

Comment

The Authoritarian Voter? The Psychology and Values of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders Support

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Abstract

In this article, authoritarian theory in psychology is used to describe authoritarian values of left and right voters that emerge from left and right populist voting behavior. Examples from European history and politics demonstrate how this can occur in the current U.S. political climate, with Donald Trump's supporters reflecting far radical rightwing populist voters' views in Europe rather than traditional Republican views and values in the U.S., and Bernie Sanders' supporters more like democratic socialist voters in Europe rather than traditional mainstream Democrats in the U.S.

Keywords: authoritarian, group polarization, European history, political psychology, social psychology

Recent empirical research has examined the relationship between the psychological construct of authoritarianism and voters who favor 2016 Republican United States Presidential candidate Donald Trump (MacWilliams, 2016; Rahn & Oliver, 2016; Traub, 2016). The recent discussion related to the rise of the “authoritarian voter” in the United States during the 2016 presidential election cycle is actually a refrain on a familiar theme in some studies of electoral politics in countries where democracy has been tenuous historically. The electoral developments in Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s is the classic example of the rise of authoritarian values as Adolph Hitler’s National Socialist Democratic Workers Party (NSDAP) eventually gained prominence from 1928-33.

Although complicated, the Nazis saw their vote totals rise by 1930 alongside growing Communist party (KPD) vote in Germany, but by 1932 the Nazi vote declined somewhat. However, with strong propaganda from the Nazis, no viable alternative to them on the right, and middle classes worried that the KPD would grow and bring a leftwing Leninist solution to Germany, the center parties were all but knocked out as the party system moved toward bipolarity as centrifugal forces pushed the electorate to extreme left and right. Thus, the Nazis using extra-parliamentary force and persuasion (once three Nazis leaders, including Hitler, were placed in the government in 1933) took power by a mixture of constitutional manipulation and force (Gellately, 2001). The NSDAP’s astonishing rise in the national assembly (Reichstag) between the 1928 and 1933 elections saw them increase from

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12 seats in 1928 to 107 seats in the September 1930 elections to 230 seats in the July 1932 elections to 196 seats in the November 1932 elections to 100 seats in the March 1933 elections. At the same time the KPD consistently took a median seat range of 133 seats, beating the Nazis in the 1928 and 1930 elections, but declining to 120 seats by 1933 (Benz, 2006). This cautionary tale provides an international context for the rise electorally of authoritarian parties and voter values. Gellately argues that once in power the Nazis proceeded to reinforce values that would lead to increased anti-Semitism and the tolerance, acceptance, and eventual promotion of authoritarian values and policies among average Germans within a few short years of Hitler and the Nazis taking power (Gellately, 2001).

Persuasion is the process of changing attitudes, and media can provide a platform for political parties to advance their agendas and change a population's attitudes on issues to favor the positions of the particular political party. Vallone, Ross, and Lepper (1985) identified the hostile media phenomenon, where partisans perceive mediated presentations of information to be biased against their side. They showed segments of American national news coverage (ABC, CBS, NBC) of the Beirut massacre in 1982 and assessed responses immediately after viewing the footage. Both pro-Israeli and pro-Arab partisans rated the news coverage as being biased against their viewpoint, reported more negative references to their side than positive ones, and reported that viewing the coverage would be influential in persuading neutral partisans to the other side.

During an election cycle, partisan voters will always believe that the news outlets are biased against them, whether they are or not. However, bias in the news in the United States may very well be real due to the following dynamic. Fox News works very hard to tell their viewers (largely Republican; Pew Research Center, 2010) that Fox News is unbiased and the other outlets are all biased towards liberal Democrats. By doing this, Fox News identifies as biased to the viewers of all other outlets. Once that has occurred, Fox News can direct their coverage to the preferences of their audience and actually be biased in the supplemental commentaries that they provide. All parties likely overestimate the probability that a neutral viewer would be persuaded by the coverage, especially since the identification of bias self-selects the viewership, and neither side listens to the other. This is not a phenomenon exclusive to Fox News, but Fox News plays a key role in the cycle regarding how American politics may have become so recently polarized. Group polarization is the tendency for groups to make decisions that are more extreme than the members are initially inclined to make as individuals. This occurs because 1) people provide persuasive arguments during discussion that other people hadn't thought of, and 2) people wait to see what group members want, then pick something more extreme to win individual popularity in the group, using social comparison. This is a basic phenomenon of small groups and large groups, not just political parties.

