

Surveying Rural America



Thanks to Eran Ben-Porath, Sarah Cho, Emily Guskin, Kirby Goidel for allowing me to share their presentations. Any mistakes are mine alone.



POLITICS

Rural Voters Played A Big Part In Helping Trump Defeat Clinton

AGRICULTURE

Revenge of the rural voter

Rural voters turned out in a big way this presidential cycle — and they voted overwhelmingly for Donald Trump.

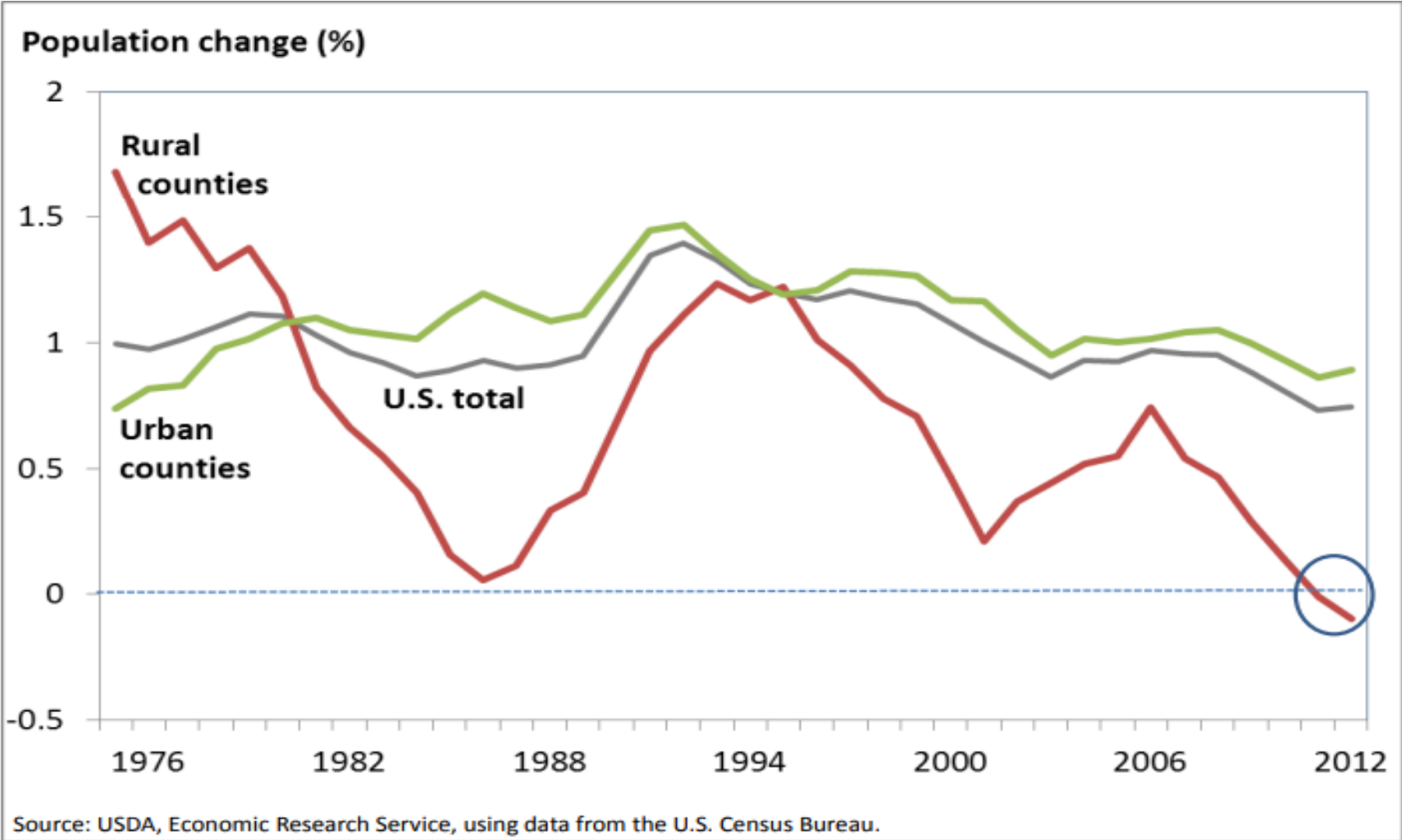
Politics

Rural America lifted Trump to the presidency. monolithic. Behind Trump's win in rural white America: Women joined men in backing him

First Read: How Rural America Fueled Trump's Win

by CHUCK TODD, MARK MURRAY and CARRIE DANN

Unquestionable Decrease in Rural Population Over Time



Surveying Rural Populations **Through RDD**

Ashley Kirzinger, KFF



Filling the need for trusted information on national health issues.

How Do RDD Surveys Define “Rural”?

U.S. CENSUS
BUREAU

OFFICE OF
MANAGEMENT AND
BUDGET

“The use of different definitions of rural by Federal agencies reflects the multidimensional qualities of rural America” USDA, 2008.

The U.S. Census Bureau

- Geographical areas using census blocks and block groups (Core Based Statistical Areas)
- Urban as areas of 50,000 or more people, urban clusters were at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people, rural was everything else.
- These are based on very small geographic building blocks and aren't limited to city and county lines.
- Everything that is not urban is defined as nonmetropolitan or rural.

OMG...OMB

- The OMB also relies on counties but also ties in “social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties”

Metropolitan Statistical Areas have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties (25%).

Micropolitan Statistical Areas have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population, plus adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties (25%).

- Each county in the U.S. is assigned one of the 9 codes.

How Do Surveys Define “Rural”?

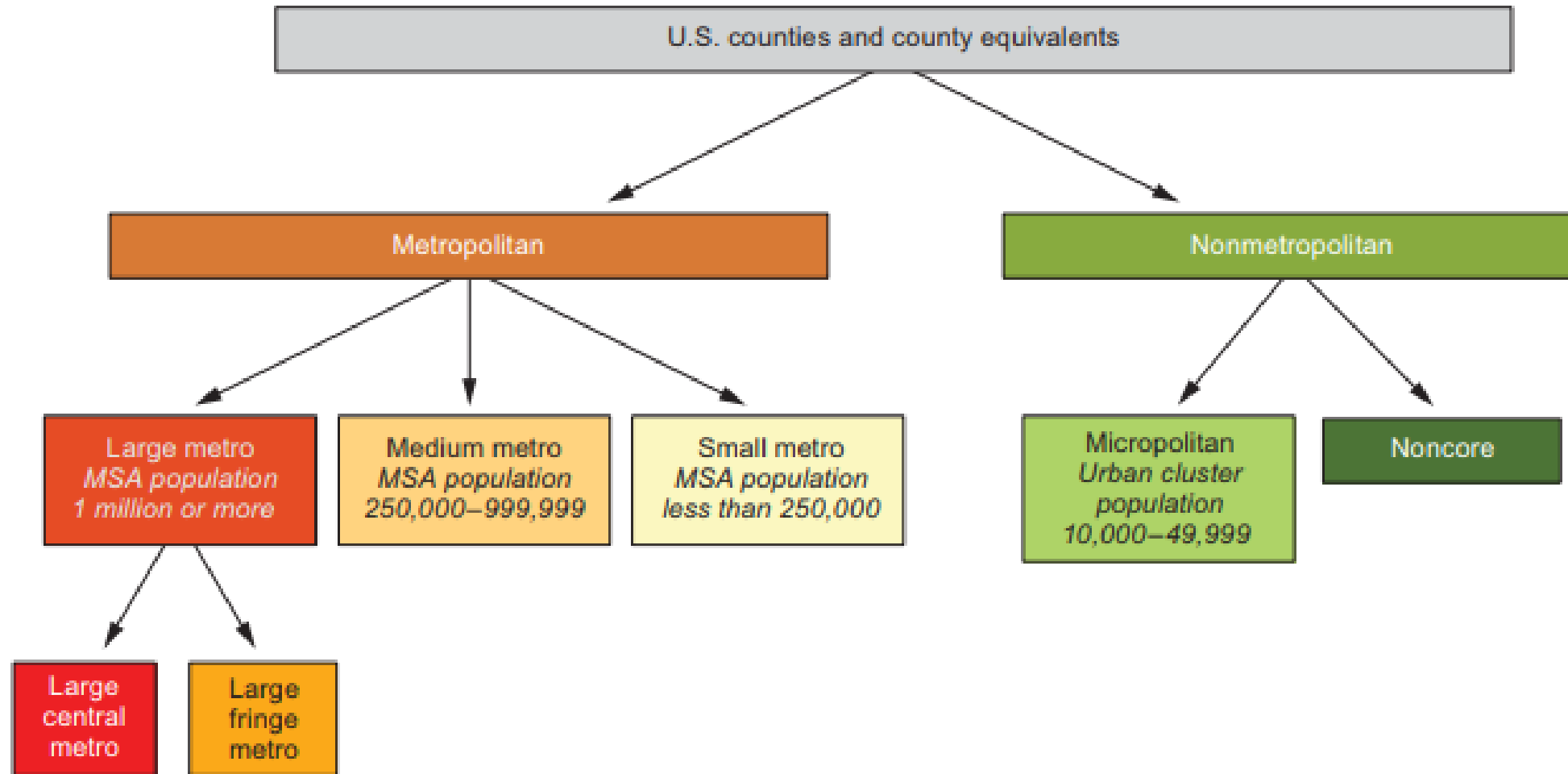
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

19.3%

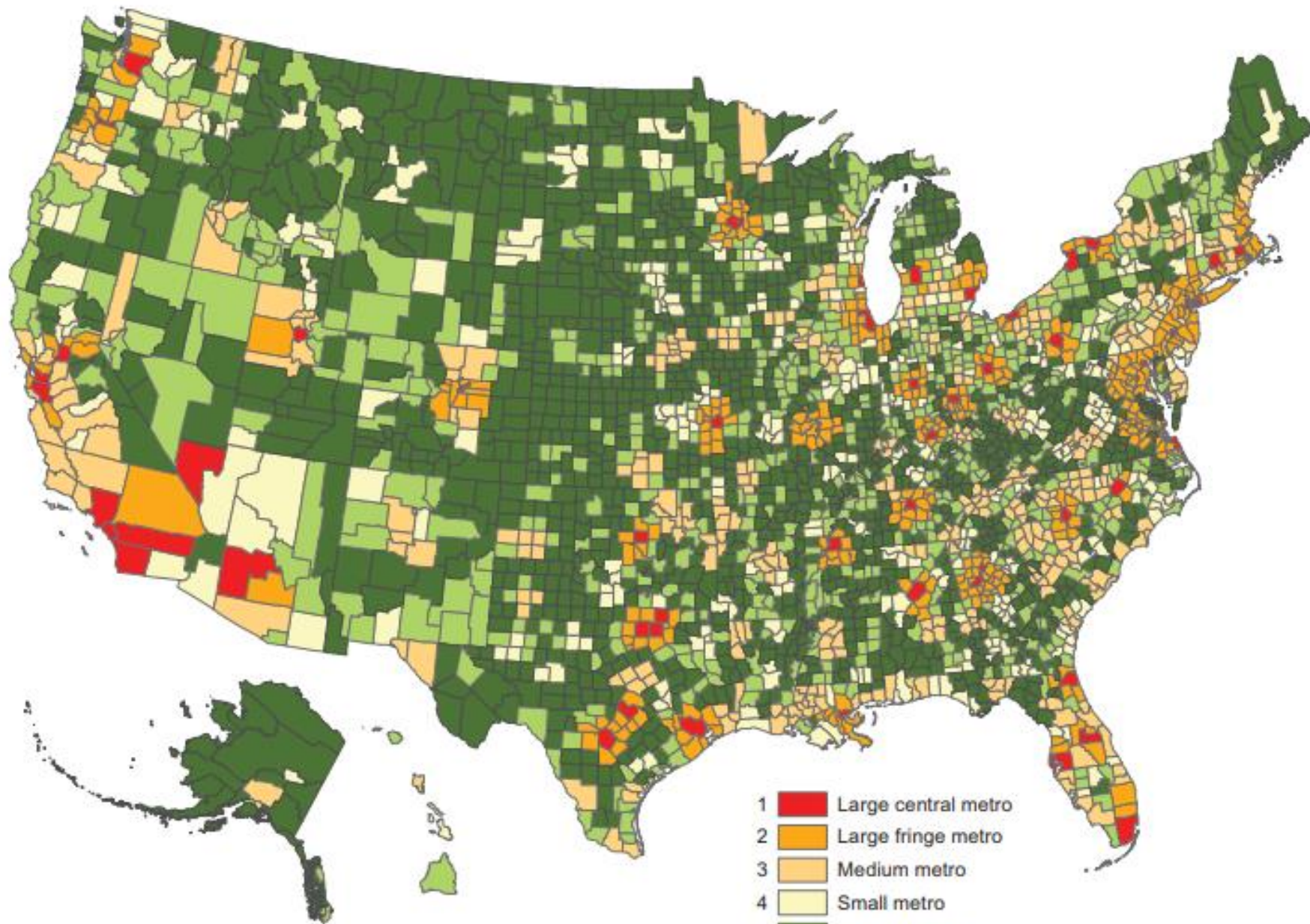
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND
BUDGET

