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THE IMPACT OF A VOTING REGISTRATION LAW ON
TURNOUT AND PARTISANSHIP: A CASE IN KANSAS

by

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BGE., University of Omaha, 1964

9589

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

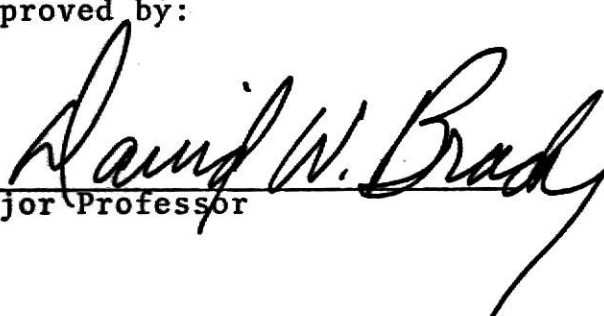
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Science

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Manhattan, Kansas

1972

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks to: David W. Brady, my major professor, who guided me through this year and insisted that I learn something about American politics; To Professors H. P. Secher and Louis Douglas, members of my advisory committee, for their cooperation and assistance;

To the United States Army for giving me the opportunity to earn my M.A., and to those who worked so hard to establish the "Degree Cooperative Program" at the Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas;

To the students at KSU who "rapped" with me and contributed to my knowledge of youthful America;

To my family who endured each uncertainty, suffered through every paper, and applauded each success as if it were their own; and,

To Bonnie McCurdy who deciphered my scrawling with patience and accuracy.

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INTRODUCTION

That there exists a connection between institutional structural election arrangements and electoral behavior is not in doubt. Maurice Duverger among others¹ has shown that electoral structures do indeed affect such variables as the number of people voting, the number of parties in the system as well as the electoral results -- who wins. Further, politicians themselves are not adverse to expending great efforts to affect these institutional electoral structures. While this conceptual scheme has engendered a number of studies demonstrating the effects of electoral arrangements on elections and party systems, there remains a void: that is, we do know that structural voting arrangements make a difference, but we do not have many precise quantitative studies detailing the specific electoral effects of such arrangements. The basic question to be addressed in this descriptive study concerns the effect of voter registration laws on electoral turnout and outcomes in the state of Kansas. During the 1960 to 1968 election period, voters living in rural areas of Kansas voted without prior registration, whereas their urban counterparts were required to register.² Did this law benefit either major party in the state? What is

the effect of non-registration in rural areas on the proportion of eligible voters casting ballots? These questions obviously have relevance to political science as a discipline and also appear to have been relevant to practicing politicians in the state of Kansas.

We believe that registration for voters should be the same for all Kansans regardless of the area or community in which they live. Currently, it is mandatory to register in certain cities and counties. All Kansans are not treated fairly and equally in this respect.³

Report Organization

The body of this report is divided into the following five sections. Section one provides an overview which establishes the base from which we can begin our study. Three separate, yet related topics concerning American voting behavior will be examined. First, the political party will be discussed as a major determinant of how the voter casts his ballot. Second, we will examine the establishment of a "normal" or baseline vote among the electorate. Finally, we will discuss the ebb and flow of voting in America with the alternations of Congressional and Presidential elections. The discussion of these three topics and their relationships will provide a structural foundation from which the research paper can be developed. Section two will present the methodology

to be used throughout the paper. The data to be used and their derivation will be discussed as will the methods used in the statistical analysis of the data. The third section establishes the parameters of the vote for the state of Kansas. In sections four and five, findings and conclusions will be presented.

Theoretical Overview

One of the first systematic studies of voting behavior was conducted by Paul Lazarsfeld. This study investigated the impact of mass media on individual vote choice during a Presidential campaign. The findings, as reported in The People's Choice,⁴ was acclaimed as an important contribution to the understanding of American electoral behavior. Lazarsfeld's work precipitated similar efforts by other scholars. In 1948, for example, the Survey Research Center demonstrated the importance of scientific survey research by predicting that Truman would be a winner. It will be remembered that the popular newspaper polls predicted a Republican victory. In 1960, using data gathered by the Survey Research Center during the 1952 and 1956 Presidential elections, Angus Campbell and associates published the most impressive work on American electoral behavior.⁵ This study, The American Voter,⁶ emphasized partisanship and political attitudes and will be called on extensively during the course of this paper

as will two other studies by Campbell et al. The first of these studies concerns the "normal" or baseline vote. Converse presents a manner for its determination employing party identification.⁷ The ebb and flow of voting in America, in relation to Presidential and Congressional elections, is presented in "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change."⁸

Partisanship

The work of Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes⁹ has led to the conclusion that partisanship is the single most important factor affecting electoral behavior in the American setting. Partisanship has a greater impact on voter choice and attitudes than either social class or political ideology and is therefore important in seeking an answer to the question posed by this paper.

It is not within the scope of this study to examine the total spectrum of psychological bases of political attitudes in America, but we should have some knowledge concerning the members of the population that are more likely to be or become members of one of the two major political parties in the United States. Admittedly, social class, ideology, and partisanship must all be considered in any general explanation of political behavior. In the American system, ideology and partisanship is determined to a great extent by the conditions of a

person's social life. Ideology and partisanship mutually influence one another and in turn determine vote choices and position on issues.

