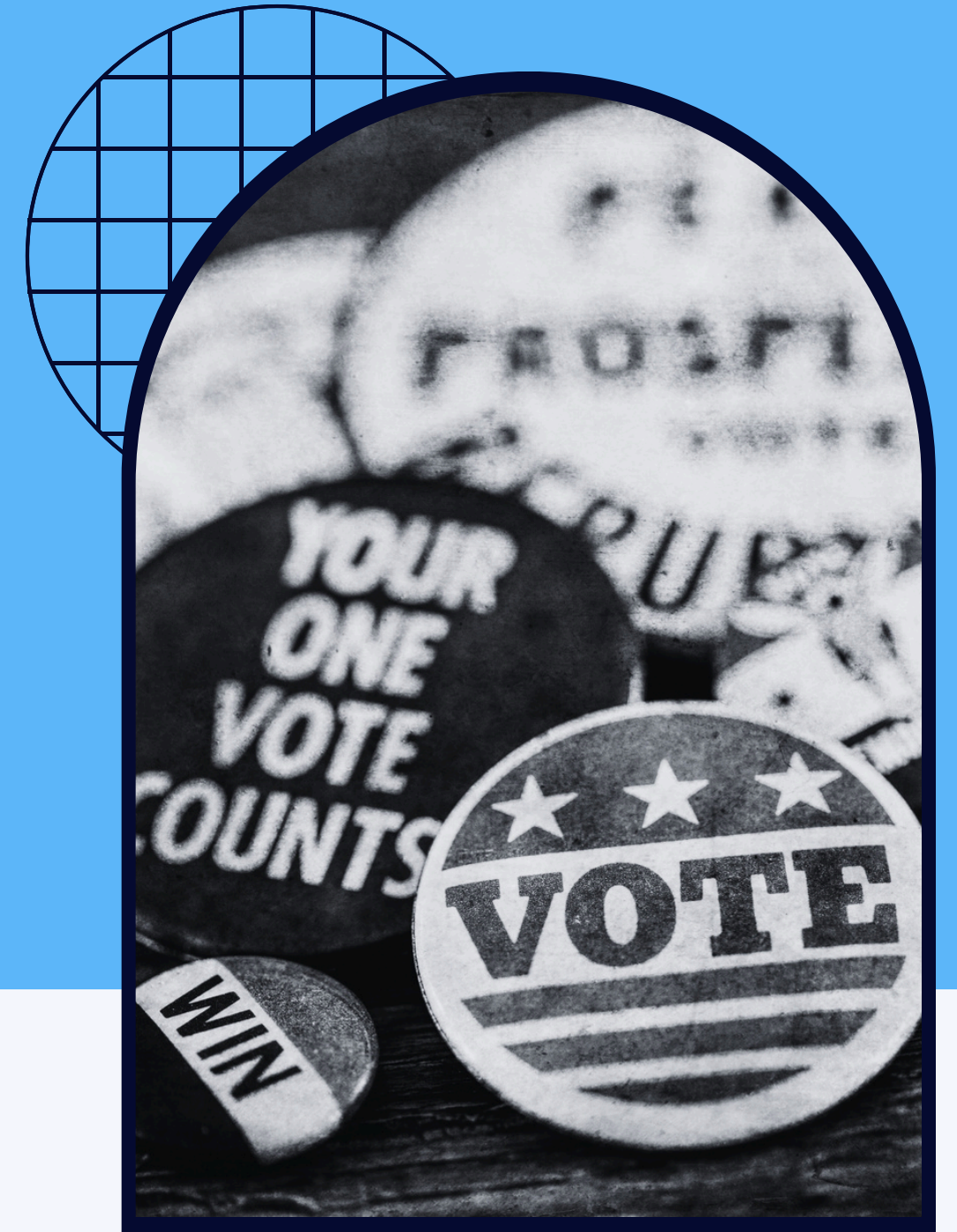


Perception of the 2024 Election

VOTER

INSIGHTS

Advertising Research



Executive Summary

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This research study focused on politicophobia and the public perception of the electoral process and advertising. Our methodology, which included due diligence reporting, qualitative interviews, survey development, geo mapping, and statistical testing to gain a better understanding as to how our respondents felt about the political process and the traits they would like to see from political candidates. From this start, the data from our survey yielded useful insights into the public's collective psyche and how it could be used to advertise more effectively. Variables with the highest mean scores (most agreed upon) included "Focus on fear turns to chaos", "Candidates aren't always the best for the job, just best at playing the game", and "A common sense approach separate from left or right ideology, works the best." These findings indicate that many Americans are disillusioned with the democratic process and would like a return to common sense leadership reaching across the aisle. Respondents of the survey presented a clean bell curve of political identities from liberal, to moderate, to conservative, and regardless of party, 82% of all respondents expressed degrees of doubt that the government is doing its best. On general perception of the government, sentiments seem to be shared across the aisle. Where the split becomes more fractured is on hot button issues like climate change support of rights to firearm ownership.

Given our reliability approval through Cronbach's alpha, we were able to use correlation testing to find strong threads between our survey statements. The strongest thread, which was also visualized through network analysis, was the desire for a compassionate presidential candidate who ensures a diversity of voices are heard. These ideas were reinforced through the results of linear regression testing, where the highest ranked coefficients against the contentious belief that "the government is doing its best" included "compassionate choices", "diverse voices", and "breaking norms", which finds that the compassionate candidate who uplifts diverse voices will also increase feelings of goodwill towards the government. These findings were also significant in our logistic regression testing against firearm ownership, where the more likely someone is to support gun ownership, the less likely they are to value these traits in a candidate. Given the popularity of these threads, it begs the question as to whether the support of firearm ownership would be a strategic platform issue, as opposed to climate change support, which sees more of a positive relationship with these variables.

Through factor analysis, again the common threads of diverse voices and compassionate choices reappear, sharing commonalities with those who feel attack advertising can lead to negative outcomes. Given the strong relation between these three, we can start seeing the ideal candidate shaping up: one who is more likely to run positive character campaigning about themselves than negative attack advertising about their opposition. Through ANOVA testing, we are more easily able to identify where differentiation in political advertising should occur in relation to demographic groups. There are large gaps between moderate and conservative messaging, as well as between those who present very masculine and those presenting feminine. As to be expected, political advertising needed to be differentiated between Gen Z and every other generational group.

Americans need a cure for the fatigue and cynicism they feel towards the political process. It seems the remedy is a candidate who is compassionate, a proponent of diversity, supportive of climate change, and may be willing to step outside the norm to work for the people with a common sense approach. The results of this study show what the public collectively values and can serve as a playbook for candidates wanting their campaign to resonate with their constituents.



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Introduction

This research project sought to understand the public's perception of the state of electoral politics regarding the upcoming 2024 election. Having researched politicophobia, the aversion or fear of the political process, in addition to reporting on negative attack advertising, our construct was created to help us determine just how bleak the public's view of the political landscape is. Subsequently, through descriptive and inferential insights reporting, we would then make suggestions as political advisors for candidates based on the data collected. Our research methodology began with due diligence reporting, which found a nation fatigued by the political process, negative attack ads, and cynical about the state of politics. We then used a semi-structured qualitative interview format to interview subjects who would have valuable insights to glean about their opinions on the political process, which were then transcribed and uploaded to Taguette, allowing us to find commonalities in speech to serve as the basis of a matrix of ten scaled survey statements, as well as other questions examining politicophobia, free thinking, and demographics which were formatted as scaled, ordinal, or nominal statements. This survey was distributed and once the data was cleaned, we were able to run multiple analytical tests in order to develop inferential insights about the public's collective schema regarding the political landscape. These research methods gave us insight into the cynicism and aversion the average American seems to feel about the political process and what can be done by future candidates to put the collective conscious at ease in a contentious political arena.



Methodology

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Perception of Presidential Election

1 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

2 SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

3 DATA COLLECTION

4 DESCRIPTIVE DATA REPORTING

5 INFERENCE STATISTICAL TESTING

1. Using a semi-structured interview format, every interviewee responded to the same prompts to gain an understanding of how the population is feeling. The transcripts were then uploaded to Taguette, where insightful moments were tagged with themes such as "politicophobia", "morality", and "apathy" to locate commonalities between interviewees.
2. Using these tags, 10 survey statements were developed, in which survey participants would respond to within a Likert scale matrix, along with other questions which would be analyzed in relation to the 10 main statements.
3. Using a convenience/judgmental sampling through our Qualtrics survey, we gathered survey results from 780 respondents who gave informed consent. Once the raw data was gathered, it was cleaned in Excel, distilling down to only numerical data, and uploaded to JASP. A Geo-Map of the zip codes of the respondents was also created to show the geographical concentrations of this sampling.
4. Once uploaded to JASP, alongside our survey coding sheet, each statement was labeled as either scale, nominal, or ordinal, depending on what type of information was being recorded. From this, we generated frequency tables, distribution plots and contingency tables, revealing areas where responses converged. Subsequently, we conducted a reliability test and obtained a Cronbach's Alpha score of .73, an acceptable internal consistency for testing.
5. Within the inferential statistical testing phase, we ran numerous analytical tests, including reliability and correlation testing, network analysis, linear and logistic regression, factor analysis, decision trees, and analysis of variance testing.

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“I do believe every vote counts.”

INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

“I think the American system has always rewarded politicians who are innovative and creative within the system who find ways of working around the established rules, but within the confines of the norm.”

ON MAVERICKS & DISRUPTORS

“Your average American would rather spend their time doing anything other than thinking or engaging with politics.”

ON POLITICOPHOBIA

“Candidates have an obligation to spend more time talking about issues that affect your average American every day.”

ON TALKING POINTS

Quotes such as these were uploaded to Taguette and were tagged with common themes to identify the shared sentiments about the election among interviewees. These were used to create the 10 scaled statements within the survey.

