

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION  
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2012 POST-ELECTION AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY:  
ANALYZING THE ELECTION AND LOOKING AHEAD  
TO THE BUDGET SHOWDOWN

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**Presentation of Survey Results:**

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DIONNE: Welcome. Welcome, everyone, including a lot of old friends who are here today. I am really looking forward to today and to Robbie's presentation. I'm E.J. Dionne of the Brookings Institution, and on behalf of our Religion, Policy and Politics Project I want to welcome you all for coming. We are here to celebrate a great piece of work that Robbie Jones and Dan Cox at the Public Religion Research Institute have been doing now for -- how many years, Robbie?

MR. JONES: Three.

MR. DIONNE: Yes, this is the third year of the American Values Survey, and I've got to say my colleague, Bill Galston, and I -- Bill can't be here today -- one of the most fun, professional partnerships I've engaged in over the years is the one with Robbie and Dan and PRRI. The meetings are always fun and substantive, and most of these are devoted to trying to solve problems and trying to figure out what people actually think as opposed to what the pollster wants them to think. And we try to stay away from that. And again, and just to be very clear, this survey -- for those of you in the media -- should not be identified as a Brookings PRRI project. It's a pure PRRI project.

I want to thank the PRRI staff, who I know put in long hours. Indeed I know this because I was in Colorado the last couple of days, so I was up very late East Coast time, and there I am getting e-mails from Robbie, who should have been asleep as he was trying to make sure that he got this all out on time. And that's true of all the people who work with him: Juhem Navarro-Rivera; Emilia Thompson-DeVoe; Christina -- Christina, forgive me --

MR. JONES: Stenyevitch.

MR. DIONNE: Stenyevitch. At least we mentioned you several times if only once correctly. (Laughter)

And I want to thank my colleagues at Brookings -- Anna Goodbaum; Christine Jacobs; Ross Tilchin; and Corinne Davis, who is here today, who has done so much work to make our partnership work.

Here's what we're going to do this morning. Robbie will present the findings of the Post-Election American Values Survey. And he'll probably mention this, but one of the things that's really powerful about this survey is we interviewed the people in this survey a month or so before the election, and we interviewed the same people again, so it's a panel study. So, it's an opportunity to see actual movement, not just what people remembered, but we have all their answers. So, there's a lot -- as those of you who were in social sciences like Bill know -- that you can do with a panel study that you can't do with other kinds of surveys.

After we hear from Robbie, Melissa Deckman and John Sides will comment. So, let me just do brief introductions of the three of them. After that's done, I may make a couple of comments myself, but mostly I want to moderate a discussion up here and then invite you all in.

Robbie is the founding CEO of PRRI. He's a leading scholar and commentator on religion, values, and public life. He's the author of books, peer reviewed articles. He writes a weekly "Figuring Faith" column in the *Washington Post's* "On Faith" section, so we're kind of double colleagues. He holds a PhD in religion from Embry University and a master's in divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, which means he prays over his data and doesn't just analyze it. (Laughter)

Melissa Deckman is the Louis L. Goldstein Professor of Public Affairs and Chair of the Political Science Department at Washington College. She is also an affiliated scholar with PRRI. Her specialties include religion in politics, state and local politics, women and politics. That's a good set for this particular election. Her current

research focuses on the ways that religion, gender, and politics intersect. She graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland and received her PhD in political science from American University.

And John Sides is Associate Professor of Political Science at George Washington University. He studies public opinion in American elections. He is the co-author of a book about the 2012 campaign -- that's fast (laughter) -- called *The Gamble*, a textbook on campaigns and a scholarly article. It's on campaign strategies, attitudes toward immigration, and other topics. He helped found and contributes to the Monkey Cage, a great political science blog that some of you junkies are familiar with. He received his BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his MA and PhD from the University of California at Berkley.

And I might note that even our panel is a panel study, because Melissa and John were kind of enough to comment on the first round of this survey. So, I will take careful notes to see if any of their views have changed since we did the first study.

Robbie, tell us what you found.

MR. JONES: Great

Well, thanks, everyone, for being here at 9 a.m. on a Friday morning. I think it's Friday anyway. It's a little bit hard to tell this week. I was sitting with some friends, you know, the day after the election, and everyone was talking about, ah, you know, so tired of campaign ads, I'm so ready, you know, for this -- so glad this is over. And, it's not over. (Laughter) Right. And, so -- today the election might be over now that we're here and actually have some data to look back at it.

But before I go on, I do want to just say one very deep, heartfelt word of gratitude to the staff at PRRI -- Dan Cox, Juhem Navarro-Rivera, Christina Stanyevitch, and also Amelia Thompson-DeVoe -- who came in early, stayed up late, and spent lots of

hours in the office between Sunday -- the field period -- we started calling people right after the election Wednesday, finished calling on Sunday and then have had, you know, these four days to analyze all the data.

And we had a national survey. There was a panel callback survey, an Ohio survey and a set of focus groups in Ohio and North Carolina right before the election. So, we had lots of data we've been swimming in the last four days to just sort of get it out, get a quick picture.

What we're going to do today is two things. We're going to do a look-back at the 2012 election, and then we're also going to do a pivot forward, all right? So, I know you'll all be relieved that we're not going to spend the whole time talking, just looking back. We actually look forward to the so-called fiscal cliff and that sort of fights around the deficit and the budget that are coming up and sort of figure out a little bit about what, you know, voters' attitudes are about those issues and how the kind of partisan wrangling is sort of lining up, at least in the public opinion data, that may give us a clue as to how those debates may go going forward.

So, let me just jump in here so, like a look back, a look ahead. E.J.'s mentioned a bit about the survey already, and I have, too, so just to kind of -- we have national election, (inaudible). Both were conducted by telephone, both land line and cell samples. Both were bilingual.

And I want to say also a special word of thanks here. We have Simon Greer here with us, who's the president of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, on the front row, one of the major funders of the project.

I also want to say thank you to the Ford Foundation and to the Civic Participation Research Fund at the New World Foundation, all of which help fund this great body of data that we're able to talk about today. So, thank you.

All right, so let's take a look back. I couldn't resist pulling just a couple of things in here from the exit polls that many of you may talk about, but first of all just quick -- I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this, but the Mormon factor. You know, was it a factor? Turns out no. Really, it did not make a huge difference. I'd put real quickly, just from the exit polls 2004, 2008, 2012 historic -- the history of voting patterns here among white evangelicals. And as you can see, there's really not much difference at all. In fact, it looks almost identical to George W. Bush's proportion of the vote back in 2004. And then the other piece of this is, you know, did white evangelicals turn out? Turns out, yes, they did. All right, so both of those things are true. They both turned out, and they voted roughly in proportion as they did for George W. Bush back in 2004.

Another piece for context that I thought just might be interesting -- again, I'm not going to spend a lot of time here, but if you just look at the patterns, these are religious groups across the bottom: left to right, support, low to high support for Democratic candidates.

As you can see, the kind of religious coalitions in the last three elections have been relatively stable. We see white evangelicals, white Catholics, white mainline mostly sort of a lower support for Democratic candidates on the left, and then Latino Catholics, unaffiliated Jews, and African-American protestants with higher support for Democratic candidates.

The other thing you'll notice that will set the stage for my next slide is that these three groups on the left are white Christian groups, and starting with Latino Catholic and over, they're either minority Christian groups, the religiously unaffiliated, or non-Christian religious groups -- that's Jews. All right, so there's kind of more diversity on the sort of right side than on the left.

MR. DIONNE: Or the other way around.

MR. JONES: Yes. (Laughter) Right, right. That's right. It might turn out the other way.

This chart I really love. I want to say thank you to Christina Stenyevitch for laying this out. But basically what we did was we tried to think about what does the kind of religious landscape in terms of diversity look like in America today? What does it look like for the two candidates' coalitions, and what does it look like, especially if we break it out by generational cohort, right? So, one of the things that you'll look at here, if you sort of pay attention to the red pieces here in the middle -- and they make kind of a triangle shape if you kind of look at our trapezoidal shape with kind of a thinner slice of red among the millennial group at the top -- 18- to 29-year-olds, and a sort of a wider swath of red on here among seniors. And basically what you see here -- that group of red is white Christian voters in the survey. And one of the things that we've seen here is that there are far fewer -- as you go down the age spectrum, there are far fewer white Christian voters as a percentage of the voting population than there are as you go up the generational spectrum. And then what we did is we laid in Obama's coalition by religion and race kind of where he would fit in the generational cohort here, and then we laid in Romney's religious cohort by religion and race where he would fit. And basically what you end up seeing here is that Obama's religious coalition by race and religion looks about like 30-year-old America, right? So, that's kind of what his coalition looks like.

Romney's coalition looks like senior America, all right? It just looks much more like that. That's the coalition that we see here. And, you know, what I've sort of been saying a lot to reporters the last few days is I think that this really does spell the end of anything you might call a white Christian strategy, that is, a sort of piling up, you know, high, high support among white Christians as a winning strategy for the presidency. Seems like this election pretty much spells out that that is a losing strategy. You have to

have a broader tent than that. You just can't run up the numbers quite high enough among white Christians to win. So, we could talk about that a little bit later.