While the principle of class conflict or loyalty is normally renounced by parties in the United States, an analysis of their appeals and support suggests that they do symbolize the interests of different classes. "The Democrats from the beginning of their history have drawn more support from the lower strata of society, while the Federalist, Whig, and Republican parties have held the loyalties of the more privileged groups."¹⁰

Based on the above it is plain to see that Democrats are much more likely to come from the homes of manual laborers than Republicans, while white-collar households are much more likely to produce Republicans than Democrats. Members of minority groups are likely to be Democrats as are those who are less educated. Catholics are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans. While there is a mixture of these social characteristics all along the partisan dimension, the fact remains that the social groupings that appear to be Democratic come from the lower strata of the American electorate which are concentrated in urban areas.

A further variable that is important to examine is the relationship between regional distribution and partisan

politics. Southern political patterns are normally distinguished from the rest of the country and within other regions of the country, commentary often refers to "the urban vote" or "the rural vote." The actual regional and community size composition of strong Democratic and strong Republican¹¹ partisans is shown in Table 1.1. As can be seen from the table, Southern Democrats account for 40 percent of all Democrats, while the remaining Democrats are spread rather evenly over the remaining three sections. Of importance to the current study is the fact that the Northern Democratic Party is disproportionately urban in contrast to the Southern wing. The Republican Party is disproportionately the party of small towns and medium-sized cities.

We have determined that while the two major political parties of America are heterogeneous based on social characteristics, the composition of the parties are indeed related to class cleavages. To quote Lipset

...polling studies show that in every American election since 1936...the proportion voting Democratic increases sharply as one moves down the occupational or income ladder.¹²

Further, it has been shown that partisans appear to fall into general regional categories. That is, the South

TABLE 1.1

THE COMPOSITION OF STRONGLY PARTISAN DEMOCRATS AND
REPUBLICANS ACCORDING TO REGION AND COMMUNITY SIZE IN
1968

		Strong Democrats		Strong Republicans	
South	40%			14%	
Cities		10%		2%	
Towns		15		4	
Rural		15		8	
East	22			30	
Cities		12		6	
Towns		8		12	
Rural		2		12	
Midwest	25			35	
Cities		8		7	
Towns		11		20	
Rural		6		8	
Far West	13			21	
Cities		5		8	
Towns		5		8	
Rural		3		5	
TOTAL	100%	100%		100%	100%
n=		294		142	

Source: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

aside, Northern Democrats are disproportionately urban, while Republicans are disproportionately found in small towns and medium-sized cities.

Finally, the most stable element among the variables that account for the voting choices of the electorate is party identification. In the past two decades the general sympathy for, and identification with, the two political parties has fluctuated very little. Table 1.2 presents the patterns of partisanship from 1952 through 1968. Partisanship is the most important variable in influencing political opinions and voting behavior.

The Normal Vote

The discussion concerning partisans did not cover the independent voter or the non-voter. While these segments of the population are important in any extensive study on American voting behavior, non-participants have been dropped from this study since they are not useful in accounting for variation in actual vote totals. On the other hand, independent voters are more easily shifted from one party to the other, but are more likely to vote during high impact elections and cannot be counted on to provide a basis for computing a baseline vote.

To determine this "normal" vote we turn to Converse and a technique which employs party identification in determining the baseline vote.

TABLE 1.2
PARTY IDENTIFICATION OF THE ELECTORATE, 1952-1968

	1952	'54	'56	'58	'60	'62	'64	'66	'68
Democrats	47%	47%	44%	47%	46%	47%	51%	45%	45%
Independents	22	22	24	19	23	23	22	28	29
Republicans	27	27	29	29	27	27	24	25	24
Nothing, Don't know	4	4	3	5	4	3	2	2	2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
n=	1614	1139	1772	1269	3021	1317	1571	1291	1552

Source: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

The voting record of the American public reveals discernable partisan fluctuations. At the same time, "...a serene stability in the distribution of party loyalties [is] expressed by the same public."¹³ This apparent contradiction can be explained by considering two components. The short-term component or force can be defined as any peculiarity associated with any particular election (an extremely attractive candidate for example). The long-term component or force simply reflects the distribution of underlying party loyalties which is stable over substantial periods of time.¹⁴

The election outcome in the population or sub-population, then, may be construed as the result of short-term forces acting upon a certain distribution of party loyalties which have characterized the population.¹⁵

The behavior of party identifiers "...varies systematically as a function of the level of stimulation accompanying a given election, and as a function of the short-term...forces created by the election."¹⁶ The high rate of turnout in presidential elections is reflective of high stimulation, while the great reduction in overall turnout in off-year Congressional elections shows a sharp reduction in stimulation. This leads to the proposition that

responsiveness of turnout rate to the level of stimulation varies inversely with the mean strength of party identification.¹⁷

The influence of short-term partisan forces tend to move peripheral voters toward the advantaged party, while the strong members of each party move only slightly toward the advantaged party. It follows then that:

responsiveness of the vote division to short-term partisan forces varies inversely with the mean strength of party identification.¹⁸

The fact that underlying loyalties in America have remained essentially unchanged in the past decade has been established.¹⁹ In order to determine the baseline vote of the population or sub-population, one must account for the patterns of variations in turnout and partisanship as a function of short-term forces. The important point is the establishment of a "zero-point" from which we can measure a normal vote.

For the purpose of this paper, we shall establish the baseline vote by using the Congressional elections from 1960 to 1968. This is done in light of the low stimulation accorded Congressional elections and due to the fact that the peculiarities associated with short-term forces are less likely to be encountered. What is important to this argument is that strong members of

both parties vote during Congressional elections along well established party lines. Independent voters and those weakly identified with either major party drop out of these elections. The party division established then is the baseline vote.

