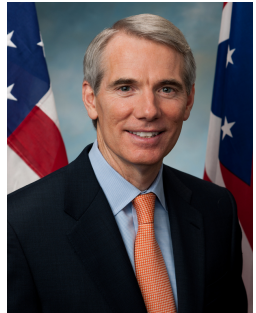


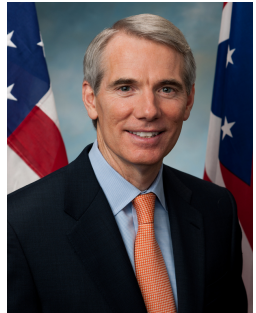
The political impact of social penumbras

Andrew Gelman and Yotam Margalit

Department of Statistics and Department of Political Science
Columbia University, New York

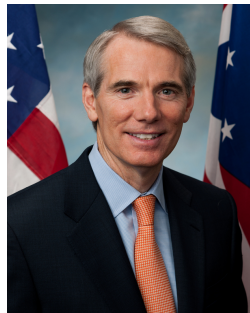
15 Oct 2015





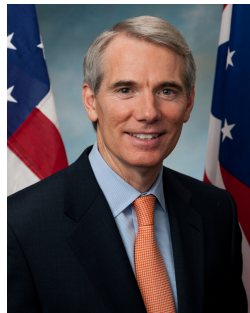
- ▶ Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio)

- ▶ 1996: co-sponsored the Defense of Marriage Act, defining marriage as one man and one woman



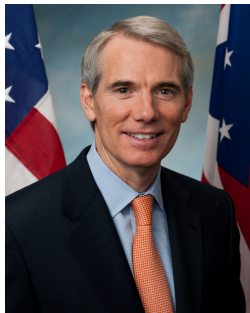
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- ▶ 1999: voted for a measure prohibiting same-sex couples from adopting children.



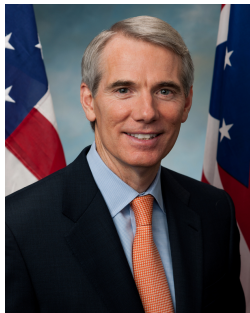
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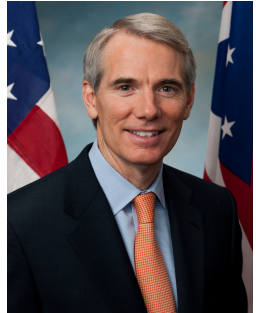


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- ▶ 2011: “openly hostile” record on gay rights led to a mass protest of students at the University of Michigan against Portman speaking at the graduation ceremony
- ▶ “Rob believes marriage is a sacred bond between one man and one woman”—Portman spokesman to Cleveland *Plain Dealer* at the time of the protest

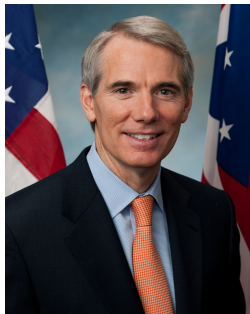


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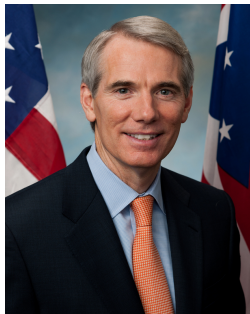
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Portman
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- ▶ 2013: “I’m announcing today a change of heart [for] gay marriage. . . My son came to Jane, my wife, and I, told us that he was gay, and that it was not a choice, and that it’s just part of who he is, and that’s who he’d been that way for as long as he could remember.”



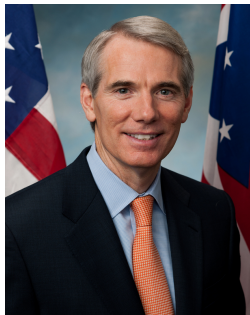
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- ▶ “I’ve come to the conclusion that . . . [marriage] is something that we should allow people to do . . . and to have the joy and stability of marriage that I’ve had for over 26 years.”



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- ▶ 2013: “I’m announcing today a change of heart [for] gay marriage. . . My son came to Jane, my wife, and I, told us that he was gay, and that it was not a choice, and that it’s just part of who he is, and that’s who he’d been that way for as long as he could remember.”
- ▶ “I’ve come to the conclusion that . . . [marriage] is something that we should allow people to do . . . and to have the joy and stability of marriage that I’ve had for over 26 years.”
- ▶ Portman also mentioned his consultation with former Vice President Dick Cheney, whose own daughter’s coming out: “forced him to re-think the issue too, and over time, he changed his view on it”



