

Issue voting in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election

Jan Zilinsky, NYU Politics

- Are voting decisions determined by partisan tribalism / blind loyalty?
- No, out-party voting took place in 2016. Evidence in favor of policy voting.

Too much partisan loyalty would be inconsistent with democratic accountability

- *View own party as infallible?*
Prepared to excuse any wrongdoing.
- *Voters' party ID determines their vote?*
Candidates can take votes of party sympathizers for granted.
- *Lack of reason choice?*
No point to deliberate or debate policies.

- Partisan voting doesn't mean voters **like** their own party.
- Partisan voting doesn't mean outcomes are predetermined.
- Partisan voting doesn't imply intoxication or lack of rationality.



HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON | SEP 16, 2018 | IDEAS

Meanwhile, hyperpolarization now extends beyond politics into nearly every part of our culture. One recent study found that in 1960, just 5 percent of Republicans and 4 percent of Democrats said they'd be displeased if their son or daughter married a member of the other political party. In 2010, 49 percent of Republicans and 33 percent of Democrats said they'd be upset by that. The strength of partisan identity—and animosity—helps explain why so many Republicans continue to back a president so manifestly unfit for office and antithetical to many of the values and policies they once held dear. When you start seeing politics as a zero-sum game and view members of the other party as traitors, criminals, or otherwise illegitimate, then the normal give-and-take of politics turns into a blood sport.

Partisanship is a helluva drug

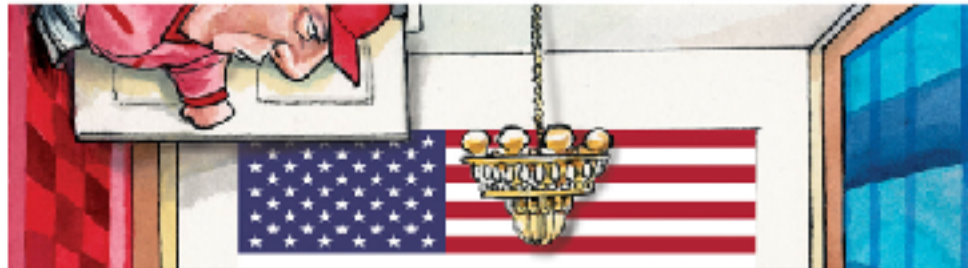
Much of what Republicans stood for during Obama's presidency looks likely to be abandoned under Trump.

By Ezra Klein | @ezraklein | Dec 23, 2016, 8:30am EST

Partisanship

The primeval tribalism of American politics

One effort to get people talking shows the depth of the divide



Americans Are Partisan About Everything — Even Sex Scandals

By Perry Bacon Jr. and Shrumli Fehta

Filed under [Pollegalore](#)



Illustration by Matt Chase

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'Negative Partisanship' Explains Everything

Conservatives and liberals don't just disagree—they actually like to hate each other. And it's getting uglier.

By ALAN ABRAMOWITZ and STEVEN WEBSTER | September/October 2017

Luca Neville follows



Olivia Crossman @crossmanolivia · Aug 18
Partisanship is one hell of a drug - @ClareMalone



CNN Politics @CNNPolitics
6 in 10 people who approve of President Trump say they'll never, ever, ever stop approving, according to a new poll
cnn/2w02xf

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Nathan Kalmoe @NathanKalmoe · Oct 8
After 2016, I've become more convinced than ever that voters see party+econ+incumb, & only marginal deviation due to candidates & campaigns.

1



Kevin Banda @KevinKBanda

Replying to @NathanKalmoe

Maybe. I think Trump is evaluated differently b/c of celebrity status, but PID is a hell of a drug and negative partisanship for days.

Keith E. Whittington and 40 others follow



William D. Adler @williamadler78 · Sep 14
Partisanship is a helluva drug

Bill Mitchell @bmitchellv

I stand with Trump 100%. #OACA is a negotiation and WHATEVER he chooses, I will back him because I elected his judgment.

