



Panel Conditioning and Attrition in the AP-Yahoo! News Election Panel Study

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Problem Statements

Assess the presence, if any, of panel conditioning in terms of real changes of attitudes in two ways:

- Compare longitudinal and cross-sectional samples
- Test for an increase in the stability of attitudes over time for the longitudinal respondents

Measure demographic characteristics as predictors of attrition

Measure candidate changes as predictors of attrition

Measure survey characteristics as predictors of attrition

Related Work

Conditioning in longitudinal panels

- Not easy to measure because confounded with attrition
- Not always found when expected
- Two consistent findings:
 1. Interviewing before the election increases chances of turnout
 2. Knowledge questions are more sensitive to conditioning

Attrition in online panels is similar to traditional household panels

Consistent findings:

- Younger, lower income and education, minorities, households with children more likely to attrite
- Survey topic, frequency and number of surveys assigned also correlated with attrition

Study Design

Field period: Nov. 2007 to Dec. 2008 - 11 waves

Wave1 baseline obtained 2,735 surveys for a completion rate of 77%

Waves	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11
<u>Samples</u>											
Longitudinal	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
Cross-sect.			X			X			X		

Compressed schedule: ~ 4 weeks between waves

1,086 respondents completed all 11 waves

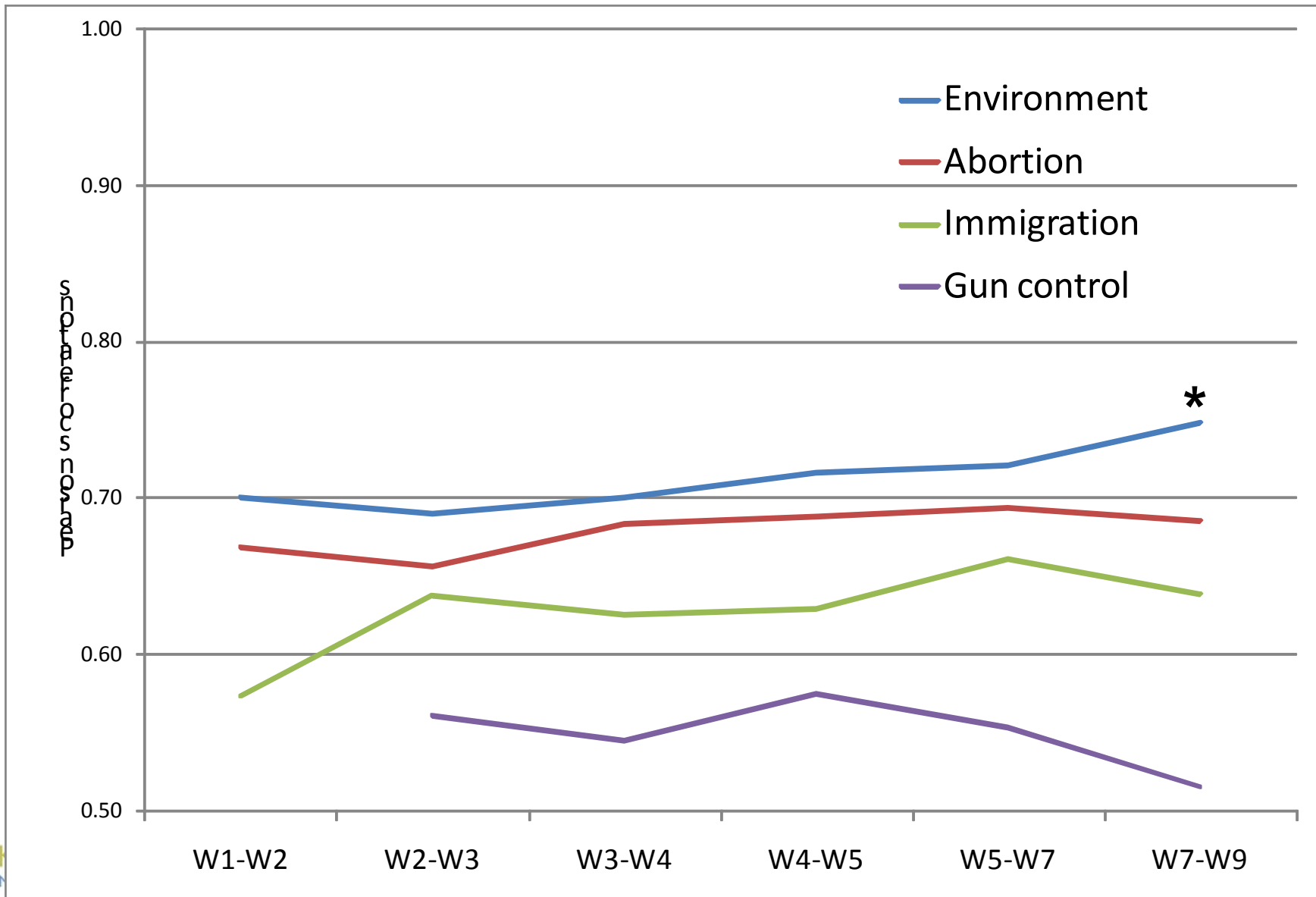
Incentive system based on demographics (rare vs. non rare) and speed of response (early vs. late respondents)

