

## APPENDIX

Public opinion polls have become a standard tool for researchers studying contemporary elections and public opinion. Although the first surveys were conducted prior to World War II, crude surveys were actually conducted early in the nineteenth century by companies that would produce county directories which combined historical overviews of a given county with biographical information about an area's residents. In rare instances, the directories included economic, religious, ethnic, and political information for nearly all the individuals living in a given county. Small descriptive sentences would report which denomination or sect an individual belonged to, where they were born, the value of their farms or personal wealth, and their voting behavior.

Unfortunately, it appears as though few county directories recorded such extensive information about nearly all the individuals residing in a given area. The H. F. Kett Publishing Company appears to have conducted such surveys, as did the two individuals, Cline and McCaffee, who compiled surveys of several counties in Indiana.

Unfortunately, the only way to determine whether or not county directories included such comprehensive information is to physically examine each volume by hand, a labor-intensive and time-consuming process. One possible alternative is for researchers to use poll books, which record the names of individuals and how they actually voted, and then try to piece together information from other sources, such as probate records and the census, to add information about the voters' social and economic characteristics (see Bourke and De Bats 1995). However this is a time consuming process and raises a number of methodological problems which county directories conveniently allow us to avoid.

The data used in this paper comes from two sets of directories from Indiana and Illinois. The Illinois samples were sampled from four Illinois counties the H. F. Kett Company surveyed. We coded every tenth observation. These directories are unique because they contain information for nearly every person living in the surveyed counties. For example, in the introduction to *The Past and Present of Rock Island County*, the publishers noted: “we have endeavored to get the names of all tax-payers and voters. We have about 8,150 names, the vote being about 6,771, which shows we could not have missed many” (Kett 1877, 1). The Illinois data include Rock Island (1877), DeKalb (1876), Bureau (1877), and Warren (1877) counties.

In addition to the Illinois data, we also use a sample of individuals contained in *The People’s Guide* for nine counties in Indiana collected during 1874. These individuals were then traced to the census to add additional information regarding the amount of wealth they owned. The trace rate was about 37%. Hammarberg (1977, 193-209) contains a detailed discussion of the selection criteria used for the Indiana data. The Indiana data are from Bartholomew, Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Henry, Johnson, Montgomery, Morgan and Vermillion counties, all surveyed in 1874.

The accuracy of the samples was determined by comparing the aggregate vote totals from these county’s to the partisan distribution of our samples using data from Burnham (1955). In the election of 1874 the nine Indiana counties were 45.5% Democratic and 54.5% Republican. The sample used here is 61% Republican and 39% Democratic. Clearly the Indiana sample is over representing Republicans, therefore it is important to point out that the results presented here may actually *understate* the degree of economic conflict occurring during this election.

However, the Illinois sample is far more accurate. In the presidential election of 1876 the four surveyed Illinois counties were 37% Democratic and 61% Republican. These statistics approximate the composition of our sample which is 35% Democratic and 65% Republican, strongly indicating that, at least in Illinois, the questions the surveyors were asking regarding the “politics” of the respondents was either synonymous, or closely correlated with, respondents’ voting behavior.

[Tables 1 and 2 About Here]

Tables 1 and 2 provide descriptive statistics regarding the respective samples. Most of the respondents in both samples were born in Northern states; however there are considerable numbers of immigrants in the Illinois data. Unfortunately it is impossible to determine the ethnic identity of second generation immigrants, since they are recorded as being born in Northern states. Protestants are the dominant religious group in both samples, and most respondents were employed as farmers. Both samples are thus predominantly agrarian, “native,” and Protestant, although there are notable deviations from this pattern.

It is important to note that the samples exhibit certain characteristics that may limit the generalizations to be derived from the analysis. For example, there are few Catholics and Irish immigrants in the respective samples. This may limit the generalizations that can be made from the analysis. However, it should also be noted that the absence of large numbers of Catholic and Irish voters probably mitigates the extent of ethnocultural conflict in the regions sampled by our data. Specifically, given the small number of Catholics and Irish respondents, the ethnic and religious homogeneity of these areas probably ensured that there was less ethnic and religious conflict than in more

urban areas where these ethnic and religious groups were more extensive and lived in identifiable neighborhoods.

We should note at the outset that it is unclear whether the political affiliation recorded in county directories records how the respondent voted, which party they supported, or some other question about their political behavior. The specific question the surveyors used does not clarify the matter. The H. F. Kett Company asked their surveyors to gather information such as “name, business, residence or section, post-office address, where born, and date of birth, when came to this State or county, politics, religion, acres of land owned, value” (Harrington 1890, 177). Unfortunately we were unable to locate any record of the question used in the Indiana directories.

