

# Nostalgia in Politics\*

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July 7, 2023

This article has been accepted for publication in *Public Opinion Quarterly* published by Oxford University Press.

## Abstract

Throughout the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump promised to voters that, if elected, he would “make America great again.” Trump’s explicitly nostalgic appeal was rooted in the collective perception, shared by at least some voters, that life was better (and simpler) in the past. Nostalgic appeals have a long history in American politics. Trump’s “Make America Great Again” (MAGA) slogan was co-opted from Reagan’s “let’s make America great again.” Despite their long history, we suspect that, as nostalgic appeals have become central to the Republican Party’s messaging, nostalgic voters have sorted into the Republican Party. Recently, scholars have attempted to better understand the political consequences of nostalgia on voting for populist parties generally and specifically Donald Trump. We make three contributions to the literature. First, using an open ended prompt, we consider more carefully what people mean when they say they long for the “good old days.” Second, we use these open ended responses to inform our measurement of nostalgia and whether it reflects a longing for the past or pessimism about the future. In doing so, we show the importance of religiosity and media consumption (i.e., Fox News) as predictors of individual-level nostalgia. Third, we connect our measure of nostalgia to vote choice during the 2022 midterm election—demonstrating the effects are broader than support for Donald Trump. Overall, we contend if one is to fully understand contemporary politics, one needs to know how nostalgia influences political attitudes and behaviors.

*Keywords:* nostalgia; nostalgic politics; vote choice

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\*This is the unrefereed version of the accepted manuscript.

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Once upon a time, nostalgia was identified as a psychiatric disorder which often manifested in physical symptoms. According to a 1941 review of the literature, incidence of nostalgia—used interchangeably with homesickness—differed by race, sex, education, nationality, and temperament (McCann 1941). Over time, nostalgia has been redefined from a malady that required treatment to a vague, generalized longing to return to a previous time or place (Batcho 2013). Sociologist Bryan Turner (1987) argues nostalgia has four major components: (1) a sense of historical decline (Make America Great Again); (2) a loss of moral certainty (secularization of society); (3) a loss of personal freedom and autonomy (due to impersonal bureaucracy and regulation); and (4) a loss of simplicity (a longing for a simpler time and better days). Regardless of definition, nostalgia has long been recognized as personally consequential, but was it also socially and politically consequential?

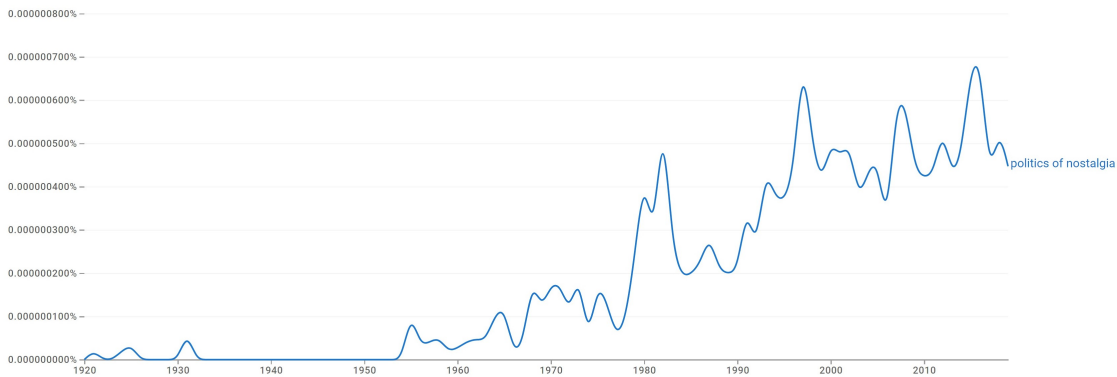


Figure 1: The "Politics of Nostalgia" in Books, 1920-2019

Until recently, the field of political science has largely ignored nostalgia and its effect on political behavior; however, the global rise of populist politicians making nostalgic appeals to voters (Smeeke, Wildschut and Sedikides 2021; Kenny 2018; Mols and Jetten 2014; Betz and Johnson 2004) has led to a boom in nostalgia research. Generally, this research finds that nostalgia is tied to support for populist and radical right parties (Elçi 2021; Lammers and Baldwin 2020; Gest, Reny and Mayer 2018; Steenvoorden and Hartevelde 2018). Related research has also found nostalgia for authoritarianism threat-

ens and potentially undermines the stability of emerging democracies (Mendelson and Gerber 2005; Chang, Chu and Park 2007; Kim-Leffingwell N.d.; Tucker and Tucker 2006).

A nostalgic individual is dissatisfied with the present in relation to the past. Nostalgia in politics is, by definition, an anti-progressive response—an attempt to return to a previous culture (Betz and Johnson 2004). Thus, membership in at least one dominant group is a necessary condition for nostalgia, as members of subordinate groups should not long for the past. Additionally, nostalgics are likely vulnerable members of the dominant group—nostalgics experience greater fear of crime (Farrall, Gray and Jones 2021)—that feel they have lost status. Perhaps not surprisingly, nostalgia is also associated with hostility toward outgroups, including nativism (Smeeke, Wildschut and Sedikides 2021; Kešić et al. 2022; Sedikides and Wildschut 2019). Nostalgia or nostalgic deprivation, as Gest, Reny and Mayer (2018) call it, then, is the perception that one’s social, political, or economic status was better in the past than it is currently.

