LETTER

# Stable Views in a Time of Tumult: Assessing Trends in US Public Opinion, 2007–20

Daniel J. Hopkins 🆔

Department of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA
Corresponding author. Email: danhop@sas.upenn.edu

### Abstract

The violent conclusion of Trump's 2017–21 presidency has produced sobering reassessments of American democracy. Elected officials' actions necessarily implicate public opinion, but to what extent did Trump's presidency and its anti-democratic efforts reflect *shifts* in public opinion in prior years? Were there attitudinal changes that served as early-warning signs? We answer those questions via a fifteen-wave, population-based panel spanning 2007 to 2020. Specifically, we track attitudes on system legitimacy and election fairness, assessments of Trump and other politicians, and open-ended explanations of vote choice and party perceptions. Across measures, there was little movement in public opinion foreshadowing Trump's norm-upending presidency, though levels of out-party animus were consistently high. Recent shifts in public opinion were thus not a primary engine of the Trump presidency's anti-democratic efforts or their violent culmination. Such stability suggests that understanding the precipitating causes of those efforts requires attention to other actors, including activists and elites.

On January 6, 2021, pro-Trump protesters stormed the US Capitol. The violence capped months of efforts by President Trump and allies to overturn the 2020 election results. It was also the culmination of a four-year term that threatened a range of democratic values (see, especially, Azari 2018; Lee and McCarty 2019; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018; Lieberman et al. 2019).

The 2017–21 Trump presidency took place after decades of sorting and political polarization by citizens (Levendusky 2009; Mason 2018), and is the product of a combination of causes operating at multiple levels of the political system (Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck 2019). Here, we provide evidence on one factor that may have facilitated the threats to democracy: shifts in overall public opinion in the years preceding the 2020 election. Researchers have offered varied models of the interplay between political elites and public opinion, with some highlighting elite opinion leadership, while others emphasize the stability or thermostatic elements of public opinion (Bawn et al. 2012; Berinsky 2009; Broockman and Skovron 2018; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Page and Shapiro 1992; Wlezien 1995; Zaller 1992). Public opinion may also potentially serve as an early-warning system for anti-democratic drives. Here, we use a unique, population-based panel administered in fifteen waves between 2007 and 2020 to evaluate shifts in public attitudes that may have facilitated or foreshadowed Trump's presidency and its threats to democracy.[1]

Specifically, we consider several types of attitudes that could plausibly contribute to democratic backsliding. The first are attitudes toward the fairness of elections and perceptions of the US system

---

[1]For replication data and materials, see Hopkins (2022).

of government generally (Daniller and Mutz 2019; Graham and Svolik 2020; Grossman et al. 2022). The second are attitudes toward Trump and other prominent politicians, which may have granted Trump unusual license (see Corrales 2018). The third are citizens' explanations for their vote choices, which allow us to identify if Trump's coalition is grounded in oppositional or anti-systemic views. In addition, we track negative sentiment by evaluating open-ended perceptions of the political parties. The Online Appendix reports other related outcomes, including vote choice, turnout, and perceptions of ideological extremity. Given the historical connections between racial hierarchy and anti-democratic movements in the US (Bedolla 2021; Mickey 2015; Miller 2021; Parker and Towler 2019), the Online Appendix also considers white Americans' racial prejudices (see also Enns and Jardina 2021). To be sure, public opinion is inextricably connected with Trump's actions as president and his anti-democratic efforts in numerous ways: Trump became president only because American voters elected him in 2016, and support among Republicans helped him remain in office after impeachment and win renomination. Public opinion is also directly implicated in the events of January 6—in fact, in the pre-polling era, such public demonstrations often *constituted* public opinion (Lee 2002). Still, our goal here is not a comprehensive assessment of the role of public opinion in producing the conditions that sustained Trump politically. Instead, it is to assess whether attitudinal trends among the public may have facilitated or anticipated the coming challenge to democracy. Such tests will also enable us to provide a limited assessment of Trump's capacity to influence public opinion in the pre-2020 election period.

The portrait that emerges is of aggregate stability—a stability that contrasts with the convulsions and anti-democratic shifts in elite-level US politics over this period. Certainly, our analyses uncover several attitudes that are worrisome in their prevalence, including dissatisfaction with the political system and strikingly negative views of the opposing party (see also Iyengar et al. 2019). However, overall, our analyses do not identify much evidence of *shifts* in the years before October 2020 that made the ground more fertile for anti-democratic efforts. This holds true among both the population overall and Republicans. One exception is improving perceptions of Trump among his supporters between 2016 and 2020, but even this improvement is not atypical during this period.

