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The Impact of the abortion issue on Voter Turnout

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ABSTRACTⁱ

This research seeks to identify differences in turnout in the 2022 midterm election. I expect that the variation in levels of turnout is caused by the saliency of the topic of abortion, especially in states where the status quo of abortion policy could change with the election. I compare a group of 12 states, some with abortion salience and some without to assess their changes in turnout. I expected to observe this relationship because the Dobbs decision has increased the urgency of voting at the state level to protect or restrict abortion access. States where the governorship will determine a definitive change in the status quo of abortion policy, or a ballot initiative is present should see an increase in turnout. Additionally, I focus on the counties of one state, Pennsylvania, to assess if typically pro-abortion and anti-abortion demographics are responsible for the changes in voter turnout. This thesis found that states where the gubernatorial election was salient saw the greatest increases in turnout for Democratic candidates, while the ballot initiative states saw less turnout in previous years. The most important demographics changing the turnout patterns are college-educated women and single women, and they must be watched in the future. The salience of abortion should encourage politicians to rethink their electoral strategies, and voters to consider how much their votes really do count, especially when their rights are on the line.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Abortion is a contentious issue for the modern American public. Before the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, abortion was legal in some states and heavily criminalized in others. The court upheld the decision in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in 1992, adding that the procedure could not be restricted to place an ‘undue burden’ on the woman seeking the procedure. Ever since, right-wing politicians and lobbies have attempted to pass restrictions in their states to eventually make a case to rise to the Supreme Court to challenge the right to an abortion. July 2022, the Supreme Court overturned the right to an abortion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* solely with the support of the conservative justices on the court. This gives the states free reign to legalize or criminalize abortion as they please. The 2022 midterms charged voters with the choice between degrees of legalization or restriction and criminalization of the procedure either through the candidates they choose from or direct ballot initiatives. This made these midterms unusually important for many in both pro-life and pro-choice camps, even as abortion is typically very responsive, deciding the fates of many women and setting the tone for nationwide abortion policy in coming years.

My research seeks to identify the impact of this decision on selected states and counties. I expect that the variation in levels of turnout is caused by the saliency of the topic of abortion; in some states the status quo of abortion policy could change with the election while in others it likely would not. I expect to observe this relationship because the Dobbs decision has increased

the urgency of voting at the state level to protect or restrict abortion access. States where the governorship will determine a definitive change in the status quo of abortion policy, or a ballot initiative is present should see an increase in turnout.

Abortion attitudes, policies, and voting patterns have been extensively studied, but salience is only hinted at and never discussed further. Abortion was heavily researched in the 90s post-*Casey*, heavily focusing on how abortion might impact vote choice and what attitudes determine someone's abortion position. So, my study will reflect the changing status of abortion in this country.

I add to this body of research by arguing that the salience of abortion should increase turnout. It is already understood that ballot initiatives, and specifically ballot initiatives based in morality policy drive turnout. Additionally, abortion salience has not been tested as impacting turnout in governor's races. It is known that voters use their opinion on abortion to help decide their choice of candidate, but the literature does not show whether this increases a person's odds of voting. In the literature, abortion salience is largely an implied concept. Context of laws and policies impact why the voter comes to vote. Salience of differing topics ebb and flow based on how relevant they are, but abortion appears to always retain some salience in the minds of voters because it is a moral issue. The unique situation of the reversal of *Roe* brought a salient moral baseline salience across the country. If abortion is salient to a voter, the 2022 election was an especially important one in which to make your voice heard.

I have investigated this question by essentially placing abortion salience as a variable in the costs and benefits model of voting. I have collected total votes cast for every state in the last three midterm years (2014, 2018, and 2022) and compared each state to its previous vote totals to show the changing turnout over time. However, I am primarily concerned with states where

abortion is salient and states where abortion is not salient. This includes analysis of 12 states: four with abortion ballot initiatives, four with critical governor's races, and four states where abortion is not salient as a comparison to the states with salience. I also focus on Pennsylvania because it is uniquely salient. I used turnout and demographic data by county to determine what counties are increasing the turnout rate because of their pro-choice or pro-life demographics.

Because my model is based on the costs and benefits of voting model, I include other typical variables associated with turnout in my study. Close elections are known to increase turnout, because one vote is more likely to tip the balance and therefore voting is more beneficial. Additionally, voters are still impacted by regular institutional barriers to voting like restrictive laws and voting processes.

My analysis will show that abortion salience drove turnout in the 2022 midterm, confirming the predictions of many pollsters and politicians who expected abortion to be a major determining issue for the midterm. This finding should cause politicians to rethink their electoral strategies. Additionally, voters should consider how much their votes really do count, especially when their rights are on the line.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Abortion is an “easy” issue. Unlike complex issues, the issue does not take much thought for the voter, and it is not difficult to understand. The issue evokes core values, which makes it easier to understand because there is no true informational component needed to craft an opinion (Mooney, 200, p. 173). If the easy issue is especially salient during an election, voters might be expected to have opinions on it that they use to decide to vote. It provides a reason to come out on Election Day. A recent Supreme Court decision has made abortion highly salient. Did it draw people to the polls? Extant research about turnout and the issue of abortion suggests a rationale for it to do so.

What Shapes Turnout?

Analyzing voter turnout begins with analyzing the factors that encourage and discourage people to vote. Individuals analyze the costs and benefits of voting when they decide whether or not they will vote. If the voter’s costs outweigh the benefits, that voter will abstain. If their benefits outweigh the costs, that voter will vote. It is commonly understood that it is often not in the voter’s best interest to vote because of the costs that come with voting. Additionally, A single vote does not have a high likelihood of changing the result of the election (Downs, 1957, p. 148). Voter turnout depends on how many citizens decide that the benefits outweigh the costs of voting.

The costs of voting are barriers, systematic or personal, that make it more difficult for the average voter to vote. For example, information gathering to vote ‘correctly’ is a cost of time and resources. Voters have little incentive to gather this information if their vote hardly matters to the result of the election (Downs, 1957, p. 148). However, the cost of voting is not the same for everyone. Those who say that voting takes little time and effort are much more likely to vote than those who say the opposite (Siegelman and Barry, 1982, p. 426). Because the decision to vote is so low benefit, it is difficult to determine if the individual made the ‘correct’ choice in voting or abstaining (Aldrich, 1993, p. 265). Voting comes with built-in costs, so any additional costs are likely to further discourage a voter from voting.