14.99%

The CDC's 2013 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties



NOTE: MSA is metropolitan statistical area.



- 1 Large central metro
- 2 Large fringe metro
- 3 Medium metro
- 4 Small metro
- 5 Micropolitan
- 6 Noncore

Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Measurement Variables

Definition	Definition Description	Geographic Unit Used
U.S. Census Bureau: Urban and Rural Areas	The Census Bureau's classification of rural consists of all territory, population, and housing units located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters. Urbanized areas include populations of at least 50,000, and urban clusters include populations between 2,500 and 50,000. The core areas of both urbanized areas and urban clusters are defined based on population density of 1,000 per square mile and then certain blocks adjacent to them are added that have at least 500 persons per square mile.	Census Block and Block Groups
Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture & WWAMI Rural Health Research Center: Rural-Urban Commuting Areas (RUCAs)	This classification scheme utilizes the U.S. Census Bureau's urbanized area and cluster definitions and work commuting information. The RUCA categories are based on the size of settlements and towns as delineated by the Census Bureau and the functional relationships between places as measured by tract-level work commuting data. This taxonomy defines 33 categories of rural and urban census tracts.	Census Tract, ZIP Code approximation available
U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB): Core Based Statistical Areas (i.e., Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan areas)	A metropolitan area must contain one or more central counties with urbanized areas. Nonmetropolitan counties are outside the boundaries of metropolitan areas and are subdivided into two types, micropolitan areas and noncore counties. Micropolitan areas are urban clusters of 10,000 or more persons.	County
Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture: Rural-Urban Continuum Codes (Beale Codes)	This classification scheme distinguishes metropolitan counties by the population size of their metropolitan area, and nonmetropolitan counties by degree of urbanization and adjacency to a metropolitan area or areas. All counties and county equivalents are grouped according to their official OMB metropolitan-nonmetropolitan status and further subdivided into three metropolitan and six nonmetropolitan groupings.	County
Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture: Urban Influence Codes	This classification scheme subdivides the OMB metropolitan and nonmetropolitan categories into 2 metropolitan and 10 nonmetropolitan categories. Metropolitan counties are divided into two groups by the size of the metropolitan area. Nonmetropolitan-micropolitan counties are divided into three groups by their adjacency to metropolitan areas. Nonmetropolitan-noncore counties are divided into seven groups by their adjacency to metropolitan or micropolitan areas and whether they have their "own town" of at least 2,500 residents.	County
Office of Rural Health Policy, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: RUCA Adjustment to OMB Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Definition	This method uses RUCAs 4-10 to identify small towns and rural areas within large metropolitan counties. In addition, census tracts within metropolitan areas with RUCA codes 2 and 3 that are larger than 400 square miles and have population density of less than 30 people per square mile are also considered rural.	Census Tract within OMB Metropolitan Counties

- **Counties**
Advantages: Stable
Disadvantages: County sizes vary
- **Zip Code Areas**
Advantages: Easy to implement
Disadvantages: Can change
- **Census geography**
Advantages: Most precise
Disadvantages: Hard to implement



Can you survey the “rural”
population via web or RDD?

Methodology

- Web survey conducted on SurveyMonkey
- 3,689 adults
- Fielded March 24-28, 2017



Discover new things

Tell us what you're curious about. We'll help you create a survey and get answers to your questions.

Email Address:

you@example.com

Password:

(at least 8 characters)

SIGN UP FREE



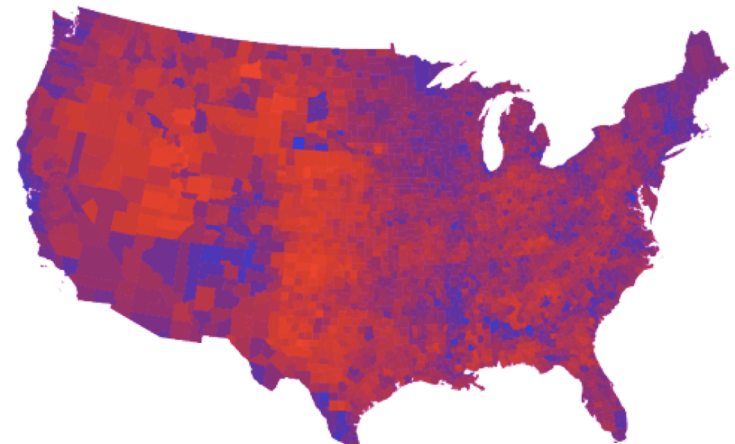
By clicking "SIGN UP FREE" you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) and also agree to receive news and tips via email.



Where do you stand on current events? Share your opinion.

Take the Survey

Your responses will remain confidential and are for research purposes only.



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Image courtesy of Robert Vanderbei



Regardless of definition, web nearly matches population on rural distribution

	Department of Defense		NCHS	
	Population	SurveyMonkey Unweighted sample	Population	SurveyMonkey Unweighted sample
Urban	31%	29%	31%	32%
Suburban	23%	24%	46%	47%
Small Town	-	-	9%	9%
Rural	45%	48%	15%	12%

NOTE: excludes 1% of sample that did not have a valid zipcode



Methodology

- RDD phone survey conducted by the Pew Research Center
- Interviews conducted in English and Spanish
- 2,002 adults
- Fielded January 3-10, 2018



RDD phone sample also matches rural distribution

	Department of Defense		NCHS	
	Population	RDD Unweighted sample	Population	RDD Unweighted sample
Urban	31%	28%	31%	31%
Suburban	23%	23%	46%	44%
Small Town	-	-	9%	10%
Rural	45%	49%	15%	15%

NOTE: excludes 8% of sample that did not have a zipcode

Summary

- Large variances in what is a “rural” area (also suburban or urban)
- There is no one true definition, and each has advantages and disadvantages
- Even with changing methodologies and practices, web and RDD samples still show a diverse group of respondents when it comes to urbanicity, regardless of how “rural” respondents are defined



Degree of Rurality & Public Opinion

ssrs
research. refined.

Eran Ben-Porath |  @en_bp



Defining Rurality

KFF/Post Rural Poll 2017: “Rural” And “Small Town”

- Who is rural? What’s a small town?
 - Self-defined?
 - Administrative definitions?
 - By county?
 - By zip code?



Comparing Self-report to Other Definitions

- On the SSRS Omnibus Poll (dual-frame RDD):
 - 1,000 respondents
 - Asked to self identify as Urban, Suburban, Small Town or Rural
 - Asked for their zip code
 - Matched to:
 - CBSA: pop size of metro area, and proximity to central city
 - CDC (2013) Metro definitions
 - Share of county considered rural based on density of Census block within county
 - Share of zip code considered rural based on density of Census block within county

Comparing Self-report to Other Definitions

% In Each Category Who Say They Are Rural:

	CBSA- Combined Rural	CBSA- Small/Med Metro	CDC Noncore	CDC Micro.	CDC Small Town	County 2/3+ Rural	Zip 2/3+ Rural
“Rural”	40	18	51	37	30	44	34
“Small Town”	46	37	38	46	47	42	45

Self-report is imperfect, but the three CDC categories seemed like a good match

Looking Within Rurality

- How much variance between the rural categories?
- Do outcomes vary by HOW RURAL respondents' county of residence is? [short answer: Yes]
- Why would that be?

Political Differences?

Small Towns Are Different than Rural/Micro.

	Small Town	Micro.	Noncore
Dem	24	27	28
Rep	28	28	33
Ind	35	35	30
Lib	21	21	17
Cons	38	46	45
HRC- 2016	40*	31	28
Trump - 2016	48	59*	57
Trump App.	47	57*	59*

Cultural Similarity?

Similar in Perceptions of Self Relative to Various Groups

	Small Town	Micro.	Noncore
Rural areas and small towns – very similar	32	38	41
Rural areas/small towns – very/somewhat similar	69	75	77
Big cities – very different	35	46*	44
Big cities – very/somewhat different	60	71	77*
Immigrants – very different	27	32	32
Immigrants – very/somewhat different	46	52	51

Rurality & Jobs

Noncore is Different than Small Town/Micro

	Small Town	Micro.	Noncore
Most Important Problem: Jobs	16	20	30*
Jobs in community: poor	28	34	44*
Experienced job loss (self or HH)	30	26	32
Jobs – better than 10 years ago	29*	28*	20
Friends/family moved for better jobs	37	44	46
Jobs – will get better	41	39	32

The Future

Noncore is Different than Small Town/Micro

	Small Town	Micro.	Noncore
Kids' future standard of living : Better	43	40	49
Encourage young people to leave	55	54	71*

Density is Destiny?

- Jobs: Density (pop/sq-mile) is linearly correlated with:
 - Jobs as MIP (+)
 - Work satisfaction (-)
- Share of friends from another race:
 - Density negatively correlated with share of friends that are different race than respondent

What Does Any of This Mean?