In short, these data provide little evidence that attitudes shifted so as to facilitate the anti-democratic elements of Trump's presidency. What is more, as of October 2020, Trump's presidency had not led to demonstrable opinion shifts in his favor (see Page and Shapiro 1992; Wlezien 1995). It is certainly vital to study opinions *after* the 2020 election to assess how rhetoric and events affected these same attitudes. However, understanding the precursors of Trump's anti-democratic efforts also requires increased attention to the opinions and behaviors of much smaller groups of activists and elites (Blum 2020; Parker and Barreto 2014). It is those groups whose actions are likely to have immediate anti-democratic impacts, even when they are out of sync with public opinion.

## Data

This article relies on what is, to our knowledge, the longest panel of a population-based sample of Americans covering Trump's 2017–21 presidency. Knowledge Networks[2] recruited panelists offline via address-based sampling or random-digit dialing prior to the five waves administered online in 2007–08 under the auspices of the National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES); the Institute for the Study of Citizens and Politics panel has been separate from NAES since. The 2,606 respondents in Wave 6 (October 2012) were sampled from the respondents to Waves 1–5, with weights designed to produce marginal distributions that closely approximately the US population.[3] Waves 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12 sampled only respondents to the prior wave, while

---

[2]Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK) and later Ipsos subsequently purchased the panel.

[3]One inadvertent by-product of the weighting is that the survey underrepresents white respondents with college degrees who were aged over forty-four in 2012. Put differently, this panel underrepresents precisely the group overrepresented in most surveys.

waves 10, 13,[4] 14, and 15 resampled Wave 7 respondents. Such a sampling strategy attempts to balance sample size against item missingness. The Online Appendix provides additional information about response rates, sampling, and survey administration, including the full list of waves, dates, and sample sizes in Table A1. Wave 15 in October 2020 constituted the final wave.

As Table 1 illustrates, the panelists' demographics generally match those of the US population of English-speaking adults as of 2008 quite well. With respect to racial demographics, the October 2020 respondents are 12 per cent black, 11 per cent Hispanic, and 71 per cent white. The average respondent has fourteen years of education, while 36 per cent have at least a four-year college degree. However, this sample is more politically engaged than the target population. For example, validated voter turnout in 2016 was 73 per cent, as compared to the benchmark estimate of 60 per cent (United States Elections Project, 2021). It should also be noted that because panelists had to be eighteen in the panel's first wave, the sample includes no one younger than thirty in 2020.[5]

## Election Fairness and System Legitimacy

A foundational element of electoral democracies is that the losing side accepts the legitimacy of the election (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). As a consequence, beliefs in the fairness of elections and the system's legitimacy are crucial elements of democratic politics (Graham and Svolik 2020; Grossman et al. 2022). Our panel includes three questions that assess related beliefs (see also Daniller and Mutz 2019).

One question—asked in five waves—was about perceived election fairness. Specifically, respondents were asked, "Do you believe presidential elections in the United States are generally very fair, somewhat fair, neither fair nor unfair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?" Figure 1 illustrates the over-time trends, both overall and broken out by partisanship as of 2007–08 for the 344 respondents who answered the question in at least 2007/08, 2016, and 2020. Overall ratings lean toward the fair side, with the average response never dipping below 3.40 on a 1–5 scale, which is between "somewhat fair" and "neither fair nor unfair." Democrats actually rate elections as less fair than Republicans in 2008 (3.53) and 2016 (3.56), perhaps because Republicans had won the most recent presidential election in both surveys (Daniller and Mutz 2019). Republicans do dip from 3.91 to 3.75 between November/December 2016 and October 2020, quite possibly as a response to Trump's repeated lies about election integrity. However, even in October 2020, beliefs about electoral fairness were nearly identical for Democrats and Republicans—and there is no evidence of crisis levels for either group. Certainly, there is no evidence of long-held Republican grievances on this score.

The panel also included two questions about the legitimacy of the political system. The first asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "I would rather live under our system of government than any other that I can think of," with responses coded 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The middle panel of Figure 1 illustrates the results over time ($n = 438$), showing that 2008 Republicans are actually systematically higher than Democrats, with an October 2020 mean (of 4.50) that is slightly *higher* than that of 2012 (of 4.45). To be sure, this item may tap American exceptionalism or identity. However, support for the American system is high and reasonably stable. In fact, it is the Democrats who show a drop under Trump, from 4.24 in 2016 to 3.98 (or almost exactly "somewhat agree") in 2020.

