**Evaluating Topic Coding Approaches for Open-ended Responses**

**within the 2020 ANES - Candidate Likes and Dislikes**

**George D. Quinn**

**Abstract**

For many decades, the process of coding open-ended survey responses has remained a challenging task. Major studies such as The American National Election Study (ANES) have provided raw data on voter preferences, which include candidate likes and dislikes. However, since 2008, ANES has not provided meaningful topic codes for these open-ended responses. Therefore, within the 2020 ANES survey, open-ended responses regarding candidate likes and dislikes remain uncoded. This paper seeks to provide a framework to code these responses and investigates the efficacy of three methodologies: Hand-coding, Structured Topic Modeling (STM), and an AI-derived model (ADM). This study utilized a representative sample of 800 open-ended responses to the 2020 ANES survey. These responses were hand-coded to create a gold standard dataset, which served as the benchmark for evaluating the accuracy of STM and ADM using a strict correlation test. The results indicate that while STM captured a degree of depth from hand coding, it lacked precise accuracy. At the same time, the ADM produced a more precise and coherent output than the STM. This evaluation demonstrates the potential of ADM to supplement traditional methods as an additional means of coding open-ended responses. The present study compares how each technique performs in the context of political sentiment analysis, contributing a critical perspective on the integration of AI in qualitative political data processing.

# Introduction

Uncovering the full breadth of why voters like or dislike political candidates poses a challenge in political science. The subjective nature of voter preference defies the constrained options of traditional close-ended surveys, prompting a reliance on more revealing yet unwieldy, open-ended questions. This paper addresses the tension between the rich detail of such responses and the difficulty of summarizing them for a large population. Human coders have traditionally undertaken this task, offering depth but not breadth in their analysis due to the challenge of scaling up to larger datasets. Therefore, the need arises to examine two alternative techniques capable of processing high volumes of open-ended responses: Structured Topic Modeling (STM) and an AI-derived model (ADM). Through a comparative study, I evaluate the effectiveness of each model in quantifying the likes and dislikes of political candidates as expressed by voters. The findings reveal that each method has its merits and limitations. While STM provides efficiency and thematic insights, ADM provides interpretive nuance similar to the findings of human coders.

The analysis of open-ended responses in political science has been bound by the foundational challenge of grasping a macro understanding of qualitative data. Historically, this was done through hand coding. As a human function, this coding often fell short in precision and was not scalable for large data sets. As a result, rich qualitative sources were underutilized in research. Nevertheless, capturing public opinion from open-ended responses is vital in analyzing American political behavior. Closed-ended questions, while reasonably straightforward to analyze, often miss the nuance and range of consideration that open-ended questions and extended interviews provide.

A classic example of the value of open-ended investigations was the hand-coding of a national survey of U.S. adults that has occurred up to and following presidential elections since 1952, known as the American National Election Study (ANES). The ANES mostly consists of closed-ended survey responses but traditionally has had a small number of open-ended responses, including candidate likes/dislikes. The ANES has served as the gold standard for large-scale and precise data in American politics.

From 1952 to 1984, there were early efforts to glean information from open-ended responses in the first waves of ANES surveys (Converse et al. 1960). Starting in 1984, the ANES focused on implementing streamlined and efficient coding of open-ended responses by a team of research assistants and investigators. This data contained hundreds of unique codes to capture particular topics within open-ended responses, and the data was grouped into nine major categories for efficient coding. In 2008, ANES attempted to streamline its hand-coding efforts by expanding staff and budgets and launching the 2008 ANES open-ended coding project. For this project, two chief investigators, John Krosnick, and Arthur Lupia, managed the team of data collectors using a traditional hand-coding method for thousands of responses to open-ended questions (Berent, Krosnick, Lupia 2015). The Krosnick-Lupia 2008 codes provided among the highest-quality coding efforts undertaken by the ANES. However, the project suffered severe delays, and the cost exceeded expectations. From 2008 forward, ANES has discontinued any meaningful attempt to code open-ended responses; instead, the ANES releases raw uncoded responses every election year.

The case of the 2008 ANES open-ended coding project showcases the structural limitations of scalable hand coding for open-ended responses. Today, Structured Topic Modeling (STM) offers a solution, efficiently generating themes from data. AI models go even further, promising the scalability and precision that past methods lacked. This paper examines this evolution by comparing three methodologies applied to historical and contemporary open-ended responses, assessing how they address the perennial challenge of marrying the qualitative with the quantitative in political analysis. Here, we explore three methodologies for extracting voter sentiments from the ANES's open-ended data. I begin by examining a legacy model—human hand-coding—renowned for its precision but impractical for large datasets. Then, I delve into Structured Topic Modeling (STM), a method that automatically generates topics from large bodies of text, shedding light on familiar themes without human intervention. Lastly, I assess an AI-derived model (ADM), which leverages computational algorithms to mimic the depth of human coding at scale.

The findings of this study inform the ongoing debate on methodological rigor in political science and suggest a path forward for incorporating precise yet scalable open-ended responses. The findings indicate that while STM offers efficiency and ADM approximates human-like coding, neither fully replicates the meticulousness of hand-coding. I conclude with the implications of these techniques for future electoral studies and the pursuit of integrating qualitative voter insights into broader quantitative frameworks.

# Review of Literature

## Legacy uses of hand coding for open-ended responses

The utilization of open-ended responses in political science serves as a window into the electorate's cognitive landscape, a tradition dating back to seminal works that leveraged these responses to glean ideological insights. Converse's pioneering work in *The American Voter* (Converse et al. 1960) set a foundation for understanding the intricate relationship between voter preferences and their underlying political cognition. This legacy of qualitative analysis reveals the depth of voter ideology and the nuances of political schemata that are not easily captured by standard close-ended questioning.

Building on this foundation, (Kelley and Mirer 1974) extended the use of open-ended responses to examine the act of voting beyond mere behavior, probing into the motivations and considerations that precede the casting of a ballot. Their work underscores the complexity of voting, as guided by various individual voter considerations. Furthermore, (Lau and Sears 1986) contributed significantly to comprehending political cognition. Their work in *Political Cognition* underscores the indispensable role of open-ended responses in understanding political schemata—frameworks that voters use to make sense of the political landscape. Their research offers a critical lens through which political thought processes can be decoded, highlighting the importance of such qualitative data in revealing the cognitive underpinnings of political behavior.

Other important studies like that of (Knight 1984) replicate and extend Converse’s exploration of voter ideology. In *The Dimensionality of Partisan and Ideological Effect: The Influence of Positivity,* Knight applies open-ended responses to re-examine levels of conceptualization. This work validates the enduring relevance of qualitative insights in measuring the depth of voters' political understanding and the dimensional nature of their affiliations. Ridout and Franz's *The Persuasive Power of Campaign Advertising* (Ridout and Franz 2011) further showcases the utility of open-ended data. Their analysis of campaign messaging effects during the 2004 and 2008 elections incorporates ANES's open-ended codes as a core component. By doing so, they illustrate how such qualitative data can illuminate the impact of political advertisements on voter attitudes, highlighting the intricacy of how voters process and internalize campaign messages.

These studies demonstrate the potent applications of open-ended responses in political science—from assessing voter cognition and conceptualization to evaluating the effects of campaign advertising. The progression from Converse’s initial groundwork through Knight’s dimensional analysis into Ridout and Franz’s contemporary application underscores a trajectory of increasingly sophisticated uses of qualitative data. Given the importance of these uses, we can be clear that while hard to attain, attempts to quantify open-ended responses provide an essential avenue for public opinion research.

The development of this model begins with formulating the correct team and resources. The initial stage of our comparative analysis involved a meticulous hand-coding operation, which two undergraduate research assistants and I carefully executed. The coding team’s objective was to apply a pre-determined set of 35 hand codes to a representative sample of 800 responses from the 2020 ANES dataset. The process was designed to maximize intercoder reliability and to capture the complexity and nuances inherent in open-ended responses.

From 1984 - 2004, the ANES bundled hundreds of codes for open-ended responses into nine major categories. Therefore, I appropriated their usage of these major categories for our analysis, and they come directly from ANES (RePass, 2018). Table 2 presents the major categories generated by the ANES.

**Table 2: Major Topic Categories**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Major categories**  **Used by ANES before 2008** |
| 1 | Experience |
| 2 | Leadership Qualities |
| 3 | Personal Qualities |
| 4 | Government Management |
| 5 | Government Activity / Philosophy |
| 6 | Domestic Policies |
| 7 | Foreign Policies |
| 8 | Group Connections |
| 9 | Miscellaneous |

Thirty-five topics are present across each given model and provide nuance to the nature of these open-ended responses; these 35 topics are present in both the hand-coded data and the ADM evaluation.

## Newer uses of automated coding

STM (Tingley et al. 2014) employed an automated approach to identifying themes within raw text by uncovering topics. STM is further enhanced by (Roberts, Stewart, and Airoldi 2016) utilizing covariate stabilization. Covariate stabilization is a statistical procedure for binding topics together with the use of covariates, which are companion characteristics. For example, party identification, when coded as a covariate within the model, will generate republican and democratic topics. Since STM procedures can be automated, researchers can process large volumes of qualitative data. With wide applicability, STM advertises itself as useful in several conditions across the social sciences (Tingley et al. 2014). Other researchers such as ((Phillips, Davidson, and Baffoe-Bonnie 2023) looked at an empirical measure of codes from a national database of suicide prevention responses vs. derived topics based on text. For this article, researchers also took the additional step of diagnosing the efficacy of their deployed STM against hand codes using a correlation matrix. Importantly, this analysis shows that plotting STM codes to hand codes is an acceptable coherence check for STM.

Parallel to STM's advancements, Large Language Models (LLMs) are carving out a significant niche. (Mellon et al. 2024) showcase the capability of LLMs to generate topics from open-ended text, marking a step towards models that not only replicate but potentially surpass human-level thematic identification. (Argyle et al. 2023) further illustrate the practical utility of Artificial Intelligence in political science research, particularly in classifying nuanced subpopulations within complex datasets like the ANES. Finally, works such as (Pham et al. 2023) provide a framework for using LLMs in topic classification across a wide variety of text, particularly mirroring this paper's usage of the GPT-4 model. Finally, within the context of model training options several emerge as viable options, for this analysis I deploy a “Few-Shot” approach which seeks to train the model over several iterations. Recent works such as (Brown et al. 2020) highlight multiple avenues to approach LLM’s.

For our analysis, I seek to implement foundational lessons from LLMs into the proposed AI-derived model (ADM). These newer methodologies stand on the shoulders of legacy hand-coding techniques, aiming to retain their interpretive strengths while dramatically increasing the scalability of analysis. This paper critically evaluates the performance of STM and ADM against traditional hand-coded methods, highlighting their respective contributions to quantifying qualitative data in political science.

