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Findings from the 11th Annual American Values Survey

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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: I want to welcome everybody here today. This is a very exciting event. It's an event that I look forward to every year. It's the 11th Annual American Values Survey, and my colleague, Bill Galston, and I, have been so honored, for the last 11 years, to work with our friend, Robbie Jones, who is the CEO and founder of the Public Religion Research Institution on this project, and to invite extraordinary commentators to join us for this discussion, and I'll introduce our extraordinary commentators in a moment.

I just want to let everyone listening know, that there are two ways you can get your questions to us; one is by email, at events@brookings.edu, the other is by way of Twitter, at [#AVS2020](https://twitter.com/AVS2020). Obviously, any wonderful remarks you want to make, comments, on the comments of our brilliant analysts, Karlyn and Andra, or anything else you want to say can be put on there. But if your questions go up there, we will see them, and we will get back to you.

The way we're going to do this, today, is that Robbie is going to do one his patented PowerPoints. I try to think of metaphor every year for what Robbie is to PowerPoints after. This year's NBA bubble, I think, I just have to say he's the LeBron James, of PowerPoints, and I think you're going to learn a great deal from that, and then I will bring in my friend, Bill Galston, will come in, my colleague, and he'll bring in Karlyn and Andra.

Before we go on, I really do want thank, at the Brookings Institution, Darryl West, the vice president for Government Studies, who has been supporter for this project right from the outset, my assistant, Megan Bell, who has done extraordinary work to bring this about, Lenny Davalos, the same. I also want to thank Emily Perkins, who has kept this show on the road for us, kept gas in the tank, you might say, for a very long time. Thanks to all of them.

So, let me introduce this fantastic panel. Robbie Jones is the CEO and founder of the Public Religion and Research Institute, aka PRRI, and a leading scholar and commentator on religion, culture, and politics. He is the author of an extraordinary -- oh, you know, that -- I want to tell you something fascinating here, that as I was speaking, all my notes were gobbled up by what I said because I had record on my phone. So, now, I will catchup.

He is the author of the very widely -- well reviewed book, "White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity." This book has gotten so much deserved attention over the last couple of months, and it's really an important book for all of us to think about. He is also the author of "The End of White Christian America." He writes regularly on politics, culture, and religion, for the Atlantic, NBC Think, and many other outlets, and he's been featured all over the place, at pretty much every cable network, NPR, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and he serves as national -- on the National Program Committee for the American Academy of Religion.

Karlyn Bowman is a very dear friend, one of my very first editors in life, and one of the very best, very, very, best, a long time ago. She is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. She combines, compiles, analyzes polling data, on a variety of subjects, including the economy, the taxes, the state of workers in America, the environment and climate change, attitudes on same sex marriage, trade, and a whole series of other areas. She has spoken a lot over the years about the evaluation of American politics and demographic chains. She writes a weekly column for Forbes.com, and we are blessed that Karlyn has joined us on these events, for many, many years, and we're really grateful, Karlyn, to have you back.

And Andra Gillespie, welcome, Andra, is associate professor of Political Science, and director of the James Weldon Johnson Institute, for the Study of Race and Difference, at Emory University, where I should note, Robbie also attended, and got your PhD -- got his PhD. Before joining the faculty, as an analyst, before joining the faculty, she was an analyst with the firm of democratic pollster Mark Mellman. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses at Emory, in American and African American politics, African American political leadership, political participation, qualitative (inaudible), and race and elections. It's an awesome group, and, Robbie, take it away. I can't wait to see what you have created for us, for Zoom, this year. There we go.

MR. JONES: All right, thank you, E.J., for that very generous -- I feel like you -- introduction. I feel like you set the bar higher every year, for the PowerPoint, but we'll see if we cannot disappoint, this year.

I want to just say a few things. First of all, to the amazing PRRI Team. These -- a big

study like this, always a team effort, so, I want to thank our research team, Natalie Jackson, Ian Huff and Deanna Ortez, Shawn Sands, our chief of staff, make sure all the balls stay in the air, and Doug Barkley and Tim Duffy, who -- it's no good having data, if it doesn't look good, or communicate well. So, I think, thanks to them for making sure the layout is right, the charts look the way do, and a big thanks there, and to the communications team, as well, to get it all out there into the hands of the public and reporters.

So, with that, I will jump in here, to what have we found, you know, this year. You know, I want to say one more thing. I do wanna say, certainly, to E.J. and Bill, thank for more than a decade. It's rare that you can do anything, for a decade. So, it's great that we've been able to this, and this year, marks decade number two, as the 11th year, so, thank for that, and here's to more great and interesting work in the future. So, with that, we will dive in.

So, just a little bit about you're -- will be seeing. This is the 11th Annual American Value Survey, conducted in partnership with Brookings Institution, by PRRI. This year, it's a survey of over 2500 adults, based on a sample from AmeriSpeak, which is probably the only panel run by The National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. There are also -- we did a follow up survey, the supplemental survey of just over 1,000 adults, in October, to pick up any late changes in the landscape, and, of course, it would be remiss without saying a warm word of thanks to the groups who made this possible. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, with additional support from the Ford Foundation, the Wilber and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation, and Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock, thanks so much for your generous support.

All right, so, we're going to jump in. First of all, last year in AVS, we noticed -- we noted that, when we asked Americans to rank their most critical issues, that the two political parties, Democrats and Republicans, shared absolutely nothing in common in their top three issues. This year we see very similar, big divides. There is one place of agreement this year, and that is in the fairness of presidential elections.

So, the numbers in front of you right now, are all Americans. You can see the coronavirus pandemic, right at the top, but right behind that, fairness of presidential elections, and healthcare, and jobs and unemployment squeaking by, into majority territory, a number of other things

falling, a little below that, mostly because of the partisan differences on those, but let me show you. So, this is all Americans. Here are Democrats, and where Democrats are on these issues. As, you can see, many more issues, Democrats ranked as critical, compared to the public, so, and strong majority territory, not just on the pandemic and fairness of the elections, but on healthcare, also foreign interference in presidential elections, and racial inequality, also at nearly 7 in 10, on the priority list.

Jobs and unemployment, up a little bit from the general public, at 58%. But note the contrast between Democrats and Republicans, self-identified Republicans, on this issue, much lower across the board. In fact, there's only three issues among Republicans, that veer into majority territory, sharing again with Democrats, the fairness of presidential elections, but also crime and terrorism. Those are two issues that are below majorities saying they are critical, among all Americans and Democrats, but they are, in fact, the top two issues, along with fairness of presidential elections among Republicans, and then, I want to draw attention to the bottom here, this issue of racial inequality. We're going to come back to this, and a couple of other findings, here, but, you know, we are looking at a, you know, 50-point spread here, between Republicans and Democrats on saying racial inequality is a critical issue, in nearly 7 in 10 Democrats, only about 1 in 5 of Republicans saying the same thing. So, we'll, again, we'll see this pattern more, but, again, similar to last year. The only thing that the two parties really agree are critical issues, are the fairness of presidential elections, both parties concerned about that. So, we're going to take -- I'm going to look at the coronavirus, and also the protests, through partisan lenses here, at the top of the presentation.

We'll start with the coronavirus pandemic, which as you saw -- I should backup. I just want to make sure I point this out, also, that Republicans are, or, actually, only 39% of Republicans say the coronavirus pandemic is a critical issue to them, and that's another one, again, of more than 40-point spread between the two political parties, and very notable, how low this is among Republicans. So, having said that, to set the table, let's take a look at just the different -- really different realities in the pandemic, whether we're talking about the origins of the virus. We had a question that asked whether Americans believe the virus developed naturally, or whether it was developed in a lab?

The country is, basically, divided on that question, but not so divided on whether the

spread of the virus could have been controlled better, 7 in 10, say that it could have been controlled better, and about two-thirds, a little less than two-thirds, disapprove of Trump's handling of the pandemic, but again, the partisans divides on these are quite -- quite large. On the origins of the virus, here again, you see a 50-point spread, essentially. On whether the spread could have been controlled better, another 50-point spread between Republicans and Democrats, and here, also, we're going have a category -- this category up top, FOX News Republican. These are Republicans who say they most trust FOX News to give them accurate information on current events, and politics.

This makes up about 40% of the Republican Party, so, 4 in 10 Republicans are in that group, and I'm breaking them out of here because on a number of questions, they look significantly different from other Republicans. So, you can see here, for example, the daylight between Republicans and those who most trust FOX News, here, essentially half as many FOX News Republicans believe the spread could have been controlled better, compared, even to Republicans, overall, and you'll notice here also, the Republicans who most trust FOX News, heavily behind the president, only 5% disapprove of his handling of the pandemic, compared to four times that many among Republicans, overall, at 22%, and nearly all Democrats here, you know, more than 9 in 10, disapproving of Trump's handling of the pandemic. So, that's a 70-point spread on the president's handling of the pandemic.

