

From the Tea Party to the Anti-Trump Resistance and the Black Lives Matter Protests

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Lecture 7. September 28, 2020

TODAY: Start with a comparison of the Tea Party following 2008 election to the anti-Trump resistance following the 2016 election – using published studies and original data collection on grassroots organizations.

Conclude with the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests.

KEY QUESTIONS: Why and how have these major social protests and protest organizations emerged – and what effects do they have on the major political parties, elections, and governing agendas.

“We always voted, but being busy people, we just didn’t keep as involved as maybe we should have. And now we’re to the point where we’re really worried about our country. I feel like we came out of retirement. We do Tea Party stuff to take the country back to where we think it should be.”

-- Arizona husband (age 69) and wife (age 67) who organized a TEA PARTY in April 2009

“I had always been a ... voter [and]... donated to my party and some select candidates.... But... I had not been super involved.... Then, the presidential campaign in 2016 became more and more ridiculous, and frightening – and ... our very worst nightmare happened. My life changed overnight.... I was called to action.... I feel like a soldier in a war, trying to save this country, my children’s future, the climate! And the list keeps growing.”

-- Wisconsin woman (age 55) who organized a RESISTANCE group soon after 2016 election

Tea Party vs. Anti-Trump Resistance

**Comparing widespread upsurges at
parallel critical junctures following 2008 & 2016**

- **Emergence & scope**
- **Who leads and participates in local Tea Parties and volunteer resistance groups?**
- **Motives for involvement**
- **Health care reform battles as central**
- **Bottom-up versus top-down organizations**
- **Impact on parties, elections, governance.**

New Research

- Most analysts focus on national organizations – like Indivisible, Swing Left, MoveOn, Black Lives Matter, immigrant rights and pro-choice groups on the left, and like Tea Party Patriots and FreedomWorks on the right.
- Skocpol and research partners also investigate local volunteer groups and ask: *How widespread are Tea Parties and local resistance groups across the country and types of places?*
 - In 2011, Skocpol and Williamson did field visits and interviews with local Tea Partiers in VA, AZ, and New England – and collected Internet data on groups across the country.
 - From 2017-19, Skocpol and others did field observations and interviews documenting the activities of ten grassroots groups in eight pro-Trump counties in NC, OH, PA, and WI, and collected online questionnaire responses from those ten groups and from more than 80 PA groups in 55/67 counties.

Emergence of Tea Party protests and groups

Nov. 4, 2008: Barack Obama elected first African American president, with Democratic Congress.

Jan. 20, 2009: President Obama inaugurated with record numbers of DC celebrants.

Feb. 19, 2009: “Rant” by CNBC’s Rick Santelli called for a “Chicago Tea Party” protest. Went viral.

Feb. 20, 2009: 50 conservative leaders in conference call to promote “Tea Party” movement

Feb. 21, 2009: FreedomWorks issues Steinhauser’s “How to Organize Your Own ‘Tea Party Protest.’”

Feb. 27, 2009: Initial Tea Party rallies in dozens of cities across the country.

March 2009: Tea Party Patriots founded in Atlanta, by Jenny Beth Martin and Mark Meckler as an umbrella group for activists and local Tea Parties (ultimately claimed 2,200 groups).

April 16, 2009: Tax Day Tea Party protests with 400,000-800,000 participants in 542 counties.

Spring 2009ff: Local citizen activists form 1000-2500 regularly meeting Tea Parties.

Summer 2009: Protests against the health reform effort – many at August Congressional Town Halls.

September 12, 2009: **Tea Party** March on Washington involving tens to hundreds of thousands.

2010: National and local Tea Party groups endorse, fund, and support conservative GOP candidates.

November 2, 2010: Mid-term elections bring huge GOP majorities in the U.S. House, governorships, and state legislatures. Many Tea Party supporting candidates elected.



Rick Santelli: Tea Party Time

BY ERIC ETHERIDGE FEBRUARY 20, 2009 12:48 PM



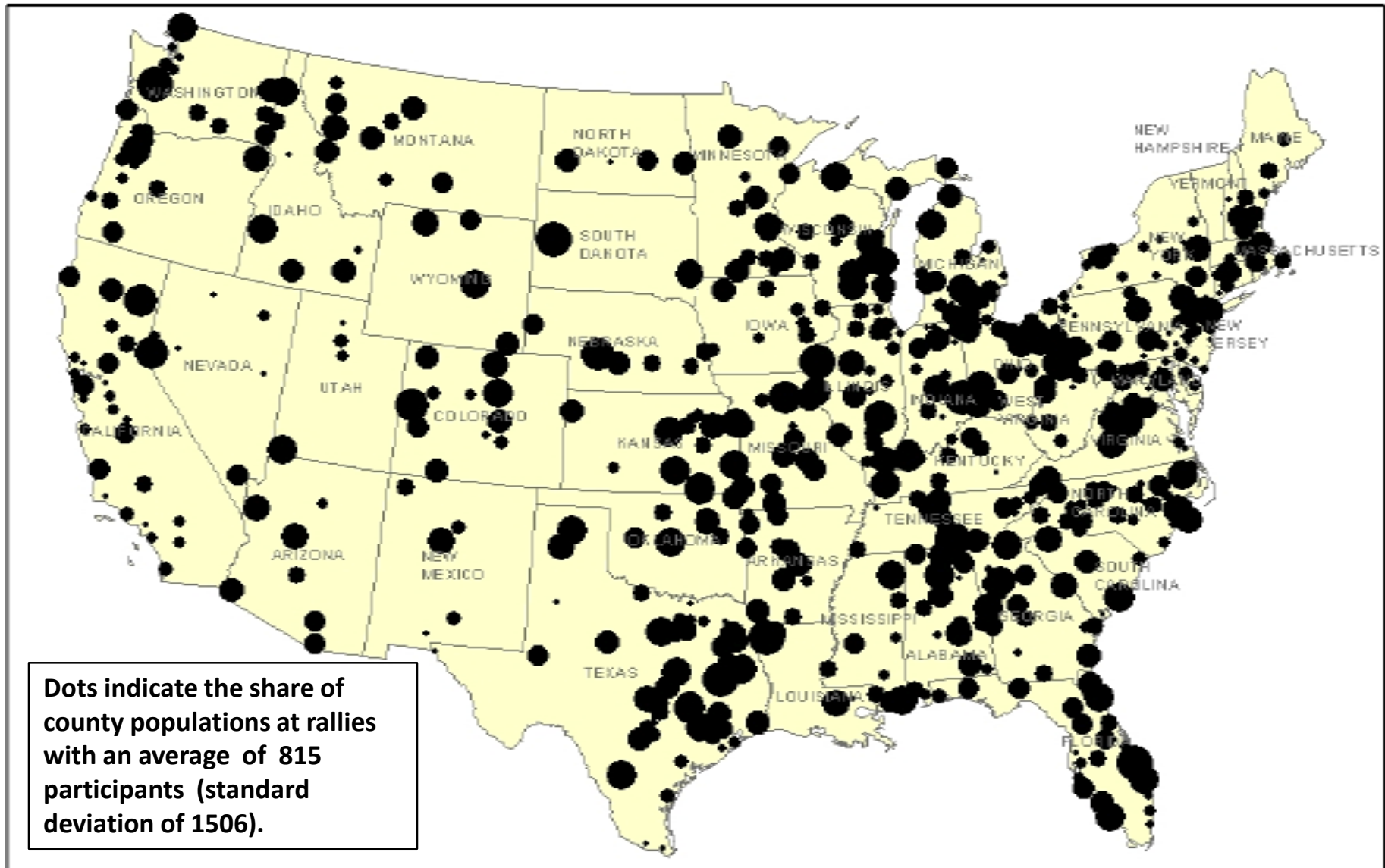
Yesterday Rick Santelli, who reports from the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade for CNBC, unleashed a rant against Obama's newly announced housing bailout plan, intended to help some homeowners refinance mortgages and avoid foreclosure. The clip was quickly linked to and embedded in Web sites everywhere, and provoked intense reaction that pretty much broke along partisan lines.

Nation-wide “Tea Party” protests and organizing kicked off a month into the Obama presidency, when CNBC financial commentator staged a soon-viral “rant” against mortgage policies and called for a Chicago Tea Party protest.

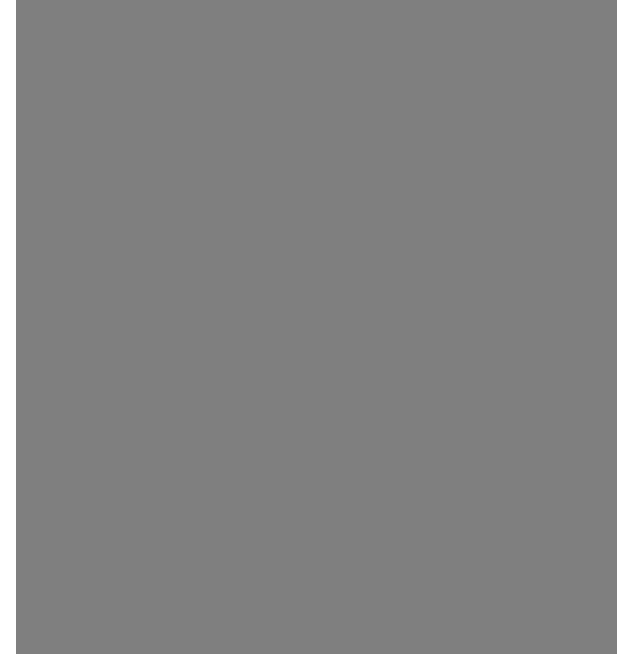
Thereafter, Fox News and right-wing talk radio did a lot of cheer-leading and information dissemination to help locals connect.

