

What's Brewing in Wisconsin?; Why America's Dairyland
Votes for Democrats in Presidential Elections and
Republicans in Gubernatorial Elections

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Forward

In the 2014 midterm elections, Democrats faced devastating losses in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Some of the most unexpected midterm defeats happened in the state gubernatorial elections, where Republicans gained the Governorship in Massachusetts, Maryland, Arkansas, and Illinois. In the state of Wisconsin, incumbent Republican Governor Scott Walker defeated Democrat Mary Burke by over seven percent of the vote in a race that the polls had consistently considered a toss-up in the months leading up to the election.

The U.S. state of Wisconsin has a long history of progressive political action, much of which continues up to the present day. In fact, Wisconsin has consistently voted to elect Democratic candidates in every presidential election throughout the past 30 years. Yet somehow, Wisconsinites reelected the highly controversial Republican Governor Scott Walker to office in 2014. However, this is not a one-time occurrence; the state of Wisconsin has elected more Republican governors than Democratic ones. Over the past 30 years, only two governors from the Democratic Party, serving a combined total of 12 years, have held the governorship.

I became increasingly interested in Wisconsin politics while interning with the 2014 campaign of congressional candidate Rob Zerban, a former

Kenosha County Supervisor who took on incumbent Paul Ryan for Wisconsin's 1st congressional district seat in the U.S House of Representatives. Along with my internship, I volunteered with the gubernatorial campaign of former Wisconsin Secretary of Commerce, Mary Burke, who faced incumbent Governor Scott Walker. By the end of the summer, Mary Burke was tied with Scott Walker in most major polls; some even reported Burke in the lead. After returning to school in the fall, I watched from New York as both Rob Zerban and Mary Burke lost by much larger margins than predicted by any poll. Despite approval ratings often dipping below 50 percent, budgets cuts that have sparked major protests and a campaign finance scandal on his hands, Wisconsinites re-elected Governor Scott Walker. After doing some research, I saw that while the State of Wisconsin had voted Democratic in every single Presidential race in the past 30 years, most Governors within that time period had been Republicans. I was instantly intrigued and wanted to find some of the possible causes for this strange anomaly.

Introduction

In the United States, state governors are the most powerful elected officials after the President. While a significant amount of research has been

done on presidential and congressional elections, a very limited amount has been done on state gubernatorial elections. In order to understand why Wisconsin, a state that has consistently voted for Democratic candidates in every presidential election throughout the past three decades has elected mostly Republican governors within that same time frame, it is necessary to look at the factors that lead to gubernatorial election outcomes. Examining these political and electoral factors could potentially help to explain many of the reasons that such stark voting differences exist between presidential and gubernatorial elections.

Seemingly contradictory voting patterns in Wisconsin have led to many questions: What factors lead to a difference in voter turnout in presidential and gubernatorial races? Are there factors that lead to a difference in voter choice in these two types of elections? Do Wisconsinites have different standards and expectations for presidents than they do for their governors? These questions can only be answered by examining Wisconsin's electoral geography. Researching Wisconsin's political geography over the past 30 years provides an extensive case study of why these electoral differences occur, providing more reliable results to draw conclusions on. By examining Wisconsin's electoral process, the information collected can then be extrapolated to other states throughout the

country where similar phenomena occur. Overall, this information could potentially be used to help citizens in other states throughout the country elect Governors that better reflect their interests.

Literature Review

In order to understand Wisconsin's seemingly contradictory voting patterns over the past 30 years, it is necessary to understand the factors that lead to gubernatorial election outcomes. The factors can be separated into two categories: those that influence vote choice and those that influence voter turnout. Both of these sets work hand in hand to determine the outcome of state gubernatorial races.

To better understand what forces shape gubernatorial elections in the U.S., I consulted the *Guide to U.S. Elections* by CQ Press. It provides a detailed explanation of gubernatorial elections and includes interesting background facts about state governors and their role in both state and federal politics. CQ Press also discusses how the nature of the governor's office has changed over the last few centuries in ways such as election shifts from presidential years to non-presidential years and increased term amounts. It also discusses why gubernatorial races have become increasingly more competitive. For example, in the 36 governorship contests in 2002, 24 were won with less than 55 percent of the total vote and 20 governorships

switched party hands (CQ Press, 2010). Elections continue to be highly competitive today. Of the 36 gubernatorial seats up for election in 2014, six switched party hands, giving Republicans control of 31 state governorships. The *Guide to U.S. Elections* provides a thorough history of gubernatorial races leading back to the inception of the U.S. that can be used to better understand election outcomes of the present.

Factors that Influence Vote Choice:

Many gubernatorial campaigns focus on noneconomic social issues, such as abortion or gun control, to appeal to a wider range of voters. In *Issue Voting in Gubernatorial Elections: Abortion and Post-Webster Politics* by Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox, the authors discuss the emerging importance of social issues in determining gubernatorial elections. In the aftermath of Webster v. Reproductive Health Services, a decision allowing states to regulate access to abortion, “voters considered the positions of gubernatorial candidates on abortion and were willing to cross party lines to support the candidates who supported their positions” (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox, 1994). This study utilized exit poll results after the 1989 and 1990 elections to determine that social issues can be more important to voters than more commonly assumed issues such as the state of the economy. While abortion may hold more weight with voters than many other non-economic issues, it

is important to consider how people vote based on their view of key social issues.

While gubernatorial elections are run at the state level, it would be naive to assume that national political factors do not influence these races. In Holbrook-Provow's *National Factors in Gubernatorial Elections*, the author examines the state of the economy, presidential popularity, midterm elections, and incumbency to prove that gubernatorial election outcomes are at least in part determined by national factors. Holbrook-Provow concludes that all mentioned factors, with the exception of midterm elections, are key in determining gubernatorial races. It is clear that gubernatorial races are not insulated from the state of the national government; however, presidential popularity does shift greatly between presidential election and midterm election years so the time that the election takes place may hold more weight than the author gives it. Holbrook-Provow's conclusion also provides candidate guidelines for using the national political climate to their advantage that could prove useful to future gubernatorial candidates in Wisconsin.

While economic conditions and the president's job performance are traditionally listed as important factors in determining vote choice, James D. King's *Incumbent Popularity and Vote Choice in Gubernatorial Elections*

stresses the importance of the incumbent governor's approval rates in determining which party will win the Governorship. This study focuses on gubernatorial elections in Illinois, Kentucky, Rhode Island, and Wyoming to suggest that an incumbent governor's approval rating is a better indicator of vote choice than the condition of the state economy. This article does not dispute the importance of economic conditions and presidential popularity, but instead adds another important factor to the list. As many past Wisconsin governors have served multiple terms, considering their approval ratings during the months leading up to elections may help to decide if this study also holds true in Wisconsin.

Factors that Influence Voter Turnout:

Political campaigning is a tactic used by candidates to encourage voter participation in gubernatorial elections. In *Getting Out the Vote: Participation in Gubernatorial Elections* by Patterson and Caldeira, the authors stress the importance of campaign activism and competitiveness in electoral participation. They also aim to prove that "electoral law and socioeconomic characteristics have little to contribute independently to an explanation of electoral turnout" (Patterson and Caldeira, 1983). However, Patterson and Caldeira do not discredit the idea that laws designed to decrease turnout, such as voter I.D. laws, certainly have an effect.

Campaigning surely influences voter turnout in Wisconsin gubernatorial elections.

While some studies suggest that political parties are in decline, they still hold much of the power in elections. In *Party Ideology, Organization, and Competitiveness as Mobilizing Forces in Gubernatorial Elections* by Hill and Leighley, the authors look at the importance of these three factors on statewide voter turnout. The authors examine how the Democratic and Republican parties mobilize voters and the ways in which voter registration requirements affect party mobilization. Hill and Leighley conclude that party ideology and competitiveness are important factors in determining voter mobilization while party organization is not. The authors also provide guidelines for party platforms that could be used by the Democratic Party of Wisconsin to reach the widest array of voters and increase their competitiveness edge.

Partisan Effects of Voter Turnout in Senatorial and Gubernatorial Elections by Nagel and McNulty questions the validity of the Conventional Theory of electoral politics in modern times and uses electoral data from the past 30 years to suggest that the theory no longer holds true. The Conventional Theory states that (1) voting participation is associated with socioeconomic status (SES) meaning those with higher SES vote more

reliably than those with low SES, (2) when turnout rises, it is because more people with low SES have voted, (3) the low SES voters are more likely to vote with the party whose economic views are more aligned with their own (Democratic Party), and (4) therefore, higher voter turnout helps Democrats (Nagel and McNulty 1996). This directly affects voter turnout for the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, which typically runs expensive get out the vote campaigns due to the conclusions drawn by the Conventional Theory. If this theory no longer holds true, they could find more effective uses for their spending.

