Rural Consciousness and its Heterogeneous Associations with Political Identities and Economic Preferences

Trent Ollerenshaw
Ph.D. Candidate
Duke University
Department of Political Science
trent.ollerenshaw@duke.edu

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Abstract: Although rural Americans' sense of place-based consciousness has been an influential explanation for their right-wing politics, recent studies show rural consciousness is only weakly associated with Republican partisanship and conservatism. I show this incongruity is explained by the heterogeneous associations of rural consciousness to political behavior. Among politically engaged Americans, rural consciousness is associated with right-wing political identification and economic conservatism. Among politically disengaged Americans, however, rural consciousness is associated with left-wing identification and economic liberalism. This heterogeneity emerges due to the downweighing of instrumental, material concerns among politically engaged citizens relative to symbolic, identity-based considerations. Thus, how rural consciousness translates into political behavior is contingent on the motivations citizens bring to bear in political decision-making. In this way, past studies have overlooked how strong rural consciousness's associations with right-wing political behavior are for politically engaged Americans, as well as its moderate associations with left-wing politics among politically disengaged Americans.

Key Words: Rural politics, rural consciousness, political engagement, partisanship, ideology, public opinion

As America's urban-rural political schisms have drastically widened in the 21st century, there has been increasing attention to the politics of place among political scientists (Gimpel et al. 2020; Mettler and Brown 2022; Scala and Johnson 2017). Polarization along the urban-rural continuum came to a dramatic head in the 2016 presidential election when stark rightward rural shifts secured Donald Trump's Electoral College victory, despite his lackluster national performance (Hopkins 2017). In the wake of rural realignment, a core question animating recent studies of rural politics is: why do rural Americans, who on average have lower incomes, weaker employment prospects, and worse health than those in other geographies, support conservative candidates, parties, and policies that work to stymie social welfare provision and redistribution?

An influential resolution to this puzzle can be found in Cramer's (2016) theory of "rural consciousness." Cramer argues that rural Americans are, in fact, considering economics in their political behavior, but that their material grievances become intertwined with political and socio-cultural grievances. Rural Americans perceive themselves as victims of distributional injustice, political underrepresentation, and cultural marginalization; their perceptions of "who gets what" drive opposition to redistributive economic policies that rural Americans believe take from rural citizens to benefit suburbanites and urbanites. Thus, rural Americans' surprisingly conservative politics are explained, per Cramer (2016), by grievances that wed feelings of economic, political, and cultural deprivation—feelings that have become increasingly pronounced in recent years due to globalization, diversification, and rural depopulation (Hochschild 2018; Wuthnow 2018).

If correct, Cramer (2016) resolves the paradox of right-wing rural politics. However, Cramer relies solely on qualitative interviews to generate her theory of rural consciousness, and recent quantitative tests mostly offer weak support for Cramer's theory. Rural consciousness is certainly *prevalent* among rural Americans (Munis 2020), and this form of group consciousness

should be politically consequential (Miller et al. 1981). Yet studies using national surveys have not found strong associations between rural consciousness and Republican partisanship (Munis 2020; Trujillo and Crowley 2022; but see Jacobs and Munis 2022), conservative ideological identity (Trujillo and Crowley 2022), or economic conservatism (Nelsen and Petsko 2021)—three of the political outcomes Cramer (2016) finds go hand-in-hand with rural consciousness.

Recent quantitative studies have cast doubt on Cramer's qualitatively-derived theory of rural consciousness. I argue, however, that accounting for one crucial but overlooked difference between qualitative and quantitative studies of rural consciousness can reconcile their findings—the varying levels of *political engagement* in the samples analyzed. Cramer (2016) interviews a cross-section of rural Wisconsinites who are, on average, older, more socially involved and, in turn, *more politically engaged* than the broader rural populace.[1] Recent quantitative studies, by contrast, have relied on national surveys that draw in more representative rural samples, and thus include many *politically disengaged* citizens. These diverging distributions of engagement are consequential for identifying rural consciousness's relationships with political behavior because politically disengaged and politically engaged citizens bring fundamentally different motivations to bear on political behavior (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Krupnikov and Ryan 2022).

In this paper, I join Cramer's (2016) theory of rural consciousness with existing theories of instrumental and symbolic political behavior to explain why rural consciousness has appeared mostly unrelated to partisanship, ideology, and economic attitudes in recent quantitative studies. Specifically, I argue that politically disengaged citizens give greater weight to instrumental, self-interested concerns, while politically engaged citizens are motivated by symbolic, identity-based

[1] To be clear, Cramer (2016) does not make any claims to representativeness. Indeed, she is forthright about these differences between her interviewees and the broader rural population.

concerns. Politically disengaged, rurally-conscious Americans tend to view themselves as better served by Democratic representation and economic liberalism to alleviate material deprivation; politically engaged, rurally-conscious citizens, on the other hand, view their symbolic, identity-based interests as better served by affiliation with the Republican Party and, in turn, the adoption of conservative economic views. The relationships between rural consciousness and partisanship, ideological orientation, and economic preferences are thus conditioned by political engagement such that rural consciousness has the opposite associations with these political behaviors among politically disengaged and engaged rural citizens. When analyzing samples with representative shares of the politically disengaged and engaged, like those used in quantitative research, these offsetting effects attenuate any unconditional (or main) associations of rural consciousness with these political outcomes. When analyzing samples that overrepresent the politically engaged, like those used in qualitative research, however, rural consciousness will only appear to be associated with Republican partisanship, conservative identity, and conservative economic preferences.

Examining the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES), I find consistent support for my theoretical expectations. Using multiplicative interaction models, I demonstrate that rural consciousness among politically disengaged citizens is associated with Democratic partisanship, liberal ideological identity, and economic policy liberalism. Among politically engaged citizens, however, rural consciousness is associated with *Republican* partisanship, *conservative* identity, and economic *conservatism*. I show that due to offsetting in the aggregate, the main associations between rural consciousness and the outcomes are very weak, consistent with recent quantitative studies that have not accounted for heterogeneity as a function of political engagement.

I also demonstrate the identity-based mechanism through which politically engaged rural citizens come to adopt conservative economic views—attention to polarized elite-level political

discourse. For the majority of economic issues (e.g., taxation, healthcare, redistribution) attention to political discourse promotes economic conservatism among the rurally conscious because (1) politically engaged, rurally conscious Americans have largely sorted into the Republican Party; (2) Republican elites take more conservative economic positions than Democratic elites; and (3) politically engaged citizens are attentive to and willing to incorporate economic views which are consistent with their political ingroup's views, even if such economic views are inconsistent with their material interests (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Zaller 1992). When this sequence breaks at step two on the small set of economic issues where Republicans are *less* conservative than Democrats—e.g., trade policy under Trump—politically engaged, rurally conscious citizens adopt *liberal* (i.e., protectionist) economic views. These divergent associations across economic issue domains are consistent with the idea that politically engaged rural Americans are attentive to, and willing to adopt, partisan-ideological elites' specific economic policy views rather than a consistent pro- or anti-market ideological orientation (see also Ollerenshaw and Johnston 2022).

This study makes several important contributions. Primarily, this study supports Cramer's (2016) claim that many rural Americans' support for Republicans and economic conservatism is rooted in identity-based motivations. I consistently find that rurally-conscious Americans driven by identity-based motivations are more likely to identify with the Republican Party and support its candidates, identify as conservative, and support economic policy conservatism (except when it comes to trade issues). But my findings also offer an important extension to Cramer's theory of rural consciousness by demonstrating that for rural citizens primarily motivated by instrumental concerns, *rural consciousness exhibits the exact opposite associations with political behavior*. These findings explain why recent quantitative studies have generally found weak associations between rural consciousness and right-wing political behavior (Munis 2020; Nelsen and Petsko

2021; Trujillo and Crowley 2022). Rural consciousness *is* associated with political behavior, but these associations are obscured when heterogeneity as a function of political engagement is not addressed. In this way, my findings also affirm the key moderating role of political engagement (or "sophistication") in economic preference formation (Federico and Malka 2018; Malka et al. 2014), especially when material interests and identities conflict (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Johnston and Wronski 2015; Ollerenshaw 2022; Ollerenshaw and Johnston 2022). Finally, this study has significant implications for understanding, and potentially addressing, geographic polarization in the US, as I find rural-urban schisms are partly maintained by the lack of political participation among rural citizens open to Democratic representation and economic liberalism.

Rural Consciousness and the Politics of Place

In classic accounts of American politics, such as Key's (1949) *Southern Politics in State and Nation* and Campbell et al.'s (1960) *The American Voter*, geography was taken as a primary ingredient shaping mass politics. Though scholarly inquiries into the politics of place languished somewhat by the late 20th-century, attention to this topic reemerged in the 21st-century as rural geographies became increasingly dominated by Republicans (Gimpel and Karnes 2006; Rohla et al. 2018). Frank's (2004) *What's the Matter with Kansas?* arguably reinvigorated the study of place and politics, popularizing the theory that rural Americans supported the Republican Party, despite their material interests being more aligned with the Democrats, due to rural affinities for conservative identity and moral traditionalism. Although Frank's account was fiercely contested (Bartels 2006), the question of why rural Americans support Republicans has remained central to recent inquiries into rural politics, especially after Donald Trump's shocking victory in the 2016 elections (Gimpel and Karnes 2006; Kelly and Lobao 2019; McKee 2008; Wuthnow 2018).

Perhaps the most influential theory of rural politics in the 21st-century US is Cramer's theory of *rural consciousness* (2012; 2016). Group consciousness—i.e., identifying with a group and believing group interests should be advanced via collective action—has long been a leading psychological explanation for political participation (McClain et al. 2009; Miller et al. 1981), but its application to rural politics is recent. After interviewing hundreds of Wisconsinites, Cramer (2016) developed a theory of place-based consciousness to explain why rural Americans so often support Republicans and economic conservatism. Specifically, Cramer finds rural consciousness captures three interrelated beliefs common among rural Americans: (1) rural citizens' needs are overlooked by policymakers; (2) rural areas are overtaxed and materially deprived; and (3) rural citizens have distinct cultural values and lifestyles that have become objects of contempt among urbanites. In Cramer's (2016) account, rurally-conscious citizens make political decisions, such as which candidate to vote for or whether to support a particular policy, through the lens of rural consciousness. And, in recent years, Republicans have capitalized on rural grievance by speaking to rural Americans' feelings of being neglected in a globalizing, increasingly metropolitan US.

While Cramer's (2016) theory of rural consciousness is compelling, recent empirical tests of her theory have offered lackluster support for the claim that rural consciousness meaningfully structures political behavior. Nelsen and Petsko (2021), for example, find rural consciousness is insignificantly associated with approval of Trump after controlling for racial resentment (though narrowly; $p=0.051$) and only weakly associated with conservative economic preferences. Trujillo and Crowley (2022) similarly find their proposed 14-item rural consciousness scale is unrelated to partisanship and ideological identity, and Munis (2020) finds rural resentment (a conceptually similar measure to rural consciousness) is unrelated to partisanship. Finally, although Jacobs and Munis (2022) find rural resentment is associated with voting for Republican candidates, they also

find rural resentment is inconsistently related to affective ratings of the parties. Contrary to the expectations one derives from Cramer (2016), recent work relying on survey data suggests rural consciousness is perhaps only weakly associated with right-wing political behavior.

Instrumental vs. Symbolic Politics and the Role of Political Engagement

How can we reconcile qualitative studies that argue rural consciousness is central to rural Americans' political thinking with quantitative studies that show rural consciousness is weakly related to the political behaviors it was forwarded to explain? In the following sections, I review instrumental and symbolic theories of political behavior and contend that rural Americans bring competing motivations to bear in their political decision-making. These competing instrumental and symbolic motivations, I will argue, are extremely consequential towards shaping how rural consciousness is translated into political identities, attitudes, and behavior.

Instrumental theories of politics take citizens' political behavior as being, to a significant extent, rooted in their desire to maximize *material interests*. Often, instrumental political theories emphasize the importance of an individuals' economic circumstances as central to their political behavior. Meltzer and Richard (1981), for example, model citizens' support for redistribution as a function of citizens' own place in the nation's income distribution and their expectations about the disincentive effects of taxation on others. Similarly, studies find citizens' expectations about their *future* place in the income distribution affects their redistribution preferences (Alesina and La Ferrara 2005; Rueda and Stegmueller 2019). Other examples of self-interest at work include workers in occupations with high unemployment rates being more supportive of redistribution as a form of social insurance (Rehm 2009); low-income senior citizens being more active in support of Social Security (Campbell 2002); and Americans worried about medical expenses being more supportive of public healthcare (Henderson and Hillygus 2011; Chong, Citrin, and Conley 2001).

And self-interest is not only brought to bear on strictly "economic" issues (Weeden and Kurzban 2017); for example, self-interest can also structure abortion policy attitudes (Boninger, Krosnick, and Berent 1995). Instrumentally minded citizens, to the extent they discern their own interests (Carpini and Keeter 1996), tend to support parties, candidates, and policies they believe would bring about good outcomes toward advancing those material interests.

Though self-interested motivations are often important determinants of political behavior, the paradox of political participation is that there are seemingly few instrumental incentives to participate at all. Learning about politics takes considerable time (an opportunity cost) and any individual who does decide to participate is unlikely to be pivotal to outcomes (Downs 1957). To resolve this paradox, scholars often point to expressive motivations, such as reaping psychosocial benefits from voting as a civic duty, as key determinants of political participation (Fiorina 1976; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Extending this logic beyond the decision of whether or not to vote, proponents of symbolic politics theories contend instrumental motivations for political behavior are usually dominated by expressive, *identity-based* considerations (Sears 1993; Sears, Hensler, and Speer 1979). Symbolic politics proponents argue citizens' political behaviors hinge less on how supporting a given candidate, party, or policy will affect them in any material way, and more on how certain political behaviors reflect who they are as a person—in particular, the social and political groups with which they identify. Politics thus primarily serves as a way for citizens to adopt, reinforce, and signal social identities. As such, in symbolic accounts, partisan identity does not primarily serve an instrumental purpose (e.g., a tally of material benefits to be gained by supporting one party and its candidates over another; Fiorina 1977); instead, partisan identity fulfills a psychological need to maintain positive distinctiveness between one's socio-political

ingroups and outgroups (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2004; Huddy, Mason, and Aarøe 2015; Mason 2018; see Devine 2015 for similar conclusions about symbolic ideological identities).

The degree to which instrumental and symbolic motivations weigh into political behavior varies across individuals in relatively predictable ways. Some theories contend it should be those *most* attentive to politics who behave in line with their interests because they, presumably, better understand how their interests will be forwarded by taking specific political actions (Carpini and Keeter 1996; Chong, Citrin, and Conley 2001). Recent political psychological studies, however, more often find that citizens' weighting of instrumental relative to symbolic political motivations *decreases* with political engagement (Federico and Malka 2018; Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Krupnikov and Ryan 2022).[2] Because the instrumental benefits of political engagement are extremely low (usually negative), but its expressive benefits are substantial, politically engaged citizens generally prioritize symbolic motivations. Indeed, the politically engaged are sometimes likened to sports fans because their participation in politics does not emerge from the belief that their participation is likely to be pivotal, but out of the enjoyment that comes from rooting for a political team (Hersh 2020; Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Krupnikov and Ryan 2022; Mason 2018). Citizens' primary motivations for political behavior thus typically shift from instrumental (or self-interested) at low levels of political engagement to symbolic (or identity-based) at high levels of political engagement.[3]

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[2] For example, Johnston et al. (2017) find a 0.53 correlation between political engagement and agreement with the statements: "My political attitudes and beliefs are an important part of my self-image," and "My political attitudes and beliefs are an important reflection of who I am."

[3] Prior research has assessed the relationships between political engagement and instrumental vs. symbolic political motivations with national US samples. In Appendix 8, I validate that political

The Heterogeneous Effects of Rural Consciousness

In the context of rural consciousness and political behavior, Cramer (2016) argues both self-interest and symbolic considerations matter. Specifically, Cramer contends Republicans' recent appeals to rurally-conscious citizens' feelings of political neglect and their sense of socio-cultural marginalization have attracted rurally-conscious Americans to Republican partisanship and conservative identity. And because the rurally-conscious understand economic redistribution as a cause of, rather than a solution to, rural areas' material deprivation, as well as a violation of widely-held norms of individualism, they also adopt conservative economic views. Per Cramer, rurally-conscious citizens' understandings of their material and symbolic interests both generate right-wing political behaviors like voting for Republican candidates and opposing redistribution.

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engagement proxies the relative weighting of instrumental vs. symbolic political considerations for rural Americans, specifically. I conduct three sets of empirical tests. First, I show that among rural citizens, material interests are decreasingly associated with related economic preferences as functions of political engagement (for similar tests using national samples, see Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017 and Appendix 7 of Ollerenshaw 2022). Second, I show partisan-ideological orientation is stronger among, and more important to the identities of, politically engaged rural citizens. Third, I show partisan-ideological orientation is only weakly associated with economic preferences for disengaged rural citizens, but strongly associated with economic preferences for engaged rural citizens. What is true in the broader national populace also holds for rural citizens; politically engaged rural Americans prioritize political identities, not material interests, in their political behavior, whereas politically disengaged rural Americans prioritize material interests, and not their (on average, extremely weak) political identities.

My contention, however, is that rural consciousness will *not* have uniform effects among instrumentally- vs. symbolically-motivated citizens.[4] In recent years, Republicans like Donald Trump have sought to cultivate rural support by appealing to rural Americans as a people left behind in a globalizing, urbanizing, and diversifying country. Democrats, on the other hand, have often tried to appeal to rural Americans by emphasizing how their policies would advance rural Americans' material interests. For instrumentally minded rural Americans, Democrats' proposed policies to alleviate rural deprivation should be more attractive than Republicans' identity-based appeals. Conversely, rural Americans who prioritize symbolic concerns over instrumental ones should be willing to eschew the material benefits of Democratic representation for the symbolic benefits of right-wing identification. The upshot is that I expect rural consciousness to have heterogeneous associations with partisan-ideological orientations based on citizens' weighting of instrumental and symbolic motivations. And because this weighting can be reliably proxied with political engagement, I derive my first hypothesis (H1): *rural consciousness will be associated*

[4] Trujillo and Crowley (2022) similarly theorize that instrumental and symbolic motivations push the rurally-conscious in opposite directions politically. However, they contend that instrumental concerns are captured in the distributional facet of rural consciousness, while symbolic concerns are captured in the representational and cultural facets. This theory assumes that representational grievances are not based in material concerns, and that economic grievances are not symbolically motivated. These assumptions, respectively, contradict recent instrumental and symbolic political theories (see especially Johnston and Wronski 2015). To offer support for my alternative theory, in Appendix 6, I show all three facets of rural consciousness are heterogeneously associated with partisan-ideological orientation and economic preferences as functions of political engagement.

with Democratic partisanship and liberal identity for politically disengaged rural citizens, but Republican partisanship and conservative identity for politically engaged rural citizens.