The following events may have created the context for recent widespread political polarization in the United States: 1994 GOP "Contract with America," 1996 Fox News Channel launched with Roger Ailes as CEO, GOP attempted to impeach Clinton, 2000 Presidential election went to the Supreme Court for a decision, subsequently George W. Bush serves a term where many Democrats did not acknowledge that he was the elected President, 2008 Democrats win the White House with a Black President and a changing electorate demographic, and 2016 Trump appeals to authoritarians. All of this, given the new mass media venues (i.e., cable news, internet, social media), provides a context where political positions are easily polarized to the extremes and this can be used by political parties to win elections. One component of this polarization cycle was authoritarianism.

The interest in empirical research that argues that the voters who support Donald Trump are authoritarian due to their values and ideology is important, but it may not tell the entire story about the spectrum of authoritarian values that may not all be housed on the right side of the political spectrum today in the United States. What's more, the voters of 2016 may not all (supporters of Senator Bernie Sanders, Mr. Trump, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Senator Ted Cruz or others) neatly fit in a time-honored "left-right" ideological spectrum. Some elements of partisan realignment may affect these developments and the fluidity of values and views may antique class-oriented (twentieth century) divisions that have begun to wane in the twenty-first century as right-libertarian and left-libertarian post-materialist values deepen in the electorates that are under 50 years of age. This article will argue that authoritarian voters may be found in varying political voting groups and that while older "Tea Party" type Republicans and independents may be voting along "authoritarian" lines for Trump (Taub, 2016), it is entirely possible that a leftwing "authoritarian" voter, especially a younger, middle class voter, might be emerging as seen in the voters supporting Sanders.

Theory and Authoritarianism

The historical link between socio-economic class, authoritarianism, and democracy has led social scientists to theorize on the development of liberal capitalist democratic systems or the converse, the evolution of authoritarian regimes. Political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset argued in his seminal work *Political Man* (1960) that democratic development would be preceded by capitalist development (Lipset, 1960). For our purposes, Lipset's

discussion of the historical European views on democracy as rule by the rabble and the elite's mistrust of the masses does not dovetail with American views of democracy where prosperity, equality, and progress all mark ideals held by many Americans. As the great Greek philosopher Plato argued in *The Republic* that due to humankind's incapacity to govern themselves democracy was the second worst form of government, Lipset recognizes that the working classes in democracies may have fascist tendencies and although democracy is a positive idea, its citizens may not be able to live up to its ideals (Lane, 1997).

Alongside the theoretical literature in authoritarianism is the literature in nationalism. Nationalism is the "advocacy of the right of a nation to pursue its own interests and to promote its national identity, goals, and agenda at the expense of other nations, states, and global institutions" (Jefferson, 2011, p. 225). Nationalism has both rightwing and leftwing variants. Studies abound on nationalism and its evolution since its appearance in the medieval period in places like Scotland. The French Revolution is the general starting point of modern nationalism and the revolutions of 1848 saw the "Springtime of Europe" play out in bringing about liberal nationalism as European nations began to self-determine and demand autonomy and recognition in the face of conservative monarchies (which were themselves authoritarian regimes). Nationalist voters have been on the rise since the 1960s in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. They've risen in more recent elections in Denmark, France, Switzerland, and Austria. Several of these are "radical rightwing populist" parties (including the rightwing parties in Italy since 1993; Betz, 1994). However, leftwing nationalist parties such as the Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales), Sinn Fein (Ourselves Alone), Basque Nationalist Party, and others provide a distinctly left-of-center democratic socialist (Marxist) and nationalist vision for their voters. Adding to this mix are left-libertarian women's parties and green parties that provide an alternative of hard left politics with middle class sensibilities (Kitschelt, 1988).

