

“Electoral Behaviour in the USA: the Newest Results”

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What I do today is to organize my remarks around some common misconceptions about American politics and these are widely, prevalently United States’ misconceptions and so I assume that those that receive none but United States American media probably share some of the same misconceptions.

Some Common Misperceptions

- 1. The 2004 Elections
- 2. Popular Polarization
- 3. Religion v. Economics
- 4. Stability of the Current Order

First- they are puzzled about what happened in the 2004 elections; second- just how polarized, how divided is the American electorate; third- the question of whether religion has displaced economics as the primary cleavage in the American politics, as some argue; then, forth- I will say some more speculative things about the stability of the current order in the American politics.

For the first three, I have quite a bit of data, while the last one is more speculative and remarks there given to some theoretical issues may have some rather relevance for those of you studying European elections, as well.

1. So, first the question of *what happened in the 2004 elections*

The 2004 Elections

- The Moral Values Myth
- Christian Conservatives

- What Really Mattered
- Who Really Re-elected George Bush

Right after, really the morning after, the media promulgated the myth that the elections have been decided on the basis of moral values and that George Bush owed his re-election to the support of Christian conservatives, some “social conservatives”, we call them sometimes in the United States.

Neither of those things is true. When I talk about what really mattered in the last elections, I focus on *groups*, who really re-elected George Bush.

The myth of moral values turned out to come from a single poorly-phrased exit-poll item that the media talked and ran with: it was: “What is the most important issue and how you decided it?” and they gave people these categories:

National Election Pool

Most Important Issue:

Taxes	5%
Education	4
Iraq	15
Terrorism	19
Economy/Jobs	20
Moral Values	22
Health Care	8

As you can see, the result was pretty spread out, but the media looked and said that moral values were number one, with 22%; moral values must mean abortion and gay marriage and therefore that’s what the election was about. That’s a very tenuous conclusion, given how

data had spread out; moreover, none of these moral values is a category or it has been compared with individual issues; for example, the Bush administration tried to equate Iraq and terrorism.

The Carry campaign was about economic issues: education, economy, jobs, health care.

We can go in the other direction and say that those moral values encompass more than abortion and gay marriage, because the amount of people referring expressly to abortion and gay marriage, in that category, range from 5% to 9%, referring specifically to those issues.

One of the reasons for this interpretation [the myth of the moral values victory] was the fact that the Bush campaign had worked to put a series of what we call “GMIs” – Gay Marriage Issues – on the ballot in the States. So, this circumstance was the evidence that indicated that the republicans had to bring up the social conservatives, as succeeded they elected George Bush.

Now, going back to the data, you find that turnout actually surged less in the States than when gay marriage was on the ballot:

The Gay Marriage Issue

- Turnout up less in states with GMIs on ballot
- Turnout among Evangelicals rose -- by same amount as everyone else
- Evangelicals broke more heavily for Bush in 2004 than 2000?
- So did:
 - African-Americans (+2.5)
 - Latinos (+8.9)
 - Jews (+6.5)
 - Northeasterners (+3.8)
 - Regular church-goers (- 0.1)
 - Non-church-goers (+2.9)
 - Women (+4.0)

That turnout rose among Evangelicals, but it rose of about the same amount as everyone else. This was a *high turnout election in the United States*, to about 60%, but this increasing turnout was pretty much across the board, across all categories.

The third point is a little contested. It seems Evangelicals voted for Bush a few percentage points higher than in 2000; but so did large parts of other groups, including groups we normally don't think have a socially conservative orientation, such as Afro-Americans, Latinos, Jews, people who live in the North-East, people who don't go to the church and women. On the contrary, for example, people who were regular church-goers (people who go once a week or more often), in fact, didn't vote for Bush.

In fact, studies that look at the importance of issues found *gay marriage to be waded down to the bottom.*

ISSUE IMPORTANCE: 2004

	Extremely <u>Important</u>	Not at All <u>Important</u>
Terrorism	45	1
Jobs	40	2
.		
.		
.		
Gay Marriage	26	24

Hillygus and Shields (KN Survey)

This was the study: gay marriage was the 15th issue, as they rated it from “extremely important”, “fairly important”, “not at all important”, while they found that *terrorism was the number one issue in election*; job was number two. So, gay marriage was 15th out of 16 issues.

Another study published recently, an American election study, which asked people to say in their own words what was the most important issue in the election, shows that 43% cited “terrorism”:

Most Important Issue 2004
Klinkner (NES)

	<u>% Citing</u>	<u>Bush Vote</u>
• Terrorism	43	70
• Iraq	17	31
• Economy	15	30
• Morals	< 3	76
• All Other	22	38

This was, according to the author, the single largest number of Americans deciding any specific issue since Vietnam, in 1968, when the figure was 44%.

This was really an election about people’s fears, about terrorism and about the Republican successfully campaign on images of strength, the Democrats being unable to

project a convincing and persuasive image that they can keep the country safe. People choosing any kind of moral issue, in this study, was less than 3% of the population. Now, the sensational thing that people citing “Iraq” did not vote for Bush (second line of the graph above), in particular high rates that Iraq was already beginning to be separated from “terrorism” was the nugget here.

In contrast with the argument that Christian conservatives re-elected Bush, you could argue it was *women*:

NOT EVANGELICALS ... WOMEN
The Republican Swing Among Women Was General

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Gain</u>
Black Women	5.8%	9.8%	4.0%
Latina Women	34.9	41.4	6.5
White Women	50.5	55.5	5.0
Married Black Women	7.1	11.5	4.4
Married Latina Women	37.3	43.8	6.5
Married White Women	54.9	61.8	6.9
Married WW with Children	58.9	66.0	7.1
Married WW without Children	51.5	59.4	7.9
Unmarried WW with Children	40.6	47.1	6.5
Unmarried WW without Children	40.3	43.1	2.8

Source: Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope. 2005

The surge of Bush between 2000 and 2004 was about 2,5% of the popular vote. The surge about women was around 4 to 5% of the popular vote.

As you know, there has been a gender gap in the United States, caused with generation now where women typically vote more democratic than men. That gender gap closed up in 2004 and across all categories of women: ethnicity (latinos and white women), married and single women. The only group that seems somewhat to resist to the Bush appeal was unmarried, white women who had no children, primarily younger women, working in the labour force.

So, basically, the surge of 4 to 5% among women can account for giving a little more than half of the electorate, can account for most of the 2,5% Bush surge in the popular vote.

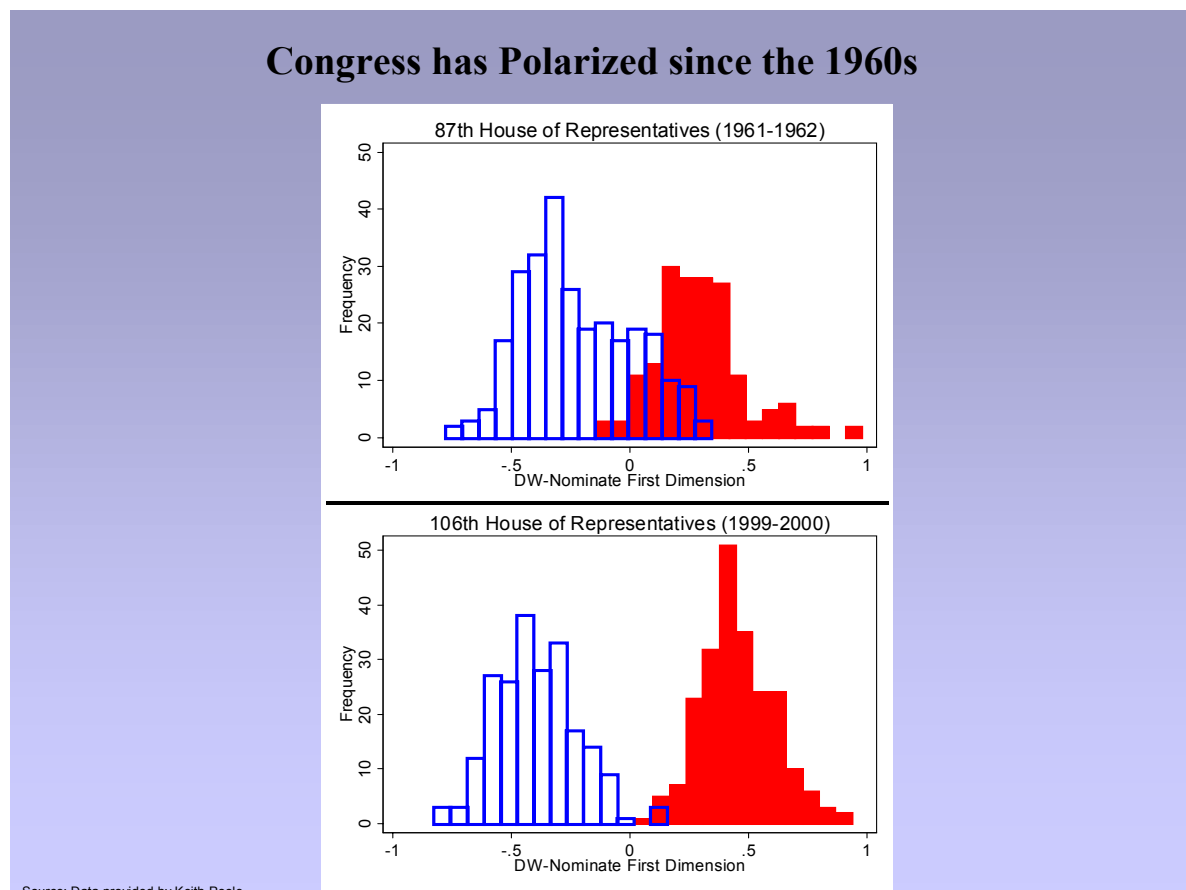
Thus, contrarily to the Christian conservatives, *it's basically women who re-elected George Bush.*

