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Trumped: How Donald J. Trump Defied the Odds and Won the Presidency

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Against all odds, Donald J. Trump shocked the world when he won the 2016 presidential election and became the 45th President of the United States.

The following is our explanation and analysis of how and why he won.

TRUMPED

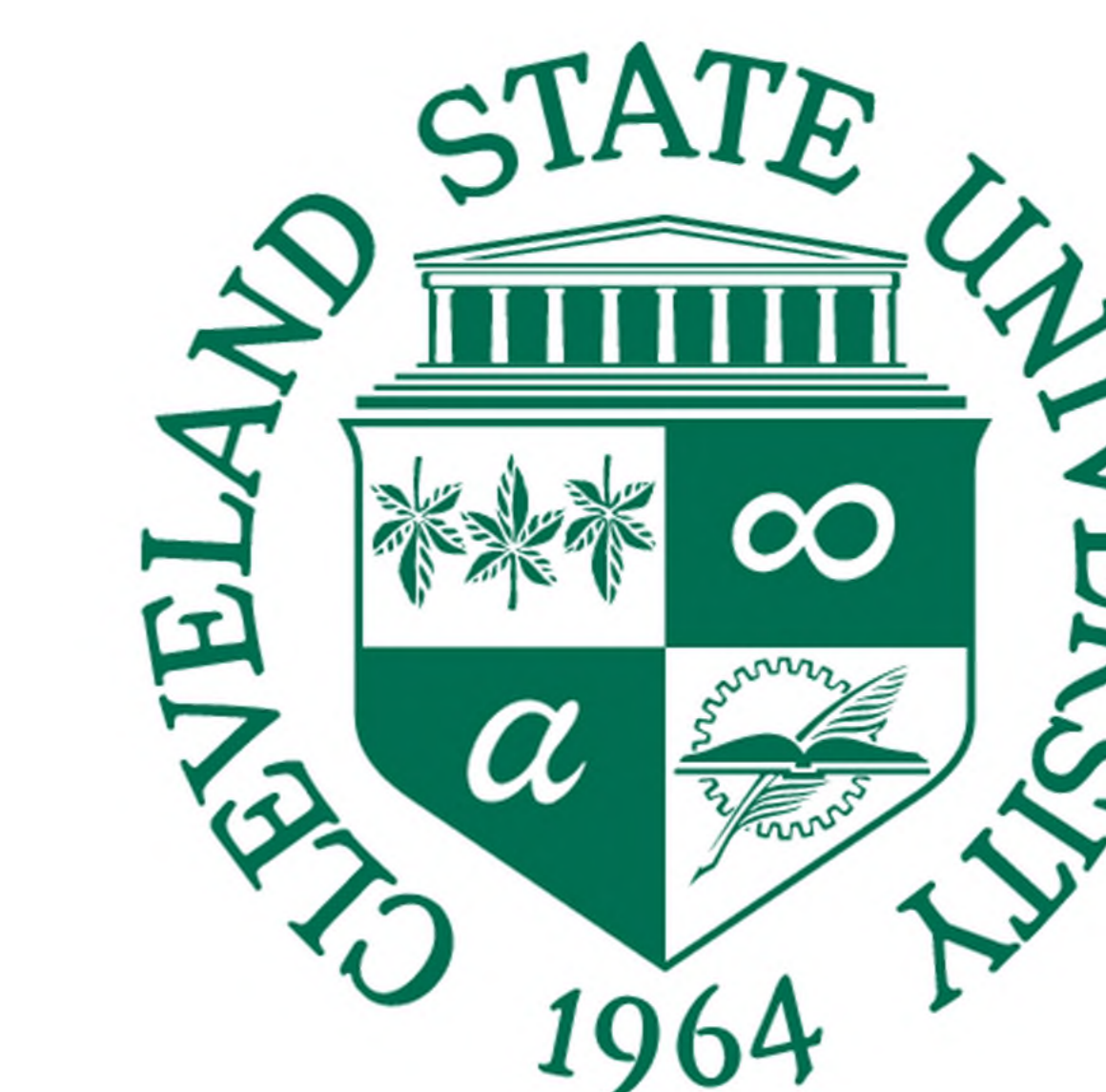
How Donald J. Trump Defied the Odds and Won the Presidency

