

Introduction

In 2016, Donald Trump and the Republican party shocked the world and the status quo by winning the presidential election in what [Politico](#) called the “biggest upset in US history.” The election was the 58th in the nation’s history and shattered the coalition of support Democrats has built through the 90’s to carve a meaningful role in post-Reagan politics. While this provides a neat concise narrative the reality of course is far more complicated.

Nonetheless, 2016 is notable for the fracturing of the “[Blue Wall](#)” with Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania all voting Republican. While all three states had been trending towards Republicans in recent elections this had been the first time since the Reagan era that any of them had actually gone red. Without these midwestern states, the DNC’s future outlook looked especially bleak. However, 2020 provided renewed hope to the DNC, as they won back the three aforementioned states and won the “Sun Belt” states of Georgia and Arizona for the first time since the Clinton era. One thing was clear to both parties, the electoral map was changing and a new political alignment was forming, drastically different then the one that American’s had become accustomed to in the 21st century. Additionally, the American politics as a whole has become much more polarized, and the rural-urban divide, which has always been present in politics, is becoming increasingly vast. These changes will have far reaching historical consequences and where and how races will be run in the next political generation.

Methodology

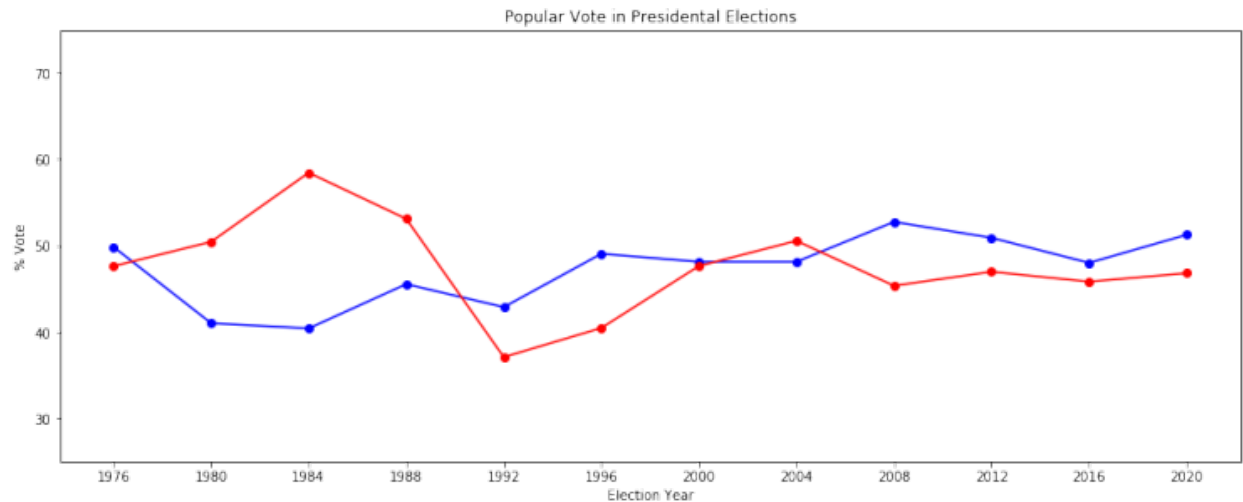
(note: all code and data can be found on my github account : <https://github.com/rk92080>)

The datasets I used are found on the [MIT Election Lab](#) and data modification and cleaning was done using Python. The visualizations in this article were done in Python (Violin plot and line charts) and Excel (maps and bar charts).

Instead of looking at the raw margins and percentages that each candidate won at the state level election I instead created a novel metric called ‘net_diff’ as can be seen in the ‘diff_data.csv’ dataset. ‘Net_diff’ is calculated by subtracting the state’s election returns against the national average of the 50 states, creating two numbers that show how much better the respective candidate did in the state as compared to nationally. I then subtracted the Democratic candidates difference against the Republican candidates difference to consolidate the information to a single statistic. So a value of +4 shows that the states voted slightly more democratic then the other states in that election. However, it DOES NOT necessarily mean that Democrats won that state. For example. in 1980 Illinois has a ‘diff’ of +4.9, however Reagan won the state with 49.6% of the vote. Since 1980 was a landslide election in favor of the GOP, even though Illinois was “more” blue then other states, it was not enough to for the Carter to actually win the state. This statistic allows also to account for years were there was a large 3rd party showing and also check to see how the states electorates voted compared to the other states that year. In simpler terms if 1 percent of the population of a state were to switch there vote from Democrat to Republican then the ‘Net diff’ would change by -2. A detailed view of these calculations can be found on my GitHub.

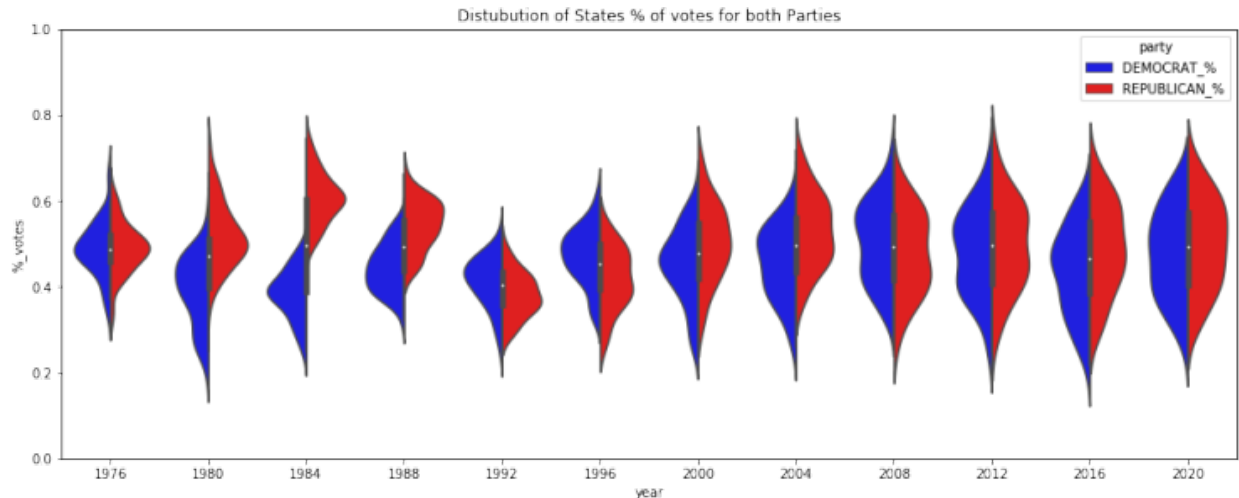
Increasing Polarization

Before taking a detailed look into regional and state Trends, its worth examining national trends that have characterized political sphere in the past quarter century. Below are the popular vote percentages for both parties of the past 12 presidential elections.

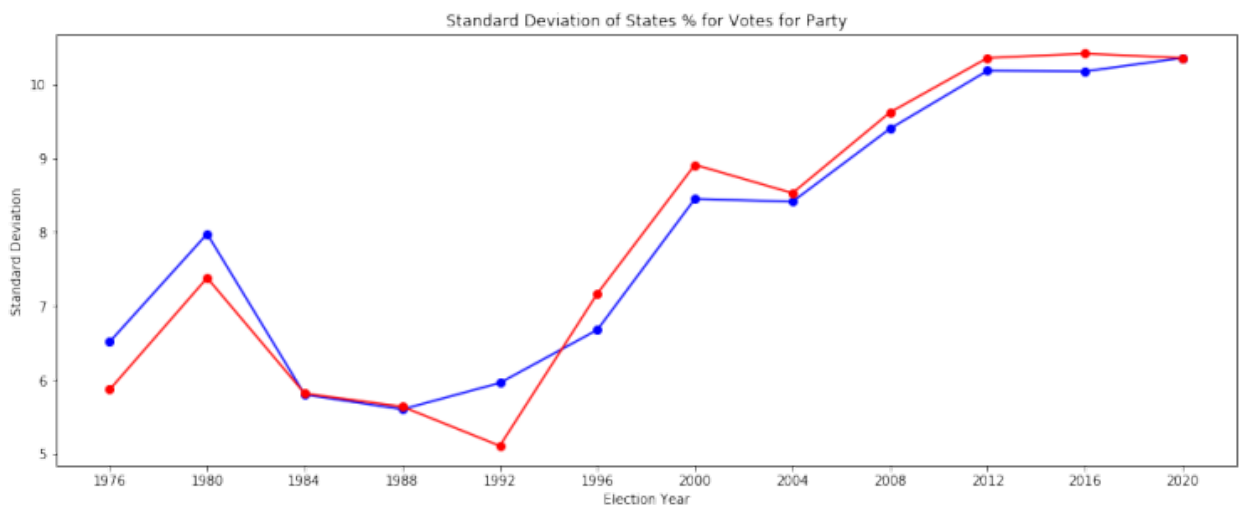


We can see Republican's did particular well in years that Reagan ran (1980 and 1984) , but since 1992 the Democrat have only lost the popular vote once. Outside of the y axis limits are third parties, which performed particularly well in 1992 and 1996 when Ross Perot formed the reform party. It will likely require more analysis to see if this Democrat domination of the popular vote will continue in the future, however it is not relevant for our purposes since election are fought in the electoral college, which involves all delegates associated with a state to go the candidate that wins a plurality of the vote (except for in Maine and Nebraska).

When looking at voting margins at the state level there is an obvious increase in polarization since the 1990's, which shows that the winning candidates have been consistently capturing more of the electorate. The violin plot shows the distribution of votes for both parties among the 50 states for each election year.



