National Elections in Comparative Perspective: The United States 2016

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Figure 1. Presidential Election Results, 1980 - 2012
Figure 2. Why Republican Strategists Lose Sleep at Night

Trend in Percentage of Vote Cast For Democratic Presidential Candidates, 1980 - 2012

Regression Line
R² = .80
Explaining Voting Choice: The Valence Politics Model

• 3 Key Explanatory Variables:
  • **Valence Issues** – economy, public services, national & personal security
  • **Two Major ‘Fast & Frugal’ Heuristics (Cues)**
  • **Party Leader Images**
  • **Dynamic Partisanship**

• Clarke et al. (2004, 2009, 2015) - UK
• Clarke, Kornberg & Scotto (2009) – Canada, US
• Clarke and Whitten (2014) - Germany
• Ho, Weng and Clarke (2015) – Taiwan
Figure 3. Dynamic Party Identification

Party Identification, Gallup Poll, Feb 2015, Feb 2016 and Nov 2012

- 2015 Feb: 25% Republican, 43% Independent, 29% Democrat
- 2016 Feb: 30% Republican, 37% Independent, 30% Democrat
- 2012 Nov: 30% Republican, 33% Independent, 35% Democrat
Figure 4. Unemployment Rate, January 2008 – February 2016

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate,
January 2008 - February 2016
Figure 5. President Obama’s Approval Rating, Nov 2012 – Feb 2016

President Obama’s Job Approval Rating in 569 Polls, November 2012 - February 2016
Figure 6. Presidential Candidate Images, March 2016 Gallup Poll

Favorable and Unfavorable Images of Presidential Candidates, March 2016 Gallup Poll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernie Sanders</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Trump</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted Cruz</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Kasich</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 7. Hillary Clinton v. Donald Trump


Note: Trend estimated using Hodrick-Prescot filter
Figure 8. Hillary Clinton v. Ted Cruz

Voting Support for Hillary Clinton and Ted Cruz in 59 National Polls, July 2015 - March 2016

Note: Trends estimated using Hodrick-Prescott filter
Figure 9. Voter Turnout, 1980 - 2012

Figure 3. Voter Turnout in Presidential Elections, 1980 - 2012
And, the Winner Is?

- Hillary – definitely the Democratic nominee
- Donald – likely the Republican nominee
- Hillary & Donald – both BIG negatives
- The Economy – not great, not terrible
- Foreign affairs – ISIS?
- Terrorism - ?
- Immigration – minds made up
- VP Picks – Kasich could be key
- Main-stream Media – in the tank for Hillary – but with friends like that?!
- Nasty campaign!
- Low Turnout?
- **Winner?? – Definitely not the American voter!**