

Polling on Elections, Trust, Media Effects

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Outline

AAPOR Conference, Orlando, May 2012

- Election Polling
 - Methods
 - Trends and issues
- Political and Social Issues
 - Political Behavior
 - Polling on Social Issues
- Trust in Institutions
- Media Effects



Election Polling – Methods

- **Identifying Likely Voters in Pre-election Polls: Comparing Methods to Find the Best One**
David Vannette, Jon Krosnick, Matt DeBell, Catherine Wilson, Stanford University
- **Probabilistic Turnout Report for Upcoming Elections**
Catherine Wilson, American National Election Studies
- **Reducing Overreporting of Voter Turnout in Seven European Countries – Results from a Survey Experiment**
Steve Schwarzer, TNS Opinion
Sylvia Kritzing, Eva Zeglovits, University of Vienna, Department of Methods in the Social Sciences
- **Breaking Bad? Method & Meaning Of The “Breaking News” Question In Exit Polling**
Jennifer Agiesta, The Associated Press
Patrick J. Moynihan, Lillian Nottingham, Harvard University
- **Data Quality from Low Cost Data Collection Methodologies**
Michael W. Traugott, University of Michigan



Vannette, et al.

Identifying Likely Voters in Pre-election Polls: Comparing Methods to Find the Best One

David Vannette, Jon Krosnick, Matt DeBell, Catherine Wilson, Stanford University

Research questions stated by authors:

- How effective are different “likely voter” methods at identifying actual voters?
- Does using a subgroup of likely voters improve the vote share accuracy?



Vannette, et al.

- ANES 2008—face-to-face survey
 - Pre-election (mostly September), N=2,322
 - Post-election, N=2,102 of same respondents reinterviewed
 - Due to September timing, hard to compare with other later pre-election surveys
- Identifying voters and predicting vote share
 - First, looked at raw ANES data (intention to vote/reported voting)
 - Then used likely voters, defined using Gallup method



Identifying Voters

Turnout Accuracy	Raw ANES	Gallup Method
Correctly identified voters	88%	94%
Correctly identified non-voters	90%	60%
Percent of respondents correctly classified	89%	77%

How accurate are respondents in predicting vote share?

Source	Obama	McCain	Other	Average Error
Federal Election Committee	52.93%	45.65%	1.42%	
ANES Pre-Election	53.97%	42.96%	3.07%	1.79%
ANES Pre-Election-Std. Gallup	51.22%	45.81%	2.97%	1.14%

Vannette et al.

- Tested other likely voter models using logistic regressions
 - Modified Gallup (took out insig. variables)
 - Enhanced LV model using literature from Rosenstone & Hansen (1993), Holbrook et al. (2001), Krosnick, Visser, & Harder (2010)
 - Having “voted in a primary”
 - Most Gallup predictors remain significant
- Generated predicted probabilities using full LV regression model
 - Tested two cut points: 64% (official turnout number) and 71% to minimize outcome error



Using .71 cut point

Predicted probabilities

Source	Obama	McCain	Other	Average Error
Federal Election Commission	52.93%	45.65%	1.42%	
ANES Pre-Election	53.97%	42.96%	3.07%	1.79%
ANES Pre-Election - Std. Gallup	51.22%	45.81%	2.97%	1.14%
ANES Pre-Election - 5pt Gallup	51.45%	45.21%	3.34%	1.28%
ANES Probability - FEC turnout	50.52%	46.79%	2.69%	1.57%
ANES Error Minimized	51.35%	45.65%	3.00%	1.05%

Identifying Voters

Turnout Accuracy	Raw ANES	Gallup Method	5pt. Gallup	FEC Prob.	Error Min.
Correctly identified voters	88%	94%	94%	89%	93%
Correctly identified non-voters	90%	60%	61%	86%	71%
Percent of respondents correctly classified	89%	77%	78%	88%	82%

Conclusions

- Vote share accuracy
 - Using likely voter models can improve prediction accuracy
 - Gallup-like models are good but may or may not be the best
 - Assigning predicted probabilities minimizes error
 - ANES vs. Gallup
- Turnout accuracy
 - ANES vote intent
 - Gallup method
 - Probabilistic approaches