In their study on cultural nationalism and liberalism, Gerson and Rubin (2015) critique those that argue that nationalism can coalesce with liberalism and that cultural nationalism as opposed to nationalism of "descent or religion" applies equally to societies as liberalism. However, Gerson and Rubin believe that this optimistic portrayal of nationalism relies on an authority in the state that is "not universally visible or detectable" (p. 197). Thus, this type of nationalism limits further the limitations already placed on individuals by liberal constitutional mechanisms within the state. Furthermore, national culture is subjective. "National culture is not public in the sense that law in liberal theory is. Instead, it is based on silent assumptions that carry no guarantees of being recognized equally or consistently by all" (p. 205).

Along with the discussion of how nationalism and liberalism may not equate, political culture and empirical studies of it may help us explain the ebb and flow of citizens' attitudes toward government. Political culture is the attitudes, values, and orientations toward government by its citizens (Jefferson, 2011). With this conceptual sub-framework of comparative politics comes an implicit understanding of voter trust in, indifference toward, and support for government. In Western Europe and the United States, scholars have seen a decline in trust and support of government since the 1960s. According to Fitzgerald and Wolak (2016), trust in government remains high in some Western European states, but this trust has fallen and is lowest in the four major industrialized democracies of Europe (Britain, France, Germany, and Italy). Trust is also lowest, as is the case in the United States, regarding the national government versus local government. And, trust is lower in local governments in unitary states (like Britain) but higher in local governments in federal states (like Germany) and vice versa for national governments. However, national governments have lower trust levels at 41% trusting in national governments in unitary states and 25% trusting in governments in federal states. This is contrasted with 49% trusting in local governments from countries with federal governments and 60% trusting in local governments from federal systems. Thus, federal systems tend to be more bipolar with higher levels of trust in local governments versus federal ones, the citizens of unitary governments have a higher average of support for both levels of government (at about 45%; Fitzgerald & Wolak, 2015).

Donald Trump

Recent research on authoritarianism and psychological profiles of voters who have a "desire for order and fear of outsiders" has found some interesting conclusions regarding Trump supporters. Political scientist Matthew MacWilliams and political scientists Marc Heatherington and Jonathan Weiler have studied the Trump phenomenon as well. The authoritarianism in the electorate that supports Trump (which is not the same as Trump's perceived authoritarianism) suggests that a kind of rightwing populism has evolved that leads to support for "extreme" positions and the gravitation toward a "strongman" leader to gain power and enforce these policy perspectives. For example, authoritarian voters tend to see a high risk of threat to themselves from ISIS, Iran, and Russia. Whereas, lower levels of authoritarianism in the electorate do not have the levels of support for this position. Voters with

lower levels of authoritarianism see car accidents and gun violence as real risks to themselves, whereas high authoritarian voters see the Zika or Ebola virus and the addiction to prescription drugs as more of a risk. Five specific areas have been identified in the research on authoritarian voters and Trump support: 1) greater tendency to support military force instead of diplomacy, 2) tighter airport controls and check on passengers of Arab or Middle Eastern heritage, 3) altering the United States Constitution to prevent citizenship for children of immigrants, 4) increased intelligence by government in allowing for phone scanning to prevent terrorism, and 5) forcing all citizens to carry national identification cards. Journalist Amanda Taub argues that America may now have a three-party system with the Democrats, Republicans, and Republican authoritarians (Taub, 2016). The conflation of authoritarianism and populism may be a problem in terms of measurement of attitudes in the context of the 2016 presidential election cycle. Political scientists Wendy Rahn and Eric Oliver (2016) state that authoritarianism as conceptualized “by political psychologists, refers to a set of personality traits that seek order, clarity and stability.” They obey strong leaders, have little tolerance for deviance, find scapegoats, and demand conformity to traditional norms. Rahn and Oliver argue that “populism” is anti-elite, believing that elites have hijacked the people’s “sovereignty.” Populists do not trust experts and are nationalists. Thus, Rahn and Oliver argue that Trump’s supporters are as authoritarian as Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio’s voters. They also argue that Trump is a populist and this makes him different from the other Republican candidates in the 2016 election cycle. They argue that Cruz voters are more authoritarian (according to the polls) and that these voters’ populism correlated more with authoritarian ideals than Trump’s voters.