Conditioning Analysis I: Comparing Longitudinal vs. Cross-Sectional Samples

Dependent Variables (0=No;1=Yes)	W3	W6	W9
Certainty to vote in the presidential election	-	-	-
Voting early in the presidential election	-	-	-
Correct answer for Obama's religion	-	0.72	-
Feeling excited about the presidential election	-	-	-
Feeling interested in the presidential election	-	-	-
Feeling hopeful about the presidential election	0.83	-	-
Feeling bored with the presidential election	-	-	0.44
Feeling frustrated with the presidential election	-	-	-

Red font: Significant odds ratios for the dichotomous (0 – 1) variable longitudinal/cross sectional sample. A significant odds ratio indicates a difference between the two samples on the item in questions. The model is controlling for the following variables: demographics, party ID, religion and number of previous KN surveys taken.

Conditioning Analysis II: Inter-Wave Stabilities



Attrition Analysis I

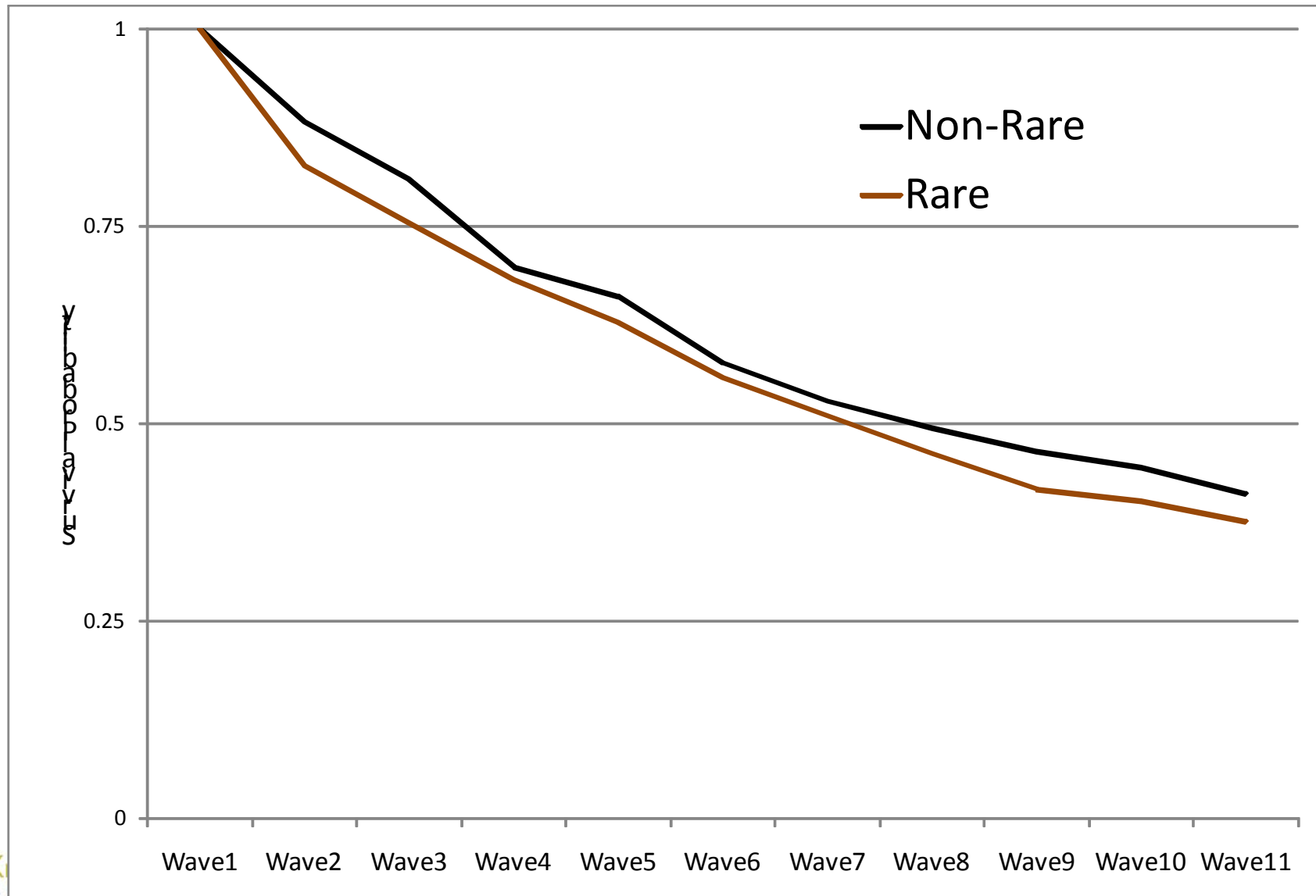
Occasional attrition was treated as permanent