Election Polling – 2012 Republican Primary

- **The Tea Party and Perot Voters: Kindred Spirits?**
Larry Hugick, Jessica Starace, Princeton Survey Research Associates International
- **The 2012 Republican Primaries: What the Heck Was That All About?**
Gary Langer, Damla Ergun, Langer Research Associates
Patrick J. Moynihan, Institute for Quantitative Social Science-Kennedy School of Government
- **Key Insights on the 2012 Republican Presidential Nomination Contest From Gallup Tracking**
Jeffrey M. Jones, Gallup, Inc.
- **Altogether Different: Understanding Dynamics of Primary and General Elections**
Andrew Smith, University of New Hampshire Survey Center
- **The End of Dempire: An Examination of Party Registration Shifts in Pennsylvania**
Christopher P. Borick, *Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion*



Hugick and Starace

The Tea Party and Perot Voters: Kindred Spirits?

Larry Hugick, Jessica Starace

Princeton Survey Research Associates International

- Objective: Compare the similarities and differences between Perot and Tea Party voters to better understand shift in political environment over last 20 years
- Data: Surveys by Times Mirror/Pew Center for the People and the Press, collected by PSRAI
 - 1994 New Political Landscape survey
 - 2011 Political Typology surveys



Hugick and Starace

- Key Similarities:

- Demographic profile (greater share male, white, less financial pressure)
- Political alienation, critical of government, anti-immigrant sentiment, negative about regulation

- Key Differences:

- Political ID, ideology
- Perot voters more likely to say third party is needed
- Tea Party voters far more unfavorable toward Democratic Party
- Tea Party voters more positive views of corporations
- Social issues: Tea Party more anti-abortion, pro gun



Where They Differ Most: Party ID

	Perot Voters	RV Tea Party Supporters
Republican	24	51
Democrat	19	7
Independent	53	39
No preference/Other/DK/Ref	4	3
Republican/Lean Republican	51	83
Democrat/Lean Democrat	37	11

Explaining the Differences: Perot Voters' Populism

Think the Fed Gov't Helps "Too Much"

	Perot Voters	RV Tea Party Supporters
Wealthy	62	49
Middle class	15	18
Poor	14	48

Think the Fed Gov't Helps "Not Enough"

	Perot Voters	RV Tea Party Supporters
Wealthy	10	9
Middle class	57	42
Poor	62	23

Perot Voters in 2012: View of the Tea Party

	Perot Voters
Agree	33
Disagree	28
No opinion	36
Haven't heard of/Refused	3

Hugick and Starace

- Some implications for 2012 election:
 - Tea Party didn't back a third party candidate, but demonstrated clout in primary as Romney ran on conservative views
 - Perot voters still a swing bloc
 - Both Perot/Tea Party voters less sympathetic to African Americans' struggles
 - Obama's populist views could appeal to Perot voters



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Public Opinion and Political Behavior

- **Issue Indifference and Policy Opinion: When Not Caring is Consequential**
Justine G. Ross, University of California, Riverside
- **Generations in American Politics**
Jocelyn Kiley, Michael Dimock, Scott Keeter, Pew Research Center
- **Gaps in Americans' Political Interest: Following Politics in Surveys From Gallup, Pew and the ANES**
Joshua Robison, Northwestern University
- **POPTOP: How Public Opinion is Related to Public Policy**
Cliff Zukin, Rutgers University
- **Who Rallies! The Impact of 9/11 on the Heritability of Political Trust**
Christopher Ojeda, The Pennsylvania State University, 2012 Seymour Sudman Student Paper Competition Winner



Assessing Public Opinion on Social and Political Issues

- **Examining the Growing Support for Same-Sex Marriage in California: What Predictors Have Changed?**
Sonja Petek, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California
- **Public Opinion on Gun Control Revisited: Collective Consensus or Unbridgeable Ideological Divide?**
Bryan C. Parkhurst, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- **A Multi-Method Approach to Polling Same-Sex Marriage: Experiments in Question Wording, Framing and Implicit Attitudes**
David P. Redlawsk, Ashley A. Koning, Rutgers University
- **Demographic Determinants of Trends in Public Opinion About Abortion in the United States**
Jason Kevern, Jeremy Freese, Northwestern University
- **Exploring the Gender Gap in Public Opinion Toward Global Climate Change**
Marc D. Weiner, Orin T. Puniello, Bloustein Center for Survey Research, Rutgers University



Petek and Baldassare

Examining the Growing Support for Same-Sex Marriage in California: What Predictors Have Changed?