SURVEY STATEMENTS

These ten statements derived from our qualitative interviews were the backbone of our construct. These scaled variables were presented in a matrix, where respondents could reply along a Likert scale of "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

- 01 **When a politician attempts to attack the opposing candidate, it's detrimental to democracy.**
- 02 **The next president must break the norms to succeed.**
- 03 **When politicians understand the average American, we'll become united.**
- 04 **Politics went from talking around the coffee table, to breaking families apart.**
- 05 **Politicians who focus on fear turn our country into chaos.**
- 06 **Presidential candidates aren't always the best, they just know how to play the game.**
- 07 **I will support a candidate who is open to consider alternative viewpoints.**
- 08 **I will choose a president who makes compassionate choices.**
- 09 **The next president must assure diverse voices are heard.**
- 10 **Rather than far left or far right, I just want a common sense approach to make things work.**

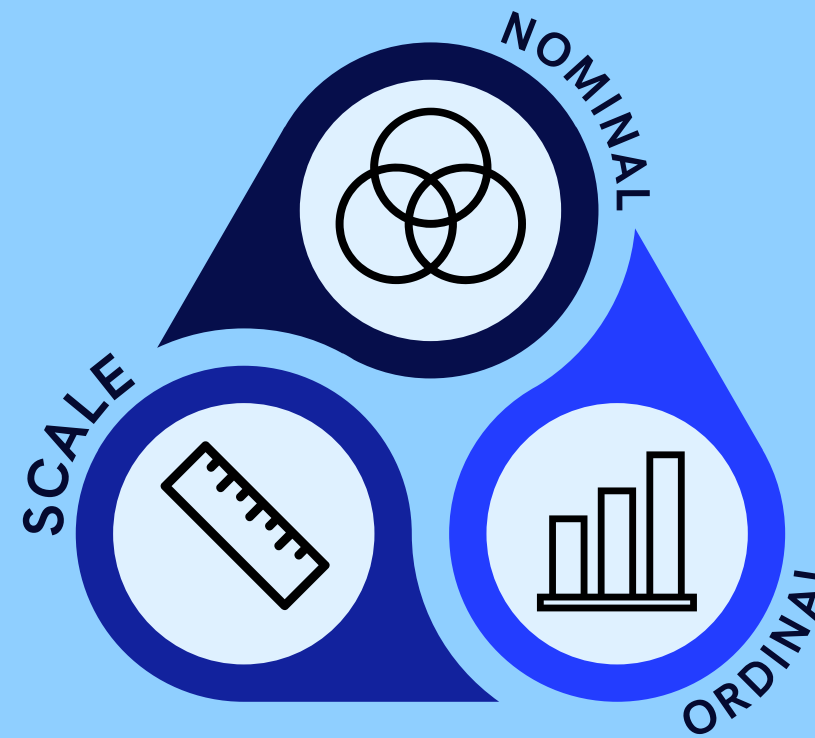
INFORMED CONSENT



After obtaining our CITI certification through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects and Social/Behavioral Research, as co-investigators we were able to ethically administer our survey with all participants giving informed consent. This puts the welfare

and human rights of our participants at the forefront of our research and ensured that our survey aligned with the guidelines as presented by the IRB.

SURVEY CODING SHEET



In addition to the 10 survey statements, we had several other survey questions regarding current political issues like gun rights and climate change, as well as demographic questions to understand age and income. These questions were ranked ordinally, while questions such as gender and race, which do not have a ranking, were recorded nominally/dichotomously. A detailed survey coding sheet

was created in order to reference the values and types of each variable/ranking and was used in tandem with every statistical analysis and interpretation to ensure consistency and validity of our results.

- 1. **STRONGLY DISAGREE**
- 2. **SOMEWHAT DISAGREE**
- 3. **NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE**
- 4. **SOMEWHAT AGREE**
- 5. **STRONGLY AGREE**

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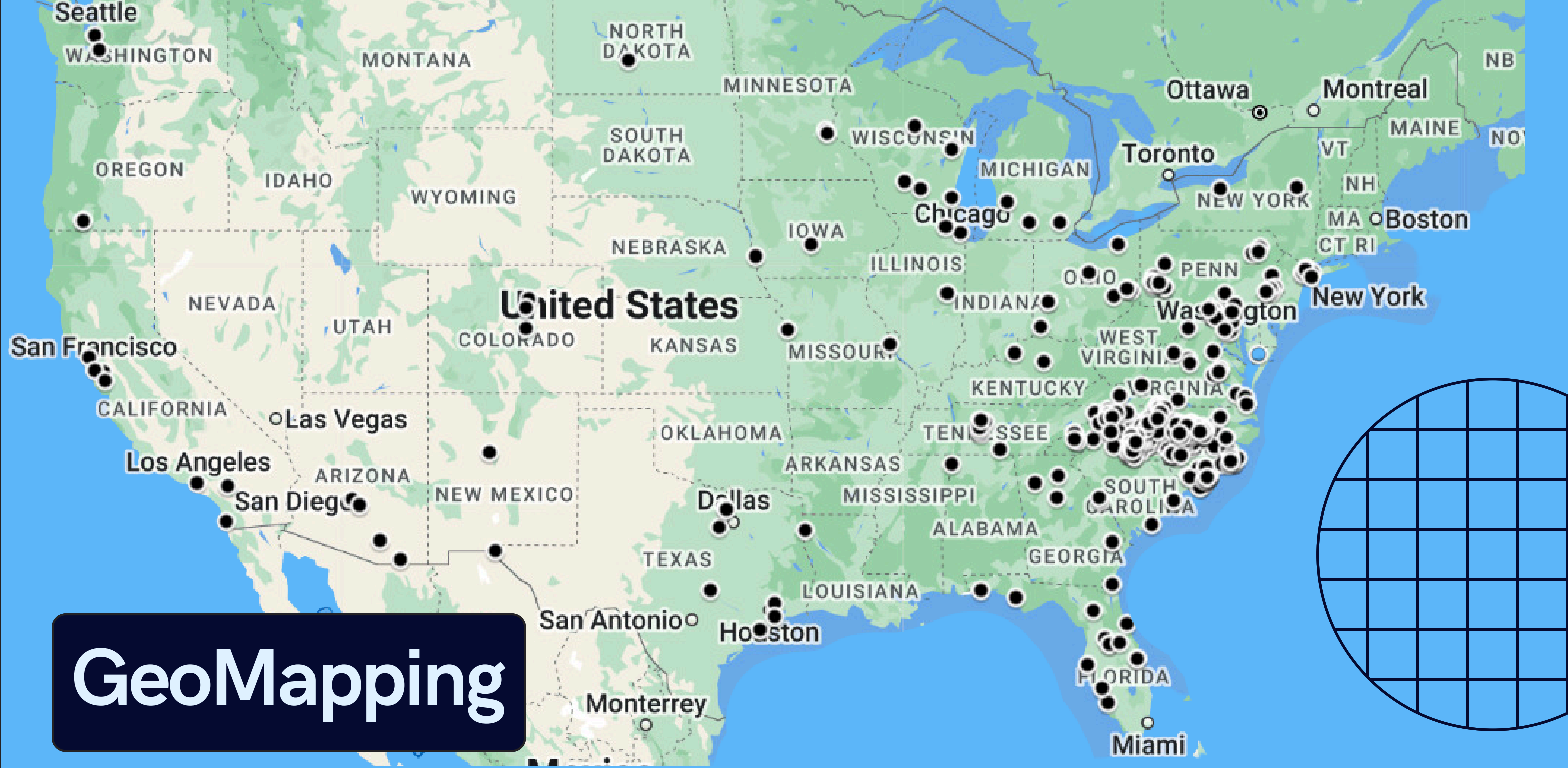
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GeoMapping

Once the data was clean, the zip codes of each participant were separated and uploaded into Google Maps, where we were able to generate a map showing the proximate location of each survey respondent to give us an idea as to visualize the geographic location of our data points.

Most of our respondents were concentrated in the mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions of the United States, with a much smaller population represented throughout Middle America and the West. Because this research was non-funded, we used a convenience/judgmental sampling rather than a stratified sampling, which would show geographic variety (as well as other demographic variety) more akin to the proportional distribution of America's voter base.

Descriptive Reporting

Using the unidimensional reliability analysis for our survey data, we see that Cronbach's alpha is 0.73, which is considered "acceptable" as it falls within the $0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$ range on the internal consistency scale. Overall, our 10 survey statements seem to work together and this acceptable reliability allowed us to further analyze our data.

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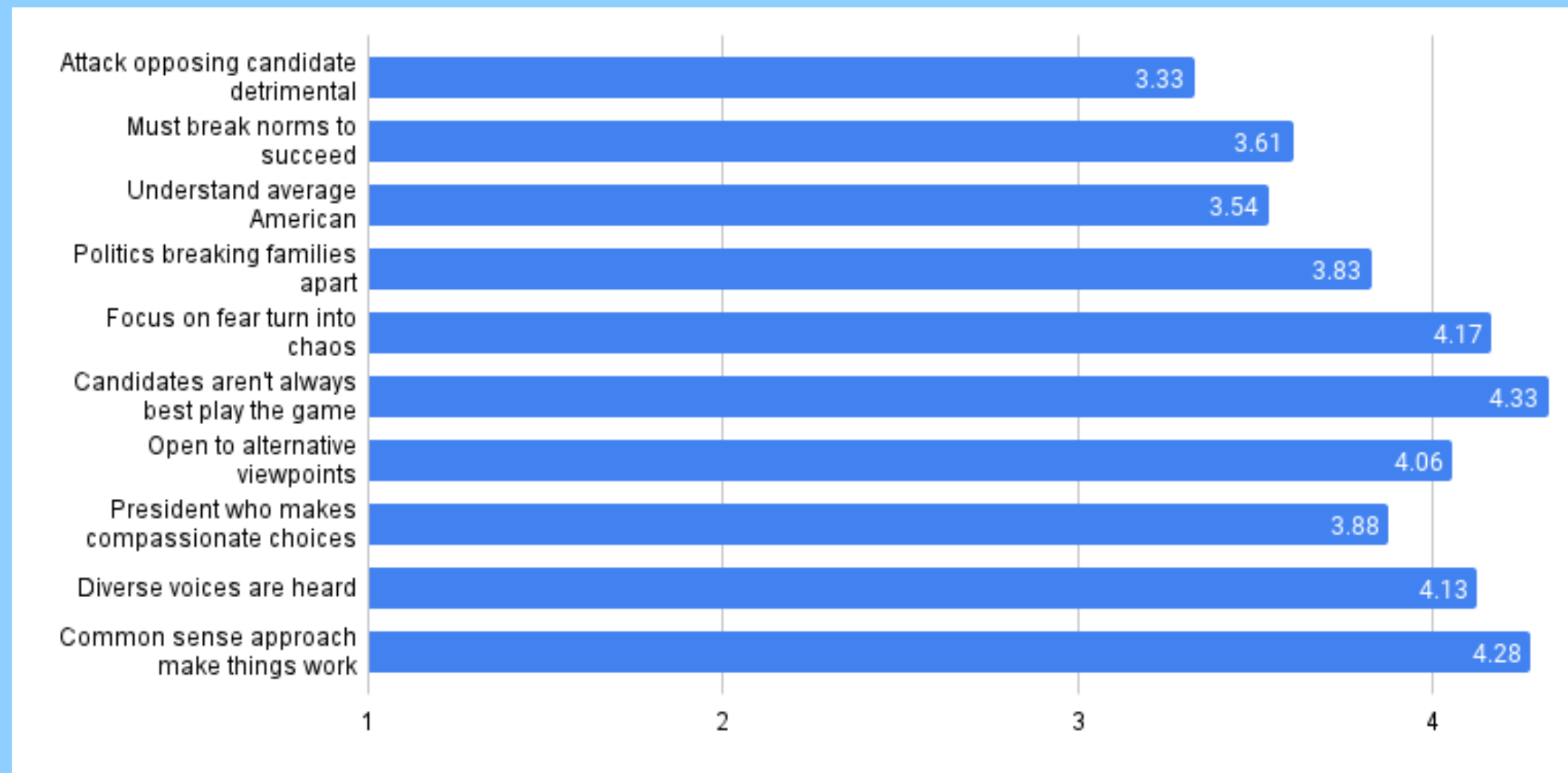
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MEAN SCORES OF PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL ELECTION SCALE



