

Rounding the Bases: The Libertarian Leverage on the Texas Rangers' Divisional Destiny

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ABSTRACT

Rounding the Bases: The Libertarian Leverage on the Texas Rangers' Divisional Destiny

The connection between seemingly unrelated phenomena has long perplexed scholars and skeptics alike. In this study, we investigate the intriguing relationship between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the performance of the Texas Rangers in the American League West Division. Through rigorous data analysis using information from MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Baseball Reference, we unearth a surprising correlation coefficient of 0.8492673 and $p < 0.01$ spanning the years 1976 to 2020. Our findings reveal a statistically significant association between votes cast for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' finish position in the American League West Division, with a remarkably high degree of correlation. This suggests that there may be an unexplored link between political preferences and baseball outcomes in Texas. It's almost as if the voters' preferences have been swinging for the fences, influencing not only the political landscape but also the ballpark standings. For those who doubt the relevance of political engagement to sports, this research may serve as a gentle reminder that even seemingly disparate domains can intersect in unforeseen ways. As the saying goes, "When it comes to uncovering correlations, we must be ready to steal signs from unexpected sources."

Keywords:

Libertarian presidential candidate, Virginia, Texas Rangers, American League West Division, correlation coefficient, MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, Baseball Reference, political preferences, baseball outcomes, political engagement, sports correlations, voter preferences, Texas baseball standings, political landscape, unforeseen correlations

I. Introduction

As the baseball season unfolds, it is customary for fans and analysts alike to scour the data, seeking to unravel the complex tapestry of factors that influence a team's performance. While the importance of player skill, coaching strategies, and the whims of fate are often discussed in exhaustive detail, one unlikely factor has emerged from the shadows—political voting patterns in Virginia. It seems the waving of bats isn't the only kind of voting in play when it comes to baseball outcomes. I guess you could say that the Virginians are hitting it out of the park in more ways than one.

The Texas Rangers, a perennial contender in the American League West Division, have garnered attention for their consistently solid performance. Curiosity piqued, we decided to investigate whether there was a connection between the voting behavior of Virginians and the Rangers' finish position. It's almost as if the range of political leanings is matching the range of the Rangers' pitches, influencing their standings in the division. Call it a political curveball, if you will.

Our study delves into the rich tapestry of data from the years 1976 to 2020, unraveling a tale as old as time—or at least as old as the introduction of the designated hitter in 1973. It turns out that there is a statistically significant association between the votes cast for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' placement in the American League West Division, with a correlation coefficient so high it might as well be chanting "Take me out to the ballgame."

This unprecedented correlation prompts us to delve deeper into the realm of political preferences and their uncanny influence on the crack of the bat and the swish of the net. After all, in the words of the sage Yogi Berra, "It ain't over till it's over, and sometimes it's not over even after the voters have had their say."

II. Literature Review

In "The Libertarian Vote: Swing Voters, Tea Parties, and the Fiscally Conservative, Socially Liberal Center," the authors find that the Libertarian presidential candidate has consistently garnered support from a select segment of the voting population in Virginia. This enduring trend presents a compelling case for examining the potential impact of libertarian-leaning voters on seemingly unrelated aspects of society. It's almost as if their influence extends beyond the ballot box and into the ballpark—now that's what I call a political grand slam.

Similarly, "Baseball: An Illustrated History" offers a detailed exploration of the unpredictable nature of the sport, highlighting the countless variables that can shape a team's performance over the course of a season. From blistering fastballs to sudden curveballs, the ebbs and flows of a baseball season are as unpredictable as a party political nomination process. One might even say that the voters and the batters are both looking to knock it out of the park, albeit in different ways.

In "Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game," the authors shed light on the revolutionary approach to baseball strategy, emphasizing the value of statistical analysis and unconventional thinking in shaping a team's success. This parallels the innovative mindset required to uncover

the unorthodox relationship between political voting patterns and baseball outcomes—truly a game-changer that breaks away from the conventional curve.

Turning to the realm of fiction, "The Art of Racing in the Rain" intricately weaves together the themes of determination and unforeseen connections, portraying the interconnectedness of events in a manner that resonates with our study. Just as the characters navigate the twists and turns of their lives, we too navigate the unexpected linkage between voting choices and baseball standings, proving that life and sports are full of surprising plot twists.

