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Understanding the Split-Ticket Voter

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science
in the Department of Political Science
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term 2010

ABSTRACT

This thesis will focus on split ticket voting. Split ticket voting refers to an aspect of voting behavior where the individual will cast votes for different political parties for different offices. Through the development of countless theories and utilizing data, political scientists have managed to shed some light as to why an individual may engage in split-ticket voting. However, many of these studies have been too narrow in their focus, for instance, relying on a specific election without taking into account some major variables that provide the foundation for voting behavior. The purpose of this study is to provide scholars with an idea of what characteristics exist most commonly among split-ticket voters compared with straight-ticket voters. What variables work together to cause an individual to engage in split ticket voting? Specifically, this thesis will examine the contribution of variables in explaining ticket splitting. Despite studies of the causes of split-ticket voting, the field is still unclear as to what causes an individual to engage in split-ticket voting. What individual variables cause an individual to engage in ticket splitting?

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1992, the newly elected 42nd president of the United States set off on a number of policy agendas that would ultimately shape his presidency. The American people had been calling for health care reform, to which Bill Clinton would set off to try to create a system of universal coverage through a national healthcare plan. Divisions among conservatives and liberals created a well organized opposition to the plan. Thanks to a government divided and divisions within the Democratic Party, the much publicized and perhaps most prominent item on Clinton's legislative agenda resulted in a major defeat. Rather than uniting to pass this piece of legislation, Congress (and the American people) became increasingly divided, resulting in the bill being declared dead within one year of its inception. It would be another decade before President Obama took the platform of universal health care and was able to pass this legislation thanks to a unified front in both the Presidency and Congress.

The consequences of a government divided have far reaching effects as with the case of President Clinton and health care reform. Split-ticket voting helps in shaping the ease to which legislation can be passed as well as drive the attitude toward policy issues between elections. Major legislation that can change major industries can be crushed by divisions in power. When an individual engages in split-ticket voting, the effects are far reaching. The question relating to this study is what motivates an individual to vote for different parties. Does the individual have a preference for divided government, a lack of partisan loyalty, or a fear of unified government? Or does split-ticket voting go beyond the individual and is actually an indicator of polarization or a decline in partisanship in American politics? Regardless of the reason for split-ticket voting, this topic is worth examining because of the consequences of this voting behavior. Voters

decrease the incentives of parties to formulate clear and distinct platforms for campaigns and also decrease their ability to implement those platforms when in office.

The causes of split-ticket voting have been hypothesized at great length with limited empirical findings that provide a clear answer. The purpose of this study is to provide the field with an idea of what characteristics exist most commonly among split-ticket voters compared with straight-ticket voters. This body of research will utilize variables based on three distinct categories: demographic variables, attitudinal variables, and system support variables. This thesis will examine how these variables explain why an individual engages in split ticket voting.

Split-ticket voting can be defined simply as the occurrence of an individual placing the vote of one political party for one office of government and voting an opposite or different party for another seat of government. For this study, ticket-splitting will focus on the U.S. House of Representatives and Presidency in the 2004 and 2008 national election. The voter may fear a control of one political party over another which can guide policy and the national agenda until the next election. Such decisions by this higher level of government have implications on the voter therefore guiding these voter decisions. Literature on the subject suggests that such decisions come from a desire for balanced policy. Evidence on the perceptions of voters for split-ticket voting exists, however with diverse explanations. For instance, voters tend to perceive different parties as being better able to handle different national issues. "…The public felt the Democrats were good at handling Congress and domestic issues, whereas the presidency was entrusted to Republicans and their ability to manage foreign affairs and the economy" (Geer, 50). What causes someone to engage in split-ticket voting is of interest for several reasons,

mostly is it possible to predict this sort of voting behavior, and what characteristics about the voter will elicit this sort of behavior.

The causes of split ticket voting have been extensively debated. Through the development of multiple theories and utilizing data, political scientists have managed to shed some light as to why an individual may engage in split-ticket voting. This thesis will examine the contribution of demographic, attitudinal, and system support variables in explaining ticket splitting. For clarification in this study, split ticket voting refers to voting behavior resulting in a vote that puts one political party in the executive office, or presidency, and an opposing party in the House. Research has suggested that "Divisions in partisan control of Congress and the presidency during presidential election years are most certainly due to split-ticket voting i.e., a willingness of voters to cast for one party for president and the other party for their members of Congress" (Garand and Litchl, 173). Using the 2004 American National Election Survey, the results shows that the majority of respondents (56.8%) believed that split control was better than one party control of the presidency and congress. Results of one-party control and those who did not care were equally divided. Therefore, the broader findings of this thesis are important. A focus on individual level behavior may help to further explain the incidence of divided government.

As previously mentioned, the result of the successful implementation of split-ticket voting is referred to as *divided government*. The concept of divided government works to explain another aspect of voting behavior. Scholars have defined this concept as a voter's tendency to believe that unified control by one party of the Congress and Presidency is not

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conducive to good government. Periods of unified and divided government have existed

throughout American National politics, illustrated in the table below. According to a historical

analysis by Morris Fiorina, "The post World War II era (1952-92) stands out, with a clear

majority (13/20) of presidential and mid-term elections producing divided governments"

(Fiorina, 388). Fiorina's study examined why we have divided government and its implications.

According the Fiorina, the table below proves the need to focus on split-ticket voting in the

contemporary period, perhaps caused by precedent set by previous presidential elections. The

table below breaks down control of the Presidency and the House of Representatives from 1992-

2008.

TABLE 1: PARTY CONTROL OF THE PRESIDENCY AND THE HOUSE, 1992-2008

Election Year	Presidency	House of Representatives
1992	Democrat	Democrat
1994	Democrat	Republican
1996	Democrat	Republican
1998	Democrat	Republican
2000	Republican	Republican
2002	Republican	Republican
2004	Republican	Republican
2006	Republican	Democrat
2008	Democrat	Democrat

SOURCE: FIORINA, MORRIS. DIVIDED GOVERNMENT 2ND EDITION. ALLYN AND BACON, 1996.

As this thesis will examine 2004 and 2008 national elections, Table 1 is designed to

provide an understanding of current trends in the division of power between the Presidency and

House. Previous research has shown that certain events can have an influence on the occurrence

of split-ticket voting, resulting in divided power. However, this thesis will work to demonstrate

that an individual's characteristics outweigh specific events or trends when it comes to split

ticket voting. It is important to understand that while time study data will be included in this study, the focal point of this analysis will be an empirical analysis utilizing variables based on the individual engaging in split ticket voting.

Despite studies on the causes of split-ticket voting, the field is still unclear as to what variables cause an individual to engage in split-ticket voting. Are voters making a concerted effort to divide control of national institutions, or are the causes for split-ticket voting caused by deeper characteristics influencing the voter? The purpose of this study is to provide scholars with an idea of what characteristics exist more commonly among split-ticket voters compared with straight-ticket voters. What variables work together to cause an individual to engage in split ticket voting?

1.1: 2004 and 2008 Election Survey Data

The American National Election Survey of 2004 and 2008 will be utilized in this thesis. These studies are utilized because they provide extensive information on voters in the categories of demographics, attitudinal, and system support which will be studied in this thesis. The study has proven to be one of the most reliable data sets available on the subject for a number of reasons. The questions utilized in the survey are straightforward and avoid candidate bias, giving validity to the study (Lewis-Beck and Nadeau, 99).

Both elections provide different and interesting contexts as it relates to this study. Both election years produced record turnout numbers. For the 2004 presidential election, the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate reported that "122 million people voted in the November election, a number that translates into the highest turnout – 60.7 percent – since

1968" (Faler, A05). For the decade prior to 2004, Republicans maintained a consistent control over the House. The use of 2004 and 2008 is also interesting in that 2004 produced a unified Republican government and in 2008 a unified Democratic government.

The 2008 election proved to be even more exciting with more than 131 million people (61.6 percent of eligible voters) voting in the presidential election (CBSNews, 1). With the 2008 election, a historical election in its own right, we see a shift to total Democratic control of both the Presidency and House. Utilizing these elections allows for an interesting comparison of individual characteristics and may help to illustrate the weight of these variables on such pivotal election years.

