

An Analysis of the November 7, 2006 Elections in Anne Arundel County

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Based on an Exit Poll conducted by
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Executive Summary

On November 7, 2006, 17 service learning students from Anne Arundel Community College were dispatched by the Center for the Study of Local Issues to a variety of polling places throughout Anne Arundel County to conduct an exit poll. The students were given two separate forms to administer: a short and a longer form. The former was single-sided and asked voters to indicate their answers to some questions in an open-ended format. A total of 435 voters completed the short form. The long form was to be filled out front and back, included more closed ended answer choices, and asked additional questions as well. Only 194 voters completed the lengthier form.

Party Registration

Both the short and long forms had similar percentages of respondents saying they were registered in the major parties: in the short form, 43 percent were Democrats, 42 percent were Republicans and 12 percent were unaffiliated. The summary will provide information only for the short form unless otherwise indicated.

Vote for Governor

The vote for governor found a ten point spread between Ehrlich (53%) and O'Malley (43%). This was within the margin of error for such a survey of around 5 percent.

Party and Vote for Governor

Democrats were much more likely to defect and vote for Ehrlich (17%) than Republicans were to vote for O'Malley (10%). Unaffiliated voters provided a 14 point advantage to Ehrlich (54%, 40%). Democrats were more likely not to vote (6%) compared to Republicans (1%).

Information Levels and Vote for Governor

A majority (56%) of respondents claimed to be "very informed" about the candidates stands on issues. Only 7 percent were "not very informed."

More Ehrlich voters (59%) said that they were very informed compared to O'Malley voters (52%).

Issues and Vote for Governor

The short form asked respondents to volunteer the most important issue in shaping their vote for governor. Education was the most typically cited (18%), followed by party (12%) and taxes (8%).

On education, the respondents were fairly evenly split between Ehrlich (53%) and O'Malley (47%). The latter did better among those stressing the party (68% vs. 27% Ehrlich). Ehrlich was favored by those stressing taxes (83%, 17%), the economy (82%, 18%) and past record (77%, 24%).

On the long form, respondents were to choose among a set of closed-ended options. Four issues were predominant: economy (21%); education (18%); taxes (16%) and crime (13%). Clearly, the two methods of collecting information yield contrasting results, raising questions about which method comes closer to truly identifying voters' motives for voting.

Among the most salient issues, Ehrlich was favored for three: economy (51%, 44%); taxes (69%, 31%), and crime (55%, 40%). O'Malley was only favored on education (43% Ehrlich, 57% O'Malley).

Traits and Choice of Governor Candidate

The short form asked respondents to volunteer a candidate trait that they most admired. In the short form, honesty was the only double digit response (33%). This was followed by party and leadership/competence/has a plan (both 7%). Those valuing honesty was disproportionately likely to favor Ehrlich (75%) over O'Malley (23%). Similar, those favoring leadership lined up behind Ehrlich (68%) rather than O'Malley (31%). Only with regards to party was O'Malley (59%) ascendant over Ehrlich (41%).

The long form provided closed-ended choices from which the respondent was to choose. The most favored items were "right experience" (25%), "right moral outlook" (21%), "understands needs of people like me," (12%) and honesty (10%).

Ehrlich was favored by those stressing the right experience (69%, 31%) and right moral outlook (73%, 22%). O'Malley gained more support from those choosing "understands needs of people like me" (75% O'Malley, 20% Ehrlich) and honesty (56%, 44%). Again, there is a contrast in outcomes between the two survey methodologies. While in both cases, those traits likely to be associated with either incumbency (right experience, leadership) and conservative ideology (right moral outlook) were linked to Ehrlich, while those stressing a less familiar candidate (party) or liberalism (understands needs of people like me) favored O'Malley, honesty wound up favoring opposite candidates depending on methodology.

Demographic Characteristics of the Vote for Governor

Gender

A somewhat larger number of women (54%) participated in the short form survey. There was a “gender gap” in that more women (48%) than men (39%) said they were Democrats. Similarly, there were a larger percentage of women than men voting for Martin O’Malley (49% vs. 38% in the short form).

Age

O’Malley and Ehrlich were most closely matched among young voters (18-30) and those between 61 and 70. Ehrlich opened up visible leads among those who were prime ‘family’ age (31-60). O’Malley had a clear lead among those in the oldest age group, 71 and more.

Race

Only about one-quarter of the African-American population voted for Ehrlich; over two-thirds voted for the Democrat O’Malley. By contrast, a clear majority (61%) of the Caucasian population supported the Republican candidate.

Education

The two candidates were tightly matched among those with some college and those with postgraduate work. Ehrlich’s strength came from those with limited education and those with bachelor’s degrees. The group with “some college” showed a strong gender effect, with women giving a majority (55%) to O’Malley, while only 34 percent of men supported the Democrat.

Income

Those with lower incomes tended to vote for the Democrat, while those with incomes over \$75,000 gravitated to Ehrlich. It was also discovered that the higher the education category and the lower the income within the category, the greater the tendency to vote for O’Malley. O’Malley beat Ehrlich in three of the four education categories among the lower income respondents, while Ehrlich decisively beat O’Malley among the higher income respondents regardless of education level.

Religion

The two candidates were close among ‘seculars’ but Ehrlich had a clear advantage over O’Malley among Evangelical Christians and Catholics. One important element in Ehrlich’s success in Anne Arundel County was the ability to appeal to secular voters who would have otherwise been inclined to support the Democratic candidate based on party registration and to do so without losing the support of more traditional ‘values voters’ among Evangelicals and Catholics..

Partisan Feelings

O’Malley was less successful in obtaining the support of strong and weak Democrats than Ehrlich was in retaining high levels of support among both weak and strong Republicans. Independent Democrats were more likely to support Ehrlich than were independent Republicans inclined to support O’Malley. Unaffiliated independents were twice as likely to support Ehrlich. Thus Democratic defections, tight party voting among Republicans, and a large advantage among unaffiliated voters explain the scope of Ehrlich’s success in Anne Arundel County.

County Executive – Vote

Excluding those who did not vote, Leopold share of the vote was 50.9 percent versus Johnson’s 49.1 percent, which corresponded nearly exactly to the final total including absentees and provisional ballots.

A slightly greater number of Democrats were willing to vote for Leopold than for Ehrlich (22% vs. 17%), resulting in a diminution of Johnson’s vote to 74 percent from O’Malley’s 79 percent. However, Republicans were less inclined to support Leopold (89% for Ehrlich, 80% for Leopold) and a much larger percentage (5% vs. 1%) opted not to vote at all. This accounts for the lower vote count by Leopold compared to Ehrlich, along with the sharp 15 point drop-off in votes from unaffiliated voters.

Partisan Feelings

Leopold lost support (compared to Ehrlich) among independent Democrats, unaffiliated independents, weak and strong Republicans. Leopold gained small bits of support among independent Republicans and strong Democrats. Johnson gained much support among unaffiliated independents and to a lesser degree independent Democrats. Johnson gained a bit more support among weak and strong Republicans, while losing some support among strong Democrats and to a larger extent among independent Republicans. Thus, Johnson closed the gap between Republican and Democratic candidates (compared to the governor’s race), but need to hold on to strong Democrats grab a slightly greater share of independent Republicans to possibly overcome Leopold.

Issues and the Vote for County Executive

The short and long forms offered some contrasts in priorities. The section used the ‘average’ scores when there was overlap.

Only two issues offer a clear linkage to party/ideology and candidate choice: the Republican Leopold was favored by those emphasizing taxes and government spending, while the Democrat Johnson was more often selected by those emphasizing the environment. ‘Taxes’ was twice as salient overall (10 percent average) than the environment (5 percent average). Thus, among issues clearly differentiating the two candidates, Leopold drew the greater benefit.

On other issues, the candidates were less polarized. Johnson was advantaged on growth by a nearly equal amount of Leopold’s advantage on the economy. On education, the cost of living and crime, there were inconsequential differences.

This lack of difference probably worked to the disadvantage of Johnson. Given his background in law enforcement, he would have been expected to gain a large advantage on crime. His status as a Democrat should have favored him disproportionately on ‘cost of living.’ He was unable to get much headway on education.

Traits and the Vote for County Executive

Looking at the average for both forms, honesty (21%) was the most cited trait, which favored Leopold (60% vs. 40%). Regarding ‘strong leader’ or ‘experience,’ the next most cited items, the two candidates were fairly close, although Johnson had a 14 point advantage on leadership. Johnson was also favored by those citing the more liberal “understands needs of people like me” while Leopold outdistanced Johnson on ‘intelligence.’

On a possible Leopold weakness such as ‘family man,’ the results were clear: the public did *not* consider this character trait as salient. Among the few respondents citing it, Leopold drew even with Johnson. The latter’s unwillingness to draw character comparisons between himself and his opponent either correctly interpreted the public’s disinterest in this aspect of contrast, or failed to capitalize on a distinction whose saliency might have been increased.

On those items not included on the long form, Leopold drew an advantage on all but the heavily cited party (55% Johnson, 39% Leopold) and ‘dedicated’ (both 50%). Thus, Leopold was favored on ‘overall character,’ persistence, beliefs and personal contact.

Gender

Leopold could not replicate Ehrlich’s strong performance among men, with Johnson in a virtual tie rather than down 20 points (the gap between male support for Ehrlich (58%) and O’Malley (38%) in the short form). Among demographic variables, this elimination of the gender gap was

the most significant contrast between the two races. However, for Johnson to have beat Leopold, he needed a strong performance among women, who were about evenly split between the two candidates. Thus, while the gap between men disappeared, there was insufficient progress among women for Johnson, resulting in a race in which gender did not play a major role.

Age

Younger voters were much less likely to vote for county executive than for governor. Compared to the governor's race, Leopold lost much ground among these younger voters; Johnson picked up voters between 31 and 50 years old. However, Leopold partly compensated for losses among younger voters by picking up support among voters 61 and older. *Had older voters not gravitated to Leopold, it seems likely that Johnson would have won the election.*

Race

In the county executive's race, disproportionate support for Johnson among African-Americans carried over from the Governor's race, with Johnson making very small inroads among white voters. Changes in the racial distribution of the vote probably did not prove important in shaping the results of the county executive match up.

Education

Leopold experienced across the board declines in support, particularly among those with "some college." Johnson picked up support especially among those with high school or some college education. The rate of none-voting was a bit higher for lesser educated groups, perhaps affecting Johnson's prospects somewhat.

Income

Johnson improved on O'Malley's performance for all income groups except those earning under \$50,000, who apparently abstained from voting rather than vote for Johnson (Leopold was unchanged from Ehrlich for this group). Johnson did best among the highest income group, gaining 8 points. However, the increase in non-voting for this race among three of the four income groups suggests that *Johnson did not sell his candidacy to those unwilling to vote for Leopold.* Such abstention could have been decisive at the margins for Johnson.

Religion

Non-practicing seculars made a decisive difference in boosting Johnson's vote total over that obtained by O'Malley. While the drop in the Jewish vote injured Johnson's prospects, the secular vote was four times as large and thus much more likely to have a consequential electoral impact. There were no other especially consequential differences between the two races.

Influences on the County Executive's Race – Long Form

Endorsements apparently carried the greatest weight with voters in this survey as one-third checked this factor. Conversations with friends or family (22%) were about as important as newspaper stories about the candidates. Those elements most easily controlled by campaigns were generally less important, such as paid ads on television (15%), literature received in the mail (15%), door-to-door contacts (13%), paid ads in newspapers (5%) or road signs (3%).

Relatively few respondents contributed to this set of answer choices, resulting in statistically problematic inferences. However, there is anecdotal confirmation of intuitive hypotheses: The door-to-door method so favored by Leopold clearly played to his advantage by a 4 to 1 ratio. Johnson's significant spending on television gained him more than a 2 to 1 advantage. Endorsements, here unspecified, played also to Johnson's advantage by a 20 point margin. Leopold obtained a 57-43 lead among those influenced by newspaper endorsements. Thus, while these results are by no means definitive, *they imply that campaigns did matter, shaping outcomes at the margins.*

State's Attorney Race

The key question in this race was how did Democrat Frank Weathersbee further erode the 15 point Ehrlich advantage and gain a 6 point victory over his challenger Dave Fischer? A look at the demographic and political variables shows that weak Republicans defected in large numbers (40%) as did those "not very informed" about the county executive race (37%). The main inference from these findings was that Weathersbee's name recognition was considerably greater than Fischer's, resulting in the least informed and meekly partisan individuals voting for the familiar name rather than party.

Party and Demographics

The report closes with a review of the relationship between demographic variables and party registration. See the text for details.

Conclusion

Both candidates experienced defections among the most committed partisans; otherwise party line voting increased probably due to lower information levels about the candidates and their issue stands. Unaffiliated voters swung to Johnson, thus making the race competitive.

Increased non-voting among lower educated and lower income groups may have impacted Johnson more than Leopold. While Johnson improved on O'Malley's performance among most age groups, Leopold actually improved on Ehrlich's scores among older voters thus compensating for losses elsewhere.

Campaign effects followed the lines apparently emphasized by each campaign, with door-to-door contacts working more for Leopold while paid ads on television assisting Johnson. Of those things least under the control of the campaigns, newspaper endorsements, Leopold won by a 14 point margin, perhaps converting some of the more informed persuadable voters to his side, and thus making a key difference in a tight race.

Introduction

On November 7, 2006, 17 students from Anne Arundel Community College were dispatched by the Center for the Study of Local Issues to a variety of polling places throughout Anne Arundel County to conduct an exit poll. The students were given two separate forms to administer: a short and a longer form. The former was single-sided and asked voters to indicate their answers to some questions in an open-ended format. A total of 435 voters completed the short form. The long form was to be filled out front and back, included more closed ended answer choices, and asked additional questions as well. Only 194 voters completed the lengthier form.

Findings

Party Registration

The shorter, single-sided survey questionnaire was initially identical to the longer version, asking first about party registration, followed up by the choice for governor and the voters' information level.

Table 1: Party Registration

Party	Short		Long	
	Percent	Cases	Percent	Cases
Democrat	43	181	42	81
Republican	42	177	43	83
Unaffiliated	12	49	13	25
Other	2	12	3	5
Total	99	419	101	194

Note: Values listed under "cases" indicate the raw count of individual voters in the sample. Values listed otherwise in all tables are percentages.

Nearly equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans participated in the both forms. The 2006 registration of party voters was approximately 43.6 percent Democrats, 38.7 percent Republican, and 17.7 percent unaffiliated. The differences between these values and those in the exit polls are probably due to turnout differentials (turnout by party registration was not available from the Board of Elections at this time this was written).

Vote for Governor

Table 2: Vote for Governor

Candidate	Short		Long	
	Percent	Cases	Percent	Cases
Ehrlich	53	224	53	103
O'Malley	43	182	44	85
Other	2	8	2	4
Didn't vote	1	3	1	1
Total	99	419	100	193

Ehrlich won the governor's race in Anne Arundel County by just under 15 percent, while the exit poll measured a 10 percent advantage, within the 5 percent margin of error for the survey

Table 3 shows the party vote and indicates the percentage of defections – the number of Democrats voting for Ehrlich and the number of Republicans voting for O'Malley.

Table 3: Vote for Governor by Party (short form)

	Ehrlich	O'Malley	Others	Didn't vote	Cases
Democrats	17	79	3	6	180
Republicans	89	10	0	1	167
Unaffiliated	54	40	6	0	50
Other	83	8	0	8	12

Table 3 shows that a much larger percentage of Democrats defected (17%) and voted for Ehrlich compared to the percentage of Republicans voting for O'Malley (10%). Unaffiliated voters were fairly evenly split, although there was a 14 point advantage for Ehrlich. Clearly, the defections coupled with the Ehrlich favorable split among unaffiliated voters created the basis for the Republican's 12 point margin in the county.

Information Levels and Vote for Governor

The questionnaire then asked about the voters' information levels "about your candidate's stands on issues such as education, crime or growth?" The voters were given the choice of 'very/somewhat/not very informed.' A majority (56%) claimed to be very informed and only a small minority (7%) was "not very informed."

Table 4: Informed about Governor Candidate's Stands on Issues?

Informed?	Percent	Cases
Very	56	220
Somewhat	37	145
Not very	7	27
Total	100	392

Looking at the results in Table 5, Ehrlich voters had a better understanding of their candidate’s stands than did O’Malley voters. As the incumbent, Ehrlich record was better known and subject to considerable advertising; O’Malley’s record was only regarding Baltimore City and his plans for Maryland may have been vaguer to his electorate.

Table 5: Informed about Governor Candidate’s Stands on Issues by Vote for Governor?

Informed/Candidate	Ehrlich	O’Malley	Total
Very	56	42	98
Somewhat	49	48	98
Not very	46	46	92

Note: Totals are less than 100 percent due to rounding and exclusion of “others” and “didn’t vote”

Issues and Vote for Governor

The short and long forms differed at this point in the survey. The short form asked the open-ended question, “Which issue most influenced your vote for governor?” The long form identified eleven issues and offered a write-in choice as well.

The short form’s answers were recoded into 27 categories, along with an “other” category for rarely mentioned items. There were 116 voters who did not write anything, resulting in 319 completed answers. Table 6 features the top 20 issues (the reminder was put into “all other issues.”)

