

A Psychological Profile of Extreme Trump Supporters

Laura Kinsman & Jeremy A. Frimer

Abstract

Donald Trump once claimed that he could murder someone in broad daylight and still not lose support, implying an extreme loyalty on the part of his supporters. The psychological foundation of this purported commitment is far from obvious in that many aspects of Trump's lifestyle, personality, policies, and values are antithetical to those cherished by large segments of his base (e.g., Evangelical Christians, free trade advocates). Political scholars, pundits and the media have offered a number of explanations for the support for Trump that exists within his base. In this chapter, we review three of the more common media explanations, which include tribal loyalties, selective media exposure, and material self-interest, and find some support for each in the scientific literature, with support generally being weaker for the more nefarious explanations (e.g., tribal racism, bloodlust) and stronger for more banal explanations (e.g., information bubbles, perceived self-interest). We also find that many of these tendencies generalize to extreme Trump opposition, meaning that Trump support is in many ways an extrapolation of a long-standing and escalating Culture War.

A Psychological Profile of Extreme Trump Supporters

President Trump's extraordinary tenure in office will end. Whether that end comes in 2021 or in 2025 (or beyond), it will come. This is probably good news to most people in the U.S. and around the world, where Trump is almost universally disliked (Wike, Poushter, Fetterolf & Schumacher, 2020). However, Trump's exit will not be the end of Trumpism. Approximately 140 million Americans still approve of President Trump. When he leaves, they will remain. To properly understand the Trump era, one must also understand his followers. Our objective is to psychologically profile supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump, who we characterize as extremists. Characterizing such a large sector of society and supporters of a major political figure in a major democracy as extremists might raise eyebrows. We suggest that a broad geopolitical and historical perspective will support the view that President Trump's supporters, as numerous as they are, are indeed extreme.

Perhaps the least controversial thing about the Trump presidency is that it has been unusual. Some political and economic regularities (Drezner, 2018) notwithstanding, Trump had the least prior political experience of any U.S. president, and his policies (e.g., on NATO, Russia, free trade, executive authority) and his personal behavior (e.g., braggadocio, insults, lack of financial transparency) make him a highly unusual U.S. President or democratically elected head of state. People will likely disagree about whether such an unusual presidency has moved the country in the right or the wrong direction. But we suggest that people of varying political stripes probably agree that an unusual presidency it indeed has been. The Trump presidency itself being far from the mainstream of presidencies renders Trump support extreme in the sense that it is non-normative.

Trump's support has been steady and around 42% of Americans. The "Trump supporter" demographic is not homogenous, however. Some of his supporters are more tentative, conditional, and ambivalent whereas others are more fervent, unconditional, and full-throated in their approval of their president. Self-identified political conservatism has been strongly associated with levels of Trump support (Reuters Polling, 2019). This is noteworthy in that many of Trump's policies have been at variance with conservative beliefs, such as those concerning free markets, international allegiances, balanced budgets, basic human decency, and moral

character. Regardless of whether Trump and his policies are philosophically conservative, it is safe to say that they do embody modern U.S. *political* conservatism, at least in the self-identified form. In this way, the Trump presidency has piggybacked upon (and stoked) the ever-growing Culture War between liberals and conservatives in the U.S. (Kabaservice, 2018).

Our analyses thus arrive in the context of a growing Culture War between liberals and conservatives. Our method is to examine the psychological basis of extreme Trump support guided by common media portrayals and then “fact-check” them with the available psychological and political science evidence. We focus on three broad explanations for extreme Trump support. Trump support may be rooted in tribal loyalties and hatred of outsiders; it may be rooted in people living in information bubbles where they consume unrepresentative and even false information; and it may be explained by material self-interest. We chose to focus on these three themes because they are relatively prevalent in media portrayals and because of the availability of rich psychological research literatures on each, and because they vary considerably in their moral undertones. Support based in having access to restricted and biased information and an interest in taking care of oneself and one’s family has more favorable moral undertones than support based in a desire to harm one’s political enemies.

The three explanations are not mutually exclusive explanations. Any one or combination thereof could be explanatory, and they could work in tandem. For instance, information bubbles might stoke tribal loyalties, and having access to only limited and potentially false information might affect whether people perceive a particular policy to further their self-interest. They are nonetheless discrete processes, each with different potential remedies, and respective literatures.

In the course of our review, we aim to expound both on whether an explanation is valid and also on whether the psychological phenomenon (e.g., tribalism) is limited to the Trump orbit or generalizes to extreme Trump opponents as well (and thus a symptom of the escalating Culture War more generally). This prompts us to consider both whether the psychological tendency is more pronounced among Trump supporters/conservatives than Trump opponents/liberals, and whether it is more pronounced among people who are extremely (versus moderately) in support/opposition to Trump.

1. Tribalism

The first common media explanation for Trump support that we consider is tribalism, which comes in three forms: prejudice against outsiders, unwavering favoritism toward the ingroup and bloodlust (Pew Research Center, 2019).

Prejudice. Trump supporters’ animosity toward “the other” can often surface in racialized and gendered forms in that Trump supporters and opponents tend to look (demographically) different from one another. According to *Thought Co* the typical Trump supporter is white and male (Cole, 2019; Pew Research Center, 2019) whereas Trump’s opponents tend to be more demographically diverse (*The Washington Post*; Blake, 2015), with greater representation of black people, Hispanics and Asians (*The L.A Times*; Pearce, 2019). Women and the LGBTQ community tend to be better represented among Trump’s opponents (Pew Research Center, 2018; Morin, 2019).

President Trump’s promises to “Make America Great Again” might signal to white Americans that Trump aims to revert to laws that favor the white majority as they formerly did during the nation’s less diverse past (*The Atlantic*; Green, 2017; Khazan, 2018). Non-white immigrants have also been a major focus of Trump’s attacks. According to *The Chicago Counsel*, immigration has become a deeply polarizing issue (Kafura, 2019), with Republicans generally feeling threatened by immigrants (*The Washington Post*; Clement & Balz, 2019), and

seeing it as a more important issue than do Democrats (*MSNBC*; Benen, 2018). To Republicans, immigrants pose a threat to the country's "vital interests" (*The Washington Post*; Clement & Balz, 2019), the traditional American way of life (*USA Today*; Collins, 2016) and to their job security (*The Washington Post*; Bump, 2019).