Unsurprisingly, nostalgics are generally conservative and less supportive of candidates or policies that aim to bring about change. For example, nostalgics are more likely to blame Barack Obama and environmental regulations for the death of coal (Mayer 2022), and, in the Netherlands, national nostalgia leads to more opposition to equal rights for Muslims (Smeeke, Verkuyten and Martinovic 2015). Instead, nostalgia predicts populist attitudes (Elçi 2021), and support for populist, radical right parties (Steenvoorden and Hartevelde 2018). In 2015 nostalgics in the United States were more likely to support the Tea Party and Donald Trump, while nostalgics in the United Kingdom were more likely to support far-right parties (Gest, Reny and Mayer 2018).

While nostalgia’s role in politics is often associated with support for far right candidates or parties, the relationship between nostalgia and political behavior is more nuanced.<sup>1</sup> Boym (2008) argues that nostalgia can be forward looking and that forward-looking nostalgia has the potential to foster greater group cohesion. Collective nostalgia

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<sup>1</sup>Fetterman, Wildschut and Sedikides (2021) find that the election of Donald Trump made voters nostalgic for Barack Obama.

makes subjects view their in-group more favorably, more likely to approach a member of their in-group, and more willing to sanction in-group members that commit some transgression (Wildschut et al. 2014). Nostalgia that focuses on a past characterized by political incorrectness increases support for right-wing populism, whereas nostalgia that focuses on a past characterized by greater decorum decreases support for right-wing populism (Lammers and Baldwin 2020; Lammers and Uğurlar 2023). Similarly, conservative ideology leads to nostalgia for a homogenous society, while liberal ideology leads to nostalgia for an open society (Stefaniak et al. 2021).

Nostalgic appeals have always been a part of American politics. While nostalgic appeals are not inherently Republican, Republican politicians have recently taken ownership over these types of appeals and tied them to far-right nationalism (Bonikowski and Stuhler 2022). Republican ownership of nostalgia pushes the Democratic Party to stake out the anti-nostalgic position. As a result, nostalgic voters should sort into the Republican Party. Mutz (2018) posits that nostalgia is the link between status threat—a demobilizing phenomenon—and support for Trump in 2016. Nostalgia serves as a defense against feelings of existential threat, limiting its harmful (demobilizing) side effects (Juhl et al. 2010).

Despite the recent influx in nostalgia research, nostalgic attitudes are not clearly defined in political science literature. In this paper, we provide an exploratory analysis of nostalgic attitudes and show that these attitudes affect vote choice in the 2022 midterm election. We use a Cooperative Election Study (CES) module with 1000 pre-election respondents to construct a measure of nostalgia, then we use this measure to predict vote choice in the 2022 midterms (self-reported in the post-election wave). Our findings show that personal beliefs, media consumption, personal and financial wellbeing, and demographics predict nostalgic attitudes. And, these nostalgic attitudes affect vote choice in the 2022 House elections.

## Measuring Nostalgia

Previous research on nostalgia and politics does not clearly nor consistently define nostalgia. To measure and better understand the concept, we ask respondents in the 2022 Cooperative Election Study a set of nostalgia-related questions. First, we ask respondents an open-ended question, “When you hear the phrase ‘good old days,’ what is the first thing that comes to mind?” We categorize their answers into ten categories. Table 1 shows the ten categories and three exemplar responses for each category.<sup>2</sup> Two of the categories capture non-nostalgic responses to the open-ended question: *bigotry* and *never existed*. These responses mention how the phrase “good old days” references a past that was bigoted (“When society was more racist and unequal”) or worse than the present (“Fantasy wish for an idealized world that never existed”). There are 192 of these non-nostalgic responses to the open-ended question.

A vast majority of the open-ended responses do, however, make a nostalgic reference to the past. We identify seven categories that capture nostalgic responses mentioning how some time or aspect of life was better in the past. These categories are *specific era*, *simple life*, *stronger economy*, *better politics*, *higher morality*, *less technology*, and *lower crime*. The *other* category includes responses that either do not fit into any of the nine categories, or do not clearly make a nostalgic or non-nostalgic statement. The most frequently mentioned category is *specific era*. 244 respondents made a reference to a specific time period (“The 1950s”) or life phase (“When I was a child”) in their open-ended response. The least mentioned category is *less technology*, with only 37 responses mentioning how life was better when there was less technology (“time before the internet or technology”) or no social media (“Life before the negativity in social media”). Respondents were more likely to vaguely reference a better time than to mention specific aspects of the past.

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<sup>2</sup>The open-ended responses were categorized independently by two coders. The Cohen’s Kappa for *bigotry* is 0.91, 0.83 for *never existed*, 0.81 for *specific era*, 0.71 for *simple life*, 0.86 for *stronger economy*, 0.77 for *better politics*, 0.80 for *higher morality*, 0.97 for *less technology*, 0.81 for *lower crime*, and 0.66 for *other*. Intercoder agreement is above 92 percent for each category.

