

Date: June 30, 2016

To: The progressive community

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Battleground 2016: new game

Trump's unpopularity and views leave him short among traditional GOP voters and in the Rustbelt and empowers Clinton's drive into more demographically diverse battleground states

Donald Trump's unpopularity, beliefs, values and leadership qualities are forging a new 2016 battleground for the election of the President and U.S. Senate. Trump and Clinton no longer face symmetric image problems. With 60 percent viewing Trump unfavorably and half of presidential year voters saying they will never vote for him, he is losing Republican support to Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson and college educated voters to Clinton and the Democrats. Trump is helping Clinton consolidate Democrats, unmarried women, and minority voters.

As a result, Trump's Rustbelt strategy is faltering badly. He is losing to Clinton by 8 points across the Rustbelt battleground states and runs no better than Mitt Romney in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. But more important, Clinton is beating Trump by 8 points in the more demographically diverse battleground states, outperforming Obama in Florida by 10 points, North Carolina by 13 points, and Arizona by 4 points. That grows the Electoral College map for Democrats and produces an Electoral College earthquake.

These results understate what is possible for Clinton because the Bernie Sanders and Millennial vote is not yet fully consolidated behind her. Johnson is winning 22 percent of the millennial vote, though the building Democratic unity and endorsements may erode that.

The Libertarian Party will likely be a long-term factor in the race. Not surprisingly, Johnson is getting 24 percent of independents. But on the right, he is also winning 11 percent of Romney voters, 26 percent of Kasich supporters (and 21 percent of all non-Trump GOP primary supporters), and 23 percent of GOP-moderates. On the left, he is winning 17 percent of Sanders primary voters, 25 percent of white millennials, and 10 percent of unmarried women. But ask yourself: do you think the right or the left will be more successful uniting behind a candidate in the coming month?

The results also understate what is possible down-ballot. Trump is only winning 38 percent of the vote across the Senate battleground, and that creates a lot of uncertainty. The Republican brand is badly tarnished – nationally and in the states where the GOP has control. All the Republican Senate candidates are under 50 percent and North Carolina and Arizona incumbents may be in reach. Plus, one-quarter of those voting Republican in the U.S. Senate race in their



state say they are certain to change their vote and support the Democrat when learning of the Republicans' position on abortion, guns and gay marriage.¹ Because the 2016 battleground is so friendly presidentially, Democratic Senate candidates can target the one-in-ten voters who are now voting for Clinton, but not yet supporting the Democratic Senate candidates and other down-ballot Democrats.

This survey on behalf of WVWVAF and VPC provides an unprecedented look at these dynamics because of the very large sample of 2,700 interviews – 300 presidential year voters from a voter file in 9 states – in the 5 Rustbelt states that Trump has targeted and 4 states with growing racial diversity and cosmopolitan populations that are increasingly open to Democrats.²

DIVERSE STATES	Clinton - Trump		Obama-Romney		2012-2016	Senate Dem - Rep	
	North Carolina	48 Clinton 38 Trump	+10 Clinton	48 Obama 51 Romney		+3 Romney	+13 D
Florida	49 Clinton 38 Trump	+11 Clinton	50 Obama 49 Romney	+1 Obama	+10 D	n/a	n/a
Arizona	39 Clinton 45 Trump	+6 Trump	44 Obama 54 Romney	+10 Romney	+4 D	42 Dem 44 Rep	+2 R
Nevada	44 Clinton 44 Trump	--	52 Obama 46 Romney	+6 Obama	+6 R	41 Dem 46 Rep	+5 R
	47 Clinton 39 Trump	+8 Clinton	49 Obama 51 Romney	+1 Romney	+9 D		