Oh, the other thing to say here is that if you sort of look back -- if we go back just a few years, white Christians in 2000 -- they're also just being smaller as a proportion of the electorate. So, if you go back to, you know, 2000, what you see is that white Christians made up 66 percent of the electorate, and just 12 years later they're down nine points to 57 percent of the electorate. So, you see that number shrinking, which makes sense as you see the generational cohorts here.

All right, one other way of looking at this is if you look at the percent of the coalition of each candidate identifying as white Christian over time -- these numbers are from the exit polls 1992 to 2012 -- what you basically see is that the Republican presidential candidates have been relying on about an 8-in-10 part of their constituency being white and Christian, and that number has not moved, right? It's very stable over time. And as you'll notice, Democrats have been relying less and less on a kind of white Christian cohort. So, if we look at 1992, among Democrats white Christians made up about 60 percent of the Democratic coalition; by 2012 they were less than 4 in 10 of Democratic presidential coalitions -- electoral coalitions. So, that's kind of one very interesting piece of the story.

The other piece is the unaffiliated vote, and if you look at the unaffiliated vote over time -- and we had a lot to say on the pre-election panel about who the unaffiliated are -- I'll say one quick thing about that in a minute before I move on, but what we see over time is that the unaffiliated -- if you go back to 1980, there were far fewer religiously unaffiliated Americans.

But you see their vote was actually not that different. They were pretty close in terms of their splitting the vote by party. And in the '80s and certainly into the



'90s you see both a kind of rapid growth of the size of this group, and the size of the bubbles -- how big the bubbles is how big a percent they're making of that candidate's coalition. So, you can see the blue bubbles getting bigger, right, over time, which means that Democratic presidential candidates are relying more on that group. And you see they stay relatively the same size. They're getting a little bit bigger as well among Republican candidates but not that much. So the spread is getting bigger, and they're piling up more on the Democratic side of the ticket as they did in this election, voting 70 percent for Barack Obama and 26 percent for Mitt Romney.

So, there's been a lot of talk about the rise of the unaffiliated. They've moved from being about 7 percent of the general population in 1992 to being nearly one in five Americans, 19 percent of all Americans. So, it nearly tripled since the early '90s as a portion of the American electorate.

However, one of the things that we found in the pre-election survey just - - unless you over-read this number -- so, we tend to use the word "unaffiliated." The other word you may have seen a lot in the media is the "nones," n-o-n-e-s, not n-u-n-s but n-o-n-e-s.

MR. DIONNE: The nuns ride buses is what -- both kinds.

MR. JONES: Yeah, right. These "nones" don't ride buses.

And one of the things that I think is really important and why we, I think, didn't hang onto this word "unaffiliated" rather than the "nones" is that the nones tend to imply that these people have no religion, right? And so one of the things we found in the pre-election survey is that that's actually not true. They just are not formally affiliated with religion. So, a big chunk of them, certainly, are atheist and agnostic. About 36 percent identify as atheist and agnostic. About 39 percent of them identify as kind of secular and not religious. But what's interesting about this is that about a quarter of them --

23 percent -- we've labeled "unattached believers," because they actually identify themselves as religious people, they're just not formally affiliated. So, that piece of the unaffiliated is really important and very interesting just in terms of kind of knowing how to read that growth of the unaffiliated, that there's at least a significant chunk of them that consider themselves religious people, just not attached to formal, religious traditions.

All right, so, a little bit of Ohio. So, we spent the weekend before the election in Ohio and North Carolina. In Ohio we were talking with white working-class voters, trying to sort of take their temperature right before the election, what was going on. And what we found -- sort of heard their (inaudible), and the data is -- particularly this thing about the auto bailout and a sort of more optimistic view about Ohio's economy at least than the general economy.

So, among white working class voters overall, just to take a look at the vote -- Obama lost white working-class voters nationwide pretty substantially. Sixty-five percent voted for Romney; 33 percent voted for Obama. But in Ohio, he ran even with white working-class voters, which is a big part of the story certainly in Ohio.

Now, why was that? I think there are a number of reasons. One is that Ohioans in general feel better about their own state's economy -- that it's doing better -- than they did about how the national economy is going. So, we actually asked in the Ohio value survey both how Ohioans perceive the direction of the country and how Ohioans perceive the direction of Ohio -- and this classic right direction, wrong track -- and we found that 53 percent felt like the country was off on the wrong track, but 51 percent of them felt like the state was on the right track. So, there's kind of more optimism about local affairs.

The second one that has certainly had an impact is strong support among white working-class Ohioans for the auto bailout, for the Obama administration's

work. I snapped this picture here in the Columbus, Ohio, airport as we were headed to the focus groups, right? (Laughter)

MR. DIONNE: You're always working, Robert.

MR. JONES: Yeah, that's right. (Laughter)

There was this huge display, right?, of a guy who was -- it was in two different places, this huge display, over -- it was a Honda, you know, factoring in, you know -- so, you see the "Built in Ohio" over here. And, so right there in the airport it took up probably, you know, 50 feet in the Columbus airport. It was, like, one section of this huge display. They had a big engine out. It was, you know, a pretty dramatic display. But you can sort of see these numbers down here they have at the bottom -- the white working-class support for the auto bailout. Nationally white working-class voters are basically divided on whether they thought this was a good idea for the administration to do or a bad idea. But in Ohio and in battleground states, they were strongly supportive. Sixty percent in Ohio, 61 percent of white working-class voters in battleground states supported the auto bailout. So, that certainly helped the Obama administration.

One other, I think, clue here that sort of may stitch all of this together in a big picture way is we had a whole range of things that we asked about the candidate -- perceptions about the candidates. This is Ohio, white working-class voters on this chart here. And what you see is on the left - now, so, Romney was very strong on the (inaudible) who has -- which candidate -- on each of these we asked them to say which candidate do you think this statement describes better, right? Does it describe Romney better? Does it describe Obama better? So, Romney outperforms Obama on "has strong religious beliefs" among white working-class voters. That's the big bar on the right, 59 percent. Has a slight edge on "plan to get the economy moving." Has an edge on "is a strong and decisive leader," But then when you sort of get to "is honest and

trustworthy, cares about people like you, understands the problems of poor Americans,” Obama starts outperforming him, and I think the biggest one here is the 13-point advantage Obama has on “cares about people like you,” right? So, this is just sort of connected at the level of empathy. I’m sure the auto bailout had something to do with that, sort of the sense that Obama sort of got what was going on, understands the problems of white working-class Americans, and I think had something to do with why he ran even in Ohio with Romney’s fight losing nationwide.

Okay, so, take a deep breath. We’ll put the election aside for a minute. We’ll sort of look ahead now, so we feel like maybe we just avoided one cliff and we’re headed toward another. (Laughter) But we are going to look ahead to the fiscal cliff. What do we have as kind of some clues in this survey about the budget debates, what we had going forward, and here I think the pattern in the data says, you know, clearly there’s a lot of polarization. You know, we saw it in the election, very writhe. We also see it in some questions about, like, the role of government: What should government be doing? What shouldn’t it be doing? There are still big partisan divides on that. Despite that, we found actually some fairly strong support for a balanced approach to tackling the deficit in terms of both cutting programs and increasing taxes. So, let me kind of step you what we found.

On this question of what the government should do more to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, polarization, political polarization, alive and well along party lines here, right? All right, so among all voters 6 in 10 say the government should do more to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. Now, that sounds pretty solid. But when you start looking at -- you break it down by party, you actually see what’s going on is that Democrats and independents are sort of on one side of that divide, and Republicans are strongly on the other side of the divide. So, still there’s very strong -- so,

Democrats -- 8 in 10 Democrats said they agree with the statement; about 6 in 10 independents agree with it, 7 in 10 Republicans disagree with the statement, right? So, even at the sort of general level, what the government should be doing. Especially on this matter of social programs, we see these stark divisions.

We had a series of questions that we asked about, okay, well, what kind of values or principles do you think Congress ought to take with it to the budget debates to kind of guide how they make these very complex decisions? You know, what kinds of values should we see? And I've got the general population -- or among all voters numbers up here. As you can see, we had four: Living within our means; promoting individual responsibility in self-sufficiency; investing in the future; protecting poor and vulnerable Americans. And basically there were kind of three patterns. So, there was very, very strong support for living within our means, a little bit less support for protecting poor and vulnerable Americans, and then about 7 in 10 both agreeing with promoting individual responsibility and self-sufficiency and investing in the future. You also see some intensity differences that we -- the dark green here is people saying this is the most important thing, and the lighter green is people saying this is very important here.

One of the things that we can look underneath it -- I don't have it on a slide, but when you look underneath there, one of the reasons why, again, we see some of these differences is that on this protecting poor and vulnerable Americans, there is, again, partisan disagreement, which is why this number looks a lot lower. And so just to give you an example, on protecting poor and vulnerable Americans -- on that principle Democrats are 74 percent, independents are 61 percent so basically right on that line, and Republicans are 45 percent, right?, who say that this is a very important or the most important principle.