2. The question of *polarization*.

It's certainly true that *American political class is highly polarized*: they are in fact much more polarized than they used to be.

You can skill the votes of the members of Congress on a single left-right dimension, that accounts for over 90% of the variance.

- The top panel is 1960, the first session of the candidate administration: people outlined in blue are democrats in the House of Representatives, or Low Chamber, people outlined in red are republicans in the Low Chamber.

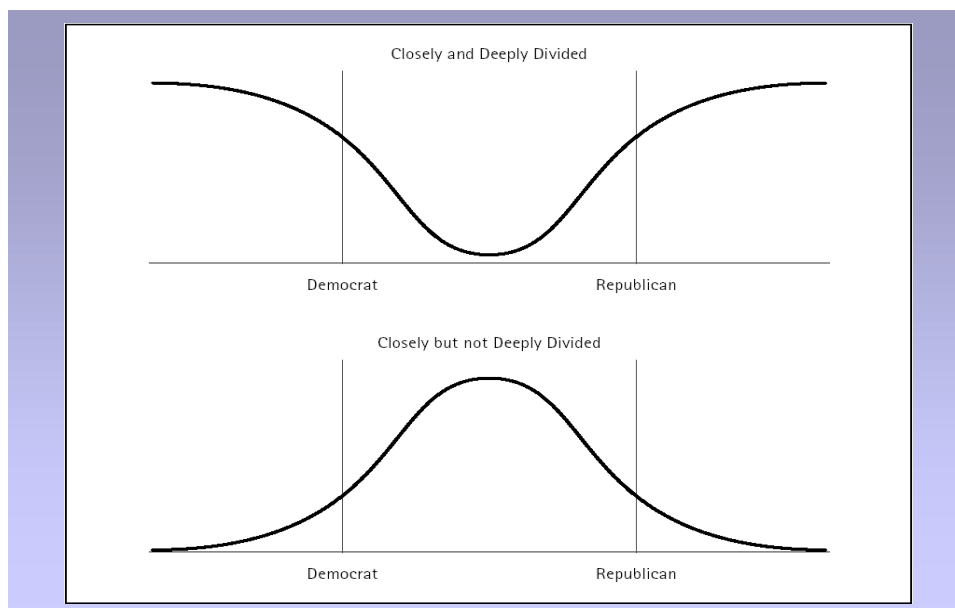


As you can see, there is a very good sized overlap in the middle: democrats and republicans overlap each other.

The bottom figure is about representatives in the current congresses: this are the last years of Clinton administration. You can see that there is now almost no overlap between democrats and republicans; and this *enormous polarization within the US Congress* is increasing.

It turns out that in the United States everything falls in the left-right dimension: abortion, gay marriage, economics, foreign policy, all collapses into this single dimension.

- When you see a distribution, such as the bottom distribution the tendency is to assume that the electorate that elects those people is polarized:



In the top panel, there is a big left segment of the electorate and a big right segment of the electorate, very few people in between and so, democrats and republicans get elected.

But you can also have an electorate such as in the bottom: *a very centrist electorate*, giving you the same result. People slightly to the left vote for the left most candidate and people slightly to the right vote for the right most candidate. So, the parties hard leftist and hard rightist candidates will still be elected, even if most of the voters are, in fact, centrist. *The evidence is strongly in favour of the argument that the American voters are more like the bottom panel than the top panel.*

- It's been common to describe the United States as composed by "red States" and "blue States": the red States vote republican and the blue States vote democratic and it's argued they differ mainly about political issues and cultural attitudes.

When you look at what people in these States believe, *it turns out that the differences are not very large:*

2004 NES (Voters Only)		
	<u>Blue</u>	<u>Red</u>
Immigration should decrease*	45	46
Environment over jobs**	31	24
Favor school vouchers	29	34
Favor death penalty	65	72
Government should ensure fair treatment of Blacks in employment	53	55
Blacks should get preference in hiring	13	21
Stricter Gun Control	63	51
Equal women's role**	78	74

*Unless otherwise noted, the figures in the table combine "strongly" or "completely agree" with "mostly" or "somewhat agree" responses.
**Scale positions 1-2. Source: 2004 National Election Studies

In 2004, red States and blue States residents are identical on *immigration*, for instance; blue States people are somewhat more sensitive to *environment protection*; *favour to death penalty*: you have statistically significant difference, but not even the 2/3 of the voters of the blue States favour death penalty; *Government fair treatment for African-Americans*: more or less identical proportions agree that, but strong majorities reject the proposition of *racial preferences in hiring*. So, opportunities yes, preferences no; *gun control*, which is often thought to be a huge difference between red and blue States: even in the red States, people think gun control should be stricter, even a majority in red States believe that; *equal women's role*: again, very similar proportions.

- Even when you move to the class of more moral kind of issues, you find out that blue and red States voters don't differ so much:

2004 NES (Voters Only)

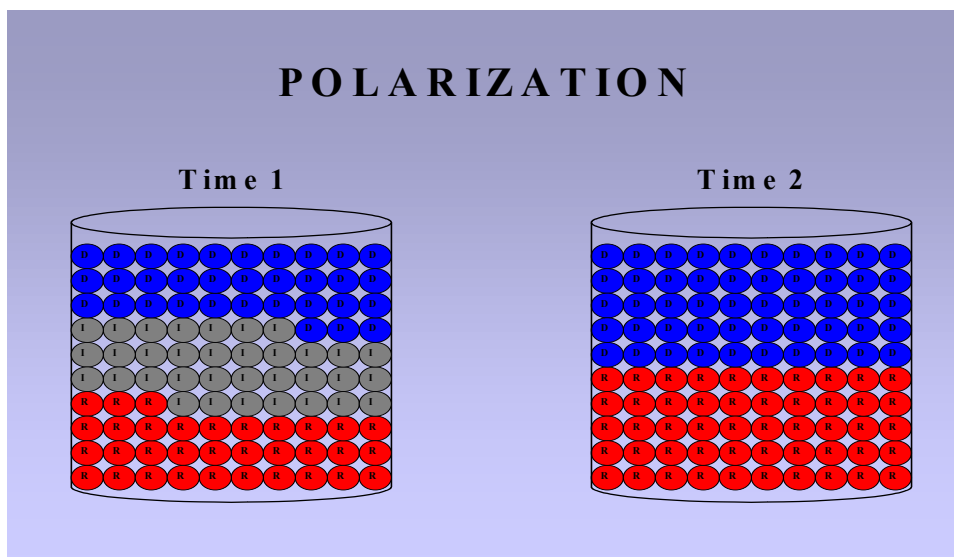
	<u>Blue</u>	<u>Red</u>
Tolerate others' moral views	65	60
Abortion- Always legal	44	32
Allow homosexual adoption	57	41
Allow homosexual marriage	39	31
No gay job discrimination	81	69
Favor gays in military (strongly)	60	51

*Unless otherwise noted, the figures in the table combine "strongly" or "completely agree" with "mostly" or "somewhat agree" responses.
**Scale positions 1-2. Source: 2004 National Election Studies

