

UNLOCKING THE KEYSTONE STATE: WHERE AND WHY DONALD TRUMP WON IN PENNSYLVANIA

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Abstract

How did Donald J. Trump best Hillary Clinton in Pennsylvania in the 2016 general presidential election? This study seeks to help answer that question by examining where Donald Trump won at the county level in Pennsylvania. Following this examination, some potential reasons for Trump's victory in Pennsylvania will be considered. The county analysis is accomplished by examining percentage totals for the Republican, Democratic, and other candidates at the county level for the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016 Presidential elections. Trendline graphs showing the vote percentages from these five presidential elections were made for each of the 67 counties of Pennsylvania. This study hypothesizes that Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and the counties surrounding Philadelphia exhibited historically-consistent percentages for Hillary Clinton while Donald Trump out-performed in the rest of the state's counties. This study utilizes qualitative and quantitative data. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Introduction

The lines wound around the arena for what seemed like miles. Entering the arena took more than an hour. A young man huddled in the crisp fall weather with his mother and brother as they waited in the extensive line. The excitement around them was palpable, with many individuals wearing red hats and a few tractor trailers sitting in the parking lot. These trailers were painted with slogans, patriotic images, and pictures of the man who all those in line were waiting to see. They were waiting to see Republican Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump. It was November 4, 2016, just four days before the 2016 general presidential election, and crowds of people waited for hours to get into the rally. Candidate Trump spoke to an electrified crowd totaling around 10,000 at the GIANT Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania (PA) (Esack, 2016). At the beginning of his speech, to the shouts and cheers of the throng, candidate Trump said the following:

Thank you very much everybody. This is amazing. And you know what, we have 7,000 people outside trying to get in, can you believe this?... In four days we are going to win the great state of Pennsylvania... and we are going to win back the White House. We are going to win it back. Unbelievable, look at this, maybe because I went to school in Pennsylvania, maybe that's the reason... Maybe. My kids went to school in Pennsylvania. A smart place, Pennsylvania... We're going to do it, folks. We're going to do it. Oh, boy, are we going to win -- we are going to win Pennsylvania big. Look at this... I hear we set a new record for this building. And by the way, I didn't have to bring JLo or Jay Z, the only way she [Hillary Clinton] gets anybody... Just me, no guitar, no piano, no nothing... But you know what we do have and it's all of us, it's all the same, we all have great ideas and great vision for our country, that's what we have. (Trump, 2016, 00:02:05-00:09:45)

But Trump's confidence on that chilly November day was not completely grounded according to the polls. According to the Real Clear Politics (RCP) average on November 4, 2016, Donald Trump trailed Hillary Clinton by 2.6% in Pennsylvania ("Pennsylvania," 2016). However, four days later, Donald J. Trump became the first Republican presidential candidate since George H.W. Bush in 1988 to win the Keystone State (Fontaine & Zwick, 2016). Trump won Pennsylvania by .7% of the vote, winning 56 of PA's 67 counties (Pennsylvania Department of State, 2018).

How did Donald Trump unlock the Keystone State? A full treatment of this

question is far beyond the purview of this study. However, this study seeks to answer the question: “where did Donald Trump win in the Keystone state?” Specifically, the study seeks to examine whether Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Philadelphia’s surrounding counties turned out with historically-consistent percentages for Hillary Clinton while the rest of the counties in Pennsylvania out-performed historic trends and secured the victory for Donald Trump. After answering this question, this study will propose some potential reasons for why Pennsylvanians voted for Donald Trump. The hypothesis of this study is that Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Philadelphia’s surrounding counties exhibited historically-consistent percentages for Hillary Clinton while Donald Trump outperformed in the rest of the state’s counties, giving him the victory.

Literature Review

The current research on and coverage of Trump’s victory in Pennsylvania is varied and incomplete. Certain articles discussed Donald Trump’s margins of victory in Pennsylvania’s 67 counties or the number of votes he garnered in the state as a whole (Fontaine & Zwick, 2016; Meko, Lu, & Gamio, 2016; Meyer, 2016). In addition, certain sources have endeavored to give a first-hand look at Trump voters and supporters in Pennsylvania via interviews with these individuals (“1 Year Later,” 2017; Perry, 2018; Saul, 2016; Zaitchik, 2016). While they provide fascinating vignettes of grassroot Trump supporters in the Keystone State, these sources are merely anecdotal in nature. As a result, they are not terribly instructive for academic purposes. As of now, academic studies have not focused on “why” Trump won the counties that he did in PA. Studies and commentary have focused more on broad explanations for why Trump won the election in general, and Pennsylvania in particular. For example, Francis Fukuyama propounded the idea that Trump won the 2016 election by identifying two real problems in the American political system: Growing inequality between the nation’s elite and working class and special interest control of the Federal government (Fukuyama, 2016). The inequality Fukuyama discussed is addressed by Kokotovic and Kurecic (2017) who cited white, working-class alienation as a reason why Pennsylvania in 2016 saw “a structural break in voting patterns” (p. 761). The authors asserted that Trump’s appeal to white, working-class voters can be best understood via the lens of public choice theory, wherein each individual votes for what is most economically advantageous for them and best fits their self-interest (Kokotovic & Kurecic, 2017). Pollak and Schweikart (2017) concurred when they asserted the following:

The white vote was especially important in...Pennsylvania. There disenfranchised voters who had been unemployed by Obama’s en-

ergy and trade policies had voted for Trump in the primaries and were willing to give him a chance in the Oval Office. By small but consistent margins these white voters would make the difference in the election.

Inglehart and Norris (2016) categorized this view on Trump's victory as "the economic inequality perspective" (p. 2).

For Inglehart and Norris (2016), this perspective included a recognition that changes in the world economy, including globalization and technological advancement, have left certain sectors of the United States' workforce behind. Ferguson, Jorgensen, and Chen (2018) described this increasing inequality as the "dual economy" that locks increasingly more Americans out of the middle class and into a life of unsteady, low wage employment, and, all too often, steep debts" (p. 2). In response to these developments, the "economic have nots," including the unemployed, white working-class voters, single parent families, and poor whites in cities, develop a greater distrust for the nation's political elites and are more open to the appeals of populist candidates, such as Donald Trump (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). The appeal of such candidates for the economically downtrodden, according to Inglehart and Norris (2016), is blaming other groups, for example the establishment and illegal immigrants, for taking prosperity away from "us."

Steven Pressman (2017) examined income data since the 1960s and concluded that the shrinking middle class in the United States contributed to Donald Trump's victory. Inderjeet Parmar (2017) examined the impact of this economic inequality on the legitimacy of the American ruling elite and, specifically, its effect on the United States' politics. He asserted that the mindset that has driven income inequality has become instantiated in the politics and policies of the two major parties, alienating large numbers of voters and contributing to Trump's triumph (Parmar, 2017). Trump's victory, along with Bernie Sanders' appeal, is the "political manifestation" of the elite's legitimacy crisis (Parmar, 2017, p. 18).

However, Eric A. Posner contended that the "economic nationalism" championed by Trump and embraced by many of his economically disadvantaged supporters is not a new phenomenon in American history (Posner, 2017). In fact, Posner asserted that this inward, "American first," focus in economic matters has great precedent in the history of the United States, dating back to the 1800s (Posner, 2017, p. 13). In addition, Rothwell and Diego-Rosell's study concluded there is "mixed evidence that economic distress has motivated Trump support" (Rothwell & Diego-Rosell, 2016, p. 1). This study found that Trump supporters earn "relatively high incomes" and "that there appears to be no link whatsoever between greater exposure to trade competition or competition from immigrant workers and support"

for Trump's policies (Rothwell & Diego-Rosell, 2016, p. 19). However, this study does find that support for Trump is heightened in regions or communities with "low levels of social or economic well-being" (Rothwell & Diego-Rosell, 2016, p. 19).

Inglehart and Norris (2016) examined another theory of populist success, called "the cultural backlash thesis" (p. 1). In this theory, populists such as Donald Trump benefit from the reaction of more traditional voters in a society against progressive values and policies that have been gaining influence and greater adherence in that society (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Another study by Paul Manuel (2017) examined Inglehart and Norris's models of cultural backlash and economic insecurity through examining three groups of "issue clusters": the secularization of America, "the rural-urban cleavage," and "empathy for the forgotten man and woman" (p. 212). In relation to the cultural backlash thesis, Manuel (2017) found that the 2016 election did the following:

[It] ignited the old cleavage between the secular values of a majority of the population living in the urban areas, university towns, and coastal areas, and the religious values of most people living in rural areas, especially in the south and middle parts of the country. (p. 218)

Another potential factor in Trump's Pennsylvania victory explored in the literature is the relation between mortality, public health, and voting patterns. In their study, Bilal, Cooper, and Knapp (2018) found that there is an increase in mortality rates in counties that voted for Trump in 2016. Particularly, they found that "counties with wider health inequalities in life expectancy were more likely to vote Republican in 2016, regardless of previous voting patterns," and that counties with increasing rates of mortality and "wider health inequalities" in the past fifteen years shifted towards voting for Trump. Jacob Bor (2017) found similar results in his study where he says that there "was less support for Trump in counties experiencing greater survival gains" and that "[c]ounties in which life expectancy stagnated or declined saw a 10-percentage point increase in the Republican vote share between 2008 and 2016" (p. 1560).

Data and Methods

This study seeks to examine where Donald J. Trump won in Pennsylvania. To that end, data from the Pennsylvania Department of State was compiled and formulated into graphs for all sixty-seven counties in Pennsylvania. These graphs record the percentage of the vote received for the Republican candidate, Democratic candidate, and third-party tickets for the presidential elections of 2000, 2004,

2008, 2012, and 2016. The trends created by this data allow the reader to see how Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton performed or underperformed against historical norms. Before examining the data, five clarifications are necessary. First, third-party tickets are categorized as “other” on the graphs. The other category includes the total percentage of all non-major party candidates. These candidates include, for example in the 2016 election, Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson and Green Party candidate Jill Stein. The research groups these percentages together because this study concerns itself with the two major party candidates of 2016: Hillary Clinton and Donald J. Trump. As a result, the graphs are mainly concerned with portraying the major parties’ vote percentages throughout PA.

Second, the major party candidates for the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016 elections are the following respectively: Bush/Cheney (R), Gore/Lieberman (D); Bush/Cheney (R), Kerry/Edwards (D); McCain/Palin (R), Obama/Biden (D); Romney/Ryan (R), Obama/Biden (D); Trump/Pence (R), Clinton/Kaine (D). Third, the trend lines on the graphs are colored according to the modern color schemes for the two major parties, red for the Republican Party (GOP) and blue for the Democratic Party (Enda, 2012). Fourth, by “historically-consistent percentages,” this study means no percentage varying by more than four percentage points from the 2012 presidential election results. Fifth, by “out-performed” this study means greater percentages than those gained by Mitt Romney in 2012.

Research

The research will be divided into two sections. The first will show the graphs made from the Pennsylvania Department of State’s data. All graphs in the first section of the research are taken from the PA Department of State’s website (Pennsylvania Department of State, 2018). The second will discuss the results shown by the graphs and their relation to the hypothesis.

Section I

The following two figures provide information necessary to understanding the graphs in section one of the research. Figure 1 shows the overall results of the 2000 to 2016 general Presidential elections in Pennsylvania. Figure 2 is a map of Pennsylvania with its sixty-seven counties. These figures serve as a reference for the graphs in section one of the research.

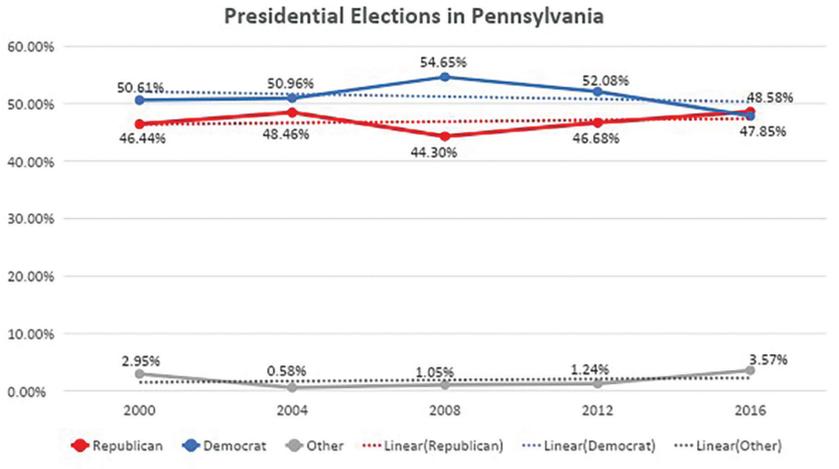


Figure 1. Presidential election data: Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

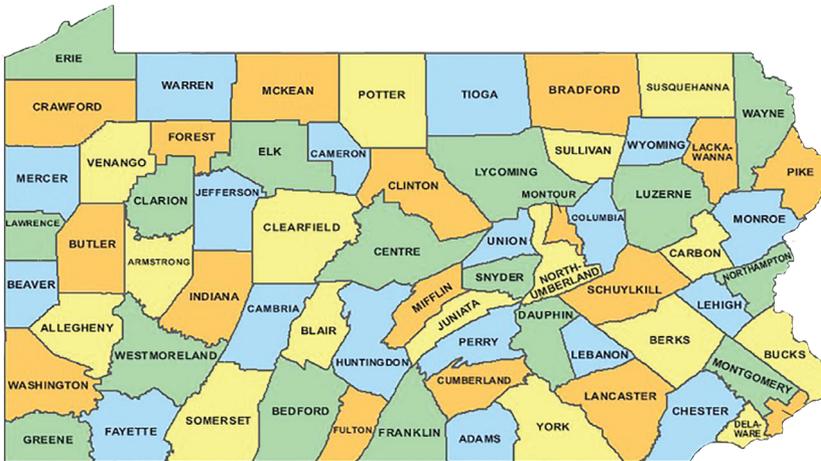


Figure 2. Map of Pennsylvania counties (Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, 2016).

