A SHRINKING RURAL POPULATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT

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In recent decades, the size of the rural population in the United States, as in most advanced industrialized countries, has been decreasing. Past research has examined political attitudes and behaviors in rural America, but has not considered whether overtime variation in these attitudes and behaviors might be a function of rural population loss and its associated economic consequences. As rural areas shrink, they may lose economic and political power, leading to a decrease in political efficacy and trust. Additionally, as rural areas face decline, partisanship and vote choice patterns may shift as rural areas have new policy demands. Together, these changes in attitudes may affect participation patterns, as rural-urban polarization may lead to an increase in participation, or the increased alienation of rural citizens may lead to them choosing not to participate.

At the same time, it must be considered that the findings on the economic consequences of rural population loss have been mixed- some rural areas are experiencing decline, while others have been able to adjust to the changing circumstances and improve their conditions. Given these mixed findings, is the relationship between rural population loss and political attitudes and behaviors uniform, or does it depend on the economic context? Additionally, if these patterns vary based on economic circumstance, it calls into question many of the policies that have been put into place in order to address this phenomenon, which tend to be put in place at the state or national level and persist even when research has shown numerous times they are largely ineffective. Using data from the Census Bureau, the US Department of Agri-

culture, the American National Election Studies, as well as a case study, I examine these questions and discuss the implications of the conclusions for the future of the American political and economic systems.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the size of the rural population in the United States, as in most advanced industrialized countries, has been decreasing. Scholars from the fields of economics, sociology, and demography and organizations that focus on economic development have asked why this phenomenon is occurring and what its consequences are. The typical characterization of rural areas experiencing this phenomenon is that they are trapped in a "vicious cycle:" outmigration leads to a set of effects that makes communities less attractive, leading to more outmigration and less inmigration (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Knight 1994; Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003). There are a few researchers that take an alternative stance, at least in regards to the consequences. They find evidence that many rural areas are quite prosperous in spite of their shrinking population and argue that it is not so much that their population loss is leading to economic decline but instead that it is leading to economic transformation (Danbom 2006; McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010). Whether the consequence is economic decline or economic transformation, one conclusion is clear across this body of research: the shrinking rural population has a substantial economic impact, perhaps even beyond rural areas.

Political scientists, however, remain largely silent on this topic. Past research has examined political attitudes and behaviors in rural America, finding that they fluctuate greatly in response to economic shocks (see Lipset 1968), but has not specifically considered whether variation in these attitudes and behaviors might be a function of a shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic consequences. At the same time, past research has established that policies intended to slow rural outmigration or encourage rural inmigration have been largely ineffective (Artz and Yu 2011; Carr and Kefalas 2009; Goetz and Debertin 1996; Hansen,

Ban and Huggins 2003; Kodrzycki 2001; Mills 2001), but has not considered the reasons that these ineffective policies come into existence and persist. As rural economic circumstances change in conjunction with the percentage of the population that is rural - for better or for worse - we must consider the impact this may have on the American political system. Additionally, we must consider how this changing context affects the attitudes and behaviors of those experiencing the changes. Do rural Americans support different parties or candidates than their suburban or urban counterparts do? Are their political trust or political efficacy levels lower or higher? Do their political participation patterns differ? And finally, do representatives, facing an electorate whose demographic, political, and economic makeup is transforming, enact these policies that are largely ineffective but provide a particularistic benefit in an attempt to maintain their political power?

In order to answer these questions, I examine data from the American National Election Studies from 1962 - 2008 as well as a case study of rural counties where a policy has been put in place in order to address the impact of a shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and economic decline. Refer to Figure 1.1 for a complete diagram of the causal process these analyses will examine. Overall, I find that the percentage of the population that is rural has effects on numerous political attitudes and behaviors. First, as the percentage of the population that is rural has declined, political trust and efficacy have declined as well, especially in rural areas. Following from this finding, as well as the generally observed geographic polarization in the United states, I then examine partisanship and vote choice. Many argue that rural Americans identify as and vote for Republican candidates due to their preference for small government, which could be exacerbated by low trust and efficacy levels. While I do find that increased Republican party identification is associated with a smaller percentage of the population that is rural, the relationship with vote choice is more complicated. I also find some evidence in favor of increased third party support as a result. Finally, I find that although one might expect support for unconventional participation to increase as trust and efficacy decrease along with the rural popula-

tions percentage, this is not the case. Overall, all forms of participation (or support for the behaviors) are lower in rural areas and that lower levels of participation are associated with decreases in the percentage of the population that is rural. Furthermore, in many of these analyses, I find strong evidence that an individuals economic circumstances or at least his or her perception of the economic circumstances - matter. The implication of these conclusions is that the economic future of rural areas matters. As the rural population declines, rural Americans may feel disaffected and support parties or candidates appealing to this belief, but unless rural areas begin to consistently experience economic decline, there is no evidence that these changes in attitudes will drive substantial changes in their political behavior.

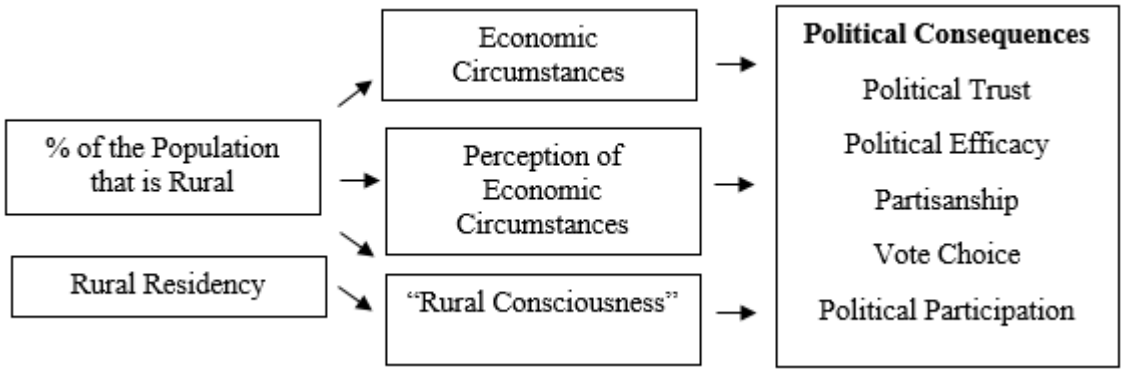

Fig. 1.1. Causal Process Diagram

1.1 The Nature of the Shrinking Rural US Population

One might begin by asking to what extent has rural population loss been occurring in the United States? According to the Census Bureau's Population Estimates (1790 - 2010), the proportion of the population that lives in rural areas has technically been in decline since the country's founding. Until the early 1900s, however, the rural population continued to grow at a double digit pace and the proportion of the population that was rural decreased only because urban growth outpaced rural

growth. In fact, it was not until the 1960s that the actual size of the rural population began to decrease, meaning that this phenomenon is somewhat modern. Since then, the absolute size of the rural population has actually decreased relative to the previous Census in several decades (the 1960s, 1970s, and 2000s), as can be seen in Figure 1.2. The rural population in 2010 of 59,492,267 people has decreased 3.5 percent from its peak of 61,658,386 in 1990 and now makes up about one-fifth of the total population.

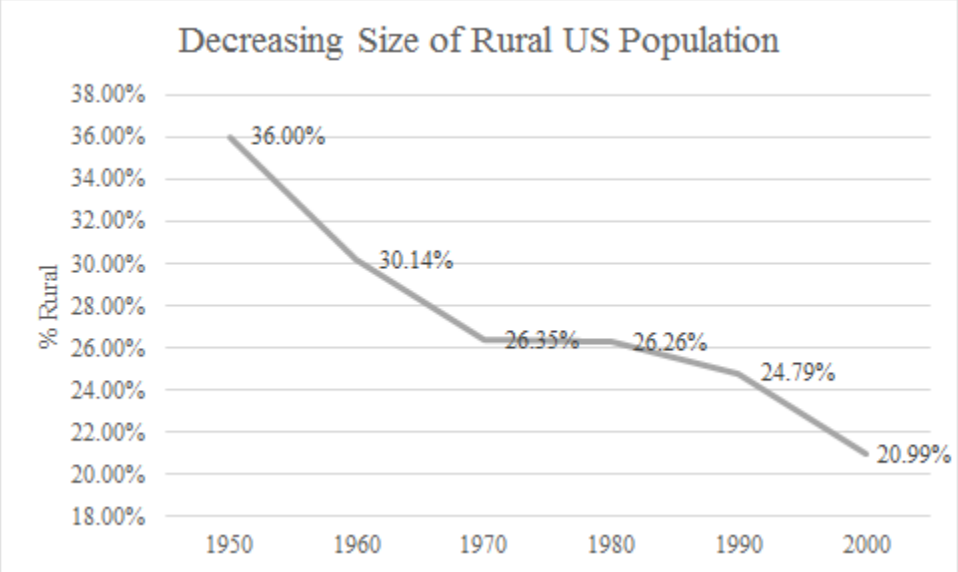

Fig. 1.2. Percent of the US Population that is Rural, 1950 - 2010

Furthermore, according to American Community Survey data from 2000-2012, this decrease in the rural population has been of a distinct nature. As of 2012, similar proportions of rural and urban persons had high school educations (85 percent in each), but the proportion of persons with bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees was lower in rural areas than urban areas (8.2 percentage points and 3.6 percentage points lower, respectively). Additionally, on average, rural persons are about six years older. This age gap is increasing in size, too - in 2000, the median age in rural areas was only four years older than the median age in urban areas. It seems that not only are rural areas in the United States losing population, but also that they are losing

their young, educated population a phenomenon that has been labeled as "rural brain drain" (Carr and Kefalas 2009).

Despite these trends rural areas are not necessarily falling behind economically. Indicators of economic health such as poverty rates, unemployment rates, and educational attainment reveal that rural areas are either doing just as well as urban areas or at least catching up, not falling behind. Figure 1.3 shows overtime changes in poverty rates for urban and rural areas from 1959-2012. Poverty rates fell sharply in both, and although rural areas continue to have higher poverty rates [1], the gap between rural and urban areas has closed over time. In fact, the gap between the two was smallest in 2010 (USDA ERS 2016*b*).

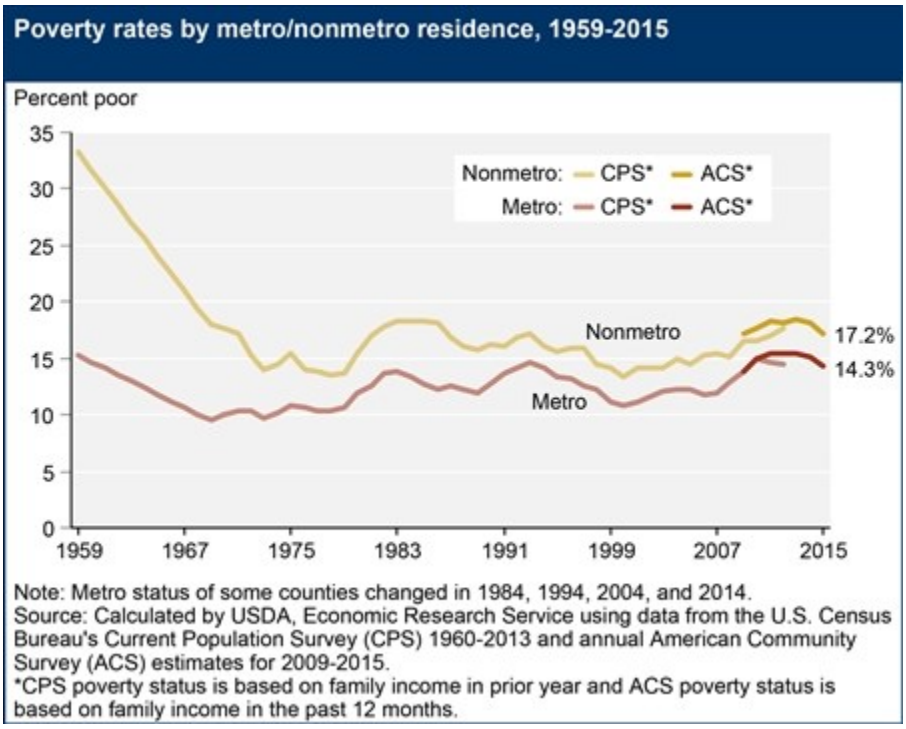

Fig. 1.3. Rural and Urban Poverty Rates: 1959-2015

[1]Of the 353 counties that had persistent poverty (poverty rate over 20 percent from 1980-2011), 301 are non-metro counties, and most are in the south (USDA ERS 2016*a*).

Figure 1.4 shows a similar trend in educational attainment - urban areas continue to have a higher percentage of adults with bachelor's degrees, but more and more persons in rural areas are obtaining these degrees, or at least some college education (USDA ERS 2016*c*).

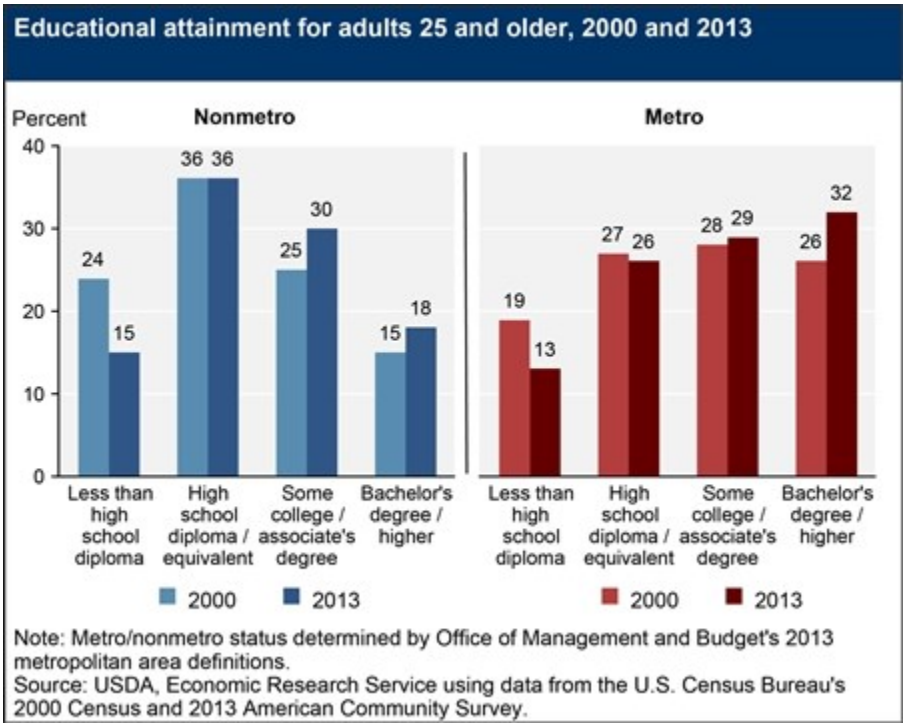

Fig. 1.4. Rural and Urban Educational Attainment: 2000 and 2013

Finally, Figure 1.5 provides further evidence of this pattern, showing that from the 2008 recession until recently, the unemployment rates in rural and urban areas were similar. Only in the last few quarters has the gap has widened again, but unemployment rates have still decreased substantially in both areas [2] (USDA ERS 2016*d*).

[2]In both areas, it is worth noting that not all of the decline in unemployment rate is due to increased employment: about half is due to a decrease in labor force participation. However, this is the same in both rural and urban areas (USDA ERS 2016*d*).

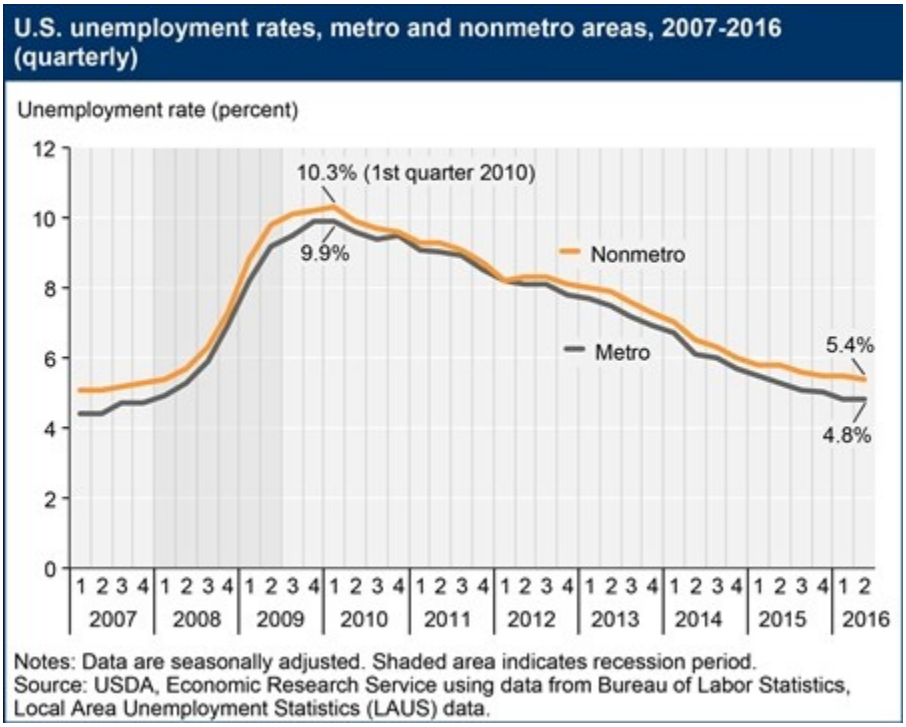

Fig. 1.5. Rural and Urban Unemployment Rates: 2007-2016

To summarize, examining several indicators of economic health overtime shows that rural areas, on average, are not falling further behind urban areas. Although urban areas continue to outperform rural areas, rural educational attainment has increased while at the same time rural poverty and unemployment have decreased. If rural population loss is leading to widespread economic decline in rural areas, it is not evident from these figures. However, on a local or individual level, the economic circumstances may vary. This means that the role of changing economic circumstances associated with a declining percentage of the population that is rural in shaping political attitudes and behavior must still be examined. Consider, for example, that a particular rural town and its residents may have changes in their political attitudes or behaviors if major employers leave and they face widespread unemployment, although the changes to this one town would not have much if any impact on the national unemployment rate.

1.1.1 Why is the Rural Population Shrinking?

This study will focus primarily on the consequences of the shrinking proportion of the population that is rural and associated economic changes, but it is also important to understand the causes in order to fully understand the impact. There are two main approaches to studies that attempt to understand why the rural population is dwindling. One attempts to understand why people move to urban areas, and the other attempts to understand why people stay in, return to, or move to rural areas. Both approaches cite economic and noneconomic factors in their explanations of this behavior. By economic factors I mean those that have measureable monetary ramifications, and by noneconomic factors I mean those that do not (the line between these can blur).

Overall, the findings suggest that although both sets of factors are important, economic factors predominantly drive rural outmigration and noneconomic factors predominantly drive rural inmigration (or factor into decisions against outmigration). Most policies directed at slowing or stopping the rural population decline, however, focus on providing economic incentives, rather than noneconomic ones, to new or return migrants, meaning that the policies in place often fail to attract new or return migrants. An emerging area of research asks why these policies that use economic incentives do not seem to work, and argues that community attachments might provide an answer: for individuals with strong community attachments, policies that provide economic incentives for inmigration are more effective (or they will decide not to leave the rural area in the first place), and for those who are less attached to their communities, such policies will be less effective.

Determinants of Outmigration

The two major determinants of outmigration from rural to urban areas are age and education: young, highly educated people are the most likely to leave (Carr and Kefalas 2009; DaVanzo 1983; Domina 2006; Huang, Orazem and Wohlgemuth 2002;

Kodrzycki 2001; McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010). There are several reasons that this is the case, and the majority of them are economic in nature. A major reason for migration patterns of this nature is income differentials - people move to areas where incomes are higher (Barro and Sala-I-Martin 1992). People in cities earn far more than those in rural areas, meaning that the return on education is greater for those who decide to leave (Artz and Yu 2011; Costa and Kahn 2000; Domina 2006; Huang, Orazem and Wohlgemuth 2002; Mills 2001; Thissen et al. 2010). Therefore, a key reason that young, educated people leave is simply to earn more money in the same career. Pay differentials are not the only job-related factor - job availability matters, too (McGranahan and Beale 2002). Studies by Costa and Kahn (2000) and Hansen, Ban and Huggins (2003) cite an inability for rural areas to provide jobs for couples in which both spouses are educated as a reason for the outmigration of these couples.

Furthermore, economic problems such as this one in areas experiencing a decline in rural population may lead to a downward spiral: educated young people leave rural areas because there are few jobs available to them, resulting in companies that offer such jobs choosing not to locate in rural areas due to a lack of workers, fueling additional outmigration outmigration (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Knight 1994). Rural areas also face a great deal of economic competition for jobs and skilled workers, as they must compete not only with urban areas, but also with developing countries and other rural areas (Mills 2001; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003). Additionally, job opportunities that do appear - for example, hazardous waste facilities or tourist attractions may pose other problems and fail to attenuate the rate of rural population decline (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Hunter and Sutton 2004; Knight 1994; Traphagan and Knight 2003). A final potential economic reason for outmigration is that young people who are not yet highly skilled, but would like to pursue a higher education, may leave in order to obtain their education (Hansen, Ban and Huggins 2003). If tuition is too high or the quality of the programs available

is low or decreasing, the population may shrink when students elect to pursue their education elsewhere (Costa and Kahn 2000; Hansen, Ban and Huggins 2003).

Economic factors are clearly central to educated young peoples' migration decisions, but they are not the only relevant factors. Some non-economic factors may influence outmigration of young, highly-educated people as well. One noneconomic factor is the young person's aspirations those who value recognition for achieving something tend to move to urban areas (Artz and Yu 2011). Another suggestion is that educated young people leave because they desire creative class amenities that are not available in rural areas, such as shopping, restaurants, and cultural amenities, and that building such amenities would keep them from leaving or bring them back (Goetz and Debertin 1996; Hansen, Ban and Huggins 2003; Reichert 2002; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003). The evidence for this claim, however, is mixed, as rural areas with such amenities may still experience a population decline (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Costa and Kahn 2000; Domina 2006). Still, these factors may help to explain why policies using an economic approach to reducing outmigration, such as payments to family farmers or tax breaks to young families, do not always stop or slow outmigration (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Goetz and Debertin 1996; Kodrzycki 2001; Mills 2001). Despite the strong evidence that economic factors push educated young people towards outmigration, and the weak evidence that noneconomic factors do the same, these economic policies may not always fulfill their intended purpose, a key reason that this study examines the reasons that such policies exist and persist.

Determinants of Inmigration

Factors that explain inmigration to rural areas, whether inmigrants are new or returning residents, seem to be the mirror image of those influencing outmigration: noneconomic factors draw residents in, while economic factors are less influential. Key determinants of rural residence are growing up in a rural area, age, marital status,

and race (Artz and Yu 2011). Additionally, those who are living in rural areas tend to value family traditions and strong friendships, but these factors are less influential for those with higher educations (Artz and Yu 2011; Hansen, Ban and Huggins 2003; Reichert 2002). Domina (2006) does argue that it is economic, not noneconomic factors that influence a person's decision to live in a rural area. He concludes that the migration pattern of middle-aged and elderly, rather than young, educated, people is consistent with an economic explanation, but it is not necessarily inconsistent with noneconomic factors such as those related to family situation.

A conclusion made by many studies citing noneconomic factors in the decision to live in rural areas is that these findings imply that financial incentives to bring educated young people into rural areas will not work (Artz and Yu 2011). This implication is unsurprising in light of the previously discussed finding that policies that are economic in nature do not stop or slow outmigration. Another reason that this implication is unsurprising is that economic factors that tie into the decision to live in a rural area are not necessarily separate from noneconomic ones. For example, those who live in rural areas because of the low housing costs or low childcare costs do so because they have families (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Hansen, Ban and Huggins 2003). Job related choices often reflect person or family values as well, such as wanting the freedom that comes with small business ownership, or a desired to pass a small business on to one's children (Artz and Yu 2011). DaVanzo (1983) refers to such factors as intangibles that are location specific capital. These are factors that increase the "cost" of making an economically beneficial moving decision, but do not have tangible costs (DaVanzo 1983; Mincer 1978). Perhaps such connections between economic and noneconomic factors can help to explain why policies that target only one type of factor, such as those that provide tax breaks or those that bring in creative class amenities, do not work. This is the reasoning behind the emergence of studies that examine the role of community attachments, as they are a potential connection between economic and noneconomic factors.

The Role of Community Attachments

According to Hansen, Ban and Huggins (2003), there is no one policy that can target those who chose to stay in rural areas and those who have left rural areas but have the potential to return because of the different factors that motivate them. The preceding discussion of factors influencing outmigration and inmigration makes it clear that different factors motivate these different behaviors but is it necessarily the case that no factors link these decisions? Recall that intangibles can affect decisions that are typically economic in nature. Families and friendships are noneconomic factors, but they can clearly affect economic costs (DaVanzo 1983; Mincer 1978). This idea has led to the inclusion of a factor whose role has not yet been completely explored: the role of community attachments. By community attachments, I mean that these young adults have a positive attitude towards their community: they do not view leaving it as the only pathway towards success and perhaps desire a stake in the community's future. Attachment to a rural community could therefore explain not only why policies aimed at slowing outmigration but also policies aimed at increasing inmigration seem ineffective, as a person's attachment to the community could supersede such efforts.

A few newer studies have examined the role of community attachments in migration decisions. Thissen et al. (2010) explain that in two different communities, educated young people may make migration decisions on the basis of the culture of the community in addition to economic considerations. According to McManus et al. (2012), a strong sense of community in the rural farming communities that they study is a key factor in the communities' potential for resilience. However, Carr and Kefalas (2009) and Pattie et al. (2011) both make a disturbing discovery: community leaders may be pushing out their best students, telling them that it is in their interests to leave rural communities, and therefore causing these youths to rule out the possibility of living in a rural community in the future. This is especially problematic because those who remain are those who possess fewer skills needed to lead productive lives

in their hometown, and even those young adults may have a negative view of their community, meaning that they do not necessarily want to have a stake in its future success (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Pattie et al. 2011).

Although leaving may in fact be in an educated young person's best interests, it may not be in the rural community's best interests, then. In short, rural communities may be destroying themselves through such actions. There may be some hope for rural communities, however: there are some national and state level policies intended to address the declining rural population in the United States (McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010), and Knight (1994) and Traphagan and Knight (2003) show that in Japan, local governments and community residents, especially those who are return migrants are making efforts to connect rural communities to young, educated urbanites. Understanding the role of community attachments in migration decisions may prove useful, then, if after learning more about the effects of rural population loss one wishes to abate them.

1.1.2 Consequences: Two Competing Views

Research typically focuses on the causes of the rural population decrease and the effectiveness of policy responses rather than asking what this phenomenon's consequences are. There has been some research that addresses this question, but it focuses almost entirely on economic consequences, not political ones. Furthermore, in general, the literature suggests that the economic future of not only the rural areas experiencing this phenomenon but also of national economies across the developed world is dire. As previously mentioned, the typical characterization of rural areas is that they are trapped in a "vicious cycle:" outmigration leads to a set of effects that makes communities less attractive, leading to more outmigration and less inmigration (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Knight 1994; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003).

There are numerous effects of a shrinking rural population involved in this cycle that they enumerate. Schools may close as young people move away, leaving behind an elderly population and few school aged children (Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Traphagan and Knight 2003). Farms may become less productive as those who remain employed in agriculture age (Coulmas and Lützeler 2011). Manufacturing and retail industries leave as they lack employees and demand (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003; Traphagan and Knight 2003). Another obstacle is the pressure put on local governments to provide services to an increasingly elderly population with an increasingly smaller population base from which to obtain funds (Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2003; Traphagan and Knight 2003). These elements of the cycle, along with evidence that policy efforts to address rural population decreases are failing, seem to suggest that rural areas face a future of economic decline.

As previously discussed, Carr and Kefalas (2009) take this argument one step further, explaining that rural areas are sowing the seeds of [their] own decline (139). They make this argument because in the rural town that they study, educators encourage those that they label "achievers" - young people with the greatest potential to obtain high human capital levels to migrate, not to stay. One person that they interview further explains the problem with encouraging outmigration of achievers: The best kids go, while the ones with the biggest problems stay (Carr and Kefalas 2009). Their analysis implies that rural communities are not actually doing anything to prevent outmigration by these young people, then, as those within the communities actively encourage it. The implication of their argument is that rural communities are to blame for self-perpetuating their decline. Evidence from Japan, however, suggests that while their rural communities still face the problem of the "best kids" leaving, local communities work actively against perpetuation of the vicious cycle (Knight 1994; Traphagan and Knight 2003). It is possible, then, that the rural areas are trapped in the cycle I have described, but further research is necessary to determine whether

rural areas are self-perpetuating this cycle outside of the community that Carr and Kefalas (2009) examine.

The competing viewpoint regarding consequences comes from the fact that this literature needs to address one of its major assumptions: nearly all authors assume that a shrinking rural population is a "problem." Obviously, there are rural areas where this phenomenon has led to economic downturn; I am not trying to deny this fact, but simply to point out that the decreasing size of the rural population may not be a universal problem nor a problem warranting national or international policy interventions, as Carr and Kefalas (2009) suggest it is. Recall that the data concerning rural population loss in the United States present a picture that is not so bleak, and could perhaps be described as positive. This assumption that there is a "problem" could be one of the reasons that there is more research on the causes than on the consequences of rural population decline - if everyone assumes that the phenomenon is a problem, then research detailing the negative consequences of it may seem to banal to pursue. In order to challenge this assumption, researchers need to begin by asking what the systemic consequences of a shrinking rural population are - both political and economic a question which this analysis will address.

Beyond the data on the rural economy that has been presented, is there any reason to doubt that rural population loss is a problem? A key argument as to why this phenomenon may not be a problem is exemplified by Glaeser (2009) *The Triumph of the City*. In this book, he builds an argument from a familiar idea: that urbanization leads to economic growth. What is unique about his book is that he provides a deeper perspective on not only why urbanization leads to growth but also why a lack of urbanization is especially problematic for the world economy. According to Glaeser (2009), urbanization is particularly important for growth because the geographic concentration of human capital allows for greater innovation (citing examples such as automobile manufacturing in Detroit). He further explains that urbanization is better for the world economy for reasons such as resource efficiency, explaining that in more spread out cities such as Houston, considerable unnecessary resources are di-

verted towards air conditioning for large homes and gasoline for lengthy commutes. Although he does not flip this logic around and argue that maintenance of rural areas is detrimental to the larger economy, one could at least examine this possible extension of his argument. Perhaps rural population loss is detrimental to local economies, but should attempts be made to solve the problem if solving the problem leads to lower innovation levels and resource efficiency?

Glaeser (2009) is not completely alone - there are some studies in this literature that stand in stark contrast to those providing the laundry list of negative outcomes associated with a shrinking rural population. Danbom (2006), for example, points out that while some rural areas do have problems with persistent poverty and rural farmers are becoming increasingly marginal, rural areas overall are doing well. He points out that many people who do choose to move to rural areas do so because of amenities that are unique to these areas, such as outdoor recreation, and that they will find that they are not missing many of the amenities that urban areas offer (i.e. retail stores). He argues that it is not so much that rural areas are experiencing economic declines as they are an economic transformation. Yes, the dominant industries of the past, such as agriculture, have faced hardship, but others, such as the service industry, are beginning to take over instead. Economic decline is not the norm for all rural counties, and that many are in fact quite prosperous in spite of their population decline (McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2003), there are numerous cases where rural regions have been able to sustain development. The average rural region in Austria, for example, has slower economic growth than urban regions, but there are many rural regions that outperform the urban ones as well.

The problem here, then, is not that the literature does not recognize that it is possible for rural areas experiencing a shrinking population to have economic success. It is instead that the majority of voices assume that this scenario is the exception rather than the rule without proper examination and without proper consideration of arguments from within their field and beyond. They then call upon governments at

all levels to remedy the problem, or, in the case of the OECD, go so far as to assume it is a problem warranting international attention. This analysis will not only help to clarify what the exact nature of the political and economic consequences are both locally and nationally, providing further insight into whether rural population decline is a "problem" is a reasonable assumption or not but also examine how these causes and consequences and policies intended to address the "problem" come together to shape the future America's political and economic systems.

1.2 A Shrinking Rural Population and Political Attitudes and Behaviors

Now that the nature of rural population loss has been explained, naturally the next question to address is how this phenomenon could possibly relate to political attitudes and behaviors. To begin, it is important to point out that analyzing the divide between rural and urban voters is a study of geographic context. Some, such as Agnew (1996) and Gimpel and Schuknecht (2002) argue that inclusion of a voter's geographic context in an analysis is necessary to model the full relationship between one's individual traits and his or her ultimate behavior. This is because inclusion of geographic context allows one to include the influence of historical processes (Agnew 1996; Brown, Knopp and Morrill 2005). Others, however, argue that attempting to show evidence that geographic context plays a role is the incorrect approach, and that researchers should instead be trying to show why context does not matter (King 1996). They argue that the use of geographic context in analyses is simply a stand in for what political scientists do not know (King 1996). They make this argument because showing that there is a relationship between an area and an outcome does not explain why an outcome occurs without additional information. Regardless of which viewpoint one takes, it is clear that a widespread phenomenon affecting the geographic context should be considered whether it is changing the inherent nature of "being rural" or altering the latent explanatory variables that this context represents.

1.2.1 Social Context and Political Attitudes and Behaviors

How exactly would geographic context - in this case, living in a rural area - mold political attitudes and behaviors? After all, voters are not born knowing the historic processes that shape their geographic context, meaning that there must be some mechanism that connects this context to the eventual shared attitudes and behaviors of its residents. One possible connection is social context - socialization, discussion with neighbors, and observation of others in their area all influence voters to behave similarly to others in their geographic context. There is extensive evidence that an individual's social context influences his or her political behavior. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1987), for example, find that an individual's social network and context influence his or her political preferences (as well as their perception of others preferences).

Cho (2003) uncovers similar evidence, finding that the length of time that one has lived within a community influences one's level of campaign contribution, even when controlling for other factors such as income[3]. Furthermore, both Cho (2003) and Gimpel and Cho (2004) link this social transfer of political attitudes and political behaviors to a historical process (the settlement of ethnic communities), providing a mechanism between history of a geographic context and individual behavior (see Lieske 1993). This influence of one's social network interactions on one's own attitudes and behavior is referred to as a "contagion effect (Cho 2003)." This influence occurs because people do not choose their political discussion partners randomly; these are the people that they engage in informal discussion with, share a sense of identity or community with, and that they respect (Anderson 2009; Walsh 2004; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1991; Parker, Parker and McCann 2008; Cramer 2016).

Social network interactions with close friends and neighbors are not the only ones that influence behavior. Some find evidence that those who are closest in one's social network may not necessarily be the most influential (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1991;

[3]See Gimpel, Lee and Kaminski (2006) for a discussion of geographic context effects on campaign contributions

Huckfeldt et al. 1995). Although one might think that those who one trusts and frequently interacts with are most influential, these interactions may matter less than originally thought for many reasons: a person may pick his or her friends on the basis of traits other than political views, for example (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1991). Furthermore, discussion is not necessary for the transmission of attitudes and behaviors: people can observe others' stickers, pins, and yard signs, for example (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1991). Consider also the nature of people with similar political views to live in the same area (Bishop 2008; McDonald 2011).

It may seem that such casual observations begin to pull away from being a social mechanism, but a small degree of social interaction remains necessary for the transmission of attitudes and behaviors: a neighbor, whether spoken to or not, would presumably still have a certain level of influence in ones considerations. For example, individuals tend to weigh "local interests or consider their sense of place when forming political attitudes, whether they live in rural or urban contexts (Anderson 2009; Cutler 2007; Rudzitis 1993). Cho and Rudolph (2005) tie this casual taking of cues from ones social environment to social network interaction in general, arguing it is not one alone, but both that are necessary to explain geographically clustered political behavior. Huckfeldt et al. (1995) elaborate on this relationship, arguing that the "macro-level" social context matters, but that those who discuss politics with weaker ties are more influenced by the larger geographic and social context than those who discuss politics with more intimate ties. Therefore, whether it is through observation, informal conversation or deliberate political communication, it seems that the mechanism by which political attitudes and behaviors are homogenized throughout a geographic context is social in nature.

How, then, does the geographical and social context of rural areas shape political attitudes and behaviors? If these attitudes and behaviors are of a specific nature in rural areas, there must be common elements within the rural context molding them in this manner. Walsh (2012*a*) suggests that rural Americans have a "rural consciousness" that is characterized by low levels of political trust and efficacy and

an affinity towards small government as a result (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016). It has three elements (Cramer 2016, pg. 12):

1. A belief that rural areas are ignored by decision makers, including policy makers.
2. A perception that rural areas do not get their fair share of resources.
3. A sense that rural folks have fundamentally distinct values and lifestyles which are misunderstood and disrespected by city folks.

My research is largely grounded in Cramer's work. She establishes through her research that "rural consciousness" may be the answer to the puzzle of why rural Americans who seem to be economically worse off may support the Republican Party and its candidates. I apply this finding to my own argument, connecting the declining percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes to rural Americans' political attitudes and behaviors.

At the same time, my research also extends Cramer's work. As discussed, rural areas across the United States are experiencing rural population loss, but the manner in which local communities respond to and the phenomenon's economic impact vary. In some rural areas, the community pushes young people away and elects politicians who put in place ineffective policies to address the problems, thereby perpetuating a cycle of decline. In other rural areas, the economy has transformed, and community members take actions to strengthen the local economy and the community. It is difficult to imagine that the social context shaping political attitudes and behaviors in these areas is similar. Still, it is possible that residents of rural areas with a stronger local economy and higher social capital levels may exhibit characteristics of this consciousness. A rural area undergoing economic transformation may continue to lag behind nearby urban areas and may still hold less political power - or at least its residents may perceive that this is the case. The question then becomes whether "rural consciousness" affects political attitudes and behaviors as theorized: if so, is this universal, or is this limited to rural areas that are struggling the most? By

examining individual-level attitudes and economic circumstances, this analysis is able to address this question.

1.2.2 Red State, Blue State, or Rural State, Urban State? The Impact of Rural/Urban Polarization

Now that we have established a mechanism that may link "being rural" to political attitudes and behaviors, the next questions would be 1) how does rural context shapes these attitudes and behaviors, and 2) what is the impact on the political system? As discussed, "rural consciousness" is associated with low political trust and efficacy levels as well as preferences for small government (Walsh 2012*b*). As a result, rural Americans are more likely to identify as and vote for Republican candidates. Others also find abundant evidence that being rural is associated with a conservative ideology and identification with the Republican party (Bishop and Cushing 2008; McKee 2008, 2007). If the declining percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes are driving more rural Americans to adopt this affiliation, increasing rural-urban polarization could be a consequence of this.

To answer these questions, one must first understand two related debates. There is the question of what force is shaping rural political attitudes and behaviors is. On the one hand, the "rural consciousness" perspective puts forth the idea that rural areas' political and economic deprivation drives these attitudes and behaviors. Alternatively, some argue that rural Americans' views on social issues drive these, regardless of their economic circumstances. Additionally, some ask whether the findings in either case are based on robust evidence, or if they are an artifact of examining the data at an aggregate level rather than at an individual or local level. Next, there is the debate concerning geographic polarization. In one view, this form of polarization is deepening, and the effects have far-reaching consequences; in the other view, the extent of polarization, and therefore its impact, is questioned.

To understand this first debate, a starting point is the discussion over the book What's the Matter with Kansas? In this book, journalist Thomas Frank (2004) (2004) argues that the working class voters of Middle America are values voters who have defected from the Democratic Party, voting against their own economic interests in support of moral conservatism. Exacerbating the tendency for working class voters to do this is the abandonment of them by the Democratic Party, which now courts suburban professionals rather than its traditional base of "blue-collar" Americans (Frank 2004). Essentially, his argument is that the parties' focus on non-economic issues leads voters astray, causing residents of states that one would predict on the basis of economic interests to be blue (Democratic or liberal) to be red (Republican or conservative) instead. Furthermore, he is not alone in making this argument: several others conclude that that rural voters are in fact "values voters as well (Francia and Baumgartner 2005; McKee 2007). However, there are several that argue that this observation does not reflect reality.

Political scientists such as Bartels (2006, 2008) and Gelman et al. (2007) disagree with Frank (2004), arguing not only that the relationship between income and partisan voting patterns continues to exist, but also that it has intensified over time. How is such disagreement possible when one observes that rich states, such as Connecticut, are blue, and poor states, such as Kansas, are red (Gelman et al. 2007)? Gelman et al. (2007) provide one possible explanation: in states with varying income levels, the relationship between individual income and partisan preference differs. In red states, they find, income matters more, meaning that the rich are far more likely to vote Republican than the poor are; in blue states, however, the relationship between income and vote choice is weaker, resulting in fewer members of the upper strata engaging in Republican voting. At the state level, this causes the pattern to manifest as poorer states being red and richer states being blue. Bartels (2006) also provides a possible reason for this incorrect conclusion: an improper specification of social class. He finds that if one analyzes partisan voting patterns by family income, rather than by education level (as Frank does), the pattern of the rich voting Republican and

the poor voting Democratic has increased over time. Once again, one can attribute the appearance of states being red or blue to the Republican voting patterns by the rich within the state. What one can glean from both of these approaches is that Frank's (2004) observation comes from methodological error: one must analyze this relationship at multiple levels, including the individual level, and properly specify class interests, in order to understand its true nature.

What then, determines a state's tendency to be red or blue? Why does income matter in some states more than in others, causing it to appear as though some states are more Republican? There are three potential explanations. One is that homogenous dispositions of populations within states could lend support to one party over the other (Gimpel, Lee and Kaminski 2006; McKee 2008; Shelley 2008; Robinson and Noriega 2010). A second is that certain populations are more mobilized and thus turnout more within these states, increasing their aggregate influence (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder 2006). Finally, a third is that the disposition of the more educated and higher income strata in these states may lead to the pattern, as suggested by Bartels (2006) and Gelman et al. (2007). A common element to these three arguments is that the red state-blue state pattern largely appears only due to aggregation; in reality the state is a proxy for the underlying factor. In the case of the rural-urban divide, the explanation may be the same. Considering the prior discussion that geography is often just a stand-in for what political scientists do not know (King 1996) this should be unsurprising. This then leads us to the question of whether rural-urban polarization is a methodological aberration, or there truly is a divide?

Although the evidence in favor of the "values voters" explanation is weak, many of the studies in this debate that are at an individual level do agree with the general conclusion that rural Americans are more conservative and more Republican - they simply do not agree on the explanation. One potential candidate for the explanation of rural-urban polarization would be rural consciousness. While the value voter explanation falls flat due to a reliance on stereotypes and poor methodological choices, other studies that find evidence of political attitudes and behaviors rely on economic

circumstances to link the two. For example, Gimpel and Karnes (2006) find that many rural voters are homeowners and small business owners, and therefore their political attitudes are not so puzzling as those such as Frank (2004) would lead one to believe. Where the rural consciousness argument would go further is that it allows for the perception of these economic circumstances, as well as additional factors, such as political trust and efficacy, to play a role (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016). This would be a more nuanced explanation of the link between rural residency and political attitudes and behaviors, but additional individual-level analysis with a more general scope is needed to provide evidence in favor of this argument.

If the results indicate that the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes increase support for the Republican party and its candidates in rural areas, then this phenomenon could be associated with increased rural-urban polarization. Increased polarization would result if at the same time urban Americans' attitudes were unaffected or they became increasingly supportive of Democrats. What would be the implications if there were in fact increased polarization between rural and urban areas as a result of this shrinking portion of the population?

Without delving too deeply into the debate over the extent of polarization in the US population in general, let us first consider the extent of rural-urban polarization. In The Big Sort, Bishop (2008) describes a society polarized in every aspect of our lives - not just politically. In his view, the political impact is that we are so far removed from others that hold differing beliefs that it becomes difficult to reach a national consensus. This view is not without criticism. Abrams and Fiorina (2012) argue that homogeneous, sorted, neighborhoods do not necessarily lead to polarization. This would require that neighbors who agree politically to talk to each other directly about politics. They argue that with the declining sense of community in modern America, this is not the case. Alternatively, voters could feel social pressures to hold political views from neighbors that they believe hold similar views. Abrams and Fiorina (2012) find, however, that their respondents report a perception that neighbors hold diverse

views. Their argument is at odds with the prior arguments in favor of the influence of social context. Regardless of which view of the role of social context is correct, Abrams and Fiorina (2012) have a point: establishing that like-minded people cluster together does not alone imply that this will result in these clusters holding strong, extremely polarized political beliefs.

Let's assume for a moment that rural-urban polarization has deepened. Beyond Bishops (2008) prediction that this would lead to a political future without the possibility of compromise, what would be the consequences? Many would argue that polarization breeds participation. Mutz (2006) argues that deliberative and participatory democracy may not be able to coexist, as deliberation allows citizens to have greater understanding of views of "the other side." She is not alone in holding this viewpoint. (Bishop 2008, pg. 291) argues that "hearing both sides of an issue is the ticket to withdrawal." Citing both Mutz's work and earlier work by Lazarsfeld, he explains that while polarization leads to participation, the risk is that participation of this nature will lead to citizens with strongly-held beliefs being the only ones to hold political power.

Abramowitz (2010) echoes this argument, noting that polarization is highest among what he refers to as "the engaged public" those who are politically involved and informed. He takes this conclusion a step further, arguing that a result of polarized and engaged citizens being one in the same is that these are the citizens that elites listen to, which therefore results in elite polarization. He does note a few problems with this increasingly engaged and polarized public. As the public becomes more polarized, more citizens sharing these beliefs may be inspired to become engaged, but at the same time, those who are less engaged and more moderate may become further alienated. Additionally, due to the structure of our political system, it is possible that policymaking may become difficult, not only due to the difficulty compromising, but also due to the difficulty determining who represents the will of the people in a time of divided government. In short, if rural areas are becoming more polarized as a result of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, the consequences - both

positive and negative could be extensive. In order to examine these implications, this analysis will also consider the question of whether the decline in the percentage of the population that is rural has an impact on political participation.

1.3 Analyzing the Impact of the Shrinking Rural Population

To first establish whether there is in fact evidence of what Walsh (2012*b*) refers to as "rural consciousness" I begin by examining political trust and efficacy. She explains that trust and efficacy are lower in these areas because rural Americans feel that they hold less economic and political power than Americans that live in urban areas, particularly urban centers of government. The expectations are that lower trust and efficacy will be associated with rural residency, a lower percentage of the population that is rural, and poor economic circumstances (actual as well as perceived). I ask first whether trust and efficacy are lower for rural Americans. After finding that rural respondents do exhibit lower political trust levels as well as lower efficacy levels as expected, I examine the explanations for these low political confidence levels. I find evidence that these attitudes are influenced by the percentage of the population that is rural as well as economic circumstances. Additionally, the perception of one's economic circumstances have an impact. Lower income levels are associated with low efficacy levels, and a feeling that one is doing worse financially than last year is associated with both lower trust and efficacy levels.

Next, I further examine the question of partisanship and vote choice in rural America and the role that a shrinking proportion of the population that is rural may play in shaping these patterns. It seems to be common knowledge that rural Americans are Republican while those who live in urban areas are Democrats. One reason for this could be that as rural Americans lose political and economic power they may exhibit preferences for small government (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016). Furthermore, as rural areas lose their population and become more homogeneous they may become more polarized (Bishop 2008). However, this conclusion is not as apparent as it may

seem. For one, methodological choices could lead to this result at the aggregate level while individual behavior is different (Gelman et al. 2007). There is also the question of why rural voters would identify as and vote for Republicans. Are rural Americans "values voters" as the popular stereotype would suggest (Francia and Baumgartner 2005; Frank 2004; McKee 2007); is it rural consciousness, as Walsh (2012*b*) suggests; or does this pattern fit the economic circumstances of business and homeowners that live in these areas (Gimpel, Lee and Kaminski 2006)? My expectation is that rural residency, the percentage of the population that is rural, and better economic circumstances (actual as well as perceived) will lead to identification as and support for Republicans.

Additionally, I ask whether rural voters that are experiencing economic changed and alienated from urban government centers may turn to third party support. Rural and agrarian voters have supported extreme candidates in the past when facing economic distress, and there is evidence to suggest they would today as well due to increased alienation from the two major parties (Lipset 1968; McConnell 1969; Hajnal and Lee 2011). I expect that support for third party candidates will be associated with rural residency, the percentage of the population that is rural, and poor economic circumstances (actual as well as perceived).

