

Partisan Polarization and the Rise of the Tea Party Movement

Alan I. Abramowitz
Department of Political Science
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia 30322
E-mail: polsaa@emory.edu

Abstract

At the grass roots level, the emergence of the Tea Party movement can best be understood as an outgrowth of the increased conservatism of the Republican electoral base, and especially the more politically engaged segment of that base, since the 1970s. I present evidence from American National Election Study surveys showing that Republican identifiers have been trending in a conservative direction for several decades and that this trend has been most evident among the most active partisans. I then present evidence from the October, 2010 wave of the American National Election Study Evaluations of Government and Society Survey about the social characteristics and political beliefs of Tea Party supporters. The overwhelming majority of Tea Party supporters were Republicans and supporters were much more conservative than other Republicans. While conservatism is by far the strongest predictor of support for the Tea Party movement, racial hostility also has a significant impact on support. Along with their greater conservatism, Tea Party supporters were much more politically active than other Republicans. These results suggest that the Tea Party movement has the potential to strongly influence the 2012 Republican congressional and presidential primaries, putting considerable pressure on Republican candidates to embrace issue positions well to the right of the median general election voter.

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The Tea Party movement has attracted enormous attention from journalists, candidates, and elected officials since it first appeared on the U.S. political scene in early 2009. However, there has been considerable disagreement among political observers about the numbers and motivations of those participating in Tea Party protests, the prevalence of racist sentiments among Tea Party activists, the role played by wealthy individuals, conservative groups and media figures in fomenting these protests, and the potential long-term impact of the movement (Judis 2010; Crabtree 2010; Parker 2010; Scarborough 2010). A key question raised by the spread of Tea Party protests and the emergence of Tea Party candidates in numerous House, Senate, and gubernatorial elections is whether this movement represents a new force in American politics or whether it is simply the latest, and perhaps the noisiest, manifestation of the long-term rightward shift of the Republican Party—a shift that can be seen as part of a larger trend toward increasing partisan polarization in American politics (Abramowitz 2010; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006; Weisberg 2010; Williamson, Skocpol and Skoggin 2011).

Political analysts aligned with the liberal wing of the Democratic Party have tended to criticize the Tea Party protests as a largely top-down phenomenon driven by well-funded conservative interest groups and media figures (Waldman 2010). It is clear that right-wing organizations such as Americans for Prosperity and Freedom Works have provided important logistical support for the movement and that conservative media figures, mainly associated with Fox News, have played crucial roles in publicizing and encouraging attendance at Tea Party rallies (Bedard 2010). However, these efforts could not have succeeded without the existence of a large, receptive audience among the public. Any successful social movement requires both leadership and organization and a grass roots army of sympathizers to respond to those leaders

and organizations and the Tea Party movement is no exception (Garner 1977; Wood 1982; McAdam and Snow 1997).

The goal of this study is to analyze the sources of support for the Tea Party movement within the American public. I also want to explain why the Tea Party movement emerged when it did, immediately following the election of a Democratic president and Congress in 2008, and whether the movement is likely to last beyond the 2010 midterm elections. Using data from the American National Election Studies cumulative file, I argue that grass roots support for the Tea Party movement can best be understood as a product of the increasing conservatism of the Republican Party's activist base over the past several decades. While only a small fraction of this base has actually participated in Tea Party protests, the expansion of the activist conservative base of the Republican Party has produced a large cadre of politically engaged sympathizers from which such participants can be recruited.

Along with a growing number of conservative Republican activists, the other factor crucial to the emergence of the Tea Party movement at the grass roots was the Democratic victory in the 2008 election and especially the election of Barack Obama as president. Obama is not only the first African-American president, but the first non-southern Democratic president since John F. Kennedy and arguably the most progressive Democratic president since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Obama's mixed racial heritage, his ambitious policy agenda, and the extraordinarily diverse coalition of liberals, young people, and racial minorities that supported him in 2008 all contributed to a powerful negative reaction on the part of many economic and social conservatives aligned with the Republican Party and perhaps among whites who were simply upset about having a black man in the White House. While any Democratic president pursuing a progressive policy agenda would probably have provoked a strong reaction from conservatives,

Obama's presence in the White House may have intensified that reaction by activating racial fears and resentments among some whites. These fears and resentments were of course stoked by right wing politicians, media commentators and websites.