Project Leader: Professor Joel Lieske

Student Researchers: Nick Mintern

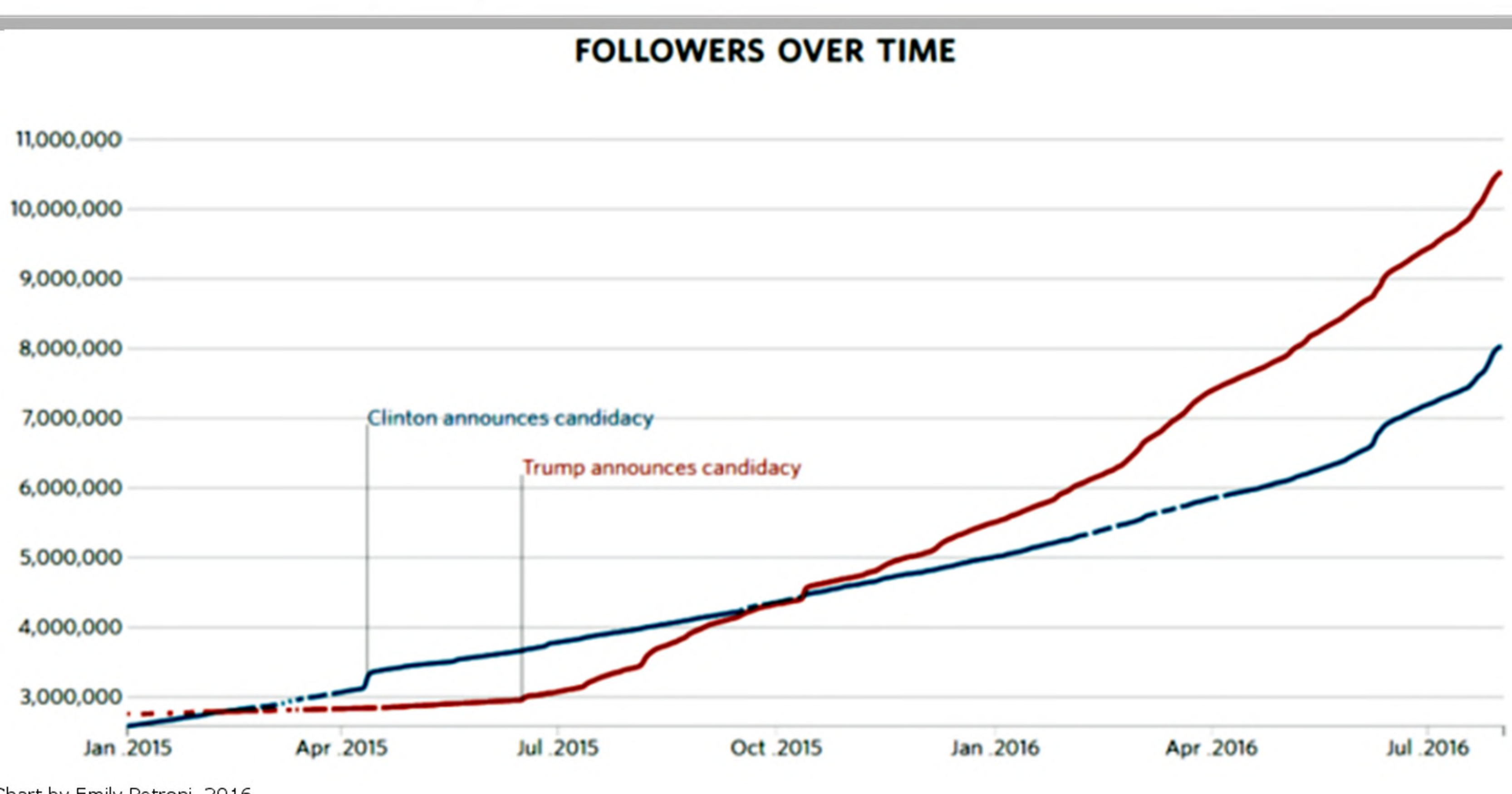
Chad Wright

Joe Massaroni



Make America Great Again

Several key aspects of Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign combined to facilitate his Electoral College victory



