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## TRUMP AND THE MIDWEST: THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND THE AVENUES OF MIDWESTERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

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Perhaps the biggest story of the surprising 2016 presidential election was Donald Trump's victories in the Midwest, which, according to President Obama's 2012 campaign manager David Plouffe, left the "blue Big Ten firewall in ruins."<sup>2</sup> The *Columbus Dispatch* reported that "one of the more stunning aspects of the surprise presidential victory of Republican Donald Trump was the way that states in the industrial Midwest fell like dominoes for him."<sup>3</sup> Trump won Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, and Ohio, all of which Barack Obama had won in both 2008 and 2012.<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin had not voted for the Republican candidate for president since the Reagan 49-state landslide of 1984 and Michigan had not since 1988. Iowa had supported Michael Dukakis, Bill Clinton twice, and narrowly supported Al Gore in 2000 and George Bush in 2004 before voting for Obama twice. Ohio served as a classic bellwether and had voted to support the winner of the presidential

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<sup>2</sup> David Plouffe, "What I Got Wrong About the Election," *New York Times*, November 11, 2016. See also Amy Walter, "How Trump Broke the Blue Wall," *Cook Political Report*, December 9, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Jessica Wehrman, "GOP Wins Over Union Members in Midwest," *Columbus Dispatch*, November 20, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Trump also won Pennsylvania, which, outside of Philadelphia, is seen as "Midwestern in culture and concerns." Michael Barone, "Race Was Won (and Lost) in Midwest," *Washington Examiner*, November 21, 2016.

race every year since John F. Kennedy in 1960.<sup>5</sup> One goal of this article is to explore the surprising shift in voting patterns in Midwestern states during the 2016 election and to draw on some of the work done in Midwestern history to better understand and contextualize this shift, which, if it becomes semi-permanent, could mark a major transition in presidential politics. Another goal of this article is to highlight the possibilities for future research in the field of Midwestern studies which have been prompted by these recent events and to suggest additional research possibilities more generally.<sup>6</sup>

One method of beginning a review of the recent election and tapping the available corpus of work on the history of the Midwest is to examine the origins of the Republican Party in the Midwest and its subsequent fortunes. Organized in 1854 as an anti-slavery and anti-Southern party – and thereby specifically a regional party and one that found particular support among Midwestern farmers – the GOP first took shape in meeting halls in Ripon, Wisconsin and Jackson, Michigan and Crawfordsville, Iowa (there is debate about the precise origin of the party).<sup>7</sup> The Republican Party swept the Midwest during the 1850s and the first person to win a presidential race as a Republican was Illinoisian Abraham Lincoln in 1860.<sup>8</sup> The areas of the Midwest which were settled by New England Yankees and Pennsylvania Quakers and Germans tended to be more supportive of the GOP than areas of the Midwest settled by Southerners, who had migrated in from the solidly Democratic South.<sup>9</sup> The influence of early settlement patterns on present day voting results is still visible, although party loyalties have flipped due to the rise of the GOP in the South and the transformation of areas settled by New Englanders into Democratic territory.

<sup>5</sup> Kyle Kondik, *The Bellwether: Why Ohio Picks the President* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2016); Andrew Cayton, “Bellwether Ohio,” *American Interest* vol. 12, no. 2 (November/December 2016), 45-51.

<sup>6</sup> Most specifically, I hope this article will provide research ideas to the students in my class POLS/HIST 492/592: “The Political Culture of the Midwest” at the University of South Dakota. More generally, I hope this article will assist those interested in participating in a planned book of essays about post-World War II Midwestern politics.

<sup>7</sup> Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1978), 149-50; William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1988); Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1970); Robert Cook, *Baptism of Fire: The Republican Party in Iowa, 1838-1878* (Ames, Iowa State University Press, 1994); Henry Clyde Hubbert, *The Older Middle West, 1840 - 1880: Its Social, Economic and Political Life and Sectional Tendencies before, during, and after the Civil War* (New York, Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963); Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York, Basic Books, 2014); na, “Grand Old Problem: Where Were the First Republicans,” Associated Press, May 1, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Douglas R. Egerton, *Year of Meteors: Stephen Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, and the Election that Brought on the Civil War* (New York, Bloomsbury Press, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Colin Woodard, *American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America* (New York, Penguin, 2012).

From the time of the Civil War until the Great Depression, the Republican Party remained dominant in the Midwest and presidents such as U.S. Grant (Illinois), Rutherford Hayes (Ohio), James Garfield (Ohio), Benjamin Harrison (Indiana), William McKinley (Ohio), William Howard Taft (Ohio), Warren Harding (Ohio), and Herbert Hoover (Iowa) hailed from the region. In the latter half of the nineteenth-century the region, which had mostly been settled by agrarian yeoman, became much less dependent on agriculture as a robust industrial economy took hold and the national GOP made efforts to protect Midwestern industry by way of high tariffs. In the early decades of the twentieth-century, the factories of the Midwest were highly productive and Henry Ford built his famous plants in Dearborn, Michigan and other companies such as General Motors took root in Detroit. The raw materials for these industries were shipped in via the Great Lakes from Minnesota's Iron Range and from the southern Midwest's coal fields. During the labor crunch of the World War I era, many African Americans left the segregated South and moved to Midwestern cities to find work in the Midwest's new factories and thereby created another major interest group in the Midwest that was especially influential in cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Milwaukee.

The crisis of the Great Depression jolted the Midwest, as it did the entire nation, and Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal caused the region to partially re-align politically toward the Democrats, although the GOP still remained a strong force, especially in small towns, rural areas, and suburbs, all of which caused many areas of the Midwest to be politically competitive. In stark comparison to the era of pre-1930s GOP dominance in the Midwest, New Deal farm programs and New Deal labor laws drew more Midwesterners toward the Democrats.<sup>10</sup> During the New Deal, Republicans also began to lose their hold on the African American voter, who had previously supported the party of Lincoln as liberators but would later become a pillar of the Democratic coalition.<sup>11</sup> The

<sup>10</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990); Shelton Stromquist and Marvin Bergman (eds), *Unionizing the Jungles: Labor and Community in the Twentieth-Century Meatpacking Industry* (Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 1997); Elizabeth Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis, 1915-1945* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Theodore Saloutos, *The American Farmer and the New Deal* (Ames, Iowa State University Press, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> Nancy Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983); Donald J. Lisio, *Hoover, Blacks & Lily-Whites: A Study of Southern Strategies* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Richard Sherman, *The Republican Party and Black America from McKinley to Hoover, 1896-1933* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1973); Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians: The Rise of Negro Politics in Chicago* (New York, AMS Press, 1969); Eric Schickler, Kathryn Pearson, and Brian D. Feinstein, "Congressional Parties and Civil Rights from 1933 to 1972," *Journal of Politics* vol. 72, no. 3 (July 2010),

New Deal's promotion of organized labor was especially influential in the Midwest's industrial areas, which saw the rise of powerful unions such as the United Auto Workers which were loyal to the Democratic Party.<sup>12</sup> In the later stages of the twentieth-century, however, the once-powerful and employment-generating manufacturing sector of the Midwest began to shrivel in the face of stiff foreign competition, the movement of factories to low-wage countries such as Mexico, and automation.<sup>13</sup> The smaller number of farmers in the Midwest and the Democrats' traditional focus, at least in the North, on urban voters and its more recent focus on coastal voters caused a widening disconnect with rural Midwesterners. In broad strokes, these were the forces and trends at work in the 2016 presidential race in the Midwest.

#### THE RURAL MIDWEST VOTE

During the 2016 presidential race Midwestern "outstates," or places outside of metro areas of a million-plus people, strongly supported Trump.<sup>14</sup> Outstate areas accounted for 61% of the vote in Wisconsin, 47% in Michigan, 100% in Iowa (where there is no metro of over a million people), and 44% in Ohio.<sup>15</sup> President Barack Obama had won outstate Wisconsin (outside of Milwaukee and Madison) with 54% and 50% in 2008 and 2012 but Clinton only received the support of 41% of rural Wisconsinites; Obama had won outstate Michigan (outside of Detroit and Grand Rapids) with 55% and 52% but Clinton only received 41%; Obama had won outstate Ohio (outside of Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati) with 48% and 47% but Clinton only received 35%.<sup>16</sup> In Wisconsin's 46 non-metro or rural counties Trump won by nearly 20%, a major shift from 2012,

672; Mark Stern, "Party Alignments and Civil Rights: Then and Now," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* vol. 25, no. 3 (Summer 1995), 414.