A recurring theme on the right since even before the 2008 election has been that because of his mixed racial heritage, Barack Obama's values were different from those of the large majority of white Americans. The widespread promotion by right-wing talk show hosts and websites of claims that Obama was really a Muslim and may not have been born in the United States sought to exploit this sentiment (Stolberg 2010). Acceptance of these beliefs, along with intense opposition to specific policies such as the economic stimulus and health care reform, helped to create a large pool of individuals who were receptive to calls for action by conservative organizations and media figures during 2009-2010.

Brewing the Tea: The Growth of the Conservative Republican Base, 1972-2008

In order to understand the origins of the Tea Party movement, one needs to go back many years before the appearance of Barack Obama on the national political scene. The Tea Party movement can best be understood in the context of the long-term growth of partisan-ideological polarization within the American electorate and especially the growing conservatism of the activist base of the Republican Party.

Over the past several decades, the U.S. party system has undergone an ideological realignment at both the elite and mass levels. At the elite level, conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans who once held key leadership positions in the congressional parties have almost disappeared and the number of moderates in both parties has gradually diminished leaving a predominantly liberal Democratic Party battling a predominantly conservative Republican Party (Poole and Rosenthal 2000; Sinclair 2005; Dodd and Oppenheimer 2005). At

the mass level, change has not been quite as dramatic but citizens have gradually brought their party loyalties into line with their ideological orientations with the result that Democratic identifiers have been moving to the left while Republican identifiers have been moving to the right (Abramowitz 2010; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009).

While the alignment of partisanship with ideology is not as close at the mass level as it is at the elite level, within the American public the sharpest ideological divide is found among the most politically engaged citizens. In general, partisan-ideological polarization is greatest among the most interested, informed, and active members of the public: active Democrats are far more liberal than inactive Democrats and active Republicans are far more conservative than less active Republicans. Moreover, as the parties have become more polarized, the size of each party's activist base has been increasing (Abramowitz 2010).

Rather than turning off the public, the growing polarization of the parties appears to have led to increased interest and participation in the electoral process since the 1980s because citizens perceive that more is at stake in elections. Table 1 displays the trend in electoral participation among Republican identifiers over the past six decades according to data from the American National Election Studies. The electoral participation scale is based on responses to six questions about election-related activities—voting, trying to influence someone else's vote, displaying a campaign button, yard sign, or bumper sticker, giving money to a candidate or party, attending a campaign rally, and working for a campaign. Therefore scores range from 0 for individuals who engaged in no activities to 6 for those who engaged in all six activities.

[Table 1 goes here]

The data in Table 1 show that the percentage of Republican identifiers participating in two or more activities—generally individuals who did more than just vote—reached a low point

during the 1980s but then rebounded in the 1990s and reached an all-time high in the most recent decade. As partisan polarization has increased in recent years, so has the level of activism of Republican identifiers. While only about a third of Republican identifiers reported engaging in at least two activities in the 1980s, fully half reported engaging in at least two activities in the 2000s. At the same time, the percentage of Republican identifiers engaging in at least three activities almost doubled, going from 11 percent in the 1980s to 19 percent in the most recent period.

These results indicate that over the past three decades there has been a marked increase in the size of the activist base of the Republican Party—an increase that preceded the rise of the Tea Party movement. Moreover, as the GOP’s activist base was growing, it was also becoming increasingly conservative. Figure 1 displays the trend in the average score of Republican identifiers on a 7-point liberal-conservative scale between the 1970s and the 2000s. This is as far back in time as we can go since the ANES did not begin asking this question until 1972.

[Figure 1 goes here]

The data in Figure 1 show that over this time period there has been a fairly steady increase in the average conservatism score of Republican identifiers. Rank-and-file Republicans have been following their party’s leaders to the right. Moreover, the data show that this increase has been greatest among the most active party identifiers—those who presumably pay the most attention to what their party’s leaders are doing. While the increase in conservatism was fairly modest among inactive Republicans, it was very substantial among the most active group—those engaging in at least three activities. This group was the most conservative to begin with and it became much more conservative during this time period, going from an average score of 5.0 to an average score of 5.6 on the 7-point scale.