Gubernatorial Races Compared to Other Elections:

In *Comparing Gubernatorial and Senatorial Elections* by Squire and Fastnow, the authors aim to find why governors are more electorally vulnerable than senators. The article concludes that voters associate governors and senators with different issues. Along with differences in re-election rates, voter knowledge, and challenger quality, the article found that voters care more about governor elections and believe that they have more of an impact on their everyday lives. Understanding how gubernatorial elections are perceived in comparison to other political races helps to explain similarities and differences in factors that influence election outcomes.

In *Gubernatorial Midterm Slumps* by Folke and Snyder, the authors look at the well-known presidential midterm slump and determine that a similar phenomenon happens to governors in the United States. They also believe that voters use midterm elections to counteract policies put in place by the previous governor that fall too far left or right on the political spectrum. While not as high as the percentage of seats lost by the president's party during midterm elections, there still is a constant loss of legislative seats by the governor's party between gubernatorial races. This article does not directly relate to the election of governors but it does show the effects that gubernatorial races have on other elected state officials that may indirectly effect later elections.

New Jersey Case Study:

In *Campaign Dynamics: The Race for Governor* by Thomas M. Carsey, the author uses New Jersey's 1993 gubernatorial race where Republican Christine Todd Whitman triumphed over incumbent Democrat James Florio. This election showed just how "candidates battle to provide information to voters while trying to change the salience of various issues and cleavages within the electorate" (Carsey 2001). Carsey detailed the events leading up to the 1993 election and the effects they had on vote choice and voter turnout. It was interesting to see how the state of the

economy, incumbency, and presidential popularity directly affected New Jersey's gubernatorial race. This was a useful case study because like Wisconsin, New Jersey typically had close gubernatorial elections, where candidates often win by less than a 5% margin. This case study provides a basis for how to examine past elections in Wisconsin and conclude how they relate to the state's overall gubernatorial election trends

Case Study: Kenosha County, WI

Wisconsin's political atmosphere has always been paradoxical to say the least. The state was home to Robert La Follete, father of the Progressive movement, as well as the famous anti-Communist senator Joe McCarthy, for whom the term *McCarthyism* was coined. From 1910 to 1960, Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee, had mostly Socialist mayors. In 1998, Republican Paul Ryan became the youngest member of Congress, entering at age 28. Ryan was selected as the Vice Presidential candidate, running with Republican Mitt Romney in 2012. That same year, Democrat Tammy Baldwin became the first openly Gay U.S. Senator in history.

Wisconsin's "weather, the absence of a fashionable big city, its tax structure, and other constraints limit its potential for dramatic economic growth even as a brain drain of many of its best educated young people

continues to worry state officials. Yet Wisconsin is still a strong state economically, not at all skating on margins of economic existence as are such states as North Dakota or West Virginia” (Conant, 2006). Madison is the state capital and Milwaukee is the largest city; both of them are major Democratic strongholds. According to the 2010 census, Wisconsin has a population of 5,686,986 people (see addendum for Census information).

Kenosha County lies in the southeastern-most corner of Wisconsin and is located about half way in between Milwaukee and Chicago, IL. It is the 8th most populated county in the state of Wisconsin; it consists of 1 city, 6 villages, and 7 towns. A case study of Kenosha County can be used to partially represent the larger state of Wisconsin because it is relatively similar in demographics, and its voting patterns have correlated closely with Wisconsin’s over the past 30 years.

Map of Wisconsin (Kenosha County Highlighted in Red)

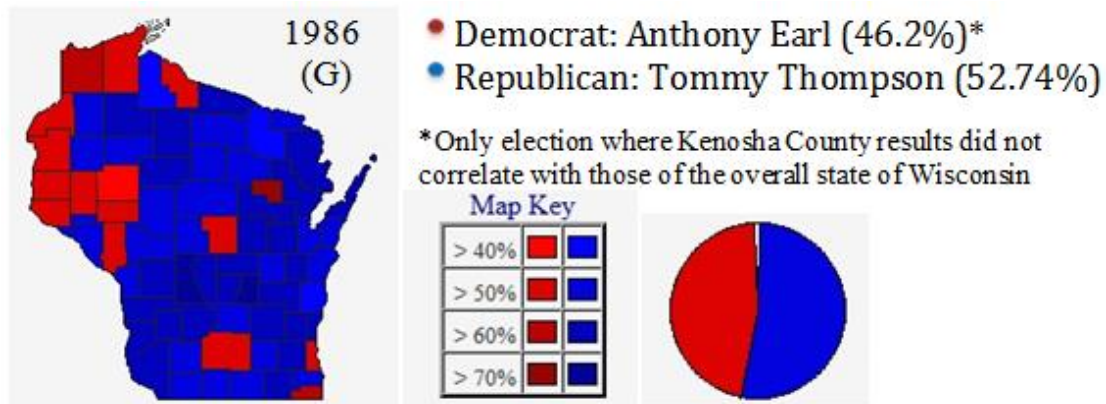


Municipal Map of Kenosha County, Wisconsin

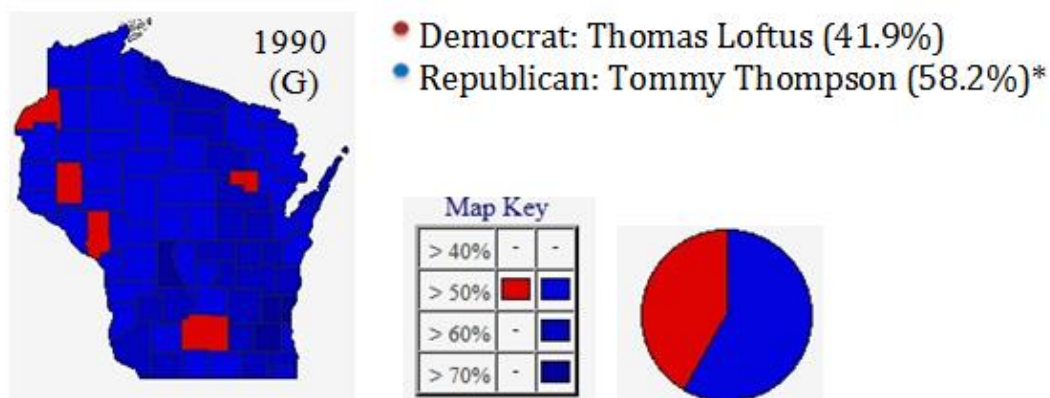


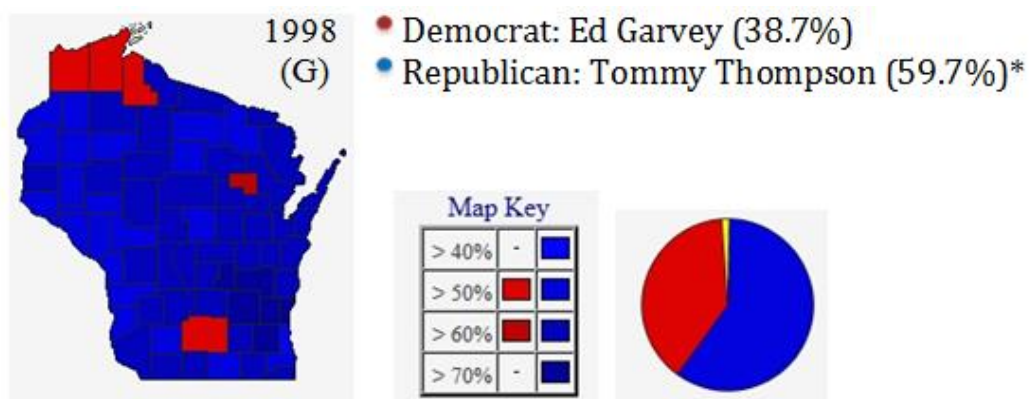
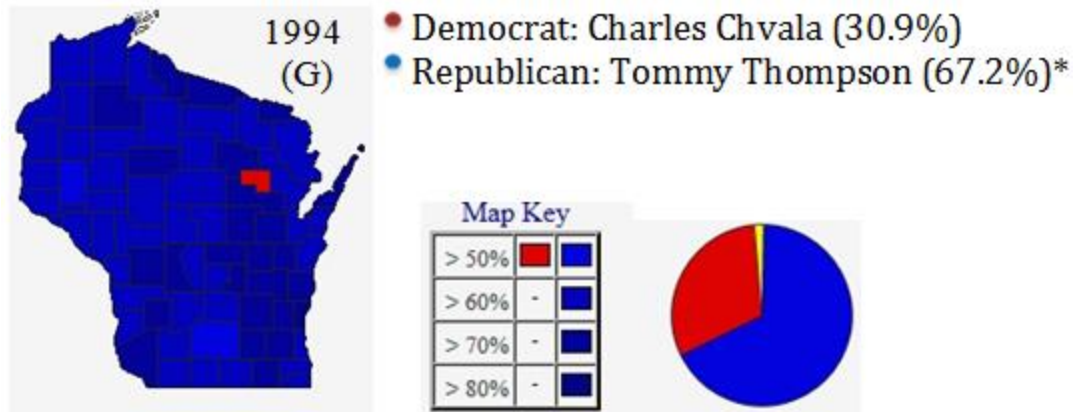
Maps from Kenosha County, WI Website (<http://www.co.kenosha.wi.us/>)