# Theoretical Approach

Understanding the nature of the data collected in interviews and surveys informs the choices made when analyzing open-ended responses. I hypothesize that following the correct procedures and data validation checks, automated mechanisms can provide similar accuracy and coherence to the traditional hand-coded responses for these open-ended questions. Given the limited scope of the specific goal of discerning topics from distinct candidates, like dislike questions, hand coding procedures are precise but lack the scale needed to complete the full analysis of responses. Given the expanded N within the 2020 ANES database, this will likely be true for future ANES-released data; it is more imperative than ever that an automated process can provide efficient and accurate data at a large scale. When it’s assumed that our hand-coded ANES responses provide a supreme level of coherence and create our “Gold Standard Data,” then I hypothesize that:

* H1) Structured topic modeling (STM) provides the next step in coding these open-ended responses given the probabilistic framework and relatively accessible nature of the data; this is an acceptable alternative to hand-coded data.
* H2) When engineered with the correct prompt and trainable model, AI-derived topic modeling (ADM) will provide a coherent and accessible pathway to generate coherent topics and quantifiable codes for open-ended responses.

Therefore, if the strategic goal for this analysis is to find the most efficient method to code open-ended responses, then I have developed three studies of each method to achieve this goal. Study one will examine the process of implementing a hand-coding system with a team of coders to process these responses. Study two will discuss how the STM model was implemented. Then, study three evaluates the ADM implementation. Finally, we will subject STM and ADM to accuracy comparisons with the hand-coded gold standard data, particularly using the shared major categories.

# Method

This study embarks on a comparative analysis of three approaches to coding open-ended responses on the same representative 800-response sample of likes and dislikes drawn from the 2020 ANES on the presidential election of that year. This sample size reflects the broader dataset on the dispersion of responses while allowing for a manageable comparison across the three coding methodologies.

## The Sample

Table 1 displays the distribution of the representative sample from the ANES dataset alongside the overall responses for the survey. Note that the categories are likes and dislikes for the two major candidates.

**Table 1. Representative Sample Compared with All Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Representative Sample Used in the Study** | **% of Representative Sample** | **Full 2020 ANES Responses** | **% of All 2020 Responses** |
| Biden Likes | 200 | 25.0% | 4,124 | 24.7% |
| Biden Dislikes | 200 | 25.0% | 3,898 | 23.4% |
| Trump Likes | 200 | 25.0% | 3,648 | 21.9% |
| Trump Dislikes | 200 | 25.0% | 5,007 | 30.0% |
| **Total** | **800** | **100%** | **16,677** | **100%** |

***\*ANES 2020 Open-Ended Responses (-1, -9, N/A, and Blank responses omitted)***

***Total Respondents = 8,280***

The sampling strategy affords us the focus necessary to conduct a comparative analysis and draw generalizable conclusions. This sample will be examined across all three.

Model coherence is measured by a correlation test of the model with the gold standards of hand coding. For each model, the data evaluated are the same 800 ANES responses across all four candidate evaluations (200 per candidate evaluation).

## Major Categories & Hand-Coded Annotations

Accessing the same hand-coded topics to measure efficacy across all three models is challenging. Among the approaches available for this dilemma, the best action is to follow the example from previous ANES open-ended coding waves and develop major categories that can be held constant across all three models for evaluation (Repass, 2018). Repass’ report evaluated how the nine hand codes (addressed in the literature review) could be used by researchers in the future. In the process, he established the efficacy of the previous codes. For our analysis these legacy major categories serve as the key metric for model comparisons.

In 2008 Krosnick and Lupia assembled 35 topics to cover candidate likes and dislikes (ANES, 2008). These codes categorized as CFA codes provide the basis for coding likes and dislikes among the 2008 open ended data. Within the 2020 analysis for our hand coding and ADM adaptions, I leveraged the existing infrastructure from the 2008 codes and made some small changes to adapt the proposed codes to 2020. These agreed upon hand codes serve as the foundation for our derived gold data. A full table of all 35 topics, annotation rules and corresponding major categories are provided in Appendix C.

The codes are built to capture several hundreds of specific codes; however, for our purposes, we only distribute the 35 topics generated for hand codes and from the STM, respectively. Collapsing the full set of 35 topics into the nine major categories is selected based on similar themes and topic classifications. For example, within Topic 3, personality hand codes such as 11- Personality Honesty and 15 – Candidate Health and Fitness will be binned together within Topic 3, because of the focus on personal qualities or attributes. Furthermore, this scheme for collapsing the hand codes was transferred to the STM-derived codes. These joined major categories help expedite our analysis of coding efficacy and provide the basis for correlation testing presented in the findings. Because STM generates its unique codes, these major categories offer the best model performance method across STM and ADM compared to hand-coded data. Table 3 provides an example of how the general 35 topics were collapsed into the respective nine major categories for Topic 3, “Personal Qualities.”

**Table 3: Major Category Mapping for All Three Models**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Major Category | (STM) Topic 3  \*STM developed topics | Corresponding Hand-Coded Topics and (ADM)  \*Adapted from Krosnick & Lupia 2008 for 2020 |
| Personal Qualities | * 2: Impulse Control * 9: Negative Personality * 11: Candidate Age/Health * 17: Honesty * 20: Untruthful * 31: Uncaring | * 11: Personality - Honesty * 12: Personality - Intelligence * 14: Personality - Other * 15: Candidate Health / Fitness * 16: Religion * 17: Education * 18: Physical Appearance * 19: Demographics |

# Study 1: Hand Coded Responses

Research Assistant 1 (RA1) coded responses representing Biden's Dislikes and Trump's Likes. This practice allowed RA1 to become particularly attuned to the thematic nuances expressed by respondents from a conservative partisan stance. Similarly, Research Assistant 2 (RA2) was responsible for coding the remaining half of the dataset, which included Biden's Likes and Trump's Dislikes, again allowing for a focus on a liberal viewpoint. This division of labor was strategic, enabling each coder to develop a refined understanding of the sentiments associated with their assigned perspectives.

After each set of 200 responses was coded, the team’s role was to review and reconcile the codes from RA1 and RA2 with my own. This step ensured the reliability and validity of the coding process, providing a robust set of hand-coded data for subsequent analysis. The task presented challenges, particularly in interpreting and categorizing disorganized or ambiguous text. Figure 1 illustrates some of the more complex responses we encountered, exemplifying the difficulty of drawing distinct themes from the raw data. This manual coding served as the benchmark for our study, offering a gold standard against which the performance of STM and ADM could be compared. The attention to detail in this phase was crucial, as it set the foundation for the entire evaluation process, establishing the level of coherence and interpretability that we aimed to match or exceed with automated methods. Importantly, we also batched our responses into 20 separate batches of 10 responses each. This step was beneficial when evaluating the ADM model.

**A person in a suit and tie

Description automatically generatedFigure 1: An example of two hard-to-code responses from the 2020 ANES**

As delineated, the hand-coding operation was time-consuming and required detailed training and precision. The task demanded a thorough understanding of the subject matter and a keen eye for identifying nuanced expressions of sentiment within the open-ended responses. This process ensured that the resulting codes provided an acceptable platform to discern voter attitudes and preferences. In this study, the hand-coded approach laid the groundwork for subsequent methodological comparisons. It established a comprehensive coding scheme that could serve as a reference point for the automated models to aspire to or surpass. Each response was examined, with the coders trained to extract relevant themes and sentiments that formed the basis of the hand-coded dataset.

Hand-coding these responses highlighted the importance of human judgment in capturing the complexity of topic categorization within reactions. This endeavor provided valuable data for this study and underscored the potential limitations of relying solely on manual coding for large datasets. The scalability and reliability problems were similar to the constraints presented by

(Berent, Krosnick, Lupia 2015) The 2008 ANES project. While our study represents a smaller scale for this task, the intensive labor and time required for hand-coding operations underscore the need for more efficient yet equally precise methodologies, prompting the exploration of STM and ADM as viable alternatives. By far and away, the hand coding approach was the most time-consuming and costly model for coding this specific representative sample.

# Study 2: STM coding

Structured Topic Modeling (STM) for this evaluation is an approach that offers significant advantages for the analysis of textual data. Its adaptability allows for processing text from a few hundred to several thousand responses. For STM to function optimally, the text must undergo several preprocessing steps. Firstly, the text is converted into a vocabulary that the model can analyze as a cohesive whole. This process includes eliminating stop words, such as “the” or “and,” allowing STM to craft the most substantive vocabulary. The significant words extracted from the document's vocabulary must be constructed depending on the document's size. These preprocessing stages are critical because any inadequacies in data preparation or vocabulary breadth can result in incoherent topics.

Next, when configuring the STM, one must decide the number of topics (K) the model should identify. An expectable K level is crucial for determining model coherence. Within the framework of STM, four diagnostic criteria are particularly pertinent to our work: Held-out Likelihood, Residuals, Semantic Coherence, and the Lower Bound. The effectiveness of each topic level is tested across a range of topic iterations narrowed down, based on these diagnostic measures. Residuals and semantic coherence provide efficacy for any decision to implement a certain K level within an STM. In summary, choosing the optimal K will maximize the coherence of a proposed model.

An additional step in STM preprocessing is covariate stabilization. STM allows for a more controlled “bag of words” approach by binding covariates into the prior distributions for document-topic and topic-word distributions, as discussed by Tingley et al (2014). This study incorporated covariates such as Party Identification, Education Level, Ideology, Government Trust, and Age, offering a more refined understanding of topics that may vary across demographic and ideological lines. In the most basic sense, covariates operate to steer the STM to bind coherent themes ahead of the topic distribution. For our STM model covariates help create an expectable scheme of topic classifications. (See Appendix C for full STM output and Find Thoughts, which picks three representative responses for a proposed topic).

The STM model is applied to our set of 800 representative responses. Covariate stabilizations and K diagnostics further bolster the model's reliability for this evaluation. Including respondent age as a covariate is an example of how we enhanced the stability of the derived topics. STM's innovation lies in integrating these covariates into the model, allowing each open-ended response to represent a mixture of topics. This approach acknowledges that topic prevalence and content can vary among participants, resulting in a more nuanced analysis (see further diagnostics in the appendix). To pinpoint the optimal number of topics, I conducted a diagnostic analysis. The initial diagnostics for the representative sample tested K levels from 25 to 45. The goal is to achieve low residuals and a high level of semantic coherence. I found that the diagnostic indicated that 35 was the acceptable K level for this data. Therefore, K was set to 35 for this study.

The STM model's results provide a compelling picture of the prevalent themes within the dataset. As shown in Figure 3, the topic probabilities indicate that personal qualities such as progress and feelings are more prominent than specific policy concerns, underscoring the importance of individual attributes in shaping voter perceptions. Despite its probabilistic nature and the inherent limitation of frequent shifts in results, STM provides valuable insights into the nature of open-ended responses in our dataset. This is important as we progress from manual coding to automated analysis, offering a glimpse into the landscape of topics and sentiments that might otherwise remain obscured.The topic prevalence for each labeled topic provides the general nuance of the data derived by STM. Topic probability broadly shows that the top topics include progress, feelings, endorsements, and electability. Interestingly, these topics provide wide dispersion, but personal qualities had a stronger prevalence than specific policy concerns.

**Figure 3: Topic Probabilities across all responses via STM**

**A graph of a number of colors

Description automatically generated with medium confidence**

The nature of this data suggests that topics pull across categories and, importantly, provide nuance about where each level lands as a proportion. The general takeaway from these STM-based analyses suggest that our database is weighted particularly toward feelings and progress. At the same time, limited prevalence is reserved for policy categories and strictly partisan categories. For Figure 3 The y axis denotes the generate topics from STM for this model, they are labeled and interpreted from the raw output (see Appendix C for full output). The x axis represents the prevalence of a given topic across all responses. So, for example the topic “Progress” is prevalent across more then 40% of responses, while the topic “General Foreign Policy” is only prevalent among less then 10% of responses.

