁵

4. *Ending the “Fairness Doctrine” in broadcasting brought talk radio and then Fox News:*

In 1949, The Federal Communications Commission required television and radio broadcasts to adhere to its “Fairness Doctrine.” Broadcasters had to discuss controversial topics honestly and equitably, and had to provide contrasting views in a balanced way. That rule ended in 1987 under the Reagan administration. “Almost overnight, the media landscape was transformed,” wrote newspaper reporters Kevin Kruse and Julian Zelizer.²⁷⁶ By 1995, the number of all-talk radio stations grew from two in 1960 to 1,130 in 1995, and “conservatives accounted for roughly 70 percent of all talk-radio listeners.”²⁷⁷ Fox News was launched in 1996 in response to a perceived market for conservative views. MSNBC was also founded in 1996 but did not become an outlet for liberal views until late in the 2000s. Politics of social identity and consequent political polarization, said Kruse and Zelizer, “can be traced, in large part, to the end of the Fairness Doctrine.”

5. *The rise of social media facilitates in-group political conformity*

In the early 1980s, academics routinely communicated over the Internet. During the 1990s, large segments of the public were e-mailing relatives and friends about social and political life. By the 2000s, dedicated interactive technologies—called social media—facilitated social and political communications among millions of people with similar backgrounds or interests. Facebook (founded in 2004) and Twitter (2006) and other Internet applications allowed like-minded strangers to commiserate over politics. Research determined that interacting over social media often “results in competing worldviews while providing little opportunity for finding common ground.”²⁷⁸

Given that (1) people will not move back to places they left, (2) civic associations are unlikely to flourish again, (3) cable television will not disappear, (4) the Fairness Doctrine will not be re-instated, and (5) social media are here to stay—the causes of tribal behavior seem destined to continue. Those factors affect both parties. The lead article in a psychology journal held that liberal biases of social scientists caused them to “find” more tribal behavior among Republicans than among Democrats,²⁷⁹ and another article in the same journal agreed that Democrats were tribal too. However, after reviewing numerous studies, the second article found:

a broader definition of the tribe among liberals than conservatives, as well as less importance ascribed to group-based moral principles, more favorable attitudes toward cooperation and compromise, and less unfavorable evaluations of their ideological opponents.²⁸⁰

Nevertheless, both Republican and Democratic partisans exhibit tribal behavior and will for the foreseeable future.

Tribal Solidarity

Prior to this sociological interpretation of party identification, scholars explained voters’ preferences in terms of politics. In 1957, Anthony Downs’ highly influential book, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, advanced the “axiom” that “each citizen casts his vote for the party he believes will provide him more benefits than any other.”²⁸¹ The supposed benefits came in the form of economic policies (tax rates, subsidies, regulation, welfare), social policies (education, race relations, immigration) or foreign policies (anticommunism, free trade).²⁸² The rational course of action for voters was to identify with the party that served their policy interests.

In historical and cross-national perspective, this rational-choice model of party identification in America clashed with European party models. In their heyday, European “mass” parties had formal members drawn from sectors of society and appealed to their voters’ sense of social and political solidarity.²⁸³ In a sense, the electorate was separated into socio-political “silos” or “pillars,” in a process called “pillarization”: “the cultural, political, and cultural organization of society into separate strata” in the party system.²⁸⁴ In contrast, American parties then were described in the contemporary, postwar literature as socially rootless.

In a series of publications in the 1950s and 1960s, Otto Kirchheimer characterized American parties as “catch-all” parties that sought to bridge the “socio-economic and cultural cleavages among the electorate in order to attract a broader ‘audience’.”²⁸⁵ Theoretically, both parties in a two-party system should propose policies that appeal to voters in the middle—the so-called “median voter”—and thus both parties will inevitably converge in their offerings. Like twins “Tweedledee” and “Tweedledum” in

Alice in Wonderland, they would be practically indistinguishable. In fact, Alabama's Governor George Wallace called them that in 1968, declaring that there wasn't "a dime's worth of difference" between the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates that year.

If American parties followed the "catch-all" model in the 1950s and 1960s, they have not for the last few decades sought to become a "big tent" for all sorts of voters. Analysts today speak instead of political polarization, of Democrats and especially Republicans being "sorted" into socially distinct groups. Mason writes:

In particular, the Republican Party is now largely made up of White, Christian, self-identified conservatives, while the Democratic Party is generally characterized by non-White, non-Christian, self-identified liberals. . . .

In Democratic congressional districts, citizens were more likely to buy food at stores like Whole Foods, Dunkin Donuts, and Trader Joe's. In Republican congressional districts, hungry shoppers headed to Arby's, Cracker Barrel, and Kroger. Clothing shoppers went to American Apparel and L.L. Bean in Democratic districts and to Dillard's and Old Navy in Republican districts.²⁸⁶

Republican and Democratic partisans today operate in social silos that resemble the party pillarization that occurred in Europe, except that our parties are not connected to ancillary organizations, partly because voluntary associations have declined in America since the 1960s. Today, Republicans link together by their social identity, and so do Democrats. Without organizing for the purpose, Republican partisans act in lock step with other Republicans, as Democrats act in lock step with other Democrats. Consider that over a series of Gallup polls in 2020, 91 percent of Republicans—separately interviewed—approved of President Trump's job performance versus only 6 percent of Democrats.²⁸⁷ Before 2000, identifiers of the sitting president's party averaged approval rates ranging from as low as 20 percent to a maximum of 70 percent.²⁸⁸ That nearly all Republicans approved of Trump's performance while nearly all Democrats disapproved indicates that both behaved like loyal tribal members, not rational voters.

Existential Issues

In international politics, an "existential threat" is defined as something "likely to cause damage to such a degree that it terminates one's existence."²⁸⁹ For example, in 2015 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff testified that "Russia posed the greatest existential threat to the United States."²⁹⁰ That perception dominated the Joint Chiefs' thinking about military policy. In domestic politics, certain social groups may perceive that other groups pose an existential threat, perhaps not to their survival, but to life as they know it. To southern Whites in 1860, Abraham Lincoln's election threatened the continuation of slavery, and life as they knew it depended on slavery. To them, the threat to slavery overruled all other considerations, caused southern states to secede from the Union and led to the Civil War.

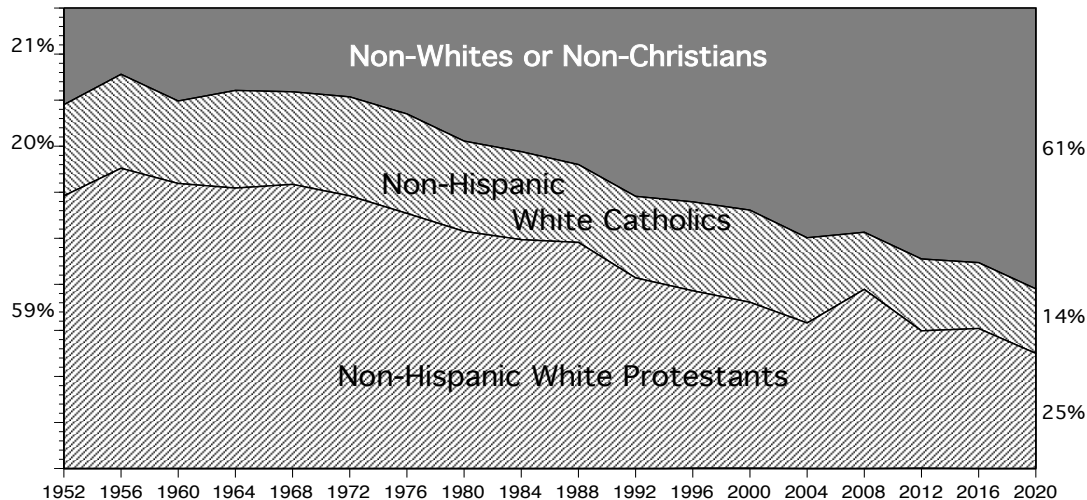
Today, white Christians (Protestants and Catholics) perceive an existential threat from the inexorable growth of non-Whites and non-Christians in the electorate. Numbers alone show that white Christians are a minority in a country that many remember as predominantly white and Christian. According to the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI):

The last year that WASPs (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants) comprised a majority was 1993. In 2018: if you combined all white, non-Hispanic Christians—Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and other

nondenominational groups—they comprised only 42 percent of the country, down from 54 percent just a decade ago in 2008.²⁹¹

Figure 15.4 plots the dramatic decrease in the proportion of white Christians and the concomitant increase in respondents who are non-white or non-Christians, including atheists, agnostics, and those saying they are “nothing in particular.”²⁹² National surveys only estimate religious composition. The 39 percent white Christians in Figure 15.4 is close to the PRRI estimate above of 42 percent.

FIGURE 15.4: Decline in White Christians in American Electorate, 1952-2020*



*American National Election Studies, 1952-2016. and Democracy Fund Voter Study Group Data Release No.1, Published January, 2020

In August, 2021, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the nation’s total white population in 2020 had *shrunk* for the first time in history. From 2010 to 2020, the non-Hispanic white population declined 2.6 percent, reducing the Whites’ share of the total U.S. population to 57 percent.²⁹³ This news conformed the fears of many Republican voters. A 2021 national survey found slightly over 60 percent of Americans (both Republicans and Democrats) thought the declining proportion of Whites was neither good nor bad. While 24 percent of all Democrats saw the news negatively, 38 percent of conservative Republicans viewed it as bad.²⁹⁴ Non-Whites already dominated competitive sports, were ascendant in entertainment, and had wrested political offices from Whites at the local, state, and national levels. Electing a black man President of the United States in 2008, re-electing him in 2012, and electing a mixed-race woman Vice-President in 2020 was particularly galling to some Whites. Ashley Jardina in *White Identity Politics* quoted comments by radio talk host Rush Limbaugh the day after the 2012 election:

I went to bed last night thinking we're outnumbered. I went to bed last night thinking all this discussion we'd had about this election being the election that will tell us whether or not we've lost the country. I went to bed last night thinking we've lost the country. I don't know how else you look at this.²⁹⁵

Jardina’s book carefully distinguished between racism and the white in-group desire “to protect their group's collective interests and to maintain its status.”²⁹⁶ Moreover, when asked in a 2016 national survey, “How important is being white to your identity?” about 30 percent replied, “Not important at all.”²⁹⁷ Still, about half of white respondents said that it was “Important” to “Very important.” When former Southern Baptist preacher Robert Jones administered his 15-question racism Index in a 2018

national survey, he found that white Christians “overall are more likely than white religiously unaffiliated Americans to register higher scores on the Racism Index, and the differences between white Christian subgroups (white evangelical Protestants, white mainline Protestants, and white Catholics) are largely differences of degree rather than kind.”²⁹⁸

Racism is one cultural trait that, surveys show, distinguishes many white Christians from white non-Christians. Sexism also characterizes the substantial subset of white Christians who believe that the “Government of Man” is inferior to the “Kingdom of God.”²⁹⁹ The evangelical theology of “complementarism” asserts that, while men and women were “equal before God,” God assigned the genders different roles. Men were to lead women.³⁰⁰ Many evangelicals fume at social changes that infringe on men’s traditional role as head of household, that allow women to have abortions, and that permit same-sex marriage. To them, Democrats back government policies that violate God’s laws.

Instead of accommodating the nation’s demographic and cultural changes, Republican leaders saw political advantage in opposing them. The same political party whose planks once urged political equality for former slaves, civil rights for Blacks, and equal rights for women, now backed “states’ rights” to prevent further advances by women and racial minorities. When Ronald Reagan, in accepting the 1980 Republican nomination, welcomed people into a “national crusade to Make America Great Again,” many white Christians got the message. Donald Trump certainly grasped the hidden meaning of the phrase when he filed paperwork in 2012 to copyright “Make America Great Again,” years before using it in his presidential campaign.³⁰¹ White Christians understood Reagan in 1980 and Trump in 2016: MAGA meant returning to the time when white Christians dominated America’s culture and politics.³⁰² Robert Jones at the Public Religion Research Institute wrote:

By activating the white supremacy sequence within white Christian DNA, which was primed for receptivity by the perceived external threat of racial and cultural change in the country, Trump was able to convert white evangelicals in the course of a single political campaign from so-called values voters to “nostalgia voters.” Trump’s powerful appeal to white evangelicals was not that he spoke to the culture wars around abortion or same-sex marriage, or his populist appeals to economic anxieties, but rather that he evoked powerful fears about the loss of white Christian dominance amid a rapidly changing environment.³⁰³

Goldwater in 1964, Reagan in 1980, and Trump in 2016 chose to parlay the demographic and cultural changes into an existential issue for white Christians. By promising to restore life as it had been, Republicans would draw votes from white Christians hoping to protect their way of life. In her article, “Casting the Other as an Existential Threat,” May Darwich said, “By portraying a sectarian Other as the source of an existential threat to a particular society, elites move the issue from normal politics to the ‘exceptional’.”³⁰⁴ Tribal solidarity becomes paramount; vote only for your own.

As in 1860, party politics became structured around an existential issue. Once again the issue involved white southerners, but they found refuge in the Republican Party a century later. The ironies mount. After the Civil War, Republicans sometimes campaigned by “waving the bloody shirt”—a reference to Union soldiers who died in battle. According to Republican historian Gould, the bloody shirt “became a coded slogan for Republican emphasis on the passions of the war over more reasoned and presumably important issues.”³⁰⁵ During the party’s Ethnocentrism era, the slogan, “Make America Great Again,” reminded white Christians of what they thought they lost to Non-Whites and non-Christians, focusing their attention on voting for Republicans and against Democrats.

Existential threats to social tribes provide a sociological explanation of changes in the Republican Party since the 1960s. Donald Trump's recent role in accelerating party change has invited psychological explanations. John Dean, former White House Counsel for President Nixon, and Bob Altemeyer, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Manitoba, wrote about the psychological connection between the Republican social tribe and Donald Trump in their book, *Authoritarian Nightmare*.³⁰⁶

Analyzing responses to questions concerning social dominance and authoritarianism for a national survey in 2019. Dean and Altemeyer found that most of Trump's supporters "have one of the two authoritarian personalities that have been scientifically established, plus a unique group that combines these two. They are:"

Social Dominators. People who believe in inequality between groups. Predictably, they usually believe their groups should be more prestigious and powerful than others. . . .

Authoritarian Followers. These people are submissive, fearful, and longing for a mighty leader who will protect them from life's threats. . . .

"*Double Highs.*" Some people score highly in both being a Social Dominator and being an Authoritarian Follower. . . .³⁰⁷

Of 990 respondents divided into those who approved and disapproved of Trump, those who approved rated substantially higher on authoritarian and social dominance scales.³⁰⁸ These findings also relate to the personality cult surrounding Donald Trump.

Summary

The Republican Party entered its Ethnocentrism era in 1964 and engaged in normal politics with Democratic opponents throughout the rest of the 20th century. A set of factors—internal migration, civic disorganization, changes in technology and communications policies—caused many voters to morph their identification with a political party into a social identity. Being a Republican (or a Democrat) no longer meant favoring different sets of government policies but being included in a desirable social club, a tribe with clear "we" versus "them" distinctions, a tribe that demanded strict loyalty in opinions and, above all, in voting. Party politics in the 21st century were very different from party politics in the 20th century.

Donald Trump did not start the Republican Party's Ethnocentrism era, but he exploited it. When Trump announced on June 16, 2015 that he was seeking the Republican presidential nomination, he appealed openly and plainly to his targeted electorate:

It is way past time to build a massive wall to secure our southern border . . .

When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. [gesturing to audience] They are not sending you. [pointing to audience]

They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists, and some, I assume are good people. . . . It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably, probably from the Middle East We don't know what's happening. And it's got to stop, and it's got to stop fast.³⁰⁹

After his election, politics became further complicated in the second decade of the 21st century by the rise of a personality cult around the former president of the United States.

CHAPTER 16

The Personality Cult

Whereas group intelligence and ignorance steer a social tribe, the intelligence and ignorance of a single person directs a personality cult. Chapter 1, “Political Parties,” stated that “cult” does not ordinarily fit into a discussion of American political parties. Nor does “personalist parties,” a term often applied to Latin American political parties.³¹⁰ The term “personalism” is often cited as the basis of a dictator’s power, with or without a political party.³¹¹ Such a dictator rules by loyalty to his person. Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan were enormously popular, their popularity won them elections and public support, but they were not idolized by followers like Donald Trump. To an NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll question asked repeatedly of Republicans during Trump’s presidency, “Do you consider yourself to be more of a supporter of Donald Trump or more of a supporter of the Republican Party?” 52 percent chose Trump and only 39 percent chose the party.³¹²

The term “cult” raises the conceptual bar beyond personalism. According to the American Psychological Association, a personality cult is based on “exaggerated devotion to a charismatic political, religious, or other leader, often fomented by authoritarian Figures or regimes as a means of maintaining their power.”³¹³ The clearest, most bizarre, and most tragic example of a cult in American history was led by Reverend James Warren Jones of the People’s Temple Christian Church Full Gospel. Jones founded his Temple in Indiana, moved it to San Francisco, and then in 1977 relocated to a “socialist paradise” he named Jonestown in Guyana, South America. In 1978, U.S. Representative Leo Ryan flew to Jonestown to investigate stories of human abuse—mind control, beatings, imprisonment. While attempting to return with some Temple members who wished to leave, Ryan and his party were killed by Jones’ gunmen. Then Jones convinced his followers to drink a fruit punch laced with cyanide. Over 900 people died, including 300 children. Jones killed himself.³¹⁴

Nothing as grotesque occurred in the history of American political parties, but some observers charge that Lyndon LaRouche, who ran eight times for president, surrounded himself with a cult of supporters. In the 1970s he had 37 offices in North America and 26 abroad, and in the 1980s created an armed compound in Virginia.³¹⁵ LaRouche usually sought nomination as a Democrat and received thousands of votes, once running from jail after conviction for defaulting on loans from supporters. In 2008, he ran against Obama for the Democratic nomination, later supported Trump, and died in 2019 at 96. His obituary in the *New York Times* identified him as a “cult Figure.” In June, 2021, LaRouche’s followers still maintained a website claiming that LaRouche “was framed up” and jailed by the same “global elites” that “waged the coup against Donald Trump, a coup which denied him his duly-elected second term.”³¹⁶

One year before LaRouche’s 2019 death, the *New York Times* identified another “cult Figure”—Donald Trump—in an editorial, “The Cult of Trump”:

This week’s primary elections underscored the striking degree to which President Trump has transformed the Republican Party from a political organization into a cult of personality. By contrast, Democrats show signs of taking a more pluralistic approach, fielding candidates who are willing and even eager to break with their national leaders — the House minority leader, Ms. Pelosi, in particular.