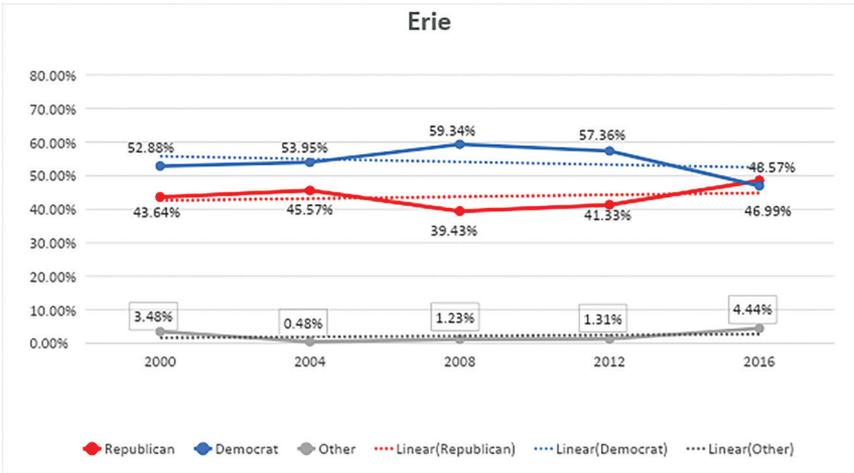


Figure 3. Presidential election data: Erie County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

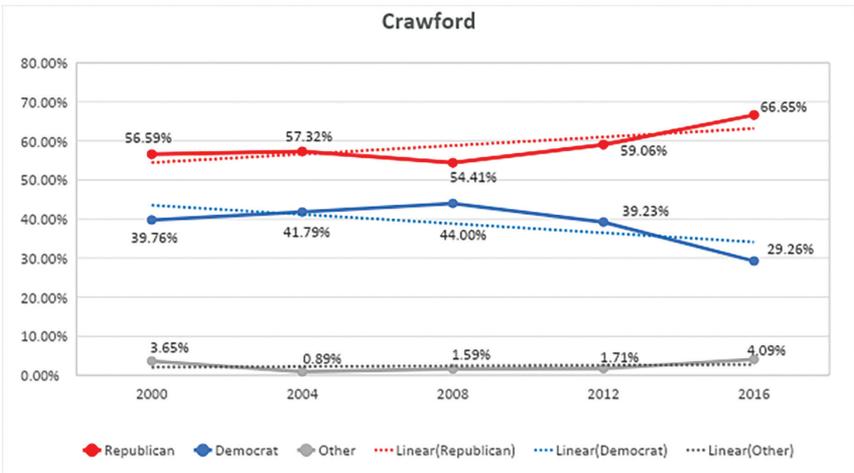


Figure 4. Presidential election data: Crawford County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

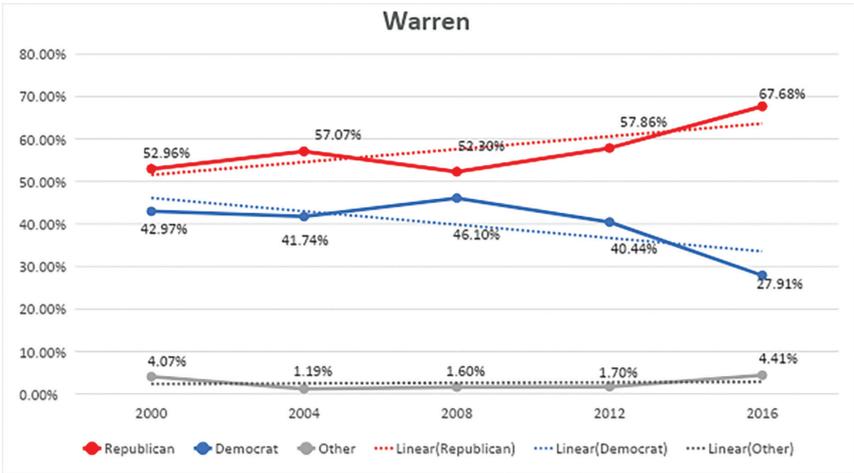


Figure 5. Presidential election data: Warren County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

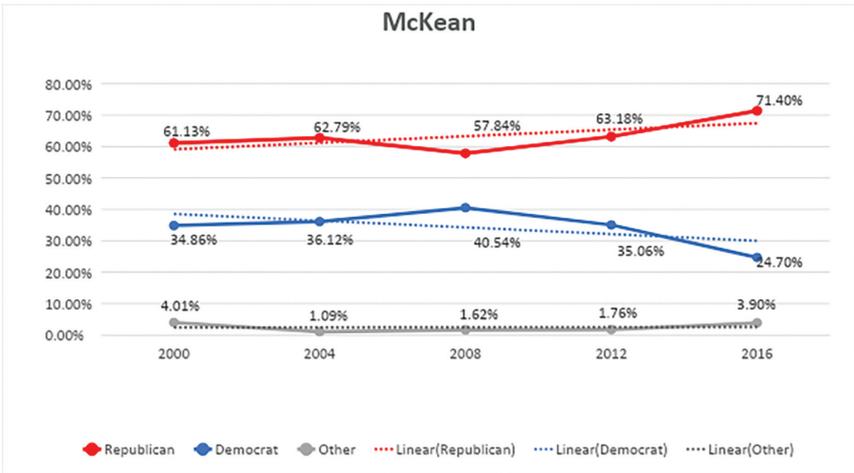


Figure 6. Presidential election data: McKean County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

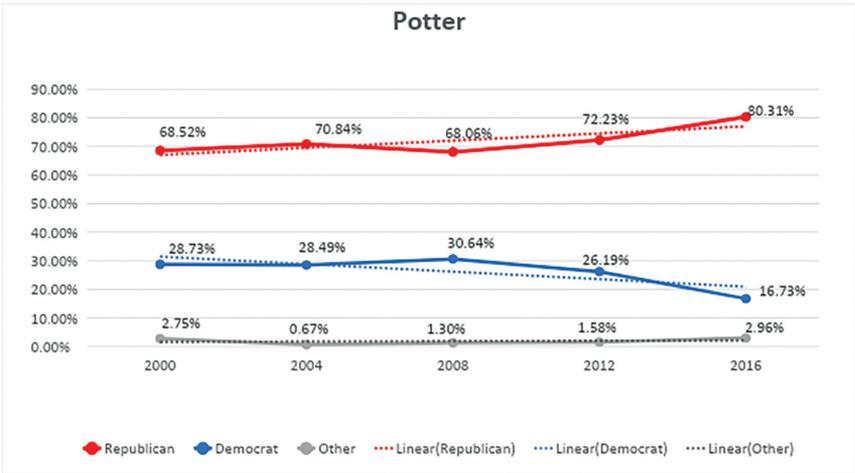


Figure 7. Presidential election data: Potter County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

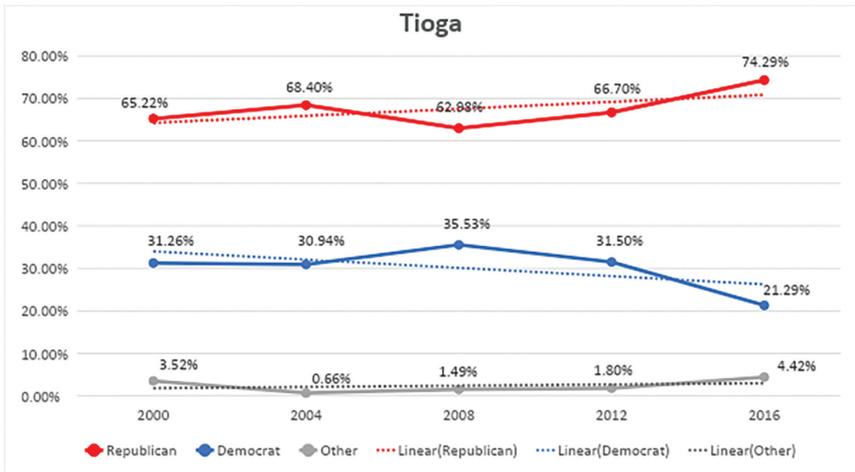


Figure 8. Presidential election data: Tioga County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

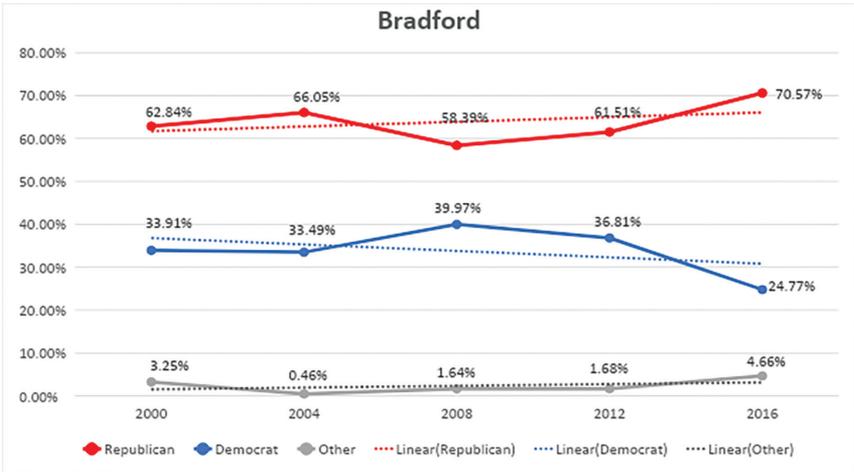


Figure 9. Presidential election data: Bradford County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

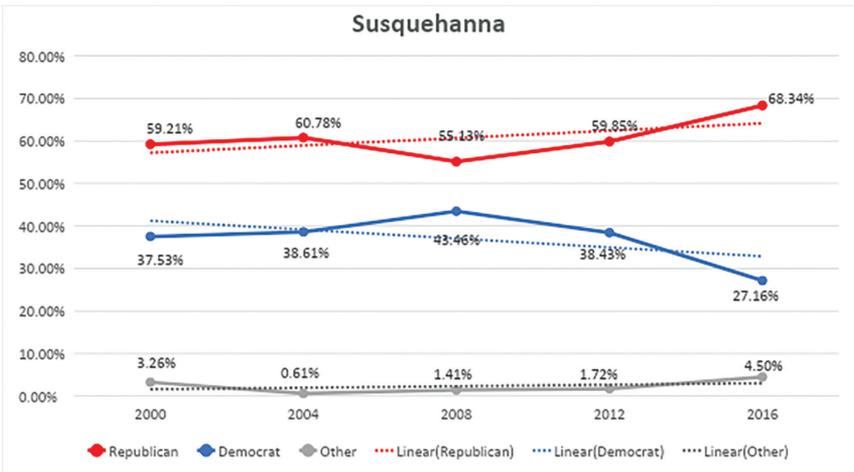


Figure 10. Presidential election data: Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

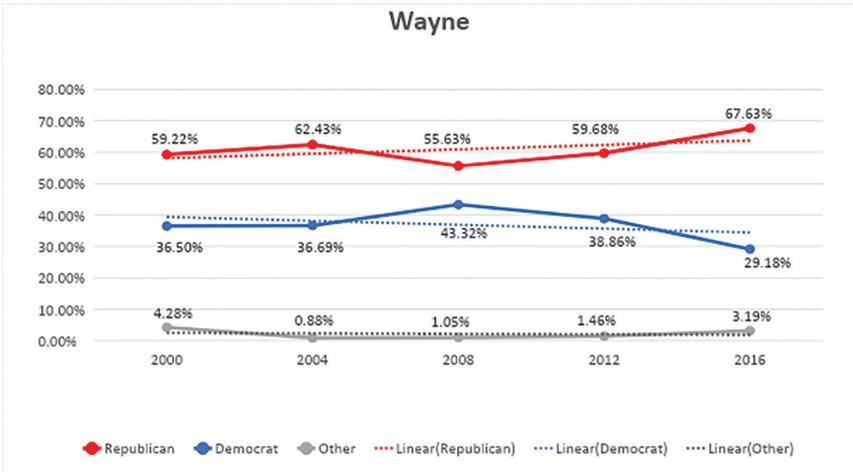


Figure 11. Presidential election data: Wayne County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

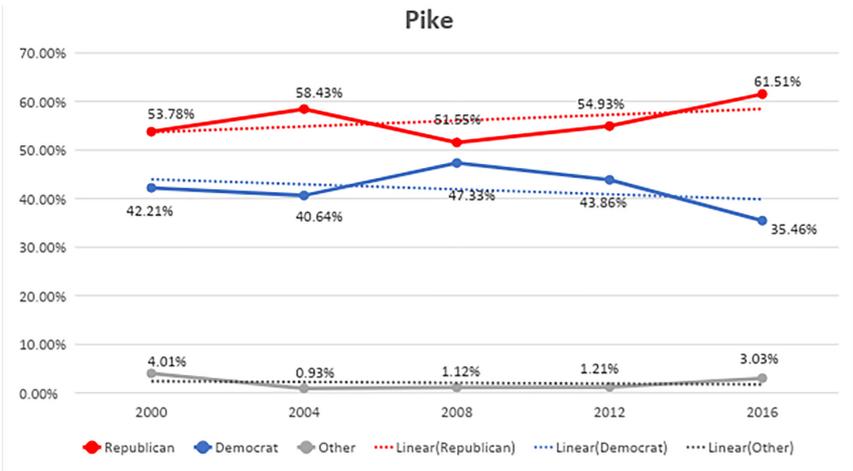


Figure 12. Presidential election data: Pike County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

