

2021-2022

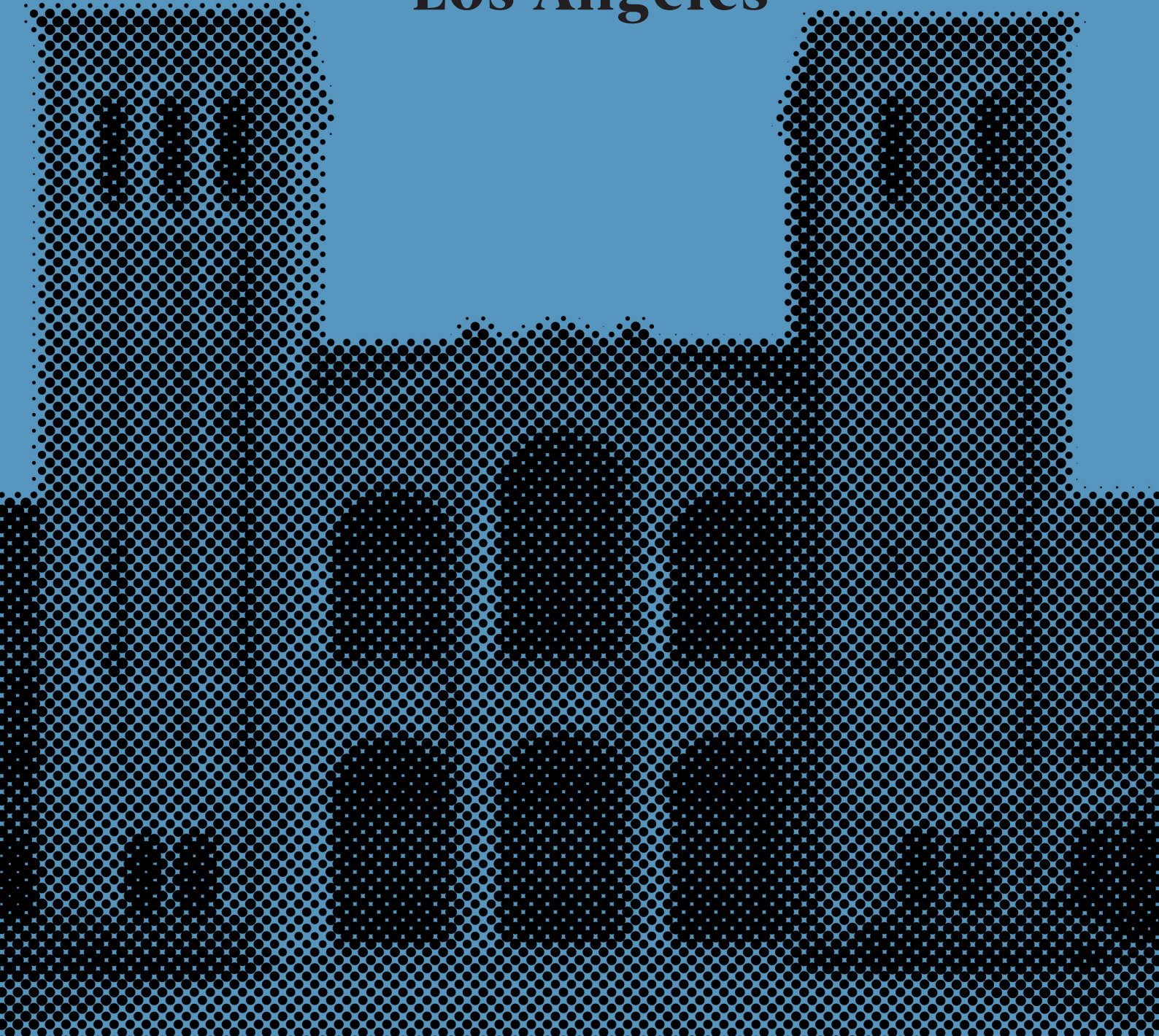
ISSUE 02

# DEMOS

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL

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University of California,  
Los Angeles



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## ABOUT

# ABOUT

Demos is a group of undergraduate students at UCLA showcasing the collaborative efforts between students here and across the country. We are dedicated to displaying the academic excellence of those who are not just undergraduate students but those who have also earned the title of political science researcher. As an organization created by UCLA undergraduates, we aim to serve the undergraduate community and beyond by giving students a chance to publish their work, garner writing and publishing experience, and put a spotlight on valuable research.

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# ABOUT THE COVER

For my first issue as manager of publication, I wanted DEMOS to stand out from other journals. The image of Royce Hall is iconic to the university, and purposely reminiscent of the 2020-2021 issue cover. The dots that make up the image of Royce's facade are not chosen arbitrarily. DEMOS as a student publication is built on the cooperation and involvement of its writers and editors, each element of the issue coming together to create something representative of the university out of isolated parts. The issues our writers researched are all tremendously complex and can only be understood by gaining a greater perspective.

- Evan Holter

# DEMOS STAFF

## *2021–2022*

*A special thanks to the writers, editors, and managers that made this issue possible*

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Riddhi Patel - Co-Chief Editor

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# RIDDHI PATEL'S LETTER

Dear Reader,

My name is Riddhi Patel and I am beyond excited to present you with DEMOS 2021-2022! I am from Southern California and a junior majoring in Political Science with a concentration in American Politics. As a consumer and producer of research, I have always been fascinated by the story-telling and editing process. This is why it has been my greatest honor to work alongside our authors and editors to showcase their work. This year we have compiled four creative and compelling research papers that shed light on complex issues around the globe. We hope through their work you can learn and leave more informed than before.

Best,  
Riddhi Patel

# MIHIR RAI'S LETTER

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking a chance to read through this year's publication of DEMOS. Working on this year's publication was an honor and I am proud of the product we have for you all to read. This year's leadership was entirely new and it required us to overcome a number of hurdles to get to the place we are today. Every single person who helped contribute to this journal added a unique element that will allow our journal to thrive for years to come. DEMOS is centered around sharing students' love for political science and further exploring the diverse field of political science. I hope this year's edition teaches you something you didn't know, opens your eyes to a perspective you may not wholly agree with, and more importantly, shows you the young talent that the future relies on. Political science, and politics in general, is an inherently collaborative field and I hope this journal offers a glimpse into what UCLA political science students can create when we work together!

Warm Regards,  
Mihir Rai





# National Security Law and Journalism: An Analysis Regarding Lawful Disclosure

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**Aviv Assayag**

**Edited by**

**Michael Kerrigan &  
Martin Makaryan**

## ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to examine the decisions journalists must make when disclosing national security matters.<sup>1</sup> This paper places urgency on Congress' need to amend current statutes, such as the Espionage Act,<sup>2</sup> to mostly exempt journalists from prosecution for work done within the normal scope of their employment. This paper is organized as follows: the paper begins with an introduction, followed by a section discussing journalist ethics (including their application to national security). An introduction to the law follows. Then, this paper sets forth three examples that frame the discussion: the Espionage Act of 1917,<sup>3</sup> the well-known Pentagon Papers case,<sup>4</sup> and WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. First, the probability that the government could prosecute under the Act is scrutinized. Second, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case is studied and applied to the present day. Third, the legal definition of a journalist is probed. This paper ends with a conclusion that sets out suggested next steps for Congress.

## NATIONAL SECURITY LAW AND JOURNALISM: AN ANALYSIS REGARDING PROPER DISCLOSURE

The rigid dichotomy of national security law is as follows: it is uncompromisingly strict yet bewildering for well-meaning journalists attempting to promote a state of national security in line with their country's best interests. Of course, journalists should adhere to the law and understand the burden they carry working a beat pertaining to some of the most sobering issues facing the world. National security law generally highlights what cannot be reported on — such as nuclear blueprints or an undercover operative's location in the Middle East — but how does the issue of national security apply to less-obvious occurrences? Ultimately, this paper finds: a) journalists have broad latitude in publishing national security material, and b) despite this latitude, Congress needs to institute statutory reforms to further protect journalists. Without these reforms, journalists should be aware of their potential ability to be prosecuted and even spend time behind bars.

Before delving into three examples of national security law intersecting with journalism to substantiate that finding, this paper provides an overview of journalistic ethics to put my case studies in perspective. The three case studies that subsequently follow are the Espionage Act of 1917, the 1971 Pentagon Papers case, and the debate over WikiLeaks and Julian Assange.

## NATIONAL SECURITY AND REPORTING: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Most journalists acknowledge the nuanced nature of national security matters that distinguishes them from others. One example can be found in the New York Times ethics guidelines, which state:

When possible, reporter and editor should discuss any promise of anonymity before it is made, or before the reporting begins on a story that may result in such a commitment. . . [however,] national security [carries] standing authorization for the reporter to grant anonymity.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This paper is primarily rooted in United States law, journalists, and national security. This is not an international analysis.

<sup>2</sup>18 U.S.C. §793-798 (2005)

<sup>3</sup>Id.

<sup>4</sup>New York Times Co. v. United States, 403 U.S. 713 (1971)

<sup>5</sup>Emphasis added, see <https://www.nytimes.com/editorial-standards/guidelines-on-integrity.html>

Why should national security be treated differently from other fields, and does it compromise normative journalistic ethics to freely pass out anonymity to sources? The differentiating factor is the substance of the coverage, which also extends to the sources that seek anonymity from national security journalists. Suppose a journalist's anonymous congressional source — a senior aide to a Senator on the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, for instance — was discovered sharing information with the press about the opposing party's lackluster nutritional agenda for America's schoolchildren. In that case, the source might be terminated from their position but would almost unquestionably not face charges.

When matters of national security are at stake, this changes. James A. Wolfe, a staffer for a Senator serving on the Senate Intelligence Committee, met charges after law enforcement officials "seized years' worth of phone and email records" from a national security reporter at the New York Times.<sup>6</sup> He was sentenced to two months in prison and fined \$7,500.<sup>7</sup> Wolfe's case is one of many examples that clearly show that news organizations grant anonymity only out of necessity. Ethically, a journalist publishing national security information should be altruistic in their intentions. Although exposing national security matters may embarrass the government — the Pentagon Papers serve as a prime example — the benefit for the public good, on the whole, should always outweigh the embarrassment of government elites.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO NATIONAL SECURITY LAW & THE ESPIONAGE ACT OF 1917**

Journalists new to national security matters should first look at its definition. Muller and Birnbauer point out the U.S. Supreme Court's view on the subject:

'National security' was intended to comprehend 'only those activities of the Government that are directly concerned with the protection of the Nation from internal subversion or foreign aggression, and not those which contribute to the strength of the Nation only through their impact on the general welfare.' *Cole v. Young*, 351 U.S. 536 (1956).<sup>8</sup>

Journalists covering national security matters should also recognize that they are working in a legal gray area. While the government has never prosecuted a journalist<sup>9</sup> under the serious statutes laid forth hereinbelow, there remains a possibility.<sup>10</sup> No blanket protections exist for journalists in the same way that state-specific shield laws do.<sup>11</sup> Since national security matters are national, as the name implies, suits pertaining to national security will inevitably end up in federal court. As national security reporter Judy Miller knows from her time behind bars, no such shield law exists for federal matters.<sup>12</sup>

## **THE ESPIONAGE ACT OF 1917**

Two sections of the Act are most pertinent to the issues at hand in this paper. First, a segment of section 798 reads in pertinent part:

<sup>6</sup>See [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/ex-senate-staffer-faces-charges-in-leak-investigation/2018/06/07/2155c956-6abf-11e8-bbc5-dc9f3634fa0a\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/ex-senate-staffer-faces-charges-in-leak-investigation/2018/06/07/2155c956-6abf-11e8-bbc5-dc9f3634fa0a_story.html)

<sup>7</sup>See <https://www.wsj.com/articles/senate-staffer-accused-of-lying-to-fbi-gets-jail-time-11545344243>

<sup>8</sup>Muller & Birnbauer, 2018, pp. 78

<sup>9</sup>While Julian Assange's classification as a journalist is debated, the United States in 2019 announced charges under the Espionage Act.

<sup>10</sup>Silver, 2008, pp. 483

<sup>11</sup>As this paper discusses hereinbelow, qualified journalistic immunity does exist in federal court. However, it is imperfect at best and still does not replace the utility a federal shield law would have.



Whoever knowingly and willfully communicates, furnishes, transmits, or otherwise makes available to an unauthorized person, or publishes, or uses in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States. . . any classified information. . . shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.<sup>13</sup>

While a source may foresee being subject to prosecution for distributing classified information — another reason anonymity in national security reporting is imperative — newspapers typically do not. Yet, with such language that pinpoints publication as a violation of the Act, it seems plausible to expect that prosecution could be a reality. Legal experts diverge on the government’s prosecutorial ability, as further alluded to hereinbelow.