Tea Party Rallies on Tax Day, April 15, 2009

444,000 to 810,000 protesters nationwide in 542 counties



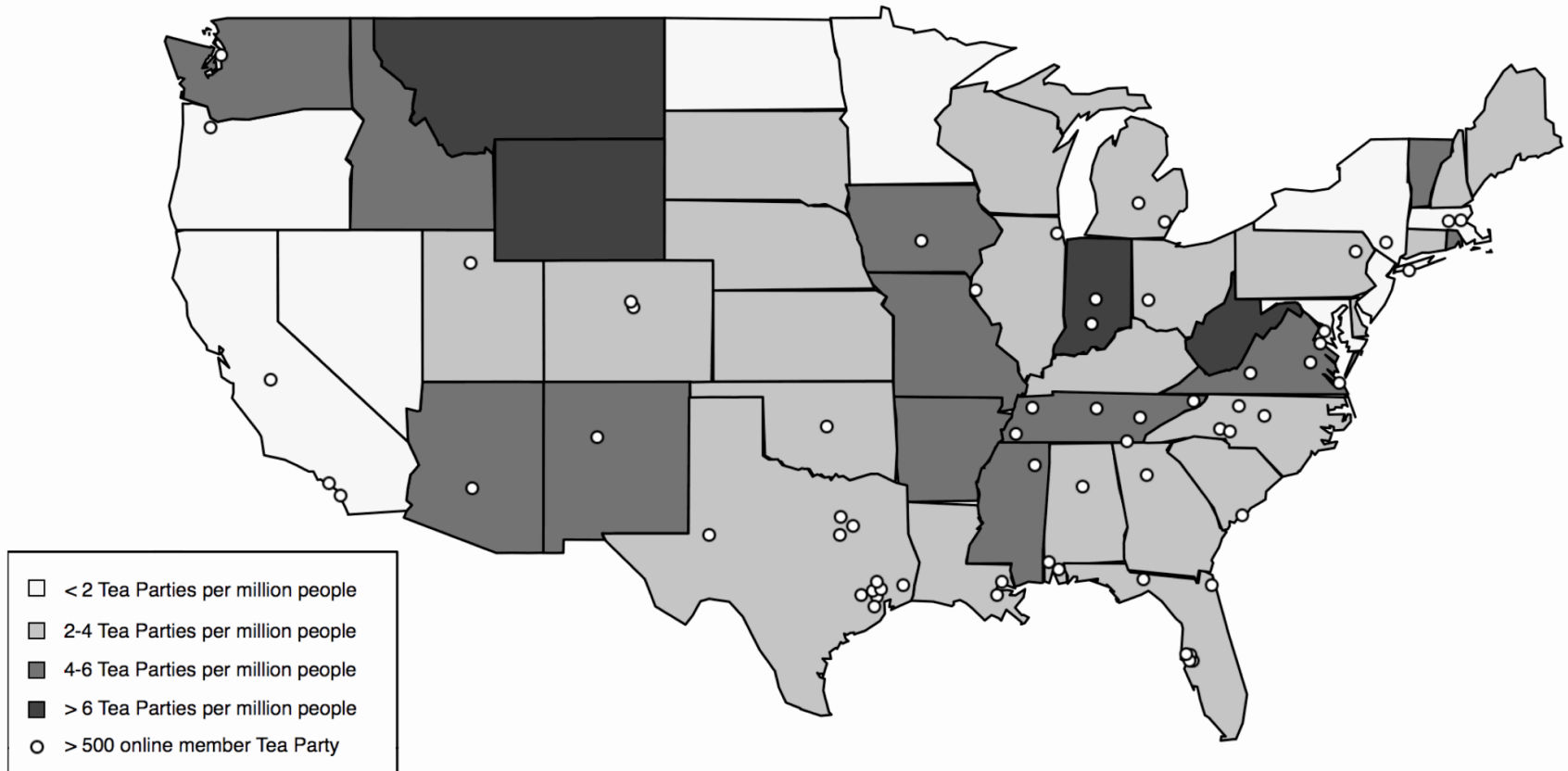
Source: Madestam et.al., "Do Protests Matter?" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (2013).



Sources: Wall Street Journal
(top) and Politico (side).

Up to 2000-2500 local Tea Parties were formed by late 2010. More than 900 were still visibly active by the spring of 2011.

*Number of Tea Party groups per million people in each state,
and location of largest Tea Party groups.*



*Source: Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (Oxford University Press, 2012).*

Emergence of anti-Trump protests and groups

Nov. 8, 2016: Donald Trump wins narrow Electoral College victory; GOP maintains control of Congress.

Before and after Nov 8: Clinton supporters connect via *Pantsuit Nation* to commiserate, then organize.

Mid-Nov. 2016: Action Together Network founded to support “leaders of activist groups.”

Dec. 14, 2016: Former Congressional staffers led by Ezra Levin and Leah Greenberg post on Google docs *Indivisible: A Practical Guide for Resisting the Trump Agenda*.

Jan, 20, 2017: Inauguration of President Donald Trump.

Jan. 21, 2017: Massive Women’s Marches in DC and 600 places against Trump and for women’s rights.

March 2017: Indivisible organized with a website and map and DC-headquarters with dozens of staff.

During 2017: Marches and rallies by anti-Trump groups, around 2% of Americans in c. 6,500 protests.

During 2017: At least 3000 local groups formed.

Nov.-Dec. 2017; March 2018: Female voters and resistance groups buoy Democrats in special Congressional elections in VA, AL, and southwestern PA.

January 21, 2018: Follow up Women’s Marches in hundreds of locations around US and world.

Throughout 2018: Record numbers of women and resistance-backed candidates.



November 2018: Elections result in big Democratic and female gains in U.S. House and states.

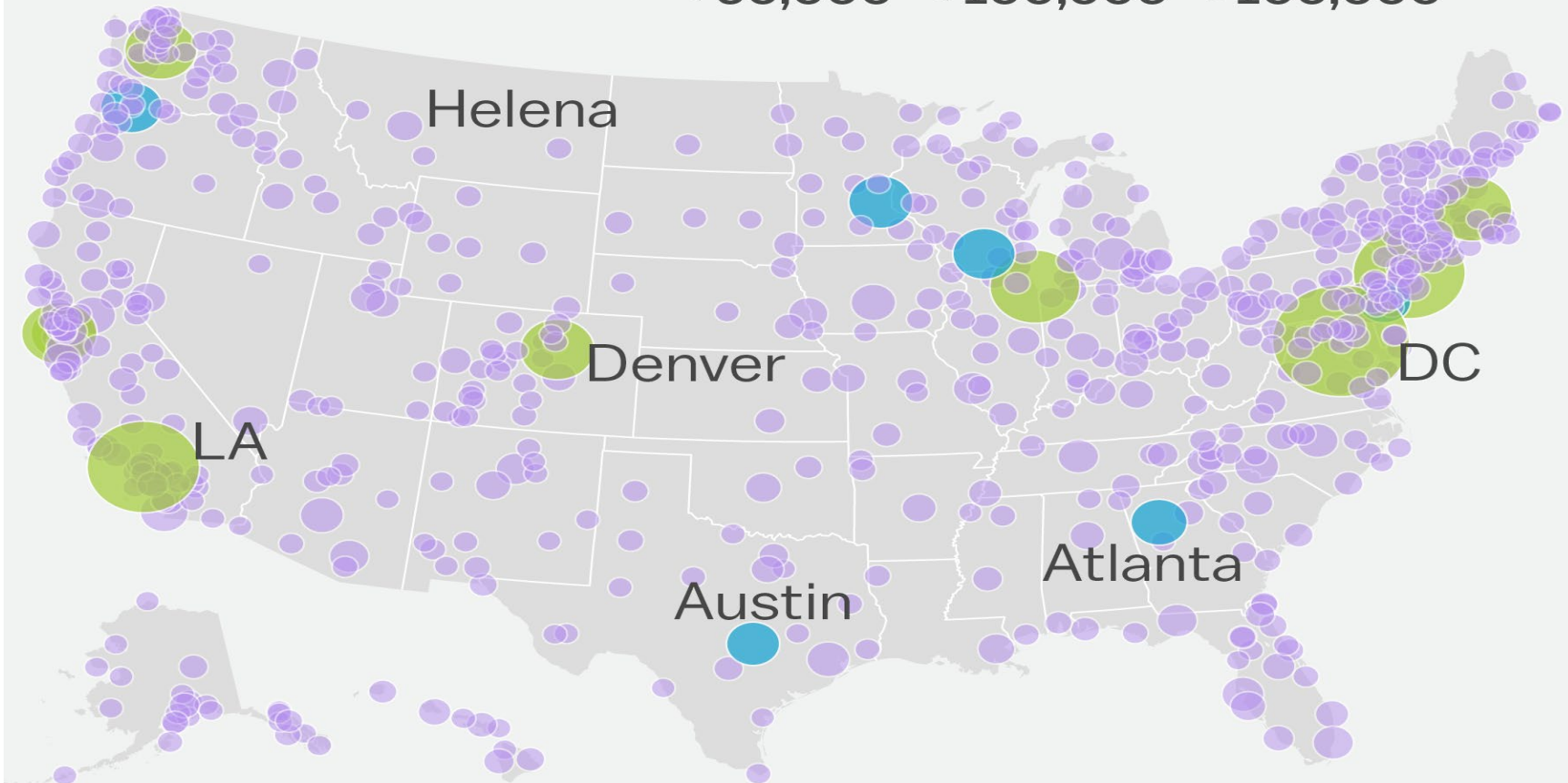
WOMEN'S MARCH IN WASHINGTON DC, JANUARY 21, 2017 (NBC News)



