


Political Polarization in the U.S. The Geographical Divide & The Rise of the Tea Party Movement

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Abramowitz, Chapters 5 & 6

TABLE 5.1
Distributions of States and Voters by State Competitiveness in Presidential Elections

	1960 (%)	1976 (%)	2000 (%)	2004 (%)	2008 (%)
STATES (# of)					
HIGH	20	20	12	11	6
MODERATE	14	11	10	10	9
LOW	7	9	6	8	9
VERY LOW	9	11	23	22	27
VOTERS (% of)					
HIGH	52	59	28	24	19
MODERATE	30	20	22	29	13
LOW	8	11	22	16	19
VERY LOW	11	10	34	31	49

Source: www.uselectionatlas.org
Note: High, 0-4.99%; Moderate, 5-9.99%; Low, 10-14.99%; Very low, 15% plus. District of Columbia included in 1976-2008 results.

TABLE 5.2
Characteristics of Voters in Red States and Blue States in 2008

	RED STATES (%)	BLUE STATES (%)
ATTEND CHURCH		
WEEKLY	48	28
MONTHLY	12	11
OCCASIONALLY, NEVER	40	60
BORN AGAIN, EVANGELICAL	60	38
GUN OWNER	49	32
UNION HOUSEHOLD	6	18

Source: 2008 American National Election Study

TABLE 5.3
Political Attitudes of Voters in Red States and Blue States in 2008

	RED STATES (%)	BLUE STATES (%)
DEMOCRAT	42	59
INDEPENDENT	7	8
REPUBLICAN	51	33
LIBERAL	22	39
MODERATE	26	26
CONSERVATIVE	52	35
PRO-CHOICE	31	53
MIXED	20	20
PRO-LIFE	49	27
FAVOR GAY MARRIAGE	29	47
CIVIL UNIONS ONLY	28	29
NEITHER	44	24
FAVOR SINGLE PAYER	38	53
NEUTRAL	10	9
OPPOSE SINGLE PAYER	51	38

Source: 2008 American National Election Study

TABLE 5.4
The Partisan Orientations of States Represented by Incumbent U.S. Senators

	96TH SENATE (1979-80) (%)	112TH SENATE (2011-12) (%)
SUPPORTIVE (Safe straight-ticket states)	37	71
COMPETITIVE	40	12
OPPOSITIONAL (Safe split-ticket states)	23	17
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Data compiled by author
Note: Supportive, percentage of states won by a margin of at least 5 percentage points by the candidate of a senator's party; Oppositional, percentage of states won by a margin of at least 5 percentage points by the candidate of the opposing party; Competitive, percentage of states won by a margin of less than 5 percentage points.

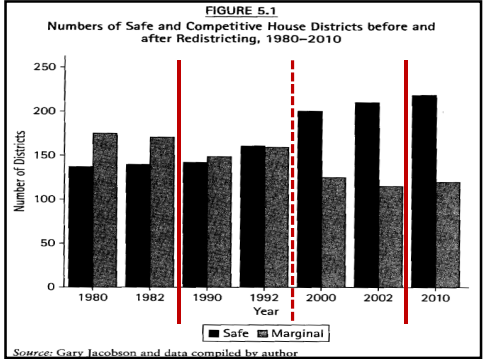


TABLE 6.1
Campaign Activism by Decade among Republican Identifiers

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES	52-60 (%)	62-70 (%)	72-80 (%)	82-90 (%)	92-00 (%)	02-08 (%)
0	13	16	21	28	22	13
1	41	42	39	40	39	37
2	24	22	23	21	26	31
3+	22	20	17	11	13	19

Source: American National Election Studies Cumulative File (1952-2008)
Note: Scores indicate the number of election activities a respondent reported engaging in (see text).

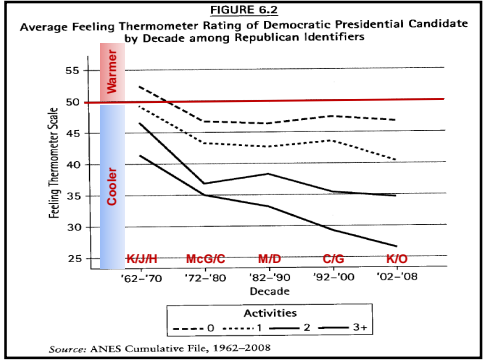
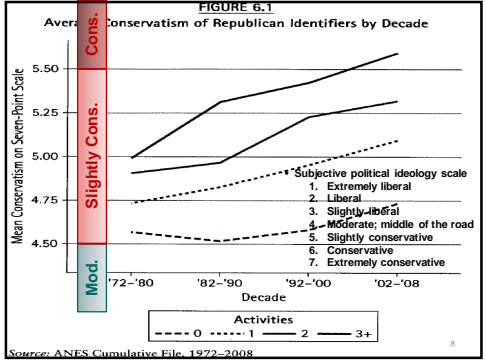


TABLE 6.2
Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Active Republicans versus Overall Electorate in 2008