Period.

1



Brendan Nyhan @BrendanNyhan

Partisanship is a hell of a drug

Michael Cohen @speeddial71

It's amazing to think that 5 years ago, Republicans lost their s--- over Obama calling the actions of a Cambridge police officer "stupid" and today are unbored by POTUS calling the FBI the "worst in history"

11:54 AM · 4 Dec 2017

76 Retweets · 106 Likes

10

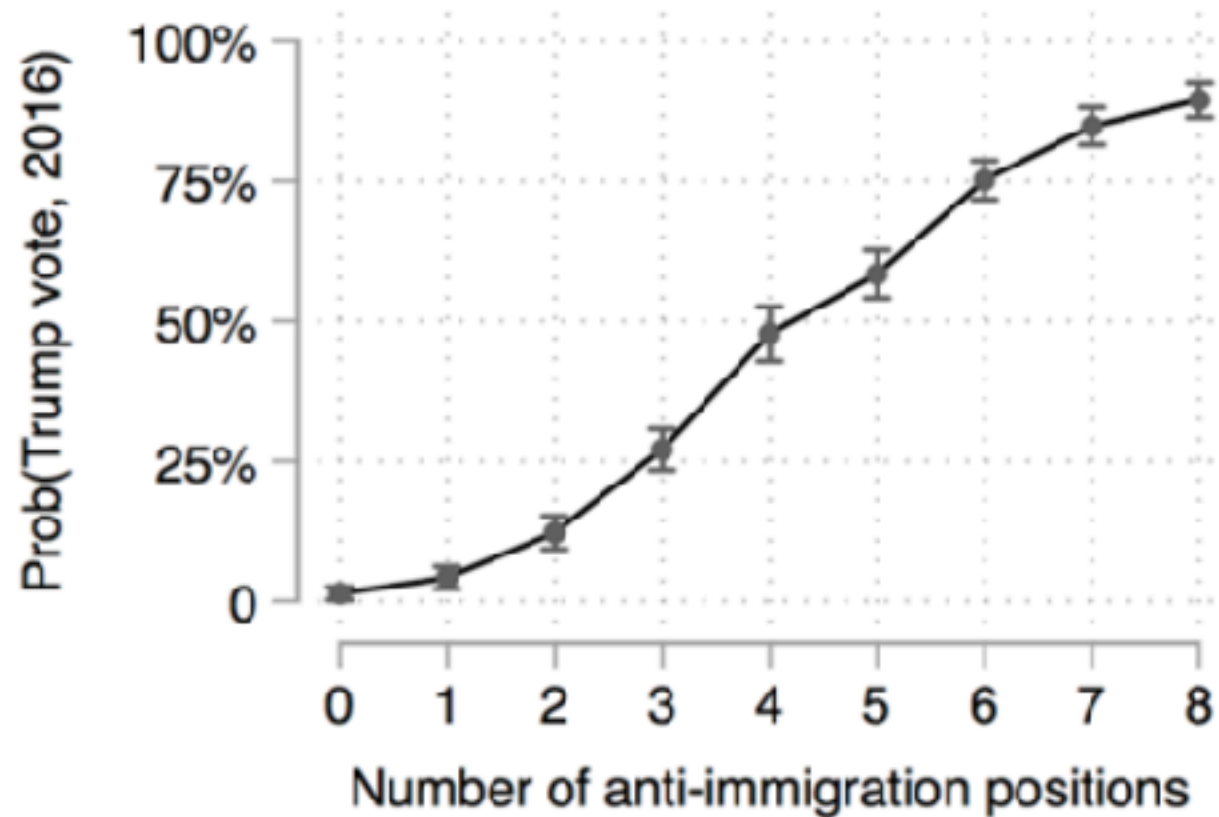
Is there a policy/issue position that has an independent effect on voting?