4.2M joined Women's Marches in more than 600 US cities

January 21, 2017

  
< 50,000 < 100,000 >100,000



Source: Data from Jeremy Pressman and
Erica Chenoweth

Vox

Former Congressional staffers lead by Ezra Levin and Leah Greenberg wrote “a practical guide” to help liberals adapt local Tea Party tactics – such as contacting district offices. The *Guide* was circulated online from late 2016.

By mid 2017 Indivisible organized as a staffed-up nonprofit to offer tactics and services. Its web map soon listed almost 6000 local entities spread across all U.S. Congressional districts.

Former congressional staffers
reveal best practices for
making Congress listen

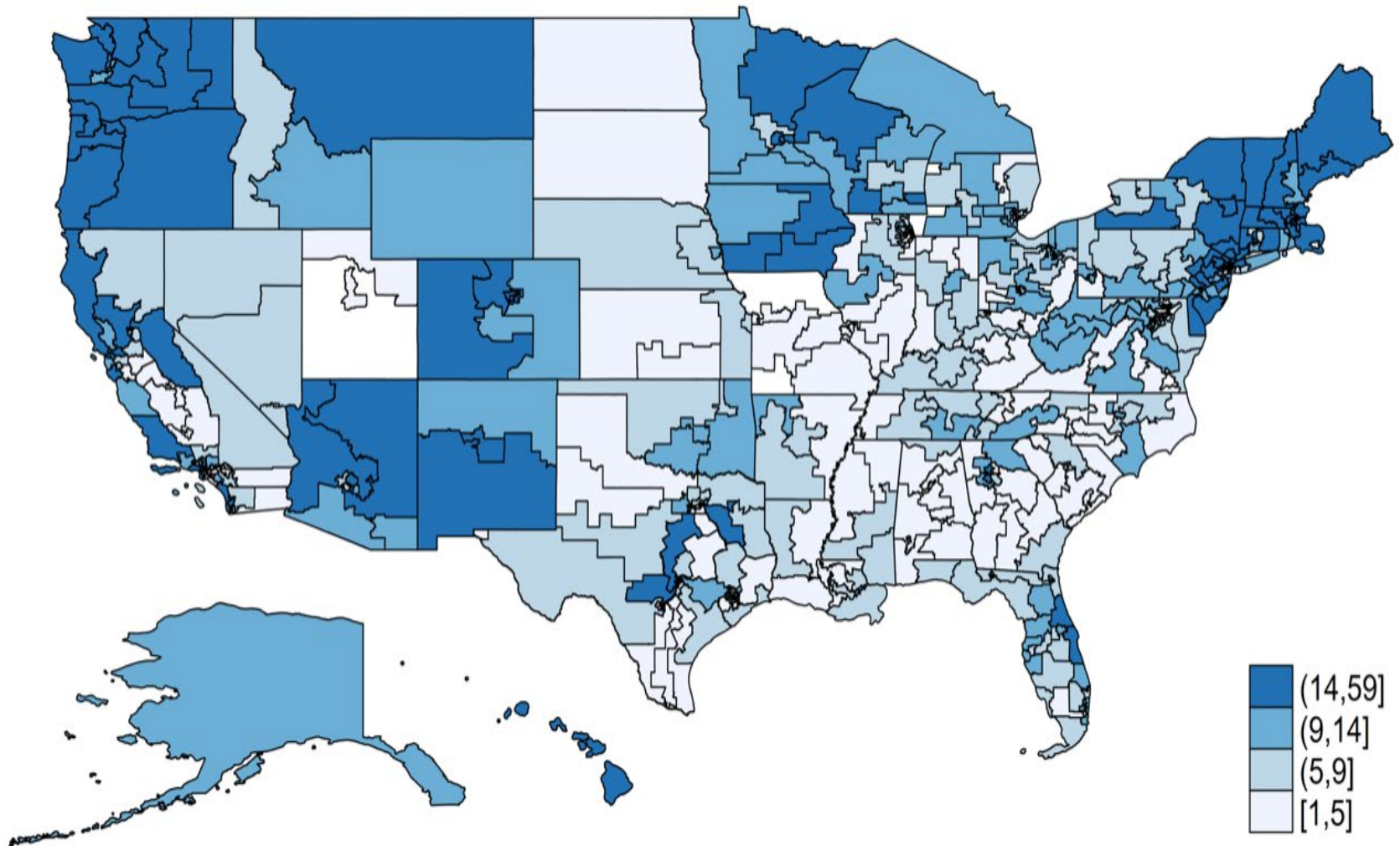
The book cover features a grayscale photograph of a classical statue's head, likely representing a historical figure, which serves as the background. A light-colored rectangular box with a thin orange border is centered on the cover, containing the title and subtitle. The title 'INDIVISIBLE:' is in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font. Below it, the subtitle 'A PRACTICAL GUIDE for RESISTING THE TRUMP AGENDA' is in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font, with the word 'for' in a red script font.

INDIVISIBLE:

A PRACTICAL GUIDE *for*
RESISTING THE TRUMP AGENDA

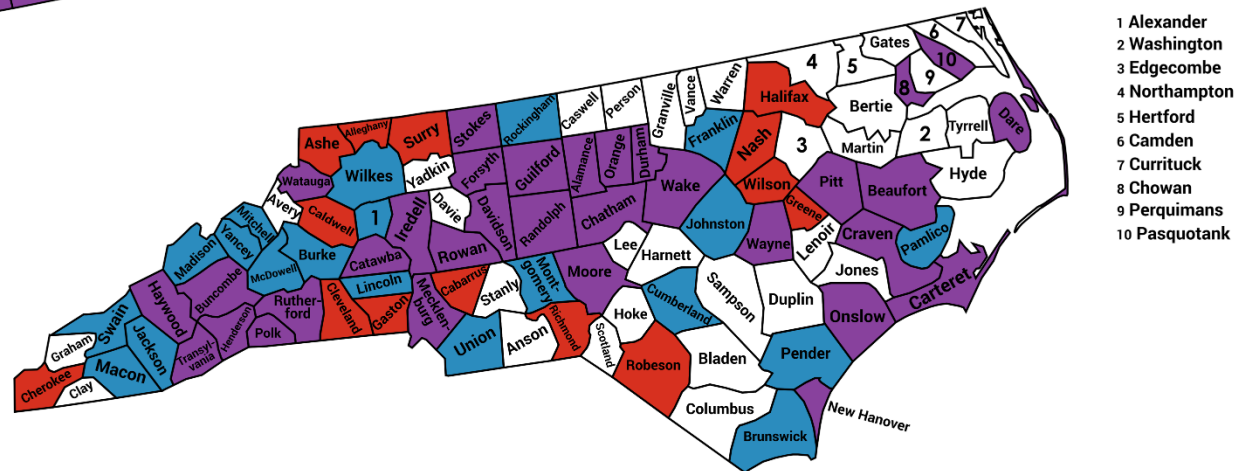
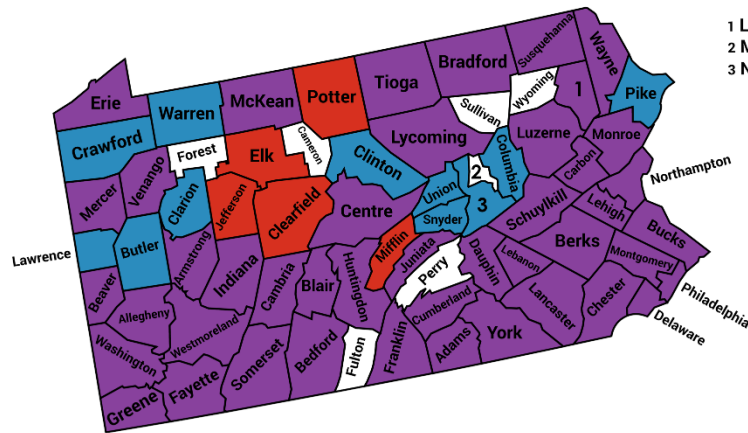
INDIVISIBLE MAP LISTINGS BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

About 4600 listings – about 2000 are probably actual groups



Map prepared by Gabriel Perez-Putnam

across places in the US political geography



Anti-Trump Resistance Organizations and Activities in Pro-Clinton and Pro-Trump Pennsylvania Counties

	Any resistance groups late 2016 to 2018	Indivisible Map listings August 2017	Women's Marches January 2017	Planned Parenthood health centers
Clinton 2016 counties (11)	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	7 (64%)	9 (82%)
Trump 2016 counties (56)	44 (79%)	36 (64%)	13 (23%)	7 (13%)

Sources: Resistance groups and Indivisible listings from authors' databases; marches with 30 or more participants from Pressman and Chenoweth; centers from Planned Parenthood website.