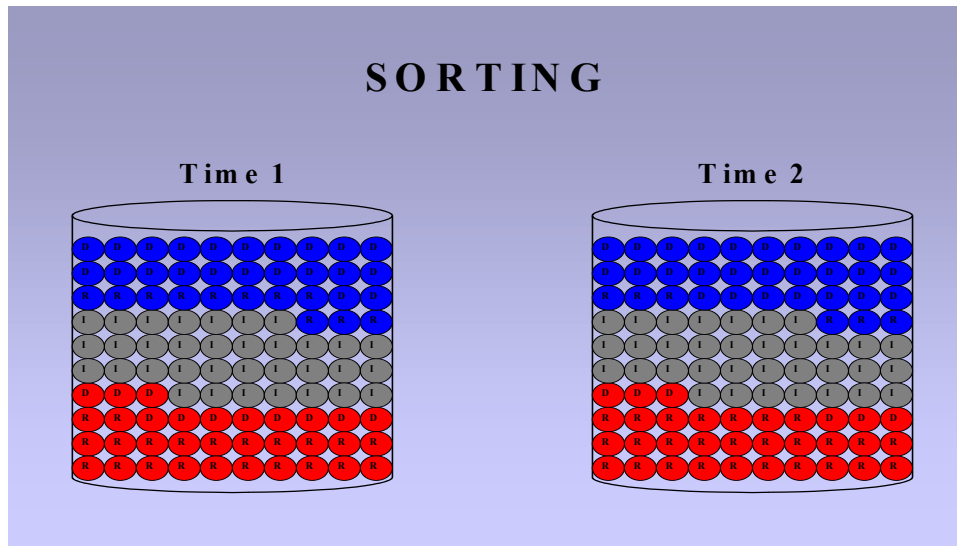
About *abortion*, there is a statistically significant difference, but, even in the blue States, only a minority agrees that abortion should always be legal; *homosexual adoption*: it was the single biggest difference we found in 2004: in the blue States, majority is in favour of homosexual adoption, in the red States, they were opposed to it; they both oppose *job discrimination for gays*; and finally the issue that was very controversial in 1992 and now it's a majority preferred issue: people think gays should be able to serve openly in the *military*.

- What has happened in the United States is a certain amount of *politic sorting*.

In the diagrams, you can see what people mean for *polarization*:



The blue marbles are “liberals”, the red marbles are “conservatives”, the grey marbles are “independents”. What has happened in the United States is something a little more subtle which is called *sorting* (page 13):



You still have the same number of liberals, independents and conservatives now as we did earlier, but earlier they were across the parties.

In these panels, there are 2/3 of democrats/liberals, 2/3 of republicans/conservatives, but 1/3 of the conservatives is democratic and 1/3 of liberals is republican. What happens here is that there are far more liberal democrats and far more conservative republicans: it happens a partisan and ideological realignment, so the parties are more homogeneous now than they were in the past, but all the people mistaken that for polarization.

The distribution of opinion is about the same now as it has been, there's the same number of independents, the same number of liberals and the same number of conservatives, but *the correlation between belonging to a party (democratic, independent, republican) and ideology has increased.*

So democrats now are more liberal than they used to be, republicans are more conservatives and a large part of this is realignment of the American South, which used to send a lot of conservative democrats to Congress and now republicans have taken most of those seats. Thus, *the democrats have shared a lot of their conservative wing, republicans have picked up a lot more conservatives*, in order to get rid of the liberal North-East.

So, in general, parties are more homogeneous internally than they were one generation ago.

- The *difference between elites and masses* is shown in this slide: the New York Times presented a survey on the delegates to the democratic and republican national conventions and a national sample and then it compared the attitude of the delegates (the political class) with the attitude of democratic and republican population.

2004 New York Times Delegate Survey

	<u>Delegate Difference</u>	<u>Identifier Difference</u>
Government should do more to solve national problems	72 %	13
Cut taxes to improve economy	67	35
Make all or most tax cuts permanent	88	35
Abortion generally available	62	32
New anti-terrorism laws excessively restrict civil liberties	62	28
Extremely important to work through UN	72	35
No legal recognition of gay relationships	44	19

Here, it's calculated the difference, in the first column, between republican and democratic delegates and, in the second column, the difference, on the issue, between republicans and democrats in the population.

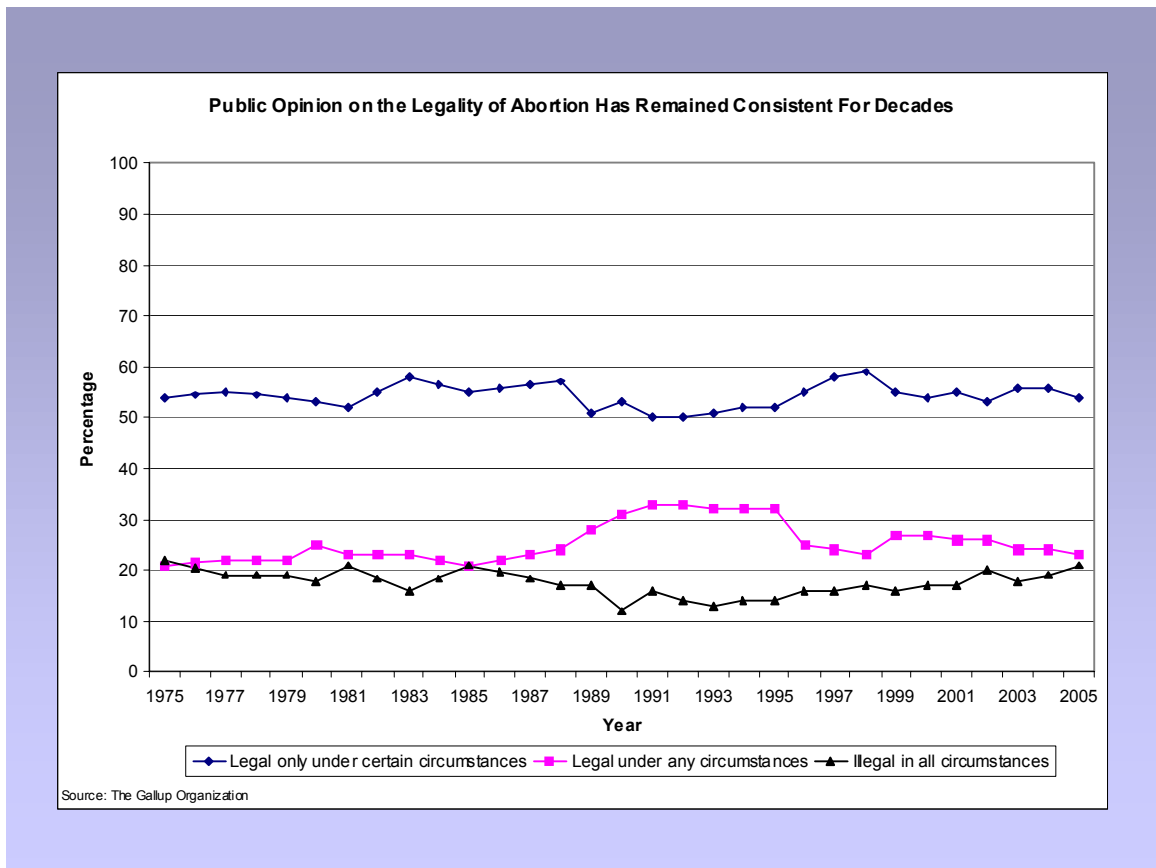
On the general question of activism of Governments, there is a 72% difference between the delegates of the two parties, but only a 13% difference among the identifiers. As you go down the issues (taxes, permanent tax cuts, abortion, terrorism laws), you find that, in general, *the difference between the delegates is at least twice than between the identifiers* (and this is not accounting the independents in the population, just the democrats and republicans).

So, very large elite level differences, much smaller popular differences.

- Just to emphasize this, I want to focus on an issue that rolled American politics for a generation down: the issue of *abortion*.

