

Who Votes Now? And Does It Matter?

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1 Intro

Demographics remain today, as they were in 1972, the bedrock of analyses regarding the determinants of mass political behavior in the U.S. Whether drawing on the intellectual traditions of the Columbia school established by Lazarsfeld, et al, in *Voting* or the Michigan model Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes in *The American Voter*, scholars have consistently demonstrated the importance of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, age and marital status as predictors of numerous aspects of electoral behavior and public opinion. Indeed, despite the development of more sophisticated and “contextualized” theoretical arguments regarding the determinants of voter turnout, demographic characteristics of the American population continue to be of interest.

Of course, the demographics of the U.S. have changed dramatically since the time of Wolfinger and Rosenstone’s seminal work on voter turnout. Since 1972, the population has not only increased substantially but has also become increasingly diverse, with the proportion of Anglos declining to 75.1 percent, the proportion of African-Americans declining to 12.3 percent, and the proportion of Latinos and Asian-Americans increasing to 12.5 and 3.6 percent, respectively (U.S. Census, Table 1, Census 2000 PHC-T-1 Population by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for the United States: 2000). At the same time, levels of economic inequality have increased. Between 1967 and 2001, for example, the proportion of aggregate income held by the lowest fifth of the population decreased from 4.0 to 3.5 percent, while the proportion of aggregate income held by the highest fifth increased from 43.8 to 50.1 percent (U.S. Census, Table IE-3). Other notable social trends have occurred as well. Participation of women in the workforce has increased, while participation in the institution of marriage has declined and family size has decreased at the same time that the population has aged.

This paper is part of a larger project investigating the demographics of voter turnout since 1972. Most acknowledge that these fundamental shifts in the composition of the pop-

ulation clearly have real consequences for the political and economic life of the nation. Yet Wolfinger and Rosenstone's *Who Votes?*—based exclusively on data from the 1972 presidential election—remains the conventional wisdom for students of political participation. While our work provides a needed replication of Wolfinger and Rosenstone's analysis and thus focuses primarily on the demographics of turnout, we also extend their original work in two important ways: we consider the consequences of a wide range of voter registration and election administration laws that have originated since 1972, and we incorporate more explicitly elite sources of voter mobilization (i.e., party contacting and issue positions).

Theoretically, we also seek to redress what we view as an imbalance in studies of voter turnout, one that tends to emphasize the costs of voting and attend far less to potential benefits. We also seek to understand how elite activities depress or enhance the demographic representativeness of the electorate. In this paper, however, we focus, as did Wolfinger and Rosenstone, on a key question concerning the consequences of turnout, and that is whether voters are representative of non-voters with respect to their preferred policy positions. Normative concerns regarding the quality of democratic representation in the U.S. certainly compel us to consider this question nearly thirty years after Wolfinger and Rosenstone's analysis. Yet practical concerns also motivate us, for Wolfinger and Rosenstone's initial conclusions remain conventional wisdom today, despite the fact that their conclusions clearly do not hold for an important, well-defined set of issues today, class-based issues on which there are notable differences between voters and non-voters.

2 On the Representativeness of Voters

The centrality of elections to representative democracy—along with concerns regarding low or declining turnout in American elections—would suggest that scholars might well pay special attention to whether voters' policy positions are representative of non-voters', or

even the broader (eligible) electorate's views. Yet aside from Wolfinger and Rosenstone, we have identified only three papers that consider this key question—(Bennett & Resnick 1990), (Shaffer 1982) and (Studlar & Welch 1986)—and their conclusions are fairly consistent with each other: there are surprisingly few, and in very case, only modest, differences in the policy preferences of voters and non-voters.

“Conventional wisdom,” if you will, seems to have interpreted those findings as indicating that there are no differences between voters and non-voters. Some of this “stronger” conclusion certainly emerges from Wolfinger and Rosenstone's (1980) description of their data from 1972. After reporting a “slight” over-representation of Republicans in the electorate, Wolfinger and Rosenstone examine citizens' preferences on seven issues (government guaranteeing jobs, medical insurance, bussing, abortion, legalizing marijuana, the role of women, ideology) and observe:

All other political differences between voters and the general population are considerably smaller than this gap of 3.7 percentage points. Moreover, these other differences, as slight as they are, do not have a consistent bias toward any particular political orientation . . . In short, on these issues voters are virtually a carbon copy of the citizen population. (Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980): 109)

Moreover, Bennett and Resnick's (1990) analysis of General Social Survey (1985), Gallup (1987) and American National Election Study (1968-1988) data mirrors these conclusions for the most part, though they offer some evidence that conflicts with Wolfinger and Rosenstone's (1980) observations of “small and statistically insignificant” differences between voters the citizen population. Bennett and Resnick's analysis considers a broader range of attitudinal characteristics of voters, such as patriotism and other measures of system support, attitudes toward political and social groups and levels of political information. On these items, they, too, report that there are few differences, and that non-voters thus do

not represent a threat to democracy.

