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OPPORTUNITY 08:
ISSUES, IDEOLOGY, GENDER AND RACE
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. MANN: Good morning, welcome back to Brookings. We've got to turn that mic down a little bit; that's better. For the third in our series of seminars on the 2008 election, I use that term, "seminars", to emphasize the fact that what we're trying to do here is explore ways in which social science research might lend some value added to the discussion and understanding of the current election.

So Larry Bartels, my colleague here who is Director of the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics in the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, and I first organized the set of seminars in 2004, they worked out well, and we decided to do it again.

So on the Brookings side, this is – the co-sponsorship is with Brookings Opportunity 08 project. The first session, and I see some familiar faces, you all were here in early September, when we talked about parties and partisanship; then three weeks ago we had a session on election fundamentals, the economy, the war, the standing of the President. Today, as you know, we'll be talking about issues, ideology, candidate traits, gender, race. And then two weeks from today, in the final pre-election seminar, on October 31, we're going to be looking at money, campaign ads, and mobilization efforts in the few days before the election itself. We're delighted to welcome three colleagues to today's session.

On my far right here is Professor Sunshine Hillygus, who is the Frederick Danziger Associate Professor of Government and Director of the Harvard Program on Survey Research. I hope she has with her her new book, which is called – available Amazon.com, to say nothing of the book stores, it's called *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Political Campaigns*, and we're delighted to have you with us.

On my right is Daron Shaw. Daron participated in the seminars four years ago and we're delighted to welcome him back. He is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas at Austin. His most recent book is *The Race to 270*, which analyzes the effects of TV advertising and candidate visits on the 2000 and 2004 presidential election. Daron was in a marvelous position to really take on these research questions because he was involved in doing polling for the Bush campaigns in both 2000 and 2004, so he brings together a mix of academia and practical politics, which we're delighted to have. And then on my left, on the end, we welcome Shankar Vedantam, who is a national reporter and columnist of the *Washington Post*. Many of you know him through his *Washington Post* column, Department of Human Behavior, which deals with science, but a particular focus on human behavior, a set of provocative essays that I've come to turn to every Monday morning in my *Washington Post*. So welcome to the three of you. Larry and I are just delighted to have you here. And we have competition.

Now, the first two sessions of our seminars have talked about the powerful forces of partisanship, the economy, and the President's political standing, and leading to a huge advantage for the Democratic Party. This was evident in our last seminar three weeks ago, which was really before the financial meltdown.

But we now know that after the most recent and dramatic economic developments and the four debates, three presidential and once vice presidential, the campaign narrative seems to be reinforcing the election fundamentals rather than diverting from those fundamentals. So a natural question to ask is, could that change in the remaining days of the campaign? Might, for example, some issue come to the surface in ways that would work to the advantage of John McCain, will Joe the plumber, who's now become the symbol in McCain's eyes of a classic middle class citizen striving to better himself, or will the reaction be like me, who had Bernie the plumber over at his house yesterday and faced a bill of \$300 for one hour of work, will this be something different?

In any case, the question really is, is there a chance that taxes returns and becomes a focus of the campaign? There's questions about ideology. The *National Journal* report on voting over this last session of Congress ranking Obama as the most liberal voting record in the United States Senate has certainly got a fair amount of attention, as well as rebuttal from others who believe that ranking itself is flawed, but

the emphasis on Bill Ayres, on radicals, on domestic terrorists, might this conjure up an image of a candidate too extreme?

We'll also talk about candidate traits a bit, from temperament to empathy, and ask whether there's any chance of that altering the course of the campaign in the remaining 17 days. We will look at the gender of Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin and ask the question of how that might play out. And finally, I suppose the most visible element on our agenda today is race. We have had literally scores of news reports and the print and broadcast media about the potential effects of race, as identity, as racial resentment, lots of uncertainty about how one projects the net effects of race as an issue, because there are obviously positive and negative forces operating, and perhaps the element that's got the most attention is, to what extent are those racial effects visible now in the polls, and to what extent might they be invisible and not show up until election day, the so called Bradley Effect.

There's a huge body of scholarship on these questions, but some remaining differences, disagreements, and certainly uncertainty, because the reality is that we've never had a minority presidential candidate, and so we're making inferences from candidates running state-wide and in congressional districts under very different conditions. It's tough to make inferences, but we're going to do the best we can to tell you what we know and what we don't know. So that's on the plate for today. We'll begin as we have in the past seminars with Larry Bartels.

MR. BARTELS: Thanks, Tom, and thank you all for coming. I want to start us off by making three points about issues; one is about the role of issues in democratic theory, the second is about the issue landscape and changes in the issue landscape in American politics over the last 30 years or so, and then the third is specifically about race. First about democratic theory, we have this vision that what the campaign and the election ought to be about is issues.

We expect the candidates to tell us in their speeches and their ads about their positions on a whole range of issues. We expect voters to listen carefully to what the candidates say and weigh the candidate's positions in comparison with their own convictions and make a choice of candidates on the basis of their issue position. And then we expect the election to enforce responsiveness by having put the candidate in office who's closest to the voter's issue positions, who then implements those policies, and so people get policy outcomes that are close to what they wanted in the way of policies with respect to all the issues that they care about.

That's mostly not what happens. This progressive ideal that dates back for a century in American politics conflicts with most of what we've observed about the way voters actually behave and about the way the political process and the connection between elections and policy actually works. When political scientists first started studying voters systematically in the 1940's, they were kind of aghast at how little people

seem to know about issues, how disorganized their thinking about issues was, how often they didn't know what the candidate's positions on important issues were, and so on.

And so we've been trying to struggle with how it is that people make decisions in spite of that, and mostly been impressed by the extent to which issues are dominated by other kinds of considerations, like the ones we've talked about in our previous sessions, peoples' sense of the state of the economy, or, as we'll talk about as we go on today, identity politics and their sense of the candidates as people.

There are, obviously, lots of people who, if you talk to them, have very coherent and plausible sounding things to say about the issues and about the connections between their issue positions and their voting behavior. And if you look at the end of the day, at the relationship between what people say about issues and the way they vote, the relationship is often quite substantial. But that relationship can be quite misleading. And the example that I want to sketch for you of that is based on work that Gabriel Lenz at MIT has done, looking at the issue of social security privatization in the 2000 election. We haven't heard much about the possibility of investing peoples' social security in the stock market lately, but that was a popular idea back in 2000, indeed, the most important, most salient issue in the 2000 election.

In the last few weeks before Election Day, a huge proportion of the candidates' ads and of media coverage were about the issue of social

security privatization. And when we talked to people after the election about how they voted and looked at the relationship between their views about social security privatization and their votes, there was a strong correlation there, just as you would expect, if people were thinking about that issue and weighing the candidates' stands and voting accordingly.

But what Lenz did was to look back over the course of the election year and see how peoples' views about the issue changed, how their perceptions of the candidates' stands changed, and about how their evaluations of the candidates changed over the course of the election year, and what he found was that there was virtually no one in the electorate who had a view about social security privatization and then voted for the candidate who favored that view because they favored that view. What happened mostly is that, as they were bombarded with all this information about where the candidates stood on the issue, people who hadn't thought about it before adopted the position of the candidate that they were already going to support for other reasons.

And so the relationship between their views about the issue and their voting behavior increased substantially over the course of the campaign, but it wasn't because people were voting on the basis of this issue, it was because they were using what they knew about this issue either to rationalize the position that they now expressed about the issue or rationalizing the voting choice that they had already made on some other basis.

So although we're going to talk a lot about the relationship between issue positions and voting behavior, I want you to bear in mind that the causal status of those connections is something that we have to worry about a lot in trying to assess the importance of issues in the campaign.

And then on the aggregate level, if we think about the ways in which peoples' issue voting behavior influences what they get in the way of policy, I want to – back to a relationship that I told you about, and some of you may have seen a picture that I had at our first session last month, about the voting behavior in Congress of Democratic and Republican representatives. And what I pointed out was that even when Democrats and Republicans represent constituencies with similar views, or in the case of the Senate, even exactly the same constituencies, their roll call behavior when they get to Congress is wildly divergent.

The Republicans are much more conservative in their behavior than their constituents are; the Democrats are much more liberal in their behavior than their constituents are.

That shouldn't happen if the story that I told you about the roll of issues in elections and policy-making actually work. Voters would notice that their elected officials were taking these positions that were quite divergent from their own views, and they'd find somebody else to vote for, and the candidates would be forced to change their positions to correspond to what voters wanted on all these issues, and we'd end up

with candidates who were like the voters themselves, mostly in the middle of the distribution. That doesn't happen; the reason it doesn't happen is because candidates aren't forced to change their positions to comport with the views of their constituents because constituents mostly aren't voting on the basis of the candidates' positions on these issues.

Okay. About the issue landscape and how it's changed and how it matters, one important point to keep in mind is that if you look at the policy questions that we've asked people about over a long period of time, there's very seldom any substantial movement in the position of Americans as a whole on important issues.

You can go back for 30 years and track what people think about important issues, and there's, for most of these issues, very little movement over time. And so when somebody interprets the outcome of an election as reflecting a shift in voters' views about some important issue, it's almost always going to be a misinterpretation of what's going on, because peoples' views about these issues really don't shift very much.

In 1980, people often said that Ronald Reagan was elected because the American electorate had shifted to the right; well, they hadn't shifted to the right, they had very much the same kinds of views on important policies as they had had in 1976, when Jimmy Carter managed to get elected for the first time, and for that matter, very similar views to the views that they have now. What does change some from election to

election is the relative salience or importance of different kinds of issues. And maybe the most important example of that over the last 30 years or so has been the increasing importance of social and morale issues, abortion, gay marriage, gun control. Those are all things that are much more tightly related to peoples' partisanship and to their voting behavior than they used to be. And so commentators who've called attention to the increasing importance of social issues I think are quite right to do so.

But at the same time, that emphasis is, on one hand, exaggerated, and on the other hand, I think miscast or misinterpreted. Exaggerated because, although the importance of these social issues has increased substantially over time, they're still generally much less important than the core issues of the economy and social welfare that people have cared about most over the entire period that we've been able to survey their views about these issues and their voting behavior over the last 50 years. So although social issues are more important now than they used to be, they're still distinctly less important than economic issues. And miscast also, because the kinds of people who are voting on the basis of these social issues are mostly not the kinds of people that you've been led by commentators to think about, the kind of standard images that there's, for many people, a discrepancy between their views about economic issues and social issues, and that movements in the American electorate have mostly been driven by people who are liberal on economic issues, but social conservatives, and that those people have migrated

away from the Democratic party and toward the Republican party, and that those people are mostly low income, low education, working class kinds of people.

