Rise of the *Trumpenvolk*: Populism in the 2016 Election

By
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Despite the wide application of the label "populist" in the 2016 election cycle, there has been little systematic evidence that this election is distinctive in its populist appeal. Looking at historical trends, contemporary rhetoric, and public opinion data, we find that populism is an appropriate descriptor of the 2016 election and that Donald Trump stands out in particular as the populist par excellence. Historical data reveal a large "representation gap" that typically accompanies populist candidates. Content analysis of campaign speeches shows that Trump, more so than any other candidate, employs a rhetoric that is distinctive in its simplicity, anti-elitism, and collectivism. Original survey data show that Trump's supporters are distinctive in their unique combination of anti-expertise, anti-elitism, and pronationalist sentiments. Together, these findings highlight the distinctiveness of populism as a mechanism of political mobilization and the unusual character of the 2016 race.

Keywords: Donald Trump; content analysis; elections; political representation; populism; public opinion

> *The only antidote to decades of ruinous rule by a small handful of elites is a bold infusion of popular will. On every major issue affecting this country, the people are right and the governing elite are wrong. The elites are wrong on taxes, on the size of government, on trade, on immigration, on foreign policy.*
>
> —Donald J. Trump, *The Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 2016

By many accounts, 2016 is the year of the populist. The improbable popularity of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders has been widely attributed to a massive wave of voter discontent with the governing classes. Many of the 2016 candidates, including Trump, Sanders, Ben Carson, and even Ted Cruz have been tagged

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with the populist label. But while the term populist gets widely applied, its meaning is often unclear. How, for example, can the same term describe both a Jewish, Democratic socialist senator from Vermont whose central concern is the billionaire class and a billionaire New York real estate developer whose central concern is illegal immigration? Can they both be populists? And, more importantly, how can the concept of populism help us to understand this unusual election?

Looking at historical trends, contemporary rhetoric, and public opinion, we suggest that not only is populism an appropriate descriptor of many aspects of the 2016 election but that one candidate stands out in particular as the populist par excellence. Exploiting a large "representation gap," Donald Trump has enjoyed a ripe opportunity to make a strong populist claim to the presidency. Trump capitalized on this by employing a rhetoric that is distinctive in its simplicity, anti-elitism, and high degree of collectivist language. Trump's supporters echo these sentiments, exhibiting a unique combination of anti-expertise, anti-elitism, and pronationalism. Unlike supporters of the other "populist," Bernie Sanders, Trump's supporters are also distinctive in their high levels of conspiratorial thinking, nativism, and economic insecurity. The year 2016 is indeed the year of the populist, and Donald Trump is its apotheosis.

What Is Populism?

Populism is a promiscuous term used to describe a diverse set of political movements around the world. It is applied equally to rightist parties in Europe, leftist movements in Latin America, and anticorruption crusaders in Asia.[1] In the 2016 election cycle, it has been used to characterize candidates as diverse as Sanders on the Left, Ted Cruz on the Right, and Trump somewhere in between. Given this diversity, does the concept of populism still have utility?

A rich body of comparative research suggests that it does. Despite their obvious differences, populist movements share many latent tendencies. At its core, populism is a type of political rhetoric that pits a virtuous "people" against nefarious, parasitic elites who seek to undermine the rightful sovereignty of the common folk. As a style of political communication, populism has several notable traits. Its tone is Manichean, casting politics as a bifurcated struggle between "the people," on one hand, and a self-serving governing class undeserving of its advantaged position, on the other. Its goal is restorative, replacing the existing corruption with a political order that puts the people back in their proper place and that is more faithful to their longings and aspirations. Its worldview is apprehensive, suspicious of any claims to economic, political, or cultural privilege; for populists, the good is found in the common wisdom of the people rather than the pretensions of the expert.[2]

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But while denigrating economic or political elites is a relatively straightforward maneuver, it is often more challenging to endow the "people" with a real and meaningful existence. Populist politicians do this in a number of ways. They typically start broadly by defining the "people" as anyone who is not an elite. By conjuring the existence of a solidary people who share ill-treatment at the hands of the governing classes, populists seek to transcend cleavages based on class or region (Kazin 1995; Taggart 2000). "Populists in established democracies claim they speak for the 'silent majority' of 'ordinary, decent people' whose interests and opinions are (they claim) regularly overridden by arrogant elites, corrupt politicians, and strident minorities" (Canovan 1999, 5). Populism also defines the "people" by appeals to economic and social nationalism (Gerteis and Goolsby 2005; Jansen 2011). Here, the nation, or "heartland," is the primordial basis for a shared identity (Taggart 2000). This construction of a "we" is facilitated also by the invocation of the people's enemies, both internal and external—the "people" often come to know who they are by who they are not. Consequently, nativism and racism are common in populist appeals, particularly in those European democracies facing immigration pressure. Latin American populism, on the other hand, while more inclusive of a variety of groups (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013), frequently draws on the anticolonial ideology of *Americanismo* as a way to draw a circle around the national "we" (Rovira Kaltwasser 2014).