However, on some of the same issue positions that Wolfinger and Rosenstone examined, as well as some additional policy preference measures, they note that findings are mixed. Few differences are observed on partisanship, ideology and foreign policy positions. However, on some domestic policies,

. . . nonvoters and voters do not see eye to eye. Nonvoters are slightly more in favor of an increased government role in the domestic arena. They are more likely to oppose curtailing government spending for health and education services, and they are more likely to support government guarantees that everyone has a job and a good standard of living. (Bennett and Resnick (1990): 789-94)

In addition, analyses of voters' and nonvoters' opinions on spending for a set of eight domestic programs indicates that nonvoters are significantly more likely than voters to favor spending. Thus, the conventional wisdom that "who votes does not matter" in the representation of citizens' policy views to elected officials is clearly situated in a substantial amount of data and in the authoritative analyses of Wolfinger and Rosenstone's work—with the "fine details" provided by Bennett and Resnick somewhat obscured.

We find these somewhat inconsistent findings—coupled with the common claim that voters are representative of non-voters—to be troubling. The substantive conclusion seems especially inconsistent with our basic beliefs about how representative politics work: it is not just that these policy differences *should* matter in a normative sense, but it is also that common political sense suggests that they *must* matter to some degree. These sentiments certainly motivate the arguments and conclusions of the recent *Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy* sponsored by the American Political Science Association.

Moreover, these conclusions based on the policy preferences of voters vs. non-voters

(or the more general citizen population) contrast with several studies that argue that who votes does matter in terms of policy benefits. Hill and Leighley (1992), for example, find that state electorates in which the poor vote as much as the wealthy provide significantly higher welfare benefits. Similarly, Martin (2003) finds that members of Congress allocate federal grant awards to areas where turnout is highest. Thus, those who vote more are rewarded with more substantive policy benefits.

3 Old Data, New Data

And so in this chapter we return to address the question of whether who votes matters, first assessing the representativeness of the 1972 and the 2004 electorates to provide an initial assessment of the extent to which Wolfinger and Rosenstone's classic findings remain. We then provide a more detailed assessment regarding trends in the representativeness of voters by examining the policy differences between voters and non-voters in each presidential election year since 1972. These analyses provide some insight as to whether such representation varies by issue type and whether any variations we observe reflect election-specific factors or instead reflect more enduring compositional characteristics of the electorate. The latter is especially important from a normative perspective given the notable changes in inequality since the 1980s, while the former is valuable as well in terms of identifying institutional sources of participatory representation.

We also consider more recent data on the representativeness of the electorate, relying on the 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES). This analysis complements our findings based on the time series available in the NES, in that it focuses on an additional set of more contemporary policy issues than what the NES time series allows. The NAES also provides an opportunity to assess the representativeness of voters in 2004 relative to the entire, and not just citizen, population, which we expect to do in a revised version of this

paper. This additional analysis will provide an alternative approach to assessing electoral representation, one that is broader and more inclusive, than what is available using the NES sample of voting-eligible individuals.

Our analyses of NES policy positions are drawn from the standard set of seven-point issue scales, along with questions on party identification, political ideology and presidential candidate thermometer scores, available in the NES Cumulative Data File. Question-wording for each of these measures is available in the appendix, along with that for the self-reported measure of voter turnout used to categorize voters and non-voters. Our analyses of the NAES data focus on the set of policy issues asked in the post-election wave of the general election panel survey. In categorizing voters and non-voters, we rely on the post-election self-report (and therefore exclude individuals who voted early or by absentee ballot). Specific question-wording for both the NES and the NAES policy questions is provided in the appendix.

4 Political Differences between the 1972 and 2004 Electorates

Table 1 reports the distributions of partisanship for 1972 and 2004 for non-voters and voters using both the traditional seven-point party identification scale and a collapsed, three-point scale. Note that the distribution for 1972 is not precisely the same as that reported by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (in Table 6.2, page 110) because we compare the distribution of partisanship among voters with its distribution among non-voters (rather than the entire population).

[Table 1 About Here]

Even then, however, Wolfinger and Rosenstone's basic observations for 1972 remain, with the most notable points being the under-representation of Independents and the over-representation of Republicans. More specifically, while Independents comprised 22 percent of non-voters in 1972, they comprised only about nine percent of voters, while Republicans comprised about 26 percent of non-voters and almost 40 percent of voters. At the same time, Democrats comprise about 52 percent of both non-voters and voters.

In 2004, these same patterns can be observed. Independents represent almost 21 percent of non-voters, but only 6.5 percent of voters, while Republicans represent nearly 30 percent of non-voters but over 45 percent of voters. Thus, the under-representation of Independents and over-representation of Republicans is slightly greater in 2004 than in 1972.

Table 2 presents a similar comparison of the policy views of voters and non-voters in 1972 and 2004. Here our results differ somewhat from those reported by Wolfinger and Rosenstone. Consistent with the results for partisanship in Table 1, the ideological distribution of voters and non-voters in 2004 is fairly similar to that in 1972: moderates are most under-represented, while conservatives are over-represented. Importantly, the magnitude of these differences increases between 1972 and 2004.