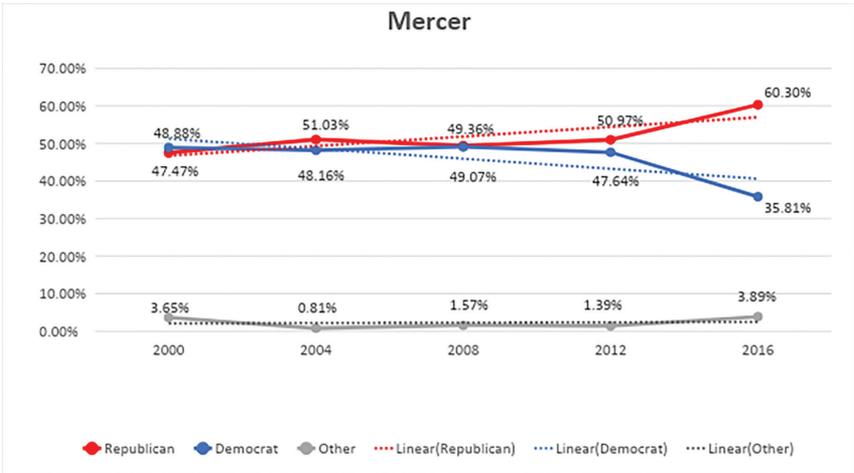


Figure 13. Presidential election data: Mercer County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

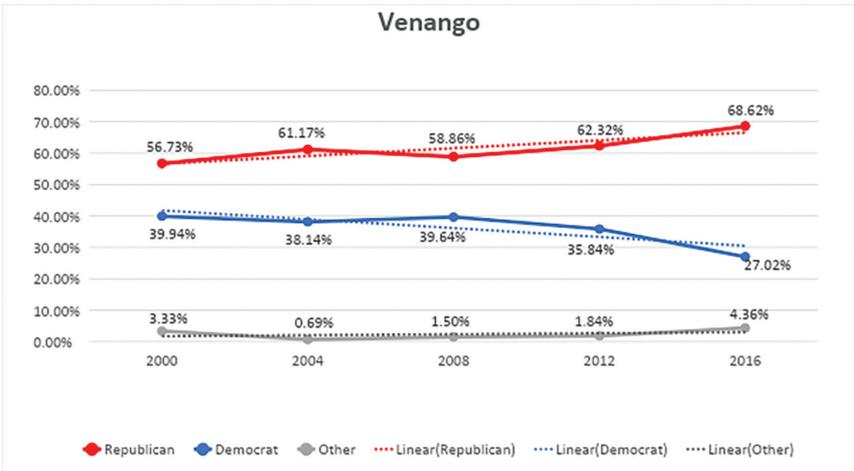


Figure 14. Presidential election data: Venango County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

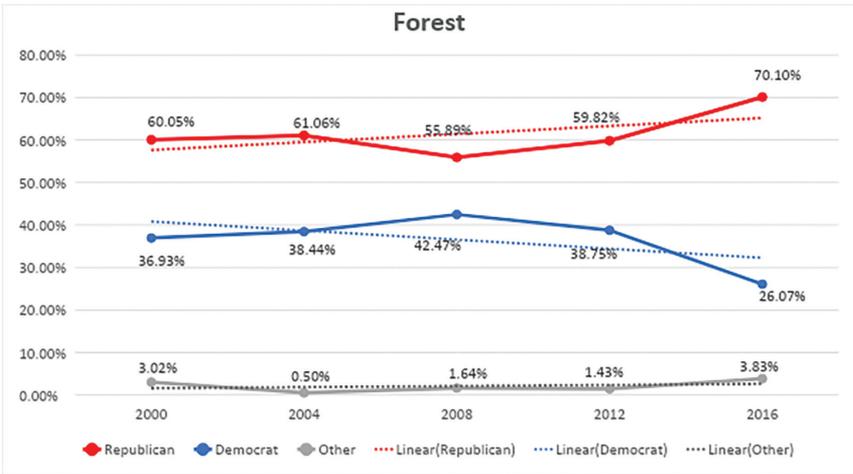


Figure 15. Presidential election data: Forest County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

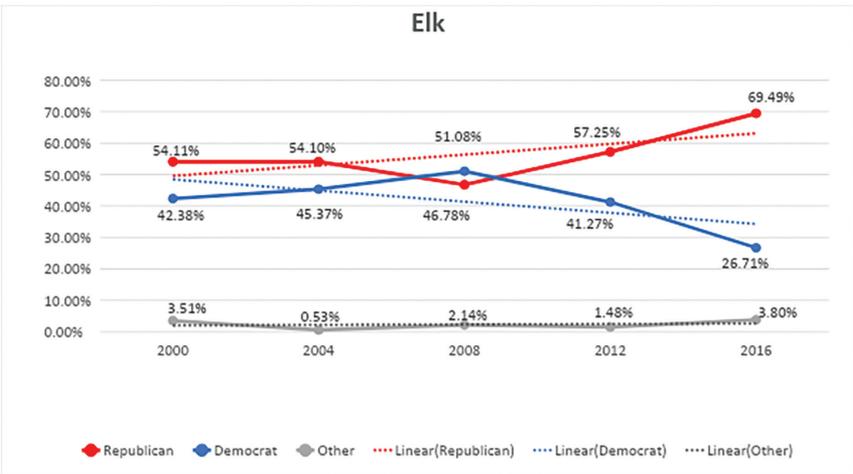


Figure 16. Presidential election data: Elk County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

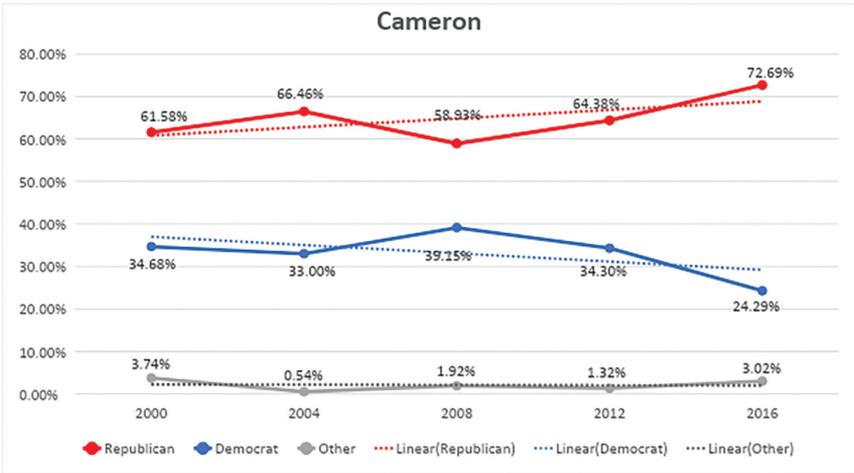


Figure 17. Presidential election data: Cameron County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

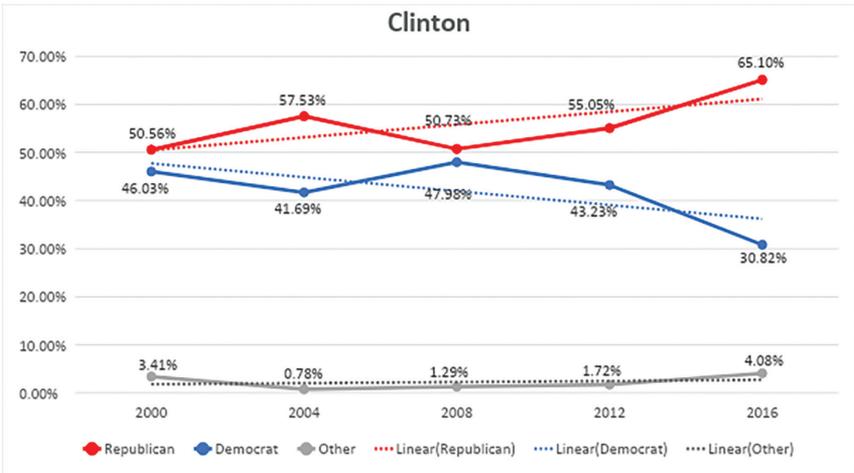


Figure 18. Presidential election data: Clinton County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

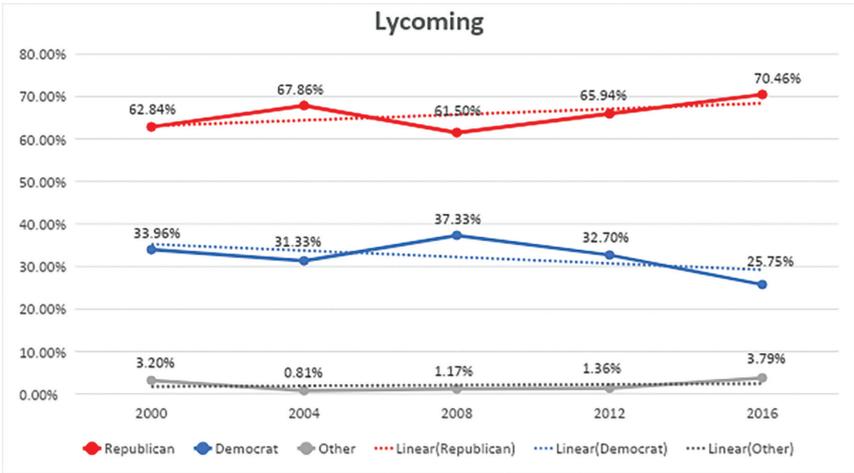


Figure 19. Presidential election data: Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

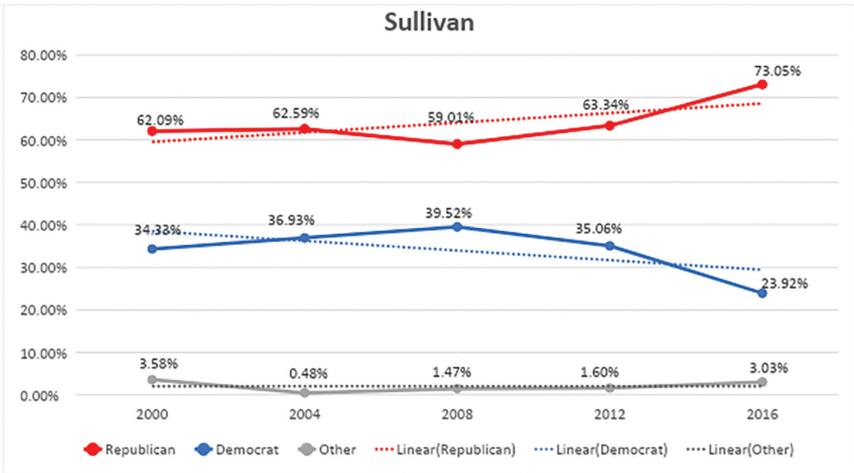


Figure 20. Presidential election data: Sullivan County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

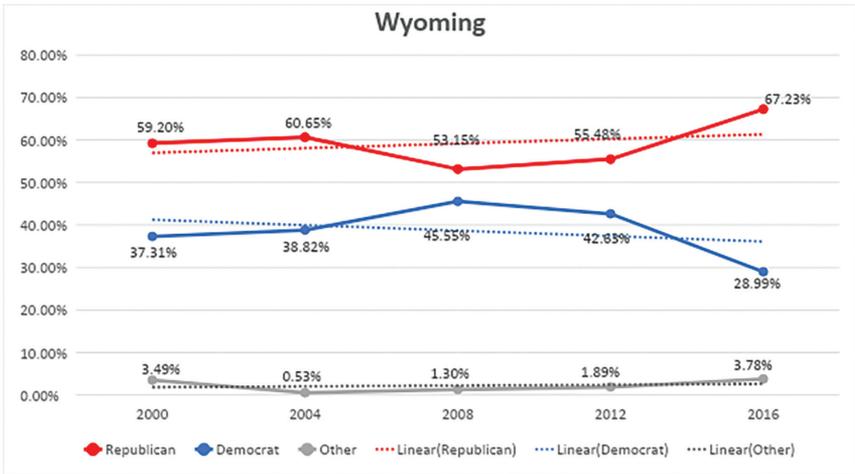


Figure 21. Presidential election data: Wyoming County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

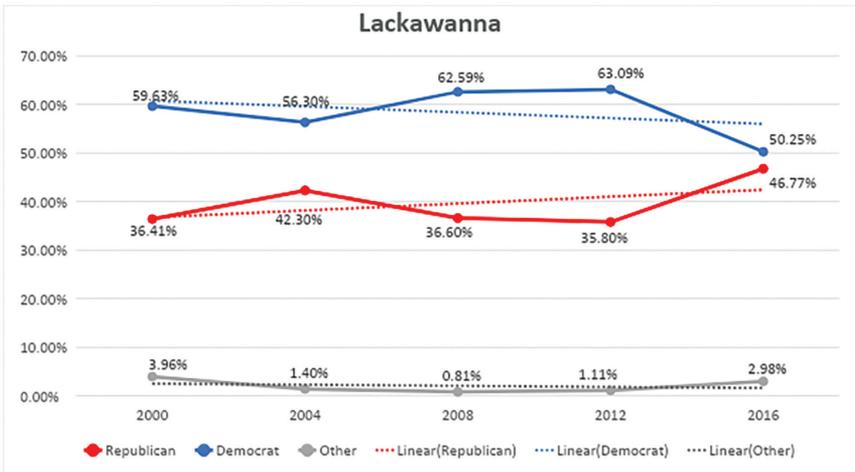


Figure 22. Presidential election data: Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

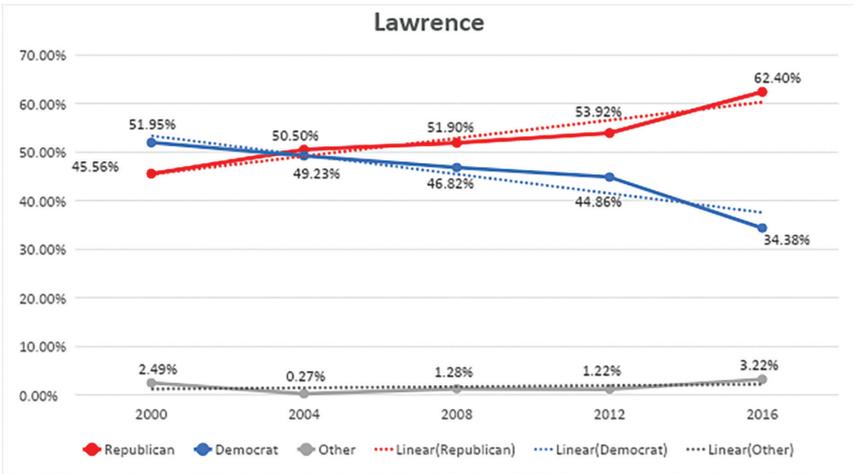


Figure 23. Presidential election data: Lawrence County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

