# WHAT MOVES PARTISANSHIP?
## The Effects of Geographic Relocation on Party Identification

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### Abstract

In this paper, we assess the impact of geographic relocation on partisan identification. In particular, we hypothesize that when new social environments expose individuals to information about politics that conflicts with their partisan predispositions, which were reinforced by their previous environment, they are more likely to change their partisan identification. We evaluate this hypothesis using data from a three wave panel study in which 1135 respondents are interviewed for the last time seventeen years after the initial interview, giving the environment to which they moved time to convert them. We find support for this perspective even though the data that we use, if anything, make it less likely that we would observe this relationship. We argue that this fact makes the finding particularly compelling.

Probably no aspect of political behavior has been studied as much as partisan identification. Although it was the focus of attention for political scientists long before "the Michigan school" made its mark, party identification attained its full-flowering status as a disciplinary phenomenon once the SRC/CPS data sets began to provide biennial grist for the discipline's behavioral mill. Although virtually no empirical stone has been left unturned in the on-going obsession with explaining why people align themselves with the parties they choose, over the now nearly half-century that political scientists have been crunching the NES data several findings have emerged as the primary thruways for traversing this subfield.

Thus for the first couple of decades of "the Michigan studies" countless investigations assumed the stability of individual (micro) partisanship, based on the original findings of *The American Voter*. The so-called "revisionist" theory of party ID—i.e., that individual partisanship is <u>not</u> "fixed for life", but instead responds to short-term stimuli—achieved its initial foothold in the mid-1970s, however, and since that time the debate over the issue has been on-going. Fiorina's (1981) work is among the most influential of the early works in this area, emphasizing voters' (on-going) retrospective, issue-based evaluations of the parties in shaping voting behavior. More recently, Franklin (1992) has found that partisan "learning" takes place across the life cycle, influenced especially by partisan issue positions. Bowler and Lanoue (1996) arrive at a similar conclusion, albeit for different reasons, finding that systemic changes (in their case, the rise to prominence of a new political party on the Canadian electoral scene) induce individual reassessments of past, partisan loyalties. Carmines and Stanley (1992) emphasize the increasing influence of ideology—gradually supplanting the effects of

group membership—on party ID in accounting for the recent rise of the Republican party: "It is not that the proportion of conservatives has sharply increased; the increase has actually been quite modest.  But what has changed is the connection between ideology and partisanship.  Once loosely connected, ideology and partisan ship are now much more tightly bound together…" (236)  Finally and most recently, Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson's masterwork, *The Macro Polity* (2002), authoritatively stakes a claim for the revisionist school's emphasis on evolving partisan attitudes in response to changing political-electoral conditions while simultaneously salvaging some of *The American Voter*'s original emphasis on the stability of party identification.

At the same time that the revisionist school has been mounting its case, however, the traditionalist perspective has continued to find support among scholars mining this particular, empirical vein.  Green and Palmquist (1994), for example, claim that only measurement error—and not the kinds of short-term political forces that the revisionist school identifies as important—causes party ID to appear unstable over time.  Also, as mentioned above, Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson (2000) find that while "macropartisanship" is subject to short-lived influences flowing from the parties' performances while in office there are also long-term, cumulative effects that flow from those same party differences; so that macropartisanship is both changeable and enduring at the same time.  The key to that seemingly contradictory phenomenon resides in the different ways that micro- and macro-level partisan changes are measured.  Change at the individual level is measured relative to the mean level of partisanship, and thus represents "personal circumstances rather than national forces."  Gauging fluctuations in partisanship at the systemic level, on the other hand, focus not on change relative to the

mean but rather on change in the mean itself. And the variance for the latter is much

smaller in magnitude than is the variance for the former, so that,

> "'Small' micro movement … is quite consistent with the 'large' macro
> movement we observe…. Thus, the perceived inconsistency between
> macro-level movement and relative stability at the micro level is a
> statistical illusion. The fact of macro-level movement should not
> challenge the view that party identification is highly stable at the
> individual level." (145)

Considered in that light, much of the extant literature on this question is taken up

with considering which factors in particular shape partisan affiliation. Though certain

variables appear fairly consistently across many of the studies—presidential approval,

"rally" effects, and economic conditions (whether of the "pocketbook" or "sociotropic"

variety), to name few—there may be other, more idiosyncratic factors that exercise

relatively little influence at any particular time but that can have notable impacts when

aggregated across time.