Ebb and Flow

While there are several variables that relate directly to voter turnout,²⁰ we shall be concerned here with the ebb and flow of voting in America with the alternation of Congressional and Presidential elections. Angus Campbell has labeled elections as "low-stimulus" and "high-stimulus."

The essential difference between a low-stimulus and a high-stimulus election lies in the importance the electorate attaches to the choice between the various party-candidate alternatives which is offered.²¹

We would expect that, when the interest of the electorate is high, the turnout also would be high. While few elections take on a great significance for many voters in America, most conceive of Presidential elections as important because of the traditional importance attached to the office, the issues that quickly become identified with the candidates for President, the coverage of the mass media, and candidate appeal.

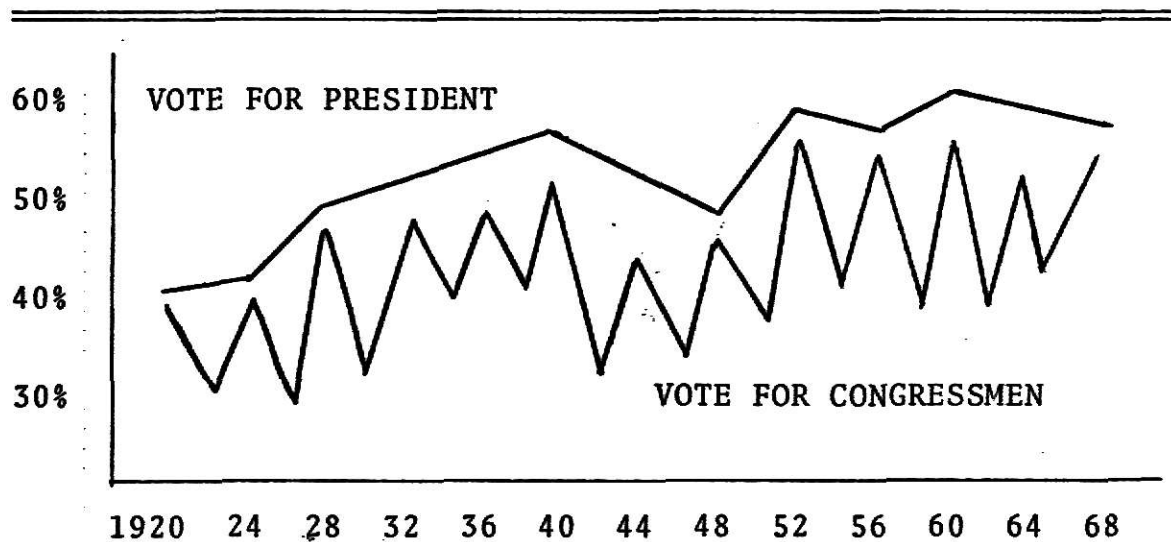
Table 1.3 shows that while there has generally been an increase in the proportion of people voting there are fluctuations in both Presidential and Congressional elections. The most consistent pattern in the table reveals that in non-presidential years there is always a great decline in voter turnout. Interestingly enough, fewer people vote in Congressional elections even in a Presidential year. This peculiarity can also be explained by the importance, or lack of importance, the electorate attaches to the two kinds of elections.

According to Campbell "a low-stimulus election tends to follow party lines."²² The importance attached to Presidential elections brings to the polls many citizens who are much less stimulated by political circumstances than partisans.

An excited election situation in which a stirring issue or an attractive candidate makes the party-candidate choice seem unusually important may bring these peripheral voters to the polls in large numbers. In an election of lesser apparent importance and weaker total stimulation the participation of these peripheral voters declines, leaving the electoral decision largely to the high-interest core voters.²³

Thus, concerning the ebb and flow of voting behavior of the American electorate, the conclusion is that high turnout is a result of greater interest in the electorate and low turnout a result of little interest. American

TABLE 1.3
TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN PRESIDENTIAL AND
CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1920 - 1968



Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1969, Washington, D.C. 1969.

people have a greater interest in Presidential elections than they do in Congressional elections, and partisans tend to carry low-stimulus elections.

The three topics thus far discussed are interrelated and affect the voting results of the American electorate. Partisanship is strongly tied to both stability in national voting patterns and stability in the political system. During high-stimulus elections, such as that for the Presidency of the United States, large numbers of peripheral voters are drawn to the polls. The non-partisans shift more readily from one party to another, and they add disproportionately to the vote for one Presidential candidate, normally the winner. During low-stimulation elections, such as Congressional elections, these less committed voters do not turnout and the partisans, who are much less likely to shift their vote, cast their ballot along party lines. This being the case, there is a decline in the support for the party that had disproportionately large numbers of peripheral voters in the previous Presidential election. Since partisan voters are the primary actors in Congressional elections, we have discussed the establishment of baseline vote as reflected through Congressional elections. As can be seen partisanship is an important factor in explaining surge and decline of American voting behavior and the establishment of a "normal" vote.

METHODOLOGY

This report will seek the answers to two questions: Did the registration law requiring urbanites to register prior to voting, while their rural counterparts were not required to register, benefit either major political party? and, What is the effect of non-registration in rural areas on the proportion of eligible voters casting ballots? Since, as Lipset points out in Political Man²⁴ it is the Democrats who live in urban areas and, as we shall see, Kansas is a relatively rural state, the two questions above can be combined into one general question. Did the registration law which required the urban population to register prior to voting, benefit the Republican Party in the State of Kansas during the period 1960 through 1968?

This report uses census data collected from U. S. Government and State of Kansas publications.²⁵ The following data will be used to assist in answering the questions set out above:

- a. votes cast for Presidential electors and Congress, by party and total turnout, 1960 through 1968;
- b. voting population by county; and
- c. the proportion of urbanness by county.

