DIGITAL POPULISM

IN THE 2016 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES:

A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATES' TWITTER COMMUNICATION

SCOUT NAOHMAN BURCHILL

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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By

Scout Naohman Burchill

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Digital Populism in the 2016 Republican Presidential Primaries:

A Textual Analysis of Candidates' Twitter Communication

To better understand the phenomena of populism, in both its uncanny relationship with social media and its complicated, often fractious relationship with democracy, the Twitter timelines of Republican presidential candidates in the 2016 United States elections were analyzed. Two questions were posed: Firstly, do Republican outsider, or challenger, candidates employ more populist language than those with closer proximity to power? And secondly, how do candidates vary in their framing of populist language? In answering these two research questions, a methodological approach was employed, incorporating automated dictionary-based analysis in tandem with n-gram analysis, that endeavors to let the language of populism speak for itself. It was found that outsider candidates, or those further from the traditional centers and pathways to power employ more populist appeals than established, insider candidates. Furthermore, n-gram analysis of populist terms revealed nuanced variations in the types of populist appeals employed by both insider and outsider candidates and revealed Twitter to be an extension of the campaign arena, albeit one far more amenable to populist appeals than traditional media settings. In general, populist communication was found to be more than just a strategy for bolstering democratic legitimacy, but an innate feature of the democratic process.

ÖZET

2016 Cumhuriyetçi Parti Ön Seçimlerinde Dijital Popülizm:

Adayların Twitter İletişimlerinin Metinsel Çözümlemesi

Bu araştırma, popülizmin hem sosyal medyayla hem de demokrasiyle olan karmaşık ve kaçınılmaz ilişkisini anlamayı hedefler. Araştırmada Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin 2016 başkanlık seçimine katılmayı hedefleyen Cumhuriyetçi Parti adaylarının Twitter profilleri incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme, iki soruyu cevaplandırmayı hedefler. Cumhuriyetçi Parti'ye dışarıdan dahil olan adaylar, politik güç merkezlerine daha yakın adaylara göre daha popülist bir dil kullanmış mıdır? Adaylar popülist dil kullandıkları çerçeveler bakımından birbirinden nasıl farklılık göstermektedir? Bu iki araştırma sorusunu cevaplamak için yöntemsel bir yaklaşım kullanılmıştır. Sözlük temelli ve n-gram çözümleme modelleri ile popülist dilin kendini göstermesi sağlanmıştır. Araştırma, politik güç merkezlerine uzak adayların, geleneksel güç merkezlerine yakın, politik sistemin içinde uzun zamandır var olan adaylara göre daha çok popülist dil kullandığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Popülist terimlerin n-gram çözümlemesi, farklı adaylar tarafından kullanılan söylemlerin birbirinden ne açılardan farklı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu çözümlemenin bir başka sonucu da, Twitter'ın seçim kampanyalarının bir uzantısı olduğu ve geleneksel medyaya göre Twitter'ın popülist söylemlere çok daha uygun bir ortam olduğudur. Sonuç olarak, popülist dilin sadece demokratik meşruluğu güçlendirmek için kullanılan bir araç değil, demokratik sürecin özünde olan bir nitelik olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The 2016 American presidential campaign remains one of the preeminent examples of populist communication in recent American, and arguably early 21st century, history. In the early stages of the campaign, mainstream media outlets had already tagged candidates Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders as populist figures. Their rise to prominence and unorthodox communication styles, facilitated by mediums of mass communication like social media, captured the ethos of populist appeals in ways scholars of populism had spent decades working to conceptualize. Using the 2016 Republican presidential primary as a case study, this thesis explores the phenomenon of populism in the digital age of democracy by examining how various Republican candidates used Twitter to craft populist appeals. Beginning with an overview of the phenomenon of populism, starting with the history of the term in Chapter 2 and moving on to outline the theoretical underpinnings of populism in Chapter 3, this research ultimately aims to illuminate how the communicative paradigms of the digital age can facilitate both the study and the phenomenon of populism, particularly in the American context.

As will be outlined in Chapter 2, for much of the 20th century and early 21st century the study of populism suffered from a lack of conceptual consensus and clarity surrounding the term. As a result, a number of amusing yet revealing descriptors were employed by academics to describe the challenge of conceptualizing populism. They included "mercurial," "contested," "elusive and recurrent," "slippery," "chameleonic,"

"exceptionally vague," "confusing," a "shifty eel," and more recently "sexy" (Canovan, 1981, p. 3; Laclau, 1977, p. 143; Panizza, 2005, p. 1; Rooduijn, 2019, p. 362; Stanley, 2008, p. 108; Taggart, 2000, pp. 2, 4; Weyland, 2001, p. 1; Weyland, 2010, p. xii). Despite the diversity of opinion represented by the authors quoted above, these descriptors hit on something nearly all scholars and academics have agreed upon; the phenomenon of populism defies easy conceptualization. However, as eloquently captured by the final descriptor, "sexy," the study of populism experienced a massive resurgence of interest in both political science circles and mainstream discourse beginning in the early 2000s and peaked in 2016 in response to the success of the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump (Rooduijn, 2019, p. 362).

While this 21st century resurgence of interest has contributed to greater conceptual clarity and scholarly consensus around the phenomenon of populism, the state of the field was not always as settled as it now appears. Somewhat like a ship without an anchor, for a long time the concept of populism was buoyed by various dominant schools of thought. The frameworks of these other, more established and comprehensive theories, like modernization theory for example, were essential to defining populism in the past, and arguably still hold sway today. This sense of being unmoored is captured well by Peter Wiles (1969) who wrote in the late 1960s, "to each his own definition of populism, according to the academic axe he grinds" (p. 166). Wiles was writing as part of a larger moment in the history of populism studies widely regarded as the first concerted effort to form a definitive definition of the term. Even though this attempt, an academic conference organized by Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner at the London School of Economics in 1967, ultimately failed to reach any sort

of consensus, the formal acknowledgement that populism is an important and essential concept for understanding historical and political developments helped lay the necessary foundations for future studies (Ionescu & Gellner, 1969).

Likewise, historical developments dating back to at least the late 19th century in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and beyond have proven just as influential in determining the meaning of the term populism at different points in time. From groundswell agrarian movements to powerful charismatic leaders, populism has manifested itself in different forms across time and space, reflecting a variety of political realities and shifting democratic possibilities. As Müller (2016) puts it, "one cannot help thinking that then, just as today, all kinds of political anxieties get articulated in talk about populism" (p. 7). This is most clear when looking at the history of the study of populism. Just as political anxieties have shifted over time and space, morphing in response to developments and crises, so too have the contours and features of conceptualizations of populism. Panizza (2005) articulates this beautifully, likening the concept of populism to a mirror of democracy through which deep anxieties and ugly realities about the state of democracy and society can be seen more clearly. In many ways, the power of social media platforms to both bolster and undermine democratic societies is reflected in contemporary understandings and attitudes towards populism and the larger state of democracy. Chapter 2 of this paper will sketch out this history of the study of populism to better situate the contemporary theoretical debate about populism in Chapter 3. Furthermore, because this research focuses on populism in the American context, a brief history of populism will reveal America's special relationship with both the phenomenon of populism and the study of populism.

Chapter 3 will detail the three dominant schools of thought in contemporary populism studies: the ideational approach, the political-strategic approach, and the discursive approach (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). Beyond laying out the foundations of each approach, Chapter 3 will explore how these schools of thought contrast and overlap in both their definitional and methodological underpinnings.

Chapter 4 will delve into populism and social media's symbiosis. Their uncanny relationship fits well with the previously noted observation that evolving conceptions of populism reveal deep anxieties and realities about the state of democracy. The rise of social media platforms and the profound power they represent, both as realizations of a truly democratic information space and as weapons wielded by malign forces to manipulate and sway public opinion, have ushered in new dimensions of political communication and mobilization over the past two decades. Furthermore, social media platforms have facilitated the emergence of new identity and interest groups onto the political landscape in ways that reanimate and reshape political fault lines and questions of democratic governance. As social media platforms expand the arena of democratic politics, they subject the political process to their own networking logics and rules. Chapter 4 delves into this relationship between populism and social media, focusing on the incentive structures and intrinsic affinities that make social media such an amenable medium for populist communication and ideas.

Chapter 5 outlines the research questions and methodology and presents the analysis. As an important tick on the timeline in both the history of populist politics and the history of social media's influence in politics, the 2016 Republican primaries were ultimately chosen as the context of this research. In response to Donald Trump's upset

victory over the field, many observers honed in on his divisive and extremely active social media presence, particularly on Twitter, as key to his success and a defining feature of his particular brand of provocative, internet troll-inspired populism. While Trump was certainly unique in how he communicated, he was not alone in making populist appeals to the public. As backed up by the findings of this research, Republican candidates from across the political spectrum leveraged populist framings on Twitter to appeal to the public, shape their image and bolster their democratic legitimacy. Building off previous studies analyzing populist communications in the American context, two research questions were posed: Firstly, do Republican outsider, or challenger, candidates employ more populist language than those with closer proximity to power? Secondly, how do candidates vary in their framing of populist language? To answer these questions, Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) insider-outsider framework, which assesses each candidate according to their relative proximity to traditional centers and pathways to power was employed along with a novel mixed-methods approach to analyzing populist communication that endeavors to let the language of populism speak for itself.

First, Twitter messages shared by Republican candidates during their respective campaign periods were collected and processed. Then, a dictionary of populist terms was developed by analyzing and comparing existing dictionaries of populist terms. This helped to guarantee the reliability of terms and ensured the dictionary-based approach employed was rooted in prevailing literature on populist studies and communications. Furthermore, a qualitative pre-analysis of each candidate's most widely liked Twitter messages helped to further contextualize the dictionary of terms and facilitated the

addition of several terms found to be thematically relevant to both populist

communications and trending topics during the 2016 campaign. Once the dictionary was

developed, each candidate's Twitter communications over the course of their campaign

period was subjected to dictionary-based textual analysis to discern variations in each

candidate's usage of populist terms. Finally, an n-gram analysis was conducted on select

populist terms to differentiate how certain candidates framed their populist appeals. In

contrast to human-based coding approaches, in which trained coders determine whether

a claim is populist or not according to certain established criteria, this approach relied on

a combination of computer-assisted automated recall and n-gram analysis to determine

how candidates chose to frame populist terms, and thus allowed each candidate's own

language to determine the nuances and idiosyncrasies of their populist appeals.

Ultimately, it was found that outsider candidates, or those situated further from

the traditional centers and pathways to power employed more populist appeals than

established, insider candidates. Furthermore, n-gram analysis of populist terms revealed

nuanced variations in the types of populist appeals employed by both insider and

outsider candidates. These nuances are revealed in the analysis presented in Chapter 5

and discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6. Additionally, Twitter was found to

constitute an extension of the traditional campaign arena, albeit one far more amenable

to populist appeals than traditional media settings. Rather than constituting a radical

paradigm shift in democratic politics, manifestations of digital populism are better seen

as opportunities to gain new insights into an old and versatile phenomenon. Overall,

populist communication was found to be best understood as an innate feature of the

democratic process.

CHAPTER 2

THE RISE OF POPULISM:

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The origins of populism as an academic topic of interest are inseparable from the context

of American politics and the development of political thought in the United States. In

fact, the word's linguistic origins trace back to a specific moment in American politics.

The term populist was coined on a train traveling from Kansas City to Topeka, Kansas

in May of 1891, to self-brand a movement of largely agrarian farmers forming a third

political party to challenge the two-party duopoly dominating American politics (Frank,

2020). The People's Party, as it came to be called, was an economic and social reaction

to the corruption and concentration of wealth and power in the Gilded Age. The Party

was essentially an alliance of movements and interests that banded together to present a

unified front and address major social and economic issues plaguing society, and

particularly poor and working-class society, at the time. These factions included Anti-

Monopoly, Labor Reform, Union Labor, Greenbacks, Prohibition, and others (Kazin,

1998, p. 27). The People's Party adopted a clear set of political goals and policies, which

were laid out in the Omaha Platform at the Party's establishment on July 4, 1982 (The

Omaha Platform: Launching the Populist Party, n.d.). These goals included monetary

reform to reduce the burdens of debt on farmers, the regulation of monopolies, free

trade, a graduated income tax, the initiative and referendum, the direct election of

senators, government established banks and a host of other demands, many of which

have since become part of the fabric of modern American society (Frank, 2020).

Although the party was short-lived, the People's Party captured and articulated a reform

impulse in American politics and society that ensuing progressive movements would

draw from for inspiration. The strong civic sense of a proud populist tradition in

American politics and society largely traces back to this movement (Bjerre-Poulsen,

1986).

The language and ethos of the People's Party, which was highly moralistic and

emblematic of classic populist antagonisms between the 'plain people' and the corrupt

elite, has continuously found relevance and new articulations in mainstream American

political discourse throughout history. This populist tradition is an essential feature of

the American cultural and political vernacular (Kazin, 1998). It is not hard to hear

echoes of contemporary populist appeals in the language of the preamble to the Omaha

Convention:

> The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal
> fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the
> possessors of those, in turn, despise the republic and endanger liberty. From
> the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great
> classes—tramps and millionaires….We have witnessed for more than a
> quarter of a century the struggles of the two great political parties for power
> and plunder, while grievous wrongs have been inflicted upon the suffering
> people...They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives, and children on the altar
> of mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds
> from millionaires...we seek to restore the government of the Republic to the
> hands of 'the plain people,' with which class it originated. (The Omaha
> Platform: Launching the Populist Party, n.d.)

While the millionaires may have become billionaires, the similarities between the past

and present are striking.

John D. Hicks' 1931 study, *The Populist Revolt*, was the earliest authoritative

work on the movement, and it painted a largely sympathetic portrait of the Populists as

political forerunners to contemporary progressivism (Bjerre-Poulsen, 1986). The

political vision put forth by the Populist movement became embodied in the politics and

cultural shifts that took place under Franklin Roosevelt's vast expansion of the federal

government and his New Deal politics (Frank, 2020). In Hicks' writing, Populism was

portrayed as a noble and spirited crusade replete with a cast of larger-than-life characters

plucked right from the dung and dust of rural America. However, beginning in the 1950s

this proud history became radically revised by historians and scholars writing in the

midst of the terrors of McCarthyism. Senator McCarthy's Red Scare, in which public

hearings and accusations of subversion and treason were leveled against government

officials and prominent members of society alleged to have communist ties or

sympathies, irrevocably altered the American political landscape, and dramatically

rerouted the study of populism.

2.1 The rise of anti-populism

Richard Hofstadter, a renowned historian and Edward Shils, a celebrated sociologist,

were at the forefront of developing a new conceptual understanding of populism born

directly from the horrors and witch hunts of the McCarthy era. With their contributions,

the concept of populism took on a decidedly negative connotation. Perhaps most

strikingly, both scholars traced the origins of McCarthyism back to the American

Populist movement of the late 1800s.

In his Pulitzer Prize winning book, *The Age of Reform*, Hofstadter (1960) wrote

that the Populist movement "seems very strongly to foreshadow some aspects of the

cranky pseudo-conservatism of our time" (p. 20). According to Hofstadter, an obvious

through-line connected the populism of the late 1800s to that of contemporary

McCarthyism. "Somewhere along the way," he wrote, "a large part of the Populist-Progressive tradition has turned sour, become illiberal and ill-tempered" (Hofstadter, 1960, p. 20). In *The Age of Reform* Hofstadter (1960) portrayed the Populists as anti-Semitic, conspiracy driven yokels looking "backward with longing to the lost agrarian Eden" (p. 62). Rather than progressive reformers, in Hofstadter's account the Populists typified a peculiar kind of extreme reactionary backlash against industrialization and the rise of intellectuals and experts in urban cores. In a later essay published in 1965 entitled "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," he took this analysis even further by likening the Populist movement with other "movements of suspicious discontent," placing them in a lineage of a style of American thought and political discourse, which he coined the paranoid style (Hofstadter, 2008, p. 6). More akin to a psychological disorder, the paranoid style is characterized by "qualities of heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy," as well as the pathological conviction that history itself is a conspiracy of apocalyptic proportions set in motion by malignant, even demonic, forces that must be vanquished no matter the cost (Hofstadter, 2008, p. 3). This reframing of the Populist movement as a deranged and conspiracy-driven moral crusade shifted focus away from the issues, policies, and context of the movement itself and retrospectively recast the movement as part of a continuity, a populist tradition, encompassing McCarthyism and other conspiracy-laden crusades (Bjerre-Poulsen, 1986).

In his 1956 book on McCarthyism, *The Torment of Secrecy*, sociologist Edward Shils (1996) connected the Populists to McCarthyism in even blunter terms, writing that "McCarthy is the heir of LaFollette" (p. 99). Robert LaFollette was a well-established political leader of the Progressive movement who served as the governor of Wisconsin

as well as a senator in Congress. These analyses by prominent thinkers like Shils and

Hofstadter had a profound effect on the early conceptualization of populism. The

Populist movement and the People's Party were reframed as the wellspring from which

McCarthyism took root and populism itself was conceived as a sort of mad political

neurosis endemic in certain segments of society and bound to flare up under the right

conditions (Bjerre-Poulsen, 1986). Another significant consequence of these studies was

the transformation of the term populism from a reference to a specific political party and

movement in late 1800s America to a general concept that was applicable to political

and social movements around the world (Frank, 2020).

2.2 Populism goes global

Edward Shils is credited as being the first to coin the term populism as a concept

with wider applicability in mind (Allcock, 1971). Writing in response to

McCarthyism, in his book *The Torment of Secrecy*, Shils (1996) defined populism

as follows:

> Populism proclaims that the will of the people as such is supreme
> over every other standard, over the standards of traditional
> institutions, over the autonomy of institutions and over the will of
> other strata. Populism identifies the will of the people with justice
> and morality. (p. 98)

This definition zeroes in on a key component in populism studies, the sovereignty of the

people. Even though Shils' discussion of populism was deeply rooted in the

contemporary American political context, Shils sought to establish a term with broad

relevancy and wide applicability. He added that "populism has many faces," citing Nazi

dictatorship and Bolshevism (Shils, 1996, p. 98). As an added layer of context, it is

worth mentioning that around the same time as the American Populist movement, a socialist agrarian movement was growing in Russia among the intelligentsia, holding up the peasant population as the legitimate source of both political revolution and moral regeneration of the nation. Proponents of this movement were called narodnik, which English-speaking historians translated as 'populist' (Allcock, 1971). Even though this movement had no connection to the American Populist movement, the choice to translate narodnik as populist created a tenuous connection between the two movements that led many scholars to view them as part of an overarching phenomenon called populism. In a later essay on the concept of populism from Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner's seminal conference, Worsley (1969) singles out this translation choice as "an imputation, not a 'neutral' simple equivalence" (p. 219).

Notably, as mentioned above, Shils' definition hits on many widely accepted conceptualizations of populism today, particularly in his framing of populism as a phenomenon that imagines the people, or masses, as the ultimate source of sovereignty, legitimacy and morality over a society's elites and institutions. Less of a movement, Shils' articulation of populism is closer to an ideology, or a set of beliefs. Shils zeroed in on ressentiment as a central part of the populist ideology, adding that populism emerges from, "popular resentment against the order imposed on society by a long-established, differentiated ruling class which is believed to have a monopoly on power, property, breeding, and culture" (Shils, 1996, pp.100-101). This ideology or set of beliefs, which is rooted in distrust and resentment of society's educated, experts, and elites, rests on two bedrock principles, "the notion of the supremacy of the will of the people, and the notion of the direct relationship between people and the government" (Panizza, 2005, p.

4). This emphasis, on Shils' part, reflected the overall fear of lawlessness and mob rule that gripped America's elite, educated classes during the purges, demagoguery, and vitriol of the McCarthy era (Allcock, 1971). While Shils and Hofstadter codified this American-centric conceptualization of populism principally to make sense of McCarthyism, and by extension a few other mass movements, Seymour Martin Lipset, another accomplished American sociologist, took this newly burgeoning definition of populism and found instances of it across the globe.

By looking at the social bases of McCarthyism and other "middle-class extremist populist movements," Lipset reframed the concept of populism as a kind of psycho-social phenomenon of the lower-classes (Lipset, 1960, p. 157). Lipset understood McCarthyism as "populist extremism" and developed a theory of "working-class authoritarianism" on the basis that "extremist and intolerant movements in modern society are more likely to be based on the lower classes than in the middle and upper classes" (Lipset, 1960, p. 167, p. 97). His analysis of McCarthyism was accompanied by analyses of Poujadism in France, Italian Fascism, and Austrian Nazism, in which working-class extremism became baked into the psychology of uneducated, lower-class groups. These movements, according to Lipset, arose from the "insoluble frustrations of those who feel cut off from the main trends in modern society" (Lipset, 1960, p. 170). As this support base of petty bourgeoisie suffer from the "relative decline of their class" as well as dwindling "status and influence within the larger society," it causes them to "accept diverse irrational protest ideologies," such as "regionalism, racism, super-nationalism, anti-cosmopolitanism, McCarthyism and fascism" (Lipset, 1960, p. 170). It is this sense of relative deprivation that is key and is most manifest in the rejection of all

things metropolitan (Allcock, 1971). As will be drawn out in more detail later, Lipset's theory was the primogenitor of modern theories of cultural backlash. Lipset's analysis, which cast populism as a sort of social movement of a particular segment of society, grows to become incredibly influential in how the concept is applied in various contexts throughout the world.

2.3 Populism finds safe harbor in theories of development

This framing of the phenomena of populism aligned it with ascendent theories of development, modernization, and democratization. In fact, Lipset is widely recognized as one of the forerunners of modernization theory, which aims to establish a link between economic development and democratization (Przeworski & Limongi, 1997). Lipset and others, notably Kornhauser (1959) and Germani (1978), who focused on the rise of mass society, framed populism as a reactionary and regressive impulse against modernization and the emergence of the modern world (Taggart, 2000).

Modernization theory, which correlates economic development with political and societal shifts, posits a linear transformation from rural agrarian societies with traditional values to secular, industrial, urban ones. Accordingly, urbanization, industrialization, secularization, higher literacy and education rates, technological development, and the expansion of mass media and communication channels are primary features of modernization theories. These features further the process of democratization and provide a framework through which sociological shifts in societies can be predicated and interpreted (Przeworski & Limongi, 1997, p. 158).

Lodging populism within the larger framework of modernization theory imbued it with a particular meaning that served a larger research agenda. Starting in the 1960s, populism became an important concept in making sense of political developments in underdeveloped countries on the economic peripheries, and especially those that were undergoing processes of modernization and democratization (Allcock, 1971).

This modernization-inspired conceptualization of populism was well represented in that canonical first collection of texts assembled from Ionescu and Gellner's 1967 conference at the London School of Economics. Contributing an article on populism as an ideology, MacRae (1969) defined populism as "a romantic primitivism" that revolts against the rootlessness of modern life, and at its core conveys both, "a rebellion against the alienated human condition" and a reverence for the idealized agrarian yeoman who firmly belonged to a virtuous community of cultivators of soil (p. 162). Following MacRae, Wiles (1969) suggested that populism should be regarded as "a syndrome, not a doctrine" and isolated 24 features of populism combinable in a variety of ways (p. 166). A number of these features base populism in a rejection of science, intellectualism, and technocracy, and an embrace of tradition, nostalgia, racialism, and a sense of social alienation (Wiley, 1969, pp. 166-171). Worsely (1969), another contributor to the collection, argued that populism is not an ideology or mass social movement, but rather, "an emphasis, a dimension of political culture," that is neither inherently democratic nor anti-democratic (p. 245). Worsely, in particular, saw the usefulness of the application of populism abroad and centered his conceptualization around colonialism and the emergence of domestic political movements opposing the colonial rule of foreign nations (Allcock, 1971). Within the framework of these larger theories of modernization

and development, populism was widely employed to "pinpoint societal problems" both in the Western world and beyond (Kaltwasser et al., 2017, p. 5).

The obvious problem with these accounts of populism is that they rest on larger teleological assumptions about progress and fixed paths of societal development. In other words, the concept of populism becomes too deeply entangled with and dependent on other theories and frameworks. Another major problem with these accounts, which became increasingly clear in the 1980s, is that populist movements are just as prone to occur in highly developed societies and well-established democracies as they are in developing ones (Taggart, 2000).

2.4 Populism revisited

Around the 1980s, and advancing well into the 1990s, the larger political science community began to reassess prevailing conceptualizations of populism and started to "take ownership" of the topic (Kaltwasser et al., 2017, p. 6). As new developments and economic regimes began reshaping the political landscape, disrupting established orders and schools of thought, more attempts were made to try to disentangle the concept of populism from larger and more dominant theories and frameworks.

Canovan (1981) published a sweeping and ambitious comparative study on populist movements, hoping to distill the kernel at the heart of the phenomenon and succeed where Ionescu and Gellner failed. Her work was pioneering in its attempt to formulate a definitive definition of populism by creating a descriptive typology derived from all recorded populist movements across time and space. She identified seven types of populism divided into two major categories, agrarian populism, and political

populism, but ultimately concluded that all the variants of populism were "not reducible to a single core" (Canovan, 1981, p. 298). One of the motivating ideas behind Canovan's early work on populism was that the term desperately needed clarification if it was ever to become a useful concept in its own right.

