

Divided Dems, United Reps: Party strategy and within-party variation in immigration attitudes

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Abstract. In an era of high partisanship, salient issues have the potential to become flashpoints for both parties. Why, then, do parties not emphasize certain hot-button issues symmetrically? This paper argues that in order to answer this question, social scientists must study attitudes at three levels: (1) the aggregate, (2) between-party, and (3) within-party. Each level provides necessary information for understanding party strategy toward issues and the broader consequences of public opinion for institutional politics. Using several waves of ANES data between 1992 and 2016, I apply this analytic strategy to immigration—one of the most salient issues in U.S. and European politics—to understand why Democrats, unlike Republicans, have not touted immigration as a central issue of the party. The results suggest that Democrats may be reluctant to run on immigration because substantial intra-party disagreement make this strategy too risky; on the other hand, touting immigration poses little risk to a uniform Republican party and provides much upside in their potential to “wedge” a divided Democratic party. I conclude by discussing the consequences of within-party variation for our understanding of party coalitions and electoral strategy.

The literature on the increased polarization of public attitudes has largely focused on trends at the aggregate and between-party levels (e.g., DellaPosta 2020; Brooks and Manza 2013; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; DiMaggio et al. 1996; McCarty et al. 2008; Abramowitz 2013; Layman et al. 2006). Population-level attitudinal change and partisan sorting have important implications for institutional politics. For instance, trends at each of these levels suggest certain party strategies on particular issues: If issue A is trending with increased favorability in the aggregate, we might expect both Democrats and Republicans to champion positions in line with growing public support for issue A; if issue A has become increasingly sorted along partisan lines, then we would expect both parties to make this issue a flash point in campaigns (De Sio and Weber 2014). Given increased partisan sorting across all issue domains (Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; McCarty et al. 2008; Abramowitz 2013; Layman et al. 2006)), in principle, any issue could become salient for both parties. Why, then, do some issues not become equally touted by both parties in an era of high partisanship?

I argue here that in order to fully understand how issues play out in the political arena and how parties strategize on those issues, social scientists must study attitudinal trends at three levels: 1) the aggregate, 2) between political parties, and 3) *within parties*. Each

level provides necessary information for effectively understanding party strategies. While the existing literature on public attitudes and partisanship has largely focused on the first two levels, I emphasize the importance of the third level, within-party, here. Within-party variation has several implications for our understanding of institutional politics and, more specifically, issue ownership by parties. For example, if party members are clearly divided on an issue, it may be difficult for the party to establish a clear position, and the party may shy away from making said issue a focal point in campaigns; in contrast, substantial partisan uniformity on an issue allows parties to articulate clear positions in campaigns, capturing the support of party members and potential defectors of other parties in elections (Hillygus and Shields 2009). Further, clear divides within a party on a politically salient issue may serve as a harbinger of future realignment.

There has been arguably no greater hot-button issue than immigration in recent U.S. elections, as well as in Western European politics (Dennison and Geddes 2019). Not only is immigration important for its clear policy implications, but it has been the main issue for radical right parties (Dennison and Geddes 2019; Dahlström and Sundell 2012). Given immigration’s political salience, we would expect both Democrats and Republicans to champion clear positions on it and make it a focal point of their respective platforms. While Republicans have effectively incorporated immigration into the center of their party’s platform in recent elections (e.g., Donald Trump ran, and in part won, on an explicit anti-immigrant platform in his 2016 election campaign (Bonikowski et al. 2019; Sides et al. 2018; Lamont et al. 2017), Democrats have largely shied away from the issue. Why have Democrats, unlike Republicans, not seized on immigration?

To answer this question, I employ the analytical framework outlined above. Using several waves of American National Elections Studies (ANES) data, I evaluate trends in immigration attitudes at three levels: aggregate, between-party, and within-party. While immigration attitudes have become slightly more pro-immigration over the last several decades, there has been drastic party polarization on this issue since 2008, with Democrats becoming more pro-immigration and Republicans becoming increasingly anti-immigration. These trends at the aggregate and between-party levels suggest that immigration should be an issue taken up by both parties. Why then have Democrats not championed immigration? My analysis of within-party heterogeneity demonstrates that while the parties have clearly grown apart, the attitudes within the parties have not trended uniformly. Indeed, while Democrats have become more pro-immigration over the last several years, they have also grown more variable on this issue. A decomposition of the within-party trends shows the growing divide among Democrats can be explained by emergent ideological and partisan cleavages, with liberals and “strong” Democrats largely driving the party’s pro-immigration trends. In contrast, Republicans have become more anti-immigration and consistently so. While there were previously significant differences among Republicans along regional, religious, and racial lines, these difference have collapsed, and the result is a largely uniform Republican party on immigration. The results suggest that the Democratic party has not been able to champion immigration as a central party position because considerable within-party variation exists on this issue, making a strong emphasis on immigration risky. Conversely, Republicans have been able to run and win on immigration because they have become a party of increasingly consistent and strong anti-immigration sentiment.

The contribution of this paper is both substantive and methodological. Substantively, I

put forth a research program that emphasizes studying attitudes at multiple levels, giving researchers the ability to effectively understand how parties will strategize around certain issues and how those issues will play out in the political arena. Aggregate and between-party trends cannot explain why some issues become flash points for both parties and some issues do not show symmetry, as is the case with immigration—the polarization literature suggests that both parties will take up these issues. Methodologically, in measuring the sources of within-party variation, I develop a measure called *weighted κ'* (a reconfigured version of the kappa measure used by Manza and Brooks [1999] and others). This measure serves as a simple and interpretable measure of the dispersion among several categories in a variable of interest, while controlling for the sizes of each category. It is ideal for plotting over-time trends and making comparisons across several outcomes. The analytical approach and methodological tools supplied herein could be applied to any attitudinal outcome of interest. More broadly, this paper aims to make strides in the incorporation of institutional politics and political parties into sociology (Mudge and Chen 2014), topics largely understudied by political sociologists in recent decades.

Background

Political polarization and partisan sorting

There is a large and growing literature on political polarization—growing divides between Democrats and Republicans—in the United States and its various causes and effects (e.g., DellaPosta 2020; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Brooks and Manza 2013; McCarty et al. 2008; Bonikowski et al. 2019; Abramowitz 2013; Layman et al. 2006; DiMaggio et al. 1996). While “polarization” in the U.S. has become an oft-discussed topic in social science and public discourse, it is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, parties have always been deeply divided on key issues. What is new, however, is the multitude of issues on which the parties disagree; Democrats and Republicans have become increasingly divided along all major issue domains, such as race, culture, social welfare (Layman et al. 2006), and even foreign policy (Berinsky 2009).

Using roll-call voting records and data, political scientists have documented growing polarization among politicians at both the national (McCarty et al. 2009) and state levels (Shor and McCarty 2011). Party activists have also been shown to be increasingly polarized along ideological lines. While there is consensus on polarization among political elites, there is more disagreement on whether or not the electorate is polarizing (Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Fiorina and Abrams 2009; Hare et al. 2015; Noel 2013; DiMaggio et al. 1996); a more accurate description of what has happened is that the electorate has become better *sorted* along ideological lines (DellaPosta 2020; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; Fiorina and Abrams 2009; Abramowitz and Saunders 1998); that is, liberal Americans have increasingly aligned with the Democratic party and conservative Americans have increasingly aligned with the Republican party. So, rather than there being an ideological shift where Democrats are becoming more liberal and Republicans are becoming more conservative, liberals and conservatives have increasingly selected into their respective parties, resulting in a more liberal Democratic party and a more conservative Republican party.

While pundits often point to more recent phenomena (e.g., the rise of partisan media; the Tea-Party movement), evidence suggests that the traces of the current levels of polarization go back to the 1970s and are likely the result of larger historical processes, stemming from events such as the post-Civil Rights realignment and increased economic inequality (McCarty et al. 2008). Furthermore, parties developed more distinct ideologies during this same period, giving Americans a clearer basis on which to select their political affiliation based on ideology (Noel 2013).

The current trends in polarization and partisan sorting have clear consequences for democratic processes. For example, polarization among politicians leads to lower capacity to govern, lower productivity in legislation, and slower judicial appointments (Layman et al. 2006). Furthermore, a polarized electorate has created an environment in which Americans have increasingly prejudiced views of affiliates of the opposing party—Democrats are increasingly likely to villainize Republicans and vice versa (Mason 2015).

Partisan sorting has further implications for our understanding of parties' strategies in campaigns. Given polarization across all issue domains, there is the potential for virtually any issue to become a flash point for parties, serving as an effective, low-risk means of rallying their bases (De Sio and Weber 2014). Thus, in an era of high partisanship, we would expect salient issues to become equally touted by each party. Why, then, do some salient issues not receive symmetrical emphasis by parties in campaigns? One possible explanation lies intra-party dynamics.

Toward a study of both within- and between-party variation

Studying between-party variation in attitudes often reveals patterns masked by aggregate trends. For example, if Democrats and Republicans are polarizing on issue X over time, and they are equally moving in more favorable and unfavorable directions respectively, then attitudes on issue X may appear stable over time in the aggregate (assuming equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats). However, just as in studying partisan sorting is essential to understanding variation underlying aggregate trends, variation *within* parties is missed by simply studying partisan sorting. In other words, the partisan sorting literature tends to treat parties as homogeneous groups and underlying within-party variation goes unmeasured. While Democrats and Republicans may be polarizing in terms of their respective mean support for issue X, the consistency (i.e., the variation) with which each party supports issue X may vary. If so, a type of asymmetrical polarization emerges where one party becomes more extreme and consistently so, and the other party becomes more extreme, but inconsistently so. How does this matter for our understanding of issue emphasis by political parties in a highly partisan era? The latter scenario suggests differing levels of risk to each party for campaigning on issue X: While party members in both parties have grown more extreme on issue X, one party is consistent in its increasingly extreme views, and thus has little risk in turning off party members who disagree; the other party is more fractured on issue X, making a strong emphasis on issue X a risky strategy (De Sio and Weber 2014). Further, if a party is fractured on a salient issue, an opportunity emerges for the opposing party to exploit these within-party differences, making the pay-off for running on issue X even higher for the consistent party (Hillygus and Shields 2009).

Thus, to fully understand socio-political attitudes over time and their potential political

consequences, social scientists must study public attitudes at three levels: First, there should be a measure of trends in the aggregate to gauge how the public has shifted on average over time. Issue positions that are increasingly popular in the aggregate serve as potential sites of political consensus, as well as common campaign points between parties (for a thorough discussion of these "valence" issues, see De Sio and Weber (2014))

Second, variation at the between-party level should be assessed. As described in the section above, party polarization has key consequences for political functioning and is likely a key source of underlying variation in the aggregate trends. For example, stable attitudinal trends in the aggregate may mask underlying variation between parties. Further, party polarization on a given salient issue would suggest symmetrical issue ownership by each party, with two clear policy platforms for voters (Noel 2013). However, studying the between-party level alone cannot explain why some salient issues do not receive symmetrical ownership and emphasis by parties.

Third, we should measure within-party trends. Treating political parties as homogeneous groups may mask underlying variation within these parties, thus obfuscating key intra-party dynamics. For instance, is a party becoming more liberal on an issue because the party is moving in that direction as a whole, or is it a faction of the party that is driving the trend? In the latter case, asymmetrical trends within parties suggest growing factions among party members on a given issue, which can be thought of as within-party cleavages. Sociologists have long been interested in social cleavages and their consequences for party coalitions and electoral outcomes. For example, Manza and Brooks (1999) demonstrated the continued importance of social cleavages, such as religion, class, and race, in U.S. national elections over the latter-half of the 20th century. Other work has examined latent cultural cleavages, such as nationalism (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016) and their impact on politics (Bonikowski et al. 2019). While past work has thought of cleavages as an aggregate level phenomenon, we can also think of cleavages as existing within subgroups of a population, such as within political parties. We can think of existing within-party cleavages on a given issue, then, as the sources of variation measured in a party on the whole.

It is this third level on which this article focuses. I argue that within-party variation has at least four important consequences for our understanding of socio-political attitudes and their consequences for institutional politics: (1) Just as between-party polarization causes gridlock in politics, within-party polarization can make it difficult for parties to establish a firm identity on a policy for a given issue. Further, if the issue is salient enough, these within-party differences can cause difficulties in choosing candidates to run in electoral contests (Bawn et al. 2012; Karol 2009; Petrocik 1996). If the opposing party is in solid agreement on said issue, it will be more likely to establish a clear party stance and, potentially, win electoral contests if this issue becomes salient in the political arena (De Sio and Weber 2014; Hillygus and Shields 2009). This logic leads to the three subsequent consequences. 2) The ability to campaign on a given issue depends not only on the average support for a given issue in a party but also the consistency with which a party supports that position—if just over half of a party supports a position on an issue, but the other half strongly opposes that position (i.e., within-party polarization), running on said issue position is risky (De Sio and Weber 2014). 3) If there is considerable within-party variation on an issue, the potential exists for an opposing party candidate to run on that issue and exploit ("wedge") existing variation—existing within-party cleavages (Hillygus and Shields 2009). Following

from this, 4) existing within-party cleavages on an issue may serve as a harbinger of future party realignment (Hillygus and Shields 2009; Manza and Brooks 1999). If clear within-party differences exist on an issue and an opposing party champions a position on that issue that is in line with a faction of the first party's members, these members may eventually realign and switch to the opposing party. While it is beyond the scope of this study to empirically assess these consequences, the theoretical groundwork laid herein may be applied to future studies.

Beyond the consequences for party strategies outlined above, intra-party dynamics in an era of high partisanship may have serious implications for policies and political culture, more broadly. As views on issues become increasingly polarized by party, issue stances and their respective policy proposals become more extreme, as well. Thus, in a two party system, the ability to block more extreme policies from being implemented depends on the ability of the opposing party to counter. If the opposing party is not able to effectively counter the extreme policy position by running on a clear oppositional platform due to the intra-party dynamics outlined above, extreme policy positions may eventually be implemented or, at the very least, dominate the rhetoric of the party in power. Depending on the issue in question, this could have dire consequences for democratic processes.

Immigration: An important case

There is perhaps no greater hot-button issue in American politics (as well in European politics [Dennison and Geddes 2019]) than immigration (Sides et al. 2018). Not only has immigration become central to U.S. politics and beyond, but it is an issue that has clear and potentially negative consequences for political systems. For instance, immigration has been shown to be *the* issue of radical right parties in Western Europe (Dennison and Geddes 2019) and was a key component of Donald Trump's victory in 2016 (Sides et al. 2018). Despite immigration's centrality in the political arena, Democrats have not provided a symmetrical pro-immigration counter to Republicans, thus leaving ownership of immigration to Republicans (Petrocik 1996). Given this puzzling asymmetrical emphasis by Democrats and Republicans, along with its current saliency and importance for institutional politics, immigration serves as a prime case on which to implement the research strategy outlined above. In the remainder of this section, I briefly outline the literature on immigration attitudes. I then discuss several hypotheses about U.S. immigration attitudes at the aggregate, between-party, and within-party levels.