I first examine patterns in partisanship and vote choice and observe that rural residents are more likely than urban to identify as Republicans. However, residents of suburban areas seem to be equally if not more polarized from urban residents. Additionally, third-party support levels are higher among rural residents in some years. I also examine the roles that a declining percentage of the population that is rural and economic circumstances to determine which can explain these patterns. I find that while residents of rural areas are most likely to identify as Republicans, as expected, the role of the decreasing percentage of the population that is rural is less clear. The percentage of the population that is rural is associated with increased likelihood of identifying as a Republican, but decreased likelihood of voting for Republican presidential candidates. Third-party voting does increase along with the percentage of

the population that is rural, but then decreases again. The results concerning economic circumstances (actual and perceived) are more in line with the expectations. As economic circumstances improve (or one feels they are better), the probability of identifying as and voting for Republicans increases. Third-party voting does decrease as income increases, but increases as one feels he or she is doing worse financially.

I then examine a question that follows from the other findings. If rural Americans do in fact have more polarized views and do have lower political trust and efficacy levels does this subsequently affect their political participation? One might expect that an effect of polarization may be increased participation Abramowitz (2010); Bishop and Cushing (2008); Mutz (2006), the growing partisan divide between rural and urban America may be driving participation, especially in homogeneous rural areas. Furthermore, this polarization coupled with low trust and efficacy levels may be a combination that leads to less conventional protest behaviors (Pollock 1983; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009). I therefore expect that increased participation, as well as increased support for unconventional participation, will be associated with rural residency and the percentage of the population that is rural. Additionally, I expect that better economic circumstances (actual as well as perceived) will be associated with higher conventional participation levels while poor economic circumstances (actual as well as perceived) will be associated with support for unconventional behaviors.

I first examine conventional participation patterns, and observe that rural Americans have a similar or lower voter turnout levels, participation in campaign activities, and support for protest behaviors as their urban and suburban counterparts. I expected higher participation levels as the result of rural-urban polarization associated with a shrinking rural population (as well as historically high participation in small communities), however, this is not the case. Instead, rural residency and a lower percentage of the population that is rural are associated with lower participation levels. I then ask whether the percentage of the population that is rural, and economic circumstances play a role in shaping these patterns. More in line with my expectations

are the findings concerning economic circumstances. Voting and campaign activities are associated with higher income levels, although the influence of perceived economic circumstances is more complex. While not all results are not as expected, the conclusion is still clear: while the percentage of the population that is rural is having an impact on political attitudes, it does not appear that the implication is widespread changes in participation.

Finally, in order to better understand whether these findings apply only at the individual level, or whether they vary based on local economic circumstances, I perform a case study of the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) Zones. Situated in both a plains state (North Dakota) as well as the northeast (New York and Vermont), the counties within these zones allow me to look in detail at patterns of vote choice and political participation across these areas experiencing varied economic circumstances. I begin by providing background on the establishment of the zones as well as the economic circumstances the counties in each face. All are characterized as facing economic problems, but over time some have fared better than others - some counties, such as those in the Bakken formation in North Dakota are doing quite well while other counties, such as those in Vermont, are falling behind. My expectations generally correspond to those for the prior chapters, but should vary based on the economic circumstances observed within the zones.

I then ask how vote choice, voter turnout, and campaign activities (specifically, campaign donations) vary across the zones, and find that the results support my general conclusions. While there is not a one to one correspondence between economic circumstances and vote choice, the highest increase in support for Republican candidates comes from those zones experiencing the most economic improvement, and third party support is higher than or at least as high as it is nationally in all of the zones. Additionally, there are no clear trends in participation, except that donations were relatively low. This case study also allows me to provide some additional evidence of the relationship between the percentage of the population that is rural and political attitudes and behaviors. Across many of the zones examined, the incumbent repre-

sentatives who introduced the zones to their districts continued to win re-election, even as vote choice patterns in these areas changed. This was particularly evident in the New York zones, where the incumbent remained popular within his district, but voters in these zones outside of his district voted for his opposition.

1.3.1 Summary

In summary, the main question in this analysis is what impact a declining proportion of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes have had on several political attitudes and behaviors in the rural United States. In Chapter 2, I begin by examining political trust and efficacy. I specifically look at how trust and efficacy vary across rural, suburban, and urban areas, and how these attitudes have changed in each area as the percentage of the population that is rural has decreased. Additionally, I ask whether economic circumstances or one's perception of these circumstances play a role. In Chapter 3, the analysis addresses the same questions regarding partisanship and vote choice. In light of the finding in Chapter 2 that rural Americans are particularly alienated, I consider whether there is an impact on support not only for the two major parties, but for third parties as well. Again, I ask how geographic context, the percenaget of the population that is rural, and economic circumstances affect these attitudes and behaviors. Chapter 4 builds on the findings of the prior chapters, that establish there is low political confidence in rural America as well as the possibility of increased rural-urban polarization. Based on both of these findings, I examine whether political participation and support for unconventional participation have increased. As in the prior chapters, I consider the roles of geographic context, the percentage of the population that is rural, and economic circumstances. Finally, in Chapter 5 I perform a case study which looks at the economic circumstances, vote choice, and political participation patterns in five areas across the United States where a program has been implemented to address the consequences of rural population loss. With the analysis in the prior chapters being

at an individual level, this case study provides better understanding of the role of local economic context. The conclusion then summarizes these findings and considers the implications for the future of the American political and economic systems.

2. POLITICAL TRUST AND EFFICACY

Many analyses of political attitudes and behaviors of rural Americans have focused on partisanship, ideology, and issue opinions, but attention has also been given to political trust and efficacy in this population, which are at relatively low levels. A similarity between these two areas of focus is that many explanations suggest that there is some characteristic of being rural that influences these attitudes. Recently, Walsh (2012*b*) has suggested that a"rural consciousness" explains their distrust and lack of efficacy (see also Cramer 2016). Additionally, in early examinations of this population, such as *The American Voter*, the argument is that an individual's rural context contributes to their unique attitudes and behaviors (Campbell et al. 1960). For example, they attribute the differences between the urban laborers' and rural farmers' political involvement to the farmers' physical remoteness - after all, their other characteristics, such as education level, are similar. Their analysis does not focus on political trust and efficacy specifically, but their focus on physical remoteness, as well as economic situation, allows for a comparison, as low levels of civic resources and engagement (due to the remoteness) combined with economic hardship would likely contribute not only to low trust levels but also a lack of efficacy.

The rural context has gone through substantial changes in the intervening years. The size of the rural population has dwindled, and the agriculture industry has transformed. Therefore, the question is how the relationship between being rural and political trust and efficacy has changed over time, and at the same time how being rural has interacted with other factors that impact these attitudes. For example, has population loss increased the physical isolation of rural Americans, thereby decreasing their trust and efficacy - or have technological advancements allowed them to bridge physical barriers, alleviating this effect on their political attitudes?

In order to answer these questions, this analysis examines the political trust, internal efficacy, and external efficacy of rural Americans from 1952 - 2008. In addition to examining trends in these attitudes, other factors such as the varying social and economic circumstances of rural areas in the United States will be considered. If the results provide evidence that rural context has a distinct impact on political trust and efficacy, the implications for the American political system would be significant, as variation in these attitudes may affect other aspects of the system, from approval of incumbents to patterns of political participation. Therefore, it is important to understand the relationship between rural context and these political attitudes in order to understand what further impact on the political system that changes in this context, such as population loss, may have.

2.1 Political Trust and Efficacy in Rural America

Political trust and political efficacy are distinct but related concepts. Craig (1979) describes their delineation clearly, characterizing political trust as being the anticipated quality of government outputs; external efficacy being the degree to which an individual perceives of his political actions as being successful; and internal efficacy being the degree to which an individual perceives of participatory channels that he or she feels competent to use as being open to him or her. These attitudes are also influenced by similar factors at the individual level - an individual's demographic, social, and institutional context - with macro-level trends, particularly in trust, being primarily driven by period or aging effects. Being a rural resident during this time period characterized by population loss and the resulting economic transformation could therefore result in facing different socioeconomic as well as political circumstances that would lead to lower political trust and efficacy within this population.

As previously mentioned, one possible explanation as to why political trust and efficacy would be lower is the concept of "rural consciousness (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016)." Walsh (2012*b*) argues that class and place-based social identities along with

the perception of distributive justice play a role in forming the patterns in their political attitudes and behaviors. The three elements of this consciousness that she identifies are power, values and lifestyle, and hard work. The rural residents in her analysis believe that major political decisions affecting rural people are made by the residents of urban government centers without regard to local interests; that rural persons have values and lifestyles distinct from persons in urban areas, such that they may perceive of actions by those outside rural areas (such as the government) as a threat to their values and lifestyles; and that rural persons have a central value of "hard work," which ties into their opposition to social welfare programs.

Others find evidence that could undermine this argument, however, stating that the difference between rural and urban political attitudes is decreasing over time (Drury and Tweeten 1997; Knoke and Henry 1977). Chamberlain (2013) examines efficacy specifically, examining this attitude across political cultures (see Elazar 1966), and finds that the differences in external efficacy across cultures have dissipated since the 1980s. Finding that rural residency itself directly influences trust and efficacy would support the "rural consciousness" explanation, whereas finding that rural residency does not influence these attitudes would support the idea that American politics is becoming more homogeneous, at least in terms of the rural-urban divide.

Political institutions - both formal and informal - also play a role in forming these political attitudes. Davis (2014) finds that a more disproportional voting system results in those voting for the losers having significantly lower efficacy than those who voters for winners, and Lassen and Serritzlew (2011) find that larger jurisdiction sizes have a negative impact on internal efficacy. Political trust is also affected as institutional arrangements can result in changes in the relative power of actors who can then ensure their interests prevail (Farrell and Knight 2003). Howell and Fagan (1988) find that blacks had high local trust in incumbents, but low trust at the national level because their "political reality" differs at each level of the political system. In an additional example, voting for the winner of an election is found to increase trust, but there is evidence that in a majoritarian system, losers are more

dissatisfied than losers in a more consensual system (Anderson and Guillory 1997; Anderson and LoTempio 2002). The presence of corruption and scandals can reduce political trust as well (Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Bowler and Karp 2004).

This explanation has similarities to the "rural consciousness" explanation, with the key difference of course being that in the "rural consciousness" model, the reality of the political institutions is not what matters, but the perception of this reality. Aberbach and Walker (1970) provide an analysis that also supports this explanation. In their analysis of race and efficacy, they find that citizens' expectations about the treatment they will receive from government officials, feelings of deprivation, and beliefs about the status or acceptability of one's group in society influence trust. Either way, not having, or perceiving that they do not have, political power or resources and that those in power do not serve their interests could lead to lower efficacy and trust among rural residents.

Social and demographic characteristics also affect political trust as well as internal and external efficacy. Income, formal education, and civic resources - for example, growing up in a politically active home - can all attribute to both higher internal and external efficacy (Beaumont 2011; Morrell 2005; Bowler and Donovan 2002). There is also evidence that sense of community in general can have a positive impact not only on internal and external efficacy, but also personal and political trust (Anderson 2010). This results from collective efficacy and mutual trust among community residents with shared expectations for social-control related action (Anderson 2010; Browning, Feinberg and Dietz 2004). Therefore, in considering the impact of rural residency and the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, these social and demographic factors must be controlled for, especially as rural population loss could result in rural residents having a lower socioeconomic status and a lower level of civic resources than their suburban and urban counterparts.

Finally, let us switch focus from individual determinants of these attitudes to macro-level trends. These are primarily driven by period effects. Period effects (as opposed to aging or cohort effects) are variations over time periods or calendar years

that influence all age groups simultaneously that reflect shifts in social, cultural, economic, or physical environments (Yang and Land 2013). Lipset and Schneider (1983) find that the trend from the 1960s - 1980s in the United States is that trust and external efficacy - although not necessarily internal efficacy - have been declining, and conclude that this is the result of the performance of institutions and their leaders, who citizens feel are "inept and untrustworthy." In the 1980s - 1990s, this trend continued, with lower political trust being attributed to dissatisfaction with Reagan's domestic and foreign policies; negative perceptions of the economy; scandals associated with Congress; and increasing public concern with crime (Miller and Borrelli 1991; Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000). There is evidence that trust did increase in the early 2000s as a result of 9/11, however (Chanley 2002). It is also possible that changes in trust are driven by aging forces. Trust levels are high when voters first enter the electorate, but erode over time as they become better acquainted with the operations of politics (Jennings and Niemi 1981, 215).

In addition to these period and aging effects affecting the political trust and efficacy of all Americans over this time frame, rural Americans have faced the unique period effect of their population loss trend. The consensus regarding the impact of rural population loss is that economic, social, and civic resources are in decline as young, educated people and diverse industries providing well-paying jobs leave the areas (Carr and Kefalas 2009). However, there is some evidence that not all rural areas are caught in this cycle of decline, but have instead transformed and prospered (Danbom 2006). As shown in the previously discussed data from the USDA and Census Bureau, some rural areas do lag behind the rest of the country on a number of economic indicators, such as poverty rates, unemployment rates, and educational attainment. However, overall the data suggests the gap is closing. Therefore, we would expect that the relationship between the percentage of the population that is rural and trends in political trust and efficacy may not be universal across rural Americans, but instead be affected by their economic situation (or perception of this situation).

2.1.1 Hypotheses

This analysis will test the following hypotheses, while also taking into consideration each of the factors past research has found contribute to political trust and efficacy. The hypotheses concern the key independent variables in this analysis, which include the percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances (income), and perception of economic circumstances (whether the individual feels they were better off in the last year):

Hypothesis 1a *Residents of rural areas will have lower internal efficacy and external efficacy than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1b *Residents of rural areas will have lower political trust than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1c *The percentage of the population that is rural, income levels, and the respondent's financial situation will interact with the effect of place of residence on internal efficacy and external efficacy.*

Hypothesis 2a *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, respondents will have lower internal efficacy and external efficacy than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 2b *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, respondents will have lower political trust than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 3a *Respondents with lower income levels will have lower internal efficacy and external efficacy than respondents with higher income levels.*

Hypothesis 3b *Respondents with lower income levels will have lower political trust than respondents with higher income levels.*

Hypothesis 4a *Respondents who felt they were doing worse financially will have lower internal efficacy and external efficacy than respondents who felt they were doing better financially.*

Hypothesis 4b *Respondents who felt they were doing worse financially will have lower political trust than respondents who felt they were doing better financially.*

2.2 Data and Methods

To examine the effect of a shrinking percentage of the population that is rural on these political attitudes, pooled data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) surveys, years 1952 - 2008 are used (See Appendix A for question wording). This time frame is used because the percentage of the population that is rural in the United States began to decline in the 1960s; therefore, responses over this time period will span from prior to the beginning of the rural population loss phenomenon and continue through the present. Data regarding the percentage of the population that is rural is taken from the United States Census Bureau.

I then begin the analysis by providing an overview of the trends in each attitude over time, comparing responses of rural residents to responses of suburban and urban residents. Regression analysis or logistic regression analysis, depending on the scale of the dependent variable, is then used to examine the factors that influence these attitudes, with rural place of residence, percentage of the population that is rural, the respondent's income level, and the respondent's assessment of their economic situation being the key independent variables. I also consider the interaction between place of residence and the percentage of the population that is rural, income level, and perception of economic circumstances. Predicted probabilities based on changes in key independent variables in each of these models, estimated using Clarify, are provided to allow for ease of interpretation of the logistic regression results (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003).

2.2.1 Measurement

Measurements for the key dependent variables of internal efficacy, external efficacy, and political trust come from responses to ANES questions. Measurements for the key independent variables of rural residence and economic circumstances, and for the control variables of age, gender, race, education level, religion, presidential approval and congressional approval come from responses to ANES questions as well. The measurements of each variable are listed in Table 2.1 and the specific survey questions used to measure each variable are detailed in Appendix A. Additionally, to account for the extent to which the percentage of the population that is rural has declined, a key independent variable, I used data from the United States Census Bureau. The shrinking percentage of the population that is rural is accounted for by including for each respondent the measurement of the size of the rural population in the United States as a percent of the total population in the most recent prior Census or American Community Survey. For example, for respondents in the 1950s, a value of 36 percent is assigned; for respondents in the 2000s, a value of 20.99 percent is assigned.

Table 2.1: Variable Measurement

Variable	Measurement	Years Available
Dependent Variables		
Internal Efficacy	(0) Too Complicated - Disagree (1) Too Complicated - Agree	1952 - 2008
External Efficacy	(0) No Say - Disagree (1) No Say - Agree	1952 - 2008
Trust	Ranges from 0 - 100	1958 - 2008
Independent Variables		
Urbanism	(1) Rural (2) Suburban	1952 - 2008

Continued on next page...

... table 2.1 continued

	(3) Urban	
% Rural Population	Percent of US population rural, ranges from 20.99 - 36.00	1952 - 2008
Income Percentile	(1) 0 -16 (2) 17 - 33 (3) 34 - 67 (4) 68 - 95 (5) 96 - 100	1948 - 2008
Financially Better off Last Year	(1) Better Now (2) Same (3) Worse Now	1952 - 2008
Control Variables		
Gender	(1) Male (2) Female	1948 - 2008
White	(1) White (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Black	(1) Black (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Hispanic	(1) Hispanic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Age	Ranges from 17 - 99+	1948 - 2008
Education Level	(1) 8th Grade or Less (2) 9th - 12th Grade or less (3) 12th Grade/GED (4) 12th Grade/GED + (5) Some College (6) Bachelor's Degree	1952 - 2008

Continued on next page...

... table 2.1 continued

	(7) Advanced Degree	
Protestant	(1) Protestant (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Catholic	(1) Catholic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Jewish	(1) Jewish (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Presidential Approval	(1) Approve (2) Disapprove	1972 - 2008
Congressional Approval	(1) Approve (2) Disapprove	1980 - 2008

Before proceeding with the analysis, there are also a few key measurement issues to address. One is that over the time period examined, the measure of observed urbanism of the respondent's address changed. A second is that past examinations of the measures of internal and external political efficacy provide evidence that some measurements of these concepts are more reliable and valid than others. Finally, past research has debated the nature of political trust that the ANES questions truly measure. In order to address any concerns with possible issues arising from the use of these measurements, I will address how each issue will be handled in this analysis in more detail.

Over the time period examined, the measurement of urbanism in the ANES has changed. From 1952 - 2000, the ANES included an interviewer observation of whether the respondent lived in a city, suburban area, or rural area, with small towns being included in rural areas, based on the size of the town as well as designations by the US Census Bureau[1]. In 2004, this observation became more subjective, but also more

[1]For detailed notes on how this variable was coded, refer to "Urbanism Note" in the Appendix of the ANES Cumulative Data File Codebook.

detailed, splitting rural areas and small towns as well as large cities into separate categories. Interviewers were asked to subjectively judge which of these designations fit the respondent's dwelling based on the surrounding area[2]. In 2008, this measurement changed again, with the categories being rural farm, rural town, suburban, urban (residential only), mostly commercial, or mostly industrial. Interviewers were still expected to make subjective judgments. In order to include these later years in the analysis, rural areas, small towns or rural towns were considered rural; large cities and inner cities were considered urban; and the respondents living in a mostly commercial or industrial area were not included in the analysis as it was unclear whether they lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area based on this information. The percentage of respondents in each classification is provided in Table 2.2, with the specific observations for 2004 and 2008 provided in Appendix B (Tables B.2 and B.3) for reference.

Table 2.2: Observed Urbanism

Year	Rural Areas	Suburbs	Urban Areas
1952	37.86%	29.49%	32.65%
1954	35.21	30.55	34.24
1956	48.69	26.45	24.86
1958	48.69	27.45	23.86
1960	51.57	26.33	22.10
1962	36.16	38.55	25.29
1964	38.96	31.19	29.85
1966	39.50	31.22	29.28
1968	43.67	30.25	26.08
1970	43.86	29.26	26.87

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[2]If multiple interviewers coded the same respondent's dwelling differently, the most urban designation was used.

... table 2.2 continued

Year	Rural Areas	Suburbs	Urban Areas
1972	43.14	31.05	25.80
1974	38.29	35.94	25.78
1976	37.50	35.10	27.40
1978	33.64	39.28	27.08
1980	33.46	39.16	27.39
1982	35.54	36.81	27.64
1984	34.91	41.83	23.26
1986	32.17	42.46	25.37
1988	33.48	42.30	24.22
1990	33.48	44.09	22.42
1992	32.56	41.89	25.55
1994	30.97	40.56	28.47
1996	33.43	39.44	27.13
1998	34.74	37.94	27.32
2000	31.11	40.66	28.23
2004	39.69	32.52	27.80
2008	20.09	40.18	39.72

Numerous studies address the measurement of the concepts of internal and external political efficacy (Balch 1974; Chamberlain 2012; Craig 1979; Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990; Hayes and Bean 1993; Stewart et al. 1992). Most of these address distinguishing the concepts of internal efficacy, external efficacy, and trust, but once that evidence was established the question of the most valid and reliable measurements of each of these concepts began to be addressed. Niemi, Craig and Mattei (1991) conclude that of the original questions used by the ANES, responses to statements of "people like me don't have any say in what the government does" and "I don't think public official care much what people like me think" primarily measure external

efficacy, while "sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on" captures aspects of both internal and external political efficacy. Their results instead support the following four new measures of internal efficacy:

1. "I consider myself to be well-qualified to participate in politics."
2. "I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country."
3. "I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people."
4. "I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people."

To analyze changes in both internal and external efficacy over this time period, it is necessary to use"agree/disagree" responses to the "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on" question to measure internal efficacy. The problem with this approach is that this measure may tap into aspects of external efficacy and is therefore not the preferred measure of this concept; however, the more reliable and valid indicators are only used in certain years (1988, 1992, 2000, and 2008) which would ignore internal efficacy in earlier years when the rural population began to decline. Morrell (2003) addresses this issue in his analysis of how researchers have measured this concept over time, and while he concludes that there are concerns with using this approach, it is at least preferable to failing to separate the concepts of internal and external efficacy or using newly developed, untested measurements of the concept.

Finally, the heavily-debated question of whether the measurements of political trust in the ANES measure trust in the system or trust in incumbents must be addressed (see Appendix A for questions used). Miller (1974*a*; 1974*b*) argues that there is widespread discontent stemming from issue polarization that may lead to radical political change. Citrin (1974), on the other hand, provides evidence of an alternate

explanation: citizens are dissatisfied not with the entire political system, but instead with the performance of incumbent officeholders' policies and handling of events. Lipset and Schneider (1983) also find that despite the decades-long decreases in political trust and efficacy, there is no evidence of increasing cynicism about democracy, the citizen's role in it, or a loss of confidence in the American political system. Citrin's explanation is supported by Levi and Stoker (2000) as well, who conclude that most evidence points to these questions measuring trust in incumbents.

Assuming that these questions do measure trust in incumbents, one may still question the use of these measurements based on their other potential shortcomings. Cook and Gronke (2005) find evidence that the measurement of trust in the ANES exaggerates discontent, as there is no clear way to distinguish between someone who is merely skeptical as compared to someone very cynical and these measures are influenced by short term evaluations of political events. They propose instead use of a measure ranging from active distrust to active trust. For the sake of examining what factors influence trust throughout the entire time period, a newly developed measure unfortunately cannot be used. However, the inherent biases in the measure can be kept in mind when making conclusions. Because this study examines data from 1952 - 2008 in order to understand the impact of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural on this attitude, a "trust index"(constructed by the ANES, refer to Appendix A) based on the following ANES measures is used:

1. "How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right - just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?"

2. "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 the people?"

3. "Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?'

4. "Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?"

2.3 Results: Internal and External Efficacy

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show overtime trends in internal and external efficacy among rural, suburban, and urban respondents. From 1952 - 2008, the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement "People like me don't have any say about what the government does" has increased in each population, although it has been slightly higher in rural areas in most years. The percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on" has remained relatively high, especially among rural respondents, and was comparatively stable from 1964 - 1998. Internal efficacy has been consistently lower in rural areas (with the exception of one year, 1998), and in many years by a large margin. Throughout most of this time frame, upward and downward trends in responses by respondents living in rural areas have been similar to the trends in suburban and urban areas. Agreement with the "don't have any say" statement would reflect lower external efficacy; and agreement with the "too complicated" statement would reflect lower internal efficacy. These figures lend preliminary support to the hypotheses that both internal and external efficacy are lower in rural areas.

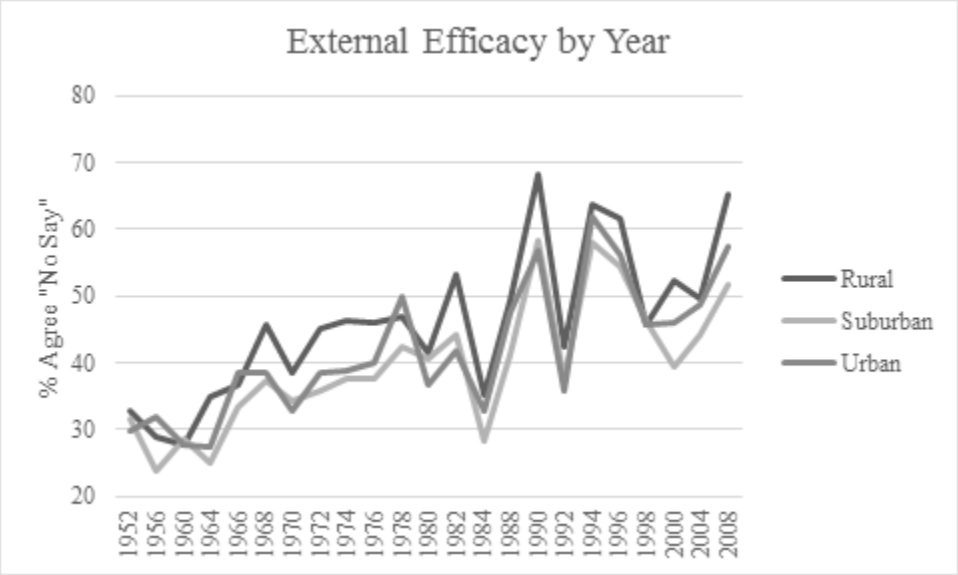

Fig. 2.1. External Efficacy: 1952 - 2008

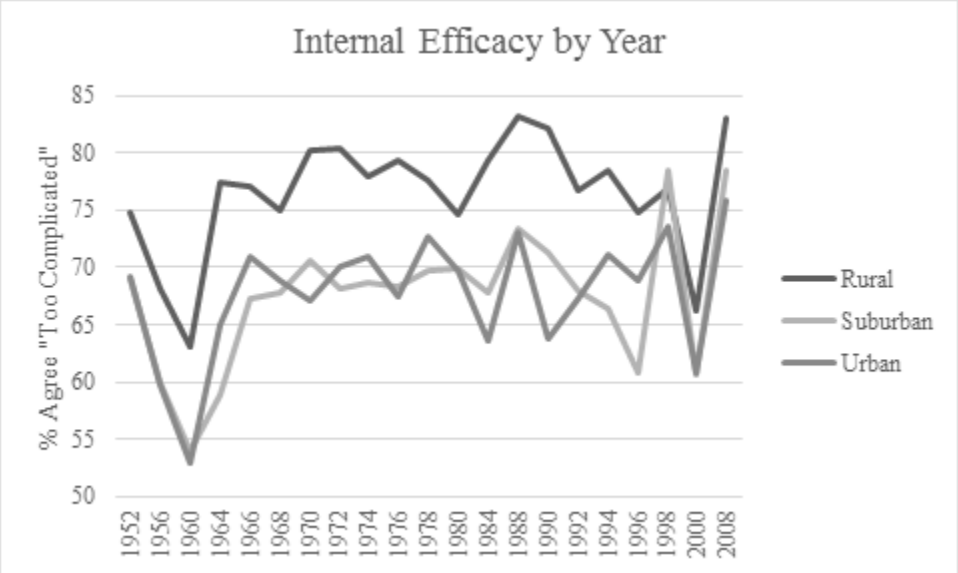

Fig. 2.2. Internal Efficacy: 1952 - 2008

Tables 2.3 and 2.4 display the results of the logistic regression analyses for internal efficacy and external efficacy, respectively. Whether a respondent lived in a rural,

suburban, or urban area; the percentage of the population that is rural; the respondent's income; and the respondent's perception of his or her economic circumstances had a significant effect on both internal and external efficacy. In some cases, the effect was direct, and in others, it was conditional, varying across respondents in rural, suburban, and urban areas. For interpretation of these results, refer to Table 2.1, which describes variable measurement in detail, as well as the graphical interpretation of the results.

Note that due to the inclusion of interaction terms in the internal efficacy analysis, one must use the graphs provided to determine significance of effects (Brambor, Clark and Golder 2006). As there are no "real-world" scenarios where the interaction terms would take on a value of zero, the coefficients for the constituent variables in the interaction terms do not have a meaningful interpretation. Furthermore, it is possible that the conditional effect takes on significance at some values of the key independent variables although the interaction term itself is not significant. Based on the hypothesized relationships, all analyses were originally completed using all three interaction terms. Those found to have no significant conditional effect upon inspection of graphs of predicted probabilities were removed from the model. Results from the models including all interaction terms in these cases are provided in Appendix B for reference.

In order to provide clearer interpretation of the logistic regression results and interaction effects, predicted probabilities of agreeing with each statement, generated using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003), are provided. In order to examine changes in these probabilities at various levels of key independent variables, values of the control variables are set to remain constant. The presented predicted probabilities are for a white male who has a high school education, a median income, financially feels he is doing about the same as last year, and is a Protestant. When determining the impact of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, he has a median income and financially feels he is doing about the same as last year. When determining the impact of economic circumstances and income, he lives in a rural

area and the percentage of the population that is rural is lowest. For the external efficacy results, he also disapproves of the President and Congress.

The graphical interpretation shows that the results support many of the hypotheses concerning internal efficacy. Figure 2.3 provides the predicted probability of agreeing with the "too complicated" statement among rural, suburban, and urban respondents as the rural population decreases. As the percentage of the population that is rural decreases, internal efficacy also decreases (higher probability of agreeing). Additionally, there are significant differences in internal efficacy between rural and urban respondents at several points, such that internal efficacy is lower among rural respondents. Figure 2.4 provides the predicted probability of agreement with this statement, also conditional on place of residence, as income percentile increases. As income increases, internal efficacy increases (lower probability of agreeing), and at low income levels, internal efficacy is lower among rural respondents. Finally, Figure 2.5 provides the predicted probability, conditional on place of residence, based on the respondent's perception of his or her economic circumstances. When circumstances are perceived of as "better," internal efficacy is lower among rural respondents than urban. However, internal efficacy does not change significantly as the perception of these circumstances becomes worse.

Table 2.3
Logistic Regression Results: Internal Efficacy

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.438	(0.278)
% Rural Pop	-5.957**	(2.212)
Income Percentile	-0.201**	(0.041)
Better off Last Year	-0.074	(0.055)
Gender	0.582**	(0.032)
White	-0.235†	(0.124)
Black	-0.208	(0.134)
Hispanic	-0.051	(0.143)
Protestant	0.208**	(0.052)
Catholic	0.091	(0.057)
Jewish	-0.098	(0.110)
Age	0.004**	(0.001)
Education Level	-0.363**	(0.011)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	0.420	(1.024)
Income x Urbanism	0.041*	(0.019)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.038	(0.026)
Intercept	3.990**	(0.619)
N	22352	
Log-likelihood	-11882.339	
$\chi^2_{(16)}$	2692.38	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

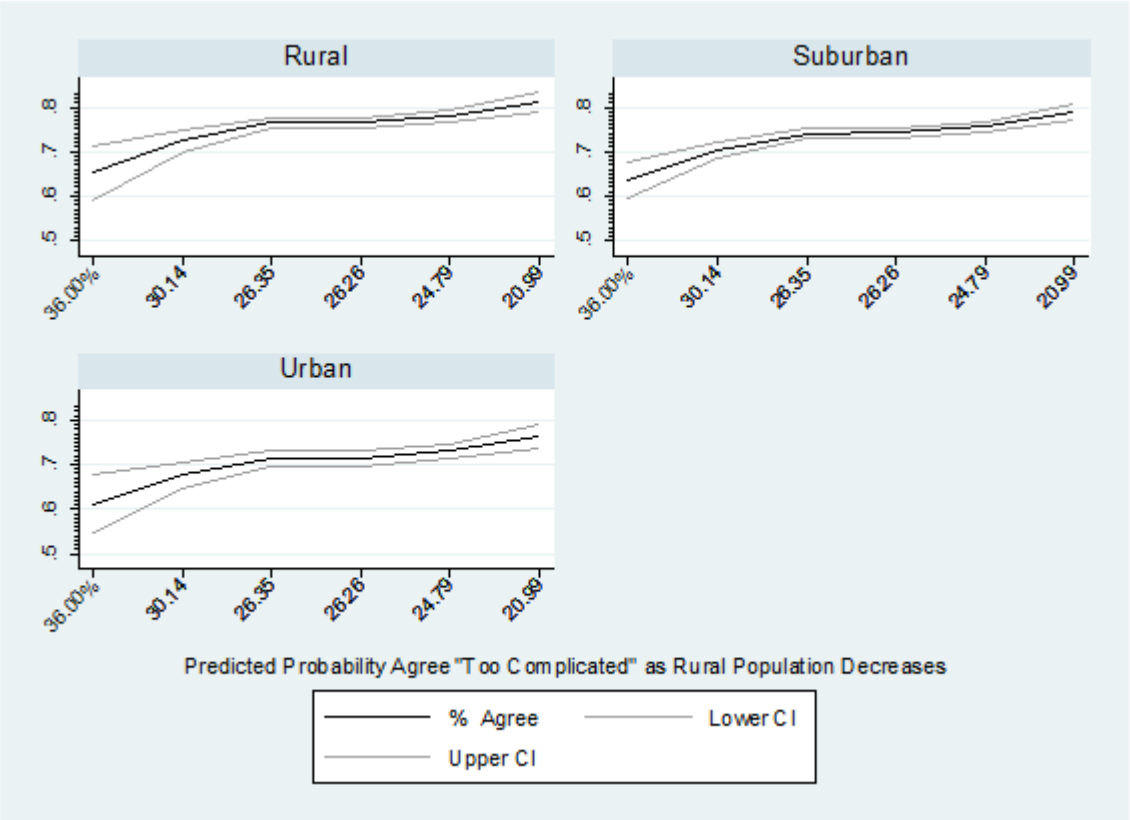

Fig. 2.3. Predicted Probability Agree "Too Complicated" as Rural Population Decreases

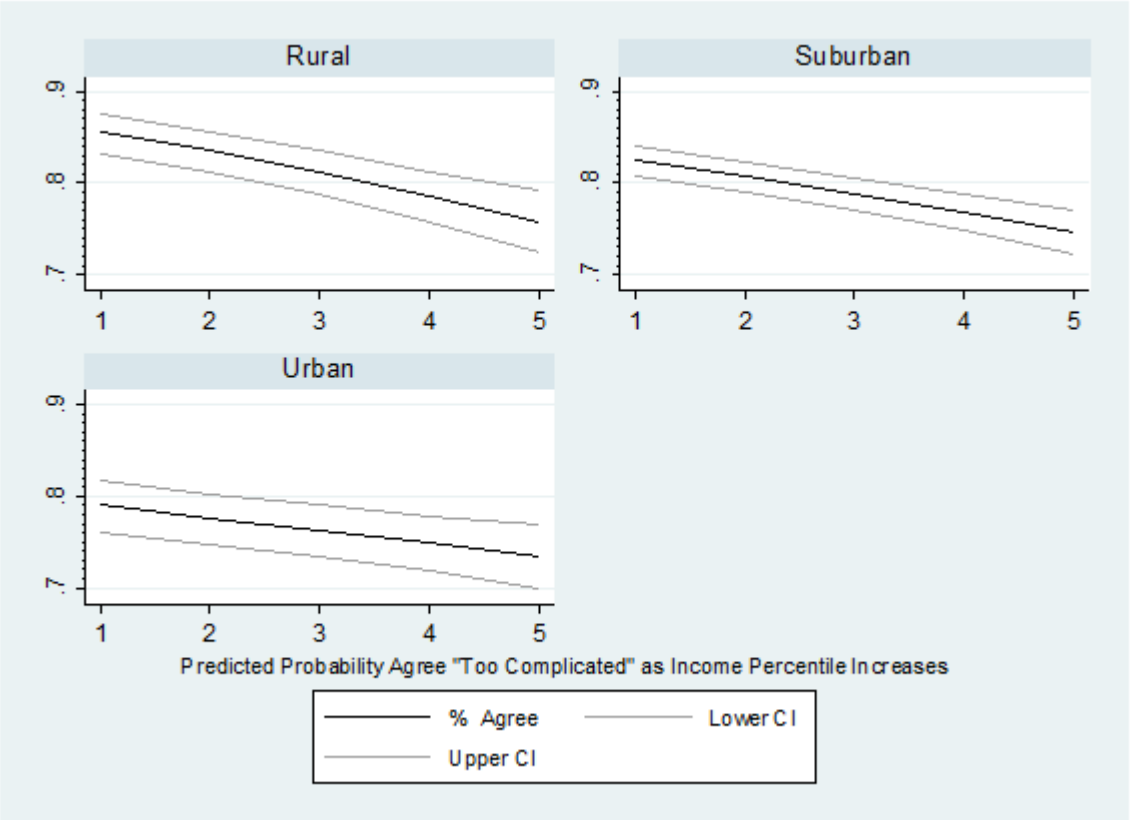

Fig. 2.4. Predicted Probability Agree "Too Complicated" as Income Increases

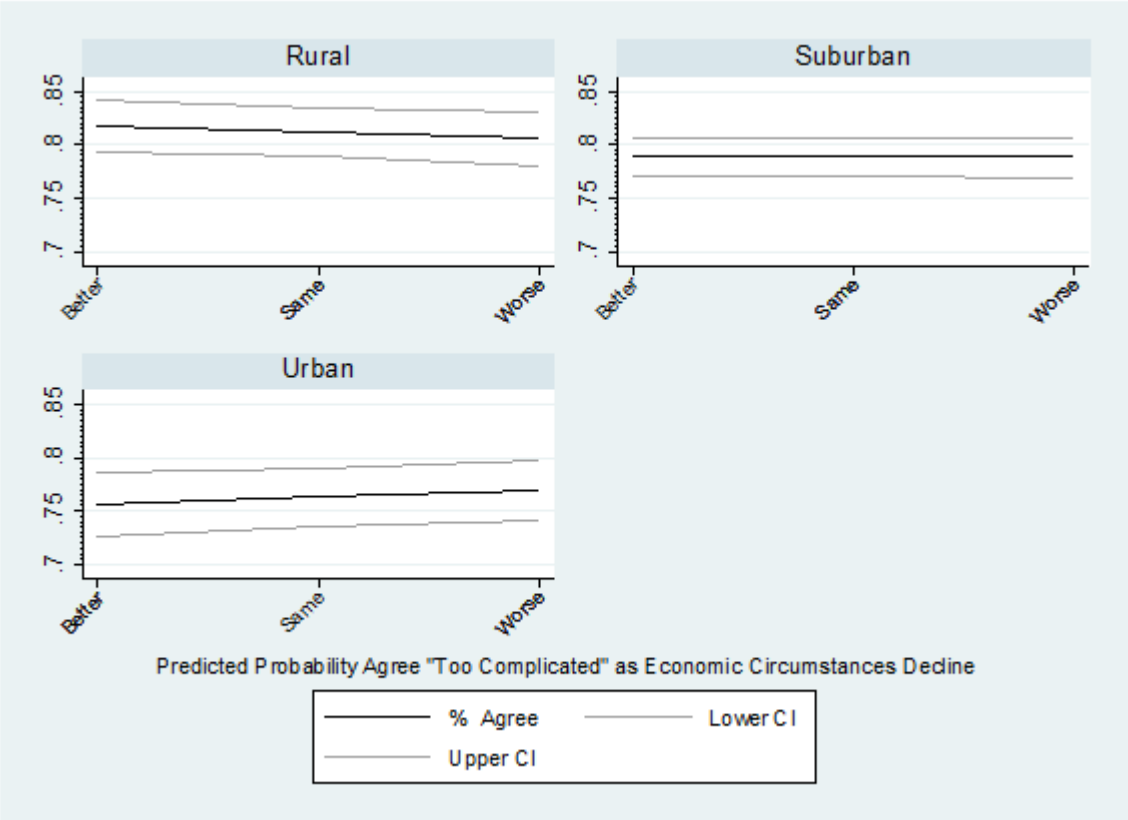

Fig. 2.5. Predicted Probability Agree "Too Complicated" as Economic Circumstances Decline

The results (see Table 2.4) also provide support for most of the hypotheses concerning external efficacy, although none of the hypothesized interactions were significant (Refer to Appendix B, Table B.3 and Figures B.1 - B.3 for results from the model including all interactions). As hypothesized, rural respondents had lower external efficacy (higher probability of agreeing). Graphs of predicted probabilities for several key independent variables are also provided to facilitate interpretation of the results. Figure 2.6 provides the predicted probability of agreeing with the "no say" statement as the rural population declines. As expected, as the percentage of the population that is rural decreases, external efficacy decreases (lower probability of agreeing). Figure 2.7 shows the predicted probability of agreeing with this statement

as the respondent's income percentile increases. As income increases, external efficacy decreases, as expected. Finally, Figure 2.8 provides the predicted probability of agreeing with this statement based on perceived economic circumstances. When respondents felt worse compared to last year, their external efficacy was lower, as hypothesized.

Table 2.4
Logistic Regression Results: External Efficacy

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.072**	(0.025)
% Rural Pop	-8.742**	(1.104)
Income Percentile	-0.127**	(0.018)
Better off Last Year	0.082**	(0.023)
Gender	-0.016	(0.037)
White	-0.081	(0.122)
Black	0.219†	(0.133)
Hispanic	0.034	(0.138)
Protestant	-0.096†	(0.057)
Catholic	-0.056	(0.064)
Jewish	0.203	(0.144)
Age	0.000	(0.001)
Education Level	-0.257**	(0.012)
Presidential Approval	0.134**	(0.038)
Congressional Approval	0.086**	(0.009)
Intercept	3.043**	(0.327)
N	13140	
Log-likelihood	-8524.746	
$\chi^2_{(15)}$	1055.204	

Significance levels : † : 10% ∗ : 5% ∗∗ : 1%

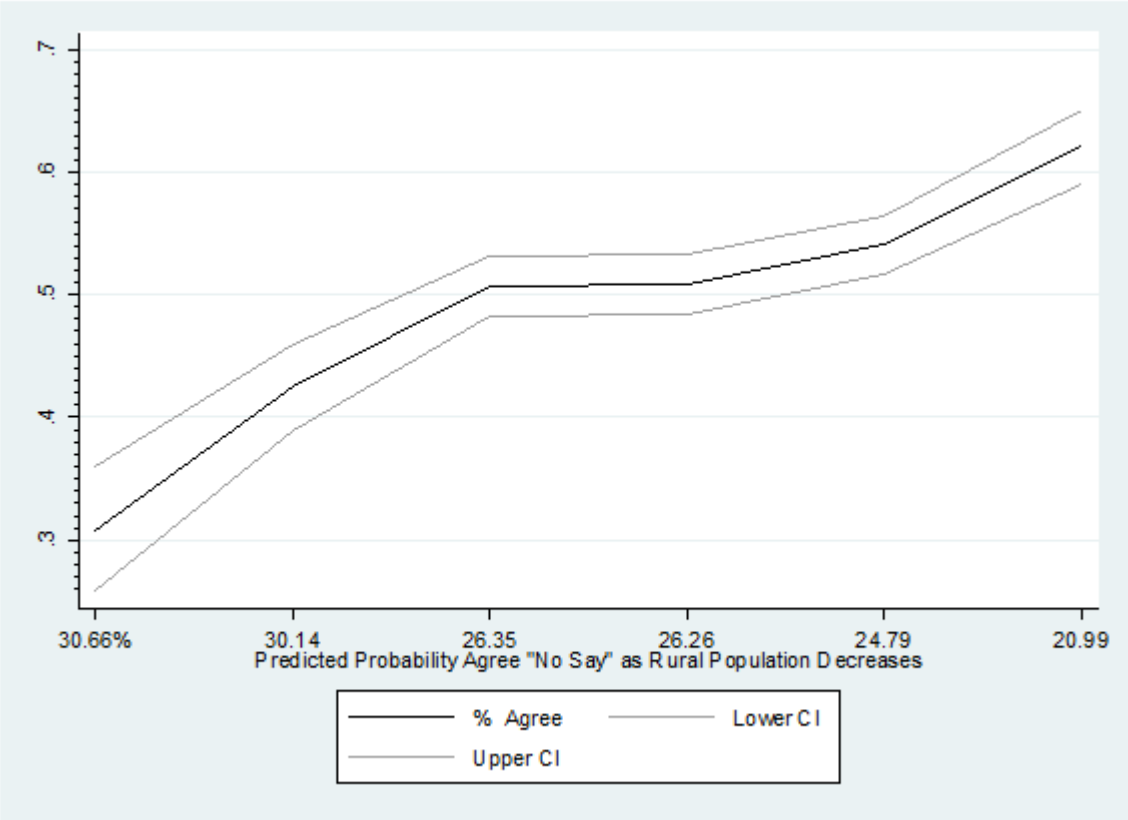

Fig. 2.6. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Rural Population Decreases

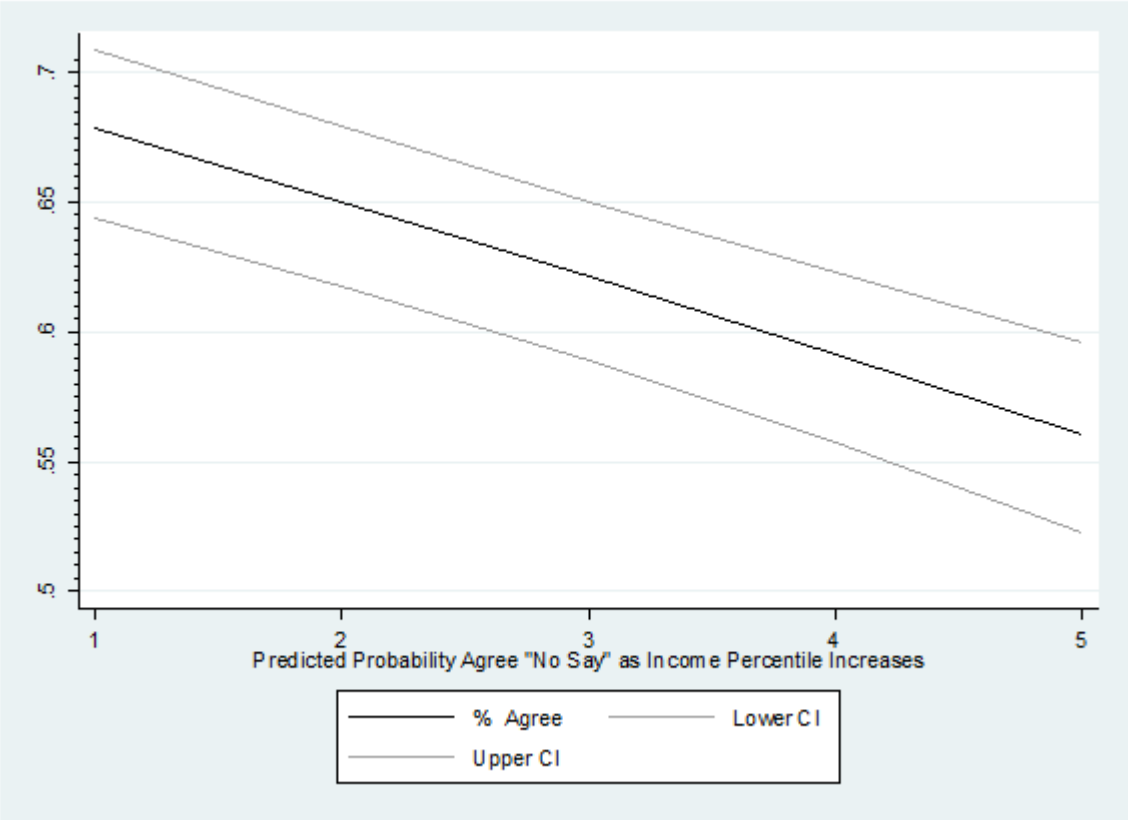

Fig. 2.7. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Income Increases

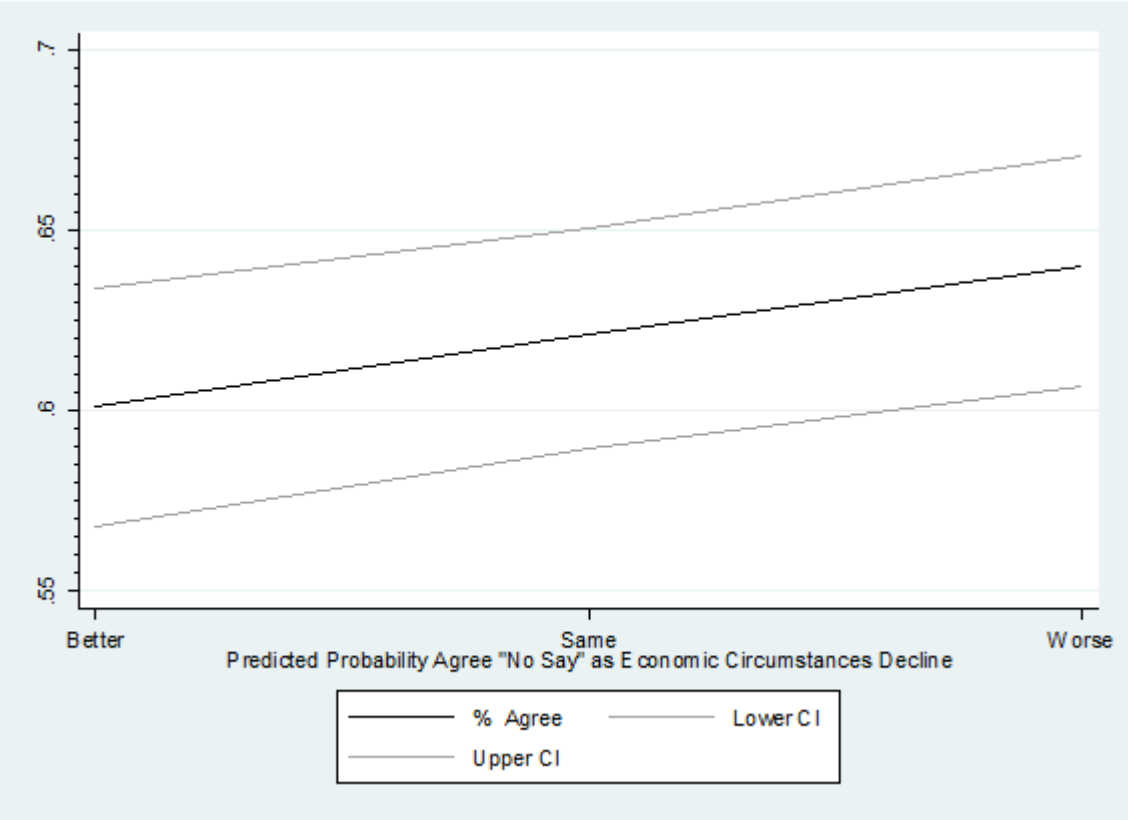

Fig. 2.8. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Economic Circumstances Decline

2.4 Results: Political Trust

Figure 2.9 shows the trust index among rural, suburban, and urban residents from 1958 - 2008. Overtime trends in political trust as measured by these indicators are already well-documented: trust rapidly declined in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and has remained low, although there is a slight upward trend after 9/11. Therefore, these results suggest that trends among rural residents have been similar to the trends present in the general population. Because the gap between rural respondents and the sample as a whole is not as clear and consistent as it is for internal and external efficacy, these trends alone cannot provide support for the hypotheses. Additional

analysis is therefore required to determine if being rural as well as the demographic and economic trends in rural areas have had a distinct impact on political trust.