Table 1: Open-ended response categories and exemplar responses

Bigotry	White people wanting to go back to Jim Crow or slavery. When society was more racist and unequal A dog whistle for racism	Never existed	Fantasy wish for an idealized world that never existed. Toxic nostalgia - there were no “good old days” Idiots and fools longing for times that never actually existed.
Specific era	The 1950s When I was a child The sixty’s and seventies.	Simple life	The past was better than the present A more simple way of life Before things became complicated.
Stronger economy	Having a good job with more money in my pocket The low prices and always having enough money Families could be financially comfortable on 1 income	Better politics	No woke culture or people identifying as the opposite sex When political atmosphere was more civil, honest, and truthful! When politicians actually kept their campaign promises
Higher morality	Good wholesome old fashioned values When people had strong morals and good values. When trust and morals meant something.	Less technology	time before the internet or technology  NO internet or Social Media!!!!!!!!!!!!!! !!!!!!! Life before the negativity in social media.
Lower crime	Less crime and more trust in people. Being unafraid to leave your doors unlocked at any time.  The world wasn’t so violent	Other	I don’t know All In the Family (TV show) and Mary Hopkin’s 1968 hit Those Were The Days My Friend Carli Simon

Second, we gauge nostalgic attitudes using a battery of close-ended nostalgic prompts. These nostalgic prompts are structured following Batcho’s Nostalgia Inventory (1995) and Routledge et al.’s (2008) Southampton Nostalgia Scale. Like Smeekes, Verkuyten and Martinovic (2015), we adjust these prompts to be country-specific, which, in our case, means specific to the United States. The question wording for our six close-ended questions are as follows:

1. “How often do you long for the good old days in this country?”
2. “Nostalgia means a sentimental longing for the past; how often do you feel nostalgic when thinking about America in the past?”
3. “Since the 1950s, do you think the American culture and way of life has mostly changed for the worse or has it mostly changed for the better?”

4. “Since the 1950s, do you think the American political system has mostly changed for the worse or has it mostly changed for the better?”
5. “Since the 1950s, do you think America’s economic system has mostly changed for the worse or has it mostly changed for the better?”
6. “Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. The world used to be a better place.”

Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses to these prompts by respondent party identification. A clear pattern emerges across all six nostalgic prompts—Republican respondents are more nostalgic than their Democratic counterparts. The partisan differences are greatest in response to the prompts asking respondents about the good old days, how often they feel nostalgic, and whether the American culture has changed for the worse or better.

Table 2: Rotated factor loadings for nostalgic prompts

Item	Dimension 1: nostalgia	Dimension 2: pessimism
Long for	0.92	0.08
Feel nostalgic	0.89	0.06
U.S. culture	0.45	0.69
U.S. political system	0.12	0.85
U.S. economic system	-0.03	0.83
Better place	0.72	0.27

Note: results presented are from a factor analysis using varimax rotation.

We estimate a principal component analysis on the six nostalgic prompts. Rotated factor loadings are presented in Table 2. The factor analysis reveals that two dimensions are captured by responses to the nostalgic prompts. Dimension 1 appears to capture a longing for the past that is rooted in a belief that things are worse today, while Dimension 2 appears to capture more general pessimism towards the culture, political system, and economic system of the United States that is separate from a longing for the past. We

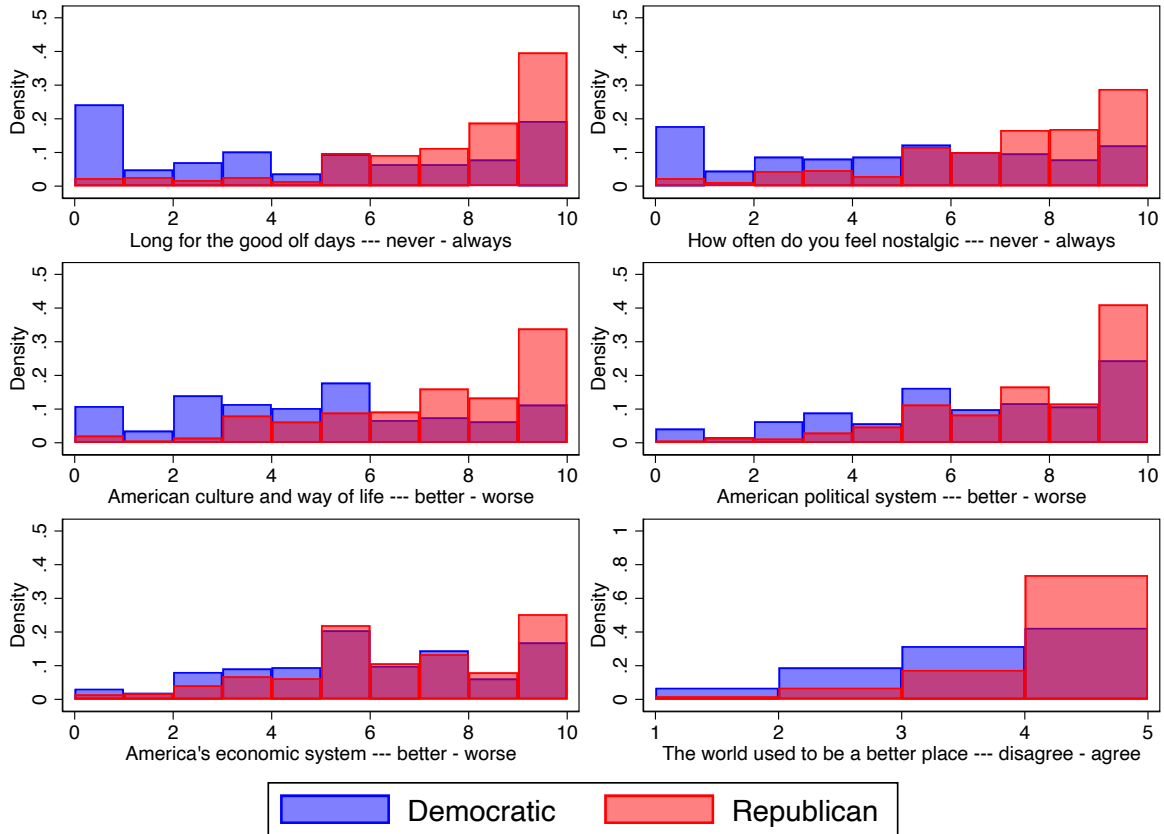


Figure 2: Distribution of nostalgic prompts

regress the nine open-ended response categories<sup>3</sup> on these two factors to parse out these differences.