President Trump's signature promise to "build a wall" was central to both his campaign and to his presidency (*The New York Times*; Hirschfield-David & Baker, 2019). His anti-immigrant rhetoric included attacking the morality of Mexican immigrants, labelling them as "rapists" and "drug smugglers", and framing them as an economic threat in the way they were framed as competing for jobs and depleting the social welfare system (*TIME*; Arce, 2019). At times, President Trump even advocated for violence against those attempting to immigrate to the United States (*The Washington Post*; Sonmez, 2018; *L.A. times*; Vives & Castillo, 2019). *The Washington Post* contends that Trump's tough stance on immigration was particularly alluring to conservatives who were unsatisfied with existing, more subtle approaches to immigration (Scott, 2019), and may have been a major factor in his ascension to the White House (*Politico*; Kumar, 2019). *Proposition 1a is that Trump support is rooted in a particularly nefarious form of tribal prejudice based in racism, xenophobia, and other forms of antipathy toward minorities.*

Scientific evidence: Conservatives in general appear to be particularly racist against black people and illegal immigrants. When asked to report their general feelings toward Black people, illegal aliens, and White people on 100-point feeling thermometers, conservatives showed a ~12 points gap favoring whites over blacks, and a ~45-point gap favoring whites over illegal immigrants (Schlenker, Chambers, & Le, 2012). The analogous gaps for liberals were approximately half the size. This apparent racism and prejudice against minorities has been found in several studies (Sears & Henry, 2003; Meertens & Pettigrew, 1997; Terrizzi, Shook, & Ventis, 2010), and appears to confirm Proposition 1a that Trump support may be rooted in racialized tribalism. However, this conclusion hinges upon a correlational relationship between ideology and attitudes toward various demographics, leaving open the possibility of a third variable explaining the association.

Worldview conflict is an alternative explanation for conservatives' prejudicial gap: people tend to feel and express prejudice against anyone whose beliefs conflict with their own (Brandt & Crawford, 2019; Chambers & Melnyk, 2006). For instance, gun rights advocates dislike gun restriction advocates just as gun restriction advocates dislike gun rights advocates. And liberals tend to dislike conservatives just as conservatives tend to dislike liberals. Black people tend to hold liberal worldviews and favor liberal politicians. This political leaning is evident in exit polls in which black voters overwhelmingly favored Democrats over Republicans in recent U.S. elections. Black voters favored Democratic candidates over Republican candidates by 81%, 87%, 91%, and 77% in the 2016-2004 elections respectively (e.g., CNN, 2016). It is possible that conservatives dislike black people because of black peoples' race or because of black peoples' political beliefs, or both.

Attitudes toward conservatively minded black people are revealing of the source of conservatives' prejudice toward black people. Experimentally crossing the race and the political beliefs of the target, Chambers, Schlenker and Collisson (2012) found that (white) conservatives expressed similarly positive attitudes toward conservatives, regardless of whether the conservative was white or black. And they expressed similarly color-blind negative attitudes toward liberals. Thus, conservatives' prejudice against black people appears to be explained by worldview conflict and may have little inherent basis in skin color. (Note that we are not claiming that racism does not exist, nor that when it exists it is always rooted in ideological

conflict. We are merely citing data that suggests that conservatives' apparent racism may be rooted in ideological conflict.)

Ingroup favoritism. Conservatives disdain for liberals (of all colors) could cause conservatives to blindly rally behind their Culture War leaders, resulting in extreme ingroup favoritism and deference to authority. While running for president in January 2016, Donald Trump gained the impression that his supporters were unusually dedicated and deferential to him. Expressing astonishment, he famously stated: "They say I have the most loyal people, did you ever see that? I could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn't lose voters. It's like incredible!" (CNN; Diamond, 2016). According to *Axios*, 62% of those who approve of his job performance claim they cannot think of anything Trump could do to lose their support (Allasan, 2019). Scandals, such as the Hollywood Access Tape, impeachment for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, and mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic seemed to have done little to weaken support among his followers (*The Washington Post*; Farenthold, 2016; *New York Times*; Peters, 2019), with his approval ratings remaining unusually stable and between 39% and 45% (Jones, 2018). These anecdotes and statistics suggest an unusually robust form of deference to and support for authority among Trump's supporters.

According to *Vox*, the Trump orbit is a hotbed for authoritarian submission: people who are especially likely to defer to authoritarian leaders hold conservative values such as a defense of hierarchy and social order as a means to an end of maintaining order and control in an uncontrollable world (Taub, 2016). *Psychology Today* suggests that President Trump displays qualities consistent with authoritarian leadership, subsequently attracting support from like-minded individuals looking to thwart perceived troublemakers (Azarian, 2017). *Proposition 1b is that Trump support is rooted in their extreme tendency to defer to their ingroup leaders.*

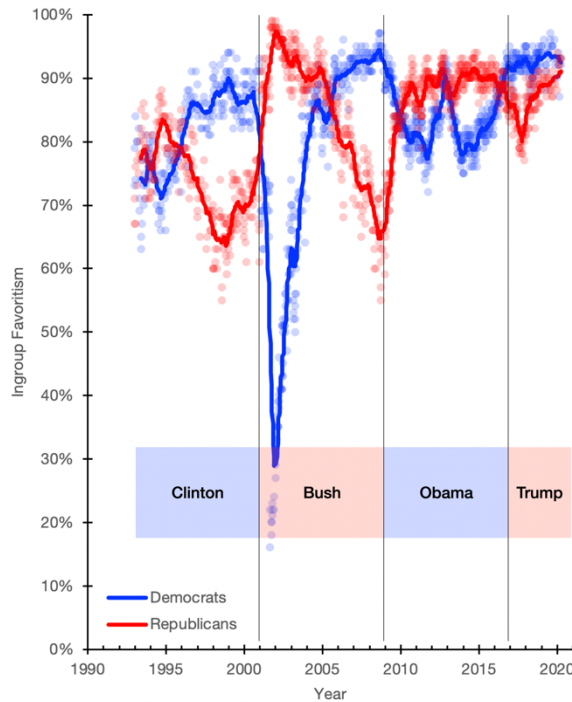
Scientific evidence: Conservatives have been found to have a pessimistic view of human nature, seeing people as inherently selfish (Lakoff, 2002). This perspective then justifies strong external forces, such as group loyalty and strong leaders, to maintain social order. Surveys of liberals and conservatives repeatedly confirmed that conservatives express more positive attitudes toward the idea of social conformity (Schwartz, Caprara, & Vecchione, 2010), a hierarchical social structure (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), and submitting to authorities (Altemeyer, 2004; Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009). Moreover, Trump supporters *per se* score especially high on standard measures of authoritarianism obedience (Dunwoody & Plane, 2019; Ludeke, Klitgaard, & Vitriol, 2018; Womick, Rothmund, Azevedo, King, & Jost, 2018). These results seem to support the proposition that Trump supporters are particularly deferential to authorities.

Presumably, the same conclusion that Trump's base is especially loyal toward and supportive of him should be evident in public opinion data. To find out, we conducted a novel analysis of all 1046 Presidential approval polls (each sample was ~1000 Americans) that Gallup (2020), conducted over the past 27 years, beginning in 1993 (President Clinton) and ending in 2020 (President Trump) with the objective of testing whether leader-directed ingroup favoritism, in the form of approval of the ingroup president and disapproval of the outgroup president, was stronger among Republicans than Democrats.

Figure 1 shows that ingroup favoritism has been generally strong with 70+% of Americans displaying ingroup favoritism most of the time. Ingroup favoritism appears to have strengthened over the past quarter century, as the lines generally slope upwards, indicative of the growing Culture War. But did Republicans display more ingroup favoritism than Democrats? The Democrats' (blue) and the Republicans' (red) lines appear to cross over one another repeatedly in

Figure 1 with neither being consistently higher than the other. This appears to not support the predominant social psychological evidence that Republicans display stronger ingroup favoritism than Democrats. A formal analysis (a party × time multilevel model; see Model 1 in Table 1), found a general increase in ingroup favoritism over time (confirming the apparent upward trend) but no effect of the party of the respondents, raising initial questions about whether there might be a disconnect between psychological studies and real world observations on the topic of ideology and ingroup favoritism.