Second, a portion of section 793 reads:

Whoever, lawfully having possession of, access to, control over, or being entrusted with any document. . . willfully communicates, delivers, transmits. . . the same to any person not entitled to receive it. . . shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, one could easily interpret such language to hold newspapers, journalists, and — more certainly — their sources<sup>15</sup> legally accountable for disclosing confidential papers and information.

In 1973, two law professors — Edgar and Schmidt — exhaustively examined the Espionage Act.<sup>16</sup> With respect to section 793, the scholars concluded that Congress’ intent when passing the Act was that it not apply to the press. Yet, the language contained within the statute was dubious when juxtaposed with Congress’ intent.<sup>17</sup> Further, concerning section 798, the scholars remarked that a government prosecuting under said section must “show knowing and willful communication” irrespective of criminal intent.<sup>18</sup> Of note, however, is their position on the act’s applicability to journalistic publication — they held that such language was not intended to censor freedom of speech.<sup>19</sup> But the feasibility that the government could prosecute under the Act is still not clear cut. As DuVal notes, “while arguably not so intended, [the Espionage Act] can be read to cover a reporter who knowingly publishes a classified document.”<sup>20</sup>

Topol, a former Department of Justice trial attorney, takes an even more definitive stance regarding prosecuting the media. In a national security case involving press publication heard by the Fourth Circuit, *United States v. Morison*<sup>21</sup> (not to be confused with the U.S. Supreme Court’s unrelated *United States v. Morrison*<sup>22</sup>), Topol posits that “once classified information has reached the media, the government has statutory authority to prosecute the media.”<sup>23</sup> Although no journalist or news organization has ever been prosecuted under the above-captioned act, such a future prosecution is not off the table.

<sup>12</sup>See <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/16/us/the-miller-case-a-notebook-a-cause-a-jail-cell-and-a-deal.html>

<sup>13</sup>Emphasis added, 18 U.S.C. §798 (a) (2005)

<sup>14</sup>18 U.S.C. §793 (d) (2005)

<sup>15</sup>With respect to sources, far more examples exist — see Chelsea Manning.

<sup>16</sup>Edgar, H. & Schmidt, B., 1973

<sup>17</sup>*Id.*, pp. 1059

<sup>18</sup>Silver, 2008, pp. 453

<sup>19</sup>Edgar, H. & Schmidt, B., 1973, pp. 1000

<sup>20</sup>DuVal, 1986, pp. 671

<sup>21</sup>*United States v. Morison*, 844 F.2d 1057 (4th Cir. 1988)

<sup>22</sup>*United States v. Morrison*, 529 U.S. 598 (2000)

<sup>23</sup>Topol, 1992, pp. 586-587

## THE PENTAGON PAPERS

In the Pentagon Papers case, The Nixon Administration sought to prevent the New York Times, the Washington Post, and other news organizations from publishing articles on a Defense Department study concerning U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In a *per curiam*<sup>24</sup> opinion, the U.S. Supreme Court set high standards for the government in their ability to halt publication and denied the government's injunctive request to cease the newspaper outlets' publishing of a series of articles pertaining to the classified study. Erwin W. Griswold, the Solicitor General, arguing the case decades ago, summed the fundamental issues present in the case in the opening minutes of his oral argument:

[This case] of course raises important and difficult problems about the constitutional right of free speech and of the free press... but it also raises important questions of the equally fundamental and important right of the government to function.<sup>25</sup>

In so stating, the government posits that its national security interests are so vital that it would impair the government's ability to function if they were to be seriously compromised. While the Pentagon Papers case provides a significant precedent in giving journalists a high level of publishing flexibility, even on certain classified documents, it did not absolve them from prosecution for publishing the same. In fact, in *New York Times Co. v. United States*, six of the nine justices left open the possibility that newspapers could be "prosecuted under the Espionage Act, even if the government" could not stop the newspaper from publishing the material.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, news organizations nowadays and their legal counsel must ask themselves these two fundamental questions before releasing stories on national security, particularly when unveiling secret government documents or information: 1) is it legal to be publishing this information in the first place, and 2) is there a high plausibility that my organization could be prosecuted for its dissemination, and, if so, do the benefits outweigh the risks?

## JULIAN ASSANGE AND WIKILEAKS: WHO QUALIFIES FOR JOURNALISTIC PRIVILEGE?

In an eighteen-count grand jury indictment filed on May 23, 2019 in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, the United States sought to prosecute Julian Assange — the founder of WikiLeaks — under the Espionage Act.<sup>27</sup> The indictment mainly detailed Julian Assange's role in facilitating and publishing classified documents retrieved from Chelsea Manning. Manning served several years in prison and eventually saw her prison sentence commuted, only to be rearrested in 2020. For this paper's purposes, Assange's case is relevant in distinguishing his status as a journalist. This question is crucial because:

Although reporters generally are subject to the same legal standards that apply to the public at large, individuals dubbed "journalists" by courts may have special standing to assert a qualified privilege in legal proceedings to . . . reveal unpublished information.<sup>28</sup>

In *re Madden*,<sup>29</sup> The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit addressed the question: legally, what is a journalist? In what is now known as the Madden test, the Court posited

<sup>24</sup>A unanimous, collective decision.

<sup>25</sup>Transcript of Oral Argument at 3, *New York Times Co. v. United States*, 403 U.S. 713 (1971). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/06/27/archives/transcript-of-oral-argument-in-times-and-post-cases-before-the.html>

<sup>26</sup>Silver, 2008, pp. 452-453

<sup>27</sup>See [https://www.scribd.com/document/411275244/Assange-superseding-indictment#from\\_embed](https://www.scribd.com/document/411275244/Assange-superseding-indictment#from_embed)

<sup>28</sup>Calvert, 1999, pp. 413

<sup>29</sup>In *re Madden*, 151 F.3d 125 (3d Cir. 1998)

three main factors that a journalist must meet when seeking to invoke privilege. They are that the journalist must:

1) [be] engaged in investigative reporting; 2) [be] gathering news; and 3) possess the intent at the inception of the newsgathering process to disseminate this news to the public.<sup>30</sup>

While the Madden test certainly provides some clarification, the gray area in this legal issue remains. For example, the Madden Court does not define “news” — an ever-changing field.

When applying the Madden test to Julian Assange, it seems exceedingly unlikely Assange would be afforded the legal protections provided to a conventional journalist. Assange principally focuses his efforts — through WikiLeaks — on publishing mass swaths of material and renders nothing in the way of reporting. Assange meets the Madden test’s third element since WikiLeaks often publishes to the public and expressly aims and intends to do so. However, that point is negated since all three elements must be met for Assange to sustain his burden in such a case. Therefore, legally, Assange is not a journalist.

## CONCLUSION

As this paper first pointed out, national security law presents a tricky existence for journalists. By examining three intersections of national security law and journalistic practice, this paper has shown, as most germanely evidenced in the Pentagon Papers case, that journalists have broad latitude in publishing national security material.<sup>31</sup> But, they should be aware of their ability to be prosecuted by the government for the same.<sup>32</sup> Those that purport themselves to be journalists and operate at the field’s periphery should not expect to receive wide-ranging protection and immunity in the federal court system. For starters, no federal shield law exists, and the Madden test shows the high bar individuals like WikiLeaks’ Assange have to pass. Congress should work to enact a federal shield law, and the Madden test would prevent it from being applied too broadly.

Prosecution under the Espionage Act of 1917, chilling by its very name, remains a harrowing possibility for journalists. While the government does not traditionally prosecute journalists for their disclosure of classified materials, a future administration — seeking to follow through on the Trump administration’s threats to prosecute journalists — could very well change this practice.<sup>33</sup> To fix this slippery slope, Congress should amend the Espionage Act as it presently stands and add straightforward language like: “the sections of 18 U.S.C., ch. 37, §791 - 799 shall not apply to journalists acting within the typical purview of their employment.” Congress must act proactively and clarify that statutes meant for spies are not to be used for journalists. Judge Ellis, in a memorandum opinion, expertly states the same:

Congress could strike a more appropriate balance between these competing interests . . . [a better] drawn statute could better serve both national security and the value of public debate. . . [T]he time is ripe for Congress to engage in a thorough review and revision of these provisions to ensure that they reflect both these changes, and contemporary views about the appropriate balance between our nation’s security and our citizen’s ability to engage in public debate about the United States conduct in the society of nations.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Id. at 131

<sup>31</sup>New York Times Co. v. United States, 403 U.S. 713 (1971)

<sup>32</sup>Id.

<sup>33</sup>See <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-48696131>

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# State Politics and Healthcare Policy: How Growing Polarization Shapes State Healthcare

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**Hanna Belcher**

**Edited by**

**Brian Darmitzel &  
Darla Lavi**

Relative to other wealthy, developed, and democratic nations, the United States healthcare system has long been an outlier. The US annually spends nearly twice the OECD average on healthcare as a share of GDP, reaching 16.90% in 2018 (Tikkanen and Abrams 2020). However, this spending does not seem to yield comparable benefits; among the OECD nations, the US has the lowest life expectancy, the highest rates of obesity, chronic disease, suicide, and hospitalizations, and the lowest number of annual physician visits. Since the 1980s, US healthcare spending, as a share of the economy, has risen due to medical advances, rising costs of the health sector, and a disproportionate rise in demand. At an average of \$4,092 per capita in 2017, private spending is almost equal to public spending and is more than five times Canada's private spending, which is the second-highest after the US (Tikkanen and Abrams 2020).

This healthcare system is an outcome of the United States political culture, one that favors decentralized power and not government intervention, resulting in a system that is uncoordinated and inefficient (Haeder and Weimer 2015). The Affordable Care Act (2010), the feature of the modern US healthcare system that successfully expanded healthcare accessibility, is still met with significant opposition even after two Supreme Court decisions to uphold the essential features (Haeder and Weimer 2015). Without constitutional power to impose this plan, the federal government incentivizes states financially, albeit a slow or possibly non-existent process in some cases. Understanding the financial incentives and nuances of this plan are essential to understanding the political and practical implications. The federal government mandates the coverage of individuals meeting certain criteria and aside from that, states have certain financial enticement, but significant discretion regarding adding additional benefits, in terms of increasing available services or increasing who can qualify for coverage. In this project, I hope to better understand the factors that affect each state's healthcare policy outcomes, specifically their spending on public health programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP. By studying the changes in the year-to-year policy by state, some of these influences may become clear.

## **CONTEXT: PARTY AND POLICY**

Scholars are far from reaching a consensus regarding how, if at all, the political party of state governments can affect public policy. However, two arguments prevail. Some contend that state and local governments are highly constrained in policymaking and potential differences in policy are not directly related to the party of the legislators creating those policies. Others explain that, especially in highly polarized fields such as healthcare, party control can measurably influence policy.

Erikson, et al. (1994), Tiebout (1956), Peterson (1981), and Hanson (1984) similarly argue against the direct effects of partisanship on policy outcomes. Within the perspective that Democrats and Republicans might tend to pursue similar policies, there are a few prevailing explanations. First, if elected representatives seek to satisfy their constituents and act as a true delegate, then legislative policy should represent the preferences of the district or state's median voter, regardless of the party in office. Alternatively, since states face economic competition from other states, their level of spending on benefits might be a result of market equilibriums. Lastly, the mechanisms of state budget creation and implementation might not leave any partisan discretion to legislators.

Findings by Erikson, et al. in *Statehouse Democracy* describe high responsiveness in elected

representatives to public opinion. Analyzing public policy and ideological survey data over the 1976-1988 period, they concluded that the policies adopted across states strongly reflected the dominant opinions of each states' constituents. It is possible that these outcomes reflect the preferences of the median voter, which elected officials will pursue, regardless of their

party affiliations. These findings suggest that political outcomes correspond very strongly to state ideology. However, this does not necessarily measure a policy maker's representativeness. For example, it might follow that a state's electoral candidates personally hold some or all of the common ideological stances of their state and further will create policy based on those strong personal or party beliefs.

If not a reflection of the preferences of the median voter, others suggest that policy outcomes might also be a consequence of economic markets and reflect economic equilibriums. A theory established by Charles Tiebout (1956) suggests that governments will provide the "optimal" level of public goods when facing pressure from competition across local or state jurisdictions. The ability of US citizens to move and relocate freely between states creates "competition" between them, which in theory forces states to provide a level of public benefits similar to their neighbors. Each state will eventually reach an equilibrium level of spending that is roughly equal to the country's average. Working from Tiebout's theory, Peterson's City Limits attempts to provide data to prove that state or local politics are limited in their policy discretion. Peterson believes that city governments are incapable of reaching certain policy goals or objectives that would be available on the national level. Local politicians feel pressure, due to the sense of competition Tiebout describes, to promote developmental policies that will provide economic benefits, rather than promote redistributive policies, which are likely to only benefit certain groups and possibly derail popular developmental policies.