2,735 respondents completed wave1; 1,086 respondents completed all 11 waves

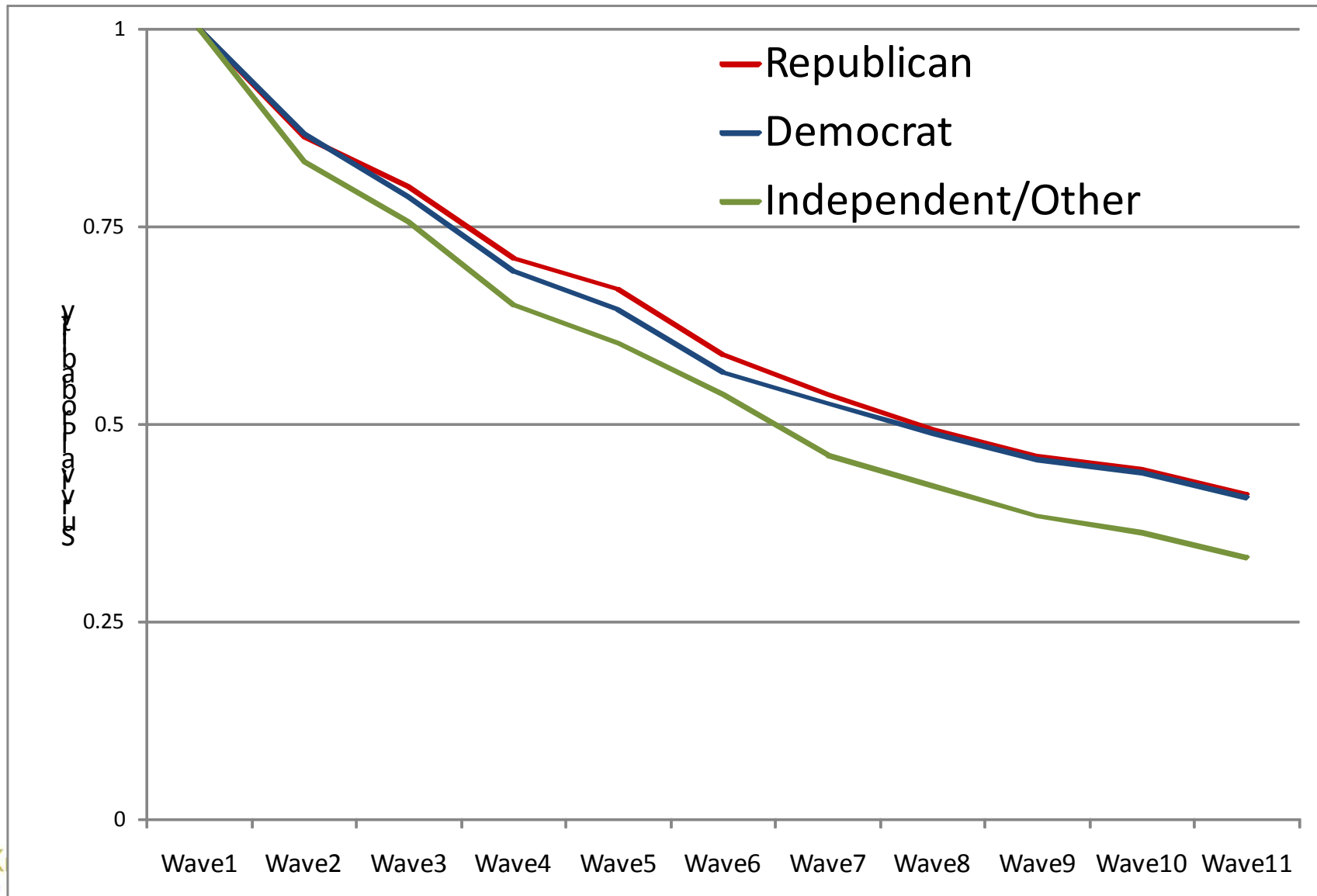
Univariate analyses: overall survival curves