---

[4]Wave 13 also included an oversample through which 220 additional respondents with lower incomes in Wave 6 were reinterviewed.

[5]Other surveys show that younger people are just as likely as those over thirty to have faith in elections (Pew Research Center, 2021) and separately show lower levels of racial prejudice (DeSante and Watts Smith, 2020). They are also, on average, less favorable toward Trump than those over fifty and similar to those aged thirty to forty-nine (Pew Research Center, 2021). There is thus little reason to think that their exclusion leads us to *understate* anti-democratic or pro-Trump attitudes or shifts in those directions.

**Table 1.** Demographics for respondents to Waves 7 (2012–13; $n = 2{,}471$) and 15 (October 2020; $n = 884$)

| | Oct 2012–Jan 2013 | | Oct 2020 | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Education 2012[a] | 13.971 | 2.371 | 13.992 | 2.341 |
| Female 2012 | 0.531 | 0.499 | 0.505 | 0.500 |
| Black 2012 | 0.131 | 0.338 | 0.121 | 0.326 |
| Hispanic 2012 | 0.098 | 0.297 | 0.105 | 0.307 |
| White 2012 | 0.703 | 0.457 | 0.712 | 0.453 |
| Income 2012[b] | 64.727 | 49.852 | 65.875 | 49.145 |
| Union 2007 | 0.117 | 0.321 | 0.132 | 0.339 |
| Age 2012[a] | 51.960 | 14.966 | 52.267 | 13.974 |
| Protestant 2007 | 0.311 | 0.463 | 0.310 | 0.463 |
| Catholic 2007 | 0.208 | 0.406 | 0.210 | 0.408 |
| Validated vote 2016 | 0.723 | 0.448 | 0.782 | 0.413 |

Notes: [a] Variables in years. [b] Variable in thousands of US dollars.

Another item illustrated in the bottom of Figure 1 instead asks respondents to agree or disagree with the statement, "At present I feel very critical of our political system," with responses again ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). Via this measure, discontent is substantially higher, with the average response (of 2.28) being nearest to "somewhat agree." The parties are quite similar in 2012, 2014, and 2016. Yet, here too, it is *Republicans* who are slightly less likely to agree—and so slightly less critical of the system—as of October 2020. From the survey evidence alone, it is not clear that the system had less perceived legitimacy among Republicans than among Democrats shortly before the 2020 election.

## Candidate Affect

One prospect is that Trump may engender especially intense support among the subset of people who view him positively. Research on Latin America finds that anti-democratic efforts are often the product of popular leaders seeking to entrench power (Corrales 2018), making an assessment of Trump's popularity vital. The panel asked respondents to assess several political figures, including Trump, in multiple years on 0–100 feeling thermometers. Figure 2 illustrates the distributions of responses for Trump in January 2016 and October 2020 (top), and for both Obama and Trump in the October they stood for re-election (bottom), for respondents who answered both questions.[6] For Trump, one key story is negativity. The median rating of Trump was 30 in 2016 and 25 in 2020. Another story is the increased positive sentiment among pro-Trump respondents, as the 90th percentile rating of Trump was 90 in 2016 but 99 in 2020. After serving as president, Trump came to be rated more positively by a subset of voters.

Is the extent of strong pro-Trump sentiment unusual? The bottom panel of Figure 2 and Figure A1 in the Online Appendix help answer that question. Figure 2 illustrates assessments of Obama and Trump in the October prior to their re-election bids (2012 for Obama; 2020 for Trump). Opinions of Trump are both more negative on average (mean of 40.9 versus 50.6) and more polarized. Trump does have a slightly higher fraction of people rating him 95 or above (14.6 per cent versus 11.0 per cent), but the difference is not substantively large. However, as the distributions of ratings for Clinton and Romney (see Figure A1 in the Online Appendix) illustrate, neither enjoyed the same strongly positive assessments. Trump stands out relative to Clinton and Romney, but much less so relative to Obama.