If you divide people up on the basis of their views about issues on economic policy issues, positions, and social policy issue positions, so think of a kind of quadrant space and where people are in that space. Most people are on the main diagonal elements, which is to say if they're liberal on economic issues, they're also liberal on social issues, and very likely to vote Democratic; if they're conservative on economic issues, they're mostly conservative on social issues and likely to vote Republican. But if you look at the people for whom there are cross-pressures between economic and social issues, there's a set of people for whom – they're social conservatives and economic liberals, that's the smallest of the four groups in terms of the numbers of people in the electorate, and those people are mostly voting for Democrats, which is to say their liberal economic views mostly outweigh their conservative views on social issues.

There's a somewhat larger set of people who have the reverse combination of positions, which is to say they're conservative on economic issues and liberal on social issues; those people mostly vote Republican, which is to say, again, that their views on economic issues mostly outweigh their views on social issues.

But there are a substantial number of them who are voting for Democrats. Indeed, that set of people who are voting for Democrats is larger than the corresponding set of social conservatives who are voting for Republicans. They're mostly better educated and upper class people who have migrated to the Republican Party over time. So there's lots of commentary focusing on these social conservatives who have migrated away from the Democrats, toward the Republicans, much less on the larger number of people who are social liberals who have migrated away from the Republicans and toward the Democrats. So whenever you're asked to think about what's the matter with Kansas, you should bear in mind Andy Gelman, who's a statistician and political scientist at Columbia who's got an interesting new book on red and blue states and rich and poor states, who says that the real question is, what's the matter of Connecticut. There are more people in the Connecticut class voting Democratic on the basis of social issues than there are people in the Kansas class voting Republican on the basis of social issues.

Finally on the issue of race, the way to think about this in the context of our topic for today I think is to notice that race is really not in this election a policy issue. The candidates haven't been talking about policies that are of particular significance to African American voters or to white voters, people aren't weighing those issue positions and judging accordingly.

Insofar as race is important in the selection, and I think it will be, it's going to be important not as a set of policy issues, but as a set of identities or antipathies, and that's very much of a piece with the way voters think about politics more generally. The issue is whether they feel comfortable with one candidate or another more than it is a matter of whether they agree with the specific policy proposals of one candidate or another in this issue area. I've tried, as many other analysts have, to assess what the impact of race will be on the outcome of the election this year. The bottom line here is the one that Tom mentioned, which is that it's really very hard for us to tell because this is an unprecedented historical situation.

So people have looked at this in a variety of different ways. What I've done is to look at the racial antipathies that people in previous election cycles have expressed, and to think about what might happen if those antipathies play a larger role in their voting behavior this time than they have in the past.

It's important to bear in mind that there are potential flows in both directions there, which is to say there are some people who are more enthusiastic about white people than they are about black people and may then be moved to vote for McCain rather than Obama as a result, but there are also people who are more enthusiastic about blacks than they are about whites and who may be led to vote for Obama as a result. And the net balance of those two suggests to me that racial antipathies are

likely to be costly to Obama in the voting booth. My own estimate is that it's going to cost him something like three and a half or four percentage points in the vote. There are a variety of other people who have done other kinds of estimates based on different data or different considerations, looking at peoples' attitudes about racial prejudices, looking at patterns of voting in previous state level elections where we've had African American and white candidates.

I would say the range of estimates from those different approaches is kind of in the ballpark of two percentage points to five or six percentage points on the outside. Whether all that plays out in the election is something that we'll have to see, because the important point here is that we're extrapolating from situations that are really quite different from the one that voters are actually going to face when they get into the booth next month, so stay tuned and we'll see what happens.

MR. MANN: Larry, just to clarify the last point if I could. Would those effects be factored into the sort of pre-election polling information we have or hidden because of some measurement problems or a combination of the two?

MR. BARTELS: Well, presumably some combination of the two. I think mostly they're already represented in the views that people are expressing in the polls. I'm not a big believer in the Bradley Effect in the sense of people being motivated to consciously misrepresent their

views to pollsters because they somehow feel bad about how they're going to vote.

As I've said, people have a lot of capacity for rationalizing their behavior in ways that sound plausible. So if I decide I'm not going to vote for Obama, I can give you reasons why I think it's a good idea not to vote for Obama.

But I think it will make some difference even in comparison to where the polls stand now, because there are undecided voters who really don't know in their own minds how this is going to play out when they actually get into the booth. They may find themselves in the end not feeling sufficiently comfortable with Obama to cast a vote for him, and so I think there may be some effect that's not represented in the polls now, but I think mostly it probably is already reflected in what we see.

MR. MANN: All right. Thank you very much. We're now going to turn to Daron. And I just call your attention in the handouts as you came in; there is a set of charts and tables that Daron has prepared and I'm sure he'll be referring to.

MR. SHAW: Well, thanks. I'd like to thank Tom, obviously, and Larry for extending an invitation, giving me an opportunity to speak to you all this morning. I was intimidated; I went back and looked at the transcript from the first two meetings and I saw that Alan Abramowitz and Bob Erikson I think had presented extensive data, and so I was sort of forced to immediately go through and prepare some data, because that's

what we do in political science, and so I, you know, ask for your forgiveness if there's too many pages of this.

But, Sunshine, can I have your book for a second? I did not bring my book, but what I'd like to point out is, this is Sunshine's book, and I have a blurb on the back, so I like to think of this as our book.

As Tom mentioned, the first few sessions have emphasized these broad macro factors that condition the presidential vote, presidential approval, the state of the economy, the distribution of party identification, and obviously, across all those dimensions, Obama has a significant advantage. And so I took the topic of this morning's discussion as an opportunity to explore those factors that may allow John McCain to become competitive or to transform the race in some way. And so what I'd like to do is sort of go through what we I think in political science think about, issues, traits, ideology, gender, and race, so we're going to cover those things in sort of bullet point fashion.

But I'd also like to throw in a couple topics of my own, I'll just say a couple things on those. One is young voters, or the youth vote; and secondly, more broadly construed, campaign effects, which I think is the topic for the next session, but I'd like to at least mention that.

So let me kind of proceed in order and speak real briefly on issues first. The classic conception of issues and their role in campaigns is, as I think Professor Bartels laid out very nicely, is something we call proximity voting, and the idea is that on some, you know, theoretical

continuum, summary issue dimension, you kind of figure out where you stand, and then using the information that's provided over the course of the campaign, you fix positions to the candidates. So, you know, I'm at a certain position, Obama is here, McCain is here, and I do a simple distance calculation. Whichever candidate is closer to me is the one that I prefer. I'm sure a lot of you have actually done this online, where you can go in and put your position and then allow the candidates, you know, fix the candidates positions and figure out which candidate you're closer to.

There's not a lot of evidence that this occurs in any real consistent way. Or if there is evidence, it's confounded by some causality issues, as Professor Bartels mentioned, which is if I'm here and I'm going to vote for McCain, I'll simply pull McCain closer to me, I'll attribute to him issue positions that are closer to mine as a way to rationalize my vote choice.

However, if you set aside that sort of rationalization and you take something like Senate voting records as a way to fix the true positions of the candidates, and then you take a national survey of voters, and so we're allowed to place what we call the median voter across some issue dimension, and then the candidates positions, you actually get kind of a surprising picture. McCain is better situated than you might think.

Now, part of that is because, and there are some controversies over this, because Obama's voting record is premised largely on his behavior in the 2007 session, and a lot of those votes, as

Obama has pointed out, are essentially opposition to Bush positions. So it's also true, I would point out, that McCain actually didn't vote in enough 2007 issues to even generate a measure of where he is. So I think that's one of the reasons we haven't heard a lot about this from McCain.

But at any rate, as you see in the first handout, and I threw in Senator Clinton, as well, you can see – and this is a summary issue dimension, so it involves some social welfare issues, spending, taxes, as well as some social issues also. You see that voters are very, very slightly right of center. And by the way, this is sensitive to exactly the issues that you put into this continuum.

But on this summary dimension, they're slightly right of center. You see McCain scores, you know, is kind of a moderate Republican, and Obama and Clinton, Clinton is slightly more moderate than Obama – on the Democratic side. But if you actually do a Euclidian distance calculation, which is one of the words we use to get PhD's, you find that McCain scores slightly closer to voters than does Obama. There are a couple of problems here, as Professor Bartels hinted, not all issues are equal, and the issues that are dominating the conversation and selection are economic issues, and on those issues, Obama has a significant advantage. You know, and I think the Democratic Party generally has an advantage.

If people are anxious, they have concerns, they think that there are problems. The party that is more willing to use government to

propose solutions to those problems is going to have an advantage. You know, it's a very simple rubric, you know, you've got a problem, I have a program. And Republicans are in a position of either sort of philosophically adjusting, well, okay, we'll go for a government solution, but we want it to be efficient and lean, or they oppose it. And I think they're at a natural disadvantage in an election where the voters are anxious and want something done.

So I don't think, even though in simple terms, McCain is at least competitive on issues, I think that the reality is, the sort of issues that are being emphasized and the nature of the conversation right now clearly advantages Obama. So I don't figure there's much McCain can do on that. Now, there's another way to think of issues, and I'm actually quite attracted to this, and that is that voters don't actually do these sorts of calculations. There's a third proposal by a guy named John Petrocik who's at Missouri called issue ownership, and Petrocik argues that it's not so much your position on the issues, it's the salience of the issues in the election.

So in other words, what candidates are trying to do is to dominate the agenda. And a candidate who successfully convinces voters that his or her issues are the salient ones in the election is going to have a big advantage.

And so, for instance, setting aside your partisanship, I think we could pretty easily figure out which issues are owned by the

Democratic Party and which issues are owned by the Republicans.

Democrats own the environment, social security, health care; Republicans tend to own crime, they have traditionally owned taxes, and defense, not foreign policy, but defense.