Social science research on immigration has taken up several debates, arguing about the various predictors and consequences of immigration attitudes, with most recent work focusing on sociotropic explanations (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014).¹ While political party is routinely included as a control variable, it has been noticeably absent as a main independent variable in the immigration attitudes literature. As Hainmueller and Hopkins conclude in their 2014 *Annual Review of Political Science* article, "Research on immigration attitudes to date has been surprisingly divorced from research on political partisanship and ideology. The relationship between immigration attitudes and political partisanship and ideology should be

¹While there has been important work done beyond the U.S. context, I focus mainly on findings that pertain to the U.S.

a central issue moving forward” (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014: 244). Since the publication of this article in 2014, there has been increased attention to the importance of politics for our understanding of immigration attitudes, largely in response to the 2016 election and the ensuing public debates surrounding immigration policy (Flores 2018, 2017; Sides et al. 2018; Mutz 2018; Bloemraad et al. 2016). For instance, Flores (2018) demonstrated that political elite signaling can influence attitudes toward immigrants.

Other work has evaluated the relationship between immigration attitudes and party affiliation more directly. Using panel data, Hajnal and Rivera (2014) provides evidence that suggests immigration attitudes can affect one’s political affiliation over time, with anti-immigration attitudes leading to more conservative self-identified political affiliation. Sides et al. (2018) argued that Americans have become deeply divided on issues of identity, such as immigration, and Donald Trump won the Republican nomination, and eventually the national election, with his explicit anti-immigrant rhetoric because there was a demand for it—especially among Republicans. And thus attitudes toward immigration were one of the key deciding factors for the 2016 election, and a key dividing issue between Democrats and Republicans (Sides et al. 2018). Recent studies of trends in public polarization have also found that Democrats and Republicans have increasingly split on immigration (Blanco et al. 2020) as well as on inclusive and exclusive forms of nationalism, with Republicans becoming more exclusive and Democrats becoming increasingly inclusive (Bonikowski et al. 2019).

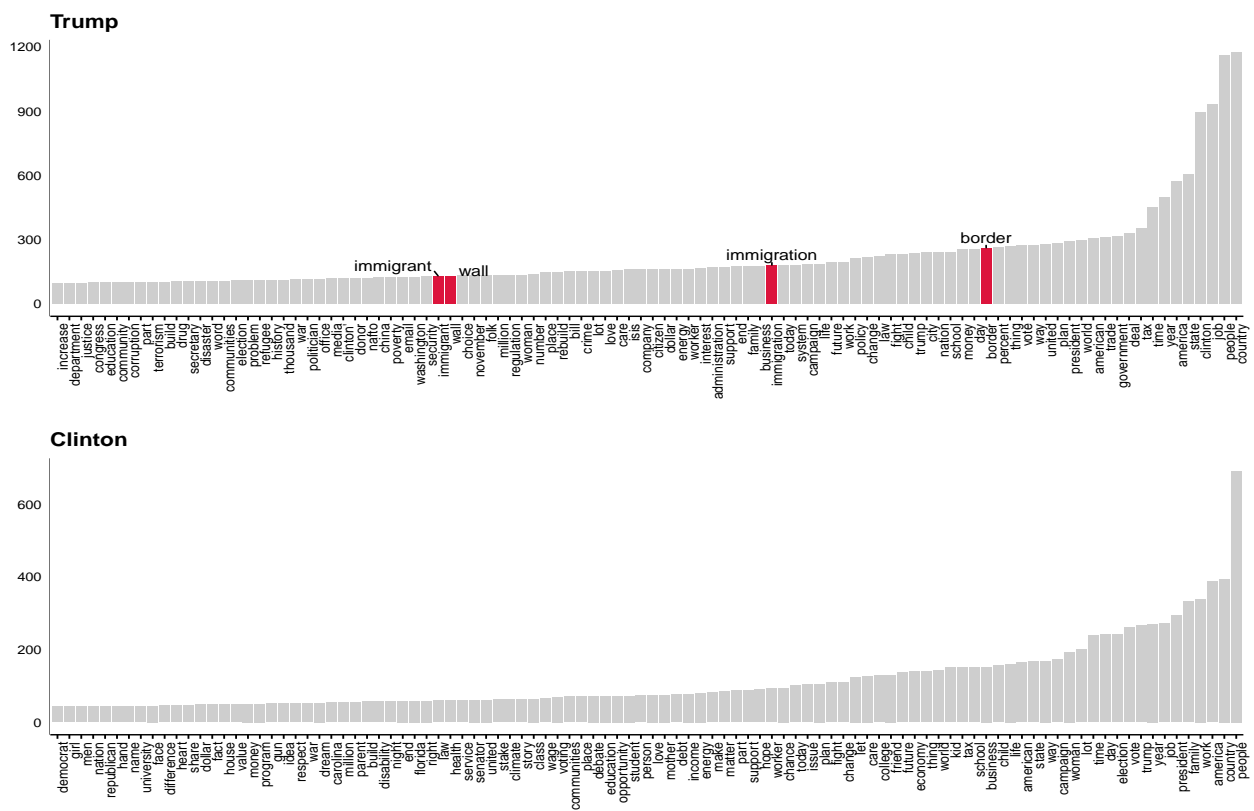
Clearly immigration has become a central issue to the American political arena, and there has been growing evidence that immigration attitudes have become polarized by party (Blanco et al. 2020; Sides et al. 2018; Hajnal and Rivera 2014). Given those trends, we would expect both parties to emphasize the issue symmetrically, providing clear policy alternatives to the electorate (De Sio and Weber 2014). But has this been the case?

Following two consecutive losses in presidential elections to Barack Obama in which minority-group votes played a critical role, Republican party leaders understood that a shift in strategy was needed (Sides et al. 2018). Given the electoral defeats and an increasingly diverse electorate, Republicans attempted to shift their image to be more inclusive, in hopes of capturing the votes of an increasing share of minorities. This strategy was abruptly halted with the campaign of Donald Trump in 2016 (Sides et al. 2018; Flores 2018; Lamont et al. 2017). Trump notably ran on an explicitly anti-immigration platform, using brazen rhetoric such as referring to Mexican immigrants as “rapists” and “criminals” (Flores 2018; Lamont et al. 2017). The early success of the Trump campaign in the Republican primaries drove other serious candidates, such as Ted Cruz, to follow suit in their clear anti-immigration platforms (Bonikowski et al. 2019). Going into the 2016 national elections, the Republican party had firmly adopted an anti-immigration platform with continued provocative rhetoric (Sides et al. 2018; Elliot and Altman 2015).

Was this strong anti-immigration campaign by Republicans met by an equally strong pro-immigration platform by Democrats? The short answer is “no.” While Democrats made broad references to “immigration reform” (Andrews and Kaplan 2015; PBS 2016; Min Kim 2015; Karni 2015) and used boilerplate “melting pot” rhetoric (Bonikowski et al. 2019), Democrats did not provide a symmetrical counter to the anti-immigration rhetoric of Republicans; they did not become the party of “pro-immigration.”

Indeed, scholars have emphasized the need for Democrats—as well as left parties in Western Europe—to take ownership of inclusivity and immigration as a necessary means to

Figure 1: Top 100 most frequently occurring nouns in the 2016 presidential campaign speeches. Nouns related to the topic of immigration are highlighted in red.



counter the increasingly extreme rhetoric and policy proposals of the right (Gidrom 2018; Dahlström and Sundell 2012). Why, then, have Democrats not taken ownership of immigration?

This paper seeks to shed light on this question by analyzing trends in immigration attitudes at three levels: 1) the aggregate, 2) between-party, and 3) within-party. As outlined above, I argue that we cannot understand the strategies of both parties on immigration (or any hot-button issue) without understanding the patterns of attitudes at each level. While there is an increasing literature on trends in immigration attitudes at the first two levels, I analyze and discuss trends at the aggregate and between-party levels as both a means to demonstrate that we cannot understand party strategy on immigration without the third level (within-party) and to replicate and confirm past findings.

Hypotheses

In light of past research on immigration attitudes and the parties' respective campaign strategies, I generate some broad expectations for the analyses at each level. Given the increased presence of explicit anti-immigration rhetoric (Sides et al. 2018; Flores 2017, 2018) in the American political arena, we might expect that there was a demand for it in the electorate (De Sio and Weber 2014). In other words, Donald Trump and the Republicans may have ridden an anti-immigration wave into office in 2016. However, despite the recent increase in exclusive politics, studies on immigration attitudes in the U.S. and abroad have not found a marked increase in anti-immigration in the aggregate but have found, rather, that the public has remained stable on immigration or even become more pro-immigration (Flores 2017; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). These findings lead to my first set of hypotheses concerning the aggregate level:

Hypothesis 1a (Aggregate level): *Anti-immigration sentiment has risen in the aggregate.*

Hypothesis 1b (Aggregate level): *Immigration attitudes have held steady or have become increasingly pro-immigration in the aggregate.*

The partisan sorting of a wide array socio-political attitudes in the U.S. has been well established by sociologists and political scientists (e.g., Baldassarri and Gelman 2008; DiMaggio et al. 1996; Abramowitz 2013). While immigration attitudes had been largely omitted from this literature (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014), there is now an increasing body of work that examines the relationship between partisan identification and immigration attitudes (e.g., Sides et al. 2018; Flores 2018; Hajnal and Rivera 2014). Like other attitudes across all issue domains, these studies have found that immigration has increasingly become sorted by party, with Republicans becoming more anti-immigration and Democrats becoming more pro-immigration. Moreover, recent studies have shown that nationalist beliefs have also become better sorted by party, with Democrats holding increasingly inclusive understandings of the nation and Republicans increasingly holding exclusive conceptions of the nation. These findings lead me to my hypothesis regarding the between-party level:

Hypothesis 2 (Between-party level): *Immigration attitudes have become sorted by party, with Republicans becoming increasingly anti-immigration and Democrats becoming increasingly pro-immigration.*

While immigration has become a hot-button issue in American politics, it has not been

given equal emphasis by Democrats and Republicans. Republicans have made immigration a central part of their platform in recent elections, espousing explicit anti-immigration rhetoric and outlining exclusive policy proposals (Bonikowski et al. 2019; Sides et al. 2018; Flores 2018; Lamont et al. 2017), whereas Democrats have not provided a clear counter-frame on this issue. Why would Republicans take clear ownership of immigration while Democrats have shied away from it (Petrocik 1996)? Assuming parties strategically choose to emphasize some issues and deemphasize others their to advantage in the political arena, one explanation for this asymmetry on immigration is that Republicans found it advantageous to run on immigration, whereas Democrats found it too risky (De Sio and Weber 2014; Bawn et al. 2012; Hillygus and Shields 2009; Karol 2009). Under this assumption, we would expect that Republicans had support for a strong anti-immigration platform, and Democrats lacked such support for a symmetrical pro-immigration campaign (De Sio and Weber 2014). However, if immigration attitudes have become symmetrically polarized by party, and Democrats and Republicans have moved equally in opposite directions on the issue, then we would expect the same strategy by both parties. In other words, running on immigration would appear to be a sound strategy for Democrats, because immigration, like many other issues, has become strongly sorted by party; running on the issue should pose little risk and serve as an effective means of rallying the base while also countering the platform presented by Republicans.

If overall support for strong immigration campaigns is evident in both parties, why would Democrats, then, not take ownership of immigration like Republicans have? While there may appear to be support among Democrats overall, Democrats may have found it too risky to run on immigration in fear of disaffecting subsets of the party (De Sio and Weber 2014; Bawn et al. 2012). In other words, while support might have existed on average, substantial within-party variation on this issue may have made a strong immigration platform too risky. This dynamic also helps to explain the Republican strategy on immigration: In a two party system, such as in the U.S., parties run on issues not only to rally their bases, but to pick up new voters (De Sio and Weber 2014; Hillygus and Shields 2009). Parties prioritize issues for which there is support within their own party but also residual support in the electorate (i.e., support for an issue position beyond support of party members), as these issues pose little risk and maximum gain (De Sio and Weber 2014). Recognizing disagreement in the opposing party, U.S. parties emphasize “wedge issues”—highly salient and often controversial issues—in campaigns in order to exploit existing cleavages in the other party (Hillygus and Shields 2009). Thus, the strategy of using “wedge” or “bridge” issues (De Sio and Weber 2014) implies the importance of within-party variation on a given issue and not merely the mean support. In the case of immigration, then, we might expect that there is substantial variation among Democrats on immigration, whereas Republicans are consistent on the issue. This logic leads to my final hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 (Within-party level): *Variation in immigration attitudes is greater among Democrats than among Republicans.*

Data and Methods

To study trends in U.S. immigration attitudes at the aggregate, between-party, and within-party levels, I employ the cumulative time series American National Election Studies (ANES)

datafile (The American National Election Studies 2018). This data set is a compilation of all ANES Time Series studies conducted from 1948 until the most recent wave (2016). The ANES is a commonly used dataset in social science research related to American politics and asks a variety of questions about public opinion and political identities.

Dependent variables. My key outcome of interest is attitudes toward immigration. While there are a number of measures related to this topic, I focus on the commonly used immigration policy item: “Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little, or decreased a lot?” This item has range of 1 (“decreased a lot”) to 5 (“increased a lot”) and has a number of advantages compared to other immigration attitudes items: 1) it puts the focus on *legal* immigrants rather than *illegal* immigrants, which is less likely to yield negatively biased results because of the negative wording (“illegal”) (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). 2) This item is less likely to be subject to positively biased responses because of social desirability concerns, as occurs in questions about specific groups (e.g., feeling thermometer toward Hispanics) (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014); and 3) this item is the most widely available in ANES waves, allowing for the most robust longitudinal analysis possible. The item is available in eight waves: 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016. A collapsed three-category version of the question (1. “decreased” 2. “stay the same” 3. “increased”) was also asked in 2000. Because of this additional year and negligible impact on substantive findings, I focus on the 3-category item for analyses and visualization.² This gives me a sample of 20,503 respondents over nine waves of ANES data.

Key independent variables. My main interest is in how immigration attitudes have been patterned by party over time. Thus my key independent variable of interest is party identification. I use the reduced three-party measure (Democrats, Independents, and Republicans).³ As I am mainly interested in the sorting between Democrats and Republicans, I focus on Democrats and Republicans. Beyond trends between the parties, this study seeks to understand *within-party* variation. Thus, I analyze how immigration attitudes among Democrats and among Republicans differ by key predictors of immigration attitudes, including: income (by terciles), education (1. less than HS, 2. HS, 3. Some College/AA, 4. BA, 5. Advanced Degree), and geographic region. I also include several variables that are typical predictors of social-political attitudes: sex (male), religion (religious tradition, religiosity, and church attendance), and age (I use a categorical age term: 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-). Finally, I include measures of partisanship (e.g., “Strong Democrat” vs. “Democrat”) and political ideology (Liberal, Moderate, Conservative)⁴. See Table 1 of the appendix for weighted descriptive statistics.