On living within our means, though, there's actually partisan agreement

on this when 93 percent of Republicans say this is -- you know, almost all Republicans say that this is very important or the most important thing, sort of guiding budget. Independents look again like -- basically like this: 86 percent, altogether saying living within their means is important. But there's kind of strong Democratic agreement: 72 percent of Democrats line up here, which is why that line sort of looks a lot bigger than the one on the bottom, and there's a mixture of the two in the middle. But --

MR. DIONNE: Robbie --

MR. JONES: Yes.

MR. DIONNE: Could I ask you in terms of the most important, is there a gap? In other words, are Republicans much more likely to say it's the most important --

MR. JONES: Yeah, I don't have the number right in front of me, but on the living within our means part, definitely there's more intensity on the Republican side, yeah, on that, than there is on the Democratic. Even in the agreement there's more. There's intensity differences that you would expect to see there.

Now, so, given all that polarization, we asked another question that was sort of -- all right, so basically the two options before people and sort of tackling the federal deficit are cutting things, increasing taxes, right? So, we've got a revenue side and a cut side. What do you think -- and here we gave the option of both. So, do you want to cut major programs? Do you want to increase taxes? Do you want some combination of both? And, you know, what we see here is that although you can see differences, certainly, on cutting major programs with the Republicans saying 4 in 10 think you should only cut programs there, still 52 percent of Republicans support a combination of both cutting and increasing taxes. So, not completely allergic to the idea of raising taxes there, certainly a substantial minority saying you should only do cuts. And Democrats are overwhelmingly in the combination of both. Eleven percent say you

should only raise taxes, but only about 1 in 10, only 4 percent, of Democrats say you should only cut major programs. And independents look, not surprisingly, a little bit like the general population on the question. But I think the main thing to see here is that at least in principle, right, there is this kind of sense of yeah, a balanced approach. It does some cuts and some increasing taxes. That seems like the right path to go on.

Now, all right, so we've got polarization on what the government should be doing, some widespread agreement on the kind of strategy for tackling these very complicated things. However, alright, the devil's in the details. When you get down to all right, so what shall we do on the revenue side? So, should we increase taxes on Americans making at least \$250,000 a year? 6 in 10 voters overall say yes to that question, but here again is this big partisan divide, right? So, 9 in 10 Democrats say yes, two-thirds of independents say yes, nearly two-thirds of Republicans say no, we should not raise taxes on Americans making at least \$250,000 a year.

Interestingly enough, when we look underneath here, we had another question that asked who -- like, just people's perceptions of who is paying too many taxes in the country, and among all Americans -- and we looked at it by income, so, like, we said, you know, people like you -- we had an option like people like you are paying too much, and then we correlate it with income. So, Americans -- what's interesting here is this is a kind of linear line that may run in a little bit of a counterintuitive direction, depending on what your assumptions are, but here's how it pulls out, that Americans who live in households with under \$30,000 a year in income -- 52 percent of them say we're paying too many taxes, right? So, poor Americans living at the lower end of the spectrum say we're paying too many. In Americans who live in households with over a hundred thousand dollars in income -- I don't know, what do you think, which way is it going to go? Thirty-two percent think they're paying too much in taxes, right? So, actually the

wealthier end of the spectrum actually are less likely to think they're paying too much in taxes than sort of the lower end of the income spectrum. This is kind of an interesting contextual piece here.

And I'm going to end on -- so that's the income side of it. What about the sort of cutting side of things? Here again partisan differences on cutting federal programs, federal funding for social programs to help the poor. Among all voters, two-thirds oppose this as a way of tackling the deficit. Democrats -- this is actually a very similar pattern, you'll notice, from the previous one. Democrats -- 9 in 10 oppose this; independents -- two-thirds oppose this; and Republicans, actually, a slim majority -- 53 percent actually support -- are more likely to support cutting federal programs that help the poor as a way of tackling the deficit.

MR. DIONNE: Did you rig the numbers to get 53 percent to (inaudible) the campaign?

MR. JONES: Oh, right, yeah. (Laughter) Good point. Yeah, we weighted to 47 percent on this number.

Yeah, no, but you see -- so, you know, I think the picture obviously is complex, and this is why there's a lot of wrangling here. But, you know, there is, I think, some daylight and maybe a way forward, at least at the level of principle, even if, you know, when you get down to the level of details, what you see is a lot of, you know, push and pull on the numbers.

So, I'm going to stop there and turn it over to Melissa and John. Let me just say my own thanks to both of you for being here, both pre-election and post-election, and offering your insights on the data. So, thank you.

MR. DIONNE: By the way, applause for Robbie.

MS. DECKMAN: Yeah.



MR. DIONNE: You can take that as half for Robbie, half for you coming up.

MS. DECKMAN: I'll take any I can get.

Thank you very much. Congratulations to Robbie, Dan, and the team at PRRI really for some excellent work -- remarkable and such a quick turnaround as well.

I also want to say thanks to Robbie and Dan for lending me the data. I've been analyzing it the last couple of days, and as a self-professed social science geek, I've been in Heaven looking at numbers and analyzing numbers. So, some of the analysis actually is based on what I've done the past few days looking at that.

So, I want to talk today about several gaps in the electorate and what the PRRI data have to say about their importance in this election. Two of those gaps we hear a lot about are in the media: the guide gap and the gender gap. But I also want to talk about another gap that has received somewhat less attention by the media but one that I think is increasingly important in examining voting behavior, and that's the marriage gap among the electorate.

First, though, talking about the guide gap, the post-election survey results here offer very little that is surprising in terms of vote choice by religion. I think, you know, Robbie did a great job showing the last few election cycles. We have very set-in patterns of how people vote by religion.

I also thought that the chart that Christina came up with that looks at the diminishing white Christian strategy and juxtaposes that by age with the trapezoids. I'm impressed that you came up with that term. I haven't heard that since elementary school -- trapezoid. But I think, you know, it really sort of shows the problem that the GOP is going to be facing in the future quite brilliantly.

There are two quick points that I wanted to make about religion that

emerge from the findings here that deserve maybe a little closer examination by scholars in the near future. First -- this was not in the presentation but it's in the report -- there was a finding with respect to white evangelical Protestants and their views about the state of the U.S. economy. So, the pollsters -- they found that white evangelical Protestant voters were the only religious group of voters that were significantly more likely to blame the economic policies of Obama rather than the economic policies of Bush for the current economic crisis.

Now, much of American politics today is what I would describe as tribal, right? Voters tend to root for their own sides. Their biases certainly color their perceptions about most if not all political issues -- you know, it's the other guy's fault; it's not our team to blame here. And perhaps it's because Bush was one of their own, that white evangelical Protestants may be reluctant to place blame at his feet and more likely to, say, blame the socialist Muslim from Kenya for these problems -- I mean Barack Obama. But, you know, what's interesting, though, I did some further analysis on the PRRI data, and white evangelical Protestants hold consistently the most conservative view on a variety of economic positions.

There has been a concerted effort in recent years by Christian right leaders to, for lack of a better term, biblically justify, I think, conservative economic policy, right? It's a conscious effort to expand their own issue agenda from social issues to economic issues. And part of that might just be for a political strategy, because the Tea Party, of course, emphasizes economic issues, and they're certainly trying to attach their coattails to the Tea Party, and we have this big debate going on right now about the GOP and the Tea Party and social concerns.

But I'm wondering how much of those arguments -- that there is a biblical mandate to lower taxes or a biblical mandate to cut government spending -- is filtering

down into the pews and potentially shaping the views of economic policies of evangelicals. I think that that is an interesting finding and we need to do more with that in the future.

So, the second finding I wanted to talk about -- again, it's in the report, it wasn't mentioned here -- is with respect to the homogeneity of churches. So, in recent years, political scientists -- most notably, Robert Putnam and David Campbell and their book *American Grace* -- argue that politics is an important component of the religious churning that characterizes American society today.

All right, so Americans are very religiously fluid. It's not uncommon for them to leave one faith tradition to go to another. And so rather than accepting the premise that religion merely shapes our attitudes about politics, social scientists increasingly are finding that our political views, in fact, shape our religious behavior, including the choices of where we go to worship. Increasingly, the data here show that more Americans are choosing to attend churches with likeminded partisans.

So, in the post-election survey, I think it's pretty stunning. Two-thirds of Americans -- those who say they attend church at least, you know, somewhat frequently -- are part of a congregation in which the members share their own political views. So, two-thirds said that they essentially go to a church where most of the members are voting the same way that they're going to be voting. And by contrast, only 12 percent said that they attended church, a congregation in which the members of the congregation have different candidate preferences there. So. This tendency, though, is more pronounced in faith traditions that have a more orthodox theology. So, for example, 8 in 10 white evangelicals attended church in which most people backed Romney and the GOP. But there's more diversity among Catholics, for example, and I think that's because of the crosscutting sort of theology that happens in the Catholic Church, right? For some

Catholics, they follow more the social teachings of the church when it comes to abortion, and they're more likely to vote Republican, and of course other Catholics would say that the rich social justice teaching of the church is what matters to them. And so Catholics might be more willing to attend churches where there's a divergence of opinion there.