How Grassroots Resistance Groups Formed

- **Two to five leader-initiators (mostly women) launched groups, starting right after 2016 election into 2017. Founding meetings usually in local restaurants or libraries.**
- **Leaders and founding participants often met for the first time *after* they individually joined online groups or joined national resistance projects.** Many connected as Pantsuit Nation shifted from a celebratory national Facebook site to a local connector of women who met to share despair and organize resistance. Some would-be organizers also met as they planned for – or traveled by bus to – the 2017 Women’s Marches.
- **Most groups took tactical advice from the *Indivisible Guide* when disseminated as a Google doc starting December 2016.** Indivisible’s most important early impact probably happened through the Guide rather than through professional activities organized from the DC office established in 2017.
- **Well before the spring of 2017, these groups were all up and running, with leaders, plans, projects, Facebook pages, and often periodic newsletters.**
- ***Comparisons to Tea Parties:*** Formed after Tax Day 2009 in similar ways and places and do similar things. Meetings start with Pledge and perhaps a prayer.

Indivisible Citizens of Catawba Valley



Even the smallest, heavily conservative counties launched resistance groups.



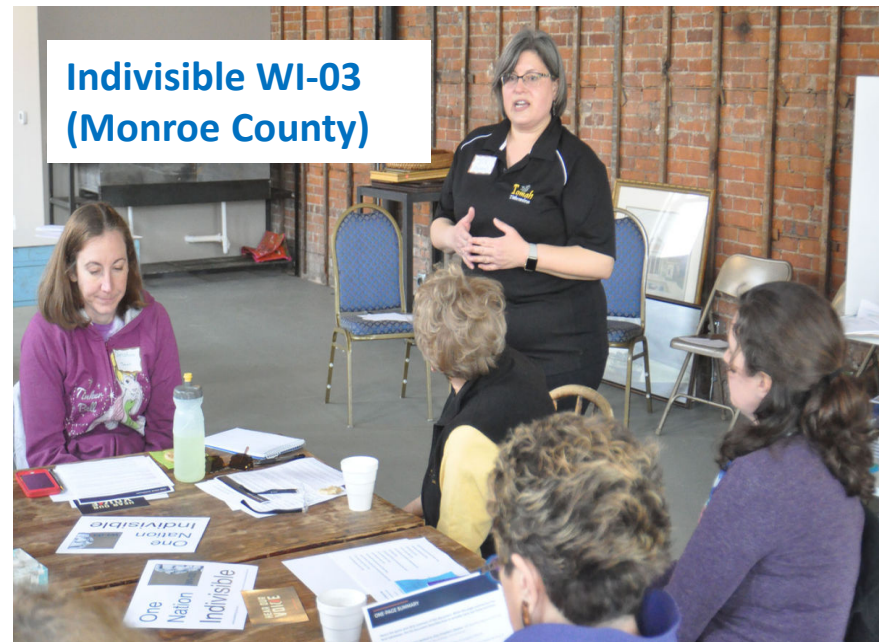
**INDIVISIBLE
WE RISE**

WEST CENTRAL PA

Indivisible OH-12 East (Licking County)



Indivisible WI-03
(Monroe County)



Who are the Grassroots Organizers?

- **Two-thirds to 90% of resistance group organizers are women, overwhelmingly white.** Some young mothers, but median age around 55. Male resisters are often the husbands or partners of female leaders or members.
- **Eighty to ninety percent are college educated,** including about half of those with advanced degrees. Typical occupations (active or pre-retirement) are teachers, professors, health care providers or service managers, business or non-profit managers.
- **Nine of ten grassroots resisters say they are Democrats or lean that way.** Others are “Independents” or disgruntled Republicans.
- ***Comparison to Tea Partiers:*** Both groups of grassroots activists are overwhelmingly white, older, middle class, and more highly educated than most Americans. But Tea Partiers are far right GOPers; 50%-60% are males; often work/worked in small business, construction, and military.

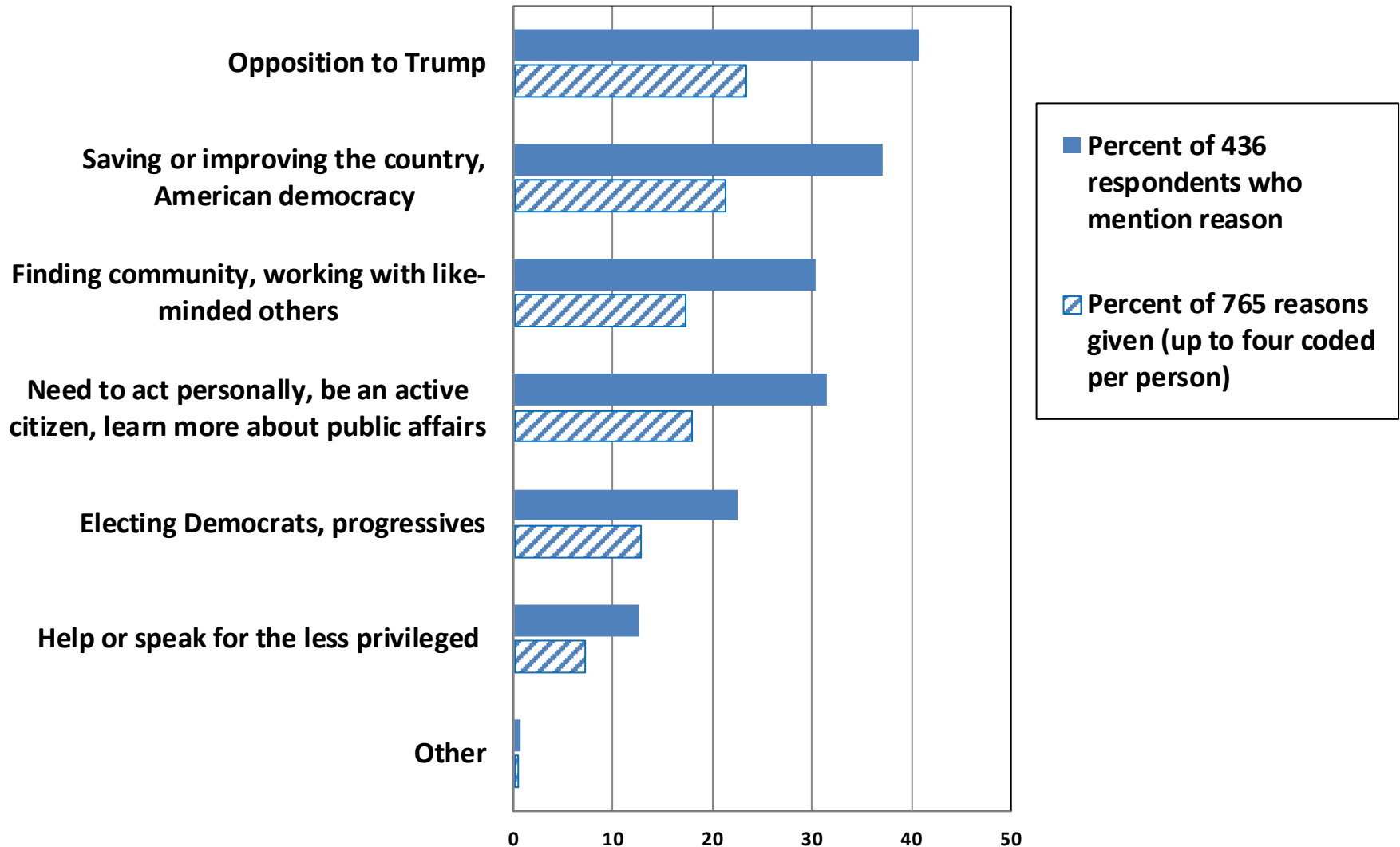
Upsurges born of fierce antipathy to Obama or Trump

Both the Tea Party and the resistance were sparked by fear and loathing of newly elected Presidents backed by co-partisans in Congress.

- To **Tea Partiers**, Barack Obama symbolized “un-American-ness” because of his race, immigrant father, urban and professorial background, beyond just his Democratic Party affiliation.
- To **resisters**, Donald Trump lacks character and qualifications, represents disrespect and hatred toward women, minorities, and immigrants – and a selfish disregard for the public good.