Although this hypothesis accounts for why politically engaged, rurally-conscious citizens adopt right-wing partisan-ideological identities, it does not yet account for their economic policy conservatism—that is, why would rurally-conscious citizens eschew liberal economic views as they adopt right-wing political identities? In line with Johnston, Lavine, and Federico (2017), I argue that economic policies are often interpreted symbolically for politically engaged citizens because economic issues become associated with specific groups and identities through political discourse (see also Johnston and Wronski 2015). Today, political elites are so ideologically well-sorted that, on almost any economic issue, politically attentive citizens can learn (or infer) where Democratic and Republican elites will fall on the matter (Abramowitz 2010; Hetherington 2001). Politically engaged citizens are more attentive to political discourse and elite-level polarization, more willing to assimilate policy views from ingroup elites to reinforce their identification with partisan-ideological groups (Carsey and Layman 2006; Layman et al. 2010; Zaller 1992), and, as I hypothesize in H1, better sorted as a function of rural consciousness. I thus expect politically engaged, rurally-conscious citizens to adopt conservative economic attitudes because these views are almost always symbolically associated with Republican partisanship and conservative social identity (Lenz 2012; Tesler 2015). I thus derive my second hypothesis (H2): *rural consciousness will be associated with economic policy liberalism for politically disengaged rural citizens, but economic policy conservatism for politically engaged rural citizens.*

The caveat to the above account, of course, is that I only expect rural consciousness to be increasingly associated to conservative economic preferences for issues where Republican elites have staked out a more conservative position than Democratic elites. Although elites have mostly

polarized this way on economic issues, at least one issue remains where Republicans have often found themselves to the left of Democrats: trade. Specifically, since Trump became the 2016 Republican nominee, he and other Republican elites have espoused stridently anti-trade views. And while anti-trade views are still found among Democratic elites, in the recent 2016 and 2020 elections, Trump attacked his Democratic presidential opponents for their past support for free trade agreements. My theory proposes symbolically-motivated rural Americans' economic views reflect those which they adopt to maintain congruence with their political ingroup (Zaller 1992). Thus, although I generally expect engaged, rurally conscious Americans to adopt conservative economic views, on trade, I expect the exact opposite since elite cue-taking will pull the rurally-conscious in a left-wing (i.e., protectionist) direction (Mutz 2021; for similar uses of trade vis-à-vis other economic policies, see Johnston et al. 2017 and Ollerenshaw and Johnston 2022). My third hypothesis (H3) is thus: *rural consciousness will be associated with protectionist trade preferences, and increasingly so as a function of political engagement.*

Data

To test H1-H3, I primarily use the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES). The 2020 ANES is an ideal dataset because it is a probability-based cross-section of voting-eligible Americans.[5] Based on my theory, it is especially important to utilize a probability-based sample because imbalances correlated with political engagement, which are common in non-probability samples, could skew the inferences drawn about rural consciousness (Kennedy et al. 2016). In total, 7,449 respondents completed both its pre-election and post-election waves. In line with the recommendations of Nemerever and Rogers (2021) for operationalizing rurality, I subset the full

[5] All estimates are weighted, and standard errors are robust to the complex sampling design of the 2020 ANES Time Series. For further details about sampling methodology, see Appendix 1.

sample to the 3,154 respondents who identify as "rural" or "small-town" Americans in a survey question. For brevity, I collectively refer to rural and small-town Americans as just "rural." This operationalization is appropriate because the wordings of the rural consciousness items directly refer to people from "small towns and rural areas" and because rural consciousness exists among Americans not *presently* living in rural areas or small towns, but who consider themselves rural or small-town people (Johnson and Scala 2022; Trujillo 2022). However, for those who would prefer analyses of only those presently living in rural areas or small towns, I provide replications that impose this restriction in Appendix 4 and find extremely similar results. Finally, I exclude 50 respondents who reported not taking the survey at all seriously or who refused to report how seriously they took the survey because the 2020 ANES was primarily self-administered, a mode which lends itself to trolling and inattentive responding (Lopez and Hillygus 2018). My findings are not at all driven by the exclusion of these respondents, however (see Appendix 4). After these exclusions, but before listwise deletion, the 2020 ANES sample includes 3,104 rural Americans.[6]

Analysis

H1-H3 posit the associations of rural consciousness with the three outcomes of interest are conditioned by political engagement. I test these hypotheses with multiplicative interaction linear models that include as independent variables: rural consciousness, political engagement,

[6] In Appendix 7, I replicate tests of H1-H3 in a 2018 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) module from the reproduction files of Munis (2020). The 2018 CCES includes Munis's four-item rural resentment measure—a similar construct to rural consciousness. While Munis's CCES is useful for replication tests with a different rural consciousness measure, it has the major limitations of being a small, non-probability sample of just 266 rural/small-town Americans.

the interaction of rural consciousness with political engagement, and a set of covariates. Here, I outline how all these variables are constructed (but see Appendix 2 for exact question wordings).

Rural Consciousness: Rural consciousness is assessed with three items, each tapping one facet of rural consciousness. The first question probes perceptions of rural Americans having too much, too little, or about the right amount of political influence. The second probes perceptions of rural Americans getting less, more, or about what they deserve from the government. Finally, the third item probes perceptions of rural Americans getting less, more, or about the right amount of respect. The three items are combined into an additive scale (α=0.69) ranging from 0 to 1, where values above 0.50 indicate rural consciousness, values at 0.50 indicate rural non-consciousness, and values below 0.50 indicate something like anti-rural consciousness. The distribution of rural consciousness is shown in Figure 1. Very few rural Americans are anti-rural (5.7 percent), the modal share locate at the non-conscious midpoint (19.9 percent), and a large majority exhibit at least some rural consciousness (74.5 percent). Given this skew, I calculate marginal effects from the scale's midpoint to maximum (i.e., from rurally non-conscious to conscious). However, the results are near-identical when the anti-rurally conscious are folded in with the non-conscious or excluded from the analysis (Appendix 4); i.e., my findings are not an artifact of extrapolation into a region of rural consciousness that lacks support (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2019).[7]

Political Engagement: Following Johnston, Lavine, and Federico (2017) and Ollerenshaw (2022) who build multiplicative interaction models moderated by political engagement, I assess political engagement (sometimes referred to as "political sophistication") with a political interest subscale and a political knowledge subscale. The political interest subscale is comprised of four items that

[7] In Appendix 5, I also verify the linearity assumption of multiplicative interaction models holds using a binning estimator (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2019).

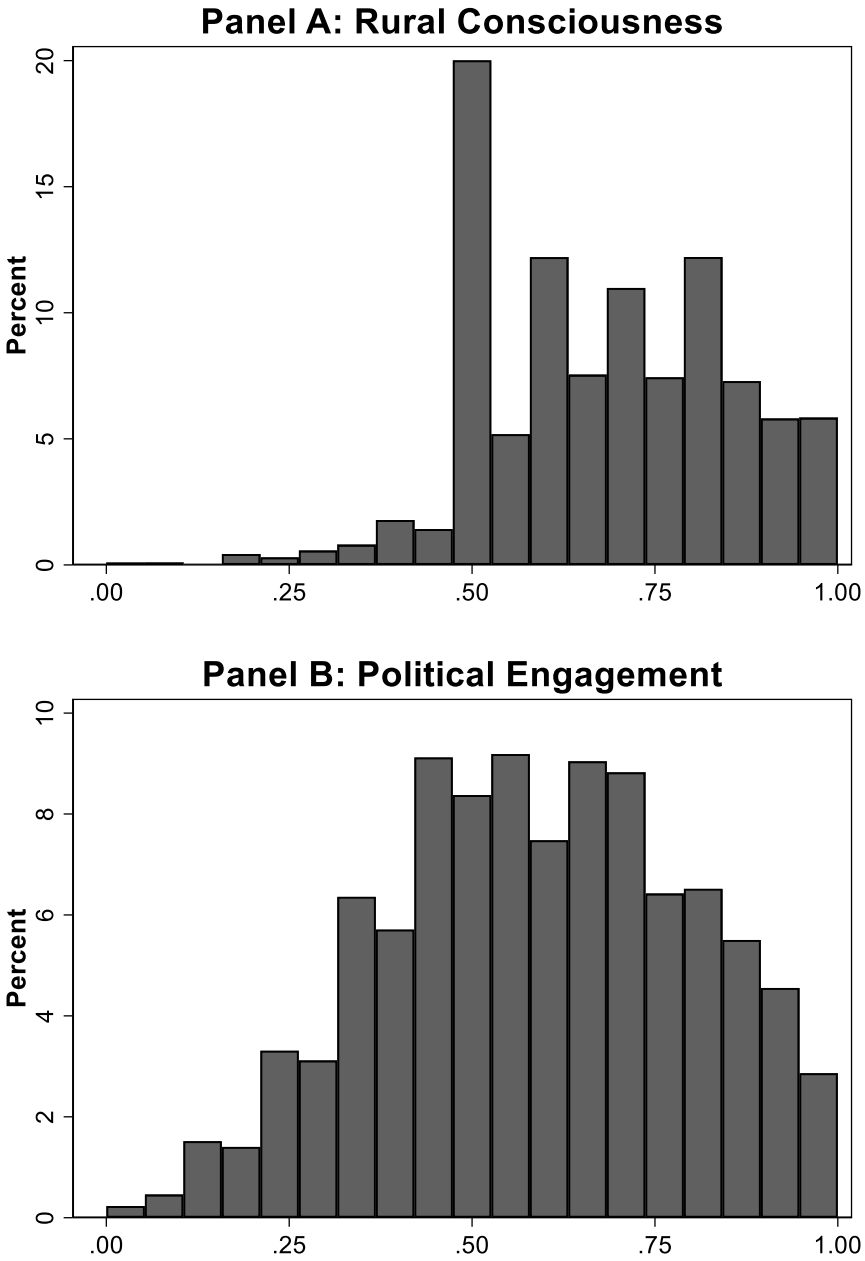

Figure 1—Distributions of Rural Consciousness and Political Engagement. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES.

capture attention to political events, campaigns, and news (α=0.83). The political knowledge subscale is the average of correct answers to eight political knowledge questions: one about Senators' term lengths, two about partisan control of Congressional chambers, and five office recall questions about major political figures (α=0.70). Political engagement is constructed from

these two constituent subscales, equally weighted. Political engagement is recoded to take values between 0 and 1 such that larger values indicate greater engagement. The distribution of political engagement is shown alongside the distribution of rural consciousness in Figure 1. Engagement and rural consciousness are only weakly correlated (r=0.09), which indicates similar degrees of rural consciousness can be found among politically engaged and disengaged rural Americans.

Partisanship and Ideology: To test H1, I use six partisan-ideological orientation variables. My primary measure of partisanship is the standard 7-point partisan identity scale, recoded to range from 0 (strong Republican) to 1 (strong Democrat). As additional measures of partisanship, I also assess the difference in 101-point thermometer ratings of the Democratic and Republican parties, dichotomous two-party presidential candidate preferences (Biden/Trump), and 101-point ratings of Biden vis-à-vis Trump, all coded so that higher values indicate Democratic partisanship. My primary ideological orientation measure is the standard seven-point ideological identity scale coded to take values between 0 (extremely conservative) and 1 (extremely liberal). Those who indicate having not thought much about their placement on this scale are recoded to the middle category ("Moderate"). As a second measure of ideological orientation, I assess respondents' ratings of "Liberals" vis-à-vis "Conservatives" where higher values indicate pro-liberal warmth.

Economic Policy: To test H2 and H3, I use the 16 economic policy items on the 2020 ANES. These items span issues of redistribution, social welfare, healthcare, taxes, regulation, and trade. Using principal components factor analysis (see Appendix 2), I show 14 of these economic items load well onto the first factor that explains 45 percent of the variation across these items, with the second factor explaining just 7 percent more variation. I generate an additive index of economic policy preferences using these 14 items (α=0.90). This policy index ranges from 0 (conservatism) to 1 (liberalism). Notably, the two items that do *not* load well onto the first factor assess attitudes

towards import restrictions and free trade agreements. Thus, I test H2 using the economic policy index and its 14 constituent items, and test H3 by scaling the two trade items, recoded between 0 (pro-trade) and 1 (anti-trade) since protectionism is usually considered to be an anti-market view. *Controls*: I control for respondent age, gender, education, income, race/ethnicity (six-categories, white non-Hispanic as the baseline category), and whether the respondent is a parent to children under 18, married, in a union, or residing in the South.[8] I also control for racial stereotyping, as recent work finds rural resentment towards urban Americans is partly confounded by views of urban Black Americans, specifically, as being violent and lazy (Nelsen and Petsko 2021).[9] Racial stereotyping is measured as the average of differences in ratings given to Blacks and whites on two dimensions: hardworking-lazy and peaceful-violent. Finally, following the recommendation of Blackwell and Olson (2022) for estimating interaction effects when the sample is large and/or

[8] Though some studies of rural consciousness have focused exclusively on non-Hispanic whites, I include respondents from all racial/ethnic groups in my analysis. In Appendix 4, I show that my findings are very similar for non-Hispanic whites and racial/ethnic minorities.

[9] I prefer controlling for racial stereotyping over racial resentment because racial resentment has been shown to better tap sympathy for Black Americans among liberals than the specific anti-Black attitudes thought to confound rural consciousness (Carney and Enos, n.d.; Feldman and Huddy 2005). In addition, racial resentment is sometimes argued to tap conservative values and principles (Sniderman and Tetlock 1986); because conservatism is often essentially my outcome of interest, including racial resentment as a covariate risks introducing attenuation bias. Racial stereotyping, by contrast, directly assesses beliefs about Blacks' purported laziness and violence. However, acknowledging the ubiquitous use of racial resentment among political scientists, in Appendix 4, I replicate tests of H1-H3 while swapping racial resentment for racial stereotyping.

the set of covariates is small, I use a fully moderated model where every covariate is interacted with political engagement to address potential omitted interaction bias.

Rural Consciousness, Partisanship, and Ideology

I begin my analysis by testing H1, which posits rural consciousness will be conditionally associated with political identities. In Figure 2, I display the conditional marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum on the four partisanship and two ideological orientation items. Beginning with the standard seven-point partisan identity measure, I find rural consciousness has a 22-point association with Democratic partisan identity at the lowest level of political engagement ($p=0.005$), but a 33-point association with *Republican* partisan identity at the highest level of engagement ($p<0.001$). This 55-point difference in the associations of rural consciousness to partisan identity as a function of political engagement ($p<0.001$) supports H1. Similar results emerge for the party ratings measure; rural consciousness is associated with 24-points warmer ratings of the Democratic Party vis-à-vis the Republican Party at the lowest level of engagement ($p<0.001$), but 33-points colder ratings of the Democratic Party vis-à-vis the Republican Party at the highest level of engagement ($p<0.001$)—a 57-point difference ($p<0.001$).

Turning now to partisanship measured via presidential candidate preferences, I find rural consciousness is associated with a 28-point greater predicted probability of preferring Biden over Trump at the lowest level of political engagement ($p=0.005$), but a 43-point greater probability of preferring Trump over Biden at the highest level of political engagement ($p<0.001$)—a 71-point difference ($p<0.001$).[10] In terms of ratings of Biden and Trump, rural consciousness is associated

[10] I use a linear probability model to estimate these predicted candidate preference probabilities. Note that I include non-voters who reported a preference for either Trump or Biden in the model but exclude third-party voters and non-voters without a preference between Biden and Trump.

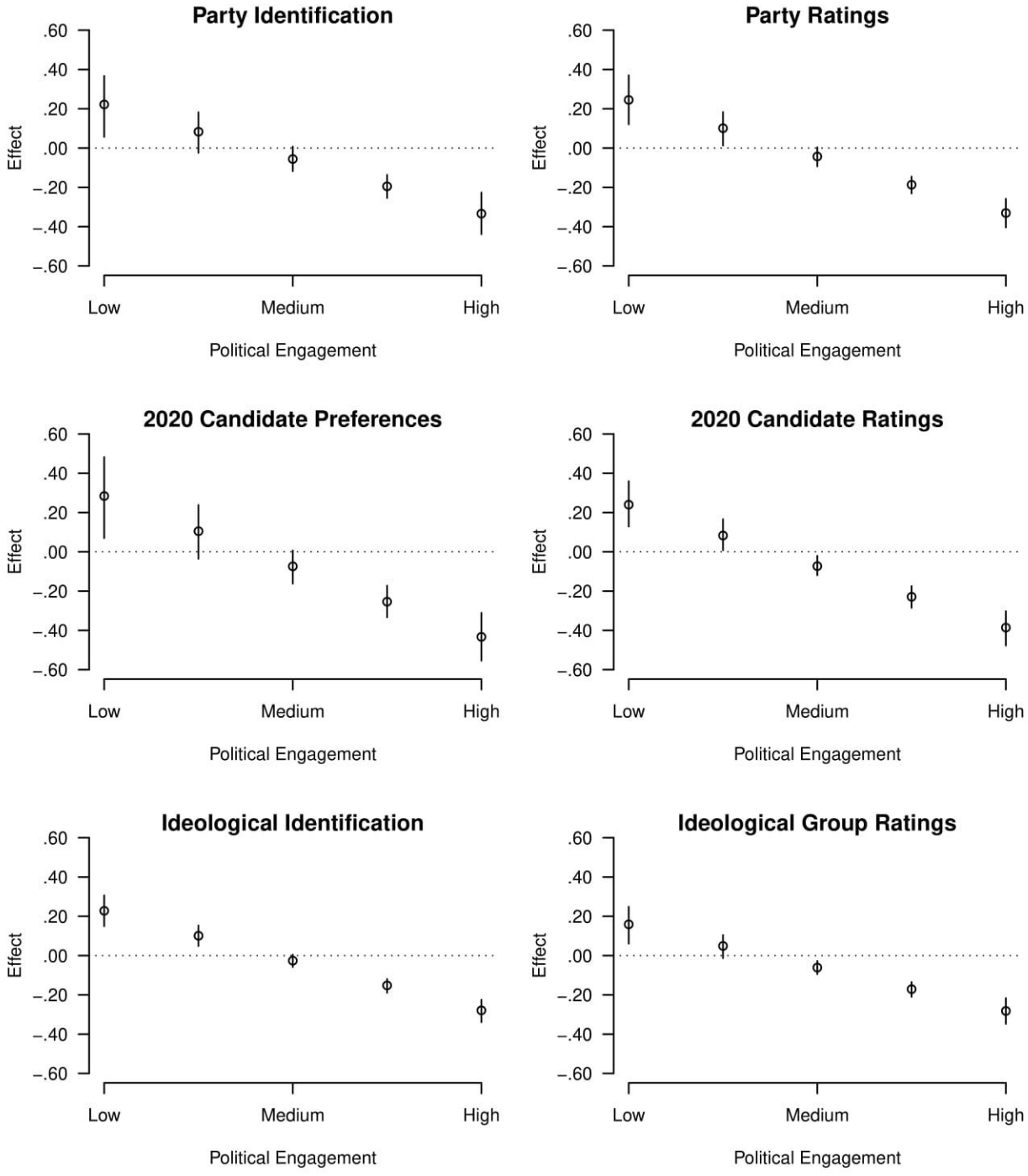

Figure 2—Conditional Associations of Rural Consciousness to Partisan-Ideological Orientation. Points are marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum with 95 percent confidence intervals. Positive values indicate associations with left-wing orientations. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

with 24-points greater relative warmth towards Biden at the lowest level of political engagement ($p<0.001$), but 39-points greater relative warmth towards Trump at the highest level of political engagement ($p<0.001$)—a 63-point difference ($p<0.001$). Whether assessed via partisan identity, party ratings, candidate preferences, or candidate ratings, rural consciousness is associated with Democratic partisanship among the disengaged, but Republican partisanship among the engaged.