But I think this is a really important question. I thank Robbie for putting it on there. But I think, again, we need to kind of look at that question of the homogeneity religiously of our congregations and what that means for politics.

Okay, moving on to the gender gap. The gender gap is certainly alive and well, and in fact based on exit polls, the gender gap actually increased from 2008. So, in 2008, the percentage difference between women and men voting for Obama was 7 points; in 2012, that actually increased to 10 percentage points. Fifty-five percent of women voted for Barrack Obama compared to 45 percent of men who voted for Barack Obama. And the result is that in fact it wasn't so much that Obama did much better among women, the selection cycle, but it was more that men were more likely to back Mitt Romney than John McCain. So.

Well, two quick observations. I did some quick analysis of the poster we did here. One thing that was interesting. I looked at the white working class. Earlier this summer, you all did a survey of the white working class, and initially, in the summertime at least, we saw that white working-class women were essentially tied in their support between Obama and Romney, but on election day Romney won out. So, it appears that they (inaudible) 60 to 37 percent.

Now, there's still a gender gap among the white working class. Seventy percent of white working-class men chose Romney compared to 60 percent of white working-class women. But at the end of the day, class mattered more -- trumped gender, I think -- for this group of voters here.

I think the key as to why women voters, aside from certain groups with the white working class or white evangelical Protestants -- why they went for Obama is not necessarily linked to views on social issues. Robbie's data has shown and PRRI's data has shown consistently that there is no gender gap when it comes to abortion, for example. But, instead, women are much more supportive of the social safety net, and they're less conservative on taxes. And I did a various series of analyses here looking at gender and those issues, and time and time again you see gaps of about 10 to 11 to 12 percentage points differences between men and women on this issue.

Now, of course, multi-varied analyses often show that sometimes gender disappears when you consider other factors, and we need to do that. But still I think the trends are pretty interesting.

The last point I wanted to make was on the marriage gap. Exit polls show that married voters chose Mitt Romney over Barrack Obama by a significant margin 56 to 42 percent. But Romney lost unmarried voters by an even wider margin. Just 35 percent of those who were unmarried in the electorate voted for Mitt Romney. Now, this is not noteworthy necessarily, because married voters tend to turn Republican, and it kind of makes sense. You get married. You have higher incomes. You don't want to pay as much taxes. You have kids. All of a sudden you care about security and crime and those sorts of things. So, it has sort of a conservatizing -- is that a verb? I'm not sure. But it makes people a little more conservative over time.

But what really should worry the GOP is that the percentage of adults who get married in the U.S. is on a decline. So, for example, in 1960 72 percent of adults were married by 2010 -- sorry, 72 percent of adults were married in 1960, and by 2010 that number had fallen to 51 percent. And as a result of this, married folks have begun to make up a smaller slice of the electorate in just four years. So, in four years we dropped

from 66 percent of voters in 2008 being married to 60 percent being married in 2012.

So, again doing a quick analysis of the post-election study I found I think some really interesting things about marital status and the vote. So, marital status colors voters' perceptions of the two candidates in terms of their leadership traits -- and really by big gaps, too. Unmarried voters were far more likely to see Obama as honest and trustworthy, as a stronger and decisive leader than Romney; and given that the centerpiece of Romney's campaign really revolved around his acumen as a business leader, right? -- his desire to promote jobs -- I think what was really damaging for Romney was that among unmarried voters, 59 percent to 37 percent said that Obama had a better plan to get the economy moving than did Mitt Romney.

The married and the unmarried also hold very distinct attitudes on what government should do to promote economic growth in the U.S. So, for example, while a majority of married voters supported the Republican view that lowering tax rates and cutting spending is the best way to promote economic growth. Only 38 percent of unmarried voters agreed with that assessment.

Finally, last point. The Republicans' positions on culture war issues -- you may have heard them among unmarried voters as well. So, data from the American Value Survey that was done a little bit earlier shows that unmarried voters hold far less conservative views on gay marriage, the legalization of marijuana, and, unlike the gender issue, unmarried voters have basically more supportive views of abortion rights. So, unmarried voters were more likely to favor the Obama administration's contraception mandate as well. So, I think the extremely conservative social views expressed by several Republican candidates -- names are not necessary at this point -- especially regarding rape and abortion probably did not help the Romney ticket among unmarried voters.

So, these are these trends -- the trends with unmarried voters, the gender gap, obviously religion -- are enduring. I think they definitely bear further analysis in the future.

I'll stop there, so.

MR. DIONNE: And now, John. And thank you for coming back.

MR. SIDES: It's a pleasure to be here, and thanks to Robbie and PRRI for another really interesting survey project. Whenever I've spoken at these, I always open by praising the quality of the survey research that PRRI does, which is not cheap, and I want to particularly praise the fact that they went back and re-interviewed people a second time that they had talked to in September. That's a really novel thing that most polls don't do and oftentimes gets us a really interesting picture into the extent to which individual attitudes do and don't change during an election campaign.

The goal of political science as far as I can tell, with regard to elections, is to be a buzz kill, and that means that we are to take any explanation of or interpretation of an election that is interesting and just throw cold water on it. (Laughter) So, I want to live up to that ideal today, and I want to begin with the auto bailout.

It is true I think, as Robbie said, that the attitudes towards the bailout in Ohio are obviously more positive than they were in the rest of the country, although they're not necessarily in the other battleground states. But to go from that to be able to make claims about what the auto bailout did or didn't do in terms of persuading how voters will support the President is a really hard question to answer. And Nate Cohn of the *New Republic* took a pretty good deep dive into at least what public available data we have right now. He came away less certain about the role of the auto bailout, and I'll give you a couple of factoids from his article.

Obama did worse among white voters in Ohio than John Kerry did. But

he didn't do worse among white voters in Iowa or Wisconsin. It seems kind of odd if you think that the auto bailout is a way to make end roads into white voters and white working-class voters in a rustbelt state like Ohio.

He actually seemed to benefit more -- at least if you look at the exit poll -- from Black turnout in Ohio than anything else. Black turnout was 15 percent. Blacks were 15 percent of the electorate in Ohio. I think only 11 percent in 2004. And, obviously they're much more supportive of the President than they were of John Kerry by about 10 percentage points or thereabouts.

And I just don't know at the end of the day that either of those factoids means that the auto bailout didn't matter. I'm just throwing them out there to try to complicate the picture a little bit.

Our focus on Ohio as sort of this key element of the election I think was due to the fact that the candidates focused on it so much. At the end of the day, you know, Obama actually did better in Virginia and Colorado than he did in Ohio, and so I just wonder -- you know, you have to kind of wonder at the end of the day whether the focus on Ohio was really -- our focus on Ohio as a consequence of the campaign strategic position is would they have even made that same decision if they had known at the end of the day that they didn't even need Ohio to win, right? He could have won on the basis of Colorado, Virginia, states like that. So, more to be seen.

A second interesting thing that comes out of the PRRI data that is in some data that I've looked at as well is this question about cares about people like you and the advantage that Obama had on that question.

E.J. mentioned a book that I'm writing about this election with Lynn Vavreck, who's a political scientist at UCLA. The book is called *The Gamble 2012.com*, if you're interested, a shameless book.



MR. DIONNE: And Lynn is awesome, too, by the way.

MR. SIDES: Yeah.

So, we've been -- we looked at this back, beginning in January, because that's when the first Bain attacks began. Bain attacks were initiated initially by Newt Gingrich and Rick Perry not by Barack Obama, as you may remember. And we found that even in the second week of January Mitt Romney had a disadvantage on the question of cares about people like you relative to Barack Obama.

Now, here comes the cold water. That existed in January, and it never changed for the entire duration of the campaign. There was no real trend. The President didn't get any additional advantage or any additional disadvantage. There was really no evidence for a differential trend in the battleground states relative to other states. So, you're hearing a lot of claims right now about the role that Obama is really advertising, particularly in the rustbelt, played in characterizing Mitt Romney as an out-of-touch plutocrat. We're here to say that characterization may already have been in place in January, and to the extent that the Obama advertising did anything, it just sort of solidified that, but it certainly didn't change anything or create something anew. Now, our evidence right now is certainly tentative on that front, and we're going to do some more in-depth analysis. But I just want to put that out there right now that we shouldn't presume, as people have been doing based on the exit poll in particular, that because people who believe this tended to vote for the President, that that explains the election and therefore validates the Obama early advertisement strategy.

Another interesting piece from this data that Robbie didn't mention but I also think is some counterintuitive -- PRRI asked people to place each of the candidates on a 5-point ideological scale from liberal to conservative and asked them to place themselves on that scale. And when you look at where people placed themselves

relative to the candidates, they placed themselves closer to Romney than to Obama. Romney is closer, based on this measure, to the average American voter than is Obama. We've been doing that in our data, Lynn and I, since January, and in that entire time we found that that was always that the case Romney was closer to the average American. And, moreover, we found almost no trend in that data. If there's any trend at all, it's both Romney and Obama being perceived as slightly further away in November than they were in January. We find no trend in people's placement of Romney during the primary, okay? So, this is cold water on the idea that Romney lost the election, because he took conservative positions in the primary. Maybe he did relative to some subset of American voters, but American voters as a whole didn't perceive any change in Romney's ideology during January, February, and March. In fact, they still saw him as closer to themselves than they did Obama. Now, maybe again we can look at sort of Latinos, Romney's positions on immigration, particularly back in the fall when he was debating Rick Perry. We can sort of say that those were crucial. So, I'm not throwing the ideological story out the window entirely. I'm just saying we have to be very cautious about impugning Romney's loss to these positions he took in the primary.