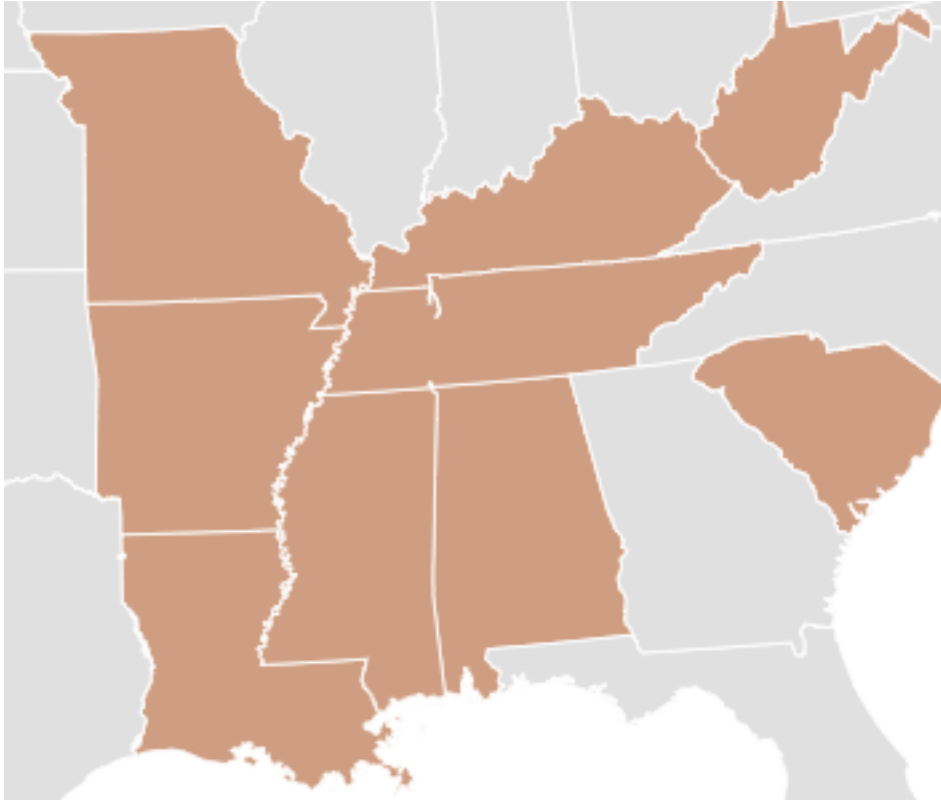
Each “violin” represent a single election, with the red half showing the distribution Republican’s performance in all 50 states and the blue half doing the same for Democrats. The thickness of the distribution is represents the number states which voted around that percentage for the respective candidate. Therefore, the “violins” that are more stretched out indicate a larger distribution of state level outcomes in that election. The asymmetric violins showing the election in the 1980’s underscores importance of Reagan as a political force in the 1980’s. We can also see that since 1992, there has a persistent increase in polarization in American politics. This can also be confirmed by looking at the standard deviation of the percentage of vote the parties received by state for each election.



The reason behind this shocking trend will require further analysis and study, however, the effects of a polarized electorate can cause instability in a democracy, and tends to correlate with an increase in extreme and partisan politicians.

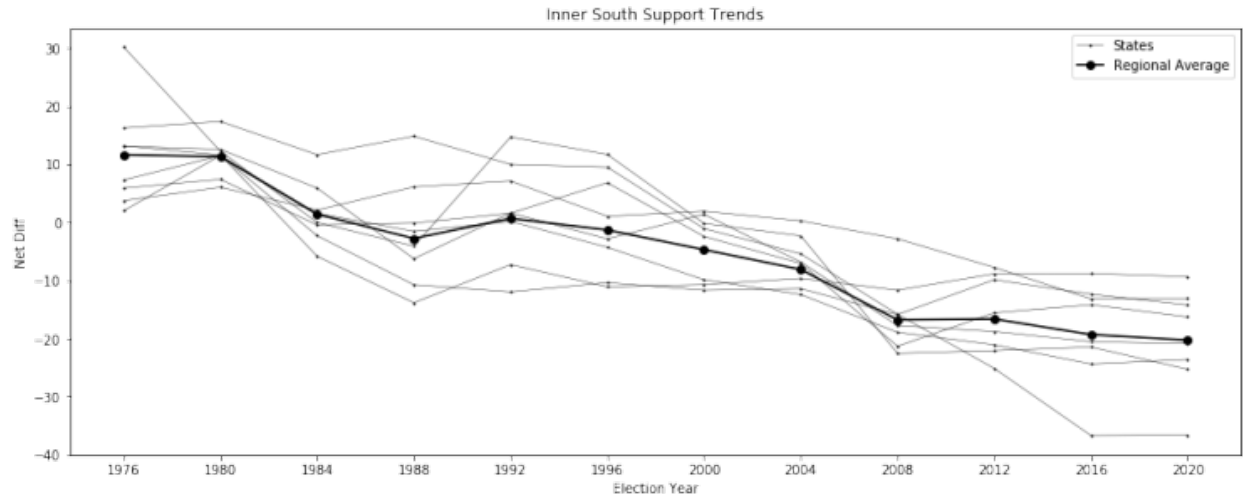
Regional Analysis

Inner South



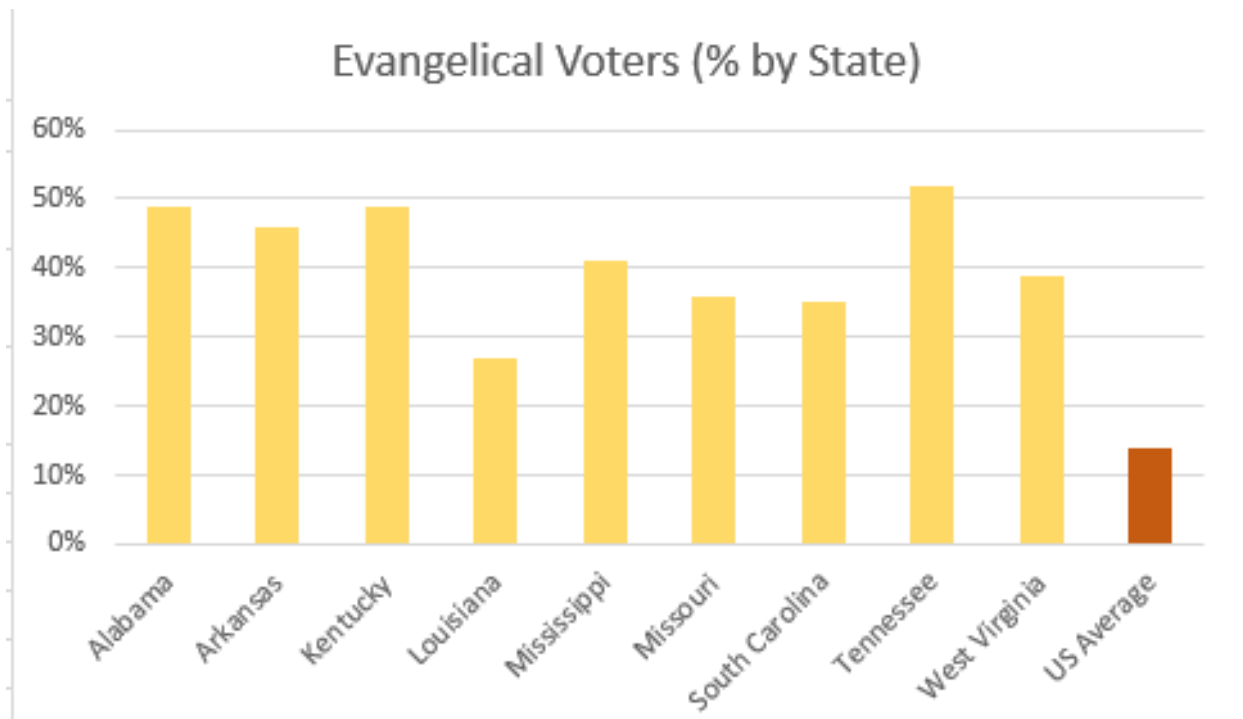
Introduction

Since 1870's the southeastern United States has been a [stronghold](#) of the Democratic Party and during the mid-20th century the South was an important faction of the New Deal alliance that contributed to DNC domination of presidential elections between 1932 to 1968 (interrupted only by President Dwight Eisenhower). However, the 1960's saw the Democrat's power in the south begin to chip away as John F. Kennedy, followed by Lyndon B. Johnson, began to promote civil rights legislation. In 1968 the south defected, with 5 states rejecting the DNC's national candidate Hubert Humphrey instead choosing to vote for Alabamian segregationist George Wallace running as an independent and proud "Dixiecrat". The other southern states, with the exception of Texas, voted Republican this election. During the dawn of the Reagan era the DNC was no longer the juggernaut it once was in the south, but the state parties still maintained a high level of control. Additionally, Carter had dominated the South in the 1976 election, and performed relatively well in 1980.

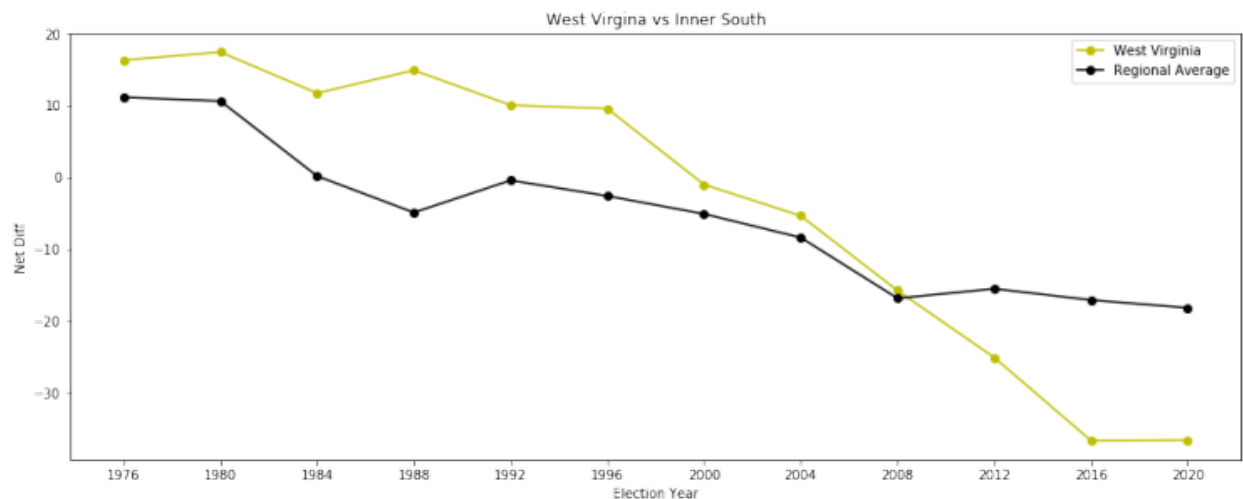


Regional Trends

The region I will be calling the 'Inner South' includes the states of Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, and West Virginia. While each state is distinct culturally and economically there are commonalities in the way the electorate shifted during the past 25 years. Generally speaking the 'Inner South' leaned towards the Democratic Party in the early 80's, but support for the DNC began to steadily decline in the 90's and early 2000's. This erosion of support can be attributed to a variety of factors, notably the GOP's messaging began to align more with southern voters interest. The rural, conservative-minded, and religious southern voters naturally were attracted to the Republican platform which emphasized lower taxes, strong military, and small government. Additionally, the GOP made a concerted effort to win over evangelical voters through social issues such as abortion. This strategy has proven fruitful for Republicans as evangelicals make a [massive voting block](#) in the 'Inner South' states.