The results, shown in Figure 3, reinforce our suspicion that Dimension 1 captures nostalgia (a longing for the past) while Dimension 2 captures pessimism about the future. Respondents that say the “good old days” were bigoted or never existed are significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) less likely to express nostalgic attitudes on the close-ended prompts. Respondents are significantly more likely to express nostalgic attitudes if their open-ended prompts refer to the past as a simpler time ( $p = 0.010$ ), more moral ( $p < 0.001$ ), less technologically advanced ( $p = 0.031$ ), and/or safer ( $p = 0.006$ ). The open-ended response categories are not strong predictors of Dimension 2—pessimism. The  $R^2$  is 0.38 in the nostalgia model, yet only 0.05 in the pessimism model. Only one type of open-ended response,

<sup>3</sup>We exclude the category *other* since it contains miscellaneous responses that are not necessarily topically similar.



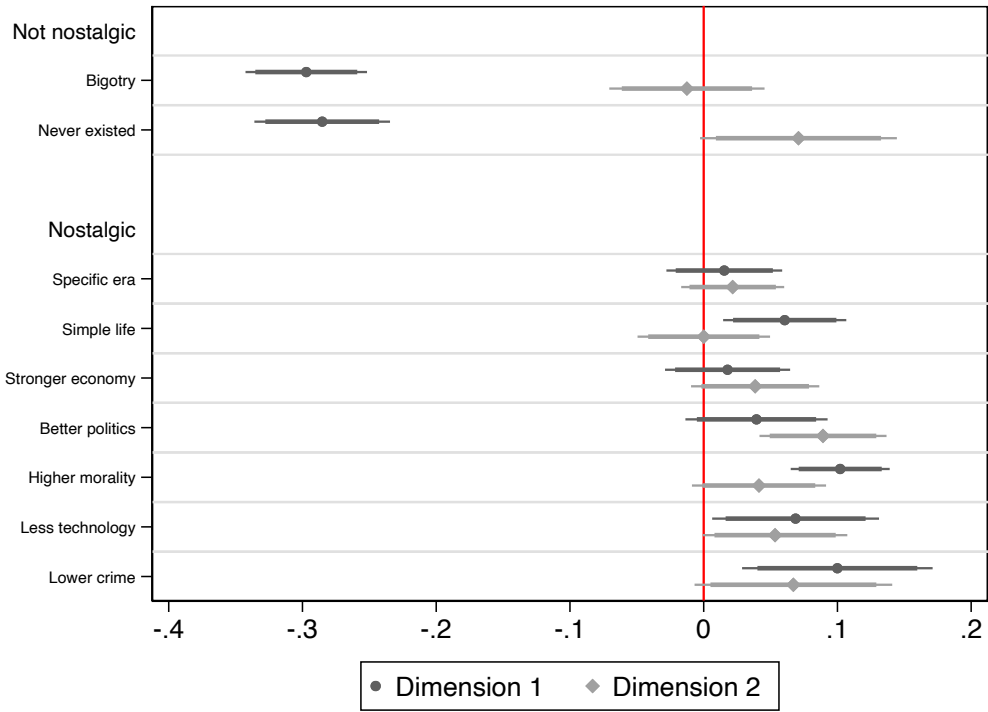


Figure 3: The relationship between open-ended responses and the two factors

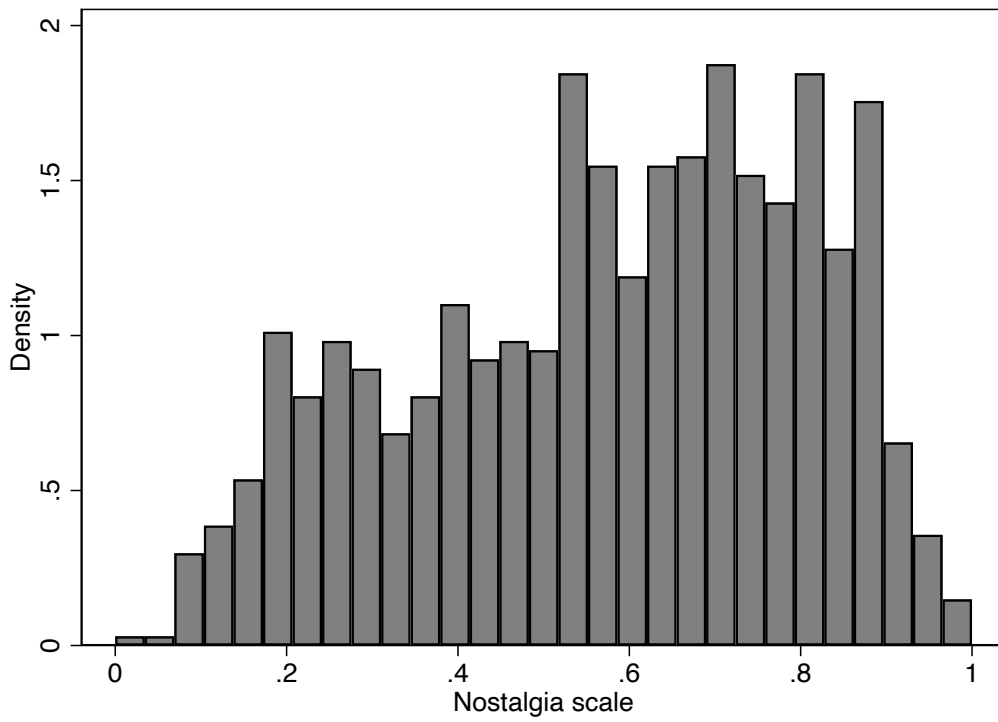


Figure 4: Distribution of nostalgia scale

responses that reference politics of the past, makes respondents significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) more likely to express pessimistic attitudes in the close-ended prompts.

