

Appendix 1: Additional Survey Information

This appendix includes additional background information on the survey, the results of which are reported in “The Populist Radical Right in the United States.”

1. Inclusion & Sampling

I contracted Qualtrics, an “experience management” and market research firm based in Utah to complete a survey of Arizona Republicans in advance of the 2018 Senate Primary. Actual sampling took place from August 21st, 2018, up to August 27th, the day before the election. The screening question used to determine eligibility for the survey was “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?” The options available to respondents were Democrat, Republican, Independent, and Other. Only those who selected “Republican” were invited to complete the survey, provided they indicated residence in Arizona as well. As noted in the paper, this is a weakness, as independents are allowed to vote in many primaries (including Arizona), and the truly politically-disaffected may not identify with either major party. I ultimately made the decision to include only self-identified Republicans to keep the cost of finding likely primary voters down. I theorized that self-identified independents would be less likely to participate in the primary, and the cost of generating a large enough sample of independent likely voters would have exceeded my limited survey budget. This hunch proved correct, as roughly 95% of respondents indicated that they had already voted, were certain to vote, or were likely to vote.

2. Dependent Variables

The key dependent variable in the analysis is the answer to the question, “If the 2018 Arizona Republican Senate Primary election were held today, which of the candidates would you vote for?” Respondents had the option to select Martha McSally, Kelli Ward, Joe Arpaio, and Other, though fewer than 3% ultimately selected that latter category, and they were excluded from the analysis.

3. Independent Variables

The variables ultimately included in the analysis serve four broad purposes: evaluating H1, evaluating H2, evaluating other theories explored in the literature, and providing demographic controls. In this section, I will describe the variables and include a rationale for their inclusion. (For reference, I have included Table 1 below.)

Table 1: factors that influence support for 2018 Arizona Senate candidates among self-identified Republican likely voters

Independent variable	McSally support	Ward support	Arpaio support
No differences between Rep./Dem establishment	0.76	1.79	0.96
Perception of corruption (1-4)	0.77*	1.26	1.10
RINOS are a detriment (1-5 [strongly agree])	0.89	1.41***	0.91
Social media news consumer	0.6**	1.79*	1.24
Talk radio news consumer	1.12	1.16	0.59*
Fox news viewer	1.71**	0.79	0.63*
Fear of job loss (1-5 [extremely worried])	1.03	1.02	0.94
Authoritarianism (0-4)	1.00	0.95	1.19

Immigrants good for economy (1-5 [strongly disagree])	0.84*	0.93	1.46***
Education (1-5 [highest])	1.10	1.13	0.74**
Income (1-5 [highest])	1.11	1.04	0.81
Age (years)	1.02**	0.98*	0.98
Ideology (1 [extremely liberal] – 7 [extremely conservative])	1.05	1.21	0.83*
Race (white)	0.75	2.29	0.75
Constant	1.24	0.01***	3.67
<i>n count</i>	739	739	739
Pseudo r-squared	0.07	0.07	0.11

Notes: *** = $p < .001$, ** = $p < .01$, * = $p < .05$

3.1. H1: Party convergence

H1 holds that “If a conservative voter believes that the mainstream liberal and conservative parties have “converged,” that is, adopted similar positions on important issues, he or she is more likely to support a PRR candidate.” I included three variables in the model that evaluate this claim. The first, labelled “No differences between Rep./Dem establishment,” is captured by this question: “Do you think there are any important differences in what establishment Republicans and the Democratic Party stand for?” Respondents had the option to select “Yes, differences” or “No, no differences” (or “don’t know”). This is a non-standard question modified from the ANES original, “Do you think there are any important differences in what Republicans and Democrats stand for?,” which I also asked. (Response options are the same). When I included the latter question in the model, it was not significant, and I suggest that this is because my sample has chosen to identify as Republican. By definition, respondents have chosen one of the parties, and it is unlikely they would have done so had they believed that there were no important differences between them. They were in fact unlikely to dismiss their party wholesale (fewer than 5% of respondents said there were no differences between the parties), though when the opportunity to criticize the establishment was made available, that number more than doubled to almost 12%. I therefore believe that this operationalization captures the underlying phenomenon of interest, namely belief in mainstream party convergence, while still allowing voters to identify as Republicans.

The second variable of note here is “Perceptions of corruption,” operationalized as “How widespread do you think corruption such as bribe-taking is among politicians in the United States?” Possible responses were very widespread, quite widespread, not very widespread, and hardly happens at all. I created an ordinal scale with 1 representing “hardly happens at all” and 4 representing “very widespread.” This variable is included because much of the populist radical right’s rhetoric is designed to gin up resentment against entrenched politicians and bureaucrats who are looking out for themselves. It therefore makes sense that voters who perceive corruption would be attracted to the PRR, and would be more likely to see the political establishment as being rotten in general. (“Drain the swamp!”)

The final variable, “RINOs are a detriment” is related closely to the first. It is operationalized as ““Republicans in name only” (RINOs) are a detriment to the Republican Party.” Response options were available on a 1-5 scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with a “don’t know” option as well. RINO is a term often used on the right to criticize Republican politicians seen as insufficiently faithful to conservative principles.