---

[6]A total of 912 respondents answered both Trump questions, while 1,078 respondents assessed Obama in 2012 and Trump in October 2020.
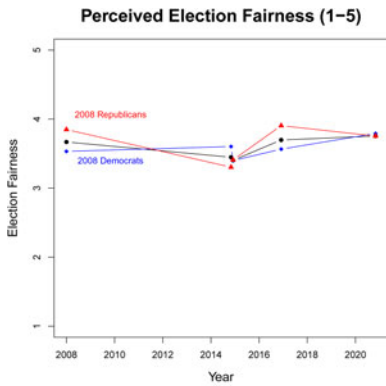
(a) Election Fairness ($n=344$)
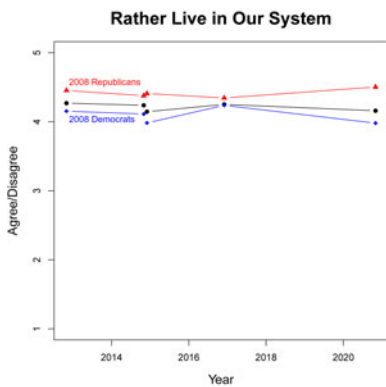


(b) Rather Our System ($n=438$)
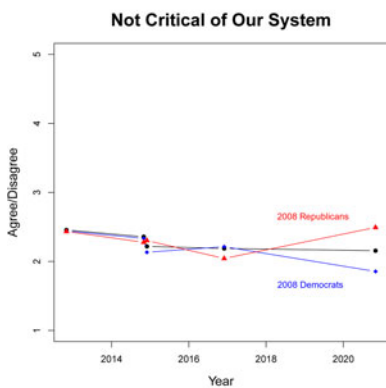


(c) Not Critical ($n=436$)

**Fig. 1.** Trends in views about election fairness and political system legitimacy over time.

In Figure A2 in the Online Appendix, we present another evaluation of the intensity of Trump support. There, we plot vote support by lagged partisanship four years prior. If the US public were more polarized in their vote choices in 2020 than in earlier years, this is one way to measure it. In 2012, Mitt Romney won 92 per cent of those who had identified as strong Republicans four years prior. In 2020, Trump won 90 per cent of the comparable group. This is noteworthy because Trump had emerged as a political figure in 2016, meaning that identifying as a strong
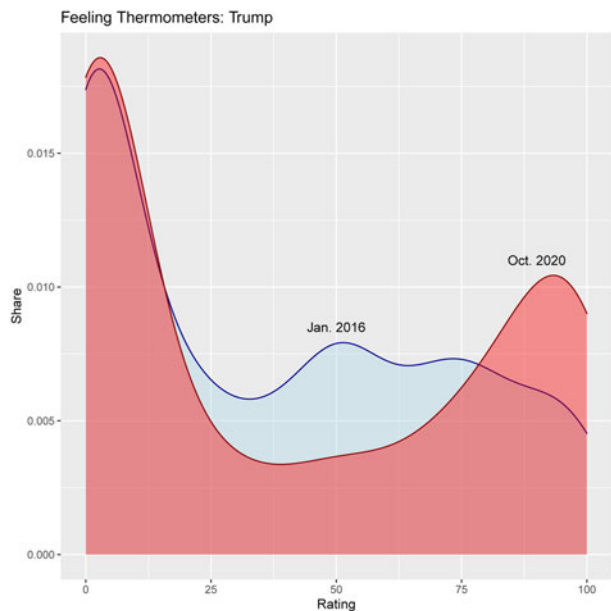
(a) Trump Over Time ($n=912$)
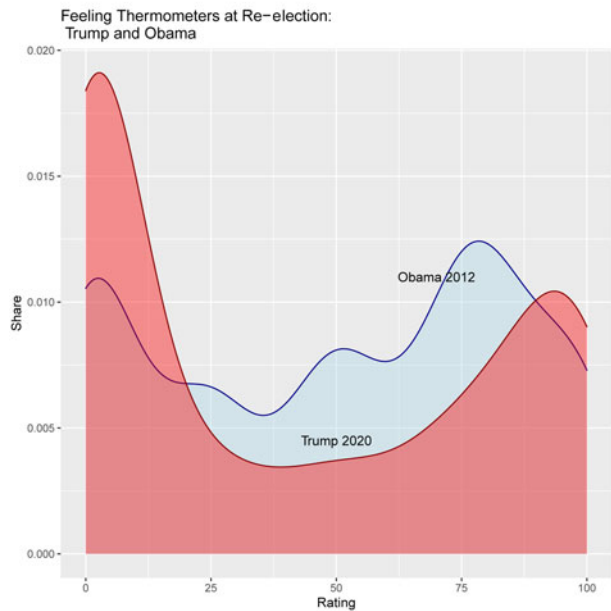


(b) Trump and Obama ($n=980$)

**Fig. 2.** Distribution of respondents on 0–100 feeling thermometers assessing Trump at different times (top) or Trump versus Obama while running for re-election (bottom).