## Extracting hard classifications (0-1) from ST**M**

In Structured Topic Modeling (STM), where the model operates based on probabilities, hard quantified outputs are not immediately applicable. For a clearer assessment of accuracy, it is necessary to set a coherence threshold that can deterministically categorize a response as being related to a topic (represented as '1') or not ('0'). The establishment of an appropriate coherence threshold is crucial. If the threshold is too high, the model may fail to classify any topics in the responses, resulting in an overwhelming number of '0's. Conversely, a threshold that is too low could result in nearly all responses being classified under a topic, diluting the specificity of the analysis. After conducting a series of looped analyses, examining the interplay between coherence and topic prevalence, I determined that a 15% coherence level was the most suitable among the various thresholds tested.

The process involved multiple iterations of testing to establish this threshold, utilizing the STM's “theta” function to facilitate this optimization. The coherence thresholds were evaluated across these iterations, ensuring that the chosen threshold provides a reliable measure for topic assignment in the model. Figure 4 provides the means for each prevalence classification. The X-axis refers to the tested prevalence level from 5% - 50%, and the Y-axis refers to the level of coded topics, which is the output (for example, 5% codes a mean of more than two topics, while 50% codes less than one topic). The bars refer to the mean of classified topics across the simulation, and 15%, which was chosen as the acceptable coherence threshold, is denoted in green.

**Figure 4 –Means of prevalence across each coherence threshold** A graph with a green and blue line

Description automatically generated

# Study 3: ADM coding

Now, given the nuances of how STM was utilized within our methodological framework. I will introduce the piloted Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) GPT-4 model. Importantly, methodological processes dictate that large language models be strategically deployed over several iterations [(Pham et al. 2023)](https://www.zotero.org/google-docs/?eK81Xg), while no formalized process is agreed upon. For this pilot ADM, I utilized the existing infrastructure of the front end and accessed GPT -4 via open AI.

Table 4 describes the steps in training the GPT-4 Process Tracing Model. I start the process by giving a simple dialogue to GPT-4. Next, I present the 35 topics as listed in Appendix B. Then I provide a general example for GPT-4 to pick out up to several topics. Then I provide the correct topics so that GPT-4 can learn. Then I give a batch of 10 responses to GPT-4. GPT-4 then selects the appropriate topics. Then I give the correct hand codes. GPT-4 then learns again. Then I ask GPT-4 to amend the 35 codes based on its learning. Then I repeat this procedure for batches of 10 up to the 200 responses per question. So, this process was repeated for Bides Likes & Dislikes and Trump Likes & Dislikes.

**Table 4: ADM via GPT-4 Original Dialogue**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Stage 1: | Stage 2: | Stage 3: | Stage 4: | Stage 5: | Stage 6: |
| Start with Topics | General Example | First Batch | Compare to hand codes | Amend the 35 original | Next Batch |
| Presenting 35 topics (as in Appendix B) | I provide an example of ONE response that qualifies for coding. | Supply Batch 1 for coding 10 responses (This is often the most incorrect) | Then compare to the correct coding from hand codes for that 10 | Then look at any affected codes and update the criteria | Supply Batch 2 for coding another 10 responses |

After processing each batch, I asked the bot to amend our current topics and be ready to handle the next batch. As the script continues, the model is quicker, asks fewer questions, and makes fewer mistakes when we reach the final 200. The output from the model now exists in an archived dialogue, from which I scraped all of the codes and sorted them by response ID number. An important goal for this analysis was the utilization of consumer-grade GPT-4 analysis. Further studies such as (Pham, 2023 and Mellon et al. 2024) access the developer API provided by Open.ai which while open to researchers requires additional costs. For this evaluation, I used the free front-end consumer-level GPT-4 analysis.

This process repeats for the exact 200 responses for each of the four questions we look to examine, further bolstering our efforts to code these topics using an AI-derived model effectively. Utilizing Large Language Models for this task provides two key insights: AI works well for a wide range of applications but also fails to pick up respective nuances. While this is a similar complaint to STM, the ADM can speak to you, ask clarifying questions, and provide a rationale for its decisions. Table 5 below is an example of some dialogue needed to gather accurate information.

**Table 5: Example of GPT-4 Feedback**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Researcher | GPT-4 Response | Researcher | GPT-4 Response |
| Simple Response | Code this response  430113 : NOT SUITABLE FOR ANY GOVERNMENT ROLE | 430113  13) Personality - Leadership: Not suitable for any government role implies a critique of leadership ability. | Now compare with these hand codes  13 | 430113  Both Codings: 13 (Personality - Leadership)  Analysis: Agreement on the unsuitability for government roles, focused on leadership. |
| More Difficult Response | code this response  429953  His lack of morals. His entitlement attitudes. His inability to tell the truth. He is stupid. He doesn’t educate himself before making decisions. He doesn’t listen to advice from experts. He is stupid. He doesn’t wear a mask | 429953  11) Personality - Honesty: Inability to tell the truth.  14) Personality - Other: Lack of morals, entitlement attitude, not wearing a mask, and failure to educate himself or listen to expert advice.  12) Personality - Intelligence: Described as stupid, implicating intelligence issues. | Now compare with these hand codes  429953  11, 12, 13, 30 | 429953  My Coding: 11 (Personality - Honesty), 14 (Personality - Other), 12 (Personality - Intelligence)  Hand Codes: 11, 12, 13 (Personality - Leadership), 30 (Public Health / Covid)  **Analysis: The inclusion of leadership (13) and specific mention of Covid-19 handling (30) in the hand codes was missed in my interpretation.** |

As structured, the model will inherently improve as more hand codes are revealed. Furthermore, the GPT-4 model was asked to continually return the original hand codes and revise the criteria as it continued working on the data. Each of the four questions for candidate likes and dislikes had its model script, and feedback was provided for each topic considered for a given response. This process is referred to as Few-Shot testing within a large language model (Brown et al. 2020).

Table 4 presents a side-by-side comparison of hand-coded responses and those generated by the ADM for simple and more complex responses. The table illustrates GPT-4's ability to interpret open-ended survey data and assign thematic codes comparable to those determined by a human coder. For a straightforward response deeming a candidate, take response 430133 which included the text: "NOT SUITABLE FOR ANY GOVERNMENT ROLE," both the human coder and GPT-4 identify a critique of leadership ability, resulting in a match on the code for "Personality - Leadership." This example demonstrates the model's ability to grasp precise feedback.

In a more complex response criticizing a candidate's morality, honesty, intelligence, and approach to public health, GPT-4 assigns multiple relevant codes that largely coincide with the human coder's analysis. It interprets the response as touching on honesty, general personality critique, and intelligence. The human coder also includes leadership and public health, highlighting a nuanced understanding that GPT-4 partially captures but does not fully match.

This comparative analysis suggests that while the ADM can effectively identify and categorize prominent themes in open-ended responses, the nuance achieved by human coding in more complex cases can present challenges for the model. The table shows the ADM's potential in coding thematic content, indicating a promising direction for further refining its interpretive algorithms. Similar to STM, this process is iterative and fine-tuned with more training and pre-processing. Coherence does seem to grow as more batches are fed to the model.

# Results

At first glance, you can determine the efficacy of a given model by how frequently responses were coded within a given set of categories to provide the most clear and concise measure of the relative effectiveness of a given model. I seek to evaluate using the shared major categories. These mapped on neatly onto our provided hand codes and additionally provided critical structures for STM to generate on its fruition. The major categories, a shared attribute across all three models (STM, ADM, and Hand Codes), are the variables of interest in our analysis. The best vehicle to measure the efficiency of these coding operations is a strict Pearson correlation test, which we use to subject STM-derived major categories and AI-derived major categories. Results take a three-step approach; first, the descriptive count data is provided for each model. Next, a count correlation test is conducted across all major categories, with particular attention to weighting larger categories, and a Pearson correlation metric is provided for the STM-derived and AI-derived models. Finally, a detailed correlation matrix is presented for both the STM-HAND and AI-HAND models.

## Nature of the data and count correlation - Hand codes vs STM and ADM

Immediately, there are interesting divergences in how each model comprehends and provides counts for each major category. Hand-coded frequencies match much more closely to this dataset's AI-derived model. The STM-derived model performs somewhat closer to the nature of what the data provides but fails to recognize the full magnitude of responses in a given category. The ADM is unparalleled in seeking an efficient coding structure, particularly when providing coherent and identical matching. Figure 5 relays the full frequency distribution of the nine major categories across all three models discussed in this analysis. The N of this official dataset is (N=800), representing 200 randomly selected candidate likes and dislikes, respectively. The nature of this data is predisposed to provide more personality qualities than other categories of codes. Since this is overweight, a strict correlation test that considers hand-coded results to be the gold standard data helps to clarify what relationships are present within the model. The departure points for STM and ADM come at the magnitude, but both models recognize the broad nature of the data.

**Figure 5: Major Category frequency distribution across all three models**

A graph of different colored bars

Description automatically generated

In a more favorable development for STM, we can see that from a strict count correlation and holding both models to the relative performance of 100% for the hand-coded data, both STM and AI-derived models perform well at being correlated with results from the hand-coded database. The Pearson correlation for both AI and STM models is presented in Figure 6. Importantly, because category three was so prevalent, it was important to examine the count data regressed over the counts of each model. The HAND-AI model produced an exceptional Pearson correlation coefficient of (0.97) while the HAND-STM model also provided a high correlation of (0.79). Providing all details considered, the STM model would not necessarily be discounted as inaccurate, given the nuance and flexibility of the model as it performs concerning the limitations of the AI-derived model. However, the utility of STM, at least in how it has been constructed, does seem to fall apart in accuracy for larger categories; this is particularly true given the divergence of correlations within major category 3.

**Figure 6: Pearson’s Correlation for HAND-AI and HAND-STM models**

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Description automatically generated

\*Pearson correlation coefficient provided for all counts for each of the nine categories given the outputs from each database.

## Correlation tests

Next, we move to a critical step to measure each major category's performance across all nine major categories. With the inherent goal of determining model performance and specific model agreement across all nine categories, I provide Pearson correlation findings for each category compared to the hand-coded results. Figure 7 provides an ideal representation of the discernible findings for the combined correlation matrix. Ideally, the best-performing models would show a positive (green) correlation on the diagonal within this matrix. STM-HAND performs poorly at this task.

**Figure 7: STM-HAND Correlation Matrix**

A screenshot of a graph

Description automatically generated

The correlation was particularly notable in several major categories, such as "Leadership Qualities" and "Personal Qualities," suggesting that STM is more reliable in capturing themes related to personal attributes of political figures. However, categories involving more nuanced topics or those requiring deeper contextual understanding showed less consistency. The coherence thresholds established for STM affected its performance. Setting appropriate coherence levels was crucial for ensuring that the topics generated by STM were meaningful and closely matched the hand-coded categories. The findings suggest that while STM can identify broad themes effectively, its precision in matching the nuanced understanding of human coders varies. While the nuance is lacking in the general correlation of the findings, bound topics and newly generated topics were reasonably stronger. (See Appendix C for “find thoughts” and STM output).

