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## Primary Systems and Voter Turnout: Measuring the Institutional Effect of Primary Type on Voter Turnout

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Primary Systems and Voter Turnout:  
Measuring the Institutional Effect of Primary Type on Voter Turnout

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
Political Science

by

Leslie Lott  
B.S. Mississippi University for Women, 2002, 2003

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## **Abstract**

Using the 1990, 1994 and 1998 Congressional mid-term elections, this study looks at whether the type of primary system in a person's state has an effect on whether or not that person will vote in the general election. The five types of primary systems (closed, semi-closed, semi-open, open and blanket) are explained as well as traditional factors for likelihood of voting. It is hypothesized that the more closed the primary system, the less likely a person is to vote. Data analysis shows that when significant, living in an open primary state does significantly increase the likelihood that a person will vote. However, primary type was significant in only six of the nine models studied here.

## **Keywords**

Primary systems, Closed primary, Semi-closed primary, Semi-open primary, Open primary, Blanket primary, Voter turnout

## **Introduction**

Much research has been done on what leads a person to vote. However, the purpose of this study is to determine what effects the type of primary system used by a state will have on turnout in general elections. First, I will introduce and explain the six different methods that are or have been used by states to conduct elections. Second, I will explain various factors that lead a person to vote and present the current research that illustrates the connection. Next, I will present my hypothesis based on the literature review. Finally, I will explain the methodology and discuss the results as well as present possibilities for future research.

I expect that the more closed the primary type, the more it will depress voter turnout due to increased costs to the voter. However, I also expect that this analysis will confirm the effects of the established characteristics of a voter as well as some of the newer, less discussed characteristics. Although I expect that these variables will prove to have an effect on likelihood of voting, I am interested as to whether their effects will differ across primary types.

Analysis of the 1990 data shows that primary type is not significantly related to likelihood of voting. In 1994, primary type is significantly related to likelihood of an individual voting, but in the opposite direction as hypothesized. The 1998 analysis provides support for the hypothesis that the more closed a primary, the less likely a person is to vote.



# Chapter 1

## History of the Direct Primary

Originally, if someone wanted to get elected to political office in the United States, he was forced to build his own networks and rely on friends and his status in the community. A candidate had to utilize word of mouth, newspapers and meeting the people that would be voting. Completely lacking in structure, the self-nominating system was the only way to get elected to political office.

The old ways – the “self-nominating system” characterized by personalism and informalism – gave way in the decade of the 1790s, in particular, to the rudimentary experimentation with structures organized to electorally unite voters with commonly shared views as to the centralization (or decentralization) of federal authority, and as to the interests and groups governmental action should favor [Crotty 1977, 193].

This development of political parties allowed for a shared purpose and networking possibilities through which a candidate could obtain electoral success. However, with the birth of political parties, a new system would be ushered in.

Beginning with the Jefferson Republican and Federalist parties, candidates now could rely on mobilization efforts provided by the parties for their election. Gone were the days of a candidate being forced to log in tremendous face-to-face hours with the members of his constituency. The days of the caucus were in full swing. Begun as a network of local committees, the caucus was intended to provide structure to the electoral process and allow for more involvement within state and local communities. The caucus allowed locally elected officials to produce the nominees for state office, with the expectation that these officials were actually representing their constituents. In use in 1788 in Maryland, “as party divisions

increased, it became widely popular through the nation. The practice assumed its most famous exposition through the congressional caucuses from 1800 to 1824, which took over the function of nominating presidential candidates” (Crotty 1977, 198). But, as time passed, these caucuses became more and more centralized in their power and corruption ensued.

As the caucus system evolved, it became less and less representative of the people’s wishes and was beginning to be seen as disconnected and serving only those directly involved. “Those districts not electing members to a legislative forum were denied even an indirect say in nominations. The caucus was cliquish and contained elements of elitist representation” (Crotty 1977, 199). Due to these problems as well as the problem of party disintegration, the end of the caucuses was imminent. For nearly two decades, Jefferson’s Republican party had enjoyed complete control with one-party rule in government. However, as this party began to dissolve, so did the system of Congressional Caucuses. “After the collapse of the Congressional Caucus in 1824 the political situation still presented a somewhat chaotic aspect [but,] by force of habit people resorted to it automatically but it had received its death-blow” (Ostrogorski 1964, 25).

As the caucus system aged, most people saw it as too closed. “‘King Caucus’ smacked too much of the aristocratic privilege associated with the defunct Federalist party” (Davis 1967, 22). Born from this collapse was a system that would be in place for the remainder of the nineteenth century: the convention. Due in large part to Andrew Jackson’s candidacy, the convention system allowed the parties to reorganize and open up to a different group of people. Jackson, widely popular due to his reputation as a “frontier hero” (Crotty 1977, 199) was expected to be chosen as the next candidate for president. However, his caucus instead chose to nominate William Crawford who would finish last in an election thrown to the House of Representatives due to a tie and ultimately won by John Quincy Adams. This spurred Jackson to

change the way that politics were handled, feeling he could have fared better than Crawford. “Jackson, of course, went on to win the presidency on his own in 1828... [and] His election ushered in a vigorous era of democratic expansion and of the promised reforms was the replacement of ‘King Caucus’ with a more representative method of party expression, the national nominating convention” (Crotty 1977, 199).

The first convention would come two years after Jackson’s election as President. A group of anti-masonic men came together from all parts of the country in September of 1830. Out of this convention came a report in which this group encouraged “all the citizens of the United States who were hostile to secret societies to send delegates ... to a convention, with instructions to nominate candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency” (Ostrogorski 1964, 37). In December of 1831, over a hundred delegates were present in Baltimore as guests of the Caucus of the National Republicans of the Maryland Legislature (Ostrogorski 1964, 38). Jackson’s Democratic Republicans would follow in May of 1832 with their own convention, and by 1840 national conventions had become commonplace.