Wisconsin Gubernatorial Election Results from the Past 30 Years



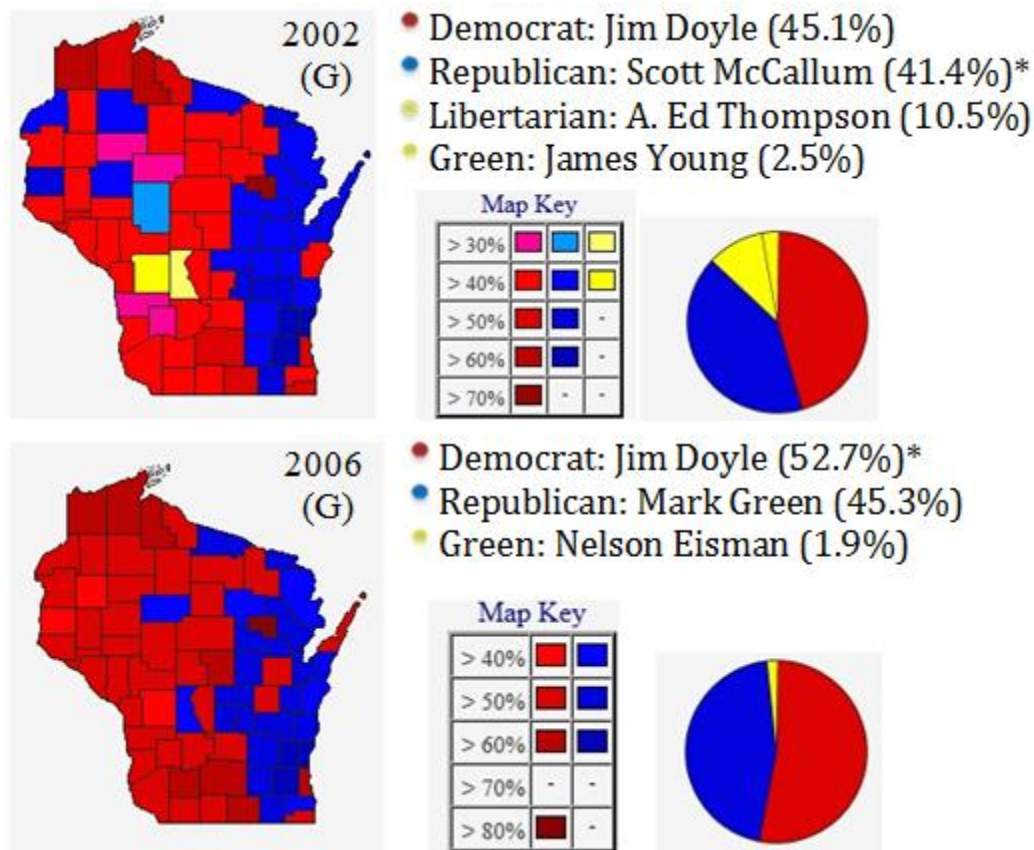
Anthony Earl was elected Governor in 1982 after former Governor Lee Dreyfus declined to run for re-election. Much to the surprise of the Democratic camp, Earl lost to former Republican state legislator Tommy Thompson in the 1986 elections. This loss was most likely due to the negative effects that the early 1980s recession had on Wisconsin's economy, Thompson's financial support from the business community, and Earl's fatal reputation as 'the governor of Madison' (Conant, 2006). In 1988, Earl ran for U.S. senate but lost the party bid in the primaries.





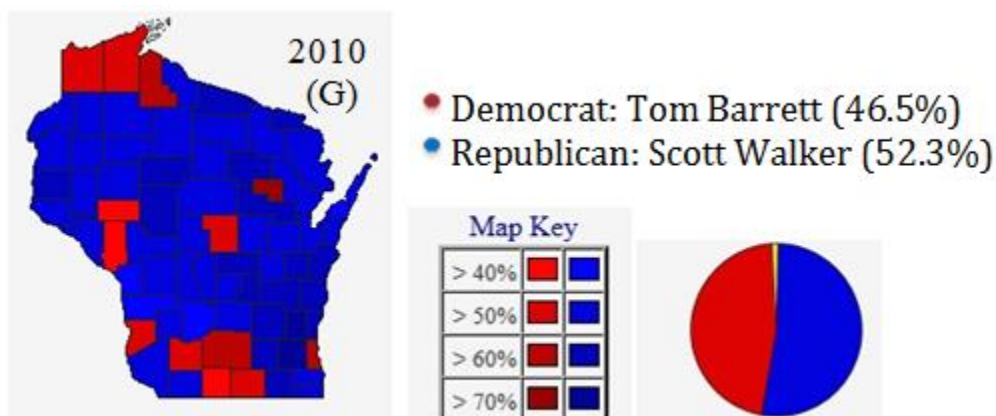
Tommy Thompson went on to win the next three elections; he served for a total of 16 years and became Wisconsin's longest serving Governor. Thompson defeated the Speaker of the Wisconsin State Assembly, Thomas Loftus, in 1990, Chuck Chvala, a State Senator in 1994, and the Wisconsin Deputy Attorney General, Ed Garvey, in 1998, each by a more than 10% margin. Thompson enjoyed "enduring popularity and state economic prosperity during his administration. Since taking office in January 1987, Thompson cut taxes and welfare, relentlessly boosted business, tamed the state bureaucracy and whipped the Legislature into submission" (Schultze

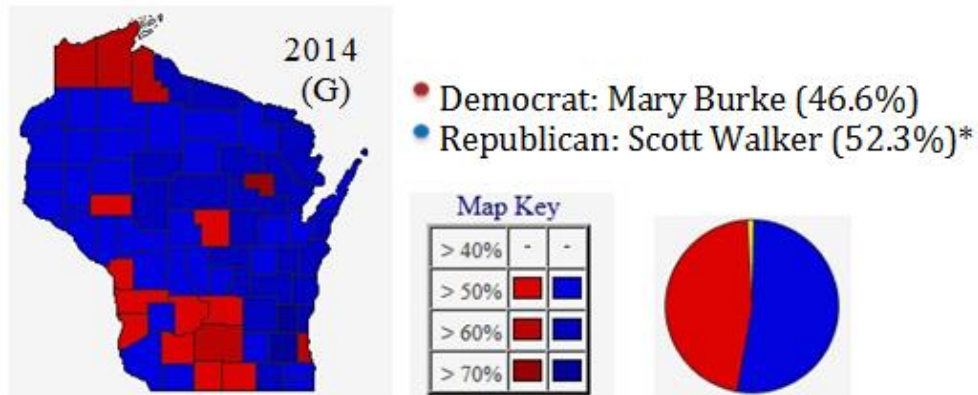
and Bice, 1997). In 2001, Thompson left the governorship to serve as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services during George W. Bush's first term as President. He was succeeded by his long-time Lieutenant Governor Scott McCallum.



McCallum served as Governor until the 2002 elections, where he lost to Wisconsin Attorney General, Jim Doyle. The race also included “Jim Young, representing the Green Party, [who] ran an aggressive campaign that threatened Doyle, while Ed Thompson, Tommy Thompson’s free-spirited, tavern-owning brother, ran as a Libertarian, threatening McCallum” (Fowler,

2008). Doyle ended up winning with just over 45% of the vote. As Doyle took over, the state of Wisconsin was experiencing the largest deficit in the state's history. While trying to limiting the tax and other financial burdens on Wisconsin residents in the “areas of education and health care and pursuing financial incentives to attract and keep businesses and jobs in the state, Doyle took drastic cost-cutting and revenue raising actions to deal with the budget and overall economic crises, among them raising property taxes, levying additional sales taxes, and laying off and furloughing state workers” (National Governors Association). When Doyle was reelected in 2006, he became the first Democratic Wisconsin governor to be reelected in 32 years. With low approval ratings and a record high budget deficit, Doyle did not decide to seek reelection in 2010 (Martin, 2009).