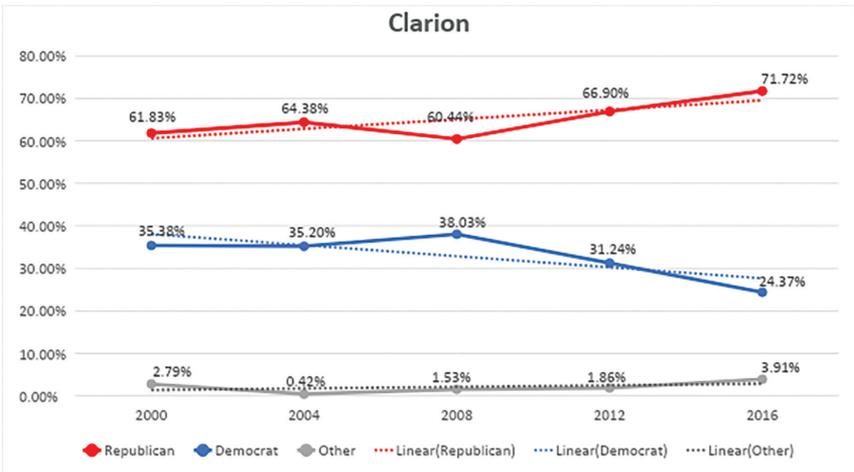


Figure 24. Presidential election data: Clarion County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

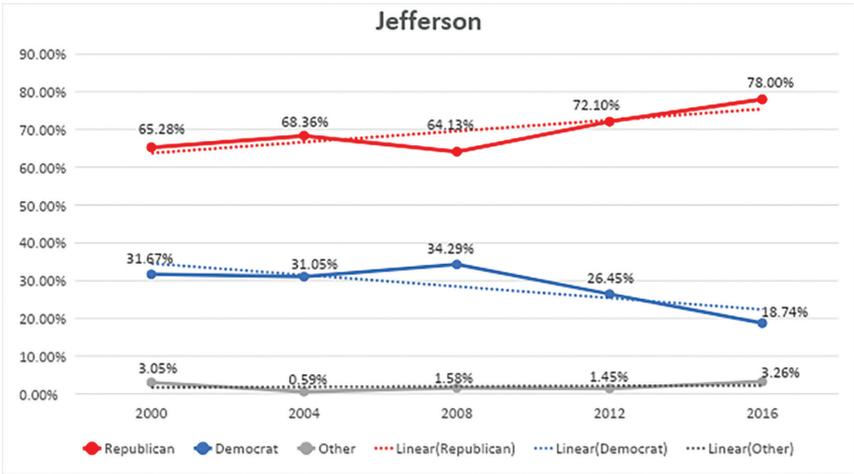


Figure 25. Presidential election data: Jefferson County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

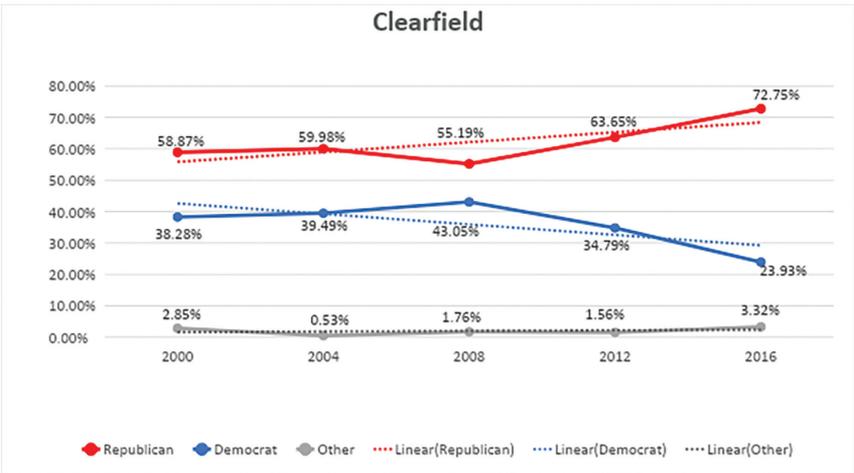


Figure 26. Presidential election data: Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

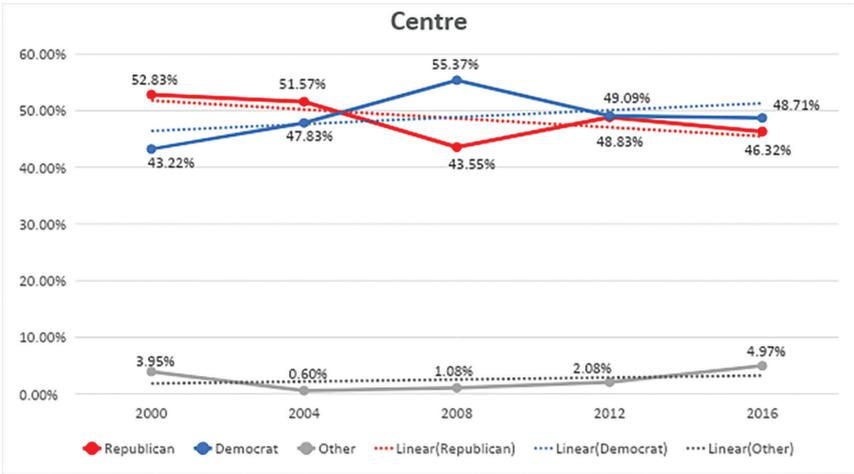


Figure 27. Presidential election data: Centre County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

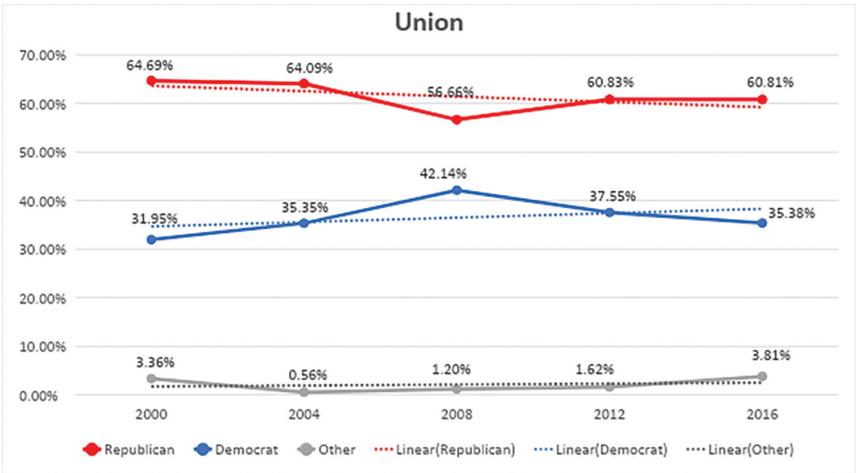


Figure 28. Presidential election data: Union County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

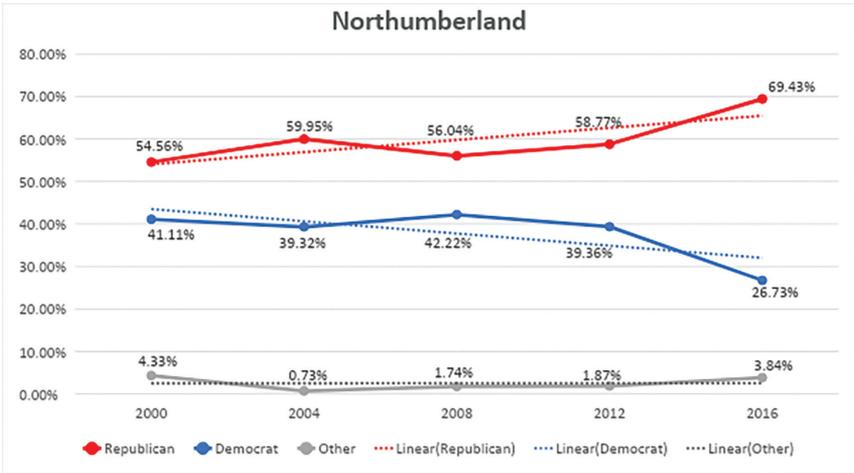


Figure 29. Presidential election data: Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

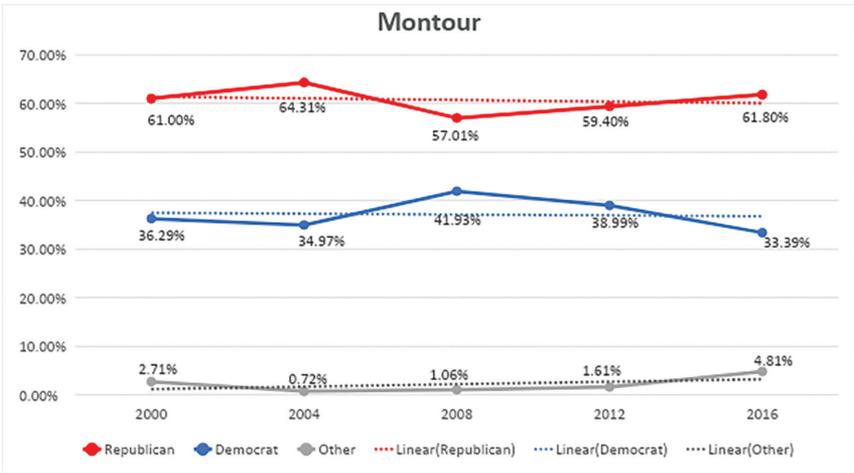


Figure 30. Presidential election data: Montour County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

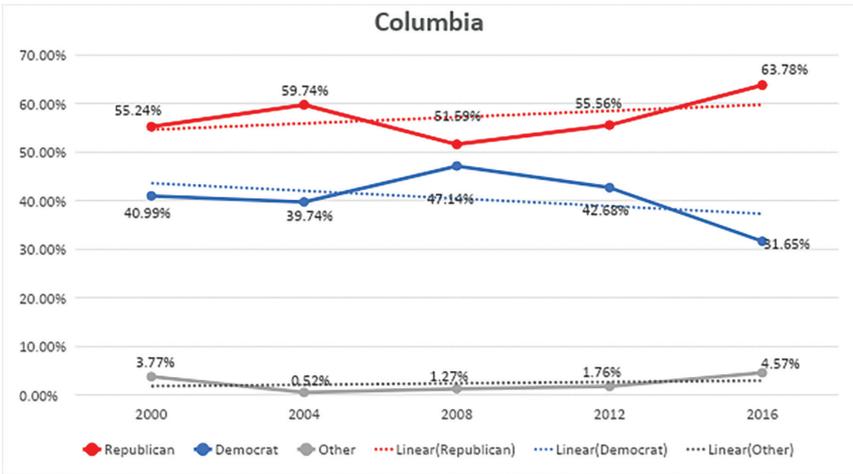


Figure 31. Presidential election data: Columbia County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

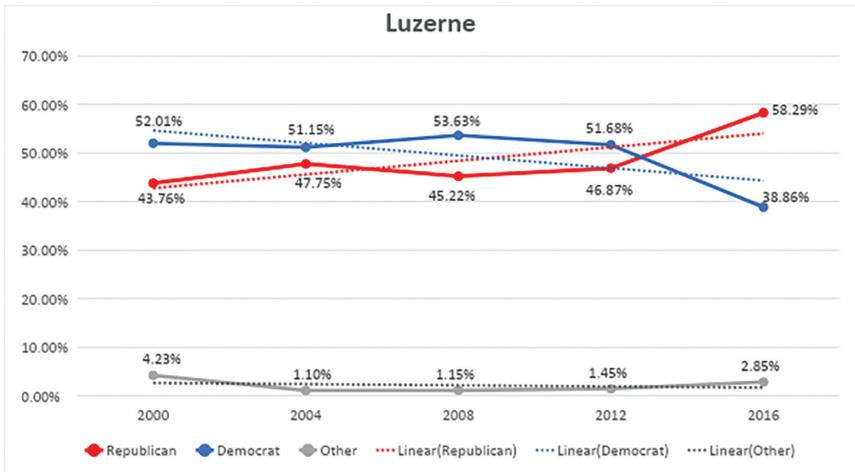


Figure 32. Presidential election data: Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

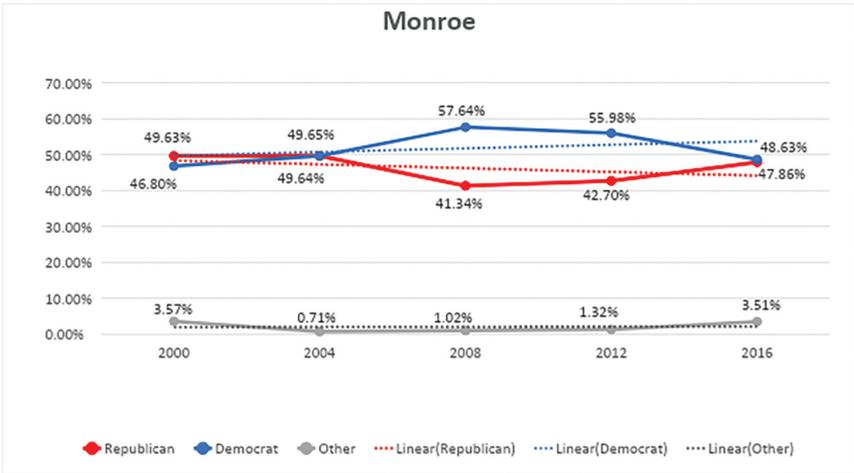


Figure 33. Presidential election data: Monroe County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