Figure 1. Reasons for Participation in Grassroots Resistance Groups

765 reasons offered by 436 respondents to 2017 questionnaires



Respondent	Response when asked: Why did you decide to get involved? What do you hope to achieve?
PA woman, age 62	"After the election, I was devastated by the results. I decided I wasn't going to sit back and do nothing. I wanted to take my country back. As a result, I attended the Women's March and I weekly make phone calls to senators and congressmen. I hope to become more active in being a true citizen of the U.S."
WI woman, age 59	"Upset over the election – be with like-minded people. Stop some of the GOP agenda."
OH woman, age 61	"Something needed to be done to save our democracy."
OH man, age 52	"Trump. Trump out."
OH woman, age 39	"I felt helpless in the wake of the election. In the community I live, especially, I hoped to share thoughts with like-minded people – to feel a local connection. I hope the conversation continues and our group can bring about positive change locally, statewide and be a part of a bigger picture change in the country."
NC woman, age 46	"I cannot sit on the sidelines while others try to tear down our country. I hope to help educate citizens [in] our red county that are frustrated to contact their representatives. I want to support local grassroots candidates to get elected to office."
WI woman, age 74	"Very concerned about the future of our country and planet after the election of a man who is a lot of bluster but no substance."
WI woman, age 60	"I decided to get involved because I can't just sit by and watch what is happening to our rights in this country without doing anything. I hope to help progressives get elected in future elections. I hope to bring attention to what the proposed changes in healthcare mean to the average American, and I hope to show future generations what is important and how to stand up for what is right, just, moral, and ethical."
NC woman, age 62	"I want a positive inclusive country."
NC woman, age 30	"I felt like my voice was not being heard. My family's interests were not going to be protected. I felt like my new 'president' was a dangerous lawbreaker. I felt like it was my responsibility to help the disenfranchised citizens who feel like I do."
OH woman, age 55	"I hope to be part of helping stop the madness that is taking over this country. Lying and hatred are becoming acceptable. Individual rights are being assaulted at every turn. I desperately want Congress to work together and stop the incessant partisanship that is paving the way for Trump to dismantle everything good that this country stands for."
OH woman, age 49	"To know other people shared my concerns and learn new ways that I can contribute my efforts, also to stay on top of all the information. To make a difference, strength in numbers."

What local groups do

- **Tea Party** groups usually met/meet monthly for programs featuring speakers provided by outside advocacy groups. Activities include lobbying local government, state legislature, Congress; hearing from candidates; organizing to attend protests. Tea Party meetings start with the Pledge of Allegiance and sometimes a prayer.
- **Resistance groups** met frequently in early 2017, now less often; usually have task forces and issue sub-committees. Meetings are focused on organizing, some discussion, occasionally speakers. Activities include contacting legislative offices, hearing from candidates, organizing for voting and anti-gerrymandering campaigns, attending protests.
- **Resistance groups** seem more open to federating with others and co-sponsoring with unions, NAACP, churches, Democratic Party, etc.

Long-running, multilevel battles over the 2010 Health Reform law have been central for both movements



Jonathan Ernst/Reuters.



Buffalo News.

Eight County resistance groups fought to save health reform – with die-ins; public forums and protests; calls, letters, & delegations to Congressional offices.



Suit Up Wilmington sends a valentine



Action Together Stark visits Rep. Renacci's office

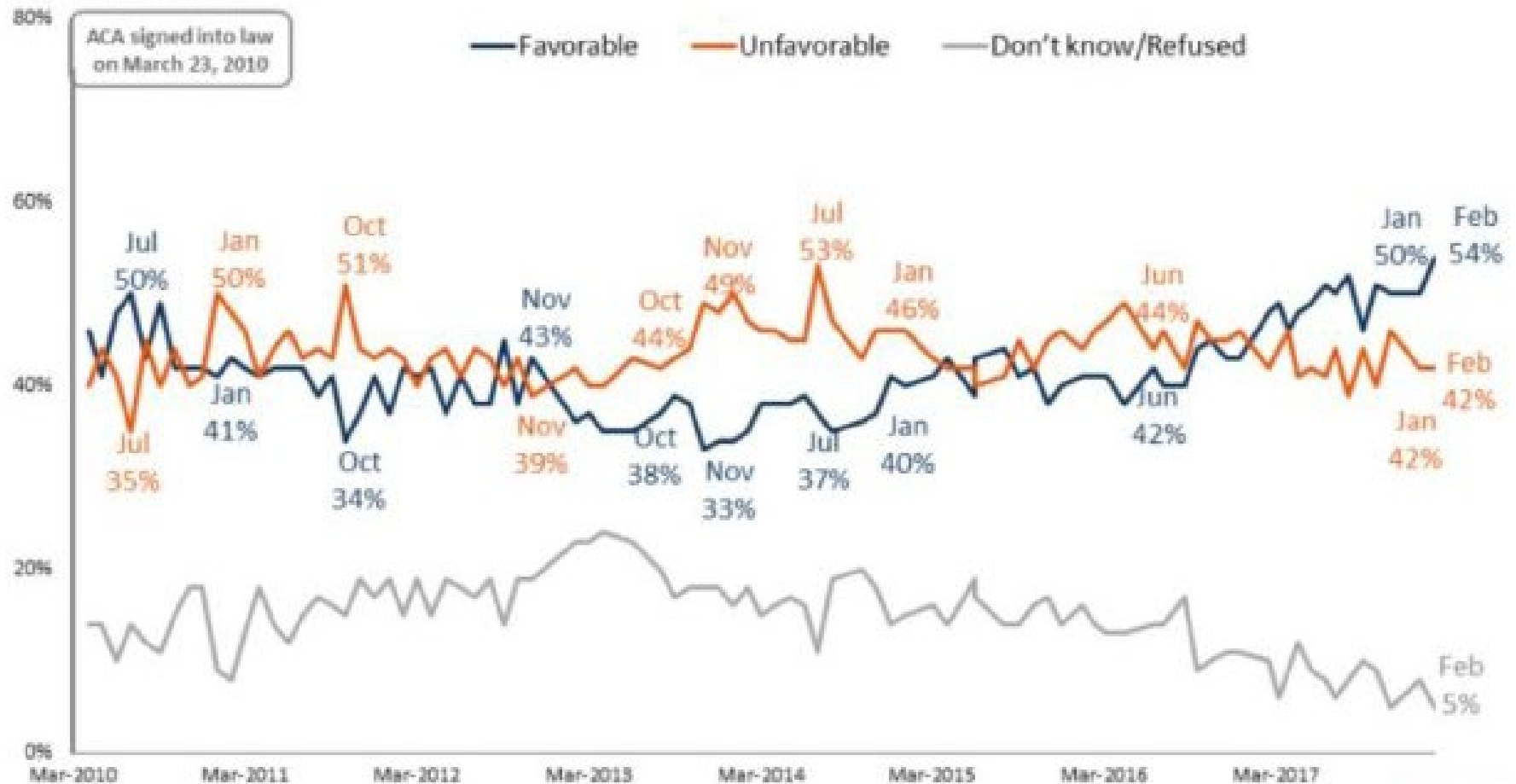


Catawba Indivisibles use pro-life appeals



More of the Public Hold a Favorable View of the ACA

As you may know a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010, known commonly as the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it?



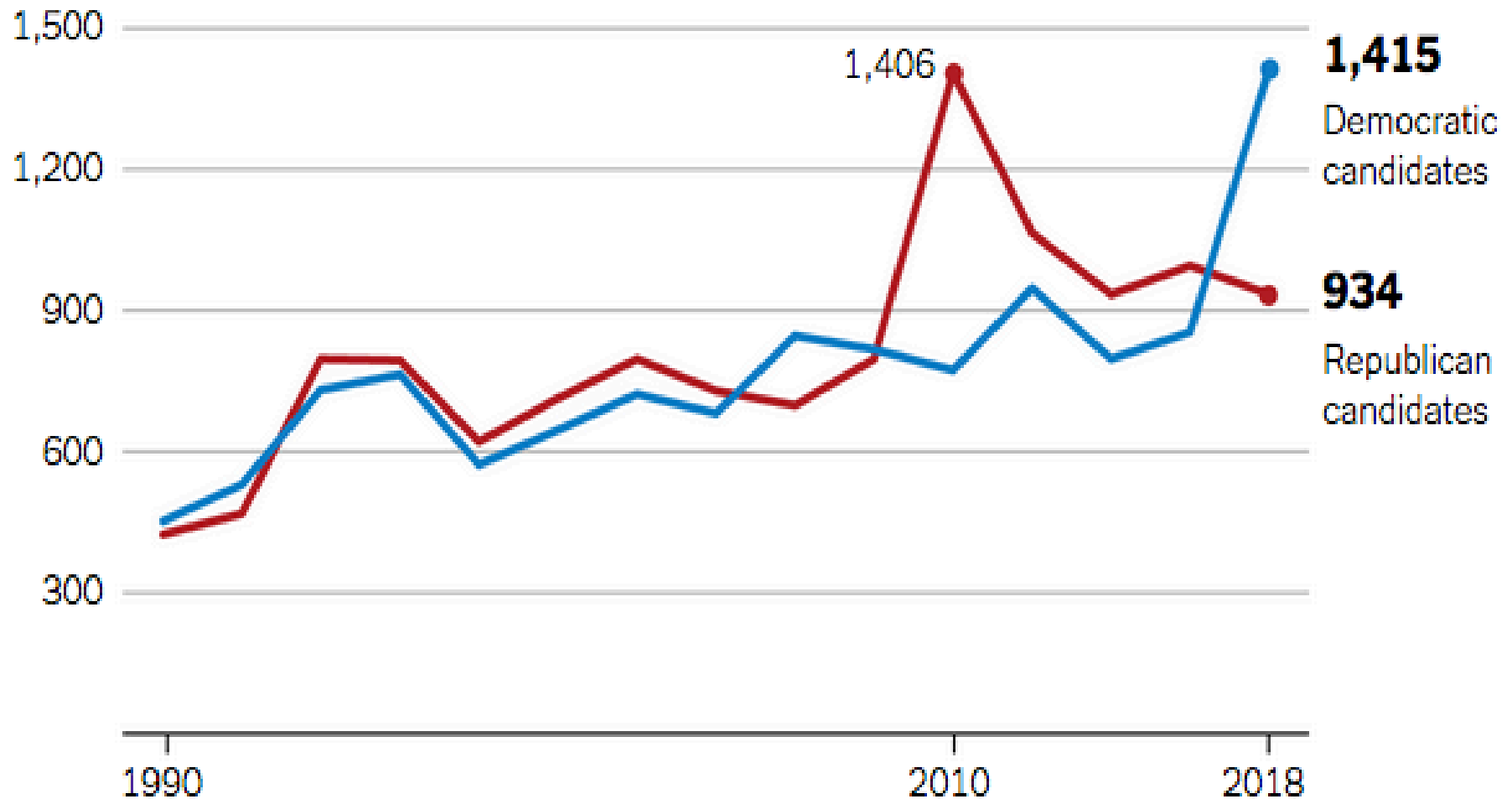
SOURCE: Kaiser Family Foundation Health Tracking Polls