Another highly influential theory of populism that developed a bit before Canovan's was Laclau's discursive theory, which will be discussed at length under the discursive approach to populism. Laclau's theory presented one of the first important and enduring critiques of populism as a symptom of development and modernization, or as a sign of societal problems. Significantly, Laclau challenged the prevailing methodology which sought to derive the essence of populism from phenomena presupposed to be populist (Laclau, 1977, p. 145). This flawed reasoning, Laclau argued, is circular and doomed from the outset. Instead, Laclau developed a theory of populism within a Marxist framework that focused on the struggle of dominant classes in society seeking hegemony and the articulation of ideas in that hegemonic struggle (Laclau, 1977). Laclau's theory of populism, which he continued to develop well into his later life, seeks to center the inherently vague and contradictory nature of populism at the core of its approach (Taggart, 2000, p. 17).

Perhaps the most influential factor contributing to the rethinking of populism throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s was the emergence of neoliberal policies and the rise of new manifestations of populism, particularly in Latin America and Europe. According to Mudde (2004), during the 1980s, the rise of so-called new populist parties generated a surging wave of new articles, books, and theories on populism. These new populist parties adopted the economic agendas of neoliberal reform and fused it

with appeals to mainstream segments of society by demonizing politicians, bureaucrats, immigrants, and welfare recipients. New populists were generally aligned with far-right and even neo-fascist movements and typically included extreme nationalist elements (Taggart, 1996, p. 2). According to Taggart (1996), this wave of far-right new populist parties signified the decline of the postwar consensus, which was characterized by four elements; social democracy, corporatism, the welfare state, and Keynesianism (p. 13). As these pillars of the old order began to give way, a surge of populism took shape to usher in a new order and neoliberal consensus. The oil crises of the 1970s posed a significant challenge to the promise of continuous economic growth and stability enjoyed in the postwar decades. Furthermore, the shift in Europe and much of the Western world to postindustrial economies began undermining class solidarities and classic class-based social democratic parties (Taggart, 1996, p. 17).

In response to the floundering of the four pillars of the postwar system, upon which mass party politics had been based, new types of parties on both the left and the right began to rise out of the collapse of the postwar consensus. Taggart (1996) called these parties the "New Protest Parties," and distinguished between the parties of "New Politics" on the left and "New Populists" on the right, particularly in Western European democracies (p. 2). Whereas New Politics parties on the left were driven by emerging postmaterialist values and causes such as environmentalism, feminism, pacifism, and nuclear disarmament, the New Populist parties on the right primarily employed an anti-system ideology with elements of extreme nationalism that mobilized around issues like taxation, immigration, and regionalism (Taggart, 1996, p. 2). The collapse of the postwar hegemonic order and the realignment of politics around a new neoliberal

consensus proved fertile ground for the emergence of a new type of populist politics.

Populist parties rode the waves of discontent and uneasiness felt by societies in an

uncertain transition, and left a considerable imprint on democratic politics, particularly

in Western Europe and the United States. Mudde's incredibly influential ideological

definition and approach to studying populism emerges primarily from this particular era

of populist revival, which has grown increasingly mainstream over time, leading him to

coin the term the "populist Zeitgeist" to describe our current political climate (Mudde,

2004, p. 541).

This transformation mirrors the turn Latin American politics took, as well.

Starting in the late 1980s and lasting through the 1990s neoliberal reforms began to be

implemented by populist leaders. Jansen (2011) characterized these "neopopulist"

leaders as "a new breed of Latin American politicians who implemented neoliberal

policies while continuing to mobilize surprising levels of popular support" (p. 76). The

emergence of neoliberal populism in Latin America helped disentangle populism from

another larger framework of development, dependency theory, which associated

populism with import-substitution strategies of industrialization that aimed to protect

nascent, domestic factors of production from foreign competition (Weyland, 1996, p. 4).

According to previous theories, populism could not be compatible with

neoliberal reforms, which included austerity, more limited redistribution policies,

privatization, and other restructurings that would disproportionately disadvantage poorer

citizens. However, these assumptions proved to be wrong as populism continued to grow

throughout the 1990s, ushering in waves of neoliberal reforms. From these

developments, the political-strategic approach to populism, which focuses on the role of

charismatic leaders and strategies of mobilization was formulated and established, most

prominently by Kurt Weyland (this approach will be thoroughly outlined in Chapter 3).

2.5 Modern populism studies

The current surge of interest in the study of populism, which began in earnest back in the

1990s due to the rise of new populist parties in both Europe and the Americas, has

exploded since the 2000s (Kaltwasser et al., 2017, p. 10). The idea that populist

movements only occurred in developing societies and democracies has been upended

and largely dispelled. However, much of the work on populism is still limited by a

narrow focus on specific regions and tends to be spurred on in response to real world

developments. South America and Europe, having been the most affected by the rise of

populist politics since the early 1990s, have become epicenters of recent waves of

populist scholarship (Kaltwasser et al, 2017, p. 7). The United States, as put by the

Oxford Handbook of Populism, "has been the home of populism," but despite the

outsized role populism has played in American politics, academic studies on American

populism still suffer from a "dearth of systemic scholarship" (Kaltwasser et al., 2017,

pp. 9-10). Mudde and Kaltwasser (2012b), writing in 2012, cite Ghita Ionescu and

Ernest Gellner's conference at the London School of Economics, and remark that "more

than forty years later the number of scholars of populism has increased manifold and we

are probably even further from a definitional consensus within the scholarly community"

(p. 4).

The ascendance of populist politics in the latter half of the 2010s, especially the

election of Donald Trump, the success of the Brexit referendum, and the continued

success of far-right populist parties in Europe have led many commentators to view our

current era as a quintessentially populist one. This has renewed wide interest in the

phenomena of populism and has generated a number of theories intending to explain this

current explosion of populist politics. As a result, a plethora of studies and commentaries

have emerged offering various explanations for the rise in populism by zeroing in on

populism's root causes in various contexts. Unsurprisingly, this focus has not

substantially helped clarify the concept of populism, and instead, the transformation of

populism into a buzzword has, according to some scholars, inadvertently led to

additional confusions with related concepts (Rooduijn, 2019). Despite these challenges,

recent scholarship has produced a number of influential and compelling accounts of our

current populist era.

Explanations for the recent rise of populism in Western democracies are

dominated by accounts that roughly fit into two major camps. On one side is Inglehart

and Norris (2019) who propose a cultural backlash theory, reminiscent of Lipset and

drawing heavily from modernization theories, discursive approaches to populism, and

lessons from the rise of the new populists. They propose that cultural values among

social conservatives are higher predictors of support for authoritarian populist parties

than economic insecurities. In other words, economic changes such as globalization and

deindustrialization do not explain the resurgence of populism and instead, they argue, it

is the result of a cultural and generational backlash by older voters who reject younger

voters' emphasis on post material values (Inglehart & Norris, 2019).

On the other side are scholars and commentators who argue that discontent and

insecurity over economic changes and inequalities wrought by the neoliberal regime are

key to understanding the current resurgence of populism. They point to the hollowing

out of middle class and working-class communities as a result of deindustrialization and globalization. Accordingly, these once relatively prosperous and upwardly mobile segments of society have been left behind by the capitalist elite who have also captured democratic governments. These losers of globalization, still reeling from the effects of the Great Recession, embrace populist leaders and messages (Geiselberger, 2017). Other accounts, particularly those venturing beyond the Western fold, point to other factors as well, like populism that appeals to people's fear of crime, particularly in countries with high levels of economic inequality and limited social service provisions (Chevigny, 2003).

A final, and significant, reflection on the current state of the field of populism is that the benefit of time has caused scholars to reexamine its relationship with democracy. The cyclical nature of the phenomenon of populism and its diverse manifestations have led many scholars to reassess their normative judgments of populism. While many view populism as being inherently in tension with liberal democracy, the intrinsic toxicity of populism to democracy has been challenged by others who argue that populism can be either a threat or a corrective to democratic rule depending on the context and various factors (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012c). Accordingly, populism can be inclusionary or exclusionary in nature, largely hinging on how the concept of 'the people' is defined, which leads to drastically different forms of populist parties, leaders, and movements. Populist movements that are inclusive can improve the quality of a liberal democracy by bringing marginalized people into the fold or can undermine it by using the sovereignty of the people to subvert crucial checks and balances (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012a).

For some, populism represents a legitimate challenge to Western liberal democracies that must be overcome. Mudde (2021) conveys this sentiment well by referring to populism as "an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism" (p. 577). Canovan (1999), by focusing on the inherent tensions within representative democratic systems, eloquently argues that populism is not a symptom of backwardness, but rather, "a shadow cast by democracy itself" (p. 3). By looking within, at the redemptive and pragmatic faces of democracy, as she calls them, the potential for populism is understood as something always lurking in the shadows, an inescapable feature of democratic societies. Whereas the pragmatic face of democracy views democracy as nothing more than a procedural form of government, a collection of rules, practices, norms and institutions that limit power and maintain a peaceful balance through compromises between rival interests, the redemptive face of democracy seeks salvation through politics, holding in reverence the romantic notion that the will of the people constitute the highest form of legitimacy and only through them can unity and wholeness be achieved (Canovan, 1999, p. 10).

The populist challenge inherent in democratic societies is perhaps most artfully conveyed by Arditi (2005), who likens populism to "the arrival of a drunken guest at a dinner party," who, "is bound to disrupt table manners and the tacit rules of sociability by speaking loudly, interrupting the conversation of others, and perhaps flirting with the wives of other guests" (p. 90). As the vulgar, unwelcome guest, populism breaks the established rules of engagement presiding over democratic politics and disrupts the status-quo by promising the redemption of democracy through popular power.

CHAPTER 3

STUDYING POPULISM:

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In contemporary populism studies, three main schools of thought currently dominate the field: the ideational approach, the political-strategic approach and the discursive approach (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). These conceptualizations of populism differ in both their definitional and methodological foundations.

3.1 Populism as ideology

The ideational approach, as it is often referred to, was established in its current iteration by Cas Mudde in his noteworthy 2004 article "The Populist Zeitgeist," and remains the most influential in terms of setting research agendas among academics. This is largely because the ideational approach operationalizes a minimal definition that lends itself very well to comparative analyses, both quantitative and qualitative, due to its stripped-down simplicity and its flexibility of application across a range of contexts. According to Mudde (2004), populism is:

> ...an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people. (p. 543)

There are two equally important aspects of Mudde's definition of populism as an ideology that require some unpacking.

Firstly, at the core of the ideational approach is the notion that populism is rooted in an antagonistic relationship between 'the people,' however they may be constructed,

and 'the elites' or hostile others. This dichotomy is the central cleavage from which

populism, especially as a concept that can be operationalized and studied, emerges from

and is key to understanding populism's diverse manifestations. Furthermore, this

antagonism between the people and the elite is primarily cast in Manichean terms, as a

moral struggle between good and evil, friends and foes. In essence, populism is

primarily a form of moral politics, meaning populism is not necessarily rooted in socio-

economic cleavages such as class or ethnic and religious divides, or in actual gaps in

political power between groups, referred to as situational politics (Mudde & Kaltwasser,

2012b). Secondly, populism derives legitimacy from a specific relationship to

democracy that views the 'will of the people' as the supreme authority in political

decision-making and the highest expression of democratic governance. This hearkens

back to the earliest academic definitions of populism proposed by Shils and Hofstadter,

who emphasized this exact dimension of populism. In this way, populism is inextricably

linked with notions of popular sovereignty and democracy. In sum, populism as a set of

ideas consists of these two supporting pillars; firstly, the moral struggle of good,

virtuous people against evil, corrupt elites and secondly, the notion of popular

sovereignty, or the principle that governments are created and legitimated through the

consent and will of the people.

3.1.1 The thin center of populism

A third component of the ideational approach, which truly sets this approach apart from

others, is the concept of populism as a "thin-centered ideology" (Mudde, 2004, p. 544).

Building off Michael Freeden's (1998) formulation of an ideology as a bundle of loosely

interrelated ideas, Mudde specifies the ideology of populism as "thin-centred" as opposed to a more programmatic full ideology, like liberalism or socialism (Mudde, 2004, p. 544). The 'thin' nature of populism is key to understanding how populism manifests itself in different contexts and allows for comparative studies between various populist parties or figures. Unable to stand alone as a coherent political program or vision, populism fuses with other 'thick' or full ideologies, like socialism or nationalism. Accordingly, "which ideological features attach to populism depend upon the socio-political context within which the populist actors mobilize" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 2). The various 'thick' ideologies that pair with populism inform the central populist constructions of which segments of society constitute the people and which the elites. This distinction between a 'thin' and 'thick' ideology is important when making sense of differences between, for example, the rise of far-right, nativist populist parties in Europe on one hand, and the success of more left-wing, socialist populist figures in Latin America on the other.

In the recent context of American politics and presidential elections, Bernie Sanders was highly successful in articulating a leftist-social-democratic populist ideology framed around economic inequality and the division between the 99% and the 1% (Rehmann, 2016). In Sander's populism, the corrupt elites were defined as the 1% of the population who had amassed outrageous fortunes at the expense of the 99%, or the vast majority of Americans, and particularly the multiracial working class. In former president Donald Trump's right-wing ethno-nationalist populism, the corrupt elites were largely portrayed as the political establishment who were in a cabal to undermine America through alliances with other antagonists, such as immigrants, Muslims,

journalists, and even traditional foreign allies. Trump constructed his definition of the people through references to the "silent majority" and the "forgotten men and women" (Schertzer & Woods, 2020, p. 1155). By constantly lambasting unfavorable press, political opponents, 'liberals,' and other perceived enemies, Trump was able to delineate the lines between the people and the elites.

Stanley (2008), stresses this 'thin' nature as a crucial aspect of the ideational approach. While populism is no less an ideology than say liberalism, according to Stanley (2008), "its thin nature means that it is unable to stand alone as a practical political ideology" due to the fact that "it lacks the capacity to put forward a wide-ranging and coherent programme for the solution to crucial political questions" (p. 95). In other words, the antagonistic dichotomy between 'the people' and 'the elites,' on its own, does not necessarily lead a political actor to a set of comprehensive policies. While this dichotomy remains a foundational cornerstone for any populist actor's espoused worldview, a complementary 'thick' ideology is needed to provide more substantive policies and programs. Depending on the political, economic, and social context, populism attaches itself to a 'thick' ideology and is presented as a complete package. Pankowski (2010), in his study of radical right-wing populists in Poland, offers a good example of how the ideology of populism functions as a "mental framework" through which political actors interpret, react, and articulate political conflicts, ideas, and developments.

3.1.2 Ideology as a mental map to the heartland

This formulation of the ideology of populism as a mental framework through which actors perceive and articulate politics is central to Taggart's conception of a glorified heartland as the primary construct of the populist imagination. The heartland, according to Taggart (2002), "represents an idealized conception of the community," where "a virtuous and unified population resides" (p. 67; Taggart, 2000, p. 95). As the highly romanticized, diffuse, and emotive core of populism, 'the heartland' is the imaginary place where 'the people' reside. In this way, the classic populist construct of the people is rendered a derivative concept. The people become the imagined populace of an imagined heartland.

There are two features of the populist's heartland that distinguish it from other ideologies depictions of ideal societies or utopias. Firstly, the heartland is "a vision derived from the past and projected onto the present" (Taggart, 2002, p. 67). Secondly, the heartland is not centered on reasoning or historical facts, but instead, "owe their power to the heart" (Taggart, 2000, p. 95). Shrouded in imprecision and nostalgia, these imaginary places, built by the backward-looking gaze of the populist imagination, shape the contours of who is included or excluded in the categorization of the pure people and accounts for "the inward-looking nature of populism," as well as the various ideological predilections and attachments, like nationalism or socialism, that various populists latch onto (Taggart, 2000, p. 96). In the context of the United States, Taggart points out that evocations of Middle America are explicit allusions to the heartland (Taggart, 2002, p. 67).

3.1.3 Challenges and advantages of the ideological approach

The diffuse and slippery nature of populism as an ideology can lead some to dismiss it

as pure opportunism or a style of highly emotive political discourse distinct entirely

from ideology or policy making. However, this portrayal misses the central thesis of the

ideational approach to populism as a thin-centered ideology. Namely, that the ideology

of populism does present a "distinct interpretive framework that can be generalized

across all its manifestations" (Stanley 2008, p. 118). In other words, populism, as a

distinct ideology, offers its own unique framework and logic to the practice and theory

of politics, a sort of "mental map through which individuals analyze and comprehend

political reality" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 6). In practice, this may help explain

why populist parties and politicians typically attach themselves to certain 'thick'

ideologies, like nativism or socialism, rather than other, more elite oriented ideologies.

      However, as noted by Postill (2018), populism is not strictly relegated to political

ideologies at the extremes of the political spectrum. Using the examples of French

president Emmanuel Macron and others, Postill (2018) highlights the rise of centrist

populists, who seek to position themselves as the sensible middle path to the corruption

of the establishment and the extremism of 'radical' populists. These centrist populists

tend to be technocratic leaders who blend populist language with pro-market platitudes

and capital-friendly policies (Postill, 2018, p. 757). Furthermore, Postill points out the

rise of theocratic populism in places like Indonesia and neoconservative populism

elsewhere. These populist variants express the populist ideology particularly through

their emphasis on popular sovereignty and invocations of the heartland (Postill, 2018,

pp. 759-760). This suggests that populism does not inherently have particular affinities

for certain ideologies. Understanding how populism can attach to different political ideologies across the ideological spectrum is useful in that it can allow for more analytical and wider reaching studies of populism in different contexts, places, and times.

There are four significant strengths, or key features, of this approach: distinguishability, categorizability, travelability, and versatility (Mudde, 2017, p. 34). In terms of distinguishability, the ideational approach establishes clear distinctions between parties and figures that are populist and those that are not. Thus, the ideological approach makes essentialist distinctions between populist and non-populist actors. This feature may contribute to conceptual or theoretical clarity, however, some scholars, particularly from the discursive school of thought, argue that this essentialist principle does not accurately capture the way populism manifests in the real world. According to the discursive school, which will be outlined in detail later, populism is a much more flexible concept that manifests itself in degrees and can be readily employed by political actors at different times or in different places (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013).

Another feature of the thin-centered nature of the ideological approach is that it allows for extensive categorizability, wherein different forms of populism can be categorized according to the various thick ideologies attached to it. This is useful in making sense of the differences between various populist figures and parties and allows for the addition of established classifications to describe diverse manifestations of populism, such as socialist, nationalist, ethno-centric, technocratic, etc. The ideational approach's ability to be employed across various geographical and temporal boundaries allows for comparative and cross-national studies, thus allowing for travelability.

Finally, one especially unique strength of the ideational approach is versatility. Defining populism as an underlying ideology lets researchers study not only the supply side of populism, but also the demand side, as well. Whereas the supply side focuses on parties and leadership, the demand side focuses on the attitudes and beliefs of citizens. Surveys and other research methods can be implemented within the ideological framework to better understand a population's populist inclinations and predilections. The broad applicability and operationalization of the ideational approach is undoubtedly one of its greatest strengths and the reason it is the most widely cited definition of populism.

3.2 Populism as political strategy

The current iteration of the political-strategic conceptualization of populism was developed in the context of Latin American politics by the leading proponent of this approach, Kurt Weyland. According to Weyland (2001), populism is defined as, "a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers" (p. 14). Central to Weyland's conception of populism is leadership. The charismatic leader is not merely a feature of populism, but rather, the essence and emanator of populism.

3.2.1 The leader as the puppet master of the people

The central strategy of populist leaders is to cultivate a direct, unmediated, and highly personalistic relationship with their mass of followers. By self-identifying themselves

with the will of the people, populist leaders forge a direct and intimate connection with their followers (Weyland, 2017, p. 59; Weyland, 2001, p. 14). Accordingly, populist communication tends to rely on direct and intimate communication channels like television and mass rallies, which mobilize crowds and demonstrate power through numbers (Weyland, 2017, p. 59). Weyland dismisses the classic populist conception of 'the people' as a homogenous and unified populace. In fact, because the people are "amorphous, heterogeneous, and largely unorganized" they lack agency and a unified will (Weyland, 2017, p. 54). This necessitates a leader to articulate the political mission and will of the people. In effect, the idea of the people is crafted by the leader. In Weyland's conception, this is a strategy to win broad and impassioned support from a large mass of people across traditional boundaries. In line with this direct, unmediated form of power, populist leaders often make use of frequent elections and plebiscites, as well as focus groups and opinion polls to ascertain the will of the people (Weyland, 2017, p. 58).

3.2.2 The populist twist

Weyland's political-strategic approach emphasizes a pivotal inversion of power dynamics between populist leaders and their followers called the "populist twist" (Weyland, 2017, p. 54). Because the populist leader is the one who acts, gives direction, mobilizes supporters, and embodies the will of the people, the populist leader, in Weyland's view, is the source of populism rather than an ideological antagonism between 'the people' and 'the elites.' The people are not empowered and are in fact denied agency in the political-strategic approach to populism. Instead, it is the populist

leader who ultimately empowers him or herself by claiming to be the voice of the people. As a result, power is delegated away from the people and to the leader. This conceptualization inverts the power dynamics implicit in the ideational approach to populism. Whereas the ideational approach views populism as a sort of bottom-up and top-down movement, the political-strategic conceptualization views populism as primarily a top-down strategy employed by leaders to rally citizens and whip up support for their goals and political projects (Weyland, 2017, p. 54). Once again, this twist on power dynamics puts the role of leader at the forefront of the phenomenon of populism.

This is also evident in the organization of populist parties and governments. Because the politics of populism revolve around a single, typically charismatic, leader, the organization of parties and political programs also revolve around the individual leader. Because the leader's source of legitimacy and power derives from their direct identification with the people, institutionalized party structures and organizational discipline tend to be foregone and usurped by capricious and erratic decision-making (Weyland, 2017, p. 58). This "antiorganizational stance" is simultaneously the source of a populist's power as well as a major reason populist leaders who fail to maintain popular support fall from power rather rapidly in comparison to non-populist leaders who may be propped up for a time by traditional institutions or party organizations (Weyland, 2001, p. 16). In the same vein, charisma is often pointed to as an important feature of populist leaders. While it is not an essential component, this trait exemplifies the particular type of personalistic and intense relationship a populist leader seeks to cultivate with his or her followers and can function as a sort of "glue" that holds their disordered mass of followers together (Weyland, 2017, p. 59).

Weyland's approach puts deeds instead of discourse at the forefront of understanding populism, viewing populist political strategies as tactics leaders employ to gain and maintain power. Anti-elite rhetoric for instance, is not an articulation of an underlying ideology according to the political-strategic approach but is instead a political instrument used to target enemies and challengers to the populist's power and mobilize and inflame followers (Weyland, 2017, p. 58). According to Weyland, this approach provides a better explanation of how populism actually operates in the real world and as a result is liable to provide less false positives than discursive and ideology-based approaches (Weyland, 2017, p. 61). Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the political-strategic approach was inspired by the seemingly counter-intuitive rise of neoliberal populism in Latin American beginning in the late 1980s. Populist strategies for manufacturing and guaranteeing broad popular support for radical and risky policies of neoliberal reform proved crucial to the successful emergence of a new economic and political order. The anti-status quo orientation of populism and the close bonds of loyalty forged between populists and their followers helped to both usher in this new neoliberal order as well as dismantle the established models of development (Weyland, 2001, p. 17).

3.2.3 Variants of the political-strategic approach

Weyland, of course, is not alone in promoting a political-strategic approach to populism. While Weyland's framework focuses on populism in terms of political organization, that is, on the relationship between populist leaders and their followers, other scholars focus on policy choices and forms of mobilization (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013, p. 10). The

role of policy as a populist strategy has, for the most part, failed to gain traction, especially because of real world developments demonstrating that populist policies range from vast government spending and economic redistribution to neoliberal, market-oriented reforms (Weyland, 2017, p. 51). Levitsky and Roberts (2011), who studied the resurgence of the left in Latin American politics following the unraveling of the neoliberal consensus around the late 1990s, define populism as a form of mobilization divorced from specific economic policy initiatives or ideologies. They define populism as the "top-down political mobilization of mass constituencies by personalistic leaders who challenge the established political or economic elites on behalf of an ill-defined pueblo, or 'the people'" (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011, p. 6). A common thread running through many mobilization and political organization frameworks is the emphasis on the charismatic, personalistic leader, seemingly endowed with super-human qualities, who forges an intimate, unmediated relationship with their base of support. Above all, the emphasis of populism as a top-down strategy is a hallmark of the political-strategic school.

Other scholars who adhere to the political-strategic approach are more critical of this cult of personality element of populism. Barr (2009), for example, points to Peru's Alberto Fujimori as an example of a prominent non-charismatic populist leader and reframes populism as a "mass movement led by an outsider or maverick seeking to gain and maintain power by using anti-establishment appeals and plebiscitarian linkages" (p. 38). This framing of populism as a mass movement is taken a step further by Jansen (2011) who proposes understanding populism as, "any sustained, large-scale political project that mobilizes ordinarily marginalized social sectors into publicly visible and

contentious political action, while articulating an anti-elite, nationalist rhetoric that valorizes ordinary people" (p. 82). In Jansen's view, populism is best characterized as a mode of doing politics called populist mobilization. This conception of populism minimizes the larger-than-life role of the populist leader and replaces it with a focus on patterns of mobilization and discourse. Interestingly, Jansen's mobilization theory heavily draws from not only the political-strategic school, but from the discursive school, as well. Because populist mobilization is reframed as a political project, or as a means to an end, it can be utilized by a wide range of political actors and becomes a much more flexible concept (Jansen, 2011, p. 77).