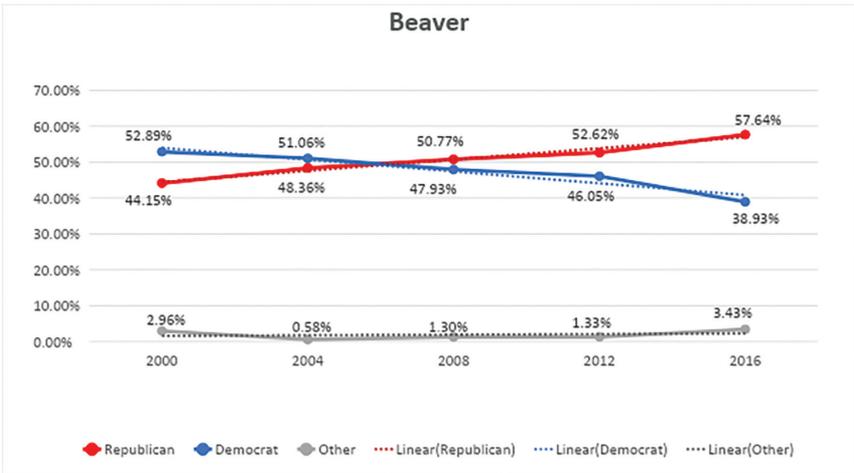


Figure 34. Presidential election data: Beaver County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

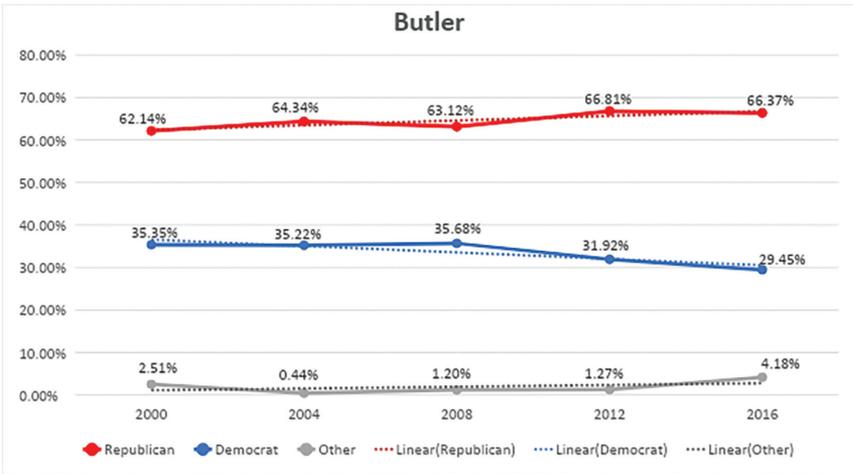


Figure 35. Presidential election data: Butler County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

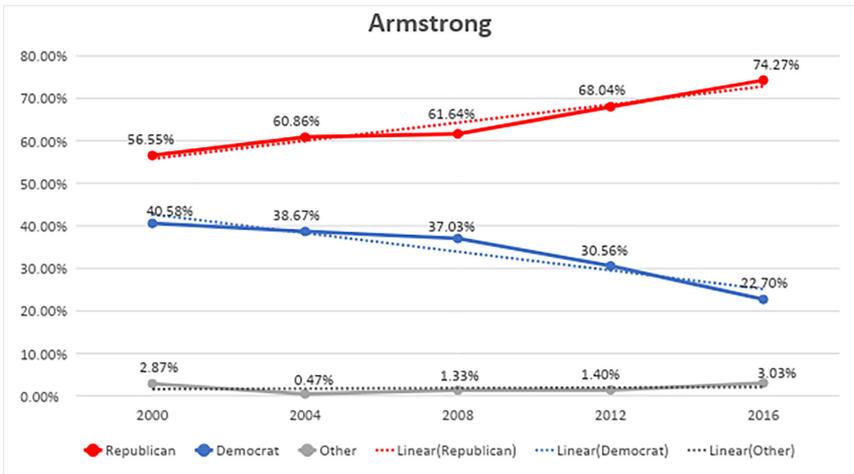


Figure 36. Presidential election data: Armstrong County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

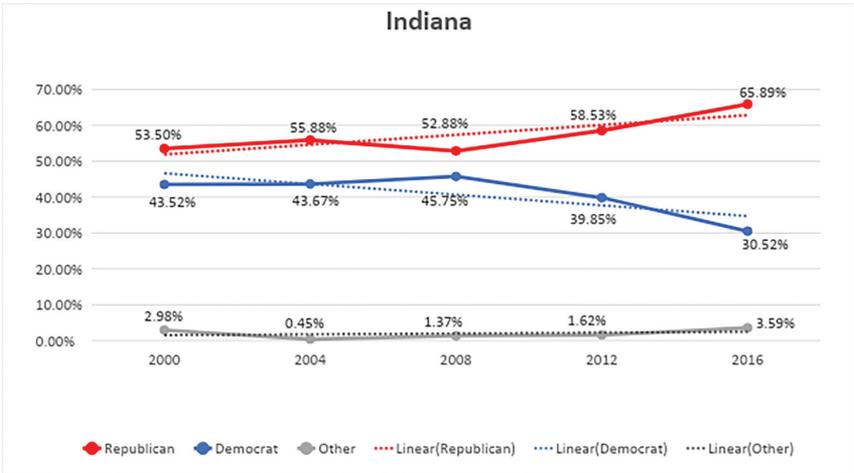


Figure 37. Presidential election data: Indiana County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

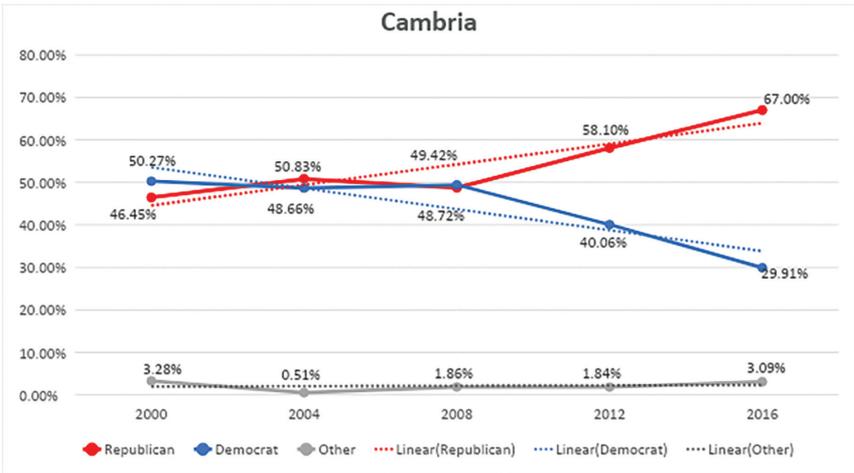


Figure 38. Presidential election data: Cambria County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

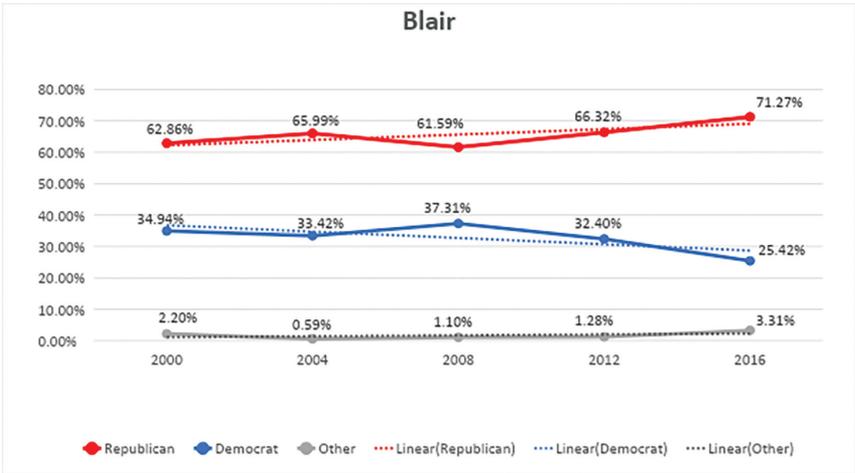


Figure 39. Presidential election data: Blair County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

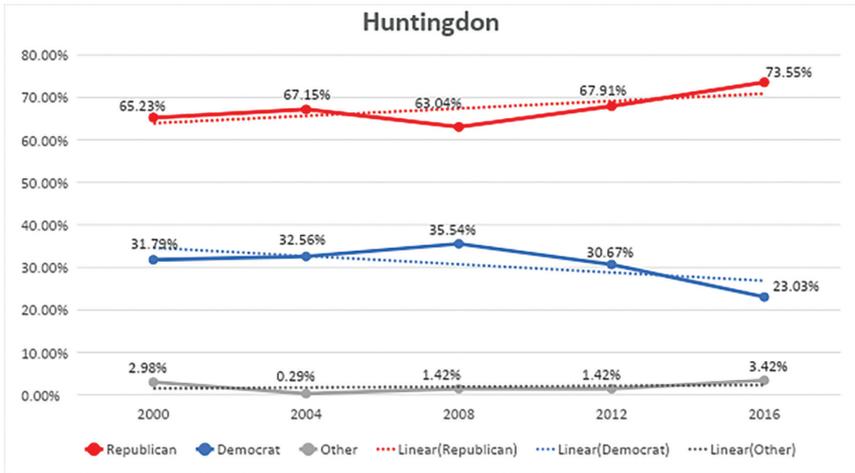


Figure 40. Presidential election data: Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

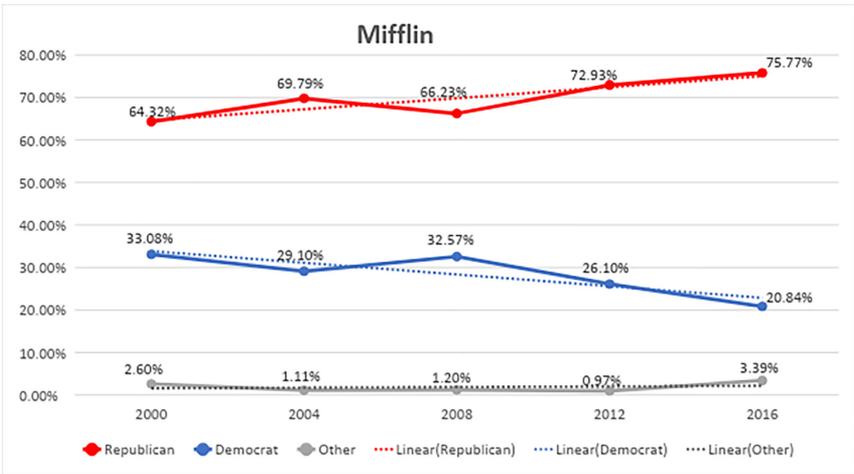


Figure 41. Presidential election data: Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

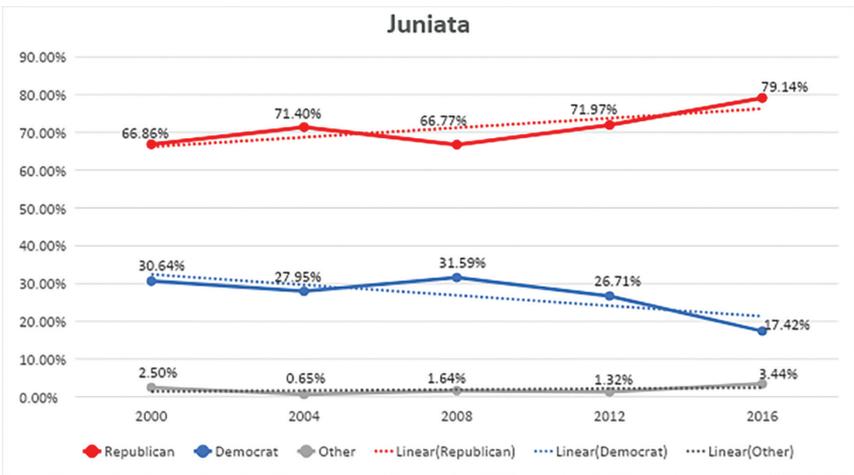


Figure 42. Presidential election data: Juniata County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

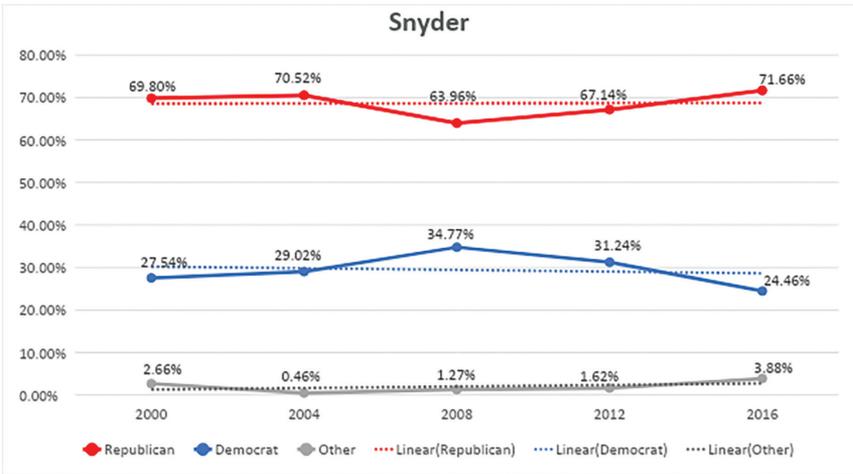


Figure 43. Presidential election data: Snyder County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