Since the study has to do with the electoral institutional structure as it pertains to voting behavior in Kansas (that is, what was the affect of the voting registration law requiring urbanites to register prior to voting), it was first necessary to decide which counties were urban and which were rural. The simplest solution was to use the halfway point in dividing the counties. If a county was called 50 percent rural or greater by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, it was called rural in the first gross separation of rural/urban counties for use in this report. Using that simple measure, we found that 68 counties were rural and 37 urban.

In order to refine the measure of ruralness further, frequency distribution analysis was conducted to determine the clusterings of counties according to population distribution. It was evident that the counties tended to cluster; that is, there was a group of counties from 10-30 percent rural, a group from 50-70 percent rural, and, a group 100 percent rural. The counties were therefore grouped according to their ruralness as follows:

0	-	40 percent	=	urban
41	-	79 percent	=	mixed rural
80	-	100 percent	=	rural

In numbers, this meant that 23 counties were urban, 36 were mixed rural, and 46 were rural.

Another key variable pertinent to the report concerns the proportion of the population that votes. Therefore, it was necessary to determine by county, the proportion of the eligible voting population that actually cast ballots in Kansas during the Presidential and Congressional elections from 1960 through 1968. This was determined by dividing the number eligible to vote into the number of people voting. This then provided us with:

- 1) proportion of eligible voters casting ballots for Presidential electors in 1960, 1964 and 1968;
- 2) proportion of eligible voters casting ballots for Congress during Presidential elections; and
- 3) proportion of eligible voters casting ballots for Congress during the off-years of 1962 and 1966.

Once the turnout of voters was determined, we turned to the "party vote". The partisan vote of each county was determined by dividing the number of people voting for either of the two major parties into the number of Republican votes cast. This gave us:

- 1) the proportion of Republicans and Democrats²⁶ casting ballots for Presidential electors in 1960, 1964 and 1968;
- 2) the proportion of Republicans and Democrats casting ballots for Congress during Presidential years; and
- 3) the proportion of Republicans and Democrats casting ballots for Congress during the off-years of 1962

and 1966.

The result of the data collection was a set of data for each county containing population of the county, ruralness of the county, voting age population, the proportion of the population voting in Presidential and Congressional elections, 1960 through 1968, and the proportion of the electorate voting either Democratic or Republican.

PARAMETERS OF THE VOTE FOR THE STATE OF KANSAS

This section will establish the relevance of both the baseline vote and surge and decline, as posited by Campbell,²⁷ for the state.

When we consider the two party distribution of electoral results in Kansas, it is evident that the state can be characterized as stable Republican.²⁸ Which is to say, that the long term component of party identification reflects that the state is strongly Republican. This is not to say that short-term forces have not acted upon the characteristic distribution of the Republican majority in the state. That in fact is what determines the outcome of elections. A good, recent example of this can be found in 1964 during the Presidential election when, despite a relatively high statewide turnout of 63 percent, only 45 percent voted Republican. Contrast this to the 1960 and 1968 Presidential elections when 61 and 60 percent respectively went Republican. While the period of time covered is historically short, it illustrates very well the influence of a short-term partisan force (in this case an unpopular candidate) acting upon the established distribution of party loyalties. The return to normalcy can be seen during the 1968 Presidential election in so far as the proportion voting Republican approached a more

characteristic distribution.

In order to be able to say that one or the other parties made significant gains or loses, or to assess electoral outcomes in the state with any meaning, a "zero-point" or baseline vote must be determined. To lessen the variation in turnout and partisanship brought about by high stimulation elections and to reduce, as far as possible, the confounding peculiarities associated with short-term forces, Congressional elections from 1960 through 1968 were used to establish the baseline vote for the state.²⁹ In the congressional elections from 1960 through 1968 the average turnout was 58 percent of those eligible to vote by age. The partisan picture is shown in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1

PARTISAN TURNOUT DURING CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS
OF 1960 THROUGH 1968 (in percentages)

	1960	1962	1964	1966	1968
Republican	54	60	55	63	62
Democrat	46	50	45	37	38

Source: State of Kansas Election Statistics

This establishes the baseline vote for Kansas as used in this report. That is, the state baseline is approximately

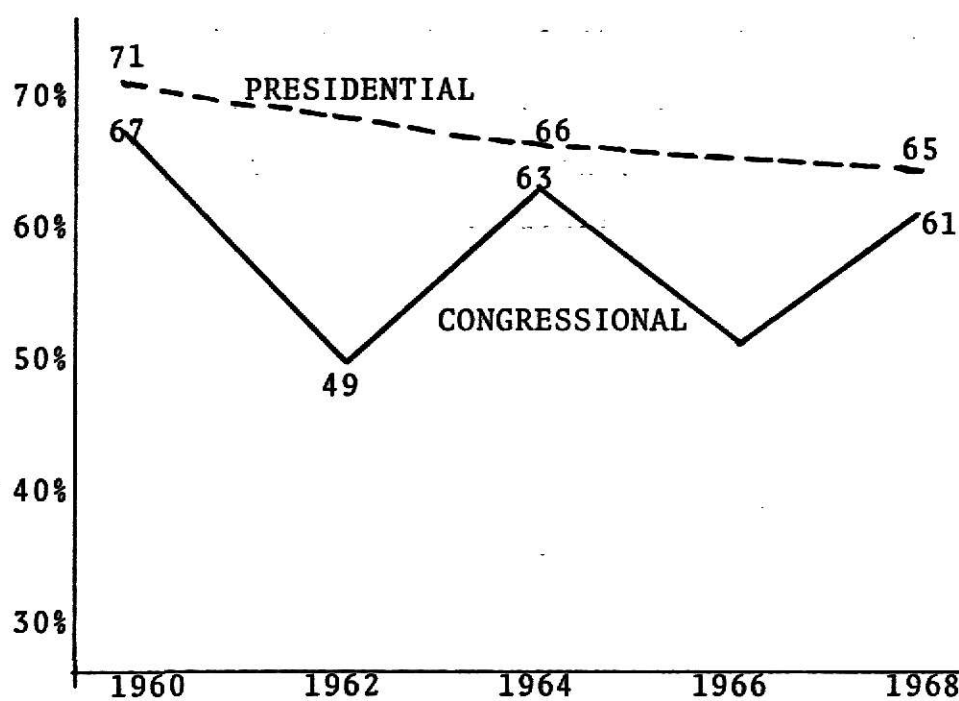
a 58/42 split in favor of the Republicans over the entire state.