Finally, I examine whether the conditional associations for partisanship are also reflected in ideological orientation. Looking first at the standard seven-point ideological identity measure, I find rural consciousness has a 23-point association with liberal identification at the lowest level of political engagement ($p<0.001$), but a 28-point association with conservative identification at the highest level of engagement ($p<0.001$)—a 51-point difference ($p<0.001$). Turning to ratings of liberals vis-à-vis conservatives, similar associations emerge; rural consciousness is associated with 16-points more relative warmth towards liberals at the lowest level of political engagement ($p=0.001$), but 28-points more relative warmth towards conservatives at the highest level of political engagement ($p<0.001$)—a 44-point difference ($p<0.001$). Across both measures, rural consciousness is *conditionally* related to liberal-conservative identity. These results support H1.

To illustrate why interaction terms are necessary to discern the relationships between rural consciousness and partisan-ideological orientation, in Table 1, I show the main associations of rural consciousness from its midpoint to maximum with each partisanship/ideology measure. On average, rural consciousness is associated with 11-points more Republican partisanship, 10-points warmer ratings of the Republican Party vis-à-vis the Democratic Party, a 15-points higher predicted probability of preferring Trump to Biden, 13-points warmer ratings of Trump vis-à-vis Biden, 7-points more conservative identity, and 10-points warmer ratings of conservatives vis-à-vis liberals. These small, positive associations are similar to those from recent work correlating

rural consciousness to political identities (Munis 2020; Trujillo and Crowley 2022), party ratings (Jacobs and Munis 2022), and related attitudes like Trump approval (Nelsen and Petsko 2021).

Partisan Identity	Party Ratings	Candidate Preferences	Candidate Ratings	Ideological Identity	Ideological Ratings
-0.106	-0.095	-0.151	-0.130	-0.071	-0.101
(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.014)	(0.015)
N=2,877	N=2,827	N=2,466	N=2,787	N=2,877	N=2,823

Table 1—Main Associations of Rural Consciousness to Partisan-Ideological Orientation. Entries are marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum. Standard errors in parentheses. Positive values indicate associations with left-wing orientations. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Rural Consciousness and Economic Ideology

In this section, I address a core question of Cramer (2016): why do rural Americans, who would generally benefit from economic redistribution and social welfare programs, often support less of these things? I theorize there is a contingent relationship between rural consciousness and economic preferences predicated on citizens' relative prioritizations of material versus symbolic political motivations. Though material interests should lead rurally-conscious citizens to be more favorable to redistribution and social welfare provision, I hypothesize politically engaged, rurally conscious citizens will adopt economic attitudes consistent with right-wing elites due to identity-based motivations (H2). I thus expect the association between rural consciousness and economic liberalism to flip from positive at low political engagement to negative at high engagement.

Atop Figure 3, I show the conditional marginal associations between rural consciousness and economic ideology on the 14-item policy scale. At the lowest level of political engagement, rural consciousness is associated with 24-points greater economic liberalism ($p<0.001$). It is the case that rural consciousness is associated with support for policies that would materially benefit economically deprived rural communities; however, this association only emerges for politically *disengaged* citizens. At the highest level of engagement, rural consciousness is related to 30-

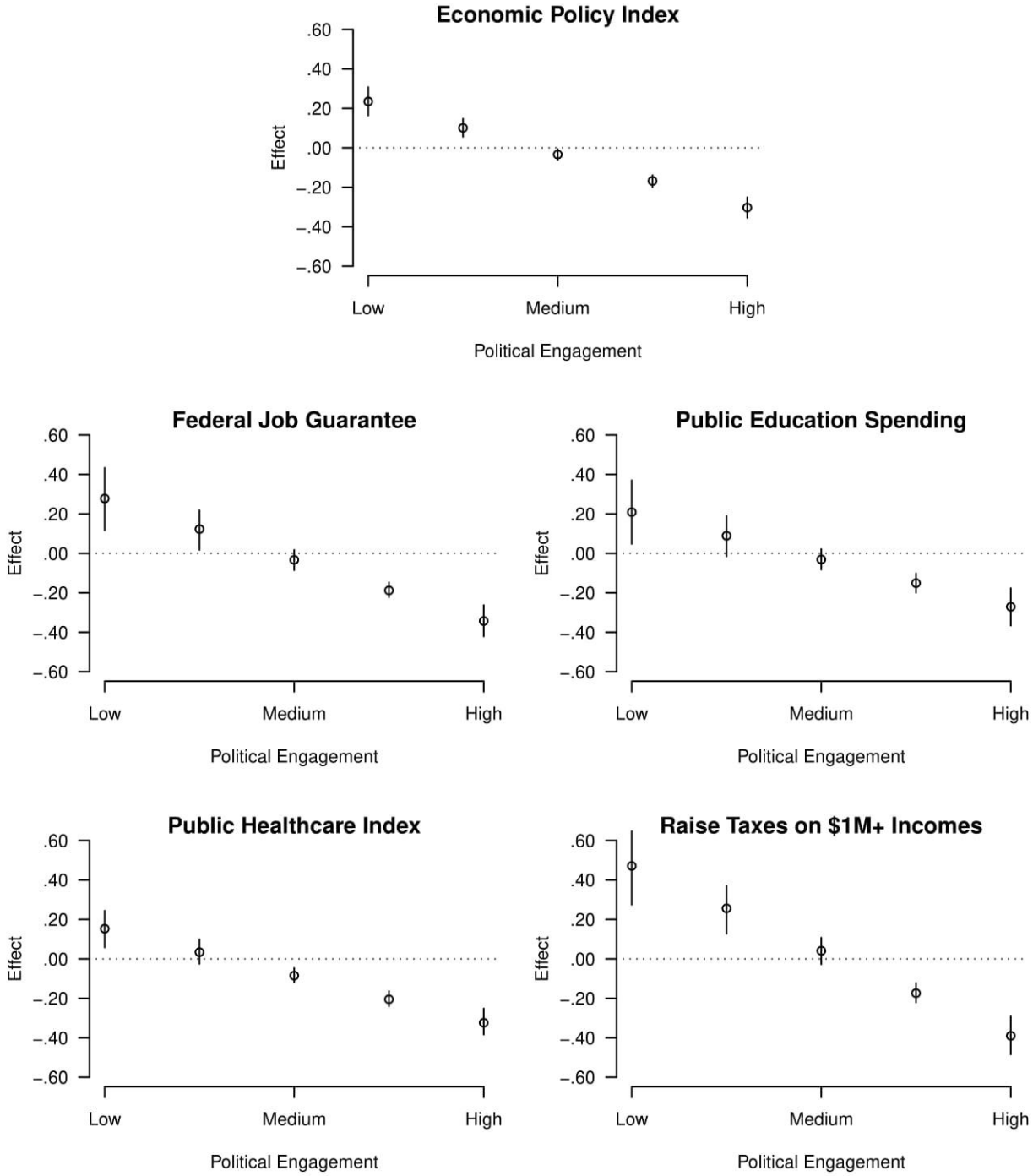

Figure 3—Conditional Associations of Rural Consciousness to Economic Preferences. Points are marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum with 95 percent confidence intervals. Positive values indicate associations with liberal preferences. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

points greater economic conservatism ($p<0.001$). This 64-point interaction is substantively and statistically significant ($p<0.001$), consistent with H2. For comparison, as shown in Table 2, rural consciousness has a relatively weak 8-point overall association with economic conservatism.

Political engagement moderates the associations between rural consciousness and all 14 constituent economic policy items used to create the economic policy scale in the hypothesized directions.[11] While it would be repetitive to discuss all 14 items, several are worth individual discussion because they directly tap the central economic grievances raised by Cramer's (2016) rural interviewees: high unemployment, poor public schools, healthcare affordability, and taxes. Specifically, in Figure 3, I plot support for a federal jobs guarantee, federal education spending, public vs. private healthcare provision (a three-item scale; $\alpha=0.74$), and raising taxes on annual incomes above $1 million. At the lowest level of engagement, rural consciousness is associated with 28-points more support for a job guarantee ($p<0.001$), 21-points more support for federal education spending ($p=0.007$), 15-points more support for public healthcare provision ($p=0.001$), and 47-points more support for raising taxes on annual incomes over $1 million ($p<0.001$). Thus, not all rurally-conscious Americans hold economic views at odds with their ostensible material standing; indeed, politically disengaged, rurally-conscious Americans are generally quite liberal in economic outlook. At the highest level of political engagement, however, rural consciousness

[11] In Appendix 3, I offer the conditional associations between rural consciousness and all 14 items used to create the economic policy scale. The items described in this section were selected because of their substantive importance, not because only these items (and not others) provide support for H2. In fact, these same patterns also emerge for government spending/services levels, federal aid to the poor, welfare spending, Social Security, government actions to reduce income inequality, minimum wage levels, government regulations, and universal basic income.

is associated with 34-point less support for a job guarantee ($p<0.001$), 27-points less support for education spending ($p<0.001$), 32-points less support for public healthcare provision ($p<0.001$), and 39-points less support for raising taxes on incomes above $1 million ($p<0.001$). On average (as shown in Table 2), and especially among politically engaged citizens, rural consciousness is associated with economic conservatism. This is certainly not a universal phenomenon, however, as rural consciousness among the politically disengaged is associated with economic liberalism.

Economic Policy Index	Healthcare Index	Federal Job Guarantee	Millionaire Taxes	Public School Spending
-0.081 (0.012)	-0.128 (0.015)	-0.088 (0.018)	-0.035 (0.026)	-0.074 (0.021)
N=2,880	N=2,880	N=2,876	N=2,878	N=2,877

Table 2—Main Associations of Rural Consciousness to Economic Preferences. Entries are marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum. Standard errors in parentheses. Positive values indicate associations with left-wing economic preferences. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Elite Cues and Economic Preference Formation: The Case of Trade Policy

One of my core theoretical claims is that rurally-conscious, politically engaged citizens adopt conservative economic views because: (1) they have Republican/conservative identities; (2) Republican-conservative elites are generally more conservative on most economic issues than Democratic-liberal elites; and (3) politically engaged citizens have identity-based motivations to incorporate economic views consistent with their political identities. It is thus the interaction of elites' position-taking and citizens' attention to politics that generates conditional associations between rural consciousness and economic attitudes. However, where elite signals are unclear or flip altogether from their typical alignment, I would expect rural consciousness to be associated with left-wing economic preferences, especially for the politically engaged. Specifically, with a stridently anti-trade Republican serving as president in 2020, I expect rural consciousness to be conditionally associated with economic *liberalism* (i.e., protectionist views) because this is the

trade position politically attentive, rurally-conscious citizens should adopt from political elites.

In Figure 4, I plot the conditional association between rural consciousness and support for protectionism. At the lowest level of political engagement, rural consciousness exhibits a 7-point association with support for trade (p=0.220). This null at the lowest level of political engagement somewhat contradicts H3; I had expected rural consciousness to be associated with opposition to trade among the politically disengaged, and for these anti-trade views to be even stronger among the politically engaged. One possible explanation for this null is that politically disengaged rural Americans are uncertain about how they would be materially affected by trade, as trade is a hard issue area for many citizens to parse their own material interests (Scheve and Slaughter 2001). Johnston (2013), for example, finds low political sophistication predicts non-response on trade questions. For whatever reason rural consciousness is not associated with trade preferences for politically disengaged rural Americans, the expected association with protectionism emerges for the politically engaged. At the highest level of engagement, rural consciousness has a 14-point

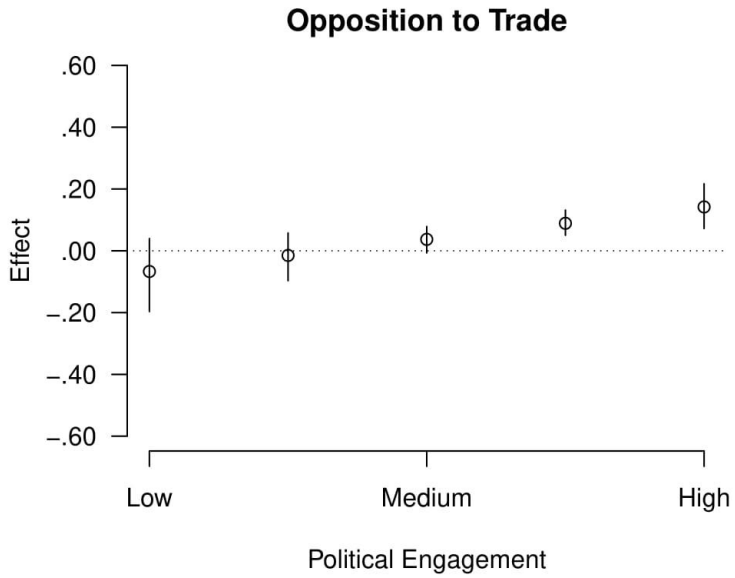

Figure 4—Conditional Associations of Rural Consciousness to Trade Preferences. Points are marginal effects of rural consciousness taken from its midpoint to maximum with 95 percent confidence intervals. Positive values indicate associations with anti-trade preferences. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

association with support for protectionism ($p<0.001$). As expected, there is a positive, 21-point interaction between rural consciousness and engagement ($p=0.011$). These findings support H3.

Importantly, the relationships between rural consciousness, political engagement, and opinion formation clearly differ for trade relative to other economic issues. Indeed, formally testing the differences in the interactions of rural consciousness and political engagement for the economic policy index and the trade index, I reject the null hypothesis of coefficient equivalence ($p<0.001$). For one of the few remaining economic issues where Republicans often take positions to the left of Democrats, rurally conscious, engaged Americans hold left-wing preferences.[12]

Discussion

Drawing on theories of instrumental and symbolic politics, in this paper, I hypothesized rural consciousness would be heterogeneously associated with political behavior. Specifically, I hypothesized that rural consciousness would be associated with Democratic partisanship, liberal identity, and economic liberalism for politically disengaged citizens but Republican partisanship, conservative identity, and economic conservatism for politically engaged citizens. Analyzing the 2020 ANES, I found consistent support for these expectations. To demonstrate that politically engaged citizens were adopting specific economic positions from political elites, I also assessed

[12] In Appendix 4, I conduct five robustness checks to show my conclusions hold: (1) using rural location rather than identity as a sample exclusion criterion; (2) excluding anti-rurally conscious respondents from the sample or folding them into the "rural non-conscious" scale midpoint; (3) controlling for racial resentment; (4) examining white and non-white rural Americans separately; (5) using different attentiveness/trolling sample exclusion criteria. The only area my findings do not hold is that controlling for racial resentment, rural consciousness becomes non-significantly associated with anti-trade preferences at the highest level of political engagement ($p=0.064$).

how political engagement conditioned the associations between rural consciousness and trade preferences—a specific economic policy area where Republicans have recently taken positions to the left of Democrats. Unlike for other economic policies, rural consciousness was associated with left-wing trade preferences among the politically engaged. These results are consistent with theories of public opinion formation that contend politically engaged citizens adopt economic views consistent with their political ingroup's elites because they are sorted into distinct partisan-ideological groups, attentive to politics, and highly concerned with advancing symbolic, identity-based interests in their political behavior (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Zaller 1992).

Though I find support for my hypotheses, I rely on cross-sectional data; my analyses thus have limitations worth explicitly addressing, especially towards sustaining any claims that rural consciousness is causally related to political behavior. Arguably the foremost threat to inference in this study is the possibility that rural Americans differentially adopt rural consciousness due to partisan-ideological ties. My theory assumes that politically engaged, rurally-conscious citizens sort into the Republican Party for symbolic reasons, and that sorting, coupled with attention to polarized elite discourse, leads the rurally conscious to adopt conservative economic preferences. Alternatively, however, these conditional associations could indicate that rural Americans adopt or reject rural consciousness due to its symbolic associations with the political right. Specifically, Republicans' anti-urban/pro-rural rhetoric might actively stoke rural consciousness among their supporters, which in turn may lead Democrats to reject rural consciousness. If this were the case, the associations I show between rural consciousness and political orientation could be evidence that rural consciousness is endogenous to political identities. And, of course, these explanations could also be co-occurring if political identities and rural consciousness are reciprocally related.

It is likely unreasonable to assume rural consciousness is entirely exogeneous to partisan-ideological identities, especially for politically engaged Americans. As geographic polarization has increased, and political elites' appeals to rural grievance have become more one-sided, rural consciousness (or a lack thereof) may itself have become a means of signaling political identity. An important question, then, is which causal pathway dominates: rural consciousness to political identities, or political identities to rural consciousness? Unfortunately, data limitations preclude a direct answer to this question. Trujillo (2022) finds rural *identity* is exogeneous to partisanship, which could imply rural consciousness is also exogeneous to political identities; however, there are no public panel studies I am aware of that measure rural consciousness and political identities that would allow me to test how changes in rural consciousness and political identities are related or not. However, the 2024 ANES plans to reinterview 2020 respondents; if rural consciousness reappears on the 2024 questionnaire, a future study could use the 2020-2024 ANES panel to test whether political identities predict changes in rural consciousness. Beyond panel studies, survey experiments testing whether political identity primes affect rural consciousness could also prove fruitful. For now, however, without direct evidence that rural consciousness is exogeneous to partisan-ideological identities, the results of this study should be viewed as strictly associational.

Conclusion

In this paper, I demonstrated the associations between rural consciousness and political behavior are contingent on individuals' levels of political engagement. For politically disengaged Americans, rural consciousness is associated with Democratic partisanship, liberal identity, and economic liberalism. For politically engaged citizens, however, rural consciousness is associated with the exact opposite political behaviors: Republican partisanship, conservative identity, and economic conservatism. My findings offer new insight into the psychological bases of political

behavior among rural Americans which has, for decades, presented researchers a vexing puzzle to be solved. My findings are consistent with recent theories that argue politically disengaged citizens prioritize instrumental, self-interested concerns in their political decision-making, while politically engaged citizens prioritize symbolic, identity-based concerns (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017). Among instrumental-minded Americans, rural consciousness is associated with political behaviors aimed at increasing left-wing representation and economic redistribution; for symbolically-motivated Americans, rural consciousness is associated with right-wing political identity and, in turn, greater opposition to economic redistribution and social welfare provision.

I suggest we need to amend, if only slightly, Cramer's (2016) original conceptualization of rural consciousness. Cramer interviewed a sample of rural Americans more socially involved and politically engaged than would be representative (p. 41; 2016). This skew is acutely relevant because political engagement shapes how rural consciousness relates to political behavior. To be clear, my results offer substantial support for Cramer's (2016) theory: rural consciousness is, *on net*, related with Republican partisanship, conservative identity, and economic conservatism. My amendment to Cramer's account is that for politically disengaged citizens, rural consciousness is associated with *left-wing* politics. Indeed, my findings bolster Cramer's (2016) claim that rural Americans' economic conservatism "is more about identity than principle" (p. 140) since rural consciousness is only related to economic conservatism among symbolically motivated citizens.

