

**Partisan Media and Electoral Polarization in 2012:
Evidence from the American National Election Study**

Gary C. Jacobson

University of California, San Diego

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Figure 1. Partisan Differences in Thermometer Ratings of Presidential Candidates and Parties

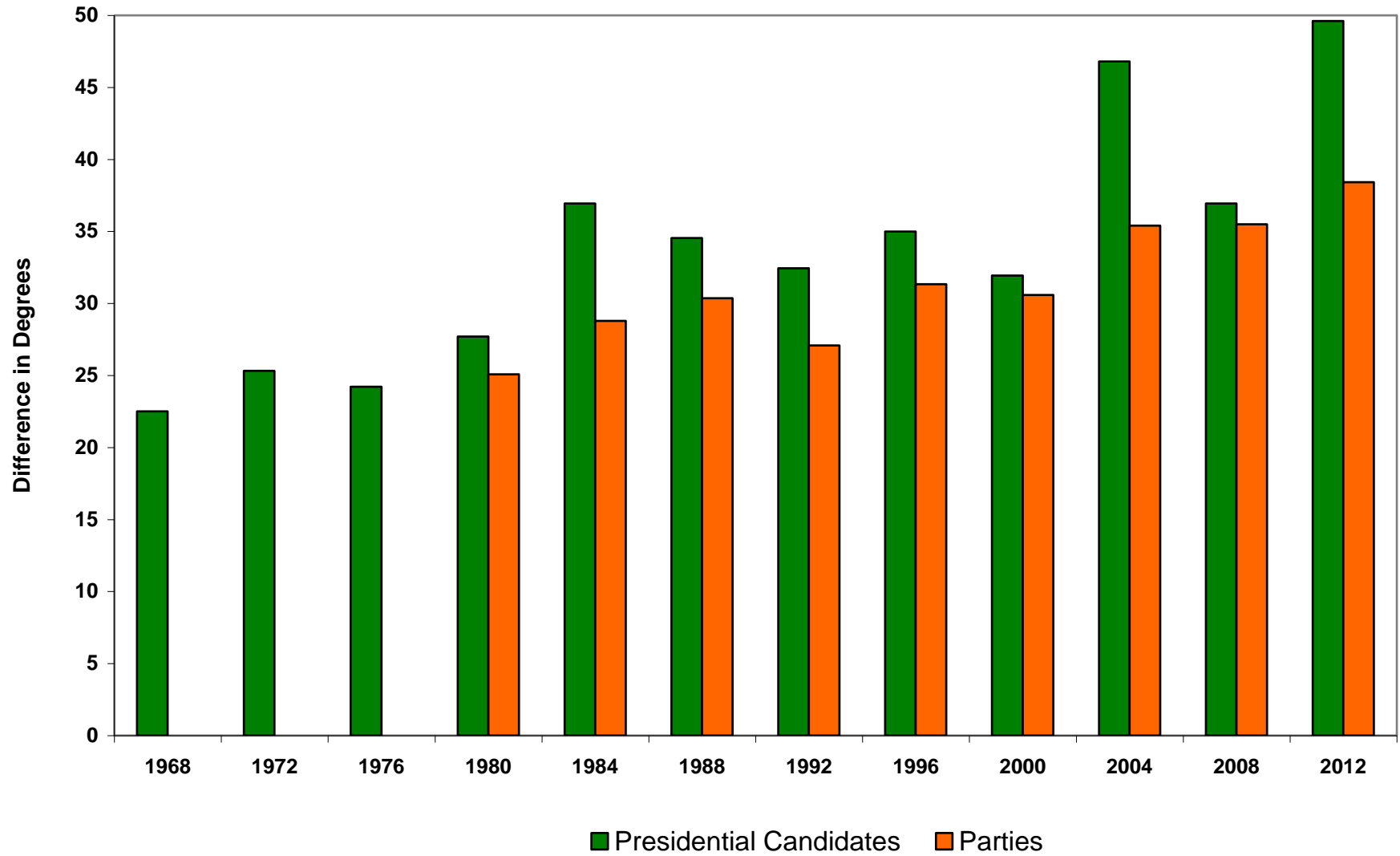


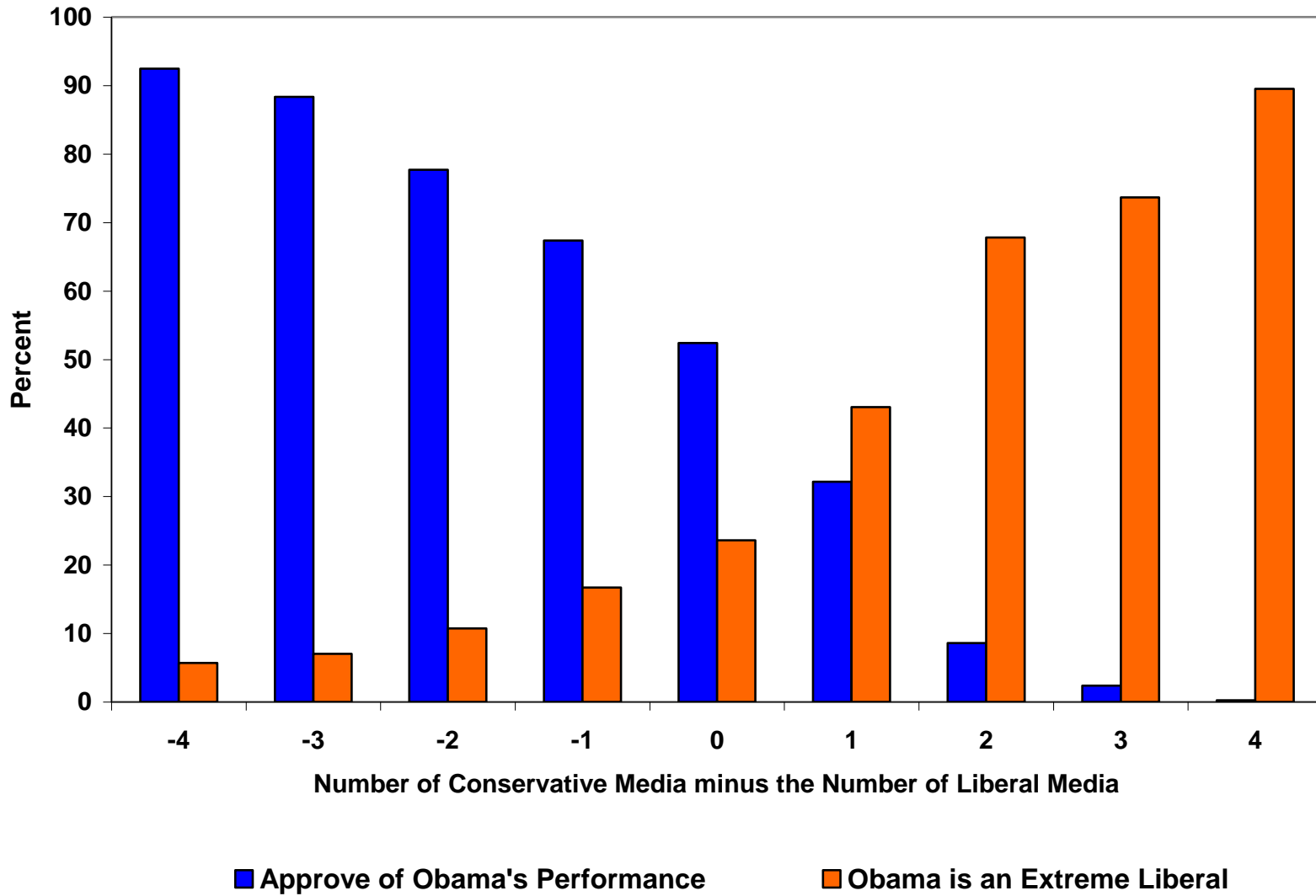
Table 1. Partisanship of Audiences for Television, Radio, Print, and Internet News and Opinion Sources