Left-Libertarianism and Post-Materialism

Two theoretical constructs that have found momentum in explaining new political parties (mainly in European democracies) and social movements around the democratic industrialized world are the theory of left-libertarian politics and post-materialism. Left-libertarianism found its grounding in the work of political scientist Herbert Kitschelt (1988) in the late 1980s, and post-materialism has been a longstanding work of political scientist Ronald Inglehart (1990). Kitschelt studied European political parties and how the concept of left-libertarianism was innovating and changing multiparty systems in Germany and Belgium. He looked at mainly green parties and smaller leftwing parties. He found that parties that were evolving as “left-libertarian” were opposed to the priority of economic growth, in favor of more “democratic participation” in the party (rather than centralized control by party elites), and an opposition to “the bureaucratic welfare state” as an alien impersonal entity (Kitschelt, 1988, pp. 194-95). Left-libertarians were more pro-capitalist than anti-capitalist, for a general leftwing view of the world (but with a mixture of liberal and social democratic values), and they embodied post-materialist values.

Post-materialist theory is a large body of literature related to empirical research and opinion polling in sociology and political science that looks at how the end of the old ideological cleavages that underpinned the industrialized era of the early twentieth century began to give way to new emerging values in the “post-industrial” era. The rise of the service sector after 1945 and the end of old socio-economic class divides in western democracies along the lines of “labor versus capital” and “trade unions versus management” led to younger generations moving past the “old politics” concerns related to one’s livelihood, safety, and immediate material personal concerns (which were tied to economic satisfaction and need). From this, younger generations shifted to “post-materialist” attitudes tied to “new politics” which saw a post-materialist “left” and “right” focus on issues of personal liberty, environmental issues, individual rights (the abortion debate, animal rights, gay rights, etc.), more participation in the democracy, and embracing middle class (rather than working class) values. Gender, culture, religion, and sexual mores were all changing in this post-materialist context. Thus, the “new left” became pro-gay rights, pro-choice on the abortion issue, and libertarian on many issues (including more tolerance for legalization of marijuana, euthanasia, etc.).

According to Inglehart (1990), these trends have been coming since the early 1960s. The “new right” was for a defense of “God and country,” pro-life on the abortion issue, less state control of markets, and maintaining a modicum of traditional social mores, but with an increasing focus on personal liberties. This has led to years of increasing libertarianism, as a political orientation, coming into the electorate (on both the right and left of the traditional spectrum). Thus, these value changes in western populations are now reflected in the American electorate and affect the debate over authoritarianism among Republican voters for Trump and others. However, the libertarian components of Trump voters and left and right voters for other candidates in both Democratic and Republican supporting populations may affect the perception of authoritarianism and post-materialist and libertarian variables may link supporters of varying candidates across the spectrum. Cross-cutting cleavages linked to populism (left-of-center economic values and right-of-center social values) and libertarianism could suggest that Sanders voters and Trump voters are not as far apart as some analysts may think.