In quantitative studies of rural consciousness, the issues introduced by not accounting for heterogeneity as a function of political engagement are also apparent. Nelsen and Petsko (2021), for example, use non-multiplicative models while controlling for racial resentment and find rural consciousness is related to just 5-points greater Trump approval in the 2019 ANES Pilot. In the same dataset, I can construct a measure of political engagement from three knowledge items and

one interest item. Interacting rural consciousness and racial resentment with this measure, I find rural consciousness is associated with 39-points *lower* Trump approval among the least engaged Americans, but 21-points *greater* Trump approval among the most engaged Americans.[13] Nelson and Petsko similarly find small associations between rural consciousness and economic policy conservatism, including an item about support for measures to reduce income inequality where I find a conditional association (Appendix 3). These examples illustrate how the relationships of rural consciousness with political behavior can be missed by looking only for its average effects.

Further, Trujillo and Crowley's (2022) recommendation to separate rural consciousness into its economic (distributional), political (representational), and cultural (way of life) facets does not account for this heterogeneity. In Appendix 6, I show that although the associations of rural consciousness do vary somewhat across these facets of rural consciousness (consistent with Trujillo and Crowley 2022), each facet is conditionally associated with political orientation and economic preferences in exactly the same ways. Most strikingly, I find rural citizens who agree "people living in small towns and rural areas get less than they deserve from the government" (i.e., distributional grievance) support economic liberalism at low levels of political engagement, but economic conservatism at high engagement. This is consistent with my theory that the *application* of rural consciousness to political behavior depends on an individual's weighting of instrumental and symbolic considerations. Inferential gains can be made by examining the rural consciousness facets separately (Trujillo and Crowley 2022); however, doing so does not obviate the need to account for heterogeneity as a function of political engagement. Fortunately, it should

[13] Nelsen and Petsko (2021) incorrectly use their survey weights as a covariate. The estimates I "reproduce" here are correctly weighted. Consistent with Nelsen and Petsko, I calculate marginal effects on the full range of rural consciousness and do not subset to rural/small-town identifiers.

not be difficult to account for this heterogeneity in the future because questions tapping political engagement (e.g., items about attention to news) are frequently asked in public opinion surveys.

The popular face of rural consciousness today is found on the right. This portrayal is not surprising because political engagement is highly correlated with political participation, such as voting, making political donations, discussing politics, attending political events, and contacting elected officials (2020 ANES). The preferences of rural Americans high in rural consciousness, but low in engagement, thus risk being overlooked by journalists who tend to report on engaged citizens (Krupnikov and Ryan 2022), researchers who typically average over disengaged citizens analyzing aggregate political behavior, and politicians who have few incentives to substantively represent Americans unlikely to vote for them or donate to their campaigns. As rural areas trend right (Hopkins 2017; Mettler and Brown 2022), a challenge for democratic representation today involves not only addressing polarization across a growing urban-rural divide (Brown, Mettler, and Puzzi 2021; Gimpel et al. 2020; Scala and Johnson 2017), but also figuring out how to represent the millions of politically disengaged rural Americans who have preferences entirely at odds with the policy agendas being forwarded by their increasingly conservative representatives.

Although raising political participation can be difficult, to the extent presently disengaged rural Americans can be mobilized, my findings suggest that such efforts could disproportionately benefit Democrats and progressive economic causes, reversing ongoing trends towards an urban-rural schism along these dimensions. Indeed, although Trump won rural and small-town voters in the 2020 ANES by 24-points, Trump was preferred to Biden by just 5-points among non-voters. Rural and small-town non-voters were also 8-points (or 0.37 standard deviations) more liberal on economic policy than rural and small-town voters. If Democrats wish to contest Republicans' rural dominance, my findings suggest one possible path forward lies in appeals to the widespread

distributional grievances of many disengaged rural Americans. Unfortunately, Democrats' rural mobilization efforts essentially collapsed post-2020, with the party not making any meaningful investments in rural organizing for the 2022 midterms (Montellaro and Schneider 2021). Such disinvestment bodes poorly for Democrat's future electoral prospects given the steep structural advantages conferred by rural dominance in the US. More importantly, Democrats' inability (or unwillingness) to make inroads with rural Americans does a disservice to the millions of rural citizens who desire, and would benefit from, greater social welfare provision and redistribution.

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Appendix Material: Rural Consciousness and its Heterogeneous Associations with Political Behavior

[BLINDED]

Contents

Appendix 1—2020 American National Election Study (ANES) Data Description

Target Population: The target population of the 2020 ANES is non-institutional U.S. citizens 18 years or older as of November 3rd, 2020 living in the 50 US states or the District of Columbia.

Field Dates: The pre-election wave was fielded between August 18, 2020 and November 3, 2020. The post-election wave was fielded between November 8, 2020 and January 4, 2021.

Sample Recruitment: Westat, Inc collected the sample. "Selected addresses were sent a series of letters to recruit one household member to go online to complete a survey. The invitation letter included $10 in cash and promised $40 for completing a survey online. Household members following the invitation link were taken to a screening instrument to randomly select one person from among the adult U.S. citizens living at the address to complete the ANES questionnaire. Upon completion of the screener, the selected respondent was invited to complete the survey based upon the mode of their assigned group" (2020 ANES Codebook, pg. 4).

Interview Modes: Responses were mostly collected via self-administered online surveys, with small samples who completed live video or telephone interviews. Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish.

Response Rate: The response rate (AAPOR RR1) for the 2020 ANES pre-election wave was 40.9 percent. Of those who completed a pre-election interview, 90 percent went on to complete a post-election interview.

Weights and Sample Design Effects: To accurately represent the target population, I utilize the weighting variable V200010b, the strata variable V200010d, and the cluster variable V200010c.

Sample Subset: The total post-election sample was 7,449. I subset to the 3,154 respondents who identified themselves as "rural" or "small town" Americans when asked the question (V202356): "Regardless of where you currently live, do you usually think of yourself as a city person, a suburb person, a small-town person, a country or rural person, or something else?" I also drop 50 respondents who answered (V201650): "We sometimes find people don't always take surveys seriously, instead providing funny or insincere answers. How often did you give a serious response to the questions on this survey?" with "Never Serious" or those who skipped this item. The final sample includes 3,104 respondents.

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American National Election Studies. 2021. ANES 2020 Time Series Study Full Release [dataset and documentation]. July 19, 2021 version. www.electionstudies.org.

Appendix 2—Question Wordings and Measure Constructions

Question Wording Bank

Rural Identification (V202356): "Regardless of where you currently live, do you usually think of yourself as a city person, a suburb person, a small-town person, a country or rural person, or something else?" [1. City person 2. Suburb person 3. Small-town person 4. Country (or rural) person 5. Something else]

Rural Consciousness: The rural consciousness scale is generated from three items (α=0.69).

1. (V202276x): "Compared to people living in cities, do people living in small towns and rural areas get more, the same, or less than they deserve from the government?... Do they get a great deal [more/less], moderately [more/less], or a little [more/less] than they deserve from the government?" [1. A great deal more 2. Moderately more 3. A little more 4. The same 5. A little less 6. Moderately less 7. A great deal less]
2. (V202279x): "Compared to people living in cities, do people living in small towns and rural areas have too much influence, too little influence, or about the right amount of influence on government?... Do they have much too [much/little], somewhat too [much/little], or a bit too [much/little] influence on government?" [1. Much too much 2. Somewhat too much 3. A little too much 4. About the right amount 5. A little too little 6. Somewhat too little 7. Much too little]
3. (V202282x): "Do people living in small towns and rural areas get too much respect, too little respect, or about the right amount of respect from people living in cities?... Do they get much too [much/little], somewhat too [much/little], or a bit too [much/little] respect from people living in cities?" [1. Much too much 2. Somewhat too much 3. A little too much 4. About the right amount 5. A little too little 6. Somewhat too little 7. Much too little]

Political Engagement: The political engagement scale is generated from two equally weighted subscales: political interest and political knowledge.

1. Political Interest (α=0.83)
    a. (V201005): "How often do you pay attention to what's going on in government and politics?" [1. Always 2. Most of the time 3. About half the time 4. Some of the time 5. Never]?
    b. (V201006): "Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been [very much interested, somewhat interested or not much interested/ not much interested, somewhat interested or very much interested] in the political campaigns so far this year?" [1. Very much interested 2. Somewhat interested 3. Not much interested]

c. (V202406): “How interested would you say you are in politics? Are you (very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested, or not at all interested / not at all interest, not very interested, somewhat interested, or very interested)?” [1. Very interested 2. Somewhat interested 3. Not very interested 4. Not at all interested]
d. (V202407): “And how closely do you follow politics on TV, radio, newspapers, or the Internet? (Very closely, fairly closely, not very closely, or not at all / Not at all, not very closely, fairly closely, or very closely)?” [1. Very closely 2. Fairly closely 3. Not very closely 4. Not at all]

2. Political Knowledge (α=0.70)
    a. “For how many years is a United States Senator elected - that is, how many years are there in one full term of office for a U.S. Senator?” [Open-Ended Response]
    b. “Do you happen to know which party currently has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington?” [Democrats/Republicans/Don’t Know]
    c. “Do you happen to know which party currently has the most members in the U.S. Senate?” [Democrats/Republicans/Don’t Know]
    d. “What job or political office does Mike Pence now hold?” [Open-Ended Response Coded by the ANES]
    e. “What job or political office does Nancy Pelosi now hold?” [Open-Ended Response Coded by the ANES]
    f. “What job or political office does Angela Merkel now hold?” [Open-Ended Response Coded by the ANES]
    g. “What job or political office does Vladimir Putin now hold?” [Open-Ended Response Coded by the ANES]
    h. “What job or political office does John Roberts now hold?” [Open-Ended Response Coded by the ANES]

2020 Presidential Candidate Preferences: Presidential candidate preferences is a variable that captures preferences for Biden or Trump, including among non-voters, but excluding those who preferred neither candidate or supported a third party candidate.

1. (If voted for president, V202073). “Who did you vote for? [Joe Biden, Donald Trump/Donald Trump, Joe Biden], Jo Jorgensen, Howie Hawkins, or someone else?” [1. Joe Biden 2. Donald Trump 3. Jo Jorgensen 4. Howie Hawkins 5. Other candidate {SPECIFY} 7. Specified as Republican candidate 8. Specified as Libertarian candidate 11. Specified as don’t know 12. Specified as refused]
2. (If did not vote for president, V202079x). “Did you prefer one of the candidates in the November election for President?... Who did you prefer? [Joe Biden, Donald Trump/Donald Trump, Joe Biden], Jo Jorgensen, Howie Hawkins, or someone else?” [10. Prefer Joe Biden - preference not strong 11. Prefer Joe Biden - preference strong 20. Prefer Donald Trump - preference not strong 21. Prefer Donald Trump - preference

strong 30. Prefer Jo Jorgensen - preference not strong 31. Prefer Jo Jorgensen - preference strong 40. Prefer Howie Hawkins - preference not strong 41. Prefer Howie Hawkins - preference strong 50. Prefer other candidate - preference not strong 51. Prefer other candidate - preference strong]

2020 Presidential Candidate Ratings: Presidential candidate ratings are assessed as the difference in ratings given to Joe Biden and Donald Trump on 101-point feeling thermometers.

1. (V201151). "How would you rate: Joe Biden." [0-100, 998. Don't know]
2. (V201152). "How would you rate: Donald Trump." [0-100, 998. Don't know]

Ideology (V201200): "We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?" [1. Extremely liberal 2. Liberal 3. Slightly liberal 4. Moderate; middle of the road 5. Slightly conservative 6. Conservative 7. Extremely conservative 99. Haven't thought much about this]

Ideological Group Ratings: Ideological group ratings are assessed as the difference in ratings given to liberals and conservatives on 101-point feeling thermometers.

1. (V202161). "How would you rate: Liberals." [0-100, 999. Don't recognize]
2. (V202164). "How would you rate: Conservatives." [0-100, 999. Don't recognize]

Partisanship (V201231x): "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as [a Democrat, a Republican / a Republican, a Democrat], an independent, or what?... Would you call yourself a strong [Democrat / Republican] or a not very strong [Democrat / Republican]? Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?" [1. Strong Democrat 2. Not very strong Democrat 3. Independent-Democrat 4. Independent 5. Independent-Republican 6. Not very strong Republican 7. Strong Republican]

Party Ratings: Party ratings are assessed as the difference in ratings given to the Democratic Party and the Republican Party on 101-point feeling thermometers.

1. (V201156). "How would you rate: the Democratic Party." [0-100, 998. Don't know]
2. (V201157). "How would you rate: the Republican Party." [0-100, 998. Don't know]

Partisan Identity Importance (V201232): "How important is being [a Democrat/a Republican/an Independent] to your identity?" [1. Extremely important 2. Very important 3. Moderately important 4. A little important 5. Not at all important]

Economic Policy Index: The economic policy index is constructed from the following 14 items (α=0.90). A principal component factor analysis provided later in this section shows that these 14 items load well onto one factor, and that the two trade items do *not* load onto this same factor.

1. Affordable Care Act (V202328x): "Do you approve, disapprove, or neither approve nor disapprove of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, sometimes called Obamacare?... Do you [approve/disapprove] of that a great deal, a moderate amount, or a little?" [1. Approve a great deal 2. Approve a moderate amount 3. Approve a little 4. Neither approve nor disapprove 5. Disapprove a little 6. Disapprove a moderate amount 7. Disapprove a great deal]
2. Aid to Poor Spending (V201320x): "Should federal spending on aid to the poor be increased, decreased, or kept the same?... Should it be [increased / decreased] a lot or a little?" [1. Increased a lot 2. Increased a little 3. Kept the same 4. Decreased a little 5. Decreased a lot]
3. Government Healthcare (V201252): "There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some people feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans like Blue Cross or other company paid plans. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?" [1. Government insurance plan 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Private insurance plan 99. Haven't thought much about this]
4. Healthcare Spending (V202380x): "Do you favor an increase, decrease, or no change in government spending to help people pay for health insurance when they can't pay for it all themselves?... Should it [increase/decrease] a great deal, a moderate amount, or a little?" [1. Increase a great deal 2. Increase a moderate amount 3. Increase a little 4. No change 5. Decrease a little 6. Decrease a moderate amount 7. Decrease a great deal]
5. Government Spending and Services (V201246): "Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?" [1. Government should provide many fewer services 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Government should provide many more services 99. Haven't thought much about this]
6. Income Inequality Reduction (V202259x): "Next, do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the government trying to reduce the difference in incomes between the richest and poorest households?... Do you [favor/oppose] that a great deal, a moderate amount,

or a little?" [1. Favor a great deal 2. Favor a moderate amount 3. Favor a little 4. Neither favor nor oppose 5. Oppose a little 6. Oppose a moderate amount 7. Oppose a great deal]

7. Job Guarantee (V201255): "Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?" [1. Government should see to jobs and standard of living 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. Government should let each person get ahead on own 99. Haven't thought much about this]
8. Millionaire Taxes (V202325): "Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose increasing income taxes on people making over one million dollars per year?" [1. Favor 2. Oppose 3. Neither favor nor oppose]
9. Minimum Wage (V202377): "Should the federal minimum wage be raised, kept the same, lowered but not eliminated, or eliminated altogether?" [1. Raised 2. Kept the same 3. Lowered 4. Eliminated]
10. Public School Spending (V201305x): "Should federal spending on public schools be increased, decreased, or kept the same?... Should it be [increased / decreased] a lot or a little?" [1. Increased a lot 2. Increased a little 3. Kept the same 4. Decreased a little 5. Decreased a lot]
11. Regulations (V202256): "Would it be good for society to have more government regulation, about the same amount of regulation as there is now, or less government regulation?" [1. Much more 2. Somewhat more 3. A little more 4. About the same amount 5. A little less 6. Somewhat less 7. Much less]
12. Social Security Spending (V201302x): "Should federal spending on Social Security be increased, decreased, or kept the same?... Should it be [increased / decreased] a lot or a little?" [1. Increased a lot 2. Increased a little 3. Kept the same 4. Decreased a little 5. Decreased a lot]
13. Welfare Spending (V201314x): "Should federal spending on welfare programs be increased, decreased, or kept the same?... Should it be [increased / decreased] a lot or a little?" [1. Increased a lot 2. Increased a little 3. Kept the same 4. Decreased a little 5. Decreased a lot]
14. Universal Basic Income (V202376x): "Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose establishing a federal program that gives all citizens $12,000 per year, provided they meet certain conditions? This program would be paid for with higher taxes… Do you [favor/oppose] that a great deal, a moderate amount, or a little?" [1. Favor a great deal 2. Favor a moderate amount 3. Favor a little 4. Neither favor nor oppose 5. Oppose a little 6. Oppose a moderate amount 7. Oppose a great deal]

Free Trade Agreements (V202361x): "Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the U.S. making free trade agreements with other countries?... How strongly do you [favor/oppose] it?" [1. Favor a great deal 2. Favor moderately 3. Favor a little 4. Neither favor nor oppose 5. Oppose a little 6. Oppose moderately 7. Oppose a great deal]

Import Restrictions (V202231x): "Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports?... Do you [favor/oppose] placing new limits on imports strongly or not strongly?" [1. Favor strongly 2. Favor not strongly 3. Oppose not strongly 4. Oppose strongly]

Age (V201507x): [18-79, 80. Age 80 or older]

Education (V201510): "What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?" [1. Less than high school credential 2. High school graduate - High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED) 3. Some college but no degree 4. Associate degree in college - occupational/vocational 5. Associate degree in college - academic 6. Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, AB, BS) 7. Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA) 8. Professional school degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)/Doctoral degree (e.g. PHD, EDD) 95. Other]

Gender (V201600): "What is your sex?" [1. Male 2. Female]

Income (V201617x): "The next question is about [the total combined income of all members of your family / your total income] during the past 12 months. This includes money from jobs, net income from business, farm or rent, pensions, dividends, interest, Social Security payments, and any other money income received by members of your family who are 15 years of age or older. What was the total income of your family during the past 12 months?" [1. Under $9,999 2. $10,000-14,999 3. $15,000-19,999 4. $20,000-24,999 5. $25,000-29,999 6. $30,000-34,999 7. $35,000-39,999 8. $40,000-44,999 9. $45,000-49,999 10. $50,000-59,999 11. $60,000-64,999 12. $65,000-69,999 13. $70,000-74,999 14. $75,000-79,999 15. $80,000-89,999 16. $90,000-99,999 17. $100,000-109,999 18. $110,000-124,999 19. $125,000-149,999 20. $150,000-174,999 21. $175,000-249,999 22. $250,000 or more] *NOTE: Missing values imputed from a linear predicted value from gender, race, education, parent, married, union, unemployed, age, south, class identity, and stock ownership.*

Married (V201508): "Are you now married, widowed, divorced, separated or never married?" [1. Married: spouse present 2. Married: spouse absent {VOL - video/phone only} 3. Widowed 4. Divorced 5. Separated 6. Never married]

Owns Stock (V201606): "Do you personally, or jointly with a spouse, have any money invested in the stock market right now - either in an individual stock or in a mutual fund?" [1. Yes 2. No]

Parent (V201567): "How many children or teenagers age 0 to 17 live in this household?" [0. No children 1. One child 2. Two children 3. Three children 4. Four or more children]

Personal Health (V201623): "Would you say that in general your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?" [1. Excellent 2. Very Good 3. Good 4. Fair 5. Poor]

Race/Ethnicity (V201549x): [1. White, non-Hispanic 2. Black, non-Hispanic 3. Hispanic 4. Asian or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic alone 5. Native American/Alaska Native or other race, non-Hispanic alone 6. Multiple races, non-Hispanic]

Racial Resentment: Racial resentment is constructed from four items (α=0.87). The first and fourth items are reverse coded.

