

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: CONTESTED POPULISM: THE CROSS-PRESSURED WHITE WORKING CLASS IN AMERICAN POLITICS

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While there has been a fair amount of research on class cleavages in the United States, the extant literature is a muddle of competing explanations of the political behavior of the white working class. Some argue that they are trending more Democratic on economic grounds in an era of growing inequality, while others point to growing Republican support based on social, cultural, and moral issues. I argue that the white working class is cross-pressured in a political environment that makes both the economic and cultural dimensions of class salient. Class shapes important economic outcomes, such as income, but it also socializes an authoritarian worldview. Although the Republican Party has made strong inroads with this constituency on the basis of their relatively higher levels of authoritarianism, the Democratic Party remains a competitive alternative based on its economic policies.

CONTESTED POPULISM: THE CROSS-PRESSURED WHITE WORKING CLASS
IN AMERICAN POLITICS

By

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Dedication

My mother's family emigrated from Italy in the 1910s and my great-grandfather earned a living as a sanitation worker picking up trash on the streets of New York City. The next generation did better, as my maternal grandmother worked in factories and my maternal grandfather worked in many different occupations before he eventually owned his own small business as a jeweler in his later years. My father and mother worked in various working class jobs as they tried to provide a better life for my brother, my sister, and me. My mother drove a school bus and my father worked as a skilled craftsman alongside my paternal grandfather, manufacturing rubber stamps and notary public embossers for decades at a small business called Ace Rubber Stamp in Newark, New Jersey. Neither of my parents enjoyed the privilege of graduating from an institution of higher learning, but through hard work, a few breaks, and a lot of dedication, they managed to buy that rubber stamp business when I was a kid. Today, my mother and father work alongside my brother as the entire staff of Anchor Rubber Stamp in Matawan, New Jersey. Before attending the University of Maryland for graduate school, I spent a year working at Anchor Rubber Stamp with my family. Running a small, family-run manufacturing business in this post-industrial economy is incredibly hard, stressful work. I stand in awe of the work that my parents and my brother do on a daily basis.

I am well aware of the privileges that I have enjoyed in order to attend good state universities for my undergraduate and graduate education. It is thanks in no small measure to the working class values of hard work and dedication to family that I stand at the precipice of a Ph.D. today. My sister, a sociologist at Southwest Missouri State

University, is also earning her Ph.D. in the fall of 2010. Neither one of us would be where we are now without the support of our family. This dissertation is the culmination of the multi-generational journey from a New York City sanitation worker to a Ph.D. at the University of Maryland. I dedicate this dissertation to my family, going back several generations, on whose shoulders I stand.

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There are several people who have played important roles in my ability to complete this dissertation. I became the person that I am today while I earned a Bachelor of Arts at Rutgers University from 1999 to 2003. I am especially grateful for the mentorship of Marc Weiner while I was a student at Rutgers. Marc was my instructor in several classes while he was completing his Ph.D. at Rutgers. His suggestion that I work for him as a grader of undergraduate exams after I graduated in 2003 was an especially formative professional experience for me. I learned an early lesson in pedagogy when I was entrusted with providing feedback for students' exams in his course on political parties. I doubt that I would be where I am today without his trust in my abilities. I also learned a valuable lesson in how long it takes to grade a stack of blue book exams—a lesson that I still seem to have forgotten each time I am confronted with a new batch.

Once I arrived at UMD in 2004, I was incredibly lucky to be placed under the capable guidance of several top-notch scholars. I had especially good fortune to work with Irwin Morris. Irwin is a great mentor who knows when to provide an encouraging word but also knows when to impose a deadline. Geoff Layman has made an indelible impact on my research and intellectual development. If not for his departure to Notre Dame (and my own deliberate speed in concluding this project), Geoff would have been a co-chair of this dissertation. Regardless of his official position on my committee, Geoff has always gone above and beyond in providing useful feedback at every stage of this project. I am very grateful to both Irwin and Geoff for their guidance.

Virtually the entire American politics faculty in the Department of Government and Politics at UMD has had a major impact on my professional development. Wayne

McIntosh provided several funding opportunities that got me through graduate school and sent me to ICPSR in Ann Arbor, Michigan in the summer of 2005. Jim Gimpel taught me how to be a social scientist as I produced the first publications of my career under his close supervision. Karen Kaufmann and Frances Lee kept me on my toes in their graduate seminars, and I mimic many of their teaching styles in my own classes today. Paul Herrnson has provided a fruitful co-authorship in recent years. To all of my teachers at UMD, I owe many, many thanks.

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I am also extremely grateful for the collegiality and friendship of several of my peers while I completed my graduate education at UMD. Mike Spivey, Mike Evans, Jesse-Douglas Mathewson, Kim Karnes, Becca Thorpe, and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz, among many others, were great sources of intellectual stimulation and commiseration through the years. Shanna in particular has been a source of great strength. I often refer to Shanna as my “professional life partner” and by that, I mean that she is one of my very best friends. Many, many thanks to Shanna for helping me make it this far.

My parents, my brother, Tommy, my sister-in-law, Prudence, my nephew, Evan, and my extended family have been central to my personal development. My parents fed

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Chapter 1: The Two Faces of White Working Class Politics: Introduction of Setting, Theory, and Research Design

1.1 *Setting the Stage: The Politics of Class since the New Deal*

"These unhappy times call for the building of plans that rest upon the forgotten, the unorganized but the indispensable units of economic power... that build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

- Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Forgotten Man" speech, April 7, 1932.

"It is the quiet voice in the tumult and the shouting. It is the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans: the non-shouters, the non-demonstrators. They are not racists or sick; they are not guilty of the crime that plagues the land... They are good people, they are decent people; they work and they save, and they pay their taxes, and they care... This I say to you tonight is the real voice of America."

- Richard Nixon, Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention, August 8, 1968.

"The poorer strata everywhere are more liberal or leftist on economic issues... But when liberalism is defined in non-economic terms... The more well-to-do are more liberal, the poorer are more intolerant."

- Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (1960, 92).

Those whom President Roosevelt identifies as the main actors in the struggle between the common person and the powerful interests is far different from President Nixon's view, but both narratives have left indelible marks on contemporary American politics. According to Roosevelt, "the forgotten man" must guard against being a victim of an economic order that allows the rich and powerful in the business classes to prey upon him. Nixon, on the other hand, sees a "forgotten majority" that must fight back against the pretentious, educated professional classes in the government, media and academia who look down upon them, and worse, would compromise the security of their neighborhoods and the sanctity of their values. Roosevelt's world is one in which there is

rampant economic exploitation at the hands of the business classes. Nixon's is one in which the professional classes poison the culture and perpetuate social disorder, all while blaming the average American.

In this dissertation, I examine the extent to which each of these visions of the political interests of the common American is evident in the political behavior of one group often associated with such rhetoric: the white working class. This is a topic that has received a lot of attention from academics, journalists, and political practitioners alike. The research question that motivates my project is: are the white working class more Democratic due to their economic position, or are they more Republican due to their values and cultural worldview? Prior to addressing that question, I first answer: why should we care about the political behavior of the white working class?

American government is at its core designed to protect the economic interests of property-owners from the threat of usurpation by the majority (see Beard 2004 [1913]). In *Federalist #10*, James Madison recognized that economic inequality is a great threat to the health of a republic. He writes, "The most common and durable source of factions has been the unequal distribution of property... A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views." It was taken as a given to the founders that conflict over economic interests would endure as an inevitable by-product of freedom; thus, "The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation."

Economic interpretations of history and much of sociological class analysis emphasize that the distribution of economic resources is the most fundamental factor in determining life opportunities and power in society. Political scientists have also long recognized the relationship between economic power and political power (see Dahl 1961; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 1995; APSA Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy 2004; Bartels 2008). From Madison's insight into the fundamental role that differences in economic interests play in fostering political instability, it is widely recognized that inequality of economic resources directly shapes inequality in political participation, and thus, inequality in the representation of those interests by elected officials (see Dahl 1961; Bartels 2008).¹ If, as Harold Lasswell famously articulated, politics is about "who gets what, when, and how," (1935), and if, according to James Madison, the first task of government is to adjudicate conflict between groups with different economic interests, then political science must always keep a keen eye trained on the extent to which different class groups understand their interests and translate them into support for different political agendas.

Bringing this broad justification for a study of class-based politics to the specific topic addressed in this project – the politics of the white working class – it is important to understand the threatened economic status of those towards the bottom and middle rungs of the economic ladder over the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Looking at the income distribution since 1947, "...the real incomes of families at the 20th percentile increased by less than \$15,000 over this period, while the

¹ The clearest example of how economic power translates into political power is the simple fact that those with resources are able to contribute to campaigns, and thus, influence policy (see Bartels 2008).

real incomes of families at the 95th percentile increased by almost \$130,000” (Bartels 2008, 7).² Income inequality has been expanding for decades, with Americans increasingly being pushed away from the middle and towards the poles of the income distribution. Since 1970, income inequality has rapidly grown (Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008), and along with it, income *instability* has risen (Hacker 2006). According to Jacob S. Hacker (2006), in 1970, an American family had a 7 percent chance of experiencing a 50 percent decline in their income in a given year. Today, the odds of such a decline have risen to 16 percent. Even those who are fortunate enough to avoid such a dramatic drop in income are likely to find that their wages have stagnated, or that they must work far more hours to keep up with their modest standard of living (Teixeira and Rogers 2000). Such economic insecurity jeopardizes retirement savings, family stability, and access to health care, all of which feeds back again to economic insecurity (Hacker 2006).

Of course, income is inextricably related to employment. From 1979 to 2005, the number of Americans who responded that they are “frequently concerned about being laid off” doubled to nearly 40 percent (Hacker 2006). Opportunities for those without a college education to find good jobs have declined precipitously. Unskilled and skilled manual labor –those occupations that traditionally define the working class – have declined as a proportion of available jobs in the ongoing shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy. From 1940 to 2006, the percentage of employed Americans working in the traditional blue-collar occupations fell from 36 percent to 23 percent (Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009). In addition to the decline of these occupations, the proportion of

² Based on Census data using 2006 real dollars.

Americans belonging to labor unions has plummeted from over one third of the labor force in the late 1940s to 12 percent in 2009, with more than half of those unionized in 2009 working in the public sector, not in manufacturing plants.³ Any way you slice it, the working class is slowly vanishing (also see Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009), and those who remain are struggling to survive.

Madison's argument that the fundamental role of government is to represent different economic interests in society seems especially relevant in today's climate of growing inequality, or what Larry Bartels calls, "The New Gilded Age" (2008). The translation of the interests of different class groups into electoral outcomes is one way to assess whether Madison's expectations for what would form the foundation of politics and government ring true in the twenty-first century. Like Madison and many others, the earliest studies of American voting behavior recognized the class basis of political competition. As the authors of *The American Voter* wrote of the electoral success of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, it was "unquestionably strongly economic in character... [and] criticized by its opposition for setting class against class" (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960, 156).

The extant literature is mixed as to whether the white working class has maintained its close ties with the Democratic Party in the years since, but the popular answer is that this relationship has frayed. Thomas Frank's *What's the Matter with Kansas?* (2004) is perhaps the best known effort to make sense of what many view as a paradox of inverted class voting: why would working class voters support the Republican Party when such an alliance seemingly contradicts their economic self-interest? Frank argues that the

³ Figures courtesy of Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Republican Party dupes the working class into joining its coalition based on its image as the party of traditional moral values, while it has simultaneously advanced policies that have negative effects on their economic standing; in the words of Thomas and Mary Edsall, the Republicans have built a “top-down” class coalition (1992). Republican advantages in recent national elections are in large part credited to the ability of the G.O.P. to direct working class whites’ frustration at the rapidly changing American culture rather than at the continually rising level of income inequality. For their part, according to Frank, the Democratic Party has ceded the economic agenda to the Republican Party by moving to the right on fiscal matters (see also Phillips 1990; Reed 2005), thus giving working class whites little reason to vote for Democrats.

Though Frank’s take on the politics of the white working class received a great deal of attention, he was neither the first nor the last to try to make sense of this group’s role in the collapse of the New Deal coalition. Previous literature noted the displacement of class as a central political cleavage due to the newly dominant racial cleavage that emerged following the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 (e.g., see Abramson 1974; Beck and Souraf 1992; Black and Black 1987; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Cowden 2001; Edsall and Edsall 1992; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989). *Race and the Decline of Class in American Politics* (Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989) is an indicative title in this tradition. This literature posits that racial animus, fear of crime and urban unrest (Hurwitz and Peffley 1997; Rieder 1985), and resentment against the perception that African-Americans were undeserving recipients of welfare benefits (e.g., Gilens 1999; Katz 1989) led working class whites to break with the Democratic Party. From a myriad of

professional and political perspectives, both academic and in applied politics--left and right--the premise that the white working class was trending firmly Republican was treated as a given (e.g., Phillips 1969; Ladd and Hadley 1975; Greenberg 1996; Teixeira and Rogers 2000; Douthat and Salam 2008).

Despite all of this accumulated conventional wisdom, recent accounts of the white working class paint a starkly different portrait of their political alignment. The most direct challenge to Thomas Frank's analysis of working class political behavior came from Larry Bartels (2006, 2008). Joining several other scholars (e.g., McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008; Nadeau et al. 2004; Stonecash 2000), Bartels dismissed the notion that the working class has defected to the Republican coalition, pointing to an increased income gap in presidential voting and party identification. Since the 1970s, the white electorate has seen a widening split between the increasingly Democratic voters in the lowest income third and Republican voters in the highest income third. These studies note that the income gap in political behavior corresponds with widening levels of income inequality over the same timeframe, thereby offering a parsimonious explanation based in the tradition of economic voting (see Downs 1957; Fiorina 1981; Key 1966): as economic inequality has risen, low-income voters have moved closer to the Democrats, while high-income voters increasingly support the Republicans.

The expectation that economic interests cleave the electorate, with those towards the top pitted against those towards the bottom, is nonetheless a narrow conception of the role of class in shaping political attitudes and interests. Political behavior is not merely determined by some automatic translation of economic self-interest into support for a

particular party or candidate (see Sears, Lau, Tyler, and Allen, Jr. 1980). Growing inequality and a shrinking working class occupational structure is far from the only relevant change to American society over the last century. Dramatic cultural and social changes have taken place simultaneously with growing inequality. Among the relevant social changes are the civil rights movements of African-Americans, women, and gays and lesbians, in addition to the growing Latino population and the issue of immigration. The formerly prosperous and culturally ascendant white working class has had to adjust to a new world in which women, African-Americans, and ethnic minorities compete with them for economic resources, civil equality, and multicultural parity.

In short, I shall argue that class position indeed influences the perception of economic interests, but it also has effects on a socialized cultural worldview. In the next section, I describe the context in which the white working class finds itself attracted to both the Democratic and Republican parties. Here, I contend that both parties try to gain their support with populist rhetoric. Next, I briefly introduce a theory that explains how class shapes attitudes towards both economic and cultural issues, focusing on occupation as the foundation of my analysis. I argue that experiences in the workplace influence both the attainment of economic resources and the socialization of values, namely, authoritarianism. Holding a working class occupation leads to less income, which works to the benefit of the Democratic Party, but it also increases authoritarianism, which works to the benefit of the Republican Party. Class directly shapes both economic and cultural interests; among white working class voters since the 1960s, I show that the Republican Party has disproportionately benefited from the cultural half of this equation.

My argument is unique in that the extant literature on this question tends to view the politics of the white working class as an either/or proposition. Either the white working class is primarily concerned with their pocketbook, or they suffer from an unenlightened sense of self-interest, dwelling on issues such as abortion, gay rights, and animus towards racial and ethnic minorities. I find that both of these perspectives have kernels of truth, but neither is comprehensive. Furthermore, the manner in which class leads to socially conservative issue preferences is rarely specified as a direct effect of class and instead tends to be either taken as a given or described as a mere correlate of class. Following an introduction of my theoretical perspective, I preview my research design, choice of data and methodology, and the findings of each of the subsequent chapters.

1.2 Populist Rhetoric, an Expanded Issue Agenda, and the Politics of Class

The politics of class and inequality is essentially the politics of power. Candidates for office tend to frame debate by pointing the finger at political foes and assigning blame for failing to advance the good of “the people,” however defined.⁴ The history of American political rhetoric is characterized by competing visions of who are the elite and corrupt, versus those who are the common and virtuous; in a word, it is characterized by populism (Kazin 1995). As historian Michael Kazin puts it, “...images of conflict between the powerful and the powerless have run through our civic life... The stout industrialist—top hat on his fleshy head and diamond stickpin gleaming from his silk tie—clashes with working men dressed in overalls... The federal bureaucrat,

⁴ “The people” tends to be defined as white working men throughout most of American history, or is at least “shaped in their image” (Kazin 1995, 2).

overeducated and amoral, scoffs at the God-fearing nuclear family in its modest home...” (1995, 1). Note that Kazin recognizes the use of populism as a style of argumentation used against both those with greater economic means (“the stout industrialist”) and those lacking traditional morality (the amoral, scoffing “federal bureaucrat”). Following this broad approach, he documents the use of populist rhetoric by those on the traditional economic left and those on the cultural right from the nineteenth century through the close of the twentieth century. Understanding that populist rhetoric is not solely a weapon of those on the economic left sheds some light on our research question. The politics of the white working class is best understood within a rhetorical context with both economic and cultural emphases. Some examples of this rhetoric are illustrative.

In his speech to accept his party’s nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago on July 2, 1932, Roosevelt drew sharp contrasts between “the favored few,” “corporate profit” and the interests of Wall St. with the “average man and woman,” “common sense citizens” and “the great mass of people.” He accused Republicans of ignoring starving men and women and railed against “the lack of honor of some men in high financial places.”⁵ As he ran for reelection in 1936, Roosevelt continued to speak out against “economic royalists,” “privileged princes of new economic dynasties” and charged that this moneyed “enemy within our gates” had “concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people’s property,” namely that of the “average man.”⁶

This narrative came to define the terms of the political debate in the decades following Roosevelt’s presidency; it pits the bottom of the economic ladder against the

⁵ See the text of the speech: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=75174>.

⁶ See: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15314>.

top, with FDR's Democratic Party representing the interests of the former and the Republican Party defending the interests of the latter. This frame served Democratic candidates well for many election cycles. Roosevelt's successor in the Oval Office, Harry S. Truman, predicted at the Democratic National Convention in 1948 that he would emerge victorious in his election because the Democratic Party is a "haven of the ordinary people" and "the people know that the Democratic Party is the people's party and the Republican Party is the party of special interest, and it always has been and always will be."⁷

By 1968, the identity of the two-party system had begun to transform. The issues bundled up with the civil rights movement, including race riots, urban decay, taxes and social welfare provision, and school integration, pitted the white working class part of the Democratic coalition against the new African American constituency that embraced the party (Edsall & Edsall 1992; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989; Carmines and Stimson 1989). In addition, issues associated with women's equality (e.g., abortion, equality in employment) and gay rights came to the fore with the counter-cultural and student movements of the 1960s. Accepting these "New Left" elements within the party meant that the image of the Democratic Party had shifted from that of the average working man to that of groups associated with rapid social and cultural upheaval – upheaval from a culture in which whites were clearly dominant.

As the newer set of issues took its place alongside the traditional economic issues that defined party competition and formed the basis of the parties' respective mass coalitions, Republicans grew more competitive with many groups of voters. The Civil

⁷ See: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12962>.

Rights movement severed the Solid South and many non-Southern whites from the Democratic Party; the women's and gay rights movements spurred a backlash that flourished into the Christian Right (see Wilcox 2000) and brought religious traditionalists from all denominational backgrounds into the Republican fold (see Layman 2001). If people form their political attachments by asking themselves, "What kinds of social groups come to mind as I think about Democrats, Republicans, and Independents? Which assemblage of groups (if any) best describes me?" (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002, 8), then the white working class was in effect left to choose between the typically white and male "stout industrialist" or the "federal bureaucrat" who seems to no longer look out for their best interests, and instead, serves the interests of other groups.

Reflecting this new political landscape, Democratic appeals shifted from references to the "people's party" to the ambitious goals of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society. These policies were no longer explicitly connected to the condition of the "average man" but rather focused on a war against poverty and campaigns for civil rights for unpopular social groups. Furthermore, the Vietnam War and the frightening domestic unrest so starkly apparent in a series of political assassinations and urban riots traumatized the country over the course of the preceding years. Out of such turmoil, a political opportunity emerged: the country was looking for order where chaos reigned.

With the shifting political winds came an inevitable shift in rhetoric. Richard Nixon captured the Republican nomination for president in 1968 and ran against the perceived failures of the Great Society. As part of his pitch to the American public, he redefined the "forgotten man" of Roosevelt's New Deal. No longer would the forgotten

man be contrasted with the privilege and wealth of Wall St.; rather, Nixon depicted a “forgotten majority” or a “Silent Majority” who were victims not of Wall St. but of Pennsylvania Avenue.⁸ It was those in government who were the privileged and powerful elite. It was the members of the national media and the intelligentsia – the educated, urbane and condescending elite -- who enabled the incompetent, overreaching government and cast Nixon’s forgotten majority as the beneficiaries of white skin privilege. Vice President Spiro Agnew, never one to shy away from a colorful putdown, cast the liberal cognoscenti of the time as “an effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals.”⁹ This meme caught on with future Republican politicians.

From Nixon’s defense of “the forgotten Americans, the non-shouters, the non-demonstrators” grew a rallying cry that helped usher in the Reagan era a decade later. Reinforcing the sense of cultural resentment that was given voice by Nixon and Agnew, Reagan tapped into the notion that the Democratic Party had forsaken the common good for the good of discrete special interests. He assailed his opponents’ vision, “Their government sees people only as members of groups; ours serves all the people of America as individuals.”¹⁰

In response, Democrats tried to redefine the terms of the debate. In 1984, Walter Mondale argued of Republicans, “They are a portrait of privilege; we are a mirror of America... What we have today is a government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich.” Later, in 1988, Michael Dukakis characterized the Republicans as the party of the

⁸ For a masterful account of Nixon’s political rebirth in 1968, and his ability to capitalize on the social unrest of the day, see Richard Perlstein’s *Nixonland*.

⁹ <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,839090,00.html>.

¹⁰ <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=40290>.

“privileged few.”¹¹ This line of attack – from both sides -- continues to this day. In 1992, Bill Clinton praised those who “work hard and play by the rules” and said that his Republican opponent “has raised taxes on the people driving pickup trucks and lowered taxes on the people riding in limousines.”¹² Eight years later, his vice president, Al Gore, delivered a convention speech imbued with Democratic populism, explaining the choice between the parties’ respective policies: “That’s the difference in this election. They’re for the powerful. We’re for the people.”¹³

1.3 Where Have You Gone, Joe Six-Pack? Locating the Politics of the White Working Class in Workplace Socialization, Authoritarianism, and Group Competition

The confusion within the academic literature on the question of where the white working class stands politically reflects this contested populism and the nuanced nature of class’s relationship to political behavior. Scholars see evidence of a white working class that responds to the economic pressure of a society with an increasingly endemic inequality of resources and claim that their relationship with the party of the New Deal is alive and well (Bartels 2006, 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008; Nadeau et al. 2004; Stonecash 2000). Others point to the salience of cultural and racial issues and recall the legacy of the Silent Majority, a new Republican majority brimming with Reagan Democrats (Frank 2004; Abramson 1974; Beck and Souraf 1992; Black and Black 1987; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Cowden 2001; Edsall and Edsall 1992; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989; Phillips 1969; Greenberg 1995; Teixeira and Rogers 2000; Douthat and

¹¹ <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25972>,
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25961>.

¹² <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25958>.

¹³ <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25963>.

Salam 2008). With such colorfully populist rhetoric coming from both sides of the partisan divide, it is no wonder that confusion might reign over what are the actual political loyalties of the white working class. That such disagreement exists is at least circumstantial evidence that perhaps both sides of the debate have a point. The question is: can both sides be partially right, and if so, how?

Studies that find a strong connection between the white working class and the Democratic Party invariably use income as a proxy for class. While this seems a plausible enough indicator on its face, there are several problems with this approach. One overarching reason why income is a poor measure of class is that economic voting -- and income's effect on political behavior generally -- is contextual (see Kinder and Kiewiet 1981; Fiorina 1981; Manza and Brooks 1999; Gelman et al. 2008), but household income is never contextualized when used as a proxy for class. There is an abundance of evidence that income shapes economic policy preferences (see Bartels 2006, 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008; Nadeau et al. 2004; Stonecash 2000), but relatively little evidence that it has an effect on attitudes towards cultural issues such as abortion or gay rights.¹⁴ Thus, using income as a proxy for class --with lower income standing in for "working class"-- leads to the conclusion that the white working class is economically liberal and pro-Democratic. Theoretically, that is all that such a definition *can* tell us.

On the other hand, accounts of the white working class that find a pro-Republican constituency invariably use the attainment of a college degree as a proxy for class; this approach is also imperfect. Education is an insufficient proxy for class for the main

¹⁴ The exception being that Gelman et al. (2008) argue that higher income voters attach greater salience to the culture wars than lower income voters.

reason that it is potentially spurious. For one, education is used as an explanatory variable for a number of concepts, including cognition, participation and political engagement, political knowledge and tolerance of out-groups (see Nie, Junn, Stehlik-Barry 1996). Thus, when we include measures of education in our models, we capture a myriad of education's effects, not just its class effects. Indeed, entire bodies of literature are based on understanding the nexus between education and democratic citizenship (Verba, Schlozman Brady 1995; Nie, Junn, Stehlik-Barry 1996) and separate bodies of literature investigate the connection between education and work (see Bills 2004). I am unable to find any scientific study that is based on the premise that a college education is a suitable indicator of class. To put it tautologically, education is *education*; Class is *work*. Try as some in graduate school might, getting an education is not the same thing as having a job. They are related concepts, but they are not identical.

While I argue that income and education are both flawed, there is of course another available indicator that most directly measures class: occupation. Somewhat mysteriously, political scientists neglect to include measures of occupation in models of political behavior even as their colleagues in sociology routinely construct models with separate measures for income, education and occupation. One sociological study on the effect of income on voting takes care to note (Manza and Brooks 1997, 1349):

“To ensure that the political effects of household income are not the product of a more fundamental socioeconomic cleavage, we also include a number of statistical controls in the model. The most important of these controls is social class, which, if ignored, makes it impossible to test for a spurious association between income and vote choice. The inclusion of income also allows us to address the substantive question of whether income and class voting represent separate types of partisan cleavage.”

In sociology it is uncontroversial that income and occupation do not measure the same underlying construct, nor do education and occupation. At least in some elections, occupation and income both have independent, significant effects on vote choice (see, e.g., Brooks and Brady 1999).

Identifying an individual's location in the class structure is ultimately an exercise in finding their place in that structure relative to other individuals. Class is inherently relative. "The premise behind the idea of social relations is that when people go about their lives in the world, when they make choices and act in various ways, their actions are systematically structured by their relations to other people who are also making choices and acting" (Wright 2005, 14). This becomes socially structured in the workplace where members of different classes interact with each other in hierarchical organizations of labor and market exchanges. Put simply, these processes uniquely occur in the context of one's occupation.

The socializing effects of class as experienced in the workplace are not taken into account in existing studies of the political behavior of the white working class, which is surprising given the rich literature on political socialization (see, e.g., Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003). This literature points to local social contexts as key to the socialization of political preferences, summarized in three points by Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995, 18-20): (1) citizens value information that is provided inexpensively, (2) the supply of political information is biased at its source and individuals are limited in their control over these sources, and (3) individuals are rewarded or punished based on the degree to which their preferences align with those whom they encounter in their daily lives. Individuals'

political attitudes are determined in part by their interaction with their environment. In recent literature on the political behavior of the white working class, however, socialization in the class structure is ignored as a relevant factor in favor of a parsimonious pocketbook voting explanation or a vague and under-theorized description of the white working class as socially conservative.

In thinking about how those in the white working class come to view their political interests, first we have to recognize that those in working class occupations are more likely to earn less income and have greater economic insecurity than those in non-working class occupations. Furthermore, their relationship to other classes through socialization on the job also shapes their outlook on economic issues. Those in working class occupations are more likely to view their place in the class structure as one of holding less power than those in other occupations. As a result, they should view their economic interests as distinct from those in other occupations and support politicians who speak to their comparatively weaker position in the economic order. This outlook is likely to be reinforced in the workplace (see Finifter 1974). However, a strictly economic conception of class is not the only relevant manner in which class interests are understood.