Figure 1. Ingroup favoritism of Democrats and Republicans in their approval and disapproval of U.S. Presidents. The percentage of Republicans that approved of a Republican president was the Republican ingroup favoritism score, and the percentage of Democrats that did not approve of Republican presidents was the Democratic ingroup favoritism score; a symmetrical procedure was used to calculate Republican and Democratic ingroup favoritism scores when the president was a Democrat. Dots represent individual polls and lines are 20-poll moving averages.



Closer inspection of Figure 1 gives the impression that ingroup favoritism might be stronger when the other party controls the presidency (perhaps because the effect of bad is stronger than that good, Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & de Vohs, 2001). For example, Republican non-approval of President Obama was ~90% and stronger than Democratic support (~80%) for President Obama. This impression was borne out in analyses (President × Party interaction; see Model 2). Statistically controlling for this effect, it was Democrats rather than for Republicans that evidenced stronger ingroup favoritism (Controlling for the effects of the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks yielded a similar conclusion; see Model 3).

Table 1. Are Republicans more approving of their co-partisan presidents and disapproving of presidents from the other party than Democrats? Apparently not. Analyses are from multilevel models predicting ingroup favoritism in presidential approval, with random intercepts for each presidency.

Predictor of Ingroup Favoritism	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
(Intercept)	92.46 [87.24, 97.67]***	94.41 [79.68, 109.14]**	89.63 [89.05, 90.21]***
President (1 = Republican, -1 = Democrat)		4.91 [-9.82, 19.64]	0.56 [-0.03, 1.14]†

Party (1 = Republican, -1 = Democrat)	0.28 [-0.53, 1.09]	-2.17 [-2.90, -1.44]***	-0.99 [-1.58, -0.41]**
Time (in years, centered at April 2020)	0.77 [0.60, 0.95]***	1.09 [0.91, 1.27]***	0.48 [0.43, 0.52]***
President × Party		-6.35 [-7.08, -5.62]***	-5.17 [-5.75, -4.59]***
President × Time		0.57 [0.39, 0.75]***	-0.01 [-0.06, 0.03]
Party × Time	-0.05 [-0.11, 0.01]†	-0.32 [-0.37, -0.27]***	-0.07 [-0.12, -0.03]**
President × Party × Time		-0.67 [-0.72, -0.61]***	-0.42 [-0.47, -0.38]***
9-11 (Sept 2001-Nov 2002 = 1; else = 0)			-12.89 [-14.36, -11.41]***
9-11 × Party			23.64 [22.17, 25.11]***

Note. † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The disconnect between (previously reviewed) psychological theory and research that suggests that Trump supporters are particularly authoritarian on the one hand and publicly available data (that points to similarities between the two sides) on the other hand begs for an explanation. One possibility is that the scales used to support the conclusion that Republicans are more biased than Democrats may themselves have been biased by conflating the act of obedience to authority with the act of obeying *conservative* authorities. For example, an item on the Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale asks participants to agree or disagree with “It is always better to trust the judgment of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society” (Altemeyer, 2004, p. 86). This wording is confounding because it leaves open the possibility that conservatives endorse this item more than liberals because conservatives trust the judgment of *any or even all* authorities (an authoritarian tendency) on the one hand, or because of a more generic form of ingroup favoritism manifest as conservatives trusting the judgment of their ideologically congenial authorities, like religious leaders. Some scales appear to avoid this conservative authority confound by not specifying the authority object, and instead asking general questions about behaviors such as obedience in general (Schwartz, 1992). However, an object (e.g., an authority figure) is logically necessary for obedience to happen. Not stating what that object might leave the subject to infer or imagine one; when people do infer an obedience object, they tend to conjure the image of a conservative authority figure (Frimer, Gaucher, & Schaefer, 2014).

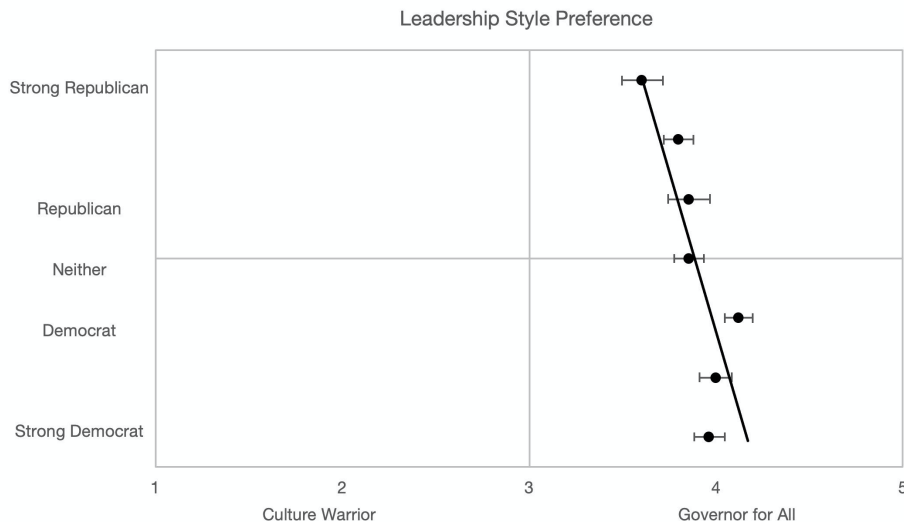
To validly test the idea that conservatives are more obedient than liberals, the object of obedience needs to be specified and the perceived ideology of the authority figure needs to be taken into account. When asked about obeying an ideologically diverse set of authority figures, from civil rights and environmental leaders on the left to religious and military leaders on the right, conservatives displayed more obedience only when the authorities were perceived to hold politically right-wing views (Frimer et al., 2014). When the authority figures were from the political left, people on the political left displayed the elevated authoritarian tendencies. And when the authority figures were perceived to be politically neutral (e.g., an office manager), liberals and conservatives were similarly obedient. And when the authority figures in the RWA scale were revised to be left wing authorities, political liberals endorsed authoritarianism, prejudice, and dogmatism (Conway, Houck, Gornick, & Repke, 2017). These results are consistent with Realistic Group Conflict Theory, which posits that people in general (liberals included) fall in line with the crowd and the leader when groups compete for limited resources like political power (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). Obedience to authority appears to not be limited to, or even particularly elevated on, the political right vis-à-vis the left. Rather, it appears to be a quite pronounced motive on both extremes (Frimer et al., 2014), meaning that obedience to Trump might be a product of the larger Culture War.