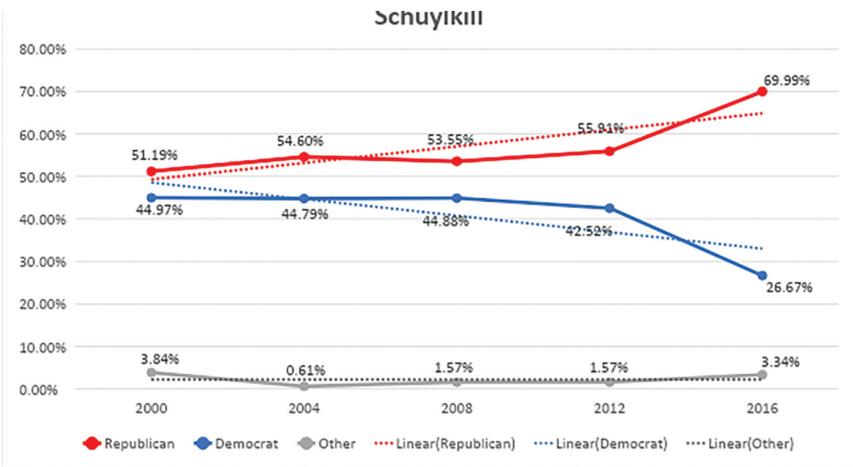


Figure 44. Presidential election data: Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

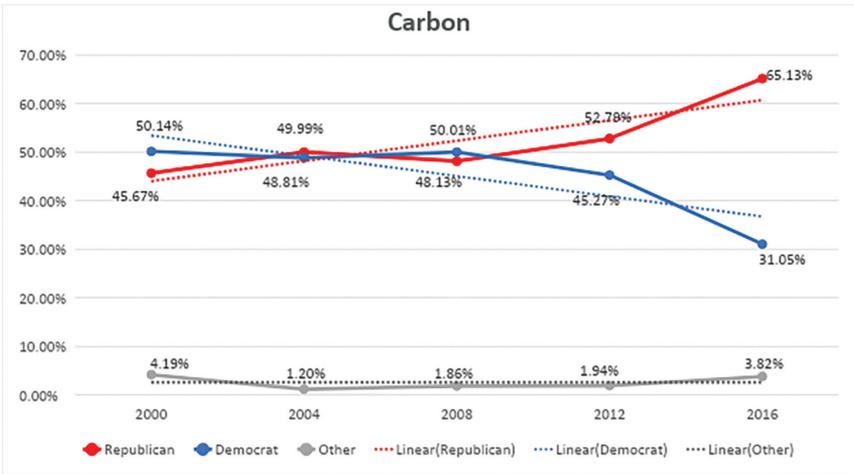


Figure 45. Presidential election data: Carbon County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

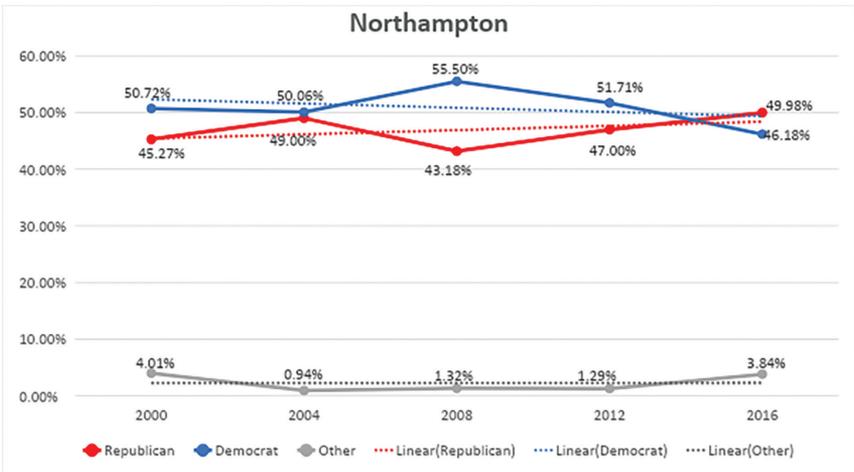


Figure 46. Presidential election data: Northampton County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016

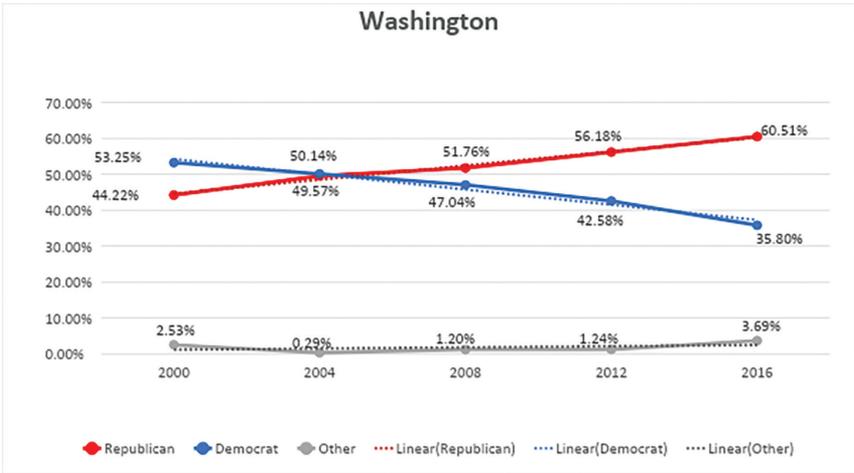


Figure 47. Presidential election data: Washington County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

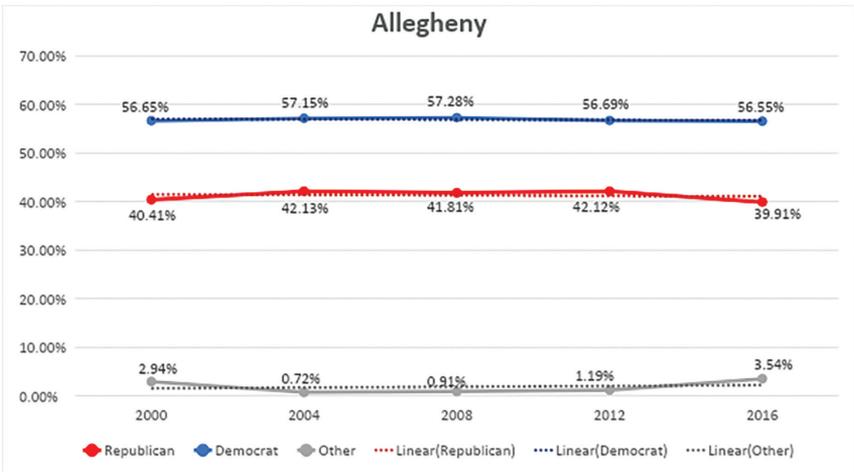


Figure 48. Presidential election data: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

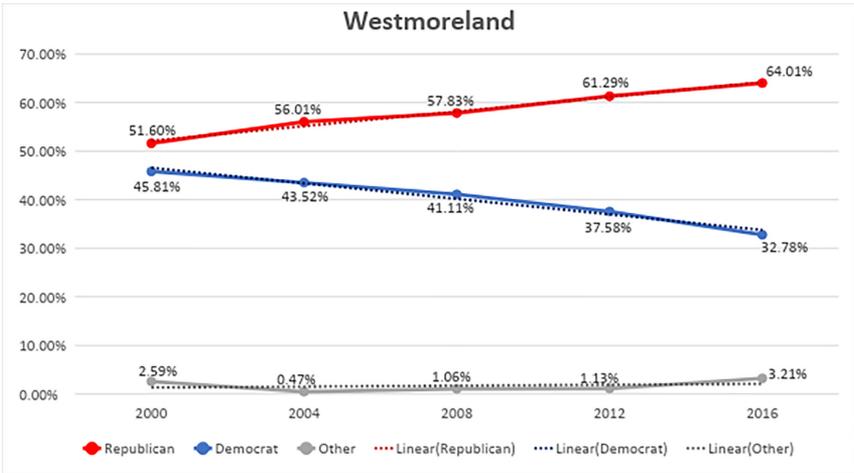


Figure 49. Presidential election data: Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

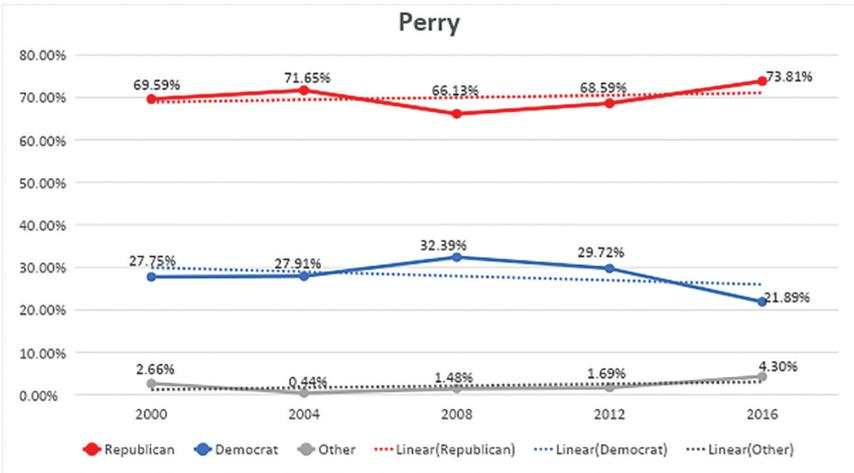


Figure 50. Presidential election data: Perry County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

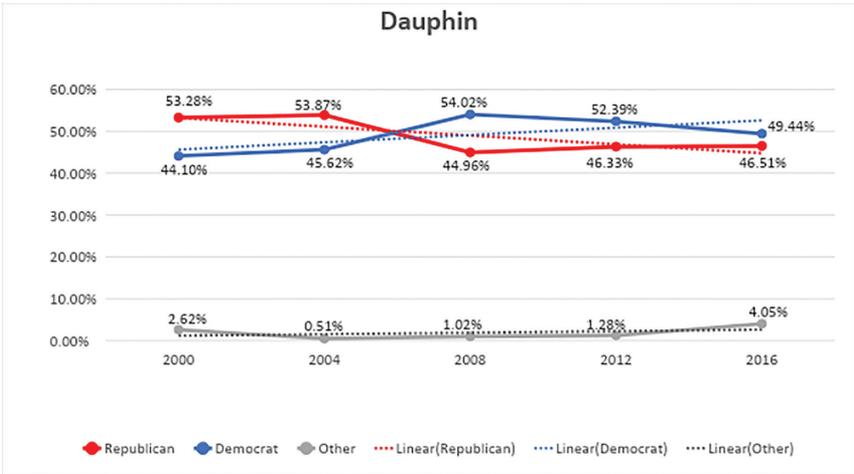


Figure 51. Presidential election data: Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

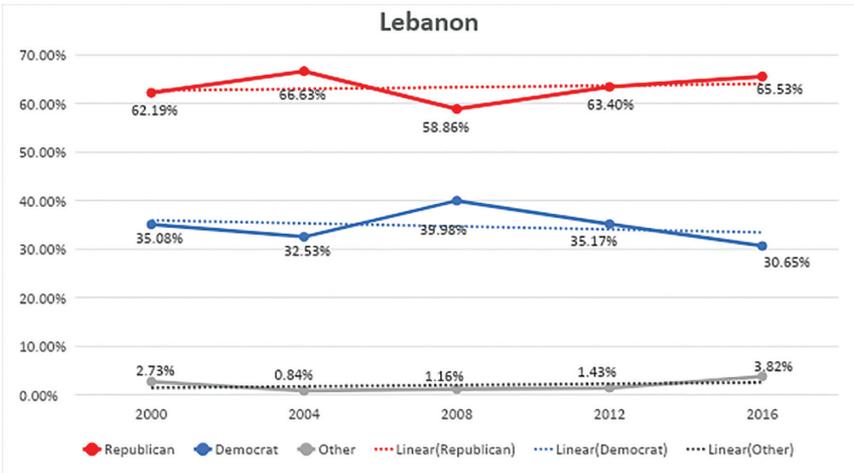


Figure 52. Presidential election data: Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

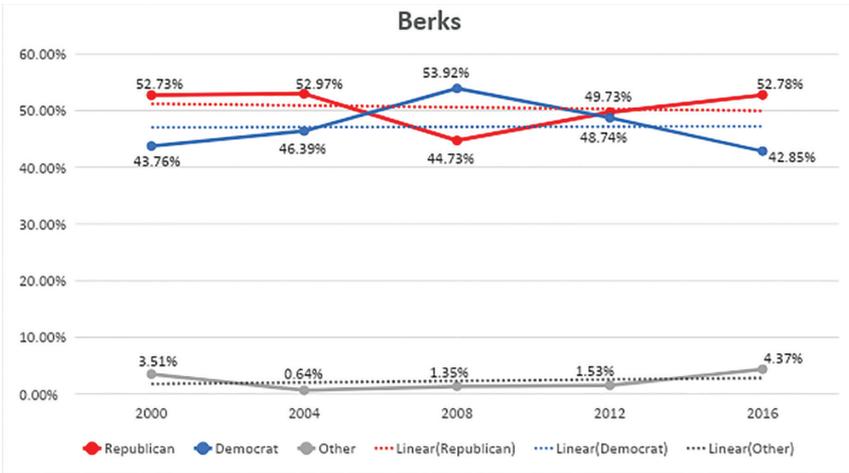


Figure 53. Presidential election data: Berks County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