Thus far we have seen that the most active segment of the Republican base almost doubled in size between the 1980s and 2000s and that it also became considerably more conservative during this time period. But that was not the only important shift in outlook that occurred. Figure 2 displays the trend in the average rating of Democratic presidential candidates on the NES feeling thermometer scale over the past five decades. Since 1968, the NES has asked respondents to rate a variety of individuals and groups on this feeling thermometer scale, which ranges from 0 (very cold) to 100 (very warm). A score of 50 is considered neutral.

[Figure 2 goes here]

The data in Figure 2 show that as Republican identifiers have become increasingly conservative, they have also become increasingly negative in their evaluations of Democratic presidential candidates. A very similar trend is evident in evaluations of the Democratic Party itself. And once again, the most dramatic change occurred among the most active Republican identifiers—those engaging in at least three election activities. Among this group, the average feeling thermometer rating of Democratic presidential candidates fell from a lukewarm 42 degrees in the late 1960s to a very chilly 26 degrees in the 2000s.

The data from the NES surveys shows that over the past several decades the active Republican base has become increasingly conservative and increasingly hostile to the Democratic Party and its presidential candidates. By 2008, as the data in Table 2 demonstrate, the active Republican base was primed to respond positively to calls from conservative organizations and media figures to engage in protest activity against a newly elected Democratic president and Congress with an ambitious progressive policy agenda. This table compares the social characteristics and political attitudes of active Republican identifiers (those who engaged

in two or more election-related activities in 2008) with the social characteristics and political attitudes of the overall electorate.

[Table 2 goes here]

The data from the 2008 American National Election Study demonstrate that active Republicans were overwhelmingly white, older, better educated, wealthier, and more religious than the overall electorate. They were also much more conservative than the overall electorate. Compared with the electorate as a whole, active Republicans were much more likely to place themselves on the right side of the 7-point liberal-conservative scale, to oppose the creation of a single-payer health care system, to oppose gay marriage, to take a pro-life position on the issue of abortion, and to favor a reduced role for government in dealing with social problems. They were also much more likely to give Barack Obama a negative rating and Sarah Palin a positive rating on the feeling thermometer scale. Given the decidedly conservative and anti-Obama attitudes of the active Republican base, the size of this group, and its relatively high level of previous political engagement, the success of the Tea Party movement in mobilizing large numbers of anti-Obama protesters is not surprising.

Drinking the Tea: Analyzing Public Support for the Tea Party Movement in 2010

While several million individuals may have taken part in Tea Party protests or contributed money to Tea Party organizations or candidates since the movement first appeared on the political scene in early 2009, these active participants clearly constitute only a small fraction of a much larger group of Tea Party sympathizers. I will concentrate here on analyzing the sources of support for the Tea Party movement among the American public, using data from the October, 2010 wave of the American National Election Study Evaluations of Government and Society Survey (EGSS). The October 2010 survey is the first of several cross-sectional studies being

conducted by ANES in 2010, 2011 and 2012 to test new instrumentation and measure public opinion between the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. The surveys are being conducted entirely on the Internet using nationally representative probability samples. Respondents are members of the Knowledge Networks KnowledgePanel, an omnibus panel of respondents recruited using telephone and address-based sampling methods who are provided free Internet access and equipment when necessary.

It is important to understand the characteristics and attitudes of Tea Party supporters within the public because it is from this group that the protest participants and contributors are recruited. It is also important to understand this larger group because it constitutes a bloc of voters that Tea Party candidates can look to for electoral support—a constituency that has proven large enough to carry a number of Tea Party candidates to victory over more mainstream or moderate candidates in Republican primaries. Tea Party supporters undoubtedly played major roles in the upset victories of Sharron Angle in Nevada, Christine O’Donnell in Delaware, and Ken Buck in Colorado in 2010 over candidates backed by the Republican establishment. However, the fact that all three of these candidates went on to lose in the general election, possibly costing the Republican Party three U.S. Senate seats, suggests that the Tea Party movement poses serious risks for the GOP in areas that are not solidly Republican by supporting candidates whose views are far to the right of the overall electorate.

The 2010 EGSS included questions about the Tea Party movement and a series of questions about current domestic policy issues in addition to questions about racial attitudes, political activities, and demographic characteristics. This made it possible to analyze the sources of support for the Tea Party movement and to compare the political activities, social

characteristics and the racial and political attitudes of Tea Party supporters with the attitudes of members of the general public and Republicans who did not support the Tea Party movement.