In politics, values matter as well. The once-dormant but recently prolific literature on authoritarianism (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009) is one source to consider in thinking about connections between class and values. Authoritarianism is a concept with a long history in social science, with early studies treating the concept as a personality disorder or maladjusted psychological disposition (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950). More recent work treats it as a cognitive style in which those with high levels of

authoritarianism tend to view the world in black and white, perceive a fragile social order, prefer order over ambiguity, and privilege conformity over non-conformity (Altmeyer 1996; Hetherington and Weiler 2009). As a result of their inclination to value conformity and protect established social norms (Feldman 2003), authoritarians are more likely to look unfavorably upon out-groups who they see as violating social conventions and mores (Stenner 2005). For whites, this leads to negative feelings towards any number of minority groups, including Jews (Adorno et al. 1950), African Americans (Piazza and Sniderman 1993), gays and lesbians (Barker and Tinnick 2006), immigrants (Hetherington and Weiler 2009), Arabs (Huddy et al. 2005), and Muslims (Kalkan, Layman and Uslaner 2009). An orientation that values conformity to the established social order seems especially relevant given the content of political debate over the last forty to fifty years—a debate in which Nixon successfully argued in 1968, “Our first commitment as a nation in this time of crisis and questioning must be a commitment to order.”¹⁵

The relevance of authoritarianism to a study of the working class in particular dates back to Seymour Martin Lipset’s theory of working class authoritarianism, in which he argued “the lower class way of life produces individuals with rigid and intolerant approaches to politics” (1959, 89). Lipset was careful to distinguish class effects on authoritarianism as opposed to education effects, noting “Noneconomic liberalism is not a simple matter of acquiring education and information; it is at least in part a basic attitude which is actively discouraged by the social situation of lower-status persons” (1959, 103). There is also a literature that deals with the question of class effects on

¹⁵ *Nixonland*, p. 241.

personality, values, and a preference for conformity (Kohn 1977; Kohn and Schooler 1983; Parcel and Menaghan 1994). This research finds that middle and upper class parents value self-direction in their children while working class parents value conformity and obedience to external authority.

The broad theory here is that class socializes values, and that values in turn influence attitudes and behavior, including political behavior. Class influences values in that “[m]embers of different social classes, by virtue of enjoying (or suffering) different conditions of life, come to see the world differently – to develop different conceptions of social reality, different aspirations and hopes and fears, different ‘conceptions of the desirable’” (Kohn 1977, 7). Working class individuals find conformity to externally imposed rules desirable while upper and middle class individuals find self-directedness desirable because “The essence of higher class position is the expectation that one’s decisions and actions can be consequential; the essence of lower class position is the belief that one is at the mercy of forces beyond one’s control...” (Kohn 1977, 189).

The set of on-the-job realities experienced during one’s workday therefore socializes individuals to project those realities onto other aspects of life. If an individual is able to get by through self-directedness, then such an orientation is seen as valuable for their children. The converse is true of conformity to authority. When one exercises self-direction at work, one values self-direction in their children. Thus, we should not expect authoritarians to be randomly distributed among the population; instead, I argue that authoritarianism is a socialized worldview in which class plays an important role.

This theory shares common ground with Wildavsky’s work on political culture and social theory (1998). Wildavsky utilized “grid-group” theory (Douglas 1982), which

stipulates that cultural biases are aligned along two dimensions of society: the group and the grid. An individual with a low score on the group dimension socializes in multiple different groups with porous boundaries for group membership, whereas one with a high group score spends most of his time in one group, with strong boundaries separating group members and outsiders. On the grid axis, the high end indicates explicit and institutionalized classifications that separate individuals and regulate their interactions, such as male and female, or youth and elder (Douglas 1982; Wildavsky 1998). Lower scores on the grid dimension imply greater agency on an individual basis in negotiating relationships with others. The description of authoritarianism is similar in many respects to that of “hierarchs” in grid-group theory, as hierarchs are characterized by strong group boundaries and highly institutionalized, rigid social interactions. Wildavsky’s conception of a hierarchical political culture is another way of thinking about the political worldview that results from authoritarianism and the role of group dynamics in shaping individual behavior.

The role of group competition in structuring political behavior is indeed a key to understanding the politics of the white working class. Generally, identification with social groups underlies the foundation of political scientists’ understanding of partisan identification, and consequently, political behavior (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Furthermore, ethnocentrism as a key feature of authoritarianism is a “bedrock finding” of this literature (Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 46; see also Duckitt 1989); thus, if the white working class is relatively more authoritarian, then it follows that they are also more likely to exhibit ethnocentrism. Additional theoretical support comes from an established literature that identifies

intergroup hostility as the product of competition between dominant and subordinate groups, particularly when subordinate groups challenge the economic and cultural superiority of a dominant group (see Blumer 1958; Bobo 1999; Bobo and Hutchings 1996; Kaufmann 2002).

The nexus where the theory of authoritarianism meets theories of group position is key. Group position theories predict "...beliefs of in-group superiority, perceptions of out-group distinctiveness, an assumption of proprietary claim on important in-group privileges such as power and material wealth, and a challenge from subordinate groups for greater control of those valued resources..." (Kaufmann 2002, 287). Meanwhile, authoritarianism, closely related to ethnocentrism, is activated under conditions of threat (Stenner 2005). Given the economic plight of the white working class in recent decades, the *relative* ground that has been gained by racial, ethnic, and other cultural minorities over this same period of time, and the tendency of rhetoric from politicians to contrast the status of whites with other groups, group position theory seems a particularly apt framework within which to understand Republican gains among the white working class.¹⁶ The white working class is threatened by the emerging parity of other groups in society, which is conditioned by elite rhetoric and sustained over the course of several decades.

Taken together, my approach considers many theoretical traditions in the study of political behavior, yet I focus on authoritarianism as the lynchpin of understanding the

¹⁶ Though direct appeals to white racial interests are increasingly uncommon, they are nonetheless not the exclusive stock in trade of the Republican Party. Hillary Clinton famously justified her continuing presence in 2008 Democratic primary, "Senator Obama's support among working, hard-working Americans, white Americans, is weakening again."

cultural outlook of the white working class. The relevant socio-political context from my perspective is one in which the ranks of the working class are shrinking, income inequality is growing, a number of formerly subordinate groups seem to be improving their respective lots in life, and politicians from each side of the aisle prime the economic and cultural ramifications of these social changes. Class effects should be evident in shaping opinion on both economic and cultural issues, as class directly influences both economic standing and social values. In order to rigorously investigate these expectations, the next section describes my research design and data sources.

1.4. Scope of Analysis: Why Study Only Whites?

Perhaps the most consequential decision for my research design is that I choose to limit the scope of my study to white Americans. One might reasonably question why I should look at only the white working class and not a more broad study of the entire working class, including African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, and other racial and ethnic groups. For one, it is common in studies of American political behavior to distinguish between racial groups for the very reasons reviewed above: race remains a key factor dividing the parties' respective bases, with the realignment of African Americans into the Democratic Party in the 1960s as one of the most important political developments in the last fifty years (see Carmines and Stimson 1989). Clearly, political candidates, operatives, the media, and the public itself view racial and class differences as relevant factors shaping distinct attitudes and interests. Furthermore, class does not have uniform effects on all segments of the population. For example, scholars point to "Black class exceptionalism" as an explanation for why gains in economic standing tend to make

African Americans more economically liberal, and increasing class status reinforces black racial solidarity (see Hajnal 2007). Quite simply put, when it comes to public opinion and political behavior more generally, “Class works differently for African Americans than for whites” (Hajnal 2007, 560). To examine the working class without regard for race would ignore the very real social and political differences between blacks and whites.

A similar case may be made for separating whites from Latinos in a study of political behavior. A large and growing literature is dedicated to understanding the integration of Latino-Americans into American society and its political institutions, including the two major political parties (see Leighley 2001; Wong 2006). Indeed, the very existence of a distinct literature devoted to the political behavior of Latinos on one hand, and the white working class on another hand, attests to the common understanding that these are unique and politically relevant constituencies worthy of separate theorizing and empirical analysis. As I argue later in this dissertation, immigration is a quintessential issue that touches upon white economic and cultural anxiety, both of which are influenced by class, providing one example of where the interests of the white working class and their Latino peers part ways.

In sum, then, race and ethnicity are very much relevant to this study inasmuch as I expect white attitudes towards out-groups to vary by class. However, there are sound theoretical reasons and a great deal of support in the extant literature for a separate examination of groups based on both race and class. To combine these distinct populations into one class grouping would require far more theoretical and empirical analysis than the scope of this project allows.

1.5. Introduction to Research Design and Data

My study of the political behavior of the white working class relies on the American National Election Studies (ANES) surveys from 1952-2004.¹⁷ The advantages of using the ANES are that it is a well-established source of survey data that is familiar to a wide range of scholars and it allows for easy replication. The surveys from 1952 through 1988 are used solely to provide a descriptive overview of the voting behavior of the white working class over time, whereas later surveys are used to construct more sophisticated quantitative modeling.

For multiple regression models, I utilize ANES surveys from 1992, 2000, and 2004. The analysis is restricted to these years because they are the only surveys in which authoritarianism is measured according to the conventions employed by previous research (Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Barker and Tinnick 2006) and important control variables, such as religious practices and beliefs, are all available. The three years of data are pooled together, thus boosting the number of observations and providing a broad overview of the relationship between class and political behavior in contemporary American politics. In addition to running Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression models, I estimate direct, indirect, and total effects of class in a path model by calculating these effects by hand. In models predicting the two-party share of the vote for each presidential candidate, I use logistic regression models.

¹⁷ The 2008 NES is not yet included in the analysis because occupational codes were not initially released. As a result, class could not be adequately measured using the 2008 survey under the time constraints of completing the requirements for a doctorate degree. 2008 data will be added at a later stage of the project. 1996 is excluded because that survey does not include the appropriate measures of authoritarianism.

Although my reliance on data from 1992 through 2004 provides multiple years of data to examine my research questions, the major drawback is that I cannot empirically test the relationship between class, authoritarianism, and political behavior in earlier years. However, I shall argue that there is a fundamental relationship between class and authoritarianism—a relationship for which I uncover evidence in the 1992-2004 era and have no reason to doubt its prior existence--and that this relationship is one likely cause of the movement of the white working class from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party that I observe in the overtime descriptive data from 1952 through 1988. Although my argument that class operates through authoritarianism to increase Republican voting among the white working class is indeed supported in later surveys, it is important to acknowledge that my argument is limited to the realm of circumstantial evidence with regard to the years before 1992.

1.6. Chapter Outline and Preview of Findings

Chapter 2 picks up where this introduction leaves off, providing much more depth and breadth in support of the theoretical approach previewed above. I review literature on class and politics, mostly from the field of sociology, to support my claim that occupation is central to defining and understanding the effect of class on political behavior. I go on to connect occupation to economic outcomes, such as income, and socialized values, such as authoritarianism, in a path model that sets up the empirical analyses in the chapters to follow. My review of authoritarianism narrows my understanding of the concept from some of the older studies of authoritarianism, thereby

reducing the scope of my interpretation of findings to something decidedly more parsimonious. Building on Hetherington and Weiler (2009), I understand authoritarianism to be a worldview that values order and conformity, whereas non-authoritarians value fairness towards minorities and curiosity. I couch all of my expectations for how class influences political attitudes within a group position framework that places the white working class at the bottom of the dominant racial group, with racial, ethnic, and culture minorities portrayed as the subordinate groups challenging their place of economic and cultural superiority in American society.

Based on a full presentation of my theory, I review the most common approaches to measuring the white working class and argue for a model that focuses on occupation. This approach reveals a substantial disagreement between various interpretations of the political behavior of the white working class since 1952, with an income-based measure showing a much more pro-Democratic constituency than either an occupation- or education-based measure. I conclude that, while the Democrats are still competitive with white working class voters, the Republican Party has clearly made substantial inroads and now counts this group among its base of support.

In Chapter 3, I introduce the first set of empirical models based on the theoretical path model presented in Chapter 2. I find that working class occupations lead to lower income, but also to increased levels of authoritarianism. The effect of holding a working class occupation in fact has a stronger effect on authoritarianism than it does for income, which is an important factor explaining the apparent shift of the white working class to the Republican Party in the decades since the social upheaval of the 1960s. Class effects lead to Democratic support through lower income, but the stronger effect of class on

authoritarianism counteracts this effect and pushes the white working class to the G.O.P. This chapter provides preliminary support for the theory laid out in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 4, I dig deeper into the findings of Chapter 3 and extend the implications of my theory to a separate literature in American political behavior, arguing that class dynamics help explain the gender gap in which men are disproportionately Republican, and women are relatively more Democratic (see Cook and Wilcox 1995; Manza and Brooks 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002, 2006; Norrander and Wilcox 2008; Kellstedt, Peterson, and Ramirez 2010). Because those occupations that comprise the working class are overwhelmingly male, the observed shift of white men to the Republican Party in 1980s is partially the result of class dynamics. Since men are both more likely to hold a working class occupation, and are more likely to exhibit higher levels of authoritarianism than women, women have remained more loyal to the Democratic Party than men. In effect, white working class men abandoned the party that would place them in a coalition with women and minorities and instead joined political forces with a party that traditionally appealed to white men of a higher class position. The findings of this chapter lend additional support for framing the politics of the white working class in group position theory; not only are the white working class a threatened segment of the dominant racial group, but men are a particularly threatened subset of this population (see Kaufmann 2002).

I extend the findings of Chapter 4 to a preliminary look at some of the issues that connect the white working class--particularly the men--to the Republican Party as I move to Chapter 5. Having found a gender cleavage within and between the working class and the non-working class, I assess the relative salience of a number of issues to the political

behavior of men and women in each class category: immigration, social welfare spending, issues that touch upon race relations (e.g., affirmative action, the death penalty, government aid to blacks), defense spending, gay and lesbian rights, and abortion. I find that the white working class is especially opposed to increased levels of immigration and is less supportive of gay and lesbian rights than other whites. However, differences in opinion on social welfare spending, defense spending, abortion, and racial issues are far more muted. These findings provide further support for the notion that authoritarianism is a key factor shaping the politics of the white working class, as immigration and gay and lesbian rights are heavily shaped by the authoritarian worldview.

I conclude my empirical analyses in Chapter 6 by incorporating a number of competing values and group affect measures into a comprehensive model of political behavior. Group affect measures, including feelings towards labor unions, big business, Latinos, blacks, Asians, gay men and lesbians, feminists, Christian fundamentalists, and identification with the working class are examined. Value orientations, such as racism (both traditional and symbolic), egalitarianism, preferences for limited government, and a competing measure of moral traditionalism are also taken into account. I find that the white working class is far more likely to identify as “working class” than those in other occupations, but that this difference is of limited political consequence. The biggest class differences in group affect are between working class men and non-working class women towards gays and lesbians, with working class men demonstrating the coolest feelings. When it comes to values, there is little evidence of greater racism on the part of the white working class, nor is there evidence of greater moral traditionalism. This last finding shows that it is specifically authoritarianism that leads to greater cultural traditionalism

among the white working class rather than other conceptualizations of traditional beliefs. I also find that the white working class is less egalitarian and more eager for the government to play an active role in their lives than those outside of the working class.

Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the implications of my research for understanding the politics of class generally, the specific political behavior of the white working class, and my sense of what all of this means for the future of American politics. While the Republican Party has successfully peeled off a large segment of the white working class from the Democratic coalition, future population trends suggest that this may be a hollow political victory moving forward. Should the Republican Party struggle to assemble a coalition of working class whites with ethnic and racial minorities, the ever-shrinking white working class may serve as a burdensome component of the Republican base. The Democrats, on the other hand, may increasingly find it necessary and politically beneficial to distance themselves from the authoritarian elements within the white working class as they seek the support of Latinos, African-Americans, and non-working class whites.

Chapter 2: Beyond Income: How Class Shapes Values, or, Why the White Working Class Left the Democratic Party

In this chapter, I elaborate upon my argument that occupation is a necessary starting point for theorizing the political effects of class. Conventional approaches within political science favor income as a proxy for class, whereas political journalists and other authors prefer educational attainment as a measure of class. I argue that income and education are relevant, but occupation is central to understanding class. The manner in which class is measured has important consequences for how we assess the political behavior of the white working class. Thus, my discussion of measurement and theory are intertwined; one cannot derive a measure of class and a model of class effects on political behavior without a theory of what class is and why it is relevant to politics. This chapter picks up the central research question introduced in the previous chapter: are the white working class more Democratic due to their economic position, or are they more Republican due to white racial grievances and a more traditional cultural outlook?

The existing evidence on this question is decidedly mixed. Many political journalists and scholars wonder whether and why the white working class left the New Deal-coalition that formerly defined the Democratic Party (Frank 2004; Teixeira and Rogers 2000; Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009; Douthat and Salam 2008; Brady, Sosnaud and Frenk 2009; Huckfeldt and Kohfield 1989; Leege, Wald, Krueger and Mueller 2002; Edsall and Edsall 1992), while others argue that the white working class is in fact increasingly loyal to the Democratic party (Stonecash 2000; Brewer and Stonecash 2007; McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal 2008; Bartels 2006, 2008). The reason for this discrepancy is largely a matter of theorizing what class is and why it is relevant to

political behavior. Another reason is a lack of focus on the interaction between how class shapes political attitudes and how American society has quite radically shifted from one of overwhelming white, male dominance to one that allows for greater representation women and minorities.

Class shapes both economic standing and values. One value orientation that class socializes is authoritarianism. Some of the most frequently cited characteristics of authoritarianism are ethnocentrism, aversion to disorder, and intolerance of non-conformity and non-conformists. As one of the more economically vulnerable segments of the dominant racial group, the white working class is likely to be especially susceptible to political appeals based in cultural differences and group threat dynamics. This expectation is especially relevant in a context in which one party represents the political interests of racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities and the other serves as the opposition to that party, instead representing white backlash and traditional social order. As a result of all of these moving parts, the white working class is not exclusively bound to either party, though they are growing increasingly Republican. On economic grounds, the Democratic Party still has something important to offer. On cultural issues, the Republican Party gives voice to the threatened status of this shrinking and an increasingly culturally marginalized group.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. First, I review the literature on the political behavior of the white working class and identify two areas with room for improvement: (1) the inconsistent and theoretically underdeveloped measurements of class, and (2) the unopened “black box” of a socially conservative working class. On the first point, I argue for a definition of the working class that emphasizes occupation and

sets aside educational attainment and income as distinct but related concepts for analysis. On the second point, I contend that political analysts often suppose that the white working class is particularly culturally traditionalist, but that such conclusions are rarely specified as class effects per se. Does class cause a traditional cultural outlook, or do the two merely correlate?

To address this critique and improve upon the extant literature, I turn to research on the role of authoritarianism in structuring political attitudes and behavior in American politics (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009). I argue that Lipset (1959; see also Grubb 1979) was correct when he proposed that authoritarian attitudes are more prevalent among the working class. I show that this leads to a divided working class that is caught between conflicting pressures in a political system in which one party represents their social values and another their economic concerns.

2.1. Theory and Measurement of Working Class

Have white working class voters exited the Democratic Party in droves over racial and cultural issues, or are they increasingly alienated from a Republican Party that is perceived to place the interests of big business ahead of the well-being of ordinary workers? The answers to these questions depend largely on how we define the white working class. The dominant conventions in the literature to assign class position are to use either the educational attainment or the income level of an individual. Both of these approaches have their drawbacks.

Studies that find a strong connection between the white working class and the Democratic Party tend to use income as a proxy for class. However, this is inappropriate

because a great deal of research suggests that straightforward “pocketbook voting” is often mediated by other considerations in the minds of voters. Examples of widely known findings on the contextual nature of economic voting include the distinction between pocketbook and sociotropic voting (Kinder and Kiewiet 1981), retrospective versus prospective economic evaluations (Fiorina 1981) and income polarization in poor states versus a muted income cleavage in rich states (Gelman et al. 2008). Furthermore, a household income in a more sparsely populated or suburban community buys a lot more than an identical household income in a more urban location; household income tells us nothing about the cost of living where the household exists. A teacher’s salary, for example, can get someone a middle class lifestyle in rural America but in a large city, it may barely pay the rent.

Another shortcoming of focusing exclusively on how much money an individual has is that it ignores how they earned the money in the first place. How people earn their money is of primary interest because it is directly related to how much money they have; in fact, occupation is a much stronger predictor of permanent income than an individual’s current income at any given snapshot in time (Hauser and Warren 1997). As Manza and Brooks put it, “The part-time school teacher, the semi-skilled factory worker, the college student working part-time as a computer programmer, and the self-employed artist might all report the same income on their tax returns. But as salaried, hourly, or self-employed they have different sources of income... and ultimately very different life chances” (1999, 56).

How people earn their money – their occupation -- is the most common approach to class analysis, particularly in sociology, and is perhaps the most important contextual

variable to interpreting income as a class effect (see Hout 2008). The idea here is that how people earn their money tends to produce shared interests among one group of people vis-à-vis others, and has a homogenizing effect on how different groups perceive their interests through socialization in the workplace. Thus, holding one job rather than another produces both objectively distinct interests and subjective perceptions of those interests. A measure of income without any context for how the income is made thus ignores important socialization that occurs in the workplace, where individuals spend most of their waking hours and are daily confronted with how they fit into the economic order relative to others.

Beyond these examples of the contextual nature of income's influence on political evaluations, purchasing power, and socialization, a major reason why income is an inadequate measure of class pertains specifically to a critique of using the lowest third of the income distribution as a proxy for working class, as is common in political science (Bartels 2006, 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008; Nadeau et al. 2004; Stonecash 2000). Consider what this definition means for who is identified as working class if we analyze a 2004 survey from the American National Election Studies (NES). In 2004, whites in the lowest income third earned less than \$35,000, and such a demarcation has been treated interchangeably with working class status (Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008). The problem with treating the two as synonymous is that it includes a number of individuals who are unemployed or under-employed and thus cannot fall into a meaningful definition of the working class. If the term "working class" is to mean anything, it must at least require that those included in the definition be *working*.

Further, the bottom income third contains some working class, but also elderly who subsist on fixed incomes, students, the disabled, part-time workers, recipients of welfare aid, and some citizens who are utterly impoverished. Assuming that class can be captured simply with a snapshot of household income, \$35,000 and below cannot be considered enough income to qualify as working class. In 2000, the official poverty line was \$17,600. One sociology textbook that aligns income levels with class status fix the “working poor” at a median income of roughly 125% of the poverty line, which was \$22,000 in the year 2000 (Gilbert 2003). Viewed in this way, nearly 25% of households in 2000 were at or beneath 125% of the poverty line, representing a majority of those individuals currently classified as working class in the extant literature (Gilbert 2003). That whites living in poverty still support the Democratic Party more than the Republican Party, which is the central finding of literature claiming that the white working class is strongly Democratic, is certainly an important finding in its own right. That whites living in poverty are thought of as synonymous with those in the working class, however, represents quite a departure from mainstream class analysis (see Gilbert 2003).

If income is inadequate as a proxy for class, then what should we make of research that equates class with holding a college degree? When the white working class is defined as those without a college education, they are invariably portrayed as throwing the bulk of their support to the Republican Party (e.g., Frank 2004), a stark contrast with the literature using income discussed above. As I argued in Chapter 1, education is an insufficient proxy for class for the main reason that it is potentially spurious, but it also surely overestimates the size of the working class population. Whereas a definition of the white working class based on the income distribution fixes the population at about 33

percent over time, the widespread attainment of a college degree is a fairly new phenomenon in American society; using the ANES surveys from 1952-2004, the size of the white working class would fall from 94 percent of all whites in 1952 to 67 percent of all whites in 2004. Using manual skilled and semi-skilled/unskilled occupations as a method for identifying the white working class, the population falls from 26 percent to 14 percent of whites over this time. So, in 1952, the white working class was anywhere from 26 percent to 9 percent of the white population, and in 2004, it ranges anywhere from 14 percent to 67 percent. These figures largely mirror those of the census and Current Population Survey estimates (see Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009). Intuitively, it makes little sense to think of the white working class as ever being as large as an education-based approach would suggest.

Both income and education tell us something about class dynamics, but neither is a sufficient measure in and of itself. Surely, a college education is for many occupations a gatekeeper that allows in only those with demonstrated proficiency at certain skill sets. Education provides credentials that allow entrance into occupations: a lawyer cannot practice law without a law degree and a political scientist cannot get tenure without a Ph.D. A college education also predicts greater income and job security over the course of a lifetime (see Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009), though the correlation between education and income is weaker than many suppose.¹⁸ Education also serves as a

¹⁸ Some studies take the approach that income, education and occupation can all be scaled together to capture socio-economic status (see Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009). However, using a pooled sample from the NES 1992, 2000 and 2004 surveys, income and education are correlated at .36, income and holding a skilled or unskilled manual occupation are correlated at only .14, and education is correlated with skilled and unskilled occupations at .40. While two of these are moderately correlated, the three indicators are hardly equivalent.

predictor of employment, particularly in a time of economic downturn in a post-industrial economy.¹⁹

As I noted in Chapter 1, occupation is a common indicator of class in the field of sociology, but tends to be ignored in models of political behavior constructed by political scientists. This omission persists despite evidence that occupation exerts an independent effect on presidential vote choice even after controlling for income and education (see Brooks and Brady 1999). Class is more than just a number on a pay stub or a set of credentials: it is a socially constructed and regularly reinforced power structure in which citizens spend a good deal of their daily lives. Again, to ignore occupation is to ignore the socializing effects of class. How does one's occupation socialize political attitudes and interests? One such feature of the occupational structure is variation in the amount of authority that workers exercise from one job to another.

“Relations of authority” is a term that refers to this power structure, say between owner and employee, or between manager and worker (see Wright 2005; Breen 2005). An owner and an employee are members of different classes because an employer holds authority over an employee, as does a manager over a worker. Those who are self-employed are distinct from those who are employees due to their differing levels of power in the workplace. Further distinctions are drawn between those who hold a particular set of creative or educational credentials from those who are a source of labor, and those who are salaried employees (and thus presumably hold more of their

¹⁹ Through the summer of 2010, the percentage of Americans over 25 years of age with a bachelor's degrees who were unemployed hovered around 5%, whereas unemployment grew linearly by amount of education to an unemployment rate of about 13% for those with less than a high school diploma. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t04.htm>.

employers' trust) versus those who are wage earners (see Manza and Brooks 1997). These skills, resources and their varying levels of prestige distinguish one person from another in the hierarchy of any workplace, and in the labor market writ large, both reflecting and creating relations of authority.

The site of production is essential to understanding the formation of classes because it links these relations of authority to the division of labor in a socially institutionalized context that individuals experience in their day-to-day lives (Grusky 2005). This idea rests in part on the theory articulated in Durkheim's *The Division of Labor in Society* (1960 [1893]), in which he argues that experiences in the occupational setting shape individuals' values, lifestyles, and economic opportunities. Members of the same occupation are thought to share a sense of solidarity and experience "homogeneous conditions of existence" (Durkheim 1984, 101; see Grusky 2005, 56-9). The political ramifications of class are then the consequence of the translation of shared workplace experiences into a set of outside-the-job realities that produce a common set of interests and attitudes.

"Homogeneous conditions of existence" refers to many aspects of social and economic life that are related to class. When sociologists speak of "life chances," they refer to "the chances an individual has for sharing in the socially created economic or cultural 'goods' that typically exist in any given society" (Giddens 1973, 130-1). Weber (1978 [1922], 302) explains, "a class situation is one in which there is a shared typical probability of procuring goods, gaining a position in life, and finding inner satisfaction." That is, a class position simply consists of people with common life experiences and opportunities. In empirical research, life chances are typically operationalized as income;

that is, occupation is understood to appear causally prior to income. One does not typically draw a paycheck in the absence of having a job.