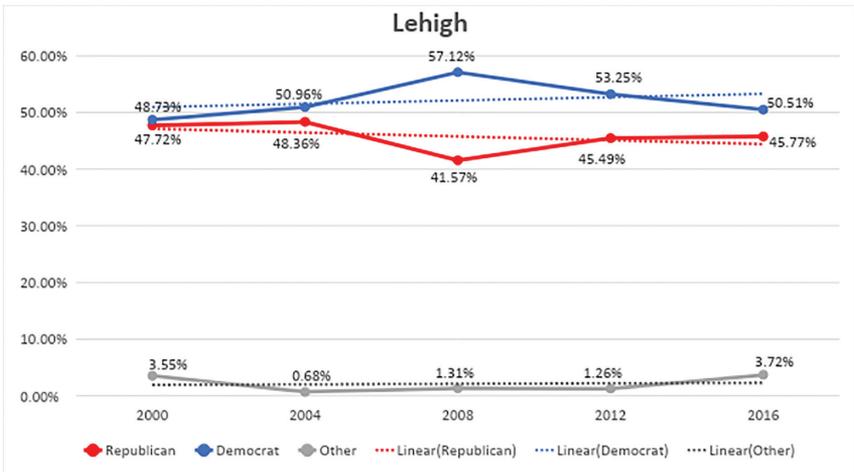


Figure 54. Presidential election data: Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

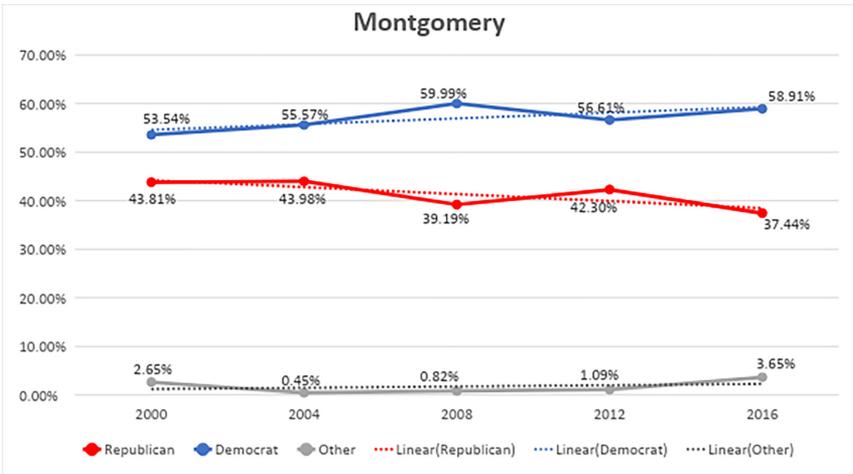


Figure 55. Presidential election data: Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

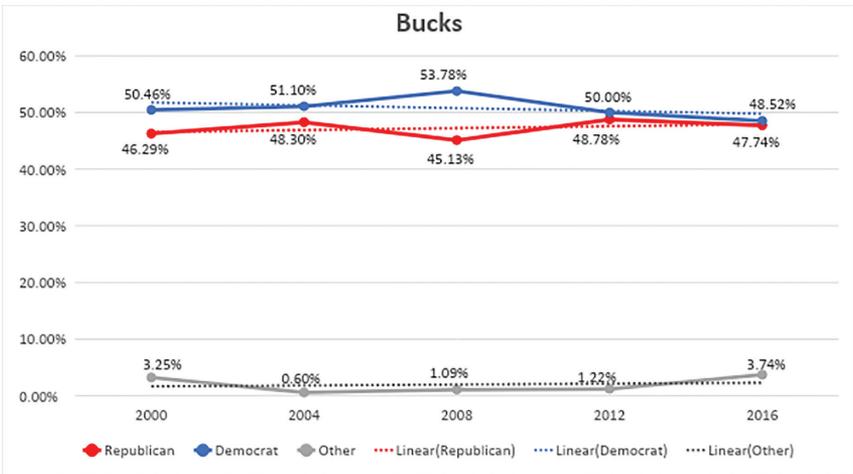


Figure 56. Presidential election data: Bucks County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

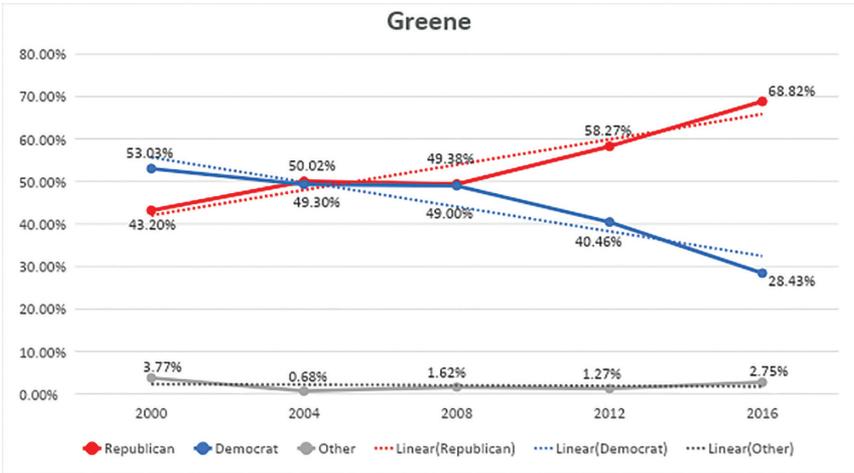


Figure 57. Presidential election data: Greene County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

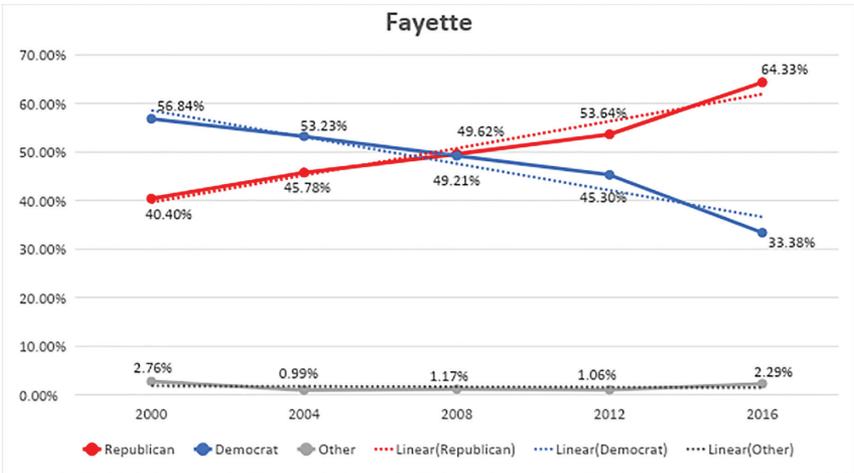


Figure 58. Presidential election data: Fayette County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

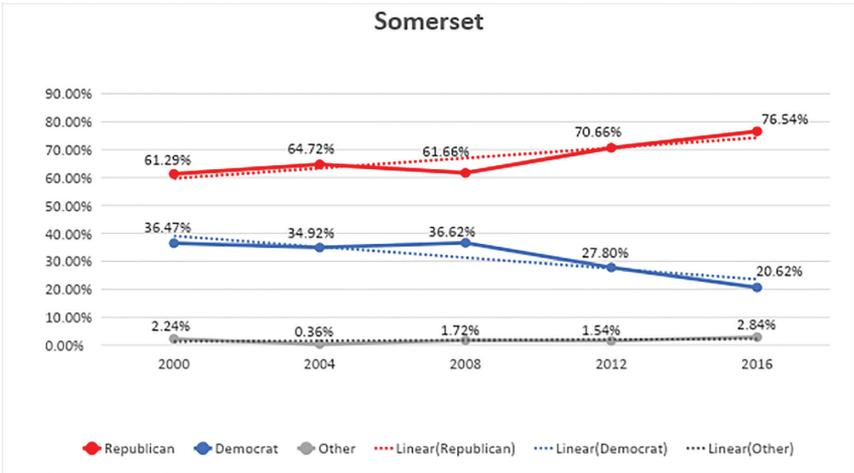


Figure 59. Presidential election data: Somerset County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

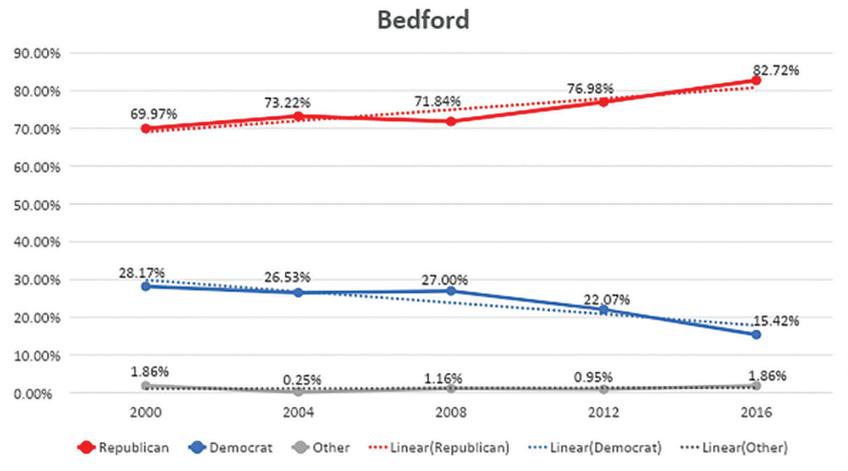


Figure 60. Presidential election data: Bedford County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

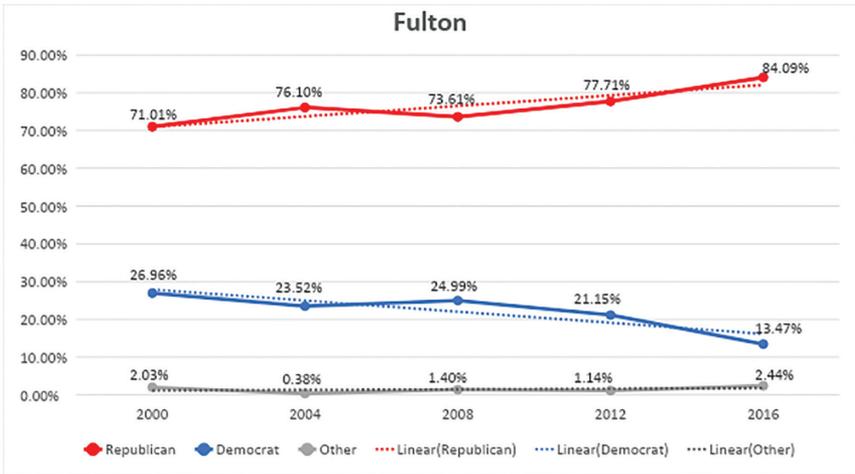


Figure 61. Presidential election data: Fulton County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

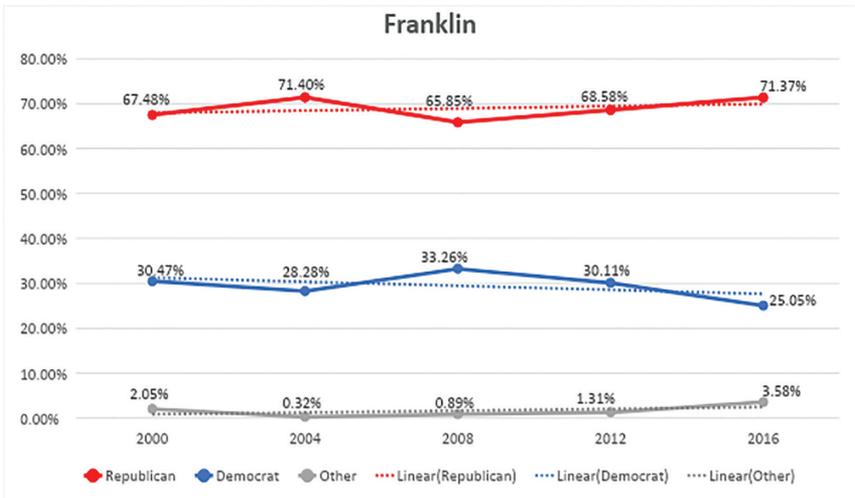


Figure 62. Presidential election data: Franklin County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016

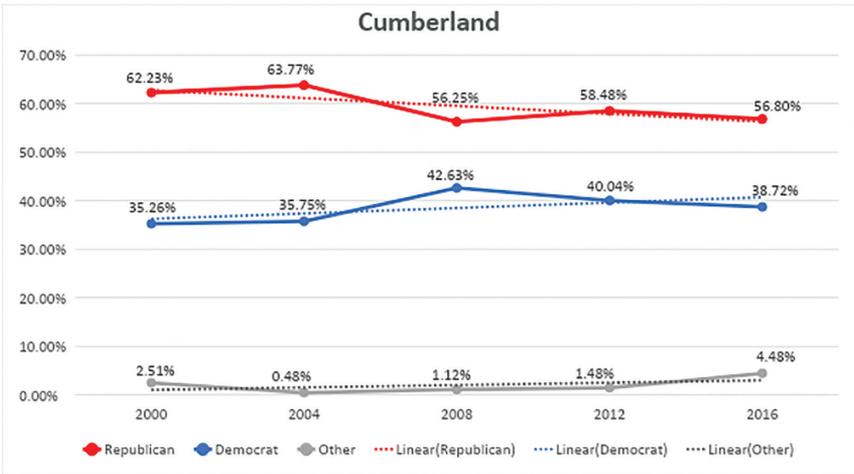


Figure 63. Presidential election data: Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

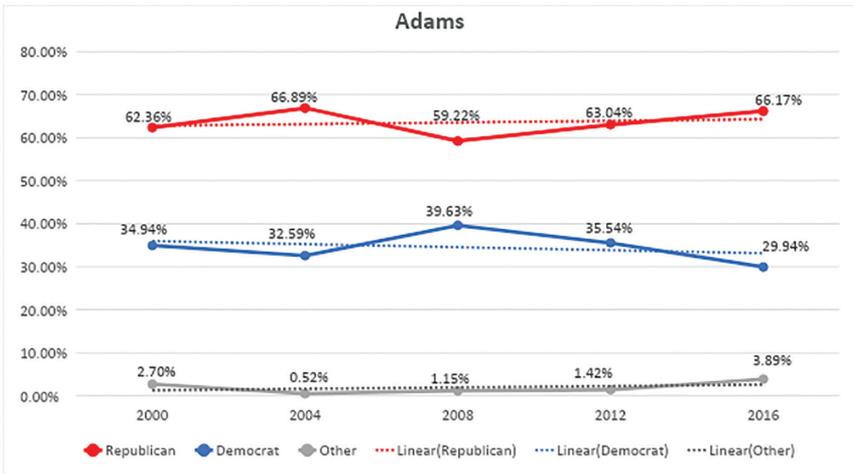


Figure 64. Presidential election data: Adams County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