Until 1910, the national convention would enjoy relatively little controversy. However, just as the caucuses led to problems with abuse of power, so did the conventions. The spoils system made famous during the Jackson administration, would come to bind most presidents to their supporters and conventions. Presidents were expected to reward those in the conventions that helped them obtain or maintain electoral success. This expectation gave significant power to those in charge of the conventions and led to widespread corruption. “Small wonder, then, that Boss Tweed and others were determined to manage nominations; for, without the power to choose candidates for office, the bosses would be thwarted in spinning their web of control” (Davis 1967, 23). Based in New York, Boss Tweed was known as one of the most powerful

party bosses and would stop at nothing to maintain his power. Complaints began surfacing about some of the tactics being used by Boss Tweed and other party bosses to achieve their goals, from choosing corrupt delegates who would vote however they were told by the bosses, to forcing those they could not manipulate to vote their way through threats of physical violence. The conventions were quickly coming to be seen much in the same way as the caucuses were, with the party bosses being seen as the gang leaders in charge of a delegates-for-hire scheme. The parties, due to the conventions, were seen as machines that would produce the candidate with the most debt to the party and the most likely to bend to the wishes of the party. “It was this rising discontent among the middle-class – the small businessman, members of the professions, and independent farmers – that spawned the Progressive movement. From this protest movement was to emerge the direct primary system and first major reform of the national nominating convention in almost a century – the presidential primary” (Davis 1967, 24).

The primary was first instituted... in Crawford County, Pennsylvania ... in 1860 by the Republican party. A little more detective work traces the origins to Crawford County, yes, but to the Democrats 18 years earlier. It appears that the use of the primary was suspended by the Democrats in 1850 and then resurrected by the newly created Crawford County Republicans. From that date on, it enjoyed a more or less continuous usage in a scattering of local party contests up until its adoption by a number of states in the early 1900s as the vehicle for selecting presidential delegates [Crotty 1977, 203].

Although Crawford County is credited with being the first to hold a primary, Wisconsin citizens passed a law in 1905 officially establishing a primary as the Republican party had elected two candidates from two separate conventions. With Pennsylvania following in 1906, South Dakota in 1909 and Oregon in 1910, the primary system still had growing pains to overcome. “Oregon is usually given credit for adopting the first presidential preference primary... The law provided for both popular choice of presidential candidates and the election

of delegates legally pledged to support the winner of the preference primary” (Davis 1967, 26). Until the passage of the Oregon law in 1910, delegates to the conventions were not required to vote in accordance with the electorate’s decision. This gave the appearance of no change from the caucus or the convention system. However, many states would soon follow; by 1916, twenty-six states had in place a presidential preference primary system (Davis 1967, 28).

Although the Progressive Movement is often given credit for the rise of the direct primary in elections outside of the presidential races, Ware (2002) argues that this is not the case. He argues that the rise of the Australian ballot and state laws regulating party activity led to the direct primary finding widespread use. He does not, however, discount the role of the reformers in the rise of the direct primary. “The contribution of the reformers was really to speed up the experimental use of the direct primary in particular states, and to facilitate its use over a wider range of offices than would have happened otherwise” (Ware 2002, 224).

The Australian ballot lowered the cost of holding elections for the parties, who at the time bore most of the cost for holding elections. As more and more candidates were being placed on the ballot and the number of people voting was increasing, so was the cost of printing the ballots. By switching to the Australian ballot, the parties were transforming these costs to the states. This new ballot also decreased the concerns over party ballots being altered without approval of the parties. As the new ballot form began to enjoy the support of the parties, the reformers saw that change could be brought about successfully and with little resistance if put in the correct context to gain party support.

Secondly, Ware (2002) argues that state regulations paved the way for the direct primary. The first of these regulations, discussed above, was the requirement that delegates to state

conventions cast their vote based on the election results in their districts. “In many states more than a decade of extensive regulation of the nomination process usually preceded the introduction of the direct primary. Often the direct primary was the culmination of repeated attempts by legislators to provide for nomination procedures that worked better than the existing ones” (Ware 2002, 57). The author describes the increased use of the direct primary with a sense of trial and error on the part of state governments. Once this idea produced positive results in Pennsylvania, the direct primary was seen as a “quick fix” to many of the problems that had arisen from the convention system. Again, the parties seemed to embrace the direct primary; thus clearing the path for its eventual rise in popularity. “Party politicians were not the ‘victims’ of antiparty reformers who somehow imposed a debilitating reform on them. Certainly, this was not the terms in which those politicians who were in a position to promote reform understood what was happening” (Ware 2002, 257).

Like the caucus and convention systems that preceded it, the direct primary had its problems. Parties saw a loss of control over the candidates chosen through more involvement by the electorate. “In some states... the primaries were “open”; voters would declare at the polls which party ballot they wanted... In other states... [t]he primaries were closed to all but party members.” An increase in opposition party members and independents took the control of virtually all party decisions out of the hands of the parties, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This problem would later be addressed by changing the type of primary system in place to one of the five types we know today. Each of these five types will be discussed in the next section and the types that each state used during the elections studied in this research can be found in Appendix A.

## Chapter 2

### Types of Primaries

There are six different methods by which states have conducted primary elections: closed, semi-closed, open or pure open, semi-open, blanket and nonpartisan. The distinguishing factor among the methods lies in the party affiliation of the voter. Each type of primary system puts a different weight on party affiliation.

Closed primaries require that a voter choose a party affiliation when registering to vote. Although that affiliation can be changed at a later date, the affiliation on record is extremely important. “A direct primary is *closed* if voters must declare their party affiliation some time before the election” (Kanthak and Morton 2003, 3). However, states vary on the time frame prior to an election in which the voter is allowed to change their party affiliation. Once this is established, the voter is only allowed to vote in the party primary in which he or she is registered as affiliating with. For example, a voter registers as a Democrat on the day of registration or prior to the primary election; the voter is only allowed to vote in the Democratic primary. Closed primaries eliminate the concern of crossover voting and allow for high levels of control by the state parties. Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia all used this type of primary during the years studied here (Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27). California used a closed primary system in 1990 and 1994 before changing to a blanket primary for 1998. “The closed primary reflects the belief that citizens benefit from having clear choices in elections, which can

best be provided by unified, strong parties; therefore, it makes sense for a party's candidates to be selected by that party's loyal followers"(Hershey 2006, 161).

