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DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES OF MAINE VOTERS

by

Caitlyn Rooms

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for a Degree with Honors
(Political Science and International Affairs)

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the political priorities of a population is key to unravelling the ways that people engage in local, state, and national politics. National polling organizations do studies in every election cycle on the domestic priorities of national voters, and every few years on the foreign policy priorities of the American public. These polls help academics and policymakers understand the motivations of the American populace and help to guide the public narrative surrounding contentious issues. Polls like this are, however, rare at the state level. This study aims to fill that gap for the state of Maine, providing state-level data on the domestic and foreign policy priorities of Maine voters. This study replicated two Pew Research Center polls to investigate the issues of highest priority to Maine voters in the 2020 presidential election and the foreign policy priorities of Maine voters. The study found that Maine voters prioritized many of the same issues as national voters, with heavy interest in the economy and healthcare, but that Maine voters were more likely to consider the Coronavirus outbreak and economic inequality as high priorities than national voters. In foreign policy, Maine voter priorities lined up closely with national ones, with both groups putting strong emphasis on protecting American jobs and issues of national security. Maine voters were also found to be less concerned with most issues overall, prioritizing almost every issue less than national voters. Maine voters were particularly disinterested in Supreme Court appointments and foreign policy compared to national voters. This study also addressed how demographic differences in age, gender, political affiliation, income, education level, and urban/rural identity influenced the priorities of Maine voters, finding that

urbanity and age likely had the largest impact on the difference between Maine and national priorities.

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INTRODUCTION

This research began as a simple thought that flickered through my head in the early hours of the morning, shortly before the presidential primaries in Spring of 2020. I, as an International Affairs and Political Science student following the presidential race closely, wondered to myself: Do Maine voters think about foreign policy when voting? I had been told that I shouldn't think too hard about a thesis topic- that when it was time, a question would come to me that I would just know was meant to be my thesis. So, when this thought flickered through my half-sleeping brain, I immediately sat up and grabbed a pen and paper to write it down. I knew I had a thesis topic. Over the following weeks and months, my topic grew and expanded under the guidance of my advisors. It expanded from the very narrow question of "How much do Maine voters think about foreign policy when voting?" into a far broader set of questions: What issues do Maine voters value the most? How does foreign policy compare to other topics of concern within Maine? How do Maine voters' concerns compare to national ones? And when Mainers do consider foreign policy, which aspects of it do they prioritize over others? These became my guiding research questions.

Voter priorities in the United States have long been a topic of research, particularly at the national level but also in many cases at state and local levels. Even at the national level, these priorities vary significantly across constituencies, but also share many similarities- economy, civil rights of various kinds, foreign policy, etc. Different voting groups have been shown to hold different voting priorities- a fact which should come as no surprise, when one looks at the sheer diversity of the United States. Over the last few years, for example, increasing attention has been focused on the urban-rural

divide in the United States, born from a feeling of disenfranchisement by rural Americans and spurred on by the resurgence of populism. It is therefore notable that research into the subject of voting priorities- particularly those relating to demographic trends- is lacking when it comes to the state of Maine. Although a number of research centers and polling agencies do research at the national level about which topics and policies voters find most important with every election cycle, this type of analysis has not been done for the State of Maine. This work attempts to not only address this lack of research into Maine voter priorities in general, but to answer the specific question: Are Maine voters more or less likely to prioritize foreign policy when voting in domestic elections than the U.S. populace more generally?

This research, while seeking to answer the question of whether Mainers are more or less likely to prioritize foreign policy than the nation as a whole, also seeks to conduct an exploration of Maine voter priorities more generally: Which domestic issues do Maine voters consider to be the most important when voting in presidential elections? What foreign policy priorities are Maine voters thinking about when they consider the topic of “foreign policy”? How do demographic factors, besides one’s identity as a Maine voter, influence responses? All of these questions form a key part of the underlying exploratory research behind this study, and together they form the basis for the greatest contribution of this study to the field of Maine politics. They may also allow a larger generalization of how rural and urban voters differ in their priorities, possibly offering insight into the concerns of rural communities across the United States due to the highly rural nature of Maine. To pursue this research, this study will replicate two national-level Pew Research Center polls on important voting issues in the 2020 presidential election and foreign

policy priorities. The results from this study will shed light on the priorities of Maine voters which may be used to guide public discourse along lines more meaningful to Maine voters, and to inform state officials of the greatest concerns of their constituents.

This research relies upon an understanding of several key terms, the first of which is policy issues. For the sake of this study, policy issues are defined as public policy topics and politically charged themes upon which the public can be reasonably expected to have an interest which may affect public engagement with political discourse. In the case of this study, given its limited scope as a replication of prior polls by the Pew Research Center, the number of policy issues under consideration is limited. Although this limits the ability to collect data on a wide variety of potentially equally influential topics, the replication of prior research at the national level allows for a comparison between national and state-level data.

Another key term in this study is “prioritization,” used to refer to the value which respondents place upon a topic, measured by the percentage of respondents who identify a topic as “Very Important” or as a “Top Priority.” The term “prioritization” often brings to mind an ordered list of priorities from greatest to lowest, but this is not how the term is used here. An individual in this study may have multiple top priorities based upon their perception of the importance of a variety of issues to their decisions regarding presidential candidates and their perspective on American foreign policy. Thus, “prioritization” is used in this study to refer generally to the importance a respondent or group of respondents places upon an issue, rather than a definitive ranking.

Finally, the term “foreign policy” in this study refers broadly to international issues relating to the federal government upon which government policies may be

perceived by the general public to have an influence. In the first survey of voter issue priorities in the 2020 presidential election, “foreign policy” is not defined for the participants. Therefore, it can only be interpreted as broadly referring to the international issues which the public may perceive as relevant to presidential policymaking. In contrast, in the second survey, foreign policy is constrained to the eighteen topics listed, severely limiting the issues which respondents may see as included in foreign policy. This leaves out a large number of possible foreign policy topics; but, as in the case of policy issues, the limitations allow for direct comparisons to national Pew data to consider how Maine opinions differ from those of Americans more broadly. Thus, the overall usage of the term foreign policy in this thesis will refer primarily to the broad concept of international issues relating to the federal government, despite the knowledge that the second survey of foreign policy opinions limits the number of such issues about which participants may offer responses.

The structure of this thesis is relatively straightforward. This paper begins with a literature review of prior data and research into U.S. voter priorities at the national level and how demographic differences such as age, gender, party affiliation, income, and education level influence interest in particular policy issues. Then, the paper discusses the hypotheses and research questions driving this study. After that is a section detailing the methodology of the study, including sections on participant recruitment, procedures, and analysis. Next is a presentation of results, analyzing descriptive statistics, visuals, and multivariate models attempting to explain the factors influencing Maine voter priorities. Finally, the last section will summarize the conclusions reached through the data analysis and comparisons, as well as offer suggestions for further research based upon the results

of this study. There are additional appendices after the body of the research paper where readers may view materials such as the consent form, survey questions, the tables of quantitative data relating demographics to voter priorities, and full results from the multivariate models.

This study found, overall, that Maine voters are less concerned about both domestic and foreign policy than U.S. voters in general. Consistently, for almost all issues and across all demographic variables, a lower percentage of Maine voters were concerned with policy issues than their national counterparts. Maine's top domestic priorities, also, differed slightly from those of national respondents, with Mainers' top domestic priorities being the Coronavirus outbreak, the economy, healthcare, and economic inequality, while national respondents to the same questions prioritized Supreme Court appointments more highly than economic inequality, and the Coronavirus much less than Maine respondents. In foreign policy, however, Maine and national priorities were largely the same, with both groups prioritizing protecting the U.S. from terrorism, protecting American jobs, and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Overall, the results found a strong consistency between *what* national respondents and Mainers prioritized, but significant differences in how much they prioritized the issues, with Maine respondents ranking almost all issues across almost all demographics lower than their national counterparts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Domestic Political Priorities of American Voters

General

Much research has been done on the domestic priorities of the American electorate, but perhaps the most notable is the Pew Research Center's surveys of popular issue priorities leading up to the 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 presidential elections. These surveys have found a number of consistencies in the overall priorities of the American populace, including a consistent concern for the economy, healthcare, and perceived safety and security issues including terrorism and coronavirus.

In 2004, the top three issues identified as "very important" to people's decisions of who to vote for in the presidential election were the economy, jobs, and terrorism.¹ In 2008, the top issues were the economy, jobs, healthcare, and education.² Then, in 2012, the top issues were the economy, jobs, budget deficit, and healthcare.³ In 2016, the top issues became the economy, terrorism, foreign policy, and then healthcare,⁴ and finally, in Pew's 2020 data, they found that the economy, healthcare, Supreme Court appointments, and the Coronavirus outbreak were the most salient issues.⁵ These results indicate a strong consistency in American issue priorities, with the economy topping the list in all of the last five Pew studies and healthcare being one of the top four in every

¹ "With Voters Focused on Economy, Obama Lead Narrows," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (April 2012)

² "With Voters Focused on Economy, Obama Lead Narrows," Pew Research Center.

³ "With Voters Focused on Economy, Obama Lead Narrows," Pew Research Center.

⁴ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (July 7, 2016)

⁵ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020)

election cycle. Jobs also appear to be a notable factor which was not asked about in the 2016 or 2020 surveys, and concerns for safety issues of immediate concern- terrorism in some years and coronavirus in 2020- also find their place consistently on the list of top voter priorities. These consistencies would seem to suggest that one could, with some level of reliability, predict that samples of smaller portions of the United States- such as the state level sample pursued in this thesis- will maintain some of these consistencies. It is, therefore, reasonable to suspect that Maine voters will identify the economy, healthcare, and some form of salient safety issue- likely coronavirus- as their top priorities.

Notably, foreign policy varies greatly in its ranking compared to other issues, with the last three election cycles- the only three for which data on foreign policy opinions is available- showing vast differences. In 2012, 52% of those polled by Pew considered foreign policy to be a major issue,⁶ similar to the 57% that considered it as such in 2020.⁷ Meanwhile, a full 75% of respondents considered it a “very important” issue in 2016, placing it as the third most important of the issues polled.⁸ This indicates that the issue of foreign policy may vary widely in importance at the national level, and suggests that generalizations about how people may value the topic would be dubious at best.

⁶ “With Voters Focused on Economy, Obama Lead Narrows,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (April 2012)

⁷ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020)

⁸ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center.

Demographic Differences and Their Influence on Voter Priorities

In addition to literature on overall domestic priorities among U.S. voters, extensive research has been done about how various demographic variables may influence political priorities, both in the U.S. and in other countries. The most notable of these are gender, age, party affiliation, education level, and income, each of which is believed to have a significant influence on the political priorities of voters.

Gender

Research on the influence of gender on political priorities suggests that women generally prioritize education, healthcare, and welfare programs, which are commonly seen as more “women’s” issues, while men are slightly more likely to prioritize economic and security issues such as trade deficits, infrastructure, and foreign policy.

Pew’s data provides an easy first glance at the issue, offering quantitative data on how the genders differ in their prioritization of various policy issues. For example, Pew found that in 2008 and 2012, women prioritized education and healthcare over 10% more often than men, and in 2020, women similarly prioritized healthcare over 10% more than men, although abortion was not a question on the 2020 survey.⁹ Additionally, women prioritized the Coronavirus outbreak 8% more than men, falling in line with their higher prioritization of healthcare.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Pew found that men only prioritized a few issues more highly than their female counterparts, those being budget deficits and energy

⁹ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020)

¹⁰ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center.

in 2012,¹¹ and foreign policy and Supreme Court appointments in 2020.¹² Notably, in all of the years studied, the overall issue of “the economy” was rated almost equally by both genders. This indicates that women are more likely to prioritize healthcare, education, and other issues of wellbeing, while men may be more likely to prioritize specific economic and political issues- such as Supreme Court appointments and foreign policy- than women.

These Pew findings are supported by previous research into the priorities of women in mayoral and gubernatorial positions in U.S. cities. Holman surveyed 100 mayors of towns and cities and identified a trend: women were more likely to believe that the city should spend more on “urban women’s issues” while men prioritized development.¹³ Holman addresses the broad trend that women are more likely to interact with situations relating to traditionally “women’s” issues such as housing, healthcare and education, and suggests that this common interaction may motivate women in local politics- and women in general- to prioritize these issues more than males.¹⁴

Another study by Heidbreder and Scheurer suggests that female governors spend over twice as much time in their state of the state addresses discussing welfare issues such as healthcare, economic inequality, etc. than male governors.¹⁵ In this study, they controlled for political party and found that even after controlling for whether the female

¹¹ “With Voters Focused on Economy, Obama Lead Narrows,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (April 2012)

¹² “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center.

¹³ M. Holman, “She Says, He Says: Gender and Policy Attitudes,” *Women in Politics in the American City*, (2015): 26-43, Temple University Press, Accessed March 11, 2021.

¹⁴ Holman, “She Says, He Says,” 27.

¹⁵ Brianne Heidbreder and Katherine Felix Scheurer, “Gender and the Gubernatorial Agenda,” *State & Local Government Review* 45, no. 1 (2013): 10.

governor was Democrat or Republican, they still spent almost twice as long discussing welfare issues than male governors.¹⁶ These results support Holman's findings that women prioritize traditionally "women's" issues relating to welfare, such as education, healthcare, and issues of equality.

The studies by Holman and Heidbreder, along with the Pew data on gender variation in prioritization of issues in the 2008, 2012, and 2020 elections, reveal notable trends in the political priorities of women at the local, state, and national levels: women are more likely to prioritize education and healthcare, while men put higher priority on economic and infrastructural issues such as trade, taxes, energy policy, and transportation. In studies of issue prioritization by voters within a state, it could therefore be expected that data will show that women continue to prioritize healthcare, abortion, and education much more highly than men, while both genders tend to prioritize the economy relatively evenly.

Age. Age also appears to be an issue with considerable influence on people's political priorities, as shown by Pew data from 2008 and 2016, and supported by Inglehart's thesis relating generational shifts and post-materialist priorities.¹⁷ These data all suggest that youth voters are more likely to prioritize non-materialist issues such as education, the environment, and human rights than older voters, while older voters are more likely to prioritize issues of national security and economic policies- materialist issues of safety and physical wellbeing.

¹⁶ Heidbreder, "Gender and the Gubernatorial Agenda," 10.

¹⁷ Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," *The American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (1981): 889, doi:10.2307/1962290.

In Pew's 2016 study of voter issue priorities, they found that different age groups prioritized the economy relatively evenly, while there were great differences in how different age groups prioritized the issues of Supreme Court Appointments, Social Security, Terrorism, Healthcare, and Foreign Policy.¹⁸ In all of these cases, the elderly- counted as respondents over 65- were significantly more likely to consider these issues to be "very important."¹⁹ Meanwhile, youth voters- those aged 18 to 29- were significantly more likely to identify treatment of racial, ethnic, and sexual and gender minorities as "very important."²⁰ Results from Pew's 2008 survey reveal similar trends, but asked different questions and can therefore not be compared directly. The 2008 Pew poll found that the elderly put significantly more emphasis on terrorism, energy policy, healthcare, "moral values," immigration, and trade policy than their younger counterparts.²¹ Meanwhile, the only issue on which the youth group put significantly more emphasis than the elderly was education. In 2008 as in 2016, however, all age groups ranked the economy consistently as the most important issue in their consideration of who to vote for in the presidential election.²² These results demonstrate the consistency of the prioritization of the economy among voting age groups, and highlight the emphasis which the elderly place upon national security- they considered the issue of terrorism significantly more important than youths in both 2008 and 2016, and valued foreign policy significantly more than their younger counterparts in 2016, the only year for which

¹⁸ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (July 7, 2016)

¹⁹ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (July 7, 2016)

²⁰ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center.

²¹ "More Americans Question Religion's Role In Politics," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2008)

²² "More Americans Question Religion's Role In Politics," Pew Research Center.

that data is available. The data from 2016 suggests that youth voters in recent years prioritize equality for marginalized groups much more highly than elderly voters, but there is no corresponding data from 2008, with the only question about equality asked in 2008 being about gay marriage, about which all age groups were relatively disinterested.

Robert Inglehart's research into post-materialist concerns among different age groups strongly supports Pew's findings. Inglehart conducted a study in the 1970s addressing whether age or environmental factors was responsible for the growth in post-materialist priorities of the time. Post-materialist concerns, according to Inglehart, are concerns which move past the physical necessities such as food, water, shelter, and safety.²³ Post-materialist concerns, then, may include issues of education, healthcare, the environment, etc. In this study, he found that although the economic environment of the participants influenced the propensity of each age group for post-materialist priorities, the bigger influence came from generational differences.²⁴ As generations aged, they did not see dramatic drop-offs in post-materialist concerns as one would expect if materialist concerns were positively related to age, as some had suggested.²⁵ The generation which came of age between the end of the Vietnam War and the onset of recession in the late 70s, he found, remained more strongly post-materialist than other generations as they aged.²⁶ This indicates that it is the economic environment of one's youth that influences one's propensity for post-materialist concerns- concerns such as education, healthcare, welfare, human rights, etc. This supports the Pew data, in which the youth voters- who

²³ Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," *The American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (1981): 889, doi:10.2307/1962290.

²⁴ Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," 889.

²⁵ Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," 889.

²⁶ Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," 889.

came of age in the midst of a booming U.S. economy- hold the most noticeably post-materialist priorities: priorities relating to climate change, economic equality, and racial and ethnic equality. Thus, both Inglehart's post-materialist thesis and the public opinion data from Pew point to youth voters being much more concerned with post-materialist issues such as the environment and equality than elderly voters, who are more concerned with materialist issues of safety and security.

Political Affiliation

Political affiliation is also strongly related to people's policy priorities- unsurprisingly, given that people are expected to pick a party based upon which of the major parties most closely follows their political priorities. As such, because the subject is believed to involve an understood connection between party and political priorities, little specific research has been done on the topic. Pew data and a study on issue ownership in political campaigns, then, serve to indicate how political affiliation may influence voter priorities.