<sup>12</sup> John Barnard, *American Vanguard: The United Auto Workers during the Reuther Years, 1935-1970* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York, Basic Books, 1984); Edward McClelland, *Nothin' But Blue Skies: The Heyday, Hard Times, and Hopes of America's Industrial Heartland* (New York, Bloomsburg Press, 2013); David Giffels, *The Hard Way on Purpose: Essays and Dispatches from the Rust Belt* (New York, Scribner, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> Michael Barone, "Race Was Won (and Lost) in Midwest," *Washington Examiner*, November 21, 2016; Aaron Zitner and Paul Overberg, "Rural Vote Fuels Trump; Clinton Loses Urban Grip," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Barone, "Race Was Won (and Lost) in Midwest," *Washington Examiner*, November 21, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Barone, "Race Was Won (and Lost) in Midwest," *Washington Examiner*, November 21, 2016.

when Obama and Mitt Romney split this vote.<sup>17</sup> In 2008, Obama carried 40 of Wisconsin's 47 rural counties; in 2016, Trump carried 42 of those counties.<sup>18</sup> In Ohio, Trump fared better than Romney in 42 counties, most of them relatively small and rural.<sup>19</sup> Overall Clinton lost rural voters by a 2-1 margin, which was much worse than Obama had fared.<sup>20</sup> By far the largest shift of voters to the GOP during the 2016 presidential election occurred in the rural Midwest and, in particular, the "most striking change occurred in counties along the junction of Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa."<sup>21</sup> After the election, some commentators criticized the Clinton "campaign's decision to largely surrender the rural vote to the GOP" and for its failure to name a "rural council" or to build a rural campaign infrastructure.<sup>22</sup> Congressman Collin Peterson, who represented rural Western Minnesota and who was nearly defeated as part of the Trump wave, lamented the state of the Democrats in the rural Midwest and conceded "we've become an urban party."<sup>23</sup> Some Democratic strategists, however, discounted such concerns and argued that Democrats should focus less time on the rural Midwest and instead focus on their urban strengths and on the Sun Belt.<sup>24</sup>

Whatever strategy the Democrats adopt, their poor rural returns were clear in the Midwest in 2016. In rural areas of Michigan, for example, Trump far out-performed Michigan native Mitt Romney in counties such as Montmorency, Kalkaska, and Osceola, which supported Trump with

<sup>17</sup> Craig Gilbert, "Difference-makers in Trump's Wisconsin Win," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 12, 2016; Dan Balz, "Democrats Search for a Path Back into Rural America's Good Graces," *Washington Post*, December 10, 2016; Craig Gilbert, "As Dust Settles, Parts of Political Map Scrambled," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 4, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Ben Merriman, "Caught in the Middle," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 20, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Henry J. Gomez and Rich Exner, "A Big Reason Why Donald Trump Beat Hillary Clinton in Ohio: He Ran Up the Score in Appalachia," *Cleveland.com* [the new designation for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*], November 10, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Molly Ball, "Why Hillary Clinton Lost," *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016).

<sup>21</sup> Lazaro Gamio and Dan Keating, "How Trump Redrew the Electoral Map, from Sea to Shining Sea," *New York Times*, November 9, 2016 (striking); Emily Badger, Quoc Trung Bui, and Adam Pearce, "The Election Highlighted a Growing Rural-Urban Split," *New York Times*, November 11, 2016; Michael Barone, "Donald Trump and the Outstate Midwest Redraw the Partisan Lines," *Washington Examiner*, December 5, 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Helena Bottemiller Evich, "Revenge of the Rural Voter," *Politico*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Maggie Severns and Theodoric Meyer, "House Democrats Lament Blue-Collar Collapse," *Politico*, November 18, 2016 (Peterson); Alex Roarty, "Rural Democrats: Party Ignored Us, Suffered the Consequences," *Roll Call*, December 2, 2016; Greg Jaffe, "Vilsack's Tough Message for Fellow Democrats: Stop Writing Off Rural America," *Washington Post*, November 28, 2016; Mallory Shelbourne, "Obama's Agriculture Secretary: Dems Need to Talk to Rural America," *The Hill*, November 28, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Mark J. Rozell and Whet Smith, "Memo to Democrats: Look to the Southwest and Southeast, Not Midwest," *Politico*, November 30, 2016; Gabriel Debenedetti, "Democrats Wrestle with Rust Belt Dilemma," *Politico*, November 26, 2016; Alana Semuels, "Democrats Don't Have an Easy Answer for the Rust Belt," *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016); Ronald Brownstein, "Has the Balance of Power Shifted from the Rustbelt to the Sunbelt?" *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016); Gabriel Debenedetti, "Democratic Donors Call for Clinton Campaign Post-Mortem," *Politico*, December 15, 2016.

nearly 70% of the vote.<sup>25</sup> Clinton only won 8 Michigan counties, all of which were urban or university-oriented.<sup>26</sup> One consultant blamed Democrats for focusing too much on urban Detroit: “You can saturate Detroit all you want, but when you drive past 23 Mile or north of Bay City, all you saw was Trump. There was no effort whatsoever to make a dent in that area.”<sup>27</sup> Trump won Michigan’s rural areas and small towns 57%-38%, improving on Romney’s 2012 margin of 53%-46%.<sup>28</sup>

The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* noted that it was “hard to overstate Trump’s dominance in rural Wisconsin” and reported that he won rural voters by a 27% margin. In 2008, Obama had carried the same rural voters by 8%. Trump won 18 rural counties in Wisconsin that Obama had won in 2012 (overall, Trump won 22 counties in Wisconsin that Obama had won in 2012). One of the “last bastions of rural white Democrats in America,” the area of Southwestern Wisconsin near the Mississippi River known as The Driftless, went for Trump.<sup>29</sup> Counties such as Pepin, Buffalo, Crawford, Vernon, Grant, Lafayette, and Trempealeau, which had not voted for a Republican presidential candidate in decades, supported Trump. Trempealeau County was made famous in historical circles by the Nebraskan Merle Curti, who conducted an intense microcosmic analysis of the settlement and development of the county while a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.<sup>30</sup> Trump won Wisconsin’s rural areas and small towns 63%-34%, improving on Romney’s 2012 margin of 53%-46%.<sup>31</sup> After the election, some Democratic consultants urged party leaders to not be distracted by these poor badger state returns and argued that the future of the Democratic Party was in the diversifying Sun Belt and South: “It does not lie in rural Wisconsin.”<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Kathleen Gray, “Trump Message, Voter Turnout Led to GOP Wins and Dem Losses,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Chuck Todd, Mark Murray, and Carrie Dann, “How Rural America Fueled Trump’s Win,” NBC News, November 9, 2016.

<sup>29</sup> For Wisconsin data, see Craig Gilbert, “Difference-makers in Trump’s Wisconsin Win,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 12, 2016 (quotation). See also Craig Gilbert, Todd Spangler, and Bill Laitner, “How Clinton Lost ‘Blue Wall’ States of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Detroit Free Press* (co-operative report), November 10, 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Merle Curti, *The Making of an American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier County* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1959).

<sup>31</sup> Chuck Todd, Mark Murray, and Carrie Dann, “How Rural America Fueled Trump’s Win,” NBC News, November 9, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Reid J. Epstein and Janet Hook, “In Their Coastal Citadels, Democrats Argue Over What Went Wrong,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 18, 2016.

The two states Clinton won in the Midwest, Minnesota and Illinois, were highly influenced by singular and dense urban areas, the Twin Cities and Chicago. In perhaps the biggest surprise of the 2016 election, Trump only lost Minnesota, which is known for its liberal politics and had not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1972, by 1.5%. In the famously labor-oriented Iron Range, Trump won Hibbing, the hometown of Bob Dylan.<sup>33</sup> But 60% of the Minnesotans live in the Twin Cities metro area, making the dominance of one urban core in Minnesota similar to the role of Chicago in Illinois. Minnesota's urban center simply holds more votes than "outstate Minnesota," where Trump did well.<sup>34</sup> Even in northern Minnesota, "long a Democratic-Farmer Labor stronghold," Trump won Beltrami, Itasca, Mahnomen, and Koochiching counties.<sup>35</sup> Overall, Trump won 78 of Minnesota's 87 counties.<sup>36</sup> In Illinois, Trump also won the vast majority of counties – 91 of 102 – but Clinton won big in Chicago's Cook County, where she earned half of her votes, and thus won the state.<sup>37</sup>

The great disparity in voting between rural counties and urban areas proved true across the Midwest. Trump won 93 of 99 counties in Iowa, for example, and flipped 32 counties that had voted for Obama in 2012.<sup>38</sup> Trump's Iowa victory was bigger than Reagan's 1984 reelection landslide.<sup>39</sup> In a pattern common to the larger Midwest, Trump lost six counties in Iowa that were home to urban centers (Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport) and universities (University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa) but he won the remaining 93. Trump won 88 of 92 counties in Indiana; 75 of 83 counties in Michigan; 61 of 66 counties in South Dakota; 81 of 88 counties in Ohio; and 59 of 72 counties in Wisconsin. Trump won every county in Kansas but one (home to the University of Kansas); every county but two in North Dakota (which were Indian reservation counties); every county but two in Nebraska (which were

<sup>33</sup> Greta Kaul, "Greater Minnesota Struggling Economically, Data Shows Worst-Hit Areas Cast Ballots for Trump," *MinnPost*, November 29, 2016. On the Iron Range, see Jeff Manuel's recent book *Taconite Dreams: The Struggle to Sustain Mining on Minnesota's Iron Range, 1915-2000* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2015), which won the 2016 Hamlin Garland Prize awarded by the Midwestern History Association.