Cooperation and tension between national & local groups

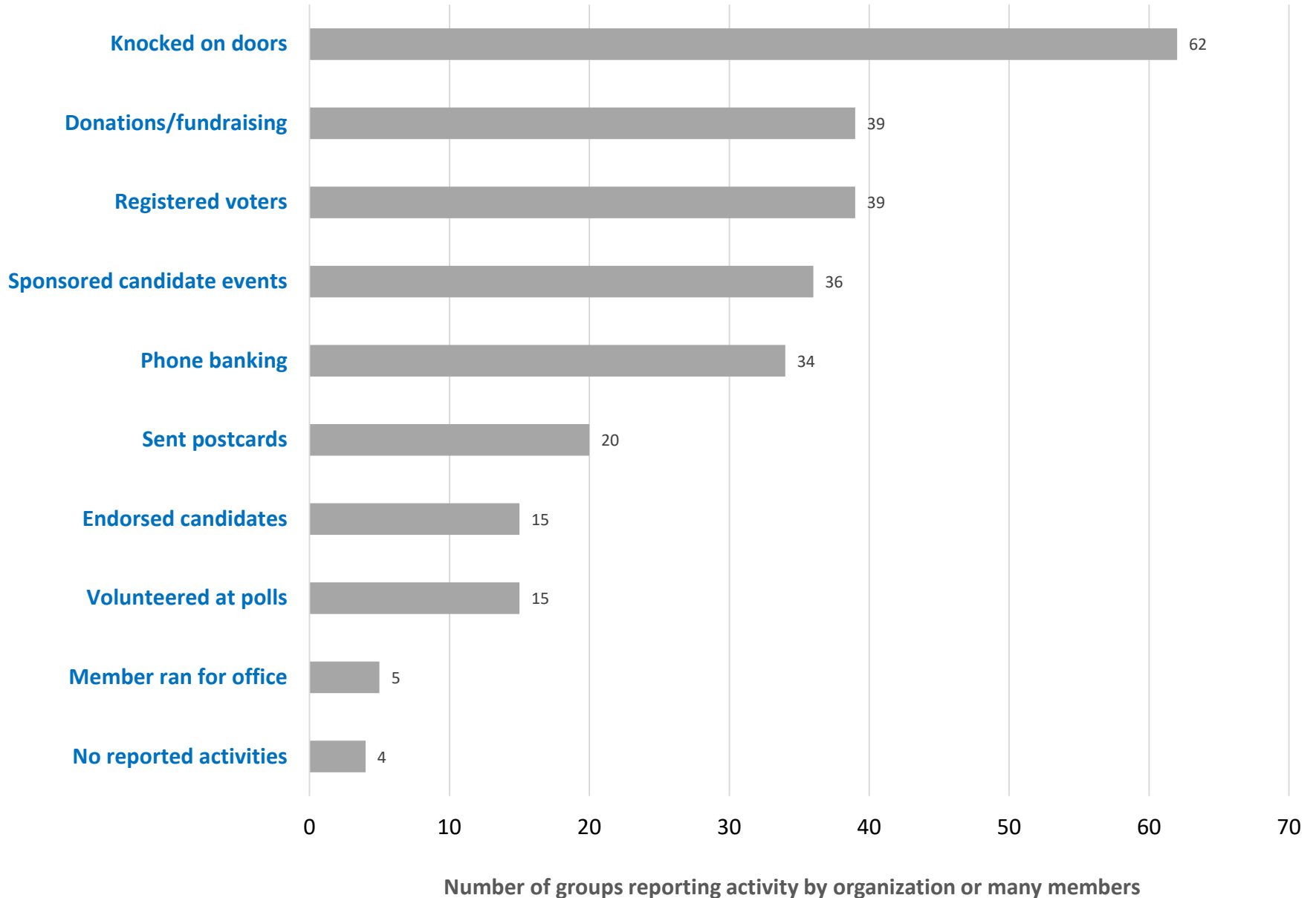
- Both the **Tea Party** and the **anti-Trump resistance** are *loosely interconnected fields of organizations* – including local volunteer groups, national advocacy, funding, and umbrella organizations.
- Local groups are autonomous, and national organizations often exaggerate their ability to direct and speak for the entire endeavor.
- Agenda clashes:
 - **Tea Party Patriots** and **FreedomWorks** claimed that the movement mainly wanted federal budget cuts, including “entitlement reform” – but **local Tea Partiers** cared more about crackdowns on immigrants, crime, and “welfare” spending.
 - **National resistance organizations like Indivisible and MoveOn and progressive issue advocacy groups** have pushed Democrats to shut down government over DACA and pursue impeachment, but many **local groups** do not fully support these priorities. Differences can also occur over primary election endorsements.

Both the **Tea Party** and the **Grassroots Resistance** spurred surges in midterm candidacies

House Candidates by Party

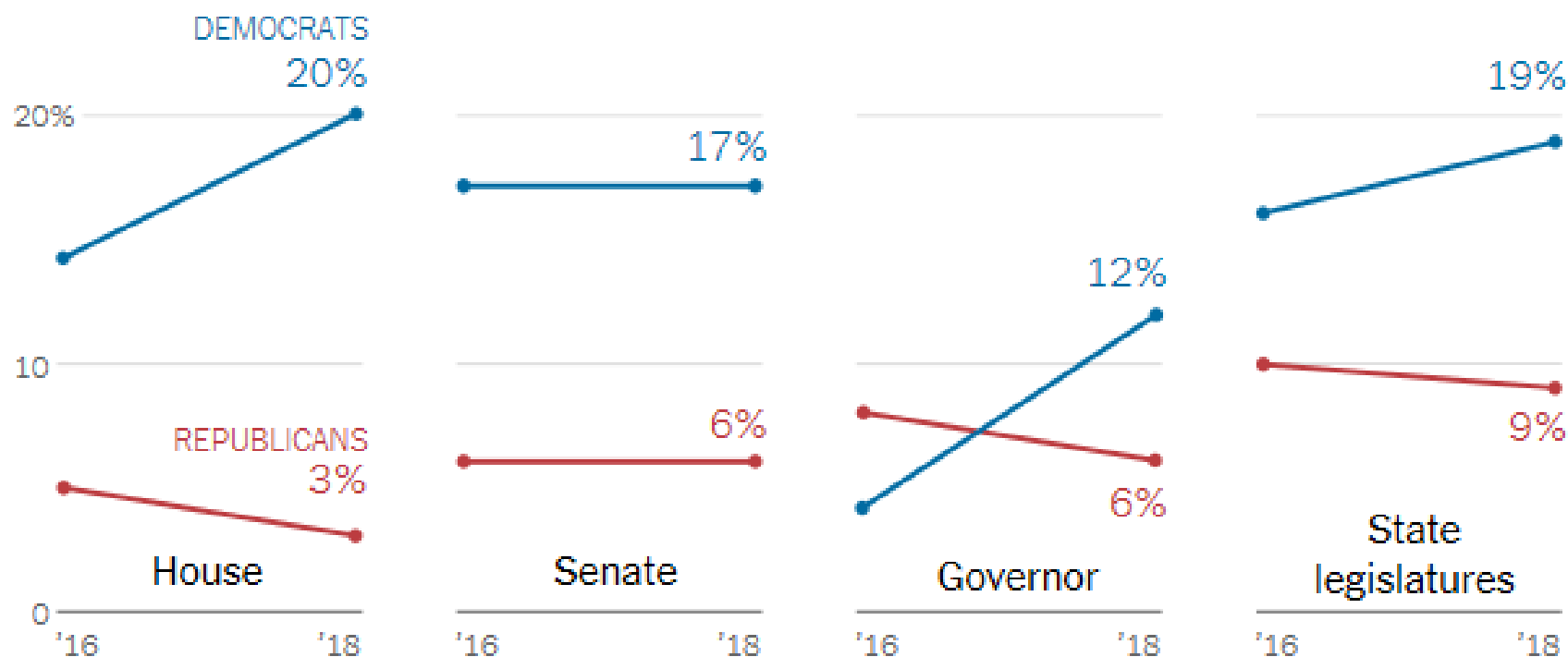


Activities in 2018 Elections Reported by 82 Grassroots Resistance Groups in 49 Pennsylvania Counties