Of course, nearly all democratic politicians seek to align themselves with "the people," which is partly why the populist label gets so widely applied. But populists do more than simply paint themselves on the side of the majority; they make populist rhetoric the center of their campaigns. Anti-elitism and collectivism are the sine qua non of their political existence. Their whole purpose is to challenge the dominant order and give voice to the collective will, goals that are infused with a sense of urgency by proclaiming that a crisis exists (Moffitt 2015; Pappas 2012; Rooduijn 2014b).

Toward this end, populists often employ a distinctive style, one that is simple, direct, emotional, and frequently indelicate (Canovan 1999; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Moffitt and Tormey 2014). By flaunting the usual rules of engagement, the populist's lack of decorum contributes to followers' perceptions of authenticity, distinguishing the populist from the usual "typical politician." Like a "drunken guest" (Arditi 2005) with "bad manners" (Moffit and Tormey 2014), the populist disrupts the normal dinner table, much to the discomfort, even alarm, of the usual patrons.

This transgressive political style signals to the people that the populist politician will go to great lengths to protect her interests, even if it means bending or breaking the rules. To members of the establishment, however, the people-centric and pugnaciousness of the putative populist's rhetoric is demagoguery, successful only because its listeners harbor antidemocratic sympathies (Stanley 2008).[3] But to many lay followers, the populist's distinctive antics provide a focal point to orient themselves, and criticism by established elites only serves to strengthen the bond between the leader and his or her followers (Panizza 2005).[4] A common identity and a sense of linked fate emerge through shared attachment to the populist politician rather than interpersonal attachment to individual

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group members. By "performing" populism, the psychological distance between populist leaders and their followers is reduced and the bonds among followers solidified.

Despite claiming to represent "the people," the populist's rhetoric is not uniformly embraced across the population. Certain types of people seem to be drawn to populism more than others. According to revisionist historians of the original Populist movement in the late nineteenth century, early American populists were anxious about their status in society, xenophobic, and prone to conspiracy theories (Hofstadter 1955).[5] Less pejoratively, Spruyt, Keppens, and Droogenbroeck (2016) contend that a somewhat similar syndrome is operative in contemporary European populism. They argue that globalization makes certain groups, particularly the less well-educated, insecure both about their labor market prospects and their status in society. Identifying with the "people" becomes a way to cope with the uncertainty and vulnerability of their precarious social position. Populism also allows the individual's problems to become grievances of "people like us," reducing individual responsibility and shifting blame outward. Yet despite the depth of comparative research, there are very few studies about populist sentiment in the United States.[6]

What also remains unclear is why populism is more prevalent at certain times rather than others. Elites, after all, are present in every democracy, yet populist movements are temporal and fleeting. Populist movements can arise in relatively egalitarian countries yet be largely absent from some of the most stratified. We suggest that a populist moment depends on the alignment of a number of key factors: the right political conditions, a charismatic populist leader, and the receptivity of an audience based on their own grievances and psychological predilections. In sum, a *populist moment* requires the right rhetoric spoken by the right person to the right audience at the right time. And, as we look to the data, the 2016 election has all the hallmarks of a populist moment.

Populism in Campaign Communication

The political rhetoric of the 2016 primary campaign was filled with populist rhetoric. This can be empirically demonstrated in a quantitative content analysis of the announcement speeches of the seven top presidential hopefuls (see, e.g., Bonokowski and Gidron 2016; Hawkins 2009; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011; Rooduijn 2014a).[7] To assess the degree of "populist" rhetoric, we used a mix of our own custom content analysis "dictionaries" and the Diction software program. Diction has been used to score quantitatively a wide variety of political texts (Hart 2000; Hart, Childers, and Lind 2013; Hart et al. 2005).[8]

We start with two "dictionaries" that capture anti-establishment rhetoric, one corresponding to political elites and the other, to economic elites.[9] "Political populism" was measured with such words and phrases as politician(s), the government (in Washington), the system, special interests, IRS, lobbyists, donors, and campaign contributions. "Economic populism" includes the terms millionaires,

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the rich, the wealthy, CEOs, big banks, Wall Street, inequality, and corporations, among others. The word, "elites," was included in both dictionaries. The text of each announcement speech was matched to our anti-establishment dictionaries, and the number of matches was standardized as a percentage of total words. We also included a "blame" dictionary containing terms designating social inappropriateness (e.g., stupid, sloppy) and adjectives describing unfortunate circumstances such as troublesome and discouraging (Hart and Carroll 2013).

The first panel of Table 1 displays the rates of anti-establishment language for the candidates, measured as a percentage of total words. Sanders scores highest in economic populism, invoking business elites twice as often as Clinton. Trump and Carson, the two Republican outsiders, score highest in political populism, invoking political elites twice as often as even Sanders. Blame language is common among all candidates but especially high in both Trump's and Sanders's speeches.