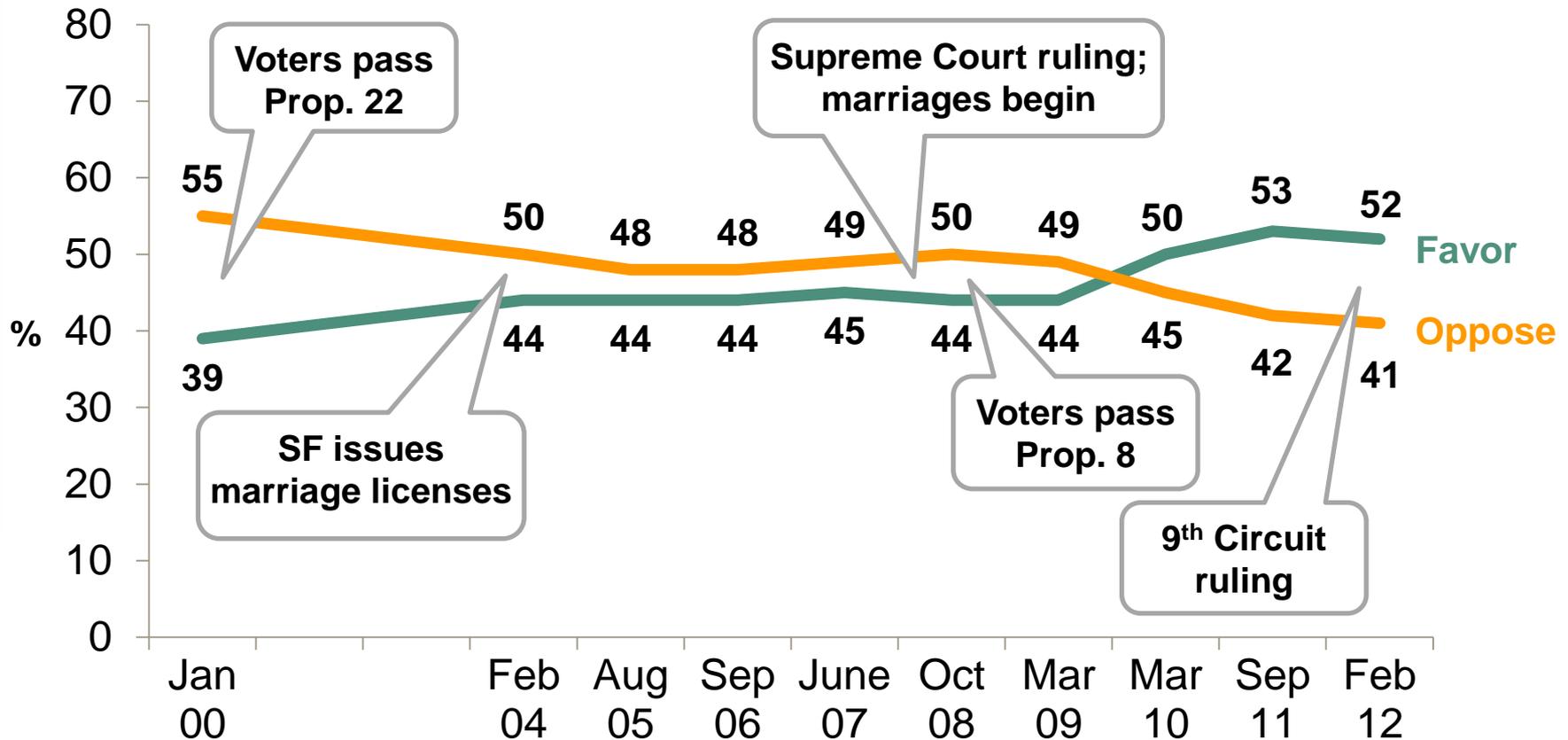
Sonja Petek, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California