In sociology, there is widespread consensus that the theory of class is best operationalized in empirical research at the unit of analysis of an individual's occupation (see, e.g., Chan and Goldthorpe 2007; Shavit and Muller 1998; Breen 2004, 2005; Wright 2005; Blossfeld et al. 2006; Erikson et al. 1979; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992). Why political scientists ignore this consensus remains a mystery, as there clearly is the potential for economic and cultural interests to derive directly from one's experience in the occupational structure. The question remains: what difference does it make if we identify the working class with income, education, or occupation?

2.2. An Occupation-Based Definition of the Working Class

I define the white working class as all whites in skilled and unskilled/semi-skilled manual labor occupations that work full time and are not self-employed.²⁰ This approach follows Brady, Sosnaud, and Frenk (2009), which is based on modern class analysis that distinguishes classes according to relations of authority and levels of supervision on the job and whether the worker in question is self-employed (Aminzade 1993; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1993; Evans 1992, 1999; Weeden and Grusky 2005; Wright 1997, 2005; Manza and Brooks 1999). Following Manza and Brooks (1999), respondents are first separated into seven occupational categories: professionals (e.g., teachers, scientists, writers, lawyers, doctors); managers and administrators (all non-retail sales managers);

²⁰ In 1992, the census occupation codes are as follows. Skilled: 35, 44-51, 53. Unskilled: 30, 36, 38, 42-3, 52, 54, 56-65, 67-70. In 2000 and 2004, they are: Skilled: 35, 44-51, 53, 55. Unskilled: 30, 36, 38, 42-3, 52, 54, 56-65, 67-71.

owners and the self-employed; routine white collar workers (retail sales and clerical occupations); skilled workers and foremen (mechanics, plumbers, carpenters); unskilled/semi-skilled workers (housekeepers, construction workers, garbage collectors, barbers); and non-full time participants in the labor force (retired, students, those working less than 20 hours per week).²¹ I use a dummy variable coded one for full time skilled and semi-skilled workers and zero for all other full time occupations, including professionals, managers, administrators, the self-employed, and routine white collar workers. Non-full time participants in the labor force are excluded from the analyses.

One reasonable objection to this classification scheme is that it is overly simplistic in drawing a line between blue collar and white collar workers and assigning the former with the title “working class” (see Evans 2000; Manza and Brooks 1999). To reduce the complexity of the American class structure to a two-class model is indeed inadequate if the goal of this research were to account for the relationship between class and political behavior more generally and not the specific topic of the politics of the white working class. Since my goal is to identify a group—the white working class—and explain their political behavior, it is necessary to arrive at boundaries for who belongs to the group and compare their political behavior to those who do not belong. As this is my more limited scope, the decision to code the white working class as 1 and all other full-time employed whites as 0 is justified (see also Brady, Sosnaud, and Frenk 2009; Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009).

Another plausible objection to this coding scheme is that those in routine white collar occupations should be included in a definition of working class. This is probably

²¹ For more on these methodological decisions, see Manza and Brooks 1999; Brady, Sosnaud, and Frenk 2009.

the most difficult methodological decision that I had to make in this project. On the one hand, routine white collar jobs are predominantly (though not exclusively) wage labor rather than salaried, opportunities for advancement are limited, work is routinized, and the skill set necessary to obtain such jobs are fairly modest (Manza and Brooks 1999). In these respects, routine white collar professions are similar to jobs in the skilled and semi-skilled category. On the other hand, the routine white collar category includes some low-level managerial and administrative occupations (Brady, Sasnaud, and Frenk 2009) and routine white collar work typically involves a greater degree of interpersonal skills and work with people, whereas skilled and unskilled labor involves less work with people and more work with things (see Smith 1996). The distinction between work with people and work with things is a sufficient enough basis on which to separate routine white collar work from other “working class” occupations, as it is a key component of developing expectations for how workplace dynamics socialize outside-the-job attitudes towards the world.²²

Another reason to exclude the routine white collar occupations from a definition of working class is that the working class is traditionally associated with manual labor (see Manza and Brooks 1999). The routine white collar sector of the economy is a relatively newer and growing portion of the population, whereas skilled and semi-skilled manual labor is a shrinking segment of the population. If we are interested—as I am—in understanding the political behavior of a class group over time, then there is some value

²² Vicki Smith’s (1996) research on routine white collar workers emphasizes the degree to which these employees consciously understood that working in a routine white collar environment shaped their interpersonal skills. The ability to work with people in turn made workers feel as though they had greater efficacy in the workplace.

to restricting the working class code to those occupations that were considered working class both in the 1950s and in the twenty-first century.

Still, it is admittedly debatable whether routine white collar workers count as working class or are better understood as distinct from the working class. Brady, Sosnaud, and Frenk (2009), for instance, are ambivalent about whether routine white collar workers should be considered working class. My judgment is that the routine white collar professions are distinct, but interpretations of the models that appear in later chapters are undoubtedly shaped by this judgment. The most consequential byproduct of the decision to exclude routine white collar workers from a definition of working class is that it affects my interpretation of class effects on the gender gap in Chapter 4. Because the skilled and unskilled occupations are overwhelmingly male, and the routine white collar sector is overwhelmingly female, my argument that the Democratic Party's problem attracting white working class support is part of a broader problem attracting white male support is to some extent contingent upon the validity of excluding routine white collar workers from a definition of working class.

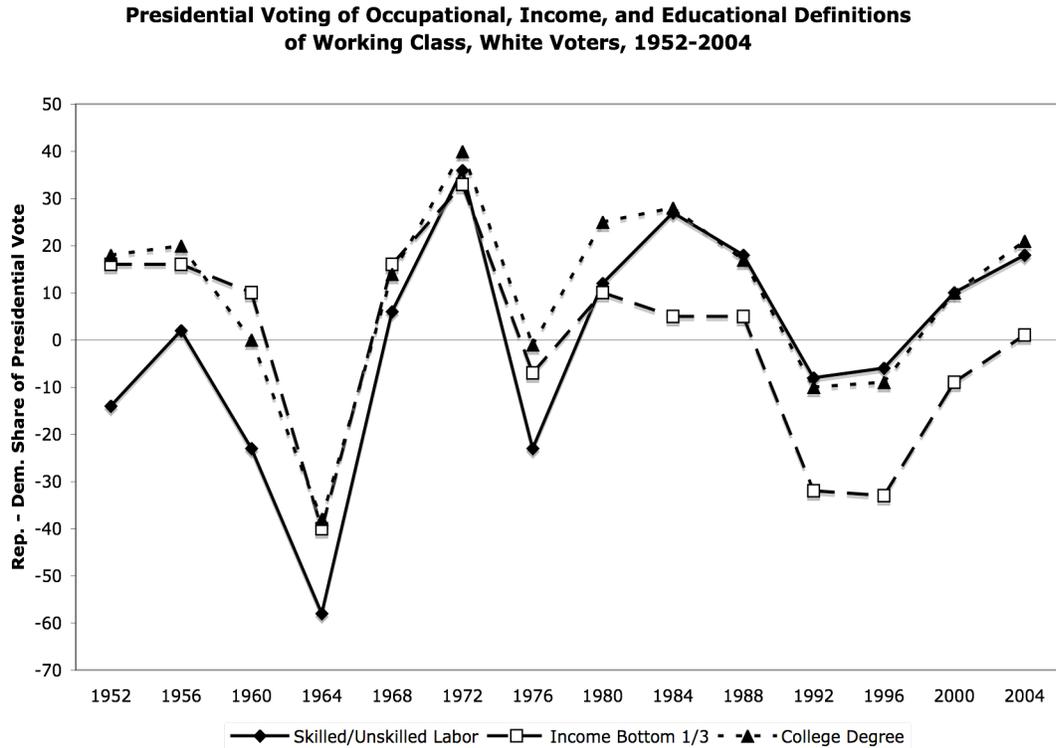
Another consequence is that my results are best interpreted as the best approximation of the politics of the white working class compared to other full-time, employed whites, and not as a coherent story about those coded 0 in the models. In other words, I make no claims that those excluded from my definition of working class are a coherent class grouping; instead, I make claims about the white working class as opposed to belonging to a mixed "other" class category. As a result, I use the term "non-working class" to describe those coded 0 in my models, as it would be inaccurate to assign a label such as "upper class" or "middle class" to such a diverse range of occupations. Since

there are sound arguments for both including and excluding routine white collar professions from my definition of working class, I test my models both with and without these workers coded as 1 and footnote where there are relevant differences in the results (see also Brady, Sasnaud, and Frenk 2009).

Finally, some might wonder why I do not consider self-identification with the working class as an alternative to income, education, and occupation-based measures. The reason for this omission is that it would ignore research that demonstrates that class identification is best understood as a dependent variable (see Davis and Robinson 1998; Vanneman and Cannon 1987; Wright 1997; Brady Sasnaud, and Frenk 2009). Although I do not use self-identification as working class as a measure of the size of the working class, I do assess the political consequences of working class identification as an intervening variable in the analyses in Chapter 6.

With these caveats, I move to evidence bearing on the analytical consequences of choosing different indicators of the working class: income, education, or occupation. If, as I argue, studies of class in American political behavior should account for the effects of occupation rather than simply rely on income and education, then we should see different results in the presidential vote for each of these class-related measures. In fact, this is largely the case (see also Brady, Sosnaud, and Frenk 2009). Figure 2.1 graphs the Republican minus the Democratic share of the two-party presidential vote for each definition of the white working class from 1952 through 2004: those in skilled and unskilled manual labor occupations, those in the lowest third of the income distribution, and those with no college degree. Higher values represent greater support for the Republican presidential candidate.

Figure 2.1



The results for presidential voting show that an occupational definition of the working class looks very similar to an education-based definition, but an income-based measure is quite different. Particularly since Reagan's election in 1980, low-income whites have been far more supportive of Democratic candidates than whites in working class occupations or whites without a college degree, with the differences in support ranging from percentages in the mid-teens to the mid-twenties. With the exception of President Clinton's victories in 1992 and 1996, which of course were aided by the presence of Ross Perot on the ballot, the white working class has been a solidly pro-Republican voting bloc over the last three decades. 1976 was the last election in which a majority of the white working class voted for the Democratic candidate. This graph casts doubt on the conclusion that the white working class is a pro-Democratic constituency

and lends support to the notion that the Republican Party has made impressive inroads with these voters since 1952.

Clearly, different measures lead to different conclusions about the size and political behavior of this constituency. Although it is tempting to conclude that education is an appropriate measure of class on the basis of this graph, recall the vast difference in the size of the population depending on whether we use one of these definitions or the other. If the lack of a college degree is equated with working class, then we have 67% of whites counted as working class in 2004. If we use occupation, then only 14% are included. Thus, in the absence of accounting for occupation, we might know the general direction of white working class support if we know how whites without a college degree vote, but we can draw vastly different conclusions about its size, and consequently, its political relevance (e.g., Dahl 1961).

2.3. A Model of Working Class Effects on Political Behavior

The notion that occupation should affect economic interests is fairly uncontroversial, as described above. However, if class differences produce distinct groups of people with shared interests and attitudes, then we should see evidence of these distinctions over a wide range of issues, not just those related to the economy. It is often said that the white working class is particularly conservative on social and cultural issues, but it is rare to see an explanation for why class conditions *per se* lead to such attitudes. Does class correlate with such attitudes, or are such attitudes a direct product of class?

In Chapter 1, I made the case that authoritarianism is a worldview that is shaped by experiences in the workplace. Authoritarianism is closely related to a smaller literature

that focuses on the role of parenting values on political worldview (Lakoff 2002; Barker and Tinnick 2006). Authoritarianism is often measured using a series of questions that tap directly into individuals' conceptions of the best parenting styles, which recalls recent work by linguist George Lakoff (2002). Lakoff argues that Americans are roughly divided into two worldviews, each of which views the world using the family as a metaphor: one group holds a "strict father morality" while the other believes in a "nurturant parent morality." How one views the proper parenting style for a family is thought to influence the way people think about the size and responsibilities of government, with strict parents generally tending to conservative ideology and nurturant parents favoring liberal ideology. Using this theoretical framework, Barker and Tinnick (2006) find some support for its claims, as the battery of parenting questions significantly predict opinion over a range of issues and presidential vote choice, with Republicans winning over authoritarians and Democrats performing well with non-authoritarians.

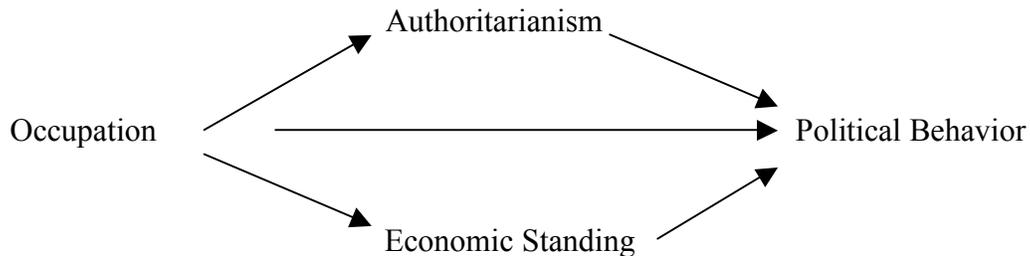
It is important to note that the concept of "non-authoritarianism" as a coherent worldview opposing authoritarianism has gained traction in a recent publication. Hetherington and Weiler suggest that, like authoritarians, non-authoritarians operate under a "motivated social cognition," or the notion that people "believe what they believe because to do so serves certain key psychological purposes" (2009, 42-3; see also Jost et al. 2003; Lavine et al. 2005). For authoritarians, the motivated social cognition is a need for order and an aversion to differences, ambiguity, and non-conformity. For non-authoritarians, the motivated social cognition is one in which outgroups are given preference, prejudicial thinking is rejected, personal autonomy is favored over social conformity, and there is a desire to be broadly opinionated. Hetherington and Weiler

argue that non-authoritarianism is just as key to interpreting the effects of authoritarianism, as it represents the other side of the same coin.

To summarize the expected relationship between occupation and authoritarianism, those who are employed in working class occupations experience distinct work conditions and power dynamics on the job from those in the non-working class. Such work conditions include closeness of supervision, routinization of work, substantively non-complex assignments, and work with things rather than work with people. When deference to authority is demanded on the job, conformity to dominant social norms outside the job becomes a more deeply held value system (see Kohn 1977).

If occupation influences authoritarian values in the manner suggested here, then individuals in the white working class should exhibit a more authoritarian worldview than those in occupations outside of the working class. However, the working class should also have less income than those in non-working class occupations and may be socialized to resent or mistrust the economic power of those for whom they work. Figure 2.2 sketches a simple path through which occupation affects political behavior. On one side of this simple diagram, a working class occupation leads to authoritarianism, which in turn leads to greater support for the Republican Party. On the other side, a working class occupation leads to less income, which in turn produces greater support for the Democratic Party. The end result is a potential stalemate in which both parties should draw support from the same constituency by appealing to different aspects of their position in the class structure; that is, there should be virtually no total, unidirectional effect of holding a working class occupation on support for either party as the effects of income and authoritarianism cancel each other out.

Figure 2.2. A Theoretical Model of Class Effects on Political Behavior



Simply put, there is no “natural” home for the white working class in American politics. Some aspects of an individual’s class position should benefit a party that speaks to their economic condition, while others should respond to a party that speaks to their values and sense of group position relative to other groups in society. Again, the relationship between authoritarianism and group conceptions of politics is key. Authoritarianism is the specific mechanism by which I expect class to shape attitudes towards cultural issues, but theories of group interest and group competition explain the broader context in which authoritarian values are activated and made politically salient.

2.4. Description of Data and Hypotheses

Having laid out my theoretical expectations, I turn next to a description of data, measurement, and hypotheses. Under each sub-heading in the rest of this chapter, I explain the measures that I use to test my hypotheses and provide a brief synopsis how my broader theory applies to a specific hypothesis. I begin with a description of the main variables of interest and basic socio-demographic variables included in the subsequent

models. Next, I introduce the public policies, value orientations, and group affect measures that comprise the material in Chapters 3 through 6.

Authoritarianism

I follow recent literature (e.g., Hetherington and Weiler 2009) that uses a series of questions asking respondents the following: “Although there are a number of qualities that people feel that children should have, every person thinks that some are more important than others. I am going to read you pairs of desirable qualities. For each pair please tell me which one you think is more important for a child to have: Independence or respect for elders? Obedience or self- reliance? Curiosity or good manners? Being considerate or well behaved?” Those who choose “respect for elders,” “obedience,” “good manners,” and “well behaved” are scored as the most authoritarian. Those who choose the other responses are coded as the least authoritarian. The variable used in this analysis is a factor score of these four items created using principal components factor analysis.²³

Education and Household Income

Education and household income are both scaled from zero to one, with one representing the most highly educated and the greatest amount of income, respectively. Education ranges from 8 grades of schooling or less to holding an advanced degree. Household income ranges from no income to \$120,000 and over.

²³ Factor analysis loadings: Individualism/Respect (.66), Obedience/Self-reliance (.75), Curious/Good manners (.75), Considerate/Well behaved (.60). Eigenvalue 1.54, 51% variance explained, .64 reliability alpha.

Religious Traditionalism

Religious cleavages are known to shape political competition in American politics, particularly on issues related to the culture wars (e.g., Davis and Robinson 1996; Green et al. 1996; Jelen 1997; Layman 2001; Layman and Green 2006; Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2006). In order to isolate the effects of class and authoritarianism on political behavior, I control for religious traditionalism using an index that combines views on the authority of the Bible, attendance at worship services, frequency of prayer, and the importance of religion to the respondent's life; previous research suggests that all of these items capture an underlying commitment to traditional religious behavior and beliefs.²⁴

Other Socio-demographic variables

A series of dichotomous variables are included in subsequent models as controls including being a member of a union household, female, and residence in a southern state. I also include controls for age and the year in which the survey was administered.

Political Alignment Index

I present results for five dependent variables measuring a respondent's political behavior. The discussion focuses on an average of four measures: party identification, ideological identification, two-party presidential vote, and a measure that subtracts feeling thermometer ratings of the Democratic candidate for president from the Republican. I use this dependent variable in order to assess general alignment with more liberal, Democratic identification and behavior versus more conservative, Republican

²⁴ The factor analysis produces one variable with an eigenvalue greater than one (2.55) and the factor explains 64 percent of the variance across the four measures. Individual loadings: Frequency of prayer (.85), Life guidance from religion (.87), Attendance (.78), Biblical inerrancy (.69).

identification and behavior (see also Layman and Green 2006). The models on each of the component parts of the index are OLS regression models except for the two-party vote model, which is a logit model. Party identification is the traditional seven-point scale, as is ideological identification. Because these variables are often modeled as categorical variables, I also footnote any relevant differences between OLS and ordered logit models of these dependent variables.²⁵

2.4.a. Issues

Once I establish a relationship between holding a working class occupation and authoritarianism, and then trace that connection to political behavior, it is necessary to investigate the issues that link an individual's position in the class structure with their political attitudes. I examine five sets of issues that are salient to contemporary American politics and have potential relevance to class: immigration, social welfare spending, racial issue attitudes, defense spending, and the issues that are connected to the culture wars.

Immigration

Although the issue of immigration policy has traditionally divided the parties more internally rather than externally (Tichenor 1994; Citrin et al. 1997; Burns and Gimpel 2000; Monogan 2007), recent evidence suggests some partisan sorting on the issue, with Republicans staking out a more restrictionist stance and Democrats a more pro-immigration position (Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Immigration is an issue for

²⁵ Confirmatory factor analysis indicates that these measures load onto one factor, with an eigenvalue of 2.38 explaining 74 percent of the variance. Individual loadings are .89 for party ID, .90 for presidential vote, .90 for candidate feeling thermometer difference ratings, and .73 for ideological identification. I use an average rather than factor scores because it preserves nearly 40 percent of the total number of observations.

which we should expect the “social construction of target populations” to be relevant as well; that is, the “cultural characterizations or popular images of the persons or groups whose behavior or well-being are affected by public policy” will shape the politics of the issue (Schneider and Ingram 1993). In the case of immigration, the target population tends to be Latinos.

The class implications for the immigration issue are at least two-fold. First, from an economic standpoint, members of the white working class are more economically insecure and more likely to compete with unskilled immigrant populations than many in the non-working class, so economic self-interest may lead the white working class to favor more restrictive immigration policies. However, previous research shows that personal economic motivations are less predictive of attitudes on immigration policy than national economic evaluations and general anxiety over taxes (Citrin et al. 1997; Burns and Gimpel 2000). Additionally, however, attitudes about immigration policy are shaped by perceptions of group threat that extend beyond economic issues to a sense of cultural threat (Wilson 2001; Burns and Gimpel 2000).

On the cultural side of the equation, authoritarianism is a predictor of the opinion that views immigrants as a threat to the American economy and culture (Barker and Tinnick 2006; Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Particularly given the heated rhetoric surrounding the issue, immigration is a good example of the authoritarian tendency for ethnocentrism, intolerance of out-groups, and need for order; on the other side of the coin, non-authoritarians are quick to defend out-groups. In sum, then, there are three paths through which I expect class to shape attitudes on immigration. First, I expect a direct and positive relationship between holding a working class occupation and favoring

more restrictive immigration policies. Second, occupation should work indirectly through income to increase support for restrictive immigration policies. These expectations derive directly from a theory of economic threat. Third, occupation should work indirectly through authoritarianism to raise support for a hard-line stance on immigration, as previous research attests (Barker and Tinnick 2006; Hetherington and Weiler 2009).

Attitudes towards immigration policy are measured using a variable that asks respondents if federal spending on tightening border security to prevent illegal immigration should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same. The variable has five cut points. I use this measure despite the existence of other survey items about immigration because it is the only question that was asked consistently in 1992, 2000, and 2004. Previous research on attitudes towards immigration also uses this measure (see Burns and Gimpel 2000; Hood and Morris 1998).

Social Welfare Spending

Social welfare spending is an issue domain in which the white working class could support either a position that calls for increased spending or one that wishes to limit social welfare expenditures. On the economic side of the matter, many lower-income members of the white working class would benefit from additional social welfare spending, as predicted by literature that posits a connection between lower income voters and Democratic Party support (e.g., Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008). If there is any evidence of a relationship between an economically disadvantaged white working class and the Democratic Party, then social welfare spending would be an ideal place to uncover such evidence.

On the other hand, there are good reasons to doubt white working class support for a more generous welfare state. Similar to the explanation given for why the white working class should be especially favorable to a more restrictive immigration policy, the social construction of social welfare spending is that it benefits African Americans and other minority groups and not whites (see Gilens 1999). This is one of the central storylines of the literature that observed a break between the white working class and the Democratic Party (see, e.g., Edsal and Edsall 1992). As social welfare spending grew more and more associated with racial politics, whites purportedly grew increasingly critical of higher spending on such programs.

Another reason to doubt white working class support for social welfare spending is rooted in gender differences. As I argue in Chapter 4, the white working class is predominantly male, and one of the most oft-cited causes of the gender gap is differences in male-female opinion on social welfare spending, with women more supportive and men less supportive (see, e.g., Kaufmann 2002). Because of the combined effects of the racial and gender disparities in who benefits from social welfare spending, and because the white working class is overwhelmingly male, it stands to reason that the white working class views social welfare spending with suspicion.

Authoritarianism, however, is not recognized as a major influence on attitudes towards social welfare spending, though very small effects have been uncovered in past research (Cizmar, Layman, McTague, Pearson-Merkowitz, and Spivey 2010). Although it is difficult to imagine a direct relationship between authoritarianism and attitudes on the size of the welfare state, it is nonetheless plausible that there is an indirect relationship that starts with occupation's positive effect on authoritarianism and

authoritarianism's positive effect on negative out-group affect. If increased social welfare spending is associated with groups that are viewed as behaving outside of the moral mainstream, then authoritarians may be less likely to support it.

In sum, there are competing expectations for the relationship between class and attitudes on social welfare spending. From an income standpoint, the white working class should disproportionately support increased social welfare spending. Based on their status in society relative to groups (e.g., racial minorities and women) who are perceived to disproportionately reap the rewards of such programs, however, we might find evidence of white working class support for decreases in social welfare spending. Authoritarianism may indirectly drive down support for social welfare spending through its negative effect on racial out-group affect.

Attitudes towards social welfare spending are measured using an index of mean survey responses to eight items in the NES. Respondents were asked, on a seven-point scale, if they agreed with the following positions: (1) the federal government should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living rather than let people get by on their own; (2) the federal government should provide more services even if it means an increase in spending; (3) the federal government should provide a health insurance plan rather than have people pay for their medical expenses through private insurance plans; (4) federal spending on public schools should be increased rather than decreased; (5) federal spending on for social security should be increased rather than decreased; (6) federal spending on welfare programs should be increased rather than decreased; (7)

federal spending on child care should be increased rather than decreased; and, finally, (8) federal spending to help the poor should be increased rather than decreased.²⁶

Racial Issues

Because much of the original explanation for the defection of the white working class from the Democratic Party rests on the notion that the white working class harbors resentment over the Democrats' embrace of African Americans, it is important to assess the relevance of issues related to race. I investigate attitudes towards three issues that touch on the racial cleavage in American politics (affirmative action, government aid to blacks, and the death penalty) by creating an index of attitudes towards these three issues. Affirmative action preferences are measured on the basis of a question that asks respondents to take a position regarding the following statement: "Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong haven't earned." A separate question asks respondents the degree to which they agree with the following: "Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves."

Finally, a question asks respondents whether they favor the death penalty for those who commit murder. Although this is not an overtly racial issue, there is a well documented "race gap" in black and white opinion on the death penalty; in fact, whites

²⁶ The confirmatory factor analysis loadings corresponding to each of these items are (1) .64, (2) .73, (3) .59, (4) .57, (5) .53, (6) .60, (7) .67, (8) .69. Eigenvalue: 3.17. Percent of variance explained: .39. Reliability alpha: .76.

tend to become more supportive of the death penalty after they learn that it disproportionately affects blacks (Peffley and Hurwitz 2007). Because the death penalty is crime issue, and crime is in turn a race issue, it is justifiable to include the death penalty in an index of racial issues.²⁷

Defense Spending

Defense spending presents an issue in which class effects should be primarily driven by authoritarianism. Although defense spending is an imperfect measure of being a foreign policy hawk, it is the only question asked in the same manner across all three surveys that comes close to the underlying conceptual set of issues surrounding the use of military force and war (see also Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Authoritarians are more likely to support increased defense spending because the use of military force imposes a strong (and ethnocentric) sense of order on a seemingly chaotic world (Hetherington and Weiler 2009). Since I hypothesize that the white working class is more authoritarian, it stands to reason that the white working class may also be relatively more supportive of increased defense spending. The defense spending measure asks respondents to place themselves on a seven-point scale ranging from the position that the government should decrease defense spending to the stance that the government should increase defense spending.

Culture War Issues

The issues associated with “the culture wars” (Hunter 1991) comprise another issue cleavage in American politics in which class effects should be evident due to

²⁷ Confirmatory factor analysis produces a factor loading of .76 for the preferential hiring item, .77 for the item gauging whether the government should help blacks economically, and .64 for the death penalty. Eigenvalue: 1.58. Variance explained: .53. Reliability alpha: .54.

authoritarianism. Existing literature either dismisses the role of the culture wars in understanding class politics (see Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008) or neglects to systematically specify the mechanism(s) through which class matters to cultural conflict (see Frank 2004). Much of the debate surrounding the culture wars—including issues such as abortion, gay and lesbian rights, and the role of women in society—focuses on religious foundations of political conflict surrounding these issues (see, e.g, Layman and Green 2006). More recent literature expands the scope of inquiry to include non-religious causes of cultural conflict, especially as it relates to authoritarianism (Barker and Tinnick 2006; Mockabee 2007; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Cizmar et al. 2010). Building on this research, I argue that class, as an important socializing mechanism in the formation of an authoritarian worldview, should similarly be considered as a source of division on issues associated with the culture wars.