1. (V202300): "'Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.'" [1. Agree strongly 2. Agree somewhat 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree somewhat 5. Disagree strongly]
2. (V202301): "'Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.'" [1. Agree strongly 2. Agree somewhat 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree somewhat 5. Disagree strongly]
3. (V202302): "'Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.'" [1. Agree strongly 2. Agree somewhat 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree somewhat 5. Disagree strongly]
4. (V202303): "'It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.'" [1. Agree strongly 2. Agree somewhat 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Disagree somewhat 5. Disagree strongly]

Racial Stereotyping: Racial stereotyping is constructed from two difference measures, one for ratings of violence and one for ratings of laziness, each constructed from two items (α=0.78). Values at 0.50 indicate equivalent ratings of Blacks and whites, values above 0.50 indicate anti-Black stereotyping, and values below 0.50 indicate anti-white stereotyping.

1. (V202521): "On this scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means peaceful and 7 means violent, where would you rate whites in general on this scale?" [1.Peaceful/2/3/4/5/6/7.Violent]
2. (V202522): "On this scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means peaceful and 7 means violent, where would you rate blacks in general on this scale?" [1.Peaceful/2/3/4/5/6/7.Violent]
3. (V202515): "On this scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means hard-working and 7 means lazy, where would you rate whites in general on this scale?" [1.Hardworking/2/3/4/5/6/7.Lazy]

4. (V202516): "On this scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means hard-working and 7 means lazy, where would you rate blacks in general on this scale?" [1.Hardworking/2/3/4/5/6/7.Lazy]

Unemployed (V201534x): [1. R working now (if also retired, disabled, homemaker or student, working 20 or more hrs/wk) 2. R temporarily laid off 4. R unemployed 5. R retired (if also working, working]

Union (V201544): "Do you or anyone else in this household belong to a labor union or to an employee association similar to a union?" [1. Yes 2. No]

South (V203003): [1. Northeast 2. Midwest 3. South 4. West]

Factor Analyses for Partisan-Ideological Orientation and Economic Policy Indices

For brevity, throughout the appendix, when I test H1 using alternative models, measures, and/or sample subsets, I will use a six-item measure of partisan-ideological orientation instead of looking at all six items individually. The six-item scale is an additive scale of partisan identity, ratings of the Democratic Party vis-à-vis the Republican Party, candidate preferences between Biden and Trump, ratings of Biden vis-à-vis Trump, ideological identity, and ratings of liberals vis-à-vis conservatives (α=0.94). Below, I provide the factor analysis that justifies my use of this left-right political orientation scale and the 14-item economic policy index used in the main text.

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	4.790	4.335	0.798	0.798
2	0.455	0.177	0.076	0.874
3	0.278	0.048	0.046	0.920
4	0.230	0.068	0.038	0.959
5	0.162	0.077	0.027	0.986
6	0.086	.	0.014	1.000

Variable	Factor 1	Uniqueness
Partisan Identity	0.906	0.906
Party Ratings	0.942	0.942
Candidate Preferences	0.872	0.872
Candidate Ratings	0.935	0.935
Ideological Identity	0.829	0.829
Ideological Group Ratings	0.872	0.872

Table 2A—Partisan-Ideological Orientation Factor Analysis. Principal components exploratory factor analysis. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	6.369	5.056	0.398	0.398
2	1.313	0.342	0.082	0.480
3	0.971	0.035	0.061	0.541
4	0.935	0.173	0.059	0.599
5	0.762	0.103	0.048	0.647
6	0.660	0.008	0.041	0.688
7	0.652	0.046	0.041	0.729
8	0.605	0.016	0.038	0.767
9	0.589	0.032	0.037	0.804
10	0.557	0.030	0.035	0.838
11	0.527	0.065	0.033	0.871
12	0.461	0.016	0.029	0.900
13	0.445	0.024	0.028	0.928
14	0.421	0.038	0.026	0.954
15	0.384	0.034	0.024	0.978
16	0.349	.	0.022	1.000

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
Affordable Care Act	0.766	-0.232	0.359
Government Health Insurance	0.731	-0.101	0.455
Public Healthcare Spending	0.675	-0.035	0.543
Government Spending/Services	0.740	0.118	0.439
Federal Job Guarantee	0.733	0.023	0.462
Aid to Poor Spending	0.688	0.160	0.502
Public School Spending	0.562	0.237	0.628
Social Security Spending	0.355	0.560	0.561
Welfare Spending	0.692	-0.007	0.521
$1+ Million Income Taxes	0.597	0.015	0.644
Income Inequality Reductions	0.727	-0.034	0.470
Minimum Wage	0.604	0.160	0.610
Government Regulations	0.665	-0.024	0.557
Universal Basic Income	0.696	-0.034	0.514
Free Trade Agreements	-0.129	0.617	0.602
Import Restrictions	-0.346	0.655	0.451

Table 2B—Economic Policy Factor Analysis *with* Trade Items. Principal components exploratory factor analysis. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	6.270	5.231	0.448	0.448
2	1.040	0.115	0.074	0.522
3	0.924	0.209	0.066	0.588
4	0.716	0.052	0.051	0.639
5	0.663	0.052	0.047	0.687
6	0.611	0.020	0.044	0.730
7	0.591	0.027	0.042	0.773
8	0.564	0.033	0.040	0.813
9	0.530	0.053	0.038	0.851
10	0.477	0.031	0.034	0.885
11	0.446	0.018	0.032	0.917
12	0.429	0.040	0.031	0.947
13	0.388	0.038	0.028	0.975
14	0.350	.	0.025	1.000

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
Affordable Care Act	0.758	-0.230	0.373
Government Health Insurance	0.729	-0.184	0.435
Public Healthcare Spending	0.676	-0.006	0.543
Government Spending/Services	0.743	0.073	0.442
Federal Job Guarantee	0.735	-0.091	0.451
Aid to Poor Spending	0.693	0.338	0.406
Public School Spending	0.568	0.318	0.576
Social Security Spending	0.370	0.745	0.308
Welfare Spending	0.692	0.167	0.494
$1+ Million Income Taxes	0.601	-0.208	0.595
Income Inequality Reductions	0.731	-0.257	0.400
Minimum Wage	0.610	0.001	0.628
Government Regulations	0.666	-0.138	0.538
Universal Basic Income	0.697	-0.110	0.502

Table 2C—Economic Policy Factor Analysis *without* Trade Items. Principal components exploratory factor analysis. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Appendix 3—Economic Policy Results by Item

In Table 3A, I decompose the 14-item economic policy index and 2-item trade policy index into their constituent items and replicate tests of H2 and H3 with each item. For the full regressions including all covariates, see the reproduction files.

Policy Item	***Marginal Effect (Low Engage.)***	***Marginal Effect (High Engage.)***	***Main Effect***	***N***
Affordable Care Act	0.148 (0.064)	-0.411 (0.044)	-0.181 (0.021)	2,876
Government Health Insurance	0.201 (0.078)	-0.339 (0.041)	-0.117 (0.025)	2,878
Public Healthcare Spending	0.107 (0.063)	-0.222 (0.038)	-0.087 (0.019)	2,860
Government Spending/Services	0.298 (0.057)	-0.337 (0.032)	-0.076 (0.022)	2,878
Federal Job Guarantee	0.278 (0.073)	0.343 (0.039)	-0.088 (0.018)	2,876
Aid to Poor Spending	0.237 (0.072)	-0.243 (0.037)	-0.045 (0.020)	2,866
Public School Spending	0.209 (0.074)	-0.271 (0.045)	-0.074 (0.021)	2,877
Social Security Spending	0.210 (0.070)	-0.141 (0.043)	0.003 (0.021)	2,867
Welfare Spending	0.228 (0.082)	-0.325 (0.047)	-0.097 (0.026)	2,869
$1+ Million Income Taxes	0.471 (0.093)	-0.390 (0.046)	-0.035 (0.026)	2,878
Income Inequality Reductions	0.358 (0.068)	-0.371 (0.042)	0.071 (0.026)	2,876
Minimum Wage	0.265 (0.052)	-0.236 (0.041)	-0.030 (0.019)	2,864
Government Regulations	0.097 (0.056)	-0.336 (0.040)	-0.158 (0.018)	2,875
Universal Basic Income	0.193 (0.076)	-0.278 (0.042)	-0.084 (0.024)	2,870
Anti-Free Trade Agreements	-0.078 (0.067)	0.043 (0.038)	-0.006 (0.023)	2,865
Import Restrictions	-0.048 (0.072)	0.236 (0.044)	0.119 (0.023)	2,823

Table 3A—Associations of Rural Consciousness with Economic Preferences by Item. Table entries are the marginal effects of rural consciousness as a function of political engagement and main effects of rural consciousness with standard errors in parentheses. Positive values indicate associations with liberal economic preferences. Opposition to trade is coded as a liberal economic preference. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Appendix 4—Robustness Checks

A. Rural/Small-Town Self-Identification vs. Rural/Small-Town Location

First, I replicate tests of H1-H3 while using rural/small-town residence as the inclusion criteria instead of rural identification. Some Americans identify themselves as rural or small-town Americans, but do not report living in a rural area or small-town. In the 2020 ANES, 72 percent of those who self-identify as rural/small-town Americans also report living in a rural area or small-town, while 28 percent do not. Other Americans may live in a rural area or small-town, but not identify as rural or small-town folk. In the 2020 ANES, 78 percent of those who live in a rural area or small-town identify as rural or small-town folk, while 22 percent do not. For this 22 percent, rural consciousness may also be less influential in shaping political behavior. In Table 9A, I show rural consciousness does display conditional associations with the three outcomes of interest. When requiring respondents be both rural identifiers and living in a rural location, the associations are much like those when only rural self-identification is required. Although I argue self-identification is the most sensible inclusion criteria because those presently living outside rural areas/small-towns can and do feel rural consciousness, my results hold when focusing only on those living in rural areas or small towns, as well as the joint sample of rural/small-town identifiers and residents.

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**Rural Identification**	**Rural Location**	**Rural Identification and Location**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.222 (0.043)	0.170 (0.050)	0.233 (0.051)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.337 (0.035)	-0.326 (0.042)	-0.327 (0.049)
Observations	2,880	2,691	2,024
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**Rural Identification**	**Rural Location**	**Rural Identification and Location**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.235 (0.034)	0.184 (0.044)	0.220 (0.042)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.303 (0.026)	-0.259 (0.030)	-0.267 (0.031)
Observations	2,880	2,691	2,024
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**Rural Identification**	**Rural Location**	**Rural Identification and Location**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	-0.067 (0.054)	-0.087 (0.062)	-0.117 (0.069)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.142 (0.033)	0.161 (0.034)	0.149 (0.041)
Observations	2,876	2,688	2,021

Table 4A—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness by Rural Identifier/Location Sample Subset. Table entries are marginal effects with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

B. Dealing with Anti-Rurally Conscious Respondents

Next, I replicate tests of H1-H3 excluding anti-rurally conscious respondents and folding anti-rurally conscious respondents in with non-conscious respondents at the scale's midpoint. In Figure 1, I showed a few respondents gave responses to the three rural consciousness items that put them into the anti-rural consciousness range. This arguably introduces an issue of support for the multiplicative interaction models, as estimates for anti-rural consciousness individuals will be based primarily on extrapolation into this range (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2019). Thus, I test whether my conclusions hold excluding anti-rural respondents from the sample or folding them in with the non-conscious and restricting the analyses to a range of rural consciousness that has clear support (0.5 to 1). In Table 4B, I display the marginal effects of rural consciousness to my three outcomes across these three ways of dealing with the anti-rurally conscious. My results can be replicated in all three cases, with slightly larger associations when folding the anti-rurally conscious respondents to the scale midpoint and slightly weaker associations excluding the anti-rurally conscious respondents altogether.

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**Including Anti-Rural**	**Fold Anti-Rural into Non-Conscious**	**Excluding Anti-Rural**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.222 (0.043)	0.244 (0.051)	0.188 (0.051)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.337 (0.035)	-0.354 (0.043)	-0.275 (0.045)
Observations	2,880	2,880	2,726
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**Including Anti-Rural**	**Fold Anti-Rural into Non-Conscious**	**Excluding Anti-Rural**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.235 (0.034)	0.246 (0.039)	0.193 (0.042)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.303 (0.026)	-0.310 (0.031)	-0.242 (0.033)
Observations	2,880	2,880	2,726
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**Including Anti-Rural**	**Fold Anti-Rural into Non-Conscious**	**Excluding Anti-Rural**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	-0.067 (0.033)	-0.068 (0.061)	-0.037 (0.063)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.142 (0.033)	0.161 (0.038)	0.129 (0.042)
Observations	2,876	2,876	2,722

Table 4B—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness With/Without Anti-Rurally Conscious Respondents. Table entries are marginal effects with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

C. Racial Stereotyping vs. Racial Resentment

I control for racial stereotyping rather than racial resentment in my main analyses for a few reasons. First, it is my view that the racial stereotyping measure directly captures the anti-Black beliefs thought to confound rural consciousness's effects on political behavior—the beliefs that Black Americans, who are associated with urban areas resented by the rurally conscious, are lazy and violent. Further, to the extent that racial resentment is confounded by non-racial content like conservative principles and values, racial resentment is partly the outcome we are trying to explain, especially when testing H1. The more racial resentment measures general conservatism and not anti-Black affect, the more it introduces attenuation bias. For those reasons, I prefer to control for racial stereotyping over racial resentment to address anti-Black attitudes confounding the associations of rural consciousness with my outcomes of interest. However, acknowledging there are competing views about racial resentment, some of which strongly contend the construct does not at all measure principled conservatism, I offer models that control for racial resentment.

In Table 4C, I compare the conditional associations of rural consciousness to my three outcomes of interest as functions of political engagement, controlling for racial stereotyping or racial resentment. I find support for H1 and H2 across both models; rural consciousness is associated with left-wing partisan-ideological orientation and economic liberalism at low levels of engagement but associated with right-wing partisan-ideological orientation and economic conservatism at high levels of engagement. I find support for H3 when controlling for racial stereotyping, but not racial resentment; the association of rural consciousness with anti-trade preferences at the highest level of engagement is correctly signed but insignificant (p=0.064).

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**Racial Stereotyping**	**Racial Resentment**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.222 (0.043)	0.096 (0.041)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.337 (0.035)	-0.121 (0.030)
Observations	2,880	2,910
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**Racial Stereotyping**	**Racial Resentment**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.235 (0.034)	0.134 (0.035)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.303 (0.026)	-0.134 (0.023)
Observations	2,880	2,910
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**Racial Stereotyping**	**Racial Resentment**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	-0.067 (0.054)	-0.029 (0.054)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.142 (0.033)	0.064 (0.034)
Observations	2,876	2,906

Table 4C—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness Controlling for Racial Stereotyping vs. Racial Resentment. Table entries are marginal effects with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

D. White Non-Hispanic vs. Racial Minority Subsample Analyses

Although rural consciousness is sometimes studied specifically for white non-Hispanics, the trait does exist among racial/ethnic minorities. Indeed, in the 2020 ANES, the mean of rural consciousness on a 0 to 1 scale is 0.70 for white non-Hispanics (n=2,486) and 0.66 for people of color and Hispanics (n=600). However, it does not necessarily follow that rural consciousness is applied to political behavior in the same ways across racial groups. Here, I test H1-H3 separately for non-Hispanic whites and racial/ethnic minorities. Due to the small samples for each minority group, I use a pooled racial/ethnic minority sample consisting of all Americans who are not non-Hispanic whites. Of the racial minority sample, 28 percent are Black, 31 percent are Hispanic, 8 percent are Asian, 11 percent are Native American, and 23 percent are multiracial (unweighted).

As shown in Table 4D, I find near-identical results across the two groups when testing H1 and H2. For both groups, rural consciousness is associated with left-wing partisan-ideological orientation and economic liberalism at low levels of engagement, but right-wing orientation and economic conservatism at high levels of engagement. Testing H3, I find similar results across groups at high engagement—rural consciousness is associated with trade opposition. However, at low levels of engagement, rural consciousness is associated with support for trade among racial minorities (p=0.021), but unrelated to trade opposition for non-Hispanic whites (p=0.664). This is a minor discrepancy, however, given the pattern of rural consciousness becoming more closely associated with anti-trade preferences holds for engaged whites and racial minorities.

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**White Non-Hispanic**	**Racial/Ethnic Minority**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.204 (0.048)	0.259 (0.076)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.345 (0.046)	-0.308 (0.064)
Observations	2,340	540
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**White Non-Hispanic**	**Racial/Ethnic Minority**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.234 (0.041)	0.210 (0.071)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.304 (0.031)	-0.286 (0.059)
Observations	2,340	540
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**White Non-Hispanic**	**Racial/Ethnic Minority**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	-0.029 (0.067)	-0.191 (0.080)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.130 (0.037)	0.197 (0.063)
Observations	2,337	539

Table 4D—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness by Racial/Ethnic Group. Table entries are marginal effects with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

E. Dealing with Trolling/Disengaged Respondents

The 2020 ANES was primarily self-administered online. This is a survey mode that lends itself to inattentive responding and even outright trolling (Lopez and Hillygus 2018). The 2020 ANES includes a question that can help identify likely trolls: "We sometimes find people don't always take surveys seriously, instead providing funny or insincere answers. How often did you give a serious response to the questions on this survey?" The response options were: 1. Never serious 2. Some of the time serious 3. About half of the time serious 4. Most of the time serious 5. Always serious. In the main analyses, I removed the 50 respondents who did not indicate that they at least took the survey serious "some of the time" because these individuals are very likely to have been either trolling or very disengaged throughout the survey. In theory, such individuals can add noise and possibly attenuation bias onto the estimated associations of interest, and their removal can be beneficial for that reason. In practice, however, I find very little difference from excluding these respondents.

In Table 4E, I show that across three reasonable engagement screens, I find support for H1-H3. Specifically, I show that my results are near-identical when including or excluding the 50 most likely trolls, and that imposing a stricter engagement criterion that respondents indicate they took the survey seriously "most of the time" or "always" also does not meaningfully affect my findings (i.e., dropping an additional 91 respondents, 141 in total).