[Table 2 About Here]

Individuals' positions on abortion, too, reflect a slight change in magnitude between 1972 and 2004. In both years voters over-represent more liberal ("always legal") policy positions, while individuals with more centrist positions are fairly evenly represented. The shift between 1972 and 2004 is from voters *under-representing* to *over-representing* opposition to abortion in 2004. Consistent with anecdotal observations about the politics of abortion, it

seems that citizens with strong positions on the issue are mobilized far more than individuals with moderate views, and this is more certainly the case in 2004 than was the case in 1972.

On two of the issues—government guaranteeing jobs, and health insurance—the electorate seems to have become somewhat less representative of non-voters in its opinions. In 2004, there is a twelve percentage point difference between non-voters and voters believing that it is the government’s responsibility to guarantee jobs, and a nine-percentage point difference between voters and non-voters who believe that people should “get by on their own.” These patterns both result in an electorate that reflects more conservative views than non-voters. Similarly, the difference in the policy positions of voters and non-voters on government providing health insurance for individuals also increases between 1972 and 2004, with non-voters holding substantially more liberal positions on this issue than they did in 1972. This shift in the policy preferences of non-voters leads to larger differences between voters and non-voters in 2004, though we should also note that the proportion of voters who took “middle of the road” positions on this issue also increased notably between the two years.

Finally, the issue on which there was the greatest improvement in the representativeness of voters is that of women’s role. Although there were substantial differences between voters and non-voters on whether “women’s place is in the home” and whether “women are equal,” in 1972, in 2004 these differences had all but disappeared.

Thus, in comparing the differences between voters and non-voters, we see both expected and interesting changes between 1972 and 2004. Clearly opinion on the role of women in society has become more widely-supportive of equality (at least in the voicing of public policy views), while the politics of abortion likely mobilizes individuals on both ideological extremes. For our purposes, however, the more interesting differences between 1972 and 2004 relate to the role of government in providing jobs or health insurance because these issues

relate most directly to the possibly distinctive class-based interests of voters and non-voters. Importantly, we observe here a greater under-representation of non-voters' more liberal positions on these issues in 2004 as compared to 1972. Whether this difference is merely a function of the two particular time points we selected for observation or instead reflects a more fundamental change is addressed in the next section.

5 Policy Differences between Voters and Non-Voters, 1972-2004

In this part of the analysis we seek to document more broadly the "contours" of voters' policy representativeness over time. In this sense we want to overcome the superficiality of comparing the 1972 and 2004 elections as "endpoints" and instead comment on the dynamics (using the term loosely) of voter representativeness. More specifically, we want to assess whether such representativeness shifts slowly—as one might expect were policy views largely structured by the longer-term, enduring demographic predictors of turnout—or whether it reflects more short-term, election-specific factors. To the extent to which we observe the latter, we would likely draw some inferences regarding the increasingly important roles attributed to elite mobilization in recent studies of political participation (e.g., (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993)).

Assessing the distinctiveness of voters' and non-voters' policy preferences over time requires a somewhat different analytical approach than has been used in previous studies, all of which are based on cross-sectional comparisons of voters vs. non-voters in a single, or quite limited number of, study year(s). Our approach in this section is to graph the differences in the mean positions of voters and non-voters in each presidential election year since 1972. That is, for each of the NES seven-point issue scales, we compute the mean issue

position of voters and subtract from that the mean issue position of non-voters. Each of the scales is coded so that higher values represent more conservative issue positions. Thus, a positive difference between the means of voters and non-voters on any issue indicates that voters are more conservative on that issue than are non-voters.

We consider six issues, along with party identification, ideology and candidate vote preference in the graphs below. The vote preference measure is based on respondents' thermometer rankings of the two major presidential candidates in each election year. We first compute the difference between voters evaluations of the Republican and Democratic candidates and then compute the same value for non-voters. We then take the difference between these two scores and then, for graphing purposes, re-scale it to be "comparable" to values on a seven-point scale.

We present these results in three separate graphs, mostly so that the graphs are readable. But we group the issues based on theoretical motivations. The first set of issues (including party identification, political ideology and candidate preference) we label as "political views," as we expect these three attitudinal measures to be most sensitive to the particular election context (i.e., nature of the issues, campaign strategy, etc.). We therefore expect these issues—and the candidate preferences, in particular—to be most likely to change election by election.

The next set of graphs we present are those that reflect "class-based interests," and include the government's role in providing health insurance, government provision of services and the government's role in guaranteeing jobs. These three issues, more than any others available consistently for over-time analysis, have clear implications for the nature of redistributive policies in the U.S. If the government is to play a larger role in redistributing wealth—taxing the wealthy more to provide more program benefits for the poor—then these three issues are central to that goal. And the class-based particularistic benefits of such

government policies should also be quite clear to citizens.

Finally, we present a set of issues that we believe to be largely motivated by some sense of “values,” loosely interpreted: the role of women/women’s equality, aid to Blacks and defense spending. While we are not arguing that this is a “coherent” set of opinions that share common demographic or attitudinal sources, we do believe that each of these likely reflects more personal, fundamental symbolic beliefs than the other issues we consider. As such, we expect them to likely exhibit little sensitivity to election-specific contexts.