I use an index of mean survey responses regarding several issues associated with the culture wars in order to gauge the extent to which class influences such attitudes. The index includes: (1) a question asking whether a women's proper role is in the home or if instead women should have equality with men in running businesses, industry, and government; (2) a question asking if abortion should never be permitted, should be permitted only in the cases of rape, incest, or the woman's life is in danger, the law should only permit abortions when a clear need has been established, or a woman should always be permitted to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice; (3) a four-point question asking if the government should protect homosexuals against job discrimination; (4) a question asking if homosexuals should be allowed to serve in the United States Armed Forces; and (5) a question asking if gays and lesbians should be legally permitted

to adopt children. In some models, I analyze these issues as an index of related issues, while in other models I examine attitudes towards individual “culture war” issues.²⁸

2.4.b. Values, Group Identification, and Group Affect

A related set of analyses, appearing in Chapter 6, investigates class differences in value orientations, attitudes, and out-group feelings that are distinct from authoritarianism. A substantial literature identifies “core values” as important influences on political behavior (Rokeach 1973; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Feldman 1988; Feldman and Steenbergen 2001; Goren 2005; Alvarez and Brehm 2002; Jacoby 2006). These values—views about the proper relationship between groups in society and the role of government in regulating these relations—shape opinion on policies and vote choice. A different set of variables testing the role of out-group affect in shaping the politics of class is rooted in the broad group-based theory explained above.

The rationale for these models is to fully specify and test a model of class effects on political behavior with controls for a range of potentially relevant causal relationships. Some of these variables—for instance, measures of racism, affect towards minority groups, affect towards labor unions and big business, egalitarianism, and self-identification as working class—are included for reasons that are fairly consistent with the theory laid out above. Other factors—moral traditionalism and orientations towards the size and scope of government—are taken into account in order to prevent spurious conclusions as a result of omitted variables.

²⁸ Confirmatory factor loadings for these items are (1) .58, (2) .60, (3) .72, (4) .76, and (5) .74. Eigenvalue: 1.58. Reliability alpha: .71.

Racism

To test the extent to which the white working class may exhibit greater levels of racism, I examine measures of both traditional and symbolic racism. Traditional racism is measured as a mean of respondents' placement of blacks on seven-point scales for lack of intelligence and laziness. "Symbolic racism" (for review, see Sears and Henry 2005) is measured as a mean of responses to the following survey items: (1) Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors (agree); (2) Over the past few years blacks have gotten less than they deserve (disagree); (3) It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as whites (agree); (4) Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class (disagree).

Egalitarianism

The white working class, as a group towards the bottom of the economic ladder, might be especially egalitarian. However, workplace socialization may impose upon working class employees an acceptance of a hierarchical social order in which not everyone can or should be equal to everyone else. Put another way, egalitarianism may be consistent with a group that is relatively economically deprived compared to many others, yet it may be at odds with the deference to authority inherent in their experiences in the workplace.

Egalitarianism is measured according to an index of six measures querying respondents on the degree to which they endorse egalitarian values: (1) Society should ensure equal opportunity; (2) We have gone too far in pushing equality in this country;

(3) It is a big problem if we don't give everyone an equal chance; (4) We should worry less about equality; (5) It is not a problem if some have more of a chance than others; (6) There would be fewer problems if we treated all equally.²⁹

The Role of Government

Whether those in the white working class value a more active or more limited government is another factor that theory predicts competing expectations. On one hand, a more active government can provide more programs and intervene in an economy that does not work to the benefit of many in the working class. However, if the programs that government engages in are unpopular because they are perceived to help those in other racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Gilens 1999), and the government is perceived as the corrupt elite that keeps the working class down (see Chapter 1), then those in the white working class may view an active government less favorably. Attitudes towards the role of government are measured by an index of three items: (1) agreement with the sentiment that the less the government does, the better; (2) support for the notion that the free market can better handle problems; (3) agreement that the government is involved in things people should do for themselves.³⁰

Moral Traditionalism

Are the white working class more authoritarian than those in other occupations, or is it that they are more generally more morally traditional? This is an important question because it speaks to the extent to which the findings in later chapters rest on a more elegant theory of working class authoritarianism or if, instead, authoritarianism is merely

²⁹ Confirmatory factor analysis of these six items: (1) .51, (2) .66, (3) .64, (4) .70, (5) .65, (6) .64. Eigenvalue: 2.42. Variance explained: .40. Reliability alpha: .70.

³⁰ Confirmatory factor analysis factor loadings: (1) .83. (2) .79. (3) .78. Eigenvalue: 1.95. Variance explained: .65. Reliability alpha: .80.

a crude measure of moral traditionalism, as Thomas Frank's general point of view might hold. To distinguish between a specific theory of working class authoritarianism and a more broad theory of working class traditionalism, I examine a measure of moral traditionalism that is commonly used in other studies of cultural conflict and political behavior (see review in Cizmar et al. 2010). This index asks respondents to agree or disagree with the following statements: (1) "The world is always changing and we should adjust our view of moral behavior to those changes." (2) We should be more tolerant of people who choose to live according to their own moral standards even if they are very different from our own." (3) "The newer lifestyles are contributing to the breakdown of our society." (4) "This country would have many fewer problems if there were more emphasis on traditional family ties."

Working Class Identification

Identification with subjective class categories has received fairly little attention in political science (but see Jackman 1979; Jackman and Jackman, 1983), perhaps because it is commonly understood by sociologists to be a dependent variable (see Hout 2008; Manza and Brooks 1999). Several scholars find that Americans are remarkably accurate in their assessments of which occupations and income levels are associated with which subjective labels, such as "poor," "working class," "middle class," "upper-middle class," and "upper class" (see Jackman 1979; Jackman and Jackman 1983; Hout 2008). What is less clear is whether subjective class identification bears any relationship to political behavior. Stonecash (2000) finds that identification with the working class increased support for Democratic presidential candidates in the 1950s and 1960s, but that this relationship has largely disappeared since.

It is certainly plausible that working class identification might shape an economic perception of the political world and lead to increased support for the Democratic Party, as was evident in decades long past. However, because Americans also associate non-economic, social factors such as lifestyle and status with class terms (Jackman and Jackman 1979, 1983), it is equally possible that identification with the working class would shape feelings of threat relative to other, non-working class groups. Because of these competing explanations of the political significance of subjective identification with the working class, I include a simple dichotomous variable for whether respondents identify as “working class” and test the relationship in Chapter 6.

Group Affect

I test differences between the white working class and those outside of working class occupations regarding affect towards relevant social groups in American society. As much political debate is framed in terms of group interests, and authoritarianism is related to ethnocentrism, it is reasonable to expect feelings towards groups to exert considerable influence on the attitudes and political behavior of the white working class. I use feeling thermometer ratings of three different clusters of related groups: economic groups (labor unions and big business), racial and ethnic groups (African Americans, Latinos, and Asians), and groups associated with the culture wars (gays and lesbians, feminists, and Christian fundamentalists). My measure of class-related groups takes the difference between ratings of big business and labor unions, with higher values indicating more warmth towards big business. The variable for racial and ethnic groups takes the difference between respondents’ ratings of white people and their ratings of each ethnic group and takes the average of the three. Finally, the measure of groups associated with

the culture wars takes the difference between respondents' ratings of all groups in the feeling thermometer battery and their ratings of each group and takes the average of the three.

A Note on Measurement

All variables in subsequent analyses have been scaled to range from zero to one, with one representing more conservative and Republican attitudes. Scaling each variable from zero to one in one politically relevant direction allows for easy interpretation of coefficients. Any deviation from this standard is noted in a footnote.

Chapter 3: The Dual Influence of Occupation on the Political Behavior of the White Working Class: Class, Economic Standing, and Authoritarian Values

3.1. Introduction to First Stage of Path Model

In the first two chapters, I argued that occupation influences the political behavior of the white working class through two distinct mechanisms. On one hand, holding a working class occupation shapes economic prospects and self-conceptions of one's economic interests, specifically measured by income. On the other hand, occupation also shapes orientations towards authority through workplace socialization dynamics that make authoritarianism more likely for the working class. In this chapter, I present the first set of empirical models that test my hypotheses about the relationship between class and political behavior. Those hypotheses are stated below.

H1: The effect of holding a working class occupation as opposed to a non-working class occupation increases the level of authoritarianism.

H2: The effect of holding a working class occupation as opposed to a non-working class occupation decreases the level of income.

These hypotheses suggest opposing outcomes when extended to expectations for political behavior. Those with higher levels of authoritarianism are known to disproportionately support the Republican Party (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009). However, those with lower income are more supportive of the Democratic Party (see e.g., Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008). The end result, from a political standpoint, is a stalemate. Models that fail to include occupation mis-specify the relationship between class and political behavior. On the other hand, models that fail to account for occupational effects on authoritarianism and income are also mis-specified. What we need is a path analysis in which the effects of occupation on authoritarianism and income are modeled first, and

then the direct and indirect effects of occupation through income and authoritarianism are modeled in a second stage.

These hypotheses suggest a resolution to the competing explanations of the politics of the white working class in the existing literature. My argument is that both those who find an economically liberal working class and a culturally conservative working class are right. However, the theory developed here specifies the manner in which class shapes both economic interests and cultural orientations through income and separately through authoritarianism.

The first set of models follows the simple theory outlined in Figure 2.2 (see Chapter 2), first examining the relationship between holding a working class occupation and having authoritarian values on the one hand, and the effect of holding a working class occupation on income on the other hand. This is the first stage of a path analysis that leads to a second and final stage containing various indicators of political behavior and identity: party identification, ideological identification, two-party presidential vote, and comparative feelings of each of the major party's presidential candidates as measured by feeling thermometers. These variables are averaged together to form a political alignment index (Layman and Green 2006), which serves as the main dependent variable in the discussion of the results. All of the models are ordinary least squares regression. Using the results of these models, direct and indirect effects are calculated by hand.

3.2. Results

In Chapter 2, I showed that using occupation as an indicator for the working class shows a movement to the Republican Party among members of the white working class

since 1980. While this answers the question of whether the choice of class indicators influences conclusions about the political behavior of the white working class (it does), it leaves unanswered the question of why the white working class is a predominantly Republican constituency since 1980. Moving from descriptive evidence to predictive models, I continue my analysis with models that assess the influence of socio-demographic variables on authoritarian parenting values and income levels.

Table 3.1 presents the results of two OLS models with socio-demographic variables regressed on authoritarianism and income; both offer support for my hypotheses. The white working class is more authoritarian and has less income than whites in other occupations. White working class status bears a significant, positive and substantively meaningful impact, with a coefficient of .08. Moving from a non-working class occupation to a working class occupation produces an 8 percentage-point increase in authoritarianism. Only two other factors – religious traditionalism ($\beta=.31$) and education ($\beta=-.36$)—have stronger effects on authoritarianism, and having a working class occupation has a stronger effect than sex, age and region.

The model predicting income similarly conforms to theoretical expectations. Working class occupations are negatively related to income; moving from a working class occupation to a non-working class occupation reduces income by 5 percentage points. Substantively, this is about equal to the effect of sex and Southern residence on income. Education and age have a stronger impact on income, with higher and education and more advanced age both predicting higher income. It is notable that women are both

Table 3.1. The Effect of Class on Authoritarianism and Income in the United State, Whites, 1992-2004

	Authoritarianism	Income
White Working Class	.08*** (.02)	-.05*** (.01)
Education	-.36*** (.02)	.25*** (.02)
Sex	-.06*** (.01)	-.06*** (.01)
Age	-.04 (.03)	.15*** (.03)
South	.03** (.01)	-.04*** (.01)
Religious Traditionalism	.31*** (.02)	--
Year 2000	.04*** (.01)	-.36*** (.01)
Year 2004	.02 (.02)	.01 (.01)
Constant	.60*** (.03)	.54*** (.02)
R-squared	.24	.48
N	2114	2421

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1.

* p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

less authoritarian and have less income than men, which suggests that class factors contribute to the partisan gender gap that has emerged in recent decades (see Cook and Wilcox 1995; Manza and Brooks 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002, 2006; Norrander and Wilcox 2008; Kellstedt, Peterson, and Ramirez 2010).

Taken together, Table 3.1 shows that different aspects of class are likely to have competing influences on political behavior. Working class occupations lead to a more culturally traditional worldview through authoritarianism, but also have negative effects on income. It is somewhat surprising that working class occupations have a stronger effect on authoritarian values than on income, though sociological literature has suggested for some time that there is a great deal of variation in household income within and across class categories (see Gilbert 2003). For instance, a household with two working class earners will likely have greater income than a household with one routine white-collar worker or junior-level professional. Furthermore, the highest-income car mechanics likely out-earn the lowest-income accountants (see Gilbert 2003, 89). In any case, the fact that occupation has a stronger substantive effect on values than income suggests a weakness in literature that ignores non-economic dimensions of class and its relationship to political behavior. It also indicates a potential source of comparative strength for the G.O.P. in competing for white working class votes. If occupation is to have any statistical influence on political behavior, we should see those effects channeled largely through authoritarianism and income. However, because these two factors pull the white working class in different directions, the total effect of class on political behavior should be counterbalanced.

Table 3.2 shows the results of five models with dependent variables for the seven-point scale of partisan identification, the seven-point scale of ideological identification, a dichotomous variable for the two-party share of the vote, comparative candidate evaluations and the political alignment index that averages the first four variables across respondents.³¹ Recall that each variable is coded from zero to one with higher values representing the more Republican and/or conservative-leaning responses. As shown in Model 1 in Table 2, the effect of holding a working class occupation is reduced support for the Republican Party, with a statistically significant coefficient of -.03. Holding a working class occupation thus still slightly works to the benefit of the Democratic Party, as does living in a household with a member of a labor union. Authoritarianism and high income, however, nudge voters towards the Republican Party. Education, often supposed to be an adequate proxy for class, bears no direct statistical relationship to political alignment. All in all, there are aspects of class that pull working class voters in both directions. The G.O.P. scores support on the basis of authoritarianism, but the Democrats thrive on the effects of low income and a direct effect from occupation.

Occupation bears a significant relationship to both ideological identification and candidate evaluations, but is unrelated to predicting the vote and falls shy of two-tailed statistical significance when it comes to party identification ($p < .14$). Even with much

³¹ Changing the party ID and ideological ID models to ordered logit, with Republicans, Independents, and Democrats in one model, and Conservatives, Moderates, and Liberals in the other model, does not change the substantive conclusions of these results.

Table 3.2. The Effect of Class and other Socio-demographic Variables on Political Alignment in the United State, Whites, 1992-2004

	Political Alignment	Party ID	Ideological ID	Two-Party GOP Vote	Candidate Evaluations
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
White Working Class	-.03** (.01)	-.03 (.02)	-.03* (.01)	-.12 (.18)	-.03** (.01)
Authoritarianism	.15*** (.02)	.12*** (.03)	.13*** (.02)	1.22*** (.23)	.12*** (.02)
Income	.19*** (.03)	.20*** (.04)	.11*** (.03)	1.59*** (.35)	.16*** (.03)
Union Household	-.10*** (.01)	-.14*** (.02)	-.03** (.01)	-.82*** (.16)	-.08*** (.01)
Education	-.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)	.00 (.02)	-.23 (.28)	-.05* (.02)
Sex	-.07*** (.01)	-.09*** (.02)	-.08*** (.01)	-.49*** (.13)	-.04*** (.01)
Age	-.07** (.04)	-.10** (.05)	.08** (.03)	-.99** (.39)	-.07** (.03)
South	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.00)	.07 (.14)	.02 (.01)
Religious Traditionalism	.26*** (.02)	.22*** (.03)	.23*** (.02)	2.29*** (.24)	.19*** (.02)
Year 2000	.08*** (.02)	.08*** (.02)	.04*** (.01)	.80*** (.19)	.07*** (.01)
Year 2004	.06*** (.01)	.07*** (.02)	.05*** (.01)	.68*** (.16)	.06*** (.01)
Constant	.26*** (.03)	.28*** (.04)	.29*** (.03)	-2.17*** (.38)	.31*** (.03)
R-squared	.18	.11	.18	.14	.16
N	1949	1923	1668	1351	1931

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression except for Model 4, which presents logit coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

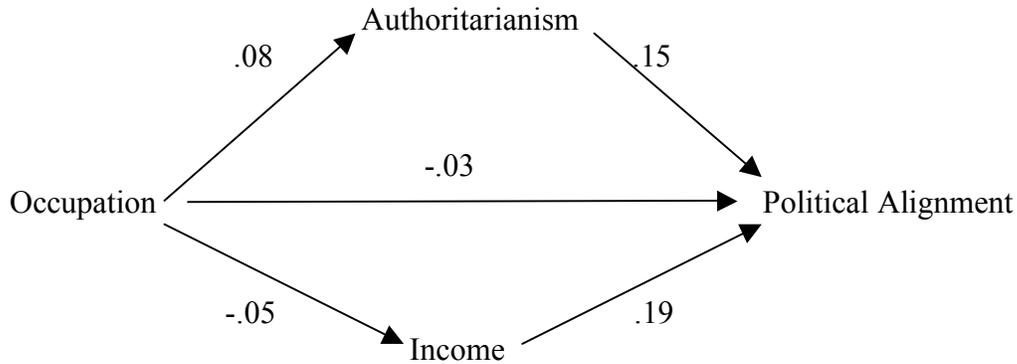
of occupation's effect being channeled through income and authoritarianism, and even with controls for the other relevant socio-demographic predictors of political behavior, it is apparent that class effects still nudge voters slightly to the left. These results show that despite the sometimes-desperate hand-wringing of some on the left, the effect of holding an unskilled or semi-skilled occupation, controlling for other relevant factors, still benefits the party of Roosevelt.

These results also demonstrate the utility of specifying income and authoritarianism as class effects rather than interpreting their effects as distinct from (in the case of authoritarianism) or as equivalent to (in the case of income) class. Without the benefit of Table 1 showing a direct relationship between occupation and authoritarianism and a separate relationship between occupation and income, the results in Table 2 would have a different interpretation entirely. That interpretation would fail to recognize the multi-faceted nature of the relationship between class and political behavior.

In order to more precisely determine the effects of working class status on political alignment, I present Figure 3.1, which contains all of the theorized paths from occupation to political alignment with the actual results from the models in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. I also calculated the direct and indirect effects of the working class occupation on political alignment and discuss these results below.

Figure 3.1 shows that occupation has a direct, negative effect on Republican political alignment and a direct, negative effect on income. In turn, high income has a direct, positive effect on Republican political alignment. The indirect effect of

Figure 3.1 Direct and Indirect Effects of Working Class Occupation on Political Alignment, Whites, 1992-2004



occupation on political alignment through income, calculated by multiplying the two coefficients together ($-.05 \times .19$) is $-.01$. Occupation also has a direct, positive effect on authoritarianism, and authoritarianism has a direct, positive effect on Republican political alignment. The indirect effect of occupation on political alignment through authoritarianism, calculated by multiplying the two coefficients together ($.08 \times .15$) is $.01$. The indirect effects of occupation on Republican political alignment thus cancel each other out, as the $-.01$ effect through income and the $.01$ effect through authoritarianism sum to 0. The only effect left over from class is a small, direct effect of $-.03$. When we isolate the effect of class on political alignment, the effect of being in the white working class actually works to the slight benefit of the Democratic Party, but that effect is substantively modest.

3.3. Conclusions

The politics of class in the contemporary United States is hotly contested terrain. One scholarly view identifies income inequality as the central battleground of the debate, with the white working class loyally voting for the Democratic Party: as income

inequality grows, political polarization between low income and middle-upper income voters persists. Another view holds that the culture wars that consistently remain on the political agenda since the 1960s carry greater weight in the minds of the white working class than matters of income inequality: as more Americans attain a college degree, those without such education have switched to the G.O.P. due to their cultural conservatism. The evidence presented in this paper suggests that the politics of the white working class actually lies somewhere in between these two portraits. I find evidence of a largely pro-Republican white working class since 1980, but I also find support for the notion that the Democratic Party has something to offer these voters.

That class conflict revolves around both economic and cultural issues, and that this renders the white working class politically competitive over time, should come as no surprise. Populism appears on both the right and left side of the political spectrum, on issues economic and cultural, at least since the nineteenth century (Kazin 1995). Some historical figures embody both sides of the populist coin: William Jennings Bryan and George Wallace stand out as examples of leading politicians who spoke to the economic anxieties and cultural sensibilities of the working classes of their eras and framed their careers as crusades for the ordinary against the powerful. As many intuit, but too infrequently goes unstated, there actually is no “natural” partisan home for the white working class at the turn of the twenty-first century. The Democrats offer a platform that speaks to their economic condition; the Republicans appeal to their cultural values and traditions. In recent decades, this tug-of-war has worked to the benefit of the Republican Party more often than not, but as the elections of 1992 and 1996 show, a marriage between the white working class and the G.O.P. cannot be taken for granted.

Such a conclusion is apparent when class is theorized and measured more fully than is customary in recent scholarship. A working class voter is not equal to the sum of his household income. In order to uncover the nuanced linkages between class position and political behavior, political scientists in particular must take greater care to specify theoretical expectations for various commonly used empirical indicators of class. No longer can we simply ignore the role of occupation in shaping an individual's socio-political attitudes, nor can we pretend that all indicators of class are interchangeable. Clearly, they are not.

Occupation is the most direct measure of one's class position, as generations of sociological research attests. When we account for the effects of occupation, income and education separately, we gain a more complete understanding of the politics of class in contemporary American society. A contribution of this research is to connect the dots between class and socially conservative attitudes by revisiting a largely dormant theory of the social traditionalism of the working class. Moving from the realm of anecdotes and impressions, I point our attention to an observable attitudinal disposition that is obviously related to class through occupation: authoritarianism.

Future research should continue to explore the social and psychological mechanisms that predict authoritarianism, particularly important sociological phenomena such as class and religion. The connection between class and values is ripe for additional analysis, as issues such as the economy, the culture wars, and immigration are likely to remain salient in the near term. Careful attention to the various mechanisms that connect class to political behavior, situated within a political context that emphasizes multiple

issues that are relevant to class, uncovers a cross-pressured white working class that is not easily pigeonholed as Democratic or Republican over the past two decades. Still, the Republicans have had more success courting this constituency in recent elections and it is certainly plausible that a Democratic candidate for president will struggle to cut into this advantage in the near future. The white working class is likely to continue to shrink, and as it does, its power in electoral politics will diminish. A coalition of non-working class, professional, college educated whites, African Americans, and Latinos may be enough to sustain the Democratic Party to a governing majority even if it cedes more white working class ground to the G.O.P. Should the white working class become permanently entrenched in the Republican coalition, the party of Lincoln will have to find a way to accommodate other groups, such as Latinos, with whom an authoritarian white working class may not particularly want to share power.

Chapter 4: Occupational Sex Segregation, Authoritarianism, and the Gender Gap in American Politics

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I integrate research on the political gender gap in the United States with studies that document the gender gap in earnings and occupational sex segregation. I argue that class differences between men and women are an underappreciated reason for the political gender gap, as white working class men are particularly responsible for the documented movement of men into the Republican coalition. The increased influx of women into the labor force threatened working class white men both in terms of their economic standing and their authoritarian worldview. I discuss the implications of my findings for group position theory, authoritarianism, class conflict, and the gender gap in American politics.

In the preceding chapter, I found that the white working class is more authoritarian but has less income than those in non-working class occupations. The effect of being more authoritarian has led the white working class to disproportionately support the Republican Party in recent years, as authority relations in the workplace have an effect on value orientations towards conformity to social norms outside the job. As political discourse across a myriad of issues has taken on an increasingly cultural tone in recent decades, class effects have driven some in the white working class to the more culturally traditionalist party. However, the Democratic Party remains competitive with this constituency due to its support for economic policies that benefit lower income voters and socialization processes in the workplace that reinforce an antagonistic

relationship with those who have greater economic resources. Thus, class effects have competing influences on political behavior.

The models in the previous chapter also uncover a significant result when assessing differences between men and women when it comes to authoritarianism and income: on average, women are less authoritarian and earn less income than men. In this chapter, I explore the intersection of class and sex and its impact on the “gender gap” in American politics. Building on the extant literature, I argue that part of why we see an increasing gender gap is due to occupational segregation of the sexes.

Women are grossly underrepresented in working class professions and this is a significant and overlooked contributing factor to the growth of the gender gap since women began entering the workforce in large numbers since the 1960s. The story of the growth of a Republican white working class cannot be fully appreciated without a thorough examination of the political implications of occupational sex segregation; likewise, the story of the growth of the gender gap cannot be fully appreciated without recognizing the class differences that continue to divide the sexes. Specifically, this chapter builds on the argument that white men are primarily responsible for the emergence of the gender gap in American politics (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002), but I offer an explanation that focuses on the role of white working class men as the main catalyst for the gender gap.

The growth of the gender gap is due to a significant extent to the breakdown of the close relationship between the overwhelmingly male white working class and the Democratic Party. Furthermore, the more modest changes in the political affiliations of women – a growing Democratic allegiance during the 1990’s (see Kaufmann, Petrocik,

and Shaw 2008) – should be disproportionately evident among women in non-working class occupations. The gender gap is thus conceived as a political division that is driven most acutely by the diverging politics of working class men, who are the most authoritarian, and non-working class women, who should be the least authoritarian.

4.2. Existing Explanations of the Gender Gap

The gender gap in American politics refers to differences between men and women in political behavior, primarily in partisan identification and voting (see Cook and Wilcox 1995; Manza and Brooks 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002, 2006), which are rooted in differences in policy preferences (see Kaufmann 2002), political ideology (Norrande and Wilcox 2008) and distinct fluctuations in policy mood (Kellstedt, Peterson, and Ramirez 2010).³² To summarize these findings, women on average tend to identify more with the Democratic Party and vote for Democratic candidates, and are more likely to identify as liberal. Policies on which there is evidence of a gender gap include foreign policy, on which women are thought to be less hawkish and less supportive of military spending than men (Gilens 1988; Conover and Sapiro 1993; Nincic and Ninci 2002; Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008; but see Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). Other scholars explore the notion that women may respond negatively to Republican opposition to abortion rights and other feminist movement priorities, though the evidence in support of this claim is quite weak (see Smeal 1984; Conover 1988; but see Mansbridge 1985; Cook and Wilcox 1991; Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997; Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008).

³² See Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008 for review of gender gap literature.

The most consistent finding regarding policy differences between the sexes is that women are more supportive of a generous welfare state than men, likely as a result of their disproportionate reliance on these programs (Piven 1985; Erie and Rein 1988; May and Stephenson 1994; Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002; Mattei 2000; Schlesinger and Heldman 2001), but also because women are more likely to express feelings of empathy, or place greater value than men on the well-being of others (Beutal and Marini 1995). George Lakoff's metaphor of a "nurturant parent" Democratic Party and a "strict father" Republican Party also comes to mind, in which Lakoff conceives of the differences between the governing philosophies of the two major parties in overtly gendered terms (Lakoff 2002).

Whereas early studies of the gender gap focused on changes in the political behavior of women as the reason for the growing political divide between the sexes, scholarship of the last decade recognizes that a shift in male support in favor of the G.O.P. is the primary culprit for the widening of the gap over the long term (see Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Wirls 1986; Miller and Shanks 1996; Box-Steffensmeier, de Bouf and Lin 2004; Seltzer, Newman and Leighton 1997; Kaufmann 2002). While women have remained consistently more supportive of the Democratic Party over the last fifty years, men have flocked to the Republican coalition; from 1952 to 2004, the percentage of men identifying with the Democratic Party dropped from 59 percent to 43 percent, while the percentage of women identifying themselves as Democrats has only fallen from 58 percent to 53 percent (see Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008, 98). Since 1988, however, women have been the source of change and the partisanship of men has stabilized, with women's Democratic identification increasing by 6 percent and

men's remaining roughly the same (see Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008, 99; Kaufmann 2002; Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef and Lin 2004). Among white Americans, there remains a 10-point gender gap as of 2004, with 46% of white women identifying as Democratic compared to only 36 percent of white men (see Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008, 99).

Existing explanations for the foundations of the gender gap emphasize that men and women share different views about major political issues and attach different levels of salience to those issues (Shapiro and Majahan 1986; Plutzer and Zipp 1996; Norrander 1999; Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008; Mattei 2000; Schlesinger and Heldman 2001). While gender differences exist across elections, particular economic and social conditions may increase or diminish the size of the gap from one election to another depending on (1) differential attitudes on issues, (2) the salience attached to issues, and (3) the interaction of these two related dynamics within a particular social context (see Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002; Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008; Box-Steffensmeier, de Boef and Lin 2004). The same general fault lines of political competition that I argue underlie class-based divisions – various debates over economic issues, cultural conflict, and the vast gray area in between – provide the basis for the gender gap as well.