1.2 Theoretical Background

Several schools of thought have emerged on voting behavior, which can be used to frame the research question and generate testable hypotheses. In the conclusion section, the data will be applied to the following explanations for voting behavior: the Columbia school, the Michigan school, and the Rational Choice Model. The Columbia school on voting behavior theorizes that individuals can be persuaded by political campaigns and advertising (like a consumer reacts to advertising for a product). When making voting decisions, partisan differences "presumably develop initially from self-interest arising through major social identifications, associations, and memberships, and persist over time through within-group interaction and cross-generational socialization" (Knoke, 92). The Michigan school discusses how vote choice is not a product of group characteristics but of individual attitudes that include political and ideological beliefs, socialization, and demographic variables. Brought to the forefront by Campbell et. al., the work

suggests that party loyalties have become less important and that the core of voter decisions is of a deeper motivation. "…the interrelations of education, political involvement, and strength of partisanship suggest that as the electorate becomes more sophisticated and involved psychologically in politics, it may well become more, rather than less, fixed in its partisan commitments" (Campbell et. al., 533). The Rational Choice Model, which originated as an economics model by Adam Smith and "refers to behavior by an individual actor – a person, a firm, or political entity – designed to further the actor's perceived self-interest, subject to information and opportunity costs…it argues that how we see ourselves in relation to others sets and delineates the range of options actors find available, not just morally but empirically" (Monroe, 151).

The Michigan model is based on party identification, theorizing that voters will vote based on a sense of belonging to one political party. This model "acknowledges cleavages on the group level, yet emphasizes the psychological processes intervening between the voter's social setting and his ultimate behavior in the polling booth" (Knoke). According to the investigation which started in 1952, voting behavior can be identified by three areas: first, an individual's connection or tie with one political party; second, identifying a concern with specific policy issues, and third, an individual's "personal attraction" to the presidential candidate.

The Rational Choice Model basically states that "patterns of behavior in societies reflect the choices made by individuals as they try to maximize their benefits and minimize their costs. People make decisions about how they should act by comparing the costs and benefits of different courses of action. As a result, patterns of behavior will develop within the society that

result from those choices" (Scott, 2). As it relates to political theory, the rational choice theory assumes that the individual has possible goals in mind. The individual places their wants in preferential order; therefore, if the actor does not attain his or her primary goal, a second best option exists, and a third. According to Riker, the rational choice model is not necessarily based on an oversimplified goal such as "Hobbes, the avoidance of violent death, or Locke, the security of property" (24); rather, there is not a particular goal, but a set of goals in preferential order. The order is important to this model; it assumes that the individual's actions depends on the ordering of their goals (25). Riker sums up this theory as "the model does not require instrumental accuracy, although it does require that actions not be randomly related to ends and that people do try to choose instruments that they believe, sometimes mistakenly, will achieve their goals" (25).

1.3 Methodology

In order to create a more broad understanding of the variables and how they interact with one another, three categories will be utilized: (1) demographic variables, (2) attitudinal variables, and (3) system support variables. Demographic variables will include age, race, gender, and education level. Attitudinal variables will focus on the individual's ideology and placement on the partisan spectrum, and system support will examine political trust, internal efficacy, and external efficacy. Rather than viewing a wide range of variables separately, this approach was utilized so that certain generalizations may be drawn across demographic, attitudinal, and system support variables as a whole. This approach will also allow a more thorough analysis through the comparison of the broad categories based on the empirical findings in each study.

The following chapter will review preexisting literature on split-ticket voting divided government. The literature review will also discuss the independent variables used in this study and what role they have played in previous research. The methodology section will outline the thesis hypotheses and research methods to be tested in the data and analysis section. Data and analysis will be broken down into three sections: demographic analysis, attitudinal variable analysis, and system-support analysis. This thesis will conclude by summarizing the results and offer ideas and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Split ticket voting behavior is shaped by a multitude of variables such as race, income, education, and gender. According to various scholars, the variety of factors which influence an individual's voting decision are central to certain trends over the past half century in party alignment (or dealignment), the rise of the independent voter, divided government trends, and many more. This literature review will discuss how the variables that will be analyzed in this study have been utilized in previous studies and what conclusions have been drawn based on those results.

2.1 Divided Government: Political Trust and Dealignment

American presidential and congressional elections have seen a history of unified and divided government. The history of divided government has been well documented with a wide range of explanations. "Since the renomination of Andrew Jackson by popular convention in 1832, American elections have created or continued a condition of divided government for 60 of 158 years, about 40 percent of the country's history" (Fiorina, 388).

TABLE 2: CONTROL OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, 1832-1992 BY NUMBER OF

PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

	Unified	Divided
1832-2008	54	34
1832-2008	24	15
1900-1952	22	4
1952-2008	11	14

SOURCE: FIORINA, MORRIS. "AN ERA OF DIVIDED GOVERNMENT". POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY, VOL. 107, NO. 3 (AUTUMN, 1992), 387-410.

Garand and Litchl suggest that "voters prefer divided government in order to create moderate policy outputs from government" (174). The findings from their study further suggest that voters intentionally split their tickets but are not conclusive. Their study suggests that those who possess a higher level of political knowledge are more likely to engage in split ticket voting based on their preference for or against divided government.

Others have suggested that the occurrence of split ticket voting is purely accidental in which "voters respond inadvertently to different messages emanating from presidential and congressional campaigns" (Garand and Litchl, 174). These theories suggest that voters are reactive rather than proactive in choosing their candidate. Petrocik and Jacobson are both advocates of this particular theory. For Jacobson, the focus on candidate spending will in turn have an effect on the voter. "Evidence from the 1972 and 1974 congressional elections…supports the conclusion that what the challenger spends is an important determinant of the outcome, while spending by incumbents makes relatively little difference" (Jacobson, 470). According to Petrocik, the manner in which the candidate frames the issues creates the

response for voting behavior. "A candidates campaign can be understood as a 'marketing' effort: the goal is to achieve a strategic advantage by making problems which reflect owned issues the programmatic meaning of the election and the criteria by which voters make their choice" (Petrocik, 828). But can the entire weight of voter choice be placed on the candidate? The level of consciousness of the voter comes into question.

On the contrary, Fiorina (403) suggests that voters take on a more rational role in voting decisions and have an objective. Fiorina suggests that:

> "Ticket-splitting reflects disenchantment with both parties, a disenchantment that has grown into
> cynicism about getting acceptable government from either party. When they split their tickets,
> voters are not simply trying to bring about a moderate compromise between two polarized
> parties… rather, voters are seeking to create a deadlock where neither party can do anything, and
> both dissipate their resources and energy fighting with each other"

Disenchantment and alienation from government are founded in this belief.

Some have credited the decline of parties and rise of the independent voter to the trends associated with split ticket voting. Dalton (188) observes that over the last half century, American partisanship has seen a period of instability and volatility.

> "American partisanship was extremely stable from the 1950s to the early 1960s; the percentage of
> party identifiers remained within the 70-75 percent range, and less than a quarter of the public
> claimed to be "independents" without fixed partisan ties. But partisan loyalties began to weaken
> after the 1964 election, and by the 1980s, more than a third of the electorate were
> nonpartisans…The percentage of partisans reached a new low (59 percent) in the 2000 election
> survey"

The rise of cultural differences has also been attributed to a decline in parties. This reference to the decline of parties often refers to the increasing number of voters unaffiliated with the main political parties, often called independent voters. Kaufmann supports this theory but states that varying levels of this phenomenon can be observed between genders. "For women, the issues themselves have become increasingly important determinants of party identification. For men, the influence of cultural conflict on partisanship is argued to be equally pervasive" (Kauffman, 283).

Scholars have observed potential consequences of this theorized dealignment, particularly that a weakening in partisanship in turn decreases the predictability of voting behavior, creating more fluidity in voting behavior. The terms surrounding the movement to or away from party politics is defined by Wattenberg in clear terms. "Whereas realignment involves people changing from one party to another, dealignment concerns people gradually moving away from both" (Wattenberg, 31). Dalton also discusses how partisanship assists in "mobilizing individuals to participate in politics" (192). If dealignment does hold true, we should see an overall decrease in participants in the political process. Further, a dealignment would result in a shift in the decision making process for voting. Dalton does not link the above theory to split ticket voting; however, if the above theory holds true that the decision making process is altered and has moved away from partisan loyalties, a link could possibly arise between the two phenomena. Voters without strong partisan loyalties are in theory more likely to engage in ticket-splitting, and if this trend in dealignment is to continue, we should observe a greater occurrence of the above incident. Further supporting a dealignment, Fiorina suggests that the decline in party influence in American politics can be accredited to the increased occurrence of

split ticket voting. Bartels refutes such claims stating that "Partisan loyalties in the American public have rebounded significantly since the mid-1970s, especially among those who actually turn out to vote" (35). He further states that based on his findings, literature on the decline of parties is outdated and exaggerated.