Respondents in the EGSS were asked if they considered themselves supporters of the Tea Party movement. Those who described themselves as supporters were then asked a follow-up question about whether they supported the Tea Party strongly or not too strongly. Overall, 23 percent of the survey respondents described themselves as supporters of the Tea Party movement including 13 percent who described themselves as strong supporters.

Table 3 compares the social characteristics and political attitudes of Tea Party supporters with those of non-supporters. The findings regarding the social characteristics of Tea Party supporters indicate that the widely held stereotype of this group as made up predominantly of older white males is largely correct. Tea Party supporters were overwhelmingly white, they were somewhat older than non-supporters, and they were very disproportionately male. In addition, Tea Party supporters were somewhat more affluent than non-supporters and they were considerably more religious than non-supporters and more likely to be gun owners. In terms of education, Tea Party supporters were slightly less likely than non-supporters to have graduated from college.

[Table 3 goes here]

It is when we turn our attention from social characteristics to political attitudes that the differences between Tea Party supporters and the overall electorate become very striking. Although some Tea Party leaders have tried to stress the movement's independence from the Republican Party, it is clear from these data and from other surveys that supporters of the Tea Party movement overwhelmingly identify with the Republican Party. In this case, 86 percent of Tea Party supporters were Republican identifiers or independents leaning toward the Republican

Party compared with only 32 percent of non-supporters. Tea Party supporters make up a very large proportion of the Republican electoral base. Forty-five percent of all Republican identifiers and leaners and 63 percent of strong Republican identifiers described themselves as supporters of the Tea Party movement.

Going along with the strongly Republican party loyalties of Tea Party supporters, the data from the EGSS show that compared with non-supporters, Tea Party supporters held much more negative views of President Obama and much more positive views of the Republican politician who has been perhaps the most frequently associated with the Tea Party movement—Sarah Palin. Fully 84 percent of Tea Party supporters had an unfavorable opinion of Barack Obama and 77 percent had a favorable opinion of Sarah Palin. In contrast, only 27 percent of non-supporters had an unfavorable opinion of Obama and only 19 percent had a favorable opinion of Palin. And Tea Party supporters were also much more likely than non-supporters to have doubts about whether Barack Obama was born in the United States: 44 percent of supporters believed that Obama either probably or definitely was not born in the U.S. compared with only 22 percent of non-supporters.

When it comes to ideology and issue positions, the data in Table 3 show that Tea Party supporters were far to the right of the rest of the public. Eighty-five percent of Tea Party supporters described themselves as conservative compared with only 29 percent of non-supporters. Similarly, compared with the overall public, Tea Party supporters were much more likely to take the conservative side on a wide variety of policy issues, opposing key Obama Administration initiatives including repeal of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy toward gays in the military, government support for clean energy development, health care reform, stem cell research, and the economic stimulus program.

The fact that Tea Party supporters were much more likely than non-supporters to identify themselves as born again or evangelical Christians and to accept a literal interpretation of the Bible as well as the fact that they were substantially more opposed to repealing the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy towards gays in the military suggest that support for the Tea Party was based on social as well as economic conservatism. Moreover, the fact that Tea Party supporters scored substantially higher than non-supporters on four questions measuring resentment toward African-Americans suggests that racial attitudes were also a contributing factor.

An important question here is to what extent differences between the social characteristics and political attitudes of Tea Party supporters and non-supporters can be explained simply by the fact that Tea Party supporters were overwhelmingly Republicans. In order to answer this question, we need to know whether Republicans who supported the Tea Party differed from those who did not. Table 4 compares the social characteristics and political attitudes of these two types of Republicans.

[Table 4 goes here]

The results displayed in Table 4 indicate that Republican supporters of the Tea Party movement differed in a number of important respects from other Republicans, sometimes fairly dramatically. In terms of social characteristics, the most striking differences involved gender, age, and religiosity. Tea party Republicans were disproportionately male, somewhat older, and much more religious than other Republicans. More importantly, there were substantial differences between the political attitudes of supporters and non-supporters. Compared with other Republicans, Tea Party supporters were much more likely to identify strongly with the GOP, to describe their political views as conservative, to dislike Barack Obama, to like Sarah

Palin, to question whether Obama was born in the U.S., and to oppose a variety of Obama Administration policy initiatives.