Next question is sort of this implication about Obama's victory for future elections. Are we headed for a period of Democratic dominance -- a Democratic dynasty in the White House, as one reporter asked me on the day after the election. A term that you also see tossed about in elections like this is "realignment," meaning that the country is being fundamentally transformed in some way with a rising coalition for a particular party that's going to usher in a period of party dominance.

So, I don't think that's a conclusion that we can even begin to draw from this election. 2012 is much more of a status quo election than I was a sea change. You look at Obama's victories in states; compare those to 2008. Compare them even to 2000

-- Gore's margin in those states. Changes at the margins, okay? Changes at the margins are consequential because he wins, but it's not like we sort of -- we shuffled the landscape of American politics in a profound way.

Secondly, look at Congress, right? Democrats expected to do pretty poorly in the Senate; they gained two seats. That's a good thing if you're a Democrat, but that's not a sea change. And you look at the House and the very narrow gains by the democrats in the House, and you look at the sort of configuration of the political system before and after November 6 and it's basically the same, okay? Divided government, right? Challenges but from party polarization and these kinds of things.

A second, I think, thing that's true is that even though pro-Democratic constituencies are growing, especially non-whites, religiously unaffiliated. That growth is slow, okay? The white proportion of the electorate has been declining two to three points in successive elections over the last 10 to 20 years. That growth is not fast enough to insulate the Democratic Party from the national swings that take place because of the economy, business cycle, and things like that. So, if we're going into 2016 and the country is for some reason dropping into recession, Latino voters are not going to save the Democrats, right?, by themselves. Parties who preside over recessions are probably going to be thrown out of power no matter what. So, economic fundamentals are still key here.

Another question the 2012 election raises is whether the Obama coalition is just that, you know, a coalition that supported Barack Obama, and that coalition may be difficult to reconstitute or recreate in an election with different people at the top of a ticket. So, I think that the Republican Party of course, right? -- as Robbie said, we'd probably realize that this is the end of the line with white Christians exclusively. So, the question then becomes, right, take Obama take off the top of the ticket. Assume

the Republican Party does a few things to try to make some in-roads into the Obama coalition. What does that look like, okay?

Republicans don't need to win 70 percent of the Latino vote to win a presidential election. They need to win, maybe, 35, 40 percent. Is that possible?

All right, I'll give you another factoid. Who's more popular among Florida Latinos, Mitt Romney, Barack Obama, or Jeb Bush, okay? Answer: Bush.

So, I'm not suggesting that you can sort of do a couple of symbolic things like support, you know, comprehensive immigration reform, you know, put Marc Rubio out in front, every single Ted Cruz out in front, like, every single time you can. Put Jeb Bush or somebody like that at the top of the ticket and it's a done deal. No problem, okay? Putting, you know, Alan West or J.C. Watts out in front hasn't exactly helped the Republican Party earn the loyalty of African-Americans. I'm just suggesting, right, that there is some malleability in these coalitions, right? Now, maybe in 10 years or more, if the Republican Party's been unsuccessful making in-roads into Latinos, you will see them solidify as a Democratic constituency much the way African-Americans have. But it's still too early to make that conclusion.

So, again, the metaphor actually I'd like to describe 2012 and the way that demographics play a role is something that Ron Braunstein wrote. He said he thinks of it as a thumb on the scale for the Democrats, right? Having the electorate become increasingly non-white is a thumb on a scale that helps Democrats, but that's not enough to sort of wait, the American political landscape decisively in their favor.

One last comment looking forward and thinking about the fiscal cliff a little bit. One of the interesting questions that always arises in the study of public opinion is whether public opinion about a political issue is a cause of sort of things that happen in politics, decisions that politicians make, and so forth, or is it a consequence of the

decisions that politicians make? And as I'm thinking about the fiscal cliff negotiation, I'm putting my money on consequence. In other words, I'm thinking that the American public has some ideas about taxation and government spending. But at the end of the day, whether they accept or approve of whatever negotiation or whatever deal is struck between Obama and the Republican Party is really a consequence of what messages they receive about that kind of deal. If Obama and the Democrats get behind it and some substantial fraction of Republicans get behind it and the (inaudible) says okay, great, thank you, we support that.

If the negotiation falls apart, it's extremely acrimonious, Boehner and the Republicans and Obama can't agree any more now than they could in 2011, then you will see the public polarize, right?, as Democrats and Republicans and the public take their cues from their leaders in the party.

So, at the end of the day I think that the negotiation about the fiscal cliff really is a lot more dependent on the dynamics within the White House and Capitol Hill than it is on dynamics in the broader electorate. And I think at the end of the day we as voters are mostly going to be responding to what politicians are doing in this domain rather than sort of guiding them to a particular outcome.

Thanks very much.

MR. DIONNE: That was great. I'm going to make a couple of observations that include questions. For those of you nostalgic for the campaign, we have arranged a 30-second negative ad attacking Robbie's data. No, we decided not to do that.

Also, there an oversight on my part. I also want to thank my intern, Maggie Darling, who's done great work this week, and I appreciate that very much.

I also cannot resist noting you all remember how famous Herman Cain

got with 9-9-9. I don't know if you looked at that chart, but for white mainline Protestants, their vote was 44-44-44 across three elections, which is Robbie's number, which may prove the stereotype that white mainline Protestants are unusually calm, stable, and even tempered compared with the rest of us.

Just a couple of observations by way of questions. One is: I was struck by the Ohio number, wrong-track nation 53 percent, right-track state. What I wonder about is, is that partly explained simply by Republicans who like Kasich and who just switched? And I'm curious what impact that had on the election, if any, because I do think it was a messaging problem for Romney that Kasich always got unhappy if he told voters in Ohio how bad the economy was, for understandable reasons. But I found that intriguing.

I know we have some interesting numbers here, which I'd just like Robbie to elaborate on just a bit on a proportion who felt they were voting for the candidate they supported versus voting against. And broadly speaking, Obama supporters were much more inclined to say they were voting for Obama. Romney supporters had a larger number who said they were voting against Obama not for Romney. Now, some of that may be natural in an incumbent election, but I'd love Robbie to talk about that.

I am grateful for Melissa's point on religion and, I think, on the sense that a lot of people attend homogeneous congregations and how people's views are aligning to their party, and it really raises an obsession of mine, which is that we don't use our religious faith to guide our politics. We use our religious faith to rationalize political views we have going in, and I'd love to talk about that, which I think is a real challenge to religious people and to religious traditions. You know, is party now, at this moment, accurately far more important than religious faith to people's political behavior, even

though we often explain it in terms of religious faith?

On the gender gap, I just want to make a couple of observations. One is that there are many things that go into it, and I think that Melissa was absolutely right to underscore that it's not simply the social issues. Those may play more with upscale, higher-educated women, but even there the whole issue with the social safety net I think is really important, and we could explore that a bit.

The other is just an artifact on the gender gap. Because of differential turnout rates, African-Americans and Latinos make up a larger share of the female vote than of the male vote, and that also contributes to the gender gap for reasons that may have little or nothing to do with gender.

And I'd like to pose a question on the marriage gap. I do think that there is something very interesting there. But I also wonder if that -- here I'm following John on the cold water theory, although I intend to throw cold water on some of his cold water. (Laughter) So it'll really get icy in here.

MR. SIDES: Warm it back up.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, the -- or warm it back up, depending, or maybe I'll throw warm water on his cold water.

I wonder how much the marriage gap is an artifact of age differences, which is people are getting married later, a larger portion -- Obama did much better among younger voters than older voters. So, all we're looking at here, or part of what we're looking at here is that, you know, married people tend to be older, and that may even be true for another reason, which is women outlive men. So, widows are counted as unmarried, and there is the regular -- you know, there is a gap between their voting behavior, so I'd like to talk about that.

Just on the social issues generally, over the last week a slogan that only

some of you in this room are old enough to remember -- in 1972 Richard Nixon ran against George McGovern on the basis of acid, amnesty, and abortion. That was one of the Nixon slogans. And we just went through an election -- it wasn't acid, but there is grass, where marijuana was legalized. So, you talk about a potential sea change on the whole question of drugs. Amnesty -- then it was for draft resisters. Now, this election may well lead to an amnesty for immigrants. And of course abortion -- I think this is maybe the first campaign -- and somebody can challenge me on this -- where a first presidential campaign where a Democrat really aggressively used a pro-choice position on abortion to win an election. And I think that could be an interesting sort of -- you know, it raises some interesting questions about the future of social issues.