Table 6: Issues and Vote for Governor

Issue	Percent	Cases
Education	18	57
Party vote	12	37
Taxes	8	24
Economy	5	17
Past record	5	17
Voted against a candidate	5	16
Crime	4	14
Overall beliefs (agreement)	4	13
Growth	3	11
Government spending	3	10
Change (time for)	3	9
Environment	3	8
Honesty/integrity	3	8
Slots	3	8
BGE/utilities	3	8
Stem cells	2	6
Anti-Bush/Iraq war	2	6
College tuition	2	5
Competence	2	2
All other issues	15	51
Total	105	319

Note: Total does not equal 100 percent due to rounding

Among policy oriented “issues,” only education was in the double digits (18%). Taxes followed at 8 percent, along with the economy (5%), crime (4%), and growth, the environment, honesty and slots at 3 percent. A heavily promoted issue like stem cell research was only cited by six respondents; concern over rising college tuition was cited by five individuals. One heavily debated issue was the matter of the BGE merger/utility rate hike, which was mentioned by 8 people (3%). The question of either candidate’s competence was not a significant concern. Five percent claimed to be voting against a candidate (rather than for the candidate chosen). **Twelve percent claimed to be voting for a candidate based on party loyalty and identification, the second largest motive.**

Table 7 shows how those concerned about various issues divided themselves among the candidates. On the key issue of education, there was little swing with Ehrlich receiving 51 percent of those voters’ support compared to O’Malley’s 47 percent.

O’Malley was much more likely to receive the straight-line “party loyalty” endorsement (68% vs. 27%), which was indicative of O’Malley’s limited appeal to Republican defectors or independent voters. On issues likely to appeal to conservatives such as taxes, government spending and the economy, Ehrlich clearly outdistanced O’Malley. By contrast, the latter did better among those interested in the environment, and those seeking a change. Those focusing on the rise in utility rates were completely in O’Malley’s camp. The two candidates split the ‘slots’ issue evenly. It is important to remember that the number of cases identifying any issue was small, with large margins of error.

Table 7: Issues by Vote for Governor

Issue	Overall	Ehrlich	O’Malley
Education	18	51	47
Party vote	12	27	68
Taxes	8	83	17
Economy	5	82	18
Past record	5	77	24
Voted against a candidate	5	69	31
Crime	4	57	36
Overall beliefs (agreement)	4	54	39
Growth	3	72	27
Government spending	3	100	0
Change (time for)	3	38	63
Environment	3	25	75
Honesty/integrity	3	75	25
Slots	3	50	50
BGE/utilities	3	0	100
Average	--	57	41

The long form presented eleven closed-ended choices, depicted on Table 7.1. A total of 164 respondents made a choice from the selection presented... A few others chose abortion (4 cases), the stem cell research, party loyalty or the war in Iraq (1 each).

Table 7.1: Issues by Vote for Governor (Long Form)

Issue	Percent	Cases
Economy	21	34
Education	18	30
Taxes	16	26
Crime	13	21
Growth	8	13
Cost of living	6	10
Slots	6	10
Healthcare	5	8
Environment	3	5
Work with the legislature	3	4
College tuition	3	5
Total	100	164

Table 8 compares the open-ended and closed ended choices, with the items ranked by the percentage choosing the item on the long form.

Table 8: Issues by Vote for Governor

Issue	Long	Short
Economy	21	5
Education	18	18
Taxes	16	8
Crime	13	4
Growth	8	3
Cost of living	6	3
Slots	6	3
Healthcare	5	0
Environment	3	3
Work with legislature	3	0
College tuition	3	2
Total	100	49

Excluded from the long form were issues such as government spending, party loyalty, and past record, as well as any personal characteristics of the candidate such as honesty. While there was agreement about the importance of education, the limited set of choices presented by the long form might incorrectly suggest motives such as the economy or crime to be much more salient as motives for picking a candidate than was in fact the case. The short form's open-ended approach highlighted the key importance of party loyalty as an "issue" for voters facilitating their choice among candidates. It also illuminated how some "issues" such as healthcare disappeared when not suggested to the voters. However, it might also be argued that the closed-ended instrument

may have provided “reminders” to voters about what was important to them and what wasn’t. These may have been in the back of their minds as they considered the candidates.

Table 9: Issues by Vote for Governor (Long Form)

Issue	Ehrlich	O’Malley	O’Malley (Short form)	OM Long-short
Slots	80	20	50	+30
Taxes	69	31	17	-14
Growth	62	39	27	-12
College tuition	60	40	--	
Crime	55	40	36	-
Economy	53	44	18	-26
Cost of living	50	50	--	
Education	43	57	47	-10
Environment	40	60	75	+15
Work with the legislature	25	75	--	
Healthcare	13	88	--	
Average	50	50	39	-11

Table 9 shows how the issues divided the voters by candidate for governor. The final column shows the difference between O’Malley’s support by issue according to the two forms.

Some substantive interpretations would not be changed: conservative voters favoring issues such as taxes and the economy leaned to Ehrlich; more liberal voters favoring issues such as healthcare and the environment leaned towards O’Malley.

The contrast between the two instruments makes it possible to highlight the polarization evident around healthcare or slots, only apparent in the long form. Clearly, the two methods of soliciting information from voters each had their strengths and weaknesses.

Traits and the Choice for Governor

A second open-ended question on the short form inquired “what trait do you most admire in your candidate for governor?” The version found in the long form was slightly different: “Which one of your candidate’s traits most influenced your vote for governor?”

Table 10 shows that of the 435 potential short form respondents, only 240 provided an answer. The most cited trait was “honesty, trustworthy” mentioned by 33 percent (another 3 percent cited the similar “integrity”). No other answer received a double digit response. Traits such as “clear, straightforward,” “strong leader, competent, has a plan,” and had likeable general characteristics all garnered around 6 percent. A few others pointed to “persistence/consistency” (5%) or party (7%). Only 4 percent underscored the apparently “obvious” choice of “right experience.”

Table 10: Traits Motivating Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Traits	Percent	Cases
Honesty, trustworthy	33	78
Party	7	17
Leadership, competence, has a plan	7	16
Clear, straightforward, forthright	6	15
Generally likeable character	6	15
Persistent, consistent	5	12
Right experience	4	9
Past record	3	8
Integrity	3	7
Overall beliefs	3	6
Family man	2	5
All others	21	52
Total	100	240

The long form included seven traits from which the respondent was to choose the one trait which most influenced the choice for governor. Table 11 contrasts the results for the short and long forms.

Table 11: Traits Motivating Vote for Governor (Contrast Short and Long Forms)

Traits	Short	Long
Honesty, trustworthy	33	10
All others	21	0
Party	7	0
Leadership, competence, has a plan	7	22
Clear, straightforward, forthright	6	0
Generally likeable character	6	0
Persistent, consistent	5	0
Right experience	4	25
Past record	3	0
Integrity/right moral outlook	3	21
Overall beliefs	3	0
Family man	2	6
Understand the needs of others	0	12
Works well with others	0	4
Total	100	100

There were only 14 missing cases for the long form (9%) compared to 187 (43%) for the short form. The contrast between the long and short forms again underlines the impact of different methodological approaches. While only four percent indicated that ‘right experience’ was important in the open-ended question, one quarter of the sample chose it from the list on the long form. Honesty was not unimportant in the long form (10%), but it received only one third the citations of the short form (33%). Leadership was chosen by more than a fifth (22%) in the long

form, but only 7 percent in the short form. The “right moral outlook” was cited by a fifth (21%) and be might be similar to “overall beliefs” or “integrity” which was only cited by 3 percent in the short form. Another 12 percent of those in the long form opted for “understands the needs of others” which went unmentioned in the short form.

These contrasting results imply that while honesty appears to be a relatively consistent factor in voters’ contemplation of desirable candidate traits, they seem highly amenable to suggestions about desirable traits which they would not have otherwise offered. Clearly, **this makes the job of assessing what, if any, traits the voters actually associated with the candidate as a condition for choosing the candidate’s name on the ballot a highly speculative affair.**

One hypothesis would be that voters had little specific understanding of the traits of their preferred candidate, but instead had an image of an ideal profile for the job. Armed with such an image, they then ascribed the image to the candidate chosen.

Table 11.1 shows that the images were not identical for Ehrlich and O’Malley voters.

Table 11.1: Traits Motivating Vote for Governor (Long Form Only)

Traits	Long Overall	Ehrlich	O’Malley	Total	Cases
Honesty, trustworthy	10	44	56	100	18
Right experience	25	69	31	100	45
Right moral outlook	21	73	22	95	37
Family man	6	10	90	100	10
Understand the needs of others	12	20	75	95	20
Works well with others	4	14	86	100	7
Total	100				137

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to some voters choosing “other” for their candidate.

Those favoring ‘right experience’ and ‘right moral outlook’ lined up disproportionately behind Ehrlich, which seems plausible given that he was the incumbent governor and was the Republican candidate, presumably more in tune with “values voters.” O’Malley was favored by those emphasizing “understanding the needs of others,” “working well with others,” and “family man. The first of these seems a typical Democratic appeal to the ‘common person’ while the second appears to touch either the conflicts between Ehrlich and the legislature, or some other view of O’Malley’s ability to work with diverse personalities and institutions in general. The ‘family man’ contrast had less obvious meaning, although O’Malley’s family – both nuclear and extended – was either larger or better known than Ehrlich’s.

These findings suggest that there was at least a plausible partisan tilt to the images held by voters. Moreover, the images were not uniquely general, but also appeared plausibly related to the candidates themselves, such as the loading of ‘right experience’ with Ehrlich support. Thus, the closed ended responses appear to have yielded some meaningful findings, despite the fact that the long form suggested to voters the traits that they admired in their candidates.

Demographic Characteristics of the Vote for Governor

Each form asked a similar set of demographic questions, with the long form including ideology which was excluded from the short form. Both had gender, age, race, education, household income, religion, and partisan feelings.

Gender

Both the long and short forms featured nearly identical percentages of men and women respondents as shown on Table 12, in each case slightly over-representing women.

Table 12: Gender (Contrast Short and Long Forms)

Gender	Short	Long
Men	54	53
Women	47	46
Total	101	99

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to rounding

Table 13 shows the contrast between the two forms regarding gender and support for each party while Table 14 shows the relationship with vote for governor.

Table 13: Gender and Party Registration (Short and Long Forms)

Gender	Short	Long	Average	Short	Long	Average	Short	Long	Average
	Democrat			Republican			Unaffiliated		
Men	39	33	36	45	53	49	14	11	13
Women	48	52	50	37	32	35	11	14	13

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to “other” party registration and rounding.

The ‘gender gap’ appeared in both tables. In Table 13, using the average for both forms, there was a 14 percent gap between the percentage of women saying they were Democrats (50%) and the percentage of men (36%). About an equal percent were unaffiliated (13%).

In Table 14, there was an even larger gap, 18 percent, in the percentage of men and women supporting the Democratic candidate, Martin O’Malley. The more statistically valid short form shows a smaller gender gap of 11 points, and indicated that the female vote was evenly split between the two candidates. Thus, it seems likely that despite a ‘gender gap’ which favored Democrats, the gap *did not create an actual majority of women favoring Democratic candidates.*

Table 14: Gender and Candidate (Governor) and Party (Short and Long Forms)

Gender	Short	Long	Average	Short	Long	Average	Short	Long	Average
	Ehrlich			O’Malley			Other		
Men	58	70	64	38	31	35	3	0	2
Women	50	38	44	49	56	53	1	4	2

Age and the Vote for Governor

Table 15 lists respondents' ages in roughly 10 year increments. There were small differences between the two forms, but both produced similar groupings overall.

Table 15: Age (Short and Long Forms)

Age Group	Short	Long
0-30	19	23
31-40	20	17
41-50	24	23
51-60	20	18
61-70	11	12
70+	7	7
Total	101	100

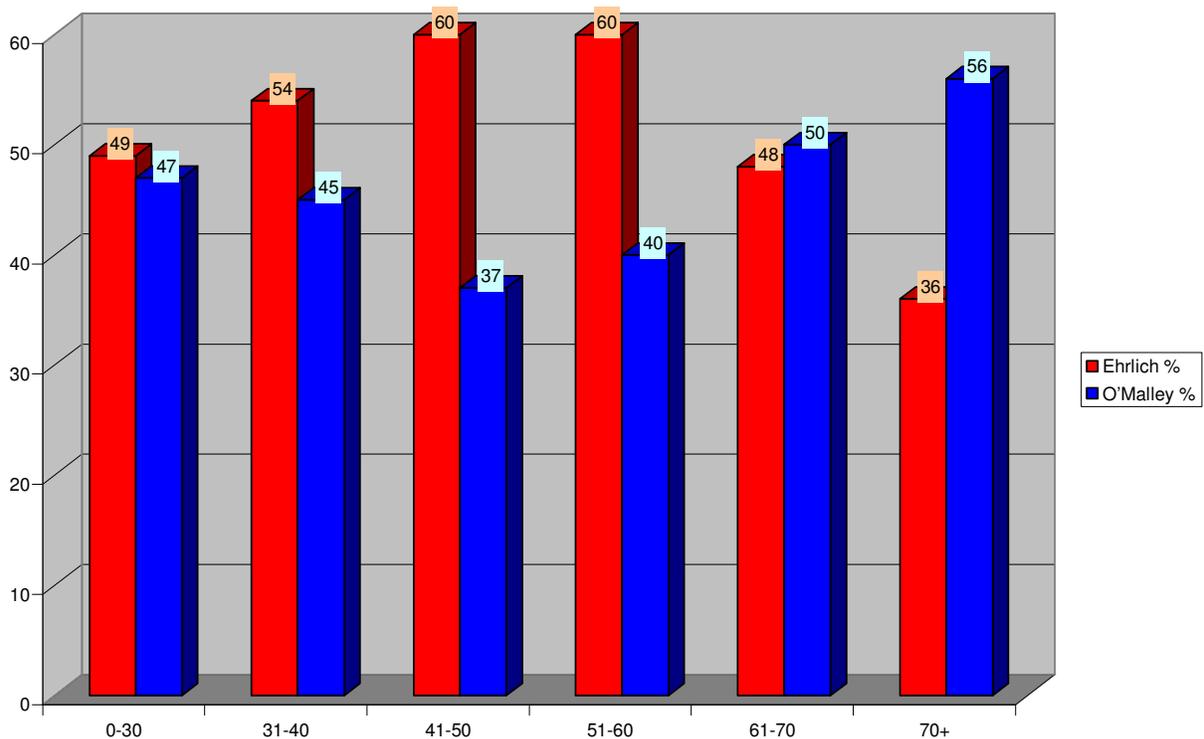
Table 16 shows the relationship between age and the vote for governor, using only the results for the short form and excluding votes for other candidates or those who did not vote for governor.

Table 16: Age and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Age Group	Ehrlich	O'Malley
0-30	49	47
31-40	54	45
41-50	60	37
51-60	60	40
61-70	48	50
71+	36	56
Total	101	100

As shown on Graph 1, O'Malley and Ehrlich were most closely matched among young voters (18-30) and those between 61 and 70. *Ehrlich opened up clear leads among those who were prime 'family' age (31-60).* O'Malley had a clear lead among those in the oldest age group, 71 and more.

Graph 1: Age and Vote for Governor



Race and the Vote for Governor

Table 17 shows the relationship between race and the vote for governor. The sample shows that the great majority of respondents were Caucasian, although there was a slight over-representation of African-American respondents (17% vs. 13% according to US census).¹ The over-representation of African-Americans had the possible benefit of providing a slightly larger than expected within group sample (N=72) engendering a bit more confidence in the percentages for the distribution of that vote among the candidates.

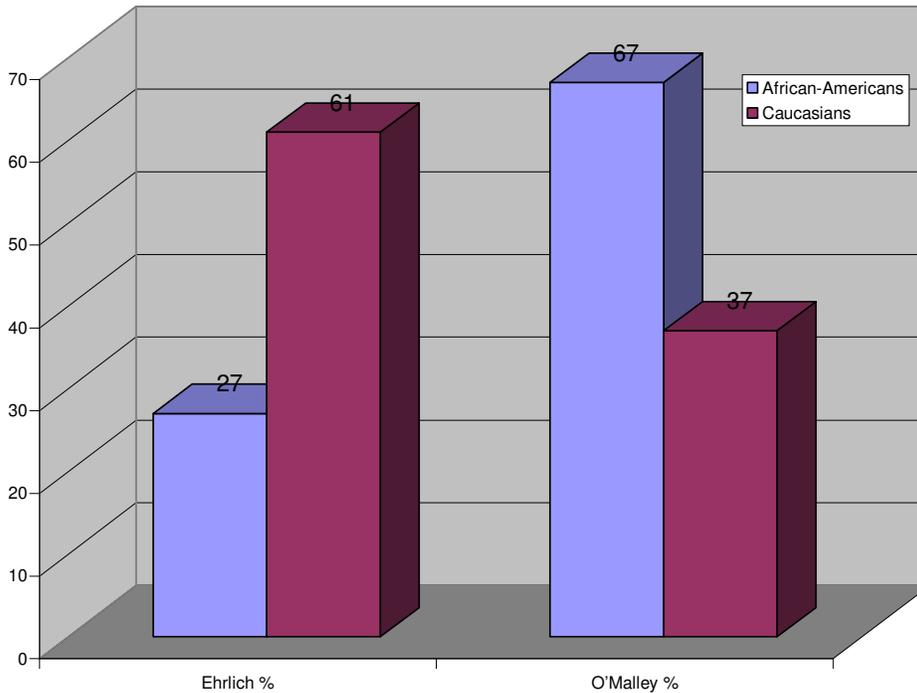
Clearly, there was a strong racial dimension to the vote. Only about one-quarter of the African-American population voted for Ehrlich; over two-thirds voted for the Democrat O'Malley. By contrast, a clear majority (61%) of the Caucasian population supported the Republican candidate. Other populations were too small to offer trustworthy generalizations.