Pew has extensive data on how people responded to their issue priority surveys based upon party affiliation. It is important to note, however, that in three of the last four presidential election cycles, the results are framed by which presidential candidate the respondent supports, rather than by which party they identify with. Only the 2012 data provides results based upon party rather than presidential candidate preference. Despite this disparity, the results show notable trends which may, to some extent, be related to party affiliation. In all four election cycles, Democrats or those who supported the

Democratic candidate valued the environment and healthcare significantly more than their Republican counterparts.²⁷ In both the 2016²⁸ and 2020²⁹ polls, the only two to ask the question, Democrats also valued racial and ethnic equality significantly more highly. Meanwhile, Republicans consistently rank immigration and economic issues such as budget deficits, trade policy, and taxes more highly than Democrats.³⁰ These statistics suggest that in general, Republicans and those who support Republican candidates will consider economic factors and perceived security threats such as violent crime and immigration to be more important to their election decisions, while Democrats and those who support Democratic candidates will prioritize the environment, issues of equality, and health care. Notably, however, the two groups consistently rate the economy and foreign policy relatively evenly, and the party which rates the economy more highly changes from election cycle to election cycle.³¹ Thus, although political party appears to be a significant factor in people's voting issue priorities, having a strong influence on the prioritization of the environment, health care, security issues and economic issues, there are some issues which appear to be less influenced by partisanship.

This is consistent with a study done by Kang, which found that Republicans and Democrats deviated significantly in the area of what is referred to as issue ownership.³² Issue ownership refers to a theory that based upon public perceptions of which party

²⁷ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (July 7, 2016)

²⁸ "2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction," Pew Research Center.

²⁹ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020)

³⁰ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting," Pew Research Center.

³¹ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting," Pew Research Center.

³² Taewoo Kang, "Campaign Rhetoric in Polarized America: An Audience-Channel Theory of Campaign Communication." Dissertation, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2017.

handles certain issues better, they become the party which can safely- and usefully- use that issues in their rhetoric, while the opposing party runs a risk of alienating or disappointing voters by referencing that same issue.³³ This means that the party which establishes “ownership” of an issue often forms their rhetoric and platform around that issue to increase popular support for the party. Kang found that, based upon thousands of emails, political advertisements, and public speeches, Republicans in the mid-2010s enjoyed issue ownership of budget deficits, terrorism, foreign affairs, and taxes, while Democrats enjoyed issue ownership of issues like women’s rights, climate change, abortion, and inequality.³⁴ This indicates that Republicans were perceived as the most effective at managing economic and foreign affairs issues, which therefore formed a large part of their rhetoric, and have therefore become major priorities for the Republican Party. The Democratic Party, meanwhile, was perceived as most effective at handling issues of equality and climate change, leading these to become major priorities for the party overall. These results from Kang’s study, therefore, indicate that Republicans will more strongly prioritize economic and foreign policy issues while Democrats will favor issues of equality and the environment.

Based on Pew’s data and Kang’s study, it is clear that party affiliation is a strong indicator of someone’s issue priorities, with Democrats favoring issues relating to healthcare, the environment, and equality, while Republicans favor immigration and specific economic issues. This topic is, as previously mentioned, assumed to be true on a broad scale since people choose a party to identify with that most closely matches their

³³ Taewoo Kang, “Campaign Rhetoric in Polarized America.”

³⁴ Taewoo Kang, “Campaign Rhetoric in Polarized America: An Audience-Channel Theory of Campaign Communication.” Dissertation, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2017.

own priorities. Thus, due to the consistency between Maine's level of party identification and that of the nation over the last few decades (both see a very even three way split between Democrats, independents, and Republicans today, and that has been true nationally for several decades)³⁵ it can be reasonably suggested that in a state-level survey of political priorities in Maine, political affiliation will be strongly related to someone's priorities.

Income

There are few data on how income levels affect policy priorities among voters, though what little data exist does offer some valuable insight. Pew has never provided data relating income with voting priorities, but two recent studies offer useful insight into the difference between the political priorities of low- and high-income individuals, noting that high income individuals have disproportionate influence on government policymaking.

Recent research provides quantitative statistics on policy priority differences between high- and low-income individuals. One study found that wealthy individuals put significantly more emphasis on infrastructure improvements, while low-income individuals put much more emphasis on education, the environment, healthcare, and homeland security.³⁶ This seems to indicate a preference among wealthy individuals for economic issues, while lower income individuals are more concerned with the

³⁵ "In Changing U.S. Electorate, Race and Education Remain Stark Dividing Lines," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (June 2020)

³⁶ Benjamin I. Page, Larry M. Bartels, and Jason Seawright, "Democracy and the Policy Preferences of Wealthy Americans," *Perspectives on Politics* 11, no. 1 (2013): 56.

environment and issues of social welfare. Another study found similar results, with high-income individuals only indicating a higher prioritization of one issue than low-income individuals- the economy.³⁷ Meanwhile, the issues upon which low-income individuals most out-prioritized high-income individuals were crime, poverty, minimum wage, abortion, and same sex marriage.³⁸ In this case, high-income individuals prioritized the economy in general more highly, while lower-income individuals prioritized economic issues which related directly to them- poverty and minimum wage. They also prioritized crime- an issue directly influential to their lives- and, interestingly, same sex marriage, indicating that they, like those analyzed in the first study, prioritized social welfare issues more highly than high-income individuals. Thus, it would appear that low income is correlated with a concern for social welfare and equality, while high income is correlated with economic concerns.

Although there is considerably less data available on how income influences political priorities than one would expect, the studies from Page and Flavin and Franko both suggest that low-income individuals prioritize social welfare issues and equality, while high-income individuals emphasize the economy. This result, then, suggests that the same results may be seen in state-level studies on this subject.

³⁷ Patrick Flavin, and William W. Franko, "Government's Unequal Attentiveness to Citizens' Political Priorities," *Policy Studies Journal* 45, no. 4 (2016): 688. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12184>.

³⁸ Flavin, "Unequal Attentiveness to Citizens' Political Priorities," 668.

Education

Education is the final demographic category which is likely to have a significant influence on voter priorities. Like income, there is no Pew data on how education levels influence political priorities, but other research can offer some insight into the subject.

Studies have consistently found that higher education is positively correlated with higher political engagement.³⁹ A paper by Hillygus suggests that a civic education “lowers the material and cognitive cost of [political] participation.”⁴⁰ This is because higher education provides people with better abilities to analyze political perspectives, as well as the knowledge required to register and to vote, and the ability to argue a point in a coherent manner due to improved language skills associated with higher education.⁴¹ This does not, however, address which issues are important to those of higher education, merely that those of higher education are more politically engaged.

To address how exactly education affects specific political priorities, one must look to other studies. One study found that education is, in most cases, associated with more liberal political stances. The study found that education is consistently found to be positively correlated with concern for the environment, gender roles, and the right to a job.⁴² This indicates a preference among higher educated individuals for issues relating to equality and the environment. Another study on the effects of university education in Canada found that:

³⁹ D. Sunshine Hillygus, "The Missing Link: Exploring the Relationship Between Higher Education and Political Engagement." *Political Behavior* 27, no. 1 (2005): 25.

⁴⁰ D. Sunshine Hillygus, "The Missing Link." 27.

⁴¹ D. Sunshine Hillygus, "The Missing Link." 27.

⁴² David L Weakliem, "The Effects of Education on Political Opinions: An International Study," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 14, no. 2 (07, 2002): 148.

“Although... the university-educated [did not become] more feminist or environmentalist, the decline in support for these attitudes among those not attending university suggests that attending university may have offset a decline in feminist and environmentalist attitudes that may have been occurring among the public in this time period.”⁴³

This indicates that, even if higher education does not actively make people more ‘liberal’ as the first study suggested, it may prevent them from developing more conservative opinions, leading to them having more liberal opinions on the environment and gender roles than the general public. Thus, higher education would have the effect of seeming to make people more concerned with the environment and issues of equality than those without higher education. These two studies therefore would indicate that education is positively correlated with more ‘liberal’ priorities such as the environment and social welfare issues relating to equality.

Urban vs. Rural.

Over the last several years, particularly since the election of Donald Trump in 2016, much research has also been done into how urban and rural voters differ in their priorities. These studies suggest that urban and rural voters may differ most significantly in their concern for issues of crime, immigration, foreign policy, and economic inequality, as well as a broader difference of rural populations being less politically engaged overall.

⁴³ Eric Mintz, “The Effects of University Education on the Political Attitudes of Young Adults,” *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* Volume XXVIII, no. 1 (1998): 34.

According to Wuthnow, one explanation of why rural voters may be less engaged is their perspectives on the federal government.⁴⁴ He offers two rural perspectives on the federal government, one being that it is unaware of rural issues and cannot accurately understand the problems of rural populations, and the other being that the federal government is overreaching, imposing unsuitable policies designed for urban centers on rural communities.⁴⁵ As a result, rural populations may have a lower concern for national political issues, since they do not trust the federal government to pursue policies which will improve their lives and their communities. This wariness, Wuthnow suggests, may often present itself as a fear of change and of policies involving significant government oversight.⁴⁶ For example, one recent study found that rural voters, making up only 19.3% of the U.S. population in 2010,⁴⁷ are extremely wary of traditional politics, fearful of immigration and of changes in racial relations, and generally critical of the role and extent of the government.⁴⁸ Meanwhile, urban voters, who make up the vast majority of the U.S. populace, are far more politically engaged and trustful of the political system.⁴⁹ Another study suggests that urban populations experience higher crime rates, and that cities provide greater visibility for economic and social inequality.⁵⁰ This study also suggests that urban populations are more interested in foreign policy due to the economic

⁴⁴ Robert Wuthnow, "Introduction," In *The Left Behind: Decline and Rage in Small-Town America*, 9. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018. doi:10.2307/j.ctvc773q2.3.

⁴⁵ Robert Wuthnow, "Introduction," 9.

⁴⁶ Robert Wuthnow, "Introduction," 9.

⁴⁷ "Defining Rural Population." Official web site of the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration. U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, January 12, 2021.

⁴⁸ Daniel T. Lichter, and James P. Ziliak, "The Rural-Urban Interface: New Patterns of Spatial Interdependence and Inequality in America," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 672 (2017): 6-25.

⁴⁹ Lichter, "The Rural-Urban Interface: New Patterns of Spatial Interdependence and Inequality in America."

⁵⁰ Jodok Troy, "The Power of the Political in an Urbanizing International," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 42, no. 4 (2017): 211-26.

connections between the industries in cities and other countries.⁵¹ Thus, existing literature would suggest that rural populations will prioritize immigration and issues of perceived governmental overreach, while urban populations will prioritize issues of crime, equality, and foreign policy.

Foreign Policy Priorities of American Voters

General

Foreign Policy priorities, like domestic policy priorities, are widely studied and analyzed. Pew's data for this subject is, like their data on domestic issue priorities, extremely useful in identifying national trends in foreign policy interests. Pew has done a number of polls on foreign policy priorities among Americans, one in 2013, one in 2018, and then one in 2021. These polls use a majority of the same questions, allowing for a clear perspective into which issues Americans prioritize consistently and which vary greatly by year. These polls indicate that a few foreign policy issues are constants in the American mindset- particularly protecting the U.S. from terrorism, protecting U.S. jobs, and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

In Pew's 2013 study, they found that the top three issues which national respondents considered to be the most important were protecting America from terrorism, protecting American jobs, and preventing the spread of WMDs, in that order.⁵² After that, concern for the next highest priority issue dropped over 10 points, from 73% of

⁵¹ Jodok Troy, "The Power of the Political in an Urbanizing International."

⁵² "Americans' foreign policy priorities for 2014," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (December 2013)

respondents saying that preventing the spread of WMDs was a “top priority” to only 61% identifying “reducing dependence on imported energy” as such.⁵³ (See Appendix III for Pew results.) This prioritization of issues- and the large drop in concern after “preventing the spread of WMDs”- continues throughout the later two polls. Pew’s 2018 poll found that Americans’ top three foreign policy priorities remained the same as in 2013, with an 8% drop after “preventing the spread of WMDs,” after which came “improving relationships with allies.”⁵⁴ In both years, “promoting democracy in other nations” came in as one of the least important foreign policy priorities, ranking last in 2013 and next to last in 2018, higher only than “attracting skilled workers from other countries.” Finally, in 2021, a similar but not identical set of issues was seen as the most important. Pew’s 2021 survey found that the top four issues were “protecting the jobs of American workers,” “reducing the spread of infectious disease,” “taking measures to protect the U.S. from terrorist attacks,” and “preventing the spread of WMDs.”⁵⁵ These results show a different ordering of the prior years’ top three issues, with “protecting American jobs” moving up from second to first, and with the addition of “preventing the spread of infectious disease” as a major issue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, however, these results are remarkably consistent, with a major drop occurring after “preventing the spread of WMDs” the same as in prior years and the least prioritized issue in the study, like in 2013 and similarly to 2018, being “promoting democracy in other nations.”

⁵³ “Americans’ foreign policy priorities for 2014,” Pew Research Center.

⁵⁴ “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy.” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (November 2018)

⁵⁵ “Majority of Americans Confident in Biden’s Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins.” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (February 24, 2021)

These Pew results indicate that nationally, U.S. foreign policy priorities are highly consistent across years and across political situations. This would seem to suggest that, given the high level of consistency, the same issues would be prioritized at state levels.

Demographic Differences and Their Influence on Voter Priorities

Foreign policy, like domestic policy, is believed to be heavily influenced by a number of demographic variables. As such, it is important to consider the variables discussed previously for domestic policy priorities. Thus, here, too, we will address the influence of gender, age, party affiliation, education level, and income on the foreign policy priorities of voters.

Age

Age has been shown to be significant to foreign policy priorities just as it is to domestic ones. This may be seen in Pew's analysis of how age relates to response-rates on certain issues polled in their 2018 and 2020 foreign policy attitude surveys. This lines up with the data previously cited on the issues which youths prioritize, and the results from Inglehart, which may be generalized from domestic policy to foreign policy in some cases.

Pew has done a limited amount of analysis on how different age groups responded to their foreign policy question in 2018, as well as slightly more detailed analysis of how age influences foreign policy priorities in 2020. The analysis from 2018 shows that youth respondents are more likely to prioritize human rights issues including "protecting groups

threatened with genocide,” “promoting and defending human rights in other countries,” and “aiding refugees fleeing violence around the world” than elderly respondents.⁵⁶ Pew also found that in 2018, youth respondents placed much less importance on maintaining U.S. military advantage over other countries and limiting the power and influence of four key U.S. competitors; Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea.⁵⁷ This, once again, seems to line up with domestic data, in which youth voters prioritized many perceived security issues- terrorism, immigration, etc.- significantly less than domestic concerns regarding issues such as education and equality.

Pew’s data, although not authoritative on its own, is supported by studies on generational differences in the U.S. from the late 20th century. Both Inglehart and Cutler found that older generations were more concerned with security issues relating directly to material safety and comfort, while younger generations were more engaged in what Inglehart refers to as post-materialist issues, or issues relating to more intellectual topics such as education and human rights. Inglehart’s research, while focused on domestic and personal priorities, is applicable to the way in which people form foreign policy priorities. Inglehart’s finding that people’s tendencies towards post-materialist priorities are heavily shaped by the economic environment of their generation’s childhood serves as a suggestion for how modern youths will engage with foreign policy.⁵⁸ Based upon these findings, one could infer that youths today, who grew up during a strong expansion of the U.S. economy but also lived through the Great Recession during their childhood,

⁵⁶ “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy.” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (November 2018)

⁵⁷ “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy.” Pew Research Center.

⁵⁸ Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," *The American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (1981): 889, doi:10.2307/1962290.

and who came of age in a time when the U.S. is actively engaged in a number of costly foreign wars, could be expected to have a number of foreign policy opinions shaped by these factors. Inglehart's research would lead one to suspect that the economic wealth of the U.S. during the formative years of current youth voters will lead them to have strong post-materialist concerns in both domestic and foreign policies, and that this post-materialist focus may combine with the experience of drawn-out foreign wars to lead youths to favor foreign policy issues emphasizing issues besides military engagement, such as human rights, the environment, and equality. Similarly, in his study from the 1960s, Neal Cutler found that even after controlling for the effects of aging, generational groups still held relatively consistent foreign policy views within their generation.⁵⁹ He found that, consistently, younger generations were progressively more likely to support varied engagement abroad and a more diverse U.S. foreign policy engagement aside from military engagement, whereas older generations favored limited foreign policy engagement focused tightly on necessary military conflicts.⁶⁰ Although these studies are both rather old, their findings about the consistency of generational concerns and Cutler's finding of a gradual shift towards more varied foreign policy concerns across generations appears to apply in present day, supported by Pew's findings.

Thus, the existing research suggest that age is strongly correlated with foreign policy concerns, with the elderly consistently being more concerned with issues of security while youths are more interested in post-materialist environmental and human

⁵⁹ Neal E. Cutler, "Generational Succession as a Source of Foreign Policy Attitudes: A Cohort Analysis of American Opinion, 1946-1966." *Journal of Peace Research* 7, no. 1 (March 1970): 33-47.

⁶⁰ Cutler, "Generational Succession as a Source of Foreign Policy Attitudes," 33-47.

rights issues. As such, it can be expected that the same trends will remain true at the state level, since they hold true in both domestic and foreign policy issues.

Gender

Gender is an issue which is widely assumed to be influential in people's foreign policy priorities, but which there is a relatively small amount of recent literature to back up. Pew, despite their large amount of data analysis on gender differences in domestic policy issues, has done little analysis of gender differences in opinions of foreign policy issues. What little they have done is scattered across a number of years and very specific questions and must be supplemented by additional research on the subject to create a coherent overview of how gender influences foreign policy priorities.

Evidence on the subject comes from two different Pew studies, one in 2004 and one in 2017, which are supported by two studies on gender's influence on foreign policy priorities in the U.S. and Denmark. The first Pew results are from a 2004 study which found that women were significantly less likely than men to support increases to the military budget or size of the military.⁶¹ They also found in 2017 that women were more willing than men to sacrifice privacy for the sake of protection from terrorism.⁶² Similarly, Eichenberg finds that both historically and in his 2002 study, women were less likely than men to support the use of military force in almost all cases.⁶³ Additionally,

⁶¹ "Foreign Policy Attitudes Now Driven by 9/11 and Iraq," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2004)

⁶² "Foreign Policy Attitudes Now Driven by 9/11 and Iraq," Pew Research Center.

⁶³ Richard C. Eichenberg, "Gender Differences in Public Attitudes toward the Use of Force by the United States, 1990–2003," *International Security* 28, no. 1 (2003): 110–41. DOI: 10.1162/016228803322427992.

Togeby's study on women in Denmark in the 1990s found that women there were more pacifist and more in favor of multilateral organizations such as the European Union than men.⁶⁴ All of these examples support the idea that women prioritize human rights and multilateralism over the use of force, and that men are more likely to support foreign policy issues relating to international security than women.