- By demographic characteristics
 - rare group (18 – 29 yrs old, or nonwhite, or less than HS) vs. non-rare group
- By party id
 - Wave 1: Republicans - 40.3%, Democrats - 44.5%, Independent/Other - 15.2%
 - All Waves: Republicans - 41.7%, Democrats - 45.6%, Independent/Other - 12.7%

Survival Curves for Rare vs. Non-Rare Respondents: Wave 1 to 11



Survival Curves for Party ID: Wave 1 to 11

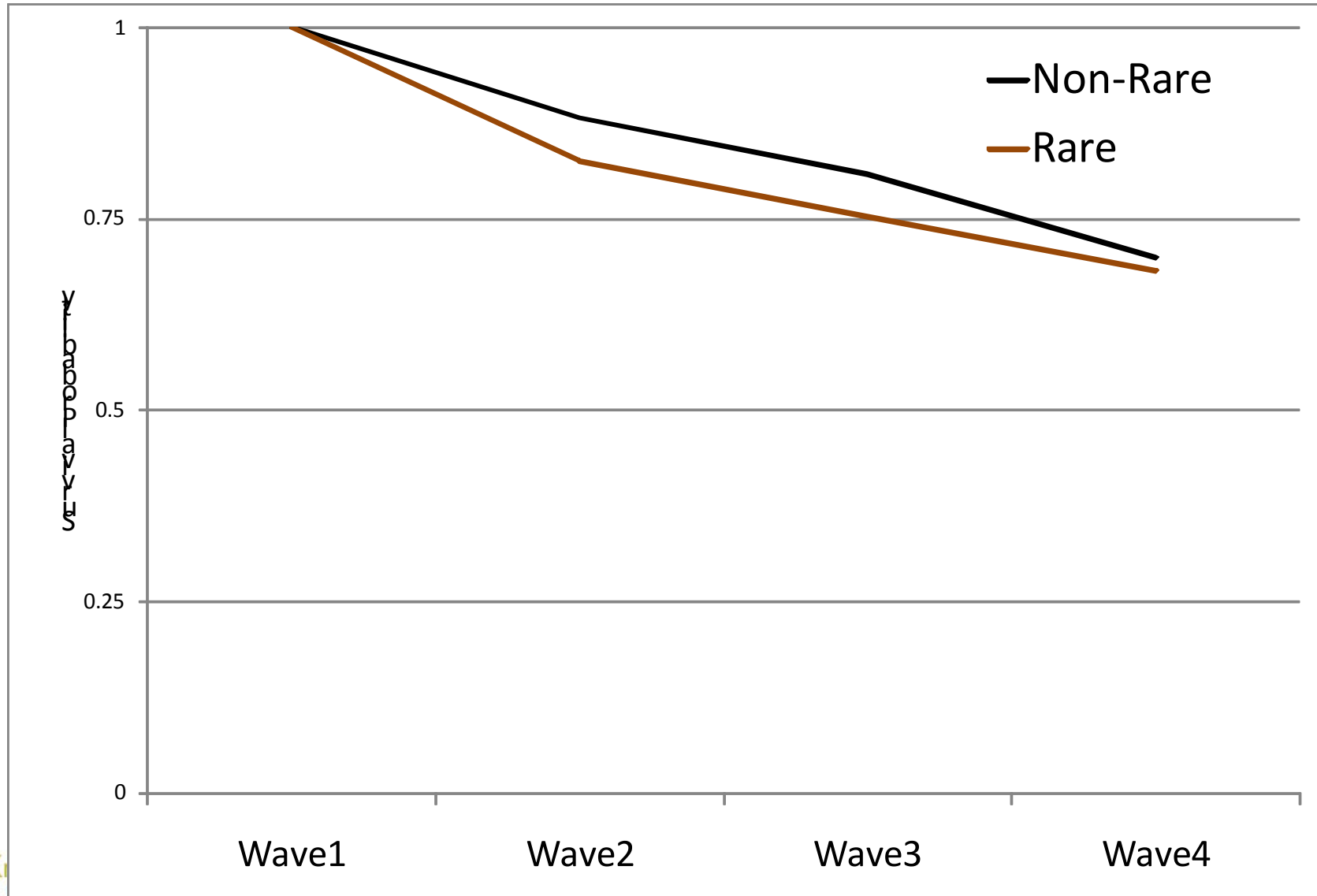


Attrition Analysis II

Multivariate analyses using Cox Regression:

- Due to the difference in incentive system, wave 1 – 4 were examined separately from wave 5 – 9
 - **Wave 1 – 4:** compare survival rates for rare and non-rare respondent groups
 - Rare group received \$5.0
 - Non-rare group received \$0.0
 - **Wave 5 – 9:** compare survival rates for late and early respondents in each respondent group (rare and non-rare)
 - Rare late group received \$7.5
 - Rare early and non-rare late groups received \$5.0
 - Non-rare early group received \$0.0

Survival Curves for Rare vs. Non-Rare Respondents: Wave 1 – 4



Incentive System

Waves	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11
Groups	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Rare Late	10.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	5.0	-
Rare Early	10.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	-
Non-Rare Late	5.0	-	-	-	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	-
Non-Rare Early	5.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.0	-

Wave 1 – 4 Survival on Panel:

Overall, rare group had similar survival rate as non-rare group (possible incentive effect)