The benefits of voting can be any expected positive result of voting, like realizing candidate or policy goals. Voters may have strong feelings about these goals so the benefits of achieving their desired policies or candidates may be greater than the costs of voting. Morality issues, like abortion, are shown to increase turnout when ballot initiatives are present (Mooney, 200, p. 173). This is especially motivating for midterms as opposed to presidential elections (Grummel, 2008). These ballot initiatives give the voter greater say in what happens in their state because they themselves partake in the legislation. There are conditions that raise the perceived benefits of voting, motivating the choice to vote. Changing abortion policy can be seen as a benefit to voting, especially when candidates use abortion as a platform or legislatures pass relevant policies. Additionally, certain demographics may feel more motivated by these actions if they have more to lose or gain from a policy change. Voters choose to vote when they are more partisan, differences between the parties are larger, and when they expect a close election (Fiorina, 1976, p. 397). The benefits of voting should motivate voters to come to the polls.

The cost and benefit analysis of voting has been used to explain turnout increases and decreases based on specific policies, issues, and conditions. The act of registering to vote is not common in all Western democracies, and there is some evidence to suggest that the act of registering to vote depresses turnout. Early closing of voter registrations is also speculated to depress turnout (Hershey, 2009, p. 87). It is disputed as to whether Voter ID law decreases turnout. In the aggregate it has the potential to depress overall turnout, but at the individual level it may not because already active voters may be motivated to learn new laws and vote regardless of the obstacles (Hershey, 2009, p. 88). Other factors like educational attainment may be more impactful on turnout than these laws and even drive political interest (Mycoff et al., 2009, p. 121). Reducing barriers to voting might or might not increase the number of people who vote. Rather, the lowest socioeconomic groups will still not vote, but those slightly higher might be impacted by reduction of barriers (Hershey, 2009, p. 89). Factors like polling place accessibility prevent disabled voters from voting, which could depress their turnout as a group (Schur et al., 2017, p. 1387). My study seeks to expand on the factors that increase turnout, like salience.

Voters and Salient Issues

Salient issues are the issues deemed most important to address, and impact how regular citizens and political actors behave. Issues will typically experience times of higher and lower salience based on political contexts, while others stay more consistent. “Easy Issues” are issues that are symbolic, deal with ends rather than means, and fit a specific political agenda (Carmines & Stimson, 1980, p. 80). In the instances of morality policy issues like abortion, pornography, capital punishment, and gay rights, anyone can claim to have a credible opinion (Mooney, 2000,

p. 171). These policies are ‘easy issues’ (Carmines & Stimson, 1980, p. 80). Therefore, they are salient and generate a high level of participation (Mooney, 2000, p. 174). Policymakers are aware of the salience of these issues, so they are highly responsive to their constituents’ moral opinions and attempt to reflect their preferences to remain in office (Mooney, 2000, p. 175). This can lead to periods of time where morality policy is of low salience since the policy is matched with the public opinion (Mooney, 2000, p. 175). However, if there is a change in either public opinion or public policy, the morality policy can become ‘active’ again and trigger a wave of policymaking on the subject to correct the lack of congruence between policy and public opinion. Not only those who hope the policy and general opinion on the topic remain congruent are mobilized. Others may now take the opportunity that incongruence has given them and use it to push the policy in a totally opposite direction, even past the public opinion (Mooney, 2000, pp. 176-178). Easy, moral issues often become salient issues that fluctuate in periods of salience and non-salience based on external forces.

Abortion is an easy issue that fluctuates based on forces like the court and elections. The Court has a role in morality decisions, and therefore the power to set off policy making waves (Mooney, 2000, p. 182). *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark decision that legalized abortion across the United States, set off a policy wave so strong it never truly became dormant again (Mooney, 2000, p. 185). Since SCOTUS has a role in spurring policy debate, they also have a role in driving voters to vote on these new policies (Ro & Haider-Markel, 2009). Howell & Sims (1993) studied the impact of abortion policy on candidate choice with a survey measured in 1990 and 1991 that offered different results. The authors offer the explanation that in 1990 the governor vetoed anti-abortion legislation which mobilized the pro-life movement. In 1991, however, an anti-abortion bill that the governor vetoed was overridden by the state legislature,

which in turn mobilized the pro-choice voters since they felt threatened (Howell & Sims, 1993, pp. 58-60). States changing or threatening to change the status quo of abortion policy change the level of salience of the topic, and to whom those changes are salient. Salience changes with time and to whom an issue is most salient.

The Abortion Issue

Since abortion has a higher issue salience, it is natural that this salience has an impact on the candidates people vote for and the policies they support when combined with their existing values. These examples suggest that abortion saliency may have wider impacts on voter behavior than have been previously studied.

Vote Choice

Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox published an article studying the gubernatorial elections of ten states in 1989 and 1990: Virginia, New Jersey, Florida, Texas, California, Massachusetts, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. They found that in eight of the ten states that abortion attitudes were a stronger predictor of vote choice than even the state of the economy, nationally and state by state (Cook et al., 1994, p. 198). Pennsylvania had a particularly unique finding: abortion was an even stronger predictor than partisanship in the state (Cook et al., 1994, p. 194). A similar effect has been found when examining presidential elections. Smith (1994) studied the impact of abortion on the 1984 and 1988 presidential elections to compare. He found that abortion attitude impacted both presidential elections, supporting his hypothesis (Smith, 1994, p.

358). He also draws the conclusion that the context of each election is important to how much the attitudes impact each election. Though both elections had abortion as a predictor of vote choice, they differed slightly because each election happened in a different context (Smith, 1994, p. 364).

When comparing the importance of the issue of abortion to the Gulf War, affirmative action, social welfare, and the economy in the 1992 presidential election, abortion held its weight in importance to the other issues (Abramowitz, 1995, p. 178). Abortion was found to be a stronger predictor of vote choice than the economy, concurring with Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox (Abramowitz, 1995, p. 185). Voters who were more aware of the candidates' positions on abortion were more influenced in their vote choice than voters who were less aware of the candidates' positions (Abramowitz, 1995, p. 185).

In senatorial races, abortion attitude matters to a voter's choice of candidate just as it does for Presidential and Gubernatorial races. However, Highton (2004) found that abortion attitude only matters to voters when the candidates have opposing viewpoints on abortion. When the candidates' positions on abortion are the same, abortion attitude has no effect (p. 189). The more information a voter has about the candidates, the more likely abortion attitudes are to affect that voter's choice of candidate (Highton, 2004, p. 191; Abramowitz, 1995, p. 185). Abortion attitudes are shown to affect vote choice in Gubernatorial elections, Presidential elections, and Senatorial elections, but different characteristics of these elections could impact the importance of abortion.