This trend, as discussed in the studies by Eichenberg and Togeby, is seen across much of U.S. history and internationally, as well as shown in Pew's results. This suggests that in a state-level sample, women would similarly prioritize humanitarian issues and ones relating to a decrease in the use of military force, while men would prioritize national security and military intervention.

Political Affiliation

Political affiliation appears to be one of the most studied factors influencing foreign policy priorities among U.S. citizens, with data about it abounding. Pew's studies in 2018 and 2021 both analyzed the influence of party affiliation on responses, as did a Washington Post survey from 2020, all of which suggest the same basic trends- Democrats prioritize equality, the environment, and coronavirus, while Republicans prioritize job protection, terrorism, and other national security issues.

In Pew's 2018 study, for example, the top three issues for Republicans were "protecting the U.S. from terrorist attacks," "protecting jobs of American workers," and "maintaining U.S. military advantage over all other countries."⁶⁵ For Democrats, on the

⁶⁴ Lise Togeby, "The Gender Gap in Foreign Policy Attitudes," *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 4 (1994): 375-92.

⁶⁵ "Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (November 2018)

other hand, the top four issues were “improving relationships with allies,” “preventing the spread of WMDs,” “protecting American jobs,” and “dealing with global climate change.”⁶⁶ In the same survey from 2021, Republicans saw the exact same top three priorities as in 2018, while Democrats’ top three issues were “reducing the spread of infectious disease,” “dealing with global climate change,” and “protecting the jobs of American workers.”⁶⁷ These results show Democrats’ prioritization of the environment and coronavirus and Republicans’ prioritization of national security, both of which are supported by academic literature on the influence of partisanship on elections.

Prior research on this subject suggests, first, that partisanship is significantly impactful on foreign policy priorities when political parties differ considerably in their foreign policy platforms. One study found that historically, when parties were vocal about their foreign policy differences- as they have been consistently since the end of the Vietnam war- people’s voting decisions were closely related to their foreign policy priorities.⁶⁸ Another study then adds that political parties shape their campaigns around the foreign policy issues which their voters are most concerned about, resulting in Republican candidates seeing great success from framing campaigns around national security issues like fighting terrorism, and moderate success from framing campaigns around economic issues like trade imbalances and tariffs.⁶⁹ This indicates that Republican voters are highly concerned with these issues, and on a consistent enough basis for the

⁶⁶ “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy,” Pew Research Center.

⁶⁷ “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy,” Pew Research Center.

⁶⁸ John H. Aldrich, Christopher Gelpi, Peter Feaver, Jason Reifler, and Kristin Thompson Sharp. “Foreign Policy and the Electoral Connection.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (June 15, 2006): 477–502.

⁶⁹ Peter F. Trumbore and David A. Dulio, "Running on Foreign Policy? Examining the Role of Foreign Policy Issues in the 2000, 2002, and 2004 Congressional Campaigns." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 9, no. 3 (2013): 267-86.

party to realign its general foreign policy priorities around these issues. Meanwhile, the study finds that Democratic political candidates may often appeal to the same foreign policy issues when they perceive that their voter base is unhappy with Republicans' handling of particular foreign policy issues- for example, campaigning against wars that the American public blamed on a Republican president in the early 2000s.⁷⁰ This indicates a trend of Republicans favoring foreign policy issues of military engagement and national security, while Democrats, generally sticking to opposing Republican foreign policy actions, favor issues such as reducing U.S. involvement overseas. Furthermore, a study by Ole Holsti found that historically, in the years since the Cold War, members of both political parties have favored an increase in foreign policy priorities relating to economic and social factors, though Democrats favored this by a larger amount.⁷¹ This study also found that Republicans continued to favor stronger national security, even at a time when Democrats saw it as unnecessary after the fall of the Soviet Union and pushed for more diplomatic leadership and less military might.⁷² All of these studies support Pew's recent findings, indicating that Democrats favor issues aside from national security, while Republicans continue to place heavy emphasis on military strength and national security.

These trends in recent foreign policy concerns, with Republicans favoring national security and Democrats favoring the environment, equality, and the coronavirus pandemic, are thus seen in a number of different sources, suggesting that they are consistent and widespread trends. Thus, it is reasonable to suspect that political affiliation

⁷⁰ Trumbore, "Running on Foreign Policy?" 267-86.

⁷¹ Ole R. Holsti, "Sources of Foreign Policy Attitudes." In *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy, Revised Edition*, 186-187. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

⁷² Holsti, "Sources of Foreign Policy Attitudes, 186-187.

with have a significant influence on foreign policy opinions at the state level, with Democrats still prioritizing the environment, equality, and coronavirus, while Republicans continue to prioritize national security issues such as maintaining U.S. military supremacy, combatting terrorism, and addressing immigration issues.

Income

There are few data on how income levels affect foreign policy priorities, though what little there are do offer some valuable insight. A number of studies indicate that income is positively related to prioritization of foreign policy issues which would increase U.S. involvement globally and negatively with issues which would increase U.S. protectionism.

Ahmed discusses how middle-class anxieties over economic circumstances influence U.S. foreign policy, particularly by increasing fears about China, concerns over trade issues, and lessened interest in foreign intervention in the form of military or humanitarian action.⁷³ They add that the middle class- increasingly concerned with their own economic future- is increasingly seeing the costs of U.S. global leadership in pursuit of benefits which primarily fall on other nations rather than returning home to the constituents whose tax dollars pay for them.⁷⁴ Grossmann and Mahmood also suggests that upper class foreign policy interests- among which they include liberalized trade policy, humanitarian aid, and military conflict- gain more traction in congress despite disproportionately small support among lower classes.⁷⁵ Similarly, additional research

⁷³ Salman Ahmed et al. "Making U.S. Foreign Policy Work Better for the Middle Class." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 23, 2020.

⁷⁴ Ahmed et al. "Making U.S. Foreign Policy Work Better for the Middle Class."

⁷⁵ Matt Grossmann and Zuhaib Mahmood, "How the Rich Rule in American Foreign Policy," 2020.

found that those in the top 90th percentile in income have disproportionate sway on- and interest in- issues relating to foreign policy, economic and tax policy, and religious issues- especially compared to those in the bottom 10th percentile, who have basically no influence on such policies.⁷⁶ Finally, a study by Benjamin O. Fordham published in 2008 suggests that low-income individuals disproportionately favor isolationism, protectionism, and the foreign policies most conducive to these sentiments, while economic interests drive upper class individuals to support issues which will benefit them- and to some extent the region in which they live- more strongly.⁷⁷ These three studies, then, would seem to suggest that income is somewhat influential in shaping foreign policy priorities, though the extent to which that is true is uncertain.

Based upon these studies, it is possible that state-level surveys of foreign policy opinions may see greater support for military and humanitarian involvement abroad from those of higher income, coupled with emphasis on protectionist issues like decreasing the U.S. trade deficit and decreasing U.S. military presence abroad among the middle and lower classes.

Education

Education also appears to be related to foreign policy priorities, though research on the subject is severely lacking. Among the literature about how education levels impact policy opinions both domestically and internationally, it is generally in agreement

⁷⁶ M Gilens, *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. (2012) Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

⁷⁷ Benjamin O Fordham, "Economic Interests and Public Support for American Global Activism," *International Organization* 62, no. 1 (2008): 168.

that higher education levels correlate with more ‘liberal’ views (being used in the literature to describe left-leaning views rather than the traditional meaning of liberalism as that which pursues liberty.)

In his study, mentioned previously in the section on education’s effects on domestic policy opinions, Weakliem suggests that higher education levels are “consistently associated with more liberal views on subjects... including environmentalism, gender roles, and rights to hold jobs.”⁷⁸ He says that this is seen across cultures, whereas he also found that higher education was influential on opinions on economic issues, but in a much less universal way. According to his study, higher education levels in the United States lead to greater concern for- and a more conservative stance on- economic issues such as trade.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, in other countries, higher education levels were sometimes associated with more liberal leanings on economic issues.⁸⁰ This indicates that although education is generally associated with liberal trends- greater tolerance for diversity, concern for human rights, etc.- in the U.S., it is not fair to ascribe liberalism in general to education, since in the study Weakliem found that economic opinions in the U.S. skewed conservative when associated with higher income. Additionally, as mentioned in the domestic issues section, a Canadian study by Eric Mintz found that university education prevents people’s opinions from becoming more conservative when relating to environmental and social issues.⁸¹ This supports the idea that higher education will lead to greater support for issues involving equality and the

⁷⁸ David L Weakliem, "The Effects of Education on Political Opinions: An International Study," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 14, no. 2 (07, 2002): 148.

⁷⁹ Weakliem, 148.

⁸⁰ Weakliem, 148.

⁸¹ Eric Mintz, "The Effects of University Education on the Political Attitudes of Young Adults," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* Volume XXVIII, no. 1 (1998): 34.

environment. Thus, it is not unreasonable to suspect- with a healthy dose of skepticism given the lack of research on the topic- that Maine voters may also show a correlation between higher education and a higher concern for issues relating to human rights and equality.

Urban vs. Rural

Research also suggests that urbanicity may lead citizens to hold differing opinions on foreign policy. One article suggests that urbanicity may lead to increased concern for international affairs due to the economic interconnections of city industries, the political involvement of its people, and the extent of direct foreign interaction- a form of cultural diplomacy- that cities foster.⁸² These reasons for increased interest in foreign policy would seem to point to a number of policy areas in which urban citizens would be interested- primarily economic issues and issues of equality and human rights, driven by economic integration and the tolerance inspired by cultural exchange. This research also suggests that urbanicity contributes to people's awareness of what others possess, leading to greater concern for economic and social equality due to the everyday visibility of these issues to urban populations.⁸³

⁸² Jodok Troy, "The Power of the Political in an Urbanizing International," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 42, no. 4 (2017): 211-26.

⁸³ Troy, "The Power of the Political in an Urbanizing International," 211-26.

Where to Go from Here

The research discussed here makes it clear that demographic differences have a strong influence on political priorities. The studies cited here give a broad overview of how significantly age, gender, political affiliation, income, education level, and urbanicity may influence voter opinions, voter engagement, and in some cases, actual policy. Notably, however, with the exception of data on gender and gubernatorial policy, all of the studies cited here have been about local or national trends. Very little has been done to apply these trends at the state level, where local issues and demographic trends meet national policy. For this reason, this research will attempt to fill in the gaps left by the existing research to apply the trends witnessed in prior literature to the domestic and foreign policy priorities of Maine voters. Maine is a state with a number of large demographic differences from the nation- namely age and urbanity- which will allow for some informative analysis of the way elderly and rural voters influence national and state level opinions, since these two groups are overrepresented in Maine in comparison to the rest of the nation. This study will address the demographic trends within Maine and how they influence Maine voter opinions on national-level policy, thereby bridging the gap between the local and national spheres which have been largely analyzed separately in the existing literature.

METHODOLOGY

Research Question

- What are the most important domestic and foreign policy priorities to Maine voters, and how do they differ from those of U.S. citizens more broadly?

Hypotheses

- Maine voters show less concern for foreign policy issues when voting in U.S. presidential elections than U.S. voters overall.
- The issues of the greatest concern for Maine voters in 2020, similar to the national results, are the economy and the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- The foreign policy issues of the greatest concern to Maine voters are those relating to the economy, e.g. trade deficits and the protection of U.S. jobs.

Participants

The participants in this study were registered Maine voters recruited from across Maine. Participants were recruited by Qualtrics, an online survey distribution site which contacts participants who match desired respondent demographics to construct a representative sample of the desired target group. In this case, Qualtrics was hired to recruit a representative 400-person sample of Maine voters based on Maine's age, urban-rural, and gender demographics. This was achieved by establishing respondent quotas within Qualtrics proportional to Maine's population. The resulting sample was 420 Maine voters over the age of 18, half male and half female, approximately 2/3 rural, with ages 18-34, 35-54, and 55+ each representing approximately 1/3 of the sample, as per Maine's population statistics. Unfortunately, there are some drawbacks to this representative

sample. First, it results in a racial sample which makes analysis of the opinions of minority racial groups in Maine almost impossible, with numbers of black, Asian, Native American, and Latino groups which are too low to provide any reliable data. Additionally, the number of individuals with high incomes is also too low to provide reliable data. The data collected in this study may, therefore, be representative of the state as a whole, but fail to provide samples which allow for full analyses of opinions by race or income. Qualtrics provided incentives to participants to complete the survey.

Procedures

The first section of the survey included a consent page detailing the risks and benefits of the research, as well as some information about the survey and the contact information of the researchers. It also explained the confidentiality measures, including not collecting IP Address data and the planned date of destruction of data collected. The consent form indicated that completion of the following survey was considered consent for the use of a participant's survey data. (See Appendix I for Consent Form)

After the consent form was the survey itself, which consisted of eleven demographic questions to aid in analysis and two sets of questions regarding participant priorities in domestic and foreign policy (see Appendix II for Survey Questions). The survey took about five minutes to complete, consisting of the demographic questions and five matrix-style questions about respondents' domestic and foreign policy priorities. A first set of demographic questions was used to screen out survey respondents who were not in the target population (those who were under 18 or were not registered Maine voters) or belonged to age, gender, or urban/rural categories for which the respondent

quota had already been met. The matrix questions are replicated from two Pew research studies. The first two matrices, replicating questions from Pew's 2020 poll on perspectives on the 2020 presidential election, asked participants to rate whether they considered various policy issues to be "Very Important," "Somewhat Important," "Not Too Important," or "Not Important at All" when voting in the 2020 Presidential election.⁸⁴ Participants in this study were also given the option to respond with "Prefer Not to Answer." The second set of questions, which replicated closely a 2018 Pew poll about U.S. foreign policy priorities, asked participants to rate various foreign policy issues by whether they considered them to be a "Top Priority," "Some Priority," or "No Priority" for the United States.⁸⁵ For this question as well, participants had the option of responding "Prefer Not to Answer" in this study. Once the survey collection was completed by Qualtrics, the data was downloaded from Qualtrics as Excel and SPSS files for analysis.

Design

The research done in this study sought to answer the question "How do Maine voters compare to national voters in their concern for Foreign Policy?" The independent variables in the case of this question are the age, gender, race, urban vs. rural, income, party affiliation, and education level from the above description, with a dependent variable of how respondents value Foreign Policy and various specific Foreign Policy issues. To answer the question, Maine's data will be compared to national data from

⁸⁴ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting." Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020) <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/08/13/important-issues-in-the-2020-election/>.

⁸⁵ "Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy." Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (November 2018.) <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/11/29/conflicting-partisan-priorities-for-u-s-foreign-policy/>.

Pew's 2020 survey on voter issues in the presidential election and their 2021 foreign policy attitude survey.

Additional research in this study was primarily exploratory, seeking to compile data on the top priorities of Maine voters and how demographic factors influence the formation of these priorities, thereby establishing a basis for more specific research into the area of policy prioritization among Maine voters. This data collection therefore sought to study the influence of multiple independent variables- including age, race, gender, urban vs. rural, income, party affiliation, and level of education- on the dependent variable of how respondents prioritized issues.

Analysis

The initial goal for analysis of this survey was to determine whether Maine voters are more or less likely to prioritize foreign policy than Americans in general, and which foreign policy issues Mainers considered most important. Analysis was also done to determine which overall issues are most important to Maine voters, as well as which are significant to various demographic groups. The descriptive statistical analysis was done through Qualtrics using the crosstab function, then compared to national data provided by Pew. These descriptive statistics were graphed, then compared to national results, followed by an analysis of how gender, age, party affiliation, income, education level, and respondents' identification with either a rural or urban community influenced responses in Maine in comparison to national data. Finally, analysis was done to determine the correlation between a number of different independent variables and their influence on specific dependent variables. Multivariate analysis was done in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to create models that analyze how

independent demographic variables influenced the level of prioritization Maine voters put on the issues of Coronavirus, climate change, immigration, maintaining U.S. military advantage over all other countries, and reducing our trade deficit.

RESULTS

The results presented below, in order, present a summary of the hypotheses stated in the Methodology section of this paper and whether the results supported or failed to support the hypotheses, the findings regarding how Maine voters prioritize foreign policy, the overall domestic priorities of Maine voters, the specific priorities of the demographic groups studied and how they may influence Maine's overall domestic issue prioritization, the overall foreign policy priorities of Maine voters, and the foreign policy priorities of the various demographic groups and how these, too, may influence Maine's overall foreign policy priorities. We end with the results from the multivariate models.

Analysis of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Maine voters show less concern for foreign policy issues when voting in U.S. presidential elections than U.S. voters overall.

The data from this study support this hypothesis, with only 40% of Maine voters marking foreign policy as “very important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election as opposed to 57% of national respondents marking it as such.

Hypothesis 2: The issues of the greatest concern for Maine voters in 2020, similar to the national results, are the economy and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The data from this study support this hypothesis as well, with Coronavirus being the top priority for Maine voters, followed by the economy as the second highest priority. It is noteworthy that nationally, the economy was ranked more highly than Coronavirus, but in Maine Coronavirus is the top issue followed by the economy.

Hypothesis 3: The foreign policy issues of the greatest concern to Maine voters are also those relating to the economy, e.g. trade deficits and the protection of U.S. jobs.

The data from this study fail to support this hypothesis, with only one of the top five foreign policy issues in Maine relating to economic issues. Rather, the top foreign policy issues to Maine were found to be “protecting the U.S. from terrorism,” “global Coronavirus response,” “protecting American jobs,” “preventing the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs),” and “preventing foreign interference in U.S. elections.” These issues actually suggest that Maine voters prioritize safety and security issues more highly than economic ones, since four of the five issues deal with perceives safety or security threats to the nation, the population, or our democratic process, while only one relates to the economy.

Maine Prioritization of Foreign Policy

This study found that Maine voters prioritize foreign policy in their voting decision less than the national results by a considerable margin. Nationally, 57% of respondents considered foreign policy to be “very important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election,⁸⁶ while only 40% of Maine voters considered it as such. This supports the hypothesis that Maine voters are less concerned with foreign policy than U.S. citizens as a whole.