But Mr. Trump’s grip on the Republican psyche is unusually powerful by historical standards, because it is about so much more than electoral dynamics. Through his demagogic command of the party’s base, he

has emerged as the shameless, trash-talking, lib-owning fulcrum around which the entire enterprise revolves.³¹⁷

Soon after its editorial on June 7, 2018, Steven Hassan, who had defected from Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church cult to become a mental health professional, published a 300-page book, *The Cult of Trump*. Hassan noted others who concluded that Trump's supporters constituted a cult:

Former Tennessee Republican senator Bob Corker was quoted in the *Washington Post* as saying, "It's becoming a cultish thing, isn't it?" In 2019, Maryland Democratic representative Jamie Raskin said, "The Republican party is almost like a religious cult surrounding an organized crime family. That's the mentality." Former White House staffer and Apprentice contestant Omarosa Manigault Newman ends her book, *Unhinged*, with these memorable words: "I've escaped from the cult of Trump world. I'm free."³¹⁸

Unfortunately today, the cult concept fits into discussing a major American political party.

Trump the Candidate

The website, *Ballotpedia*, summarized Donald Trump's background and political experience before declaring his presidential candidacy:

A New York-based real estate developer, author, chairman of The Trump Organization, and former executive producer of "The Apprentice"—a reality television show in which he also starred—Trump had never before sought or held elected public office prior to his 2016 run, though he flirted with political bids off and on between the late 1980s and 2015. He became more active in national politics in 2011 when he began publicly questioning whether Barack Obama was a natural citizen. That same year, Trump indicated some interest in seeking the Republican nomination for president but ultimately declined to run.

Trump's candidacy for the Republican nomination in 2016 was initially seen as something of a long shot, but the New York businessman's outsider status, mastery of the media, and no-holds-barred campaign style propelled him to the front of the field.³¹⁹

A wealthy person and flamboyant personality, Donald Trump had attracted attention, publicity, and controversy in New York in the 1980s. He drew criticism for razing an Art Deco building to make way for Trump Tower and praise for rebuilding Wollman ice-skating rink in Central Park. In 1987, Gary Trudeau, the Pulitzer Prize-Winning editorial cartoonist, anticipated that the showy billionaire might run for president and began to ridicule him in Trudeau's syndicated and popular comic strip, *Doonesbury*, as an orange-haired womanizer of low intelligence and lower morals.³²⁰

Political observers widely joked about Trump's June 16, 2015 announcement to seek the 2016 Republican nomination for president. That fall, he was one of 17 Republican aspirants who drew national attention. Ten hopefuls who scored high in opinion polls were invited to the first of twelve scheduled debates. Donald Trump—seen by millions for years as host of *The Apprentice* reality television program—averaged 20 percent in those early polls, almost twice as high as the next person, Scott Walker.³²¹ Although placed at center stage by his poll results, Trump's initial performance drew weak reviews, and he lost the Iowa caucuses on February 1 to Senator Ted Cruz. However, Trump won the February 20 primary in South Carolina and did well enough elsewhere to lead six Republicans still competing for the prize. By May 4, the five others dropped out and Trump was assured of the party's nomination at the July 2016 Republican convention.

This brief recap of Trump's quest for the Republican nomination reminds us that most Americans were amused by his announcement to run, that political analysts expected him to fail, and that he struggled to win primaries to gain the nomination. During the primary campaigns, many prominent Republicans denounced Trump, only to court him after he won the presidency. Consider this report:

- In 2015, Senator Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina, labeled Mr. Trump a “race-baiting, xenophobic, religious bigot” and called him the “ISIL man of the year,” referring to the Islamic State. That was in addition to describing him as a “kook,” “crazy” and a man who was “unfit for office.”
- Senator Ted Cruz, the second-to-last man left standing in the ugly 2016 Republican primary race, called Mr. Trump a “pathological liar” who was “utterly amoral,” a “serial philanderer” and a “narcissist at a level I don’t think this country’s ever seen.”
- Mick Mulvaney, the former Republican congressman who now serves as the president’s acting chief of staff, in 2016 called him a “terrible human being” who had made “disgusting and indefensible” comments about women.
- “Rick Perry called him a ‘cancer’ and then became a cabinet secretary.”³²²

A former adviser to Republican Paul Ryan, the former House Speaker, said: “Everything is tribal at this point. . . .If you’re with him, you’re with him, in spite of or because of the way that he is.”³²³

Trump’s electoral team had a rocky beginning. Roger Stone, who advised Richard Nixon and most Republican presidential candidates since, was Trump’s adviser until 2015. He got into legal troubles, was convicted and imprisoned in 2019, and pardoned by Trump in 2020. Trump fired his campaign manager Corey Lewandowski in June, replacing him with Paul Manafort, who resigned in August. Kellyanne Conway became campaign manager and Stephen Bannon of Brietbart News was named campaign chief executive. Deputy campaign manager David Bossie left in 2019 under accusation by the Internal Revenue Service.

Trump himself had already laid out the campaign template the previous summer in announcing his candidacy. He would campaign against immigration, against global trade agreements, for “America First,” and would “Make America Great Again.” In *The Politics of Losing*, Rory McVeigh and Kevin Estep presented evidence showing that “Donald Trump found his core support among those who felt they were on the losing end of a newly global economy.”³²⁴ Trump also denounced so-called “leaders” in Washington and later promised to the “drain the swamp.” Castigating government elites as the “enemy” gave his campaign a “populist” slant and appealed to workers who lost manufacturing jobs when companies opened plants abroad. In 2021, Geoffrey Kabaservice wrote: “it seems increasingly likely that right-wing activists may prevail over the party professionals and nominate an extreme presidential candidate.”³²⁵

Donald Trump was a long shot to win the Republican nomination, but won it. He was given no chance to win the 2016 general election against former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, did not win the vote, but still won the election. Although Clinton won almost three million more popular votes than Donald Trump, he won a majority of the electoral votes and thus became president. She carried 20 states (plus Washington, DC) with a population of 67 million. Trump won 30 states with 62 million people. Trump won 10 of the 11 states in the old confederacy by an average of 16 points, losing only Virginia. Exit polls showed Trump winning 81 percent of white evangelical Christians. 67 percent of Whites lacking a college degree (which overlaps with the preceding category), and 62 percent of voters in “small cities or rural areas.”³²⁶

Scholars have scratched their heads bloody to explain Trump's electoral appeal. One experienced team examined responses to national surveys and social and economic data from the nation's counties and congressional districts. They concluded:

Above all, our evidence makes clear that economic aspects of Trump's message—often explicitly linked to more or less plausible policy proposals—were central. His deviations from Republican orthodoxy on trade and immigration were crucial in the primaries and powerful in the general election as well. His nods to criticisms of the wealthy and support for left-leaning economic policies (on infrastructure, jobs, Social Security and Medicare) undoubtedly helped defuse the usual advantage they bring to Democrats in general elections.³²⁷

These researchers disputed those who argued that “social anxieties overwhelmingly predominated” in the general election but granted that social factors were important in Republican primary elections, which gave Trump the party's presidential nomination.³²⁸ In fact, McVeigh and Estep—who corroborated the other researchers' findings for the general election—found “virtually no correlation between the vote for Trump in the primary and caucus elections and the vote for Trump in the general election.”³²⁹ That is, worries about America's changing social composition mattered more to Republican primary voters than to all voters in the national electorate.

Elizaveta Gaufman offered a secular explanation for Trump's social appeal, especially to his primary voters. She argued that Donald Trump unwittingly but successfully tapped into a “carnival culture.” The anti-elite nature of a common carnival “allows for ‘low culture’ to come to the high world (of politics), wherein all people are also allowed to curse and swear without social sanction.”³³⁰ Although himself a wealthy businessman and a media celebrity, Trump's blunt, crude talk separated him from the elites he attacked. According to Gaufman, he drew support from threatened groups by his “anti-establishment battle-cry . . . as a means of rallying voters against his opponent, who was portrayed as mainstream and experienced—part of the ‘Washington DC swamp’.”³³¹ Trump's unprecedented daily stream of messages on social media both confounded his electoral team and won “likes” from partisans in his social tribe. Gaufman explained: “Freedom is the core value of carnival and ‘telling it like it is’ without a semblance of politesse and etiquette created an illusion of a supposedly real-world town square clashing with the world dominated and mapped out by elites.”³³² Even bragging about his sexual escapades played into the carnival culture.

Gaufman's portrayal of Trump as carnival barker may explain why secular voters bought tickets to his booth, but Calvinist historian Kristen Kobes Du Mez explains why 81 percent of white Evangelical Christians crammed into his tent. In *Jesus and John Wayne*, she wrote that evangelicals' support for Trump reflected their “embrace of militant masculinity, an ideology that enshrines patriarchal authority and condones the callous display of power, at home and abroad.”³³³

Donald Trump was the culmination of their half-century-long pursuit of a militant Christian masculinity. He was the reincarnation of John Wayne, sitting tall in the saddle, a man who wasn't afraid to resort to violence to bring order, who protected those deemed worthy of protection, who wouldn't let political correctness get in the way of saying what had to be said or the norms of democratic society keep him from doing what needed to be done.³³⁴

. . . Sure, Trump was a notorious womanizer, married three times. So was John Wayne. . . . Trump was “the John Wayne stand-in” his evangelical supporters were looking for.³³⁵

Evangelicals in *God's Own Party*, as the Republican Party was called almost a decade earlier, opened their political arms to Donald Trump.³³⁶ Their religious faith engendered a cult-like attraction to their candidate.

Trump the President

Clearly, candidate Donald Trump created a personal following, his own social tribe, while campaigning for and winning the presidency. No doubt, his victory increased their attachment to him, but not until 2018 did observers refer to his hold over them as cult-like. On February 5, 2018, the website *Axios* released one of the first publications titled “The Cult of Trump.” It began:

Rarely has a president changed his party as fast and profoundly as Donald J. Trump. Love him or hate him, you can no longer argue his ability to bend an entire party to his will. **In the two and a half years** since he announced his candidacy, he has moved the party away from decades of orthodoxy on trade, Russia, deficits and more — and has helped make the law-and-order party skeptical of FBI leadership.³³⁷ [Emphasis in original]

The next day, *The National Interest* published, “Conservatives and the Cult of Trump,” which identified a member of the Republican National Committee who said that Trump surpassed his favorite, Ronald Reagan, and quoted this from a conservative columnist: “President Trump has officially transformed himself from merely a great American president into a historic world leader keeping lit the torch of freedom for all people around the world.”³³⁸

As the campaign for the 2018 congressional elections unfolded, other observers compared Trump’s authority within the party to that of a cult leader. On June 12, 2019, *Bloomberg News* reported that South Carolina Republican voters voted against a veteran lawmaker said to be disloyal to the president and for his opponent who proclaimed: “We are the party of President Donald J. Trump.”³³⁹ The same story cited a Republican speaking of Trump’s hold in Congress:

“We’re in a strange place. I mean it’s almost becoming a cultish thing,” Senator Bob Corker, a retiring Tennessee Republican, told reporters Wednesday, a day after lambasting other GOP lawmakers on the floor of the Senate for being too afraid of Trump to rein in his authority to impose tariffs.

Former cult member Steven Hassan, who has taught at Harvard’s Medical School, wrote a book explaining the nature of a cult, saying that cult leaders employ

a complex array of influence techniques, applied incrementally to control almost every aspect of a person—the way they act (behavior), what they read, watch, or listen to (information), the way they think (thoughts), and how they feel (emotions). Trump has gotten millions of people to believe, support, and even adore him by using techniques in each of these areas.³⁴⁰

Cult leaders typically exercise their charismatic influence on followers through personal interactions. Jim Jones gathered a thousand followers around him in Jonestown, Guyana, where they could not escape. Lyndon LaRouche turned an estate in Virginia into an armed camp. David Koresh, head of the Branch Davidians sect, maintained a compound in Waco, Texas. Federal agents raided the compound in 1993, causing a fire resulting in the deaths of 79 cult members and Koresh’s death by gunshot.

Trump’s followers had no access to him when president nor did he to them. How could he have commanded their loyalty? Hassan says:

I cannot overstate the impact of the digital world on the whole area of undue influence and mind control. People no longer need to be physically isolated to be indoctrinated by destructive cults. Digital technology has provided access and a powerful set of tools for destructive groups and individuals to indoctrinate, control, and monitor believers day and night. When cult members go home for family visits, they are often receiving multiple texts every hour to keep them connected and faithful.³⁴¹

Before and after his election to the presidency, Donald Trump tweeted his thoughts to increasing numbers of avid followers. His Twitter social media account had nearly 89 million followers in early 2021. Although Twitter banned Trump from Tweeting following the January 6, 2021 capitol insurrection, a “Trump Twitter Archive” retained more than 56,000 posted to his account since 2009.³⁴² Before being banned from Facebook after the insurrection, he had about 150 million followers and subscribers.³⁴³ Social media provided a means to influence followers without interacting with them in person. Few Germans actually met Adolph Hitler. Nevertheless, the Holocaust Museum said:

Election campaign materials from the 1920s and early 1930s, compelling visual materials, and controlled public appearances coalesced to create a "cult of the Führer" (leader) around Hitler. His fame grew via speeches at rallies, parades, and on the radio.³⁴⁴

Hitler’s Nazi Party participated in four free parliamentary elections from 1928 to 1932, winning first place in the last three. Named Chancellor and head of government in January 1933, Hitler terrorized opponents in the March 1933 elections, won again by a large margin, and assumed dictatorial powers.

Mentioning Hitler returns us to the research cited in Chapter 15 on the authoritarian nature of Trump’s relationship with his followers. Dean and Altemeyer wrote:

Nothing demonstrates right-wing authoritarians' submission to their leaders as clearly as Trump's supporters' acceptance of his pronouncements and guidance regarding COVID-19. Polls show they believed Trump's dismissal of the threat during January and February and up to March 11, 2020. Accordingly, they would have been more likely to ignore the advice coming from medical experts to socially distance themselves from others. Considerable numbers of them likely became infected and proceeded to infect others, including their loved ones. They did not blame him for leading them, as far as they knew, into the Valley of Death.³⁴⁵

Trump the Losing Candidate

Political parties provide a peaceful way to transfer government power in a democracy. Political scientist Ralph M. Goldman argued that “a stable political party system is the most effective institutional alternative to warfare.”³⁴⁶ Stable party systems require defeated candidates to leave office without a fight—even after close or disputed elections. That norm was observed by American presidential candidates throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and for a time into the 21st century. Consider these four examples of problematic presidential elections since World War II: two were decided by less than 1 percent of the popular vote and two saw the popular vote winner lose to the electoral voter winner:

- 1960 Democrat Kennedy won by only 0.2 percent of the vote over Republican Nixon
- 1968 Republican Nixon won by only 0.7 percent over Democrat Humphrey
- 2000 Republican Bush lost to Democrat Gore by 0.5 percent but won the electoral vote
- 2016 Republican Trump lost to Democrat Clinton by 2.1 percent but won the electoral vote

In all four cases, all the losing candidates—including Trump’s 2016 opponent who polled more popular votes—accepted the outcomes.

On September 23, 2020, more than a month before the November 3 presidential election, President Trump refused to guarantee that he would accept the results and leave office if defeated.³⁴⁷ That was not an off-hand remark. He and his running-mate Mike Pence repeatedly failed to commit to honor the people’s verdict in October. Political observers wrote articles and even books speculating on the consequences of such unprecedented action.³⁴⁸ Trump established the precedent.