Policy

Policy relates to vote choice because voters are somewhat aware of the conditions that will achieve their policy desires. Conservative states are more likely to put in restrictive abortion policies. If the conservative state has a high rate of religious adherence that state is even more likely to put up restrictive policy (Kreitzer, 2015, p. 53). Democratic control of both chambers of the legislature is related to the adoption of both pro-abortion and anti-abortion policies, but Republican control of the legislature was not (Kreitzer, 2015, p. 54). Also, the adoption of specific anti-abortion policies such as gestational ban and fetal homicide laws are significantly reduced when a Democratic governor is in power. The percentage of Democratic women in the legislature also reduces the likelihood that restrictive abortion policy is adopted. However, states with many Democratic women legislators are no more likely to adopt pro-abortion policy than states with no Democratic women legislators (Kreitzer, 2015, p. 55). Additionally, a higher percentage of female legislators, Democratic female legislators, and members of NARAL in a state are associated with less restrictive abortion policy (Medoff, 2002, p. 481).

States with specific political cultures towards regulating moral issues will be more likely to adopt strong regulations on abortion than other states without those political cultures (Cook et al., 1993c, p. 772). When controlling for the concepts of religion, affluence, education, and race, better educated people, White people, more affluent people, and Jewish and non-religious people are the most supportive groups towards abortion (Cook et al., 1992). Moral values related to support of abortion are the commitment to privacy, belief that life begins at conception, and social traditionalism (Tamney et al., 1992, pp. 43-45).

Religious groups are agents of mobilization, which suggest they are important for understanding turnout when abortion is highly salient. Catholics and Evangelicals are most pro-life, but Catholics are particularly important due to centralization of the church. The Catholic Church's stance is pro-life, and Catholics must be a member of a Catholic church in order to remain a Catholic. Yet, Protestants may choose to attend pro-choice or pro-life congregations. Another factor that may affect abortion restrictions is lobbying. The Catholic Church lobbies in each state while Protestant churches are less organized, so the Catholic Church lobbies more. Their lobbying can also create counter-lobbying by pro-choice groups, further affecting policy (O'Connor & Berkman, 1995, pp. 449-450). Cook et al. (1993a) also showed that while Catholics are great at teaching their members anti-abortion attitudes, sometimes a large, Catholic, pro-life, presence in a state allows non-Catholics to mobilize against the anti-abortion attitudes of the Catholics (p. 223). Furthermore, states with high numbers of Evangelicals are also pro-life (O'Connor & Berkman, 1995, pp. 454-455). The authors conclude that the structural differences of Roman Catholics and Evangelicals are what account for the different ways in which these groups influence state abortion policy. These findings suggest that religion has a role in increasing turnout of their voters.

Because abortion is an "easy" issue, the benefits of voting should outweigh the costs for voters in certain states and groups who typically hold stronger pro-life or pro-choice views. The typical information gathering cost of voting is lower, and the policy benefits of voting for a pro-choice or pro-life candidate are extremely high because *Roe* does not restrict how states design their policies around abortion giving the voter more influence. The benefits of achieving desired policy for the voter are far above any cost, enough to motivate greater turnout in the midterms. Abortion has been studied extensively in determining vote choice but lacks research when it

comes to turnout. This suggests that abortion salience can be viewed as a factor of the model of voting, increasing turnout.

Chapter 3

Theory

In July 2022, the Supreme Court overruled *Roe v. Wade* in the case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This decision made it possible for states to legalize or criminalize abortion to their own liking. This decision also brought abortion to the front of the public mind once again, like when *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* were decided. States all have their own levels of abortion salience as an issue based on their political climate and structure, but it was limited in the past because no state could fully outlaw abortion, no matter if their government wanted to or not. The court's decision affects every state, because now they all have a chance to change their abortion policy. *Dobbs* has created a baseline of abortion salience across the country, meaning that the issue of abortion access is at least in the minds of all voters. Abortion is always an important moral issue, but *Dobbs* makes it more relevant to discuss than before. However, abortion will matter more in some states than others because of the changes in policy and elections at the state level. The issue will matter to certain counties more than others because certain demographics have stronger opinions on abortion than others.

This salience will translate into higher turnout because abortion as a factor alters the probability of voting model. People decide to vote based on an analysis of the benefits and costs of voting. Since abortion is an "easy issue" and a moral one, people can easily understand its

arguments and counterarguments and take a stance with little thought. This characteristic lowers the costs of voting. Information gathering is an important step of the voting process: if voters do not feel sufficiently educated on candidates and issues, they are less likely to vote. Abortion essentially creates a heuristic for a person to filter candidates from. If they feel strongly enough about the abortion issue, it is simple for them to come to the polls with a somewhat informed opinion.

The salience of abortion will also raise the benefits of voting. Most elections give voters little power, where it hardly matters if they make the ‘correct’ choice to vote or abstain. However, the 2022 midterms offer a unique condition because of the *Dobbs* decision. States will now be able to make their own abortion policies, largely without the restriction of state institutions and of course SCOTUS. This should give the voter increased say in what happens in their state with the fate of abortion rights, but particularly in the states directly addressing abortion this past election cycle. Voters’ governors and state congresses have a say in crafting and passing new legislation on abortion or even protecting it in the state constitution, so these elections are more critical to abortion rights than before. Voters will feel that their vote ‘makes a difference’ and come out despite general midterm apathy.

The *Dobbs* decision creates conditions for higher turnout by lowering certain costs of voting and increasing benefits of voting because it created higher issue salience. However, there will be states where abortion is salient and states where abortion is not salient based on the characteristics of the election that even further raise the benefits of voting.

Hypotheses

States

Certain electoral conditions can increase the benefits of voting based on abortion. States will sometimes place laws or state constitution amendments on ballots so that its constituents may have a direct say in the fate of certain policies. When states add these conditions to their ballots, especially when they deal with morality policy like same-sex marriage, the death penalty, and of course abortion, the state will see an increase in turnout in midterm elections (Grummel, 2008). We have seen ballot initiatives drive turnout relatively recently with the case of Kansas. Kansas wanted to amend their constitution to ban abortion statewide and placed this policy on a primary election ballot to disadvantage abortion rights groups. Instead, Kansas rejected the constitutional amendment drastically in a record-turnout primary. Ballot initiatives give the voters direct say, so they know their vote will be critical to state policy, raising the benefits of them voting. Pro-choice people have more to lose from not voting in the initiative because the status quo was originally in their favor. So, I focus on Democratic turnout because Democrats are usually pro-choice. This suggests that states with these types of ballot initiatives about abortion should see higher turnout than states who do not and see higher turnout than previous elections.