If we subject the AI-HAND model to the same evaluation, we find one of the most important methodological cleavages in utilizing AI for this task. Recalling our process tracing steps, the AI-based model can learn, adapt, and be trained to incorporate critical nuances that emerge from a text. Leveraging the ability to communicate with the model, we find that the AI-derived model's performance is significantly higher in coherence. Figure 8 provides the topic-based correlation matrix, which tests the AI-HAND model across the nine major categories.

**Figure 8 ADM - HAND Correlation Matrix**

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Critically, as established in previous effective coding measures, the correlation of results is exceptional when utilizing the AI-based model. Some major categories performed significantly higher than expected; in most literature cited before, the key distinction within the HAND-AI model is the ability to learn while processing. While valuable in developing themes, STM fails to improve over a large amount of data. While this test sample is relatively small, the HAND-AI model could proceed to code a full dataset without much of the coherence changing. The best case within our correlation matrix is topic 3, personal qualities. This topic has a hand-coded N of 320, significantly larger than most other categories. However, when comparing this large and diverse group of codes and responses, STM provides a correlation of 0.13.

In contrast, ADM provides a correlation for the same response of 0.63 when both are compared to the gold standard hand-coded data. Finally, the results do suggest that by leveraging the front-end consumer-level AI-derived models' ability to produce clear results, we can formalize this process and engage the model using the API developed for our tested methods and further seek to bolster model coherence. STM does not have the same room for improvement for this specific task.

# Discussion

Examining topic coding methodologies for open-ended responses within the 2020 American National Election Study has provided crucial insights into the effectiveness and limitations of different analytic approaches. This study highlighted the comparative accuracies of hand-coding, structured topic modeling (STM), and AI-assisted models (ADM), offering a nuanced understanding of their application in political science research. Hand-coding, while labor-intensive, remains the gold standard due to its precision in capturing the nuanced expressions of respondents' likes and dislikes towards political figures. However, the scalability issues associated with hand-coding necessitate exploring automated methods, especially in handling larger datasets typical of national surveys.

The STM approach, bolstered by recent advancements in covariate stabilizations, presents a viable alternative, offering substantial utility through its relative simplicity and adaptability. Yet, its effectiveness is contingent on the correct pre-processing of texts, which poses a challenge in ensuring the accuracy of topic assignments. Emerging prominently in this study is the potential of AI-assisted models, which are beginning to match the coherence and accuracy of traditional methods. The adaptability of AI models, especially with ongoing improvements in natural language processing algorithms, supports their use in dynamic research environments. These models can handle large volumes of data efficiently, potentially surpassing traditional methods in speed and scalability without significant loss of accuracy. Future research should focus on refining AI models to enhance their interpretative capabilities and ensure that they can maintain consistency with established coding standards. As political discourse continues to evolve, the ability of AI to adapt to new contexts and nuances will be critical.

Critically, the lessons from both models leave us with several specific benefits and drawbacks for both models. At the moment, STM offers the best-automated scalability, particularly in handling large datasets, which is a common challenge in major surveys. Unlike manual coding, STM can rapidly process vast amounts of text, reducing the time and labor costs associated with data analysis. STM also allows researchers to incorporate metadata or covariates (like demographic information) into the modeling process. We could extract specific covariates for this presented model and determine their relative effect on the data. Finally, by converting qualitative text into quantifiable data, STM facilitates statistical analysis of themes and sentiments expressed across a population. This capability is particularly valuable in measuring the prevalence and significance of certain topics over others.

However, some important drawbacks have emerged in this paper, particularly in terms of coherence and interpretation. STM can provide important insights into the probabilistic nature of open-ended data. However, the model can require some fine-tuning and, indeed, poorly coherent data when we take the step of pulling these probabilities into a hard count. While STM can identify dominant topics within text data, interpreting these topics remains subjective and requires additional qualitative analysis. Without substantial human oversight, the model's outputs may not always correspond directly to intuitive or meaningful categories.

Some important conclusions emerged from this analysis for the AI-derived model. First, unlike STM, the ADM is using an iterative approach. AI models, particularly learning-based ones, can improve over time through continued training on new data. This adaptability makes them highly effective in dynamic research environments where discourses and language use evolve. When thinking about the likes and dislikes of a candidate, it's very clear that this question is uniquely prone to shifts in interpretation and language specific to a given election cycle. The coherence for this task is unexpectedly strong, particularly considering the limitations of using GPT-4 on the front end.

Future developments for this project include using a larger and more systematic hand-coded gold standard database for comparing coherence. A good candidate for this would be the 2008 ANES open-ended coding project outcomes for candidate likes and dislikes. There are other avenues to explore on the STM front, including using a manually refined dictionary, perhaps shifting around covariates, and implementing a different theta level to determine STM coherence. On the AI front, using the open.ai API system includes providing strategic training for the bot on each specific topic and providing sample data for the model to work on before annotating text. Lastly, this evaluation unlocks several possible new roads for exploration, including analyses previously dependent on the ANES open-ended codes, which have not been available since 2008.

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# Appendix A - Key concepts and definitions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gold Standard | Data derived from human topic annotation utilizing Hand Codes |
| Major Codes | ANES derived nine large categories. Used from 1984 - 2004 and replicated in this paper for our use. |
| Hand Codes | 35 Topics ANES derived from 2008 with 2020 Adaptations |
| STM | A dictionary-based topic model pulling textual themes from covariates and raw responses |
| STM Data | Data developed from the STM model utilizing generated codes (via 15% prevalence threshold) also 35 topics |
| ADM Data | Data generated from the use of GPT-4 utilizing Hand Coded 35 topics |
| K Levels | The topic levels that need to be determined for which STM can operate |

# A screenshot of a graph Description automatically generatedAppendix B - Supplemental Analysis:

A-1: 35 Topic Full Correlation Matrix

\*STM provided via 15% coherence threshold \*Hand codes are matched to the closest corresponding category; see STM topic mapping table below for direct matches. \*Hand columns with (.x) values denote multiple Fuzzy matches for STM onto the same hand codes

# A chart of numbers and a graph Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAI-HAND

\* This topic-to-topic correlation matrix utilized the same methodology for the top. Some categories in the AI-derived model returned no results; therefore, the data within the column is held at 0.00.

# Finding K STM Results

Finding K results plot 25- 45:

A diagram of a diagram

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Finding K results plot 30 – 38:

A group of graphs with text

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# Appendix C - Hand-coded Annotation Rules:

These are the guidelines provided for the coding team as they worked on coding the distinct topics for the 2020 responses. Codes were loosely developed and adapted from Krosnick and Lupia's ANES 2008 open-ended codes

# Project Summary:

Our objective is to code open-ended responses given in the 2020 presidential elections. For this particular element of the survey, 200 unique respondents were asked four questions.

* What is it that you **like** about **Joe Biden**
* What is it that you **dislike** about **Joe Biden**
* What is it that you **like** about **Donald Trump**
* What is it that you **dislike** about **Donald Trump**

For these responses, we are looking for what particular topics were mentioned among 35 agreed-upon topics. These topics are across all four questions, and a response can carry one or several topics depending on the particular response. Below is a table of all 35 topics, with the respective criteria for a topic to be satisfied

# 35 Topics for all four questions

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | Label | Annotation Criteria | Larger Categories |
| 1 | General | Good person, bad person, likable, not likable, I like him, I do not like him - Any allusions to a general feeling toward a candidate. Everything but not specific. | Miscellaneous |
| 2 | Party | Is (or is not) a Democrat, is (or is not) a member of the Democrat Party, is (or is  not) a Republican, is (or is not) a member of the Republican Party, is (or is not) | Government Activity |
| 3 | Ideology / Philosophy / Views | Conservative, liberal, socialist, Marxist, communist, fascist, libertarian, moderate, America First or MAGA share my views, or I oppose his views. | Government Activity |
| 4 | Electability | Can win, cannot win | Experience |
| 5 | Better than alternative | Not Trump, Not Biden, Lesser of two evils | Leadership Qualities |
| 6 | Political experience | Political experience, work the candidate has done as a politician or elected official, “experienced” or “inexperienced” in general. Positive or negative. “Insider” and like the current job of an incumbent. Record | Experience |
| 7 | Non-Political experience | Business experience, work the candidate has done in business, industry, or  Education. Also, “outsider” sentiments or reasons for support | Experience |
| 8 | Scandal / Cover-up | The candidate was involved in a scandal or cover-up | Miscellaneous |
| 9 | Other past activity | Any mention of something the candidate did in the past that does not match  another code, for example trump’s twitter usaged | Miscellaneous |
| 10 | Personality - Ability | The candidate's ability to accomplish a task or get the job done. Keeping promises and fulfilling objectives | Leadership Qualities |
| 11 | Personality - Honesty | The candidate's honesty, integrity, consistency, predictability, sincerity, empathy  Truthfulness, character “Cares about people like me” | Personal Qualities |
| 12 | Personality - Intelligence | The candidate's intelligence | Personal Qualities |
| 13 | Personality - Leadership | The candidate's ability to lead, get people to work together, make people want to  follow, inspire people, inspire the respondent, motivate people, motivate the  respondent. Strong or weak Leader “fights for people like me”. Also, Patriotic sentiments | Leadership Qualities |
| 14 | Personality - Other | Anything about the candidate’s personality that does not match the description above | Personal Qualities |
| 15 | Candidate Health / Mental Fitness | The candidate's health and mental sharpness. Age. | Personal Qualities |
| 16 | Religion | The candidate does, or does not, belong to a specific religious group. The candidate is religious or not religious. It also advances a religious agenda. | Personal Qualities |
| 17 | Education | The candidate’s education, where the candidate went to school or college, the candidate’s type of diploma or college degree | Personal Qualities |
| 18 | Physical Appearance | The candidate's physical appearance, attractiveness, how good the candidate looks | Personal Qualities |
| 19 | Demographics | The candidate's age, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, height, weight,  marital status, or where the candidate is from | Personal Qualities |
| 20 | Policy - Economic | What the candidate will do about the economy, taxes, government spending, the  budget, the deficit, and the national debt? The candidate’s policy, stand, views, position, or emphasis on the economy, taxes, government spending, the budget, the deficit, the national debt. Covid stimulus, and other economic or fiscal concerns | Domestic Policies |
| 21 | Policy - Poor People | What the candidate will do about government programs to help poor people. The candidate’s policy, stand, views, position, or emphasis on government programs to help poor people. General For the people sentiments  NOTE: This code should be only assigned to ideas that mention helping poor people or government programs to help poor people. Examples of government programs to help poor people include welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and public housing. Any idea that mentions how much the candidate cares about poor people is assigned to the **“groups”** code (26) | Domestic Policies |
| 22 | Policy - Liberty | What will the candidate allow people to do, prevent people from doing, or make legal or illegal. The candidate’s policy, stand, views, position, or emphasis on what people should be allowed or prevented from doing or what activities should be legal or illegal.  Abortion, LGBTQ policy, and Marijuana are some examples | Domestic Policies |
| 23 | Policy - International Affairs | How will the candidate deal with other countries in general, foreign policy in general, and the reputation of the United States? The candidate’s policy, stand views,  position, or emphasis on other countries in general, foreign policy in general, and the reputation of the United States. Also support or opposition to military. | Foreign Policies |
| 24 | Policy - Judiciary | Supreme court, judicial appointments, and court packing. Any other illusions to judicial policy | Domestic Policies |
| 25 | Policy - Other | What will the candidate do about something that does not match a description in  codes 20-24. The candidate’s policy, stand views, position, or emphasis on  something that does not match a description in codes 20-24. | Domestic Policies |
| 26 | Groups | The candidate's support for or opposition to ideological or other groups. feelings about a specific group of people. Also, attacks on candidates' supporters | Group Connections |
| 27 | Emotions / Feelings | The candidate makes the respondent feel happy, sad, angry, proud, afraid, scared | Miscellaneous |
| 28 | Candidate - Other | Any mention of something about Trump / Biden that does not match another code | Miscellaneous |
| 29 | Non - Candidate | Any mention of something other than the candidate and that is not about the respondent | Miscellaneous |
| 30 | Public Health / Covid | Both pro and anti-Covid mitigation. Masks, lockdowns, school closures. Health infrastructure, Vaccines, and other covid specific mentions | Government Management |
| 31 | Democracy / Voting Rights | Election Fraud, Voter suppression, ballot access, democratic insecurities, mail in voting, abuses of power, saving democracy, fear of dictatorship, or rolling back voting access, etc. | Government Management |
| 32 | Racial Issues / Policing | BLM, George Floyd, racial equality, defund the police, and other broad illusions to racial justice or racial resentment (Close to code 26 but specifically focused on racial issues). Also, law and order and pro-police sentiments. | Group Connections |
| 33 | Running Mate / Endorsement | Running mate (Kamala Harris or Mike Pence). Or key endorsements from respected political or non-political figures (Party Luminaries) such as  James Clyburn for Biden or  Jerry Falwell Jr. for Trump | Experience |
| 34 | Don’t Know | I don’t know, don’t know, DK, I’m unsure, I’m not sure, Unsure, You got me, I  can’t remember, I have no clue, no clue, I have no idea, No idea, No guess, no, nothing | Miscellaneous |
| 35 | All others | Any statement that does not fit the codes | Miscellaneous |