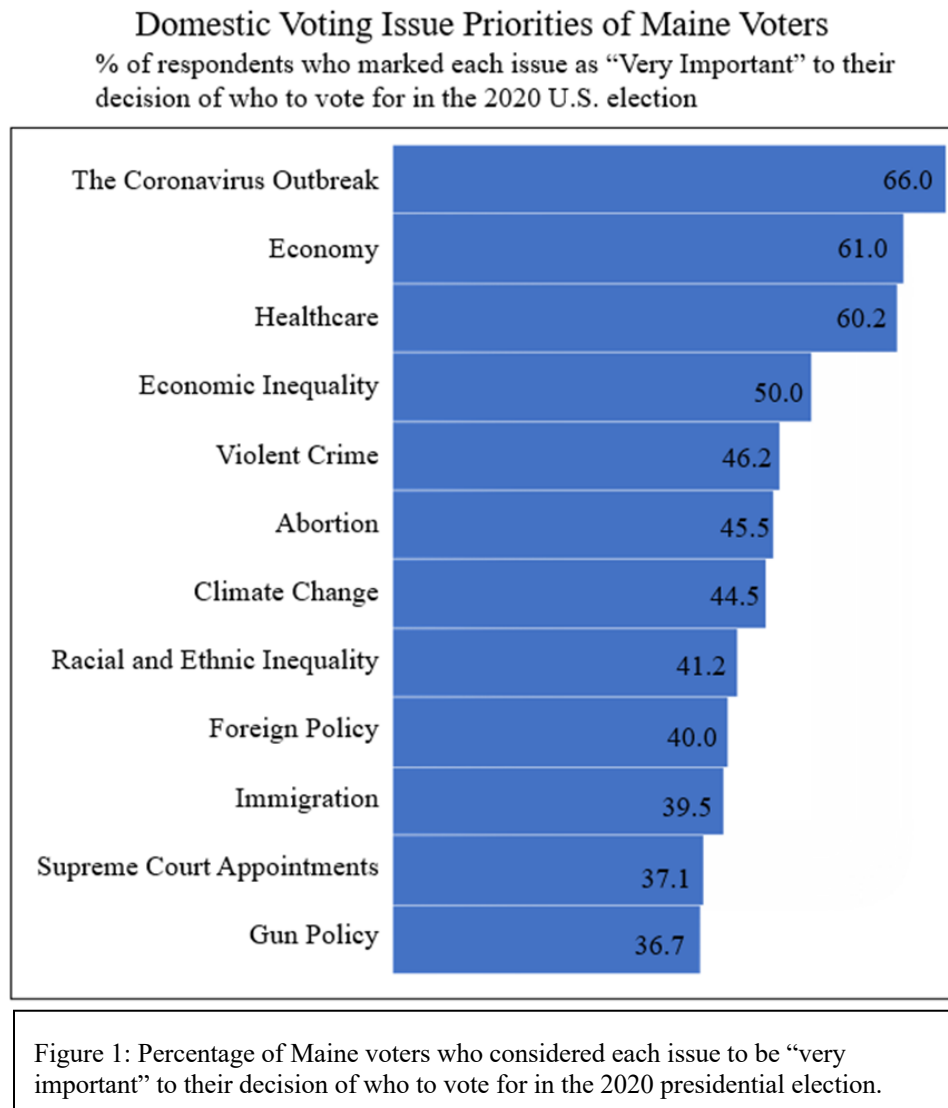
⁸⁶ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020).

Maine Voters' Domestic Issue Priorities

The overall data from this study reveals some interesting deviations from Pew's national results regarding the overall priorities of voters. The top four issues for Maine were the Coronavirus outbreak, the economy, healthcare, and economic inequality, (See graph below) in comparison to the top four issues for the nation, which were the economy, healthcare, Supreme Court appointments, and the Coronavirus outbreak.⁸⁷ The most noticeable ways in which Maine's results differ from the national ones are the significantly lower concern for the economy, coupled with a greater concern for the Coronavirus outbreak and far lower concern for Supreme Court appointments, resulting in a very different ordering of priorities between national and Maine voters.

⁸⁷ "Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020).

Nationally, the economy was the highest priority by an 11% margin,⁸⁸ while in Maine, it came in second, 5 percentage points behind the Coronavirus outbreak. It is also notable that Coronavirus- the highest ranked issue in Maine- was only marked as “very important” by 66% of Maine respondents, as opposed to the highest priority nationally- the economy- having a 79% “very important” response rate nationally.⁸⁹



⁸⁸ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020).

⁸⁹ “Election 2020,” Pew Research Center.

This disparity in the degree of valuation of the issues is seen consistently across many of the topics, with eight of the twelve topics showing a lower percentage of Mainers marking them as “very important” than the national respondents. The only four exceptions to this are the Coronavirus outbreak, economic inequality, climate change, and abortion, all of which Maine voters marked as “very important” at most a few percentage points more often than national respondents.

The greatest discrepancies between Maine priorities in the 2020 presidential election and national priorities are in the prioritization of Supreme Court appointments (26.9 percentage point difference), foreign policy (17 point difference), and gun policy (18.3 point difference). In all three of these cases, Mainers marked the issues as “very important” much less than national respondents.

The issues about which Mainers care more than national respondents are also potentially informative about the political climate in Maine. These issues were the Coronavirus outbreak, economic inequality, climate change, and abortion. In each of these cases, Maine voters only marked them as “very important” a few percentage points more often than national voters, with the largest difference being 5.5 points in the case of abortion.

These results, therefore, demonstrate some interesting variation between the political priorities of Maine voters and those of national voters. This variation may be a result of the political situation of Maine and the political, cultural, and social environment in which Maine voters live, but they may also be a result of differences between Maine’s demographics and those of the nation as a whole.

Maine Voters' Foreign Policy Priorities

Mainers' top foreign policy priorities are, in order, 1) protecting the U.S. from terrorism, 2) global Coronavirus response, 3) protecting American jobs, 4) preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), and 5) preventing foreign interference in U.S. elections. (See Figure 1 below.) This is mostly consistent with the national results (See Appendix III for Pew data), which prioritize the same top 4 issues in a different order, and which did not ask about foreign interference in U.S. elections, and thus marked “improving relationships with our allies” as the fifth most important,⁹⁰ which was the sixth top priority in Maine. This demonstrates a strong consistency between Maine opinions and national ones, though as with domestic policy issues, Maine respondents showed an overall lower concern for most issues than national respondents.

⁹⁰ “Majority of Americans Confident in Biden’s Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (February 24, 2021)

Foreign Policy Priorities of Maine Voters
 % of respondents who marked each issue as a “Top Priority”

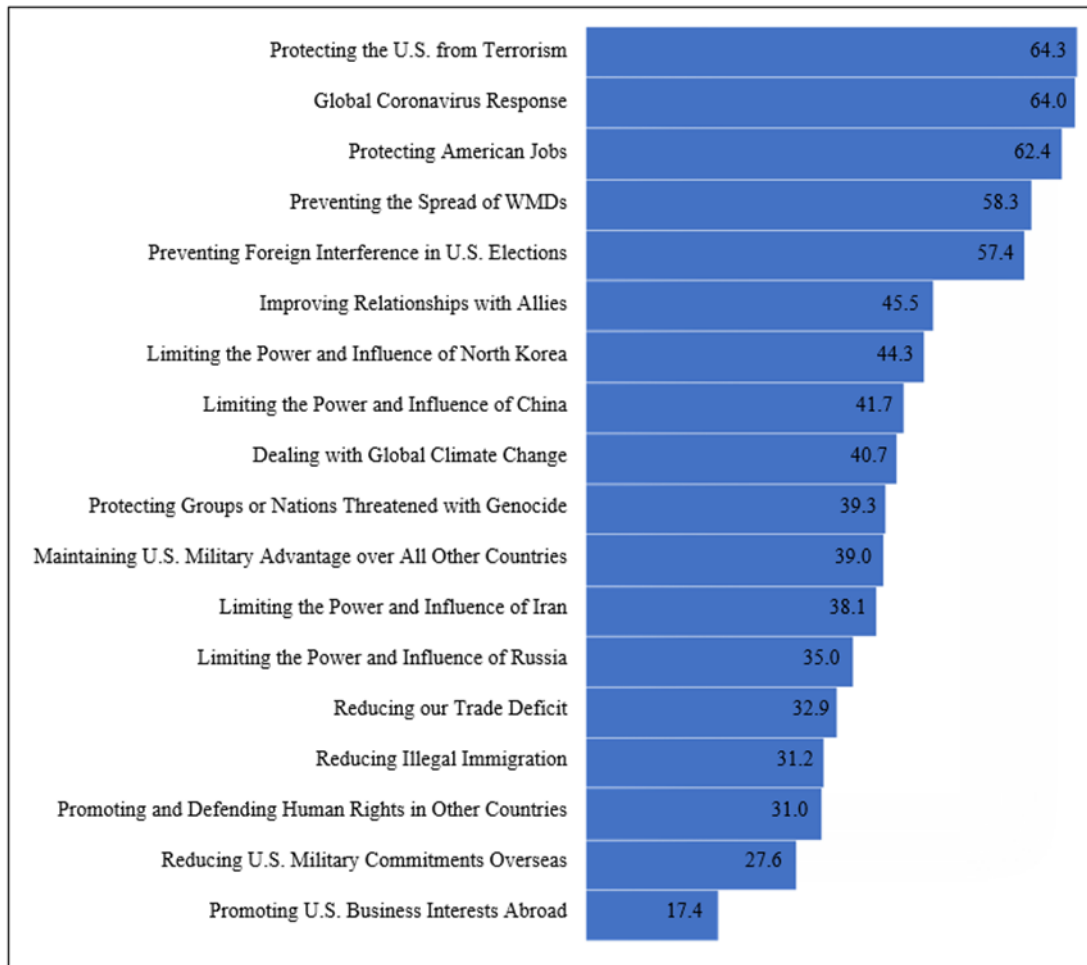


Figure 2: Percentage of Maine voters who considered each issue to be a “top priority” to American foreign policy.

Interestingly, both samples saw a nearly 10-point drop between “preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs)” and “improving relationships with our allies.” After that issue, national concern for the lower issues drops below 60%, and within Maine the levels drop from near 60% to below 50%. This seems to indicate a strong consistency between the two, with Maine responses largely mirroring national ones, though with small levels of deviation. This trend continues down the list, with Maine’s priority list closely matching the national one, though with 5-10 point lower

rates of “Top Priority” responses almost across the board.

Voter Demographics and Political Priorities

The various demographic categories asked about in this study were: age, race, income, education level, gender, political affiliation, and urban verses rural. Each of these categories has then been used to compare how those who responded differently to these demographic questions varied in their domestic and foreign policy priorities and, when possible, how these differences compared to national priorities among the same demographic groups.

Age

The age groups into which this study divided respondents are 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, or 65+, though national data is only available for the first and last groups, as most Pew data focused on the difference between the youth and the elderly. For this reason, this analysis will also focus most heavily on these two categories.

The highest domestic priorities of the youth group in Maine were the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, economic inequality, climate change, and racial and ethnic inequality. (See Appendix IV for the table of Maine’s results.) These issues were all marked as “very important” by between 48% and 54% of Maine youth voters. Pew has not released 2020 data on the relationship between age and issue priorities, but results from 2016 reveal a large difference between the priorities of Maine youth now and national youth in 2016. In Pew’s 2016 national poll, the top issues for youths were found to be the economy, treatment of racial and ethnic minorities, gun policy, foreign policy,

and terrorism.⁹¹ (See Appendix III for Pew’s domestic policy results.) These issues differ greatly from those of Maine youths in 2020, with national youths in 2016 putting significantly more emphasis on the economy and issues of national security and less on the environment and civil rights. Interestingly, it is the Maine data which most strongly resembles the existing literature on the issues which youth voters most prioritize.

Unlike youth voters, the elderly in Maine were largely consistent with their national counterparts in the kinds of domestic issues they prioritized. Maine elderly voters’ most important issues were the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, the economy, foreign policy, and abortion, in comparison to the elderly priorities nationally in 2016, which were terrorism, the economy, healthcare, foreign policy, and social security.⁹² This indicates a strong level of consistency between the two groups, with both prioritizing an issue of safety- coronavirus and terrorism- first, followed by healthcare, the economy, and foreign policy.

Not only are the views of each age group informative on their own, but the differences between how much the youth and the elderly prioritize each issue is also noteworthy. For example, the gap between how many youth voters and how many elderly voters marked the Coronavirus outbreak as “very important” is 26.7%, with the elderly putting much more emphasis on the issue than youths. Similarly, the elderly marked Foreign policy 21.2% more than youth voters, and healthcare 20.0% more. In contrast, the youth voters only marked climate change, racial and ethnic inequality, and economic inequality higher than elderly voters, by 8.6%, 10.6%, and 1.2% respectively. This is

⁹¹ “2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (July 7, 2016)

⁹² “2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction,” Pew Research Center.

consistent with prior literature which has found that the elderly consistently prioritize healthcare issues and foreign policy more than youth voters.⁹³

Interesting, these trends between age and political priorities do not present themselves as strongly in Maine voters' highest foreign policy priorities. Within Maine, both the elderly and youth voters' top foreign policy priorities were the "global coronavirus response," "protecting the U.S. from terrorism," "preventing the spread of WMDs," and "protecting American Jobs." Interestingly, a much higher percentage of the elderly prioritized all of these issues, with the top youth priorities being identified as "top priorities" by around 50% of youths while the top elderly priorities were identified as such by nearly 70% of elderly respondents. This indicates a much higher concern for foreign policy among the elderly- consistent with the results from the question about foreign policy overall.

Although the political priority trends based on age are not apparent in the overall top priorities of the two age groups, they do present themselves when one considers which issues youth voters prioritized more highly than the elderly, and which the elderly prioritize more than youths. In Maine, only three issues saw higher prioritization by youth voters than elderly voters: "protecting groups or nations threatened by genocide," "promoting and defending human rights in other countries," and "reducing U.S. military commitments overseas." These issues are reflective of both the prior literature and the two issues which Pew found youth voters to prioritize over the elderly in their 2021 study, which were "reducing U.S. military commitments overseas" and "aiding refugees

⁹³ Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," *The American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (1981): 889, doi:10.2307/1962290.

fleeing violence.”⁹⁴ (See Appendix III for Pew data.) Unfortunately, Pew’s 2021 foreign policy priority survey had not been released as of the time when the survey for this study was developed, so the questions replicated here are from Pew’s 2018 survey and therefore do not perfectly match up with the questions from Pew’s 2021 data. Nonetheless, both results show a significant prioritization of human rights and lessening military commitments among youth respondents. Similarly, both studies show much higher levels of concern from the elderly than from youths over issues including terrorism, the spread of WMDs, and the influence of China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia. This indicates that in both Maine and nationally, issues of national security are at the forefront of the minds of elderly voters.

Overall, it would appear that age does influence the policy priorities of Maine voters, with youth voters prioritizing the environment, human rights, and equality much more highly than the elderly, while the elderly are more likely to prioritize the economy, national security, and foreign policy. The youth data contradicts with the national youth priorities from 2016, but the elderly data is consistent between the Maine results and the Pew data. Unfortunately, without 2020 national data on the relationship between age and issue priorities, comparisons between Maine’s data and the national data cannot rule out the chance that any differences are due to the difference between election cycles rather than due to Maine’s particular political situation.

⁹⁴ “Majority of Americans Confident in Biden’s Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (February 24, 2021)

Gender

Gender also appears to bear a notable correlation with Maine voter prioritization of a number of issues, with men and women prioritizing a few different issues among Maine voters. Overall, women's top domestic priorities were the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, abortion, and the economy, while men's were the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, the economy, and economic inequality. (See graph below.) Notably, however, although both genders included the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, and the economy in their top four issues, there were large differences in the percentages of each group that marked them as "very important."

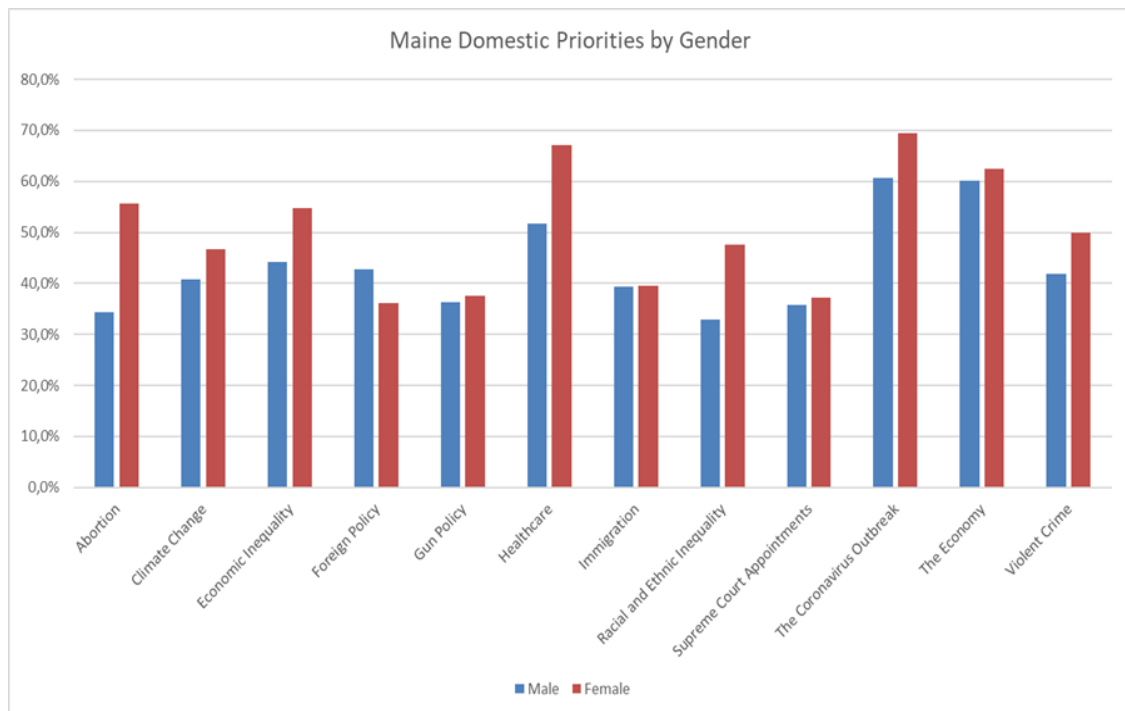


Figure 3: Percentage of men vs. women who marked each issue as "Very Important" to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

The largest gap between the percentage of men and women who marked various domestic policy issues as "very important" is on the issue of abortion, which was the third most important issue to women but the next to last most important to men, and

which women marked as “very important” 21.7 percentage points more than men.