Women Winners in Congress, Governorships, & State Legislatures

The percentage of seats held by women in 2016 vs. 2018



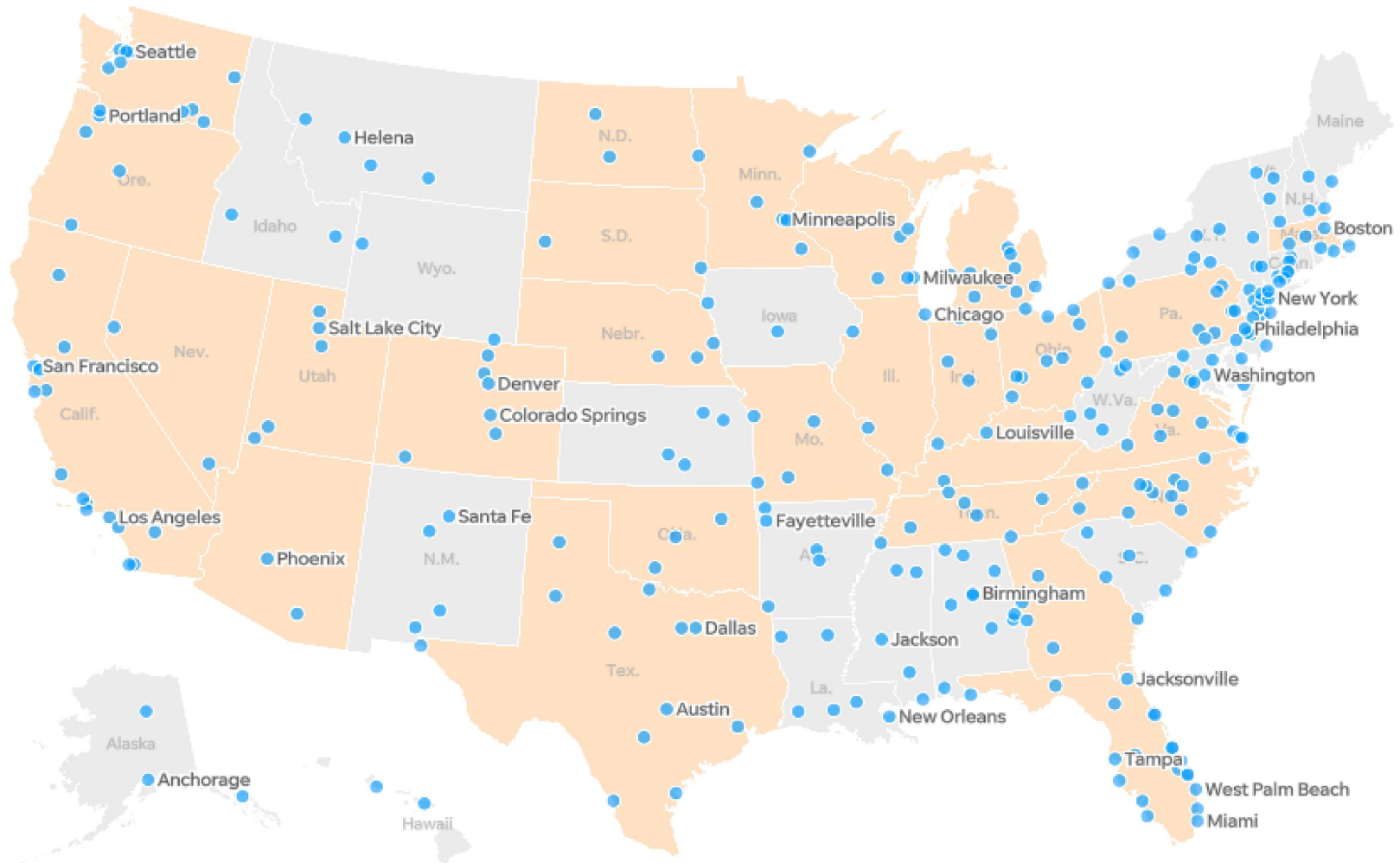
Sources: Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University; National Conference of State Legislatures | Notes: Data are for election results as of Nov. 14, compared with data after the 2016 elections. A governor's race and seven House races with female candidates have not yet been called. A Senate race with a female candidate has advanced to a runoff, but it has yet to be held. | By The New York Times

Impact on party and governing agendas?

- **GOP revamped after 2008 – toward ethno-nationalism by grassroots **Tea Party**, and toward anti-government ultra-free-market economics by the **Koch network**.**
- **Resistance** overall has not fostered as much extreme movement in the Democratic Party:
 - **Local groups have activated older college-educated White women, expanding Democratic coalitions and voter turnout.**
 - **Local resisters often support viable moderate candidates, do simply push the party to the left overall.**
 - **National advocates may push for noncompromising stands by Congressional Democrats, but most local groups do not.**
 - **Resisters are running for local party posts in many areas and co-exist more or less uneasily with long-standing participants.**

Before I turn to the recent Black Lives Matter protests, we can take some time for questions or comments about the Tea Party and the overall anti-Trump resistance.

Black Lives Matter Protests after George Floyd Death, Summer 2020

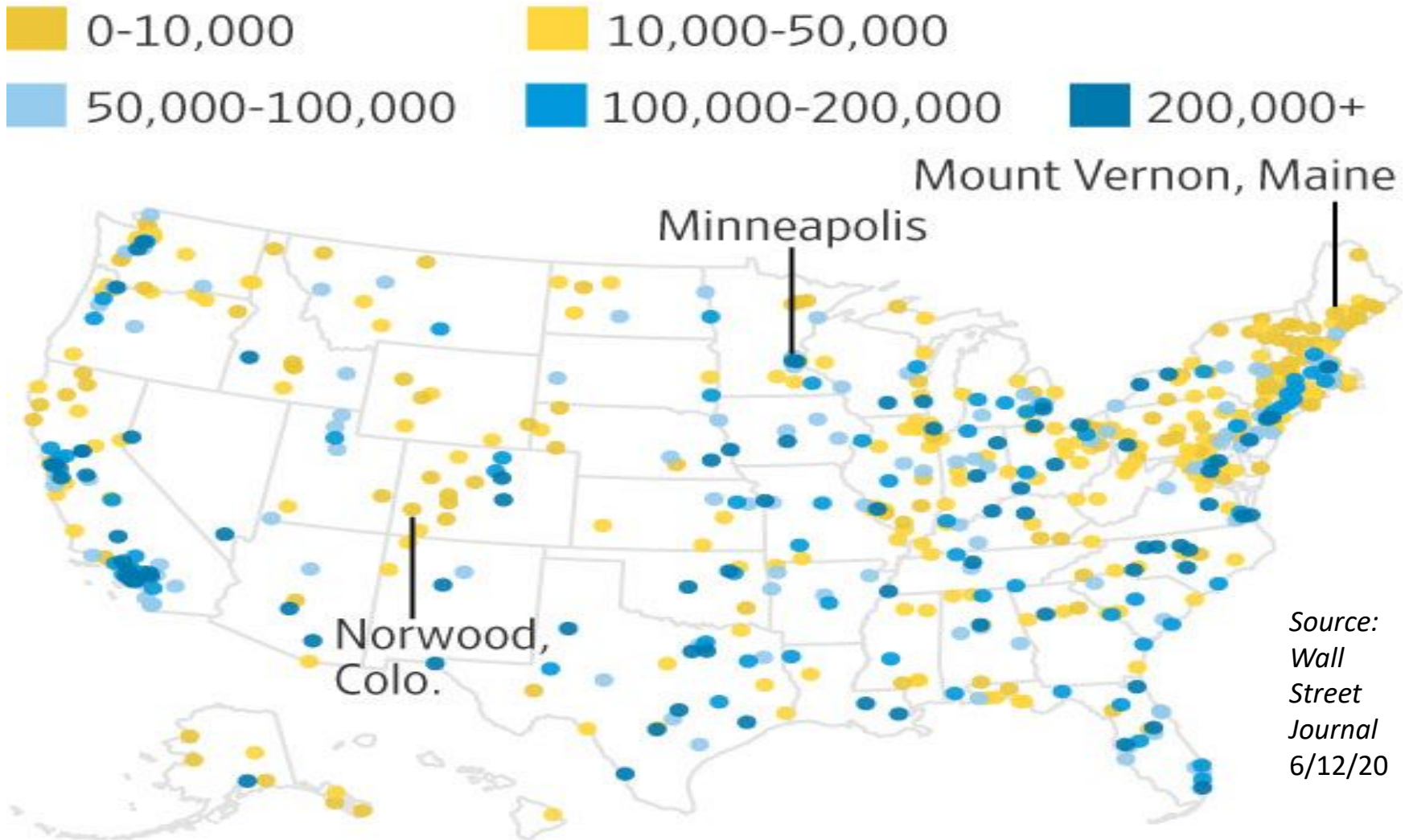


Yellow indicates states where
National Guard was called up.