The work of Bowler and Lanoue (1996), cited above, points us toward one, such

dynamic agent when it identifies systemic change as encouraging people to reassess their

partisan loyalties. Although the U.S. has not recently experienced the addition of a

significant, third-party movement *a la* the appearance of Canada's Reform Party, the

resurgence of the Republican Party beginning in the late 1960s may be seen as an

electoral development of a similar nature. The comparison is strengthened when the

focus is narrowed to a consideration of the U.S. South only. With the strengthening of

the Northern-liberal contingent of the Democrat party in Congress, serving to alienate an

electorate increasingly skittish about the path the nation seemed to be following; the

rapidly increasing influence of the South as a destination for industrial workers displaced

from the old Rustbelt of the Midwest; the creeping conservatism (at least of the social variety) that came to characterize so much of the country during the last quarter of the twentieth century; and the loosening of electoral ties among certain, key constituencies of the New Deal coalition, made possible by the insurgent presidential candidacy of Alabama's George Wallace; the political deck was shuffled in such a way that significant electoral change was in the cards.

The unique role played by the Old South in shaping American electoral history cannot be overstated. For decades, political scientists have noted the distinctive traits exhibited by the states that lay to the south of the Mason-Dixon line. Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1949) and Elazar's *American Federalism: A View from the States* (1966, plus subsequent editions) are only the most prominent of a number of works that have pointed out that the South long has been noted for its particular contributions to American electoral politics. Of greatest interest to us here is the role that the South has played in transforming the nature of American politics during the latter part of the twentieth century. For decades, of course, the South insisted on denying its growing, ideological compatibility with an evolving party of Lincoln. With the maturing of the reconstituted GOP of Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan, however, the South gradually assumed its current role as the base for Republican control over national (particularly presidential) politics (see especially the Blacks' *Politics and Society in the South*, 1987; and, more recently, Jackson and Carsey, 1999a, 1999b).

The particular dynamics of that transformation, however, are not yet as obvious as its macro-level effects. One question that merits further analysis concerns the role of partisan conversion in establishing the newly Solid <u>Republican</u> South. Exactly how did

the Confederacy change from being the land of the "yellow dog" Democrats to being the region comprising the most solidly "red" states (as opposed, for example, to the bi-coastal "blue" states of Democratic strength)? Underlying that issue is a somewhat broader question concerning the "portability" of partisanship: Do people take their party ID with them when they move somewhere with decidedly different electoral demographics? Or does the political culture of the new place of residence serve as a kind of surrogate for the "systemic change" that Bowler and Lanoue (1996) discuss, affording an opportunity for voters to reassess their partisan leanings? How often, in other words, are voters "converted" to a new party when they are immersed in a political culture significantly different from their previous environment?

**Geographic Relocation and Partisan Change?**

Franklin (1992) writes of the importance of issue evaluations for prompting changes in party ID, concluding that "partisan learning" does not stop with the socializing influence of the parents. Could, however, the context in which learning about issues takes place influence individuals' partisanship? More specifically, could geographic relocation be a part (albeit an episodic one) of such a process of on-going, social learning? With particular regard to the South, for example, Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson (2002) conclude that the region's shift to Republicanism has been seen mostly among the youngest cohorts, with relatively little in the way of conversions among older partisans. Given the considerable in-migration of Northerners (from the Midwest, in particular) to the South during the last quarter of the twentieth century, the question naturally arises as

6

to whether that region's particularly strong form of conservatism—which, as already has been noted, increasingly aligned itself with the Grand Old Party (see Carmines and Stanley, 1996) during that same time period—was sufficiently compelling to convert many of those immigrants from Democratic to Republican affiliation.