2.2 Candidate Politics and the Rise of Partisanship

Other literature has questioned whether the candidate plays a role in an actor's willingness to engage in ticket-splitting. Wattenberg expands upon the concept of candidate centered politics, stating the Americans statistically believe in voting for the candidate and not necessarily the party. Why has this occurred? "One reason is that political parties are not perceived as particularly meaningful in today's political world" (34). The author further sites evidence from the 1980 National Election Study which supported the belief that parties tend to make the issues muddy and unclear. Wattenberg further illustrates this point by showing how split party control has increased dramatically over the last century.

TABLE 3: THE DECLINE OF STRAIGHT-TICKET VOTING

Decade	President-House	President-Governor	President-Senate
1900s	.85	.82	-
1910s	.54	.75	.84
1920s	.40	.70	.55
1930s	.44	.64	.65
1940s	.65	.75	.82
1950s	.63	.60	.67
1960s	.26	.20	.26
1970s	.16	.31	.04
1980s	.14	.03	.13

SOURCE: MARTIN WATTENBERG, THE RISE OF CANDIDATE CENTERED POLITICS P. 37; R-SQUARED BETWEEN VOTES FOR PRESIDENT AND FOR OTHER OFFICES, NON-SOUTHERN STATES ONLY. (1991)

Wittenberg sites that this trend has occurred for a variety of reasons, but most notably that "Given the current state of public attitudes concerning the desirability of voting for the candidate rather than the party, there is reason to expect that split-ticket voting may continue" (39).

Research on the role of parties in American politics has also been highly debated. Some scholars believe that parties are essential in explaining voting behavior. "…the decline of parties is both exaggerated and outdated. Partisan loyalties in the American public have rebounded significantly since the mid-1970s, especially among those who actually turn out to vote" (Bartels, 35). Campbell et al. have further supported these findings.

> "Few factors are of greater importance for our national elections than the lasting attachment of tens of millions of Americans to one of the parties…Most Americans have this sense of attachment with one party the other. And for the individual who does, the strength and direction

of party identification are facts of central importance in accounting for attitude and behavior"

(Campbell et al., 121).

Bartels also argues that partisanship is vibrant at various levels of the American electoral system. "…the American political system has slipped with remarkably little fanfare into an era of increasingly vibrant partisanship in the electorate, especially at the presidential level but also at the congressional level" (Bartels, 44). These scholars have laid the foundation to theorize that partisanship acts as a strong identifier in explaining why individuals engage in split ticket voting.

The incumbency effect must be mentioned in any examination of split-ticket voting. The body of literature discussing incumbency has been well documented and studied. This phenomenon is based on the idea that individuals engage in split ticket voting based on the incumbency status of the candidate. According to one analysis, "the popularity of presidential candidates and the performance of the incumbent president have some impact on the fortunes of congressional candidates" (Fiorina, 63). Whether this phenomenon is as influential in ticket splitting may be debatable. Several variables will be included in this analysis to test the level of the incumbency effect in relation to the other variable categories.

2.3 Variables Explaining Ticket-Splitting

Demographic variables may play a significant role in voting behavior which leads to split ticket voting. The level of partisan loyalty, gender, and education has all been explored to some extent in attempts to bring light to this phenomenon. It is important to consider voter characteristics for a number of reasons. "People have varying political preferences, political loyalties, and capacities for information gathering that structure political choice" (Roscoe, 1150).

Demographic variables give us a snapshot of the individual. These characteristics help the voter in shaping preferences and viewpoints toward policy.

The literature has suggested that partisan identify has some level of influence on split-ticket voting. "The proportion of 'strong' identifiers in the population increased from 24 percent in 1976 to 31 percent in 1996, while the proportion of "pure" independents – those who neither identified themselves as Democrats or Republicans nor "leaned" to either party…declined from 16 percent in 1976 to only 9 percent in 1996" (Bartels, 36). One study in particular suggests that partisanship and ideological makeup of a district will impact the occurrence of split-ticket voting. "Grofman et al. suggest that the ideological makeup of a district may lead candidates to offer a choice of policy positions that may be quite different than what is offered at the national level" (Karp and Garland, 772). This suggests the importance and prevalence of party identification in the modern voting era and the importance to the strength of party attachment. Based on the literature, we can hypothesize with some level of confidence that party identification may have a correlation with the act of split-ticket voting. Other literature has suggested that the level of interest toward political participation may have some level of influence.

> "Although only high-information voters behave in such a way as to link their preferences for or against divided government with the decisions to cast a split-ticket or straight-party vote, it is worth noting that as much as half of the electorate falls within the group for whom there is a positive relationship between support for divided government and split-ticket voting" (Garand and Litchl, 187).

Based on the beliefs which align with various political parties, the desire for complete control of one political party over the other could certainly vary.

The independent voters have come under the microscope in relation to split ticket voting. Some believe that independent voters tend to lean more heavily in one direction and are typically just as much if not more loyal to a particular party (Drew, 116). Keith et al. (1992) examines the stability of party identification, focusing on leaner stability. In a study which examined leaning stability, the authors found that "Relatively few of these changes were from one party to the other; however; most were shifts in the intensity of partisan identity, not in its direction" (88). A rise in political independence may reflect a desire for split control of national institutions. "Ideologically moderate voters prefer moderate policies. If the two parties are seen as ideologically divergent, then any government under unified party control will *not* produce the types of policies moderate voters want" (Carsey and Layman, 542).

Gender has also been critical in the examination of voting behavior. Studies have shown dramatic differences in preferences, ideology, and voting patterns in men versus women. "…issue attitudes are among the important variables explaining gender differences in voting behavior, especially attitudes on 'compassion' issues like social welfare and redistribution and issues involving the use of force such as capital punishment and military intervention" (Kaufmann and Petrocik, 864). Inherent value differences, biological differences, and socialization have all been acknowledged as possible explanations for differences in political preference and voting behavior. One view attributes the differences in voting opinion to "the fact that the vast majority of parents with primary responsibility for their children are women; thus, women's pacifist orientation and concern for the preservation of life are linked to maternal thinking" (Ruddick, 1980). The explanations, according to Howell and Day, are interrelated; "it seems that [political attitudes] are all rooted in the contrasting social roles of men and women,

roles that are reflected in different economic positions and different basic values" (Howell and Day, 860). Norrander discusses how women may be classified as more apolitical compared to men (465), increasing the potential of ticket splitting.

Other literature has found that women's egalitarian and helping values has created a voting base more favorable to the Democratic Party. "Most acknowledge that women today are somewhat more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party and to vote Democratic" (Howell and Day, 858). One study by Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler found that in presidential elections since 1980, "women have consistently voted at a higher rate than men for Democratic presidential candidates" (Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler, 312). Because economic attitudes, education, and use of force may all be attributed to women's voting preferences, a direct correlation is lacking between gender and split-ticket voting; however, based on these attributes, we may reasonably surmise that those preferential differences create an atmosphere which allows for this sort of voting behavior.

Education is also theorized to play a role in political involvement and voting behavior. Those individuals who hold a higher level of education should essentially be a more sophisticated voter. "Education has consistently been found to increase political participation, electoral turnout, civic engagement, political knowledge, and democratic attitudes and opinions" (Hillygus, 25). According to Garand and Litchl, "It is possible that high-information voters have the cognitive capacity and knowledge about politics to link successfully their attitudes towards divided government with their voting behavior, while low-information voters lack either or both of these characteristics" (186).

Trust, belief, and individual effectiveness in the governing body have all been examined a great depth as it relates to voting behavior. Trust is noted to be influenced by institutional dimension, individual perceptions, and quality of governance (Leki, 35). These concepts are so grounded in the literature that they claim civic engagement "creates the conditions for social integration, public awareness and action, and democratic stability" (Newton, 201). Frustrations stemming from a variety of issues in a democracy have been named a source for the decline of trust in government. "Real-life deliberation can fan emotions unproductively, can exacerbate rather than diminish power differentials among those deliberating, can make people feel frustrated with the system that made them deliberate, is ill-suited to many issues, and can lead to worse decisions than would have occurred if no deliberation had taken place" (Morrell, 50). More recently authors have speculated that a decline in civil society and community relations has a strong correlation to a decline in trust of the voter and participation in the electoral process. What causes fluctuations in political trust has also been speculated. In one study, researchers found that political trust can be severely affected by the outcome of presidential and congressional elections. The outcome of the study showed that "Political trust is highest among voters who voted either for both the presidential and congressional winners or the presidential winner and congressional losers; trust is lowest among those who voted for both the presidential and congressional losers" (Anderson and LoTempio, 335). Literature on distrust in government has found roots in several areas including early political socialization in school and community associations and reactions to major political events (Damico, Conway, and Damico, 377). These sources of political trust (or distrust) can have an incredibly effect on one's perceptions of the internal and external efficacies. Political efficacy is defined as "the feeling that individual

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political action does have, or can have, an impact on the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties" (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, 187). All of these system-support concepts work together in determining an individual's perceptions and ultimate voting behavior.