Bloodlust. Another form of tribalism that might be at play in extreme Trump support is bloodlust in the form of aggressive desires for attacks on perceived enemies. President Trump has frequently insulted and attacked Democrats, referring to them as “sick people” (*ABC News*; Scott, 2019) and “Crooked Hillary”, having issued more than an insult each day on Twitter alone (Frimer & Skitka, 2018). *The Nation* characterized his verbal attacks on his political adversaries as tantamount to President Trump “throwing red meat to his base”, which conjures the images of Trump satiating the ravenous hunger of a vicious pack of wolves (Abramsky, 2019). *Proposition 1c is that Trump’s supporters tribal instincts cause them to approve of Trump causing harm to their shared (perceived) enemies.*

Scientific evidence: Conservatives score higher than liberals on standard measures of sadism, psychopathy, and general meanness (Lilienfeld, Latzman, Watts, Smith, & Dutton, 2014; Preston & Anestis, 2018) and extreme conservatives score especially high on these traits (Duspara & Greitmeyer, 2017). These trends might appear to align the media’s portrayal of Trump supporters as a pack of ravenous wolves that enjoy a rhetorical bloodbath. But closer inspection points to a different conclusion, that Trump’s supporters do not approve of his attacks in the first place.

Elevated scores on a subclinical measure of psychopathy does not necessarily qualify Trump supporters as psychopaths in the same way that being 1 kg overweight does not qualify a person as obese. To put conservatives’ higher desire for interpersonal conflict in context, Frimer and Skitka (2020; Study 5) asked 1593 Americans from across the political spectrum to indicate whether they prefer their political leaders to be culture warriors (e.g., “fight with opponents”) or be governors for all (e.g., be a “country unifier”). Partisanship correlated with preference in a manner consistent with prior psychopathy and ideology findings, such that Republicans expressed a stronger preference for culture warriors than Democrats did. However, people across the political spectrum, strong Republicans included, preferred governors over warriors (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Self-reported political leadership preference of American Democrats and Republicans in 2019. All items were bipolar, with culture warrior items being low (1) and governor-for-all items being high (5) on the 1-5 scale. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.



Inferences about Trump supporters' self-reported preference for national unity over Culture War might be prone to the limits and biases of self-awareness and qualified by the possibility of socially desirable responding, to which conservatives tend to be particularly prone (Wojcik, et al., 2015). Needed are experimental designs that assess the reactions of Trump supporters to Trump's attacks on his adversaries wherein respondents are not aware of what a scripted response might entail. To that end, Frimer and Skitka (2018) asked self-identified "diehard Trump supporters" to react to a tweet in which President Trump attacked a political rival (e.g., Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama) or a media personality (e.g., Mika Brzezinski, Joe Scarborough) or a less uncivil version of the same. If Trump's diehard base has bloodlust, we should expect them to express greater approval of his uncivil attack than for the more civil rapprochement. But this is not what was found. In several studies, diehard Trump supporters evaluated Trump similarly after reading a civil or uncivil message from him; when they did show a reaction, it was disapproving of Trump's uncivil attack. The rest of the political spectrum, univocally disapproved of Trump's attacks, and this included (non-diehard) Trump supporters. These results were corroborated in longitudinal analyses of public polling data, meaning that they were not an artifact of the artificial lab setting. They also accord with decades of research showing that attack ads backfire upon the attacker---they harm the reputation of the attacker more than that of the attacked (e.g., Carraro & Castelli, 2010; see Lau, Sigelman, & Rovner, 2007 for a review). In sum, research to date seems to disconfirm the notion that Trump's supporters have bloodlust for the perceived political adversaries.

2. The Information Bubble

Along with tribalism, a second common explanation that the media sometimes offers for extreme Trump support implicates the regular consumption of pro-Trump media and opinions. While the number of media sources and the diversity of ideas available to the public have increased over time, people have increasingly consumed content that confirms their attitudes while remaining unexposed to information that might alter or challenge those beliefs. The "Trump Bubble" refers to a set of media outlets, citizens, and social media circles that share content that exclusively promotes and validates President Trump's agenda, policies and behavior. According to *The Financial Times*, the center of the Trump Bubble might be *Fox News* (Bond, 2017), whose pundits tend to support President Trump on most matters. Social media also contributes to the formation and maintenance of information bubbles. Sites like Facebook and Twitter use algorithms to learn from a user's previous behaviors to selectively present more of the same. *Business Insider* proposes that these sorting algorithms help to maintain a relatively narrow ideological cocoon that reinforces asymmetrical, biased information bubbles and echo chambers (Bremmer, 2019).

Even when belief-challenging information enters the conversation, it rarely affects attitudes. This is because people tend to interpret information in a way that confirms their pre-existing opinions. According to *The New Yorker*, this confirmation bias might explain why extreme Trump supporters were undeterred by evidence that challenges their allegiance (e.g., the Access Hollywood scandal; Konikova, 2016).

The information circulating within the Trump bubble may not be fully accurate in part because some of it is false news propagated by Russian bots (Goldman, Barnes, Haberman & Fandos (2020). However, it succeeds in reinforcing the beliefs of those who strongly approve of the current president (*The Washington Post*; Emba, 2016), and may even deepen their extremism (*The Guardian*; Grimes, 2017). Information bubbles on the political right may be particularly impervious to outside information. However, *Huffpost* suggests that both Republicans and

Democrats consume media content that supports and confirms their existing beliefs (Grenoble, 2018). *Proposition 2 is that Trump supporters are in an information bubble filled with pro-Trump opinions, Russian bots, and fake news.*

Scientific evidence: Repeated exposure to statements supporting a singular point of view is sufficient to increase attitude polarization (e.g., Hinsz & David, 1984). The more statements supporting the viewpoint, the more extreme the observer's attitudes are likely to become. Simply put, repetition works. Information bubbles, sustained by social media algorithms that selectively present information that the user previously responded positively to have made information consumption increasingly asymmetric and unbalanced in recent years.

However, AI sorting algorithms are not the only causes of information bubbles. Among the most robust findings in social psychology is the confirmation bias, the tendency for people to seek out and interpret information in a way that supports their existing opinions (e.g., Kunda, 1990). The confirmation bias is a product of a desire to avoid the uncomfortable feeling of cognitive dissonance that results from having one's beliefs challenged (Festinger, 1957; Webb, Change, & Benn, 2013) and from a desire to keep the peace with one's friends and acquaintances, which satisfies the need for a sense of shared sense of reality with close others (Echterhoff, Higgins, & Levine, 2009) and the associated need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The confirmation bias thus scratches a defensive itch and provides clarity in an oft-confusing world. The scientific record strongly and consistently supports the notion that people tend to selectively expose themselves to people and information that they expect will reaffirm their existing beliefs (e.g., Bakshy, Messing, & Adamic, 2015; Barberá, Jost, Nagler, Tucker, & Bonneau, 2015; Frimer, Skitka, & Motyl, 2017; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2008).