- Social Media**

Trump's controversial yet strategic use of social media caused the size of his audience to skyrocket (and at little to no monetary expense to him or his campaign)

- Populist movement**

Trump's policy positions were better suited to appeal to an increasingly popular Populist movement

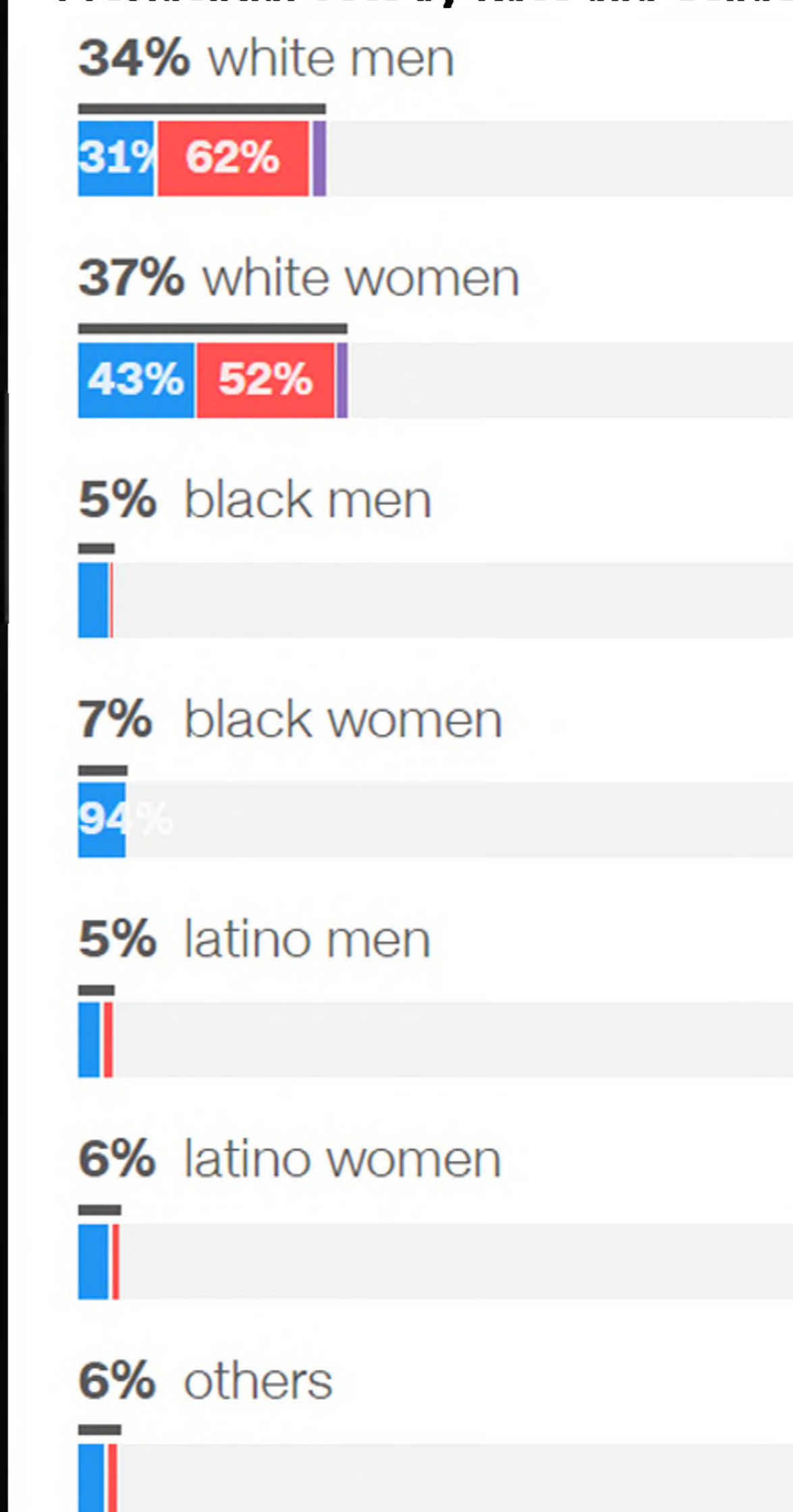
- Campaign Trail**

Trump held considerably more rallies in key swing states than did his opponent Hillary Clinton

Strong Policies and Mixed Enthusiasm

Donald Trump won not only because of the strength of his policy positions, but also because of the weaknesses of his opponent, Hillary Clinton. The Trump campaign's gravitational pull of those on the outskirts of the political arena contributed greatly to him winning the presidency.