Now, my -- John -- on the auto bailout, I will confess that I have a bias as one of the only people outside the UAW and GM to support the auto bailout, so I put that -- and during that period I bought a Chevy Malibu as part of my minor, very small part in the bailout of the American Detroit-based auto industry.

I do think the polling is quite clear in terms of support for the bailout in Ohio being higher, as Robbie suggests, and if you look at the exit polls, supporters of the bailout were more likely to vote for Obama. Now, there's clearly a push-pull there. If you're for Obama you'd say you supported the bailout. Nonetheless, I think that's true, and I think comparing the white vote in Ohio with the white vote I guess you did in Wisconsin and Iowa is problematic, because southern Ohio is basically southern in character -- that whole Appalachian belt. There was also the coal issue down there and that Obama ran behind Kerry in those counties, you know, in 2008 as well as 2010, and whereas that southern -- you know, the culturally southern part of Ohio has no analog in Iowa or Wisconsin. And so in a way I think the interesting test case would be to take the rest of Ohio, particularly working-class voters in places like Parma, Youngstown,



Cleveland, Akron -- you know -- and to look at them in comparison with the Iowa and Wisconsin voters, which is something we can actually do, at least with the exit poll.

In terms of the impact to the advertising, John, I think that is a really interesting argument. And, you know, I think is some other support for that. On the other hand, your polling began in January, correct? Is that what we're -- and I think one of the questions is: Did Romney's image actually get shaped during the 5,211 Republican debates? I'm sorry, it was like 20, but it felt like 5,211, probably especially to Mitt Romney. Did that image get created before we went into 2012? And, again, that's hard to figure out, but you and Lynn are great political scientists. I'd love you to look at that to see --

And then two final points, and then each of you can respond however you want. Oh, by the way, I think you make a very good point on Ohio versus Colorado and Virginia, and I think we're really looking at two Democratic strategies here that the party's really going to debate, which is what was called the Colorado strategy -- I just came back from Colorado, so I've been thinking about that -- which is based much more on an upper middle class conversion of people to the Democratic Party versus the Ohio strategy, which involves a very heavy emphasis on adding white working-class voters. And I think that raises all kinds of interesting questions for the future.

You talk about this as a status quo election, and if you compare it to 2008, that's broadly true. But there was an intervening event called the Tea Party 2010 Republican election, and indeed one of the mistakes the poll denying Republicans made. I'm not saying all Republicans were polled in (inaudible). Talk about that subset, that substantial subset who were poll denying is they assumed the turnout this year would be the same as the turnout in 2010 and that the result would be the same. You know, in some sense, stability is a great victory for Democrats to come from 2010 almost -- not all

the way back to 2008 but enough back to win this election, gain the Senate seats, win, it appears, at least a plurality of the vote in the House races, even if the district lines didn't let them take over the House.

But I also think it raises very interesting questions about whether, given the fact that the Democratic coalition is very heavily dependent on African-American voters, Latinos, and young people, these voters vote at a much lower rate in mid-term elections. And could we be establishing a particular -- and this is a hypothesis, and we don't have enough elections to conclude this, but it's just a question -- could we be establishing a very odd pattern where the electorates at mid-term elections are quite different than the electorates in presidential elections.

I quite agree with you that Obama has a very important role in creating this particular coalition. But the interesting question -- and this is my last point -- if you look at the white vote for Obama, it would appear to me, especially if those who remember from the 2008 election this great map the *New York Times* ran where Obama ran ahead of John Kerry in -- if my memory serves -- 85 percent of American counties. But there was 15 percent of American counties -- somebody referred to it as the red slash on the map -- counties kind of running Appalachia and into the south, sort of some western Pennsylvania counties through West Virginia across mountains of Kentucky, Tennessee, the western parts of Virginia and North Carolina all the way down through Arkansas and Louisiana. What you wonder is if the losses Democrats will suffer from a somewhat lower African-American vote and turnout efforts will be counteracted by a couple of points in the white vote that may have been hostile to Obama, you know, straight out because he's black or at least had some cultural difficulty getting to voting for Obama. And just to be very clear, I'm not saying most of the votes against Obama were racist. I don't believe that. You know, I think the word "racist" is thrown around too

easily. Nonetheless, I don't think there's any doubt that there is an element of that, and those couple of white points could be enough to offset some of those losses, which I think, you know, we'll find out over the coming years.

But thank you all for a great presentation.

MR. DIONNE: Feel free to respond to each other briefly and then I want to open it up -- and to those questions, I want to open it up to the audience.

Why don't you just take the non-voters and whatever else there? And if we could -- I've thrown all this out and then I'm going to ask you to be brief, so we can get the audience in. Go ahead.

MR. JONES: I'll be real fast. I do want to hit just a couple of points. I will thank Melissa for bringing up the homogeneous churches and households thing. It's a pretty interesting phenomenon. We found, not surprisingly, there are very few split-ticket households we looked at. Only 4 percent said that they live in split-ticket households. However, married men who voted for Romney are less likely than married women who voted for Romney to say that their spouse shares their candidate preferences. So it showed up a little bit more there. There was no difference in the Obama side there.

And the --

MR. DIONNE: That means men lie more (inaudible).

MR. JONES: It may be that, too, right.

MR. DIONNE: Maybe, yeah.

MR. JONES: It's also interesting that -- just out of curiosity -- that 1 in 10 said they had no idea how their spouse voted in the election, which is kind of an interesting artifact. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: (inaudible)

MR. JONES: Interesting artifact of the thing. The other thing I do want to mention is the for-and-against piece because that one just hit the cutting room floor on the presentation, but I do think it's important to note here. Three-quarters of Obama voters said their vote was primarily a vote for Obama, 13 percent said their vote was a vote against, and 11 percent it was both. But among Romney voters it was only 52 percent said their vote was a vote for Romney. Right. And 4 in 10 said their vote was a vote against Obama, all right. So there's clearly a big difference in those and sort of the way they were thinking about it.

And I think Melissa mentioned that less than half of white, Evangelical Protestant voters said their vote for Romney was a positive vote for him, 48 percent, and 41 percent said their vote was a vote against Obama. So you kind of see a difference in one of his biggest base constituencies there.

And I want to thank you, E.J., for the white Christian makeup in the midterm versus the general. We really ought to look at that because we really might see a ping-pong back and forth between some of the ways this all works out.

And I guess finally I want to say just a bit about John's comments about reshuffling. I think it's the right -- it's always a temptation looking for the headline, looking for the sound bite. You know, this was, the last election, the best -- you know, the election where this will never happen again, this is always going to happen from this point forward, you know, those kinds of things. And so I want to thank him for the -- it is the job of political and social scientists to say, yeah, but, you know, to almost everything that's thrown out there. So I definitely want to thank him for that.

The one thing I do want to say there, though, is that, you know, it does seem to me that there is a possibility, I think, of the thumb on the scale thing is right. And certainly, I mean, one of the ways to say it is, you know, that I think any national

campaign that's relying on, you know, maps of the electorate created at any time in the past and looking backward rather than sort of a new map looking forward is just sort of bound to lose their way, I think, on this, the national elections.

The last thing I'll say, E.J. mentioned the non-voters. One of the great things about this we were able to actually look at non-voters in the survey and what it looks like. And the bottom line is had non-voters turned out and voted on Election Day it looks like it would have translated into about a 2 percentage point bump in Obama's win on Election Day. So that's kind of what happens if everyone had turned out on the election.

So I'll stop there so we have time for questions.

MS. DECKMAN: I just have three brief comments to E.J.'s excellent points. First, in the finding about religion may be -- using religious views to rationalize our politics today, I think there's something to be said for that. And I think that what's happening, and I've seen other social surveys that show this, that younger people especially are increasingly turned off by that approach, right? This is why you have, I think, the growth of these unaffiliated in society. A lot of surveys of younger people say we don't want politics and religion mixing and so I'm just going to opt out of organized religion.

I think you're going to see the usual round of sole searching by conservative Evangelicals also about their place in politics, right? They can't get all they want, so then they start focusing more on saving souls as opposed to trying to change minds at the ballot box. I think you're going to see another sort of incarnation of that debate happening in the near future.

So on the marriage gap, I think that you raise a valid point about perhaps it's an artifact of age differences. Now, previous social science research has shown that

marital status actually still has an independent effect when you control for other things. But you're right in the sense that there have been dramatic changes in the average age of marriage just in the last decade.

I think, also, economics plays a big role in here, too, because married couples obviously make a lot more money than do single people. Single people are more reliant on government programs. And so I think that's somehow in the mix as well. And so this was just a first brush look at the data doing some very simple bivariate analyses. But the way that unmarried and married people view the world is very, very different, and I think that's really what's interesting about these findings.

Lastly, talking a little bit about abortion, we haven't talked much about it so far on the panel. But, you know, I found two things that were shocking about the conventions this summer. The first was that the Republicans let Clint Eastwood talk to a chair on the stage. That was shocking to me. But on the Democrats, what I found really shocking was the extent to which pro choice advocates were given such a big stage. You know, here you had Cecile Richards, you had the president of NARAL having a very aggressively pro choice platform, which is something the Democrats have really sort of shied away from in recent elections. I think, though, that that is really just because of the positions taken by the Republican Party, which has increasingly gone to the right. And so it's sort of a -- I don't think it's necessarily a strategy to say let's embrace the pro choice position because we know from reams of studies that PRRI has done and other studies that show that Americans are morally ambiguous about this, but it's really just a response to how far the Republicans went on the right. And so I think that's really more of what's going on there.