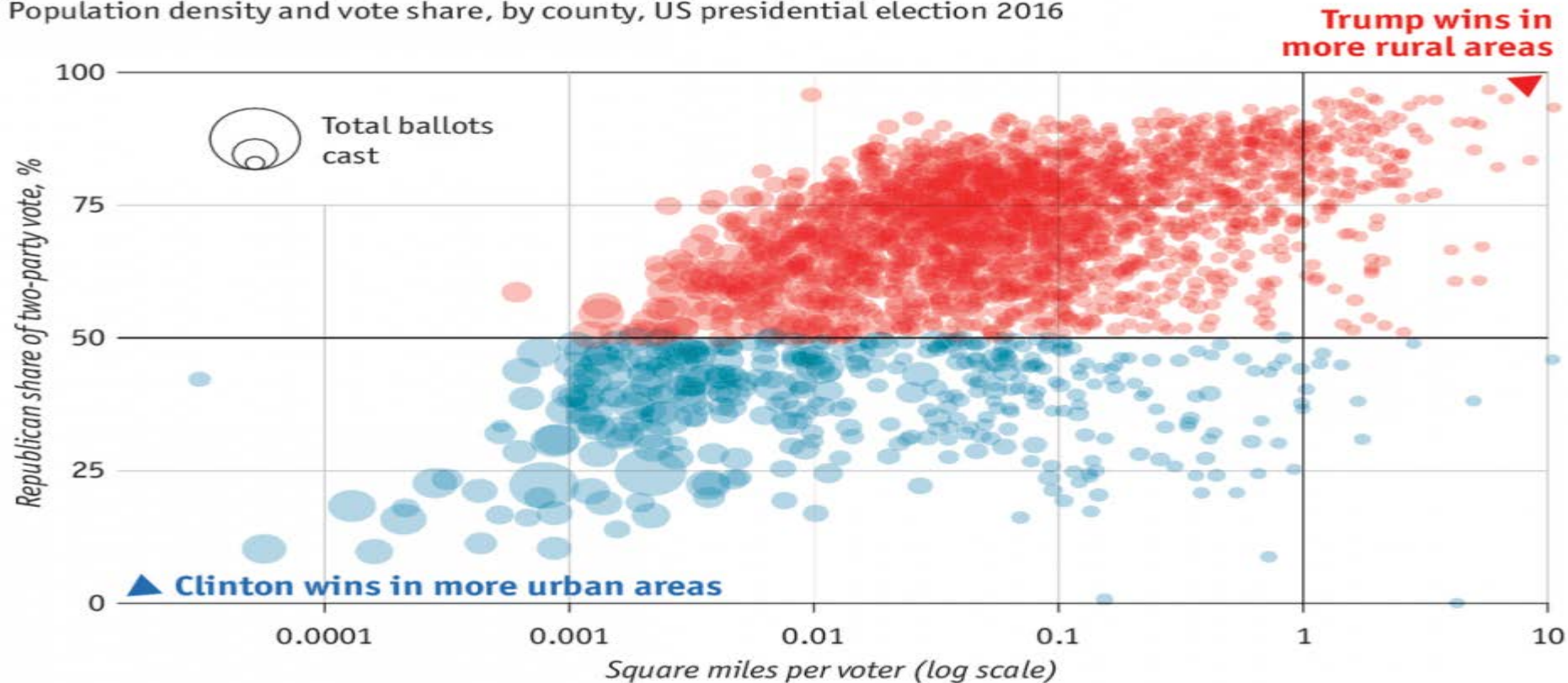
- The small-town/rural continuum is nuanced
- Different definitions may better fit different questions
 - Or at least yield different responses
- Be sure to specify rural definitions
- Consider weighting by density within rural categories

Exploring the Rural/Urban Divide: Role of Partisanship and the Politics of Place

Why the Rural/Urban Divide?

Town and country

Population density and vote share, by county, US presidential election 2016

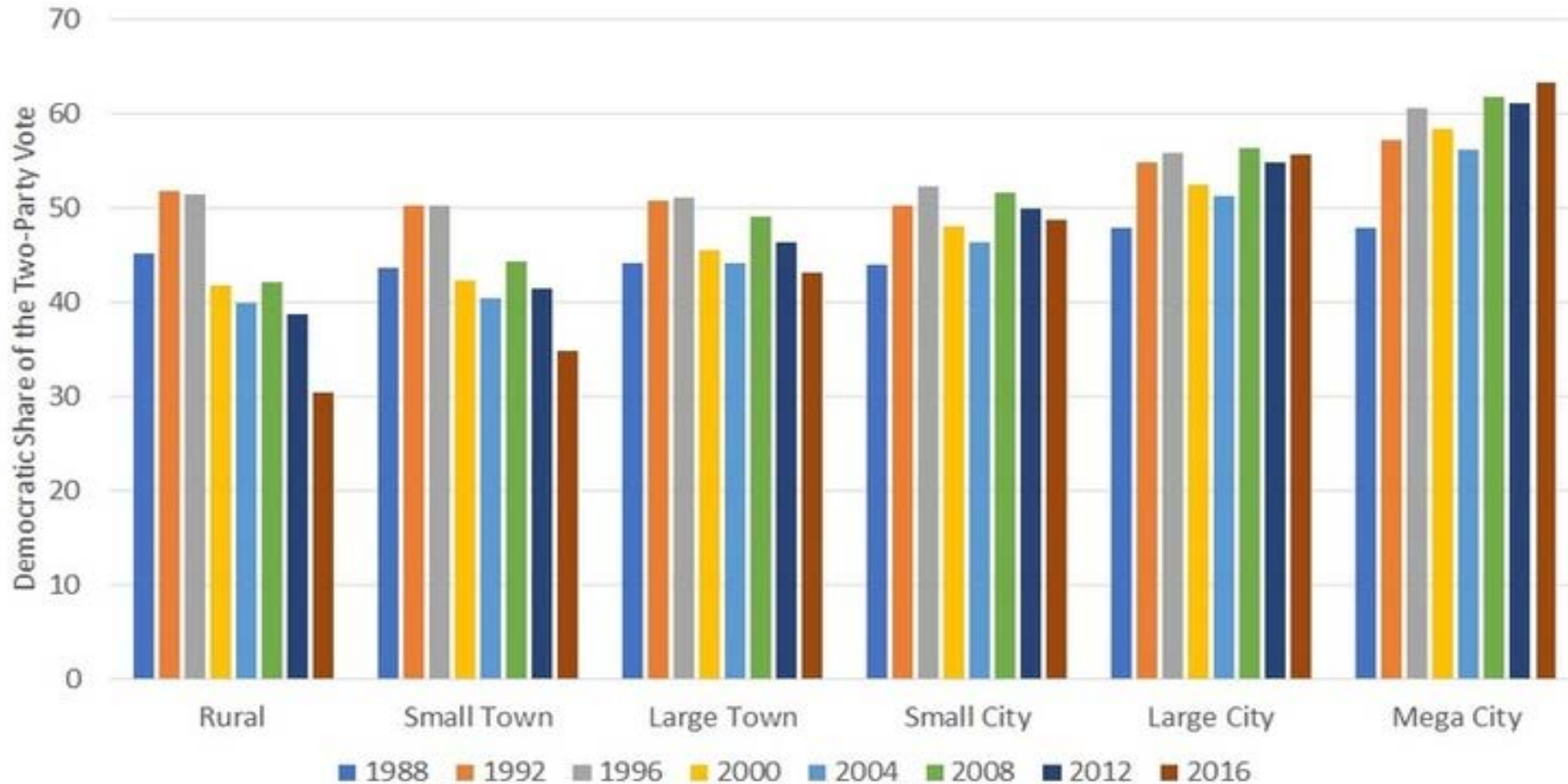


Population density was a powerful predictor of vote share.

Sources: Atlas of US Presidential Elections; Census Bureau; *The Economist*

Why the Rural/Urban Divide?

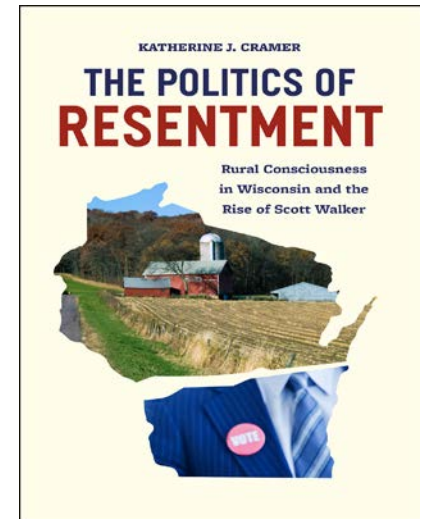
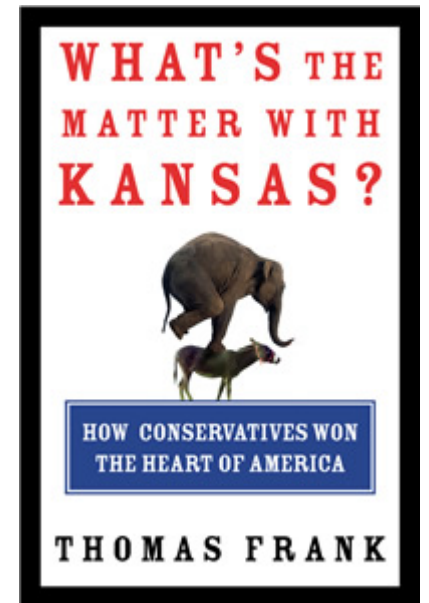
Voting Trends in Each CBSA Division - United States



Hillary Clinton did worse in rural areas than Obama, Kerry, Gore, Clinton, or Dukakis

But..... *the more things change, the more they stay same*

- Urban/Rural Divides have long been a factor in U.S. politics.
- Thomas Jefferson (writing to James Madison in 1787):
I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get plied upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe
- William Diamond (1941, p 305) writing about the election of 1896 concluded:
The conflict of urban and rural populations must, therefore, be given its place as a factor in American history-a factor which has been perhaps as important as the frontier and the westward movement."
- "What's the Matter with Kansas?" (2004)
- "The Politics of Rural Resentment" (2016)



Two Questions

- **Trump's Rural Vote**: Is the rural/urban divide reflective of other attitudes that happen to be associated with place of residence? And, can we discern differences based on place relative to identity?
- **Rural/Urban Divides Overtime**: Is this anything new? Does this reflect change in partisan commitments over time?