Also, we're going to -- we'll have a couple of slides that have a few swing groups, here, and taking a look at groups that are, sort of in the middle. Most of these groups supported Trump in the past election but are kind of groups that have been -- that are basically in the middle and are considered swing groups. So, I'm going to do these first two items from the last slide, disapprove of Trump's handling of the pandemic, or believe the spread could have been controlled better. Among all Americans, this is the same numbers from the previous slide, 65, 69, on disapproval, and believe the spread could have been controlled better, and if we look at women -- white women, you see, and this is a group that -- that white women with a four-year college degree, a group that President Trump has been struggling with, in the polls, but actually won, barely, in 2016, 69%. So, it's basically 7 in 10, both disapprove of his handling of the pandemic and believe the spread could have been controlled better.

And even among white women with no four-year degree, so white working-class women

are both the majority territory on that question. Among seniors, very similarly. Another group that Trump won in 2016. You know, 61% disapproves of his handling of the pandemic, and a little more than two-thirds believe the spread could have been controlled better. In the religious landscape, there are basically two groups that are kind of swing groups. There are white Catholics, and white mainline Protestants. Again, Trump won each of these groups, by that 6 in 10, and the case of white mainline Protestants, and a little more than that actually, among white Catholics.

But here again, white Catholics is a group I'm going to draw some attention to, as we go. 60% disapprove of his handling of the pandemic, 65% believe it could have been controlled better, and then we have -- we were able to break out a few states altogether, and we're calling these key Rust Belt States. These are, again, kind of states that are more divided, like swing states. In the Rust Belt category, we have Iowa, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. In the Sun Belt category, we have Arizona, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina.

And you'll see here, among these states, too, we still have about two-thirds or more, both disapproving of the pandemic, so, and the spread could have been controlled better. So, kind of across the board, in these swing groups, we don't see a lot of good news for President Trump. Even groups that supported him, in 2016, are very unhappy about how the pandemic has been handled.

On the subject, too, we asked about who trusts which sources, to give them accurate information, about the pandemic, and these are the -- these are the people who said a lot of trust -- or the percent of Americans who said they had a lot of trust in the following sources. So, you can see, this is all Americans, across the top here, university researchers, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Centers for Disease Control, kind of topping out the list, but really only about half, or a little bit more, than Americans saying they have a lot of trust in those sources. But you will notice that Donald Trump is down at the end of the list, and 14%.

Only 14% of the country, that's essentially half as many who say Biden, but Biden is still below 3 in 10, saying they have a lot of trust in him. These are Democrats, so, more likely to trust most sources across the board, than the American public. It drops down a little bit on state and local government, but it drops down to one, on President Trump. These are Republicans, as you can see,

support drops below, in most cases, where the public is, and even among, it's notable, I think, even among Republicans, only 39%, said they have a lot of trust in President Trump.

It's about the same for the CDC, and university research centers, but nothing reaching anywhere near majority among Republicans, and this group of -- this darker red, is a group of FOX News Republicans, those who most (inaudible), again they are, nowhere near anywhere majority, except for President Donald Trump, 58% saying President Trump, and note the zero, along Joe Biden. It is absolutely 0% saying that they have a lot of trust in Joe Biden. So, you can really see the, again, the effect of FOX News, among Republicans, on these numbers.

So, let's kind of turn to the election, and take a look at the electoral process and the candidates. The other thing that we found, is that, and by the way, this is -- these are negatives. See, this is the people who are not at all confident. So, not at all confident the election will be conducted fairly. That's a third of Americans, who say that they are not at all confident. About 4 in 10 Americans say they are not at all confident that voting by mail will be as secure as voting in person, and a majority, 55%, are not at all confident that Trump will concede defeat, if he loses the election, and, again, you can see, you'll be able to see the big divides between Democrats and Republicans, here, again, some kind of partisan, consistent with the kind of worries about the fairness of the election.

In the previous question, you see about the same number being not all confident the election will be conducted fairly, but Republicans are much less likely to trust voting by mail, perhaps taking cues from the president on this. A majority of them said they're not as all confident, that voting by mail will be as secure as voting in person.

And, on the last one, we have three-quarters, a little bit more actually, of three-quarters of Democrats, saying, they are not at all confident that Trump will to concede defeat, if he loses the election. And, on the last one, I'm not quite sure whether to say only, or even, 24% of Republicans say that they are not all confident Trump will concede defeat, if he loses the election.

The other thing we're seeing, consistent with a lot of other polling, and even the early voting, and absentee voting, numbers that are out there, very high enthusiasm, for this election, and, in fact, we see a, kind of, record number of people telling us they are absolutely certain that they are going

to vote, and actually, in our follow up survey, we had 15% saying they had already voted in the election. And one thing, also, that's notable here, is that, in 2016, there was an advent -- Republicans had about a seven-point advantage of partisans saying they were absolutely certain to vote.

This year, that enthusiasm gap is closed. So, it's basically 85%, but, again, a record high, of both Democrats and Republicans, saying they're absolutely certain they're going vote this year. The other thing we asked about was what was -- about motivation, were you voting -- for those who said they were supporting one candidate or the other, we ask, well, is this more of a vote, for the candidate, or is more a vote against their opponent? And so, we were able to compare 2016 and 2020, and even the difference between September and October, of 2020.

I'm going to put 2016 and 2020, both in September, to compare, and first look at Trump's support. Its changed quite dramatically, actually. So, in 2016, we had about 40% of Trump's supporters saying they were voting for him, though we had about 6 in 10 saying they were voting against the Democrat, that is Hillary Clinton. This time around, the numbers have basically reversed themselves, and we have two-thirds saying they're voting for Trump, only about a third saying they're voting against Biden.

On the Democratic side, the numbers, the patterns look a bit similar, that last time around, in 2016, 54% of those supporting Hillary Clinton said they were voting against Trump, versus 46%, who said they were voting for her. This time, Biden is a little bit more, in September, actually, people saying they were voting against Trump, than voting for Biden, but that moves, in over the last month, in fact.

So, Trump's numbers still look about the same. Heavily, many more people saying they're voting for him, than against Biden, but now Biden's numbers have actually evened out about it, just about as many saying their voting for him, as voting against Trump. So, a little bit of the shift on the dynamics, just over the last month there. So, in this survey, we did a supplemental survey, following up in October, and we developed two different likely voter models; one, that is -- predicts a kind of average turnout, that looks more like 2016, and one that predicts a higher turnout, around 70%, which is very high -- which would be high compared to 2016, but consistent with the way that voters are telling us that they are going to vote this time, and, I'm going to just put up both of these here.

If we're looking at average turnout, our supplemental survey predicts that -- the -- or have people telling us, 54% telling us they'll vote for Joe Biden, versus 40% for Trump. So, that's a 14-point spread, but if it's high turnout, Biden's lead opens up to 18 points, 56, up to 38, but we do still have 7% out, saying, either they're voting for some other candidate, or they don't know, or refused, out there. So, kind of paying attention to that on the outside.

So, what does the religious landscape look like, in terms their reporting who they're going to vote for. Here, this is using numbers consistent with the high turnout model, at 70%. Here, the first one I'll put here, is white evangelical Protestants. We're showing absolutely no movement of this group. If there's one number, you know about the religious landscape, from 2016, it's probably that 81% of white evangelicals, according to the exit polls, voted for Trump, but notably when I go back -- when we went back and looked at our 2016 survey, that was taken just ahead of the election, about this time, in the race, in 2016, the summary is actually up 10 points, so we actually had white evangelical, at 69%, even though they eventually voted at 81% for Trump.

So, we had them up, from where they were this time in the election cycle, last go around, and then I'm going to put up here the groups that are heavily leaning toward Joe Biden. These are Hispanic Catholics, those who are non-Christian religions, of Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhist, etc. Those who are religious unaffiliated, and down here, anchoring the bottom, are African American Protestants, and I just want to just kind of, note this bookend here, of white evangelical Protestants and African American Protestants in the country. It's remarkable, in many ways, because of how much, theologically, these two groups share, and yet the main thing as those theological beliefs get refracted through the lens of race, they head in almost entirely diametrically opposed, political direction. So, it's really just worth noting this great, great distance here between, we're talking, you know, like 75-point difference, between white evangelical Protestants on the one hand, and African American Protestants on the other.