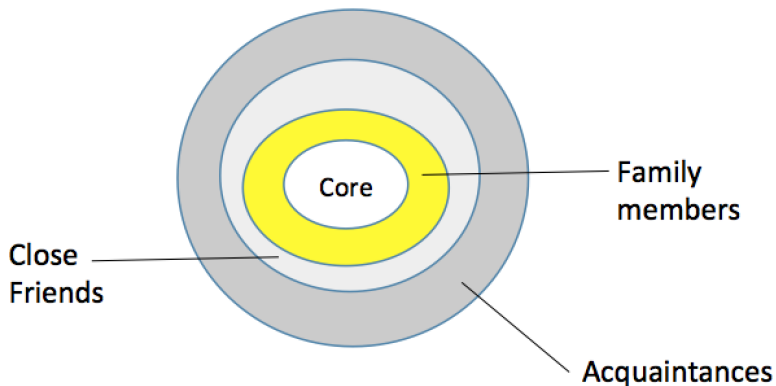
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1. To what extent does familiarity with members of a certain social group influence people's views on public policies related to that group?

Penumbra



Social penumbra



- Size and the shape of the penumbra can relate to the political salience and influence of a social group

Research questions

1. To what extent does familiarity with members of a certain social group influence people's views on public policies related to that group?
2. To what extent does the social penumbra of a group—its shape and size—matter for explaining public preferences on key policies?

Penumbras and change in public opinion?

- ▶ 2004: Karl Rove puts gay marriage on the ballot in key states to help mobilize mass support in favor of Bush
- ▶ 2012: Karl Rove criticizes the Democrats for “using the issue of gay marriage for political gain”

- ▶ Panel design
- ▶ Two surveys administered by YouGov 12 months apart
- ▶ 3,000 respondents in wave 1; 2,106 re-interviewed in wave 2
- ▶ Penumbra membership in 14 social groups and 8 names
- ▶ Attitude questions on 12 related policies
- ▶ Also GSS in 2006 and 2014

Group size (area of red circle) and penumbras (areas of black circles indicate close family, close family + close friends, and close family + close friends + others known) compared to the population of American adults (light gray circle)

Active Military



Immigrant in Past 5 Yrs



NRA Member



Abortion in Past 5 Yrs



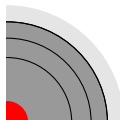
Lost Job Last Year



Muslim



Gay/Lesbian



Currently Unemployed



Mortgage Underwater



No Health Insurance



Care for Elder



Gun Owner



Receive Govt Welfare



Serious Health Problem



Number of people with each name (area of red circle) and penumbra (areas of black circle indicates number of people who know at least one person with this name) compared to the population of American adults (light gray circle)

Walter



Rose



Bruce



Tina



Kyle



Emily



Jose



Maria



Walter+Rose+...+Emily



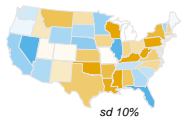
Jose + Maria



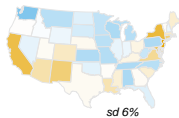
All 8 names



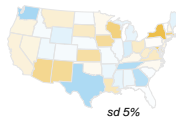
Know any Mortgage Underwater?



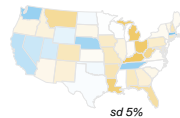
Know any Gun Owner?



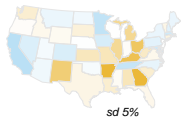
Know any No Health Insurance?



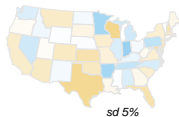
Know any Immigrant in Past 5 Yrs?



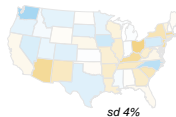
Know any Gay/Lesbian?



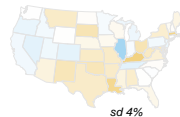
Know any Receive Govt Welfare?



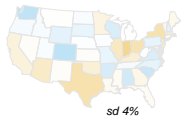
Know any NRA Member?



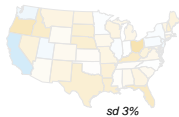
Know any Currently Unemployed?



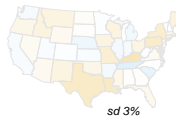
Know any Active Military?



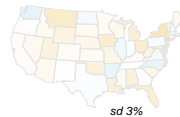
Know any Muslim?



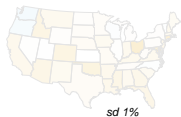
Know any Lost Job Last Year?



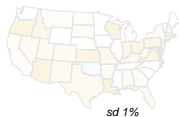
Know any Care for Elder?



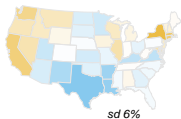
Know any Serious Health Problem?



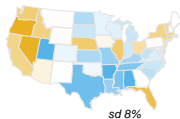
Know any Abortion in Past 5 Yrs?