<sup>34</sup> Patrick Condon, "Clinton Narrowly Wins Minnesota," *Star Tribune*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>35</sup> Greta Kaul, "Greater Minnesota Struggling Economically, Data Shows Worst-Hit Areas Cast Ballots for Trump," *MinnPost*, November 29, 2016 (stronghold); Greta Kaul and Tom Nehil, "Where Trump Did Better than Mitt Romney in Minnesota, and Where He Did Worse," *MinnPost*, November 11, 2016.

<sup>36</sup> Patrick Condon, "Clinton Narrowly Wins Minnesota," *Star Tribune*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>37</sup> Cecilia Reyes and Geoff Hing, "Election Analysis: On the Edge of Illinois' Urban-Rural Divide," *Chicago Tribune*, November 17, 2016; Kyle Bentele, Jonathon Berlin, and Ryan Max, "Illinois, a Blue Island in a Red Sea: Data Analysis," *Chicago Tribune*, November 15, 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Marshall Cohen and Jeff Simon, "How Democrats Lost Dubuque and Middle America," CNN, December 14, 2006; Krista Johnson, "Clinton Drops 32 Counties Obama Won in 2012," *Iowa Watch*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> Jason Noble, "Donald Trump Won Iowa with a Pitch-Perfect Message to Iowans Desperate for Change," *Des Moines Register*, November 9, 2016.

home to Omaha and the University of Nebraska); and every county but three in Missouri (which were home to the University of Missouri, Kansas City, and St. Louis). And, as noted, he won 78 of Minnesota's 87 counties and 91 of Illinois's 102 counties. The rural Midwestern counties where Clinton performed well, it should be noted, were often Indian reservation counties, the electoral history of which would make an excellent research project, as would the history of internal reservation politics, which has received minimal attention from scholars.

A longer-term perspective on the fortunes of Democrats in the rural Midwest would make some of the returns of 2016 less jarring. The GOP originated in the rural Midwest, after all, and the GOP has historically been dominant with rural voters, at least until the Great Depression. Richard Jensen and Paul Kleppner did much to explain these voting patterns for the late-nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup> In contrast to the criticisms of some Democrats after the 2016 election, however, there have been prominent Democratic leaders who have worked hard to earn rural Midwestern votes. This would include the many Midwesterners in FDR's Department of Agriculture who fought for policies to maintain the long-standing agrarian order of small farmers in the Midwest and, in the process, had to battle many Easterners who had little sympathy for the region.<sup>41</sup> It would also include the farm policies of Missourian Harry Truman during the 1940s and also Hubert Humphrey, who was elected mayor of Minneapolis in 1945 but then went on to a long career in the U.S. Senate and in national politics where he was a vigorous supporter of Midwestern family farms.<sup>42</sup> George McGovern's entry into politics via his criticism of farm policies during the 1950s serves as another example.<sup>43</sup> But these examples also serve to make the point that Democrats in recent years have had few prominent voices from rural America and that their embrace of various forms of cultural liberation have alienated them from more traditional and conservative rural parts of the Midwest.

<sup>40</sup> Richard J. Jensen, *The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1971); Paul Kleppner, *The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900* (New York, The Free Press, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Jess Gilbert, *Planning Democracy: Agrarian Intellectuals and the Intended New Deal* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015).

<sup>42</sup> Allen J. Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics in the Truman Years* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1967). On the Iowan Henry Wallace, see Thomas W. Devine, *Henry Wallace's 1948 Presidential Campaign and the Future of Postwar Liberalism* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

<sup>43</sup> Thomas J. Knock, *The Life and Times of George McGovern: The Rise of a Prairie Statesman* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2016), 158-59, 165, 169; Jon K. Lauck, "George S. McGovern and the Farmer: South Dakota Politics 1953-1962," *South Dakota Politics* vol. 32, no. 4 (Winter 2003), 331-53.



Despite some work on the history of the farm program and of progressive farm advocates, which is, on balance, fairly dated, this scholarship is not extensive. If there is one area of the Midwest deserving of particular attention from historians and researchers more generally it is the rural Midwest, which has not been a popular area of study for scholars in recent decades. Such efforts will be able to rely on important building blocks.<sup>44</sup> The unwinding of the old agrarian rural order and rural depopulation and the resulting economic friction and cultural consequences for the rural Midwest are especially important topics.<sup>45</sup> This would certainly include the 1980s farm crisis.<sup>46</sup> Given the themes of the 2016 election, rural v. urban cultural tensions are also important to explore, including their long history.<sup>47</sup> So are tensions over the coastal dominance of the media and entertainment industries and rural Midwestern protests thereof.<sup>48</sup> The growing number of studies of American conservatism published over the past decade have done little to examine the rural Midwest, which, after the 2016 election, is now particularly relevant. These studies would be especially valuable if they extended back into the nineteenth-century and the era when the GOP was first organized and even before given the limited historiography on this topic.

#### WORKING CLASS VOTERS

In addition to a strong performance by the GOP in rural areas during the 2016 election, the party also performed well among non-college educated whites, some of whom lived in rural areas

<sup>44</sup> J.L. Anderson (ed), *The Rural Midwest since World War II* (DeKalb, IL, Northern Illinois University Press, 2014); Paul K. Conkin, *A Revolution Down on the Farm: The Transformation of American Agriculture since 1929* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2009); David B. Danbom, *Born in the Country: A History of Rural America* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

<sup>45</sup> Jon K. Lauck, *American Agriculture and the Problem of Monopoly: The Political Economy of Grain Belt Farming, 1953-1980* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2000); J.L. Anderson, *Industrializing the Corn Belt: Agriculture, Technology, and Environment, 1945-1972* (DeKalb, IL, Northern Illinois University Press, 2008); Robert Wuthnow, *Remaking the Heartland: Middle America since the 1950s* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011); Jon K. Lauck, "'The Silent of Artillery of Time': Understanding Social Change in the Rural Midwest," *Great Plains Quarterly* vol. 19, no. 4 (Fall 1999), 245-55.

<sup>46</sup> See *Middle West Review* vol. 2, no. 1 (Fall 2015) for a special issue on the 1980s farm crisis.

<sup>47</sup> Timothy B. Spears, *Chicago Dreaming: Midwesterners and the City, 1871-1919* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005); James H. Shideler, "Flappers and Philosophers, and Farmers: Rural-Urban Tensions of the Twenties," *Agricultural History* vol. 47, no. 4 (October 1973), 283-99; Jon K. Lauck, "The Myth of the Midwestern 'Revolt from the Village,'" *MidAmerica* vol. 40 (2013), 39-85; Don Kirschner, *City and Country: Rural Responses to Urbanization in the 1920s* (Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1970).

<sup>48</sup> Robert L. Dorman, *The Revolt of the Provinces: The Regionalist Movement in America, 1920-1945* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Jon K. Lauck, *From Warm Center to Ragged Edge: The Erosion of Midwestern Literary and Historical Regionalism, 1920-1965* (Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 2017).

but many of whom would be more closely associated with Midwestern industrial areas. This group favored Trump by a margin of 39% (Romney only won this group by 26%).<sup>49</sup> These numbers indicate that many traditionally working class and Democratic areas of the “Rust Belt” moved toward Trump.<sup>50</sup> In the wake of the New Deal during the 1940s, nearly 70% of workers voted for Democrats, but this had fallen to 35% by 1980 and continued to fall in subsequent decades.<sup>51</sup> In 2016, Trump won working class white men by a 50% margin; Trump won 67% of all white working class voters.<sup>52</sup> Obama had won union households by 18% in 2012, but Clinton, according to the exit polls, only won them by 8%, or 51%-43%.<sup>53</sup> According to the AFL-CIO’s own survey, union support for Clinton came in at 56% compared to 65% for Obama in 2012.<sup>54</sup> In Michigan, Trump won working class whites overall by a 61%-31% margin.<sup>55</sup> In Ohio, Trump won union voters 49%-44%, a major turnaround from 2012, when Obama won 60% of Ohio’s union voters.<sup>56</sup> Robert Bruno, director of the Labor Education Program at the University of Illinois-Chicago, observed that the “Democratic Party has lost its footing among working people and allowed the Republican Party to become the party of the working class. And that’s an astonishing thing to have to admit.”<sup>57</sup> Ohio State University political scientist Paul Beck saw the 2016 voting results as a “white working class revolt against the Democratic Party.”<sup>58</sup> “Politically, it’s a complete rout,” said John Russo, one-time director of the Center for Working-Class Studies at Youngstown State

<sup>49</sup> Aaron Zitner and Paul Overberg, “Rural Vote Fuels Trump; Clinton Loses Urban Grip,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> Nate Cohn, “Why Trump Won: Working-Class Whites,” *New York Times*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Emmett Rensin, “The Smug Style in American Liberalism,” *Vox*, April 21, 2016; Robert Reich, “Democrats Once Represented the Working Class. Not Any More,” *Guardian*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>52</sup> Reid J. Epstein and Janet Hook, “In Their Coastal Citadels, Democrats Argue Over What Went Wrong,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 18, 2016; Ronald Brownstein, “How the Rustbelt Paved Trump’s Road to Victory,” *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016).