West Virginia



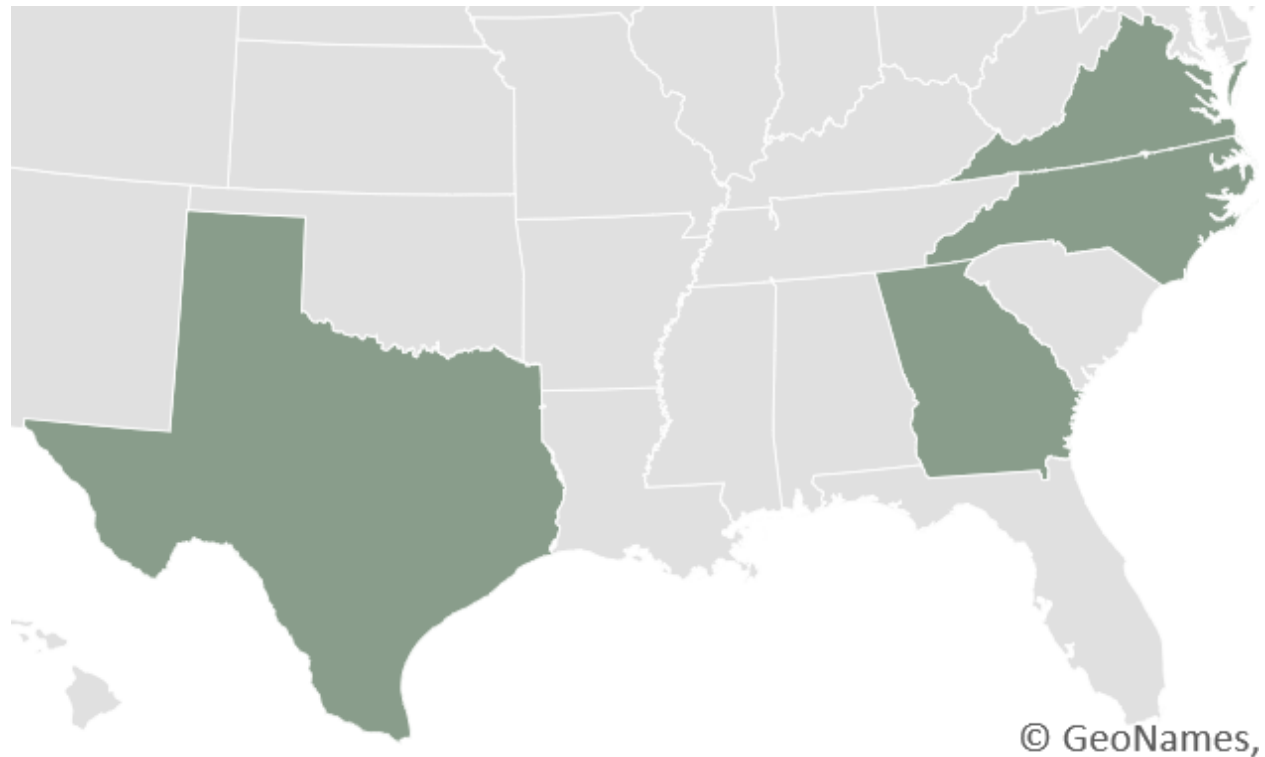
While each state in this region has its own particular reasons for shifting strongly to the right, none lurched as quickly and dramatically as West Virginia. Unlike the other ‘Inner South’ states, West Virginia was never heavily as reliant on agriculture. The state was born during the civil war when agriculture and slavery dependent Virginia seceded from the Union. Those living in the Appalachian mountains rejected the succession and opted to stay in the Union as a new state. West Virginia’s primary export is coal and the state’s fate often mirrors the faltering industry. Up until 1996 West Virginia could be considered a purplish blue state and was one of only six states that voted for Carter over Reagan in the 1980 election. However, economic hardships caused by the contraction of the coal industry coinciding with a changing DNC platform has spurred a new

era in the state's politics. West Virginian voters see [Democratic politicians and their promotion of renewable resources and environmental regulations](#) as detrimental to the struggling state's well-being. Republicans, on the other hand, have publicly endorsed coal over other forms of energy, and generally seek to reduce regulations. While other economic factors (such as the natural gas) have also handicapped the industry, this contrasting messaging may be the source of this electoral shift.

Future Outlook

Although the story of West Virginia and coal is unique, it does underscore why Democrats have become so uncompetitive in the 'Inner South.' Culturally, the constituents of these states began find less and less common with the Democrat platform and as voters began to embrace the economics of Reagan they found a natural home in the Republican party, which has embraced this former Dixiecrats states with open arms. In the near future this region will likely remain uncompetitive and skew strongly republican. Democrats, on the other hand, will likely have to fundamentally change the way they operate in the 'Inner South.'

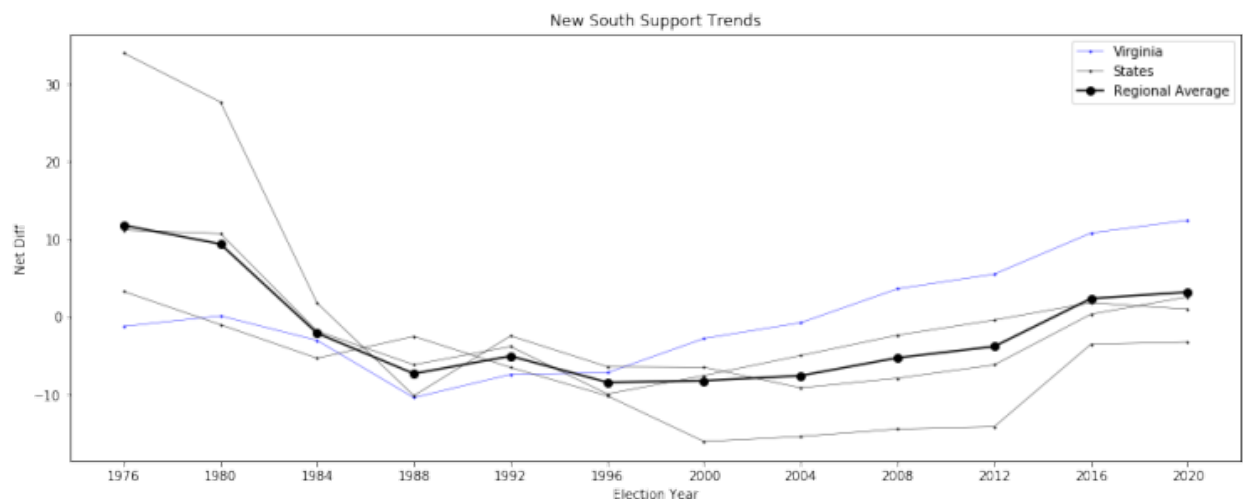
The “New South”



Introduction

The term [“New South”](#) was used during the reconstruction era by reformers who wanted to encouraged Southerners to forgot the slavery fueled plantation economy of the past and embrace industrialization which had already swept through the north. The term was meant to harken to a hopeful future where the south would find prosperity and rise from the ashes of the civil war.

