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The Polarization of the American Public: A Study of the Effects of Changing Demographics

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The Polarization of the American Public: A Study of the Effects of Changing Demographics

Submitted to the Department of Political Science of Allegheny College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

I hereby recognize and pledge to fulfill my responsibilities as defined in the Honor Code and to maintain the integrity of both myself and the College community as a whole.

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Abstract

American political culture has frequently been criticized for the polarized nature of its political elite. However, over the past sixteen years, there has been a definite decline in the way that individual Americans with party affiliations view other Americans with opposing beliefs. In a case study of Maryland, Ohio, and Pennsylvania over the course of fifty years, this research lays out the way that Americans in different geographic contexts have been affected by changing demographics around them. With the help of Census data and "feeling thermometer" measures from the American National Election Studies, it is clear that there are trends of the perception of the opposition occurring. The data supplied and displayed in this research shows that the demographic makeup of communities and the geographic context of these communities have the power and influence to alter individuals' identities, affect the rural-urban divide, and, ultimately, impact the way that Americans view each other.

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Introduction

When most Americans think about polarization in our country, the first image that comes to mind is likely a room of Washington elected officials arguing over policy, unable to come to a compromise for the good of the American people. This image of the uncompromising, polarized partisan elected official is one that we see over and over again in the media, one we feel comfortable talking about with our friends. However, there is the possibility that there is another type of polarization occurring in our country, one taking place in the neighborhoods and communities we call home. In my research, I will be asking the question—Are average Americans growing more polarized? And more particularly, are residents of homogeneous communities in the United States more likely to hold intensely negative views towards those with opposing political beliefs? My hypothesis is that residents of homogeneous communities will be more likely to feel emotionally negative towards opposing beliefs, and those who hold them, because living in a homogeneous community results in a lack of contact with individuals of different backgrounds, faiths, cultures, and political beliefs.

This topic is an important one, and one that is of great interest to me. I feel like our country has seen a recent decline in the way we view opposition. It seems like those who hold political beliefs are more and more likely to ignore the opinions of those belonging to the opposing party, but also more likely to feel emotionally hostile towards members of the opposing party. I feel that there has been comprehensive literature surrounding political polarization occurring on the level of nationally elected officials. However, there seems to be a gap in literature regarding the way that average Americans have become polarized, especially the idea that much of this polarization is emotionally charged. I am hoping that this research will begin to fill the gaps on the relationship

between demographics in a community and the way that Americans view themselves and each other.

In order to conduct my research, my first chapter will consist of a literature review based in the scholarly framework on the topic of citizen polarization, emotional responses to opposition, and group identity. My second chapter will be a methods section in which I lay out the methodology of the case studies I will be conducting based on Census data and American National Election Studies' "feeling thermometer" data for five "snapshot" election years in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. My third chapter will consist of the graphs and data I have gleaned from the Census and ANES data sets in order to begin painting a picture of the different demographics in each state and in each year. My fourth chapter will be a discussion of the data I have laid out and of the patterns I have seen in that data, in the hope of explaining the way that demographics affect emotionally charged responses by average Americans.

Chapter 1- Literature Review

A Gallup poll in 1958 asked Americans a seemingly simple question— "If you had a daughter of marriageable age, would you prefer she marry a Democrat or a Republican, all other things being equal?" (Vavrek, 2017). The findings showed that of those who identified with the Democratic party, 33% of them would want their daughter to marry a fellow Democrat. Similarly, 25% of Republicans would want their daughter to wed another Republican. Fast forward fifty-eight years, to the week before the 2016 election. A writer for the New York Times, Lynn Vavreck, asked the same question to a representative sample of individuals. Among those she asked, 60% of Democrats would wish for their child to marry another Democrat and 63% of Republicans would hope their child married another Republican (Vavrek, 2017). Does this uptick in preferences towards the romantic choices of their children reflect a notable change in our society? Is the American public beginning to associate more intensely negative feelings towards those on the other side of the aisle, to the point where they do not want those with opposing views in their families?

Throughout the last half century, some have come to believe that facts, figures, and personal experiences show that average Americans have slowly developed more hostile, negative feelings against fellow Americans of the opposing political party. Although some may credit this trend solely with increasingly divergent policy positions from the two major parties, I will argue through my research that affective polarization is occurring and is influenced by the rise in homogeneity in communities across the United States. Through an analysis of theory and data, I will argue that the increasing number of Americans living in homogeneous communities, surrounded by people of similar backgrounds, lifestyles, and values as their own exacerbates tense

feelings towards the those of opposing political viewpoints, creating a negative emotional reaction towards members of the opposing party.

Traditionally, the idea of polarization is associated with an ideological distance between the two parties on political issues. Polarization is a term used to measure the similarity or difference in the positions that Republicans and Democrats hold. With this traditional definition, when there are high levels of political polarization, the two parties have disparate views that do not overlap on much. Low levels of polarization reflect commonalities. I will be deviating from this conception of "polarization" to one that is based on individual's emotional responses to opposition.

A team of academics consisting of Shanton Iyengar, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes released an academic paper entitled "Affect, not Ideology" where they look into the trends they have identified through survey data to illustrate an American public moving further apart, while simultaneously adopting more intensely negative opinions towards each other. They offered a newer approach to the concept of polarization, that deviates from the traditional conception of polarization as distance between the two parties on policy issues. For Iyengar et. al, polarization is the way that individual partisans begin to view themselves within the political system. They use the term "affective partisan polarization" to refer to the emotional and psychological associative response that drives Democrats and Republicans apart.

Affective polarization moves away from looking at roll call analysis, interest group ratings of congressman, analysis or party platforms, or surveys of party activists (Iyengar et.al, 2012, pp. 1-2). Rather, this theory relies on identification of the individual of as part of an in-group, a concept that is given weight by the experimental precedent established by past psychological research. We have reached a point in our country's history in which party identification, according to these scholars, "represents a meaningful group affiliation," and as a result, politically active Americans

have begun to associate positive sentiment with their in-group (or their political party) and negative sentiment towards the opposing party, or the out-group (Iyengar et.al, 2012, 2). Affective polarization relies on the emotion that comes from the dichotomy of the in-group versus the out-group. The group mentality of modern day political parties is enough that the "mere act of identifying with a political party is sufficient to trigger negative evaluations of the opposition" (Iyengar et. al, 2012, p, 3). I find this argument compelling, as it draws from psychologically tested aspects of human identity and emotion. It combines politics with human nature to explain every day emotions.

Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes reference a variety of studies, drawing a large portion of their quantitative data from the American National Election Studies, especially the feeling thermometer data where respondents were asked to rate their feelings towards the other group on a scale of 0-100, with a rating of 0 reflecting a "cold" feeling and 100 indicating a "warm" feeling (Iyengar et.al, 2012, p. 7). Their analysis of the data dating back to 1948 showed that the feelings of respondents towards those in their own party has barely changed over time. However, the respondents' feelings towards the out-group has dropped nearly 15 points since 1988 (Iyengar, et.al, 2012, p. 8). Iyengar et. al counter the traditional conception of polarization by arguing that policy-driven polarization would result in more intense feeling thermometer variables in those that identify as liberals and conservatives, based on the level of involvement and partisanship that those groups would feel. The data shows this is not the case. The scholars cite that the increased use of technology and negative political campaigns have worked to "reinforce voters' sense of partisan identity and confirm stereotypical beliefs about supporters and opponents" (Iyengar et. al, 2012, p. 23).

A famous psychological study conducted by David Myers and Helmut Lamm in 1976 looks at the phenomenon of polarization in a variety of situations, particularly the way that group mentality affects individual beliefs. The study looks at seven categories (attitude studies, jury decisions, ethical decisions, judgements, person perception, negotiation behavior, and risk measures) in order to prove that consistent group interactions increase the likelihood of polarization of individuals within the group.

Myers and Lamm point to several explanations as to why group settings facilitate the adoption of more extreme opinions. One possibly theory they present is that a subject may move to a more extreme position when "he discovers that others share his inclinations more than he would have supposed" or "because the subject is released to more strongly act out his preference after observing someone else who models it more extremely than himself" (1976, p. 613). Another theory for the phenomenon is that exposure to arguments during discussion facilitates a level of cognitive learning. When subjects are introduced to new arguments they had not previously thought about, they may be swayed more easily.

A very interesting assertion that Myers and Lamm make from their data is the strength of face-to-face communication when it comes to swaying opinions and encouraging extremity in opinions. They quote a fellow scholar in saying, "It is clear that any impact that the mass media have on opinion is less than that produced by informal face-to-face communication of the person with his primary groups, his family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors," (Myers and Lamm, 1976, p. 620). The strength of everyday interactions with groups of individuals close to you seem to outweigh the effects of technology and media that were cited by Iyengar et. al. This argument about face-to-face interaction could help my argument when I begin looking at communities, because communities often result in consistent face-to-face interactions and interpersonal

connections with neighbors. However, it is worth noting that Myers and Lamm study was released in 1976, a time when the level of media and technology infiltrating everyday life is less than the level today.

Affective polarization is also brought up by Lilliana Mason in her article, "A Cross-Cutting Calm: How Social Sorting Drives Affective Polarization." Mason looks deeply into the "sorting" that she believes is occurring along party lines that is creating an influx of negative emotions towards the "out-group." Mason defines "sorting" as the way that individuals of similar religious beliefs, racial identities, and socioeconomic status tend to "sort" themselves into parties based on what people similar to them are doing. She believes that the phenomenon has less to do with "polarization of attitudes" on policy issues and more to do with "the polarization of Americans on a social and emotional level" (Mason, 2016, p. 2).

Mason looks at two primary emotions, anger and enthusiasm, as driving forces behind the animosity between members of the opposing parties (2016, p. 4). Studies in the past regarding "sorting" along party lines show that "voters who are members of groups that conflict with their party are less likely partisan" (Mason, 2016, p. 5). Because the data shows that affective polarization is occurring at a more widespread rate, Mason posits that it is a sign that there are less of these "cross-cutting cleavages" are occurring. In other words, Americans are sorting themselves into the political parties based on similar demographic information. For example, based on datasets provided by the ANES, the partisan gap between white people and black people has grown from 26 percentage points in 1980 to 36 percentage points in 2012. Weekly churchgoers and church abstainers have grown from a partisan gap of 7% in 1980 to 15% in 2012 (Mason, 2016, p. 8).

The lack of "cross-cutting" through sorting means that individuals who identify with one political party over another will react more emotionally to political events. She argues that this can lead to problems with our democracy, especially when you have two competing groups who see each other as a threat to their in-group's success.

A group of political scientists consisting of Cass R. Sunstein, Reid Hastie, and David Schkade investigated the effects of this type of geographic sorting on group polarization in regard to political decisions. They conducted a study with 63 residents of either liberal Boulder, Colorado, or more conservative Colorado Springs. Six participants from each city were put into groups with other individuals that followed the same ideological stance and asked to debate the issues of global warming, affirmative action, and same-sex civil unions (Sunstein et. al, 2007, p. 916).

The results of the study seem to add validity to the Myers and Lamm 1976 psychological study on group polarization. Groups from Boulder, the traditionally liberal city, became more liberal on all three issues after deliberation. Those from Colorado Springs became more conservative. The team of academics concluded that deliberations with like-minded people increase consensus within the group, while simultaneously increasing the disparity of opinions between ideological groups (Sunstein et. al, 2007, p. 922). Sunstein et. al chalks the results up to basic conformity and herding habits of humans that make people naturally defer to the opinions of others. Based on the study results, the scholars stress the importance of heterogeneous societal groups and exposure to divergent opinions to encourage respect and tolerance (Sunstein et. al, 2007, p. 929).

The geographical sorting that is occurring in Boulder and in Colorado Springs may be indicative of a trend happening across the country that, according to Bill Bishop, encourages group polarization and discourages discussion across party lines. Bishop throughout his book, *The Big*

Sort, argues that geographic clustering of people who share the same lifestyle choices and political values has resulted in a society where individuals are increasingly staunch and extreme in their beliefs while being less and less willing to work with the other side. In order to investigate this trend, Bishop divides counties within states into four groups: landslide Democrat, landslide Republican, competitive Democrat, and competitive Republican. He categorizes a "landslide" as any presidential election that resulted in a victor claiming 20 percentage points or more of the vote (Bishop, 2008).

Bishop then looks at the census data showing income, college education, church attendance, level of foreign-born residents, and race makeup for the counties within his study to examine whether homogeneous counties tend to be "landslide" counties more often than heterogeneous counties. His study is structured in a way that is highly convincing, as it draws on demographic information and election data. In my research, I will be relying on demographics relating to the diversity of an area, so the way that he looks into these issues is compelling. He asserts that individuals, beginning in the 1990s have been naturally "sorting" themselves by moving to neighborhoods and counties with people that look like them and think like them. As a result, the counties that tend to be considered "landslide" have a higher level of homogeneity, seeming to prove his argument that sorting increases affective polarization.

Skeptics of Emotionally Driven Affective Polarization

While the aforementioned offer strong arguments for the phenomenon of emotionally driven, affective polarization, other scholars present research and data that challenges the idea of affective polarization. Steven Webster and Alan Abramowitz published an academic article entitled "The Ideological Foundations of Affective Polarization in U.S. Electorate" in 2017 where

they conduct a case study of American welfare policy to test their hypothesis that ideological polarization is the reason for the rise in affective polarization.

According to Webster and Abramowitz, "the rise of affective polarization within the public has been very closely connected to the growth of ideological polarization within the public." (2017, p. 622). These scholars credit the classic ideological disagreement between the two parties "when it comes to the size and role of the federal government" (Webster and Abramowitz, 2017, p. 623). As a result of the views that Democratic and Republican partisans hold on issues of the size and role of the federal government force individuals to opposite ends of the political spectrum, therefore eliciting more hostile responses to the opposing party as whole.

Webster and Abramowitz first turn to Congressional members' voting records to aid their argument about the effect of ideological polarization on affective polarization. American National Election Studies data shows that Democrats and Republican elected officials in Congress are more divided today than they have been at any other time in history. Webster and Abramowitz see this divide among political elite as an important factor causing the divide among ordinary American partisans. The academics believe that "the greater the perceived distance from the opposing party, the more negatively party identifiers and leaners view the opposing party" (Webster and Abramowitz, 2017, p. 627). As a result, Americans will begin to believe that if the opposing party gains control of the government and "enact its preferred policies, those policies would be very harmful to the overall well-being of the nation" (Webster and Abramowitz, 2017, p. 627).

Webster and Abramowitz designed a study where individuals were randomly broken into three groups. The control group was informed that a candidate from the opposing political party was running for a congressional seat in their district. No additional ideological preference about this candidate was told. To the second group, the administer of the study describes the same

situation, with a candidate that is either a "moderate-to-liberal" Republican candidate for Democratic respondents or a "moderate-to-conservative" Democrat for Republican respondents. In the final group, Democratic respondents were told that a very conservative Republican was running for a congressional seat while Republican respondents were told a very liberal Democrat was running (Webster and Abramowitz, 2017, p.639).