And the two groups I haven't put up here, yet, are groups that are really more kind of in the middle, here. These are two that vote -- that did vote for President Trump, in 2016, but here's where they are today. White mainline Protestants, basically, evenly divided on this point. It's worth saying there

that that is actually quite different from where we had them last time. On white mainline Protestants, the Trump side hasn't moved that much, but Biden is up relative to Hillary Clinton, by 11 points there. We only had 37%, at this point in time, in the race, last year, saying they were going to vote for Hillary Clinton, versus 48% this time around.

And then, among white Catholics, we have a more sizable lead, 54-41 among white Catholics, again, that's a group that supported President Trump, in the last election, and this is also up ten points, compared to where we had them, at this point in the race, last time around. Again, Trump's move -- Trump's side of the equation hasn't moved that much, but last time around, we had 44% of white Catholics reporting they were going to vote for Hillary Clinton. This time, we have 54% reporting they're going to vote for Joe Biden.

So, racial inequality, as we talked about the pandemic, look at the racial inequality through partisan lines, big, big, divides, on this question, as well. Two similar questions on racial justice here, that when we have nearly two-thirds of the country, disapproving of Trump's handling of the protests for racial justice, and 57%, who say they believe that Trump has encouraged white supremacy, with his decisions and behavior, in the country.

As you might imagine, there are very large divides among partisans here, we have nearly all Democrats, 9 in 10, disapproving of his handling of the protests against racial justice, and nearly as many saying that they believe Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups. Among Republicans, and in particularly in FOX News Republicans, you can see this dramatic difference, again, 70 points, basically, between the two parties, and 80 points between, you know, FOX News -- those who -- Republicans who most trust FOX News, so, really, really different partisans leans on this.

This is a very similar slide to the pandemic, where you have these key swing groups across the bottom, here. The news is also not great for President Trump, on disapproval and those who believe he's encouraged white supremacy groups, among many of these key -- key groups. The one, again, that I think draw attention to, are white women with four-year college degrees, basically, 7 in 10 disapproving of his handling of the protests, and believing that he's encouraged white supremacy groups. That number drops off a bit for women, particularly on believing the president encouraged white

supremacy groups, for women -- white women without a college degree.

Among seniors, about 6 in 10. On both of these sentiments, and among white Catholics and white mainline Protestants, you'll see here a little more divided, particularly on whether the president's encouraged white supremacists groups, but among white Catholics, 56%, saying that they disapprove of how he's handled the protest, and again, if we look at these key states, kind of the Rust Belt states, and the Sun Belt states, we're looking at more than 6 in 10, disapproving of his handling of the protests, and at least slim majorities, saying that he's encouraged white supremacist groups.

The survey -- one more interesting questions we had in the survey, was essent -- was an embedded experiment, and we basically split the sample into two demographically identical subsamples, and we asked one half of the sample, one version of a question, and we asked the other half of the sample, another version of the question, so these were kind of quarantined samples. Only they got one version of the question, or the other. But then we could compare the responses between these two different questions, demographically, to see where people dropped off, depending on what was in the question.

So, the question was, "It always makes our country better when," -- the first version of the question said, "Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government?" Here we have about 6 in 10 Americans agreeing, that it always makes our country better when Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government. However, when we changed the word Americans, and we inserted just one word, the word Black, in front of Americans, we see a distinctively different pattern. The number drops from 61% to 52% of Americans agreeing, that it always makes our country better, when Black Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government, and what -- you can really see the difference when, you look, particularly among white subgroups and among partisans, here you can see.

So, I'm gonna go through just a few of these, here. So here are all Americans -- or here are these subgroups, actually saying, when you -- they agreed, that it always makes our country better when Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government. It ranges from 71% of Democrats, to 49% of Republicans, and just a little bit less than that, of FOX News Republicans, basically

being divided, on that question. White evangelicals, and the majority territory whites, and majority territory, but note what happens, again, when they get the version of the question that says, it makes our country better, when Black Americans speak up and protest.

Significant drop off, nearly across the board. I'll start with all white Americans, and it's a 14-point drop, along white Americans, when the protestors are specified to be Black Americans, and you'll see these numbers just get bigger down the way. It's a 20-point drop off, among white evangelical Protestants. It's a 25-point drop off among Republicans, and it is a yawning 37-point drop off among Republicans, who most trust FOX News. Even among whites with a four-year college degree, notably, who tend to be in a more progressive, on racial issues. There's a 12-point drop off there, but notably among Democrats overall, there is no drop off at all.

So, the partisan differences here, 25-drop off among republican, when the protestors are specified to be Black, versus no drop off, you get a real sense of, kind of, how a racial line is really been brought to, these kind of perceptions of the protest, and whether or not they are good thing or a bad thing for the country.

And, finally, in the last section here, I wanted to do a little bit of walking through some cracks and what I'm calling "Trump's white Christian wall of support." So, again, Trump won all white Christian subgroups, in the 2016 election, and we've been tracking favorability over -- over the past year. Actually, the past couple of years very consistently, and here's what it looks like.

This first number, is -- this -- marked December 2019, is actually the average of all of our surveying across 2019. About two-thirds held a favorable view. You can see that's ebbed and flowed, particularly through the summer of the pandemic. But as the election season, has kicked in, it has jumped back up to, basically, more than historic levels. Since his election, it's basically been somewhere between two-thirds and 80% of support among white evangelical Protestants, so we're saying that's fairly consistent.

Along more volatility among white mainline Protestants, who are down now at 50, basically divided, on whether they have a favorable view of the president or not, and considerable volatility among white Catholics. In fact, in June, July -- sort of, in June, July, and going into August, we

had only -- less than 40% of White Catholics holding a favorable view of the president, they rebounded a bit, again, as the election season kind of kicked off, and has dropped a bit, now.

But you'll notice that like - you know, back in 2019, there was a divide, really, between white evangelicals on the one hand, and others, but it was -- it was, you know, 14 points essentially, 14, 15 points. That number today, is more like 25 points. So, it was at 15 points in 2019, it's 25 points, the gap, between white evangelicals and other white Christian subgroups. That's notable, in particular, because in -- especially in those upper Midwest states, the kind of Rust Belt swing states. White mainline Protestants and white Catholics for example, are as big or bigger proportion of the population, in states like, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania.

Here I want to take a look at Christian divides. These white Christian divides, on the candidates and religions. So, the two questions here -- one is, people who say that either Trump or Biden, has strong religious beliefs, and on the right, the one who say the person Trump or Biden models religious values, with their behavior and speech. And, so, what we see here, is all Americans are much more likely to say Biden, rather than Trump, about twice as likely, has strong religious beliefs. But white evangelicals are the end burst, twice as likely to say that President Trump has strong religious beliefs, verses Vice President Biden.

However, white Catholics and white mainline, again, this kind of crack in this wall of support, or the other way around. On the question about modeling religious values, again, all Americans significantly more likely to say, that this applies to Biden, rather than Trump. White evangelicals strongly disagree, again, more than twice as likely to say that this applies to Trump, rather than Biden. However, the same pattern, among white Catholics and white mainline Protestants, more likely to say this applies to Biden, rather than Trump. So, again, kind of different orientation there.

And, kind of, just go back to the virus, and show you where these groups are on disapproving of Trump's handling of the virus, thinking the spread of the virus could have been controlled better, by evangelicals disagreeing, with those things, are less likely to disapprove, less likely to say they've been controlled better, but look at white mainline Protestants, and particularly white Catholics, here, you know, 6 in 10 disapprove, 65% think the coronavirus could have been controlled better, than it

was.

One other note here where we see some distance between white evangelicals on the hand, and white mainline Protestants and Catholics on the other. It's not dramatic, but I think it's significant and notable. One thing that we have seen, is that the protests, over the last few years, and this summer, have actually shifted the countries view on the issue of whether, for example, the killing of African American man by police, are isolated incidents, or the other half of the question is; or whether they are part of a pattern, of how police treat African Americans, and you'll see that we've been seeing a ten-point drop, since 2015, when we first asked this question, on the number of Americans who say they are isolated incidents. So, from 53% down to 43% today, but white evangelical Protestants haven't moved at all, on this question. 7 in 10, five years ago, 7 in 10 today, see these as isolated incidents, but you'll see some movement here, among white mainline Protestants and white Catholics.

They have both dropped -- back in -- five years ago, there was no daylight at all, between white evangelicals and other white Christians in the country. Today, it's double digit differences, 70% among white evangelicals, 58 and 57 among white mainline Protestants and white Catholics, so, again, just some daylight opening up, there on this issue of racial justice, in the country.

I put this slide in, really, because of all the conversations around the Supreme Court, that the Barrett nomination, and the issues of same sex marriage and abortion, coming up here. Notable, that all Americans, 6 in 10, favor the legality of abortion, and in our recent survey, this number actually keeps creeping up, 7 in 10 Americans today, favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to legally marry, even a majority of seniors, today, those over the age of 65, favor marriage equality, today.