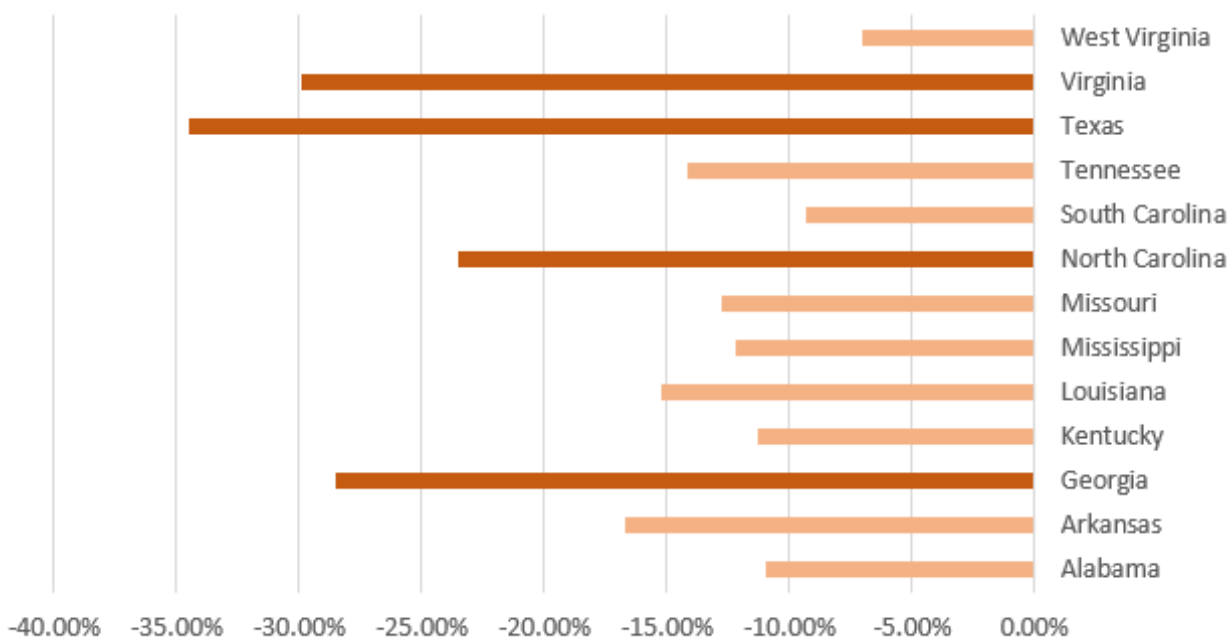
Sadly, this prosperity was not meant to extend to Black Americans, and Henry W Grady, who had coined the phrase in his home state of Georgia was a staunch white supremacist. In many way, reformers like Grady wanted to lead Georgia into a new era but their promises often fell short perhaps due to the fact Georgia became marred by the same segregationist politics that was prevalent her “Dixiecrat” sisters. This included the other states of the “New South” : Texas, North Carolina, and Virginia. Predictably, these four states’ electoral history mirrored those of the ‘Inner South’ for most of the 20th century and entering the 1980’s the four states ranged from safe blue states (Georgia) to true battleground states (Virginia). Like the states of the ‘Inner South’ the 80’s saw the popularity of the Republican party increase at the expense of the Democrats.



Regional Trends

However, this trend did not hold in the “New South” starting the capital of the former confederacy. After Republican support in Virginia peaked during the 1988 contest between George HW Bush and Michael Dukakis, Virginia steadily began to vote more and more left in presidential elections. This was followed by North Carolina in 2000, and Georgia and Texas in 2008. While these four southern states all experience this shift during different election cycles, the shift had all coincided with similar demographic transformations. In recent years the increase of Fortune 500 companies and other economic opportunities have made the “New South” an attractive destination for migrants, including many 1st generation Americans. For example, [Texas leads the nation with 53 Fortune 500 companies](#) headquartered in the state, and North Carolina’s “Research Triangle” is home of major research institutions. This has caused the demographic composition of these state’s population to change dramatically; [the graph below shows the change in the percentage of the population that was white \(non-Hispanic\) residents compared to the other southern states \(the “New South” states are in burnt red\).](#)

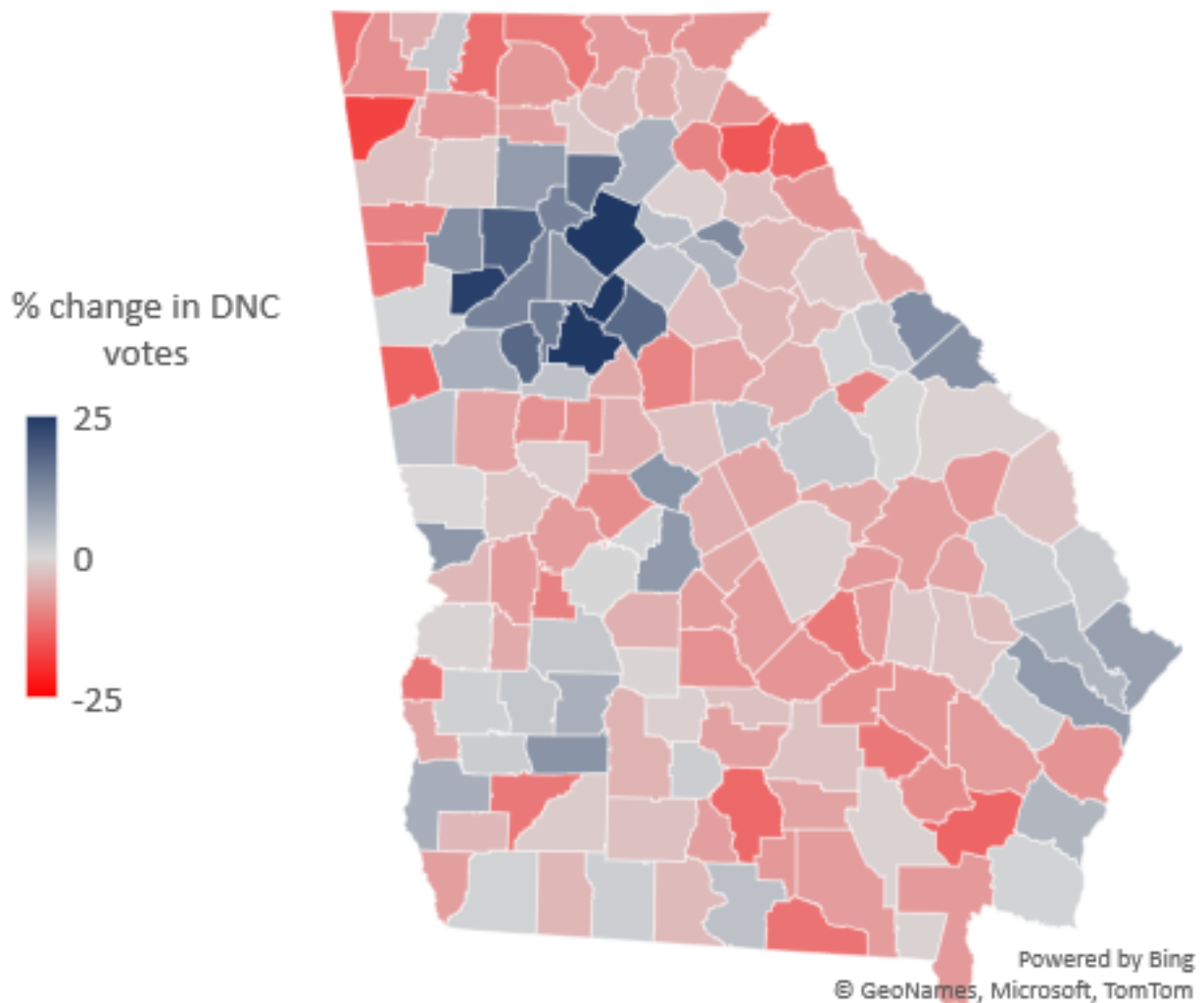
Change in the % of White (non-hispanic) Population



While obviously not every new resident of these states will necessarily be a Democrat, their views likely differ from the rural, culturally conservative voters that composed most of the electorate during the Reagan and Clinton years. Many of those moving for work also come with bachelor degrees, [making all four “New South” more educated](#) than their “Inner South” counterparts. Furthermore, the “New South” is host some of the largest and fastest growing metro areas in the United States. The Democratic Party has also in recent elections coalesced support among urban voters and college graduates, so have been able to capture these demographic changes. However, the final piece of the puzzle that many have transformed these states from Red to Purple can be found between urban and rural: the suburbs.

Georgia

The importance of the suburbs in Presidential elections is especially obvious when look at the Peach State. Like it’s fellow “New South” states Georgia also undergone tremendous economic growth and the demographic changes that come with it. Republicans had traditionally relied on the fiscally conservative suburbs and socially conservative rural counties to keep Georgia red (this is a somewhat simplistic view since Georgia has several rural Black majority counties that have consistently voted for Democratic). Starting from 2008 however the increasingly diverse suburbs began to flock the Democratic Party. This suburban defection cumulated in 2020, when the state voted for the Democratic candidate for the first time since 1992. Some of this shift can be attributed to an increase in minority population, many 1st and 2nd generation Americans call these suburbs home. Additionally, many Black Americans have also been moving into the Atlanta area, many from out of state. [Georgia’s 2nd largest county, Gwinnett, is 27% Black and 13% Asian.](#)



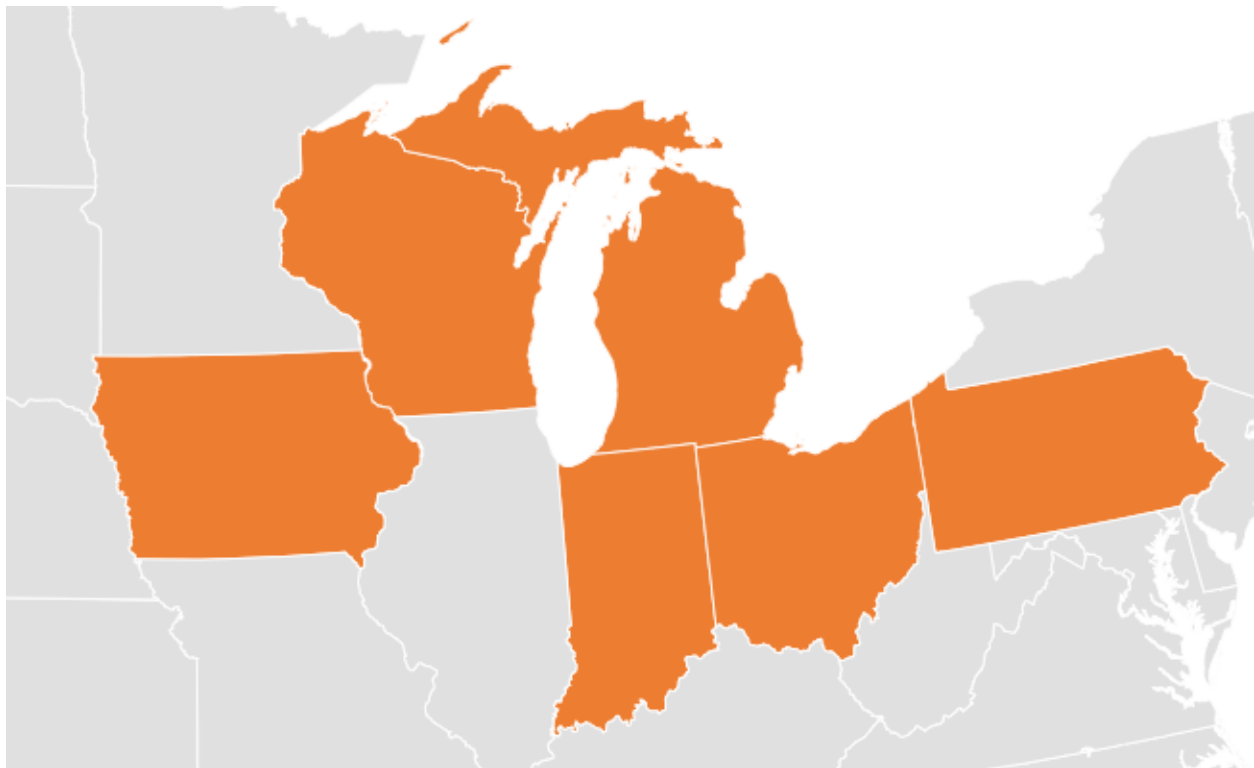
(Note: Comparing voting percentages from between 2004 and 2020, Atlanta location is marked with a black dot, Gwinnett County is marked with a Green dot)