- Research question: With recent shift in attitudes, what core predictors have changed since 2008?
- Data: PPIC Statewide Survey data
 - October 2008 and February 2012
 - 2000-2012 for time trends



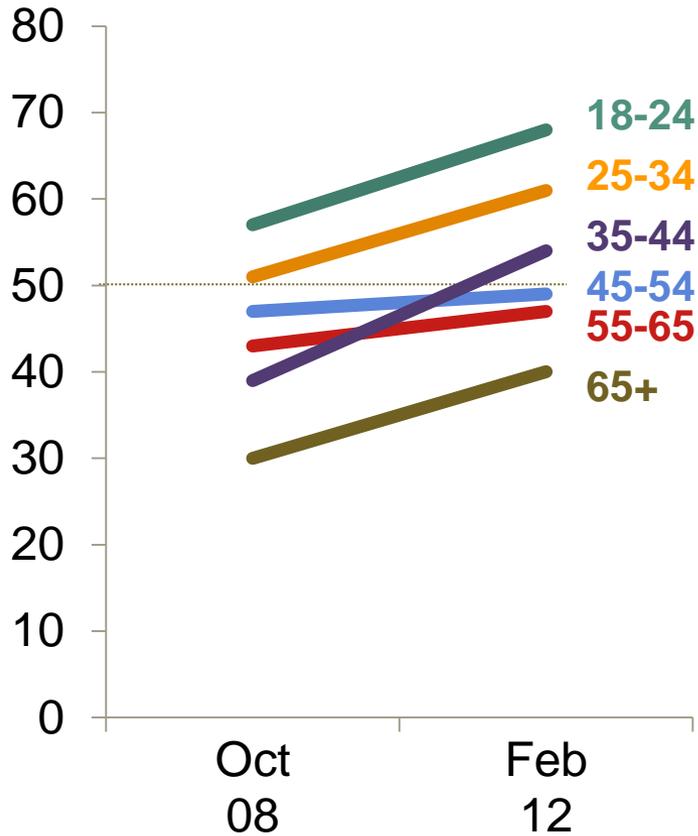
Petek and Baldassare

Do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?