When Mitt Romney criticizes President Trump, for example, comment sections on his social media posts fill up with people accusing the Republican Senator and former *de facto* leader of the party of being a “RINO.” This is a good variable to include because it captures the essence of the conflict over the party’s direction. Both camps, the more moderate, traditional establishment, and the insurgent populists, believe they are rightful Republicans. Since the term is generally used to castigate those who are insufficiently conservative (e.g. too moderate, too Democratic) and is rarely directed at those seen as ideologically extreme, it is a good proxy for feelings about party convergence. A Republican Party with too many RINOs is too similar to the Democrats, and that is what I attempted to capture with this variable.

3.2. H2: Social media

H2 holds that “If a voter uses social media for news, he or she is more likely support a populist radical right candidate.” The idea here is that different types of media have characteristics that make them suitable (or unsuitable) for populist radical right ends. The three variables reported (Fox News, Social media, and Talk radio) here are drawn from the same prompt: “Where do you get your political news? [Select all that apply]” Response options were:

- Network TV including their websites
- Cable news including their websites
- Print newspapers including their websites
- Talk radio
- Social networks or video streaming services
- Other web news
- Newsmagazines including their websites
- I do not regularly consume news

For each selected category, I prompted users to specify further. If the respondent selected “Cable news” he/she was directed to this question: “Which of the cable networks do you follow? [Select all that apply],” where the response options were CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and “Other.” The variable reported in the analysis is simply whether or not a respondent selected Fox News (which nearly 500 did). While I did press for details on social media and talk radio habits, those variables only indicate whether or not the respondent selected them from the initial menu prompt. In future analyses, I would like to delve deeper into different social networks and radio hosts. (Sean Hannity and Rush Limbaugh were the most popular radio hosts, while Facebook and YouTube were the most popular social networks.)

3.3. Other theories:

I also included a number of variables found or hypothesized to be significant by other authors. The first of these, “Fear of job loss,” is the answer to this question: “How worried are you about losing your job in the near future?” Possible responses, recorded as a 1-5 scale ranging from “not at all worried” to “extremely worried,” are intended to gauge the extent of a respondents economic anxiety, though job loss is only one component of economic anxiety. A question about the general state of the economy would likely have been better to capture the general unease with the economy that PRR candidates are fond of stoking, but absent that, the fear of job loss question is the best opportunity to gauge this angst.

The next series of questions is drawn from MacWilliams (2016, cited in the main text’s references), who found that an index of four child-rearing questions predicts support for Donald Trump in the 2016 primaries. All four questions take the form, “Which one is more important for a child to have?” Possible responses are respect/independence, good manners/curiosity, self-reliance/obedience, and being considerate/well behaved. One answer in each set is indicative of authoritarian values. So if the respondent selected respect, good manners, obedience, and well behaved, that would be a score of 4 on the index (with a possible range of 0-4). Its Cronbach’s alpha is roughly 0.55, however, and anything below 0.6 is generally not considered robust (Young, Ziemer, and Jackson, 2019, p. 414). While the scale is not particularly internally consistent in this case, I decided to include it based on the success other authors have had using it as a predictor.

The final variable in this section is “Immigrants good for the economy,” which is operationalized by the prompt, “Immigrants are generally good for America's economy.” Respondents had the option of five responses ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). This is a standard question that captures general attitudes towards immigration. It does not specify legal or illegal immigration, though it is useful as a potential proxy for the threat immigrants pose to respondents’ livelihoods. It is likely that respondents who feel that immigrants are undercutting them in the labor market will indicate that they believe immigrants are bad for the economy, providing evidence for economic theories of populist radical right support.

3.4. Demographics

The demographic variables are relatively standard. Education is the answer to the question “What is the highest level of education you have completed?” Response options (1-5) are less than high school, high school, some college/university, bachelor’s degree, post-graduate study, and don’t know/prefer not to answer. Income is split into categories as well, with the prompt, “Different political issues and candidates attract supporters across the income spectrum. With that in mind, we'd like to ask a little bit about your financial situation. What is your household income?” Available responses (1-5) are \$0-29,999, \$30,000-49,999, \$50-99,999, \$100,000-\$199,999, \$200,000+, and don’t know/prefer not to answer. Age is the respondents stated birth year subtracted from 2018, and Race is a dummy variable where 1 indicates that the respondent self-identified as white. Ideology is the answer to the question “Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?” The scale (1-7) includes response options extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate; middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, and extremely conservative.

4. Multicollinearity

As with all regression analyses, multicollinearity is a concern. I ran several checks and determined that the model’s variance inflation factor (VIF) is low and within the acceptable range. The model’s mean VIF is 1.13, with no individual variable exceeding 1.3. Anything above roughly 5 is problematic, so multicollinearity does not appear to undermine the results of this analysis.

References

- MacWilliams, M. C. (2016). Who decides when the Party doesn’t? Authoritarian voters and the rise of Donald Trump. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 49(4), 716-721.
- Young, C., Ziemer, K. & Jackson, C. (2019). Explaining Trump's popular support: validation of a nativism index. *Social Science Quarterly* 100(2), 412-418.