Table 17: Age and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Racial Group	Overall	Ehrlich	O'Malley
African-Americans	17	27	67
Caucasians	75	61	37
Latino or Asian	5	50	50
Other	2	33	67
Total	99		

¹ See <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Profiles/Single/2003/ACS/Narrative/050/NP05000US24003.htm>.

Graph 2: Race and Governor Vote



Education and the Vote for Governor

Respondents were offered four education choices, from “high school” to “postgraduate work.” Table 18 shows the distribution of the sample across several categories.

Table 18: Education and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Education	Overall	Ehrlich	O'Malley	Other	Total
High school	16	55	36	9	100
Some college	34	51	46	1	98
Bachelor's degree	27	60	40	0	100
Postgraduate work	24	48	51	0	99

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to some who did not vote and rounding.

Graph 3 visually demonstrates that the two candidates were tightly matched among those with some college and those with postgraduate work. Ehrlich's strength came from those with limited education and those with bachelor's degrees. The group with “some college” showed a strong gender effect, with women giving a majority (55%) to O'Malley, while only 34 percent of men supported the Democrat.²

² It might be noted that the US Census Bureau's “American Community Survey Profile” for 2003 presents a picture of a much less educated general population. For example, it claims that only 18 percent held a bachelor's degree, compared to the 27 percent cited. It also claims that 41 percent held a high school diploma or less, compared to the 16 percent in this sample citing “high school.” This suggests that the voters were much more educated than the general population. See <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Profiles/Single/2003/ACS/Narrative/050/NP05000US24003.htm>

Graph 3: Education and Vote for Governor

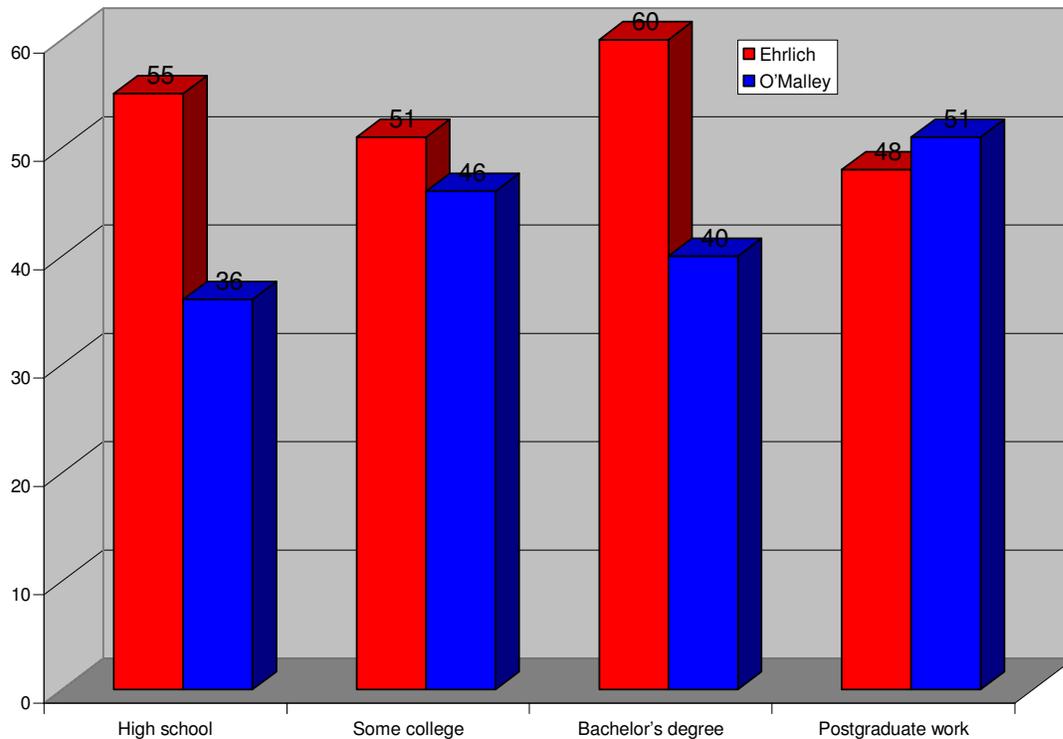


Table 18.1 shows the effect of gender gap as it relates to education. As seen on Graph 3.1, there were very large gender gaps among women with some college and a bachelor's degree. The gap was smaller among those with high school educations and disappeared altogether for postgraduate respondents. This finding contrasts, for example, with Stanley Greenberg's finding that "women with postgraduate degrees are now deeply ensconced in the Democratic world."³

Table 18.1: Education and Gender and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

	Men			Women			Gap
	Ehrlich	O'Malley	E-O	Ehrlich	O'Malley	E-O	
High school	56	30	26	54	41	13	13
Some college	61	34	27	43	55	-12	39
Bachelor's degree	65	35	30	55	45	10	20
Postgraduate work	48	50	-2	50	50	0	-2

³ Stanley Greenberg, *The Two Americas*, (New York: Thomas Dunne Books) 2004, p. 126.

Income and the Vote for Governor

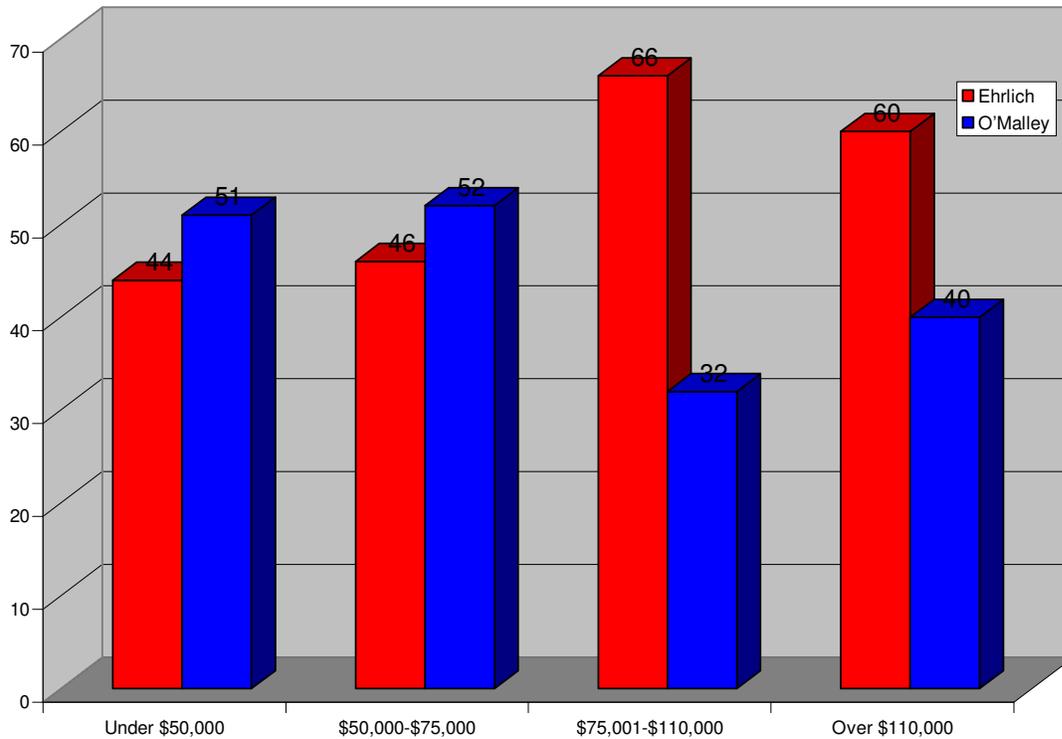
Income had a statistically significant ($p > .01$) effect on the choice of candidate. Clearly, those with lower incomes tended to vote for the Democrat, while those with incomes over \$75,000 gravitated to Ehrlich.

Table 19: Income and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Income	Overall	Ehrlich	O'Malley	Other	Total
Under \$50,000	20	44	51	5	101
\$50,000-\$75,000	28	46	52	2	100
\$75,001-\$110,000	28	66	32	2	100
Over \$110,000	24	60	40	0	100

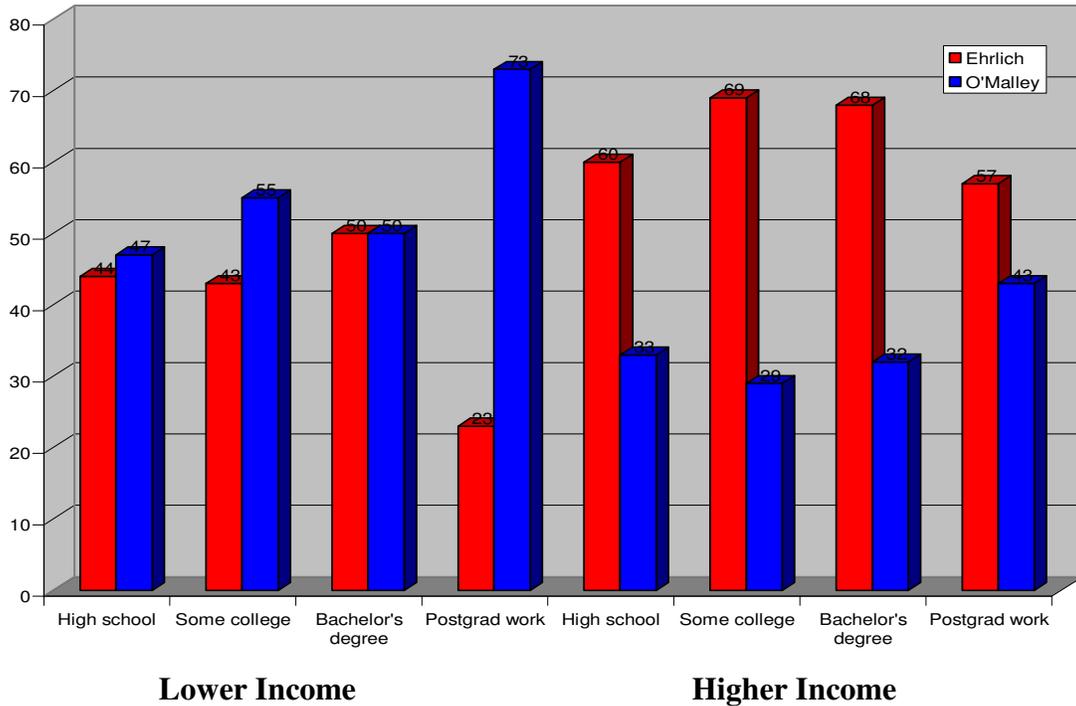
Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Graph 4: Income and Vote for Governor



The relationship between education and vote was also affected by household income. As a generalization, the higher the education category and the lower the income within the category, the greater the tendency to vote for O'Malley.

Graph 5: Education, Income and Vote for Governor



This tendency is represented in Graph 5, which groups the income categories into just two groups, those making above and below \$75,000 to show how they differ within the educational categories. (In the case of those with who checked off “high school” the lowest income category, 0-\$50,000 was used as the dividing point).

The first group of columns shows that O'Malley beat Ehrlich in three of the four education categories among the lower income respondents, while Ehrlich decisively beat O'Malley among the higher income respondents regardless of education level. While it is tempting to try to interpret this as proving that income trumps education as a determining factor, it is also possible that those with lower household incomes might be unmarried, a factor which usually tilts voters to the Democratic side. Neither form asked about marital status.

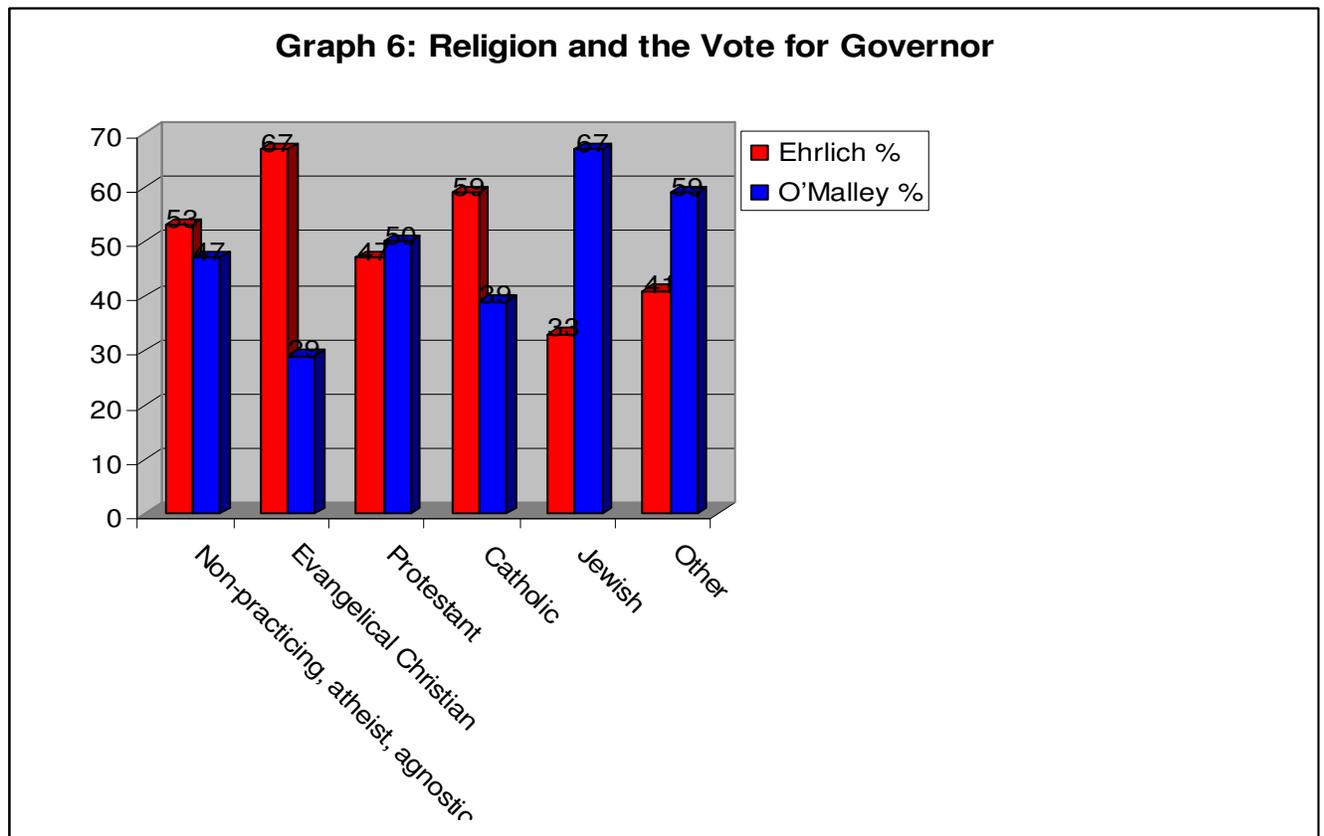
Age did correlate with lower incomes for most educational categories. For example, 42 percent of those with lower incomes and having ‘some college’ were under 30 years of age. Among those with a bachelor’s degree, 37 percent of those with lower incomes were under 30. The same was less true among those with only “high school” or “postgraduate work.” This suggests that those with at least some college tended to have increasing incomes with age, and thus a more pro-Republican stance through their life cycles, while those with the least and the most education may see less change of their income situations over time and tend to remain ‘fixed’ in their political inclinations.