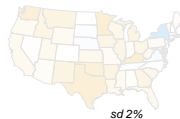
Are you conservative?



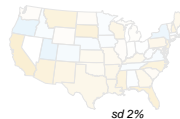
Do you attend church regularly?



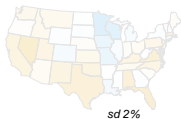
Know any Walter?



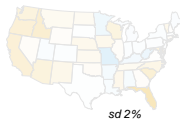
Know any Emily?



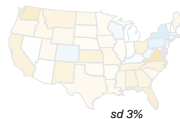
Know any Bruce?



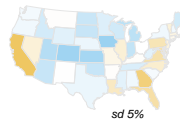
Know any Tina?



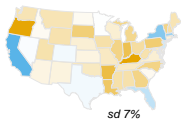
Know any Rose?



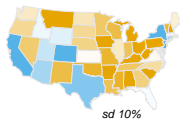
Know any Kyle?



Know any Maria?

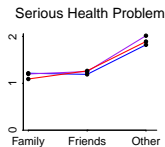
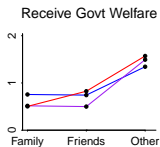
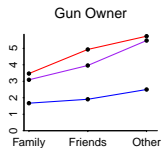
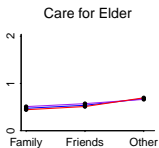
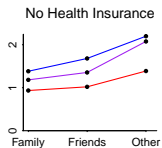
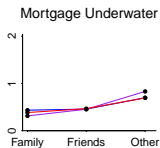
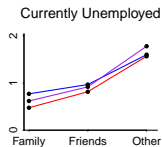
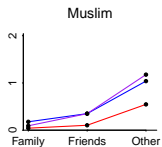
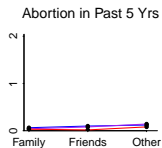
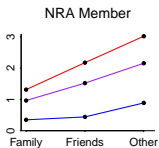
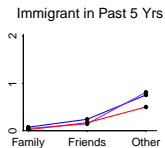
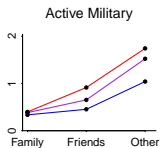


Know any Jose?

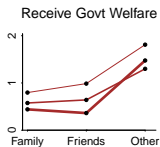
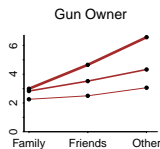
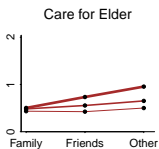
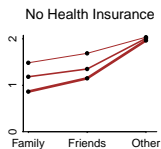
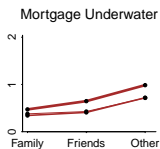
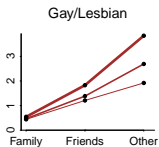
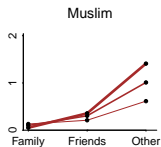
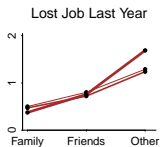
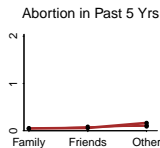
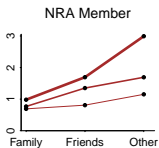
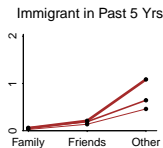
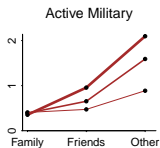


Shades of blue: People in these states are more likely to know someone of that group
Shades of tan: Less likely to know someone of that group

Average number of people known in each group, among Democrats (blue), Independents (purple), and Republicans (red)



Average number of people known in each group, among low, middle, and high-income respondents
(indicated by thin, intermediate, and thick lines)

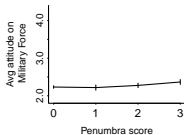
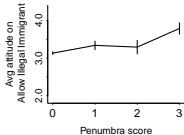
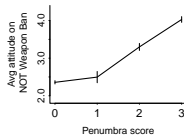
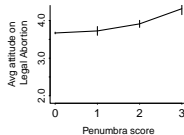
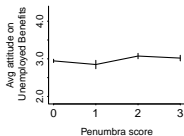
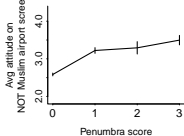
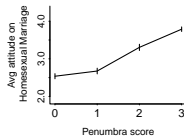
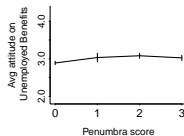
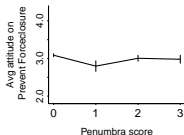
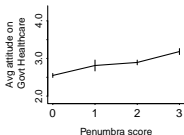
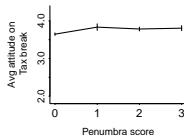
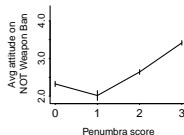
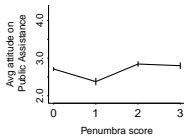
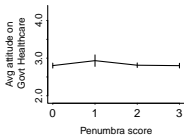


Is penumbra membership associated with group-relevant attitudes?