Figure 1 presents the (weighted) mean differences between voters and non-voters on party identification, political ideology and candidate vote preference for 1972 through 2004. The points that are plotted for each variable (i.e., the Y-axis values) are the mean differences between voters and non-voters for each variable. The numbers plotted beside each of these points are the t-values associated with each difference; values of 2 and above, of course, are considered statistically significant. Based on our general knowledge of the inter-relationship between partisanship, ideology and vote choice, we expected these three measures to move largely in sync with each other, and that is mostly what we see. Consistent with the ideological shift of Conservative Democrats to the Republican party over this time period, we see that ideology becomes more closely linked to both party identification and vote preference over time (and especially by 1988). And because vote preference is necessarily tied to candidate characteristics, we see this difference between voters and non-voters varying the most election-to-election, as we would expect.

[Figure 1 About Here]

Importantly, we note that in about half of these election observations, there are

significant differences between voters and non-voters, and this holds true most of the time for partisanship and vote preference, and increasingly so for ideology in the post-1984 period. Yet there are clearly election-specific variations in the magnitude of the difference between voters and non-voters—the contrasting patterns for 1992 and 1996 clearly highlight this, as does the election of 2004, when voters and non-voters differed significantly on partisanship (with voters significantly more Republican than Democrats), but were indistinguishable with respect to ideology and vote preference.

Of course, if one considers only the endpoints—1972 and 2004—our results are consistent with those reported in Table 1, as first identified by Wolfinger and Rosenstone and affirmed in our analysis of the 2004 data. Hence, we conclude that the electorate in 2004 is indeed more Republican than that of 1972, and thus non-voters are represented less-well in terms of partisanship, but that this finding clearly reflects particular election-specific issues and dynamics rather than any more fundamental longer-term trend.

Figure 2 presents a similar graph for our three class-based issues. Here, too, it is important to note the relative “dominance” of long-term trends vs. election-specific variations. In contrast to Figure 1, where only about half of the election observations produced significant mean differences between voters and non-voters, in Figure 2, all but three of the twenty-four points are significant. Although the magnitude of these differences between voters and non-voters varies in each election, the more fundamental observation is that there are notable, consistent and substantial differences between voters and non-voters on class-based issues. We therefore draw a very different inference than did Wolfinger and Rosenstone regarding the policy representativeness of voters. Our data, too, suggest that the differences in 1972 were modest. However, our results for each of these three issues after 1972 suggests though that these differences on class-based issues are enduring and increasing.

[Figure 2 About Here]

We note two additional details regarding Figure 2. First, the issue of government health insurance seems to display the greatest variation in the magnitude of differences between voters and non-voters. We believe this likely reflects the increasing salience of health insurance across these election years, as well as the extent to which presidential campaigns emphasized health insurance as part of their electoral strategies. Second, and in contrast, we believe the relative stability in the magnitude of the statistically significant differences on the jobs and government services question likely reflects some sense of broad public agreement as to the relative role of government—though, of course, this might also reflect the more general nature of these two questions.

Figure 3 presents the mean differences between voters and non-voters on “value based” issues for 1972 through 2004. Our expectations of null findings here are generally supported, with the exception of four out of twenty-two observations: on neither aid to Blacks nor defense spending preferences do voters differ significantly from non-voters. And these null findings are quite consistent over time.

[Figure 3 About Here]

The (four) exceptions to this observation also serve to remind us of the dangers of generalizing on the basis of single elections, for each of these exceptions documents significant differences between voters and non-voters with respect to individuals’ beliefs about the role of, or equality of, women. Our comments above, relying on comparisons between 1972 and 2004, noted how differences between voters and non-voters on this issue had apparently

“disappeared” by 2004. Yet this data clearly shows that in half of the elections from 1972 to 2004, voters were significantly more liberal in their opinions toward women’s roles than were non-voters. This issue thus ”joins” party identification and candidate preferences as being structured at least in part by the election-specific context. And this stands in sharp relief to the electorate’s consistent over-representation of conservative views on class-based issues since 1972.

6 Policy Preferences of Voters and Non-Voters, 2004

In Tables 3, 4 and 5 we present data from the 2004 National Annenberg Election Study. We begin here by describing the differences between voters and (eligible) non-voters in the Annenberg study. Because these questions are notably more “timely” queries regarding citizens’ issue positions than the long-standing questions of political beliefs included on the NES, they provide another perspective on the representativeness of the electorate in 2004. Eventually we will use this data to compare the preferences of voters to those of (eligible) non-voters as well as to those of (ineligible) non-voters to assess more broadly the nature of electoral representation. For now, the data comparing voters to non-voters in Tables 3 and 4 are generally comparable to that provided earlier in Tables 1 and 2 (the voting eligible sample of the NES).

[Tables 3, 4 and 5 About Here]

Although the particular questions differ dramatically from those used in the NES and reported in earlier tables, we note that these issues, too, can be viewed more broadly as class-based (Table 3), values-based (Tables 3 and 4) and as political views (Table 5). Our de-

scription here reflects these three perspectives on policy preferences, though we acknowledge that the assignment of any one of these issues to our issue categories might be questioned.