One of these issues is the ongoing debate about the appropriate size and scope of the social welfare state, with men tending to favor more conservative, restrictive policies and women a more liberal, generous approach. A popular explanation for this finding is that women are simply more economically vulnerable than men and therefore support

parties and candidates who will protect programs that directly provide assistance to their livelihoods (Beutal and Marini 1995; Erie and Rein 1988; Gilligan 1982; May and Stephenson 1994; Piven 1985). Other literature explains the gender gap in social welfare attitudes as a function of white men's desire to maintain a position of cultural and economic superiority over new and perceived subordinate groups in society (Kaufmann 2002). Building on Blumer's theory of group position (Blumer 1958; Bobo 1999; Bobo and Hutchings 1996), Kaufmann (2002) argues that attitudes about social welfare policies are the most salient set of issues driving men's partisanship, but that there is also an indirect relationship between men's attitudes on the so-called culture war issues and their preferences for social welfare policy. The glue that binds these seemingly disparate issue dimensions is men's desire to retain a position of dominance over racial, ethnic and cultural minorities – and women -- who are perceived to disproportionately benefit from social welfare programs.

In addition to social welfare attitudes, culture war issues such as equality under the law for women, gays and lesbians, and abortion are commonly understood as one of the central fault lines in American politics over the past several decades (see Layman and Green 2006). Extant research points to a gender divide on the question of gay rights, with women substantially more supportive of legal protections for gays and lesbians than men (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002).³³ There is, in contrast, little evidence that women are more likely to support the pro-choice position on abortion than men, and similarly, men and women tend to mirror each other on issues of male-female

³³ Americans' attitudes towards gays and lesbians are nonetheless very fluid early in the twenty-first century. A recent poll conducted by Gallup finds that men are now actually *more* likely to agree that "gay and lesbian relations" are morally acceptable than women. Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/05/opinion/05blow.html>.

equality (see Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Kaufmann 2002). It seems clear, however, that an important source of political differences between men and women is that culture war issues are more salient, or more directly connected, to women's political behavior than to men's. The relationship between culture war attitudes and women's political behavior is direct whereas men's culture war attitudes are bundled up with social welfare attitudes in a manner consistent with group position theories. The result of such distinctions is a gender gap that leads women to remain more liberal and more Democratic than men. Kaufmann explains:

Male partisanship has also been affected by the cultural conflicts of the past decade, but for men this influence appears to have been less direct. Increasing male Republicanism may not be a pure manifestation of opposition to abortion or gay rights, per se. Rather, these issues, in conjunction with the civil rights claims of blacks and other minority groups, represent a pervasive challenge to the racial and gender privilege long enjoyed by white men in the United States (2002, 302).

Building on this argument, I suggest that part of why men and women have different responses to the same socio-political stimuli is rooted in their divergent experiences in the class structure: men disproportionately work in those working class occupations in which authoritarianism is socialized and economic vulnerability is high, particularly in an economy that is transitioning from an industrial economy with a large number of blue-collar jobs available to a post-industrial economy in which those jobs are vanishing from sight. This is not to say that women are less economically vulnerable than men – surely, on average, they are not -- but rather that the salience that men attach to social welfare issues, and their connection to culture war issues, may be driven by white men in the working class due to their higher levels of authoritarianism and the threat that is activated by increasing economic insecurity. From a group position

standpoint, men are the dominant group over women and should on average respond more vociferously to changes in economic and cultural supremacy (see Kaufmann 2002).

The theory of group position that explains the growth of the gender gap is highly compatible with my own explanation of why the Republican Party has made inroads with the white working class. If we sub-divide the white working class by gender and create four groups – white working class men, white working class women, white non-working class men, and white non-working class women – then we should find that class differences operate in concert with gender differences. White working class men should be the most authoritarian and the greatest source of the well-documented male movement to the Republican Party. Non-working class white women should be the least authoritarian and the greatest source of the more recent female movement to the Democratic Party. White working class women – though few in numbers -- and non-working class white men ought to be the greatest sources of stability in the gender gap, with the former remaining a mainstay in the Democratic coalition and the latter remaining a key cog in the Republican base.

On the other hand, it may be that white men in the non-working class have the most to lose by the challenges to white male economic and cultural supremacy that is represented by the entrance of women into the workforce in greater numbers over the last generation. If this is the case, then we should expect to see growth in the Republican support of non-working class white men as well. To flesh out these arguments further, I turn to sociological literature on sex segregation and gender differences in socialization in the workplace.

4.3. Class, Occupational Sex Segregation, and Political Implications

Class-based disparities between men and women are well documented.³⁴

Sociological and labor studies of economic inequality between men and women focus on gaps in earnings, skills, workplace authority and opportunities for upward mobility (promotions), among other indicators of disparity. Much of the research in this field zeroes in on earnings inequality as the key dependent variable. Though the gap in earnings between men and women has shrunk considerably since the 1970s (Blau and Kahn 2000; Cancio et al. 1996; Chiu and Leicht 1999; Even and MacPherson 1993; Kim and Polacheck 1994; Smith 1997), women still earn roughly 80 cents for every dollar earned by men (see Leicht 2008). The shrinking of the earnings gap accelerated through the 1970s and 1980s before slowing during the 1990s (see Leicht 2008), a contraction in large part due to the loss in earnings for men rather than gains in the earnings of women (Bernhardt, Morris and Handcock 1995). This is also a period of time during which political scientists observed the greatest movement of men to the Republican Party.

Occupational sex segregation is sustained by a number of influences, including some factors that are choices on the part of individuals and some that are constraints imposed by outside forces (England 1992). Childhood socialization is one factor, as young girls and young boys are socialized to aspire to different sorts of occupations (e.g., Marini and Brinton 1984), and these patterns persist through sex-segregated networks of peers and path dependent patterns of learning through adulthood, thus leading to some degree of self-selection into segregated occupations (see England 1992). Such socialization differences inevitably lead to sex differences in values, as men may be more

³⁴ For a recent review of this literature, see Leicht 2008.

likely to value status, money, authority in workplace, autonomy, taking risks, and working with *things*, while women may aspire to working with *people* and being nurturant or creative at work (see England 1992; Brenner and Tomkiewicz 1979; Herzog 1982; Glenn and Weaver 1982).

On average, men and women have different experiences at work, often work disproportionately with same-sex peers, and look for different rewards from their jobs.³⁵ When men and women go to work, they tend to have very different experiences, social networks, and exposure to distinct ideas and prejudices. While the last decade of literature on the gender gap commonly refers to differences in the economic interests of men and women, explanations beyond women's relatively lower income and greater reliance on social services are rarely offered as mechanisms that may drive the political gender gap.

One study that attributes the growth of the gender gap to the increased labor force participation of women tells a causal story that places women as the agents of change (Manza and Brooks 1998), contrary to more recent understandings of the origins of the gender gap. According to this explanation, women entered the labor force in greater numbers thanks in part to an activist government intervention allowing greater access to jobs and more widespread provision of social services such as childcare, and that greater levels of employment contributed to higher levels of feminist consciousness (Manza and Brooks 1998). However far this narrative may take us for explaining why women did not

³⁵ Of course, a great deal of constraint is also placed on the career paths of men and women that have little to do with individuals' work-life preferences. Employers may discriminate on the basis of sex, if not for pernicious reasons, then simply because one sex has dominated a particular position that comes to be thought of as best performed by one sex or the other (see England 1992).

move to the G.O.P. with men, it belies a great deal of evidence that points to men as the source of *change* in the growing gender gap through the 1980s and is thus limited. While the influx of women into the labor force is key, the causality of this interpretation misses the mark because it explains only the stability of women's political behavior while saying very little about men.

I argue that the intersection of class and sex in employment patterns is a key source of political divisions because occupational experiences influence both economic outcomes and social values. Furthermore, much of the theoretical support for the notion that occupational sex segregation is an important cause of the political gender gap comes from the overlap of group position theory used to explain both phenomena in different bodies of literature. Research on occupational sex segregation points to group threat (e.g., Blalock 1967) as an explanation for the maintenance of gendered occupational composition (see Reskin, McBrier and Kmec 1999). As women and other groups perceived to be subordinate to white men increasingly compete for jobs that were once closed to them, the dominant group reacts by hoarding these jobs and reacting negatively to the subordinate groups. This is true of both professional occupations and among blue-collar jobs, where women are overrepresented in lower-paying plants and men in higher-paying plants (Carrington and Troske 1998). Group competition applies both to women's entry into occupations and with regard to how much authority women hold once they gain entry into an occupation (see Huffman and Cohen 2004). It is likely that the compatibility between group position theory and the gender gap (see Kaufmann 2002) is in part a function of the segregation of the sexes into different occupations; that is, group position theory explains occupational sex segregation, which in turn explains the political

gender gap.³⁶ This is particularly relevant to research on the political behavior of the white working class, as women have never approached parity with men in the occupations that make up the working class.

Two broad sets of political implications are apparent from the segregation of the sexes into different occupations. The first is the obvious consequence that women earn less income and are therefore more likely to favor the economic policies advanced by the Democratic Party, who traditionally champion the interests of those lower on the economic ladder and are rewarded with strong support from low income voters (see, e.g., Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008). The second set of implications relate to socialization processes in the class structure that operate differently for men and women and lead to distinct worldviews. Men are far more likely than women to exercise authority in the workplace (see Huffman and Cohen 2004). As a result, men are more likely to be socialized to value the exercise of authority in the workplace and to feel threatened by (1) challenges from women to their traditional role as authority figures and (2) their lack of authority in the workplace relative to other men.

These expectations are compatible with research that finds authoritarianism to be activated when exposed to threatening conditions (see Stenner 2005). In effect, white men have been under a near-constant state of economic and cultural threat by other groups since income inequality spiked in the 1970s. Furthermore, the observed bump in the Democratic affiliation of women in the 1990s may very well represent a backlash to

³⁶ McVeigh and Sobolewski (2007) find that counties with high levels of occupational sex and racial segregation were more likely to support George W. Bush in the 2004 presidential election. They argue that support for Republicans is highest where segregation is highest and most vulnerable to penetration, as occupational segregation promotes relatively high levels political consensus and weakens efforts on the part of disadvantaged groups to alter the unequal status quo.

the increasingly working class, male G.O.P. The most likely source for such a backlash is among women in the non-working classes who ought to exhibit a strong non-authoritarian worldview relative to men and women in the working class.

4.4. Data and Methods

The data and methods used in this chapter are the same as those used in the previous chapter. As with the preceding chapter, the modeling strategy is to first predict the class effects of occupation on authoritarianism and income and then to calculate direct and indirect effects of class on political alignment as in a path model. This chapter is different in that the models are separated by sex, and then separate models are run on four different sex/class samples: white working class men, white working class women, non-working class white men, and non-working class white women.

4.5. Results

Before I present OLS models of the joint effects of class and gender on political behavior, it is useful to look at some basic descriptive statistics that lend preliminary support for my hypotheses. First, is there evidence that the greatest source of growth in the political gender gap resulted from the movement of working class white men into the Republican Party during the 1980s and 1990s? Figure 4.1 shows the voting trends of white working class men, white non-working class men, white non-working class women, and all white women since 1952. White working class women are not shown because their sample sizes are too small in many years to make meaningful judgments about their voting behavior, but I discuss an overview of their voting pattern in the

coming paragraphs.³⁷ In its stead, I include the voting patterns of all white women so as to give a sense for the degree to which the voting pattern of non-working class women is distinctive.

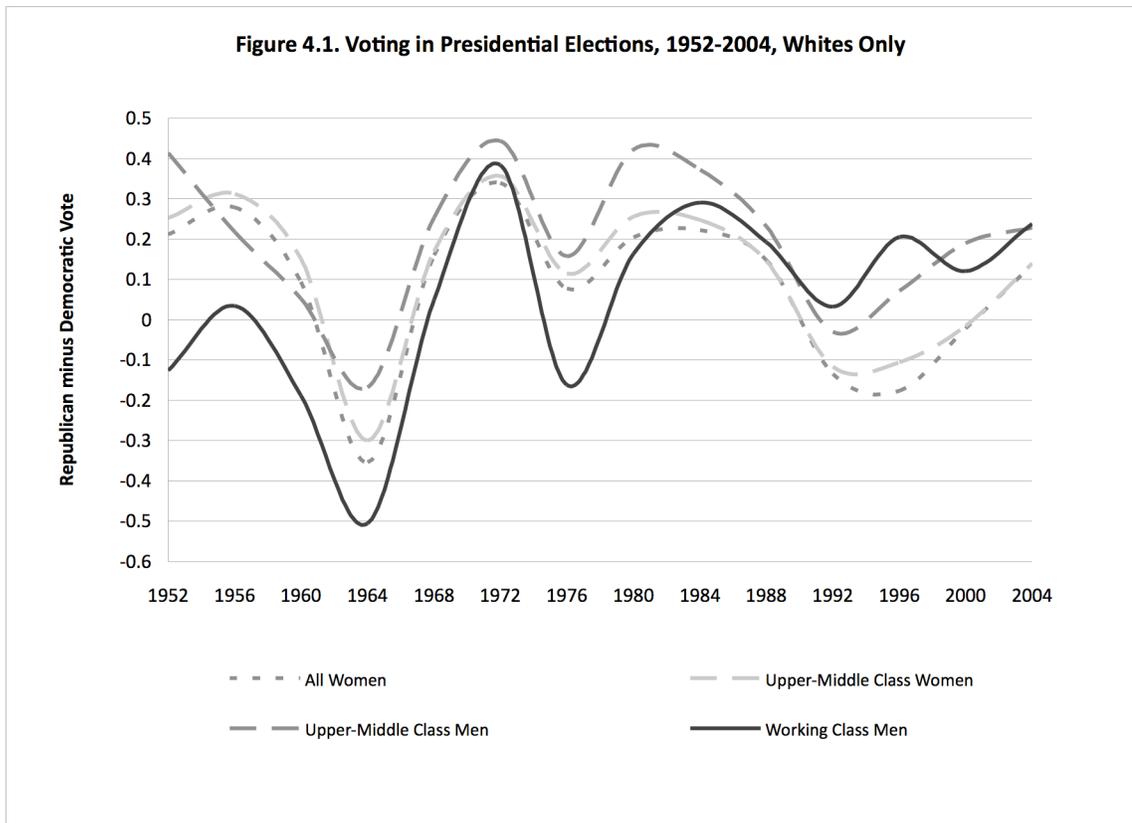


Figure 4.1 supports the argument that the growth in male Republicanism is mostly due to a shift in the politics of white working class men. With the exception of 1964 and 1996, white men outside the working class have voted more Republican than Democratic in every election since 1952.³⁸ In fact, 1980 through 1992 saw a steady erosion in the

³⁷ Since 1984, the ANES sample of white working class women who voted ranges from 13-32 in any given year.

³⁸ The 1996 result is due to the presence of Ross Perot on the ballot. 1964 is the only year in the series in which a majority of white men preferred the Democratic nominee.

Republican support of white non-working class men; in contrast, white working class men have given the Republican nominee more of their votes in every year since 1976. Prior to 1980, working class white men fluctuated in their voting behavior, alternating between Democratic and Republican support. 1980, however, marks a change in the voting of white working class men in which the fluctuating ceased and Republican support became the norm. White women outside of the working class exhibit the same trends as their male, white-collar counterparts, but are consistently more Democratic in their voting. Since 1964, white women in the non-working classes have favored Democratic candidates to Republican candidates only three times: 1992, 1996 and 2000. I focus here on the voting trend of white-collar women because they make up the vast majority of all employed women. Compared with all white women, the trend lines in Figure 4.1 closely track each other, but non-working class women are consistently slightly more Republican than working class white women.

The growth in the gender gap is clearly due first to a pro-Republican switch in the voting behavior of white working class men and then to a pro-Democratic reaction by non-working class white women. As blue-collar jobs began disappearing and the wage gap between men and women shrank – disproportionately because men’s earnings dropped, not because women’s income grew (Bernhardt, Morris, and Handcock 1995) – men in blue-collar occupations reacted by embracing the G.O.P. This coincided with a growing religious right presence in the Republican Party and an increase in the visibility of culture war issues and issues surrounding race relations. It also precipitated a female exodus to Bill Clinton and Al Gore in the elections of 1992, 1996 and 2000. Since 1976, working class white men abandoned political competition with non-working class white

men and instead joined them in Republican coalition; in the elections held in the 1990s, working class white men voted even more Republican than men in the white-collar world. This picture conforms to the narrative presented earlier in the chapter, but of course it leaves many questions yet unanswered.

One obvious omission thus far is what happened to the small number of working class white women over this time frame. White working class women are the most consistently pro-Democratic group of the four class/sex categories, with the exceptions of 1968 and 2000. In 1968, white working class women were slightly more (4 percent) pro-Nixon than their male, working class peers, and in 2000, they were 5 percent less Democratic than their female counterparts in the non-working class. The most pronounced split occurs between men and women in the white working class after 1988, when men continued to vote Republican and women in the white working class rejected the G.O.P.'s presidential nominees in favor of Bill Clinton and Al Gore. However, the sample sizes under consideration are quite small in some years, so we must draw these conclusions with some caution.³⁹

Having examined broad voting trends, I next turn to Table 4.1, which shows descriptive statistics for two variables of interest for class effects on political behavior: income and authoritarianism. The table largely conforms to expectations: working class men are the most authoritarian, with a mean score of .68 on a scale of zero to one, while both women and men in the non-working class exhibit the lowest levels of

³⁹ Looking at the four elections from 1992 to 2004, women in the white working class (N=99) gave 34% of their two-party share of the vote to the Republican nominee whereas men in the white working class (N=202) gave 57% of their two-party vote to the Republican nominee.

authoritarianism at .50 and .51, respectively. Working class women fall closer to working class men, with a mean authoritarianism of .65. Looking at income, working

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics: Authoritarianism and Income by Sex and Occupational Class in the United States, Whites, 1992-2004.

	Authoritarianism	Income
White Working Class Men	.68 (.27) N=421	.53 (.25) N=479
White Working Class Women	.65 (.27) N=138	.44 (.26) N=156
White Non-working class Men	.51 (.31) N=803	.63 (.27) N=860
White Non-working class Women	.50 (.29) N=893	.56 (.28) N=956

Note: Data drawn from American National Election Studies 1992, 2000 and 2004 (pooled) surveys. Entries are means with standard deviations in parentheses. All variables coded from 0-1.

class women have the lowest mean income (.44) and non-working class men the highest (.63), on a scale of zero to one. Working class men out-earn their female peers (.53) and nearly earn as much as white-collar women (.56). Though these are not raw levels of income, they do give a sense of where these groups fall relative to one another. Given the changes in the voting behavior of working class men and non-working class women, the lack of appreciable differences in income between the two groups and the relatively large differences in authoritarianism suggest that authoritarianism may be key to their diverging political behavior.

Table 4.2. The Effect of Class on Authoritarianism and Income in the United States by Sex, Whites, 1992-2004

	Men Authoritarianism	Women Authoritarianism	Men Income	Women Income
White Working Class	.08*** (.02)	.07*** (.03)	-.05*** (.01)	-.08*** (.02)
Education	-.37*** (.04)	-.35*** (.03)	.23*** (.02)	.26*** (.03)
South	.05*** (.02)	.01 (.02)	-.05*** (.01)	-.03** (.01)
Age	-.01 (.05)	-.09* (.05)	.20*** (.04)	.10** (.04)
Religious Traditionalism	.31*** (.03)	.31*** (.03)	--	--
Year 2000	.03* (.02)	.05* (.02)	-.37*** (.01)	-.36*** (.01)
Year 2004	.01 (.02)	.04 (.02)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Constant	.59*** (.04)	.55*** (.03)	.54*** (.02)	.49*** (.02)
R-squared	.25	.23	.49	.46
N	1128	986	1321	1100

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

Table 4.2 shows the results of four models of class effects on authoritarianism and income; the first two models predict authoritarianism for men and women, respectively, and the second two models predict income for men and women, respectively. The table reveals very few differences in the predictors of authoritarianism and income for men and

women. There are two slight differences. First, southern residence predicts greater authoritarianism for men than women, with southern residence producing a 5 percent increase in the authoritarianism of men, but having no influence for women. Second, occupational class has a stronger negative effect on the income of women (-.08) than men (-.05), which is a consistent result with the means presented in Table 4.1. Again, the results of Table 4.2 suggest that authoritarianism is more relevant to understanding class effects on the political behavior of men than women.

Table 4.3 shows the results of the second stage of the path model, replicated from Chapter 3, but on a sample of only men. For comparison, the results for the second stage of the path model for women are presented in Table 4.4. These tables each show five models with dependent variables for the seven-point scale of partisan identification, the seven-point scale of ideological identification, a dichotomous variable for the two-party share of the vote, comparative candidate evaluations and the political alignment index that averages the first four variables across respondents.⁴⁰ Recall that each variable is coded from zero to one with higher values representing the more Republican and/or conservative-leaning responses. To streamline the discussion, I focus primarily on the results from Model 1 in each table, which gives a broad overview of the effects of socio-demographic variables on political behavior.

First, looking at Table 4.3, class has no significant effect on the political alignment of men, nor on any of the measure's constituent parts, but authoritarianism and income each have substantively strong impacts. Moving from the least authoritarian to

⁴⁰ Changing the party ID and ideological ID models to ordered logit, with Republicans, Independents, and Democrats in one model, and Conservatives, Moderates, and Liberals in the other model, does not change the substantive conclusions of these results.

Table 4.3. The Effect of Class and other Socio-demographic Variables on Political Alignment in the United States, Men, Whites, 1992-2004

	Political Alignment	Party ID	Ideological ID	Two-Party GOP Vote	Candidate Evaluations
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
White Working Class	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.03)	-.01 (.02)	.03 (.22)	-.02 (.02)
Authoritarianism	.16*** (.03)	.14*** (.04)	.15*** (.03)	1.33*** (.31)	.13*** (.02)
Income	.24*** (.04)	.22*** (.05)	.16*** (.04)	2.37*** (.52)	.20*** (.04)
Union Household	-.12*** (.02)	-.15*** (.03)	-.03 (.02)	-1.14*** (.23)	-.09*** (.02)
Education	.00 (.04)	.05 (.05)	.05 (.03)	-.33 (.41)	-.05 (.03)
Age	-.07 (.05)	-.14** (.06)	.05 (.05)	-.97* (.53)	-.03 (.04)
South	.00 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	.04 (.19)	.01 (.01)
Religious Traditionalism	.24*** (.03)	.21*** (.03)	.22*** (.03)	2.19*** (.32)	.17*** (.02)
Year 2000	.10*** (.02)	.08*** (.03)	.08*** (.03)	1.17*** (.27)	.09*** (.02)
Year 2004	.06*** (.02)	.06** (.02)	.02 (.02)	.68*** (.22)	.06*** (.02)
Constant	.21*** (.04)	.26*** (.05)	.23*** (.04)	-2.70*** (.55)	.28*** (.03)
R-squared	.18	.11	.16	.15	.16
N	1054	1042	912	706	1048

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression except for Model 4, which presents logit coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 4.4. The Effect of Class and other Socio-demographic Variables on Political Alignment in the United States, Women, Whites, 1992-2004

	Political Alignment	Party ID	Ideological ID	Two-Party GOP Vote	Candidate Evaluations
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
White Working Class	-.04 (.02)	-.03 (.03)	-.03 (.02)	-.27 (.31)	-.04** (.02)
Authoritarianism	.13*** (.03)	.09** (.04)	.11*** (.03)	1.03*** (.34)	.11*** (.02)
Income	.14*** (.04)	.18*** (.05)	.06* (.04)	.92** (.46)	.12*** (.03)
Union Household	-.08*** (.02)	-.12*** (.03)	-.03 (.02)	-.54** (.23)	-.07*** (.02)
Education	-.03 (.03)	-.01 (.05)	-.05 (.03)	-.17 (.40)	-.04 (.03)
Age	-.08 (.05)	-.07 (.07)	.09** (.04)	-1.10* (.58)	-.12*** (.04)
South	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.11 (.20)	.02 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.27*** (.03)	.21*** (.04)	.24*** (.03)	2.49*** (.36)	.22*** (.03)
Year 2000	.06*** (.02)	.08** (.03)	.04* (.02)	.47 (.27)	.05** (.02)
Year 2004	.07*** (.02)	.08*** (.03)	.02 (.02)	.70*** (.23)	.05** (.02)
Constant	.22*** (.04)	.22*** (.06)	.28*** (.04)	-2.25*** (.49)	.30*** (.04)
R-squared	.15	.08	.17	.12	.15
N	895	881	756	645	883

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression except for Model 4, which presents logit coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

the most authoritarian man increases Republican alignment by 16 percent. Moving from the man with lowest to the highest income increases Republican alignment by 24 percent. Belonging to a union household reduces Republican support by 12 percent. These results largely mirror those from Chapter 3, though the effect of income is stronger among a sample of men (.24) than among a sample of both men and women (.19). Calculating the indirect effect of occupational class through authoritarianism ($.08 * .16$) produces an indirect effect of .01. Calculating the indirect effect of occupational class through income produces an effect of -.01. Thus, the total effect of occupation through income and authoritarianism on political alignment for men is zero, which is consistent with the theory and results presented in Chapters 2 and 3.

Table 4.4 replicates Table 4.3 but the sample is restricted only to women. There are some subtle differences in class effects on political behavior for men and women. Looking at Model 5 in Table 4.4, working class occupation predicts a 4 percent decrease in the warmth that women feel towards Republican presidential candidates compared to Democratic nominees; for men, there are no such direct effects. Turning to Model 1, the effect of authoritarianism on political alignment is slightly lower for women (.13) than men (.16), but the effect of income on political behavior is nearly twice as weak (.14) for women as it is for men (.24). As with men, residence in a union household reduces Republican political alignment (-.08). There is also some evidence of differences in the political impact of age for men and women; for women, age predicts more conservative ideological identification (Model 3), a reduced likelihood of voting Republican (Model 4), and cooler feelings for Republican nominees versus Democratic nominees (Model 5), controlling for other factors. For men, age decreases Republican partisan identification

(Model 2) and the likelihood of voting for a Republican (Model 4), but has no impact on ideological identification or comparative feelings towards the candidates. Calculating the indirect effects of occupation through authoritarianism and income on political alignment for women produces similar results for women as it does for men: regarding authoritarianism, the indirect effect is .01 (.07 * .13), and for income, the effect is -.01 (-.08 * .14). For women, as for men, the total effect of occupation on political alignment is zero.

The results thus far offer mixed evidence for the theory set out in this chapter. While it is true that men dominate the white working class, and that these men demonstrate the greatest levels of authoritarianism, Tables 4.2 through 4.4 show that class appears to influence political alignment similarly for men and women; that is, men and women are both cross-pressured by competing influences of occupational class to produce a total effect on political alignment of zero. Still, Figure 4.1 demonstrated that the growth of the gender gap is attributed to a great extent to the movement of white working class men into the Republican fold in the 1980s and then a reaction among white women – the greatest number of whom occupy non-working class jobs – into the Democratic coalition in the 1990s.

Occupational sex segregation and differing political salience for income and authoritarianism are still logically connected to the political divide between the sexes, but the models presented thus far have been unable to fully demonstrate their relevance. In order to dig a bit deeper, Table 4.5 replicates Model 1 from Tables 4.3 and 4.4, but separates the samples into four categories: white working class men, white working class women, white non-working class men, and white non-working class women. These

models shed greater light on how different socio-demographic variables influence political alignment when we examine sub-samples of voters at the intersection of class and sex.

Looking first at white working class men, authoritarianism has a strong influence on political alignment: among white working class men, moving from the least authoritarian to the most authoritarian produces a 10 percent increase in Republican support. Income has an even stronger effect, with a 26 percent increase in conservative political behavior from the lowest to the highest level of income. Union household status has an effect nearly equal to that of authoritarianism (-.11), but in the direction of Democratic support. Religion also has an effect similar to that of authoritarian; moving from the least religious to the most religious produces a 13 percent increase in Republicanism.

Turning next to the model of white working class women, only two factors significantly influence their political behavior: income and union household status. The effect of moving from the white working class woman with the lowest to the highest earnings produces a 22 percent increase in Republican alignment. On the other hand, belonging to a union household decreases Republican support by 23 percent. Two notable null findings jump out. The first, and most germane to my theory, is that authoritarianism does not explain the political behavior of women in the white working class. The second is that religious beliefs are also unimportant to connecting white working class women to the parties and their candidates.