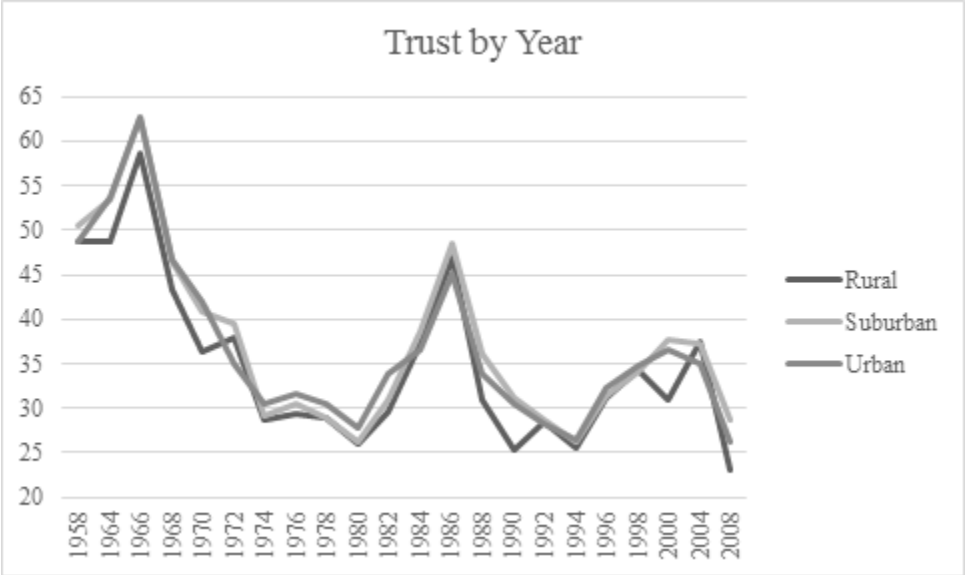

Fig. 2.9. Trust Index: 1958 - 2008

Table 2.5 displays the results of the regression analysis for the trust index. Again, refer to Table 2.1 for measurements of variables to facilitate interpretation of the coefficients. These results support most of the hypotheses, although again none of the interaction effects expected were significant (refer to Appendix B, Table B.4 and Figures B.4 - B.6 for results from the model including all interactions). Whether a respondent lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area; the percentage of the US population that was rural; the respondent's income percentile; and the respondents' feeling concerning how they were doing financially compared to last year each had a significant effect. The results show that rural respondents had lower levels of trust on the scale than urban areas, as well as that as the percentage of the rural population decreases, levels of trust decrease. However, the results concerning economic circumstances were mixed. As the respondent's income percentile increases, their trust level decreases. At the same time, respondents who felt that they were doing worse finan-

cially compared to last year had lower levels of trust, as expected. Although these results are mixed, they do support the argument that not only does rural residency have an impact on trust, but also that the percentage of the population that is rural and economic circumstances have an impact.

Table 2.5
Regression Results: Trust Index

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	0.558*	(0.232)
% Rural Pop	27.513**	(9.427)
Income Percentile	-0.689**	(0.170)
Better off Last Year	-2.337**	(0.211)
Gender	-0.328	(0.343)
White	-1.552	(1.112)
Black	-0.650	(1.209)
Hispanic	2.546*	(1.250)
Protestant	0.752	(0.526)
Catholic	3.676**	(0.588)
Jewish	2.555†	(1.346)
Age	0.013	(0.010)
Education Level	0.486**	(0.114)
Presidential Approval	-7.843**	(0.353)
Congressional Approval	-2.908**	(0.087)
Intercept	48.768**	(2.881)
N	15539	
R^2	0.138	
$F_{(15,15523)}$	164.992	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

2.5 Discussion and Conclusions

These results lead to two key conclusions: living in a rural area leads to lower levels of political trust and efficacy, as does the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural (see Table 2.6 for a summary of the results for the logit models, and Table 2.7

for a summary of the regression results). Together, these results support the idea of a "rural consciousness." The results also suggest that economic circumstances matter, although these results are somewhat mixed. Both internal and external efficacy are higher when one's income is higher, and both external efficacy and trust are higher when one feels that their economic circumstances have improved. These results lend support to both the "political reality" and "rural consciousness" models, as perception of economic circumstances matters in addition to the objective circumstances. Rural residents who feel that they are financially worse off than in the past may feel lower levels of political trust and external efficacy, even if their income level is not necessarily low. This could be explained by their feeling of "relative deprivation" compared to urban areas.

What are the implications of these conclusions - what would it mean for the future of the American political system if political trust and efficacy erode along with the percentage of the population that is rural, particularly for rural residents? One is that political participation may decrease or change in nature. When levels of political efficacy are higher, this may mediate the effect of personality traits or emotions on political involvement, making citizens more likely to participate (Gallego and Oberski 2012; Rudolph, Gangl and Stevens 2000; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009). Therefore, rural Americans may become less likely to participate politically as the rural population continues to shrink. It is also possible that rather than decreasing their participation levels, rural Americans may choose more unconventional participation methods such as protests, which may occur if individuals have high levels of internal efficacy along with low levels of internal efficacy (Pollock 1983; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009). Studies of protest behaviors in urban areas in the 1960s also provide evidence that citizens with "perceived deprivation," which is characterized similarly to "rural consciousness," may participate in such behaviors rather than participate through conventional channels (Eisinger 1973). Chapter 4 examines this question of whether political participation has changed as a result of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the corresponding economic

Table 2.6
Results Summary: Predicted Probabilities of Agreeing

Independent Variable	Internal Efficacy	External Efficacy
Rural Population % (Rural Respondents)		
Low - 20.99%	81.21	62.09
High - 36.00%	65.54	30.84
Rural Population % (Urban Respondents)		
Low - 20.99%	76.31	No Interaction
High - 36.00%	61.18	No Interaction
Income Level (Rural Respondents)		
Low - 0-16%	85.58	67.80
Middle - 34-67%	81.21	62.09
High - 96-100%	75.87	56.03
Income Level (Urban Respondents)		
Low - 0-16%	79.00	No Interaction
Middle - 34-67%	76.31	No Interaction
High - 96-100%	73.38	No Interaction
Economic Circumstances (Rural Respondents)		
Better - 0-16%	81.77	60.14
Same - 34-67%	81.21	62.09
Worse - 96-100%	80.63	64.01
Economic Circumstances (Urban Respondents)		
Better - 0-16%	75.60	No Interaction
Same - 34-67%	76.31	No Interaction
Worse - 96-100%	77.00	No Interaction

changes in rural areas, as well as specifically examining the support for unconventional participation among rural Americans.

Additional implications relate to the decrease in support of government actors and actions that would occur as citizens' trust levels decrease. Declining levels of political trust do not necessarily need to correlate to declining support in the democratic political system to have this impact - loss of support for incumbents can as well (Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn 2000; Hetherington 1998). Loss of support for incumbents result-

Table 2.7
Results Summary: Political Trust

Independent Variable	Trust
Urbanism - Rural	Lower
Urbanism - Urban	Higher
Rural Population % - Low	Lower
Rural Population % - High	Higher
Income Level - Low	Higher
Income Level - High	Lower
Financially Better off Last Year	Higher
Financially Worse off Last Year	Lower

ing from low levels of trust may have far-reaching impacts, such as support for third party or extremist candidates (Hetherington 1999; Abramson 1979).

Consider as an example of these possibilities explanations of support for the Tea Party movement. Although evidence shows that geographically, the Tea Party had support outside rural areas and small towns, where its ideas would generally be expected to receive support, it gained traction in suburban and urban areas due to economic restlessness in those areas (Cho, Gimpel and Shaw 2012). In the past, rural Americans, and in particular those in the agriculture industry, expressed support for a variety of political parties and populist ideals due to the changes in their economic situation (Lipset 1968; McConnell 1969). As the rural population shrinks, the question becomes whether the impacts will only be in the form of increased third party support in rural areas, due to economic restlessness and increased alienation, or whether the basis of support for these movements will change due to the potentially decreased political influence of rural and agrarian interests? In the next chapter, in order to examine this implication and begin to answer this question, I examine changes in partisanship and vote choice, asking specifically whether rural Americans have become more supportive of third parties' candidates as a result of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes.

3. PARTISANSHIP AND VOTE CHOICE

In recent years, there has been a focus on the divide in partisanship and vote choice between rural and urban America. Over time, this divide has become more polarized, with rural Americans increasingly identifying as and voting for Republicans (Bishop and Cushing 2008; McKee 2008, 2007). Partisanship and vote choice in rural areas have long been characterized as diverging from urban areas. *The American Voter*, for example, devotes an entire chapter to agrarian political behavior, stating that "'the farm vote' is an entity that has meaning for the politician, journalist, and lay observer alike, and among the repute bloc votes, it holds fascination as one of the most unpredictable (Campbell et al. 1960, pg. 402)." In contrast to the consistent trends towards polarization we now observe, in early years, the agrarian vote was described as having extreme variation in reaction to economic circumstances (Campbell et al. 1960; Lipset 1968; McConnell 1969). They nature of these attitudes and behaviors in rural America has clearly changed, but this observation begs the question - what force has been driving this change?

The widespread loss of rural population and transformation of the rural economy happens to coincide with this change in the nature of partisanship and vote choice in the United States. Is it the economic impact of rural population loss driving these changes, or is perhaps another force at work? On the one hand, there is evidence that social context and economic circumstances affect partisanship and vote choice (Bishop and Cushing 2008; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987; Fiorina 1981). This result would be similar to that observed concerning political trust and efficacy among the population. On the other hand, analyses of these attitudes and behaviors in rural America have focused largely on other factors, such as whether rural voters are "values voters."

Using data from the ANES from 1952 - 2008, I ask whether the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances, and the perception

of these economic circumstances influence partisanship and vote choice. I determine that each of these factors matters, although not exactly as one might expect. As the rural population declines, the probability of identifying as a Republican increases, and is highest among rural respondents. At the same time, the probability of voting for a Republican presidential candidate becomes lower as the rural population declines, as does the probability of voting for a third-party candidate. Additionally, being "rural" is not the only important factor: as income levels increase and respondents feel they are doing better financially, the probability that they identify as and vote for Republicans increases as well.

3.1 Vote Choice and Partisanship in Rural America

There are two main schools of thought regarding the development of party identification in the United States and its relation to vote choice. Some conceive of party identification as in *The American Voter* - as a psychological-social attachment which develops early in life, influenced heavily by family, and remains relatively stable (Campbell et al. 1960; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002; Hajnal and Lee 2011; Jennings and Niemi 1968). In this view, party identification is a key determinant of vote choice, although more proximate factors may prevail in a particular election or large-scale shifts in partisanship may occur slowly over time. Others conceive of this relationship as in *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, as a heuristic to allow voters to choose which party will provide the most political benefit to them (Downs 1957). For example, in Fiorina's (1981) model, voters choose their party as the result of a running tally of retrospective evaluations. Analyses of political attitudes and behaviors in rural America, however, question whether these typical explanations sufficiently account for the patterns observed in these areas and tend to look for a unique factor that could explain these patterns.

There is ample evidence that rural Americans tend to identify as and vote for Republicans and that urban residents do just the opposite (evidence concerning sub-

urban residents in mixed) (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder 2006; Gainsborough 2005; Gimpel and Karnes 2006; McKee 2007, 2008; Sauerzopf and Swanstrom 1999). Political scientists have not been able to successfully explain this pattern, which Gimpel and Karnes (2006) label as the discipline's "rural problem." There are currently two sets of completing explanations concerning these rural-urban differences. In the first set, differences are explained via the varying levels of importance that voters place on "values" across these geographic lines (Bartels 2006; Frank 2004; Gimpel and Karnes 2006; McKee 2007, 2008). In the second set, differences are attributed to varying economic circumstances across geographies or the argument is that the differences are not that large and therefore do not need to be explained (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder 2006; Gimpel and Karnes 2006; Gelman et al. 2007).

Studies that explain the differences in attitudes and behaviors across rural, suburban, and urban geographies with the "value voters" (also called "culture war") thesis are at least in part inspired by journalistic accounts of the phenomenon such as Frank's (2004) *What's the Matter with Kansas?* As previously discussed, this book argues that white working-class voters in middle America are flocking to the Republican Party against their own interests because the Democrats have abandoned them for upper-class, east-coast voters, and the Republicans have courted them with moral issues. Francia and Baumgartner (2005) produce similar findings. McKee (2007) puts forth a similar argument as well, providing evidence that rural voters tend to identify as "part of the religious right;" oppose gun controls, gay marriage, and pro-choice positions; and often own their own homes. Studies that place the root of the differences in economic issues date back to explanations proposed in *The American Voter* (see also Lipset 1968; Lewis-Beck 1977). As previously explained, in these early studies, they found that agrarian political behavior was quite variable, although overtime they were found to become more involved and stable. Furthermore, in specific comparison to urban laborers, agrarian voters respond differently to economic hardship, have different levels of involvement, and react to third parties in different ways.

These early studies do not address the argument that rural and urban voters have different values in their discussion of how economics comes into play, as they came prior to the value voters/culture war thesis. Gimpel and Karnes (2006) directly challenge the value voters/culture war thesis, pointing out not only that any explanation that relies on social conservatism of rural voters may be rooted in stereotypes, but also that the reason scholars dismiss economic explanations of this divergence is that they have not properly examined the economic characteristics of rural voters. Many assume that rural voters should not identify as or vote for Republicans because they are not as wealthy as suburban and urban voters; Gimpel and Karnes (2006), however, are able to provide evidence that these rural voters do not consider themselves impoverished "wage slaves," as they are actually more likely than suburban and urban voters to own homes and small businesses, and levels of economic inequality are lower in rural areas. This means that economic conservatism among rural voters is not as surprising as it may seem at first. Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder (2006) also bring a direct challenge. They find that the weight of social issues is not higher than the weight of economic issues for rural voters (this is true of other social groupings as well), implying that economic issues are still the most important in presidential elections. Because rural "red" (Republican) states happen to be more conservative on both economic and social issues, this leads to the divergence that one can observe (see also Gelman et al. 2007).

A key issue with explanations of these rural political attitudes and behaviors is that they tend to be rooted in stereotypes or have methodological shortcomings. *The Big Sort* provides a quote exemplifying the attitude some urbanites hold towards rural Americans - that "they are rubes, fools, and hate mongers (Bishop and Cushing 2008, pg. 270)." Analyses by journalists and political scientists are not void of these statements. For example, in *What's the Matter with Kansas?* rural Americans are described as "dumb, boorish, and bigoted (Frank 2004)," and in *The American Voter* the authors hypothesize that rural voters only talk about politics at ice cream socials (Campbell et al. 1960).

A problem with Frank's (2004) account is that simply because the white working-class voters that he examines live in the "heartland," one cannot extrapolate his findings and claim they apply to all rural voters. The reason for this is that not all of these individuals are rural and not all rural individuals possess these particular traits. Re-examining this claim with more methodological rigor shows that the only gains that Republicans seem to have made in the lower portion of the income distribution seem to come from the "solid south" shifting to be more in line with the rest of the country (Bartels 2006; Abramowitz and Teixeira 2008; McKee 2008)[1]. Additionally, many of the "values voters" arguments (as well as early economic arguments) that are more rigorous in this regard still suffer from unclear conceptualization of the difference between rural, suburban, and urban areas; conflating geographic location and occupation by examining only the agrarian population; or assuming an exact correlation between education with social class (see Campbell et al. 1960; Lewis-Beck 1977; McKee 2007; McKee and Teigen 2009).

What role could rural population loss have in explaining these patterns? There is ample evidence that migration patterns and the resulting social context influence several political attitudes and behaviors (Bishop and Cushing 2008; Cho 2003; Gimpel et al. 2008; Huckfeldt et al. 1995; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987, 1991; McDonald 2011; Mellow and Trubowitz 2005). More specifically, there is evidence that individuals tend to weigh "local interests" or consider their sense of place when forming political attitudes, whether they live in rural or urban contexts and that the social network interactions with those that one shares a sense of community with influences these views (Anderson 2009; Cutler 2007; Rudzitis 1993; Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016). As rural areas lose population and undergo economic transformation, this could lead to changes in which political interests dominate in the social network. Recall that the trend in rural population loss has been of a specific nature, such that the young

[1]Although Abramowitz and Teixeira (2008) do not agree with Bartels' (2006) critique, they still disagree with Frank (2004) by arguing that white working class voters do not flock to the Republicans on the basis of moral issues. Instead, they argue that they have become richer, more educated, and less unionized.

and educated are most likely to leave (Carr and Kefalas 2009). Also, although the economic impact of this trend has varied, as people continue to leave rural areas for urban, the effect of migration could be increased partisan sorting (Bishop 2008; Kirland and Williams 2015).

This sorting could go so far as to occur within rural areas. For example, there is evidence that those rural areas with an older "farming" economy are more conservative than those with a transformed recreational economy (Scala, Johnson and Rogers 2015). Walsh (2012*b*) argues that people in rural areas have developed a "rural consciousness" characterized by lower political efficacy, lower trust in government, and as a result more preference for small government. This rural consciousness, rather than (or in addition to) explanations based on "values voters" or objective rural economic circumstances could result in the observed trend towards Republican partisanship and vote choice.

A somewhat different pattern in partisanship and vote choice could also be explained by this relationship. While most attention has been directed towards explaining the reasons that rural voters identify as and vote for Republicans, the percentage of Independents in the rural population has also increased over this same time frame. Furthermore, despite the ubiquitous "red-state-blue-state" characterization, there are still voters who defect from this two-dimensional pattern, such as those in rural areas with "populist" traditions (Morrill, Knopp and Brown 2007, 2011). Hajnal and Lee (2011) argue that white voters with ideologically extreme or conflicting political views are no longer identifying with one of the two major parties. There is also evidence that the effect of local economic factors on economic evaluations may be especially strong for those that are not partisans (Reeves and Gimpel 2012). Therefore, as the rural population declines, a primarily white population with a unique "rural consciousness" that may not fit the two-dimensional framework could remain in these areas, which would then result in rural voters identifying as Independents, or perhaps voting for third party candidates. It is worth noting, however, that Hajnal and Lee (2011) do find this trend is more prevalent among liberal extremists than

conservative, with those that are more conservative continuing to identify with the Republicans. Therefore, if rural Americans are more conservative in their extreme views, rather than being liberal or having cross-cutting viewpoints, the result again would be that they would be more likely to identify as and vote for Republicans.

3.1.1 Hypotheses

This analysis will test the following hypotheses, while also taking into consideration each of the factors past research has found contribute to partisanship and vote choice. The hypotheses concern the key independent variables in this analysis, which include the percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances (income), and perception of economic circumstances (whether the individual feels they were better off in the last year):

Hypothesis 1a *Residents of rural areas will be more likely to identify as Republicans than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1b *Residents of rural areas will be more likely to vote for Republican or third party presidential candidates than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1c *The percentage of the population that is rural, income levels, and the respondent's financial situation will interact with the effect of place of residence on partisanship and presidential vote choice.*

Hypothesis 2a *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, respondents will be more likely to identify as Republicans than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 2b *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, respondents will be more likely to vote for Republican or third party presidential candidates than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 3a *Respondents with higher income levels will be more likely to identify as Republicans than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 3b *Respondents with higher income levels will be more likely to vote for Republican presidential candidates than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 3c *Respondents with lower income levels will be more likely to vote for third party presidential candidates than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 4a *Respondents who felt that they were doing better financially will be more likely to identify as Republicans than respondents who felt that they were doing worse financially.*

Hypothesis 4b *Respondents who felt that they were doing better financially will be more likely to vote for Republican presidential candidates than respondents who felt that they were doing worse financially.*

Hypothesis 4c *Respondents who felt that they were doing worse financially will be more likely to vote for third party presidential candidates than respondents who felt that they were doing better financially.*

3.2 Data and Methods

To answer these questions, pooled data from the ANES surveys years 1952 - 2008 are again used (see Appendix A for question wording). As previously explained, use of these data allow for analysis of comparatively worded questions over the same time frame as the rural population loss phenomenon has been occurring. Data from the US Census Bureau is also used to measure the percentage of the population that is rural. The analysis begins by providing an overview of the trends in party identification and vote choice of rural residents as compared to suburban and urban residents over time. Multinomial logistic regression is used to examine which factors influence these attitudes, with rural place of residence, percentage of the population that is rural, the

respondent's income level, and the respondent's assessment of their economic situation (retrospective) being they key independent variables. The interaction between place of residence and each of these other factors is also considered. Predicted probabilities based on changes in values of these key independent variables for each of the models, estimated using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003), are provided to allow for ease of interpretation of the multinomial logit regression results.

3.2.1 Measurement

Measurements for the key dependent variables of party identification and presidential vote choice come from responses to the ANES questions. Additionally, measurements for the key independent variables of rural residency and economic circumstances, as well as control variables of age, gender, race, education level, religion, union membership, southern residency, and ideology also come from responses to the ANES questions. The measurements of each are listed in Table 3.1 and the specific survey questions used to measure each variable are detailed in Appendix A. Additionally, to account for the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, a key independent variable, I used data from the United States Census Bureau. The shrinking percentage of the population that is rural is accounted for by including for each respondent the measurement of the size of the rural population in the United States as a percent of the total population in the most recent prior Census or American Community Survey. For example, for respondents in the 1950s, a value of 36 percent is assigned; for respondents in the 2000s, a value of 20.99 percent is assigned.

Table 3.1: Variable Measurement

Variable	Measurement	Years Available
Dependent Variables		
Party Identification	(1) Democrat (2) Independent (3) Republican	1952 - 2008
Vote Choice	(1) Democrat (2) Republican (3) Other	1952 - 2008
Independent Variables		
Urbanism	(1) Rural (2) Suburban (3) Urban	1952 - 2008
% Rural Population	Percent of US population rural, ranges from 20.99 - 36.00	1952 - 2008
Income Percentile	(1) 0 -16 (2) 17 - 33 (3) 34 - 67 (4) 68 - 95 (5) 96 - 100	1948 - 2008
Financially Better off Last Year	(1) Better Now (2) Same (3) Worse Now	1952 - 2008
Control Variables		
Gender	(1) Male (2) Female	1948 - 2008

Continued on next page...

... table 3.1 continued

White	(1) White (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Black	(1) Black (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Hispanic	(1) Hispanic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Education Level	(1) 8th Grade or Less (2) 9th - 12th Grade or less (3) 12th Grade/GED (4) 12th Grade/GED + (5) Some College (6) Bachelor's Degree (7) Advanced Degree	1952 - 2008
Age	Ranges from 17 - 99+	1948 - 2008
Protestant	(1) Protestant (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Catholic	(1) Catholic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Jewish	(1) Jewish (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Union Membership	(0) No (1) Yes	1948 - 2008
Southerner	(1) Yes (2) No	1952 - 2008

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... table 3.1 continued

	(1) Extreme Liberal	
	(2) Liberal	
	(3) Slight Liberal	
Ideology	(4) Moderate	1972 - 2008
	(5) Slight Conservative	
	(6) Conservative	
	(7) Extreme Conservative	
	(1) Strong Democrat	
	(2) Weak Democrat	
	(3) Independent-Democrat	
Party Identification	(4) Independent	1972 - 2008
	(5) Independent-Republican	
	(6) Weak Republican	
	(7) Strong Republican	

Once again, there are a few items related to measurement worth mentioning before proceeding with the analysis. The first is that as the same data is used, the same issues with the measurement of urbanism that were discussed in the previous chapter remain. Second, I made the choice in the analysis of party identification to use a three-point scale, with all respondents being identified as Democrats, Independents, or Republicans [2]. Independent leaners were included with the corresponding party they lean towards. Finally, for presidential vote choice, votes for all candidates that were not in one of the two major parties were considered third party votes, rather than votes only for major third party candidates.

[2] A regression analysis using the full seven-point scale of party identification was also performed, and the results were substantively similar to the results of the multinomial logit model presented. See Appendix B, Table B.5 for the results. Additionally, the full seven-point scale is used as a control variable in the analysis of presidential vote choice.

3.3 Results: Party Identification

Figure 3.1 shows the percent of respondents identifying as Republicans in rural, suburban, and urban areas over time. Although the focus has generally been on explaining the predominantly Republican partisanship in rural areas, one can observe that in most years, and consistently since 1980, a higher proportion of suburban respondents identified as Republicans. In general, a higher proportion of both rural and suburban respondents identified as Republicans compared to urban respondents, and the overtime trends were similar. These trends alone do not support the hypothesis that rural respondents are more likely to identify as Republicans. Additional analysis is required to determine the role that rural residence plays once the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances, and other factors are considered.

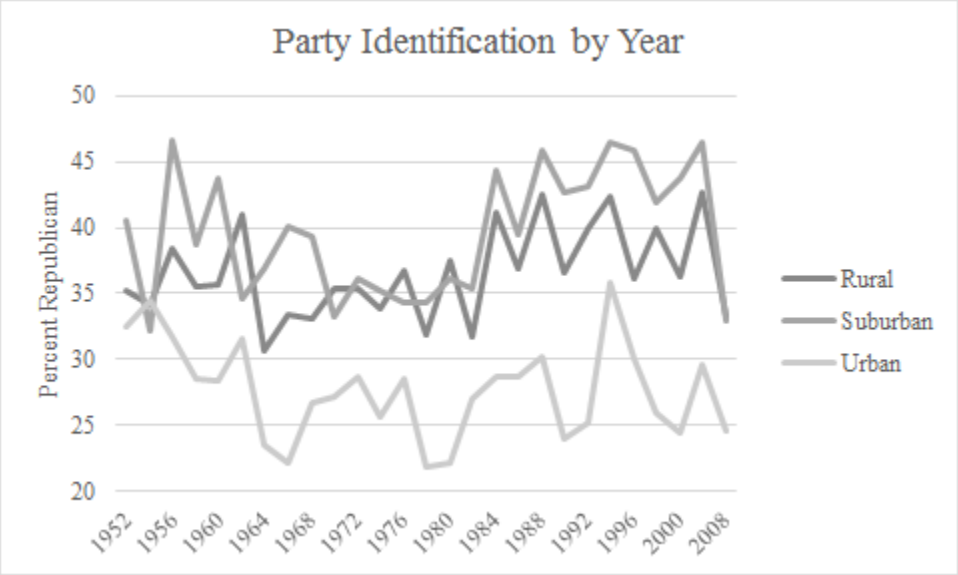

Fig. 3.1. Rural, Suburban, and Urban Party Identification: 1952 - 2008

Table 3.2 displays the results of the multinomial logit regression analysis, with Democratic identification being the reference category. The results provide strong evidence in favor of the hypotheses. Whether a respondent lived in a rural, suburban,

or urban area; the percentage of the US population that was rural; and whether the respondent felt they were doing better financially compared to last year had an impact on the probability they would identify as an Independent rather than a Democrat. All four key independent variables, including the respondent's income percentile, had an impact on the probability that they would identify as a Republican rather than a Democrat. Only the hypothesized interaction effects between place of residence and the other key independent variables were not significant (Refer to Appendix B, Table B.6 and Figure B. 7 - B.9 for results from the model including all interactions). Refer to measurements described in Table 3.1 and the graphs provided for interpretation of the coefficients.

In order to provide a clearer interpretation of these results, predicted probabilities of identifying as a Republican generated using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003) are provided in Figures 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. To examine changes in this probability at various levels of the key independent variables, values of the control variables are set to remain constant. The presented predicted probabilities are for a white male who has a high school education, is a Protestant, does not live in the south, is not a union member, and is ideologically moderate. When determining the impact of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, he has a median income and financially feels he is doing about the same as last year; when determining the impact of economic circumstances, he lives in a rural area and the percentage of the population that is rural is lowest.

Table 3.2: Multinomial Logit Regression Results: Party Identification, Reference Category = Democrat

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Equation 1 : Independent		
Urbanism	-0.095**	(0.036)
% Rural Pop	3.005†	(1.678)

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... table 3.2 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Income Percentile	0.017	(0.026)
Better off Last Year	0.060†	(0.031)
Age	-0.255**	(0.052)
White	0.188	(0.182)
Black	-0.942**	(0.205)
Hispanic	-0.011	(0.204)
Age	-0.021**	(0.002)
Education Level	-0.116**	(0.018)
Protestant	-0.266**	(0.076)
Catholic	-0.533**	(0.084)
Jewish	-0.814**	(0.194)
Southerner	-0.003	(0.060)
Union	-0.337**	(0.066)
Ideology	0.310**	(0.021)
Intercept	-1.457**	(0.498)
Equation 2 : Republican		
Urbanism	-0.046†	(0.025)
% Rural Pop	-3.798**	(1.122)
Income Percentile	0.196**	(0.019)
Better off Last Year	-0.114**	(0.022)
Gender	-0.171**	(0.037)
White	0.346**	(0.128)
Black	-2.089**	(0.160)
Hispanic	-0.226	(0.147)
Age	-0.004**	(0.001)
Education Level	0.099**	(0.012)

Continued on next page...

... table 3.2 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Protestant	0.404**	(0.060)
Catholic	-0.175**	(0.066)
Jewish	-1.115**	(0.145)
Southerner	0.335**	(0.043)
Union	-0.749**	(0.047)
Ideology	0.786**	(0.016)
Intercept	-3.692**	(0.341)
N	18913	
Log-likelihood	-14771.835	
$\chi^2_{(32)}$	6173.624	

Significance levels : † : 10% ∗ : 5% ∗∗ : 1%

Figure 3.2 provides the predicted probability of identifying as a Republican as the rural population declines. These results support the hypotheses that rural respondents will be more likely to identify as Republicans and that the likelihood increases as the rural population declines. The results also support the hypotheses related to economic circumstances. Figure 3.3 shows the predicted probability of identifying as a Republican as the respondent's income percentile increases, and Figure 3.4 shows this probability across respondents that rate their financial situation better, the same, or worse than last year. The probability of identifying as a Republican increases as income level increases, and is highest when respondents indicate they are doing better financially.

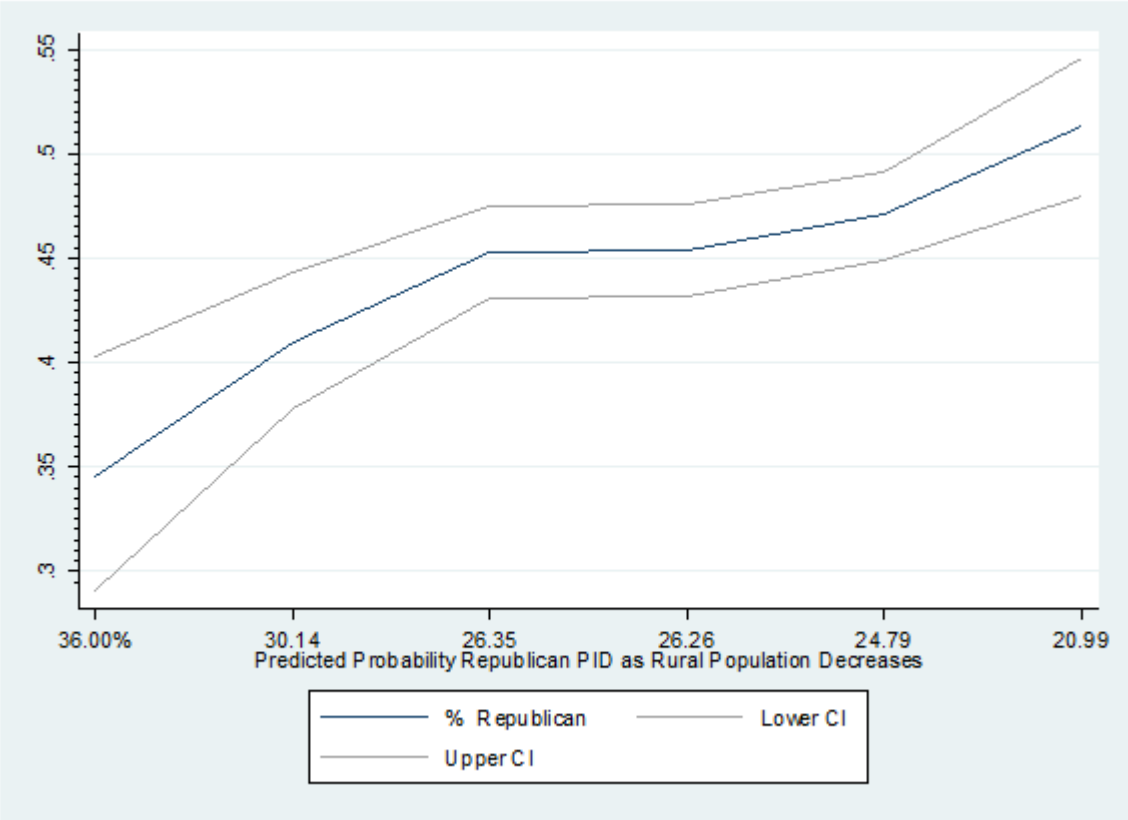

Fig. 3.2. Predicted Probability of Party ID as Rural Population Decreases

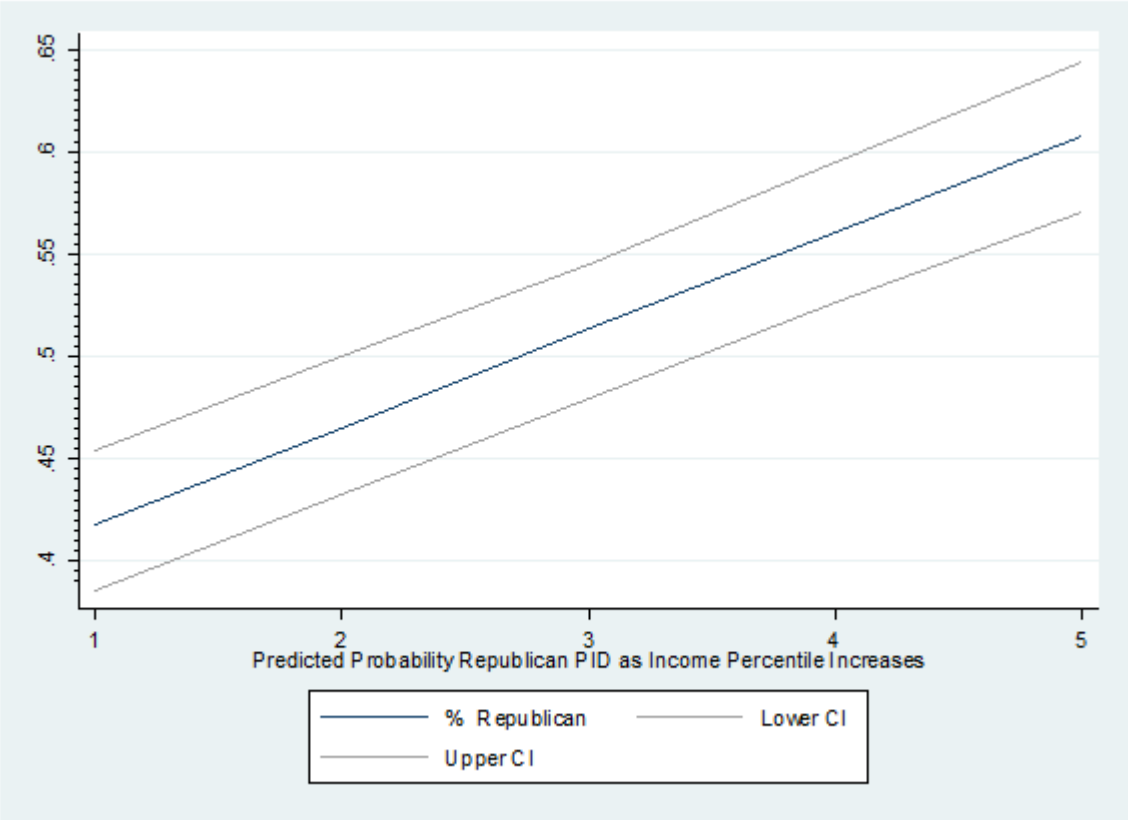

Fig. 3.3. Predicted Probability of Party ID as Income Increases

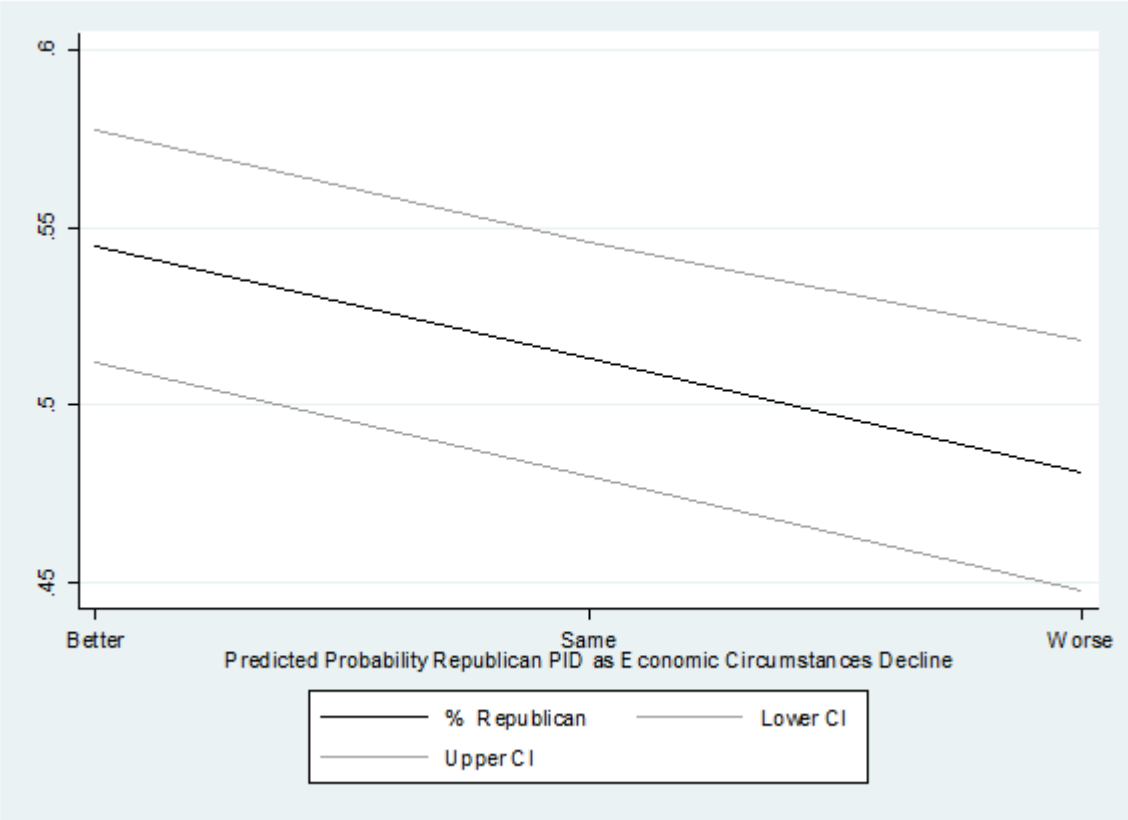

Fig. 3.4. Predicted Probability of Party ID as Economic Circumstances Decline

3.4 Results: Presidential Vote Choice

Figures 3.5 and 3.6 show the percentage of respondents in rural, suburban, and urban areas voting for Republican and third party presidential candidates, respectively. Similar to party identification, there has been a lot of attention focused on explaining votes for Republican candidates in rural areas, but suburban respondents appear to be just as likely to vote for these candidates as well. Again, rural and suburban voters generally voted for Republican candidates at much higher rates than urban voters, and followed the same overtime voting trends. The trends in third party voting follow a slightly different pattern: in general, third party voting is similarly low in all areas,

however in each election with a major third party candidate the results vary somewhat. In 1968, when George Wallace was a major candidate, rural voters were more likely to cast third party votes than suburban and urban voters. In contrast, in 1992, when Ross Perot was a major candidate, rural and suburban voters supported him at much higher levels than urban voters. The results in 1980 and 1996 also display different patterns, however the differences in these cases are not as drastic. Again, these results alone cannot support the hypotheses that rural voters are more likely to vote for Republican or third party candidates.

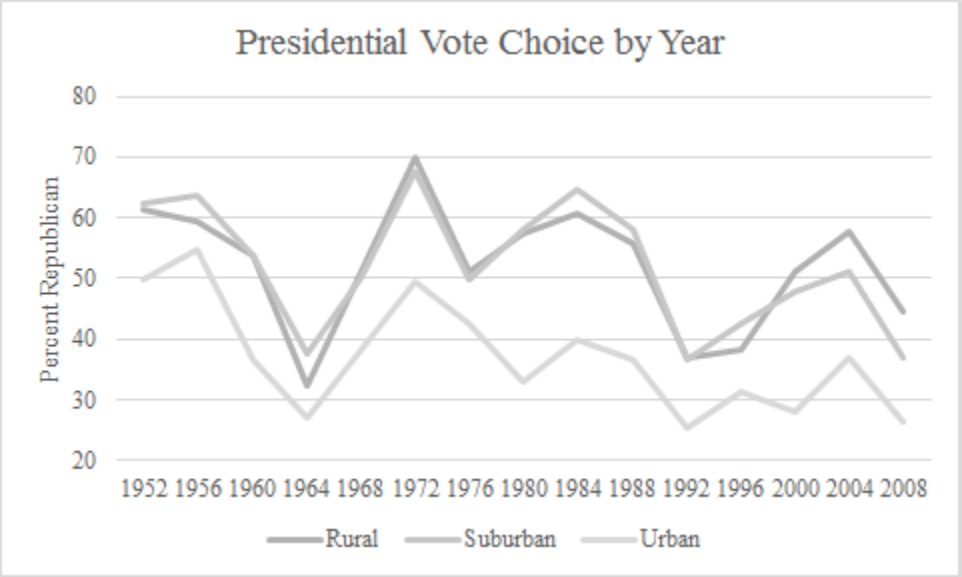

Fig. 3.5. Rural, Suburban, and Urban Presidential Vote Choice (Republican): 1952 - 2008

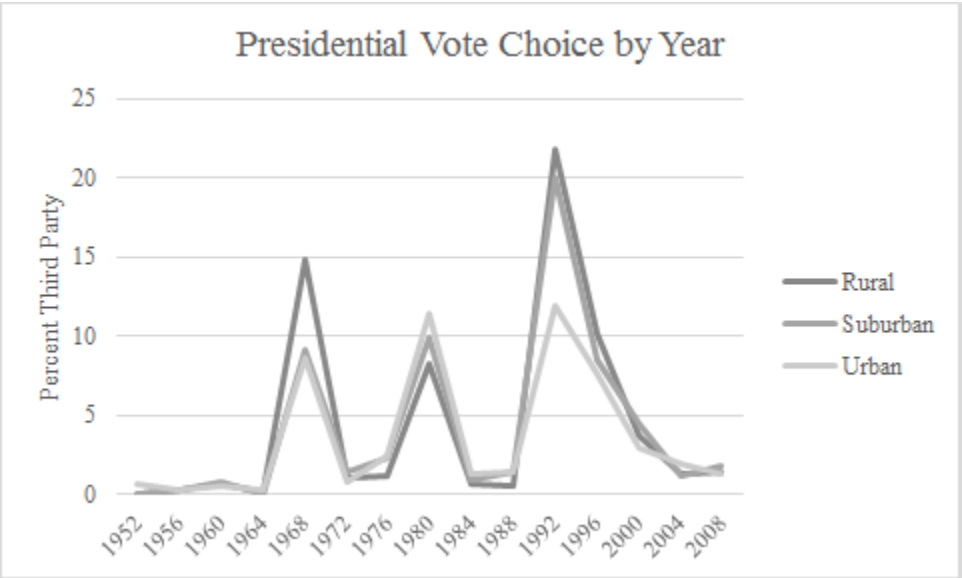

Fig. 3.6. Rural, Suburban, and Urban Presidential Vote Choice (Third-Party): 1952 - 2008

Table 3.3 displays the results of the multinomial logit regression analysis, with Democrat being the base category. These results provide mixed supported for the hypotheses. Whether a respondent lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area; the percentage of the US population that was rural; and whether the respondent felt they were doing better financially compared to last year had an impact on the probability they would vote for the third-party presidential candidates. The percentage of the population that is rural, the respondent's income level, and whether the respondent felt they were doing better financially compared to last year had an impact on the probability they would vote for the Republican presidential candidate rather than the Democrat. Refer to measurements described in Table 3.1 and the graphs provided for interpretation of the coefficients.

The impact of these variables was not in all cases what was expected, however. In both instances, the interaction terms did not have a significant effect (Refer to Appendix B, Table B.7 and Figures B.10 - B.15 for results from the model including

all interactions)[3]. Additionally, although I hypothesized that a decrease in the percentage of the population that is rural would be associated with a higher probability of voting for Republican candidates, the results lead to the opposite conclusion.

Table 3.3: Multinomial Logit Regression Results:
Vote Choice, Reference Category = Democrat

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
	Republican	
Urbanism	-0.063	(0.049)
Percent Rural	12.832**	(1.852)
Income Percentile	0.111**	(0.037)
Better off Last Year	-0.190**	(0.043)
Gender	0.042	(0.071)
White	0.289	(0.243)
Black	-1.842**	(0.311)
Hispanic	-0.309	(0.280)
Protestant	0.389**	(0.117)
Catholic	0.407**	(0.125)
Jewish	-0.207	(0.252)
Age	0.002	(0.002)
Education Level	-0.023	(0.024)
Ideology	0.537**	(0.031)
Party ID	0.814**	(0.021)
Intercept	-8.808**	(0.608)
	Third Party	

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[3]The predicted probabilities for two of the interaction effects for the third-party voting model had very little overlap. Their interpretation would lead to the same substantive conclusions: third-party voting is higher in rural areas, and increases in likelihood as the percentage of the population that is rural decreases.