The work of Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) is particularly instructive in this context. Their discussion of the importance of social structure for partisan dynamics does not predict that immersion in a new culture deterministically results in conversion to the new set of beliefs. Thus, for example, their work does not assume that Northerners who move to the South automatically will convert to the Republican Party. Rather, the likelihood of such a conversion is probabilistically determined, with the prospect of switching parties increasing: (a) in proportion to the degree of "bias" (here, GOP strength); and/or (b) as the dissonant newcomer is forced to encounter her/his own being out of synch with the dominant, local culture—which is more likely to occur during times of political ferment: "[I]n politically tumultuous times—times during which people's lives are disrupted by the external world of politics—disagreement should increase in frequency relative to agreement, and thus we should expect that social interaction might become an important engine driving the dynamic of partisan preference." (55)

Looking at those two sets of conditions, expectations that Northern and Midwestern Democrats who relocated to the South, and other geographic areas characterized by Republican electoral strength, might well have switched parties should be doubly strong. First, the new environment in which they found themselves was becoming increasingly homogenous in a political sense, as the solid Republican South became more settled. Second, the 1960s through 1980s were marked by considerable

political upheaval in the U.S., and perhaps nowhere more than in the South. Hence, social communication theory gives good reason to expect a noticeable degree of party switching as Northern and Midwestern Democrats relocated to the South, as well as other bastions of Republicanism.

To follow the logic of this context driven hypothesis, consider the following example in which a Democrat from a "rust-belt" community flees scarce economic opportunities in her state in search of better employment in the "sun-belt." Upon arriving in her new home, not only will she face considerably different weather, but she will also live in a considerably different, and more Republican, social environment. In this environment, no doubt, she will be more likely to be exposed to information implying the superiority of Republican values and policy priorities to those of the Democratic Party than she would have been if she remained in her former community. Moreover, when she seeks new information to ascertain whether her preexisting beliefs were wrong, she will be more likely to learn that they were than she would have been if she had remained in her former community. As the ratio of Republicans to Democrats in her new community increases, both the frequency with which she is confronted with inconsistent messages, and the frequency with which she encounters information that reinforces the inferiority of her preexisting beliefs, increases. In summary, based on the convincing case built by Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) that individuals' beliefs are influenced by the context of their social environment, we propose that geographic relocation from a community in which one's party identification is in the majority to a community in which one's partisanship is in the minority triggers changes in one's partisanship.

**Data and Methods**

To assess whether moving to rival political environments causes individuals to change their partisan identification, we examined data from a three-wave panel study (Jennings, Markus, and Niemi 1991) on political socialization. This study contains the best data available for testing the rivalry hypothesis because it provides information on both respondents' partisan identification and on the states in which respondents resided over a period of almost two decades. For this study, a national sample of 1669 high school seniors was interviewed in 1965.[1] These respondents were then re-interviewed in 1973 (with a retention rate of 80.8%) and 1982 (with a retention rate of 60.0%) (Jennings, Markus, and Niemi 1991).

Although this data contains good information about respondents' partisanship and places of residence, using it to assess partisan identification change prohibits us from modeling this phenomenon in the manner of past studies (e.g., Fiorina 1982; Franklin 1992). These studies have employed two staged models of respondents' partisanship, analyzing partisanship in time *t* as a function of exogenous factors and respondents' partisanship in time *t-1* (e.g., Fiorina 1982; Franklin 1992), a variable treated as endogenous to the exogenous variables in the model at time *t*. Therefore, their authors regressed partisanship in the earlier panel on a set of independent variables and used the predicted values as measures of partisanship in *t-1* in the second stage model. We cannot employ this modeling strategy in this paper, however, because the available data, which is the only available data of which we know that contains information on place of

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[1] Parents of these respondents were also interviewed. In this paper, we examine only the responses of the students, leaving analysis of partisan identification change of their parents for future research.

residence over a sufficient period of time, does not include the independent variables

necessary for the first stage models.[2]

Given this problem, rather than modeling partisan identification, we model

whether or not individuals expressed a different partisan identification in 1982 than they

did in 1965. That is, rather than modeling partisan identification using the traditional

seven-point scale to assess why individuals change their partisanship, we model actual

changes in partisan identification. As of 1982, did respondents change their partisan

identification from what it was in 1965? We focus on 1965-1982 change because the

nearly two-decade gap between interviews provides sufficient time for change to occur.