Whether it actually impacted votes, you know, we still have to tease this out. Traditionally views on abortion doesn't really impact votes, but when you're looking

at the margins, you know, maybe something will emerge, but it's still yet to be tested. But I do think that's an interesting finding and definitely we need to kind of play more with that.

I think, if anything, on social issues, you know, the liberalization on attitudes about gay rights maybe has more to say than abortion because abortion tends to be relatively stable in terms of our attitudes on that, so.

MR. JONES: I still want the water to be cold, so. (Laughter) And I admit that the last car that I bought was a Subaru, not a Chevy, so my credibility on this question may be damaged as a consequence of that.

Just two cautionary notes. One is that the county stuff, you know, the guy that I mentioned, Nate Cohn at *The New Republic*, you know, took a look at the county data as best he could and, again, he didn't see a clear evidence that Obama was doing better in the kind of industrialized, blue-collar-ish counties. I mean, it's always a little tricky to characterize counties in these very broad ways, but it really wasn't there relative to '04, for example. So, you know, maybe he's doing worse in Southern Ohio because it's more Appalachian. Maybe he's doing better in Columbus because it's Columbus and it's more educated, you know, et cetera, et cetera. But in the kind of counties where you think Obama should be doing better because of the auto bailout, it didn't really seem to be the case.

And the challenge with the exit poll is this: Never assume that a cross tab is causation.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, I agree with that.

MR. JONES: So the fact that supporters of the bailout were more likely to vote for Obama may be a consequence of the fact that Democrats were more likely to support the bailout; may be a consequence of the fact that people decided they wanted to

vote for Barack Obama and then lined up their positions on issues to correspond to his. The social science evidence is actually much more stronger in favor of that kind of scenario where, in some sense, you know, the candidate preference is the horse and then issue beliefs become the cart as opposed to of sort of presuming that voters reason from their issues positions to their candidate preference.

One thing on acid amnesty, and abortion, the thing that I -- the most overreaching headline I actually saw after the headline was not about a party realignment, but was the headline by Ben Smith in BuzzFeed called "Liberal America." (Laughter) You know, you may remember a few years ago where the cover of *Newsweek* was "A Center Right Nation." And you may think, wow, we went from a center right nation to liberal America in like three or four years, and that tells you a lot more about the ways in which journalists pitch headlines than anything about the American public and its opinions on issues.

It's absolutely true that the American public has been moving towards embracing same-sex marriage. And the fact that a couple of ballot initiatives passed this year in states in which the electorate leans more towards that issue is not surprising. Run those ballot initiatives in Alabama again, you're going to get the same old result that you've gotten in the South before. So, I mean, the country as a whole hasn't changed just because of two ballot initiatives, but what you are seeing is a gradual secular change in attitudes about that.

With regard to immigration there's always been receptiveness in the public for a path to citizenship given certain kinds of qualifications. So what I think we're seeing there is nothing more than just kind of ratification of what the public was willing to do rather than the public itself sort of moving in any particular direction.

The abortion thing, I think it's entirely possible for the Democratic Party



to appeal to Democratic constituencies by emphasizing the fact that women should have, you know, a right to legal abortion. The majority of the public does not favor, you know, outright bans on abortion. But people's attitudes towards abortion are complex and you can win this battle on the pro choice side, on the pro life side, depending on the particular issue at stake, the kind of framing that you want to apply to that issue. Pro life forces were easily, I think, able to win the debate in and around the concept of partial birth abortion, in part by using that phrase and by focusing on a particular rare kind of abortion procedure that occurs late in pregnancy, which people don't tend to favor. But if you want to frame it solely in terms should you have this -- should the government, you know, take away your right, right, or should the government get between you and your doctor or a woman and her doctor, then that's a different choice.

So I think the American public's view of abortion is fundamentally ambivalent, hasn't changed because of 2012 and isn't going to change going forward in a dramatic way; hasn't changed really since *Roe v. Wade*. Almost all the public opinion indicators have been flat-lined since *Roe v. Wade*. So it just seems to me that at the end of the day that I think that the Democratic Party does not need to shy away from it as a means by which they can appeal to sort of, you know, the people that like to watch the Democratic National Convention and cheer for their party. But don't hold your breath for liberal America quite yet.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. I want to just say those last two points I totally agree with. I'm very fond of Ben Smith, but it is important to look at those states where those referenda happened.

Secondly, I think you're utterly right about abortion opinion being pretty stable and that it depends in a way on how the other side framed it. And I think the Right to Life side got the worst framing of the issue that they have ever come up with in this

election.

MR. JONES: Yes, they did.

MR. DIONNE: Two points on questions and I'm going to bring in several at the same time, so we can get a lot of voices. Please keep them brief and please stay focused on the data. We are not here today to resolve large philosophical questions. That's for you all to do. (Laughter) We want to sort of talk about data.

So brief comments here, here, here, and Richard Reeves, my new friend, in the back. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: These are actually two questions about the data. One is what is the ethnic composition of the unaffiliated? I am assuming that that is a large majority of white Americans in that category.

And the other thing is does the gender gap show up strongly or more strongly within certain religious communities? So do white Evangelical women and men vote differently more strongly? Do white mainline women, are they more liberal than white mainline men? And I'm kind of guessing that white Roman Catholic women might actually be much more conservative -- or much more liberal than white Roman Catholic men. And so --

MR. DIONNE: Are you married to one of these? No, no. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: No, no, I'm married to a white Presbyterian and I'm a white Episcopalian, so -- and we vote for the same person, too. But I just think that that's kind of an interesting thing to think about what the gender gap in the religious community is.

MR. DIONNE: That's a great question.

SPEAKER: And then the final thing just real quickly is the Mormon thing, Robbie, I'm sorry I disagree with you. I think it was a factor and I think that it's hard to find it in the data because so many Americans won't admit that it's a factor. But I think it

might show up in the softness of the Evangelical vote for Romney. And I also think that it's a factor going on if, indeed, the Democrats adopt a Rocky Mountain strategy, is that there are huge swaths -- and this I know from growing up in Arizona -- huge swaths of people in religious communities that will not vote for a Mormon, but they would never tell a pollster that.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you so much. Let's get a mic over here to the gentleman in the -- just this is the order I've seen people.

SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. DIONNE: I'll just keep tab of the questions.

SPEAKER: Some questions about what can be done with the data. One, with your panel component coupled probably with the ANES panel component, if you look at switchers and undecideds at earlier stages are you going to be able to tease out causality better? I'm sure you could do it better. Do you have enough numbers to tease out some causality issues that are ambiguous here?

A related question which will require not just your data but other data, yesterday Mitt Romney famously attributed his loss to gifts that were given to the various Democratic constituencies, all very concrete and meaningful things: Obama's support of gay marriage and abolishing Don't Ask, Don't Tell; his quasi DREAM Act; Romney I think also mentioned putting youth on their parents' insurance. If we go back in time are we going to be able to tease out with your data and other data the degree to which these concrete -- I don't regard them as gifts, but I'm going to use Romney's words -- gifts, in fact, affected the opinions that you're able to measure in your public opinion poll and, hence, affected the election?

And then finally, let me just give you a challenge to meditate on, and that is does a panel like this really do a public service when the data cry out for multivariate

analysis to make even the simplest, you know, understanding such as the questions that this woman just asked? Should we wait? I mean, I know the sexiness of getting out early, but should we really wait another month so we can do some multivariate data before running panels of this sort?

MR. DIONNE: Let me answer that real quick. No. (Laughter) No, in other words, I think that the interest is getting out as much good information on analyzing an election as you can knowing that there's a lot more analysis to do, which is why I tried to raise some questions about some of these things, but those were good questions.

This lady here. Everybody please be brief because we're going to get thrown out of this room eventually.

SPEAKER: For Mr. Jones and the study, the questions related to who pays too much taxes, could you clarify if the phrase "taxes" in any way the respondent would have understood it was income taxes or all of taxes? Because payroll taxes, Social Security taxes are kind of capped.

And related to that would be the question to Melissa about lower-income women, you know, cocktail waitress, the Walmart worker. When they think taxes, I'm not sure they're thinking income taxes. They're thinking payroll taxes.

MR. JONES: Right.

SPEAKER: So that kind of clarification I would appreciate.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. And then this gentleman, Richard Reeves, David Saperstein, and then I'll have to shut it down.

SPEAKER: Following up on the last one for Dr. Jones, do you know whether your respondents, in fact, have the same definitions for words like "means" and "poor" in your --

MR. JONES: (inaudible)

SPEAKER: Do you know whether your respondents have the same definitions for words like "means" and "poor," for example, in your values of principles?

MR. DIONNE: Thank you.

MR. REEVES: Hi. I've just escaped from British politics, so I'll be careful, but that was a great introduction. Two questions.