The Annenberg study offers five questions that we consider to be class-based: whether the respondent favors making union organizing easier, government health insurance for children, shifting Social Security to the stock market, school vouchers and federal assistance to schools. Interestingly, on these issues the largest differences between voters and non-voters are those relating to union organizing and federal assistance to schools. In both cases, non-voters take more liberal positions. Also notable are differences between voters and non-voters in support for government health insurance and social security shifting to the stock market. In both of these cases, non-voters are also more liberal than voters.

The only class-based issue in which non-voters do not take the “more liberal” position is that of school vouchers: substantially more non-voters than voters strongly favor the use of school vouchers while substantially fewer strongly oppose the use of school vouchers. With this exception noted, our conclusions regarding the substantial differences between voters and non-voters on class-based issues are sustained.

Nine issues included in the Annenberg post-election study measure what we have termed “value-based” issues, though this categorization is perhaps too broad for this large set of diverse issues. Nonetheless, four of these issues relate to Iraq, military spending and the draft, two relate to gun control issues, two relate to abortion and one focuses on the 9/11 commission recommendations. With one or two exceptions, the differences between voters and non-voters on these issues are, as in the case of the value-based issues from the NES, quite modest. The most dramatic exception is on respondents support for keeping troops in Iraq or bringing them home, in which case there is almost a twenty percentage point difference between non-voters and voters—with non-voters preferring that the troops stay in Iraq.

Interestingly, the pattern of “extreme” misrepresentation on abortion that we saw in the case of the 2004 NES is not evidenced here, and begs further investigation.

Finally, respondents’ responses on party identification and ideology seem to contradict the patterns identified in the 2004 NES. Independents here are *over-represented* in the electorate, though the partisan biases for Republicans and Democrats are indeed fairly modest (and similar in magnitude). Consistent with this, and also contradicting the NES findings reported in Table 1, the NAES data indicate that the 2004 electorate is fairly ideologically representative of non-voters. These contradictory findings require some further attention to differences in sample design, survey implementation and questionnaire structure before we can draw any firmer conclusions.

7 Conclusion

Our initial interest in evaluating the representativeness of voters in contemporary American politics was stimulated largely by the normative concerns associated with representation in modern democratic societies. That the conventional wisdom suggesting that “who votes” does not matter due to the relatively representative policy preferences expressed by voters seemed to conflict with a broader appreciation of the notable demographic, economic, and political changes that have occurred in the U.S. since Wolfinger and Rosenstone’s classic statement.

Re-visiting this very basic question is thus important in both these normative and practical empirical respects. Both elected officials and citizens alike tend to think of elections as mandates of sorts, and though political scientists tend to object to such notions on several grounds, one important aspect of the legitimacy and reality of such perceived mandates hinges on whether the voters who supposedly express such preferences are representative

of those who do not choose to engage. Thus, conventional wisdom based on the empirical analysis of data from one single election over thirty years ago certainly deserves further inspection.

We offer in this paper a more extended analysis of the extent to which voters represent non-voters. Importantly, we take issue with the assumption that voters are indeed representative of non-voters. Our evidence deviates from that offered by Wolfinger and Rosenstone in one very important respect: that after 1972, voters and non-voters differ significantly on most issues relating to the role of government in redistributive policies. In addition to these differences being evident in nearly every election since 1972, we also note that the nature of the electoral bias is clear as well: voters are substantially more conservative than non-voters on class-based issues.

Inconsistent findings across different national surveys certainly merit further attention and consideration, which is part of our immediate research plan. Theoretically, what we believe to offer the greatest potential pay-off stems from our empirical observation of the extent to which the magnitude and nature of the representativeness of voters seems to vary more with respect to election-specific factors than with respect to more fundamental, long-term political or economic changes. Investigating these patterns suggests more serious consideration of elite sources of voter mobilization and representation, issues that were simply not a part of Wolfinger and Rosenstone's theoretical or empirical approach over thirty years ago. In this respect, we conclude that a comprehensive analysis of representation of different interests over time in the electorate will offer numerous intellectual advances in our understanding of the determinants and consequences of voter turnout.

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8 Appendix on Question Wording

8.1 American National Election Studies

Representative introductions to the seven-point scale responses are included below:

- Government Health Insurance:

There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that medical expenses should be paid by individuals, and through private insurance like Blue Cross or some other company paid plans). Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And of course, some people have opinions somewhere in between at points 2,3,4,5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

- Government Guarantee Jobs

Some people feel that the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on his/their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

- Government Services

Some people think the government should provide fewer services, even in areas such as health and education, in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel that it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

- Women's Role

Recently there has been a lot of talk about women's rights. Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry and government. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1). Others feel that a women's place is in the home. Suppose these people are at the other end; at point 7. And of course, some people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about this?

- Aid to Blacks

Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5 or 6). Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about it?

- Defense Spending

Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about this?

- Party Identification

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? (IF REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT) Would you call yourself a strong (REP/DEM) or a not very strong (REP/DEM)? (IF INDEPENDENT, OTHER [1966 AND LATER: OR NO PREFERENCE]:) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?

- Ideology

We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, extremely conservative, or haven't you thought much about this?

- Candidate/Vote Preference

1978-LATER: I'd like to get your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news these days I'll read the name of a person and I'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 and 100 mean that you feel favorably and warm toward the person; ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorably toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person.) If we come to a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate that person. Just tell me and we'll move on to the next one.

