



DEMOCRACY CORPS

CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG

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To: Friends of Democracy Corps

From: Stanley Greenberg and James Carville, Democracy Corps

The GOP Civil War & Its Opportunities *Report from Republican Party Project Survey*

When you see the results of this survey, you will believe that either Donald Trump has an amazing antenna for the mood of the party or a great pollster. And you will also believe this explosive civil war inside the GOP can move significant numbers of voters out of the Republican camp – and this poll starts to show how.

Executive Summary

As the Republican Party grapples with a fateful decision about its nominee for president, this new Democracy Corps survey of Republican voters shows they are headed towards a train-wreck that will change our politics. That may seem like hyperbole, but this one of kind survey is an eye opening glimpse into what is really happening inside one of our major national parties. The animated animus for Democratic governance and fear of the country's growing immigrant and racial diversity truly unify the Republican Party and have allowed Donald Trump to surge ahead of the field. But there are deep fissures inside the base as well and the GOP is poised to crack wide open.

Moderates form 31 percent of the Republican Party base, and they are solidly pro-choice on abortion and hostile to pro-life groups. About one in five are poised to defect from the party. The party is divided down the middle on gay marriage, climate change, and the N.R.A.¹

With the GOP's battles alienating large swaths of the country and an internal civil war in full swing, this campaign is full of opportunity for progressives.

¹ **Moderates** (31 percent) consist of: (a) liberals/moderates who are *neither* observant Catholics, *nor* Tea Party supporters, *nor* very favorable towards the Tea Party, (b) conservatives who are *neither* Evangelical Republicans *nor* Observant Catholics and do *not* attend religious services more than once a week who are *neither* Tea Party supporters *nor* strongly favorable towards the Tea Party. **Evangelicals** (30 percent) consist of Evangelical Christians who are not Moderates (see above). **Tea Party** (17 percent) consist of strong Tea Party supporters or those very favorable towards the Tea Party who are: (a) not Moderates or Evangelicals (see above); (b) liberals/moderates who are not Evangelicals and are very favorable towards the Tea Party or somewhat strong Tea Party supporters. **Observant Catholics** (14 percent) consist of Observant Catholics or Catholics who attend services more than once and week who are not Moderate, Evangelical, or Tea Party (see above). **Establishment** (8 percent) consists of those who are not Moderate, Evangelical, Tea Party, or Observant Catholic (see above).



This likely voter survey of 800 Republican base voters was conducted online using a voter file sample. The results were weighted to match Democracy Corps' national likely voter data set for self-identifying Republicans and Republican-leaning independents who will vote in the Republican primaries or caucuses. That includes questions such as religion, church attendance, ideology, strength of party identification, Tea Party support, education and age. Our assertions that Moderates are 31 percent of the Republican base and that the party is split down the middle between a Tea Party-Evangelical bloc and a Moderate-Observant Catholic bloc are based on our last three national surveys of likely voters. In short, you can trust that this is real.²

This survey of Republicans looks eerily like Trump's inside intelligence on Republican thinking, though at the same time, it shows how Democrats can take advantage of this moment.

The strongest attacks that we tested centered on his character and leadership qualities: that he is an ego-maniac at the expense of the country, that he is disrespectful towards women, and that he cannot be trusted to keep the country safe and handle our nuclear weapons.

The strongest Democratic messages that shift Tea Party, Observant Catholic, and Moderate voters away from the Republican nominee are ones focused on investment and modernizing America; on reforming corporate governance so growth works for middle class, not just the CEOs; and on getting beyond social issues to address America's problems.

A party united by the threat of Democratic governance and racial diversity

As we will see, this is a party divided. But this party is not divided on its fundamental doubts and fears about Democratic governance and immigration. It is not divided on supporting leaders who will battle to get illegal immigration under control. That is what Donald Trump understands.

When we look at the different dimensions of Republican thinking using a factor analysis, the conventional conservative views on national defense, regulation, markets and taxes just are not that important at the moment.³

The most powerful dimension of Republican thinking is defined by Republican voter hostility to Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party, the Affordable Care Act, President Obama and his attacks