Source: *USA Today*, June 29, 2020.

Protests in more than 600 places in two weeks following George Floyd killing – including small places with few African Americans

Population size of protest locations



WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN MAJOR PROTESTS DURING THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY?								
<i>Major Resistance Protests in Washington DC</i>	Median adult age	Female	BA or Graduate degree	White	Black	Latinx	Asian	Multi/ other
WOMEN'S MARCH (1/21/17, est 750k)	43	85%	87%	77%	7%	4%	4%	8%
MARCH FOR SCIENCE (4/22/17, est 100k)	41	54%	82%	80%	1%	4%	5%	10%
PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH (4/29/17, est 200k)	42	57%	77%	77%	3%	6%	6%	6%
MARCH FOR RACIAL JUSTICE (9/30/17, est 10k)	38	66%	70%	62%	18%	7%	6%	7%
WOMEN'S MARCH (/20/18, est 75k)	43	78%	75%	77%	9%	3%	7%	5%
MARCH FOR OUR LIVES (3/24/18, est 800k)	49	70%	72%	78%	8%	5%	3%	6%
FAMILIES BELONG TOGETHER (8/31/18, est 32k)	45	71%	84%	70%	7%	9%	5%	8%
<i>Racial Justice Protests in DC, NYC, and LA</i>								
GEORGE FLOYD PROTESTS (6/6-7/20)	26	53%	82%	65%	15%	3%	11%	5%
JUNETEENTH (6/19/20)	30	60%	73%	46%	37%	4%	6%	8%
MARCH on DC (8/28/20)	31	56%	66%	36%	47%	6%	1%	8%

Data from Dana R. Fisher, University of Maryland

Emergence and 2020 impact of Black Lives Matter

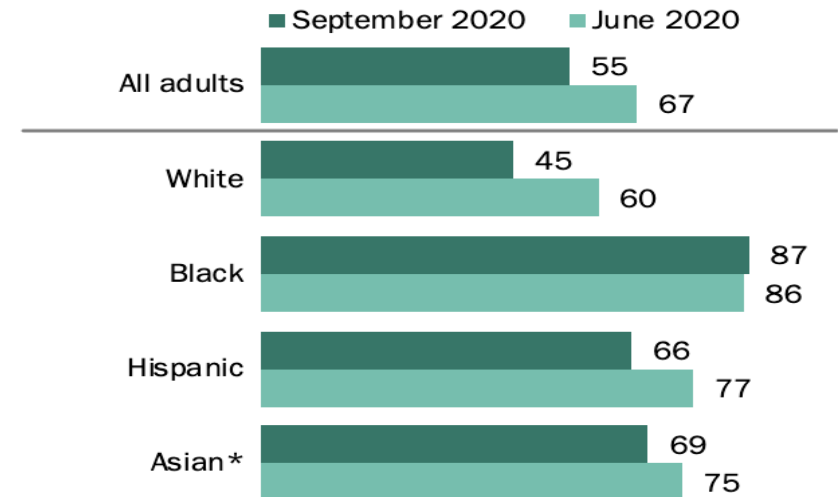
- July 2013:** Following the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin killing, a Facebook post by Alicia Garza was amended into the Black Lives Matter hashtag, encapsulating a new kind of Civil Rights movement. A social media platform promoted BLM on Facebook and Twitter.
- Late 2014:** Organized movement grew during responses to the Ferguson, Missouri, police killing of Michael Brown. People from various cities organized group rides to Ferguson, and afterwards formed interconnected BLM chapters – 30 U.S. chapters plus one in Toronto by early 2016. Chapters choose their own tactics, but are supposed to adhere to a common statement of principles.
- 2015-16:** BLM activists pursue decentralized protests and engage Democratic Party presidential contenders. Republican contenders Ted Cruz and Donald Trump, stoke backlash and aligned with Fraternal Order of Police.
- Aug 2015:** BLM activists help launch “Campaign Zero” with ten proposals to reduce police violence and reform criminal justice.
- Feb 2016:** Some BLM organizers invited to the White House to meet with President Barack Obama and other African American leaders; some go, others refuse, signaling different approaches to change.
- 2017-on:** President Trump repeatedly denounces BLM and champions police and “law and order.” BLM and other activists repeatedly mobilize to protest police and criminal justice failings in killings of unarmed Blacks.
- June 2020:** Video of police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis ignites massive nationwide protests by youthful multiracial marchers proclaiming “Black Lives Matter” banner, shifting public opinion toward calls for systematic reforms.
- Late 2020:** Some activists push “Defund the Police,” while others plus most elected officials and candidates call for reforms to address “systemic racism.” Legislation stalls in Congress, and as protests with some violence persist, White public opinion becomes less favorable to BLM.

At the height of the post George Floyd murder protests, the U.S. public supported Black Lives Matter by a large margin, including more than a third of Republicans and GOP leaners.

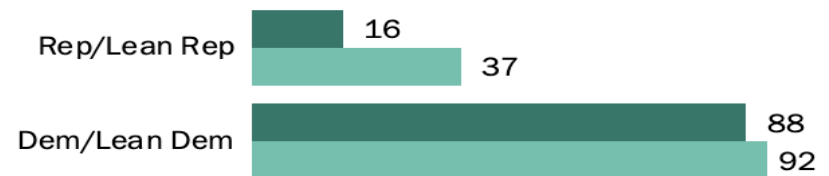
But White and GOP support declined as protests continued, with incidents of violence highlighted in the media.

Support for Black Lives Matter movement down since June

% saying they strongly or somewhat support the Black Lives Matter movement



Among White adults



*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

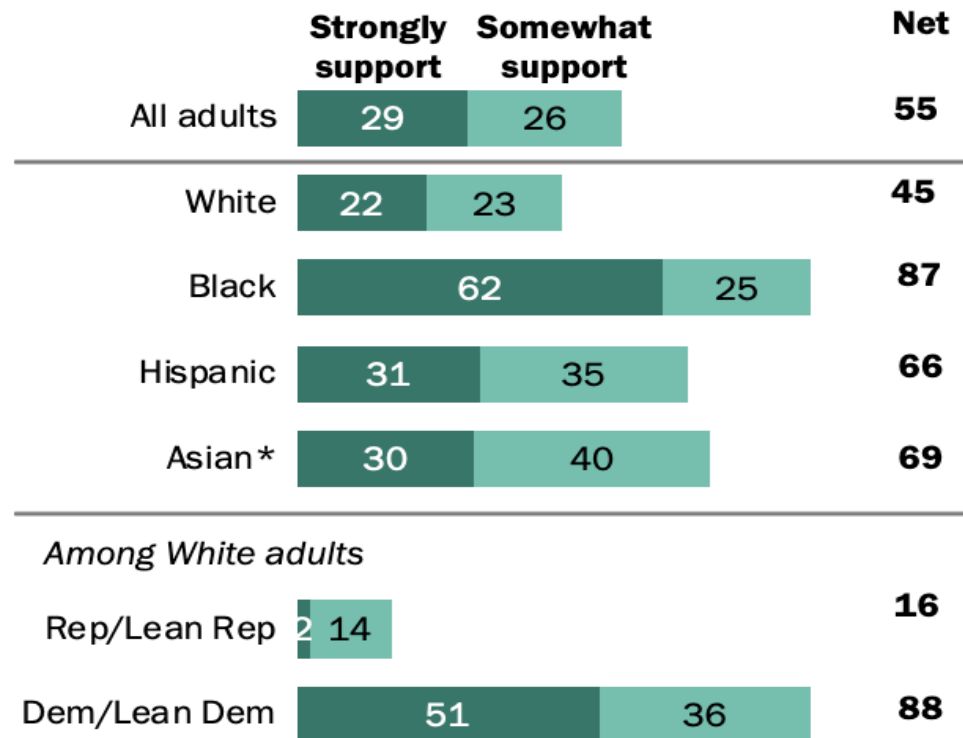
Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Surveys of U.S. adults conducted June 4-10, 2020, and Sept. 8-13, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Black adults most likely to express strong support for Black Lives Matter

% saying they ____ the Black Lives Matter movement



*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

Note: Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 8-13, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A controversial radical slogan started in Minneapolis and spread among progressives, but not among most Democratic candidates or elected officials.



What Next?

- **Tea Party/Trump Republicans will not go away no matter what happens in 2020 elections – have gained more sway through GOPers in Congress and states.**
- **Will resistance participants remain active? Or pull back? Or remake roots of Democratic Party?**
- **How will volunteer citizen activists relate to Democrats they helped to elect? To the Biden administration, if it takes office in 2021?**
- **How will the tensions and challenges of movements for racial equity in criminal justice and beyond play out – especially when local solutions have to be worked out within a polarized national political and media environment?**