There are at least 3:

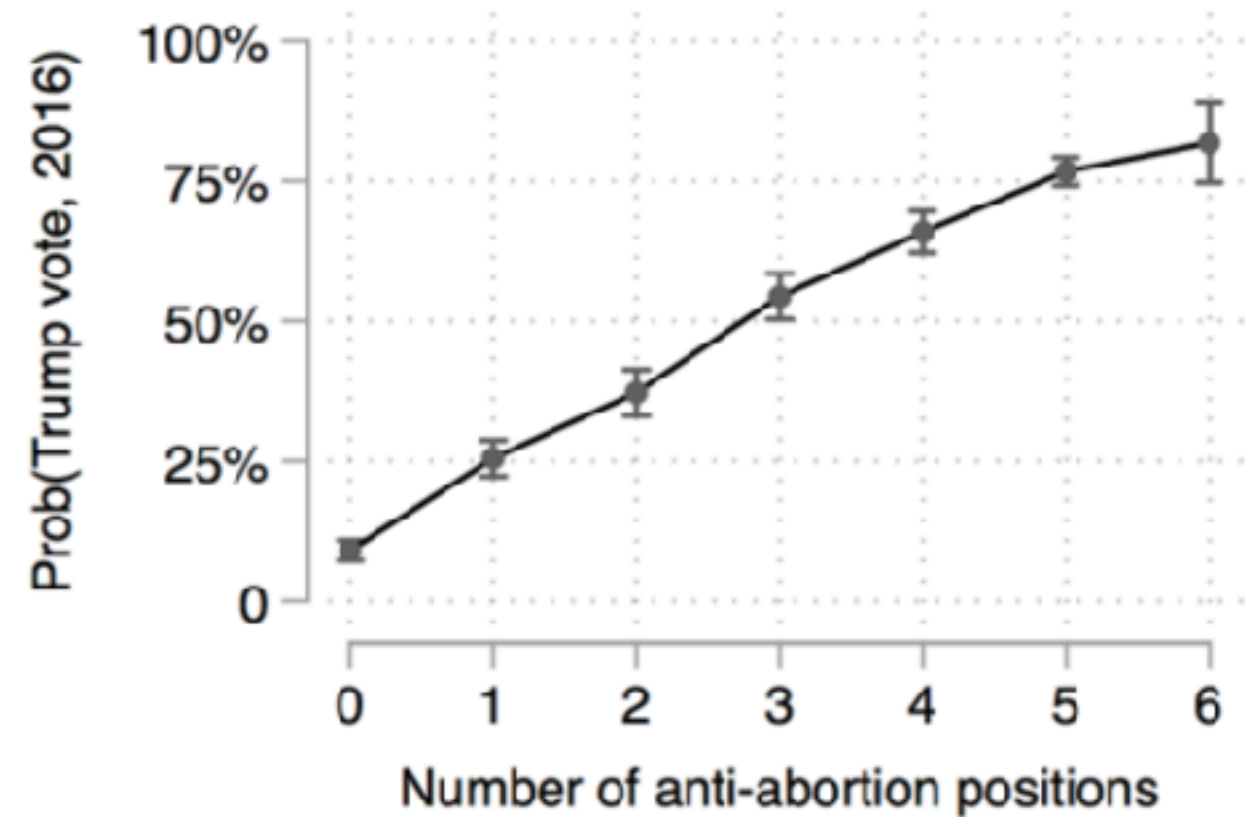
- *Abortion*
- *Gun rights*
- *Immigration*

Voting for Trump in 2016. Predicted probabilities.
Controls: Gender, age, income, education & race.