The results in Table 4 show that the characteristics and attitudes of Tea Party supporters cannot be explained simply by their Republican loyalties. Tea Party supporters clearly stood out from other Republicans in terms of their characteristics and especially in terms of their political outlook. In addition, Tea Party supporters scored substantially higher on the racial resentment items than other Republicans. These findings raise the question of how much each of these factors contributed to support for the Tea Party movement.

Explaining Tea Party Support: A Multivariate Analysis

In order to determine the relative contributions of party identification, ideological conservatism, racial resentment, and demographic characteristics to support for the Tea Party movement among the public, I conducted a logistic regression analysis of Tea Party support among white respondents. I excluded nonwhites from the analysis because there were very few nonwhite supporters of the Tea Party movement in the sample. However, including nonwhites has almost no impact on the results. The independent variables in this analysis are a nine-item ideology scale (Cronbach's alpha = .92) combining ideological identification with opinions on eight policy issues (repeal of DADT, health care reform, expansion of SCHIP, the economic stimulus program, federal funding of stem cell research, federal funding of clean energy research and development, financial reform and raising taxes on upper income households), the seven-point party identification scale, the four-item racial resentment scale, the Obama like-dislike scale and five social characteristics—age, gender, education, family income, and frequency of church attendance. The results are displayed in Table 5.

[Table 5 goes here]

The independent variables included in the analysis do a very good job of predicting support for the Tea Party movement with an overall accuracy rate of 85 percent. In order to compare the effects of the independent variables, I calculated the change in the probability of supporting the Tea Party associated with an increase of one standard deviation above the mean on each independent variable with all other independent variables set at their means. For example, an increase of one standard deviation above the mean on the ideology scale is estimated to produce an increase of almost 19 percentage points in Tea Party support.

The results in Table 5 show that ideological conservatism was by far the strongest predictor of Tea Party support. In addition to conservatism, however, both racial resentment and dislike for Barack Obama had significant effects on support for the Tea Party. These two variables had much stronger effects than party identification. Racial resentment had a somewhat stronger effect than dislike for Obama. Moreover, dislike for Obama was itself very strongly related to racial resentment with a correlation of .46. Finally, two social background characteristics, age and gender, had significant effects on Tea Party support with older respondents and men more likely to support the Tea Party. However, these effects were much smaller than those for ideology, racial resentment, and dislike of Obama. After controlling for political attitudes and other demographic characteristics, education, income and frequency of church attendance had little impact on Tea Party support.

Tea Party Support and Political Activism

We have seen thus far that Tea Party supporters differed from other Republicans in their demographic characteristics and especially in their political attitudes. However, the significance of these differences depends on the relative levels of political activism of these two types of Republicans. Table 6 displays data comparing Republicans who supported the Tea Party

movement with those who did not support the movement on several measures of political activism. In every case, Tea Party supporters were substantially more active than non-supporters. Tea Party supporters were much more likely than non-supporters to be registered to vote and to report that within the past year they had contacted a public official to express an opinion on an issue, given money to a candidate or party, attended a political meeting or rally, and displayed a yard sign or bumper sticker.

[Table 6 goes here]

The relatively high levels of activism of Republicans supporting the Tea Party movement mean that the composition of various groups of GOP activists is skewed toward supporters of the movement. Tea Party supporters made up 45 percent of all Republican respondents but they made up 63 percent of Republicans who reported contacting an elected official to express an opinion, 65 percent of Republicans who reported giving money to a party or candidate, and 73 percent of Republicans who reported attending a political rally or meeting. Thus, the impact of the Tea Party movement on the Republican Party is magnified by the greater political activism of its supporters compared with other rank-and-file Republicans. Looking ahead to the 2012 presidential and congressional primaries, this finding suggests that Tea Party supporters are very likely to comprise a disproportionate share, and in many states and congressional districts an outright majority, of voters in Republican primaries.

Conclusions and Implications

The evidence presented in this study indicates that the Tea Party movement did not suddenly emerge on the American political scene in 2009 in response to the progressive policy agenda set forth by President Obama and the Democratic Congress. Rather it was the natural outgrowth of the growing size and conservatism of the activist base of the Republican Party

during the preceding decades. By 2009 a large cadre of very conservative Republican activists was available for mobilization by conservative organizations and media outlets.