A second feature of populist rhetoric is the creation of a unified people. We developed five scores that measure the candidates' degree of collectivism: references to the American people or Americans; references to "our country/nation;" the use of plural pronouns such as "we, they, our, and ours;" mentions of foreign countries or threats; and appeals to subnational groups. The latter measure is designed to assess the degree to which the candidates internally differentiate "the people" or treat them as a single, homogenous category.

The second panel of Table 1 displays the results of our people-centrism analysis. The two Democratic candidates invoked the collective nationalist terms far more often than the Republicans. Indeed, Donald Trump never referred to Americans or the American people, instead using the locution "our country." On the other hand, Republicans were also less likely to refer to specific groups by name compared with the Democrats.[10] In sharp contrast, candidates like Ben Carson and Donald Trump hardly ever name a specific group; instead, they were far more likely to invoke "we–they" collectivist constructions.[11] These populist candidates conjure a "people" not by amalgamations of specific groups or by even invoking the institutions of state, but by including themselves as part of the group.

Finally, we also used Diction and our own examination to characterize more stylistic and structural characteristics of the candidates' rhetoric to assess its simplicity and "everydayness." The last panel of Table 1 lists different measures of language simplicity including the use of short words and sentences, sentence variety, and appeals to common sense. In terms of simplicity, Carson, Kasich, and Trump stand out from the others. Their sentences are noticeably briefer than the other candidates' and they use shorter words. In addition, there is less variety in their choice of words,[12] and they appeal to common sense.[13] Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and, in most respects, John Kasich seem to speak the language of ordinary people.

In sum, Donald Trump employed the most consistently populist syntax, followed only by Ben Carson. Trump scores high in targeting political elites, blame language, invoking both foreign threats and collective notions of "our" and "they," and the simplicity and repetition of his language. Sanders's language, by contrast,

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TABLE 1
Populist Language Scores among Seven Leading Presidential Candidates

	Carson	Clinton	Cruz	Kasich	Rubio	Sanders	Trump
Anti-establishment							
Blame*	2.23	2.63	1.47	2.71	1.37	3.90	3.43
Political %	0.60	0.13	0.21	0.24	0.22	0.23	0.61
Economic %	0.00	0.45	0.04	0.00	0.27	0.99	0.05
People-centrism							
The American people or Americans #	2	23	7	2	9	16	0
Our country or nation #	6	11	0	3	4	5	10
We–they %	5.69	4.45	2.31	5.06	5.63	3.75	6.12
Foreign countries international threats %	0.00	0.13	0.38	0.02	0.22	0.20	1.15
Subnational social categories %	0.34	1.89	0.50	1.02	1.04	0.58	0.10
Language simplicity							
Six-letter words %	14.81	21.33	22.89	11.94	20.63	20.83	13.81
Average words per sentence	12.74	14.91	17.80	13.21	21.00	21.38	9.55
Variety*	0.24	0.28	0.32	0.22	0.34	0.29	0.17
Present concern*	15.48	17.66	12.7	13.26	13.12	13.66	17.81
Appeal to common sense	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

NOTE: *Calculated using Diction.

scores high in economic populism, blame attribution, and invocations of “America” but employs a more complex and sophisticated language. Nor does he score high in the use of “we–they” collectivist rhetoric. Thus while Sanders may be “populist” in a strictly economic sense, his language is not nearly as “of the people” as either Carson’s or Trump’s.

Why Populism Now?

Our attention now turns to why 2016 is such a ripe time for a populist appeal. Although there is lots of speculation as to what motivates populist movements (economic conditions, class stratification, new media technologies, etc.), we assert that populism originates in a political source, namely, when existing political parties are not responding to the desires of large sections of the electorate. We call such conditions a “representation gap.”

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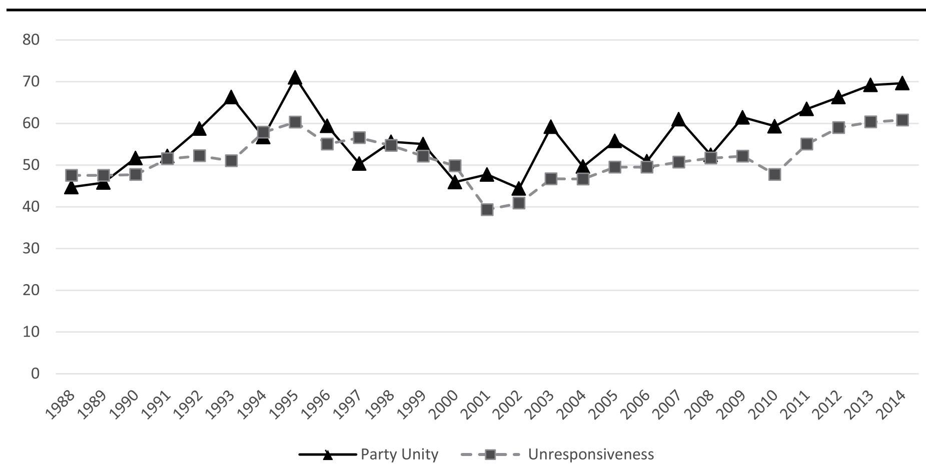
FIGURE 1
The Representation Gap



We measure the "representation gap" in two ways. First, we use Congressional Quarterly's party unity votes, votes on which a majority of Democrats opposed a majority of Republicans (we averaged House and Senate party unity votes). We then compare these scores to attitudes of the citizenry toward government responsiveness using different survey questions (e.g., Pew Research Center, American National Election Studies, Gallup) from 1988 to 2014:

—Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Public officials don't care much about what people like me think.