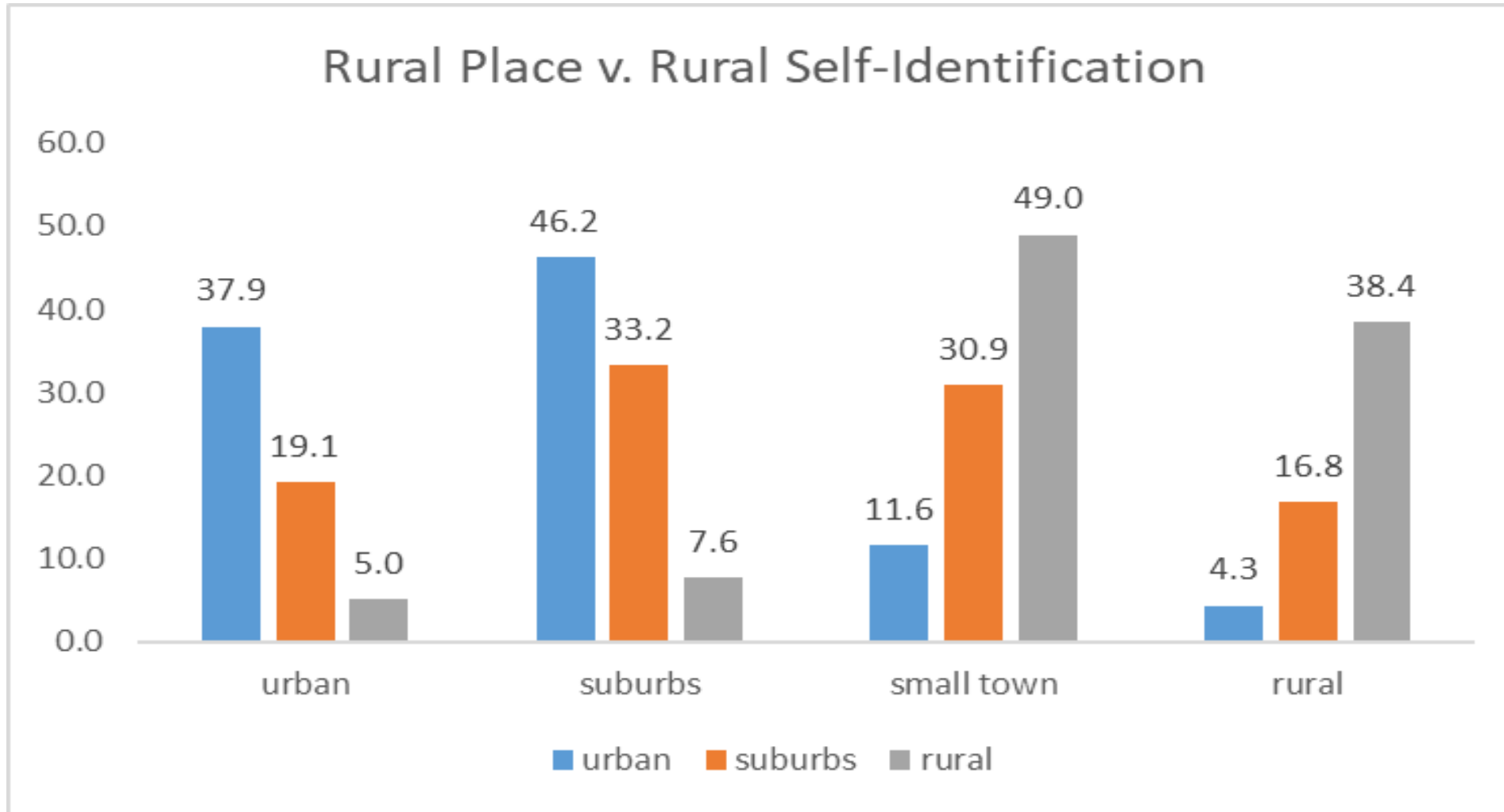
Trump's Rural Vote: Identity v. Place



Kaiser/Post Survey of Rural America

- Random sample of 1,686 adults ages 18 and over
- Conducted April 13- May 1, 2017.
- 1,070 from rural counties
- 307 from suburban counties
- 303 from urban counties

Identity versus Place



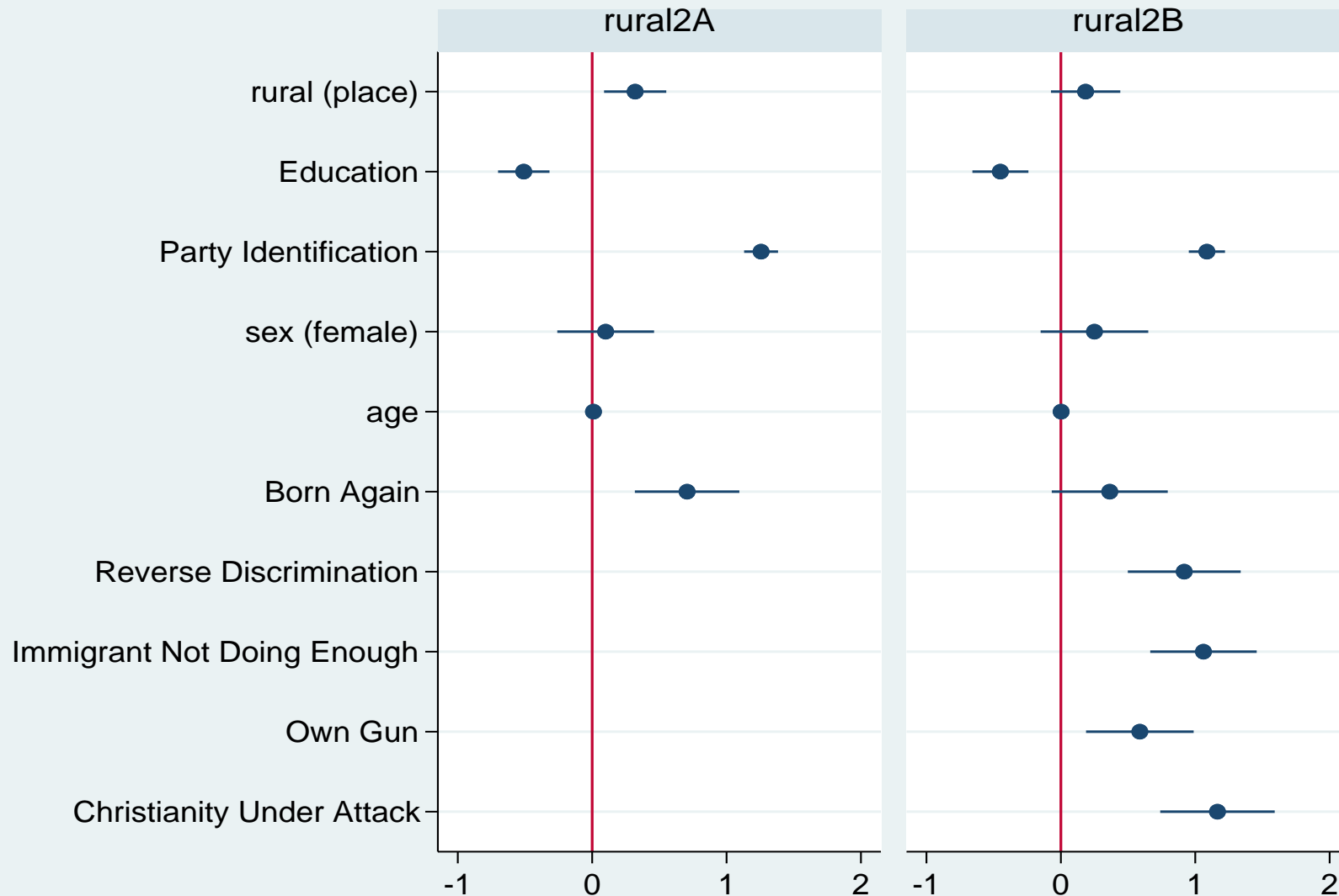
$r=.55$

Place: based on county designation.

Identity: Based on survey response "Do you consider the area where you live to be rural, small town, suburban, or urban?"

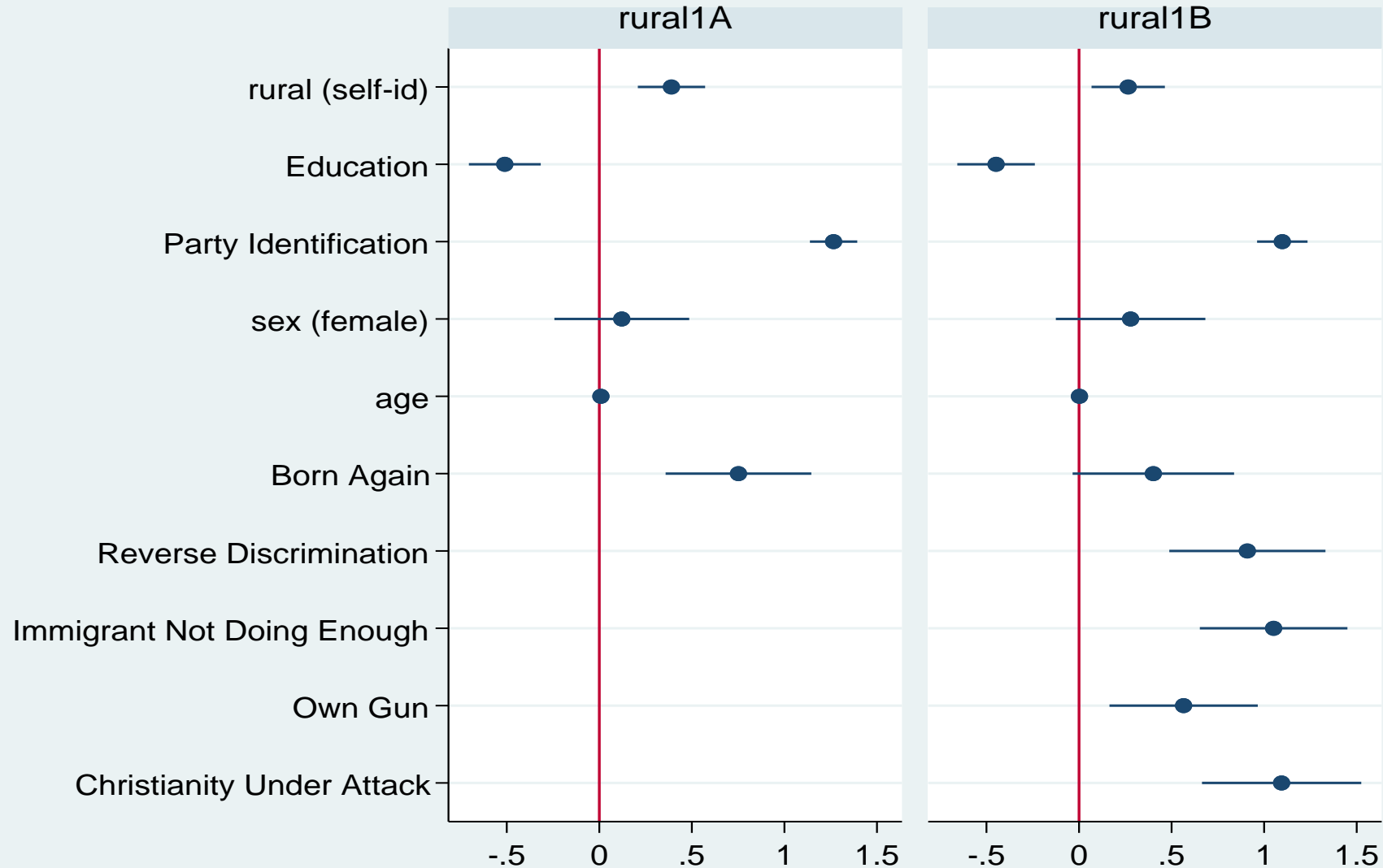
37.9% of respondents in urban counties considered the area they lived in to be urban while 46.2% described these areas as suburbs.

Rural defined as place



- (1) Rural falls out of the model once we include other attitudinal variables.
- (2) Born again falls out of the model once include in the attitudinal variables.
- (3) Place as connected to set of attitudes.