The results of their study seem to confirm that there is a relationship between ideological difference and affective polarization. Democrats and Republicans who were exposed to the third, "extreme ideologue" situation had much lower, less favorable affective ratings of the opposing party's candidate than those in the control group who were given no ideological information about the candidate. Those in the second group, who were exposed to moderate ideological candidates had more positive feelings about the opposing party's candidate (2017, p. 640). In conclusion, Webster and Abramowitz's argue that their research and their experiment show that affective polarization should not and cannot be separated from ideological polarization. They believe, unlike Mason, that it is not just "tribal affiliations" or "sorting" that push people to feel more negatively towards their opponents. However, I believe there is something to be said for the power of political affiliations as an identity to move individuals apart without ideological influence.

Skeptics of mass public polarization

Unlike the previously mentioned academics who believe that some level of partisan polarization is occurring, but may have slight disagreements about the factors that contribute to this movement, Jonathan Rauch, a journalist, author, and activist falls into the camp of those who believe that the polarization of the electorate is overstated. Rauch, in an article written for *The Atlantic,* criticizes the commonly held belief that American citizens are fundamentally and deeply

divided. Instead, Raunch says our political system has misled us to believe the public is polarizing, when, in reality, most Americans hold centrist beliefs.

Raunch begins his dissent by critiquing the two-party system. He cites that "the fastest-growing group in American politics is independents, many of them centrists who identify with neither party and can tip the balance in close elections" (Raunch, 2005). He says that although it is true that these independents normally vote for one of the two major parties on election day, independents are often "undecided until the last moment and aren't particularly happy with either choice, arguing that a sizeable chunk of the public does not hold staunch views" (Raunch, 2005).

Rauch does offer the theory that political segregation, or the clustering of like-minded people either socially or geographically could equate to a rise in isolation from opposing points of view. Morris P. Fiorina looked at the question of political segregation and found "a shocking level of agreement" (Rauch, 2005). Yes, states that went Republican in presidential elections were more conservative than states that went Democratic, however the states tended to agree to a certain extent on a majority of issues (Rauch, 2005). For example, 77% of respondents from red-states favored capital punishment, as did 70% of respondents from blue-states. On the issue of gun control, 64% of respondents in blue states favor stricter control, as do 52% in red-states, indicating that there are more centrist than extreme views (Rauch, 2005).

According to Rauch, there has been a change in our political system (2005). Rauch argues that in the mid-twentieth century, politicians were "fairly ordinary people who were recruited into politics by local parties or political bosses and then worked their way up through the system" (Rauch, 2005). In a political system run and controlled by party machines and political bosses, "loyalty, not ideology, was the coin of the realm, and candidates were meant to be smart and ambitious but not, usually *too* smart and ambitious" (Rauch, 2005). By the 1960s and 1970s,

ideologue candidates gained power as it became more obvious that they had the "superior hustles and higher turnouts" that could dominate primary elections. "The higher you go in the hierarchies of the parties, the further apart they lean," Rauch says (2005). Although the majority of the American publicly identify as centrists, they are forced between two extreme candidates, therefore getting dragged into the increasing polarization at the upper echelons of politics. Although there has been a change in the way we get our candidates, this argument understates the power of group pull and contradicts the data-based arguments of past authors.

Like Rauch, Morris Fiorina is also skeptical about the idea of a polarized public, choosing to also argue that the American public tends to be rather centrist in political ideology in his book, *Disconnect: The Breakdown of Representation in American Politics*. Fiorina argues, "the largely centrist American population consistently views the political alternatives that vie for consent to run the country as more extreme than the population—and growing more so" (2009, p. 14). Fiorina points to some fundamental differences between political elites and the mass public. The mass public, or ordinary Americans, tend to change their minds more easily, and often "position themselves on issues on a case-by-case basis rather than deduce their specific positions from some abstract principle" like political elites might (Fiorina, 2009, p. 17).

Fiorina believes that the data he is examining concludes that the general public is more centrist on most issues. He argues that the "positions taken by many representatives distort the views of the public at large," indicating a belief in elitist politics dictating the perceived public interest (2009, p. 21). Fiorina's research seems to say that political elites are more concerned about specific cultural issues such as "abortion, gun control, gay marriage, stem cell research, flag burning, and the like." Meanwhile, the American mass public are more concerned with "broader questions of peace and war, domestic security, the economy, education, and health care" (Fiorina,

2009, p. 49). Most interestingly, Fiorina asserts that average Americans feel uncomfortable with the hostile, negative, and uncivil style that the political elite use when interacting with members of the opposing party. This moves away from the earlier scholars I examined who recognized that there is a level of negatively between average Americans in regard to the opposing party.

Fiorina staunchly believes that his research indicates that there is a disconnect between the political elites and the mass public that grows more and more distinct as you work your way up the political ladder. As a result, the American public is left with more extreme divisions in the political realm that is "less representative than it was a generation ago and is less supported by the citizenry" (2009, p. 161).

Chapter 2- Research Methods

The ANES Dataset

In order to begin investigating the relationship between diversity, population homogeneity, and affective partisan polarization, I will be looking at data collected by the American National Election Studies (ANES) that represents the feelings members of the electorate hold towards their party and the opposing party. In particular, I will be looking at the ANES Time Series Study for the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. The Time Series Study is an effort by the ANES to compile a series of election studies "to support analysis of public opinion and voting behavior in U.S. presidential elections" dating back to 1948 and continuing through the present (The American National Election Studies, 2010). This data will allow me to look at the trends of affective partisan polarization through the lens of several key variables expressed in the data sets.

Of the multitude of variables presented in the datasets, I will be focusing on those that provide me with a strong vision of party identification and feelings towards respondents' own party as well as the opposing party. First, I will be looking at the data for party identification, variable VCF301 for election years 1964, 1976, and 1988. Respondents were asked "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?" If they answer that they identify as either Republican or Democrat, they are then asked a follow-up question regarding the strength of their political beliefs. For these elections, this variable is coded on a scale of 1-7, with a code of 1 indicating a strong Democrat and a code of 7 indicating a strong Republican. The scale equates so that codes 1 and 2 are those who identify as Democrats and those who respond "6 or 7" identify as Republicans. For the sake of my research, I will be excluding those respondents who code as "3, 4, or 5," as these are individuals who identify as independents with slight leanings.

For the election years in 2000 and 2016, the variables for party identification and strength are V000519, V000520, AND V000521. Those who identify as Democrats are coded as "1" for variable V000519. Variable V000520 then divides the respondents by identification strength with "1" meaning a strong Democrat and "5" being a weak Democrat. Republicans are coded in variable V000519 as "2" and then V000521 divides them by strength the same way that Democrats are divided and assigned.

In my research, I will also be including the ANES "feeling thermometers." This is the crux of my argument, because the feeling thermometers allow me to gain insight into the way that respondents judge their own parties and the opposing parties. The ANES also includes a multitude of feeling thermometers regarding specific Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates. I chose to leave these variables out, as candidates bring in the unwanted and unnecessary complexities of personality, charisma, and character. By looking at the feeling thermometers directed at parties, I hope to remove some of the subjectivity that can exist when respondents are being asked about well-known individuals. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings towards groups on a scale of 0-100. If the respondent feels "cold" or unfavorably towards the group, then they should rate them somewhere between 0-50. If the respondent feels "warmly" or favorably towards a group, then they should give them a rating of 50-100. If they do not know about the group or do not feel either way, then they should give them a 50 (ANES Codebook). Variables V000369 and V000370 are the feeling thermometer questions in which respondents were asked about members of the Democratic and Republican parties. As a result, these are the data points I will be paying the most attention to.

The ANES also records the state of residence of every respondent. This is information I will be utilizing when I'm looking at corresponding Census data. In order to dive deeper into my

hypothesis that homogeneity of lifestyle and changing demographics leads to an increase in negative feelings towards those of the opposing political party, I will be conducting a case study of three states in order to track trends in the feeling thermometers in conjunction with Census trends.

The States

I will be looking at the data provided by the ANES for respondents from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, in addition to Census data on demographic information and lifestyle factors for these states. I chose these states in particular because of their geographic proximity. Pennsylvania and Ohio are incredibly similar in demographic makeup and economy, and both states consistently act as swing-states in Presidential elections. Maryland is slightly different, however chosen for a particular reason. Maryland tends to be a strongly Democratic state when it comes to Presidential elections, however, there are pockets of the state with strong Republican roots, especially in the more rural areas bordering Pennsylvania. Maryland also offers a look at a much more racially heterogeneous population, paired with a more consistently and strongly "blue" result in Presidential elections, which is an interesting addition to the research data. With a close geographic proximity to Pennsylvania and Ohio, but with a different racial and socioeconomic makeup, Maryland acts as an alternative to Pennsylvania and Ohio. While Pennsylvania and Ohio offer me insight into the way that more politically "up for grabs" states are affected by demographics and homogeneity, Maryland gives me a case study of a state with a political majority offset by pockets of political minorities. Maryland's more diverse demographics also allow me to dig into the relationship between identity and political affiliation and the way that this can spawn affective polarization.

Pennsylvania and Ohio are economically and demographically incredibly similar. As of 2016, Pennsylvania has an unemployment rate of 5.4% (Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2017). As of 2017 in Ohio, the unemployment rate is 5.1% (Economic Overview Ohio, 2018). Ohio also has the seventh largest state economy in the nation, with a robust manufacturing sector that leads the nation in the production of plastics, rubber, fabricated metals, electrical equipment, appliances, cars, and trucks (Economic Overview Ohio, 2018). As for leading exports in the state, Ohio ships out machinery and motor vehicles. Pennsylvania's economy is the sixth biggest in the nation, highlighting the similarities between the size and power of Pennsylvania and Ohio. In the 20th century, Pennsylvania was known as a steel and mining powerhouse. More recently, Pennsylvania's economy is based in the manufacturing of industrial machinery and equipment, producing fabricated metal products (like Ohio), and food products (Byrne, 2015).

As for Maryland, the state's location near the nation's capital and its location on the Chesapeake Bay lends the state to a bustling technology and business industry as well as trade. The federal agencies located in southern Maryland closer to D.C. contribute to the state's strength in technology. These agencies include National Institutes of Health, NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center, and the Department of Defense. The Port of Baltimore gives Maryland easier access to international sea trade, which values Maryland exports at $9.7 billion per year (Maryland at a Glance, 2017). Maryland's access to sea ports differs from landlocked Pennsylvania and Ohio, where much of the economy has to do with mining and manufacturing raw goods.

The Years

Now that I have established the data I will be utilizing and the states I will be focusing on, I will explain my choice to examine trends over a fifty-year time frame through the use of "snapshot" election years throughout the decades. I will be looking at the ANES data collected for

the 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, and 2016 elections. I have chosen these election years for particular reasons and each election year I have chosen falls within a 11-16year cycle, in order to best establish "checkpoints" of the mood of the citizens at the time.

The 1964 election was between Lyndon B. Johnson and Barry Goldwater. This election is the only "extreme landslide election" I chose. However, based on the availability of the "feeling thermometer" data through the ANES, the 1964 election provided me with the earliest reliable data on emotional responses to the opposing party. Additionally, the 1968 election occurred during such a politically heated time in our nation's history that I did not think it would be accurate or appropriate for my research to use that election cycle as the "snapshot" for this decade. There are several factors that set this election cycle apart from others, partially because of the untraditional circumstances surrounding it. First, the 1964 election occurred less than a year after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, therefore it was a tumultuous time for a country that had recently experienced the death of the President. This may have an effect on the data presented in the feeling thermometers, solely on the emotionality of this time period in American presidential history.

Additionally, Barry Goldwater was an untraditional Republican candidate for the time. Goldwater marked the shift away from the Rockefeller Republicans of the 20th century. He was opposed to federal involvement in most fields and was seen as an outsider to the mainstream Republican Party. He ran a campaign with a heavy emphasis on crime in cities, opposed civil rights legislation, and called for "states' rights." Johnson won this election with 61% of the popular vote and 486 electoral college votes (Levy, 2010). I have to keep in mind the "landslide" nature of this election when looking at the ANES data.

When conducting my research on this election cycle, I also have to keep in mind the way that Goldwater differed from the mainstream Republican Party and marked a switch in the

ideology of the Party. However, I believe that using the Johnson/Goldwater election will reduce critiques that my research is looking at Republican parties with different ideologies. Goldwater represented the shift in the Republican party platform that is seen in the last half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. As a result, by using the 1964 election, my research will be looking at a Republican party that is established in its position on most issues, rather than a Republican party that switched from Rockefeller Republicans to Goldwater Republicans.

After this, I will be looking at the 1976 election between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter following the resignation of Richard Nixon for his involvement in the Watergate scandal. The campaign trail focused heavily on the economy, on the "character of the two candidates," and abortion (The Editors of Encyclopedia Brittanica, 2017). Abortion has consistently proven to be a hot topic in our country, dividing liberals and conservatives, and eliciting affective emotional responses. Additionally, the scandal that was plaguing the White House under Nixon may have resulted in negative associations in the minds of Democrats towards Republicans who had supported Nixon. This is something I would like to explore. Carter won this election with 297 electoral college votes, while Ford got 240 votes.

The next election year snapshot I will be looking at is the 1988 election between George H. W. Bush and Michael Dukakis. I chose this year because it follows the Reagan era and I want to see the impact that this very influential and defining period for the modern Republican party had on the way that Republicans and Democrats viewed each other. I believe that the best way to see this effect is by looking at the election cycle immediately after Reagan's eight years in office. This way, I will be seeing the completely developed attitudes that respondents have after the establishment of Reagan's policies. In this election cycle, it is widely accepted by political

historians that George H. W. Bush's campaign was largely based on the weaknesses of his opponent, Dukakis, rather than the substance of Bush's own policy issues. Bush campaigned on Dukakis's decision on the Massachusetts prison furlough system and racial tactics associated with Willie Horton, Dukakis's veto of a law requiring public school students to recite the pledge of allegiance, and Dukakis's inaction on issues of pollution in Boston Harbor. Although Dukakis began to make a comeback in the polls right before election day, Bush won the 1988 election with 54% of the popular vote and 426 electoral college votes (Morrison, 2009).

After that, I will be examining the 2000 election year. This election was between Al Gore and George W. Bush. I believe that this election cycle serves as a strong snapshot of the late 90s, early 2000s, prior to the switch in our country's ideas about national security and foreign involvement that occurred following 9/11. The 2000 election serves as my final snapshot of American life and opinion prior to the War on Terror. This election's campaign cycle was traditional, but ended untraditionally when no clear winner could be called on election night, and the Supreme Court had to be summoned to deal with the fallout. Gore won the popular vote over Bush by 500,000 votes, however, Bush won the electoral college with 271 votes to Gore's 266. Since the ANES collects and records respondents' information prior to the election, this untraditional result should not impact the data from this election cycle or the feelings that respondents held towards the opposing party.

My final snapshot will be the 2016 election. Although this election cycle was anything but ordinary, I found it important to include the most recent data on feeling thermometers and the emotions and feelings in our country in order to understand the way that the trends have evolved over time. The 2016 election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton brought together two types of nominees that had not been seen before. Trump, an outsider with no prior political

experience, ran on a platform of anti-establishment and anti-Washington, which was appealing to white, working class voters who had felt excluded by the government for a long time. He campaigned on blaming the political establishment for "costly intervention in foreign conflicts, a widening gap between the rich and poor, stagnant wages, excessive political correctness, and a failure to enforce immigration law" (Beckwith, 2017). Clinton appeared to be the easy favorite with a sizeable lead going into election night. Her campaign ran on a continuation of Obama era policies, from climate change to healthcare. In a surprising result, Clinton beat Trump in the popular vote by 2.8 million votes, but lost the electoral college and the election with 227 votes to Trump's 304.