RUSTBELT STATES	Clinton - Trump		Obama-Romney		2012-2016	Senate Dem - Rep	
	Michigan	48 Clinton 33 Trump	+15 Clinton	54 Obama 45 Romney		+9 Obama	+6 D
Wisconsin	44 Clinton 32 Trump	+12 Clinton	53 Obama 46 Romney	+7 Obama	+5 D	46 Dem 45 Rep	+1 D
Pennsylvania	45 Clinton 36 Trump	+9 Clinton	52 Obama 47 Romney	+5 Obama	+4 D	38 Dem 46 Rep	+8 R
Ohio	41 Clinton 41 Trump	--	50 Obama 48 Romney	+2 Obama	+2 R	43 Dem 40 Rep	+3 D
New Hampshire	41 Clinton 41 Trump	--	52 Obama 46 Romney	+6 Obama	+6 R	47 Dem 46 Rep	+1 D
	44 Clinton 36 Trump	+8 Clinton	53 Obama 47 Romney	+6 Obama	+2 D		

¹ In Michigan, this question was asked of those who did not identify as Democrats.

² On behalf of Women's Voice. Women's Vote Action Fund and the Voter Participation Center, Democracy Corps conducted a nine-state battleground survey of 2700 likely voters from June 11th – 20th. Three hundred cases were completed in each state: Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. The margin of error for the entire survey is +/- 1.89 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. The margin of error within each state is +/-5.66 percentage points. Margin of error is higher among subgroups.



What's going on?

The starting point is the growing asymmetry between voters' views of Clinton and Trump.

- Donald Trump: 60 percent unfavorable (51 very unfavorable)
- Hillary Clinton: 52 percent unfavorable (45 very unfavorable)
- No chance of supporting candidate: Trump 48 percent; Clinton 40 percent

Many Republican base voters and traditional Republican voters are put off by the nominee, and this is driving his vote down to just 38 percent, with the Libertarian candidate earning 11 percent.

- Trump is only getting 80 percent support with Republicans, 10 points below Clinton's performance with Democrats
- Trump is only getting 50 percent of Kasich voters, 61 percent of GOP moderates and 78 percent of Romney voters
- Trump underperforms Romney margins among key demographics:
 - Whites*: 39 to 58 Romney (+19), 36 to 45 Trump (+9)
 - White non-college men*: 31 to 65 Romney (+34), 32 to 54 Trump (+22)
 - Seniors*: 44 to 56 Romney (+12), 43 to 48 Trump (+5)
 - Married women*: 45 to 53 Romney (+8), 42 to 43 Trump (+1)

Clinton has established her electoral lead as she has come to dominate the comparison with Trump on who has what it takes to be president, is for the middle class, shares your values and is best for America's future. Clinton's margin on these measures is equal to or exceeding her vote margin and explains her growing strength. Winning the contest over values and the future is particularly important in the regression model on predicting the vote for Clinton.³

- Has what it takes to be President: +17 Clinton
- For the middle class: +15 Clinton
- Shares your values: +12 Clinton*
- Best for America's future: +8 Clinton*

What brings her vote down are the more diminished advantages she has on bringing the right kind of change and raising issues that matter – two important predictors in the vote model. Her advantage on standing up to corporate interests also lags behind her vote.

- Will bring the right kind of change: +5 Clinton*
- Stands up to corporate special interests on behalf of ordinary people: +5 Clinton
- Finally raising issues that matter to me: +4 Clinton*

These point to real opportunities to grow her vote by consolidating Democrats and the progressive coalition and by becoming a greater voice for change, particularly on the economy.

³ * Voters who said the starred items described Clinton much better had the greatest likelihood of voting for Clinton in our regression analysis.



- Clinton is winning 89 percent of Democrats, 4 points below Obama's vote in 2012
- Sanders primary supporters are only giving Clinton 69 percent of their votes; 6 percent are voting Trump and 17 percent for Johnson

Trump's Rustbelt play faltering

Donald Trump genuinely wins his biggest margins with white working class men across the battleground, and that pattern holds in the Rustbelt states. That is why Trump and many observers believe he can break the Democrats' blue wall there.