²Figure 11 in the appendix includes over-time trends by party with the five-outcome immigration item

³See Appendix D for over-time trends including a five-category party identification variable. For the within-party analyses, a reduced partisan variable is used because I treat partisan strength as a within-party cleavage (e.g., strong vs. weak Democrats.)

⁴Because of small cell sizes, I use a three-way ideology variable that has been collapsed from the standard seven-point ideology scale: “Very liberal” to “Very conservative.”

Analytic strategy

In order to understand the parties' respective strategies toward immigration, the analysis aims to (1) demonstrate how immigration attitudes have changed over time in the aggregate, (2) measure how these attitudes have been patterned by party (between-party variation), and (3) measure within-party variation in these attitudes.

First, to measure how immigration attitudes have trended over time, I run a simple ordinal logistic regression (OLR), regressing immigration attitudes on year. Second, to measure between-party variation, I regress immigration attitudes on a *year* \times *party* interaction; a test of the differences between parties over time provides a direct test of sorting. Next, I turn to within-party variation. I measure within-party variation on immigration in two ways. The first approach provides an overall measure of variation in parties over time; the second provides a closer look at sites of disagreement within each party (i.e., sources of variation) by measuring cleavages.

To measure overall variability within the parties, I fit a variance function regression with a two-step maximum likelihood (ML) approach, predicting variation in immigration attitudes (Western and Bloome 2009). A variance function regression writes the mean, \hat{y}_i , and the variance, σ_i^2 , both as a function of covariates:

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{y}_i &= x_i'\beta \\ \log \sigma_i^2 &= z_i'\lambda\end{aligned}\tag{1}$$

where x_i is a $K \times 1$ vector of covariates for the mean, and z_i is a $J \times 1$ vector of covariates for the variance. For the purposes of the variance function regression, y , the immigration attitude item, is treated as continuous.⁵ Both x_i and z_i include party identification, year, and a *party* \times *year* interaction term. Because I am interested in changes in the overall variation among Democrats and Republicans, I do not include further controls, as I am not interested in the adjusted over-time within-party variation. A variance coefficient, λ_j , can be interpreted as the difference in the log variance associated with a one-unit change in z_j , adjusted for other covariates in z_i . Here, the key coefficient of interest, *party* \times *year*, measures the difference in variation between Democrats and Republicans on immigration attitudes over time.

Next, to explain what is driving⁶ the within-party variation demonstrated by the variance function regression, I identify cleavages among Democrats and Republicans on immigration attitudes by employing the kappa index. Kappa (κ) measures the average distance from the mean among groups for some outcome of interest (Manza and Brooks 1999; Brooks and Manza 1997; Hout et al. 1995). While this measure has been used extensively to measure social cleavages in national electoral outcomes (e.g., the change in the U.S. religious and class cleavages in national elections over time (Manza and Brooks 1999; Brooks and Manza 1997)), it can also effectively measure within-party cleavages for a given attitudinal outcome. Past

⁵Unfortunately, to my knowledge, a nonlinear version of variance function regression has not yet been developed. As such, I am forced to model the ordinal outcome variable with a linear model. Doing so has potentially important consequences as this model may violate OLS assumptions about linearity. However, the present approach is the best available option.

⁶When I use the term “driving”, I am referring to the important variables that explain within-party variation when within-party trends are decomposed. “Driving” is not meant to imply causality.

studies utilizing kappa have derived the index from logit coefficients, meaning kappa has been interpreted as the average difference in the log-odds for a given socio-demographic variable with a given outcome; these kappas, then, can be compared over time to measure changes in the average difference among groups (i.e., changes in the cleavage) (Hout et al. 1995). However given the difficulties in comparing logit coefficients across groups and models, as well as the difficulty in interpreting log-odds substantively, I transform the logits into predicted probabilities (Brooks and Manza 1997). Deriving kappa from predicted probabilities is preferred as predictions from nonlinear models do not suffer from the same cross-model comparison issues as logit coefficients; moreover, predicted probabilities measure the outcome in its natural metric, allowing for more meaningful interpretations (Long and Mustillo 2018; Mize 2019; Mize et al. 2019). Thus, kappa measures the standard deviation of the predicted probabilities of each level of an outcome (j) for each level (k) of a given variable (cleavage) in a given year (t). Equation 2 formally defines kappa as:

$$\kappa_t = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{k=1}^K (P_{kjt} - \bar{P}_{jt})^2}{K}}. \quad (2)$$

To use an example from Brooks and Manza’s 1997 *American Sociological Review* article on social cleavages and changing political alignments in U.S. Presidential Elections, K =the number of categories in a given cleavage (e.g., religious sects), P =the probability of vote choice j (1 = Democratic candidate, 2 = Republican candidate), and t =the election year.

Because I am using kappa to measure an ordinal outcome variable, I expand kappa to sum over several outcome variables. I refer to this expanded version of kappa as kappa prime (κ'), and it is formally defined in equation 3:

$$\kappa'_t = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^J \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{k=1}^K (P_{kjt} - \bar{P}_{jt})^2}{K}}}{J}, \quad (3)$$

where J is the number of categories for a given outcome variable (e.g., $J=3$ in the case of the immigration attitude variable), K is the number of categories for a given socio-demographic variable (e.g., if the variable of interest is income terciles, $K=3$ as I am using income terciles), P equals the predicted probability for a given category (k) for a given level of the outcome (j), in a given year (t). Simply put, for a given categorical variable in a given year, κ' calculates the average of the standard deviations of the predicted probabilities for each level of the outcome. I derive κ' for each socio-demographic variable among Republicans and Democrats for each year; separate models are run for the calculation of each κ' , where in each model I allow the variable of interest to vary by year. For example, to calculate the education cleavage among democrats over time, I 1) fit an OLR, regressing immigration attitudes on an *educationXyear* interaction, controlling for other variables (including only Democrats); 2) I then obtain the predicted probabilities for each outcome among each education level for each year; 3) finally, the predicted probabilities are then used to calculate the κ' for education in each year among Democrats.

κ' provides an informative description of the dispersion in immigration views among categories of a given variable. However, this measure may give us a distorted understanding of each variable's contribution to the overall variation because κ' does not take into account the relative sizes of categories within variables. For example, when calculating the religious tradition cleavage, each category (i.e., Catholics, Protestants, Jews, etc.) would be weighted the same, as the average differences among these categories is the measure of interest. But to better assess the direct contribution of the religious tradition cleavage to the overall variation in each party, we may not want to weight each category the same, as the proportions of these categories vary drastically (e.g., In 2016, Jews makeup 2 percent of the religionists in the sample, whereas Protestants make up 48 percent). These differences in relative category sizes could potentially distort our understanding of the religious tradition cleavage as a source of variation among parties if, for instance, Jews have immigration views that are sizably different from the rest of the categories, as they would disproportionately drive up the average difference among categories in the variable. To get an overall sense of the religious tradition cleavage, we would weight Jews equally when calculating κ' , but to get a better measure of the contribution of the religious tradition cleavage to the overall variation within parties, we would need to weight the contribution of each religious tradition by their relative sizes within the parties. As such, I derive a weighted measure, *weighted* κ' , that weights the contribution of categories by their relative size in each year. Whereas κ' weighs each category the same, *weighted* κ' essentially weighs each individual the same. Equation 4 formally defines *weighted* κ' :

$$\text{Weighted } \kappa'_t = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^J \sqrt{\sum_{k=1}^K \omega_{kt} (P_{kjt} - \bar{P}^*_{jt})^2}}{J} \quad (4)$$

Equation 4 differs from Equation 3 in two ways. First, a weight variable, ω , is added to adjust for the relative contribution of each category, k , in time t . Because the weights sum to one, the denominator under the square root is dropped, as the weights imply a divisor of K .⁷ This weight is equal to the proportion of respondents in category, k , at time t . Second, a weighted mean, \bar{P}^* , is used to account for the distributional effects on the mean probability of outcome j , for a given variable, K , in year t .

Because *weighted* κ' is simply adjusted by the year-specific distributions of variables, we can fix the weights to represent distributions in any year. Doing so creates a sort of counterfactual scenario in which one can assess the impact of population changes within a party (e.g., are attitudes changing or has the makeup of parties simply changed?). I test for the possibility of distributional effects by calculating *weighted* κ' s fixing weights at 1992 levels.

Weighted κ' s provide a concise and interpretable measure of cleavages within parties. These cleavages represent potential sites of exploitation by opposing parties in elections. To make more specific predictions, though, we can easily decompose the *weighted* κ' s into their individual respective categorical trends. For example, if there is a growing religious cleavage among Democrats on immigration, are anti-immigration driving this trend? Decomposed *weighted* κ' s, then, provide a closer look at the drivers of within-party variation and allow

⁷For instance, if both the weights and the K divisor are included, one would essentially be dividing by K twice.

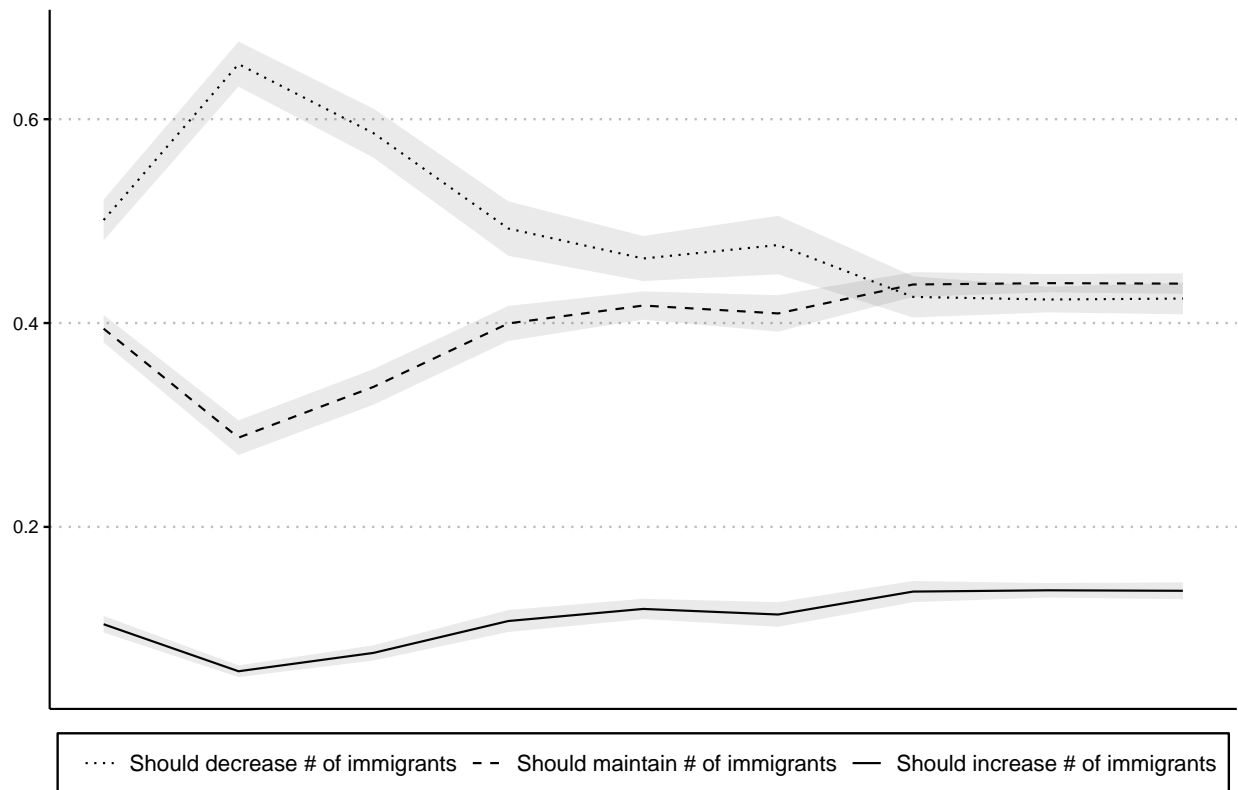
for predictions about future potential realignments (Hillygus and Shields 2009; Manza and Brooks 1999); to expand on the Evangelical example, if there is a sizable proportion of Evangelical Democrats who are anti-immigration and immigration is made a salient issue in the election, these voters may be potential defectors from the Democratic party and, possibly, future party switchers. In short, decomposed *weighted κ 's* allow for predictions about how issues might play out in future elections. I conclude the analysis by discussing trends in these decomposed *weighted κ 's*.

Results

Overall trend in immigration attitudes

To first understand trends in immigration attitudes at the aggregate level, I present over-time trends for the outcome variable with the full sample. Figure 2 shows the mean probabilities for each outcome category over time, with an accompanying 95%-confidence interval. In short, this figure demonstrates that there has been an overall decrease in anti-immigration sentiment, accompanied by a slight increase in more favorable immigration sentiment since the early 1990s. This finding confirms Hypothesis 1b, that immigration attitudes have remained relatively stable in the aggregate rather than demonstrating increased anti-immigration sentiment.

Figure 2: Immigration attitudes over time (overall)



We see a spike in anti-immigration sentiment in 1994, when nearly 70% of Americans thought the number of immigrants should be decreased, followed by a precipitous decline over the remainder of the 1990s. The overall anti-immigration sentiment continues to decline until we see a leveling out following 2008. Without data points for the years preceding 1992, it is hard to know if the patterns in 1994 is in fact a sudden "spike," but one possible explanation for this trend is that it is a backlash to the 1990 Immigration Act signed by the Bush administration, which increased the amount of legal immigration. While we would expect to see reaction to this bill show up in 1992, it may be that the backlash didn't set in until some years later when politicians began running campaigns in opposition to the bill, subsequently resulting in the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act* of 1996 signed into law by Clinton. The saliency of illegal immigration during this period, perhaps, fed into more positive sentiment toward legal immigration in the years following that reform.

Noticeably, there is another up-tick in anti-immigration sentiment from 2000 to 2004, which has been interpreted as a surge in restrictive nationalism following the 2001 September 11th attacks (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016). On average, though, this trend reverses in 2008, where we see about equal proportions (40 percent each) of Americans who think the number of immigrants should either be maintained or decreased, these proportions hold steady until 2016.

Again, looking at the aggregate trends suggests that Americans have on average become less anti-immigrant since the early 1990s, and there has even been a slight up-tick in the number of Americans who think the number of immigrants should be increased. When only considering these aggregate trends, the current saliency of immigration and prominent anti-immigration rhetoric seems surprising. However, looking at aggregate trends in immigration attitudes obfuscates important and documented underlying variation—namely, partisan-sorting (Bonikowski et al. 2019; Sides et al. 2018). To understand the current saliency of immigration in the U.S. political arena, and the parties' respective strategies toward this issue, I now turn to trends at the between-party level.