3.2.4 Common criticisms

While the political-strategic approach provides several salient critiques of the ideological approach, the political-strategic approach is not without its own criticisms. By centering the leader as the primary actor, the role of the people in political processes and populist politics essentially becomes non-existent. Stripping agency from the people to engage in populist politics is especially problematic from a collective action standpoint. Many theories of populist social mobilization focus on the role that social movements play in engendering populist politics or populist frames of collective action, particularly focusing on mass movements such as Occupy Wall Street, the Greek and Spanish indignados, and other bottom-up movements (Aslanidis, 2017; Aslanidis, 2018). Going one step further, it surely seems possible, especially in the context of other frameworks of populism, for there to be leaderless populist movements. The proliferation of social media and recent social movements like Black Lives Matter and

the Arab Spring pose considerable challenges to the question of agency and the necessity of leaders for political action.

3.3 Populism as discourse

The discursive approach brings communication front and center in the study of populism. While other approaches tend to incorporate communication as an important aspect in some form or other, the discursive approach considers populism primarily as a communication tool, or a logic of politics. For perspective, the political-strategic approach framed populist communication, particularly anti-elitist discourse, as a strategy to gain and maintain power, whereas the ideological approach framed communication as an essential medium for constructing and articulating the boundaries between the people and the elite, as well as other components of the populist ideology. In both the ideological and discursive schools, communication, both spoken and written, play fundamental roles in shaping populist antagonisms, dichotomies, and meaning. Many studies of the ideological approach use party literature, speeches, manifestos, and other forms of communication to empirically study and classify populist actors (Mudde, 2007; Arter, 2010; Pankowski, 2010; Rooduijn & Pauwels, 2012). In this way it is easy to see how these two approaches, the ideological and the discursive flow into one another.

　　While there are important and consequential differences between these two approaches, there is also significant overlap, as well. For many scholars, the operationalization of the populist ideology is based on analysis of political communication. Conversely, populist communication strategies are often analyzed as expressions of populist ideologies. As Kries (2014) puts it, "the populist ideology

manifests itself in the political communication of populist leaders" (p. 5). Some of the key distinctions and points of contention between the ideological and discursive schools of thought will be brought to bear below.

3.3.1 Hegemony and discourse

Ernesto Laclau, who worked closely with his wife Chantal Mouffe, is widely accepted to be the originator of the discursive approach to populism. Laclau's theory of populism will require a bit of unpacking by first reviewing two essential concepts. The first is the concept of discourse, which not surprisingly plays a central role in the discursive school, and the second is hegemony, which boasts a formidable history in political science. However, in the context of populism and Laclau's discursive theory, a direct lineage can be traced to Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony and its intimate relation with language and discourse.

Before Gramsci, usage of the term 'hegemony' was almost entirely applied to situations in which one nation held dominance over another, particularly through friendly alliances. Gramsci, a Marxist thinker, repurposed the concept of hegemony to describe the intricate relations of power within societies, and particularly the power relations emanating from dominant social groups. Ultimately, for Gramsci hegemony came "to mean the formation and organization of consent" (Ives, 2004, p. 2). Although Gramsci never provided a clear definition himself, consent is central to Gramsci's conception of hegemony and helps explain why large segments of society continue to accept and even support governments, as well as social and political systems, that harm their own interests (Ives, 2004, p. 6).

According to Louw (2005), Gramsci employed the term hegemony to describe how ruling groups assert dominance in three ways. Firstly, society's dominant groups build consent and legitimacy around their own interests and goals and convince the masses that their values, leadership, practices, and discourses are natural, common sense, and right. Secondly, society's dominant groups organize alliances and compromises between powerful interest groups, such as governing coalitions and bargains, for example. Thirdly, they deploy coercion, or violence. Although violence may not always be necessary to maintain the status quo, their monopoly on violence and the omnipresent threat of coercion, which is legitimated via institutional mechanisms like courts, police, and prisons, is crucial in deterring threats to their power (Louw, 2005, p. 19). Arguably, resorting to violence to maintain hegemony is a sign that a stable consent-based hegemonic order is on shaky foundations. Success in these three spheres is necessary to become the dominant, ruling group in a society. Once dominant, hegemonic groups must continue to work to maintain their dominance through generating discourses and consent among the masses. The more natural or obfuscated the discourses and practices of the hegemonic, ruling group becomes within a society, the more ingrained and hidden the power relationships become, as well (Louw, 2005, p. 98).

In this conceptualization of hegemony, discourse, as well as practices, are essential tools through which power relations are simultaneously expressed and obfuscated. Louw (2005) defines discourse as "the way meaning is socially produced" in that, individuals are born into societies with pre-existing discursive formations and then construct themselves and reality out of these available discourses (Louw, 2005, p. 287).

Interestingly, this conceptualization of discursive formations as mental maps of meaning in some ways parallels the ideological approach, which characterizes populist ideology as a way of making sense of the world.

This conception of discourse is echoed by Laclau and Mouffe, as well, who define discourse as, "the structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 105). For Laclau, Mouffe, and similar thinkers of the discursive school, this structured totality encompasses far more than just speech or language but incorporates all social relations and interactions between individuals or societal groups. In other words, discourse stands at the center of a fundamentally socially relational, intersubjective, constructionist conception of reality. As Laclau (2005) puts it in his final magnum opus on populism, *On Populist Reason*:

> Discourse is the primary terrain of the constitution of objectivity as such. By discourse, as I have attempted to make clear several times, I do not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which relations play the constitutive role. This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it. Thus 'relation' and 'objectivity' are synonymous. (p. 68)

In this way, everything, from speech to historical events to art and even the falling of a brick or an earthquake, is constituted as an object of discourse and acquires meaning through discourse. Thus, the sphere of discourse constitutes the realm where individuals, groups, and societies acquire a sense of identity, where they articulate and form their own truths, values, and conceptions of reality, and where they affirm the truths, values, and conceptions of reality of others (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, pp. 105-110).

3.3.2 Laclau and Mouffe's discursive approach

According to Stravrakakis (2017) and Ives (2004), Laclau and Mouffe built on

Gramsci's theory of hegemony, moving it beyond a Marxist, class based, materialist

framework to a broader, post-Marxist, conception that centers discourse and

antagonisms as the primary vehicles of societal movements and politics. By dispelling

materialist and deterministic accounts of social change and political transformations and

centering a plurality of actors and social groups with various interests, rather than the

classic Marxist dichotomy between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, Laclau and

Mouffe paved the way for a new conception of politics and power. This framework

places antagonisms and the continual process of deconstruction and reconstruction of

identities as the primary movers of politics, arguing against other frameworks which

prioritize individual motivations and the pursuit of self-interest as the drivers of politics

(Panizza, 2005, p. 5). As Laclau (2005) states, "there is no hegemony without

constructing a popular identity out of a plurality of democratic demands" (p. 95). It is

from this trailblazing theory of politics that populism is ultimately understood as

"synonymous" with the logic of politics in its highest form (Laclau, 2005, p. 154). The

discursive construction of 'the people' is, according to Laclau "the political act par

excellence" (Laclau, 2005, p. 154). In other words, more than merely a secondary

political phenomenon, populism acquires primary status as "the royal road to

understanding something about the ontological constitution of the political as such"

(Laclau, 2005, p. 67).

The construction of the people through antagonism is at the core of studying

populism from a discursive approach. As an aside, it is worth highlighting the

connection here that the antagonistic relationship between 'the people' and 'the elites' is also a key feature of Mudde's ideological definition of populism (Mudde, 2004). Antagonism is thus central to populism and politics in general because through antagonisms political identities are constituted and reproduced. As Panizza (2005) puts it:

> Antagonism is thus a mode of identification in which the relation between its form (the people as signifier) and its content (the people as signified) is given by the very process of naming-that is, of establishing who are the enemies of the people (and therefore the people itself) are. (p. 3)

Populism is therefore an anti-status quo discourse that seeks to create new, radical modes of political identification by dividing the political sphere between 'the people' and their 'other.' Accordingly, populism is available to any political actor engaging in this process of political identity creation in which the sovereignty of the people and the conflict between the 'the people' and the 'others' are core elements (Panizza, 2005, p. 4). By constituting 'the other' by means of an antagonistic relationship, the political identity of 'the people' can be forged in a way that appeals to a plurality of interests and social groups by tying them together in their common state of oppression under an adversarial 'other' (Panizza, 2005, p. 6). Populism, therefore, is part of the political struggle over power and hegemony.

While populism is a particular language of politics, particularly endemic to representative democracies, it tends to emerge in times of crises and amidst collapsing hegemonic orders. During times of "unsettlement and de-alignment," when the established language of politics and social relations struggles to maintain dominance, populist appeals emerge that attempt to change the

language of political discourse, redraw social borders and political frontiers, articulate new popular identities, and shape a new hegemonic order (Panizza, 2005, p. 9).

In Laclau's early work, he more explicitly spells out these moments when tensions arise in the hegemonic order and populism emerges as a considerable force in politics (Laclau, 1977, p. 173). Typically, the dominant ideas in society are formed and propagated by the hegemonic classes. The hegemonic classes, as a result of their power, are able to absorb, neutralize, and defang subversive and anti-status quo discourse and ideas challenging their hegemonic order by incorporating them in ways that express heterodoxy, but not antagonism. However, when one segment of the dominant class aims to establish their own hegemony over the existing one, they make direct populist appeals to the masses in an attempt to constitute new political identities and social relations that propagate their own ideas and values. According to Laclau, this conflict between discursive creations of 'the people' and 'the other,' which constitutes the core of populism, explains why the concept of populism is so elusive and takes on so many different manifestations (Taggart, 2000, p. 17).

Interestingly, this conception of the discursive approach of populism tends to privilege a top-down, elite-driven perspective. However, other discursive accounts, which employ the same conceptual foundations, approach populism from a more bottom-up perspective.

3.3.3 Criticism of the discursive approach

While discursive theories of populism are about much more than just language, the linguistic phenomenon of populist language still plays a key part of the discursive approach. This leads to the charge that the discursive approach lacks analytical precision and does not lend itself well to empirical research. In other words, if "an appeal to 'the people' against both the established structure of power and the dominant ideas and values of society," as Canovan (1999) put it, constitutes populism, then it may be hard not to see populism everywhere (p. 3).

Hawkins (2009) seems to be responding to these criticisms of a lack of analytical rigor in his articulation of the minimal definition of the discursive approach, defining populism as, "a Manichaean discourse that identifies Good with a unified will of the people and Evil with a conspiring Elite" (Hawkins, 2009, p. 1042). Hawkins operationalizes this minimal definition by developing a holistic grading system to analyze speeches of political figures and leaders. While this approach does not differ significantly from the ideological understanding of populism as Mudde (2004) articulated it, one important conceptual distinction between the discursive and ideological approach is worth delving into.

The discursive approach allows for populism to be present to a greater or lesser degree, while the ideological approach is more essentialist and seeks to make clear distinctions between populist and non-populist parties (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). This point of contention mirrors many others in the social sciences between essentialists who aim for analytical rigor and exactness and those who oppose essentialist

categorizations as too rigid and constraining. This debate is clear in the critiques these two camps offer one another.

According to Mudde and Kaltwasser (2012), Laclau, who pioneered many of the ideas shaping the discursive theory of populism, "proposes a concept of populism that becomes so vague and malleable that it loses much of its analytic utility" (p. 7). On the other hand, advocates of the discursive approach like Panizza (2005), among others, stress the point that as a discursive mode, populism is readily available to be used by any political actor or party and not simply by those who are classified as populist (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). As Aslanidis (2016), a proponent of a more discursive approach, argues, "a graded approach will reveal a more subtle and refined political landscape, where political parties are not easily classified as either populist or non-populist; it will demonstrate the fact that populist discursive elements are scattered across the ideological spectrum and that their intensity varies with time" (p. 8). Most significantly, the discursive approach shifts focus away from binary opposition, which seeks to evaluate political parties and figures as either populist or not, and toward the crucial question of degree, that is, whether parties and figures have more or less populist characteristics than others (Deegan-Krause & Haughton, 2009, p. 822).

3.3.4 Applications and variations of the discursive approach

Applications of discursive theories of populism can be divided into two offshoots, those that focus on style and those that focus on substance. Research that focuses on the style of political communication dovetails nicely with another less established school of

populism, which approaches the phenomenon as a political style, emphasizing the performative features of populism (Moffit & Tormey, 2014).

Wirz (2018) finds that populist appeals elicit stronger emotions than non-populist ones and, as a result, are more persuasive. Populist communication techniques, according to Wirz, are the opposite of pluralist communication techniques, which embrace diversity, dialogue, and stress the importance of compromise. Wirz breaks down populist appeals into two types: advocative and conflictive. Advocative populist statements aim to elicit hope and pride by making references to the virtues and achievements of a monolithic people, demanding sovereignty, and demonstrating closeness to the people. Conflictive populist statements, on the other hand, aim to elicit fear and anger and encompass statements that exclude, discredit, or blame others, such as elites or out-groups, as well as those that deny sovereignty to the people. The framework that Wirz develops conveys much of what political scientists and scholars had assumed to be true about the emotional nature of populist appeals, and tracks well with observations made about Donald Trump's usage of "insult politics" as campaign rhetoric (Winberg, 2017, p. 3).

Insult politics, defined as "ad hominem attacks of a disparaging nature aimed at an individual or group," powered Donald Trump's highly conflictive and inflammatory campaign and were effectively employed to shatter traditional norms of presidential campaigning, target political opponents, and establish Trump as a populist champion taking on the corrupt political establishment on behalf of his followers (Winberg, 2017, p. 3). Trump's provocative populist rhetoric was key to spinning this narrative, despite

his own obvious political connections, immense wealth, and abandonment of many of his core populist promises while in office.

Another discursive feature of Donald Trump's populist style is his straightforward, jargon-free, and pared-down language. Applying the most common readability measures to Trump's speeches and television appearances, Kayam (2018) concluded that his "simple, straightforward, and anti-intellectual rhetoric was an intrinsic part of his campaign strategy" (p. 14). Trump employed sentences and words that were significantly shorter and less complex than any of his political competitors, communicating at around a level of complexity commensurate with a fourth or fifth grade education. His competitors, on average, communicated at a level of complexity closer to a ninth grader (Kayam, 2018).

Kayam's (2018) analysis, focusing on style, mixes elements of a discursive and strategic approach to populism, while also highlighting how form can follow substance. Trump's language differentiated him from other candidates, allowed him to reach more people, and allowed him to propose simple solutions to complicated issues, eschewing complexity for colloquialism and emotional appeals. Interestingly, Bernie Sanders, another widely regarded populist candidate in the 2016 presidential election, spoke at a grade level higher than every other candidate measured besides Hillary Clinton, who is the only other Democratic candidate included in the study. This suggests that discursive style may not be an essential feature of populism but may still reveal a lot about certain populist strategies or populist actors.

Before moving on to discursive approaches that focus more on substance, it is worth noting that Wirz's (2018) conceptualization of populist appeals as being highly

emotive and relying on "gut feelings rather than on rational facts and deliberation," mirrors Hofstader's (2008) observations about the paranoid style of American politics (p. 1116). The paranoid style, as discussed earlier, fits in well with the discursive approach to populism. A "mode of expression" or "rhetoric," the paranoid style is distinguished by both its exaggerated and heated style, as well as its substance, which fixates on conspiracies, suspicions, and imminent threats of persecution (Hofstader, 2008, pp. 6, 4).

3.3.5 As American as apple pie: Populism as the political vernacular

Particularly in the American context, in which Hoftsader was focused, the study of populism tends to revolve around discourse, language and political strategy. American historian, Michael Kazin's (1995) hugely influential work on the history of American populism entitled, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, draws from an understanding of populism that is deeply rooted in the language of politics in America. Kazin writes:

> Whether orated, written, drawn, broadcast, or televised, this language is used by those who claim to speak for the vast majority of Americans who work hard and love their country. That is the most basic and telling definition of populism: a language whose speakers conceive of ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bounded narrowly by class, view their elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic, and seek to mobilize the former against the latter. (p. 1)

Principally analyzed as a linguistic phenomenon, or a "flexible mode of persuasion," Kazin views populism as an endemic feature of American politics and society that has shifted across ideological spectrums over time (Kazin, 1995, p. 3). His work traces this

shift from a progressive, reformist ideology embodied by the People's Party to a reactionary, conservative ideology consolidated under Nixon and Reagan.

According to Kazin, the malleability and persistence of populism in the American context is an embedded feature of American society, including the American political experiment and the idealism of Americanism, which are deeply entwined with anti-elitist sentiments, Enlightenment and Reformation values, particularly pietism and rationalism, and a producer ethic (Kazin, 1995, pp. 9-17). From this fabric of interwoven ideas, populism emerges as an innate feature of American political movements that aim to dramatically reform or challenge American society and politics without ever threatening its fundamental structure and ideology or resorting to revolution (Taggart, 2000, p. 26). This argument, which views populism as a particular type of discourse or strategy, seems to capture well the nature of American politics, especially in regard to the institutional structure of the American political system.

Unlike most political theaters in continental Europe and elsewhere, the United States' modern political system has been dominated by a two-party duopoly for almost its entire history. Influential populist parties based around a leader or populist ideology are unable to form as they might in other representative democracies in Europe. Furthermore, the United States' constitutional system impedes and obstructs populist leaders via a rigid system of checks and balances. As a result, populist politicians must achieve power through one of the two mainstream political parties, so they tend to emerge when the popularity of both mainstream parties is very low and gaps in representation are increasingly high (Lee, 2019). In other words, when the status-quo no

longer represents the interest of enough Americans and the two-party consensus offers few alternatives, populism tends to rear its head.

One final and important note about American populism is that there is also a significant racial dynamic at play, as well. There is a long history here, but more recently it has been shown that the racial makeup of the American electorate has become significantly divergent among party lines. The Republican electorate has grown increasingly white, and the Democratic electorate is made up of the majority of non-white voters. This tends to exacerbate racial tensions and conflict as party platforms become more primed to express racial and ethnic policy differences. This deep racial gap between parties, which has been growing gradually over time, allows for the opportunity of major parties, particularly the Republican party, to be 'ouflanked' by candidates like Donald Trump who employ highly racialized rhetoric (Lee, 2019). These gaps in representation that leave mainstream parties vulnerable to being outflanked by populists may run along other lines as well, including education, urban and rural divides, and other highly polarized cleavages.

Kazin (1995) traces the mainstream adoption of racialized politics in the modern Republican party to Nixon and Goldwater's adoption of George Wallace's populist segregationist rhetoric, employing the Southern Strategy to win over white voters by exploiting regional, ethnic, and racial antagonisms in the wake of the Civil Rights movement. According to Kazin (1995), starting in the 1960s, Republican conservatives latched onto the populist mantle by endlessly harping on cultural resentments and grievances, and especially underlying racial tensions.

Kazin's highly influential discursive approach to populism and accompanying account of American populism is rooted in the same minimal definitions put forward by other scholars of populism, as a phenomenon that moralizes and appeals to the people against a corrupt elite. By basing American populism in foundational principles, Kazin is able to interpret the linguistic phenomenon of populism accordingly. Although his approach does highlight the intimate relationship populism has with democratic principles and representational democracy, it is limited in its ability to develop a more coherent and universal conceptualization of populism that lends itself to empirical research. This lack of analytical precision, as discussed earlier, is the most common criticism of the discursive approach. However, developing mediums of communication, such as social media and the internet, have inspired newer approaches to populism that take a more communication-centered approach without eschewing empirical and methodological rigor and usefulness.

CHAPTER 4

POPULISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Even during the earliest days of the internet, scholars were already drawing connections between populism and the emerging communicative and networking possibilities of the world wide web. In the late 1990s, Bimber (1998) posited a theoretical relationship between populism and online communication and explored the transformative potential of the internet to "restructure political power in a populist direction" by enabling citizens to directly communicate with governments, cut out intermediaries and elite gatekeepers, and exert a greater influence as individuals (p. 137). While Bimber (1998) ultimately doubted the emergence of a full-on populist revolution in politics enabled by the internet, he did foresee a number of aspects central to studies of populism on social media today, such as the accelerated process of issue group formation (p. 136).

Bimber was far from alone in anticipating a shifting landscape in political systems and the information environment as a consequence of new and emerging networking technologies. In a 1999 analysis of the creeping power and influence wielded by mass media over political institutions, described as the 'mediatization' of politics, Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) warned that "political systems in most liberal democracies are facing momentous changes on the communication front that raise serious challenges to the old order" (p. 259). Having a "mutagenic" effect, critics anticipated new communications technologies would have the potential to undermine traditional democratic institutions of representation, fragment the political electorate and party structures, erode traditional social and political bonds, empower shrewd,

manipulative, and unprincipled actors, and last but not leastly, facilitate the spread of populist attitudes and opinions (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999, p. 248). Over two decades later, the foresight of these and other similarly situated studies is striking. While there is certainly a lot more 'data' to draw from, scholars note a relative dearth of research on populism on the internet over the previous decades (Engesser et al., 2017b). Recently, however, a growing amount of scholarship has been dedicated to studying the relationship between populism and social media.

At the heart of many studies is the effort to understand the relationship between emerging communications platforms and a number of groundswell populist movements that have risen to prominence over the past two decades, particularly in western democracies where mobilized masses with the help of Twitter and Facebook challenged political and economic status-quos.

The potential of social media to engender new political realities first entered mainstream discourse during the Arab Spring in the early 2010s. Deemed "liberation technology" by some, social media platforms were heralded by many pro-democracy advocates as a promising development for democracy worldwide by virtue of their ability to empower individuals and civil society as a whole against authoritarian rulers (Diamond et al., 2012, p. xii). Since those early days of buoyed hope and potential, ultimately deflated by the subsequent disappointments that followed, the belief that social media produces positive, pro-democratic change in the world has witnessed a considerable fall from grace. Growing unrest and deepening economic and political divisions in western liberal democracies have accelerated this perception, and whether viewed as a convenient scapegoat or a contributing factor, social media has come to play

a major role in conversations about democratic decline and threats to democratic governance.

No instance captures this better than Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, which defied all expectations and forced analysts, commentators, and scholars to seek out explanations for his narrow victory over establishment-favorite Hillary Clinton. An influential strain of thought that emerged early on to explain Trump's unlikely success was his ability to unite social media savviness with emotionally charged, and often incendiary, populist messages (Gerbaudo, 2018). While Trump may represent the pinnacle of this unholy matrimony, the 2016 American election fits into a much broader research agenda of studying and assessing the role social media plays in populist movements, from the Brexit referendum in the UK and Marine Le Pen's Front National in France on the right, to Bernie Sander's rise in the US and Podemos' electoral successes in Spain on the left (Gerbaudo, 2018). The seemingly symbiotic relationship between social media and the rise of populism is increasingly difficult to deny, especially as platforms like Twitter and Facebook have grown to rival traditional news media in their influence and reach (Fisher et al., 2018, p. 2). Predictably, a growing body of literature is seeking to parse out this "elective affinity" between social media and populism (Gerbaudo, 2018, p. 745).

Gerbaudo (2018) proposes a helpful framework for parsing this affinity, focusing on two roles social media plays in facilitating populism: the people's voice and the people's rally. While Gerbaudo (2018) roots his analysis against the backdrop of a "profound economic crisis shaking the legitimacy of the neoliberal order," particularly

in western democracies, his schema is still helpful in understanding the complementary

relationship between populism and social media (p. 746).

4.1 The people's voice

The people's voice represents the power social media grants new actors, both ordinary

citizens and political actors, to bypass traditional gatekeepers of news and opinion-

making and communicate directly and without mediation. For Gerbaudo (2018), this

aspect is inextricably linked with a deeper crisis of authority and trust in mainstream

news media, which helps to explain the naturally "rebellious" or "transgressive" nature

of populist social media discourse (p. 746). Through its oppositional stance to traditional

sources of information, social media becomes a platform representing the voice of the

people, a channel for the populist appeal to "represent the unrepresented" and ultimately

unify a divided people (Gerbaudo, 2018, p. 746). Contrary to mainstream media, which

populist figures and supporters of populist parties and politicians tend to distrust and

view as corrupted by elites and not representative of the true interests and concerns of

the people, social media is driven by user generated content (Fisher et al., 2018). As

Bartlett (2014) puts it, "the content is generated by us – the honest hardworking,

ordinary citizens, exactly the people who the populists are defending" (pp. 93-94). In

this way, social media platforms come to represent the most direct expression of the

people's will, lending messages on these platforms more legitimacy in the eyes of a

distrustful, underrepresented public and more utility as a tool in the hands of a populist

politician.

Accordingly, the logic of social media as a communications platform fits well in the framework of a populist leader who seeks "direct, unmediated access to the people's grievances, and acts as the spokesperson of the vox populi" (Kriesi, 2014, p. 363). As opposed to traditional media outlets wherein journalists and other middle-men frame and filter content, social media facilitates unmediated communication with the people (Klinger & Svensson, 2015, p. 1248). This ability to craft and disseminate messages directly to the public allows actors to circumvent gatekeepers and speak directly to the public (Esser et al., 2017). In fact, opposition to mainstream media and the ability to criticize it freely as Donald Trump consistently did, vilifying unfavorable coverage as 'fake news', can actually bolster the populist image and legitimacy of a leader amongst a supporter base that feels alienated by traditional media outlets (Fisher et al,, 2018, p. 3; Gerbaudo, 2018, p. 5).

Beyond the direct dissemination of messages, social media platforms enable direct interaction between users, allowing politicians to engage in dialogue with ordinary citizens and vice versa (Tromble, 2016). These capabilities allow populist actors to forge closer links to the public and grant them the ability to 'listen' and channel the unfiltered 'voice' of the people. Twitter, in particular, facilitates direct engagement through the use of @-mentions as well as retweet and reply functions (Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 21).