That the theory of surge and decline is valid in the state of Kansas is evident when Figure 3.1 is examined. During the high-stimulus elections, the Presidential elections of 1960, 1964 and 1968, turnout of eligible voters was 71, 66, and 65 percent, respectively. The proportion of ballots cast for Congress during the same elections, while slightly lower, all were above the 60 percent mark. The decline in the off-year Congressional elections is striking; more importantly, it shows that during low-stimulation elections, such as Congressional races, less committed voters fail to turn out. With these peripheral voters eliminated, the voting by partisans fall along established party lines. This being the case, there is a decline in the support for the party that had disproportionately large numbers of peripheral voters in the previous Presidential election.

Figure 3.2 brings together the ideas of baseline vote and surge and decline. First, let us turn to baseline vote. The main point illustrated here is the effect of short range forces on the electoral behavior. As can be seen the percentage of the population voting Republican in the Presidential years 1960 through 1968 is slightly above the baseline. The election of 1964 was obviously affected by a short-range force which forced some Republicans to

FIGURE 3.1

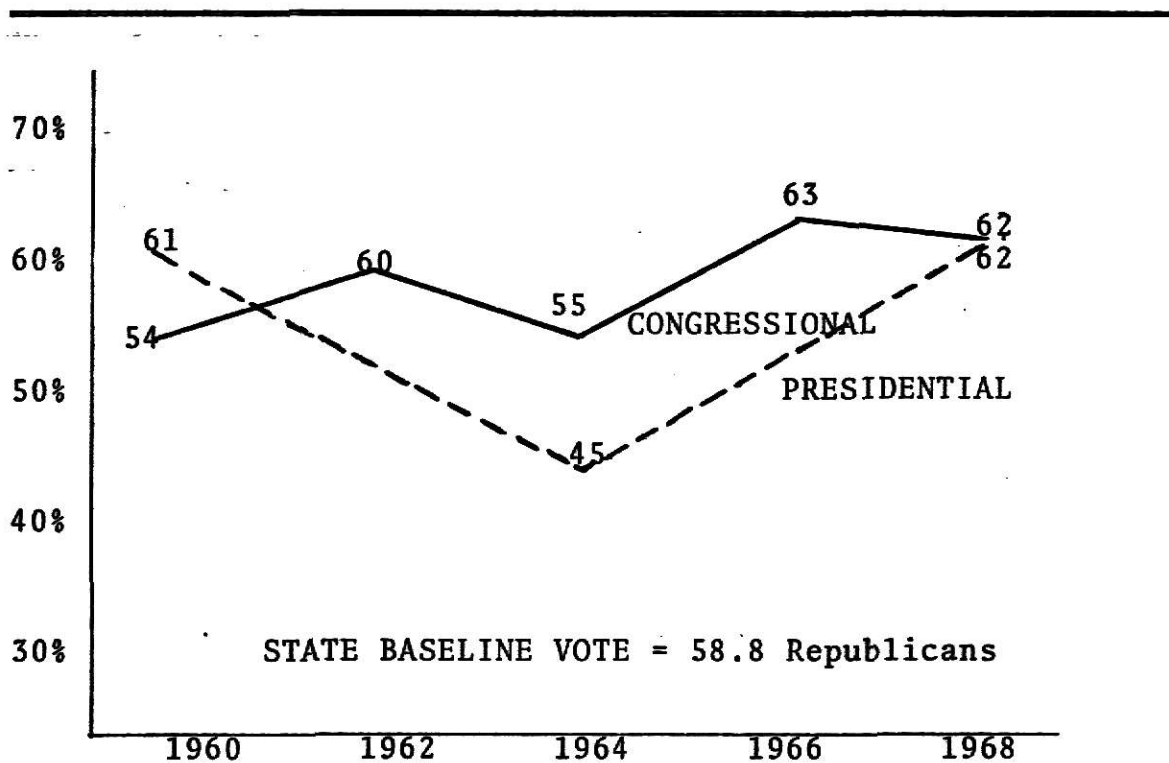
TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN KANSAS IN PRESIDENTIAL
AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1960-1968



Source: State of Kansas Election Statistics.

FIGURE 3.2

PARTISAN TURNOUT IN KANSAS FOR PRESIDENTIAL AND
CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1960 - 1968 (Republicans)



Source: State of Kansas Election Statistics.

leave the party when voting for Presidential electors. The Congressional vote on the other hand, went to Republicans. In other words, some Republicans voted for Johnson for the Presidency but displayed their party allegiance by returning to the Republican column after they had made their choice for President.