On November 3, 2020, Republican President Donald Trump lost decisively to Democratic challenger Joe Biden by clear majorities in both the popular vote (51 to 47 percent) and the electoral vote (57 to 43 percent). However, close contests in some states took time to determine the outcome. By Saturday after the Tuesday election, the Associated Press and news networks called the election for Biden. The president did not concede, saying that the election was “far from over.”³⁴⁹ He quickly began to dispute the results to stay in power. Most Republican officials charged with counting the votes stayed true to the law and verified his defeat, including his unexpected loss in Arizona. But on November 20, the Chairwoman of the Arizona Republican Party texted one of the Republican supervisors of Maricopa County, which contains 60 percent of Arizona’s voters, protesting the verification: “Seems like you’re playing for the wrong team and people will remember. WRONG team.”³⁵⁰

Millions of Trump’s voters bought his claim that their team really won. Founded in 2013, *Just Security*, “an online forum for the rigorous analysis of national and international security,” scoured social media sites and archives to compile a timeline of relevant actions by President Trump and his supporters nearly every day after the election.³⁵¹ Here are a few excerpts from the scores of *Just Security* postings:

- November 4: In the early morning hours following Election Day, Trump falsely declares premature victory to his supporters at the White House. He makes several unsubstantiated claims about supposed voter fraud, calling it “a major fraud on our nation.” He then calls for vote counting to stop.
- November 5: At 9:12 a.m. ET, Trump tweets, “STOP THE COUNT!”
- November 6: More than 200 protesters, including militia movement members, gather to protest in Detroit, Michigan. A group of Trump supporters target a local news station for a protest in Youngstown, Ohio. More protests take place in Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Michigan.
- November 10: Oath Keepers leader Stewart Rhodes tells Alex Jones [Infowars] that he had men stationed outside Washington, DC prepared to engage in violence on Trump’s command.
- November 12: According to notes shared by an Oath Keepers member inside a chat room for dues-paying group supporters, Rhodes says that members of his group will be stationed near Washington, DC until Trump is installed as president.
- November 14: Trump supporters and far-right extremists gather by the thousands in DC to protest the results of the 2020 election. Trump pays a visit to the Million MAGA March with a presidential motorcade drive-by. That night, members of the Proud Boys and Trump supporters engage in violence in downtown DC, feuding with civil rights counter-protestors.
- November 21: Trump acknowledges Stop the Steal protesters in Georgia on Twitter in a reaction to a Breitbart News article. “The proof pouring in is undeniable. Many more votes than needed. This was a LANDSLIDE!” Trump writes.
- December 5: Armed protesters surround Michigan Secretary of State Joselyn Benson’s home, chanting “Stop the Steal” and spouting conspiracy theories about the election popularized by Trump and his allies. Activist Genevieve Peters live-streams the event, including the caption, “Michiganders head to Secretary

of States Jocelyn Benson’s HOUSE in dead of night to let her know: WE AIN ‘T TAKING THIS CORRUPT ELECTION!! FORENSIC AUDIT PERIOD!”

- December 19: Trump tweets out a call for his supporters to protest in DC on the day when Electoral College votes are set to be certified by Congress. “Statistically impossible to have lost the 2020 Election,” Trump says, adding, “Big protest in DC on January 6th. Be there, will be wild!”
- December 25: Ali Alexander posts a since-deleted video to YouTube on Christmas Day, urging people to come to DC on Jan. 6, the day that Congress will finalize Biden’s election as president. With a triumphant soundtrack, the video features Trump at a rally declaring, “We will never give in. We will never give up, and we will never back down. We will never ever surrender.”
- December 31: Oath Keepers share details for Jan. 6 protests on its website and announce that the group will be present in an article titled, “JANUARY SIXTH, SEE YOU IN DC!”
- January 1, 2021: Trump promotes “Stop The Steal” on Twitter, encouraging his supporters to attend the “BIG Protest Rally in Washington DC”
- January 2: White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows tweets, “We’re now at well over 100 House members and a dozen Senators ready to stand up for election integrity and object to certification. It’s time to fight back.”

Also on January 2, President Trump called the Secretary of State in Georgia, Republican George Ruffensperger, asking him to change the vote totals and deny Joe Biden his narrow victory in Georgia. Someone recorded and released the call. Here are excerpts from the extended conversation, Trump speaking:

Hello, Brad and Ryan and everybody. . . . I think it’s pretty clear that we won. We won very substantially, Georgia. . . . there were many infractions, and the bottom line is many, many times the 11,779 margin that they said we lost by . . . we’re many, many times above the 11,779, and many of those numbers are certified or they will be certified . . . So look. All I want to do is this. I just want to find 11,780 votes, which is one more than we have because we won the state. . . . And the truth, the real truth is I won by 400,000 votes, at least. That’s the real truth.

After the president made his plea, Secretary of State Ruffensperger replied:

Mr. President, you have people that submit information, and we have our people that submit information. And then it comes before the court, and the court then has to make a determination. We have to stand by our numbers. We believe our numbers are right.³⁵²

President Trump also tried to reverse the election results through the courts via lawsuits. Over two months following the election, his supporters filed “at least 86 contesting election processes, vote counting, and the vote certification process in multiple states, including Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.”³⁵³ Virtually all lawsuits were dismissed by judges, some of whom were Trump appointees. Some filings were found to be “frivolous” or “without merit.” The Pennsylvania Supreme Court later vacated one minor ruling in Trump’s favor.

While President Trump was unsuccessful in altering the Georgia vote count, his supporters pressed on with their rebellious plans. Here are final excerpts from the *Just Security* timeline:

- January 3: Jennifer Lynn Lawrence, also from Women for America First, tweets to her followers urging them to attend protests on Jan. 6. “The globalists will not win!” she writes. “We the People are showing up to defend our way of life & our President who has put America First!”
- January 4: On TheDonald.win, a popular pro-Trump forum board, more than 50 percent of top posts that day contain calls for violence in the top five responses, according to Advance Democracy. Users on the

forum openly fantasize about storming congressional offices. One user replies to a post on the forum with the comment, “Stop the steal and execute the ‘stealers,’” according to The Daily Beast. Similar violent rhetoric is present on the platform Parler.

- January 5: Trump supporters descend on DC, hosting a roughly eight-hour event at Freedom Plaza. That evening, Trump tweets and posts to Facebook, “I hope the Democrats, and even more importantly, the weak and ineffective RINO section of the Republican Party, are looking at the thousands of people pouring into DC They won’t stand for a landslide election victory to be stolen.” His message is addressed to Republican Senators Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, and John Thune.
- January 6: At 8:17 a.m., Trump tweets encouragement to Pence, urging him to overturn the election.

Around noon on January 6, 2021, President Trump addressed thousands of supporters he had gathered on the Ellipse south of the White House. Here are excerpts from the transcript of his speech published by The Associated Press:

All of us here today do not want to see our election victory stolen by emboldened radical-left Democrats, which is what they're doing. And stolen by the fake news media. That's what they've done and what they're doing. We will never give up, we will never concede. . . .

Our country has had enough. We will not take it anymore and that's what this is all about. And to use a favorite term that all of you people really came up with: We will stop the steal. Today I will lay out just some of the evidence proving that we won this election and we won it by a landslide. This was not a close election. . . .

We have come to demand that Congress do the right thing and only count the electors who have been lawfully slated, lawfully slated.

We will not let them silence your voices. We're not going to let it happen, I'm not going to let it happen. (*Audience chants: "Fight for Trump."*) . . .

Take third-world countries. Their elections are more honest than what we've been going through in this country. It's a disgrace. It's a disgrace. . . .

We will not let them silence your voices. We're not going to let it happen, I'm not going to let it happen. (*Audience chants: "Fight for Trump."*)

Now, it is up to Congress to confront this egregious assault on our democracy. And after this, we're going to walk down, and I'll be there with you, we're going to walk down, we're going to walk down. . . .

I know that everyone here will soon be marching over to the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard.³⁵⁴

In truth, the president did not march with the protesters, and they did not peacefully make their voices heard.

Instead, an angry mob, armed with various weapons, violently assaulted the Capitol, forcing entrance into the chambers where members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives had gathered to verify the states’ electoral vote counts and verify the election of Joe Biden as President. Five people died during the insurrection. The mob succeeded in interrupting the vote count and drove members of Congress to seek refuge until order was restored. Late in the day, Congress resumed its constitutional duty, finished the count, and confirmed Joe Biden’s election.

On January 13, 2021, just a week after the insurrection, the House of Representatives impeached President Donald Trump for the second time. This time on the charge “incitement of insurrection.” On December 18, 2019, the House had impeached him on charges of “abuse of power” and “obstruction of justice.” Whereas no House Republicans voted for impeachment in 2019, this time ten Republicans joined all Democrats. On February 9, the Republican Senate began its second trial on the House’s

impeachment charges. The Senate acquitted him again on February 13, but seven Republicans joined all Democrats in voting for conviction.

Summary

On December 19, Trump Tweeted: “Big protest in DC on January 6th. Be there, will be wild!” He reminded his followers on January 1 to “Stop The Steal,” encouraging them to attend the “BIG Protest Rally in Washington DC.” Why did thousands of people from across the United States heed Trump’s Tweet to uproot their lives during a pandemic in the middle of the winter and storm the nation’s capitol? Why did a thousand people in Jonestown, Guyana, drink a poisoned punch at the command of Reverend James Jones?

In both cases, people demonstrated “exaggerated devotion to a charismatic political, religious, or other leader,” which the American Psychological Association defined as characteristic of a personality cult. Two chapters in Part V conclude this book. Chapter 17, “The Party In Peril,” examines how far Trump’s personal grip on his voters extends to Republicans holding governmental office and leadership positions in his party. Chapter 18, “A Republican Epiphany,” hopes for a restored Republican Party.

CHAPTER 17

The Party in Peril

Part I of this book had three chapters. One described four organizational forms of Republicans. Another identified four principal objectives of government: imposition of social order, freedom from theft and physical harm, provision of public goods, and advancing economic and social equality. The third chapter explained how political parties formulated their platforms to address these objectives.

The two chapters in Part II identified ideological “epochs” in Republican Party history and how 2,722 platform planks were extracted from all 41 Republican platforms since 1856. The eight chapters in Part III reviewed the party’s planks on eight policy dimensions. Part IV’s three chapters analyzed Republicans as Electoral Teams, as a Social Tribe, and as a Personality Cult. Part V closes with two chapters: this one on the party’s status in 2021, and the last on its possible future.

On January 13, 2021, the House of Representatives impeached President Donald Trump for “incitement of insurrection.” On January 20, Joe Biden was inaugurated as President of the United States without the presence of President Trump, who had returned to his Florida home before the ceremony. Trump did not comment on the inauguration via his favorite social media platforms, because he could not. Facebook had denied him access indefinitely on January 7, and Twitter banned him permanently on January 8.³⁵⁵ The ex-president was effectively cut off from his favorite means of communicating with his devoted supporters.

Trump’s Republican Critics

Even before Trump’s impeachment on January 13, some Republicans questioned his leadership. On January 11, South Dakota Senator John Thune stated:

We’ve got to chart a new course. I think our identity for the past several years now has been built around an individual. And we’ve got to get back to where it is built on a set of ideas an principles and policies, and I’m sure those conversations will be held.³⁵⁶

That same day, GOP strategist Scott Reed said, “I think the Trump brand is close to destroyed,” and another strategist, Rick Tyler, elaborated:

Unless the party fully rejects Trump, it will quickly become irrelevant. The type of candidates a Trumpcentric Republican Party will nominate will be easily beaten in most general elections, relegating themselves to being a perpetual minority and regional party.”³⁵⁷

In 2019, the House of Representatives had impeached President Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, but the Senate failed to convict him. After the House impeached him a second time for inciting an insurrection, how would the Republican leadership in Congress react to the former president?

Although the Senate Republican leader, Mitch McConnell had voted against Trump’s impeachment, he unexpectedly and forcefully criticized President Trump afterward on the Senate floor, saying in part:

American citizens attacked their own government. They used terrorism to try to stop a specific piece of democratic business they did not like.

Fellow Americans beat and bloodied our own police. They stormed the Senate floor. They tried to hunt down the Speaker of the House. They built a gallows and chanted about murdering the vice president.

They did this because they had been fed wild falsehoods by the most powerful man on Earth – because he was angry he'd lost an election.

Former President Trump's actions preceding the riot were a disgraceful dereliction of duty.

Many who watched or read McConnell's devastating speech expected him to oppose Donald Trump's attempts to control the party. Also on January 13, Republican Representative and Minority Leader, Kevin McCarthy, who did not vote to impeach Trump, nevertheless delivered this speech on the House floor:

The President bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters. He should have immediately denounced the mob when he saw what was unfolding. These facts require immediate action by President Trump, accept his share of responsibility, quell the brewing unrest and ensure that President elect Biden is able to successfully begin his term.

Many who watched or read McCarthy's critical speech also expected him to oppose attempts by Donald Trump to control the party, especially since McCarthy supported his colleague Liz Cheney, Chair of the Republican Conference, who voted to impeach Trump on January 13. Cheney, the third highest-ranking Republican in the House, released this statement on her vote:

The President of the United States summoned this mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack. Everything that followed was his doing. None of this would have happened without the President. The President could have immediately and forcefully intervened to stop the violence. He did not. There has never been a greater betrayal by a President of the United States of his office and his oath to the Constitution.³⁵⁸

Given Cheney's damning comments about President Trump, some Republicans in the House sought to oust her as chair of their Republican Conference. They forced Kevin McCarthy to schedule a vote on her retention by secret ballot in a closed meeting on February 2. According to the media accounts, Kevin McCarthy defended his deputy against others who accused her of "aiding the enemy" by criticizing Trump. Cheney won the secret vote by a large margin (reported as 145 to 61), which seemed to signal that Trump's grip on congressional Republicans had loosened.³⁵⁹

Trump's Republican Defenders

On January 13, Republican Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy criticized President Trump by name on the House floor. On February 2 he opposed Liz Cheney's removal from her leadership post for denouncing the president on the House floor. Between those two dates, McCarthy travelled to Florida to meet with the president on January 28. Although McCarthy had said that President Trump "bears responsibility" for the January 6 attack on the capitol, McCarthy afterward released a statement saying, "Today, President Trump committed to helping elect Republicans in the House and Senate in 2022."³⁶⁰ Clearly, the former president still had influence within the Republican Party.

The February 25-28 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Florida soon demonstrated the extent of his influence. CPAC invited Donald Trump to speak in the prime spot at the end of the conference. During his hour and a half speech, Trump promised not to start a new

party but claimed that the 2020 election “was rigged, and the Supreme Court and other courts didn’t want to do anything about it.” To which the crowd repeatedly cheered: “You won. You won. You won. You won.”³⁶¹ Present at CPAC, Senator Ted Cruz noted, “Donald J. Trump ain’t goin’ anywhere.”³⁶²

Rank-and-file CPAC attendees expressed to reporters their devotion to Donald Trump personally. One worker at a booth selling Trump merchandise complained about the party: “We’re so disgusted by Republicans that, honestly, if Trump’s not running, we don’t care who wins.” Another lifelong Republican claimed that the Lord told her in 2015, “I want you to pray for Donald Trump,” and she was “very upset” when “seven Republicans turned on him” to vote for conviction in the Senate. A third person thought that Vice-President Pence “let down” his president by presiding over the Electoral College votes.³⁶³

CPAC is independent of the Republican Party organization, which to then had not taken a position on the former president. A month later in early April, the National Republican Committee invited him to headline a retreat for party donors in Florida, four miles from Mar a-Lago. One GOP donor commented: “The venue for the quarterly meeting along with Trump’s keynote speech at CPAC shows that the party is still very much in Trump’s grip,” and it “doesn’t seem to have the ability to hit escape velocity from its former standard-bearer.” A former RNC staffer and now Trump critic said that the party had the chance to move on after January 6, “but they didn’t choose to do that. This is who the party is.”³⁶⁴

The last week in April, House Republicans met for their annual retreat, again in Florida. This time Majority Leader McCarthy and Conference Chair Liz Cheney were on different paths. In keeping with McCarthy’s statement after meeting with Trump on January 28, McCarthy emphasized party unity, working with the former president on the 2022 elections. Cheney urged distancing the party from Trump, arguing that was “damaging to perpetuate the notion that in 2020 the election was stolen.”³⁶⁵ Trump’s defenders returned to dethroning her from House leadership.

On May 4, Republican Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, previously Cheney’s defender, told Fox News: “I have heard from members concerned about her ability to carry out the job as conference chair, to carry out the message.”³⁶⁶ On May 12, House Republicans met for about 15 minutes, rejected a request for a recorded vote, and by voice vote quickly removed Liz Cheney from her leadership position. On May 14, House Republicans elected Trump-endorsed Representative Elsie Stefanik Chair of the Republican Conference. Stefanik stated her view: “Voters determine the leader of the Republican Party, and Donald Trump is the leader they look to.”³⁶⁷

It took almost four months for House Republican leader. Kevin McCarthy, to forget his denunciation of President Trump for causing the January 6 assault on the Capitol and to accept Trump’s leadership of the Republican Party. In under two months, Mitch McConnell, Senate Republican leader, forgot his more damning denunciation and forgave the former president. When asked on February 24 whether he would support Donald Trump for election in 2024, McConnell replied: “the nominee of the party? Absolutely.”³⁶⁸

Perplexed Republicans

Perplexed Republicans were at a loss to understand what had happened to their party. A former Tea Party leader and conservative activist, Mark Meckler confessed his puzzlement: “I’m unaware of a GOP agenda. I would love to see one. . . . Nobody knows what they’re about. They do this at their own peril.”³⁶⁹

High-ranking Republican government and party officials began to speak out. In the last chapter of his 2021 memoir, John Boehner, Speaker of the House 2011-2015, stated:

My Republican Party—my party of smaller, fairer, more accountable government and not conspiracy theories—had to take back control from the faction that had grown to include everyone from garden-variety whack jobs to insurrectionists. If the conservative movement in the United States was going to survive, there couldn't be room for them. Time will tell how successful that mission will be, but I hope to be able to do my part, even in retirement.³⁷⁰

Republican Paul Ryan had replaced Boehner as House Speaker in 2015 and served during Trump’s election and administration until 2019. Speaking at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library on May 27, 2021, Ryan avoided mentioning President Trump by name but told the crowd, “If the conservative cause depends on the populist appeal of one personality . . .

then we’re not going anywhere. Voters looking for Republican leaders want to see independence in metal. They will not be impressed by the sight of yes-men and flatterers flocking to Mar-a-Lago. We win majorities by directing our loyalty and respect to voters and by staying faithful to the conservative principles that unite us.”³⁷¹

Speaking at the Ronald Reagan Library on June 24, Republican Vice-President Mike Pence defended his role in counting the electoral votes that certified Joe Biden’s election as president, saying, “I will always be proud to have played a small part on that tragic day when we reconvened the Congress and fulfilled our duty under the Constitution and the laws of the United States,”³⁷²

Other self-identified Republicans or political conservatives publicly disassociated themselves with Donald Trump’s administration, including

- Joe Scarborough (host of *Morning Joe*)
- George Will (conservative columnist)
- Max Boot (conservative columnist)
- Richard Painter (Bush ethics lawyer)
- Steve Schmidt (Republican Party strategist and top George W. Bush aide)
- Jennifer Rubin (author of the "Right Turn" blog for *The Washington Post*)
- Bill Kristol (neoconservative political analyst)
- Colin Powell (Former United States Secretary of State)
- Joe Walsh (former representative and radio host)³⁷³

To some, the problem was more than just Donald Trump; the party itself had a problem by elevating winning votes above respecting principles. It was behaving more like a team than a party. In 2016, before Trump won the party’s nomination, some prominent Republicans formed an informal “Never Trump Movement” to stop him from succeeding. Observers across the country thought him unfit for the presidency by experience, temperament, values, and morals. Even the nation’s daily newspapers,

owned by traditionally conservative publishers, endorsed Hillary Clinton 243 to 20 over Donald Trump.³⁷⁴ Disregarding Trump's fitness to be President of the United States and de facto leader of the Republican Party, some once active Trump critics became fervent supporters—e.g., Senator Lindsey Graham and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. Other Republicans fell into line as they witnessed Trump's strength among Republican voters.