But he is just not running that impressively with white non-college men compared to Romney and his performance with white working class men is weaker in the Rustbelt than in the diverse states where other dynamics may be at work. And he barely leads among white working class women who outnumber the men in these states. Trump's Rustbelt play is bound to be disappointing.

- White non-college men:
 20% of Rustbelt state voters: 32 Clinton, 50 Trump, 14 Johnson (+18 Trump)
 2012 vote in Rustbelt: 36 Obama, 64 Romney (+28 Romney)
- White non-college women:
 24% of Rustbelt state voters: 36 Clinton, 43 Trump, 11 Johnson (+7 Trump)
 2012 vote in Rustbelt: 43 Obama, 52 Romney (+9 Romney)

Clinton's big play in the diverse battleground states

Hillary Clinton is also over performing in the increasingly diverse states of the Southwest and Border South: Florida, Arizona, Nevada and North Carolina, driven by the growing Rising American Electorate. The RAE forms 56 percent of the voters here, a greater share of voters than in the Rustbelt by 9 points. The RAE vote, particularly the minority and unmarried women, is growing and Clinton is currently winning these groups by a greater margin than Obama in 2012.

- Rising American Electorate:
 56 % of diverse state voters: 60 Clinton, 25 Trump, 10 Johnson (+35 Clinton)
 2012 vote: 61 Obama, 36 Romney (+25 Obama)
- Minorities:
 31 % of diverse state voters: 75 Clinton, 15 Trump, 6 Johnson (+60 Clinton)
 2012 vote: 78 Obama, 21 Romney (+57 Obama)
- Unmarried women:
 25% of diverse state voters: 64 Clinton, 23 Trump, 10 Johnson (+41 Clinton)
 2012 vote: 64 Obama, 34 Romney (+30 Obama)



The women question

Pundits like to talk about the women’s vote. WVWVAF has established there is a significant difference in the participation and preferences between unmarried and married women and that this marriage gap is much more predictive than the gender gap.

Across the battleground, Clinton is achieving landslide margins with unmarried women (62 to 23 percent) – including white unmarried women (50 to 31 percent) – and with college-educated women (54 to 30 percent.) All of these votes exceed the margins achieved by Obama. That is building atop Trump’s failure to build his margins with white working class voters everywhere, including the Rustbelt.

Clinton is also approaching double digit margins with white college educated women (46-35 Trump), and white non-college unmarried women (45-36 Clinton). And by the way, Clinton is running dead even with married women (42 to 43 percent) compared to Obama’s 8 point loss in 2012.

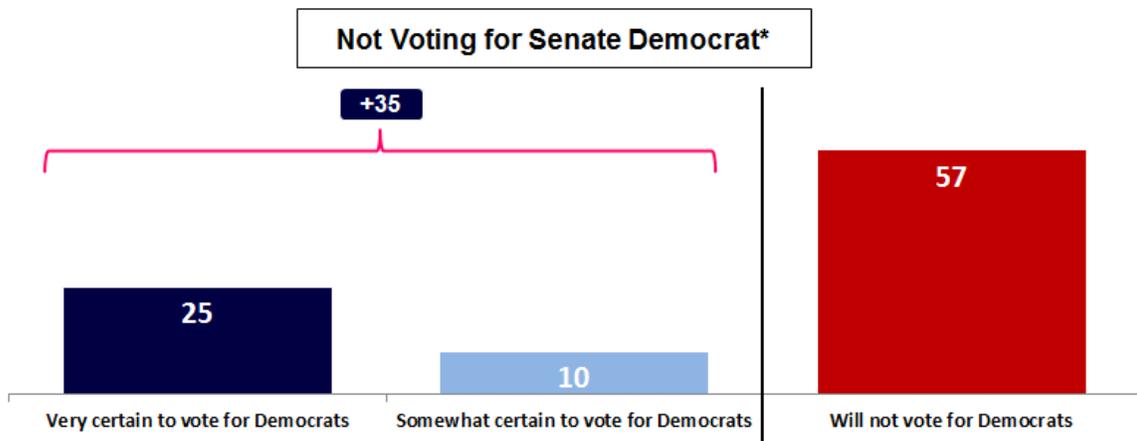
The US Senate and producing a down-ballot rout

With the GOP brand so tarnished, voters seem unusually ready to punish Republicans for the positions that are taking. After hearing a list of their positions on abortion, guns and gay marriage, one-quarter of those voting Republican for Senate say they will definitely vote for Democratic candidates down ballot.