Party polarization

Figure 3 shows trends over time in immigration attitudes by party. Compared to Democrats, Republicans appear to show slightly more anti-immigration sentiment throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, but the difference is small. In fact, both parties show remarkably similar patterns up until 2008. Following 2008, we see marked party polarization on immigration attitudes. Among Republicans, there is a steep rise in anti-immigrant sentiment from 2008 to 2012, and this rise continues into 2016, where it reaches its highest value since 1994. Over this same time, there is a decreased probability of saying the number of immigrants should be increased or maintained among Republicans.

Figure 3: Immigration attitudes over time (by party)

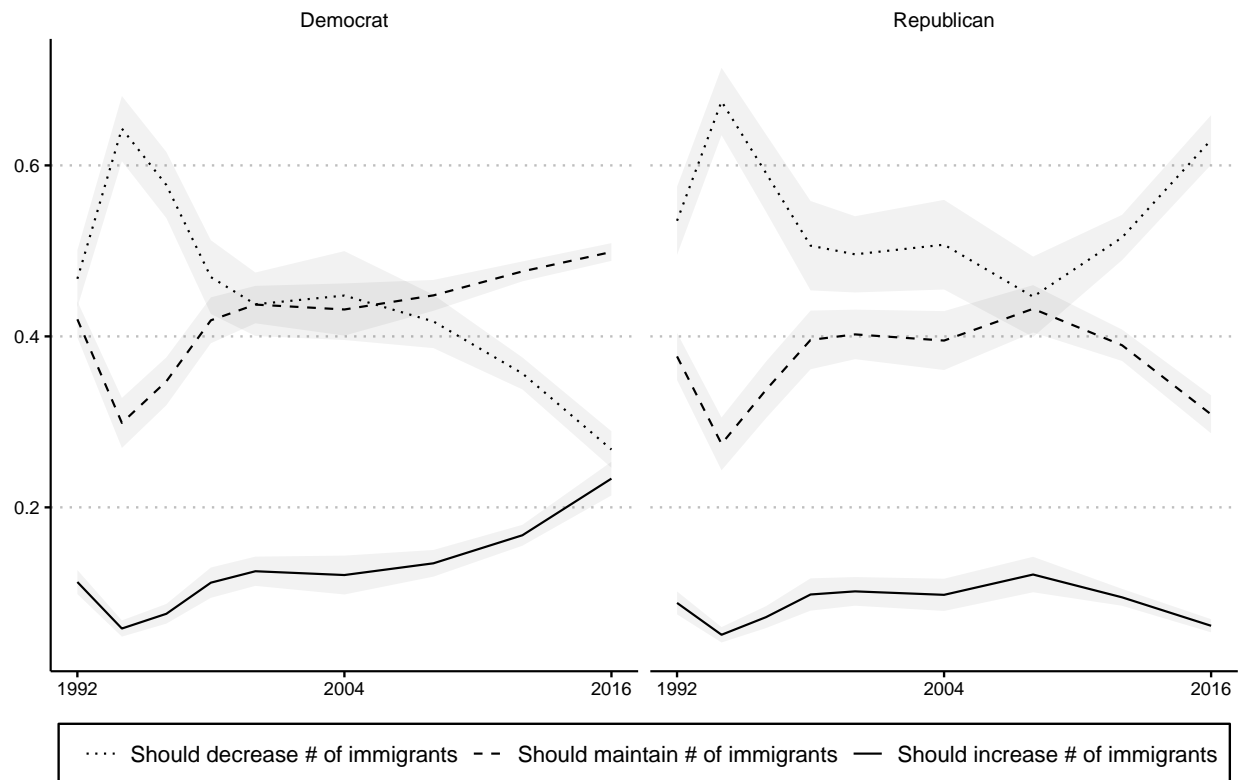


Figure 4: Over-time ADC on anti-immigration attitudes



In comparison, we see nearly mirror effects among Democrats, with decreasing anti-immigration sentiment and accompanying increases in the probabilities for “increasing the number of immigrants” and “maintaining the number of immigrants.” In line with recent work on this issue (Sides et al. 2018), Figure 3 demonstrates that there has been clear party polarization on immigration attitudes since 2008. This trend is being driven by the steep increase in negative immigrant sentiment among Republicans following 2008 and the continuation of a more pro-immigrant trend among Democrats since 2004. Figure 4 models this polarization more formally, plotting the average discrete change (ADC)⁸ between Republicans and Democrats over time on the first outcome: “Decrease the number of immigrants.” The dotted lines around the trend line mark the 95% confidence interval; points in which the lower bound crosses the solid horizontal line indicate a non-significant difference between the parties in that year. From this figure, we clearly see the recent polarization on anti-immigration attitudes: There is a non-significant difference between the parties in each year before 2012, except in 1992, when the party difference is small, but just meets significance at the 95% level.⁹ These results confirm Hypothesis 2 and past work that demonstrated the increased partisan sorting of immigration attitudes.

Given the symmetrical polarization of Democrats and Republicans on immigration in recent years, as well as the issue’s continued saliency, we would expect both parties to tout immigration as a core issue, providing clear ideological alternatives in the political arena (De Sio and Weber 2014; Abramowitz 2013). But that did not happen. While Republicans made immigration a central theme to their campaigns, Democrats largely shied away from the issue. And thus studying attitudes at the aggregate and between-party levels cannot fully explain party strategies on immigration, a hot-button issue that has become firmly sorted by party: Why have Democrats not touted immigration as Republicans have? Theories on party strategy and issues suggests that we must analyze within-party trends to answer this question (De Sio and Weber 2014; Hillygus and Shields 2009), and it is these results to which I now turn.

Within-party variation on immigration attitudes

Overall heterogeneity on immigration attitudes

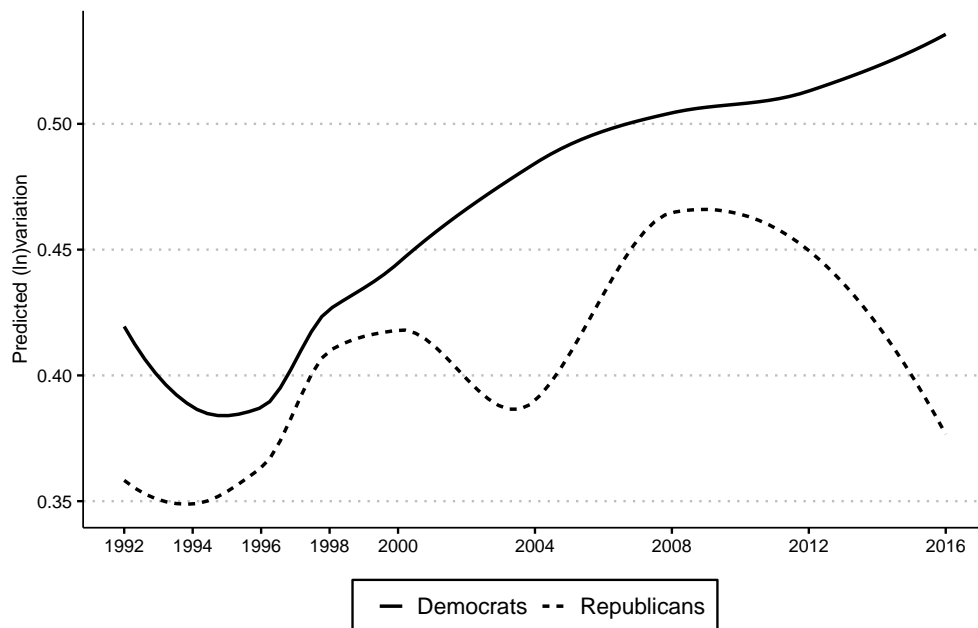
To first get a sense of the overall variation within the parties on immigration attitudes, Figure 5 shows the predicted logged variance for Democrats and Republicans over time; these predictions come from a variance function regression, plotting the *year* \times *party* interaction.¹⁰ As with the trends in means over time, the largest distinction between the parties emerges in recent years, with Republicans becoming sharply more consistent in their immigration views and Democrats becoming steadily more variable. Overall, the results from the variance function indicate that, while Democrats have become steadily more pro-immigration since

⁸For a categorical variable, an average discrete change measures the difference in probabilities between a given category and the baseline category. In this instance, it is simply a measure of the difference in predicted probabilities between Republicans and Democrats for having anti-immigration views across each year.

⁹See Appendix B [Table 2] for tabular display of regression results.

¹⁰Trend lines have been smoothed to better capture over-time trends and de-emphasize year-to-year fluctuation

Figure 5: Predicted within-party variation over time. Differences are statistically different at the 95% level in 1992, 2004, 2012, and 2016.



2008, they have also become more variable on the issue. Comparatively, Republicans have become sharply more anti-immigration and consistently so.¹¹ This finding is in clear support of Hypothesis 3.

Explaining within-party variation: Within-party cleavages

Figure 5 demonstrated the over-time trends of within-party variation. But what is driving the within-party variation among Republicans and Democrats? That is, what kinds of Democrats are disagreeing on immigration, and what kinds of Republicans used to disagree but now agree on immigration? These within-party cleavages represent both the sources of conflict within parties and opportunities to implement “wedge politics” for the opposing party (Hillygus and Shields 2009). To measure trends in within-party cleavages and contributions to overall within-party variation, I calculate *weighted κ'* indices for each socio-demographic variable among Democrats and Republicans over time. Figure 6 plots smoothed trend lines of the *weighted κ'* scores; larger values indicate a larger cleavage in that year—larger dispersement. The solid trend lines indicate the *weighted κ'* scores derived from baseline models fit without controls, and the dashed lines indicate scores derived from models including controls. Plotting both the full and baseline models together provides a convenient way of understanding which categories’ trends are being affected by the inclusion of other variables in the model. To clarify, when I refer to a “socio-demographic variable” or simply a “variable”, I am referring to patterns by sub-party variables (e.g., Education among Democrats); when I refer to a “group”, I am referencing categories within sub-party variables

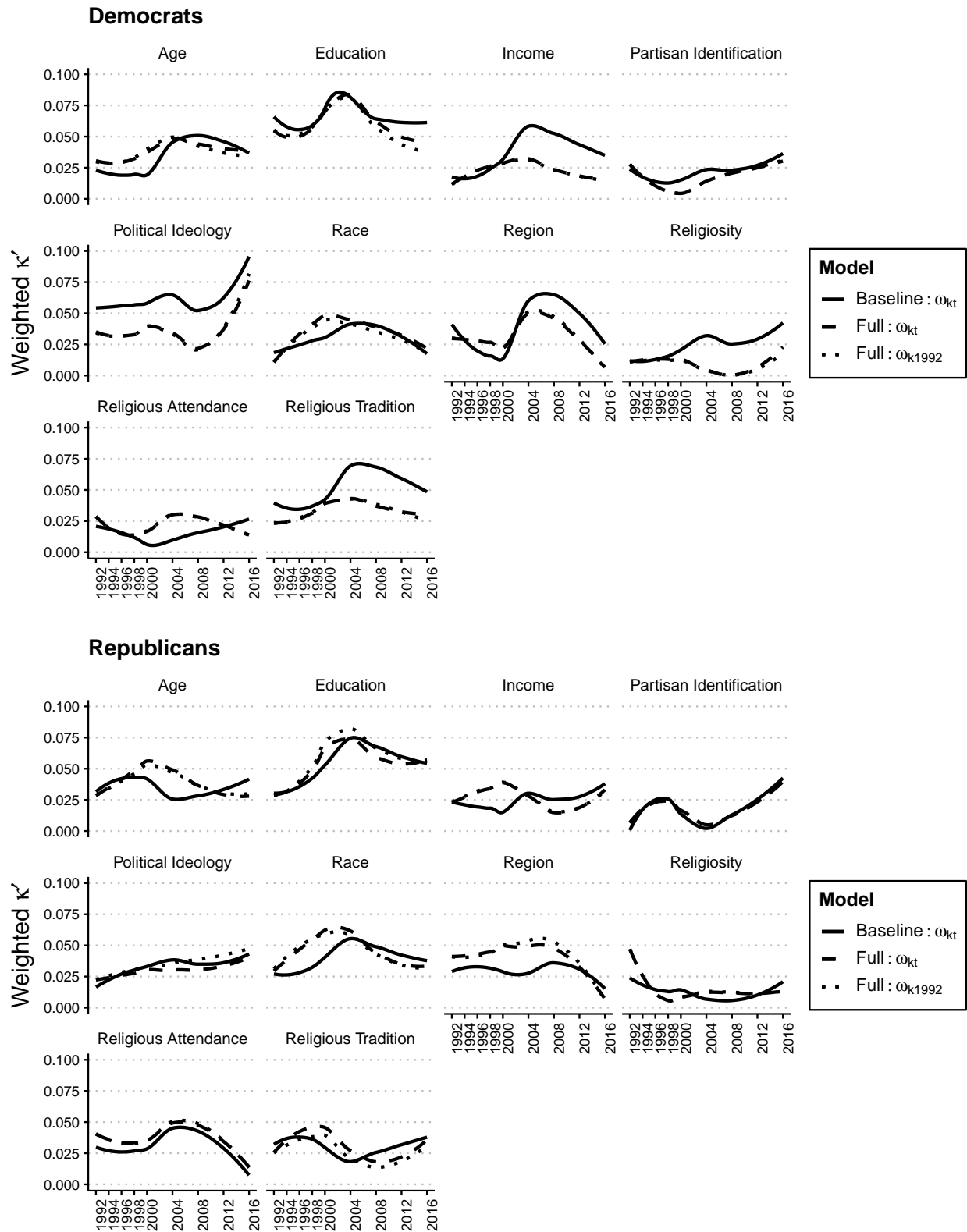
¹¹See Appendix C for robustness checks on the variance function analysis. See Table 3 of Appendix B for variance function results in tabular form.

(e.g., BA vs. <BA among Democrats). Graphical displays of *weighted* κ' indices over time give us a wealth of information; first, we can easily identify which variables contain large cleavages versus small between-group variability both overall and in a given year. Second, we can see how these cleavages have developed over time—it is equally important to identify variables that have had growing cleavages and variables that have had their between-group differences shrink. For example, if a variable has relatively high between-group variability in 2008 but this variability shrinks drastically in subsequent years, this is a clear demonstration of party alignment among this sub-party variable¹². Alternatively, if a variable has relatively low between-group variation in the early 2000s, but then increases its variability in recent years, this suggests that this variable is an important site of disagreement within the party. Third, as I am using the *weighted* κ' measure, these trends tell us which cleavages are contributing most strongly to the overall within-party variation in a given year.

I could also, of course, display trends for the non-weighted κ' measure, which would show over-time trends in cleavages, regardless of group sizes. The choice to use either the *weighted* κ' or the unweighted κ' is a theoretical one. Again, because *weighted* κ' is a more direct measure of contribution to variation, I have chosen to focus on its trends here. The results between the two measures are largely the same, indicating that group sizes are not drastically altering the substantive conclusions.¹³ See Appendix D for trends using unweighted kappas.