In this election, what's interesting is that the Democratic issues are simply much more salient to voters, so they have a natural advantage. I think Obama has helped this, but I think conditions have just made it almost impossible for McCain to do that. I don't see how McCain emphasizes or convinces people that issues upon which Republicans have natural advantages are going to be the issues you should vote on. Now, the interesting little twist here is taxes, which clearly are a big issue. What's happened here is that taxes have started to become more of an important issue, but the natural Republican advantage on this issue has diminished with that rise in salience.

Obama is at least competitive. And if you look at the data I've got here, people say that Obama is better able to handle taxes than McCain, and I think a large part of that is because Obama has talked about a middle class tax cut, and McCain does not have a middle class tax cut.

So I think in some sense he has stolen that or at least neutralized that issue from the Republicans. Okay.

On traits, you'll notice that I just ran some figures. When we think of traits in political science, they're actually fairly simple. We think of

traits like leadership, empathy, you know, and one way for a candidate who's disadvantaged by conditions or issues to do well is to convince voters that he or she is temperamentally suited or has a set of traits that make him or her a superior candidate.

McCain's competitiveness in the spring and summer I think was largely derived from his effectiveness on these traits. People thought he was a strong leader, they thought he was trustworthy and honest, his long sort of career based on telling people what he thinks is right as opposed to what they want to hear, and so when you looked at the summer polls and McCain was within a couple points and even took a small lead after the convention, I think it was largely because he had managed to personalize the vote choice, or at least convince people that he had these traits that recommended him as a candidate.

In fact, I think this is still true, all the candidates, presidential and vice presidential, are considered very favorably by the American public. Palin's numbers have tumbled in the last couple of weeks. But in comparative terms, you look back to 1980, when nobody liked Carter or Reagan, in this election, most people like both Obama and McCain, they think they're good, their favorable ratings are pretty high.

But what Obama has been able to do in the last few weeks is really score well on strong leadership. He's convinced people he's a strong leader. And he has at least neutralized, if not taken advantage on honesty and trustworthiness. Those traditionally are issues where if

Republican candidates do well, they tend to dominate on those traits. Democrats almost always do well on empathy, cares about people like me, understands the problems of people like me, and Obama is, as you can see, enjoying significant advantages. Interesting, these last two ratings, you see at the bottom of the chart, indicate the most significant Obama advantage, can bring the country together, 66 percent say Obama can do that, only 42 percent say McCain. Has the right temperament to be a good president, 66 for Obama, 51 for McCain. So McCain is not horrible on these numbers, but Obama is really, really scoring well.

So traits seem to have become insufficient to give McCain, you know, any kind of serious boost. Obama is doing at least as well as McCain.

I'd also point to this last thing which I sort of thought about, the critical questions that each candidate has to face in this election. And for Obama, I think it is, is Obama experienced enough to be president; for McCain, it's would McCain be different from Bush. And what you see in the graph is that Obama has done a very nice job I think of answering that question, 53 to 43 say he does have enough experience. McCain is basically 50/50 on whether he's actually different from Bush. So I think Obama has answered his question in a way that McCain hasn't. Real quickly, on ideology, again, the idea here I think, as we're considering things is, is it possible for McCain to realize an advantage from kind of the natural conservative tendency to the American electorate. Most people

self-identify as either moderate or conservative. There's about one in five who self-identify as a liberal.

So one possibility is that McCain could bring that ideology to the floor in a way that would, you know, allow him to be competitive. He's got a bit of a problem here, though, as you see. McCain currently is drawing 15 percentage points less of the vote than Bush did amongst conservatives. Bush got 84 percent of self-identified conservatives, McCain is only getting 69 percent.

On the other side of the coin, Obama is drawing 20 percent of self-identified conservatives, and Kerry only drew 15. So Obama is running stronger, McCain is running considerable weaker. Even after nominating Sarah Palin and using the convention to shore up his credentials with conservatives, you know, he is not doing as well with conservatives as he needs to.

Remember, Bush won 89 percent, and he only won the vote by two points or two and a half points. Interesting I thought just as I ran these numbers that Bush actually scored eight points higher amongst moderates than McCain, you know, so for a polarizing conservative president, and supposedly a more broadly appealing candidate like McCain, Bush actually did better with moderates. And I think, as Larry suggested, a lot of that has to do with just the conditions that face the country right now.

On the issue of gender, I have a particular hobby horse on this, and that's kind of derived from my colleague, Karen Kauffman at the University of Maryland, who's done a significant amount of research arguing that the real story when it comes to the gender gap is the movement of men away from the Democratic party, not the movement of women towards the Democratic party.

So the story is kind of men peeling off as Democratic identifiers over the course of the last 30 or 40 years. That story has got a little bit of a twist, and that is, in the '90's, it is true that women identified at higher levels with the Democratic Party largely as a function of the Clinton campaign. They really liked Bill Clinton, and, you know, party identification kind of moved accordingly. But largely this is a story about men moving to the Republicans over Reagan, and then, to a lesser extent, with Bush. There's a particular version of this story, though. In 2004, how many people here heard of security moms? This was supposedly the group that was going to allow Bush to win. That story is empirically false so far as we can tell.

The real story in 2004 was that southern women voted for Bush at higher rates than they had in 2000. In fact, they actually preferred Bush to Kerry, which is a significant departure from their behavior in the 2000, and especially the '96 election.

This was not true in the north. But in the southern states, women went for Bush. They also – by the way, southern women went for

Clinton at higher levels than their northern counterparts. So Karen actually, my colleague calls this southern belles as opposed to security moms, she said the story is really one of southern women, and it seems largely to be driven by affect for specific candidates. They just were more comfortable with Clinton, and they were more comfortable with Bush than they were with Kerry. McCain is not doing well with southern belles. The gender gap, the last poll I saw had it at 54/37 for Obama amongst women, so that's a 17 point favor – Obama scored 17 points higher than McCain. Men were 43 for Obama, 47 for McCain, plus four for McCain with men, minus 17 with women. You add it up and it's a 21 point gender gap. That's high by historical standards. And the difference is that women don't like Johnny Mac very much.

I have a few things to say about race, but I'll table most of them for the discussion. I want to say something specifically about the Bradley or Wilder Effect. What we're really interested in in this election I think is the extent to which people actually misrepresent how they're going to vote. So they say they're going to vote for Obama, but they really voted or intend to vote for McCain.

The way we're measuring this in political science I think is flawed. What we're doing is, we're looking at the difference between the poll and the election outcome. That's what people did in the Democratic primaries.

Well, look, there are a lot of reasons a poll can be different from an election outcome. Polls have err, a natural err associated with how many people you sample and sampling techniques. People can genuinely change their mind between the time the polls are done, or in the aggregate certainly, and the time of the election. It's true that it's possible that some people are actually misrepresenting, I think that's really what we're after. But it's also true, and I would encourage everybody to think about this fairly seriously, that there's a technical thing called response rates. What we found in the primaries was that, on the Democratic side, Obama supporters were more likely to respond to pollsters than were Clinton supporters. So it's a response rate problem. And it's a function of enthusiasm I think for the candidate.

That told a lot of the story in the difference that Obama saw between his poll numbers and ultimately his election results. I think there's going to be significant enthusiasm differential this time around when we move to the general election.

McCain was consistently underestimated in the spring polls, because Huckabee supporters wanted to do interviews, Paul supporters will find reporters wherever they can and talk to them, so McCain tended to be under represented I think because the response rates were lower for McCain supporters than they were for these other people. So if you have a candidate with a relative lack of enthusiasm amongst his supporters, McCain, and a candidate with a high degree of enthusiasm amongst his

supporters, Obama, I think you can see a significant differential between the poll results and what you get on Election Day. Now, race is a part of that, it's played into enthusiasm, et cetera, but that's quite different from what we're talking about, which is where race is specifically driving vote intention, and I agree with Larry, that's a nettlesome issue.

Finally, the last two points, young voters, I have a single point to make here. People focus on turnout; I'm less interested in youth turnout than I am in the distribution of the vote amongst young voters. Young voters never turn out at levels comparable to their senior cohorts, they just don't. There's a lot of reasons for that which we can talk about. But what's interesting in this election, they're not going to vote at the same rates as 30 plus people, but they're coming in with a huge Democratic skew. They're coming in basically plus 30 Obama, that is enormous.

So I'm less interested in the level at which they vote, although I think we're all interested in that at some level, but they're coming in decidedly for the Democratic candidate, and that's very interesting given that the election is basically even amongst everybody else. So this is sort of unusual historically. The final point on campaigns, and this is reflected in the last figure in the handout, so maybe, okay, Obama has advantages across issues, and he's done well with traits, McCain is not capitalizing on ideology, we're not sure about how he's going to do with race, gender, Palin doesn't seem to have helped McCain much in terms of narrowing the gender gap, young voters are killing

McCain, well, maybe he can run a whiz bang campaign, well, the problem is that organizationally, in terms of money, he's just getting outplayed by Obama, both across traditional outreach mechanisms and across these new aspects of campaign outreach.

Obama has just put together an organization like none we've ever seen. And it really is striking for a person who's not an incumbent and who doesn't have the backing of an incumbent political party. He's put this together on his own, and it's a stunning campaign. And I don't – as a matter of fact, I think – and we talked a little bit about this last night at dinner, I think that whatever race effect there is, there's a good chance it will be offset by the ground game and the campaign organization that Obama has put in place.

Now, I don't want to underestimate race, it's obviously historically and traditionally such a dominant factor in American politics, but I'm not so sure that you're not going to see these things sort of balance out, so we end up getting a result that looks a lot like the polls we see the night before the election.

MR. MANN: Daron, thank you so much. That's a formidable list of factors that might work against the broad fundamentals of the election, but none of which do. Sunshine, is there any ray of hope or opportunity for John McCain?

MS. HILLYGUS: Well, that's one of the issues, the questions that I want to address in my remarks. And I want to talk about

the role of issues in the campaign, but also, again, to talk about the persuadable voters in the electorate. And I think one of the things that – one of my take away points is the fact there are enough persuadable voters left in the electorate, that there are some scenarios in which McCain could pull it out if he was to be successful with these persuadable voters. But as I'll explain, he has quite an uphill battle.

But I first want to talk a bit about the role of issues in the campaign. I certainly don't want the message coming out of this session to be that all political scientists think that, you know, the masses are asses and they don't know anything about issues.