... table 3.3 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Urbanism	-0.128†	(0.072)
Percent Rural	9.448**	(2.766)
Income Percentile	0.036	(0.054)
Better off Last Year	0.121†	(0.063)
Gender	-0.357**	(0.107)
White	0.767†	(0.412)
Black	-1.193*	(0.534)
Hispanic	0.028	(0.474)
Protestant	-0.476**	(0.146)
Catholic	-0.405*	(0.160)
Jewish	-0.954*	(0.374)
Age	-0.017**	(0.004)
Education Level	0.006	(0.037)
Ideology	0.157**	(0.045)
Party ID	0.498**	(0.032)
Intercept	-5.515**	(0.911)
N	7737	
Log-likelihood	-4125.873	
$\chi^2_{(30)}$	5323.464	

Significance levels : $\dagger$: 10% $*$: 5% $**$: 1%

In order to illustrate this and provide clear interpretation of the results, predicted probabilities generated using Clarify of voting for Republican or third party presidential candidates are provided (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003). The presented predicted probabilities are for a white male who has a high school education, is ideo-

logically moderate, and identifies as an Independent. When determining the impact of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, he has a median income and financially feels he is doing about the same as last year; when determining the impact of economic circumstances, he lives in a rural area and the percentage of the population that is rural is lowest.

Figure 3.7 provides the predicted probability of voting for the Republican presidential candidate as the rural population declines. As previously noted, as the percentage of the population that is rural decreased, the probability of casting a vote for the Republican also decreased. Figure 3.8 provides the probability of voting for the Republican candidate as income increases. In this case, the result was as expected, with the probability increasing as income increased. The hypothesis related to perception of economic circumstances is also supported by the results, as shown in Figure 3.9. As a respondent perceived their economic circumstances to become worse, the probability of voting for the Republican candidate declined.

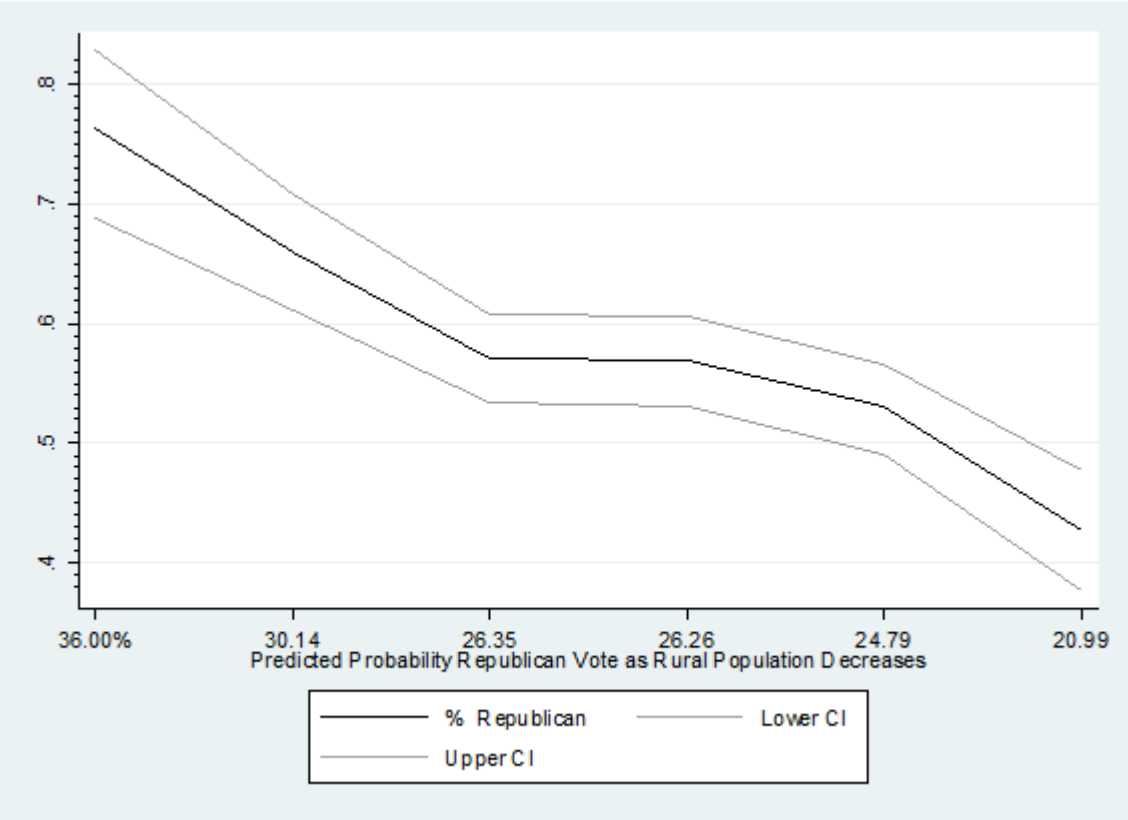

Fig. 3.7. Predicted Probability Republican Vote Choice as Rural Population Decreases

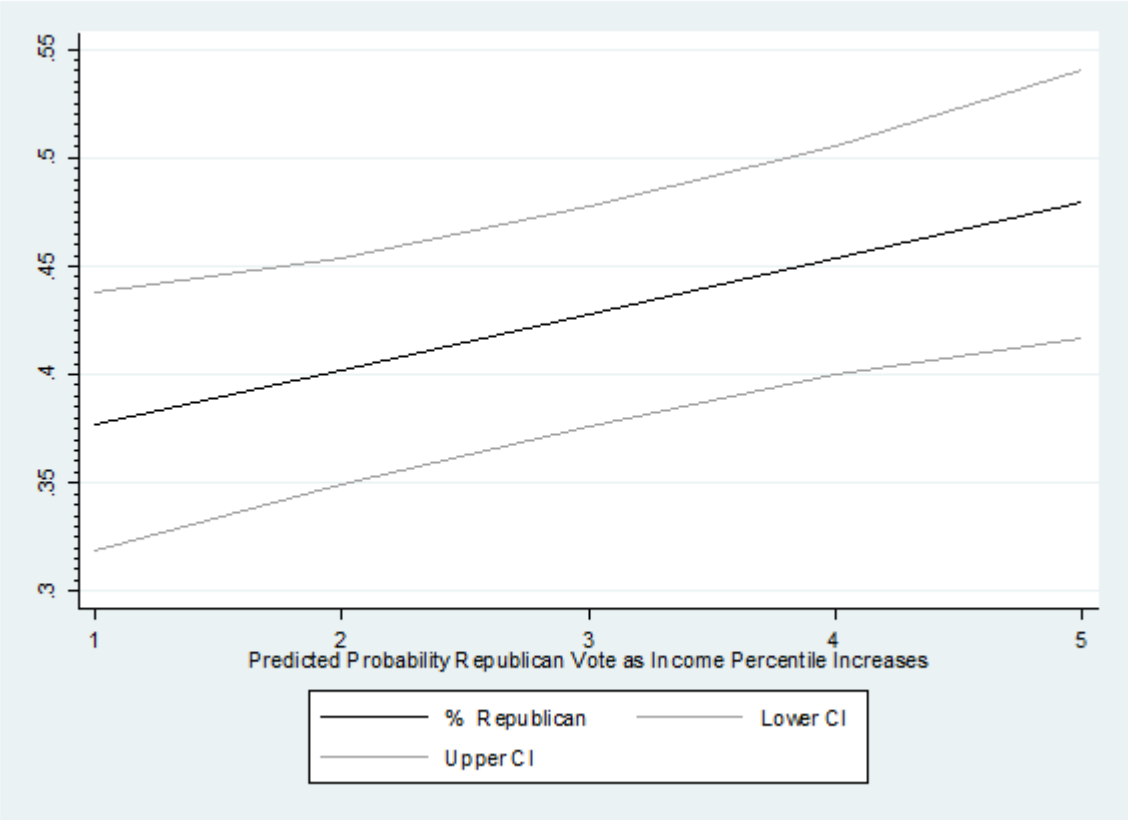

Fig. 3.8. Predicted Probability Republican Vote Choice as Income Increases

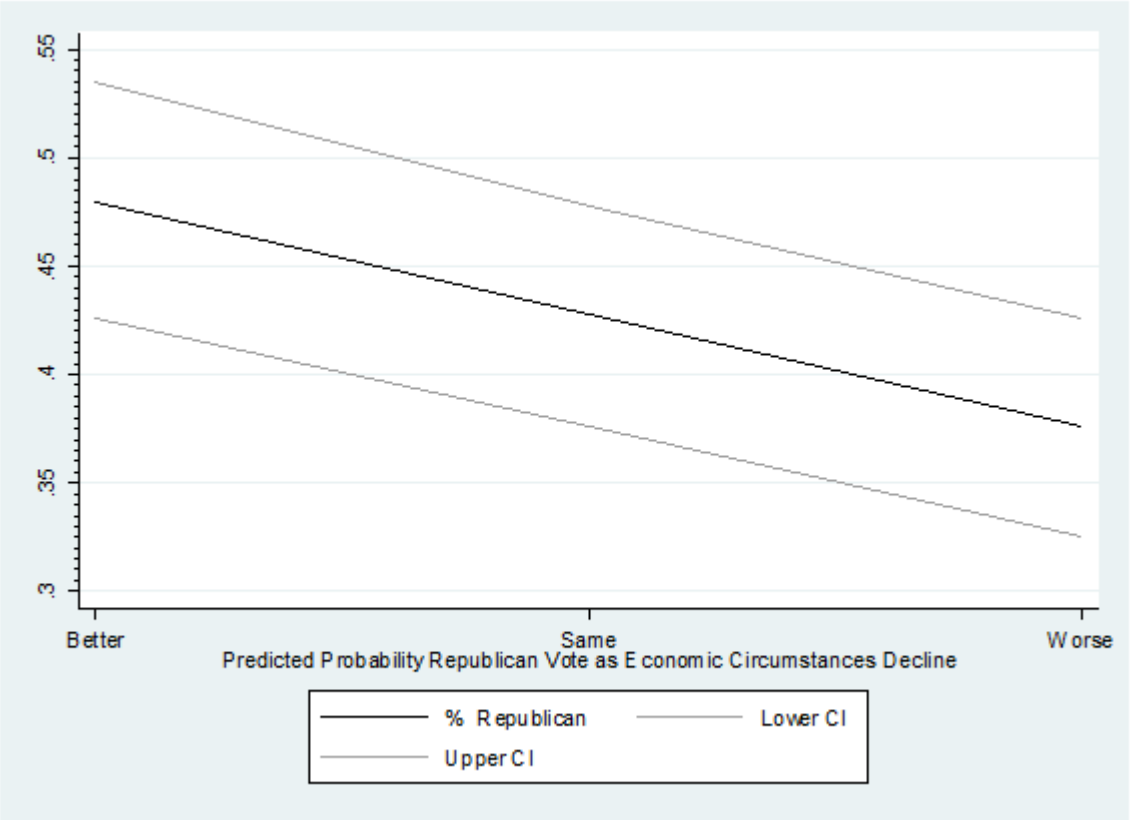

Fig. 3.9. Predicted Probability Republican Vote Choice as Income Increases

The results for third-party candidate vote choice were mostly as expected, although in this case income level had no significant effect, but place of residence did. Rural respondents were more likely to vote for third party candidates than suburban or urban respondents. Predicted probabilities are again provided for clearer interpretation of additional results. Figure 3.10 provides the predicted probability of voting for a third-party candidate as the percentage of the population that is rural decreases. The probability of voting for a third-party candidate increases slightly at first, and then decreases slightly. Additionally, Figure 3.11 provides the probability as a respondent perceives his or her finances to have become worse. As perceived economic

circumstances decline, the probability of voting for a third-party candidate increases, as expected.

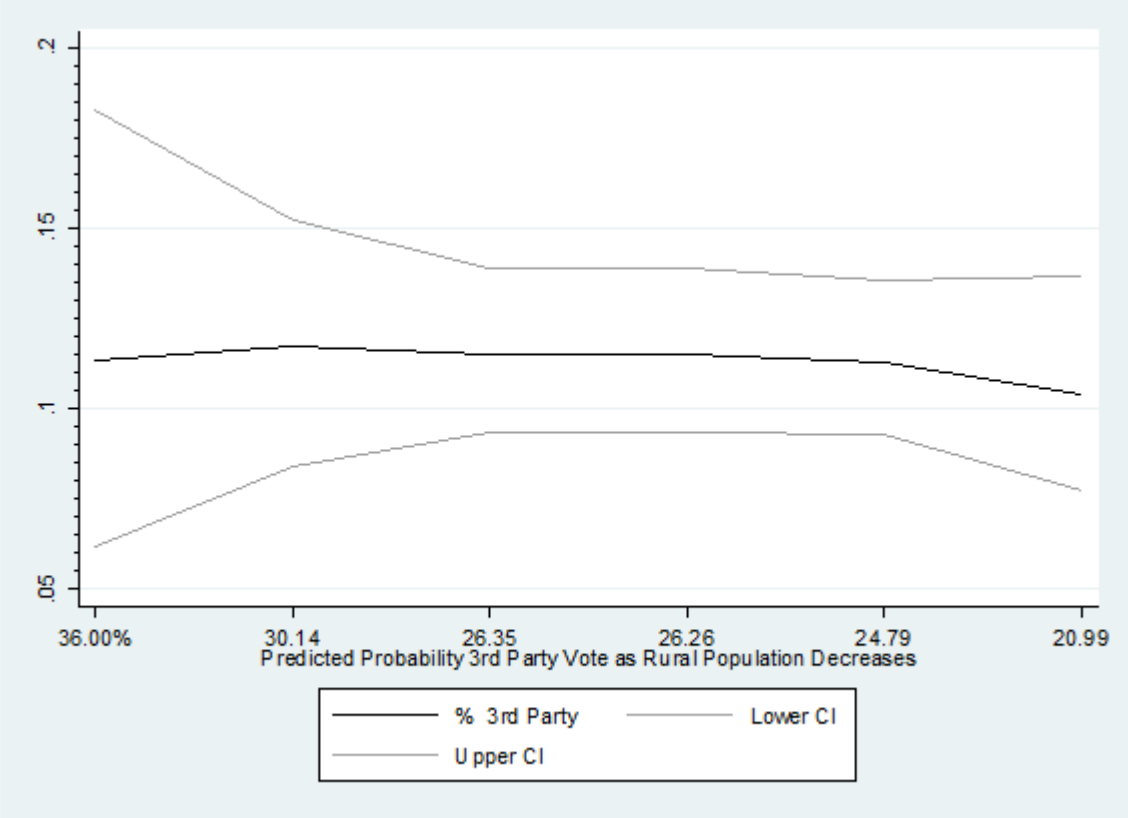

Fig. 3.10. Predicted Probability Third Party Vote Choice as Rural Population Decreases

Fig. 3.11. Predicted Probability Third Party Vote Choice as Economic Circumstances Decline

3.5 Discussion and Conclusions

These results lead to the conclusion that not only does living in a rural area impact partisanship and vote choice, but also that economic circumstances play a role (see Table 3.4 for a summary of the results). Although this analysis does not directly address the question of whether rural voters are "values voters" (beyond controlling for religion in the model) it does provide support for the alternative explanation, put forth by those such as Campbell et al. (1960), Lipset (1968), and Rosenstone, Behr and Lazarus (1996) that rural partisanship and voting behavior can be explained by economic circumstances. These results also provide some support for the idea that

"rural consciousness," as suggested by Walsh (2012*b*) or the movement away from the two major parties as suggested by Hajnal and Lee (2011) may be driving rural voters experiencing economic decline to support certain parties or candidates. When controlling for other factors, respondents who are rural or who feel they are they are doing worse financially are the most likely to support third party candidates.

Table 3.4
Results Summary: Predicted Probabilities

Independent Variable	Party ID (GOP)	Vote Choice (GOP)	Vote Choice (3rd)
Rural Population %			
Low - 20.99%	51.31	26.18	10.41
Middle - 26.35%	45.27	57.08	11.50
High - 36.00%	34.49	76.33	11.36
Income Level			
Low - 0-16%	41.80	37.68	Not Significant
Middle - 34-67%	51.32	42.76	Not Significant
High - 96-100%	60.73	47.95	Not Significant
Perceived Economic Circumstances			
Better	54.49	48.00	8.60
Same	51.32	42.76	10.41
Worse	48.11	37.63	12.49

The relationship of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural with vote choice is more complicated. The initial hypothesis was that as the percentage of the population that is rural decreased, people would be more likely to identify as Republicans. Instead, the result was that as the percentage of the population that is rural decreased, respondents became more likely to vote for Republican candidates. This result also cannot be explained simply by an increase in third-party voting, as votes for third-party candidates also decline eventually.

Is this result truly surprising? I hypothesized that as the rural population decreased that rural voters would cast their votes for Republican or third party presidential candidates because this would fit the economic models of the past, as well as the rural consciousness explanation. As rural voters lost influence and their economy

struggled, it would make sense for them to express a preference for small government or abandon the two major parties, depending on the nature of their views. However, despite the popular perception that rural voters are increasingly voting for Republican candidates, one can observe from Figure 3.5 that the trend has actually been an overall decline since 1972, which coincides with the decline in rural population. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that this is the effect of the percentage of the population that is rural holding all other factors constant, but other factors, such as economic circumstances, have an effect as well. The results provide clear evidence that both lower income levels and the feeling that one is financially worse off than in the past decrease the probability of voting for Republican candidates, as expected. If economic circumstances are declining as the rural population shrinks - or rural voters feel that they are - then rural voters would be less likely to vote for Republicans as a result of this phenomenon.

If the conclusion is that the impact of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural on partisanship and vote choice may be quite dependent on the surrounding economic context, the implication is that the "red-state-blue-state" debate may not continue in its current state going forward. As previously mentioned, some rural areas have adapted better to their population loss than others, and there is already evidence of different voting patterns in these areas (Scala, Johnson and Rogers 2015). In some areas, decline has in fact occurred, with only an aging, unskilled population left behind in areas where the basis of the local economy is gone. In other areas, the economy lags behind the nation, but is catching up; and finally, in some other areas, the economy has transformed, and is doing better than it ever was.

The aggregate trend currently seems to be towards the latter two scenarios, which would suggest that rural Americans will increasingly identify as and vote for Republicans as their economic circumstances improve. However, once one takes rural consciousness into consideration, this may not be the case. If the rural areas that are catching up, but still lagging somewhat behind, feel that their circumstances are not improving, they may become less likely to vote for Republicans. Due to their

economic restlessness and feeling that urban centers of government hold power over them (Lipset 1968; Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016), they may instead identify more with third party candidates, and as will be examined in the next chapter, become more participative, especially through less conventional methods.

Additionally, one must consider the trends observed in suburban areas. Regardless of which direction rural areas will go in the future, their population size is declining. Therefore, the importance of obtaining electoral support from other segments of the population is growing. Figures 3.1, 3.5 and 3.6 showed that while there is stark contrast between rural and urban areas, a divide that still cannot be completely explained, that Americans in suburban and rural areas have followed similar patterns in terms of partisanship and vote choice.

There is already evidence that movements that would have once had their basis in rural areas have shifted to the suburbs. As previously mentioned, this was the case with the Tea Party movement (Cho, Gimpel and Shaw 2012), although in the past populist movements were supported by rural and agrarian voters (Lipset 1968; McConnell 1969). Preliminary evidence from the 2016 presidential election lends support to this idea as well. For example, *The New York Times* provided a list of the top factors associated with support for President Donald J. Trump, who was not associated with the Republican Party prior to his nomination, in the presidential primary (Irwin and Katz 2016). Their analysis suggested that support for Trump came from white voters experiencing economic dysfunction in general, and is no longer confined to agrarian areas. Future research should therefore further explore the nature of the suburban vote, especially in relation to third party candidacies in order to better understand the implications for future elections.

4. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

As the rural population declines, what, if any impact might one expect this phenomenon to have on political participation? As previously discussed, recently, rural Americans have been described as having a "rural consciousness," characterized by low political trust and efficacy levels and an affinity for small government (Walsh 2012*b*). As the size of the rural population dwindles and the economy transforms, this characterization is not unsurprising. Since the 1950s, the shrinking size of rural communities and any associated economic decline (or perceived economic decline) could lead residents to feel that their political and economic influence has been reduced, especially relative to urban centers of power (Cramer 2016). In general, patterns in participation in rural areas are not well understood, and especially not in the context of declining trust and efficacy levels, which past studies show can affect participation levels. The patterns in participation in rural areas require examination in order to better understand what impact, if any, the shrinking percentage of the rural population has had. As efficacy and trust decline, is this leading to higher participation levels? Or is it perhaps the case that alienated citizens begin to abandon conventional participation methods and shift their support to the unconventional?

In order to answer these questions, I use data from the ANES from 1952 - 2008 and the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1985 - 2006. I ask what impact the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances, the perception of these circumstances, political trust and political efficacy have had on political participation in rural, suburban, and urban areas. I find that rural Americans are less participative than urban or suburban Americans, both in terms of voting and participation in other campaign activities, and that participation has declined as the percentage of the rural population has declined. I also find that economic circumstances play a role, in that respondents with higher income are more likely

to participate, but that perception of economic circumstances plays a role only in some instances. Therefore, the results are more supportive of the social-psychological model, where those with higher incomes, higher education levels, and higher civic engagement are more likely to participate, than a model where rural citizens are driven to participation through a unique mechanism, such as the intimacy of their community or rural consciousness.

Still, there could be a role for rural consciousness. Perhaps low political trust, efficacy, and income combined have led rural voters to less conventional participation methods. Examination of support for protest behaviors shows that this is not the case, however. Rural residency is associated with disapproval of these behaviors, and the percentage of the population that is rural has no significant effect on approval of these behaviors. Instead, only low trust and, in one time period, income appear to drive approval of these behaviors, as would be expected from past studies. The key conclusion, then, is that the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic circumstances do not seem to be undermining support for the current political system through increased voter turnout, campaigning, or protesting against the government. This finding is despite the low political confidence among rural Americans and the trend towards polarization between rural, suburban, and urban areas that have resulted from the decreased percentage of the population that is rural and associated economic changes. In short, the attitudes of rural Americans may have changed, but these shifts in attitudes have not led to any significant increase in political activities that could deepen the impact of the attitudinal change.

4.1 Participation in Rural America

Little attention has been given to explaining different patterns of participation in rural America, at least in comparison to partisanship and vote choice. As the divergence between participation patterns of rural and urban persons is not as drastic, this is not surprising. Still, a few studies have addressed this question. Early analyses

of agrarian voters in the United States, such as *The American Voter*, find that farmers have very low participation levels (Campbell et al. 1960). Later re-examinations of this population find that they are at least as, or in some instances more participative than their urban counterparts (Lewis-Beck 1977).

Although focused on this specific population, rather than rural voters in general, these findings suggest that rural Americans have become more participative over time. More recently, Gimpel and Schuknecht (2003) find that rural voters are more likely to turn out to voter than suburban voters, due to the fact that although they both must travel further to vote than urban voters, the routes in rural areas are unimpeded. A comprehensive analysis of participation patterns in the rural United States is needed to determine whether their participation has in fact increased, if participation patterns are similar to those among other segments of the population, or if the rural patterns are in some way unique.

Why would one expect that participation patterns of rural Americans have changed as a result of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes? If rural voters are becoming more polarized, they may also become more participative (Mutz 2006; Abramowitz 2010). Additionally, past findings have tied low efficacy and trust levels to increased participation, particularly unconventional forms of participation. On the one hand, rural Americans may be less likely to participate due to their low external efficacy mediating the effect of their personality traits and emotions on their political involvement (Gallego and Oberski 2012; Rudolph, Gangl and Stevens 2000; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009). There is also some evidence that participation has a reciprocal relationship with external efficacy, such that they reinforce each other, which given the low external efficacy observed in rural areas would support this argument (Finkel 1985). At the same time, one must remember that low internal efficacy levels coexist with these low external efficacy levels, which past studies have found lead to unconventional participation methods, such as protests (Pollock 1983; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009).

Additionally, a proposed explanation of protest behavior is the political opportunity structures (POS) approach, where institutional and political processed influence political activity (Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 2011). In the POS approach, citizens face open, closed, or mixed political contexts, with an open context meaning citizens are most free to participate through a wide variety of channels and closed meaning they are not free to do so. In an open context, as citizens are free to participate in many ways, they may therefore choose to participate in protest behaviors. In a closed context, as citizens are unable to participate through conventional channels, this context may also engender protest behaviors (Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 2011)[1]. There is evidence that mixed contexts can also produce such activity. Eisinger (1973), for example, argues that the condition that leads to protest behaviors is a "perception of deprivation." This occurs in a mixed context characterized by a political environment where citizens have some opportunities to participate and exact change, but this change does not meet their expectations (see also Lipsky 1968).

Both low efficacy levels and the "relative deprivation" argument suggest that the result of "rural consciousness" could be low voter turnout and less participation through many other means, but higher un-conventional participation. However, in an argument put forth by Miller et al. (1981), there is a relationship between group consciousness and participation such that group members that are not content with the relative power of the groups will become more participative through traditional means. Additionally, Uslaner and Brown (2005) argue that economic inequality, which rural Americans impacted by population loss may be experiencing, is a strong determinant of trust, which may lead to overall lower participation levels. Therefore, once cannot rule out alternative possibilities for participation patterns, meaning they could be low, high, or of a unique nature in rural areas.

[1]Cross-national research by Dalton (2009) examines the role of the POS model, political values, and political and economic resources. Ultimately, they conclude that the POS model alone cannot explain these behaviors, as the political resources available to those in developed countries are also required to facilitate protest behaviors.

In support of the argument that "rural consciousness" will have any sort of impact, there is extensive evidence that participation is influence by local context and social network. Many find that neighborhood context can lead to higher or lower participation levels across a range of political activities, including when one controls for other factors (Cho, Gimpel and Dyck 2006; Cho and Rudolph 2008; Gimpel, Dyck and Shaw 2004; Gimpel, Lee and Kaminski 2006; Huckfeldt 1979; La Due Lake and Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg 2003). Verba and Nie (1972) described a socioeconomic participation model, in which those of a higher social status are more likely to participate. They also acknowledge a role of intervening forces, including the nature of one's community. There are two alternative explanations as to how this nature may affect participation in an urbanizing society. On the one hand, urbanization may expose people to more communications and interactions with others involved in politics; on the other hand, urbanization may lead to a decline in participation as individuals leave small, intimate communities for urban sprawl, where political units are not well-bounded. Their results are mixed, but lend more support to the "decline in community" model, where participation is higher in small, more isolated communities. In short, there is evidence that local context influences participation, but the evidence is mixed in regards to how the decline of rural areas may have an impact. Additional examination is required to determine whether rural participation patterns are in fact influence by the local context of rural consciousness such that participation is higher in any way.

Because the driving forces behind rural participation are not well understood, we must also consider the explanations behind these behaviors in general. Voting is typically considered separately from participation in other political activities (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995). Additionally, there is a vast rational-choice literature that examines the "paradox" of voter turnout specifically. The main models in this vein are the calculus of voting model, where citizens must weigh the probability that their vote will make a difference, their expected benefit, the cost of voting, and their citizen duty; the minimax regret model, where citizens face uncertainty but must

consider whether they would regret not voting if their preferred candidate were to lose by one vote; and models based in game theory (Aldrich 1993; Downs 1957; Ferejohn and Fiorina 1974; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Essentially, the puzzle these studies intend to address is why so many citizens do vote when rational choice theories would lead one to expect low voter turnout levels. However, the rational choice explanations have a number of shortcomings, with one issue being that their empirical evidence relies at least in part on social-psychological explanations (Green and Shapiro 1994, Ch. 12).

In social-psychological models, numerous factors such as time, money, civic skills, civic engagement, and interpersonal trust are said to lead to higher participation levels (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995; Brehm and Rahn 1997; Campbell et al. 1960; Leighley 1995; Verba and Nie 1972). This could lead to lower participation levels among rural Americans if their income and education levels are lower. In the ANES data, more rural respondents are in the lowest income percentile and fewer have an education beyond high school in their urban and suburban counterparts, meaning one may expect this result from the analysis. As seen in the data from the USDA and US Census Bureau earlier, income and education are similarly slightly lower in the rural population. There is some debate as to whether in recent years, the foundation of this model - community and civic engagement - is failing across America. In *Bowling Alone* Putnam (2000) concludes that such disengagement is driving lower engagement levels.

His argument is not without criticism. Hero (2007), for example, argues that the relationship between voter registration, turnout, and social capital is an artifact of these factors being related for whites in homogeneous contexts. Therefore, one might expect declining social capital in more homogeneous, majority white areas to lead to less participation locally, but as people leave rural areas and the country becomes more urbanized and diverse, for this relationship to weaken in general. Dalton, Sickle and Weldon (2008) also provides an alternative argument, stating that citizenship is now engaged rather than duty based. In his view, citizens may participate in acts

such as boycotts, demonstrations, or internet activism but not necessarily voting. This explanation would apply to trends observed in the general population, rather than being specific to rural Americans. One might also consider the role deliberative democracy may play. If the rural population is declining such that only certain groups are left behind as rural Americans move to urban, perhaps people in more homogeneous rural areas are experiencing fewer cross-cutting views while in the urban areas they have moved to people are experiencing more (Carpini et al. 2004; Mutz 2006). The result would be higher participation in rural areas and lower participation levels elsewhere.

4.1.1 Hypotheses

This analysis will test the following hypotheses, while also taking into consideration each of the factors past research has found contribute to voter turnout and other forms of participation, both conventional and unconventional. The hypotheses concern the key independent variables in this analysis, which include the percentage of the population that is rural, economic circumstances (income), and perception of economic circumstances (whether the individual feels they were better off in the last year):

Hypothesis 1a *Residents of rural areas will have higher voter turnout than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1b *Residents of rural areas will have higher participation levels than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1c *Residents of rural areas will be more supportive of unconventional participation than residents of suburban or urban areas.*

Hypothesis 1d *The percentage of the population that is rural, income levels, and the respondent's financial situation will interact with the effect of place of residence on voter turnout, participation levels, and support for unconventional participation.*

Hypothesis 2a *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, voter turnout will be higher than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 2b *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, participation levels will be higher than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 2c *When the percentage of the rural population is lower, support for unconventional participation will be higher than when the percentage of the rural population is higher.*

Hypothesis 3a *Respondents with higher income levels will have higher voter turnout than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 3b *Respondents with higher income levels will have higher participation levels than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 3c *Respondents with higher income levels will have less support for unconventional participation than respondents with lower income levels.*

Hypothesis 4a *Respondents who feel they are doing better financially will have higher voter turnout than respondents who feel they are doing worse financially.*

Hypothesis 4b *Respondents who feel they are doing better financially will have higher participation levels than respondents who feel they are doing worse financially.*

Hypothesis 4c *Respondents who feel they are doing better financially will have less support for unconventional participation than respondents who feel they are doing worse financially.*

4.2 Data and Methods

To answer these questions in regards to conventional participation, pooled data from the ANES surveys years 1952 - 2008 area again used (see Appendix A for

question wording). As previously explained, use of these data allow for analysis of comparatively worded questions over the same time frame as the rural population loss phenomenon has been occurring. Additionally, to measure the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, I used data from the United States Census Bureau. The shrinking percentage of the population that is rural is accounted for by including for each respondent the measurement of the size of the rural population in the United States as a percent of the total population in the most recent prior Census or American Community Survey. For example, for respondents in the 1950s, a value of 36 percent is assigned; for respondents in the 2000s, a value of 20.99 percent is assigned.

The analysis begins by providing an overview of the trends in voter turnout and participation in other campaign activities for rural residents as compared to suburban and urban residents over time. Logit regression or regression analysis are then used, depending on the measurement of the dependent variable, to examine which factors influence these behaviors. Rural place of residence, the percentage of the population that is rural, the respondent's income level, and the respondent's assessment of their economic situation (retrospective) are they key independent variables. Predicted probabilities based on changes in values of these key independent variables for each of the models, estimated using Clarify, are provided to allow for ease of interpretation of the logit regression results (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003).

The analysis then moves on to an examination support for unconventional participation. To answer the question of whether support for these behaviors has increased as a result of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, responses to survey questions from the ANES years 1968 - 1976 and the GSS years 1985 - 2006 are used. Because the question wording is not exactly comparable, the results from the two time periods cannot be directly compared, but this analysis still allows one to conclude what factors influenced these attitudes within each time period. In each time period, support for several unconventional activities is examined. Regression analysis is used to determine the role that the key independent variables of rural

place of residence, the respondent's income level, and the respondent's assessment of their economic situation (retrospective) play.

4.2.1 Measurement

Again, there are a few key measurement issues in this analysis, primarily concerning the dependent variables. First, as voting is a separate dimension from other forms of participation, this must be considered in the measurement of the dependent variables (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995). Therefore, whether the respondent indicated that they voted in a national election is considered separately from one's political participation level, which is measured as a count of other activities the respondent participated in, with both sets of questions coming from the ANES. The following six activities are included in this count, which is constructed by the ANES (see Appendix A for exact wording and processing notes):

1. Talking to people to show why they should support a party or candidate.
2. Attending political meetings or rallies.
3. Working for a party or candidate.
4. Wearing a button or putting a campaign sticker on a car.
5. Donating money to a party or candidate.
6. Writing a letter to a public official.

Additionally, because I am particularly interested in whether rural Americans participate in less conventional manners, I then also consider separately the respondent's support for various protest behaviors. These encompass both legitimate protest behaviors as well as some behaviors that could be categorized as political violence (see Eisinger 1973). I choose to examine support for these behaviors rather than participation in these behaviors for two reasons. The first is that I am interested in these

attitudes among rural respondents, who may not have a chance to participate in such behaviors due to their physical location in the case that they are supportive of such behaviors. Additionally, the data on these attitudes and behaviors is somewhat limited. For example, very few survey respondents are going to be able to say they have participated in an activity that caused damage to a government building compared to the number that would say such a behavior is permissible.

Because only a few years of data concerning this topic are included in the ANES data, data from the GSS are also used to examine this question. Although this allows me to examine additional years of data, the results from the two time periods are not comparable for several reasons, meaning I lose the ability to include the the percentage of the population that is rural as an independent variable in this analysis. With the exception of the percentage of the population that is rural, which is obtained from the US Census Bureau for the voter turnout and campaign participation analyses, the measurements for the other key independent variables of rural residency, economic circumstances, efficacy, and trust are present in both data sources, as well as the measurements of the control variables, which include gender, race, age, education level, religion, interest in politics, ideology, and whether it was a presidential election year. The measurements of each variable (from each data source) are listed in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 and the specific questions used to measure each variable are detailed in Appendix A.

One difference from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 is that for the variables measuring support for unconventional behavior, I created an index. Similar to Dalton (2009), I added the variables measuring support together into a single variable. In the ANES data, support for three behaviors, protests, civil disobedience, and demonstrations are included. As support for the three activities examined is measured on a scale of 1-3, the index is therefore on a scale of 3-9. In the GSS data, support for protests, publications, demonstrations, occupation of government offices, damage of government buildings, and a national strike are included. The six behaviors are examined in separate groups of three, depending on the years the data was available (1985 -

1990 or 1985 - 2006). As support for the behaviors is measured on a scale of 1-4, the two indexes are therefore measured on a scale of 3 - 12, with one index for each time period.

Table 4.1: Variable Measurement, ANES

Variable	Measurement	Years Available
Dependent Variables		
Voted in National Election	(0) Did not vote (1) Voted	1948 - 2008
Campaign Activities	Count of activities, ranges 1 - 6	1956 - 2008
Protest Behavior Support	(1) Disapprove (2) Pro-con; depends; don't know (3) Approve	1968 - 1976
Independent Variables		
Urbanism	(1) Rural (2) Suburban (3) Urban	1952 - 2008
% Rural Population	Percent of US population rural, ranges from 20.99 - 36.00	1952 - 2008
Income Percentile	(1) 0 -16 (2) 17 - 33 (3) 34 - 67 (4) 68 - 95 (5) 96 - 100	1948 - 2008
Financially Better off Last Year	(1) Better Now (2) Same (3) Worse Now	1952 - 2008

Continued on next page...

... table 4.1 continued

Internal Efficacy	(0) Too Complicated - Disagree (1) Too Complicated - Agree	1952 - 2008
External Efficacy	(0) No Say - Disagree (1) No Say - Agree	1952 - 2008
Trust	Ranges from 0 - 100	1958 - 2008
Control Variables		
Gender	(1) Male (2) Female	1948 - 2008
White	(1) White (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Black	(1) Black (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Hispanic	(1) Hispanic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Age	Ranges from 17 - 99+	1948 - 2008
Education Level	(1) 8th Grade or Less (2) 9th - 12th Grade or less (3) 12th Grade/GED (4) 12th Grade/GED + (5) Some College (6) Bachelor's Degree (7) Advanced Degree	1952 - 2008
Protestant	(1) Protestant (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Catholic	(1) Catholic (0) Other	1948 - 2008

Continued on next page...

... table 4.1 continued

Jewish	(1) Jewish (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Interest in Politics	(1) Hardly at All (2) Only now and then (3) Some of the time (4) Most of the time	1960 - 2008
Ideology	(1) Extreme Liberal (2) Liberal (3) Slight Liberal (4) Moderate (5) Slight Conservative (6) Conservative (7) Extreme Conservative	1972 - 2008
Presidential Election	(1) Pres Elect Year (0) Not Pres Elect Year	1948 - 2008

Table 4.2: Variable Measurement, GSS

Variable	Measurement	Years Available
Dependent Variable		
Protest Behavior Support	(1) Definitely allowed (2) Probably allowed (3) Probably no allowed (4) Definitely not allowed	1985 - 2006
Independent Variables		
Urbanism	(1) Rural (2) Suburban	1985 - 2006

Continued on next page...

... table 4.2 continued

	(3) Urban	
Income Level	Ranges from $236 - $162,607	1985 - 2006
Financially Better off Last Few Years	(1) Better (2) Same (3) Worse	1985 - 2006
Internal Efficacy	(1) Understanding - strongly agree (2) Understanding - agree (3) Understanding - neither agree or disagree (4) Understanding - disagree (5) Understanding - strongly disagree	1996 - 2006
External Efficacy	(1) No say - strongly agree (2) No say - agree (3) No say - neither agree or disagree (4) No say - disagree (5) No say - strongly disagree	1996 - 2006
Trust in Executive Branch	(1) A great deal (2) Only some (3) Hardly any	1985 - 2006
Trust in Congress	(1) A great deal (2) Only some (3) Hardly any	1985 - 2006
Control Variables		

Continued on next page...

... table 4.2 continued

Gender	(1) Male (2) Female	1985 - 2006
White	(1) White (0) Other	1985 - 2006
Black	(1) Black (0) Other	1985 - 2006
Age	Ranges from 17 - 89+	1990 - 2006
Education Level	Years of school completed, ranges 1 - 20+	1985 - 2006
Protestant	(1) Protestant (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Catholic	(1) Catholic (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Jewish	(1) Jewish (0) Other	1948 - 2008
Interest in Politics	(1) Very interested (2) Fairly interested (3) Somewhat interested (4) Not very interested (5) Not at all interested	1990 - 2006
Ideology	(1) Extreme Liberal (2) Liberal (3) Slight Liberal (4) Moderate (5) Slight Conservative (6) Conservative (7) Extreme Conservative	1985 - 2006

The following set of questions from the ANES was used to measure support for unconventional political behavior:

> There are many possible ways for people to show their disapproval or disagreement with governmental policies and actions. I am going to describe three such ways. We would like to know which ones you approve of as ways of showing dissatisfaction with the government and which ones you disapprove of.
>
> 1. How about taking part in protest meetings or marches that are permitted by the local authorities? Would you approve of taking part, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?
> 2. How about refusing to obey a law which one thinks is unjust, if the person feels so strongly about it that he is willing to go to jail rather than obey the law? Would you approve of a person doing that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?
> 3. Suppose all other methods have failed and the person decides to try to stop the government from going about its usual activities with sit-ins, mass meetings, demonstrations, and things like that? Would you approve of that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

The following set of questions from the GSS was used to measure support for unconventional political behavior:

> There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question.
>
> 1. Organizing public meetings to protest the government.

2. Publishing pamphlets to protest against the government.
3. Organizing protest marches and demonstrations.
4. Occupying a government office and stopping work there for several days.
5. Seriously damaging government buildings.
6. Organizing a nationwide strike of all workers against the government.

4.3 Results: Voting

Figure 4.1 shows the overtime trend in voter turnout in national elections. While at first glance there appear to be frequent ups and downs, this is due to turnout being higher in presidential elections, a factor that has been controlled for in the regression analysis. Examining either midterm or presidential elections in isolation shows that there has been relatively little variation over time. One can also observe that the trends have not been consistently different across rural, suburban, and urban areas. In some years, turnout was highest in rural areas, and in others, it was highest in urban areas. Therefore, we cannot conclude from these trends alone whether the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural has had an impact on voter turnout.

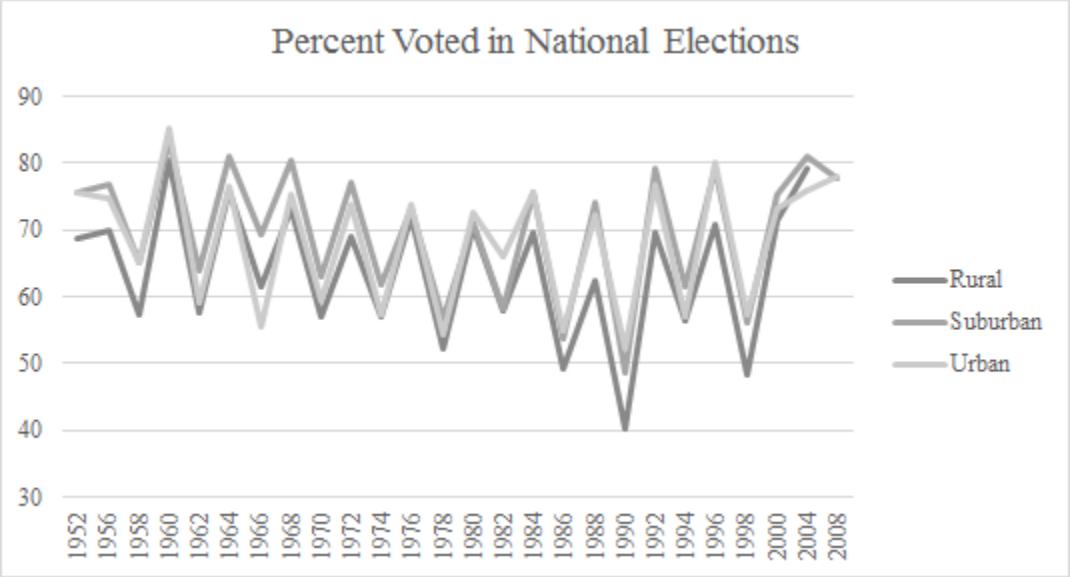

Fig. 4.1. Rural, Suburban, and Urban Voting in National Elections: 1952 - 2008

Table 4.3 displays the results of the logit regression analysis for voter turnout in national elections. Whether a respondent lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area; the percentage of the population that is rural; the respondent's income percentile; and the respondent's feeling concerning how well they were doing financially each had a significant effect. Place of residence also interacted with both income percentile and one's perceived economic circumstances, as expected. Similar to the analysis in Chapter 2, reference to the graphs provided for interpretation is necessary due to the inclusion of conditional effects to observe these results. The interaction between place of residence and the percentage of the population that is rural was not significant, as there was slight overlap in the predicted probabilities. A graph of the interaction effect is provided for reference, as well as to show the effect of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural. External efficacy also had an effect, although internal efficacy and trust did not. Refer to Table 4.1 for measurements of variables as well as the graphs provided to facilitate interpretation of the results.

In order to provide a clearer interpretation of the logit regression results and the interaction effects, the predicted probability of voting at various levels of the key independent variables, keeping other factors constant, is provided. Predicted probabilities were estimated using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003). The predicted probabilities are for a white male with a high school education, a median income, who financially feels he is doing about the same as last year, and is a protestant. He also agrees with the statements that politics is "too complicated" and that he "does not have any say in what government does," has an average trust in government, and is interested in politics "some of the time." When income and economic circumstances are varied, the percentage of the population that is rural is lowest.

Figure 4.2 displays the predicted probability of voting in national elections in rural, suburban, and urban areas as the rural population declines. Controlling for all other factors, the probability of voting in national elections decreased as the percentage of the population that is rural decreased. The predicted probability of voting as income increases by place of residence is provided in Figure 4.3. As income increases, the likelihood of voting increases, and at low income levels is lower among rural respondents than urban. Finally, Figure 4.3 provides the predicted probability of voting by place of residence as one's perception of his or her economic circumstances declines. There is no significant change as economic circumstances decline, but when circumstances are worse, the probability of voting is lower among respondents in rural areas than in urban.

These results provide somewhat mixed support for the hypotheses. Based largely on the argument that citizens are more likely to participate in politics when they live in small, intimate communities, I expected turnout to be highest in rural areas but to decrease as society urbanized (rural population decreased). However, the evidence in favor of this argument had somewhat mixed support, meaning that this result is not entirely unexpected. As also noted, high levels of alienation in rural areas could also be driving lower participation levels, which would be in line with the finding that low external efficacy is associated with a lower likelihood of voting. I had

Table 4.3
Logistic Regression Results: Voting

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	0.739*	(0.306)
% Rural Pop	9.834**	(2.358)
Income Percentile	0.409**	(0.043)
Better off Last Year	-0.049	(0.057)
Internal Efficacy	-0.014	(0.044)
External Efficacy	-0.427**	(0.037)
Trust Index	0.000	(0.001)
Gender	0.091*	(0.036)
White	0.461**	(0.131)
Black	0.555**	(0.140)
Hispanic	0.205	(0.151)
Age	0.036**	(0.001)
Education Level	0.282**	(0.013)
Protestant	0.347**	(0.059)
Catholic	0.562**	(0.065)
Jewish	0.559**	(0.154)
Interest	0.504**	(0.019)
Pres. Election	0.969**	(0.036)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	-2.574*	(1.126)
Income x Urbanism	-0.045*	(0.021)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.046†	(0.028)
Intercept	-8.234**	(0.666)

N	19792
Log-likelihood	-9982.587
$\chi^2_{(21)}$	4989.31

Significance levels : † : 10% ∗ : 5% ∗∗ : 1%

also hypothesized that those who felt they were doing well would be more likely to participate in conventional manners, such as by voting, but keep in mind that there are several arguments as to how citizens who are dissatisfied will chose to participate. Based on past findings, it is possible that instead those who feel they are not doing well are actually most likely to participate through conventional channels in order to achieve their policy demands, as seen among urban respondents.