¹²Such a trend could also be driven by over-time partisan sorting in terms of people selecting into parties with which they agree. As I do not have longitudinal data, I cannot control for this selection effect. Regardless of potential selection, though, shrinking cleavages are suggested of alignment on immigration attitudes.

¹³The most drastic changes occur when there are especially small categories, as is the case with religion, where the proportion of Jews among religionists is very small.

Figure 6: Smoothed *Weighted κ'* indices trends for Democrats and Republicans

Among Democrats, we see clear differences between socio-demographic variables in terms of their *weighted κ'* index levels and the over-time trends of these indices. First, political ideology appears to be a clear driver of variation among Democrats in recent years. Following 2008, the *weighted κ'* rises sharply and is the only variable for which there has been a clear increase since 2008, and this holds true in both the baseline and full models, suggesting that this trend is not due to growing divides among correlates of political ideology.

Partisanship and religiosity have also increased, but the trends are less dramatic. Although the cleavage has shrunk in recent years, education stands out as a significant source of variation. Further, there is a noticeable spike in 2004, where the *weighted κ'* reaches the highest level among any variable in any year apart from ideology in 2016, but then there is a subsequent decline in the cleavage in the following waves, where it reaches levels similar to the 1990s; moreover, the small difference between the baseline and full models for education is notable and is suggestive of the variable's importance relative to other variables in the model. The large education cleavage in 2004 is indicative of varied responses to the September 11th attacks along educational lines (Bonikowski et al. 2019; Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016). Religious tradition demonstrates a similar magnitude and trend to education, with a spike in 2004 and steady decline in subsequent years. Race and geographic region were both fairly large cleavages, but both variables have sharply declined in their between-group variability since 2004, and both have index scores of nearly zero by 2016. Gender, religious attendance, and religiosity all show consistently low cleavage levels across waves. While the baseline models for income suggest fairly high and consistent cleavage levels, these differences among income groups are attenuated in the full models, especially by education.¹⁴ Finally, distinct from other variables, age showed very little variation throughout the 1990s, but a more distinct age cleavage emerged in 2004. Since then, the differences among age groups have stayed level or have slightly declined.

The patterns are noticeably different among Republicans compared to Democrats. The increased consistency among Republicans in recent years appears to be driven by declines in the race, regional, and religious attendance cleavages. The age cleavage has also steadily declined. Notably, ideology and partisanship are contributing to the within-party variation differently compared to Democrats; while there has been an increase in the ideology and partisan cleavages in recent years, these increases are not as dramatic compared to Democrats. The education cleavage again stands out among Republicans, with a similar highpoint in 2004, but the subsequent decline is not as sharp as with Democrats. Several variables among Republicans show steady and relatively low cleavage levels over time. Gender, income, religiosity, age, and religious tradition all demonstrate fairly steady and small cleavage levels over time.

In sum, Figure 6 gives us insight into the sources of variation among Democrats and Republicans over time on immigration attitudes. Among Democrats, a clear ideological cleavage has emerged in recent years, as well as a steadily increasing partisan cleavage, explaining the increased variation among Democrats. For Republicans, the increased consistency in recent years on immigration can be best attributed to a sharp decrease in the regional, race, and religious attendance cleavages, which more than offsets more modest increases in ideological

¹⁴Step-wise regressions demonstrate that the inclusion of education dramatically attenuates the effect of income group on immigration attitudes.

and partisan cleavages.

While *Weighted κ'* takes into account group sizes in a given year, this does not account for the potential effect of over-time compositional shifts that could be influencing trends. Given the well-documented compositional shifts among Republicans and Democrats over the last several decades, the results could be driven by changes in the make-up of parties rather than attitudinal changes. To test this, I calculated *Weighted κ'* indices derived from full models, fixing group sizes to their 1992 levels (ω_{k1992}); trends for *Weighted κ'* indices fixed at 1992 group sizes are plotted with the dotted lines. These trends display a counterfactual scenario in which the party compositions have remained the same since 1992, thus capturing the possible effects of composition shifts on our understanding of cleavage trends. The influence of compositional shifts can be ascertained, then, by looking at the gap between the dotted and dashed (full models with year-to-year composition weights) in a given year. For instance, if the age cleavage estimate among Democrats is much lower in 2016 for the dotted line compared to the dashed line, this would suggest that compositional changes since 1992 have contributed to a larger age cleavage in 2016 than there would have been if the age composition of Democrats had not shifted since 1992.

Overall, the trends do not appear to be affected by over-time compositional shifts, with slight year-to-year deviations for some cleavages. One notable, but small, compositional effect exists for the Republican ideological cleavage. The divergence between trend lines indicates the ideological cleavage among Republicans has been suppressed by compositional shifts over time; the growing share of “conservative” Republicans over the last several decades is well documented, and this shift appears to have suppress what would otherwise be a larger ideological cleavage on immigration attitudes among Republicans. Though, again, this compositional effect is small. (See Figure 9 in the appendix for over-time composition trends among Democrats and Republicans.)

To recap, the overall increase in variation among Democrats is largely being driven by increasing ideological and partisan cleavages; that is, Democrats are increasingly disagreeing on immigration along ideological and partisanship lines; for Republicans, their increasing homogeneity on immigration views is being driven by collapsing religious (measured as church attendance), regional, and racial cleavages: while Republicans used to demonstrate considerable disagreement on immigration along religious, regional, and racial lines, these differences have dissipated, and the party has become relatively uniform on this issue.

The results suggest that Democrats have not made immigration a flashpoint issue for the party because doing so risked disaffecting large segments of the party. Republicans, on the other hand, brought immigration to the forefront in the political arena because this strategy posed little risk of losing party members and had the potential to wedge a divided Democratic party. But, how are these within-party dynamics going to potentially play out in future elections, and how did we get here? That is, what kinds of Democrats are trending apart from the rest of the party on immigration and provide an opportunity for Republicans to gain voters? To shed light on these questions, I now turn to decomposed *Weighted κ'* s.

Group trends: decomposing within-party cleavages

Figures 7 and 8 trend plots for each group of Democrats and Republicans, respectively; that is, these figures plot the predicted probabilities of *Socio – demographpicvariableXyear*

interactions, estimated from full models with controls. For each variable, there is a separate panel for each outcome of the immigration item: “Decrease the number of immigrants”, “Maintain the number of immigrants”, “Increase the number of immigrants.”¹⁵

Figure 7 plots group trends among Democrats. Again, Figure 6 demonstrated that the steadily increasing variation among Democrats is largely a result of growing ideological and partisan cleavages within the party. Here we see that the growing ideological cleavage is a function of liberal Democrats becoming markedly more pro-immigration since 2008, evident in both their decrease in anti-immigration views and increase in pro-immigration views; meanwhile, moderate Democrats have had stable attitudinal trends over this same period of time, and conservative Democrats have actually become more anti-immigration. Thus, we see here that since 2008, Democrats themselves have become polarized along ideological lines. Similarly, there has been growing gap between “Strong Democrats” and “Democrats”, with those with strong partisanship being more pro-immigration since 2004.

While not as important as the ideological and partisanship divides, there are notable patterns among other variables, as well. The education cleavage among Democrats is a result of a clear diploma divide: there is a sizable and steady gap among Democrats with a BA and Democrats without a BA in terms of the probability of holding anti-immigration and pro-immigration views.¹⁶ While both BA and non-BA holders have become more pro-immigrant in recent years, those Democrats with a BA have consistently held notably more pro-immigrant views. While the age cleavage has not grown in recent years, there is marked and growing difference between young Democrats (18-29) and everyone else, who have become consistently more pro-immigration over time. This suggests a future Democratic party that is increasingly pro-immigration and, potentially, increasingly divided on immigration if older Democrats do not become more pro-immigration.

¹⁵Note that these trends represent decomposed κ 's as opposed to the *Weighted* κ 's. That is, these trends in predicted probabilities are not weighted by their relative group sizes.

¹⁶The models were estimated including a five-category education variable. However, I collapse the categories into a BA/non-BA binary variable for visual display to demonstrate the clear divide.

Figure 7: Democrat immigration attitudes over time. Smoothed trend lines for the predicted probability of outcome.

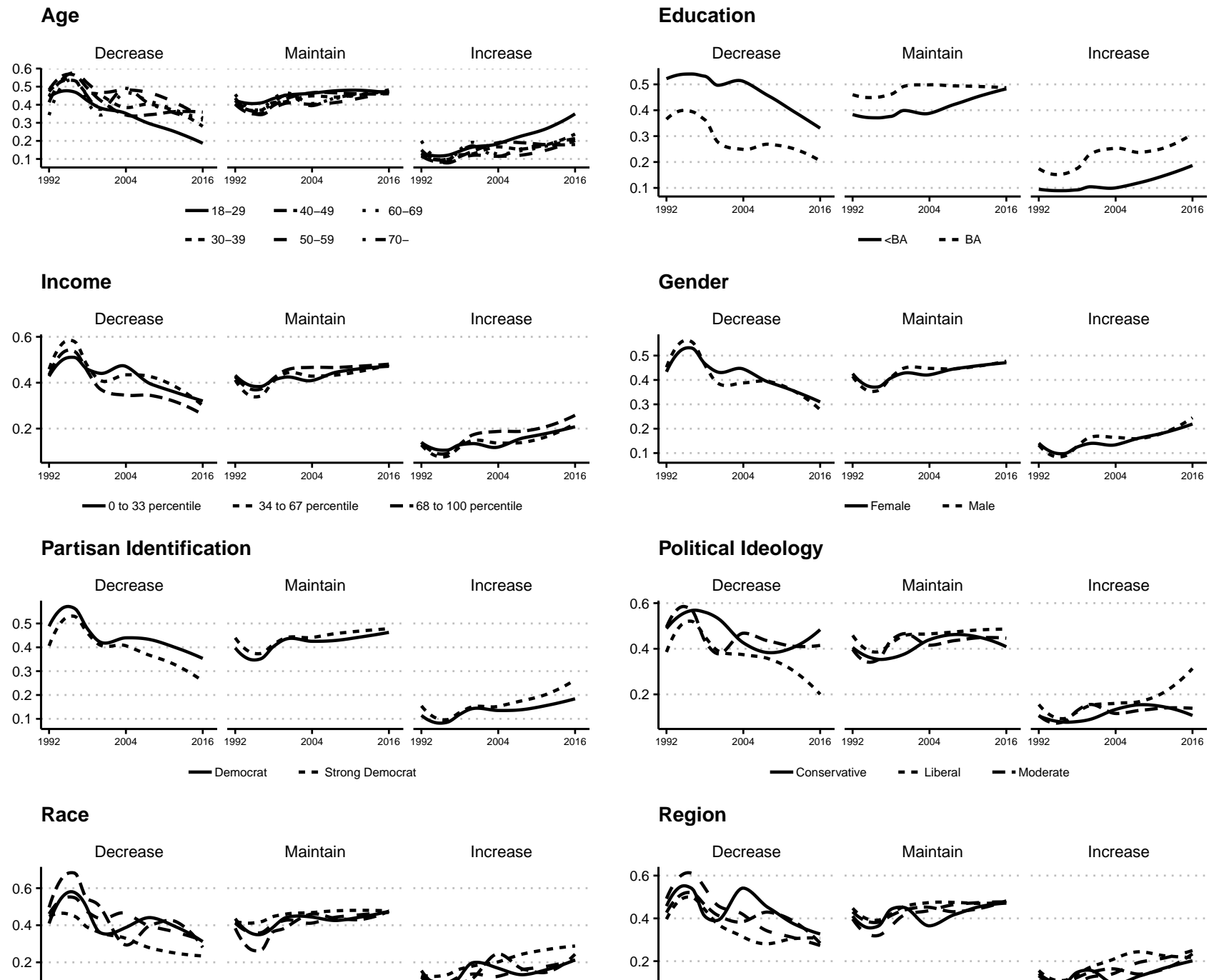
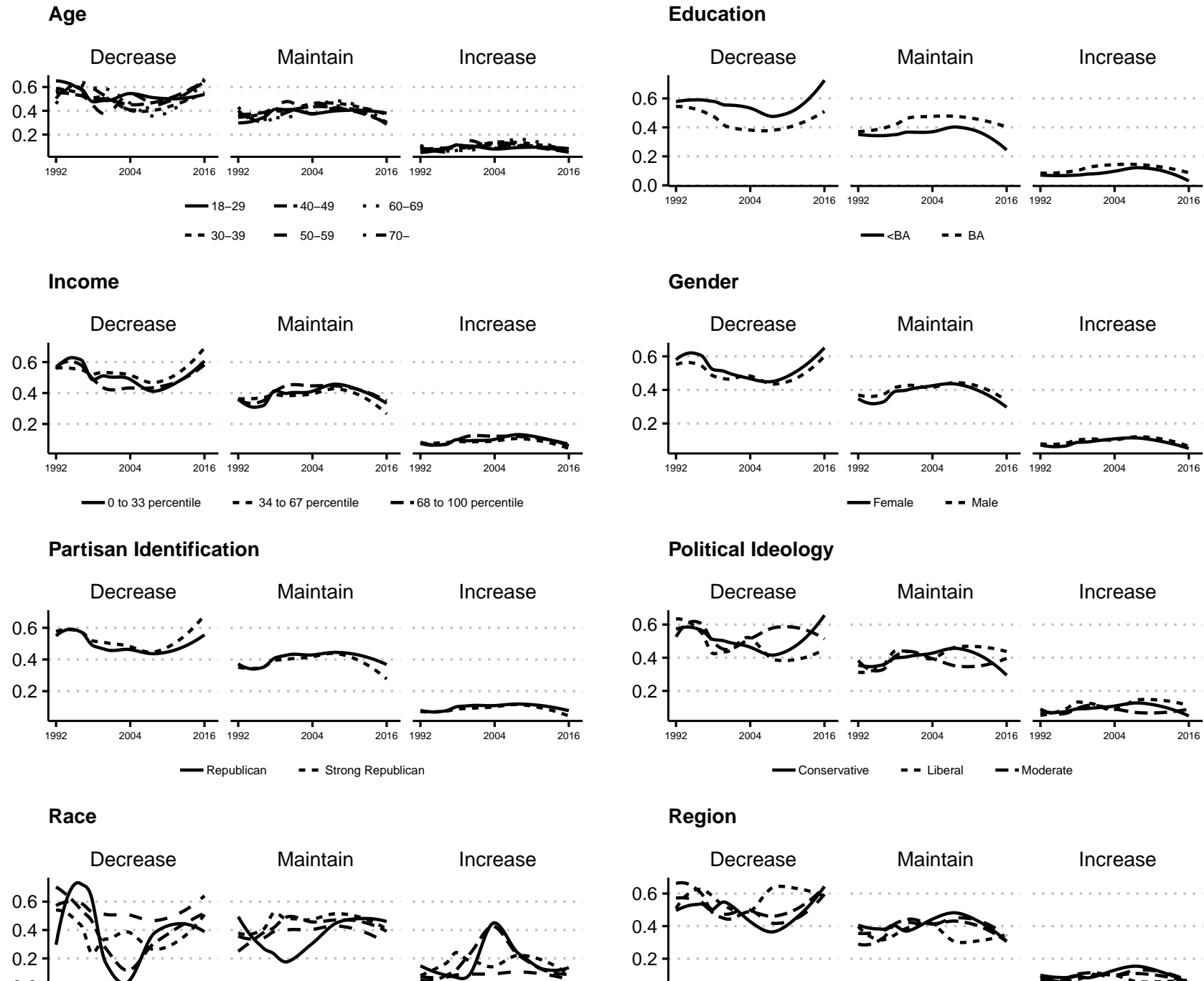


Figure 8: Republican immigration attitudes over time. Smoothed trend lines for the predicted probability of outcome.