Women also prioritized economic inequality, healthcare, racial and ethnic inequality, and the Coronavirus outbreak considerably more than men, by 10.5 points, 15.4 points, 14.8 points, and 8.8 points respectively. Additionally, they prioritized almost every other issue slightly more than men, with the notable exception of foreign policy, which men marked as “very important” 6.2 percentage points more often than women. It is also noteworthy that men and women were almost even in their prioritization of immigration, gun policy, and Supreme Court appointments, with a 1.3 point difference or less on all three of these issues. These results, like those relating to age, are consistent with Pew’s national results.

Pew has only released a limited amount of 2020 data on gender and issue prioritization, making comparisons to the full list of issues polled in this survey impossible. A comparison between the Maine data and the national data that is available, however, reveals many consistencies: nationally, women were much more likely to mark healthcare, abortion, and the Coronavirus outbreak as “very important,” just as they were in Maine.⁹⁵ (See Appendix III for Pew results on domestic policy.) Additionally, men were a few percentage points- 5%, to be exact- more likely than women to mark foreign policy as “very important” in the national results,⁹⁶ very close to the 6.2% difference in the Maine survey. There were also a number of differences between Maine’s results and the national ones, with both genders prioritizing the Coronavirus outbreak more highly than their national counterparts but almost all other issues less.

⁹⁵ “Only 24% of Trump supporters view the coronavirus outbreak as a ‘very important’ voting issue,” Pew Research Center, Washington D.C. (April 8, 2021)

⁹⁶ “Only 24% of Trump supporters.” Pew Research Center.

Interestingly, despite its considerable influence on domestic policy priorities, gender appears to have a limited influence on foreign policy priorities in Maine. In Maine, women's top priorities were the "global Coronavirus response," "protecting the U.S. from terrorism," "protecting American jobs," and "preventing the spread of WMDs," while men's top priorities were "protecting the U.S. from terrorism," "protecting American jobs," "preventing the spread of WMDs," and "preventing foreign interference in U.S. elections." (See Appendix IV for data table.) Both genders shared three of the same top four issues, indicating that gender has little influence on the ordering of people's foreign policy priorities. The data also suggests that gender has only a limited influence on the percentage of each gender who prioritize each issue, with most issues showing very little variation between the two genders, and the greatest variation being 15.7 point difference on the topic of the "global Coronavirus response," with women prioritizing it more highly than men, in keeping with the domestic politics results.

Overall, it is clear that Maine's gender data is relatively consistent with the national data, with women in both the Pew data and the Maine results putting significantly more emphasis on the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, and abortion, while men were more likely to prioritize foreign policy and issues of national security.

Political Affiliation

The last demographic category for which we have national data is respondents' political affiliation, which appears to have a notable relationship with respondents' priorities in both data sets. In Maine, Democrats' top priorities were the Coronavirus outbreak, healthcare, climate change, and economic inequality, while Republicans' top

priorities were the economy, healthcare, the Coronavirus outbreak, and immigration. (See Figure 3 below.) Nationally, many of the same priorities emerged, with national Democrats’ top priorities being healthcare, the Coronavirus outbreak, racial and ethnic inequality, and the economy, and Republicans’ top priorities being the economy, violent crime, immigration, and Supreme Court appointments.⁹⁷ (See Appendix III for Pew data.)

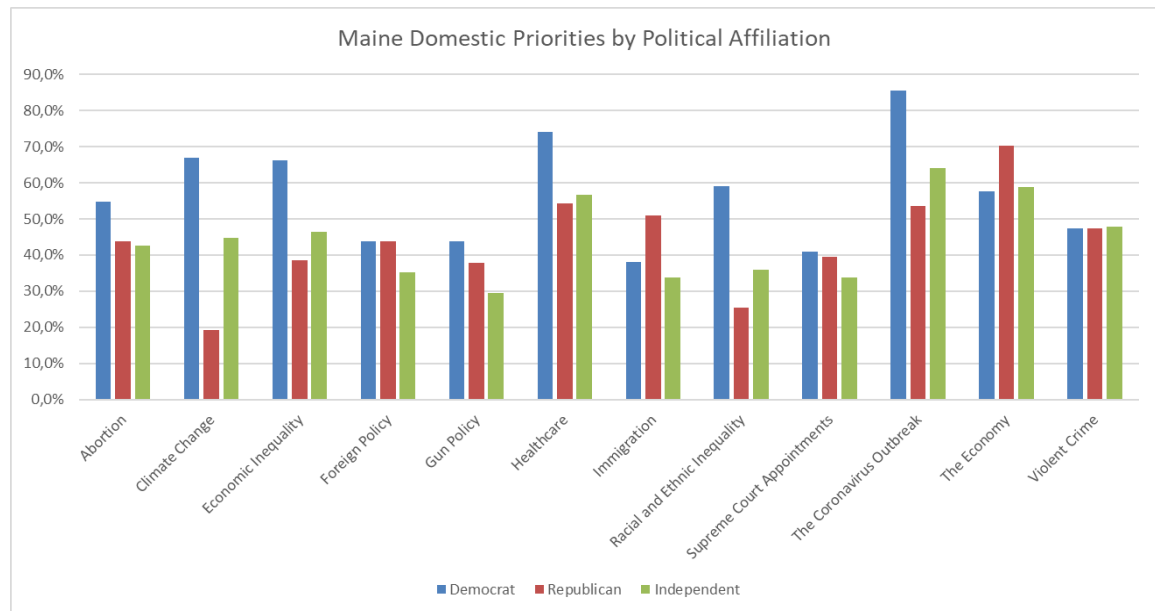


Figure 4: Percentage of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

When considering the results from Maine, notable differences in the percentage of Democrats and Republicans who considered each issue “very important” emerge, particularly relating to the issues Democrats find to be the most important. On the issues of climate change, economic inequality, the Coronavirus outbreak, and racial and ethnic inequality, Democrats were 20+ points more likely to mark the issue as “very important” than Republicans or Independents. The most drastic difference is between Democrats and Republicans on the issue of climate change, which 66.9% of Democrats considered “very

⁹⁷ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting.” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020)

important” as opposed to only 19.3% of Republicans. It was the third highest priority issue for Democrats, but the lowest for Republicans, and fell near the center of the pack for Independents.

The differences between the two parties’ prioritization of most issues are, like the data for gender and age, consistent with Pew’s results in terms of the differences between the two major political parties. In Pew’s study, for example, the national data for the question about climate change showed 68% of Biden supporters and 11% of Trump supporters marking it as “very important,” to go with Maine’s 66.9% and 19.3%.⁹⁸ This demonstrates a strong consistency between the Maine results and the national results, but there are also significant differences akin to those shown by the age and gender results, primarily with regards to Maine voters in both parties marking most issues as “very important” around 10% less than their national counterparts. It is also notable that members of both parties prioritized the Coronavirus outbreak more highly than their respective parties did nationally.

Similar priorities emerge for the two parties when one considers their responses to the questions on foreign policy issues. The top foreign policy priorities for Democrats were the “global coronavirus response,” “preventing foreign interference in U.S. elections,” and “preventing the spread of WMDs,” while the Republican top priorities were “protecting the U.S. from terrorism,” “protecting American jobs,” and “preventing the spread of WMDs.” (See Appendix IV for data table.) The fact that two of the three

⁹⁸ “Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (August 2020).

issues for each group are different indicates how strongly partisanship influences foreign policy priorities.

A number of issues saw large gaps between how Democrats and Republicans prioritized them, including “promoting and defending human rights in other countries,” “dealing with global climate change,” “improving relationships with allies,” “global coronavirus response,” “limiting the power and influence of China,” “reducing illegal immigration,” “reducing our trade deficit,” and “maintaining U.S. military supremacy over all other nations.” Notably, the first four were heavily favored by Democrats, while the latter four were heavily favored by Republicans. This is unsurprising, as it reflects the issues pushed by the two major parties in their campaigns and reflects prior literature about party concerns. Predictably, independents fall between the two major parties on almost all of these issues, with the notable exception of “promoting and defending human rights in other countries,” which independents mark as a “top priority” less than either major party. These results are highly consistent with the national ones, which revealed the same issues as key points of disagreement between the two major parties.

Just like in the Maine sample, the two issues with the largest level of disagreement in the national results are “dealing with global climate change” and “reducing illegal immigration.”⁹⁹ (See Appendix III for Pew data.) The other issues, too, have similar amounts of deviation between the national and state results, usually some 20 or so percent.

⁹⁹ “Majority of Americans Confident in Biden’s Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins,” Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (February 24, 2021)

Thus, overall, Maine's results are largely consistent with the topics which each party values and which issues the parties disagree on the most, but with the caveat that in many cases the party which favored an issue most does so by around 10% less than in the national results.

Income, Education Level, and Urban/Rural Communities

The other three variables asked about in the survey are income, education level, and whether the respondent saw their community as urban or rural. These topics were not asked about in Pew's surveys, but nonetheless provide interesting data on the variables which may influence Maine voter priorities.

Income

Income appears to have a limited correlation with Mainers' domestic prioritization of voting issues, but some notable correlation with a few foreign policy priorities.

The only domestic topics which seemed strongly related with income were the Coronavirus outbreak and violent crime. (See Appendix IV for data table.) Violent crime showed what would appear to be a strong negative relationship with income, revealing that as income rose, concern for violent crime fell. Concern for the Coronavirus outbreak also seems to be negatively related to income. Income also appears to be positively related with the foreign policy issues of "limiting the power and influence of China," "promoting U.S. business interests abroad," and "reducing our trade deficit," and

negatively with “protecting groups or nations threatened with genocide.” (See Appendix IV for data table.) These data would seem to indicate that concern for economic issues in foreign policy may relate positively with income, while income is negatively related to concern for crime and human rights, both of which are consistent with the prior literature.

Education Level

Education level appears to have a significant relationship with a number of domestic political issues, but relatively little relationship with foreign policy issues.

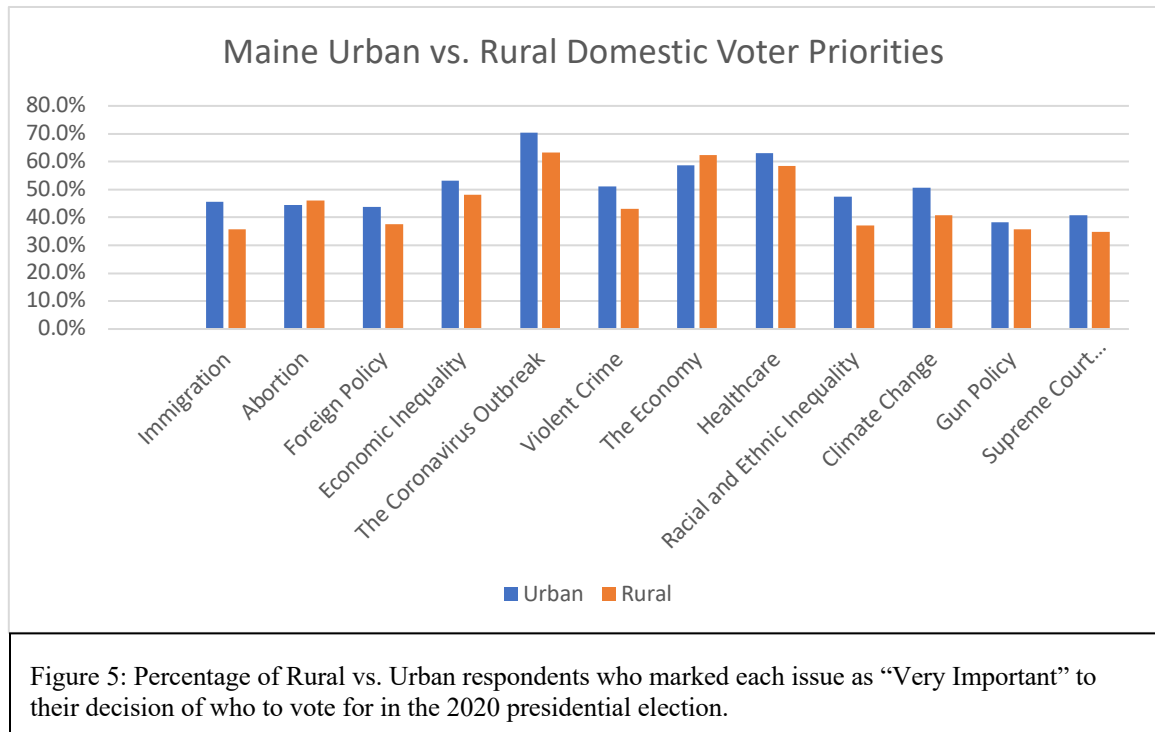
In terms of domestic issues, Mainers’ prioritization of Supreme Court appointments, foreign policy, and healthcare appear to increase strongly with education level. Additionally, violent crime seems to vary inversely with education level. (See Appendix IV for data table.)

The only notable results relating education and foreign policy issues are that respondents with an Associate Degree but no education higher than that were the group which rated “limiting the power and influence of China, North Korea, Russia and Iran,” “preventing foreign interference in U.S. elections,” “reducing illegal immigration,” and “reducing our trade deficit,” the highest out of all education levels. (See Appendix IV for data table.)

These results would seem to indicate that in Maine, income is positively related with concern for highly political issues such as Supreme Court appointments and foreign policy and negatively related to issues of crime, but that income has little notable influence on foreign policy priorities.

Urban vs. Rural

The differences between the political priorities of urban and rural communities in Maine is, surprisingly, extremely small.



For every issue, the difference in “very important” response rates between urban and rural respondents was around 10% or less. The graph below, and the data in Appendix IV, show the remarkable consistency between the two groups’ concern for domestic policy issues, a trend which was also seen in the foreign policy priorities. In general, urban respondents marked most issues slightly higher than their rural counterparts, though only by a few percentage points.

Urbanity seems to have a limited impact on Maine voters’ foreign policy priorities as well. The only foreign policy issue on which there was a difference of more than 10%

between urban and rural respondents was “protecting American jobs,” which rural respondents marked as a “Top Priority” 11.1% more often than urban respondents. This indicates that, as was the case with domestic priorities, the difference between urban and rural respondents is small at best. For most issues, the percentage of each group who marked the issue as a “top priority” was within 2% of each other. Thus, it would appear that Maine voters’ urban or rural identity has little impact on their foreign policy priorities, or, indeed, their policy priorities overall- though this may be a result of Maine’s ‘cities’ being extremely small in comparison to cities in other states, making the urban-rural divide much smaller than it may otherwise be.

Modelling Maine’s Policy Priorities

This study developed five multivariate models, each attempting to model the factors influencing the formation of Maine voters’ priorities on different foreign or domestic policy issues. The five models are laid out below.

- 1) The first model considered the factors influencing Mainers’ prioritization of the Coronavirus outbreak, for which we considered the independent variables of gender, age, income, and party affiliation.
- 2) The second model explored factors influencing Mainers’ prioritization of climate change based upon party affiliation, income, education level, and age.
- 3) The third model explored factors influencing Mainers’ prioritization of immigration based upon age, party affiliation, education level, and income.

- 4) The fourth model explored factors influencing Mainers' prioritization of maintaining U.S. military advantage over all other countries based upon age, party affiliation, education level, income, and gender.
- 5) And the fifth model explored factors influencing Mainers' prioritization of reducing our trade deficit based upon gender, age, party affiliation, and income.

The results from the multivariate models provided a number of promising results in terms of significant data, with all but one revealing significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The influence of the independent variables on responses regarding the Coronavirus outbreak and climate change were both extremely statistically significant, with party affiliation returning p-values of 0.000 in both models, thereby indicating a very strong correlation with responses regarding the two issues. Age and gender, with p-values of 0.001 and 0.013 respectively, were also strongly correlated with responses regarding Coronavirus. The influence of age (p-value of 0.002), party affiliation (p-value of 0.001), and education (p-value of 0.013) proved significant to the responses of participants regarding reducing military intervention overseas, while only income, with a p-value of 0.023, proved statistically significant in Maine voters' prioritization of reducing our trade deficit. None of the independent variables used to develop the model for immigration, however, proved to have a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable.

Unfortunately, despite the statistical significance of the independent variables in four of the five models, the pseudo- r^2 values these models returned were extremely low- only between 0.047 and 0.165, indicating that even the best model- that relating to the Coronavirus Outbreak, shown below- accounted for only around 16% of the deviation

within the dependent variable. This indicates that the models lack key independent variables which are significant to how Maine voters develop their priorities regarding the dependent variables. For the results of the other models, see Appendix V.

The Coronavirus Outbreak

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues in making your decision about who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election? Please mark your answer in the appropriate box. You may mark "Prefer Not to Answer" for any question you do not wish to answer. - The Coronavirus Outbreak	Very Important	268	68.9%
	Somewhat Important	73	18.8%
	Not Too Important	33	8.5%
	Not Important At All	15	3.9%
Valid		389	100.0%
Missing		31	
Total		420	

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	510.935			
Final	453.305	57.630	4	.000

Goodness-of-Fit

Chi-Square	df	Sig.
489.880	452	.106
327.123	452	1.000

Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.138
Nagelkerke	.165
McFadden	.082

DISCUSSION

The results from this study are informative, but ultimately leave a lot of questions unexplored and fail to give explanations for the reasons behind many of the results. In both domestic and foreign policy, the data point to differences between Maine's political priorities and those of the nation as a whole but fail to adequately explain these differences. A number of hypotheses for why these differences occur may be made, but further research will be necessary to address the new questions raised by this research.

Overall, the large difference between the percentage of Mainers concerned with most issues and the percentage of national respondents concerned with those issues suggests that Mainers are less concerned with almost all issues than national respondents. In particular, it would appear that Maine voters have much less interest in Supreme Court appointments, foreign policy, and gun policy than national respondents, issues which may be related to the specific political climate in Maine. Possible reasons for these stark differences that come to mind include the relatively low number of industries in Maine heavily involved in foreign affairs and the fact that Maine is a state which still relies heavily upon hunting, making guns a less contentious issue in Maine than in many other states. It is also possible that the low concern for these issues may be a result of a design flaw- this survey, in comparison with Pew's data, was done in the aftermath of the election when opinions may have calmed surrounding a number of contentious issues.