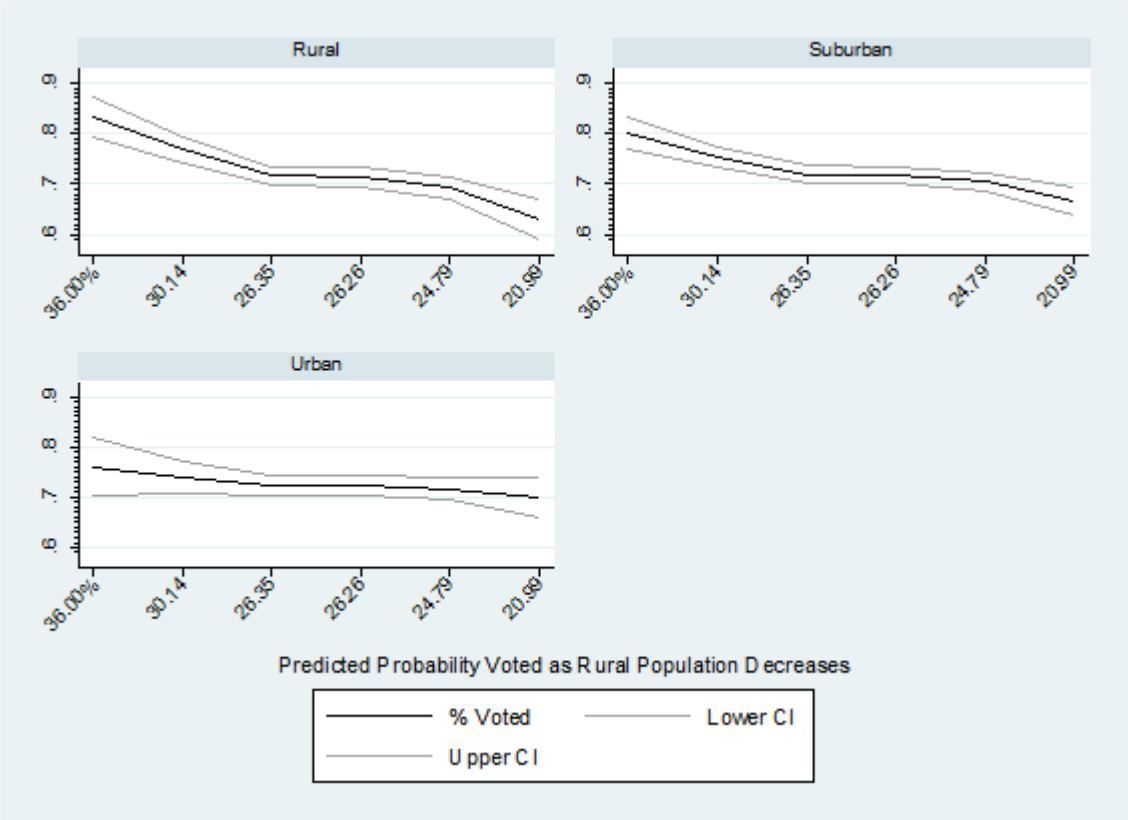

Fig. 4.2. Predicted Probability of Voting as Rural Population Decreases

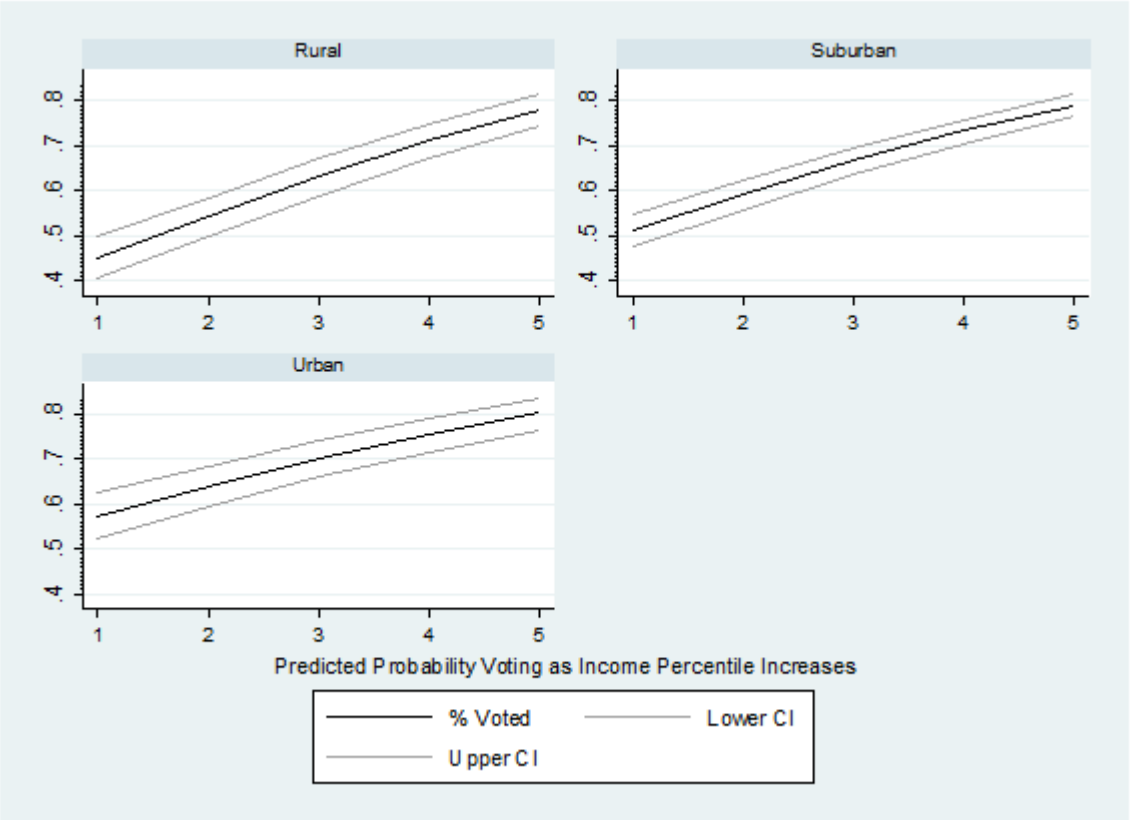

Fig. 4.3. Predicted Probability of Voting as Income Increases

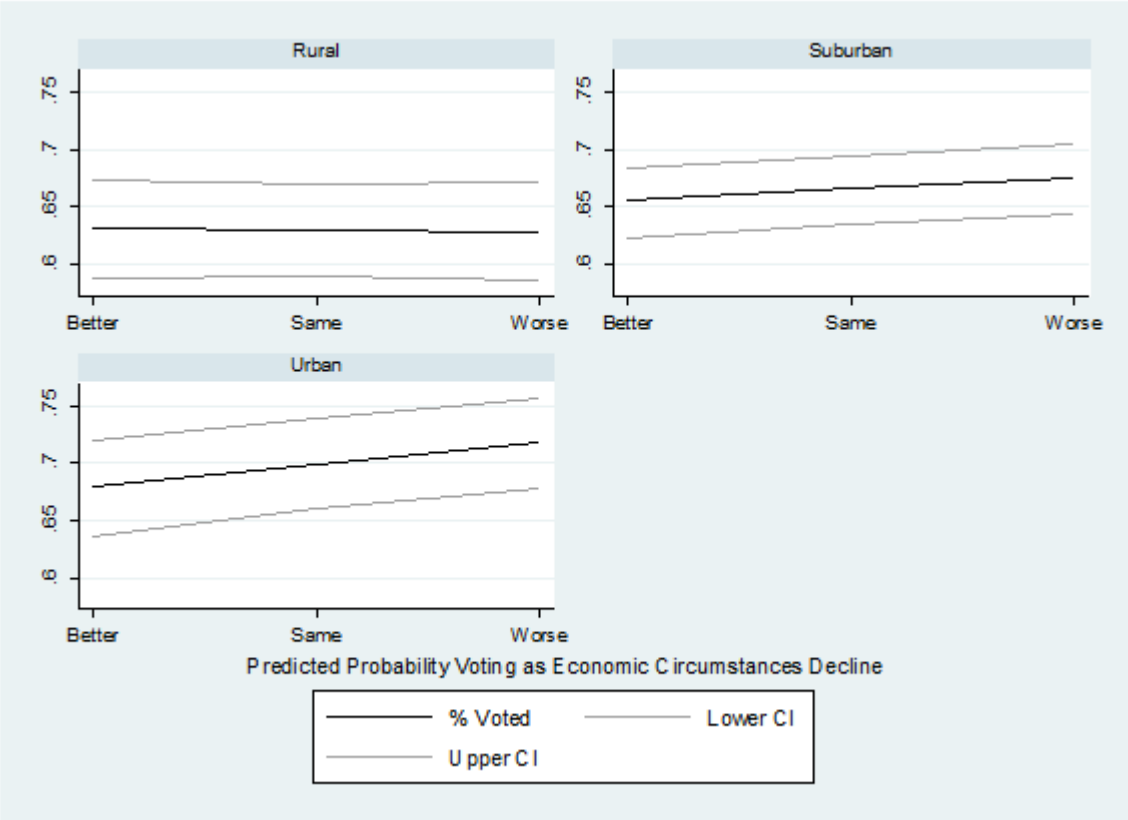

Fig. 4.4. Predicted Probability of Voting as Economic Circumstances Decline

Finally, predicted probabilities are not provided for the additional independent variables added in this analysis, which include internal efficacy, external efficacy, and trust. Of these three variables, only external efficacy had an impact, such that respondents with lower external efficacy were less likely to vote. This result, along with the result that higher income is associated with voting, lends support to the social-psychological model, but not the "rural consciousness model." If along with feeling financially worse off, low political efficacy and trust levels had led to an increased likelihood of voting, this would suggest that a loss of political and economic power in rural areas is driving citizens to the polls. However, the results do not support this argument.

4.4 Results: Other Forms of Political Participation

Figure 4.5 displays the mean level of campaign activities that rural, suburban, and urban respondents participated in. One can observe from this figure that there are no clear trends as to whether rural voters participated in more campaign activities on average than urban or suburban voters. In fact, the overtime trends appear quite similar, with ups and downs in participation occurring at the same time across these geographic divides.

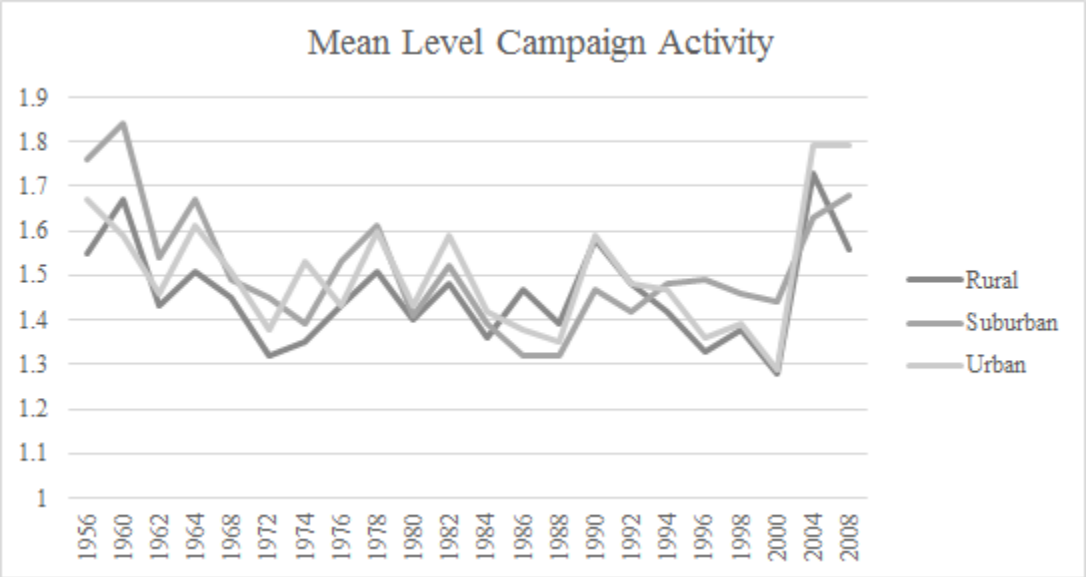

Fig. 4.5. Mean Level of Campaign Activity: 1956 - 2008

The regression results for participation in campaign activities are also provided in Table 4.4. Refer to Table 4.1 for measurements of variables in order to interpret the coefficients. Similar to voter turnout in national elections, whether a respondent lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area; the percentage of the population that is rural; the respondent's income percentile; and the respondent's feeling concerning whether their financial situation compared to last year all had a significant effect. None of the hypothesized interaction effects were significant (Refer to Appendix B, Table B.11 and Figures B.18 - B.20 for the results of the model with interaction terms). As with

voter turnout, respondents who lived in rural areas were less likely to participate in campaign activities, and participated in fewer activities as the the percentage of the population that is rural declined. Additionally, participation increased along with income, but at the same time was higher when the respondent felt they were doing worse financially.

Table 4.4
Regression Results: Campaign Activities

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	0.017†	(0.009)
% Rural Pop	1.292**	(0.408)
Income Percentile	0.067**	(0.007)
Better off Last Year	0.027**	(0.008)
Internal Efficacy	-0.151**	(0.016)
External Efficacy	-0.105**	(0.014)
Trust	-0.001**	(0.000)
Gender	-0.028*	(0.014)
White	0.002	(0.051)
Black	0.054	(0.055)
Hispanic	0.019	(0.059)
Age	0.000	(0.000)
Education Level	0.060**	(0.005)
Protestant	0.069**	(0.023)
Catholic	0.039	(0.025)
Jewish	0.232**	(0.051)
Interest in Politics	0.220**	(0.007)
Presidential Election	0.175**	(0.014)
Intercept	0.192	(0.125)
N	18717	
R^2	0.139	
$F_{(18,18698)}$	167.361	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

Unlike with voter turnout, internal efficacy, external efficacy, and trust all had a significant impact as well. As with voting, lower efficacy - although in this case both internal and external - led to less participation, in line with the social-psychological

model. Lower political trust, on the other hand, led to higher participation levels. Together, the contribution of low trust and feeling worse off financially to campaign participation provide some weak support for the "rural consciousness" argument. These mixed results therefore suggest that both lines of reasoning could play a role in explaining rural campaign participation.

4.4.1 Results: Unconventional Participation - Support for Protest Behaviors

Although the results indicate that rural Americans are not more participative than their suburban and urban counterparts, support for several protest behaviors across two time periods is also examined in order to answer this question of whether rural Americans are more supportive of unconventional behaviors. Although the direct relationship between support for these behaviors and the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural cannot be tested, as previously explained, other key factors related to the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, such as feelings concerning economic circumstances, political efficacy, and trust, are analyzed. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 display the trends in approval for demonstrations in 1968 - 1976 and 1985 - 2006, respectively.

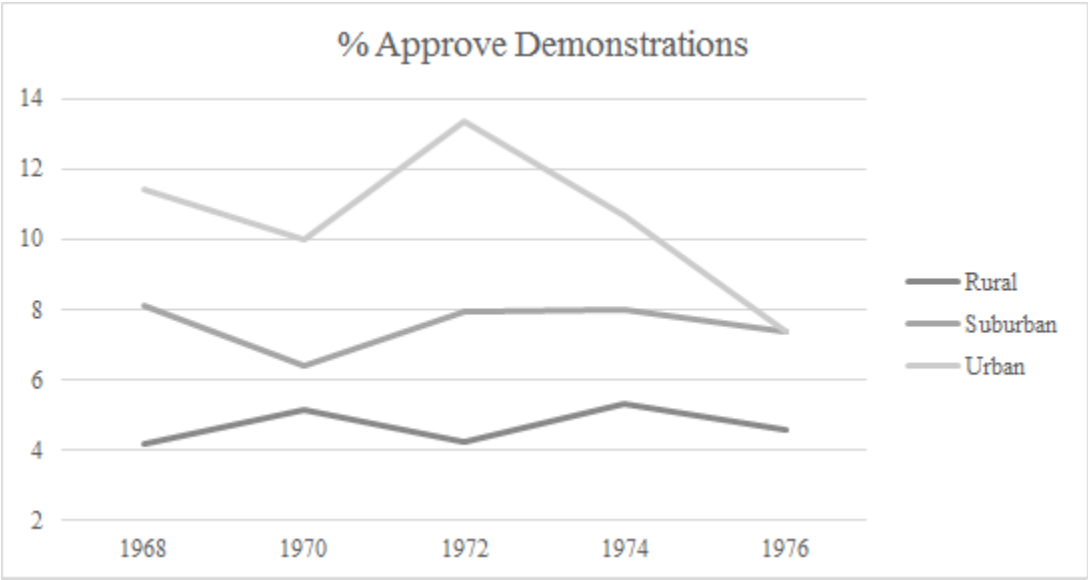

Fig. 4.6. Percent Approving of Demonstrations: 1968 - 1976

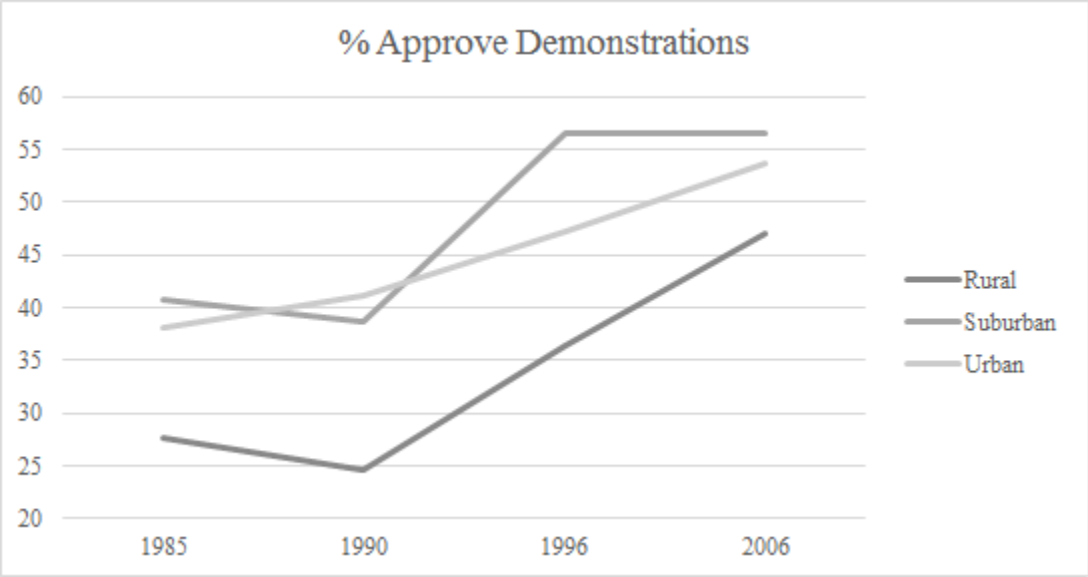

Fig. 4.7. Percent Approving of Demonstrations: 1985 - 2006

As a reminder, these two questions are worded differently so the level of support in the two surveys cannot be directly compared. The two figures are, however, illustra-

tive of each time period. In the earlier time period, support for these behaviors was highest in urban and suburban areas, with ups and downs in support over time; in the later time period, while support remained highest in urban and suburban areas, it generally increased over time. An increase in support for these behaviors in the later time period (1985 - 2006) suggests that support may be increasing as the the percentage of the population that is rural shrinks, but support being lowest in rural areas across both time periods is not what was hypothesized. Additional analysis is needed to determine the role - if any - that rural consciousness may play in forming these attitudes.

Table 4.5 displays the results of the regression analysis for the earlier (1968 - 1974) time period. Refer to Table 4.1 for variable measurements in order to facilitate interpretation of the results. These results are regarding support for participation in protests, civil disobedience, and demonstrations, which have been combined into an index as described. As with the other attitudes examined, the results are mixed. Political trust, whether a respondent was rural, and the respondent's income percentile each had an impact on support for unconventional participation. As expected, lower political trust was associated with approval, as well as lower income with approval. However, urban respondents were more likely to approve of participation in protests and demonstrations. Additionally, perception of economic circumstances as well as the hypothesized interaction effects were not significant (Refer to Appendix B, Table B.8 and Figures B.17 and B.18 for results from the model including all interactions).

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 display the regression results for the later time periods, 1985 - 1990, and 1985 - 2006, respectively[2]. These include support for public meetings protesting the government, publications protesting the government, demonstrations protesting the government, occupation of government offices, damage of government

[2]Not all years were available for all variables. Results related to publications, occupation of government offices, and damage of government buildings are for 1985 - 1990 only, and do not include internal or external efficacy in the analysis as these questions were not asked during these years. Results for public meetings, demonstrations, and a national strike are based on questions asked 1985 - 2006, and can therefore include the efficacy questions from the latter part of the time period

Table 4.5
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index, 1968 - 1974

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	0.125**	(0.048)
Income Percentile	-0.091*	(0.037)
Better off Last Year	-0.030	(0.044)
Internal Efficacy	-0.073	(0.080)
External Efficacy	0.047	(0.079)
Trust Index	-0.007**	(0.002)
Gender	0.106	(0.071)
White	0.360	(0.439)
Black	0.824†	(0.458)
Hispanic	0.956†	(0.547)
Protestant	-0.826**	(0.155)
Catholic	-0.544**	(0.163)
Jewish	0.317	(0.278)
Age	-0.020**	(0.002)
Education Level	0.130**	(0.024)
Interest	-0.024	(0.043)
Ideology	-0.248**	(0.028)
Intercept	7.081**	(0.538)
N	1689	
R^2	0.227	
$F_{(17,1671)}$	28.833	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

buildings, and a national anti-government strike, respectively. Refer to Table 4.2 for variable measurements in order to interpret the coefficients.

The results for the 1985 - 1990 index are similar to those observed in the earlier time period. Again, the respondent's place of residence and their trust in government (specifically in the executive branch) had a significant effect. However, none of the hypothesized interaction effects were significant, and no key independent variables were found to be significant for the 1985 - 2006 index (Refer to Appendix B, Tables B.9 and B.10 for results from the models including all interactions[3]). Again, the results were not entirely as expected. Although lower trust was associated with increased support for these behaviors, living in a rural area was again associated with lower support for these behaviors. This is consistent with the findings for the earlier time period, but is the opposite result of what was hypothesized concerning place of residence.

4.5 Discussion and Conclusions

For all three attitudes and behaviors examined - voter turnout, campaign activities, and support for protest behaviors - the results of the analysis provided only partial support for the hypotheses (see Table 4.14 for a summary of the logit regression results, and Table 4.15 for a summary of the regression results). What conclusions can be drawn given that the results are mixed? Despite mixed results, they actually lead to a clear conclusion: although the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural may be affecting participation patterns, the evidence does not favor the argument that changes in these patterns are driven by rural consciousness. Instead, the results show that they are driven by forces identified in well-tested explanations of political behavior, such as income level, economic benefit gained from participating, and trust in government.

[3]As these are similar to the earlier time period, additional graphical interpretations of the interaction effects are not provided, only the regression results.

Table 4.6
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index: 1985 - 1990

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.167†	(0.089)
Income	0.000	(0.000)
Better off Last Year	-0.120	(0.088)
Trust Executive Branch	-0.209*	(0.104)
Trust Legislature	-0.118	(0.116)
Gender	-0.006	(0.131)
Age	0.023**	(0.004)
White	-0.347	(0.323)
Black	-0.765*	(0.376)
Protestant	0.182	(0.230)
Catholic	0.439†	(0.251)
Jewish	0.364	(0.561)
Education Level	-0.104**	(0.025)
Interest	0.234**	(0.068)
Ideology	0.098*	(0.049)
Intercept	9.999**	(0.725)
N	579	
R^2	0.173	
$F_{(15,563)}$	7.854	

Significance levels : $\dagger$: 10% $*$: 5% $**$: 1%

Table 4.7
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index, 1985 - 2006

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.096	(0.129)
Income	0.000	(0.000)
Internal Efficacy	0.004	(0.067)
External Efficacy	-0.128	(0.098)
Better off Last Year	-0.120	(0.115)
Trust Executive Branch	-0.222	(0.145)
Trust Legislature	-0.129	(0.152)
Gender	0.634**	(0.172)
Age	0.041**	(0.006)
White	-0.862*	(0.390)
Black	-1.452**	(0.469)
Protestant	0.727**	(0.236)
Catholic	0.422	(0.267)
Jewish	0.068	(0.538)
Education Level	-0.257**	(0.035)
Interest	0.225**	(0.083)
Ideology	0.126†	(0.065)
Intercept	7.494**	(1.023)
N	599	
R^2	0.252	
$F_{(17,581)}$	11.539	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

As the rural population declined, respondents became less likely to turn out to vote and their participation in campaign activities decreased. Additionally, political participation of both forms was lowest for rural respondents. Although I hypothesized that rural residents would be more likely to participate, recall that prior research came to mixed conclusions regarding the role of rural residency, meaning these results are consistent with past findings. Furthermore, participation levels were higher when incomes were higher and respondents felt they were financially worse off. Again, this result supports past findings concerning the motivations for political participation. In short, although there is some weak evidence in favor of "rural consciousness" driving participation patterns, the results are more supportive of rational choice or social-psychological explanations. The implication of this conclusion is that while the shrinking percentage of the rural population itself may lead to a decline in participation, this phenomenon should not lead to unexpected or unique patterns of participation among rural Americans in the future.

In examining the results for support of unconventional political behaviors, this point takes on heightened importance. Recall that my expectation was that support for these less conventional behaviors would be higher in rural areas, especially as the rural population declines, due to "rural consciousness." However, the results of these analyses show that rural residence is not consistently related to support for these behaviors. Again, the results favor past explanations of these behaviors, with low political trust being associated with support for these behaviors.

If rural residents are not becoming more supportive of unconventional behaviors, what does this mean? It means that despite the impact we have seen that the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural has on political efficacy, trust, partisanship, and vote choice, rural Americans are not necessarily ready to begin protesting the existing political system. As previously discussed, low levels of political trust may mean only less support for incumbents, rather than widespread loss of support for the political system (see Miller 1974*a*,*b*; Citrin 1974). At the same time, this result also means that certain results of engaging in protest behaviors that rural

Table 4.8
Results Summary: Predicted Probabilities

Independent Variable	Voting
Rural Population %	
Low - 20.99%	63.00
Middle - 26.35%	71.56
High - 36.00%	83.46
Income Level (Rural Respondents)	
Low - 0-16%	45.11
Middle - 34-67%	63.00
High - 96-100%	77.90
Income Level (Urban Respondents)	
Low - 0-16%	57.35
Middle - 34-67%	69.91
High - 96-100%	80.04
Economic Circumstances (Rural Respondents)	
Better	63.10
Same	63.00
Worse	62.90
Economic Circumstances (Urban Respondents)	
Better	67.98
Same	69.91
Worse	71.76

Americans may desire, such as policy change, may not be realized (Kitschelt 1986)[4]. Instead, one can expect that in the future that such behaviors will continue to occur among the particularly powerless within this opportunity structure.

Furthermore, this behavior will not be confined to rural areas or driven by economic decline in those areas alone. Consider, for example, that in the past the agrarian changes in political attitudes and participation levels were sparked by economic

[4]Kitschelt (1986) finds that in the case of nuclear policy, while the US political system did not necessarily allow new policies to be implemented as the result of protests, it did at least allow for the opposed policies to be disrupted.

Table 4.9
Results Summary: Political Participation

Independent Variable	Campaign Activities	Unconventional Behaviors
Urbanism - Rural	Lower	Disapprove
Urbanism - Urban	Higher	Approve
Rural Population % - Low	Lower	Not Applicable
Rural Population % - High	Higher	Not Applicable
Income Level - Low	Lower	Not Significant
Income Level - High	Higher	Not Significant
Financially Better off Last Year	Lower	Not Significant
Financially Worse off Last Year	Higher	Not Significant
Internal Efficacy - Low	Lower	Not Significant
External Efficacy - Low	Lower	Not Significant
Trust - Low	Higher	Approve
Trust - High	Lower	Disapprove

volatility (Lipset 1968; McDonald 2011; Lewis-Beck 1977). In the 1960s, we observed protest behaviors in urban areas desiring political changes (Eisinger 1973). Today, we instead observe the prevalence of the Tea Party movement not only in rural areas, but also in suburban areas struggling economically (Cho, Gimpel and Shaw 2012). Perhaps the common element is the economic strife that citizens across each of these geographic areas experience, rather than a unique explanation for each. An opportunity for future research may be to examine areas experiencing economic decline more specifically, perhaps with a focus on those where anti-government movements are geographically concentrated. The results of the analysis at hand may lead to the conclusion that the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural is not causing fundamental change in participation patterns, but this does not mean that all areas are immune and that future participation patterns cannot be better understood by examining a more nuanced explanation.

Also, recall that rural population loss has not led to economic decline in all rural areas. In many, as the population has declined, economic transformation has occurred, and it is in part one's perception that their rural area is doing poorly in

contrast to urban areas that leads to the development of "rural consciousness (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016)." If perception of economic circumstances has no impact on support for unconventional behaviors, ultimately the result will be quite unlike the results observed for the other dependent variables, which were all influenced by this perception. Therefore, rural areas may be more supportive of third party candidates, exhibit low trust and efficacy levels, and as a result of this perception, be more likely to participate through conventional means. However, the impact on the American political system may be less than it would be otherwise as rural Americans are otherwise less likely to participate, and are not being driven to unconventional behaviors in protest of the current system of government.

5. THE REAP ZONES: A CASE STUDY

The examination of survey responses lead to several conclusions concerning rural political attitudes and behaviors in general as the percentage of the population that is rural has declined. The results suggest that the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural has led to both lower political trust and efficacy levels; increased Republican partisanship; increased support for Democratic presidential candidates; and lower political participation, both in terms of voting and campaign participation. At the same time, it is important to remember that income level, as well as one's perception of their financial situation, have had an impact on each of these attitudes and behaviors as well.

This conclusion begs the question of whether these general results apply based only on one's individual economic circumstances, or whether the local economic context has an impact? For example, are the effects stronger where the economy has been in decline? This question is especially important given the variance in the economy in rural areas across the United States during this time frame. We know from the results of the prior chapters that when an individual's economic circumstances are worse, or are perceived to be worse, the effects on attitudes and behaviors are similar. Possibly as a result of rural population loss, some areas have stagnated, others have declined, and still others thrived. As these local economies have transformed have patterns of political attitudes and behaviors varied across them as well? The conclusion that economic circumstances, both objective and perceived, matter in addition to the roles played by rural residency and rural population loss implies that these patterns should vary as the local economic context varies. With the use of a case study, this implication and related questions can be furthered examined.

5.1 Case Selection and Methods

The case study is of the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) Zones, which consist of several counties in both the plains and the northeast of the United States. These two regions are economically very different, with rural areas in the plains being more physically isolated and dependent on agriculture, and rural areas in the northeast being closer to urban centers and more often offering outdoor recreation opportunities. Of course, these are only general trends - rural areas in both regions each have their own economic strengths and difficulties on the local level. However, due to the general differences between these two regions, this case allows for comparison of political attitudes and behaviors as well as the economic situation of rural areas on a local (county) level housed within their larger regional context.

I selected the REAP Zones for the case study for several reasons. Each of these regions was selected for program participation due to their economic decline. Therefore, whether their circumstances were, relative to the national averages, declining or not, the assumption is that they were at that time perceived to be in decline. Additionally, the economic circumstances of the zones vary. Selecting cases of this natures allows me to examine both rural areas whose economies have done well in spite of their population loss and areas that have struggled economically. This variation is crucial for determining whether local-level variation in economic circumstances affects political attitudes and behaviors. Finally, as mentioned, the REAP Zones are found in both the plains and the northeast. Examining local areas in different regions allows me to consider whether the same results apply in different areas of the country.

I begin with some background information on each of the zones. Then, for each of the zones, I first examine their economic situation, describing their education level; poverty level; median household income; and the state of the agriculture industry. This establishes that some of the zones are faring better economically than others. I then examine several attitudes and behaviors found to be related to the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural as well as income level. These include vote

choice, voter turnout, and campaign activities (measured as campaign donations). Unfortunately, data for political trust and efficacy for these counties are not available, so these attitudes are not examined in the case study. I also consider whether these patterns in attitudes and behaviors may be keeping representatives that establish policies intended to address rural population loss - whether these policies are effective or not - in power. Additionally, I the consider what support for these incumbents in conjunction with the other conclusions implies for the American Political system as a whole.

5.1.1 History of The REAP Zones

The REAP Zones were established by the USDA to address issues facing rural areas, such as geographic isolation, absence of metropolitan centers, low density settlement patterns, dependence on agriculture, population loss, and economic distress (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016; United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Rural Business Cooperative Service 2011). Memoranda of Agreement between the REAP Zones and the USDA established that USDA Rural Development would assist the zones with implementing their programs. The initiative was then extended by the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act of 2001; the 2008 Farm Bill, and the 2014 Farm Bill.

There are currently five REAP Zones located in North Dakota, New York, and Vermont, with each having developed a strategic plan for economic revitalization in their respective geographic area, with administration by the USDA authorized to continue through September 30, 2018. The USDA provides funding for the zones to assist with their plans in the form of loans. The goal is that by forming private-public partnerships with stakeholders in these communities, these stakeholders will be able to continue making improvements without this federal assistance after their REAP Zone designation has expired.

When first established in 1995, two zones in North Dakota were designated for participation. At that time, rural areas in the Great Plains were characterized as facing unique economic and community development issues as compared to other rural communities (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 1996). Speaking on the 20th anniversary of the zones being established, former Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota echoed this characterization of the Plains states' rural economic situation (REAP Investment Fund, Inc. 2015). In his recollection of first discussing the REAP Zones with President Clinton, he suggested that he would like to establish a pilot program of REAP Zones in North Dakota. He stated that he felt such an initiative could bring economic and community development to what he described as an "egg-shaped" area in the center of the country that was losing population.

The zones in New York were added in 1999, and the zone in Vermont in 2000. Given that the intention of the original REAP Zones was to be a "pilot program" for addressing these issues in the rural Great Plains, it is somewhat surprising that the additional zones are in the Northeast. Furthermore, the issues facing the other REAP Zones are not necessarily the same as those facing the initial zones established in North Dakota. Both the North Dakota zones, along with the zone in Vermont, are described as having issues stemming from low population density, population loss, and isolation (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). The two zones in New York, on the other hand, are described as having poverty and joblessness caused by major employers leaving the area.

So how did the REAP Zones initiative develop from a pilot program meant to address the issues unique to the rural states in the Great Plains to a pilot program whose "outcomes and lessons learned will help USDA to assist other communities throughout rural America experiencing similar problems (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016)." On the one hand, the benefits of the private-public partnership model could have been seen as being suited to rural areas facing different issues that could therefore benefit rural areas across the United States,

not just in its "heartland" as Senator Dorgan envisioned. On the other hand, one must consider the role that the particularistic nature of American politics may have played. After all, despite the stated goal to forge public-private partnerships that would result in eventual independent from this form of federal assistance and the early expansion of the program, after being signed into law in 2001, these same five areas have received continued REAP Zone designation with no sign of change to this status quo through at least 2018.

5.2 Rural Population Loss Policies

Examining the persistence of other policies intended to address issues stemming from rural population loss provides a possible explanation for the persistence of the REAP Zones: pork-barrel politics, which privileges policies that provide particularistic benefits to constituents, is to blame. The United States as well as other countries with a policymaking process of this nature - Japan, for example - tend to use relatively ineffective policies to address the issues related to rural population loss (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Coulmas and Lützeler 2011; Traphagan and Knight 2003). In the United States, it is puzzling in the first place that state and national level policies exists to address economic issues caused by rural population loss, as the rural economy from a national perspective appears to be doing quite well and catching up to the nation as a whole. According to data from the USDA ERS and USDA Census of Agriculture, gaps in poverty rates and educational attainment are closing; unemployment rates are lower in rural areas than urban; and the agriculture industry has transformed (McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010). Therefore, an explanation of this policy's persistence must first explain its existence.

Further contributing to pork-barrel politics as a potential explanation is that finding that policies that tend to be put into place to address rural population loss tend not be very effective. There are two reasons for their inefficacy. First, these policies typically have a goal of attracting new or return residents, especially those

with high human capital levels and low community attachment levels who are unlikely to return (Carr and Kefalas 2009). Communities could instead focus on residents who never left or returned for their own reasons (primarily familial) in order to make better use of human capital resources they already possess. Second, the policies used in the United States are primarily economic in nature. For example, tax breaks or payments to new residents, or attempts to support agriculture and manufacturing industries (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Goetz and Debertin 1996; Mills 2001). However, the evidence shows that these policies do not attract or retain residents with high human capital levels as the available jobs typically do not match their skills, and it is difficult to attract the industries that require these skills as the residents currently living in the rural areas do not possess them.

why would pork-barrel politics provide an explanation for the existence and persistence of these relatively ineffective policies just described? In the United States, there is a preponderance of evidence that many policy outcomes are the result of pork-barrel politics (Faith, Leavens and Tollison 1982; Fiorina 1989; Lowi 1979; Niskanan 1975; Shepsle and Weingast 1981, 1987; Weingast 1979; Weingast and Moran 1983; Weingast and Marshall 1988). Special interests request that legislators enact policies that grant the interests particularistic benefits and in turn promise to provide the legislators with electoral support. The structure of American political institutions also facilitates such exchanges. Special interests desire benefits and deliver votes to legislators; bureaucrats overseeing the policies request larger budgets in order to maintain their agencies; legislators desire votes and therefore deliver benefits to interests and approve budget requests from agencies. Furthermore, the committee system allows legislators to serve on committees that serve the needs of the special interests in their districts, giving them increased power over the legislative agenda in these policy areas, and the norms of Congress results in many of these particularistic policies proposed by these committees passing.

Once one considers the nature of the policymaking process in the United States, it seems entirely unsurprising that special interests in rural areas, such as agricul-

tural interests, would be able to lobby rural representatives to propose legislation that provides particularistic benefits, such as payments to farming families, to these interests in their districts. Additionally, once these policies are in place, none of the parties involved have any incentive to discontinue them. Districts and special interests receive benefits whether the policy is successful or not; legislators continue to receive electoral support from those who benefit; and the agencies that oversee these policies, in these cases typically the USDA; do not want to risk reducing agency size by recommending that such programs be discontinued. The incentives of all parties in the policymaking process are therefore aligned in such a manner that policies that provide disproportionate benefits to special interests are put into place, and once they are in place, they tend to slowly expand, not be reassess and phased out if it is determined they are no longer viable.

Because this system creates this incentive structure, policies to address these issues may be put into place at the national or state level[1], rather than a local level, despite the fact that many of the problems that do arise that are associated with rural population loss are typically local in nature. Considering the evidence that particularistic politics has played a role in perpetuating the existence and persistence of such policies - effective or not - in the United States and elsewhere, this explanation could be behind the existence and persistence of the REAP Zones as well. While at first the REAP Zones may seem to be different, as they are meant to benefit specific rural communities and focus on improvement in these communities, rather than attracting outsiders in, keep in mind that these zones are federally administered and the initiative is intended to be a pilot program for an eventual national scope.

[1]One example is the Rural Opportunity Zone Program in Kansas (see Kansas Department of Commerce website at http://www.kansascommerce.com/index.aspx?NID=320), a program that provides student loan repayment and tax cuts to new residents.

5.3 The REAP Zones

For each of the five REAP Zones, I will examine their political and economic circumstances from the time the REAP Zones were established through the present, in order to allow me to address the questions I have been asking about the population in general at a local level across these rural communities. As their population has declined and their economy has changed, has there been an impact on the political attitudes and behaviors of the residents? And, in turn, have any changes in these attitudes or behaviors had an impact on the electoral chances of those that represent them - and control whether the REAP Zones are extended or not? I will begin with a discussion of the two original REAP Zones in North Dakota, and then move on to discuss the later established zones in New York and Vermont. I will then discuss the economic circumstances and political attitudes and behaviors in each.

5.3.1 Center of North American Coalition (CONAC) and Southwest REAP Zones

The two REAP Zones in North Dakota, as previously mentioned, were the first established, meant to serve as a pilot program for addressing issues specific to rural areas in the Plains states (REAP Investment Fund, Inc. 2015). The CONAC Zone, located in the north central area of the state, bordering Manitoba, Canada, consists of McHenry, Bottineau, Rollette, Towner, Pierce and Benson counties, as well as the Indian reservations of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa (located within Rollette County) (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). Figure 5.1 provides a map of the state showing the location of the counties within this zone. These counties are characterized as experiencing high rates of poverty and population loss, along with a decline in agricultural and extractive industry productivity. According to data from the US Census Bureau, the population of these counties is 100 percent rural, with the exception of Pierce County, where 35 percent of the population is rural. On average, they have experienced a population loss of 18.5 percent from 1980 -

2010, with McHenry and Bottineau counties experiencing over 30 percent population loss over this time period.

The Southwest Zone, located in the southwest corner of the state, consists of Dunn, Stark, Hettinger, Adams, Bowman, Slope, Golden Valley, and Billings counties, as well as part of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation (located within Dunn County). Again, refer to Figure 5.1 for a map showing the location of the counties in this zone. These counties are characterized similarly as suffering from population loss - for their already low density population - and economic decline (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). According to data from the US Census Bureau, the population of these counties is 100 percent rural, with the exception of Stark County, where 27 percent of the population is rural. On average, they have experienced a population loss of 27.9 percent from 1980 - 2010, with Hettinger County experiencing 42 percent population loss. Only Stark County, which is the largest, has not experienced high rates of population loss, with a growth rate of two percent over this time period.

Fig. 5.1. Map of North Dakota

5.3.2 Sullivan-Wawarsing and Tioga REAP Zones

The two REAP Zones in New York were established in 1999, and like the North Dakota zones, were included in this pilot program to search for ways to revitalize rural areas (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). The Sullivan-Wawarsing Zone, located in the southeastern area of the state, bordering Pennsylvania, consists of Sullivan County as well as the town of Wawarsing in bordering Ulster County[2]. Figure 5.2 provides a map of the state showing the location of the counties within this zone. These areas are characterized as experiencing reduced employment opportunities. In Sullivan County, this is the result of there being a

[2]Unless otherwise noted, data presented for the zone are for Sullivan County, as Census data is not available for the town of Wawarsing itself. It is the only town within Ulster County in the zone, and borders Sullivan County.

decline of college and entrant worker populations along with geographic isolation. In the town of Wawarsing, this is the result of large employers in the manufacturing and hospitality industries leaving (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). According to data from the US Census Bureau, the population of this area is primarily rural, with between 71 to 84 percent of the population of Sullivan County being rural from 1980 - 2010. The population of Sullivan County has been increasing, however, growing 19 percent over this same time period.

The Tioga Zone, located in the south-central area of the state, also bordering Pennsylvania, consists only of Tioga County. Again, Figure 5.2 shows the location of this county within the state. This area is also characterized as experiencing a substantial loss of manufacturing jobs (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). The population of this county is also mostly rural, with between 65 to 72 percent being rural from 1980 - 2010, according to US Census Bureau data. Tioga County's population is slightly higher than it was in 1980, by about three percent, but the size of the population peaked in 1990.

Fig. 5.2. Map of New York

5.3.3 Northeast Kingdom REAP Zone

The final REAP Zone, the Northeast Kingdom in Vermont, was established in 2000 (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016). The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative, which predates REAP Zone designation (it was established in 1996) works with organizations and communities to develop and maintain the zone' strategic plan, which is necessary for REAP Zone designation (The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative 2016). This zone consists of three counties, Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans, which are in the northeast area of the state, bordering Canada and New Hampshire. Figure 5.3 shows the location of these counties within the state. These counties are characterized as being isolated, sparsely populated, and economically distressed due to the loss of railroad and manufacturing industries as well as fam-

ily farms (United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development 2016; The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative 2016). According to data from the US Census Bureau, the population of the area is primarily rural, with 72 - 85 percent of Caledonia and Orleans Counties, and 100 percent of Essex County being rural between 1980 - 2010. Although the population is very rural, population decline has not been an issue over this time period. Both Caledonia and Orleans Counties experienced steady population growth from 1980 - 2010, and the population of Essex County stayed relatively stable, increasing slightly but then decreasing slightly again. In this respect, the Northeast Kingdom is more similar to the New York zones than the North Dakota zones.

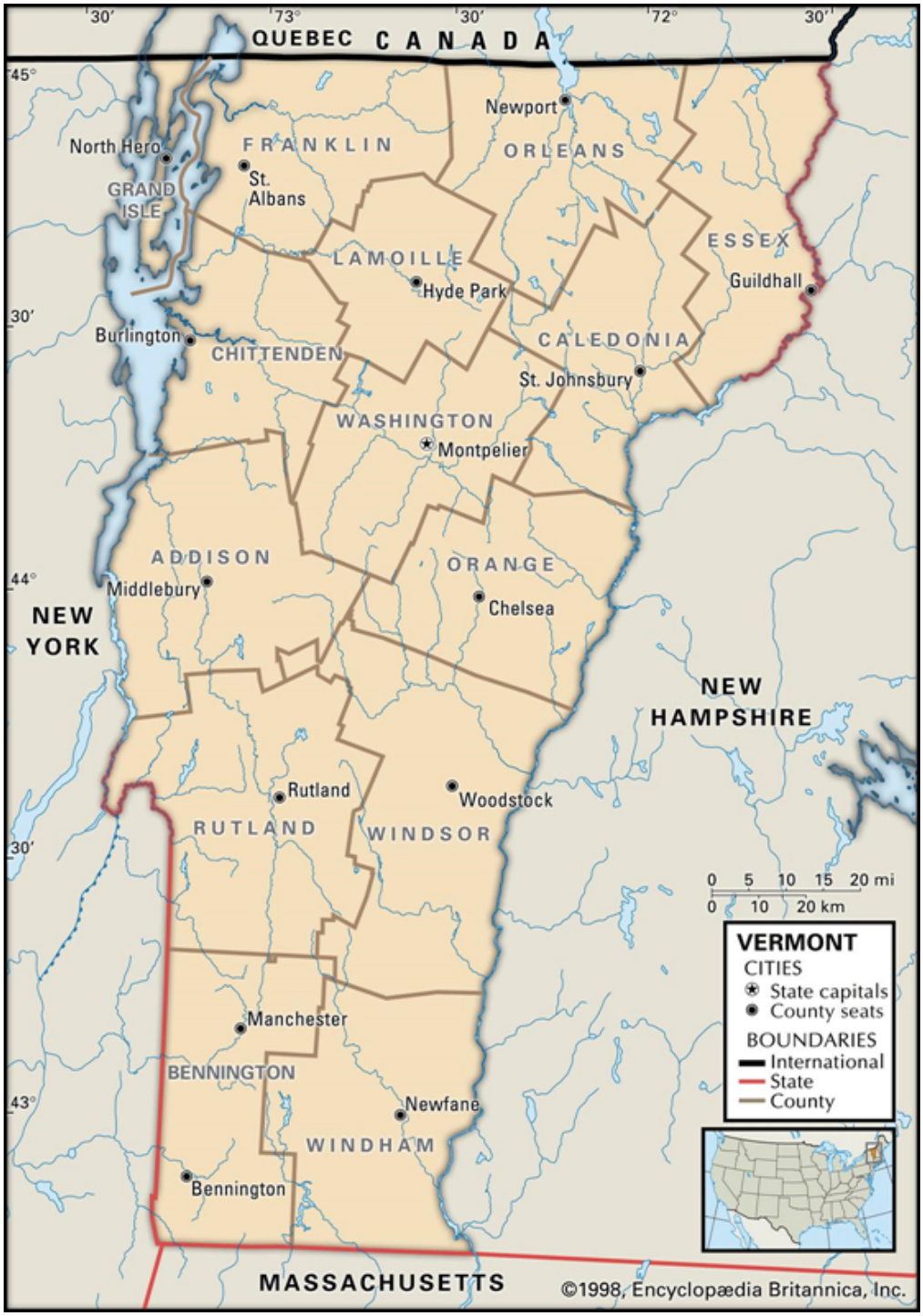

Fig. 5.3. Map of Vermont

5.4 Economic Circumstances of the REAP Zones

In order to provide evidence that the economic circumstances in these areas experiencing rural population loss vary on local level, these circumstances in each of the zones are examined at a county level. For each zone, education level, income level, poverty rates, and the state of the agriculture industry are discussed. Overall, the results show that circumstances do vary across the zones, with some lagging behind and others improving. This variation allows me to analyze the relationship between local economic circumstances and political attitudes and behaviors in each.

5.4.1 Center of North American Coalition (CONAC) and Southwest REAP Zones

Economically, the areas in North Dakota are, on average, worse off than the United States as a whole. However, circumstances have been improving. According to data from the US Census Bureau, in the CONAC Zone in 2014, on average, 16.3 percent of the population over twenty-five years old had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29.3 percent of the US population. Since 1980, this proportion has increased more in three of the five counties than in the US as a whole, with the proportion more than doubling over this time frame in Rollete County.

In the Southwest Zone, on average 21.1 percent of the population in these counties had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2014. Additionally, in four of the eight counties, this proportion has increased more than in the US as a whole, and has more than doubled in Adams and Slope counties since 1980. While there have been some aberrations - for example, in Slope County this proportion peaked in 2010 and has since been declining - it appears that despite further rural population loss, these counties are catching up to the rest of the country in terms of educational attainment, or are at least continuing to increase their education levels over time.

Examining median household income since the time the zones were enacted leads to a similar conclusion. According to data from the US Census Bureau, in 2014 the

median household income across the CONAC Zone was about $43,678, compared to $53,482 for US households. Although consistently lower, median household income levels in these counties have increased about as much as or more than median household income for the US since 1995. In McHenry County, income levels have more than doubled.

The Southwest region is, for the most part, similar. Until recent years, the median household income had been lower than the US as a whole, but increasing at least at a similar rate. Starting in 2009, in five of the counties, median household income began to surpass the US as a whole, and in these five counties has more than doubled (in the case of Slope County, tripled) since 1995. This recent unusually large increase in income levels can be explained by recent changes in the economic activities in these counties. These five counties - Dunn, Stark, Bowman, Slope, and Billings - have had increased economic activity related to oil drilling in the Bakken formation in recent years. Refer to locations of oil rigs (green) and oil/gas fields (red) in Figure 5.4. Only one county in the CONAC zone, Bottineau, has experienced this increased drilling activity, and its median income is the highest in that zone.