Issue 1: Immigration

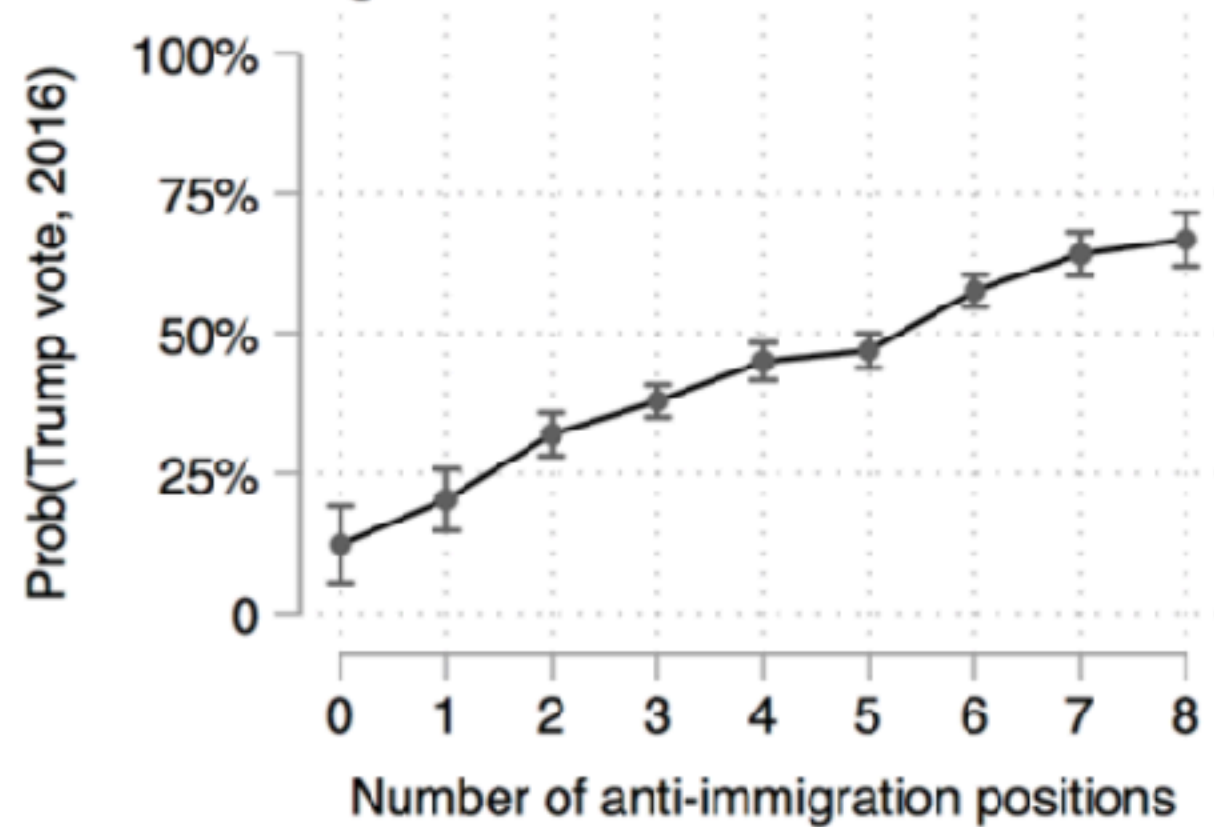


Issue 2: Abortion

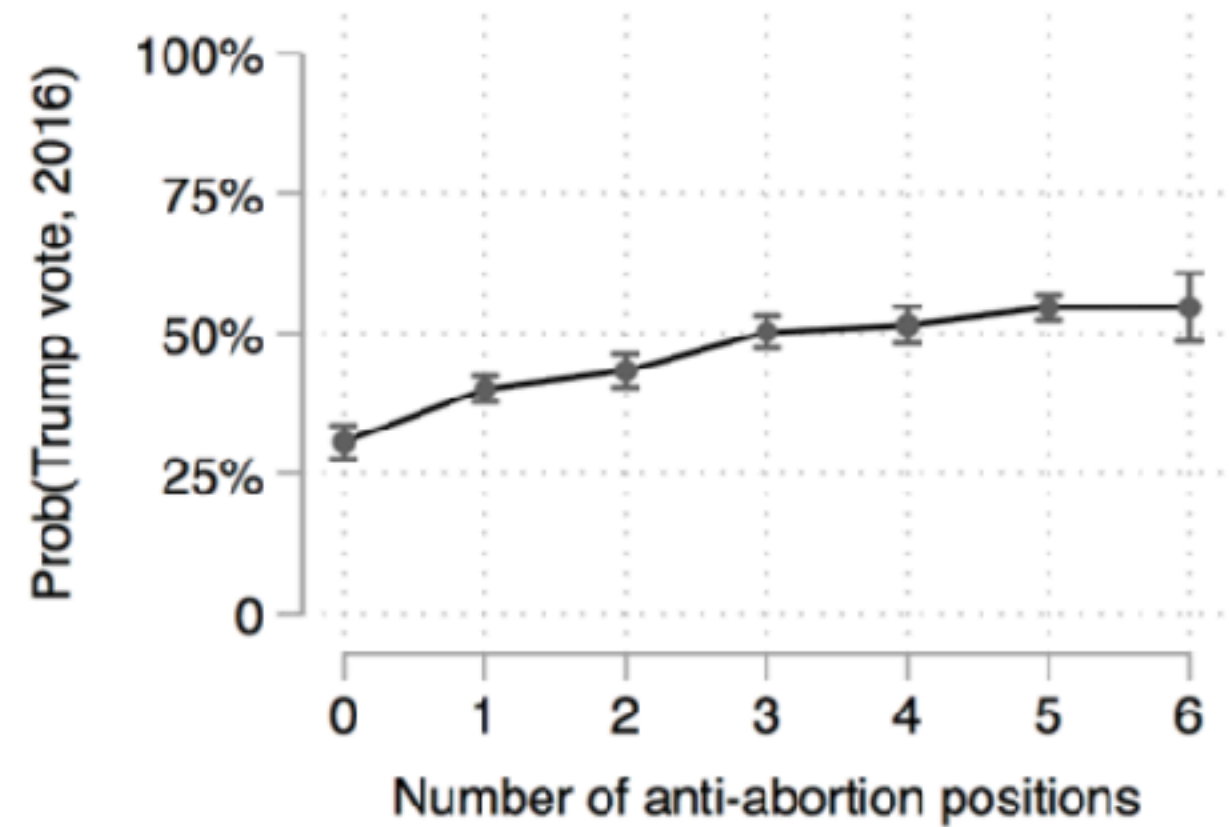


Voting for Trump in 2016. Predicted probabilities.
Controls: **Party ID** (7 categories), gender, age, income, education & race.

Issue 1: Immigration



Issue 2: Abortion



1. *Grant legal status to all illegal immigrants who have held jobs and paid taxes for at least 3 years, and not been convicted of any felony crimes.*
2. *Grant legal status to people who were brought to the US illegally as children, but who have graduated from a U.S. high school.*
3. *Increase the number of visas for overseas workers to work in the U.S.*
4. *Increase the number of border patrols on the U.S.-Mexican border.*
5. *Identify and deport illegal immigrants.*
6. *Fine U.S. businesses that hire illegal immigrants.*
7. *Admit no refugees from Syria.*
8. *Ban Muslims from immigrating to the U.S.*

		Percent Correctly Predicted
	<i>Model inputs</i>	
(1)	Party ID, 3 default categories	78.5%
(2)	Party ID, 3 categories: leaners classified as partisans	86.4%
(3)	Party ID, 7 categories + DKs	86.3%
(4)	Anti-immigration views (8 items)	84.1%
(5)	(3) + (4)	90.7%
(6)	(3) + (4) + Retrospective household finances	91.1%
(7)	(6) + gender, age, income, education and race	91.1%

- Voting behavior can be predicted well with issues + PID
- Marginal importance: own finances, economics evaluations
- Room for more clarity:
Interpreting the coefficient on PID in a “long regression”