However, migration alone cannot account for the 25% percent increase this county saw in saw in Democratic voters between 2004 and 2020. The harsh reality for the GOP is that they are losing ground among white suburban Georgians, a demographic they need if they wish to remain the dominant party in the state. Some of this erosion of support can be attributed to changing voting patterns of white college graduates. [According to a 2020 NBC](#) exist polls, 44% white college graduates voted for Joe Biden compared to 20% of white non-college graduates. By contrast, among non-white voters this margin was only 3%. Finally, people vote for the candidate, not the party, and many suburbanites might have disapproved President Trump's handling of the major issues prior to the 2020 elections, notably the Coronavirus pandemic and widespread protest against police brutality. These voters may still align with the GOP in future elections, and are the group that Republicans hope to reenergize.

Future Outlook

While the GOP should be concerned with the on-going trends in the “New South”, they are still the dominant political force in Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas, especially at state and local offices. Even with the gains that Democrats have made in the region, particularly the suburbs, it has not always translated into electoral success: gubernatorial or otherwise. For example, despite bullish projections in 2020 from DNC strategists regarding Texas, the state ended up turning red as it has every election since 1976. Additionally, even though North Carolina voted for Obama in 2008, the state has been won by the Republican candidate in every subsequent presidential election (albeit by thin margins). By contrast, Virginia has become a blue leaning purple state, as a result of the many changes it and the other three states have experienced in the past 30 years. These changes have also altered the political landscape, now characterized by aggressive campaigning and razor thin margins; in this new era these states may become an important battleground states. Here, both parties will attempt to energize their respective bases, while fighting over the swing voters that reside in the suburbs.

The Rust Belt

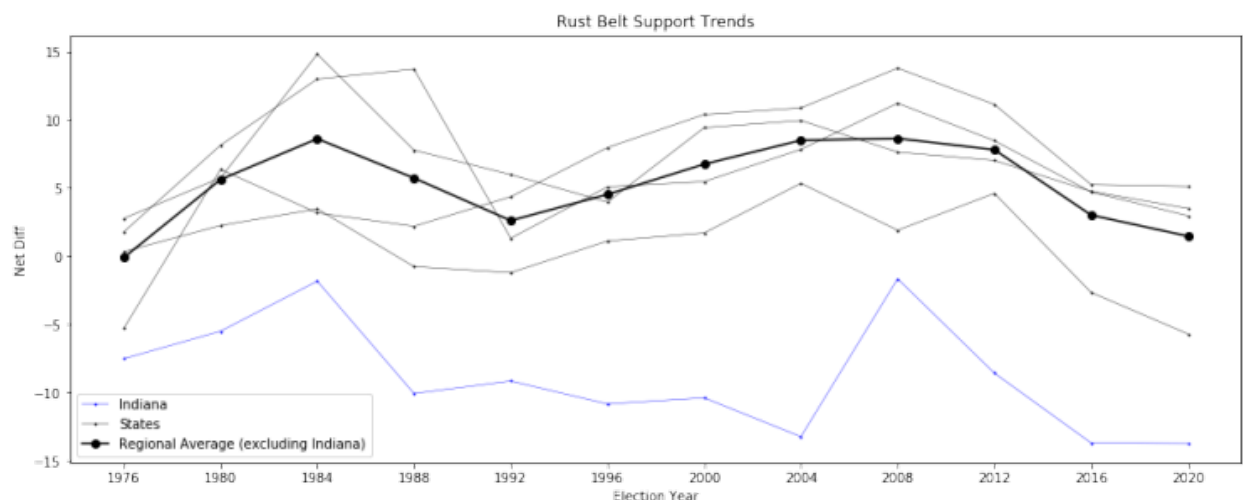


Introduction

In December of 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the nation in a radio broadcast, announcing that in light of the precarious international situation America was to support her Allies abroad through her powerful manufacturing industry, which he called [“Arsenal’s of Democracy.”](#) During this time, much of American manufacturing was centered in the Great Lakes region, and FDR knew that cities like Detroit, Flint, Cleveland, Akron, Milwaukee, and

Pittsburg would be instrumental to the war effort. These cities transformed their sophisticated industrial apparatus to churn out tanks, planes, bombs, and other wartime necessities. When WW2 finally ended in 1945 and factories and plants returned to fulfilling commercial needs this region flourished; cities grew and a strong blue collar middle class formed amidst a booming post-war economy. Outside the bustling towns, farmers staked there fortunes in the fields and also enjoyed the prestige and prosperity that blanketed the region. In the 1970's the region was again disrupted by the situation abroad: Europe and Japan's burgeoning manufacturing industry, which had been leveled during the war rebounded and posed real danger to America's heartland. In the Great Lakes region plants closed and with it unemployment rose. Additionally, the 1980's saw a farm crisis from high farm debts, which hurt the agricultural sector in these states. Towns in the region began to see population declines, and the once robust middle class began to shrink. By the end of the Reagan administration, the region was well passed its heyday, and a new term began to be used to describe the manufacturing heartland of the nation: ["The Rust Belt."](#)

Regional Trends

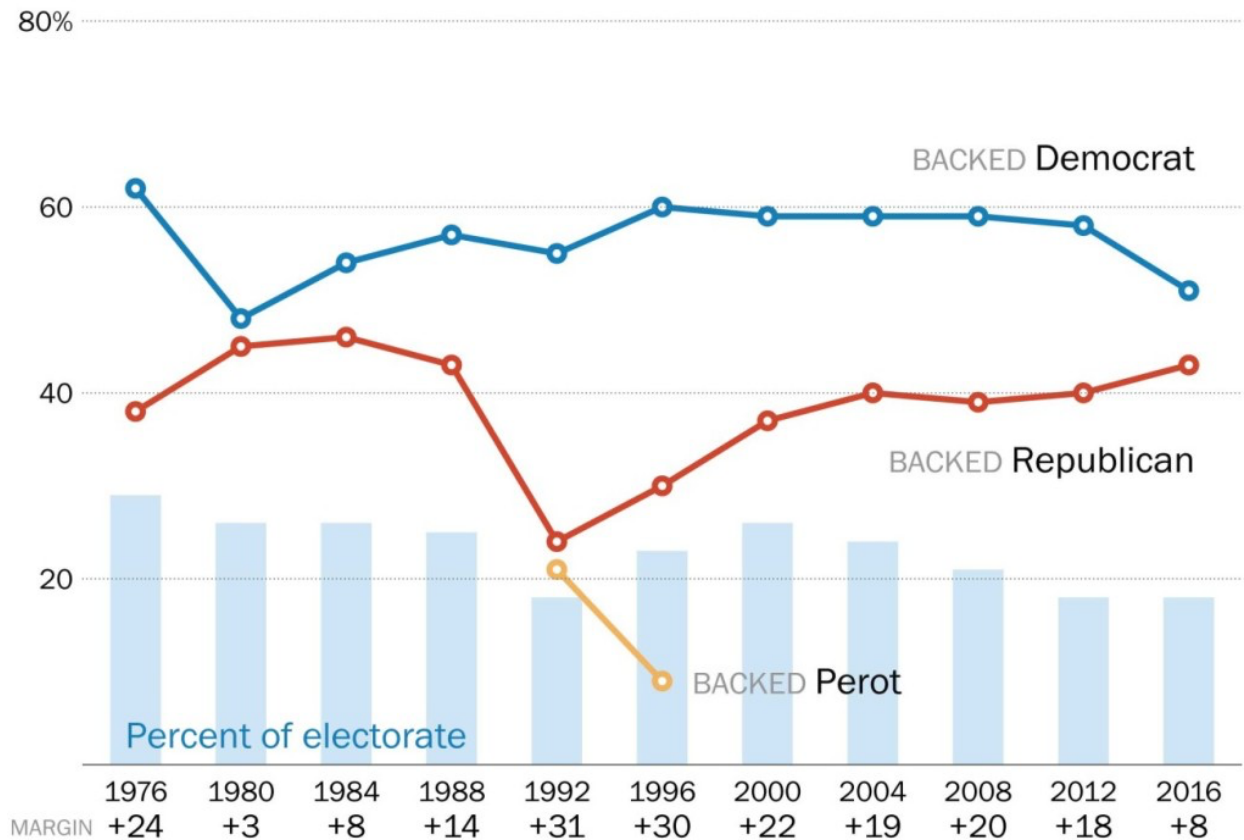


When DNC presidential candidate Walter Mondale stated that “[Reagan’s policies] are turning our industrial Midwest into a rust bowl” in 1984 the region was going through a dire economic downturn caused by farm crisis and lagging manufacturing industry. This climate helped Democrats build a coalition of support in the “the Rust Belt” which I am characterizing as the states of Michigan, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Once swing states, Democrats were able to exploit the perceived inaction by the Reagan administration to the hardship to convert Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Iowa into blue states. Indiana remained a safe Republican state (2008 being the exception), but its electoral trends parallel those of the other “Rust Belt” states. The region had a particularly high union presence given its manufacturing roots, and the GOP stance on labor relations which has become [increasingly anti-union from the Reagan onward](#), weakened its appeal. This culminated in 2008, with President Obama winning all five “Rust Belt” states, backed by the Democrat support centers the party had formed in the past two decades: blue collar workers, and minority communities. However, this would be the pinnacle of their success in the region, subsequent years saw Democratic support decline slowly but steadily. The most obvious reason for this trend is white blue collar voters, who traditionally aligned with the DNC’s pro-union policies, began to leave the party. This can

clearly be seen in the below graphic (from the Washington Post) showing the initial increase of support for the DNC in the 80's before falling starting in 2008.