At the elite level, abortion is a kind of “text issue”, with democrats having to be pro-choice and republicans having to be pro-life. Thus, you will be surprised by the mass level,

given how dividing is this issue at the elite level: the first point is that *public opinion has not moved much at all on this issue in a generation.*

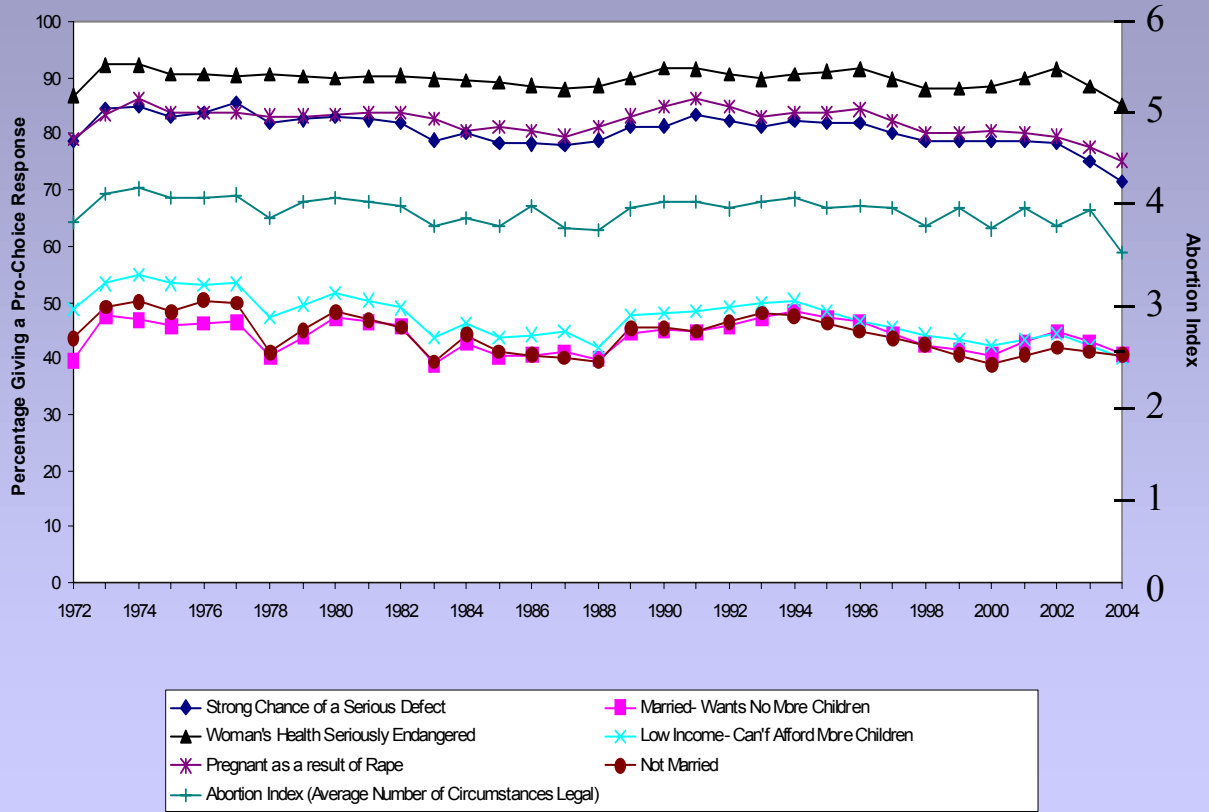


There is a gap of data, where the top of the graph, the top line is “people thinking abortion should be legal under certain circumstances”; so, most Americans, the majority consistently says: “Sometimes yes, sometimes no”. The democratic position is the bottom line, which is “always legal” (20 to 25%); the republican position is “always illegal” (about 20%).

So, you have the parties representing these much smaller proportions of the population, while the population itself is *largely centrist on this issue.*

I want to give you some specific data, using a general social survey from University of Chicago, because it gives you much more demographic details. The question reads as follows: “Should abortion be legal under each of the following circumstances?”.

Popular Attitudes Toward Abortion Have Been Remarkably Stable Since *Roe v. Wade*



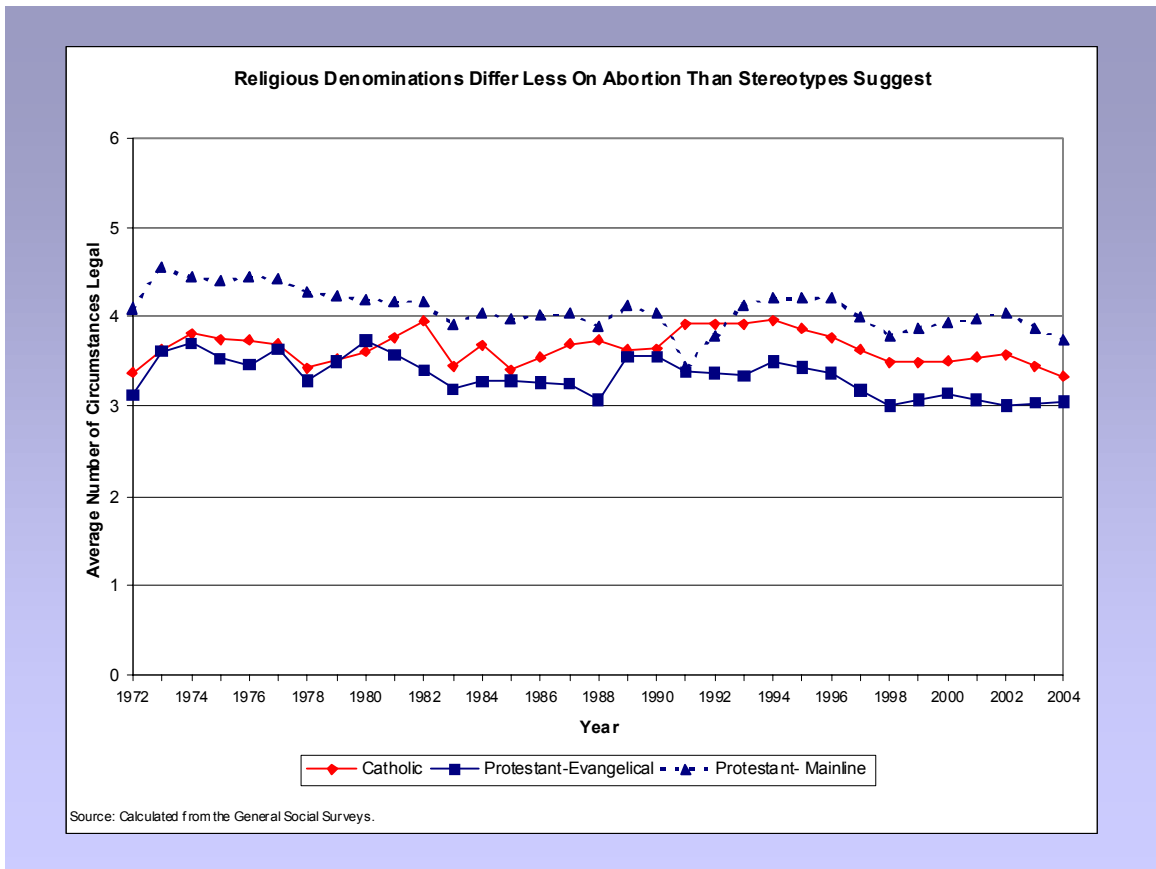
Source: The General Social Survey

The population, more or less universally, agrees that it should be legal in the event of a serious threat to mother's health: that's the top point and it runs to 90%, while, in cases of rape or incest, it's 80% the proportion of the population thinking these are justifiable reasons for abortion. Then, when you get down to income situation of the mother, it's about fifty-fifty split: half of the population says this is a sufficient reason, half of the population says no.

On the right axis, I have the number of those six circumstances in which the population thinks abortion should be legal and it is, on average, about 4: so, *American population is more or less in the middle.*

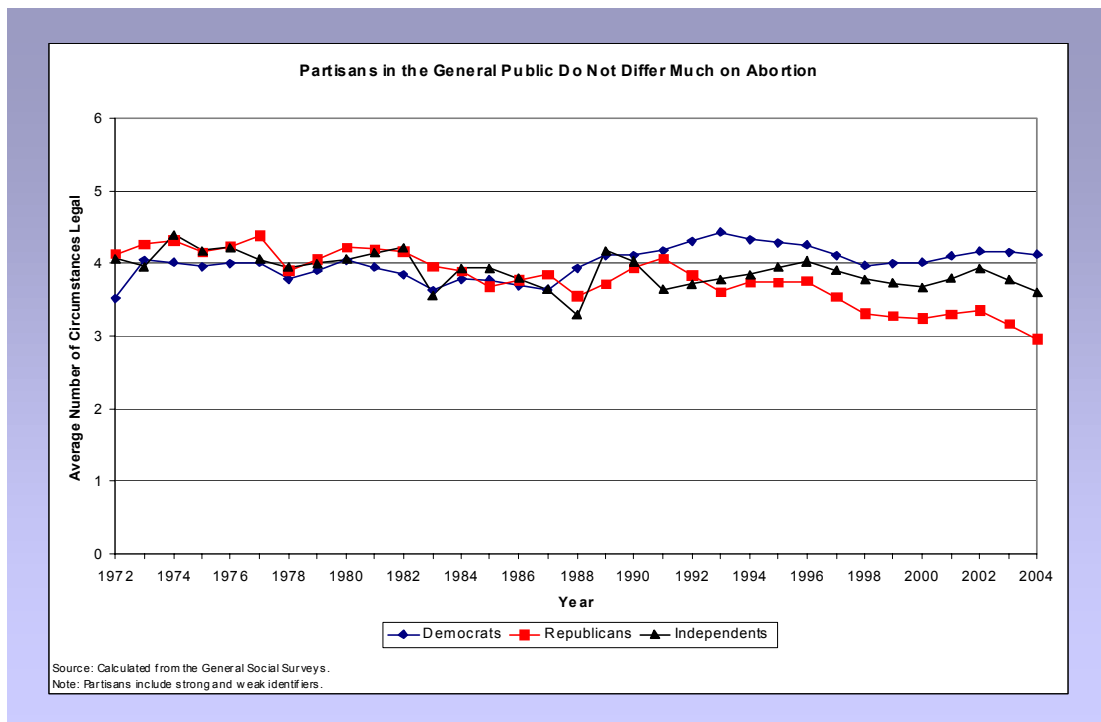
Even when you divide the map into blue States people and red States people, there is not much difference on this issue: red State people are a little more conservative on the issue, blue State people are a little more liberal but, from 0 to 6, they're both between 3 and 4.