Like with the 1964 election, the 2016 election also is an outlier in the history of presidential elections. Beginning with an unconventional primary season that saw so many Republicans in the race that a single debate stage could not fit all of them, this campaign cycle was anything but traditional, with candidates on all sides making increasingly belittling and hostile comments towards each other. Trump's lack of political experience and prominence as a reality television star and business mogul was something never seen before. To add to this, Clinton was the first female nominee of a major party. This is something I must keep in mind, as there may be gender bias in place in the data because Clinton was a woman. Additionally, Trump's dismissal of all of the norms and "rules" of elections created an environment that may expressed in the data I am examining. If this is the new norm of Presidential elections, then this data may be a reflection of things to come. On the other hand, if the 2016 election ends up being an anomaly, I still believe it is important to include it in my research, as it marks a time when our political environment changed, and I am interested in the effect that this environment has on citizens' feelings towards each other.

Data Method

I will be combining the ANES feeling thermometers from each of my "snapshot" elections and pairing that with several key data components from the U.S. Census datasets that I believe best represent diversity and heterogeneity in the state populations of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. I plan to divide the respondents in the ANES surveys from 1964, 1988, 2000, and 2016 into the state in which they live. From there, I will divide those who identify as Democrat and those who identify as Republicans based on variables that ask respondents to identify with a particular political party and with what strength they identify with the party. Any respondent who responds with a code from 1-2 in years 1964, 1976, or 1988 or a 1 in 2000 and 2016, I will identify as a Democrat. Anyone who answers with a code from 6-7 in 1964, 1976, and 1988 or a 2 in 2000 and 2016 will be classified as a Republican. For the sake of my research, I will be excluding Independents, or those that answer with a 4, which is the ANES's way of identifying those who do not identify with either party. Additionally, I will then divide those who are coded as "strong partisans" in order to collect information about those who more intensely hold their affiliation. I will also combine the strong and weaker identifiers to get a sense of the overall feelings of all party identifiers within each state.

From there, I will calculate the mean "feeling thermometers" for Democrats and Republicans in each of my four snapshot years. I plan on looking at both the feeling thermometers for how the respondents feel about their own party as well as the opposing party, in order to get a comprehensive view of the political climate. Additionally, I will keep in mind that calculating means can often reduce the complexities of data down to a single value, which means that I may have to sacrifice these complexities for the ease of my research process.

Once I have established the mean "feeling thermometer" for Republicans and Democrats living in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, in both "strong" and "all", in each of these election years, I will be collecting Census data in three categories: racial make-up (with a particular focus on non-white residents), percent of the population that is foreign-born, and the percent of the population with a Bachelor's degree. I believe that these data points highlight racial, education, and cultural diversity in each of these states, and, as a result, can paint a picture of the homogeneity or heterogeneity within the state. Because the Census is conducted every ten years, I will be choosing the Census datasets that are closest to the election year I am examining (ex: for the 1964 election, I will be working with the 1960 Census, for the 1988 election, I will be looking at 1990 Census data.) The Census does have intermittent data collection in between these ten-year periods and often includes population "estimates" based on trends observed. As a result, in these cases and when this type of data is available, I will be using the data closest to the election year.

Once I have accumulated all of my data from both the ANES and the Census and divided it by each state, each election year, and political party, I will be plotting it on graphs in order to see the relationship. My plan is to create three graphs for the three "diversity" Census categories in order to visually compare the three states. Then, I will chart the median feeling thermometer for each state over the five snapshot election years. Each state will have two "feeling thermometer" graphs associated with it—one that only focuses on strong partisans and one for all party identifiers in the ANES data tables.

If my hypothesis is correct, then I would expect to see a relationship with feeling thermometers towards the opposing party and an increase in diversity in a state. For example, as diversity increases, communities become less homogeneous, therefore people have more exposure to those of different lifestyles and backgrounds, and become more willing to be open-minded.

Therefore, their feeling thermometers towards the opposing party should become "warmer." Inversely, in states and communities with less diversity, I would expect to see a chart where individual's feeling thermometers towards the opposing party become "colder." I expect that this research method will allow me to gain insight about the effects that these measures of diversity can have on states with varying political leanings and the way that heterogeneity changes the way that we see each other and our opposition.

Limitations of my Research

The limitations to my research come from broadening the idea of "homogeneous versus heterogeneous communities" to state level data. Because of the lack of data on feeling thermometers for particular counties or regions of a state, it is difficult to take a closer look at the way that individuals in neighborhoods are affected by homogeneity versus heterogeneity. Widening my scope to the state level removes some of the nuances and does not take into account that way that individuals may sort themselves into communities and neighborhoods of like-minded and similar people. For example, although Maryland may be considered diverse on a statewide level, citizens living in the state may be sharply divided and "sorted" into neighborhoods of people who look, think, and act like them. Additionally, Maryland, Ohio, and Pennsylvania tend to have more diverse population centers surrounded by large areas of rural, less diverse areas. This type of data cannot be seen from the state-level and poses a limitation of my research.

Additionally, there may be other reasons that affective polarization is occurring, whether that be the state of the country at these particular times, the way that political campaigns have evolved, or the way technology infiltrates our lives. These factors are not reflected in the Census data or the ANES data, and therefore, are not included in my research. This is not to say that these factors are not contributing to the way that citizens feel about each other and opposing viewpoints.

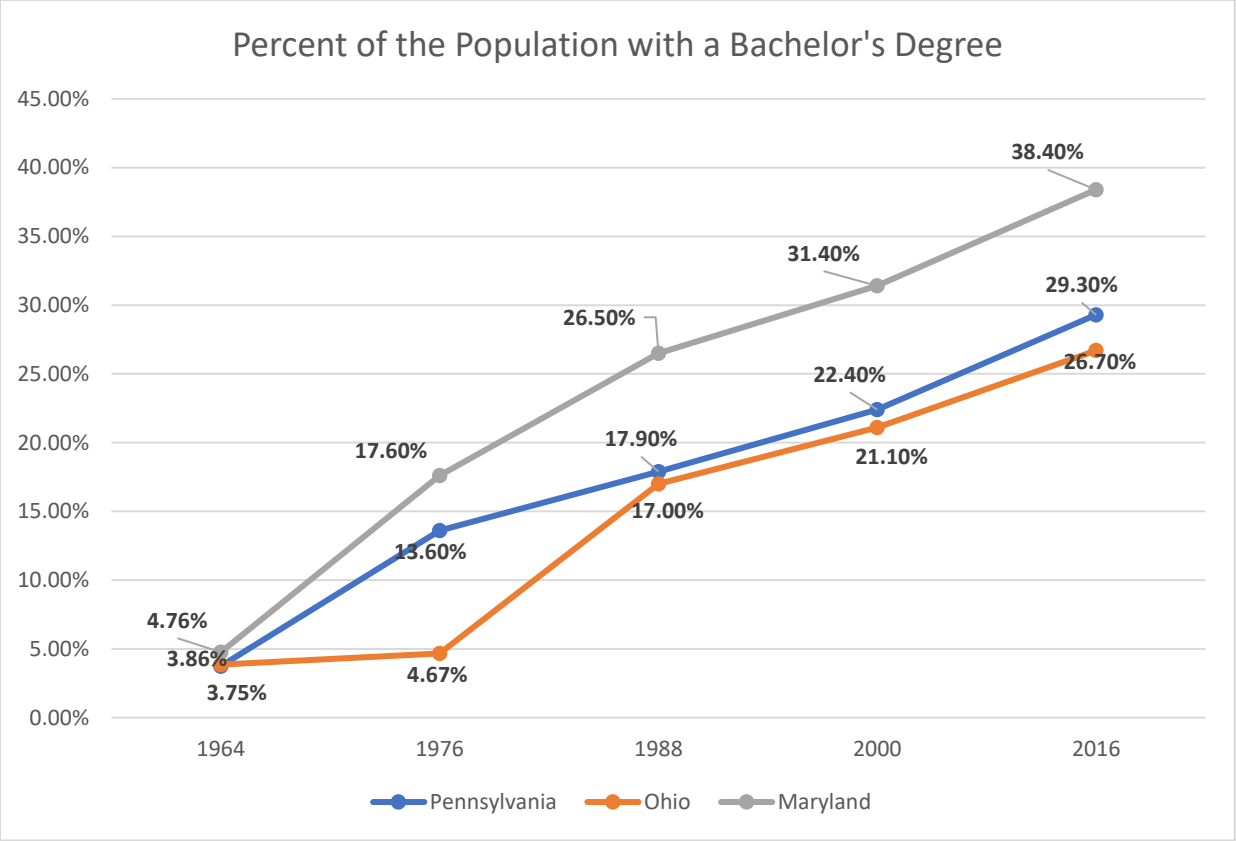
I am interested in investigating the effect of homogeneous communities on our political feelings and environment, which is why I have chosen to do this segment of research in particular.

Chapter 3- Data Results

Census Data and Trends

I began my investigation on the effects of diversity on the feelings and opinions that party members hold about their own party and those of the opposing party by looking at the Census trends for Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland from 1964-2016. As mentioned in my Methods section, I refined my analysis of Census data to include: the percent of the population holding a Bachelor's degree, the percentage of the population that identified as non-white, and the percent of the population that is foreign born. For the purposes of my data, when looking at the percent of the population that is "non-white," I included Hispanics as "non-white," because I feel that is an essential area of diversity that needs to be included. The influx of Hispanic families and individuals into America is one of the more recent "diversity" issues that has penetrated our political rhetoric and debates, therefore, their inclusion as an "out-group" to the white population is worth noting.

Using the Census data that was closest to the election years I am exploring (1964, 1978, 1988, 2000, and 2016), I created a graph for each of the markers of diversity in the population that I was looking at to see the trends that exist within all three states, as well as to compare the differences between the states. Below is the first of these graphs, exploring the percent of the population in possession of Bachelor's degrees from 1964-2016.

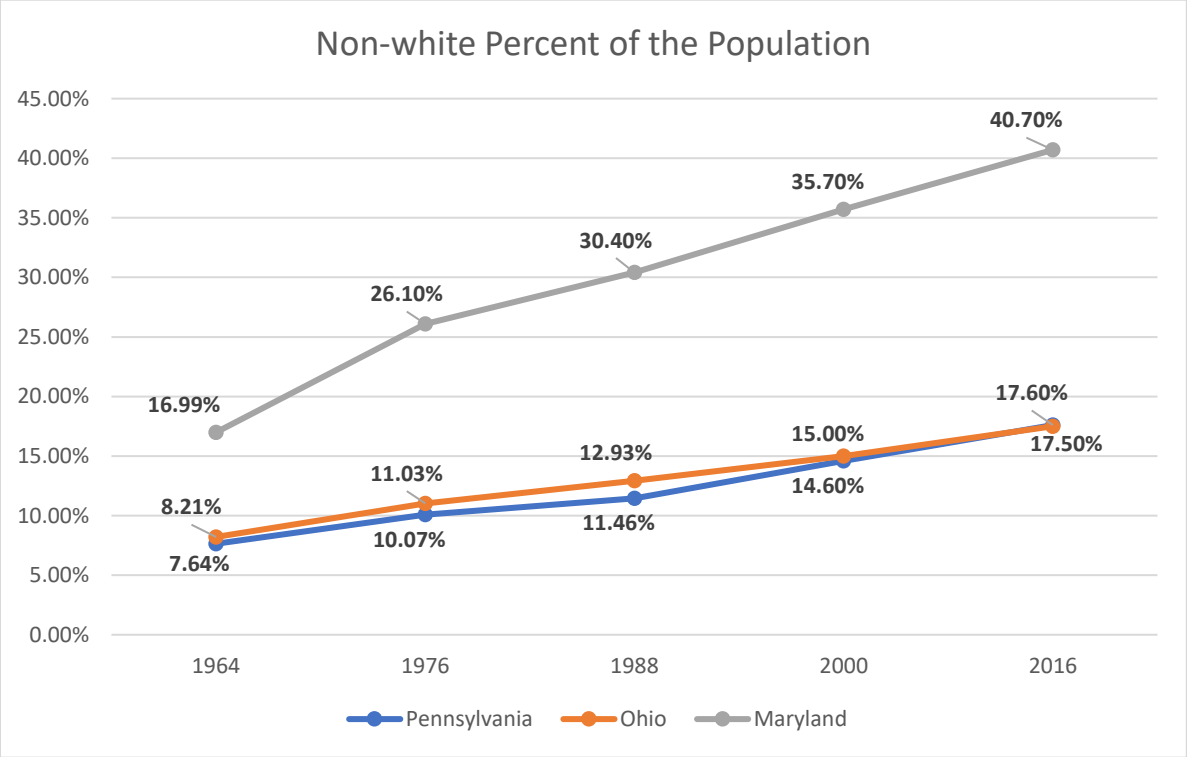


(Graph 3.1)

As is observable in this graph, all three states during the 1964 election had similarly low rates of college-educated residents. This is illustrated by the cluster in the lower left corner of the graph. In the 1960s in America, college education was a status symbol, reserved for mostly males from wealthier families. In states like Pennsylvania and Ohio, rural land, agriculture, and mining jobs dominated and a college education was not a necessary path for employment. In 1976, almost a decade later, Maryland and Pennsylvania were experiencing fast growth in their class of college-educated citizens. Ohio, with only a 0.92% increase from 1964-1976, saw an increase by the 1988 election that mirrored the one that Pennsylvania and Maryland had experienced prior, showing that the economic opportunities in Ohio may have resulted in this later growth (U.S. Census Bureau Dataset, 1960 &1980). While Ohio and Pennsylvania maintained very similar levels of college-educated, Maryland began to separate itself, most recently reporting that 38.40% of their

population holds a Bachelor's degree or more. The increase of citizens searching out higher education in Maryland could be attributed to the wealth in many pockets of the state and its proximity to Washington D.C. The presence of several incredibly wealthy suburbs outside of the nation's capital and a wider availability of government jobs that require higher levels of education may be responsible for Maryland's consistently high percentage of residents holding Bachelor's degrees.

From there, I looked at the percentage of population of each of these states that identifies as "non-white" in order to get a picture of the racial makeup of these states.