Semi-closed primaries are essentially the same as a closed primary with the exception that voters are allowed to "change their party registration at the polls, or they can simply declare their party preference at the polling place" (Hershey 2006, 160). New Jersey, Maine, Massachusetts, Oklahoma and Rhode Island used the semi-closed primary system during the years studied. Arizona switched to a semi-closed primary in 1998. Colorado, Kansas, New Hampshire and Oregon switched to the semi-closed primary in 1994. North Carolina and West Virginia switched to the semi-closed primary in 1996 (Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27).

A semi-open primary is very similar to a semi-closed and open primary. "In 'semiopen' primaries ... voters can pick whichever party's ballot they choose but will need to ask for a particular party's ballot at the polls" (Hershey 2006, 160). Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Wyoming used the semi-open primary system in the years studied here. Hawaii switched to the semi-open primary system in 1994 (Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27).

Open primaries, sometimes called pure open or fully open, allow for voters to "receive either a consolidated ballot or ballots for every party and they select the party of their choice in the privacy of the voting booth" (Hershey 2006, 160). In most cases, the voters must register as affiliated with one party or another, but this affiliation is not taken into account on election day. Open primaries require that the parties relinquish some control over the voting process as well as their registered supporters. "Open and blanket primaries are consistent with the view that rigid party loyalists are harmful to a democracy, so candidates should be chosen by all voters,



regardless of party” (Hershey 2006, 161). Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont and Wisconsin were using the open primary system for the years studied here (Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27). As of the September 2004 elections, Washington began using the open primary system due to a United States Supreme Court ruling which stated their previous primary system, a blanket primary system, was unconstitutional (Washington Secretary of State Website, 2007)<sup>1</sup>. More on the blanket primary system as well as the court ruling will be discussed later.

Blanket primaries allow for greater freedom for the voter and no control for the parties. “The names of candidates from all parties appear on a single ballot in the primary, just as they do in the general election, so that a voter can choose a Democrat for one office and a Republican for another. In short, just as in an open primary, voters who are not affiliated with a party are permitted to help choose party’s candidates” (Hershey 2006, 160). Alaska and California used this type of primary until 2000 and Washington until 2004.

Kanthak and Williams (2005) go as far as to say that because a candidate could be elected with a majority in the first stage of this system, Louisiana does not actually have a primary election. They consider Louisiana to have a general election and a runoff election if necessary rather than a primary and general election combination. However, due to the United States Supreme Court ruling in *Foster v. Love* [522 U.S. 67 (1997)], Louisiana was forced to move their federal elections to mirror the date of the remaining forty-nine states’ federal election date. This is because theoretically, Louisiana’s Senators and Representatives could win at the first stage and be elected to federal office prior to the remainder of Congress. Since an individual is able to

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<sup>1</sup> [www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History\\_of\\_Washington\\_State\\_Primary\\_Systems.pdf](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History_of_Washington_State_Primary_Systems.pdf), Accessed November 12, 2007.

vote for any candidate from any party that he or she prefers without having to declare a party at registration or at the polling place, this type of primary is the most open of the five. Because of this, the blanket primary will be coded as such.

There are five major types of primary systems in use today. In a closed primary state, the voter is required to affiliate with a political party when registering to vote. A semi-closed primary allows the voter to change their affiliation at the polling place, but his or her registration will be changed for future elections. Semi-open primaries do not require a voter to affiliate with a party at registration, however he or she is required to declare which party's ballot they prefer before being allowed to vote. An open primary does not require the voter to declare which party's ballot he or she prefers. Instead, each voter is given either a consolidated ballot or a ballot for each party. The most open primary type is the blanket primary. All of the candidates are placed on one ballot and the voter can choose a different party for each office if he or she so wishes. In the blanket primary, a winner can be determined without a general election. Although several political parties have mounted court cases against the blanket primary, a "Top Two" system has not been ruled unconstitutional and is used in Washington and Louisiana. Each primary type has good and bad points. The more closed the primary type, the more benefit to the political parties. The more open the primary type, the more benefit to the individual voter.

## Chapter 3

### Controversy Surrounding the Blanket Primary

The United States Supreme Court ruled in 2000 that the blanket primary is unconstitutional (530 U.S. 567)<sup>2</sup>. However, Washington continued its use until it was “challenged by the state Democratic, Republican and Libertarian parties in United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, Tacoma” (Washington Secretary of State Website)<sup>3</sup>. After Washington’s primary was upheld as constitutional by the United States District Court, the parties appealed the decision to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which ruled in favor of the political parties (Washington Secretary of State Website)<sup>4</sup>. After the State’s writ of certiorari was denied, the Ninth Circuit’s decision would remain in place and the State would establish two types of primary systems. The first choice was a nonpartisan system with the second being an open primary. As the nonpartisan option was considered unconstitutional by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the United States Supreme Court approved the State’s writ of certiorari and heard oral arguments in October of 2007 (Washington Secretary of State Website)<sup>5</sup>. Until the time of the Supreme Court’s ruling, Washington used the open primary system.

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<sup>2</sup> *California Democratic Party v. Jones*, 530 U.S. 567 (2000).

<sup>3</sup> [www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History\\_of\\_Washington\\_State\\_Primary\\_Systems.pdf](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History_of_Washington_State_Primary_Systems.pdf), Accessed November 12, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> *Democratic Party of Washington State v. Reed* (W.D. Wash. 2002), 343 F. 3d 1198 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2003), *cert denied*, 540 U.S. 1213 (2004).  
[www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History\\_of\\_Washington\\_State\\_Primary\\_Systems.pdf](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History_of_Washington_State_Primary_Systems.pdf), Accessed November 12, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> “*Washington State Grange v. Washington State Republican Party, et al. and State of Washington v. Washington State Republican Party, et al.*, Nos. 06-713 and 06-730 respectively.”  
[www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History\\_of\\_Washington\\_State\\_Primary\\_Systems.pdf](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/pdf/2006/History_of_Washington_State_Primary_Systems.pdf), Accessed November 12, 2007.