About *religious differences*:



Again no much difference, 3 to 4, with Protestants at the top, Evangelicals in the bottom and Catholics in the middle.

Then, we have *partisans*:

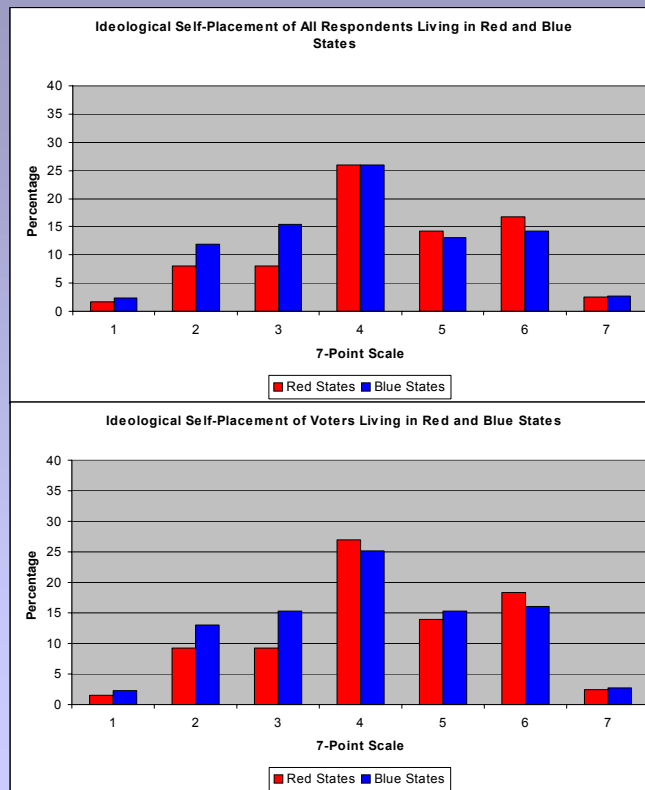


Abortion is, as we saw, a hugely dividing issue at the elite level. But here, at the mass level, we have democrats at the top, republicans in the bottom and independents in between. Here's what I mean by the "politic sorting": as you can see from the graph, it took about twenty years for the parties even to get on the right side, for this issue. Finally, you see democrats looking a little more liberals than republicans, but, in contrast with the huge division that this issue provokes at the elite level, republicans and democrats in the population are only one circumstance apart on this issue, with the independents in between.

So, the general picture is that if you ask Americans where they stand (this is the ideology skill) the red States people and blue States people say *they're pretty much in the middle*.

Here, the top panel is "all residents", the bottom panel is "voters only".

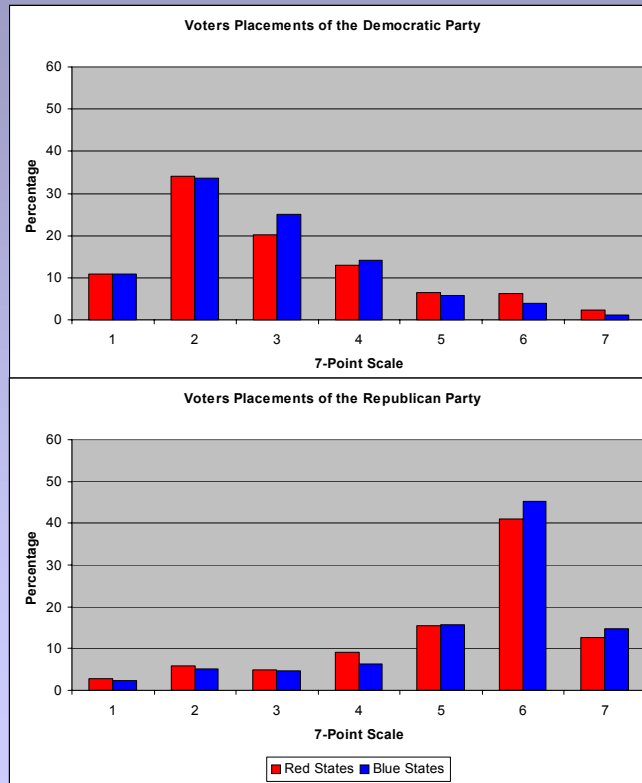
Red and Blue State Residents are Basically Centrists: 2004



Source: 2004 National Election Studies

In both, slightly conservative and slightly liberal are in the middle. When you ask the same people where the parties stand, they put democrats on their left and republicans on their right:

Red and Blue State Voters Agree that the Parties are Not Centrist: 2004



Source: 2004 National Election Studies

So, the general view of the American politics is still *a largely centrist population, choosing between parties on both sides.*

- Another issue I had mentioned is *Iraq*: I talked about it at the beginning, about the terrorism question. This paper was just published a month ago by Philip Klinkner and it is a very detailed analysis on foreign politics considerations in 2004 election:

Partisan Differences 2004 (Klinkner NES)

- Foreign Policy Goals – not large
- Foreign Policy Means – not large
- National Defense – not large
- Patriotism – not large
- Bush – very large

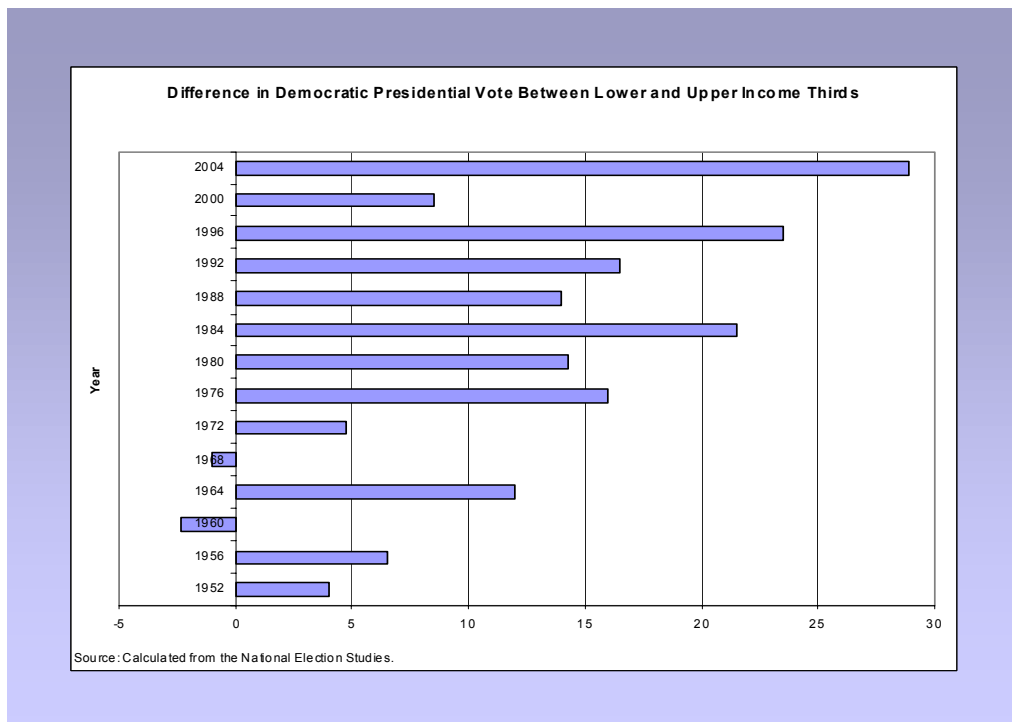
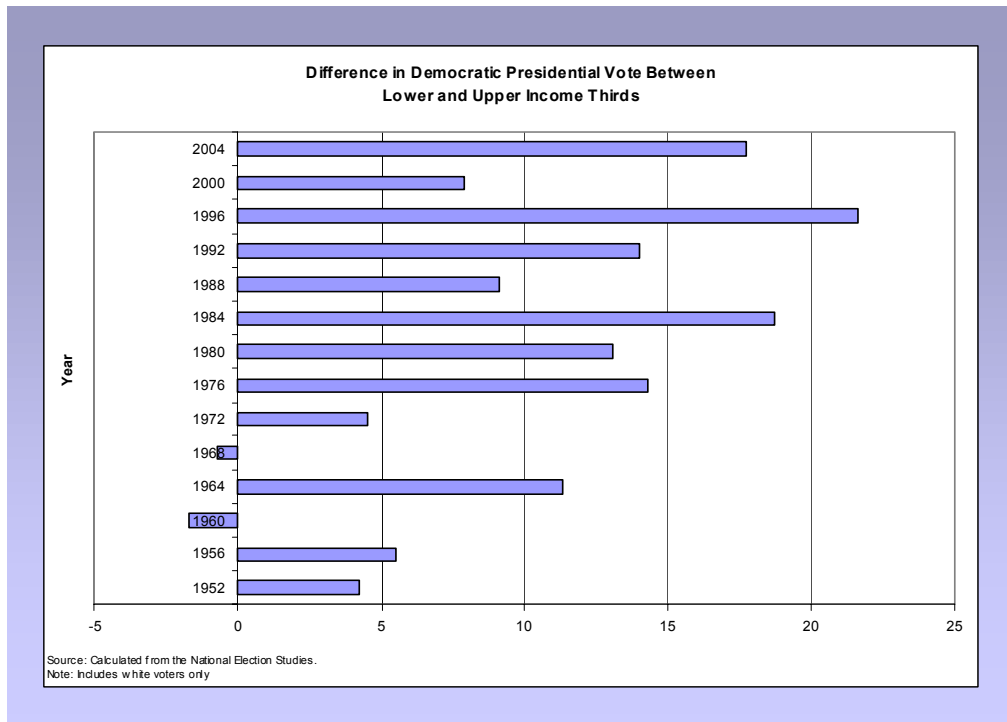
There's something very interesting: if you look at the *foreign politics goals* that Americans believe should be followed (question of human rights, national interest, exc.), democrats and republicans, at a mass level, don't show a lot of difference. If you look at *foreign politics means* (military, diplomacy, exc.), again, they don't show a lot of difference. If you look at *national defence* issues, they don't show a lot of difference. If you look at *patriotism* issues, they don't show a lot of difference. If you ask about electing *George Bush*, they show *huge difference*.