| | Weighted N | <i>Republicans</i> | | | <i>Independents</i> | <i>Democrats</i> |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | | <i>Tea Party</i> | <i>Other</i> | <i>All</i> | | |
| National Average | 4185 | 23.2 | 18.9 | 42.1 | 7.9 | 49.9 |
| <i>Conservative Sources</i> | | | | | | |
| Fox News | 961 | 51.3 | 20.0 | 71.3 | 4.0 | 24.7 |
| Bill O'Reilly | 561 | 68.2 | 17.4 | 85.6 | 3.4 | 10.9 |
| Sean Hannity | 520 | 74.3 | 14.9 | 89.2 | 3.7 | 7.2 |
| Greta Van Susteren | 348 | 69.9 | 14.9 | 84.8 | 3.3 | 11.9 |
| Mike Huckabee | 313 | 77.8 | 15.3 | 93.1 | 3.2 | 3.7 |
| Bret Baier | 277 | 74.6 | 10.5 | 85.1 | 3.1 | 11.9 |
| Rush Limbaugh | 382 | 73.0 | 13.7 | 86.7 | 3.8 | 9.5 |
| Glenn Beck | 219 | 75.0 | 15.6 | 90.6 | 3.1 | 6.3 |
| <i>Wall Street Journal</i> | 178 | 42.8 | 18.4 | 61.2 | 4.6 | 34.2 |
| Drudge Report | 148 | 70.1 | 8.2 | 78.3 | 10.7 | 11.0 |
| Mark Levin | 101 | 87.7 | 3.9 | 91.6 | 2.7 | 5.7 |
| Laura Ingraham | 88 | 76.7 | 7.2 | 83.9 | 2.5 | 13.7 |
| Michael Savage | 85 | 77.9 | 10.5 | 88.4 | 4.2 | 7.3 |
| Average | | 70.7 | 13.1 | 83.8 | 4.0 | 12.1 |

| | | <i>Republicans</i> | | | <i>Independents</i> | <i>Democrats</i> |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | Weighted N | <i>Tea Party</i> | <i>Other</i> | <i>All</i> | | |
| National Average | 4185 | 23.2 | 18.9 | 42.1 | 7.9 | 49.9 |
| <i>Liberal Sources</i> | | | | | | |
| CNN | 528 | 17.5 | 15.3 | 32.8 | 6.4 | 60.9 |
| Anderson Cooper | 482 | 14.4 | 13.1 | 27.5 | 5.4 | 67.1 |
| NPR | 458 | 10.7 | 13.2 | 23.9 | 7.5 | 68.5 |
| Jon Stewart | 457 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 14.4 | 5.0 | 80.5 |
| MSNBC | 449 | 20.7 | 14.3 | 35.0 | 6.2 | 58.8 |
| <i>New York Times</i> | 374 | 8.1 | 17.9 | 26.0 | 4.2 | 69.8 |
| Stephen Colbert | 370 | 8.0 | 11.1 | 19.1 | 4.3 | 76.6 |
| Huffington Post | 334 | 16.2 | 9.5 | 25.7 | 6.3 | 68.0 |
| Frontline | 250 | 15.9 | 9.2 | 25.1 | 5.5 | 69.3 |
| Chris Matthews | 247 | 9.0 | 6.3 | 15.3 | 3.0 | 81.7 |
| <i>Washington Post</i> | 201 | 24.8 | 7.9 | 32.7 | 6.8 | 60.6 |
| Average | | 13.8 | 11.4 | 25.2 | 5.5 | 69.3 |

| | | <u>Republicans</u> | | | <u>Independents</u> | <u>Democrats</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | Weighted N | <i>Tea Party</i> | <i>Other</i> | <i>All</i> | | |
| National Average | 4185 | 23.2 | 18.9 | 42.1 | 7.9 | 49.9 |
| <i>Mainstream Sources</i> | | | | | | |
| 60 Minutes | 1198 | 16.3 | 18.2 | 34.5 | 6.9 | 58.6 |
| NBC Nightly News | 1121 | 18.3 | 19.7 | 38.0 | 6.6 | 55.4 |
| CBS Evening News | 1019 | 19.0 | 18.1 | 37.1 | 7.8 | 55.2 |
| 20/20 | 976 | 16.3 | 20.3 | 36.6 | 8.8 | 54.6 |
| Dateline | 949 | 15.3 | 20.2 | 35.5 | 6.7 | 57.3 |
| ABC World News | 855 | 16.5 | 18.9 | 35.4 | 7.6 | 57.2 |
| Nightline | 722 | 18.4 | 18.6 | 37.0 | 6.8 | 56.2 |
| Meet the Press | 492 | 21.7 | 16.6 | 38.3 | 6.6 | 55.1 |
| <i>USA Today</i> | 405 | 24.2 | 25.0 | 49.2 | 7.0 | 43.8 |
| Face the Nation | 403 | 23.0 | 13.8 | 36.8 | 9.7 | 53.5 |
| Average | | 18.9 | 18.9 | 37.8 | 7.5 | 54.7 |