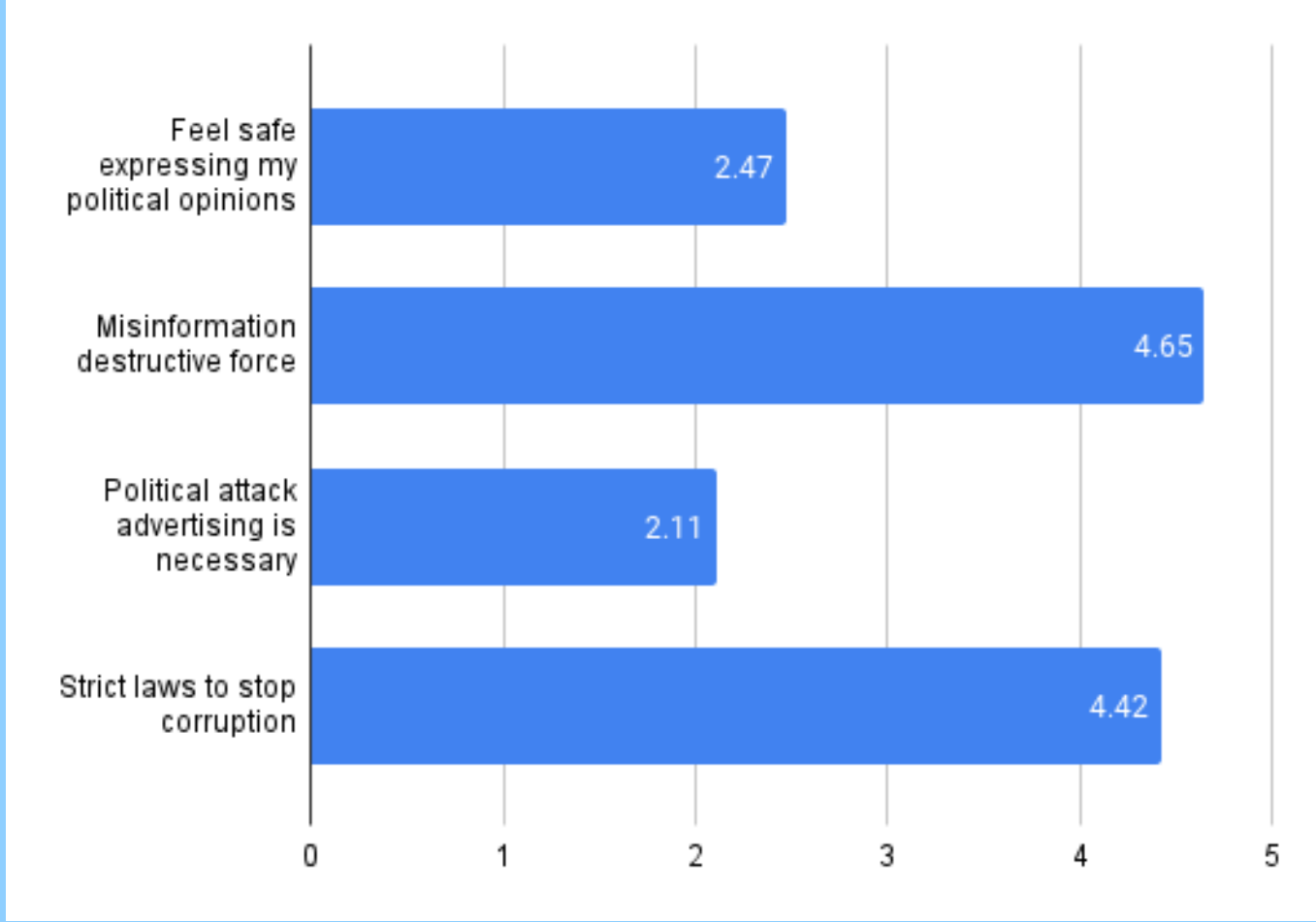
TOP MEAN SCORE

"Candidates aren't always the best players in the game"

With a mean score of 4.33, respondents largely agree with the fact that US political candidates aren't necessarily the best fit for the job, but the best at playing the game and that a common sense

approach removed from partisanship would be the most effective political strategy. The most contentious opinion was as to whether oppositional attack ads were detrimental to the democratic process, with mean score of 3.33. These findings indicate that many Americans are disillusioned with the current state of electoral politics and would like a return to common sense driven leadership spanning across the aisle. Despite the desire for a bipartisan common sense approach, fewer respondents were willing to condemn negative attack advertising as detrimental to democracy. These findings seem to indicate that our prototypical voter may not be averse to their candidate running negative advertisements about their opposition, while also responding positively to a common sense platform.

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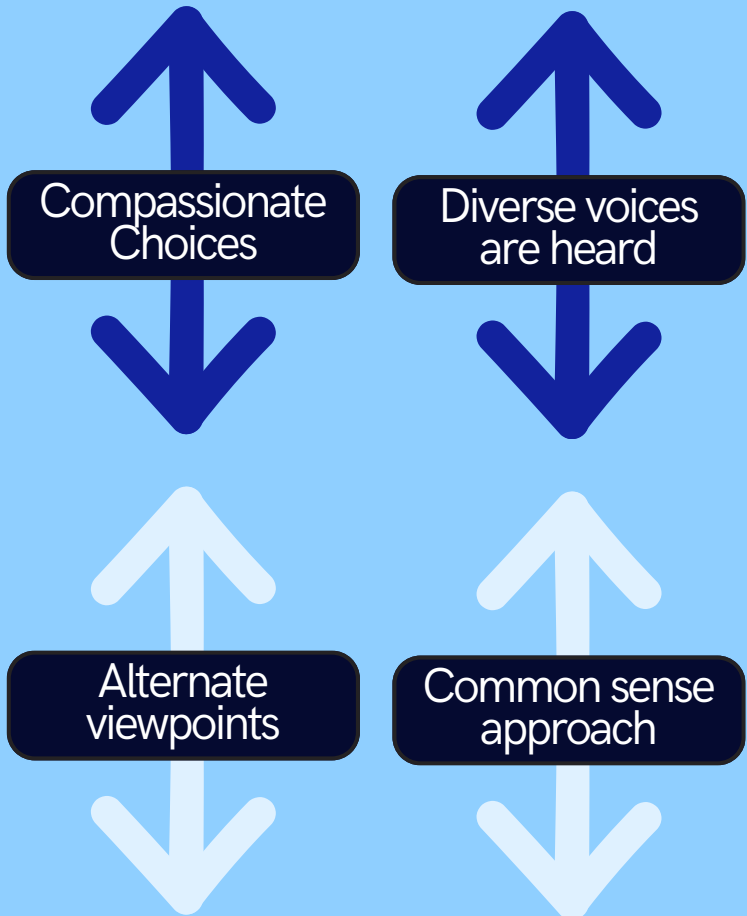
MEAN SCORES OF POLITICOPHOBIA MEASURES

With the highest mean score of 4.65, the majority of respondents feel that misinformation is a destructive force. Respondents also largely agree that strict laws must be put in place in order to stop corruption. Given that these two variables are so widely agreed upon by respondents, highlighting a campaign against misinformation and valuing transparency would resonate well with the majority of voters who may feel cynicism or anxiety regarding the 2024 election.