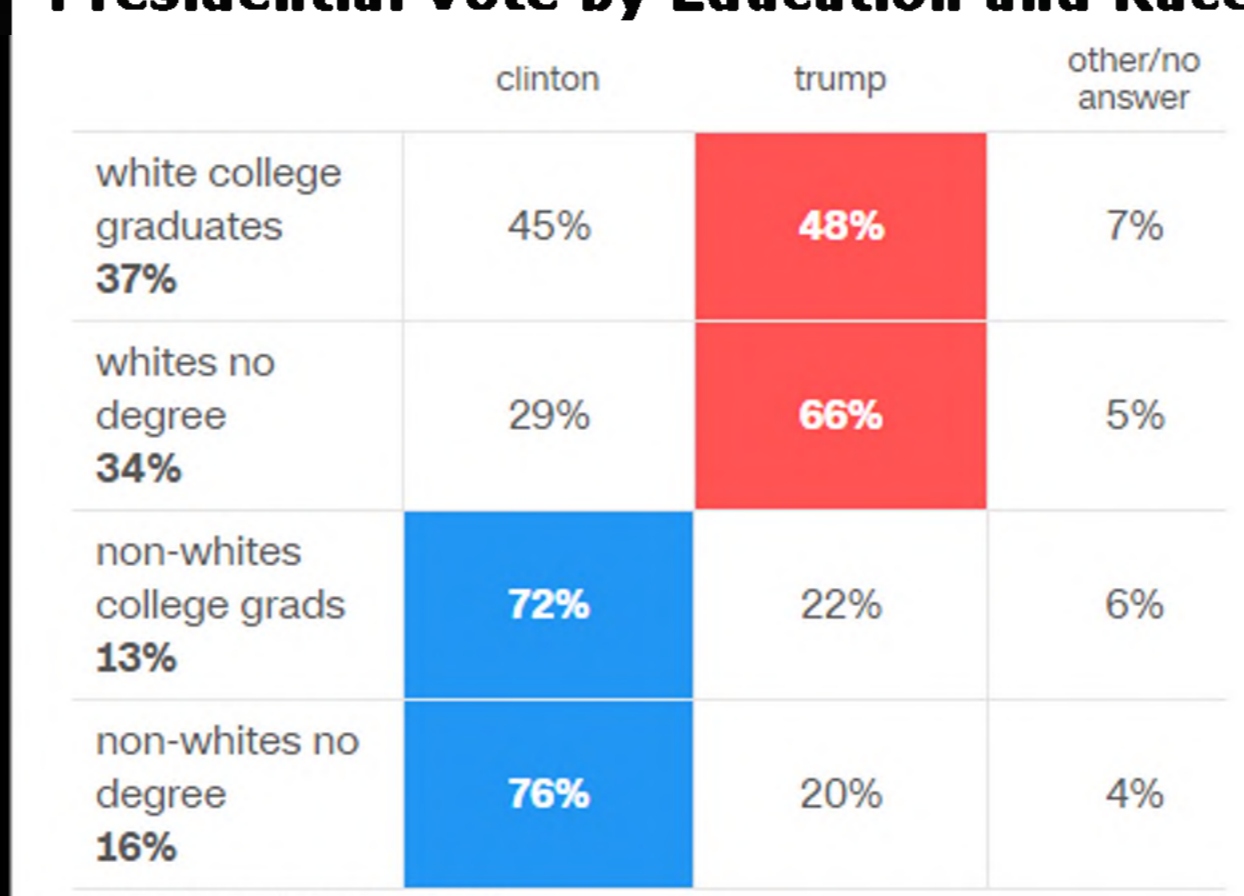
Presidential Vote by Race and Gender



Trump's policies appealed to those who had lost influence in the Post-Cold War era. There were some studies that predicted Trump's win through economic dissatisfaction due to mergers and acquisitions, globalization and automation. In addition, a majority of white, non-college graduate men voted for Trump because they thought that the national economy was in a poor state and that illegal immigrants should be deported back to their own countries (CNN 2016).