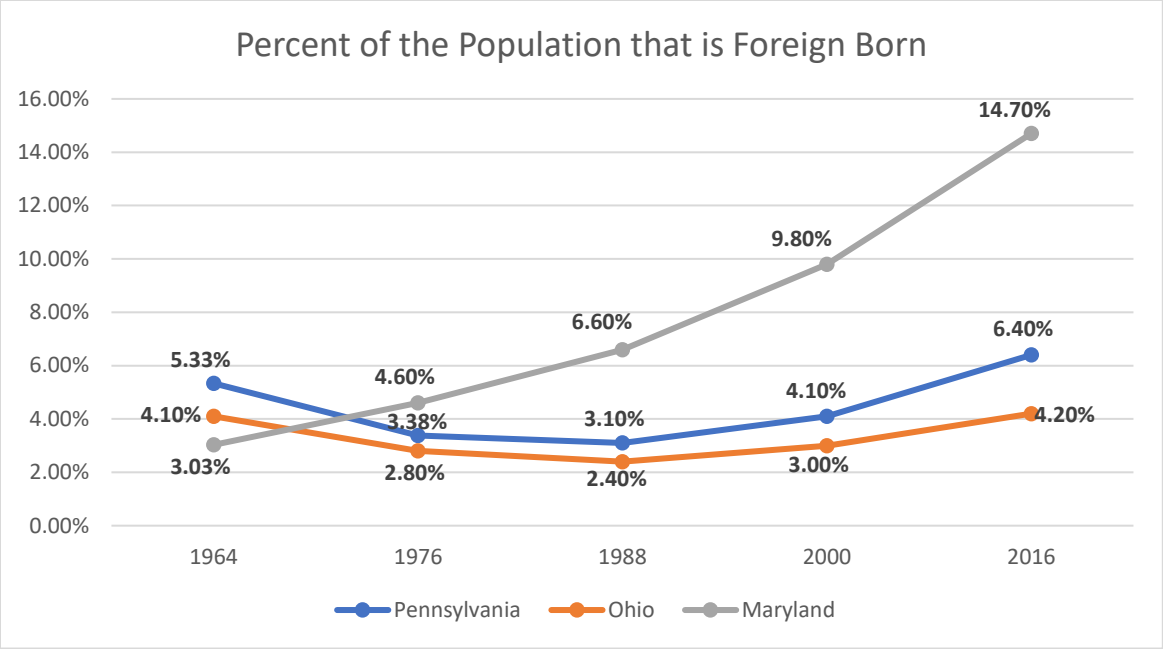
(Graph 3.2)

It is immediately apparent that Maryland had a much higher percentage of non-white residents, which contributes to its diversity, one of the main reasons I chose to compare Maryland to the other two states that are geographically near, but demographically different. While Ohio and Pennsylvania hover around very similar percentages, Maryland demonstrates a state with a larger

portion of the population that identifies as people of color. As of 2016, 40.7% of Maryland's population is non-white. For Pennsylvania and Ohio, 17.6% and 17.5% of their populations are non-white, respectively (U.S. Census Dataset, 2016).

From 1964 to 2016, Maryland saw an increase of 23.71% when it comes to the proportion of non-white residents within the state. During this time period, Pennsylvania saw an increase of 9.39%. Ohio saw an increase of 9.89% over these six decades. So, like the level of higher education attainment, Pennsylvania and Ohio hold similar demographic statistics over these snapshot elections. However, Maryland saw a much more pronounced increase in diversity amongst their residents, much like it was with Bachelor's degrees. This will be something that I will be touching upon later in this chapter when discussing the American National Election Studies "feeling thermometers" and the way that these values can be impacted by different levels of diversity.

The final demographic Census data set that I gathered is the percent of the population within each of these states that is foreign-born. An increase in the population of foreign born residents can mean an increase in the variety of cultures seen within a geographic area, which may have an effect on the types of political ideologies that individuals hold and the way that they express those ideologies to those around them. Looking at foreign-born populations can also begin to shed light on the way that immigrants affect partisan perceptions of each other.



(Graph 3.3)

Here, I found a similar pattern to those seen above. While Pennsylvania and Ohio experienced similar trends in the percentage of foreign born individuals within their states, Maryland had a marked uptick in that amount. What is of particular interest to me is that Ohio and Pennsylvania began with a higher percentage than Maryland, only for that number to immediately drop by the next election cycle while Maryland's began to grow. Often times in cases of immigration, patterns of immigration are affected by job availability and economics.

In Pennsylvania especially, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the manufacturing and steel economies were collapsing. Pittsburgh, the second biggest city in the state, which had the ability to draw in large numbers of immigrants from Eastern Europe to work in the mines and factories, was hard hit by a recession that began to shut down the steel mills that were the backbone of the economy (Toland, 2012). With a collapsing economy and fewer available jobs, the pull to these areas to immigrants would decrease, which may explain the interesting decline and then slow climb we see in the chart. Maryland, much less dependent on steel mills and coal mining would not have seen this immediate effect. Additionally, the proximity to large metropolitan areas and

government industries may continue to drive immigrants to Maryland, just like these factors affect the level of education in Maryland in comparison to the Rust Belt states.

ANES Data

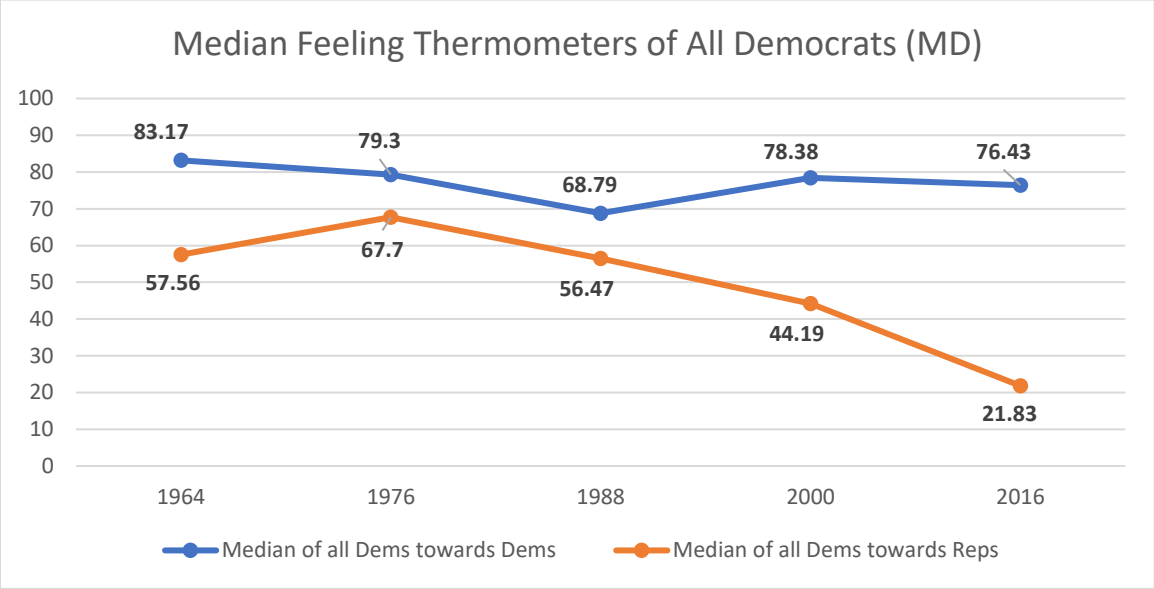
Once I established the trends that existed in state diversity, I looked onward to the trends that exist in these three states in regard to the ANES feeling thermometer questions that are asked to respondents. During every election cycle since 1964, respondents are given a variation of the following question:

"There are many groups in America that try to get the government or the American people to see things their way. We would like to get your feelings towards some of these groups. When I read the name of a group, we'd like you to rate it with what we call a feeling thermometer."

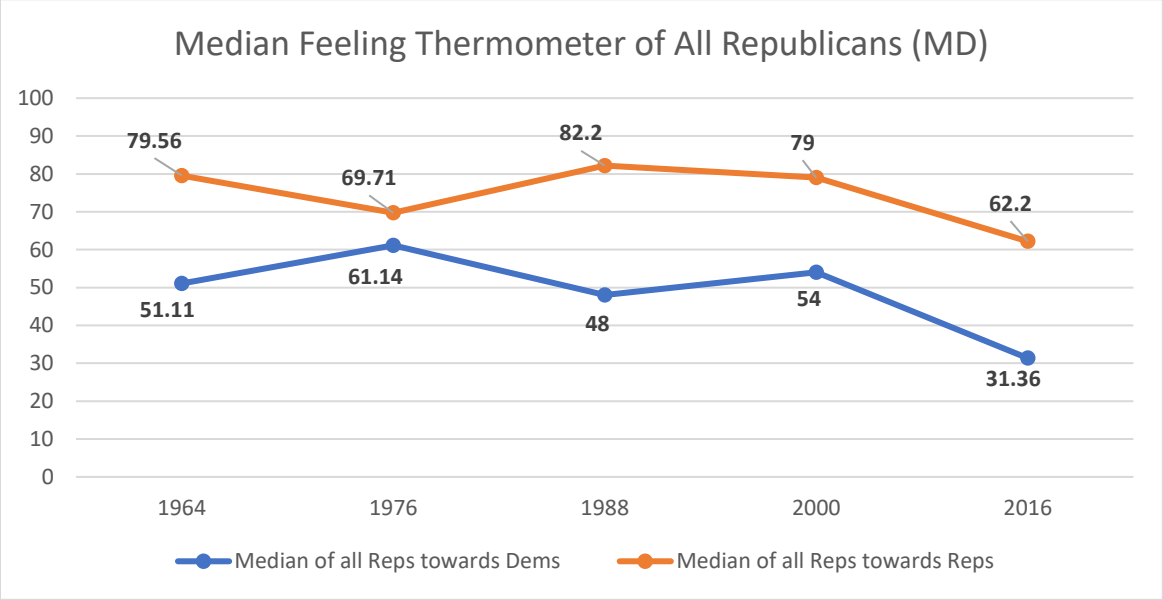
Respondents are to give an answer between 0-50 if they do not feel favorably towards the group, or feel "cold" towards the group. An answer between 50-100 would mean the respondent feels some level of "warmth", or favorability, towards the group in question.

First, in order to get a broad view of the trends from election to election, I created two graphs per state, one graph showing the "Median Feeling Thermometer Response of Democrats" and one showing the "Median Feeling Thermometer Response of Republicans." Each of these graphs show the median feeling thermometer response towards the respondents' own party and opposing party. These graphs encompass all respondents from each state that identify with either the Democratic or Republican Party, regardless of the strength of that identification.

Maryland



(Graph 3.4)



(Graph 3.5)

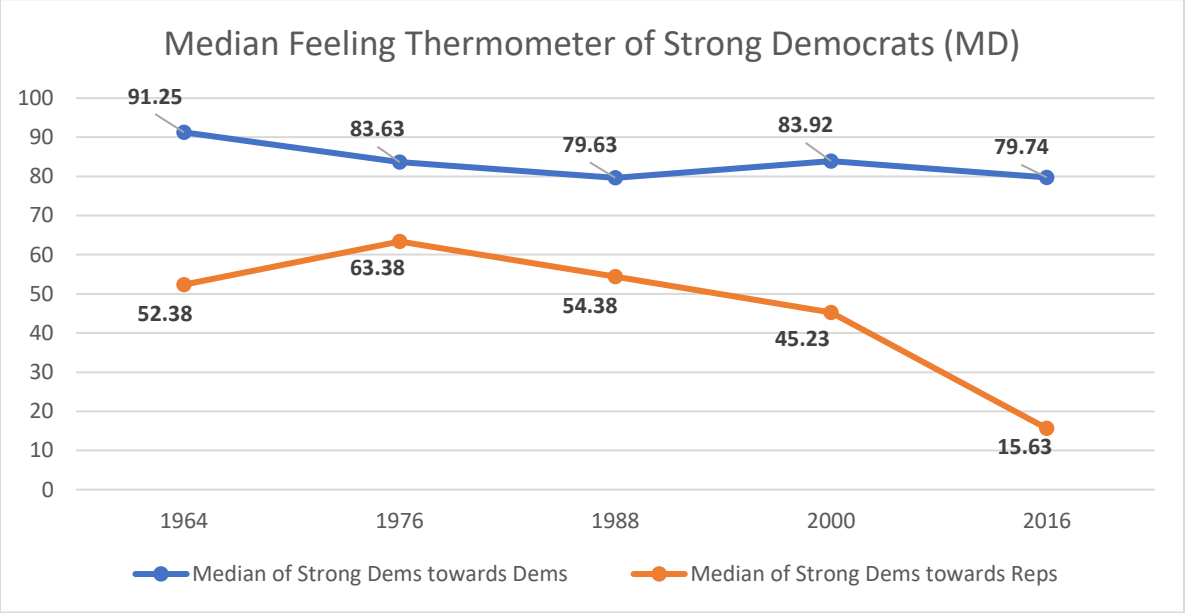
Throughout my research thus far, Maryland has proven to be an interesting state, with much more pronounced diversity and education levels than its Rust Belt companions. Here, that pattern continues. The Graph 4, representing all Maryland Democrats, has one of the larger disparities of any of the states or partisan identifications I have examine between how Democrats feel about other Democrats versus how they feel about With 45.87 points separating them, it is clear that

there is a large divide between the warmth that Maryland Democrats feel towards their fellow Democrats and the "coolness" they feel towards Republicans in 2016. Additionally, from 1964 until 2016, the feeling thermometer medians for Democrats towards Democrats hover between the high 60s and low 80s, showing that there is general consensus about the favorability of fellow Democrats over this long span of time. However, when it comes to their feelings toward Republicans, Maryland Democrats express a strong drop-off in favorability from 1976 until 2016, with a huge drop coming between 2000 and 2016. During these sixteen years, the favorability drops in half, from 44.19 to 21.83 in our most recent election (ANES Time Series Cumulative Data, 2016).

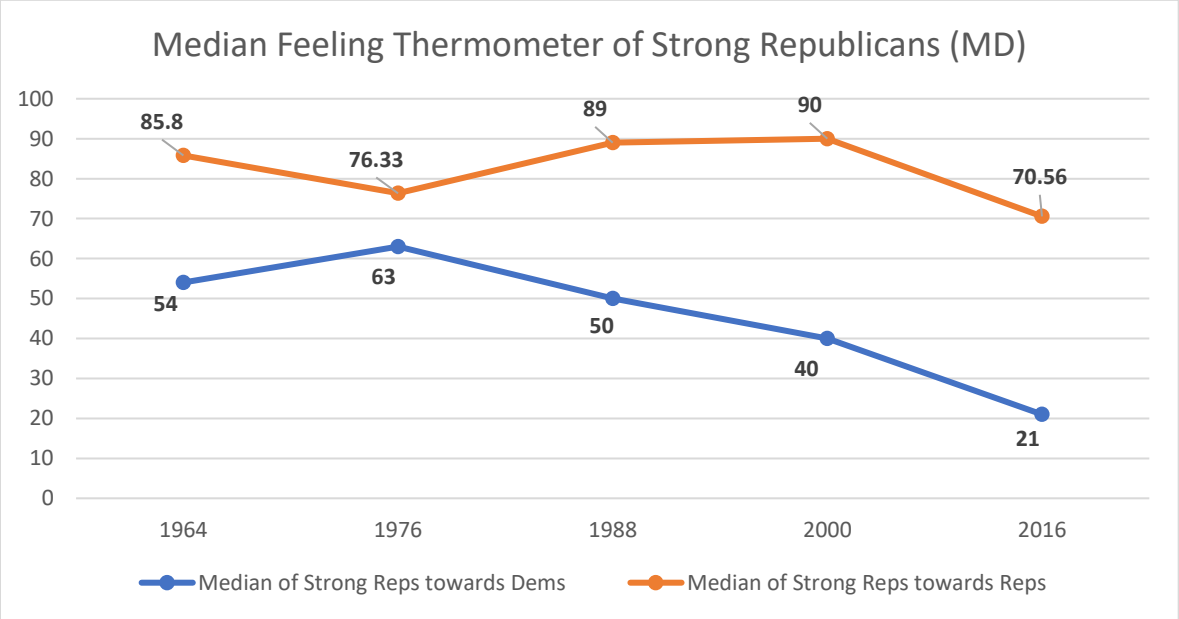
Surprisingly, the intensity of dislike that is felt on the left in Maryland is not reciprocated to such levels on the right. As indicated in Graph 3.5 above, Republicans have held steady levels of favorability towards their fellow Republicans, with just a couple instances of favorability drops coming in 1976 and 2016. This may have to do with the uniqueness of these elections. 1976 saw Gerald Ford running shortly after Nixon's resignation, leaving debate between the American public and the Republican Party about whether or not Nixon should be pardoned. 2016 was the emergence of Donald Trump, a divisive character who caused tensions between populist and establishment Republicans. However, as a part of the larger picture, there are only 30.84 feeling thermometer points separating the way that 2016 respondents feel about other Republicans versus Democrats. Notably, Republicans in Maryland do not feel as "cold" towards Democrats as Democrats towards Republicans. In fact, this 30.84-point divide is the smallest difference of all of the cases I examined, which begs the question, what makes it this way?