In their opinion, released in March of 2008, the Justices ruled that *Jones* (530 U.S. 567)<sup>6</sup> did not apply to the Washington initiative (I-872)<sup>7</sup> passed by the voters in 2004. This initiative was passed in an attempt to correct the parts of the primary system that were ruled unconstitutional by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The United States Supreme Court ruled that because the initiative had been blocked by a permanent injunction, the only grounds for argument by the political parties had to be facial in nature. The Court defined such challenges as, “require[ing] a showing that a law is unconstitutional in all of its applications” (U.S. Supreme Court Slip Opinion)<sup>8</sup>. Because the initiative itself was not unconstitutional in wording, the Justices ruled in favor of the State of Washington. This ruling allows Washington to enact the initiative and maintain part of their blanket primary. However, I-872 establishes a unique type of primary system. The “Top Two” system allows for a nonpartisan blanket primary, similar to the type used by Louisiana. The difference is that the top two vote-getters in the primary proceed to the general election, regardless of party affiliation or total percentage of votes received. As the party affiliation is intended to include the candidate’s preference and has no bearing on whether the party does or does not endorse the candidate, the party cannot argue a violation of their associational rights. The associational argument posed by the political parties in this case was not the focus of the facial challenge; thus, the Supreme Court would not issue an opinion. Issuing the opinion of the Court, Justice Thomas notes, “The State has had no opportunity to implement I-872, and its courts have had no occasion to construe the law in the context of actual disputes arising from the electoral context, or to accord the law a limiting construction to avoid

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<sup>6</sup> *California Democratic Party v. Jones*, 530 U. S. 567.

<sup>7</sup> The People’s Choice Initiative of 2004, also referred to as I-872.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/07pdf/06-713.pdf> . Accessed on December 1, 2008. Pg.1 of slip opinion.

constitutional questions” (U.S. Supreme Court Slip Opinion)<sup>9</sup>. In their opinion, they do not rule out the possibility that the initiative could be enacted in a way that would make it unconstitutional; they simply argue that on the basis of its wording, it is within the realms of the constitution and the right of a political party to associate with the candidates it so chooses and not be forced to associate with those it does not choose to support.

Louisiana is the only state to use the nonpartisan type of primary system. Though it is often considered a type of blanket primary, rather than determining which candidates move on to the general election, “any candidate who wins more than 50 percent of the votes in the primary is elected to the office immediately. If no candidate wins an outright majority, then the general election serves as a runoff between the top two vote getters, even if they are of the same party” (Hershey 2006, 161). As mentioned above in the Washington case, the constitutionality of the blanket primary system was heard by the United States Supreme Court in October of 2007.

The Ninth Circuit decided that the nonpartisan primary: violates the political parties’ First Amendment right of free association by allowing any voter, regardless of his or her affiliation to the party, to choose the party’s nominee, and allowing any candidate, regardless of party affiliation or relationship to the party, to self-identify as a member of that party and appear on the primary and general election ballot as a candidate for that party [Washington Secretary of State Website].

The official question presented to the Court was, “Does Washington’s primary election system in which all voters are allowed to vote for any candidate, and in which the top two candidates advance to the general election regardless of party affiliation, violate the associational rights of

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/07pdf/06-713.pdf> . Accessed on December 1, 2008. Pg. 7 of Thomas opinion.

political parties because candidates are permitted to identify their political party preferences on the ballot” (U.S. Supreme Court Website)<sup>10</sup>?

This history has been provided to explain why the blanket primary is looked at separately from the other types of primary. Also, as the literature reviewed concludes that the blanket primary is not a true party primary as the candidates in the general election can be from the same party. The blanket primary is treated here as the most open type of primary.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.supremecourtus.gov/qp/06-00730qp.pdf](http://www.supremecourtus.gov/qp/06-00730qp.pdf). Accessed on November 12, 2007.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Determinants of the Likelihood to Vote**

Many studies have been done regarding what leads people to head to the polls on election day. Some of the most common factors include: education, income, age, social ties, employment status, residential stability, whether or not an incumbent is running, a person's history of voting, political disaffection, political attention, consumption of political media, presence of a high-ticket race and number of contacts made to the prospective voter. Each of these will be discussed below.

Stephen Wayne found in his study of presidential elections that “as people become more educated, as they move up the socioeconomic ladder, as their jobs gain in status, they are more likely to vote. Education is the most important of these variables. It has a larger impact than any other single social characteristic” (Wayne 1998, 59). Wolfinger and Rosenstone attribute the importance of education on whether or not someone will vote to a lower cost of voting due to either having more access or the ability to gain access to more information about the election as well as reducing the level of anxiety associated with the process of registering and actually casting a ballot, which they term “information costs” (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 14). Hershey states that more education also leads people to “feel that they ought to vote, to gain satisfaction from voting” (Hershey 2006, 147). Although education is a very strong indicator of whether someone will vote, alone it is not as predictive as combined with other socioeconomic variables such as income, which will be discussed next.

Income is the second most predictive factor when considering whether or not someone will vote. This is due to several reasons, probably the biggest of which is that people with lower

income levels are more likely to be concerned with fulfilling their daily needs. As income increases, the perception of vested interest a person feels in politics and who gets elected also increases. Wolfinger and Rosenstone also mention that higher income leads to a set of “norms and pressures” that includes political activity more than someone with a lower income (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 21). One of the most convincing reasons that income has as much to do with whether or not someone will vote as education is also stated by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980, 22-23):

Someone who has succeeded materially despite a scanty education is probably unusually competent, energetic, and engaged. This is all the more true if the person does not have a high-status job. These personal qualities may well generate a keen sense of civic duty and therefore a high probability of voting. The same would be true in reverse for someone who could not be successful, despite the advantage of a good education.

Until recently, a person’s gender was a strong pre-determinant to whether or not they would vote. Women were less likely to vote than men. In fact, many studies were done regarding the so-called gender gap. However, this gap has closed, due largely to the increasing education levels in women. Another biological factor has become the focus of the literature, largely replacing discussions on gender. The age of a voter has become an important factor in whether or not that person will vote. Hershey writes, “after socioeconomic explanations, the next most powerful personal factor in accounting for differences between voters and nonvoters is youth. For a long time, younger Americans have been less likely to go to the polls than are older people, especially those over the age of 65” (Hershey 2006, 148). Studies have shown that as age increases, so does the probability that that person is to vote, when controlling for all other socioeconomic factors. However, there appears to be a ceiling at which this effect levels off. “The rate of increase in voting begins to level off at around age fifty-five but turnout continues to



rise, at an increasingly slower pace, through the seventies” (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 47). The increase in turnout with age could be related to an increased history of voting as well as increased social ties, both of which will be discussed later.