—People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

—Generally speaking, elected officials in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly.

—Do you tend to feel or not feel the people in Washington are out of touch with the rest of the country?

—Voting gives people like me some say about how the government runs things.[14]

As illustrated in Figure 1, there are two points in the last quarter century where the public felt especially unrepresented, the mid-1990s and currently. In looking for explanations for the movement across this time series, we first considered macroeconomic variables such as growth in median household income and unemployment. None proved to be related. Next we examined subjective economic assessments in the form of the familiar Michigan Index of Consumer Sentiment with the same result. There is simply no indication that the economy in 2016 is either objectively weak or subjectively concerning (see also Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, this volume). Nor is this time series related to rising income inequality.

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Instead, the strongest correlation[15] is with the party unity scores. Both party unity and nonresponsiveness rise in the mid-1990s, drop again until 2010, and then rise in tandem in 2016. These findings dovetail nicely with Bartels's (this volume) analysis of "the missing middle." As he shows, the distance between the major parties' core supporters and swing voters is large and has been growing over time. In particular, the Republican base has grown more conservative in its ideology and in its opposition to government spending on services and to government's role in providing jobs, while the Democratic base is out of step from mass opinion on government aid to blacks and the government guarantee of jobs. Also interesting is his finding that swing voters were especially distant from the Republican base in 1996, the year in which party unity votes and the representation gap were equally high in our analysis.

In addition to high levels of partisan conflict, the mid-1990s shares many other interesting parallels with 2016. Both had populist "nonpoliticians" vying for office; in the '90s, it was Pat Buchanan, who worked in the Nixon White House but never held elective office, and H. Ross Perot. Both periods were characterized by expressions of heightened racial tension (the Los Angeles riots and Rodney King in 1992 and the O. J. Simpson trial in 1995; and Black Lives Matter in 2015) and concerns with immigration (California's Proposition 187 in 1994; the border crisis in Texas in 2014). Both periods followed economic recessions and particular catastrophes in the financial sector (the savings and loan crisis and the Great Recession). The national news media in both periods contained many more stories about economic inequality than in previous years.[16] By many measures, the mid-1990s and the mid-2010s look remarkably similar. These results also suggest why Donald Trump's brief presidential candidacy in 2000 never gained traction: by then, the representation gap had declined considerably from its mid-1990s height.

Populism in the People

A strong populism sentiment is also evident in the 2016 American electorate. We find this in a nationally representative Internet survey sample of 1,063 American adult citizens fielded between February 26 and March 3, 2016.[17] To gauge populist attitudes, we asked respondents a battery of fourteen questions about people's feelings toward the political process, experts and common wisdom, and attachment to an American identity. Some of these items were of our own construction while others were adapted from survey studies of populism in other contexts (Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove 2014; Elchardus and Spruyt 2016; Hawkins, Riding, and Mudde 2012; Spruyt, Keppens, and Droogenbroeck 2016; Stanley 2011). We then put the responses in a principal component analysis, a statistical method for identifying linearly uncorrelated variables. From this analysis, we find the survey questions load on three, separate dimensions related to populism (see Table 2).

The first dimension, *anti-elitism*, captures feelings of marginalization relative to wealth and political power. The items that load on this dimension include questions like "It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the rich control

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TABLE 2
Loadings from Rotated Principle Components Analysis

Question	Anti-elitism	Mistrust experts	National affiliation
People like me don't have much say in what government does (Likert)	0.611		
Politics usually boils down to a struggle between the people and the powerful (Likert)	0.641		0.259
The system is stacked against people like me (Likert)	0.660		
It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the rich control both political parties (Likert)	0.686		
People at the top usually get there (because they have more talent and work harder / from some unfair advantage)	0.495		
I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals (Likert)		0.568	
When it comes to really important questions, scientific facts don't help very much (Likert)		0.712	
Ordinary people can really use the help of experts to understand complicated things like science and health (Likert)		0.696	
Politics is ultimately a struggle between good and evil (Likert)	0.386	0.474	
It would be unwise to trust the judgments of the American people for today's complicated political issues / I generally trust the collective judgments of the American people, even for complex political issues			0.614
I generally consider myself to be (different than most Americans / like most other Americans).			0.729
How important is being an American to who you are? (7-point scale)			0.692

both political parties"; "Politics usually boils down to a struggle between the people and the powerful"; "The system is stacked against people like me"; and "People at the top usually get there from some unfair advantage." Together, these questions reflect one of the core elements of populism, the feeling that a small group of wealthy and powerful elites holds all the levers of political power.