## Steps for coding:

1. Take a response and read it in detail, for example, take this response from Joe Biden - Likes:

**“He isn't Donald Trump. He shares my view of what America stands for. I want to save our democracy.”**

1. In my view, there are a few topics mentioned in this response.

* 5) Better than the alternative
* 3) Ideology / Philosophy
* 31) Voting rights

However, this is subjective; read through and fully vet each answer, but there is no truly correct way to code these responses. Do your best and be sure you have a reason for how you coded this particular response any particular way. Remember that all responses can have up to as many codes as you would like to assign.

# Appendix D STM Topic Mapping - with Raw STM Data

Full table of all three categories of codes

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Major Categories | Corresponding STM Topics | Corresponding Hand-Coded Topics |
| 1 | Experience | * 26: Experience * 28: Non-Government- Experience * 32: Electability | * 6: Political Experience * 7: Non-Political Experience * 33: Running Mate / Endorsement * 4: Electability |
| 2 | Leadership Qualities | * 4: Compassion/Empathy * 15: Competency * 24: Mental Capabilities * 33: Leadership * 6: Better than alternative | * 5: Better than the alternative * 10: Personality - Ability * 13: Personality - Leadership |
| 3 | Personal Qualities | * 2: Impulse Control * 9: Negative Personality * 11: Candidate Age/Health * 17: Honesty * 20: Untruthful * 31: Uncaring | * 11: Personality - Honesty * 12: Personality - Intelligence * 14: Personality - Other * 15: Candidate Health / Fitness * 16: Religion * 17: Education * 18: Physical Appearance * 19: Demographics |
| 4 | Government Management | * 13: Government Management * 21: Approaches / Decisions * 25: Kept Promises * 22: Covid | * 30: Public Health / Covid * 31: Democracy / Voting Rights |
| 5 | Government Activity / Philosophy | * 12: Ideology / Philosophy * 27: Party * 34: Progress | * 2: Government activity * 3: Ideology / Philosophy |
| 6 | Domestic Policies | * 1: Working Class Issues * 5: Science/Environmental Policy * 18: Healthcare Policy * 26: Military Spending * 30: General Policy Beliefs | * 20: Policy - Economic * 21: Policy - Poor People * 22: Policy - Liberty * 24: Policy - Other |
| 7 | Foreign Policies | * 14: Military Policy * 23: National Security * 35: General Foreign Policy | * 23: Policy - International Affairs |
| 8 | Group Connections | * 3: Racial Issues * 29: Values | * 26: Groups * 32: Racial Issues |
| 9 | Miscellaneous | * 8: Feelings * 16: General Dislike * 19: For the rich | * 1: General * 8: Scandal / Coverup * 9: Other Past Activity * 27: Emotions / Feelings * 28: Candidate - Other * 29: Non - Candidate * 34: Don’t Know * 35: All others |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Raw STM Data** | Label | Major Cat | Closest Hand Category |
| 1 | Topic 1 Top Words:  Highest Prob: work, class, peopl, make, tri, care, fight  FREX: class, work, fight, middl, tri, make, profession  Lift: cours, john, mistak, rise, class, fight, work  Score: work, class, john, fight, middl, tri, mistak | Working Class Issues | Domestic Policies | (21) Policy - Poor People |
| 2 | Topic 2 Top Words:  Highest Prob: left, mouth, never, polici, far, decis, peopl  FREX: mouth, never, left, answer, far, agenda, puppet  Lift: engag, subject, mouth, answer, fund, although, mislead  Score: subject, mouth, engag, answer, left, agenda, never | Impulse Control | Personal Qualities | (14) Policy - Other |
| 3 | Topic 3 Top Words:  Highest Prob: trump, donald, racist, better, presid, bigot, biden  FREX: donald, trump, bigot, better, pathet, racist, preditor  Lift: bigot, pathet, preditor, donald, trump, excus, cater  Score: trump, donald, preditor, bigot, pathet, better, racist | Racial Issues | Group Concerns | (32)  Racial Issues / Policing |
| 4 | Topic 4 Top Words:  Highest Prob: like, everyth, honest, man, fact, concern, human  FREX: honest, everyth, like, man, decent, fact, may  Lift: oppos, decent, honest, everyth, least, empathet, like  Score: like, everyth, honest, oppos, man, fact, decent | Compassion  /Empathy | Leadership Qualities | (11) Personality - Honesty |
| 5 | Topic 5 Top Words:  Highest Prob: scienc, direct, incompet, will, countri, spend, environ  FREX: direct, scienc, spend, environ, wear, destruct, expert  Lift: destruct, wear, environ, expert, direct, spend, scienc  Score: wear, spend, environ, direct, scienc, expert, doesn’t | Science / Environmental Policy | Domestic Policy | (25)  Policy - Other |
| 6 | Topic 6 Top Words:  Highest Prob: experi, build, relationship, offic, better, social, world  FREX: experi, build, relationship, small, pass, charact, damag  Lift: pass, experi, build, small, restor, near, popul  Score: experi, pass, relationship, build, restor, damag, system | Better then alternative | Experience | (6) Political Experience |
| 7 | Topic 7 Top Words:  Highest Prob: nation, countri, lot, touch, current, good, presid  FREX: nation, current, touch, child, lot, hate, real  Lift: child, nation, congress, faith, current, sociopath, end  Score: child, nation, current, touch, hate, fascist, congress | State of the Nation | Government Managment | (8) Scandal / Coverup |
| 8 | Topic 8 Top Words:  Highest Prob: feel, mani, countri, see, like, america, politician  FREX: feel, see, mani, yet, don’t, divis, mind  Lift: topic, yet, see, don’t, unifi, healthi, feel  Score: yet, feel, see, mani, divis, don’t, unifi | Feelings | Miscellaneous | (27) Emotions - Feelings |
| 9 | Topic 9 Top Words:  Highest Prob: hes, offic, real, need, asshol, crazi, everyon  FREX: hes, asshol, crazi, real, offic, pervert, trustworthi  Lift: hes, asshol, crazi, pervert, joke, trustworthi, real  Score: hes, crazi, offic, asshol, real, need, trustworthi | Negative Personality | Personal Qualities | (11) Personality - Honesty |
| 10 | Topic 10 Top Words:  Highest Prob: say, thing, lie, peopl, way, pandem, racist  FREX: say, thing, way, lie, selfish, love, pandem  Lift: egotist, emot, unstabl, immor, selfish, say, sexist  Score: say, emot, lie, selfish, egotist, liar, unstabl | Rhetoric | Miscellaneous | (30) Public - Health - Covid |
| 11 | Topic 11 Top Words:  Highest Prob: realli, old, speak, isnt, age, stand, mind  FREX: realli, isnt, speak, lifelong, old, prefer, age  Lift: bare, dement, excel, lifelong, isnt, prefer, manner  Score: lifelong, realli, speak, old, isnt, age, ethic | Candidate Age/Health | Personal Qualities | (15) Candidate Age - Health |
| 12 | Topic 12 Top Words:  Highest Prob: countri, socialist, help, want, peopl, make, togeth  FREX: socialist, togeth, help, viewpoint, bring, want, arrog  Lift: viewpoint, choos, socialist, ration, shape, decenc, environment  Score: viewpoint, socialist, togeth, help, bring, becom, choos | Ideology  /Philosophy | Government Philosphy | (3) Ideology / Philosophy |
| 13 | Topic 13 Top Words:  Highest Prob: presid, know, will, vice, polit, hous, white  FREX: vice, know, presid, happi, hear, hous, second  Lift: half, happi, common, vice, hear, second, sexual  Score: happi, presid, vice, know, hear, hous, second | Vice President | Government Managment | (33) Running Mate / Endorsement |
| 14 | Topic 14 Top Words:  Highest Prob: good, polici, believ, view, militari, econom, economi  FREX: good, econom, view, believ, polici, militari, brought  Lift: brought, cathol, murder, strength, businessman, econom, background  Score: polici, good, view, econom, believ, strength, militari | Military Policy | Foreign Policy | (23) Policy - International Affairs |
| 15 | Topic 15 Top Words:  Highest Prob: think, will, set, know, time, tax, america  FREX: set, think, ridicul, know, speak, creat, china  Lift: home, usa, set, creat, think, israel, ridicul  Score: think, set, ridicul, creat, speak, school, spend | Competency | Leadership Qualities | (10) Personality - Ability |
| 16 | Topic 16 Top Words:  Highest Prob: dont, run, want, just, trust, state, mate  FREX: dont, run, capabl, trust, just, mate, want  Lift: capabl, fool, clue, dont, mate, run, trust  Score: dont, run, mate, trust, fool, just, want | General Dislike | Miscellaneous | (1) General |
| 17 | Topic 17 Top Words:  Highest Prob: think, peopl, honesti, liar, will, racial, danger  FREX: honesti, bulli, racial, think, danger, liar, continu  Lift: compuls, exact, impuls, tension, present, cut, prison  Score: exact, liar, think, honesti, bulli, continu, racial | Honesty | Personal Qualities | (11) Personality - Honesty |
| 18 | Topic 18 Top Words:  Highest Prob: done, like, lot, deal, said, bill, medicar  FREX: done, lot, bill, medicar, said, deal, regul  Lift: bill, medicar, done, prevent, sex, obamacar, whatev  Score: done, medicar, bill, lot, prevent, got, like | Healthcare Policy | Domestic Policy | (25) Policy - Other |
| 19 | Topic 19 Top Words:  Highest Prob: doesnt, polit, rich, help, tax, left, far  FREX: doesnt, rich, polit, differ, chanc, far, left  Lift: bit, suppos, doesnt, differ, chanc, decad, there  Score: doesnt, bit, rich, differ, left, polit, suppos | For the rich | Miscellious | (20) Policy - Economic |
| 20 | Topic 20 Top Words:  Highest Prob: countri, turn, lie, cant, everyth, believ, will  FREX: turn, cant, lie, everyth, tri, trust, communic  Lift: communic, repeat, turn, abras, news, embarrass, light  Score: turn, cant, repeat, communic, lie, abras, everyth | Untruthful | Personal Qualities | (11) Personality - Honesty |
| 21 | Topic 21 Top Words:  Highest Prob: pro, question, approach, man, live, major, involv  FREX: major, question, involv, approach, pro, twitter, live  Lift: flynn, major, respond, socialismh, twitter, guy, isn’t  Score: major, pro, involv, approach, question, flynn, matter | Approaches / Decisions | Government Managment | (13) Personality - Leadership |
| 22 | Topic 22 Top Words:  Highest Prob: peopl, attitud, make, person, presid, good, lack  FREX: attitud, enjoy, side, lead, person, racial, worst  Lift: attitud, enjoy, side, mask, statement, larg, among  Score: attitud, enjoy, crisi, worst, side, peopl, lack | Covid | Government Managment | (30) Covid / Public Health |
| 23 | Topic 23 Top Words:  Highest Prob: posit, countri, other, address, strong, health, deal  FREX: posit, address, other, government, peac, hope, sure  Lift: address, government, posit, peac, societi, disregard, hope  Score: address, posit, other, hope, government, peac, crisi | National Security | Foreign Policy | (23) Policy - International Affairs |
| 24 | Topic 24 Top Words:  Highest Prob: lack, mental, leadership, poor, charact, disrespect, corrupt  FREX: lack, leadership, disrespect, mental, charact, poor, comment  Lift: comment, cultur, dishonesti, disrespect, fear, intellig, charact  Score: comment, lack, disrespect, poor, charact, mental, fear | Mental Capabilities | Leadership Qualities | (15) Candidate Health / Mental Fitness |
| 25 | Topic 25 Top Words:  Highest Prob: peopl, american, promis, pandem, kept, elect, moral  FREX: kept, promis, peopl, elect, american, younger, due  Lift: deliv, flag, kept, younger, con, elect, promis  Score: kept, peopl, promis, american, elect, due, flag | Track Record | Government Managment | (13) Personality - Leadership |
| 26 | Topic 26 Top Words:  Highest Prob: seem, obama, like, also, biden, joe, year  FREX: obama, seem, rather, ive, joe, alot, heart  Lift: rather, children, ive, passion, vise, alot, obama  Score: rather, seem, obama, ive, joe, children, also | Endorsements | Experience | (33) Running Mate / Endorsements |
| 27 | Topic 27 Top Words:  Highest Prob: democrat, vote, liber, dementia, abort, pro, one  FREX: democrat, dementia, vote, liber, actual, pro, abort  Lift: barack, actual, dementia, vote, democrat, pay, liber  Score: democrat, vote, barack, dementia, pro, liber, platform | Party | Government Activity / Philosophy | (2) Party |
| 28 | Topic 28 Top Words:  Highest Prob: economi, busi, get, tax, job, thing, countri  FREX: busi, economi, improv, get, success, job, made  Lift: bought, confid, growth, improv, market, start, success  Score: economi, busi, improv, bought, get, success, lower | Non Government- Experience | Experience | (7) Non - Political Experience |
| 29 | Topic 29 Top Words:  Highest Prob: support, strong, valu, conserv, polic, law, china  FREX: valu, strong, support, conserv, principl, china, polic  Lift: anita, blm, hill, judgment, tend, treatment, principl  Score: principl, support, valu, strong, conserv, blm, socialist | Values | Group Connections | (3) Ideology / Philosophy |
| 30 | Topic 30 Top Words:  Highest Prob: stanc, belief, countri, women, align, gun, immigr  FREX: belief, align, gun, stanc, women, control, border  Lift: behavior, belief, regard, align, gun, mine, led  Score: stanc, belief, behavior, gun, align, women, led | Policy - Liberty | Domestic Policy | (22) Policy - Liberty |
| 31 | Topic 31 Top Words:  Highest Prob: care, countri, person, idiot, empathi, racist, divid  FREX: care, idiot, empathi, person, fit, divid, basic  Lift: calm, hurt, sander, traitor, uniti, idiot, care  Score: care, person, calm, idiot, empathi, divid, basic | Uncaring | Personal Qualities | (12) Personality - Intelligence |
| 32 | Topic 32 Top Words:  Highest Prob: candid, great, stop, anoth, put, america, view  FREX: candid, stop, great, anoth, moder, win, protect  Lift: deep, post, select, moder, win, candid, stop  Score: candid, post, moder, stop, anoth, great, deep | Electability | Experience | (5) Better than the alternative |
| 33 | Topic 33 Top Words:  Highest Prob: govern, long, countri, repres, compass, need, role  FREX: long, role, compass, repres, govern, effect, understand  Lift: role, alreadi, cognit, rude, long, compass, effect  Score: role, long, govern, repres, compass, need, busi | Leadership | Leadership Qualities | (13) Personality Leadership |
| 34 | Topic 34 Top Words:  Highest Prob: year, enough, four, redact, american, social, progress  FREX: four, year, progress, redact, enough, motiv, ago  Lift: motiv, progress, ago, four, resourc, sometim, road  Score: progress, year, redact, four, ago, enough, resourc | Past Activity | Government Activity | (9) Other Past Activity |
| 35 | Topic 35 Top Words:  Highest Prob: plan, foreign, general, polici, poor, bad, tax  FREX: plan, foreign, general, bad, poor, polici, horribl  Lift: disagre, epidem, plan, financi, supremaci, foreign, general  Score: disagre, plan, poor, foreign, general, epidem, bad | General Foreign Policy | Foreign Policy | (23) Policy - International Affairs |