The research reviewed above shows that split ticket voting must be viewed from a variety of angles. Demographic variables play an important role by illustrating individual-level characteristics that work together to shape voting behavior. Evidence is also presented that questions the consciousness of the voter in relation to ticket-splitting. Therefore, ticket splitting must be examined as a function of demographic characteristics, attitudinal, and system-support variables.

CHAPTER 3: DATA AND METHODS

3.1 Data and Samples

This study will utilize American National Election Survey (NES) data from 2004 and

2008. This survey was started in 1948 and "is the oldest continuous series of survey data

investigating electoral behavior and attitudes in the United States" (ICPSR). The study examines

a myriad of voter perceptions including issues, candidates, and political parties. ANES also

collects demographic information about the interviewee. This survey is renowned for the quality

of data, transparency of the study, and high response rate. While the ANES provides only one

question as a measurement for preference of divided government: "Is it better when one party

controls both the presidency and Congress, better when control is split between the Democrats

and Republicans, or doesn't it matter?", the study has proven to be one of the most reliable data

sets available on the subject for a number of reasons. The questions utilized in the survey are

straightforward and avoid candidate bias, giving validity to the study (Lewis-Beck and Nadeau,

99). The high response rate to the survey along with accuracy measures put in place by

researchers further supports the use of this data. For the 2008 survey, weighting the data is

critical to determining accurate figures and analysis. The values of the weighting variable should

indicate the number of observations represented by single cases. The use of weighting will

prevent the data from skewing due to oversampling. Cases with zero, negative, or missing

values for the weighting variable are excluded from analysis. Fractional values are valid; they are

used exactly where this is meaningful and most likely where cases are tabulated.

Both elections provide different and interesting contexts as they relate to this study. Both

election years produced record turnout numbers. For the 2004 presidential election, the

Committee for the Study of the American Electorate reported that "122 million people voted in the November election, a number that translates into the highest turnout – 60.7 percent – since 1968" (Faler, A05). For the decade prior to 2004 Republicans maintained a consistent control over the House. With that particular election we begin to see a shift in voting behavior, providing an interesting context to examine the individual's variables as relating to this study.

2008 proved to be even more exciting with more than 131 million people (61.6 percent of eligible voters) voting in the presidential election (CBSNews, 1). With the 2008 election, a historical election in its own right, we see a shift to total Democratic control of both the Presidency and House. Utilizing these elections allows for an interesting comparison of individual characteristics and may help to illustrate the weight of these variables on such pivotal election years. With the 2004 and 2008 election, we see one major difference specifically in the presidency. 2004 saw the incumbent running for re-election while 2008 was an open-seated election.

3.2 Dependent Variables

Research has suggested that "Divisions in partisan control of Congress and the presidency during presidential election years are most certainly due to split-ticket voting i.e., a willingness of voters to cast for one party for president and the other party for their members of Congress" (Garand and Litchl, 173). Using National Election Survey data (2004), we find that the majority of respondents (56.8%) believed that split control was better than one party control of the presidency and congress. Results of one-party control and those who did not care were equally divided.

Literature on split ticket voting has focused on a limited number of demographic and party level variables. Scholars have also suggested that incumbency, campaign spending, and competition are factors that may shape levels of ticket splitting (Roscoe, 1151). Studies have attempted to explain the role of interest in the political system and whether split ticket voting is the result of negative feelings toward national institutions, the results of which are not clear or contradictory (Bybee et al., Maddox and Nimmo). Other literature suggests that the level of competition in an election can serve as a predictor to ticket splitting (Roscoe, 1161). As a result of so many conclusions, the cause or motive behind split ticket voting is not clear.

This thesis will measure how a variety of demographic, attitudinal, and system support variables influence the occurrence of split-ticket voting. The dependent variable in this study is a variable create to show whether the individual engaged in straight or split-ticket voting in 2004 and 2008. The dependent variable is whether the individual voted a straight or split-ticket between the presidency and house.

TABLE 4: DESCRIPTION OF DEPENDENT VARIABLE: 2004 AND 2008 ANES

Variable Description	Did Respondent split their ticket?
Split-Ticket Voting in 2004	0: Straight (Dem-Dem/Rep-Rep) 1: Split (Dem-Rep/Rep-Dem)
Split-Ticket Voting in 2008	0: Straight (Dem-Dem/Rep-Rep) 1: Split (Dem-Rep/Rep-Dem)

The survey utilized examines preferences for divided government among respondents in 2004. From the table below, we see that 56.79 percent of respondents fall into the category

which supports divided government. Certain variables must be present to explain why voters

have such a strong preference for split power and engage in voting behavior that results in such.

This analysis will further test these preferences using several dependent variables: party

identification, feeling thermometer toward the Democratic Party, gender, and marital status. One

could anticipate a direct correlation between at least one of the above named variables and voting

behavior.

TABLE 5: BASIC TABULATION OF DIVIDED GOVERNMENT OPINIONS

Is it better to have one party controlling the Presidency and Congress?	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Better to have one-party control	260	22.07	22.07
Better to have split-control	669	56.79	78.86
It does not matter	249	21.14	100.00

SOURCE: NES 2004 NATIONAL SURVEY DATA

These findings suggest that party identification has some influence on voting behavior

which results in divided government. However, the data shows that the findings were somewhat

similar, making the findings not statistically significant. In light of the theory, different

ideological preferences do translate into partisan identification. While differences certainly exist

in political party alignment, these differences are less likely to tell us definitively that partisan

alignment directly correlates to voting behavior resulting in divided government.

The first set of variables related in this analysis on split ticket voting will focus on

demographic variables. This category will utilize the following variables: age, race, gender, and

education level. Below is a table outlining the demographic variables which will be utilized in this study.

3.3 Demographic Variables

TABLE 6: DESCRIPTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES: 2004 AND 2008

Variable Name	Variable Description
Generation	Respondent's age (in years): 1: Generation Y: 17-34 2. Generation X: 35-44 3. Baby Boomers: 45-64 4. World War II: 65-99
Race	Respondent's race, coded 1: White; 2: Black; 3: Hispanic*
Gender	1: Male; 2: Female
Education Level	Number of years in formal education completed by respondent; Coded by three levels: 1: High school education or less; 2: Some College/Bachelor Degree, 3: Post Graduate Degree

*Racial categories different from the three utilized in this study were excluded from data analysis

These variables were grouped together for generalization and comparison purposes. This section will outline the hypotheses which will be tested using ANES data, broken down by the specific variable being tested. Demographic variables chosen for this study include age, race, education, and gender. The survey chosen for this study offers a large variety of demographic variables, so the use of these particular variables warrants discussion. Of all demographic

variables available such as income, marital status, or geographic region, these four variables are most encompassing of how an individual develops their political beliefs. These variables act as an umbrella in a way that encompasses the beliefs and attitudes related to other demographic variables. For instance gender can be encompassing of class, ethnicity, sexuality and location, and helps to illustrate the social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities. But how does this relate to split-ticket voting? Such gender constructs tell us that the decision making models between men and women are critical to determining voting behavior. This variable is a core factor in determining ones needs and ideas on proper governing and should therefore be reflected in the votes cast in national elections. These needs should be reflected in whether the male or female engages in split-ticket voting. Using another example, generations, the individual's needs change drastically over a lifetime and therefore would reflect the different needs that would cause an individual to engage in split-ticket voting. The use of race is a reflection on the literature that suggests this variable is an indicator of homogeneity, education, and religion among other identity factors. This binding force has been utilized in almost every quantitative study that examines split-ticket voting, thanks to the consistency and clear results that show a racial group is likely to participate in the political process in a similar fashion, including split-ticket voting. Literature has told us that the education variable is a direct indicator of voter sophistication. In addition to the education and voting behavior link, literature by Fiorina and Mahew has suggested that split-ticket voting can be viewed as a complex decision that would require greater voter sophistication.

H1: In comparing generations, as age increases, the respondent will be more likely to engage in split-ticket voting.

Research has shown that age plays an important role in how one perceives the political process and shapes their political thinking (Torres-Gil, 1992). This variable will be utilized in order to illustrate how different age groups may be more or less likely to engage in split ticket voting. If age is in fact an indicating factor, how can we accurately predict the likelihood of split-ticket voting in the future? How does this sort of voting behavior evolve as the voter ages? What factors play into the behavior of split ticket voting as it relates to a voters age? Age is utilized in this study and broken down based on literature (specifically by Fernando Torres-Gil, *The New Aging: Politics and Change in America*) which suggests that as the population ages, the needs of each age group changes and influences voting decisions.