The Party Surrenders to the Team

Stuart Stevens worked on several high-profile Republican campaigns and was senior strategist to Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign. He left the party after Trump's election and in 2020 published *It Was All A Lie: How the Republican Party Became Donald Trump*, which blamed the party for Trump's presidency:

There is nothing strange or unexpected about Donald Trump. He is the logical conclusion of what the Republican Party became over the last fifty or so years, a natural product of the seeds of race, self-deception, and anger that became the essence of the Republican Party. Trump isn't an aberration of the Republican Party; he is the Republican Party in a purified form.³⁷⁵ . . .

In the end, the Republican Party rallied behind Donald Trump because if that was the deal needed to regain power, what was the problem? Because it had always been about power.

The rest? The principles? The values? It was all a lie.³⁷⁶

Academics also wrote critically of the current state of the Republican Party. Distinguished historian Lewis Gould authored a series of books on the party's history.³⁷⁷ His final book, published in 2014 prior to Trump's presidency, began:

Republicans took justified pride in their record in the nineteenth century of freeing the slaves and enacting the Reconstruction amendments to the Constitution. Democrats had taken an unduly long time to discard their racist past. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the parties passed each other in opposite directions. The party of Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson became as identified with the aspirations of African Americans as previous members of their party had been with keeping alive segregation and discrimination. Republicans, for their part, found reasons to champion the cause of white southerners and like-minded northerners in the service of victory at the polls and the opportunity to hold power.³⁷⁸

Gould wrote before Donald Trump's 2016 quest for the party's nomination and his campaign for winning the election. Both actions capitalized on Republicans' acceptance of Goldwater's attempt to capture votes from white southerners, which repudiated the party's historic stance on civil rights. In a 2021 personal communication, Professor Gould wrote, "I now believe that the Republican Party I wrote about has ceased to exist."³⁷⁹

As Republicans entered its Ethnocentrism era, "Party of Lincoln" became the party of expediency. Stevens wrote in the last chapter of *The Big Lie*:

A political party without a higher purpose is nothing more than a cartel, a syndicate. No one asks what is the greater good OPEC is trying to achieve. Its purpose is to sell oil at the highest prices possible. So it is with today's Republican Party. It is a cartel that exists to elect Republicans. There is no organized, coherent purpose other than the acquisition and maintenance of power.³⁸⁰

Political parties acquire and maintain power in democratic systems by winning elections. In both major parties, their electoral teams are entrusted to campaign for votes within two sets of parameters: electoral rules and party principles. Some party principles are malleable. Electoral teams can skirt or

amend them for electoral advantage without altering the party's character. Consider the Republicans' position on the "protective tariff." As discussed in Chapter 7, the 1888 Republican platform stated: 1888 platform: *We are uncompromisingly in favor of the American system of protection.* A century later, the 1980 Republican platform switched position, stating, *The Republican Party believes that protectionist tariffs and quotas are detrimental to our economic well-being.* The public in general and Republicans in particular quietly accepted this change in party principles.

Over the years, the Republican Party changed its policies numerous times. Figure 13.1 in Chapter 13 depicted a dozen changes in the party's platforms just since 1924. What happened in 1964 was different. Having lost the 1960 election and seeking to garner votes from southern Whites, who had voted solidly against Republican candidates since the Civil War, the Republican *Party* backed a strategy that contradicted the party's two founding principles: (1) embracing national authority and (2) ensuring citizens' political rights. In 1952, the party had acted very differently to a series of electoral losses.

In 1952 Republicans ended a string of five consecutive losses in presidential elections (1932 to 1948) by nominating a sure "winner" (General Dwight David Eisenhower) who was less conservative than their ideal. Republicans then chose to be on a winning *Team* rather than being in a principled, but losing, *Party*. In 1964, Republicans finally selected a staunchly conservative candidate, Barry Goldwater, despite his support of states' rights against one of the party's founding principles. The convention delegates were undeterred that pundits projected Goldwater to lose to President Lyndon Johnson. They seem preferred to be in a principled losing *Party* than an unprincipled winning *Team*.

Goldwater's dedicated followers and Goldwater himself thought that they would win the election *because* of their principled, uncompromising, conservative stance. Frank Annunziata's 1980 article—written close to the period—summarized their reasoning:

Conservative Republicans attributed the party's narrow defeat in 1960 to the party's derivative and imitative liberalism. Millions of conservatives, they claimed, refused to vote because no real choice existed. . . . "We who are conservatives," Goldwater commented, "will stoutly maintain that 1960 was a repeat performance of 1944 and 1948, when we offered the voters insufficient choices."³⁸¹

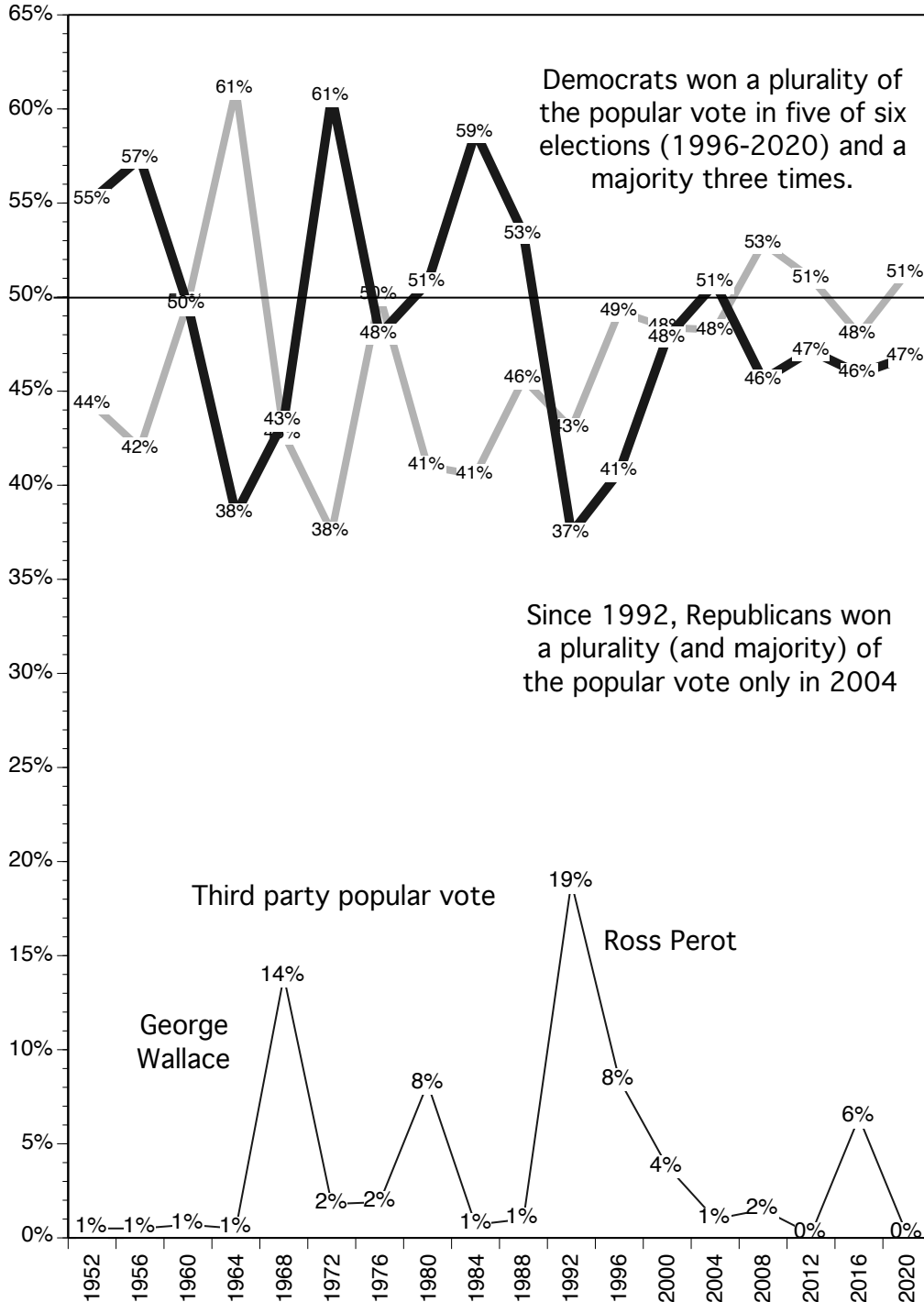
Goldwater famously promised to offer voters "a choice, not an echo."³⁸²

Few knew at the time that Republicans were also changing the politics for winning in future elections. Ex-Republican strategist Stevens described Barry Goldwater's opposition to the 1964 Civil Rights Act as "the defining moment for the modern Republican Party."³⁸³ The party entered its Ethnocentrism era committed to courting southern white voters under the guise of states' rights. As non-Whites increased their share of the electorate, Republicans' appealed more to northern Whites. After the party abandoned support for women's rights in 1980, Republicans drew increasing support from evangelical Christians. As white Christians' share of the electorate declined, so did Republicans' share of the popular vote. Eventually, Republicans chose "to fight the demographic trend of declining white voters by making it more difficult for nonwhite voters, particularly black voters, to participate in the election."³⁸⁴

Results of presidential elections since 1952 reveal a sharp change in voting patterns for both parties, but the change is especially stark for the Republican Party. Whereas in ten elections from 1952 to 1988, Republican candidates captured a majority of the popular vote six times—not simply a plurality of the popular vote but a *majority* of it. In six elections from 1996 to 2020, only once did Republicans

win even a plurality of the popular vote.¹ Twice (2000 and 2016) Republican candidates lost the vote but won the presidency only by winning the Electoral College. Thus, the party became increasingly dependent on electoral votes from less populated southern, central, and plains states, where white Christians predominated. The percentage of two-party vote for presidential candidates is given in Figure 17.1, along with the leading percentage for third party candidates.

FIGURE 17.1: Parties' Percent of Popular Vote, 1952-2020



¹ The 1992 election was skipped because Ross Perot's candidacy cut deeply into both parties' vote shares.

The Republican Party discredited its reputation in the 1960s. That was when it turned from being the Party of Lincoln, using the national government to advance political equality and provide public goods, to the Party of Goldwater, leveraging states' rights to impede social equality and place winning elections above serving the public. Already in 2012, two distinguished scholars at the conservative American Enterprise Institute acknowledged that the Republican Party had become “an insurgent outlier” in our two-party system. It was

ideologically extreme; contemptuous of the inherited social and economic policy regime; scornful of compromise; unpersuaded by conventional understanding of facts, evidence, and science; and dismissive of the legitimacy of its political opposition. When one party moves this far from the center of American politics, it is extremely difficult to enact policies responsive to the country's most pressing challenges.³⁸⁵

The authors issued that judgment in a book published in 2012. They renewed it in a revised 2016 edition published before Donald Trump was elected president. They are unlikely to change their judgment now after Trump became the first president to reject electoral defeat, yet enjoying support from a majority of Republican members of Congress and Republican state officeholders across the country.

Summary

Donald Trump is not the sole reason the Republican Party is in peril today. The party entered its perilous state in 1964 by trading its moral authority as the Party of Lincoln for votes from southern Whites. In 1877, Republicans had done something similar, when Rutherford Hayes traded ending Reconstruction in the South for winning the disputed 1876 election. Hayes' act infringed on Republicans' commitment to political equality for the former slaves, but it was not a complete betrayal. Nevertheless, the party signaled to what lengths it might go to hold on to the presidency, to retain power.

Whereas Hayes made a self-serving bargain to retain the presidency in 1877, Republicans in 1964 traded away the party's founding principles for Goldwater's “southern strategy.” Seeking to win national elections by converting the previously Democratic “solid south” into their own bastion, Republicans reversed both their commitment to national authority over state authority and their embracement of political equality. The Republican Party in its Ethnocentrism era became a fundamentally different party from the Grand Old Party during its Nationalism epoch. The change repelled many life-long Republican officials, activists, and dedicated conservatives.

Prior to the 1932 election, a majority of American voters favored Republican candidates in national elections. Afterward, more voters identified themselves as Democrats than Republicans. After World War II, Republicans overcame their numerical disadvantage in the electorate by nominating popular Figures, such as General Dwight Eisenhower and actor Ronald Reagan, or by benefitting from unpopular Democrat nominees, such as Hubert Humphrey and Hillary Clinton.

Although Goldwater's southern strategy failed miserably for him in 1964, it worked well enough to narrowly elect Richard Nixon in 1968, to produce Nixon's smashing re-election in 1972, and to generate huge victories by Reagan in 1980 and 1984. By the 1990s, however, demographic changes began to undermine the party's dependence of white Christian voters, as non-Whites and non-Christians grew in the electorate. The white Christian tank retained enough gas for Donald Trump to extract an electoral vote victory in 2016. The fuel level dropped in 2020, and he failed to secure re-election.

Some prominent Republicans left the party in protest over Donald Trump's nomination in 2016. More left after his election, and still more because of his actions as President of the United States—especially his failure to concede defeat in the 2020 election. Still more Republicans disassociated themselves from the party after Trump incited supporters to storm the Capitol on January 6, 2021 to prevent certifying Joe Biden's election. This is the status of the Republican Party in 2021:

- It remains the minority party in its share of party identifiers in the electorate.
- Its core constituency, white voters, has continued to decline as a share of the electorate.
- It suffered seeing some Republicans in Congress voting to impeach or convict their own president for “inciting an insurrection.”
- Its former president experienced new lows in approval, falling to 39 percent in a June 2020 Gallup Poll with 57 percent disapproving his performance.
- Its congressional leadership still professed allegiance to the former president.
- Its Republican identifiers professed more loyalty to Donald Trump personally than to their party.

Being led by a twice-impeached, unpopular ex-president, and being criticized by prominent party leaders who fear for the party's future, the Republican Party is a party in peril.

CHAPTER 18

A Republican Epiphany

GOP stands for Grand Old Party and is a synonym for “Republican Party.” In fact the website of the Republican National Committee is **www.gop.com**. Writers usually cite the 1870s for the first usage of “grand old party,” but an item in the 1868 *Chicago Tribune* praised “the grand old Republican party” for carrying on the war, putting down the rebellion, making soldiers of colored men, freeing them, and granting their citizenship.³⁸⁶ Lincoln lived in Illinois, so the *Chicago Tribune* often ran articles about the GOP’s accomplishments, like this one in 1879:

Col Ricaby came up and thanked the Convention for the complement paid him, coming as it did from the Chicago representatives of the **grand old party** which erased the blighting stain of slavery from the national escutcheon, and the **grand old party** which would never cease its aggressive action until every American citizen, —white, red, black, or yellow, —no matter what his creed or nationality, should be permitted to walk forth as a man and exercise his right of conscience in his political views independently or rifle-clubs, mobs, or ex-rebels. (Great applause.) [emphasis added]³⁸⁷

Many other contemporary items in the *Chicago Tribune* reflected the GOP’s themes of national authority and political equality during the party’s Nationalism epoch.

Today, those words do not fit the Republican Party, a party in peril yet a party we need. Peggy Noonan, President Reagan’s speechwriter, conceded that “The party is split, if not shattered,” in her April 10, 2021 *Wall Street Journal* column, “America Needs the GOP, and It Needs Help.” She continued:

It is worth saving, even from itself. At its best it has functioned as a friend and protector of liberty, property, speech and religious rights, an encourager of a just and expansive civic life, a defender of the law, without which we are nothing, and the order it brings, so that regular people can feel as protected on the streets as kings.³⁸⁸

Noonan argued against trying to start a new party, saying,

Two parties are better for the country, and better for Democrats. A strong Republican party keeps them on their toes. As Oscar Hammerstein once said, ‘liberals need conservatives to hold them back and conservatives need liberals to pull them forward.’

Unlike musical impresario Mr. Hammerstein, who won multiple Tony and Academy Awards, I am a nationally unknown academic. However, I am devoted to studying political parties, I find merit in Hammerstein’s aphorism, and I agree with Peggy Noonan. While other European democracies function well with multiple political parties, our democratic form of government and constitutional framework require having two major parties responsibly engaged across the country in competitive elections.³⁸⁹ Geoffrey Kabaservice wrote, “One of the likeliest ways America might in fact be destroyed would be if one of its two major parties were rendered dysfunctional.”³⁹⁰

The Party Organization Tries

Kabaservice, quoted above, also thought that while the Republican Party had “cut itself off from its own history, and indeed has become antagonistic to most of its own heritage,” millions of

moderate Republicans, and millions of other voters, “would vote for moderate Republican candidates if they could find them.”³⁹¹ Republican leaders thought similarly in 2013 and tried to strengthen the party by ending the party’s Ethnocentrism.