Bernie Sanders

Sanders' supporters are an interesting mixture of voters. Although they seem to be classically on the far left of the Democratic party (much like the Extraparliamentary Opposition within the German Social Democratic Party from 1966-69 when anti-nuclear, pro-environmental, pro-choice, and pro-Marxist legislators represented the leftwing fringe of the party), these voters may be "authoritarians" in their own right. In an admittedly small sample size after the West Virginia primaries in May 2016 (Savransky, 2016), 44% of those voting for Bernie Sanders on the Democratic ticket claimed that they would vote for the presumptive Republican nominee Trump for president if their candidate was defeated by Hillary Clinton. Only 23% said they would support Clinton and 31% said they would support neither candidate. Thus, with three-fourths of West Virginia's Sanders supporters saying they would either support Trump or sit out the election, these breathtaking data may provide some qualified support for newly evolving attitudes among voters who are unhappy with both of the presumptive nominees (Clinton and Trump) for the two major parties. Yet, with nearly 50% suggesting an anti-vote in favor of Trump this may not mean that Sanders voters are authoritarian, but that they are unhappy with Clinton.

Libertarian blogger James Smith (2016) argues that when the left-right spectrum is analyzed the Republican candidates (Trump, Cruz, Rubio, and Bush) are all right authoritarians and that Clinton falls in the more "right" category. However, Sanders is to the center-left on the line between libertarian and authoritarian in a two dimensional space with a horizontal left-right economic policy axis and an authoritarian (north pole) and libertarian (south pole) on a vertical axis that bisects the horizontal axis. Data points from voter surveys from an Internet political quiz (admittedly a highly accidental, non-probabilistic sample) suggest those outcomes. However, Smith argues that Sanders is actually more authoritarian in political space than the two dimensional grid portrays. His argument is that the graph "overemphasizes the difference between 'left' and 'right,' and underemphasizes the difference between 'authoritarian' and 'libertarian,' and then doesn't take into account the authoritarian potential in economic policy." Then his philosophical inferences from the data suggest that both left and right authoritarians mutually benefited from state expansion in the mid-twentieth century. He gives the New Deal under FDR and then uses, curiously, the Affordable Health Care Act as an example of American statism that benefits Republicans through the expansion of "special business interests." His main argument is that both right and left authoritarians want greater control via the state but for different reasons (one more for social democratic reasons, the other for conservative business and nationalistic reasons). His upshot is that Sanders is more like a Scandinavian socialist and that his economic statism and confiscatory tax policies are more reminiscent of the command economies of Eastern Europe under Communism than they are of free market liberal government.

The Economist argued in April 2016 that Trump's support from "disaffected blue-collar workers" (or left-of-center authoritarians) was not a given. The magazine argued that his support was equally from "better-paid and better-educated voters." His support, according to exit polls, is made up of a greater percentage (34%) from those making over \$100,000/year to 32% supporting him making under \$50,000/year. However, in the latter only 29% made up part of the total Republican electorate in states with exit polls whereas the former saw 37% of the Republican electorate. So, in some cases, it appears a greater percentage of lower-middle class and under voters support Trump versus the richer and more educated, as those with at least a college degree make up 43% of his support. In New York, only 13% of Trump's votes came from New York City in winning the Republican primary. Thus, the idea that he is winning lots of blue collar votes is incorrect according to *The Economist*. Sociologists Jeremy Brooke Straughn and Angie L. Andriot state that studies show that strong patriotic Americans tend to have greater rates of participation in civic life and are more attached to their country. Straughn and Andriot's findings suggest that those with high levels of formal education are an exception. These citizens are also patriotic, but different from "red, white and blue" patriots, as the former participate more in civic activities than those with less education (Straughn & Andriot 2011, p. 556). Straughn and Andriot's empirical findings support the more educated Trump and Sanders voters who will be more engaged in voting, but will reflect new right and new left postmaterialist values respectively, which may lead to continued ideological hardening in terms of political values.

These data may confirm several things. First, that the old left-right political cleavage based on class lines and "old politics" and "materialist" voting was still in play in the 2016 election cycle. Second, that authoritarian values may be driving voters for every candidate, assuming Smith's logic that authoritarians voting for Trump, Sanders, and Clinton are driven by traditional old politics materialist issues and Trump's supporters are driven by the issues Taub (2016) identifies including fears related to self-preservation, national defense, and personal safety. Another explanation for left-of-center authoritarianism in the Sanders voters is the return of the hard left and its uncompromising views and values on old materialist issues and new post-materialist issues.