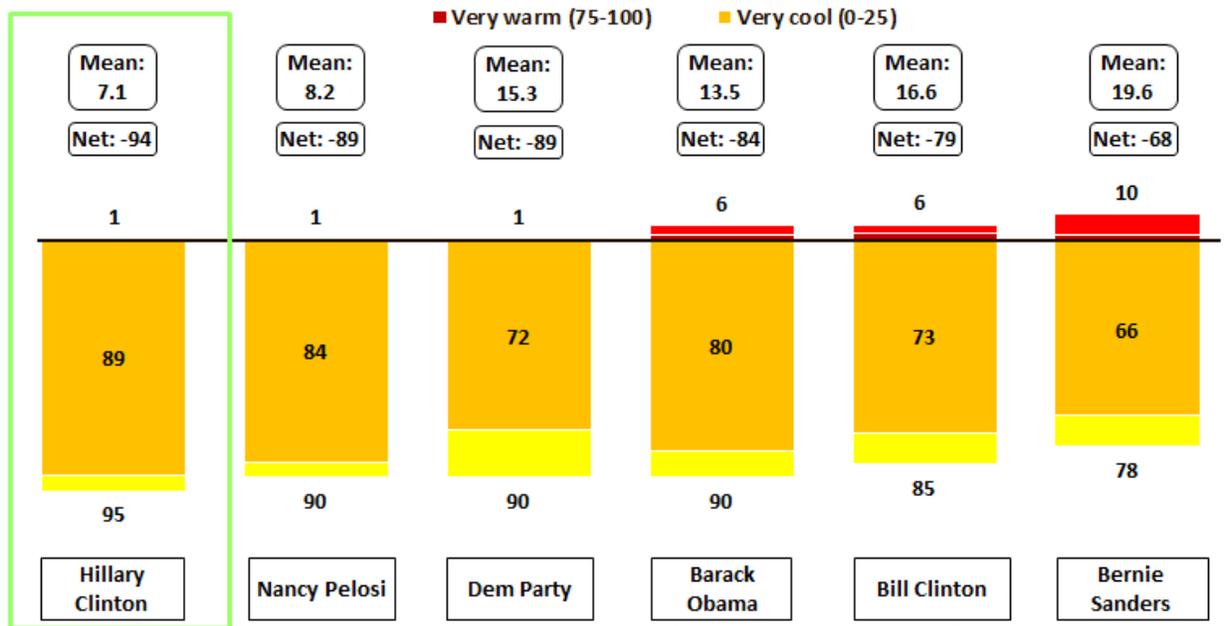
² This national web-survey of 800 likely Republican voters was conducted by Democracy Corps & Greenberg Quinlan Rosner on February 11- 16, 2016 using a voter file sample. Likely voters were determined based on whether they voted in 2012 or registered since and stated intention of voting in 2016. Data is among those who identify as Republicans or independents who lean Republican and vote in Republican primaries or caucuses. Margin of error for the full sample is +/-3.47 percentage points at 95% confidence. The 5 categories of Republicans are mutually exclusive categories determined by respondents' responses on ideology, religion, frequency of service attendance, strength of Tea Party support and favorability towards the Tea Party. To ensure that the web-survey accurately reflects the national Republican Party, the typologies were weighted to the average for each type from Democracy Corps' last three national surveys.

³ A factor analysis was conducted using principal-components analysis on the thermometer and agree/disagree responses, while also trying the principal factors and maximum likelihood methods to check the results. The most prominent factors from each analysis were used to compute factors scores. The PCA results retained 9 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. Cumulatively, the 9 retained factors explain 64.1% of the variance in the feeling thermometers and attitudinal questions.



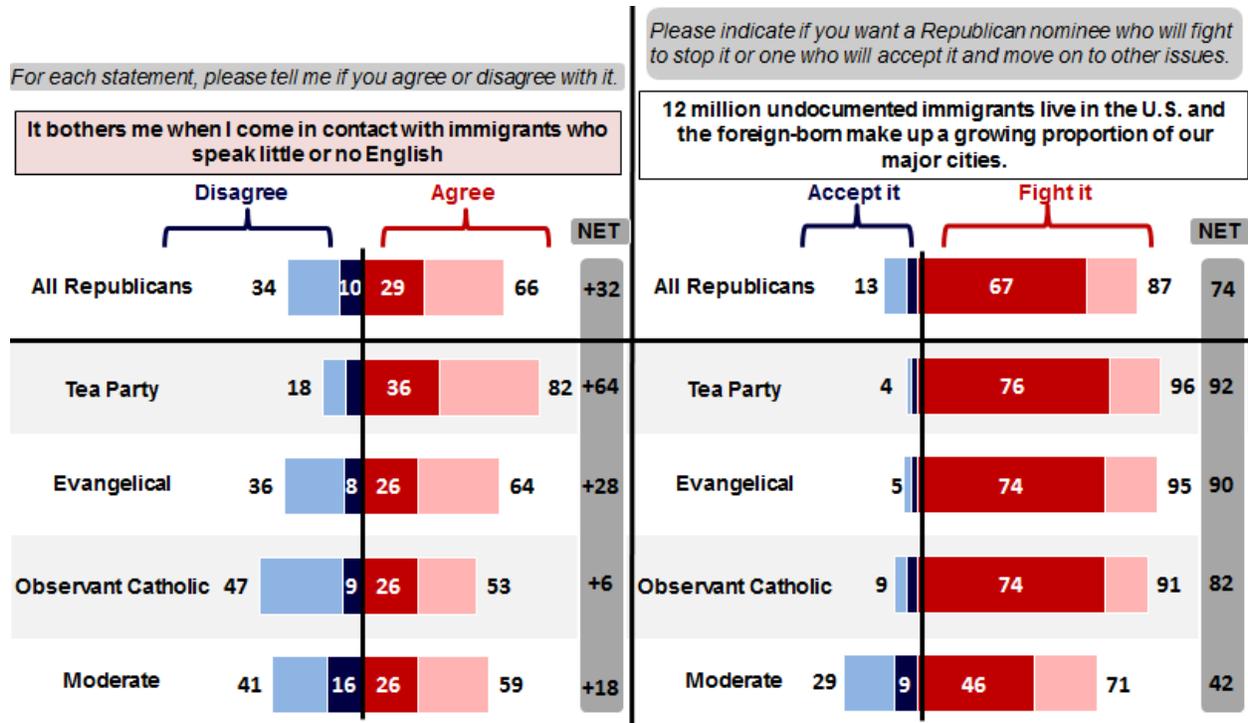
on the Constitution. That one dimension explains more than twice as much of the variation in GOP thinking as the next strongest dimension.