Early in 2013, Reince Priebus, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, confronted the facts. In 2008, Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama was elected with 53 percent of the vote. In 2012, Obama was re-elected with another, though smaller, absolute majority of the popular vote and 62 percent of the electoral vote. Responding to these Republican losses, the RNC launched their Growth and Opportunity Project, explaining:³⁹²

Following the 2012 Election, the American people sent a clear message that it was time for the Republican Party to grow. In response, Chairman Priebus issued an assessment of the party by the Growth and . In 2012, Project task force. Reaching out to hundreds of party leaders and grassroots activists across the country, the task force issued a list of recommendations to the RNC to help pave a path to victory. This project is an ongoing commitment to get input from people all across the country on ways to grow our party.³⁹³

Chairman Priebus charged his task force with

making recommendations and assisting in putting together a plan to grow the Party and improve Republican campaigns. We were asked to dig deep to provide an honest review of the 2012 election cycle and a path forward for the Republican Party to ensure success in winning more elections.³⁹⁴

The project’s authors met with thousands of people “both outside Washington and inside the Beltway,” spoke with “voters, technical experts, private sector officials, Party members, and elected office holders,” conducted polls, and consulted pollsters before issuing its 100-page report.³⁹⁵ It began by noting: “Republicans have lost the popular vote in five of the last six presidential elections.”³⁹⁶ A section titled “America Looks Different” urged the party to recognize “the nation’s demographic changes”:

In 1980, exit polls tell us that the electorate was 88 percent white. In 2012, it was 72 percent white. Hispanics made up 7 percent of the electorate in 2000, 8 percent in 2004, 9 percent in 2008 and 10 percent in 2012. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2050, whites will be 47 percent of the country while Hispanics will grow to 29 percent and Asians to 9 percent.

If we want ethnic minority voters to support Republicans, we have to engage them and show our sincerity.³⁹⁷

A section titled “Demographic Partners” began:

The Republican Party must focus its efforts to earn new supporters and voters in the following demographic communities: Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islanders, African Americans, Indian Americans, Native Americans, women, and youth. . . .

. . . **Unless the RNC gets serious about tackling this problem, we will lose future elections; the data demonstrates this.** In both 2008 and 2012, President Obama won a combined 80 percent of the votes of all minority voters, including not only African Americans but also Hispanics, Asians, and others. The minority groups that President Obama carried with 80 percent of the vote in 2012 are on track to become a majority of the nation’s population by 2050. Today these minority groups make up 37 percent of the population, and they cast a record 28 percent of the votes in the 2012 presidential election, according to the election exit polls, an increase of 2 percentage points from 2008. We have to work harder at engaging demographic partners and allies. . . . [emphasis added]

By 2050, the Hispanic share of the U.S. population could be as high as 29 percent, up from 17 percent now. The African American proportion of the population is projected to rise slightly to 14.7 percent, while the Asian share is projected to increase to approximately 9 percent from its current 5.1 percent. Non-Hispanic whites, 63 percent of the current population, will decrease to half or slightly less than half of the population by 2050.

The sentence with boldface shows that the RNC understood the party was headed toward permanent minority status. Unfortunately, the Republican National Committee, the top party organ, had no control over who would seek the party's nomination and where its nominee would drive the party.

On June 16, 2015, Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination. During which, he said:

When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.³⁹⁸

If candidate Trump knew about the RNC's advice to "show our sincerity" to "ethnic minority voters," he did not take it. Instead, he explicitly flaunted the professional team's report and appealed directly to the dwindling white portion of the American electorate. Nonetheless, RNC chair Reince Priebus, who sponsored the party study, backed Trump's ethnocentric campaign strategy. Trump won the 2016 presidential election, and a compliant Priebus became his first Chief of Staff. The long and expensive RNC report was later purged from the national committee's website.³⁹⁹

Hunting for Voters: 1964

In 1964, Barry Goldwater proposed "to go hunting where the ducks were." According to Joseph Aistrup's *The Southern Strategy Revisited*, Goldwater aimed for the "strongly ideological, racially motivated white conservatives." His Southern Strategy was "merely an attempt to attract states rights voters to the Republican party."⁴⁰⁰ Viewed from that perspective, Goldwater simply sought to win for the Republican Electoral Team—not to reverse the basic principles of the Republican Party. However, Aistrup wrote, "Republican heavyweights such as former RNC chair Meade Alcorn and New York Senator Jacob Javits felt the party should not abandon its historic commitment to civil rights to win the votes of Southern segregationists, and Republican Senator John Sherman Cooper believed it would deny constitutional and human rights of our citizens."⁴⁰¹ In retrospect, Goldwater failed in achieving his electoral objective but succeeded in jettisoning his party's principles.

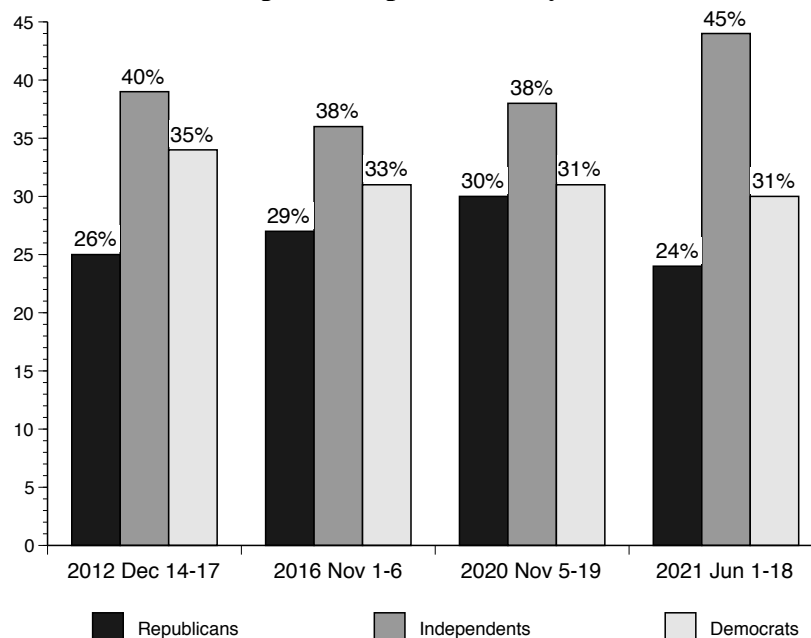
The 2013 RNC report, which urged "efforts to earn new supporters and voters," proposed hunting across the country for other ducks. Instead, Donald Trump chose to double-down on Ethnocentrism. To his credit, Donald Trump foresaw that he just . . . might . . . win by exploiting his showmanship and marketing himself as their Great White Hope to the dwindling but still numerous white Christians in the electorate. Against the odds, he won in 2016, drawing enough votes from supporters in less populous states for an electoral vote majority. In 2020, Goldwater's 1964 Faustian bargain expired. Demographic changes had already returned the former capital of the Confederacy, Virginia, to the Democratic column in 2008. In 2020, another Confederate state, Georgia, voted Democratic, as did previously reliably Republican Arizona, Goldwater's home state.

The 2013 RNC report had concluded, “it was time for the Republican Party to grow,” relying on established theory about how two-party politics operated in America. In most U.S. elections, candidates need only a simple plurality of votes to win. In some countries, such as France, candidates must win a majority for election to office. Our plurality rule, dubbed “first-past-the-post,” tends to produce two-party competition. Any third party that falls short of winning pluralities gains nothing for its effort. That leaves the two largest parties competing for votes from a common electorate. Theoretically, each party would propose policies designed to attract more voters than the other party. As stated in Chapter 2, their platforms typically promised direct benefits in the form of Public Goods or indirect benefits packaged as Freedom, Order, or Equality.

Arguably, our party system operated that way up to the middle of the 20th century. Republicans and Democrats campaigned by telling voters how their economic, social, and foreign policies would benefit the country generally and them personally. Both parties, according to theory, sought votes from the middle of the electorate, and thus the parties converged in their policies. They competed mainly over Public Goods: who would get what from government and at what costs. Typically, Democrats offered people more benefits but higher taxes. Republicans countered by proposing lower taxes but fewer benefits. With the parties thus engaged in bargaining with the electorate, compromises on all sides were possible. This thumbnail account oversimplifies the situation but echoes how Peggy Noonan described it.

In 1964, Republicans changed the competitive dynamics by campaigning against granting rights to a racial minority. Their actions resurrected the existential issue in U.S. politics that provoked the Civil War. In 1980, Republicans created a new, two-sided, existential issue by opposing equal rights for women. White Christians feared losing their rightful place in American society by granting equal rights for Blacks and women. However, Blacks and women feared that they would never gain their rightful place without those rights. Unlike disagreements over Public Goods, disagreement on existential issues discourages electoral bargaining, which precludes rational behavior within party theory.

FIGURE 18.2: Gallup Poll Report of Party Identification, 2012-2021



The first three columns in Figure 18.2 plot 2012 poll data that faced the 2013 RNC report authors. They knew that Democrats had enjoyed an edge in party identification since the 1930s. Seeing that Democrats in 2012 led by almost 10 percentage points, they rationally concluded it was “time for the Republican Party to grow.” However, Figure 18.2 also revealed that by November 2016 the Democratic advantage had declined from nine to four points. By November 2020, the parties were neck and neck. Perhaps their 2013 analysis and remedy were incorrect. Perhaps Trump was right in doubling-down on an ethnocentric strategy. He lost in 2020, but perhaps he could win again in 2024. Legions of Republicans still pledged him their support. On June 26, 2021, thousands of Trump’s faithful flocked to his first rally since leaving office in Wellington, Ohio. They cheered when he lashed out at the ten Republican House members who voted to impeach him and chastised Vice-President Mike Pence for failing to stop the electoral vote count.⁴⁰² No one could tell whether Trump would run again in 2024 or what influence he would have in determining the Republican nominee.

Hunting for Voters: After 2021

Notwithstanding the influence of former president Trump, party theory supports the 2013 RNC prescription for the Republican Party’s path to recovery. Simply put, the party needed even then to look beyond its base. For reasons to be discussed below, that was easy to advise but difficult to implement. Nevertheless, assuming that the party wants to win future presidential elections, the party should rethink how Independents respond to its policies. Look again at Figure 18.2 for the share of Independents. They constituted from 38 to 45 percent of the electorate. True, Independents are less likely to vote in presidential elections than those who identify as Republicans or Democrats, but, excepting landslide victories, Independents always decide the outcome. Consider the partisan sources of votes cast for the major presidential candidates in the 2016 and 2020, as displayed in Figure 18.3.⁴⁰³

FIGURE 18.3: Partisan Sources of Presidential Votes, 2016 and 2020

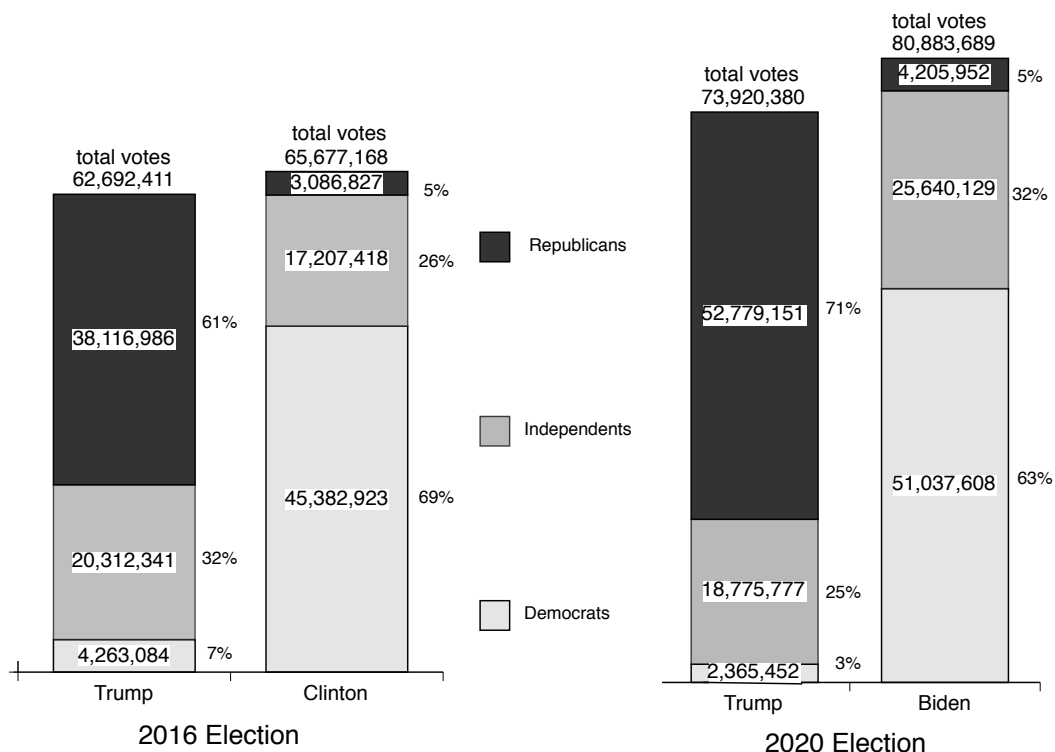


Figure 18.3 reveals that if the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections were decided only by Republicans and Democrats voting for their parties' candidates, *both* winning candidates would have lost. In 2016, over 7 million more Democrats voted for Clinton than Republicans voted for Trump. In 2020, 1.6 million more Republicans voted for Trump than Democrats voted for Biden.

Donald Trump won in 2016 by getting an estimated 3,104,923 more votes from Independents than Clinton got. Joe Biden won in 2020 by an estimated margin of 6,864,353 cast by Independent voters. Clearly, Independents decided the outcome of both presidential elections. From a theoretically rational perspective, the Republican Party should do more to court Independent voters in the electorate. Unfortunately for the party and the country, rational Republicans are hampered in appealing broadly to Independent voters in the electorate due to the narrow concerns of the party's selectorate.

The Electorate v. the Selectorate

Political scientists distinguish between the *electorate*, the enfranchised citizens who chose which candidates are elected to government office, and the *selectorate*, the party activists who select the candidates presented for the electorate's decision. While countries differ somewhat in how they define eligible voters, countries differ far more in how they select party candidates for election. In the United States, both parties follow candidate selection laws that give local party activists great power. Winning votes in the electorate is very different from getting chosen by the selectorate. One cross-national study put it this way: "In U.S. primary elections, voters may select congressional nominees without reference to what any higher party organization might prefer. This is candidate selection at its most purely inclusive and decentralized."⁴⁰⁴

The Republican National Committee has no control over the Republican selectorate. State laws define how both parties select their candidates, which they usually do through primary election. Across the country, Republicans vote in primary elections to nominate Republican candidates for general elections to the U.S. House or Senate, and to select Republican convention delegates to nominate the party's presidential candidate. As of 2021, Donald Trump appears to exercise considerable control over how his tribe or cult votes in Republican primaries. If he continues to promote ethnocentric policies, the Republican selectorate is unlikely to increase the party's share of the electorate.

As party polarization increased during the 21st century, academics began to examine conditions for rational behavior in the context of tribe/cult politics. Patir, Dreyfuss, and Shayo described such politics as "the existence of a set of voters whose overriding concern is 'who is with us and who is against us' and who support candidates representing their ethnic, religious, or national group whatever the policy they promote."⁴⁰⁵ Consistent with research on tribes, they note that "individuals do not identify with a group simply because they belong to it. People are more likely to identify with their group if it provides them with a sense of pride or 'status.'"⁴⁰⁶ Typically, they said, tribal politics is rooted in "the middle and lower ranks of the socioeconomic distribution," and "Non-tribal regimes are characterized by centrist policies, catering to the median voter in society as a whole, whereas tribal regimes are typically characterized by more extreme policies."

If a party's policies appeal mainly to its partisans, it is not catering to the "median voter"—i.e., the one in the middle, the average voter. Wherever the median voter stands on an issue, the position is apt to be among Independents, not partisans. Rational political parties in a two-party system try to propose policies that fit its basic principles (satisfying its partisans) while also appealing to Independent

voters. That the Republican Party has captured a plurality of the popular vote for president only once (2004) in eight elections since 1992 suggests that it has campaigned to the Republican electorate and not to the American electorate. That contradicts the origin and history of the Grand Old Party.

Demeaning Government

This book's subtitle is "From Governing Party to Anti-Government Party, 1860-2020." Founded in 1854 to oppose the spread of slavery, the Republican Party in 1860 won every northern state except New Jersey, fought to maintain the Union, ended slavery, freed the slaves, and made them citizens. While fighting the Civil War, Republicans funded the creation of land-grant colleges and the construction of a transcontinental railroad. Subsequent Republican administrations established the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate railroads, enacted the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to preserve economic competition, the Pure Food and Drug Act to prohibit the sale of adulterated food and drugs, and undertook building a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. Republicans created the National Forest Service and the first national parks. Republicans introduced legislation leading to a national income tax, regulation of child labor, and the establishment of an eight-hour day for workers. The Republican Party was a governing party throughout its Nationalism epoch. If I lived then, I'd be a Republican instead of aligning with Democrats and their racist southern wing.

Today, Republicans fly the libertarian banner of freedom from government. As stated above in Chapter 1, "to govern" means "to control." All government requires surrendering some freedoms; only anarchy elevates freedom above government. Democratic government entrusts voters to decide what freedoms they are willing to trade for order, equality, and public goods. During their Nationalism epoch, Republicans won national elections on party platforms that promoted all three values at the cost of certain freedoms.