There are notably different patterns for Republicans compared to Democrats (Figure 8). Again, the *weighted κ'* indices demonstrated the sharp collapse of several Republican cleavages in recent years, notably region, race, and religion (attendance). The regional cleavage decline appears to be a function of Southern, Midwestern, and Western Republicans becoming more similar to Northeastern Republicans in their anti-immigration views: There was large spike in anti-immigration sentiment among Northeastern Republicans in 2008, and they have maintained this level of anti-immigration; Republicans from other regions have since closed this gap, resulting in the smaller regional cleavage among Republicans. Most striking is the patterns among religious attendance. While a sizable cleavage existed in the mid-2000s, this cleavage has collapsed as a result of regular church attenders becoming sharply more anti-immigration in recent years. It appears that while regular church attendance may have served as a buffer from anti-immigration sentiment among Republicans in past years, this function no longer holds, as regular church attenders are just as anti-immigration as occasional church-goers and those who never attend church. This is a striking finding and is consistent with the mobilization of Christian nationalists in recent years (Whitehead and Perry 2020; Bonikowski et al. 2019). The racial cleavage is defined by a steady level of anti-immigration sentiment among white Republicans compared to more varied attitudes among other racial categories. This cleavage has drastically dissipated as a result of a consistent uptick in anti-immigration views among all racial categories since 2004. While the increasingly small share of minority Republicans is well documented, these unifying trends are important, as demonstrated in Figure 4, despite the small number of respondents occupying the non-white categories. Compared to Democrats, the patterns among age groups for Republicans are less clear, but a bit of an age cleavage does appear to develop in 2016, with the two youngest categories having lower levels of anti-immigration attitudes compared to older Republicans. The sharp increase in anti-immigration attitudes among older Republicans following 2008 is particularly eye-catching.

While the ideological cleavage among Republicans is not as pronounced as Democrats, several trends are noteworthy. Interestingly, conservative Republicans, holding all else equal, became the most anti-immigration category in 2016, while moderate Republicans had been the most anti-immigration since 2004. Why have these ideological differences among Republicans not contributed to larger variation among Republicans? As Figure 6 demonstrates, the ideological cleavage among Republicans was suppressed by changing composition, as a large majority of Republicans are made up of self-identified “conservatives” by 2016, which drowns out the differences of moderate and liberal Republicans. This ideological dynamic is different compared to Democrats, as Democrats, while also becoming more liberal, are split more evenly along ideological lines (liberal vs. moderate). So, simply put, the ideological divisions among Democrats are more impactful compared to Republicans because the Republican party has become overwhelmingly conservative in recent years. Like Democrats, the education cleavage does appear to be driven by a diploma divide among Republicans. However, this divide was less pronounced in the early and mid-2000s has become more stark in recent years.

In sum, the growing ideological cleavage among Democrats is best explained by increasingly pro-immigration views among liberals paired with a simultaneous static trend among moderates and an increasingly anti-immigration (small) group of conservative Democrats; similarly, strong Democrats have increasingly pro-immigration views compared to weak

Democrats. Thus, the steady rise in variation among Democrats on immigration views can best be explained by the growing distinction between liberal, strong Democrats, and the rest of the party. Further, a sizable education gap remains, with lower-educated Democrats demonstrating more anti-immigration sentiment compared to the rest of the party. Republicans, on the other hand, have become sharply more homogeneous on their immigration views, and this can be attributed to a number of factors. Most notably: There is a decreasing distinction between Northeastern Republicans and Republicans in other regions in terms of their anti-immigration views; regular church attenders, who were formally the most pro-immigration Republicans, are now just as anti-immigration as less religious Republicans; and, there has been a dramatic rise in anti-immigration views among conservative Republicans—given that conservative Republicans make up 80% of the party by 2016, this trend has a major impact on growing uniformity of Republican immigration attitudes.

Discussion and Conclusions

The literature on mass polarization and partisan sorting has demonstrated a public that is increasingly divided along political lines. In this environment, virtually any salient issue has the potential to become flash points for both parties. Why, then, do parties not emphasize certain hot-button issues symmetrically in an era of high partisanship? This paper has argued that in order to answer this question, social scientists must study attitudes at three levels: (1) the aggregate, (2) between-party, and (3) within-party. Each level provides necessary information for understanding party strategy toward issues and the broader consequences of public opinion for institutional politics. I have applied this analytic strategy to immigration—one of the most salient issues in U.S. and European politics—to understand why Democrats, unlike Republicans, have not touted immigration as a central issue of the party.

The results demonstrate a number of important findings. **First**, immigration attitudes have been fairly stable at the aggregate level, except for a rise in anti-immigration sentiment in the mid-1990s. Since this short-lived spike, however, the aggregate trends have held steady and, if anything, have become slightly more pro-immigration—a surprising trend given the recent rise in anti-immigration rhetoric and policy proposals (Lamont et al. 2017; Flores 2017, 2018). **Second**, these trends in the aggregate mask drastic party polarization since 2008, with Republicans becoming sharply more anti-immigration and Democrats becoming more pro-immigration. **Third**, while the parties have clearly grown apart, the attitudes within the parties have not trended uniformly. While Democrats have become more pro-immigration over the last several years, they have also grown more variable on this issue. In contrast, Republicans have become more anti-immigration and consistently so. In short, the results suggest that Democrats may be reluctant to run on immigration because substantial intra-party disagreement make this strategy too risky; on the other hand, touting immigration poses little risk to a uniform Republican party and provides much upside in their potential to “wedge” a divided Democratic party.

When looking at overall trends on immigration attitudes, the current political climate—one of heightened saliency surrounding issues of race and immigration—would seem puzzling (Sides et al. 2018). But once this trend is disaggregated by party, a clear over-time story

emerges. The similar trends between parties going into 2008 are reflective of the fact that immigration was not highly politically salient during this era (Flores 2018). While the September 11th attacks had severe short-term implications for citizens' national identities (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016), Democrats and Republicans had not yet diverged sharply on immigration attitudes.¹⁷ The years from 2001 to 2008 were marked by an era of "compassionate conservatism, in which ideas of inclusivity were espoused—and this may explain the higher pro-immigration sentiment among Republicans during this period.

This era came to an abrupt ending, however, with the 2008 election, which ushered in a political era marked by the saliency of issues related to race, ethnicity, and immigration (Sides et al. 2018). Following suit, we see a precipitous drop in pro-immigration sentiment among Republicans following 2008. By 2012 Republican party leaders had dropped the "compassionate conservative" brand of the Bush-era Republican party and candidates, including Mitt Romney, ran on platforms that included more restrictive immigration policies.

But following the loss of the 2012 election, in which Latinos and other ethnic minorities played a crucial role in electing Obama to a second term, Republican party leaders decided they needed to turn away from the restrictive immigration policies that had marked their platform in fear of further alienating these voters (Sides et al. 2018; Hajnal and Rivera 2014), and this turn was evident in the 2016 Republican primaries. Mainstream Republican candidates ran on either inclusive immigration policies or didn't emphasize issues related to immigration—this strategy ran in stark contrast to the Trump campaign (Bonikowski et al. 2019; Lamont et al. 2017). Republican leaders were fearful of Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric and its consequences, as this approach was in direct conflict with the image that party elites had attempted to establish over the previous four years. But as several scholars have argued, and is demonstrated here, the demand for anti-immigration rhetoric among Republicans was there (e.g., Bonikowski et al. 2019; Sides et al. 2018): anti-immigration sentiment among Republicans, on average, only grew from 2012 to 2016.

While Republicans have been able to successfully run—and win—on an anti-immigration platform, why have Democrats not been able to establish a commensurate pro-immigration platform or campaign strategy, despite a rise in pro-immigration attitudes? One possible explanation for this is that the intra-party dynamics on immigration have varied between Republicans and Democrats. For Republicans, they have not only become more anti-immigration on average, but they have done so consistently; in other words, to be a Republican increasingly means to be anti-immigration. Thus the demand for anti-immigration candidates and policy proposals is there among Republicans, and there is not much risk of backlash from party members, as they are increasingly uniform on this issue. Democrats, however, have become more pro-immigration on average, but this trend is largely being driven by liberals and strong partisans. In other words, growing cleavages within the Democratic party have made it difficult for the party to establish a clear identity on immigration, and as a consequence, candidates may find it risky to run campaigns with immigration as a central focus. Notably, the growing ideological cleavage among Democrats played out along several issue domains in the 2020 Democratic primaries, as the liberal and moderate wings struggled to

¹⁷It may be that shifts in nationalism, as a result of the September 11th attacks, set the groundwork for downstream shifts in immigration attitudes. Backlash to the Obama presidency may have served as a catalyst.

define the identity of the party.

Within-party differences on politically salient issues may also have potential consequences for party defection and subsequent realignment (Manza and Brooks 1999). With the case of immigration, within-party cleavages among Democrats may explain the oft-discussed “Obama-Trump switchers”—Democrats who voted for Obama in 2012 but subsequently voted for Trump in 2016. If an issue becomes sufficiently salient in the political arena, such as immigration, the possibility emerges for opposing-party candidates to exploit existing cleavages in a party (Hillygus and Shields 2009). Unsatisfied with the liberal, pro-immigration, wing of the Democratic party, more moderate and conservative Democrats may have found the explicit anti-immigration rhetoric appealing in 2016 (Lamont et al. 2017). Further, depending on the continued political saliency of an issue, within-party cleavages may serve as a harbinger of future realignment (Manza and Brooks 1999). Indeed, there is early evidence of this already occurring with immigration: low-educated whites are increasingly identifying as Republicans in recent years, and it is these individuals who demonstrate the most anti-immigration views (Sides et al. 2018; Hajnal and Rivera 2014).

In a highly polarized political environment, within-party variation may have substantial consequences for the implementation of social policies and for political culture, as well. In a two party system, the ability to block increasingly extreme policies from being implemented largely depends on the ability of the opposing party to effectively counter. If intra-party dynamics prevent the opposing party from touting an issue and providing an alternative platform, more extreme, and potentially dangerous, rhetoric and policy proposals can dominate the political arena. While scholars have called for Democrats and left parties in Europe to take ownership of pro-immigration platforms in order to counter the rise of far right parties (Gidrom 2018; Dahlström and Sundell 2012), this paper suggests that intra-party disagreement may be preventing them from doing so.

This paper also has several implications for the literature on mass polarization. I have demonstrated the importance of studying attitudinal trends at three levels (aggregate, between-party, and within-party), but the implications of the results also suggests the continued importance of studying attitudes on select salient issues. Sociologists have shifted their focus from studying polarization on key issues in the public (DiMaggio et al. 1996), to studying issue constraint (Baldassarri and Gelman 2008), to the more recent interest in studying the relationship among a large set of political beliefs (DellaPosta 2020; Baldassarri and Goldberg 2014). Each of these approaches has distinct political implications, and scholars should spell these out. While recent approaches to the study of mass polarization have emphasized the need to go beyond studying a few selected issues, this paper shows the importance of taking a close look at hot-button issues, as they have clear implications for institutional politics (Bélanger and Meguid 2008). Immigration, for instance, became a key issue in the 2016 election and could potentially impact future elections and party alignments (Sides et al. 2018). While more holistic approaches to attitudinal polarization map out important political-cultural developments (DellaPosta 2020; Baldassarri and Goldberg 2014; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008), the implications of these studies give less insight into party coalitions and electoral strategy. Studying salient issues, their relationship to parties, and their role in the political arena, provides sociologists an opportunity to engage more directly with institutional politics and electoral outcomes, topics largely ceded to political scientists in recent decades (Mudge and Chen 2014).

There are several limitations with the present study. First, a long-term descriptive study of immigration attitudes and their relationship to party could benefit from having an greater number and variety of measures. This study has focused on the commonly used legal immigrant policy item because it covers the largest number of waves and has been shown to be a good measure of Americans' views on the issue (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). However, there are other variables that would be important to track over a similar period, such as a feeling thermometer measure toward legal immigrants, as well as illegal immigrants; it is possible that views toward illegal and legal immigrants would trend differently by party (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014).

Second, while this study traces important descriptive patterns over time, it does not directly contribute to the literature on the *causes* of attitudes toward immigration. The observed trends are consistent with political party becoming an increasing source of attitudes toward immigration via party signaling and attitude constraint mechanisms—regardless of their relationship to economic vs. cultural socio-tropic concerns (Flores 2018,?; Baldassarri and Gelman 2008); measuring the impact of party signaling on key issues, such as immigration, will remain a vital point of study in future research. Finally, as is often an issue with over-time attitudes studies using cross-sectional data, I cannot determine to what extent trends in between-party attitude differences are due to within-person attitude change, partisan switching, or cohort replacement. However, the importance of measuring between- and within-party cleavages at any given time remains, regardless of potential partisan realignment—the level of disagreement between and within parties at a given time is still of substantive interest.