While Figure 3.1 shows evidence of surge and decline, the same phenomenon is shown in a different manner in Figure 3.2. It should be noted that Congressional votes for Republican candidates during Presidential elections were very near or below the baseline vote of 58% Republican. As was noted earlier, the proportion of the population turnout increases greatly during Presidential elections. This increase in voters is attributable to non-partisans who do not vote in low-stimulus elections. In the "surge" years of our sample the proportion of the Democratic vote approaches the Republican total as the number of peripheral voters increases.

It should be noted here, that based on population alone, there are more peripheral voters living in the urban areas of the state where the electoral structure makes voting more difficult. While these peripheral voters are found in all classes and strata it is likely that those living in urban areas lean toward the Democratic party when they vote. On the other hand, peripheral voters in rural areas of Kansas tend to vote during the same kinds

of elections as urbanites, but favor the Republican party.

In this section we have established a state baseline vote for approximately a 58/42 split in favor of the Republican party. Having established this baseline as "normal" for the state one can better assess the outcome of the electoral process -- who wins, and interpretation of voting patterns take on additional meaning when this logically developed measuring stick is used as an analytical tool.³⁰

The ebb and flow of Kansans voting behavior, with the alternation of Presidential and Congressional elections, has also been demonstrated in this section. As proposed by Campbell et al.³¹ concerning national voting behavior, we have found that fluctuations in turnout and partisanship in Kansas result from a combination of short-term forces, superimposed onto the long-term force of state partisanship. High-stimulus elections elicit high turnout while low-stimulus elections bring far fewer people to the polls.

Having established the parameters of the vote for the state, we now turn our attention to the findings of this report.

FINDINGS

In this section the relationship between the rural-urban scale and voting turnout and partisanship is investigated. The hypotheses are: 1) that the more rural the county the higher the turnout of eligible voters, and 2) the more rural the county the higher the proportion of the Republican vote. Of course, if both of these hypotheses are true then the essential conditions for showing that the non-registration requirements in rural areas aided the Republican party will have been met.

Non-Registration and Voter Turnout

The assumption underlying this analysis is that the more rural the county the fewer the number of voters required to register. Thus, if the voting turnout in rural counties is higher we can reasonably infer that these differences are largely the result of the non-registration phenomena in rural areas. This is especially true given that the seminal work on American voting behavior shows that urban areas have higher turnout rates than do rural areas.³² In fact, given the above, one would expect that the more rural the area the lower the voter turnout.

The initial test of the hypothesis entailed a straightforward correlation between proportion of the county rural

and percentage of voter turnout over all 105 counties.

Table 4.1 shows the results of this analysis.

TABLE 4.1
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TURNOUT AND RURALNESS

	<u>Turnout</u>	
	Pres. Elec. 1960, 1964, 1968	Cong. Election 1962, 1966
Ruralness	.62	.63
p .05		

Figures are simple correlation coefficients for the 105 counties of Kansas.

The results show striking correlations of over .6; which means that the more rural the county the higher the turnout. This is antithetical to all that is known about rural-urban voter turnout differences. In short, the results show exactly the reverse of what the American Voter³³ and other studies would lead us to believe.

A second test of the hypothesis was to categorize the counties as urban, mixed rural and rural as was done above and compare the mean average turnout across the categories. Table 4.2 presents these results.

In each case the table shows that in rural districts the turnout is higher. For example, in the presidential elections of 1960, 1964, and 1968 the mean turnout by county

TABLE 4.2
TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN KANSAS

	Urban (23)	Mixed Rural (36)	Rural (46)
Pres. Elec. 60, 64, 68	61.4	71.8	77.5
For Cong.; Pres. Elec. 60, 64, 68	59.1	69.2	74.8
Congressional 62, 66	46.7	52.7	63.9
p .05	() = number of counties		

category was, urban 61.4; mixed rural, 71.8; and rural, an exceptional 77.5 percent. Categories for other elections reveal the same pattern. Thus, the following conclusion seems inescapable: In contrast to the pattern for the entire United States rural areas in Kansas have significantly higher turnout rates than do urban areas. One might argue that this is the result of the fact that rural Kansans have an especial concern for democracy or they possess some other property that distinguishes them from rural Americans elsewhere. However, this seems unlikely given that Burnham and others³⁴ have shown that as registration laws became more stringent in the late 1890's the turnout of voters decreased. Therefore, it seems much more likely that the higher levels of voter turnout in rural Kansas areas was attributable to registration laws rather than to special properties of rural Kansans.

Non-registration and Partisanship

The preliminary test for determining the effect of non-registration in rural areas on levels of partisanship was to conduct an analysis correlating percentage of county rural versus percentage voting Republican over all 105 counties. The hypothesis is that there will be a positive correlation between ruralness and Republicanism. Specifically, the hypothesis is that the more rural the

county the higher the percentage of Republican votes.

Table 4.3 presents the results.

TABLE 4.3
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REPUBLICAN VOTES
AND RURALNESS

	<u>Republican Votes</u>	
	Pres. Elec. 1960, 64, 68	Cong. Elec. 1962, 66
Ruralness	.26	.19
p .05		

Figures are simple correlation coefficients for the 105 counties of Kansas.

While the results are not as striking as those presented for the relationship between voter turnout and ruralness, they do present a positive relationship with a correlation of near .2 in the case of Congressional elections and over .2 for Presidential elections. In other words the more rural the county the greater the proportion of Republican votes.