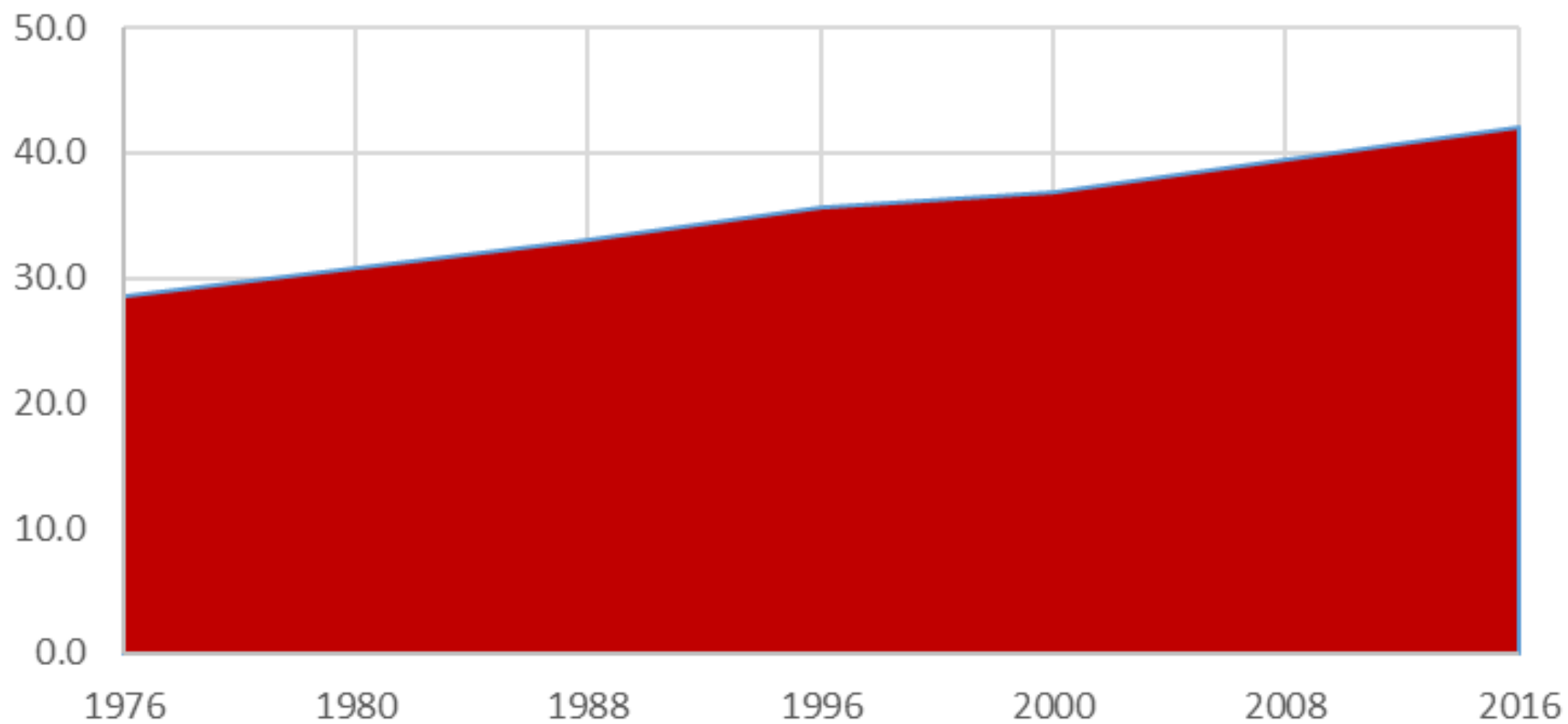
Rural Identity



Rural identity, however, remains a predictor even after including other attitudes.

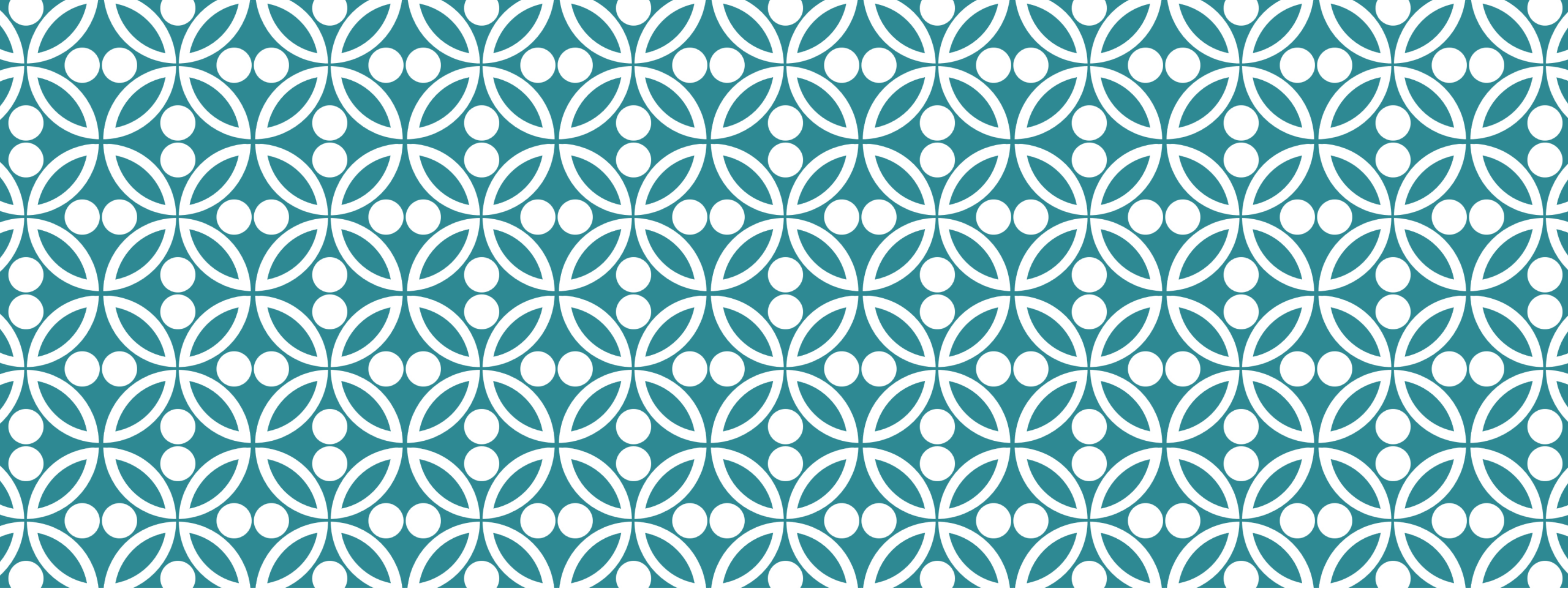
The Changing Relationship of Rural Location and Partisan Affiliation

Predicted Probability Rural Respondent is a Republican, 1972-2016



Conclusions

- As a place, the rural/urban divide matters because it is associated with a specific set of attitudes.
- But.. rural identity (or self-placement) matters more than designation by county.
- The relationship between community size and partisan affiliation has changed over time as rural communities have become more Republican.
- The same relationship does not hold with political ideology, suggesting that this reflects shifts in partisan commitments but not issue positions or ideology.



TELLING THE FULL STORY OF RURAL AMERICA WITH SURVEY RESEARCH, FOCUS GROUPS AND JOURNALISM

A collaboration between The
Washington Post and the Kaiser
Family Foundation

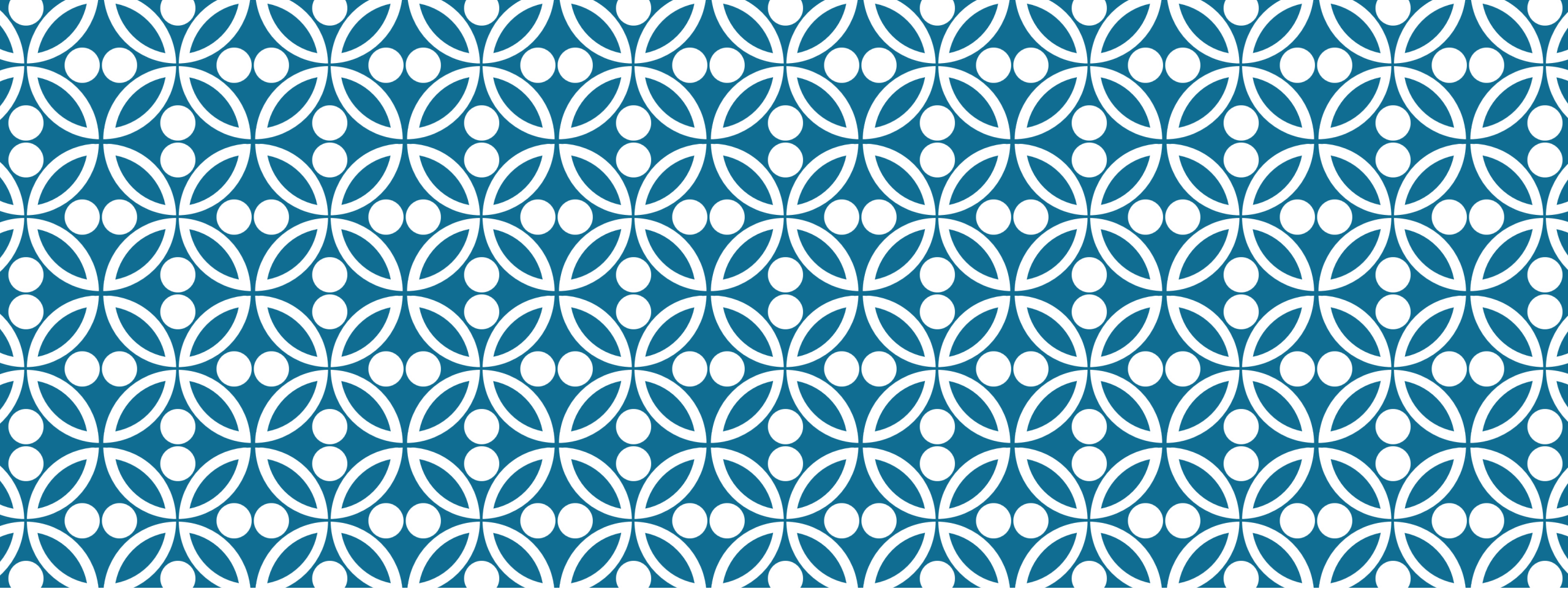
Emily Guskin, Scott Clement and
Liz Hamel

HOW WE STUDIED THE POPULATION

Survey

Focus
groups

Follow-up
interviews



FOCUS GROUPS



FOCUS GROUP LOCATION SELECTION

To understand more about the rural population we decided to hold two focus groups in a rural county, one of Trump voters, one of people who voted for anyone else.

We examined dozens of rural counties, narrowing down to counties that were far from a city and counties who voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012, but then flipped to Trump in 2016.

Ashtabula County, Ohio fit what we were looking for:

- 50 miles from Cleveland, on Lake Erie and the border of Pennsylvania
- Obama won by 14 points in 2008 and 13 points in 2012
- Trump beat Clinton by 19 points and was first presidential candidate to speak in the county since JFK
- 90 percent of the county is white
- Median household income is just above \$40,000
- Population just under 100,000



FOCUS GROUP

The firm we hired to recruit was unable to find enough people. A voter registration database proved a useful source for contacts with some indication of political leaning and 2016 turnout.

Using tools like Google Maps and Facebook, we identified a community deli that offered to close early for us to host focus groups.

Participants agreed to be filmed during the focus group.

A Washington Post film crew came to town ahead of us to film B roll and get acquainted with the community.