White evangelical looking very different, than the rest of the country. You can see here, only 22% saying abortion should be legal, and only 34% saying gay and lesbian couples should be able to legally marry, but again, just kind of noting, the kind of cultural differences between these two groups, here. Very, very different profiles on these two issues of abortion and same sex marriage. White Catholics, for example, two-thirds saying marriage of cou -- that gay and lesbian couples should be able to marry. 53% favoring the legality of abortion.

And, finally, here, before I wrap up, one final slide. Again, you can see some differences

on two questions, that are really about a threat, to American values, or to American culture, here. These are two questions that were agree, disagree questions, and what I'm going to show you here, is the percent of Americans who disagree, with these two statements. One, "Immigrants are invading our country, and replacing our culture ethnic background," or two, "The values of Islam are at odds with American values in a way of life." This is the percent who disagrees.

Notably, this is the first time, since Pierre has been asking this question since 2012, that we have found a majority of Americans disagreeing that the value of Islam, are at odds with American values, in a way of life. Here white evangelicals, the percent again, who disagree with each of those statements, but again a notably different profile, from other white Christians subgroups, white mainline Protestants, and white Catholics, in particular, in the country. Two-thirds disagree with that statement about immigrants, and 55% saw the majority -- disagreeing statement about Islam.

Now least I land this plane amid a bunch of debris and partisan divide, I do want to kind of have one last slide, where there are a few places of bipartisan agreement here, and we asked the question about whether the things, you know, especially in the wake of the pandemic, and the economic crises in the country. Whether we needed a major policy change, as to help everyday Americans, given how bad things have gotten in the country, and the sentiment is pretty dark, out there about the people. Most Americans seeing things that are going in the wrong direction, for example, 79% of Americans, including 93% of Democrats, and 62% of Republicans, all agree, that we need some major policy changes to help everyday Americans.

I put two up here that -- two policies that we tested on this front, guaranteeing all Americans a minimum income, and guaranteeing access to affordable child care. Here on the child care question, we've got super majorities of both parties, 83% of the country, agreeing, or favor that policy, and guaranteeing Americans a minimum income. Again, 7 in 10 Americans favoring that, 88% of Democrats, and actually a slim majority, 52% of Republicans.

So, with that little up note, I'm going to wrap it, and we will hand it back over to E.J. and Bill, and on to the discussion.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you, Robbie, for that brisk canter, through a massive report.

I'm amazed that you didn't pause for breath. We have about 50 minutes left, and let me tell everybody, how we're gonna spend those 50 minutes.

First turn to Professor Andra Gillespie of Emory University and Karlyn Bowman of the American Enterprise Institute, for their reactions. Each at about -- for about five minutes. We'll then divide the remaining time, about equally, between a panel discussion and audience questions. So, without further ado, Andra Gillespie, over to you.

MS. GILLESPIE: Thank you, very much, Bill, and thank you E.J. and the rest of Brookings, for inviting me to this. I'm really honored to be a part of this panel, and thank you, Robbie, for adjusting for this. It's been really fun to look at your data, and I can't wait to actually play with this a little bit more.

The data that Robbie presents, is fascinating and valuable, and, but what struck me most, is the consistency of the data. This consistency puts the current climate and the current election cycle into context, and suggests challenges that await us in a post-election America, and I'm using post-election America very literally. I'm not trying this, sort of, put my thumb on, but I think the outcome of the election will be.

So, let me start with the things that don't change, that I do think actually are most relevant for what were going to see happen in the next two to three weeks. So, most important, PRRI's data shows a consistency in Trump's base of support, that appears to inure him, to please to modify his behavior. His approval rating is constant, his supporters remain loyal. His most friendly media outlet, consumption, correlates with a near unanimous discipline, amongst those who are viewing it.

This undergirds Trump's strategy of doubling down on his 2016 election strategy. Now, to be sure, there are problems with this strategy. It's 2020, it's not 2016, and Donald Trump is no longer the (inaudible) candidate. Voters aren't taking the leap of faith, on him, based on what he's promising. They know based on what he's done, what to expect in the next four years, and this is problematic for Trump.

Election forecasters have been struggling with this, and you know, many election forecasters who typically use GDP growth, for instance, as an independent variable in their models, have

actually switched to COVID job approval, because they think that that's a stronger predictor this year, and it was hard to deal with the 30% drop in GDP, because that was just going to throw everything off. So, this doesn't portend will for Trump, and time is actually running out to change the narrative on the optic of how President Trump is responding to the crisis. But still we'll wait and see if anything changes with those numbers in the next two weeks, that actually going to shift the outcome of the election.

There are other things though, that haven't changed a lot, or had -- that have greater impact on post-2020 policy debates and institutional arguments, and they're sort of tied into, sort of, the remaining of my election 2020 arguments. And, so here, the data on race jump out. In part because of institutional concerns later, but also in part because what I think this could portend for the 2020 election results.

So, from a vote choice stand point, PRRI's numbers on Hispanic attitudes, are actually really interesting to me. The 2016 exist polls were somewhat surprising, in that they showed an increase in Republican support, amongst Latinx voters, compared to 2012. Now there are questions about sampling, particularly in exit polls with Latino populations. But I'm going to be curious to see happening in the next couple of weeks, is what Hispanic voting looks like and what the break down is between Republican and Democratic voting.

PRRI points to the need to look at religious differences amongst the Latinx population, that actually speak to me to 2004, for instance. I mean, so in particular, where we need to be mindful of the difference between, how Hispanic Catholics and Protestants behave. We also need to look at differences and perceptions of discrimination. There's an interesting paper, that's published in The Dubois Review, that looks at Hispanic perceptions of racism and support for Donald Trump, so Hispanics that didn't perceive a lot of societal discrimination were more inclined to support Donald Trump, than those who did.

And, so, in this data set, the fact that there were so many Latino Protestants who viewed George Taylor's death as an isolated incident, is telling. I also did not ignore the racial and gender gap, in terms of support for a Black woman running for vice president, and so, -- Robbie didn't talk about this a whole lot, but they ran another experiment, where they asked whether or not it was a good idea for Joe Biden, to name a woman or a Black woman as his running mate. And the place where there was the

biggest gap, whereas, among African-American men who were less likely to support the idea of naming a Black woman relative to a woman in general.

I'm happy to talk about that, in the Q&A. I do want to get back to this notion of, sort of, perception of discrimination. Whether or not George Floyd's death was an isolated incident. Because I think it speaks to larger issues of systemic racism, that will pose challenges for reconciliation and actually for policy in the years to come. So, I'm using this particular question, as a proxy for respondent perceptions of systemic racism.

And, so, we see increasing convergence among Democrats that police shootings are not isolated incidents, and we also see that Republicans are largely resistant to this idea, and other proxy measures, like minorities are likely to be discriminated against, and years of discrimination, slavery, explain Black white inequality. I would argue that, if these patterns persist, they will still continue to be the basis, of our talking past each other, and of us not actually promoting meaningful racial reconciliation in the United States.

Another concern for me, is the racial differences in issue ranking. So, four and a half months, after George Floyd's death, race ranks amongst the top three standing issues, for African-Americans, only in the sample. So, sympathy is great, and I do want to acknowledge the changes in the recognition of what's going on, but salience actually matters for agenda setting, and this is something that we should be aware of as well.

The other data points, that stood out to me, was among white Evangelical behavior, and I'm going to, just put, my sort of identities out there. This matters to me personally, as an evangelical of color. So, I have to say, that nothing surprised me, in PRRI's findings, in terms of the perceptual chasm, between white evangelicals and Black Protestants. However, these do matter to me from a normative stand point. The most concerning to me, was the fact of more than half of white evangelicals who said that -- who supported Trump, who said that Trump could never lose their support, and the increase in the strategic relativisms, when it comes to issues related to character. I mean, so in particular, one of the data points shows, increasing numbers of white evangelicals, who say that they're actually willing to consider political candidates who have exhibited moral failings, and, so, that number

went up from 30%, at the beginning of the American values survey, in the early 20-teens, up to 72% last year, to 68% -- or to 68% today. So, this, Trump's moral behavior, you know, sort of is implicated in this, and so, this gives me a normative concern about a loss of moral authority for evangelicals because of the perceived hypocrisy of the change in attitudes, and also because there are institutional and behavioral concerns that are connected to this, and that may be what's driving what's going on here.

So, one, you know, I still have to do more study on this, but my hypothesis is that this is being driven by hyper partisanship and other biases, and I worry about the long-term implications for electoral capture amongst white evangelicals and the potential for benign neglect from the Republican Party, or whatever potentially replaces it, and I think that this ties into Robbie's other work, particularly "The End of White Christian America" that notes that white evangelicals will shrink as a share of the electorate.