Therefore, if we do not observe change in respondents who moved to starkly different

political environments, and lived there over a great many years, then we should not

expect to find support for the rival hypothesis under any circumstances.[3]

One obvious problem with this modeling strategy is that we cannot control for

partisanship in the previous period by including a lagged term for partisanship. This is a

problem if identifiers of one party were more/less likely to switch identifications than

identifiers of the other party and/or independents. Therefore, we elect to model only

whether or not Democratic identifiers in 1965 had changed their partisan identification by

1982. We believe that doing so allows us to sidestep the need to control for partisan

identification in the previous period, because all of the respondents in the model are of

the same party in this period. Exclusive focus on Democratic identifiers makes sense for

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[2] For example, although a variable allowing us to measure retrospective economic evaluations is available in the 1982 data, no such variable is available in the 1965 or 1973 data.

[3] This is true as long as our focus is on states as the social environment in which individuals live. In fact, different political environments exist within states. An individual moving from San Francisco to Orange County, CA or from Boulder, CO to Colorado Springs, CO, for example, is probably as likely to encounter different political environments as a person moving from Massachusetts to Arizona.

other reasons as well. First, of the 1126 respondents who answered the partisan identification questions in 1982, only 350 were Republicans. This small sample size makes inference uncertain, especially after other observations are lost because of missing data. Second, this sample size problem is also present for 1965 independent identifiers, making analysis of their behavior similarly impractical. Third, the theoretical impetus of this paper is largely the Democratic loss of, and Republican gain in, identifiers in the electorate as a whole. In addition to focusing our analysis on 1965 Democratic identifiers, we focused our analysis only on white respondents, because, only one of the African American respondents who identified themselves as Democrats in 1965 who was re-interviewed in 1982 indicated that s/he had changed partisanship.

The dependent variable for the analysis is a nominal variable that takes on the value of 0 if the respondent was a Democratic identifier in 1965 who remained so in 1982, 1 if s/he indicated that s/he was an independent in 1982, and 2 if s/he indicated that she was a Republican in 1982. We used the traditional seven-point partisan identification variable to construct this measure. Recall that only white Democratic identifiers from the 1965 are included in the analysis. We coded individuals indicating that they were "strong," "weak," and "independent" Democrats as 0, "independent" independents as 1, and individuals indicating that they were "strong," "weak" and "independent" Republicans as 2. Since the dependent variable is nominal, we employ the multinomial logit estimator to model it.

To construct variables to assess the rivalry hypothesis, we employed Erikson, Wright and McIver's (1993) measure of state partisanship, subtracting the percentage of Republicans in the state in which the respondent grew up from the percentage of

Republicans in the state in which the respondent resided in 1982. If the respondent lived in the same state, the measure equals 0. If the respondent lived in a state in 1982 that was more Republican than the one in which s/he grew up, then his/her observation is positive; if, in 1982, s/he lived in a state with a lower percentage of Republicans than the state in which s/he grew up, then his/her observation is negative. The higher (lower) the value that this Republican difference variable takes on, the more (less) exposed the individual, who indicated that s/he was a Democrat in 1965, is to information that characterizes Republican values and policies in a favorable light vis-à-vis Democratic values and policies in 1982.

A simplistic view of this variable is that it should be positively and significantly related to the probability of a change to Republican identification given the rivalry hypothesis. However, this variable provides no information about the amount of time respondents lived in the states to which they moved. Thus far, we have not considered the impact of the duration of residence on partisan change. However, there is no reason to expect that even individuals who are most prone to partisan conversion will encounter information leading them to change their identification overnight. More realistically, individuals will become more likely to change their opinions the longer they reside in rivalrous political environments. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) do not provide theoretical guidance concerning how long conversion should take. Realistically, it will vary across individuals. Some individuals, no doubt, will never convert. For the sake of simplicity, we assume that the longer an individual lives in a political environment that rivals the one s/he moved from, the more likely she will be converted. This assumption suggests a multiplicative relationship between moving to a politically rivalrous environment and the

length of time one lives there on partisan identification. Specifically, we expect that Democratic identifiers in 1965 who move to Republican states will be more likely to identify as Republicans in 1982 as the degree of Republican presence in the state to which they move increases and the length of time they live in such states increases. Therefore, we create a variable that is the interaction between the Republican difference variable and a variable measuring the number of years individuals resided in the states to which they moved.[4] If the rivalry hypothesis is correct, this variable should be positively and significantly related to the changing partisan affiliation to the Republican Party. We test this hypothesis on individuals who switched to an independent identification based on the possibility that information biased toward Republican values and policies may not be enough to change Democrats into Republicans but still may lead them into the independent category.