Wolfinger and Rosenstone mention that social ties include family and friends. They found that “married people are more likely to vote than those who are single, separated, divorced, or widowed” (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 44). Spouses are an important impetus and resource where voting is concerned. Jackson notes the importance of “the exchange and sharing of political information between spouses and one spouse encouraging or prodding the other to do his or her civic duty” (Jackson 2003, 343). If a person’s spouse votes, he or she is likely to as well.

Jackson found that residential stability, employment status and whether a person is a homeowner affect the likelihood of voting. In testing his hypothesis regarding Latino electoral participation, he found, “Stable residents (i.e., nonmovers), homeowners, and those who are employed are more likely to be registered, controlling for other factors” (Jackson 2003, 345, 347). Residential stability and home ownership provide people with a stronger feeling of civic duty and more interest in the outcome of the election; thus, they will be more likely to register and vote. He explains adding these two variables as, “those who perceive a greater stake in the future of their community likely perceive greater benefits from political participation” (Jackson 2003, 341). By increasing the benefits of voting, citizens are decreasing the costs associated with voting and increasing the probability of heading to the polls on Election Day.

Bibby and Holbrook agree with Wolfinger and Rosenstone that the more difficult the process of registering is, the higher the cost and, absent strong factors to the contrary, the less

likely someone is to register. They go on to say that “in states in which it is difficult for voters to register or to stay registered, fewer people register, and voter turnout tends to be lower than it would be if registration laws made it easier to register” (Bibby and Holbrook 2004, 95).

However, the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (“NVRA”) has established procedures to make the registration process much easier. When a person moves, however, the individual must update their registration with a new address. The NVRA requires that when a person changes the address with the Department of Motor Vehicles (“DMV”), that information is to be sent to the appropriate officials to change the individual’s voter registration. Through programs such as Motor Voter, the initial registration process has become nearly effortless. For a person who is not residentially stable, the time after a move does not often include concerns over changing the address with the DMV and can lead to a gap in that person’s registration. Although not often considered as variables in most voting behavior studies, I felt compelled by Jackson’s argument to include these three variables in this project.

Whether or not the majority of the candidates are incumbents can also lead to lower level of voter turnout. “The research on gubernatorial primaries finds turnout is lower when an incumbent is seeking reelection” (Kenney 1986, 68). Contrary to the rest of the literature, Jewell and Olson find that “although the absence of incumbents may lead to closer primaries, there is no consistent pattern of higher turnout with or without incumbents in the race” (Jewell and Olson 1978). However, there could be a variety of reasons for the lack of a consistent pattern. A few examples could include: high approval rates for incumbent (thus a lower need to elect a new candidate), lack of inter-party competition, and lack of credible and/or likable candidates for either the primary or general elections.

A factor often overlooked is a voter's history of voting. Party and/or candidate mobilization is aimed at getting a person to the polls. "Once the mobilization has brought an individual to the polls, however, he or she is likely to return. Voting becomes a habit, which can help to explain the increasing tendency to vote as people age" (Hershey 2006, 146). Another reason that a history of voting could increase the likelihood a person will vote is that the act of going to the polls, especially in smaller towns or communities, becomes a social event. Meeting neighbors and catching up with old friends frequently occurs in communities, particularly suburban communities. Also, voting can lead to other forms of political involvement which increase the benefits for a person to vote. Having a history of voting is usually associated with high levels of education and income as both variables are excellent predictors of likelihood of voting.

Baum and Kernell (1999) introduce the idea of media consumption, political disaffection and political attitudes and behavior as having an effect on a person's opinion of government. A person's opinion of government determines their level of efficacy which can affect whether or not they will vote. Media consumption, comprised of television, print sources and radio, can increase the political knowledge and campaign interest a person possesses. Political disaffection is defined by a person's trust in government and level of both internal and external efficacy. As trust and efficacy decrease, the likelihood that a person will vote decreases as well. However, as trust and efficacy increase, the likelihood a person will vote increases as well, because the person now feels as though every opinion makes a difference and every vote can make a difference in both the election and government as a whole. Combining campaign and political interest, knowledge of public affairs, party identification, state of the economy and political activity, Baum and Kernell produce their political attitudes and behavior variable (Baum and Kernell

1999, 112). Using each of these survey questions, they determine the stake a person has in any given election. Increased interest in campaigns and politics leads to increased knowledge of public affairs.

Having a defined party identification or being involved in political activity is also a symptom of a higher stake. I will be adjusting party identification to strength of party identification as I feel this is more useful. Though their study focuses on the decline of public attention and opinion towards government leaders, these variables prove useful for our purposes.

There are a variety of effects that the election itself could have on whether or not someone will vote. Some examples include: weather, weekday or weekend and the type of election being held. The weather is an obvious but somewhat surprising factor. However, to someone who is considering voting, especially for the first time, weather such as rain or snow could add to the cost to the voter. This is especially true for someone who does not have an automobile and is required to either walk to their polling place or take public transportation.

If the election is held on a weekday, as is the case with federal elections, people who have to work, especially those who work outside of their voting area may find it more difficult to get off work or leave work early in order to get to the polls before voting ends.

Probably the biggest of these factors is the type of election being held. Voter turnout is consistently higher in big-ticket elections. When the ballot includes presidential or gubernatorial candidates, voters are considerably more likely to vote. "It is understandable why general election campaigns for the presidency and governorships entice more voters to participate. The personalities and issues involved are more highly publicized, the coverage is more intense, and people's party loyalties are aroused" (Hershey 2006, 145). Hershey goes on to discuss that the

drama associated with these big-ticket elections inherently draws more interest and more turnout. Jewell and Olson find that the presence of a presidential election also increases the turnout for gubernatorial elections and could explain why many states have changed their gubernatorial races to federal election years. Due to an inability to obtain the information for each election regarding the factors discussed above, the presence of a high-ticket election (in this case, gubernatorial) will be the only considered in the data analysis.

In his study on how people judge political expertise, Huckfeldt introduces the variable of social communication. He cites Downs' (1957) assertion that this communication encourages participation in the electoral process through a decrease in the information costs for an individual (Huckfeldt 2001, 426). Expanding on Downs' assertion, "Rather than undertaking extensive and exhaustive research regarding every political issue, individuals quite reasonably acquire such information on the cheap by collecting it from politically knowledgeable individuals who hold compatible political biases" (Huckfeldt 2001, 426). Although he continues his study of social communication with studying how people determine political expertise in another source, he illuminates the idea that increased social communication will lower the information costs and increase the probability of voting.