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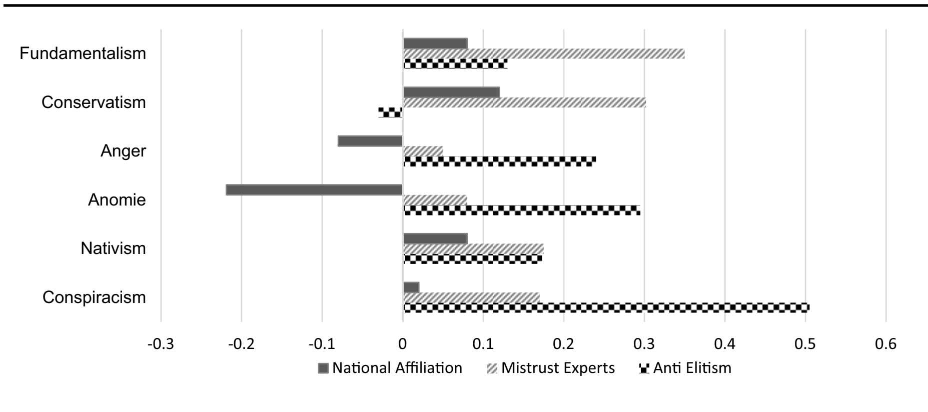
FIGURE 2
Partial Correlations of Secondary Variables with Three Dimensions of Populist Attitudes



The second dimension, *mistrust of expertise*, indicates a general skepticism of science and expert opinion. It includes responses to the statements: "I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals"; "When it comes to really important questions, scientific facts don't help very much"; and "Ordinary people are perfectly capable of deciding for themselves what's true and what's not." Also loading on this dimension is the Manichean notion of politics being a struggle between good and evil. While the first dimension relates to issues of explicit political or economic power, the second dimension items reflect suspicion of knowledge claims and scientific expertise. They also reflect a faith in common wisdom, the idea that folk knowledge is more valid than expert opinion.

The third dimension is what we call *national affiliation*. These are items designed to gauge respondent's affiliation with, and similarity to, the American people and include: "I consider myself to be like ordinary Americans"; "It would be unwise to trust the judgments of the American people"; and "How important is being an American to your sense of self?" Unlike the first two dimensions, which are about opposition to elites, this dimension relates to a collectivist "American" identity.

Although these three dimensions are commonly attributed to populists, they often correspond to different and even contradictory types of attitudes. We can see this by comparing the populism factor scores with other demographic and attitudinal measures.[18] In Figure 2, we depict partial correlation coefficients for six attitudinal factors that are often associated with populism: ideology, anger at the federal government, anomie, nativism, conspiracism, and fundamentalism.[19]

The first two dimensions of populism, anti-elitism and mistrust of experts, share many of the same attitudinal correlates but in different degrees. Anti-elitism's largest correlation is with the conspiracy theory scale. Respondents who think that the system is stacked against them are far more likely to endorse conspiracy theories of all types than not. Conspiracy theories seem to function as a form of populist discourse (Fenster 2008). Not surprising, anti-elitists are less

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trusting of people in general and are more likely to be angry at the government. Anti-elitists are also more likely to be nativists and hold fundamentalist beliefs.[20]

The second dimension, mistrust of experts, has a slightly different pattern. Here the largest correlation is with fundamentalist Christian beliefs. People who put their faith in the wisdom of "ordinary" people are also more likely to believe in Biblical inerrancy and prophesy. They also score higher in conservatism. And, like anti-elitists, those mistrusting of experts also endorse more conspiracy theories. The mistrust-experts scale also correlates with nativism. This aspect of populism thus looks much more like an ideologically tinged dimension with stronger support among conservatives, particularly those with fundamentalist religious beliefs.

These patterns, however, contrast sharply with the third dimension, national affiliation. Here, we find few significant correlations with any of the attitudinal measures linked to the first two dimensions. Indeed, the only sizable correlations are with anomie and anger, and these are negative. In other words, people who place a lot of value on their American identity are generally more trusting of people and less angry at the American government. We also find that fundamentalists score slightly higher, on average, in their national affiliation scores.

This oppositional pattern between anti-elitism and national affiliation is evident throughout our data and not just with these items. For example, anti-elitists are far more likely to agree that "Congress is no longer an institution that speaks for the people" while nationalists are less likely to agree.[21] Conversely, nationalists are much more likely to agree that "when ordinary Americans come together, they usually prevail."[22]

Together, these findings highlight some of the paradoxes of populism. When the "people" are defined as the "nation" then the people are defined largely by their political and economic institutions; yet allegiance to a nation naturally entails allegiance to institutions and its leaders. This is why we see nationalists as being so much more positive about Congress and business and political elites and optimistic about their own political power. But at the same time, "the people" may also see themselves as also being alienated from the politicians and business leaders who run these institutions. Typically, these paradoxes are often resolved in the persona of the populist politician, often one who portrays himself or herself as against the dominant political establishment. Such leaders are able to rail against systemic inequities and the disenfranchisement of the "true" people while encouraging them to take charge of the situation, particularly by invoking collectivist language as indicated above.