Since Dimension 1 fits more closely with our conceptualization of nostalgia, it is used throughout this paper as the nostalgia scale. Figure 4 shows the distribution of the nostalgia scale (rescaled from 0 to 1) across our sample. The respondents in our sample skew slightly more nostalgic. The nostalgia scale is correlated with an index of the “long for,” “feel nostalgic,” and “better place” prompts at  $\rho = 0.98$ , and the “long for” prompt at  $\rho = 0.92$ . The results that follow are not substantively altered when this index or the single prompt are used in place of the nostalgia scale, and these alternative specifications are included in Table A2 and A3 of the Appendix.

## Determinants of Nostalgia

What types of people hold nostalgic attitudes? Broadly, we expect that beliefs and experiences that reinforce the feeling that America has left one behind lead to nostalgic attitudes. Americans 1) holding traditional or conservative beliefs, 2) consuming conservative political news, 3) struggling financially and personally, and 4) identifying as a member of the dominant social group(s) exhibit more nostalgia.

First, respondents with more traditional/conservative personal beliefs should exhibit higher levels of nostalgia. The personal beliefs variables included in our model are seven-point partisan identification, ideology, and religiosity. Previous research finds that conservatives view the changing political and social order as an existential threat (Jost 2017), and, like conservative ideology, religiosity is associated with a defense of the status quo against change or progress (Jost et al. 2014). Therefore, conservatives should prefer a past without these existential threats. Second, media consumption habits should affect nostalgia in a similar way. Respondents that consume conservative news will exhibit greater levels of nostalgia, while respondents that consume liberal news will exhibit

lower levels. We include three media consumption variables: political interest, watched Fox News, and watched CNN or MSNBC.

Third, financially and personally worse off respondents should exhibit higher levels of nostalgia, and, fourth, so should older, White respondents. General indicators of personal wellbeing include family income and education. More specific indicators include employment status, stock and home ownership status, a dummy indicating a negative life event occurred in the past year,<sup>4</sup> and subjective health. To estimate the effect of dominant-group membership, we include a set of variables related to identity—respondent age, gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship status, whether the respondent is a parent, and whether the respondent lives in an urban or rural part of the country.

Using a linear regression model, we estimate the effect of each on nostalgia. The results from this model are shown in Figure 5. All three personal beliefs affect nostalgic attitudes in the expected direction. Republican identification (0.02,  $p < 0.01$ ), conservative ideology (0.02,  $p < 0.06$ ), and religiosity (0.04,  $p < 0.01$ ) positively affect nostalgia. To contextualize the size of these effects, the predicted level of nostalgia increases by 0.10 (43 percent of a standard deviation in nostalgia) when a respondent moves from strong Democrat to strong Republican, 0.09 (40 percent of a standard deviation) moving from very liberal to very conservative, and 0.13 (57 percent of a standard deviation) moving from not religious to very religious.

In contrast, two of the coefficients on the media consumption variables are significant but in opposite directions. Respondents that watched Fox News in the last 24 hours are more nostalgic (0.09,  $p < 0.01$ ), while respondents that watched CNN or MSNBC in the last 24 hours are less nostalgic (-0.05,  $p < 0.04$ ). Unsurprisingly, respondents' general interest in political news does not have an effect on nostalgia (-0.00,  $p < 0.93$ ) in this partisan media environment. These findings conform with research that shows Fox News and CNN and MSNBC move viewers in opposite directions on issues such as COVID-

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<sup>4</sup>A respondent experienced a negative life event if they lost their job, got divorced, were the victim of a crime, visited the emergency room, or received a pay cut in the last year.