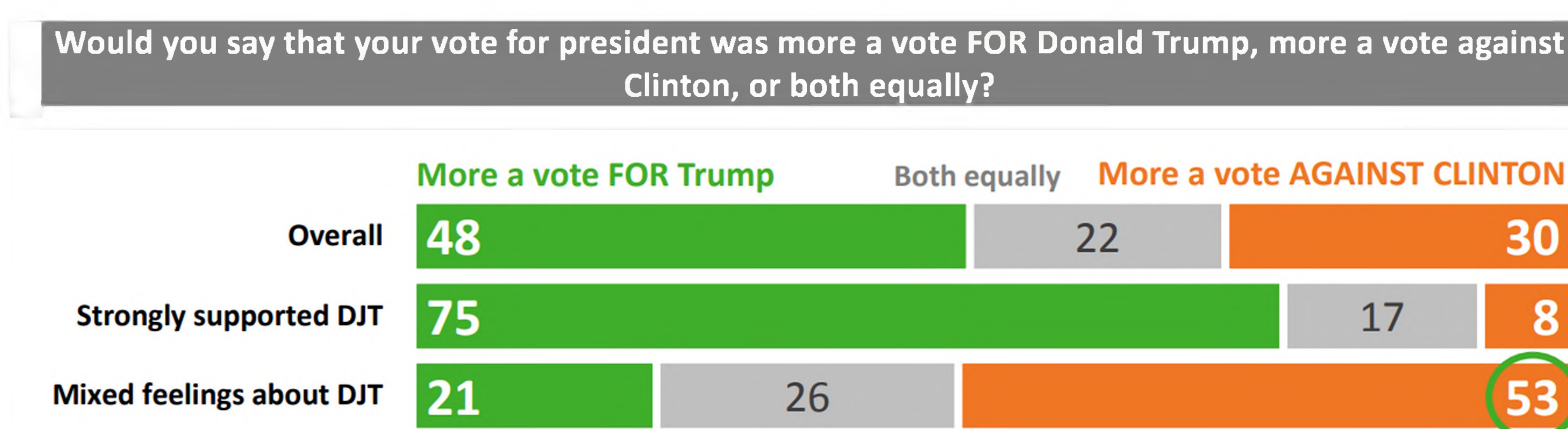
A large factor in Clinton's loss was that she was a weak candidate. In one study, 61% of drop-off voters (those who only vote during presidential elections) decided not to vote ahead of time. Their reasons included statements such as "I did not like either candidate", "I think both candidates were not a good fit for president" and that "Neither candidate was trustworthy." (Global Strategy Group, and Garin Hart Yang).