<sup>53</sup> Molly Ball, “Why Hillary Clinton Lost,” *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016); Jessica Wehrman, “GOP Wins Over Union Members in Midwest,” *Columbus Dispatch*, November 20, 2016. For a prescient prediction of Clinton’s problems with union households in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin, see Noam Scheiber, “Unions Lean Democratic, but Donald Trump Gets Members’ Attention,” *New York Times*, January 29, 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Melanie Trottman, “Union-Member Support for Clinton Fell from Obama in 2012, AFL-CIO Survey Shows,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 11, 2016; Steven Greenhouse, “What Unions Got Wrong,” *New York Times*, November 27, 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>56</sup> Jessica Wehrman, “GOP Wins Over Union Members in Midwest,” *Columbus Dispatch*, November 20, 2016; Henry Grabar, “Trump Country,” *Slate*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>57</sup> Jessica Wehrman, “GOP Wins Over Union Members in Midwest,” *Columbus Dispatch*, November 20, 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Jackie Borchardt and Rich Exner, “Donald Trump Flipped Rust Belt States by Boosting Rural Vote,” *Cleveland.com*, November 11, 2016; James Hohmann, “Democrats Angry that Clinton Had No Economic Message,” *Washington Post*, November 17, 2016.

University.<sup>59</sup> Trump's message that free trade deals hurt workers, especially the North American Free Trade Agreement passed by the Clinton administration during the early 1990s, proved especially powerful in the industrial Midwest.<sup>60</sup> Sociologist Michael McQuarrie emphasized the *regional* nature of the election and how Clinton "was a terrible candidate for the Rust Belt" given her husband's shepherding of NAFTA and because the Clintons were "avatars of free trade, financialization and identity politics, a triumvirate of characteristics that associates them pretty directly with what many people associate with the causes of Rust Belt decline and crisis."<sup>61</sup> "Trump is president," he argued, "because of a regional revolt."<sup>62</sup>

In Michigan, commentators again focused on the importance of Macomb County, a working class area next to Detroit that John F. Kennedy had won in 1960 with 63% of the vote and LBJ had won four years later with 75% of the vote.<sup>63</sup> Macomb County became the symbolic home of the "Reagan Democrats" as it flipped to supporting Ronald Reagan, who won 66% of the vote in the county in 1984.<sup>64</sup> Trump won Macomb County 54%-42%, prevailing in the county by roughly 50,000 votes in a year when turnout in the county was up 4%.<sup>65</sup> In 2012, Obama had won Macomb County 52%-48%, or by 16,000 votes. In 2008, Obama had won Macomb County 53%-44%, or by 39,000 votes. Reporting from Warren, Michigan in Macomb County revealed a deep distrust of Clinton and also indicated that voters were not enthusiastic about Trump but chose him because

<sup>59</sup> Kris Maher and Shibani Mahtani, "Midwest Voters as Shocked as the Nation by Trump Victory in Rust Belt," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>60</sup> Gerald F. Seib, "Trade, Not Immigrants, May Have Been Key Motivator of Donald Trump's Voters," *Wall Street Journal*, November 10, 2016; Tom Troy, "Donald Trump Captures Ohio, Presidency," *Toledo Blade*, November 9, 2016. On NAFTA, see Chad Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus: The Rust Belt, the Maquilas, and a Tale of Two Cities* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>61</sup> Michael McQuarrie, "How the Rust Belt Delivered Trump the Presidency: A Deep Dive," *Newsweek*, November 19, 2016.

<sup>62</sup> Michael McQuarrie, "How the Rust Belt Delivered Trump the Presidency: A Deep Dive," *Newsweek*, November 19, 2016.

<sup>63</sup> Beginning in 1968, Democrats began to lose the white working class vote by increasingly larger margins. Thomas B. Edsall, "The Not-So-Silent White Majority," *New York Times*, November 17, 2016.

<sup>64</sup> Stanley Greenberg, James Carville, Andrew Baumann, Karl Agne, and Jesse Contario, *Back to Macomb: Reagan Democrats and Barack Obama* (Washington, DC, Democracy Corps, 2008), 2.

<sup>65</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, "Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan," *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016; Adrienne Roberts and John D. Stoll, "Donald Trump's Promise of Bringing Back Jobs Worked With Many Michigan Voters," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016; James Hohmann, "The Reagan Democrats Are No Longer Democrats," *Washington Post*, November 11, 2016. Macomb County became the focus of Democratic pollster Stanley Greenberg's famous study of "Reagan Democrats," which caused Bill Clinton to hire Greenberg and to rely on his data in his presidential bids. Stanley B. Greenberg, "Goodbye, Reagan Democrats," *New York Times*, November 10, 2008.

they wanted the change in direction that Trump provided.<sup>66</sup> This major shift in Macomb County was part of what Wayne State University political science professor Timothy Bledsoe called a “revolt of working class whites...who’d been part of the Democratic coalition for years.”<sup>67</sup> Overall, Trump flipped 12 Michigan counties that voted for Obama in 2012, including working class counties such as Bay, Eaton, Monroe, and Saginaw.<sup>68</sup> In the final tally, Trump won Michigan by 10,704 votes.<sup>69</sup>

In Wisconsin, Trump also benefitted from a “seismic shift in the blue collar vote.”<sup>70</sup> While Romney won the white working class in Wisconsin by 8% in 2012, Trump won them by 28% in 2016.<sup>71</sup> In 2012, Obama won union households in Wisconsin by 33%; Clinton won them in 2016 by 10%.<sup>72</sup> In LaCrosse, Obama won 58% of the vote in 2012, but Clinton only won 44% in 2016; in Racine, Obama won 51% in 2012, but Clinton only won 37% in 2016.<sup>73</sup> Trump also won Green Bay’s Brown County, a semi-industrial swing county where Clinton underperformed Obama in 2012 by 7%, and in the broader and frequently contested Fox Valley.<sup>74</sup> Kenosha, south of Milwaukee and north of Chicago, had voted for Obama and Bill Clinton twice and against Bush twice and had supported Mondale and Dukakis in 1984 and 1988. But in 2016 it voted for Trump.<sup>75</sup> Similar to the doubts expressed by Michigan voters, 63% of Wisconsinites had an unfavorable view of Trump, but he still won.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Jonathan Cohn, “The Michigan Voters Said They Didn’t Love Trump. But They Hated Clinton,” *Huffington Post*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> David Muller, “After Winning Michigan for Trump, Macomb County Viewed as Symbol of U.S. Political Realignment,” Mlive (Michigan newspaper reporting collective), November 10, 2016.

<sup>68</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>69</sup> Kathleen Gray and Paul Egan, “Board of Canvassers Certifies Trump Victory in Michigan,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 28, 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Craig Gilbert, “Difference-makers in Trump’s Wisconsin Win,” *Milwaukee Journal*, November 12, 2016.

<sup>71</sup> Craig Gilbert, “Difference-makers in Trump’s Wisconsin Win,” *Milwaukee Journal*, November 12, 2016.

<sup>72</sup> David Weigel, “How Voters Who Heavily Supported Obama Switched Over to Trump,” *Washington Post*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>73</sup> Ronald Brownstein, “How Trump Won,” *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016).

<sup>74</sup> Madeleine Behr, “Is Fox Valley Wisconsin’s Swing Region in ’16 Race?” *Post-Crescent* [Appleton], February 9, 2016; Adam Rodewald, “Why Brown County is No. 1 Political Battleground,” *USA Today*, June 1, 2016; Charlie Mahtesian, “How Trump Won His Map,” *Politico*, November 9, 2016. On Wisconsin’s sub-regions, see Lawrence H. Larsen and Barbara Cotrell Larsen, “Wisconsin’s Disaggregated Development and the Study of the Midwest,” *Studies in Midwestern History* vol. 1, no. 4 (May 2015), 30-37.