8.2 National Annenberg Election Study

Question-wording for the policy preference questions is provided below. Possible response categories are included in Tables 3 and 4.

- **Make Union Organizing Easier**
Do you favor or oppose making it easier for labor unions to organize?
- **Government Health Insurance for Children**
Do you favor or oppose the federal government helping to pay for health insurance for all children?
- **Social Security in Stock Market**
Do you favor or oppose allowing workers to invest some of their Social Security contributions in the stock market?
- **School Vouchers**
Do you favor or oppose the federal government giving tax credits or vouchers to parents to help send them to private schools?
- **Favor Federal Assistance for Schools**
Providing financial assistance to public elementary and secondary schools—should the federal government spend more on it, the same as now, less, or no money at all?
- **Favor Military Spending**
Military defense—should the federal government spend more on it, the same as now, less, or no money at all?
- **Reinstate the Draft**
Do you think the United States should put the military draft back into operation?
- **Spending to Rebuild Iraq**
Rebuilding Iraq—should the federal government spend more on it, the same as now, less, or no money at all?
- **Troops in Iraq**
Do you think the United States should keep troops in Iraq until a stable government is established there, or do you think the U.S. should bring its troops home as soon as possible?
- **Implement 9/11 Recommendations**
As you may know, the 9/11 commission has recently released its final report on what the government knew about potential terrorist attacks before 9/1, and made recommendations on what the government should do to prevent future attacks. Based on what you know about the report, do you think the government should adopt all the commission's recommendations, most of them, just some of them, or none of them?
- **Gun Control**
Restricting the kinds of guns people can buy—should the federal government do more about it, do the same as now, do less about it, or do nothing at all?

- Assault Weapons Ban

The current federal law banning assault weapons is about to expire. Do you think the U.S. Congress should pass this law again, or not?

- Ban All Abortions

The federal government banning all abortions—do you favor or oppose the federal government doing this?

- Make Abortion More Difficult

Laws making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion—do you favor or oppose this?

- Party Identification

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democratic, a Republican, an Independent or something else?

- Ideology

Generally speaking, would you describe your political views as very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal or very liberal?

Table 1: Partisan Composition of Voters versus Non-Voters, 1972 and 2004

	1972			2004		
	% of Non- Voters	% of Voters	Diff	% of Non- Voters	% of Voters	Diff
Party ID - 7 Point Scale						
<i>Strong Dem</i>	11.1	14.8	-4.7	10.9	18.7	-7.8
<i>Weak Dem</i>	29.1	25.1	4.0	17.3	13.5	3.8
<i>Lean Dem</i>	11.6	10.5	1.1	21.4	15.7	4.6
<i>Indep</i>	22.0	9.1	12.9	20.9	6.5	14.4
<i>Lean Rep</i>	9.9	11.3	-2.4	15.5	10.7	4.8
<i>Weak Rep</i>	11.1	15.4	-4.3	10.0	14.6	-4.6
<i>Strong Rep</i>	5.2	13.0	-7.8	4.1	20.2	-16.1
Party ID - 3 Point Scale						
<i>Dem</i>	51.8	51.1	0.5	49.6	47.8	1.8
<i>Indep</i>	22.0	9.1	12.9	20.9	6.5	14.4
<i>Rep</i>	26.2	39.6	-13.4	29.6	45.5	-16.0
Number of Respondents	595	1651		220	830	

Entries are column percentages. Data from the National Election Study, 1972 and 2004

Table 2: Issue Attitudes of Voters versus Non-Voters, 1972 and 2004

	1972			2004		
	% of Non- Voters	% of Voters	Diff	% of Non- Voters	% of Voters	Diff
Govt Jobs Scale						
<i>Govt Should Guarantee Jobs</i>	37.1	29.3	7.8	42.9	31.0	11.9
<i>Middle Road</i>	19.4	24.6	-5.2	17.2	20.0	-2.8
<i>People on Their Own</i>	43.5	46.1	-2.6	39.9	49.9	-9.1
Number of Respondents	490	1482		203	771	
Govt Health-Provider Scale						
<i>Govt Health Insurance</i>	48.3	43.7	4.6	51.5	44.3	7.2
<i>Middle Road</i>	15.8	14.2	1.6	17.7	19.7	-2.0
<i>Private Insurance</i>	35.8	42.1	-6.3	30.8	36.0	-5.2
Number of Respondents	240	718		198	781	
Abortion Legal						
<i>Always Legal</i>	21.3	26.2	-4.9	31.6	38.9	-7.3
<i>If Child Burden</i>	15.9	18.4	-2.5	16.4	18.0	-1.6
<i>Mother's Life in Danger</i>	49.8	45.8	4.0	32.9	31.4	1.5
<i>Never</i>	13.2	9.6	3.6	19.1	11.7	7.4
Number of Respondents	593	1621		225	822	
Women's Role						
<i>Women's Equality</i>	43.7	51.0	-7.3	82.6	83.2	-0.6
<i>Middle of Road</i>	16.8	21.2	-4.4	8.5	10.0	-1.5
<i>Women's Place is Home</i>	39.5	27.8	11.7	8.9	6.8	2.1
Number of Respondents	572	1588		213	810	
Respondent Ideology						
<i>Liberal</i>	22.8	26.6	-3.8	26.2	29.1	-2.9
<i>Moderate</i>	45.3	35.4	9.9	41.6	30.2	11.4
<i>Conservative</i>	31.8	38.0	-6.2	32.2	40.7	-8.5
Number of Respondents	311	1237		149	718	