I also looked at the median feeling thermometers of individuals in Maryland that have identified themselves as "strong" partisans, separating them out from the weaker partisans that

were included in the "Median Feeling Thermometers of All Democrats" graphs above. Below are the two graphs charting the feelings of strong partisans.



(Graph 3.6)



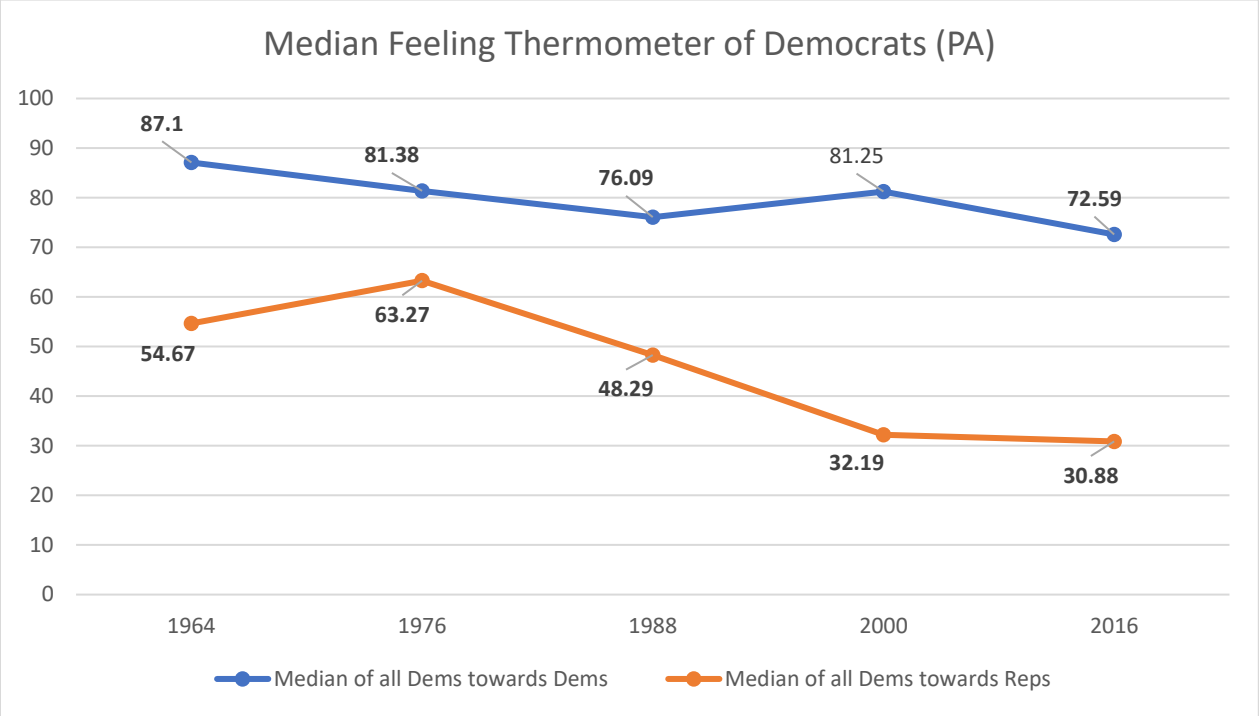
(Graph 3.7)

Unsurprisingly, both partisan Democrats and partisan Republicans feel "warmer" about their companions within the party and "colder" about those who belong to the opposing party than the previous graph that combined those who identified as both strong partisans and weaker

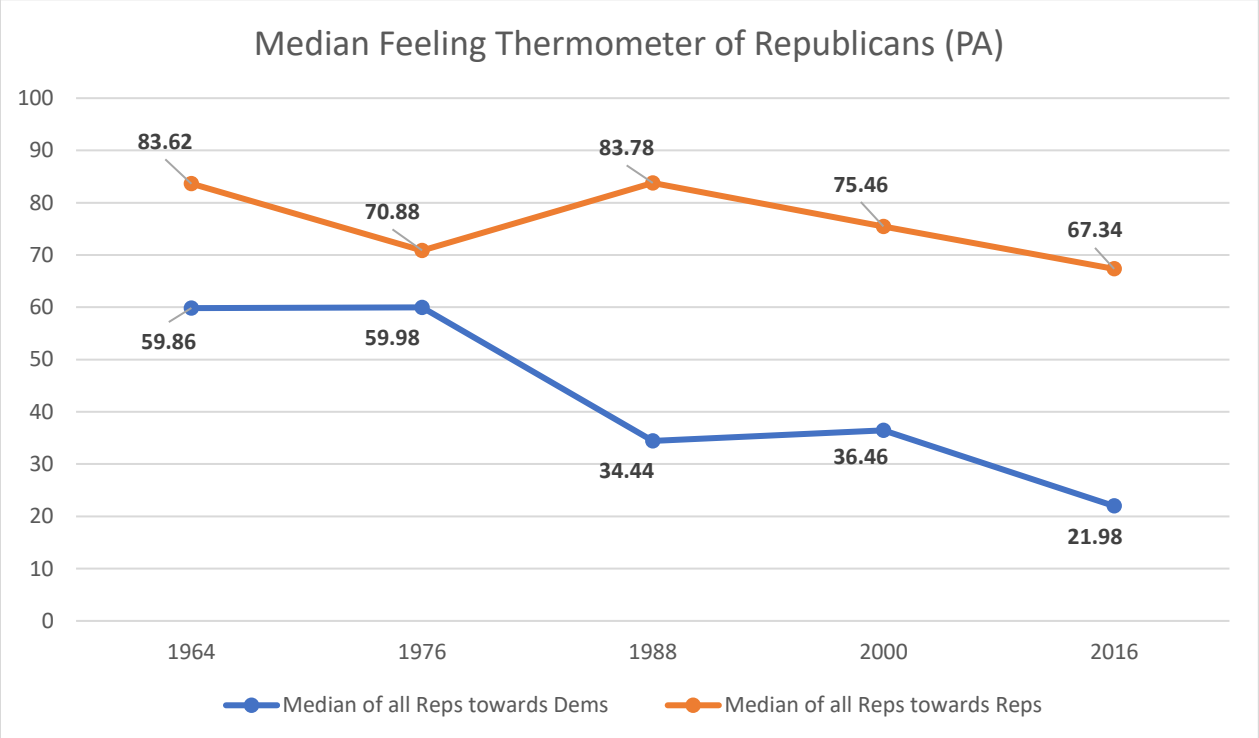
partisans. Additionally, there seems to be an unequal perception occurring between strong Democrats and strong Republicans in Maryland, similarly with the trend graphs 3.4 and 3.5. However, in this case, there are even larger divides in perception. Here, 64.11 points separating the way that Maryland's strong Democrats feel about each other versus how they feel about Republicans. It is also worth noting that the 15.63 rating given by the Maryland Democrats in this graph is the lowest rating given to Republicans in any of the cases I am looking at, in any of the three states, and that the 64.11-point divide in perception of party fellows versus opposition is the largest of any of my cases (The American National Election Studies, 2016).

When it comes to strong Republicans in the state of Maryland, they rate their fellow party men and women more favorably than when I looked at all Republicans, however, they feel much colder about Democrats than the prior chart of all Maryland Republicans demonstrated. With strong Republicans, there is a 49.56-point difference in 2016. No other grouping, regardless of strength in either Maryland, Pennsylvania, or Ohio shows a divide quite as vast as the one in this scenario in the Democratic party. Strong partisans Democrats in Maryland have the largest divide between their feelings towards their fellow identifiers and their feelings of negativity towards the opposing party, showing that there is a case of affective polarization occurring here that is more dramatic than in "less diverse" states like Pennsylvania and Ohio. This phenomenon is something I will be diving deeper into during my next chapter.

Pennsylvania



(Graph 3.8)

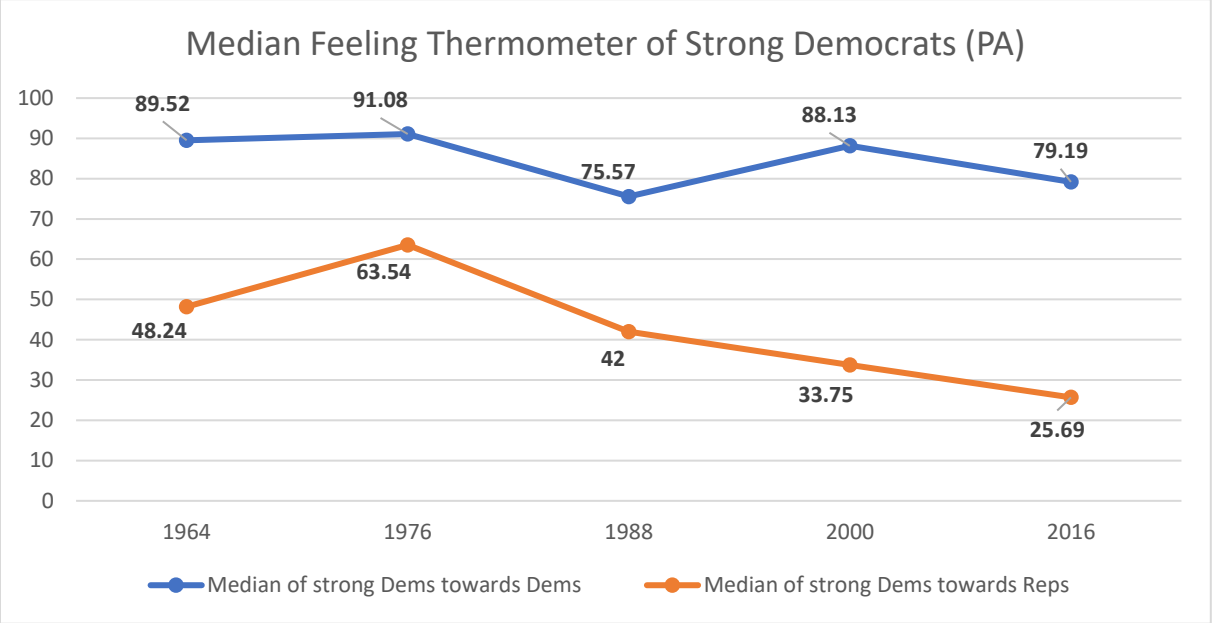


(Graph 3.9)

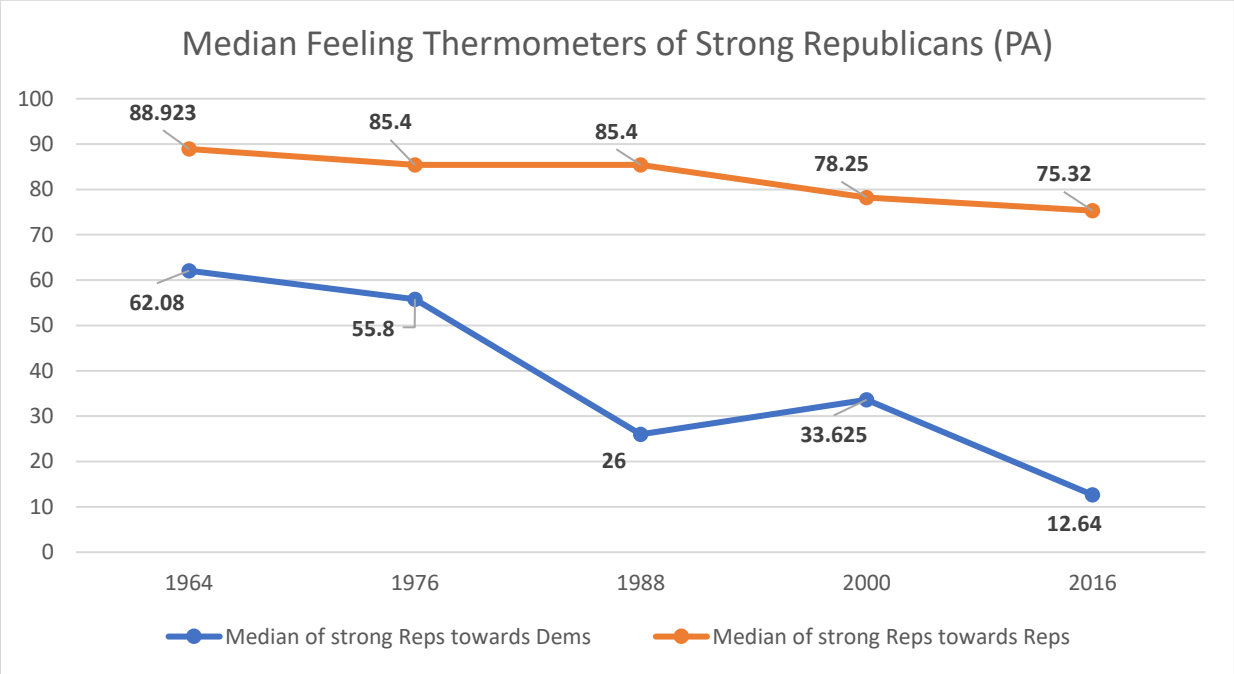
Just as with the Maryland graphs, these first set of graphs (Graphs 3.8 and 3.9) detail the feeling thermometers of Pennsylvania respondents who identify with one of the two major, regardless of the strength of their party identification. From 1964 until 2016, Keystone state Democrats have been a part of a slow decline in favorability towards their own party, with some ebbs and peaks, like in 2000 when the level of favorability increased to 81.25. Within these five election snapshots, the highest rating of favorability that Democrats felt towards their fellow Democrats was in 1964, with a high rating of 87.1. Graph 3.8 shows the way that Democrats begin to drop in their perceptions of Republicans. From 1976 to 1988, there was a large drop of 14.98 points, followed by another drop in 2000. Interestingly, the difference in the feeling thermometer medians from 2000 to 2016 amongst Pennsylvania Democrats was
rather small, something that differs greatly from the 22.36-point drop that was seen in Graph 3.4 (The American National Election Studies, 2016).

As for Pennsylvania Republicans, they held a rather consistent level of "warmth" amongst their fellow Republicans, never reaching median points as low as "all" Maryland Republicans did about each other. A slight decline took place between the 1988, 2000, and 2016 elections, leaving the most recent feeling thermometer median towards fellow Republicans at 67.34. When it comes to their feeling towards opposing Democrats, Republicans held more "warm" feelings towards them during the 1964 and 1976 elections, only to experience a 25.54-point drop from 1976 to 1988. During the 2016 election, Republican respondents to the ANES study felt "colder" about Democrats than Democrats felt about Republicans. The difference between the way that all Democrats feel about themselves and the way they feel about Republicans is 45.36 points. For all Republicans, that number is 41.71.

In order to get a sense of the attitudes of strong partisans within the state, I also looked into their median feeling thermometer answers from the ANES.