These populist attitudes are most consistently in line among supporters of Donald Trump. Figure 3 shows the average score on each of the three populism dimensions according to responses to the question, "If the general election were held today, which candidate would you support?" The differences that immediately leap out are between supporters of Donald Trump and Ben Carson and the rest of the field. Among the candidates in late February 2016, both Carson and Trump were the only candidates whose supporters score higher, on average, for all three populist dimensions. This is particularly striking for Trump's supporters. They score the highest in mistrust of expertise and national affiliation of the entire sample; they also score second highest in political marginalization.

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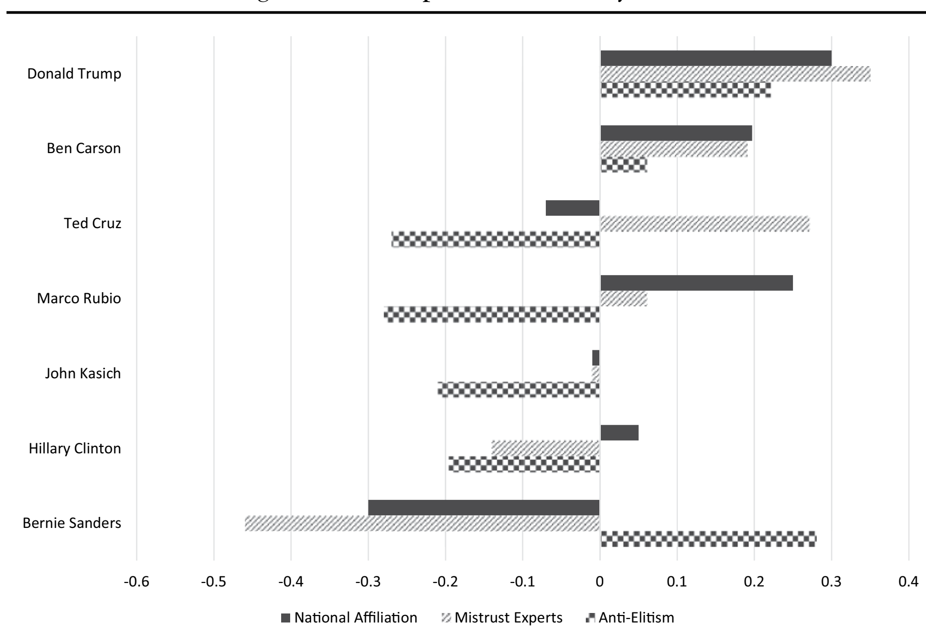
FIGURE 3
Average Scores on Populism Measures by Candidate



These results contrast with the supporters of Bernie Sanders, the other "populist" in the race. They too score quite high in system marginalization; in fact, they have the highest average score on this dimension in the entire sample. But they are the lowest scorers in both mistrusting experts and national affiliation. The difference with Trump supporters is particularly notable here. Whereas Trump's supporters have the highest averages both on national affiliation and mistrust of experts, Sanders's supporters score the lowest.

The scores for the rest of the candidates' voters also provide an interesting snapshot of their particular political appeal. Cruz's supporters are low in political marginalization but high in mistrust of expertise. The same holds for Rubio's, but they also score quite high in national affiliation. Supporters of Hillary Clinton and John Kasich interestingly have the most similar profiles, being below average in both political marginalization and mistrust of expertise but about average in national affiliation.

The distinctiveness of Trump's supporters is also evident in many of the attitudinal correlates of populism as depicted above. In Figure 4, we list the average scores on the conspiracism, nativism, anomie, and anger items.[23] A three-item financial pessimism scale was also added.[24] Once again, Trump's supporters are different from other voters in that they score above average on all of the attitudes that are related to populism. In the sample, they are the most financially pessimistic and conspiracy minded of all the voters. They also record high levels of mistrust and anger at the federal government. And they score highest on the nativism scale, although Cruz's supporters also score high on the nativist scale as well.

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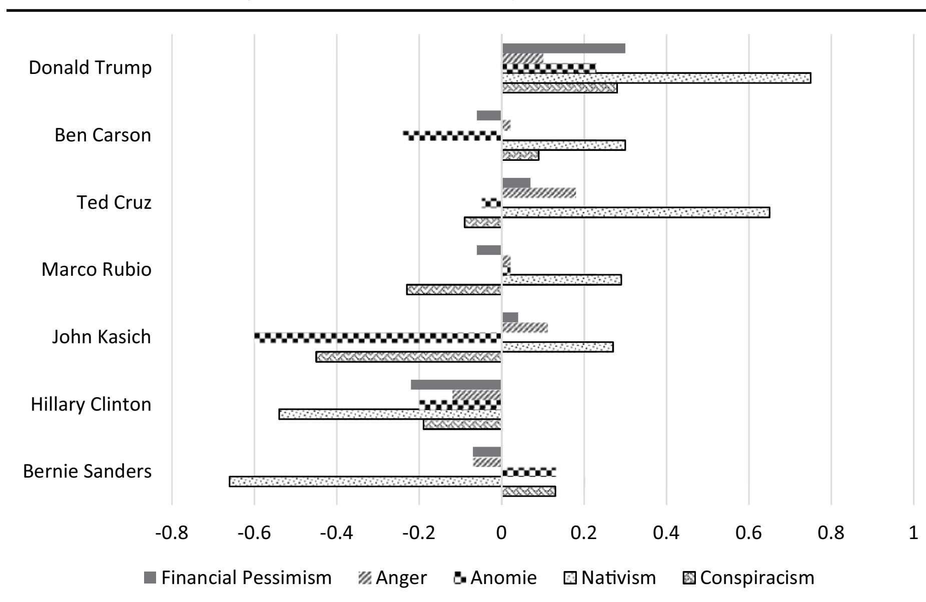
FIGURE 4
Average Attitudinal Measures by Candidate Preference