	ACTIVE REPUBLICANS (%)	OVERALL ELECTORATE (%)
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS		
WHITE	92	75
MALE	50	45
COLLEGE GRADUATES	44	29
18-29 YEARS OLD	16	21
50 AND OLDER	50	43
INCOME \$75,000 OR MORE	55	37
WEEKLY CHURCHGOER	50	33
POLITICAL ATTITUDES		
CONSERVATIVE	83	42
VERY CONSERVATIVE	59	26
OPPOSE HEALTH CARE REFORM	74	37
PRO-LIFE ON ABORTION	58	42
OPPOSE GAY MARRIAGE	83	61
FAVOR REDUCED GOVERNMENT ROLE	75	41
NEGATIVE RATING OF OBAMA	69	29
POSITIVE RATING OF PALIN	84	46

Source: 2008 ANES.

TABLE 6.3
Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Tea Party Supporters versus Nonsupporters

	TEA PARTY SUPPORTERS (%)	NONSUPPORTERS (%)
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTITUDES		
AGE ≥ 44	70	59
WHITE	85	75
MALE	63	45
MARRIED	62	49
INCOME \$75,000+	31	24
COLLEGE GRAD	27	30
BORN AGAIN/EVANGELICAL	52	33
WEEKLY CHURCHGOER	50	36
BELIEVE BIBLE, ACTUAL WORD OF GOD	49	28
GUN OWNER	43	29
POLITICAL AND RACIAL ATTITUDES		
REPUBLICAN IDEOLOGY OR LEAN	86	32
CONSERVATIVE IDEOLOGY	85	29
DISLIKE OBAMA	84	27
LIKE PALIN	77	19
BIRTHING	44	22
OPPOSE ENDING "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL"	67	31
OPPOSE CLEAN ENERGY	74	21
OPPOSE HEALTH CARE REFORM	81	33
OPPOSE STEM CELL RESEARCH	66	29
OPPOSE ECONOMIC STIMULUS	87	41
DISAGREE BLACKS ARE VICTIMS	74	39
DISAGREE BLACKS GOTTEN LESS	77	42
AGREE BLACKS NEED TO TRY HARDER	66	36
AGREE NO FAVORS FOR BLACKS	80	48

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010.

TABLE 6.4
Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Republican Tea Party Supporters versus Other Republicans

	TEA PARTY SUPPORTERS (%)	OTHER REPUBLICANS (%)
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTITUDES		
AGE ≥ 44	70	59
WHITE	86	89
MALE	66	48
MARRIED	62	63
INCOME \$75,000+	32	27
COLLEGE GRAD	28	32
BORN AGAIN/EVANGELICAL	52	38
WEEKLY CHURCHGOER	52	42
BELIEVE BIBLE, ACTUAL WORD OF GOD	47	34
GUN OWNER	44	42
POLITICAL AND RACIAL ATTITUDES		
STRONG REPUBLICAN IDEOLOGY	43	21
CONSERVATIVE IDEOLOGY	90	62
DISLIKE OBAMA	90	55
LIKE PALIN	82	38
BIRTHING	46	37
OPPOSE ENDING "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL"	71	44
OPPOSE CLEAN ENERGY	81	32
OPPOSE HEALTH CARE REFORM	88	58
OPPOSE STEM CELL RESEARCH	71	41
OPPOSE ECONOMIC STIMULUS	91	62
DISAGREE BLACKS ARE VICTIMS	74	54
DISAGREE BLACKS GOTTEN LESS	77	58
AGREE BLACKS NEED TO TRY HARDER	65	42
AGREE NO FAVORS FOR BLACKS	82	65

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010.

TABLE 6.5
Logistic Regression Analysis of Tea Party Support among Whites

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	LOGIT COEFFICIENT	STANDARD ERROR	SIGNIFICANCE	CHANGE IN PROBABILITY
AGE	.141	.060	.01	+0.027
FEMALE	-.511	.191	.01	-.024
EDUCATION	.073	.055	.10	+0.016
INCOME	-.033	.025	.10	-.013
CHURCH ATTENDANCE	-.011	.057	n.s.	-.000
PARTY IDENTIFICATION	-.188	.064	.01	-.034
CONSERVATISM	.354	.041	.001	+0.187
DISLIKE OF OBAMA	.227	.071	.001	+0.063
RACIAL RESENTMENT	.155	.034	.001	+0.118
CONSTANT	-6.137			

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010
Note: Significance levels based on one-tailed test.

TABLE 6.6
Political Activities of Republican Tea Party Supporters versus Other Republicans

ACTIVITY	TEA PARTY SUPPORTERS (%) (45%)	OTHER REPUBLICANS (%) (55%)
REGISTERED TO VOTE	(+17%) 92	75
CONTACTED PUBLIC OFFICIAL	(+24%) 44	20
GIVEN MONEY TO CAMPAIGN	(+13%) 22	9
ATTENDED RALLY/MEETING	(+17%) 24	7
DISPLAYED SIGN/BUMPER STICKER	(+14%) 25	11

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010