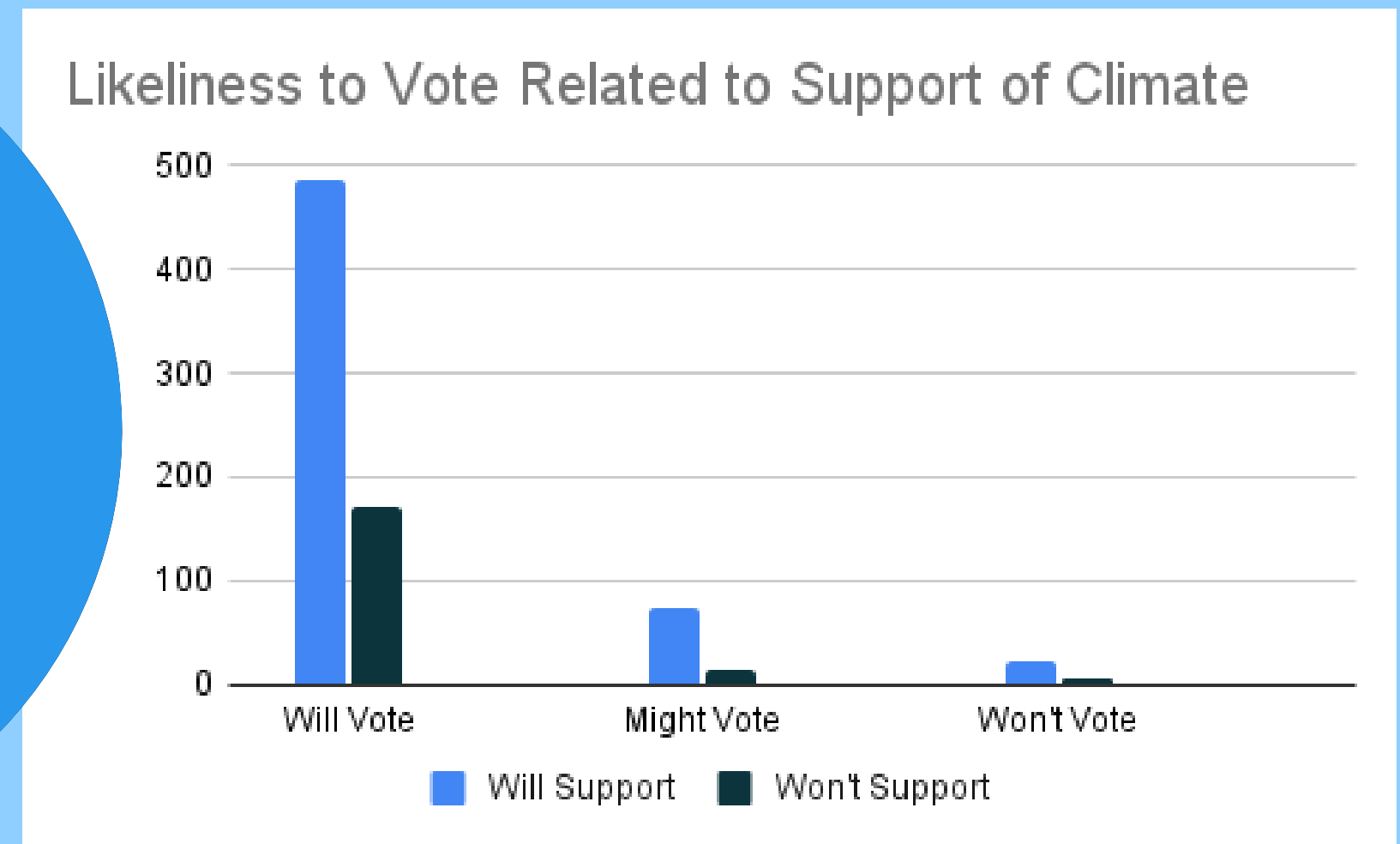
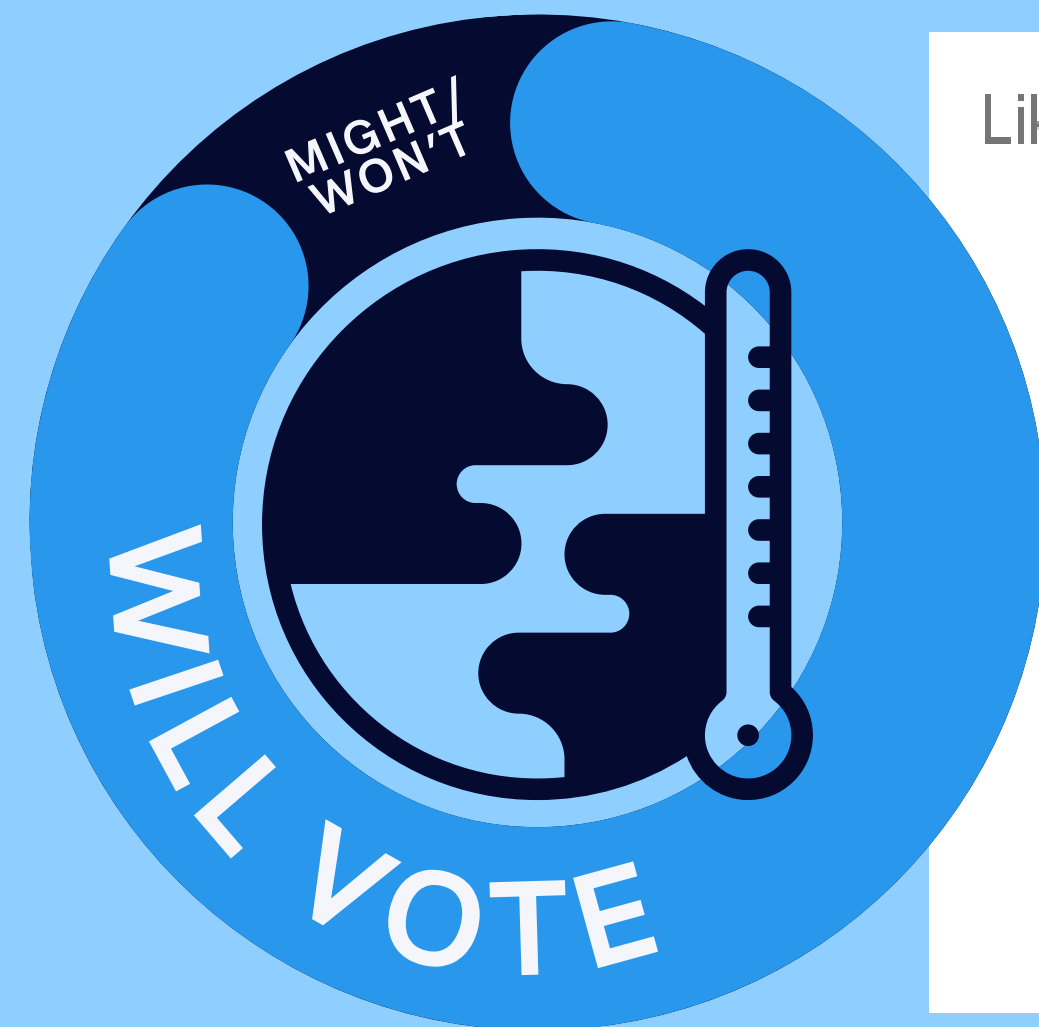
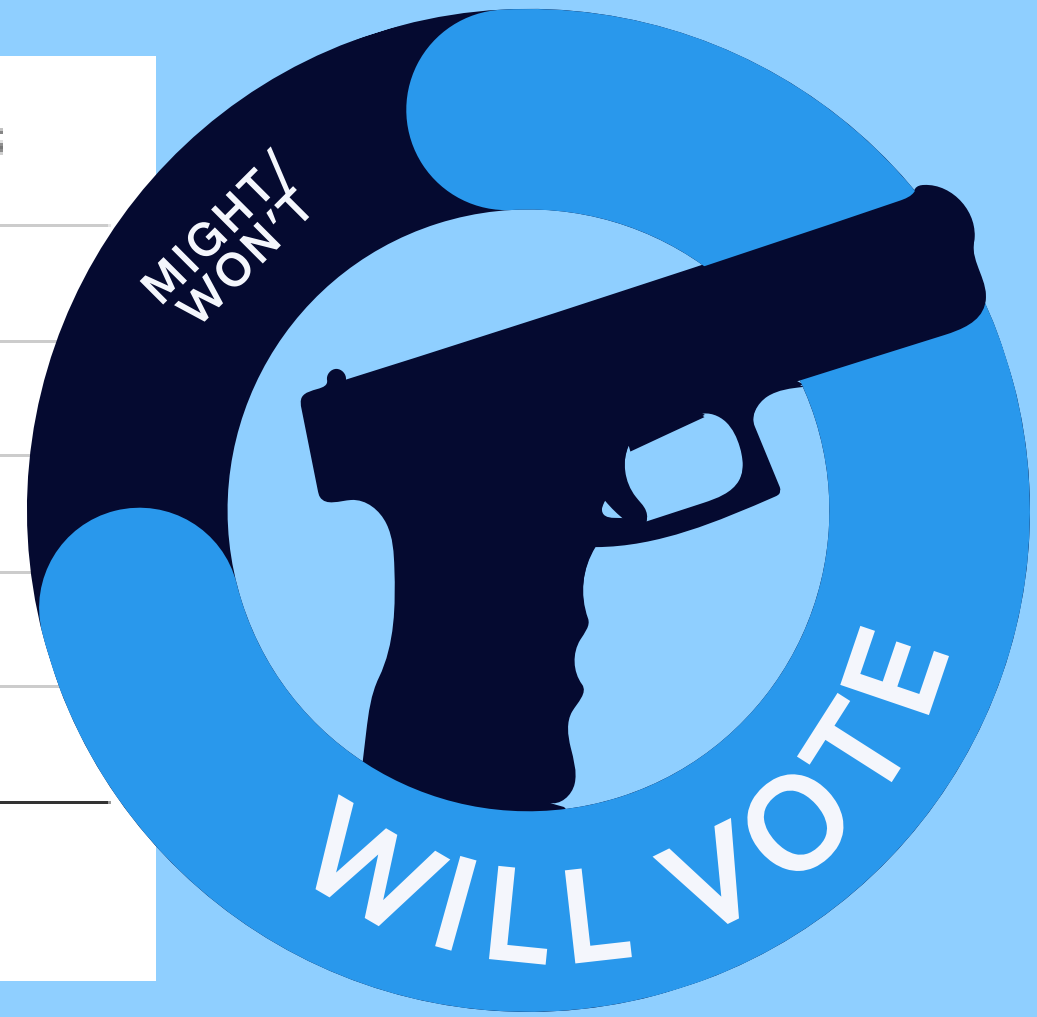
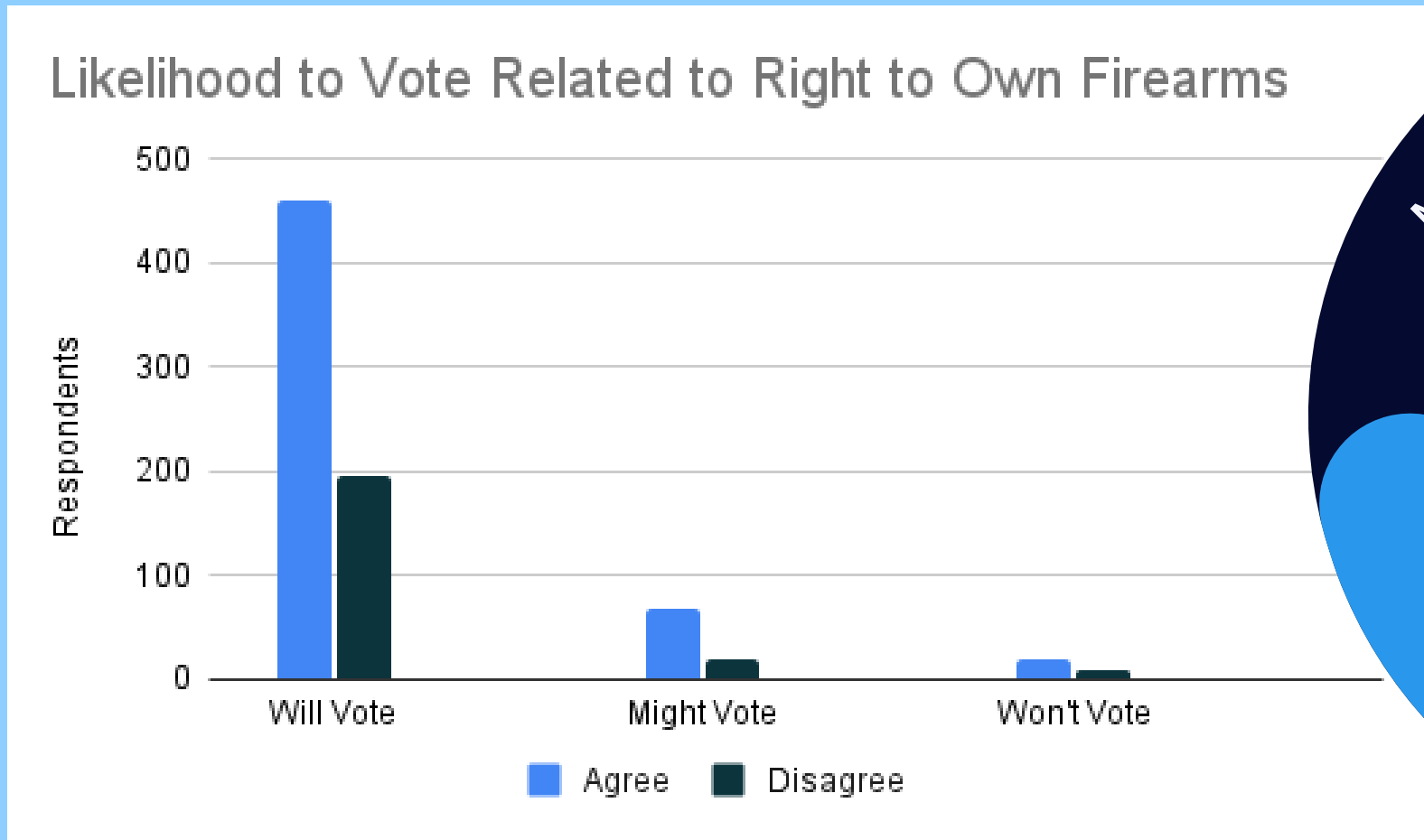
Correlation Testing

The first step of our inferential insight analysis is correlation testing. The highest degree of correlation between variables is that which has a Pearson's r score closest to 1. The top correlated pair of variables is "President who makes compassionate choices" and "Diverse voices are heard" with a Pearson's r score of 0.6 and a p score of <math><0.001</math>, indicating the relationship is significant. Not only is this a significant pairing of variables, but it is also a positive relationship, meaning the two variables track up and down together. The next highest relationship is between "open to alternative viewpoints" and "common sense approach to make things work" with a Pearson's r score of 0.43 and a p score of <math><0.001</math>, again indicating a significant positive relationship. The desire for a compassionate presidential candidate who ensures a diversity of voices are heard is a common thread within the survey statements. Compassion and diversity are two factors which for many respondents are inextricably linked, so the willingness to highlight these values on the campaign trail is paramount.