H1: States with abortion ballot initiatives will see higher increases in turnout among Democrats than states with none.

H2: States with abortion ballot initiatives will have higher increases in turnout among Democrats than in previous midterm years.

Another electoral condition that raises the benefits of voting is the Governor's election. Abortion attitudes have been shown to affect the voter's candidate choice in senate, gubernatorial, and presidential elections (Abramowitz, 1995; Smith, 1994; Cook et al., 1994; Howell & Sims, 1993). States in general also adopt less restrictive abortion policies when the Democratic party controls their legislature and governorship (Kreitzer, 2015). If a voter cares about abortion, they generally know which party will enact pro-life or pro-choice policy among every election level, including at the gubernatorial level. In many states, the governor will be critical in either protecting or restricting abortion because they hold veto power over the pro-choice or pro-life policies the state legislatures put forth. Additionally, the governor can set a policy agenda when they come into office, so voters will generally look to the governor instead of state senators or representatives for policy cues. What policies an incumbent governor is involved in signing and vetoing affect how the constituency views them and how they will vote come the next election (Howell & Sims 1993). Some states were projected to elect a governor who is the opposing party of the legislature, while others won a party trifecta easily advancing any legislation. This makes the governor's abortion stance critical to the abortion policy in a state, especially in races where one candidate seeks to totally criminalize and the other seeks to expand abortion rights. In states where the election of a new governor would entirely change the status quo of abortion policy in a state, abortion is especially salient. Some states may a higher change of exacting this change than others based on other election characteristics. These states will see higher turnout than states where abortion is not salient and see higher turnout than previous midterms.

H3: States where the governor's race controls the fate of state abortion policy will have increased turnout among Democrats compared to those without a critical race.

H4: States where the governor's race controls the fate of state abortion policy will have increases in turnout among Democrats compared to previous years.

Counties

The counties within a salient state will differ in how salient the voters believe abortion to be. In states where abortion is a salient issue, there will naturally be voters who care a lot about abortion and voters who care little about abortion. Communities are likely to share some similar values with one another, so these communities may or may not come out to vote based on their common values. There are demographics that are more pro-choice or more pro-life, and since those groups tend to live in areas near each other, the turnout rate will be different based on the community's values. These groups affect the political culture of the state, and majority groups will have the chance to advance abortion policy in the state. States who have a political culture focused on social traditionalism may adopt stronger abortion restrictions than those who do not, for example (Tamney et. al, 1992). Demographics that already care about the issue of abortion will see abortion as especially salient and come out to vote more than others. Groups like Catholics, Evangelicals, conservatives, and married women are more likely to be pro-life. Groups like single women of reproductive age, professional women, liberals, and the well-educated are more likely to be pro-choice. These demographics have incentive to turnout because abortion is most salient to these groups. Therefore, districts in a state where abortion is most salient will see higher turnout than other districts when large proportions of any of these populations are present.

H5: Counties with high proportions of Catholics will see increased turnout for the Republican candidate.

H6: Counties with high proportions of Evangelicals will see increased turnout for the Republican candidate.

H7: Counties with high proportions of single women will see increased turnout for the Democratic candidate.

H8: Counties with high proportions of college-educated women will see increased turnout for the Democratic candidate.

Controls

Because abortion is only a factor in decreasing costs and augmenting benefits of voting, there are still other costs and benefits that will impact turnout in these midterms. A voting benefit that may moderate the effects of abortion salience is a close election. For months, all of the elections from senate to house to governorships have been projected to be close elections. Each week, one party seems to be in the lead overall when it flips the next week. There are many policy issues in this election that have brought many races close. Between the economic troubles, gas prices, and aftermath of January 6th, 2021, attacks, voters have many attitudes that impact their vote choice. Voters see the news and speculation and may decide that expressing their feelings in a vote is more beneficial than costly. Turnout is typically higher in closer elections because voters feel like their vote could tip the balance (Fiorina, 1976). Therefore, close races for house seats and senate seats could increase turnout, whether the gubernatorial election is close, or the ballot initiative is present.

H9: Close elections in states will increase turnout.

Costs of voting still exist in this midterm, and those are the traditional barriers to voting that are institutional rather than personal. Policies like voter ID laws are likely to decrease turnout because they make it harder to voter, especially for lower socioeconomic status voters (Hershey, 2009). Other institutional barriers are registration deadlines, harsh mail-in ballot policies, voting roll purges, and reduced polling places that create confusion and long-lines that could prohibit people from voting. States with strict policies that increase the difficulty and time cost of voting are likely to see decreased turnout. Also, incumbents running in an election are more likely to win since people generally turn out in fewer numbers. An incumbent running has the potential to depress turnout.

H10: States with stricter voting laws will see decreased turnout.

H11: States where an incumbent is running will see decreased turnout.

States will have differing levels of turnout in the midterm because of the salience of abortion. Factors such as critical gubernatorial elections and ballot initiatives create this salience, increasing turnout. Districts with higher proportions of pro-choice and pro-life demographics will see higher turnout than other districts in high salience states.

Chapter 4

Analytical Approach

Analysis of States

Independent Variables

To conduct analysis on hypotheses one through four, I have chosen twelve states to analyze. I have picked states where I believe abortion to be salient and non-salient after researching each state's political structure, races on the ballot, and other political issues affecting the midterm in the state. These criteria are how I have operationalized my independent variable of salience. I have two categories of salient states for my analysis and one category of non-salient states, for comparison. The salient groups are the states with abortion ballot initiatives to either pass legislation or amend the state constitution and the states where the characteristics of the governor's race could impact state abortion policy. The non-salient group of states are states where abortion policy will not be impacted, regardless of election outcome.

Ballot Initiative States

This election shows four states that have abortion as an issue directly on the ballot: California, Kentucky, Michigan, and Vermont. I have included all of these states because ballot initiatives have been shown to increase turnout, so I expect these states to see increases in Democratic turnout because Democrats have the most to gain from affirming abortion policies.

California is the first state I expect to see increased turnout in because of a ballot initiative. California also tends to be a leader in influencing Democratic policy, modeling for the rest of the country. California voters are relatively used to ballot initiatives, in fact, there were seven total initiatives on the 2022 midterm ballot. The main draw of the midterms in this state should be the ballot initiative since Gov. Gavin Newsom was projected to win reelection and did so by a margin of 18.4% (*See Table 2*). California's proposition 1 asked voters to affirm the right to abortion and contraception in the state constitution. A relevant, national issue like abortion is likely to influence voters to come to the polls, which is why I believe abortion is quite salient here.