2A Partisan Media Use and Views of Barack Obama



2B Beliefs About Obama's Birthplace and Religion

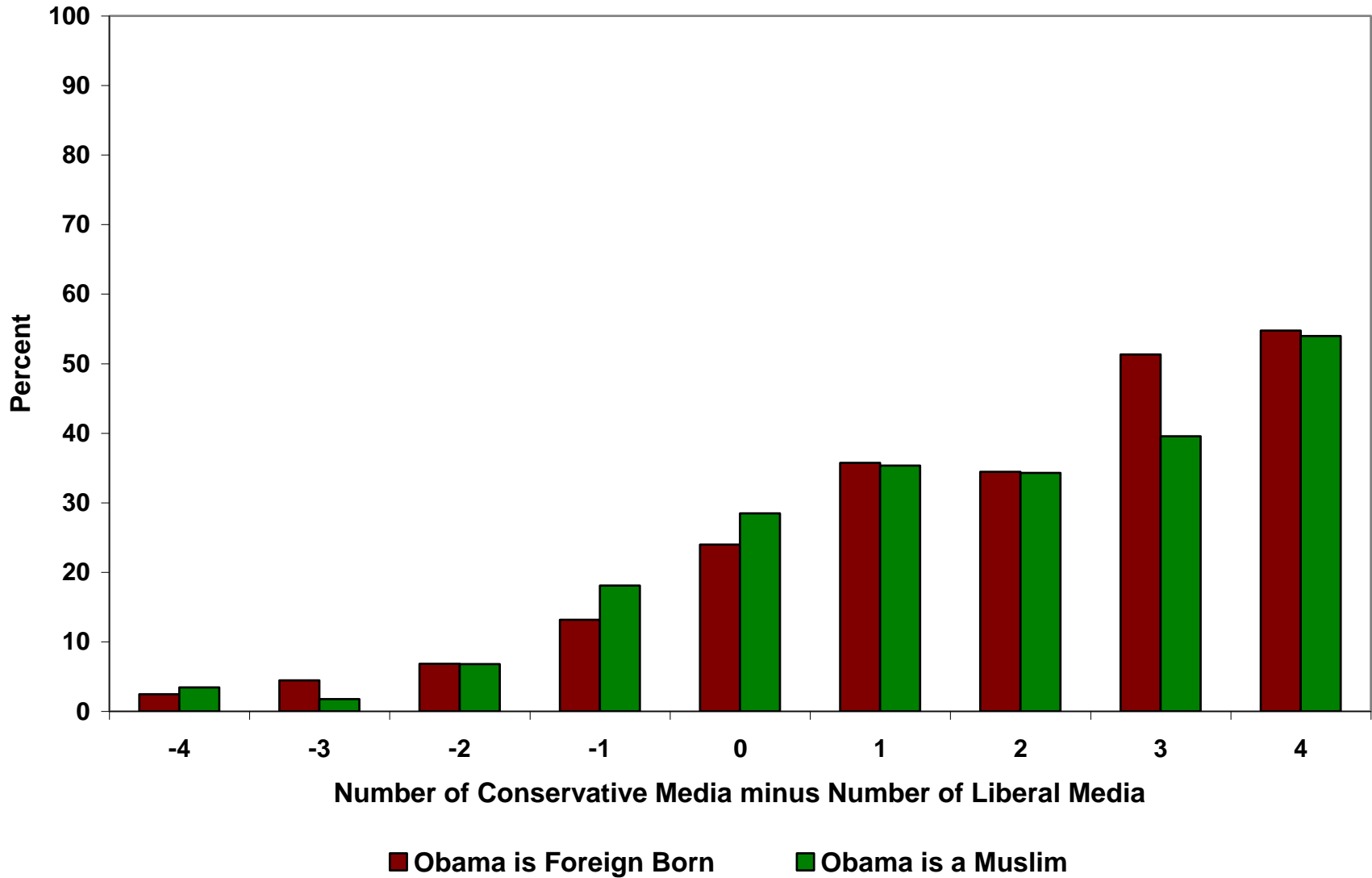
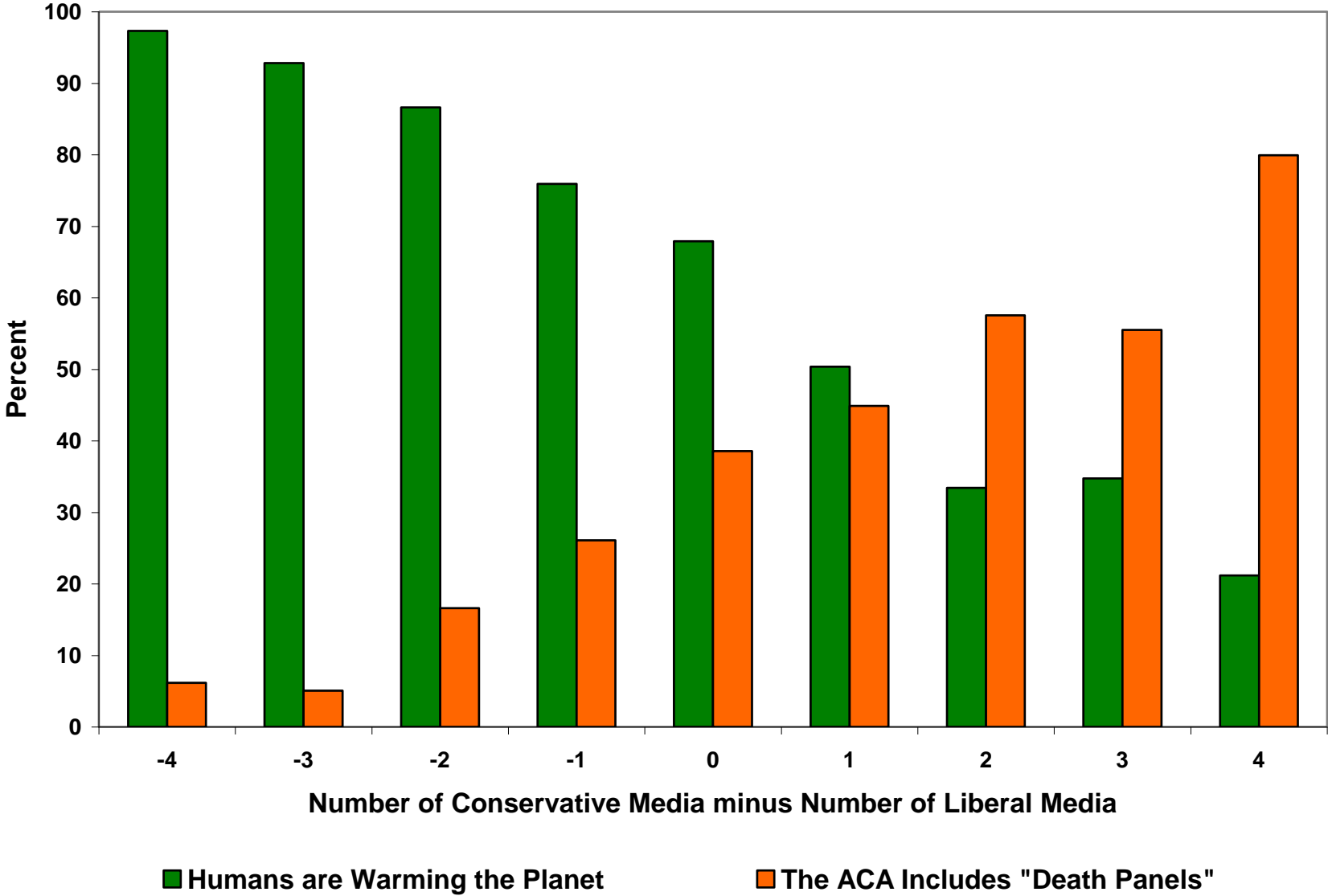
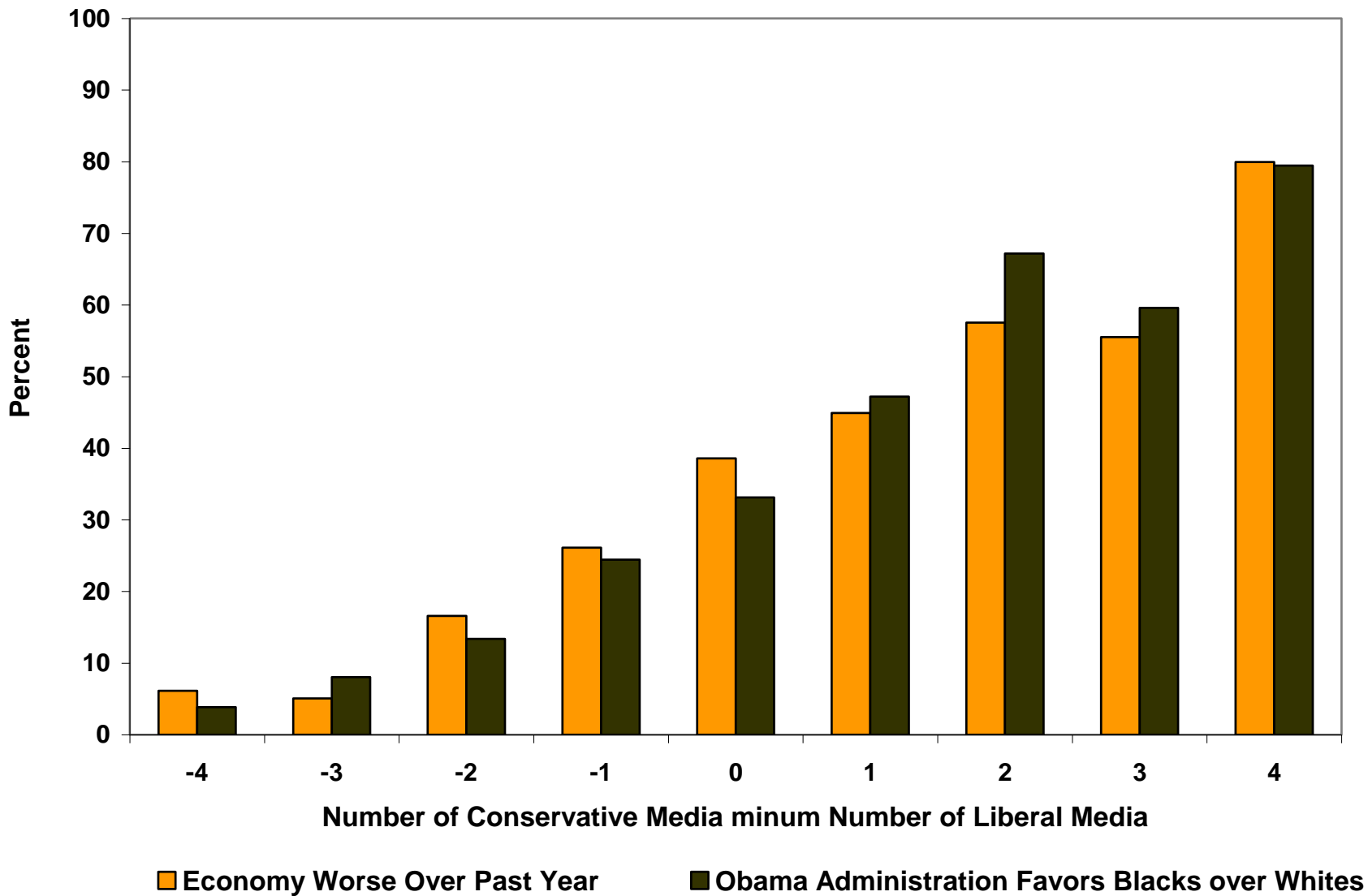