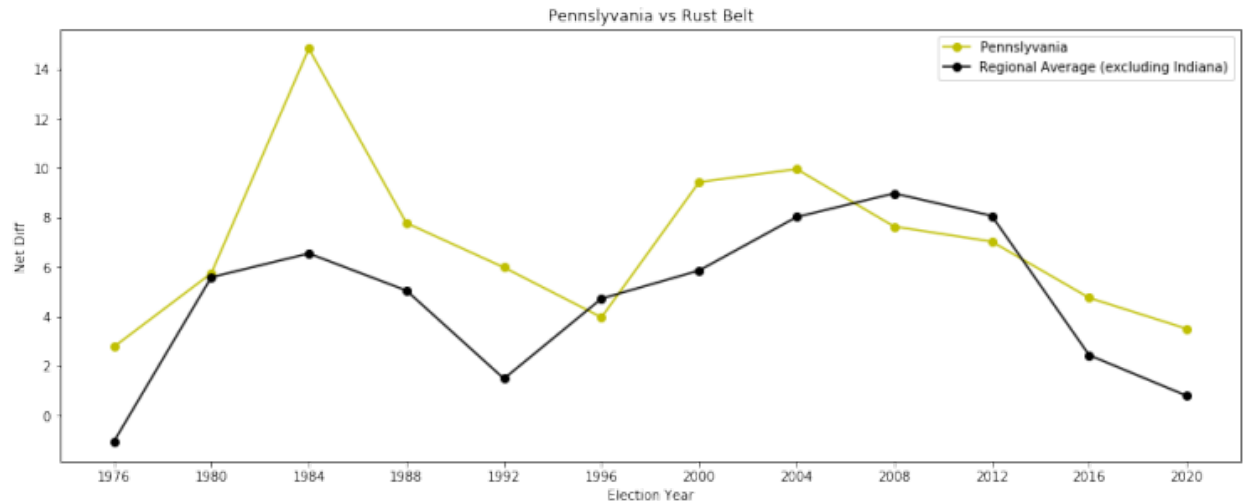
Union household support in presidential elections

Data from exit polling. Preliminary 2016 results from Edison Media Research.

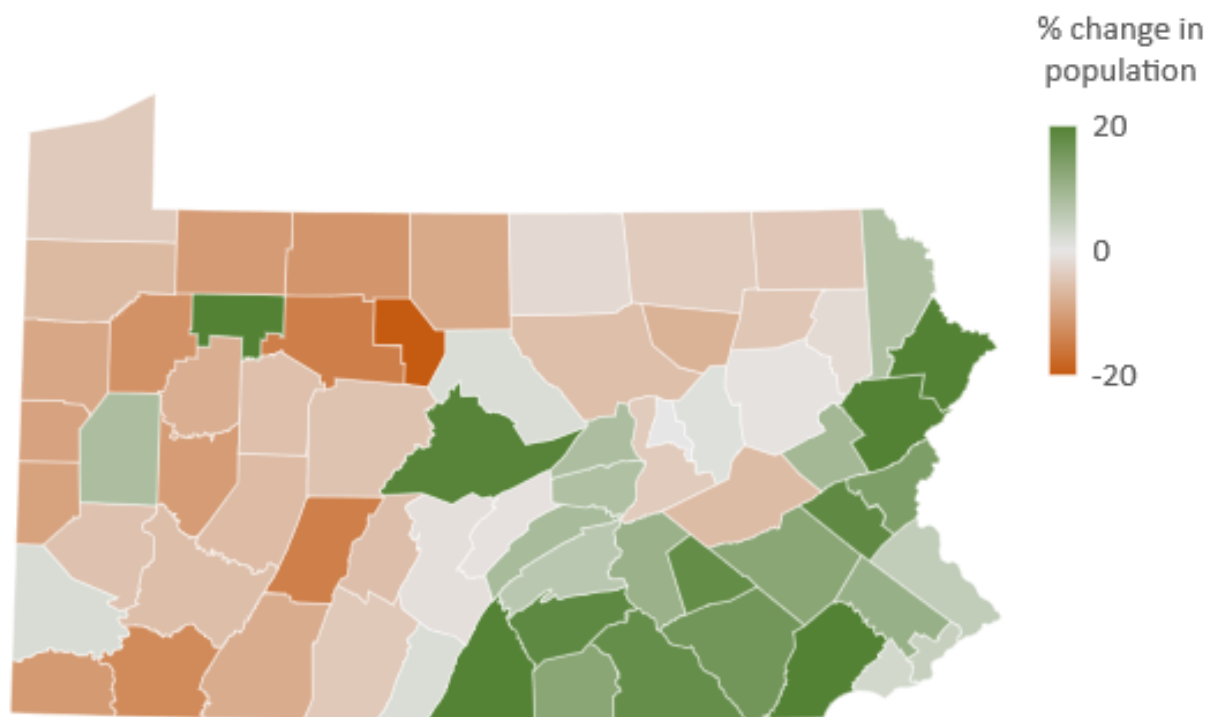


The reason for this sudden lack of confidence in the party likely has multiple reasons. One reason could be an apparent indifference to the changes that beset the region. However, the region has seen mixed economic success since this DNC domination of the region began. The region has been hurt badly by globalization and it seemed there was little the government could do to stop the bleeding. US had lost 4.3 million manufacturing jobs under President George W Bush, during the Obama presidency manufacturing jobs increased by only 300,000. President Trump campaigned heavily on the promise of bring jobs back but did [not fare much better](#). Nonetheless, “Rust Belt” voters responded well to his sharp criticism of the trade deficit and implementation of tariffs. These changes can spell trouble for the Democrats in the past two elections, the margins in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan have been extremely tight, therefore making even small shifts in the electorate disproportionately influential to national elections.

Pennsylvania

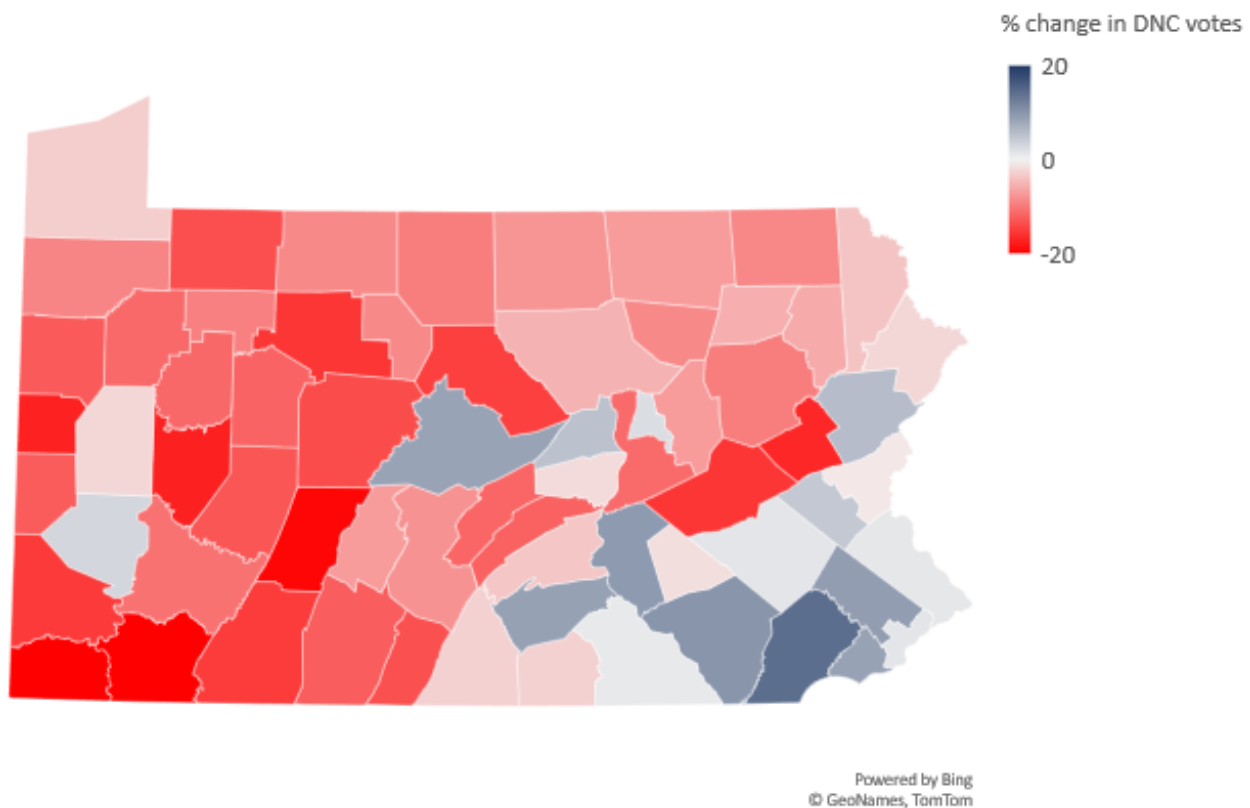


A closer look at Pennsylvania provides a more detailed picture of why Democrat's blue collar base has eroded since 2000. The state is economically divide: the areas of the state closest to the Atlantic ocean including Philadelphia and its metros are part of the northeastern megalopolis that stretches from Boston to Washington DC. The western region contains the “Steel City” of Pittsburg and is considered part of the “Rust Belt” like many other regions on the shores of Great Lakes. As the American manufacturing has declined, so has the population in counties that rely on this industry. The area has also experienced massive population loss since 2000, a fact made more dire by the fact nation's population as a whole has grown 15% during the same time period.