This paper has brought together sociology research on public opinion with insights from political science on parties and institutional politics. The implications of the findings demonstrate the value of bringing these two literatures together and highlights the importance for the continued revival of research on political parties in sociology (Mudge and Chen 2014). Future studies could apply the analytical approach and methods supplied herein to a wide range of socio-political attitudes of interest to social scientists. For instance, have Democrats become increasingly divided on other issues—such as abortion, welfare, and affirmative action—or is this pattern unique to immigration? Are Republicans increasingly agreeing on issues across the board? Are there similar within-party dynamics in other countries? These are a few possible questions that future studies could answer with the approach and methods outlined in this paper.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Descriptives

Table 1: Weighted Descriptive Statistics for Each Wave

	N	Mean	SD
1992			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	2168	0.49	0.50
Maintain	2168	0.43	0.50
Increase	2168	0.08	0.27
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	1497	0.59	0.49
Republican	1497	0.41	0.49
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	1824	0.28	0.45
Moderate	1824	0.32	0.46
Conservative	1824	0.41	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	2420	0.08	0.27
HS	2420	0.46	0.50
Some College	2420	0.23	0.42
BA or more	2420	0.23	0.42
Age	2484	45.82	17.89
Male	2485	0.46	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	2281	0.34	0.47
34 to 67%	2281	0.30	0.46
68 to 100%	2281	0.36	0.48
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	2485	0.19	0.39
North Central	2485	0.27	0.44
South	2485	0.35	0.48
West	2485	0.19	0.39
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	2467	0.56	0.50
Catholic	2467	0.24	0.42
Jewish	2467	0.02	0.14
Other and none	2467	0.18	0.39
Religiosity	2295	0.78	0.41
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	2472	0.37	0.48
Occasional	2472	0.29	0.45

Regular	2472	0.34	0.47
<hr/>			
1994			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	1730	0.66	0.47
Maintain	1730	0.28	0.45
Increase	1730	0.05	0.22
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	1152	0.53	0.50
Republican	1152	0.47	0.50
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	1400	0.19	0.39
Moderate	1400	0.34	0.47
Conservative	1400	0.47	0.50
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	1757	0.06	0.23
HS	1757	0.49	0.50
Some College	1757	0.25	0.44
BA or more	1757	0.20	0.40
Age	1795	44.06	17.35
Male	1795	0.48	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	1649	0.32	0.46
34 to 67%	1649	0.35	0.48
68 to 100%	1649	0.34	0.47
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	1795	0.17	0.37
North Central	1795	0.27	0.44
South	1795	0.37	0.48
West	1795	0.19	0.39
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	1768	0.53	0.50
Catholic	1768	0.25	0.43
Jewish	1768	0.02	0.13
Other and none	1768	0.20	0.40
Religiosity	1760	0.77	0.42
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	1769	0.39	0.49
Occasional	1769	0.29	0.45
Regular	1769	0.33	0.47
<hr/>			
1996			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	1499	0.59	0.49
Maintain	1499	0.36	0.48

Increase	1499	0.05	0.23
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	1133	0.59	0.49
Republican	1133	0.41	0.49
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	1329	0.24	0.43
Moderate	1329	0.32	0.47
Conservative	1329	0.44	0.50
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	1711	0.05	0.21
HS	1711	0.47	0.50
Some College	1711	0.27	0.44
BA or more	1711	0.22	0.41
Age	1712	44.61	17.39
Male	1714	0.46	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	1564	0.33	0.47
34 to 67%	1564	0.37	0.48
68 to 100%	1564	0.30	0.46
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	1714	0.16	0.37
North Central	1714	0.26	0.44
South	1714	0.38	0.49
West	1714	0.19	0.39
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	1710	0.53	0.50
Catholic	1710	0.26	0.44
Jewish	1710	0.02	0.12
Other and none	1710	0.20	0.40
Religiosity	1706	0.78	0.41
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	1705	0.37	0.48
Occasional	1705	0.34	0.47
Regular	1705	0.30	0.46

1998			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	1245	0.51	0.50
Maintain	1245	0.39	0.49
Increase	1245	0.11	0.31
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	810	0.59	0.49
Republican	810	0.41	0.49
<i>Political Ideology</i>			

Liberal	1018	0.24	0.43
Moderate	1018	0.37	0.48
Conservative	1018	0.39	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	1276	0.06	0.23
HS	1276	0.44	0.50
Some College	1276	0.28	0.45
BA or more	1276	0.23	0.42
Age	1265	45.20	17.52
Male	1281	0.46	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	1219	0.33	0.47
34 to 67%	1219	0.34	0.47
68 to 100%	1219	0.34	0.47
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	1281	0.19	0.39
North Central	1281	0.25	0.43
South	1281	0.38	0.48
West	1281	0.19	0.39
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	1274	0.47	0.50
Catholic	1274	0.31	0.46
Jewish	1274	0.02	0.14
Other and none	1274	0.20	0.40
Religiosity	1270	0.77	0.42
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	1271	0.37	0.48
Occasional	1271	0.30	0.46
Regular	1271	0.33	0.47

2000			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	1742	0.47	0.50
Maintain	1742	0.44	0.50
Increase	1742	0.09	0.28
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	1069	0.59	0.49
Republican	1069	0.41	0.49
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	673	0.27	0.44
Moderate	673	0.31	0.46
Conservative	673	0.42	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	1800	0.04	0.20

HS	1800	0.44	0.50
Some College	1800	0.28	0.45
BA or more	1800	0.24	0.43
Age	1798	45.55	17.64
Male	1807	0.44	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	1515	0.39	0.49
34 to 67%	1515	0.30	0.46
68 to 100%	1515	0.31	0.46
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	1807	0.19	0.40
North Central	1807	0.25	0.43
South	1807	0.36	0.48
West	1807	0.20	0.40
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	1787	0.52	0.50
Catholic	1787	0.27	0.44
Jewish	1787	0.02	0.14
Other and none	1787	0.19	0.40
Religiosity	1799	0.76	0.43
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	1789	0.36	0.48
Occasional	1789	0.31	0.46
Regular	1789	0.33	0.47

2004			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	1047	0.48	0.50
Maintain	1047	0.43	0.49
Increase	1047	0.10	0.30
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	726	0.53	0.50
Republican	726	0.47	0.50
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	920	0.25	0.43
Moderate	920	0.33	0.47
Conservative	920	0.41	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	1212	0.05	0.21
HS	1212	0.41	0.49
Some College	1212	0.29	0.45
BA or more	1212	0.26	0.44
Age	1212	46.54	17.57
Male	1212	0.49	0.50

<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	1070	0.35	0.48
34 to 67%	1070	0.30	0.46
68 to 100%	1070	0.35	0.48
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	1212	0.20	0.40
North Central	1212	0.25	0.44
South	1212	0.35	0.48
West	1212	0.20	0.40
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	1209	0.49	0.50
Catholic	1209	0.25	0.43
Jewish	1209	0.03	0.16
Other and none	1209	0.23	0.42
Religiosity	1203	0.77	0.42
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	1204	0.35	0.48
Occasional	1204	0.30	0.46
Regular	1204	0.35	0.48

2008			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	2061	0.45	0.50
Maintain	2061	0.41	0.49
Increase	2061	0.14	0.35
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	1403	0.57	0.50
Republican	1403	0.43	0.50
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	1626	0.29	0.45
Moderate	1626	0.29	0.45
Conservative	1626	0.42	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	2308	0.02	0.15
HS	2308	0.41	0.49
Some College	2308	0.29	0.45
BA or more	2308	0.28	0.45
Age	2277	46.85	17.72
Male	2322	0.45	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	2139	0.31	0.46
34 to 67%	2139	0.39	0.49
68 to 100%	2139	0.30	0.46
<i>Region</i>			

Northeast	2322	0.15	0.35
North Central	2322	0.21	0.41
South	2322	0.43	0.49
West	2322	0.21	0.41
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	2320	0.53	0.50
Catholic	2320	0.19	0.39
Jewish	2320	0.01	0.12
Other and none	2320	0.27	0.44
Religiosity	2309	0.71	0.45
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	2315	0.33	0.47
Occasional	2315	0.29	0.45
Regular	2315	0.38	0.49

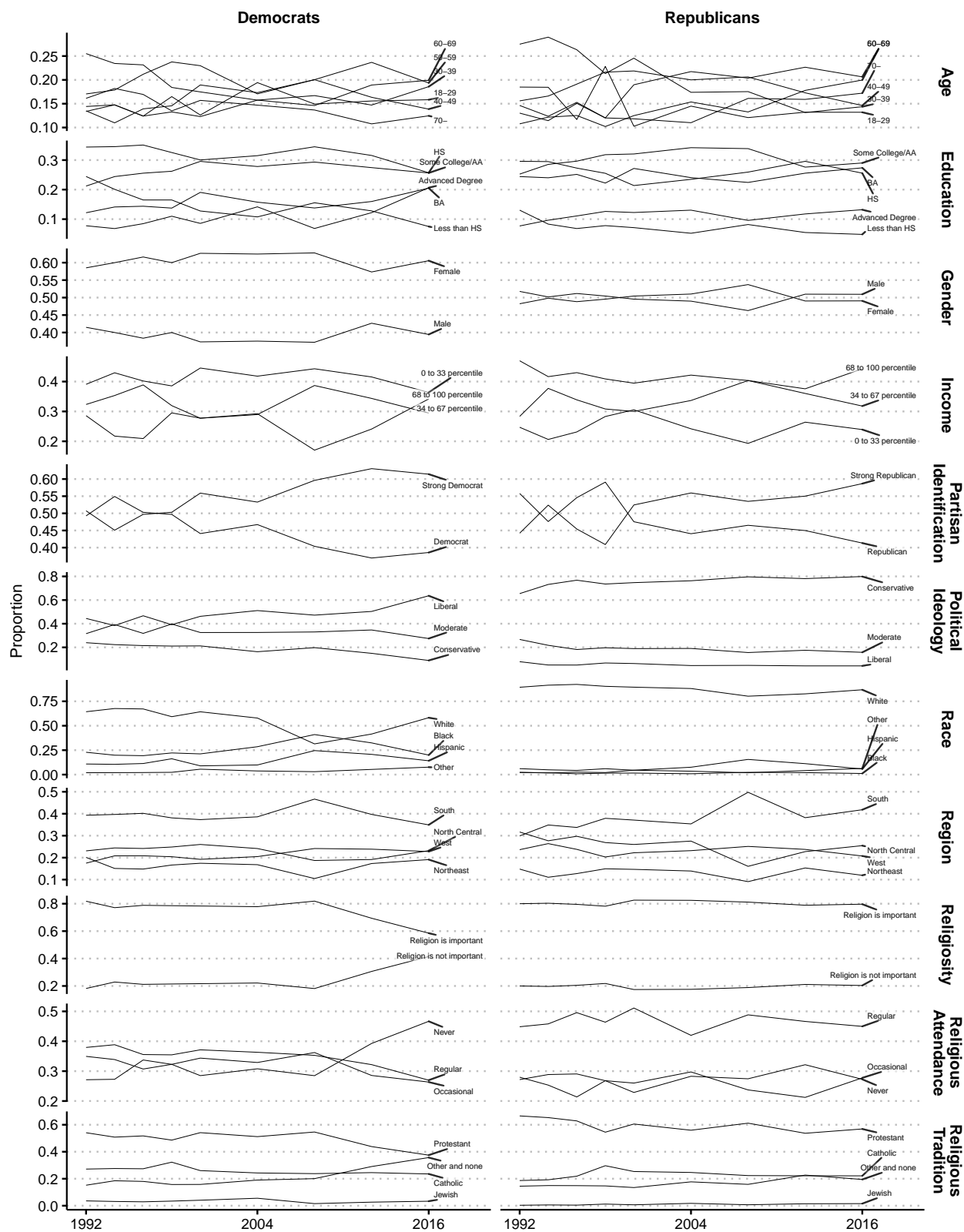
2012			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	5390	0.44	0.50
Maintain	5390	0.42	0.49
Increase	5390	0.14	0.35
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	3741	0.56	0.50
Republican	3741	0.44	0.50
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	5300	0.26	0.44
Moderate	5300	0.34	0.48
Conservative	5300	0.40	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	5846	0.02	0.14
HS	5846	0.38	0.49
Some College	5846	0.30	0.46
BA or more	5846	0.29	0.46
Age	5852	47.38	17.38
Male	5914	0.48	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	5715	0.31	0.46
34 to 67%	5715	0.37	0.48
68 to 100%	5715	0.31	0.46
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	5914	0.17	0.38
North Central	5914	0.22	0.41
South	5914	0.38	0.49
West	5914	0.23	0.42
<i>Religious tradition</i>			

Protestant	5895	0.42	0.49
Catholic	5895	0.22	0.41
Jewish	5895	0.02	0.14
Other and none	5895	0.35	0.48
Religiosity	5882	0.67	0.47
<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	5880	0.33	0.47
Occasional	5880	0.25	0.43
Regular	5880	0.43	0.50

2016			
<i>Immigration attitudes</i>			
Decrease	3621	0.44	0.50
Maintain	3621	0.40	0.49
Increase	3621	0.16	0.37
<i>Party ID</i>			
Democrat	2678	0.55	0.50
Republican	2678	0.45	0.50
<i>Political Ideology</i>			
Liberal	3049	0.32	0.47
Moderate	3049	0.29	0.45
Conservative	3049	0.39	0.49
<i>Education</i>			
Less than HS	4231	0.01	0.11
HS	4231	0.37	0.48
Some College	4231	0.31	0.46
BA or more	4231	0.31	0.46
Age	4149	47.31	17.65
Male	4218	0.48	0.50
<i>Income</i>			
0 to 33%	4157	0.32	0.47
34 to 67%	4157	0.30	0.46
68 to 100%	4157	0.38	0.49
<i>Region</i>			
Northeast	4270	0.18	0.38
North Central	4270	0.22	0.41
South	4270	0.38	0.48
West	4270	0.23	0.42
<i>Religious tradition</i>			
Protestant	4269	0.43	0.50
Catholic	4269	0.22	0.41
Jewish	4269	0.02	0.13
Other and none	4269	0.33	0.47
Religiosity	4243	0.65	0.48

<i>Church attendance</i>			
Never	4248	0.30	0.46
Occasional	4248	0.28	0.45
Regular	4248	0.42	0.49

Figure 9: Over-time compositions for Democrats and Republicans. Plots display weighted proportions of each group over time (Source: ANES).



Appendix B: Regression tables

This appendix includes tables for the regression results, which are displayed graphically in the results section. Table 2 displays results for the over-time, between-party, and within-party models. I also display a “Full” model, which presents results with all variables included and no interactions. The results are displayed as logits (log-odds). As the graphical displays in the results section plot predictions, I present the results here as logits to include both predicted values (which are preferred for cross-model comparisons and interactions [Mize 2019; Mize et al. 2019]) and logit coefficients, which are estimated parameters from the ordinal logit model. I do not include tabular results for each *variableXyear* interaction model because this would result in twenty-four (12 variables X 2 parties) columns of results. Results for these models are available upon request. Table 3 presents tabular results from the variance function regression. The first column (β) contains OLS coefficients; the second column (λ) contains variance coefficients.