Religion and the Vote for Governor

Table 20 shows the relationship between religion and the vote for governor. The two candidates were close among ‘seculars’ but Ehrlich had a clear advantage over O’Malley among Evangelical Christians and Catholics. The latter’s preference for Ehrlich was perhaps more unexpected given the fact that O’Malley was Catholic and that Ehrlich had not advocated social conservative positions on issues such as abortion. Ehrlich’s strength among seculars was also atypical of Republicans nationally and perhaps due to Ehrlich’s ‘moderate’ positions on social issues.⁴

Table 20: Religion and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

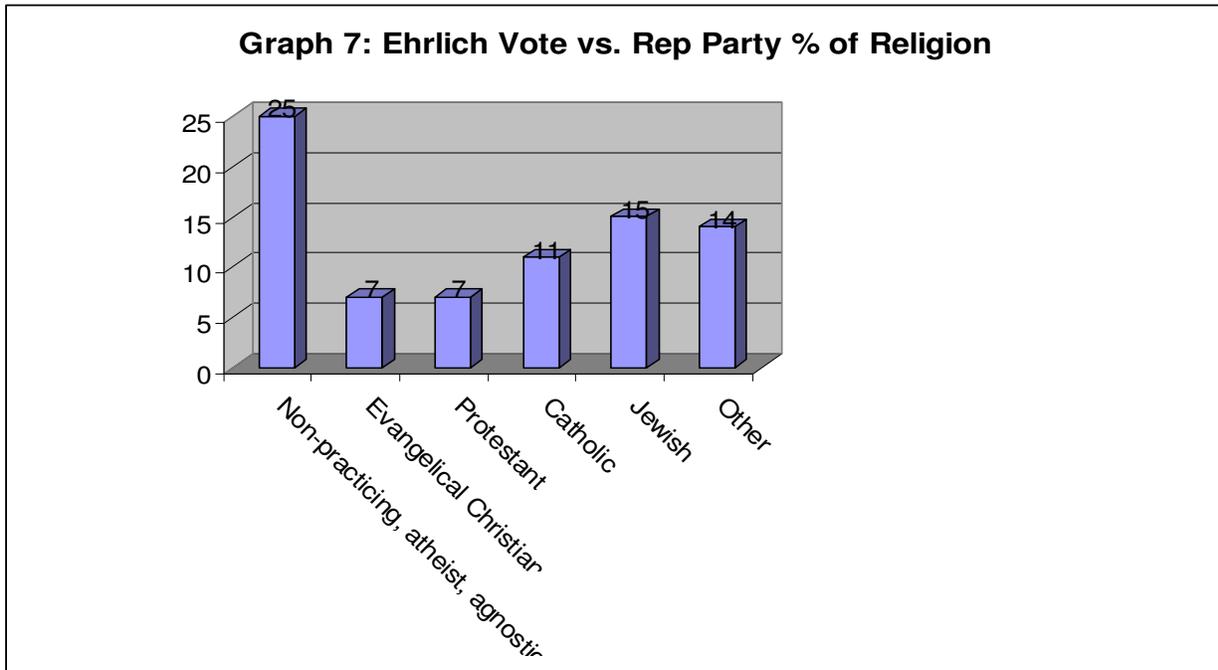
Religion	Overall	Ehrlich	O’Malley
Non-practicing, atheist, agnostic	16	53	47
Evangelical Christian	10	67	29
Protestant	24	47	50
Catholic	35	59	39
Jewish	4	33	67
Other	11	41	59
Total	99	101	100



As can be seen on Graph 7, Ehrlich’s greatest success was among seculars. When compared to the percentage of the sample that identified itself as Republican and secular, Ehrlich gained 25

⁴ See Greenberg’s discussion of ‘secular warriors’ pp. 128-130.

points. He also made large gains among Jews and “others” although the number of cases in these categories was small. It seems safe to say that one important element in Ehrlich’s success in Anne Arundel County was *the ability to appeal to secular voters who would have otherwise been inclined to support the Democratic candidate and to do so without losing the support of more traditional ‘values voters’ among Evangelicals and Catholics..*



Partisan Feeling and the Vote for Governor

Table 21 presents the vote for governor categorized by the strength of partisanship. Several factors point to the basis for Ehrlich’s superior vote count.

- O’Malley was less successful in obtaining the support of strong and weak Democrats than Ehrlich was in retaining high levels of support among both weak and strong Republicans;
- Independent Democrats were more likely to support Ehrlich than were independent Republicans inclined to support O’Malley;
- Unaffiliated independents were twice as likely to support Ehrlich.

Table 21: Partisan Feelings and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Partisan feelings	Overall	Ehrlich	O’Malley
Strong Democrat	25	4	93
Weak Democrat	15	20	77
Independent Democrat	6	46	50
Unaffiliated Independent	9	61	33
Independent Republican	5	62	38
Weak Republican	15	92	7
Strong Republican	23	97	2
Total	99	101	100

County Executive

Both the short and long forms asked respondents to indicate their votes for county executive.

Vote for County Executive

Leopold won the county executive’s race 51 to 49 percent including absentee votes. In the short form, the 4.9 percent of the respondents claimed that they did not vote for county executive. Including these non-voters, Leopold would have received 48.4 percent of the vote compared to Johnson’s 46.7 percent. Excluding the non-voters, the respective percentages are 50.9 to 49.1, virtually exactly the final total.

Table 22: Vote for County Executive

Candidate	Short		Long	
	Percent	Cases	Percent	Cases
Leopold	51	200	51	98
Johnson	49	207	46	89
Didn’t vote	(5% excluded)	(21)	3	5
Total	100	407 (428)	100	192

Table 23 shows the party vote and indicates the percentage of defections – the number of Democrats voting for Leopold and the number of Republicans voting for Johnson.

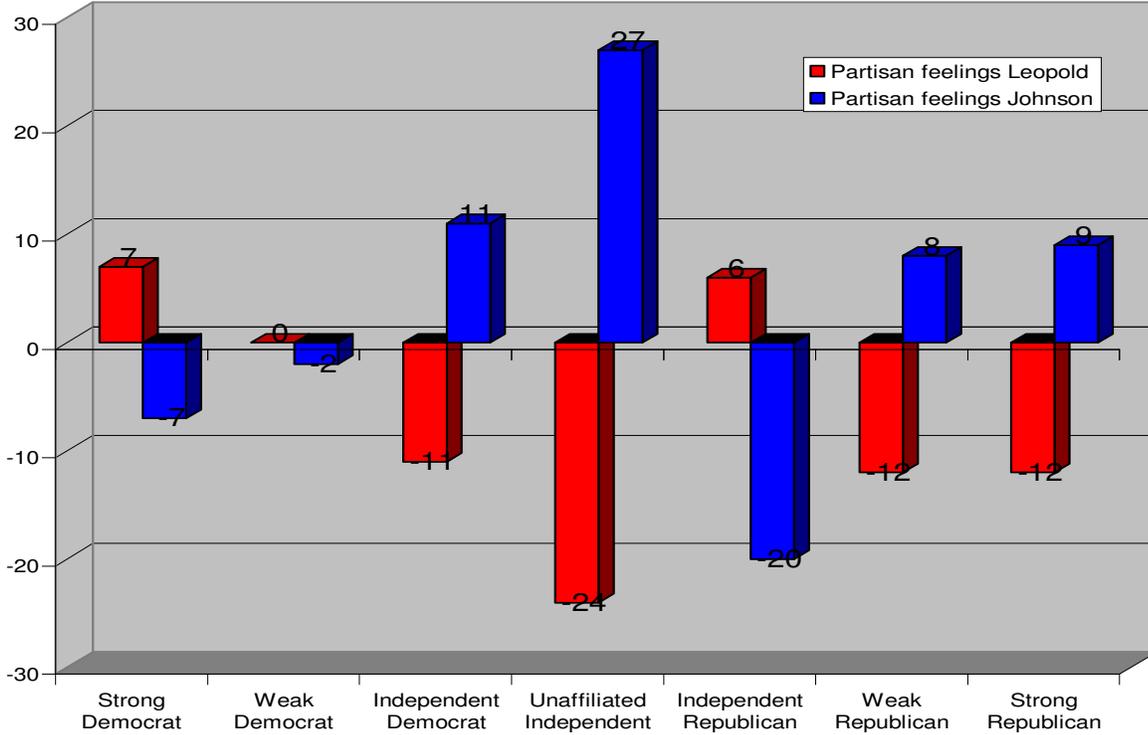
Table 23: Vote for County Executive/County Executive by Party (short form)

	Republicans		Democrats		Didn’t Vote		Cases
	Ehrlich	Leopold	O’Malley	Johnson	Govr.	County Exec.	
Democrats	17	22	79	74	6	4	180
Republicans	89	80	10	14	1	5	167
Unaffiliated	54	39	40	55	0	6	50
Other	83	42	8	42	8	17	12

A slightly greater number of Democrats were willing to vote for Leopold than for Ehrlich (22% vs. 17%), resulting in a diminution of Johnson’s vote to 74 percent from O’Malley’s 79 percent. However, Republicans were less inclined to support Leopold (89% for Ehrlich, 80% for Leopold) and a much larger percentage (5% vs. 1%) opted not to vote at all. This accounts for the lower vote count by Leopold compared to Ehrlich, along with the sharp 15 point drop-off in votes from unaffiliated voters.

These results appear puzzling since Leopold had a higher defection rate among Democrats, implying a greater, rather than diminished, capacity to crossover and pick up middle of the road, independent minded voters. Johnson and Leopold split the “other” vote evenly, again a reason for the much tighter race.

Graph 9: Governor-County Executive Vote



Partisan Feeling and the Vote for County Executive

To further unravel the mystery of how partisanship affected the two races, Table 24 (and Graph 9) presents the votes for governor and county executive categorized by the strength of partisanship. Several patterns point to the basis for Leopold’s small margin of victory.

- Leopold lost support (compared to Ehrlich) among independent Democrats, unaffiliated independents, weak and strong Republicans;
- Leopold gained small bits of support among independent Republicans and strong Democrats;
- Johnson gained much support among unaffiliated independents and to a lesser degree independent Democrats; and,
- Johnson gained a bit more support among weak and strong Republicans, while losing some support among strong Democrats and to a larger extent among independent Republicans.

Table 24: Partisan Feelings and the Vote for County Executive and Governor (Short Form)

Partisan feelings	Percentages					
	Governor Overall	County Exec Overall	Ehrlich	Leopold	O'Malley	Johnson
Strong Democrat	25	25	4	11	93	86
Weak Democrat	15	15	20	20	77	75
Independent Democrat	6	5	46	35	50	61
Unaffiliated Independent	9	8	61	37	33	60
Independent Republican	5	5	62	68	38	18
Weak Republican	15	15	92	80	7	15
Strong Republican	23	23	97	85	2	11
Total	99	96				

Note: Totals do not equal 100 percent due to rounding and some respondent misfiling – Democrats claiming to be Republicans and vice-versa.

Graph 9 specifically shows the results of subtracting the county executive vote from governor’s vote for each partisan subcategory. The higher the number, the greater the gain or loss of the county executive candidate compared to the results for the candidate for governor from the same party.

Issues and the Vote for County Executive

Table 24.1 combines the short and long form responses for issues influencing the vote.

Table 24.1: Issues and County Executive Vote

Issue	Short	Long	Ave	Johnson			Leopold		
				Short	Long	Ave	Short	Long	Ave
Education	8	21	15	53	43	48	47	54	52
Growth	5	8	7	70	62	66	30	39	34
Taxes	5	15	10	0	40	20	100	60	80
Govt. spending	4	2	3	38	33	35	62	67	65
Cost of living	3	10	7	50	47	49	50	53	52
Crime	2	18	10	50	47	49	50	53	52
Environment	2	8	5	100	62	81	0	38	19
Transportation	1	3	2	0	80	40	100	20	60
Economy	1	11	6	51	47	49	50	53	52
Party	30	--		60	--		40	--	
Experience	6	--		50	--		50	--	
Honesty	4	--		43	--		57	--	
Anti-candidate	4	--		43	--		57	--	
Leadership	4	--		43	--		57	--	
Beliefs	4	--		43	--		57	--	
Housing	--	3		--	75		--	25	

Table 24.1 provides a glimpse at the diversity of issue responses. The short form showed that the open-ended 'issues' choices diverged significantly from those on the closed-ended form. Party prevailed as the key issue on the short form, but wasn't offered on the long form. Among the policy oriented issues, education topped the list for both forms. But as is demonstrated by the contrasting scores on crime, the different methodologies produced other diverging response patterns.

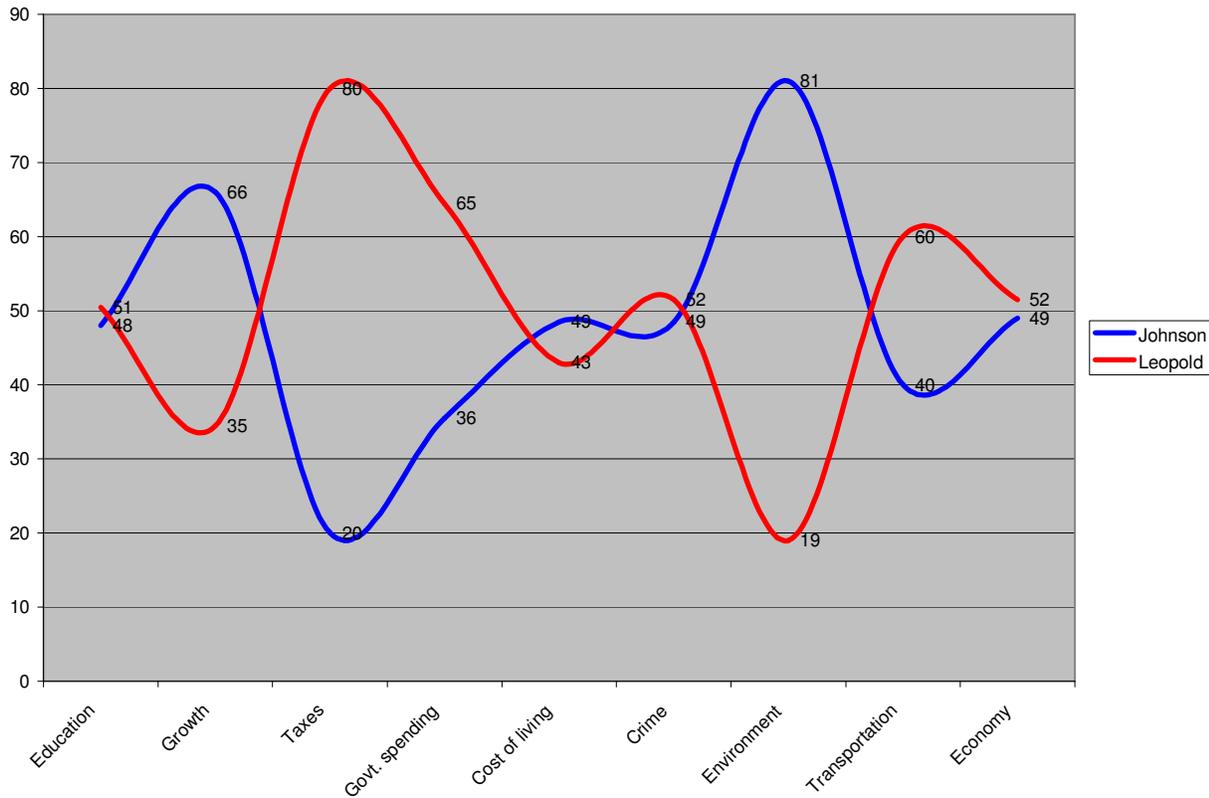
Graph 9.1 uses the average scores (combining the results for both forms) to plot votes for the two candidates among those emphasizing each issue. Only two issues offer a clear linkage to party/ideology and candidate choice: the Republican Leopold was favored by those emphasizing taxes and government spending, while the Democrat Johnson was more often selected by those emphasizing the environment. As may be seen on Table 24.1, taxes was twice as salient overall (10 percent average) than the environment (5 percent average). Thus, among issues clearly differentiating the two candidates, Leopold drew the greater benefit.

On other issues, the candidates were less polarized. Johnson was advantaged on growth by a nearly equal amount of Leopold's advantage on the economy. On education, the cost of living and crime, there were inconsequential differences.

This lack of difference probably worked to the disadvantage of Johnson. Given his background in law enforcement, he would have been expected to gain a large advantage on crime. His status as a Democrat should have favored him disproportionately on 'cost of living.' He was unable to get much headway on education.

Lastly, on the various items mentioned only on the short form, Leopold led Johnson (honesty, leadership, overall beliefs and voting against the opponent), while Johnson only led on party. This suggests that Johnson did not work the character issue to his benefit, relying mostly on a party line vote.

Graph 9.1: County Executive Vote and Issues found in both Forms



Traits and the Vote for County Executive

Table 24.2 shows the traits identified in the short and long forms. Looking at the average for both forms, honesty (21%) was the most cited trait, which favored Leopold (60% vs. 40%). Regarding ‘strong leader’ or ‘experience,’ the next most cited items, the two candidates were fairly close, although Johnson had a 14 point advantage on leadership. Johnson was also favored by those citing the more liberal “understands needs of people like me” while Leopold outdistanced Johnson on ‘intelligence.’