Party as social identity
... subset: devotion / loyalty

AND

Cues-based voting

Supplementary slides

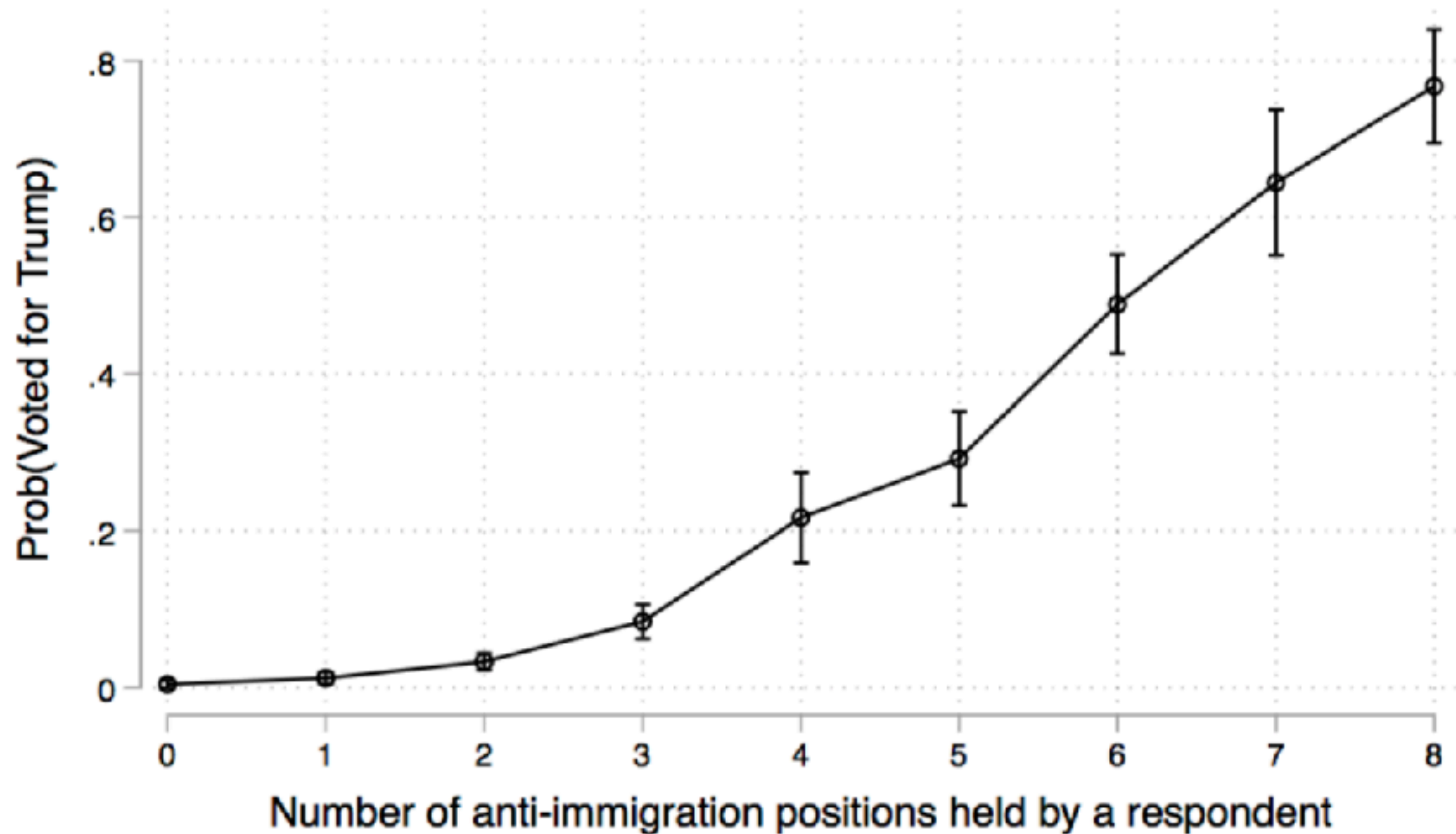
Table A1: Predictors of Trump voting (linear probability models).