Please rate your feelings toward some people, organizations, and concepts, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



It is not surprising, then, that nearly 80 percent of Republicans today say, “there is no real difference between the Democratic Party and socialism” and nearly 90 percent say the Democratic Party’s policies are “so misguided that they threaten the nation’s well-being.” All the front-running candidates have given strong voice to this attack, though they apparently think Trump will finally fight, unlike the feckless leaders of the party (as reported in Democracy Corps’ earlier focus groups).

It is also hard to understate the importance of race and immigration in the Republican equation. It does not matter what faction you look at, Republican voters are uncomfortable with immigrant diversity; they think illegal immigration is out of control and want their leaders to fight it. Furthermore, two-thirds of the Republican base say, “it bothers me when I come in contact with immigrants who speak little or no English,” and that includes almost 60 percent of the Moderates. A stunning 87 percent of Republicans, including 70 percent of Moderates, say they want their party’s nominee to fight the acceptance of the 12 million undocumented immigrants living in the country and the growing proportion of foreign born in our major cities.

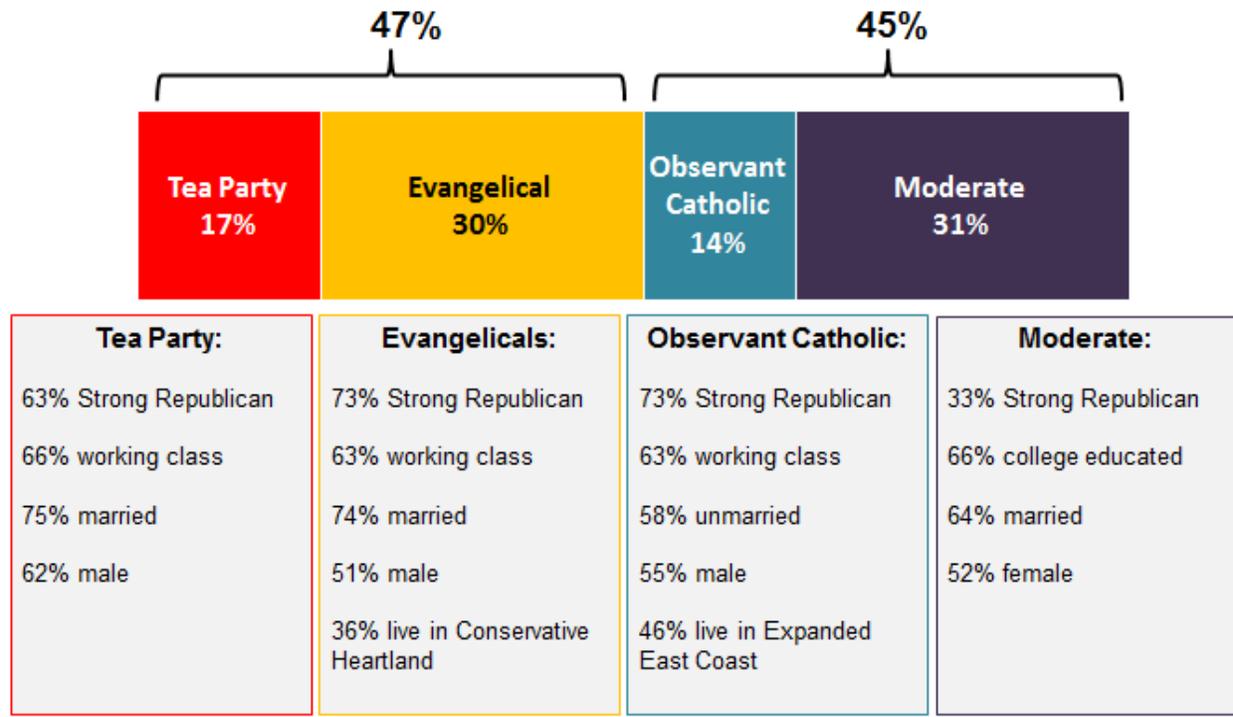


That is why the candidate most opposed to Democratic governance and most opposed to immigration has proved so strong and across all segments of the party. In our factor analysis, the strongest non-party dimension was defined by views of Donald Trump and immigration.