Presidential Vote by Education and Race



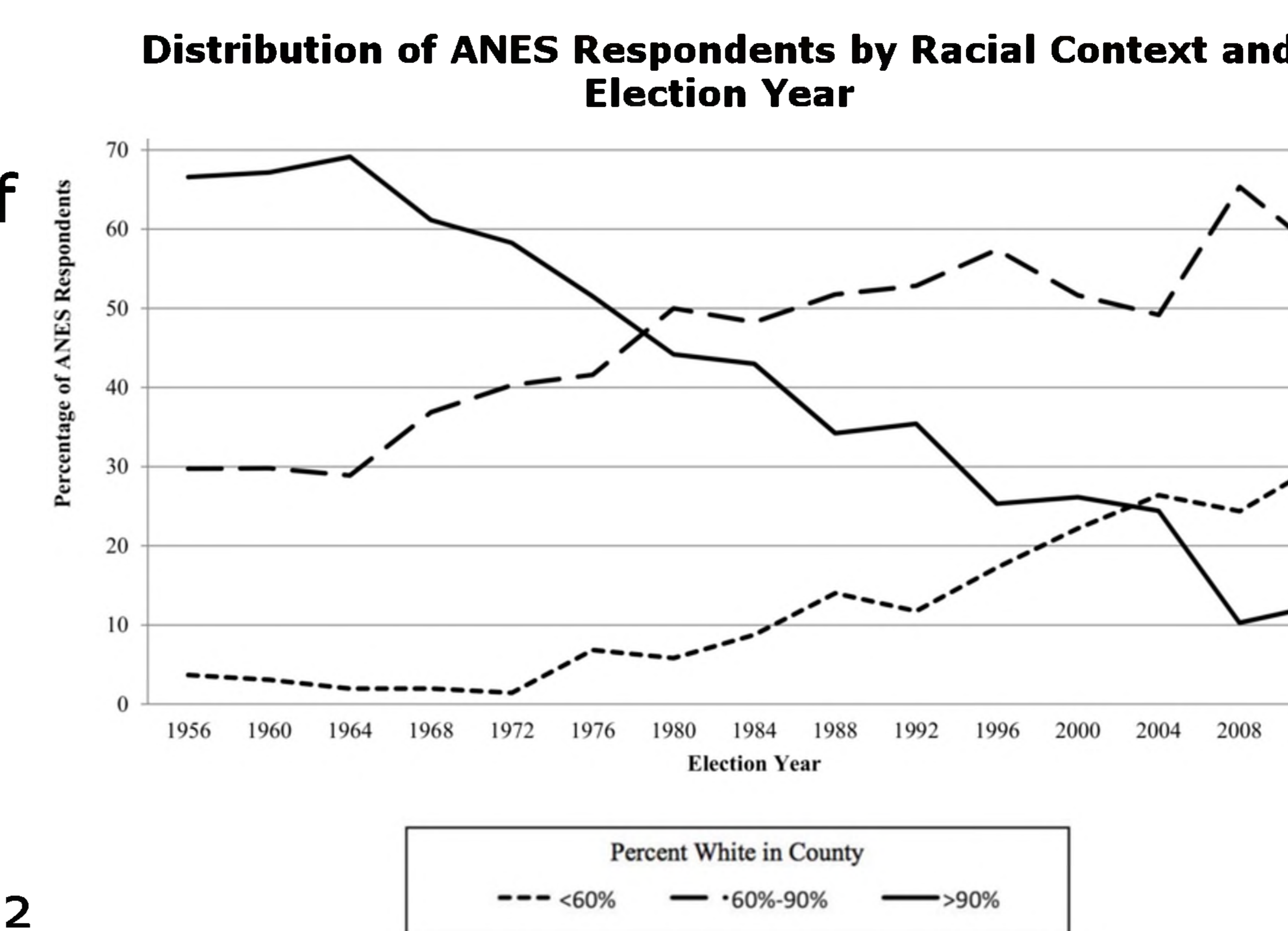
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Obama-Trump drop-off voters