(Graph 3.10)



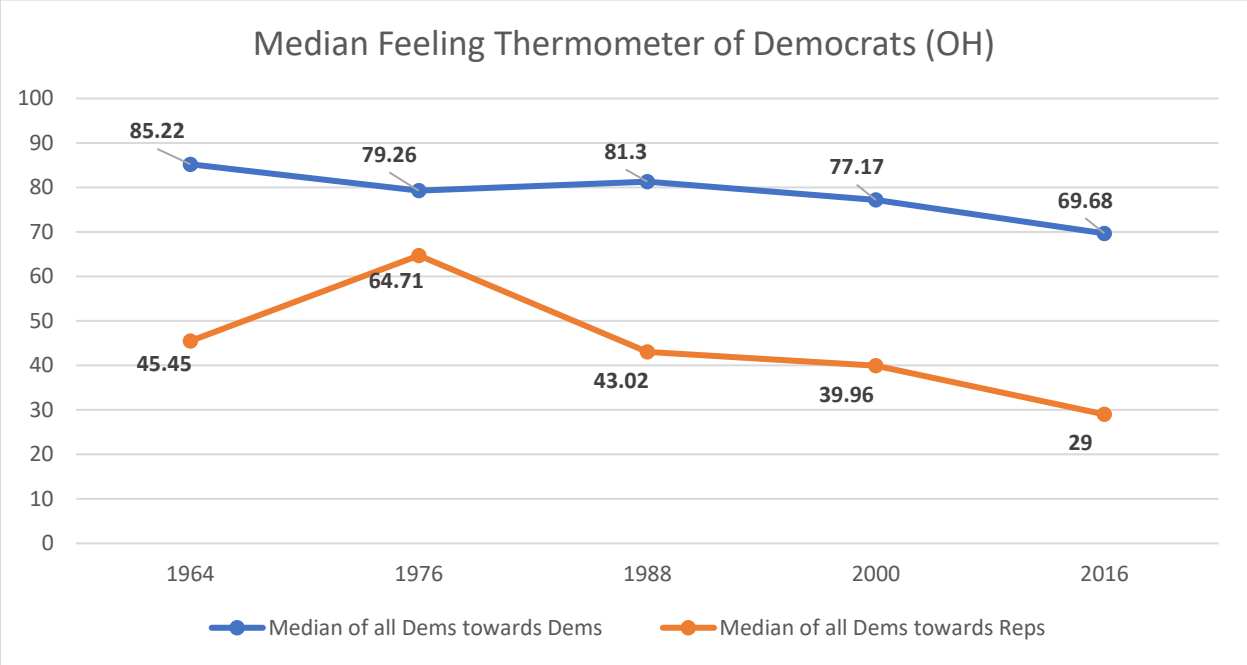
(Graph 3.11)

Strong Pennsylvania Democrats, similarly to their Maryland counterparts, hold themselves and other members of their party in higher esteem than the measures of "all" Democrats in

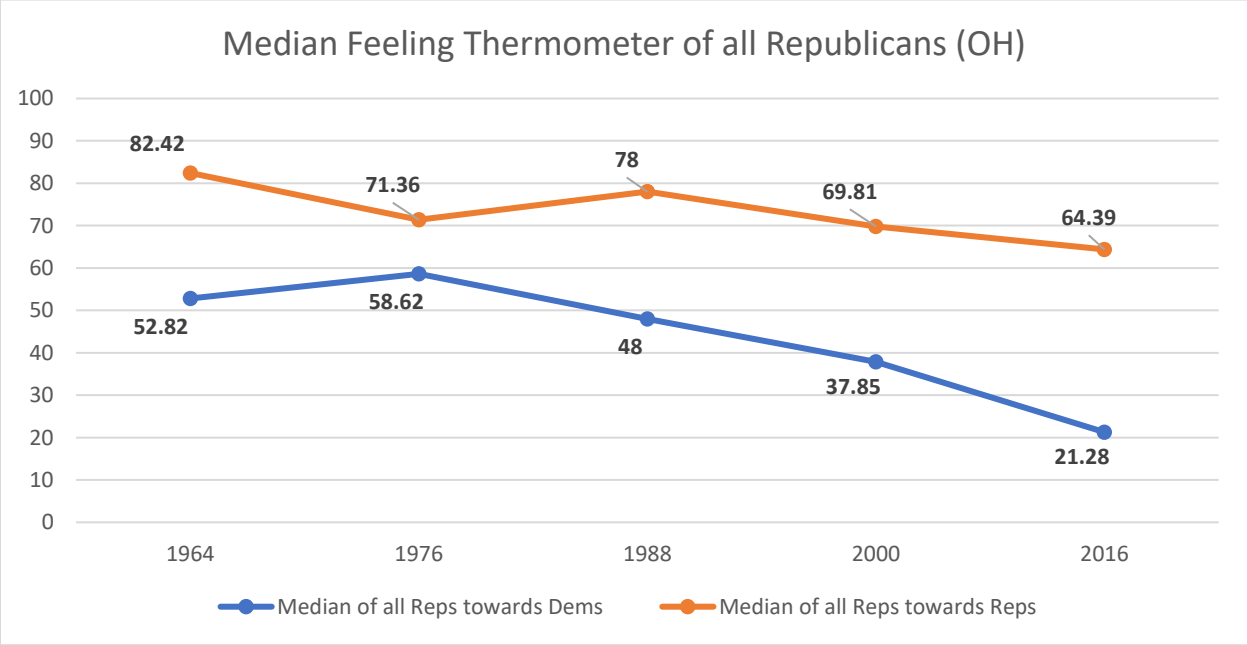
Pennsylvania. During the five snapshot election years I have chosen, Pennsylvania "strong" Democrats only dropped as low as 75.57 in 1988, a sign that during these years, most people felt overwhelmingly favorably towards fellow Democrats. When asked about Republicans, strong Democrats in Pennsylvania do not show the same sudden decline that strong Democrats in Maryland saw in Graph 3.9 between 1976 and 1988. Democrats felt most favorably towards Republicans in 1976, however, from there, it was a slow decline to a rating of 25.69 in the 2016 election. In 2016, there was a 53.50-point difference between how favorably strong Democrats thought about themselves, and how unfavorably they felt about Republicans (The American National Election Studies, 2016). Unsurprisingly, this difference is slightly larger than the difference shown in graph 3.8, signaling that stronger partisans tend to have more intense feelings of like and dislike towards themselves and their opponents.

Strong Pennsylvania Republicans showed steady favorability towards each other. Their feelings towards Democrats tend to be a little more back and forth. In 1964, the partisans interviewed tended to have more "warm" feelings towards the opposing party. This continued in 1976, however by 1988, things had changed. From the 1976 election to the 1988 election, strong Pennsylvania Republicans recorded a 29.8-point decrease in their feelings towards Democrats. This is a rather notable drop in favorability occurring over a shorter period of time. After that drop, there is a slight rise in favorability towards Democrats in 2000, only to once again see a decline. By 2016, the median feeling thermometer rating is 12.64, one of the lowest seen in all of my data collection. The 62.68-point difference between the way that strong partisan Republicans feel about themselves versus Democrats is the largest difference seen in any of the Republican groups I included in this study.

Ohio



(Graph 3.12)



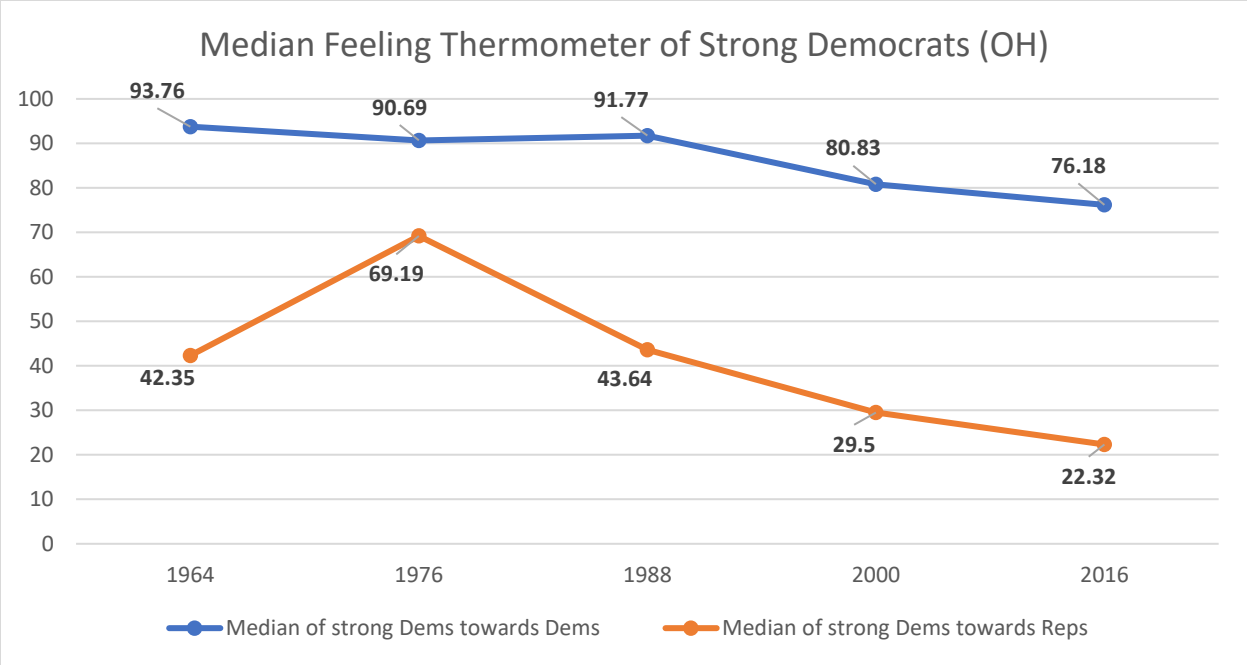
(Graph 3.13)

Above, graphs 3.12 and 3.13 demonstrate the trends in feeling thermometers of all Democrats and all Republicans Ohio's Democrats and Republicans show the least divide between positive feelings for themselves and negative feelings towards the other party. As Graphs 3.12 and

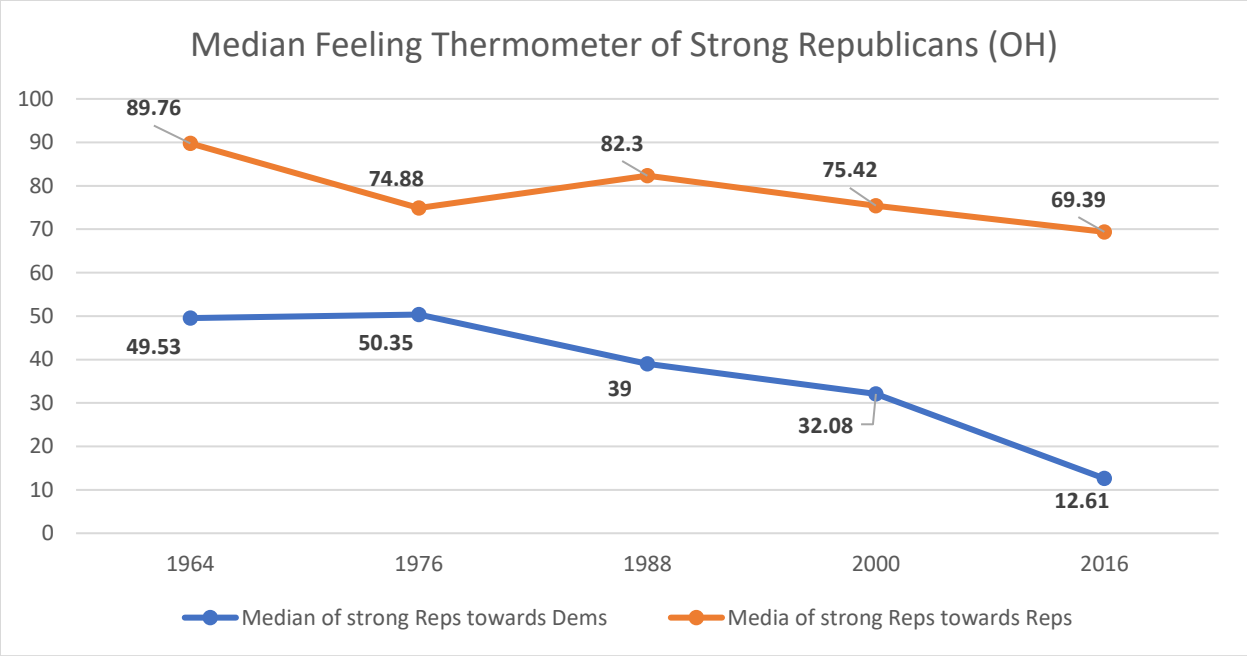
3.13 show, when you combine all party identifiers in Ohio, regardless of party identification strength, there is a clear divide that occurs over the emotions brought out by the idea of those of the opposing party. However, this divide is not as pronounced as it was in Maryland or Pennsylvania. Ohio Democrats experienced a drop in their feelings of "warmth" towards Republicans between the 1976 and 1988 elections, which was similar to the trends seen in both breakdowns of Democrats in Pennsylvania. However, from there, the decline in the median feeling thermometer rating is slightly more gradual. In 2016, the difference between Ohio's Democrats when thinking about each other versus the opposition was 40.68 (The American National Election Studies, 2016). In comparison to some of the other states that I have examined, this is a less intense divide.

Republicans are the same way. Unlike their Democratic counterparts, the Republicans did not experience a sudden drop-off in median feeling thermometer responses in 1976; rather their "warm" feelings towards Democrats decreased at a rather constant rate. By 2016, the difference between the two lines in graph 3.13 was 43.11. This means that these two graphs demonstrating the feeling thermometers of all those respondents from Ohio expressing an identification with one of the two major parties is the least divisive of all of the graphs I have examined. With the 40.68-point difference on the Democrats side and the 43.11 difference from the Republicans, this group has less distance placed between their feelings of their fellow party members and the opposing party's members

The pattern of "less distance" continues even when looking at those who identify has strong party partisans in Ohio, as demonstrated in graphs 3.14 and 3.15 below.



(Graph 3.14)



(Graph 3.15)

As expected, and as demonstrated with Maryland and Pennsylvania, when you begin to look at only strong partisans, the level of intensity increases, both for the like of their own party, as well as the dislike of the other party. This is also true in Ohio's case, with both partisan Democrats and Republicans reporting higher levels of warmth towards their own party and lower levels of

coolness towards the opposing party. However, the difference in these levels is not as extreme as demonstrated in the case of partisan Republicans in Pennsylvania or partisan Democrats in Maryland (which are proving to be our most divisive groups thus far). Rather, Ohio's data from strong partisans on both sides of the aisle seems to suggest a more reserved level of difference.

For partisan Democrats, there is a difference of 53.86 between their feelings about themselves and their feelings about Republicans in the 2016 election. However, this is not an extreme difference, like those seen in strong partisans from Maryland and Pennsylvania. Additionally, it is rather similar to the difference on the other side of the aisle with Republican perceptions. In the 2016 election, strong Republican partisans gave Democrats a median feeling thermometer rating of 12.61 points (The American National Election Studies, 2016). This is the lowest feeling thermometer rating given by any group in any of the graphs I have created. However, the reason that there is not a massive difference between the feelings towards their "own" versus the "opposition" (like in partisan Republicans in Pennsylvania), is because partisan Ohioans gave their own party members a "colder" rating than in past years (and a colder rating that Pennsylvania partisan Republicans gave each other). Because Ohioan partisans have a median feeling thermometer rating towards their own party members of 69.39, the difference is only 56.78-points. This makes Ohio's population with both "all" party identifiers and "strong" partisans the least extremely divided of the three states I have examined.