Theories for the existence of the bias set up predictions that Trump supporters might be particularly prone to the confirmation bias insofar as conservatives (e.g., Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003) and people with extreme political views (Greenberg & Jonas, 2003; Hogg, 2007; van Prooijen & Krowel, 2019) are thought to feel particularly threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity. The evidence is mixed regarding whether conservatives/Republicans are more prone to selectively exposing themselves to congenial information than are liberals, and a number of studies leave open alternative explanations for their findings. For instance, a study of media consumption of the 1940 U.S. Presidential election found that Republicans consumed more belief-confirming political information than did Democrats (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944). However, the Republican party outspent the Democrats in that election by a margin of 2:1 in that election (Overack, 1941), making pro-Republican information more available in general. Taking into account this asymmetric amount of slanted information, Sears and Freedman (1967) concluded that Republicans were less prone to selective exposure than Democrats. More recent lab studies found that conservatives were more likely to avoid interactions with liberals than vice versa (Nam, Jost, & van Bavel, 2013), however this study failed to replicate (Brandt & Crawford, 2013). And a series of experiments found strong and consistent evidence that selective exposure motivation is strong for both liberals and conservatives, and to a similar degree (Frimer et al., 2017). A meta-analysis of a variety of forms of political biases found similarly strong biases among liberals and conservatives (Ditto et al. 2019).

Analyses of the networks and behaviors of people on social media sites have also produced mixed results. Some studies suggest that conservatives' bubbles are less permeable than liberals'. For instance, on Twitter, conservatives appear to be less likely to retweet liberals' tweets than vice versa (Barberá, Jost, Nagler, Tucker, & Bonneau, 2015) and conservatives and

extremists have more ideologically congenial social networks on Twitter than liberals and moderates, respectively (Boutyline & Willer, 2017). Yet another study on social media found that conservatives' bubbles were more permeable than liberals': conservatives were found to be more likely to click on and share cross-cutting Facebook posts than were liberals (Bakshy, Messing, & Adamic, 2015).

Together, the evidence probably favors the proposition that Trump supporters are in an ideologically homogenous and impermeable information bubble, a bubble that is of comparable impermeability and homogeneity as the bubble on the extreme political left. However, it remains possible that other asymmetries make the Trump bubble particularly biased. Information within each bubble might be different in quality, for example if Russian bots were to have infiltrated the Trump bubble, spreading false news stories with the intent of accentuating divisions within the U.S. False news spreads much faster on social media than factual information (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018), making false news particularly potent. That said, the available evidence is that Russian bots are not (yet) as efficacious as commonly thought. An analysis of the political attitudes of 1239 Democrats and Republicans on Twitter found that attitudes did not change after interacting with Russian bots (Bail et al., 2020).

In sum, the available evidence supports the idea that Trump supporters are in an information bubble, that the bubble is probably sealed tighter than the information bubbles of political moderates, and that the information bubble itself helps drive up and sustain extreme beliefs. However, the evidence is too mixed to yield any firm conclusions about whether the Trump bubble is more ideologically uniform than information bubbles on the far left.

3. Material Self-interest

Having examined and found some support for tribalism and information bubbles explaining extreme Trump support, we now consider what is perhaps a more rational explanation: self-interest. Four in five Americans are living paycheck to paycheck (*The Guardian*; Reich, 2019). According to sources such as *USA Today*, *Business Insider* and *CNBC*, the costs of healthcare, education, childcare, housing and food are increasing more quickly than are wages in the United States (Leonhardt, 2019; Hoffower, 2019; Long, 2018; Rapier, 2019; Steinour, 2019). Factories are shutting down and moving overseas, and with them the well-paying manufacturing jobs that previously gave many Americans a sense of purpose and pride, and a decent living (*Business Insider*; McEnery, 2011). Employment in manufacturing has declined 27% since 2000 (*Quartz*; Guilford, 2018), those Americans who lost their well-paying factory jobs that came with benefits subsequently sought work in retail, healthcare and construction (*CNN Business*; Long, 2016). The result of these economic changes is rising anxiety and a general sense of desperation (*Detroit Free Press*; Howard, 2019). Downtrodden people may believe that Trump, who has promised to improve Americans' financial predicament, will alleviate their economic hardship; that is, they support him out of material self-interest.

According to some media accounts, President Trump seems to have taken care of his supporters. His support for policies that directly benefit conservative Americans may bolster his support amongst Republicans (*The Washington Post*; Olorunnipa & Parker, 2019). Many of Trump's policies such as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the Market Facilitation Program (farmer subsidies) have been found to benefit his base more so than his opponents. For instance, the *New York Times* reports that the tax cuts President Trump signed into law in 2017 disproportionately benefited white Americans over Latino and African Americans (Tankersley, 2018). President Trump's bailout program for American farmers overwhelmingly benefitted white farmers while simultaneously harming small farms and racial minorities (*AG Mag*; Carr, 2019). Economic

anxieties have made unconventional economic policies, including protectionism, politically viable. According to *The Conversation* (Bencherki & Basque, 2018) Trump supporters sense that an ever-changing world has left them behind has been sufficiently strong for them to abandon a long-standing preference for free trade, and instead embrace protectionist tariffs and trade wars. In sum, President Trump's policies may have prioritized the interests of his political base (*The Washington Post*; Jan, 2017).

The Wall Street Journal states that Trump's supporters believe that he is capable of ushering in a new era of economic prosperity (Zitner, 2016). Indeed, President Trump promised and delivered a major bill that reduced taxes; the spirit of the bill struck a chord with his supporters (*The Washington Post*, Long, 2017) even though it did little in the end to lower most of their tax burdens (*The Guardian*; Cary & Holmes, 2019). This observation makes salient the distinction between *actual* self-interest and *perceived* self-interest. Trump supporters might support him because they think they are better off for it. *Proposition 3 is that Trump's support is rooted in perceived material self-interest.*

Scientific evidence: The literature on “pocketbook voting”, that is, the tendency to vote for and support candidates and policies that maximize one's own material self-interests, is mixed and contentious, with some scholars suggesting that pocketbook voting occurs and others suggesting it might not. Our review of the literature finds support for the occurrence of a particular kind of pocketbook voting, namely that people tend to favor candidates and policies that they believe will advance their individual self-interests.

Early analyses seemed to support the notion that apparent pocketbook voting is an epiphenomenon, propped up by unrelated psychological processes. For example, analyses of survey data and experimental studies found that correlations between personal finances and political attitudes were found *only* when items measuring finances and attitudes were located in close proximity to one another within a survey (Sears & Lau, 1983). People might have voiced opposition toward a candidate as form of scapegoating their personal financial distress when their reasons for opposition were actually based in other factors. However, Lewis-Becker (1985) evaluated Michigan CPS-SRC election surveys and found no support for the item-proximity moderator effect. Lau, Sears & Jessor (1990) then refined the conditions under which item proximity is likely to produce an apparent pocketbook voting effect. Together, these studies seem to support the idea that it possible to socially prime a relationship between pocketbook concerns and political attitudes.

The primed connection between personal finances and political decision making may not be limited to surveys and questionnaires but might also extend to the real political world. Politicians sometimes raise the psychological salience of personal finances in political decision making, which could induce pocketbook voting. For example, Ronald Reagan successfully induced more externalized attribution for voters' financial improvement in his “Good Morning America” campaign (Beschloss, 2016) and subsequently produced a strong economic self-interest vote for himself in 1984 (Lau et al., 1990). President Trump has drawn from the same playbook by explicitly linking his presidency to the value of Americans' pensions:

I won the election, the markets went up thousands of points, things started happening. If, for some reason, I were not to have won the election, these markets would have crashed. That will happen even more so in 2020. You have no choice but to vote for me, because your 401(k), everything is going to be down the tubes. (Murray, 2019).