Another benefit of social media is that it is cheap, easy to use, and does not require any specialist technical expertise. This low-cost, low-barrier medium enables populist actors to get exposure and build their own follower base and platform despite lacking resources and access to more traditional pathways of influence-building and legitimacy (Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, pp. 21-22). In many ways, social media offers

populist actors pragmatic solutions to developing closer connections to the people through direct, unmediated, and often personality-driven communication (Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 21).

All these advantages listed above to directly engage with the people and voters at a human level are described by Jacobs and Spierings (2016) as "human-contact opportunity" (p. 23). The sense of presence and approachability coupled with the freedom to craft and directly communicate messages allows for greater personalization and personality-driven politics (Jacobs & Spierings, 2016). These advantages are particularly suited to the 'charismatic' nature of many populist leaders who are empowered through social media to build stronger bonds of emotional and personal attachment with their supporters by sharing their inner lives and private thoughts through personal messages and behind the scenes access (Golbeck et al., 2010; Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 21). In many ways, the capabilities offered by social media platforms seem tailor-made technological and pragmatic solutions to resolving the paradoxes and tensions at the heart of the populist appeal as the highest expression of democracy.

To summarize, social media platforms are particularly suited to the communicative preferences of populist actors and populist messages allowing direct communications with and between 'the people' and the ability to bypass traditional gatekeepers of information such as mainstream media outlets (Engesser et al., 2017a). This unique aspect of social media platforms allows populist actors and politicians to maintain a close and direct connection to their audience, as well as personalize their communication with their supporters and create a sense of intimacy, community, and belonging among scattered groups (De Vreese et al., 2018). Bartlett (2014) captures

many of these features of social media well, stating, "the medium fits the message: it is distributed, non-hierarchical and democratic" (p. 93).

4.2 The people's rally

The people's rally represents the mobilizing and coalition-building capabilities of social media. Whereas the people's voice captures the aspects that make social media the truest expression of the interests and concerns of the people, the people's rally captures those aspects that allow the expressions of the people to gain traction, reach like-minded individuals and form new political coalitions. The people's rally is deeply connected to the architecture, economic incentives, and opportunity structures of social media platforms (Gerbaudo, 2018).

As opposed to traditional media logic, which is based on professional gatekeepers and a mostly passive audience, the operating logic of social media, or 'network media logic', is built around the construction of groups of like-minded individuals, or 'kindred souls', who share similar interests and produce their own content (Klinger & Svensson, 2015; Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 24). Far from a passive audience, social media platforms are built on engagement and as a result operate according to the logic of immediacy and virality (Klinger & Svensson, 2015, p. 1248; Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 22). This logic of virality compels content creators, including political actors and ordinary citizens, to communicate messages that will garner the most engagement through likes, comments, and shares (Ernst et al., 2017). Viral messages travel rapidly through first-degree social networks, wherein users directly follow one another, and then beyond through the 'like' feature, to second-degree

and even more distant connections. These networking effects allow messages to be disseminated to a large number of people with incredible speed (Jacobs & Spierings, 2016, p. 22).

This also means sensationalist, conflictive, and incendiary content is more likely to garner reactions, spread quickly and win out the popularity contest over other types of content (Munn, 2020). Accordingly, emotionalizing and controversial populist messages that resonate with large swathes of people or energize heated debates have a major advantage over the often highly sanitized, milquetoast political messaging of establishment middle-of-the-road political parties. As Bartlett (2014) puts it, "the short acerbic nature of populist messages works well in this medium. Humor, outspokenness, pithy put-downs and catchy slogans: these are the DNA of cyber culture" (p. 94). Furthermore, the speed and momentum with which messages can go viral can produce spillover effects that influence the coverage and topics of discussion in traditional media outlets, too (Jacobs & Spierings, 2019).

Gerbaudo (2018) points out that network media logic is highly conducive to achieving the aims of populist movements, to unify an otherwise highly divided people. Reminiscent of Laclau's (2005) concept of an 'empty signifier,' which constitutes the creation of a homogenous people by fusing together disparate demands and interests under a single platform and overcoming traditional lines of fragmentation to unify a divided people through the awareness of their common interests and common foes, the construction of social networks and groups through shared interests enhances the possibility of new coalitions to form through the realization of common interests and identities.

Aslanidis (2018) studied the formation of these new awarenesses that unify disparate grievances in society through the lens of collective action frames, and in particular, through the strategic use of populism as a master frame to catalyze mobilization amongst a divided people for the sake of popular sovereignty. The Occupy Movement's framing of the 99% and the 1%, for example, provides an excellent example of how the populist master frame can shape collective and inclusive identities of a unified people against an elite group undermining popular sovereignty through their disproportionate and morally objectionable amounts of wealth and power (Aslanidis, 2018, p. 15). The powerful simplicity and resonance of this frame translates exceptionally well to social media platforms due to their inherently interactive and participatory nature as well as their ability to spread simple messages to broad swathes of society through memes, viral content, and direct appeals (Gerbaudo, 2012).

The new possibilities enabled by the power to reach out to diverse groups of people almost instantaneously are equally matched the capability of social media platforms to target specific groups of individuals tied together by common interests. This capability allows populist actors and messages to target specific groups, recruit disaffected citizens, and facilitate the creation of in-group and out-group dynamics by, for example, attacking a common enemy within a certain network of individuals (Bartlett et al. 2011; Engesser et al., 2017a). As previously mentioned, this targeting also allows populist politicians to personalize and tailor their messaging to specific groups of people, forming stronger ties and sympathetic bonds.

Another feature embedded in social media's network media logic that facilitates the dissemination of populist messages and coalition-building is the engagement-driven,

personalized selection criteria. These algorithmic incentives can contribute to filter

bubbles and echo chamber effects. Filter bubbles are formed by the invisible algorithms

that utilize user activity and data to create algorithmically generated guesses as to what

type of information a user would like to see, personalizing the content each individual

user is exposed to and trapping them in a so-called bubble of content that constantly

reinforces their opinions and ideological dispositions (Pariser, 2011). This highly

personalized method of disseminating information is intended to maximize the attention

of users and keep their eyes glued to the screen to target them with endless

advertisements. This economic model, known as the attention economy, treats user

attention as a scarce resource companies vie to win over and mine for maximum profit.

The more users scroll and interact, the more information is collected, the more ads a user

sees and the better equipped the algorithms become at reproducing the cycle by keeping

users scrolling (Center for Humane Technology, 2021). Engesser, Fawzi, and Larsson

(2017b) frame these incentives in terms of online opportunity structures that favor

populist discourse through the cultivation of homophily, or the tendency of similar

individuals to form bonds with each other (p. 6). Filter bubbles and echo chambers

cultivate homophily not only by reinforcing an individual's opinions and ideological

dispositions but also by reducing exposure to contradicting or alternative views. This

selective exposure on such a large scale can potentially develop deeper in-group

mentalities. In theory, filter bubbles and echo chambers can contribute to formation of

populist attitudes and the mobilization of populist movements by facilitating and

accelerating the formation of new coalitions of like-minded individuals united by similar

opinions and interests (Gerbaudo, 2018).

From a theoretical and conceptual standpoint, it has been argued that filter bubbles are a major boon for populist candidates and a factor in the rise of populist movements; however, empirical research casts some doubt on these arguments. Groshek and Koc-Michalska (2017) did not find that ideological constrained flows of information, or filter bubbles, correlated to more support for populist candidates in the 2016 American Presidential election. Instead, their study suggested more active social media usage was related to an increasing likelihood of network heterogeneity, not homogeneity, both offline and online. In fact, they found that an increased reliance on traditional television as a news source correlated to an increased likelihood of supporting populist candidates on the right and decreased likelihood on the left. They also found that differences in the way users engaged with social media correlated to levels of support for right-wing populist Donald Trump. Active social media users were less likely to support Trump and more likely to support Democratic populists than Republican populists in general, whereas passive social media users were more likely to support Republican populists in general, and Trump in particular (Groshek & Koc-Michalska, 2017, pp. 1389-1399). Groshek and Koc-Michalska's study suggests there are many variations in the way social media usage and habits may engender affinities for populist of different ideologies.

4.3 Parsing the elective affinity

To summarize all the key points above, there are a number of ways social media's opportunity structures and logic render it a well-suited instrument for populist communication. Firstly, social media platforms enable close links to the public through

direct and unmediated messaging that circumvents traditional gatekeepers of information flows and framing. This allows populist figures to form a close and direct connection to the people, personalize their messages, exert their charisma, target dissatisfied groups of citizens, and strengthen bonds of attachment between themselves and their followers. The ability to directly interact with users, whether they be politicians or citizens, allows for an even closer level of proximity and presence. This deeper sense of connection, whether through the admiration of a populist leader or the resonance of populist appeals, can foster feelings of community among otherwise scattered groups, unifying a divided people.

Secondly, open and available to everyone, social media as a communications and media platform most aligns with the will and voice of the people. The creation of content by users, or in other words, the people, and the democratizing potential of the relatively horizontal, non-hierarchical architecture of social media contribute to this perception. As the most democratic of all mass media, popular sovereignty is seen as manifested on the internet and social media. Furthermore, social media's often oppositional stance toward traditional mainstream media bolsters this image especially in the eyes of those who feel distrustful or unrepresented by mainstream media. In this way, populist actors can harness the symbolic power of social media to act as the true mouthpiece of the people's will.

Thirdly, the engagement-driven logic of virality helps populist messages resonate widely. Populist messages that appeal to broad swathes of people can jump from interest-bound group to interest-bound group, while controversial, emotionalized, or negative messages that drive user engagement gain traction and spread rapidly.

Messages can reach large audiences or target specific groups of individuals with similar interest to cultivate deeper in-group/out-group dynamics.

Fourthly, the formation of networks of citizens not bound by traditional ties of political affiliation or class can allow for the formation of new political coalitions to form and mobilize. Populist master frames spread rapidly via messages and memes and social media's built-in incentives to cultivate homophily can help facilitate the creation of these new constituencies. This networking architecture is particularly well-suited to the mobilization and coordination of large groups of people.

A seminal study by Engesser, Ernst, and Esser (2017a) empirically demonstrates how the communicative and networking opportunities offered by social media are especially well-suited to the dissemination of populist messages and ideologies. Looking at how populism quantitatively manifests itself on Twitter and Facebook in a cross-national context, the study categorized messages from political figures within populist as well as non-populist political parties in four European countries (Austria, Italy, Switzerland and the UK) according to five key elements of populism: sovereignty of the people, advocating for the people, attacking the elite, ostracizing others, and invoking the heartland. The authors conclude that populism manifests itself in a fragmented form on social media, meaning the five key elements are generally isolated from one another, but sometimes clustered in pairs, the most common of which is the pairing of the people and the elite.

According to the authors, there are several reasons for this fragmentation. Firstly, fragmentation lowers the complexity of the populist ideology by focusing on only one or two elements at a time. Secondly, it allows the populist ideology to remain ambiguous,

while simultaneously framing the populist ideology in a more inclusive and personalized way. Thirdly, a fragmented form of populism travels more under the radar and can spread more easily between like-minded people. These reasons all fit well within the network logic of social media. While the authors remark that the fragmented form of populism, "could be an empirical expression of populism's 'thin' nature and 'inherent incompleteness,'" the reasons stated above also fit well within the network logic of social media (Engesser et al., 2017a, p. 1122). In fact, Engesser et al. (2017a) conclude the study by remarking that populism thrives on the logic of connective action and social media in particular is well-suited to meet the communicative preferences of populist actors (p. 1123).

4.4 Measuring populism on social media

When it comes to measuring populism on social media, approaches do not differ much from those employed on manifestoes or speeches. In general, there are two approaches to measuring populism in a text: human-based coding and computer assisted dictionary-based methods of analysis (Dai, 2018).

Human-based coding was the first method to be applied to populist texts. Jagers and Walgrave's (2007) study was the first to use content analysis and manual coding to study populism by analyzing references to the people and anti-establishment discourse during Belgian political parties' television broadcasts (Grundl, 2020). As a unit of analysis, Jagers and Walgrave (2007) used excerpts containing specific references to the people or anti-establishment statements to calculate a measurement of populism. Hawkins and others (Hawkins, 2009; Hawkins & Kaltwasser, 2018) developed a holistic

grading method, in which an entire speech or manifesto is coded for populism. Whereas holistic grading methods use the entire text as the unit of analysis, other studies using human-coding content analysis, such as the above-mentioned Jagers and Walgrave (2007) use different units of analysis such as words or paragraphs to measure the 'amount' or degree of populism in a text. While these studies have all revealed insights into populism as a phenomenon and as a political communications tool, there are a number of limitations to employing a human-based coding approach to populist discourse. For one, this approach is costly and very time-consuming, as it requires at least several well-trained coders. It also limits the sample size one can work with because of the amount of energy and time it takes for coders to analyze a text (Grundl, 2020).

The second and more recently ascendent approach, computer-assisted or automated dictionary-based content analysis has the potential to overcome these limitations (Grundl, 2020). Pauwels (2011) was the first to try out this quantitative text analysis method, applying it to the party manifestos of Belgian political parties and later refining this approach with Rooduijn (Rooduijn & Pauwels, 2011). These dictionary-based approaches quantify the proportion or presence of words associated with or indicative of populism in a text. While this method is more efficient and can evaluate a large amount of text, it tends to be less generalizable across time and geography, as each dictionary of populist terms will vary according to context. This makes comparability of measures of populism difficult but not impossible and in many ways mirrors the human-based code method with one crucial difference (Dai, 2018, p. 2). The dictionary-based approach necessitates treating the text as a "bag of words" in which order and context of

the words does not inform the analysis (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013, p. 272). This can be problematic when developing dictionaries for populism, especially for words that signify people-centrism such as 'we', 'people,' and 'us,' however there are ways to improve the accuracy of a dictionary.

The two concepts that describe the quality of a dictionary are recall and precision (Grundl, 2020, p. 6). Recall corresponds to a dictionary's ability to capture all populist texts, or in other words, avoid false negatives. Precision, on the other hand, corresponds to a dictionary's ability to only capture texts that are truly populists, or in other words, to avoid false positives. These two concepts are in tension with one another, as a dictionary with high recall rates might lack in precision whereas dictionaries with high levels of precision may miss significant portions of populist text (Grundl, 2020, p. 6).

4.5 Grounding the dictionary-based approach

Several previous studies applied textual analysis, and specifically dictionary-based approaches, to researching populism in the American context, and a few have done so to political communications on Twitter in the context of the 2016 presidential election. While not a study of Twitter communication, Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) survey of presidential campaign speeches from 1952-1996 serves as a foundational work in this regard. Not only does their study utilize a dictionary-based approach on 2,406 campaign speeches, the 44-year period of analysis in the context of campaign communication provides a number of key findings grounding this study, as well as an approach to populism as a form of claims-making that is utilized in this study. Treating populism not as an essential categorization of an actor or political party, but rather as a form of

political claims-making aligns well with the communication-centered approaches to studying populism outlined by de Vreese et al. (2018) and allows for the evaluation of increases and decreases in populism as a phenomenon over time, as well as gradations and types of populist claims between political parties and candidates.

Overall, Bonikowski and Gidron (2016) find that populism is a common feature of presidential politics among both Democratic and Republican candidates, however the content or ideological orientation of the populist claims vary significantly between the two parties. Democrats rely primarily on economic populism targeting business elites, while Republicans employ anti-statist populism targeting federal political elites (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016, pp. 1607-1608). These findings are supported by Engesser et al.'s (2017a) seminal study of populism on Twitter, which also found that left-wing politicians predominantly targeted the economic elite, while right-wing politicians predominantly targeted media elites, as well as by Maurer and Diehl (2020) who studied the Twitter communications of presidential candidates in the United States and France in the context of the 2016 and 2017 elections.

Utilizing a dictionary-based textual analysis method focusing on five categories of populist subjects (political elite, corporate elite, media elite, immigration, and the people), as well as sentiment analysis to discern differences between right-leaning and left-leaning populist communication, Maurer and Diehl (2020) analyzed the Twitter feeds of presidential candidates Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders, Marine Le Pen, Jean-Luc Melenchon, Hillary Clinton and Emmanuel Macron, finding considerable ideological nuances and differences in how candidates employ populist themes. Sanders' populist rhetoric, for example, is characterized as a populist framing of class conflict,

whereas Trump's populism targets cultural and political elites, but does not question the economic order (Maurer & Diehl, 2020, p. 13). Maurer and Diehl's study also lends credence to Postill's (2018) argument against viewing the variants of populism as only either left or right. Postill (2018) argues that globally, populism spans the entire ideological spectrum and highlights the existence of centrist, technocratic populism, of which Macron serves as an exemplary, as well as theocratic populism. Postill characterizes centrist populism as a capitalist-friendly form of populist appeal that blends classic populist themes with a pro-market language of entrepreneurship, economic growth and job flexibility and presents its policy vision as a sensible third way between the failures of the corrupt establishment and radical extremists rivals (p. 757). While Maurer and Diehl (2020) framed their study around a binary right/left ideological distinction, they also found considerable differences within the right and left. Le Pen and Trump, for instance, even though they are both right wing populists, vary in their conceptions of the elite. Le Pen, for example, did not target the media elite and is more people-centric than Trump's populist appeals, which reflects her socialist leanings.

Studies also consistently find that candidates located at the far ends of the political spectrum are more likely to employ populist rhetoric (Ernst et al., 2017; Ernst et al., 2019; Maurer & Diehl, 2020; Engesser et al., 2017). Bonikowski and Gidron (2016) framed this as outsider status, meaning candidates not entrenched in the political establishment and/or hold political ideologies located near the far ends of the political spectrum, and evaluated a candidate's relative outsider status according to three factors functioning as indicators of a candidate's proximity to power: incumbency, career length and prior political experience (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016). All three factors were

found to correlate with a candidate's employment of populist rhetoric. Representatives of incumbent political parties were far less likely to rely on populist claims than those belonging to challenger parties and those with longer careers also rely less on populist rhetoric. Additionally, candidates with previous political experience who have held positions of power are less likely to use populist language in relation to the level of office they served. Members of the previous administration, for example, are less likely to make populist claims than members of Congress (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016, pp. 1608-1609). The prevalence of populism varies in relation to a candidate's position to power. In other words, a candidate relies more heavily on populist claims in direct proportion to their distance from the center of power, and in this case, the presidency. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016) suggest that populism is "primarily a strategic tool of political challengers, and particularly those who have legitimate claims to outsider status" (p. 1593).

In the context of Twitter communication during the 2016 presidential election, Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) assertion that "the prevalence of populist claims in campaign discourse varies in systematic and predictable ways" has largely held up to scrutiny (p. 1595). Lacatus's (2018) study of the official Twitter feeds and press releases of presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, and Bernie Sanders found that all candidates employed populist discourse in varying degrees and with different ideological bents. Sanders and Trump, both political outsiders in comparison to Clinton, who positioned herself as the successor to President Barack Obama, employed more populist appeals. As predicted by Bonikowski & Gidron (2016), Clinton's use of populist language was largely linked to offering responses to Trump and Sanders' highly

populist language (Lacatus, 2018, p. 227). According to Lacatus (2018), Trump's language reflected a right-wing populism that was "nativist, producerist and critical of political liberal elites in Washington" and promoted a "racialized view of 'the people'' excluding illegal migrants, Muslims, refugees and other minorities (p. 227). Sanders, exemplifying a left-wing populism, characterized 'the people' as "poor, largely ignored by Washington political elites, and doomed to a life of inequality by the self-servient economic elite comprising the richest 1%" (Lacatus, 2018, p. 227).

Oliver and Rahn's (2016) study of populism in the 2016 election offer further insight into the levels of populism between candidates. Although it does not include Twitter communications, Oliver and Rahn utilize a dictionary-based approach to candidates' announcement speeches, creating two dictionaries to capture anti-establishment rhetoric, one corresponding to political elites and the other to economic elites, as well as a 'blame' dictionary and scoring system to measure degrees of collectivism. Their study found that Bernie Sanders scored highest in terms of economic populism and Donald Trump and Ben Carson scored highest in terms of political populism. Blame language was common amongst all candidates but especially so in Sander's and Trump's speeches (Oliver & Rahn, 2016, p. 193). They also found that Democratic candidates Clinton and Sanders employed collective nationalist terms far more than Republican candidates and Republican candidates were less likely to refer to specific groups. Trump and Carson in particular conjured a characterization of 'the people' not by referring to specific segments of society but by including themselves as part of the group (Oliver & Rahn, 2016, p. 193).

Oliver and Rahn (2016) also analyzed the syntax and style of candidates'
language for simplicity and 'everydayness', as a component of populism. In terms of
simplicity and everyday language, Ben Carson, John Kasich, and Trump utilized the
most basic and straightforward language, using simpler words, shorter sentences, and
less variety. Sanders in comparison employed a more complex and sophisticated use of
language (Oliver & Rahn, 2016, pp. 193-194).

Although previous studies using content analysis and dictionary-based
methodologies seem for the most part to correlate similar findings about the usage of
populist rhetoric across the political spectrum whether or not the unit of analysis is a
tweet or a speech, it is worth mentioning that candidates may be more inclined to
employ populist appeals on Twitter than in more traditional settings (Ernst et al., 2019).
As previously outlined, the online opportunity structures of online communication are
conducive to populist communication (Engesser et al., 2017). For this reason, Twitter
offers a very appealing site for examining populist politics. At the same time, however,
Twitter communication is likely to generate more populist discourse than other
mediums.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH, METHODOLOGY, AND ANALYSIS

Drawing from the previous studies outlined in the final section of Chapter 4, this paper aims to answer the two following questions: Firstly, do Republican outsider, or challenger, candidates employ more populist language than those with closer proximity to power? And secondly, how do candidates vary in their framing of populist language? The first research question further puts to the test Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) assertion that "the prevalence of populist claims in campaign discourse varies in systematic and predictable ways," and provides a conceptual framework to evaluate variations across candidates in their employment of populist appeals (p. 1595). The second question loosely adopts Laclau's (2005) notion of an empty signifier by analyzing the way candidates employ and frame populist claims to appeal to different ideas, concepts, and constituencies.

This research employed a method of automated dictionary-based analysis that aims to let the language of populism speak for itself. Firstly, each candidate's Twitter communications were collected, processed, and qualitatively analyzed. Secondly, existing populism dictionaries from relevant studies were also collected, analyzed, and compared in order to develop a dictionary-based approach firmly rooted in prevailing literature on populist studies and communications, ensuring a reliable dictionary of populist terms. After a qualitative pre-analysis of each candidate's most widely liked Twitter messages, each candidate's Twitter communications over the course of their campaign period was subjected to dictionary-based textual analysis to discern variations

in each candidate's usage of populist terms. Finally, an n-gram analysis was conducted on select populist terms to differentiate how populist claims were framed by certain candidates. In contrast to human-based coding approaches, in which trained coders determine whether a claim is populist or not according to certain established criteria, this approach relied on a combination of computer-assisted automated recall and n-gram analysis to determine how candidates chose to frame populist terms, thus allowing each candidate's own language to determine the content and character of their populist appeals.

5.1 Retrieving and cleaning the data

Each candidate's Twitter data, except for Donald Trump's, was sourced from Harvard Dataverse's 2016 United States Presidential Election Tweet Ids Database (Littman et al., 2016). Due to Twitter's permanent removal of Donald Trump's account and all its accompanying data, Twitter data was also sourced from The Trump Archive website (Brown, 2016). Harvard Dataverse's dataset of Republican candidate's Twitter timelines contained 87,589 tweets collected between July 13, 2016 and November 10, 2016 from the Twitter API using Social Feed Manager. The Twitter accounts sourced from the database include Chris Christie (@ChrisChristie), Ben Carson (@RealBenCarson), Jim Gilmore (@gov_gilmore), Jeb Bush (@JebBush), Marco Rubio (@marcorubio), John Kasich (@JohnKasich), Ted Cruz (@tedcruz) Mike Huckabee (@GovMikeHuckabee), Rand Paul (@RandPaul), Carly Fiorina (@CalryFiorina) and Rick Santorum (@RickSantorum). Complete data for each tweet was retrieved from the tweet ids in the database using the Hydrator tool (Documenting the Now, 2020). Due to some gaps and

technical limitations in data collection, not all tweets may have been captured, however, the vast majority were, and each candidate has more than a representative sample size. Donald Trump's twitter messages were retrieved directly from The Trump Archive website (Brown, 2016).

Once the tweets were retrieved, the data was cleaned and only tweets from each candidate's official campaign period were selected. Table 1 below shows each candidate, their campaign period and the number of tweets collected:

Table 1. Candidate Overview: Campaign Period and Number of Tweets

Candidate	Campaign Officially Announced	Official Withdrawal Date	Total Number of Days	Number of Tweets within Campaign Period
Ben Carson	May 3, 2015	March 4, 2016	307	1958
Chris Christie	June 30, 2015	February 10, 2016	226	2008
Carly Fiorina	May 4, 2015	February 10, 2016	283	1287
Jeb Bush	June 15, 2015	February 20, 2016	251	2538
Jim Gilmore	July 30, 2015	February 12, 2016	198	1137
John Kasich	July 21, 2015	May 4, 2016	289	3003
Marco Rubio	April 13, 2015	March 15, 2016	338	2862
Mike Huckabee	May 5, 2015	February 1, 2016	273	1893
Rand Paul	April 7, 2015	February 3, 2016	303	2357
Rick Santorum	May 27, 2015	February 3, 2016	253	1092
Ted Cruz	March 23, 2015	May 3, 2016	408	2600
Donald Trump	June 16, 2015	Nomination Secured: May 26, 2016	346	5806

Donald Trump stands out in the sheer number of tweets sent out during the campaign period (5806), nearly doubling the runner up John Kasich (3003). In total, 28,541 Twitter messages, or tweets, were analyzed.