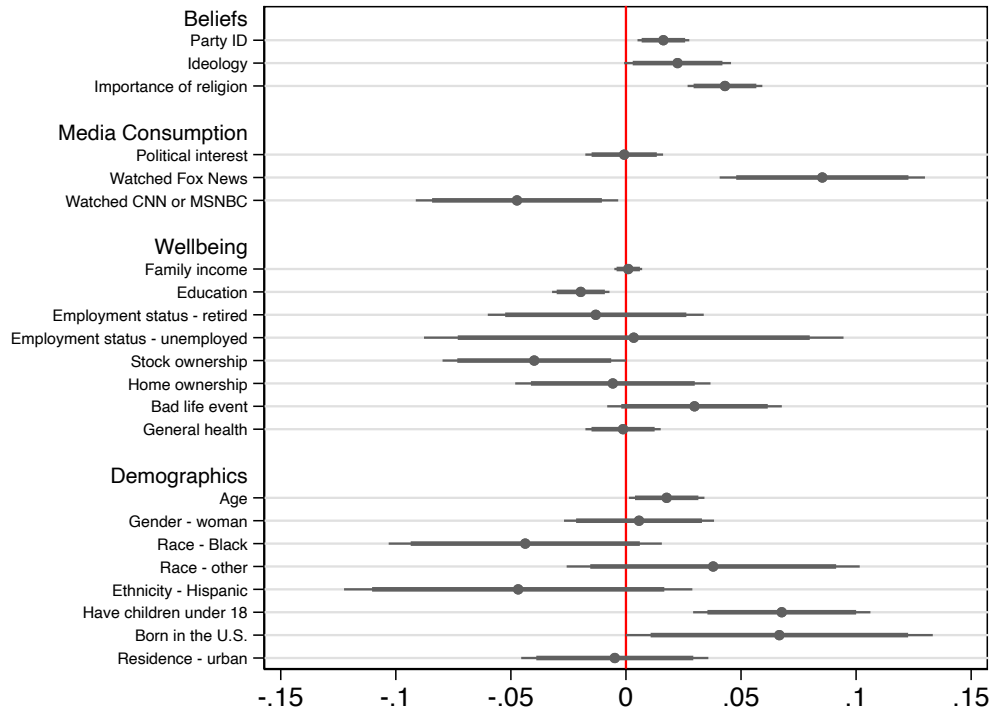


Figure 5: The determinants of nostalgia

19 (Bruine de Bruin, Saw and Goldman 2020), immigration (Hoewe et al. 2020; Gil de Zúñiga, Correa and Valenzuela 2012), and climate change (Feldman et al. 2012).

The personal wellbeing and demographic variables paint a more nuanced picture of nostalgia, as most of the coefficients are statistically insignificant. However, the coefficients that are statistically significant conform with our expectations. More educated respondents and respondents that own stock are less nostalgic (-0.02,  $p < 0.01$  and -0.04,  $p < 0.05$  respectively). Investing in one's education or the stock market requires some level of confidence that the investment will pay off—that conditions will be better in the future. Meanwhile, older respondents, respondents with children under the age of 18 in their house, and respondents born in the U.S. are more nostalgic (0.02,  $p < 0.04$ ; 0.07,  $p < 0.01$ ; and 0.07,  $p < 0.05$  respectively). Immigrants and the youth have less nostalgia for an America of the past that they personally did not experience.

## Nostalgia and Vote Choice

Previous research finds that nostalgic voters are more likely to support Donald Trump (Gest, Reny and Mayer 2018). We argue that, as the Republican Party has largely adopted the platform and messaging of Trump, nostalgics are also more likely to vote for the Republican Party in elections not featuring Trump. Historically, preservation of the status quo has been a central component of conservative ideology. Yet, nostalgia implies a dissatisfaction with the current status quo—dissatisfaction rooted in the belief that social change has come or is coming too quickly. Trump’s conservatism, on the other hand, emphasizes a return to the status quo of the past. Thus, nostalgics should prefer the Republican Party and its current brand of conservatism over a Democratic Party fixated on social progress.

In the United States, conservatives are increasingly sorted into the Republican Party (Zingher 2018; Knuckey 2006). Aside from ideology, the use of nostalgic rhetoric by Republican elites and Donald Trump (Bonikowski and Stuhler 2022) has likely attracted more nostalgic individuals to the party. Democratic elites’ response to Trump has been to point out flaws in America’s past and emphasize the prospects of the future—further solidifying Trump as the politician and Republicans as the party of nostalgics. Therefore, we expect nostalgics were more likely to vote Republican in the 2022 midterm elections.

To test our expectation, we estimate the effect of pre-election nostalgia on vote choice in the 2022 midterms—an election without Donald Trump. The dependent variable, vote choice (based on respondent self reports), is a categorical variable indicating whether the respondent voted for the Democratic Party, Republican Party, or some other third party in their House election. Thus, we estimate multinomial logistic models on the sample of respondents that voted in the 2022 midterm election. Our controls include respondent party identification, ideology, family income, education, age, gender, and ethnicity (Hispanic identification). We exclude race as a control since there are only three Black respondents that voted for their Republican House candidate in our sample. Table

A1 of the Appendix shows the full regression results from this model.

The average marginal effects of nostalgia on the probability of voting for each party is depicted in Figure 6. Nostalgia has a marked effect on vote choice in 2022 House elections, and most of the trade off in vote choice is between voting for the Democratic and Republican candidates. Nostalgia has an average marginal effect of 0.28 ( $p < 0.01$ ) on the probability of voting Republican and -0.27 ( $p < 0.01$ ) on the probability of voting Democratic. To contextualize the size of these effects, the average marginal effect of a change in partisan identification is a 0.08 increase in the probability of voting for the Republican candidate. The marginal effect of nostalgia on the probability of voting for a third-party candidate is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.602$ ).