The Return of the Hard Left

The Sanders and Clinton voters may be more authoritarian and uncompromising on multiple issues as is the case with conservatives and conservative evangelicals on the right. The recent rise of unyielding student demonstrations focused on race on campuses (such as the University of Missouri-Columbia and Yale University) harkens back to the Vietnam era where students were joined by faculty and race was the spark which then connected other issues related to social tolerance and new politics/postmaterialist issues (transgender, LGBT, and other related subjects). Interestingly, in calling for greater control and say in determining their own futures on their campuses, students also demonstrated authoritarian attitudes that called for bans on freedom of speech, trigger mechanisms, safe zones where media were not allowed, and, as in the case at Missouri, demands to immediately hire 10% minority faculty (Campbell, 2015). Mixed into the Missouri demonstrations were faculty dismay at the university president and chancellor's performance and graduate student demonstrations over the lack of healthcare and benefits. As a result, the university saw both president and chancellor forced out, the state legislature cut the university's budget (a Republican legislature upset with perceived "political correctness"), and a large drop, some say as much as 25%, in enrollment in fall 2016 (Keller, 2016).

The Missouri context was inflamed by the hardening of attitudes statewide on the Ferguson, Missouri riots of 2014 (Favignano & Keller, 2016) and the role of the Black Lives Matter organization (Eligon & Perez-Pena, 2015) which in itself is a representation of post-materialist politics with a focus on civil rights, individualism, and a link to new left politics tied to identity, gender, and social protest. Thus, the more radical strains in the student protest movement on college campuses today may not be neo-Marxian as the protests on campuses in the 1960s, including the famed revolt of students and others in France in 1968 against the de Gaulle government. But, it does see an increased hardening of ideology and more authoritarianism on issues of post-materialism such as gay rights, where we see the shutting down of conservative views on homosexuality by utilizing social media, media, and corporate interests to challenge measures seen as anti-gay in conservative states such as transgender bathroom bans and attempts to keep clergy and others from violating their consciences on issues related to gays such as providing gay wedding services.

This fascinating, but troubling, evolution in terms of hardening intolerance on campuses and in the American public ideologically is not new in the political culture. Venomous politics hit a high point in the United States in the fractionalized and regionalist politics of the 1850s and 1860s prior to the Civil War. Unfortunately, as seen in Europe, this is where fragmented democracies see the ballot end and the gun enter politics (Ireland in the 1920s, Germany in the 1930s, and Italy in the 1920s are some examples).

The question seems to be if right and left populism is being underpinned by the authoritarianism seen in the political psychology of the American electorate. If so, a spiraling of the political spectrum into a polarized system (like Weimar) where the center fades away and right and left extremes fight it out becomes the tenuous norm. Although a multi-party political system like Weimarian Germany's system is not an exact match with the two-party system in the United States, the dangers of ideological polarization and rhetoric associated with it may lead to further authoritarian voting in both left and right spectrums of the system.

Another wrinkle in this attitudinal and ideological system in the United States and western electorates is the idea that "partisan realignment" (Noonan, 2016) and "partisan dealignment" may be occurring. Realigning elections are major electoral adjustments in voting behavior that swing most elections between Republicans and Democrats. The resulting electoral realignment may last decades (Burnham, 1971). Partisan dealignment suggests that voters are ending their affiliation with traditional "old politics" views and switching party allegiances or abandoning parties altogether and embracing new views and values (Norpoth & Rusk, 1982). Based on new left and new right politics tied to post-materialist views, candidacies like Ron Paul's for president in 2012 and support for smaller parties such as the Libertarian Party or Ralph Nader and the Green Party may become more the norm. Look for increased cross cutting cleavages, increased confusion in the logic of support for the two main parties, and for more anti-politics voting (to vote against the system and to target candidates due to issue positions that people are against rather than for).

Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009) examined the moral foundations of liberals and conservatives. Liberals construct their moral systems on the foundations of harm/care and fairness/reciprocity, both of which protect individuals (individualizing foundations). Conservatives construct their moral systems on the foundations of harm/care and fairness/reciprocity, as well as ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity, which protect social functions (binding foundations). Foundations are the evolved psychological mechanisms that provide the foundations for the mind to be prepared to be more or less receptive to certain messages.

In order to win elections in the current polarized climate of American politics, Democratic strategists should emphasize harm/care issues (i.e., Flint, Michigan, need for public health care, and cases of police shooting

innocent people) and fairness/reciprocity issues (i.e., income inequality, policing minority issues, affirmative action) to rally their base. Republican strategists could also emphasize those, but to distinguish from Democrats (who focus their efforts on those issues and thus may be hard to beat on those issues to the average voter) should emphasize ingroup/loyalty (i.e., America is great), authority/respect (i.e., police are good), and purity/sanctity (i.e., limiting the boundaries of marriage, immigration).

There is a psychological motivation to justify the established system, with dispositional and situational sources of variation (Jost & Hunyady, 2005). At the individual level, system justification serves to decrease negative emotion that accompanies guilt and moral outrage for advantaged groups, and puts disadvantaged groups in a position where they have conflicting motivations, some of which are to justify a system in which they are disadvantaged (such as defending authorities and institutions, supporting limited rights to criticize the government, and conferring legitimacy on the economic system). The key here is that threats to the legitimacy of the system and mortality salience both lead to increased system justification in both liberals and conservatives. For example, with 9/11, the United States was under attack ideologically (Al Qaeda) and physically (World Trade Center) which dramatically increased patriotism and support for the Bush Administration during the time immediately following the event (Landau et al., 2004).

So what would system justification predict for the GOP with the ideological threat of Trump reforming the system? Because of Trump's anti-establishment sentiments, including against the GOP, it predicts that most conservative GOP members would 1) reject Trump for the nomination, 2) oppose him in the general election, and 3) cling more tightly to a more purely conservative candidate (i.e., supporting Ted Cruz).

Monkovic (2016), suggested that Donald Trump's candidacy is a product of appealing to White identity that is under threat. Interestingly, Craig and Richeson (2014, 2015) found that independent Whites primed with majority-minority state (racial-shift condition) more greatly endorsed conservative policies, a shift mediated by group-status threat (where the effect went away when participants were told that Whites would stay at the top of the hierarchy). Because conservative policies emphasize the ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity moral foundations, information about the stability of Whites in the social hierarchy should affect policy endorsement because "conservative policies" are associated with "social hierarchy" and defended, as predicted by System Justification Theory and Moral Foundations Theory.

Conclusions

In this summary, we used authoritarian theory in psychology to describe authoritarian values of left and right voters that emerge from left and right populist voting behavior. We provided examples from European history and politics to demonstrate how this can occur in the current U.S. political climate, with Donald Trump being more like far radical rightwing populists in Europe rather than traditional Republicans in the U.S., and Bernie Sanders more like democratic socialists in Europe rather than traditional Democrats in the U.S. We described the Nazis as a cautionary tale for authoritarian values.

One outcome of this product of group polarization in U.S. politics may be partisan realignment, where the Republican and Democratic parties remain at the extremes and a third party of libertarian interests emerges as a major player. Although three major parties would better represent the attitudes of the population, it would substantially weaken the power of the current two major parties, as the breakdown of coalitions and caucus votes would make it more difficult to navigate congress. However, the two party system will remain viable only as long as coalitions within each of the two parties can agree with each others' interests. Since that breakdown seems to be occurring, with authoritarianism and populism driving much of the disintegration of coalitions, the future seems to favor a system with more than two parties. The alternative could very well be the recurrence of Weimarian German scenario and a polarized pluralist party system (Sartori, 1976).

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