Table 4.5. The Effect of Socio-demographic Variables on Political Alignment Index in the United States, by Class and Sex, Whites, 1992-2004

	White Working Class Men	White Working Class Women	White Non-working class Men	White Non-working class Women
Authoritarianism	.10** (.05)	.02 (.08)	.18*** (.03)	.13*** (.04)
Income	.26*** (.06)	.22* (.11)	.23*** (.05)	.14*** (.04)
Union Household	-.11*** (.03)	-.23*** (.05)	-.13*** (.03)	.06*** (.02)
Education	-.07 (.07)	.11 (.13)	.03 (.04)	-.04 (.04)
Age	-.05 (.07)	-.05 (.11)	-.08 (.07)	-.08 (.06)
South	.02 (.03)	-.07 (.05)	-.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.13*** (.05)	.11 (.08)	.29*** (.03)	.30*** (.04)
Year 2000	.13*** (.04)	.05 (.06)	.09*** (.03)	.07** (.03)
Year 2004	.09*** (.03)	.02 (.06)	.04 (.03)	.07*** (.02)
Constant	.27*** (.06)	.41 (.11)	.18*** (.05)	.20*** (.05)
R-squared	.12	.19	.22	.16
N	364	118	690	777

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Ordinary least squares regression. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1.

* p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Recall from Table 4.1 that blue-collar women are nearly as authoritarian (.65) as blue-collar men (.68); nonetheless, authoritarian values appear to be irrelevant to determining their political support. Instead, the authoritarianism of the white working class is attributable almost entirely to men, whose economic and cultural supremacy relative to women and other minorities has been under assault for decades. This is a key piece of evidence in support of my explanation of white working class men's departure from the Democratic base: as the issues that are salient to the authoritarian divide in American politics grew in salience, and as the Republican and Democratic parties grew polarized on these issues, white working class men shifted to the G.O.P. White working class women, on the other hand, were the greatest source of support for the Democratic Party among employed, white voters. This is because white working class women are predominantly motivated by their lower levels of income and their association with labor unions. The null result on religious traditionalism for white working class women further lends support to this interpretation, as the issues and identities that animate the religious divide closely overlap with those that define the authoritarian divide.⁴¹

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that the Democratic Party's problem attracting the support of white men is most apparent among white working class men. The growth of the gender gap in the 1980s is primarily driven by a switch in the voting patterns of white working class men from Democratic to Republican presidential candidates. While white

⁴¹ Although the coefficients for authoritarianism for the non-working class on political alignment are larger than those of white working class men, this is likely a function of more variation in the authoritarianism of the non-working class (see Table 4.1).

men outside of the working class have always been the base of the Republican Party, white working class men used to be much more Democratic.

Part of the explanation for this change in the political behavior of white working class men is that their relatively greater levels of authoritarianism were paired with a political context in which the issues most relevant to the authoritarian divide in American politics became more prominent on the political agenda. The Republican Party after the 1970s has seen a growth in its cultural conservatism in addition to its traditional identity as the party of big business, Wall St., and high-income voters. Whereas the Democratic Party was once associated with the working class, union worker, the 1960s and 1970s saw a change to a party that associated with feminists, racial and ethnic minorities, and gays and lesbians. Issues relevant to these social groups—welfare, immigration, abortion, gay rights—split the white working class from the cultural liberalism of the new priorities of the Democratic Party.

The movement of the white working class to the Republican Party is not, as is commonly assumed (see Frank 2004), inconsistent with their class position. As we learned in Chapter 3, occupation predicts authoritarianism at substantively higher levels than it does income. Socialization processes in the occupational structure lead to different values, and values are important determinants of political behavior. This general explanation of the connection between the white working class and the Republican Party has implications for the gender gap as well. Men and women experience different socialization processes as a result of occupational sex segregation. Because the white working class is overwhelmingly male, and because working class occupations lead to increased authoritarianism, white working class men are especially

likely to support a party that takes the more authoritarian position on a range of issues. In recent decades, that party is the G.O.P. (Hetherington and Weiler 2009).

The argument presented in this chapter points to compatibility between research on authoritarianism and group position theories of political behavior. A key characteristic of authoritarianism is ethnocentrism (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009). A group position theory of the gender gap holds that white men are more Republican than women due to a desire to maintain their cultural and economic superiority over other groups (see Kaufmann 2002). Within such conditions of threat (see Stenner 2005), white men with higher levels of authoritarianism are most susceptible to react to groups who do not conform to their cultural values with political antagonism. Authoritarianism is thus a mechanism through which white working class men express their superior group position.

Chapter 5

Cross-Pressured on the Issues: Immigration, the Social Welfare State, Defense Spending, the Culture Wars, Racial Issues and the Political Behavior of the White Working Class

5.1. Introduction: Which Issues Divide?

The previous chapters sketch an initial portrait of the white working class as a group that is attracted to the cultural traditionalism of the Republican Party but still finds the economic program of the Democratic Party appealing, albeit to a limited extent. Contrary to existing accounts of their political behavior, the white working class is neither monolithically Democratic nor Republican; instead, their class position pushes and pulls them in different directions on the basis of different aspects of each party's brand. In Chapter 3, I established that the white working class is, on average, more authoritarian and has less income than white Americans employed outside the working class. Higher levels of authoritarianism translate into greater Republicanism while lower levels of income and residing in a union household work to the political benefit of Democrats.

In Chapter 4, I reported a gendered division within these findings. Because the white working class is overwhelmingly male, the movement of these voters into the Republican coalition over the last thirty years is primarily driven by the departure of white working class men from the Democratic base. Authoritarianism is a significant predictor of the political alignment of white working class men, but not of white working class women. Further exacerbating the blue-collar gender gap is that those in the white working class with lower income are disproportionately female. These results are

consistent with a theory of the class effects on political behavior that accounts for distinct paths of influence through both the pocketbook and social value orientations.

The discussion of the results in Chapters 3 and 4 makes reference to the issues that connect voters to their partisan loyalties, but these assumptions are not explicitly tested. In this chapter, I turn to five distinct issue dimensions that are salient in contemporary American politics and examine differences in opinion on these issues by class and sex. Those issues under consideration are immigration, social welfare spending, defense spending, culture war issues such as gay and lesbian rights and abortion, and racial issues such as affirmative action and the death penalty.

On some of these issues, class effects clearly predict a unidirectional relationship, while on others, the relationship results in cross-pressures. Immigration is a good example in which occupation, income, and authoritarianism should all lead working class whites to favor more restrictive immigration policy, as immigrants represent threats to the economic and cultural standing of working class whites (e.g., Burns and Gimpel; Wilson 2001; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; see full review in Ch. 2). On issues that touch upon the culture wars, authoritarianism predicts lower support for gay and lesbian rights and reproductive freedom for women (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009). On other issues, class effects lead voters in competing directions. Social welfare policies are more beneficial to lower income citizens, particularly women, but authoritarian values lead voters to oppose welfare policies that are perceived to support deviant personal behavior or other groups (see review in Ch. 2). A similar set of expectations relate to racial issues, on which authoritarians should support the death penalty and oppose efforts on the part of the government to ensure equal opportunity through affirmative action. Defense

spending is an issue on which authoritarians should be supportive, but those with lower income may prefer spending on butter rather than guns.

This chapter takes the form of a broad survey of the issues that animate partisan and ideological conflict and their relevance to understanding the politics of the white working class. For each set of issues, I summarize my findings according to my initial expectations, as laid out in Chapter 2. At the conclusion of the chapter, I offer an interpretation of what the sum of these parts means for understanding the role of the white working class in the contemporary political divide. I argue that the current set of salient issues in American politics works to the benefit of the Republican Party for courting white working class votes, but there are perils to this electoral strategy for the future success of the party.

5.2. Initial Findings

Table 5.1 shows descriptive statistics of working and non-working class opinion for each of the major issue dimensions broken down by sex. Starting with immigration, there is evidence of greater support for more restrictive immigration policy among the white working class, with a mean support of .72 versus .64 for the non-working class.⁴² Working class men are the most supportive of restrictive immigration policy (mean=.73), with non-working class men the least supportive (mean=.62). This split is particularly interesting given the competing influences within the Republican Party on the immigration issue, with the traditional business wing of the party in favor of having cheap immigrant labor and the culturally populist, more authoritarian wing of the party

⁴² Difference in means is significant at $p < .001$.

Table 5.1. Descriptive Statistics: Class, Sex, and Attitudes on Major Issues in the United States, 1992-2004 (Whites only).

	Working Class	Non-Working Class	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non-Working Class Men	Non-Working Class Women
Immigration	.72 (.24) N=624	.64 (.25) N=1800	.73 (.24) N=469	.71 (.25) N=155	.62 (.25) N=852	.66 (.25) N=948
Social Welfare	.36 (.18) N=687	.40 (.20) N=1990	.38 (.18) N=514	.30 (.17) N=173	.45 (.21) N=930	.35 (.18) N=1060
Racial Issues	.79 (.22) N=681	.74 (.24) N=1984	.80 (.21) N=512	.74 (.24) N=169	.75 (.23) N=928	.72 (.25) N=1056
Defense Spending	.52 (.25) N=538	.49 (.24) N=1532	.54 (.24) N=418	.47 (.25) N=120	.49 (.24) N=756	.48 (.25) N=776
Culture War Issues	.43 (.26) N=687	.33 (.27) N=1987	.46 (.25) N=514	.35 (.28) N=173	.39 (.28) N=931	.28 (.26) N=1056
Gay & Lesbian Rights	.55 (.34) N=630	.41 (.34) N=1861	.59 (.32) N=474	.43 (.36) N=156	.50 (.35) N=876	.34 (.32) N=985
Abortion	.36 (.36) N=659	.31 (.35) N=1895	.36 (.35) N=498	.37 (.37) N=161	.33 (.34) N=891	.29 (.35) N=1004

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Entries are means, with standard deviations in parentheses. For measurement of each issue dimension, see descriptions in Chapter 2. All variables are scaled from liberal to conservative, with higher values indicating more conservative opinion.

seeking to preserve American cultural traditions and economic security from the threat of new immigrant populations. If, as suggested in Chapter 4, the main source of new working class support for the Republican Party in recent decades is from working class white men, then the G.O.P. will have a delicate balancing act to perform in the coming years between the business interests in the party and the new authoritarian base of working class white men regarding the immigration issue. Still, the issue of immigration, if handled deftly by Republicans, could work in the short term to keep the white working class support that they have gained in recent decades, as Democrats fail to offer a more restrictive alternative.

Turning our attention next to social welfare issues, there are the expected divisions between men and women within and between the working and non-working classes. While the white working class (mean=.36) views social welfare spending more favorably than the non-working class (mean=.40), and this difference is statistically meaningful ($p < .01$), the split is driven primarily by the wide margin between working class white women (mean=.30) and non-working class white men (mean=.45). In fact, non-working class women are more supportive of a generous social welfare state (.35) than working class men (.38). Here we have a set of issues that should work to the Democrats' favor among the white working class, but gender differences complicate the relationship.

For racial issues, there is the expected evidence of a more racially conservative working class (mean=.79) compared to the non-working class (mean=.74), with white working class men the most conservative on racial issues (mean=.80) and non-working class white women the most liberal (mean=.72). These results lend support to the

conventional wisdom that holds that the white working class defected from the Democratic Party in part because of the entrance of African Americans into the base of the party following the Civil Rights Act and related legislation in the 1960s.

There is a small difference between the working class and the non-working class on the issue of defense spending, with those in the working class slightly more disposed to favor increased spending (mean=.52) than those outside of the working class (mean=.49). Though the difference between the classes is statistically significant ($p < .01$), the greatest difference of opinion on defense spending is within the working class between men (mean=.54) and women (mean=.47). Again, this is an issue on which Republicans can count on the support of the white working class, but the base of working class support for defense spending is primarily a function of the male dominance of these occupations.

A pronounced class divide is apparent on issues related to the culture wars, particularly regarding the matter of gay rights. Because the issue of gay rights represents such a dramatic class divide, I focus much of the rest of my discussion of the class basis of the culture wars on this set of issues. The white working class is far more conservative on issues related to gay rights (mean=.55) than those outside of the working class (mean=.41), with much of this finding driven by a split between working class white men (mean=.59) and non-working class white women (mean=.34). It is plausible, on the basis of this finding, to suggest that the Republican Party's opposition to increased tolerance and civil equality for gays and lesbians has been a particularly important source of continued white working class support for the G.O.P. as the issue has increased in prominence in recent decades. The exacerbation of the class divide that gender adds to

the mix is also particularly noteworthy, as previous research (Kaufmann 2002) points to gay rights as an important piece of the puzzle in understanding the contemporary gender gap. On other culture war issues, such as abortion, there is a much smaller but nonetheless apparent class division, with the working class more conservative (mean=.36) than the non-working class (.31), and non-working class women the most liberal (mean=.29).

The totality of these descriptive statistics makes some key connections between white working class opinion on important issues and the shift in support of this constituency from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party since the 1970s. On almost every issue, the Republicans have an advantage among these voters. The Republican position on immigration is closer to the white working class position on immigration than the Democrats. The Republican position on defense spending is closer to the white working class position on defense spending than the Democrats. The Republican position on racial issues is closer to the white working class position on racial issues than the Democrats. The Republican position on culture war issues such as gay rights and abortion is closer to the white working class position on culture war issues than the Democrats. On only one set of issues—social welfare spending—is the Democratic Party closer to the white working class position than the Republican Party, but this is traditionally understood as a complex and racialized issue dimension. For those, such as Thomas Frank (2004), who are puzzled as to why the white working class would support the Republican Party over the Democrats, these results suggest a simple answer. White working class voters are directly translating their policy preferences into support for political candidates who share their views.

5.3. Multivariate Models and Path Analysis of Each Issue

Having reviewed a descriptive overview of the distinctive policy attitudes of the white working class, I now turn to multivariate models of predictors of each set of issue preferences. For each issue dimension, I model class alongside a number of other relevant variables to isolate the unique effects of class. Then, using the results from Chapters 3 and 4, I estimate the direct, indirect, and total effects of class on each set of issues, also separating out men and women in order to evaluate the extent to which class operates differently according to the expectations derived from my discussion of the gender gap.⁴³ The first issue that I analyze is immigration, shown in Table 5.2.

Looking at Table 5.2, it is apparent that the white working class is more favorable towards restrictive immigration policy than whites in other occupations, with a positive and significant coefficient of .04. This effect is especially evident among men, whereas class is an insignificant predictor of immigration attitudes among women. The only two variables that have a greater effect than holding a working class occupation are related to class. Education has the strongest effect; moving from the lowest level of education to the highest level reduces support for restrictive immigration policy by 18 percent. The other variable with a strong effect on immigration attitudes is authoritarianism, which as we know from Chapter 3, is itself influenced by class. Income has no discernible effect on attitudes towards immigration policy.

Table 5.3 shows the direct, indirect, and total effects of class on immigration policy, both for men and women. For men, there is a substantively meaningful direct

⁴³ In the Appendix, these models are further broken down by class-sex samples of white working class men, white working class women, white non-working class men, and white-non-working class women.

Table 5.2. A Model of Immigration Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.04*** (.02)	.05*** (.02)	.02 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.13*** (.02)	.10*** (.03)	.16*** (.03)
Income	.02 (.03)	.02 (.04)	.02 (.04)
Union	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Household Education	-.18*** (.03)	-.21*** (.04)	-.13*** (.03)
Sex	.03** (.02)	--	--
Age	.01 (.03)	.07 (.05)	-.04 (.05)
South	.01 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.03)
Year 2000	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Year 2004	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.03)	.00 (.02)
Constant	.65*** (.03)	.67*** (.04)	.65*** (.04)
R-squared	.10	.12	.08
N	1908	1034	874

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

Table 5.3. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Immigration

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	.04	0	.01	.05
Men	.05	0	.01	.06
Women	0	0	.01	.01

effect from working class occupation to preferences for more restrictive immigration policy of .05, holding all other variables at their means. In addition to this direct effect, the indirect effect of occupation through authoritarianism is .01, for a total positive effect of .06. For women, there is no such direct effect, leaving only an indirect effect of .01 for occupation working through authoritarianism to increase preferences for more restrictive immigration policy. Thus, class works to influence the attitudes of men on immigration policy to a greater extent than it influences the attitudes of women. These results are mostly consistent with my theoretical expectations, with the only surprise being the lack of a relationship between income and immigration attitudes. White working class men are both economically and culturally threatened by immigrants, whereas women express less opposition to immigration and such class-based opposition is primarily driven by authoritarianism.

Table 5.4 turns our attention from immigration policy to issues surrounding social welfare spending. As predicted above, and by literature suggesting a continued relationship between the white working class and the Democratic Party (e.g., Bartels 2008; Stonecash 2000), the effect of holding a working class occupation reduces support for less generous welfare policy by 4 percentage points, which is the same effect of

residing in a union household. Furthermore, a change from the lowest to the highest level of income leads to much stronger support (19 percentage points) for less generous welfare policies, holding all other variables at their means; since the white working class earns less income than whites in other occupations, the direct relationship from working class occupation to the desire for more social welfare spending is reinforced by the indirect relationship of occupation through income. On the other hand, moving from the least to the most authoritarian worldview, setting all other variables at their means, leads to a five-percentage point increase in support for more restrictive welfare policies. As the first column of Table 5.4 shows, sex is an important predictor of attitudes on social welfare policy, with women more liberal than men by 9 percentage points.

Table 5.5 summarizes the direct, indirect, and total effects of occupation on social welfare attitudes. Once again, occupation is a much stronger predictor of men's issue preferences than women's, with the total effect of holding a working class occupation reducing support for less social welfare spending six times as large for men (-.06) than for women (-.01). The indirect effect of occupation through income contributes to white working class's support for more social welfare spending, but not nearly as strongly as the direct occupational effect. Thus, extant literature that posits a relationship between working class income levels and support for Democratic candidates on social welfare issues actually underestimates the nature of this relationship by ignoring occupational effects. Although authoritarianism is related to greater support for conservative social welfare policies, the indirect effect is too small to outweigh the direct relationship between occupation and social welfare preferences.

Table 5.4. A Model of Social Welfare Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	-.04*** (.01)	-.05*** (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Authoritarianism	.05*** (.02)	.06*** (.02)	.03 (.02)
Income	.19*** (.02)	.22*** (.03)	.16*** (.03)
Union Household Education	-.04*** (.01)	-.03** (.02)	-.05*** (.01)
Sex	.05*** (.02)	.05* (.03)	.07** (.03)
Age	-.09*** (.01)	--	--
South	.07*** (.02)	.01 (.04)	.13*** (.03)
Religious Traditionalism	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Year 2000	.09*** (.02)	.08*** (.02)	.10*** (.02)
Year 2004	.01 (.01)	.03* (.02)	.00 (.02)
Constant	-.04 (.01)	-.04** (.02)	-.05*** (.01)
R-squared	.22*** (.02)	.22*** (.03)	.13*** (.03)
N	.16	.12	.12
	1951	1055	896

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 5.5. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Social Welfare (Whites only).

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	-.04	-.01	<.01	-.05
Men	-.05	-.01	<.01	-.06
Women	0	-.01	0	-.01

The next set of models, shown in Table 5.6, examines the relevance of class to racial issue attitudes, specifically, affirmative action policies, government aid to blacks, and the death penalty. Here, the evidence suggests that class effects cancel each other out to produce very little influence on racial issue attitudes. There is no evidence of a direct relationship from working class occupation to racial issues attitudes. However, increases in authoritarianism lead to more racially conservative issue preferences; moving from the least to the most authoritarian worldview produces a 15-percentage point increase in racial issue conservatism. On the other hand, increases in income produce a nearly-equivalent 17-percentage point increase in racial issue conservatism.

As Table 5.7 shows, the total effect of working class occupation on racial issue attitudes is zero. Although the white working class is more authoritarian than those outside of the working class, they also earn less income, thereby canceling out the political impact of working class authoritarianism on racial issue attitudes.⁴⁴ To the extent that the white working class is more conservative on racial issues, education is the

⁴⁴ Of course, a white working class individual that has high income (e.g., a plumber) and high authoritarianism is likely to be especially racially conservative, so on an individual level, these dynamics may play out quite differently.

primary causal mechanism by which this is manifested, not class per se. The relationship between class and racial issue attitudes is very similar for men and women. These results are somewhat surprising given the extant literature's focus on race relations as a driving force behind the defection of working class whites from the Democratic Party.

A similar story—that of conflicting class effects—is apparent for defense spending. Table 5.8 reveals no direct relationship but instead shows evidence of two indirect relationships between holding a working class occupation and attitudes towards defense spending. Increases in authoritarianism lead to greater support for more defense spending, as expected. Moving from the lowest to the highest levels of authoritarianism produces a 9-percentage point increase in favor of defense spending. The total class effects on attitudes towards defense spending are confounded, however, by the positive relationship between income and more hawkish preferences. Moving from the lowest to the highest income bracket increases support for defense spending by 12 percentage points. Once again, the total effects of class on an issue amounts to zero, as shown in Table 5.9. To the extent that the white working class is more favorably disposed to increased government spending on defense, it is a result of the negative relationship between education and support for defense spending, but not a class effect per se. Unsurprisingly, men are more likely than women to support spending on guns instead of butter. These results confirm expectations that class leads to cross-pressures on defense spending.

Table 5.6 A Model of Racial Issue Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.01 (.01)	.01 (.02)	.00 (.02)
Authoritarianism	.15*** (.02)	.16*** (.02)	.15*** (.03)
Income	.17*** (.03)	.21*** (.04)	.13*** (.04)
Union Household Education	-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Sex	-.13*** (.02)	-.14*** (.03)	-.12*** (.04)
Age	-.02 (.01)	--	--
South	-.02 (.03)	-.03 (.04)	.00 (.05)
Religious Traditionalism	.03*** (.01)	.02 (.01)	.04*** (.02)
Year 2000	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)	-.02 (.03)
Year 2004	.07*** (.02)	.08*** (.02)	.07** (.02)
Constant	-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
R-squared	.63*** (.03)	.61*** (.04)	.64*** (.04)
N	.10	.12	.08
	1950	1055	895

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 5.7. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Racial Issues (Whites only).

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	0	-.01	.01	0
Men	0	-.01.	.01	0
Women	0	-.01	.01	0

Two issues associated with the culture wars—gay and lesbian rights and abortion—conclude my survey of the political issues that matter to the white working class. Table 5.10 reveals no direct relationship between occupation or income regarding preferences on gay and lesbian rights, but there is a very strong relationship between authoritarianism and support for extending fewer civil rights to gays and lesbians. The most authoritarian voter is 22 percentage points more conservative on gay and lesbian rights than the least authoritarian position, setting all other variables at their means. As seen in Table 5.11, the total effect of occupation on conservative views on gay and lesbian rights, channeled indirectly through authoritarianism, is .02. Though this effect is the same for both men and women, women are dramatically less conservative on gay and lesbian rights than men. These results are consistent with expectations discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. The white working class is likely attracted to the Republican Party in part because of their oppositional stance towards gays and lesbians.

Table 5.8. A Model of Defense Spending Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.00 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.09*** (.02)	.11*** (.03)	.08** (.03)
Income	.12*** (.03)	.11*** (.04)	.12** (.04)
Union	.00 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)
Household Education	-.15*** (.03)	-.14*** (.04)	-.16*** (.04)
Sex	-.04*** (.01)	--	--
Age	.08** (.03)	.09** (.05)	.08 (.05)
South	.03** (.01)	.01 (.02)	.05** (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.12*** (.02)	.11*** (.03)	.12*** (.03)
Year 2000	.23*** (.02)	.24*** (.02)	.22*** (.03)
Year 2004	.20*** (.01)	.21*** (.02)	.19*** (.02)
Constant	.29*** (.03)	.28*** (.04)	.25*** (.05)
R-squared	.26	.27	.24
N	1525	869	656

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 5.9. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Defense Spending (Whites only).

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	0	-.01	.01	0
Men	0	-.01	.01	0
Women	0	-.01	.01	0

When it comes to attitudes towards abortion, there are class effects for women that run through both authoritarianism and income, but for men, the only class effect is through authoritarianism. There are no direct effects of holding a working class occupation on attitudes towards abortion. Table 5.12 shows that income is a significant predictor of women's preferences regarding the legalization of abortion, but the same is not true of men. Increases in income reduce conservative views on abortion for women ($\beta = -.08$). For both men ($\beta = .13$) and women ($\beta = .17$), higher levels of authoritarianism produce more restrictive preferences on the legalization of abortion. Table 5.13 shows the indirect and total effects of class on opinion towards abortion for men and women, with class having a stronger total effect ($\beta = .02$) for women than for men ($\beta = .01$). The stronger class effects on abortion compared to gay and lesbian rights is likely due to the greater influence of religious traditionalism on views towards abortion compared to gay and lesbian rights. In sum, class effects on abortion attitudes are somewhat weaker than expected, but there remains a statistically significant, indirect relationship from class through authoritarianism.

Table 5.10. A Model of Gay Rights Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.22*** (.02)	.22*** (.03)	.22*** (.04)
Income	.04 (.03)	.02 (.05)	.05 (.05)
Union Household Education	-.04** (.02)	-.05** (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Sex	-.13*** (.03)	-.16*** (.04)	-.11** (.04)
Age	-.17*** (.01)	--	--
South	.14*** (.04)	.20*** (.06)	.09 (.06)
Religious Traditionalism	.02 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.04* (.02)
Year 2000	.37*** (.02)	.34*** (.03)	.40*** (.04)
Year 2004	-.13*** (.02)	-.12*** (.03)	-.14*** (.03)
Constant	-.19*** (.02)	-.21*** (.02)	-.17*** (.02)
R-squared	.31*** (.04)	.34*** (.05)	.12** (.05)
N	.34	.29	.32
	1948	1054	894

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 5.11. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Gay Rights (Whites only).

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	0	0	.02	.02
Men	0	0	.02	.02
Women	0	0	.02	.02

5.4. Conclusion:

The results of this chapter conform to expectations for the most part. On immigration, I anticipated evidence of both economic and cultural threat from the white working class, and I expected this relationship to differ for men and women. Indeed, there are both direct occupational effects and indirect effects through authoritarianism that lead to a more restrictive posture towards immigration policy for men, but only an indirect effect through authoritarianism for women. On social welfare policy, I expected the white working class to prefer more generous policies due to their relatively lower levels of income, but I also predicted that authoritarianism would reduce support for social welfare spending due to the racialized nature of the framing of the issue. There was substantially greater support for the economic aspect of my expectation, with a direct effect of occupation for more liberal social welfare policies and a similar indirect effect through income, but the confounding effects of authoritarianism were comparatively weaker. The white working class on balance favors more generous welfare policies than those outside of the working class.

Table 5.12. A Model of Abortion Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004
(Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)	.03 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.15*** (.02)	.13*** (.03)	.17*** (.04)
Income	-.05 (.03)	-.02 (.05)	-.08* (.05)
Union Household Education	-.02 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	.00 (.03)
Sex	-.14*** (.03)	-.13*** (.04)	-.18*** (.05)
Age	-.07*** (.01)	--	--
South	-.09** (.04)	.02 (.06)	-.21*** (.06)
Religious Traditionalism	-.02 (.01)	-.02 (.02)	-.03 (.02)
Year 2000	.58*** (.02)	.59*** (.03)	.57*** (.04)
Year 2004	.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)	.02 (.03)
Constant	.09*** (.02)	.07*** (.02)	.13*** (.02)
R-squared	.11*** (.04)	.07 (.05)	.11** (.05)
N	.31	.31	.32
	1919	1039	880

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 5.13. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Occupational Class through Income and Authoritarianism on Attitudes Towards Abortion (Whites only).

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect Income	Indirect Effect Authoritarianism	Total Effect
All	0	0	.01	.01
Men	0	0	.01	.01
Women	0	.01	.01	.02

When it comes to racial issues such as affirmative action, government aid to blacks, and the death penalty, my test of the extant literature's explanation for white flight from the Democratic coalition receives little support due to class effects working at cross-purposes. From an authoritarian standpoint, the white working class is more conservative on racial issues. However, when income is taken into consideration, those outside of the working class are also racially conservative. The total effect of class on racial issue attitudes actually amounts to zero. To the extent that the white working class is more racially conservative than those outside of the working class, this relationship is driven by other factors, such as education.