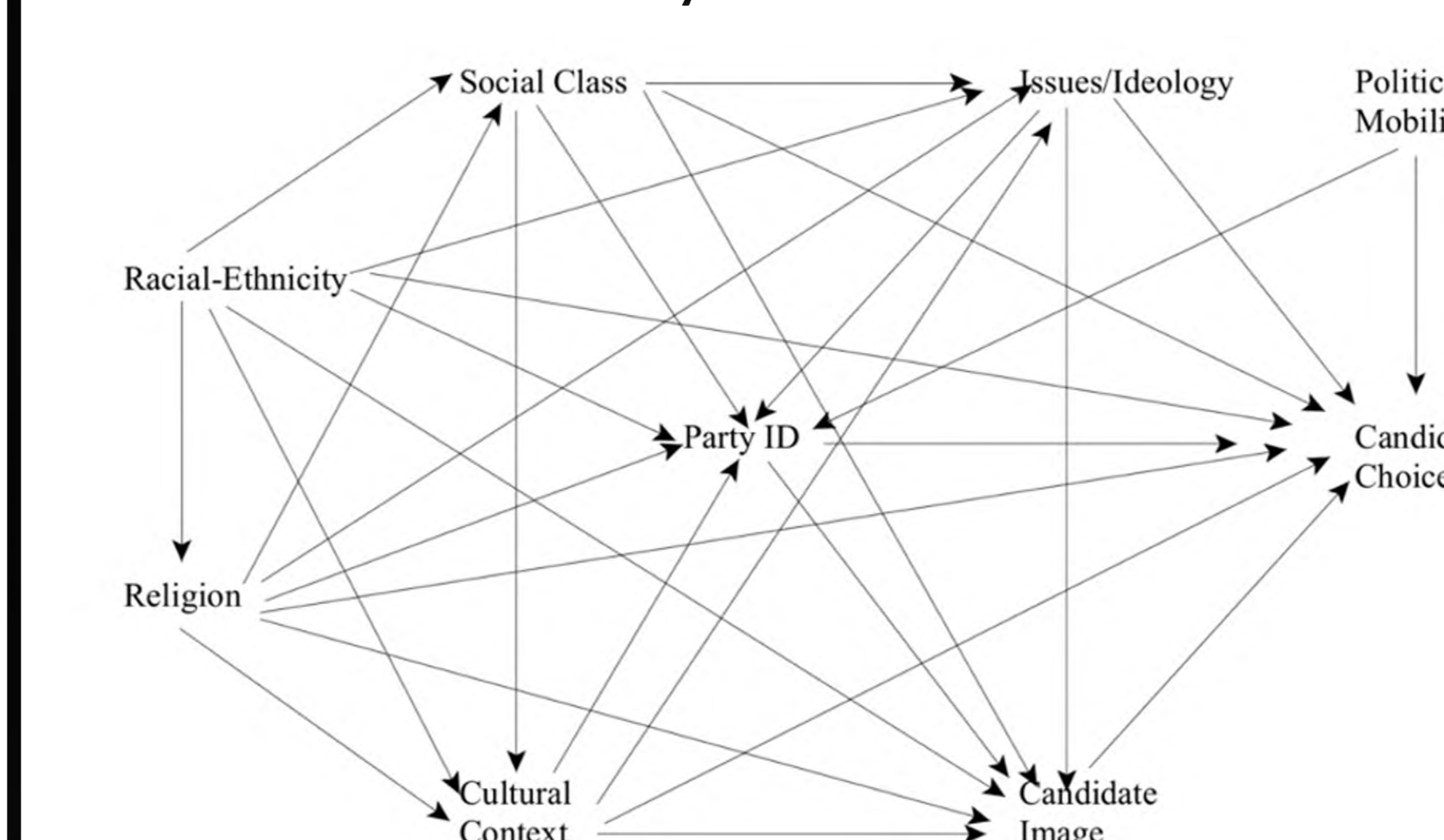


How Diversity Affected the Outcome

Diversity produces different social outcomes depending on the level of diversity in a given area. At an **integrated local level**, people of all races generally become **more tolerant** of each other as their misconceptions of other races are dispelled.¹ But at the same time, diversity on a **larger scale** with limited positive contact between races produces the opposite effect; among all races, **tolerance goes down** and **racial resentment increases** as the perceived social and economic "threats" from other races increase.²