*Indicates incumbency

Maps, Charts, Graphs and Data by David Leip (<http://uselectionatlas.org/>)

Percentages represent the percent of the popular vote received for each candidate

Results shown for candidates receiving more than 1.0% of the popular vote

Former state assembly member and Milwaukee County Executive, Scott Walker, was elected Governor of Wisconsin in 2010. He won against Democrat Tom Barrett, Mayor of Milwaukee and former U.S. Congressman. After announcing that emergency tax cuts needed to be made, Walker signed an array of new bills, one of which would “extend tax breaks to companies for every new job they create, at a two-year cost of \$67 million” (Bauer, 2011). Critics of the bill believed it would only benefit a few large businesses and dismissed it as sham. This would be the first of many Walker-related controversies.

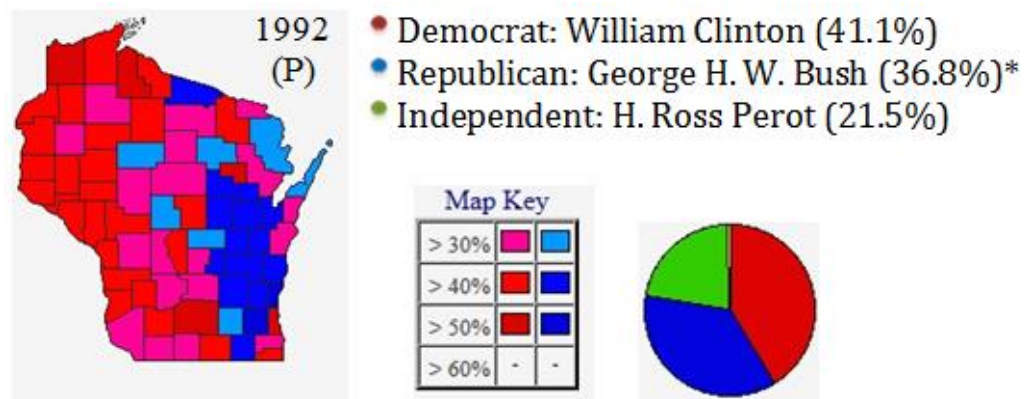
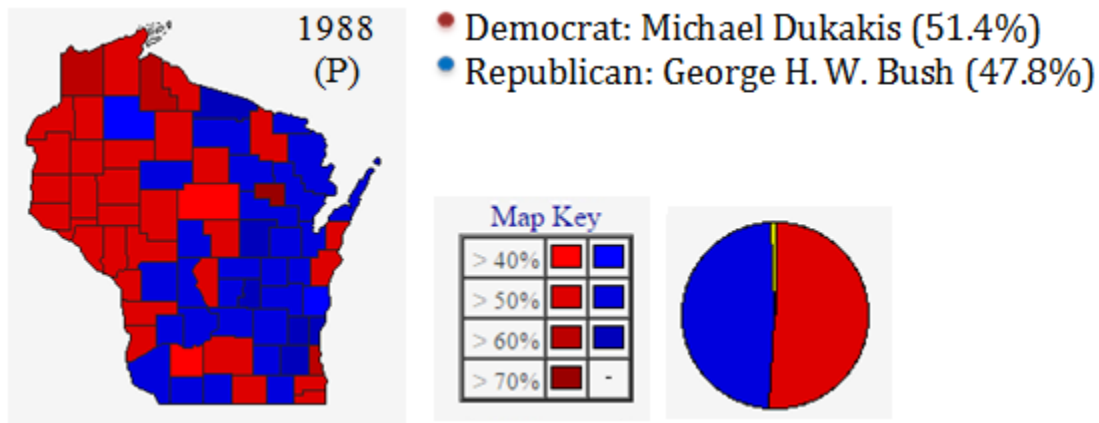
In 2012, a recall election was ordered by the Government Accountability Board as a result of Walker pushing through his infamous budget repair bill that ended collective bargaining rights for most state

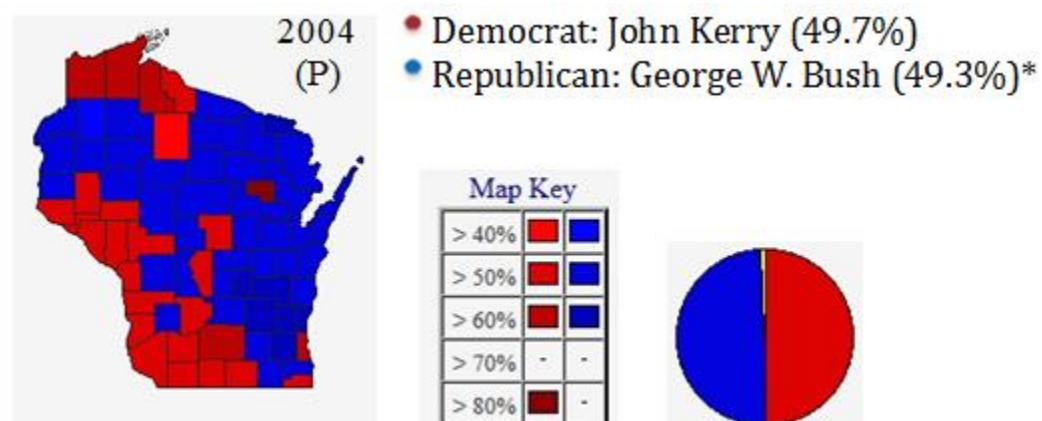
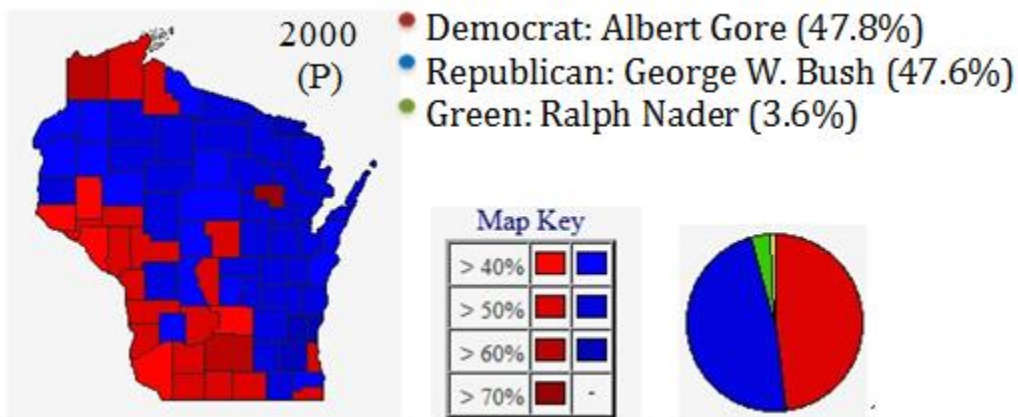
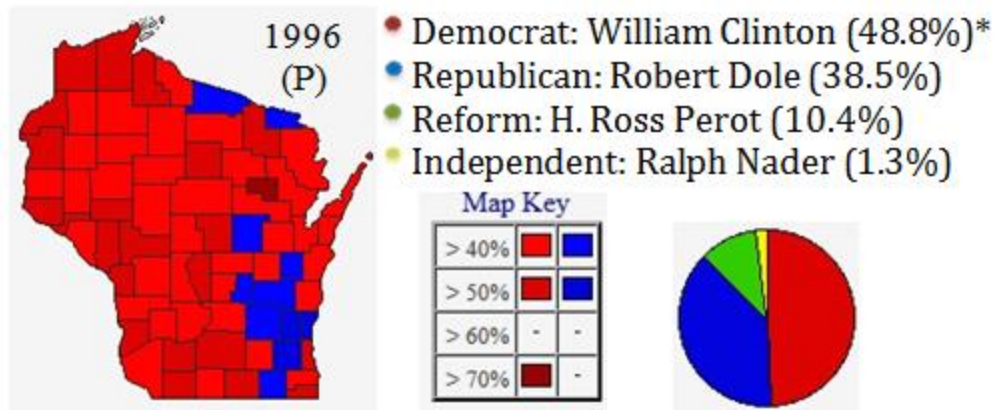
workers. It forced “workers to contribute more to their pension and health care costs, which amounted to a cut in pay. Walker argued the changes were needed to help balance the state's budget, while Democrats and other opponents said the true intention was to weaken the power of unions, which have traditionally opposed Republicans” (Reilly, 2012). In 1959, Wisconsin became the first state to enact collective bargaining laws; unions in the state continue to remain strong today. This new law sparked large-scale protests across the state and a circulated petition for a recall election that only needed 500,000 signatures had gained over 900,000. However, Scott Walker won the re-call election, becoming the first Governor in U.S. history to do so. After the recall, Walker and the Republican-led state legislature signed a Voter Identification law into effect; the League of Woman Voter and the NAACP decided to take legal action against it. The “U.S. Justice Department sided with the challengers in the federal court case, saying that the photo ID requirement unfairly affected minority voters” (CBS News), and the case was sent to the U.S. Supreme Court for potential review.