And so, what does it mean if you have a party that sort of is capturing, without question, without critique, you know, the hearts and the minds of one segment of the population, and some people argue, and as a scholar of African American politics, you know, I'm certainly aware of the sort of notion of a Democratic electoral capture and the perceptions of that, you know, within African American communities, but what I see here is sort of this uncritical acceptance of a "Trumpian" Republican Party orthodoxy, that I don't even see in African American communities. If you look at a lot of the public discourse, about younger Blacks being somewhat jaundiced of Joe Biden, excuse me, of demanding more, if we think about that infamous inter-chain between Charlamagne tha God, and Joe Biden, in May, before George Floyd's death, all of that was actually resisting the notion of capture and demanding policy attention.

I'm not seeing that in this data amongst white evangelicals, and so, even though it looks like white evangelicals have gotten more out of their relationship with Donald Trump, than Blacks have, historically, gotten out of the Democratic Party, I do wonder whether or not they are heading down an inevitable path of capture that could be really problematic in years to come. So, I'll end there, and I look forward to Karlyn's comments and the rest of the conversation.

MS. BOWMAN: Thank you, and thank you, Robbie, for a wonderful presentation. This is

an enormously rich survey. When I get back to my office, I think I will reread a little essay that I have pasted on my office wall. It's written by the great sociologist and pollster Dan Yankelovich. And Dan talked about how Americans make up their minds about issues, and he argued that people, that's journalists and social scientists, probably a lot of people listening to this virtual conversation, make up their minds by the accumulation of factual information. And Dan responded that that's not really the way that publics make up their minds, that facts are not unimportant, but they're not the royal road to judgement. And what Dan said was that Americans always start with their values, and that's why I think this particular survey, the 11th edition of this survey, is just enormously important.

Like Andra, I'm going to concentrate on a few things that Robbie didn't mention, and one of them is just something I've been working on, personally, for a few months last summer. I spent a few months looking at every question that's ever been asked on the Electoral College. Gallup asked the very first question in 1944, and they asked a very similar question to this, to the question that Robbie included in this survey in 1948, for the first time. They asked what -- they asked Americans whether the president should be elected -- the presidential election should be decided in terms of the popular vote, and in 1948, 63% of Americans said yes, in fact, that should be the case.

In the new survey, it's 66% virtually identical. And in looking at dozens of questions that have been asked on that subject since 1948, in almost all of them, I think there were only two exceptions when people came down on this side of the question. And that's important because it's solid, it's stable, overall, but what we also know about the question and the issue is that it seems to have very little intensity, and, still, in polls, it asks the question about how we can work to improve our democracy. Things, such as term limits, still had greater salience, overall.

Robbie touched on one of the questions in the survey on election legitimacy. I'd like to look at another one in the survey, and that is a question that the Pew Research Center has asked in every -- after every presidential election, since 2004. And they ask Americans whether or not their own vote was counted accurately. They didn't ask about fairness. They simply asked about whether the vote was counted accurately. And in every one of those presidential election years and off-year elections, the vast majority of Americans said that their vote was counted accurately. Robbie asked that question in this

survey, and found, once again, 82%, and what was significant, that 81% of Republicans and 86% of Democrats believed that their vote would be counted accurately, overall. And I think that speaks to most peoples' personal experience.

Robbie has done a lot of work on voting impediments, particularly in the 2018 survey, where he asks people questions about whether or not they had said that they were told, when they voted, that they had the wrong registration, and he also asked one that has an echo in this survey. He asked whether or not Americans are worried that voters will be harassed, and, in fact, 69% of people in this survey said they were worried that that might happen in this election campaign.

But, if you go back to the 2018 questions, not only in the PRRI questions, but also in a series of questions asked by Marist, and the NPR, and the NewsHour, only 1% of Americans indicated that that had ever happened to them, and 89% in the PRRI survey said that that had never happened to anyone in their family or to them. So, I think, when we ask people about their personal experience of voting impediments, as PRRI has done, you see that those numbers are in the very low single digits, and even when you ask Hispanics and African Americans those identical questions, like the 2018 survey did, again, those numbers were very low, overall.

This survey, and I think others like it, have pointed to the fact that most people think that we will know the winner in a day or two after the election, whether we're resigned to it or whether we feel that way, but I, again, thought that that was a slightly optimistic note. That was a solid majority in the survey, including 60% of Republicans and 57% of Democrats.

I thought the battery on issue emphasis was very interested in issues that were critical -- of critical importance to Americans, with Coronavirus and the economy very close to the top, overall. Regarding Coronavirus, Robbie's numbers are absolutely consistent with virtually every other poll I've seen. Only about 33% to 35% approve of the way that Donald Trump has handled the issue, overall.

One thing, though, that I thought was particularly interesting in this survey is twice as many people trusted Biden a lot to provide accurate information about Coronavirus, but only 28% trusted Biden a lot, and 14% trusted Trump a lot. Now, again, that's the -- that category in the survey, overall. And speaking about healthcare, generally, I thought another interesting finding in the survey was that

48% of Democrats strongly favored Medicare for All, and 39% somewhat favored it, and, again, that's something that could come up after the election, if Mr. Biden is the winner.

I tend to focus, in these sessions, and I have in the past, on the question of abortion, and I have no disagreement with the way that Robbie presented those results. I tend to look at the extremes on that question, and in this survey, 22% thought it should be legal in all circumstances. That number seems to be inching up ever so slightly, and a number of surveys that ask the identical question, whereas 13% said it should be illegal in all circumstances. But what I thought was significant, in looking at that battery of critical issues, that a third said that abortion would be a critical issue for them, but more Republicans, 41% than Democrats said it would be a critical issue for them in the campaign, and I think that is part of the explanation, that we saw so much concentration in the Supreme Court hearings, last week, on the Affordable Care Act and not on the issue of abortion.

There was another question in the survey that I think supported that point. 32% of Republicans said they would only support a candidate who shared their views on abortion, compared to 17% of Democrats. The numbers were slightly reversed on the critical issue being the Supreme Court, where more Democrats said that that was going to be a critical issue for them, 53%, compared to 44% of Republicans. Interestingly, more Democrats than Republicans strongly favored setting a retirement age for Justices, in the survey, than gen -- another question about the Supreme Court appointments.

And Robbie talked a lot about the divisions, and I'd like to end on one note that I thought was really very interesting, and this is, I think, the first question in the September part of the survey, and that was whether or not Americans see better days ahead. We've talked about a lot of problems in the society, but 61% of Republicans and 62% of Democrats say that they see better days ahead for Americans, and that's where I'll end. So, thank you.

MR. GALSTON: All right. We now turn to the panel discussion. Like Karlyn, I'm going to pick up where she left off, like Karlyn, I was astonished by that optimism about the future number, and I'm not sure what to make of it. I'm just going to let that lie there because I want to shift the focus just a little bit.

This is, as the title suggests, not the -- not just the American Politics Survey, but the

American Values Survey, and so, I want to shift to a question that's really at the heart of American values, and that is the role of religion and religious belief in public life, and in that connection, I'd like to ask anyone on the panel who's interested to comment on findings from two questions in the survey, that I regard as very interesting.

Question number one: Is it necessary to believe in God, in order to be a moral person and lead a moral life? Just four years ago, the country was evenly split on that question, 49 say yes, 50% say no. Well, today, the share of Americans who say that it's necessary to believe in God to be moral has declined by 10 full percentage points, to just 39%. That is a big shift on a fundamental question in a short period of time.

Another example, you know, having to do with American exceptionalism in the world, "God has granted the U.S. a special role in history." Just four years ago, 57% of Americans answered that question in the affirmative. According to this survey, that's down to 40% today, a 17-percentage point drop. So, panel, would you care to comment on and offer an interpretation of these very large swings in a short period of time on very fundamental questions?

MS. BOWMAN: Well, perhaps the Coronavirus is the explanation for the second question. If you thought God granted America a special place, you might have thought we would have been spared, in some particular way. It didn't happen. So, perhaps, that explains that very steep drop that you mentioned on that question, overall, and I think the growth of the "nones", the nones that Robbie's talked about so much, and in these surveys in the past, the growth of those people with no religious views is just sort of sprinting ahead, and I think that's changing views, perhaps, on the other question.

MS. GILLESPIE: I agree with Karlyn on the last point. You know, my first hypothesis would be to look at the nones, and to look just at increasing religious diversity, sort of as evidence of the fact that people might be a little bit more sort of resistant to that Judeo-Christian kind of Puritan idea of the city on the hill.