A second means of testing the hypothesis was to once again categorize the counties and make simple comparisons between the mean average proportion of Republican votes across the categories. Table 4.4 shows the results. In the case of Presidential elections the table shows that the

TABLE 4.4
PROPORTION OF REPUBLICANS VOTING IN KANSAS

	<u>Urban</u> (23)	<u>Mixed Rural</u> (36)	<u>Rural</u> (46)
Pres. Election 1960, 64, 68	54.3	56.8	58.2
For Cong.; Pres. Election 1960, 1964, 1968	53.3	59.0	56.1
Congressional 1962, 1966	61.4	61.3	62.9
p .05			

more rural the county the greater the proportion of Republican votes. This pattern was somewhat confounded during Congressional elections, but the fact remains that Republicanism increased as one moves from urban counties to mixed rural and rural. Thus, the conclusion can be made that the more rural the county the higher the proportion of the Republican vote.

Summary Regarding Conditions

Thus far the hypotheses have been tested using straightforward correlations between ruralness and voter turnout and ruralness and partisanship, and by comparing turnout and partisanship across urban, mixed rural, and rural counties. The findings reached were:

1) the more rural the county the higher the turnout of eligible voters, and

2) the more rural the county the higher the proportion of the Republican vote.

—Therefore, each hypothesis has been proven and we have met the conditions necessary to show that the non-registration requirements in rural areas accrued to the advantage of the Republican party.

In light of the foregoing, the next logical question to be investigated became, in what kinds of elections did this advantage accrue to the Republicans? Keeping in mind that the state baseline vote was established to fix the "zero-point", from which electoral results might be assessed, we may now turn our attention to an analysis of the Presidential elections of 1960, 1964 and 1968 and the Congressional elections during the period 1960 through 1968.

It has been asserted that the non-registration requirements in rural areas was advantageous for the Republican party. Table 4.5 presents a graphic portrayal of that advantage during recent Presidential elections. In every instance the turnout of eligible voters increased as the regions became more rural. This higher turnout in rural areas kept the proportion of Republican votes above what we might expect based on the baseline vote, especially in the mixed rural areas and rural counties. The 1964

TABLE 4.5
TURNOUT AND REPUBLICANISM DURING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS
BY COUNTY CATEGORY - 1960-1968

Election Year	County Category					
	Urban		Mixed Rural		Rural	
	Percent Voting	Percent Republican	Percent Voting	Percent Republican	Percent Voting	Percent Republican
1960	63.0	62.2	77.9	63.8	82.9	64.8
1964	59.3	45.7	69.9	47.4	76.6	48.2
1968	60.6	55.0	67.4	59.2	73.0	61.5

Presidential election actually proves the case. That is, when the short term partisan forces indicated a decisive Democratic victory, the percentage of those voting Republican still increased as the area became more rural.

The examination of Congressional elections over a nine year period revealed a continuation of what was found to be true during Presidential elections. That is, Republicanism increased as counties became more rural. Table 4.6 depicts this increase. As might be expected the Congressional elections were more in accord with the state baseline vote than were the Presidential elections. During "off-year" Congressional elections, however, the Republican portion of the vote tends to exceed the baseline as peripheral voters drop out. Here again we conclude that during Congressional elections the non-registration of rural citizens was an advantage for the Republican party.

Based on the foregoing, it seems that the following conclusion is unavoidable: non-registration requirements in rural areas was advantageous for the Republican party during the Presidential and Congressional elections during the period 1960 through 1968.

TABLE 4.6
REPUBLICANISM DURING CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS
BY COUNTY CATEGORY 1960-1968

Election Year	Urban	Mixed Rural	Rural
1960	53.8	56.3	58.3
1962	58.3	60.4	60.5
1964	52.7	57.3	56.0
1966	64.5	65.5	68.5
1968	56.6	63.4	58.5

CONCLUSION

The findings of this paper are as follows:

- 1) As instances of ruralness increased in Kansas counties, the turnout of eligible voters increased.
- 2) As instances of ruralness increased in Kansas counties, the proportion of votes for the Republican party increased.
- 3) Advantages accrued to the Republican party during Presidential and Congressional elections from 1960 through 1968.

In general, we have shown that structural voting arrangements had an effect on voting behavior and electoral results in Kansas. Specifically, the conclusion is that registration laws benefited the Republican party in Kansas during the 1960 through 1968 period.

This conclusion will be tested during the 1972 and 1974 elections in the state since the law has now been changed so that all citizens must register prior to voting. The 1974 Congressional elections will be most interesting and revealing because rural voters may register in 1972 when they go to vote, in 1974 they must register prior to voting just the same as their urban counterparts.

Further research in this area should take the foregoing into consideration and should, we feel, be done. The implementation of this new structural arrangement may

create a force which will cause Kansas' political system to become much more competitive. This possibility should be of interest to political scientists who delve into institutional arrangements and electoral behavior and, should concern politicians who want to practice the ultimate in political participation -- running for public office.

FOOTNOTES

1. Literature on party systems and structural arrangements is extensive. Three general works include Maurice Duverger, Political Parties, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1954; V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups, Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1958; Hugh A. Bone, American Politics and the Party System, (4th ed.), McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1971.

2. The law governing registration of voters reads as follows: (a) It is the duty of all legally qualified voters residing either in a county having a population of more than one hundred thousand (100,000), or residing in a city of the first or second class to register to vote. Such registration, when made as provided in this act, shall entitle such voters to vote, if otherwise legally qualified...

(b) The citizens who shall be entitled to the right of suffrage and who reside in this state in territory outside of that specified in subsection (a) of this section shall not be required to register to prove entitlement to the right of suffrage, but shall be required to make such proofs as are otherwise required by law. (From: Kansas Election Laws, 1968, Chapter 25, Kansas Statutes Annotated, State Printing Office, Topeka, 1968).