<sup>75</sup> David Weigel, “How Voters Who Heavily Supported Obama Switched Over to Trump,” *Washington Post*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>76</sup> 21% of voters who viewed Trump unfavorably voted for him. Craig Gilbert, Todd Spangler, and Bill Laitner, “How Clinton Lost ‘Blue Wall’ States of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Detroit Free Press*, November 10, 2016.

Similar patterns prevailed in Ohio. Trump won Stark County, home to the city of Canton, a once-prominent steel town, by 17% compared to a draw between Romney and Obama in 2012; Trump tied in Lorain County, once home to Toni Morrison and which favored Obama by 14% in 2012.<sup>77</sup> Trump lost Summit County, home to Akron, but cut the Democratic margin from 2012 in half and he won 24 of the county's 31 towns.<sup>78</sup> In Youngstown, which Obama had won by 63%-35% in 2012, Trump essentially drew even, losing only 50%-47% in a traditionally Democratic county.<sup>79</sup> In May 2016 the long-serving chairman of the Mahoning County (Youngstown) Democratic Party had sent a detailed memo to the Clinton campaign about the erosion of support for her in the area and the growing amount of support for Trump but he received no response.<sup>80</sup> The chairman had to kick off 18 members of his Democratic central committee because they were supporting Trump.<sup>81</sup> After the election, Democratic Congressman Tim Ryan, who represented Youngstown, led an effort to topple the Democratic leader in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Bay Area Californian Nancy Pelosi. Ryan's home of Trumbull County, Ohio had just voted for a Republican presidential candidate for the first time since 1972.<sup>82</sup> Ryan argued that the Democrats had become a coastal party and had forgotten the Midwest, but he unsurprisingly lost the vote in a caucus in which a third of the membership was from California, New York, and Massachusetts.<sup>83</sup>

The support for Trump among working class voters was further highlighted by his diminished support in the wealthy, traditionally-Republican suburbs of the Midwest, where Clinton's criticisms of Trump's brashness found a more receptive audience. Trump underperformed, for exam-

<sup>77</sup> Aaron Zitner and Paul Overberg, "Rural Vote Fuels Trump; Clinton Loses Urban Grip," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>78</sup> Doug Livingston, "Trump Paints Parts of Summit County, Ohio Red," *Akron Beacon Journal*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>79</sup> Charlie Mahtesian, "How Trump Won His Map," *Politico*, November 9, 2016; Nate Cohn, "Why Trump Won: Working-Class Whites," *New York Times*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>80</sup> James Hohman, "Rust Belt Dems Broke for Trump Because They Thought Clinton Cared More about Bathrooms than Jobs," *Washington Post*, November 22, 2016.

<sup>81</sup> James Hohman, "Rust Belt Dems Broke for Trump Because They Thought Clinton Cared More about Bathrooms than Jobs," *Washington Post*, November 22, 2016.

<sup>82</sup> James Hohman, "Meet Tim Ryan, the Ohio Democrat Challenging Nancy Pelosi to Lead the Democrats," *Washington Post*, November 29, 2016.

<sup>83</sup> Jonathan Martin and Emmarie Huetteman, "After Democrats' Losses, Nancy Pelosi Becomes a Symbol of What Went Wrong," *New York Times*, November 29, 2016.

ple, in the “affluent, conservative Midwestern suburban stronghold” of Hamilton County, Indiana.<sup>84</sup> So too in Boone County in suburban Indianapolis, where Trump performed 8% poorer than Romney.<sup>85</sup> In Ohio, Trump’s support in the Columbus suburb of Delaware County dropped from Romney’s in 2012 – the county gave Trump the lowest margin of victory, 16%, for any Republican presidential candidate since Barry Goldwater.<sup>86</sup> The same pattern was evident in the wealthier sections of Summit County, Ohio around Akron.<sup>87</sup> In Michigan’s tony Oakland County Trump also slipped 3% below Romney. Trump’s margin of victory in key Republican suburban counties in Wisconsin also slipped. In Waukesha County, for example, which Romney won by 34%, Trump only won by 28% and Trump trailed the performance of Republican U.S. Senate candidate Ron Johnson by 10% in the county.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, in Ozaukee County, Romney won by 30% in 2012, but Trump only won by 19%.<sup>89</sup> These suburban counties in Wisconsin had been the “reddest” counties in Wisconsin in recent decades but in 2016 that designation went to more rural Northern counties, a sign of Trump’s strength among working class Midwestern voters and lessened support, vis a vis Romney, among wealthier Republicans. To underscore the point, River Hills, the wealthiest place in Wisconsin, voted Democratic for the first time in 90 years.<sup>90</sup>

However the role of workers in the 2016 election season is ultimately interpreted, the long-term development of the industrial Midwest has proved to be fertile territory for historians. Labor historians have studied the region’s industrial workers for decades.<sup>91</sup> This includes the study of masculine ideals in the era of industrialism, a particularly important topic given the prominent role of working class men in the outcome of the 2016 election.<sup>92</sup> The role of religion and tradition among

<sup>84</sup> Charlie Mahtesian, “How Trump Won His Map,” *Politico*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>85</sup> Stephanie Wang and Chris Sikich, “How Trump Won Big in Indiana,” *Indianapolis Star*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Henry J. Gomez and Rich Exner, “A Big Reason Why Donald Trump Beat Hillary Clinton in Ohio: He Ran Up the Score in Appalachia,” *Cleveland.com*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>87</sup> Doug Livingston, “Trump Paints Parts of Summit County, Ohio Red,” *Akron Beacon Journal*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>88</sup> Craig Gilbert, “Difference-makers in Trump’s Wisconsin Win,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 12, 2016; Craig Gilbert, “As Dust Settles, Parts of Political Map Scrambled,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 4, 2016.

<sup>89</sup> Craig Gilbert, “Difference-makers in Trump’s Wisconsin Win,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 12, 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Craig Gilbert, “As Dust Settles, Parts of Political Map Scrambled,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 4, 2016.

<sup>91</sup> Daniel Nelson, *Farm and Factory: Workers in the Midwest, 1880-1990* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1995).

<sup>92</sup> Stephen Meyer, *Manhood on the Line: Working-Class Masculinities in the American Heartland* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2016).

workers and workers' role in modern cultural conflicts are similarly important.<sup>93</sup> So is the role of 1960s and post-1960s cultural liberalism.<sup>94</sup> How all these cultural conflicts corresponded with a painful era of deindustrialization is also critical to understand.<sup>95</sup> For future researchers, the long-term story of how Midwestern workers once-loyal to the Democrats of the New Deal era became frustrated with later Democrats who organized as a "new party of multicultural cosmopolitanism," as some frustrated Democratic strategists see it, is ideal for future study and highly relevant to Midwestern history.<sup>96</sup>

### THE AFRICAN AMERICAN VOTE

Another major factor in Clinton's defeats in the Midwest was her weak performance with African American voters. In Milwaukee city council District 15, for example, which is 84% black, voter turnout dropped 20% and local voters were unenthusiastic about Clinton.<sup>97</sup> The Clinton campaign failed to send prominent surrogates such as the Obamas to Milwaukee in order to shore up this vote and Clinton herself did not visit Wisconsin after the July convention.<sup>98</sup> As a result, Clinton received 289,000 votes in Milwaukee County, down from Obama's 328,000 in 2012. The Clinton campaign devoted few resources to these key areas. The Clinton campaign and its allied groups spent more money on advertising in Omaha (presumably to help Clinton in Western Iowa) during the final weekend of the campaign than it did in Wisconsin and Michigan combined.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Matthew Pehl, *The Making of Working-Class Religion* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2016); Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1991), 476-532.

<sup>94</sup> Joshua B. Freeman, "Hardhats: Construction Workers, Manliness, and the 1970 Pro-War Demonstrations," *Journal of Social History* vol. 26, no. 4 (Summer 1993), 725-44; Steve Fraser, *The Limousine Liberal: How an Incendiary Image United the Right and Fractured America* (New York, Basic Books, 2016); Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2015).

<sup>95</sup> Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York, The New Press, 2010). See also the chapters on Lansing, Michigan, Youngstown, Ohio, and Gary, Indiana in Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (eds), *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003).

<sup>96</sup> Thomas B. Edsall, "The Not-So-Silent White Majority," *New York Times*, November 17, 2016.

<sup>97</sup> Sabrina Tavernise, "Many in Milwaukee neighborhood didn't vote—and don't regret it," *New York Times*, November 20, 2016; Craig Gilbert, "Difference-makers in Trump's Wisconsin Win," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 12, 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Sam Stein, "The Clinton Campaign Was Undone by Its Own Neglect and a Touch of Arrogance, Staffers Say," *Huffington Post*, November 16, 2016.