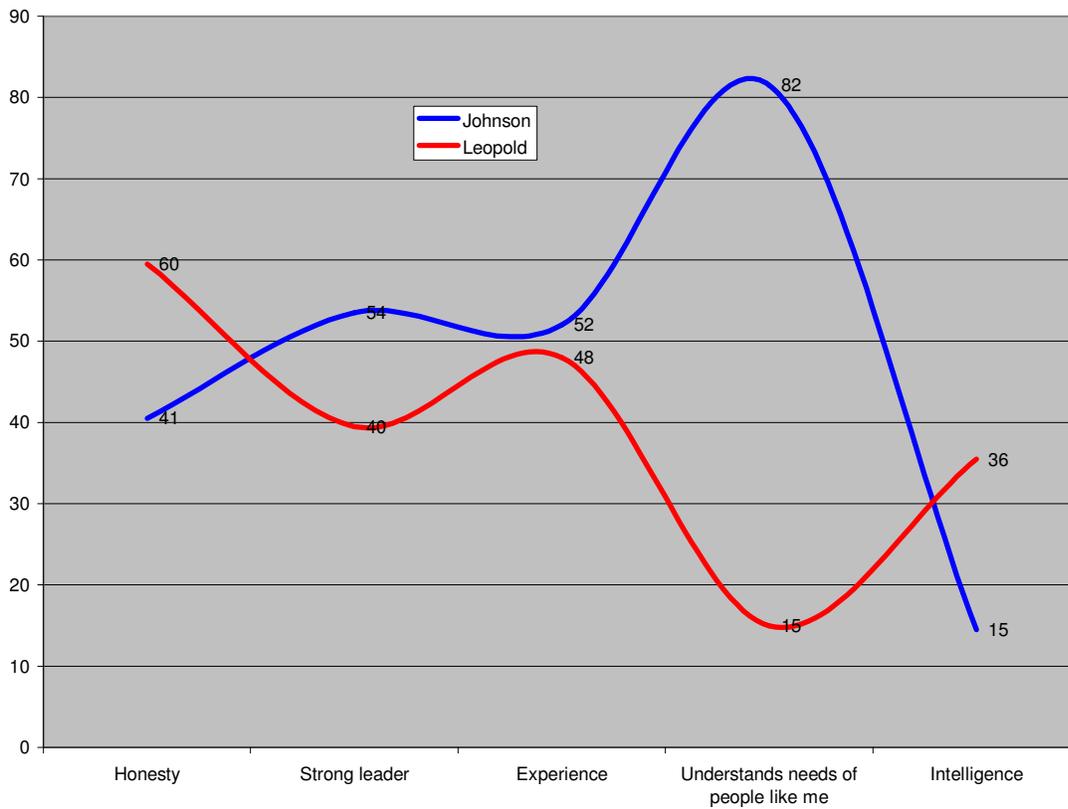
On a possible Leopold weakness such as ‘family man,’ the results were clear: the public did *not* consider this character trait as salient. Among the few respondents citing it, Leopold drew even with Johnson. The latter’s unwillingness to draw character comparisons between himself and his opponent either correctly interpreted the public’s disinterest in this aspect of contrast, or failed to capitalize on a distinction whose saliency might have been increased.

On those items not included on the long form, Leopold drew an advantage on all but the heavily cited party (55% Johnson, 39% Leopold) and ‘dedicated’ (both 50%). Thus, Leopold was favored on ‘overall character,’ persistence, beliefs and personal contact.

Table 24.2: Traits and the Vote for County Executive

Traits	Short	Long	Ave	Johnson			Leopold		
				Short	Long	Ave	Short	Long	Ave
Honesty	25	16	21	38	43	40	62	57	60
Strong leader	5	19	12	57	50	54	29	50	40
Experience	5	29	17	57	47	52	43	53	48
Understands needs of people like me	1	17	9	100	63	82	0	30	15
Intelligence	0	14	7	0	29	15	0	71	36
Family man	0	1	1	0	--	50	--	50	25
Party	23	--	--	55	--	--	39	--	--
Overall character	8	--	--	46	--	--	54	--	--
Persistence	6	--	--	13	--	--	87	--	--
Beliefs	5	--	--	29	--	--	71	--	--
Dedicated	3	--	--	50	--	--	50	--	--
Personal contact	3	--	--	25	--	--	75	--	--

Graph 9.2: Traits and the Vote for County Executive



Gender and the Vote for County Executive

Table 25 presents the relationship between gender and the votes for both county executive and governor. There are columns that subtract the gubernatorial vote from the county executive vote to show gains and losses.

The gender gap which had appeared in the governor’s race disappeared in the county executive’s race. This was due to a dramatic 10 percent drop in support among men for John Leopold, and a corresponding 9 percent increase for George Johnson. Women were less likely to vote in the county executive’s race, which in such a close race probably worked to the disadvantage of Johnson.

Table 25: Gender and Vote for County Executive (Short Form)

Gender	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O’Malley	Johnson	J-O	Didn’t vote – Gov	Didn’t vote – CE	CE-G
Men	58	49	-9	38	47	+9	4	4	0
Women	50	48	-2	49	46	-3	1	6	-5

Age and the Vote for County Executive

The relationship between age and the vote revealed an interesting twist. Younger voters were much less likely to vote for county executive than for governor. Compared to the governor’s race, Leopold lost much ground among these younger voters; Johnson picked up voters between 31 and 50 years old. However, Leopold partly compensated for losses among younger voters by picking up support among voters 61 and older (see Graph 10). *Had older voters not gravitated to Leopold, Johnson would have won the election.*

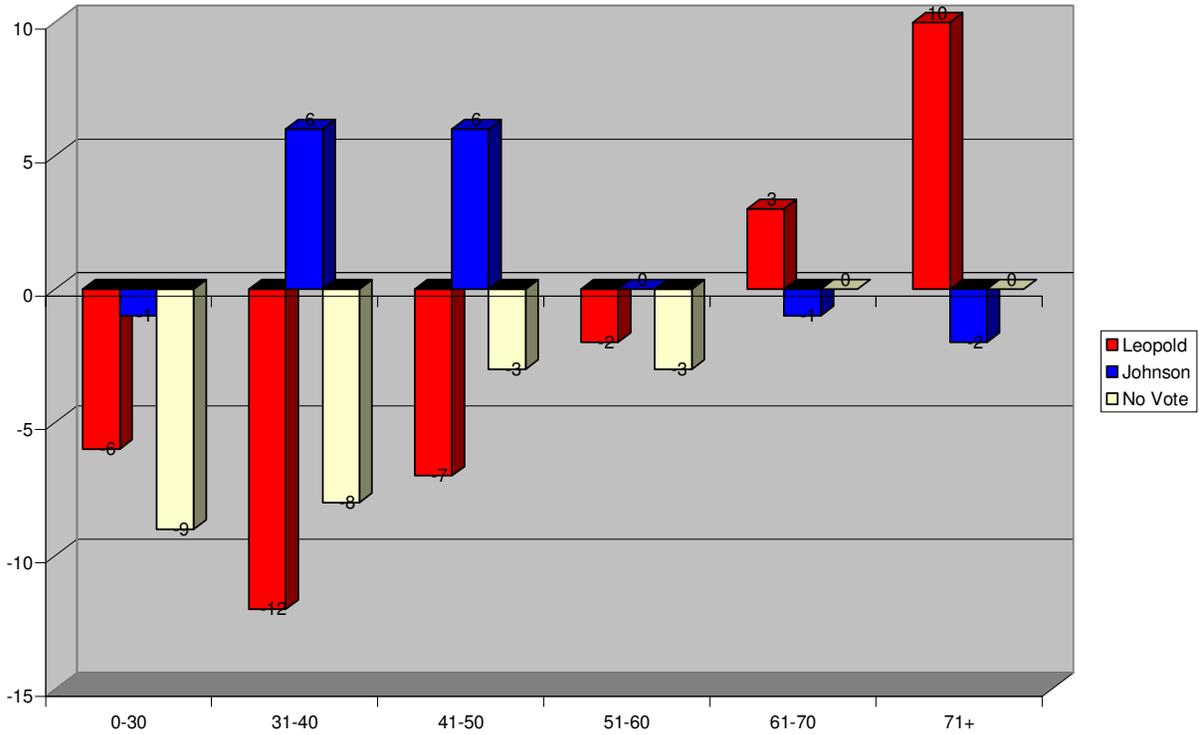
Table 26: Age and the Vote for County Executive/Governor (Short Form)

Age Group	% of sample	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O’Malley	Johnson	J-O	No Vote – Gov	No Vote – CE	CE-G
0-30	19	49	43	-6	47	46	-1	3	12	-9
31-40	20	54	42	-12	45	51	+6	0	8	-8
41-50	24	60	53	-7	37	43	+6	1	4	-3
51-60	20	60	58	-2	40	40	0	0	3	-3
61-70	11	48	51	+3	50	49	-1	0	0	0
71+	7	36	46	+10	56	54	-2	0	0	0

Voters 61 and older tended to focus less on issues than on character, choosing such “issues” as experience, honesty, and community representation when asked which “issue” most influenced

“your vote for county executive.” Moreover, they were the least likely to cite “party” as an issue, only 7 percent, compared to 21 percent for those 30 and younger and 11 percent for those between 31 and 60. These findings were essentially echoed when age and “trait” were compared.

Graph 10: Changes in Support by Age Group



Race and the Vote for County Executive

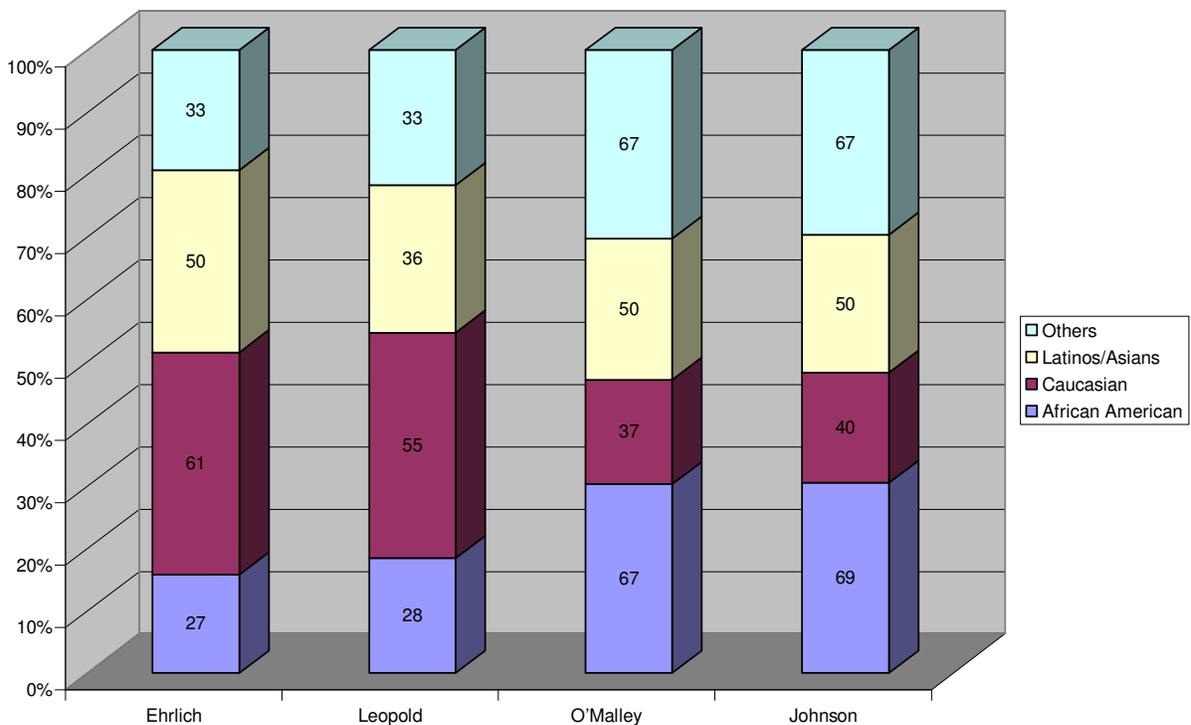
Table 27 compares race with the votes for county executive and governor. There was little change, although Leopold did experience a 6 percent drop in support among Caucasians. The even larger 14 percent drop was among Latinos/Asians, whose small number of cases magnify the percentage change effect. Generally, disproportionate support for Democratic candidates among African-Americans was sustained, with Johnson making very small inroads among white voters. Graph 11 shows the race/candidate relationships.

Table 27: Age and the Vote for County Executive/Governor (Short Form)

Race	% of sample	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O'Malley	Johnson	J- O	No Vote – Gov	No Vote – CE	CE-G
African American	17	27	28	+1	67	69	+2	2	3	+1
Caucasian	75	61	55	-6	37	40	+3	1	5	+5
Latinos/Asians	5	50	36	-14	50	50	0	0	14	+14
Others	2	33	33	0	67	67	0	0	0	0

Note: 4 percent of African-Americans claimed to have voted for an “other” candidate for governor.

Graph 11: Race and Votes for County Executive/Governor



Education and the Vote for County Executive

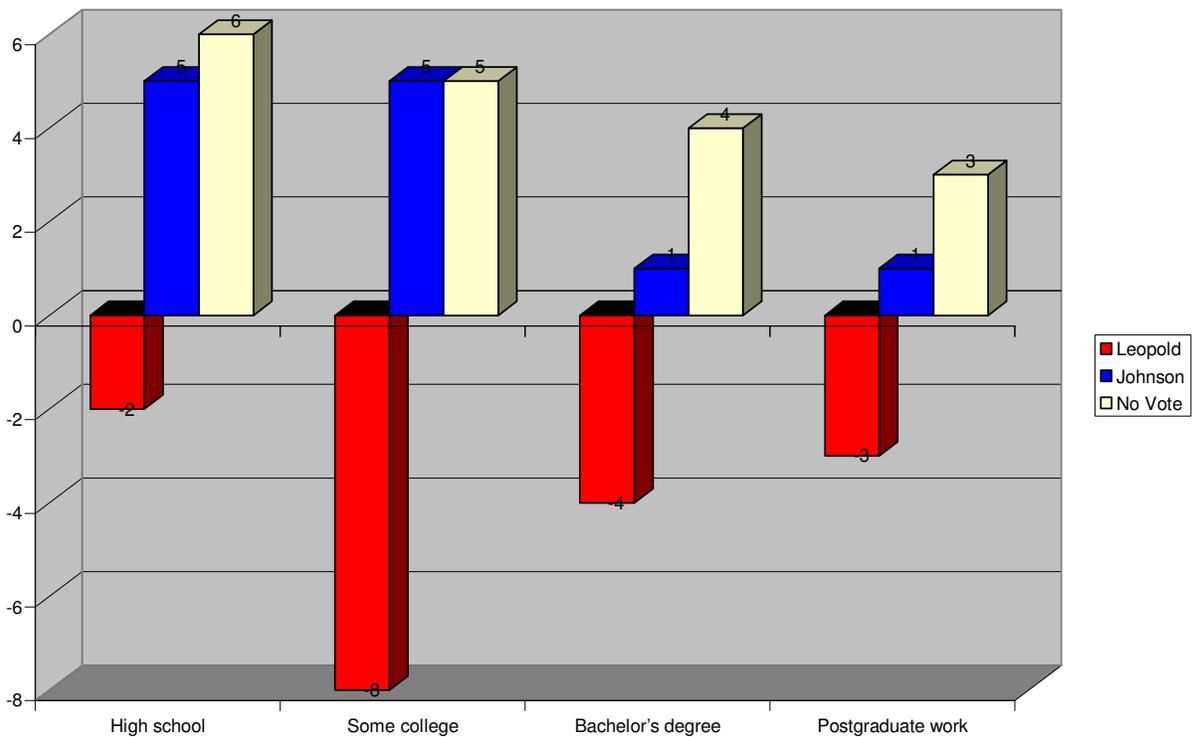
Table 28 compares the votes for governor and county executive by education levels. Leopold experienced across the board declines in support, particularly among those with “some college.” Johnson picked up support especially among those with high school or some college education. The rate of none-voting was a bit higher for lesser educated groups.

Table 28: Age and the Vote for County Executive/Governor (Short Form)

Education	Overall	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O’Malley	Johnson	J-O	No Vote-Gov	No Vote-CE	CE-G
High school	16	55	53	-2	36	41	+5	0	6	+6
Some college	34	51	43	-8	46	51	+5	1	6	+5
Bachelor’s degree	27	60	56	-4	40	41	+1	0	4	+4
Postgraduate work	24	48	45	-3	51	52	+1	0	3	+3

Note: Nine percent of those saying “high school” claimed to have voted for an “other” candidate for governor.

Graph 12: Change in Vote for County Executive vs. Governor



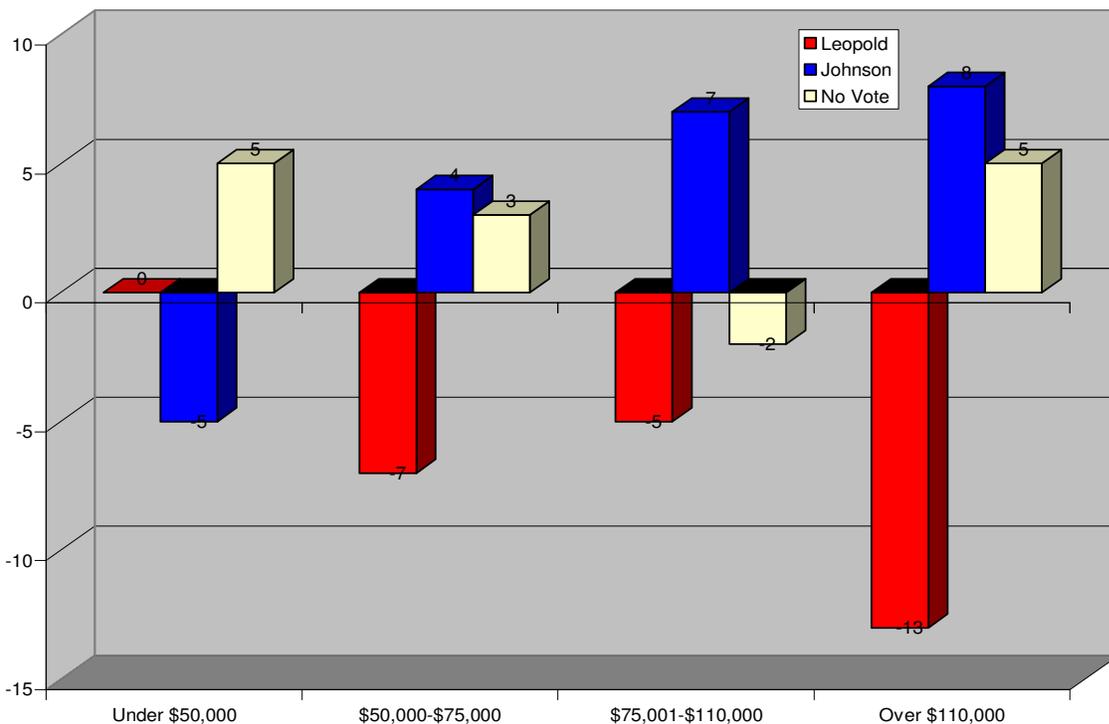
Income and the Vote for Governor

Table 29 depicts the relationship between income and the votes for county executive and governor. As shown on Graph 12, Johnson improved on O'Malley's performance for all income groups except those earning under \$50,000, who apparently abstained from voting rather than vote for Johnson (Leopold was unchanged from Ehrlich for this group). Johnson did best among the highest income group, gaining 8 points. However, the increase in non-voting for this race among three of the four income groups suggests that *Johnson did not sell his candidacy to those unwilling to vote for Leopold*.