5.2 Qualitative pre-analysis of Twitter data

To start, the top three most liked tweets from each candidate were evaluated to contextualize themes and indicators. According to Gerbaud (2014), the interactive features of social media and Web 2.0 in general, such as liking, commenting and sharing, constitute a sort of informal voting system embedded into the architecture of social media, furthering the plebiscitary view of social media as a truer representation of direct democracy in action, in line with the populist vision of a true democracy, and operating according to the "one like, one vote" principle (p. 80). Accordingly, a brief review of the most liked tweets for each candidate provided an entry point into the development of the dictionary and helped guide an initial analysis by highlighting the most impactful tweets of the campaign for each candidate. Table 2 below displays the top three tweets by likes of Ben Carson, Chris Christie, Carly Fiorina, Jeb Bush, Jim Gilmore, and John Kasich. Table 3 below displays the top three tweets by likes of Marco Rubio, Mike Huckabee, Rand Paul, Rick Santorum, Ted Cruz, and Donald Trump:

Table 2. Top Three Tweets by Likes During Campaign Period – Carson, Christie, Fiorina, Bush, Gilmore, and Kasich

Candidate	Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes	Second Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes	Third Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes
Ben Carson	Yes #IamaChristian [incl. image of Carson with sign reading "I am a Christian"]	11,375	May the Lord guide my words tonight, let His wisdom be my thoughts. #GOPDebate	7,156	Once more, I step aside Lord, let your voice resonate above all.	6,776
Chris Christie	I gotta tell you the truth, even in New Jersey what you are doing is called rude. #CNBCGOPDebate #TellingItLikeItIs	512	We came here to say that speaking your mind matters. #FITN [Note: withdrawal Day]	433	These two have no idea what they are talking about. [incl. images of Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton]	419
Carly Fiorina	Mr. Trump: There. Is. No. Excuse.	3554	I mourn with you. I pray with you. I stand with you. America must lead in the world. We must wage & win this fight against Islamic terrorism	2576	I stand with @megynkelly.	2550
Jeb Bush	Sorry Mom	104,807	America. [incl. image of handgun with Jeb's name on it]	30,303	Got my debating boots on! #GOPDebate [incl. image of cowboy boots with Jeb's name on them]	17,137
Jim Gilmore	Started out as 1 of 17 GOP Candidates, now with Rand Paul & Rick Santorum out, 1 or 9. #StillStanding	289	I will do all I can to see that our next President is a free enterprise Republican who will restore our nation to greatness and keep us safe [Note: withdrawal day]	190	As the only veteran in the race, I understand how much our veterans have sacrificed to ensure our nation's security. #VAReform	121
John Kasich	Make no mistake, @MarcoRubio will continue to be a powerful voice for the future of our Republican party. -John	4,078	How John Kasich waits for election night results. [incl. video of Kasich playing basketball]	2,902	Sen. @TedCruz should be proud of his strong and disciplined campaign. Texas is lucky to have you. Best wishes going forward. -John [Note: withdrawal day]	2,887

Table 3. Top Three Tweets by Likes During Campaign Period – Rubio, Huckabee, Paul, Santorum, Cruz, and Trump

Candidate	Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes	Second Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes	Third Top Tweet by Likes During Campaign	Number of Likes
Marco Rubio	We cannot be a party that nominates someone who refuses to condemn white supremacists and the Ku Klux Klan.	13,314	Donald Trump is a con artist — and he cannot be our nominee. #NeverTrump [incl. video of Rubio attacking Trump in debate]	8,715	Donald Trump will never be the nominee of the party of Lincoln and Reagan. #NeverTrump	8,176
Mike Huckabee	I trust @BernieSanders with my tax dollars like I trust a North Korean chef with my labrador! #DemDebate	6,789	@HillaryClinton If "Muslims have nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism," why would offending them boost ISIS recruitment?	1,764	After the #GOPDebate I'll join @realDonaldTrump in Des Moines to support our vets who've been abandoned by @BarackObama. Hope you join us!	1,395
Rand Paul	My friend @tedcruz has still not pledged to issue exec order declaring Canadian "bacon" is not real bacon. Makes me suspicious. #Festivus	3,833	I have no grievances against my fellow doc @RealBenCarson because I have not heard a word he has said in any debate. #Festivus	3,385	to my comrade @SenSanders: Unless you're Santa Claus, Socialism runs out of other people's money #Festivus	3,056
Rick Santorum	Thank you @Pontifex for blessing our little angel Bella! - rs	534	Watching the 2nd debate with friends. @GovernorPerry @GovernorPataki	485	Yes, @HillaryClinton we are at war with radical Islam! You are not qualified to serve if you cannot even define our enemy! #DemDebate	347
Ted Cruz	Donald, real men don't attack women. Your wife is lovely, and Heidi is the love of my life. [resp. to Trump tweet]	13,259	Pic of your wife not from us. Donald, if you try to attack Heidi, you're more of a coward than I thought. #classless [resp. to Trump tweet]	9,799	Then why did you contribute thousands of dollars to her? [resp. to Trump tweet]	7,856
Donald Trump	Happy #CincoDeMayo! The best taco bowls are made in Trump Tower Grill. I love Hispanics! [incl. image of Trump with a taco bowl]	142,886	When I said that Hillary Clinton got schlonged by Obama, it meant got beaten badly. The media knows this. Often used word in politics!	73,711	Crooked Hillary said that I want guns brought into the school classroom. Wrong!	43,364

Firstly, there is a massive discrepancy in the number of likes between candidates. Donald Trump tops the list with 142,886 likes, while Jim Gilmore consistently had low interaction rates, mustering only 289 likes for his most liked tweet. Judging from the massive difference between Donald Trump's most liked tweet and his second most liked tweet, as well as Jeb Bush's most liked and second most liked tweet, it is clear that these two messages constituted a viral message, or one that spreads rapidly through networks by racking up interactions and gaining maximum exposure (Klinger, 2013). While Trump's absurdist attempt to reach out to Hispanic voters may constitute a populist appeal to the people, Jeb Bush's 'sorry mom' is not populist and instead captured a collective moment demonstrating Chadwick's (2013) argument that media systems in western democracies have become hybrid media systems, meaning network media logic and traditional mass media logic are not mutually exclusive and should be understood to overlap and intertwine (p. 207). The message was posted during a Republican Debate, shortly after Jeb Bush confessed to smoking marijuana 40 years ago and publicly apologized to his mother. This interplay between traditional media and network media is prevalent in other ways, as well. Tweets commenting on the Republican debates as well as the Democratic debates, featured heavily amongst almost all candidates in their most liked tweets, suggesting that traditional televised campaign events are still massively influential in shaping voters' perceptions and affinities. In this context, Twitter extends the parameter of the debate and adds an additional dimension and arena of conflict wherein candidates can shape the public's perception of them.

22 out 36 tweets contain @-mentions or clear references to opponents, both Republicans and Democrats, as well as media figures and influential leaders. The ability

of Twitter users to directly engage with others, is another way the arena of conflict becomes extended. Disregarding Rick Santorum's two tweets and Carly Fiorina's tweet in support of Megyn Kelly, a debate moderator who Donald Trump misogynistically criticized during a debate, all direct mentions refer to political opponents. Out of the 19 tweets that mention politicians, close to half, or nine, include mentions of Donald Trump (if Fiorina's support for Megyn Kelly constitutes a Trump-related tweet, then the total rises to 10, over half) and seven include criticisms of Democratic politicians. The vast majority of these direct references are negative or critical in sentiment. Republican runner up Ted Cruz's top three most liked tweets all stemmed from a personal feud he had with Donald Trump, showcasing how Trump drove a large part of the most engaging Twitter messages, steering the conversation and pulling other candidates along. This tentatively supports findings by Bonikowski and Gidron (2016), who tracked the degree of populist appeals over time, as well. The competitive pressure exerted on incumbent candidates by challengers appealing to the general will of the people and framing establishment politicians as corrupt elites, forces those incumbent or establishment candidates to respond to the populist critiques, presenting themselves as genuine representatives of the populace competing, particularly in this case, against radical, dangerous challengers (Bonikowski and Gidron, 2016, p. 1611).

5.3 Assessing outsider status

To assess the outsider status of each candidate, a matrix method was devised to rank candidates according to Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) criteria of proximity to power, in this case, the presidency. The criteria was broken down into three elements:

incumbency, prior office, and political career. Because all Republican candidates were technically part of the challenger party during the 2016 presidential election, and, as a primary, the field was more representative of intra-party dynamics, more weight was given to considerations of prior office and political career than incumbency. Table 2 below shows this qualitative assessment of outsider status based on open-source bibliographic information:

Table 4. Political Backgrounds of Candidates

Candidate	Prior Political Office	Political Office at the Time of Campaign (Incumbency)	Political Career
Ben Carson	None	None	None
Chris Christie	Appointed U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey (Dec 2001) [Note: technically not a political office], Governor of New Jersey (2010-2018)	Governor of New Jersey	Yes - 7 years as Governor of New Jersey
Carly Fiorina	None	None	Despite never holding office, Fiorina is a long-time Republican insider and business community leader. Best known for her role as CEO of Hewlett-Packard from 1999-2005, she helped advise John McCain's presidential campaign in 2006, worked on the Defense Business Board and led the CIA's External Advisory Board from 2007 to 2009, ran as a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in 2010, launched political action committees (PACs) and served as chair of the American Conservative Union before running for president in 2016.
Jeb Bush	Chairman of the Dade County Republican Party (mid-1980s) Florida's Secretary of Commerce (1986-1988), Governor of Florida (1999-2007)	None	Hailing from the political Bush family dynasty, Bush grew up embedded in Republican party politics and has had a long career in politics himself.
Jim Gilmore	Henrico County's Commonwealth Attorney (1987-1993), Attorney General of Virginia (1993-1997), Governor of Virginia (1998-2002)	None	After Gilmore's previous political offices in Virginia, Gilmore subsequently ran for president in 2007 and US Senator for Virginia in 2007, losing both before running again for president in 2016.
John Kasich	State Senator in Ohio (1978-1982), US House of Representatives, Ohio (1983-2001), Governor of Ohio (2011-2019)	Governor of Ohio	Kasich has had a long political career, including a prior presidential campaign in 2000.
Marco Rubio	Florida House of Representatives (2000-2008), U.S. Senator for Florida (2010-current)	US Senator	Rubio served only one term as a US Senator before running for president in 2016, but served for eight years in the Florida House of Representatives
Mike Huckabee	Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas (1993-1996), Governor of Arkansas (1996-2007)	None	Campaigned for president in 2008 as well as 2016
Rand Paul	US Senator from Kentucky (2011-present)	US Senator	Son of Ron Paul, a prominent, long-time libertarian politician active in office from the late 1970's to 2013. Prominent member of the Tea Party movement, a right-wing populist movement with anti-government stances.
Rick Santorum	US House of Representatives, Pennsylvania (1991-1995), US Senator from Pennsylvania (1995-2007)	None	Santorum ran for president in 2012 and again in 2016
Ted Cruz	Solicitor general of Texas (2003-2008) [Note: technically not a political office], US Senator from Texas (2013-present)	US Senator	Prominent member of the Tea Party movement, a right-wing populist movement with anti-government stances.
Donald Trump	None	None	Donald Trump rose to fame as a celebrity businessman famous for his real estate career. Though never holding office before becoming the president of the United States, Trump flirted with political office before running in the Californian and Michigan primaries for president in 2000 before withdrawing and openly speculating about running for president in 2011,

Accordingly, three tiers of candidates emerge from the above analysis. Firstly, there were the clear outsider candidates, Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and Carly Fiorina. While none had previously held elected office before, Fiorina emerged as the least outsider of the outsiders, having worked on major Republican campaigns and organizations in different capacities in the past.

Secondly, there were those candidates who may have had long political careers, but were no longer serving in elected office, including Jim Gilmore, Rick Santorum, Mike Huckabee, and Jeb Bush. There is a strong argument that Bush fits far better in the third tier, hailing from the Bush family dynasty, a name nearly synonymous with political elites and insiders. Whereas Huckabee, former governor of Arkansas, on the other hand, is known to position himself as a political outsider and firebrand, representing the people of the 'heartland' against the elites of Washington.

Finally, there were those candidates holding elected office, Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, Marco Rubio, John Kasich, and Chris Christie. Interestingly, Cruz and Paul both had relatively short political careers prior to serving in office even though they were among those in closest proximity to power. Furthermore, and somewhat ironically, both candidates hail from the Tea Party movement, an overtly anti-government faction of the Republican party, with deep connections to the anti-statist populist shift rightward that took root in the Republican party under Nixon and Reagan described by Kazin (1995). Kasich and Christie, as state governors, were more removed from the power of the presidency, however Kasich had had a long career as politician in Washington, as well.

In sum, there were three clear outsider candidates, Ben Carson, Donald Trump, and Carly Fiorina, and nine insider candidates ranked in roughly two groupings with

some flexibility allowed. Political office holders in closest proximity to power included

Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, and Marco Rubio, while those who had the longest active political

careers and deepest political connections included Jeb Bush and John Kasich.

5.4 Dictionary development

To grasp a high-level overview of the language used by all Republican candidates, the

text of each candidates' tweets was converted into a corpus and processed using the

Python-powered program Orange (Demser et al., 2013). Figure 1 below is word cloud

visualization of all Republican candidates' tweets, encapsulating all the Twitter

discourse from the campaign period.

Figure 1. Word cloud of all candidate tweets

Once again, Trump dominated the Twitter sphere as '@realdonaldtrump' and

'trump' were both among the top 5 most used words. The descriptor 'RT', which is

attached to messages that are retweets, or direct shares, of another user's message was by far the highest used term, demonstrating the powerful incentive structures of Twitter and network media logic. Positive tweets and endorsements were frequently retweeted to amplify messages of support and reach out to constituencies. Critiques of other candidates were also retweeted to bolster lines of attack. Also seen in the qualitative pre-analysis, references to Republican debates featured frequently, demonstrating again the interconnectivity of the traditional mass media and new media. Finally, a number of well-established populist terms, such as 'America,' 'American(s),' 'people,' and 'washington' emerged as significant enough terms to cross-analyze with existing dictionaries sourced from previous studies.

Table 5 below shows the dictionaries of three previous studies. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016) developed their dictionary from a survey of 2,406 presidential campaign speeches from 1952-1996. Though not in the context of Twitter, the broad overview captures many characteristics of American populism. Maurer and Diehl (2020) constructed their dictionary in the context of the Twitter communications of presidential candidates, both Democrat and Republican, during the 2016 presidential election. Likewise, Oliver and Rahn (2016) also developed their dictionary to measure levels of populism in the 2016 American presidential election but applied it to each candidate's announcement speech. From an initial comparison, a significant number of terms were found to overlap between 2 or more dictionaries, forming the initial foundation of this study's dictionary:

Table 5. Previous Populist Dictionaries

Bonikowski & Gidron (2015)	All Populist Terms	bureaucrat, loophole, millionaire, baron, venal, crooked, unresponsive, uncaring, arrogant, special interest, big government, Wall Street, Main Street, big corporations, ordinary taxpayer, your money, wealthy, few, professional politician, big interest, old guard, big money, Washington elite, rich friend, power monger, power grabbing, power hungry, easy street, privileged few, forgotten Americans, too big, long nose, top 1 percent, average American taxpayer, government is too big, government that forgets the people
Maurer & Diehl (2020)	Political Elite	ads, bureaucrat, bush, clinton, campaign contribution*, congress, cruz, dems, dnc, doj, election*, establishment, government, graham, irs, leaders, leadership, obama, officials, old guard, oligarchy, pacs, paul ryan, politician*, rove, rubio, senat*, supreme court*, system, washington
Maurer & Diehl (2020)	Corporate Elite	bank*, baron, big money, billionaire*, ceo*, companies, company, corporation*, donor*, easy street, economic elite, financial institutions, hedge fund, koch brothers, lobby*, millionaire*, morgan stanley, nra, privileged few, rich, special interest*, top 1, trump, wall street, wall st, wealth*
Maurer & Diehl (2020)	Media Elite	barbara walters, billoreilly, cbs, chucktodd, cnn, dailybeast, davidbrooks, davidgregory, fox*, gma, gstephanopoulos, jeffreylord, journalist*, loudobbsnews, media, meetthepress, megyn kelly, megyn*, nbc, nbcnews, networks, nyt, nydailynews, oreillyfactor, press, pundit*, reporter*, seanhannity, theview, thisweekabc, todayshow, tv, washingtonpost, wsj
Maurer & Diehl (2020)	People	americans, american families, american voter, average tax payer, average taxpayer, taxpayer, citizen, citizens, crowd*, main street, middle class, ordinary people, our children, our country, people in this country, the people, the american people, tribe, vets, veterans, working class
Maurer & Diehl (2020)	Immigration	asylum, border*, citizenship, family class, immigra*, permanent residen*, refugee*, migrant*, foreign worker*, multicultural*, intercultural*, emigra*, foreigner*, newcomer*, work permit*, study permit*, residence permit*, work visa*, study visa*, residence visa*, naturalise*, naturalize*, naturalisation, naturalization, deport*, undocumented*
Oliver & Rahn (2016)	Political Populism	politician(s), the government (in Washington), the system, special interests, IRS, lobbyists, donors, campaign contributions, elites
Oliver & Rahn (2016)	Economic Populism	millionaires, the rich, the wealthy, CEOs, big banks, Wall Street, inequality, corporations, elites
Oliver & Rahn (2016)	Collectivism	American people, Americans, our country, our nation, plural pronouns (we, they, our, ours), mentions of foreign countries or threats, appeals to subnational groups

Note: * allows for variations in the ending of a term, in the case of plurals or other common endings

Table 6 below displays all the dictionary terms appearing in two or more of the populist dictionaries displayed above.

Table 6. Terms Appearing in Two or More Populist Dictionaries

American(s), baron(s), big money, bureaucrat, CEO, our country, donor(s), elite(s), easy street, government, IRS, lobby(ists), Main Street, millionaire(s), ordinary, people, politician(s), privileged few, rich, special interest(s), system, taxpayer(s), top 1, Wall Street, Washington, wealthy

While some of the terms listed above, derived from previous, relevant dictionaries are essential populist terms, like 'people' and 'politician(s),' some proved not very relevant upon initial analysis. For example, terms like 'baron' and 'easy street' were not mentioned by any candidate and were thus excluded from the final list of terms.

To better contextualize the dictionary of terms, several additional terms from the above dictionaries were tested and added, as well. These included terms like 'border,' 'immigrant,' 'our nation,' 'media,' 'establishment,' and a few others that featured in one of the dictionaries above and were determined to have an important relevance in the Twitter discourse of candidates. Finally, a few additional terms were added based upon the preliminary analysis of most liked tweets and themes to further contextualize the final dictionary of terms thus reflecting all the contours of discourse of the 2016 Republican primaries. These terms included, 'illegal,' 'ISIS,' 'terrorism,' 'Islam,' 'Muslim,' 'Christian(ity),' 'radical,' and a few others. Not all these terms ultimately proved relevant, but all those tested are included in Table 7 below:

Table 7. Final List of Dictionary Terms Tested

people, the people, America, American people, American(s), taxpayer, tax payer, our country, our nation, Main street, middle class, working class, class, vets, veteran(s), citizen(s), voter(s), folk, USA, worker(s), political class, Christian(ity), establishment, democrat(s/ic), corrupt(ion), immigrant(s), immigration, illegal(s), Muslim, Islam, terror(ist), ISIS, asylum, refugee(s), migrant, undocumented, radical, dnc, cnn, nyt, fox, powerful, bank(s), Donald, Trump, socialism, communism, media, elite(s), tax, business(es), China, trade, healthcare, Obamacare, Washington, Hillary, Clinton, Obama, Bernie, Sanders, Jeb, Marco, Cruz, Ben, bureaucrat, politician(s), IRS, government (including govt and gov't), special interest(s), donor(s), millionaire(s), billionaire(s), Wall Street, CEO, exec(utives), company/ies, rich, top 1, lobby(ists), system, bureaucracy, hedge, corporation, privileged, wealth(y), border

The majority of these terms were not included in the final analysis for a variety of reasons. Firstly, well-established populist terms with deep roots in the literature of populism were given far more weight and consideration to ensure the results of the study conformed with and contributed to the prevailing literature on the topic. Secondly, not all populist terms tested were found to be relevant in the Twitter discourse of candidates. The dictionary above was developed to cast as wide a net as possible and to ensure as many dimensions and categories of populist appeals were captured and considered. 'Main street,' for instance, a term included in at least two previously established dictionaries, was employed only six times by three candidates across all 28,541 tweets. While not all the terms ultimately selected for the final analysis below reflect the most widely or frequently used terms, they do highlight crucial degrees of variation and consistency amongst candidates, in both the employment of populism terms and the framing of populist terms. See the Appendix for all available data on each term included in this study's dictionary of terms.

5.5 Populist variation across candidates

To determine the degrees and variations of populism across candidates, the number of tweets including a populist term, irrespective of the context, was calculated in proportion to the total number of tweets the candidate sent over their campaign period. These proportions were then used to create a weighted average, comparing each candidate's usage of populist terms. The analysis is divided into two sections, the people and the elites. The first section provides an analysis of the relative frequency of people-centric populist terms among candidates, while the second section provides the same analysis on anti-elitist populist terms. Both sections are divided into two subsections to better capture the ideological contours and variations of populism among candidates. The first subsection of section one, the people, explores terms conveying an inclusive vision of the people, while the second explores terms conveying an exclusive vision of 'he people. The first subsection of section two, the elites, explores terms targeting political elites, while the second explores terms targeting economic elites.

5.5.1 Inclusive people-centrism

Inclusive people-centric populist terms subjected to analysis included, 'people,' 'our country,' 'our nation,' 'America,' and 'American(s).' While some noteworthy differences were found between terms, outsider candidates, overall, and Ben Carson, in particular, used these inclusive people-centric terms at higher rates than other candidates. Figure 2 below compares each candidate's usage of the word 'people.'
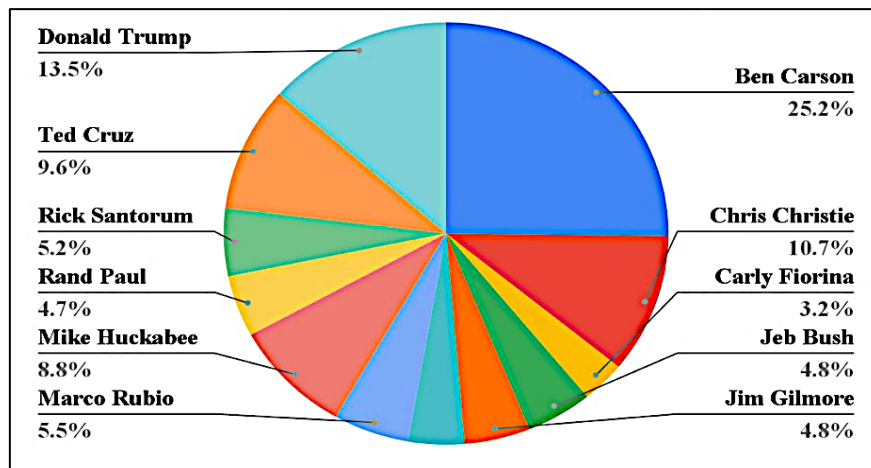
Figure 2. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'people'

Ben Carson used the term 'people' at a much higher rate than all other candidates, followed by Donald Trump and then Chris Christie. Somewhat surprisingly, Carly Fiorina, the third outsider candidate used the term people at the lowest rates among all 12 candidates.

