**"From the Monongahela Valley to the Mesabi Iron Range":**

**How the 2016 US Presidential Election was won and lost**

**by**

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- To state the obvious: the proximate explanation of an electoral outcome that delivers a change in government is the change in the pattern of the vote relative to the previous election. And the proximate explanation of an electoral outcome that delivers a change in the executive branch of the US Government is the change in the votes for the Electoral College.

- Any "narrative" that demonstrably conflicts with the data on these two points may be set aside.

## *Change in aggregate popular vote*

- At an aggregate level: little change in GOP share of popular vote, a larger change in the Democrat share (a loss of 3 percentage points, 6% of its 2012 result).

- Aggregate popular vote:  2012 , 2016

| | % | | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *USA – all:* | | | |
| Obama | 51 | Romney | 47 |
| Clinton | 48 | Trump | 46 |

Source: Dave Leip's Atlas of US Presidential Elections

# *Change in aggregate popular vote by gender*

- Popular vote by gender: 2012, 2016

|  | % |  | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *USA – women:* | | | |
| Obama | 55 | Romney | 44 |
| Clinton | 54 | Trump | 41 |
| *USA – men:* | | | |
| Obama | 45 | Romney | 52 |
| Clinton | 41 | Trump | 52 |

Source: Edison Research as published in CNN politics

# *Change in aggregate popular vote by race*

- Popular vote by race: 2012, 2016

|  | % |  | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *USA – whites:* | | | |
| Obama | 39 | Romney | 59 |
| Clinton | 37 | Trump | 57 |
| *USA – non-whites:* | | | |
| Obama | 82 | Romney | 16 |
| Clinton | 74 | Trump | 21 |

Source: Edison Research as published in CNN politics

## *Summary of change in popular vote by gender and race*

- At an aggregate level: little change in the pattern of voting by gender (NB: no increase in GOP share of the "male vote"); and little change in the pattern of voting by white Americans (NB: no increase in GOP share of the "white vote").

- But NB: the steep fall in the Democrat share of the minority vote – 8 percentage points, or 10% of its 2012 result – and the steep rise in the share for the GOP: 5 percentage points, > 30% of its 2012 result.

## *The change in the electoral college*

- The 2012 election yielded 206 out of 538 electoral college votes for Mitt Romney, the 2016 election 306 for Donald Trump. Of these additional 100 votes, 29 were delivered by Florida, 1 by Maine (which splits its votes), and 70 by five Midwestern states: Pennsylvania (20), Ohio (18), Michigan (16), Iowa (6) and Wisconsin (10).

- In short: the 2016 US Presidential Election was won and lost in the Midwest – primarily through a collapse in the Democrats' vote, as documented below.
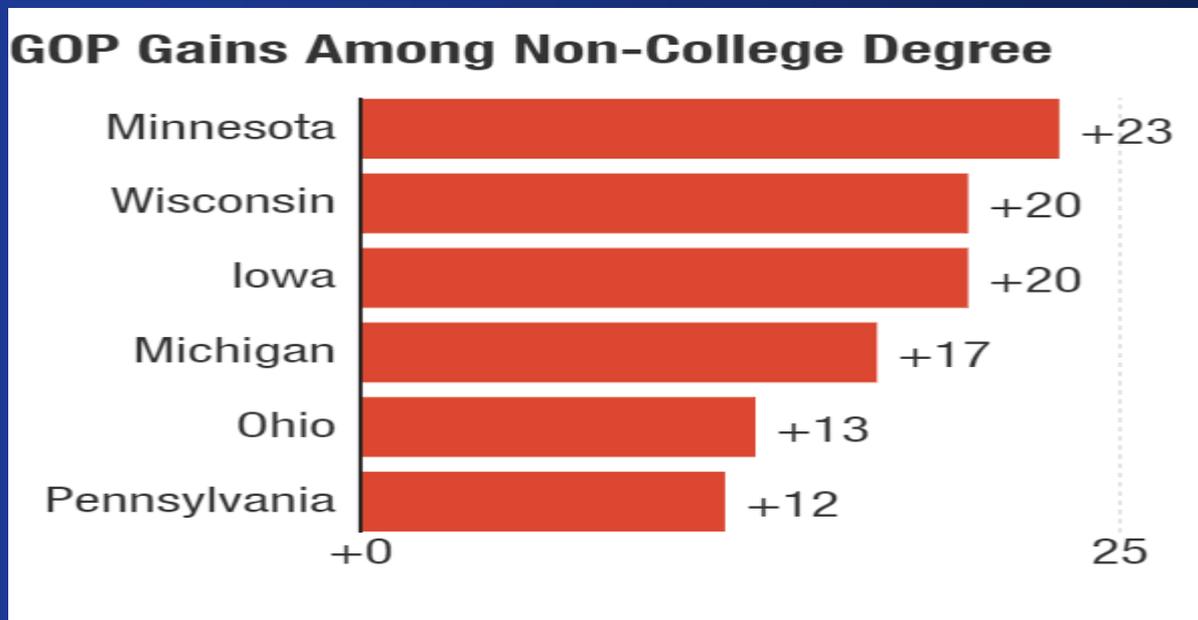
# *The change in the popular vote in the Midwest*

- Popular vote in five Midwestern states, 2012, 2016

|  | % |  |  | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Pennsylvania:* | | | | |
| Obama | 52.0 | | Romney | 46.6 |
| Clinton | 47.5 | | Trump | 48.2 |
| *Ohio:* | | | | |
| Obama | 50.6 | | Romney | 47.6 |
| Clinton | 43.2 | | Trump | 51.3 |
| *Michigan:* | | | | |
| Obama | 54.0 | | Romney | 44.7 |
| Clinton | 47.0 | | Trump | 47.3 |
| *Iowa:* | | | | |
| Obama | 52.0 | | Romney | 46.2 |
| Clinton | 41.7 | | Trump | 51.2 |
| *Wisconsin:* | | | | |
| Obama | 52.8 | | Romney | 45.9 |
| Clinton | 46.5 | | Trump | 47.2 |

Source: Dave Leip's Atlas of US Presidential Elections

# *The change in the working-class vote in the Midwest*

- Increase in GOP share + reduction in Democrat share of votes of those without college degrees in six Midwestern states, incl. Minnesota, in 2016 relative to 2012. (Source: Domenico Montanaro, NPR.)

## GOP Gains Among Non-College Degree

| State | GOP Gain |
|---|---|
| Minnesota | +23 |
| Wisconsin | +20 |
| Iowa | +20 |
| Michigan | +17 |
| Ohio | +13 |
| Pennsylvania | +12 |

+0                                    25

## *And why?*

- Identifying *how* – and more precisely, *where* – the election was won and lost helps us to understand *why*.

- For the Midwest embodies in a concentrated form all the indicators of the social regression increasingly evident in the United States in recent years: the disappearance of secure employment, the decline in median real wages, the fall in mean life expectancy (!), the bankruptcy of Detroit, the poisoning of Flint....

# *Youngstown!*

*From the Monongahela valley*

*To the Mesabi iron range*

*To the coal mines of Appalachia*

*The story's always the same*

*Seven hundred tons of metal a day*

*Now sir you tell me the world's changed*

*Once I made you rich enough*

*Rich enough to forget my name*

Source: Bruce Springsteen