Table 29: Income and the Vote for Governor (Short Form)

Income	Overall	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O'Malley	Johnson	J-O	No vote -Gov	No vote - CE	CE-G
Under \$50,000	20	44	44	0	51	46	-5	5	10	+5
\$50,000-\$75,000	28	46	39	-7	52	56	+4	2	5	+3
\$75,001-\$110,000	28	66	61	-5	32	39	+7	2	0	-2
Over \$110,000	24	60	47	-13	40	48	+8	0	5	+5

Graph 13: Income and Difference between County Executive and Governor Votes



Were there differences among the partisan groups regarding the choice of candidate and income? Table 30 shows such differences for the Democratic candidates. Johnson showed small but consistent erosion of support among Democrats earning over \$50,000. *It seems likely that had he held on to O'Malley's level of support among these Democratic income groups, he would*

have won the election. However, he would have had to do so without losing the significant gains made among Republicans, especially the highest income group. Among unaffiliated voters, Johnson lost among the least affluent, but seemed much more acceptable to middle income groups.

Table 30: Vote for Democratic Candidates for Governor and County Executive among Party Groups

Income	Overall Johnson	Democrats			Republicans			Unaffiliated		
		O'Malley	Johnson	J-O	O'Malley	Johnson	J-O	O'Malley	Johnson	J-O
Under \$50,000	41	73	74	+1	17	4	-13	43	29	-14
\$50,001-\$75,000	51	87	82	-5	5	16	+11	21	57	+36
\$75,001-\$110,000	41	73	70	-3	6	12	+6	22	56	+34
Over \$110,000	52	75	72	-3	9	22	+13	65	65	0

Table 31 shows the same relationships for Republican candidates. Naturally, the image is the reverse of that applicable to Johnson: Leopold gained among most Democrats but lost among Republicans and unaffiliated voters. *Leopold apparently proved victorious particularly based on the support of those making between \$75,001 and \$110,000, where he gained 60 percent of their votes.* Conversely, had Johnson been able to improve upon his performance in the lowest income group, 10 percent of which did not vote for county executive, he might have nosed ahead of Leopold.

Table 31: Vote for Republican Candidates for Governor and County Executive among Party Groups

Income	Overall Leopold	Democrats			Republicans			Unaffiliated		
		Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E
Under \$50,000	44	20	21	+1	83	83	0	43	43	0
\$50,001-\$75,000	39	9	15	+6	92	73	-19	71	43	-28
\$75,001-\$110,000	60	24	30	+6	94	89	-5	67	44	-23
Over \$110,000	47	25	17	-8	91	76	-15	35	29	-6

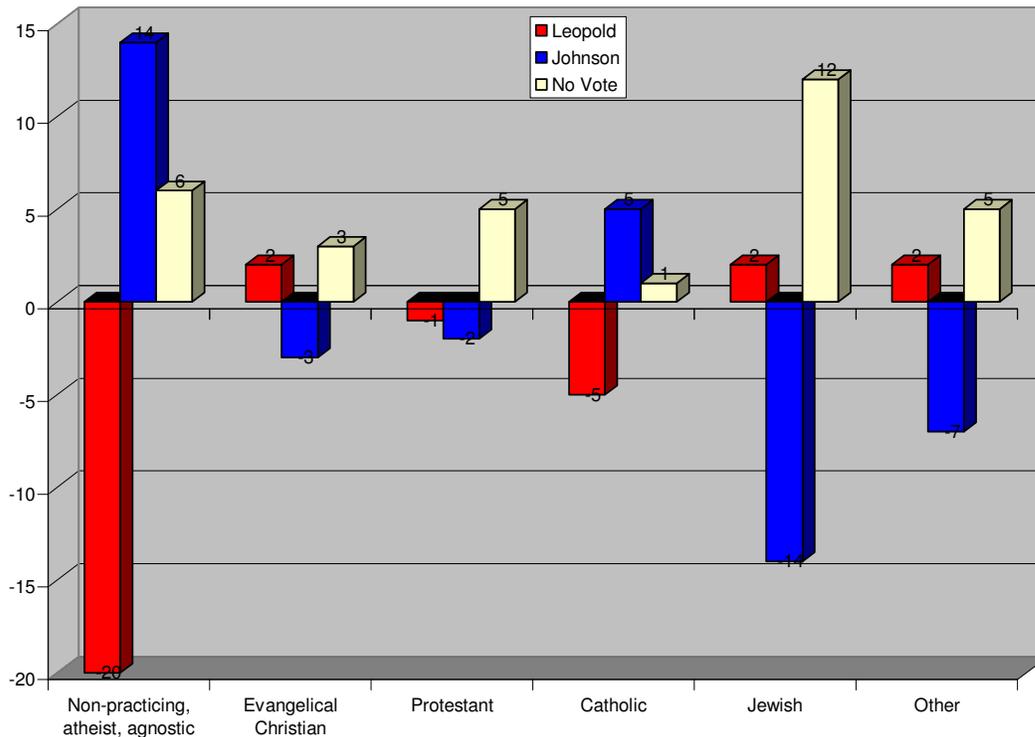
Religion and the Vote for County Executive

Table 32 shows that non-practicing seculars made a decisive difference in boosting Johnson’s vote total over that obtained by O’Malley. While the drop in the Jewish vote injured Johnson’s prospects, the secular vote was four times as large and thus much more likely to have a consequential electoral impact.

Table 32: Vote for Governor and County Executive among Religious Groups

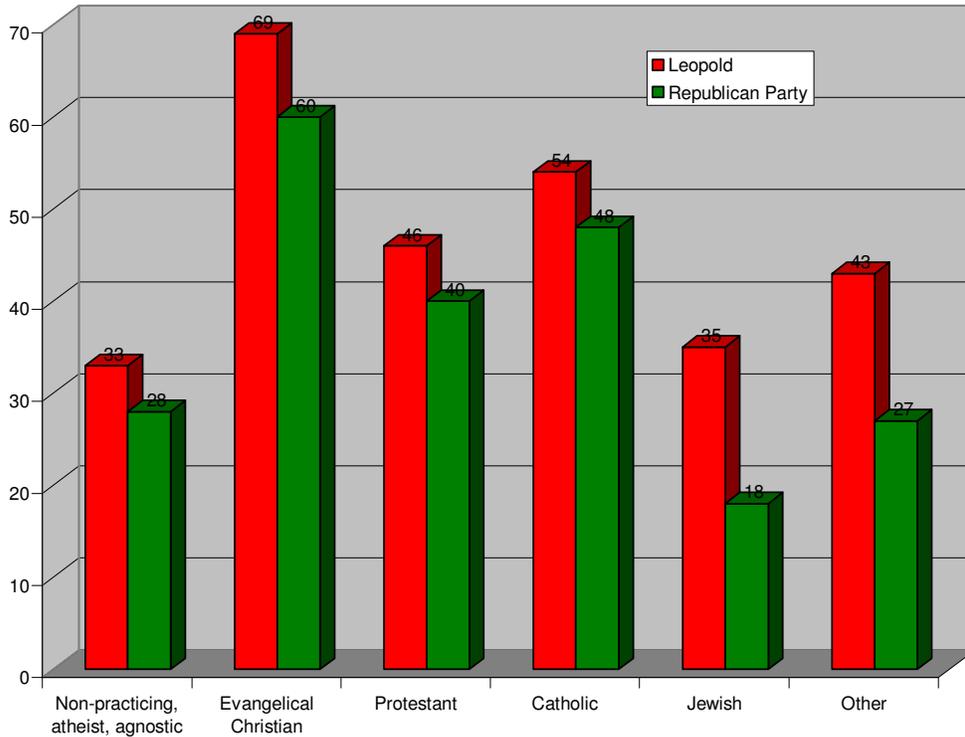
Income	Overall	Ehrlich	Leopold	L-E	O’Malley	Johnson	J-O	No vote -Gov	No vote - CE	CE-G
Non-practicing, atheist, agnostic	16	53	33	-20	47	61	+14	0	6	+6
Evangelical Christian	10	67	69	+2	29	26	-3	2	5	+3
Protestant	24	47	46	-1	50	48	-2	0	5	+5
Catholic	35	59	54	-5	39	44	+5	1	2	+1
Jewish	4	33	35	+2	67	53	-14	0	12	+12
Other	11	41	43	+2	59	52	-7	0	5	+5
Total	99									

Graph 13: Religion and Difference between County Executive and Governor Vote



Leopold’s victory can be partially explained by his ability to expand his support among religious categories beyond the levels of the Republican Party. Graph 15 shows the party and Leopold percentages.

Graph 15: Leopold vs. Republican Party Vote by Religion



Long Form: Additional Questions

The long form included two sections not included on the short form: a section asking voters to check off a factor if it was very important in affecting the choice of county executive candidate; and a section in which the vote for State’s Attorney was recorded.

Voting Influences on County Executive’s Race

Voters were presented 13 items that might have influenced their vote. These included a range of factors such paid ads on television, road signs, and a personal contact. Table 33 shows the items and the percentages citing each.

Endorsements apparently carried the greatest weight with voters in this survey as one-third checked this factor. Conversations with friends or family (22%) were about as important as newspaper stories about the candidates. Those elements most easily controlled by campaigns were generally less important, such as paid ads on television (15%), literature received in the mail (15%), door-to-door contacts (13%), paid ads in newspapers (5%) or road signs (3%).

Newspaper endorsements were in the same range (14%) as was information on the Internet (13%). Seeing the actual candidate played a relatively small role as only 11 percent said that they were affected by having seen the candidate speak at a public forum, or otherwise personally knowing the candidate (8%). Naturally, the more such contacts a candidate may have, the more likely that influences will accrue and prove decisive in a close race.

Table 33: Factors Influencing the Vote for County Executive

Influence	Percent
Endorsed by some person or group I respect	33
Conversations with friends or family	22
Newspaper <i>stories</i> about candidate	20
Paid ads on TV	15
Literature received in the mail	15
Endorsed by a newspaper like the <i>Capital</i> , <i>Washington Post</i> or the <i>Sun</i>	14
Information from the Internet	13
The candidate or a representative came to my door to introduce him/herself	13
I saw the candidate speak at a public forum	11
I personally knew the candidate from church, civic/sports association, etc.	8
Paid ads in the newspapers	5
Candidate's name from signs along major roads	5

Note: Respondents could choose more than one influence.

Table 34 shows the extent that influences were tied to support for either county executive candidate. The factors with the greatest statistical significance were: conversations with family/friends, door-to-door contact, paid ads on television, and endorsement by person/group (not a newspaper). In all cases, only a small minority of respondents claimed that any of these elements was very influential, making it hard to assess the general electoral benefits of these methods. However anecdotal inferences can be offered as follows: The door-to-door method so favored by Leopold clearly played to his advantage by a 4 to 1 ratio. Johnson's significant spending on television gained him more than a 2 to 1 advantage. Endorsements, here unspecified, played also to Johnson's advantage by a 20 point margin. Could that be related to the five previous county executive's endorsements? Was it the various interest groups endorsements? Conversations with family or friends also played to Johnson's advantage by 10 points – was this related to the fact that Johnson was much more likely (46 point advantage) to be known from community (rather than door-to-door) contacts?.

The items playing to Leopold's advantage included literature received in the mail (30 point advantage), newspaper endorsements (13 point advantage), and information from the Internet (35 point advantage). Could this imply that Leopold's mailings were more numerous and effective than Johnson's? Could the newspaper endorsements have been the key to putting him over the top?

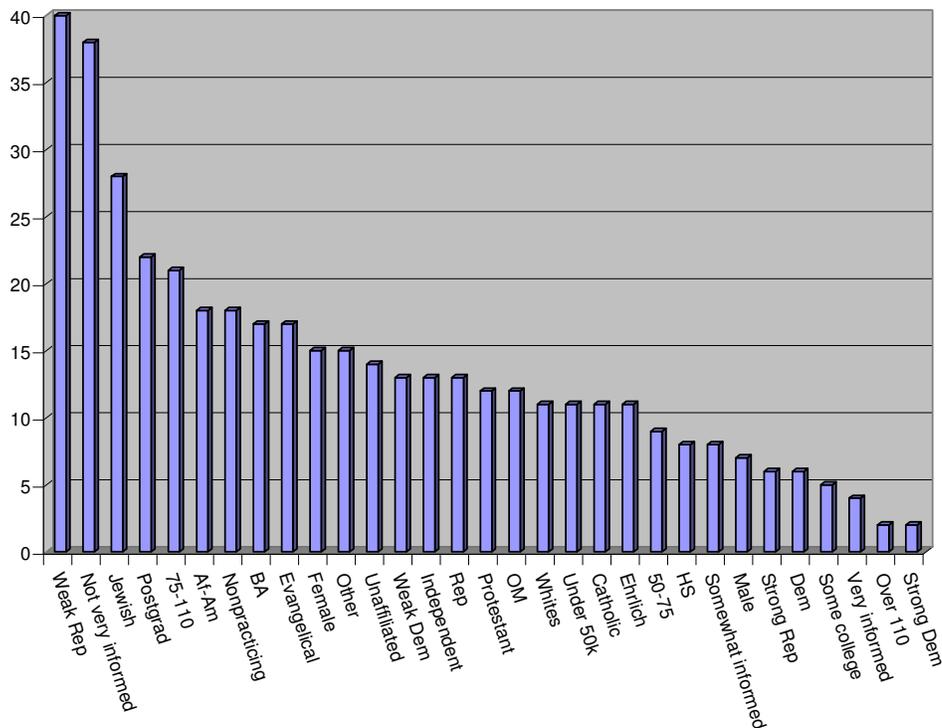
Table 34: Factors Influencing the Vote for County Executive by Candidate

Influence	Overall	Leopold	Johnson	Cases
The candidate or a representative came to my door to introduce him/herself	13	80	20	20
Information from the Internet	13	65	30	20
Literature received in the mail	15	63	33	24
Endorsed by a newspaper like the <i>Capital</i> , <i>Washington Post</i> or the <i>Sun</i>	14	57	44	23
Newspaper stories about candidate	20	47	50	32
Conversations with friends or family	22	41	51	37
I saw the candidate speak at a public forum	11	41	53	17
Endorsed by some person or group I respect	33	39	59	54
Paid ads in the newspapers	5	38	63	8
Candidate’s name from signs along major roads	5	38	50	8
Paid ads on TV	15	29	67	24
I personally knew the candidate from church, civic/sports association, etc.	8	27	73	11

State’s Attorney Race

The final unique feature to the long form was the recording of the vote for State’s Attorney. After weighting the sample by the known results for that race, the focus will be on identifying the defectors from Leopold which resulted in Democrat Frank Weathersbee’s 53 to 47 win.

Graph 16: Weathersbee-Johnson



Graph 16 sorts the information presented on Table 35 which shows the vote for both county executive and State's Attorney candidates by social and political variables. What Graph 16 highlights are the variables that most contributed to Weathersbee's victory. The first two items probably tell most of the story: Weak Republicans defected in large numbers (40%) as did those "not very informed" about the county executive race (37%).

It seems likely that Weathersbee's name recognition was considerably greater than Fischer's, resulting in the least informed and meekly partisan individuals voting for the familiar name. The vote difference between the two, Johnson and Weathersbee, was 10 percentage points in the long form. Everything above the 10 percent line shows a larger than expected movement in Weathersbee's favor. Among the least likely to vote for Weathersbee were those claiming to be "very informed" as well as strong Democrats and strong Republicans. Weathersbee appears to have made headway among several specific groups as well such as those with postgraduate education, African-Americans, women and others. Lastly, Weathersbee had a 22 point advantage among those saying that "crime" was the most important issue when choosing a candidate for county executive. Apparently, the linkage between fighting crime, the State's Attorney's office, and Weathersbee's name appears well ensconced in the public's mind.