The Republican nomination race

Trump understands a Republican Party that is divided into very distinct segments.

The Tea Party base has the most intense views and forms 17 percent of the GOP base – likely presidential voters who identify with the Republican Party and Republican-leaning independents who say they are very likely to vote or have voted in the Republican primaries and caucuses. Evangelicals are 30 percent of the GOP base and together with the Tea Party, that strong conservative bloc forms half of the base. The Moderates are a very significant 31 percent of the base. Observant Catholics form 14 percent of the base and align with social conservatives on many issues. But on other important issues, Observant Catholics and Moderates break with the conservative bloc and form an opposing bloc that counts for 45 percent the base.



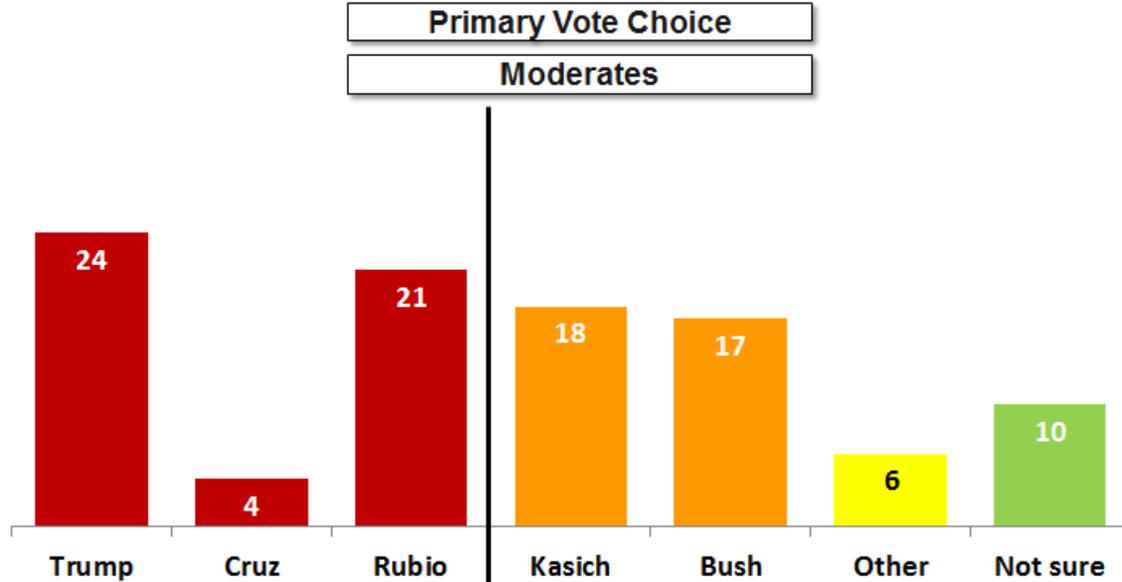
Trump holds a commanding lead in this Republican Party, taking 32 percent of the primary vote with Cruz and Rubio trailing far behind at 18 and 17 percent respectively. He has a strong base with working class voters, men and the Tea Party, and his voters think he can win in November.

Cruz has not surged because he has not consolidated Evangelicals. Trump has matched his vote among Evangelicals (30 percent of the Evangelical primary vote for each) and one in five remains undecided or support another unnamed social conservative. At the same time, Cruz has failed to win Observant Catholics (15 percent of Observant Catholic primary vote for Cruz), limiting his religious conservative support.

The most important factor contributing to Trump’s surprising dominance is the support among Moderates. Trump is more than matching his opponents’ vote among Moderates. He understands that they too want to fight the Democrats and immigration, but they are also hostile to pro-life groups and sympathetic to Planned Parenthood. We will see later that the Moderate base voters are heavily pro-choice on abortion, and the establishment candidates like Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush are running as the most uncompromisingly pro-life candidates.



Thinking about the Republican presidential primary election or caucus in your state, if the primary or caucus for the Republican nominee for President were held today, for whom would you vote?



GOP civil war begins with the moderates

All of the base groups of the Republican Party are dominated by working class voters, except for the Moderates: two-thirds of Moderates have a four-year college degree. They stand apart in other important ways as well. As a start, two-thirds say abortion should be legal in all or most cases. The pro-life candidates have not reached them because acceptance of abortion is not considered a legitimate position in an otherwise pro-life party.