### Find Thoughts for STM - 3 Representative Reponses for each STM Topic

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| --- | --- | --- |
| # | Topic Label | Find Thoughts Output  (RAW ANES open-ended responses from either position within the 4x4) |
| 1 | Working Class Issues | **1)** my worry is that he may just focus on the poor lower social economic status population and not the working class which is the catagory that my family fits in. I am not poor neither do I qualify for any low income benefits.    **2)** First and foremost, he is not Donald Trump. He is compassionate and seeks to involve people of all backgrounds in his appointments. He supports science in government decision making. He seems to be able to recognize past mistakes and change course. He is not perfect and was not my first choice but perhaps he will rise to occasion and truly work to strengthen equality in all aspects of life.    **3)** Joe is for the people--he seems to sincerely care. I believe he will work to make America a place to be proud of and help the Citizens. |
| 2 | Impulse Control | 1) I do not like how he talks about people of color, women, people with disabilities, and veterans. I can't trust anything that comes out of his mouth. He refuses to take ownership of his decisions and refuses to seek advice-and take advice-from people with different opinions than his regardless of the fact that they are more educated on the subject than he is.  2) he appears to be a puppet of the far left socialist agenda in the Democratic Party. He also seems not to be coherent a good part of the time. he’s had over 40 years in politics to do something and has been on the wrong side of most decisions made for the positive benefits of Americans.  3) I definitely agree with his policies on healthcare, tax policy, education funding, theres a whole lot of them his approach to the military and military engagement// |
| 3 | Racial Issues | 1) Donald Trump is a racist, homophobic, bigoted, pathetic excuse for president. He has lied constantly about the Corona Virus. He is a pathetic excuse for a man, let alone president of the United States. He has attacked our military service members, he made fun of a reporters for his disability. He is disgusting.  2) leftist/progressive ideologyliberal Supreme Court nominees,pro war stances.47 years of not much to show for, mildly racist, used the threat that Republicans would put black Americans in chains again,democrats vote against Israel and cater to Iran. Nepotism with Hunter Biden ie.China/Burisma, blackmailing 1 billion dollars, etc Biden has catered to Communist China  3) He is not Donald Trump. Biden has integrity and is best-suited to reverse some of the damage caused by Donald Trump over the last four years. |
| 4 | Compassion  /Empathy | Topic 4:  has somewhat decent policies- i like kamala better but joe biden is at least not awful  He is at least has honesty. He is not the pathological liar that Trump is. He has a great deal of experience in foreign affairs which I appreciate. I support his choice of Kamala Harris as running mate. Biden will be far and away better for this country that the self absorbed, hate-filled Trump.  He may also be a pedophile, but I especially do not like his ethics |
| 5 | Science / Environmental Policy | Topic 5:  Too exhaustive to list: lack of intelligence, refuses to follow science, broadcasts misinformation and lies, diabolical "salesman" whose actions benefit only the elite, divides to conquer, fascist traits, destruction of environment for corporate gain, surrounds himself with not with experts, but with incompetent criminals, narcissism, bullying, racism, sexism....  1. while both candidates endorse massive gobernnment spending and deficits, Joe biden expresses claims he'd spend a lot more than Trump, especially on social spending, and there's education in there too, and military but as a general top line number, it's clear that joe biden would spend more than Donald Trump...I'd say potentially, since they both throw those numbers out there. The one other point is that he has been easily manipulated; I'd be concerned that extremists--extreme ideologies that lean leftward may be exploiting him//  His lack of morals. His entitlement attitude. His inability to tell the truth. He is stupid. He doesn’t educate himself before making decisions. He doesn’t listen to advice from experts. He is stupid. He doesn’t wear a mask! |
| 6 | Better than alternative | Topic 6:  He’s not Trump. He has the ability to build coalitions, is progressive & has plans for restoring damage T has done to the environment, the social support systems, the post office, & building a stable economy for ALL Americans. His integrity will help rebuild our standing in the world. we wont have to worry about damage to Medicare & Social Security or his undercutting prograns to help small businesses & vulnerable populations toenhance his own wealth & his cronies. He respects women, minorities & people with disabilities  He is an honorable man and he would restore a sense of decency to the presidency. He has the knowledge and experience needed for the job on day one.  He’s a better option than Trump. He might be able to fix our relationships with other countries, pass legislation to prevent climte change, and push for euality under the law. |
| 7 | State of the Nation | Topic 7:  A LOT HAPPENED WITH THIS PRESIDENT I HEARD A LOT ABOUT MULLER'S REPORT HIS LEADERSHIP NOT THE STRONGEST ALSO NOT AN HONEST LEADER TO THE AMERICANS NOT TRUTHFUL ALSO THE WAY HE IS INSIGHTING INTO VIOLENCE WE HAVE TO FACE A LOT OF HATE CRIMES HIS PLATFORM IS BASED ON HATE AND LIES AND BENEFITTING CERTAIN GROUP NOT HELPING THE REAL AMERICAN WORKERS HE HASN'T BEEN WELL INTERNATIONALY IN GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER NATIONS NOT GOOD IN HANDLING THE COVID-19 NOT DOING WELL FOR THIS NATION.//  He has destroyed the nation. We are divided more than ever ince he took over, he is holding congress hostage. He ignored a national pandemic and is directly responsible for our nations' shortcomings in the pandemic response. He has sewn discord across the whole country. He is an admitted fascist. He welcomes our countries enemies and praises dictators. He is the beginning of the end of our country's democracy. He spits on the sacrifices of our servicemen. He put [REDACTED FAMILY DETAILS] in direct danger when [REDACTED DETAILS].  He's a racist misogynist fascist who watches Fox News all day and does nothing for the country. He abuses the presidency for his own personal gain. He corrupts everything he touches, including turning the Justice Department into his own personal law firm. He is dumb, malicious, a sociopath, and a pathological narcissist. His only constituency is the very rich. He lies to his base, riles them up to violence, and in the end does nothing for them. |
| 8 | Feelings | Topic 8: His ability to unify the country, and his overall approach to solving difficult challenges which is to fill a room with the smartest people and facilitate a healthy debate over the best of many solutions. Specifically I support the Green New Deal, raising the minimum wage, addressing systemic racism, and providing universal healthcare coverage. I don’t mind paying more taxes for those things.  Because he is not a career politician, he keeps his campaign promises and loves America. I agree with his platform of America first. The Democrat's are destroying our cities.  I like many things about him. Prayer and God back in the White House are the first ones that come to mind. |
| 9 | Negative Personality | Topic 9:  he's a pervert. It's on video multiple times with young girls. He's nasty and needs to go.  we need someone who is NOT a politician in office  He's out for the middle class. He's out for everyone. He's going to be a fair president. and we need him in here. He'll keep our taxes down.// |
| 10 | Rhetoric | Topic 10:  HE IS A LIAR , HE REALLY HAS NO RESPECT FOR ANYTHING, AND HE HAS NO RESPECT FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OR FOR THE VETERANS, HE HAS NO REPSPECT FOR MINORITIES OF ANY KIND. ITS HARD TO EVEN PINPOINT, HE IS EGOTISTICAL, I HAVE NOTHING GOOD TO SAY SO i DO NOT WANT TO KEEP GOING//  his love of counry his dislike of liberals a very strong international leader does what he Says he will do takes a strong hand with world leaders  He lies, he is anti-woman, antI-LGBTQ, ANTI-African American, Anti-Muslim, He's uninformed of the issues, he did a terrible response to Covid-19 pandemic, He curses, He says horrible things about everyone, He does not respect the troops, He uses the military on his own citizens, He hires unqualified people like his family, He puts up unqualified judges which the republicans vote in, he is messing with the mail, he tells people to vote twice, Need I say more? |
| 11 | Candidate Age/Health | Topic 11:  well, going into the Alaskin reserves for one thing. He is very, extremely non eco friendly. He did not take covit seriously in the beginning until he realized, oh this really is a wicked virus, until he was forced to comply. He goes for the so called poor, only because he has to look good. He has always lived and believes in socialism, not in a communal way of living. not really all pulling together to better a situation, us...  -He lies. Unabashedly, constantly, and in such a bold manner that a psychological issue is most likely at play-He's a spoiled brat. I don't want a president who has never paid their own phone bill.-He's a sexual predator-He ignores science and data-He can't dress himself, literally holds his nose in the air when getting asked questions like he's in a Dickens novel, and he's fat and dumpy. All aesthetics, but also critical when putting a president alongside another world leader.-He doesn't speak well, and he is obviously unintelligent-He's bitter and spiteful, and his emotions are easily manipulated at the turn of a dime-He's racist-He's sexist-His obvious disregard for law and the sanctity of his office has resulted in the first time in my life I have ever been ashamed of my country. No hyperbole, full-stop.  Donald Trump lacks proper experience and leadership skills to lead the nation. He also lacks to ability to speak in an educated manner which gives the appearance that he is growing senile in his old age. |
| 12 | Ideology  /Philosophy | Topic 12:  He and the Democratic Party seem to want us to choose to become a socialist country. Everything they are asking to do resembles what has been done in other countries in the past who became socialistic. None of them did well by that point. I want people to have more power to help shape our country and what it is governed by. I want us to be free, not socialist and to work on our problems together (race, inequality, opportunity and fairness to all, and an honest reporting that is neutral so we can all make up our own minds.  His viewpoints on healthcare, environmental protection, and education. Separate from his platform, his compassion towards people and his ability to listen to others and make rational decisions that will benefit our country and bring us together.  Screeches the truth. Comes across looking dishonest. Arrogant.// |