3. Paul R. Guynes, A Citizen's Pamphlet, Kansas Voters Guide: 1970, Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1970. Taken from the Democratic party platform.

4. Paul Lazarsfeld et al., The People's Choice, New York: Columbia University Press, 1944.

5. Among theoretical works dealing with public opinion and voting the best known are: Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957; Robert A. Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956. Seymour M. Lipset's Political Man, New York: Doubleday, 1960, is a very complete study of opinion and voting behavior, to include political ideology. The consequences of political ideology are further explored in the following: Robert E. Lane, Political Ideology, New York: The Free Press, 1962; Lloyd Free and Hadley Cantril, The Political Beliefs of the American People, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968. Works concerning American political behavior include: Robert E. Lane,

Political Life, New York: The Free Press, 1959; Hugh A. Bone and Austin Ranney, Politics and Voters, 3rd ed., McGraw-Hill, 1971; Lester W. Milbrath, Political Participation, Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1965; Nelson W. Polsby, Robert A. Dentler, and Paul A. Smith (eds.), Politics and Social Life, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963; Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, The Real Majority, New York: Coward, McCann, and Geohegan, Inc., 1971; and V. O. Key, Jr., The Responsible Electorate, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966. General works dealing with the socialization processes can be found in: Kenneth Langton, Political Socialization, New York: Oxford University Press, 1969; Herbert H. Hyman, Political Socialization, New York: The Free Press, 1959; Michael Rush and Phillip Althoff, An Introduction to Political Sociology, London, 1971.

6. Angus Campbell, Phillip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, The American Voter, New York: Wiley, 1960.

7. Angus Campbell, et. al., Elections and the Political Order, New York: Wiley, 1966, Chapter 3.

8. Angus Campbell, "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIV (Fall, 1960), 397-418.

9. Angus Campbell, et. al., op. cit.

10. Seymour M. Lipset, op. cit., p. 230.

11. The terms "strong Democrat" and "strong Republican" are used here as Campbell et. al., used them in The American Voter. An Abridgment, p. 68.

12. Seymour M. Lipset, op. cit., p. 303.

13. Angus Campbell et. al., Election, op. cit., p. 12.

14. Ibid., p. 24.

15. Ibid., p. 15.

16. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

17. Ibid., p. 19.

18. Ibid., p. 21.

19. Ibid., p. 21.

20. Angus Campbell et. al., op. cit., chap. 4.
21. Angus Campbell, "Surge and Decline," op. cit., p. 398.
22. Ibid., p. 339.
23. Ibid., p. 400.
24. Seymour M. Lipset, op. cit.
25. Votes cast for Presidential Electors and Congressmen by party: State of Kansas Election Statistics, Primary and General Elections, Topeka, Kansas: State Printing Plant, 1960 through 1968. Voting population by county: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970. Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Advance Report PC (V2) 18, Kansas. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971. Total Population by County and percent of urban population: U.S. Bureau of the Census. County and City Data Book, 1967 (A Statistical Abstract Supplement). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967 and U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census Population: 1970. Number of Inhabitants, Final Report PC (1)-A18 Kansas, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970.
26. Votes cast for parties other than the two major parties amounted to less than one percent except in the 1968 Presidential election when the American Conservative party received 10.2 percent of the ballots cast.
27. Angus Campbell et. al., Election, op. cit., Chaps. 2 and 3.
28. James W. Drury, The Government of Kansas, Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 1970, p. 28.
29. As a further check in establishing the baseline vote, the proportion of Republican votes for State Printer during the period 1960-1968 was examined with the following results: 1960, 54%; 1962, 68%; 1964, 53%; 1966, 55%; and 1968, 60%. The mean established was 58/42 split in favor of the Republicans and compares favorably with Congressional elections. The same data for Auditor of State reveals a 56.8 Republican majority. State of Kansas Election Statistics, Primary and General Elections, Topeka, Kansas: State Printing Office, 1960 through 1968.
30. Other methods of attaining baseline votes were tried with no perceptable differences.
31. Angus Campbell et al., op. cit., Elections, chap. 3.
32. Angus Campbell et al., op. cit.

33. Angus Campbell et al., op. cit.

34. For more detailed discussion of voter registration and voter turnout, see Walter D. Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainspring of American Politics, New York: W. W. Norton, 1970, chap 4. The most comprehensive data on voting participation by demographic classifications and residence are found in U.S. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 174, "Voting and Registration in the Election of 1968," U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970.

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**THE IMPACT OF A VOTING REGISTRATION LAW ON
TURNOUT AND PARTISANSHIP: A CASE IN KANSAS**

by

DON F. SNOW

BGE., University of Omaha, 1964

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Science

**KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas**

1972

This report investigates the relationship between institutional structural election arrangements and electoral behavior in the State of Kansas. Specifically, it examines the impact of voting registration laws on electoral turnout and partisanship in the State of Kansas during the years 1960 through 1968.

The major proposition tested is; did the registration law which required urbanites to register prior to voting, while their rural counterparts were not required to register, benefit either major political party? Data for the 1960 through 1968 election period were collected and statistically manipulated in order to answer the above question. The results of the study showed that, contrary to the pattern for the rest of the U.S., the more rural the county the greater the turnout of voters. It was also found that the more rural the county the greater the proportion of the vote Republican.

Based on the positive relationships between voter participation and ruralness and the increase in Republicanism and ruralness, the registration law seems to have favored the Republican party during the period examined.