The arguments previously discussed work to minimize the effect of state and local policymakers, instead contributing possible policy differences to responsiveness to public opinion, competitive markets, or the fundamentals of the Medicaid program. Scholars such as Caughey, et al. (2017), Grumbach (2018), and Kousser (2002) argue that the party affiliation of state and local legislators will measurably affect policy outcomes. In "Incremental Democracy: The Policy Effects of Partisan Control of State Government" Caughey shows that state policy is (at least) partially explained by the ideological divergence of the officeholders. Due to the increasingly ideological polarization of the parties since the 1970s, Caughey expects partisan effects on policy to be more significant now than in the past. The study finds that prior to the 1990s, partisan control in state legislatures would have relatively small effects on policy consequences, however, partisan representatives are becoming increasingly divergent in the policies they implement. Importantly, the changes within states due to party control of the legislature seem insignificant when compared to the policy differences across different states.

These variations and the absence of "wide swings in policy" that some might expect with changes in representatives might be due to a possible status quo bias, the need to compromise in policy-making, the "realities of policy making as opposed to symbolic position taking," or any of the mechanisms described previously. While the gaps in partisan platforms seem to be expanding, the actual policy consequences of changes in leadership are much less striking. This seems to align somewhat with the earlier idea that the preferences of the median voter in a state are not shifting

drastically in an election, even if the majority party changes.

Further analyzing the relationship between party control, polarization, and public policy, later research finds a stronger correlation between these variables. Grumbach (2018) argues states are beginning to play a more significant role in policymaking. He analyzes the changes in state policy from 1970 until 2014 across 16 different issue areas, finding that relative to 1970, policy outcomes are increasingly polarized and vary across states. For highly polarized topics, the effects are even stronger. For example, by 2014, Massachusetts had expanded Medicaid coverage and SCHIP benefits, while Alabama had not expanded the program, but instead implemented mandatory drug testing to qualify for any public benefits. Across each issue, including healthcare, policy variation between states and the different outcomes in Republican states versus Democratic states increases over time. Grumbach's research appropriately examines recent changes that make it more likely to see a correlation between party control and policy outcomes, that many earlier studies might not have predicted.

Specific to Medicaid spending analysis, observing the changes in spending or discretionary spending, may reveal an effect of party control on policy. While the stark differences between spending across states are evident (some spending up to four times more than others), it is less clear currently how party control affects policy and spending year-to-year. Kousser (2002) finds that the party in control of a state legislature can design healthcare policy to fit specific partisan goals. This finding becomes clear only when state discretionary spending is isolated, disregarding federal grants or mandated spending. Kousser focuses on Medicaid spending directed towards optional recipients, as opposed to recipients who must be covered. He discovers two ways in which states increase their discretionary spending: either increasing coverage to more individuals or offering additional benefits to existing recipients. Comparing the models of the effects of party control on total expenditures and optional expenditures proves the validity of the results, revealing that they are not due to time, scope, control, or other factors. On average, Republican legislators spend \$13.71 per capita less per year on discretionary recipients, compared to Democratic legislators and these results are consistent across the country.

Contrary to what has been previously argued, Kousser finds that public opinion has little influence on the generosity of state Medicaid spending, while these decisions are instead determined by party affiliation and lobbyists' requests. Possibly attributable to the political party of legislators, he determines that Democrats will typically spend \$13.71 more per capita on discretionary recipients. As Hanson's 1984 paper suggested, Kousser also finds that wealthier states will be more generous in Medicaid spending.

As more research is able to demonstrate a relationship between party control and policy outcomes, scholars theorize why this might be the case. Candidate ideology and policy are growing increasingly polarized due to factors that are not the result of voter choices (Hall 2019). For example, even if voters had elected the most moderate candidate in each US House of Representatives election since the 1980s, there would still be a dramatic increase in polarization ideologically, and similarly in policy. This political system (with growing costs and declining benefits of running for office) likely deters more moderate candidates from running, which is visible in the growing ideological divide between Democrats and Republicans.

A greater focus on national politics and national party ideology similarly may lead to

increasing polarized policy at the state level. American political behavior, in general, is becoming more nationalized, leading to an increased focus on national problems and party-favored solutions (Hopkins 2018). This happens through two methods: as voters' choices in state and local elections tend to mirror those in federal elections, their voting becomes nationalized, and as voters increasingly become engaged with and informed on national politics, but less with state or local politics, their behavior becomes more nationalized. This leads to national issues dominating state and local politics as well, with voters' attention shifting from local political issues to more symbolic ones. This creates a similar effect on legislators. As voter behavior nationalizes, representatives focus less on benefiting their constituents and more on meeting the goals of their party, which might be evident as elected state representatives create public policy that is shaped to meet certain partisan goals or agendas.

The mechanisms of Congressional primary elections may also lead to more candidates being elected who represent ideological extremes. As voter turnout is usually substantially lower during primary elections than general elections, candidates must appeal to the small group of ideologically extreme voters that actually show up to vote (Brady, et al. 2007). Further, more moderate incumbents face higher odds of competing against challengers in the primary. Brady, et al. describe a strategic dilemma faced by these candidates that ultimately leads to increasingly ideologically polarized candidates being elected and contributing to the growing polarization of Congress to this phenomenon.

## METHODOLOGY

I will be using a difference-in-differences (DiD) regression to evaluate the relationship between party control and state spending outcomes. In this analysis, I will observe the level of state spending and majority party control across all 50 states over a period of 24 years (1997-2020). A DiD analysis is used to estimate the effect of a "treatment," which in this study is party control. This technique does so by comparing the changes in outcomes (the level of spending) over a period of time.

DiD will work effectively in this study for a few reasons. First, DiD analyzes changes in outcomes rather than absolute levels. This allows for data to be used that begins at different levels and can still evaluate a treatment effect even if the absolute value of the group's outcomes are very different. For example, although some states have drastically different levels of healthcare spending, this analysis evaluates the yearly change in spending, along with party control. Second, it will account for changes in the outcome that are due to factors other than the treatment. This should help to control for important geographic and demographic differences between states. While states may have certain factors that require or lead to higher levels of healthcare spending, such as a larger elderly population, a larger share of low-income individuals, or a preference for higher levels of spending, this difference-in-differences analysis can help to account for this by comparing the changes within a state. DiD will eliminate biases in the comparison between groups that could be a result of permanent differences between the groups (i.e., state demographic differences).

Theoretically, state demographics, such as age, gender, race, political ideology, or voter preferences will not change significantly enough from one year to another to affect policy. Demographic controls are not needed because DiD analyzes the annual change in spending, instead of comparing overall levels between states, where variation would be due to population size or demographic factors that would require different levels of people to be covered under the federal mandate. Lastly, DiD can



account for significant changes in spending that are produced at the national level. For example, if a national election favoring Democratic candidates is coincidentally correlated with a sharp increase in spending, DiD can control for these effects.

Although this methodology might be the most effective in this analysis, there are potential limitations. If significant changes in the demographics or policy preferences are correlated with party control, they will not appear in the regression. For example, if state demographics change, requiring more individuals to be covered under public health insurance, at the same time government control moves to Democratic control, this analysis might falsely attribute this change to the party control treatment. However, over the relatively short time period of this study, any of these changes should not be so significant as to interfere with the treatment analysis, as some research suggests (Columbia Population Health Models).

This study will focus on data from a twenty-four-year period from 1997 to 2020, which is important for a few reasons. Within this time period selected, and outside the scope of previous research, there have been significant changes to the US healthcare policy at the national level. In 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was enacted and remains the most substantial overhaul and, importantly, expansion of the US healthcare system since Medicaid and Medicare were introduced in 1965. Many studies show increased polarization in ideology between the Democratic and Republican parties since the early 2000s, likely strengthening any relationship between party control and policy outcomes in this chosen time period.

## **VARIABLES**

### **Dependent Variables**

**Public Healthcare Spending.** The main dependent variable in the study is the annual level of public health spending (including Medicaid, Medicare, and CHIP programs) per state per capita. Within these federally mandated health programs, the federal government and the state governments are each responsible for paying a portion of the total, which depends on different factors such as demographics, and varies by state and year. In this analysis, I separate each state's spending from the federal government's share and divide that total by that year's population.

**Health Status.** As a supplemental analysis, I will evaluate the effect of party control on the average state self-reported health status, which should be a factor of health spending, as health outcomes may reflect effective health policy and spending. IPUMS CPS (Current Population Survey) compiles self-reported health status on a scale from 1 to 5.

**Public Health Coverage.** This variable refers to the percentage of state residents who are covered under some form of public health insurance (Medicare, Medicaid, or CHIP).

### **Independent Variables**

**Political Party.** I am using a trichotomous measure of party control by taking a simple majority of the political party of the state's legislative branch and then assigning each year a value for a Democratic majority, Republican majority, or divided control. I compiled the entirety of the data for political party from the "State Legislative Aggregate Ideology Data" 2020 update by Boris Shor and

Nolan McCarty. Figure 1 in the appendix displays the majority party of each state government per year from 1997-2020..

Spend Year. To account for the lag between policy creation and implementation, the variable spend year has been differentiated from budget year. For example, if a new healthcare budget or policy is passed in one calendar year, that policy and related changes in spending are not likely to be implemented until a slightly later period. Spend year was used in the regression analyses and represented budget year plus one.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Results

Figure 1: Per Capita Yearly Spending Summary, 1997-2020.

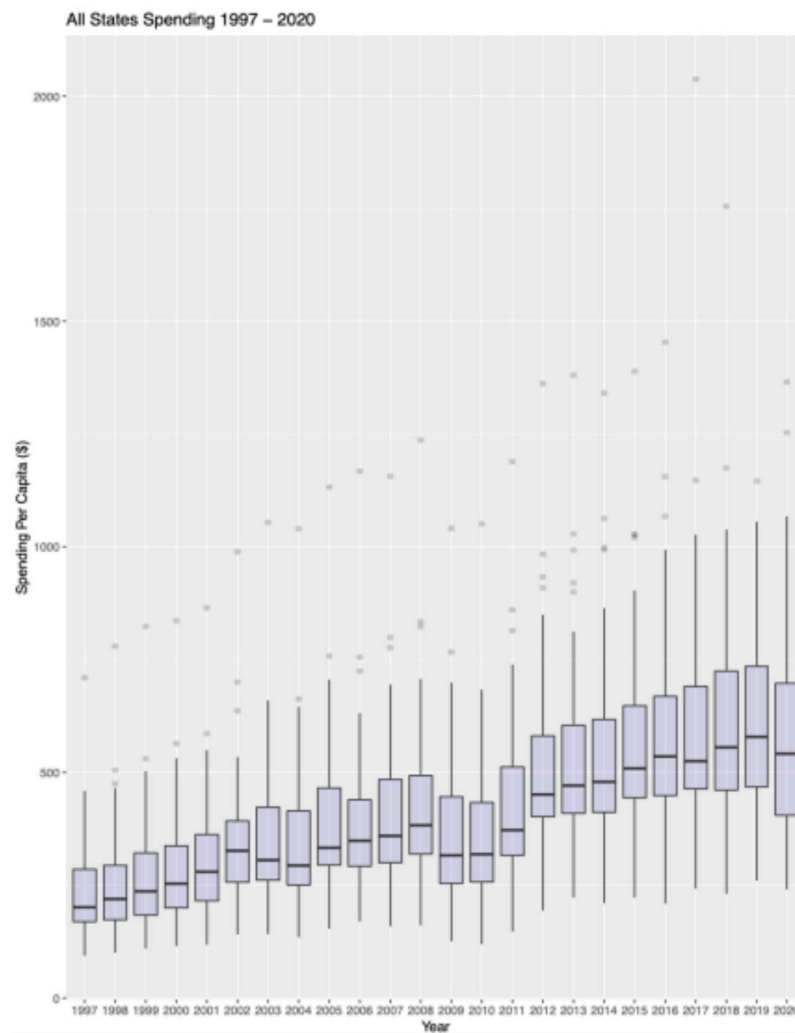
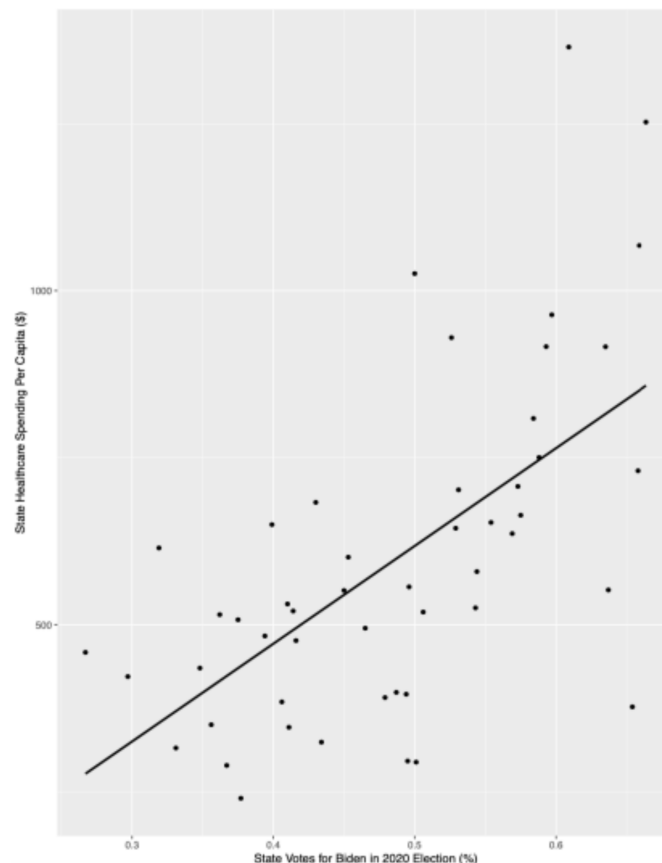