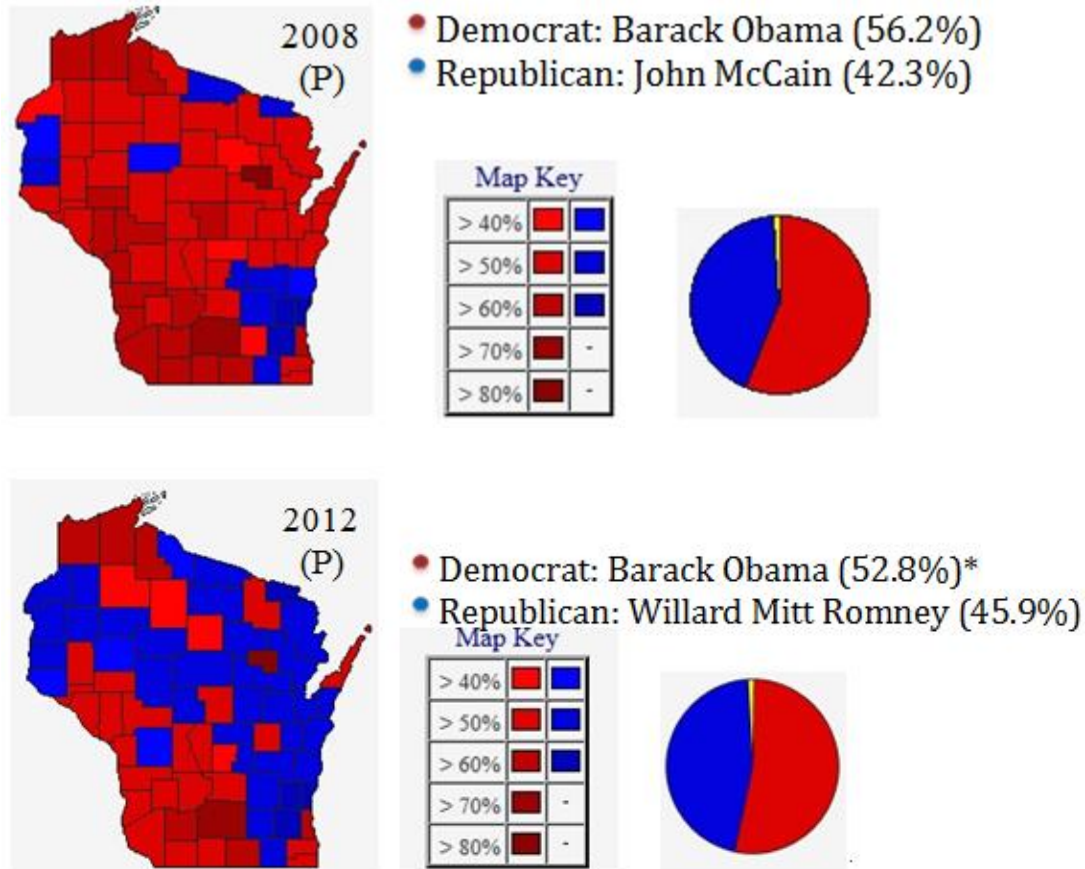
In 2014, Walker won again, this time against Mary Burke, a former business executive and Madison County School Board member. Throughout the campaign cycle, Burke and Walker appeared to be neck-and-neck. On Election Day, Walker won with 52.3% of the vote while Burke had received

only 46.6%, much lower than expected. Walker's 2015 budget proposal laid out a \$300 million (13%) cut to the University of Wisconsin System over the next two years in an attempt to fix the State deficit (Bauer, 2015). This announcement sparked a wave of protests from students, educators, and concerned Wisconsin citizens.

Wisconsin Presidential Election Results from the Past 30 Years







Methodology

The primary aim of this case study was to get a better understanding of why Wisconsin has voted for mostly Democrats in Presidential Elections and Republicans in Gubernatorial Elections throughout the past 30 years. I chose this time period because it was almost 30 years ago that Wisconsin last voted to elect a Republican President, Ronald Reagan, in 1984. Since I will begin my research in January of 2015, I will use data from 1985 to

2015. The 30-year longitudinal dimension will provide a more extensive period of time that could potentially make add reliability to this research.

I supplemented the above literature review with surveys of Wisconsin residents in Kenosha County, which I received by going door to door (see survey in Addendum). Specifically, I was interested in finding the factors that influenced voter choice and voter turnout. I began by asking basic demographic questions including the gender, age, race, highest educational attainment, and annual household income of the participants to get a better understanding of my surveyed population. I then asked the participants questions about their voting patterns, whether or not they belong to a political party, whether or not they approve of the current president, which economic and social issues are most important to them, and what factors most influence their decisions in the voting booth (see survey in addendum). I completed this task on three consecutive Saturdays.

I analyzed the information that I collected to answer questions such as: What factors have led to differences in both voter turnout and voter choice in presidential and gubernatorial races? Is there demographic evidence that could explain these trends? Do Wisconsinites have different standards and expectations for presidents than they do for governors?

Results

Table 1 on the next page shows the demographic make-up of the State of Wisconsin, Kenosha County, WI, and the Survey population in order to provide a baseline for comparisons between the three geographic areas. Of the 100 participants surveyed in this case study, 56 were male and 44 were female; 12 were between the ages of 18 and 29, 44 between 30 and 49, 28 between 50 and 64, and 16 either 65 or older; 91 of the participants identified as White, 5 as Black or African American, 2 as Asian, 1 as some other race, and 1 as two or more races; 6 participants identified as Hispanic or Latino (of any race). When asked for their highest educational attainment, 6 reported that they had not graduated high-school, 36 were high school graduates that had no higher education, 20 had some college but not degree, 10 had an Associate's degree, 19 had a Bachelor's degree, and 9 had a Graduate or professional degree. Ten participants came from households with an annual income of less than \$24,999, 47 from households making \$25,000 to \$74,999 annually, 40 from households making over \$75,000 annually, and 3 stated that they did not wish to respond. These demographic results were self-reported and represent how each participant self-identifies. High percentages of survey participants were white and male; they tended to

be older, richer, and more educated than the average Kenosha County resident.

Table 1 Demographic Type	State of Wisconsin (WI)	Kenosha County (KC)	Survey Results
Total Population	5,706,871	166,874	100
Voting Population (Age 18 and over)	4,381,727	124,810	100
Gender			
Male	49.6%	49.5%	56.0%
Female	50.4%	50.5%	44.0%
Age (Voting Population)			
WI & KC (18-34), Survey Population (18-29)	29.2%	30.1%	12.0%
WI & KC (35-54), Survey Population (30-49)	35.1%	39.2%	44.0%
WI & KC (55-74), Survey Population (50-64)	26.2%	15.4%	28.0%
WI & KC (75+), Survey Population (65+)	8.7%	7.3%	16.0%
Race			
White	87.0%	87.4%	91.0%
Black or African American	6.2%	7.0%	5.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%
Asian	2.3%	1.5%	2.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	1.5%	1.7%	1.0%
Two or more races	2.0%	2.1%	1.0%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)*	6.1%	12.0%	6.0%
Highest Educational Attainment*			
Less than high school graduate	9.5%	11.2%	6.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	32.8%	33.7%	36.0%
Some college (no degree)	21.2%	22.3%	20.0%
Associate's degree	9.6%	9.6%	10.0%
Bachelor's degree	17.7%	15.7%	19.0%
Graduate or professional degree	9.1%	7.6%	9.0%
Annual Household Income			
\$24,999 or less	22.3%	22.6%	10.0%
\$25,000 to \$74,999	45.2%	42.9%	47.0%
\$75,000 or more	32.4%	34.6%	40.0%
Did not wish to respond	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%

U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey (WI & KC Data only)

*All those identified as Hispanic or Latino also identified as part of another racial group

*Highest education attainment numbers are for those aged 25 and up (WI & KC Data only)

The first non- demographic question on the survey asked to which political party the participants belongs. From this point on, race

demographics will be split up into White and Non-White groupings.