Republican four years before was already an identification adopted in the shadow of Trump. Thus, there is little evidence that Trump had atypical levels of support among those whose partisanship in prior years meant they were most positively predisposed toward him.

Between 2008 and 2020, US federal elections had a range of outcomes, from decisive Republican victories (2010 and 2014) to decisive Democratic victories (2008, 2012, and 2018)

and more divided outcomes (2016 and 2020). How do we square the stability reported in these time-series with that electoral volatility? Shifts in vote choice in this period have received extensive consideration elsewhere (Hill, Hopkins, and Huber 2021; Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck 2019). Still, Figure A3 in the Online Appendix and the associated discussion also provide evidence of over-time stability, as a striking 88 per cent of our panelists did not cross party lines in 2012, 2016, or 2020.[7] Nonetheless, in a closely divided polity with winner-take-all institutions, even small electoral shifts can tip the balance of political power.

## Open-Ended Explanations of Vote Choice

Closed-ended questions written years ago may not capture shifts in public opinion in response to recent events. Accordingly, we next analyze open-ended responses to a question asked in October 2020: "Let's say a friend asked you why you were supporting [CANDIDATE] in the presidential election. In one sentence, what would you say?"

Three coders manually annotated each of the 533 responses from the 2020 survey into various non-exclusive categories to identify the reasons people gave for their vote. We then averaged the annotations; the Online Appendix provides the full codebook. Figure 3 reports the fraction of October 2020 responses coded into common categories; Table A2 in the Online Appendix provides the corresponding fractions.

Here, too, there is little that indicates the impending threat to democracy. Biden supporters are much more likely to say that they were motivated by their opposition to Trump than the reverse (35 per cent versus 12 per cent), and the fraction of responses from Trump supporters containing disaffection is just 6 per cent. Indeed, the distribution of responses from Trump supporters looks like it might for any incumbent president, with backers highlighting his personal traits (32 per cent), policies (30 per cent), experience (11 per cent), and performance in office (29 per cent).[8] In Figure A5 in the Online Appendix, we plot two of the most indicative categories—opposing the alternative candidate and expressing political disaffection—by lagged political partisanship. These figures reinforce the fact that independents who leaned Democratic or pure independents backing Biden were the most likely to explain their vote as opposition to the other candidate. Disaffection is not especially concentrated among strong Republicans.

Negative affect toward the parties is another critical metric (Iyengar et al. 2019): as negative affect rises, people may dismiss or dehumanize their political opposition (Jardina and Piston 2016), or else see their victory as unacceptable. While we do not have a measure of affect toward the parties, we did ask randomly chosen subsets of respondents in November/December 2016 and October 2020 to describe the political parties.[9]

Overall levels of negativity are high, but they did not change markedly between those two waves. Respondents rated the Democrats negatively in 60 per cent of their November/December 2016 responses, but that came down to 52 per cent in October 2020. Ratings of the Republican Party were negative 54 per cent of the time in 2016, a figure that rose to 57 per cent in 2020. A total of 84 per cent of 2016 Republicans made negative comments about the Democratic Party, which *dropped* slightly to 81 per cent in October 2020. To be sure, such ratings reflect worrisome levels of negativity (Iyengar et al. 2019). Such high levels of negativity could well facilitate denial of Biden's victory or foster related beliefs about the stakes of the 2020 election (Kalmoe and Mason 2019). However, they do not show evidence of major *shifts* in recent years.

---

[7]Figure A4 in the Online Appendix also illustrates that these panelists' validated voter turnout is both high and stable, meaning that the panel is unlikely to be able to detect subtle turnout shifts that may prove decisive in tight elections.

[8]Figure A6 in the Online Appendix illustrates comparable results for the Clinton–Trump match-up in 2016, and shows more negativity toward the Democratic nominee among Republicans, as well as more mentions of gender.