	Dependent variable: Voted for Trump in 2016			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Democrat (including leaners)	-0.28** (0.019)	-0.24** (0.020)	-0.23** (0.022)	-0.22** (0.022)
Republican (including leaners)	0.28** (0.017)	0.25** (0.018)	0.25** (0.020)	0.22** (0.020)
Number of anti-immigration views	0.06** (0.003)	0.05** (0.003)	0.05** (0.003)	0.04** (0.003)
Number of pro-guns views		0.02** (0.005)	0.03** (0.005)	0.03** (0.005)
Number of anti-abortion views		0.02** (0.003)	0.02** (0.003)	0.02** (0.003)
Preference of spending cuts		0.001 (0.004)	0.002 (0.004)	0.001 (0.004)
Economic conditions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Household finances	✓	✓	✓	✓
Income			✓	✓
Education			✓	✓
Age			✓	✓
Race			✓	✓
Gender			✓	✓
Ideology				✓
Constant	0.25** (0.022)	0.19** (0.026)	0.14** (0.037)	0.14** (0.037)
R-squared	0.701	0.713	0.717	0.720
Observations	11262	9985	8665	8665

Predicted probabilities: Voting for Trump in 2016

Sample: **Democrats and Independents**

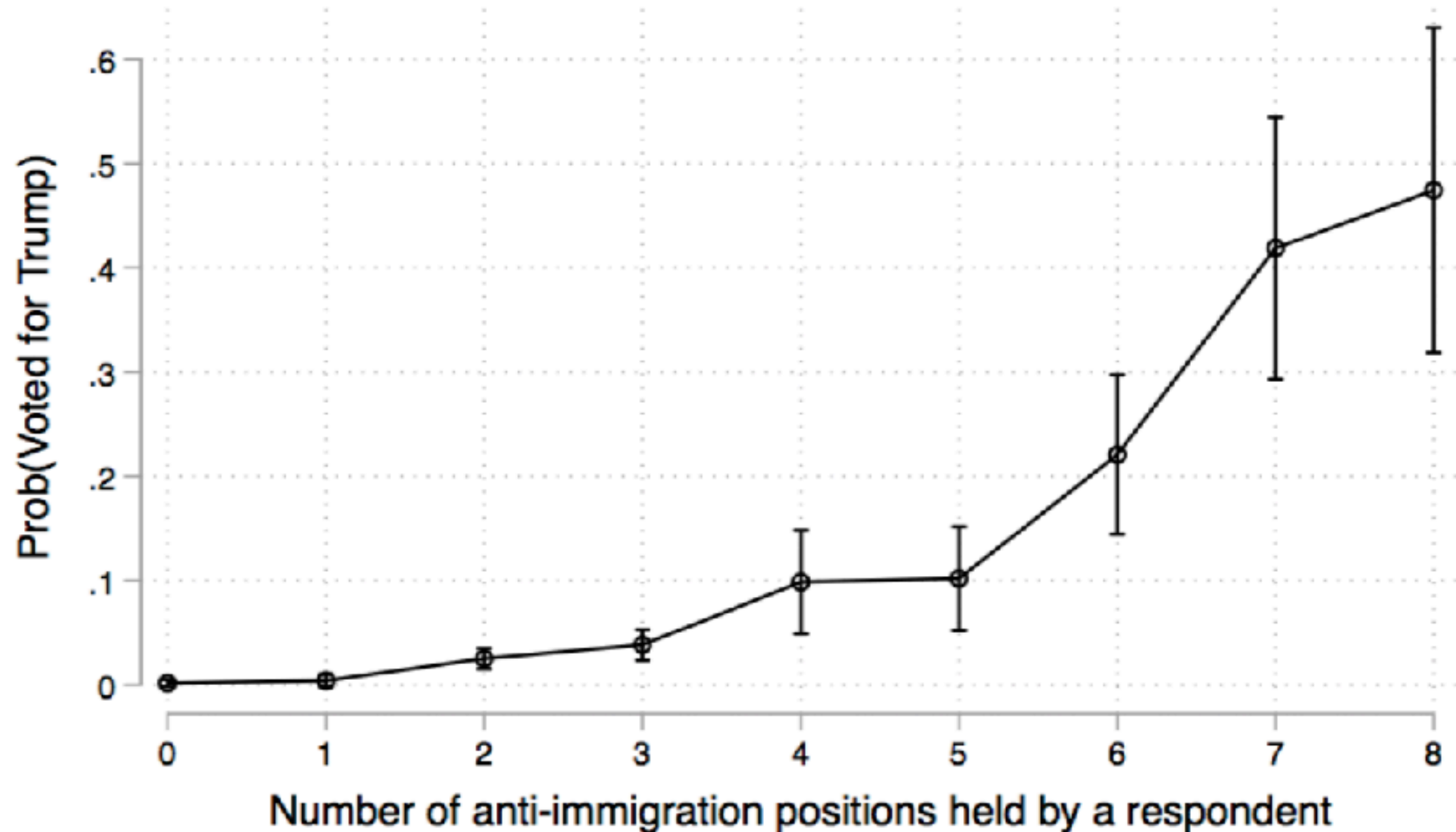
Issue 1: Immigration



Predicted probabilities: Voting for Trump in 2016

Sample: **Democrats only**

Issue 1: Immigration



	(1)	(2)	(3)
Strong Democrat	-0.52** (0.019)		-0.36** (0.018)
Not very strong Democrat	-0.37** (0.025)		-0.29** (0.023)
Lean Democrat	-0.47** (0.023)		-0.32** (0.021)
Independent	Baseline category		Baseline category
Lean Republican	0.35** (0.023)		0.26** (0.021)
Not very strong Republican	0.31** (0.024)		0.26** (0.021)