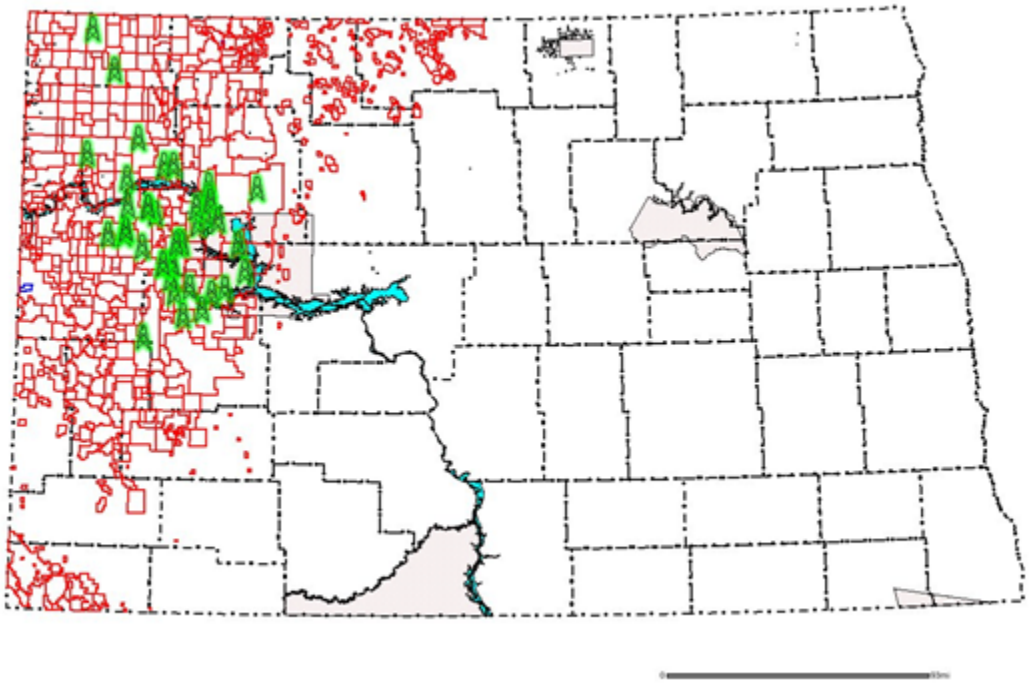

Fig. 5.4. Oil Right and Oil/Gas Field Locations: 2016, North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources

Examining poverty rates since the time the zones were enacted shows the zones are doing quite well in comparison to the US as a whole. In 2014, US Census Bureau data shows that the percentage of the population in poverty in the CONAC Zone was 21.6 percent, compared to 15.6 percent of the US population. Although poverty rates were higher on average, this is largely due to the very high poverty rates in two of the counties, Rollete and Benson, where poverty rates are over 35 percent. While these very high rates of poverty should not be ignored, this may be explained by a unique characteristic of these counties: Indian reservations are located within with, and over 50 percent of the population is Native American. In the other three counties, poverty rates are lower than the US average, and have been decreasing since 1995.

The Southwest Zone is fairing even better on this front. In all counties in this zone, the percentage of the population in poverty is on average lower than the rate across

the US as a whole, at 8.8 percent, and this rate has decreased in all counties in this zone since 1995. The declining rate of poverty in these zones is especially impressive considering that the percentage of the US population in poverty has increased over this same time frame, especially in the last decade.

According to data from the USDA Census of Agriculture, the agricultural industry has changed in these areas since the time the zones were established as well. While there were no clear trends indicating that the number of farms in each of these counties increased or decreased between 1997 and 2012, the nature of these farms changed over time. Consistent with the trend described by Danbom (2006), the number of small farms (sales less than $2,500 annually) has increased and the number of farms where the operator's principal occupation is farming has decreased over this time frame. From 1997 to 2007, the number of farm operators with a principal occupation of farming decreased in every county across the two zones, and in 2012, decreased continued across three of the five CONAC Zone counties and four of the eight Southwest Zone counties[3]. A similar trend can be observed for small farms. From 1997 to 2007 the number of farms with annual sales under $2,500 increased across all counties in the two zones, but the number of farms in this category did decrease in most counties in 2012[4].

At the same time, agricultural sales in these counties have been skyrocketing. From 1997 to 2012, the value of farm products sold at least tripled across all counties in these two zones, with most of the increases in sales being in 2007 and 2012. The largest increase was in Benson County, where sales increased from $50,117,000 to $240,629,000(in 2012 dollars) over this time frame. Although this is not sufficient evidence to conclude that these changes in the agriculture industry in these areas are the cause of increased sales, it is clear that the industry has not suffered as a result.

[3]In 2012, many of the counties where there was an increase in the number of farm operators with a principal occupation in farming did not have large increases. For example, in Rollette County, the number increased from 313 to 317 farms in this category. The largest increase was in McHenry County, where the number increased from 540 to 590 farms in this category, and this was still a decline from 1997, when 650 farms were in this category.

[4]Although the number of small farms did decrease in most counties in 2012, the number was still higher in all counties as compared to 1997 with the exception of Billings County.

5.4.2 Sullivan-Wawarsing and Tioga REAP Zones

Economic trends in these two zones in New York differ from those in the two zones in North Dakota - as well as from each other. Tioga County has done better, or at least about the same, as the US as a whole in some aspects. Sullivan County, on the other hand, tends to be worse off than the US as a whole and is not necessarily catching up. Circumstances there have been improving, but not as quickly as in the US on average.

The only exception to this dichotomy is educational attainment, where both counties lag behind. According to data from the US Census Bureau, in Sullivan County in 2014, 21.1 percent of the population over twenty-five years old had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29.3 percent of the US population. Since 1980, this proportion has increased substantially - by about 75.8 percent, but this is slower than the increase in the US as a whole, which is about 80.8 percent. In Tioga County, 23.8 percent of the population had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2014. Similar to Sullivan County, this proportion has increased since 1980, by about 60.8 percent, but this again this increase lags behind the US average. It appears that while educational attainment has improved over time, these zones still lag behind, especially compared to the gains in education made over this same time period in the two zones in North Dakota.

Median household income from 1995 - 2014 followed a similar trend in Sullivan County, but not Tioga County. According to data from the US Census Bureau, in 2014 the median household income in Sullivan County was about $49,388, compared to $53,482 for US households. Median household income has been consistently lower in this county than the US, and has increased at about the same rate since 1995 (55.8 percent in Sullivan County compared to 56.9 percent across the US). Again, this zone is lagging behind the rest of the country and not showing signs of catching up.

Tioga County, on the other hand, has fared much better. Although median household income in this county grew at about the same rate, about 57.9 percent, in 2014

it was higher than the US median at $56,167. In fact, median household income was higher in this county than across the US from 1995 - 1998 and 2010 - 2014. It is important to remember that while income levels have not doubled - or even tripled - in Tioga County, as was the case for some counties in the zones in North Dakota, this county cannot necessarily be held to the same standard due to the unique economic activity related to oil drilling in North Dakota. Both Tioga and Sullivan counties are likewise situated within the Marcellus formation, but this has not been a factor that could lead to similar trends in growth, as oil drilling in this formation in New York state has been heavily regulated or restricted.

Examining poverty rates since the time the zones were established (1995 - 2014) reveals a similar, diverging trend. In 2014, US Census Bureau data shows that the percentage of the population in poverty in Sullivan County was 18 percent, slightly higher than the percent of the US population in poverty, which was at 15.6 percent. The poverty rate in this county has been slightly higher than in the rest of the country in almost every year examined, and this rate has increased in this county at a faster rate than the US on average.

In Tioga County, however, the percentage of the population in poverty in 2014 was only 9.5 percent. In contrast to Sullivan County, the poverty rate was lower than the rate in the US in almost every year examined. Although the rate was lower than it was in 1995, the rate did climb from 2004 - 2009 before falling again. Similar to the North Dakota zones, the declining rate of poverty in Tioga County, despite the temporary increase, is impressive considering that the poverty rate in the US has increased over this same time frame, especially in the last decade. Again, the conclusion is that Sullivan County lags behind the rest of the US economically, while Tioga County pulls ahead.

Trends in the agricultural industry in these two zones also differ from those observed in the North Dakota zones. Recall that in the North Dakota zones there was a clear pattern of transformation of this industry to smaller farms where the operator's principal occupation was not farming, accompanied by huge increases in sales of farm

products. Data from the USDA Census of Agriculture reveals that these trends are not present in these two zones in New York. In fact, there are no clear trends showing that the agriculture industry has changed over time in these two counties.

In both Sullivan and Tioga Counties, the number of farms increased in 2002, then fell again from 2007 - 2012. The value of farm products sold did continually increase from 1997 - 2007 in Tioga County, but not at the same high rates as observed in the zones in North Dakota. Additionally, this same trend was not observed in Sullivan County, where sales increased in some years and decreased in others. There were also no consistent trends in either county in terms of the number of farms where the principal operator's occupation was farming, not the number of small farms with sales less than $2,500. In both counties, these numbers fluctuated over this time period. The lack of transformation in the agriculture industry in these two zones is not necessarily a negative. While there has not been transformation, there has also not been decline. Instead, the evidence points to relative stability in this industry, with only temporary ups and downs in these various aspects over the years examined.

5.4.3 Northeast Kingdom REAP Zone

Economically, trends in the Northeast Kingdom are similar to the Sullivan-Wawarsing Zone in that in many attributes, this zone lags behind and is not necessarily catching up to the rest of the country. All three counties lag behind the rest of the US in educational attainment, which the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative considers one of the "defining markers of income inequality (The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative 2016)." In 2014, recall that 29.3 percent of the US population over twenty-five years of age had a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, according to data from the US Census Bureau, this percentage was 25.8 percent in Caledonia County, 21.4 percent in Orleans County, and only 14.1 percent in Essex County. Since 1980, this proportion has increased about 72 - 73 percent in two of the counties, but this is slower than across the US, where this proportion increased about 80.8 percent over

this same time frame. Only Orleans County is catching up, with this proportion having increased about 91.1 percent over this same time frame. Overall, the conclusion is similar to what was observed in the New York zones: this zone, in particular Essex County, continues to lag behind, especially compared to the gains in education made over this same time period in the two zones in North Dakota.

The median household incomes of all three counties lag behind the US as a whole as well. In 2014, the median household income across the Northeast Kingdom was about $40,698, compared to $53,482 for US households. From 1995 - 2014 median household income in all three counties has been consistently lower than for US households, and has increased at a slower rate. Again, Essex County lags particularly far behind. They have consistently had the lowest median household income of the three counties and this income level has increased at the slowest rate. While one may not expect this zone to match the income growth of the North Dakota zones, given that it is not currently experiencing their unique economic circumstances related to oil drilling activities, the fact remains that income levels are lower in this zone than the other four zones and are not showing signs of catching up. The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative 2016 argues that the low income in this zone may be explained in part by a mismatch between jobs and job-seekers. They explain that after the loss of railroad and manufacturing industries, new employers that try to come into the region have been unable to fill positions with qualified workers, meaning that the region has high unemployment despite jobs being available.

Throughout this same time period (1995 - 2014), poverty rates also lagged slightly behind the US average in two of the three counties, but in contrast to income and education levels this zone appears to be catching up in this respect. On the one hand, this is somewhat surprising as The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative (2016) states that the loss of manufacturing and railroad industries has also led to widespread generational poverty, but on the other hand, they may be comparing their zone to their state, whose poverty rate is relatively low, rather than considering it in a national context. In 2014, US Census Bureau data shows that the percentage of the population

in poverty in Essex and Orleans Counties was about 16.9 and 16.7 percent, respectively, compared to 15.6 percent of the US population. The poverty rate in these two counties has been slightly higher than in the rest of the country in almost every year examined, however the rate has been either decreasing or slowly decreasing relative to the US rate. Caledonia County fared slightly better than the other two counties. In 2014, its poverty rate was lower than the US rate, at 14.1 percent, and its poverty level has decreased over this time frame. In recent years, poverty levels have increased slightly, but have remained lower than the US rate. While these decreases in poverty are not as drastic as they are in the North Dakota zones, remember that any decline in poverty locally while the rate climbs nationally is noteworthy, especially with this zone lagging behind economically in other aspects.

Similar to the zones in New York, agriculture industry trends in these two zones also diverge from those observed in North Dakota. As previously discussed, in the North Dakota zones there was a clear pattern of a transformation in agriculture to smaller farms where the principal operator's occupation was not farming, accompanied by huge increases in sales of farm products whereas in the New York zones stability was observed. Data from the USDA Census of Agriculture from 1997 - 2012 reveals that stability is the trend in the Northeast Kingdom as well. There was some evidence that the number of farms has increased in this zone over this time frame, as there were consistent increases in this number in two of the three counties. However, the number stayed relatively the same in Essex County over this same time frame and was stable in the later years of this time period (2007 - 2012) in Orleans County. This trend was also not reflected in the value of farm products sold, with this amount increasing in the three counties in some years and decreasing in others[5]. There were also no consistent trends in the zone in terms of the number of farms where the principal operator's occupation was farming, nor the number of small farms with sales less than $2,500. Once again, these numbers fluctuated over time, with only Orleans

[5]The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative (2016) does note that over this entire time frame, the value of farms products sold, particularly in milk from cows and maple syrup, did increase. However, this does not account for the decreases between 2007 and 2012.

County having consistent increases in the number of small farms. As with the New York zones, however, keep in mind that while there has not been transformation, there has also not been decline.

5.5 Political Attitudes and Behaviors of the REAP Zones

As the economic circumstances vary across these zones, the next question is whether political attitudes and behaviors vary as well. Finding that political attitudes and behaviors do vary as a result of the differences in local economic circumstances would provide a more nuanced view of the results from the prior chapters. In the prior chapters, I found not only that rural residency and the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural affected political attitudes and behaviors, but also that one's economic circumstances, or perceptions of these circumstances, had an effect. Those results are from an individual-level analysis, though, and allow one to make conclusions only about how a respondent's own circumstances in conjunction with the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural affect attitudes and behaviors. From examining cases of local areas with varied economic circumstances, all perceived at one point in time to be struggling, I can provide insight into whether the results of the larger analysis vary based on the local economic circumstances and population changes.

For each of the counties, vote choice patterns (in both congressional and presidential elections), voter turnout, and campaign contributions are examined. Although vote choice patterns do not directly allow one to observe changes in partisanship, they do allow one to observe how attitudinal changes translate into votes. Data was obtained from the US Census Bureau, the North Dakota Secretary of State, the New York Board of Elections, the Vermont Secretary of State, and the Federal Election Commission (FEC). Additionally, they provide insight into the role that pork-barrel politics may play in these zones, as in the rest of the US, in keeping incumbents in office. Again, the results show that these patterns vary across the zones. While there

are no clear trends in participation, some zones lean more Democratic while other lean more Republican, and third-party support is higher in some zones than others.

5.5.1 Center of North American Coalition (CONAC) and Southwest REAP Zones

Politically, the counties in these two zones have supported Republican candidates at the presidential level while supporting Democratic candidates at the congressional level, only switching to support Republican congressional candidates in recent years. From 1980 - 2008, on average 32.6 percent of votes in these counties were cast for the Democratic presidential candidate. While there were some years where Democrats received a higher percentage of these votes than others, there are not clear overtime trends and Democratic candidates have never done particularly well in most of the counties[6]. In fact, in all but three of these counties, a smaller proportion of votes were cast for Democratic candidates than in the US as a whole across all years examined.

It is worth noting as well that these zones have been more supportive of third-party presidential candidates than the US as a whole. Third-party candidate support was highest in these counties in 1980, 1992, and 1996. This pattern was true throughout the US, but in most years, the extent of third-party support was much higher in these zones. In 1992, for example, 23.8 percent of votes in the CONAC Zone and 32.5 percent of votes in the Southwest Zone were cast for third-party presidential candidates, compared to 19.5 percent across the US. Furthermore, all counties in the Southwest Zone have been more supportive of third-party presidential candidates than the US on average in all election since 1992.

The voting patterns for Congressional Candidates in these zones was very different over this time period. As previously explained, the zones were initially proposed by

[6]Rollete and Benson counties, where Democratic presidential candidates have received well over a majority of votes in several elections - up to 75 percent - are the exception to this rule. Review of voting patterns in congressional elections also shows that these counties are the exceptions, with voters in these counties continuing to support Democratic congressional candidates despite declining support in other counties starting in 2008.

Democratic Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota when he was still a Congressman. That same year, he would be elected Senator and remain in this position until deciding not to seek re-election in 2010. From 1992 - 2004, Dorgan was able to capture over a majority of votes across all counties within the zones. His share of the vote did decline slightly in a few counties in the Southwest Zone by 2004, however. In 2010, a Republican, former Governor John Hoeven, was elected to succeed him in the Senate. Hoeven secured a higher percentage of the votes than Dorgan previously had in all but two of these counties (Rollette and Benson).

Dorgan's successor as Congressman as a result of the 1992 election, Earl Pomeroy, was also a Democrat. Pomeroy held this seat until 2010, when he lost of Republican Richard Berg (who has since been succeeded by Republican Kevin Cramer). From 1992 - 2008, Pomeroy was the preferred candidate across many of these counties, but not all. Similar to Dorgan, throughout this entire period his support was strongest in Benson and Rollette counties. In 2008, however, especially in the counties in the Southwest Zone, he received a much lower percentage of votes than in the prior election, followed by his loss in 2010.

Data concerning political participation in these counties over this time frame shows that there were no clear patterns. Voter turnout did not consistently increase or decrease across this time period in any of the counties. Additionally, data from the FEC[7] shows only isolated patterns in individual campaign contributions to Political Action Committees (PACs) and candidates. The amount of contributions steadily increased in two CONAC Zone counties, Benson and Bottineau, and one Southwest Zone county, Stark, from 1990 - 2012. However, this trend was not present across the zones. Overall, the contribution amounts in these counties were relatively low throughout the entire time period. The contribution amounts were largest in all counties in the 2012 presidential election, but given this was a single election year and this general trend in campaign contributions was present across the country, one cannot conclude from this data that there is a trend unique to these zones.

[7]County-level data used were compiled by the Sunlight Foundation, who obtained the data through a database of FEC data.

Another possible trend in campaign contributions has been that in most of these counties that made contributions to presidential candidates, the contributions have been made to the Republican candidates[8]. Considering presidential voting patterns in these counties, this finding is not surprising. Also, it is worth noting that this trend is only present in the most recent elections. The data shows that contributions to presidential candidates were sporadic across the CONAC counties prior to 2008, and across the Southwest counties prior to 2012. Given general voting patterns, the low contribution amounts, and the sporadic data prior to recent elections, this evidence is again not strong enough to conclude that there is a trend unique to the zones.

5.5.2 Sullivan-Wawarsing and Tioga REAP Zones

Politically, these two zones in New York are very different from the zones in North Dakota. Tioga County has generally been less supportive of Democratic presidential candidates than Sullivan. However, support of Democratic candidates has increased in both counties, not eroded, in recent years. From 1980 - 2008, on average 45.4 percent of votes in Sullivan County and 37.8 percent of votes in Tioga County were cast for the Democratic presidential candidates. In Tioga County, a smaller proportion of voters were case for Democratic candidates than in the US on average across all years examined, but this proportion increased each year from 1992 - 2008. In Sullivan County, voters have been slightly more supportive of Democratic presidential candidates than the rest of the US over this same time frame.

Also in contrast to the zones in North Dakota, third-party candidate support has not been quite as strong in these zones. As in the US as a whole and North Dakota, third-party candidate support was highest in these zones in 1980, 1992, and 1996. Third-party support was not as extensive as observed in North Dakota, however. While support for third-party candidates in both Sullivan and Tioga Counties was

[8]Rollette County, which is one of the two counties more generally supportive of Democratic presidential candidates, is an exception with no donations made to the Republican candidate in most years. However, in 2012, 100 percent of the donations in this county were made to the Republican candidate.

higher than the US average in most years, this was in most instances only by a small margin. The margin of difference in 1992 and 1992, the years of greatest divergence, was only about 4 percentage points higher. In comparison, the average margin in the North Dakota zones was about 7 - 9 percentage points higher.

The voting patterns for congressional candidates is more similar to the trend observed in North Dakota, but not identical. The two zones in New York are interesting in that in some years, parts of these two counties were within different congressional districts. This allows one to observe that although Sullivan County has generally been supportive of Democratic presidential candidates and support has been increasing in Tioga County, support for Democrats at the congressional level has only existed for the one representative the two zones shared: Maurice Hinchey.

Hinchey was the Congressman for New York's 26th District, which contained parts of both counties when the zones were established. After redistricting as the result of the 2000 Census, he became the representative of New York's 22nd District, containing part of Tioga and all of Sullivan County. In both counties, he was the winning candidate every year with the exception of 2010, when the Republican candidate received more votes in Tioga County. Looking at the election results for Hinchey as a Democrat does not show him winning with huge margins - in fact, he did not receive a majority of the votes on this ticket in most years. However, he typically was the candidate for several third-party tickets as well, and in 2006 ran with no opposing Republican candidate, which demonstrates he was a secure incumbent.

These two counties then experienced redistricting again as the result of the 2010 Census, and are no longer within the same district (Sullivan is in the 19th District, and parts of Tioga are in the 22nd and 23rd Districts). Hinchey retired in 2012, and the Congressional election results in the new districts changed substantially, with support for the Democratic candidate dissipating in both counties[9]. Still, this is not entirely unsurprising considering that throughout this entire time period, support for Democrats other than Hinchey did not exist within the two districts. In 1998 - 2000,

[9]There was no Democratic candidate in the 22nd District in 2014.

prior to Sullivan County being contained entirely within Hinchey's district, only 24 - 26 percent of the vote in the part of the county outside his district was for the Democratic candidate. Likewise, part of Tioga County was outside his district from 1998 - 2010, and support for the Democratic candidate ranged from as low as 10 percent to 37 percent at its peak.

Similar to the zones in North Dakota, there were also no clear trends in political participation in these two counties. As in North Dakota, voter turnout did not consistently increase or decrease over the time period 1980 - 2008 in either county. The data from the FEC concerning individual campaign contributions to PACs and candidates is also similar in that the only trend was an increase in donation amounts over time, especially in recent years. There are some differences in that both of these counties have a higher amount of donations than many of the counties in North Dakota and the trend is present in both counties here. Although donations have steadily increased in recent years and reached some of their highest amounts in both counties in the 2012 presidential election[10], this evidence cannot lead to the conclusion that there is a trend unique to these zones as this is a general trend in campaign contributions present across the country.

There were also no clear trends in which party the campaign contributions were made to in these counties. From 1992 - 2012, in some years, contributions heavily favored Republican presidential candidates, while in others almost no contributions were made to them without any pattern over this time period. Although the data shows that the nature of participation in these two zones is somewhat different than what was observed in North Dakota, the conclusion is that there were no clear trends unique to these areas.

[10]The highest amount of donations in Sullivan County was in the 1992 election, rather than 2012, which was when donation amounts were highest in most areas.

5.5.3 Northeast Kingdom REAP Zone

In some respects, the Northeast Kingdom is different from the other zones politically, but in others it is quite similar. While the zones in North Dakota become less supportive of Democratic candidates at both the presidential and congressional levels, and the zones in New York became less supportive at the congressional level, the three counties in this zone became more supportive in recent years. In the 2004 presidential election, both Caledonia and Orleans counties were more supportive of the Democratic candidate than the US as a whole, and in 2008 all three counties were more supportive, with at least 55.9 percent population voting for the Democratic candidate in comparison to 52.9 percent nationally.

However, like the other zones, there is relatively high support for third-party presidential candidates. As in the US on average and in the other zones, third-party candidate support was highest in this zone in 1980, 1992, and 1996. However, with a single exception[11], the percentage of the population voting for third-party candidates has been higher across this zone in every election from 1980 - 2008. The amount of third-party support was most similar to that observed in North Dakota over this time frame. As discussed, while support for third-party candidates was higher in all zones than across the US in most years, in New York this was only by a small margin in most instances, whereas in North Dakota this was by a large margin. In comparison, in the Northeast Kingdom, the margin of difference in 1992 and 1996 was 8 - 9 percentage points.

The voting patterns at the congressional level are very different than in the other two zones, where voters initially supported Democratic incumbents but then shifted their support to Republican candidates. The Northeast Kingdom has also consistently supported incumbents, but, similar to the pattern observed at the presidential level, support for Democratic candidates has not eroded. When the zone was established, Vermont was represented in Congress by Senator Bernie Sanders. Sanders served as

[11] In 1988, .8 percent of Essex County voted for presidential candidates that were not the Democratic or Republican nominee, compared to 1 percent nationally.

representative until 2006, when he was elected Senator. He has consistently received a majority of the vote in all three counties from 2000 - 2012, and was re-elected with about 66.1 percent of the vote in 2012. Sanders is an Independent, but caucused with the Democrats and sought the Democratic nomination in the 2016 presidential election.

Sanders was then succeeded as Congressman by Peter Welch, a Democrat. Welch's support in the three counties in this zone was weakest at the times that he was initially elected in 2006, when he received only about 42.5 percent of the vote across the zone. Welch's support then strengthened, with over 82 percent of the votes in this zone being case for him in the next election, where he was both the Democratic and Republican nominee. He has since received a majority of the votes in all three counties, with a single exception in Essex County in 2014, where he was still the winning candidate. It is clear from these election results that although the Northeast Kingdom, like most of the US and the other zones, is supportive of incumbents, it is not following the same trend as the other zones which have shifted their partisan support in recent years.

Trends in political participation in the Northeast Kingdom also differ in some aspects from the other zones. Recall that in the other zones, there were no clear trends in voter turnout. In these three counties, on the other hand, turnout increased from 1980 - 1992, dropped in 1996, but then increased from 2000 - 2008. This could in part be because the population increased over this time frame; however, the population also increased in New York's zones, where this trend was not present. The data from the FEC concerning individual campaign contributions to PACs and candidates shows that trend in this form of participation shared more similarities with the other zones. Like the other zones, the only trend was an increased in donation amounts over time, especially in recent years. This zone was more similar to those in North Dakota in that contribution amounts were relatively low and this trend was only consistently present in two of the three counties, as in Essex County, amounts declined in 2012. Again, recall that these results cannot lead to the conclusion that there is a trend

unique to these zones as this is a general trend in campaign contributions present across the country.

Also like the other zones, there were no clear trends in which party the campaign contributions were made to in these three counties. From 1992 - 2012, in some years, contributions heavily favored Republican presidential candidates, while in other years almost not contributions were made to them. The only potential pattern that emerges in that in 2000, the percentage of contributions made to the Republican presidential candidate was relatively high across all three counties compared to other years observed, but this was a single point in time. Once again, the only conclusion is that there were no clear trends unique to this zone, with the possible exception of an increase in voter turnout.

5.6 Discussion and Conclusions

The motivation for this case study was to examine the results observed concerning the political attitudes and behaviors of rural Americans in the context of local economic circumstances. From the descriptions of the economic circumstances of each of the REAP Zones, it is clear there is wide variation. Some zones, like the Southwest Zone in North Dakota are doing quite well, while others, such as the Northeast Kingdom in Vermont, are lagging behind. Still others fared well on some indicators but lagged behind on others. Refer to Table 5.1 for a summary of the observations for each of the zones.

But what has been the political impact of this variation in economic situations across the zones? At first glance, there appears to be no consistent pattern. There are no clear participation patterns across the zones, with the possible exception of the increased voter turnout in the Northeast Kingdom. Furthermore, the zones in North Dakota have become more supportive of Republican candidates over this time frame, while the zone in Vermont has become more supportive of Democratic candidates, and the pattern in the New York zones depends on whether the candidate is presidential

or congressional. At the same time, the zones in North Dakota and Vermont have had similar support for third parties much higher than the amount of support in the New York zones. It is obvious from this divergence that there is not a one-to-one relationship between economic circumstances and support for third parties' candidates, then. If there were, Democratic and third-party support would exist only in the zones lagging behind, especially in those with relative economic deprivation, and Republican support only in the zones improving.

Table 5.1
Results Summary: Economic Circumstances and Political Participation

Variable	CONAC	Southwest	Sullivan-Wawarsing	Tioga	Northeast Kingdom
Population	Decreased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased	Increased
Education	Increased	Increased	Increased Slowly	Increased Slowly	Increased Slowly
Income	Increased	Increased	Lagged Behind	Remained High	Lagged Behind
Poverty	Decreased	Decreased	Remained High	Remained Low	Decreased
Agriculture	Improved, Smaller Farms	Improved, Smaller Farms	Remained Stable	Remained Stable	Remained Stable
Presidential Vote	Republican	Republican	Democratic	Democratic	Democratic
Congressional Vote	Republican	Republican	Republican	Republican	Democratic
Turnout	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend	No Trend	Increased
Contributions	No Trend	No Trend	Increased	Increased	Increased

The lack of a one-to-one relationship does not imply that there are no meaningful conclusions. On the contrary, the trends observed across these five zones reinforce the conclusion from the analysis of the prior chapters, as well as provide unique insights. Recall that a key conclusion from the other analyses of changes in attitudes and behaviors resulting from the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and changing economic circumstances led to mixed results as well. Furthermore, these

mixed results led to clear conclusions: although the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural is associated with lower political trust, lower political efficacy, and increased polarization, this has not led rural Americans to support unconventional forms of participation in protest of the government. The importance of this is that the effect of any changes in attitudes will not result in an undermining of the system, but instead in change through traditional channels (if change is effected at all). In contrast, consider the extreme agrarian movements of the past resulting from the economic turmoil that these zones have faced in the past as well (Lipset 1968; McConnell 1969).

When initially making this conclusion, I had questioned whether closer examination of the relationship between local economic context and participation would change this conclusion, as perhaps participation patterns would change for those living in the areas facing the most economic decline. This case study provides some evidence that this will not be the case, as there was almost no variation in participation patterns despite variation in the zones' economic situations. Additional examination is required, however, to determine if there is truly no pattern to unconventional participation based on variation in economic circumstances, which was not examined in this analysis. The clearest example of protest behaviors in any of the zones has been in North Dakota, where there has been recent resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline in the Bakken formation[12]. This is the zone that has been doing the best economically, but close examination of these protests as well as others may reveal local-level trends driving these individual-level behaviors that could be generalized to other rural areas across the US, providing an opportunity for future research.

Another conclusion made from the analyses of the previous chapters was that as the percentage of the population that is rural has declined, the probability of voting for Republican presidential candidates has also declined. In these zones, some became more supportive of Republicans and others of Democrats. However, these findings

[12]This activity is concentrated in areas near, but not within, the Southwest REAP Zone

are not necessarily inconsistent. I had originally hypothesized that as the percentage of the population that is rural decreased, support for Republican candidates would increase due to the nature of rural consciousness that may coincide with this shrinking percentage. As the evidence led to the opposite conclusion, I proposed an alternative explanation: as rural Americans lose economic strength, or feel that they have, as the percentage of the population that is rural declines, they may become more likely to vote for Democrats. These cases suggest that this is a possible explanation, as the zones in North Dakota where Republican support has increased have seen the most economic gains. Furthermore, these results could provide an explanation for third-party support as well. The residents of both the zones in North Dakota and Vermont may feel they are not doing well economically as some of the counties still have not caught up to the nation (or in the case of Vermont, their state) although circumstances may have improved. As previously mentioned, this is not a one-to-one relationship - consider the mixed economic circumstances but similar vote choices in the New York zones - but it does provide some additional evidence in favor of these arguments.

There is also one unique conclusion that can be drawn from this case study, which could not be drawn from results of the prior chapters, where only presidential vote choice is examined: voters favor their incumbents, even when partisan trends are changing locally. In both the North Dakota and New York zones, Democratic congressional incumbents continued to hold office for years, with support switching to the Republican candidate once that incumbent was no longer available (due to retirement or redistricting). The results in the prior chapters did lead to the conclusion that the decreasing percentage of the population that is rural is related to an increase in the probability of identifying as a Republican. Perhaps it is the case that residents of these rural areas did begin to identify as Republicans as their population declined, but this was not reflected immediately in their voting behavior due to an incumbent holding the office. In each of these cases, the incumbent candidate brought the areas into the REAP Zone, and would have taken many additional actions while in

office to benefit the residents of their districts, thereby gaining their support. The implication would be that incumbency not only allows ineffective policies addressing rural population loss to exist and persist, but may also lead to a delay in changes to vote choice patterns resulting from the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural. Again, not all of the cases provide strong evidence in favor of this, as the zone in Vermont was consistently Democratic, so I would encourage future research to further explore this question as well.

6. CONCLUSIONS

I began by explaining that although rural population loss is a widespread phenomenon, political scientists have not yet fully considered its effect on political attitudes and behaviors. On the one hand, this is not surprising. After all, the effects of this phenomenon are typically considered to be economic, rather than political, in nature. On the other hand, many of these studies of economic impacts typically consider the policies put into place to address rural population loss and its associated economic impacts. Therefore, one may ask the question of who enacts these policies, and if voters punish or reward them based on the policies' performance? If not, then what keeps these policies in place and these politicians in office? Furthermore, if rural population loss has affected the economy, have these economic changes resulted in changes to political attitudes and behaviors, which would in turn affect support for these policymakers? There is extensive evidence that many political attitudes and behaviors are affected by one's economic circumstances (or perceived economic circumstances), as well as evidence that rural Americans tend to be more Republican/Conservative, distrust government, and have low political efficacy. Clearly, further examination of the effects of rural population loss, which could lead to losses of rural political and economic power, on political attitudes and behaviors is required to understand its role.

The goal of this analysis was therefore to begin to address this question of how the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and the associated economic changes have affected several political attitudes and behaviors. As a reminder, I began with a few expectations. Given that rural areas experiencing population loss could be losing economic and political power and becoming more alienated from urban areas, especially urban centers of government, one might expect that political efficacy and trust would decline. Additionally, given that these same trends could lead rural

Americans to prefer small government, this phenomenon could help to explain the rural-urban polarization observed in recent years. At the same time, as the rural population becomes more alienated from the current political system and becomes more homogeneous, they may also turn their support to third parties. As an extension of both of these trends, if rural Americans exhibit both low political confidence levels and have polarized political views, this may lead to increased political participation, perhaps in unconventional forms. Finally, as many of these explanations rely on rural Americans losing economic power as a result of rural population loss, I also expect that patterns in these attitudes and behaviors will vary as economic circumstances - or perceptions of these economic circumstances - vary.

Were these trends present as expected, then? Overall, the results were mixed. The first question examined was whether Americans experiencing the declining percentage of the population that is rural have lower political trust and efficacy levels, as one might expect of a population experiencing loss of political and economic power (perceived or actual). The results indicate that political trust and efficacy levels are in fact lower among rural residents as the percentage of the population that is rural shrinks and their economic circumstances decline, although the evidence that economic circumstances play a role is slightly weaker. Only efficacy is lower when one's income is lower, but both trust and efficacy are lower when one feels their economic circumstances have worsened.

Next, I re-examined the frequently asked question of what drives partisanship and vote choice in rural areas, adding the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural to the list of potential factors. The results here were somewhat mixed. While I expected rural Americans to identify as Republicans and vote for Republicans or third party candidates more frequently as the percentage of the population that is rural declined, the results did not lead to this exact conclusion. Instead, I found that at the same time as Republican Party identification increased, voting for Republican or third party candidates decreased as the percentage of the population that is rural declined. The evidence does suggest that economic circumstances play a clear role,

however. As circumstances improve, voters are more likely to both identify as and vote for Republicans; as they become worse, voters are also more likely to vote for third-party candidates.

The final question asked was whether this decreased political confidence combined with the polarized partisanship of rural areas is leading to increases in political participation, and in particular unconventional participation. The results again provide mixed support for the hypotheses. Rural Americans were found to be less participative through conventional means, and participation declined as the percentage of the population that is rural became smaller. Additionally, the relationship between participation and economic circumstances was mixed. Conventional participation levels were higher when income was higher, but were also associated with feeling one's economic circumstances had worsened. Finally, only place of residence and political trust were found to be associated with support for unconventional behaviors. As expected, lower trust levels lead to higher support, but rural residents were less supportive. Keep in mind that each of these results are in line with findings in past research, which has characterized rural and agrarian citizens as both participative and uninvolved, as well as both supportive of extremist movements and non-ideological depending on the historical and economic context of the time period under examination.

From these mixed results, I am able to drawn three main conclusions. First, despite the mixed results, one thing is clear: the political confidence of rural Americans is low. The results provide evidence in favor of the argument that there is a "rural consciousness" characterized by low trust, low efficacy, and a preference for small government (Walsh 2012*b*; Cramer 2016). The second key conclusion is that rural Americans are polarized from urban, but that the nature of this polarization is not exactly as one might expect. Rural Americans are most likely to identify as and vote for Republicans, but their likelihood of voting Republican declined along with the percentage of the population that is rural. Furthermore, suburban residents appear to be equally polarized from their urban counterparts. Finally, political participation in rural areas is low, and is also associated with with the decreasing percentage of

the population that is rural. Furthermore, conventional forms of participation have not simply been replaced with the unconventional as trust erodes and polarization increases.

There are a few key implications from these conclusions as well. One is that rural-urban polarization may be better explained by the economic circumstances each faces than by "values voters" explanations. Once we understand the nature of rural-urban, as well as suburban, polarization, this should help us to better understand the future of partisanship and vote choice in the United States. Another is that despite their low political confidence levels, rural Americans do not appear to be protesting, or in support of protesting, the current system of government. A key question surrounding the phenomenon of widespread declines in political trust in the 1960s and 1970s was whether this decrease in confidence translated into less support for the Democratic system, or whether it only signified disapproval of incumbents, with evidence pointing to the latter (Miller 1974*a*,*b*; Citrin 1974). Again, with rural Americans affected by the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural, we observe a similar pattern. The shrinking percentage of the population that is rural and living in a rural area were both associated with low trust and efficacy levels, but living in a rural area did not lead to increased support for protest behaviors. In fact, living in a rural area was associated with low political participation levels in general, implying that although rural Americans may hold somewhat unique political attitudes, they are not necessarily taking political actions that would result in their preferred candidates being elected or their desired policies being put into place. Together, these implications lead to a number of questions as to how rural population loss will affect the future political landscape.

6.1 Polarization: Reexamining the Rural-Urban Divide

A great deal of attention has been given to the question of what drives rural voters to identify as and vote for Republicans. On the one hand, many argue they are

"values voters," driven by social conservatism (Frank 2004; Francia and Baumgartner 2005; McKee 2007). On the other hand, many others argue that rural voters, like other voters, make their choice in line with their economic circumstances (Gimpel and Karnes 2006). Still a third camp suggests that perhaps the observation of polarization is a methodological anomaly (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder 2006; Gelman et al. 2007). This analysis provides evidence in favor of the second argument, finding that rural voters are unique from urban voters, and these differences in their attitudes and behaviors are driven by their economic circumstances.

However, another observation made in this analysis is that rural and suburban Americans are quite similar, a largely unexplored finding. Many researchers ignore suburbs when asking these questions, possibly because unlike rural areas, there is no "puzzle" to solve. After all, it is not surprising that areas that tend to be more wealthy would also tend to be more Republican. There are a few studies that examine suburbs that have previously come to the conclusion that suburban and urban voters differ. For example, Gainsborough (2005) finds that not only do voters from these two areas vote for different presidential candidates, but that they form their preferences differently. She finds that suburban voters weigh their attitudes about the appropriate size of government more heavily than urban voters, who weigh retrospective economic evaluations more heavily.

If rural and suburban voters are in fact quite similar to each other but polarized from urban voters, what would this mean? One obvious implication would be that if both rural and suburban areas continue to become increasingly Republican, this could increase the electoral chances of Republican candidates in spite of rural population loss. This is not a certain portrait of the future, however. Lang, Sanchez and Berube (2008) consider the future of suburban attitudes and behaviors and conclude that while suburbs are generally considered to be more Republican leaning, this is changing. They argue that suburbs are becoming more competitive due to voters in higher density suburbs leaning Democratic. They point out that if Democrats continue to push out from their urban centers into these ore highly dense suburban areas, this

could change the outcome of future elections. One opportunity for future research, then, would be to further examine the extent to which urban voting patterns have permeated the suburbs, and what mechanisms are driving these changing patterns[1]. From there one could ask how these changing patterns could affect electoral outcomes in order to better understand the implications for the future.

Others have found evidence of changing patterns in the suburbs that should also be examined further in order to better understand the implications for the future. Cho, Gimpel and Shaw (2012), for example, consider the geographic distribution of support for the Tea Party movement. Their findings indicate that support for this movement was quite high in suburban areas, especially those facing economic hardships. What is particularly interesting about this is that historically, third party candidates have been more likely to emerge as prestigious challengers when the agriculture industry, but not any other aspects of the economy, faced adversity (Rosenstone, Behr and Lazarus 1996). Agrarian voters have typically been the most vulnerable to economic volatility, driving them to support candidates of this nature (Lipset 1968; McGranahan, Cromartie and Wojan 2010).

The finding that support for this movement came from suburban economic hardship, rather than agrarian, then, leads to a number of questions that could be addressed going forward. Will third party movements of the future have a suburban basis of support, rather than rural or agrarian, or will support be split between these areas? Was this finding in regards to support for the Tea Party movement perhaps an anomaly or due to a unique feature of the movement, or is suburban support an enduring overtime trend? Given that a major role of third parties in the United States is to push the two major parties towards policy innovations, a change in the basis of support for third parties could mean new directions for future policies (Rosenstone, Behr and Lazarus 1996). Future analyses could therefore also ask whether a suburban rather than rural and agrarian basis of support for these movements leads to demands for different policy outcomes, as well as whether these outcomes are actualized.

[1]Lang, Sanchez and Berube (2008) do speculate that migration patterns and social context are driving these changes, but do not perform an analysis of this.

6.2 Economic Circumstances and Participation Patterns

The finding that rural Americans have low participation levels was not entirely unexpected - after all, as discussed, there are theories to support both outcomes, and in the past, findings as to whether they are more or less participative have been mixed. What was somewhat unexpected was the finding that rural Americans are not more supportive of unconventional political behaviors. Past studies have shown that people with low efficacy levels, trust levels, and a political system where they face relative power deprivation are more likely to participate in such behaviors (Pollock 1983; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009; Eisinger 1973). Although these explanations are supported by research primarily focused on urban areas, the characterization of rural Americans supported by the results of this analysis is similar. Rural Americans have low political confidence, and their beliefs are polarized from their urban counterparts, another factor which drives participation (Abramowitz 2010; Bishop and Cushing 2008; Mutz 2006). The finding that rural residents have these traits therefore begs the question of why the results instead indicate that they are less likely to be supportive of such behaviors?

One possibility to be examined in future research is that the relationship is more nuanced. Perhaps it is not that all rural Americans could be expected to be supportive of protest behaviors (or go so far as to participate), but only those experiencing the largest declines in political and economic power. The results indicated that respondents who felt they were faring worse financially were more participative through conventional means, but that only those with low trust were supportive of unconventional behaviors. We also know from the results that rural Americans are not uniformly facing hardship as the size of their population declines. From a national perspective, rural areas are doing quite well economically and catching up to urban areas. On a more local scale, consider the differences between the REAP Zones. On the one hand, one may look at the oil boom in the Southwest zone and think that the economy is surging ahead; on the other hand, one may look at the Sullivan-Wawarsing

Zone and believe that all rural areas are growing sluggishly, still lagging behind urban areas.

Considering the results of the analysis in Chapter 3, asking which of these zones is more likely to be trending toward Republican support should have a clear answer: the zone faring better economically. It may be the case then, that the same pattern applies for participation. Rural Americans in more prosperous areas may also feel a lack of trust and efficacy, hold a preference for small government, and feel as though urban residents have more power, but it is possible that they have not yet reached the point where their voices are not being heard through the conventional channels. At the same time, rural citizens in areas that are rapidly losing both political and economic influence as their population declines may be more inclined to support or participate in such behaviors if they feel that other channels are not available or that these have been exhausted. Future research could address the question of whether the relationship between unconventional participation and the political attitudes of rural Americans is mediated by economic circumstances, providing an increased understanding of whether we might expect to see a very low frequency of such behaviors coming from these areas in the future, or whether certain areas facing hardship may flare up in protest of the current system.

Regardless of the reason for the low political participation levels in rural areas, one may ask whether it matters that their participation level - conventional or unconventional - is low. As previously discussed, there is a delicate balance between participation and deliberation in a democracy (Mutz 2006). A healthy democracy does not have citizens so polarized that compromise cannot be made, but also does not have citizens so ambivalent that they fail to participate in the process altogether. A key reason for this is that without participation, how would the policy demands of the citizens be communicated to the policymakers? If rural Americans are not voting as frequently, not participating in campaigns as frequently, and not engaging in protest behaviors, are their representatives hearing their demands?

Obviously, these citizens are being represented to some extent. Consider, for example, the evidence that residents of the New York REAP Zones were able to keep their incumbent representative in power within their shared district at a time when the trend was towards a preference for the opposing party in both counties outside of this district. Such findings do not imply that all citizens are being represented equally, however. Several studies in the red-state-blue-state debate have found, for example, that higher income citizens are more well-represented (in part due to their political participation), contributing to this pattern (Bartels 2008; Gelman et al. 2007). Additional evidence from the case study also provides a clear example of where rural participation falls short: campaign contributions. Overall, contributions were low across the zones, and evidence shows that nationally, most contributions are very geographically concentrated in urban areas (Gimpel, Lee and Kaminski 2006). At the national level, if urban citizens participate, but rural ones do not, this means that their voices cannot be heard. Therefore, future research could further examine the policy preferences of rural Americans in contrast to the policies that their representatives actually support in order to determine if they are being represented, or if there is in fact a disconnect.

Another possible area of focus for future research is the ineffective policies that tend to be put into place in order to address rural population loss. I argued that these policies exist and persist because of pork-barrel politics. Representatives of rural areas enact these policies in order to bring funds to their districts and then continue to support them to keep their electoral chances higher. This is regardless of the policy's effectiveness or the need to address "problems" associated with population loss, as well as regardless of whether the area has declined economically or not. The next natural question, then, is what interests within their districts support them, and in turn desire these policies? Consider the REAP Zones, for one example. Although this analysis does not attempt to thoroughly analyze their effectiveness, one can theorize as to which interests would be most likely to support a policy of this nature. The program provides assistance in the form of loans with a goal of forming private-public

partnerships with stakeholders in these communities, with the idea that these stakeholders will be able to continue making improvements without this federal assistance after their REAP Zone designation has expired. It seems clear that the supporters of this policy staying in place would be these local stakeholders then, who are more likely to represent business interests than citizens affected by economic hardship[2]. Understanding who participates in these rural areas as well as what their interests are could help us to better understand the existence and persistence of ineffective policies.

6.3 Rural Population Loss and the Future

In considering the effect of the shrinking percentage of the population that is rural on both partisanship, vote choice, and participation, a key factor sticks out - the role of economic circumstances, or the perception of these circumstances. Rural Americans, like their fellow suburban and urban citizens, are more likely to identify as and vote for Republicans when they have a higher income or feel that their financial situation has improved since the last year. Furthermore, when they feel that they are doing worse financially, they are more likely to vote for third-party candidates. These effects are also not limited to partisanship and vote choice. Political efficacy and trust are also affected, with low confidence levels being associated with low income levels and the feeling that one is doing worse financially. Finally, voters with the most civic resources, including income, are most likely to vote and participate in campaign activities.

The reason that this result is perhaps the most interesting is found in what it means for the future. At the beginning of this analysis, I provided an overview of the economic circumstances in the rural United States over the time period during which rural population loss has been occurring. Overall, the key conclusion of this overview

[2]For a specific example, consider the Northeast Kingdom Collaborative. Their membership includes regional development organizations, educators, social service and employment agencies, local government officials, business people, nonprofit organizations, health care providers, and conservation organizations (The Northeast Kingdom Collaborative 2016).

was that in general rural areas are doing quite well. They have been improving, and where they may still lag behind urban areas in some aspects, they are catching up. Not all rural areas are improving, however. In some areas, where the local economy has been unable to transform in the face of population loss, rural areas are left with a shrinking, uneducated population and a lack of jobs to offer both to current residents and prospective migrants.