[9]The question read: "If you had to describe the [Republican/Democratic] Party in one sentence, what would you say?" Three people annotated responses to the 2016 survey; four people did so for the 2020 survey. Conflicts were resolved via majority rule.
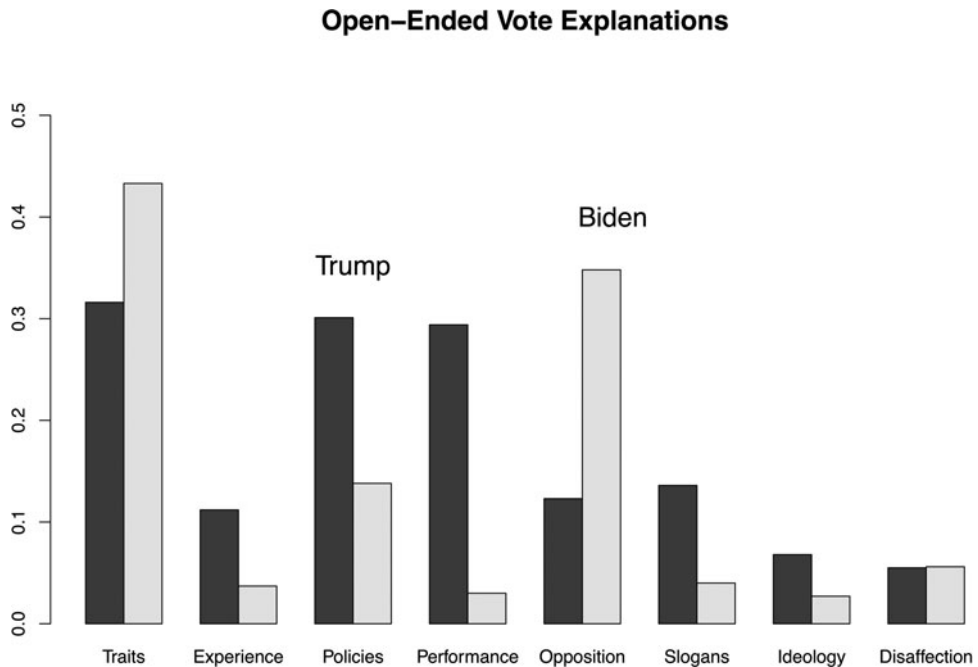
## Open–Ended Vote Explanations



**Fig. 3.** Distribution of hand-coded responses to a question about why respondents supported Trump versus Biden—2020 open-ended explanations (*n* = 533).

Whatever changed in recent years appears to have been principally at the elite and activist levels, not among the public. (We should add that other studies using standard measurement techniques have reported discernible increases in negative partisanship over this period. For example, Lelkes et al. [2022] report that negative partisanship outpaced positive partisanship for the first time in 2020, though it also shows that such increases are more pronounced in online versus face-to-face surveys.)

## Discussion

Certainly, the attitudes probed here are not an exhaustive list. Students of democratic breakdowns in Europe in the 1930s often note the intense ideological polarization of the period, which raised the perceived stakes of elections (Weber 1996; see also Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2013). In Figure A7 in the Online Appendix, we use questions about perceived ideology to measure whether Donald Trump or Joe Biden was perceived as unusually extreme. Perceptions of Trump did grow more conservative between 2016 and 2020—but perceptions of Trump's ideology in 2020 looked little different than perceptions of Romney's in 2012. There is no evidence that perceptions of ideological extremity were markedly different in 2020 than in 2012. Here, too, the survey data alone provide little indication of the looming anti-democratic threat.

Historically, racial hierarchy has been closely connected with anti-democratic movements (Bedolla 2021; Mickey 2015; Miller 2021; Parker and Towler 2019), so Figure A8 in the Online Appendix also reports trends in white Americans' anti-black prejudices. If anything, such prejudices were *declining*—or at least not increasing—in the Trump era (see also Enns and Jardina 2021; Hopkins and Washington 2020).

Overall, the story that emerges from this population-based panel is one of stability in core aspects of public opinion that may have presaged Trump's anti-democratic turn. In the period

before the 2020 presidential election, we do not detect heightened concerns about election fairness or system legitimacy, either overall or among Republicans. Views of Trump while running for re-election in 2020 were more polarized than views of Obama at the comparable moment of his presidency, but Trump claimed only a slightly larger fraction of very strong supporters than had Obama. Open-ended questions display significant negative partisanship but no dramatic increases in that measure and no signs of widespread disaffection among Republicans.

Explaining the sources of this stability is beyond the scope of a single article. Still, Tables A3–A7 in the Online Appendix begin this investigation by presenting regressions of this article's primary outcomes on basic demographic measures, such as socioeconomic status, racial self-identification, and religion, as well as partisan identity measured in October 2012. For some outcomes—especially partisanship-related measures, such as the Trump feeling thermometers and vote choice—the models have consistently strong predictive power. Many of the individual-level predictors are stable in sign and magnitude too. Such results suggest the stabilizing role of partisan identity and demographic factors during a time of consistent, polarized partisan cues (see, especially, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Levendusky 2009).