<sup>99</sup> Sam Stein, "The Clinton Campaign Was Undone by Its Own Neglect and a Touch of Arrogance, Staffers Say," *Huffington Post*, November 16, 2016; Craig Gilbert, "Difference-makers in Trump's Wisconsin Win," *Milwaukee Journal*, November 12, 2016; Craig Gilbert, Todd Spangler, and Bill Laitner, "How Clinton Lost 'Blue Wall' States of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Detroit Free Press*, November 10, 2016.

Democratic pollster Paul Maslin said “It’s nothing short of malpractice that [the Clinton] campaign didn’t look at the electoral college and put substantial resources into states like Michigan and Wisconsin.”<sup>100</sup> The Clinton campaign did seem to recognize the dire situation in Michigan a few days before the election, but they were not able to reverse the situation.<sup>101</sup> In heavily African American Detroit, Clinton received nearly 50,000 fewer votes than Obama had in 2012 and in Wayne County overall Clinton received nearly 80,000 fewer votes than Obama in 2012.<sup>102</sup> Voter turnout in Detroit dropped from 51% in 2012 to 48% in 2016.<sup>103</sup> In Genesee County, home to Flint, where Obama had won with 64% in 2012 and 66% in 2008, Clinton won with only 54%.<sup>104</sup> In Cleveland’s Cuyahoga County African American turnout was down 11% from 2012.<sup>105</sup> Not only was raw support for Clinton down among African Americans in 2016, but a higher percentage of African Americans supported Trump than had supported Romney in 2012. African Americans supported Clinton 88%-8%, a drop from their 93%-6% support of Obama in 2012.<sup>106</sup> Support for Trump among African American men actually increased to 13%.<sup>107</sup>

Those interested in studying these patterns and the deeper story of African American voting in the Midwest will be blessed with a rich historiography. One of the more popular areas of study in African American history in recent decades has been the Great Migration of blacks from the South

<sup>100</sup> Craig Gilbert, Todd Spangler, and Bill Laitner, “How Clinton Lost ‘Blue Wall’ States of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Detroit Free Press*, November 10, 2016 (Maslin). See also Emma Roller, “Not Your Grandmother’s Wisconsin,” *New York Times*, November 22, 2016.

<sup>101</sup> Brett Logiurato, “The Clinton Campaign Appears to be in Full-Blown Panic Mode Over a State that Hasn’t Gone Red in 2 Decades,” *Business Insider*, November 6, 2016.

<sup>102</sup> Edward-Isaac Dovere, “How Clinton Lost Michigan—and Blew the Election,” *Politico*, December 14, 2016; Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>103</sup> Kathleen Gray, “Trump Message, Voter Turnout Led to GOP Wins and Dem Losses,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 9, 2016; Ken Coleman, “Why Didn’t Detroit Deliver for Clinton?” *Detroit News*, November 11, 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Chad Livengood, Michael Gerstein, and Joel Kurth, “Trump Flipped 12 Counties to Win Michigan,” *Detroit News*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>105</sup> Plouffe, “What I Got Wrong About the Election,” *New York Times*, November 11, 2016. On the diminished enthusiasm among African American voters, see also Michael Stern, “Report from the Field: The Rust Belt’s Blues Turn It Red,” *Prospect*, November 16, 2016.

<sup>106</sup> Chuck Todd, Mark Murray, and Carrie Dann, “How Rural America Fueled Trump’s Win,” *NBC News*, November 9, 2016; Tami Luhby and Jennifer Agiesta, “Exit Polls: Clinton Fails to Energize African-Americans, Latinos, and the Young,” *CNN*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>107</sup> *CNN* exit poll, updated November 23, 2016.



to the North and, in particular, the movement of blacks to Midwestern cities.<sup>108</sup> Chicago in particular has drawn heavy interest from researchers.<sup>109</sup> But Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Cincinnati have also attracted researchers.<sup>110</sup> More recently, researchers have turned to less obvious urban areas such as the Twin Cities of Minnesota and Cedar Rapids, Iowa.<sup>111</sup> All of these cities have also contributed to a recent round of works about the civil rights movement in the North.<sup>112</sup> The histories of African Americans in the urban Midwest help to provide a critical context for the importance of African Americans to the Democratic coalition in states such as Michigan, where lower

<sup>108</sup> Darlene Clark Hine, "Black Migration to the Urban Midwest: The Gender Dimension, 1915-1945," in Joe William Trotter, Jr. (ed), *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1991), 126-46; Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (New York, Random House, 2010); Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York, Viking, 2010); James N. Gregory, *Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Lawrence Rodgers, *Canaan Bound: The African-American Great Migration Novel* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1997); Jack Temple Kirby, "The Southern Exodus, 1910-1960: A Primer for Historians," *Journal of Southern History* vol. 49, no. 4 (November 1983), 585-600.

<sup>109</sup> St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (revised and enlarged edition, University of Chicago Press, 1993 [1945]); James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989); Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967); Stewart E. Tolnay, "The African American 'Great Migration' and Beyond," *Annual Review of Sociology* vol. 29 (2003), 209-32; Davarian L. Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Christopher Robert Reed, *Knock at the Door of Opportunity: Black Migration to Chicago, 1900-1919* (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 2014).

<sup>110</sup> Joe William Trotter, *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-1945* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1985); Beverly A. Bunch-Lyons, "'No Promised Land': Oral Histories of African-American Women in Cincinnati, Ohio," *OAH Magazine of History* vol. 11, no. 3 (Spring 1997), 9-14; Kenneth L. Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870-1930* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1976); Kimberly L. Phillips, "'But It Is a Fine Place to Make Money': Migration and African-American Families in Cleveland, 1915-1929," *Journal of Social History* vol. 30, no. 2 (Winter 1996), 393-413.

<sup>111</sup> William D. Green, *Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865-1912* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2015); Brie Swenson Arnold, "An Opportunity to Challenge the 'Color Line': Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Women's Labor Activism in Late Nineteenth-Century Cedar Rapids, Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* vol. 74, no. 2 (Spring 2015), 101-41.

<sup>112</sup> On the distinctions between North and South in the area of race relations, see Clarence Lang, "Locating the Civil Rights Movement: An Essay on the Deep South, Midwest, and Border South in Black Freedom Studies," *Journal of Social History* vol. 47, no. 2 (2013), 371-400. See also Kathryn Schumaker, "Unearthing Paths Toward Black Freedom in the Midwest," *Middle West Review* vol. 2, no. 2 (Spring 2016); Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York, Random House, 2008); Darryl Mace, *In Remembrance of Emmett Till: Regional Stories and Media Responses to the Black Freedom Struggle* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2014); Patrick Jones, *The Selma of the North: Civil Rights Insurgency in Milwaukee* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2010); Jakobi Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2013); and Tekla Agbala Ali Johnson, *Free Radical: Ernest Chambers, Black Power, and the Politics of Race* (Lubbock, Texas Tech University Press, 2012).

black turnout arguably cost Clinton the state in 2016. Cities such as Flint also provide an opportunity to examine the intersection of race and deindustrialization.<sup>113</sup> In 1980, General Motors employed 80,000 people in Flint; today it employs 7,200.<sup>114</sup> Deindustrialization in Flint was most memorably highlighted by Michael Moore's film "Roger and Me," which launched Moore's career.<sup>115</sup> The nexus of race and politics in Flint was further highlighted during the 2016 campaign by the debate over the Flint water crisis.<sup>116</sup>

## THE LATINO VOTE

Although smaller than in other regions of the United States, the Latino vote in the Midwest is also deserving of more research, which could build on some recent and important studies.<sup>117</sup> This research could include the famous Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, which Trump won after a long history of the county supporting Democratic presidential candidates. Trempealeau, unlike other Midwestern counties which had suffered through the loss of manufacturing jobs, was the "most manufacturing-intensive county in Wisconsin."<sup>118</sup> It became the location of a rapid influx of Latinos to work at the dairies, Ashley Furniture, and GNP Co., a chicken producer.<sup>119</sup> Its elementary school went from nearly all white to 73% Hispanic.<sup>120</sup> The local fall heritage festival featuring

<sup>113</sup> Andrew R. Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan and the Fate of the American Metropolis* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2015); Gordon Young, *Tear Down: Memoir of a Vanishing City* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2013); Steven P. Dandaneau, *A Town Abandoned: Flint, Michigan Confronts Deindustrialization* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1996).

<sup>114</sup> Edward McClelland, "The Rust Belt Was Turning Red Already; Donald Trump Just Pushed It Along," *Washington Post*, November 9, 2016. For a deeper history of Detroit, see Beth Tompkins Bates, *The Making of Black Detroit in the Age of Henry Ford* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

<sup>115</sup> Richard Bernstein, "'Roger and Me': Documentary? Satire? Or Both?" *New York Times*, February 1, 1990.

<sup>116</sup> Amy Chozick, "In Flint, Hillary Clinton Prods Congress and Calls Response to Crisis 'Immoral,'" *New York Times*, February 7, 2016.