Figure 1 maps a summary of per capita state spending over the 1997-2020 period<sup>1</sup>. Over this period, average spending across all states trends upwards, however, the range in spending across states has increased significantly. In Figure 1, the median spending slowly rises and the spending range and IQR grow larger over time. Beginning in 1997, almost every state's spending falls between \$100 and \$350, while in 2020, the range of spending is considerably higher, at \$250-\$1250. Twenty years ago, the difference between state welfare benefits, like public healthcare, might have been negligible, around only a few hundred dollars at most. Today, it is common for some states to spend over a thousand dollars more per capita than other states. It also seems that variation within a state has increased over time, in addition to this variation across states. In the second half of the period measured, from around 2010 to 2020, each individual state's spending appears very volatile, whereas in the first half, each state's spending was relatively consistent, simply increasing slightly each year, on average. States like California, Delaware, Illinois, New York, Texas, and Washington, which can be viewed individually in Figure 7 (appendix), are great examples of where intrastate variation visibility grows over time.

The general trend seen in per capita state spending is also notable. All states and average spending has increased over time, but, further, it appears that all states, regardless of party and regardless of absolute levels of spending, will follow similar general patterns. The most notable in Figure 1 is the sharp decline in spending in 2008, plateau in 2009, and sharp increase in 2010. Almost every state follows this trend very closely. Although there was not a similar phenomenon during the early 2000s recession, I would likely attribute this brief trend in spending to the economic recession. It appears as though state spending broadly follows similar patterns, perhaps due to US economic conditions, however, there is still no explanation for the growing variation within and across states.

## Connection Between State Politics and Policy

Figure 2: 2020 Election and State Spend.



The growing variation in US state healthcare policy demonstrates individual states and legislators can have significant discretion in their policy choices, challenging some arguments that they are instead limited in their ability to affect healthcare policy. The ACA (2010) gave one significant choice to states: the ability to expand Medicaid coverage. As of 2021, 38 states have expanded the program and 12 states have not. State legislators' decision to expand Medicaid is one mechanism that grows disparities across states.

State voter preferences or partisan control can similarly produce differences in policy at the state level. Figure 2 shows a strong positive correlation between state politics and public healthcare spending. As a higher percentage of a state voted for the Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the 2020 election, a higher level of public healthcare spending is observed, on average. This plot illustrates a relationship between political ideology and policy outcomes, suggesting that preferences toward more liberal ideology could lead to higher levels of state spending.. Elected state legislators could be showing a high level of responsiveness to public opinion, regardless of their political party affiliation, and enacting policy that aligns with the preferences of their constituents. Alternatively, state representatives could be designing policy to meet certain goals or preferences in line with their party's national ideology. Nevertheless, this establishes a clear relationship between state-level politics and policy outcomes.

### Graphical Evidence of Party Control

Figure 3: Oregon vs Alabama, Per Capita Spending.

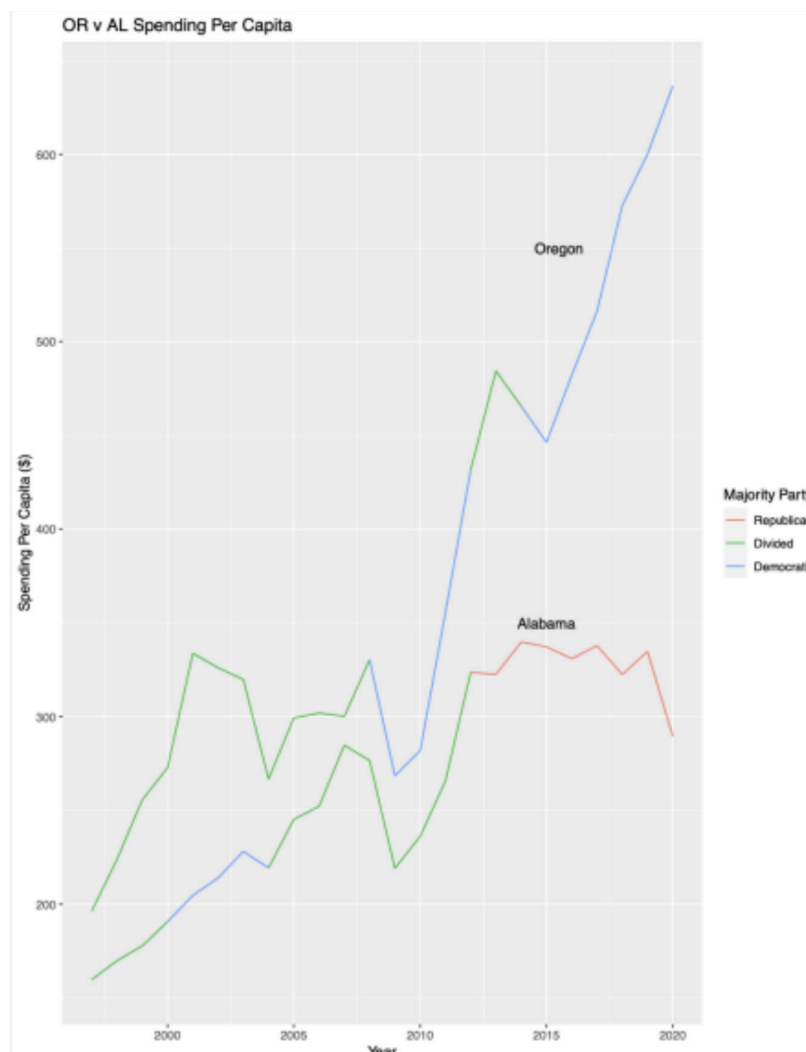
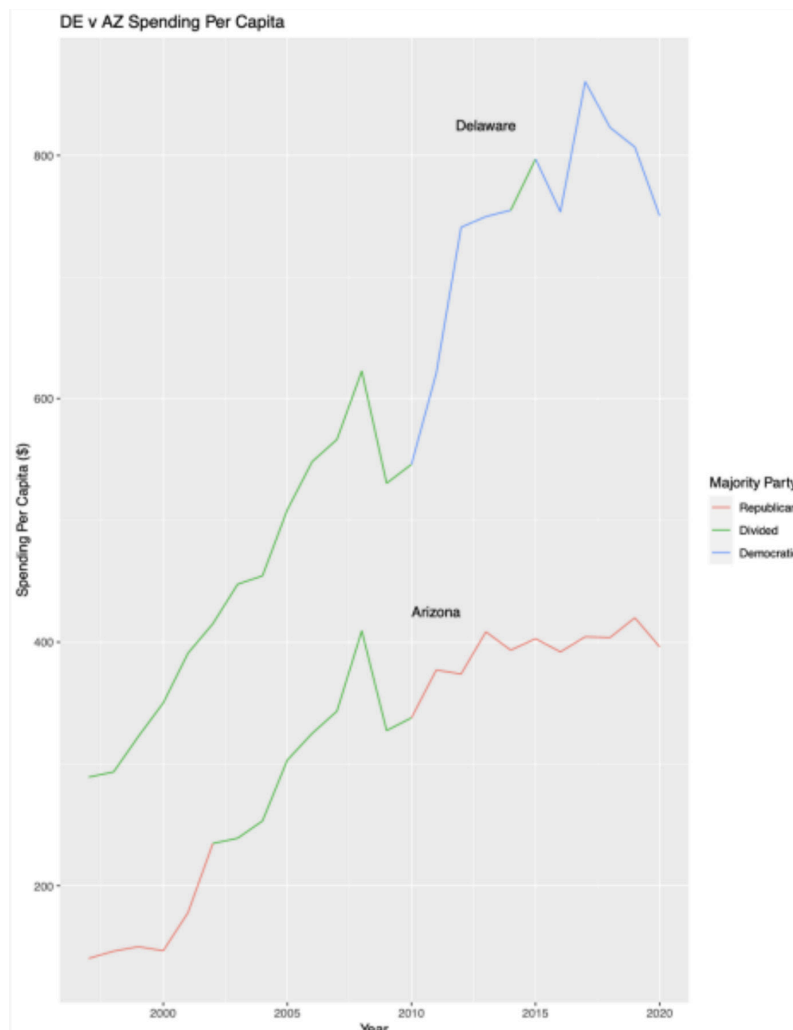


Figure 4: Delaware vs Arizona, Per Capita Spending.



By plotting state healthcare spending over time, along with the political party in control, certain trends have emerged. Both of the figures below demonstrate how a switch in party control can result in changes to healthcare policy, specifically where a switch to a Democratic majority leads to higher levels of spending.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 each display the per capita spending of two states over time. In each of these, the causal effects of political party on spending are clearly depicted. In Figure 3, Oregon and Alabama's per capita spending differs by less than \$100 while both parties are controlled by divided governments in the late 1990s. After 2010, Oregon switched to Democratic control, which was followed by a sharp increase in public healthcare spending. Around the same time, the Alabama state government became a Republican majority and experienced a plateau and eventual decline in spending. At the end



of the twenty-four-year period measured, the spending in each of these states differed by over \$300, with Oregon's per capita spend just above \$600, more than double Arizona's high \$200 range. Figure 4 displays a similar effect. In the early 2000s, Arizona and Delaware experienced very similar positive changes in spending while under a divided government. In 2010, Delaware's switch to Democratic control preceded a rapid increase in spending, while Arizona's spending plateaued under the new Republican majority.

### Formal Regression Results

Table 1: Formal Regression Results.

	Health Spending (\$)		Public Health Insurance Rate (%)		Health Status (1-5)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dem Control	78.46	31.16	2.18	0.44	-0.03	0.00
	(31.38)	(8.34)	(0.92)	(0.32)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Rep Control	-77.00	-31.57	0.39	0.09	0.01	0.00
	(38.57)	(11.82)	(0.97)	(0.29)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Intercept	440.70		29.22		3.80	
	(33.17)		(0.59)		(0.02)	
Num of States	50	50	49	49	49	49
Num of Years	24	24	23	23	23	23
Num of Obs	1,200	1,200	1,127	1,127	1,127	1,127
State FE	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Year FE	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y

Note: Robust standard errors clustered by state reported in parentheses

Table 1 displays the results of three cross-sectional regression analyses (seen in columns (1), (3), and (5)), where the y-intercept represents the average value for state public healthcare spending, rates of public health insurance coverage, and self-reported health conditions. Columns (2), (4), and (6) display the results of three difference-in-difference regression analyses, which illustrate the effect of party control on the same dependent variables, but controlling for state and year fixed effects. Even in the absence of spending trends over time or within states, there is still a notable change in state healthcare spending when party control changes.

When a state switches from a divided government to Democratic control, we can expect the average per capita spending will increase by \$32.2. Similarly, when the state switches from a divided government to a Republican majority, the average spend will decrease by \$32.8. The intercept of

\$445.8 represents the average per capita spending of a divided state legislature. While differences in Republican versus Democratic ideology and healthcare policy preferences might seem much larger than a \$32 difference in spending, there are a few reasons why there are not usually drastic changes to policy with changes in government control. Policy-making requires compromise among legislators, leading to the abandonment of certain large goals in order to reach any consensus. Similarly, the strong positions on policy issues taken by elected representatives or candidates might be more symbolic and can be abandoned during the realities of policy-making (Caughey, et al. 2017).

It is unclear whether party control, and consequently their changes in spending, have impactful changes on health quality or the number of people covered under public health insurance. With a switch from a divided government to a Democratic state government, rates of public health insurance increase by 0.4% and increase by 0.1% with a switch to a Republican majority. Although smaller, these effects are still evident in the difference-in-differences analysis.