Yet, for measures of election fairness and system legitimacy, the models are less predictive and the coefficients less stable. Here, it is helpful to consider evidence from Griffin and Quasem (2021), who report trends in Americans' perceptions of election fairness using the Nationscape survey. In late October 2020, Trump and Biden supporters were virtually identical in their belief that the presidential election would be conducted fairly, corroborating our panel. However, immediately after the election, beliefs diverged sharply based on partisanship, with confidence growing to 93 per cent among Biden supporters and dropping to just 29 per cent among Trump supporters. After prominent partisans sent salient, conflicting cues about election integrity, their co-partisans in the public followed suit, showing within-party opinion leadership (Zaller 1992). However, on key issues, Trump's rhetoric also generated a backlash among Democrats (Enns and Jardina 2021; Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck 2019). Stability can thus result from consistent partisan cues or from their absence (Page and Shapiro 1992).

## Conclusion

In prior centuries, public opinion was tantamount to the views of the public as they were made known to government officials (Blumer 1948)—and by that older definition, the January 6 storming of the Capitol clearly represented an expression of public opinion. However, since the widespread adoption of polling, public opinion is more commonly considered to be the attitudes of the public as measured through surveys. By this definition, the relationship between Trump's attacks on democratic values and public opinion is not clear ex ante.

We used a population-based panel to analyze shifts in US public opinion in the years before and during Trump's tumultuous 2017–21 presidency. Were there movements in public opinion that may have laid the groundwork for Trump's anti-democratic rhetoric or his sustained challenge to the 2020 election's legitimacy? More generally, are certain attitudes leading indicators of anti-democratic threats? Analyzing various election-related attitudes, we find little evidence that 2020 stands out from prior years. While such attitudes as negative views of the opposing party remain highly concerning, our data do not detect a rise in the run-up to October 2020. Trump did enjoy strong support among a fraction of the electorate, but that support was not atypical. Obama in 2012 had only a slightly smaller share of highly positive supporters than Trump did in 2020. The choices those two presidents made, not the intensity of their supporters, is likely the key difference between the transitions in 2016 and 2020.

To be sure, our panel stops in October 2020 and so does not cover attitudinal shifts in the post-2020 election period. Crucially, it does not consider beliefs about the 2020 election itself. As detailed earlier, the stability in views of election fairness was shattered by Trump's post-

election actions, with significant majorities of Trump supporters no longer reporting confidence in US elections (Griffin and Quasem 2021).

This research also suggests the limits of studying mass opinion in understanding the dynamics that can produce anti-democratic efforts. Researchers would do well to complement population-based studies with focused work on the activists and elites who act in the shadows of public opinion (see, for example, Blum 2020; Parker and Barreto 2014). To borrow a metaphor from Bartels (2022), public opinion reflects not a wave, but rather a reservoir that political entrepreneurs can tap into. The storming of the Capitol is a powerful reminder that small minorities can nonetheless have a powerful impact on the stability of US democracy—and that shifts among small groups can be invisible when surveying the population as a whole. Small groups of activists may also have an outsized impact on how Americans *perceive* polarization, heightening the belief that the public is more polarized than it actually is (Ahler 2014; Levendusky and Malhotra 2016).

## References

**Ahler DJ** (2014) Self-fulfilling misperceptions of public polarization. *The Journal of Politics* **76**(3), 607–620.

**Azari J** (2018) Forget Norms. Our Democracy Depends on Values. Available from https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/forget-norms-our-democracy-depends-on-values/

**Bartels L** (2022) *Public Opinion and the Crisis of Democracy in Europe*. Book manuscript, Vanderbilt University.

**Bawn K et al.** (2012) A theory of political parties: groups, policy demands and nominations in American politics. *Perspectives on Politics* 571–597.

**Bedolla LG** (2021) On the ballot in 2020: will the United States (finally) embrace civil rights? *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*, **6**(1), 71–81.

**Berinsky AJ** (2009) *In Time of War: Understanding American Public Opinion from World War II to Iraq*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Blum RM** (2020) *How the Tea Party Captured the GOP: Insurgent Factions in American Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Blumer H** (1948) Public opinion and public opinion polling. *American Sociological Review* **13**(5), 542–549.

**Broockman DE and Skovron C** (2018) Bias in perceptions of public opinion among political elites. *American Political Science Review* **112**(3), 542–563.

**Collier D and Levitsky S** (1997) Democracy with adjectives: conceptual innovation in comparative research. *World Politics* **49**(3), 430–451.

**Corrales J** (2018) *Fixing Democracy: Why Constitutional Change Often Fails to Enhance Democracy in Latin America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

**Daniller AM and Mutz DC** (2019) The dynamics of electoral integrity: a three-election panel study. *Public Opinion Quarterly* **83**(1), 46–67.