According to the *Center for Voting and Democracy*, White voters tend to vote in higher percentages than their Non-White counterparts (2013). This is not to say that all Non-White races have the same voting patterns, but since 91% of participants identified as White, creating a Non-White group for the remainder is more statistically significant than analyzing each individual racial group, especially those with just 1 or 2 participants. Hispanic or Latino participants are not included in the Non-White group because they also had to identify as part of another racial group, and as a result would be counted twice.

Of the 100 Kenosha County Residents surveyed, 45 identified as Democrats, 37 as Republicans, 15 as Independents, 2 said other, and 1 said none (see Table 2 on the next page). The groups most likely to identify as Democrats are:

- Gender: Women (56.8%)
- Age: 18-29 (66.7%), 30-49 (52.3%)
- Race: White (40.7%), Non- White (88.9%), Hispanic or Latino (50.0%)
- Highest Educational Attainment: Associate's degree (60.0 %), Bachelor's degree (63.2%), Graduate or professional degree (77.8%)
- Annual Household Income: \$24,999 or less (60.0%), \$25,000 to \$74,999 (51.1%)

Table 2 Political Party Self-Identification					
Demographic Group	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other	None
Gender:					
Male	35.7%	42.9%	19.6%		1.8%
Female	56.8%	29.5%	9.1%	2.3%	2.3%
Age:					
18-29	66.7%	8.3%	25.0%		
30-49	52.3%	34.1%	11.4%		2.3%
50-64	35.7%	42.9%	17.9%	3.6%	
65+	25.0%	56.3%	12.5%		6.3%
Race:					
White	40.7%	39.6%	16.5%	1.1%	2.2%
Non-White	88.9%	11.1%			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%		16.7%
Highest Educational Attainment:					
Less than high school graduate	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%		
High school graduate	33.3%	44.4%	13.9%	2.8%	5.6%
Some college (no degree)	35.0%	35.0%	30.0%		
Associate's degree	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%		
Bachelor's degree	63.2%	31.6%	5.3%		
Graduate or professional degree	77.8%	22.2%			
Annual Household Income:					
\$24,999 or less	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%		4.3%
\$25,000 to \$74,999	51.1%	31.9%	12.8%		
\$75,000 or more	37.5%	45.0%	15%	2.5%	
Totals:	45.0%	37.0%	15.0%	2.0%	1.0%

The groups most likely to identify as Republican are:

- Gender: Male (42.9%)
- Age: 50-64 (42.9%), 65+ (56.3%)
- Highest Educational Attainment: High school graduate (44.4%), Less than high school graduate (50.0%)
- Annual Household Income: \$75,000 or more (45.0%)

None of the demographic groups identified primarily as Independent,

Other, or None. However, more than 20 percent of 18-29 year olds, as well

as participants with less than a high school diploma or some college (no degree) self-identified as Independents. An equal amount of participants with some college (no degree) voted identified as Democrat and Republican (35.0%). While all of this information is important, it does not necessarily correlate with how each participant tends to vote in presidential and gubernatorial elections.

Question 9 on the survey asked participants to circle the candidates that they voted for in the last three presidential elections and the last three gubernatorial elections. Participants who voted for Democrats in the majority of these elections were labeled as “Tends Democrat” and those who voted for Republicans in the majority of these elections were labeled “Tends Republican”. These labels will also be used in other tables and results moving forward. No participant voted for the same amount of Democrat and Republican candidates. 3 participants stated that they did not vote in any of the elections surveyed. Demographic information for those who tend to vote Republican and Democrat can be seen in Table 3 on the next page.

The demographic groups that tend to vote for Democrats are:

- Gender: Female (63.6%)
- Age: 18-29 (91.7%), 30-49 (52.4%)
- Race: Non-White (88.9%), Hispanic or Latino (66.7%)
- Highest Educational Attainment: Associate's degree (50.0%), Bachelor's degree (68.4%), Graduate or professional degree (77.8%)
- Annual Household Income: \$24,999 or less (70.0%), \$25,000 to \$74,999 (51.1%)

Table 3 How Participants Tended to Vote Overall			
Demographic Group	Tends Democrat	Tends Republican	Does not vote
Gender:			
Male	37.5%	60.7%	1.8%
Female	63.6%	31.8%	4.5%
Age:			
18-29	91.7%	8.3%	
30-49	52.4%	43.2%	4.5%
50-64	39.3%	60.7%	
65+	25.0%	68.8%	6.3%
Race:			
White	45.1%	51.6%	3.3%
Non-White	88.9%	11.1%	
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	66.7%	33.3%	
Highest Educational Attainment:			
Less than high school graduate	16.7%	83.3%	
High school graduate	38.9%	61.1%	
Some college (no degree)	45.0%	55.0%	
Associate's degree	50.0%	40.0%	10.0%
Bachelor's degree	68.4%	31.6%	
Graduate or professional degree	77.8%	22.2%	
Annual Household Income:			
\$24,999 or less	70.0%	30.0%	
\$25,000 to \$74,999	51.1%	42.6%	6.4%
\$75,000 or more	45.0%	55.0%	
Totals:	49.0%	48.0%	3.0%

The demographic groups that tend to vote for Republicans are:

- Gender: Male (60.7%)
- Age: 50-64 (60.7%), 65+ (68.8%)
- Race: White (51.6%)
- Highest Educational Attainment: Less than high school graduate (83.3%), High school graduate (61.1%), Some college (no degree) (55.0%)
- Annual Household Income: \$75,000 or more (55.0%)

Overall, 49 participants tended to vote for Democrats, 48 tended to vote for Republicans, and 3 did not vote, differing greatly from the totals of the previous political party self-identification question. 10 percent or less of each demographic group responded that they did not vote.

Question 10 on the survey asked which five issues (of those listed) were most important to the participant. The overall results can be seen in Table 4 below. Only responses from those who have voted in any of the surveyed elections are included. These issues were gathered from past Gallup Poll's Most Important Problem Facing the U.S. surveys.

Table 4 Issue	Number of Votes	Tends Democrat	Tends Republican
The economy (in general)	76	30	44
The environment	19	19	0
Immigration	33	17	15
Foreign affairs	6	5	1
Abortion/access to contraception	16	10	6
Gun-control	10	6	4
Income/wealth distribution	13	13	0
Healthcare policy	38	22	15
Poverty/hunger/homelessness	11	10	0
Ethics/moral/religious/family decline	31	12	19
War/fear of war	10	4	5
Education/access to education	40	23	16
Unemployment/jobs	43	23	20
Dissatisfaction with government	60	15	43
Federal budget deficit	23	10	13
Same-sex marriage	7	3	3
Race relations	9	7	1
The social security system	12	3	9
Equal pay for women	7	6	1
Terrorism	36	7	25
Totals:	500	245	240

Top five issues overall:

The economy (in general) (76)

Dissatisfaction with government (60)

Unemployment/jobs (43)

Education/access to education (40)

Healthcare policy (38)

Top five issues for those who tend to vote for Democrats:

The economy (in general) (30)

Unemployment/jobs (23)

Education/access to education (23)

Healthcare policy (22)

The environment (19)

Top five issues for those who tend to vote for Republicans:

The economy (in general) (44)

Dissatisfaction with government (43)

Terrorism (25)

Unemployment/jobs (20)

Ethics/moral/religious/family decline (19)

Those who tend to vote Republican were more united in their choices of important issues than those who tend to vote Democrat, whose important issue votes were spread among many different issues. Overall, the economy (in general) was the biggest issue for voters of both parties.

Table 5 shows the responses of those who tend to vote for Democrats and Republicans to questions 12 and 13 relating to the reasons why they vote for presidential and gubernatorial candidates.