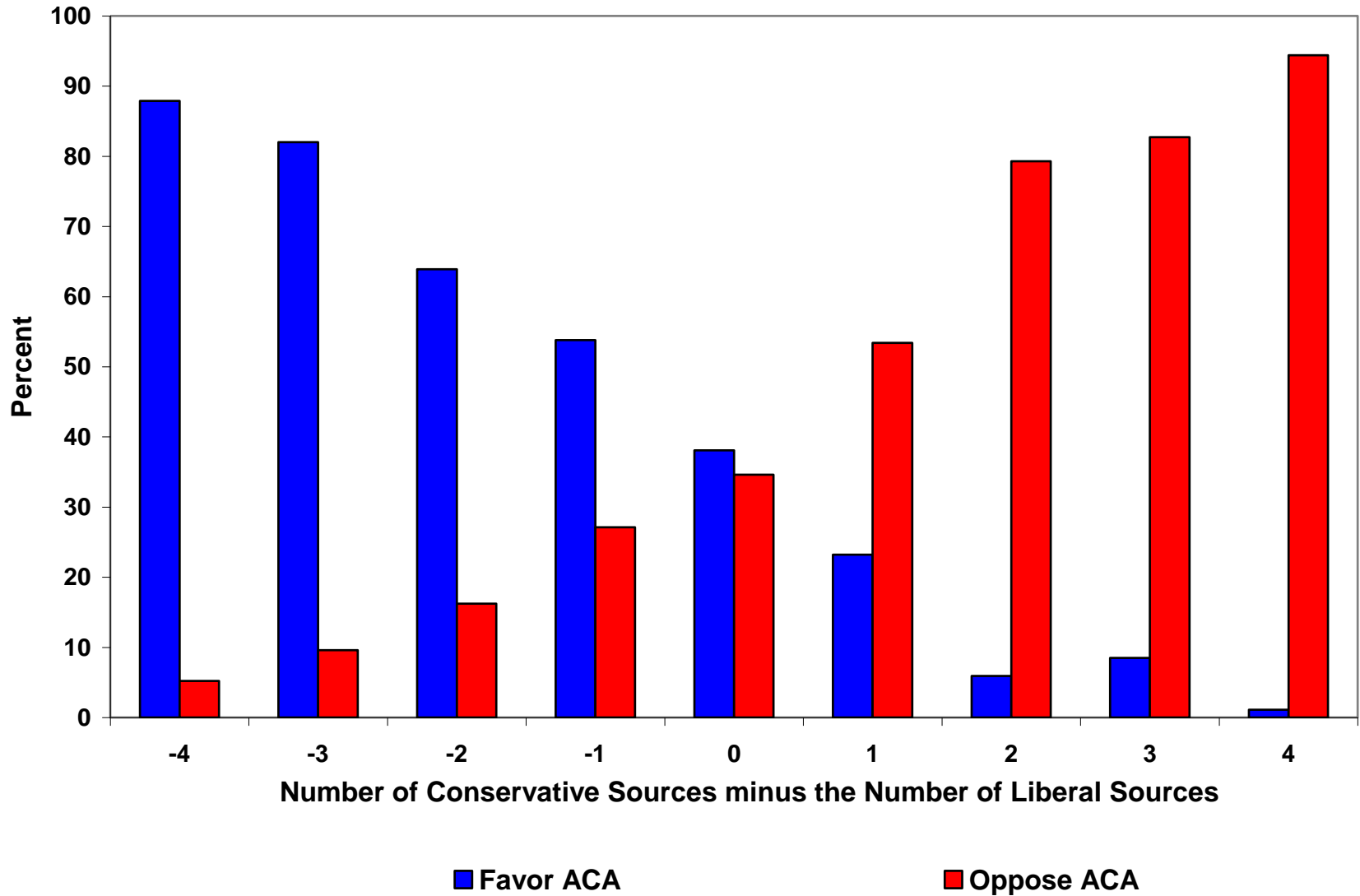
Figure 3A Belief in Human-Induced Climate Change and ACA "Death Panels"