Throughout the research done for this study, one major gap has appeared. Although much study has been done on voter turnout and reasons it increases or decreases, there seems to be very little study done in regards to voter turnout in primary or general elections outside of presidential races. This is especially true of primary elections. Also, with the exception of Kanthak and Morton (2003), only one other study has addressed the direct correlation between the type of primary and voter turnout levels in either the primary or general elections. Kanthak and Morton focused on the party vote shares as an effect of the presence of a primary. However,

Calcagno and Westley (2008) look at “the relationship between primary type, candidate deviation, and voter turnout” (Calcagno and Westley 2008, 3). Their focus on primary type and voter turnout utilizes gubernatorial elections from 1989 through 1998 and contains 142 elections and attempts to cancel out the effect of a high profile contest on the ballot. The purpose of this research is to fill the hole that is left in the current literature as well as to connect the current research regarding voter turnout to the type of primary each state operates under.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Theoretical Expectations**

The literature has shown that the higher the level of competition within the election, the more likely a person is to get out and vote. If only one party has a high level of competition and the other party primary includes very few candidates or predictable races, a person registered with that party is less likely to vote in that primary. If a voter is allowed to choose which party to affiliate with at the polls, then that person is more likely to vote.

Both Bibby and Holbrook and Wolfinger and Rosenstone state that the higher the cost to the voter to register or change party affiliation, the less likely someone is to register. If a person must be concerned with party affiliation, the costs increase if the person wishes to vote in another party's primary. Also, although party identification has been found to be fairly consistent over time, events can occur that might convince a person to identify with a different party or candidate and require that his or her registration be altered.

H1. The more closed the primary system in a voter's state, the less likely he or she will be to vote.

### **Dependent Variables**

With a focus on mid-term Congressional elections, this study looks at individual voter turnout in general elections as the dependent variable. Although Kanthak and Morton (2005) argue that the blanket primary (particularly the type used by Louisiana) is not an actual primary, it is included in this study as the most open primary system. This information is based on individual responses to survey data.

## **Independent Variables**

The independent variable in this study is the type of primary a voter's state operates under, which will be examined in the context of Congressional general elections. I will only be including general elections because the survey data does not include a distinguishing question as to whether the respondent voted in the primary or general or both. The question only asks if the person voted in the election. Without being able to distinguish whether the respondent voted in a primary or general, I cannot include both due to concerns of duplication and model specification errors.

I expect that primary type will have an effect on general election turnout because the mobilizational effects of primary elections carry over into the general election. If someone does not vote in the primary due to problems related to party affiliation, they are less likely to vote in the general election as well.

## **Control Variables**

The control variables used to test my hypothesis in this study will be the following: education, income, age, marital status, employment, time at current address, home ownership, whether the respondent voted in previous elections, the presence of incumbent, media consumption, political and campaign interest, public affairs knowledge, strength of party identification, trust in government, efficacy, the number of social contact types and whether or not a gubernatorial race is on the ballot. Each of these has been addressed primarily in the literature review above.



## **Years Studied**

The years studied for this project are 1990, 1994 and 1998, which are all mid-term congressional election years. Attempts to determine the specific type of primary used by each state proved difficult. The difficulty arises because each state has multiple laws on the type of primary to be used with some sections of the laws being outdated and worded in ambiguous manners. The information provided in Kanthak and Morton (2003) is contradictory to that found in Calcagno and Westley (2008). As the Kanthak and Morton information is located in a conference paper and the Calcagno and Westley information is in a published article, this study will use the information provided by the latter. Although the source of the Calcagno information is not identified in their article, the information is more recent and more detailed in the explanation of states that have changed the type of primary system used from one election to another. The contradiction shows the complex nature of determining which type of primary a state uses for any given election. Those in charge of running the election as well as the political parties may not be completely sure and some states use different types of primaries for state elections than federal elections.

These years were chosen because they are all mid-term congressional elections and in the same decade. This allows for analysis separate of large gaps in time as well as major cultural shifts.

Throughout the course of the three elections selected for this project, the ANES surveys have included different variables, with the number of variables tending to increase as time passes. However, this should not produce an effect for the purposes of this study. The questions used to determine each variable have been fairly consistent over time.

## Sources of Data

Peter T. Calcagno and Christopher Westley's article titled "An Institutional Analysis of Voter Turnout: The Role of Primary Type and the Expressive and Instrumental Voting Hypotheses" is used to determine the type of primary system used by each state in each of the chosen election years.

Using ANES data, I establish my major individual variables. Education, income, age, marital status and employment status are used to determine socioeconomic status. Time at current address and home owner status determine residential stability. Political attitudes and behavior are comprised of campaign interest, public affairs knowledge and strength of party identification. Media consumption is comprised of television viewing, radio listening, newspaper reading, magazine reading. Political disaffection is made up of trusting government, feelings about political parties and efficacy. Political communication is determined by contact with political parties, candidates, interest groups and social discussion. Residential stability is a combination of the time a person has lived at his or her current address and whether he or she is a homeowner or rents a home. Political attitudes, political disaffection and residential stability are additive index variables and will be used in the place of the individual variables they are comprised of. Finally, presence of an incumbent and type of primary are also established using ANES data.

## Methodology

The data will be analyzed using a multiple cross-sectional view process. The focus of the study is the Congressional mid-term elections of 1990, 1994 and 1998. The blanket primary has been included and coded as the most open type of primary system.<sup>11</sup>

I utilized a cross-sectional approach to test my hypothesis. Although this does not allow for a comparison across elections, I will be able to compare across primary types within each election. The purpose of using three elections is to allow a stabilizing effect when analyzing results. I expect that over time the type of primary will have an effect regardless of major events at the time of the election; using multiple elections to establish a control variable for major events at the time of each election will allow me to confirm or deny this particular hypothesis.

I used logistic regression, Logit, to get a cross-sectional view of the data. Also, I used a two-tailed test for my hypothesis and a significance level of at least 95%.