Somehow, *small differences in positions* (what do you think should be done? What do you think about issues?) *have been translated*, at least in this administration, *in huge differences in evaluation of the candidates*.

So, something unusual is going on here, some complex mapping. My interpretation is that *a non-polarizing candidate, like Bush, could, in fact, appeal to this much larger centre and give you the appearance of a politics much less polarized than we have*.

3. The third misconception I mentioned at the beginning was the notion that *religion has replaced economics as a major cleavage in American politics*.

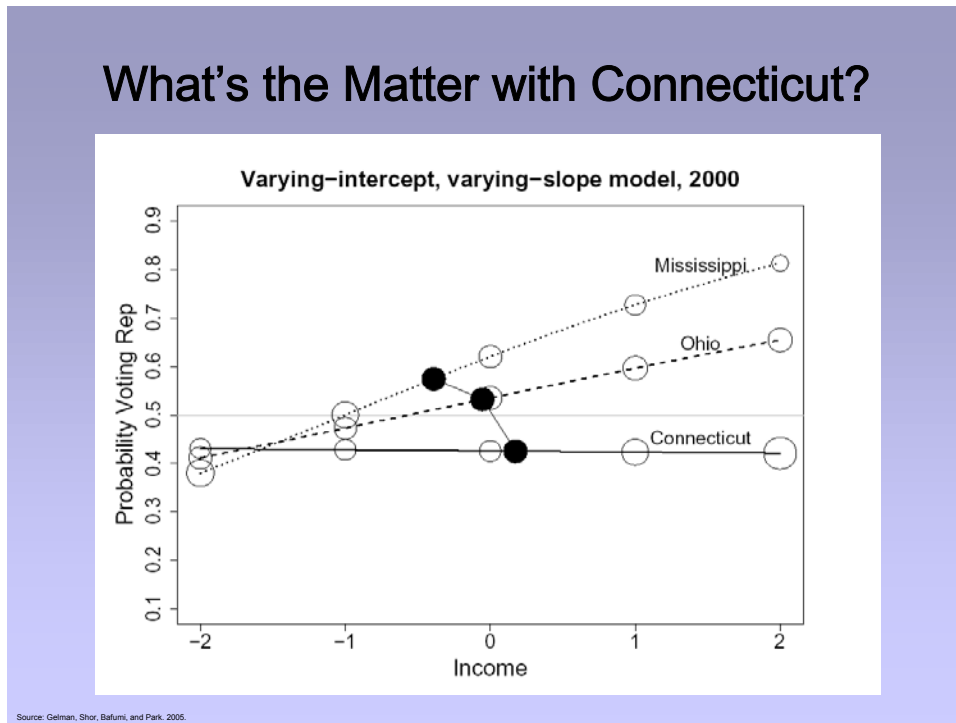
Some of you may have read Thomas Frank's book "What's the matter with Kansas?": it's a wonderful book to read, but completely wrong. In fact, if you look at the data (pages 23-24), this is the difference in the democratic presidential vote between respondents whose household is in the upper third of the income distribution and respondents whose household is in the lower third of the income distribution (there are only whites, because Afro-Americans tend to vote democratic):



As you can see, *income differences in voting have been much stronger in recent years than they were* and, if you include African-Americans in that group, you conclude that, in 2004, the income dividing the American politics was the largest it has been in the fifty years

in which we have data. So, income is not going away, as a division: *economics is still a fundamental division in American politics.*

There's a paper by a political scientist, entitled: "What's the matter with Connecticut?"; a foundation in Philadelphia did a huge survey in 2000, they had 100,000 respondents (it was a continuing survey) and that made it possible to estimate *voting models for individual States*, supposing the nation as a whole:

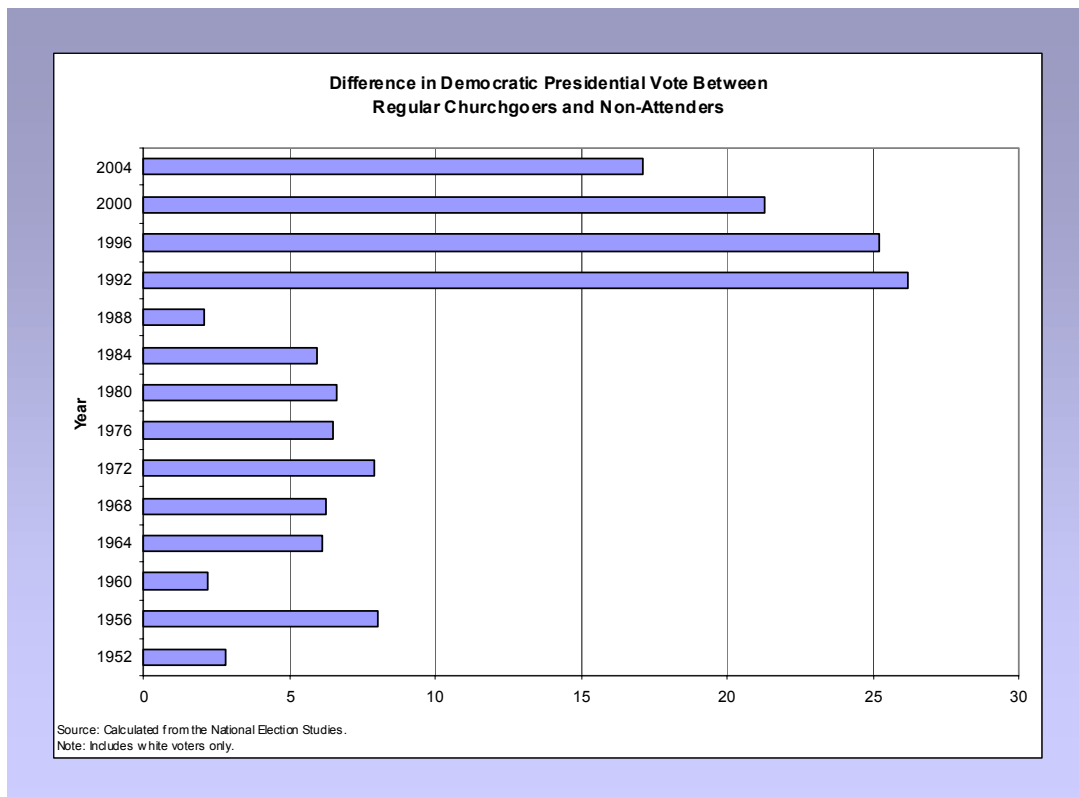


They found something very interesting: *the poor States are the States in which the income correlation with the vote is the highest. In the rich States it disappears.*