In accepting the 1964 Republican presidential nomination, Barry Goldwater extolled the virtue of "freedom under a government limited by laws of nature and of nature's God." He saw strict limits on what governments could do. In Goldwater's book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, he even viewed employee retirement insurance as infringing on freedom. He wrote, "The government takes 6 % of most payrolls in Social Security Taxes and thus compels millions of individuals to postpone until later years their enjoyment of wealth they might otherwise enjoy today."⁴⁰⁷ President Ronald Reagan's 1981 inaugural address echoed Goldwater's view. Reagan said, "Government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem." In his news conference on August 12, 1986, Reagan quipped: "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help."⁴⁰⁸

While claiming to be anti-government, the Republican Party's 2016 platform also says it is also *a party of law and order*. It favors imposing harsh sentences for drug offenses, executing prisoners for capital crimes, and building walls to keep out immigrants. It also passes laws that force women to give birth to unwanted children, keep schools from teaching about racial discrimination, and prevent businesses and schools from requiring face masks to prevent spreading the COVID-19 virus. In a schizophrenic way, the anti-government party relies a lot on government when politically expedient. Consider mandatory vaccination laws. They originated in the early 19th century and were upheld by the Supreme Court in 1905. Republicans in power then accepted mandated vaccinations against smallpox; Republicans in power in 2021 opposed requiring vaccinations to stop a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁰⁹

Rational parties in a two-party system compete for voters by promising government benefits. Typically, parties propose and dicker over providing and funding Public Goods. Republicans did this successfully during their Nationalism epoch up to the 1920s but stopped during their Neoliberalism epoch of antistatism and free market capitalism. They surrendered the tax and spend strategy to Democrats, who won voter support over the decades for such government programs as Social Security, Medicare, minimum wages, health care expansion, and Head Start. Social Security became so popular that even Republicans called it the “third rail” of American politics: “touch it, and you will die.” Medicare was similarly embraced; one conservative warned her bemused Republican congressman, “Keep your government hands off my Medicare.”⁴¹⁰

Some Republicans see the party replacing the Democratic Party as the voting home for blue-collar workers. Missouri Senator Josh Hawley declared on Twitter, “We are a working class party now. That’s the future.”⁴¹¹ Once, “blue-collar” referred to many millions of voters, mostly men, with good-paying jobs. Today, it refers to fewer millions of voters with poor-paying jobs. Republican presidential candidates, Donald Trump in particular, won support from this dwindling group by feeding them cultural benefits—by attacking minorities and immigrants. Those candidates who decried losing manufacturing jobs in America neglected to mention that Republicans’ core principles of free trade and economic freedom led to making goods abroad and buying foreign products. Also, few Republicans favored spending money on government programs to help the poor and unemployed, relying instead on laws that propped up Republican cultural values. Carlos Curbelo, a former Republican congressman from Florida, said, “Eventually, if you don’t take action to improve people’s quality of life, they will abandon you.”⁴¹² A researcher at a conservative think tank said that using the state “to directly affect the economic well-being of Americans” was very difficult for Republicans.⁴¹³

Parties can bargain rationally over providing and funding Public Goods—over which groups will benefit and at what cost. When parties compete over core values of Freedom, Order, and Equality, bargaining usually fails. They may compromise a little while proposing to scrap zoning laws (Freedom), to fight crime (Order), or to oppose ethnic discrimination (Equality). When parties compete over core values, however, they face trading cultural precepts rather than tangible benefits such as monthly social security checks, hospital payments, wage amounts, insurance coverage, and early schooling. Conflicts over core values simply cannot be resolved by bargaining, as illustrated when the U.S. Constitution counted slaves as three-fifths of a person.

Conclusion

Chapters 6 through 13 in Part II reviewed hundreds of planks in quadrennial platforms of the Republican Party since its founding in 1854. Those chapters detailed how “the Party of Lincoln”—a governing party—evolved into an anti-government party. Once a champion of national authority and political equality, the Republican Party in 1964 deliberately reversed its position, advocating states’ rights and defending racial inequalities. In effect, the party traded its founding principles for votes from southern Whites. By 1980, it sank further into social inequality, trading women’s rights for votes from Evangelical Christians. The 1964 story involved more than just winning votes. Republicans knowingly selected a candidate, Barry Goldwater, who *believed* in states rights and thought that national government should *not* enforce racial equality. The Grand Old Party lost its way on principles in 1964 and continued going in a different direction since. The book by Amy Fried and Douglas Harris describes at length how the Republican Party “from Goldwater to Trump” was *At War with Government*.⁴¹⁴

Because Chapters 6 through 13 only dealt with party planks concerning government policy, it did not report this passage in the Republican Party's 2016 platform, re-adopted in 2020:

The next president must restore the public's trust in law enforcement and civil order by first adhering to the rule of law himself. Additionally, the next president must not sow seeds of division and distrust between the police and the people they have sworn to serve and protect. The Republican Party, a party of law and order, must make clear in words and action that every human life matters.

Mr. Trump ran on that platform and was elected president in 2016. The passage presumably remain party policy in 2020 when he ran again and lost but did not adhere to the rule of law and accept his loss.

To make their party Grand again, Republicans must experience a collective epiphany, a revelation, a widespread admission that they are no longer the historic "party of Lincoln" but a reactionary guard against social change. Former Republican Speaker John Boehner once saw his party standing for "smaller, fairer, more accountable government." By 2021, he awakened to realize that it was controlled by a "faction that had grown to include everyone from garden-variety whack jobs to insurrectionists."⁴¹⁵ Other Republicans need to wake up and take action to restore the GOP as a true democratic party in a two-party system.

That can be done, but only Republicans can do it. As described in Chapter 14, the Democratic Party accomplished something comparable in 1948, when its convention adopted its first civil rights plank over the objections of its powerful southern wing. The 1948 Democratic civil rights plank was proposed by a young Hubert Humphrey, whose biographer wrote:

Democratic Senate minority leader Scott Lucas of Illinois, who called Humphrey a "pipsqueak," warned him that his action would "split the party wide open" and "kill any chance of Democratic victory in November," and Rhode Island senator J. Howard McGrath threatened, "This will be the end of you."⁴¹⁶

The plank did split the party, southern delegations did walk out of the convention, and the party did lose votes of white southerners. In the 1948 election, President Truman lost four southern states, but he still won—and Democrats ended their tacit support of racism. The party "did the right thing" again in 1964, when President Lyndon Johnson backed the Civil Rights Act, fully expecting it to cost the party in the South, which it did. Embracing Ethnocentrism and winning southern votes, Republicans won a string of presidential elections. While the party profited electorally, it lost its principled soul.

In October, 2021, two former Republican office-holders published an Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times* proposing that they along with other Republicans opposed to Trump "form an alliance with Democrats" to defeat Trump-backed Republican candidates.⁴¹⁷ It is noteworthy that two prominent Republican leaders publicly backed an electoral strategy to discredit Trump indirectly, who will challenge him directly in the party organization?

Who will emerge as Republican heroes to restore the Grand Old Party as the governing "Party of Lincoln" that led social change in America? Who will return the GOP to being a democratic party, one that accepts electoral outcomes and participates responsibly in legislative politics? Who will remake it to standing again for fairer, smaller, more accountable government against a Democratic Party left free to spend without opposition from a respectable party? Who will lead Republicans out of its Ethnocentrism era and into one of genuine Conservatism? Who will head the Republican epiphany?

EPILOGUE

The Next Republican Era

What might result from a Republican epiphany? In my Introduction to this book, I said in the first paragraph:

More than fifty years of research and writing on democracy and party politics have convinced me that no nation can practice democratic government in the absence of a responsible, competitive party system. Given its constitutional structure, the United States cannot endure as a democracy without two major parties—two parties that compete for popular votes, accept election outcomes, and govern responsibly.

The United States needs a vigorous Republican Party to challenge an energetic Democratic Party over how government should promote the Public Good—defined in Chapter 2 as actions that benefit the public. The parties' electoral competition should extend across the nation into every state and into all areas within each state. Both parties should be inclusive in attracting partisans, and they should adopt policies that appeal to independent voters. Above all, democracy requires government to encourage all citizens to vote and both parties to abide by electoral decisions, resulting in the peaceful transfer of power.

Today, neither party competes adequately across and within the nation. Democrats appeal more to metropolitan residents in populous states, while Republicans count more on residents living outside urban areas in states with fewer people. Since the 1960s, the parties have diverged even more in their partisan composition. In an earlier book, *A Tale of Two Parties*, I documented differences in the social bases of Democratic and Republican partisans since 1952.⁴¹⁸ Simply put, the Republican Party has not attracted substantial numbers of minority social groups to identify as Republicans. Since 1952, Republican partisans have been overwhelmingly white and Christian. Seven decades ago, white Christians constituted a majority of the electorate. Today, they are in the minority.

More disturbing for democracy is that most Republican partisans and party leaders refuse to accept that its presidential candidate lost the 2020 election. Donald Trump's unprecedented denial of the outcome led to his supporters' January 6, 2021 "Stop the Steal" assault on the U.S. Capitol during Congress' official count of electoral votes. A national survey in May 2021, six months after the 2020 election, found that "56% of Republicans believe the election was rigged or the result of illegal voting, and 53% think Donald Trump is the actual President, not Joe Biden."⁴¹⁹ While some Republican governmental leaders, most notably Wyoming Representative Liz Cheney, denounced Donald Trump's failure to concede losing, most members of Congress failed to do so.

Democracy cannot succeed anywhere if candidates do not accept election results. If the Republican Party intends to function as a responsible, democratic party in the future, it must remake itself into one. It should become socially inclusive instead of ethnocentric. Like the former "Party of Lincoln," it should return to being authentically conservative instead of archaically reactionary. Instead of trying to resurrect a former society, it should work to improve the current one by using powers of government institutions for the Public Good.

"Conservatism' is a word whose usefulness is matched only by its capacity to confuse, distort, and irritate."⁴²⁰ That is how Clinton Rossiter, the distinguished historian and political scientist, began his lengthy entry in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Despite the term's many uses, Rossiter asserted that "an ordered, constitutional society" was the core value that "in the most

meaningful sense” defined conservative parties.⁴²¹ He also distinguished conservatism from being reactionary, describing “Reaction as the position of men who sigh for the past more intensively than they celebrate the present and who feel that a retreat back to it is worth trying.”⁴²² Conservative principles motivated anti-slavery citizens to band together historically as Republicans. They sought constitutional means to combat a present threat and to ensure future social and economic progress.

The Republican Party was formed in 1856 to impose order on the various states concerning the spread of slavery. After the Civil War, the party imposed constitutional government on the United States, developed the nation’s economy, and advanced its society. The GOP was a conservative party that employed government power to promote and preserve political and social institutions. It served the national community by producing Public Goods. The Republican Party flourished throughout the 19th century. It experienced what was defined in Chapter 4 as its *Nationalism* era.

By the end of the first quarter of the 20th century, Republicans began to elevate the value of individual freedom over governmental order. From the late 1920s to the early 1960s, party principles evolved from a conservatism that promoted Nationalism and Public Goods to a classical liberal conservatism steeped in economic freedom. During the decades that Democrats shut Republicans the party out of the presidency, the Republican Party entered its *Neoliberalism* era. Under President Dwight Eisenhower’s administration, however, key governmental programs—e.g., the Interstate highway system—resembled those of the party’s Nationalism period.

Beginning with Barry Goldwater’s presidential campaign in 1964, the Republican Party turned 180 degrees away from national authority (the key principle of the Republican Party’s Nationalism era) and toward states’ rights (the key principle of the Democratic Party after the Civil War). That reversal led to the Republican Party’s entrance into *Ethnocentrism*. Moreover, Goldwater inverted the priorities of “order” and “freedom” on the conservative scale of values. Government’s role in maintaining order became subservient to preserving freedom. Understanding this development requires some historical background.

The original dilemma of government concerned the tradeoff between two abstract values.⁴²³ “Order” through government had always been the goal of political conservatives, who valued strong government. “Freedom” from government restrictions was the objective of their political opponents—deemed “liberals” at the time. Then in the latter half of the 19th century, “Equality”—distinct from Freedom—emerged as a cherished political value. Today, Equality’s advocates are widely recognized as liberals, while Freedom’s advocates have been mistakenly labeled as conservatives.

In truth, government action is required to achieve both Order and Equality in a society. Neither value can be secured without government intervention. Freedom, in contrast, come merely from blocking government. Freedom’s extremists are anarchists. The less extreme are libertarians—the philosophical opposites of conservatives. Today’s media describe the many Republicans in the House Freedom Caucus as “extreme” conservatives. More accurately, Freedom Caucus members are libertarian.

The inherent conflict between the values of Order and Freedom poses a conundrum for the Republican Party, composed of avowed conservatives and avowed libertarians. Goldwater himself struggled with the value contradiction. In one place he proposed balancing the values: “the Conservative looks upon politics as the art of achieving the maximum amount of freedom for individuals that is consistent with the maintenance of the social order.” On the next page he seems to have made his value choice, saying, “the Conservative’s first concern will always be: *Are we maximizing*

freedom?”⁴²⁴ Perhaps his 1960 book, *The Conscience of a Conservative* should have been titled, “The Conscience of a Libertarian.”⁴²⁵

The Republican Party today espouses incompatible principles and destructive politics. Libertarians in the Freedom Caucus constitute an organized faction that opposes policies proposed by the majority of Republican conservatives. Many Republicans up for election fail to acknowledge that Democrat Joe Biden was duly elected President, fearing retaliation from his defeated opponent, Donald Trump. The former president, widely recognized as the party leader, has already attacked Republican Senate Leader Mitch McConnell, who blamed Trump for the January 6th assault on Congress. The party is split ideologically and politically.

For decades, the Democratic Party was also split ideologically and politically between its northern and southern wings. In southern states, the party was dominated by racism, and southern Democrats in the U.S. House and Senate often voted with conservative Republicans. In 1948, the Democratic Party experienced its own epiphany and adopted its first Civil Rights plank. The party remade itself by following a more coherent philosophy oriented to equality.

How should the GOP remake itself? That is for Republicans to decide. I am not a Republican, but I offer these suggestions:

1. Disavow Donald Trump’s claim that he won the election, and avow the integrity of our highly decentralized system of counting and reporting election returns. Reaffirm the Republican Party’s long held democratic credentials.
2. Consider returning to a version of the GOP’s *Nationalism* era—of using government to advance the Public Good instead of trusting private enterprises to serve public rather than private interests. Recall that Republican President Teddy Roosevelt was acclaimed as a “trust-buster.”
3. Celebrate the exceptional history of the United States of America—a country founded by immigrants. Welcome immigrants; recruit them into the party; recognize that they are the key to population growth in America.
4. Decide whether the GOP is a conservative party that governs an orderly society or a libertarian party that frees individuals to do as they please. Should government limit the availability of weapons used in homicides and mass shootings, or should anyone be able to buy and carry a deadly weapon of choice?

APPENDIX A

Validating the Coding

A measurement procedure has concurrent validity if it matches results produced by an alternative procedure. Ideally, the measurement alternative should be recognized and established. Unfortunately, there is no established procedure for coding American party planks over time, but there is an alternative data set. Over eighty years ago, a PhD student at Northwestern University catalogued all platform planks adopted by all U.S. political parties at national conventions from 1840 to 1936.⁴²⁶ Richard G. Browne earned his degree for that effort and had a long and distinguished career as a teacher and academic administrator, but he apparently never published anything afterward on party platforms. Only one of the many sources consulted in writing this book cited Dr. Browne’s painstaking research.⁴²⁷

Browne doggedly identified 1,666 individual platform planks for 34 different American parties from 1840 to 1936. He listed all of the planks in a 45-page appendix. I used only the 793 planks he identified for the Democrats (420 planks) and Republicans (373 planks) in the 21 elections that they faced each other from 1856 to 1936. Democrats averaged 20 planks per election platform v. 17 for Republicans.⁴²⁸ Using a computer, I culled 540 Republican planks from online platform texts for 1856 to 1936, versus Browne’s 373 planks. I coded his Republican planks into the same 114 categories in Chapter 5, Table 5.1, used for my planks. Consider these examples: code 110 States’ Rights—Browne listed 3 planks, I found 4; code 210 National Rights—Browne had 8 planks to my 13; code 508 Territories—Browne had 14 planks to my 15. Over 58 such comparisons, our frequencies of usage correlated 0.77.

Platform planks, according to Browne, reveal political sentiment more than they imply political action. Perhaps the best way to indicate what Browne regarded as a platform plank is through examples. Table A.1 lists Browne’s first 5 of 20 Democratic planks and the first 5 of 8 Republican planks in 1856, and his first five of 20 Democratic and 22 Republican planks in 1936.

TABLE A.1: Browne’s First Five Democratic and Republican Planks: 1856 and 1936

<u>Democratic 1856</u>	<u>Republican 1856</u>
Strict construction of the Constitution	Maintain the Union
Oppose internal improvements	No slavery in territories
Oppose assumption of state debts	Oppose polygamy
Equal protection of all persons, industries	Favor punishment for Kansas outrages
Economy	Favor admitting Kansas as a free state
<u>Democratic 1936</u>	<u>Republican 1936</u>
Protect citizens from kidnapping and banditry	Maintain constitutional government
Protect savings	Preserve free enterprise
Favor old age pensions and unemployment	Restore employment
Protect consumers against exploitation	Provide federal aid to states and localities who will administer relief
Provide cheap power	Old age pensions and unemployment insurance

The allusion to “Economy” in the 1856 Democratic platform simply reflected a promise to “practice the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs,” not to “improve” the economy. Presumably, Browne counted “economy” as a plank because it occurred in a numbered sentence. Acknowledging some chance for error in interpreting the meaning of a plank, one must concede that nearly all of Browne’s twenty planks in Table A.1 are readily interpretable and meaningful.