Crosstabs

The crosstab between respondents' likelihood to vote and support present high numbers of people likely to vote, regardless of whether they do or do not support either initiative. 74% of people who will vote will do so in support of climate oriented candidates and 70% of people who vote will do so in favor of the right to own firearms. We see similar numbers amongst possible voters and non-voters in support of climate candidates as we did with support of firearm ownership, with a slight preference towards climate. Given that the majority of voters are in favor of candidates who uphold climate change initiatives, we can a.) assume that political messaging geared towards climate conscientiousness would be an effective talking point, and b.) should not be as contentious an issue as it is on Capitol Hill when the numbers show that public opinion is weighted in support of climate focused candidates. In other analyses where climate support is referenced, it often scores highly in relation to other popular variables like diverse voices and compassionate choices. Candidates in support of climate change would be wise to do so in tandem with campaign choices along these lines.



Network Analysis

provides a visual representation of correlative relationships, both positive and negative, between variables, or nodes. Stronger relationships are indicated by thicker and bolder edges (lines), while positive and negative relationships are indicated by blue and red edges, respectively.

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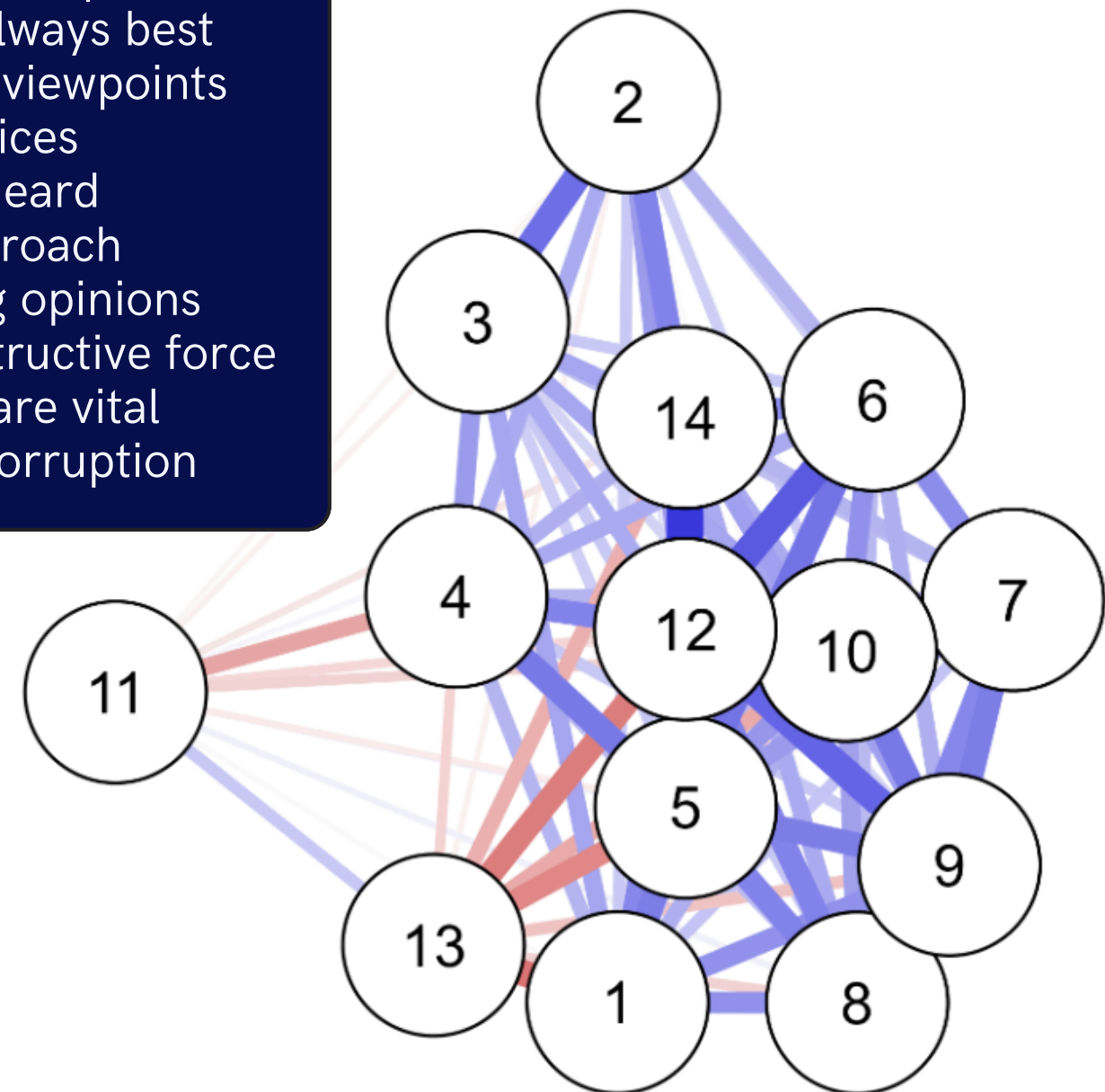
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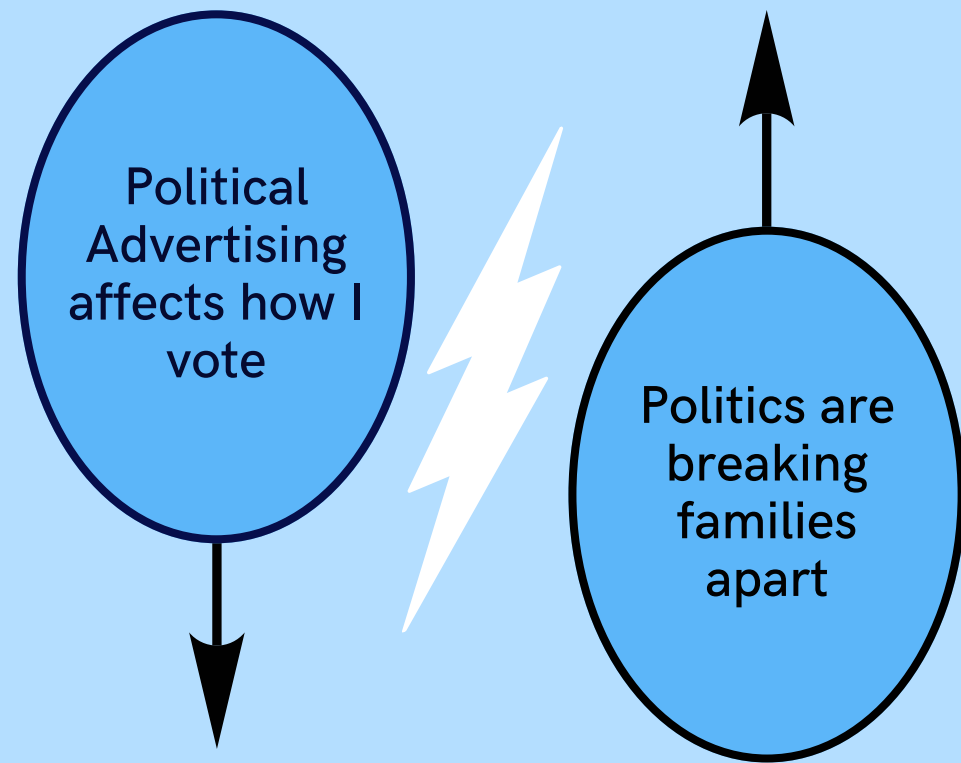
The strongest positive relationship is between nodes 12 and 14, "Misinformation is a destructive force" and "Need strict laws to stop corruption". These two variables will track together: the more strongly someone feels that misinformation is destructive, they're also likely to believe we need to implement strict laws to stop corruption. The strongest negative correlation also includes node 12 and is posed in contrast to node 13, "Political attack ads are vital". Those who feel strongly about the proliferation of misinformation as a destructive force are less likely to feel that campaigns have to be run with negative attack ads. It is interesting that the strongest correlative relationships, both positive and negative, occur between the statements regarding politicophobia. This highlights a somewhat anxious and cynical voter bloc, which reflects findings within our due diligence reporting where voters experiencing cynicism and election fatigue may also experience decreased self-efficacy.

Candidates should ensure they are running a clean campaign with fact-based rhetoric to ease the minds of their constituents. Voters have grown weary of "alternative facts" and corrupt politicians. A team of fact-checkers should be employed within the campaign headquarters and evidentiary based claims should not only be a part of the candidate's rhetoric, but also touted as an intrinsic character trait.

1. Attack opposition detrimental
2. Must break norms to succeed
3. Understand average American
4. Politics breaking families apart
5. Focus on fear turn into politics
6. Candidates aren't always best
7. Open to alternative viewpoints
8. Compassionate choices
9. Diverse voices are heard
10. Common sense approach
11. Feel safe expressing opinions
12. Misinformation destructive force
13. Political attack ads are vital
14. Strict laws to stop corruption



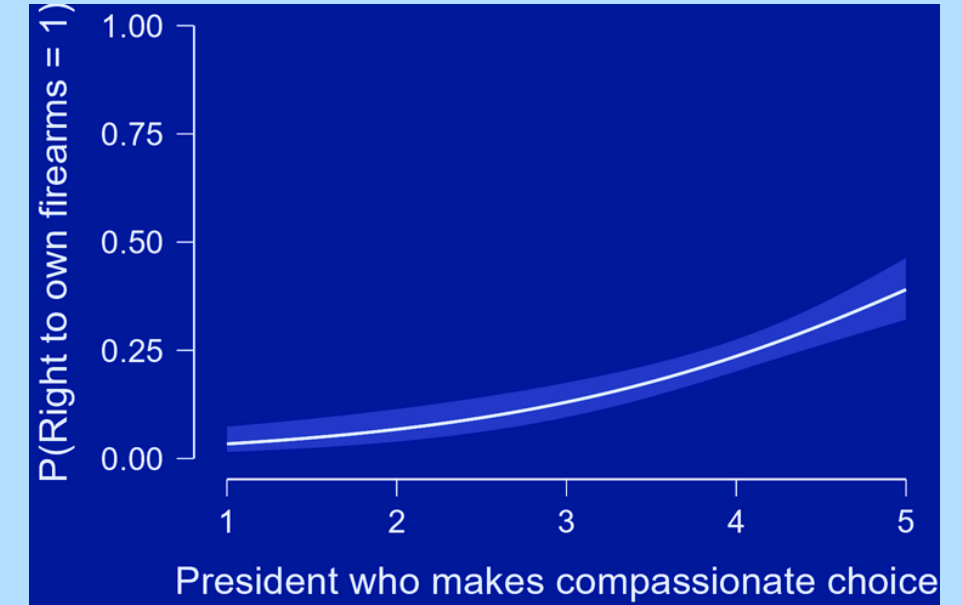
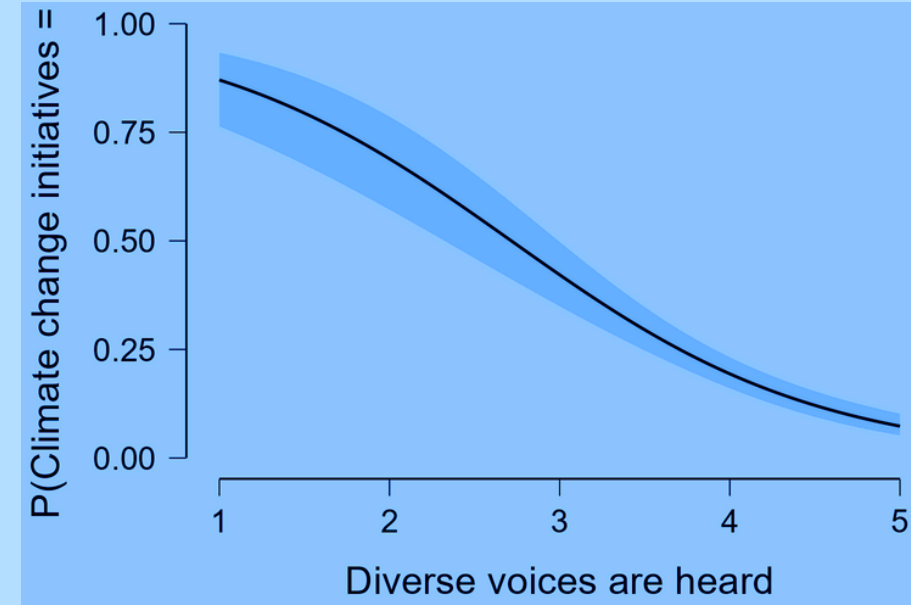
LINEAR REGRESSION