The issues about which Mainers care more than national respondents are also potentially informative about the political climate in Maine. Climate change and the Coronavirus outbreak stand out as issues that make sense for Mainers to value more than

other states, due to the high average age of Maine residents making them more susceptible to the Coronavirus and the extreme importance of Maine's climate and nature to its economy. Economic inequality and abortion, however, are a different story. The fact that Mainers are more concerned about economic inequality than the national average is surprising, since Maine was actually the 13th most equal state in 2019 (the last year for which state-level data is available) based upon the Gini Coefficient of each state.¹⁰⁰ The Gini Coefficient is a statistical measure of income inequality ranging from 0- complete equality- to 1- complete inequality.¹⁰¹ Maine's Gini Coefficient in 2019 was 0.45, making it one of the 13 most equal states in the nation.¹⁰² Maine's poverty rate in 2019, as well, was the 17th lowest in the nation, lower than 33 other states.¹⁰³ It is possible that Mainers are concerned with the issue particularly because it is a relatively small problem in Maine, and is something which Mainers wish to maintain, but this is pure conjecture. The results are surprising enough to suggest that additional research into the subject may be useful to determine why this discrepancy between national and state level data arose.

Additionally, Maine's higher likelihood of prioritizing abortion is interesting, given the highly secular nature of Maine- tied for the second most secular state in the nation.¹⁰⁴ Abortion is, in many cases, an issue prioritized by religious groups, although it is possible that the secular nature of Maine could actually encourage Maine voters to be more strongly in favor of abortion rather than strongly against it. There is some support

¹⁰⁰ "Gap between Rich and Poor, by State in the U.S. 2019." Statista. Statista Research, January 20, 2021.

¹⁰¹ "Who, What, Why: What Is the Gini Coefficient?" BBC News. BBC, March 12, 2015.

¹⁰² "Gap between Rich and Poor, by State in the U.S. 2019." Statista.

¹⁰³ "Poverty." USDA ERS - Data Products. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed April 8, 2021.

¹⁰⁴ "U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C., (November 3, 2015.)

for this explanation since Democrats marked the issue as ‘very important’ significantly more often than Republicans or independents. Unfortunately, this survey asked neither about religious affiliation nor about people’s stances on the voting issues, so this is, also, mere conjecture that cannot be explored in this research. Further research in this area should include a question on religious affiliation in order to fill this gap in information.

Maine’s foreign policy priorities, unlike domestic ones, were extremely similar to those of national respondents. The consistencies between the two suggest that Maine’s population does not hold significantly different foreign policy priorities from those of the nation as a whole, with Mainers of all demographics, like national respondents, being heavily concerned with protecting American jobs and national security. Maine’s results do, however, show much lower overall levels of concern for individual foreign policy issues, in keeping with their lower prioritization of foreign policy as a whole. The difference does not appear to stem from demographic differences between Maine and the United States, since the disparity appears within the demographic results as well, with demographic groups generally prioritizing most foreign policy issues significantly less than the same groups nationally. As such, it is likely that Maine’s relative disinterest in foreign policy is a result of circumstances particular to the state other than the demographic differences between Maine and the U.S. more broadly.

The demographic groups polled in this study do provide some notable data and may suggest explanations for a few of the differences we see between Maine and national data. The most notable data from the demographic sections come from analyses of age, political affiliation, and urban vs. rural identification.

An analysis of age and survey responses may help to suggest why Maine's top five foreign policy issues, like the national results, are mostly related to security. This is because elderly voters- of which Maine's electorate has a higher percentage than the nation- are known to be more interested in national security issues than younger voters, who tend to be more interested in human rights and the environment than their older counterparts.¹⁰⁵ It is also notable that in Maine, both the elderly and youth voters' responses on questions dealing with national security tended to be consistent with national results, but on questions dealing with economic issues, both age groups in Maine marked the issues as top priorities about 10% less often than national respondents. For example, one of the highest-ranking issues in both samples- protecting American jobs- saw 63% of youths and 85% of the elderly mark it as a "top priority" nationally,¹⁰⁶ but only 50% and 67% of the respective populations marked it as such in Maine. This may be due to the lack of manufacturing jobs in Maine, and a subsequent decreased fear of jobs being outsourced from the state compared to national concerns. Nonetheless, it highlights the pattern visible in the overall foreign policy data which refutes one of this study's hypotheses: Maine voters are overall more concerned with national security than with economic foreign policy.

Gender does not appear to have a large effect on Maine's foreign policy priorities. The demographics of Maine are consistent with the national numbers when it comes to gender, with 51% of individuals identifying as female and 49% as male in both Maine and the U.S. This study also found that Maine's men and women saw small differences

¹⁰⁵ Neal E. Cutler, "Generational Succession as a Source of Foreign Policy Attitudes: A Cohort Analysis of American Opinion, 1946-1966." *Journal of Peace Research* 7, no. 1 (March 1970): 33-47.

¹⁰⁶ "Majority of Americans Confident in Biden's Handling of Foreign Policy," Pew Research Center.

between their levels of concern for most domestic and foreign policy issues, and the only areas where they differed greatly largely reflected the national data. Thus, it is unlikely that age is a significant factor in the difference between Maine's levels of prioritization of issues and the nation's.

Political affiliation, also, appears to have relatively little bearing on the difference between Maine's priorities and those of the nation, with relatively equal percentages of Maine respondents identifying with the two major political parties as in national samples, and Maine members of each party largely reflecting the concerns of their party members nationally. Predictably, independents fall between the two major parties on almost all of these issues, with the notable exception of "promoting and defending human rights in other countries," which independents mark as a "top priority" less than either major party. A possible explanation for this is the high number of libertarians who identify as independents and are likely strongly opposed to foreign intervention of any sort.

Interestingly, in the nationwide sample, 60% of Republicans and 80% of Democrats marked "reducing the spread of infectious disease" as a "top priority,"¹⁰⁷ while in Maine, when asked about the "global Coronavirus response," the results for Republicans and Democrats were 48.2% and 81.3% respectively. With the proportion of Democrats who prioritized the issue remaining almost exactly the same, it is interesting that the Republican results were so much lower. Unfortunately, because the questions were phrased differently, it is impossible to tell whether this difference is due to some influence of Maine's political situation or due to a Republican backlash against the use of

¹⁰⁷ "Majority of Americans Confident in Biden's Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins," Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (February 24, 2021)

the term “Coronavirus,” which may hold connotations which Republicans disagreed with due to the recent partisan conflicts over the handling of the pandemic.

In spite of this one notable deviation between the party responses to the question regarding Coronavirus, most other areas showed that Democrats and Republicans in Maine generally differed on their prioritization of issues by the same amount as the two parties did nationally. Once again, though, both groups tended to prioritize each issue much less than their national counterparts. These results, along with the consistent percentage of respondents identifying as Democrat, Republican, and Independent in Maine and nationally, indicate that political affiliation is likely not a significant factor in the difference between Maine’s results and the national ones.

Interestingly, unlike any of the previous categories, income appears closely positively correlated with a concern for foreign policy issues relating to the economy. This is reasonable, as higher income can, in many cases, involve higher engagement in the global economy due to engagement in finance, trade, or other fields closely linked with international business. The same may be said for a concern over China, since it is actively overtaking the U.S. as the world’s leading economy and poses an economic threat to U.S. businesses abroad. The surprising result, then, is the negative relationship between income and concern for protecting groups or nations threatened with genocide. Prior literature suggests that lower income individuals prioritize welfare issues more than higher income individuals, but this is fascinating to see in the context of foreign policy, where the human rights issue at hand has no bearing on the standard of living of the respondent. Given that the same difference is not seen in the other human rights issues on the list, however, little of value can be extrapolated from this finding, suggesting that

further research would be needed to see if this result would be replicated in other studies of Maine foreign policy priorities.

Education level appears to have a notable relationship with a few domestic and foreign policy issues, mostly seemingly related to higher education levels having more civic education and being correlated with higher tolerance of diversity. In domestic issues, Mainers' prioritization of Supreme Court appointments, foreign policy, and healthcare appear to increase strongly with education level. This is consistent with existing literature on how education influences political opinions, making respondents with higher education more tolerant, more politically engagement, and more open to diverse opinions. This makes it no surprise that Supreme Court appointments- the most specific political issue on the list and the one requiring the most understanding of U.S. politics- appears heavily positively related to education. It also helps to suggest why foreign policy- which involves diverse perspectives and many humanitarian issues- and healthcare- broadly seen as a welfare issue- may also be positively related with education level. Finally, violent crime seems to vary inversely with education level. This may relate to the issue of income, since generally, higher education is largely correlated with higher income. Unfortunately, there is no national Pew data on the influence on education level on policy priorities, but given that the spread of the Maine respondent's level of education is similar to that of the nation, it is likely that this is not a significant factor in the difference between Maine's priorities and national ones.

The issue which may have the most influence on the difference between the political priorities of the general U.S. population and Maine is, perhaps unsurprisingly to those who live in Maine, its urban and rural differences. Overall, the two groups

responded very similarly, with only a few percentage point differences on most issues. This may be a result of how small Maine's 'cities' are, much smaller and more connected to rural areas than most urban centers in the U.S. However, though the differences between the rural and urban voters in Maine are small, they may have disproportionate weight upon Maine's priorities. Within Maine, rural voters outnumber urban ones almost 3:2- a far cry from the nearly 1:4 ratio in the U.S. more broadly, with less than 20% of the U.S. population living in rural areas. This means that the slight differences in raw percentages may translate to larger influence on overall Maine results. This may help to explain the differences between Maine's results and national results, with the rural results lowering Maine's overall concern for climate change, gun policy, racial and ethnic inequality, and a number of other issues upon which Maine's overall prioritization was significantly less than that of the nation.

This explanation is supported by a look at the issue of racial and ethnic inequality, which was marked as "very important" by 52% of respondents nationally but only 41.2% in Maine. Urban respondents in Maine marked the issue as "very important" 47.5% of the time, much closer to the national results, while rural voters marked it as such only 37.2% of the time. Accounting for the 3:2 ratio of rural to urban voters, this brings us to nearly the 41.2% of Maine voters overall who marked the issue as "very important." Thus, it is possible that the demographic category with the greatest impact on how Mainers prioritize issues overall may be whether they come from a rural or urban community, in spite of how small the differences between urban and rural responses were.

Overall, this study found a lot of consistency between the priorities of Maine voters compared to U.S. voters more broadly, but with a number of deviations which may

be results of Maine's low urbanicity, large elderly population, and low number of industries involved in foreign business. Mainers appear to be less concerned with politics in general, particularly with high-level political issues such as Supreme Court appointments and foreign policy. Based on the data collected in this study, it would appear that age and urbanicity may have the largest effect on Maine's policy priorities, with gender, income, education level, and political affiliation having limited influence on how Maine voters vary from national ones in their prioritization of issues. The results from this study therefore answer a number of interesting questions, but they also suggest an array of new ones: How does religion influence political priorities in Maine? Does the use of the term "coronavirus" change response rates to questions about limiting the spread of disease? Why do Maine voters prioritize economic inequality so much more highly than national voters, despite having one of the lowest rates of income inequality in the U.S.? And most significantly: what other factors influence Maine voter priorities that were not included in the models developed in this study? The models, explaining at most 16% of the variation within the dependent variable, clearly miss major factors that contribute to the formation of Mainers' voter priorities. Further research would be useful in determining what major factories these models fail to account for, allowing for a more comprehensive view of how Maine voters form their political priorities.

CONCLUSION

This study, through its replication of Pew's surveys on issues of importance to the 2020 presidential election and major foreign policy priorities, offered a number of valuable insights into the domestic and foreign policy issues Maine voters prioritize and how they form these priorities.

This study found that Maine voters are, overall, less likely to prioritize most issues than their national counterparts, with the exception of a few issues such as Coronavirus, abortion, climate change, and income inequality. Demographic statistics and the particular economic situation in Maine may explain these four outliers, with Maine's population being more elderly and less religious than the national demographics, along with the economy of Maine being one of the most equal in the nation and relying heavily on eco-tourism. Unfortunately, a question about religious affiliation was not asked in this study and should be included in future studies of this kind to further investigate the reasons for responses regarding abortion.

Another notable finding was that Maine's urban and rural respondents did not differ greatly in their concern for almost any issues. This small difference may be a result of the relative lack of distinction between urban and rural areas in Maine compared to the broader United States, with Maine 'cities' being smaller than many 'towns' in other parts of the country. That being said, rural respondents consistently prioritized most issues a few percentage points less than urban ones. The urban results tended to be closer to national results, but when accounting for the unusual 2/3 rural population of Maine, the

demographic split between urban and rural population sizes in the state seems to contribute significantly to the lower concern among Maine respondents for most issues.

Maine was also found to prioritize foreign policy and Supreme Court appointments much less than the nation as a whole. These differences may be the result of Maine's low business involvement internationally and the highly political nature of the issue of Supreme Court appointments, but they may also be indicative of a design flaw in this study. The study was conducted in February, four months after the election, by which time it is possible that highly salient political issues may have decreased in importance in the minds of many respondents.

A similar design flaw which should be addressed in later studies is the use of the word "Coronavirus" in the Maine study of foreign and domestic policy priorities, in comparison to Pew's use of the broader term "infectious diseases." This difference in wording may have influenced the startling difference between how Maine and national Republicans prioritized the issue. Given that in the domestic policy questions, Maine respondents prioritized Coronavirus more highly than the national results, it is possible that the wording of the question in the foreign policy section influenced responses and should therefore be controlled for in any further studies of this kind.

Finally, the study attempted to develop multivariate models explaining the reasons for Mainers' prioritization of the Coronavirus outbreak, climate change, immigration, maintaining U.S. military supremacy over all other countries, and reducing our trade deficit. These models were statistically significant in all but one case but explained at most 16% of the variation within the dependent variable. Further research should be done to address the gaps in these models and determine which additional

independent variables have significant influence on the ways Maine voters develop their priorities on these issues.

Overall, further research in this area should primarily focus on a few key questions: What additional independent variables are influential in the formation of Maine voters' political priorities? How does religion influence these priorities? Why is Maine more concerned with income inequality than the nation as a whole, despite having one of the most equal income distributions in the U.S.? And finally, how does the use of the term "Coronavirus" rather than "infectious diseases" influence respondents' likelihood to rate an issue as a high priority? Addressing these issues would significantly fill in the gaps- and potential design flaws- present in this study and help to solidify an understanding of how Maine voters form their political priorities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Caitlyn Rooms, an Undergraduate student in the Department of Political Science at the University of Maine, and Doctors Robert Glover and Mark Brewer, professors in the University of Maine Department of Political Science. The purpose of the research is to understand the domestic and foreign policy priorities of Maine voters. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to take an anonymous survey. It should take you about 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Risks:

Your time and any inconvenience caused by answering the survey are the only risks involved in this study.

Benefits:

While this study will have no direct benefit to you, this research may help us learn more about the domestic and foreign policy priorities of Maine voters.

Compensation:

You will be compensated the amount you agreed upon before you entered the survey. Compensation will be provided to participants that complete the survey.

Confidentiality

This study is anonymous. Your name and contact information will not be in any way linked to your responses, which will also be kept confidential. Your responses will be stored in a password protected program and on a password protected hard drive until no later than July 1st, 2020. No IP addresses will be collected in the process of completing this survey, and all data will be destroyed on or before July 1st, 2020.

Voluntary

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Submission of the survey implies consent to participate.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at caitlyn.rooms@maine.edu, or by phone at (813) 298-5184. You may also reach the faculty advisor on this study at robert.glover@maine.edu, or at (207) 581-1880. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Compliance, University of Maine, (207) 581-2657 (or e-mail umric@maine.edu).

APPENDIX II: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Which zip code do you live in?

2. To which of the following age categories do you belong?

☐ 18-24

☐ 25-30

☐ 31-50

☐ 51-70

☐ Over 70

3. Are you a registered Maine voter?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Do you consider your community to be urban (a city or large town) or rural (in the countryside, a small fishing town, etc)?

☐ Urban

☐ Rural

Question 1: Importance of Issues in Presidential Elections

How important, if at all, are each of the following issues in making your decision about who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election? Please mark your answer in the appropriate box. You may mark “Prefer Not to Answer” for any question you do not wish to answer.

Topic	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not Important At All	Prefer Not to Answer
Immigration					
Abortion					

Foreign policy					
Economic Inequality					
The coronavirus outbreak					
Violent crime					
The economy					
Health care					
Racial and ethnic inequality					
Climate change					
Gun policy					
Supreme court appointments					

Question 2: Foreign Policy Priorities

Thinking about long-range foreign policy goals, how much priority, if any, do you think each of the following should be given?

Topic:	Top Priority	Some Priority	No Priority	Prefer Not to Answer
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism				
Protecting American Jobs				

Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)				
Improving Relationships with Allies				
Global Coronavirus Response				
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries				
Dealing with Global Climate Change				
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad				
Reducing Illegal Immigration				
Reducing our Trade Deficit				
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia				
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran				
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea				
Limiting the Power and Influence of China				
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide				
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries				

Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas				
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections				

Demographic Questions:

The following questions are designed to help us better analyze the data you have provided above. You may mark Prefer Not to Answer for any question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

5. What was your total household income last year, before taxes?

- ☐ Less than \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 or more

6. Do you see yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or what?

- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Other (Please Specify):

7. What is your current gender identity?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender female / trans woman (or Male-to-Female (MTF) transgender, transsexual, or on the trans female spectrum)
- ☐ Transgender male / trans man (or Female-to-Male (FTM) transgender, transsexual, or on the trans male spectrum)
- ☐ Non-binary, genderqueer, or genderfluid
- ☐ Other

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Some High School
- ☐ High School Graduate
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Associates Degree (Two-year)
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree (Four-year)
- ☐ Post-Graduate Degree
- ☐ Trade School/Certification

9. What is your race/ethnicity?

- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
 - ☐ Black/African-American
 - ☐ Hispanic
 - ☐ Native American
 - ☐ White/Caucasian
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
-

10. Have you or a family member served in the military?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. Which of the following categories best describes the industry you currently work in?