But in most ways, Trump's supporters are highly distinctive from their Republican counterparts. Compared with supporters of fellow populist Carson, for example, Trump's supporters are far more nativistic and socially alienated. Cruz's supporters also express high levels of anger at the government but tend to be more trusting of other people and less enthusiastic about conspiracy theories than Trump's. Kasich's supporters are also far less alienated and conspiracy minded as well.

Looking at all the candidates, the greatest contrasts are between Trump's and Clinton's supporters. On all of these attitudinal scales, Clinton's supporters are the mirror image of Trump's. Clinton voters are far below the sample averages on all the items. Where Trump's supporters see conspiracies, Clinton's do not; where the *Trumpenvolk* fear immigrants, Clinton voters embrace them. And where Trump's supporters express apprehension about their financial future, Clinton voters tend toward optimism.

A similar contrast also exists between Trump and Sanders. Sanders voters, much like Clinton's, are generally the opposite of Trump's supporters. This is especially the case with the nativism scale. The only "secondary" scale where Sanders voters resemble Trump's is in their social alienation. Yet Sanders's supporters are not especially angry at the federal government nor do they feel financially pessimistic. Their anti-elitism is largely based on issues of economic inequality and political marginalization; unlike Trump's supporters, they actively reject both a strong nationalist identity and a denigration of immigrant groups.

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Conclusion

Few presidential candidates have invited as much critical scorn or surprising support as Donald Trump. Trump has been accused of being a fascist, an authoritarian, a demagogue, and a dangerous influence on American politics. But our analysis reveals that the improbable emergence of Donald Trump is ultimately rooted in American party politics. Yes, Donald Trump's simple, Manichean rhetoric is quintessentially populist. Yes, his supporters combine the distinct traits of a strong nationalist and ethnocentric identity with a deep suspicion of elites and cultural pretenses. But the opportunity for a Donald Trump presidency is ultimately rooted in a failure of the Republican Party to incorporate a wide range of constituencies.[25]

As with the populist insurgency of Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot in the mid-1990s, the emergence of Donald Trump is reflective of a particularly high level of party enmity as measured by party unity votes. As Bartels (this volume) shows, the distance between "swing voters" and the parties' core constituencies is greater now than it has been in 40 years. Like the original populists, the concerns of these voters are not reflected in either parties' policies. But, unlike their late-nineteenth-century counterparts—who combined nationalism with a strong economic and political reform agenda—today's populist constituency is finding its voice primarily on the Right rather than the Left. Kazin (1995) argues that around 1940, American populism "migrated" rightward as the reform impulse in American politics shifted to causes more important to the liberal intelligentsia than to average voters. Despite this year's attacks on economic elites and Sanders's trade nationalism, the American Left cannot credibly assemble "the people" so essential for a successful populist movement given its dependence on minorities and the more cosmopolitan and well educated. American populism in the twenty-first century has a conservative tinge and is felt most acutely in the political turmoil of the Republican Party.

Notes

1. Examples include Britain's Independence Party, France's National Front, Norway's Progress Party, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, Lopez Obrador in Mexico, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and South Korea's Roo Moo-hyun.

2. See, e.g., Bonokowski and Gidron (2016), Hawkins (2009), Kazin (1995), Lee (2006), Mudde (2004), Panizza (2005), Stanley (2008), Rooduijn (2014a), Taggart (2000).

3. See Buric (2016), Milbank (2016), and Brooks (2016) on Donald Trump. Earlier populists have faced similar accusations from prominent leaders or commentators. William F. Buckley, for example, branded George Wallace as a would-be dictator (Kazin 1995). During the 2008 election, Sarah Palin earned such monikers as "a demagogue in a skirt" (Hoeller 2008) and "America's lipstick fascist" (Schaeffer 2008) by her critics.

4. In some accounts of populism, the identity of the populist leader is not considered a component of a minimal definition of populism (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). In other perspectives, the leader's charisma plays a more central role. Albertazzi and McDonnell (2008) argue that central to the leader-follower bond is supporters' views that their leader possesses extraordinary qualities while at the same time being one of, and one with, the people.