FOCUS GROUP FACILITY

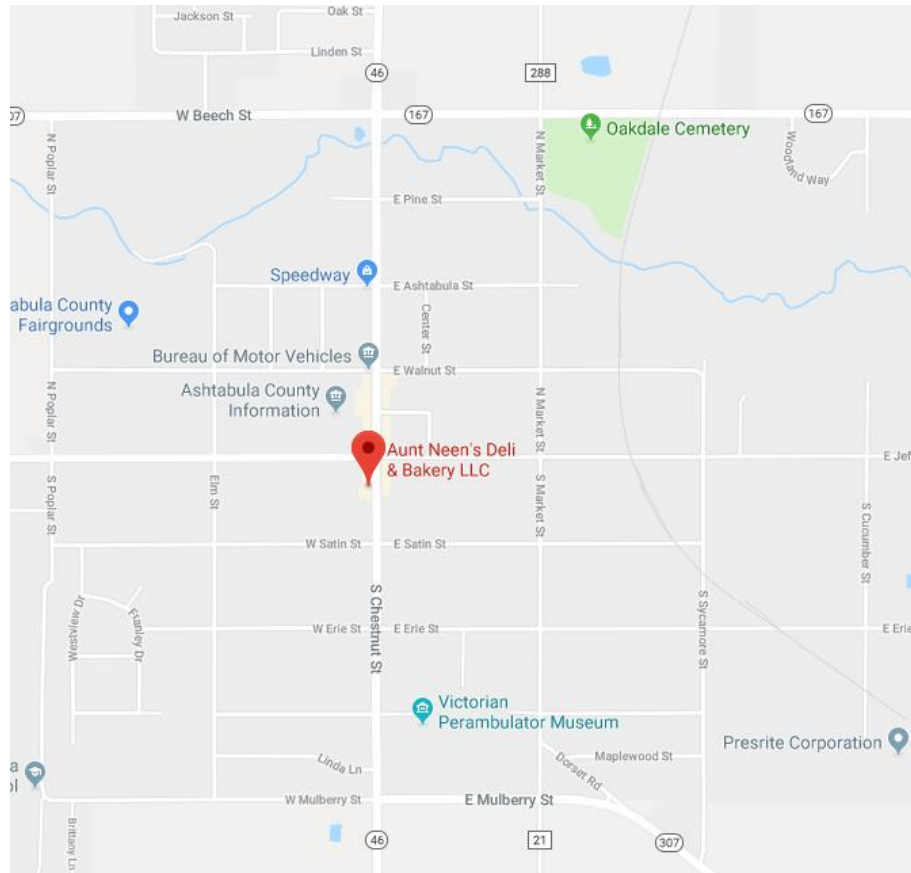


Photo courtesy of Aunt Neen's Deli & Bakery Facebook page

FOCUS GROUP



National

Meet the rural Americans who fear they're being forgotten

Hear from rural voters in Ashtabula County, Ohio, as they describe the most important issues to them.

June 14, 2017 | 6:03 PM EDT

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM FOCUS GROUPS

Individuals' feelings and opinions beyond quantitative results

People feel left behind, some would move away if they could

Feelings there are no jobs, or at least no good jobs

Anxiety about drug use, specifically heroin and painkillers

Concerns about immigration, race and public assistance all jumbled together

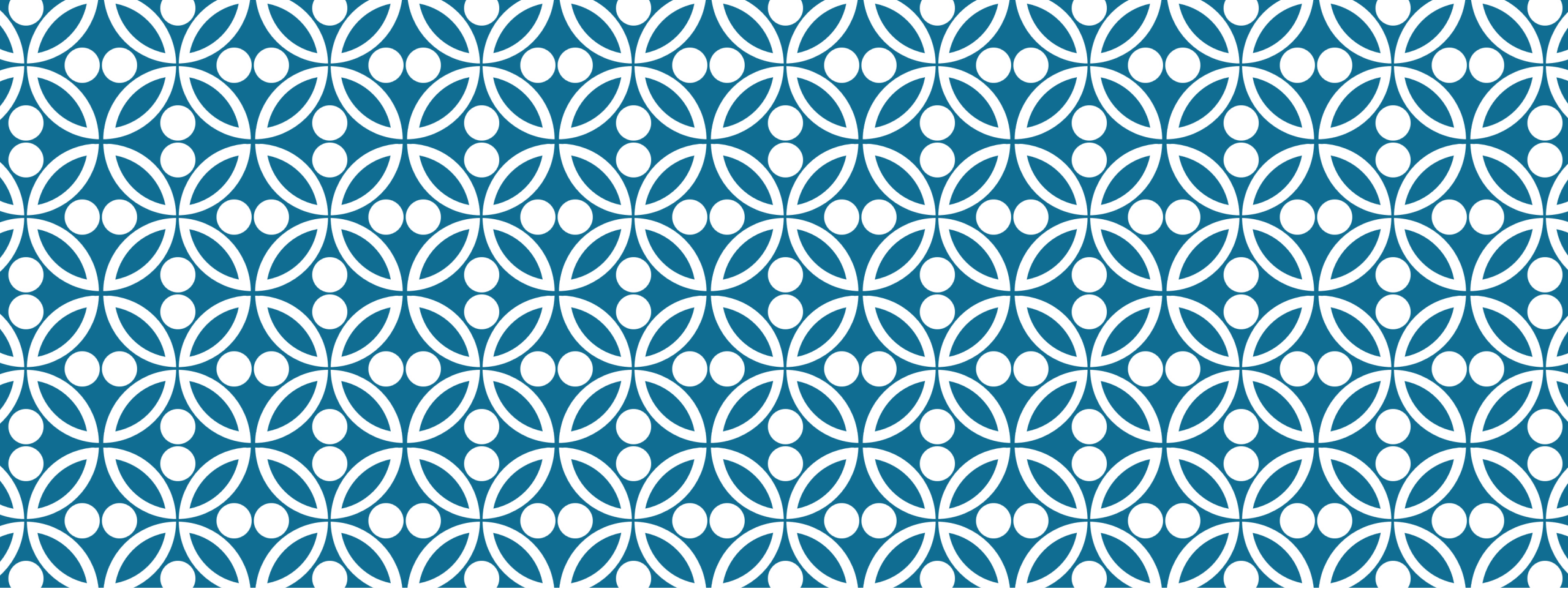
Sense that immigrants are working for less and taking advantage of system

Sentiment that everyone is government assistance and that the system is being abused

Trump voters still like him, but concerned about his tweets and his making up facts

Non-Trump voters think Trump will bring us into a war

People in cities are ruder, keep to themselves



**MAIN STORIES PUBLISHED USING
POLL DATA**

From my way to areas outside metropolitan Washington.



T-MORNING 90°/77° • TOMORROW: T-MORNING 87°/69° C12

Democracy Dies in Darkness

81

Mistrial isn't end of woes for Cosby

Prosecutor says he will retry entertainer on sexual-assault charges

BY MANUEL ROIG-FRANZIA

NORRISTOWN, Pa. — A Pennsylvania judge declared a mistrial Saturday after a jury was deadlocked on sexual-assault charges against Bill Cosby, the comic legend whose legacy as a promoter of wholesome values has been tarnished by a years-long sex and drugging scandal.

As the mistrial was declared, Cosby sat at the defense table with his chin held high, a flat, blank look on his face. Across the wall of the courtroom, jurors stood one-by-one in the jury box and said, "Yes" as Judge Steven T. O'Neill asked each whether they agreed that the jury is "hopelessly deadlocked." The jurors answered without hesitation, but several slumped forward in their chairs, elbows on their knees and fingers knit, looks of frustration on their faces.

After the questioning was done, the entertainer sat back in his chair, holding to his chest a slender cane that has been with him inside the courtroom each day. The jury filed out almost within arm's reach of Andrea Constand, Cosby's accuser. She stood respectfully with a strained smile on her face. Afterward, the prosecutor, Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele, announced in court that he will retry Cosby. Constand has already told him she is willing to testify again at a retrial. In the next 120 days, O'Neill will schedule a new trial to be held sometime in the next 12 months.

The courtroom emptied quickly, but the two main players in this 11-day melodrama lingered. Constand, in the brilliantly white, lightweight blazer she had worn on the witness stand, stood along the edge of the courtroom wall. Six accusers who had amended the trial as spectators, some with tears in their eyes, lined up to console her with long, sad hugs.



MICHAEL S. WILLAMSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

A GAP DEFINED BY VALUES

Alienation from cities grows in small towns

BY JOSE A. DELREAL AND SCOTT CLEMENT

The political divide between rural and urban America is more cultural than it is economic, rooted in rural residents' deep misgivings about the nation's rapidly changing demographics, their sense that Christianity is under siege and their perception that the federal government causes most of the needs of people in big cities, according to a wide-ranging poll that examines cultural attitudes across the United States.

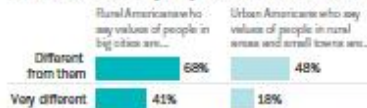
The Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey of nearly 1,700 Americans — including more than 1,000 adults living in rural areas and small towns — finds deep-seated kinship in rural America, coupled with a stark sense of estrangement from people who live in urban areas. Nearly 7 in 10 rural residents say their values differ from those of people

POLL CONTINUED ON A10



TOP: A roadside store in Bethel Springs, Tenn., started as a fruit stand and later sold poultry. ABOVE: Jaykob Gibson, 16, works as an amusement park in Conneaut Lake, Pa.

Rural Americans say they have different values



Source: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 13-May 1, 2017, error margin ±1.5 percentage points among 1,070 rural residents and ±1.7 points among 303 urban residents.

Where immigrants are fewer, tolerance is less

BY MARIA SACCHETTI AND EMILY GUSKIN

An insurance salesman in rural Louisiana worries that immigration will sink the United States further into debt. In the Ohio countryside, a father of five says immigrants lower wages. But in New Orleans, a lifelong urbanite credits immigrants with rebuilding her hurricane-scarred neighborhood.

A Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey of nearly 1,700 Americans — including more than 1,000 in rural areas — reveals that attitudes toward immigrants form one of the widest gulfs between U.S. cities and rural communities.

Rural residents are more likely than people in cities or suburbs to think that immigrants are not adapting to the American way of life. The poll also finds that these views soften in rural areas with significant foreign-

DIVIDE CONTINUED ON A12

RURAL DIVIDE



A feeling that values are widely divergent

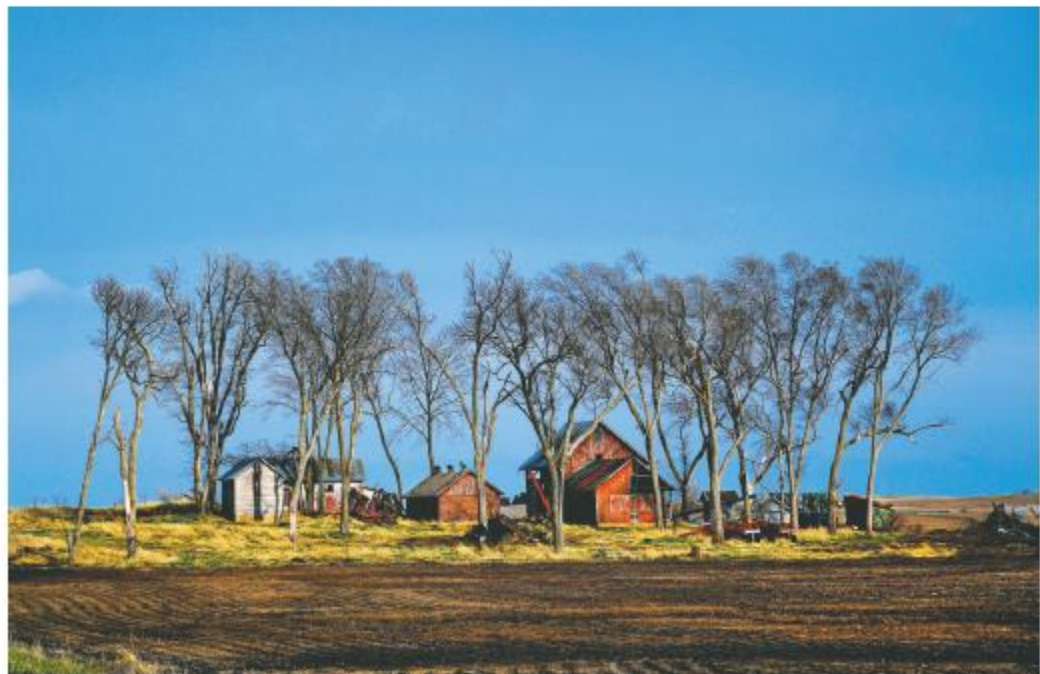
POLL FROM A1

who live in big cities, including about 4 in 10 who say their values are "very different."