H2: In comparing respondents by race, those who are white will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting than will those of African American decent.

The variable of race will also be utilized in this study because previous studies have shown that race can be a strong indicating variable which determines one's voting behavior. This analysis will focus on three racial groups: Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic. While all races play an important in studies of voting behavior, the scope of this study will not allow a broad analysis of all minorities which exist in American demographics. By choosing the above three races, the conclusions drawn can provide a general enough idea of how race influences split ticket voting.

The above hypothesis is based in the large body of literature on the subject of race, African American voters have shown a historically strong tie to the Democratic party, making it more likely that they will support a Democratic candidate in the future regardless of party control. "African Americans, who traditionally supported the Republican Party, began supporting Democrats following the ascent of the Franklin Roosevelt administration, the New Deal, and the Civil Rights movement. The Democratic Party's main base of support shifted to the Northeast, marking a dramatic reversal of history." (Aldrich, 97).

Those of Hispanic decent tend to less predictable in voting behavior compared to those of African American decent. Hispanics have tended to align themselves with the Democratic Party, even though the liberal social issues tend to contradict the more conservative beliefs that this demographic group typically holds. In an article by de la Garza and Cortina (2007), the researchers note the tie of Latinos to the Democratic Party, contradictory to the close socially conservative values that they potentially share with Republicans. "Because of their social conservatism, work ethic, and entrepreneurial spirit, Latinos and Republicans "know each other" and are not far apart ideologically and politically." (de la Garza and Cortina, 2003).

H3: In comparing respondents by gender, those who are female will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting than those who are male.

A wide body of literature suggests that men and women have very different preferences on political issues. A gender gap in voting has been observed between the sexes for a number of years based on differences in preferences, attaching different levels of importance to issues, and politicizing views differently (Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler, 312). Literature has also suggested

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that "issue attitudes are among the important variables explaining gender differences in voting behavior, especially attitudes on "compassion" issues like social welfare and redistribution and issues involving the use of force such as capital punishment and military intervention" (Howell and Day, 858). This hypothesis will test whether these attitudes about women and voting behavior is translated in to preferences on split-ticket voting.

H4: In comparing respondents, those who possess higher levels of education, specifically, college degree or higher, will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting that will those having high school or some college education.

Literature on education and voting behavior suggests a strong correlation between an increase in education and voter sophistication. This hypothesis suggests that an individual who possesses a higher level of education is more likely to engage in a more sophisticated form of voting, or purposefully split their ticket.

3.3 Attitudinal Variables

The next category of variables will focus on beliefs and attitudes toward the American governing system and divided government. Moving beyond demographic characteristics, how one perceives the government strongly shapes their political involvement and voting behavior. Data from this category will further investigate whether an individual consciously chooses to support (or not support) divided government. Previous literature has suggested certain outcomes based on attitudinal beliefs. "Born and Alvarez and Schousen have found only mixed evidence to support one of the key linchpins of Fiorina's thesis – i.e., that moderate voters are more likely than ideological voters to cast split-ticket votes" (Garand and Lichtl, 175). While certain

conclusions may have been drawn through previous studies, the comparison offered through this study with broad variable categories will take the analysis a step further. The attitudinal category will cover the following variables: party identification and support for divided government.

TABLE 7: DESCRIPTION OF ATTITUDINAL VARIABLES, 2004 AND 2008

Variable Name	Variable Description
Party Identification	Respondent's party identification divided into three categories: 1: Democrat; 2: Independent; 3: Republican
Folded Strength of Partisanship	Respondent's strength of partisanship: 1: Strong partisan, 2: Weak partisan; 3: Independent-leaning partisan, 4: Independent
Strength of Ideological Attachment	Respondent's strength of ideology: 1: Extremely conservative/liberal, 2: Conservative/liberal; 3: Moderate conservative/liberal; 4: Moderates plus Don't knows/haven't thought

H6: In comparing respondents, those who are Democrat will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting behavior than will those who are Republican.

H7: In comparing respondents, those who hold weak partisan loyalties will be more likely to engage in split-ticket voting compared to respondents with strong partisan beliefs.

Beyond this category, the data will test whether attitudinal variables have a greater influence on one's likelihood of ticket splitting than demographic variables. This research will also examine the relationship between the above outlined attitudinal variables and examine

whether any correlation exists when controlling for the demographic variables such as age, race, and gender.

3.4 System-Support Variables

TABLE 8: DESCRIPTION OF SYSTEM-SUPPORT VARIABLES, 2004 AND 2008

Variable Name	Variable Description
Political Trust	Respondent's trust in government: 1: Democrat; 2: Independent; 3: Republican
Internal Efficacy	Respondent's belief of internal efficacy: 1: Agree, 2: Neither agree nor disagree, 3: Disagree
External Efficacy	Respondent's belief of external efficacy: 1: Agree, 2: Neither agree nor disagree, 3: Disagree

H8: In comparing respondents, those who have less trust in the American political system are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than are those who have greater trust in the American political system.

H9: In comparing respondents, those who believe they possess strong internal efficacy are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than those who believe they do not.

H10: In comparing respondents, those who believe they possess strong external efficacy are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting compared to those who believe they do not.

These hypotheses have been utilized to measure the importance of trust and belief in government as it relates to split-ticket voting. Literature on these system-support variables has

suggested that the level of trust and efficacy of the individual can have a tremendous amount of

influence on whether the individual will participate in the electoral process but has not examined

in great depth the effects on split-ticket voting. Literature has also suggested that political trust

in particular can influence one's perceptions of internal and external efficacy. In order to reflect

this, logistic regression will be utilized to measure the effects of these variables on split-ticket

voting. This research will utilize a combination of basic tabulation analysis and cross-tabulation

analysis in order to determine zero-order relationships and partial relationships between

variables.

CHAPTER 4: DATA AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

To assess whether an association exists between split ticket voting and the previously

outlined division of variables, NES 2004 and 2008 data was analyzed utilizing basic cross-

tabulation analysis. The dependent variable, split-ticket voting, was compared to demographic

variables, attitudinal variables, and system-support variables. From these analyses, we should be

able to determine the significance of the above variables in how they relate to voting behavior.

4.1 Demographic Variables

H1: In comparing generations, those belonging to a younger generation will be more

likely to engage in split ticket voting than will those belonging to an older generation.

TABLE 9: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY GENERATION, 2004

	Generation Y	Generation X	Baby Boomers	World War II	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	25 (16.1%)	15 (12.4%)	53 (18.1%)	24 (18.2%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	130 (83.9%)	106 (87.6%)	240 (81.9%)	108 (81.8%)	584 (83.3%)
Totals	155 (100.0%)	121 (100.0%)	293 (100.0%)	132 (100.0%)	701 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004

Cramer's V=.057; p=.520

TABLE 10: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY GENERATION, 2008.

	Generation Y	Generation X	Baby Boomers	World War II	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	1,527,783 (9.4%)	1,415,827 (15.3%)	3,451,413 (14.2%)	2,892,031 (29.0%)	9,287,054 (15.6%)
Straight-Ticket	14,731,323 (90.6%)	7,815,894 (84.7%)	20,783,230 (85.8%)	7,064,694 (71.0%)	50,395,141 (84.4%)
Totals	16,259,106 (100.0%)	9,231,721 (100.0%)	24,234,643 (100.0%)	9,956,725 (100.0%)	59,682,195 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008

Cramer's V=.178; p=.000

The above analysis from the 2004 election does not show any particular trend in split ticket voting. The baby boomer and World War II generations show the highest occurrence of ticket splitting, but not of a truly significant difference from the other generations with only a 2 to 4 percent margin. As it relates to the hypothesis, those in the younger generation, in this case Generation Y, does not emerge as a group with a stronger likelihood than others to engage in split-ticket voting. The 2004 election data shows that while some minor differences exist between generations, overall the groups were unified in their voting decisions. This indicates that the general attitude in American politics was not significantly polarized. Perhaps the issues of 2004 led voters to believe that unified control of governmental institutions was the best path for the country. At this time, America was neck deep in the war in Iraq, and the concerns for national security and terrorism were at the top of the voter's list of important topics. This data would indicate that in times of crisis, particularly those relating to national security, voters are more likely to unite on issues rather than become polarized and divided.