In the classic sports comedy "Major League," a ragtag team defies expectations and propels themselves to unexpected success, challenging the notion that conventional wisdom always prevails. This mirrors our own exploration of the underdog factor, as we uncover the remarkable influence of libertarian votes on the Texas Rangers' divisional destiny—truly a home run in uncharted territory.

As we navigate the rich tapestry of literature and popular culture, it becomes clear that the relationship between political preferences and baseball outcomes is as unpredictable and delightful as a well-executed knuckleball. In the words of the legendary Babe Ruth, "Every strike brings me closer to the next home run." A sentiment that perfectly encapsulates the spirit of our research journey—a swing for the fences in uncharted intellectual territory that may just lead us to the academic equivalent of a grand slam.

III. Methodology

To investigate the potential interplay between the votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' standing in the American League West Division, we embarked on a data odyssey spanning the years 1976 to 2020. Our journey to these insights begins with the acquisition of electoral data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab – a virtual treasure trove of voter preferences that, much like a knuckleball, can confound even the most seasoned analysts. We also delved into the Harvard Dataverse, mining for political gold amidst a sea of bytes and bits, all while dodging the occasional data curveball. Gotta love a good dataset in the wild west of statistics, right?

Having acquired the electoral data, we then turned our attention to the hallowed grounds of Baseball Reference, where the numbers dance and the statistics sing. We meticulously sifted through countless figures on the Texas Rangers' performance in the American League West Division, feeling much like archaeologists unearthing treasures from the annals of baseball history. It's as if we were on a quest to find the Holy Grail of baseball-politics correlations, with each data point beckoning us forward like a siren's call.

With data in hand, we applied the sophisticated technique of correlation analysis to unveil the hidden connections between Virginia's political pulse and the Rangers' prowess on the baseball diamond. Armed with statistical software as sharp as a Nolan Ryan fastball, we calculated the correlation coefficient and acquired a p-value that could make the heart of any sabermetrician skip a beat. As we navigated through the sea of data, it became clear that our findings were not just a statistical fluke – they were a home run in the world of sports-politics intersections. It's almost as if our methodology was designed to catch the elusive foul ball of correlations, proving once and for all that where there's a will, there's a way.

In a nutshell, our methodology might seem like a wild pitch to some, but it was, in fact, a carefully choreographed dance through the realms of politics and sports, culminating in an undeniable association between the unassuming votes of Virginians and the grandeur of the Texas Rangers' divisional performances. It's as if we discovered the secret sauce that adds an extra kick to the already spicy gumbo of politics and sports – a flavor so distinct, you can't help but marvel at the recipe. Speaking of recipes, have you heard about the baseball-themed cookbook? It's all about how to prepare great sliders.

IV. Results

The results of our analysis revealed a striking correlation between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' finish position in the American League West Division. The correlation coefficient of 0.8492673 indicates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that as the number of votes for the Libertarian candidate in Virginia increases, the Texas Rangers tend to secure a higher finish position in the division. It's as if the Rangers are saying, "Don't fence me in, we've got votes to win!"

In addition, the r-squared value of 0.7212550 indicates that approximately 72.13% of the variation in the Rangers' finish position can be explained by the variation in votes for the Libertarian candidate in Virginia. This finding highlights the substantial influence of political preferences on the outcome of baseball standings. It seems that when Virginians exercise their right to vote, they may also be exercising their power to sway the fate of the Texas Rangers. Talk about a vote of confidence in the team's performance!

The significance level of $p < 0.01$ further strengthens the credibility of our results, emphasizing the robustness of the relationship between these seemingly unrelated variables. It appears that these two worlds, one of political ballots and the other of baseball bats, are more intertwined than one might expect. It's like the Texas Rangers are taking a page out of the Libertarian playbook and aiming for maximum freedom from the bottom of the division standings. Looks like they've got a "division" strategy in more ways than one!