I think that Larry is exactly right when he says that most people are not following every policy issue, they're not informed on a lot of policy issues. And the thing I would say is that it is true that people don't know much about a lot of things, but they know enough about things that they care about, and so that's an important distinction. And it is the case that people who are older are informed about social security, that attorneys are interested in tort reform, that union members are interested in NAFTA, Jews are interested in policies toward Israel. In political science, we call these issue publics. There are an issue or two that you can think of that you really care about that issue, and what we find is that people tend to be knowledgeable on that issue, they look to the candidates to see what their positions are on those issues, and the

question is, what are the conditions under which they will vote on the basis of those issues?

The important thing I want to point out is that these views that people have that they care about on an issue or two, again, like Larry has said, most people don't know about the whole range of issues, that often times those issues do not necessarily align with their party affiliation, and so they begin the campaign, are in the campaign with a bit of a dilemma.

They might agree with one candidate on one issue, they might agree with the other candidate – affiliate with the other candidate's party identification, or agree with the other candidate on a different issue. And so the role of the campaign is to determine, of these tensions, which one wins out. And so you have the small business owner who might be a member of the Sierra Club, the pro life Catholic who also wants increased spending on the poor, the, you know, union member who owns a gun, and what they have to do is, over the course of the campaign, decide which of their considerations, which of these important considerations are going to win out. In estimating the size of these kind of torn or cross pressured people, I estimate them about a third of the electorate. And so that very much is a large enough number of people to kind of make a difference.

And again, these are people who agree with each of the candidates on something they care about.

This view of the persuadable voter is actually quite different from what you read in the headlines, right. When we hear about who's up for grabs in the election, you know, generally we hear – the pollsters tell us it's the undecided voters, that these are the people who are up for grabs, except the reality is that a lot of these undecided voters are not really going to vote. You may have seen the Jon Stewart, you know, play on the undecided voters.

The other thing is that it misses out on people who currently support a candidate and then change their mind. And fundamentally, if you're undecided or not depends on who asked you the question, how they asked the question, and when they're asking the question. And so just in a recent poll, all the polls that came in on the 9th of October, you had the number of undecided voters ranging from zero percent up to 12 percent, and that's even after a lot of pollsters kind of pushed them into the corners and say, who are you leaning toward. So being undecided is a behavioral consequence rather than a theoretical reason why somebody is persuadable or not.

Every election year we hear about the kind of demographic group de jour, that's the, you know, security moms, it's the hockey moms this time, or the NASCAR dads, right, and this election cycle we've heard a lot about working class wives.

The problem with that, as political scientists will tell you, is that demography is not destiny. You look at a group of working class

wives and they have a lot of variability in the issues they care about, in their ideology, in their party identification. And sure enough, if you look at the working class wives, 33 percent of them identify with the Democrats, they're much more likely to support Obama.

The working class wives who identify with the Republican Party, it's about a third of them, they are more likely to vote for McCain. And so there's a lot of variation, and it's important to remember that, you know, we don't vote a particular way just because we are Catholic or white or black, and so demography, again, is not destiny. And then there are those who say, okay, we've heard in this session at Brookings about party identification, and it's certainly the case that your 90 percent Democrats are going to vote for the Democrats, 90 percent of Republicans are going to vote for the Republican party, and so maybe the only people who are persuadable are the people who are independents.

But as political scientists have long showed, in fact, those people who like to call themselves independent, a lot of them are, in fact, closet partisans, you know, they just don't want to admit to a pollster that they affiliate with a party.

And then those who are kind of pure independents, a lot of them stay home on Election Day. And the only group that we really care about, and certainly the only group that the candidates care about are the persuadable voters, right, the people who are actually going to show up on Election Day.

So, again, the argument that I would make is that these persuadable voters are those who have a foot in each camp. It turns out that, once you take into account who's actually going to show up on Election Day, a lot of them are actually partisans who disagree with their party on a given issue. I call them the but otherwise partisans. So it is the person who is pro life, but otherwise a Democrat. And if the campaign, if the candidates can convince that pro life Democrat that what is at stake in the election is abortion policy, then they are able to increase the salience of that cross pressure to such an extent that that person is likely to defect and vote for the Republican.

And so the challenge that the candidates have, the challenge that McCain has, because the conditions are so against him at this point, is to look at the coalition, the potential coalition of people who might otherwise support Obama, and look for issues on which he might pluck away little pieces of support, look for little issue public where he can convince that pro life Democrat that really abortion is what is at stake in this election rather than the economy.

And that's where there is this potential left in the last three weeks of the campaign that that could happen, but it's very difficult, because most Americans say that whatever my view is on abortion, whether I agree with the candor or not, what I care about in this election cycle is the economy. It's also the case that, you know, what the candidates are looking for then is, they're looking for potential wedge

issues, where they can emphasize an issue on which somebody disagrees with their own party, and they can pull that person away. And so when we talk about wedge issues, right, we think back to the Republican southern strategy to appeal to southern conservative white Democrats on the issue of race.

But today what we find is that it's not just the issue of race, and, in fact, there's a whole laundry list of wedge issues that the candidates talk about, and they're able to talk about these wedge issues because of changes in information and information technology.

The candidates don't go on national television and try and increase the salience of abortion, because, you know, McCain does that and he risks alienating those people who disagree with him on abortion. What he does is, he sends messages through micro targeting, he sends messages in direct mail, in email, on web sites, and he narrowly targets to those persuadable voters a message about the issue that he wants them to come to his side on. We call it dog whistle politics, right, the sending a message that's intended to be received by only that narrow constituency and not heard by the rest of the electorate. And so looking at this dog whistle politics, looking at micro targeting in say the 2004 election, what I found was that the candidates were talking about 75 different issues in direct mail. There were not 75 different issues being discussed in the media, there were not 75 different issues being talked about over the

water cooler or on television ads, right, it was a completely different campaign going on on the ground than in television advertising.

And if you look kind of more detailed at the content of the direct mail, 30 percent of direct mail pieces sent by the RNC and the Bush Campaign talked about wedge issues, and especially things like abortion, gay marriage, stem cell research, and zero percent of their television ads did, and that's actually rounding down.

There was one I think television ad that talked about abortion, and it was a Spanish language ad, and so it was already kind of targeted to a fairly narrow constituency.

And so I guess the point I want to make is just that, number one is, the candidates recognize that issues can play a role, and they have a very, you know, narrowly targeted and directed strategy for increasing the salience of different issues. But in a campaign like this one, where it doesn't matter what you receive in the mail, you still only want to focus on the issue of the economy, McCain has a very difficult task of trying to, you know, peel away those but otherwise Democrats.

That's not to say he's not trying. So you look at direct mail on both sides of the aisle, and what you, again, find in this election cycle is this tendency to focus on these very kinds of narrow issues. And so there's the piece of direct mail that talks about McCain's abortion policy, and that because he adopted a child out of Bangladesh, that shows his

commitment to life, and that's being sent out to try and appeal on abortion issues.

In Florida, the Florida Republican Party has put together a message that says Fidel Castro has endorsed Obama, right, to appeal to Cubans on this issue. And Obama is doing similar things; in southern states, where religion is more important, he's sending out a piece of direct mail that splashed across it says, committed Christian, right, this is not going out to the people in my area, right, in Cambridge, that's not the message they're receiving from the Obama campaign. So the key point here is that there is a very different campaign going on on the ground than we sometimes see in the media and on television. It is hard – I think it is, again, hard to imagine that this will be incredibly effective this election cycle. But it's important for us to kind of recognize, not necessarily because of the effect on the voters, because the voters are going to, again, I think vote on the basis of the economy, but how it's changed the behavior of the candidates, this willingness to talk about what in many peoples' minds are superficial issues rather than the things that the majority of Americans talk about.

And to the extent that the candidates are successful in building a coalition of different little issue publics, it will come back to bite them when it comes time to govern, because they've made these promises, they sent out these messages that have conveyed to different groups that their issue is going to be a priority to the next president, and

then when it comes time to actually start working on policy, it's inevitable that those different constituencies will be disappointed.

Okay. So that's my main point about issues. I want to talk just very briefly about the issue of race. I think, like a number of other political scientists, I've kind of done the back of the envelope calculation. And what I did is, I said, okay, a lot of the discussion has been about, you know, how many people are willing to admit that they are not willing to vote for a black candidate, or how many people have negative attitudes towards blacks. And I think the point I want to make is just that it's not quite so straight forward. Beyond kind of all of Daron's excellent point about this, you know, comparing pre-election and the actual election results, that even within a given survey, we have to take into account, number one, that, yes, there are people who have negative attitudes towards blacks, and the number is higher than, you know, many people like, and you look at exactly that number and you start worrying even about the current polling numbers for Obama.

But we have to remember that a lot of those people who have negative attitudes aren't likely to support any Democrat. Sixty-eight percent of those, in a recent poll I did, who have negative attitudes towards blacks supported Bush in 2004.

So then you kind of take away those people who you're not expecting them to have ever supported any Democrat, much less a black Democrat, and you say, okay, what about the independents and the

Democrats who have negative attitudes towards blacks, and so you've kind of cut that number in half. Well, then you look to see, in fact, several – there's a good chunk of them that actually support Obama, what's the reason, well, we ask the question, how like blacks do you think, you know, how like other blacks is Obama, and 53 percent say they don't think Obama is like other blacks.

And so they have these negative racial attitudes, but they don't connect Obama up to some of those negative racial attitudes. And so I think it's important, again, to remember that it's not so straight forward as to say just, you know, what is the extent of racial prejudice or negative racial attitudes in the country.

And in my back of the envelope calculations, I put it kind of down at the two percent type of impact. But again, I think we are playing in a, you know, a set of conditions that are very hard to – anything more than kind of a back of the envelope calculation.

Finally, on the issue of gender, you know, there has been I think a lot of speculation in the media that, or questions about the Hillary supporters, and would they eventually support Obama. And the beauty of the project that I'm working on right now is that it's a panel study, and so we interview people during the primary, we're interviewing them at multiple stages during the campaign, and so we can look at those people who at one time supported Clinton and look to see where they are now. And 65 percent – the majority of them have moved to the Obama camp.

And so the question is, okay, did Sarah Palin, in fact, appeal to those women who supported Clinton.

And if you look at Clinton supporters, Obama supporters, those who switch back and forth between the Democrats and Republicans in the primary, that nearly across the board, women have more negative views of Sarah Palin than do the men in those same categories.