The next state I expect to see that abortion is salient is Kentucky. Kentucky's ballot initiative asks voters to add to their state constitution to ban abortion. Kentucky has no governor race, only a senate race which the incumbent Republican swept. Kentucky voters see abortion as salient, especially because this state has seen recent legal issues on the issue. A Kentucky judge blocked the 6-week abortion ban set to go into place as soon as the Dobbs decision was handed down. Kentucky is a unique case among these states in that it does not have a gubernatorial election to compare to the others, so I have substituted total votes cast for Republicans and Democrats in the congressional districts in Kentucky to get statewide comparison for the same years. Though Kentucky has no race, the ballot initiative has potential to bring out voters who might generally vote Republican, but still have pro-choice values. The ballot initiative is the only novel thing about the Kentucky ballot, and therefore creates salience.

Another state where I have decided abortion is salient is Michigan. In an exit poll, 45% voted abortion as their primary voting issue, more than any other issue. Michigan asks voters to add reproductive freedom to the state constitution. When the Dobbs decision took effect,

Michigan had an old, unenforced abortion ban from 1931 still in law. It has not taken effect because of legal challenges. I believe the challenges to the law have increased salience in the race, and so has the incumbent governor Gretchen Whitmer, who has shown support for the ballot initiative. She has been important in fighting for abortion rights in the state, so she helps raise abortion salience in the state. Michigan voters have appeared to award Gov. Whitmer with reelection by a margin of victory of 10.6% for her staunch pro-choice attitudes (*Table 2*). Michigan has high levels of salience because of Gov. Whitmer and her support of the ballot effort.

Vermont is the last state where the issue of abortion is salient due to a ballot initiative. Vermont asks its voters to affirm reproductive liberty like Michigan's proposal. Like California, Vermont is a blue state with otherwise non-competitive races except for congress, so the ballot initiative to affirm abortion rights should make abortion more salient than anything else on the ballot.

Overall, these states share the commonality of abortion ballot initiatives, but the salience of the issue of abortion is created by different characteristics of each state that influenced the need for such proposals.

Salient Gubernatorial States

These states I believe abortion is salient because the outcome of the gubernatorial race will definitively determine how much each state has access to abortion. Each of these states have the possibility of the status quo of state abortion policy changing with the election. I determined that by assessing election closeness, exit polls, and characteristics of the race.

Arizona is the first state where the issue has salience. In an exit poll, 32% of voters said abortion is their number one while 36% percent of voters said inflation was the most important issue (*Table 1*) (NBC News, 2022). This means that abortion was the second most important issue in the Arizona midterm. Like Michigan, Arizona had an old existing abortion ban on the books, which nearly took effect after the Dobbs decision thanks to the attorney general. Courts blocked the 6-week ban from going into effect. With no ballot initiative, the governor's race will be a key determinant of abortion policy in the state. This race is also projected to be close, which may increase the need to vote for a candidate based on abortion attitude. Abortion is especially salient in Arizona.

Georgia is the next state where abortion has a lot of salience. Abortion was the second most important voting issue with 26% of voters ranking abortion as their top issue behind inflation with 36% percent of voters (*Table 1*) (NBC news, 2022). While a lower percentage chose abortion as a top issue compared to states like Pennsylvania and Arizona, it is still significant that abortion is the second most important issue. Abortion was already very restricted in Georgia, and they were one of few states to attempt to push the boundaries of abortion policy a few years before the Dobbs decision. Abortion has been salient in Georgia for a long time. Abortion has been common talk to the governor race and even the senate race. Republican senate candidate Herschel Walker has been accused by two women for pressuring them to have an abortion despite being anti-choice himself. Abortion as a campaign issue combined with a flurry of bans create high salience in Georgia.

Abortion is salient in Pennsylvania. In an exit poll, 37% of PA voters said abortion was their primary voting issue (*Table 1*) (NBC News, 2022). Abortion was a strong campaign issue this cycle with Josh Shapiro seeking to protect abortion in the state while his opponent Doug

Mastriano sought to ban it without exceptions. This becomes even more critical because a Democratic governor is the only thing blocking the typically Republican state legislature from banning abortion. Before the election, most thought Republicans would retain both chambers of the legislature so Republican victory would create a trifecta. Fearing this trifecta, voters kept the governorship Democrat-controlled and flipped the control of the state house, awarding Josh Shapiro for his pro-choice attitudes with a margin of victory of 14.8% (*Table 2*). Abortion also has historic importance in Pennsylvania, because it has been a significant predictor of vote choice following the landmark ruling in Casey. Pennsylvania is a clear example of abortion salience.

Lastly, Wisconsin is a state with abortion salience. Voters ranked abortion only slightly behind in importance as inflation unlike Georgia where the difference is more pronounced (*Table 1*) (NBC News, 2022). Like Pennsylvania, a Democratic governor would be the only thing stopping the Republican legislature from banning abortion. Abortion has been a key issue in the governor race, and abortion debate has resurfaced due to an old ban in the law. The candidates have opposing abortion stances. The Republican candidate has expressed support for the old ban that seeks to prosecute doctors who perform abortions no exceptions, but claimed later he would back exceptions such as rape or incest. The governor race is critical for abortion rights, increasing the salience of the issue.

Table 1: Importance of Abortion in Exit polls

State	Percent who Selected Abortion as Primary Voting Issue	Rank of Importance:
AZ	32%	2
GA	26%	2
MI	45%	1
PA	37%	1
WI	31%	2

Data come from NBC News. Voters were asked to rank in importance the campaign issues of abortion, inflation, crime, gun policy, and immigration. The first column shows what percent selected abortion as their top issue while the second shows where abortion ranked among the five issues. These are all the states in the analysis that have this exit poll question.

Non-Salient Gubernatorial States

Four states, Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, and New York have gubernatorial elections where abortion is not salient. Each of these states are either historically red or blue, or do not have competitive races. Alabama, Colorado, and Connecticut swing heavily for their favored party, the races were not remotely close (*See Table 2*). New York has a much smaller margin of victory, which is unusual given their margins of victory are very strongly towards the Democratic candidate. However, since New York is a historically blue state it is still included as a non-salient state. All these states feature an incumbent governor in the, so the status quo of abortion is unlikely to change due to the natural advantage incumbents have. Alabama will continue to restrict abortion further, while the other three will continue to protect abortion. There is no direct threat of policy change in these states, and therefore abortion is a non-salient issue.