A shift from a divided to Democratic government yields an increase 4 times higher (0.4%) than a shift from a divided to a Republican government (0.1%). While these incremental changes in coverage may seem insignificant at relatively low percentages, each of these decisions and changes affect tens to hundreds of thousands of people in each state. For example, a 0.4% increase in Florida, with a population of 21.48 million, brings public health insurance to almost 100,000 more people.

## CONCLUSION

Eliminating spending trends over time within states, changes in the majority party are still likely to affect public healthcare spending by about 7% on average. Importantly, these effects are evident even without isolating discretionary spending from mandatory spending, as earlier research might not have suggested. Kousser (2002) found that Republicans spent \$13.71 less per capita on optional recipients than Democrats did. These findings are an important benchmark for how much this relationship has strengthened over the past decade. Even without isolating discretionary spending on optional recipients, an effect of more than twice this size can now be seen (\$32.77 less). The increasing disparities over time in spending between states and growth in year-to-year variation within a state have made this causal relationship stronger, which was not as present when these previous studies had been conducted.

These regression analyses have demonstrated how changes in party control can measurably impact public healthcare policy and spending. However, it is unclear exactly what drives these changes in policy; scholars describe a few possibilities. It could be the case that a state representative's party affiliation serves as a proxy for the policy preferences of their district's median voter. Alternatively, it could be that a representative's policy preferences are shaped by their national party ideologies. Regardless of the driving factors, legislators are certainly able to shape state policy to meet their partisan goals, confirming past research by Caughey, et al (2017), Grumbach (2018), and Kousser (2002). Unlike some have argued in the past, it appears as though state legislatures are not overly constrained in policymaking and are able to implement measurable policy changes.

Hyperpolarization has dramatically changed state-level public policy over the past few decades (Grumbach 2014), which increasingly affects Americans' quality of life and life expectancy. In addition to policy directly related to healthcare and public insurance programs, others argue that a wide variety

of public policy topics have significant impacts on health. Bradley, et al. (2016) suggests that states with a higher ratio of social to health spending perform better for a handful of health metrics, such as obesity rates, type II diabetes, and even mental health quality.

Similarly, Montez (2020) argues that polarization has and will continue to deteriorate health status and life expectancy in the US, through a variety of state policies. Life expectancy as a metric acts as a “social mirror”; public policy has far-reaching effects, into healthcare availability, employment, housing opportunities, and economic well-being. Policy also affects the social determinants of health, through policies aimed to reduce gender discrimination, strengthen labor protections, civil rights, etc (Montez 2020). For example, restrictive abortion laws increase a woman’s risk of poverty, unemployment, anxiety, poor physical health, and violence from the man involved in the pregnancy. State ideology in general, and consequently policy outcomes, are directly related to life expectancy. Observing the change in ideology in each state from 1970 to 2014, the five states with the highest life expectancy had all moved in a liberal direction, whereas four of the states with the lowest life expectancy had moved in a conservative direction. The state with the largest shift toward liberal policies had the highest life expectancy in 2014 and the opposite was found for the state with the largest conservative shift. Policy liberalism, in general, has a clear relationship with better health outcomes.

States have transitioned from implementing policies that vary in ideology to policy that is either liberal or conservative all around (Grumbach 2014). This phenomenon is what accounts for such a high effect of polarization and policy on health outcomes. Further, these findings have especially impactful considerations for certain demographics. State policies, like Medicaid and CHIP spending, impact women, persons of color, and low-educated adults at disproportionately high rates. For example, the majority of Medicaid recipients and minimum wage workers are women. As your state of residence becomes a stronger determinant of public healthcare availability, and quality of life in general, the implications of polarization will be much larger.



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APPENDIX

Figure 5: State Government Party Control Plot, 1997-2020.

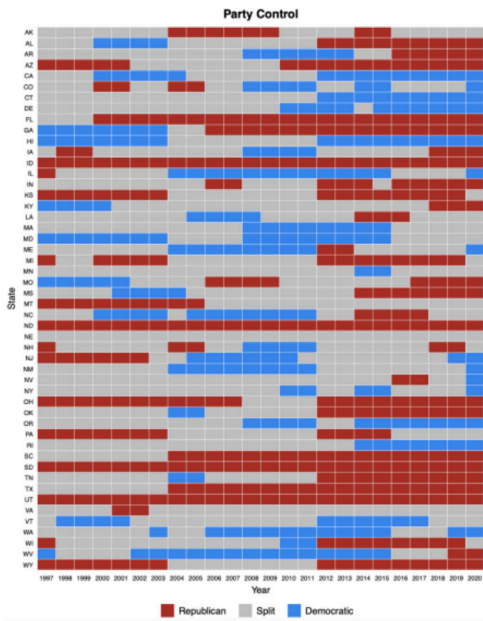
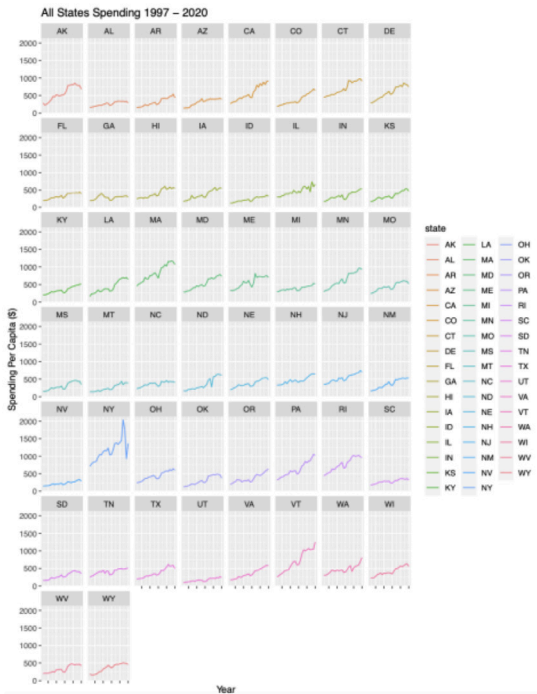


Figure 7: Individual State Healthcare Spending, 1997-2020



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# What impact, if any, did bin-Laden's death have on al-Qaeda?

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Tamara Nogueira**

A little over two decades has passed since the tragic day of September 11, 2001. The mastermind behind this catastrophic event, Osama bin Laden, was killed ten years later in what was viewed as a successful decapitation strike. Bin Laden's death significantly weakened al Qaeda and sent a message to its loyal followers that no matter how un-touchable you may feel, death is always a possibility. Perhaps for the first time, in a long time, al-Qaeda became vulnerable and appeared to be broken. Even though bin Laden's death certainly impacted al Qaeda, it did not break it down to the point of no return. In this paper, I will argue that bin Laden's death, although impactful, did not leave a lasting impact on al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda after bin-Laden's death is nowhere near as strong as it was in 2001, but it has slowly regained its strength, increased its following, and may now have an even bigger vengeance against the United States.

Osama bin Laden was a formidable leader who inspired recruits and spoke for the Islamist cause with conviction and authority. Many thought he was untouchable, with a network of people protecting him at all times. Despite the fact that "...for years prior to his death, he had been to a considerable extent cut off from the outside world, unable to engage in operations in any practical way; still, al-Qaeda persisted" (Wu and Carleton, 57). After the September 11th invasion of Afghanistan, bin Laden went on the run and was forced to go into hiding. although al-Qaeda was hindered by bin Laden going into hiding, it continued to thrive even under such strenuous conditions.

Al-Qaeda thrived despite the lack of bin Laden's presence because in a way, 9/11 revitalized al-Qaeda and invigorated its followers. In the eyes of al-Qaeda members and supporters, al-Qaeda achieved the goal of instilling fear among Americans. Bombing the World Trade Center was a psychological tactic against the U.S., which was targeted specifically for its significant financial impact that would lead to the loss of lives and catastrophic monetary consequences. Al-Qaeda believed that if it wore the United States down economically, the United States would be forced to completely withdraw from the Middle East because it would not be able to afford the costs of keeping troops in the region. To achieve this, bin Laden wanted to attack the United States economically in what he referred to as a "bleed-until-bankruptcy" plan. "America's weakened economic position made it seem mortal, and jihadis have since been counting on the U.S. to crumble under the weight of its own security expenditures... al-Qaeda's strategy of low-level warfare, meant to drain the U.S. economically, will continue to pose an underestimated threat long after its leader's death" (Ross). Al-Qaeda's ultimate goal was to hinder the West in any way possible and compared to other jihadist groups, al-Qaeda's violence was very strategic.

Additionally, bin Laden was extremely charismatic and ran al-Qaeda like a business. He selected the attacks that he felt would cause the most damage, and set up affiliates around the world in an attempt to establish a global caliphate. "Al Qaeda maintained cells and personnel in a number of countries to facilitate its activities, including in Kenya, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Malaysia, and the United States" (PBS). Yet, most of al-Qaeda's affiliates were loosely controlled (even more so after 9/11) allowing them to operate independently. This is part of the reason as to why Osama bin Laden's death did not impact al Qaeda and its global affiliates to the extent that it was supposed to. Public opinion in the U.S. held that if bin Laden was killed, al-Qaeda would be scrambling for a new leader and it would eventually die out. However, despite the loss of bin Laden, al-Qaeda was able to continue its operations due to the autonomy of al-Qaeda's regional affiliates, which allowed them to

function independently in tandem with the organization. Their rather independent actions link back in "...the form of pledges of ideological fealty by regional affiliates to Osama bin-Laden, along with mutual statements of support for shared goals" (Rollins, 5). Hence, although the death of bin Laden impacted al-Qaeda's organizational cohesion and slowed down its operations, it did not affect the overall morale of the organization.

As it became clearer that the U.S. military operation against bin Laden had failed to defeat al-Qaeda, many scholars began to wonder if leadership decapitation (the killing of leaders of terrorist organizations) was truly effective. Several critics have argued that targeting al-Qaeda's leadership is not an effective counterterrorism strategy. This is due to the fact that "al-Qaeda is peripatetic, migrating from place to place as conditions warrant or allow. When enough attention or combat power is focused on its current location, it relocates to a place where the local government is either supportive or ineffective" (Venhaus 2). This strategy of infiltrating local governments that are either supportive or ineffective allows al-Qaeda to gain more recruits, spread its ideology, and reinvigorate Muslim youth. Thus, leadership decapitation is not always successful because killing the leader does not kill the concept nor the psychological hold an ideology has on its followers.

Moreover, groups such as al-Qaeda, are the hardest to destabilize through leadership targeting, as the group's success does not only rely on the leader, but rather on the collective. Most jihadist groups relentlessly recruit members because in the event that their leadership is affected, the group itself can remain intact. The popular support that al-Qaeda had fostered among its affiliates such as the Taliban (a militant Islamist group operating in Pakistan), contribute to its ability to quickly recover in the aftermath of an attack towards its leader bin Laden. However, while bin Laden's death did not impact al-Qaeda as much as it was perceived, it did significantly weaken the organization. Bin Laden had been the most prominent voice to fuel hatred against the West. He made speeches that inspired younger generations to fight against the West, negotiated deals with other jihadist groups, and made strategic decisions that he felt would contribute to al-Qaeda's expansion in the future. Bin Laden's charismatic personality allowed him to manipulate Muslim public opinion and invoke the dedicated loyalty of his followers, who are willing to risk their lives for the Islamic cause. Bin Laden, "...embodies a potent blend of strong personality, fanaticism, and apparent piety that serves as a rallying cry for the creation of an Islamist state...the charismatic qualities of leaders like him, present a significant challenge to Western efforts to combat Islamist terrorism." (Hofmann 14). Losing bin Laden as a leader lost al-Qaeda's most crucial element of persuasion and bargaining power.

Another reason as to why bin-Laden's death did not have such a big impact on al-Qaeda was that the organization's focus, involving the dispersion of ideology and provision of inspiration, is best accomplished with terroristic acts that require little to no group cohesion. It can be argued that individual actors that perform suicide bombings instill as much fear as an attack on a national monument would. For example, on April 15, 2013, two brothers, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, planted two homemade pressure cooker bombs near the finish line of the Boston marathon. Their homemade bombs killed three people and injuring hundreds of others, including seventeen people who lost their limbs. although the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center resulted in many more deaths (2,996 to be exact), the impact that both events had on Americans was virtually the same. In both situations Americans were left scared, unsure of their safety, and anxious for what may happen in the future.