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5. A new generation of historians (e.g., Goodwyn 1978; McNall 1988; Postel 2007) takes strong issue with this reading of the original Populists. The complexity of large-scale social movements like the Populists no doubt permits a variety of interpretations, especially in the absence of survey data on movement activists. Even when analysts agree on one feature, they may construe it in different ways. For Hofstadter (1955), the conspiracism of the Populists was pathological. Ostler (1995), on the other hand, sees conspiracism as a mobilization strategy used by populist leaders to legitimize extraordinary political action.

6. Most of the research on populism among the mass public in the United States is historical or interpretive and not based on public opinion. For exceptions, see Bakker, Rooduijn, and Schumacher (2016), Hawkins, Riding, and Mudde (2012), and Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2014).

7. Announcement speeches, unlike candidate debates, are not constrained by having to address particular topics. They typically offer a rationale for why the candidate is running, and, as such, are likely to features diagnoses of what ails the body politic and the candidate's proposed solutions to them.

8. See http://www.dictionsoftware.com/published-studies/

9. We follow here the strategy of Bonokowski and Gidron (2016). In their content analysis of presidential speeches, they find sharp differences between the political parties in terms of the content of the populist claims: Republicans were much more likely to critique political targets whereas Democrats concentrated on economic elites.

10. For example, Hillary Clinton's speech mentions specific social categories nearly ninety times, including factory workers, food servers, farmers, firefighters and police officers, Mexican farmworkers, children with disabilities, poor people, single parents, EMTs, construction workers, women of color, immigrant families, and LGBT Americans. In their own overtime analysis of the phrase, *the American people*, Hart et al. (2005) suggest that the token has been used by candidates as *rhetorical compensation* for the increasing diversity of the American public, a political version of "protesting too much."

11. Consider, for example, these lines from Ben Carson's announcement: "That's who we are. We, Americans, we take care of each other. That's why we are called the United States of America." Counterpose a "we" with a "they" and a boundary is created between the people and their antagonists. In Donald Trump's words: "When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically."

12. Defined as the number of different words divided by total words. Calculated by Diction.

13. Our conclusions are similar to those reached by Viser (2015) and Zhong (2016) but using different methods.

14. The survey questions are coded such that the series measures political *un*responsiveness, and so higher values are indicative of a larger representation gap.

15. $r = .73$

16. Leslie McCall's (2013) content analysis of news magazine coverage of inequality themes over the period from 1980 to 2010 finds a sharp spike in 1994 and 1995. Using Factiva, we counted the number of stories in the *New York Times* that mentioned inequality in the headline or lead paragraph. The number more than tripled between 2011 and 2015.

17. The survey took approximately 16 minutes, on average, to complete. The survey was then weighted based on age, education, race, ideology, and gender to best approximate a nationally representative sample.

18. From the rotated factor loadings, we created three factor scores, one for each of the dimensions listed above (anti-elitism, distrust expertise, and national affiliation). The factor scores all have a mean value of zero and a standard deviation of one.

19. Ideology is measured on a five-point scale from very liberal to very conservative. Anger is measured with a five-point scale (pleased, satisfied, indifferent, frustrated, angry) in response to the question, "What are your feelings about the federal government?" Anomie is a scale comprising two questions "Do you think most people would try to (take advantage of you given the chance/be fair)" and "Most people can be trusted/You can't be too careful in dealing with people." Nativism is a scale comprising three items about support for a border (three-point scale), perceptions of whether too many immigrants are criminals (five-point scale), and opinions on whether immigrants are more of a burden or benefit to America. The conspiracism scale was measured by support for five conspiracy theories about the FDA and pharmaceutical companies, public health officials hiding data linking vaccines and autism, whether Wall Street intentionally orchestrated the 2008 recession, whether a secret cabal controls things, and whether the government

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helped to plan the attacks of 9/11 (see Oliver and Wood 2014). Fundamentalism is measured with Likert scales on statements about biblical inerrancy, End Times prophesy, the power of prayer, and hidden Bible codes. The correlations with all the attitudinal variables control for education, age, ideology, gender, and race. The correlations with ideology only control for education, age, gender, and race.

20. They also tend to be less educated on average.

21. Respondents were asked how much they agreed with the statement on a five-point Likert scale. Anti-elitism has .32 correlation, national affiliation a –.11 correlation.

22. The full statement was "Although special interests sometimes prevail, when ordinary Americans come together they usually prevail." Responses were on a five-point Likert scale. It had a –.19 correlation with anti-elitism, a .21 correlation with national affiliation.

23. To make them comparable, for each of the scales, the individual items were put in a principle component analysis that generated a factor score with the mean value set to 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The anger item was rescaled so that its lowest value was –1 and highest value was 1.

24. Financial pessimism was measured by responses to three items: "When you think your children are your age, will their standard of living be (better/same/worse) than yours?" "Do you feel anxious about having enough money?" (five-point scale); and "In the coming year, do you think your finances will (get worse/stay the same/get better)?"

25. David Frum's (2016) analysis is particularly penetrating on this aspect of Trump's appeal.

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