Now I am going to read you a list of positions taken by Republican candidates for U.S. Congress and the legislature in [STATE]. The Republican candidates oppose:

- *Restricting gun rights for people on the terror watch list and outlawing the sale of assault rifles*
- *New laws guaranteeing equal pay for women*
- *Abortion, even in cases of rape and incest*
- *Gay marriage and new laws barring discrimination against gays, lesbians and transgender people*

After hearing the Republican candidates takes these positions, would you now vote for his or her Democratic opponent?





In the wake of Orlando, there is heightened attention to the extreme positions taken by Republicans. Here are the positions that struck people the most:

- Opposes abortion, even in cases of rape and incest (29 percent)
- Opposes restricting gun rights for people on the terror watch list and outlawing the sale of assault rifles (19 percent)
- Opposes gay marriage and new laws barring discrimination against gays, lesbians and transgender people (15 percent)
- Opposes new laws guaranteeing equal pay for women (10 percent)⁴

Sanders primary supporters: holding back for now

There is good reason to believe Sanders supporters will consolidate around Clinton as the conventions come to a close.

The Sanders voters are anti-corporate and voting on the economy.

- CEOs of big companies: 60 percent unfavorable⁵
- Top factors in determining your vote for president: candidate's position on economy (43 percent); position on big business and money (29 percent)

Sanders voters are fiercely socially liberal and here, they are more comfortable with Clinton: by a 74-point margin, they say Clinton shares their values.⁶ Over 70 percent of Sanders voters give warm ratings to gay marriage and Planned Parenthood and a candidate's stance on abortion rights and gay marriage is the second most important factor in their vote (30 percent).

Millennials: holding back for now

With 70 percent of millennials supporting Senator Sanders, fewer than half of the millennials in the battleground are voting for Clinton, resulting in a weaker than expected performance among the Rising American Electorate in a race against a candidate like Trump.

- RAE: 57 Clinton, 24 Trump, 14 Johnson (+33 Clinton)
- Millennials: 46 Clinton, 24 Trump, 22 Johnson (+22 Clinton)
- White millennials: 36 Clinton, 32 Trump, 25 Johnson (+11 Clinton)
- No chance of supporting candidate: Trump 46 percent; Clinton 44 percent

⁴ Note that 22 percent volunteered "all of the above" without prompting.

⁵ Compared to 30 percent unfavorable towards NAFTA

⁶ Two-thirds are under 50, 47 percent millennials, two-thirds are white, and 53 percent are men.



Millennials still favor Clinton on nearly every subject from immigration to special interests, but they hold back because of their deep distrust of the political system and more importantly, because Clinton has not won them on their top issue, the economy.

- A candidate's position on the economy a top factor in vote: 47 percent
- White millennials give Trump a 9 point advantage on the economy⁷

And Trump win millennials on honesty by 7 points.

Libertarian Party support could be sustained

Right now the Libertarian vote is coming primarily from dislodged Republicans and with Trump in the race, there is potential for a libertarian candidate to be a significant factor in November.

- Republicans & GOP-leaning Independents: 13 percent Johnson
- Among Johnson voters: Trump 80 percent unfavorable

Johnson voters are turned off by the GOP's extremism and importantly, say Clinton shares their values by 12-point margin. They are socially liberal, responding warmly to gay marriage and Planned Parenthood. They believe immigration strengthens our country and discrimination against blacks and Hispanics requires attention.