My measure of salience is not perfect, however there are numerous reasons I did not choose other methods. Ideally, I would have had surveys that justified the level of abortion salience in each state, but that data does not exist. The closest data I found were exit polls assessing abortion's importance among other prominent issues. Though this is helpful, and I used this to further justify the importance of abortion in particular states, not every state had this question on an exit poll. It is at least helpful to see that others also expected abortion to be particularly important in certain states than others, therefore they prepared exit polls for those states. Additionally, I stuck to these twelve states to use the clearest cases I possibly could. The characteristics of these states provided significant justification that the status quo could change. For example, I considered using Florida, but decided it would be a poor case because of Governor DeSantis. Florida was being closely watched in the news because of his actions as governor relating to LGBTQ+ issues and his speculated presidential run in 2024. I decided against Florida because I thought his presence would overshadow the abortion issue. I also do not employ an ordinal measure of salience since I am making my own judgment of salience, and I wanted to limit the effects of my bias. For these reasons, my measurement of salience is valid, but not necessarily the most reliable.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this analysis is turnout. I have operationalized increases in turnout by using the gubernatorial election data for the twelve states from 2014, 2018, and 2022, including votes cast for the Republican candidate, Democratic candidate, and total votes for

governor. From those votes, I calculated percent change in votes from 2018-2022 and 2014-2022 for every state. Further, I took the average percent change in votes for both parties among my groups of salient and non-salient states. I am intending to measure changes in turnout, and I have. Others could easily use the data I have and calculate the same changes.

Method

Multivariate analysis was not necessary to the analysis in this part. Rather, I have displayed my calculations in a table to visualize which groups of states experienced changes and which ones did not.

Univariate Statistics

Among the states, there were extreme increases and extreme decreases in turnout. For example, Alabama saw the most decline in Democratic votes from 2018-2022 with a 67.17% decrease in votes while Arizona saw a 22.79% increase in Democratic votes. The same year, Republican votes saw the most increase in Vermont (25.17%) and largest decrease in Connecticut (19.02%). When comparing 2014 to 2022, however, there are increases among Democratic and Republican voters. The year 2018 was a record-breaking turnout year for midterm elections, and 2022 was unusually high as well continuing the trend of increased younger voters, so this was unsurprising. Every state saw increases in voters from 2014-2022 while five of the twelve states saw increases in votes from 2018-2022. The maximum increase in Democratic (51.32% Arizona) votes and Republican (56.92% Vermont) votes were similar that year. The minimums for Democratic (-31.15% Vermont) votes and Republican (0.696% Wisconsin) votes were far different the same year. There was greater variation in both years for

Democratic votes ($2018\ sd = 27.86$, $2014\ sd = 23.51$) than Republican votes ($2018\ sd = 12.61$, $2014\ sd = 18.14$). Overall, turnout differs a lot by state and by party.

Table 2: Percent Change in Turnout by State

Percent Change:	AL	AZ	CA	CO	CT	GA
2018-2022 Total Votes	-22.13	7.13	-14.01	-0.65	-10.93	0.36
2014-2022 Total Votes	16.04	41.12	33.07	18.62	13.83	35.49
2018-2022 Democratic votes	-68.17	22.79	-19.34	8.14	2.11	-6.07
2014-2022 Democratic Votes	-3.59	51.32	32.17	31.46	21.87	36.88
2018-2022 Republican Votes	-7.98	-4.73	-6.27	-9.94	-19.03	6.31
2014-2022 Republican Votes	20.77	36.65	34.37	4.56	3.65	36.29
Margin of Victory 2022	R+38.0	D+0.7	D+18.4	D+19.3	D+12.8	R+7.5
Incumbent Running	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Percent Change:	KY*	MI	NY	PA	VT	WI
2018-2022 Total Votes	-7.27	4.74	-3.29	6.59	3.70	-0.67
2014-2022 Total Votes	4.50	29.26	35.41	34.85	31.88	9.20
2018-2022 Democratic votes	-24.88	6.76	-15.76	4.47	-61.67	2.54
2014-2022 Democratic Votes	-3.53	39.15	34.10	36.65	-31.15	17.36
2018-2022 Republican Votes	1.88	5.16	20.09	8.87	25.17	-2.09
2014-2022 Republican Votes	6.93	18.02	44.37	29.62	56.92	0.70
Margin of Victory 2022	-	D+10.6	D+5.8	D+14.8	R+47.2	D+3.4
Incumbent Running	-	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

‘’ denotes that Kentucky did not have a gubernatorial election and its turnout numbers come from adding up the total votes cast for Democratic, Republican, and all congressional candidates. Thus, it has no entries for Margin of Victory or Incumbency and is an odd case of this analysis.*

All incumbents running won their race; states where incumbents were not running did not run because they hit term limit.

State Analysis Results

Table 3: Percent Change in Turnout by Groups

Group	Percent Change from 2018-2022 Total Votes	Percent Change from 2014-2022 Total Votes
Ballot Initiative States	-3.21	24.68
Salient Gubernatorial	3.35	30.17
All Salient States	0.07	27.42
Non-Salient States	-9.25	20.97
All States	-3.04	25.27
Group	Percent Change from 2018-2022 Democratic Votes	Percent Change from 2014-2022 Democratic Votes
Ballot Initiative States	-24.78	9.16
Salient Gubernatorial	5.93	35.55
All Salient States	-9.42	22.36
Non-Salient States	-18.42	20.96
All States	-12.42	21.89
Group	Percent Change from 2018-2022 Republican Votes	Percent Change from 2014-2022 Republican Votes
Ballot Initiative States	6.48	29.06
Salient Gubernatorial	2.09	25.81
All Salient States	4.29	27.44
Non-Salient States	-4.21	18.34
All States	1.45	24.40

The averages percent changes by groups of states showed the patterns discussed above in Table 3. All groups by each party saw increases from 2014-2022, but only some groups saw increases from 2018-2022. The salient gubernatorial states (PA, WI, AZ, GA) saw the highest increases from 2014-2022 and the highest from 2018-2022. The category “All Salient States” refers to the combination of the salient gubernatorial states and the ballot initiative states (CA, MI, KY, VT). This grouping saw increases from 2018-2022, although very little and the second-highest increases from 2014-2022.

In 2018 turnout numbers soared, especially among Democrats. So, there was nowhere to go but down. The only group of states that saw turnout increases were the salient gubernatorial states with a small increase of 5.93%. This same group saw the highest increase from 2014 as well, with 35.55%. The ballot initiative states saw the largest decrease in turnout from 2018 and the lowest increase from 2014.

Republican votes saw increases from 2014 and 2018 in all except one category, the non-salient states from 2018-2022. The ballot initiative states saw the largest increase (6.48%) in Republican votes from 2018-2022, oddly enough, while the salient states saw a slight increase of 2.09%. The ballot states also saw the largest change from 2014 compared to other groups.