For defense spending, a similar story emerges. Although authoritarianism leads the white working class to a more hawkish posture on defense spending, a positive linear relationship between income and defense spending mediates the total class effects. Again, my theory of competing class effects gains support, as the total effect of class on defense spending amounts to zero.

When it comes to the culture wars, my expectations for the effects of class are supported, as authoritarianism leads to more conservative attitudes on both gay and lesbian rights and abortion. The effects are stronger for men on gay and lesbian rights,

whereas they are stronger for women on abortion. These results in particular provide further evidence for the notion that differences of opinion between the sexes on gay and lesbian rights are relevant to understanding the gender gap (see Kaufmann 2002). I add to this argument by demonstrating the contributing effects of class.

These results shed considerable light on what motivates the political behavior of the white working class. The premise of much hand-wringing by commentators on the left (e.g., Frank 2004) is that the white working class is trending Republican in a manner that is contrary to their objective interests. The only way that such an argument can stand is if we ignore the overwhelming overlap between positions taken by the Republican Party and the preferences of the white working class. The descriptive statistics presented at the beginning of this chapter should disabuse anyone of the notion that the white working class supports the Republican Party despite the G.O.P. advancing policies that are out of touch with their preferences. On only one set of issues—social welfare provision—does the white working class fall closer to the Democratic Party. On all other issues, the Republicans are more representative of white working class opinion.

On a different note, revisionist accounts of the politics of the white working class that ignore non-economic issues and maintain that the relationship between the white working class and the Democratic Party has remained unperturbed over the last several decades (Bartels 2008; Stonecash 2000) must confront the reality that the social welfare policies most closely associated with the income-based class interests of the white working class is a myopic view their political behavior. On both sides of the debate in the extant literature, analyses would benefit from a broader perspective of how class works to shape political preferences.

The findings in this chapter do not present an unqualified rosy picture for the Republican Party's courting of the white working class. On the issue of immigration, in particular, the white working class represents a conservative force within the Republican base that is likely to remain hostile to the pro-immigration position of business interests that comprise a separate and important part of the party's base. This issue is especially relevant to white working class men. Although the Democratic Party presents an even more liberal alternative, the Republican Party finds itself walking a tight rope between a socially conservative, anti-immigration, white working class base on one side, a pro-business, pro-immigration non-working class base on the other side, and the prospect of losing a generation of Latino voters as they become the largest non-white minority group in the country. Whereas decades of attrition have essentially liberated the Democratic Party from having to concern themselves with the preferences of the white working class in their pursuit of Latino voters, Republicans have spent decades attracting a bloc of voters that is now shrinking as it simultaneously becomes more embedded in the base of their party. If economic threat, authoritarian values, and negative ethnic out-group affect are the primary causal mechanisms through which the white working class opposes less restrictive immigration policy, then the G.O.P. will may have an increasingly difficult time assembling a winning coalition of voters in elections in the near-future.

When it comes to the culture wars, and particularly the issue of gay and lesbian rights, the Republican Party finds itself in a similar long-term predicament. While the white working class is conservative on gay and lesbian rights, the trajectory of public opinion more broadly is in the direction of increased tolerance (see Brewer 2003). On

this, and other issues, the Republican Party will have to reconcile an increasingly authoritarian base with an increasingly diverse and socially tolerant American public.

In sum, class effects lead the white working class closer to the Republican Party's position on some issues (e.g., immigration, gay and lesbian rights, abortion), closer to the Democrats on one set of issues (social welfare spending), and to a stalemate on other issues (racial issues and defense spending). On balance, the Republican Party benefits from class effects within the white working class on more issues than do their Democratic opponents. The next step in the analysis is to dig deeper into the causes and consequences of these issue preferences for the white working class.

Chapter 6: The Values and Group Dynamics that Underlie the Political Behavior of the White Working Class

6.1. Introduction: Affect, Values, and the White Working Class

In the preceding chapters, I uncovered a relationship between working class occupations, economic interests, and authoritarian values. As a result of a working class occupation's negative effect on income, the white working class is drawn to the Democratic Party. However, the greater authoritarianism of the working class compared to the non-working class works to the benefit of the Republican Party.

The policies on which the Democratic Party is a viable alternative for the white working class include those issues related to social welfare provision; when it comes to the government taking an active role in ensuring that more people have jobs, that the government provide more services even if it means greater spending, that the government is active in making healthcare more widely available, and spending is increased for schools, child care, social security, and to help the poor, the white working class supports the Democratic Party over the Republicans. On a number of other issues, the Republican Party represents a better fit for the white working class. On immigration, for instance, the increasingly partisan divide in which Democrats are more welcoming to immigrants and Republicans favor more restrictive policies is an issue on which the G.O.P. can attract the white working class. The same is true to a more limited extent for culture war issues, particularly gay and lesbian civil rights, on which both the Republican Party and the white working class are more conservative. On balance, the Republican Party enjoys an advantage with the white working class over the Democrats on most issues.

The questions that I explore in this chapter deal with which mechanisms other than income and authoritarianism tie the white working class to their issue positions and political loyalties. Why is the white working class more conservative on gay and lesbian rights and immigration policy? Why are they more liberal on social welfare spending? In order to have confidence in my conclusion that income and authoritarianism are the primary mediating factors that explain the political behavior of the white working class, I need to account for other relevant values, including moral traditionalism, egalitarianism, racism, and orientations towards the appropriate role of government.

It is also important to assess the degree to which affective group attachments link the issue preferences of the white working class to their political alignment. Important group attachments include groups relevant to their economic standing, such as the degree to which they identify with the “working class” (Jackman 1979; Jackman and Jackman 1983), feelings towards big business, and affect for labor unions. Potentially relevant group affect that reflects cultural dimensions of class include feelings towards minorities such as African Americans, Latinos, and Asians, and gays and lesbians.

As with my treatment of salient issues in American politics in Chapter 5, this chapter takes the form of a general survey of the values and group attachments that underlie the political behavior of the white working class. Chapter 2 previews my expectations for all of the subsequent analyses. Briefly summarized, I expect to find evidence of an anti-egalitarian white working class due to their socialization in hierarchical, authoritarian work environments. On the other hand, it is possible that a group towards the bottom of the economic ladder should be especially egalitarian. When it comes to moral traditionalism, the similarity between it and authoritarianism suggests

that the white working class is more morally traditional than their counterparts outside of the working class. Beyond such speculation, however, there is little theoretical support for such an expectation.

Given the white working class's higher levels of authoritarianism and its preference for a more generous welfare state, I expect to find a lack of support for the view that the government should leave more decisions up to individuals and the free market. In contrast, my portrait of the white working class reveals a group that wants the government to be active both in the economy (i.e., support for more social welfare spending) and individuals' personal lives (i.e., gay and lesbian rights and abortion). On immigration, as well, the white working class is not content to allow the free market to determine the movement of immigrant populations. Instead, they prefer more restrictive government policies to curb immigration.

Given the positive relationship between working class occupations and labor union membership, I expect more warmth for labor unions vis-à-vis big business among the working class than among those outside of the working class. Similarly, recent research shows that Americans are actually quite accurate in their class self-identification (see Hout 2008), so I expect to find that the white working class more strongly identifies as working class than those outside of the working class. However, there is little reason to expect this to have political ramifications, as previous research also shows its independent effects to be quite limited (see Hout 2008).

Expectations for racism and affect towards racial and ethnic minorities are guided by previous research on the racial motivations for the defection of the white working class from the Democratic Party (e.g., see Abramson 1974; Beck and Souraf 1992; Black

and Black 1987; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Cowden 2001; Edsall and Edsall 1992; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989) and predictions of ethnocentrism derived from theories of authoritarianism (see (Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Duckitt 1989). The white working class is more likely to hold racist views, and is more likely to feel coolly towards racial and ethnic minorities. Authoritarianism also predicts cooler feelings towards culturally non-conformist groups such as feminists, gays, and lesbians.

Following a descriptive overview of the attitudes of the white working class relative to the non-working class on these measures, I present multivariate OLS models predicting each set of values and group affections. Next, I regress these values and group affect measures on each issue dimension examined in Chapter 5.⁴⁵

6.2. Initial Findings

Table 6.1 shows descriptive statistics of working and non-working class opinion for each value and group affect measure broken down by sex. Starting first with working class identification, the working class is dramatically more likely to identify as working class than the non-working class. Fully 60 percent of those classified as working class by their occupation also identify subjectively as working class. In contrast, only 40 percent of those outside of working class occupations nonetheless self-identify as working class. This is especially true of white working class men, among whom 62 percent self-identify as working class.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ In the appendix, there is a model of every variable considered in the dissertation—socio-demographics, policy attitudes, group affect, and values—regressed on political alignment.

⁴⁶ Despite this difference, working class identification has no effect on any of the dependent variables examined in this chapter. As a result, it is excluded from the models shown in the subsequent tables.

Table 6.1. Descriptive Statistics of Group Affect and Values by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, 2004
(Whites Only)

	Working Class	Non- Working Class	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class Identification	.60 N=559	.40 N=1594	.62 N=416	.55 N=143	.39 N=742	.41 N=852
Traditional Racism	.50 (.16) N=582	.48 (.16) N=1716	.51 (.16) N=436	.48 (.18) N=146	.49 (.16) N=819	.47 (.16) N=897
Symbolic Racism	.51 (.19) N=592	.50 (.18) N=1786	.52 (.18) N=444	.49 (.20) N=148	.51 (.18) N=842	.50 (.18) N=944
Non- egalitarianism	.61 (.15) N=597	.56 (.13) N=1789	.61 (.15) N=448	.61 (.16) N=149	.56 (.12) N=845	.56 (.13) N=944
Moral Traditionalism	.61 (.20) N=594	.60 (.23) N=1776	.61 (.20) N=445	.58 (.20) N=149	.60 (.24) N=839	.60 (.23) N=937
Limited Government	.35 (.38) N=596	.45 (.41) N=1785	.38 (.38) N=446	.26 (.33) N=150	.56 (.41) N=845	.34 (.38) N=940
Labor Union Affect	.56 (.24) N=519	.52 (.22) N=1618	.56 (.24) N=400	.55 (.22) N=119	.49 (.24) N=775	.54 (.21) N=843
Ethnic/Racial Group Affect	.11 (.19) N=586	.07 (.16) N=1722	.12 (.19) N=441	.11 (.20) N=145	.06 (.17) N=814	.07 (.16) N=908
Gay and Lesbian Affect	.40 (.27) N=520	.46 (.28) N=1616	.39 (.27) N=393	.45 (.29) N=127	.42 (.28) N=772	.49 (.27) N=844

Notes: Data pooled from 1992, 2000, and 2004 American National Election Studies. Entries are means with standard deviations in parentheses. Working class identification is the percentage of each group that identify as working class. Labor Union Affect is the mean feeling thermometer rating of labor unions. Ethnic/Racial Group Affect is the difference between each group's mean feeling thermometer rating of whites and their ratings of Asians, Latinos, and African Americans. Gay and Lesbian Affect is the mean feeling thermometer rating for each group. Traditional Racism, Symbolic Racism, Non-egalitarianism, Moral Traditionalism, and Limited Government values are described in Ch. 2.

Next in Table 6.1 are two measures of racism: traditional racism and symbolic racism. Recall that traditional racism measures stereotypes of African Americans' laziness and intelligence, whereas symbolic racism measures how perceptions of African Americans compare to other historical immigrant groups (i.e., Irish, Italian, and Jewish), whether African Americans get more or less than they deserve, whether inequality between the races is caused by a lack of effort on the part of African Americans to achieve, and whether slavery and generations of discrimination have created unfavorable conditions for African Americans today (for review, see Sears and Henry 2005). In either case, traditional or symbolic racism, there are only small differences between the attitudes of the working class and the non-working class. Each class grouping by sex is within a range of .47 and .51 on traditional racism and .49 and .52 on symbolic racism.⁴⁷ Non-working class women and working class men are the furthest apart on traditional racism, but overall class differences are quite muted. To the degree that racism may distinguish the white working class from those outside the working class, there is only very little evidence of such a distinction in these data.

Anti-egalitarian attitudes are presented in the next row of Table 6.1. There are substantive differences between the two class groupings and these differences are consistent across both men and women. The white working class is .05 more anti-egalitarian than those in the non-working class.⁴⁸ This supports the expectation that workplace socialization may lead to anti-egalitarian attitudes rather than the opposing possibility that individuals on the lower rungs of the economic ladder inevitably value

⁴⁷ Difference of means is significant ($p < .01$).

⁴⁸ Difference of means is significant ($p < .01$).

equality. Whereas there is support for an anti-egalitarian white working class, there is no evidence that the white working class is more morally traditional. The moral traditionalism battery measures individuals' value attachments to moral relativism and tolerance of alternative lifestyles, which seems as if it should be related to authoritarianism's emphasis on non-conformity (see Cizmar et al 2010). While it is somewhat surprising that there is no relationship between holding a working class occupation and moral traditionalism, the lack of such a relationship provides additional theoretical support for working class authoritarianism. It is authoritarianism specifically, and not a more general orientation towards traditional morality, that drives the white working class to the Republican Party.

The final value orientation presented in Table 6.1 is the belief in limited government. As expected, the white working class is substantially less in favor of the idea that the government should generally defer to the free market and that the government is involved in matters that people should determine for themselves. The white non-working class is .10 more in favor of limited government than the white working class. When we account for sex, white working class women are especially unlikely to support limited government, with a mean of .26. Compare this to the .56 mean level of support for limited government of white non-working class men, and there is a dramatic class/sex division. The belief that the government should be active is the quintessential political belief of the white working class. On issues related to the economy, the lower-income white working class favors more social spending. On issues related to personal behavior, the white working class is authoritarian and wants the government to discriminate against those who violate traditional cultural norms, such as

gays and lesbians. In the Democratic Party, they find candidates willing to champion the former. In the Republican Party, they find candidates willing to support the latter.

The remainder of Table 6.1 shows group affect measures by class and sex. There are modest but significant differences in feelings towards labor unions, with the white working class .04 warmer than the white non-working class.⁴⁹ The difference is most pronounced between working class men and men outside of the working class, with a difference of .07. A similar gap is apparent in the difference between feelings towards whites and feelings towards ethnic and racial minorities (i.e., African Americans, Latinos, and Asians), with the white working class .11 warmer towards whites than they are towards minorities, whereas the non-working class is only .07 warmer towards whites than they are towards minorities. Finally, the white working class is .06 cooler in its feelings towards gays and lesbians than the non-working class, with the largest difference (.10) between working class men and non-working class women.⁵⁰ All of these descriptive outcomes confirm expectations. In the next section, these variables are employed as dependent variables in multivariate models, and are then used as independent variables in models of issues attitudes.

6.3. Multivariate Analysis

Having reviewed descriptive evidence that bears on the links connecting the white working class to their political behavior, I now turn to several multivariate models predicting these value orientations and measures of group affect. I focus in particular on values for which there is descriptive evidence of divisions between the white working class and those outside of the working class: egalitarianism and support for limited

⁴⁹ Difference of means is significant ($p < .01$).

⁵⁰ Difference of means is significant ($p < .01$).

government. These results are found in Table 6.2, whereas the results of models of relevant group affect measures, including feelings towards big business and labor, racial and ethnic minorities, and gays and lesbians are found in Table 6.3. Next, in Table 6.4 and Table 6.5, I use these value orientations and measures of group affect to predict the issue attitudes first analyzed in Chapter 5: immigration, social welfare attitudes, racial issues, and gay and lesbian rights.

Table 6.2 presents models predicting anti-egalitarianism in the first three columns and preferences for limited government in the second three columns. Looking first at anti-egalitarianism, the effect of holding a working class occupation produces a two-percentage point increase in anti-egalitarianism with all other variables held constant at their means. In addition to a direct occupational effect, moving from the least to the most authoritarian position increases anti-egalitarianism by 8 percentage points, all else equal. Furthermore, education has a negative effect on anti-egalitarianism equal to that of the positive effect of authoritarianism. In sum, and consistent with expectations, the white working class is less egalitarian than those in the non-working class. However, this effect is only true among men in the white working class.

I interpret these effects as the product of workplace socialization that privileges deference to authority and imposes a value on order and conformity to prescribed social arrangements. Under this interpretation, the white working class likely does not view their place in occupational structure relative to others as the product of a lack of opportunity, but rather as part of the natural hierarchical social order. This finding may

Table 6.2. Anti-egalitarian and Limited Government Values by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	Anti-egalitarianism			Limited Government		
	All Employed Whites	Men	Women	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.02* (.01)	.02** (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.10*** (.02)	-.15*** (.03)	.00 (.04)
Authoritarianism	.08*** (.01)	.06*** (.01)	.09*** (.02)	-.03 (.03)	.04 (.05)	-.11** (.05)
Income	-.02 (.01)	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	.25*** (.04)	.32*** (.06)	.18*** (.06)
Union Household	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.07*** (.02)	-.05 (.03)	-.08** (.03)
Education	-.08*** (.01)	.07*** (.02)	-.09*** (.02)	.04 (.04)	.03 (.06)	.02 (.06)
Sex	.00 (.01)	--	--	-.20*** (.02)	--	--
Age	.11*** (.02)	.12*** (.03)	.09*** (.02)	.11** (.06)	.03 (.08)	.20*** (.08)
South	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.05* (.03)	.05* (.03)
Religious Traditionalism	.00 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	.19*** (.03)	.23*** (.05)	.12** (.05)
Year 2000	-.08*** (.01)	-.07*** (.01)	-.08*** (.01)	.17*** (.03)	.21*** (.04)	.13*** (.04)
Year 2004	-.06*** (.01)	-.06*** (.01)	-.07*** (.01)	.06** (.02)	.04 (.03)	.10*** (.03)
Constant	.59*** (.02)	.58*** (.02)	.60*** (.02)	.21*** (.05)	.17** (.07)	.08 (.07)
R-squared	.18	.16	.20	.13	.13	.06
N	1951	1055	896	1798	974	824

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

also explain the puzzling lack of evidence of disproportionate racism in the white working class. Perhaps, instead of being a product of racism, the white working class broke with the Democratic Party over racial issues in part because of their anti-egalitarianism. Women, who have not enjoyed the male position of privilege in society, are not as influenced as men by their occupational class in their views of egalitarianism.

The next set of models in Table 6.2 show the results of socio-demographic variables regressed on belief in limited government. Holding a working class occupation has a strong, negative effect on commitments to limited government; the effect of holding a working class occupation produces a ten percentage-point decrease in support for limited government. In addition to the strong, direct effect of occupation, higher income has a strong, positive effect on belief in limited government. Thus the total effect of holding a working class occupation on opposition to limited government is $-.11$.⁵¹ For men, the relationship is even stronger, with a direct effect of $-.15$ and a total effect of $-.17$.⁵² Contrary to my expectations, authoritarianism has no effect on a belief in limited government for men, but does have an influence for women. Still, these are substantively large effects of class on belief in limited government. These results support the argument of Ross Douthat and Reihan Salam in *Grand New Party: How Republicans Can Win the Working Class and Save the American Dream* (2008), in which the authors argue that the G.O.P. needs to offer active government solutions to the economic problems that the working class faces if they are to succeed in retaining their support. Indeed, the white working class clearly wants an active federal government.

⁵¹ Direct effect: $-.10$, Indirect effect through income: $-.01$.

⁵² Direct effect: $-.15$, Indirect effect through income: $-.02$.

In sum, Table 6.2 provides mixed conclusions for the political behavior of the white working class. On one hand, their anti-egalitarianism should benefit the Republican Party, as the Democratic Party is more strongly associated with concern for equality. On the other hand, an aversion to limited government is an area over which the parties might split working class support. The Republican Party, while strongly associated with anti-government rhetoric, nevertheless favors government intervention in matters of personal behavior. In addition, the “big government conservatism” (see Milkis and Nelson 2007) of the George W. Bush administration, in which the Republican agenda include a massive prescription drug benefit and active federal intervention into education policy, might be exactly the posture that appeals to the white working class (see Douthat and Salam 2008). Opposition to limited government is therefore not automatically a value orientation that works in the favor of the Democrats.

In Table 6.3, the first three columns show the results of a model of feelings towards big business minus feelings towards labor unions. Positive values indicate greater warmth towards big business than labor unions, whereas negative coefficients indicate greater warmth for unions over big business. The effect of holding a working class occupation produces a two-percentage point decrease in warmth towards big business relative to warmth towards labor unions, and this result is limited to men. Furthermore, greater income results in much warmer feelings towards big business vis-à-vis labor unions, thereby adding slightly to the direct effect of being in the working class. Surprisingly, the effect of income is stronger than the effect of residing in a union household (-.05). These results confirm expectations that the white working class is still

Table 6.3. Affect towards Selected Groups by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	Affect: Big Business minus Labor Unions			Affect towards Latinos, African Americans, and Asians			Affect towards Gays and Lesbians		
	All Whites	Men	Women	All Whites	Men	Women	All Whites	Men	Women
Work	-.02*	-.02*	.00	.02***	.03***	.02**	.01	.00	-.01
Class	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.03)
Authoritar.	.03**	.03*	.03	.02***	.01	.04***	.08***	.06**	.11***
	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)
Income	.08***	.08***	.08***	.01	.00	.03*	-.02	-.07	.04
	(.01)	(.03)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.03)	(.05)	(.05)
Union HH	-.05***	-.05***	-.05***	.00	.00	.00	-.01	.01	-.03
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.00)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Educ.	.01	.01	.01	-.04***	-.04***	-.03**	-.06**	-.09**	-.02
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.03)	(.04)	(.04)
Sex	-.01*	--	--	.01**	--	--	-.08***	--	--
	(.01)			(.00)			(.01)		
Age	.03	.04	.00	.01	.03*	.00	.05	.03	.10*
	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.04)	(.05)	(.06)
South	.01	.01	.00	.01	.00	.01	.01	.02	.02
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.00)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)
Relig. Trad.	.00	.00	.01	-.01	-.01	.00	.13***	.15***	.11***
	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.03)	(.04)
Year 2000	.02	.03*	.00	-.01	-.01	.02**	-.11***	.08***	-.16***
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)
Year 2004	-.02**	.01	-.05***	.01*	.00	.02**	-.11***	-.06***	-.18***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.00)	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Constant	.44***	.43***	.45***	.43***	.45***	.42***	.57***	.60***	.45***
	(.02)	(.03)	(.03)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.04)	(.05)	(.05)
R-sq.	.04	.05	.05	.05	.06	.05	.11	.07	.15
N	1700	934	766	1874	1016	858	1727	937	790

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

relatively more supportive of labor unions over big business than are their counterparts outside of the working class.

The second three columns of Table 6.3 show that the white working class is more disposed to cool feelings towards racial and ethnic minorities, and that authoritarianism has a similar effect. These results are slightly different for men and women, as men have a direct class effect and no indirect authoritarian effect, but women have both a direct class effect and an indirect authoritarian effect. These findings are largely consistent with expectations, though it is surprising that authoritarianism has no effect on feelings towards racial and ethnic minorities among men.

Moving next to the final three columns of Table 6.3, there is no direct effect of occupation on gay and lesbian affect, but there is an effect for authoritarianism, one that is stronger for women than men. As a total effect, these results are quite weak. By and large, although there are some significant results for group affect, value orientations such as authoritarianism, anti-egalitarianism, and preferences for an active government appear to be the predominant factors that differentiate the white working class from the non-working class. Whether this translates into policy attitudes is tested in Table 6.4 and Table 6.5.

Table 6.4 shows the results of models predicting opinions on immigration and social welfare attitudes.⁵³ The first three columns present the results for immigration policy. Even with numerous additional variables that were not present in the model

⁵³ Because previous research finds a link between culture war attitudes and social welfare attitudes, I include a measure of affect towards groups associated with the culture wars in these models. "Culture Group Affect" is an average of feelings towards Christian Fundamentalists, Feminists, and Gays and Lesbians, with the latter two group ratings inverted so that higher values indicate warmth towards Christian Fundamentalists and coolness towards Feminists and Gays and Lesbians.

presented in Chapter 5, holding a working class occupation has a positive impact on support for restrictive immigration policy ($\beta=.03$), as does authoritarianism ($\beta=.06$). In addition to the direct effect of occupation and the indirect effect of authoritarianism, anti-egalitarianism and racial group affect explain the white working class's attitudes on immigration policy. Though the white working class was only modestly cooler towards racial and ethnic groups than the non-working class, the direct effect of a working class occupation on racial and ethnic group affect (.02, see Table 6.2) channeled through the direct effect of racial and ethnic group affect on immigration attitudes (.38) produces an additional .01 indirect effect on immigration policy. These relationships are even stronger for men (.46) than women (.28). Furthermore, anti-egalitarianism (.19) for men is stronger than the null result of anti-egalitarianism for women. Immigration attitudes for the white working class, particularly men, are thus grounded in both economic and cultural considerations. On both counts, this is a policy on which the Republicans should enjoy an advantage over the Democrats in attracting white working class votes.

The second three columns of Table 6.4 show the results for social welfare spending, and once again, the class results from Chapter 5 hold up in spite of the addition of several relevant variables to the model. Holding a working class occupation produces a three-percentage point reduction in support for less generous social welfare spending, all else equal. In addition, greater income leads to support for less generous welfare spending, further contributing to the economic liberalism of the white working class.

Table 6.4. Attitudes towards Selected Policies by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	Immigration			Social Welfare		
	All Employed Whites	Men	Women	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.03* (.02)	.03 (.02)	.03 (.03)	-.03** (.01)	-.03** (.01)	-.03 (.02)
Authoritarianism	.06*** (.02)	.06* (.03)	.07** (.04)	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)
Income	.00 (.03)	-.01 (.04)	.01 (.04)	.10*** (.02)	.09*** (.03)	.11*** (.03)
Union Household	.01 (.01)	.01 (.02)	.00 (.02)	-.02* (.01)	.00 (.02)	-.03** (.01)
Education	-.14*** (.03)	-.20*** (.04)	-.06 (.04)	.06** (.02)	.06** (.03)	.07** (.03)
Sex	.03** (.01)	--	--	-.05*** (.01)	--	--
Age	-.04 (.04)	.02 (.05)	-.10* (.06)	.00 (.03)	-.07** (.04)	.09** (.04)
South	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Religious Trad.	-.08*** (.03)	-.07** (.03)	-.08* (.04)	-.01 (.02)	-.05** (.02)	.03 (.03)
Business-Labor Affect	-.09** (.04)	-.06 (.06)	-.12* (.07)	.16*** (.03)	.18*** (.04)	.14*** (.05)
Race Group Affect	.38*** (.08)	.46*** (.10)	.28** (.13)	-.04 (.05)	-.03 (.08)	.00 (.08)
Culture Group Affect	.07* (.04)	.08 (.05)	.05 (.06)	.06** (.03)	.05 (.04)	.06 (.04)
Symbolic Racism	.23*** (.04)	.16*** (.06)	.32*** (.06)	.07*** (.03)	.07* (.04)	.07* (.04)
Anti-egalitar.	.13** (.05)	.19*** (.07)	.07 (.08)	-.01 (.04)	.05 (.05)	-.09* (.05)
Limited Gov't	-.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	-.04* (.02)	.17*** (.01)	.18*** (.02)	.15*** (.02)
Moral Trad.	.21*** (.04)	.18*** (.04)	.25*** (.06)	.16*** (.02)	.23*** (.03)	.07** (.03)
Year 2000	-.02 (.02)	-.01 (.03)	-.03 (.03)	-.04*** (.01)	-.05** (.02)	-.04** (.02)
Year 2004	.01 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.02)	-.04*** (.01)	-.03** (.01)	-.05** (.02)
Constant	.26*** (.06)	.25*** (.08)	.32*** (.08)	.07 (.04)	.03 (.06)	.04 (.06)
R-squared	.19	.22	.17	.37	.38	.27
N	1509	832	677	1531	844	687

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Other class-related indirect effects on preferences related to social welfare spending include affect towards big business and labor unions and belief in limited government. As warmth towards big business over labor unions increases, support for less generous social welfare spending likewise increases ($\beta=.16$). As we learned in Table 6.3, the white working class is cooler towards big business than it is towards labor unions relative to the non-working class. Furthermore, belief in limited government has a positive relationship with less generous social spending ($\beta=.17$). In sum, the white working class is more favorable towards greater social spending through direct occupational effects, lower income, greater affection for labor unions compared to big business, and less favorable views of limited government. These results reflect a mix of economic need, group feelings, and values as the foundation of white working class preferences for greater social spending. As with immigration, most of these results are unique to men.