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**Full Sample**	**w/o Likely Trolls**	**Most Engaged**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.220 (0.042)	0.222 (0.043)	0.240 (0.045)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.334 (0.033)	-0.337 (0.035)	-0.343 (0.037)
Observations	2,922	2,880	2,755
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**Full Sample**	**w/o Likely Trolls**	**Most Engaged**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.238 (0.035)	0.235 (0.034)	0.239 (0.034)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.302 (0.025)	-0.303 (0.026)	-0.306 (0.026)
Observations	2,922	2,880	2,755
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**Full Sample**	**w/o Likely Trolls**	**Most Engaged**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	-0.063 (0.053)	-0.067 (0.054)	-0.062 (0.064)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.138 (0.032)	0.142 (0.033)	0.140 (0.035)
Observations	2,918	2,876	2,751

Table 4E—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness by Respondent Engagement. Table entries are marginal effects with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Appendix 5—Binned Estimates of Moderated Regression Models

In line with what is viewed as best practice when using multiplicative interaction models, I perform diagnostic checks to confirm that (1) there is common support along the range of the moderator (i.e., political engagement) and (2) the effects of rural consciousness change at an approximately constant rate along the moderator (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2019). To confirm these assumptions hold, I use the R *interflex* package (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2019) to re-estimate the marginal effects of rural consciousness at the medians of three binned terciles of political engagement. Note that these estimates are twice the magnitude of those in the main text because I am unable to calculate marginal effects from the midpoint to maximum of rural consciousness using the binning estimator as I preferred to in the main analyses because of the skew of the rural consciousness distribution. The underlying model is the same, however.

Common Support

One key assumption of multiplicative linear models is that there is support for estimates along the range of the moderator. Looking across the stacked histogram of political engagement in Figures 5A-5C, it is apparent that the only region in which support is a potential cause for concern is at the very low end of political engagement. While extremely disengaged respondents are a relatively small proportion of the 2020 ANES, it is not the case that estimates in this range are purely extrapolated. Between 0 and 0.33, inclusive, there are a total of 284 rural respondents. Thus, though some caution is warranted in interpreting results at extremely low levels of political engagement, the assumption of common support mostly holds across the range of the moderator.

Linearity

To evaluate whether the assumption of linear interaction effects holds, in Figures 5A-5C, I calculate the marginal effects of rural consciousness at the median value of each binned tercile of political engagement (the default *interflex* estimator). Per the *interflex* documentation, "[i]f the treatment/marginal effect estimates from the binning estimator sit closely to the estimated treatment/marginal effects from the linear estimator, then the [linear interaction effect] assumption likely holds." In other words, we would like to see the binned estimates (red) fall approximately on the linear estimator (black). As can be seen in Figures 5A-5C, all of the binned estimates fall almost perfectly along the linear estimates, which suggests linear relationships.

References

Hainmueller, Jens, Jonathan Mummolo, and Yiqing Xu. 2019. "How Much Should We Trust Estimates from Multiplicative Interaction Models? Simple Tools to Improve Empirical Practice." *Political Analysis* 27(2): 163–92.

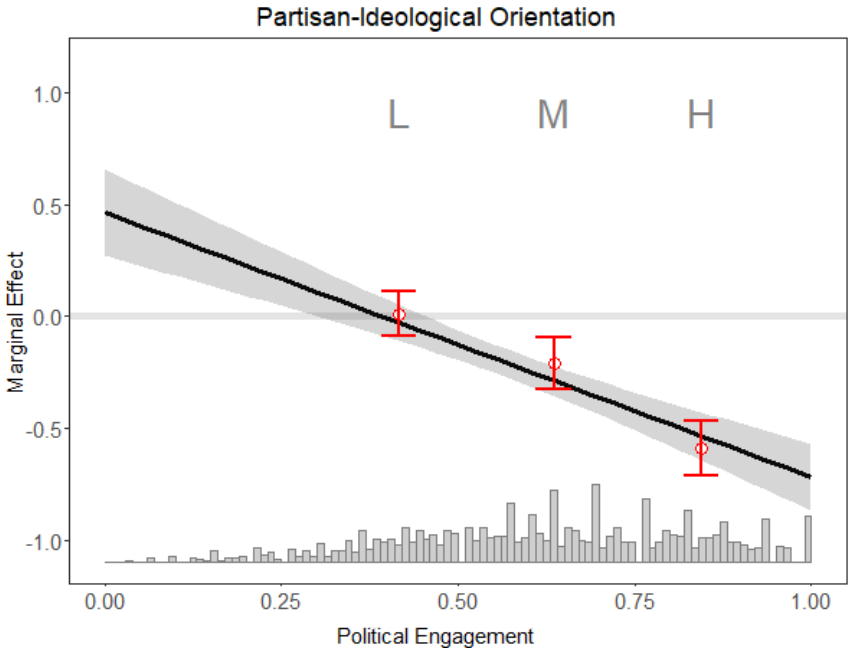

Figure 5A—Associations of Rural Consciousness to Partisan-Ideological Orientation. Point estimates are the marginal effects of rural consciousness evaluated at the medians of each binned tercile of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Lines are linear estimates of the marginal effects of rural consciousness. Histogram displays the distribution of political engagement. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

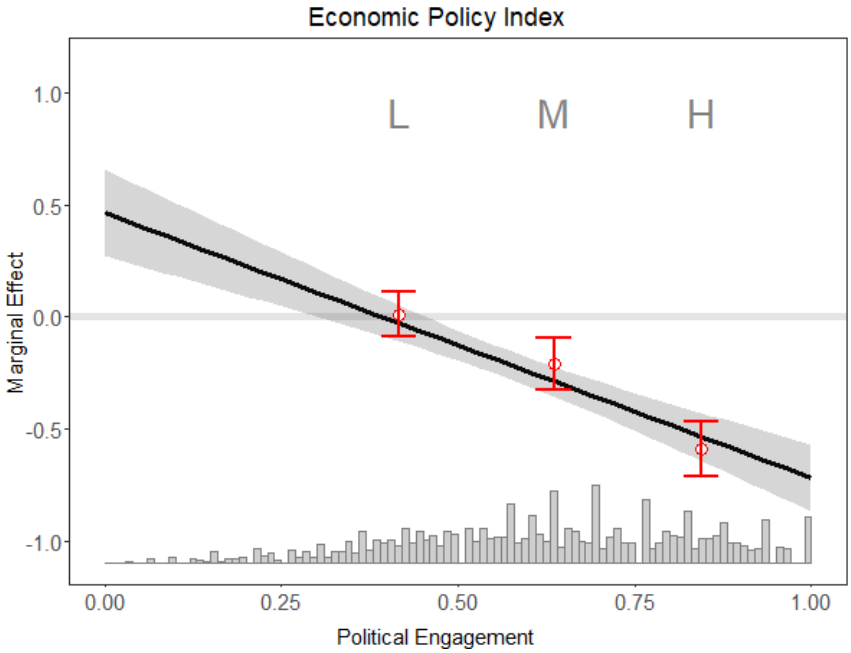

Figure 5B—Associations of Rural Consciousness to Economic Policy Preferences. Point estimates are the marginal effects of rural consciousness evaluated at the medians of each binned tercile of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Lines are linear estimates of the marginal effects of rural consciousness. Histogram displays the distribution of political engagement. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

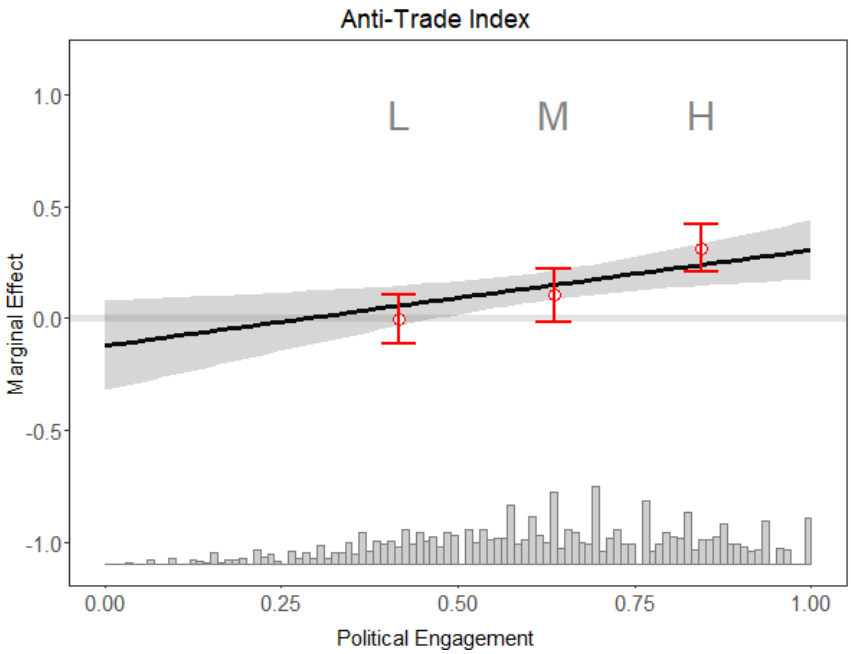

Figure 5C—Associations of Rural Consciousness to Anti-Trade Policy Preferences. Point estimates are the marginal effects of rural consciousness evaluated at the medians of each binned tercile of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Lines are linear estimates of the marginal effects of rural consciousness. Histogram displays the distribution of political engagement. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Appendix 6—Replication of Findings by Rural Consciousness Facets

In this appendix, I replicate tests of H1-H3 with each individual rural consciousness item. Rural consciousness was theorized by Cramer (2016) to be rooted in three interrelated facets of rural grievance: *economic* grievance about perceived distributional injustice; *political* grievance about perceived underrepresentation; and *cultural* grievance about perceived disrespect for rural ways of life. Trujillo and Crowley (2022) argue that these facets can point the rurally-conscious in different political directions. Trujillo and Crowley (2022) find the cultural facet is associated with Trump support and conservative identity, though not partisanship; however, they also find the economic facet is unrelated to these outcomes. (Trujillo and Crowley do not test how rural consciousness is related to economic preferences). That rural consciousness has heterogeneous associations to partisan-ideological orientation across facets offers one plausible explanation for why it has often appeared weakly related to political behavior in studies utilizing unidimensional rural consciousness measures (e.g., Munis 2020; Nelsen and Petsko 2021).

Trujillo and Crowley (2022) recommend that analyses of rural consciousness break apart the measure into its three facets. My alternative theory is that the effects of rural consciousness may vary by facet, but also more so by citizens' weighting of instrumental and symbolic political motivations for all facets. One key distinction is that I argue economic grievances that seem to be instrumental *become* symbolic for politically engaged citizens; similarly, feelings of cultural and especially political marginalization may be rooted in instrumental concerns among the politically disengaged (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Johnston and Wronski 2015). As such, there will still be heterogeneity in the effects of rural consciousness across facets that is not addressed by separating ostensibly "material" rural economic grievances from ostensibly "symbolic" ones.

To test whether breaking apart the rural consciousness scale into economic, political, and cultural facets adequately deals with the issue of heterogeneity in its effects on political behavior, I replicate tests of H1-H3 separately with each of the rural consciousness items. These items span the three facets of rural consciousness (see Appendix 2 for question wordings); thus, if they have similar conditional associations with political behavior, this will support my contention that each facet of rural consciousness captures instrumental *and* symbolic concerns, which are weighted differently for politically disengaged vs. politically engaged rural Americans.

Methodology

Using an otherwise identical model to what was used throughout the main text, I estimate the conditional marginal associations of cultural, economic, and political rural consciousness with partisan-ideological orientation, economic policy preferences, and trade preferences. I also estimate the main associations of each rural consciousness facet to each outcome to test whether Trujillo and Crowley (2022) are right that rural consciousness has heterogeneous effects across its facets. As usual, all estimated marginal effects are calculated from the midpoint to maximum of each rural consciousness item to account for the skew of the rural consciousness distributions.

Results

In Table 6A, I present the marginal effects of each rural consciousness item on each of the three outcomes. For partisan-ideological orientation, all three facets are significantly associated with left-wing orientation at low levels of political engagement, but right-wing orientation at high levels of political engagement. The main associations of rural consciousness do vary across facets, with the economic facet having the weakest overall association with left-wing orientation. These findings are consistent with Trujillo and Crowley (2022), who also find no main association between rural consciousness's economic facet and partisan-ideological identities. However, it is not the case that economic rural grievances are unimportant in shaping partisan-ideological orientation; instead, the associations of economic rural grievance with this outcome at low vs. high political engagement are offsetting in the aggregate.

The results for economic preferences are near-identical to those for partisan-ideological orientation; all three facets of rural consciousness are conditionally associated with economic preferences such that at low levels of engagement, rural consciousness is associated with liberal

H1 DV: Political Orientation	**Cultural Item**	**Economic Item**	**Political Item**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.109 (0.036)	0.104 (0.038)	0.184 (0.029)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.229 (0.028)	-0.110 (0.033)	-0.269 (0.024)
Main Effect	-0.090 (0.013)	-0.022 (0.015)	-0.082 (0.012)
Observations	2,869	2,853	2,867
H2 DV: Economic Policy	**Cultural Item**	**Economic Item**	**Political Item**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.154 (0.032)	0.132 (0.027)	0.145 (0.027)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	-0.210 (0.025)	-0.106 (0.024)	-0.232 (0.019)
Main Effect	-0.061 (0.011)	-0.008 (0.010)	-0.077 (0.009)
Observations	2,869	2,853	2,867
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy	**Cultural Item**	**Economic Item**	**Political Item**
Marginal Effect (Low Political Engagement)	0.027 (0.037)	-0.066 (0.043)	-0.078 (0.036)
Marginal Effect (High Political Engagement)	0.068 (0.027)	0.078 (0.028)	0.112 (0.023)
Main Effect	0.051 (0.015)	0.019 (0.013)	0.034 (0.014)
Observations	2,866	2,850	2,863

Table 6A—Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness Across its Three Facets. Table entries are marginal effects of rural consciousness across its cultural, economic, and political facets with standard errors in parentheses. Rural and small-town Americans only. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES.

preferences, but at high levels of political engagement, rural consciousness is associated with conservative preferences. Again, the main association of rural consciousness with conservative economic preferences is weaker for the economic facet than the cultural or political facets of rural consciousness. Though Trujillo and Crowley (2022) do not examine how the facets of rural consciousness are related to economic preferences, this variation across facets is consistent with their theoretical account.

For trade preferences, the results are slightly inconsistent across the three facets, but not in particularly important ways. Across all three items, rural consciousness is associated with anti-trade preferences at high levels of political engagement. At low levels of engagement, I find two null associations using the cultural and economic rural consciousness items, but a narrowly significant negative association to anti-trade preferences using the political item ($p=0.035$).

Conclusion

I find little evidence that the relationships between rural consciousness and political behavior can be adequately modeled by each rural consciousness facet (cultural, economic, and political) without also accounting for heterogeneity as a function of political engagement. While differences in the main associations of the rural consciousness to political behavior do emerge across facets in ways consistent with Trujillo and Crowley (2022), the heterogeneity by facet is dwarfed by heterogeneities as functions of political engagement.

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Appendix 7—Replication with Munis (2020) Rural Resentment Measure

In this appendix, I test H1-H3 with the 2018 CCES module drawn from Munis's (2020) reproduction files. The benefit of the 2018 CCES is that it includes Munis's (2020) alternative measure of rural consciousness (i.e., rural resentment; see below). However, the 2018 CCES has the downside of being a small, non-probability sample that includes just 266 rural Americans. In addition, the CCES does not include racial stereotyping items, which are my preferred measure of anti-Black attitudes. Further, the CCES includes either a more politically engaged sample than is representative of the target population (Kennedy et al. 2016), or a less discriminating political engagement measure—perhaps both. As a result, I lack power for detecting the effects of rural resentment among the least engaged rural Americans. However, it is worth at least attempting to replicate tests of H1-H3 with Munis's (2020) alternative four-item "rural resentment" measure to supplement the results from the 2020 ANES.

Methodology

Rural Resentment: Munis (2020) creates a measure of rural resentment with four items on five-point agree/disagree scales: (1) "When small towns are hit by bad times, people living there solve problems on their own. The state and federal government shouldn't give urban areas special favors"; (2) "We wouldn't have to waste tax dollars bailing out urban areas in [state] if people just moved away."; (3) "Decades of technological and economic changes have made it difficult for some small towns and rural communities in [state] to improve on their own."; (4) "Urban areas have too much say in [state] politics." (α=0.69). As shown in Figure 7A, rural and small-town Americans have, on average, moderately high levels of place-based resentment.

Political Engagement: The political engagement scale is constructed from two equally weighted subscales: political interest and political knowledge. The political interest subscale is a single item measuring interest in political news. The political knowledge subscale is two items that ask respondents to identify the parties in control of the US House and US Senate (α=0.86). As shown in Figure 7A, there are very few politically disengaged respondents on this measure in the 2018 CCES, and the measure does a worse job than that of the 2020 ANES in discriminating between medium and highly engaged respondents, as well. This is perhaps unsurprising since respondents have such a high probability of getting the political knowledge items correct by chance alone.

Political Orientation: Partisan-ideological orientation is assessed with two items: partisan and ideological identities. Partisanship is measured with the standard seven-point scale recoded to range from 0 (strong Republican) to 1 (strong Democrat). Those unsure of their partisanship are coded to the midpoint. Ideology is measured with a seven-point scale recoded to range from 0 (very conservative) to 1 (very liberal). Those unsure of their ideology are coded to the midpoint. Partisan and ideological identities are then additively scaled into a two-item index (α=0.87).

Economic Ideology: Economic ideology is generated from 13 economic policy items from the 2018 CCES spanning issues including healthcare, social welfare, taxation, and regulation. In principal components factor analysis, the first factor explains 42 percent of the variation in these 13 items, while the second factor explains only an additional 9 percent of variation. All 13 items load well onto the first factor. I create a unidimensional, additive scale (α=0.86) that ranges from 0 (economic conservatism) to 1 (economic liberalism).

Trade Preferences: Trade preferences is generated from three policy items related to support for tariffs. Two of these items both ask slightly different versions of questions about steel/aluminum tariffs, so they are averaged into one item with equal weight to the third item about implementing tariffs on Chinese imports. I scale the trade items (α=0.73) from 0 (pro-trade) to 1 (anti-trade).

Controls: I control for age, gender, education, income, unemployment, marital status, whether the respondent is a parent to a kid under 18, whether the respondent is in a union, whether the respondent lives in the South. Given the small sample, I include a single white non-Hispanic vs. other race/ethnicity covariate instead of the six-category race/ethnicity battery used in the ANES. The 2018 CCES does not include my preferred racial stereotyping items, but does include a four-item racial resentment measure and two items from the FIRE battery (one related to perceptions about racism's prevalence and another about acknowledgement of white advantage; DeSante and Smith 2020). I use three models, each with drawbacks. The first model does not include controls for racial attitudes, and therefore likely overestimates the effects of rural resentment. The second model controls for racial resentment, and therefore likely underestimates of the effects of rural resentment due to attenuation bias from racial resentment being confounded by conservatism. The third model controls for the FIRE items which, like racial resentment, only indirectly tap the anti-Black attitudes of concern as confounding the relationships between rural resentment and political behavior. I fully moderate each model by interacting all covariates with engagement.