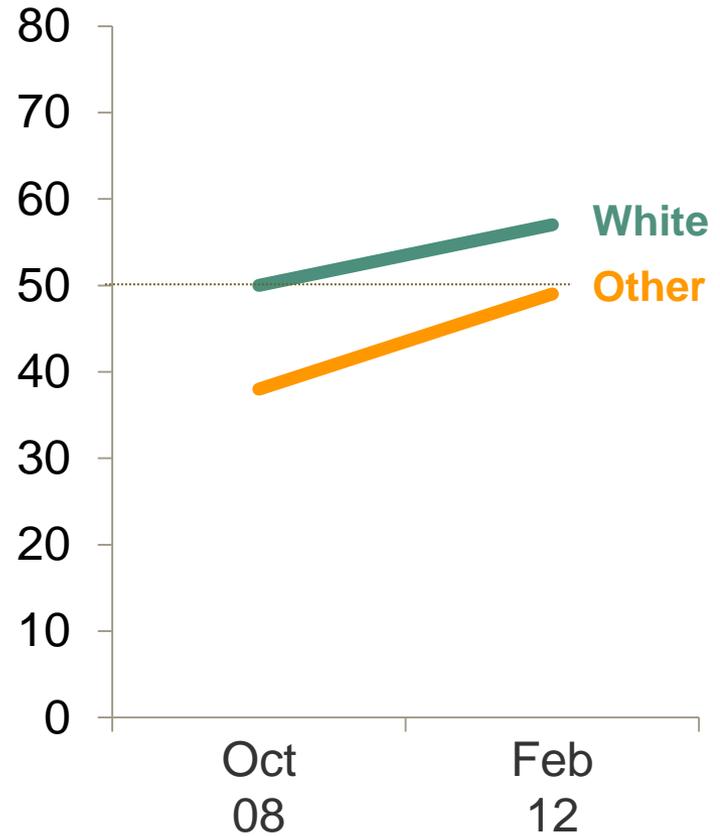


Petek and Baldassare

Age

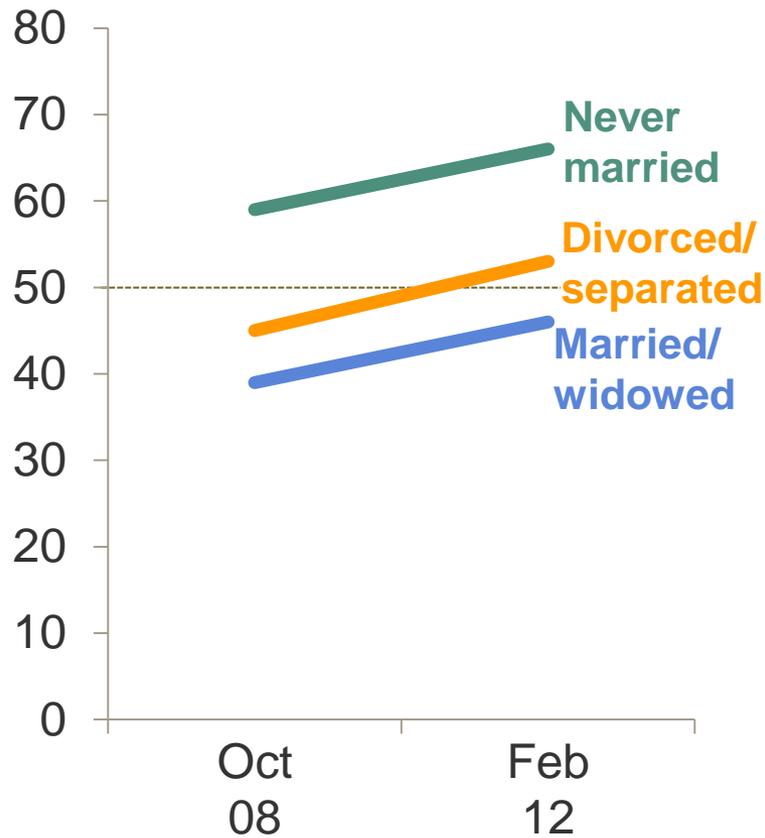


Race/Ethnicity

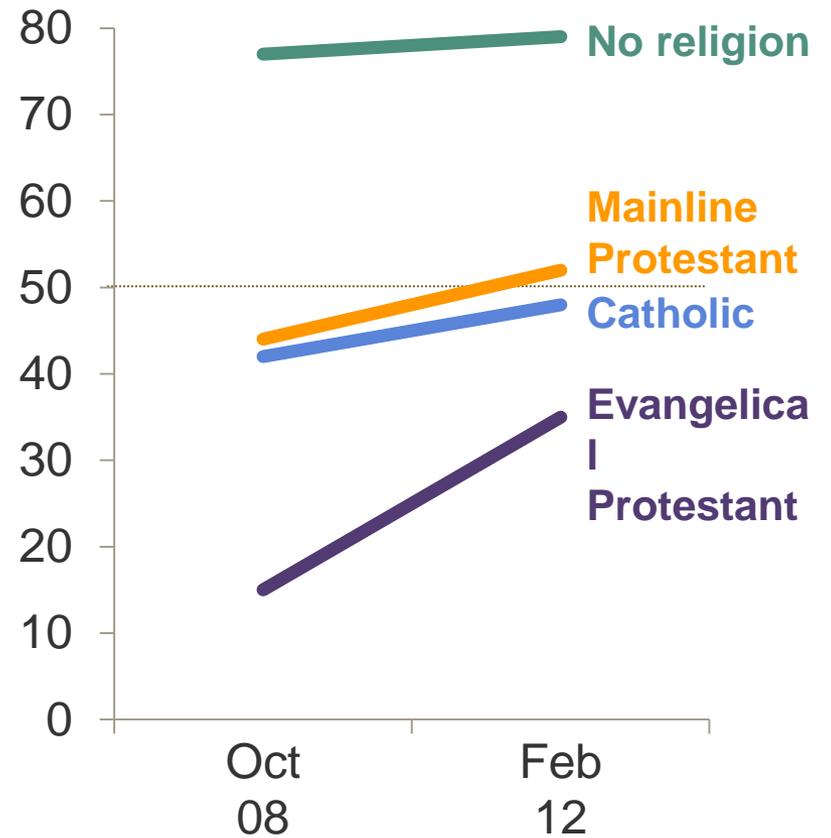


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Marital Status

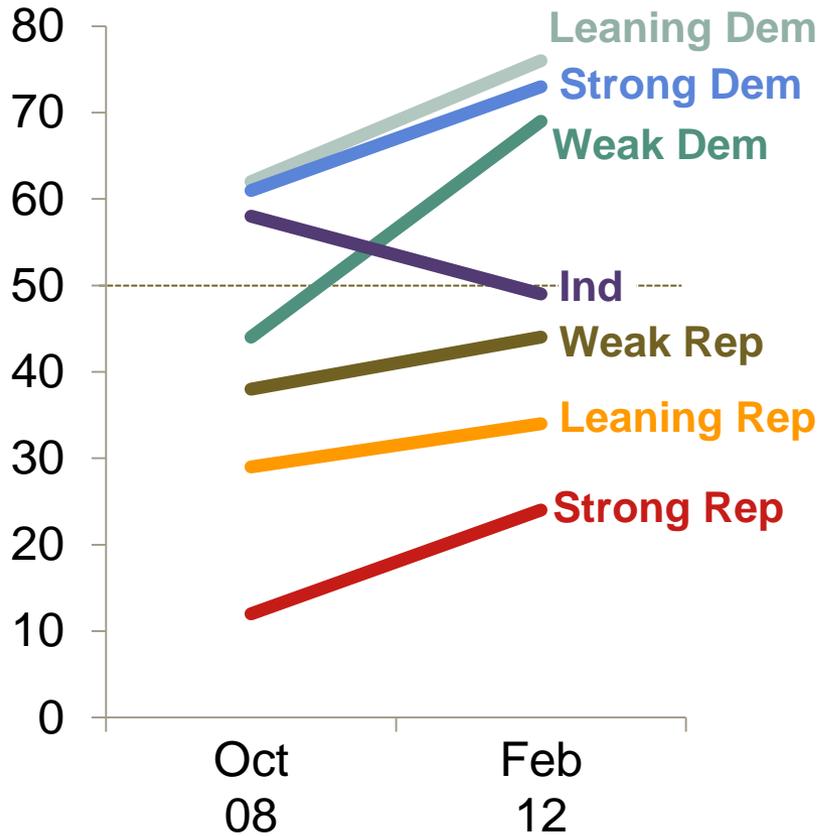


Religion

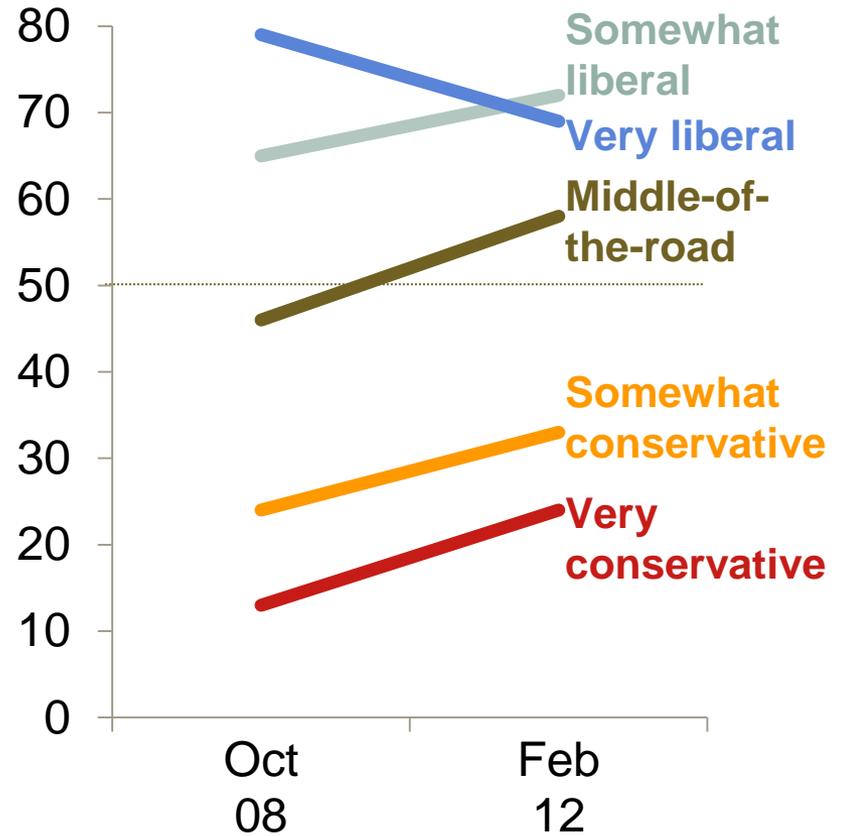


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Party



Ideology



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Independent Variable	October 2008	February 2012
Evangelical Protestants	Strongest -	<i>Weaker</i> (still strongest -)
Mainline Protestant	-	<i>Weaker</i>
Catholic	-	<i>Weaker</i>
Age	-	Similar
Liberalism	Strongest +	<i>Weaker</i>
U.S.-born	+	<i>Not significant</i>
White	+	<i>Not significant</i>
Women	+	Similar
Education	+	Similar
Democrats	+	Similar
Income	+	Similar
Never married	Not significant	<i>Strongest +</i>
Divorced/separated	Not significant	<i>Strongest +</i>
Parents	Not significant	Not significant