Table 5 Reason for Voter Choice			
Reason	Tends Democrat	Tends Republican	Total
<i>Presidential Elections</i>			
Party affiliation	61.2%	29.2%	44.0%
Political experience	6.0%	8.3%	7.0%
Candidate's character	28.6%	18.4%	23.0%
Stance on economic issues	2.0%	37.5%	19.0%
Stance on social issues	2.0%	6.3%	4.0%
I do not vote	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
<i>Gubernatorial Elections</i>			
Party affiliation	40.8%	22.9%	31.0%
Political experience	4.1%	8.3%	6.0%
Candidate's character	16.3%	8.3%	12.0%
Stance on economic issues	12.2%	45.8%	28.0%
Stance on social issues	2.0%	0.0%	1.0%
I do not vote	24.5%	14.6%	22.0%

*Data used only from participants who voted in 2 or more of the past 3 *Gubernatorial Elections* and/or 2 or more of the past 3 *Presidential Elections*

In both presidential and gubernatorial elections, the largest percentage of voters surveyed and of those who tend to vote for Democrats said they pick which candidate to vote for based on party affiliation. The largest percentage of those who tend to vote for Republicans said they pick candidates based on their stance on economic issues, which was also second overall in both presidential and gubernatorial elections. In presidential elections, 3 percent of participants said they did not vote compared to 22 percent of participants who said they did not vote in gubernatorial elections. 24.5 percent of those who tend to vote for Democrats and 14.6 percent of those who tend to vote for Republicans said they do not vote in gubernatorial

elections. Demographic patterns of Voters and Non-Voters in both presidential and gubernatorial elections can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Who Tends to Vote in Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections				
	<i>Presidential</i>		<i>Gubernatorial</i>	
Demographics	% Voters	% Non-Voters	% Voters	% Non-Voters
Gender:				
Male	98.2%	1.8%	73.2%	26.8%
Female	93.2%	6.8%	65.9%	34.1%
Age:				
18-29	91.7%	8.3%	33.3%	66.7%
30-49	95.5%	4.5%	63.6%	36.4%
50-64	100.0%	0.0%	82.1%	17.9%
65+	93.8%	6.3%	93.8%	6.3%
Race:				
White	95.6%	4.4%	70.3%	29.7%
Non-White	100.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	100.0%	0.0%	83.3%	16.7%
Highest Educational Attainment:				
Less than high school graduate	100.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
High school graduate	91.7%	8.3%	66.7%	33.3%
Some college (no degree)	100.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%
Associate's degree	90.0%	10.0%	70.0%	30.0%
Bachelor's degree	100.0%	0.0%	68.4%	31.6%
Graduate or professional degree	100.0%	0.0%	88.9%	11.1%
Annual Household Income:				
\$24,999 or less	90.0%	10.0%	50.0%	50.0%
\$25,000 to \$74,999	93.6%	6.4%	61.7%	38.3%
\$75,000 or more	100.0%	0.0%	82.5%	17.5%
Tends to Vote:				
Democrat	98.0%	2.0%	61.2%	38.8%
Republican	100.0%	0.0%	83.3%	16.7%

If participants voted in two or more of the past three presidential elections (majority), they were labeled as a “voter”. If they voted in one or zero of the past three presidential elections, they were labeled as a “non-voter”. This was repeated for gubernatorial election responses.

In presidential elections, 90 percent or more of participants from every demographic group were voters. In gubernatorial elections, the percent of voter differed greatly between demographic groups. 73.2 percent of males were voters compared to 65.9% of women. Percentage of voters tended to increase as age, educational attainment, and annual household income increased. 61.2 percent of those who tend to vote for Democrats were voters compared to 83.3 percent of those who tend to vote for Republicans.

Voter turnout for each individual surveyed election can be seen in Table 7 and Graph 1 below. Voter turnout results from those surveyed were about 20% higher overall than the actual turnout percentages for the state of Wisconsin. Presidential elections tended to have larger turnout than gubernatorial elections in both the surveyed population and in the actual turnout numbers. In the surveyed population, Democrats tended to receive the majority of votes in presidential years while Republicans tended to receive the majority of vote in gubernatorial years. Surveyed voter turnout increased in presidential elections from 2004 to 2012 and in gubernatorial elections from 2006 to 2014, respectively.

Gender

Women in this study were more likely to identify and vote Democrat while men were more likely to identify and vote Republican. Women were

more likely than men to vote in presidential, but were less likely than men to vote in gubernatorial elections.

Age

Younger age groups were more likely to identify and vote Democrat while older age groups were more likely to identify and vote Republican. All age groups in this study voted in over 90.0 of presidential elections but in gubernatorial elections, the percent of voter turnout rose with each increasing age group. Older voters were much more likely than younger voters to vote in gubernatorial elections.

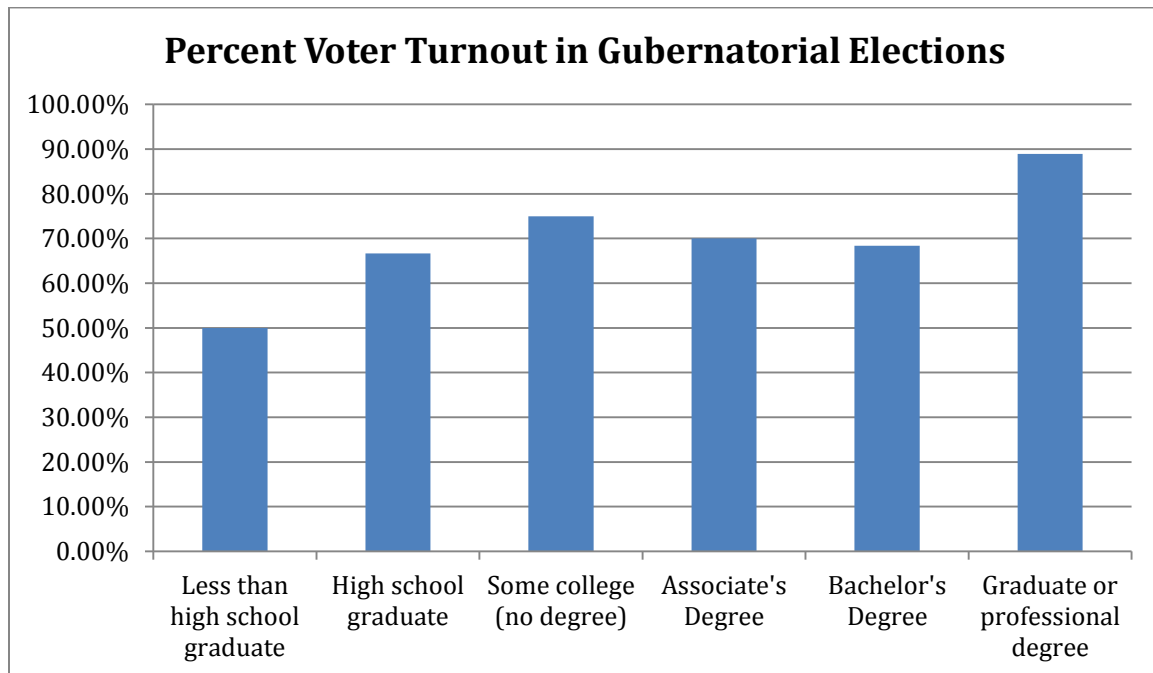
Race

Although the non-white base in this survey was fairly small (9%), most Non-White voters and Hispanic or Latino voters chose Democrats on election days, while most White voters chose Republicans. Non-White voters and Hispanic or Latino voters were less likely to vote in gubernatorial elections than their white counterparts.

Education Level

Those with higher education degrees (Graduate, Bachelor's or Associate) tended to identify and vote Democrat while those with some college (no degree), a high school diploma, or less than a high school diploma tended to identify and vote Republican. The only distinct

correlation between education level and voter turnout was that in gubernatorial elections, those with the lowest education level had the lowest voter turnout while those with the highest education level had the highest voter turnout.