In assessing the rivalry hypothesis, we also control for other factors that have been shown to affect partisan identification change. Although the study does not ask respondents to evaluate the performance of the incumbent party, proscribing a test of the retrospective voting hypothesis (Fiorina 1982), it does include a question asking respondents about whether their life had gone better, worse, or about the same as they expected it to go since the previous interview. Respondents who answered better or worse were asked for more detail. Some respondents volunteered that some element of their personal financial/economic situation led them to state that their life had been worse than they had expected. Using these responses, I created a dummy variable assuming the value

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[4] Respondents were asked to name the states in which they lived since last study and provide the number of years in which they resided there. I used responses to these questions to construct the length of time variable, which is measured in years, and is the total number of years the respondent lived in the state in which they resided in 1982 if it was different from the state in which they grew up.

of 1 if the respondent indicated that a negative element of their finances/economic situation lead them to evaluate that their life was worse than they expected; 0 otherwise. Although this question is not a direct test of the retrospective hypothesis because it does not ask respondents to assess the incumbent president's performance, it serves as strong test of the hypothesis. If individuals who volunteer that their economic situation has worsened are more likely to switch identifications, connecting the unsatisfactory state of their life to the incumbent without prompting, then the retrospective hypothesis would receive strong support. Given that the White House was controlled by the Republican party in 1982, then, Democratic identifiers who view their personal financial/economic system as being poor should be negatively and significantly related to change toward the Republican party if this strong test of the retrospective hypothesis is to receive support.[5]

Finally, we control for the impact of several demographic variables on party identification change. First, we control for the level of education respondents obtained. This variable is ordinal, taking on the value of 1 if the respondent's highest level of education achievement was high school or lower, 2 if the highest level was some college, and 3 if the respondent had college degree or higher. We expect that higher levels of education fortify individuals against arguments critical of their predispositions, making them less like to change partisanship. Therefore, we expect this variable to be negatively and significantly related to both Republican and independent identification change. Second, we control for respondents' income. This variable is measured by a scale ranging from 1 to 22 with higher values representing higher incomes. Given the propensity of higher income individuals, holding all other factors constant, to support Republicans, we

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[5] In reality, respondents in 1982 may blame Carter for their plight. Without assessments of specific individuals, it is impossible to assess how this variable should relate to party identification change.

expect this variable to be positively and significantly related to changes to Republican identification. We have no hypothesis about its relationship to change to independent identification. Finally, we include a dummy variable to control for gender (1=male), expecting that men will be more likely to change to Republican identification. If this expectation is correct, then this variable will be positively and significantly related to the Republican identification change; we have no expectation concerning this variable's relationship to independent identification change.

**Findings**

Table 1 presents the estimated coefficients and standard errors for a multinomial logit model of partisan identification change in 1982 for respondents who indicated that they were Democrats in 1965. The statistically significant chi-squared test allows us to reject the null hypothesis that all of the independent variables together have no impact on partisan identification change among Democrats from 1965 to 1982. The model correctly predicts 64.23% of the respondents' behavior correctly, for a 9.54% reduction of error over the null model of always predicting the modal category of no partisan identification change. The analysis supports our rivalry hypothesis that partisans who move to political environments in which the prevailing political identification differs from their identification are more likely to switch to the prevailing identification.