You know, and I think the other question would be -- and this is -- I'm saying this without having modeled it. So, this is another hypothesis to throw out. You know, this is the question that I think

about, with respect to moral authority, and so, if you've seen people, who think that they are the arbiters of morality, compromise, heavily, in order to achieve short-term political goals, right, that undermines the idea about whether or not you actually need to affirm a belief in God, in order to do that because I think they've seen people profess faith who have behaved in some ways that is quizzical or immoral, and that might be contributing to it.

MR. DIONNE: (overtalking).

MR. JONES: No, I'll -- yeah, I'll jump in on this, too. And what is notable on the question about you need to believe in God in order to be moral, that the biggest shifts on that question is that it's actually been a partisan shift, that it is -- like, a majority of Republicans are still there. They were 54% in 2016. They're 53% agreeing it is necessary to believe in God to be moral, but, among Democrats, it is down from 48% to 36% among Democrats. It's also down among Independents, from 43 to 32.

So, it's really kind of Democrats leading, Independents following, Republicans staying the same. So, it's this kind of asymmetric polarization phenomenon, that we see in a lot of issues, actually, with kind of Republicans staying here, and Democrats and Independents moving together, kind of, to a different place, but I think, Andra, your interpretation of, you know, I think, the division in the country and I think, for many -- there's been no question that I have, in my entire career, answered more times than why do white evangelicals support Donald Trump, who seems to not fit their values, right? I have answered that question probably 200 times, in the last four years, and so, I think it's out there as this kind of named hypocrisy, right, for a group that called itself "values" voters, and then -- and emphasized the character of a candidate, when Bill Clinton was in the crosshairs, but hasn't been willing to consistently emphasize character with Donald Trump in the crosshairs.

And just so everybody didn't miss it, that Andra highlighted that, I still think, also, one of the more remarkable, you know, shifts, that is really a sea change in political ethics, is really what it shows, is that, on this question of whether a candidate can commit an immoral act in their personal life, and still behave ethically and fulfill their duties in their public life, there's been an absolute sea change among white evangelicals in that questions. Again, in 2011, 32% said that this was possible. It went up to 72% in 2016. It's basically right there, 68% in the current survey.

So, from 3 in 10 to 7 in 10 is an absolute sea change in the way one evaluates a candidate, right? So, less on -- less along lines of character values and principles, and more on the lines of kind of an ends and means because, so, Donald Trump is a means to an end, right, and I think that's -- that is really notable, as a real sea change in American politics.

MR. DIONNE: I want to come in, if I could, with a series of questions, including some great questions we are getting from the audience. Again, #AVS2020, on Twitter, or events@brookings.edu. Just on the optimism point that Karlyn and Bill made, this -- what went through my head was a song called "Things Can Only Get Better." Some people out there may remember that song, and I just think that's a comment on where we are now, but we can -- or, Robbie, you can talk about that.

Let me just throw out several things that different people might comment on. One, it was notable that, on your issues chart, the issue of immigration wasn't --

MR. JONES: Yeah.

MR. DIONNE: -- even there because it was so far down the list, which I have a suspicion helps account for some of the difficulties President Trump is having. That was a signature issue for him in 2016. There are all kinds of reasons why it's not an issue, including the fact that a lot of borders are closed right now, but I just think that's very important, anybody who wants to comment on that.

One -- a couple of questioners want -- asked this, this is a mythological thing I just want to put on the table, you don't have to spend a lot of time on it, Robbie, why not more data for Independents, shown here? Just, if you could, satisfy that concern. I was -- this is my question. I was really struck by your findings about the Democratic Party, where -- and they were interesting because, on the one hand, about half the party supported Joe Biden or one of the other moderate or center-Left candidates, and about half the respondents, Democrats, said they supported either Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren.

But these voters, the Warren-Sanders votes, not only are overwhelmingly supporting Biden, but only about half of them or a quarter of all Democrats think Biden is too conservative, if I'm remembering right. I tried to check it, and I think -- there's so much interest in your site, Robbie, right

now, that I couldn't get into your site to double check the number, but it struck me that that might suggest an interesting divide in the Democratic Party, not half and half, but half, a quarter, and a quarter, you know, a half very, very progressive, half on -- I mean, a quarter, very, very progressive, half on the more center, the left side, and then some significant group between those, those polls. I'd like to toss that out.

Lastly, a questioner, called Michael, asked, "Does concern about environmental issues represent a rupture between older and younger Conservative Christians?" I'm curious if you have indicators of that in a survey. I think it's an interesting question for the long haul. So, I throw all those out, for anybody to jump on any piece of them, if they are interested. Maybe I'll start with Robbie because of some of them are very specific to the methods and the survey.

MR. JONES: Yeah, I'll take just a couple. I'll take the immigration one. It is notable that it doesn't show up, right, on the top of the priority list. It also -- it, for those who, you know, watch the conventions, it also didn't show up. If you had kind of had a tally sheet of the 2016 Republican Convention or the 2020 Republican Convention, and kind of notched, you know, every time immigration came up, I mean, it would look dramatically different, and so, I think we're just seeing the president not talk about, you know, this as much, and that what we're seeing is actually a drop in -- particularly on the -- well, actually, it's really only on the Republican side of those who are saying it's a critical issue, and, typically, what we see in our surveys are that those who rank it as a critical issue are more anti-immigration than pro-immigration.

So, people who want to be -- have more restricted tend to rate it higher, and so, what we've seen is that drop in Republican, has dropped -- actually, it was 60%, said it was a critical issue in 2016. It's down to 38% in the current survey. So, a 22-point drop in its importance over the last four years. Among Democrats, there's no change. It's 37, 2016, 37% in 2016, and 36% in 2020, so, no movement on its importance among Democrats, but this just real cliff drop off among Republicans. We also are seeing a little bit of softening just on the -- about -- not on policy, policy hasn't moved, but on immigrants, themselves, like about kind of more positive views of immigrants, themselves. That's inched up a little bit among Republicans, as well.

And on the real -- the question, real quickly, on the data about Independents, often on

these charts, so, we certainly have that, for anyone out there, you know, who wants it, it's there, and in the full report, we do break out Independents. You're always making choices in the PowerPoint about whether to put all Americans or Independents, and you usually don't put both because they tend to just lay right on top of each other in charts and be a little more mangling and confusing. So, I made a decision to put all Americans in almost every chart. The Independents are right on top of where All Americans are.

The one other thing I'll say, too, just to wrap this up on immigration, is that there is one issue that, E.J. and Bill, you may remember, we have been asking since 2012, about whether immigrants who are living in the country illegally should be allowed a way to become citizens, provided they meet certain requirements, and despite the political football that immigration has been, and policies that have been up for consideration and not, and anti-immigrant rhetoric from the president, that issue has hardly moved in any political -- any survey that we have fielded, since 2012.

It is today, again, a little bit more than 6 in 10 Americans. Its super majority is the Democrats, solid majority is of Independents, and about half of Republicans, who agree that when you ask them what to do about immigrants who are living in the country illegally, say that they support a path to citizenship. So, I kind of still put that on the, "Wow, despite all the disagreement, that still hasn't moved across all, you know, two administrations, all kinds of rhetoric, that's still there, and still solid."

MR. DIONNE: Before I turn to Andra and Karlyn, can I just ask you, for 15 seconds, was my charact -- since I couldn't check, was my characterization of your numbers on the Democratic side correct? And do you have, you know, just 10 seconds on that?

MR. JONES: Yes. It is mostly correct. It's also worth noting that only 3 in 10 Democrats say that they had originally hoped Biden would be the Democratic nominee. So, that's worth noting, and so, there has been a kind of coalescing around it, and your kind of characterization of it being about half and half, I think, is about right, and then when we -- and when we ask about whether he's too conservative, it is true that liberal Democrats, about a quarter of liberal Democrats, say he's too conservative, and that they preferred, you know, a more progressive candidate, but when we asked about their support, there's really no drop-off, you know, in support, but there is about a quarter of liberal

Democrats who see Biden as too conservative.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, I guess I was surprised. That was quite low.

MR. JONES: Uh-huh, yeah.

MR. DIONNE: I mean, it wasn't shocking to the coalescing around Biden, and he is the nominee, but that's still only a quarter of Liberals saying that I found interesting. Anyone else have anything to say about any of these questions? So, just to throw one more, since we have --Andra and Karlyn are warmly consensual in their hopes for the country, in the way you spoke. Janet wanted to know what values we agree on, and Tamera asked if anybody's interested in compromise. So, do either of you have a response to any of this package of issues I put on the table? Then, I'll go back to Bill. Andra, do you want to go?