(Note: Comparing population figures from between 2000 and 2020)

The economic hardships have also dramatically changed people's political preference in the area. During the 1980's and 1990's the western region of the state voted more blue than their eastern counterparts, bolstered from a strong union presence. From turn of the century, the manufacturing west has become progressively more and more Republican. Demographically, these counties are similar those in the Midwest, rather than the Atlantic coast. For one, [most are over 90% white](#), have smaller percentage of college degree holders, and are more religious; three groups which are strong predictors for voting Republican. Combined with the inability of the government to spur job growth in the region, its clear why the "Rust Belt" counties were so inclined to shift political alliances.



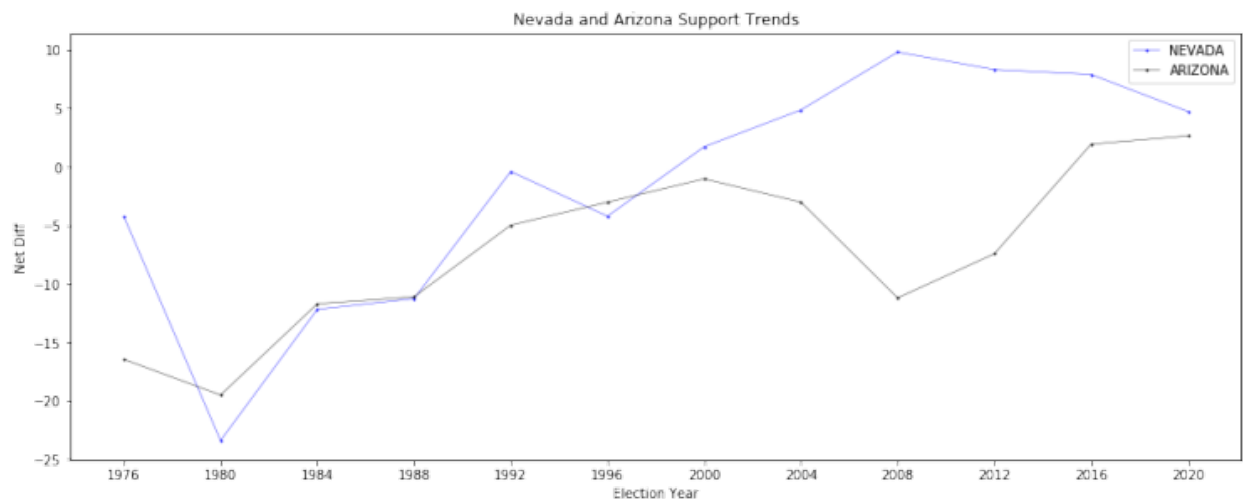
(Note: Comparing voting percentages from between 2000 and 2020)

A small silver lining for the Democrat's is that they have made gains in the Philadelphia suburbs (although not as much as in the "New South" states), and this can also be seen in the other "Rust Belt" cities including Detroit, Milwaukee, and Cleveland. These suburban gains were enough to offset the loss of the blue collar vote in 2020 when Joe Biden carried the state, but the party's long-term prospects in the state and region are hinged on gaining back at least a fraction of support from people that have felt like the party has abandoned them.

Future Outlook

As of 2022, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan have had the longest bellwethers streaks, voting for the winning candidate since 2004. This should not come as a big surprise, in many ways these states are a cross section of the nation at large. However, if current trends hold, then most of the states of the “Rust Belt” will complete their transition from Blue to Purplish Red within the next few elections; Pennsylvania and Michigan appear to likely remain battleground states due to their large cities and comparatively large POC populations. While President Trump certainly played an important role in these states shift to the right, the dye had been set since 2008. The voting patterns seems to suggest that voters in these states became disillusioned with the Democratic party, and some of the same factors that allowed the DNC to compete in the “New South,” such as appealing to college graduates, and POC may have had the opposite effect in the “Rust Belt.” The political future of both parties in this region is still unclear; while Republicans currently have the advantage they will have to prove to these voters that they can fight more than just cultural battles, while the emerging progressive wing of the DNC will attempt to win back some former Democratic areas by embracing [pro-union policies](#).

Special Western Cases



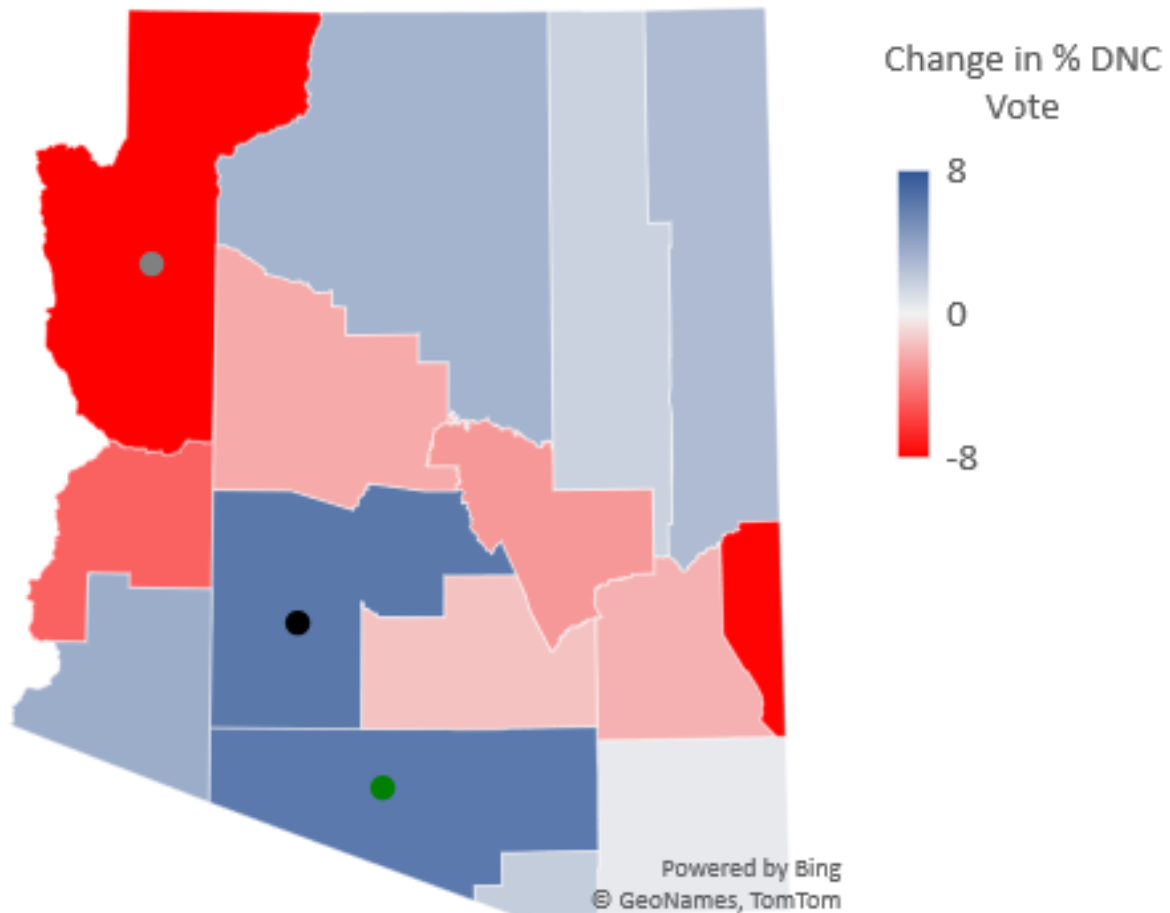
Nevada

Today Nevada is largely known as the gambling capital of the United States, but just 70 years ago it was the least populated state in the union. Initially settled by silver miners in the early 20th century, the state's unique economic history was largely shaped by the Hoover Dam. Not only does the dam provide electricity but its construction is notable for bringing an influx of young male workers. Seizing on this unique economic opportunity the state government permitted gambling in the small farming community 30 miles from the dam's construction called Las Vegas. The city, literally powered by dam, would soon rise to become the gambling capital of the United States and be the primary economic engine that would drive the state's rapid growth. Since 1990, [Nevada's population has grown an eye popping 150%](#), eclipsing every other state, and Las Vegas is now home to two professional sports teams. Clark County, where Las Vegas is situated, has taken on a bulk of the growth and is home to over 70% of the state's residence as of 2022. This massive influx of people has had an effect on the state's political landscape, during the 1980's Nevada was one of the most red states in the union. However, the massive

growth has also brought out extreme demographic changes; [the Silver State's percentage of non-hispanic white population fell by 41.7% since 1980](#), which in turn has turned the state into a true battleground. Like the "Rust Belt" states DNC support peaked in 2008, and while the Democrats have carried the state in every election since, this stellar record obscures the fact that the margins of victory have been getting smaller. Like in the rest of the country, Democrats have lost support in rural counties in the state, but unlike in other states they have not countered these losses with gain in the most populated areas of the state. In fact, when comparing elections of 2008 and 2020 Democrats performed worse in all areas of the state, although only by a few percentage points in the 2 most populated counties (Washoe and Clark). Some of this can be attributed to the issues of the election, President Trump's emphasis on keeping the economy during the pandemic would be beneficial Nevada's tourism based economy. Even with Nevada's massive minority population, the state will likely retain its status as a swing state going into the 7th party system, as it appears the DNC failed to make inroads during the Obama presidency to create a more reliably Democratic voter base.