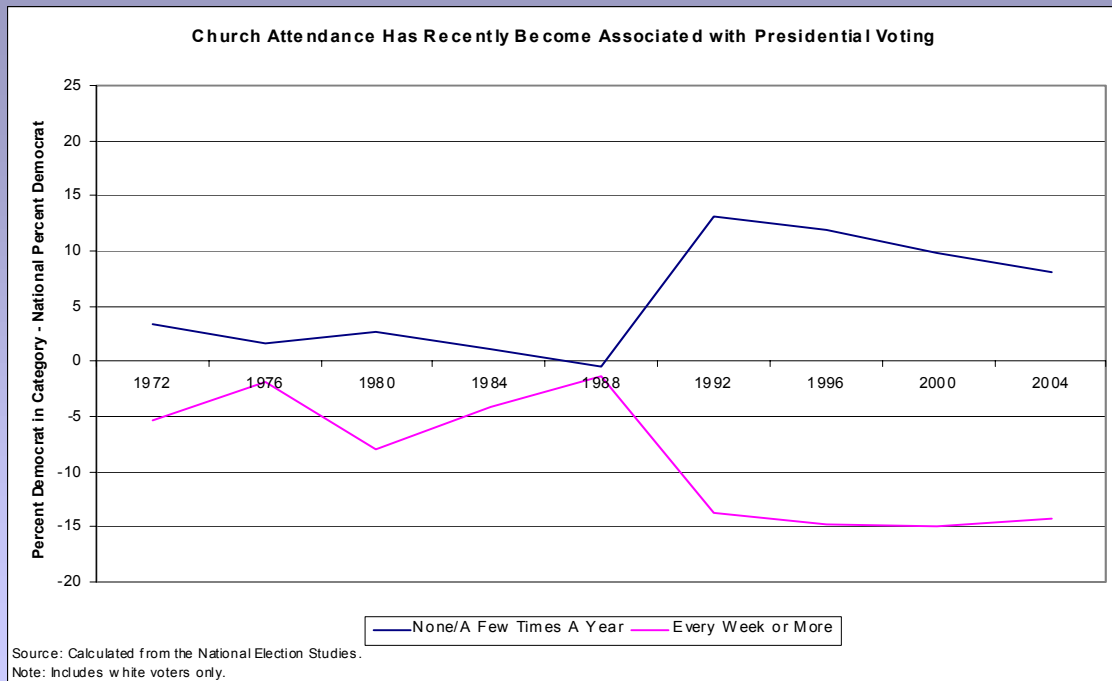
In fact, Mississippi is the poorest State in the U.S. by median income, Ohio is the median State, Connecticut is the richest State: in Connecticut, there is absolutely no correlation between your income and your vote for President. In Mississippi and in Kansas, which are the poorest States, there's a high correlation between your income and your vote. So, if you look at systematic data, *the argument that economics is not a major cleavage anymore*, people voting on the basis of other issues, *is simply not true*. Of course, there are other issues, but economics is still very important.

It is true that religion has got more important: this is a similar kind of diagram showing the difference in democratic presidential vote between people who go to the church every

Sunday or more and people who never go to the church, so very religious people and the seculars:



As you can see, the difference has increased automatically in recent years, since 1992 election; moreover, it's not a gradual increase, it is a sudden, sharp surge. In 1992, this difference just exploded and that's when Bill Clinton appeared on the scene.



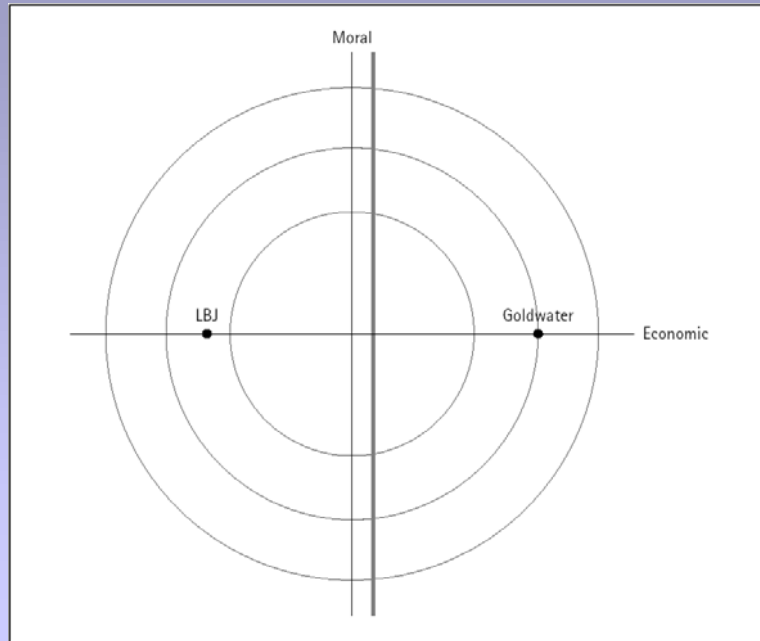
I think Bill Clinton had a lot to do with this kind of behaviour and who he was, he had a lot to do with the sudden emergence of religion, as an important variable in American politics.

Whenever election analysts see a change in the correlation between a variable (such as religion) and the vote, they tend to make the assumption that it is voters who are changing, that voters consider religion more important, this issue matters more to them. It's probably because we're measuring these things better, but in fact it may well be that *voters haven't changed at all: it's the parties and the candidates who are changing.*

Imagine to go back of more than a generation, when American politics was structured largely along New Deal issues: Roosevelt New Deal coalition on social welfare issues, with republicans more to the right than centre and we had Goldwater candidacy against Johnson and Goldwater was too far to the right.

This is the example political scientists use to assume voters are ore or less normally distributed and they vote for the candidate who is closer to them:

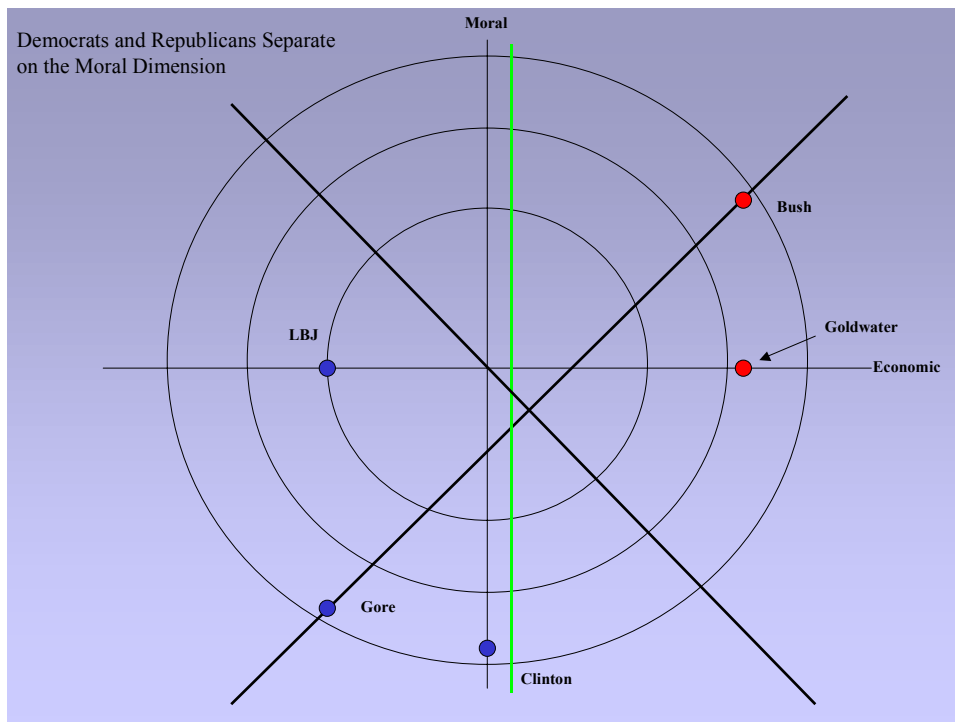
Candidate Competition in Two Dimensions: Arial View



In this case, the vertical line that is a little on the right of the centre, is the cutting line that separates people closer to Goldwater and people closer to Johnson: and, in fact, Johnson got the 60% of the votes.