<sup>117</sup> Michael Innis-Jimenez, *Steel Barrio: The Great Mexican Migration to South Chicago, 1915-1940* (New York, New York University Press, 2013); Lilia Fernandez, *Brown in the Windy City: Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Postwar Chicago* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2014); Gabriela F. Arrendo, *Mexican Chicago: Race, Identity, and Nation, 1916-1939* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2008); Michael Broadway, "Meatpacking and the Transformation of Rural Communities: A Comparison of Brooks, Alberta and Garden City, Kansas," *Rural Sociology* vol. 72, no. 4 (2007), 560-582.

<sup>118</sup> Rick Romell, "In Western Wisconsin, Trump Voters Want Change," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 27, 2016.

<sup>119</sup> Janet Adamy and Paul Overberg, "Places Most Unsettled by Rapid Demographic Change Are Drawn to Donald Trump," *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2016.

<sup>120</sup> Janet Adamy and Paul Overberg, "Places Most Unsettled by Rapid Demographic Change Are Drawn to Donald Trump," *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2016.

German and Polish food now includes a mariachi band and signs and pamphlets in Spanish.<sup>121</sup> Whatever the location of future research on Hispanics and the Midwest, the voting patterns should prove of interest. In 2016, among Latinos, Clinton's support dropped to 65% from Obama's 71% and Trump gained 2% over Romney's performance, which surprised many commentators given Trump's call for greater restrictions on immigration.<sup>122</sup>

#### CAMPUS VOTERS

Outside of urban concentrations of African American voters, the strongest areas of support for Democrats in the Midwest were university towns. In Wisconsin's Dane County, home to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Clinton won by a margin of 48%, which was higher than Obama in 2012 and higher than any other Democratic presidential candidate in history.<sup>123</sup> In Michigan, Clinton also won Washtenaw County, home of Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan, with 68% of the vote.<sup>124</sup> In Johnson County, Iowa, home to Iowa City and the University of Iowa, Clinton beat Trump 65%-27%.<sup>125</sup> Clinton won Clay County, South Dakota, home to the University of South Dakota, with 51% (the other four counties Clinton won in South Dakota were Indian reservation counties). Athens County, Ohio, home to Ohio University, also turned in its vote for Clinton, but she did 10% worse than Obama, a "surprisingly weak performance there," according to analysts.<sup>126</sup> When Clinton staffers organized an event in Athens "they drew little interest."<sup>127</sup> Tensions between university towns in the Midwest and more rural counties or outstate areas are also a worthwhile research topic. Many people in rural Wisconsin, for example, see Madison as the "domain of hippie professors and rich-kid students" and see professors as "fixated on bizarre topics of little relevance."<sup>128</sup> Conflict between Madison and other parts of Wisconsin have also

<sup>121</sup> Janet Adamy and Paul Overberg, "Places Most Unsettled by Rapid Demographic Change Are Drawn to Donald Trump," *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2016.

<sup>122</sup> Tami Luhby and Jennifer Agiesta, "Exit Polls: Clinton Fails to Energize African-Americans, Latinos, and the Young," CNN, November 9, 2016.

<sup>123</sup> Craig Gilbert, "Difference-makers in Trump's Wisconsin Win," *Milwaukee Journal*, November 12, 2016.

<sup>124</sup> Adrienne Roberts and John D. Stoll, "Donald Trump's Promise of Bringing Back Jobs Worked With Many Michigan Voters," *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>125</sup> Holly Hines, "Clinton Takes the Vote in Johnson County," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, November 8, 2016.

<sup>126</sup> Henry J. Gomez and Rich Exner, "A Big Reason Why Donald Trump Beat Hillary Clinton in Ohio: He Ran Up the Score in Appalachia," *Cleveland.com*, November 10, 2016.

<sup>127</sup> Jonathan Martin, "Ohio, Long a Bellwether, Is Fading on the Electoral Map," *New York Times*, September 29, 2016.

<sup>128</sup> Ben Merriman, "Caught in the Middle," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 20, 2016.

been heightened in recent years by friction between Wisconsin GOP governor Scott Walker and the faculty.<sup>129</sup> Similar dynamics are at work in Kansas with respect to Lawrence and the rest of the state and these tensions have a history worthy of deeper exploration.<sup>130</sup> In 2016, the only county that Clinton won in Kansas was Douglas County, home to the University of Kansas.

## THE CULTURAL DIVIDE

As demonstrated by the starkly different voting patterns between university counties and rural Midwestern counties, the election returns in 2016 exposed cultural divisions in the Midwest and the nation that are worthy of serious examination.<sup>131</sup> Demographer William Frey of the Brookings Institution called this a “cultural-generation gap” between rural Republican Trump voters and modern urban Democratic voters.<sup>132</sup> Long-time reporter, Midwestern analyst, and author Richard Longworth argued that it was “impossible to overstate the alienation between the two Americas, between global citizens and the global left-behinds, between the great cities that run the nation’s economy and media, and the hinterland that feels not only cheated but, worse, disrespected.”<sup>133</sup> Rural whites lived, some argued, with a “cruel sense of being forgotten by the political class and condescended to by the cultural one.”<sup>134</sup> Clinton aides conceded their failure to develop a rural strategy and admitted that connecting to rural voters is a “tough slog” given the Democrats’ progressive priorities: “It’s hard to speak to rural America. It’s very regionally specific. It feels daunting.

<sup>129</sup> For the longer view of Madison, see the recent book by Matthew Levin, *Cold War University: Madison and the New Left in the Sixties* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).

<sup>130</sup> Ben Merriman, “Caught in the Middle,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 20, 2016; Rusty L. Monhollen, *“This Is America?”: The Sixties in Lawrence, Kansas* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2002)(about Lawrence, Kansas).

<sup>131</sup> Josh Kraushaar, “Democrats Are Losing the Culture Wars,” *National Journal*, November 15, 2016; Justin Peligri, “Rural Voters Felt ‘Betrayed’ by Clinton,” NBC News, November 16, 2016; Cathleen Decker, “For Reeling Democrats, Now What?” *Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 2016; Emmett Rensin, “The Smug Style in American Liberalism,” *Vox*, April 21, 2016; Ross Douthat, “The Crisis for Liberalism,” *New York Times*, November 19, 2016; James Hohman, “Rust Belt Dems Broke for Trump Because They Thought Clinton Cared More about Bathrooms than Jobs,” *Washington Post*, November 22, 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Aaron Zitner and Paul Overberg, “Rural Vote Fuels Trump; Clinton Loses Urban Grip,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>133</sup> Richard C. Longworth, “Disaffected Rust Belt Voters Embraced Trump,” *Guardian*, November 21, 2016. See also Longworth’s book *Caught in the Middle: America’s Heartland in the Age of Globalism* (New York, Bloomsburg, 2009).

<sup>134</sup> Laila Lalami, “The Identity Politics of Whiteness,” *New York Times*, November 21, 2016 (quotation). See also Arlie Russell, *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right* (New York, The New Press, 2016).

You have these wings of the party, progressives, and it's hard to talk to those people and people in rural America, and not seem like you're talking out of both sides of your mouth."<sup>135</sup> The founder of the Center for Rural Strategies, Dee Davis, noted that what "Trump did in rural areas was try to appeal to folks culturally" and contrasted this outreach with Clinton's denunciation of half of Trump's supporters as "deplorables."<sup>136</sup> Davis also explained how rural voters were attuned to a candidate's statements and posture and how they focused on "the tones, the references, the culture."<sup>137</sup>

University of Wisconsin-Madison political science professor Katherine Cramer's timely work on rural Wisconsin spoke directly to these questions of respect, alienation, and power. She revealed the "pervasiveness of resentment toward the cities and urban elites" and how rural Wisconsinites felt that the "key decisions were made in the major metro areas of Madison and Milwaukee, then decreed out to the rest of the state, with little listening being done to people like them."<sup>138</sup> Cramer downplayed race as a factor in the election and highlighted the importance of a lack of "respect" toward rural concerns and noted the belief that urban elites "ridiculed rural folks as uneducated racists."<sup>139</sup> Cramer found the emergence of a "rural consciousness," or a local and rooted identity which contrasts with a more coastal cosmopolitanism.<sup>140</sup> For these rural voters, "urban" does not connote race, but serves as "code for class, power, money, and the Democratic Party."<sup>141</sup> Cramer's work on the development and growth of a stronger sense of rural Midwestern identity, one rooted in place and thus linked to continuing regionalist sentiments, will have major implications for Midwestern studies.<sup>142</sup>

Dynamics similar to those in the rural Midwest were also highly visible within the ranks of the Midwestern working class, which was drawn to Trump's stark rhetoric and criticism of cultural

<sup>135</sup> Helena Bottemiller Evich, "Revenge of the Rural Voter," *Politico*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>136</sup> Helena Bottemiller Evich, "Revenge of the Rural Voter," *Politico*, November 13, 2016; Gerald F. Seib, "'Deplorables Rise Up to Reshape America,'" *Wall Street Journal*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Helena Bottemiller Evich, "Revenge of the Rural Voter," *Politico*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>138</sup> Katherine Cramer, "For Years, I've Been Watching Anti-Elite Fury Build in Wisconsin," *Vox*, November 16, 2016.