MS. GILLESPIE: So, you know, I'm not sure that this survey captures, and, Robbie, please, correct me if I'm wrong, sort of places where we could sort of find common ground. I mean, one of the things, from a policy standpoint, that I don't think we've -- has gotten a whole lot of discussion. We just talked about sort of the majorities of folks to -- regardless of partisan affiliation, who support Dreamers, for instance, or a path to citizenship, but also, if we look at other types of policy proposals, like, you know, trying to make college free for people, or even Medicare for All, right? Like, there is this consensus around these issues that does not actually get reflected in policy debates.

So, if that's going to get refracted through a hyper partisan legislative lens, I'm not sure where we're going to get. This is sort of almost like the gun control issue, where majorities of Americans do believe in common sense gun control. It's just that the people who are in charge of making the decisions don't believe in that, and they're at loggerheads with each other. So, you know, on the one hand, and we don't ask the question in this particular survey about, you know, "Do you hate Congress, but love your member, your own personal member?" --

MR. JONES: Yeah.

MS. GILLESPIE: -- even though there are questions about who you're going to vote for in Congress. Right? If people recognize that Congress, as an institution, is a problem, but yet each individual district keeps on electing the same people, this is probably going to, you know, continue to

exacerbate these particular problems, and we aren't getting into questions here, and couldn't, and it's a much more complicated issue than sort of saying, "Oh, well, this is all about gerrymandering," because I don't actually agree with that.

I think that, you know, I think that this is really complex, and I think one of the things that kind of comes from this is a need for people to listen to each other more, and my fear is that the peoples' fundamental priors are sort of hardwired by partisanship, or by other biases, or by a refusal to see the world from the perspective of people who live and walk in different bodies, that it might actually be harder for us to be able to see that. I pray that we get there.

I mean, one of the things that sort of came out is the difference among whites, based on college education, and so, while there's this huge, still, inequality between people of color and whites, who are given the opportunity to go to college, I'm like, "Wow, I need more white people to go to college," right, so (inaudible) people and different ideas.

MR. DIONNE: Karlyn?

MS. BOWMAN: Oh, I'll just pick up where Andra left off. I agree that every time you ask a question about should we compromise on XYZ, Americans, for the most part, are in favor of compromise, or, at least, they pay lip service to it, but we're -- the partisanship is so hardwired on so many of these questions that you just tend to take your partisan opinions or take your partisan positions on these kinds of questions. I think you're both right on immigration, Robbie and E.J., that the borders are closed, and Trump's not talking about it, and you have -- those numbers are going down, but we see something really unusual in the polls this year, is that support for -- you know, Gallup's asked this question since, I think, the '40s about increasing, decreasing, or keeping immigration levels about the same, and you've seen the positive side of those numbers go up to levels we have never seen before, and I think, often, publics act as a counterweight to whoever's in power, and they just -- and so, that may be one of the reasons you're seeing people push in this direction, but it's just, generally, more positive views about immigrants and also about immigration.

MR. DIONNE: Bill?

MR. GALSTON: Yep. Well, let me just -- let me just comment, briefly, on what Robbie

and Karlyn said about immigration. One of the things that maddens Americans the most about American politics is how long it takes their elected representatives to catch up to a consensus that has existed among Americans for a very long time, right? I mean, we're talking about the better part of two decades, where Americans have agreed on the basic outlines of immigration reform, and yet the political system has failed to get it done, and we've, I think, politically, we have paid a big price for that. So, that's the only editorial comment I'm going to offer.

Now, here's my question. You know, going back, going back to religion and values, you know, I am plenty old enough to remember a group spearheaded by white evangelical Protestants that called itself the Moral Majority. I don't think it could call itself the Moral Majority with a straight face anymore. As I read this survey and a number of questions from the audience pointed in this direction, white evangelical Protestants now appear to me to be increasingly isolated outliers in the American population, and so, my question is, first of all, is that reading of the survey correct, and, secondly, if it is, what are the long-term consequences for American politics and society?

MR. JONES: I'll jump in first. I mean, this is a great big picture question. I think it's right, that we see increasingly white evangelicals kind of out on an island, in the religious landscape, by themselves, and drifting, if you think about tectonic plates, moving kind of islands around in the ocean. I mean, their tectonic plate is drifting further and further from the mainland here, and so, both the terms moral and the term majority, I think, would be challenged, you know, in today's climate, as they've embraced, as we've talked about a kind of more utilitarian kind of real politic, you know, kind of embracing someone who didn't fit their values, and then, also, I think the majority part.

It was worth noting that white evangelical Protestants today make up 15, 1-5% of the U.S. population, you know, so, they've been a shrinking and aging population. Their median age keeps creeping up, as the numbers are going down. So, I think that's really notable, and so, they're losing members, both from attrition, from younger people leaving, and from just older people dying, and so, even in states, like Texas, right, white evangelicals are only 17% of Texas, and some of these other states that we now have in the tossup category, North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona, and the Sun Belt, are affected by this kind of changing demographics in the country.

And I think the other thing that elected officials haven't caught up with is that there was the sense that white evangelicals were speaking for all Christians, period, or all white Christians, for sure, and I think one of the reasons why I spent as much time as I did, trying to put some daylight there, is that it really is true, they are unique in so many ways. I mean, they're the only religious group that has strong majorities opposing same sex marriage today, for example. They're just kind of out on -- and that wasn't true 10 years ago, and they really were kind of in the majority on that question, but I think legalization of marijuana is one we haven't talked about, but the country's really moved on that question, as well, quite dramatically, 68% supporting that today, right up to the same number supporting same sex marriage, but I think that elected officials and policymakers haven't also quite caught up with -- that those, the particular positions staked out by white evangelicals represent an increasingly shrinking and greying proportion of the population, and certainly don't speak for Christians of color.

I mean, that chart of, like, white evangelicals, up here, and Black evangelicals way down, you know, Black Protestants, way down here. I mean, that's dramatic. I mean, we've got to remember those divisions, and even among Catholics, the division between white Catholics and Latino Catholics, you know, on political -- on many political issues is yawning.

MS. GILLESPIE: Let me add a couple of things there. I mean, I think part of the -- what Robbie is pointing out is manifesting itself in terms of perceptions of loss of social dominance, right, and so, the sort of whole sort of 10-point scale isn't included in the survey, but the idea that white evangelicals perceive that Christians, that are being discriminated against, in particular, right, certainly, certainly, has a politics of grievance kind of undertone to it, and I think that that does reflect a certain type of backlash politics.

However, on the other side, I -- the way you framed the question, Bill, if you were to take that into a white evangelical Church, based on what I've even heard in the last couple of weeks, on online church, I think there are people who would question you, right? I think there are people who really still do believe that (audio skip) issues, and then there is the chasm between white evangelicals and evangelicals of color, and part of that sort of represents power differentials, kind of like within the church and who gets to speak for the church, and what that looks like, and I think that those battles are still to be fought, and

so, there was a question that kind of showed up in the chat, that wanted to try to explain what's going on.

Since I haven't run models on this data, I'm just going to speak to other data that I have, where I have run models, and some of it is state specific, but I think it points in a larger national direction. You know, if you're looking at whites, and I put all whites in a model, and say I did this in Alabama, in 2017, and I'm trying to predict support for Roy Moore, even with a large sort of evangelical segment on there, my biggest coefficient is going to be party, and there's always this endogeneity problem that we have to deal with, but this is party.

So, in the same way that Black Protestants are being defined by their racial interests because they are existential, white evangelicals are being defined by their party identification, and so, it is party that is driving these compromises, and I think the larger question is that evangelicals are supposed to be driven by something else, and so, why isn't that happening here? Like, why is it that it seems like you care more about the things of this world and then the things, you know, that are other worldly, or heavenly, in this particular instance, and so, I think that those are really important soul-searching questions that, you know, are going to have to be answered, at some point. I don't know if it's going to get answered this cycle, but, perhaps, that sort of demographic reckoning is going to eventually happen, where there's going to have to be some reflection.

MR. DIONNE: Karlyn?

MR. GALSTON: Karlyn?

MS. BOWMAN: I don't really have anything. I just wonder -- a question for Robbie, whether he expects these people, I think is it the Rod Dreher book, on the Benedict Option, where they simply would remove themselves? I mean, Andra suggested they're very political, and I think they are, but I'm just wondering if, at some point, when your numbers get so much smaller, you just not only isolate, you remove yourself from society, as a whole. I'm curious about Robbie's thoughts on that.

MR. JONES: Yeah, I doubt it. I, you know, I think that'll be an option for some, you know, maybe younger, you know, tribe that might -- wants to kind of opt out, but I don't see that. I mean, you know, white evangelicals have spent the better part of half a century building a power structure, you know, and it's been a political power structure and a cultural power structure, and walking away from that,

I just can't see it, you know?