Whether rhetorical connections between a particular candidate and material self-interest boost or sustain support for President Trump remains to be tested.

These earlier studies examined the connection between the personal finances of Americans and general and political choices. However, the politics of material self-interests of different demographic groups might diverge. For instance, the self-interest of low SES racial minorities might be aligned with the political left whereas the self-interest of wealthy white males might be aligned with the political right. It is therefore unclear whether these early studies captured the phenomenon of pocketbook voting *per se*. More recent research carefully connected respondents' pocketbook interests to particular voting options, for example by studying demographics (e.g., parents) in relation to parties with clear policies that would help or hinder those groups (Elinder, Jordahl & Poutvaara, 2015). This new wave of pocketbook voting studies found relatively consistent support for a particular form pocketbook voting—future-oriented or prospective pocketbook voting. That is, people seem to support for candidates that they think *will* benefit them financially, in the future. This new wave also found weaker but mixed support for past-oriented or retrospective pocketbook voting, a concept captured by a famous question posed by then-candidate Ronald Reagan, “Are you better off today than you were four years ago?” Some studies found support for retrospective pocketbook voting (Tilley et al.; 2018) whereas others did not (Elinder et al. 2015; Mutz, 2018)

The existing body of pocketbook voting literature is solely based on correlational and observational studies, leaving open the possibility that unidentified third variables confound or suppress observed effects. To our knowledge, no studies have experimentally manipulated the perception that a particular candidate will benefit the respondent financially and then observed whether such a manipulation altered level of support. In sum, it remains unclear whether and to what degree extreme Trump support is rooted in perceived material self-interest.

Conclusion

Our review of Trump support, in both its more tentative and extreme forms, finds that all three major psychological claims advanced in the media were consistent with the available psychological evidence. Extreme Trump support appears to be rooted in tribalism, information bubbles, and perceived material self-interest. In general, the more nefarious theories (e.g., racism, Russian bots, bloodlust) were less supported and the more banal ones (e.g., information bubbles, self-interest) were more supported. Moreover, several of the efficacious explanations generalized to extreme Trump opponents meaning that they might be a byproduct of a decades long and escalating Culture War. In this way, Donald Trump's presidency is not only stoking the Culture War, but also a product of it. Focusing attention on ways to reduce intergroup conflict might be a fruitful way of preventing the emergence of future would-be autocrats and thereby preserving democracy.

References

- Abramsky, S. (2019, November 19). Trump Wants to Treat Undocumented Migrants like Enemy Combatants. *The Nation*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/trump-immigration-military-terrorism/>
- Arce, J. (2019, August 6). Trump's Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric Was Never About Legality — It Was About Our Brown Skin. *TIME*. Retrieved from <https://time.com/5645501/trump-anti-immigration-rhetoric-racism/>
- Ashok, V., Kuziemko, I., & Washington, E. (2015). *Support for redistribution in an age of rising inequality: New stylized facts and some tentative explanations*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3386/w21529>

- Azarian, B. (2017, December 31). An Analysis of Trump Supporters has Identified 5 Key Traits. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/mind-in-the-machine/201712/analysis-trump-supporters-has-identified-5-key-traits>
- Barstow, B., Craig D., and Buettner, R. (2018, October 2). Trump Engaged in Suspect Tax Schemes as He Reaped Riches From His Father. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/10/02/us/politics/donald-trump-tax-schemes-fred-trump.html>
- Benen, S. (2018, October 18). Republican voters see illegal immigration as the nation's #1 issue. *MSNBC*. Retrieved from <http://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/republican-voters-see-illegal-immigration-the-nations-1-issue>
- Bernstein, J. (2016). Wages in the United States: Trends, explanations, and solutions. In I. Kirsch & H. Brown (Eds.), *The dynamics of opportunity in America* (pp. 167–195). New York, NY: Springer. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-25991-8_6
- Beschloss, M. (2016, May 7). The Ad That Helped Reagan Sell Good Times to an Uncertain Nation. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/business/the-ad-that-helped-reagan-sell-good-times-to-an-uncertain-nation.html>
- Blake, A. (2015, April 10). The 10 Most Loyal Demographic Groups for Republicans and Democrats. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/04/08/the-10-most-loyal-demographic-groups-for-republicans-and-democrats/>
- Bond, S. (2017, January 18). Trump supporters turn to Fox News first, says survey. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/01bb80b8-dd9e-11e6-9d7c-be108f1c1dce>
- Brandt, M. & Crawford, J. (2019). Worldview Conflict and Prejudice. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. 0065-2601. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.aesp.2019.09.002>
- Bremmer, I. (2019, January 11) America is more politically divided than ever, and the government shutdown only makes that more apparent. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/america-divided-politics-than-ever-democrats-republicans-government-2019-1>
- Brown, R. L., & Richman, J. A. (2012). Sex differences in mediating and moderating processes linking economic stressors, psychological distress, and drinking. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 73(5), 811–819. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.15288/jsad.2012.73.811>
- Carraro, L., Castelli, L., & Bump, P. (2019, August 13). It's the mainstream anti-immigration rhetoric, not the extreme, that's shaping American politics. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/08/13/its-mainstream-anti-immigration-rhetoric-not-extreme-thats-shaping-american-politics/>
- Burns, A. (2015, June 16). Donald Trump flaunts wealth in presidential bid. *The Boston Globe*. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/politics/2015/06/16/trump-enters-gop-race-for-president/8EKQm1hUu9s9LnAV8O3t2M/story.html>
- Carr, J. (2019, July 11). Trump's Farm Bailout Program Continues USDA's Racist Legacy. *AG Mag*. Retrieved from <https://www.ewg.org/agmag/2019/07/trump-s-farm-bailout-program-continues-usda-s-racist-legacy>