Although it is unlikely that more than five percent of voting age Americans have ever participated in a Tea Party rally or contributed money to a Tea Party organization, more than one-fifth of the American public considered themselves to be supporters of the Tea Party movement according to the October, 2010 wave of the ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey. These Tea Party supporters were overwhelmingly white, disproportionately male, somewhat older and a good deal more religious than the overall electorate—all characteristics also present among active Republican identifiers. But by far the most striking differences between Tea Party supporters and the overall public involved their political beliefs. Tea Party supporters overwhelmingly identified with the Republican Party and they were much more conservative than the overall public and even other Republicans on a wide range of issues including social issues and economic issues. Moreover, Tea Party supporters displayed high levels of racial resentment and held very negative opinions about President Obama compared with the rest of the public and even other Republicans. In a multivariate analysis, racial resentment and dislike of Barack Obama, along with conservatism, emerged as the most important factors contributing to support for the Tea Party movement.

These findings suggest that the Tea Party movement is not likely to fade away any time in the near future. While a Republican majority in the House of Representatives might reduce some of the concern among conservative Republicans about liberal policies emanating from Washington, as long as Barack Obama remains in the White House, Tea Party supporters are likely to remain highly motivated to oppose his policy agenda and remove him from the White House. And given the fact that Tea Party supporters make up almost half of Republican

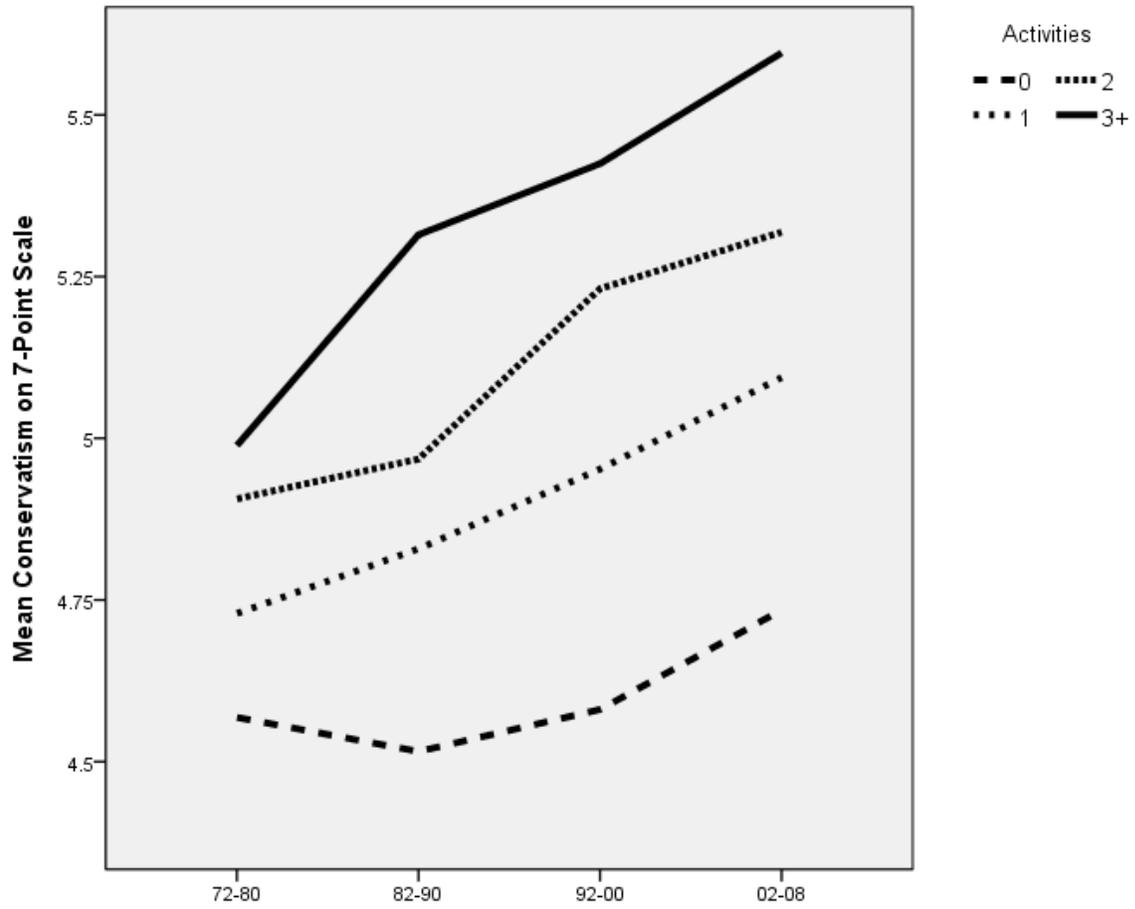
identifiers and a much larger proportion of active Republicans, the Tea Party movement appears to have the potential to strongly influence Republican congressional and presidential primaries in 2012. Any serious Republican presidential contender will have to find a way to appeal to Tea Party supporters. The risk, of course, is that this may make it very difficult for the eventual Republican nominee to appeal to more moderate swing voters in the general election.