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<sup>11</sup> A second variable for primary type "Primary2" was coded as variations of closed, variations of open and blanket. This was done due to a lack of significant difference in the distinctions between the two types of closed primaries and the two types of open primaries. However, this variable produced no significant results and was omitted from this study.

## Chapter 6

### Data Analysis

To determine whether or not the type of primary was significantly related to one's likelihood of voting, bivariate crosstabs were run for each year of the study. Next, multivariate analyses examine the relationship between primary type and likelihood of voting when the control variables discussed in the literature review were added.

The bivariate table shows that with no other variables included, primary type is significantly related at a 95 percent confidence level to the likelihood of voting in 1990. Forty-seven percent of people in closed primary states voted; that likelihood percentage decreases only slightly to forty-six percent in a semi-closed primary system and forty-three percent in a semi-open system. In an open system that percentage increases to fifty-six, while fifty-four percent of people in blanket primary states voted. The hypothesis receives some support in that a person is significantly more likely to vote in the open and blanket primaries than the other three types of primary systems. (See Table 1 below.)

Table 1: Individual Turnout by Primary Type, 1990

			Primary					
			Closed	Semi-Closed	Semi-Open	Open	Blanket	Total
Vote90	Did not vote	Count % within Primary	448 52.7%	42 53.8%	458 56.8%	87 43.7%	21 45.7%	1056 53.4%
	Voted	Count % within Primary	402 47.3%	36 46.2%	348 43.2%	112 56.3%	25 54.3%	923 46.6%
Total		Count % within Primary	850 100%	78 100%	806 100%	199 100%	46 100%	1979 100%

Pearson's chi-square = 12.570; p-value < .05

When analyzing the relationship between likelihood of voting and type of primary in the 1994 data, the results show that primary type is not significantly related to likelihood of voting. Nor is there any consistent pattern in individual turnout when moving from the most closed to the most open type of primary system. (See Table 2 below.)

Table 2: Individual Turnout by Primary Type, 1994

			Primary					
			Closed	Semi-Closed	Semi-Open	Open	Blanket	Total
Vote94	Did not vote	Count % within Primary	223 41.5%	104 35.7%	294 42.2%	92 43.6%	28 47.5%	741 41.3%
	Voted	Count % within Primary	314 58.5%	187 64.3%	402 57.8%	119 56.4%	31 52.5%	1053 58.7%
Total		Count % within Primary	537 100%	291 100%	696 100%	211 100%	59 100%	1794 100%

Pearson's chi-square = 5.362; Not significant.

However, in 1998 the relationship between primary type and likelihood of voting is highly significant statistically. Thirty –two percent of individuals in closed primary states voted, compared to forty-four percent in semi-closed primary states. Twenty-eight percent of individuals voted in a semi-open primary system and that percentage increased to thirty-three percent in an open primary system and forty-six percent in a blanket primary system. The hypothesis stated earlier does receive some support as the blanket primary produces the highest likelihood of voting; however, semi-closed primary states have the second highest likelihood of an individual voting. Thus, while the relationship is statistically significant, there is once again no consistent pattern when moving from the most closed to the most open primary systems. (See Table 3 below.)

Table 3: Individual Turnout by Primary Type, 1998

			Primary					
			Closed	Semi-Closed	Semi-Open	Open	Blanket	Total
Vote98	Did not vote	Count % within Primary	162 47.6%	42 36.8%	286 52.5%	60 36.1%	40 36.0%	590 46.2%
	Voted	Count % within Primary	178 52.4%	72 63.2%	259 47.5%	106 63.9%	71 64.0%	686 53.8%
Total		Count % within Primary	340 100%	114 100%	545 100%	166 100%	111 100%	1276 100%

Pearson's chi-square = 21.121; p-value < .01

The hypothesized relationship between the type of primary system a state uses and the likelihood that an individual will vote is supported in only one of the three years studied when controlling for the other variables. In 1990, the relationship is not statistically significant when a multivariate analysis is performed. In 1994, the type of primary is statistically significant at 95 percent confidence using multivariate analysis, but the relationship is in the opposite direction from that hypothesized, as an individual is more likely to vote in a closed and semi-closed primary system than in an open and blanket primary system. In 1998 the primary type is significantly related to an individual's likelihood to vote, at the 90 percent confidence level, and this time the relationship is in the hypothesized direction, with turnout more likely in states with more open primary systems.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout the three years studied, four variables were consistently highly significant indicators of an individual's likelihood to vote: residential stability, history of voting, political attention level and number of contacts received. As individuals become stable in their residency,

<sup>12</sup> The model looks at the relationship of all of the control variables with primary type for each of the three years and is considered the full model. Other models were considered; including the control variables without primary type, the full model without income and the full model without previous voting. However, none of the other three models provided any reportable findings.

through living at the same address for a long period of time and owning a home, they are more likely to vote. Having a history of voting is also a very good indicator of an individual's likelihood to vote in the current election. The same holds true with political attention; a high degree of interest shown in politics and campaigns combined with a high level of political knowledge and a strong party identification lead to an increased likelihood of voting. Also an increased number of contacts made to an individual will increase that individual's likelihood of voting. Each of these variables could be decreasing the significance of the type of primary in an individual's state on that individual's likelihood to vote.

The inconsistent results regarding the effect of primary openness on individual turnout could be attributed to the overwhelming effects of the voters' established voting patterns, stability, and engagement with the election. Living at one address for an extended period of time and owning a home provides an individual with a sense of having a stake in the election results. When an individual has invested in a home and plans on living in that home for a long period of time, the person elected to represent the district the individual lives in takes on more meaning than for someone who rents a residence or does not plan on living in that district for any period of time. For a person who is not residentially stable, the time after a move does not often include concerns over changing the address with the DMV and can lead to a gap in that person's registration. A second factor is a person's history of voting. Regardless of primary type, when someone has voted before, that person is familiar with the election procedures as well as the candidates running for office in that district. The act of voting becomes a habit. Third, high levels of interest in politics as well as political knowledge and strong party identification lead to a person feeling a sense of attachment toward a particular candidate or slate of candidates. This sense of attachment increases the likelihood that a person will vote to support the candidate or

candidates that the individual wants to win elective office. Finally, many candidates and political parties contact registered voters in an attempt to gain their support in the upcoming election. These contacts provide information to the individual and increase their political knowledge, which has been shown previously to increase that individual's likelihood of voting.