As is shown by the positive and significant coefficient for the Republican difference-years of residence interaction variable in Table 1, when Democrats moved to states whose populations had a higher percentage of Republicans than the states in which

they grew up, they were significantly more likely to switch their partisan identification to the Republican Party as the amount of time of their residence in these states increased. To assess the substantive impact of this variable on the probability that Democratic identifiers in 1965 identified themselves as Republicans in 1982, we ran a series of simulations of the likelihood that respondents indicated that they were Republicans in 1982.[6] First we calculated a baseline probability that respondents switched their partisanship to the Republican Party in 1982. This baseline was derived by calculating the probability that the model expects a respondent to switch to Republican partisanship who has mean values of all of the continuous independent variables and modal values of the ordinal and dichotomous variables.[7] This baseline figure is .29. We show the impact of moving on Republican identification change by adjusting the values of the Republican difference and years of residence variables from the values that produced this baseline. First, we increase the Republican difference by one standard deviation of the variable's value, from a mean difference of .0003 to a difference of 4.329. This adjustment leads the model to expect a .30 probability that respondents will become Republican identifiers, a difference of only 1%. This change, however, greatly understates the impact of moving on a switch to Republican identification. To see why this is the case, consider the following facts. The coefficient for the interaction variable is positive; therefore, in increasing the value of the interaction term by increasing the value of the Republican difference variable, the probability of change to the Republican Party increases. However, because the coefficient for the stand alone Republican difference variable,

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[6] We ran these simulations using CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003; King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000).

[7] These baseline values for the gender and educational attainment variables were "female" and "high school or less" respectively. The value of the income variable is "15," or $33,000-$35,999 even though the mean value of income is 14.5, since no respondent could have a value of 14.5.

16

which represents the impact of the Republican difference variable when the number of years respondents have lived in the state to which they moved equals 0, is negative, increasing this variable roughly offsets the increase in probability that occurs because of the greater value of the interaction variable, resulting in only a 1% increase. To more accurately demonstrate the impact of moving on partisanship, we also calculate the probability that respondents switched partisanship immediately after moving to their place of residence at which point they lived there for 0 years when the Republican difference variable is increased by one standard deviation. This change in the number of years respondents lived in the state to which they moved is reduced from 6.63 years (roughly six and a half years), the mean value of the variable that is used in the simulations producing the .30 probability of change to Republican identification given a standard deviation increase in the Republican difference variable. Given these conditions—the impact of the Republican difference variable immediately after the respondent moved when s/he essentially lived there for 0 years—the model predicts a .22 probability of a switch to Republican identification, or an 8% difference from the probability of switching after living in the state for just over six and a half years. In other words, Democrats who move to a new state with a 4.329% higher share of Republican identifiers in the electorate who lived there for six and a half years were 30% likely to become Republicans, holding all other factors constant. However, Democratic identifiers who moved to such a state were only 22% likely to call themselves Republicans the next day (when they essentially lived there for 0 years), an 8% difference from the 30% probability if they lived in the new state for 6.63 years. We believe that these simulations demonstrate a sizeable effect of relocation on partisanship given that relocation brings

17

individuals to social environments where the prevailing political winds blow against their preexisting partisan identifications.

The results of the model also provide support for some of our expectations concerning the other variables in the model. The positive and significant coefficient for the gender variable in Table 1 demonstrates that men are more likely to change their identification to the Republican Party than women. Table 2 shows that the model predicts that a change in the baseline value of gender from female to male leads to an increase in the probability of Republican identification from .29 to .42. Additionally, the positive and significant coefficient for income in Table 1 shows that individuals whose families had higher incomes were more likely to become Republicans. Specifically, Table 2 shows that individuals whose families made $50,000-$59,999 (compared to the $33,000-$33,999 baseline) before taxes were 7% more likely to become Republicans (a .37 probability compared to the .29 baseline), whereas individuals whose families grossed $21,000-$21,999 were 6% less likely to become Republicans relative to the baseline. Finally, although the model does not confirm the strong restrospective voting hypothesis in that the coefficient for the retrospective voting variable is not negative and significant, as shown in Table 1, higher levels of education make respondents less likely to change their partisan identification (p<.1).