Table 2: Logits for ordinal logistic regressions predicting immigration attitudes. Model “Over time” includes only sample year. “Party x Year” includes party identification and a partyXyear interaction. The “Full” model includes all covariates. Models “Democrats” and “Republicans” include models with covariates, restricted to only Democrats and Republicans, respectively (full model interactions)

	Full sample models			Party-specific Models	
	Over time	Party \times Year	Full	Democrats	Republicans
1992	Ref	Ref	Ref	Ref	Ref
1994	-0.633*** (0.064)	-0.719*** (0.109)	-0.529*** (0.101)	-0.616*** (0.140)	-0.463** (0.145)
1996	-0.345*** (0.065)	-0.441*** (0.106)	-0.336*** (0.101)	-0.546*** (0.137)	-0.115 (0.148)
1998	0.033 (0.068)	-0.008 (0.112)	0.041 (0.105)	-0.083 (0.141)	0.226 (0.158)
2000	0.151* (0.061)	0.120 (0.103)	0.117 (0.125)	0.090 (0.170)	0.129 (0.186)
2004	0.098 (0.071)	0.079 (0.127)	0.176 (0.114)	-0.012 (0.163)	0.298 (0.160)
2008	0.304*** (0.059)	0.202* (0.095)	0.320** (0.097)	0.226 (0.129)	0.475** (0.151)
2012	0.314*** (0.048)	0.459*** (0.080)	0.218** (0.078)	0.278** (0.105)	0.120 (0.119)
2016	0.310*** (0.052)	0.876*** (0.088)	0.200* (0.083)	0.642*** (0.114)	-0.346** (0.125)

Bock	Divided Dems, United Reps				
	Full sample models			Party-specific Models	
	Over time	Party \times Year	Full	Democrats	Republicans
Democrat		Ref	Ref		
Republican		-0.272* (0.107)	-0.316*** (0.057)		
1992 \times Democrat		Ref			
1992 \times Republican		Ref			
1994 \times Democrat		Ref			
1994 \times Republican		0.130 (0.165)			
1996 \times Democrat		Ref			
1996 \times Republican		0.215 (0.165)			
1998 \times Democrat		Ref			
1998 \times Republican		0.125 (0.175)			
2000 \times Democrat		Ref			
2000 \times Republican		0.037 (0.160)			
2004 \times Democrat		Ref			
2004 \times Republican		0.033 (0.185)			
2008 \times Democrat		Ref			
2008 \times Republican		0.154 (0.158)			
2012 \times Democrat		Ref			

	Divided Dems, United Reps				
	Full sample models			Party-specific Models	
	Over time	Party \times Year	Full	Democrats	Republicans
2012 \times Republican		-0.381** (0.127)			
2016 \times Democrat		Ref			
2016 \times Republican		-1.266*** (0.136)			
18-29			Ref	Ref	Ref
30-39			-0.195** (0.071)	-0.417*** (0.095)	0.084 (0.110)
40-49			-0.318*** (0.072)	-0.498*** (0.096)	-0.053 (0.113)
50-59			-0.368*** (0.072)	-0.595*** (0.096)	-0.076 (0.112)
60-69			-0.232** (0.075)	-0.426*** (0.100)	-0.021 (0.118)
70-			-0.296*** (0.080)	-0.448*** (0.110)	-0.070 (0.121)
Male			0.081 (0.041)	0.047 (0.055)	0.182** (0.064)
0 to 33 percentile			Ref	Ref	Ref
34 to 67 percentile			-0.076 (0.053)	-0.060 (0.067)	-0.083 (0.088)
68 to 100 percentile			0.159** (0.058)	0.186* (0.077)	0.116 (0.091)
Less than HS			Ref	Ref	Ref
HS			-0.155 (0.084)	-0.242* (0.101)	-0.070 (0.159)
Some College/AA			0.008 (0.085)	-0.016 (0.103)	-0.016 (0.159)
BA			0.458*** (0.090)	0.516*** (0.113)	0.348* (0.163)

Bock	Divided Dems, United Reps			
	Full sample models			Party-specific Models
	Over time	Party \times Year	Full	Democrats Republicans
Advanced Degree			0.723*** (0.098)	0.745*** (0.122) 0.558** (0.175)
Northeast			Ref	Ref Ref
North Central			-0.039 (0.067)	-0.196* (0.088) 0.186 (0.107)
South			-0.102 (0.063)	-0.131 (0.082) 0.014 (0.103)
West			0.004 (0.067)	-0.108 (0.087) 0.201 (0.109)
Protestant			Ref	Ref Ref
Catholic			0.083 (0.054)	0.048 (0.074) 0.130 (0.079)
Jewish			0.851*** (0.134)	0.832*** (0.153) 0.799** (0.300)
Other and none			0.291*** (0.061)	0.243** (0.080) 0.310** (0.095)
Religion is not important			Ref	Ref Ref
Religion is important			-0.072 (0.058)	-0.084 (0.075) 0.083 (0.096)
Regular			Ref	Ref Ref
Occasional			-0.324*** (0.053)	-0.274*** (0.072) -0.345*** (0.079)
Never			-0.230*** (0.061)	-0.167* (0.082) -0.294** (0.095)
White			Ref	Ref Ref
Black			0.159* (0.070)	0.049 (0.079) 0.693** (0.258)
Hispanic			0.586*** (0.071)	0.539*** (0.089) 0.659*** (0.125)

Bock	Divided Dems, United Reps				
	Full sample models			Party-specific Models	
	Over time	Party \times Year	Full	Democrats	Republicans
Other			0.136 (0.104)	-0.110 (0.135)	0.526** (0.167)
Liberal			Ref	Ref	Ref
Moderate			-0.573*** (0.057)	-0.490*** (0.066)	-0.258 (0.154)
Conservative			-0.619*** (0.063)	-0.531*** (0.084)	-0.225 (0.143)
Democrat				Ref	
Strong Democrat				0.284*** (0.058)	
Republican					Ref
Strong Republican					-0.224*** (0.065)
cut1	0.004 (0.041)	-0.131 (0.069)	-0.731*** (0.144)	-0.770*** (0.187)	0.230 (0.264)
cut2	2.148*** (0.044)	2.064*** (0.072)	1.522*** (0.145)	1.518*** (0.189)	2.556*** (0.268)
N	20503	12868	9440	5239	4201
Pseudo R^2	0.011	0.030	0.065	0.082	0.037
AIC	39414.845	24330.425	17524.998	9978.087	7388.934

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3: Results from a variance function regression predicting immigration attitudes. First column reports beta coefficients (β). Second column reports lambda coefficients (λ).

	β	λ
1992	Ref	Ref
1994	-0.222*** (0.034)	-0.153* (0.065)
1996	-0.149*** (0.035)	-0.143* (0.065)
1998	0.002 (0.039)	0.044 (0.070)
2000	0.040 (0.036)	-0.009 (0.065)
2004	0.039 (0.046)	0.136 (0.079)
2008	0.083* (0.034)	0.168** (0.059)
2012	0.172*** (0.028)	0.147** (0.050)
2016	0.327*** (0.032)	0.230*** (0.055)
Democrat	Ref	Ref
Republican	-0.101** (0.035)	-0.151* (0.067)
1992 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
1992 \times Republican	Ref	Ref
1994 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
1994 \times Republican	0.057 (0.050)	0.038 (0.097)
1996 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref

	β	λ
1996 \times Republican	0.077 (0.052)	0.070 (0.101)
1998 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
1998 \times Republican	0.051 (0.060)	0.126 (0.109)
2000 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
2000 \times Republican	0.016 (0.054)	0.083 (0.100)
2004 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
2004 \times Republican	0.001 (0.063)	-0.083 (0.115)
2008 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
2008 \times Republican	0.059 (0.056)	0.129 (0.098)
2012 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
2012 \times Republican	-0.133** (0.042)	-0.000 (0.079)
2016 \times Democrat	Ref	Ref
2016 \times Republican	-0.430*** (0.045)	-0.194* (0.083)
Constant	1.640*** (0.024)	-0.846*** (0.043)
N	12868	12868
AIC	25729.974	4391.710

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Appendix C: Variance function robustness check

The overall substantive conclusions do not change whether a three- or five-outcome immigration attitude measure is used. As one would expect, the overall levels of variance are larger with the five-outcome variable, compared to the three-outcome coding (Figure 10). One noticeable difference is the flatter trend between 2008 and 2016 when using the five-outcome coding. Further, while the 2012 difference between Republicans and Democrats is significant with the three-outcome coding, it is not with the five.

Figure 10: Variance function regression results with three- and five-outcome immigration attitude variable. Left panel presents over-time predicted logged variance results for both versions of outcome. Right panel displays over-time average discrete changes for Republicans compared to Democrats on predicted logged variance. Dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals; dashed lines crossing the solid horizontal line indicates that there is no significant difference between Republicans and Democrats in terms of their respective predicted variance in that year.

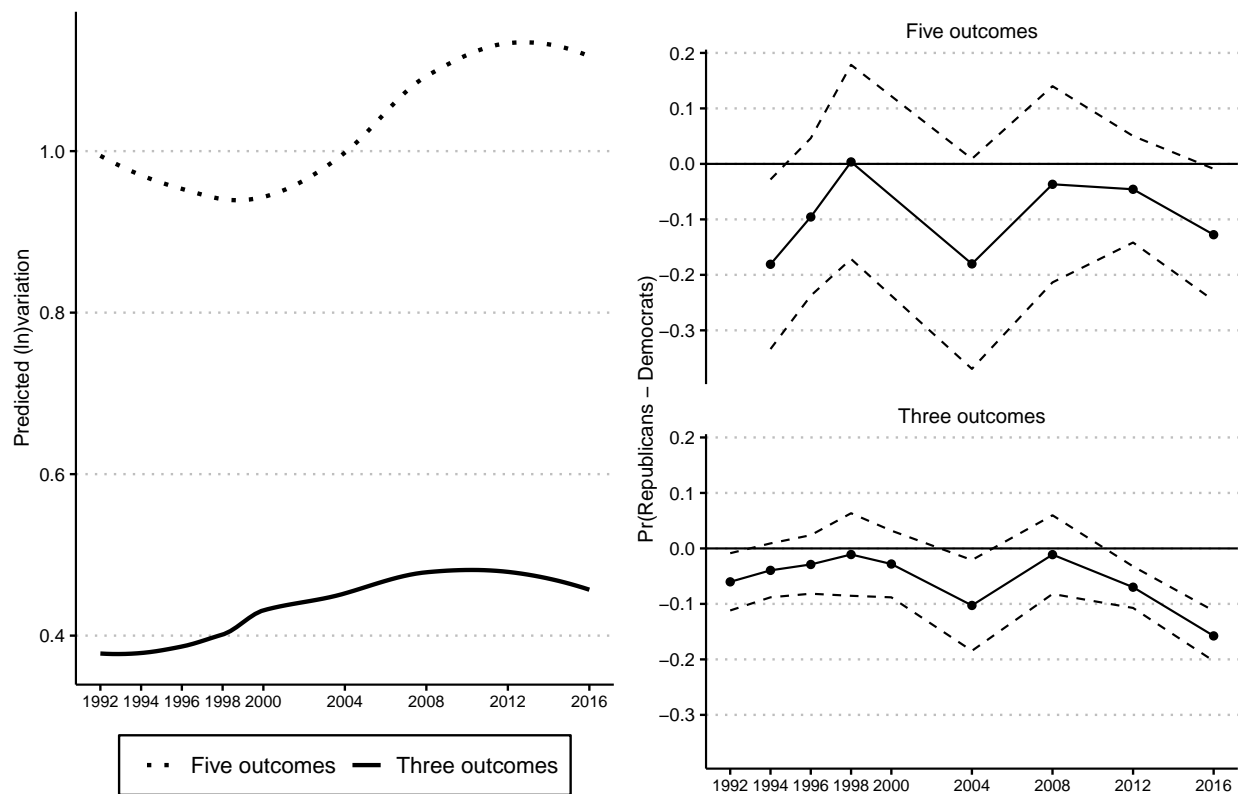
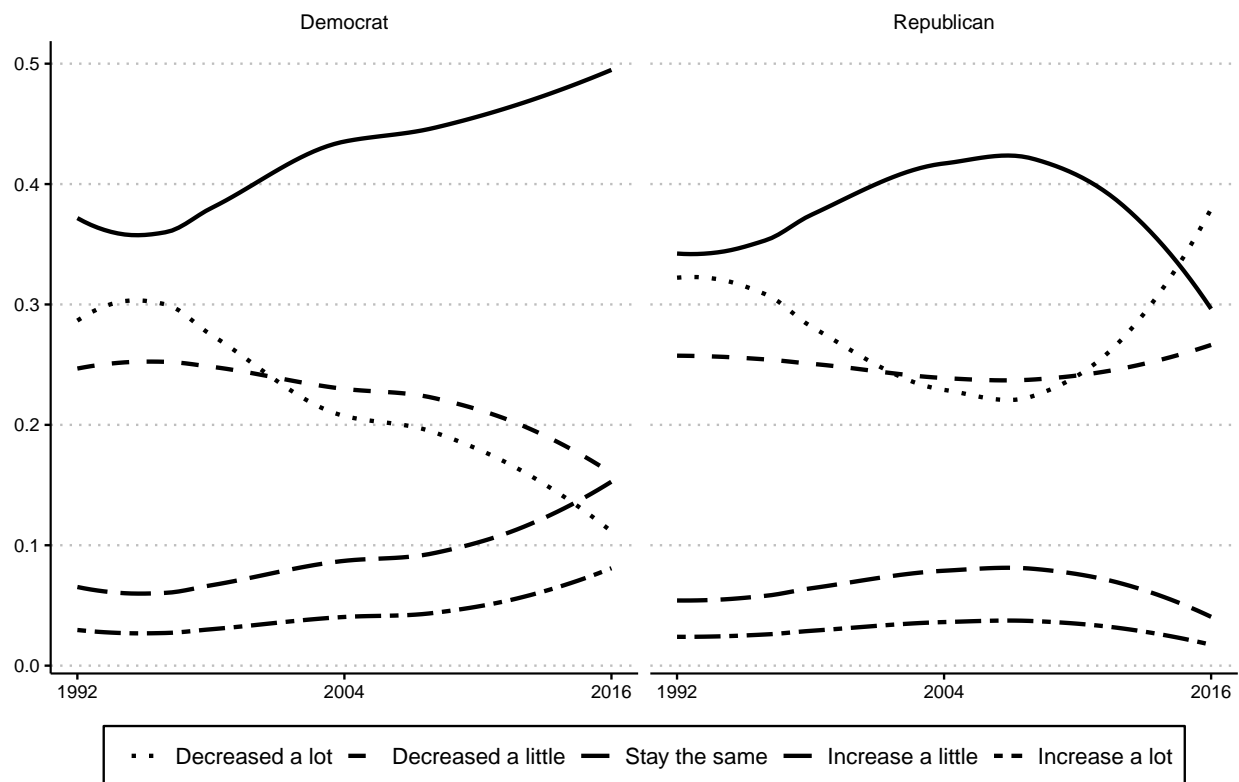


Figure 11 illustrates the over-time trends for both parties with the five-outcome coding. The minor differences we see among Republicans in the variance function analysis appears to result from nonparallel trends with the two anti-immigration categories. Indeed, most of the over-time change among anti-immigration Republicans has been due to changes among those with strong anti-immigration sentiment. This appears to explain both the differences in the early 1990s and the latter two waves. The collapsing of categories does not affect the variance function results among Democrats as much, because pro- and anti-immigration pairs trend fairly parallel.

Figure 11: Over-time party trends with five-outcome coding



Appendix D: Over-time trends for κ'

Figure 12: Within-party cleavages over time. Smoothed over-time trend lines for κ' indices for Democrats and Republicans.