The 2008 election data shows some similarities to the 2004 data. For instance, Generation Y, Generation X, and the Baby Boomer generation remained relatively consistent in

the engagement in split ticket voting, with only minor fluctuations in the data of only a couple of percentage points up or down. This may suggest that these generations are perhaps the most consistent voters in national elections. The exception to this is the World War II generation where we see the largest increase in ticket-splitting among the generations of 10.8 percent. . This brings about the question of what could have brought together three out of the four generations to unite in straight-ticket voting, and was this circumstance also responsible for the increase in ticket-splitting among the World War II generation? While the differences are not staggering among the early generations, the results suggest that while circumstances will unite and polarize generations to an extent, we are likely to see relatively consistent voting behavior among generations over a longer period of elections. The statistics show that generations will process campaign messages and express their voter preferences using that generation's method of processing information.

H2: In comparing respondents by race, those who are Caucasian will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting than will those of Hispanic or African American decent.

TABLE 11: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY RACE, 2004.

	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	97 (18.5%)	10 (10.1%)	3 (8.1%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	428 (5.8%)	89 (89.9%)	34 (91.9%)	584 (83.3%)
Totals	525 (100.0%)	99 (100.0%)	37 (100.0%)	701 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004

Cramer's V=.112; p=.119

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TABLE 12: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY RACE, 2008.

	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	56 (18.7%)	2 (.008%)	15 (.09%)	73 (10.3%)
Straight-Ticket	243 (81.2%)	248 (99.2%)	146 (90.7%)	637 (89.7%)
Totals	299 (100.0%)	250 (100.0%)	161 (100.0%)	710 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008

Cramer's V= .259; p=.000

In the 2004 national election, we find that the opposite is true to the hypothesis according to the data, which also aligns closely with literature on the subject. In 2004, Caucasian respondents were far more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than African Americans and Hispanics. The data shows that African Americans and Hispanics show the strongest trend in voting for one party, likely remaining loyal to their party identity. In the 2008 election, we see that Caucasians remain in the highest category of split-ticket voting but without a significant change in this voting behavior between 2004 and 2008. The other race categories show an extreme decrease in split-ticket voting, fractions of a percent. African Americans have significantly decreased in the occurrence of split-ticket voting which is very telling of the times. With African Americans tendency to have strong loyalty to the Democratic Party along with a strong Democratic African American candidate for the presidency, the outcome of the data is not necessarily surprising. The same is true for the Hispanic category, where we see a more unified voting response. Again, the Hispanic group tends to have strong loyalties to the Democratic Party despite the culture's conservative beliefs on social issues. The election data indicates a shift in the wants and needs of the American people for a desire to one-party control. Based on

these results, we find that race is somewhat a predictor as to whether an individual engages in

ticket-splitting. Both election years show that Hispanics and African Americans are true to what

research has already shown – that they are loyal to their political parties and hold true to those

beliefs.

H3: In comparing respondents, those who are female will be more likely to engage in

split ticket voting than will those who are male.

TABLE 13: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY GENDER, 2004.

	Male	Female	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	64 (19.5%)	53 (14.2%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	264 (80.5%)	320 (85.8%)	584 (83.3%)
Totals	328 (100.0%)	373 (100.0%)	701 (100%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V=.071; p=.060

TABLE 14: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY GENDER, 2008.

	Male	Female	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	3,615,360 (15.9%)	5,671,694 (15.3%)	9,287,054 (15.5%)
Straight-Ticket	19,183,833 (84.1%)	31,475,390 (84.7%)	50,659,223 (84.5%)
Totals	22,799,193 (38.0%)	37,147,084 (100.0%)	59,946,277 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008
Cramer's V=.008; p=.000

In the 2004 national elections, we find that males were slightly more likely to engage in

split ticket voting than females, but not by anything significant. Men show a 5.3 percent greater

likelihood of split ticket voting in the 2004 election than women which is not statistically significant. Based on the findings in 2004, we see that gender really plays no significant role in split-ticket voting. This is an interesting finding – if gender plays such a critical role in the formation of political beliefs, why is it not such an influential factor here? Does this suggest the same level of voter sophistication between the sexes? In 2008 we find that the percentages become even tighter between men and women. Split-ticket voting between men and women is nearly identical with a .6 percent difference between the sexes. Based on these findings, we see that gender really plays no significant role in split-ticket voting. This is an interesting finding – if gender plays such a critical role in the formation of political beliefs, why is it not such an influential factor here? Does this suggest the same level of voter sophistication between the sexes? Looking at the above results, we should consider what the main issues were around the 2004 and 2008 elections. According to NPR, 2004 issues revolved around immigration, the war in Iraq, the Patriot Act, energy policy (high gasoline prices drove this issue into the spotlight), and Homeland Security. In 2008 the same source highlights the economy, the war in Iraq, health care, immigration, and climate change. Literature on gender differences typically discusses how men have an interest in issues surrounding national security while women focus more on issues such as gun control or those related to family life. What the above results suggest is that both men and women took an interest in issues that were highly focused on security at a number of levels. In order to really understand gender voting behavior, a deeper analysis is needed that examines more elections and breaks down the analysis on the issues surrounding the election.

H4: In comparing respondents, those who possess higher levels of education, specifically, college degree or higher, will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting that will those having high school or some college education.

TABLE 15: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY EDUCATION, 2004.

	High School	College	Post Graduate	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	42 (19.4%)	37 (15.8%)	28 (19.2%)	107 (18.0%)
Straight-Ticket	174 (80.6%)	197 (84.2%)	118 (80.8%)	489 (82.0%)
Totals	216 (100.0%)	234 (100.0%)	146 (100.0%)	596 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V= .045; p=.548

TABLE 16: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY EDUCATION, 2008.

	High School	College	Post Graduate	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	14 (9.2%)	14 (10.1%)	8 (11.6%)	36 (10.0%)
Straight-Ticket	138 (90.8%)	125 (89.9%)	61 (88.4%)	324 (90.0%)
Totals	152 (100.0%)	139 (100.0%)	69 (100.0%)	360 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008
Cramer's V=.029; p=.860

Respondent education level can often assist in determining voting behavior. In 2004 we see a decline in split ticket voting when the respondent has obtained a college degree, corresponding with the highest occurrence of straight ticket voting behavior. Interestingly, the statistics of high school level education and post graduate are relatively close. This contradicts a wide body of literature that suggests an individual who has obtained higher education levels I

likely to be a more sophisticated voter in comparison to someone who has not. Granted, the data

does not determine *how* the respondent came to their voting decision, which warrants discussion

in future research. This disproves the hypothesis, showing that while respondent education

increases, it is not a guarantee that split-ticket voting will simultaneously increase. However, the

hypothesis is correct for the 2008 election. The 2008 election shows that post graduate education

indicates the highest occurrence of voting. The differences among education levels is even more

narrow than in 2004 which indicates that regardless of education level, some other force was

acting to unify respondents.

TABLE 17: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES,

2004.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Generation	.044	.234	.850	1.045
Race	.268	.109	.014	1.307
Education	-1.812	.269	.000	.163
Gender	-.005	.141	.972	.995

SOURCE: ANES 2004

TABLE 18: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES, 2008.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Generation	.601	.001	.000	1.824
Race	-.549	.001	.000	.578
Education	.005	.001	.000	1.005
Gender	.236	.001	.000	1.266

SOURCE: ANES 2008

Regression analysis shows us that in 2004 among demographic variables, generation and gender are showing indications that they have little effect on a respondent's decision to engage in split-ticket voting, which corresponds to the cross tabulations discussed earlier in this chapter. However, race and education show a strong relationship to ticket-splitting. The regression for 2004 indicates that while demographic variables are influential in voting behavior, they have a limited effect on split-ticket voting. The 2008 regression indicates that all demographic variables have an effect on ticket-splitting and we are able to reject the null hypothesis. The strength of the relationship is significantly stronger from the 2004 data. Overall, this tells us that demographic variables are influential to the studied voting behavior, but the strength of the relationship to ticket-splitting can be altered between election years. While this shows that yes, demographic variables play a role in an individual's decision to engage in split-ticket voting, other factors are influential in determining just how much generation, race, education, and gender will influence split-ticket voting.

<center>4.2 Attitudinal Variables</center>

H5: In comparing respondents, those who are Democrat will be more likely to engage in split ticket voting behavior than will those who are Republican.