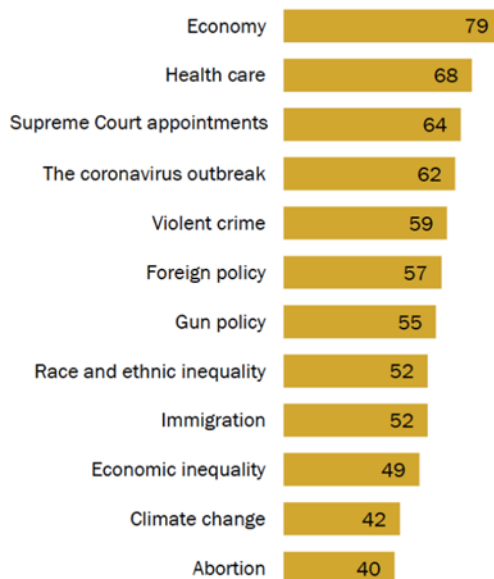
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- ☐ Mining
- ☐ Utilities
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Computer and Electronics Manufacturing
- ☐ Other Manufacturing
- ☐ Wholesale
- ☐ Retail

- ☐ Transportation and Warehousing
- ☐ Publishing
- ☐ Software
- ☐ Telecommunications
- ☐ Broadcasting
- ☐ Information Services and Data Processing
- ☐ Other Information Industry
- ☐ Finance and Insurance
- ☐ Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
- ☐ College, University, and Adult Education
- ☐ Primary/Secondary (K-12) Education
- ☐ Other Education Industry
- ☐ Health Care and Social Assistance
- ☐ Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- ☐ Hotel and Food Services
- ☐ Government and Public Administration
- ☐ Legal Services
- ☐ Scientific or Technical Services
- ☐ Homemaker
- ☐ Military
- ☐ Religious
- ☐ Other Industry

APPENDIX III: PEW DATA

Economy is top issue for voters in the 2020 election

% of registered voters saying each is 'very important' to their vote in the 2020 presidential election



Note: Based on registered voters.

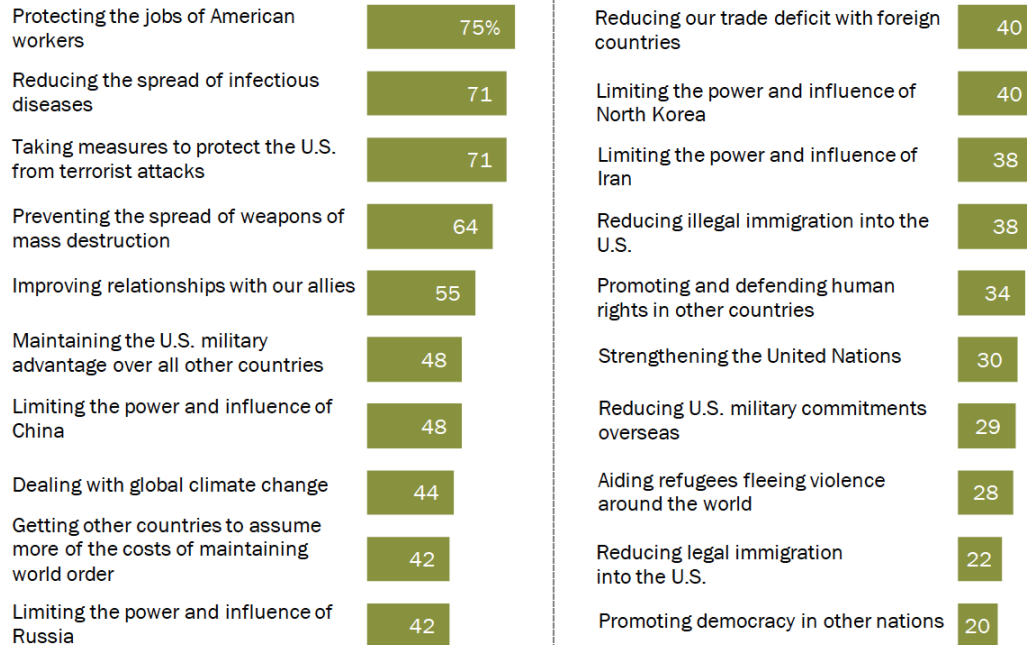
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 27-Aug. 2, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 6: Pew data on national issue priorities in the 2020 election. *Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting.* (Pew Research Center. 2020).

Protecting American jobs, reducing the spread of disease and preventing terror attacks are top foreign policy priorities among U.S. adults

% who say ___ should be given **top priority** as a long-range foreign policy goal



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 1-7, 2021.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 7: Pew data on foreign policy priorities in 2021. *Majority of Americans Confident in Biden's Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins.* (Pew Research Center, 2021).

2016 issue importance by age groups

% of registered voters saying each is "very important" to their vote in 2016 ...

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	Young-old diff
	%	%	%	%	
Supreme Court appointments	45	60	74	74	-29
Social Security	57	58	75	78	-21
Terrorism	68	77	85	86	-18
Health care	66	71	76	79	-13
Foreign policy	70	72	77	81	-11
Trade policy	50	53	63	59	-9
Immigration	68	64	75	74	-6
Education	67	64	63	72	-5
Gun policy	71	67	76	75	-4
Economy	80	83	87	83	-3
Abortion	46	43	44	48	-2
Environment	54	47	58	50	+4
Treatment of racial and ethnic minorities	74	67	58	56	+18
Treatment of gay, lesbian and transgender people	50	42	39	32	+18

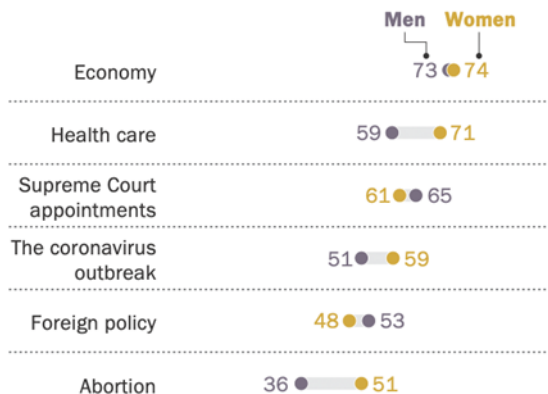
Note: Based on registered voters. Q40.
Source: Survey conducted June 15-26, 2016.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 8: Pew data on age and domestic policy priorities in 2016. *2016 Campaign: Strong Interest, Widespread Dissatisfaction.* (Pew Research Center, 2016).

Sizable gender differences on the importance of health care, abortion

% registered voters who say each is "very important" to their vote in the 2020 presidential election



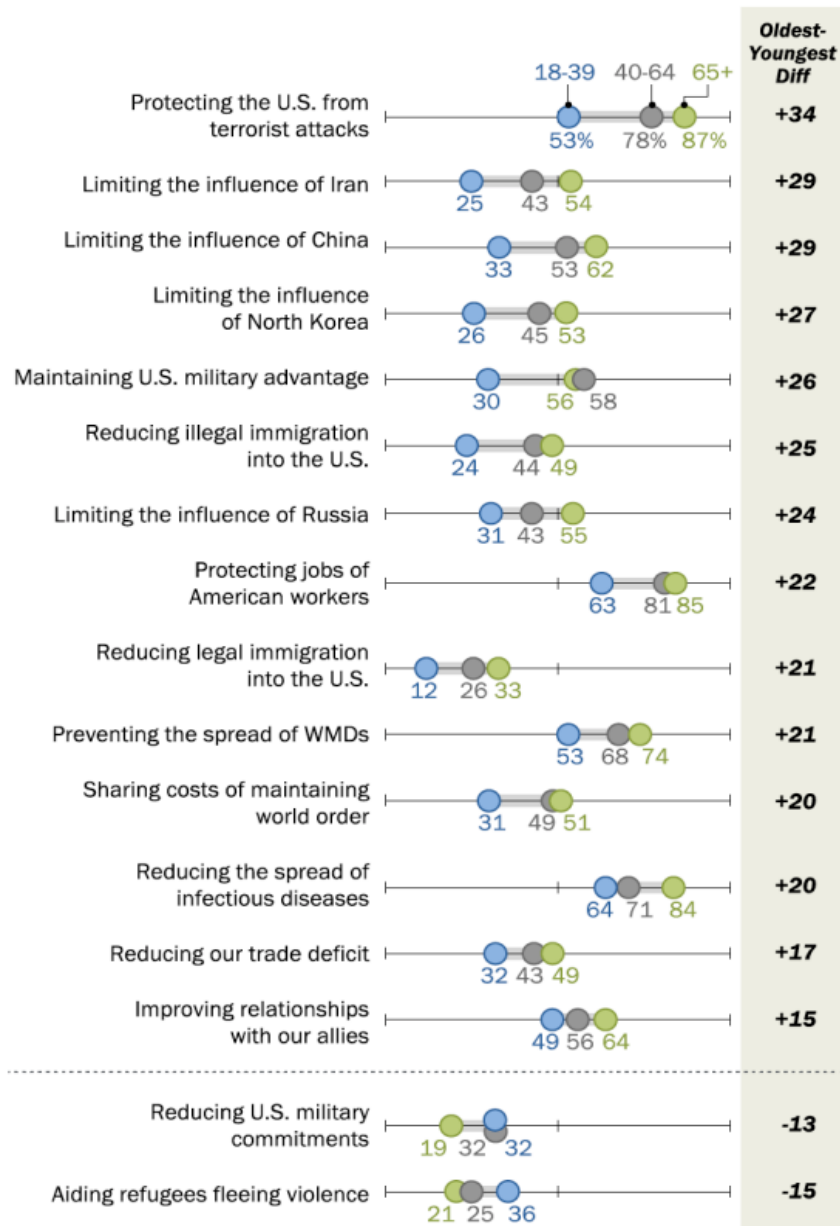
Note: Based on registered voters.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 6-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 9: Pew data on gender and domestic policy priorities in 2020. *Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting.* (Pew Research Center, 2020).

Older Americans prioritize most foreign policy issues

% who say ___ should be given **top priority** as a long-range foreign policy goal



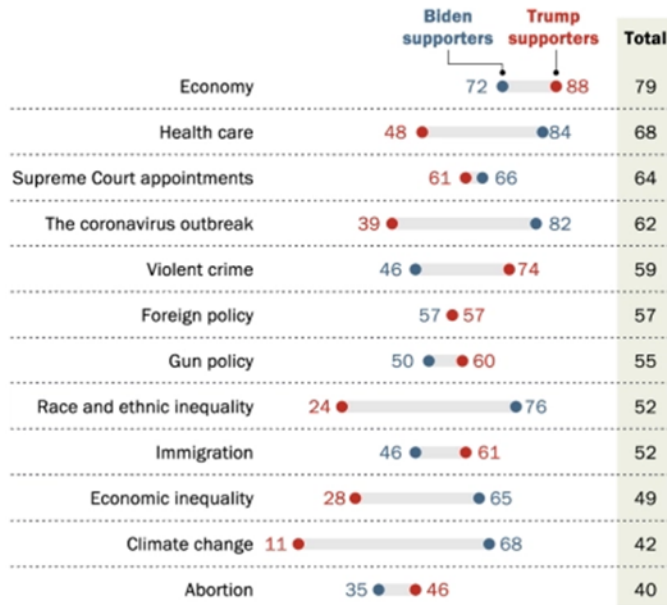
Note: Only significant differences shown. See topline questionnaire for full question wording. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 1-7, 2021.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 10: Pew data on age and foreign policy priorities in 2021. *Majority of Americans Confident in Biden's Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins.* (Pew Research Center, 2021).

Top issues for Trump supporters are economy, crime; Biden supporters prioritize health care, coronavirus

% of registered voters saying each is 'very important' to their vote in the 2020 presidential election



Note: Based on registered voters.

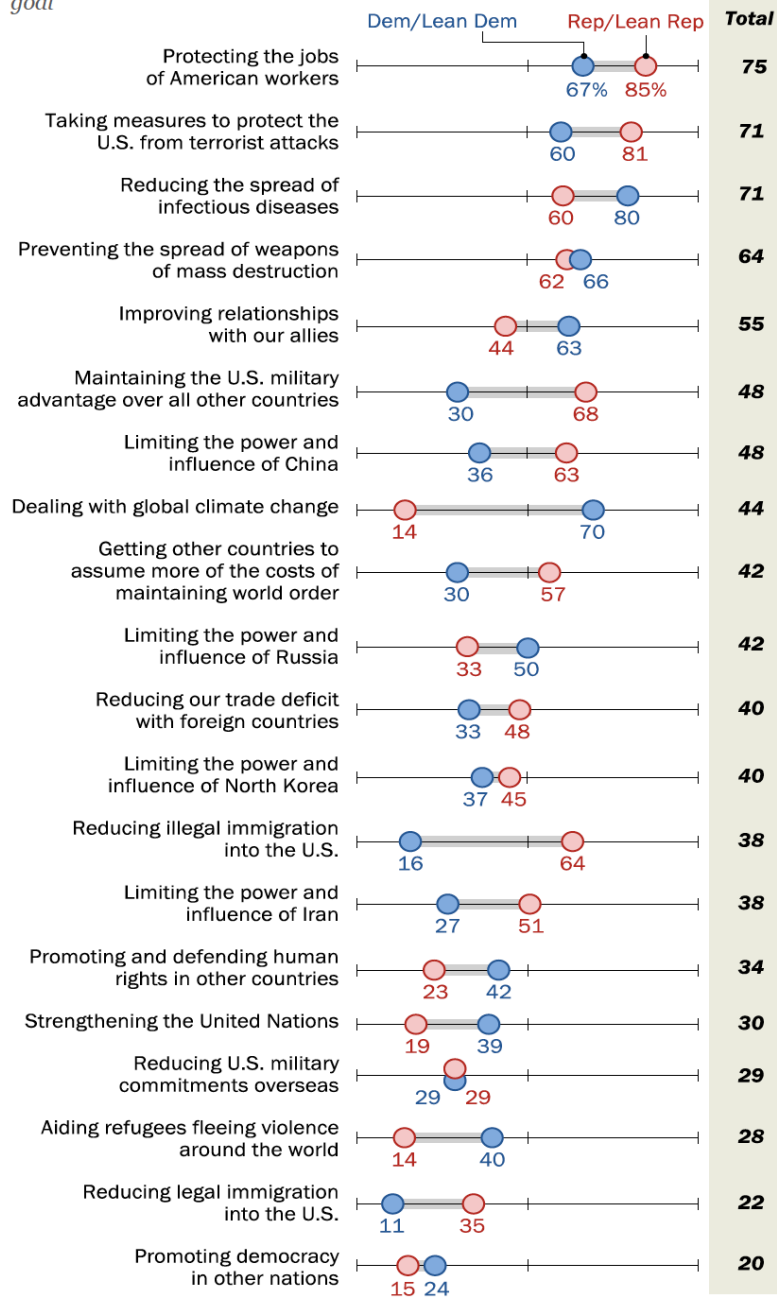
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 27-Aug. 2, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 11: Pew data on political affiliation and domestic policy priorities in 2020. *Election 2020: Voters Are Highly Engaged, but Nearly Half Expect To Have Difficulties Voting.* (Pew Research Center, 2020).

Sharp partisan divides in foreign policy priorities

% who say ___ should be given **top priority** as a long-range foreign policy goal



Note: See topline questionnaire for full question wording.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 1-7, 2021.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 12: Pew data on political affiliation and foreign policy priorities in 2021. *Majority of Americans Confident in Biden's Handling of Foreign Policy as Term Begins.* (Pew Research Center, 2021).

APPENDIX IV: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Maine Domestic Policy Priorities by Age

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 or Older
Abortion	44,2%	50,0%	40,0%	41,5%	44,8%	50,0%
Climate Change	48,1%	51,1%	46,7%	41,5%	34,5%	42,5%
Economic Inequality	50,0%	53,4%	56,0%	49,2%	39,7%	48,8%
Foreign Policy	32,7%	34,1%	32,0%	40,0%	46,6%	53,8%
Gun Policy	30,8%	33,0%	38,7%	36,9%	32,8%	45,0%
Healthcare	50,0%	60,2%	54,7%	72,3%	50,0%	70,0%
Immigration	38,5%	33,0%	40,0%	43,1%	43,1%	41,3%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	48,1%	45,5%	42,7%	44,6%	27,6%	37,5%
Supreme Court Appointments	26,9%	38,6%	40,0%	38,5%	43,1%	33,8%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	53,8%	56,8%	66,7%	66,2%	67,2%	82,5%
The Economy	42,3%	56,8%	58,7%	75,4%	65,5%	65,0%
Violent Crime	46,2%	43,2%	42,7%	47,7%	44,8%	52,5%

Table 1: Percentage of each age group who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election

Maine Domestic Priorities by Gender

	Male	Female
Abortion	34,3%	55,7%
Climate Change	40,8%	46,7%
Economic Inequality	44,3%	54,8%
Foreign Policy	42,8%	36,2%
Gun Policy	36,3%	37,6%
Healthcare	51,7%	67,1%
Immigration	39,3%	39,5%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	32,8%	47,6%
Supreme Court Appointments	35,8%	37,1%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	60,7%	69,5%
The Economy	60,2%	62,4%
Violent Crime	41,8%	50,0%

Table 2: Percentage of men vs. women who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

Maine Domestic Priorities by Political Affiliation

	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Abortion	54,7%	43,9%	42,6%
Climate Change	66,9%	19,3%	44,9%
Economic Inequality	66,2%	38,6%	46,3%
Foreign Policy	43,9%	43,9%	35,3%
Gun Policy	43,9%	37,7%	29,4%
Healthcare	74,1%	54,4%	56,6%
Immigration	38,1%	50,9%	33,8%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	59,0%	25,4%	36,0%
Supreme Court Appointments	41,0%	39,5%	33,8%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	85,6%	53,5%	64,0%
The Economy	57,6%	70,2%	58,8%
Violent Crime	47,5%	47,4%	47,8%

Table 3: Percentage of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

Maine Domestic Priorities by Income

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 or more
Abortion	48,5%	43,1%	47,5%	43,1%	33,3%
Climate Change	43,6%	43,9%	43,4%	47,7%	55,6%
Economic Inequality	49,5%	56,1%	50,0%	40,0%	44,4%
Foreign Policy	36,6%	40,7%	45,1%	38,5%	11,1%
Gun Policy	34,7%	38,2%	41,0%	26,2%	55,6%
Healthcare	60,4%	60,2%	64,8%	53,8%	44,4%
Immigration	37,6%	35,0%	42,6%	49,2%	11,1%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	42,6%	39,0%	45,1%	35,4%	44,4%
Supreme Court Appointments	26,7%	41,5%	40,2%	41,5%	22,2%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	65,3%	71,5%	66,4%	58,5%	44,4%
The Economy	55,4%	56,9%	66,4%	70,8%	33,3%
Violent Crime	55,4%	51,2%	40,2%	36,9%	22,2%

Table 4: Percentage of each income group who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