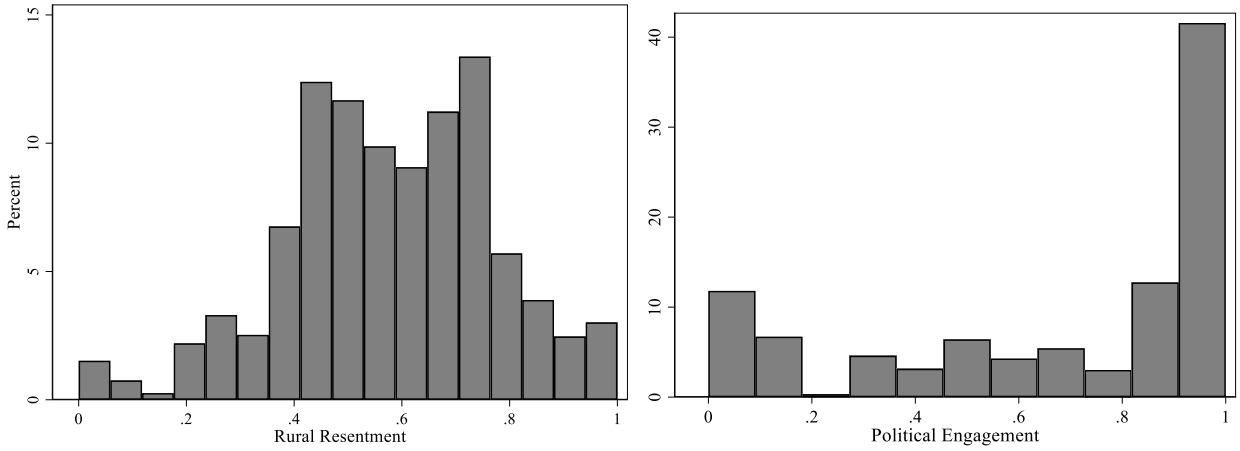

Figure 7A—Distributions of Key Independent Variables. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2018 CCES, Munis (2020).

Results

In Table 7A, I display the associations between Munis's (2020) rural resentment measure and partisan-ideological identity, economic policy preferences, and trade preferences at low and high levels of political engagement, as well as the interactions of rural resentment with political engagement. I do so with the three models described above, the first not controlling for racial attitudes, the second controlling for racial resentment, and the third controlling for FIRE items. Note the estimated effects of rural resentment at low levels of engagement are underpowered because the CCES has only 266 rural respondents, few of whom are low in political engagement.

H1 DV: Partisan-Ideological Identity	**Model 1 – No Racial Attitudes**	**Model 2 – Racial Resentment**	**Model 3 – FIRE Racial Attitudes**
Marginal Effect (Low Engagement)	0.244 (0.245)	-0.005 (0.195)	0.197 (0.196)
Marginal Effect (High Engagement)	-0.859 (0.095)	-0.240 (0.090)	-0.380 (0.085)
Rural Resentment* Political Engagement	-1.103 (0.284)	-0.235 (0.237)	-0.577 (0.233)
H2 DV: Economic Policy Preferences	**Model 1 – No Racial Attitudes**	**Model 2 – Racial Resentment**	**Model 3 – FIRE Racial Attitudes**
Marginal Effect (Low Engagement)	0.462 (0.209)	0.228 (0.171)	0.318 (0.174)
Marginal Effect (High Engagement)	-0.845 (0.081)	-0.326 (0.079)	-0.427 (0.076)
Rural Resentment* Political Engagement	-0.845 (0.081)	-0.554 (0.208)	-0.745 (0.207)
H3 DV: Anti-Trade Policy Preferences	**Model 1 – No Racial Attitudes**	**Model 2 – Racial Resentment**	**Model 3 – FIRE Racial Attitudes**
Marginal Effect (Low Engagement)	-0.250 (0.344)	0.059 (0.307)	-0.101 (0.314)
Marginal Effect (High Engagement)	0.974 (0.133)	0.277 (0.142)	0.423 (0.137)
Rural Resentment* Political Engagement	1.224 (0.399)	0.217 (0.373)	0.524 (0.374)
Observations	266	266	263

Table 7A—Conditional Associations of Rural Resentment with Political Identities and Policy Preferences. Table entries are marginal effects of rural resentment on political identity, economic preferences, and trade preferences at the minimum and maximum values of political engagement and the interaction between rural consciousness and engagement. Positive values indicate associations with left-wing identity and policy preferences (anti-trade is coded as a left-wing position). Standard errors in parentheses. Source: 2018 CCES, Munis (2020).

Looking first at partisan-ideological identity, I find support for H1 in Models 1 and 3, where I observe significant interactions between rural resentment and political engagement such that politically engaged, rurally resentful Americans are less Democratic and liberal in identities

($p<0.001$, $p=0.014$). In Model 2, however, I find a non-significant interaction effect ($p=0.323$), though in the expected negative direction. Turning to economic policy preferences, I find support for H2 across all three models. I observe large, negative, significant interaction effects such that rurally resentment Americans who are politically engaged are substantially more conservative in their economic policy preferences than politically disengaged rurally resentful Americans (every $p<0.01$). Finally, looking at trade preferences, I find support for H3 in Model 1, where I observe a significant interaction such that the rurally resentful who are politically engaged are more anti-trade than those who are disengaged ($p=0.002$). I find interactions in the expected directions for both Models 2 and 3, but they are not significant ($p=0.560$, $p=0.162$). Notably, if the 2020 ANES estimates offer even a rough approximation of the interaction effect we would expect to observe, the 2018 CCES would be underpowered to identify similarly sized effects because the interaction between rural consciousness and political engagement is of a smaller magnitude on trade policy than other economic policy preferences.

Discussion

The effects estimated in Model 1 are likely inflated since I am not controlling for anti-Black attitudes, a probable confound (Nelsen and Petsko 2021). However, the effects in Model 2 are likely an underestimate of rural resentment's effects because racial resentment partly captures more general conservative principles and values (i.e., the outcome), which produces attenuation bias. It is unclear whether the two FIRE items in Model 3 address racial confounding while not themselves being confounded by conservatism, but this model tends to find effects smaller than Model 1 and larger than Model 2. And, in general, all estimates drawn from the 2018 CCES should be interpreted with caution because they are derived from a small, non-probability sample without a particularly discriminating measure of political engagement.

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Appendix 8—Validation of Political Engagement Measure for Rural Americans

In this appendix, I demonstrate that political engagement is a valid proxy for Americans' relative weighting of instrumental (self-interested) and symbolic (identity-based) motivations for political behavior. A longstanding debate among scholars studying political behavior is whether citizens who are more interested in and knowledgeable about politics are more or less likely to make political decisions that advance what we might consider to be their material interests (for a review, see Chong 2013). Early theories held politically engaged individuals were more capable of behaving in ways that advanced their self-interest because they had the information necessary to weigh the personal costs and benefits of different courses of political action. If political action was viewed by citizens as strict calculations of material costs vs. benefits, we would expect for political engagement to enhance the associations between material interests and related economic policy preferences (e.g., support for progressive taxation as a function of household income level) since politically engaged citizens are more informed than disengaged ones (Chong, Citrin, and Conley 2001). Alternatively, however, citizens may give weight not only to what a political action might do for them materially, but also what taking a given political action *says about them as a person*. Political attitudes do not exist only to forward material self-interests; for many, they serve to reinforce their self-concept and/or signal group loyalty (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2004; Groenendyk 2013; Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017). To the extent citizens politically behave for symbolic, identity-based reasons, we would expect political engagement to *attenuate* the associations between indicators of material interests and related economic policy preferences but *strengthen* the associations between partisan-ideological identities and economic preferences.

Throughout this paper, and in this appendix analysis, specifically, I forward a case for the latter theory: political engagement increases individuals' reliance on symbolic considerations and decreases reliance on material considerations in political decision-making, especially with regard to economic preference formation because economic issues tend to be "hard" issues where costs and benefits are difficult to become truly knowledgeable about (Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017; Johnston and Wronski 2015; Ollerenshaw 2022; Ollerenshaw and Johnston 2022).

To validate political engagement as proxying rural Americans weighting of material and symbolic interests, I conduct three sets of empirical tests. First, I show that among rural citizens, material self-interests are decreasingly associated with related economic policy preferences as functions of political engagement (for similar tests using national samples, see Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017 and Appendix 7 of Ollerenshaw 2022). Second, I show partisan-ideological identification is stronger, and that partisan identity is more important, for engaged rural citizens. Third, I show partisan-ideological identification is weakly associated with economic preferences among disengaged rural Americans, but closely associated with economic preferences among engaged rural Americans. My findings are consistent with the theory that politically engaged Americans adopt economic preferences consistent with their partisan-ideological identities, not necessarily their material self-interests, while politically disengaged Americans adopt economic preferences consistent with material interests, not necessarily their (weak) political identities.

Methodology

For the first set of statistical tests, I estimate the conditional associations of (respectively) household income and owning stock with support for means-tested redistribution, household unemployment with support for a federal job guarantee, and poor health with support for public healthcare provision. The means-tested redistribution scale is constructed from the spending on welfare, spending on aid to the poor, and government actions to reduce income inequality items (α=0.71).[1] Household unemployment is a dummy variable if the respondent or another person in their household reports being unemployed. Poor health is measured with general self-rated health on a five-category scale ranging from 0 (excellent) to 1 (poor). To be explicit on two points, I am not testing the associations between the indicators of material interests and the 14-item economic policy index because I expect these indicators to be related to opinion formation only for *specific* economic policies relevant to that material interest, not general economic ideology. I also admit that I am using my own judgement about what are closely related economic policies to what I am considering material indicators, both of which are constrained by what is on the 2020 ANES.

For the second set of tests, I estimate the main associations of political engagement with partisan-ideological orientation strength and partisan identity importance. For partisan-ideological orientation strength, I take the absolute values of deviations from the usual six-item scale's midpoint (i.e., distance from pure independence). The absolute values are recoded such that values close to 0 indicate pure independence and values close to 1 indicate strong partisan-ideological orientation, whether it be left-wing or right-wing. Partisan identity importance is a separate question assessed on a five-point response set using the question "How important is being [a Democrat/a Republican/an Independent] to your identity?" This item is recoded to take values between 0 (not at all important) to 1 (extremely important). The point here is to show that politically engaged Americans hold stronger partisan-ideological orientations, which they view as more important to their identity, than politically disengaged citizens.

For the third set of tests, I estimate the conditional associations of the six-item partisan-ideological index with the 14-item economic policy index and each of the three economic policy outcomes used for the first set of statistical tests as functions of political engagement. Again, the models are fully moderated. Here, I am interested to see how partisan-ideological orientation shapes economic policy preferences at low versus high levels of political engagement, with the expectation that partisan-ideological orientation will only be related to economic preferences for politically engaged rural Americans. For the three economic policies examined in the first set of statistical tests, I can specifically demonstrate that the associations of political identities with economic policy preferences is strengthened with political engagement, while the role of closely related material interests is attenuated with political engagement. This is the crux of the theory; politically disengaged citizens' economic preferences are affected by their material standing, but politically engaged citizens' economic preferences are affected by identity-based considerations.

[1] The ANES item about raising taxes on incomes over $1 million also describes a clearly redistributive policy, but it is excluded from the means-tested redistribution index because very few respondents in the sample would be hit by a tax increase on incomes this high; as such, almost no respondents have a self-interested reason to oppose the policy.

In all models, I control for age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, whether the respondent is a parent, in a union, married, or living in the South. Income, stock ownership, unemployment, and health are controlled for in every model where they are not the key independent variable. I include the six-item partisan-ideological orientation index in the models for simultaneous use in the third set of statistical tests. The models are all fully moderated with political engagement.

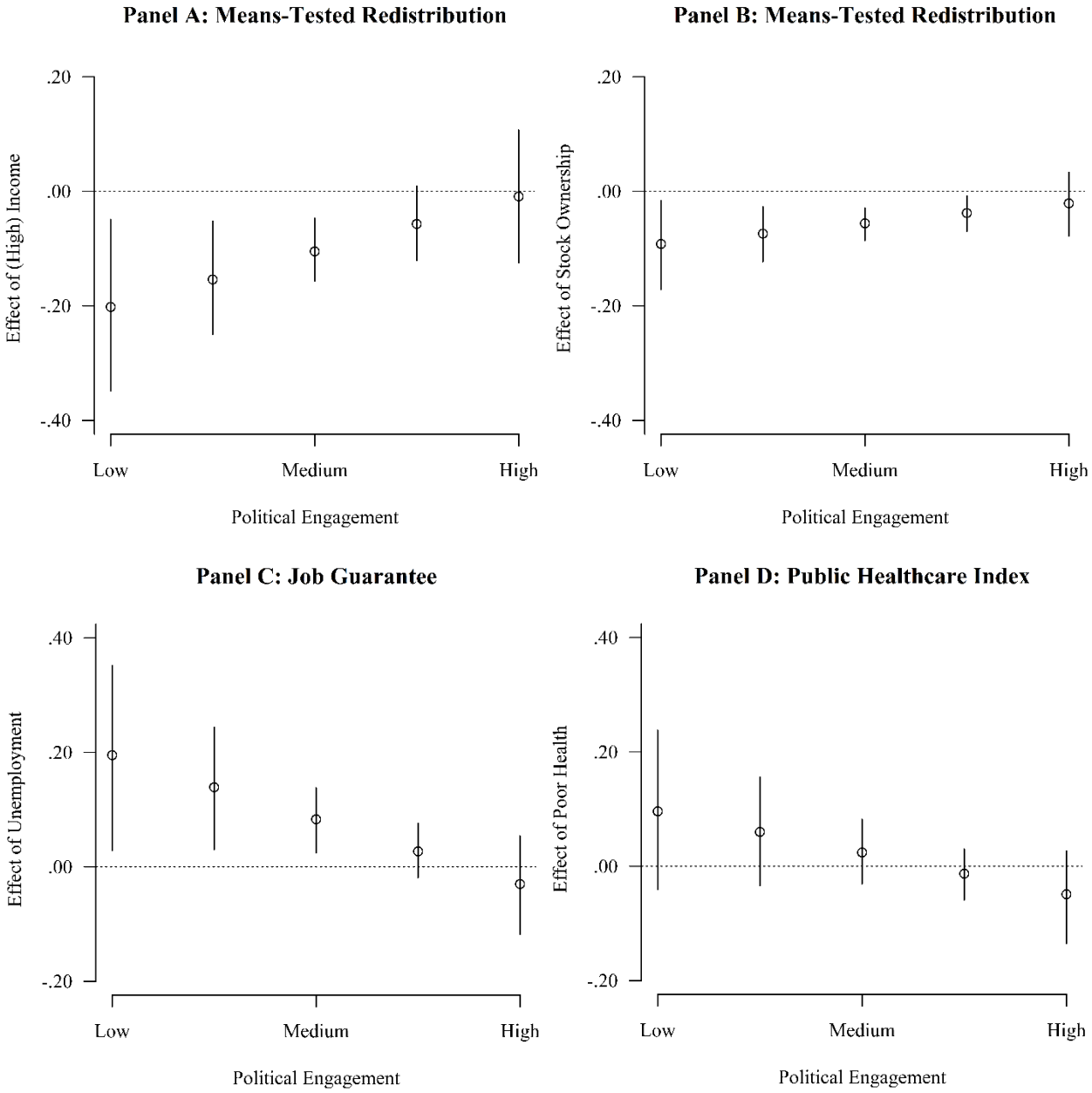

Figure 8A—Conditional Associations of Material Self-Interest to Related Economic Policy Preferences. Points are conditional marginal associations of material self-interest indicators to closely related economic preferences as functions of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Sample only includes rural and small-town respondents. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Results

In Figure 8A, I plot the four conditional associations between the indicators of material interests and closely related economic preferences. Moving from the highest to lowest income is associated with 20-points greater support for means-tested redistribution at the lowest level of political engagement, but a 1-point association at the highest level of engagement. Being a stock owner relative to non-stock owner is similarly associated with 9-points less support for means-tested redistribution, but only 2-points less support at the highest level of political engagement. For household unemployment, I find a 20-point association with support for a job guarantee at the lowest level of engagement, but a 3-point association with opposition to the job guarantee at the highest level of engagement. In each of these three cases, material interests are significantly associated with related economic preferences at low levels of engagement, but not at high levels of engagement. Last, poor health is associated with 10-points more support for public provision of healthcare at the lowest level of engagement, but 5-points less support for public healthcare provision at the highest level of engagement. This result is not fully consistent with expectations; though the association between poor health is positive at the lowest level of engagement, it is insignificant (p=0.185). Further, the association is almost negative at the highest level of political engagement, though the 5-point estimate is statistically indistinguishable from zero (p=0.212). I thus mostly find support for the theory that material interests matter when politically disengaged Americans are formulating economic preferences, but that material interests are not very influential among politically engaged citizens (see also Johnston, Lavine, and Federico 2017).

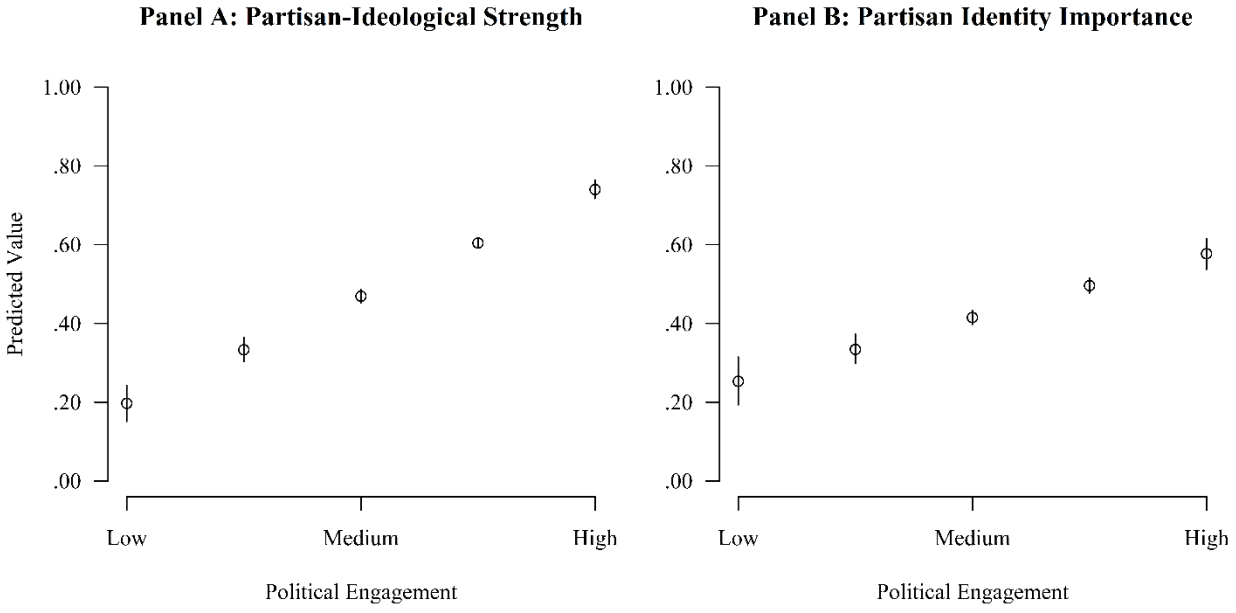

Figure 8B—Predicted Partisan-Ideological Orientation Strength and Partisan Identity Importance as Functions of Political Engagement. Points are predicted values as functions of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Sample only includes rural and small-town respondents. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

In Figure 8B, I plot the predicted values for partisan-ideological orientation strength and partisan identity importance as functions of political engagement. Figure 8B shows very strong, positive associations between political engagement and these outcomes; on average, politically engaged relative to disengaged rural Americans are 54-points more partisan-ideological in their political orientation, and they specifically report viewing their partisan identity as 31-points more important. That is to say, Americans who consider themselves to be strong partisan-ideologues and who view their partisan identity as important are, on average, high in political engagement.