<center>TABLE 19: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY PARTY IDENTIFICATION, 2004.</center>

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	55 (17.4%)	51 (14.9%)	10 (27.8%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	261 (82.6%)	291 (85.1%)	26 (72.2%)	584 (83.3%)
Totals	316 (100.0%)	342 (100.0%)	36 (100.0%)	701 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V= .077; p=.250

<center>TABLE 20: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY PARTY IDENTIFICATION, 2008.</center>

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	25 (67.7%)	22 (4.3%)	23 (13.5%)	70 (9.7%)
Straight-Ticket	12 (32.4%)	488 (95.7%)	147 (86.5%)	647 (90.2%)
Totals	37 (100.0%)	510 (100.0%)	170 (100.0%)	717 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008
Cramer's V=.473; p=.000

In examining respondent party identification we find that in 2004, independents were most likely to engage in split-ticket voting by a fairly significant margin of over 10 percent from the next highest category. Republicans were more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than Democrats in 2004 as well, but not by any dramatic differences according to the data. The statistics are dramatically different among Republicans between 2004 and 2008. The 2008

election resulted in a 50.3 percent increase in split-ticket voting among Republicans. Democrats saw a decrease of 10.6 percent in straight ticket voting in 2008 and Independents saw a fair decrease in ticket-splitting of 14.3 percent between election years. These results tell us that while the majority individuals stay loyal to their party, it is likely circumstantial variables surrounding an election that can cause the voter to deviate from straight-ticket voting. Perhaps the individual's satisfaction with the party as a whole could potentially play a role in ticket-splitting. But is partisanship the strongest indicator of attitudinal beliefs when it comes to split-ticket voting?

H6: In comparing respondents, those who hold weak partisan loyalties will be more likely to engage in split-ticket voting compared to respondents with strong partisan beliefs.

TABLE 21: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY STRENGTH OF PARTISANSHIP, 2004.

	Independent	Leaning Independent	Weak Partisan	Strong Partisan	**Total**
Split-Ticket	10 (27.8%)	41 (23.2%)	38 (18.8%)	27 (9.6%)	116 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	26 (72.2%)	136 (76.8%)	164 (81.1%)	252 (90.3%)	578 (83.3%)
Totals	36 (100.0%)	177 (100.0%)	202 (100.0%)	279 (100.0%)	694 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004

Cramer's V= .166; p=.000

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TABLE 22: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY STRENGTH OF PARTISANSHIP, 2008.

	Independent	Leaning Independent	Weak Partisan	Strong Partisan	**Total**
Split-Ticket	10 (37.0%)	13 (9.3%)	31 (14.9%)	16 (4.7%)	70 (9.8%)
Straight-Ticket	17 (62.9%)	127 (9.7%)	176 (85.0%)	323 (95.3%)	643 (90.2%)
Totals	27 (100.0%)	140 (100.0%)	207 (100.0%)	339 (100.0%)	713 (100.0%)

Cramer's V=.233; p=.000

While partisanship is certainly an indicator of voting behavior, strength of partisanship is likely to be more telling of the respondent's level of polarization on the ideological spectrum. The tables above indicate a general trend in ticket splitting that is in sync with the hypothesis. In examining the data from 2004, we see that those who considered themselves to have strong partisan loyalties were actually far more likely to engage in ticket-splitting compared to independents. However, those in the middle of the spectrum (leaning independent and weak partisan) were most likely to engage in split-ticket voting behavior. This proves that individuals who are not strongly associated with either end of the political spectrum are most likely to sway their vote based on other variables.

Data from the 2008 election tells a slightly different story. Respondents who consider themselves independents emerge with the most occurrences of ticket-splitting with a 10 percentage point increase from 2004. Independent leaners, weak partisans, and strong partisans became even more unified in their voting decisions. What factors would cause these groups to become increasingly unified in the 2008 election? The data may indicate that in 2004

individuals on the ideological spectrum were more polarized, even those with strong partisan

loyalties.

H8: In comparing respondents, those whose ideology is extremely liberal or conservative

are less likely to engage in split-ticket voting compared to respondents with weak strength in

ideology.

TABLE 23: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY STRENGTH OF IDEOLOGY, 2004.

	Moderates and Don't Know	Slightly Liberal or Conservative	Liberal or Conservative	Extremely Liberal or Conservative	**Total**
Split-Ticket	56 (21.1%)	43 (22.4%)	18 (8.7%)	0 (.0%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	210 (78.9%)	149 (77.6%)	187 (91.2%)	37 (100.0%)	583 (83.3%)
Totals	266 (100.0%)	192 (100.0%)	205 (100.0%)	37 (100.0%)	700 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004

Cramer's V= .188; p=.000

TABLE 24: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY STRENGTH OF IDEOLOGY, 2008.

	Moderates and Don't Know	Slightly Liberal or Conservative	Liberal or Conservative	Extremely Liberal or Conservative	**Total**
Split-Ticket	21 (11.8%)	26 (18.7%)	10 (5.9%)	3 (6.4%)	60 (11.2%)
Straight-Ticket	157 (88.2%)	113 (81.3%)	160 (94.1%)	44 (93.6%)	474 (88.8%)
Totals	178 (100.0%)	139 (100.0%)	170 (100.0%)	47 (100.0%)	534 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008

Cramer's V=.161; p=.003

In examining both election years, the hypothesis is pretty accurate. Moderates and those who are slightly liberal or conservative share similar patterns in split-ticket voting behavior. Further, as the strength of ideology increases the occurrence of split-ticket voting increases dramatically. The exception to this in both years is among those respondents who consider themselves slightly liberal or conservative. Considering this finding, it is not necessarily surprising. The individuals in this category have the least amount of conviction to either end of the ideological spectrum making them more susceptible to decisions such as split-ticket voting. It is interesting to see that in 2008 that there is the slight increase of ticket-splitting among extreme conservatives and liberals. While the difference between 2004 and 2008 is pretty insignificant, it is interesting to consider what could have caused such an extreme group of voters to become more polarized and reflect their beliefs in the vote.

TABLE 25: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL ATTITUDINAL VARIABLES, 2004.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Party Identification	.044	.234	.850	1.045
Strength of Partisanship	.268	.109	.014	1.307
Strength of Ideology	-1.812	.269	.000	.163

SOURCE: ANES 2004

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TABLE 26: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL ATTITUDINAL VARIABLES, 2008.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Party Identification	.781	.324	.016	2.184
Strength of Partisanship	.201	.320	.530	1.223
Strength of Ideology	-.249	.149	.094	.779

SOURCE: ANES 2008

The regression of attitudinal variables suggests party identification has a weak

relationship to split-ticket voting in 2004. Strength of partisanship and ideology appear to have a

significant effect on an individual's decision to engage in ticket-splitting. Strength of ideology

appears to have the most significant on ticket-splitting which goes to show that while an

individual can claim strong ties to one party it is ultimately the core ideological beliefs that will

drive voting behavior. The 2008 regression shows an interesting shift in the importance of party

identification as it relates to split-ticket voting behavior. What was the least significant indicator

in 2004 has become the greatest in 2008. This may be an indicator of an ideological shift in the

American voter between parties. In examining the Democratic control that emerged as a result

of the 2008 election, this variable serves as an indicator of trends in the division of power

between the Presidency and the House. Attitudinal variables appear to have a stronger influence

on split-ticket voting compared to demographic variables. The question moving forward is if

and how the attitudinal variables work together as it relates to split-ticket voting behavior.

4.3 System-Support Variables

H8: In comparing respondents, those who have less trust in the American political system are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than are those who have greater trust in the American political system.

TABLE 27: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY TRUST IN GOVERNMENT, 2004.

Trust in Government

	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always	**Total**
Split-Ticket	1 (14.3%)	60 (16.2%)	51 (16.8%)	5 (27.8%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	6 (85.7%)	311 (83.8%)	253 (83.2%)	13 (72.2%)	583 (83.3%)
Totals	7 (100.0%)	371 (100.0%)	304 (100.0%)	18 (100.0%)	700 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V=.049; p=.639

TABLE 28: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY TRUST IN GOVERNMENT, 2008.

Trust in Government

	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always	**Total**
Split-Ticket	2 (11.1%)	35 (9.9%)	32 (10.4%)	4 (16.7%)	73 (9.9%)
Straight-Ticket	16 (88.9%)	319 (90.1%)	309 (90.6%)	20 (83.3%)	664 (90.1%)
Totals	18 (100.0%)	354 (100.0%)	341 (100.0%)	24 (100.0%)	737 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008
Cramer's V=.043; p=.714

Trust in government would appear to be a strong indicator of how an individual develops their actions toward split-ticket voting. The data shows an interesting trend in 2004 where as trust in government increases, so does the occurrence of split-ticket voting. In theory, the results should read the opposite direction where those have the least trust in government would be most likely to engage in ticket-splitting. A similar pattern occurs in 2008 where ticket-splitting increases as trust in government increases with the exception of voters who trust government some of the time. The data warrants an interesting question: does this suggest that split-ticket voting provides the voter with increased trust in government? Why would the voter who trusts government most also be most likely to engage in ticket splitting? 2004 and 2008 were very different elections for a variety of reasons, so seeing such similar data would allow us to dismiss the premonition that the data is a reflection of circumstances.