Table 1
 Campaign Activism by Decade among Republican Identifiers

Campaign Activities	52-60	62-70	72-80	82-90	92-00	02-08
0	13%	16%	21%	28%	22%	13%
1	41	42	39	40	39	37
2	24	22	23	21	26	31
3+	22	20	17	11	13	19

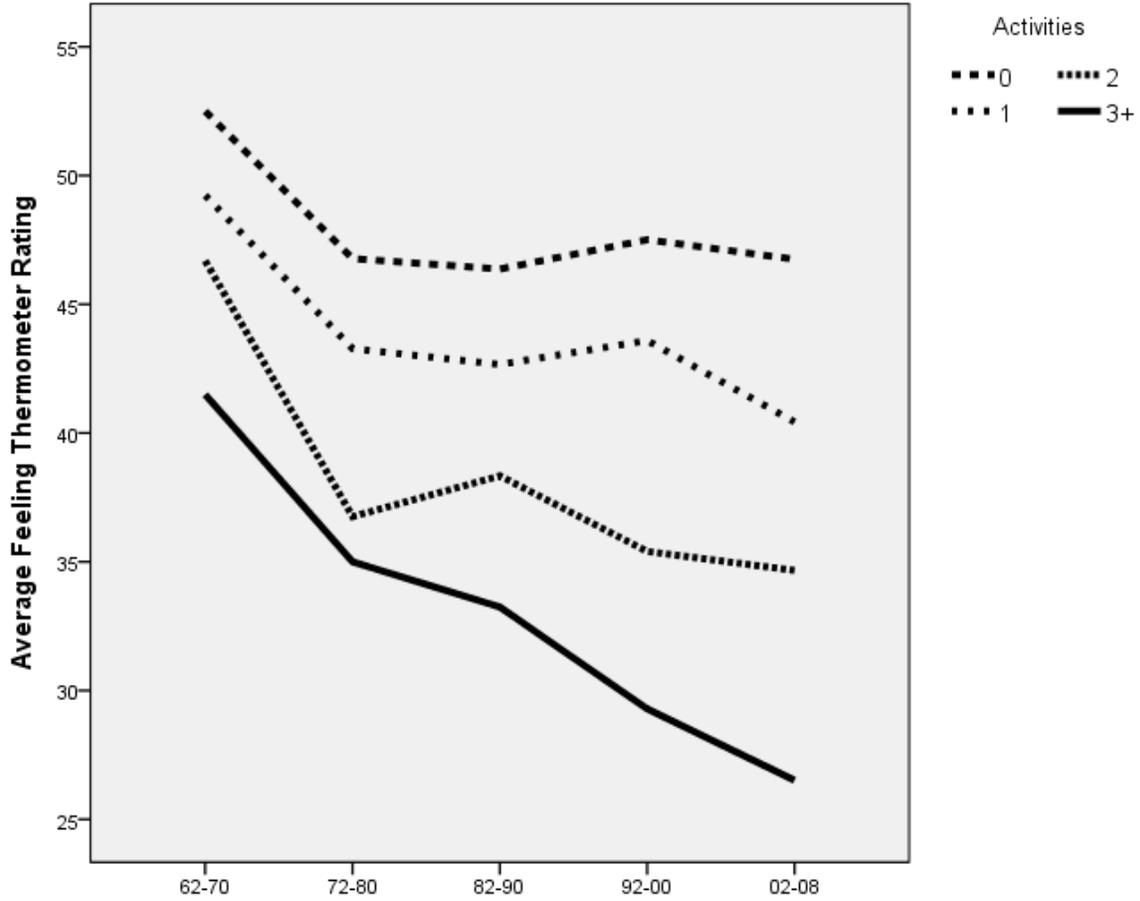
Source: American National Election Studies Cumulative File