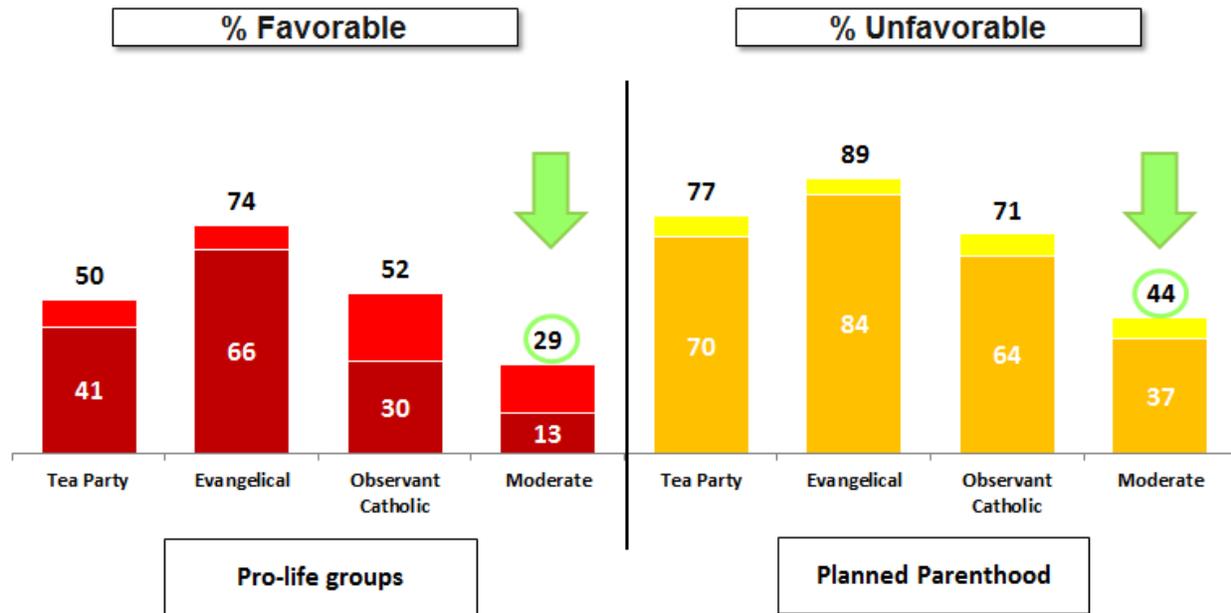
The Moderates stand out from the rest of the base by accepting the sexual revolution. A pretty stunning 86 percent of them say, half strongly, that the Republican nominee should accept that “women and men feel free to have sex without any interest in getting married, forming a family or a long-term relationship” and move on to other issues. Half of the Tea Party base agrees, but not the Evangelicals and Observant Catholics. About 70 percent of them say the party should fight this trend.

The Moderates also have very distinct views on gay marriage. Over 74 percent of the Observant Catholics and 83 percent of the Evangelicals are intensely negative about this change in marriage. The Moderates have a distinct message for their party: three-quarters, including half strongly, say the party should accept the legality of gay marriage and move on.

The significance of their attitudes on pro-life groups and Planned Parenthood is evident in their primary process, oddly putting them in Trump’s reach. But their views on the sexual revolution, gay marriage, the role of women and the modern family also create the potential for fractures in the general election.



Please rate your feelings toward some people, organizations, and concepts, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



The Moderates are also in a different place than the rest of their party on the environment and climate change, though with less intensity. Over 60 percent say that global warming is real, produced by human activity, and now requires serious measures to address it.

The great divide

Emerging issues like gun control, climate change and the role of government are already dividing the party down the middle between the Tea Party and Evangelical bloc on one hand and the Observant Catholics and Moderates on the other. Each bloc encompasses almost half of GOP base.

The Observant Catholics are actually more open in principle to the idea that government must be a check on the free market in order to “best serve the public interest.” They may be listening to Pope Francis. They are also most ready to support those earning over \$250,000 paying “a lot more in taxes.”

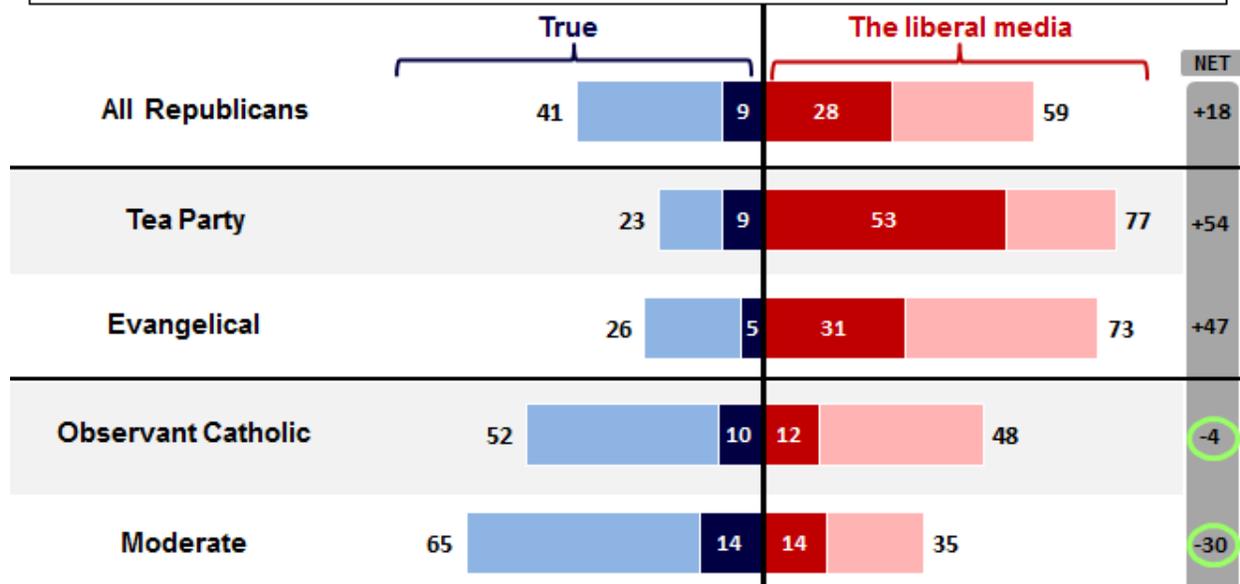
While the N.R.A. receives intense support from the Tea Party and Evangelical bloc, that is not true for the Observant Catholics and Moderates where support is barely half of that for the religious conservative bloc.