Income Level

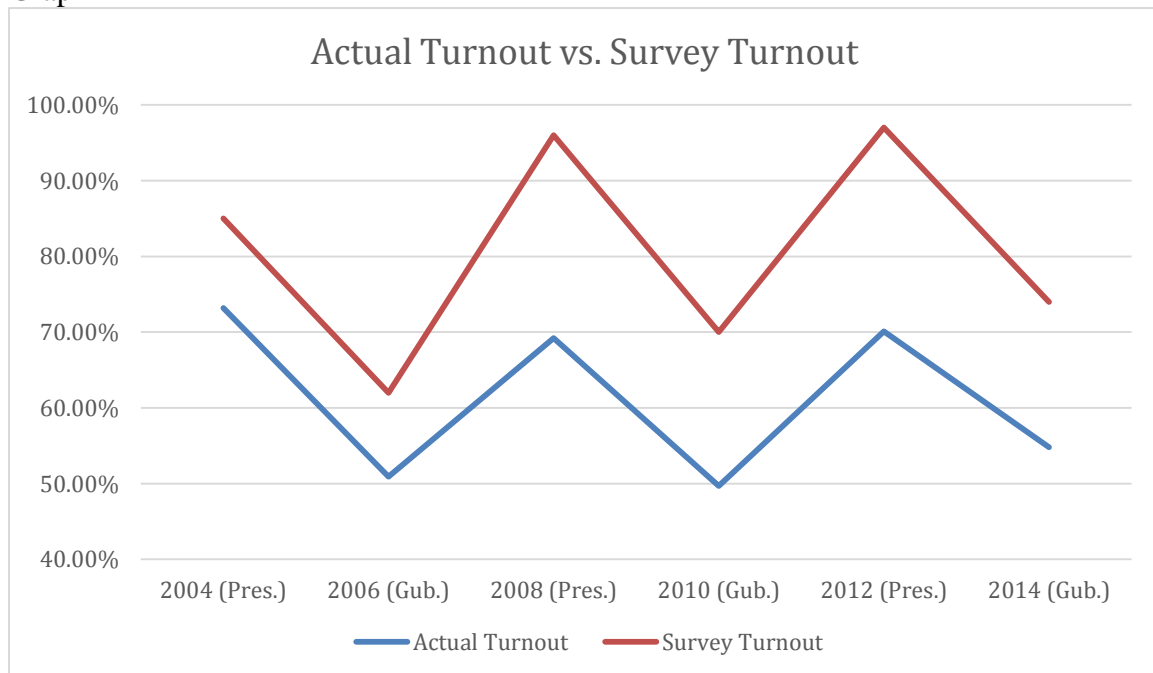
Those with low annual household incomes (\$24,999 or less) and middle-class incomes (\$25,000 to \$74,999) tended to identify and vote Democrat while those with the highest incomes (\$75,000 or more) tended to identify and vote Republican. Voter turnout in both presidential and gubernatorial elections increased as income level increased.

Table 7
Turnout Comparisons

Election	2014 (Gub.)	2012 (Pres.)	2010 (Gub.)	2008 (Pres.)	2006 (Gub.)	2004 (Pres.)
Actual Turnout*	54.8%	70.1%	49.7%	69.2%	50.9%	73.2%
Survey Turnout	74.0%	97.0%	70.0%	96.0%	62.0%	85.0%
Voted Democrat	47.3%	51.5%	42.9%	51.0%	37.1%	50.6%
Voted Republican	52.7%	48.5%	57.1%	49.0%	61.3%	49.4%

*Numbers from Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

Graph 1



Limitations

As with all research involving human subjects, there were some limitations to this case study. The first limitation was the voluntary nature of the survey. Many potential participants chose not to fill out the survey, most stating that they were “not interested in politics”. This may have led to the high percentage of surveyed voter turnout because the results lacked input from those who “were not interested in politics”.

This survey was administrated door-to-door throughout Kenosha County to make sure that participants were residents of the county. While this was well intentioned, it may have led to some of the demographic differences between survey participants and Kenosha County as a whole. Most survey participants were male, white, and tended to be older, richer, and more educated than the average Kenosha County resident.

12 survey participants were in the 18-29 age-group. Voters who were 18 or older for the 2004 presidential election would now be 28 or older. Voters who were 18 or older for the 2006 gubernatorial election would now be 26 or older. Some participants may not have voted in past elections simply because they were not old enough. This could have exaggerated the increase in voter turnout from earlier elections to more recent elections in both presidential and gubernatorial elections.

Conclusion

The aim of this case study was to determine why the state of Wisconsin has voted exclusively for Democrats in presidential elections while voting mostly for Republicans in gubernatorial elections over the past 30 years. While factors such as incumbency, presidential approval, and stances on political issues may play a role in determining voter choice on

Election Day, overall, voter choice was not nearly as important as voter turnout in determining election results. In this case study, around 20.0% of participants who voted in presidential elections did not vote in gubernatorial elections. In the surveyed gubernatorial elections, 61.2% of participants who tend to vote Democrat voted compared to 83.3% of those who tend to vote Republican. Although more participants in this case study identified as Democrats and voted for Democratic candidates in presidential elections, more participants who tended to vote Republican voted in gubernatorial elections, and elected Republican governors.

In this case study, voter turnout was the leading reason why Democrats have not won more gubernatorial seats in midterm elections. This could act as a lesson for Democrats in Kenosha County and the state of Wisconsin as a whole; it may even expand beyond America's Dairyland. The 2014 midterm elections were

“bad for Democrats, but even worse for democracy. In 43 states, less than half the eligible population bothered to vote, and no state broke 60 percent... Overall, the national turnout was 36.3 percent; only the 1942 federal election had a lower participation rate at 33.9 percent” (The Editorial Board of *The New York Times*).

On the other hand, Kenosha County Republicans are clearly doing something right. Along with higher voter turnout, participants who tend to vote for Republicans were also more unified in their responses to certain

survey questions. When asked to choose the five issues most important to them, over 40 participants who tend to vote for Republicans said “the economy (in general)” and “dissatisfaction with government”. The answers of those who tend to vote for Democrats were more spread out among various issues, with the top answer of “the economy (in general)” only getting 30 votes. Not only did Republicans show up in strong numbers for both presidential and gubernatorial elections, the issues they cared about were also more concentrated, showing a unified mentality.

In order to increase voter turnout in gubernatorial elections, Democrats need to expand their efforts, primarily focusing on women, younger voters, Non-White voters, Hispanic or Latino voters, and voters from lower income brackets. Laws and regulations designed to decrease voter turnout should be abolished. After all, “the future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter” (Dwight Eisenhower).

Addendum

Survey Instrument

My name is Clara Schopf and I am a senior at Hofstra University in New York. I will be graduating in May of 2015 with a triple major in Political Science, Geography, and Sustainability Studies, and a minor in Global Studies. Growing up, I lived in Gurnee, IL and spent a lot of time in Kenosha County, Wisconsin. After interning on a political campaign in Kenosha this past summer, I became increasingly interested in Wisconsin politics. For my senior honors thesis in Geography, I am researching why the state of Wisconsin has mostly voted for Democrats in presidential races and Republicans in gubernatorial (governor) races. Your participation in this survey is appreciated! Please select one answer unless noted otherwise.

1. What is your zip code?

2. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

3. To which of the following age ranges do you fall?

☐ 18- 29

☐ 30- 49

☐ 50- 64

☐ 65+

4. What race do you identify as?

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian and Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Some other race
- ☐ Two or more races

5. Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. What is the highest level of education you have received?

- ☐ Less than high school graduate
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Some college, no degree
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree

7. What is your annual household income?

- ☐ Less than \$24,999 or less
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 or more

8. To what political party do you belong?

- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None
- ☐ Not interested in politics

9. Which elections in the past 10 years have you voted in? Also, please highlight which candidate you voted for. (Select all that apply)

Presidential Years:

- ☐ 2012- Mitt Romney/Barack Obama/Unsure/Other
- ☐ 2008- John McCain/Barack Obama/Unsure/Other
- ☐ 2004- George W. Bush/John Kerry/Unsure/Other

Non-Presidential Years (Governor Races):

- ☐ 2014- Scott Walker/Mary Burke/Unsure/Other
- ☐ 2010- Scott Walker/Tom Barrett/Unsure/Other
- ☐ 2006- Mark Green/Jim Doyle/Unsure/Other

10. Which five of these issues are most important to you? (Please choose 5)

- ☐ The economy (in general)
- ☐ The environment
- ☐ Immigration
- ☐ Foreign affairs
- ☐ Abortion/access to contraception
- ☐ Gun-control
- ☐ Income/wealth distribution
- ☐ Healthcare policy
- ☐ Poverty/hunger/homelessness
- ☐ Ethics/moral/religious/family decline
- ☐ War/fear of war
- ☐ Education/access to education
- ☐ Unemployment/jobs
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with government
- ☐ Federal budget deficit
- ☐ Same-sex marriage
- ☐ Race relations
- ☐ The social security system
- ☐ Equal pay for women
- ☐ Terrorism

11. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

- ☐ Approve
- ☐ Disapprove
- ☐ No opinion

12. What factor most influences which presidential candidate you vote for?

- ☐ Party affiliation
- ☐ Political experience
- ☐ Candidate's character
- ☐ Stance on economic issues (the economy, federal budget, jobs, etc.)
- ☐ Stance on social issues (education, abortion, same-sex marriage, etc.)
- ☐ I do not vote
- ☐ Other _____

13. What factor most influences which gubernatorial candidate you vote for?

- ☐ Party affiliation
- ☐ Political experience
- ☐ Candidate's character
- ☐ Stance on economic issues (the economy, federal budget, jobs, etc.)
- ☐ Stance on social issues (education, abortion, same-sex marriage, etc.)
- ☐ I do not vote
- ☐ Other _____

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