And so I think – I'd just like to reinforce the message that we've I think seen more recently, and that is that Sarah Palin was not really an appeal to women as much as to social conservatives. I think I'll leave there.

MR. MANN: Thank you very much. Shankar.

MR. VEDANTAM: Well, that's a lot to respond to. There's just a ton of very interesting ideas there. I'm going to try and do two or three things. I want to try and respond to some of the things that the previous speakers spoke about. I also want to try and put a couple of potentially new issues on the table. And I also want to tell you very briefly about some reporting that I did last weekend at a town in northwest Pennsylvania which gives some of the perhaps more anecdotal, you know, information that might back up some of the data we've been hearing about today.

So a lot of the conversation today has focused on this issue of, you know, how important are the issues. And I think, you know, as

Larry says, you know, there's really convincing evidence that, contrary to what, you know, convention people think about, you know, how they reach conclusions, you know, issues do not drive, you know, people to their parties, and I think there's really strong evidence to support that.

Even though, very interestingly, and I say this as a member of the media, if you look at media coverage of elections, it's almost entirely about the issues, you know, where does Obama stand on the issues, where does McCain stand on the issues. And it's striking when you think about the fact that the issues might not matter so much at all.

The four issues that I want to try and add to the table are, you know, the question of – the role of partisanship in sort of all of this, the role of age and sort of what's happening in the election, the role of geography and what's happening in the election, and finally, perhaps most importantly, the role of, you know, what some people have called intersectionality, which is that when you think about issues one by one, you get a certain perspective, how important are the issues, how important is geography, how important is race, how important is gender.

But in the minds of any given voters, these issues are never uni-dimensional, they always are working in concert with one another, and so in some ways, it's the intersectionality, it's how these issues intersect together in the minds of individual voters that's actually more important, I would argue, than how, you know, how strong or weak the individual dimensions are.

So to sort of start, you know, with the point that Larry was making, there is good evidence that issues are not what drive voters, and so the question is, is it the candidates that drive voters, and there's some evidence for that, but when people like candidates, they're more likely to think the candidates support their own views on the issues. And we've seen this with any number of candidates, including Reagan, and Carter, and even McCain. There are many Democrats, for example, who have generally been favorable toward McCain for a long time who were surprised to learn I think in this election how conservative McCain's voting record was. And I think it stems from the fact that peoples affect towards candidate drives that perception to where the candidates actually stand on the issues.

The question, however, is, is that the only – is it just sort of the candidates and the issues that are at play, and here are a couple of things that complicate it. When you think about sort of the range of issues that people care about, you would imagine, you should imagine that there will be far greater differences between Democrats on many issues and between Republicans on many issues. Sunshine mentioned this point.

You know, what if you're a small business owner who's a member of the Sierra Club, what if you're a union member who owns a gun? We have sort of a whole range of different issues, and obviously, you know, our views on these issues might be different. The striking thing is, if you look at the views of average Republicans and average

Democrats, it is striking how much the average Democrat agrees on sort of a whole range of issues that are Democratic issues. I mean there's no particular reason why somebody who's pro choice necessarily needs to be in favor of, you know, government intervention, the two things that are completely unrelated. There's no reason why somebody who's pro choice should genuinely be gun control. But yet if we look at sort of where Democrats on average stand on many of these issues, and where Republicans stand on many of these issues, the views of individual Republicans and Democrats tend to be very monolithic.

And what that suggests to me, and I think it suggests to some people is that, what's driving a lot of where people stand on these issues is not so much the issues and not so much the candidates, but the party identification. And it's the partisanship that drives how you feel about the candidates, it drives how we feel about the issues.

I've written a column about this recently, looking at work by Mark Hetherington and Don Green and others who argue about the idea of, you know, should we think about politics much in the way of, you know, the way we think about sports, you know. So I lived in Philadelphia for some time, and I grew passionately attached to the Philadelphia Eagles, and I still follow the football team, you know, with great passion, and every weekend after I spend four hours wasting my time watching a football game, I ask myself at the end of this, why did I do that, I mean why do I care about this particular team, it's just one bunch of highly paid

athletes wearing one, you know, set of uniforms, they're really no different from any other set of athletes, and yet I have this intense emotional connection to this one team, and the political scientists are basically saying it's the same thing happening politics.

In other words, it's not so much the issues of the candidates, but it's just I know which team I'm on. And it's not so much what does the team do for me, what does electing a Republican mean for me as a Republican, or what does electing a Democrat mean for me as a Democrat, it's not how does this make a difference to my life, as much as saying a victory for them is a victory for my team, and I know which team I'm on, and so it matters to me whether the Eagles win or lose, just as it matters to me whether the Democrats win or lose.

It doesn't – asking what does it mean for you that the Democrat wins is like asking what does it mean for me that the Eagles win, it makes no difference to my life. It makes no tangible difference to my life on any number of issues, and yet I care about it intensely. I'm going to give you a little bit of stream of consciousness because there were so many different interesting ideas. One of the striking things I thought that Daron mentioned, this is in figure five of his handout that looks at Democratic party identification by gender, if you look at the point at which both men and women sort of most strongly identified with the Democratic party, it looks as if the year was around 1962, if I'm sort of broadly correct. And since that point, there's sort of been a steady

decline in sort of both men and women, but there's been an interesting divergence between men and women.

And when I think about this, it seems to me that this is actually less about gender than it is about race. In other words, the striking things that happen in the 1960's did not have to do with issues related to gender, but they had to do with issues related to race.

And when I was watching the debates on CNN, the three presidential debates, CNN and some other channels had this tracker where they had, you know, independent men and women voters sort of tracking where the candidates stood on the issues, this is purely anecdotal, but I actually had the sense that the divergence between men and women was actually much less on gender issues and much more on race issues. So in other words, when race became more prominent, the men were much more likely to sort of support McCain and much less likely to sort of find Obama appealing. And when, you know, on race issues, women were much more likely to find Obama appealing and McCain unappealing.

So what this tells me is something actually very interesting, which is that two issues, you know, gender and race, so it's not just that issues draw issues and candidates are connected and issues and partisanship and candidates are connected, but where people stand on issues of identity connect with where they stand on other issues of

identify. So, in other words, my gender informs how I think about race issues, just sort of tossing out the ideas is an interesting idea.

If you look at two other things that are extremely striking, if you sort of slice the – what predicts somebody is going to be a Republican, what predicts somebody will, you know, support Obama or McCain, two of the things that I think are really striking in this particular election are age. So, in other words, if you look at voters below 30 or below 35, you know, the gap is just extraordinary. And again, that sort of begs the question, because that's not about issues, it's not necessarily about the candidate, it's not necessarily about partisanship. So, in other words, a completely different dimension would suggest that how old you are makes a huge difference in sort of which party and which candidate you find appealing. And, you know, so, again, age obviously intersects with the other issues, as well.

The other very interesting thing is where people live. And I find this, you know, I find this always constantly fascinating. So the per capita, no, not per capita, the population intensity, how crowded the area is in which you live, is one of the most powerful predictors of whether you're a Republican or a Democrat. And when you think about this, this stuff makes no sense, you know. It makes some sense perhaps on economic issues, but why should it predict whether you live in a town or a rural area, whether you're pro choice or anti abortion; why is there a connection between those two things?

And it seems to me that's yet another area. So, in other words, geography is playing sort of a very powerful role in how people think about the issues, how people think about candidates. There's probably going to be questions on the Bradley Effect, so I'll sort of leave that to the Q and A. I don't want to sort of exceed my time. I want to tell you about a couple of things that happened last weekend and some of the recent work that I've looked at in sort of looking at gender issues and sort of race issues.

One thing that's actually gone unmentioned so far in this conversation is the issue of age. And I think McCain actually has been paying a significant price for age, and in many ways it's been under counted. I mean much of the Obama campaign has focused on how McCain is out of touch, how he has poor judgment, and sort of the debates, they seem to be sort of a stark physical contrast, especially in the town hall debate between Obama and McCain in terms of just physicality. And the question is, you know, how much of a price is McCain paying because of age issues, and how does this intersect then with the questions of race, because obviously it intersects in ways that are contradictory.

The issues of gender I think are very interesting, because there's been very interesting work, especially by social psychologists which suggest when you think about women leaders, they're often too – there are two stereotypes that are often attached to women leaders, and

the first stereotype is that the woman leader is nice, but she's incompetent, and the second stereotype is that she's very competent, but she's a bitch. So these are the two sort of general stereotypes that have often characterized how people think about women leaders.

And what I find very striking about this election is that we actually have both examples here. So when people think about Hillary Clinton, right, I mean much of I think the sexism that was directed against Hillary Clinton was not directed about her competence. Nobody questions how competent she was. People questioned how likeable she was, how much do I relate to her, how much do I trust her, how warmly do I feel toward her.

When you look at Sarah Palin, on the other hand, you see almost exactly the opposite, right. People generally think she's nice, people think she's attractive, some people think she's hot, but almost uniformly the question is, is she competent, is she incompetent. And I find it striking, and I don't know how much of this is based on, you know, peoples' careful calibrations of where the individual candidates stand on the issue, but it's really striking that we've had two female candidates who have played a very prominent role in this election season, one of them has fit the standard stereotype A, one of them has fit the standard stereotype B. All right. I'm really jumping from idea to idea, but I'm tossing out ideas that I think will sort of come up in conversations.

I spent a lot of time this last weekend in a town in northwest Pennsylvania, I'm not going to mention the town, and I'm not going to mention, you know, identify individual people I've spoken with because it's for a book project that I haven't written about, but I found it very striking.

I'm going to tell you about two voters, one I'm going to call Jack and one I'm going to call Jill. They were both elderly. Fine, let's call them Joe and Jill. So both Joe and Jill were in their late '60's, they've been straight Democratic ticket voters for about 40 years, both of them sort of, you know, very blue collar town with very strong, you know, very strong union instincts, it's been decimated by the economy.

Joe sort of works at a light bulb factory that has, you know, really sort have gone downhill over the last 15 or 20 years. You know, the number of people employed at this light bulb factory has sort have dropped by an order of magnitude in about, you know, 20 years. Joe is very strongly against free trade, you know, he wants the country to erect, you know, trade barriers and sort of impose tariffs on products coming in. He is very concerned about sort of outsourcing. And when you look at these issues, it would seem to sort of be a no brainer where he should stand on this particular campaign between Obama and McCain.