Furthermore, “...part of the reason that al-Qaeda is still able to pose a threat was its ability to choose a new leader and ensure its continuity” (Annamalai, 12). Following the death of bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, took over his position and became al-Qaeda’s new leader. Despite being seen as less charismatic and persuasive by local jihadists, Zawahiri was very similar to bin Laden and shared the same ideological outlook on how al-Qaeda should be run (Byman). Zawahiri was the head of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and helped create al-Qaeda while merging the organization with the EIJ. He was one of the most respected gurus of jihadism and was the head of the information committee in al-Qaeda. However, Zawahiri needed money and contacts (which bin-Laden had plenty) and struggled to restore al-Qaeda’s influence as it had been under bin Laden’s leadership. He also had slightly different goals than bin Laden as he felt that al-Qaeda’s closest enemy was Egypt, whereas bin Laden felt that it was the non-jihad Arab state.

Nevertheless, even a less charismatic leader and a lack of monetary support could not destroy al-Qaeda. To Osama bin Laden’s credit, the global jihadist network that he built, with thousands of affiliates all believing in the same goal, made al-Qaeda an almost untouchable organization. Bin-Laden intentionally pursued a strategy of developing al-Qaeda into not just an organization, but also an ideological movement, making it that much more difficult to defeat. You can hinder a terrorist organization by weakening it and killing its leaders, but an ideology is timeless. It is true that “...the intent of decapitation is to reduce the threat of militant groups by degrading their leaderships” (Abrahms and Mierau, 831). Unfortunately, degrading leaderships of jihadist organizations is not enough to reduce the threat of terrorism and militant groups.

This poses a broader question. Do targeted killings or decapitation strikes have lasting impacts or lead to the demise of terrorist organizations? At the surface level, decapitation strikes force terrorist organizations to rethink their strategies of attack and figure out who to appoint as their new leader. also, as a result of a leadership deficit, there is a change that occurs in the internal composition of militant groups that affects the quality and selectivity of their violence (Abrahms and Mierau, 831). For instance, Osama bin Laden took his time to carefully plan strategic attacks that he thought would affect Americans the most and had affiliates in place to help conceal his steps. Without a definitive leader like bin Laden, al-Qaeda relied more on suicide bombings than comprehensive, planned out attacks. Despite the short-term effects that bin Laden’s death had on al-Qaeda, the militant group has proven to be resilient against attacks and has shown that it will not succumb to attempts of destruction. Over time, al-Qaeda has expanded into new territory through affiliated organizations that have arisen in economically weak states such as Somalia, Mali, and Kenya (Rollins 5). It has also developed connections with local jihadist groups and continues to strengthen its relationship with the Taliban.

Although bin Laden’s death did not have a very significant or lasting impact on al-Qaeda, it did force the organization to adapt, develop new strategies, and think of new ways to recruit more affiliates. As I previously mentioned, al-Qaeda lost bin Laden’s superb networking skills and financing abilities. With modern technological applications rapidly gaining more popularity, al-Qaeda is able to use social media to their advantage. Social media allowed al-Qaeda to spread their message faster and catch the attention of more wandering eyes than ever before. So, despite experiencing a financial hit, al-Qaeda was able to grow its movement and persuade ‘lone-wolfs’ to act on behalf of the global jihad. Al-Qaeda most likely could not afford to commit large-scale terrorist attacks and the threats that it has made towards the United States and the West has, in many cases, not been fulfilled. Still, bin Laden’s

death failed to curtail the threat of terrorism against the West and it has not slowed down its attempts to achieve a global caliphate state.

It has become evident that decapitation did not lead to al-Qaeda's demise, nor has it resulted in long-term organizational degradation. al-Qaeda's core has "...shown itself capable of adapting and adjusting to even the most consequential countermeasures directed against it, having, despite all the odds, survived for nearly a quarter of a century" (Jordan, 29). Having a large supply of new recruits who are hungrier and more fearless than their predecessors has allowed al-Qaeda to have a relatively smooth succession process. Despite the numerous drone strikes that it has been hit with, al-Qaeda has been able to continue generating propaganda for its cause. "Al-Qaeda uses a shifting array of forums, primarily through three media entities...to maintain a daily flow of consistently and systematically branded information on the Internet and in traditional media" (Venhaus 6). Propaganda has been critical to inspiring new recruits and is important in maintaining al-Qaeda's core ties to its affiliates. Even if terrorist organizations are weakened after the killing or arrest of their leaders, they tend to survive, regroup, and continue carrying out deadly attacks.

Lastly, despite the fact that targeted killings or decapitation strikes may not achieve lasting impacts on terrorist organizations, we cannot allow the leaders of these horrific terrorist organizations to stay alive. Removing the head of the snake is the only way to even begin the process of destroying these regimes. If you don't remove the leader, you cannot begin to weaken the organization because the leader is the ultimate puppet master and the strategist behind vicious attacks. Killing Osama bin Laden was only the beginning of a long and arduous process to diminish the threat of terrorism. Conversely, just because the leader is killed, does not mean that the organization is all of a sudden non-existent. With bin Laden now dead, some argue that this overarching goal has been accomplished, and that United States forces can now withdraw from Afghanistan. What these critics don't seem to understand is that al-Qaeda has an extremely large network of operatives, affiliates, and supporters that has "remained robust, in spite of the loss of its nominal leader" (Rollins, 14). The overall goal of diminishing the threat of terrorism was briefly achieved with the death of Osama bin Laden, but this achievement did not leave a lasting impact.

In closing, the death of Osama bin Laden was a successful targeted killing which was done with exceptional planning, excellent operational execution, and incorporated the cultivation of years of intelligence material. Bin Laden's death should be celebrated, as the atrocious attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, caused a lifetime of pain and irreplaceable damage. Unfortunately, bin Laden's death has not curtailed the invariable threat of terrorism and neither has it weakened the jihadist organization, al-Qaeda. Though it might have caused al-Qaeda to slow down its regime and rethink its tactics, this strategy has not slowed down the groups attempts to spread terrorist ideology and violence. The impact of bin Laden's death on al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations may not be as significant as some would believe, but it was necessary to send a message that America will never back down from a fight and that fear cannot overtake our nation. The death of Osama bin Laden does not signify the end of the global jihad, nor does it signify the end of its hatred against the West. Perhaps the only real solution to defeat the violent extremism that is present in jihadist organizations is to counter and challenge its ideology head on.





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# The Rise of Populism in France and the UK: The Dark Underbelly of Globalization<sup>I</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

The age of globalization has sparked the wrath of a reactionary force around the world: populism. Populism is an ideological political movement that pins the “ordinary,” “common” folk against the entrenched, “elite” government and politicians. It is a reaction to changing demographics, economic displacement, and deindustrialization—all features of globalization—mixed with economic downturns, false nostalgia, and biased perceptions of threatening social changes. It subverts the traditional definitions of left and right, many times incorporating elements from both sides. Often led by charismatic, norm-breaking “outsider” politicians, populist movements call for changes that dilute or erode liberal democratic practices.<sup>2</sup>

During the last half of this decade, such populist movements have popped up in almost every European country. But populism is by no means a new phenomenon; populist movements have always existed and populist sentiments have proven persistent. As a long-term trend beginning in the 1960s, deindustrialization set the stage for working-class people being left behind economically. Following a period of widespread consensus around international integration and anti-Communism in European politics during the Cold War, the 1980s witnessed the rise of right-wing populist parties. These presented an alternative to the established center-left and -right parties, which, to many dissatisfied Europeans, seemed indistinguishable in their broad commitment to European integration, business, diversity, and free-market policy. Mainstream politicians from these parties engaged in so-called “there is no alternative” (TINA) politics by using their commitment to the European Union (EU) and other supranational organizations to justify their unresponsiveness to voters—a behavior that harbored resentment against these “elites” who seemed to turn a blind eye to the struggles of ordinary people.<sup>3</sup>

Another long-term trend that complemented changing party politics is the rise of the Internet, which fueled the sensationalization of news, the spread of false or exaggerated stories, and easier ways to disseminate compromising information about public figures. The Internet thereby made it easier to see the corruption and hypocrisy of politicians, whether real or fabricated, and become more critical and resentful of them.<sup>4</sup>

These trends over time have contributed to a steady rise in populism. But several short-term events are significant to the stirring of populist sentiments; in particular, the Global Recession of 2008 and the Middle Eastern refugee crisis evoked xenophobic and isolationist reactions against globalization.<sup>5</sup>

Both France and the UK are experiencing an upsurge in such xenophobic, isolationist populist movements. In each country, similar demographics—particularly poorer, older, lower class, working people—support such movements. They feel that globalization has left them behind both economically and culturally as they see floods of immigrants and increasing diversity threatening to dismantle their perceived status and lifestyle. They view their political institutions as obsolete, elitist, and neglecting the true needs of the so-called people. These are hallmarks of a populist movement.

In the UK, through political miscalculations and compromises, populist sentiments found their way into the otherwise safeguarded parliamentary system and manifested as the misguided decision to leave the EU. Boris Johnson, as a charismatic leader, rose to power and came to represent the populist movement, advocating for a no-deal Brexit and threatening norms of the British government and constitution.

<sup>1</sup>Written with the guidance and mentorship of Professor Michael Lofchie of UCLA Political Science

<sup>2</sup>Mudde, Cas. “Europe’s Populist Surge.” *Foreign Affairs*, Council on Foreign Affairs. Vol. 95, no. 6 (November/December 2016). [Web]. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2016-10-17/europes-populist-surge>

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

In France, terrorist attacks and an influx of refugees created a similar effect. The recent upsurge in the popularity among poorer, rural, agricultural, and working-class people of the anti-immigrant populist political party, the National Front, capitalizes on similar populist sentiments. The party is headed by another charismatic leader, Marine Le Pen. It rallies an exclusionary definition of “the people” around French nationalism, positioning itself against the corrupting forces of globalization and immigration. Another more genuinely grassroots political movement, the Yellow Vest movement, protests in the name of an economy that has left behind its supporters, primarily rural commuters as well as economically discontented working and middle-class individuals.<sup>6</sup> Unlike other populist movements that have a presence in the traditional political spheres, such as the National Front and Brexit, the Yellow Vests are truly disconnected and reject all political parties, despite politician’s attempts to co-opt their message and gain their support. The movement contrasts other entrenched populist movements while finding its basis in similar underlying sentiments.

So, the British populist movement came to be focused on a single issue, finding its way through the safeguards of a stable liberal democratic-parliamentary system to create major consequences—namely Brexit. Meanwhile, the populist movement in France, although capitalizing on similar sentiments, does not concentrate on a single issue: the National Front is right-wing while the Yellow Vest movement is decentralized and politically unattached. To understand each movement, one must explore each in depth.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### The Two Referendums

The contemporary story of populism in the UK culminates with the decision to leave the European Union (EU) in 2016. To understand the change over time in British politics that led to such a decision, it is useful to compare the 2016 referendum with the 1975 referendum that put to the test British membership in the European Common Market (EEC), the then equivalent of the current UN. The 1975 referendum was called soon after the UK first joined the EEC. Among the 64 percent of the population that voted, only one-third of the population voted to leave. At this time, Euroscepticism (apprehension toward the EU) was centered on the left rather than the right, as many viewed the EEC as a bastion of capitalism and therefore exploitative to laborers who desired a welfare state.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the British people had more loyalty to the two-party system at this time,<sup>8</sup> meaning they trusted political leaders in their support of European integration. Lastly, the EEC was smaller at this time and so it felt more manageable.

In 2016, however, a larger portion of the population—72 percent—voted in almost even halves, with 48 percent voting to Remain and 52 percent voting to Leave. The Leave vote, with its Eurosceptical implications, was this time concentrated on the political right and derived from suspicion of social and economic integration rather than from opposition to capitalism.<sup>9</sup> It comprised older, rural, less-educated workers as well as homogenous constituencies more than multiethnic ones.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Cigainero, Jake. “Who Are France’s Yellow Vest Protesters, And What Do They Want?” NPR, Core Publisher, 3 Dec. 2018. [Web]. <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/03/672862353/who-are-frances-yellow-vest-protesters-and-what-do-they-want>

<sup>7</sup>Dunin-Wasowicz, Roch. “The referendums of 1975 and 2016 Illustrate the Continuity and Change in British Euroscepticism.” The London School of Economics Brexit Blog, London School of Economics. 31 Jul. 2017. [Web]. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2017/07/31/the-referendums-of-1975-and-2016-illustrate-the-continuity-and-change-in-british-euroscepticism/>

<sup>8</sup>Goodwin, Matthew. “What Brexit Means for Britain.” Current History. Daniel Mark Redmond. Mar. 2017. DOI: 10.1525/curh.2017.116.788.107.

<sup>9</sup>Dunin-Wasowicz.

<sup>10</sup>McGill, Andrew. “Who Voted for the Brexit?” The Atlantic, The Atlantic Company. 25 Jun. 2016. [Web]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/06/brexit-vote-statistics-united-kingdom-european-union/488780/>



At this point, the political landscape had changed. The EU came to encompass more countries, including those in eastern Europe, such as Turkey, Albania, and Serbia, shifting the ethnic composition of the EU. Further, the EU's economic struggles following the Great Recession combined with a Middle Eastern refugee crisis beginning in 2015 and the decline of mainstream party solidarity in the UK<sup>11</sup> all contributed to this change in public opinion regarding the UK's EU membership.