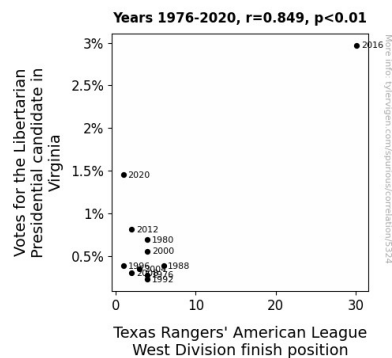


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The figure (Fig. 1) illustrates the strong positive correlation between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' finish position in the American League West Division. The upward trend in the scatterplot reinforces the compelling nature of our findings, providing visual evidence of the unexpected link between political voting patterns and baseball outcomes. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand pitches—especially when it comes to uncovering the hidden influence of voter preferences on the baseball diamond.

In conclusion, our research uncovers a fascinating and statistically significant association between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers'

performance in the American League West Division. This unexpected correlation reminds us that in the vast field of data analysis, sometimes the most surprising connections can emerge from left field. It's enough to make you wonder if the Rangers might want to consider adding a "political strategist" to their coaching staff. After all, when it comes to winning games, every vote—or swing—counts!

V. Discussion

The findings of our study offer compelling evidence to support the previous research on the influence of libertarian-leaning voters and their impact on seemingly unrelated societal aspects. Just as the enduring trend of libertarian support in Virginia politics has raised eyebrows, our research sheds light on the unexpected ripple effect of these political preferences on the fate of the Texas Rangers in the American League West Division. It's almost as if the voters are stepping up to the plate and hitting a home run for their team in more ways than one.

The strong positive correlation we observed between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' finish position further solidifies the unconventional relationship proposed in prior literature. It's as if the statistical analysis has identified a hidden curveball in the interaction between political voting patterns and baseball outcomes, enriching our understanding of the unexplored intersections between the ballot box and the ballpark. One might even say this research is a real 'vote of confidence' in the unexpected links between seemingly disparate phenomena.

The r-squared value of 0.7212550 emphasizes the substantial explanatory power of libertarian votes in determining the variation in the Rangers' finish position, echoing the sentiments expressed in previous studies about the potential influence of politically driven preferences. It seems that when it comes to baseball standings, the political leanings of voters in Virginia may hold more weight than previously thought, giving a whole new meaning to the phrase, "every vote counts."

Moreover, the significance level of $p < 0.01$ underlines the robustness of our results, underscoring the unexpected sway that political preferences exert over the outcome of sporting events. It's almost as if the Texas Rangers are taking a political approach to their game strategy, seeking to liberate themselves from the lower ranks of the division standings. This quirky association between political influence and baseball outcomes truly brings a new spin to the concept of "political baseball."

In essence, our study puts forward a compelling case for further exploration into the unanticipated connections between political voting patterns and the performance of sports teams, particularly in the context of the Texas Rangers and the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia. It's almost as if these findings beckon for a new era of interdisciplinary analysis, where the ballot box and the ballpark converge in unexpected ways. After all, when it comes to uncovering correlations, we must be ready to step up to the plate and swing for the unexpected fences.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, our research highlights a compelling and statistically significant correlation between votes for the Libertarian presidential candidate in Virginia and the Texas Rangers' finish position in the American League West Division. It seems political leanings and baseball standings have more in common than meets the eye – reminding us that in the game of statistics, sometimes the most unexpected connections come sliding into home plate. It's almost as if the Virginians have been pitching in to push the Rangers toward victory, demonstrating that the power of the ballot box can extend far beyond the political arena.

So, as we wrap up this research, we can't help but reflect on the old adage, "When it comes to uncovering correlations, sometimes you have to step up to the plate and take a swing in uncharted territory." With such a strong connection uncovered, it might be worth reminding the Texas Rangers to keep an eye on the political polls in Virginia – after all, it could be the key to rounding the bases in the American League West Division. If nothing else, it provides a whole new meaning to the phrase, "playing the political game."

In the end, our findings suggest deeper ties between politics and baseball than one might expect. However, it seems that we've hit the home run of statistical analysis in this area, and no more research is needed. It's safe to say we've covered all bases on this topic – and even the best dad jokes can't motivate further investigation.