Table 35: County Executive Vote Compared to State’s Attorney Vote by Characteristic

Characteristic	Johnson	Weathersbee	W-J	Leopold	Fischer	F-L
Gender						
Female	52	67	+15	41	33	-8
Male	35	42	+7	65	58	-7
Race						
Af-Am	55	73	+18	41	27	-14
Whites	38	49	+11	59	51	-8
Education						
HS	57	65	+8	44	35	-9
Some college	48	53	+5	48	47	-1
BA	32	49	+17	68	51	-17
Postgrad	37	59	+22	52	41	-11
Income						
Under 50k	57	68	+11	37	32	-5
50-75	42	51	+9	57	49	-8
75-110	33	54	+21	65	46	-19
Over 110	42	44	+2	58	56	-2
Religion						
Non-practicing	67	75	+8	29	25	-4
Evangelical	27	44	+17	56	56	0
Protestant	37	49	+12	73	51	-22
Catholic	26	37	+11	64	63	-1
Jewish	36	64	+30	73	36	-37
Other	76	91	+15	14	10	-4
Partisan Feelings						
Strong Dem	98	100	+2	2	0	-2
Weak Dem	63	76	+13	38	24	-14
Independent	42	55	+13	42	45	+3
Weak Rep	5	45	+40	95	55	-40
Strong Rep	9	15	+6	91	85	-6
Governor vote						
OM	83	95	+12	16	5	-11
Ehrlich	16	27	+11	81	73	-8
Party registration						
Dem	80	86	+6	18	14	-4
Rep	9	22	+13	91	78	-13
Unaffiliated	38	52	+14	50	48	-2
Informed about CE race						
Very informed	45	49	+4	55	51	-4
Somewhat informed	44	52	+8	56	48	-8
Not very informed	31	69	+37	54	31	-23
Ideology						
Conservative	27	26	-1	73	74	+1
Moderate	56	79	+23	42	21	-21
Liberal	47	70	+23	47	30	-17

Social Characteristics of the Political Parties

In this section, the social-demographic characteristics of the political parties (including unaffiliated) will be presented, starting with the gender. All findings are based on the short form.

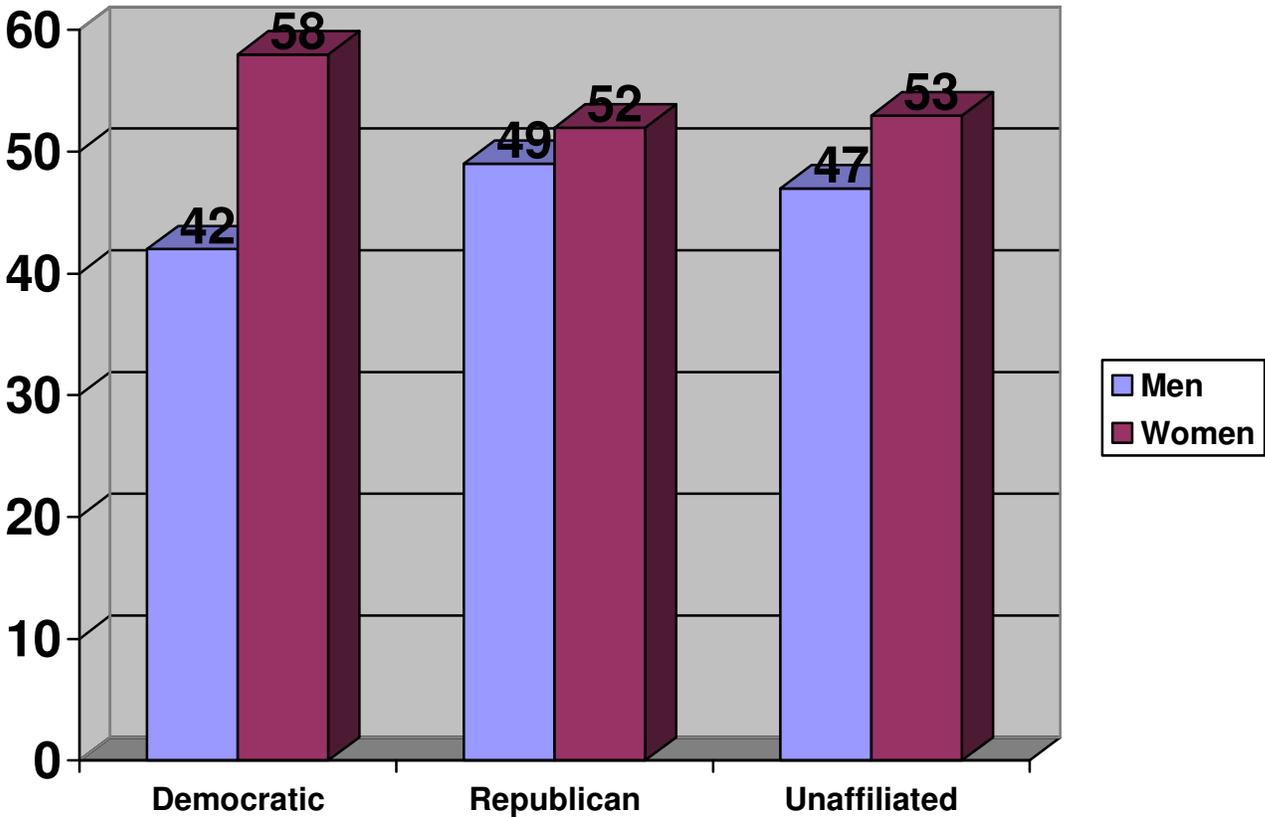
Gender and the Political Parties

Democrats tended to be more female than male (16 point margin). Republicans and unaffiliated were slightly more male (3 and 6 point margins).

Table 36: Gender and Political Party Registration

Gender/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
Men	42	49	47
Women	58	52	53
Total	100	101	100

Graph 17: Gender and Political Party Registration



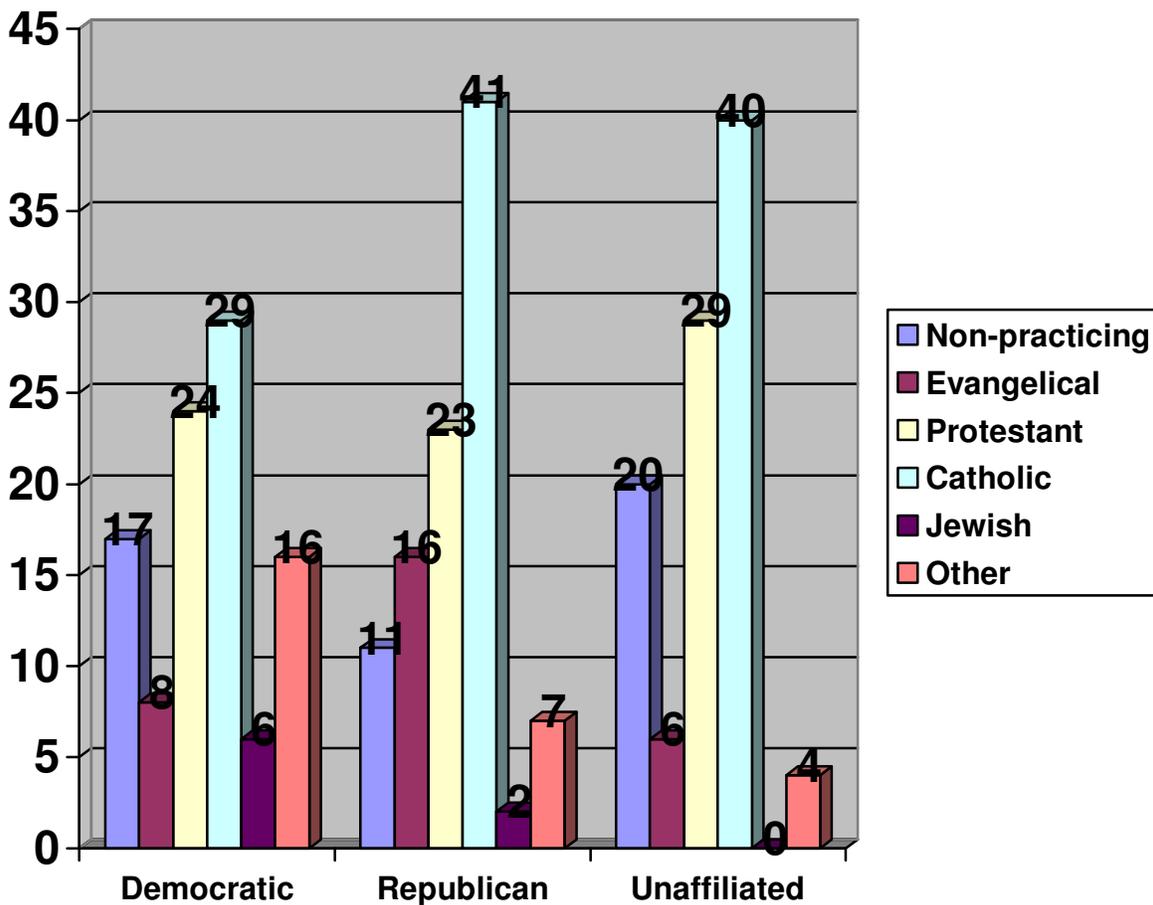
Religion and Political Party Registration

Democrats and unaffiliated tended to be more secular than Republicans. The latter and unaffiliated tended to have higher percentages of Catholics than do Democrats. There was not much difference in the distribution of Protestants among the political categories. Evangelicals were clustered in the Republican Party. Jews and “others” were found mostly in the Democratic Party.

Table 37: Religious Grouping and Political Party Registration

Religious Category/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
Non-practicing	17	11	20
Evangelical	8	16	6
Protestant	24	23	29
Catholic	29	41	40
Jewish	6	2	0
Other	16	7	4
Total	100	100	99

Graph 18: Religion and Political Party Registration



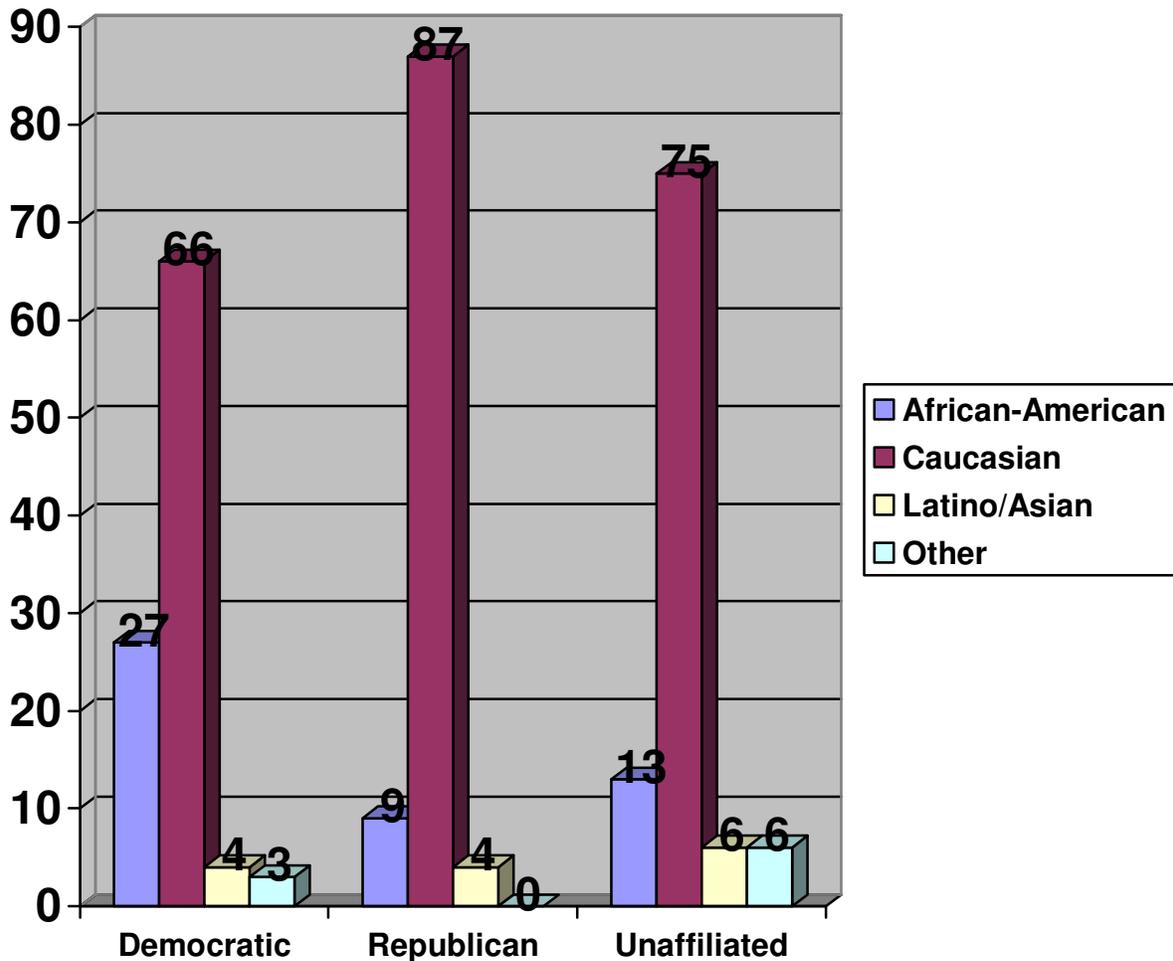
Race and Political Party Registration

Democrats had a much larger concentration of African-Americans than did Republicans or unaffiliated respondents (18/14 point margins).

Table 38: Race and Political Party Registration

Race/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
African-American	27	9	13
Caucasian	66	87	75
Latino/Asian	4	4	6
Other	3	0	6
Total	100	100	100

Graph 19: Race and Party Registration



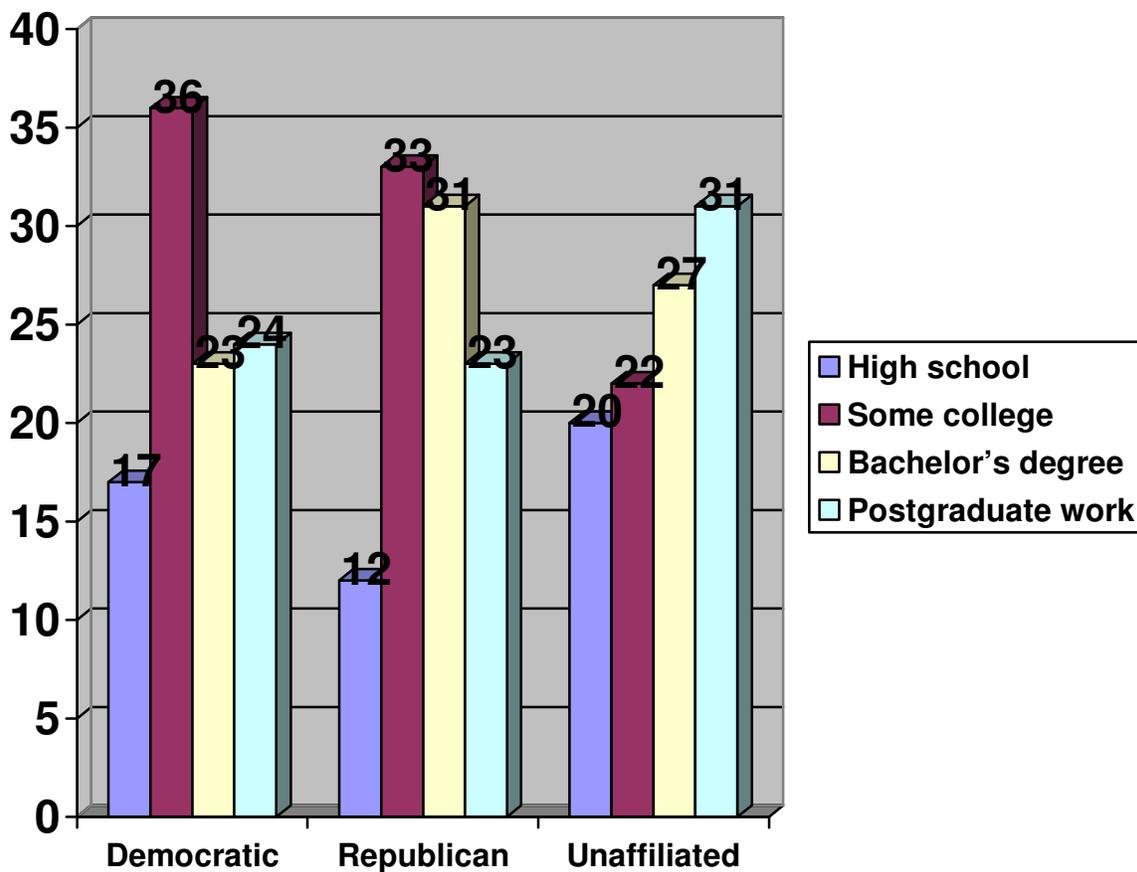
Education and Political Party Registration

Democrats tended to have a few more supporters in the “high school” or “some college” categories (53%) compared to Republicans (45%). Unaffiliated respondents had the highest concentration of those with postgraduate work (31%).