### The Transformation

The shifting political landscape that led to the change in the vote between 1975 to 2016 can be attributed to the factors discussed above. Let us unpack and contextualize these factors.

As globalization deepened and immigration increased, poorer, less-educated, rural working-class people felt left behind due to deindustrialization. As the UK society stratified into more highly educated, liberal professionals and rural working class,<sup>12</sup> niches opened up for populist parties to appeal to the working class. Thus, populism took hold on the right in the UK as a method for the discontented to regain control of the government from the urban elite and return it to the “real”—that is, white, rural, working class—people of England.

The image of “ordinary” folk is a populist illusion that defines “the people” as a narrow group of individuals who feel that they are the “real” people. Actually, this narrow group is actually only a homogenous subset of the country's citizens. In claiming that the government should answer to them, this group engages in illiberal, majoritarian behavior, feeding into a narrative that political scientist Arlie Hochschild describes as a “deep story” in her 2016 book, *Strangers in Their Own Land*. Although she applied this idea to the United States, a similar phenomenon is occurring in the UK among those who feel left behind by globalization. She describes the USA “deep story” as a “feels-as-if story,” a subjective perception in which white male Americans wait in a metaphorical line for the American Dream but feel as if government assistance enables women, immigrants, and people of color to cut them in this line.<sup>13</sup> In the UK, there is an analogous “deep story” occurring in the minds of the white working class who would come to support Brexit.

In an interview, author and US Council of Foreign Relations fellow Edward Alden describes how, despite the UK's low unemployment and high economic growth rate compared to other European countries, this demographic sees what they wanted to see. And what they want to see is an economic struggle that disadvantages them. For instance, the reverberations of the Great Recession occurred simultaneously with increasing immigration. Brexiters attributed causality here and considered immigration as one of the forces putting them in economic hardship and influencing cultural change, though we see this is not the case. Fact and narrative do not align here, as the British economy successfully integrates immigrants and continues to grow quickly. Not to mention, the UK has experienced a much lower refugee influx than continental Europe because, as an island, it can limit immigration more effectively.<sup>14</sup> This explains why Hochschild names it a “story”: the perspective is based not on fact but rather on feeling, imagination, and false perceptions. It nonetheless feels very real to the people who believe it.

Moreover, the long-term expansion of the EU to incorporate eastern European countries diversified the ethnic makeup of the EU<sup>15</sup> and, in turn, may have led to discomfort with the EU among racist white referendum voters. Thus, the “deep story” here is one of unstoppable outside forces—

<sup>11</sup>Goodwin.

<sup>12</sup>Goodwin.

<sup>13</sup>Hochschild, Arlie. *Strangers in Their Own Land* (New York: The New York Press, 2016), 135

<sup>14</sup>Alden, Edward and McBride, James. “What Brexit Reveals About Rising Populism.” Council on Foreign Relations, Greenberg Center for Goeconomic Studies. 29 Jun. 2016. [Web]. <https://www.cfr.org/interview/what-brexit-reveals-about-rising-populism>

<sup>15</sup>Goodwin.

globalization, immigration, urbanization—threatening the cultural and economic position of the white working-class and the rural uneducated. This also feeds into a so-called “replacement theory,” in which such xenophobic groups view immigrants as replacing whites and disintegrating their culture.<sup>16</sup>

These sentiments were concentrated on a single issue by the UK Independent Party (UKIP), which was founded in 1993 as a party dedicated to exiting the European Union. With the help of Nigel Farage’s political recognition, the party went from having a 7 percent general election vote share in 1999 when it won its first seats to a 27.5 percent general election vote share in 2014, beating out the Liberal Democratic party and destabilizing traditional party politics, as populism often does. In response to the popularity of the UKIP party, Conservative leader David Cameron committed in 2010 to hold a referendum on the subject.<sup>17</sup>

### Brexit and Boris Johnson

Indeed, David Cameron’s decision to hold a referendum was a grave error. He may have thought it would placate the threat of the rising UKIP party and reinforce the UK’s position in the EU. However, he was wrong on both accounts. EU membership was virtually a nonissue before Cameron publicly committed to holding the referendum, with only 10 percent of British public opinion considering EU membership an urgent policy question. After Cameron’s commitment, this number increased to 50 percent.<sup>18</sup> In this way, general populist sentiments were concentrated onto a single issue, forging a great division in British society from nothing. It drew on Euroscepticism and xenophobia, as can be seen with Brexit advertisements that embellished the threat of immigration as a result of remaining in the EU.<sup>19</sup> The concentration of these more general sentiments onto a single issue thus strengthened these sentiments’ power and had the effect of polarizing British society.

The British government is a strong, established democratic parliamentary system. It includes a culture of deference, maintains strong party loyalty, and values norms, including those of its unwritten constitution. The system is less directly democratic and empowers its party leadership as a result of parliamentary sovereignty and the nature of the Cabinet government.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the system should generally be insulated from populism since grassroots movements and whims of public opinion are guarded against by traditional party leadership and respect for the status quo. Similarly, Harvard University political scientists Daniel Ziblatt and Steven Levitsky have found that an inordinate level of direct democracy threatens liberal democracy, which initially seems counterintuitive, but turns out to make sense. By giving too much power to popular opinion, the government would become vulnerable to poor decision-making by the impassioned majority.<sup>21</sup> The UK has not taken steps that other democracies have in instituting the reforms that lead to such direct democracy. For example, the

<sup>16</sup>Schwartzburg, Rosa. “The ‘White Replacement Theory’ Motivates Alt-Right Killers the World Over.” *The Guardian*, Guardian Media Group. 5 Aug. 2019. [Web]. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/aug/05/great-replacement-theory-alt-right-killers-el-paso>

<sup>17</sup>Hunt, Alex. “UKIP: The Story of the UK Independence Party’s Rise.” BBC, Simon & Schuster. 21 Nov 2014. [Web]. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-21614073>

<sup>18</sup>Ausserladscheider, Valentina and Wood, James. “Populism and the Manufactured Crisis of British Neoliberalism: The Case of Brexit.” *The London School of Economics Brexit Blog*, London School of Economics. 23 July 2020. [Web]. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/populism-neoliberalism-brexit/>

<sup>19</sup>Alden and McBride.

<sup>20</sup>Eckstein, Harry. “The British Political System.” *Patterns of Government: the Major Political Systems of Europe*, by Adam Bruno Ulam et al., Random House, 1958, pp. 57–74.

<sup>21</sup>Fisher, Max. “U.K. Democracy, Tested by Brexit and Boris Johnson, Holds for Now.” *New York Times*, The New York Times Company. 5 Sept. 2019. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/05/world/europe/boris-johnson-british-parliament.html>

UK has held out against holding primary elections; instead party leadership selects candidates.<sup>22</sup> This is good for the stability of British democracy.

However, the referendum is one dangerously populist tool that the UK does have. Its use in the case of deciding Brexit was a political mistake on the part of Mr. Cameron, who expected a favorable result of remaining in the EU. By opening up a usually well-insulated system to the direct input of the people, who were disillusioned with the many political leaders who spoke in favor of Remaining,<sup>23</sup> Mr. Cameron weakened the democratic legitimacy of the UK and put its economy in danger. It also allowed the populist movement to achieve unprecedented, visible success.

The vote that took place on June 23, 2016, resulted in the shocking decision to withdraw from the EU, a decision with profound and long-term consequences for the British economy and society. It led to political paralysis, with multiple leaders, including David Cameron and Theresa May, unable to make progress and resigning. A constitutional crisis also occurred. Members of Parliament (MPs), 75 percent of whom voted to Remain, were forced following the Brexit vote to support Brexit-related policies they opposed, allowing populism to encroach on parliamentary sovereignty.<sup>24</sup>

Boris Johnson took up this populist movement as a charismatic, norm-challenging Prime Minister, identifying himself as a political “outsider” railing against the corrupt establishment. His norm-breaking can be seen, for instance, when he suspended Parliament at a critical time during the Brexit proceedings to avoid political backlash against his unpopular policies. Furthermore, his rhetoric alienates the opposition and contributes to polarization, feeding into populist sentiments of “us” against “them.” Yet, Boris Johnson’s unprecedented actions have been tempered by the parliamentary system, as Johnson must maintain the support of his coalition, a limit on executive power featured in the British political system.<sup>25</sup>

The decision to leave the EU has profound economic and political consequences for the UK. Large British companies that relied on easy access to EU countries have now planned or threatened to relocate from the UK, taking jobs with them. The declining fishing industry—an industry that voted to Leave to break free from seemingly frustrating EU rules—will actually be hit by the added barriers to selling fish to other EU countries, the market it relies on.<sup>26</sup> Further, the economic fallout from the referendum, such as a depreciation in silver and a rise in the prices of gas and foodstuff, has affected most significantly those with lower wages, the very people who voted for Brexit in the first place.<sup>27</sup> This promises to further exacerbate the populist base’s list of grievances when things do not work out in their favor. The UK is also dragging Scotland, which previously voted to remain part of the UK in 2014, out of the EU against their will, giving rise to Scotland’s own populist party, the Scottish National Party.<sup>28</sup>

The populist movement has further destabilized the political landscape by reorganizing party alignments. Whereas Labour was the traditional party for the citizens of northern England, PM Johnson’s brand of populism appeals to them and they are grateful to the Conservatives for achieving

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>“British Politics is Being Profoundly Reshaped by Populism.” The Economist. The Economist Group. 16 Nov 2017. [Web]. <https://www.economist.com/britain/2017/11/16/british-politics-is-being-profoundly-reshaped-by-populism>

<sup>24</sup>Fisher.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Mueller, Benjamin and Robins, Peter. “What is Brexit? And How Is It Going?” New York Times. The New York Times Company. 27 May 2021. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/article/brexit-uk-eu-explained.html>

<sup>27</sup>“British Politics is Being Profoundly Reshaped by Populism.”

<sup>28</sup>Mueller and Peter.

Brexit. For example, Hartlepool, a Conservative town since the 1970s, voted overwhelmingly for the Labour party in the recent parliamentary by-election,<sup>29</sup> exemplifying this realignment.

Ultimately, while hurting those very citizens whose xenophobic and nationalistic perceptions made them vote to Leave, Brexit has resulted in the spread of populist attitudes and the upset of the UK's political system and economy. One can see how a fairly insulated political system gave way to populist sentiments. The consequences prove to be long-term.

## FRANCE

### The History of French Populism and the National Front

Similarly to the UK, populism has deep roots in France. To start examining the current populist movement, one must return to the career of populist figure and politician Jean Marie Le Pen. In the 1950s, Le Pen supported the Poujadisme anti-taxation movement, which appealed to frustrated peasants and merchants following World War II. Holding a seat in the National Assembly, he got his start in politics.<sup>30</sup> Later in 1972, Jean Marie Le Pen founded the National Front party as a right-wing alternative to the established political parties, emphasizing nationalism and opposition to immigration, particularly Arab immigration.<sup>31</sup> The National Front party gradually grew throughout the years, first gaining victories in local elections and eventually consistently securing a considerable portion of seats and the overall vote.

Confronted with Le Pen's controversial Nazi-sympathetic and xenophobic behavior, the National Front expelled him from leadership in 2015. His charismatic daughter, Marine Le Pen, assumed control of the party and rebranded it to distance it from her father's problematic behavior.<sup>32</sup> Despite having been involved with the French political establishment for decades, the National Front continues to reaffirm its populist identity by insisting on its position as "outsiders" fighting against a corrupt "establishment."<sup>33</sup> The party, like so many other populist movements, complicates traditional left-right politics by incorporating conservative, nationalist, and anti-immigrant policies alongside left-wing economic reforms.<sup>34</sup> Instead of identifying with a point on the political spectrum, it relies on cultural identity, inflammatory rhetoric, and ideology to brand itself. These strategies led the National Front party to win second to the Gaullists in the first round of the 2002 presidential elections, uprooting the traditional competition between the Socialist Left and the Gaullist right.<sup>35</sup> Then, the National Front won first in the 2014 French parliamentary elections, securing around 25 percent of the votes and propelling it to the forefront of French politics.

### The French "Deep Story"

Similar demographics to those in the UK support the populism of the National Front. Favorable views of the National Front are strongest among less educated, Catholic, male citizens who

<sup>29</sup>Landler, Mark and Castle, Stephen. "An Election Win for Boris Johnson, but His Strategies Risk Breaking Up the U.K." *New York Times*. The New York Times Company. 7 May 2021. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/world/europe/uk-boris-johnson-conservatives-election.html>

<sup>30</sup>The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Jean-Marie Le Pen." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 16 Jun. 2020. [Web]. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Marie-Le-Pen>

<sup>31</sup>The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Pierre Poujade." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 27 Nov. 2020. [Web]. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pierre-Poujade>

<sup>32</sup>"Jean-Marie Le Pen."