What this means is that if the general trend of economic improvement continues, we can expect to continue seeing rural Americans hold preferences for small government and cast their votes for Republicans, although they may not necessarily participate in large numbers. On the other hand, if the rural economy continues to lag behind - or rural Americans perceive that it is lagging behind - the future may be very different. Given that rural partisanship and vote choice appear to be driven by economics, rather than "values," such a trend could lead instead to voters in these areas choosing Democratic, or possibly third-party candidates. Additionally, their support for, as well as possibly participation in, unconventional forms of political participation may increase if their alienation increases. Furthermore, for this to be the future for rural areas would not be without precedent: keep in mind that in the past, agrarian voters facing economic uncertainty followed the same path. In short, understanding the future of political attitudes and behaviors in rural America relies on an understanding of the economic circumstances they face.

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APPENDICES

A. QUESTION WORDING AND PROCESSING NOTES

A.1 Variables from the ANES

Source: ANES Time Series Cumulative Data File (1948 - 2012) Codebook unless otherwise noted.

A.1.1 Dependent Variables

Internal Efficacy: VCF0614

Question: 1952 - 1980, 1982, 1992: Now I'd like to read some of the kinds of things people tell us when we interview them. Please tell me whether (1992: and ask you whether)(1966,1988,1990,994-Later:how much) you agree or disagree with these statements (1992: with them)(2002: about the government.)(1988,1990: You can just give me the number of your choice.)(1992: I'll read them one at a time and you just tell me whether you agree or disagree)(1996 and later: The first is:) "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on."

Valid Codes

1. Agree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree (1988 and later only)
9. DK; depends; not sure; can't say; refused to say

Processing note: Only valid codes used were agree and disagree. Also used as an independent variable.

External Efficacy: VCF0613

Question: 1952 - 1980, 1982, 1992: Now I'd like to read some of the kinds of things people tell us when we interview them. Please tell me whether (1992: and ask you whether)(1966,1988,1990,994-Later:how much) you agree or disagree with these statements (1992: with them)(2002: about the government.)(1988,1990: You can just give me the number of your choice.)(1992: I'll read them one at a time and you just tell me whether you agree or disagree)(1996 and later: The first is:)"People like me don't have any say about what the government does."

Valid Codes

1. Agree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree (1988 and later only)
9. DK; depends; not sure; can't say; refused to say

Processing note: Only valid codes used were agree and disagree. Also used as an independent variable.

Trust Index Variable 1: VCF0604

Question: People have (1958,1964: I'd like to talk about some of the) different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to Democrats or Republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas. (1996 and later: For example:) How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right - just about always, most of the time (not 1966: or) only some of the time (1996: or almost never)?

Valid Codes

1. None of the time/never (Volunteered); almost never (1966 only)
2. Some of the time
3. Most of the time
4. Just about always

9. DK; depends

Processing note: Used as part of an index. Refer to VCF0656 processing notes.

Trust Index Variable 2: VCF0605

Question: People have (1958,1964: I'd like to talk about some of the) different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to Democrats or Republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas. (1996 and later: For example:) 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 the people?

Valid Codes

1. Few big interests
2. Benefit of all
9. DK; pro-con; depends; other; refused to choose; both

Processing note: Used as part of an index. Refer to VCF0656 processing notes.

Trust Index Variable 3: VCF0606

Question: People have (1958,1964: I'd like to talk about some of the) different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to Democrats or Republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas. (1996 and later: For example:) Do you think that people in the government wast a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

Valid Codes

1. A lot
2. Some
3. Not very much
9. DK

Processing note: Used as part of an index. Refer to VCF0656 processing notes.

Trust Index Variable 4: VCF0608

Question: People have (1958,1964: I'd like to talk about some of the) different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to Democrats or Republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas. (1996 and later: For example:) Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are (1958 - 1972: a little) crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked (1958 - 1972: at all)?

Valid Codes

1. Quite a few; quite a lot (1958 - 1972)
2. Not many
3. Hardly any
9. DK

Processing note: Used as part of an index. Refer to VCF0656 processing notes.

Trust Index: VCF0656

Question: Trust in government index, 100 point scale

Valid Codes

0. Least trusting

.

100. Most trusting

Processing note: Index built by ANES from VCF0604, VCF0605, VCF0606, VCF0608. Variables were first recoded as follows: VCF0604: 1=0,2=33,3=67,4=100; VCF0605: 1=0,2=100; VCF0606,VCF0608: 1=0,2=50,3=100. The recoded values are then totaled and divided by the number of valid responses. The result is then rounded. Also used as an independent variable.

Party Identification: VCF0301

Question: 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; 2008: or DK)) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?

Valid Codes

1. Strong Democrat
2. Weak Democrat
3. Independent - Democrat
4. Independent - Independent
5. Independent - Republican
6. Weak Republican
7. Strong Republican

Processing note: When used as a dependent variable in Chapter 3, recoded into a 3-point scale as follows: 1,2,3 =1; 4=2; 5,6,7 = 3. When used as a control variable and in Appendix B, the 7-point scale is used.

Vote Choice: VCF0705

Question: 1952 - 1964 (If respondent voted:) Who did you vote for President? 1968 - 1976 (If respondent voted:) Who did you vote for in the election for President? 1980 - later (If respondent voted:) How about the election for President? Did you vote for a candidate for President? (If yes:) Who did you vote for?

Valid Codes

1. Democrat
2. Republican
3. Other (incl. 3rd/minor party candidates and write-ins)

Voted: VCF0702

Question: 1962: One of the things we need to know is whether or not people really did get to vote this fall. In talking to people about the election we find that a lot of people weren't able to vote because they weren't registered or they were sick or

something came up at the last minute. Do you remember for sure whether or not you voted in the November election? 1952 - 1960, 1964 - 1998, 2002 Version 1, and 2004 Version 1: In talking to people about the election we (1972 and later: often) find that a lot of people weren't able to vote because they weren't registered or they were sick or they just didn't have time. (1956 - 1960: How about you, did you vote this time?) (1964 - 1976: How about you, did you vote in the elections this fall?) (1978 and later: How about you, did you vote in the elections this November?) 200, 2002 Version 2, and 2004 Version 2: In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. Which of the following statements best describes you: One, I did not vote (in the election this November); Two, I thought about voting this time - but didn't; Three, I usually vote, but didn't this time; or Four, I am sure I voted?

Valid Codes

1. No, did not vote
2. Yes, voted

Campaign Participation Count Variable 1: VCF0717

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. All years: During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for (1984 and later: or against) one of the parties or candidates?

Valid Codes

1. No
2. Yes

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count Variable 2: VCF0718

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. All years: Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, (1984 and later: speeches,)(1978, 1980, 1982: fund raising) dinners, or things like that (1984 and later: in support of a particular candidate?

Valid Codes

1. No
2. Yes

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count Variable 3: VCF0719

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. All years: Did you do any (other) work for one of the parties or candidates?

Valid Codes

1. No
2. Yes

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count Variable 4: VCF0720

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. 1956, 1960, 1962 - 1982: Did

you wear a campaign button or put a campaign sticker on your car? 1984 and later: Did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?

Valid Codes

1. No
2. Yes

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count Variable 5: VCF0721

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. 1952, 1956, 1960, 1962: Did you give any money or buy any tickets or anything to help the campaign for one of the parties or candidates? 1964: Did you give any money or buy any tickets or anything to help a party or candidate pay campaign expenses this year? 1966, 1968: During this last year were you or any member of your household asked to give money or buy tickets to help pay the campaign expenses of a political party or candidate? (If yes) Did you give any money or buy any tickets? 1972, 1974: Did you give any money to a political party this year? 1976: Did you give any money to a political party or make any other contribution this year? (responses: 1.yes, 5.no, 7.tax check-off). 1978: Did you give any money to a political party or candidate this year? 1980, 1982: Now a few questions about giving money during this last election campaign: What about other political contributions (other than tax check-offs). Did you give any money this year to a candidate running for public office? Apart from contributions from specific candidates, how about contributions to any of the political parties? Did you give money to a political party during this election year? 1984: As you know, during an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. During the past year, did you give any money to an individual candidate, to a political

party organization, people supporting a ballot propositions, or to a particular issue or interest group? (If yes: Apart from contributions from specific candidates, how about contributions to any political party organization. Did you give money to a political party during this election year? Now, apart from contributions to a political party, did you give any money to an individual candidate running for public office? 1986: As you know, during an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. During the past year, did you give any money to an individual candidate, or to a political party organization? 1988 and later: During an election year people are often asked to make a contribution to support campaigns. Did you give money to a political party during this election year? did you give money to an individual candidate running for public office?

Valid Codes

1. No (includes "not asked for money" in 1966, 1968)
2. Yes (includes "tax check-off" in 1976)

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count Variable 6: VCF0722

Question: 1952, 1956, 1960 - 1964: I have a list of some of the things that people do that help a party or a candidate win an election. I wonder if you could tell me whether you did any of these things. 1968, 1972, and later: Now I'd like to find out (1990 and later: We'd/We would like to find out) about some of the things that people do to help a party or candidate win an election. 1972, 1976: Aside from this particular election campaign, here are some other ways people can be involved in politics. All years: Have you ever written a letter to any public officials giving them your opinion about something that should be done?

Valid Codes

1. No
2. Yes

Processing Note: Used as part of a count. Refer to VCF0723 for processing notes.

Campaign Participation Count: VCF0723

Question: Campaign participation count

Valid Codes

1. Lowest level of participation (none)
2.
3.
4.
5.
6. Highest level of participation in campaign activities

Processing Note: Count of "yes" responses to variables VCF0717 - VCF0721. Generated by the ANES.

Approve Participation in Protests: VCF0601

Question: There are many possible ways for people to show their disapproval or disagreement with governmental policies and actions. I am going to describe three such ways. We would like to know which ones you approve of as ways of showing dissatisfaction with the government and which ones you disapprove of. How about taking part in protest meetings or marches that are permitted by local authorities? Would you approve of taking part, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

Valid Codes

1. Disapprove
2. Pro-con, depends, don't know
3. Approve

Approve Civil Disobedience: VCF0602

Question: There are many possible ways for people to show their disapproval or disagreement with governmental policies and actions. I am going to describe three such ways. We would like to know which ones you approve of as ways of showing dissatisfaction with the government and which ones you disapprove of. How about

refusing to obey a law which one thinks is unjust, if the person feels so strongly that he is willing to go to jail rather than obey the law? Would you approve of a person doing that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

Valid Codes

1. Disapprove
2. Pro-con, depends, don't know
3. Approve

Approve Demonstrations: VCF0603

Question: There are many possible ways for people to show their disapproval or disagreement with governmental policies and actions. I am going to describe three such ways. We would like to know which ones you approve of as ways of showing dissatisfaction with the government and which ones you disapprove of. Suppose all other methods have failed and the person decides to try to stop the government from going about its usual activities with sit-ins, mass meetings, demonstrations, and things like that? Would you approve of that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

Valid Codes

1. Disapprove
2. Pro-con, depends, don't know
3. Approve

A.1.2 Independent Variables

Urbanism, 1952 - 2000: VCF0111

Question: This represents the respondent's sampling address.

Valid Codes

1. Central cities
2. Suburban areas

3. Rural, small towns, outlying and adjacent areas

Processing note: Recoded as follows: 3=1, 2=2, 1=3. Combined with indicators for urbanism from 2004 and 2008 as described in Chapter 2.

Urbanism, 2004: V042043

Source: ANES 2004 Time Series Study Codebook

Question: Interviewer: In which of the following is this segment located?

Valid Codes

1. Rural area
2. Small town
3. Suburb
4. Large city
5. Inner city

Processing note: Recoded as follows: 1,2=1; 3=2, 4,5=3. Combined with indicators for urbanism from 1952 - 2000 and 2008 as described in Chapter 2.

Urbanism, 2008: V082025

Source: ANES, 2008 Pre- and Post-Election Survey Codebook

Question: Interviewer: Which of the following best describes the immediate area or street (one block, both sides) where the sample member/respondent lives?

Valid Codes

1. Rural farm
2. Rural town
3. Suburban
4. Urban, residential only
5. 3 or more commercial properties, mostly retail
6. 3 or more commercial properties, mostly wholesale or industrial
7. Other (Specify)

Processing note: Only 1 - 4 were used as valid codes. Recoded as follows: 1,2=1; 3=2, 43. Combined with indicators for urbanism from 1952 - 2000 and 2004 as described in Chapter 2.

Income Percentile: VCF0114

Question: 1952, 1956-1960: About what do you think your total income will be this year for yourself and your immediate family? 1962: Would you tell me how much income you and your family will be making during this calendar year, 1962. I mean, before taxes. 1964, 1968: About what do you think your total income will be this year for yourself and your immediate family. Just give me the number/letter of the right income category. 1966,1970: Many people don't know their exact (1966/1970) income yet; but would you tell me as best you can what you expect your (1966/1970) income to be - before taxes? You may just tell me the letter of the group on this card into which your family income will probably fall. 1972 - 1990, 1992 long form, 1994 - 2008 Exc. 2000 Telephone: Please look at this card/page (2000 FTF: the booklet) and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in (previous year) before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. (If uncertain:) What would be your best guess? 1992 short form: Can you give us an estimate of your total family income in 1991 before taxes? This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest and all other income for every member of your family living in your house in 1991. First could you tell me if that was above or below $24,999? (If uncertain: what would be your best guess?) (If above/below $24,999:) I will read you some income categories, could you please stop me when I reach the category that corresponds to your family situation? 2000 Telephone: I am going to read you a list of income categories. Please tell me which category best describes the total income of all members of your family living in your house in 1999 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. Please stop me when I get to your family's income.

Valid Codes

1. 0 to 16 percentile
2. 17 to 33 percentile
3. 34 to 67 percentile
4. 68 to 95 percentile
5. 96 to 100 percentile

Better off Last Year: VCF0880

Question: 1962 - 1998, 2004: We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that (1962, 1966 - 1974: you (and your family); 1976 and later: you (and your family living here)) are better off or worse off than you were a year ago. 2000 - 2002: Would you say that you (and your family) (2000 face-to-face only: living here) are better off, worse off or just about the same financially as you were a year ago?

Valid Codes

1. Better Now
2. Same (2004: Volunteered)
3. Worse Now

A.1.3 Control Variables

Gender: VCF0104

Question: Respondent Gender

Valid Codes

1. Male
2. Female

Race: VCF0105b

Question: 1948, 1952, 1956 - 1970: Interviewer observation of race. 1972 - 1976: Interviewer observation of race. In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group? 1978: Interviewer observation of

race. Interviewer observation of respondent of Hispanic origin. In addition to being American, is there another nationality or ethnic group that you feel you belong to? (If yes:) What group is that? 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986: Interviewer observation of race. Interviewer observation respondent of Hispanic origin. In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group? 1988 - 1998: Interviewer observation of race. In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group? (If Hispanic ethnic group not mentioned) Are you of Spanish or Hispanic origin or descent? 2000 - 2008: What racial or ethnic group or groups best describes you? (multiple mentions coded by interviewer) In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group? (If Hispanic ethnic group not mentioned) Are you of Spanish or Hispanic origin or descent?

Valid Codes

1. White non-Hispanic
2. Black non-Hispanic
3. Hispanic
4. Other or multiple races, non-Hispanic

Processing note: Recoded as a categorical variable.

Age: VCF0101

Question: 1964 - 1976: What is your date of birth? 1978 - 1982: What is the month and year of your birth? 1984 - Later: What is the month, day, and year of your birth?

Valid Codes

17-96. Age as coded (1992: 91=91 or older)

97. 97 (1952, 1974, 1996 and later; or older)
98. 98 (1958 - 1962, 1966, 1968; or older)
99. 99 (1976 - 1990, 1994, 2002; or older)

Education Level: VCF0140a

Question: 1952 - 1972: How many grades of school did you finish? 1974 and later: What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? Did you get a high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency test? 1974, 1976: Do you have a college degree? (If yes:) What degree is that? 1978 - 1984: Do you have a college degree? (If yes:) What is the highest degree that you have earned? 1986 and later: What is the highest degree that you have earned?

Valid Codes

1. 8 grades or less ('grade school')
2. 9 - 12 grades ('high school'), no diploma/equivalency
3. 12 grades, diploma, or equivalency
4. 12 grades, diploma, or equivalency plus non-academic training
5. Some college, no degree; junior/community college level degree (AA degree)
6. BA level degrees
7. Advanced degrees incl. LLB

Religion: VCF0128

Question: 1952 - 1964: Is your Church (1962: religious) preference Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish? 1966 - 1968: Are you Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish? 1970 - 1988, 2002: Is your religious preference Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or something else? 1990 and later, exc. 2002: (If respondent attends religious services:) Do you mostly attend a place of worship that is Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, or what? (If respondent doesn't attend religious services:) Regardless of whether you now attend any religious services do you ever think of yourself as part of a particular church or denomination? (If yes:) Do you consider yourself Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, or what?

Valid Codes

1. Protestant

2. Catholic (Roman Catholic)

3. Jewish

4. Other

Processing Note: Recoded as a categorical variable.

Presidential Approval: VCF0450

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that (the president) is handling his job as President?

Valid Codes

1. Approve

2. Disapprove

8. DK

Processing Note: Only 1 and 2 used as valid codes.

Congressional Approval: VCF0992

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the US Congress has been handling its job?

Valid Codes

1. Approve

2. Disapprove

8. DK; pro-con; both

Processing Note: Only 1 and 2 used as valid codes.

Union Membership: VCF0127

Question: 1952, 1954: Do either you or the head of your household belong to a labor union? Who is it that belongs? 1956 and later: (1956 - 1984, 2002: Does anyone)(1986 - Later excl. 2002: Do you or (1988: does) anyone else) in this household belong to a labor union? (If yes:) Who is it that belongs?

Valid Codes

1. Yes, someone in household belongs to a labor union

2. No, no one in household belongs to a labor union

Southerner: VCF0113

Question: Region - political south

Valid Codes

1. South
2. Nonsouth

Processing Note: Recoded as 1=1, 2=0.

Ideology: VCF0803

Question: All years exc. 2000 telephone, 2002: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is (1972, 1974: I'm going to show you) a 7-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? (7-point scale shown to respondent) 2000 Telephone: 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? 2002: 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?

Valid Codes

1. Extremely liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly liberal
4. Moderate, middle of the road
5. Slightly conservative
6. Conservative

7. Extremely conservative

9. DK; haven't though much about it

Processing Note: Only values 1 - 7 used as valid codes.

Interest in Public Affairs: VCF0313

Question: 1964 and later: Some people seem to follow (1964: think about) what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all? 1960, 1962: We'd also like to know how much attention you pay to what's going on in politics generally. I mean from day to day, when there isn't any big election campaign going on, would you say you follow politics very closely, fairly closely, or not much at all?

Valid Codes

1. Hardly at all (1960, 1962: not much at all)

2. Only now and then

3. Some of the time (1960, 1962: fairly closely)

4. Most of the time (1960, 1962: very closely)

9. DK

A.2 Variables from the GSS

Source: General Social Survey, 1972 - 2014 (Cumulative File) Codebook

A.2.1 Dependent Variables

Public Meetings: PROTEST1

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be

allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Organizing public meetings to protest against the government.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

Publications: PROTEST2

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Publishing pamphlets to protest against the government.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

Marches and Demonstrations: PROTEST3

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be

allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Organizing protest marches and demonstrations.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

Occupying Government Office: PROTEST4

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Occupying government office and stopping work there for several days.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

Damaging Government Buildings: PROTEST5

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be

allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Seriously damaging government buildings.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

National Strike: PROTEST6

Question: There are many ways people or organizations can protest against a government action they strongly oppose. Please show which you think should be allowed and which should not be allowed by circling a number after each question. Organizing a nationwide strike of all workers against the government.

Valid Codes

1. Definitely allowed
2. Probably allowed
3. Probably not allowed
4. Definitely not allowed
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-4 used as valid codes.

A.2.2 Independent Variables

Urbanism: SRCBELT

Question: New Belt Code as coded by interviewer

Valid Codes

1. Central city of 12 largest SMSAs
2. Central city of remainder of the 100 largest SMSAs
3. Suburbs of 12 largest SMSAs
4. Suburbs of the remaining 100 largest SMSAs
5. Other urban (counties having towns of 10,000 or more)
6. Other rural (counties having no towns of 10,000 or more)

Processing Note: Recoded as 1,2,5=3; 3,4=2; 6=1.

Income: REALINC

Question: Family income

Valid Codes

1-99999. Income as coded in 1986 dollars

999999. $100,000+

Financially Better off: FINALTER

Question: During the last few years, has your financial situation been getting better, worse, or has it stayed the same?

Valid Codes

1. Getting better
2. Getting worse
3. Stayed the same
8. Don't know
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-3 used as valid codes.

External Efficacy: POLEFF11

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

Valid Codes

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-5 used as valid codes.

Internal Efficacy: POLEFF11

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.

Valid Codes

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-5 used as valid codes.

Trust Executive Branch: CONFED

Question: I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them? Executive branch of the federal government.

Valid Codes

1. A great deal
2. Only some
3. Hardly any
8. Don't know
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-3 used as valid codes.

Trust congress: CONLEGIS

Question: I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them? Congress

Valid Codes

1. A great deal
2. Only some
3. Hardly any
8. Don't know
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-3 used as valid codes.

A.2.3 Control Variables

Gender: SEX

Question: Respondent's sex coded by interviewer

Valid Codes

1. Male
2. Female

Race: RACE

Question: What race do you consider yourself?

Valid Codes

1. White
2. Black
3. Other

Processing Note: Recoded as a categorical variable.

Age: Age

Question: 1972 - 1975: In what year were you born? 1976 - later: What is your date of birth?

Valid Codes

1-88. Age as coded

89. 89 or older

Education Level: EDUC

Question: What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that (respondent) finished and got credit for? How many years did he complete? For those that say "yes" to Did he ever complete one or more years of college for credit - not including schooling such as business college, technical, or vocational school?

Valid Codes

1. No formal schooling
2. 1st grade
3. 2nd grade
4. 3rd grade

5. 4th grade
6. 5th grade
7. 6th grade
8. 7th grade
9. 8th grade
10. 9th grade
11. 10th grade
12. 11th grade
13. 12th grade
14. 1 year of college
15. 2 years
16. 3 years
17. 4 years
18. 5 years
19. 6 years
20. 7 years
21. 8 years or more
98. Don't know
99. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-21 used as valid codes.

Religion: RELIG

Question: What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?

Valid Codes

1. Protestant

2. Catholic
3. Jewish
5. Other
98. Don't know
99. No answer

Processing Note: Recoded as a categorical variable.

Interest in Politics: POLINT

Question: How interested would you say you personally are in politics?

Valid Codes

1. Very interested
2. Fairly interested
3. Somewhat interested
4. Not very interested
5. Not at all interested
8. Can't choose
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-5 used as valid codes.

Ideology: POLVIEWS

Question: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal-point 1-to extremely conservative-point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Valid Codes

1. Extremely liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly liberal

4. Moderate, middle of the road
5. Slightly conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely conservative
8. Don't know
9. No answer

Processing Note: Only values 1-7 used as valid codes.

B. SUPPLEMENTAL RESULTS AND TABLES

Table B.1

Observed Urbanism: 2004

Rural Area	Small Town	Suburb	Large City	Inner City
15.2%	22.3	30.7	20.1	6.1

Table B.2

Observed Urbanism: 2008

Rural Farm	Rural Town	Suburban	Urban, Residential	Commercial (Retail)	Commercial (wholesale, industrial)	Other
6.5%	12.3	37.6	37.1	4.6	.4	.2

Table B.3
Logistic Regression Results: External Efficacy (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.206	(0.357)
Size Rural Pop	-8.157**	(2.983)
Income Percentile	-0.177**	(0.046)
Better off Last Year	-0.050	(0.061)
Gender	-0.017	(0.037)
White	-0.079	(0.122)
Black	0.224†	(0.133)
Hispanic	0.038	(0.139)
Protestant	-0.097†	(0.057)
Catholic	-0.058	(0.064)
Jewish	0.197	(0.144)
Age	0.000	(0.001)
Education Level	-0.257**	(0.012)
Presidential Approval	0.134**	(0.038)
Congressional Approval	0.086**	(0.009)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	-0.277	(1.396)
Income x Urbanism	0.026	(0.022)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.068*	(0.029)
Intercept	3.293**	(0.783)

N	13140
Log-likelihood	-8521.553
$\chi^2_{(18)}$	1061.589

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

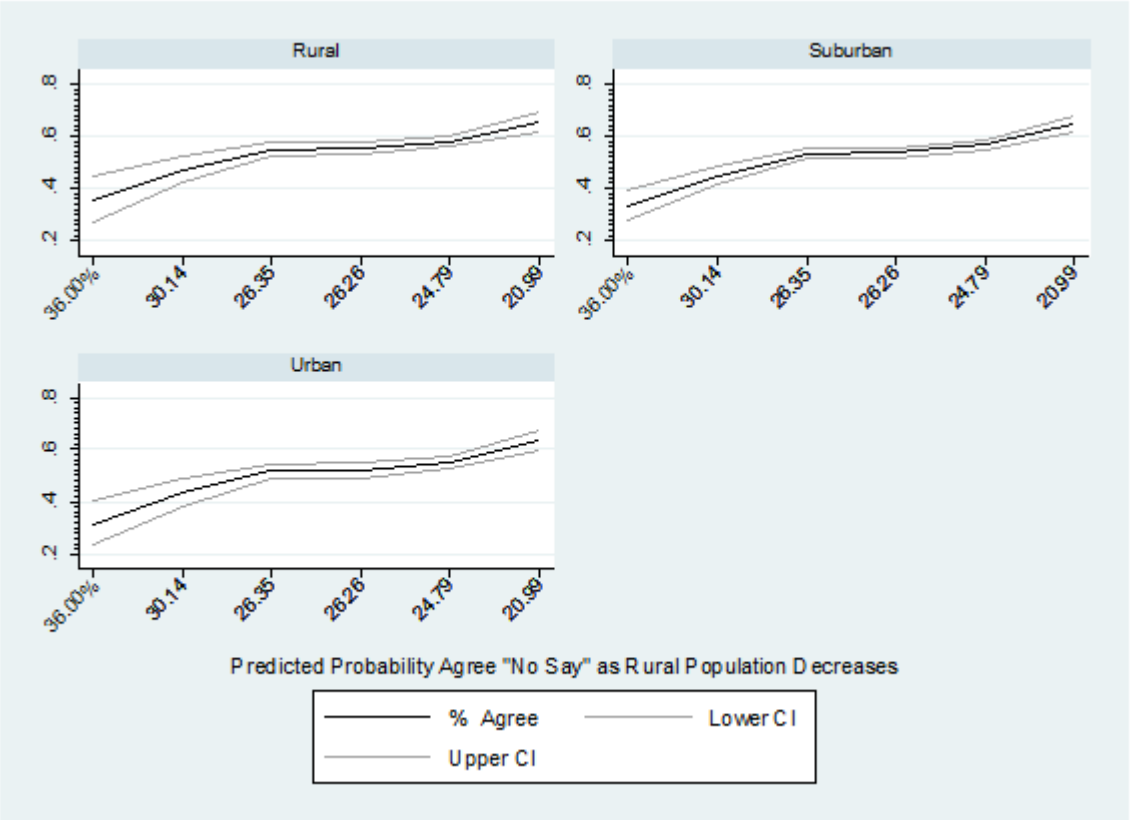

Fig. B.1. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Rural Population Decreases

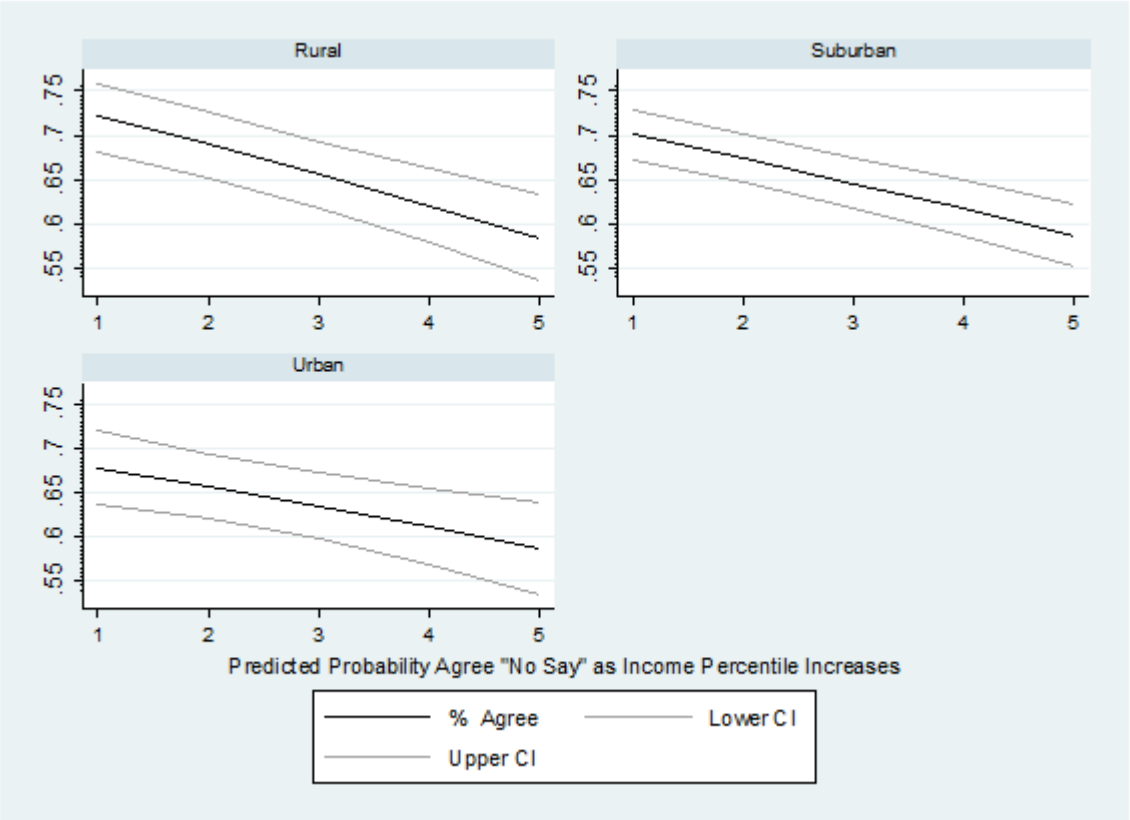

Fig. B.2. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Income Increases

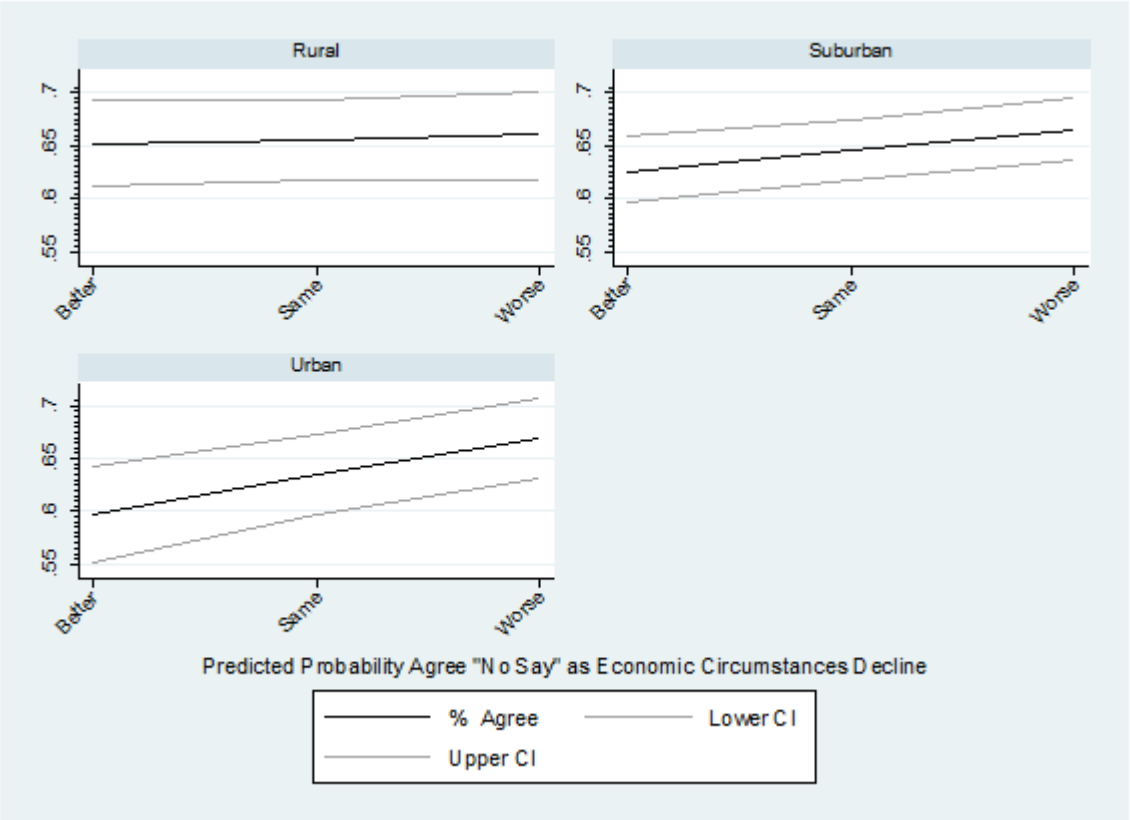

Fig. B.3. Predicted Probability Agree "No Say" as Economic Circumstances Decline

Table B.4
Regression Results: Trust Index (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-1.596	(3.030)
Size Rural Pop	21.628	(25.643)
Income Percentile	-1.565**	(0.423)
Last Year	-2.591**	(0.564)
Gender	-0.335	(0.343)
White	-1.500	(1.114)
Black	-0.554	(1.211)
Hispanic	2.600*	(1.250)
Protestant	0.758	(0.526)
Catholic	3.682**	(0.588)
Jewish	2.435†	(1.347)
Age	0.012	(0.010)
Education Level	0.484**	(0.114)
Presidential Approval	-7.850**	(0.353)
Congressional Approval	-2.906**	(0.087)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	2.657	(11.831)
Income x Urbanism	0.450*	(0.199)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.132	(0.266)
Intercept	53.137**	(6.786)

N	15539
R^2	0.138
$F_{(18,15520)}$	137.802

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

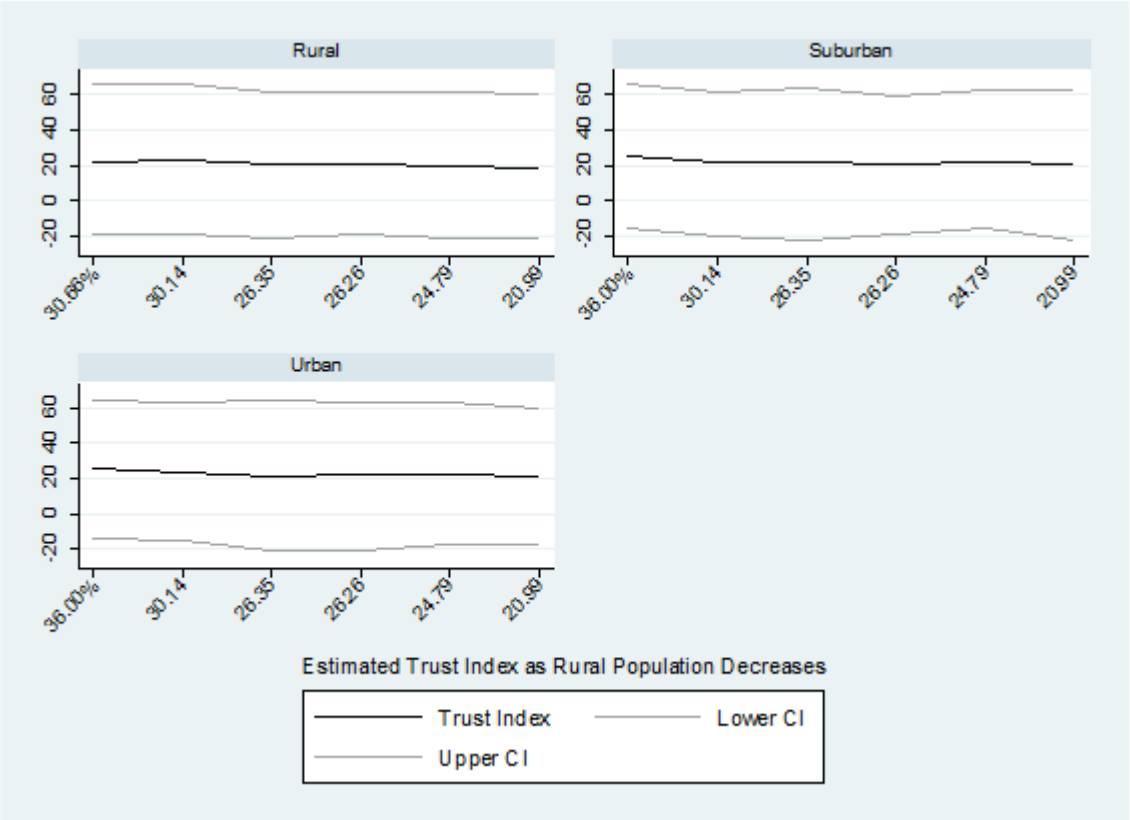

Fig. B.4. Estimated Trust Index as Rural Population Decreases

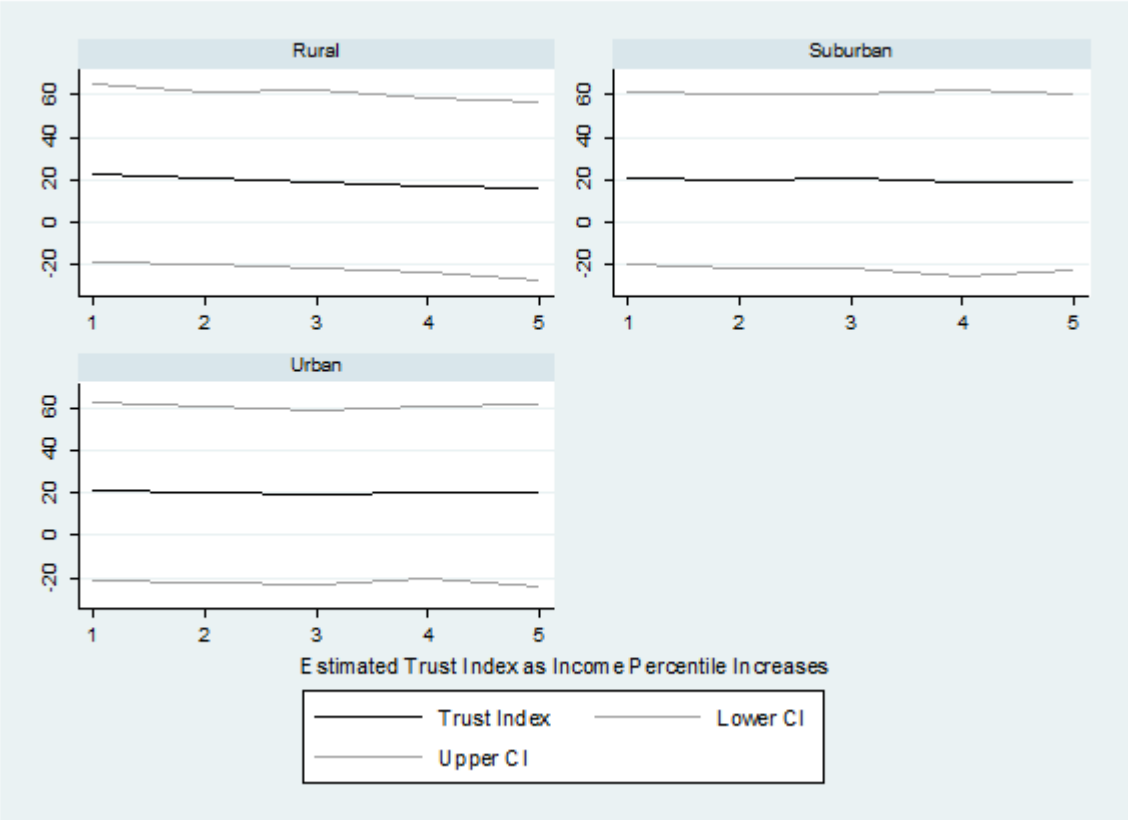

Fig. B.5. Estimated Trust Index as Income Increases

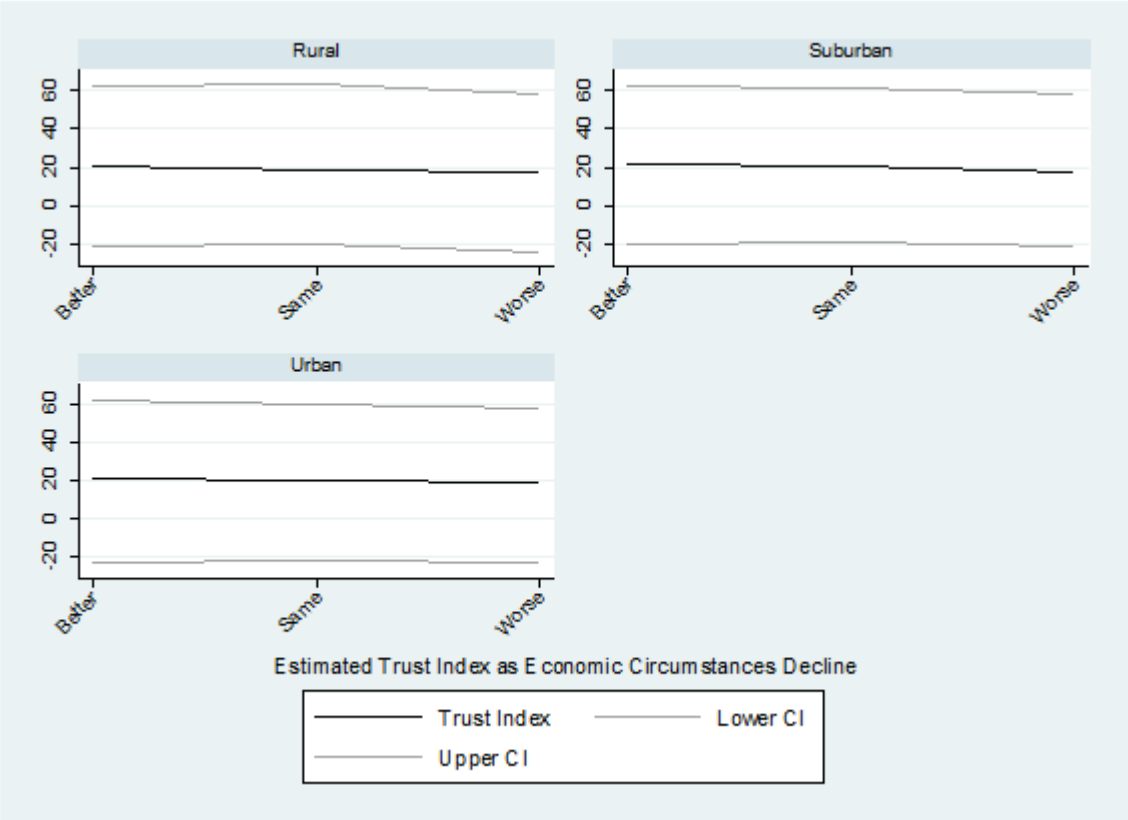

Fig. B.6. Estimated Trust Index as Economic Circumstances Decline

Table B.6: Multinomial Logit Regression Results: Party Identification, Reference Category = Democrat (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Equation 1 : Independent		
Urbanism	-0.099	(0.536)
Size Rural Pop	2.697	(4.464)
Income Percentile	-0.013	(0.065)
Better off Last Year	0.131	(0.083)

Continued on next page...

... table B.6 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Gender	-0.255**	(0.052)
White	0.189	(0.182)
Black	-0.938**	(0.205)
Hispanic	-0.010	(0.205)
Age	-0.021**	(0.002)
Education Level	-0.116**	(0.018)
Protestant	-0.265**	(0.076)
Catholic	-0.532**	(0.084)
Jewish	-0.814**	(0.194)
Southerner	-0.001	(0.060)
Union	-0.338**	(0.066)
Ideology	0.309**	(0.021)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	0.132	(2.065)
Income x Urbanism	0.015	(0.031)
Last Year x Urbanism	-0.036	(0.040)
Intercept	-1.438	(1.190)
Equation 2 : Republican		
Urbanism	-0.293	(0.365)
Size Rural Pop	-6.035*	(3.007)
Income Percentile	0.176**	(0.047)
Better off Last Year	-0.047	(0.061)
Gender	-0.171**	(0.037)
White	0.344**	(0.128)
Black	-2.089**	(0.160)
Hispanic	-0.226	(0.147)
Age	-0.004**	(0.001)

Continued on next page...