**DeSante CD and Watts Smith CW** (2020) Less is more: a cross-generational analysis of the nature and role of racial attitudes in the twenty-first century. *The Journal of Politics* **82**(3), 967–980.

**Enns PK and Jardina A** (2021) Complicating the role of white racial attitudes and anti-immigrant sentiment in the 2016 US presidential election. *Public Opinion Quarterly* **85**(2), 539–570.

**Graham MH and Svolik MW** (2020) Democracy in America? Partisanship, polarization, and the robustness of support for democracy in the United States. *American Political Science Review* **114**(2), 392–409.

**Green DP, Palmquist B, and Schickler E** (2002) *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

**Griffin R and Quasem M** (2021) Crisis of Confidence: How Election 2020 Was Different. Available from https://www.voterstudygroup.org/publication/crisis-of-confidence

**Grossman G et al.** (2022) The majoritarian threat to liberal democracy. *Journal of Experimental Political Science* **9**(1), 36–45.

**Hill SJ, Hopkins DJ, and Huber GA** (2021) Not by turnout alone: measuring the sources of electoral change, 2012 to 2016. *Science Advances* **7**(17), eabe3272.

**Hopkins DJ** (2022) Replication Data for: Stable Views in a Time of Tumult: Assessing Trends in American Public Opinion, 2007-2020", https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/N6MS1N, Harvard Dataverse, V1.

**Hopkins DJ and Washington S** (2020) The rise of Trump, the fall of prejudice? Tracking white Americans' racial attitudes via a panel survey, 2008–2018. *Public Opinion Quarterly* **84**(1), 119–140.

**Iyengar S et al.** (2019) The origins and consequences of affective polarization in the United States. *Annual Review of Political Science* **22**, 129–146.

**Jacobs LR and Shapiro RY** (2000) *Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Jardina A and Piston S** (2016) Dehumanization of black people motivates white support for punitive criminal justice policies. Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, USA. September 1–4.

**Kalmoe NP and Mason L** (2019) Lethal mass partisanship: prevalence, correlates, & electoral contingencies. Paper presented at the *National Capital Area Political Science Association American Politics Meeting*, University of Maryland, College Park MD, January 7.

**Lee FE and McCarty N** (2019) *Can America Govern Itself?* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

**Lee T** (2002) *Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and Racial Attitudes in the Civil Rights Era*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Lelkes Y et al.** (2022) Negative partisanship is not more prevalent than positive partisanship. *Nature Human Behavior*. https://www-nature-com/articles/s41562-022-01348-0.pdf (accessed June 20, 2022).

**Levendusky M** (2009) *The Partisan Sort: How Liberals Became Democrats and Conservatives Became Republicans*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Levendusky MS and Malhotra N** (2016) (Mis)Perceptions of partisan polarization in the American public. *Public Opinion Quarterly* **80**(S1), 378–391.

**Levitsky S and Ziblatt D** (2018) *How Democracies Die*. New York, NY: Broadway Books.

**Lieberman RC et al.** (2019) The Trump presidency and American democracy: a historical and comparative analysis. *Perspectives on Politics* **17**(2), 470–479.

**Mainwaring S and Pérez-Liñán A** (2013) *Democracies and Dictatorships in Latin America: Emergence, Survival, and Fall*. Cambridge University Press.

**Mason L** (2018) *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Mickey R** (2015) *Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South, 1944–1972*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**Miller LL** (2021) Racialized anti-statism and the failure of the American state. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics* **6**(1), 120–143.

**Page BI and Shapiro RY** (1992) *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences*. University of Chicago Press.

**Parker CS and Barreto MA** (2014) *Change They Can't Believe In: The Tea Party and Reactionary Politics in America*, updated edn. Princeton University Press.

**Parker CS and Towler CC** (2019) Race and authoritarianism in American politics. *Annual Review of Political Science* **22**, 503–519.

**Pew Research Center** (2021) Views of Biden and Trump during the transition. Available from https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/01/15/views-of-biden-and-trump-during-the-transition/

**Sides J, Tesler M, and Vavreck L** (2019) *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**United States Elections Project** (2021) 2016 November General Election Turnout Rates. Available from http://www.electproject.org/2016g

**Weber EJ** (1996) *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s*. New York, NJ: W.W. Norton & Company.

**Wlezien C** (1995) The public as thermostat: dynamics of preferences for spending. *American Journal of Political Science* **39**(4), 981–1000.

**Zaller JR** (1992) *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.