3B Beliefs About the Economy and the Administration's Racial Bias



4A Opinions on Obamacare



4A Opinions on Gun Control

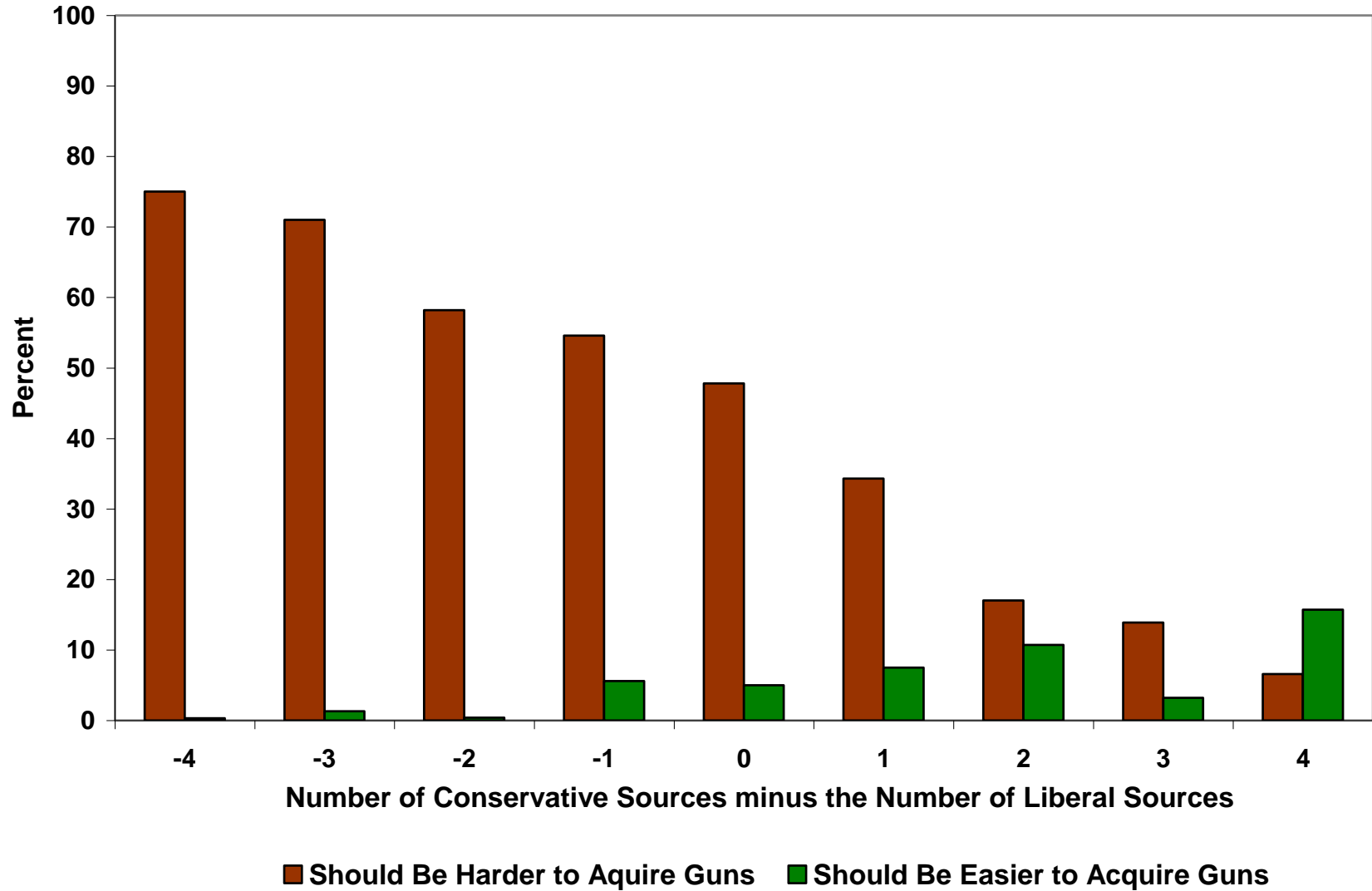


Table 4. Difference in Probability of Holding Selected Opinions and Beliefs

| | <i>Conservative</i> | | <i>Liberal</i> | | <i>Mainstream</i> | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------|----------|
| | No controls | Controls | No controls | Controls | No controls | Controls |
| Approve of Obama's job performance | -.65 | -.34 | .52 | (.12) | .17 | (.01) |
| Obama is an extreme liberal | .67 | .34 | -.27 | -.10 | -.10 | (-.02) |
| Obama is foreign born | .33 | (-.02) | -.28 | -.09 | (.03) | (.03) |
| Obama is Muslim | .25 | (-.06) | -.25 | -.12 | (.01) | .06 |
| Human induced climate change | -.54 | -.30 | .31 | .21 | .11 | .08 |
| ACA has "death panels" | .44 | .16 | -.33 | -.22 | -.13 | -.10 |
| Economy worse over past year | .49 | .11 | -.34 | -.17 | (.05) | (.02) |
| Administration favors blacks | .50 | .11 | -.24 | -.13 | -.06 | (.04) |
| Support the ACA | -.65 | -.16 | .44 | .12 | .23 | .10 |
| Favor stricter gun control | -.46 | -.17 | .26 | (.03) | .15 | .06 |

Note: Entries are based on logit equations estimating the probability of holding each opinion or belief and indicate the difference in probability of holding an opinion or belief between the least (0) and most (maximum of 4) use of each type of media with the other variables set at their mean values. Estimates based on coefficients below the .05 level of statistical significance are in parentheses.

Table 5. Polarizing Effects of Partisan Media Use, Controlling for Selective Exposure

*Difference Between Respondents at -4 and +4 on the Net
Partisan Media Scale*

| | No Controls | Controls |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Approve of Obama's job performance | -.97 | -.47 |
| Human induced climate change | -.76 | -.44 |
| Support the ACA | -.87 | -.42 |
| Obama is an extreme liberal | .84 | .39 |
| ACA has "death panels" | .74 | .34 |
| Economy worse over past year | .74 | .27 |
| Favor stricter gun control | .68 | .26 |
| Administration favors blacks | .76 | .16 |
| Obama is Muslim | .51 | .05 |
| Obama is foreign born | .52 | (.03) |

Figure 5 Net Partisan Media Use and Differences in Thermometer Ratings of the Presidential Candidates and the Parties in 2012