| 13 | Vice President | Topic 13:  I am not happy to hear that he will be raising taxes. I am not happy to hear that he is for closing the country during this pandemic and I am not happy to hear that he will be willing to place a stricter ban on the 2nd amendment.Additionally, I am not pleased with his policies international and the idea of free college and higher minimum wage.  Age, stance on 2nd amendment. His pick of vice president along with fear he will not be healthy enough to make a full term.  First: He has been in politics for a long time and is very experienced. Second: He is a very competent, thoughtful and compassionate person with whom I identify. Third: I know he will work for the betterment of society, not himself as the current occupant of the White House does. |
| 14 | Military Policy | Topic 14:  I believe in some of his policies and economic stance but I believe he causes more harm than good with his actions and words  His economic policies have brought a thriving economy and his military policies have strengthened the US military.  I BELIEVE HE IS A GOOD BUSINESSMAN// |
| 15 | Competency | Topic 15:  He’s a pedophile and only wants to raise taxes. The democrats only chose him so they can set someone else up to truly be president. He has been in politics for 40 something years and has not done anything good to change our system in all that time, so what makes you think that he will be able to change it now. He only wants to create more taxes and he is racist against black people. He is trying to take advantage of them and make them think he cares, when all he will really do is tax them to death and force thwm further into poverty.  His policies are more in line with what I think is important. I know he's a despicable person, but he gets things done, and I think he's the only one at this moment who can and will stand up to China and Russia. Also I think he'll protect a lot of the things that the Marxists and radical liberals are trying to destroy in America. We are living in a time when we can't say what we believe if it doesn't fit the right narrative. That's wrong. It's gotten too crazy. I live in California, and because of the corruption and bad policies, it's unrecognizable as the great state it once was: power outages, terrible roads, bad schools and ridiculous taxes and ridiculous prison reform.  No war, No open borders, Bring troops home, Love for Israel and Israel-UAE incredible deal, Manufacturing in USA, School choice, Buy American |
| 16 | General Dislike | Topic 16:  Pretty much everything .He wants to pack the courts. He hasn't said it out loud but I know that's what he wants to do. He supports the green new deal which I'm against. He wants to add two more states as part of the united states.  He is pro-life, stock markit were well until covid came, he has got things going in the right way, he supports the police and city mayors, they dont want trump to go in and he wants to help, i dont understand why they dont want the national guard when he has riots burning down cities//  dont trust him. just dont |
| 17 | Honesty | Topic 17:  child touching/ no tact  He has caused the deaths of what will be well over 200,000 people by his inaction against Covid-19. He has extremely bad morals, lying, cheating, corrupt and so on. He is a narcissist and uses people in government for his benefit, not the people's. His foreign policies and relationship with Vladimir Putin are dangerous to Western and our security.  He is an embarrassment to our country. He is childish and impulsive. Along with Reagan, George W Bush, and himself he has continued to cut taxes for the wealthy and has dramatically increased the deficit. He has totally mishandled COVID-19. It appears he colluded with Russia. He supports and promotes autocratic leaders. He is a compulsive liar who believes his own lies. It is amazing to me any one would vote for him. |
| 18 | Healthcare Policy | Topic 18:  He has done so much for our country and is criticized every step of the way. Personal attacks by the democratic party and the media have been extremely out of control and he is handling the chaos as a true leader. I have a lot of respect for our president for what he has done in the past 4 years and his plans for our future.  cHe's done a lot, he's cut taxes and regulations. He supports cops, I like that. He's done a lot oon immigration. He just got through the peace deal in the middle east. He's just done a lot. THe undid the Obamacare insurance mandate. I got dinged for that, so I really liked that he did that. Law and order. He's backing the cops. I really like that about him. His criminal reform bill that he signed. Renegotiating trade deals like NAFTA. I like his policies.//  If for whatever reason I choose to vote against him, it would be for a third party and not for tr\*mp. Not only does Biden function as a typical powerful (most likely corrupt) politician, his sex scandal has made it extremely difficult for me to feel comfortable voting for him, even as a "disaster prevention" tactic. |
| 19 | For the rich | Topic 19:  He is a career politician whom I'm supposed to believe has the ability or will to change issues within our political system even though he's been in government for decades. He is not far left, but panders and caters to the worst far left elements of his party and those people will be the ones who end up running his administration especially considering his choice of VP.  racist - homoohobic VP- doesnt help the poor - doesnt help students - doesnt take the corona virus seriously - tax breaks only help the rich -  QUE EL SE NIEGA A PRESENTAR SUS TAXES PERO LE GUSTA QUE UNO CUMPLA CON RENDIR LOS TAXES Y QUE SUPUESTAMENTE LAS COMPANIAS RICAS NO RINDAN TAXES ADEMAS NO QUIERE AYUDAR A LOS INMIGRANTES LEGALES Y ESO ESTA MAL PORQUE SI ELLOS TRABAJAN Y PAGAN TAXES Y NO ESTAN HACIENDO NADA MALO DEBERIA DE DARLE UNA OPORTUNIDAD Y AYUDARLOS |
| 20 | Untruthful | Topic 20:  Donald Trump was not great in the beginning of his turn but he is learning how to be a good president. Now, he has good point of view to do the right things for US. I saw his speech about Covid-19 which he is very strong for standing out against outside of the country. People vote to him for a good reason. I will vote him to keep our country safe and strong. We need a great leader to run our country. I hope the Covid-19 will be over soon. God Bless the America!  I like that he has done or at the least has tried to do everything he said he would! He in my opinion is the best president we’ve had in my lifetime! I’ve wanted someone that would turn Washington upside down for several years and believe he is doing a wonderful job in light of all the democrat and Rhino attacks!  To be perfectly honest, he is not Donald Trump. It does help that he has been a public servant all his life and he has experience navigating country through last economic crisis. He would be able to bring the US a measure of stability and restore some normalcy. It'd quite nice to turn on news and not feel embarrassed because the leader of your country is moronic, illiterate, and says ridiculous shit like injecting bleach in the middle of a pandemic. |
| 21 | Approaches / Decisions | Topic 21:  his approach to coronavirus, his approach to foreign policy, his misogynistic actions, his approach to the black lives matter movement, his approach to the recent california fires, etc  He isn’t swayed by the lifetime politicians. He has gotten rid of a lot of ridiculous regulations. I agree with his foreign policy. We are not the worlds police and if America isn’t taking care of itself, how can it help others?  BIDEN IS A LAZY POLITICIAN. BEEN IN POLITICS FOR MORE THAN 45 YEARS, TOTALLY DISHONEST, BEEN INVOLVED IN VARIOUS QUESTIONABLE INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS USING HIS POSITION AS VICE PRESIDENT; HE INVOLVED HIS SON HUNTER IN QUESTIONABLE TRANSACTIONS IN UKRAINE AND CHINA. HIS BROTHER ON IRAQ IN QUESTIONABLE TRANSACTIONS BUILDING HOUSING. BIDEN WAS ALSO VERY MUCH INVOLVED IN GETTING GENERAL FLYNN CONVICTED ON FALSE CHARGES. |
| 22 | Attitude | Topic 22:  His ethics, his handling of the corona virus, his attitude towards immigrants, dreamers, and the wall that was to built. His attitude of global warming, his being in personal debt and not showing his IRS statements. His lack of pulling this country together but consistently causing constant division by his words and actions. His childish tweets and slander.  His morals, think he is epistein hung himself if he didnt hang himeself he had a lot of stories to tell us liek prince of england in far as endeveaors furnishing women for illicit purpose. There would have been a lot name of higher powered people if he had nto hung himself , if he did. He should be leading the company on wearing a mask insteaf of ignoring it , lead the country, thats what Bidne does when leaves the stage, Trump does not believe in that . He has a large ego. He enjoys hearing himself and the crowds enjoy what he is saying , gone overboard on issues such as white supremacy, he has to counter that and counter the retirck he used against the people protesting the church in alabama and said there is good people on both sides, the good people he was referring to was the kuklux klan , cant go against the morality and racist, two ingriedients that make a person or break a person and those are the things trump goign to have. he has a high opinion of himself, dont like bringing up john mccain , wonderful person , crticism of him and the bush family .Regretfully voted for him . He has a good vice president , cant say the same for Biden.  Arrogant boorish attitude. Consistenly inciting unrest, racial divide, and any other negative you could imagine. He horribly mismanaged the Covid crisis which resulted in many deaths. His base is idiotic and racist and represents literally the worst people among us. He is the worst president of all time. |
| 23 | National Security | Topic 23:  I worry that he is a little too old for the rigors of the position and am not sure that Senator Harris has enough experience at this point if he became ill. However, he is by far the most hopeful choice we have. I expect that he will listen to the various positions within the Democratic party and try to arrive at positions that are fair to all Americans.  1. Continues to move Left politically. 2. Not strong in foreign policy matters, e.g.: his wholehearted approval of the Iran JCPOA deal; and his reco to Pres. Obama NOT to take-out terrorist UBL. 3. Strong leaning to statist, big government positions. 4. Does not support the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution (despite his rhetoric to the contrary).  His obvious disregard for the sanctity of anything except his own position. An honorable trait in some levels of society, but as a governmental agency, it is philosophically unsound. |
| 24 | Mental Capabilities | Topic 24:  yes, the fear that we are trying to recover was left of our nation, and to put in hands of someone that doesn’t have good morals standings in about what rummors comments...in other words he has shaky reputation  mentally unsound, he favors Socialist/Commnist agenda, favors New World Order, he hates America, His dealings related to his crooked son, he is a liar. he is not trustworthy. he cannot even track mentally in a conversation. He chose a very terrible person for a running mate.. and MUCH MORE  liar, incompetent, facistic, not well informed, narcissistic, not intelligent, poor decision maker, poor representative for America on the world stage, disrespectful to women and minorities, corrupt, Republican |