Turning next to Table 6.5, I present results of a model of the same racial issue attitudes that were analyzed in Chapter 5. As found in Chapter 5, there are only weak relationships between class and racial issue attitudes, channeled largely through indirect effects from other variables. Authoritarianism, racial group affect, and anti-egalitarianism are all positively related to a conservative posture on racial issues, thereby indicating that the white working class is more conservative on racial issues. However, greater income and preferences for limited government also predict conservative attitudes on racial issues, so the indirect relationship between the white working class and racial conservatism is not unidirectional. On balance, however, the stronger effects of those

Table 6.5. Attitudes towards Racial Issues by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004
(Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.01 (.01)	.01 (.02)	-.01 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.08*** (.02)	.08*** (.02)	.07** (.03)
Income	.10*** (.03)	.13*** (.04)	.05 (.04)
Union Household	-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Education	-.06*** (.02)	-.09*** (.03)	-.03 (.04)
Sex	.00 (.01)	--	--
Age	-.11*** (.03)	-.13*** (.04)	-.09* (.05)
South	.02 (.01)	.03* (.01)	.01 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	-.09*** (.02)	-.08*** (.03)	-.10*** (.04)
Business-Labor Affect	.17*** (.04)	.13*** (.04)	.22*** (.06)
Race Group Affect	.40*** (.06)	.40*** (.08)	.41*** (.10)
Culture Group Affect	.05 (.03)	.04 (.04)	.05 (.06)
Symbolic Racism	.26*** (.03)	.26*** (.05)	.26*** (.05)
Anti-egalitarianism	.15*** (.04)	.09* (.06)	.22*** (.07)
Limited Government	.06*** (.01)	.07*** (.02)	.05** (.02)
Moral Traditionalism	.23*** (.03)	.24*** (.04)	.21*** (.05)
Year 2000	.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)	.01 (.03)
Year 2004	.00 (.01)	.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)
Constant	.11** (.05)	.13** (.07)	.06 (.08)
R-squared	.28	.31	.24
N	1531	844	687

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table 6.6. Attitudes towards Gay and Lesbian by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	Gay and Lesbian Rights		
	All Employed Whites	Men	Women
Working Class	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.04 (.03)
Authoritarianism	.12*** (.02)	.13*** (.03)	.10** (.04)
Income	-.03 (.03)	-.07 (.05)	.00 (.05)
Union Household	-.01 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	.00 (.02)
Education	-.10*** (.03)	-.11*** (.04)	-.10** (.04)
Sex	-.12*** (.01)	--	--
Age	.02 (.04)	.08 (.06)	-.04 (.06)
South	.03** (.01)	.01 (.02)	.05** (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.18*** (.03)	.11*** (.04)	.25*** (.04)
Gays & Lesbians Affect	.25*** (.03)	.28*** (.03)	.22*** (.04)
Anti-egalitarianism	.17*** (.05)	.28*** (.07)	.04 (.08)
Limited Government	.07*** (.02)	.10*** (.02)	.03 (.03)
Moral Traditionalism	.46*** (.03)	.49*** (.05)	.42*** (.05)
Year 2000	-.13*** (.02)	-.14*** (.03)	-.12*** (.03)
Year 2004	-.14*** (.02)	-.16*** (.02)	-.11*** (.03)
Constant	-.05 (.05)	-.12* (.06)	-.10 (.07)
R-squared	.49	.50	.43
N	1592	863	729

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

mediating factors—particularly racial group affect—suggest that the white working class is slightly more supportive of a conservative approach to racial issues than not.⁵⁴

Finally, Table 6.6 shows the results of a model of support for gay and lesbian rights. Authoritarianism and anti-egalitarianism both structure attitudes toward gay and lesbian civil rights, especially for men. As with the results in Chapter 5, there is no direct relationship between working class occupation and attitudes towards gay and lesbian civil rights, so the relationship is strictly indirect through authoritarianism and anti-egalitarianism.

6.4. Conclusion

In sum, two issues stand out as the most distinctive to the white working class: immigration and social welfare spending. On immigration, the white working class is driven to support a restrictive policy by value orientations such as anti-egalitarianism and authoritarianism, a sense of economic threat as evidenced in the direct occupational effect, and group affect, as reflected in their comparatively cooler feelings towards racial and ethnic minorities. On social welfare spending, the white working class is more favorably disposed to labor unions than big business, holds less income and an economically vulnerable occupation, and values an active government rather than a limited government. On the former issue, the white working class holds positions more consistent with the Republicans. On the latter issue, they are more aligned with the Democrats. On issues of lesser distinctiveness to the white working class—racial issues

⁵⁴ The total effect of working class occupation on racial issues, composed entirely of indirect effects through these aforementioned variables, is .01.

and gay and lesbian rights—they are more conservative and more aligned with the Republican Party.

The white working class holds some values that differ from the non-working class. They are much more supportive of an active role for government, which is consistent with a theory of working class authoritarianism (Lipset 1960) that predicts economic liberalism and social conservatism. The white working class is also less egalitarian than the non-working class, which is consistent with the broad theoretical approach of this dissertation that focuses on workplace socialization as a key factor in understanding the political ramifications of class. I interpret this finding as indicative of the working class tendency to view the world as hierarchically ordered.

On other values, the white working class is not so distinct from those outside of the working class. They are no more morally traditional, which lends additional support to the specific mechanism of authoritarianism as the key to understanding why working class occupations make people more socially conservative. The white working class also shows very little predisposition for racism relative to those outside of the working class. On the other hand, the white working class is cooler in their affect towards racial and ethnic groups than the non-working class, so it is possible that this should be interpreted as evidence of racism. In sum, this chapter provides additional support for the argument that class shapes values, and that values in turn shape political behavior.

Chapter 7: Conclusion: A Theoretical Reorientation of the Politics of the White Working Class

7.1. Summary of Key Findings and Implications for Future Research

In 1960, Seymour Martin Lipset wrote, “The poorer strata everywhere are more liberal or leftist on economic issues... But when liberalism is defined in non-economic terms... The more well-to-do are more liberal, the poorer are more intolerant” (Lipset 1960, 92). Over the past half-century, American politics has been defined by conflict over economic issues (e.g., taxing and spending), tense race relations, cultural conflict, such as the debates surrounding lesbian and gay rights, and many issues that do not neatly fit into either an economic or cultural category, such as social welfare spending and immigration. In this environment, political actors strategically emphasize those issues on which their opponents appear to be on the side of the powerful rather than “the people” (Kazin 1995). For many in the white working class, this choice pits their economic interests against their cultural sensibilities and deeply held value systems. More often than not, the majority of white working class voters decide to vote their values and support the Republican Party.

At the outset of this project, I wanted to answer the following research question: are the white working class more Democratic due to their economic position, or are they more Republican due to their values and cultural worldview? I find that the Republicans benefit from cultural half of this equation because class is a stronger predictor of authoritarian values than it is a predictor of income (see Chapter 3). This is a strong

challenge to research that equates class with income and nothing else, as values and cultural effects are as closely related to class as economic outcomes.

Furthermore, extant literature (e.g., Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008) that equates class with income underestimates the income level of many in the working class. The central finding of this literature is that whites in the lowest third of the income distribution are predominately Democratic over the last several decades. However, most whites in this income bracket do not work full-time. The definition of working class that uses an arbitrary income level includes elderly who subsist on fixed incomes, students, the disabled, part-time workers, recipients of welfare aid, and some citizens who are utterly impoverished. To describe such a diverse group of people as a coherent political constituency with similar interests, if not entirely without merit, certainly requires further theoretical development and interpretation. As Douthat and Salam (2008, 6) explain:

The poorest Americans *haven't* turned right over recent decades... Instead, they've turned left, voting for Democrats more reliably than even in the heyday of the Great Society. But this turn hasn't delivered liberals a majority, because most working-class voters aren't poor. They're relatively prosperous... (italics in original).

Compared to the poorest Americans, the working class *is* relatively prosperous. They have the means required to survive without government assistance, but they are by no means wealthy. This is a key reason why I challenge the notion that the white working class ignorantly votes against their self-interest (e.g., Frank 2004) while I also contest the conclusion that they are the same bastion of New Deal Democratic Party support that they were in the middle of the twentieth century (e.g., Stonecash 2000; Bartels 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2008). My research indicates that they are

a pro-Republican constituency but that a large minority continues to support the Democratic Party. This finding is the product of competing class-based influences in which the Republican Party benefits from their authoritarian, anti-egalitarian values, and their relatively cooler feelings towards racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities, while the Democratic Party still attracts support on the basis of their relatively lower income, relatively cooler feelings towards big business, and preferences for an active government that is willing to spend on social services. Both parties offer compelling reasons for white working class support due to class effects. Those who observe the white working class acting contrary to their own interests must explain why a constituency should vote for a party that advocates a platform contrary to the majority of their policy preferences.

My conclusions are apparent when the working class is theorized and measured according to the precepts of modern class analysis. Class is not equivalent to education, nor can it be reduced to income. Occupation is central to class analysis because it socializes individuals in the class structure, thereby producing distinct sets of values. Occupation also predicts economic outcomes such as income more accurately than other measures, including income itself (Hauser and Warren 1997). In effect, existing studies of the white working class either present one side of the coin or the other, but very few acknowledge the multi-faceted political effects of class. The connection between class and values is especially absent from existing accounts of the politics of the white working class.

In short, I argue for a reorientation of theoretical approaches to the political effects of class in political science research. Scholarship in the field of political behavior is currently too superficial in its treatment of class. All too often class is supposedly

controlled away by including measures of education and income in empirical models. While it is common in political sociology to account for occupation (see Brooks and Brady 1999), political scientists continue to ignore the independent effects of occupation uncovered both in this dissertation and in much of the research on political behavior in sociology. This is especially consequential within research on values and cultural conflict in American politics. Value systems are not randomly distributed amongst the population; they are socialized in environments such as work, social networks, and religious congregations. To ignore the social contexts in which values are transmitted and reinforced is to ignore the foundation underlying much of the debate in American politics; that is, it focuses on epiphenomena instead of primary causal forces.

In particular, the renewed interest in authoritarianism sometimes proceeds as though authoritarianism is not itself a phenomenon that requires rigorous explanation. While it is true that authoritarianism has a checkered past in the research of decades past (see Hetherington and Weiler 2009), the obvious relevance of the authoritarian divide in American politics requires just as much interest in the causes of authoritarianism as its political consequences. My approach is to adopt Hetherington and Weiler's argument that authoritarianism is a worldview that values conformity, respect for authority, and order. However, it is not enough to describe the attributes of authoritarianism without examining its origins.

I find a relationship between class and authoritarianism, but there are certainly other explanations that future research should consider. In particular, my approach could easily be applied to religion as a force for socializing respect for authority, conformity, and order. Not only is regular attendance at a place of worship an opportunity for social

reinforcement of authoritarian values, but the values themselves overlap to a great extent with the beliefs of many of the largest religious denominations in the country. While other scholars have examined religious influence and authoritarianism as competing explanations of cultural conflict (e.g., Mockabee 2007; Cizmar et al. 2010), an application of the model that I use in this dissertation could easily be appropriated to argue that religion might actually be a cause of authoritarianism, not a wholly distinct source of attitudes.

My critique of the literature on class and American politics leads to a definition of class that is rooted in the occupational structure. Once the occupational structure is introduced into an analysis of class, one of the most important observations to make is that the occupational structure is highly segregated by sex. Women are rarely found in the occupations that comprise the traditional, blue-collar working class. Since socialization in the workplace is the key explanation of why the white working class holds a distinct set of values from those outside of the working class, it follows that part of why scholars of the gender gap observe that men are more conservative and Republican while women are more liberal and Democratic is that men and women have distinct experiences in the occupational structure.

This is likely one reason why men are more authoritarian than women, which in turn provides additional explanation for the growth of a gender gap. Because the gender gap is in part a function of a split over cultural issues and the size and scope of government action, and because occupation influences attitudes on these issues, there is an opportunity for future research to further probe the class basis of the gender gap. In the meantime, I confidently conclude that the Democratic Party's difficulty in attracting

white men into their coalition in recent decades is the direct result of their difficulty in attracting white working class votes in recent decades. While white men outside of the working class have always been disproportionately Republican, it is only since the 1970s that white men in working class occupations began to migrate to the G.O.P. The Democratic Party has always been an unattractive alternative to white men; the new development is that they are a less attractive alternative to the Republican Party for white working class men.

In addition to the central finding that class influences both cultural and economic interests, two of my findings concerning the foundation of white working class political behavior are especially important. The first is that the white working class prefers an activist rather than a limited government. On the surface, this might strike some as good news for the Democratic Party. The Republicans are stridently anti-government in much of their rhetoric, even when their policies expand the size and scope of government, as was the case under the presidency of George W. Bush. However, the desire for an active government, like other class effects, does not work to the benefit of one party over the other. On economic issues, the Democrats find themselves aligned with the preferences of the white working class in their willingness to use the power of the government to offer more spending on social services.

Likewise, the Republicans sometimes mimic the Democrats' traditional approach government activism, as with President Bush's prescription drug program and the No Child Left Behind education initiative. However it is on issues that activate the authoritarian divide in American politics, such as gay and lesbian civil rights, and the issue of immigration that the Republicans offer the active federal government response

that the white working class desires. Authoritarianism is a desire to impose order and conformity in a diverse and often-chaotic world. This impulse is highly consistent with a preference for active government intervention to ensure order, as President Nixon knew full well in 1968 when he argued, “Our first commitment as a nation in this time of crisis and questioning must be a commitment to order” (Perlstein 2008, 241).

The white working class desire for a strong, activist government is not, however, reflected in their views of egalitarianism. Instead, I find that the white working class is distinct from those outside of the working class in that they are especially anti-egalitarian. This is somewhat paradoxical in that the white working class simultaneously wants the government to see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living, wants the government to provide more services even if it means an increase in spending, and wants the government to provide a health insurance plan, invest in education, social security, and other programs. Such policy preferences are seemingly at odds with egalitarian values of equal opportunity and equality of social outcomes.

I interpret this as further evidence of competing class effects on values and policy preferences. From a strictly economic standpoint, the white working class stands to benefit from social spending relative to those outside of the working class due to their lower income. However, due to socialization in hierarchical, heavily supervised work environments, the white working class is more likely to project their lack of authority at work onto other value orientations, including egalitarianism. Because deference to authority is demanded on the job, and conformity to dominant social norms outside the job becomes part of a deeply held value system (see Kohn 1977), anti-egalitarianism may likewise be a socialized value that results from acceptance of a position at work with little

to no authority. The white working class does not experience equality of opportunities or outcomes in their occupations, so they see less value in egalitarianism more generally. While this interpretation is consistent with the theory set out in Chapter 2 as it relates to the effect occupation on authoritarianism, future research is required to flesh out this relationship more rigorously.

7.2. Where the White Working Class Has Been and Where the White Working Class is Going

Since 1952, the size and political power of the white working class has diminished considerably. Whereas the white working class once comprised about one third of the American population, today it stands at less than 15 percent of the population (see Chapter 2; also see Abramowitz and Teixeira 2009). In an era in which the white working class was such a large minority of the populace, they could be counted on as the backbone the New Deal coalition that brought the Democratic Party to a position of dominance over American politics for a generation. With the attrition of working class jobs in the shift to a post-industrial economy and the continued racial and ethnic diversification of the United States, the early twenty-first century white working class finds itself in a much weaker political position than ever.

Whereas the white working class was once an essential component of a national candidate's electoral strategy, it is no longer necessary to win a majority of their votes in order to achieve a national majority. Barack Obama almost surely lost a large majority of

the white working class en route to a convincing victory over John McCain in 2008.⁵⁵ Instead, Obama's coalition consisted primarily of African-Americans, women, Latinos, highly educated, professional whites, and the youth vote. While it is still important for Democratic candidates to win a portion of the white working class, it is no longer the case that the white working class needs to be a core constituency within the Democratic base. On the political relevance of the white working class moving forward, I largely agree with Andrew Gelman and John Sides in their sentiment, "This is not to suggest that the working class will become irrelevant to either political party, but certainly there is and will be less reason to privilege the white working class as a component of either party's coalition."⁵⁶

However, while the Democratic Party is well positioned to win elections without the future support of a majority of the white working class, the Republican Party has a much more politically difficult needle to thread. Over time, the white working class has become more Republican simultaneously with its shrinking share of the total population. The fastest growing demographic group in the United States today is Latinos.⁵⁷ The findings in this dissertation suggest that white working class is especially supportive of restrictive immigration policies, an issue that has simmered on the political agenda for years and shows no sign of diminishing in salience in the near future. It will be difficult

⁵⁵ Obama won about 40 percent of whites without a college degree (see: http://bostonreview.net/BR34.5/gelman_sides.php), which, as we learned in Chapter 3, is a good rough indicator of the direction of the voting behavior of the white working class if not an appropriate indicator of their size and of class more generally.

⁵⁶ see http://bostonreview.net/BR34.5/gelman_sides.php.

⁵⁷ Source: Pew Hispanic Center: <http://pewhispanic.org/factsheets/factsheet.php?FactsheetID=58>. Latinos make up approximately 15 percent of the U.S. population as of 2008 and account for over 50 percent of the increase in the U.S. population over the first decade of the twenty-first century.

for the Republican Party to mobilize support among the white working class--a shrinking population--on the immigration issue without alienating Latinos—a rapidly growing population. Furthermore, immigration is a potential wedge issue within the Republican base between the white working class and the traditional business interests that bankroll the party's campaigns. The Republicans' success in recent decades at winning over working class whites from the Democratic Party may thus prove to be a hollow victory if they cannot fit together easily with other important groups in an electoral coalition.

Given this trajectory, the white working class has arguably transformed from an indispensable source of support within the Democratic Party to a potential drag on the future success of the Republican Party. This conclusion is subject to change should the immigration issue see swift resolution in the coming years, or if a particularly attractive candidate to the white working class—in the mold of Bill Clinton--wins nomination as the Democratic standard-bearer. Short of such developments, however, the political marginalization of the white working class appears likely to continue.

Appendix

Table A.1. A Model of Immigration Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	.04*** (.02)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.13*** (.02)	.03 (.05)	-.09 (.09)	.14*** (.03)	.19*** (.03)
Income	.02 (.03)	.03 (.07)	.25** (.12)	.03 (.05)	.00 (.04)
Union Household	.00 (.01)	-.02 (.03)	.02 (.05)	.00 (.03)	.01 (.02)
Education	-.18*** (.03)	-.23*** (.07)	.00 (.14)	-.21*** (.04)	-.14*** (.04)
Sex	.03** (.02)	--	--	--	--
Age	.01 (.03)	.04 (.07)	-.02 (.13)	.08 (.06)	-.04 (.05)
South	.01 (.01)	.03 (.03)	-.02 (.05)	-.01 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	-.01 (.02)	.01 (.05)	.11 (.08)	-.03 (.03)	-.03 (.03)
Year 2000	.02 (.02)	.12*** (.04)	.08 (.07)	-.02 (.03)	.01 (.03)
Year 2004	.00 (.01)	.04 (.03)	.09 (.06)	-.04 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
Constant	.65*** (.03)	.73*** (.07)	.59*** (.10)	.67*** (.05)	.66*** (.05)
R-squared	.10	.07	.08	.09	.09
N	1908	360	118	674	756

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests)

Table A.2. A Model of Social Welfare Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	-.04*** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.05*** (.02)	.08** (.03)	-.01 (.07)	.06** (.03)	.03 (.02)
Income	.19*** (.02)	.30*** (.05)	.19** (.09)	.18*** (.04)	.16*** (.03)
Union Household	-.04*** (.01)	-.02 (.02)	-.11*** (.04)	-.06** (.02)	-.04*** (.02)
Education	.05*** (.02)	.03 (.05)	.03 (.09)	.07** (.03)	.07** (.02)
Sex	-.09*** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Age	.07*** (.02)	.13** (.05)	.16 (.10)	-.06 (.05)	.13*** (.04)
South	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.02)	-.05 (.04)	-.02 (.02)	.01 (.01)
Religious Traditionalism	.09*** (.02)	-.01 (.04)	.03 (.06)	.12*** (.03)	.11*** (.02)
Year 2000	.01 (.01)	.06** (.03)	.04 (.05)	.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
Year 2004	-.04 (.01)	-.03 (.02)	-.07 (.04)	-.03 (.02)	-.05 (.02)
Constant	.22*** (.02)	.11** (.05)	.19** (.09)	.25*** (.03)	.12*** (.03)
R-squared	.16	.12	.14	.10	.12
N	1951	364	118	691	778

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table A.3. A Model of Racial Issue Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	.01 (.01)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.15*** (.02)	.14*** (.04)	-.20** (.08)	.16*** (.03)	.18*** (.03)
Income	.17*** (.03)	.27*** (.06)	.41*** (.12)	.20*** (.04)	.11*** (.04)
Union Household	-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.12** (.06)	-.03 (.03)	-.01 (.02)
Education	-.13*** (.02)	.02 (.06)	-.24* (.12)	-.19*** (.04)	-.11*** (.04)
Sex	-.02** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Age	-.02 (.03)	.05 (.06)	.02 (.12)	-.06 (.05)	.00 (.05)
South	.03*** (.01)	.07*** (.02)	.03 (.05)	.01 (.02)	.05*** (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.01 (.02)	-.07* (.04)	-.12 (.09)	.07** (.03)	-.01 (.03)
Year 2000	.07*** (.02)	.09** (.04)	.15** (.06)	.07*** (.02)	.05** (.02)
Year 2004	-.02 (.01)	-.01 (.02)	-.04 (.07)	-.01 (.02)	-.03 (.02)
Constant	.63*** (.03)	.53*** (.06)	.85*** (.11)	.65*** (.04)	.62*** (.05)
R-squared	.10	.11	.18	.14	.09
N	1950	364	118	691	777

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table A.4. A Model of Defense Spending Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	.00 (.01)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.09*** (.02)	.03 (.05)	.10 (.10)	.15*** (.03)	.08** (.04)
Income	.12*** (.03)	.14** (.07)	.18 (.15)	.09* (.05)	.12** (.05)
Union Household	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.03)	-.02 (.05)	.00 (.02)	.00 (.02)
Education	-.15*** (.03)	-.10 (.07)	-.19 (.13)	-.15*** (.04)	-.16*** (.04)
Sex	-.04*** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Age	.08** (.03)	.11 (.08)	.08 (.16)	.08 (.06)	.08 (.06)
South	.03** (.01)	.03 (.03)	.08 (.06)	.01 (.02)	.04* (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.12*** (.02)	.11** (.05)	.12 (.10)	.10*** (.03)	.12*** (.04)
Year 2000	.23*** (.02)	.23*** (.05)	.32*** (.09)	.24*** (.03)	.21*** (.03)
Year 2004	.20*** (.01)	.21*** (.03)	.20*** (.07)	.21*** (.02)	.19*** (.02)
Constant	.29*** (.03)	.28*** (.07)	.22 (.13)	.28*** (.05)	.26*** (.05)
R-squared	.26	.19	.29	.32	.23
N	1525	295	79	574	577

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table A.5. A Model of Gay Rights Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004 (Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	.02 (.02)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.22*** (.02)	.16** (.06)	.26** (.12)	.25*** (.04)	.21*** (.04)
Income	.04 (.03)	-.05 (.08)	.00 (.16)	.04 (.06)	.05 (.05)
Union Household	-.04** (.02)	-.01 (.03)	.05 (.06)	-.09*** (.03)	-.04 (.03)
Education	-.13*** (.03)	-.11 (.08)	-.07 (.16)	-.18*** (.05)	-.11** (.05)
Sex	-.17*** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Age	.14*** (.04)	.15* (.08)	-.01 (.16)	.21*** (.08)	.10* (.06)
South	.02 (.01)	.02 (.03)	.06 (.06)	.00 (.02)	.04* (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.37*** (.02)	.32*** (.05)	.39*** (.11)	.35*** (.04)	.40*** (.04)
Year 2000	-.13*** (.02)	.09* (.05)	-.20** (.08)	-.14*** (.03)	-.13*** (.03)
Year 2004	-.19*** (.02)	-.20*** (.04)	-.23** (.09)	-.22*** (.03)	-.16*** (.02)
Constant	.31*** (.04)	.42*** (.08)	.15 (.16)	.34*** (.06)	.11** (.05)
R-squared	.34	.23	.34	.32	.31
N	1948	363	117	691	777

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table A.6. A Model of Abortion Attitudes by Class and Sex, 1992, 2000, and 2004
(Whites only).

	All Employed Whites	Working Class Men	Working Class Women	Non- Working Class Men	Non- Working Class Women
Working Class	.00 (.02)	--	--	--	--
Authoritarianism	.15*** (.02)	.10 (.07)	.14 (.13)	.14*** (.04)	.18*** (.04)
Income	-.05 (.03)	-.02 (.09)	-.36** (.17)	-.04 (.06)	-.05 (.05)
Union Household	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.04)	-.01 (.07)	-.05 (.03)	.00 (.03)
Education	-.14*** (.03)	-.15 (.09)	-.19 (.17)	-.12*** (.04)	-.18*** (.05)
Sex	-.07*** (.01)	--	--	--	--
Age	-.09** (.04)	.00 (.10)	-.13 (.17)	-.13 (.17)	-.23*** (.07)
South	-.02 (.01)	-.04 (.04)	-.10 (.06)	-.01 (.02)	-.03 (.02)
Religious Traditionalism	.58*** (.02)	.53*** (.06)	.59*** (.12)	.62*** (.04)	.56*** (.04)
Year 2000	.02 (.02)	.01 (.06)	-.09 (.08)	.03 (.03)	.04 (.03)
Year 2004	.09*** (.02)	.06 (.04)	-.04 (.10)	.08*** (.03)	.13*** (.03)
Constant	.11*** (.04)	.14 (.09)	.32** (.15)	.04 (.05)	.08 (.06)
R-squared	.31	.20	.30	.37	.32
N	1919	361	116	678	764

Notes: Data drawn from American National Election Studies: 1992, 2000, 2004 (pooled). Robust standard errors in parentheses. All variables range from 0-1. * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01 (two-tailed tests).

Table A.7. Political Alignment, Issue Preferences, Values, and Group Affect, 1992, 2000, 2004 (Whites).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	All Employed Whites	All Employed Whites	All Employed Whites
Working Class	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Authoritarianism	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Income	.01 (.03)	.02 (.03)	.00 (.02)
Union Household	-.04*** (.01)	-.04*** (.01)	-.05*** (.01)
Education	.02 (.02)	.04 (.02)	.04* (.02)
Sex	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Age	-.09*** (.03)	-.07** (.03)	-.09*** (.03)
South	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Religious Traditionalism	.03 (.02)	.07*** (.02)	.02 (.02)
Immigration	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)	.01 (.02)
Social Welfare	.24*** (.03)	.35*** (.03)	.26*** (.03)
Defense Spending	.16*** (.02)	.18*** (.02)	.16*** (.02)
Culture Wars	.16*** (.02)	.21*** (.02)	.18*** (.02)
Racial Issues	.10*** (.03)	.12*** (.03)	.11*** (.02)
Business-Labor Affect	.12*** (.03)	.13*** (.03)	--
Race Group Affect	.02 (.05)	-.04 (.05)	--
Culture Group Affect	.05* (.03)	.07** (.03)	--
Symbolic Racism	.00 (.03)	--	.01 (.03)
Egalitarianism	-.05 (.04)	--	-.06 (.04)
Limited Government	.10*** (.01)	--	.10*** (.01)
Moral Traditionalism	.18*** (.03)	--	.18*** (.03)
Year 2000	-.02 (.02)	.00 (.02)	-.02 (.02)
Year 2004	.04*** (.01)	.05*** (.01)	.05*** (.01)
Constant	-.03 (.04)	-.05 (.04)	.04 (.04)
R-squared	.54	.50	.52
N	1177	1265	1347

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