Arizona

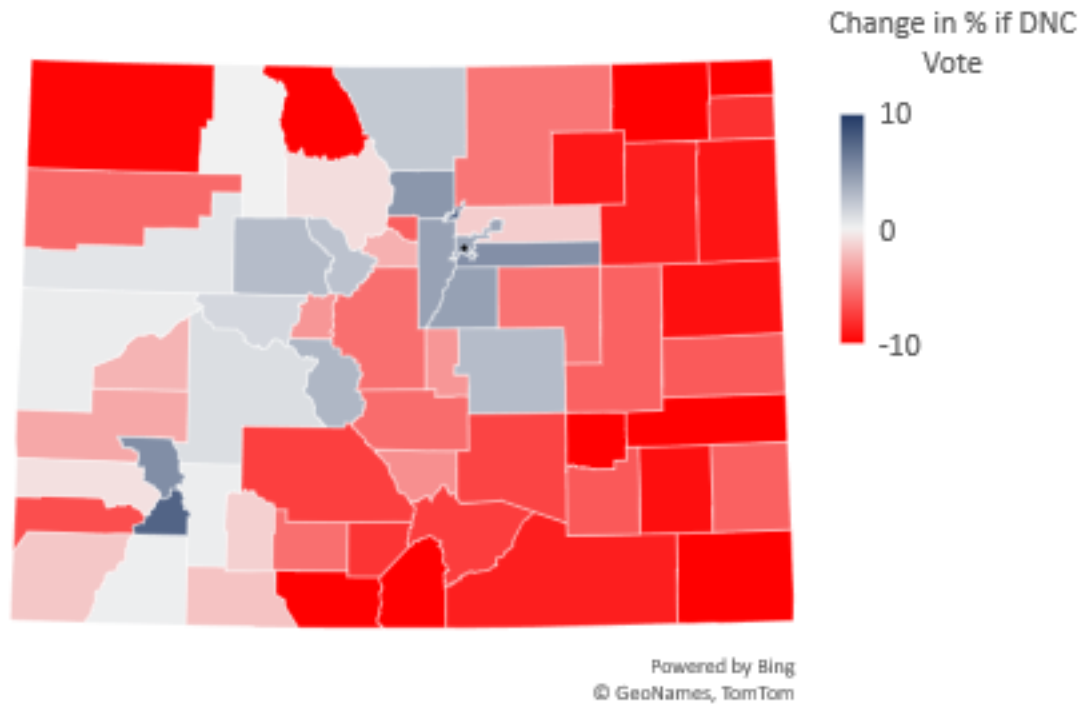
Bordering Nevada, Arizona has much in common with its north western neighbor. For example, exiting the Reagan presidency both were considered safe Republican states, and both states underwent massive population growth in the past 30 years which has altered the demographic composition of the states. However, Arizona was never particularly competitive even as Republican margins of victory shrunk until the 2020 election. In this regard, Arizona's electoral trends actually closely mirror Georgia: both states voted for the Democrat for the first time since President Bill Clinton and both states began shifting to the left from 2008 largely due to suburban voters. This can be seen in the map below: while the more rural Mohave county became significantly more Republican, these gains were offset by a subtler blue shift in the densely populated Maricopa and Pima counties which combined hold over 75% of the state's population and contain the major cities of Phoenix and Tucson respectively. Also notable are Democratic gains in the Northern counties which contain much of the state's Native American population. Like Nevada, it is also important to look at issues that are unique to a single election. In Arizona's case, [President Trump made headlines for his relentless criticism of Arizona Senator John McCain, which in-turn drove many moderate Republicans to support President Biden instead](#). Democrats may struggle to recapture this demographic in future elections when President Trump will no longer be on the ballot. Whether the leftward trend will continue remains to be seen but Arizona has seen renewed competitiveness in Presidential elections.



(Note: Comparing voting percentages from between 2008 and 2020, Mohave county location is marked with a gray dot, Maricopa County is marked with a Black dot, Pima County is marked with Green dot)

Colorado

Unlike the last two western states discussed, Colorado was a true “swing state,” in 6 election between 1992 and 2008 it voted for each party’s candidate 3 times. However, in recent years Colorado has become an blue oasis in what is essentially a ocean of Red. In the 2020 election, President Biden won the state by 15 percent capping off the DNC’s 4th straight victory in the Presidential contests in the “Centennial State”. Going into the future it appears Colorado will remain a Democratic stronghold in Presidential elections even if other offices may be more competitive. One reason for this change is that Colorado has the 3rd highest percentage of residents holding at least a bachelor’s degree: [44% compared to the national average of 35%](#) . Additionally, the DNC’s suburban appeal has buoyed its efforts in the state: the Denver metro areas accounts for slightly over half of the state’s population, another group that has since 2008 become increasingly blue. Like in the rest of the country, Republicans gained support in rural areas of the state; winning the southern parts of the states that had previously been safe Democratic counties. However, as in Arizona, these gains were not enough to offset shifts in the more populous central counties.

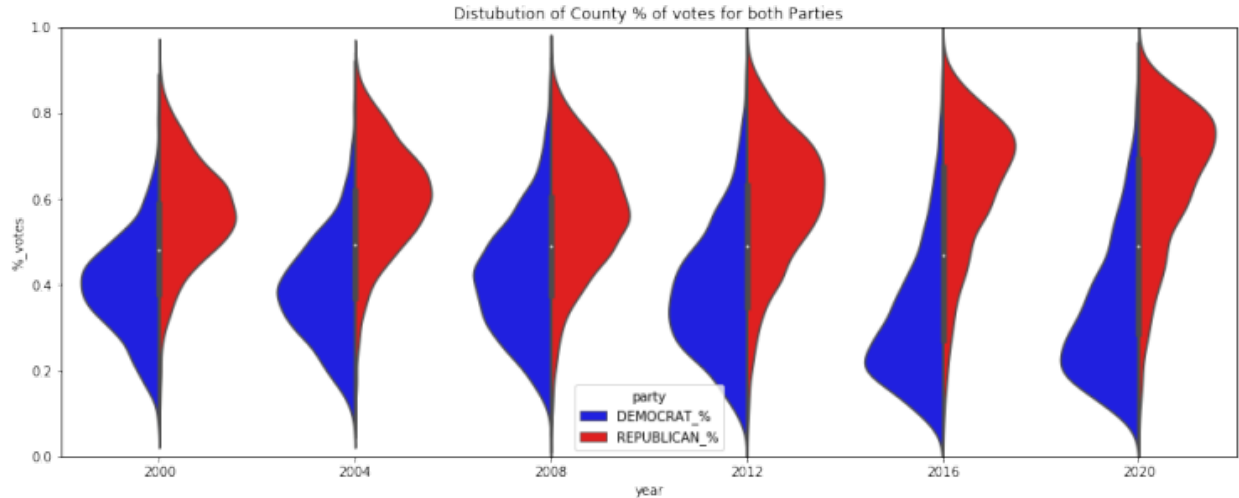


(Note: Comparing voting percentages from between 2008 and 2020, Denver is marked with a black dot)

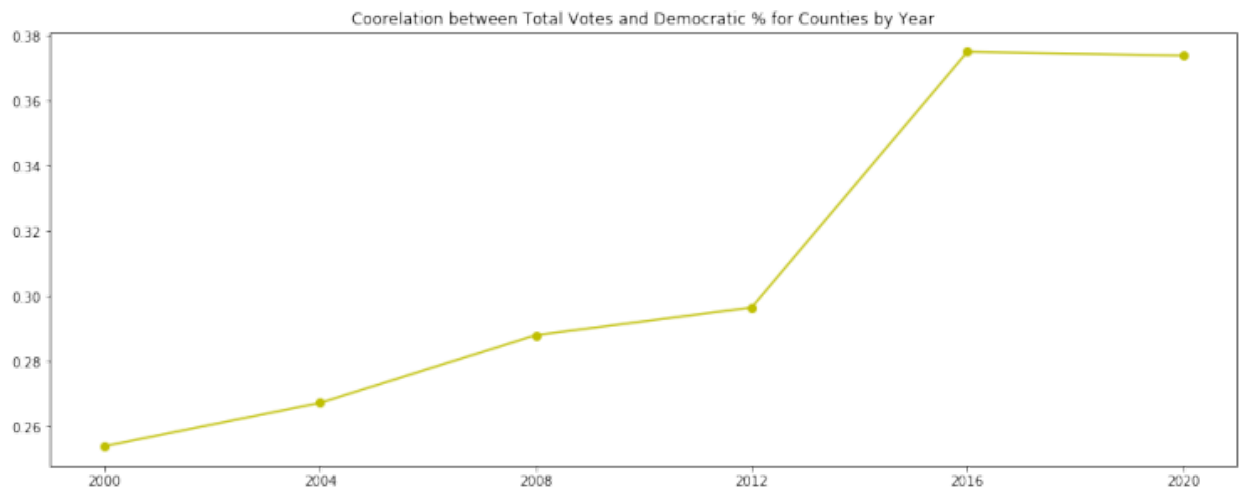
National Analysis

County Level Trends

While looking at certain states and regions have revealed some electoral tendencies endemic to those specific areas, there are also clear national trends we can establish. For one, the increase of polarization is even more apparent when looking at county data instead of state data. The Violin plot below demonstrates the increase of polarization at the county level, with a clear jump between 2012 and 2016 elections.



At glance it appears that Republicans have dominated elections, however in reality they generally winning rural counties, a trend which has held in all the states and regions examined. While the political rural-urban divide that has always been present in politics, it has become especially severe since 2012. In fact, the county's Total Votes and % Democrat values have become increasingly correlated since 2000, with a significant jump in 2016 and 2020 elections.



So what has causes such a drastic increase in polarization as well as geography becoming such a strong predictor for voting tendencies. One reason could be the consolidation of both party platforms, turning what were once distinct state level parties into a single national entity. During the 1960's the Alabama and Massachusetts DNC could take drastically different views on divisive matters like segregation allowing the parties to be competitive at state and national elections. By contrast, the new more connected political atmosphere has made it difficult for state level politicians to demonstrate the same flexibility when appealing to state electorate. Trying to find the source of this new expectation of ideological purity will likely be something researched will be grappling with for sometime. However, what does seem clear is we are entering a new political environment characterized by toxicity and division.

Appendix & Sources

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