| 25 | Track Record | Topic 25:  His contempt for the rule of law and the Constitution, his inability to hire and retain qualified public servants, his self-dealing, his incessant name-calling and consistant failure to negotiate in good faith, his reluctance to read his intelligence briefings, his inexplicable reliance on Vladimir Putin, and his refusal to say that he will accept the results of the election in November. Above all, his catastrophic mishandling of the federal government’s response to the Covid 19 pandemic.  Proven record of accomplishments despite politicians in Washington trying every legal and illegal aspect of keeping him from doing his job. Not only has he led our country, he has thanklessly and effectively kept going without caving to whiny toddlers elected under the Democrat flag.  his lack of empathy of what people are going through due to this pandemic have been laid off for a year due to pandemic also he lacks sympathy for what African American people are going through not a black or white thing but a human interest issue |
| 26 | Endorsements | Topic 26:  Served 47 years with a very weak record. He and Pres. Obama divided this country along racial lines rather than helping to bring us together. They did nothing for the African American community. The most violent cities are run by Democrats.. Joe Biden and his rich friends are preacing to me about race. I spent 30 years teaching in an Title I school predominatly black school. I saw what how little they did for my children. I do not respect Joe Biden and I will actively avocate against Kamala Harris.  It seems like his mind is slipping, and I've seen him talk back to and put down potential voters. It seems like he's trying to stand his ground and push back, but many times he just seems like a senile jerk. I also feel like he may pander a little too much to his own party. With his deteriorating mental state, I question his ability to lead this country and make wise decisions.  He has symptoms of dementia. He has sexual abuse allegations against him. He nominated Harris based on her race and sex, rather skill or qualifications. He’s being used as a puppet in a very unnerving collective. |
| 27 | Party | Topic 27:  He is too liberal and pro choice. I have always said, if you give me a democrat who is pro life I would probably vote for them, as would many other Christian's I believe  Trump and the Republicans are more pro law enforcement than Democrats however this is not enough for me to vote for him as any Democrat knows that we need police etc.  He is a Democrat and his platform is for the giving (free) to those that do not want to work and pay their way....instead rely on the ones that actually pay taxes to fund their survival. |
| 28 | Non Government- Experience | Topic 28:  He seems to treat the country as a business and made changes to 'Make America Great Again' by working with other countries to improve our stance with the relationships with those countries. He also has made changes within the US itself by improving the economy (lower interest rates, gas prices, etc...) and has been quite successful in doing so. He also has faced more challenges than any other president due to media, other parties, etc. and has still been able to go out and get things taken care of in the best interest of the US.  He has kept every campaign promise that he ran on. Something no other President has come close to doing. He puts AMERICANS first, and citizens of every country should expect their leaders to do the same. He got rid of regulations, made America energy independent, and lowered unemployment for every demographic. He lowered taxes for EVERYONE, and he handled the Pandemic better than any other politician. he works harder than any other President ever has, gives his salary away to Charity, despite being treated like a Pariah by Media, Democrats, and even Republicans. He can't be bought.  THE ECONOMY WAS IMPROVING BEFORE COVID AND HE WAS DOING THE JOB. I AGREE WITH THE WAY HE HANDLES INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS |
| 29 | Values | Topic 29:  He has strong ties to China. His son received billions from China. He is against the 2nd amendment, he is Pro choice, he supports BLM which is a Marxist organization and he has strong leanings toward socialism.  Law and Order; Economy; The Wall; Bring back jobs; America First; Criminal Justice System; Conservative Supreme Court Justices; Conservative Judges  his continued unprofessional tweets, name calling, bullying, playing the victim (everyone is against him), resistence to listening to professional scientific evidence with reference to the covid virus. |
| 30 | General Policy Beliefs | Topic 30:  His entire political career is essentially acquiescence to the prevailing political winds. He has no stance on anything. His stances are an amalgamation of what his advisors tell him to say. Noting this, his stance on guns is terrible. "Fire two blasts!" (referencing his ill-advised tirade about warding off intruders) His housing plan is abysmal. Putting the projects in suburbs? Absurd. That alone will drive anyone who wants to raise a family in a safe neighborhood away from his ballot selection.Elimination of cash bail? That's working out splendidly in NY City! Crime rates going up? We've got to find someone else to blame.  Well, he spoke on a commercial one time and gave a speech about how he views the way our country should be led; he gave his feelings and thoughts about how this country should be led and it matched my feelings and thoughts on how the country should be led. I believe his belief system aligns more with mine. In his speech to address Americans, he stated his convictions and it moved me that he would be the one to lead our country. I think he'll do the right job leading our country. I believe his views match with mine.//  General moral bankruptcy. International relations. Handling of COVID-19. His attempts to depart from democracy. Attacks on the press/right to free speech. His views on women and minorities. |
| 31 | Uncaring | Topic 31:  He is not a fit presidential leader. The hatred and the chaos that ensues from Trump's White House and surrounding circle are flabbergasting and disgusting. I'm struggling to answer this– thinking of him wondering aloud to the nation about drinking bleach as a health measure, taking away rights for so many groups, not having empathy or a care for anyone lesser than him in power or money.  He has proven before his time in office but especially during his time in office he is unfit for the job. He is a liar, a racist, has proven that he lacks empathy, and will not take responsibility for his actions or inaction. Trump and his administration have lied, broken the law, distract from the important issues our country faces, and they seek to further divide our country.  he lies and cheats. he is a racist. he divides the country. he is against the environment. he is taking away health care. he has hurt are standing in the world. he demeans woman. |
| 32 | Electability | Topic 32:  his great economy, withdrawing troops from overseas, law and order candidate, pro-life views, Supreme Court picks, capitalist views, anti-China and anti-Russian views, stopping illegal immigrants, dismantling the Deep State and corruption, pro-2nd Amendment, exposing the corrupt and inept media, protecting First Amendment rights for conservatives, stopping radical extremist leftists, Antifa and marxist BLM-ers  He is NOT knowledgeable about his presidency nor is he staff. He has put America in danger time and time again. He has North Korea threaten us plenty of times. He does NOT know the job of a true president. He also has no background of being a senator, governor, etc. He cheated his 2016 election against Hillary because he knew she would win. THIS IS NOT THE PRESIDENT WE NEED FOR ANOTHER 4 YEARS.  He's more moderate. I hate that our country keeps swinging from one extreme to another. Any and every candidate should represent ALL Americans, not just their party. A moderate is so important. |
| 33 | Leadership | Topic 33:  He is an incredible business man - we have needed that in this country for a long time. Clean up this mess, get us out of debt and stop giving away all our money and resources.  He is a career politician that has been in office too long, accomplishing little of consequence. He is too old and would likely become unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the POTUS before completing his term. He is leaning too far to the left, supporting socialism.  His compassion, honesty, integrity, he understands the issues we face and has a plan. I feel he will look for guidance when needed. He can guide us throught these hard times and take the role of the President with grace and dignity. |
| 34 | Past Activity | Topic 34:  Almost 50 years of basically vacant leadership and government action in the best interest of this country and the American people, regardless of what office he held; ineffective as Vice President; believes in abortion, illegal immigration and rewarding those who come here illegally, has not supported manufacturing, law and order, has not put America first before his own personal/political desires, as is represented by his son's questionable job in Russia, or even how he came to be the Democratic nominee in the first place, as an apparent front for the hugely radicalized party; appears to be physically/mentally challenged to take on the most powerful job in the world !!! In short---I don't trust his motives or his actions !!  He has absolutely no concept of using logic based on scientific data. He has no concept of the importance of conserving our natural resources, such as clean water and air quality, and he is selling off public lands to resource extraction that will destroy the natural beauty of the land. He has continuously neglected the health and well-being of Americans by favoring developers and fossil fuel companies with projects that negatively impact clean water and T&E species habitat. He also consistently makes comments/decisions that cause extreme anger and dismay amongst the general American public; terrible leadership.  President Trump has defended this country against any and all potential threats. Has done what he stated four years ago. The media and other policial parties have nothing but try to keep him from doing what he promised to do four years ago. |
| 35 | General Foreign Policy | Topic 35:  Tacit support of white supremacy, poor handling of the COVID-19 epidemic, bad stance on healthcare, stance on abortion, just general lies and untruthfulness, financial corruption, bad foreign policy, general incompetence.// A reason that I wouldn't vote for Trump is that he is prone to making poor decisions in the moment without thinking them through, and has a jingoistic, over-militarized approach to foreign policy. He has a horrible tax plan that helps to further consolidate the wealth of the rich away from the poor. He has no plan for climate change.//  GENERAL POLICIES , TAXES AND HIS GENERAL DEMEANOR//  Leadership ability, poor handling of the Covid-19 epidemic, etc. |