Similarly, Jill has worked for many years as a union organizer and sort of has, you know, spent several decades as a union organizer, and has also been a straight Democratic ticket voter for about

three or four decades. She cares intensely about the abortion issue and is sort of intensely pro choice.

What I found striking is that both Joe and Jill told me that they were extremely ambivalent when it came to this election, and they couldn't, you know, they really had – they were torn between the two candidates. And I tried to press them and tried to understand sort of where they were coming from, because it seemed to me, at least from where I was coming from, that – it didn't seem very complicated how they should think about these two candidates and I was trying to understand where they – how they were thinking about it. So Joe told me his concerns about Obama were that he just didn't know where Obama stood, he just felt that he couldn't trust where Obama stood, he wasn't quite sure where Obama stood, he didn't have a good feel for Obama, which I think had something to do with race, even though he explicitly said that it made, you know, race was not a factor in his thinking at all.

Jill was in some ways more interesting because she actually said that race was an explicit factor in how she was thinking about the race. And she said she was particularly concerned that if an African American man became president, she was afraid that whites would now have to go to the back of the bus, as she says, you know, that blacks had historically been at the back of the bus, but now whites would have to go to the back of the bus.

And this was really interesting. She said she had a long conversation with her sister, who was an Obama supporter, and they were having this debate about who to support, and the sister finally – different with this argument. The sister's argument was, remember, Obama is half white, and if he's half white, that must mean he must care at least some about white people, which means he's not going to send all the white people to the back of the bus, because, you know, he's half white. And this argument appealed tremendously to Jill, and she said, yes, if he is half white, then maybe he's not going to, you know, discriminate against white voters, and it's prompted her to sort of generally feel that she's going to support Obama, although she doesn't feel passionately about it.

One last issue and I'll stop, which is, on the Obama question of race, and I think Sunshine mentioned this, or maybe it was Daron, I'm not sure, when you think about the traditional stereotypes that have attached themselves to black candidates and to African Americans in general, those are not stereotypes that are attaching themselves to Obama in this race.

So, in other words, when you think about, you know, the stereotypes about blacks that have often undermined politicians, when you think about the Willie Horton ad, when you think about, you know, a whole bunch of issues related to crime, for example, crime has been a very, you know, powerful way to talk about race in many presidential elections, that is not the subtext of race that's going on in this particular

election, in some ways because it just is so implausible to sort of associate Barack Obama with sort of the traditional stereotypes that have been attached to African Americans. He's so cerebral, he's so professorial, very consciously, and I think perhaps strategically he's just sort of held back and sort of, you know, completely been unflappable, completely calm, you know, never angry, never threatening.

But the stereotypes that have attached to Obama have had to do with sort of this idea that people of color have often been seen as being less American, have been less fully American than whites. And there's very interesting research, I wrote it in my column last Monday in the Post sort of looking at this issue, and if you look at many of the issues that have been most successful I think in undermining Obama, they haven't had to do with questions related to race, per se, but questions about how patriotic is he.

What does it mean that his middle name is Hussein? You know, what does it mean that he sort of spent time in Indonesia and Africa, and to some extent in Hawaii, which apparently is a foreign country, you know, it's a striking thing.

But when you think about many of the things that have effected Obama, it has to do with this idea of, you know, how American is he, how trustworthy is he, how patriotic is he, as opposed to sort of traditional, you know, the stereotypes that have effected black politicians. So there's a whole bunch of really interesting issues, I'm just tossing them

all out there, hoping you will sort them out, you know, rather than have me do it, but to encourage you to sort of think about, you know, these issues intersect with each, how does sort of the age issue with McCain intersect with the gender issue with Palin and Clinton, intersect with the race issue, intersect with geography, intersect with age, intersect with partisanship. That's what makes it so incredibly, you know, fascinating and complicated. Thanks.

MR. MANN: Thank you so much, fascinating, as were all my colleagues up here. One question; in the last day or two, Sunshine and Daron, we've seen a focus, a reporting focus on RNC robocalls that are being made in a number of states; I assume this is standard operating procedure for campaigns also near the end. But I wanted to ask you whether, since the Bill Ayers thing seems not to have served the McCain camp well in terms of national attention and visibility in the debates and the press coverage and in the ads, whether this is a form of micro targeting? And are robocalls more like direct mail than other forms of campaigning?

MS. HILLYGUS: Well, in fact, I would say, in doing interviews for the book with some consultants, somebody – or maybe I read this by a journalist who did the interview, but the consultant was saying how at one time you would have the Republican party or any party calling up and saying, don't forget to go out to vote, and that would be the message on the phone.

And now the message is, you know, don't forget to go out to vote or the number of abortions is going to go up, right. And so because the candidates and parties have enough information about the people that they're calling, they can personalize the message.

It's only been since the candidates have had voter registration lists that are available in a single data base that they've been able to match then the consumer data to find out, you know, what magazines you're subscribing to and so on. They've been able to identify what are the issues that they think you're going to be receptive on.

And so they won't send the robocall about abortion to someone they think they're about to lose because they're pro choice, right. They will, in that type of targeted message, direct it a little bit more carefully than they can do at the national level, because when they make those type of statements at the national level, they're going to get hit from the people who disagree, and that doesn't happen I think in the middle class.

MR. MANN: Daron.

MR. SHAW: I think it's probably worthwhile to just spend a couple seconds on what micro targeting is. In the past, what happens is, in a state, you know, I'm from Texas, so in the state of Texas, you get a voter list from the registrar, and a campaign will actually call every individual on the list and ask them a couple questions, you know, who are you going to vote for, what issues are important to you, and from that list, you know, you'll come up with probably about a 40 to 60 percent, you

know, completion rate, and you'll have records, so you know, okay, I know you're, you know, you voted in Democratic primaries, but you say you're undecided, you say health care is your issue, boom, that's the kind of mail piece that goes to that person.

The problem is, that sort of enterprises extraordinarily expensive. And there's a huge rate of incompletes. So micro targeting involves surveying about 5,500 people, 6,000 people from the list, and asking them a series of questions, and then taking a look at the demography and then how the person responds to the questions and matching every individual on the voter list based on the responses gleaned from that 5,500. So I say, oh, well, you look like the sort of person, you know, who's undecided, cares about health care or education, right, so it saves money in that sense.

The problem I have envisioning, and it's just because I'm sort of limited cerebrally, I understand what a health care message looks like, you know, okay, you care about health care, I know what message I'm sending to you, but targeting these hard hitting, you know, Bill Ayers messages, I mean, you know, what information would lead you to target somebody with those sorts of messages, you know?

Well, I'm an angry white male who cares about the possibility of a Manchurian candidate, I mean I don't – I don't quite understand – yeah, exactly. Well, yeah, membership to the Trilateral Commission or something like that, I suppose. So I don't know how you'd effectively

target that message. And I'm a little confused exactly what the Ayers message is. You know, I mean, obviously, one of the – he's not patriotic, Obama is going to get in and is going to undermined the fabric of the country, but I actually think what they really want to do is suggest that this guy is comfortable hanging around with radicals, he's going to expose himself to ideas that are just wacky, and therefore, shouldn't be president, that's kind of the nice way to put it. Well, how do you micro target, I mean how do you gauge the receptiveness of individual voters to that message?

So, I mean essentially that's totally right, that's the way they do it, and that's what they're looking for, but conceptually, I have no clue who gets that call, you know.

MR. MANN: One last question, and then, please, I'd like to turn to the audience and take your questions. In sorting out the racial effect, or trying to understand it, I gleaned from what all of you have said the importance of context.

Part of the context is the, if you will, the salience of racially loaded issues; crime is one, certainly welfare is another. There may be a substitution of patriotism, Americanism, but one senses the lower salience today than a generation ago or a decade or two ago of those items that invoke sort of racial resentment stereotypes and the rest. Second, the nature of the racial minority candidacy, in Obama's case, the biracial argument, but also just the whole pitch of the campaign to run in a

seemingly post-racial environment. And the third is the primacy of the economy this year.

Now, just the bottom line, would you agree that those factors all would tend to work to diminish the potential net cost to Obama from the fact that he is black?

Larry.

MR. BARTELS: I would say, yes, and I think he's advantaged by the fact that the context that he needs in order to reduce the salience of this potential problem fits very well with his own personality and style. I saw the other night, as some of you may have, the Frontline documentary on the two candidates and their lives and their histories, and there was some footage in that of Obama as a student at Harvard Law School talking to people in crowds, and it was striking to me how much he sounded like the Obama that we see today and how the style is very much this cool, low key, conciliatory kind of style that's well suited to reduce the boiling point on these issues for people who would otherwise be more likely to be uncomfortable with an African American.

MR. VEDANTAM: Well, the thing that actually strikes me about the Obama campaign is how little he has talked about race at all. There's actually been only one real issue – time when Obama has actually discussed race, which was sort of the big speech that he made in Philadelphia.

But apart from that, what's striking is how consciously it seems that the campaign does not want to talk about race. And even when pressed to do so, the campaign consistently says it's not an issue, it won't be an issue, plays down the possibility of the Bradley Effect, and in some ways I think this is – I mean it's a consciously thought out strategy and it's based on the idea that, you know, if you think about many of these biases as not being of the explicit level, but, you know, much more being at the implicit level, you know, unstated even to people in their own, you know, it's not that people are lying, but people just don't have access to their own feelings about how to do this; the way to get at it is also at sort of an implicit level, which is not to sort of make race explicit and sort of say, you know, race is an issue on this table and I've sort of been discriminated against, as much as to say race is not an issue, you know, appeal to sort of our better angels, and so to say, you know, we live in America where race is no longer important, even, you know, whether or not it is.

As a strategy, I think it actually has been very effective. You know, it remains to be seen in the next, you know, three weeks, you know, what happens on that issue, because I think there certainly was a school of thought among many people who think about race five or six months ago, that the Obama campaign was making a serious mistake by not dealing with race head on. Now, I think they've been proven correct so far.

MR. SHAW: Well, I was going to say what was striking to me is, at the front end of this race, and maybe this is, you know, from a group of people who do too much studying of Congress and Senate elections, was that Obama is at least a second generation, arguably a third generation African American candidate.