Something important may be happening on climate change. A majority of the Observant Catholics and two-thirds of moderates say reporting that 2015 was the hottest year on record and the consensus of scientists on climate change is true, not the fiction of the liberal media.



For each, please tell me if you think that it might be true OR it might be the liberal media trying to justify their agenda.

Scientists say that 2015 was the hottest year in historical record by a wide margin, and 98 percent of climate scientists agree that human activity is a significant factor in climate change.

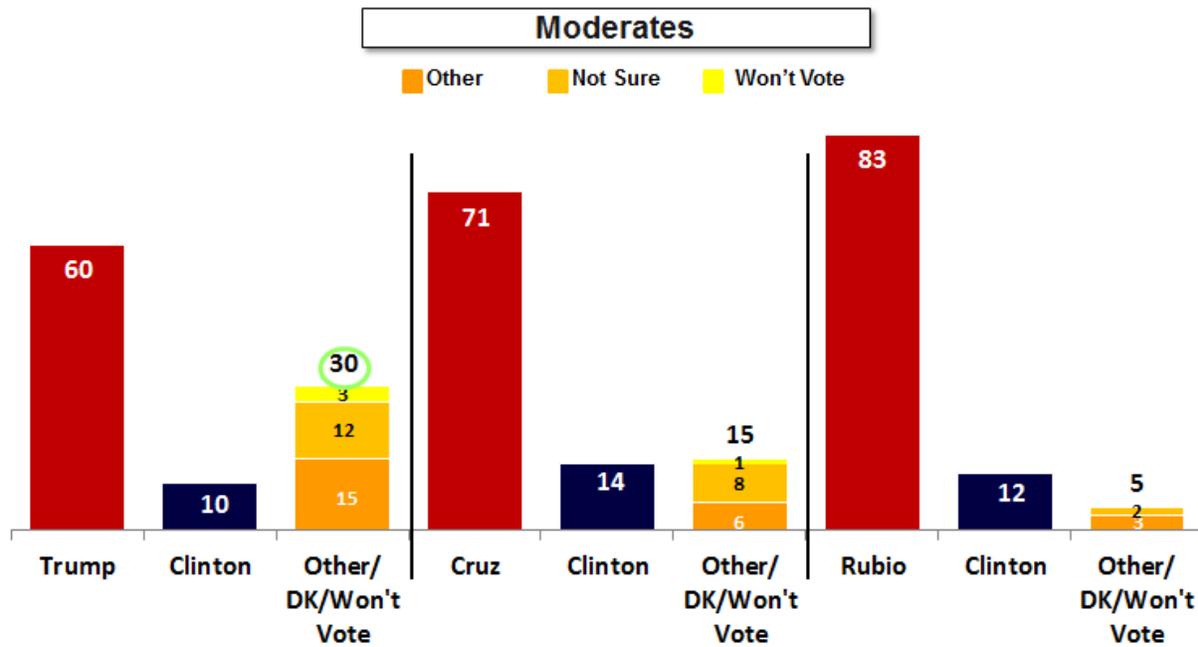


The General Election fall out

In a general election against Hillary Clinton, 20 percent of the Republican base is dislodged from Donald Trump, saying they will vote for another candidate, don't know or will not vote; 5 percent of Republicans say they will vote for Clinton. That is twice the uncertainty as for ballots with Cruz and Rubio, though Hillary's vote is a touch higher in those matchups. The possible fragmentation of the base is most evident with the Moderates.