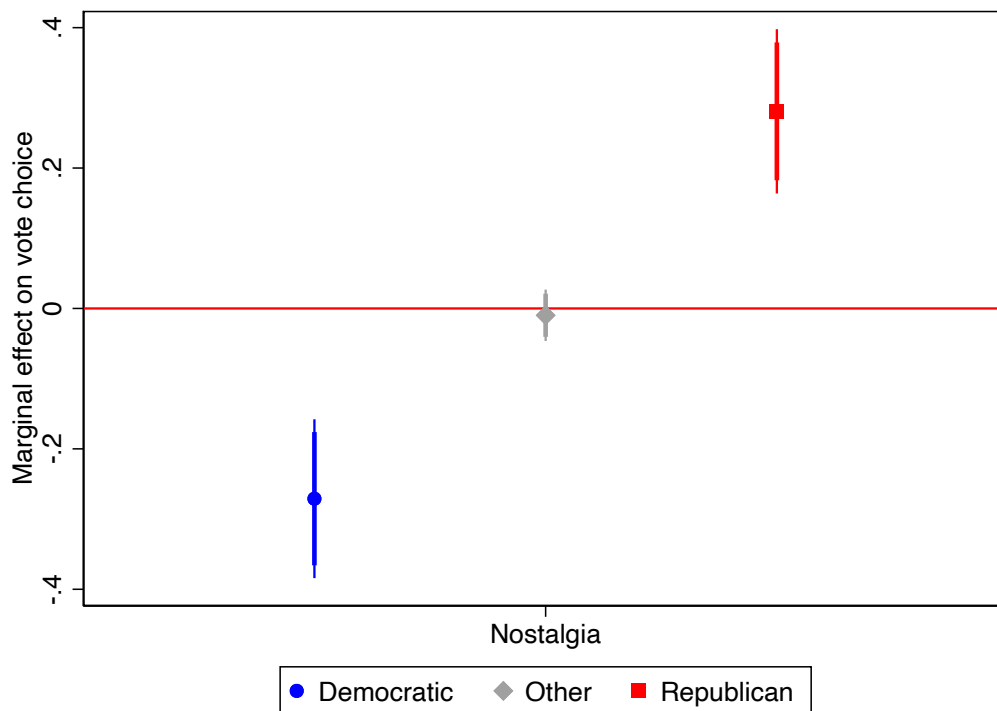


Figure 6: The marginal effect of nostalgia on vote choice in the 2022 midterms

The predicted probabilities of voting for each party across the nostalgia scale, shown in Figure 7, illustrate how large of an effect nostalgia has on 2022 midterm voting behavior. Clearly, the least nostalgic individuals in our sample are much more likely to vote

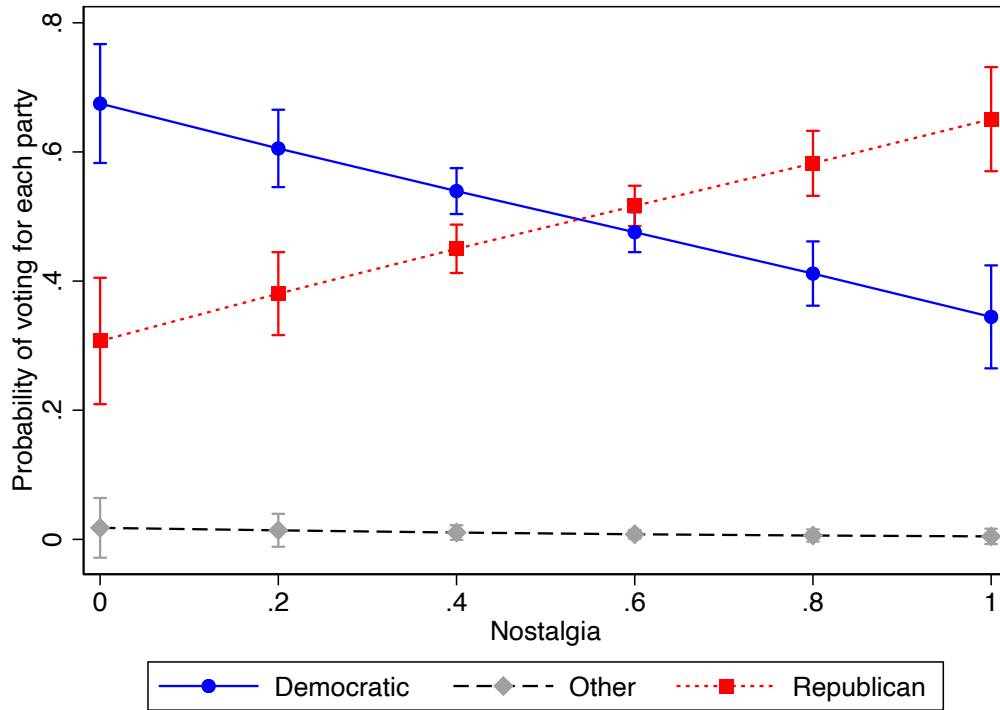


Figure 7: Predicted probability of voting for each party in the 2022 midterms

for their Democratic House candidate, and the most nostalgic individuals are much more likely to vote for their Republican House candidate. At the 25th percentile of nostalgia (nostalgia scale = 0.41), respondents are significantly more likely to vote Democratic ( $p < 0.02$ ). Respondents have a 0.54 probability of voting Democratic and a 0.45 probability of voting Republican. In contrast, respondents at the 75th percentile of nostalgia (nostalgia scale = 0.77) are significantly more likely to vote Republican ( $p < 0.01$ ). Respondents have a 0.42 probability of voting Democratic and a 0.57 probability of voting Republican.

## Conclusion

Scholars have long recognized the importance of nostalgia to American political history (Matt 2007). Only recently, however, have scholars attempted to gauge and measure nostalgia as a set of attitudes that guide political behavior. Most of this work has focused on

Donald Trump whose explicit nostalgic appeal "Make America Great Again" called on Americans to re-imagine a better and simpler time (Bonikowski and Stuhler 2022; Lamers and Baldwin 2020; Gest, Reny and Mayer 2018). We build on this literature by, first, asking Americans what comes to mind when they hear the phrase the "good old days." Their responses are instructive, capturing a nostalgia for the past, a recognition of the good old days as racist and sexist past, and pessimism about the future. We then use these open-ends to better understand responses to standard survey items designed to tap into nostalgic beliefs. We find, not surprisingly, that Republicans, Fox News consumers, and religious individuals express more nostalgia for the past. Finally, we show that these attitudes predict voting for Republican candidates and parties above and beyond partisan affiliation.