Strong Republican	0.41** (0.020)		0.31** (0.018)
No anti-immigration views		Baseline	Baseline
1 anti-immigration view		0.03*	0.01
2 anti-immigration views		0.10**	0.05**
3 anti-immigration views		0.23**	0.09**
4 anti-immigration views		0.45**	0.19**
5 anti-immigration views		0.59**	0.26**
6 anti-immigration views		0.75**	0.36**
7 anti-immigration views		0.88**	0.44**
8 anti-immigration views		0.93**	0.46**

Partisanship and vote choice in CCES (2016) VOTER Survey (2016). The CCES sample is restricted to early respondents who were asked all 8 immigration-related questions.

	CCES (2016 subsample)		VOTER Survey (2016)	
	Unweighted	Weighted	Unweighted	Weighted
Strong Democrat	25.2%	23.2%	24.6%	23.1%
Not very strong Democrat	13.4%	12.7%	11.5%	13.0%
Lean Democrat	9.7%	8.5%	9.1%	7.8%
Independent	16.3%	15.9%	14.8%	15.5%
Lean Republican	8.6%	10.2%	10.1%	9.5%
Not very strong Republican	10.6%	12.4%	12.5%	12.7%
Strong Republican	13.1%	14.6%	16.8%	16.7%
Not sure	3.2%	2.5%	0.8%	1.7%
Vote choice in 2016				
Voted for Trump in 2016	41.7%	46.8%	45.9%	46.2%
Did not vote for Trump in 2016	58.3%	53.2%	54.1%	53.8%

Number of anti-immigration policy views	Unweighted	Weighted
None	6.3%	5.3%
1	13.0%	11.0%
2	15.3%	14.3%
3	12.4%	14.5%
4	9.1%	10.8%
5	9.3%	10.3%
6	11.2%	11.3%
7	11.5%	10.8%
8	12.0%	11.7%

Gender	Unweighted	Weighted
Men	48.9%	47.3%
Women	51.1%	52.7%

Family income	Unweighted	Weighted
Up to \$29,999	19.5%	29.7%
\$30-\$59,999	30.5%	32.0%
\$60-\$99,999	28.1%	23.0%
\$100,000 or more	21.9%	15.3%