Carson also employed references to 'our nation' or 'our country' at near equally high rates, as displayed in Figure 5 below, far surpassing all other candidates. Since some candidates clearly preferred one term over another. Figure 5 consolidates references to both terms in a single comparison. Donald Trump, for instance, preferring the term 'our country', used it at the highest rate, while Ben Carson, who employed both terms at relatively high rates, dominated the usage of the term 'our nation'. Carly Fiorina, the third outsider candidate, was found to employ one or the other term at relatively high rates, ranking second behind Ben Carson.
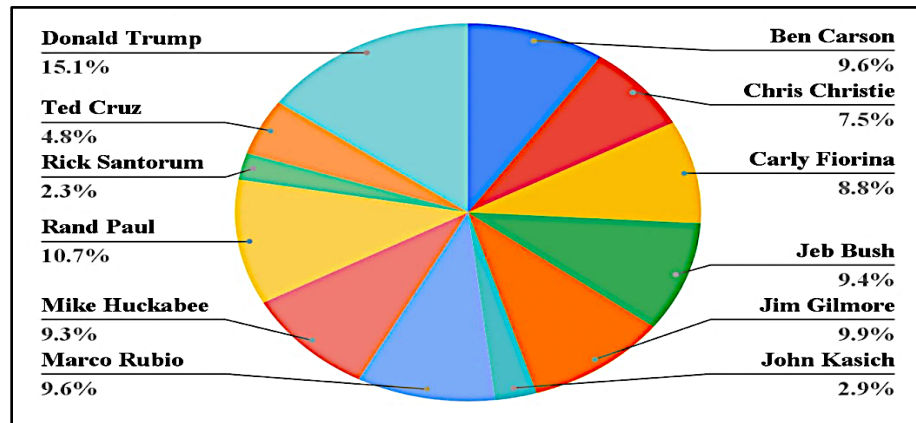
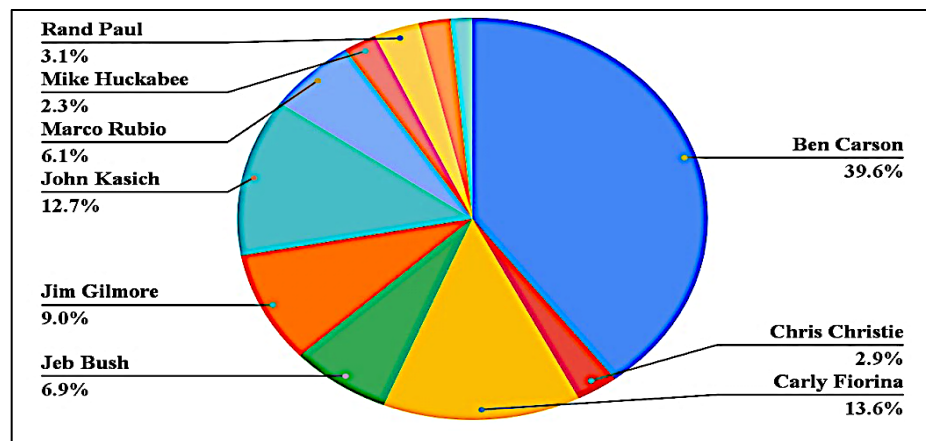Figure 3. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'our country'

Figure 4. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'our nation'
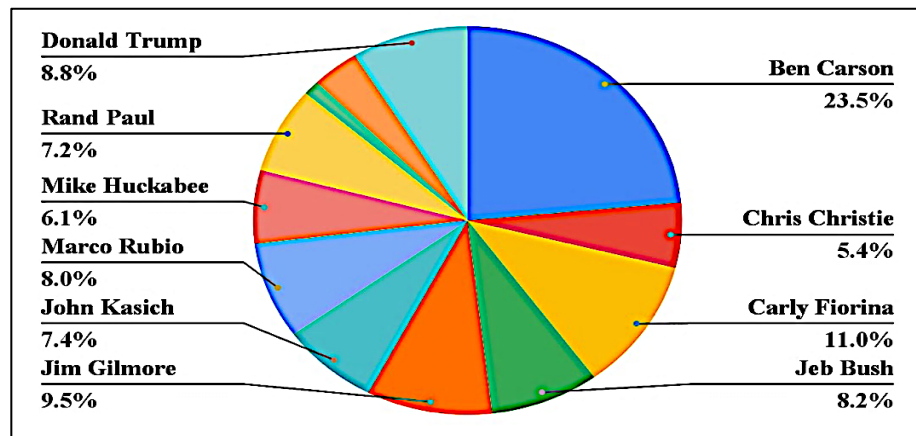
Figure 5. Weighted percentage of use of the terms 'our country' and 'our nation'

Finally, evidence of a strong correlation between outsider candidates and the terms 'America' and 'American(s)' was somewhat more mixed. Subsequent n-gram analysis on these terms revealed important layers of nuance.
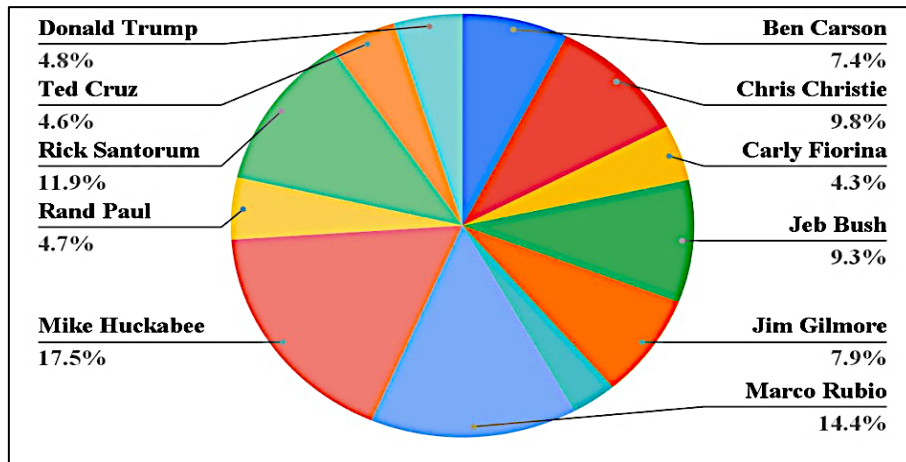
Figure 6. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'American(s)'

Figure 7. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'America'

To start, Donald Trump dominated in rates of usage of the term 'America', thanks in no small part to his campaign motto and oft-repeated slogan 'Make America Great Again.' While the following analysis will be revisited in the following section, it is worth pausing to make sense of these initial results. The hashtag, #MakeAmericaGreatAgain,

constituted a little over half of Trump's invocations of the term 'America'. Similarly, Marco Rubio's frequently repeated campaign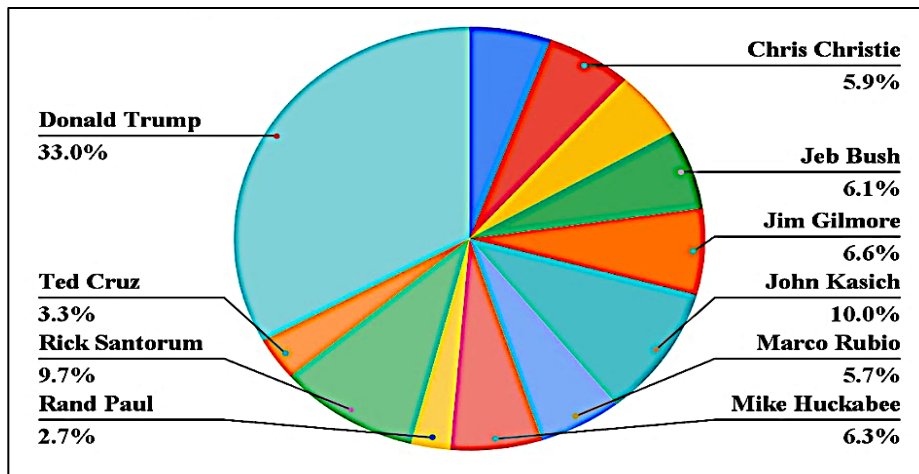 slogan and accompanying hashtag, 'The New American Century,' constituted close to half of Rubio's tweets including the term 'American(s),' and his secondary campaign message about embodying and restoring the 'American dream,' constituted a little over one-fifth of his total mentions of the term 'American(s).' While Trump's framing of the term 'America' more fully embodies the ethos of populism than Rubio's rather vague vision of a new American century, it is revealing to see how different framings of populist terms highlight fundamental themes of candidates' campaign messages. This conversation will be expanded upon in the discussion section, but it is worth noting that these findings underscore some of the limitations of the fully automated, computer-based dictionary analysis approach employed in this section, while also bolstering the analytical value and insight offered by the n-gram analysis of populist terms employed in the following section. It is this dual approach, using both the broad, bird's eye view perspective of automated dictionary-based analysis in tandem with the granular, eagle-eyed focus of the n-gram analysis, that ultimately provides deep insights and shades of nuance in the understanding of populist appeals.

Before moving on to the analysis of exclusive people-centric terms, a few takeaways remain to be mentioned. Carly Fiorina and Ben Carson, representing two of the three outsider candidates, did not invoke either term, 'America' or 'American(s),' at higher rates than other candidates. Mike Huckabee, a relative outsider in the rankings, invoked the term 'American(s)' the most, and John Kasich, a relative insider employed the term 'America' at the second highest rate, behind Donald Trump. These rather mixed

findings suggest that some terms included in many populist dictionaries, like 'American(s)' and 'America,' may be so ubiquitous in the American political vernacular that an additional level of analysis, whether it be human coding or n-gram analysis, becomes necessary to adjudicate whether certain appeals actually constitute a populist claim or framing. Finally, although Ben Carson did not feature prominently in the relative rates of usage of the terms 'America' and 'American(s),' Carson's overall high rates of usage of collectivist populist terms stand out as a key takeaway.

5.5.2 Exclusive people-centrism

While the people-centric terms listed above intend to appeal to broad bases of the electorate, thus creating an imagined in-group, exclusive people-centric terms were also subjected to analysis to better understand each candidate's discursive creation of out-groups. Based on previous findings suggesting right-wing populists tend to promote a more racialized, anti-immigrant and/or nativist approach to constructing in-groups and out-groups, as well as both previous populist dictionaries in the same context and a preliminary qualitative overview of themes from the 2016 campaign, the following terms were selected: 'illegal(s),' 'immigrant(s),' 'border', and 'Islam' (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012a; Maurer & Diehl, 2020; Lacatus, 2018). Although not included in the previous populist dictionaries relied on for this research, the terms 'illegal' and 'Islam,' both featured in Pauwels' (2011) populist dictionary of terms, one of the first dictionaries developed to 'measure' populism with a quantitative approach and appeared relevant in qualitative pre-analysis. Figures 8- 11 below display the relative rates of usage of the four terms.
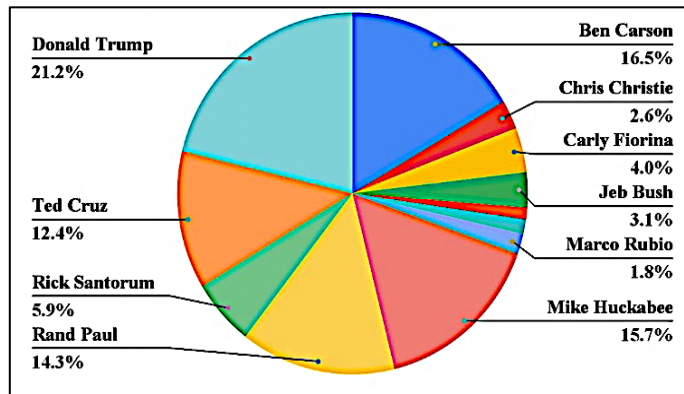
Figure 10. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'border(s)'
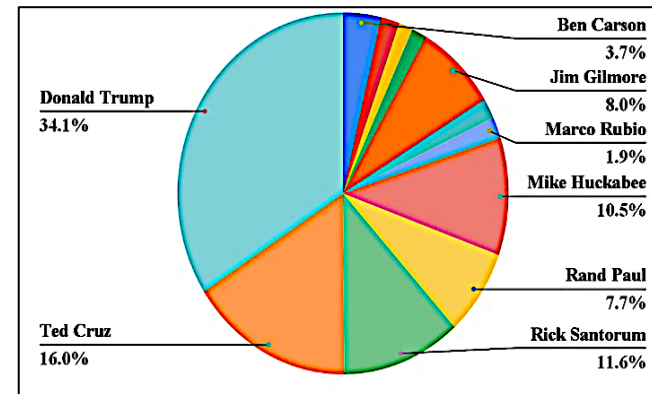

Figure 11. Weighted percentage of the term 'illegal(s)'
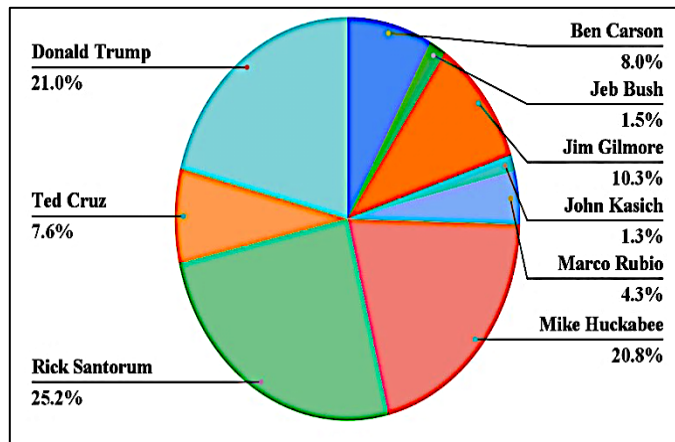

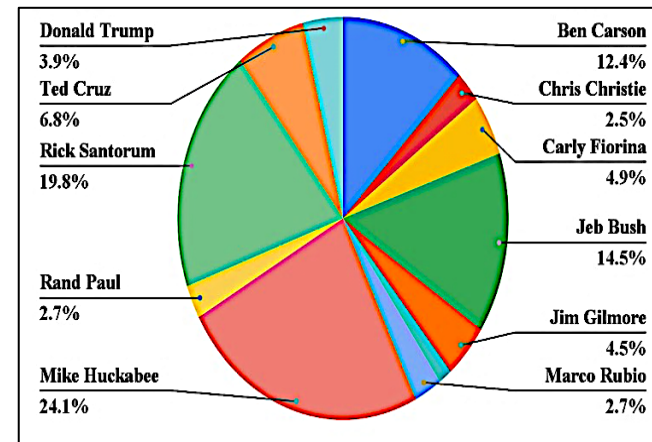Figure 8. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'immigrant(s)'

Figure 9. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'Islam(ic)'

While Donald Trump undoubtedly employed relatively high rates of terms linked to exclusive people-centric appeals, the results are not as clear-cut, with more variation between terms than previously seen. Only Mike Huckabee rates over 10% on each, showing the most consistently high rates of usage among all four terms. Donald Trump dominates in terms of the usage of the term 'illegal'. Trump and Carson, two outsider candidates, invoke the term border at the highest rates. Somewhat unsurprisingly, however, the emergence of candidates across the insider/outsider spectrum, such as Rick Santorum, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, and Rand Paul, reveal the broad relevance of immigration, border policy, and cultural and/or religious out-groups to the discourse of the Republican party.

There are a number of contextualizing factors that would be worth touching upon to bring further nuance to these findings, particularly around the term 'Islam'. While border policy and immigration have more or less remained stable Republican party issues in contemporary politics, rhetoric around Islam and Muslims played a prominent role in the 2016 Republican primaries. This observation was supported by the initial qualitative pre-analysis of most liked Twitter messages, which included three tweets from three different candidates, making explicit references to Islam or Muslims. There were two approximate reasons these topics featured so prominently. Firstly, in November 2015 the Islamic State (ISIS) claimed responsibility for a major terror attack in Paris, killing 130 civilians, setting the tone for political discourse in the 2016 presidential primaries. Secondly, following another terrorist attack in San Bernadino in December 2015, Donald Trump called for a "total and complete shutdown" of Muslims entering the United States (citation). This extreme stance provoked responses from

competing candidates, with many responding to Trump's proposal by highlighting their moderate views as more in line with the American populace and presenting themselves as principled politicians competing against a radical and dangerous challenger. A qualitative analysis of messages containing terms invoking terrorism, Muslims, and/or Islam shows the diverging strategies of various candidates. Prevailing themes include drawing distinctions between 'moderate' and 'radical' Muslims and casting blame on leadership and Democrats for not doing enough to stop terrorism, while reiterating the need for strong and competent leadership not encumbered by niceties and political correctness.

Before turning to anti-elite terms, it is worth articulating some key findings from the rates of usage of exclusive people-centric terms. Donald Trump stands out in this field. Despite not using the term 'Islam' at high rates, in many ways, his rhetoric dictated convserations around musilms and Islam by making the Muslim Ban a central campaign promise. Besides, Trump, Mike Huckabee consistently employed all four terms at high rates, while other candidates from across the insider/outsider spectrum, particularly Rick Santorum, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, and Rand Paul, used the four terms to varying degrees. Carly Fiorina ranks very low in the usage of exclusive people-centric terms and Ben Carson falls somewhere in the middle overall.

5.5.3 Political anti-elitism

Divided into two parts, the political elite and the economic elite, anti-elite terms targeting the political elite included, 'elite(s),' 'government' (including abbreviations govt and gov't), 'political class,' 'system,' 'politician(s),' 'establishment,'

'Washington,' and 'IRS.' The majority of terms, 'elite(s),' 'government,' 'Washington,' 'IRS,' 'politician(s),' and 'system' were derived from two or more relevant populist dictionaries. The term 'establishment' was included in Maurer and Diehl's (2020) dictionary of political populism derived from the Twitter communications of candidates during the 2016 election and was found to have important relevance in the Twitter communications of Republican candidates. Finally, 'political class' was the only term not featured in previous dictionaries to be tested, analyzed and selected based on its highly populist connotations and relevance. Figures 12- 19 below shows the results of each term.
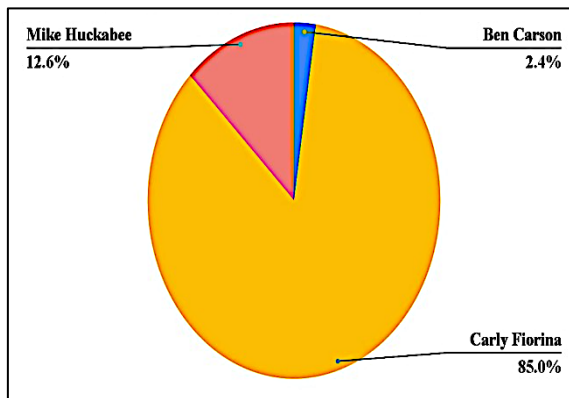
Figure 13. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'political class'
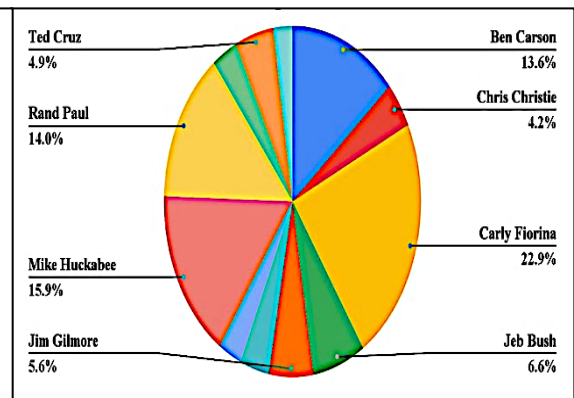
Figure 12. Weighted percentage of use of the terms 'government', 'govt', and 'gov't'

Figure 14. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'establishment'
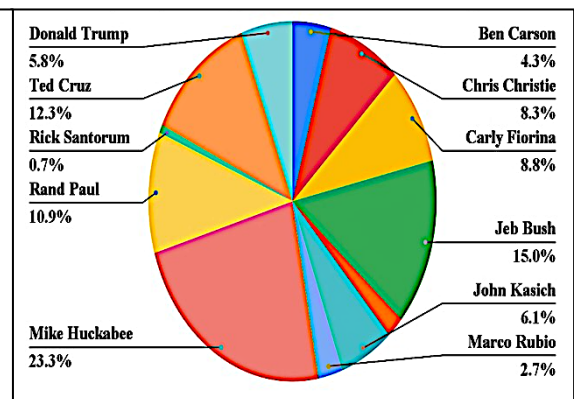
Figure 15. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'Washington'
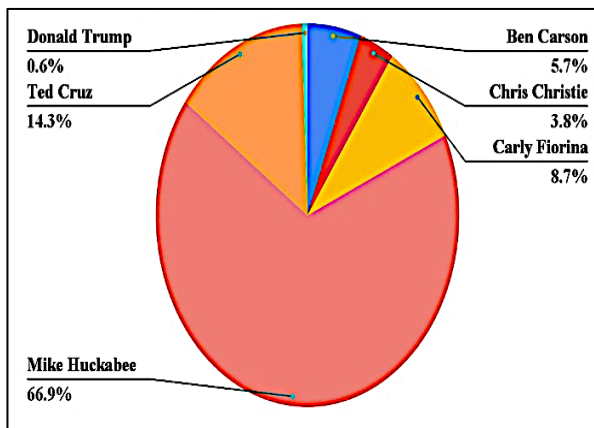
Figure 17. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'IRS'
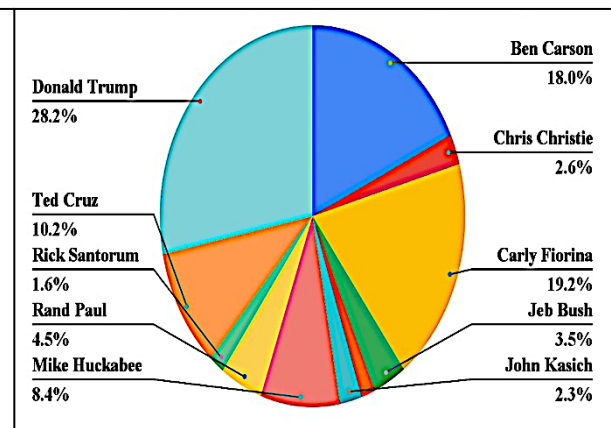
Figure 18. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'politician(s)'
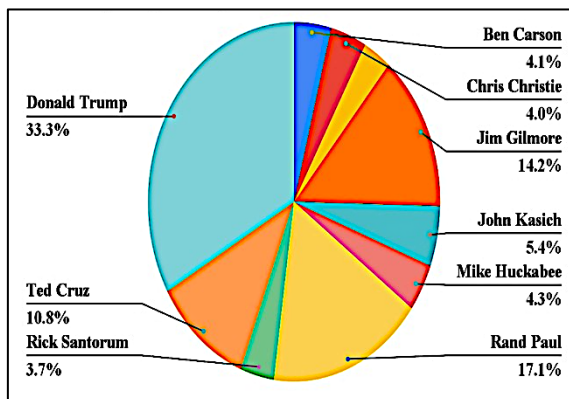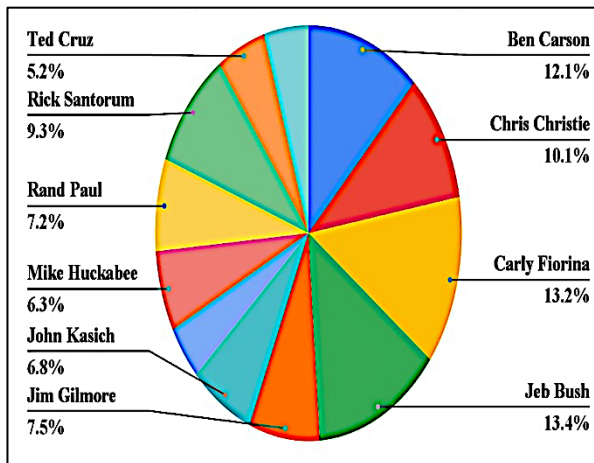

Figure 16. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'system'
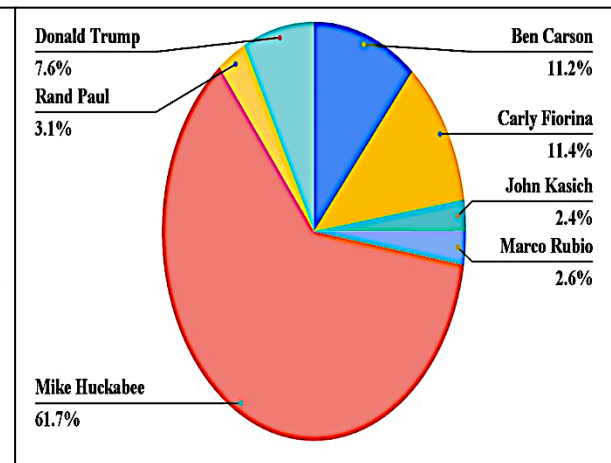
Figure 19. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'elite(s)'

Overall, outsider candidates employ more terms targeting the political elite than other candidates. In four out of eight of the terms, an outsider used it at the highest rate, and if Mike Huckabee, a relative outsider candidate with already demonstrated populist credentials is included, the proportion rises to seven out of ten. The outsider candidate who stands out the most is Carly Fiorina, who employed nearly every term except 'establishment' at exceedingly high rates. Donald Trump picks up the slack on the term 'establishment', using at a rate that almost doubles runner-up Rand Paul, while also employing the term 'politician(s)' at the highest rate. It is interesting to note that Trump, Fiorina, and Carson, the three outsider candidates and only three candidates who have never held political office, use the term 'politician(s)' at the highest rates. In general, across all eight terms, Ben Carson features prominently, but is outdone by Mike Huckabee in most cases. While not an outsider candidate in the sense of Trump, Fiorina, and Carson, the findings suggest Huckabee leverages populist appeals at equivalent, if not higher rates than some outsider politicians. His extreme policy position to abolish the Internal Revenue Services, the system for collecting tax revenues in the United States, aligns him with a number of anti-statist and anti-government themes of right-wing populist movements.

Somewhat surprisingly, Jeb Bush narrowly edged out Fiorina in his rate of use of the term 'system', which proved to be the most widely used term amongst all candidates and ranked second in his usage of the term 'Washington'. Bush's usage of the term 'Washington' demonstrates how even established insider politicians utilize populist framings to appeal to voters and constituencies. One of his minor campaign tropes, which accounted for over half of his usages of the term 'Washington', referred to his

willingness to take on 'Mount Washington', a moniker he used to characterize the Washington-based political scene, demonstrating a clear populist framing.

In a similar vein, Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, two sitting Congressmen, employed relatively high levels of anti-elite populist terms targeting the political elite. While neither candidate employed enough to stand out considerably, their relatively high rates of usage correlates with their anti-government, Tea Party political ideology.