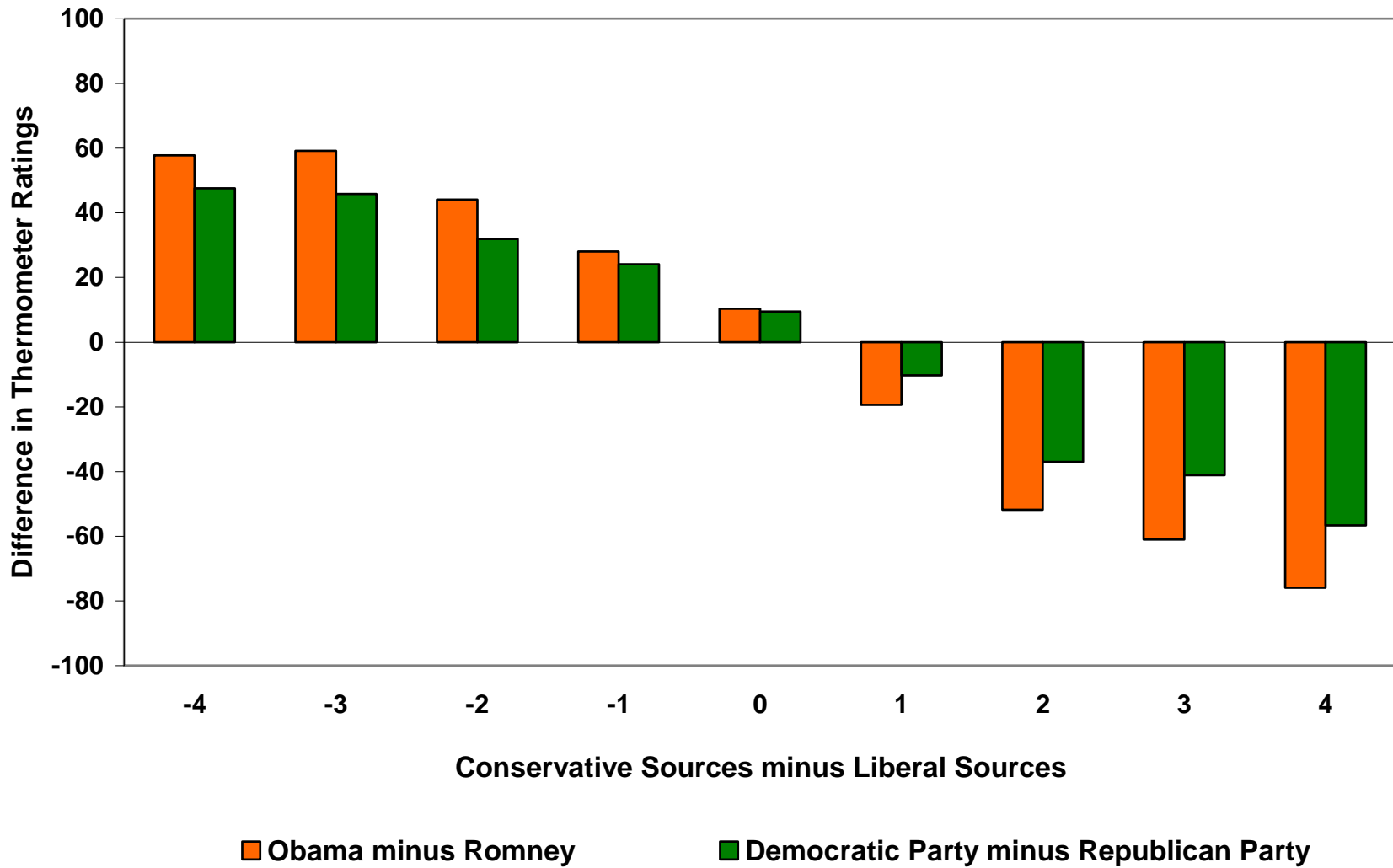


Table 6. Media Bias and Polarized Net Thermometer Ratings of Obama and Romney and the Political Parties

| | Obama minus Romney (Average=5.4°) | | Democratic Party minus Republican Party (Average=6.3°) | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| | <i>No Controls</i> | <i>Controls</i> | <i>No Controls</i> | <i>Controls</i> |
| <i>Conservative Sources</i> | | | | |
| Mark Levin | -78.9 | -10.9 | -53.8 | (0.2) |
| Sean Hannity | -78.2 | -14.2 | -57.3 | -4.8 |
| Mike Huckabee | -77.5 | -8.3 | -62.3 | -6.5 |
| Glenn Beck | -71.2 | -6.3 | -55.4 | (-3.1) |
| Bret Baier | -70.8 | -8.3 | -53.5 | (-3.3) |
| Bill O'Reilly | -70.3 | -10.9 | -53.8 | -6.0 |
| Greta Van Susteren | -68.5 | -12.4 | -53.2 | -8.1 |
| Rush Limbaugh | -68.5 | -7.4 | -50.0 | (-0.4) |
| Michael Savage | -63.3 | (-5.9) | -47.8 | (-2.5) |
| Laura Ingraham | -61.2 | -8.1 | -47.8 | -6.6 |
| Fox News | -55.7 | -8.2 | -42.3 | -3.6 |
| Drudge Report | -51.9 | (-1.3) | -38.2 | (2.6) |
| <i>Wall Street Journal</i> | -15.6 | (-1.4) | -13.8 | (-1.2) |
| Any | -55.5 | -8.5 | -42.0 | -3.5 |

| | Obama minus Romney | | Democratic Party minus Republican Party | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------|--|--------|
| <i>Liberal Sources</i> | | | | |
| Chris Matthews | 52.9 | (-1.6) | 42.1 | (1.8) |
| Jon Stewart | 46.0 | (-2.4) | 36.0 | (-1.1) |
| Stephen Colbert | 39.8 | -3.8 | 30.5 | (-2.5) |
| <i>New York Times</i> | 37.2 | (-0.0) | 27.6 | (0.1) |
| NPR | 34.3 | (-1.6) | 25.7 | (-1.5) |
| Huffington Post | 29.7 | -4.0 | 20.8 | -4.5 |
| Frontline | 28.4 | (-0.2) | 24.2 | (1.9) |
| Anderson Cooper | 24.2 | (-2.3) | 19.6 | (-1.9) |
| CNN | 22.4 | 4.1 | 13.0 | (-1.0) |
| <i>Washington Post</i> | 18.7 | (-0.2) | 12.6 | (-0.1) |
| MSNBC | 15.0 | 3.6 | 8.2 | (0.1) |
| Any | 30.4 | (-1.4) | 22.2 | -2.4 |