... table B.6 continued

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Education Level	0.098**	(0.012)
Protestant	0.405**	(0.060)
Catholic	-0.174**	(0.066)
Jewish	-1.118**	(0.146)
Southerner	0.335**	(0.043)
Union	-0.750**	(0.047)
Ideology	0.786**	(0.016)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	1.119	(1.404)
Income x Urbanism	0.010	(0.023)
Last Year x Urbanism	-0.034	(0.029)
Intercept	-3.193**	(0.809)
N	18913	
Log-likelihood	-14770.336	
$\chi^2_{(38)}$	6176.622	

Significance levels : † : 10% ∗ : 5% ∗∗ : 1%

Table B.5
Regression Results: Party Identification (7-Point Scale)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.030†	(0.018)
Size Rural Pop	-2.916**	(0.778)
Income Percentile	0.141**	(0.013)
Better off Last Year	-0.091**	(0.016)
Gender	-0.114**	(0.026)
White	0.288**	(0.092)
Black	-1.168**	(0.101)
Hispanic	-0.146	(0.105)
Age	-0.005**	(0.001)
Education Level	0.081**	(0.009)
Protestant	0.238**	(0.042)
Catholic	-0.257**	(0.046)
Jewish	-0.879**	(0.090)
Southerner	0.295**	(0.030)
Union	-0.588**	(0.033)
Ideology	0.590**	(0.010)
Intercept	1.322**	(0.238)
N	18913	
R^2	0.285	
$F_{(16,18896)}$	470.129	

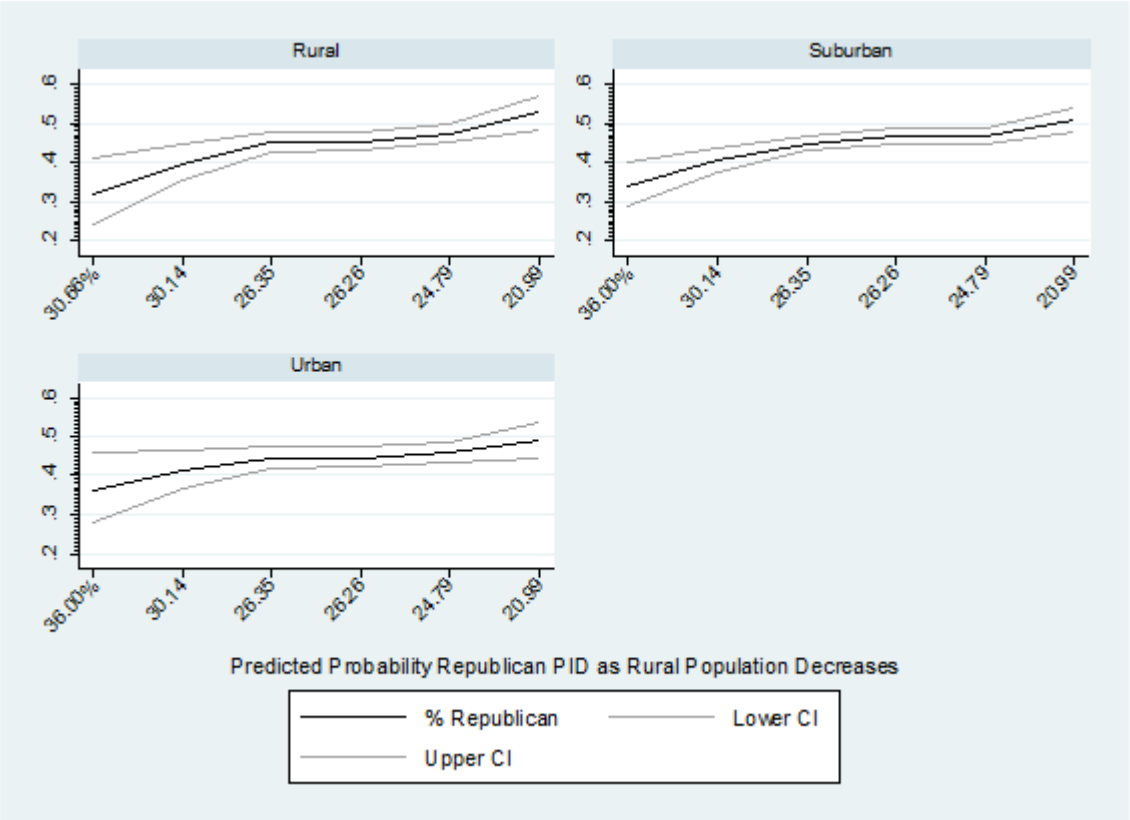

Fig. B.7. Predicted Probability Republican PID as Rural Population Decreases

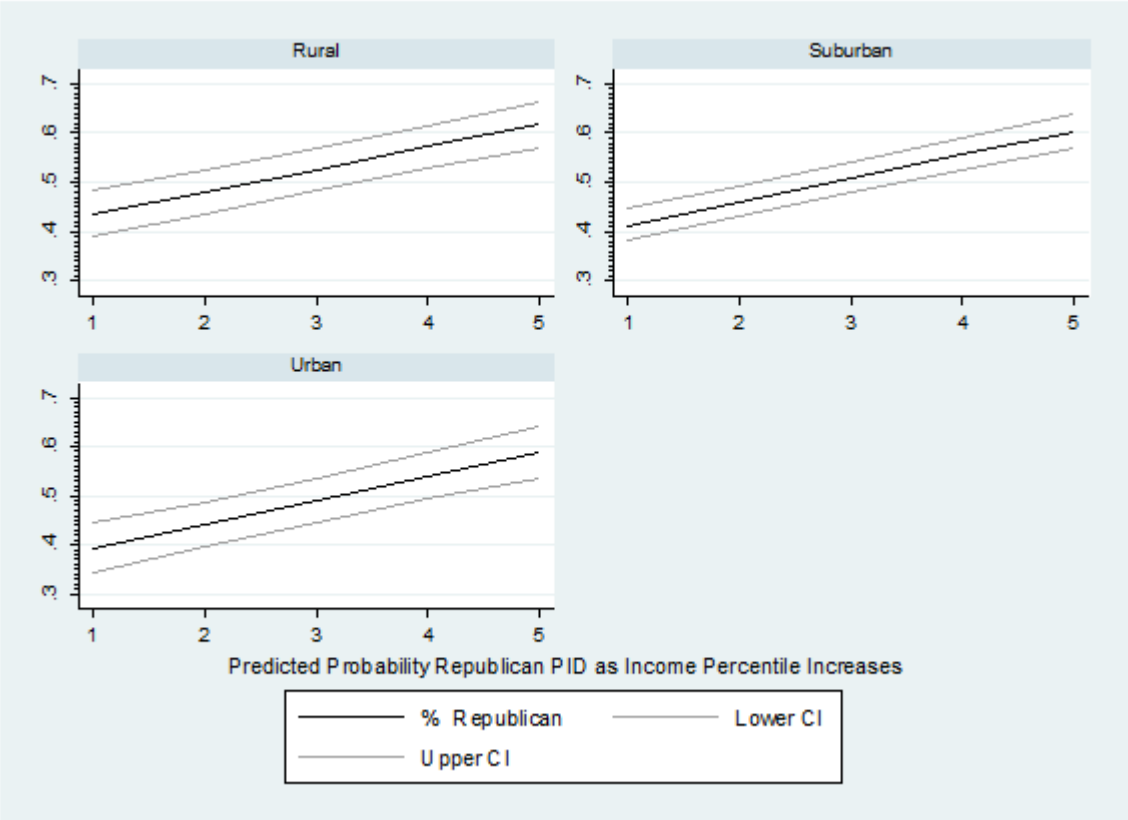

Fig. B.8. Predicted Probability Republican PID as Income Increases

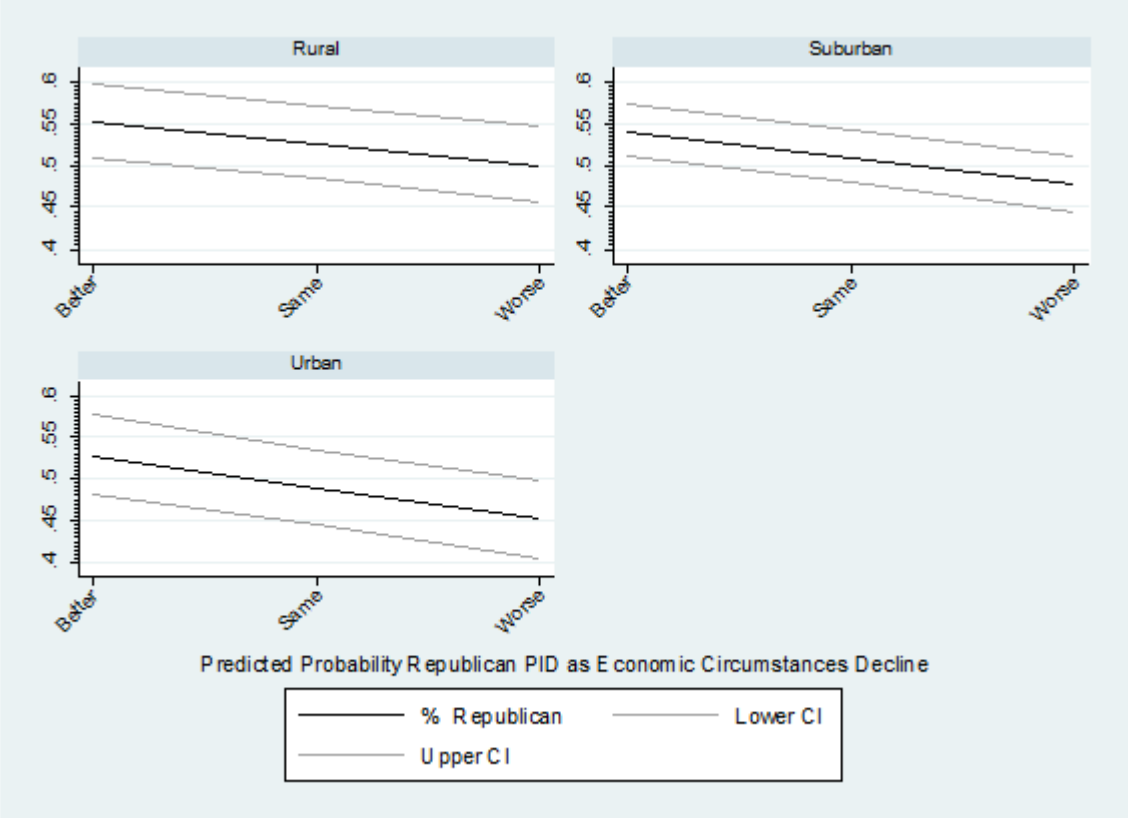

Fig. B.9. Predicted Probability Republican PID as Economic Circumstances Decline

Table B.7: Multinomial Logit Regression Results: Presidential Vote, Reference Category = Democrat (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Equation 1 : Republican		
Urbanism	-1.055†	(0.605)
Size Rural Pop	5.352	(4.937)
Income Percentile	0.147	(0.095)
Better off Last Year	-0.317**	(0.121)

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... table B.7 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Gender	0.042	(0.071)
White	0.281	(0.243)
Black	-1.861**	(0.312)
Hispanic	-0.307	(0.280)
Protestant	0.390**	(0.117)
Catholic	0.401**	(0.126)
Jewish	-0.214	(0.252)
Age	0.002	(0.002)
Education Level	-0.024	(0.024)
Ideology	0.538**	(0.031)
Party ID	0.814**	(0.021)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	3.751	(2.319)
Income x Urbanism	-0.019	(0.045)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.064	(0.057)
Intercept	-6.812**	(1.345)
Equation 2 : Other		
Urbanism	-2.079*	(0.915)
Size Rural Pop	-5.520	(7.237)
Income Percentile	-0.011	(0.141)
Better off Last Year	0.134	(0.175)
Gender	-0.360**	(0.107)
White	0.755†	(0.413)
Black	-1.216*	(0.535)
Hispanic	0.031	(0.475)
Protestant	-0.469**	(0.146)
Catholic	-0.407*	(0.160)

Continued on next page...

... table B.7 continued

Variable	Coefficient	(Std. Err.)
Jewish	-0.972**	(0.375)
Age	-0.017**	(0.004)
Education Level	0.005	(0.037)
Ideology	0.158**	(0.045)
Party ID	0.498**	(0.032)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	7.640*	(3.498)
Income x Urbanism	0.024	(0.067)
Last Year x Urbanism	-0.009	(0.083)
Intercept	-1.655	(1.983)
N	7737	
Log-likelihood	-4121.977	
$\chi^2_{(36)}$	5331.256	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

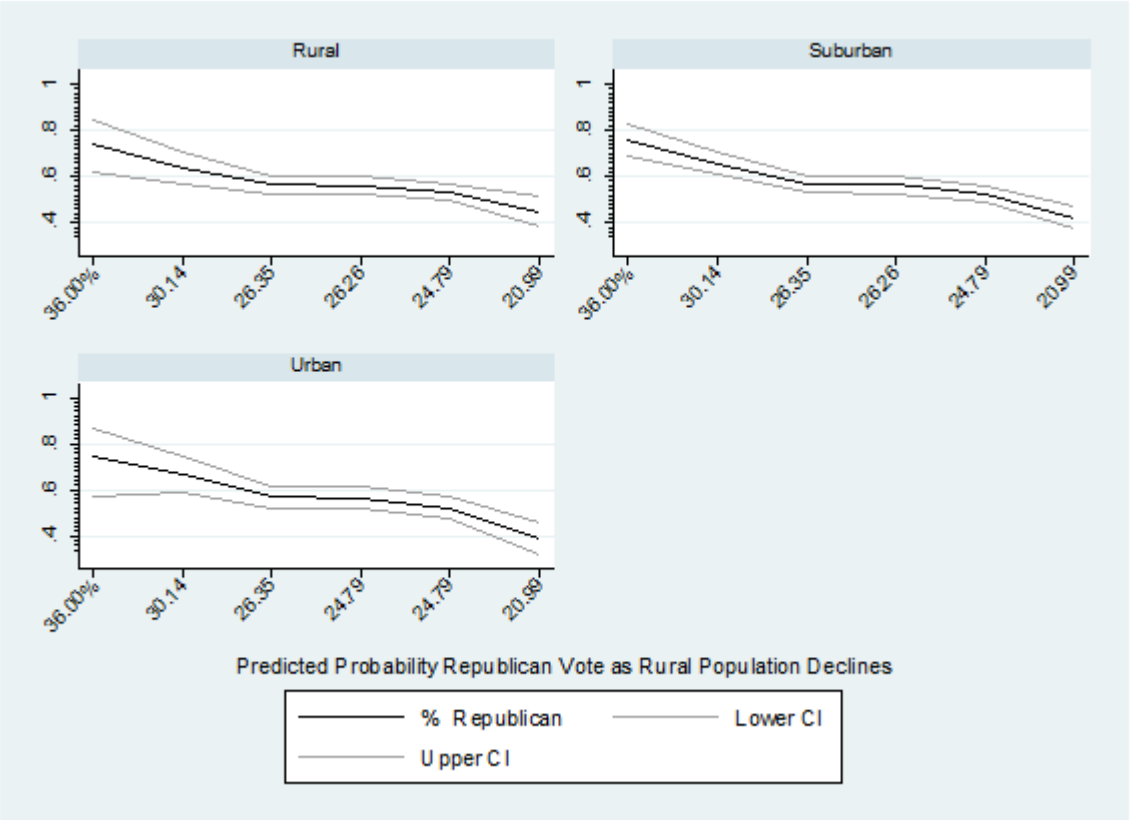

Fig. B.10. Predicted Probability Republican Vote as Rural Population Decreases

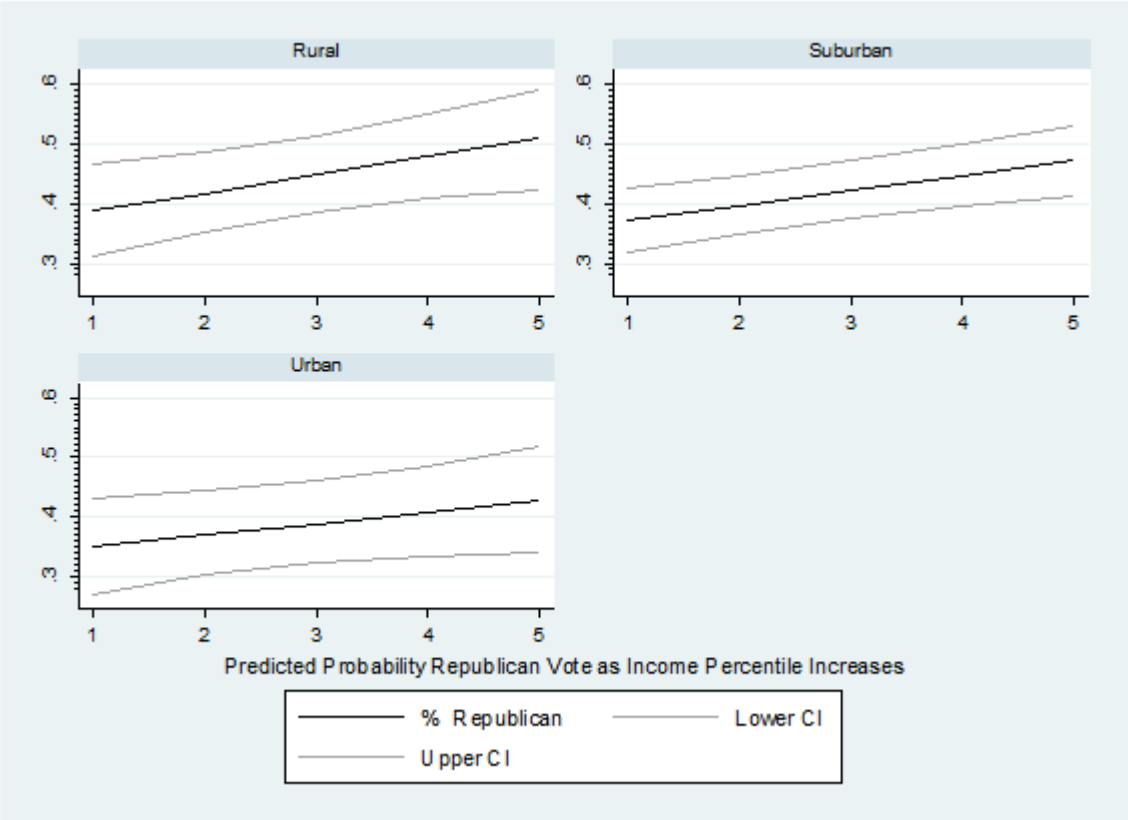

Fig. B.11. Predicted Probability Republican Vote as Income Increases

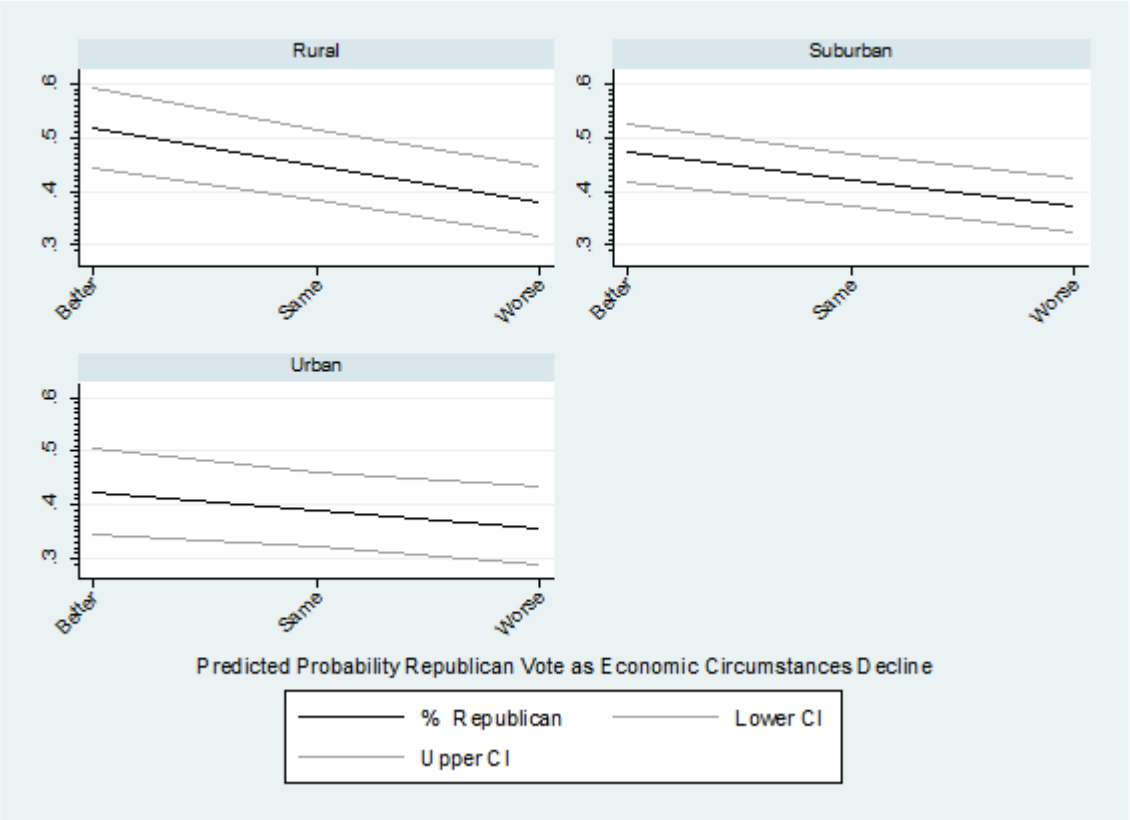

Fig. B.12. Predicted Probability Republican Vote as Economic Circumstances Decline

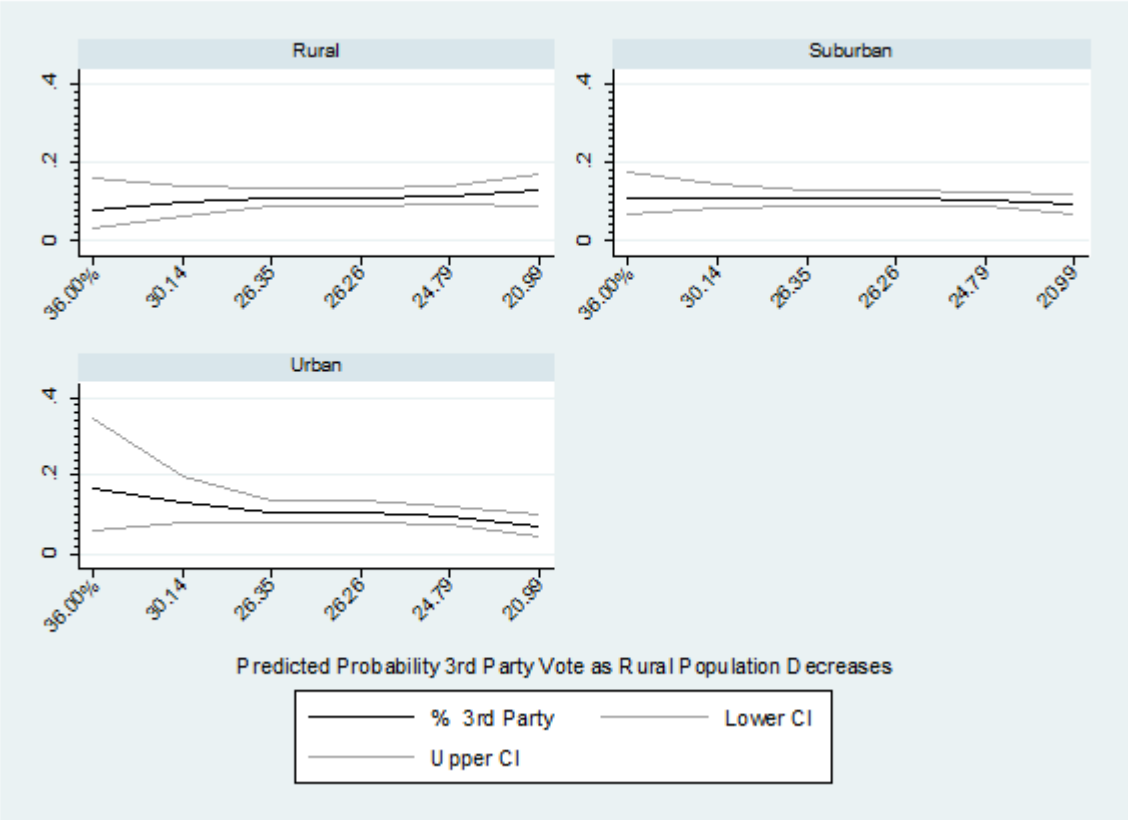

Fig. B.13. Predicted Probability Third Party Vote as Rural Population Decreases

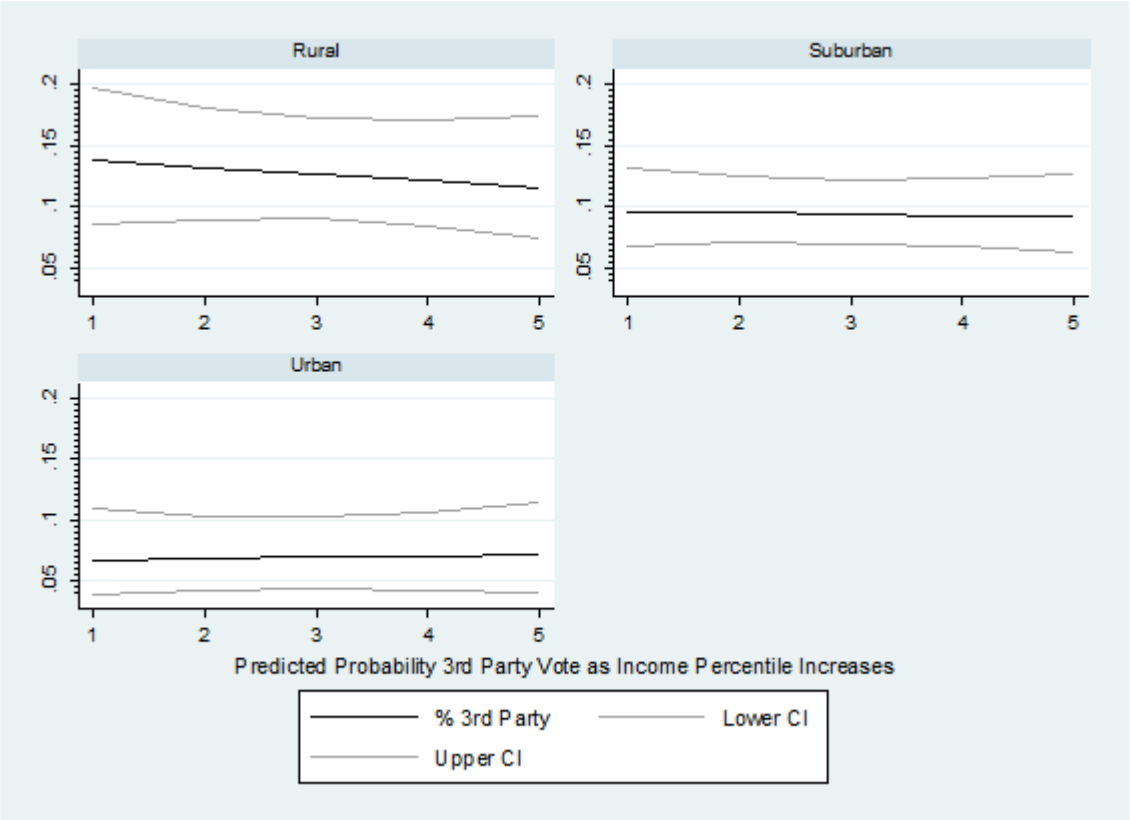

Fig. B.14. Predicted Probability Third Party Vote as Income Increases

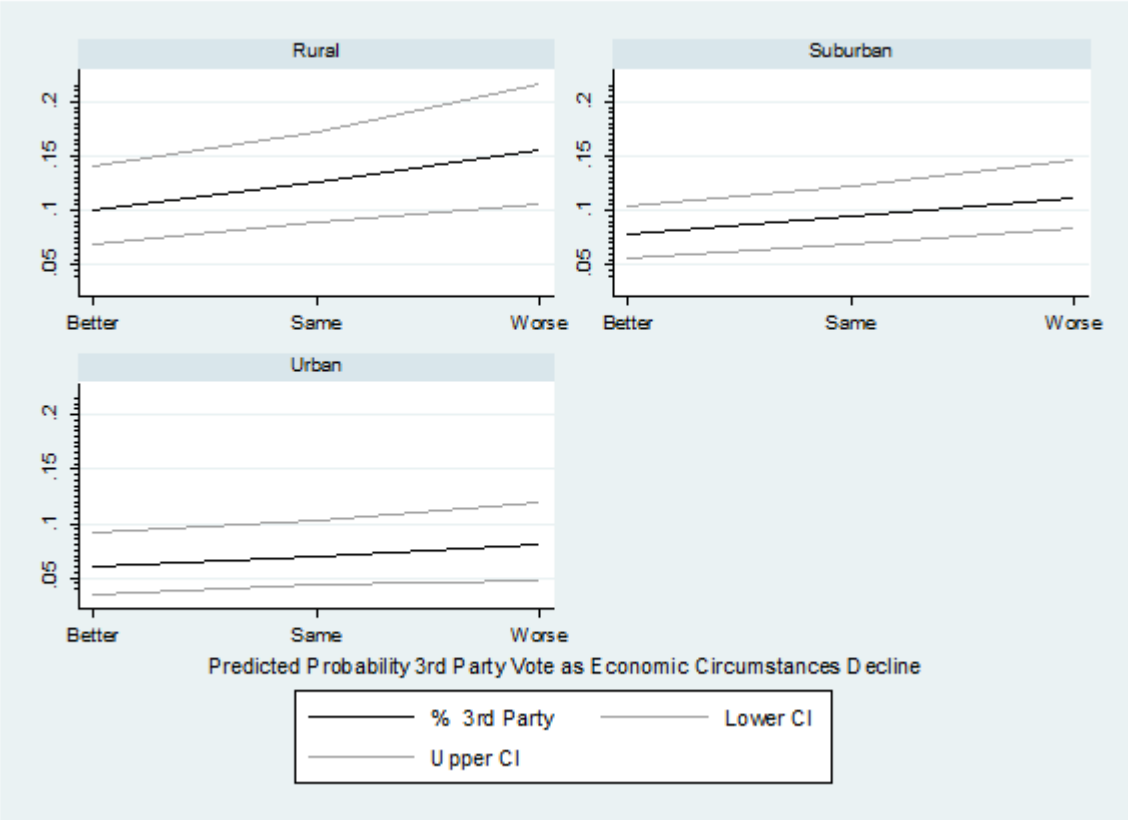

Fig. B.15. Predicted Probability Third Party Vote as Economic Circumstances Decline

Table B.8
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index, 1968 - 1974 (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.150	(0.183)
Income Percentile	-0.160†	(0.084)
Better off Last Year	-0.182	(0.116)
Internal Efficacy	-0.073	(0.080)
External Efficacy	0.044	(0.079)
Trust Index	-0.007**	(0.002)
Gender	0.111	(0.071)
White	0.358	(0.439)
Black	0.821†	(0.458)
Hispanic	0.942†	(0.547)
Protestant	-0.834**	(0.155)
Catholic	-0.551**	(0.163)
Jewish	0.310	(0.278)
Age	-0.020**	(0.002)
Education Level	0.127**	(0.024)
Interest	-0.021	(0.043)
Ideology	-0.247**	(0.028)
Income x Urbanism	0.038	(0.041)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.080	(0.056)
Intercept	7.592**	(0.628)
N	1689	
R^2	0.228	
$F_{(19,1669)}$	25.944	

Significance levels : $\dagger$: 10% $*$: 5% $**$: 1%

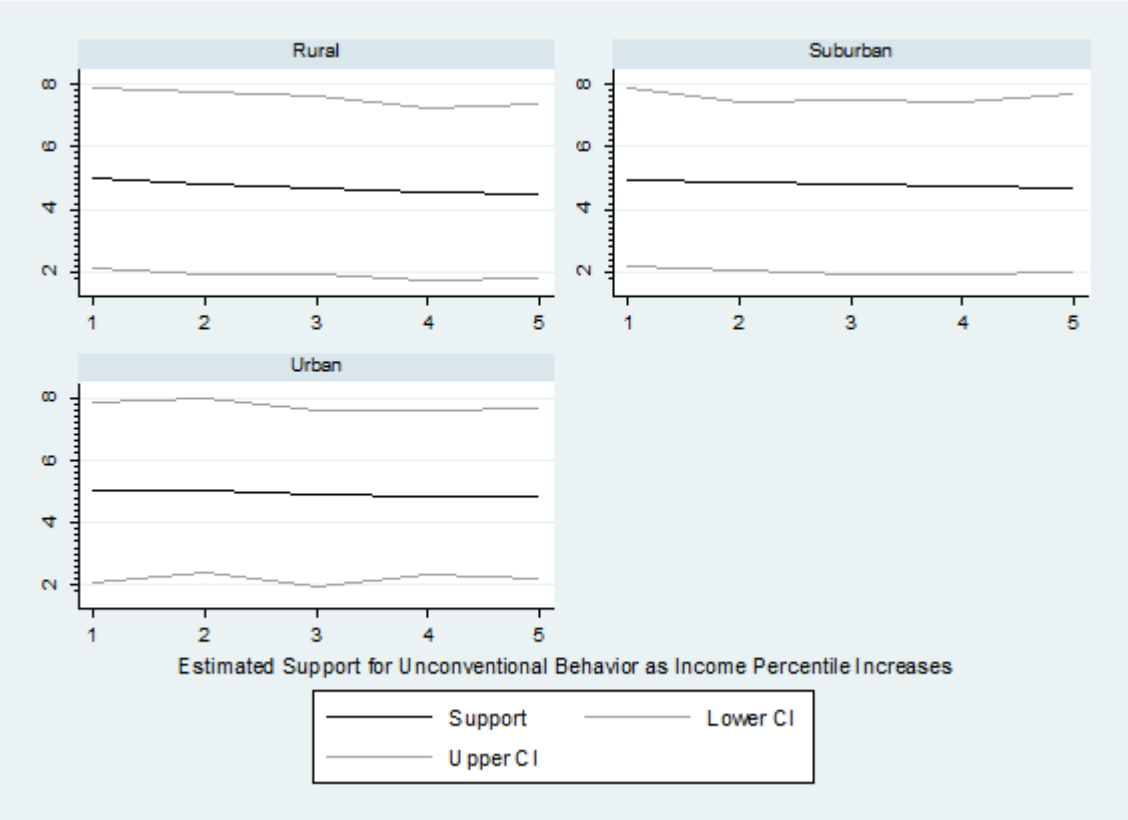

Fig. B.16. Support for Unconventional Participation as Income Increases

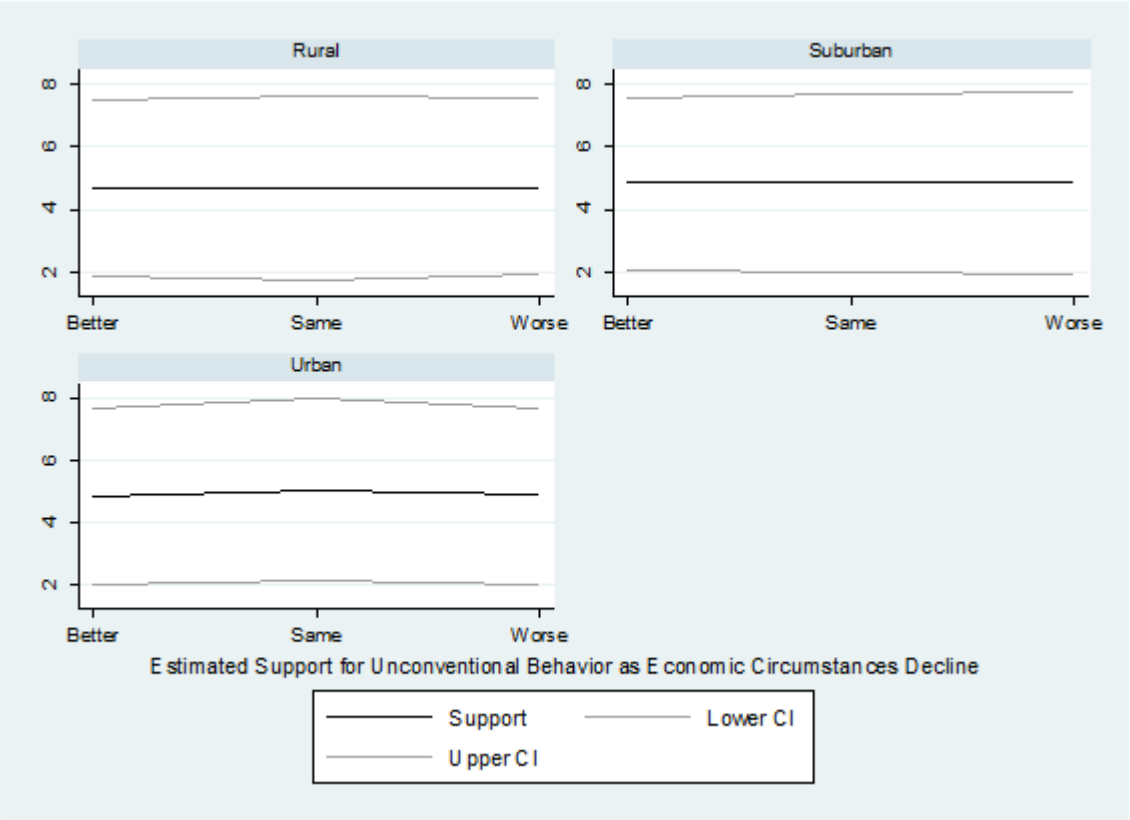

Fig. B.17. Support for Unconventional Participation as Economic Circumstances Decline

Table B.9
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index, 1985 - 1990 (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.180	(0.148)
Income	0.000	(0.000)
Better off Last Year	-0.091	(0.105)
Trust Executive Branch	-0.213*	(0.104)
Trust Legislature	-0.114	(0.116)
Gender	-0.002	(0.132)
Age	0.023**	(0.004)
White	-0.360	(0.324)
Black	-0.768*	(0.377)
Protestant	0.186	(0.231)
Catholic	0.447†	(0.252)
Jewish	0.370	(0.562)
Education Level	-0.104**	(0.026)
Interest	0.235**	(0.068)
Ideology	0.098*	(0.049)
Income x Urbanism	0.000	(0.000)
Last Year x Urbanism	-0.020	(0.035)
Intercept	10.056**	(0.777)
N	579	
Log-likelihood	.	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

Table B.10
Regression Results: Unconventional Participation Support Index, 1985 - 2006 (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.130	(0.226)
Income	0.000	(0.000)
Internal Efficacy	0.004	(0.067)
External Efficacy	-0.127	(0.098)
Better off Last Year	-0.173	(0.138)
Trust Executive Branch	-0.221	(0.145)
Trust Legislature	-0.128	(0.153)
Gender	0.624**	(0.173)
Age	0.040**	(0.006)
White	-0.854*	(0.390)
Black	-1.449**	(0.470)
Protestant	0.724**	(0.236)
Catholic	0.407	(0.269)
Jewish	0.061	(0.540)
Education Level	-0.256**	(0.035)
Interest	0.224**	(0.083)
Ideology	0.125†	(0.065)
Income x Urbanism	0.000	(0.000)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.032	(0.045)
Intercept	7.538**	(1.140)
N	599	
R^2	0.253	
$F_{(19,579)}$	10.327	

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

Table B.11
Regression Results: Campaign Activities (With Interaction Terms)

Variable	**Coefficient**	**(Std. Err.)**
Urbanism	-0.002	(0.131)
Size Rural Pop	1.116	(1.027)
Income Percentile	0.088**	(0.016)
Better off Last Year	0.002	(0.022)
Internal Efficacy	-0.151**	(0.016)
External Efficacy	-0.105**	(0.014)
Trust Index	-0.001**	(0.000)
Gender	-0.028*	(0.014)
White	0.000	(0.051)
Black	0.050	(0.055)
Hispanic	0.018	(0.059)
Age	0.000	(0.000)
Education Level	0.060**	(0.005)
Protestant	0.069**	(0.023)
Catholic	0.038	(0.025)
Jewish	0.233**	(0.051)
Interest	0.219**	(0.007)
Pres. Election	0.175**	(0.014)
Rural Pop x Urbanism	0.095	(0.491)
Income x Urbanism	-0.011	(0.008)
Last Year x Urbanism	0.013	(0.011)
Intercept	0.231	(0.281)

N	18717
R^2	0.139
$F_{(21,18695)}$	143.651

Significance levels : † : 10% * : 5% ** : 1%

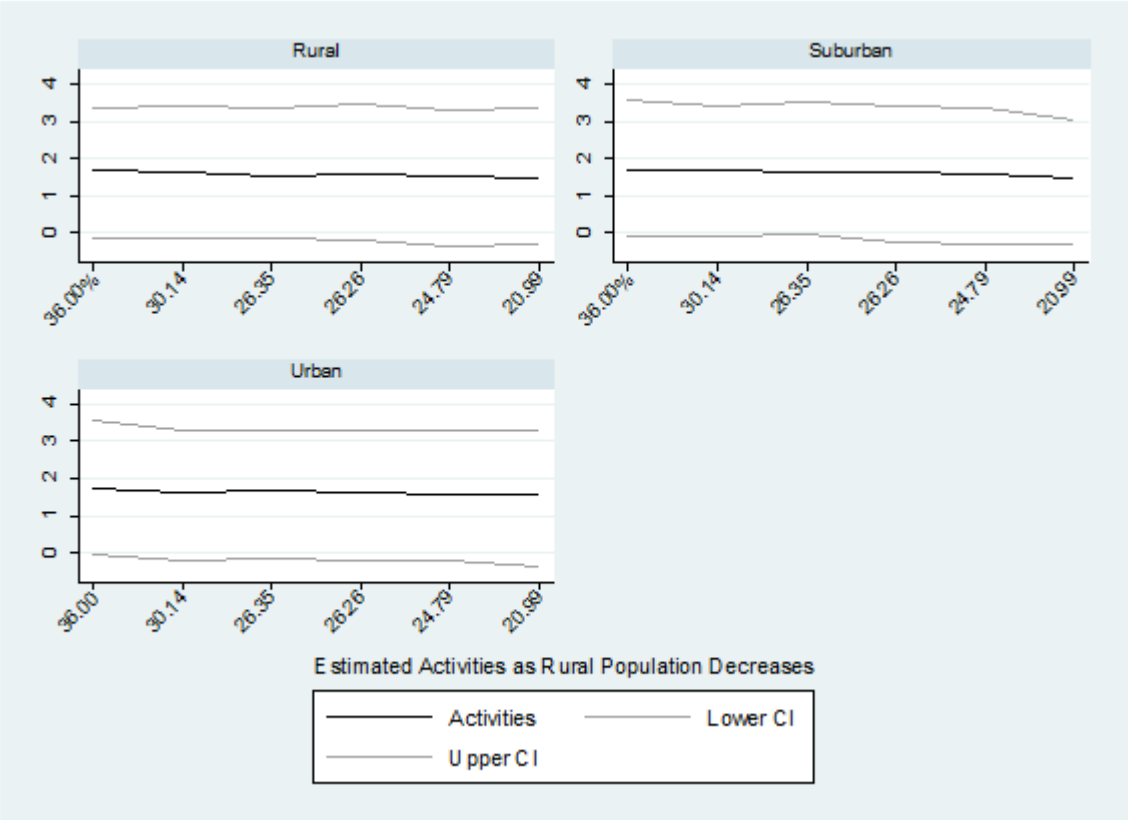

Fig. B.18. Estimated Activities as Rural Population Decreases

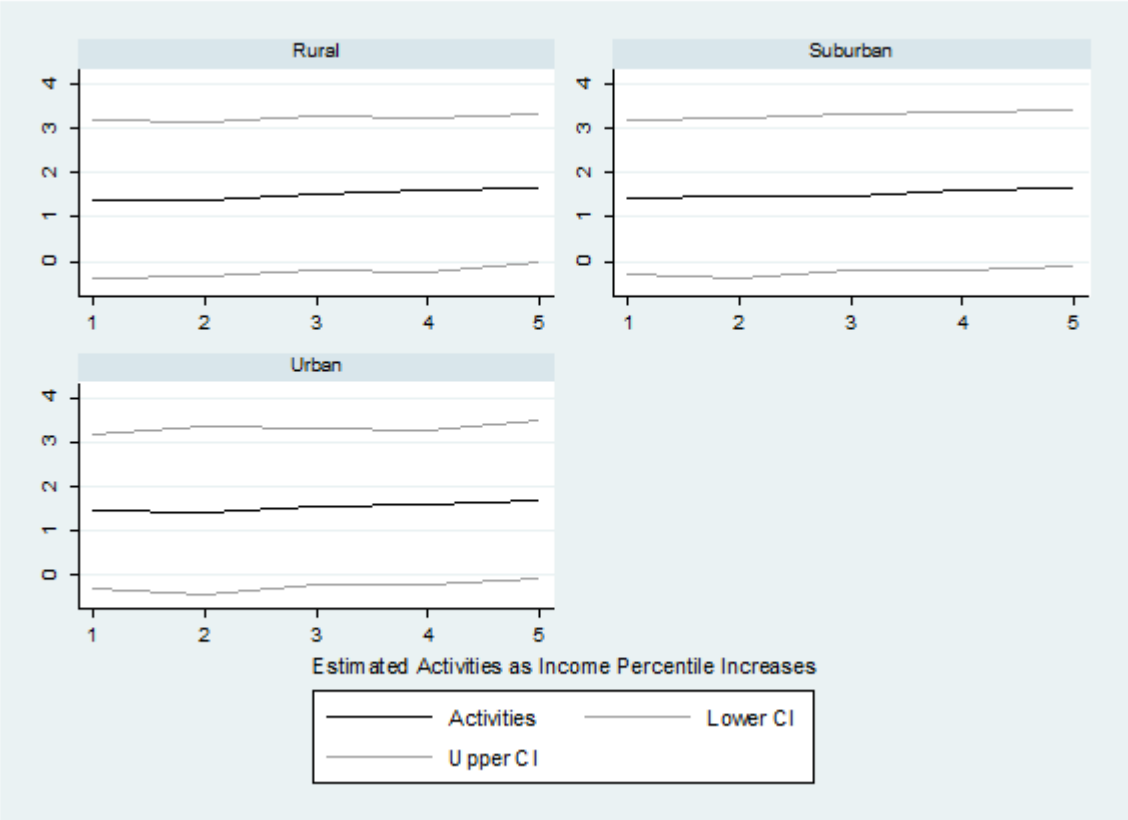

Fig. B.19. Estimated Activities as Income Increases

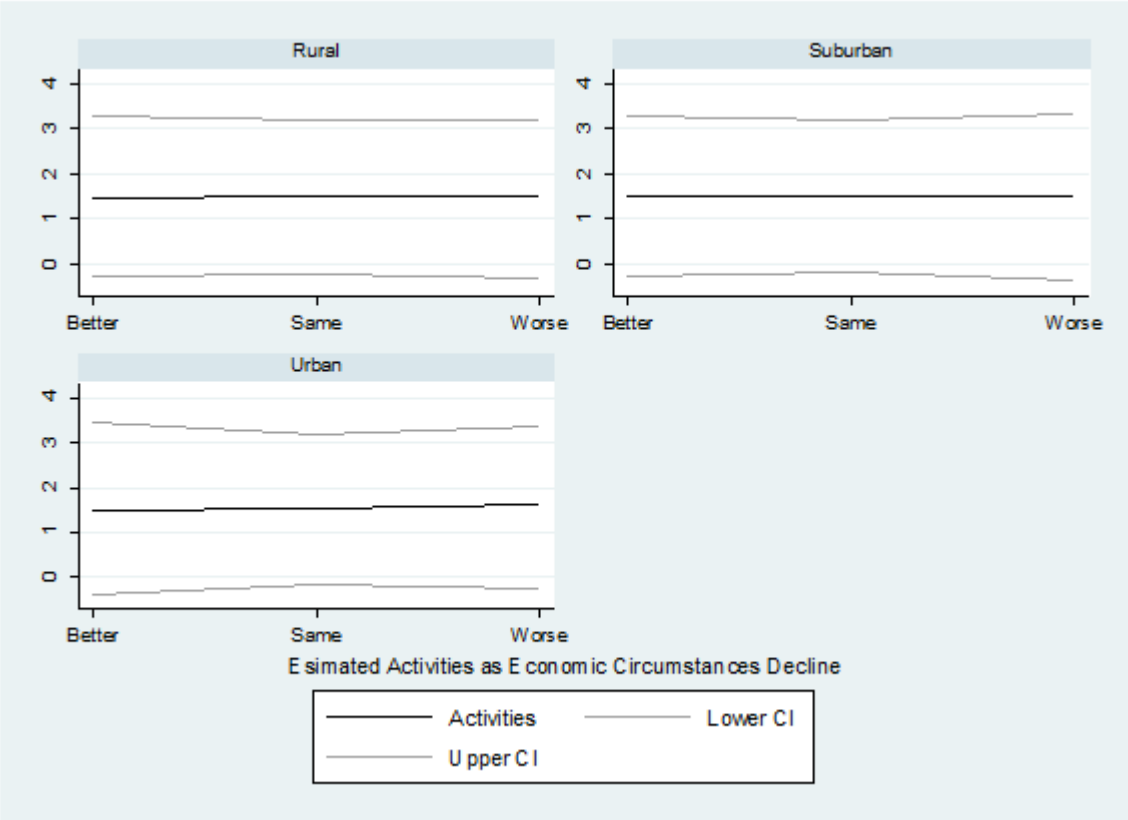

Fig. B.20. Estimated Activities as Economic Circumstances Decline

VITA

VITA

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EDUCATION

Ph.D, Political Science, May 2017
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Fields: American Political, Comparative Politics, Methods
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Ross Fellowship Recipient, 2010 - 2014

M.A. Political Science, May 2012
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Fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics

B.A. Political Science & Economics, May 2010
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Summa Cum Laude

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Independent Instructor
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Courses:

- POL 141 - Governments of the World, Summer 2012
- POL 300 - Introduction to Political Analysis, Summer 2013
- POL 101Y - American Government and Politics, 2014-15, Summer 2015, 2015-16
  - Distance Learning
  - Received Department Outstanding Independent Instructor Award, 2014-15

Teaching Assistant
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

Courses:

- POL 300 - Introduction to Political Analysis, 2011-12, Fall 2013
- POL 101Y - American Government and Politics, Spring 2013
  - Received Department Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, 2012-13
- AP US Government and Politics MOOC, Summer 2016, 2016-17

Professional Development

- Completed training on helping students to develop study skills and working with students with learning disabilities as an undergraduate peer tutor
- Attended instructional workshops and participated in "micro-teaching" through Purdue University's Center for Instructional Excellence

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant
Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

- Assisted with analyzing and organizing data, as well as writing and editing of manuscripts
- Assisted Glenn Parker and Suzanne Parker, Summer 2013
- Assisted S. Laurel Weldon, Spring 2011

Intern/Fellow
The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, PA, Jan. - Aug. 2010

- Analyzed and organized data; assisted with writing newsletter articles; attended conferences, meetings, and public hearings with Center staff
- Research Project: "The Future of Entrepreneurship: An Analysis of Small Businesses in Rural Pennsylvania"

Programming Skills
Stata, SPSS, SAS, and R

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Rural Politics, Public Opinion, Political Geography, Political Economy, Cohort Analysis, Research Methods

PUBLICATION

Kaufman, Chelsea N. 2016. "The Changing Political Character of American Farmers: 1954 - 2008." *Journal of Rural Studies* 47: 153-164.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Partisanship and Vote Choice in Rural America." To be presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL., April 2017.

"Political Efficacy in Rural America: 1952 - 2008." Presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL., April 2016.

"Social Context and Partisanship in Rural America." Presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL., April 2013.

With Suzanne Parker. "The Changing Character of American Farmers: 1948 - 2000." Presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL., April 2012.

WORK IN PROGRESS

With Michael Brownstein. "News that's Fit to Post Online: Fake News and Political Discussion among Young Voters." Accepted to be presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Fransisco, CA., September 2017.

MEMBERSHIPS & ASSOCIATIONS

- American Political Science Association Member
- Midwest Political Science Association Member
- Pi Sigma Alpha Member
- Purdue University Political Science Graduate Student Association
  - Graduate Student Senator, Fall 2013
  - Social Science Mechanics Committee, Fall 2013
  - Pi Sigma Alpha Liaison, 2011 - 2013

REFERENCES

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