<sup>139</sup> Katherine Cramer, "For Years, I've Been Watching Anti-Elite Fury Build in Wisconsin," *Vox*, November 16, 2016.

<sup>140</sup> Henry Grabar, "Trump Country," *Slate*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>141</sup> Henry Grabar, "Trump Country," *Slate*, November 13, 2016.

<sup>142</sup> Katherine J. Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2016), 5-6, 12-14.

and media elites. Long-time political commentator Ronald Brownstein argued that “Trump’s visceral connection with older, non-urban, and especially blue-collar whites has rattled the foundations of the Democrat’s Rustbelt pillars.”<sup>143</sup> One MFA program professor who supported Clinton also offered thoughts on his working class background and how some Americans feel alienated from the culture and pointed to efforts to reduce the use of the phrase “Merry Christmas,” the prominence of Black Lives Matter (“What! My life *doesn’t* matter?”), and the frequent headlines about the need for bathrooms for the transgendered.<sup>144</sup> A progressive law professor confessed her frustration with how Democrats were “obsessed with cultural issues” and how this repeatedly undermined Democrats’ ability to discuss employment and economic policy: “I fully understand why transgender bathrooms are important, but I also understand why progressives’ obsession with prioritizing cultural issues infuriates many Americans whose chief concerns are economic.”<sup>145</sup>

Cultural conflicts were also linked to criticisms of the mass media, which Trump frequently lampooned. The founder of Belt Publishing (as in “Rust Belt”) in Cleveland commented after the election on the common refrain that the media had become “too centralized on the coasts; the media ignored the Midwest” and noted that Midwestern newspapers had been “decimated” and that there was “almost no regional or local media left.”<sup>146</sup> The limited writing about the Midwest by coastal reporters, she noted, was targeted at a wealthy coastal audience of “virtual tourists spending a few minutes gawking at the other half” and carried a “colonial tinge.”<sup>147</sup> The South Dakotanative Tom Brokaw, after several decades of observing the scene in Manhattan, argued that the

<sup>143</sup> Ronald Brownstein, “Has the Balance of Power Shifted from the Rustbelt to the Sunbelt?” *Atlantic Monthly* (November 2016).

<sup>144</sup> Roland Merullo, “What Liberal Academics Don’t Get,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 20, 2016. See also Ben Austen, “Violence and Division on Chicago’s South Side,” *New York Times*, December 11, 2016.

<sup>145</sup> Joan C. Williams, “What So Many People Don’t Get about the U.S. Working Class,” *Harvard Business Review*, November 10, 2016 (quotations); Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns, “Centrists Place Economy First for Democrats,” *New York Times*, December 11, 2016.

<sup>146</sup> Anne Trubek, “The Media Didn’t Forget the Rust Belt – You Did,” *Refinery 29*, November 17, 2016. For the work of Belt Publishing, see Anne Trubek and Richey Piiparinen (eds), *Rust Belt Chic: The Cleveland Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2012); Anna Clark (ed), *A Detroit Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2014); Zan McQuade (ed), *The Cincinnati Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2014); Jacqueline Marino and Will Miller (eds), *Car Bombs to Cookie Tables: The Youngstown Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2016); Scott Atkinson (ed), *Happy Anyway: A Flint Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2016); and Jesse Segedy (ed), *The Akron Anthology* (Cleveland, Rust Belt Chic Press, 2016).

<sup>147</sup> Anne Trubek, “The Media Didn’t Forget the Rust Belt – You Did,” *Refinery 29*, November 17, 2016.

news media remained “pretty confined” to “the Eastern Seaboard” and in need of additional perspectives.<sup>148</sup> The editors of the *New York Times* conceded that “we’ve got to do a much better job of being on the road, out in the country, talking to different kinds of people than the people we talk to – especially if you happen to be a New York-based news organization – and remind ourselves that New York is not the real world.”<sup>149</sup> Professor Mark Lilla, as part of his warning about the extremes of identity politics, counseled the press to “begin educating itself about parts of the country that have been ignored.”<sup>150</sup> Others similarly urged academics to pay closer attention to the Rust Belt and its history and to life in general in the interior of the country.<sup>151</sup> Madison Avenue advertisers, ever responsive to cultural trends, adjusted to these cultural criticisms after the election – they announced that they would be reorienting their work away from “metro elite imagery” and more toward “Des Moines and Scranton.”<sup>152</sup> When hiring workers, they decided a diversity hire “can be a farm girl from Indiana as much as a Cuban immigrant who lives in Pensacola.”<sup>153</sup>

The narrow visions that limited the media and advertising worlds, some argued, also prevailed in the entertainment arena. One commentator noted how an “industry arose to cater to the smug style” of the “educated, the coastal, and the professional” in the form of the “Daily Show” and other programs which “advanced the idea that liberal orthodoxy was a kind of educated savvy and that its opponents were, before anything else, stupid.”<sup>154</sup> A key indicator of this attitude was the success of Thomas Frank’s *What’s the Matter with Kansas?* (2004), which ridiculed the electoral choices of Kansans, and conservative rural Americans in general, as foolish.<sup>155</sup> Given the extant criticisms of Hollywood and the entertainment industry, Clinton’s efforts to win Ohio through usage of celebrity surrogates such as Sally Field, the cast of *The West Wing*, and *Top Chef* judge Tom Colicchio

<sup>148</sup> Jim Rutenberg, “News Outlets Wonder Where the Predictions Went Wrong,” *New York Times*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>149</sup> Jim Rutenberg, “News Outlets Wonder Where the Predictions Went Wrong,” *New York Times*, November 9, 2016.

<sup>150</sup> Mark Lilla, “The End of Identity Liberalism,” *New York Times*, November 18, 2016.

<sup>151</sup> John Morgan, “Academics Urged to Address Trump ‘Rust Belt Revolt,’” *Times Higher Education*, November 17, 2016.

<sup>152</sup> Alexandra Bruell and Suzanne Vranica, “Trump’s Win Has Ad Agencies Rethink How They Collect Data, Recruit Staff,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 21, 2016.

<sup>153</sup> Alexandra Bruell and Suzanne Vranica, “Trump’s Win Has Ad Agencies Rethink How They Collect Data, Recruit Staff,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 21, 2016.

<sup>154</sup> Emmett Rensin, “The Smug Style in American Liberalism,” *Vox*, April 21, 2016.

<sup>155</sup> Thomas Frank, *What’s the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York, Metropolitan Books, 2004); Emmett Rensin, “The Smug Style in American Liberalism,” *Vox*, April 21, 2016. See also my review of Frank in *Annals of Iowa: A Quarterly Journal of History* vol. 64, no. 1 (Winter 2005), 93-94.

appeared tone deaf.<sup>156</sup> The connection to entertainers and the media further contributed to a perception among working people of the Democratic Party “caring about the cultural, managerial and professional elite,” according to political historian Mary Frances Berry, and “not about them.”<sup>157</sup>

These various cultural conflicts which underpinned the voting patterns in the 2016 election contests in the Midwest could yield many useful studies which delve deeply into various questions of political culture, economic history, class analysis, and agrarian politics. These studies could be combined with older studies of the region and bolster the recent efforts to revive interest in the Midwest led by the Midwestern History Association.<sup>158</sup> These studies would be particularly important if 2016 proves to be a major turning point in Midwestern voting patterns.<sup>159</sup> But even if the voting of 2016 proves to be a momentary deviation from a longer-term pattern, these studies will significantly advance our collective knowledge of the Midwest, a region whose history has been sadly neglected in recent decades.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Philip Elliott, “Inside the Fight for Ohio,” *Time*, September 23, 2016.

<sup>157</sup> na, “Democrats Aim to Rebuild the Blue Political Wall in Midwest,” Associated Press, December 4, 2016.

<sup>158</sup> Jon K. Lauck, “The Origins and Progress of the Midwestern History Association, 2013-2016,” *Studies in Midwestern History* vol. 2, no. 11 (October 2016), 139-49 and “Regionalist Stirrings in the Midwest,” *The New Territory* vol. 1, no. 1 (April 2016), 15-17.

<sup>159</sup> Harry Enten, “It’s Not All About Clinton – The Midwest Was Getting Redder Before 2016,” 538, December 9, 2016.

<sup>160</sup> Jon K. Lauck, *The Lost Region: Toward a Revival of Midwestern History* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2013).