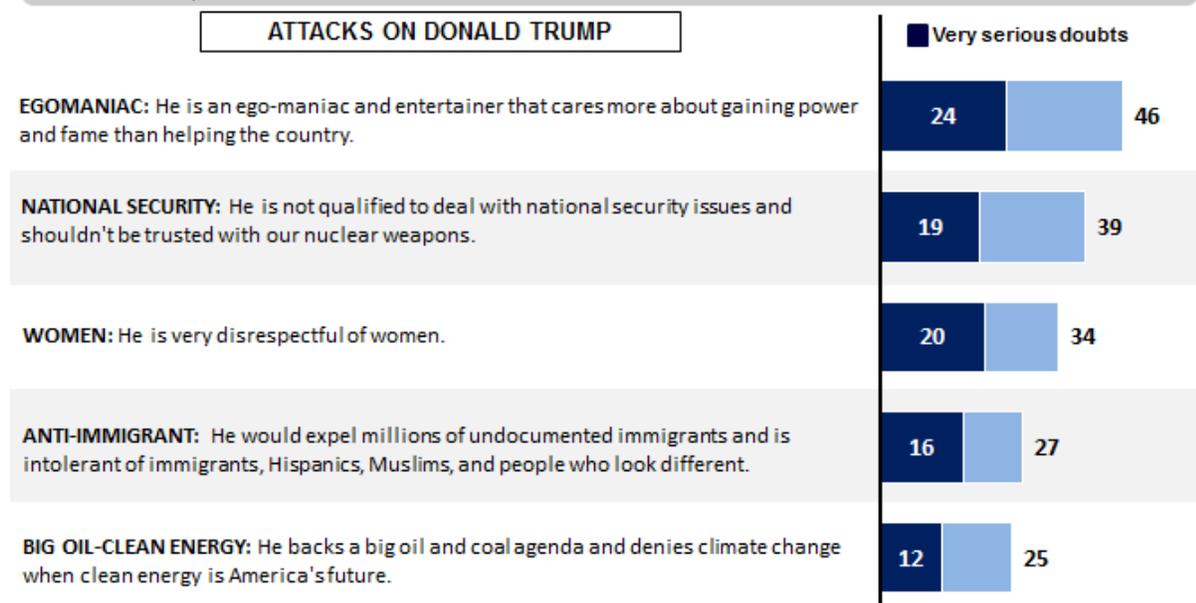
Thinking about the election for President in November, if the election for President were held today, would you vote for -- (ROTATE CANDIDATES) Democrat Hillary Clinton or Republican Marco Rubio?



Those dislodged voters respond to the attacks on Trump and positive Democratic messages, and the vote shifts further from the Republican nominee at the end of the survey.

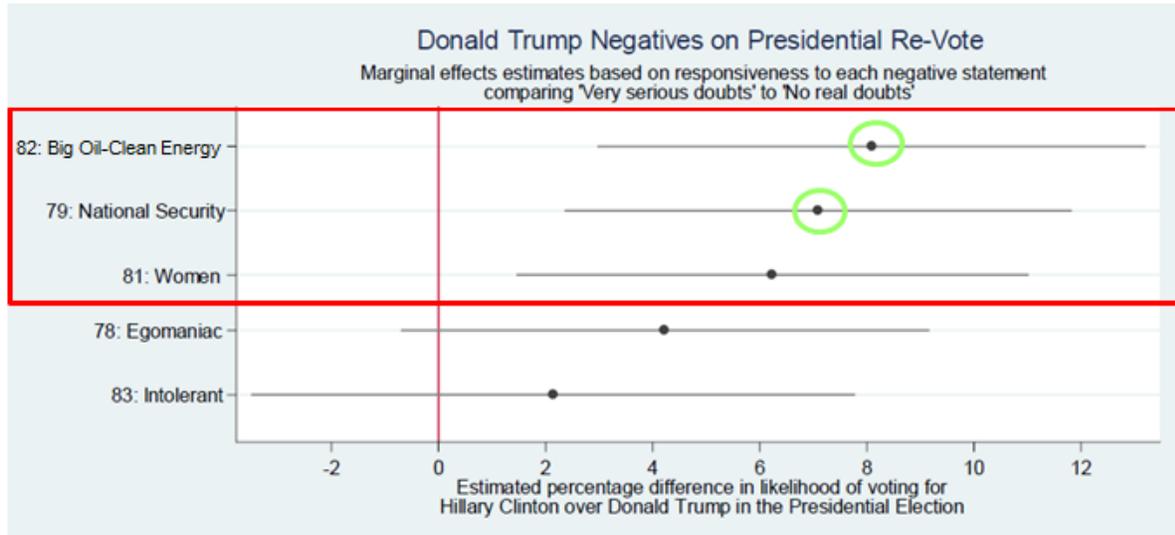
The strongest attacks on Trump charge that he is an ego-maniac who cares more about himself than the country, that he is very disrespectful towards women, and that he is a threat to national security and should not have control of our nuclear weapons.

Below is a list of reasons why some Republicans say they couldn't vote for Donald Trump in an election against Hillary Clinton. For each one, please indicate whether it raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts in your own mind about Donald Trump?