**Discussion**

In summary, we observed that Democrats who moved to social environments in which their predispositions met greater Republican opposition than in the environments

in which they grew up were more likely to become Republicans. We believe that these results provide strong support for our hypothesis that the social environment in which individuals live affects their partisanship. Not only do we observe a positive and significant relationship between partisan change and the interaction term, as the hypothesis predicts, but we observe this relationship at a relatively noisy level of the environment in which respondents live. To understand this point, consider that individuals live in neighborhoods, towns/cities, counties, states and nations. At each level, there is likely to be a different degree of similarity in the partisan leanings of one's peers. In particular, it strikes us that the level of similarity, and therefore the consistency with which individuals confront consistent partisan messages, is likely to be inversely proportional to the size of their place of residence. For example, an individual's neighborhood is more likely to be similar than his town, than his county, than his state, than his country. At the state level, the smallest level of social environment for which we have data, respondents are less likely to receive consistent partisan information than they are at the local level, making it less that this environment will influence their partisanship. That we observed a significant relationship between our interaction term and the probability of identification change to the Republican Party at this level of respondents' environments, and that this relationship produces a sizeable change in this probability, we believe doubly emphasizes the importance of geographic relocation on partisanship. We believe that if data on respondents' social environment at lower levels of geography were available, we would observe even stronger effects on partisan identification change.

Moreover, we believe that tying Huckfeldt and Sprague's (1995) emphasis on social environment to geographic mobility has great promise for explaining the Republican ascension in national politics over the last thirty-plus years. Consider that the large scale relocation of the U.S. population from Midwestern "rust-belt" and New England states that were once New Deal strongholds (see Miller and Schofield 2003) to the South and West occurred concomitantly with the Republican Party's increased fortunes in national elections, especially in these regions. Without an understanding of how the new social environments which transplants confronted in these states, it is hard to understand the Republican's continued, and indeed heightened, success in these states. Why did these states not become more Democratic if large numbers of individuals moved to them from states that were primarily Democratic?[8] A focus on the impact of the social environment on transplants, however, would predict that many of these transplants would be converted to the increasingly dominant, Republican, partisan perspective of the "sun-belt" region. Our findings are consistent with this interpretation.

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[8] We recognize that we may be committing an ecological fallacy in making this argument. It may be that the transplants, for some reason, were disproportionately Republican in their partisan preferences.

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**Table 1.** Multinomial Logit Model of Partisan Identification Change: Democratic Change from 1965 to 1982

| Variable | Dem. Switch to Ind. Identification | Dem. Switch to Rep. Identification |
|---|---|---|
| Constant | -2.219 (.798) | -1.742 (.568) |
| Republican Difference between Current vs. Former State | -.092 (.081) | -.098 (.051) |
| Years of Residence in Current State | .051 (.044) | .001 (.030) |
| Republican Diff. in Current vs. Former State **X** Years Lived in Current State | .010 (.013) | .016* (.009) |
| Education | -.183 (.251) | -.266[+] (.170) |
| Income | .012 (.051) | .084** (.036) |
| Gender (1=Male) | .804 (.392) | .731** (.265) |
| Life Worse than Expected (Negative Mention about Economic Situation) | -1.559 (1.058) | -.336 (.476) |

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of Observations | 322 |
| Chi-Square | 27.50* |
| % Correctly Predicted | 64.23% |
| Reduction of Error | 9.45% |

Note: Estimates are unstandardized coefficients; standard errors are in parantheses.
**p<.01, *p<.05, [+]p<.1.

**Table 2. Simulation of the Probability of Democratic Identifiers in 1965 Identifying as Republicans in 1982**

|  | Probability of Switch to Republican Identification[9] |
|---|---|
| Characteristics | |
| Baseline | .29 |
| % Republican identifiers in current state minus % Republican identifiers in former state when years lived in the current state is set at mean (6.63 years lived in current state) | |
|     Mean | .29 (Baseline) |
|     + 1 Std. Dev. | .30 |
| % Republican identifiers in current state minus % Republican identifiers in former state immediately after moving to current state (0 years lived in current state) | |
|     + 1 St. Dev. | .22 |
| Education | |
|     High School or less | .29 (Baseline) |
|     Some College | .24 |
|     College or higher | .20 |
| Income | |
|     $21,000-21,999 | .23 |
|     $33,000-34,999 | .29 (Baseline) |
|     $50,000-59,999 | .36 |
| Gender | |
|     Female | .29 (Baseline) |
|     Male | .42 |

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[9] The benchmark probability was calculated by selecting the mean value of all of the continuous independent variables, the modal values of the education (high school) and gender (female) variables, and the median value of the income variable ($33,000-34,999). These probabilities were calculated in STATA 8.1 using CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003; King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000).