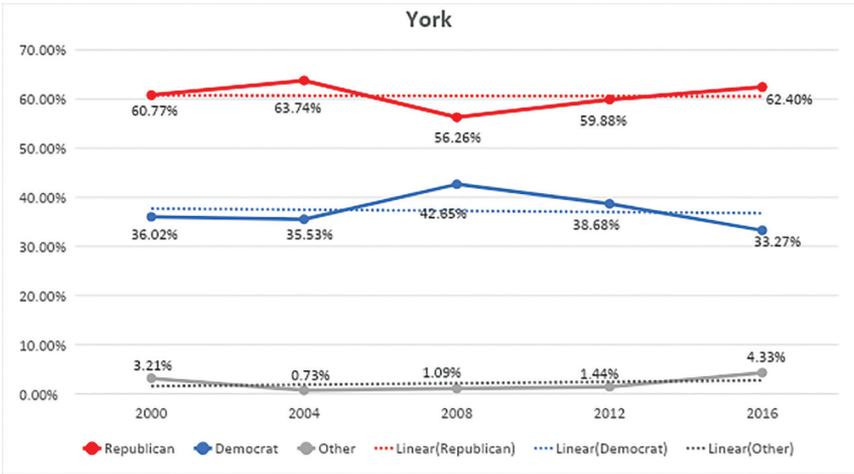


Figure 65. Presidential election data: York County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

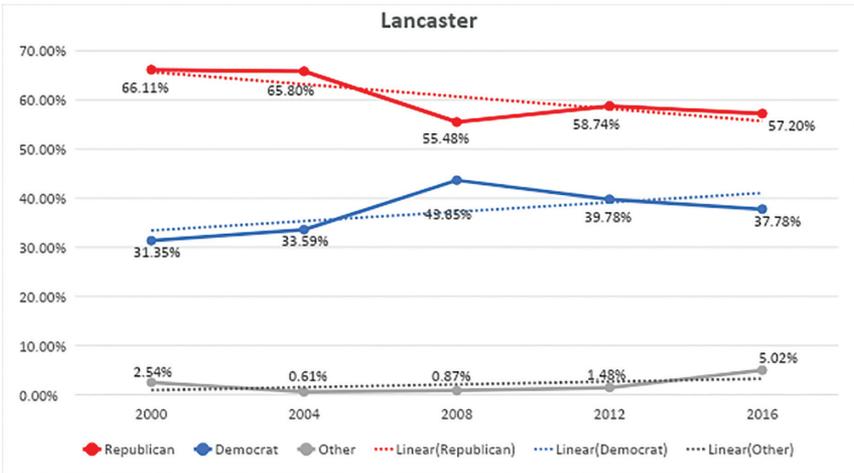


Figure 66. Presidential election data: Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

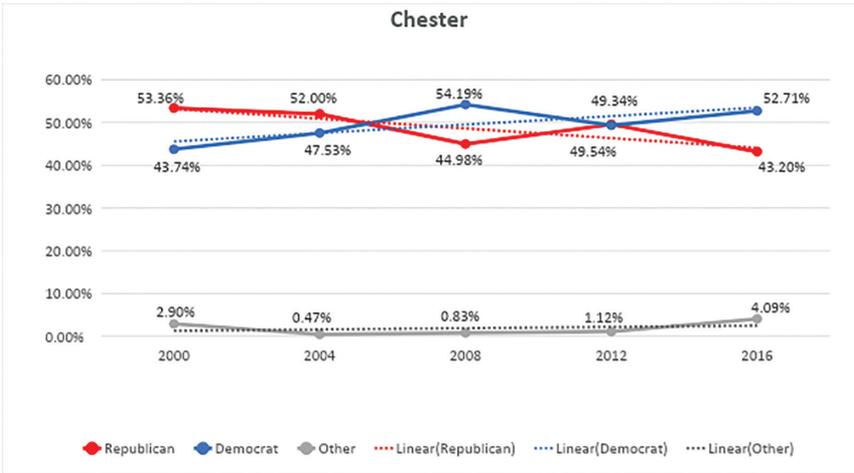


Figure 67. Presidential election data: Chester County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

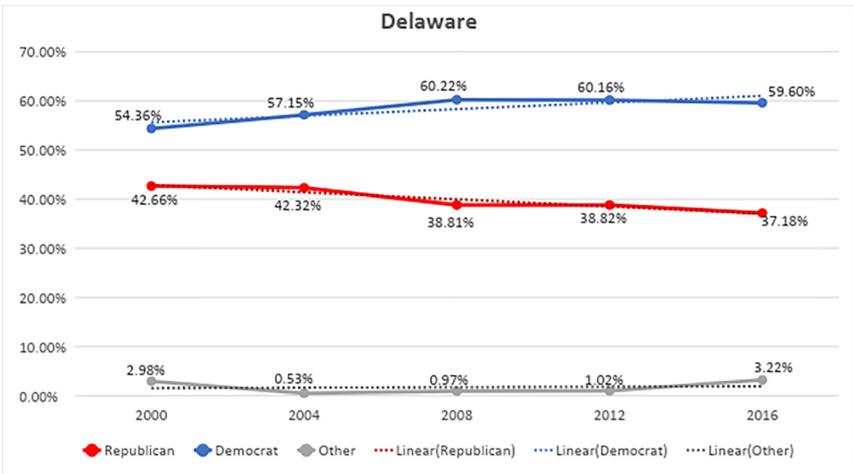


Figure 68. Presidential election data: Delaware County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

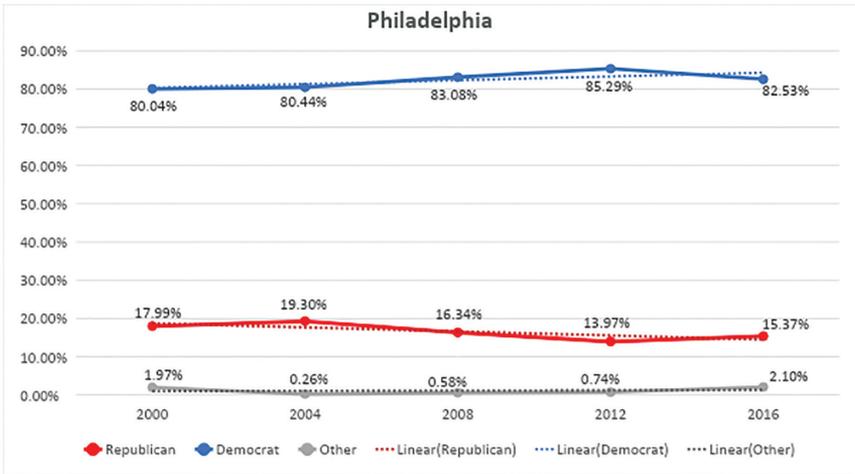


Figure 69. Presidential election data: Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, 2000-2016.

Section II

The figures in the previous section illustrate the vote percentages Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton garnered in the sixty-seven counties of Pennsylvania in the 2016 general presidential election. These graphs allow us to test the hypothesis of this study. The hypothesis of this study is that Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Philadelphia’s surrounding counties exhibited historically-consistent percentages for Hillary Clinton while Donald Trump outperformed in the rest of Pennsylvania’s counties, giving him the victory. Figures 48, 55, 56, 67, 68, and 69 show that Clinton won Allegheny County (which includes Pittsburgh), Montgomery, Bucks, Delaware, Chester, and Philadelphia Counties with historically-consistent percentages. Beyond these, Clinton won five other counties as discussed below. Figures 5, 16, 17, 18, 26, 38, 44, 45, 57, and 58 are some of the strongest examples of Trump’s outperformance in the rest of Pennsylvania’s counties. Figure 70 shows what counties Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump won on a map of Pennsylvania (“Pennsylvania results,” 2017).

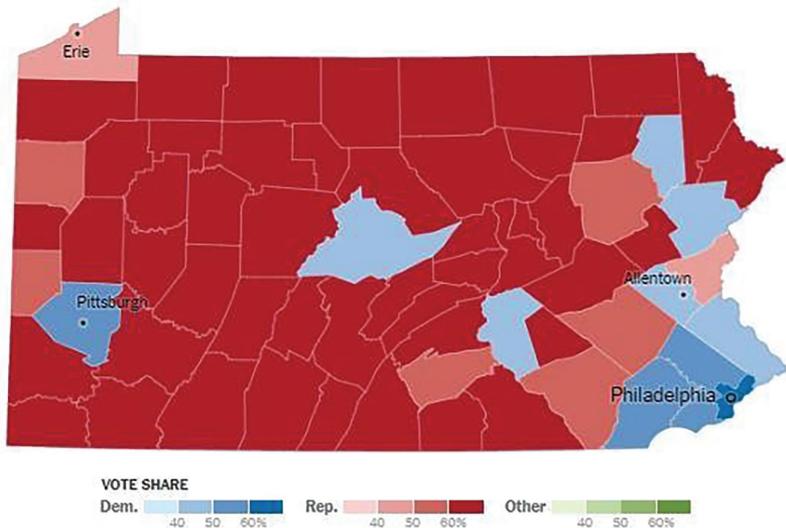


Figure 70. Presidential election results in Pennsylvania, by county (“Pennsylvania Results,” 2016).

Of the five other counties Mrs. Clinton won, three of them showed historically-consistent percentages. These were Centre County (Figure 27), Dauphin County (Figure 51), and Lehigh County (Figure 54). However, Lackawanna County (Figure 22), and Monroe County (Figure 33) showed a 7.35-point and 12.84-point decrease respectively for Hillary Clinton over President Barack Obama’s results in 2012. Apart from failing to consider the impact of these other five counties that Mrs. Clinton won, the hypothesis accurately surmised that Clinton’s performance in Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties was historically-consistent. In addition, apart from the historically-consistent cases of Butler County, (Figure 35), Cumberland County (Figure 63), and Lancaster County (Figure 66), the hypothesis also accurately stated that Mr. Trump outperformed historic trends throughout the rest of the state’s counties. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

However, the hypothesis failed to consider the significance of Lackawanna County, Bucks County, and Monroe County in Trump’s victory. According to Kraus, Clinton masterfully executed the common strategy for Democratic presidential candidates in Pennsylvania (Kraus, 2016). She focused her attention on Philadelphia County, winning it handily, and on its four surrounding counties as well as Allegheny County (Kraus, 2016).

However, Clinton came up short of winning the state for two reasons. First, Trump outperformed historic trends in 54 of the 57 PA counties he won (Kraus, 2016). Second, even in counties she did win, such as Bucks, Lackawanna, and Monroe, Hillary Clinton underperformed from what she needed to ensure her victory (Kraus, 2016; Panaritis, Purcell, Brennan, & Coulombis, 2016). Madonna and Young's (2016) predictions about what Trump needed to do to win Pennsylvania held true. Writing on July 17, 2016, the authors stated that Trump needed to minimize Clinton's victories in the counties surrounding Philadelphia (Madonna & Young, 2016). This occurred with Clinton winning Bucks, Chester, Montgomery, and Delaware counties at historically-consistent percentages. Second, the authors stated that Trump needed to win the "dozen or so rustbelt counties surrounding Pittsburgh" with greater percentages than Mitt Romney had in 2012 (Madonna & Young, 2016, p. 20). Apart from Butler County (Figure 35), Figures 13, 14, 23, 24, 34, 36, 37, 47, 49, 57, and 58 show that Trump managed to do this.

So far, this study has examined where Donald Trump won in Pennsylvania. But, why did he win the Keystone State? A complete answer to this question is far beyond the purview of this study. However, one factor that may have helped Trump win the Keystone State was the economic situation in Pennsylvania during 2016.

This situation can be best seen through four factors. First, Pennsylvania was experiencing sluggish GDP growth. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) (2016), in 2015 Pennsylvania experienced a GDP growth rate of 1.02% when compared to 2.4% for the United States as a whole. A second economic factor potentially at play in the election was the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Pennsylvania, which, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (2017) was 5.8% in October of 2016. While this unemployment rate was lower than the 8.9% unemployment rate of October 2009, the October 2016 rate for PA was still greater than the national unemployment rate of 4.9% for that month (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Third, according to the BLS, Pennsylvania lost a total of 53,200 manufacturing jobs between January 2009 and November 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Fourth, the Affordable Care Act resulted in higher proposed insurance premiums for Pennsylvanians (Mamula, 2016). For example, in May 2016, the average proposed premium percentage increase of health insurers in Pennsylvania was "23.6 percent for individual plans and 7.9 percent for small group plans" (Wenner, 2016, p. 3).

While it would be reductionistic to simply follow the aphorism that "it's the economy, stupid," the above indicators of economic hardship in Pennsylvania should not be ignored as potential causes for Trump's victory. Of course, this analysis does not, and cannot, consider how these factors affected individual counties in Pennsylvania, and, in turn, how that effect, if any, influenced individuals in certain

counties to vote for Donald Trump. Future research should focus on the economic factor, the “economic inequality perspective,” when analyzing why certain counties in Pennsylvania voted the way they did in the 2016.

Conclusion

Why did Pennsylvania vote for Donald J. Trump in 2016, the first Republican nominee in twenty-eight years? There are a number of possible factors, including the cultural alienation hypothesis and economic alienation perspective. What is certain is that Donald Trump broke the Democrats’ tested strategy for winning Pennsylvania. Will this trend continue? It will be fascinating to see how the Keystone State acts in the 2020 presidential election. For now, one thing is certain: the President “won Pennsylvania big,” at least from a historical standpoint, and the influence of that win on American history and the nation’s political system is inestimable.

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