5.5.4 Economic anti-elitism

Anti-elite terms targeting the economic elite included, 'special interest,' 'Wall Street,' and 'lobby(ists).' All three terms featured in more than one previously utilized populist dictionary. Before turning to the findings, it bears mentioning that language targeting the political elite was used at a much higher rate than language targeting the economic elite, as indicated by fewer candidates being represented on the economic elite graphs and fewer terms in general that were found to have relevance. This supports previous research finding right-wing political actors and particularly Republican politicians preferring political populism to economic populism (Maurer & Diehl, 2020; Oliver & Rahn, 2016; Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016). Figures 20- 22 below show the results of each term.
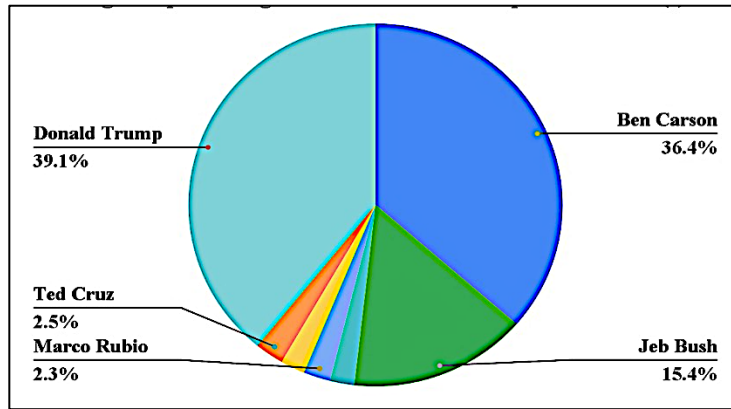
Figure 20. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'special interest(s)'
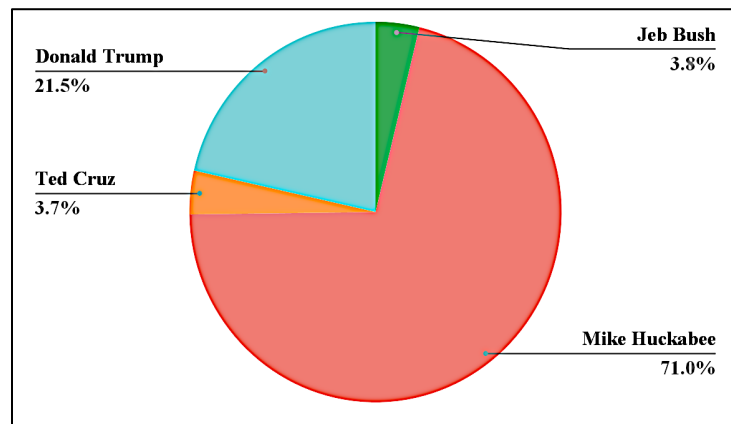
Figure 21. Weighted percentage of the term 'Wall Street'
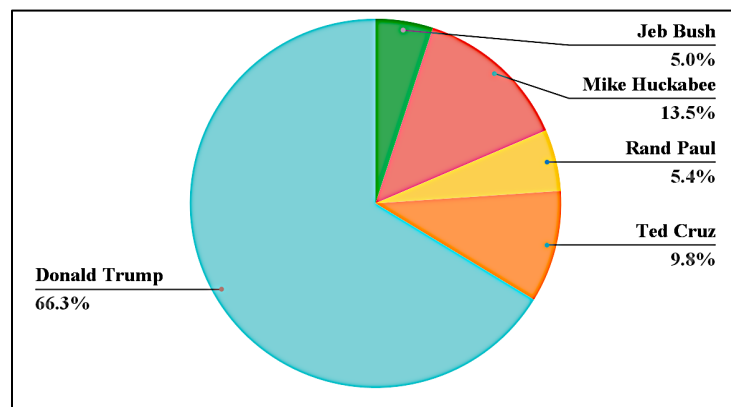
Figure 22. Weighted percentage of use of the term 'lobby(ists)'

Notably absent is the outsider candidate Carly Fiorina. Despite featuring
prominently in her usage of anti-elite terms targeting political elites, she is
conspicuously absent when it comes to terms targeting the economic elite. While more

will be remarked on this later in the discussion section, this finding reveals an important ideological distinction in her employment of populist appeals, which reflects her background as part of the economic elite. Donald Trump again emerges as the leading candidate in his usage of populist terms. Mike Huckabee dominates candidates in his usage of the term 'Wall Street'. Finally, and again, somewhat surprisingly, Jeb Bush is moderately well represented across all three terms.

Other economic populist terms tested, such as 'millionionaire', 'billionaire', 'wealthy', 'top 1', and 'donor' were employed at extremely low rates, with candidate usage by tweet in the low single digits and the majority of candidates never even using such terms once. The exception was 'donor', however Rand Paul's clearly non-populist usage of it to reach out to his Twitter followers for campaign contributions, skewed the data and created an unrepresentative data sample. However, even in that case, besides Rand Paul, Trump was the only candidate to employ the term in more than five messages.

5.5.5 Insiders versus outsiders

While the previous candidate by candidate comparisons allow for a more granular and nuanced look into individual usages of populist terms, more generalized comparisons between outsider and insider candidates reveal that the three outsider candidates, Ben Carson, Donald Trump, and Carly Fiorina, employ populist terms at much higher rates than the remaining insider candidates combined across both inclusive and exclusive people-centric terms as well as both political and economic anti-elitist categories. Figures 23- 26 combine the terms outlined in each of the four categories, comparing

overall outsider usage to overall insider usage. As an example, Figure 23 compares insider and outsider candidates' combined rate of usage of the four inclusive people-centric terms analyzed individually above ('people,' 'our country,' 'our nation,' 'America,' and 'American(s)').
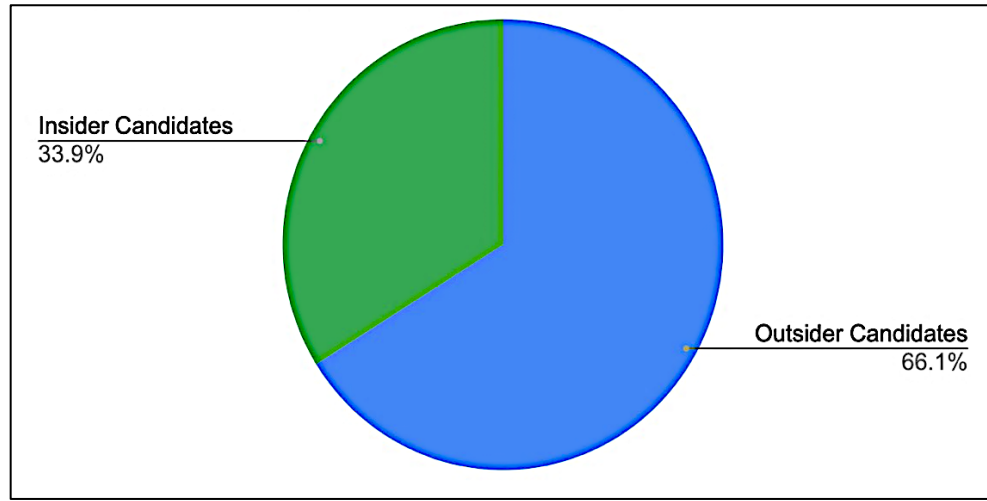
Figure 23. Weighted percentage of use of inclusive people-centric terms
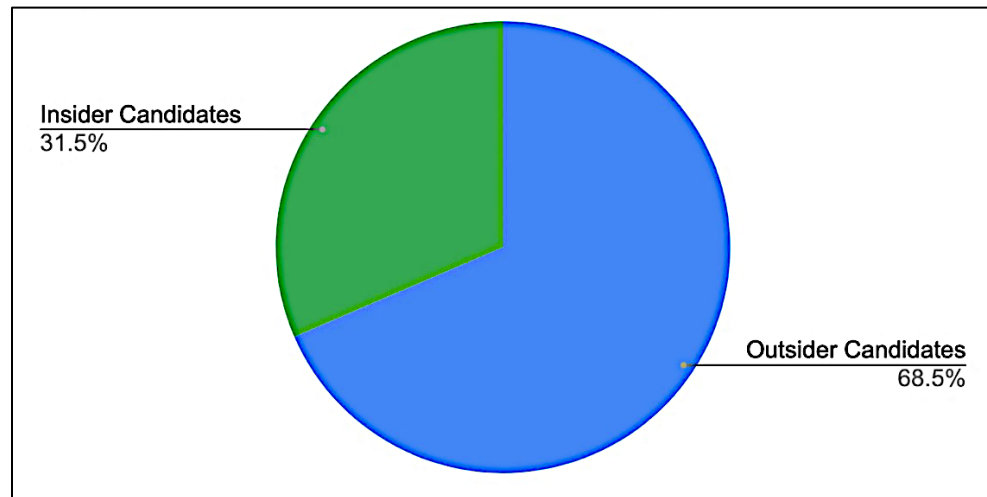
Figure 24. Weighted percentage of use of exclusive people-centric terms
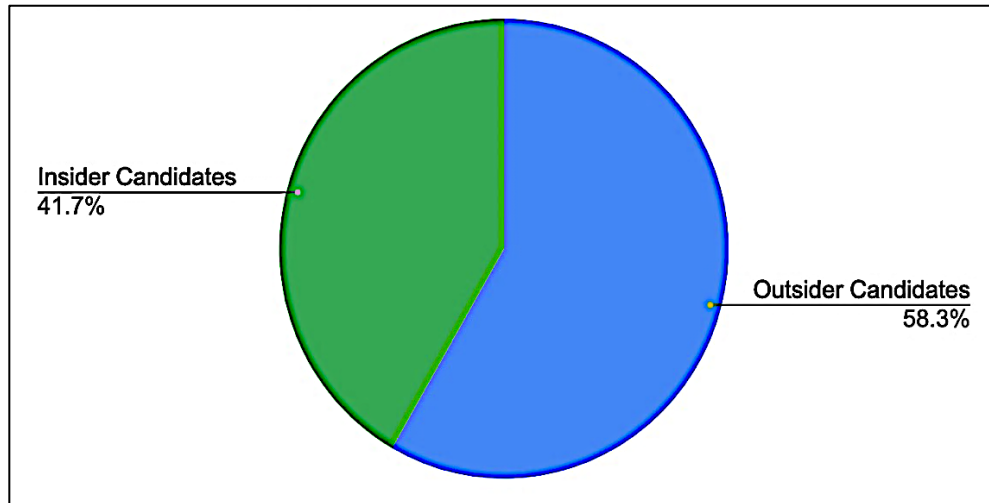
Figure 25. Weighted percentage of use of political anti-elitist terms
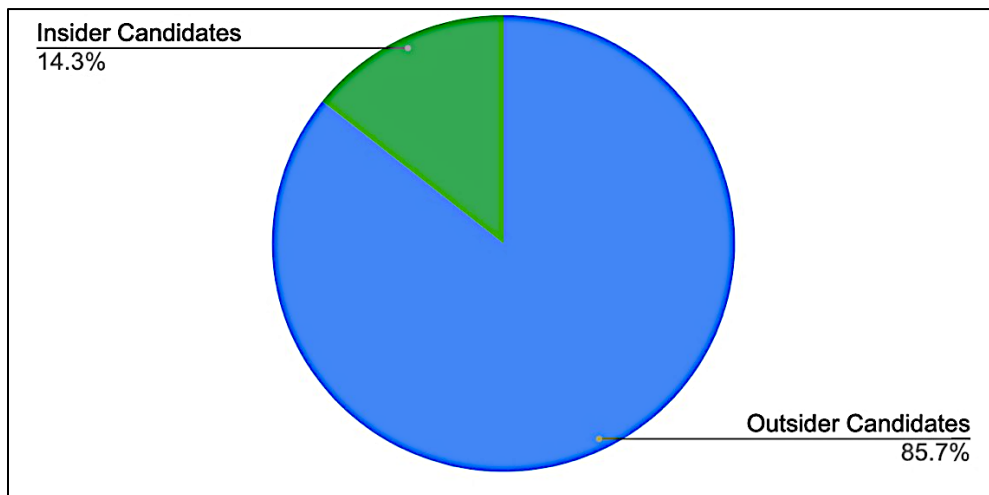
Figure 26. Weighted percentage of use of economic anti-elitist terms

Across all four categories, outsider candidates employed higher rates of usage of populist terms than insider candidates, suggesting Republican outsider candidates do employ more populist language than those with closer proximity to power.

5.6 N-gram analysis of populist terms

After evaluating variations in the usage of populist terms across candidates, key terms were selected and subjected to n-gram analysis to develop a better understanding of how candidates framed populist terms. Because some terms required analysis with stop words, such as the terms 'our country' and 'our nation', or benefitted from the inclusion of stop words, such as the term 'people', some of the bigrams, trigram and four-grams detailed below include stop words. N-grams with stop words were included if they were judged to be both coherent and valuable additions. For example, the trigram 'our country is' was not included in the qualitative analysis below because it did not convey any discernible meaning on its own. This rule of exclusion also pertained to n-grams without stop words, such as 'foxnews many people', which also did not convey a coherent framing or meaning on its own.

5.6.1 People

Fundamental to any analysis of populism, the term 'people' was subjected to n-gram analysis, focusing on the most frequently used bigrams and trigrams of the three candidates who employed the term the most, Ben Carson, Donald Trump and Chris Christie. Table 8 below displays these findings, followed by a qualitative analysis.

Table 8. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'people'

people				
Candidates	Most Frequent Bigrams	Frequency	Most Frequent Trigrams	Frequency
Ben Carson	the people	138	we the people	118
	american people	13	the american people	13
	hands people	8	back hands people	6
			put money people, prosperity power people	3
Donald Trump	the people	71	the american people	18
	great people	28	we the people	17
	many people	22	the great people	11
	american people	19	for the people, people thank you	9
	amazing people	14	so many people, thousands of people	8
	people want	8	crowd amazing people	4
	thousands people	7	crowd incredible people, crowd fantastic people, crowd great people, donald trump people, amazing crowd people, link among people, hampshire amazing people, iowa great people	3
	fantastic people	5		
Chris Christie	american people	39	the american people	37
	talk people, bring people, our people	2	for the people, american people are	5
			safety american people, taxes american people	3

107

Each candidate employed the term 'people' differently. It is also worth noting the remarkable consistency with which candidates frame the term 'people,' particularly Ben Carson who consistently framed the term as 'we the people' and Chris Christie who consistently framed the term as '(the) american people.' Carson used the refrain 'we the people,' a highly evocative phrase well-known to American audiences as the opening line of the Preamble to the United States Constitution. This highly populist framing of the term directly linked himself with 'the people' against an unresponsive and unrepresentative political and economic elite. The following tweets pulled from the dictionary analysis demonstrate this:

"We the People deserve leaders that are beholden to the Constitution & the American people alone. Not the political elite & special interests."
"Politicians have long written off our efforts to return the government to We the People, but we remain undaunted."
"I gladly confess that I was the only one at the #GOPDebate with no political title. Politicians are not telling the truth to We the People."

Similarly, Donald Trump sought to directly link himself with 'the people,' however in a more varied and tangible form. Trump's references to 'great people,' 'amazing people,' and 'fantastic people' tend to refer to his supporters, forging a direct moral and mutually empowering connection with them, especially the crowds that attended his rallies and speeches. The modifiers 'great,' 'fantastic,' and 'amazing' imbue 'the people' with a moral dimension typical in populist appeals, as well as a mutually

reinforcing relationship dynamic. Trump, the candidate, derives his power and legitimacy directly from the will of the 'great people' who support him, and in turn his supporters are empowered and represented through Trump. An important way Trump linked himself with 'the people' and bolstered his legitimacy as the representative of the people is through his allusion to the crowds, the 'thousands of people,' that attended his rallies and speeches. Quintessentially populist, Trump signals that his power derives directly from 'the people' and often used the size of crowds as a physical manifestation of his democratic legitimacy. In the Twittersphere, Trump often replicated a version of this by retweeting and boosting messages of support and endorsement. Trump also used his discursive relationship with 'the people' to make personal claims, channeling the words or thoughts of 'the people' as the unvarnished truth, bolstering his credentials as the mouthpiece of the people:

"This is happening all over our country—great people being disenfranchised by politicians. Repub party is in trouble!"

"Just left Sioux Center, Iowa. My speech was very well received. Truly great people! Packed house- overflow!"

"The great people of New Hampshire, who I love, are not properly served by the dying Union Leader newspaper."

"After my meeting with the pastors, it's off to Georgia for a big rally - many thousands of great people will be there, a beautiful movement!"

"Many people are now saying I won South Carolina because of the last debate. I showed anger and the people of our country are very angry!"

In contrast to Trump, Chris Christie's framing of the term 'people' was remarkably consistent, almost exclusively referring to people in the broadest sense as '(the) American people.' Christie framed the contemporary Democratic leadership as out of touch with the will and sentiments of the American people. While this is certainly a populist theme, Christie did not go to the same lengths to directly link himself with the people as Trump and Carson. His references to the American people predominantly aimed to highlight the failures of contemporary leadership to govern, while bolstering his own leadership qualities as worthy of 'the American people:'

"The American people want a President who means what he says and says what he means. #christie2016 #FITN"

"Leadership is not about me. It's about the American people. #TellingItLikeItIs #CNNDebate"

"I don't believe it's the government that makes us great. I believe the American people make us great."

"#DearDC The American people are really disappointed."

To summarize, outsider candidates Ben Carson and Donald Trump employed high rates of people-centric language framed in a manner that forges a direct connection between them and 'the people.' Carson's framing of 'people' is more indicative of an inclusive vision of the general American populace, while Trump's 'people' are his direct supporters through which he fostered a mutually reinforcing relationship. Chris Christie invoked the people to frame the topic of leadership. It imbued his criticisms and appeals

with a populist legitimacy, but his usage of the term barely rose to the levels of populist discourse employed by Trump and Carson.

5.6.2 Our country and our nation

All three outsider candidates employed the terms 'our country' and 'our nation' at higher rates than all other candidates besides Jim Gilmore, a long-time politician and former governor of Virginia. Comparing how the three outsider candidates, Carson, Trump, and Fiorina framed these terms in comparison to Gilmore revealed how outsider candidates leverage their outsider status to make populist appeals.

Table 9. N-gram Analysis of the Terms 'our country' and 'our nation"

our country/our nation				
Candidates	Most Frequent Trigrams	Frequency	Most Frequent Four-grams	Frequency
Ben Carson	healinspirerevive our nation	7	issues facing our nation	6
	protect our nation	5	to healinspirerevive our nation	5
	heal our nation	3	part of our nation, to heal our nation, and protect our nation, will healinspirerevive our nation, future of our nation, can protect our country	2
Donald Trump	our country needs	7	take back our country, take our country back	4
	our country back, our country is	5	great again our country, last thing our country, love for our country, people of our country, to take our country, thing our country need, in our country we, make our country great, keep our country safe	2
	take our country, back our country	4	take back our country, take our country back	4
	killing our country, make our country	3		
Carly Fiorina	take our country, our country back	8	take our country back	7
	rebuild our nation, keep our nation	2	keep our nation safe	2
Jim Gilmore	-	-	ensure our nation's security	4
	-	-	future of our country	2

While all candidates invoked themes of maintaining safety and security, noteworthy differences emerged amongst candidates. 'Ensuring our nation's security' and 'future of our country' were only consistent framings of the terms employed by Jim Gilmore. These relatively standard phrases contrast sharply with the ways Fiorina,

Trump, and Carson framed the terms. Both Fiorina and Trump consistently employed the phrases 'take our country back,' which constituted clear populist appeals insinuating that the country had been stolen from the people. Carson's usage of the verbs 'heal,' 'inspire,' and 'revive,' are reminiscent of Canovan's (1999, p. 10) characterization of the redemptive face of democracy, which seeks unity, wholeness, and salvation through politics. Fiorina's usage of the verb 'rebuild' likewise hearkens to such notions. These highly populist framings aimed to imbue the political process with moralistic dimensions, particularly in Carson's case, who framed his campaign as a crusade to rectify the nation, with nods to his medical background and his Christian faith.

5.6.3 American(s) and America

For the terms 'American(s)' and 'America,' the top two candidates who used the terms at the highest rates are compared below, along with their framing of the terms.

Table 10. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'American(s)'

Candidate	American(s)			
	Most Frequent Bigrams	**Frequency**	**Most Frequent Trigrams**	**Frequency**
Mike Huckabee	American workers	17	American workers families, American security prosperity	5
	Americans first	10	-	-
	fight American, protect American	6	-	-
	Americans hand-up, protecting American	5	-	-
Marco Rubio	American century	71	new American century	66
	new American	68	expand American dream, achieve American dream	8
	American dream	42		

As mentioned earlier, Rubio's usage of the term 'American' was heavily linked to his campaign slogans New American Century and expanding the American dream. None of these framings are particularly populist in any way. Huckabee, by contrast, employed highly populist framings to signal that he is on the side of American workers and families in a battle against Washington elites:

"I will fight for American workers and families not the Washington and Wall Street elites. #ImwithHuck"

"Washington is stealing from seniors, punching American workers in the gut, & bankrupting our kids & grandkids. I refuse to let that stand."

"The permanent political class put Wall Street & Washington elites first. They aren't fighting for American workers. #CNBCGOPDebate"

As mentioned earlier, Trump's iconic campaign slogan and accompanying hashtag 'Make America Great Again' hegemonized discourse about the term 'America' and presented a deeply populist framing of his campaign's mission.

Table 11. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'America'

America				
Candidate	Most Frequent Bigrams	Frequency	Most Frequent Trigrams	Frequency
Donald Trump	make America	689	make America great, America great again	676
	crippled America	40	make America safe	9
	America needs	23		
	America safe	9		
John Kasich	make America	17	make America safer	14
	work America	7	America needs president	11
	Kasich America, stronger America	6	America needs leader	9
	keep America	5	America safer stronger	8
	leader America	4	America needs John, work for America	6
			leader America needs	4

Trump's framing of 'America' is highly evocative of Taggart's (2000) conceptualization of the populist's heartland, as a highly emotive and idealized concept of place and

community constructed from the populist's backward-looking gaze and projected onto the present. The thrust of the idea, that America has lost the greatness it once had, and the corresponding call for action to make America great again becomes the raison d'etre and the mobilizing principle behind Trump's campaign. Trump's second most frequent framing of the term 'America,' 'crippled America,' reinforced this concept in a rather graphic and emotive manner, conveying the country as weakened, diminished, and debilitated. In contrast, Kasich, a long-time politician, most frequently framed the term 'America' around his leadership skills and experience:

"America needs a leader that will bring people together for a stronger tomorrow. America needs @JohnKasich #DemDebate"

"America needs a president who's ready & able to re-establish our footing on the world stage."

"America deserves a president with a plan and the experience to get it done."

5.6.4 Immigrant(s)

For terms related to an exclusive people-centric appeals, hardly any differences in the framing of terms was found. Table 12 below displays the framings of the three candidates who employed the term 'immigrant(s)' the most.

Table 12. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'immigrant(s)'

immigrant(s)				
Candidate	Most Frequent Bigrams	Frequency	Most Frequent Trigrams	Frequency
Rick Santorum	illegal immigrants	4	-	-
	immigrant workers	2	-	-
Mike Huckabee	illegal immigrants	7	illegal immigrants violated	4
	immigrants violated	4	-	-
Donald Trump	illegal immigrant	20	-	-
	legal immigrant, undocumented immigrant	2	-	-

The term 'illegal immigrant(s)' dominated discussion of immigration across the board. Likewise, references to the term 'border' were dominated by the bigrams 'secure border' and 'securing border' and references to 'Islam' were nearly always accompanied by the adjective 'radical.' The lack of variation across candidates in regard to the framing of exclusive people-centric terms suggests little ideological diversity amongst candidates. The perceived threats of unchecked illegal immigration and radical Islamic terrorism were most often leveraged by nearly all Republican candidates as proof of the failure of contemporary, and particularly Democratic, leadership. The following tweets captured from the data demonstrate the similarity of these framings:

"Violent extremists not jihadists now @HillaryClinton won't tell truth about illegal immigrants. Words shape policy!" – Rick Santorum

"When will President Obama issue the words RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORISM? He can't say it, and unless he will, the problem will not be solved!" - Donald Trump

"The Democrat plan: Give amnesty AND #ObamaCare to illegal immigrants. #DemDebate" - Mike Huckabee

"It's simply baffling that President Obama views climate change as a bigger threat than radical Islamic terrorism." – Jeb Bush

Politicians with experience often used these issues to bolster their leadership credentials, making the case that such pressing and urgent problems of national security require leaders with experience. In terms of outsider candidates, Carly Fiorina employed these terms at relatively low rates, while Trump employed three out four selected terms at very high rates and Ben Carson employed two out of four at very high rates. Mike Huckabee, again, stands out as a candidate who consistently employed high rates of populist terms and framed them in particularly populist ways.

5.6.5 Political anti-elitism

Carly Fiorina's emergence as a candidate who employed high rates of anti-elite political populist terms provided a fruitful line of inquiry for conducting an n-gram analysis of this categorization of terms. Table 13 below displays how Fiorina framed these terms.

Table 13. N-gram Analysis of Carly Fiorina's Usage of Political Anti-Elite Terms

Carly Fiorina	
Most Frequent N-Grams	Frequency
politician(s)	
career politician(s)	5
politicians can't, politicians talk	2
government	
citizen government	7
reimagine government, intended citizen government	5
to reimagine government, reimagine government must, government must reimagine	4
take government, federal government, government back, take government back	3
political class	
professional political class	3
taking political class, outside political class, critical political class, political class media elites	2
Washington	
status quo washington	4
system	
broken education system	3
elite(s)	
media elites	2

Fiorina's most common framings of anti-elite political terms are highly populist, showing how she leveraged her outsider status to target the political establishment. Echoing her previous calls to 'take back our country,' she made similar appeals to 'take government back' from 'career politicians' and an entrenched 'professional political

class' that does not embody a truly 'citizen government'. Her exhortations to 'reimagine' government signal a challenge to the prevailing status quo.