I think we do -- we are seeing, I think, some -- you know, I'll point to, like, one thing that I think is important on the racial justice issue. When the president, in the debate, refused to kind of denounce the Proud Boys, white supremacists, to stand back and stand by. The next morning, the President of the Southern Baptist Convention, J.D. Greear, and the executive committee came on Twitter and said, let's be clear, none of us should refuse to denounce white supremacists.

Now, that's, you know, quite something, I think, for them to kind of come in, right, the next morning, and just say, let's put a stake down, that this is something that we, even though we know that 8 in 10 of our constituents are going to vote for this president, like, still, I think, the leadership putting that stake down is important. So, we're seeing some of that happen, but as far as, like, I think, any grand, you know, retraction from society, I can't see that happening.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. E.J., we have about seven or eight minutes left. Let's see if we can organize it so I'll have time at the end to slip in a gender question, which we haven't touched on yet.

MR. DIONNE: Well, you know what I could do? Why don't we -- I just have a couple things I want to put on the table, partly from our smart viewers today, and then why don't you put the gender question on, and then we can let everybody kick it around. Would that work?

MR. GALSTON: That would work perfectly.

MR. DIONNE: Yep. Okay, well, there's one question here I just want to read verbatim because I love the way Greg, as it happens, wrote it. He wrote, "Is there ANYTHING in the poll, where FOX viewers align with the mainstream or, 'gulp' even Democrats?" I ask Greg's question because I would love you, Robbie, to talk a little more about FOX News Democrat err Republicans and other Republicans, and what that may tell us about what might happen inside the Republican Party, if President Trump loses in the fall. What do we get out of that?

Second, I just want to go back to that environment and age question that was asked earlier because I do think that, you know, the general -- and really talk a bit about generational issues because generation looms at so many moments in this survey, on attitudes toward religion, on attitudes toward the president -- if you could talk a bit about that, and then I'll go to Bill to ask a -- his gender

question.

MR. GALSTON: Okay, well, my gender question comes in two parts, one specific, the other general. First of all, Andra, I cannot resist the opportunity to ask you to expand on that astonishing finding about Black men, and their attitudes towards a Black woman vice presidential nomination. I -- that -- I fell off my chair laughing when I saw that one. I'm not sure whether laughter's the right response, but that was my -- that was my response. And then the more general form of the question, 50% of men, 5-0, say that American society is punishing men just for being men. How are we to understand that?

MS. GILLESPIE: I think I'll answer the second question first, and then get back to the first question. I mean, there's a partisan shift in that. So, Democratic men seem to -- I mean, this is basically just trying to sort of signal sort of attitudes about MeToo, and it seems like Democratic men are on board with sort of ideas about gender equity, about addressing sort of, like, these issues, and Republicans want to sort of maintain the same "boys will be boys" attitude. Like, we don't have applied questions about sort of, like, you know, what do you do in a Harvey Weinstein situation, or, you know, what do we do, you know, about pay? But, like, you know, that seems to be kind of like, you know, what's going on there, is that, again, partisanship is so hardwired that it infects, like, literally, everything that you think about certain issues.

Now, to get to the question about this experiment, which I'm really glad that you did, Robbie, you know, and I'm going to be using this in my class, just because it's a really good example, sort of, of how question wording matters, right? The only thing that's different between these two questions is the insertion of the word Black. There's another survey experiment that also does the same thing about protests, where you do see these huge chasms, where people are, in general, fine with protests, but as long and as soon as you add Black people to it, then, all of a sudden, the question goes down, and so, Robbie talked about that earlier, but, here, where we see the question, we see these differences and less support for the idea of Joe Biden naming a Black woman, compared to a woman, in general, and the demographic that seems to be the most resistant to this idea of a Black woman were African American men, and so, the question that we have here, without testing, is whether or not this is sexism or whether or not people think that this is strategic, right, and so, we have seen places in sort of history, where

African American voters have been resistant to African American candidates, if they thought that they weren't particularly viable.

So, in particular, older Blacks, in 1984, during the primaries, didn't support Jesse Jackson because they didn't see a path to victory for him. They changed their mind in '88 for other reasons, but, like, it was that first strategic kind of impulse that kind of kept them away. It really didn't have anything to do with Jackson as a person, per se, but it was just the idea that America wasn't ready for a Black president, and so, if these Black men are paternalistic and they think that America isn't ready for a Black female vice president, right, then that might sort of hold them back, and it might not be their sexism, but I don't want to rule out sexism as a possible explanation, but I would need more questions and modeling, in order to be able to definitively answer this question.

You know, I think some people are shocked to recognize that there are, actually, race gender gaps, as well. So, we talk about the overall gender gap, and I think we thought that it was largely by whites, but the truth is, for the last couple of election cycles, we have seen robust gender gaps, amongst Black populations, and amongst Latinx populations, as well. So, you know, I can't say that I was terribly surprised by what I saw, but, again, it's just really -- as a Black woman, I was kind of somewhat disappointed in Black men.

MS. BOWMAN: If I could just put in a plug for another Brookings scholar, this morning, Bill Frey, in the Metropolitan section of Brookings, presented at the States of Change Meeting on generations, and just see -- these are simulations looking out to many, many elections in the future, and how various generations were going to perform, and they look pretty Democratic, going forward, given the change in the racial and ethnic make of the population.

I think, though, I may be wrong, but younger African American men were none too happy with Hillary Clinton, too, if I remember that. So, it isn't just something that we're seeing in this election. It's something that's been there, and I think needs further examination.

The question about FOX viewers, and is there anything they agree with? I mean, you could turn that around and ask yourself whether MSNBC viewers would agree with Republicans on anything, and I think the answer would probably be fairly similar.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, the only catch, there, as you know, Karlyn, is that FOX -- the hold that FOX has on Republicans is much greater, as you saw in this survey, that Democrats tend to have a much more diverse set of media choices, when you ask about it. There's something -- FOX has a power, I think, in our politics, that no other network does. Do you disagree with that?

MS. BOWMAN: Yeah, I would -- I would agree that FOX has a greater power than MSNBC, but if you put those MSNBC together with CNN and a few other things, you might -- I think you'd probably see something similar, but, again, it's just idle speculation.

MR. DIONNE: That's -- we could -- you could run that, Robbie. You should --

MR. JONES: I can run it.

MR. DIONNE: Do you want to close, Robbie?

MR. JONES: Sure, yeah. I mean, I'll pick up on this FOX News thing, and, you know, I do think -- again, it's 40% of Republicans, right, who say that they most trust FOX News. So, it's a minority, but a big minority, of Republicans. They do look on almost every question. To pick up that one question, is there anywhere they look the same? It is on that question that Bill cited, that America's best days are ahead of us. There, they look like Democrats and like other Republicans, it's about 6 in 10, who say America's best days are -- but I think, E.J., you may be right, that it is that, wow, when you're down in the mud or down in the gutter, everything looks better, I mean, from where you're at, and different interpretations of what gutter we're in, right, across different sides of the isle, but I do think that the real question for us, in the future, is what does that party look like if Trump --

MR. DIONNE: Yeah.

MR. JONES: -- is not the president, right, and whether that FOX News Republican group is Trumpism without Trump, right, and that it will continue, in some form, and, you know, I mean, I've always thought that, really, what Trump has done is sort of coalesce these things that were already there, in many ways, that FOX had been organizing, in some ways, these viewers, long before Trump walked onto the stage, but he was very gifted, I think, at activating and coalescing them, in a way that no other candidate had done, and so, the real question is, I think, with Trump off the stage, you know, if he comes off the stage either in four weeks or four years, you know, what that looks like inside the Republican

Party, whether that diffuses or whether that holds on, right, because, right now, what you essentially have is a party within the Party, right, that is kind of organized around its allegiance to FOX News, and, particularly, to this president.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, just to you -- just to Karlyn's point, I was raising that not to make a comment on FOX. I could, but that's not what I was trying to do. It was more to identify that you do have these very distinct pieces of the Republican Party, that are kind of neatly identified by that one variable that could be instructive going forward.

MR. JONES: Yep.

MR. DIONNE: But I just want to thank everyone --

MR. JONES: Yep.

MR. DIONNE: -- and I'm going to let my distinguished colleague close for us. This was fantastic. Thank you, everyone. Bill?

MR. GALSTON: Well, I really don't feel the need to add anything to those two closing sentiments, E.J., with which I heartily concur. Let me especially thank our two wonderful panelists, for organizing such great commentaries and answers to questions on rather short notice, and to our very large audience, for your questions and for your patience. We're about two minutes over. I'd love to continue this. I have another 100 questions on my notepad, but there is no time. So, I believe that we are adjourned.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you, all. Thanks, Robbie.

MR. JONES: Thanks, everyone.

MS. GILLESPIE: Thank you. Thank you.

MS. BOWMAN: Thank you.

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