- Cary, P. & Holmes, A. (2019, April 30). Workers Barely benefited from Trump's sweeping tax cut, investigation shows. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/apr/30/trump-tax-cut-law-investigation-worker-benefits>
- Casselman, B., and Tankersley, J. (2019, August 22nd). Trump Acclaims Economy, but Voters Are Anxious Amid Recession Talk. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/22/business/economy/economics-survey-trump.html>
- Chambers, J. R., & Melnyk, D. (2006). Why Do I Hate Thee? Conflict Misperceptions and Intergroup Mistrust. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(10), 1295–1311. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0146167206289979>
- Chambers, J. R., Schlenker, B. R., & Collisson, B. (2013). Ideology and prejudice: The role of value conflicts. *Psychological Science*, 24(2), 140–149. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0956797612447820>
- Cheng, J. T., Tracy, J. L., Foulsham, T., Kingstone, A., & Henrich, J. (2013). Two ways to the top: Evidence that dominance and prestige are distinct yet viable avenues to social rank and influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 104(1), 103–125. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/a0030398>
- Clement, S., & Balz, D. (2019, September 9). Partisan divisions over immigration widen after a year of turmoil at border. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/partisan-divisions-over-immigration-widen-after-a-year-of-turmoil-at-border/2019/09/09/2b4e6482-cfdf-11e9-8c1c-7c8ee785b855_story.html
- CNN. (2016, November 23). Exit Polls. *CNN*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/election/2016/results/exit-polls>
- Cole, L. N. (2019, June 29). Meet the People Behind Donald Trump's Popularity. *ThoughtCo*. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/meet-the-people-behind-donald-trumps-popularity-4068073>
- Colvin, C. R., Block, J., & Funder, D. C. (1995). Overly positive self-evaluations and personality: Negative implications for mental health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(6), 1152–1162. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.6.1152>
- Conway, I. L. G., Houck, S. C., Gornick, L. J., & Repke, M. A. (2017). Finding the Loch Ness Monster: Left-Wing Authoritarianism in the United States. *Political Psychology*, 39(5), 1049–1067. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/pops.12470>
- Drezner, D. W. (2018, August 6). How Donald Trump is Normal and Abnormal. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2018/08/06/how-donald-trump-is-normal-and-abnormal/>
- Duspara, B., & Greitemeyer, T. (2017). The impact of dark tetrad traits on political orientation and extremism: an analysis in the course of a presidential election. *Heliyon*, 3(10), e00425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2017.e00425>
- Emba, C. (2016, July 14). Confirmed: Echo chambers exist on social media. So what do we do about them? *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2016/07/14/confirmed-echo-chambers-exist-on-social-media-but-what-can-we-do-about-them/>
- Farenthold, D. (2016, October 8). Trump recorded having extremely lewd conversation about women in 2005. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-recorded-having-extremely-lewd-conversation-about-women-in-2005/2016/10/07/3b9ce776-8cb4-11e6-bf8a-3d26847eed4_story.html

- Frimer, J. A., & Skitka, L. J. (2018). The Montagu Principle: Incivility decreases politicians' public approval, even with their political base. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 115*(5), 845–866. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/pspi0000140.supp> (Supplemental)
- Frimer, J. A., & Skitka, L. J. (2020). Americans hold their political leaders to a higher discursive standard than rank-and-file co-partisans. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 86*, N.PAG. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2019.103907>
- Gabbat, A. (2019, May 21). I get called a sell-out all the time' Trump's voters of colour speak out. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/may/21/trump-voters-of-colour-speak-out-rally>
- Gallup. (2020). Presidential Approval Ratings – Donald Trump. *Gallup*. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/203198/presidential-approval-ratings-donald-trump.aspx>
- Gilens, M. (1999). *Why Americans hate welfare: Race, media, and the politics of antipoverty policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226293660.001.0001>
- Goldman, A., Barnes, J. E., Haberman, M., & Fandos, N. (2020, February 25). Lawmakers are Warned that Russia Is Meddling to Re-elect Trump. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/us/politics/russian-interference-trump-democrats.html>
- Graetz, M. J., & Shapiro, I. (2005). *Death by a thousand cuts: The fight over taxing inherited wealth*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Graham, D (2019, August 20). Trump's Economic Anxiety. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/08/trumps-economic-anxiety/596404/>
- Green, E (2017, September 10). It Was Cultural Anxiety That Drove White, Working-Class Voters to Trump. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/white-working-class-trump-cultural-anxiety/525771/>
- Grenoble, R. (2018, February 6). Trump Supporters Consume And Share The Most Fake News, Oxford Study Finds. *Huffpost*. Retrieved from https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/trump-supporters-read-share-fake-news_n_5a7a25f9e4b06505b4e8f07d?ri18n=true
- Grimes, D. (2017, December 4). Echo chambers are dangerous- we must try to break free of our online bubbles. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2017/dec/04/echo-chambers-are-dangerous-we-must-try-to-break-free-of-our-online-bubbles>
- Guilford, G. (2018, May 3). The epic mistake about manufacturing that cost Americans millions of jobs. *Quartz*. Retrieved from <https://qz.com/1269172/the-epic-mistake-about-manufacturing-thats-cost-americans-millions-of-jobs/>
- Halevy, N., Chou, E. Y., Cohen, T. R., & Livingston, R. W. (2012). Status Conferral in Intergroup Social Dilemmas: Behavioral Antecedents and Consequences of Prestige and Dominance. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 102*(2), 351–366. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/a0025515>

- Hanson, V. D. (2019, June 30). What progressives should know about Trump voters. *CNN*. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/03/19/opinions/what-progressives-should-know-about-trump-voters-hanson/index.html>
- Hinsz, V. B., & Davis, J. H. (1984). Persuasive Arguments Theory, Group Polarization, and Choice Shifts. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 10(2), 260–268. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167284102012>
- Hirschfield-David, J., & Baker, P. (2019, January 5). How the Border Wall is Boxing Trump in. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/05/us/politics/donald-trump-border-wall.html>
- Hoffower, H. (2019, June 26). College is more expensive than it's ever been, and the 5 reasons why suggest it's only going to get worse. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/why-is-college-so-expensive-2018-4>
- Hogan Assessments. (2018, March 19). Study Shows Shared Personal Values a Better Predictor of Trump Supporters Than Political Attitudes. *Hogan Assessments*. <https://www.hoganassessments.com/study-shows-shared-personal-values-better-predictor-trump-supporters-political-attitudes>
- Howard, P. (2019, October 23). Waiting for ratification, UAW strikers reflect America's anxiety about overall economy. *Detroit Free Press*. Retrieved from <https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2019/10/23/gm-strike-uaw-us-economy/4056332002/>
- Jones, J. M. (2019, December 21). Trump Approval More Stable Than Approval for Prior Presidents. *Gallup*. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/245567/trump-approval-stable-approval-prior-presidents.aspx>
- Jost, J. T., Banaji, M. R., & Nosek, B. A. (2004). A decade of system justification theory: Accumulated evidence of conscious and unconscious bolstering of the status quo. *Political Psychology*, 25, 881–919. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2004.00402.x>
- Jost, J. T., Langer, M., Badaan, V., Azevedo, F., Etchezahar, E., Ungaretti, J., & Hennes, E. P. (2017). Ideology and the limits of self-interest: System justification motivation and conservative advantages in mass politics. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, 3(3), e1–e26. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/tps0000127>
- Kabaservice, J. (2018, November 9). Moderate Republicans aren't dead. They're hiding in plain sight. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/moderate-republicans-arent-dead-theyre-hiding-in-plain-sight/2018/11/09/268c7b1c-e365-11e8-ab2c-b31dcd53ca6b_story.html
- Kelly, N. J., & Enns, P. K. (2010). Inequality and the dynamics of public opinion: The self-reinforcing link between economic inequality and mass preferences. *American Journal of Political Science*, 54, 855–870. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00472.x>
- Khazan, O. (2018, April 23). People voted for Trump because they were anxious, not poor. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/04/existential-anxiety-not-poverty-motivates-trump-support/558674/>
- Konokova, M. (2016, December 25). The psychological research that explains helps the election. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-psychological-research-that-helps-explain-the-election>