However, we will treat the dependent variable as vote choice, and not partisan affiliation, because it is impossible to make sense of why economic divisions are influential in Indiana, and not Illinois, unless the directories are, to some degree, tapping the respondents’ political behavior. As none of the economic variables is a statistically significant predictor of the dependent variable, this would suggest that economic divisions and issues were *irrelevant* for partisanship in Illinois during this period.

Yet this would probably be an unrealistic conclusion due to the extent of economic unrest occurring during this period. Specifically, there is considerable evidence that Republicans constantly worried that their economic policies and their deflationary currency policies in particular, were costing them votes in elections across the Midwest, and issues such as the regulation of railroad rates, were salient in Illinois during this period as well.

Indeed, the personal papers of prominent Illinois Republicans such as John Logan and Elihu Washburne are filled with constituents complaining about the Republican's economic positions. As early as 1868 Washburne's papers are stuffed with notes reporting that "there is not a shadow of a doubt... that Illinois is bitterly opposed to this contraction policy;" or "our folks all cry aloud that something be done with the currency question, they say the people will not believe in Green Backs for themselves and Gold for bond holders."<sup>1</sup> Following the passage of the Inflation Act of 1874, and before it was vetoed, one of Logan's constituents concluded that "it is a victory of the common people over selfish cold blooded capitalists; a victory if you please of the enlarged liberal views characteristic of the great West over the contracted grasping policy of the East."<sup>2</sup>

At other times observers appear to have fully grasped the role of retrospective economic decisions among the electorate. One of Washburne's correspondents complained: "We are triumphantly invincible at all points but one, and that is where so many are out of employment and so many in want. They *feel* their sufferings and think any change will bring relief. So we are put at once on the defensive, and are obliged to resist the conviction [among] . . . all the discontented that the dominant party is the cause of their want."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A. Tyrrell to E. Washburne, Sterling, IL, January 27, 1868; Brown to E. Washburne, St. Louis, MO, February 2, 1868, Washburne MSS, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> W. Kuhns to J. Logan, Chicago, IL, March 27, 1874, Logan Family Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>3</sup> John Cochrane to E. Washburne, New York, NY, February 16, 1868, Washburne MSS, Library of Congress.

Yet none of this apparent economic conflict shows up in the regression results. The most likely explanation for why economic variables are such weak predictors of vote choice is because that the election of 1876 involved a set of ethnocultural issues regarding Reconstruction and anti-Catholicism that overpowered the role of economic conditions or issues.

Additionally, monetary policy was *not* a major issue during the 1876 election because both Tilden and Hayes endorsed the gold standard. As a result, issues surrounding greenback inflation which perpetually threatened Midwestern Republicans did not figure prominently in 1876. Conversely, in 1874 monetary policy was a “live” issue given the proximity of the Panic of 1873 and Grant’s veto of the Inflation Act of 1874. The paper seems to indicate that in 1876 voters were responding to these non-economic issues and that as a result, economic divisions were far less salient than ethnocultural concerns in this election.

This also indicates that the only way we can actually make sense of these findings is to assume that the question the surveyors asked captured, to a degree, the *behavior* of the respondents and not their standing party affiliations. If we take the view that the respondents’ answers to the surveyors questions regarding their “politics” did not reflect their political behavior, this would indicate that partisan divisions in Illinois did not reflect economic divisions at all, an assumption which is not supported by existing scholarship documenting the degree of economic unrest in this area, and the unpopularity of the Republican economic policies in particular. In this sense, it may be fully possible that ethnocultural issues and divisions were salient for politics at the mass electoral arena,

yet economic issues retained their importance in legislative and executive policy debates (Weibe 1984).

### How County Directories' Surveyors Collected Their Data

Companies printing county histories often gave specific instructions to their surveyors to canvass all the residents of specific areas, and comprehensiveness was especially important in rural areas where agents were instructed that “the cardinal points in working country territory are, to canvass it, first *thoroughly*, and second, *compactly*. Do not follow a turnpike without turning either to the right or to the left, across the a whole township. Work every township by school districts (as a rule, that in the center first), *district by district*. This is highly important, to the end that you may carry with you the strongest possible amount of *neighborhood INFLUENCE* (Harrington 1890, 110). Canvassers were urged to begin their canvassing in areas where they were known in order to assure truthful answers and high sales. One of the specific instructions was to “not talk politics, or make yourself conspicuous by partisanship of any kind. Carefully avoid all manifestations of *sectarianism*” (ibid, 111). Similarly, canvassers were urged to attend church on Sunday (ibid, 111) in order to ingratiate themselves into the local community. If canvassers were Christian, they were instructed to “carry your religion with you. Make yourself at home in the prayer-meetings and at the Y.M.C.A rooms, if any such are accessible... The same principles will apply to your attendance at lodge, grange, etc., if you are a Freemason, Odd Fellow, ‘Patron,’ or the like” (ibid, 112).