Finally, Johnson's voters are some of the most concerned with the economy, but they stand apart from the GOP with their anti-corporate mood, opening the door for Clinton. A striking six-in-ten Johnson voters say the economy is the top factor in their vote, and they are much more than negative about CEOs than the GOP voters, who are favorable to them.

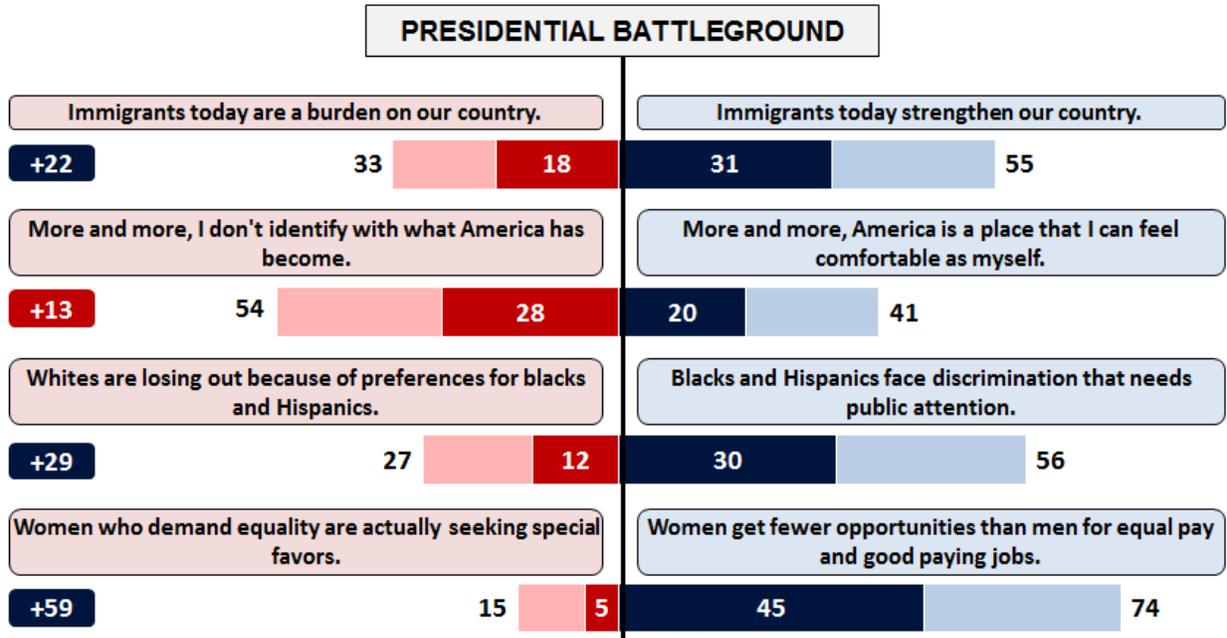
Conclusion: Reflection on Brexit & American values

No, America is not Britain. No, we are not in for a dismissal of liberal values and multiculturalism at the hands of a silent majority legitimized by Donald Trump. Actually, Trump and the GOP's extreme views on race, immigration, and women weaken their chances and empower progressives. You might not know it from the ugly rhetoric of some of the candidates, but voters in these battleground states are accepting of the country's diversity, including immigrant diversity. And while there is much more progress to be made, as many members of the RAE now say they feel more comfortable being themselves in America as say they don't identify with America, driven by the 58 percent of African Americans who now say the former.

⁷ Note: this is despite a 12-point advantage for Democrats on partisanship among millennials.



Now I am going to read some pairs of short statements some people have made about our nation. After I read each pair, please tell me which statement comes closer to your own view even if neither statement is exactly right.



They also accept the sexual revolution and evolving gender roles, with a majority holding positive views of Planned Parenthood, negative views of pro-life groups, and supporting gay marriage by a 15-point margin. No wonder Clinton earns a 12-point advantage on values and an 8-point advantage on the future, driven by the Rising American Electorate comfortable with these changing values and racial and immigrant diversity.