Entries are column percentages. Data from the National Election Study, 1972 and 2004

Table 3: Class-based and Value-based Issue Attitudes of Voters versus Non-Voters, 2004 Annenberg

	% of Non-Voters	% of Voters	Diff
Make Union Organizing Easier			
<i>Favor</i>	73.3	59.5	13.8
<i>Oppose</i>	26.8	40.5	-13.7
Govt Health Insurance for Children			
<i>Favor</i>	84.0	77.2	6.8
<i>Oppose</i>	16.0	22.8	-6.8
Social Security in Stock Market			
<i>Favor</i>	62.2	57.4	4.8
<i>Oppose</i>	37.8	42.6	-4.8
School Vouchers			
<i>Strongly Favor</i>	34.2	27.7	7.5
<i>Somewhat Favor</i>	19.7	17.5	2.2
<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	17.4	17.4	0
<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	24.8	35.0	-10.2
<i>Neither Favor nor Oppose</i>	3.9	2.4	1.5
Favor Federal Assistance For Schools			
<i>More</i>	79.9	67.6	12.3
<i>Same</i>	14.6	22.7	-8.1
<i>Less</i>	3.2	6.2	-3.0
<i>None</i>	2.3	3.6	-1.3
Favor Military Spending			
<i>More</i>	46.3	46.9	-0.6
<i>Same</i>	38.1	38.9	-0.8
<i>Less</i>	11.5	13.3	-1.8
<i>None</i>	4.1	0.8	3.3
Reinstate the Draft			
<i>Favor</i>	21.4	21.8	-0.4
<i>Oppose</i>	78.6	78.2	0.4
Spending to Rebuild Iraq			
<i>More</i>	14.5	10.7	3.8
<i>Same</i>	21.6	36.1	-14.5
<i>Less</i>	28.6	32.5	-3.9
<i>None</i>	35.2	20.8	14.4

Entries are column percentages. Data from the 2004 Annenberg National Election Study.

Table 4: Value-based Issue Attitudes of Voters versus Non-Voters, 2004 Annenberg

	% of Non-Voters	% of Voters	Diff
Troops in Iraq			
<i>Keep in Iraq</i>	68.1	49.8	18.3
<i>Bring Home</i>	31.9	50.2	-18.3
Implement 9/11 Recs			
<i>All</i>	28.3	16.7	11.6
<i>Most</i>	26.3	40.4	-14.1
<i>Some</i>	44.4	41.1	3.3
<i>None</i>	1.0	1.8	-0.7
Gun Control			
<i>More</i>	63.9	55.7	8.2
<i>Same</i>	18.1	23.4	-5.3
<i>Less</i>	4.5	7.8	-3.3
<i>None</i>	13.6	13.1	0.5
Assault Weapons Ban			
<i>Favor</i>	69.5	75.0	-5.5
<i>Oppose</i>	30.5	25.0	5.5
Ban All Abortions			
<i>Strongly Favor</i>	22.0	21.3	0.7
<i>Somewhat Favor</i>	5.3	6.5	-1.2
<i>Neither Favor nor Oppose</i>	5.3	3.0	2.3
<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	18.4	16.9	1.5
<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	48.9	52.2	-3.3
Make Abortion More Difficult			
<i>Strongly Favor</i>	26.0	26.8	-0.8
<i>Somewhat Favor</i>	10.2	10.8	-0.6
<i>Neither Favor nor Oppose</i>	7.2	4.1	3.1
<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	14.5	13.4	1.1
<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	42.1	44.9	-2.8

Entries are column percentages. Data from the 2004 Annenberg National Election Study.

Table 5: Political Views of Voters versus Non-Voters, 2004 Annenberg

	% of Non- Non-Voters	% of Voters	Diff
Ideology			
<i>Very Conservative</i>	5.6	5.7	-0.1
<i>Conservative</i>	19.7	18.1	1.6
<i>Moderate</i>	40.8	37.2	3.6
<i>Liberal</i>	26.8	29.1	-2.3
<i>Very Liberal</i>	7.1	9.9	-2.8
Party Identification			
<i>Republican</i>	30.9	34.2	-3.3
<i>Democrat</i>	35.4	25.9	5.5
<i>Independent</i>	20.1	34.6	-14.5
<i>Something Else</i>	13.8	5.4	-8.4

Entries are column percentages. Data from the 2004 Annenberg National Election Study.