Maine Domestic Priorities by Education Level

	Some High School	High School Graduate	Some College	Associates Degree (Two-year)	Bachelor's Degree (Four-year)	Post-Graduate Degree	Trade School/Certification
Abortion	23,1%	45,2%	47,6%	37,5%	42,0%	58,1%	63,2%
Climate Change	30,8%	38,7%	42,7%	29,2%	52,0%	67,4%	42,1%
Economic Inequality	46,2%	41,9%	58,3%	41,7%	47,0%	58,1%	68,4%
Foreign Policy	30,8%	33,3%	37,9%	43,8%	41,0%	51,2%	52,6%
Gun Policy	38,5%	36,6%	40,8%	39,6%	29,0%	39,5%	42,1%
Healthcare	46,2%	58,1%	58,3%	64,6%	58,0%	69,8%	73,7%
Immigration	15,4%	39,8%	40,8%	47,9%	34,0%	41,9%	52,6%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	38,5%	34,4%	45,6%	33,3%	42,0%	51,2%	47,4%
Supreme Court Appointments	23,1%	25,8%	28,2%	45,8%	46,0%	51,2%	52,6%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	61,5%	59,1%	68,9%	58,3%	72,0%	72,1%	63,2%
The Economy	53,8%	51,6%	67,0%	66,7%	60,0%	62,8%	68,4%
Violent Crime	53,8%	48,4%	48,5%	52,1%	38,0%	37,2%	68,4%

Table 5: Percentage of each education level who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

Maine Political Priorities- Urban vs. Rural

	Urban	Rural
Abortion	44,4%	46,1%
Climate Change	50,6%	40,7%
Economic Inequality	53,1%	48,1%
Foreign Policy	43,8%	37,6%
Gun Policy	38,3%	35,7%
Healthcare	63,0%	58,5%
Immigration	45,7%	35,7%
Racial and Ethnic Inequality	47,5%	37,2%
Supreme Court Appointments	40,7%	34,9%
The Coronavirus Outbreak	70,4%	63,2%
The Economy	58,6%	62,4%
Violent Crime	51,2%	43,0%

Table 6: Percentage of urban vs. rural respondents who marked each issue as “Very Important” to their decision of who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities by Gender

	Male	Female
Dealing with Global Climate Change	39,8%	40,5%
Global Coronavirus Response	55,7%	71,4%
Improving Relationships with Allies	43,3%	47,1%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	45,3%	39,0%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	37,3%	39,5%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	42,8%	46,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	35,3%	34,8%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	41,3%	37,1%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	56,7%	57,6%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	53,2%	62,4%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	31,3%	30,0%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	20,4%	14,8%
Protecting American Jobs	63,2%	62,4%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	37,8%	41,0%
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism	62,2%	66,2%
Reducing Illegal Immigration	34,8%	28,6%
Reducing our Trade Deficit	38,8%	27,6%
Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas	24,9%	30,5%

Table 7: Percentage of men vs. women who marked each foreign policy issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities by Age

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 or Older
Dealing with Global Climate Change	38,5%	48,9%	42,7%	38,5%	31,0%	41,3%
Global Coronavirus Response	67,3%	59,1%	61,3%	64,6%	65,5%	70,0%
Improving Relationships with Allies	48,1%	34,1%	50,7%	49,2%	43,1%	50,0%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	23,1%	31,8%	38,7%	46,2%	48,3%	60,0%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	25,0%	27,3%	37,3%	44,6%	50,0%	46,3%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	28,8%	34,1%	41,3%	47,7%	56,9%	57,5%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	21,2%	26,1%	33,3%	44,6%	39,7%	45,0%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	30,8%	29,5%	37,3%	47,7%	48,3%	42,5%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	38,5%	44,3%	53,3%	60,0%	75,9%	73,8%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	53,8%	52,3%	50,7%	63,1%	62,1%	67,5%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	42,3%	35,2%	30,7%	35,4%	27,6%	18,8%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	13,5%	11,4%	21,3%	24,6%	19,0%	16,3%
Protecting American Jobs	50,0%	51,1%	66,7%	72,3%	65,5%	67,5%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	46,2%	38,6%	40,0%	46,2%	29,3%	37,5%

Table 8: Percentage of different age groups who marked each issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities by Political Affiliation

	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Dealing with Global Climate Change	59,0%	20,2%	42,6%
Global Coronavirus Response	81,3%	48,2%	63,2%
Improving Relationships with Allies	59,0%	36,0%	41,9%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	30,2%	54,4%	44,1%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	31,7%	49,1%	41,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	42,4%	54,4%	43,4%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	40,3%	37,7%	32,4%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	30,2%	52,6%	39,0%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	65,5%	53,5%	58,1%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	61,9%	57,9%	59,6%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	44,6%	28,9%	23,5%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	18,7%	25,4%	11,0%
Protecting American Jobs	51,8%	69,3%	66,2%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	47,5%	34,2%	37,5%
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism	58,3%	76,3%	64,7%
Reducing Illegal Immigration	17,3%	52,6%	30,1%
Reducing our Trade Deficit	26,6%	49,1%	30,9%
Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas	29,5%	34,2%	21,3%

Table 9: Percentage of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents who marked each foreign policy issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

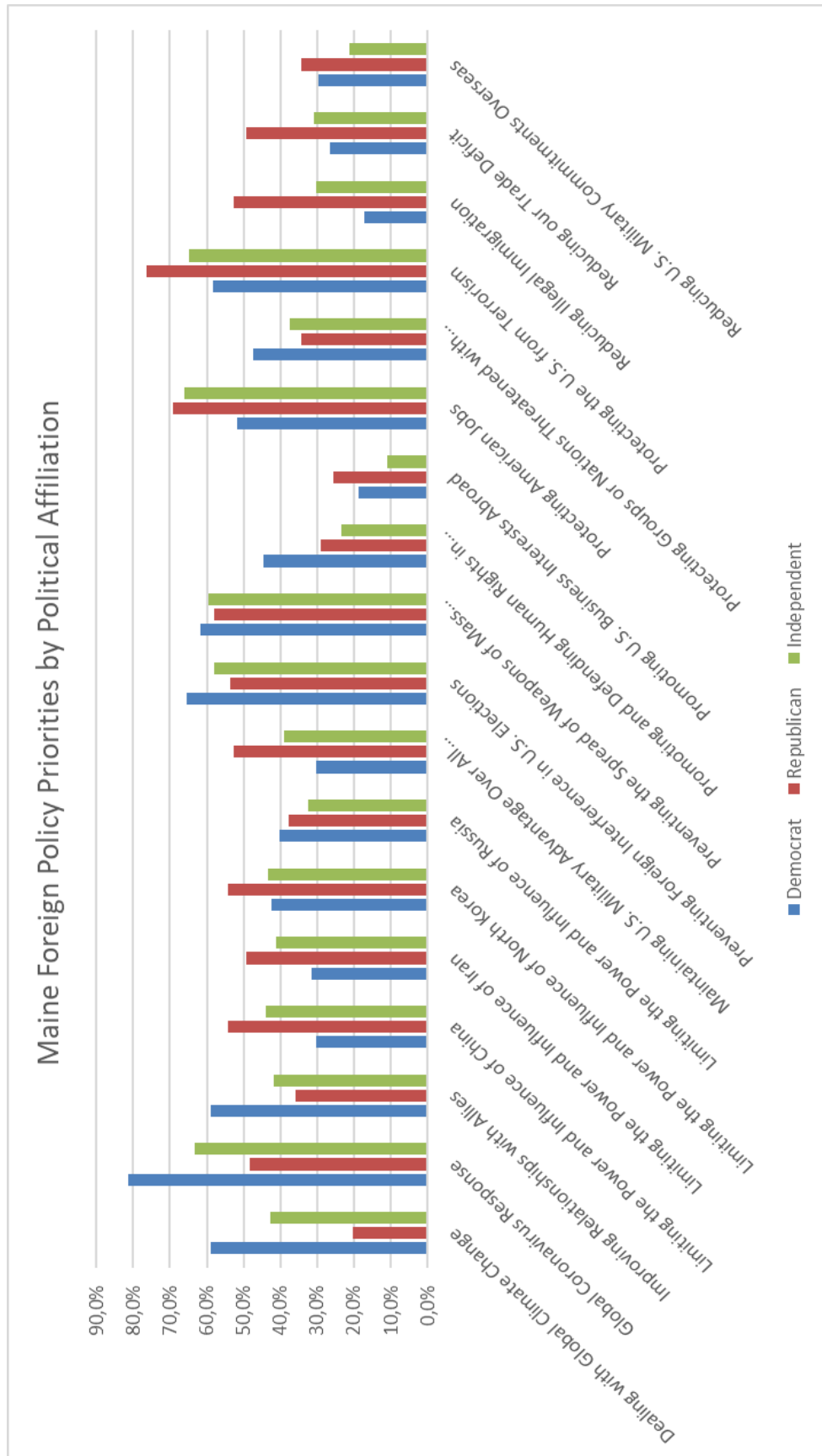


Figure 13: Percentage of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents who marked each foreign policy issue as a "Top Priority" to American foreign policy.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities by Income

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 or more
Dealing with Global Climate Change	37,6%	42,3%	39,3%	41,5%	66,7%
Global Coronavirus Response	62,4%	68,3%	67,2%	52,3%	66,7%
Improving Relationships with Allies	49,5%	40,7%	42,6%	56,9%	22,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	36,6%	41,5%	45,9%	44,6%	22,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	31,7%	43,1%	41,0%	35,4%	22,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	41,6%	43,9%	50,0%	41,5%	22,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	31,7%	34,1%	43,4%	27,7%	22,2%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	44,6%	33,3%	35,2%	50,8%	22,2%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	50,5%	64,2%	59,0%	53,8%	44,4%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	63,4%	64,2%	53,3%	52,3%	33,3%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	30,7%	30,9%	32,0%	27,7%	44,4%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	15,8%	13,0%	18,9%	24,6%	22,2%
Protecting American Jobs	65,3%	60,2%	66,4%	60,0%	22,2%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	42,6%	40,7%	37,7%	33,8%	44,4%
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism	69,3%	65,0%	58,2%	69,2%	44,4%
Reducing Illegal Immigration	29,7%	28,5%	31,1%	41,5%	11,1%
Reducing our Trade Deficit	21,8%	33,3%	37,7%	41,5%	22,2%
Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas	28,7%	32,5%	25,4%	23,1%	11,1%

Table 10: Percentage of each income group who marked each foreign policy issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities by Education Level

	Some High School	High School Graduate	Some College	Associate's Degree (Two-year)	Bachelor's Degree (Four-year)	Post-Graduate Degree	Trade School/Certification
Dealing with Global Climate Change	38,5%	32,3%	38,8%	31,3%	50,0%	62,8%	21,1%
Global Coronavirus Response	69,2%	61,3%	63,1%	52,1%	67,0%	76,7%	68,4%
Improving Relationships with Allies	38,5%	44,1%	44,7%	50,0%	44,0%	55,8%	36,8%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	53,8%	40,9%	32,0%	60,4%	45,0%	37,2%	36,8%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	53,8%	34,4%	30,1%	68,8%	38,0%	25,6%	42,1%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	61,5%	47,3%	37,9%	62,5%	40,0%	41,9%	36,8%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	38,5%	34,4%	31,1%	45,8%	33,0%	39,5%	31,6%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	53,8%	41,9%	41,7%	45,8%	33,0%	30,2%	36,8%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	53,8%	55,9%	55,3%	68,8%	55,0%	62,8%	52,6%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	69,2%	62,4%	55,3%	68,8%	51,0%	58,1%	63,2%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	53,8%	29,0%	34,0%	29,2%	29,0%	37,2%	10,5%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	23,1%	15,1%	14,6%	22,9%	19,0%	16,3%	21,1%
Protecting American Jobs	61,5%	60,2%	68,9%	68,8%	55,0%	55,8%	78,9%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	53,8%	38,7%	35,9%	41,7%	37,0%	48,8%	36,8%
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism	84,6%	64,5%	66,0%	83,3%	50,0%	65,1%	68,4%
Reducing Illegal Immigration	23,1%	32,3%	29,1%	58,3%	24,0%	20,9%	36,8%
Reducing our Trade Deficit	38,5%	34,4%	27,2%	43,8%	35,0%	25,6%	31,6%
Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas	15,4%	31,2%	31,1%	35,4%	22,0%	25,6%	15,8%

Table 11: Percentage of each level of education who marked each foreign policy issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

Maine Foreign Policy Priorities- Urban vs. Rural

	Urban	Rural
Dealing with Global Climate Change	45,7%	37,6%
Global Coronavirus Response	67,3%	62,0%
Improving Relationships with Allies	48,8%	43,4%
Limiting the Power and Influence of China	37,7%	44,2%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Iran	38,3%	38,0%
Limiting the Power and Influence of North Korea	45,1%	43,8%
Limiting the Power and Influence of Russia	35,8%	34,5%
Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	40,1%	38,4%
Preventing Foreign Interference in U.S. Elections	56,2%	58,1%
Preventing the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (e.g. Nuclear Weapons)	54,9%	60,5%
Promoting and Defending Human Rights in Other Countries	34,0%	29,1%
Promoting U.S. Business Interests Abroad	18,5%	16,7%
Protecting American Jobs	55,6%	66,7%
Protecting Groups or Nations Threatened with Genocide	44,4%	36,0%
Protecting the U.S. from Terrorism	63,6%	64,7%
Reducing Illegal Immigration	26,5%	34,1%
Reducing our Trade Deficit	33,3%	32,6%
Reducing U.S. Military Commitments Overseas	27,2%	27,9%

Table 12: Percentage of urban vs. rural who marked each foreign policy issue as a “Top Priority” to American foreign policy.

APPENDIX V: MULTIVARIATE MODELS

Climate Change

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues in making your decision about who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election? Please mark your answer in the appropriate box. You may mark "Prefer Not to Answer" for any question you do not wish to answer. - Climate Change	Not Important At All	45	12.4%
	Not Too Important	53	14.6%
	Somewhat Important	97	26.6%
	Very Important	169	46.4%
Valid		364	100.0%
Missing		56	
Total		420	

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	762.053			
Final	702.679	59.374	4	.000

Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	685.499	635	.081
Deviance	590.578	635	.896

Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.151
Nagelkerke	.164
McFadden	.065

Parameter Estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound Upper Bound	
Threshold	[Q16_4 = 2]	-3.752	.466	64.943	1	.000	-4.664	-2.839
	[Q16_4 = 3]	-2.708	.444	37.290	1	.000	-3.578	-1.839
	[Q16_4 = 4]	-1.391	.425	10.714	1	.001	-2.223	-.558
Location	AGE_RC	-.090	.060	2.214	1	.137	-.208	.028
	PARTY_ID_Recode	-.838	.119	49.320	1	.000	-1.071	-.604
	INCOME_Recode	-.009	.112	.006	1	.939	-.229	.212
	EDU_Recode	.129	.082	2.473	1	.116	-.032	.290

Immigration

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues in making your decision about who to vote for in the 2020 presidential election? Please mark your answer in the appropriate box. You may mark "Prefer Not to Answer" for any question you do not wish to answer. - Immigration	Very Important	152	41.2%
	Somewhat Important	154	41.7%
	Not Too Important	51	13.8%
	Not Important At All	12	3.3%
Valid		369	100.0%
Missing		51	
Total		420	

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	662.234			
Final	656.955	5.279	4	.260

Link function: Logit.

Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	622.805	644	.719
Deviance	542.303	644	.999

Parameter Estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound Upper Bound	
Threshold	[Q13_1 = 1]	-1.193	.413	8.334	1	.004	-2.003	-.383
	[Q13_1 = 2]	.764	.411	3.444	1	.063	-.043	1.570
	[Q13_1 = 3]	2.583	.483	28.599	1	.000	1.636	3.530
Location	AGE_RC	-.034	.059	.334	1	.563	-.150	.082
	PARTY_ID_Recode	-.182	.111	2.686	1	.101	-.400	.036
	INCOME_Recode	-.110	.110	.996	1	.318	-.326	.106
	EDU_Recode	-.022	.080	.074	1	.786	-.178	.135

Link function: Logit.

Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
Thinking about long-range foreign policy goals, how much priority, if any, do you think each of the following should be given? - Maintaining U.S. Military Advantage Over All Other Countries	Top Priority	152	41.2%
	Some Priority	152	41.2%
	No Priority	65	17.6%
Valid		369	100.0%
Missing		51	
Total		420	

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	679.366			
Final	651.296	28.069	5	.000

Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	560.606	549	.356
Deviance	579.725	549	.176

Parameter Estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound Upper Bound	
Threshold	[Q17_6 = 1]	-1.142	.519	4.840	1	.028	-2.159	-.125
	[Q17_6 = 2]	.873	.518	2.836	1	.092	-.143	1.889
Location	AGE_RC	-.188	.060	9.755	1	.002	-.306	-.070
	PARTY_ID_Recode	-.379	.114	10.959	1	.001	-.603	-.154
	GENDER_Q4	.114	.160	.512	1	.474	-.199	.428
	INCOME_Recode	-.098	.113	.753	1	.386	-.320	.124
	EDU_Recode	.203	.082	6.198	1	.013	.043	.363

Link function: Logit.

Reducing our Trade Deficit

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
Thinking about long-range foreign policy goals, how much priority, if any, do you think each of the following should be given? - Reducing our Trade Deficit	Prefer Not to Answer	26	10.0%
	No Priority	38	14.6%
	Some Priority	196	75.4%
Valid		260	100.0%
Missing		160	
Total		420	

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	297.469			
Final	287.929	9.541	4	.049

Link function: Logit.

Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	294.088	254	.043
Deviance	232.864	254	.825

Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.036
Nagelkerke	.047
McFadden	.025

Parameter Estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound Upper Bound	
Threshold	[Q19_4 = 1]	-.828	.688	1.448	1	.229	-2.178	.521
	[Q19_4 = 2]	.282	.680	.172	1	.678	-1.050	1.614
Location	GENDER_Q4	-.051	.189	.074	1	.786	-.421	.319
	PARTY_ID_Recode	.212	.168	1.598	1	.206	-.117	.541
	AGE_RC	.098	.086	1.289	1	.256	-.071	.266
	INCOME_Record	.341	.150	5.200	1	.023	.048	.635

Link function: Logit.

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Caitlyn Rooms was born in Killeen, Texas, to a military family. Her family moved every few years until she graduated from Strawberry Crest High School in Lithia, Florida, and moved to Maine to attend the University of Maine. At the University of Maine, Caitlyn majored in International Affairs and Political Science, with a minor in Economics. She is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi Honors Societies and was the president of the UMaine French Club and UMaine International Affairs Association. She received the Rendle A. Jones '65 and Patricia K. Jones '65 Honors Thesis Fellowship.

After graduation, Caitlyn plans to attend Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies program, based in Bologna, Italy. There, she will pursue a Masters of the Arts in International Relations.