Table 39: Education and Political Party Registration

Education/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
High school	17	12	20
Some college	36	33	22
Bachelor’s degree	23	31	27
Postgraduate work	24	23	31
Total	100	99	100

Graph 20: Education and Party Registration



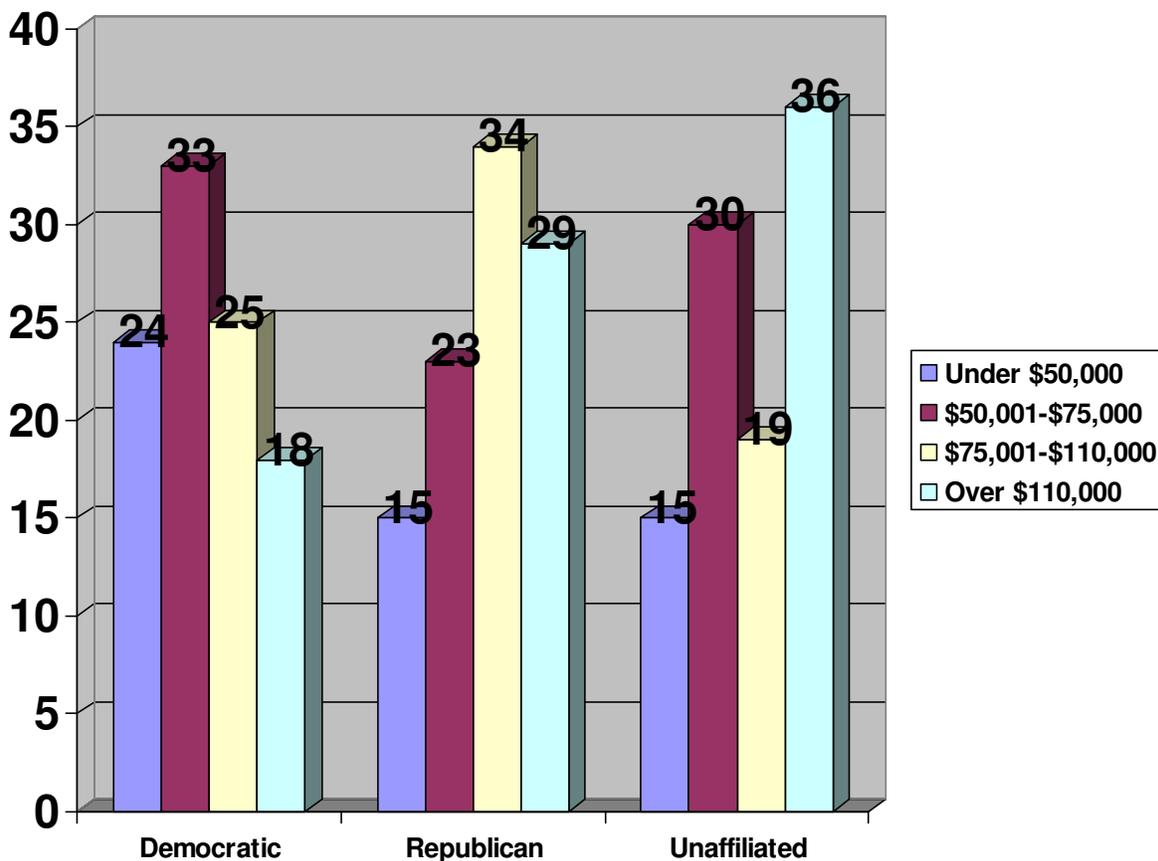
Income and Political Party Registration

Democrats had more registrants with incomes under \$75,000 (57%) compared to Republicans (37%) or unaffiliated respondents (45%). However, the unaffiliated category had the greatest of respondents in the highest income category (36%) compared to Republicans (29%) and Democrats (18%).

Table 40: Income and Political Party Registration

Income/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
Under \$50,000	24	15	15
\$50,001-\$75,000	33	23	30
\$75,001-\$110,000	25	34	19
Over \$110,000	18	29	36
Total	100	101	100

Graph 21: Income and Party Registration



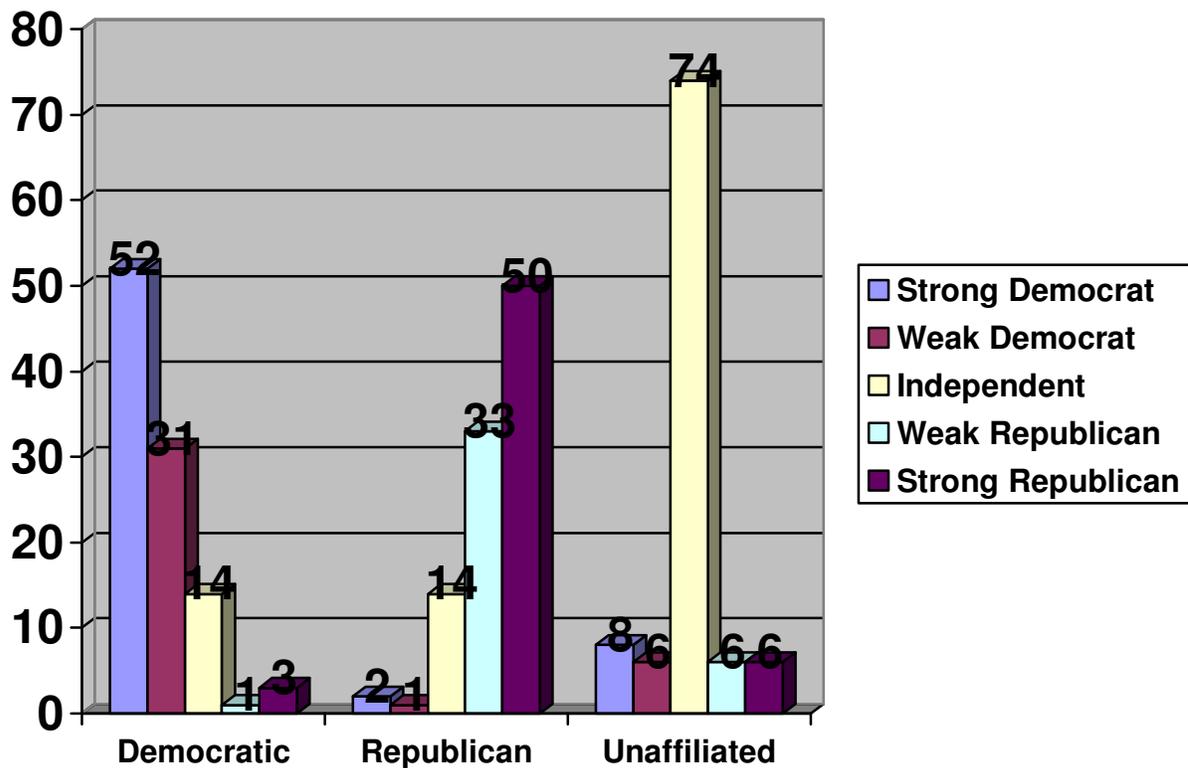
Partisan Feelings and Party Registration

About one half of those claiming to be registered in a political party claimed to be “strong” Democrats (52%) or Republicans (50%). About equal proportions claimed to be weak (31%, 33%) or independent (both 14%). Some three-quarters of unaffiliated respondents said they were “independents” (74%) with about equal numbers leaning to the Democratic (14%) or Republican (12%) sides.

Table 41: Partisan Feelings and Political Party Registration

Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
Strong Democrat	52	2	8
Weak Democrat	31	1	6
Independent	14	14	74
Weak Republican	1	33	6
Strong Republican	3	50	6
Total	101	100	100

Graph 22: Partisan Feelings and Party Registration



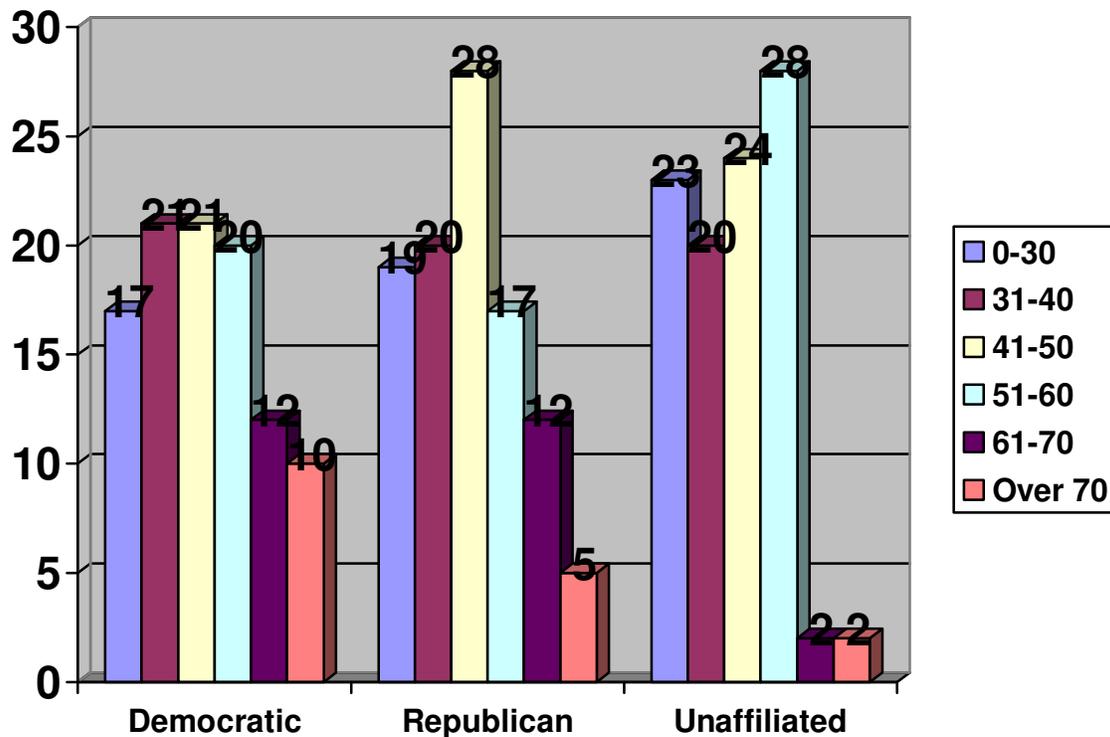
Age and Political Party Registration

Unaffiliated respondents tended to be much younger (4% over 60) than Republicans (17% over 60) or especially Democrats (22% over 60). They had a slightly greater number who were 30 or under (23%) compared to Republicans (19%) or Democrats (17%). Republicans had an especially large number between 41 and 50 (28%), while a similar percentage of unaffiliated respondents were between 51 and 60. Democrats tended to have the most evenly distributed age groupings.

Table 42: Age and Political Party Registration

Age/Party	Democratic	Republican	Unaffiliated
0-30	17	19	23
31-40	21	20	20
41-50	21	28	24
51-60	20	17	28
61-70	12	12	2
Over 70	10	5	2
Total	101	101	99

Graph 23: Age and Party Registration



Candidate Issues and Traits and Party Registration

County Executive Main Issue and Political Party Registration

In the short form, a similar percentage of respondents (around one-half) from all three groupings did *not* indicate any response to the main issue question. All groupings chose “party” as the main “issue.” All other responses were in the single digits.

Table 43: County Executive Main Issue (Short Form) and Party Registration

Issue/Party	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
No response	56	52	52
cost of living	1	2	0
crime	1	1	2
economy	1	1	0
education	5	4	0
environment	2	0	0
growth	2	3	4
Govt. spending	2	1	4
taxes	0	6	0
transportation	0	1	0
party	14	12	18
change	1	1	0
record	1	1	4
leadership	2	1	0
overall beliefs	1	2	4
experience	3	2	0
personal contact	1	2	0
independence	1	1	0
anti	2	1	4
endorsements	1	1	0
community representation	2	1	0
honesty	1	2	2
Other	2	3	6
Total	100	100	100

County Executive Main Trait and Political Party Registration

In the short form, a similar percentage of respondents (around one-half) from all three grouping did *not* indicate any response to the main trait question. All groupings chose “party” as the main “trait.” Only “honesty” was otherwise in double digits, with Republicans especially concerned with that trait. All other responses were in the single digits.

Table 44: County Executive Main Trait and Party Registration

Trait	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
clear, straightforward	3	0	7
family man	0	0	0
honesty	23	30	21
integrity	0	4	
experience	8	2	7
understands county	3	2	
strong leader	5	6	7
understands people like me	2	0	0
works well with others	3	0	0
Personal contact	0	7	0
dedicated	5	0	0
persistent, consistent	3	9	7
party	23	22	21
beliefs	2	4	21
help community	3	4	0
Character, general, like	7	9	7
independence	3	2	0
record	2	0	0
Other	3	0	0
Total			

Governor Main Issue and Political Party Registration

The main issue which was agreed upon by a majority of all respondents was education, with little variation among the partisan groupings. Unaffiliated voters were much more likely to be voting against a candidate (13% vs. 4% for Republicans and Democrats). “Party” was a more important issue for Democrats (16%) than Republicans or unaffiliated respondents (both 8%). The latter two groups were more concerned with taxes (12%, 10%) than were Democrats (4%).

Table 45: Governor Main Issues by Party

Issue/Party	Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
abortion	1	2	3
anti-Bush/war	1	2	5
anti Ehrlich or O'Malley	4	4	13
BGE	3	2	5
college tuition	2	0	0
competence	1	1	3
cost of living	1	0	0
crime	4	4	8
economy	3	7	5
education	20	17	18
environment	4	1	5
growth	1	7	3
party loyalty	16	8	8
past record	4	7	8
slots	4	2	0
taxes	4	12	10
works with legs	1	0	3
overall beliefs	4	4	0
change	4	1	0
Govt. spending	1	4	5
integrity/honesty	1	4	0
immigration	0	1	0
stem cell	1	2	3
equality justice	1	1	0
people like me	2	1	0
family values	0	1	0
bal of power divided govt.	0	1	0
Other	10	6	0
Total	100	100	100

Governor Main Trait and Political Party Registration

Republicans and unaffiliated respondents were more concerned with honesty (42%, 35%) as the major governor candidate trait than were Democrats (23%). The latter were more focused on party (10%) than were Republicans (8%) or unaffiliated respondents (0%). Republicans were especially concerned with strong, competent leadership (10%) compared to Democrats (3%).

Table 46: Governor Trait and Political Party

Trait/Party	Dem	Rep	Unaffiliated
clear, straightforward, forthright	9	5	3
family man	1	3	3
intelligent, educated	1	2	3
honesty, trustworthy	23	42	35
integrity	3	3	3
right experience	5	4	0
right moral outlook	1	0	3
change	2	0	0
sides with working people	3	1	0
understands people like me	2	2	0
works well with others	3	1	0
past record	6	1	0
general character - likeable	6	3	9
leadership, competent, plan	3	10	6
persistent, consistent	6	2	9
know personally	0	0	0
overall beliefs]	2	4	0
party	10	8	0
friendly	3	1	0
anti vote	2	1	3
Other	6	7	24
Total	100	100	100

Conclusion

The main research problem for this exit poll was to ascertain the reasons why the large Republican advantage in the governor's race was eroded in the county executive's race.

The findings presented offer some empirical basis for understanding the distinction between the two races.

Democratic defections increased for Johnson, which reduced the impact of Republican defections from Ehrlich to Leopold (as well as Republican non-voting).

Partisan feelings: Johnson lost some support among strong Democrats, compensating for Leopold's losses among independent Democrats, unaffiliated independents and strong Republicans. The main differences were among unaffiliated independents, where Johnson's performance was much improved over O'Malley.

The lower level of information among voters for this race was likely to contribute to more partisan voting for Johnson among the most weakly affiliated Democrats. His strength as a crossover candidate also reinforced his position among independents. Strong Democrats may have not liked the 'cop' image and defected a bit more than with O'Malley. Leopold apparently had his own problems with strong Republican partisans, who might have responded to the lack of endorsements from party leaders. However, again the lower information levels meant that less committed Republicans were more likely to vote along party lines.

The lack of a gender gap narrowed the Republican margin of victory by virtue of a balanced vote among men. However, Johnson's performance among women was not improved over O'Malley's – he needed a bit more 'gender gap' than there was to overcome Leopold.

"Old age" played a role in bolstering Leopold. While in most categories, Leopold's performance trailed Ehrlich, he compensated by actually improved on the latter's score among older voter. A campaign unknown was "Could a Johnson campaign ad targeted at older voters narrowed Leopold's lead enough to have affected the outcome?"

Losses among the various education categories explain why Leopold's margin of victory was much less than Ehrlich's. However, Johnson needed the persuade more of the less educated voters to vote for him rather than abstain to overcome what remained of Leopold's lead.

Johnson's main problem among the various income groups was the increase in non-voting. While he improved over O'Malley among the highest income group, converting non-voters into Johnson supporters might have further narrowed the gap between the two county executive candidates.

Finally, it seems likely that campaign effects positively affected each of the candidates along plausible lines. Those things which seemed most easily associated with a given candidate's campaign, such as door-to-door for Leopold and television ads for Johnson, seemed to work to each candidate's advantage. Among those things which campaigns could least control,

newspaper endorsements, Leopold's lead might have been the tipping point among many relatively informed but weekly partisan voters. Again, in a campaign in which the gap between the two contenders is just a few thousand votes, small campaign effects might have played a decisive part in getting persuadable voters to go one way rather than the other.