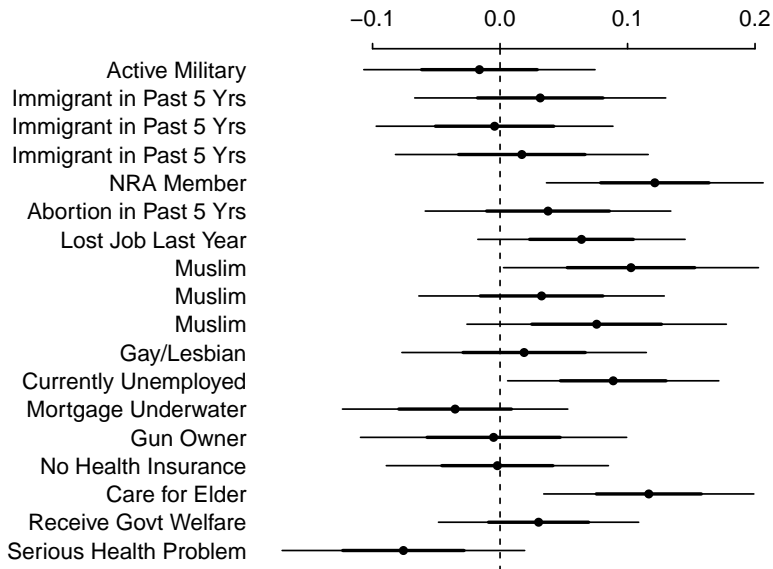
- ▶ Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased, decreased, or left the same as it is now?
- ▶ Do you agree or disagree: Homosexual couples should have the right to marry one another.
- ▶ Some are calling for the government to provide tax breaks for family expenditures on care provision for elderly family members. Others worry that such tax breaks would add to the national debt. Do you support or oppose providing tax breaks for care provision to the elderly?

More policy questions related to core groups

- ▶ Would you support or oppose a law requiring a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons?
- ▶ Which comes closest to your point of view: As a general rule, do you think the United States should be willing to use military force around the world, or the United States should be very reluctant to use military force?
- ▶ Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “It is the responsibility of the federal government to make sure that all Americans have healthcare coverage.”
- ▶ Etc.

Active Military**Immigrant in Past 5 Yrs****NRA Member****Abortion in Past 5 Yrs****Lost Job Last Year****Muslim****Gay/Lesbian****Currently Unemployed****Mortgage Underwater****No Health Insurance****Care for Elder****Gun Owner****Receive Govt Welfare****Serious Health Problem**

Coefs predicting change in attitude, given entrance into the penumbra



	Unemp	Guns	Hlth	Welf	Imm+	Illeg	Muslm	GayM	Abort	Wars	Mortg	Care
Currently Unemployed	9	-2	0	4	4	-1	3	0	2	1	2	5
Lost Job Last Year	6	-6	4	5	5	2	-2	4	0	4	3	11
NRA Member	2	12	-12	-9	1	-9	-5	-4	-3	-1	-11	7
Gun Owner	3	-1	0	0	-5	-3	-11	-1	2	7	2	1
Serious Health Problem	-4	2	-8	-16	4	5	2	0	4	7	-4	-1
No Health Insurance	4	2	0	8	3	-3	10	6	2	-3	1	6
Receive Govt Welfare	-3	-6	4	3	2	2	-1	1	-2	-1	2	7
Immigrant in Past 5 Yrs	3	0	1	-1	3	0	2	2	5	-1	-6	5
Muslim	2	5	5	5	10	3	8	9	2	1	6	14
Gay/Lesbian	3	-2	1	4	11	5	-2	2	4	-1	-2	7
Abortion in Past 5 Yrs	-6	-7	1	-3	3	3	-3	-5	4	2	0	10
Active Military	0	1	-3	-6	-5	3	-6	-1	-7	-2	-3	-1
Mortgage Underwater	1	0	-2	5	4	0	-1	8	-2	0	-4	0
Care for Elder	-2	6	-4	3	7	-3	2	-2	2	5	-2	12

Summary:

	N	χ^2	$E(t > 2)$
Group-relevant issues	18	35	0.22
Other issues	150	157	0.05

- ▶ Social penumbras are a politically meaningful concept
- ▶ Penumbra membership is associated with group-related policy views.
- ▶ Entering a penumbra can lead to attitude shifts
- ▶ Penumbra's shape might help explain speed and patterns of change in public opinion