The ballot initiative states are the most interesting case because while they see increases among total votes, and Republican votes, they see very large decreases in Democratic votes from 2018 and only a slight increase from 2014. I expected these states to see the largest changes because the literature emphasized the power of ballot initiatives, especially morality policy, to create increases in turnout. I think that this odd result comes partially from the fact that Democratic turnout declined overall from 2018-2022 because it was simply so unnaturally high in 2018. The other part, I believe, comes from the specific type of states that offered abortion

ballot initiatives in the first place. California and Vermont for example, are progressive states that created the ballot initiatives with the expectation that abortion rights would be codified into law in their state where abortion access was already well-protected. Michigan, though a swing state, still offered the ballot initiative with the intention that it would codify abortion rights into law. Though the Michigan ballot initiative had a higher chance of failing than California or Vermont, the move was still propped up by their popular, Democratic governor who vowed to keep abortion access in Michigan. Kentucky is the only state that worded the initiative in a way that favored eliminating abortion rights in the state. The others worded their initiatives in favor of protection. It was miraculous that Kentucky voted to protect abortion rights instead of eliminating them. Among the congressional results, Kentucky saw major decreases in Democratic votes from 2014 and 2022. This shows that Kentucky voters are voting Republican but are still against making abortion illegal. Additionally, the ballot initiative states saw Republican vote increases for both years. This indicates that some more Republicans turned out, who normally would not have, perhaps to show their disapproval of abortion rights while the Democrats turned out less than normal. The case of the ballot initiative states is strange but would potentially show different results had more states presented ballot initiatives. This means that my hypotheses 1 and 2 are unsupported.

The salient gubernatorial states are the most important finding, as it supports hypotheses 3 and 4. The salient gubernatorial states saw the largest increases from 2014 and 2018 among Democrats and smaller increases among Republicans for both years. Unlike the ballot states, these elections were far more critical to the fate of abortion policy in the state. From 2018, Democratic votes increased by 5.93% while non-salient states saw Democratic votes decrease by 18.42%. The same year, Republican votes increased by 2.09% in salient gubernatorial states and

declined by 4.21% among non-salient states. While Democratic votes increased in these states due to abortion salience, so did Republican votes although not as sharply. The results show the impact of salience on voter turnout in the salient gubernatorial states.

Analysis of Counties

To conduct analysis on hypotheses five through eight, I employ a different kind of analysis. To test these, I examined the 67 counties of Pennsylvania and their demographics to see what demographics are driving the changes in turnout. Certain demographics typically have a higher stake in the abortion conversation and vote for Democrats or Republicans because of it. While this is not a direct test of salience, it will provide some ideas on the groups to whom abortion matters the most and therefore turn out to vote.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this analysis is once again change in turnout. Turnout is measured with the percent change in Democratic or Republican Votes from 2018 to 2022. The turnout data come from the total votes cast for the Republican and Democratic candidates for governor in both 2018 and 2022 in each county. The vote totals come from NYT election data, which I used to calculate percent change in votes (New York Times, 2018; New York Times, 2022). The county with the largest decrease in Democratic turnout is Greene (-13.65%) and the county with the highest increase is Mifflin (19.38%). The county with the largest decrease in Republican turnout is Lackawanna (-65.87%) and the largest increase is Fulton (79.63%).

Independent Variables

The key independent variables of this analysis are the educated women and single women. In the literature, educated women and single women are some of the most likely demographics to be pro-choice. So, it is assumed that these groups would favor the Democratic party over the Republican party in vote choice. These data come from the Census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022; U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

The measure for educated women is women over 25 with a bachelor's degree or higher since college-educated women are specifically mentioned in the literature for their pro-choice views (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). I would have liked this measure to rather include women 18 and up to match the voting age, however there was no data for women over 18 only a category for women 18-24 that was negligible considering that most people graduate college at age 21 or 22. Though youth turnout has been increasing in the past few years, it remains lower than that of other age brackets. Educated younger people are still less likely to vote than older educated people. The county with the highest rate of educated women is Chester County (57%) and the lowest are Somerset, Carbon, and Lawrence counties (18%). There was moderate variation in this variable ($sd=9.4$)

The measure for single women is the total number of women between age 15 and 50 who have never married, are widowed, or are divorced (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This age bracket is important because of reproductive ability. The group ages span early years of fertility to nearing menopause, so this group should be keener on reproductive planning than others and therefore should be more pro-choice.

I would have preferred a measure of unmarried women above 18 to match the voting age but given the categories of the Census I could not solely separate out the group that is 18 to 50. It would also have been ideal if the unmarried measure did not include the widowed and divorced, because these groups still tend to lean more conservatively because they have been married. Nevertheless, this group still may have reasons to have concern with reproductive freedoms. I divided this number by the total population of each county to produce a rate, so I evenly compare each county in my analysis. The county with the lowest rate of unmarried women is Somerset (8.93%) and the highest rate of unmarried women is Philadelphia (20.23%) which makes sense since many young, single people move to large cities. There was moderate variation in the rate of unmarried women ($sd=2.64$).

The next independent variables are religious variables. Catholics and Evangelical Christians are very pro-life groups, and I would expect them to identify more with the Republican party over the Democratic party. For both variables, I have chosen to measure the number of adherents per 1,000 people of each group (ARDA, 2020). This was the best measure instead of using total congregations or number of adherents total since some counties in Pennsylvania are much smaller than others and that would skew the results. The county with the lowest rate of Evangelical adherents is Pike (23.55) and the highest is Lancaster (236.71). The county with the highest rate of Catholic adherents is Elk County (703.56), which is one of the most Catholic places in the United States. The county with the lowest number of catholic adherents is Juniata (10.72). There was much variation in the rate of Evangelicals ($sd=44.38$), but there was extreme variation in the rate of Catholics ($sd= 136.48$).

The last independent variable is a control of sorts since the Black population of a county may skew it Democratic while not necessarily being pro-choice (IndexMundi, 2011). Black

voters are generally more conservative when it comes to reproductive issues though they favor the Democratic party for other policy reasons. This variable is to ensure that all the change in votes is not solely attributed to Black turnout. This is especially important since Black turnout heavily impacted the result of the 2020 presidential election. The county with the lowest percentage of Black people is Warren (0.5%) and the highest is Philadelphia (43.7%). The variation of this group is moderate-low ($sd=6.5$).