Well, the first generation is sort of the John Lewis and those who were involved in the Civil Rights struggle, and those candidates, and I guess Jesse Jackson is sort of the highest level example, spoke differently. Their candidacies were overtly involved with sort of racial identity. And they did well with, obviously, African Americans, but tended to flame out, you know, very quickly once, you know, the fight went national and to a white audience. And so when Obama came along, I thought that what you'd see was what's become very clear in African American districts and constituencies, and that is a fight between the old style black candidate and the Harvard Ivy League educated new generation of black leaders.

And those, you know, if you guys have seen some of these races in New Jersey and in Pennsylvania and other places, they tend to involve questions of authenticity, and so there's actually a resistance on the part of many African Americans to the Harold Ford/Barack Obama style of candidacies.

But having studied a lot of these races and talked a lot about them, I was completely wrong at how quickly the power of having an

African American candidate would overpower any of those sorts of conflicts within the black community.

And there was a rallying around Obama so quickly after Iowa. You know, I thought in South Carolina, for instance, I thought there might be some very strong holdouts for Hillary Clinton as someone who, well, she's white and she's a female, but she's much better for us and for our cause on certain issues, huh-uh. And the entire African American leadership sort of came around Obama very, very quickly and powerfully.

And so I think any need that he had to rally a base of support was gone after Iowa. And so that strategy that Shankar has said is exactly right, they self-consciously avoided that, they haven't need to rally the black community.

And so one interesting thing is the other end of this, which is, I think you're going to be stunned if you didn't see record African American turnout. I mean we did a poll recently and we asked, how likely are you to vote on a zero to ten scale, where ten means you're absolutely certain to vote; every African American in the survey said ten, which is absolutely stunning.

So I'm interested kind of at the other end. Obviously, it's going to be very interesting to see how it plays out with whites, but I also think the story within the African American community has been very interesting, too. And, you know, I'm not saying it will offset, but black

enthusiasm, black turnout, I think is going to at least partially offset the race – the other side.

MR. MANN: Sunshine.

MS. HILLYGUS: I would just kind of second what Shankar said, and that was that what we see in terms of what normally we would expect, where race to kind of rear its ugly head, as people say, you know, I'm just – I'm not sure, that it's been targeted in a way that people can say, I'm uncertain about his religion, about his background, about his patriotism, and so what you see both in the ground game and in conversations is, rather than the issue of race explicitly, that often times it is this, you know, more of an issue of an outsider, of a foreigner.

And, you know, there's the billboard in Missouri that has, you know, a cartoon picture of Obama with, you know, a turban on, and it says, you know, you elect Barack Hussein Obama and you're going to, you know, get your guns taken away, abortions are going to go up.

And it's interesting how it's playing on not race directly, right, but this, you know, that Obama is different from the rest of us.

MR. MANN: All right. We'd be happy to entertain your questions. Here we go, Gary, we'll start here, and then move around.

MR. MITCHELL: I was hoping I'd have more time. Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report. And I will, A, do my best to have this be a complete thought, and B, end up as a question. One of the things that – one of the words or terms that I haven't heard today and I'm interested to

know whether it factors in any of your thinking about analyzing voting behavior is the so called science of psychographics.

I hesitate to do this, but I admit to – earlier in my life I spent a chunk of time in the advertising business in New York. And for a long time, marketing decisions were essentially driven by demography, age, income, sex, family size, et cetera. And then along came this fellow, Ernest Dichter, the science of psychographics, who said, no, there are other things that we need to look at.

And to cite one specific example, and this is leading to the question, I happened to work at an agency that was then the agency for the Listerine folks, and what we learned when we started looking at the psychographics of the mouthwash using population was that the folks who use Listerine were disease conscious, and that's what – that's why they were using Listerine. The people who used Scope were using it for sociability reasons. Now, that's a simplified cut at where I'm trying to head on this, which is, I was thinking about what Daron was saying on the robocall, on William Ayers, and saying I don't – I think, if I'm getting you correctly, saying I'm not sure who you target.

It seems to me who you target with a William Ayers call is the psychographic of fear. Voters who are – for whom fear in one form or another is a motivating factor in how they stand on issues or how they pick candidates. And so I now want to sort of turn this into a question and say, does that feel like it has any validity, or is that – or is that bunk?

MR. SHAW: The only stuff I've read on this is pursuant to the 2004 election, and the psychographic that they used was fear of death. And this comes out of the cognitive psychology literature. And the argument was that voters who had a fear of mortality, and particular voters whose fear of mortality seemed to have increased after 9/11, favored Bush, like an 80 to 20 rate.

So I guess my response is, I think that is an underdeveloped area of voting behavior. I think it's actually promising. I mean, you know, I understand what you're saying, it sort of sounds a little goofy when you first formulate it, but I think it's absolutely legitimate. And I think your instinct about this election is probably right. Our problem is measurement, because when you do these micro targeting calls, you don't have enough time to actually ask a battery of questions to get the sort of psychographic information you need to do that properly. But that's not to say it's not promising or couldn't be extremely used or valuable.

MR. BARTELS: There are consistent personality differences between people and they are sometimes correlated with political views in striking ways. I'm thinking of the work of a psychologist at New York University named John Jost, who's done studies of, you know, what makes people liberals or conservatives in terms of their personality characteristics, or Democrats or Republicans, so they can tell you things like how you feel about the idea of eating soup with an unclean spoon is related to your views about all kinds of political issues. What I'm a little

confused about is what the implications of this are with respect to targeting. And more generally I'm confused or mystified about how targeting is supposed to work. Because if you find out what the relationship is for people already between a particular concern or personality characteristic on one hand and their political views or their support on the other hand, that's not really what's interesting to you as a candidate; what you want to know is, who's at the margin of being persuaded to join your column in addition to the people who are already there.

And so whether you want to appeal to the people who look like the people who are already your supporters, or whether you want to appeal to the people who look like something else entirely is something that I think is, at least as I understand it, done mostly by the seat of the pants rather than on the basis of any scientific understanding of who's actually likely to be persuadable.

MR. MANN: Shankar.

MR. VEDANTAM: Well, I mean the other thing I think is very striking is that I think the whole – I mean this is really – the question is really about micro targeting in many ways. I think we have gotten very clever at sort of knowing, you know, how to slice and dice people to figure out what it is they care about. I actually don't think we're very good at figuring out, you know, I don't think we know necessarily that targeting that person with this method is going to make that person change their mind.

In other words, the analogy I have is sort of like, you know, thinking about the weather. You know, we've gotten to the stage where we understand, you know, why hurricanes start and why tornadoes start and why it rains one day and it's clear the next day, because we understand that humidity and latitude and longitude and the earth's rotation, all of these things make a difference.

But that doesn't mean because we understand the different things that go into the answer, that we now know how to control it, that we now know how to do anything about it. In fact, we don't when it comes to the weather. And I would argue that we probably don't when it comes to politics, as well.

MR. SHAW: There are some studies of micro targeting where we've actually split – we do a field experiment, where half of your group gets a micro targeting message and the other half gets nothing. And a lot of these experiments that I've seen, and the RNC doesn't like to hear this, I'll tell you that right now, show that there's almost no difference in the preferences of the group that the message versus those that didn't.

MR. MANN: All the way in the back, yes. Mike, right behind you.

MS. FREEMAN: Yes, my name is Jo Freeman, I'm a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, and I have a specific question for Sunshine about your panel study. When you said that only 65 percent of the Hillary voters were now supporting Obama, I was actually surprised

that it was that low, because these are, after all, they were Democratic Party primary voters, and partisanship should be fairly strong.

Can you compare the two groups of Hillary primary supporters, the 65 percent who switched, and the 35 percent who haven't, what differences are there between them demographically or according to views?

MS. HILLYGUS: I actually put a lot of, you know, error in that estimate, only because it's a very quick analysis, and the 65 percent number is actually from I think poll numbers about three or four weeks ago. We have another one that we'll get out soon. But what essentially – what you can see is that those people are a little bit slower to come to the Obama camp than others. And actually, the thing that I thought was more striking, because some of them are not necessarily McCain supporters, right, they're still undecided, the more striking thing is, actually it's the Edwards supporters are the ones that are less supportive of Obama than the Clinton supporters.

MS. FREEMAN: Can you tell me about demographic differences between the groups?

MS. HILLYGUS: So there are – there were Clinton supporters who had supported Bush in 2004, and they're the ones not coming back. I mean they're people that we would expect, and this is, again, not from a very detailed analysis. But, you know, if you simply look at the ones that haven't yet come home, they're people that probably

wouldn't have necessarily supported Clinton the whole way through anyway.

MR. BARTELS: Do we have evidence that some of those Clinton supporters who haven't come over yet are actually Republicans or independent leaning Republicans who might have –

MS. HILLYGUS: Were voting –

MR. BARTELS: -- voted against Obama rather than for Clinton?

MS. HILLYGUS: You know, I don't want to put a number, an estimate on that. There is –

MR. SHAW: Oh come on.

MS. HILLYGUS: -- there is no doubt that there are some people that it is surprising that they supported Clinton, right, but I'll stop with that to say I haven't analyzed it enough to explain that surprise.

MR. MANN: Okay. Yes, all the way in the back here.

MS. MAPLE: Hi, my name is Lindsey Maple, I'm with Talk Radio News Service. Professor Shaw, you were talking a lot about the youth vote and how that's affecting Barack's campaign. And as far as that goes, I was wondering which issues specifically you think the Obama campaign has targeted that has such a high rate of youth voters. Also, in conjunction with that, they're using a lot of like video game advertisements, I don't know if you guys have been reading about that, and I think that that targets even younger voters, or younger people who

can't vote, and what effect do you think that may have on future constituents and voters?

MR. MANN: Okay. How much of the strength of Obama among young voters is a consequence of specific decisions made by the Obama campaign to appeal to them, and what are they, or is it due to something entirely separate?

MR. SHAW: I've got an answer and a story real quickly. The answer is, I don't think much of it is issue based at all. I had a summer class in 2007, and Barack Obama came to give a – have a rally at Zilker Park in Austin, 14,000 people showed up to that. I think the notion that he has targeted issues like increased support for Pell Grants, and if that, therefore, has galvanized the youth on behalf of Obama, it doesn't make much sense to me.

I think there is a broad trend, and the broad trend is that the rest of the country has been sort of 48/48 over the last ten years really. But this, you know, millennial generation has come in with very, very strongly Democratic views, and we were discussing this before the panel, I really don't have a good sense of why that is, it could be the war, but I think there's just a disconnection between the Republican party and however they – conservative ideas and this generation.