Curiously, Browne barely analyzed party differences in the planks that he so laboriously identified. Regarding the political differences between Democrats and Republicans, Browne ventured only general statements in his Chapter 1. Toward its end, he wrote:

In all but one or two modern campaigns the parties have clashed over the tariff, and, while the difference may have been one of degree rather than of principle, such difference exists. There have also been other clashes. They are sometimes intensified, as in 1896, 1912, and in 1932, but they sometimes subside, as in 1928.

In general these differences between the parties have been pointed out: (1) the Democratic party is more progressive, and (2) it has showed this particularly in its earlier endorsement of labor legislation, which endorsement has won for it, at least most of the time since 1908, the support of the leaders of organized labor.⁴²⁹

In a chapter on the development of party platforms, Brown established that platforms had gotten progressively longer in words and contained more planks. He accounted for the increases in words and planks by increases in the scope of national politics. Browne explained that the post-Civil War platforms of both parties “dealt with problems which arose out of the war.” He wrote:

The first reference in any major party platform to one of the chief problems of the twentieth century, the relationship of the government to business, appeared in the Democratic platform of 1884 and in the Republican platform of the same year. The Democratic plank aimed at the control of monopoly in general and the Republican plank dealt with the regulation of the railroads. In 1892 the Democratic platform contained two planks proposing labor legislation, and in 1896 the Republicans followed suit. By 1920 the Democratic platform contained five planks relating to government control over business, and four planks dealing with labor. The Republican platform for the same year contained 10 planks on these two subjects.⁴³⁰

The relationship between length of platform and number of planks is stronger for Democrats than Republicans, but both showed notably more planks after 1900. Regulation of business and labor along with federal aid to agriculture were new topics in party platforms. The turn of the century also introduced foreign policy into the platforms through U.S. territorial expansion and the construction of what became the Panama Canal. World War I brought new fiscal concerns. In summary, Browne wrote:

The increased number of planks has been due chiefly to, (1) the growth in importance of the government’s relationship to business, agriculture, and labor, (2) the control assumed by the United States over noncontiguous territory, and, (3) the impact of the World War.⁴³¹

Although Browne offered important observations on the political content of the Democratic and Republican parties’ planks, most of his thesis addressed other aspects of national party platforms. One chapter detailed the process of drafting platforms. Another assessed the significance of platforms before 1908, and one assessed their significance after 1908. Browne concluded his thesis on the national party platform as a political instrument by saying that he examined “(1) its function, (2) its development, (3)

the manner of its formulation, and (4) its significance.”⁴³² He did not claim credit for detailing what the parties’ platform planks actually stated.⁴³³

Classifying and Coding Party Planks

I classified Browne’s 373 Republican planks according to the major codes in Table 5.1, restated here for convenience as Table A.1.

TABLE A.1: Major Code Headings for Classifying Party Planks

Code Type	General Category	General Category Description
1 - -	Freedom	Policies limiting government
2 - -	Order	Policies restricting citizens’ freedom
3 - -	Equality	Policies benefitting disadvantaged people
4 - -	Public Goods	Policies benefitting the public
5 - -	Government	Actions pertaining to the government
6 - -	Military	Actions benefitting the military
7 - -	Foreign Policy	Relations with foreign states
8 - -	Symbolic	Expressions of support, regret

Table A.2 illustrates how some of Browne’s specific planks were classified under those eight broad types of codes. Table A.2 gives examples from the first and last of Browne’s 393 Republican planks.

TABLE A.2: Examples of Republican Planks Classified under Major Code Headings

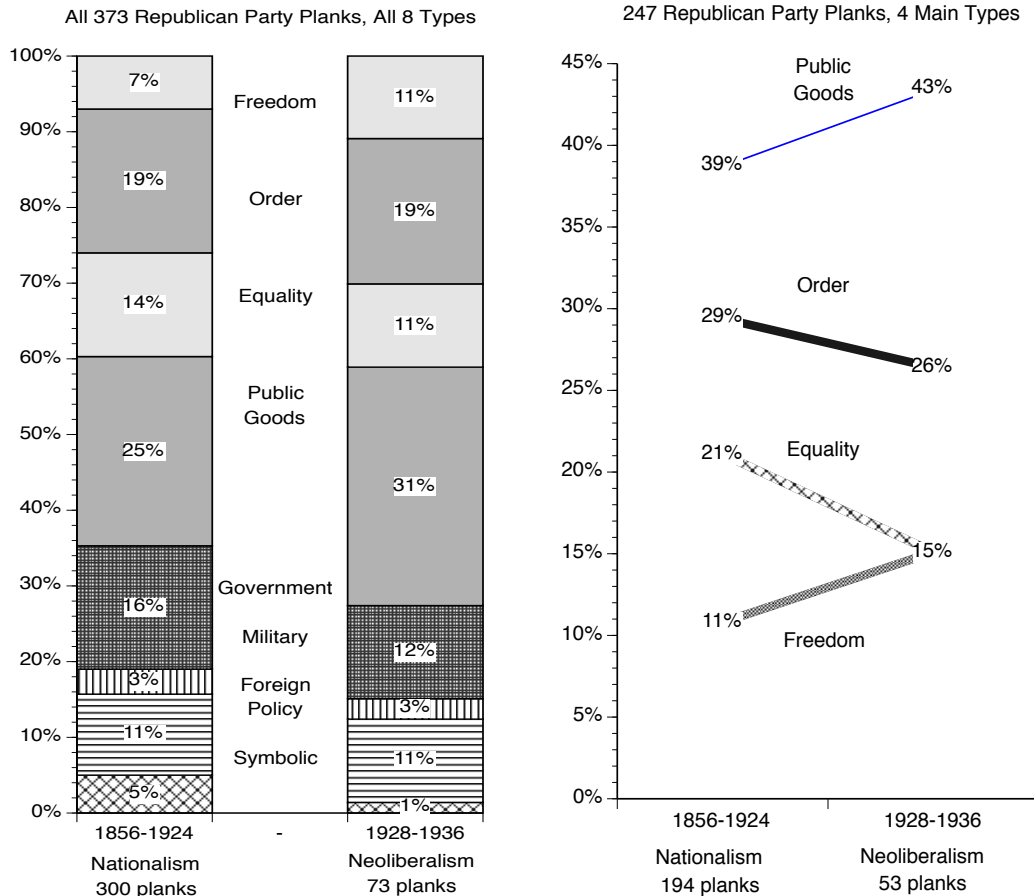
1 - - Freedom	5 - - Government
1864 Favor encouraging immigration	1872` Abolish franking privileges
1936 Preserve free enterprise	1876 Oppose patronage
2 - - Order	6 - - Military
1880 Restrict Chinese immigration	1888 Strengthen navy/merchant marine
1912 Regulate monopolies	1928 Build navy to full strength
3 - - Equality	7 - - Foreign Policy
1856 No slavery in territories	1896 Build Nicaraguan Canal
1920 Adopt federal anti-lynching law	1920 Oppose League of Nations
4 - - Public Goods	8 - - Symbolic
1856 Federal aid to railroads/highways	1868 Sympathy for all oppressed peoples
1900 Extend rural mail delivery	1892 Support Chicago’s World’s Fair

Browne’s platform data compare favorably with Gerring’s findings for his Republican “epochs.” (Gerring comingled the early Whigs, who faded in 1856, with its successor Republican Party.) Gerring held that Republicans experienced only two epochs:

<u>Epoch</u>	<u>Central Dichotomy</u>
NATIONALISM (1828-1924)	order versus anarchy
NEOLIBERALISM (1928-1992)	the individual versus the state

Figures A.1 and A.2 exclude Whigs' platforms and include only Browne's data on Republican Party planks from 1856 to 1936. That period covers nearly all of Gerring's Nationalism epoch but only a small portion of his Neoliberalism epoch.

FIGURES A.1 & A.2: Percentages of Planks in 21 Republican Party Platforms During Gerring's Two Republican Epochs



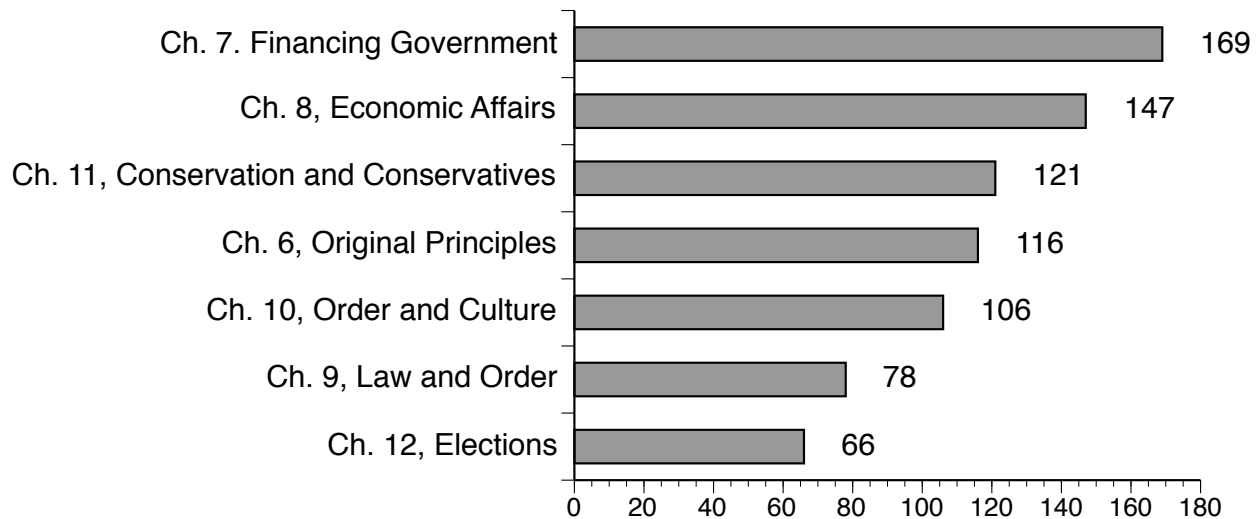
In both Republican epochs, most platform planks related to Public Goods. Consistent with Gerring's characterization, Order planks far outdistanced Freedom planks during the Republican's Nationalism epoch. Browne's sparse data for Gerring's Neoliberalism epoch showed a rise in Freedom planks with decreases in Order and Equality planks—consistent with Gerring's portrayal of favoring the individual over the state. Browne's readily available data on platform planks to 1936 produced results close enough to Gerring's much larger study of party platforms and presidential speeches to encourage collecting my own data on all Republican platform planks since 1856.

To recap: Browne listed 373 Republican platform planks from 1856 to 1936. I identified 540 Republican Planks for the same period. From 1940 to 2016, I cataloged 2,182 more planks for a total of 2,722 from all 41 Republican platforms since 1856. See Appendix B, which accounts for all the coded planks.

APPENDIX B:

Accounting for All Republican 2,722 Platform Planks

Chapters 6 to 12 in Part III considered Republican platform planks adopted since 1856 on key issue areas, but the chapters did not cover all 2,722 planks in all the platforms. Readers should know what was omitted. Two main criteria guided the choice for inclusion: (1) the importance of the topic politically, and (2) the number of planks devoted to the topic. The topic's importance was more important than the number of planks. For example, nearly every Republican platform after the Civil War contained a plank on "providing for veterans," and nearly every Republican plank promised to support the "civil service." Nevertheless, these planks were excluded from consideration; they were not important from the standpoint of partisan politics. Although spending on the space program was politically important, the topic was also excluded because few such planks appeared. Figure B.1 begins the overview of coverage by displaying the distribution of the 803 planks covered in Part III.

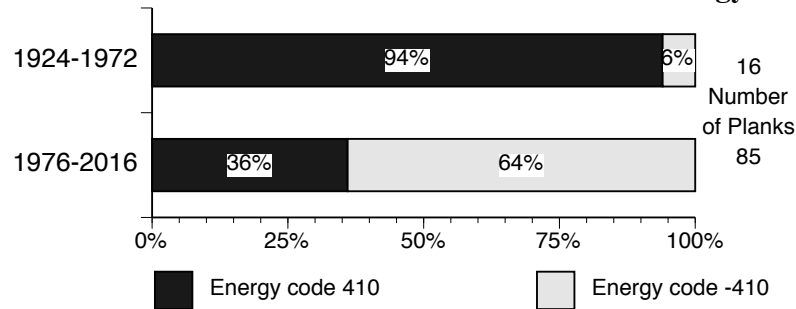
FIGURE B.1: Issues in 803 Party Planks in Chapters 6-12

The 803 planks specifically tallied in those chapters account for 30 percent of the 2,722 planks cataloged for the 41 Republican Party platforms. Many of the missing 70 percent are scattered in small numbers over all 114 coding categories.

Most of the 803 planks considered in Part III pertained to the four core governmental values of Freedom, Order, Equality, and Public Goods. Some topics in the Public Goods category did not fit comfortably in the previous chapters but drew a large number of planks since the 1930s. Four topics—Energy, Health and Welfare, Agriculture, and Foreign Policy—generated many planks and deserve reporting.

Energy planks fell under Public Goods, coded 410 for positive government action concerning energy production or consumption and code -410 for government reliance on private companies. Figure B.2 summarizes the results for 101 energy planks.

FIGURE B.2: 101 Platform Planks on Energy

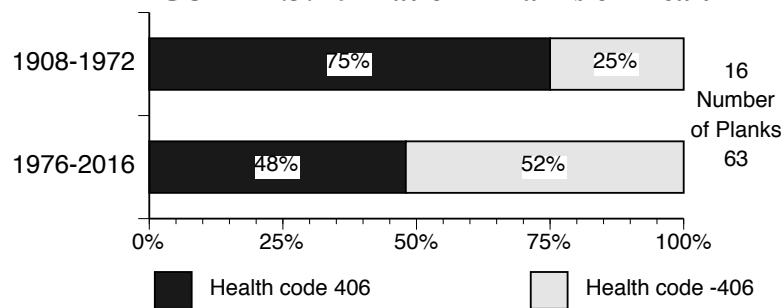


The first Republican plank on energy came in 1924. The party promised to “use publicity to contain coal prices and supply.” In 1932 it asked to “coordinate conservation of oil,” and in 1964 went on record to “favor atomic power and coal.” Almost all of the 16 planks in this period proposed positive government action. By 1976, the party’s approach to energy had changed to encouraging deregulation and promoting private enterprise, as shown by these planks from the 1976 platform:

- eliminate price controls on oil and newly-discovered natural gas
- oppose divestiture of oil companies
- remove regulation on coal mining

Republican planks were coded separately concerning Health and Welfare, both under Public Goods. Health code +406 applied to positive government actions; code –406 to actions against governmental actions. The first of 79 Health planks came in 1908, promising to “secure greater efficiency in National Public Health Agencies.” The data are in Figure B.3.

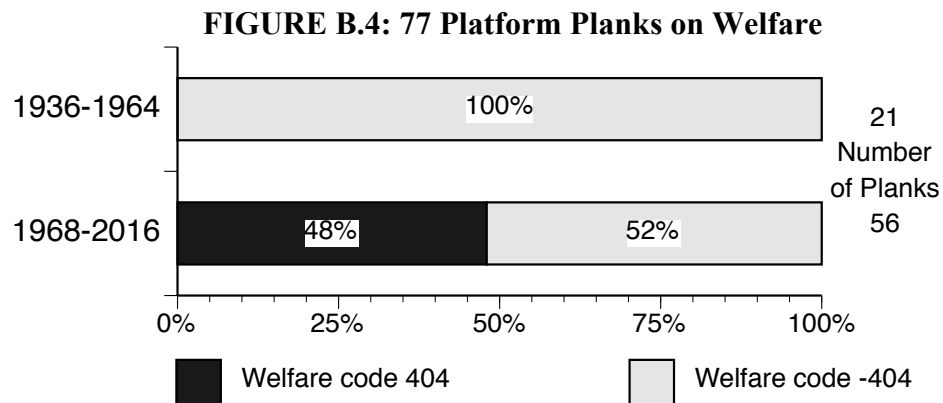
FIGURE B.3: 79 Platform Planks on Health



Up to 1972, most Republican planks on health favored government action. After 1972, a slight majority was negative. Throughout both periods, most negative planks opposed government health insurance and favored private programs. Here are some examples:

- 1952 opposed to Federal compulsory health insurance
- 1960 provide for the option of purchasing private health insurance
- 1968 broaden private health insurance programs
- 1972 oppose nationalized compulsory health insurance
- 1976 oppose compulsory national health insurance
- 1980 further health coverage through tax incentives
- oppose socialized medicine
- reject compulsory health insurance

Public Welfare was addressed in 77 Republican planks. Code +404 referenced positive governmental actions on Welfare; code -404 indicated other preferences. See Figure B.4 for the coding results.