There are noticeable trends beginning to form. Across the board, the data from the last sixteen years have shown an increase in the hostilities between both parties in all states. Maryland "strong" Democrats and Pennsylvania "strong" Republicans both show large divisions and signs of affective polarization during the past sixteen years. Ohio, despite its demographic similarities to Pennsylvania shows less evidence of large divides. What is it about these states that encourage

wide divide and hostilities in some, but cohesiveness in others? As I move into my last chapter, my discussion of my results, I will be examining the way that geography and identity can be transformed from diversity demographics to begin to unravel this story.

Chapter 4—Discussion of Results

The Most (and least) Diverse State

In order to analyze the graphs regarding the possibility of diversity and changing demographics affecting emotional response, I ranked Maryland, Ohio, and Pennsylvania in order to see which state had the highest levels of diversity when it came to college educations, non-white versus white residents, and foreign-born individuals. This will allow me to see the way that demographics affect different people in different geographic contexts. In Chapter 3, I created three graphs (Graph 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3) that showed the trends in each of these states in the five snapshot years I chose. I took the Census values on these graphs and compared them in order to see the differences in diversity over the fifty-year time frame I am reviewing.

Ohio, based on the relationship of their Census data points in comparison to those from Pennsylvania and Maryland, is the least diverse of the three. Only one of Ohio's data points, the percentage of foreign born residents inside the state in 1960, is higher than Maryland's corresponding data point. In every other data point for every other year, Maryland has a higher level of diversity. Ohio has 5 (out of 15) data points that are higher than Pennsylvania. These 5 data points were the 1960, 1976, 1988, and 2000 measures of the percent of the population that is non-white. So, for a span of almost forty years, Ohio and Pennsylvania were very similar in racial composition, however, Ohio was slightly more diverse. For the other ten data points, Pennsylvania has higher values than Ohio.

Pennsylvania has one data point that is higher than Maryland, the 1960 measure for the percent of the population that is foreign-born. This is the same data point that Ohio can claim as being higher than Maryland. However, it is important to point out that in 1960, 5.33% of the Pennsylvania population was foreign born, while Ohio's was 4.10%, so Pennsylvania is higher

than Ohio on this point. Maryland, based on these measures, is the most diverse state by far. Maryland has higher values in 14 out of 15 data points than both Ohio and Pennsylvania. The only data point that Maryland is lower on is that 1960 foreign-born percentage point that was referenced above.

Using the data plotted on Graphs 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 from Chapter 3, I was able to compare the diversity of the three states in order to analyze the way that demographics affect people who live in various areas with different political and social climates. Based on education level, racial makeup, and foreign-born residents, Ohio is the least diverse of the three states. Pennsylvania is in the middle, with several aspects of the racial demographics being less diverse than Ohio, but with many other data points being at higher levels of diversity than Ohio. As stated above, Maryland proved to be the most diverse and heterogeneous state of the three. It is also worth noting that a recent study conducted by WalletHub and published in *The Washington Post* showed that four of the most diverse "cities" in the nation can be found in Maryland. Gaithersburg, Germantown, Silver Spring, and Rockville, Maryland are all within the top ten most diverse cities in the nation, and all four are considered Maryland suburbs of Washington D.C. (Hedgpeth, 2018).

The proximity of all of these cities and towns to D.C. may help explain the difference in diversity that was seen in the data I collected for Maryland versus the two Rust Belt states. A study done by Penn State on the diversity of the D.C. suburban areas credit the "company town" aspect of the area. It is an area that sees a large government and military presence and is "dominated by institutions that value equal opportunity" (Morello, 2012). Additionally, as immigrants are moving to the D.C. area and telling family and friends about the opportunities there, they are attracting family members and friends to the region as well, which can help explain the higher levels of foreign-born individuals in Maryland. Since the late 1970s, early 1980s, there has been a decline

in resources in the Rust Belt states, which meant less migration in the first place (both domestically and internationally), and less people attracting their social networks to the area.

Republicans versus Democrats

When looking at the trends that are existing in the data points for all the Democrats in each of the three states towards other Democrats and all the Republicans in each state towards each other, a pattern emerges on both sides of the aisle. The data points for "all" Republicans in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland show a trend in the way that Republicans feel about each other. For example, in all three states, the feeling thermometer response in 1976 was "cooler" (or lower) than the response given in 1964. In all states, there was then a rise in the feeling thermometer in 1988, with Republicans giving their fellow party identifiers a higher rating than they did in the last election snapshot. By 2000, the feeling thermometer was lower, and lower still in 2016. Maryland, Ohio, and Pennsylvania all saw this same trend.

Those that identified as "strong" Republicans in all three states also were subject to a trend of their own. In the first three election snapshots I looked at, there were differences in the feeling thermometer and the direction of the change that was occurring between the snapshots. However, in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the 2000 feeling thermometer rating for the way that the respondent felt towards their fellow Republicans was lower than it was in 1988. 2016 was also considerably lower than the 2000 median rating as well.

This drop-off makes sense in the case of the years in-between the 2000 and 2016 elections, especially with the presence of an increasing number of Republicans running in the primaries and the emergence of the Trump wave. In 2008, the first Republican primary after George W. Bush's two terms, there were five contenders during the primary season: John McCain, Mike Huckabee, Mitt Romney, Ron Paul, and Rudy Giuliani (Primary Season Election Results, 2008). By the 2012

primaries, there were eleven individuals who were, at one point or another, running for President (Republican Presidential Candidates, 2012). In the 2016 election, there were a whopping seventeen Republican primary candidates who were all vying for the nomination (Bialik, 2016). With this wide field of many Republicans at different levels of conservatism, from different backgrounds, and with different personalities, Republican voters were torn about their allegiances. Therefore, there may be more hostilities forming between individuals of the same party based on the type of candidate and ideology they are supporting during the primary season.

Trump's emergence in 2016 coincides with the drop-off of the feeling thermometer for all Republicans and strong Republicans in all three states. Trump divided the Republican Party between more traditional, establishment party members and the new, populist, anti-establishment segment that began to emerge. Trump's inflammatory comments, dedication to the "working class" American who had felt excluded from politics, and populist agenda that included building the "wall," moved away from the usual Republican agenda. This left some Republicans feeling uncomfortable with the alienation of certain groups of voters and attacks on other party members. Other Republicans felt empowered by the Trump campaign's willingness to speak their mind. This party divide between the establishment and the outsider could contribute to the drop-off that occurred in all three states with all types of Republican identifiers.

Also of interest is the difference in the way that Democrats feel about each other versus the way that Republicans feel about each other. Based on the graphs in my last chapter, I averaged the median feeling thermometers from each election snapshot into a single value for each state and for both the strong partisan and "all" partisan graphs to see if Democrats felt more warmly about their fellow party members than Republicans felt about theirs. The highlighted cells indicate the "warmer"/ higher feeling towards the respondents' fellow party identifiers.

MD				PA				OH			
All		Strong		All		Strong		All		Strong	
Dems	Reps	Dems	Reps	Dems	Reps	Dems	Reps	Dems	Reps	Dems	Reps
77.21	74.53	83.63	82.34	79.68	76.22	84.70	82.66	78.53	73.20	86.64	78.35

(Table 4.1)

Unsurprisingly, strong partisans in all three of these states tend to look at their fellow Democrats or Republicans more highly than the numbers reflect in the "all" category where all levels of partisan identification are combined. However, in every case here, the Democrats feel warmer towards each other than Republicans do towards each other.

Why is this? Republicans in recent history have often been in favor of limiting the size and power of government. Unsurprising since this is one of the basic tenets of conservatism. Conservatives tend to believe that government's focus is not to have its hands in many affairs and not to be the "problem-solver" for the people. This ideology can be seen in a variety of policy pushes by Republican elected officials that seem to be working against their own good, but for the good of the idea of a decreased government presence. This may shed some light on the reason that Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Ohio Republicans feel less favorably towards each other.

In 2013, U.S. House Representative Matt Salmon of Arizona, a Republican, introduced a bill that would propose an amendment to the Constitution to create term limits for members of Congress, meaning that Representatives would limit House Reps to 3 terms and Senators to 2 terms (H.J. Res. 41, 2013). This seems to be working against his own good; such an amendment would shorter the timespan of his job. However, at the core of Republican conservatism is a belief that big government is detrimental. Creating term limits would decrease the power that elected governmental officials had by preventing them from becoming perennial powerhouses in either

chamber of Congress. Currently in the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives, Republicans are proposing a Constitutional change that would decrease the size of the House from 203 elected members to 151 elected members. With a Republican sponsor and a largely Republican base of support, it seems like this bill would only hurt representatives—it decreases job positions and puts their jobs on the line. Like these Representatives, the ANES respondents may have a more nuanced distaste for their fellow Republicans, not because they dislike their political affiliation, but because they dislike the idea of government in general.

My original discussion about affective polarization fits in here. There is an emotional response that Republicans may be feeling towards their fellow Republicans because they associate their conservative political beliefs with their identity. The idea of a smaller, less involved government is so tied to their beliefs and their lifestyles that they are engrained to feel colder towards their own party members than Democrats are towards other Democrats.

On a side note, there has been recent discussions about internal divisions within the Democratic Party. Following the 2016 election season, the tensions between more establishment ideals from Clinton and more leftist views of Bernie Sanders have been in the media. This divide was not well reflected in my data analysis, but I believe that looking forward to future election cycles, that this divide may cause lower perceptions of "warmth" in the way that Democrats view other Democrats, similarly to the way that divisive primary campaigns have affected Republicans.

The Maryland Divide

As I began to talk about in Chapter 3, the largest divide between the perception that respondents have about those within their political party and the opposition comes in Maryland, with strong Democrats reporting a 64.11-point divide between the feeling thermometer rating that they gave each other (79.74) and the rating they gave Republicans (15.63). This can be viewed in

Graph 3.6. Why is it that Maryland, the most diverse state that I looked at has one of the largest divides through the eyes of the strong Democrats in the state? Originally, at the beginning of my research, I hypothesized that diversity would increase respondents' openness to opposing ideas and opinions. Based on the literature I had read, I believed that being exposed to a wider variety of beliefs and opinions would essentially condition individuals to be more open-minded and less emotionally reactive to individuals with opposing views and opinions. However, it seems that there is a culture in Maryland among Democrats that identify as strong partisans that is opposite of this initial hypothesis.

First, it is clear to see in the case in all four of my graphs pertaining to Maryland (Graphs 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7) that the increase in "coolness" towards the opposition began in the 2000 election cycle and continued into the 2016 cycle. During the period from 1988 (the last election cycle for all of these graphs in which feelings towards the other party were civil) until 2016, Maryland saw an increase in diversity on all three fronts. The state experienced an incredible amount of growth in the foreign-born percentage from 6.60% to 14.70% during this time period, seemingly proving that diversification of the state did not create more open minded strong Democrats. Based on the Census and ANES data I collected, it may be that the increase in diversity created an environment where Democrats across Maryland feel stable and comfortable. It is worth touching upon at this point in my discussion of results that much of my data analysis occurs at a statewide level, making it difficult to see trends of sorting on a community level.

It is known that in most instances, non-white individuals and college-educated citizens tend to vote more consistently Democrat than Republican (Brownstein, 2017). Therefore, as the percentage of non-white individuals inside the state increases, Maryland as a whole becomes more liberal-leaning. This creates a political environment in which one party, the Democrats, dominate.

If you look at the voter registration information for the 2000 and 2016 elections, the two snapshots that correspond with the downturn trend in feelings towards Republicans, you can see that the state was heavily "blue." In 2000, 56.98% of the registered voters in Maryland were Democrats and 29.68% were Republicans ("Voter Registration Figures, 2000"). In 2016, 55.15% of voters were Democrats, and the Republican percentage of registered voters decreased to 26.01% ("Voter Registration Figures 2016"). When over half of the population is registered and identifies with one party, with only a quarter identifying with the other one, it would make sense that strong opinions against the other party would begin to grow. With less everyday interaction with people of vastly different political identifications, residents in Maryland could be experiencing some kind of echo chamber where Democrats mainly hear other Democratic ideas coming back to them, rather than conservative views.

In this case, an increase in diversity in Maryland could mean an increase in liberal voters in Maryland because the modern Democratic Party is known for their support of minorities and their attraction of college educated voters. The fact that the downturn in the feeling thermometer took place could be an indication of an emotional response driving affective polarization. In more recent election years, with 2016 standing out as an extreme example, issues of race and ethnicity have been more at the forefront of debates ("Blue Lives versus Black Lives" or "Building the Wall"). These sorts of issues often leave Republican candidates campaigning *against* the interests of minorities and naturalized citizens because it caters more to the strong Republican base. As diversity in Maryland grows, especially in the categories of race and foreign-born residents, there could be an affective response occurring because Democrats who are people of color or who are naturalized citizens (or are close friends with foreign-born citizens) may see Republican viewpoints on these issues as fundamentally different than their own and threatening to their

lifestyle. Put simply, there are some things in life we are unable to unwilling to compromise on. When our identity gets tied up with our political affiliations, we become unable to compromise on what makes us unique, but also our political beliefs.

The combination of an imbalance between registered Democrats and Republicans and the rise of diversity in a very liberal state could create an environment where Republicans are in the minority of registered voters and clustered in more rural areas of the state, so there are large swathes of the population that are not routinely interacting with people of other political views. Additionally, much of the diversification of Maryland in the categories I am looking at are occurring in major population centers around Baltimore and around Washington D.C. (explained by the Washington Post study I cited earlier in this chapter that ranked four D.C. suburbs as some of the most diverse in the nation). Therefore, diversification is leading to heterogeneity in some areas, but not others in more rural areas. In rural areas, like northern and western Maryland, much of the population is homogeneous, and mainly Caucasian (US Census, 2010). Therefore, the idea of "sorting" is occurring in Maryland, as people of color, foreign-born, and college educated are moving to the population centers where there are jobs and resources, and likeminded people. Elsewhere in the state, residents are sorting themselves into predominately white counties where individuals hold similar beliefs and lifestyles.

The Pennsylvania Divide

Like Maryland, Pennsylvania saw a sharp divide in perception, however, this time it is the way that strong Republicans feel about each other versus the opposition. As you can see in Graph 3.11, strong Republicans gave each other a rating of 75.32, while they gave Democrats a rating of 12.64, one of the lowest ratings across the board. This is a 62.71-point divide, meaning this is the second biggest divide of any of the states or strength of partisanship, and the largest divide amongst

Republicans. Pennsylvania, as I stated above, ranks second in diversity amongst the three states I looked at, however, it is considerably less diverse than Maryland. However, Pennsylvania is the most divided of all three of the states I am examining.

When I added up the point divisions in the graphs containing "all" respondents from each state (Graphs 3.4, 3.5, 3.8, 3.9, 3.12, and 3.13), Pennsylvania leads the pack as of 2016 in divisiveness. When I combined the divide between the perceptions of all Democratic and the perceptions of all Republican respondents, I found that there was an 87.07-point divide existing in Pennsylvania in 2016. For comparison, the gap in Maryland was 85.44 and the gap in Ohio was 83.79. Although these values are all within a few points of each other, I believe that it is important to look at the possible explanations for why Pennsylvania is the most divided on opinions and perceptions between Democrats and Republicans.