<sup>33</sup>The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "National Front." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 2 May 2017. [Web]. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/National-Front-political-party-France>

<sup>34</sup>Friedman, Uri. "How Populism Took Root in France." *The Atlantic*, The Atlantic Company. 20 Apr. 2017. [Web]. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/04/france-election-populism/523500/>

<sup>35</sup>"National Front."

hold Islamophobic sentiments and are skeptical of the EU and globalization.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, a rural and urban divide has also arisen in France. Whereas the Parisian culture thrives on globalization, the small rural farmers are left behind by it. Cheap imports and foreign competition have driven down the prices of their products, especially meat and dairy products, leading to protests in 2015 representative of rising resentment.<sup>37</sup>

The French government has engaged in a similar brand of TINA politics, withholding all direct financial assistance to struggling farmers as a result of EU regulations.<sup>38</sup> Farmers thus look and see a city of internationalist, Parisian elites who are neglecting the small provincial farmers, pushing the farmer to develop populist sentiments. Not to mention, under President Hollande, who held the office from 2012 to 2017, the French economy floundered, thereby exacerbating these issues.<sup>39</sup>

The growing frequency of terrorist attacks fanned the flames of anti-immigrant sentiments in Europe. In 2015, two brothers attacked and murdered twelve at the French magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*. And in November of the same year, simultaneous suicide bomber and shooter attacks at a concert hall, restaurant, and stadium resulted in 130 deaths.<sup>40</sup> ISIS later claimed responsibility for the attacks.<sup>41</sup>

An analogous “deep story” has thus taken hold in France. It tells a similar story of an uncaring EU and an elite establishment catering to urban needs, both blind to the economic suffering of the rural farmer. Especially in France, there is a traditional cultural image of the small farmer and his bucolic lifestyle as essential to the French spirit.<sup>42</sup> They view themselves as the “real people” and feel anger over their apparent neglect by the government and globalization. Then, they see immigrants changing demographics and link them to terrorist attacks, especially Muslim and Middle Eastern immigrants. They feel their position in society at the center of French heritage slipping from them. They are angry, want to hold onto this nostalgic image of themselves, and desire the dismantling of the unresponsive establishment—all populist sentiments. Thus, they turn to the right-wing National Front, which nourishes harmful nationalism and promises to take a hard line on immigration.

Besides the National Front, far-right movements like *Generation Identitaire*—a chauvinistic, Islamophobic, anti-immigrant group—have gained supporters since the early 2000s as a result of this “deep story.”<sup>43</sup> According to an investigative piece by Al Jazeera, the group is violent and engages in terrorist-like behavior as well as advocating “replacement theory.” It is surprisingly popular among young people. Most notably, this investigation uncovered close connections to the National Front party, revealing how despite Marine Le Pen’s outward distancing from her father’s controversial behavior,

<sup>36</sup>Wike, Richard. “5 Charts Showing Where France’s National Front Draws its Support.” Pew Research Center. Pew Research Center. 21 Apr. 2017. [Web]. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/21/5-charts-showing-where-frances-national-front-draws-its-support/>

<sup>37</sup>Beardsley, Eleanor. “Analyst: Angry French Farmers Will Have to Adapt to Globalization.” NPR. Core Publisher. 26 Jul. 2015. [Web]. <https://www.npr.org/2015/07/26/426434695/analyst-angry-french-farmers-will-have-to-adapt-to-globalization>

<sup>38</sup>Lyman, Rick. “Like Trump, Europe’s Populists Win Big With Rural Votes.” *New York Times*, The New York Times. 6 Dec 2016. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/world/europe/europe-poland-populism-rural-voters.html>

<sup>39</sup>The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “Emmanuel Macron.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 17 Dec. 2020. [Web]. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Emmanuel-Macron>

<sup>40</sup>“Timeline: Attacks in France.” BBC, Simon & Schuster. 26 July 2016. [Web]. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33288542>

<sup>41</sup>Castillo, Mariano. “Paris Suicide Bomber Identified; ISIS Claims Responsibility for 129 Dead.” CNN, CNN Worldwide. 16 Nov 2015. [Web]. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/11/14/world/paris-attacks/>

<sup>42</sup>Beardsley.

<sup>43</sup>Wilson, Jason. “With Links to the Christchurch Attacker, What is the Identitarian Movement?” *The Guardian*. Guardian Media Group. 27 Mar. 2019. [Web]. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/28/with-links-to-the-christchurch-attacker-what-is-the-identitarian-movement>



such behavior persists in the party under the radar.<sup>44</sup> Although the National Front may look different than it had, the same racist and xenophobic populist sentiments underly the party's platform, thereby continuing to secure the vote of extremist and discontented voters.

Subsequently, in 2017, although the party secured fewer seats than analysts predicted, the charismatic Marine Le Pen was second only to Macron in the presidential election,<sup>45</sup> the closest the National Front has ever come to the presidency. Only three-fourths of the population cast votes, the lowest turnout in 50 years in a French presidential election—so not as many voted for Le Pen as poles initially appear to indicate.<sup>46</sup> However, such low turnout itself reveals dissatisfaction with and distrust of the establishment, a contributor to populism. And one can discern this distrust from the fact that the race was between Marine Le Pen and Emmanuel Macron, both outsiders of the main political parties, signaling a waning of faith in traditional political parties. Macron established his party, En Marche!, which he called a “democratic revolution,” only several months before launching his presidential campaign, illustrating himself as an “outsider,” though a pro-European one.<sup>47</sup> His election thereby destabilized the French political institutions.<sup>48</sup> Populist sentiments were on the rise.

### The Yellow Vests

However, once a populist movement becomes entrenched in the establishment, as did Macron's, it often struggles to hold onto its image as populist.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, the semi-presidential system allows Macron's election even though he only received 24 percent of the vote in the first round of the 2017 election.<sup>50</sup> This, combined with his pro-business initiatives and, in particular, his increase in a gas tax in 2018, led to the breakout of a new populist movement among drivers who had to pay an extra six dollars per gallon due to the gas tax increase. These disgruntled drivers called themselves the Yellow Vests. The tax increase did not only affect drivers though; it stressed the finances of countless people in rural and suburban areas who do not have the same easy access to public transportation as those within urban areas do. The tax increase reinforced the rural-urban divide and the idea that the urban elite does not care about the lives of those who live outside of the city.<sup>51</sup> Thus, rural populations came to support the Yellow Vest movement and began protesting, vandalizing the Arc De Triomphe, calling for Macron to resign, destroying store windows in Paris, and shutting down highways across the country.<sup>52</sup> This is likely another cause of the semi-presidential system of the Fifth Republic, which Charles DeGaulle's plan established in 1958, centralizing power in the president. According to one NYU professor Herrick Chapman, this system leaves little room for alternatives to government policy besides protest on the streets.<sup>53</sup> These features of the presidential system and the Yellow Vest movement's grievances bolster the idea that the “establishment” is unresponsive to “the people.”

<sup>44</sup>Al Jazeera Investigative Unit. “Generation Identity: France Shuts Down Far-Right Group.” Aljazeera, Aljazeera Publishing. 3 Mar. 2021. [Web]. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/3/generation-identity-france-shuts-down-far-right-group>

<sup>45</sup>The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. “Marine Le Pen.” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 7 May 2021. [Web]. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marine-Le-Pen>

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>“Emmanuel Macron.”

<sup>48</sup>Nossiter, Adam. “How France's ‘Yellow Vests’ Differ From Populist Movements Elsewhere.” New York Times. The New York Times. 5 Dec. 2018. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/05/world/europe/yellow-vests-france.html>

<sup>49</sup>Nossiter.

<sup>50</sup>Nossiter.

<sup>51</sup>Collins, Lauren. “The Gilets Jaunes and a Surprise Crisis in France.” The New Yorker, Condé Nast. 4 Dec. 2018. [Web]. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-gilets-jaunes-and-a-surprise-crisis-in-france>

<sup>52</sup>Gopnik, Adam. “The Yellow Vests And Why There Are So Many Street Protests in France.” The New Yorker, Condé Nast. 6 Dec. 2018. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/the-yellow-vests-and-why-there-are-so-many-street-protests-in-france>

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.



Besides its similarities in demographics and populist sentiment, the Yellow Vest movement differs from other populist movements in several important ways. For one, it is truly a grassroots movement. It is not connected to any political party and even rejects every political party and politician that reaches out to it or attempts to co-opt its message.<sup>54</sup> It has no charismatic leader or any single leader at all.<sup>55</sup> As the movement diffuses and becomes widespread, there is no one central issue. And it has no clear location on the political spectrum as it claims supporters on both the left and right. Indeed, it mostly has less to do with nationalism or immigration and more to do with economic status.<sup>56</sup> Although the gas tax has been repealed, the movement has gained momentum and did not stop after the repeal.

Marine Le Pen has made several political gambits to get the Yellow Vests on her side. She criticized Macron's decision to increase the gas tax and his elitism, calling upon her supporters to participate in the Yellow Vest protests. A National Front mayor permitted Yellow Vest protestors to gather in one of his municipality's parking lots, where he and Marine Le Pen expressed their support for the Yellow Vests.<sup>57</sup> Though the National Front has not had clear success in gaining the support of Yellow Vests, it is the most likely out of the political parties to benefit from their sentiments.<sup>58</sup> This is especially due to the continuing terrorist attacks, which harbor anti-immigrant attitudes that complement the Yellow Vest's economic grievances. Moving closer to the 2022 presidential election in France, Marine Le Pen is projected to be Macron's main competitor. Macron continues to walk a fine line with the Yellow Vest movement. He has caused other grassroots protests through his continued support for environmental legislation that does too little for environmentalists while financially burdening the Yellow Vest demographics in the same way as did the original gas tax, which was meant to be an environmental reform.<sup>59</sup> After the pandemic last year along with continued terrorist attacks and protests over Macron's environmental reforms, Marine Le Pen will surely gain ground.<sup>60</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Globalization, a worldwide force, has resulted in a backlash that seeks to reclaim some nostalgic past and safeguard a homogenous idea of "the people" against immigrants and the "elite," "unresponsive" establishment. The 2008 recession, terrorist attacks, an influx of immigrants, and deindustrialization have all contributed to the rise of such a backlash, which has resulted in right-wing, nationalist, populist movements in both the UK and France. In the UK, the right-wing fringe party, UKIP, was successful in influencing the traditional political establishment to invoke the populist tool of the referendum, which opened up an otherwise secure system to the destabilization of the populists while simultaneously concentrating populist sentiments on a single issue. The Brexit decision revealed clear divisions between rural and urban, old and young, wealthy and poor, and educated and uneducated. And it cemented long-term consequences that negatively affect the very people who voted for Brexit as an expression of their dissatisfaction.

<sup>54</sup>Nossiter.

<sup>55</sup>Collins. <sup>56</sup>Nossiter.

<sup>57</sup>Higgins, Andrew. "France's Far Right Sees Gold in Yellow Vest Movement." New York Times, The New York Times Company. 16 Dec. 2018. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/16/world/europe/france-national-front-yellow-vests.html>

<sup>58</sup>Gopnik

<sup>59</sup>Alderman, Liz and Méheut, Constant. "Going Green, or Greenwashing? A Proposed Climate Law Divides France." New York Times. The New York Times Company. 19 May 2019. [Web]. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/business/macron-france-climate-bill.html>

<sup>60</sup>Sollety, Marion. "Who's Who: Macron's Top Challengers for 2022." Politico, Capitol News Company. 12 Feb. 2021. [Web]. <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-top-challengers-opposition-france-presidential-election-2022/>

In France, populist sentiments arising from the same underlying narrative present among similar demographics in the UK contribute to growing support for the National Front's Marine Le Pen who calls for anti-immigration and nationalist policies. Ill-advised economic policies on the part of Macron sparked the Yellow Vest movement, which differed from other populist movements in its true grassroots nature. It has great potential to empower Le Pen's National Front in the upcoming election. However, at present, the Yellow Vest movement remains disorganized and decentralized. The National Front has not gained the support of the Yellow Vest and has not yet held the presidency, which would truly give it influence in the semi-presidential system of France. So, the populist movement in France, although representing a threat to the system, especially in the next presidential election, has not yet resulted in an institutional crisis the way it has in the UK.

Ultimately, both the British and French populist movements reveal how populism as a movement can threaten to destabilize liberal democratic systems and institutions. And both exemplify the unintended consequences of globalization that have flared up recently throughout Europe and the world.