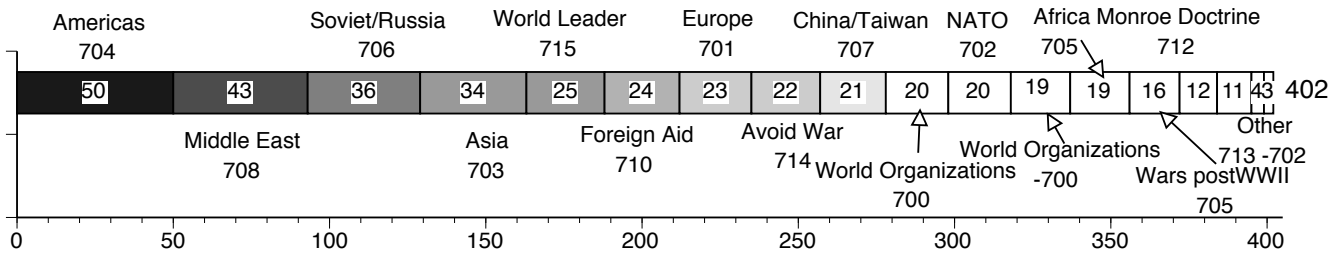
The party's Welfare planks followed a similar pattern as its planks on Health: very positive in earlier periods and mostly negative afterward. Republicans did not adopt a platform plank on welfare until 1936, during the Great Depression. From 1936 to 1960, all its planks were positive; after 1964, they turned negative. Here are the first post-1964 planks:

- 1968 modify rigid welfare requirements that stifle work
- 1972 oppose government-guaranteed income
- 1976 End welfare fraud
strengthen work requirements

Agriculture has faded from the Republican Party's attention over time. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, farming and business associated with farming employed much of America, and party platforms addressed agricultural issues. The 1984 election year divides the total number of Republican planks into two nearly equal groups. Since 1856, agriculture (code 409 under Public Goods) drew a total of 74 planks, but 81 percent of those came before 1984. The 2016 Republican platform spoke about the importance of agricultural exports and praised farmers as the backbone of America, but it contained no planks concerning farming.

The 402 Foreign Policy planks represented 15 percent of the total planks. They scattered widely over twelve coding categories. A nation's foreign policy varies with the times, which upsets longitudinal comparisons. Germany was our enemy twice in two 20th century wars and is now an important close ally. A few global areas warrant mentioning. Republican platforms contained no planks on the Soviet Union or Russia (code 706) until one in 1952, afterwards Soviet Union/Russia drew another 35 planks. Republicans adopted their first plank on the Middle East (code 708) in 1944 (Palestine), followed by another 42 planks on the Middle East, most relating to Israel. Figure B.5 displays the distribution of planks by decreasing frequency.

FIGURE B.5: All 402 Foreign Policy Planks*

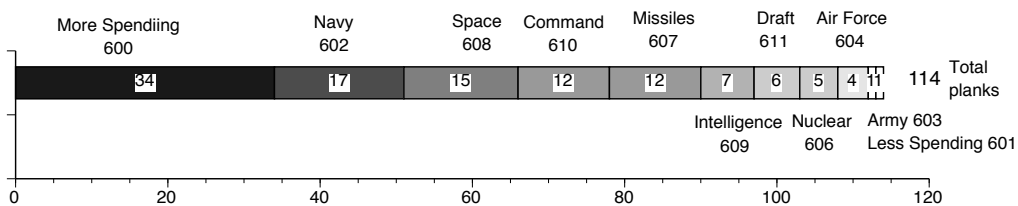


*Negative codes -700 for World Organizations and -702 for NATO signaled opposition.

In a geographic sense, the largest number of Foreign Policy planks (50) pertained to the Americas, including Canada and Latin American countries (code 704). Two codes applied to International Organizations, code +700 for positive planks and code -700 to negative planks. As befits the party's differing positions over time concerning the League of Nations, the United Nations, and the World Court, 20 planks were positive and 19 were negative.

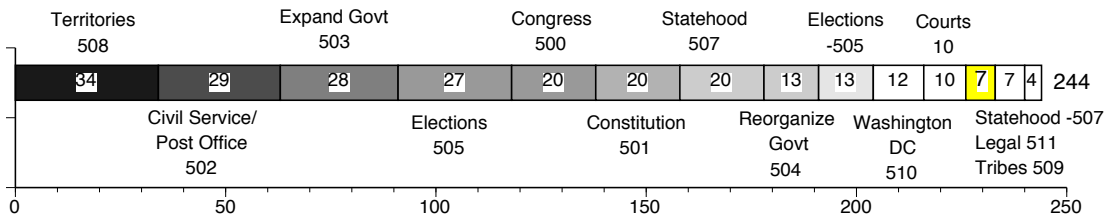
Military planks, like Foreign Policy, are adopted or not according to the international situation. A total of 114 planks fell under the Military. Code 600 applied to 34 planks that favored more spending, and code 601 to the single plank favoring less spending, which came after President G.H.W. Bush won the 1990-1991 Gulf War. The 1992 Republican platform called for a *controlled defense drawdown, not a freefall*. Otherwise the party consistently supported military spending. In addition, Republican platforms had 6 planks on Nuclear Weapons (code 606), 12 on Missiles (code 607), and 7 on Intelligence (code 609). Republicans favored a strong military capability. Figure B.6 reports Military planks by frequency of use.

FIGURE B.6: All 114 Military Planks



The Governmental category had 244 planks. Most of them were noncontroversial, except for Elections and Statehood planks discussed in Chapter 12. Figure B.7 accounts for all others.

FIGURE B.7: All 244 Governmental Planks



Finally, Republican Party platforms has only 18 planks in the “Symbolic” category, and nearly all came early in the party’s history. Graphs reported in the chapters and the appendix account for 67 percent of the 2,722 planks culled from the 41 Republican Party platforms from 1856 to 2016.

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ENDNOTES

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- ¹³ Barry M. Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 15.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- ¹⁵ This section draws heavily from Kenneth Janda, *Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey* (New York: The Free Press, 1980), p. 5.
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- ¹⁷ Leon Epstein's words, "Political Parties in Western Democratic Systems," in Edward H. Burehrig (ed.), *Essays in Political Science*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), 97-130, at p. 104.
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- ¹⁹ Joseph A. Schlesinger noted that some scholars "want to define party to include all the numerous political organizations that call themselves by the name." He continued, "However useful a theory of party based on such a broad definition would be, the theory I propose to elaborate is less ambitious" and applies only to "parties that contest in free elections, and primarily those parties that are able to win elections over time." See Joseph A. Schlesinger, *Political Parties and the Winning of Office* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), p. 6.
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- ²⁴ Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1957), p. 25.
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- ³² U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, “The Cult of the “Führer,”” at <https://www.ushmm.org/propaganda/themes/making-a-leader/>
- ³³ Tatiana Kostadovina and Barry Levitt, “Toward a Theory of Personalist Parties: Concept Formation and Theory Building,” *Politics and Policy* 42, (2014), 490-512.
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- ⁵⁹ Moisey Ostrogorsky, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, Vol. 2* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1964), pp. 138-139.
- ⁶⁰ Richard G. Browne, p. 115.
- ⁶¹ Theodore White, *The Making of the President* (New York: Atheneum, 1961), 7.
- ⁶² Brown (p. 7) credited his professor, Kenneth Colegrove, for the popular phrases, "point with pride" and "view with alarm," which authors often substitute for points 1 and 2 Browne.
- ⁶³ Browne, pp. 9-10.
- ⁶⁴ Browne, pp. 10-11.
- ⁶⁵ Pomper, 1967, pp. 325-326. This list is identical to that contained later in Gerald M. Pomper with Susan S. Lederman. *Elections in America: Control and Influence in Democratic Politics, 2nd Edition* (New York: Longman, 1980), pp. 133-135.
- ⁶⁶ Pomper with Lederman, 1980.
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- ⁶⁸ Judith Bara, "A Question of Trust: Implementing Party Manifestos" *Parliamentary Affairs*, 58 (2005), 585-599; Lucy Mansergh and Robert Thomson, "Election Pledges, Party Competition, and Policymaking," *Comparative Politics*, 39 (April, 2007), 311-329; and Lee W. Payne, "If Elected, I [Still] Promise": American Party Platforms—1980-2008," *The Journal of Political Science*, 41 (2013), 33-60.
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- ⁷⁴ Thackeray and Toye, at p. 10 and p. 2.
- ⁷⁵ Thackeray and Toye, p. 11. Word counts for American party platforms come from the American Presidency Project.
- ⁷⁶ Allan Brimicombe, "Text Mining the Election Manifestos," *British Society of Criminology Newsletter*, No. 76, (Summer 2015), Table 1.
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- ⁹⁵ This chapter draws heavily from Janda, *A Tale of Two Parties*, Chapter 10.
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- ¹⁰⁵ Lewis, p. 8.
- ¹⁰⁶ Lewis, p. 29.
- ¹⁰⁷ Lewis, p. 126.
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- ¹¹¹ John Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America, 1826–1996* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 14.

¹¹² *Ibid.*.

¹¹³ Gerring, p. 294.

¹¹⁴ The information was extracted from Table 2 in Gerring, p. 17.

¹¹⁵ Gerring, p. 15.

¹¹⁶ Gerring, pp. 204 and 40.

¹¹⁷ Gerring, p. 15.

¹¹⁸ Prominent historian Heather Cox Richardson claims instead that the party focused on “central unresolved problem” of tension between “equality of opportunity and protection of property” in *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), p. xi. I disagree with Richardson as did historian Lee Edwards, who wrote in her review, “The continuing tension in the Republican Party is not between advocates of equality and protectors of property but between proponents of liberty and proponents of order.” See “Book Review: 'To Make Men Free' by Heather Cox Richardson,” *Wall Street Journal* (September 19, 2014). I agree with Edwards and Gerring that the central dichotomy for the party was Freedom v. Order.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*.

¹²⁰ Gerring, pp. 142-143.

¹²¹ Gerring, p. 62.

¹²² John E. Gerring, “The Development of American Party Ideology, 1828-1992,” (Berkeley: University of California, 1994), Appendix D.

¹²³ In a brief epilogue, Gerring lapsed into talking about the parties moving left or right, but he saw no essential changes at the 1996 election. Gerring, pp. 283-286.

¹²⁴ American Presidency Project at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/app-categories/elections-and-transitions/party-platforms>.

¹²⁵ Browne, p. 29.

¹²⁶ Charles Merriam and Harold Gosnell, *The American Party System* (1929), cited by Browne on p. 31.

¹²⁷ The term “plan” was used this way as early as 1844. See William Safire, *Safire's Political Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1978), 537-538.

¹²⁸ Robert Harmel, “The how’s and why’s of party manifestos: Some guidance for a cross-national research agenda,” *Party Politics*, 24 (November, 2018), 229-239.

¹²⁹ “Plank” is also unmentioned in Kostas Gemenis, “What to Do (and Not to Do) with the Comparative Manifestos Project Data,” *Political Studies*, 61 (S1, 2013), 3–23.

¹³⁰ Browne, “National Party Platforms and Their Significance,” pp. 57-58.

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¹³² Joseph J. Ellis, *Founding Brothers* (New York; Vintage Books, 2002), won a Pulitzer Prize.

¹³³ Ellis, p. 106.

¹³⁴ Lewis L. Gould, *Grand Old Party: A History of the Republicans* (New York: Random House, 2003), p. 14.

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¹³⁶ Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770).

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¹³⁸ Michael A. Martorelli, “From Tariffs to Taxes,” *Financial History* (Spring, 2019), 20-23, at p. 20.

¹³⁹ Martorelli, p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ Lewis L. Gould, *Grand Old Party: A History of the Republicans* (New York: Random House, 2003), p. 90.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 484.

¹⁴³ Jeff Mason and Doina Chiacu, “Trump promises tariffs on companies that leave U.S. to create jobs overseas,” *Reuters* (August 27, 2020).

¹⁴⁴ Alexander Agadjanian, “When Do Partisans Stop Following the Leader?” *Political Communication*, 38 (2021), 351-369 at p. 352.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 436.

¹⁴⁶ Bureau of the Budget, *Historical Tables, FY2021* (Washington, DC; 2020), Table 1.3.

¹⁴⁷ Presidents are elected in November of even-numbered years. When new presidents take office in January of the following year, they face a budget already outlined by the previous administration. They do not create entirely new ones. So presidents are credited for the fiscal year after they take office.

¹⁴⁸ The 2020 pandemic cost huge sums not represented in President Trump's budgets. So the FY2020 and FY 2021 deficits are vastly underestimated.

¹⁴⁹ Ronald Reagan with Richard G. Hubler, *Where's the Rest of Me?* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965), p. 233.

¹⁵⁰ N. Gregory Mankiw, *Principles of Economics, 7th Ed.*, (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2014), pp. 170-171.

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¹⁵⁵ Rex Hammock, "The 150-Year History of the Term 'Small Business,'" (December 27, 2019) at <https://smallbusiness.com/history-et-cetera/history-of-the-term-small-business/>. He used Google's Ngram Viewer, which scans millions of pages in thousands of documents.

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¹⁷¹ Robert P. Jones, *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Christianity in American Christianity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020), p. 13.

¹⁷² The 77 percent comes from a Pew Survey, see Ruth Igielnik, Scott Keeter and Hannah Hartig, "Behind Biden's 2020 Victory," *Pew Research Center* (June 30, 2021) at <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/>. Exit polls in 2016 reported 81 percent voting for Trump.

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¹⁷⁴ Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: how white evangelicals corrupted a faith and fractured a nation* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing, 2020), p. 73.

¹⁷⁵ Historian Douglas Brinkley documents the case for Roosevelt as the conservation president in *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009).

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¹⁷⁸ Jonathan Martin, "Overthrow of a Party Leader Risks Worsening Republican's Headaches," *New York Times*, (May 13, 2021), p. A18.

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¹⁸⁰ Nathaniel Rakich and Elena Mejía, "Where Republicans Have Made It Harder To Vote (So Far)," *FiveThirtyEight* (May 11, 2021) at <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/republicans-have-made-it-harder-to-vote-in-11-states-so-far/#fn-1>.

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¹⁸² See David A. Crockett, "Dodging the Bullet: Election Mechanics and the Problem of the Twenty-third Amendment," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36 (July 2003): 423–26.

¹⁸³ Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, p. 125-126. Later, Gerring says, "What is missed in this conventional narrative, however, is the sense in which Goldwater himself was the intellectual stepchild of Hoover," p. 155. I sharply disagree.

¹⁸⁴ Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), p. 273. She continued: "Observers in November 1964 thought Movement Conservatives were extremists, soon to be relegated to a footnote in history books."

¹⁸⁵ Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, p. 101.

¹⁸⁶ David H. Bennett, *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History, Revised Edition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988, 1995), p. 395.

¹⁸⁷ Most Evangelicals are Protestant, but some are Catholic. Evangelical Catholics, like Evangelical Protestants, emphasize the Gospel and Jesus Christ. See The Economist, "What is an evangelical Christian?," *The Economist explains* (March 1, 2021) at <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2021/03/01/what-is-an-evangelical-christian>. See "Evangelical Catholicism" by Father Jay Scott Newman, Pastor of St Mary's Catholic Church, Greenville, South Carolina, at <http://stmarysgvl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Evangelical-Catholicism-Explained.pdf>. Father Newman wrote: "By our Baptism we are called to receive the Gospel as a complete, coherent, comprehensive Way of Life; in other words, we are called to be disciples, or students, of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁸⁸ Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 214.

¹⁸⁹ Bennett, *The Party of Fear*, p. 379 and p. 389.

¹⁹⁰ Edric Huang, Jenny Dorsey, Claire Mosteller, and Emily Chen, "Understanding Anti-Intellectualism in the U.S., and how it is literally killing us," *Studio ATAO* (November 13, 2020) at <https://www.studioatao.org/post/understanding-anti-intellectualism-in-the-u-s>.

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⁴¹⁵ John Boehner, *On the House: A Washington Memoir* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2021), p. 247.

⁴¹⁶ Arnold Offner, p. 3.

⁴¹⁷ Miles Taylor and Christine Todd Whitman, "We Are Republicans. There's Only One Way to Save Our Party From Pro-Trump Extremists," *New York Times* (October 11, 2021).

⁴¹⁸ Kenneth Janda, *A Tale of Two Parties: Living Amongst Democrats and Republicans Since 1952* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

⁴¹⁹ "Ipsos/Reuters Poll: The Big Lie" (May 21, 2021), at <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2021-05/Ipsos%20Reuters%20Topline%20Write%20up-%20The%20Big%20Lie%20-%202017%20May%20thru%202019%20May%202021.pdf>

⁴²⁰ Clinton Rossiter, "Conservatism," in David L. Sills (ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Volume 3* (New York: Macmillan and The Free Press, 1968), 290-295.

⁴²¹ Rossiter, p. 291.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁴²³ The value tradeoffs between order, freedom, and equality are discussed in Kenneth Janda et al., *The Challenge of Democracy* (Boston, Cengage, 2021), Chapter 1.

⁴²⁴ Barry M. Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 5-6.

⁴²⁵ Indeed, Wayne Allyn Root, the 2008 vice-presidential candidate of the Libertarian Party and Barry Goldwater devotee titled his book, *The Conscience of a Libertarian* (New York: John Wiley, 2009). Chapter 1 was labeled, "It's All Familiar: The Journey Begins with Barry Goldwater."

⁴²⁶ Richard G. Browne, "National Party Platforms and Their Significance" (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 1936).

⁴²⁷ Edward F. Cooke, "Origin and Development of Party Platforms," *The Social Studies*, 51 (1960), 174-177.

⁴²⁸ Browne lists all party planks by election years on pp. 48-50.

⁴²⁹ Browne, pp. 34-35.

⁴³⁰ Browne, p. 52.

⁴³¹ Browne, p. 54.

⁴³² Browne, p. 256.

⁴³³ Why did Browne fail to classify and analyze the 1,666 platform planks so laboriously assembled in 1936? Perhaps because it was 1936, when political scientists then lacked the knowledge, tradition, and tools for empirical research. Regardless of the reason, I am grateful for his dogged collection of data on party planks. Almost a century after he collected them, his planks are readily transformed into a database for contemporary analysis. Despite not clearly defining his unit of

analysis (the plank), Browne's painstaking and comprehensive research on United States party platforms offers detailed insights into positions taken by the two major parties over the last half of the 19th century and the first third of the 20th.