Figure 6 Media Use and Prediction that Romney Will Defeat Obama

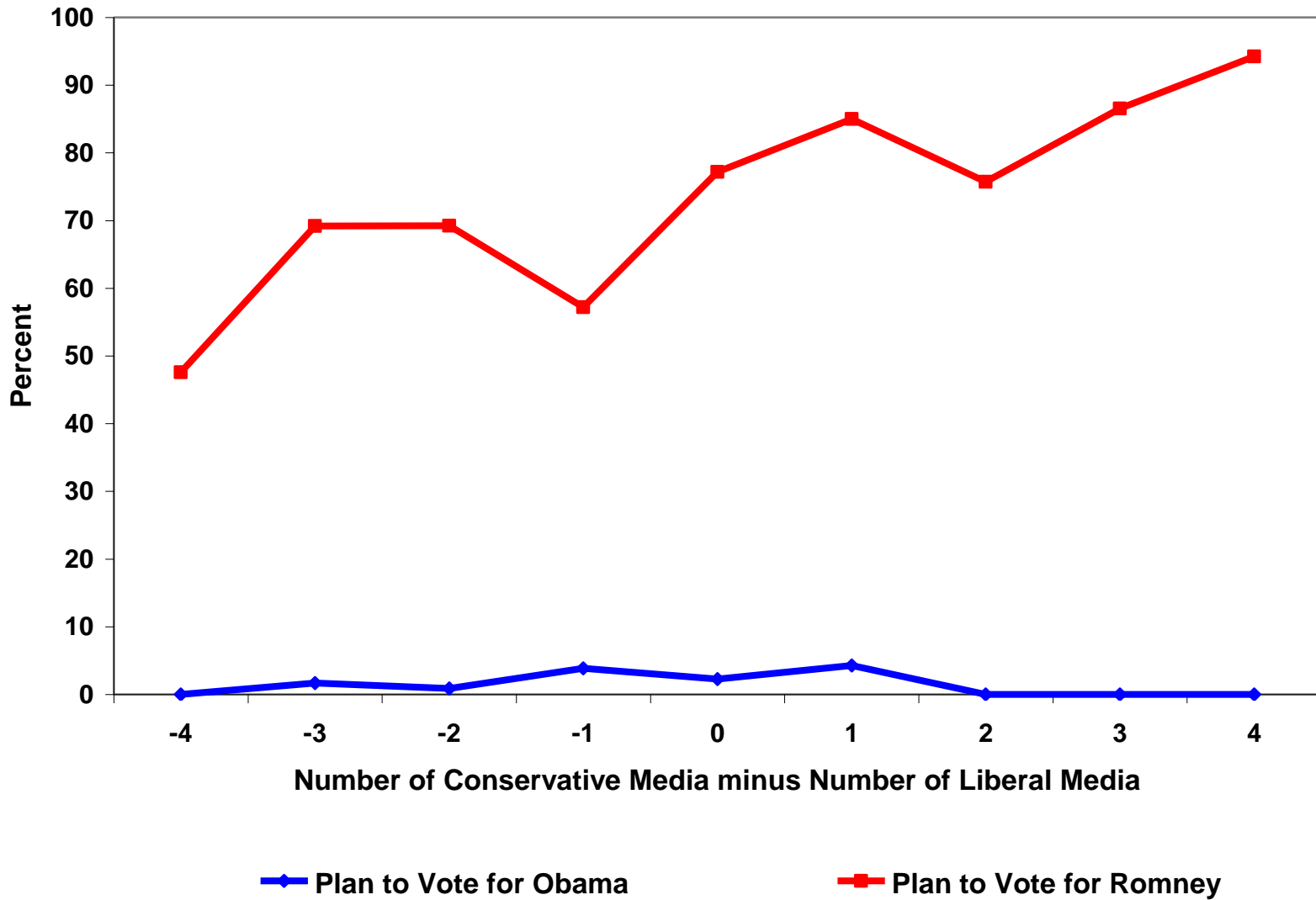


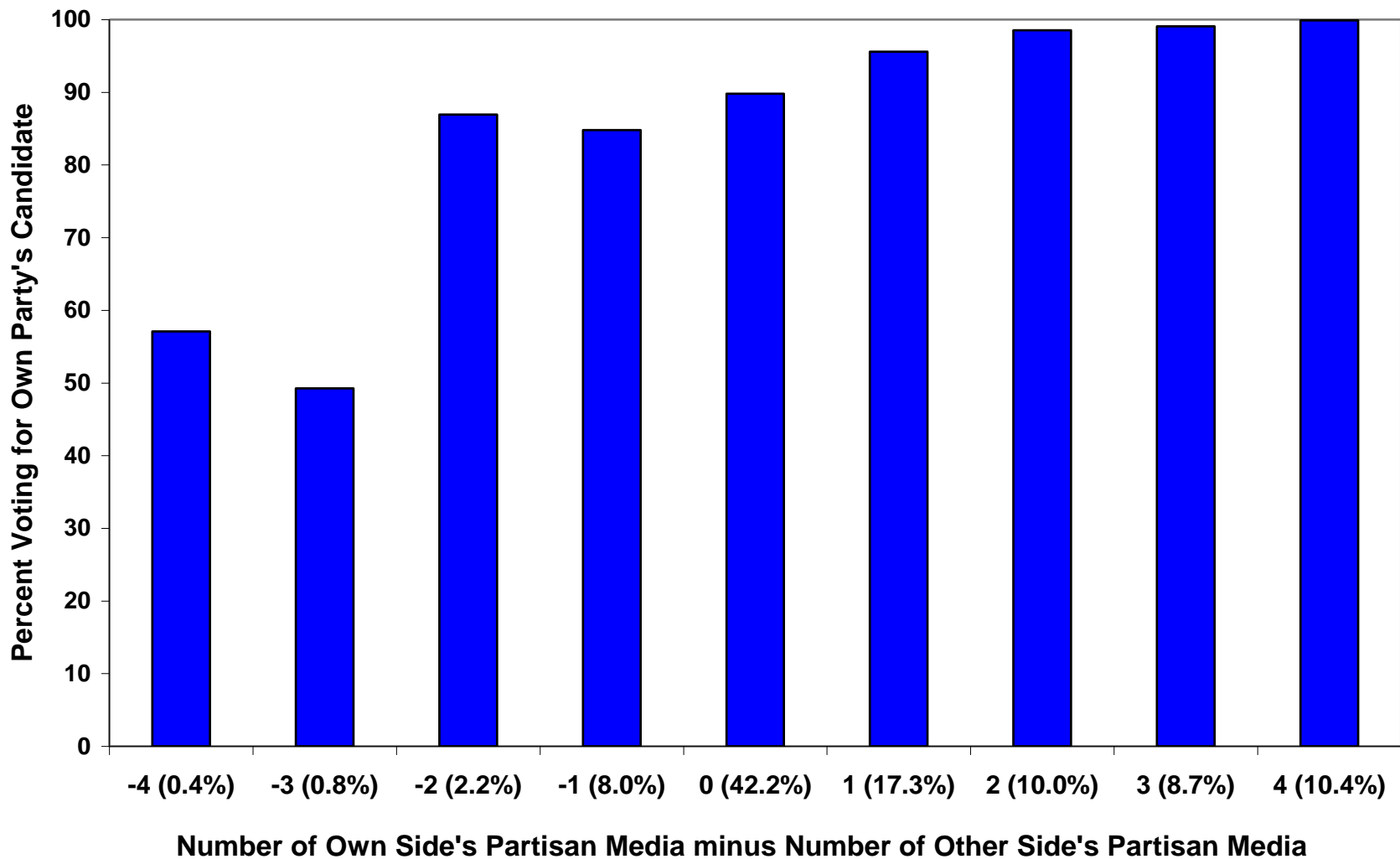
Table 7. Logit Models of Prediction of a Romney Victory

| | Coefficient | Robust S.E. | Coefficient | Robust S.E. |
|--|-------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Media use index (-4 to 4) | .26*** | .05 | .12* | .05 |
| Party ID (7-point scale) | .23*** | .05 | .06 | .06 |
| Plan to vote for Romney | 3.79*** | .28 | 1.75*** | .36 |
| Obama-Romney thermometer difference | | | -2.78*** | .36 |
| Constant | 4.11*** | .20 | 2.45*** | .29 |
| Pseudo R ² | .54 | | .57 | |
| Percent correctly predicted (Null= 64.3) | 87.0 | | 87.3 | |
| Number of cases | 3568 | | 3568 | |

Note: the dependent variable is 1 if the respondent predicted a Romney victory, 0 otherwise; the thermometer difference has been divided by 100 to make the coefficient easier to read.

*p<.05; ***p<.001.

Figure 7 Partisan Media Use and Party Loyalty in the Presidential Election



Note: The proportion of voters in each category is in parentheses.