Canvassers were also instructed to survey people irrespective of their economic status. Surveyors were instructed to diligently pursue any opportunity to interview individuals, even if their occupation or conditions of employment were inhospitable

forum for the surveyor's questions. Occasionally, surveyors found that foremen and bosses were not willing to allow their workers to be surveyed on the shop floor. H. F. Kett provided their surveyors with suggestions regarding how to convince foremen and shop owners to allow them to survey factory workers in their shops. If supervisors denied canvassers access to interview laborers, the surveyors were encouraged to approach workers during their lunch hour or after they finished work (ibid, 129).

Canvassers typically advertised the dates of their surveys prior to their arrival in local newspapers, and helpful editors were often promised free copies of the directories once they were produced. The survey would then be conducted, frequently using the names provided from voter lists, and canvassers would attempt to reach as many people as possible, as profits depended upon reaching as many people possible. Unusual for the degree of comprehensiveness, even those critical of the companies producing county directories noted that the H. F. Kett Company tried "to do a satisfactory business" (ibid, 146) by closely monitored the quality of the biographical entries their surveyors produced. The H. F. Kett Company used the comprehensiveness of their county histories in their sales pitch to customers, claiming that their directories were particularly valuable due to "the immensity of this work, the expense of going to every house, and of publishing such a work for the few hundred we can sell in this county" (ibid, 151).

The owners of H.F. Kett produced a handbook that gave guidelines for how their canvassers should conduct their surveys. This handbook stressed that "a prudent canvasser will attend meetings, lodges, etc., and spend his leisure time in places where people will consider he is a man of brains and character. The man who spends time and money in saloons, billiard-halls and disreputable places has a poisoned brain, and cannot

possibly do justice to his business. He always goes to work reluctantly, works mechanically, has a dissipated, kill-dog look, arrives his character in countenance, and loses the patronage of the best class of the community” (ibid, 152).

It is possible that the lack of respondent anonymity has biased the data the canvassers collected. For example, voters may have had incentives to lie about their partisan affiliations because the interviews were not anonymous and they may have worried about having neighbors see who they voted for. However we believe that the directories are actually quite accurate, and there is some evidence that there was not widespread preference falsification.

For example, the Indiana directories actually recorded whether individuals refused to give information regarding any of the specific questions they asked. It was very rare for individuals to refuse to offer information. In the Indiana directory for Hamilton County which contained 2,122 observations had only three respondents who refused to give their partisan or religious affiliation, and instead of entering a political affiliation the surveyors noted “the rest is his secret,” “did not give any” or “gave neither.” Although it remains possible that the respondents’ replaced their own partisan affiliations with those of their social group, the close correspondence between the actual aggregate voting statistics of the surveyed counties and the samples indicate that widespread falsification was not occurring.

## REFERENCES

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Table 1, Descriptive Statistics  
Indiana, 1874

Ethnic Variables		Religious Variables		Economic Variables	
Northern-Born	870 (87%)	Evangelical and Mainline Protestant	517 (51%)	Professionals, Managers, and Administrators	37 (4%)
German	26 (3%)	Non-Denominational Protestant	259 (26%)	White Collar Workers	14 (1%)
Irish	18 (2%)	Lutheran	22 (2%)	Artisans and Small Proprietors	69 (7%)
Southern	82 (8%)	Regular Baptist	22 (2%)	Farmers	706 (70%)
Other Foreign Country	10 (1%)	Catholic	10 (1%)	Skilled Workers	158 (16%)
		Minor Religion	13 (1%)	Agricultural Laborers and Manual Laborers	13 (1%)
		No Religion	159 (16%)	Unknown Occupation	8 (1%)
				Mean Wealth (Standard Deviation)	\$5,839 (9,201)

Note: Cell entries may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2, Descriptive Statistics  
Illinois, 1876-77

Ethnic Variables		Religious Variables		Economic Variables	
Northern-Born	1400 (56%)	Evangelical and Mainline Protestant	775 (31%)	Professionals, Managers, and Administrators	79 (3%)
German	171 (7%)	Non-Denominational Protestant	100 (4%)	White-Collar and Service Workers	137 (6%)
Canadian	24 (1%)	Liberal Protestant	113 (5%)	Artisans and Small Proprietors	140 (6%)
English and Scottish	102 (4%)	Independent	146 (6%)	Farmers	981 (39%)
Irish	160 (6%)	Lutheran	86 (3%)	Skilled Workers	364 (15%)
French	6 (1%)	Catholic	173 (7%)	Unskilled Workers and Manual Laborers	423 (17%)
Scandinavian	127 (5%)	Minor Religion	4 (1%)	Agricultural Laborers and Tenant Farmers	200 (8%)
Southern	91 (4%)	No Religion	1088 (44%)	Unknown Occupation	161 (6%)
Unknown Ethnicity	404 (16%)			Mean Wealth (Standard Deviation)	\$2,301 (6,200)

Note: Cell entries may not add to 100 due to rounding.