San Francisco Bay Area	Not significant	Not significant



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Confidence and Trust in Institutions

- **Trust at the Federal, State and Local Levels: An Examination of the Similarities and Differences**
Dean E. Bonner, Mark Baldassare, PPIC
- **Trust in American Government: Assessing the Longitudinal Measurement Equivalence in the ANES, 1964–2008**
Dmitriy Poznyak, George F. Bishop, University of Cincinnati, Bart Meuleman, University of Leuven
- **Is Confidence Really Declining? The Canadian Case**
Isabelle Valois, Claire Durand, Université de Montréal, Département de Sociologie, John Goyder, University of Waterloo, Department of Sociology
- **Public Confidence in Social Institutions and Media Coverage: A Case of Belarus**
Dzmitry Yuran, University of Tennessee
- **Georgia on Their Minds: The Impact of War and Financial Crisis on Georgian Confidence in Social and Governmental Institutions**
Andrea Lynn Phillips, Davit Tsabutashvili, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Survey Research and Methodology Program, Allan L. McCutcheon, University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Bonner and Baldassare

Determinants of Trust at the Federal, State, and Local Levels: An Examination of the Similarities and Differences

Dean Bonner, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California

- Research question: Are the determinants of trust the same across different levels of government?
- Data: PPIC Statewide Survey data
 - May 2011 and December 2011



Bonner and Baldassare

Trust in government questions

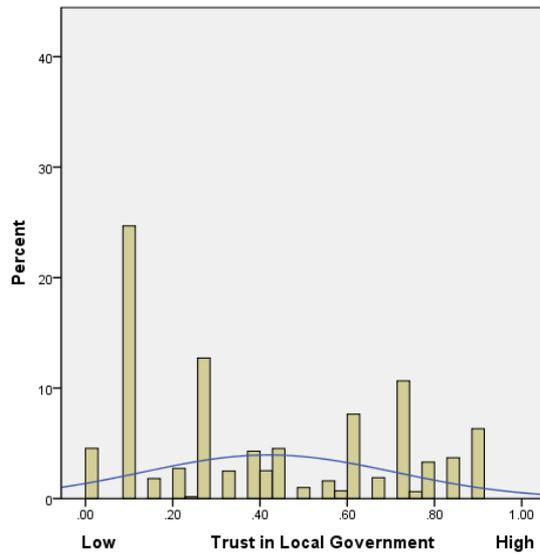
- Next, how much of the time do you think you can trust the (“your” for local) government in _____ to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?
- Would you say the _____ government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all of the people?
- Do you think the people in _____ government waste a lot?