- Landau, M. J., Kay, A. C., & Whitson, J. A. (2015). Compensatory control and the appeal of a structured world. *Psychological Bulletin*, 141(3), 694–722. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/a0038703>
- Leonhardt, M. (2019, October 9). Americans spend twice as much on healthcare as they did in the 1980s. *CNBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/09/americans-spend-twice-as-much-on-health-care-today-as-in-the-1980s.html>
- Lilienfeld, S. O., Litzman, R. D., Watts, A. L., Smith, S. F., & Dutton, K. (2014). Correlates of psychopathic personality traits in everyday life: Results from a large community survey. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5.
- Long, H. (2016, March 29). U.S. has lost 5 million manufacturing jobs since 2000. *CNN Business*. Retrieved from <https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/index.html>
- Long, H. (2017, December 14). Trump chose five families to show how the tax bill benefits them. Their stories show the reality is complicated. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/12/14/trump-chose-five-families-to-show-how-the-tax-bill-benefits-them-their-stories-show-the-reality-is-complicated/>
- Long, H. (2018, February 10). In U.S., wage growth is being wiped out entirely by inflation. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/08/10/america-wage-growth-is-getting-wiped-out-entirely-by-inflation/>
- Luttig, M. (2013). The structure of inequality and Americans' attitudes toward redistribution. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 77, 811–821. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/poq/nft025>
- Maner, J. K., & Case, C. R. (2016). Dominance and prestige: Dual strategies for navigating social hierarchies. In J. M. Olson & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*. (Vol. 54, pp. 129–180). Elsevier Academic Press.
- McCarthy, N. (2017, July 17). Why People Love and Hate Trump. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2017/07/17/why-people-love-and-hate-trump-infographic/#1eaec5a54adc>
- McDonald, J., Karol, D., & Mason, L. (2019, January 17). Many Voters Think Trump's A Self-Made Man. What Happens When You Tell Them Otherwise? *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/01/17/many-voters-think-trumps-a-self-made-man-what-happens-when-you-tell-them-otherwise-224019>
- McEnery, T. (2011, February 9). 10 Iconic American Factories That Have Closed In The Past Two Years. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/major-iconic-factory-closings-2008-2011-2>
- Meertens, R. W., & Pettigrew, T. F. (1997). Is subtle prejudice really prejudice. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 61(1), 54–71. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1086/297786>
- Miller, J. D., Hoffman, B. J., Gaughan, E. T., Gentile, B., Maples, J., & Campbell, W. K. (2011). Grandiose and vulnerable narcissism: A nomological network analysis. *Journal of Personality*, 79(5), 1013–1042. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2010.00711.x>
- Murray, S. (2019, August 15). 'You have no choice but to vote for me,' Trump tells N.H. rally. *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/08/15/trump-new-hampshire-rally-manchester-1466285>
- Olorunnipa, T & Parker, A. (2019, July 27). Trump campaign sees political advantage in a divisive appeal to working-class white voters. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-campaign-sees-political-advantage-in-a-divisive-appeal-to-working-class-white-voters/2019/07/26/39234f00-ae11-11e9-8e77-03b30bc29f64_story.html
- Paulhus, D. L. (1998). Interpersonal and intrapsychic adaptiveness of trait self-enhancement: A mixed blessing? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(5), 1197–1208. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/0022-3514.74.5.1197>
- Pearce, M. (2019, October 23). As Trump seeks reelection, immigrant voters stand in his path. *The L.A Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2019-10-23/trump-attacks-immigrants-new-naturalized-citizen-voter-registration>
- Pew Research Center (2019, August 9). An examination of the 2016 electorate, based on validated voters. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <https://www.people-press.org/2018/08/09/an-examination-of-the-2016-electorate-based-on-validated-voters/>
- Pew Research Center, (2019, October 10). “Partisan Antipathy: More Intense, More Personal” . *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <https://www.people-press.org/2019/10/10/partisan-antipathy-more-intense-more-personal>
- Rapier, G. (2018, May 18). Housing prices are soaring in America — here's where they've climbed the most since the housing crisis. *Markets, Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/how-americas-home-prices-have-fared-since-the-housing-crisis-2018-5-1024994866>
- Reich, R. (2019, May 19). The Trump economy is hurting most Americans. Statistics won't fool voters. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/19/trump-economy-americans-voters-unemployment>
- Rentzsch, K., & Gebauer, J. E. (2019). On the popularity of agentic and communal narcissists: The tit-for-tat hypothesis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 45(9), 1365–1377. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0146167218824359>
- Rushe, D. (2015, June 16). 'I'm really rich': Donald Trump claims \$9bn fortune during campaign launch. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/16/donald-trump-reveals-net-worth-presidential-campaign-launch>
- Schlenker, B. R., Chambers, J. R., & Le, B. M. (2012). Conservatives are happier than liberals, but why? Political ideology, personality, and life satisfaction. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 46(2), 127–146. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2011.12.009>
- Scott, E. (2019, May 10). For Trump and some of his supporters, violence against immigrants appears totally acceptable. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/10/trump-some-his-supporters-violence-against-immigrants-appears-totally-acceptable/>
- Scott, R. (2019, March 28). President Donald Trump calls Democrats 'sick people,' takes a victory lap on Mueller report during rally in Michigan. *ABC News*. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/president-donald-trump-hold-campaign-rally-michigan-1st/story?id=61987526>
- Sears, D. O., & Henry, P. J. (2003). The Origins of Symbolic Racism. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 85(2), 259–275. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.2.259>

- Seib, F, J (2017, March 13). The Economic Anxieties That Motivate Donald Trump Loyalists. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-economic-anxieties-that-motivate-donald-trump-loyalists-1489420637>
- Sonmez, V. (2018, November 26). Trump says U.S. agents ‘had to use’ tear gas against migrants at the border. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-says-us-agents-had-to-use-tear-gas-against-migrants-at-border/2018/11/26/a2b66a00-f1ba-11e8-80d0-f7e1948d55f4_story.html
- Steinour, H. (2019, February 22). The soaring cost of US child care, in 5 charts. *Quad-City Times*. Retrieved from https://qctimes.com/lifestyles/parenting/the-soaring-cost-of-us-child-care-in-charts/article_88234ec1-7c23-55c8-b86b-7ce3e42f34c7.html
- Tankersley, J. (2018, October 11). White Americans Gain the Most From Trump’s Tax Cuts, a Report Finds. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/11/business/trump-tax-cuts-white-americans.html>
- Taub, A. (2016, March 1). The rise of American authoritarianism. *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>
- Terrizzi, J. A., Shook, N. J., & Ventis, W. L. (2010). Disgust: A predictor of social conservatism and prejudicial attitudes toward homosexuals. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 49(6), 587–592. <https://doi-org.uwinnipeg.idm.oclc.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.05.024>
- Vives, R., & Castillo, A. (2019, October 9). Trump’s policies, as well as anti-immigrant violence, disturbed these Latinos. Now they’re taking action. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-10-09/trump-immigration-violence-latinos>
- Wike, R., Poushter, J., Fetterolf, J., Schumacher, S., (2020, January 8). Trump Ratings Remain Low Around Globe, While Views of U.S Stay Mostly Favorable. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/01/08/trump-ratings-remain-low-around-globe-while-views-of-u-s-stay-mostly-favorable/>
- Zitner, A. (2016, May 26). Donald Trump Viewed as Change Agent, Economic Steward. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2016/05/26/donald-trump-viewed-as-change-agent-economic-steward/>