When testing our 10 survey statements as covariates against the dependent variable "Political Advertising Affects How I Vote", the most significant and powerful covariate was "Politics are breaking families apart" with a p score of 0.005 and a t score of -2.85, indicating a strong negative relationship. The more likely someone is to feel that political advertising will affect their vote, the less they are to feel that politics are breaking families apart. This would suggest placing a considerable amount of weight on familial divides may not be particularly relevant when advertising.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION

0 = Agree
1 = Disagree



For the first logistic regression analysis, the 10 survey statement covariates were tested against the dichotomous variable "Candidate who supports climate change initiatives". The p score of this test was <0.001 , which indicates the test was significant. Subsequently, the covariate "Diverse Voices are Heard" with a p score of <0.001 and a z score of -8.88 was the strongest relationship presented. The more likely someone is to disagree with climate change initiatives, the less likely they are to value diverse voices being heard, as these two variables push against one another.

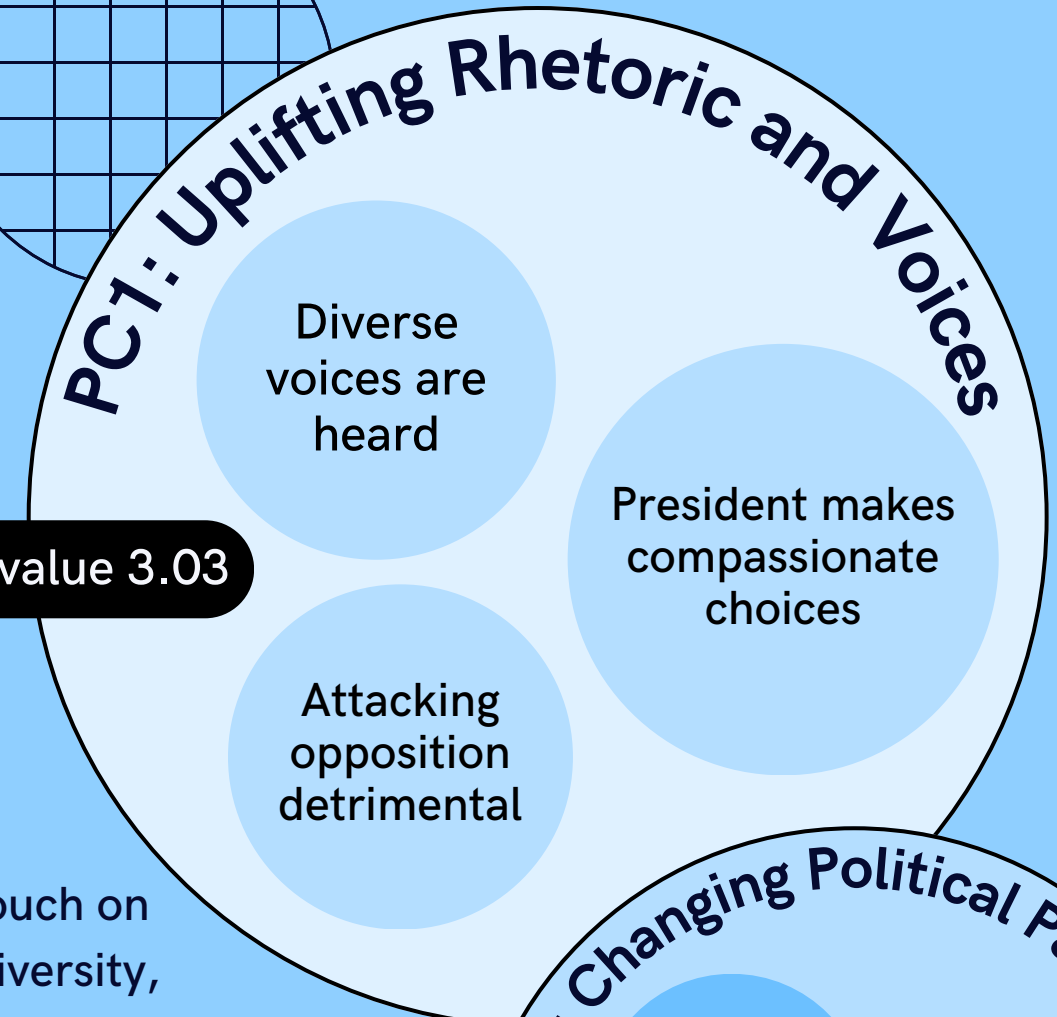
For the second logistic regression analysis, the 10 survey statement covariates were tested against the dichotomous variable "Candidate who supports rights to own firearms". The p score of this test was <0.001 , indicating the test was significant. Subsequently, the covariate "Compassionate choices" with a p score of <0.001 and a z score of 5.57 showed that the more likely someone was to disagree with the right to own firearms, they would also be more likely to support a candidate who makes compassionate choices.

Factor Analysis

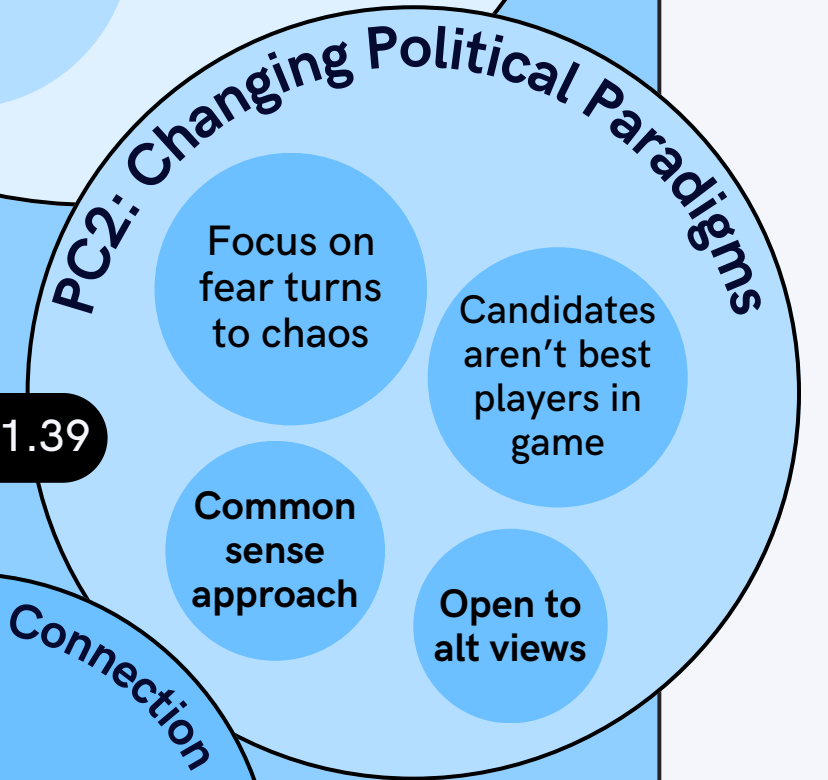
The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test run on our 10 survey statements yielded a score of 0.76, which indicates that our factor analysis was valid. Of the three principal components, Component 1 holds the most power with an Eigenvalue of 3.03, we can assume that people in favor of compassionate choices and uplifting diverse voices also believed that attack campaigning lead to negative outcomes because it doesn't align with running a compassionate campaign.

Given the strong relation between these three, we can imagine that this voter demographic is likely liberal leaning and responds better to positive advertising about the candidate rather than negative advertising about their opponent. To appeal to this voter would be to touch on the candidate's positive attributes, compassion for their constituents, and commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. Creating platform initiatives that focus on social programs that promote goodwill and committing to the allocation of funds towards causes which have a positive social connotation would be resonant with this voter base. Paired with the belief that attack advertising is detrimental, this type of positive campaign advertising would be the most effective given this component has the highest relational power of relationships among the principal components.

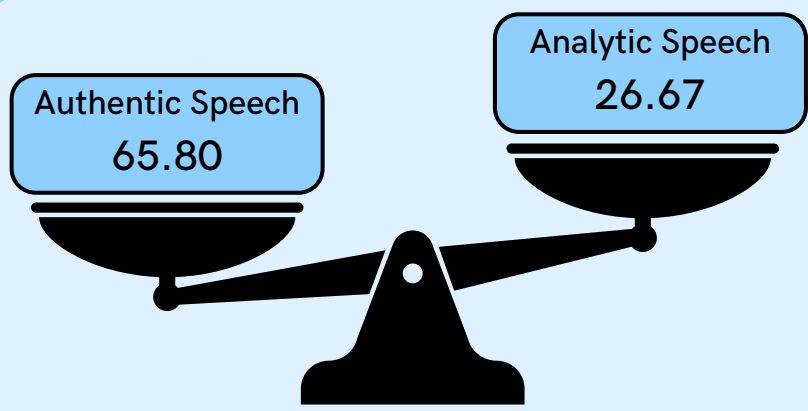
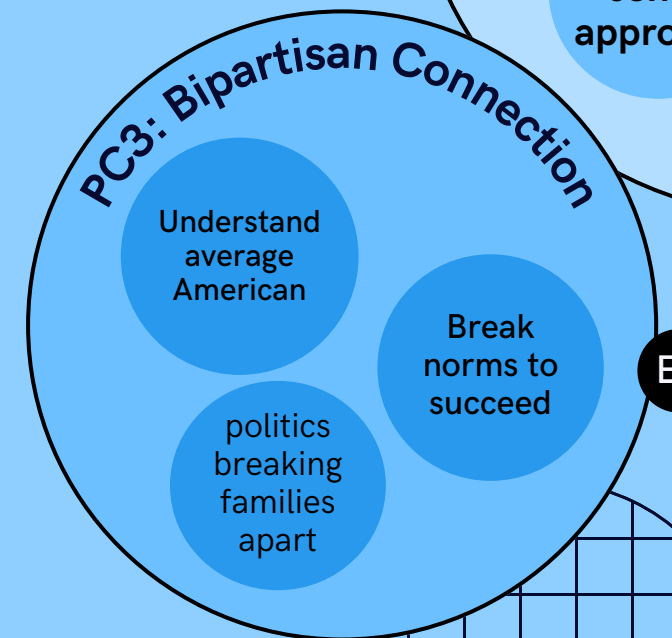
Eigenvalue 3.03



Eigenvalue 1.39



Eigenvalue 1.02



Text Analysis

Alongside the Factor Analysis, a text analysis was also completed by running the transcripts from our qualitative interviews through LIWC (Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count) software to gain further insight into the interviewees' psychological and emotional states while discussing the state of electoral politics. This yielded fascinating quantitative data involving the positive/negative tonality of speech, social wording, and moralization. The strongest insight was the predominance of authentic speech, which indicated a comfortability while discussing political topics.