Method

I used four different linear regressions to model the results of this study. I use two models of Democratic turnout change and two models of Republican turnout change. The difference between the models is whether I include the independent variable of unmarried women or educated women. I had to separate these variables since they were too highly correlated to run within the same model which effects the strength of the results. So, I run them separately. The models are run with the percent change in Republican votes and percent change in Democratic votes from 2018-2022. Though Pennsylvania had 67 counties, note that many of the counties are missing data on education and marital status, so each model only has 39 or 40 observations.

Counties Analysis Results

Table 4: Models of Turnout in Pennsylvania Counties

	Change in Democratic Turnout		Change in Republican Turnout	
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Rate of Evangelical Adherents per 1,000	0.0003 (0.0003)	0.0003 (0.0002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)
Rate of Catholic Adherents per 1,000	0.00001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.001* (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Black Population	-0.319** (0.141)	-0.498*** (0.103)	0.739 (0.836)	-0.446 (0.679)
Rate of Unmarried Women	-0.647 (0.499)	-	-8.498*** (2.959)	-
Rate of Women Over 25 with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	-	0.254*** (0.093)	-	-1.595** (0.609)
Constant	0.139* (0.076)	0.016 (0.045)	1.280*** (0.453)	0.499* (0.293)
Observations	40	39	40	39
R2	0.386	0.481	0.356	0.334
Adjusted R2	0.315	0.420	0.283	0.256
Residual Standard Error	0.050 (df = 35)	0.047 (df = 34)	0.300 (df = 35)	0.308 (df = 34)
F Statistic	5.491*** (df = 4; 35)	7.884*** (df = 4; 34)	4.840*** (df = 4; 35)	4.271*** (df = 4; 34)

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

The results of the counties analysis proved to be a bit different than expected but interesting, nonetheless. In model 3 (*See Table 3*), counties with a high rate of Catholic adherents are responsible for a decrease in turnout among Republicans rather than an increase. This disproves my hypothesis that this group would be motivated to vote for republicans, increasing votes for Republican candidates (*H5*). Additionally, the Republican turnout did increase because of the community in both Republican models, but not significantly. My hypotheses that high rates of evangelicals would lead to greater positive changes in Republican turnout (*H6*) is therefore unsupported.

Model 1 does not show that single women are turning out more for Democrats, disproving my hypothesis (*H7*). However, the unmarried women are turning out less for Republicans. Which suggests that while single women may not be voting for the Democratic candidates, they are avoiding Republican candidates; perhaps voting for third-parties or not at all.

College-educated women are increasingly turning out for Democrats as seen in model 2, supporting my hypothesis (*H8*). Even further, however, this group is responsible for percent decreases in Republican Turnout. This group is decidedly choosing to vote for Democrats over Republicans, while the group of unmarried women voters suggests voting apathy toward either party.

Black populations are an important factor in the Democratic turnout models. Black voters are decreasing their turnout for Democrats in both models 1 and 2. It is said that when Black voters turn out, Democrats win more. Since this group tends to lean more conservatively on the abortion issue, they may have voted less for the Democratic candidate because of the abortion

protection themes of the campaign. Though few of my hypotheses are supported, the models still provide interesting results for the motivations.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In this thesis, I set out to discover what was driving turnout in the 2022 midterm elections. I wanted to see how abortion impacted voter turnout with its new wave of salience thanks to the overturning of *Roe*. Salience was an implied concept in the abortion literature, and it was not studied directly how the importance of an issue can impact the vote.

In studying certain states and counties, abortion is certainly more salient in some states than others, particularly among the salient gubernatorial states. The ballot initiative states saw decreases in turnout compared to previous years, yet the only states that put up ballot initiatives put them up because they knew they would win. As for the non-salient states, that result was expected.

The counties analysis gave more interesting results. The most valuable finding was that educated women turn out the most for the Democratic candidates. Single women are not turning out for Democrats, but even more so not for Republicans. Many of my hypotheses were unsupported in this analysis, however I did intend the models to be very simple in this study because of the small number of cases. There of course are interactions between different demographics that make these groups less cohesive in opinion. Missing values for many of the smaller counties of Pennsylvania most likely played a role in shaping the results. I had even less cases than expected. If I had more time, I would have liked to analyze the counties in the other salient states from the first part of the analysis.

Regardless of the imperfect results, I think this study provides a base for important discussion on how a post-Roe world will affect elections in the years to come. Abortion can be

more salient in some states in some election years than others depending on the legislation that is passed throughout the term. Some states have characteristics that make abortion more salient than others, so it will be interesting to see what states fall into which categories over time. States seeking to protect abortion can rely on educated women and maybe to a lesser degree single women as these groups are turned off by Republican extremity on the abortion issue. Abortion salience will only grow, and it is important for the electorate to understand that as it is the politicians.

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ACADEMIC VITA

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY - University Park, PA

Dual Major: Political Science and Media Studies, Expected Graduation May 2023

DUQUENSE KLINE LAW – Pittsburgh, PA

Starting August 2023

Experience and Leadership

THE BORGEN PROJECT - Remote

Political Affairs Intern June 2021-August 2021

- Called, emailed, and encouraged others to call and email their members of congress to support policies that reduce global poverty.
- Used social media to gain the attention of my members of congress and friends to promote the causes of the Borgen Project
- Fundraised \$525 for the Borgen Project

PA STATE REP. DAN MILLER (D) - Mt. Lebanon, PA

Intern June 2021-August 2021

- Corresponded with constituents through mail and phone
- Assisted Constituents in obtaining their bus passes
- Researched and summarized issues for the Representative using state databases
- Summarized large state documents and reports for the Representative

ALPHA DELTA PI SORORITY

Delta Kappa Chapter *Director of New Member Experience* 2021

- Educated new Members of the Sorority on the information they were required to learn to be initiated
- Planned events for New Members to meet each other and bond
- Matched each new member with an older sister to be their mentor
- Helped members acclimate to sorority life

Director of Ritual Education 2021

- Understood all chapter ceremonies and rituals.
- Maintained items required for all membership ceremonies and rituals.
- Educated members on chapter rituals, songs, and secret processes.
- Facilitated sorority chapters, new member ceremonies, and initiation ceremonies

Homecoming Chair 2022

- Collaborated with two other organizations to order supplies, build a float, decorate a banner, and design shirts for the homecoming parade
- Directed members of my sorority in helping construct the float
- Encouraged members to attend homecoming events by making announcements
- Attended informational meetings presented by homecoming leadership to ensure float safety
- Placed 3rd in the homecoming competition, ensuring money for our philanthropy Ronald McDonald House

PENN STATE CLUB CHEER Blue Squad 2019-2020