In an age of partisan polarization, we contend, nostalgia serves as a powerful political appeal. Individuals are able to recall a less partisan past and time when, at least some Americans, enjoyed greater economic prosperity and financial security. More broadly, nostalgic appeals like find resonance among individuals experiencing status threat due to cultural shifts, including (but not limited to) the growth of the foreign born population. Shifting demographics leads these individuals to long for a more homogeneous past. While former President Donald Trump made the most explicit nostalgic appeal (while explicitly tying those appeals to nativism), nostalgic attitudes extend far beyond Trump. As we show in this paper, contemporary nostalgia is associated with Republican voting behavior.

There is no reason why this is necessarily case. Democrats (and liberals) might also make nostalgic appeals based on economics, periods when Americans enjoyed a higher standard of living and labor unions played a more prominent role in American politics. During the contemporary era, however, Democratic political rhetoric is mostly focused on the future. Our study uncovering the importance of nostalgia to voting behavior suggest Democrats may be missing an opportunity.



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# Appendix

Table A1: The effect of nostalgia on vote choice in the 2022 midterms

	(1)	
	Vote Choice	
	Democratic	Third Party
Nostalgia	-4.645** (0.924)	-3.217 (2.474)
Party ID	-1.426** (0.183)	-0.408* (0.206)
Ideology	-0.342 (0.273)	-0.593 (0.394)
Family income	-0.007 (0.064)	0.126 (0.100)
Education	-0.115 (0.142)	-0.226 (0.300)
Age	0.229 (0.147)	-0.129 (0.357)
Gender - woman	0.575 (0.441)	-1.566+ (0.871)
Ethnicity - Hispanic	0.104 (0.655)	1.700 (1.109)
Constant	8.254** (1.594)	2.300 (2.258)
Observations	576	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.678	
Wald $\chi^2$	124.03	

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<0.1, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Vote choice - Republican Party is the baseline category

Table A2: The determinants of nostalgia – alternative measures of nostalgia

	(1)		(2)	
	Nostalgia - alternative		Long for good old days	
Party ID	0.150*	(0.0605)	0.224*	(0.0917)
Ideology	0.299*	(0.123)	0.360 <sup>+</sup>	(0.190)
Importance of religion	0.373**	(0.0857)	0.597**	(0.138)
Political interest	-0.0821	(0.0932)	-0.0767	(0.146)
Watched Fox News	0.833**	(0.244)	1.264**	(0.371)
Watched CNN or MSNBC	-0.551*	(0.239)	-0.789*	(0.401)
Family income	0.00487	(0.0328)	-0.00990	(0.0518)
Education	-0.191**	(0.0655)	-0.309**	(0.106)
Employment status - retired	-0.198	(0.253)	-0.418	(0.396)
Employment status - unemployed	-0.0120	(0.475)	0.0742	(0.702)
Stock ownership	-0.494*	(0.210)	-0.758*	(0.328)
Home ownership	-0.136	(0.233)	-0.370	(0.363)
Bad life event	0.353 <sup>+</sup>	(0.202)	0.482	(0.317)
General health	-0.0383	(0.0909)	-0.0978	(0.146)
Age	0.189*	(0.0892)	0.271*	(0.137)
Gender - woman	0.0285	(0.175)	-0.0758	(0.281)
Race - Black	-0.540 <sup>+</sup>	(0.309)	-0.761	(0.477)
Race - other	0.383	(0.362)	0.578	(0.629)
Ethnicity - Hispanic	-0.453	(0.428)	-0.369	(0.673)
Have children under 18	0.679**	(0.208)	1.053**	(0.316)
Born in the U.S.	0.755*	(0.380)	1.670**	(0.636)
Residence - urban	-0.0115	(0.216)	-0.0950	(0.332)
Constant	2.041**	(0.753)	1.593	(1.232)
Observations	888		885	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.308		0.295	

Standard errors in parentheses

<sup>+</sup> p<0.1, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table A3: The effect of nostalgia on vote choice in the 2022 midterms – alternative measures of nostalgia

	(1)		(2)	
	Vote Choice		Vote Choice	
	Democratic	Third Party	Democratic	Third Party
Nostalgia - alternative	-0.399** (0.0926)	-0.216 (0.214)		
Long for good old days			-0.204** (0.0585)	-0.216 (0.147)
Party ID	-1.422** (0.182)	-0.399+ (0.208)	-1.393** (0.182)	-0.397+ (0.214)
Ideology	-0.327 (0.265)	-0.646+ (0.379)	-0.366 (0.259)	-0.518 (0.318)
Family income	-0.00494 (0.0644)	0.131 (0.101)	-0.0132 (0.0637)	0.141 (0.110)
Education	-0.0752 (0.138)	-0.193 (0.304)	-0.0646 (0.136)	-0.189 (0.280)
Age	0.214 (0.142)	-0.154 (0.356)	0.182 (0.145)	-0.128 (0.315)
Gender - woman	0.516 (0.427)	-1.626+ (0.856)	0.491 (0.428)	-1.626+ (0.916)
Ethnicity - Hispanic	0.0982 (0.646)	1.748 (1.109)	0.203 (0.635)	1.808+ (0.976)
Constant	7.396** (1.558)	1.585 (2.214)	6.774** (1.531)	1.003 (2.032)
Observations	588		586	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.671		0.661	
Wald $\chi^2$	119.03		117.89	

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<0.1, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Vote choice - Republican Party is the baseline category