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ANOVA

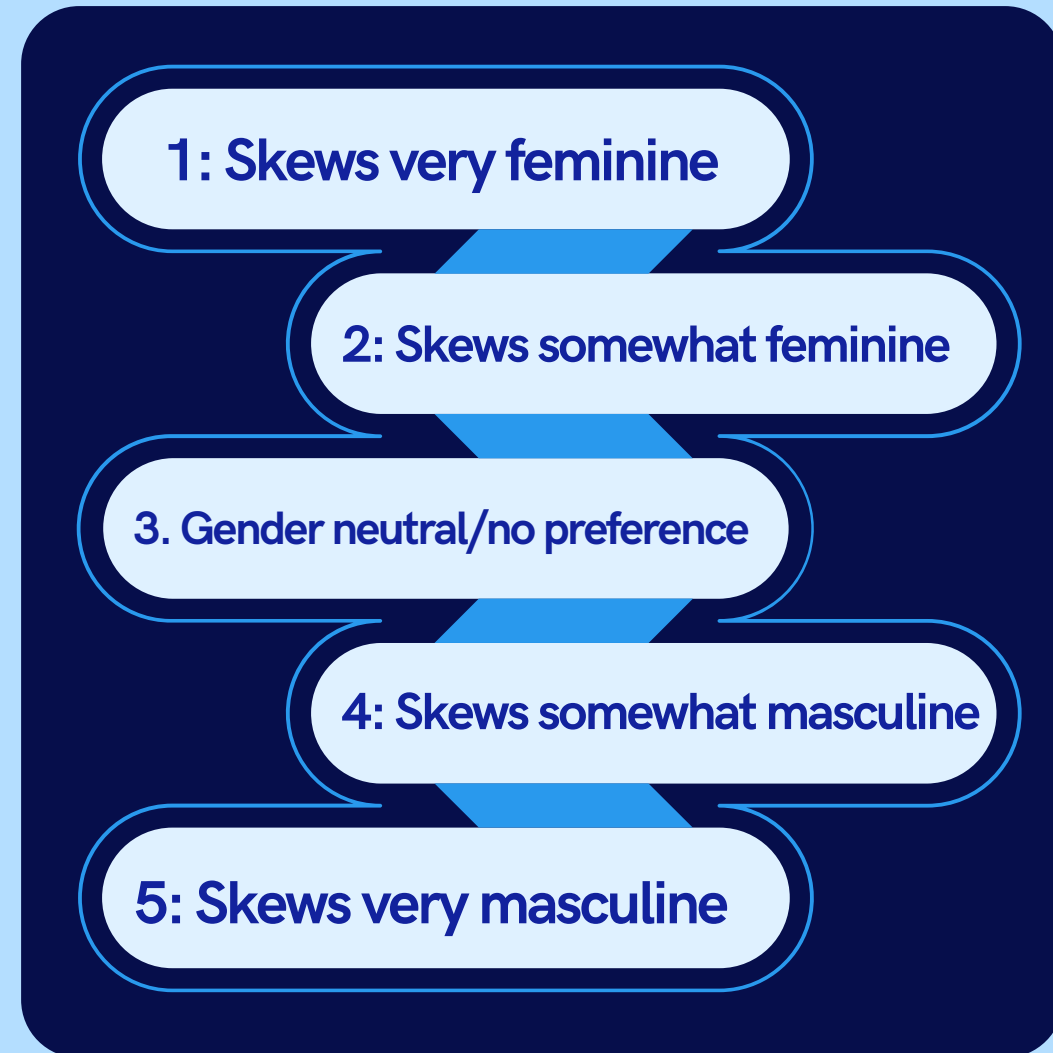
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

ANOVA testing allows us to determine if demographic groups respond differently in relation to dependent variables. Given a significant enough disparity, we should consider differentiated messaging between these demographic groups. We used analysis of variance testing to determine how different age groups, gender identities, income brackets, and political identities differ in their responses to the statement "Political Advertising Affects How I Vote".

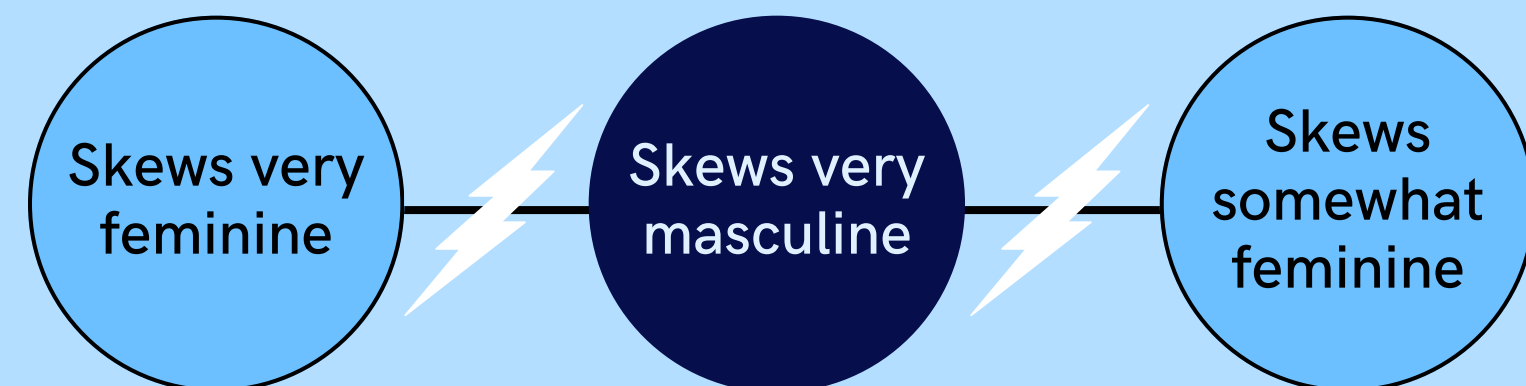


Gender Personality Traits

The p score for the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of "Gender Personality Traits" as related to the survey statement "Political advertising impacts how I vote" was 0.008, which indicates these findings are significant. Given their significance, we are able to run Post Hoc Tests on this relationship. Upon reviewing the data between related variables, two of the relationships between Gender Personality Traits and the impact of political advertising on voting were significant: the relationship between 1 and 5: "skews very feminine" and "skews very masculine" as well as 2 and 5: "skews somewhat feminine" and "skews very masculine". In Post-Hoc testing, both of these relationships had a ptukey score of 0.03. The Cohen's d score for both of these relationships shows a very large effect between the two, at 0.26 and 0.22, respectively. This would indicate that advertising geared towards anyone female identified should be drastically different from advertising towards very masculine identified demographics, whereas such variance is not required for advertising between any feminine to neutral to somewhat masculine demographics. Campaign



staffers would be wise to consider creating entirely separate messaging to be pushed to these differentiated demographics. The spheres in which these are advertisements are shared should also be taken into consideration, for example, paying for advertising slots on podcasts/content for mothers should be created differently than advertising on content geared towards a male audience.



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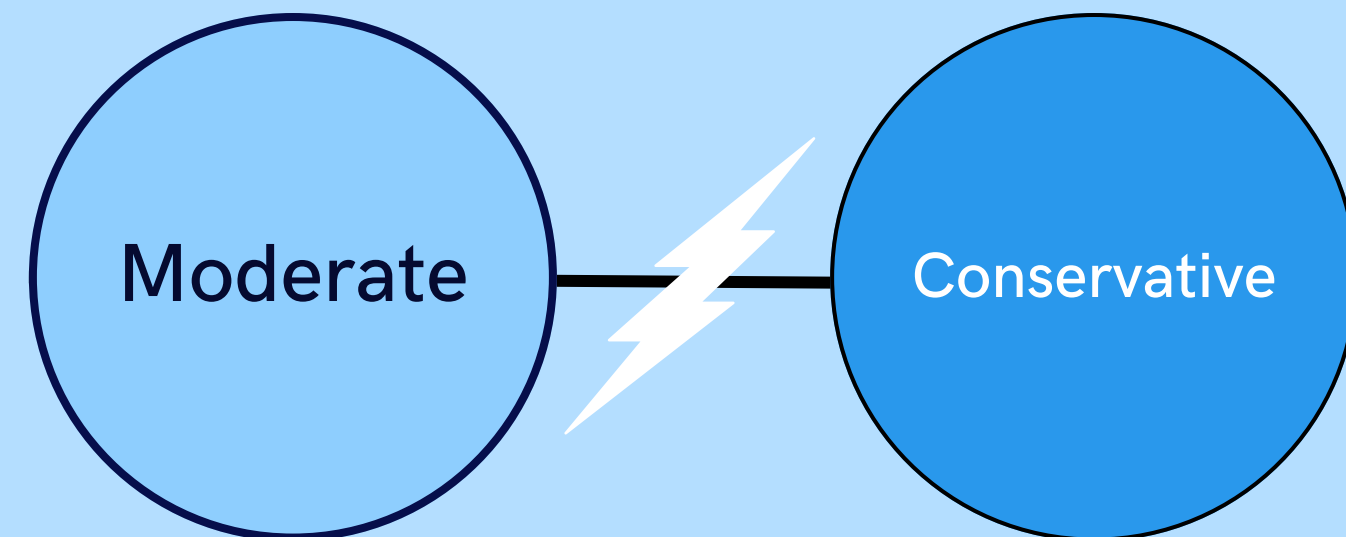
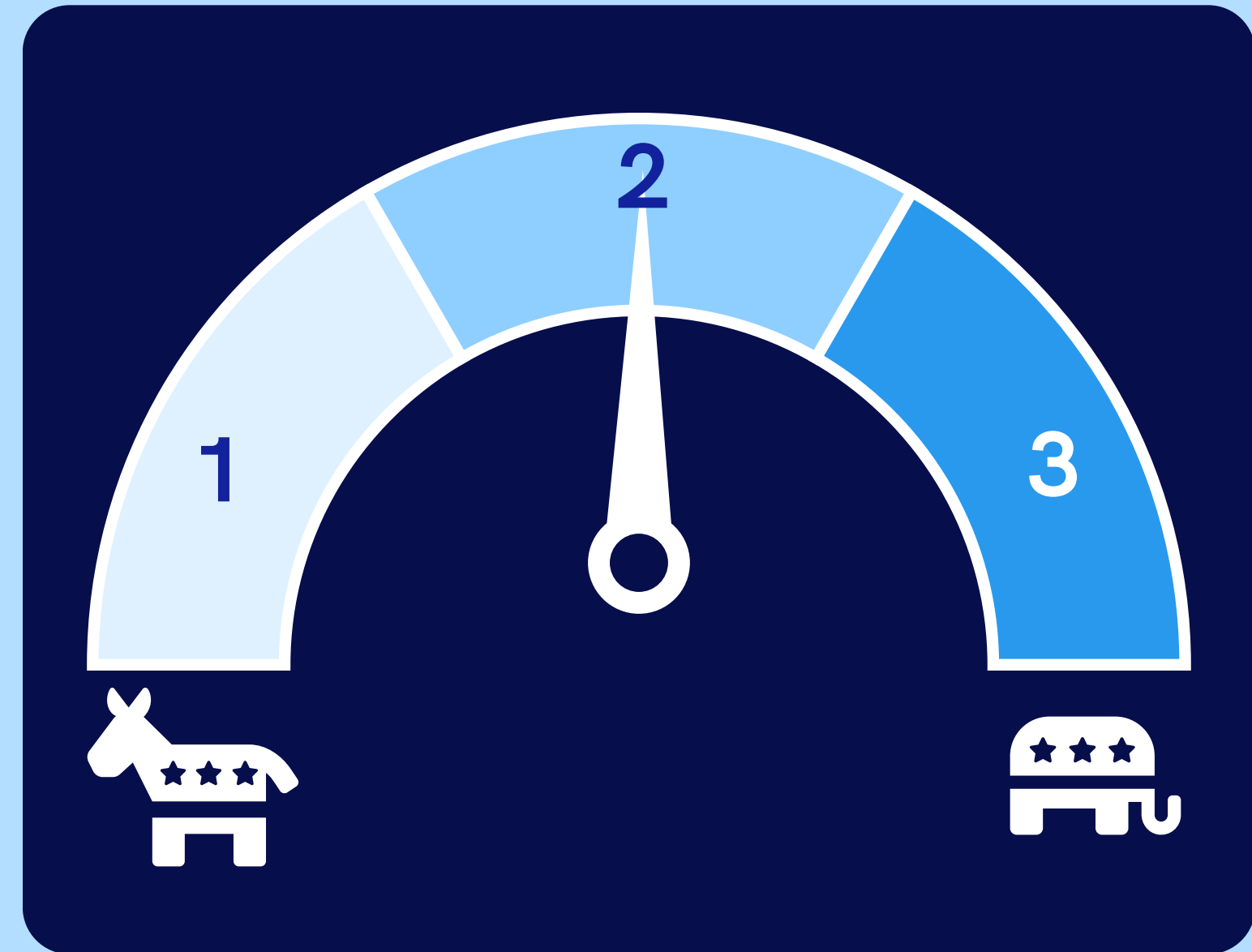
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ANOVA