Figure 1: Political Views - Ideology, Partisanship, Vote Preference

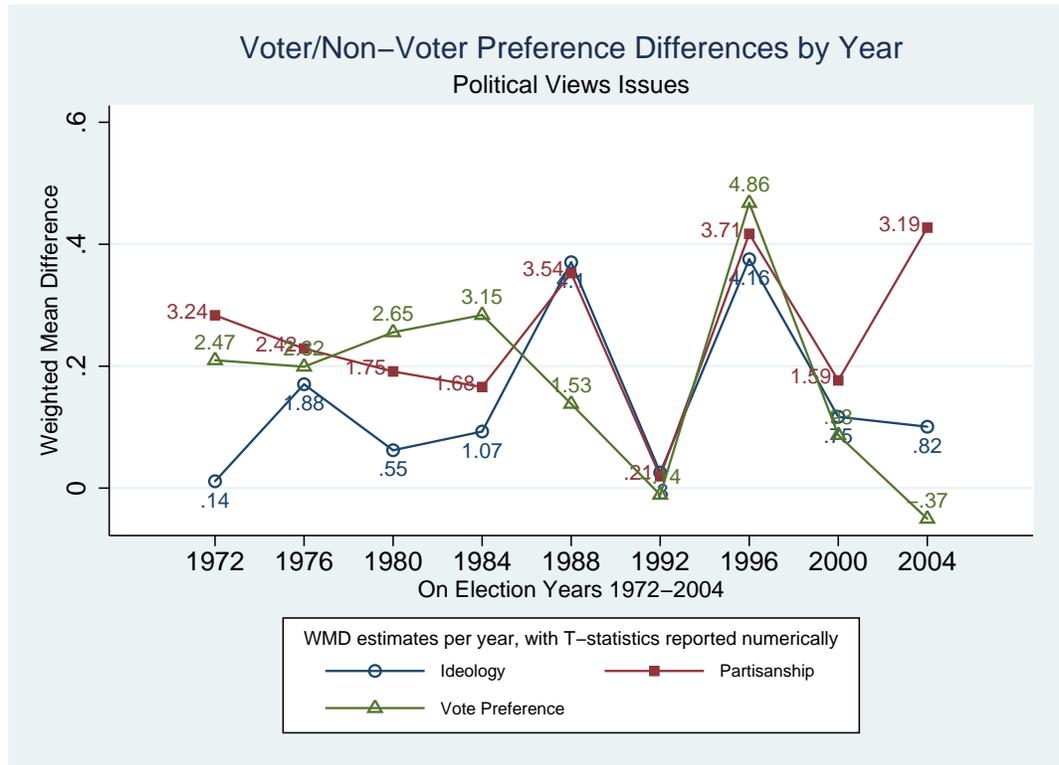


Figure 2: Political Views - Class Based Issues

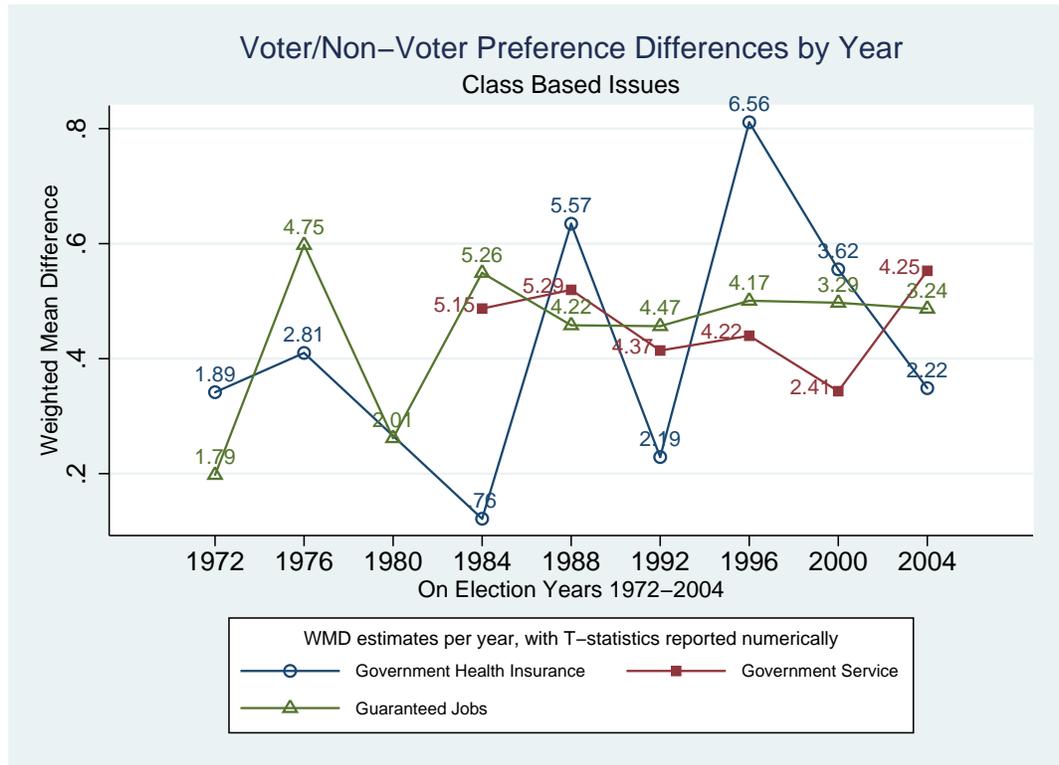


Figure 3: Political Views - Values Issues