That divide is felt more extensively in rural America than in cities: About half of urban residents say their values differ from rural people, with less than 20 percent of urbanites saying rural values are "very different."

Alongside a strong rural social identity, the survey shows that disagreements between rural and urban America ultimately center on fairness: Who wins and loses in the new American economy who deserves the most help in society and whether the federal government shows preferential treatment to certain types of people. President Trump's convictions, and immigrant rhetoric, for example, touched on many of the frustrations felt most acutely by rural Americans.

The Post-Kaiser survey focused on rural and small-town areas that are home to nearly one-quarter of the U.S. population. These range from counties that fall outside metropolitan areas such as Brunswick, Va. (population 16,248) to counties near population centers with up to 250,000 residents such as Augusta, Va. (population 74,997), close to Charlotte.



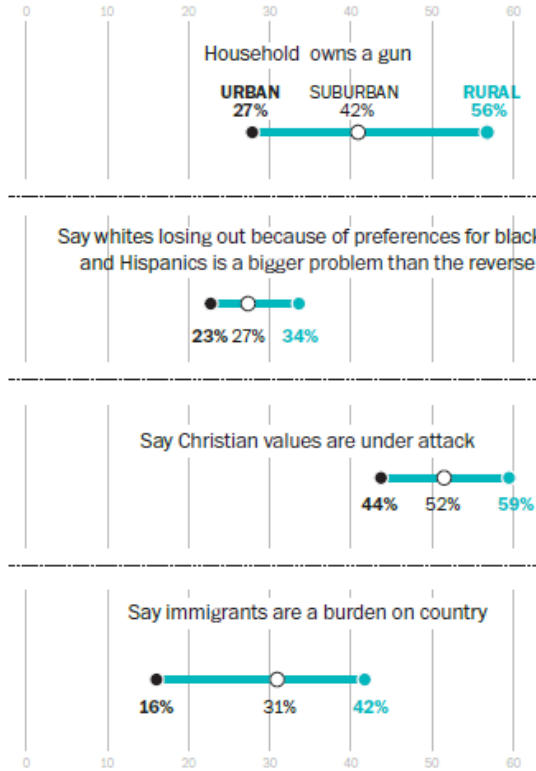
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL S. WILLAMSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A man sells produce from his truck on the side of a highway in Hephzibah, Ga. Patriotic decorations adorn a window of this home in Youngstown, Pa. An old farm sits just outside of Yale, Iowa. A Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll shows that the divide between rural and urban America is felt more extensively in small towns.

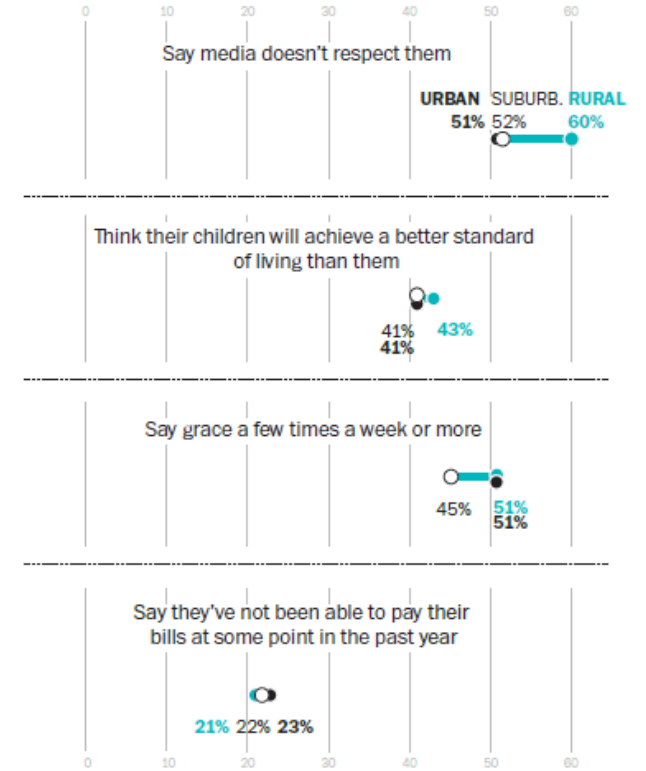


TOP LEFT AND ABOVE: MICHAEL S. WILLIAMS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST; TOP RIGHT: TY WRIGHT FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

For all their differences ...



... rural Americans also share commonalities with urbanites



Source: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 13-May 1, 2017, error margin +/- 3.5 percentage points among 1,070 rural residents, +/- 7 points among 303 urban residents and +/- 6.5 points among 307 suburban residents.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Poll shows mistrust of immigrants outside cities, suburbs

DIVIDE FROM A1

born populations.

"I think it's just people not getting out there and knowing their neighbors," said Adam Lueck, who lives in a rural part of Minnesota and thinks immigrants strengthen America.

President Trump won the November election with broad support from rural America, and his aggressive stance against illegal immigration resonated strongly there. In the Post-Kaiser poll, rural residents are almost three times as likely as city dwellers to consider immigrants a burden to the United States — 42 percent vs. 16 percent.

Rural residents are also more likely to say that recent immigrants have different values than their own — 50 percent, compared with 39 percent of urban residents.

Trump voters in rural areas are the most critical: Seventy-four percent say recent immigrants are not doing enough to assimilate to life in America vs. 49 percent of rural Americans overall who think that, as well.

One reason for rural Americans' concern about immigrants could be their lack of exposure to them. Foreign-born residents make up 2.3 percent of the population in rural counties, compared with nearly 15 percent of urban counties, according to Census Bureau data for 2011-2015.

Rural residents "have not had a long experience with immigrants," said William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution. "They haven't had a chance to get used to it. Maybe their economic situation isn't very good, and they hear politicians saying it's all about immigrants coming in and taking jobs."

Immigrants tend to concentrate in cities where jobs are more plentiful, though smaller groups have also gravitated toward rural farming towns with crops and meatpacking plants that depend on migrant labor.

The Post-Kaiser poll finds that in rural areas where less than 2 percent of the population are immigrants, less than 4 in 10 residents say immigrants strengthen the country. But that rises to near-



MICHAEL S. WILLIAMSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

The Crest Motel in Bristol, Tenn., advertises that it is an American-owned establishment. A Post-Kaiser poll shows that rural residents are more likely than people in cities or suburbs to think that immigrants are not adapting to the American way of life.

ly 6 in 10 in rural areas where at least 5 percent are born outside the United States.

"Knowing an immigrant is actually associated with a more positive attitudes about immigrants," said Mark Hugo Lopez, director of global migration and demography for the Pew Research Center. "Not 100 percent that they're great. But more of a connection and a feeling that immigrants are not necessarily a problem for the economy."

That is certainly the case for Kathleen Kanost, a 64-year-old disabled woman in New Orleans who grew up in Washington, D.C., and moved to Louisiana in 1978. A former waitress, she said she frequently worked alongside immigrants from the Middle East and Latin America.

"They're hard-working people, the ones I've known all my life," she said. "They seem to stick together and help each other out."

David Woods, a 36-year-old father of five, has a different view. Reared on his family farm near Lake Erie in Ohio, he loved the predawn quiet, the fresh air and the landscape of green clover. He hoped to continue to work on farms after his family sold theirs.

But soon he felt pushed out. Nobody at the dairy farm where he had a job spoke English, he said. And the immigrant workers were more willing to work for low pay.

In 2005, Woods left for a masonry company. He now earns double what he made on the farm, pouring concrete sidewalks, driveways and stairs. He said he's frustrated

by his belief that immigrants who are in this country illegally do not pay their fair share of taxes. Federal data shows that millions of undocumented immigrants file tax returns each year.

"A lot of people, when I start on my rants about it, they say I'm racist. I'm not racist," Woods said. "I feel like if you're going to live in the United States like the rest of the U.S., you're going to have to pay taxes like the rest of us."

A National Academy of Sciences report released last September found that immigration overall had a positive impact on economic growth in the United States. But the effect was uneven: Americans and prior immigrants who did not finish high school had lower wages because of competition for jobs.

That study also found that first-generation immigrants contributed less in taxes per capita, because in general they were less educated and earned lower wages. But that trend reversed for immigrants' children, who had higher educational achievement, better salaries and, as a result, paid more in taxes than other native-born Americans.

The United States is home to more than 41 million immigrants. An estimated 11 million are here illegally.

Rural residents are more worried about their urban counterparts about job shortages in their communities. And most, 63 percent, say cracking down on immigrants working illegally is important in addressing that issue.

"If you do it right, I don't have problem with it," William Cooper, 64, who runs an insurance agency in rural Richland Parish, La., said of immigration. "But if you don't do it right, you can hit the road."

Cooper said the United States is drowning in debt and should only welcome immigrants the nation can afford. "Can't everybody in the world live in America," he said. "We're putting ourselves into the poorhouse."

But Lueck, a 32-year-old truck driver and gun enthusiast from Blue Earth County in Minnesota, disagreed — even as he acknowledged that his views make him an anomaly in his community. He said Mexican immigrants and others are adjusting just fine, as have generations of immigrants before them.

"I don't think our cultural fabric should be laid down in a tradition that needs to be enforced," Lueck said. "We light off fireworks on the Fourth of July, and that's for everybody."

He said he has met immigrants from all over the world, including Mexico, Sudan and Somalia, and none felt entitled to U.S. government benefits or freebies. Rather than deporting immigrants, Lueck said, he would like the government to focus on requiring businesses to hire workers who are here legally.

"They want to work for everything they get, too," he said. "That's what they came here for."

This Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll was conducted April 13-May 1 with a random national sample of 1,686 U.S. adults contacted on landline and cellphones with an overall margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. The sample of 1,070 rural Americans has an error margin of plus or minus 3.5 points; the error margin is 7 points among the samples of 303 urban residents and 6.5 points among 307 suburban residents.

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Scott Clement contributed to this report.

Americans united when it comes to saying grace

BY SARAH PULLIAM BAILEY,
JULIE ZAUZMER
AND EMILY GUSKIN

OMRO, WIS. — One by one, the Weiss family rounded up the nine grandchildren, who had been running circles around the barns. They gathered under a towering maple tree, around a table laden with barbecue meatballs and French silk pie, and grabbed one another's hands.

"We ask your blessing on the meal we're about to eat," said David Weiss, 75, head

bowed under his camouflage hat.

"Amen," his family responded — a quintessential display of one of America's most enduring religious traditions.

A poll by The Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation finds that saying grace is a widespread practice in the United States. About half of all Americans take a minute to say a prayer over their food at least a few times a week, the poll reveals, making grace an unusual commonality in a politically divided nation.