Whether you are social conservatives or libertarian conservatives, it doesn't matter: all that matters is the difference on the *economic* dimension. What happens over the years is the politics move: republicans move to the more traditional end of the moral dimension, as they ally with the Christian right, the democrats become more and more secular and they move to the more modern and progressive end of the dimension.

Now, the cutting line between the two parties is shifting from a vertical to a North-South/East-West orientation:



So, we have some people left to the centre who vote for Bush on the basis of their moral issues and some people on the right to the centre vote for Clinton and Gore, basing on their moral issues.

Thus, the cutting line, the cleavage, changes, but I haven't changed any voters in this example. *The voters are in the same position, they will position on this dimension equally: it's the party they are choosing that has moved.*

Back to thirty or forty years ago, all candidates presented to the American voters were paragons of middle-class virtues: they were all married, they went to church on Sunday, they all had loving wives and loving children. We're in a very different world now: Bill Clinton cannot cover that role: he was pro-gay, he said he had never smoked marijuana but could have approved it for medical use, etc. So, in a lot of ways, he sent signals saying he was down on this dimension. Meanwhile, republicans allied with Christian right and moved up on this dimension. So, I think *this image of America becoming more religious oriented and more culturally conservative probably is exaggerated*; I'm not saying it hasn't occurred, but I'm saying there's a confluence of two effects here: whether the voters have changed and how much the stimuli the candidates are choosing between have changed.

4. I want to end up with the much more speculative arguments.

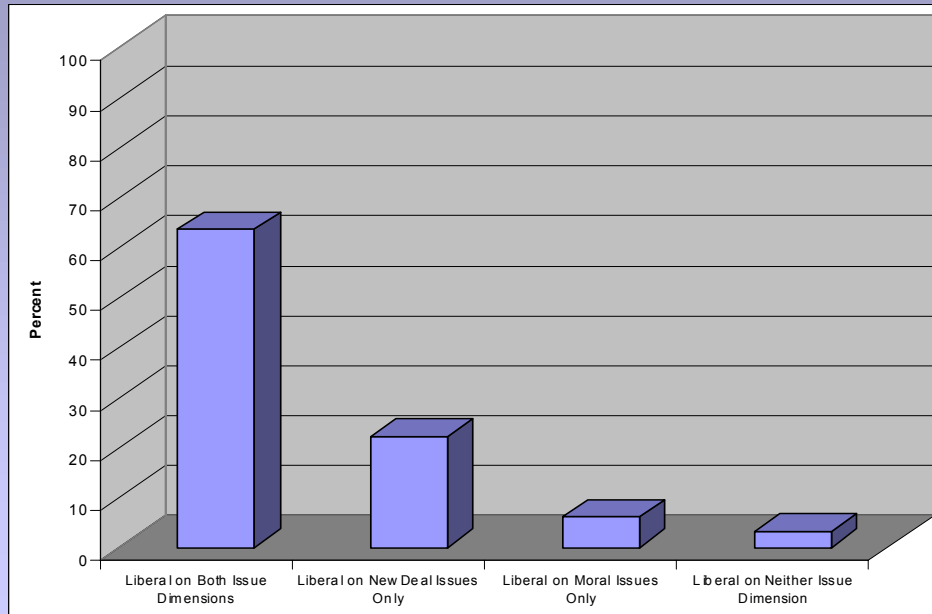
- I think this new political order in the US is quite fragile. The blue and red map (democratic and republican States) is pretty much the same from election to election and a lot of people have argued that this is now a deep, stable cleavage in the American politics and that's not going to change that much. But if you look at the map of the *governors* of the American States: stepping down from presidential races to the races for governors, you've got a very different picture: *22 of the American States have a governor different from the presidential candidate they voted for in the last election*, some by large numbers. Many States voted for Bush and elected a democratic governor, by an easy margin. So, *depending on what's the choice that is offered to them, they change their voting*. A large example last time was the State of Montana, which is a culturally conservative State: they passed the gay marriage issue by a 60 to 40 vote margin and they also approved the medical use of marijuana by a 60 to 40 vote margin. They simply switched from one side to the other, depending on the choice they were offered. They also elected a democratic governor at the same time they elected George Bush, by an overwhelming margin.

- There is a believe that is very prevalent in the American political class at the moment: the democrats have to reach out to the middle, because their base is so small.

In the US, about 20 to 25% of the population say they're liberal, about 35% say they're conservative, so the argument of the republicans is that they can win largely mobilizing their base and reaching out just a little bit to the middle.

I think both sides have a kind of wrong: there are several recent papers out and this is one by James Stimson and his students, that looks at what are the actual issue positions of people who call themselves "liberals" and "conservatives".

Issue Liberalism of Self-Identified "Liberals"

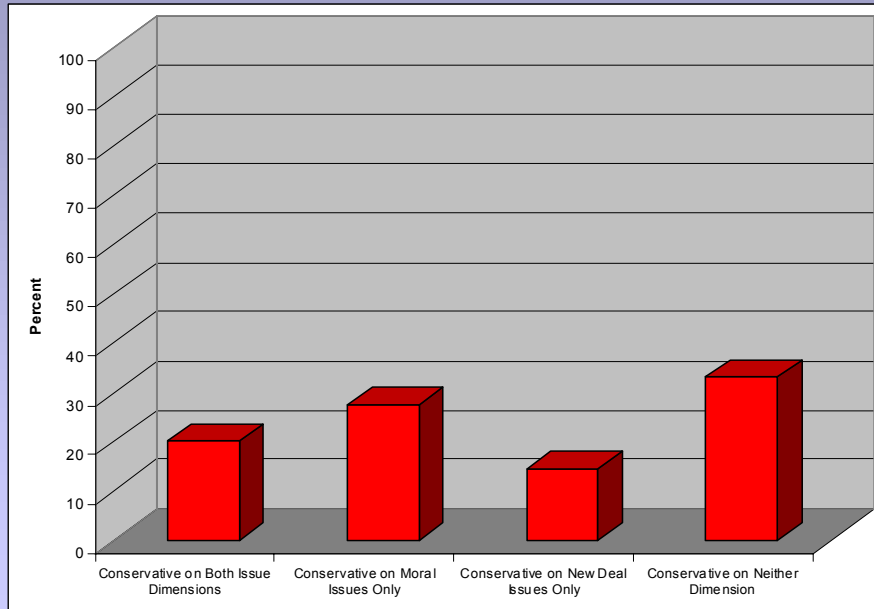


Source: Ellis and Stimson, 2005. APSA.

They found that *"liberals" are pretty much liberal*: about 60% of them are liberal both on social welfare issues and on cultural, social kinds of issues. Then, there's a fairly good part of people, about 20%, who are liberal only on the social welfare issues (e. g. union members, urban Catholics who are still Catholic conservative but socially liberal).

But when we look at the conservative side, we find a dramatically complex picture: *people who are conservative both on social and economic issues are less than 1/5 of the "conservatives"* (there's about 18% of people conservative on both dimensions); the people who are conservative only on the moral issues (religious right kind of issues) are little over 20%; the economic conservatives are only a little on the 10%; but about 30% are not conservative on either sides of issues, but nevertheless they say: "I'm a conservative", but they position left to centre on both social welfare and cultural issues:

Issue Conservatism of Self-Identified “Conservatives”



Source: Ellis and Stimson, 2005. APSA.

Remembering George Bush’s attempts in privatising elements of social security, you can see that the presumption that all conservatives support this, on the base of this sort of data, is shown to be completely false. In fact, the majority of people who say: “We’re conservatives” doesn’t necessarily favour right to centre economic policies, like elements of social security; so, it’s very heterogeneous.

I think the conservative label, in the American context, is always been more popular and it’s just somehow culturally more liberal to say that “liberal” conveys libertine, exc. What’s interesting is that people in the last category (neither conservatives nor liberals on both kinds of issues) didn’t really know much. They tend to be younger, they didn’t have a lot of information about positions, they just say: “I’m conservative”. I basically think they just see conservatives on TV and think: “They look more like me than the liberals I see on TV” and this is the kind of cultural signals sent out.

Thus, to sum up:

- the 2004 election has been very badly misinterpreted, around the world and in the United States;

- terrorism is the big deal for the democrats to figure out the ways to convey a convincing image to the American public that they're strong on the national defence, with the republicans sending a clear signal: "We are strong on national defence"; the democrats have difficulties doing it ever since Vietnam: so they have to find a way to overcome that.

- the population as polarized as people think: there's still a big centre that can be appealed to, but I think there's a kind of exhaustion: people are looking for a more pragmatic administration that solves problems, such as social welfare issues, medical care, health care, social security and so on.