CONTINUED

Political Identity

The p score for the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of "Political Identity" as related to the survey statement "Political advertising impacts how I vote" was <0.001 , which indicates these findings are significant. Given their significance, we are able to run Post Hoc Tests on this relationship. The relationship between Liberal identity (1) and Moderate identity (2), as well as Liberal (1) and Conservative (3), were insignificant according to the ptukey numbers for each relationship: 0.06 and 0.28, respectively. However, the relationship between Moderate (2) and Conservative (3) identified respondents was significant, with a ptukey score of <0.001 , and this relationship has a distinctly large effect, according to the Cohen's d score of 0.35. From this, we are able to determine that while there would not be a considerable disparity within the political advertising catered towards Liberal and Moderate identified voters or Liberal and Conservative identified voters, it would be worthwhile to ensure that political advertising geared towards Moderate and Conservative voters is starkly different.



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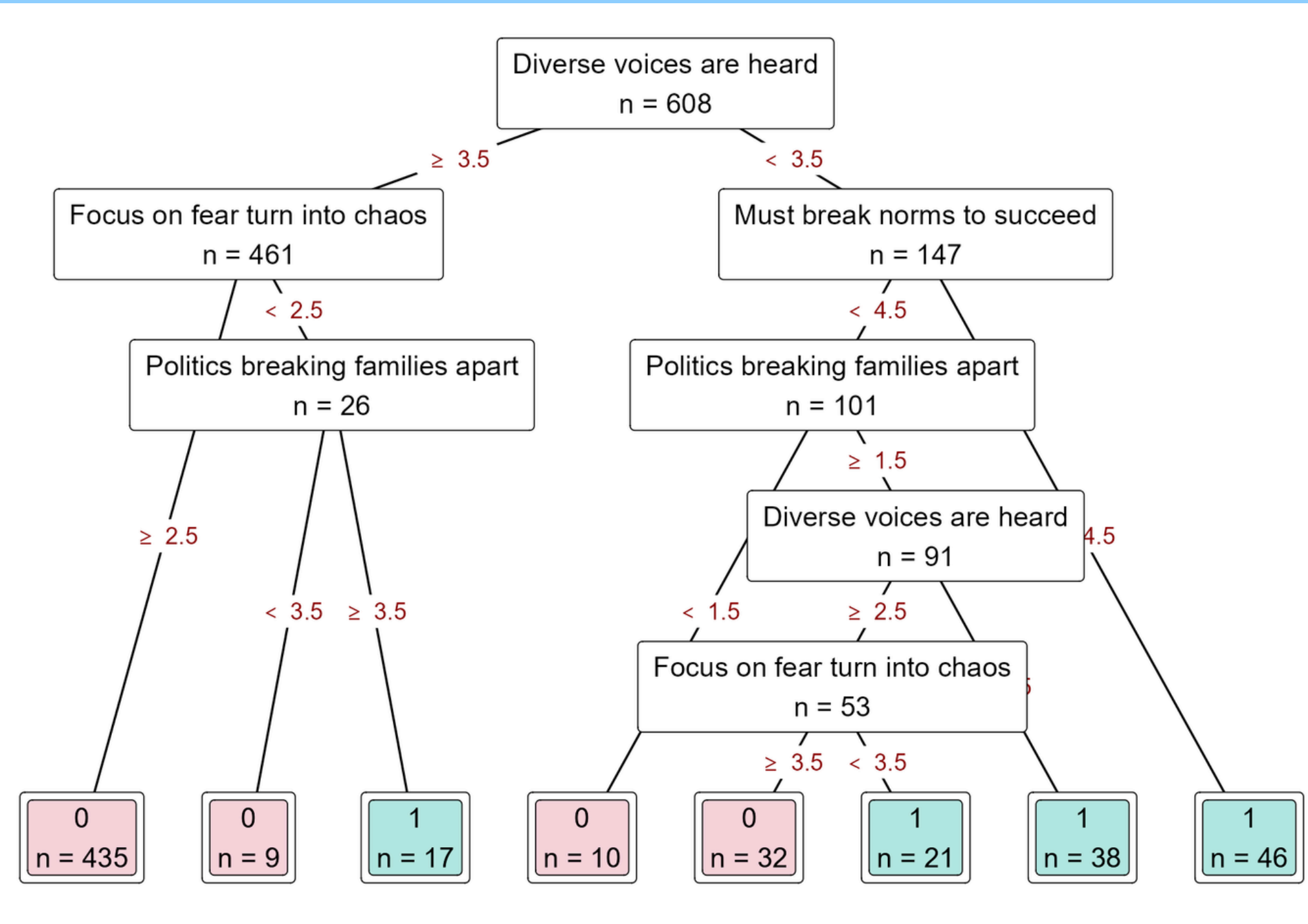
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Decision Tree

TARGET: CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES



The voters who are most invested in supporting candidates who support climate initiatives, the most important issue among the scaled survey statement variables is "Diverse Voices Are Heard" (n=608). For the majority of those who agree with climate change initiatives (n=461), they split to a small degree on "Focus on fear turns into chaos". For those who disagree with diverse voices, they split on breaking norms to succeed. On both sides of the decision tree, the next stepping off point is "Politics breaking families apart." This fully sorts those who support diverse voices, while those who feel diverse voices are more contentious an issue, they are split among diverse voices again and the focus on fear turning to chaos. Taking stock of the nodes which agree with climate change initiatives (nodes of 0), the majority tends to favor this issue (n=486) and those who oppose fall into the minority (n=122). Throughout our analyses, "Diverse voices are heard" has been one of the most prevalent issues both on its own as well as in relation to other variables.

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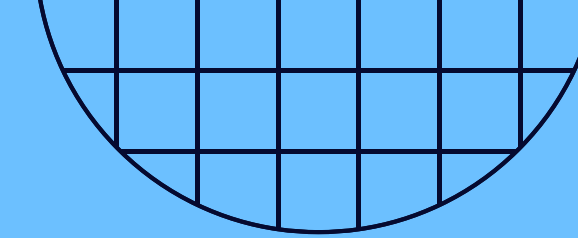
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Recommendations

UPLIFTING RHETORIC AND DIVERSE VOICES



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UPLIFT DIVERSE VOICES

One of the prevailing survey statements amongst our inferential insights analysis was the proclivity towards candidates who uplift diverse voices. This is an important hot button issue to address. Potential campaign actions include:

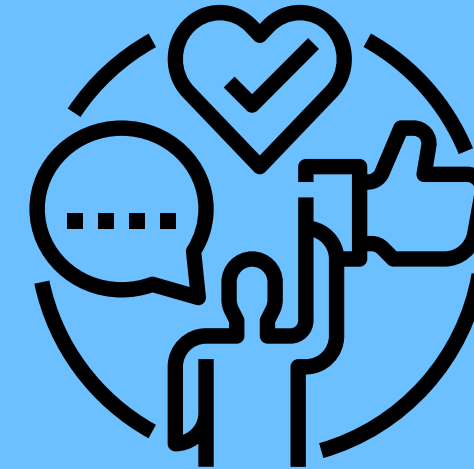
1. Pledge to nominate a cabinet of diversity
2. Seek endorsements from organizations like the SPLC, NAACP, etc.
3. Reach out to movers and shakers to join stops along the campaign trail. (Figures like Amanda Gorman, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Abby Wombach, etc)



COMPASSION & CLIMATE

Candidates who make compassionate choices was a common thread in many analyses, and the majority of respondents agreed with climate change initiatives. Focusing on the creation of jobs for middle and lower class Americans in green energy would be an effective platform talking point.

1. Commit to upholding America's responsibilities agreed upon at the Paris climate accord
2. Visit green energy plants and start-ups



POSITIVE CHARACTER ADS

With voters feeling fatigued from election-overload, barrages of misinformation, and corrupt politicians, committing to running a clean campaign with a focus on only positive character ads rather than negative attack ads towards the opposition would earn goodwill as an upstanding politician in the eyes of the public.

1. Don't just run positive ads, draw attention to your commitment to only running positive ads.
2. PACs can run attack ads so you don't have to.

CONCLUSION

From the data collected and insights analysis from our statistical testing, we are able to see what traits the public values, where the pain points of the electoral process are, and where divides occur among different issues. This information can be used as a roadmap for candidates' campaigns to create messaging and advertising which falls in line with the desires of their constituents.

Thank You

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