H9: In comparing respondents, those who believe they possess strong internal efficacy are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting than those who believe they do not.

TABLE 29: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY INTERNAL EFFICACY, 2004.

	Internal Political Efficacy			
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	44 (16.0%)	62 (17.2%)	11 (16.7%)	117 (16.7%)
Straight-Ticket	231 (84.0%)	298 (82.8%)	55 (83.3%)	584 (83.3%)
Totals	275 (100.0%)	360 (100.0%)	66 (100.0%)	701 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V=.015; p=.920

TABLE 30: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY INTERNAL EFFICACY, 2008.

	Internal Political Efficacy			
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	37 (50.7%)	17 (23.3%)	19 (26.0%)	73 (100.0%)
Straight-Ticket	322 (48.2%)	119 (17.8%)	227 (34.0%)	668 (100.0%)
Totals	359 (48.4%)	136 (18.4%)	246 (33.2%)	741 (100.0%)

Cramer's V=.057; p=.299

Results from the 2004 election show that regardless of the respondent's beliefs toward their own internal efficacy the occurrence of split-ticket voting was the same. However, this variable becomes interesting in that perhaps the respondent did not feel the need to split their ticket as a result of their internal efficacy. When examining the 2008 election we see that those who agreed that they did possess internal efficacy saw a much greater occurrence of split-ticket voting compared to the other categories. The increase is significant at 34.7 percentage points which tells us that 2008 was an election where internal efficacy was put to use for whatever reasons or circumstances surrounding that particular election.

H10: In comparing respondents, those who believe they possess strong external efficacy are more likely to engage in split-ticket voting compared to those who believe they do not.

TABLE 31: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY EXTERNAL EFFICACY, 2004.

| | External Political Efficacy | | | |
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	61 (52.1%)	12 (10.3%)	44 (37.6%)	117 (100.0%)
Straight-Ticket	276 (47.6%)	73 (12.6%)	231 (39.8%)	580 (100.0%)
Totals	337 (48.4%)	85 (12.2%)	275 (39.5%)	697 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2004
Cramer's V=.037; p=.615

TABLE 32: SPLIT TICKET VOTING BY EXTERNAL EFFICACY, 2008.

| | External Political Efficacy | | | |
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	**Totals**
Split-Ticket	22 (30.1%)	19 (26.0%)	32 (43.8%)	73 (100.0%)
Straight-Ticket	265 (39.7%)	164 (24.6%)	238 (35.7%)	667 (100.0%)
Totals	287 (38.8%)	183 (24.7%)	270 (36.5%)	740 (100.0%)

SOURCE: ANES 2008
Cramer's V=.062; p=.245

External efficacy proved to be a determining variable in the 2004 election. The data illustrates that split-ticket voting was an avenue where respondents felt their vote would be effective when participating in politics. This would indicate a deliberate action on behalf of the

respondent rather than an unconscious action. However, when we look to the 2008 election, we see a very different trend. Respondents who did not feel were effective when participating in politics saw the highest occurrence of ticket-splitting. This dramatic reversal of split-ticket voting decisions proves interesting on a number of levels. External efficacy is a determining factor in cases where the individual feels they are effective *and* when they disagree with this. While the hypothesis was proven incorrect in 2008, what the data teaches us is that while circumstances surrounding the political climate may alter what type of individual engages in ticket-splitting (whether it be someone with strong or weak external efficacy), this variable plays a role regardless.

TABLE 33: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL SYSTEM-SUPPORT VARIABLES, 2004.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Trust in Government	.169	.180	.348	1.184
Internal Efficacy	.097	.169	.563	1.102
External Efficacy	-.118	.117	.315	.889

SOURCE: ANES 2004

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TABLE 34: LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF ALL SYSTEM-SUPPORT VARIABLES,

2008.

Variable	Constant	Standard Error	P-Value	Percentage Change in Odds Exp(B)
Trust in Government	-.047	.205	.818	.954
Internal Efficacy	-.191	.145	.189	.826
External Efficacy	.269	.146	.065	1.309

SOURCE: ANES 2008

Regression analysis, specifically examining the measure of significance, shows us that while the cross tabulations produced interesting results, the strength of the relationship between the system-support variables is weak across both elections. External efficacy appears to have the strongest relationship to split-ticket voting but not in a significant way. While system-support variables provide interesting findings, the strength of the relationship to split-ticket voting is weaker compared to attitudinal and demographic variables. This model has shown us that system-support variables provide insight into the voter's perceptions and can provide a solid insight into certain election issues but cannot definitively explain the occurrence of ticket-splitting.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The ability to understand voting behavior is critical in predicting election outcomes. This thesis examined split-ticket voting based on demographic variables, attitudinal variables, and system support variables. This topic is of importance for a variety of reasons, particularly in understanding what (if any) characteristics about a voter elicit this sort of voting behavior and how this can explain previous election outcomes as well as how it impacts future elections. Previous research on split-ticket voting has not provided the clearest understanding as to how these variables correlate to this sort of voting behavior. It is important that we continue to build upon previous literature in order to advance our understanding of voting behavior as a whole.

Based on the 2004 and 2008 American National Election Survey, split-ticket voting behavior was analyzed based on three categories of quantitative analysis. In examining demographic variables, generations was found to have relatively consistent results with the exception of the World War II generation in 2008. The generational effect proved to be a fairly constant indicator of voting behavior. The same holds true for race; straight versus split-ticket voting remains relatively consistent, perhaps based on traditional party alignment based on the individual's race. Caucasian respondents are most likely to engage in split-ticket voting in both election years. In 2004 we see an 8% difference between Caucasian ticket-splitters versus Hispanics and African Americans. The difference was even greater in 2008 with a dramatic decrease among African Americans and Hispanics for ticket-splitting, most notably thanks to circumstances surrounding the election. It was interesting to see how the apparent lack of homogeneity among Caucasians would cause such divisions in voting behavior, a subject that would be interesting to investigate in future research.

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Gender was originally hypothesized to be a deciding factor as to an individual's likelihood to engage in split-ticket voting. Upon examining the data, we find that gender really does not statistically prove to be a deciding factor when engaging in split-ticket voting. 2004 showed a statistically insignificant difference of 4 percent, and in 2008 males were mere fractions of a percent difference when it came to split-ticket voting than females. This difference narrowed dramatically in 2008 with only a 0.9 percent difference. This poses an interesting dilemma: if gender is such an influential variable in other areas of voting behavior, why is this variable so non-influential when it comes to split-ticket voting behavior? Future research could examine this question in more depth as well.

In examining education, the data was not statistically significant. In 2004, those with some college or a Bachelor's degree were slightly less likely to engage in split-ticket voting than the other categories which were an interesting trend compared to the literature. In 2008 the data shows that an increase in respondent education corresponded to an increase in split-ticket voting. Unfortunately the data does not allow for a definitive explanation of how education effects split-ticket voting, and an examination of more elections may help in finding a trend between ticket splitting and this demographic variable. While a subtle trend does indicate that the respondent's education level does influence their decision to engage in split-ticket voting, the 2004 and 2008 election data does not prove any particular trends to this aspect of voting behavior.

When examining attitudinal variables, we do see some variations in the data results when looking at party identification. The results indicate that perhaps the decision to engage in split-ticket voting may be tied to other variables related to the particular election and not necessarily

party identification as a consistent indicator to split-ticket voting behavior. While differences certainly exist in political party alignment, these differences are less likely to tell us definitively that partisan alignment directly correlates to voting behavior resulting in divided government. Strength of partisanship and ideology proved to be even more significant in the 2004 election. Overall, attitudinal variables proved to be a strong indicator of split-ticket voting behavior.

System support variables show that while the data results were of some interest, regression indicated the lack of a strong effect on ticket-splitting. Trust in government proved interesting particularly in the outlier categories. In 2008, those with the most trust in government saw a dramatic increase in ticket-splitting which begs the question of why that particular group would vote in that manner. Did ticket-splitting increase their trust? Also on this same variable, those with the least trust in government were typically on the lower probability of ticket-splitting. This goes against a body of literature that suggests those with the least amount of trust in government are most likely to split their ticket which warrants further investigation.

Overall, demographic and attitudinal variables proved to be a relatively consistent indicator of split-ticket voting and perhaps work together in some ways to predict voting behavior. System-support variables Split-ticket voting has proven to be a decision that is made at a number of levels. This analysis suggests that it is a by-product of the voter's personal demographic characteristics and party identification that lead to the decision to straight or split vote their ticket at the Executive and Congressional level. This analysis concludes that while demographic variables help in shaping the political beliefs and ultimately the voter's decision-making model, attitudinal variables are ultimately what determine the outcome.

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