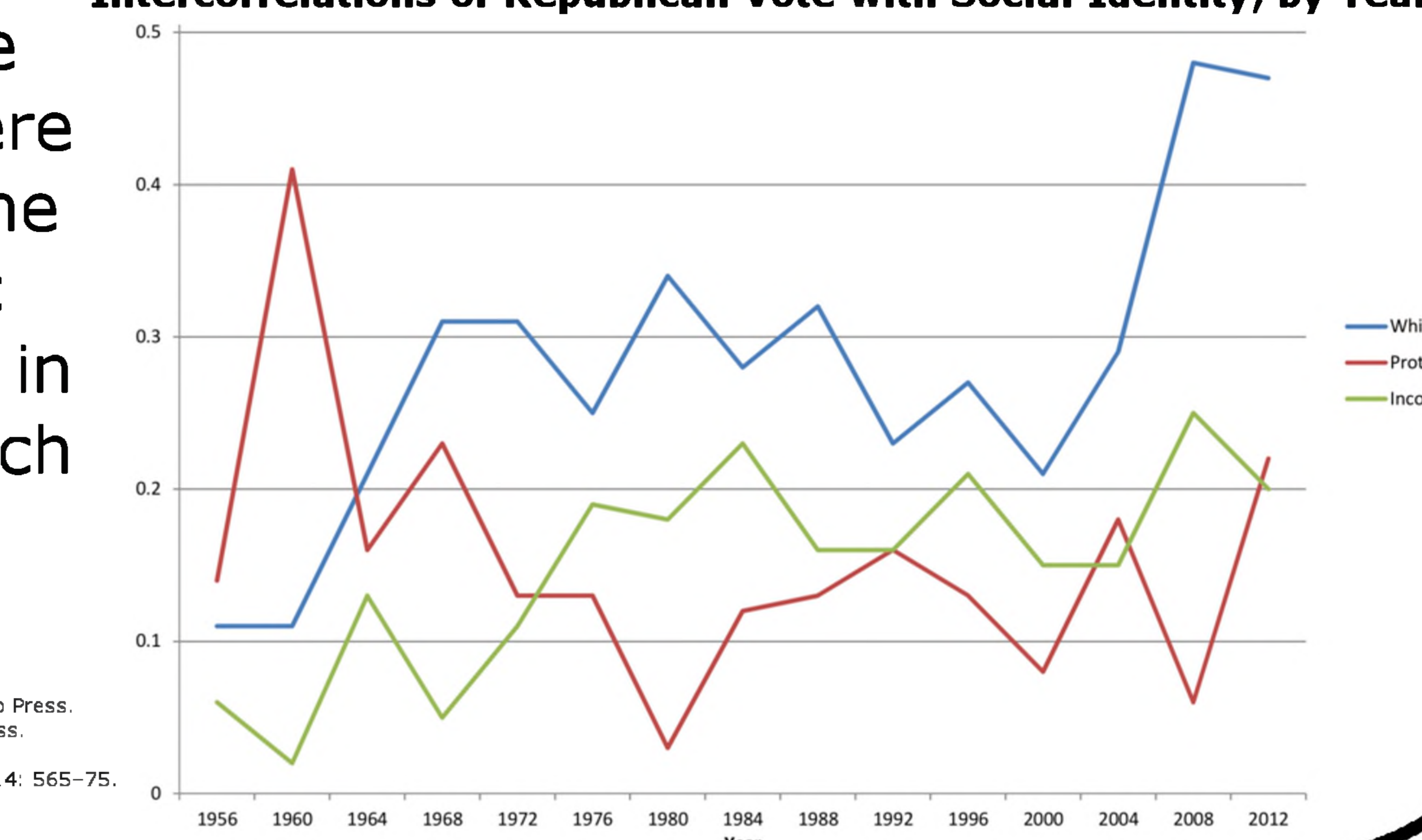
A Cultural Model of Party Identification and Candidate Choice



Consequently, public perception of the **Democratic party** is generally that it is the **party of minorities**.⁵ Under conditions where diversity has driven racial resentment up, the Democratic party's minority-centered public image is **driving white voters away** and, in many cases, to the **Republican party**, which the public generally perceives as the non-minority, or white, party.⁷

The **social identity theory** of party identification posits that people choose their party based on the **social groups** (e.g. racial, religious, etc) they believe are associated with each party.³ **Race** has consistently been found to be one of the **innately dominant** social identity groups⁴, and the Democratic party's adoption of a platform based on **civil rights** for minorities in 1948 essentially solidified support among minorities for the Democratic party.⁵

Intercorrelations of Republican Vote with Social Identity; by Year



1 - Oliver, J Eric. 2010. The Paradoxes of Integration: Race, Neighborhood, and Civic Life in Multiethnic America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 2 - Green, Donald, et al. 2002. Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
 3 - Vanhaeren, Teun. 1993. "Domestic Ethnic Conflict and Ethnic Neoliberalism: A Comparative Analysis." Journal of Peace Research 36(1): 55-73.
 4 - Scarrow, Howard A, and Stony Brook. 1993. "The Impact of the Voting Rights Act on American Political Parties." American Review of Politics 14: 565-75.
 5 - Whipple, Teah. 2007. Race, Republicans, and the Return of the Party of Lincoln. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.