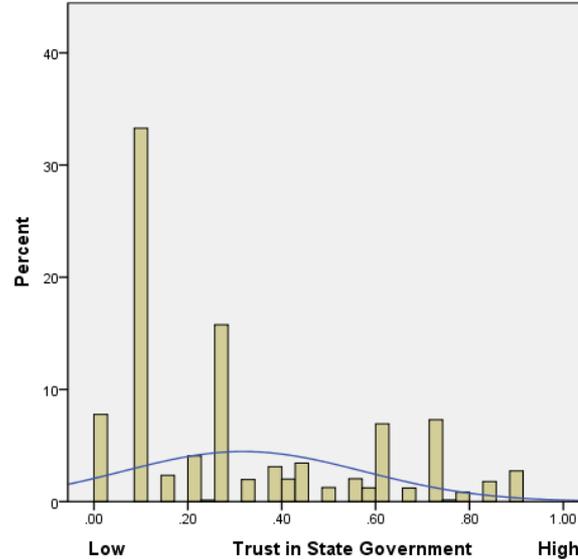
Bonner and Baldassare

Trust in government across the three levels

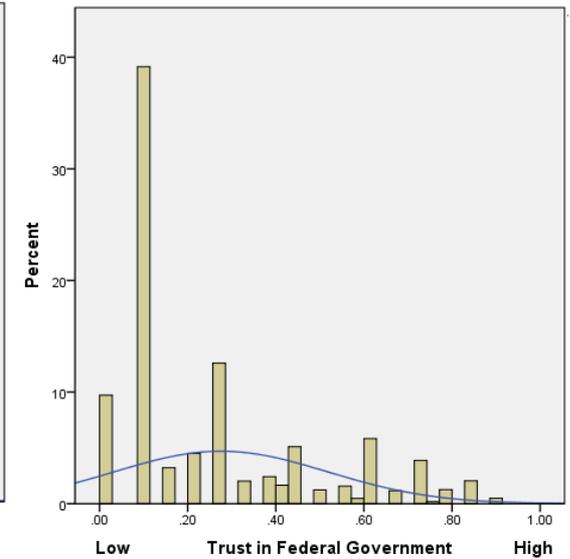
Local



State



Federal



Bonner and Baldassare

Determinants of Trust Regression Results

Independent Variable	Local Trust	State Trust	Federal Trust
Ideology	+	Not significant	-
Latino	Not significant	+	Not significant
White	Not significant	Not significant	-
Income	+	+	Not significant
Age	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Education	+	Not significant	Not significant
Gender	Not significant	Not significant	-
Direction of State	Strongest +	Strongest +	Strongest +
Economic Perceptions	+	+	+
Interest in Politics	Not significant	+	-
Frequency of Voting	Strongest -	Strongest -	-
Registered Voter	+	-	Strongest -



Bonner and Baldassare

Determinants of Trust Regression Results with Performance Variables

Independent Variable	State Trust	Federal Trust
Ideology	Not significant	-
Latino	+	Not significant
White	Not significant	Not significant
Income	+	Not significant
Age	Not significant	Not significant
Education	Not significant	Not significant
Gender	-	-
Direction of State	Strongest +	+
Economic Perceptions	Not significant	Not significant
Interest in Politics	Not significant	-
Frequency of Voting	Not significant	Not significant
Registered Voter	Strongest -	Strongest -
Executive Approval	+	+
Legislative Approval	+	Strongest +



Bonner and Baldassare

- Conclusions
 - Political and contextual optimism variables are significant at each level of government with the perception that things are going in the right direction and frequency of voting providing the most leverage.
 - We also found that when performance related variables are added to our base models of trust at the state and federal level that they are not only significant, but they also increase the explained variance.



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Media Effects on Political Views and Behaviors

- **Media Partisanship Scores: Developing a Holistic Measure for the Effects of Politically Relevant Media**
Devra C. Moehler, Elizabeth Roodhouse, Douglas Allen, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
- **The Effects of Media Localism on Political and Social Trust**
Michael Barthel, University of Washington, Department of Communication
- **Effects of Televised Campaign Advertising: Considering the Accuracy of Retrospective Survey Self-Reports of Media Consumption**
Sarah Niebler, Carly Urban, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Ken Goldstein, Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG)