An n-gram analysis comparing the three outsider candidate's framing of the term 'politician(s)', which they all employed at the highest rates in comparison with the rest of the candidates, demonstrates a shared anti-political elite populist streak amongst all three outsiders. The characterization of the self-dealing, dishonest 'career politician' who is all talk, is a universal descriptor amongst all three candidates. In the populist imaginary, figures such as the crooked career politician personify the malign and powerful forces that stand in the way of the government truly embodying the direct will of the people.

Table 14. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'politician(s)'

politician(s)		
Candidate	Most Frequent Bigrams	Frequency
Carly Fiorina	career politician(s)	5
	politicians can't, politicians talk	2
Donald Trump	career politician(s)	9
	politicians talk	4
	incompetent politican(s)	3
	washington politician, dishonest politician, phony politician, another politician	2
Ben Carson	career politician(s)	6

As briefly mentioned above, anti-political elite discourse was not the sole domain of the outsider candidates. This is readily apparent in the candidate framing of the term 'Washington.' Table 15 displays how the Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz, and Rand Paul, three relatively insider candidates, most frequently framed the term 'Washington.'

Table 15. N-gram Analysis of the Term 'Washington'

Washington		
Candidate	Most Frequent N-Grams	Frequency
Jeb Bush	mount (includes variations mt and mt.) Washington	11
	take mount (includes variations mt and mt.) Washington, power Washington	3
	power Washington, shake Washington, reform Washington, gridlock Washington, shift power Washington	2
Ted Cruz	Washington cartel	7
	Washington corruption	3
Rand Paul	Washington machine	10
	defeat Washington machine	9

Despite their relative proximities to power, Bush, Cruz, and Paul frequently and consistently frame Washington as a corrupt place that must be defeated or conquered. However, their differences in relative proximity to Washington, the seat of power, shed light on how these three candidates vary in their framing of the term 'Washington'. Despite having a long political career, Jeb Bush never served in federal office in Washington. Accordingly, he leverages his distance to construct a framing of Washington as a mountain that must be conquered. As a relative outsider to Washington

politics, Bush positions himself as someone who will 'take on' the highest peaks of power in the country, disrupting and shaking up a distant and out of touch Washington.

Cruz and Paul, on the other hand, two sitting congressmen who rose to power as part of the Tea Party's contrarian, anti-government movement, present their own populist framings of Washington. While Cruz characterizes it as a 'cartel', a criminal enterprise rife with corruption, Paul likens 'Washington' to an unfeeling machine that must be defeated. Both candidates are channeling a deeply rooted anti-statist ideology that runs through the modern Conservative movement (Kazin, 1995, p. 167). Furthermore, as members of the challenger party, with Democrats holding the presidency in Washington, their criticisms of Washington, double as criticisms of the party in power, as well.

5.6.6 Economic anti-elitism

Anti-economic elite terms were not nearly as frequently or widely employed as anti-political populist terms, further supporting previous research finding Republicans primarily rely on anti-statist populism targeting federal elites (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016; Engesser et al., 2017; Maurer & Diehl, 2020). They relative lack of usage of anti-economic elite populist terms limited the effectiveness of n-gram analysis. Framings of that were employed with any level of consistency amongst the three terms selected are displayed below in Table 16.

Table 16. N-gram Analysis of Economic Anti-Elite Terms

special interest(s), Wall Street, lobby(ists)		
Candidate	Most Frequent N-Grams	Frequency
Donald Trump	lobbyists special interests	7
Mike Huckabee	Wall Street elites	6
	Washington and Wall Street elites	5
Ben Carson	billionaires special interest, take money special interest	2

Because it is difficult to make conclusions from the n-gram analysis alone, a selection of the tweets including the terms were extracted from the data to aid the analysis. Interestingly, most anti-economic elite populist appeals did not specifically target the economic elites but were instead leveraged to target the political elite. Accordingly, anti-economic elite populist appeals emerged as an additional dimension of anti-political populism, with each candidate leveraging these framings in slightly different ways. Donald Trump weaponized these terms in the most direct manner, often accusing his political opponents of being 'puppets' controlled by donors and special interests:

"When I look at all the money the special interests and lobbyists are giving to candidates, beware – the candidates are mere puppets $$$$!"

"Jeb Bush had a tough night at the debate. Now he'll probably take some of his special interest money, he is their puppet, and buy ad's"

"John Kasich should focus his special interest money on building up his failed image, not negative ads on me"

"Rubio is totally owned by the lobbyists and special interests. A lightweight senator with the worst voting record in Senate. Lazy!"

These appeals were crafted to undermine the democratic legitimacy of his opponents. Rather than representing the will of the people, Trump charges, his opponents are doing the bidding of the elites.

Carson echoes these claims, but characteristically only employs the terms in the abstract, not directing them toward any of his political opponents, and instead aiming bolstering his own legitimacy as a true representative of the will of the people:

"I refuse to take money from special interest groups and the political elite because I am beholden to We the People."
"I refuse to take money from special interest groups and the political elite because I am beholden to We the People."

Jeb Bush employed anti-economic populist appeals at higher rates than fellow insider candidates. As previously seen in his calls to take on 'Mt. Washington', Bush framed populist appeals in ways that also promote his experience as a governor. In this way, he leveraged populist framings to bolster his relative outsider status:

"When I was Governor, we took on teachers unions, the trial bar & other special interests" – Jeb Bush

Interestingly, in the tweet extracted above, Bush leverages anti-economic populist framings to target teachers' unions and bar associations, organizations not particularly known for representing the economic elite.

Appealing the most to 'American workers,' Mike Huckabee emerged as the candidate closest to employing economically populist appeals, but still predominantly framed them by linking 'Wall Street' with 'Washington' as force against 'American workers:'

"The permanent political class put Wall Street and Washington elites first. They aren't fighting for American workers. #CNNDebate"

"I will fight for American workers and families not the Washington and Wall Street elites"

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The findings provide comprehensive answers to both research questions posed. Firstly, it

was shown that outsider, or challenger, candidates employed much more populist

language in their Twitter communications than candidates in closer proximity to power,

validating Bonikowski and Gidron's (2016) finding that "the prevalence of populist

claims in campaign discourse varies in systematic and predictable ways," and expanding

its relevance to the realm of social media communication (p. 1595). While it was shown

that populist appeals were principally the domain of outsider candidates, it was also

demonstrated that candidates from across the outsider/insider spectrum leveraged

populist appeals in relation to their proximity to power. Jeb Bush proved to be a great

example of this. Despite being a consummate insider, hailing from the Bush family

political dynasty and having served in political offices for decades, Bush still used his

outsider status as a state governor to frame his populist appeals to the public promising

to take on 'Mt. Washington' and shake up the political establishment. Interestingly,

Bush and other insiders often framed populist terms and dichotomies in ways that

highlighted their experience as a politician.

The n-gram analysis, which focused particularly on the appeals of outsider

candidates, revealed the nuances and variations of how candidates framed their populist

appeals. It was shown that Ben Carson's framing of people-centric populist terms

distinguished him as a broadly inclusive populist candidate, directly linking himself with

the people through the often-repeated line 'we the people.' He characterized his

campaign as a moral crusade to heal and inspire the nation by removing out of touch leadership and returning it to 'we the people.' Donald Trump, on the other hand, emerged as a divisive populist candidate, drawing power and legitimacy directly from 'his people,' who he in turn empowered by acting as their truest representative. His campaign to 'make America great again' was framed as a mission to 'take back' the country from incompetent, crooked, and deceitful politicians and restore it to its former glory. He employed high rates of anti-political elite populist claims directly targeting his political opponents, casting them as puppets of special interests and not representative of the true will of the people. Carly Fiorina's employment and framing of populist terms suggested that she is less representative of a populist figure, and rather better understood as a representative of the economic elite challenging the political elite. She leveraged her outsider status particularly to make anti-political elite populist appeals, calling on citizens to 'take back' the country from the 'political class,' however she did not establish a coherent framing of 'the people' and lodged most of her populist appeals against the political establishment and politicians. Rather than populist, she operated as a hybrid outsider/insider. In contrast to Fiorina, Huckabee consistently employed populist terms and framings at high rates, leveraging populist appeals to bolster his relative outsider status and image as a man of the American people taking on the corrupt Washington elites.

Across the board, the language of populism was demonstrated to be a fundamental feature of the Republican political vernacular, deeply rooted in popular ideas and constructs about the nature of democratic governance and the sources legitimacy of leadership. Overall, however, the textual analysis demonstrated that

populism is fundamentally an anti-status quo discourse. It is principally the language of the outsider, the challenger, intended to shake the foundations of the ruling order by claiming the mantle of popular sovereignty.

Additionally, social media emerged as not an entirely separate sphere, but rather an extension of the arena of conflict between candidates. While still interwoven with traditional media events, such as debates, the Twitter sphere was shown to be a medium highly conducive to a broad variety of populist appeals. Consistent and repetitive framing of populist terms, particularly among outsider candidates, helped reinforce their populist appeals.

In contrast to human-based coding approaches, in which trained coders determine whether a claim in populist or not according to certain established criteria, this approach relied almost entirely on computer-assisted automated recall, followed by n-gram analysis, allowing each candidate's own language to determine the content and character of their populist appeals. This approach, which reverse engineers most human-based coding approaches by allowing a ground-up or inductive evaluation of populist language rather than a top-down or deductive approach, has two advantages. Firstly, it reduces the need for a team of expert trained human coders, which typically limits the amount of data and texts that can be analyzed and secondly, as alluded to previously it allows for a more organic approach to categorizing and evaluating the complexities and variations of populist discourse. While precision posed some problems to a fully automated dictionary-based approach, n-gram analysis allowed for a follow-up check to analyze whether terms were framed in a populist manner or not. The consistency with which most populist terms were framed, such as Ben Carson's 'we the people' for

example demonstrated both idiosyncrasies between candidates, as well as remarkable consistencies in framings, revealing important insights about individual candidates, as well as about the phenomenon of populism itself.

A secondary advantage to this research approach, in terms of analysis, is that it allows for the understanding of populism from a variety of perspectives, without being entirely beholden to one school of thought. Trump's style of populism, for instance, through this analysis shared many aspects in common with a number of schools of thought. In many ways, the discursive relationship Trump forms with 'the people' in his Twitter communications typifies the political-strategic approach, in which he derives his power and democratic legitimacy directly from his highly personalistic and mutually reinforcing relationship with his supporters. Drawing from discursive approaches, as well, his conflictive and incendiary messages can be understood as powerful tools of antagonism, from which new in-groups and out-groups, allies and foes, were constantly being created around him, accelerating the discursive process of identity and group formation.

Employing this approach in future research seems highly promising as a way to better understand the populist vernaculars of societies and uncover nuances in the types of populist appeals candidates make. In this way, populism emerges not as an ideology of a select few political actors, but as a reflection of the democratic process itself.

Note. Denominators represent the total number of tweets in a candidate's campaign period, while numerators represent the number of tweets containing the term.

Candidate	people	the people	american people	american(s)	taxpayer	tax payer	our country	our nation	our nation + our country	class	vets	veteran	citizen
Ben Carson	219/1958	135/1958	13/1958	66/1958	5/1958	0/1958	15/1958	53/1958	68/1958	1/1958	5/1958	18/1958	13/1958
Chris Christie	95/2008	17/2008	39/2008	90/2008	4/2008	0/2008	12/2008	4/2008	16/2008	0/2008	3/2008	4/2008	1/2008
Carly Fiorina	18/1287	4/1287	5/1287	25/1287	1/1287	0/1287	9/1287	12/1287	21/1287	15/1287	1/1287	4/1287	20/1287
Jeb Bush	54/2538	9/2538	5/2538	108/2538	3/2538	0/2538	19/2538	12/2538	31/2538	14/2538	9/2538	36/2538	6/2538
Jim Gilmore	24/1137	5/1137	2/1137	41/1137	0/1137	0/1137	9/1137	7/1137	16/1137	4/1137	6/1137	45/1137	16/1137
John Kasich	55/3003	10/3003	1/3003	44/3003	7/3003	0/3003	7/3003	26/3003	33/3003	1/3003	4/3003	26/3003	26/3003
Marco Rubio	70/2862	7/2862	4/2862	188/2862	6/2862	0/2862	22/2862	12/2862	34/2862	1/2862	8/2862	13/2862	4/2862
Mike Huckabee	74/1893	26/1893	15/1893	151/1893	4/1893	0/1893	14/1893	3/1893	17/1893	8/1893	3/1893	12/1893	5/1893
Rand Paul	49/2357	6/2357	1/2357	51/2357	5/2357	1/2357	20/2357	5/2357	25/2357	0/2357	4/2357	7/2357	7/2357
Rick Santorum	25/1092	12/1092	0/1092	59/1092	0/1092	0/1092	2/1092	0/1092	2/1092	0/1092	0/1092	2/1092	1/1092
Ted Cruz	111/2600	25/2600	17/2600	55/2600	1/2600	0/2600	10/2600	4/2600	14/2600	3/2600	0/2600	8/2600	5/2600
Donald Trump	347/5806	69/5806	20/5806	128/5806	0/5806	1/5806	70/5806	6/5806	76/5806	17/5806	45/5806	54/5806	26/5806

Candidate	voter(s)	folk	america	USA	worker(s)	political class	Christian(ity)	establish-ment	Democrat(s/ic)	corrupt(ion)	immigrant(s)	immigration	illegal(s)
Ben Carson	19/1958	5/1958	47/1958	19/1958	0/1958	1/1958	8/1958	2/1958	1/1958	1/1958	4/1958	14/1958	4/1958
Chris Christie	18/2008	6/2008	51/2008	10/2008	2/2008	0/2008	0/2008	2/2008	13/2008	0/2008	0/2008	7/2008	2/2008
Carly Fiorina	29/1287	0/1287	28/1287	5/1287	1/1287	23/1287	0/1287	1/1287	6/1287	2/1287	0/1287	2/1287	1/1287
Jeb Bush	16/2538	4/2538	66/2538	18/2538	3/2538	0/2538	5/2538	0/2538	17/2538	3/2538	1/2538	10/2538	2/2538
Jim Gilmore	21/1137	5/1137	32/1137	21/1137	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	4/1137	2/1137	0/1137	3/1137	28/1137	5/1137
John Kasich	46/3003	7/3003	128/3003	15/3003	3/3003	0/3003	0/3003	4/3003	9/3003	0/3003	1/3003	11/3003	3/3003
Marco Rubio	43/2862	0/2862	70/2862	26/2862	8/2862	0/2862	4/2862	0/2862	12/2862	0/2862	4/2862	3/2862	3/2862
Mike Huckabee	15/1893	11/1893	51/1893	24/1893	24/1893	5/1893	16/1893	2/1893	8/1893	7/1893	10/1893	7/1893	11/1893
Rand Paul	30/2357	4/2357	27/2357	13/2357	0/2357	0/2357	6/2357	10/2357	16/2357	0/2357	0/2357	21/2357	10/2357
Rick Santorum	9/1092	2/1092	45/1092	14/1092	26/1092	0/1092	1/1092	1/1092	3/1092	8/1092	7/1092	34/1092	7/1092
Ted Cruz	35/2600	3/2600	37/2600	16/2600	2/2600	0/2600	9/2600	7/2600	26/2600	12/2600	5/2600	18/2600	23/2600
Donald Trump	55/5806	17/5806	817/5806	126/5806	10/5806	0/5806	15/5806	48/5806	45/5806	16/5806	31/5806	70/5806	109/5806

Candidate	muslim	islam	terror	asylum	refugee	migrant	undoc-umented	radical	dnc	cnn	nyt	fox	powerful
Ben Carson	3/1958	19/1958	31/1958	0/1958	13/1958	0/1958	0/1958	11/1958	0/1958	31/1958	8/1958	174/1958	2/1958
Chris Christie	3/2008	4/2008	18/2008	0/2008	10/2008	0/2008	0/2008	6/2008	0/2008	76/2008	24/2008	275/2008	2/2008
Carly Fiorina	0/1287	5/1287	9/1287	0/1287	0/1287	0/1287	0/1287	4/1287	0/1287	19/1287	0/1287	65/1287	0/1287
Jeb Bush	4/2538	29/2538	73/2538	0/2538	2/2538	0/2538	0/2538	28/2538	0/2538	8/2538	6/2538	46/2538	8/2538
Jim Gilmore	8/1137	4/1137	22/1137	0/1137	5/1137	0/1137	0/1137	3/1137	1/1137	28/1137	1/1137	52/1137	0/1137
John Kasich	4/3003	3/3003	20/3003	0/3003	2/3003	0/3003	1/3003	3/3003	0/3003	98/3003	18/3003	162/3003	2/3003
Marco Rubio	0/2862	6/2862	23/2862	0/2862	5/2862	0/2862	0/2862	8/2862	0/2862	30/2862	19/2862	97/2862	2/2862
Mike Huckabee	7/1893	36/1893	37/1893	0/1893	15/1893	1/1893	0/1893	28/1893	0/1893	52/1893	15/1893	89/1893	6/1893
Rand Paul	6/2357	5/2357	42/2357	0/2357	30/2357	0/2357	0/2357	5/2357	0/2357	105/2357	17/2357	152/2357	1/2357
Rick Santorum	3/1092	17/1092	3/1092	0/1092	11/1092	0/1092	0/1092	11/1092	1/1092	56/1092	0/1092	83/1092	1/1092
Ted Cruz	3/2600	14/2600	17/2600	0/2600	0/2600	0/2600	1/2600	13/2600	0/2600	73/2600	13/2600	185/2600	6/2600
Donald Trump	21/5806	18/5806	38/5806	0/5806	10/5806	1/5806	2/5806	15/5806	3/5806	276/5806	92/5806	415/5806	7/5806

Candidate	bank	donald	trump	socialism	comm-unism	media	elite(s)	tax	business	china	trade	healthcare	obamacare
Ben Carson	3/1958	34/1958	52/1958	0/1958	3/1958	13/1958	3/1958	45/1958	39/1958	1/1958	0/1958	3/1958	13/1958
Chris Christie	0/2008	24/2008	36/2008	0/2008	0/2008	4/2008	0/2008	36/2008	19/2008	4/2008	0/2008	1/2008	3/2008
Carly Fiorina	0/1287	7/1287	7/1287	0/1287	0/1287	10/1287	2/1287	15/1287	25/1287	10/1287	0/1287	2/1287	12/1287
Jeb Bush	4/2538	120/2538	134/2538	0/2538	0/2538	3/2538	0/2538	80/2538	11/2538	5/2538	1/2538	1/2538	21/2538
Jim Gilmore	2/1137	28/1137	64/1137	0/1137	0/1137	18/1137	0/1137	50/1137	30/1137	1/1137	1/1137	2/1137	2/1137
John Kasich	2/3003	100/3003	180/3003	0/3003	0/3003	6/3003	1/3003	58/3003	51/3003	1/3003	2/3003	10/3003	11/3003
Marco Rubio	11/2862	32/2862	46/2862	0/2862	0/2862	9/2862	1/2862	33/2862	13/2862	14/2862	0/2862	2/2862	24/2862
Mike Huckabee	10/1893	7/1893	10/1893	2/1893	0/1893	12/1893	16/1893	93/1893	21/1893	14/1893	25/1893	9/1893	34/1893
Rand Paul	12/2357	50/2357	63/2357	11/2357	0/2357	23/2357	1/2357	23/2357	38/2357	9/2357	4/2357	4/2357	3/2357
Rick Santorum	1/1092	4/1092	7/1092	0/1092	0/1092	9/1092	0/1092	36/1092	24/1092	1/1092	0/1092	0/1092	7/1092
Ted Cruz	2/2600	276/2600	384/2600	0/2600	0/2600	12/2600	0/2600	65/2600	31/2600	1/2600	1/2600	1/2600	30/2600
Donald Trump	13/5806	1805/5806	2906/5806	0/5806	0/5806	116/5806	6/5806	40/5806	60/5806	22/5806	34/5806	5/5806	18/5806

Candidate	hillary	clinton	obama	bernie	sanders	jeb	marco	cruz	ben	bureaucrat	politician (s)	irs	government (govt, gov't)
Ben Carson	18/1958	27/1958	40/1958	1/1958	4/1958	3/1958	8/1958	13/1958	134/1958	1/1958	20/1958	3/1958	38/1958
Chris Christie	104/2008	115/2008	48/2008	4/2008	4/2008	27/2008	34/2008	5/2008	0/2008	0/2008	3/2008	2/2008	12/2008
Carly Fiorina	67/1287	47/1287	35/1287	1/1287	1/1287	1/1287	1/1287	2/1287	0/1287	1/1287	14/1287	3/1287	42/1287
Jeb Bush	178/2538	197/2538	187/2538	5/2538	3/2538	274/2538	9/2538	2/2538	1/2538	3/2538	5/2538	1/2538	24/2538
Jim Gilmore	14/1137	16/1137	18/1137	4/1137	5/1137	6/1137	1/1137	4/1137	0/1137	0/1137	1/1137	0/1137	9/1137
John Kasich	91/3003	106/3003	18/3003	11/3003	13/3003	29/3003	13/3003	54/3003	2/3003	0/3003	4/3003	0/3003	16/3003
Marco Rubio	91/2862	81/2862	104/2862	0/2862	1/2862	7/2862	873/2862	12/2862	2/2862	1/2862	0/2862	0/2862	12/2862
Mike Huckabee	81/1893	83/1893	136/1893	11/1893	12/1893	0/1893	1/1893	2/1893	0/1893	1/1893	9/1893	34/1893	43/1893
Rand Paul	39/2357	40/2357	29/2357	36/2357	36/2357	11/2357	74/2357	48/2357	3/2357	1/2357	6/2357	0/2357	47/2357
Rick Santorum	20/1092	23/1092	28/1092	1/1092	1/1092	1/1092	6/1092	9/1092	0/1092	0/1092	1/1092	0/1092	5/1092
Ted Cruz	54/2600	49/2600	54/2600	2/2600	4/2600	10/2600	22/2600	1918/2600	1/2600	1/2600	15/2600	10/2600	18/2600
Donald Trump	259/5806	132/5806	116/5806	39/5806	34/5806	212/5806	90/5806	264/5806	82/5806	0/5806	93/5806	1/5806	20/5806

Candidate	donor	millionaire	billionaire	wall street	ceo	exec	special interest	company	rich	top 1	lobby(ists)	system	bureau-cracy
Ben Carson	1/1958	0/1958	7/1958	0/1958	1/1958	4/1958	11/1958	1/1958	1/1958	0/1958	0/1958	14/1958	4/1958
Chris Christie	1/2008	0/2008	0/2008	0/2008	1/2008	4/2008	0/2008	0/2008	3/2008	0/2008	0/2008	12/2008	0/2008
Carly Fiorina	0/1287	0/1287	0/1287	0/1287	2/1287	4/1287	0/1287	1/1287	0/1287	0/1287	0/1287	10/1287	1/1287
Jeb Bush	1/2538	0/2538	0/2538	1/2538	2/2538	5/2538	6/2538	3/2538	1/2538	0/2538	1/2538	20/2538	2/2538
Jim Gilmore	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	3/1137	5/1137	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	5/1137	0/1137
John Kasich	0/3003	0/3003	0/3003	0/3003	3/3003	14/3003	1/3003	1/3003	0/3003	0/3003	0/3003	12/3003	2/3003
Marco Rubio	4/2862	1/2862	0/2862	0/2862	1/2862	5/2862	1/2862	2/2862	1/2862	4/2862	0/2862	7/2862	0/2862
Mike Huckabee	5/1893	0/1893	1/1893	14/1893	3/1893	4/1893	0/1893	0/1893	1/1893	1/1893	2/1893	7/1893	0/1893
Rand Paul	36/2357	1/2357	1/2357	0/2357	0/2357	12/2357	1/2357	0/2357	1/2357	2/2357	1/2357	10/2357	0/2357
Rick Santorum	1/1092	0/1092	0/1092	0/1092	2/1092	2/1092	0/1092	1/1092	0/1092	0/1092	0/1092	6/1092	0/1092
Ted Cruz	0/2600	0/2600	0/2600	1/2600	8/2600	5/2600	1/2600	0/2600	3/2600	0/2600	2/2600	8/2600	0/2600
Donald Trump	12/5806	0/5806	2/5806	13/5806	9/5806	5/5806	35/5806	10/5806	2/5806	0/5806	30/5806	16/5806	0/5806

Candidate	hedge	corporation	privileged	compan	wealth(y)	border	washing-ton
Ben Carson	0/1958	0/1958	2/1958	3/1958	1/1958	25/1958	11/1958
Chris Christie	0/2008	1/2008	0/2008	0/2008	0/2008	4/2008	22/2008
Carly Fiorina	0/1287	1/1287	0/1287	3/1287	0/1287	4/1287	15/1287
Jeb Bush	2/2538	0/2538	0/2538	6/2538	2/2538	6/2538	50/2538
Jim Gilmore	0/1137	0/1137	0/1137	1/1137	2/1137	1/1137	3/1137
John Kasich	0/3003	1/3003	0/3003	2/3003	0/3003	3/3003	24/3003
Marco Rubio	0/2862	0/2862	0/2862	4/2862	0/2862	4/2862	10/2862
Mike Huckabee	1/1893	1/1893	0/1893	4/1893	0/1893	23/1893	58/1893
Rand Paul	0/2357	0/2357	0/2357	0/2357	0/2357	26/2357	34/2357
Rick Santorum	0/1092	1/1092	0/1092	2/1092	0/1092	5/1092	1/1092
Ted Cruz	0/2600	0/2600	0/2600	0/2600	0/2600	25/2600	42/2600
Donald Trump	2/5806	1/5806	0/5806	19/5806	5/5806	95/5806	44/5806

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