Rural and urban Americans are equally likely to say grace, the poll shows. Northerners and Southerners, Catholics and Protestants, Democrats and Republicans, all say grace to varying degrees. Even some Americans who reject organized

Keller said the physical act of bowing heads, closing eyes and folding hands is an important exercise in gratitude for people of many faiths, from childhood on up.

That's true for the Weiss family, evangelical Protestants who gathered on their 77-acre farm in Wisconsin. Silvie Weiss, 11, called grace "a peaceful moment to get away from the world." Her aunt Becky Sell, 36, said that "it offers me a chance to fix a point in my day where I am intentional about honoring and acknowledging what God has done for us."

In the Post-Kaiser poll, which was conducted April 13 to May 1 among a random sample of 1,686 American adults, 48 percent say they give blessings to God or say grace before meals at least a few times each

There's a religious split, as well: Six in 10 Protestants say grace a few times a week or more, as do 52 percent of Catholics. But the practice is more prevalent among black Protestants (80 percent) and white evangelical Protestants (74 percent) than among white mainline or nonevangelical Protestants, 31 percent of whom report saying grace frequently before meals.

Overall, about 8 in 10 blacks, about 6 in 10 Hispanics and about 4 in 10 whites say grace at least a few times each week.

The tradition of mealtime grace is firmly established in the black church. For Lynn Thompson, 64, grace connects her to God even when she's not well enough to make it to her Arkansas Baptist church.

herents of no particular religion say grace at least a few times a week.

Take Greg Epstein, a humanist chaplain at Harvard University, who asks someone to say a blessing when he hosts nonreligious students for dinner. Some bristle, he said, but Epstein believes in the act of gratitude.

"Why do we have to give up the good parts of being religious — including the mindfulness, the reflection that comes from a ritual like grace — just because we don't believe in the traditional wording of the poem that people recite when they sit down to a meal?" Epstein said. "Can we come up with new words that reflect our contemporary needs and values?"

Stuart H., 32, of Las Cruces, N.M., is a

SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017 • THE WASHINGTON POST

EZ M2

A11

RURAL DIVIDE



The Washington Post

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RURAL DIVIDE

SUPPORT FOR TRUMP HEAVY, NOT UNIFORM



MICHAEL S. WILLIAMSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

A voting site in Derry Township, Pa. In rural America, the president's job approval rating is 54 percent.

Even in areas he won by biggest margins, president is polarizing

BY DAN BALZ

Rural America has often backed Republicans in presidential elections, but rarely with the enthusiasm shown for Donald Trump in 2016. More sparsely populated areas of the country form the heart of Trump Nation and continue to provide majority support for a president who has faced near-constant controversy and discord.

At a time when his job approval rating is in net negative territory nationally, more than half of all adults (54 percent) in rural America say they approve of the way President Trump is doing his job, according to a new Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey. His approval rating among rural Americans is 10 percentage points higher than among suburbanites and 22 points higher than among city dwellers.

At the same time, however, any suggestion of rural America as near-monolithic in its support for the president represents a sizable oversimplification. Even in areas of the country where Trump scored some of his biggest margins, he is a divisive figure — loved by his supporters but disliked by many who voted for Hillary Clinton. Four in 10 adults in rural America disapprove of his job performance, a hefty number for a president still in the early stages of his tenure.

On election night in November, Trump lost America's cities in a landslide. In the suburbs, he narrowly prevailed over Clinton. But in the 2,332 counties that make up small-town and rural America, he swamped his Democratic rival, winning 60 percent of the vote to Clinton's 34 percent. Trump's 26-point advantage over Clinton in

POLITICS CONTINUED ON A7

Differences, in black and white
Views of rural communities are starkly split by race. A6

RURAL DIVIDE

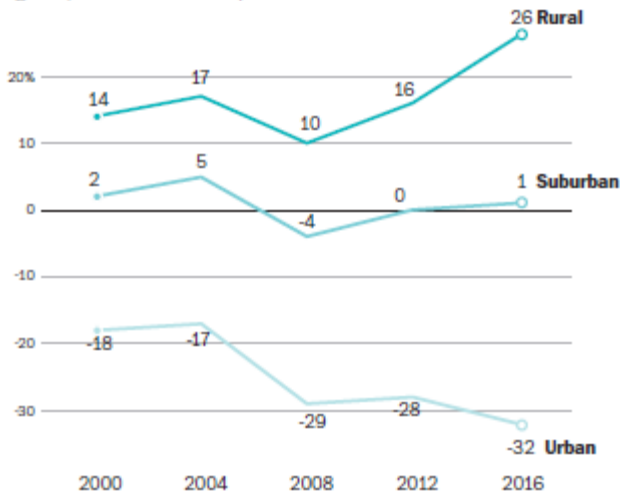


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A woman in Phyllis, Ky., pulls a lawn mower in front of a building with a painting of a Confederate flag. A sign in Kinball, W.Va., warns people not to trespass. In Williamson, W.Va., ATVs are allowed to use the streets as the town is part of the Hatfield-McCoy ATV trail. Rural America has often backed Republicans in presidential elections, but rarely with the enthusiasm shown for Donald Trump in 2016.

POLL Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation Poll

RURAL VOTERS SWUNG SHARPLY TOWARD TRUMP IN 2016

Republican percentage-point advantage (positive) or disadvantage (negative) over Democrats in presidential elections

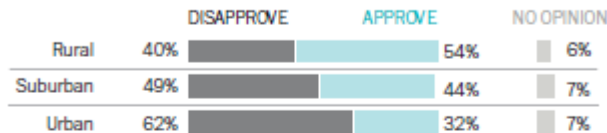


Source: County-level election results from Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections; Urban/Suburban/Rural based on National Center for Health Statistics categorizations.

POLL Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation Poll

RURAL AMERICANS ARE MORE APPROVING OF TRUMP THAN URBANITES OR SUBURBANITES

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

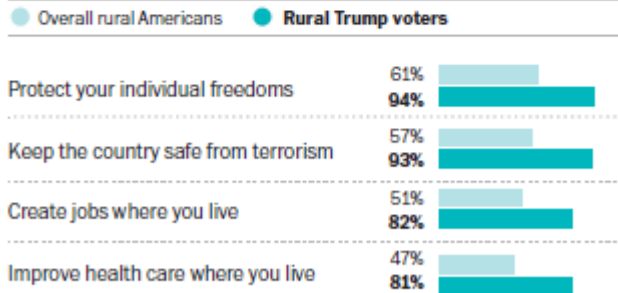


Source: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 13-May 1, 2017, error margin +/- 3.5 percentage points among 1,070 rural residents, +/- 7 points among 303 urban residents and +/- 6.5 percentage points among 307 suburban residents.

POLL Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation Poll

MOST RURAL AMERICANS CONFIDENT THAT TRUMP'S POLICIES WILL PROTECT FREEDOMS, KEEP COUNTRY SAFE

Rural Americans saying they are very or somewhat confident Trump's policies will...



Source: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 13-May 1, 2017, error margin +/- 3.5 percentage points among 1,070 rural residents and +/- 6 points among 403 rural Trump voters.

RURAL DIVIDE



Racial disparity remains stubborn

BY AIGAIL HAUSLOHNER
AND EMILY GUSKIN

ST. MARTINVILLE, LA. — Espinola Quinn views her quaint Louisiana town with a mix of love and loathing. It's the place her parents — a bar owner and a soybean farmer — raised her; the place where nearly every face is familiar; the spot where she and her husband built their own sprawling house on the edge of the bayou and raised their three girls.

But St. Martinville is also disturbingly segregated: The town still holds separate white and black proms. And Quinn, who is black, hopes her daughters will make their own lives somewhere else.

"The 1964 Civil Rights Act has not come here yet," said Quinn, who opted to bus her older daughters out of the parish for school and is now home-schooling her youngest, a 15-year-old.

"The community is still physically separated," and that, she said, "has an effect on your thinking."

A new nationwide Washington



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: St. Mard De Tours, the white church on the north end of St. Martinville, La. Espinola Quinn and her husband built their own sprawling house on the edge of the bayou in St. Martinville and raised their three girls. But she said she hopes her daughters will make their own lives somewhere else. An oak tree that is over 1,000 years old sits in a back yard in a home in St. Martin Parish, which includes St. Martinville.

PHOTOS BY ANNE HANAUER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

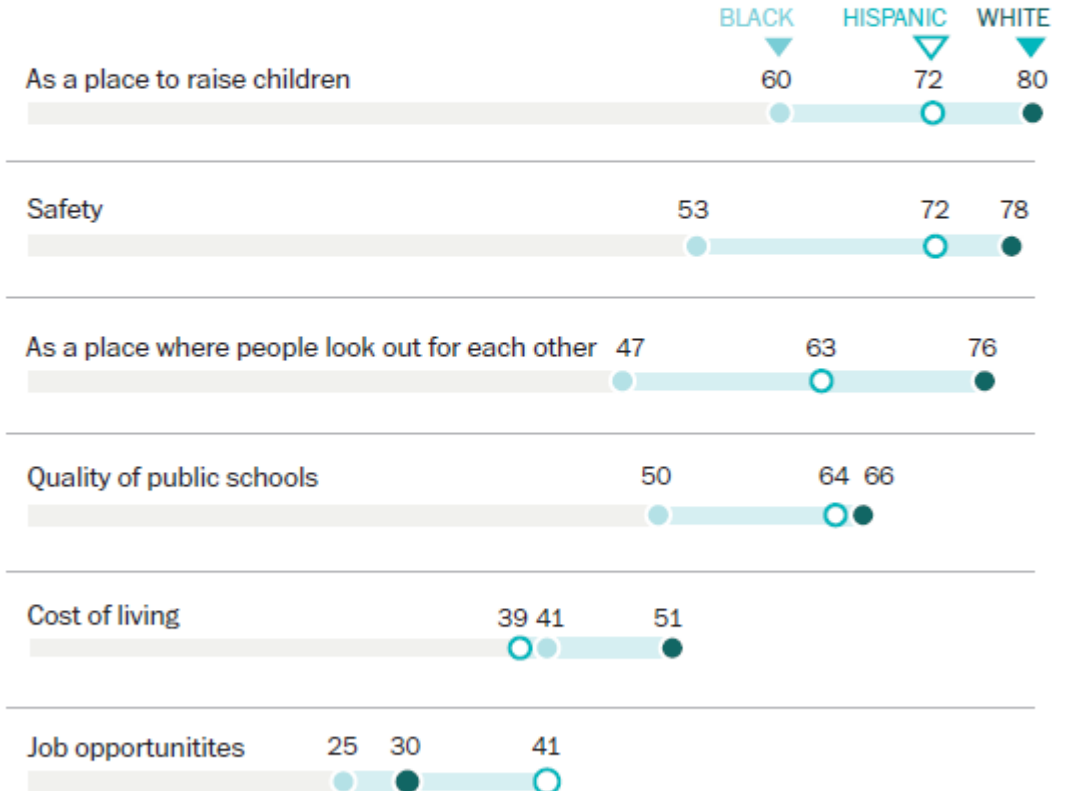
POLL

Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation Poll

RURAL WHITES GENERALLY RATE THEIR COMMUNITIES BETTER THAN RURAL BLACKS

Q: How would you rate each of the following in your local community?

Percent of rural residents who responded 'excellent' or 'good'



Source: Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 13-May 1, 2017, error margin +/- 3.5 percentage points among 1,070 rural residents, 4.5 points among the sample of 759 rural whites, +/- 12 points among the sample of 115 rural blacks and +/- 11.5 points among 111 rural Hispanics.