Figure 1
Average Conservatism by Decade of Republican Identifiers



Source: ANES Cumulative File

Figure 2
 Average Feeling Thermometer Rating of Democratic Presidential Candidate by Decade among Republican Identifiers



Source: ANES Cumulative File

Table 2
 Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Active Republicans vs. Overall Electorate in
 2008

	Active Republicans	Overall Electorate
Social Characteristics		
White	92%	75%
Male	50%	45%
College Graduates	44%	29%
18-29 years-old	16%	21%
50 and older	50%	43%
Income \$75K or more	55%	37%
Weekly Churchgoer	50%	33%
Political Attitudes		
Conservative	83%	42%
Very Conservative	59%	26%
Oppose Health Care Reform	74%	37%
Pro-Life on Abortion	58%	42%
Oppose Gay Marriage	83%	61%
Favor Reduced Gov't Role	75%	41%
Negative Rating of Obama	69%	29%
Positive Rating of Palin	84%	46%

Source: 2008 ANES

Table 3
Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Tea Party Supporters vs. Non-Supporters

	Tea Party Supporters	Non- Supporters
Social Characteristics and Attitudes		
Age GT 44	70%	59%
White	85%	75%
Male	63%	45%
Married	62%	49%
Income \$75,000+	31%	24%
College Grad	27%	30%
Born Again/Evangelical	52%	33%
Weekly Churchgoer	50%	36%
Believe Bible Actual Word of God	49%	28%
Gun Owner	43%	29%
Political and Racial Attitudes		
Republican Id or Lean	86%	32%
Conservative Id	85%	29%
Dislike Obama	84%	27%
Like Palin	77%	19%
Birther	44%	22%
Oppose Ending DADT	67%	31%
Oppose Clean Energy	74%	21%
Oppose Health Care Reform	81%	33%
Oppose Stem Cell Research	66%	29%
Oppose Economic Stimulus	87%	41%
Disagree Blacks Victims	74%	39%
Disagree Blacks Gotten Less	77%	42%
Agree Blacks Need Try Harder	66%	36%
Agree No Favors for Blacks	80%	48%

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010

Table 4
Social Characteristics and Political Attitudes of Republican Tea Party Supporters vs. Other
Republicans

	Tea Party Supporters	Other Republicans
Social Characteristics and Attitudes		
Age GT 44	70%	59%
White	86%	89%
Male	66%	48%
Married	62%	63%
Income \$75,000+	32%	27%
College Grad	28%	32%
Born Again/Evangelical	52%	38%
Weekly Churchgoer	52%	42%
Believe Bible Actual Word of God	47%	34%
Gun Owner	44%	42%
Political and Racial Attitudes		
Strong Republican Id	45%	21%
Conservative Id	90%	62%
Dislike Obama	90%	55%
Like Palin	82%	38%
Birther	46%	37%
Oppose Ending DADT	71%	44%
Oppose Clean Energy	81%	32%
Oppose Health Care Reform	88%	58%
Oppose Stem Cell Research	71%	41%
Oppose Economic Stimulus	91%	62%
Disagree Blacks Victims	74%	54%
Disagree Blacks Gotten Less	77%	58%
Agree Blacks Need Try Harder	65%	42%
Agree No Favors for Blacks	82%	65%

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010

Table 5
Logistic Regression Analysis of Tea Party Support among Whites

Ind Variable	B	S.E.	Sig.	Change in Probability
Age	.141	.060	.01	+ .027
Female	- .511	.191	.01	- .024
Education	.073	.055	.10	+ .016
Income	- .033	.025	.10	- .013
Church Attend	- .011	.057	n.s.	- .000
Rep Party Id	- .188	.064	.01	- .034
Con Ideology	.354	.041	.001	+ .187
Obama Dislike	.227	.071	.001	+ .063
Racial Resent	.155	.034	.001	+ .118
Constant	- 6.137			

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010

Note: Significance levels based on one-tailed test.

Table 6
 Political Activities of Republican Tea Party Supporters vs. Other
 Republicans

Activity	Tea Party Supporters	Other Republicans
Registered to Vote	92%	75%
Contacted Public Official	44%	20%
Given Money to Campaign	22%	9%
Attended Rally/ Meeting	24%	7%
Displayed Sign/Bumper Sticker	25%	11%

Source: ANES Evaluations of Government and Society Survey, October 2010

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