I think long term it's extremely consequential. But right now I think a lot of it is demography. He is young, he's – I mean Sunshine said this earlier, I think of Barack Obama as analogist to Tiger Woods. He

looks like what we think America will look like in 50 years, which is not just multi racial, you know. Tiger Woods refers to himself as Coblinasian, right, Caucasian, Asian, black, you know, and I think it's kind of a funny term. But I think in that sense, he represents the future, physically, and I think that appeals to young people. And so I think he's just sort of got a charisma and a presence and a look that attracts young people.

I don't want to diminish issue appeals, but I think they come after the fact. The anecdote I have is on some of these outreach methods. I was talking to a member of the McCain campaign who's doing their e-campaign, some of their online stuff, and a student had brought to my attention that Obama is advertising in these second worlds, you know, where you have avatars, and there's actually Obama advertising they purchased, so, you know, you invent a version of yourself, you pluck it down this world, and you walk by Obama for President signs. They're advertising in these worlds.

And I asked her, the McCain representative, had you guys done anything, had McCain done anything, and she said, well, yeah, she said we created an avatar for McCain, and he has an apartment, but Obama supporters park their cars in front of his apartment, so McCain can't get out of his apartment to his car, and they're writing graffiti on McCain's campaign, so they said that McCain is just sticking in his apartment.

MR. BARTELS: I think the preferences of these young perspective voters is a sort of perfect storm of all of the things that we've been talking about. I agree with Daron that it's not mostly views about specific issues, but it's insignificant part identity and affinity, on one hand they're comparing a kind of Kennedy-ness Democrat with a kind of Reagan-ness Republican who reminds them of their grumpy grandfathers.

On the other hand, they're, as Daron says, more relaxed about race and the potential role of race than older voters tend to be. And back to the sessions that we had before, focusing on the extent to which people are basing their assessments on their sense of how things are going in the country, what's really distinctive about this group is that, unlike other voters who've been around for a long time and seen lots of good and bad outcomes under both parties and have in their heads a kind of running tally of the likely successor failure of any given party, these are people who have only seen Republican failures, their entire political experience is Republican failures, and so it's consistent with a broader historical trend that we've seen, where the new voters entering into the electorate at any given time are a kind of exaggerated version of the verdict that people are making at that time on the successor failure of the parties.

MR. MANN: All right, yes.

MS. BROG: Thank you. My name is Paula Brog and I'm a freelance editor. I was just wondering what your take is on the role of, we

haven't talked about this, age of the candidates in this election. I have a father who is 82 years old, who supported, you know, John Kennedy, started out as a Democrat, then became one of the Reagan Democrats and went Republican. But now he's, you know, he's 82, and he says John McCain is too old, so – and he's maybe leaning to Obama.

So I just wanted to get your take on, you know, just the role of age, not from the voters, but the candidates, and how you see that, in terms of how the voters view them, in terms of being – and also John McCain's age is a factor because of the running mate that he chose. You know, he's 72, has had cancer, very likely could have some health – adverse health event in office, and you know, and then the role of his VP choice in all of that.

MR. MANN: Who would like to bite off that?

MR. VEDANTAM: Well, let me – if I can just try and respond to something that's – in some ways I'm responding to an implicit aspect of your question, not the question itself, which is that, you know, I don't think it's strike necessarily that elderly people have concerns about McCain's age, you know, and I think it's an error to think that, you know, racism is all about what whites think, and, you know, sexism is all about what men think, and that ageism is all about what young people think, that's just not the way it works, that, you know, elderly people are just as likely to have ageist views as young people, maybe not just as much, but fairly likely to have ageist views, just like many women have sexist views, that, you

know, are biased against women, and many blacks have racist views that are biased against people of color.

So it doesn't quite work that in sort of these neat dichotomies, and so the fact that elderly people might have the same bias doesn't mean it's not a bias. And I actually think it is going to play a significant role, especially because ageism seems to be one of those biases that you can talk about explicitly, that it seems to be okay to basically say I think McCain is too old, that he's, you know, he has poor judgment, that he's out of touch, that this is okay to say in ways that you just can't say about, you know, about gender issues, and you certainly can't say it about race issues.

MR. BARTELS: I do think it's interesting that at the outset of the campaign, the age cohort most supportive of McCain relative to Obama were those 65 and older. One sensed it was partly a discomfort with Obama and a racial minority and a comfort level with someone that they had seen around. But over time that difference has diminished, and now there are signs that seniors are more supportive of Obama. That probably has something to do with the financial meltdown and just genuine fear over our economic wellbeing and the worth of retirement funds and the rest.

But I think also sort of seeing the contrast of the two candidates in the series of debates raises questions about McCain's wellbeing and calls even more attention to the Palin nomination. So I think

in various ways the – John McCain succeeded in underscoring his age as a liability by selecting Sarah Palin as his running mate.

MS. HILLYGUS: I just want to follow up both on this question and in our earlier discussion about the youth vote, and that is, we've come back time and time again about how identity has been important to how people are selecting their candidates, and so young people like Obama because he's young, and this is the future, and, you know, there was this concern that old people would like McCain because he was older, and there's kind of this undertone that when people choose on the basis of race or age or gender, that it's an irrational decision.

And I think that we want to be very careful that that is not, in fact, what I would claim at all, because when somebody looks to Obama and says, okay, he's young, or he is like me in terms of race, or I like Clinton because of gender, that often times what they're doing is, it's part – there is this assumption that because they're like me, they're going to do things in office that will benefit me.

And so while it might not be explicit policy thinking, right, that it's going to effect affirmative action or affect a specific issue, it doesn't mean that it's irrational behavior and that there is no kind of thinking about what the policy, you know, outcomes would be. I think it is partly about what the expectation is that will happen down the road and the policies in the end because that person is like me will benefit me.

MR. MANN: Well, let's take one more question right here. We're running out of time.

SPEAKER: I'll make it quick. After Iowa, I think the country just started scratching its head about this guy, Barack Obama. So my question is, has he transcended race or is he a new paradigm for race and politics in this country?

MR. BARTELS: I guess the answer is, we'll see. And I mean that partly that we'll see when people actually get in the voting booth, but even more than that, if he does success in winning the election, I think how he governs will be an important factor in defining the implications of race than in American politics going forward.

MR. VEDANTAM: Well, you know, there's obviously, you know, in terms of race issues, Obama's candidacy has obviously had – effects, I mean there's no question about that. You have sort of a person who's sort of, you know, at the top of his game, you know, seems likely to win the election, you know, obviously those are good things. But I think it is interesting that in order to get to that position, he's had to play down the issue of race as much as he has. And there's something that I can't quite put my finger on that's sort of troubling about that, that for a female candidate to be elected, she has to play down gender, that for a person of color to be elected, he or she has to play down race. And there's some cost associated with doing that, and the cost is not just to the candidate I

think, but to the country as a whole, that certain things have to be put, you know, hidden from view in order that people can get elected.

And there's a price that I think in some ways we all are paying for that. Even as I, you know, would be the first to sort of say, that these are sort of, you know, this election is sort of breaking many historical barriers.

MR. SHAW: Just on this score, it was so striking at the end of his acceptance speech, which was on the anniversary of Martin Luther King's famous I have a dream speech, and he alluded to that, but he couldn't bring himself actually to say Martin Luther King.

MR. VEDANTAM: He never mentioned King once, he never mentioned the words civil rights once, you know, it was striking.

MR. MANN: But that's the American way, it strikes me, the whole notion of melting pot and the appeals. I mean you wouldn't like it if sort of white males used that identity as a sort of affirmative basis for campaigning. It strikes me as the – as sort of less worrisome and harmful, and I see it actually on the positive side, it seems to me Obama has got it exactly right, about how you try to transcend this and move into a very different world, so I see it as very much a post racial syndrome or paradigm, that if, as we expect, he's elected, and if, as we don't necessarily expect given the complexity of problems he would face, but if he's successful in governing, then it – the dimensions of this will become clear, because he's much freer as an elected president to address some

issues that need addressing that are explicitly associated with race, so we'll have to watch to see how he does on governing.

One last point, and I was just going to see if you all noticed the same evidence I did and whether one should attribute any importance to it. One of the more innovative polling organizations went to the states, battleground states with early voting, and did some assessing of what, you know, what the voting was among those who had taken advantage of the opportunity casts an early ballot, and in the five states where Bush had run an advantage of roughly six and a half percent, the reported vote for Obama was a plus 23 percent. Query, is that primarily a function of the efforts of the Obama campaign to turn out their troops early, would that account for it all, or is it some indicator that, you know, that there's a sort of a big Democratic victory in the works and that all of the hand wringing about the Bradley Effect will probably prove irrelevant; any thoughts on that?

MR. SHAW: Sure; traditionally Republicans have an advantage in early voting, partly because of the nature of their coalition and partly because they have traditionally valued absentee voting at a higher level than Democrats. I mean I remember – I grew up in California, I remember Jerry Brown was chair of the Democratic party of California saying, well, you know, why would you waste money on absentee voting because those people are just going to show up on election day, and, you know, it's a waste. And the Republican thought always, if you turn a .9

probability voter into a 1.0, that's a huge net advantage. So I think the Democrats have realized this.

I tend to think – most of the evidence I've seen, and Brian Gaines from the University of Illinois has done a couple of studies of Iowa over the last couple of cycles, and Gaines' evidence suggests that this is basically substitution, that you're turning mostly people who are going to show up on election day into early voters, and so that a campaign emphasizes convenience voting, whether it's early voting or absentee or mail, doesn't necessarily net them anymore votes, which sort of supports Jerry Brown's idea.

I don't think that's what's going on this time around, though. I do think, because of the kinds of voters who are making themselves – making use of this, young voters, these are not reliable election day voters, and so any vote you get in the bank is a good vote.

So I think it partly reflects the emphasis the Obama campaign has placed on convenience voting, partly reflects that we've gone from a plus two Republican election to probably a plus five to a plus eight Democratic election, right. And, you know, so I think it's significant, but I wouldn't – I think what a plus 23 sort of suggests to me, yeah, it's in line with a six, seven, eight point Democratic win over all, so, you know, it smells right to me I guess.

MR. MANN: All right. Well, listen, thank you all very much, I appreciate it. Thank you for coming.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

Notary Public

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My Commission Expires: November 30, 2008