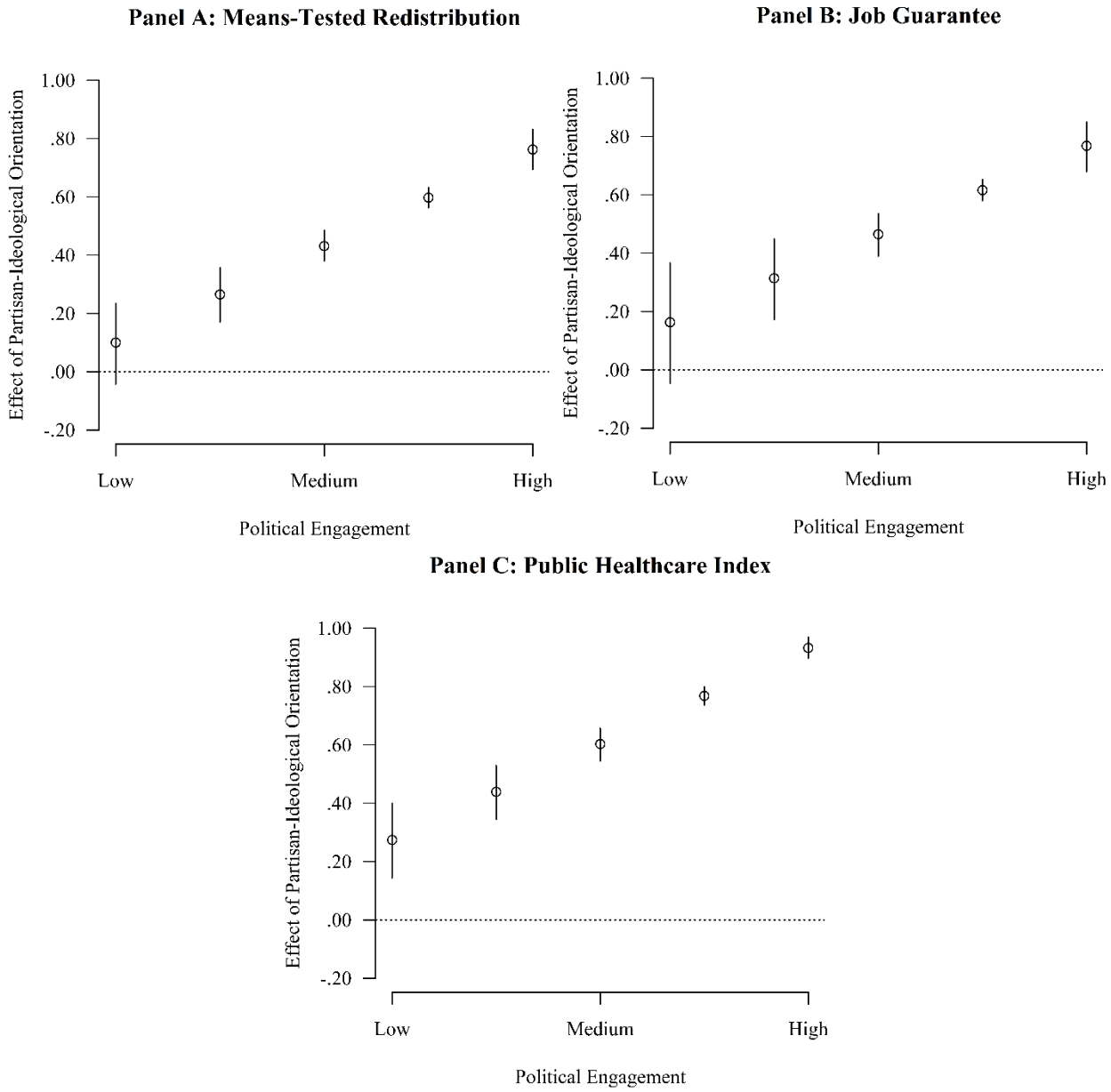

Figure 8C—Conditional Associations of Partisan-Ideological Orientation to Economic Policy Preferences. Points are conditional marginal associations of partisan-ideological orientation to economic preferences as functions of political engagement with 95 percent confidence intervals. Sample only includes rural and small-town respondents. Data are weighted. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

In Figure 8C, I plot the conditional associations between partisan-ideological orientation and each of the economic policy preferences analyzed in the first set of statistical tests. Although the values are coded such that positive marginal effects indicate positive correlations between left-wing partisan-ideological orientation and economic liberalism, the magnitudes of these associations are what is substantively important. At the lowest level of engagement, partisan-ideological orientation has a 10-point association with means-tested redistribution ($p=0.134$), a 16-point association with support for a job guarantee ($p=0.102$), and a 27-point association with healthcare preferences ($p<0.001$). At the highest level of political engagement, however, each of these associations is significantly stronger; indeed, partisan-ideological orientation has a 76-point association with means-tested redistribution ($p<0.001$), a 77-point association with a federal job guarantee ($p<0.001$), and a 93-point association with healthcare preferences ($p<0.001$). Whereas partisan-ideological orientation explains a small share of politically disengaged rural Americans' economic preferences, it explains the lion's share of politically engaged rural Americans'. These results are consistent with the idea that politically engaged Americans' political behavior is more determined by their political identities than politically disengaged Americans' political behavior.

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Appendix 9—Full Regression Models for Main Results

Table 9A. Full Regression Model Used to Calculate Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness on Partisan-Ideological Orientation

	Partisan Identity	Party Ratings	2020 Candidate Preferences	2020 Candidate Ratings	Ideological Identity	Ideological Ratings
Rural Consciousness	0.444	0.490	0.569	0.480	0.455	0.319
	(0.151)	(0.119)	(0.193)	(0.121)	(0.078)	(0.091)
Political Engagement	1.011	0.817	1.161	0.937	0.829	0.874
	(0.251)	(0.175)	(0.390)	(0.232)	(0.207)	(0.171)
Rural Consc*Engagement	-1.112	-1.152	-1.435	-1.252	-1.013	-0.882
	(0.225)	(0.170)	(0.272)	(0.185)	(0.122)	(0.145)
Male	0.038	-0.034	-0.028	-0.046	0.017	-0.002
	(0.052)	(0.039)	(0.085)	(0.049)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Male*Engagement	-0.119	0.043	-0.015	0.035	-0.073	-0.023
	(0.086)	(0.063)	(0.128)	(0.080)	(0.049)	(0.047)
Black	0.332	0.158	0.074	0.284	-0.048	-0.053
	(0.096)	(0.072)	(0.184)	(0.077)	(0.074)	(0.081)
Hispanic	0.341	0.200	0.456	0.331	0.088	0.018
	(0.088)	(0.085)	(0.182)	(0.103)	(0.041)	(0.035)
Asian	-0.093	0.051	0.065	0.233	-0.044	-0.092
	(0.192)	(0.179)	(0.459)	(0.186)	(0.090)	(0.112)
Native American	0.264	0.208	0.222	0.025	0.115	0.136
	(0.129)	(0.078)	(0.310)	(0.138)	(0.052)	(0.068)
Other/Mixed Race	0.291	0.137	0.392	0.170	0.054	-0.016
	(0.137)	(0.119)	(0.245)	(0.149)	(0.094)	(0.089)
Black*Engagement	0.089	0.132	0.451	0.082	0.166	0.161
	(0.163)	(0.108)	(0.250)	(0.129)	(0.116)	(0.124)
Hispanic*Engagement	-0.263	-0.081	-0.400	-0.234	-0.050	0.020
	(0.164)	(0.152)	(0.309)	(0.187)	(0.083)	(0.074)
Asian*Engagement	0.481	0.161	0.287	-0.075	0.242	0.290
	(0.314)	(0.288)	(0.692)	(0.308)	(0.148)	(0.195)
Native American*Engagement	-0.275	-0.208	-0.267	0.043	-0.123	-0.174
	(0.181)	(0.121)	(0.438)	(0.215)	(0.088)	(0.096)
Other/Mixed Race*Engagement	-0.230	-0.027	-0.334	-0.110	0.016	0.071
	(0.215)	(0.183)	(0.360)	(0.220)	(0.155)	(0.148)
Age	0.026	-0.030	0.018	0.044	0.034	-0.031
	(0.090)	(0.085)	(0.154)	(0.098)	(0.054)	(0.060)
Age*Engagement	0.112	0.170	0.132	0.132	-0.029	0.041
	(0.131)	(0.127)	(0.218)	(0.151)	(0.093)	(0.095)

Education	-0.062	-0.100	0.151	0.050	-0.093	-0.043
	(0.083)	(0.071)	(0.178)	(0.083)	(0.051)	(0.059)
Education*Engagement	0.184	0.237	-0.021	0.055	0.219	0.129
	(0.132)	(0.102)	(0.240)	(0.137)	(0.086)	(0.090)
Income	-0.174	-0.073	-0.323	-0.099	-0.097	-0.127
	(0.094)	(0.074)	(0.179)	(0.094)	(0.067)	(0.061)
Income*Engagement	0.251	0.135	0.459	0.202	0.136	0.204
	(0.157)	(0.118)	(0.267)	(0.157)	(0.129)	(0.104)
Parent	0.062	0.019	0.105	0.040	0.011	0.002
	(0.053)	(0.050)	(0.091)	(0.050)	(0.029)	(0.030)
Parent*Engagement	-0.081	-0.046	-0.126	-0.078	-0.025	-0.036
	(0.083)	(0.080)	(0.142)	(0.085)	(0.051)	(0.050)
Married	-0.012	-0.004	0.037	0.022	-0.020	0.015
	(0.057)	(0.052)	(0.095)	(0.058)	(0.047)	(0.045)
Married*Engagement	-0.100	-0.091	-0.183	-0.143	-0.048	-0.103
	(0.108)	(0.099)	(0.166)	(0.116)	(0.095)	(0.089)
Union	0.005	-0.028	-0.173	-0.106	-0.035	0.046
	(0.073)	(0.061)	(0.116)	(0.073)	(0.048)	(0.044)
Union*Engagement	0.019	0.063	0.297	0.176	0.049	-0.062
	(0.112)	(0.085)	(0.164)	(0.101)	(0.073)	(0.072)
Unemployed	0.047	-0.085	0.169	-0.033	-0.073	0.029
	(0.085)	(0.064)	(0.208)	(0.086)	(0.051)	(0.061)
Unemployed*Engagement	-0.120	0.130	-0.335	0.030	0.093	-0.019
	(0.130)	(0.124)	(0.283)	(0.161)	(0.100)	(0.115)
South	-0.011	-0.011	-0.080	-0.012	-0.005	0.004
	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.097)	(0.054)	(0.034)	(0.039)
South*Engagement	-0.055	-0.032	-0.002	-0.042	-0.057	-0.059
	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.149)	(0.094)	(0.058)	(0.067)
Racial Stereotyping	-0.257	-0.398	-0.504	-0.576	-0.015	-0.084
	(0.201)	(0.167)	(0.367)	(0.183)	(0.126)	(0.152)
Racial Stereotyping*Engagement	-0.537	-0.420	-0.487	-0.248	-0.576	-0.734
	(0.336)	(0.274)	(0.570)	(0.321)	(0.253)	(0.274)
Constant	0.237	0.376	0.307	0.364	0.250	0.349
	(0.153)	(0.118)	(0.253)	(0.141)	(0.113)	(0.106)
Observations	2,877	2,827	2,466	2,787	2,877	2,823
R-squared	0.263	0.291	0.213	0.286	0.191	0.235

Note: Table entries are linear regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Positive coefficients correspond to associations with Democratic partisan or liberal ideological identities. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.

Table 9B. Full Regression Model Used to Calculate Marginal Effects of Rural Consciousness on Economic and Trade Preferences

	Economic Policy Index	Federal Job Guarantee	Public School Spending	Healthcare Index	$1M+ Income Tax	Anti-Trade Index
Rural Consciousness	0.471	0.556	0.417	0.306	0.943	-0.134
	(0.069)	(0.146)	(0.149)	(0.090)	(0.186)	(0.108)
Political Engagement	0.772	0.573	1.084	0.773	1.249	-0.334
	(0.136)	(0.263)	(0.206)	(0.170)	(0.258)	(0.131)
Rural Consc*Engagement	-1.077	-1.243	-0.960	-0.955	-1.722	0.418
	(0.110)	(0.213)	(0.223)	(0.139)	(0.262)	(0.157)
Male	-0.009	-0.014	0.086	-0.005	0.043	0.060
	(0.023)	(0.047)	(0.039)	(0.034)	(0.059)	(0.036)
Male*Engagement	-0.032	-0.029	-0.175	-0.020	-0.111	-0.158
	(0.039)	(0.068)	(0.062)	(0.056)	(0.090)	(0.054)
Black	-0.018	-0.046	-0.133	-0.035	-0.220	-0.002
	(0.048)	(0.130)	(0.089)	(0.060)	(0.114)	(0.090)
Hispanic	0.080	0.042	-0.038	0.127	0.139	-0.143
	(0.063)	(0.071)	(0.087)	(0.072)	(0.123)	(0.053)
Asian	-0.055	0.124	-0.059	-0.192	0.213	-0.203
	(0.064)	(0.207)	(0.163)	(0.136)	(0.177)	(0.137)
Native American	0.195	0.286	0.250	0.148	0.106	-0.007
	(0.057)	(0.145)	(0.107)	(0.100)	(0.191)	(0.070)
Other/Mixed Race	-0.022	0.034	-0.213	-0.053	0.036	0.040
	(0.053)	(0.113)	(0.061)	(0.077)	(0.113)	(0.079)
Black*Engagement	0.230	0.329	0.341	0.339	0.544	-0.014
	(0.081)	(0.198)	(0.132)	(0.098)	(0.184)	(0.164)
Hispanic*Engagement	-0.018	0.042	0.155	-0.065	-0.176	0.186
	(0.115)	(0.126)	(0.146)	(0.137)	(0.224)	(0.101)
Asian*Engagement	0.228	-0.040	0.219	0.462	-0.225	0.142
	(0.129)	(0.309)	(0.264)	(0.229)	(0.307)	(0.228)
Native American*Engagement	-0.270	-0.287	-0.398	-0.238	-0.277	-0.012
	(0.103)	(0.233)	(0.198)	(0.145)	(0.289)	(0.107)
Other/Mixed Race*Engagement	0.121	0.099	0.308	0.165	0.038	-0.027
	(0.088)	(0.184)	(0.092)	(0.119)	(0.156)	(0.120)
Age	0.013	-0.076	0.185	-0.033	0.348	0.101
	(0.046)	(0.092)	(0.128)	(0.066)	(0.111)	(0.077)
Age*Engagement	0.066	0.146	-0.256	0.171	-0.333	-0.172
	(0.076)	(0.139)	(0.202)	(0.103)	(0.164)	(0.116)
Education	-0.080	-0.259	0.247	-0.081	0.085	-0.050
	(0.045)	(0.076)	(0.081)	(0.064)	(0.117)	(0.051)

Education*Engagement	0.113	0.359	-0.360	0.184	-0.100	-0.071
	(0.075)	(0.115)	(0.117)	(0.096)	(0.171)	(0.080)
Income	-0.140	-0.153	0.064	-0.130	0.065	0.211
	(0.057)	(0.082)	(0.089)	(0.070)	(0.108)	(0.064)
Income*Engagement	0.134	0.171	-0.142	0.130	-0.114	-0.417
	(0.103)	(0.147)	(0.149)	(0.123)	(0.158)	(0.102)
Parent	-0.008	-0.015	0.122	-0.030	-0.057	-0.003
	(0.030)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.037)	(0.064)	(0.041)
Parent*Engagement	0.025	0.033	-0.121	0.037	0.073	0.028
	(0.050)	(0.081)	(0.096)	(0.060)	(0.108)	(0.062)
Married	0.007	0.015	0.017	0.006	-0.102	-0.047
	(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.047)	(0.049)	(0.071)	(0.032)
Married*Engagement	-0.084	-0.130	-0.055	-0.104	0.059	0.110
	(0.075)	(0.094)	(0.081)	(0.095)	(0.118)	(0.056)
Union	0.019	-0.048	0.096	-0.009	0.075	-0.003
	(0.040)	(0.057)	(0.065)	(0.060)	(0.097)	(0.043)
Union*Engagement	-0.016	0.064	-0.087	0.006	-0.024	0.025
	(0.066)	(0.082)	(0.102)	(0.090)	(0.140)	(0.063)
Unemployed	0.024	0.058	-0.062	0.047	-0.062	0.100
	(0.044)	(0.122)	(0.096)	(0.063)	(0.114)	(0.048)
Unemployed*Engagement	-0.026	-0.094	0.067	-0.072	0.131	-0.140
	(0.089)	(0.183)	(0.155)	(0.112)	(0.202)	(0.091)
South	-0.001	0.000	0.039	-0.024	-0.079	-0.044
	(0.028)	(0.049)	(0.042)	(0.037)	(0.073)	(0.036)
South*Engagement	-0.006	-0.025	0.006	-0.006	0.098	0.104
	(0.048)	(0.080)	(0.065)	(0.060)	(0.113)	(0.057)
Racial Stereotyping	-0.037	-0.275	-0.078	-0.055	-0.125	0.049
	(0.097)	(0.191)	(0.135)	(0.140)	(0.218)	(0.125)
Racial Stereotyping*Engagement	-0.398	-0.126	-0.175	-0.623	-0.005	0.451
	(0.194)	(0.287)	(0.237)	(0.243)	(0.386)	(0.264)
Constant	0.388	0.467	0.285	0.479	0.052	0.535
	(0.080)	(0.178)	(0.126)	(0.112)	(0.158)	(0.077)
Observations	2,880	2,876	2,877	2,880	2,878	2,876
R-squared	0.259	0.181	0.114	0.234	0.081	0.141

Note: Table entries are linear regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Positive coefficients correspond to associations with Democratic partisan or liberal ideological identities. Data are weighted. Rural and small-town Americans only. Source: 2020 ANES Time Series.