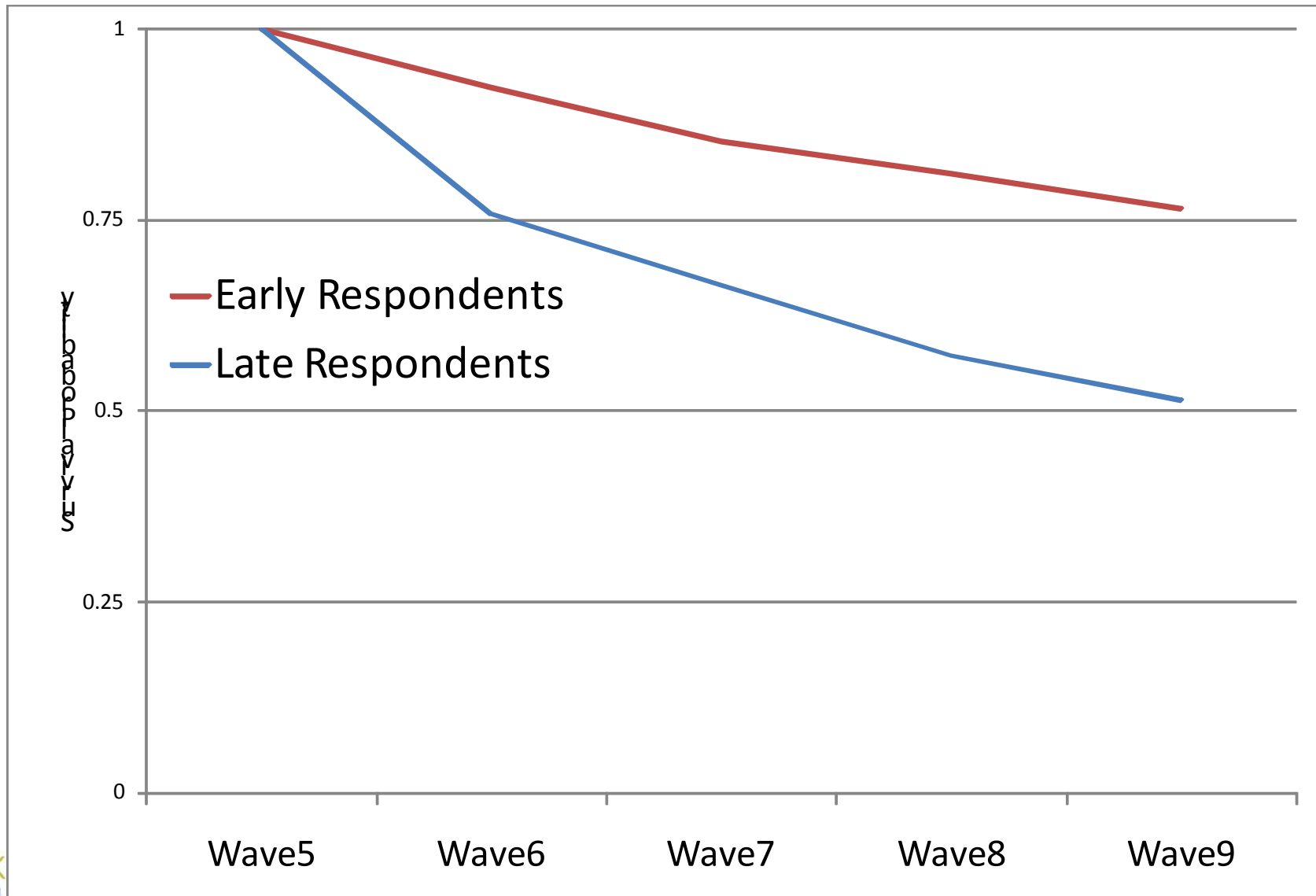
Only non-white respondents 1.2 times more likely to leave the panel than white

Parents with kids 1.3 times more likely to attrite than non-parents

Undecided Republicans 1.7 times more likely to leave than Republicans who chose to vote for McCain

No candidate preference effect on survival rates for Democrats

Survival Curves for Early vs. Late Respondents: Wave 5 – 9



Wave 5 – 9 Survival on Panel

Wave 5 is treated as baseline (n=2055)

Internet households are more likely to stay on panel

Non-rare group:

- Late respondents 2.4 times more likely to drop out than early respondents

Rare group:

- Late respondents 2.7 times more likely to drop out than early respondents
 - Would the drop out rate for late respondents be even higher if no incentive?

No candidate preference effect on survival rates

Summary and Conclusions

Limited and weak evidence of conditioning effects with few exceptions (e.g., knowledge of Obama's religion)

Stability of attitudes over time appears not to increase dramatically at an increase of repeated questioning

Attrition by party ID is similar

- Only undecided Republicans were more likely to attrite in wave 1 – 4

Late respondents are more likely to attrite than early respondents

Incentive system seems to have mitigated attrition of rare groups

Thank you!