We can see the potential to shift the vote with attacks concerning his support for a coal agenda over a clean energy future, his ability to deal with national security issues, and his disrespect towards women. In a regression analysis controlling for demographics and other factors, these charges against Trump had a significant impact on the likelihood of supporting Clinton over Trump in the re-vote.⁴



The Democratic vision statements also had a significant impact and further dislodged these voters. The three strongest messages focused on long-term investment in infrastructure, changing CEO and corporate rules to encourage investment, and getting beyond social issues to address the country's problems. In the regression modeling, those three move the needle.

INVESTMENT: We have been too focused on short-term fixes when our country should be making long-term investments so America can lead in the 21st century. We should make sure we get our money's worth for all government spending, and we know national public investments pay off. Lincoln built the transcontinental railroad; Eisenhower built the interstate highway system. Today, America must modernize our infrastructure, expand our energy and Internet grid and ensure we lead in all scientific research.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: CEOs and senior corporate management have let down their own companies, employees, and America. They jacked up their compensation while outsourcing jobs and avoided paying taxes by moving their corporate headquarters overseas. And they stopped investing in research, innovation and their own work force. We should change the rules around CEO pay so they profit from long-term investment in innovation and skill training, not from inflating stock prices.

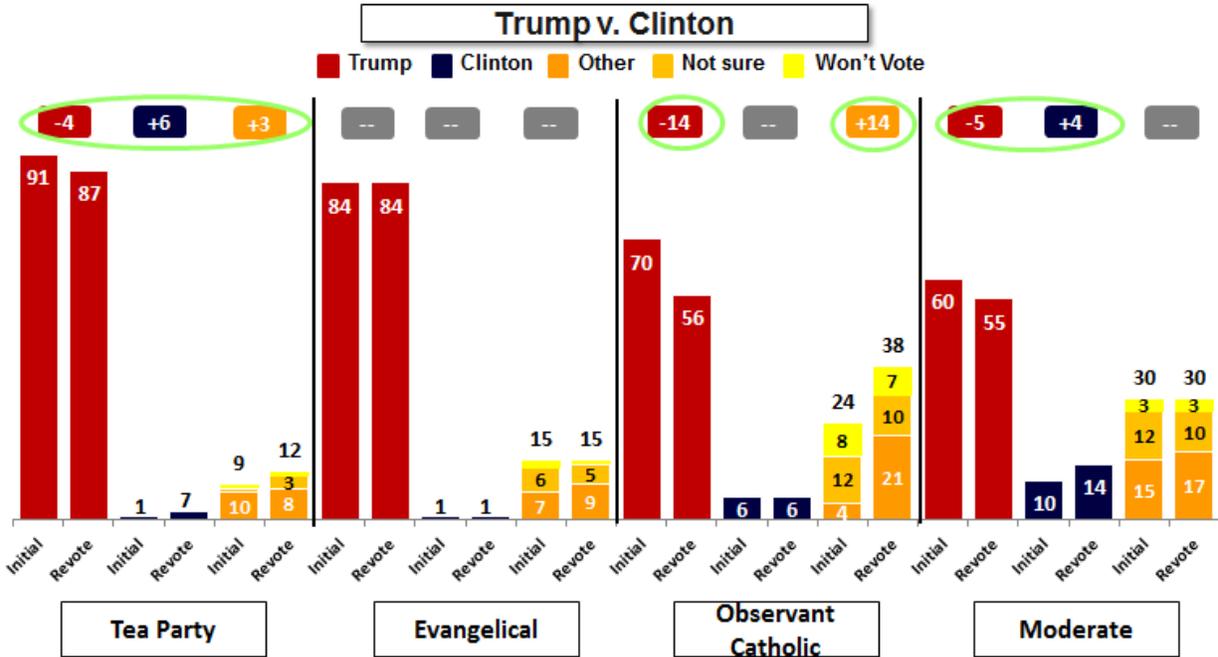
BEYOND SOCIAL ISSUES: So many leaders are determined to turn back the clock on social issues that are settled for the rest of the country. Leave Planned Parenthood alone, allow women to get contraceptive coverage, and accept that same sex marriages are now legal. Let's start addressing our country's problems.

⁴ A series of fractional logistic regressions were conducted to obtain the marginal effects of explanatory variables (candidate doubts/Democratic & Republican messages) on outcome variables (presidential re-vote, stated likelihood of voting for candidate, and electability), representing the change in outcome probabilities estimated for a hypothetical shift in explanatory variables, all else held equal. No causation is implied by these results.



Indeed, this broken Republican Party withers in the election measured at the end of the survey.

Thinking about the election for President in November, if the election for President were held today, would you vote for -- (ROTATE CANDIDATES) Democrat Hillary Clinton or Republican Donald Trump?



The Evangelical bloc stays firmly put, unaffected by this election simulation. But Clinton gains support among the Tea Party voters – a 10 point shift in margin. There is a comparable shift in margin among the Moderates. Finally, Trump’s support collapses among the Observant Catholics, falling from 70 percent to just 56 percent.

Everyone has been surprised by Trump’s extraordinary rise in the GOP primary, but it is clear from this survey that the general election may be equally disruptive for the Republican Party.