The unaffiliated group are clearly very important and likely to become more important because they're also younger. But that graph where you said some of them were secular, some of them were agnostic and atheist, I mean, that needs a bit of explanation. But I'd love to know how that group breaks down in terms of their voting pattern. Clearly they're more Democrat, but was there a difference within that group? In other words, was it their secularism or their lack of affiliation that led them to be Democrat? And I think that's quite -- in terms of going that'd be important.

And the second thing is that shocking graph showing that the majority of Republicans want to cut federal funding for the poor, and I say shocking because at least in Europe people lie to pollsters about that stuff. (Laughter) They might think it, but they'd never admit it, so it's generally shocking. And I presume from the other data that means that the more religious you are, the more Christian you are, the more likely you are to support the statement that we should cut federal funding for the poor. That in and of itself would be interesting and, in some ways, counterintuitive. Or is it the word "federal" in your question that's doing you some damage there, right? Because I'm an outsider, but they might just oppose federal funding on anything rather than funding for the poor.

MR. DIONNE: That's great. And lastly, Rabbi David Saperstein will ask a question and give a benediction for this entire enterprise. (Laughter)

RABBI SAPERSTEIN: I'm curious and I was very intrigued by this stuff

about people's self-perception, where they sit ideologically in relation to their view of the candidates. Can you tell us anything about the break -- you did it in a handout here by liberal, conservative, Democrat, Republican. Can you tell us anything about the breakdown based on the religious or ethnic or racial makeup of the groups? Anything surprising in it? And in particular, any groups for the Republicans more conservative than others who broke in the favor of Obama and would be the targets of their efforts, for example, the Latino community or something? I'd be curious to know about the breakdowns here.

MR. DIONNE: All right. I'm going to go through this real quick and we will have a spontaneous division of labor. David's question, we have ethnic composition of the unaffiliated; gender gap stronger in some groups than others; was there actually a Mormon factor; causality on switchers and undecideds. The gifts issue, is there anything we can learn from the base of what we know now? Taxes, which kind of tax? A question about the meaning of words shared across the survey. And then the question on cuts and a little more detail on the unaffiliated.

Why don't I do it this way? John, you can pick up whatever you want out of that, Melissa, and then Robbie will answer everything else. (Laughter)

MR. JONES: Yeah.

MR. SIDES: I'm going to do gifts and then that's all I'm going to comment on. There was a Gallup Poll in April and it was the first poll that asked that sort of if the election were held today, who would you vote for, after Senator Santorum dropped out and it was kind of Romney's nomination, everybody knew that was going to happen. And the coalitions of the two parties at that point look really, really similar to what they looked like in 2008. So in some sense before the gifts, right, the coalitions were already mostly there. So I'm a little dubious that you need gifts to get women to

vote for Obama or to get Latinos to vote for Obama.

And I want to caution people against using the exit poll as a way to -- as a diagnostic of this because what you might say in response is, well, but he did better among Latinos than he did in '08, and he did better than Bush did in 2004. So, ipso facto, it was the sort of watered-down version of the DREAM Act that he was able to give, right, once Congress didn't pass it. The problem is that exit polls are not designed to measure subsamples of the American public. They're designed to get the overall, like, percentage vote correct. And there's been a lot of scholarly criticism in particular of exit poll samples of Latinos beginning in 2004. That number for Bush was far out of line with every pre-election poll. And at the end of the day, maybe the exit polls aren't sampling precincts in the way that allows them to truly represent the actual nature of the Latino vote in this country.

So, you know, again, it's hard to say. You know, pre-election polls are imperfect in certain ways. Exit polls are imperfect in certain ways. But I wouldn't necessarily conclude that Obama's successes this year were at all related to these gifts. And I intend to sort of explore this in more depth with the data that we have.

MR. DIONNE: When would you do that multivariate analysis?

MS. DECKMAN: Two quick points to Diana's questions about the gender gap and the Mormon thing. The gender gap, I have a piece that's just coming in the Journal of Women and Politics and Public Policy. I'll get you a copy. Otherwise you have to trek to some crazy library, you know, on a university campus to find it. I do a multivariate analysis and essentially religion trumps gender. Religion trumps gender. I wanted to look at it in 2008, if Obama actually might be able to gain some Evangelical women. I had a very specific empirical question, but not at all. And so, at the end of the day, religion is always more important than gender. So people tend to vote their faith and

not their body parts, I guess.

So on the Mormon thing actually, I know that Robbie's folks did a study, did a certain experimental study, where they looked at a series of questions saying -- considering who you might want to vote for, and they placed a question in there about -- one of the conditions was -- in one set it had an issue about voting for a Mormon and in the other it didn't. And essentially they didn't find that it was a big deal except among more liberal voters and except among white male Protestants I remember.

SPEAKER: White, male, and Protestants, yeah, yeah.

MS. DECKMAN: And Evangelicals, there wasn't really a significant difference. I also, using this data, using the post-election data, I looked at turnout levels among religious groups. And so part of the argument for some people would be that Mormons -- rather that Evangelicals might stay home rather than vote for a Mormon. And in fact, Evangelical Protestants had among the highest levels of turnout. And I don't think it was any different than 2008. So I don't think there was a great number of Evangelicals saying I'm never voting for a Mormon, I'm staying home. So initially I don't think it was as big of an issue. It clearly was a vote against Obama, though, and not for Romney, that's true.

MR. DIONNE: And then to answer every other question anyone has.

MR. JONES: All right, here we go. I'm not going to get to all of them, I'm quite sure.

On the question about the ethnic composition and affiliated, there actually are quite stark difference in that group. It's not uniform. Atheists and agnostics are much more likely to be white, much more likely to be higher educated than the general public. Those people we labeled as kind of secular actually look very much like the general public in terms of race and education. That group that we have that is



unaffiliated believers are actually much more likely to be minorities and much more likely to be down scale in terms of socioeconomic status. So there actually is a quite different set of groups that you can see on attitudes and a bunch of other things that makes them really interesting. Unfortunately, we don't have enough in the sample to sort of dive deeper into there and give you a statistically significant thing about the vote, what the vote looks like in those subsections. But I think you have a clue given that kind of racial and income -- or racial and education break.

On the question of causality, multivariate analysis, sure. You know, we were up till midnight almost every night this week, but we will certainly be getting to it. And one of the great things about this dataset is that, you know, it's going to sort of be with us for a while. And we did 3,000 pre-election interviews, 1,400 post-election interviews, and, you know, we are just kind of skimming the surface. We'll certainly be doing it with this.

The other thing, for the researchers in the room we do archive all of our datasets at the Roper Center for secondary analysis after -- for the big datasets after a two-year embargo and we have smaller datasets out there after a one-year embargo. So all the stuff eventually gets out there for secondary analysis stuff.

On the language and the values things, they heard them exactly as they are on the chart, so they had to interpret them however they could, so we didn't define that, the words like "poor" for them. They may have had different things there.

I want to say a quick shout-out to Rabbi David Saperstein, who's the chair of our board, by the way, who's in the back. So it's always daunting to get a question from your board chair, but I'll do my best. (Laughter)

MR. DIONNE: That's why he didn't skip it.

MR. JONES: I'll do my best to answer that one as my clean-up thing.

You know, I haven't looked at it hard, so I don't have a number for you on the religion thing, but what my memory is from looking at the general patterns there is that what we see on these questions is actually you can see some religious differences, but if you actually do something that kind of teases out what they're about, they're actually more about where they are in their candidates preferences and where they are in the sort of partisan arrangement in the field than it is about the religious differences. So it's the difference in the composition of Republicans and Democrats among Catholics versus Republican and Democrats among Evangelicals. That, I think, is actually the driving factor there.

And one last thing on the ideology thing, which is a really fascinating look, is that one of the interesting things that John said is that Obama is further away, which is right, than the average voter, than Mitt Romney is. Some of that is because Mitt Romney is very consistently located on an ideological map by Democrats, Republicans, Independents, conservatives, moderates, liberals. He's very consistently located on that ideological map by all of those groups, somewhere like a moderate-leaning conservative basically is where he's located on the scale.

Obama is like a Rorschach test in that thing where, you know, it looks like this. It's like slanted in that chart. You can see he's like -- you know, Republicans rate him as like very liberal out here on the pole and Independents rate him somewhere in between, and Democrats rated him, you know, somewhere to the right of them. So it's a very interesting kind of difference that the Republican candidates seem very consistently; Obama is seen wildly different by different parties; and moderates actually locate him closer to them, although Independents don't, which is kind of an interesting move.

All right, it's all in there.

MR. DIONNE: And just on the taxes question, this doesn't say income taxes, it says all taxes.

MR. JONES: Yes.

MR. DIONNE: And obviously you're right about the, you know, lower-income people pay more in sales and payroll; upper-income people pay more in income. This is just general question, are you paying too much in tax?

I want to -- sorry to talk fast, but they need to use this room for another event. I just really want to thank John, Melissa, and my friend Robbie Jones. We'll be back again with more data and more multivariate analysis. Thank you all very, very much. (Applause)

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