When it comes to demographics, Pennsylvania has seen an overall rise in the percent of the population with a Bachelor's degree and the non-white percent of the population. While there was a steady increase with the percentage of individuals holding Bachelor's degrees, the increase in the percentage of the non-white population has been a much less drastic increase. Interestingly, Pennsylvania over the past fifty years has seen an interesting "U-shape" when it comes to the percent of the population that is foreign born (Graph 3.3). As I mentioned in Chapter 3, the shape of this graph may reflect the economic downturn that caused major manufacturing centers in the state to close. As is seen in Graph 3.3, the percentage of foreign-born Pennsylvania residents began to decrease in 1988, following the recession that closed steel factories and manufacturing plants. However, through 2000 and 2016, there is a rise in the percent of foreign born individuals coming into the state. This upward trend in diversity corresponds with the downward trend of the way that Democrats feel towards Republicans and Republicans feel towards Democrats.

Looking at the great divide between strong Republicans' perceptions, I would argue that the influx of foreign-born individuals into the state is one of the factors that led Republicans to have stronger feelings of distaste towards Democrats. From 1988 to 2000, the state saw a 1.00% increase in the foreign-born population. From 2000 to 2016, there was a 2.30% jump. In rural Pennsylvania (which makes up a large geographic portion of the state), there are known pockets of xenophobia and racial resentment. Couple this existing resentment with an increase of immigrants who are moving into a resource-depleted area. Native Pennsylvanians may feel that they have been left behind. They are struggling to make ends meet in an area where the economy is struggling, and jobs are few and far between after the heyday of industrialization has come and gone. The increase of foreign individuals coming in to compete with citizens for the few resources can cause feelings of resentment. These feelings can grow when individuals realize that one political party, more so than the other, is accepting to immigrants and foreign-born individuals.

The Democratic platform has traditionally been more open to immigrants and minorities, more recently defending the rights of childhood arrivals and arguing for a more accessible pathway to citizenship for those coming into the country to contribute to our economy. Pennsylvanians who feel that their livelihoods and job prospects are being threatened by immigrants are naturally inclined to harbor more hostile feelings towards the party and the people that are defending the rights of the foreign-born residents to be here. There could be an emotional response occurring in which some Republicans in Pennsylvania are affectively polarizing because they feel that the other party is threatening their beliefs and their way of life. However, obviously this cannot be the only factor that is leading to a wide divide between Pennsylvania strong partisan Republicans and their feelings about Democrats.

Another possible factor that could be contributing to the divide in the state could be a rural versus urban one. Traditionally, the population centers of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia have been the most liberal areas of the state, with the towns and cities in between constituting Pennsylvania's "red" sections. As those who are more diverse in faith, ethnicity, race, and country of origin sort themselves in these population centers, the remaining sort themselves into more rural areas where the population tends to be more homogeneous and similar in background, values, and lifestyles. As the Democrats in Pennsylvania stay in their more urban enclaves surrounded by a higher level of diversity, they associate Republicans within the states as those who live far away in the rural areas. They may see Republicans as those with ideals that do not align with them and those who are threatening the more "liberal" way of life by being opposed to more open routes for immigration (or a variety of other social issues). On the other hand, Pennsylvania Republicans in their neighborhoods see the Democrats as not only threatening their social values, but their prosperity and livelihoods as resources continue to be tight.

Katherine Cramer, in her book, *The Politics of Resentment,* she looks into rural anxieties in Wisconsin. Based on her ethnographic study, Cramer argues that a "rural consciousness" has emerged that has produced a "politics of resentment" based upon the belief in distributive injustice (Cramer, 2016). Her idea of rural consciousness revolves around ideas about power. To put it shortly, rural inhabitants have created a shared consciousness revolving around feeling under-valued, misunderstood, and dismissed by government. Cramer's empirical studies of money spent by state and federal governments in rural versus urban areas shows no proof behind the perceptions in rural areas that the government overlooks them. However, the rural anxiety exists, as citizens of these areas feel that they are getting the short end of the stick, in comparison to diverse urban centers (Cramer, 2016).

In Pennsylvania, the large amounts of rural area, many of which are suffering from "brain drain," problems getting families to move into rural communities, issues with job opportunities, many see urban centers as the crux of their plight. The association of urban centers with diversity creates the same situation seen with Democrats in Maryland where there is the association of liberal values with diversity. However, in rural Pennsylvania, this connection elicits rural anxiety and resentment towards the urban liberals.

The Ohio Divide?

It's well-known that Ohio frequently comes up in almost every election discussion, as it is a state that routinely swings in different directions and is frequently a predictor of the winner of the Presidential election. My data analysis seems to show that there is not a huge discrepancy between the perceptions of Ohio Democrats and Ohio Republicans. In fact, of all three states I looked at, Ohio is experiencing the least intense divisions.

Earlier, in my discussion of Pennsylvania, I discussed the way I added up the point divides in each state's feeling thermometers for all Democrats and all Republicans to find that Pennsylvania had the largest divides in perception. Ohio had the smallest divide when I added the difference between the way that all Democrats in Ohio feel about each other versus how they feel about Republicans and then repeated the process with all Republican respondents. What is it about Ohio that makes party identifiers in the state less "intense" about their dislike of the opposition?

To begin, Graphs 3.12 and 3.13 show that both Republican and Democratic respondents have seen a similar trend in feelings towards themselves and others, something that I did not see in my graphs of all respondents from the other states. In the Ohio data from 2016, there is 40.68-point divide in Democrats' feelings and a 43.11- point divide in Republicans' feelings. Even with the "strong" Ohio partisans in Graphs 3.14 and 3.15, the divide is mirrored across the aisle. For

Democrats, the divide in perception is 53.86. Republicans' divide is 56.78 points. In the two other states, I commented on a one-sided large divide on one side or the other that was not mirrored on the other side. Ohio bucks this trend and demonstrates a state where there is a divide, but the divide is less extreme on one side or the other.

It may be that Ohio does not experience the same level of extremity when it comes to elected officials or with the urban/rural divide. Ohio has three large population centers: Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland. However, the state also has numerous smaller cities that still house significant portions of the population: Canton, Youngstown, Dayton, Toledo, Akron. These mid-sized cities range in population from 64,000 (Youngstown) to 278,500 (Toledo). Akron has 197,000 residents, Canton has 71,000, and Dayton has 140,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). These are relatively well populated mid-sized cities that sit in areas of the state that are otherwise rather rural. The sheer amount of mid-sized cities in Ohio seems to break up the intensity of the rural-urban divide that has also crossed over to become a liberal versus conservative divide in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Having mid-sized cities with suburbs that spread out slowly into more rural areas may create a relationship between rural areas that rely partially on the mid-sized cities and urban areas that rely on the rural outskirts.

As a result, the intensity of difference is decreased in Ohio. More liberal people tend to reside in city centers, sorting themselves into communities of politically like-minded people. Those who live in the large rural areas of the state may hold conservative views that feel threatened by the liberal ideology. Because, in many cases, there is not a lot of interactions between these two groups, the divide grows and affective polarization occurs. However, in Ohio, the existence of mid-sized cities lessens the intensity of that divide, keeping it from becoming one-sided as in Pennsylvania or Maryland.

For reference, Pennsylvania has a handful of mid-sized cities: Allentown, Reading, Scranton, and Bethlehem. Allentown, the biggest of these mid-sized cities has 120,000 residents, meaning that, by Ohio standards, this would be on the low-end of possible population centers. After Allentown, the rest of these cities have populations under 100,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Additionally, many of these cities are clustered in the eastern and southern tier of the state, meaning their influence is both smaller than that of Ohio, and also not as well spread out to the rural areas in the center of the state that experience the most isolation from urban centers.

As for Maryland, the only major city within the state is Baltimore. The other mid-sized cities (Frederick, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Hagerstown, and Annapolis) range with populations between 30,000 and 65,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Once again, these population centers are not large enough to sustain an influence that breaks down the intensity of dislike between conservatives in rural areas and urban liberals.

Other Explanations

Although the explanation of changing demographics, increased sorting, and the influence of mid-sized cities begins to untangle the trend of increasing hostilities between everyday voters towards their opposition, it is safe to say that there are other factors that could be contributing to this trend that began between the 1988 and 2000 Presidential elections. All three of my states experienced an increase in hostilities on every level of partisan, showing that this is a notable trend that continues to intensify. However, there are some changes in our society that cannot be reflected in demographic data like the increase of 24-hour news coverage, social media echo chambers, party platform changes, and charisma of candidates.

For example, the rise of news channels like CNN, MSNBC, and FOX News and the predominance of individuals using social media platforms to get their political news has meant that Americans are able to choose the exact ideology they are hearing. If a liberal-minded American wants to hear about the political news of the day, they can look to MSNBC, where their views and beliefs will be presented to them as fact and repeated back to them. The same goes with a conservative watching FOX News. While the viewers' beliefs are being reaffirmed, their dislike and distrust for the opposition is growing because they are unable to empathize with what they are feeling.

It is not enough to see diversity, sorting, and the rural/urban divide as the sole factors that are leading to this new trend in our modern society. There are many factors at play that are contributing to the increase of hostility between party identifiers. However, in the case of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, it appears that these factors are beginning to tell a story about the way we live and the way we view each other.

Demographics do matter. However, they affect the political environment differently in each state. So, I argue based on my data analysis that diversity has the ability to push and pull us in different directions. Changing levels of diversity can cause the fusion of personal and political identities, like in Pennsylvania and Maryland, where individuals have equated their political views with their race, culture, and ethnic background to create a new identity, making it more difficult to see the political opposition as anything other than a threat to everything you hold dear. In geographic areas with rural and urban divides, rural anxieties can lead to more disparate perceptions fueled by the belief that diverse urban centers are draining rural communities of their resources. In Ohio, where mid-sized cities abound, pockets of urban diversity can work as buffers to prevent rural anxieties from boiling over and perceptions of the opposition from hitting rock

bottom. The multiplicity of factors at play may vary from state to state, but one thing is certain—diversity and demographics affect the way we see ourselves and each other, based on the geographic contexts of our communities.

Conclusion

There is little doubt that changing racial, educational, and cultural demographics will have an effect on the communities within a state. For some people, the prospect of new residents who look differently, talk differently, think differently, and hold different cultural values can be a frightening prospect. They may feel that their neighborhood is being inundated by outsiders who are a threat to their livelihood or their values. Others may see diversity as a way to enhance the quality of life. These people may hold a hope that living and working with people who are different than they are will lead to new horizons and new experiences. In each state, in each city, in each neighborhood, and for each person, changing demographics, increasing diversity, and increasing heterogeneity look and feel different. For the citizens in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, the way that levels of education, racial composition, and foreign-born residents have ebbed and flowed have had an impact on various facets of life. However, there is a story to be told about the power of demographics and diversity on our political climate.

Although I began my research with an eye on the way that homogeneity creates tension and hostility between political groups, I soon came to realize that there is more to this narrative. Authors like Cass Sunstein and Bill Bishop would argue that Americans are becoming less and less comfortable with living in heterogeneous communities. Instead, Americans tend to sort themselves into homogeneous communities, surrounded by those that echo their beliefs, and they become more and more removed from the political opposition, causing an increase in affective polarization and hostility between average Americans. Although this may be occurring, the data sets I consulted through the American National Election Studies proved to be too macro-level to truly see the sorting that was occurring in communities across Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland.

However, I was able to see a variety of trends over the span of 1964-2016 that were happening at a regular consistency across my three case study states.

Based on my research, I believe that changing levels of demographics do have an effect on the way that individuals view members of their own party versus members of the opposing party. In a state like Maryland, where a liberal political majority controls much of the state, yet with pockets of strong conservative political minorities, an increasing level of diversity into liberal strongholds can result in the fusion of political affiliation and identity. This new identity combination has steadily caused Democrats within the state to feel more and more hostile towards their Republican counterparts. With the rhetoric of recent election cycles, not only do Maryland Democrats feel that their political power being threatened, but they fear their identity as racially and culturally diverse, educated individuals is being threatened as well. An increase in heterogeneity in population centers within the state has resulted in the creation of a liberal identity in Maryland that values diversity, sees it as a part of their identity, and is unwilling to compromise on it.

In Pennsylvania and Ohio, where no dominate political majority exists, changes in diversity affect the way that people view each other. In both Pennsylvania and Ohio, economic hardships in the late 1970s and early 1980s meant a decrease in the number of foreign-born individuals arriving in the state. With a lack of job opportunities and economic prospects grim, the foreign-born population stayed low until 2000, where an increase began to occur. However, for many in rural areas of the Rust Belt, economic opportunities are still feeling as grim as they were in the 1970s and 1980s during the fall of steel and manufacturing. In Pennsylvania especially, an increase in foreign-born residents competing for jobs, housing, and resources, became associated with the values of the Democratic Party; therefore, equating a change in demographics with a threat to the

livelihood of conservative individuals living in rural areas. Rural anxiety in large portions of Pennsylvania seems to be equating to a distaste for the "liberal politics" associated with more urban areas. It does not help that Pennsylvania is a largely rural state based on geographic square miles, with few mid-sized cities to break up the rural areas.

In Ohio, a collection of five impressively populated mid-sized cities are spread throughout the state. These cities often evolve into urban centers with industry and rings of suburbs that help to decrease the urban-rural divide. These population centers exist and draw in diversity because of their resources, therefore making this increasing diversity a part of people's everyday lives, even if they live in a more rural suburb of these mid-sized cities. Ohio, based on my data, as the smallest divide between the perceptions of those in the same party and those in a different party. My data has shown that in Ohio, geography matters, especially in the way that location and context contribute to our political environment. Although Pennsylvania has very similar demographic markers throughout the sixty-year span, there are higher levels of tensions and hostility between party members, and I credit that to the geography difference between the two states.

When telling the story about "feeling thermometers," there are many factors to keep in mind. In all three states, there has been a marked downturn in the perception of the opposition over the last sixteen years, and if I had the time, I would like to look at the way that the party platforms of the two major parties have evolved during that time. It would be interesting to see if this trend has something to do with parties becoming more polarized on their positions, which, when combined with demographics changes, have the ability to push individuals further away from each other. Additionally, my data tended to be very broad and large-scale. When looking at state data to understand sorting trends, my original hypothesis ended up being too community-specific for the data sets I was using. Instead, my data led me down a path that was equally interesting, the

way that geography can affect the way that changing demographics shape us and our views of those holding opposing beliefs. Regardless, there is a story to be told here, one about the evolution of our perceptions of each other, the way our identities are formed, and the dangers that this can have for our political environment.

The importance of this research lies in the necessity of open dialogue and conversation for our political system. Democracy is based on a commitment to mutual respect for those around you, regardless of their political beliefs. If we continue to follow this trend of increasingly negative perceptions of those across the aisle, then we face the threat of becoming a part of a political system where compromise and improvement are impossible. In order to change our path, we all need to start thinking about the way we see ourselves and our neighbors. More open-minded thinking and less hostile associations with those who differ from us, whether that difference be occupation, race, country of origin, or education level, may help us reverse the trends I have seen, and help our country run more effectively and smoothly from the ground up.

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