As each of the four variables described above produced highly significant results in each of the years studied, the combination of the four dampen the effect of the type of primary. The more familiar an individual is with the political system and the upcoming election, the less likely that person is to be discouraged from voting based on the type of primary. On the same note, if someone is highly educated on the upcoming election and is familiar with the system in that particular state, the person is likely to be registered to vote and understands the requirements (or lack thereof) for party affiliation and has adhered to those requirements.

The hypothesized relationship between the type of primary system and whether or not an individual is likely to vote is based on the assumption that the more closed the primary system in a state, the higher the costs to the individual to vote. In a closed primary state, an individual must take the extra step of registering with a party affiliation in advance of the election and verifying that affiliation prior to casting a vote. Conversely, in an open primary state, the costs are lowered as the individual needs only to be registered to vote and is able to determine the party that individual chooses to support on election day. A blanket primary does not require party affiliation at all, thus an individual does not need to have any level of knowledge regarding party affiliation; that individual merely needs to be registered and is allowed to choose candidates from any party.



The lowered cost of voting to an individual in an open or blanket primary state leads to a higher likelihood of that individual voting in 1990 and 1998. Although the 1990 data did not find that the type of primary was a significant indicator of an individual's likelihood to vote, it did produce the most number of highly significant control variables. These other highly significant variables (seven in all) are most likely explaining the relationship to such a high degree that primary does not achieve significance. However, in 1994, the relationship becomes a negative one in that the open and blanket primary states produced the least likelihood of an individual voting.

Using the Clarify program with Stata, probabilities of voting in states with each type of primary system were calculated while holding other variables at their means. For a state using a closed primary system, the probability of an individual voting is seventy-two percent and this probability decreases to sixty-seven percent in a semi-closed primary system. An individual in a semi-open primary system has a sixty-two percent probability of voting and that probability decreases to fifty-six percent in an open primary system. Finally, in a blanket primary system, the probability of an individual voting is at the lowest level at fifty-one percent. This is the opposite direction hypothesized earlier. This inverse relationship is likely caused by the extremely high probabilities produced by residential stability, history of voting, political attention and number of contacts received by an individual.

In 1998, primary type is statistically significant at 90 percent confidence level. The probability of an individual voting in a closed primary system is forty-four percent and increases to fifty percent in a semi-closed primary system. That probability increases again to fifty-six percent in a semi-open primary system and sixty-one percent in an open primary system. Finally, in a blanket primary system, an individual is sixty-seven percent likely to vote. These

results are consistent with the hypothesized relationship between type of primary system and the likelihood that an individual will vote. As the type of primary becomes more open, an individual is more likely to vote. (See Table 4 below.)

Table 4: Logit Analysis of Individual Turnout

	1990	1994	1998
Variable	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
Primary	-.0046 (.0557)	-.2241** (.1048)	.2365* (.1270)
Education	.0997** (.0489)	.0367 (.0855)	-.0135 (.1161)
Income	.1332*** (.0429)	.0465 (.0731)	-.0741 (.0931)
Age	.0088* (.0047)	.0135* (.0079)	.0339*** (.0102)
Marital	.0197 (.1378)	.4072* (.2387)	.5772* (.3401)
Employment	.0264 (.1598)	-.1092 (.2757)	.2684 (.3232)
ResStab	.4551*** (.0642)	.4620*** (.1028)	.4785*** (.1523)
Incumbent	.0985 (.2492)	-.2802 (.3805)	1.1053 (.7504)
Vote88/92/96	2.8040*** (.1820)	2.9567*** (.3449)	3.1382*** (.4235)
PolDisAff	.0198 (.0307)	.0248 (.0591)	.1555** (.0657)
PolAtt	.3036*** (.0446)	.4878*** (.0780)	.8265*** (.1427)
PolMedia	.2310* (.1399)	.2959* (.1531)	.1925 (.1676)
Governor	.6012*** (.2089)	-.1964 (.2945)	.5981* (.3410)
NumCon	.2829*** (.0912)	.4744*** (.1534)	.7685*** (.2565)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.3971	.4321	.5733
N	1728	728	497

standard error in parenthesis; \* = p-value < .1; \*\* = p-value < .05; \*\*\* = p-value < .01

The 1990 data showed that primary type is not significantly related to likelihood of voting when controlling for other variables. The lack of statistical significance in 1990 is likely due to the predictive power of residential stability, history of voting, political attention level and number of contacts received. The 1994 data showed that primary type was significantly related to likelihood of voting; however, the results are contradictory to the hypothesis stated earlier. As primary type becomes more open, the likelihood of an individual voting decreases. Only in the 1998 analysis was the primary type significantly related to the likelihood of voting in the hypothesized direction.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Implications and Significance**

The intent of this study is to continue the process of studying the effects of primary type on voter turnout at the state level started by Kanthak and Morton and continued by Calcagno and Westley. Previous research has focused on what factors are present that lead a person to vote, demonstrating that many variables are related to a citizen's likelihood of voting. A minimal amount of research has looked at the type of primary system on voter turnout. No one has examined the effect of state's primary type on individual turnout in Congressional elections. My hope is that this study will spur more researchers to consider the effect of the various primary systems, not only on voter turnout in primary and general elections, but the possible effects on voter registration as well.

### **Future Research**

I started with Congressional elections in order to study the individual states separately. Future research could include a study going down to the local level. Further study could include doing time-series analysis to determine whether or not the results of this research show a consistent pattern or whether they are period-specific in each state.

### **Conclusion**

When examining the effects of the type of primary on the likelihood of voting without any control variables, we find the relationship to be statistically significant in 1990 and 1998. The hypothesis receives some support in 1990 in that a person is more likely to vote in the open and blanket primaries than the other three types of primary systems. In 1998, the hypothesis

receives some support as the blanket primary produces the highest likelihood of voting; however, semi-closed primary states have the second highest likelihood of an individual voting.

The 1990 data showed that primary type is not significantly related to likelihood of voting when controlling for other variables. The 1994 data showed that primary type was significantly related to likelihood of voting; however, the results are contradictory to the hypothesis stated earlier. As primary type becomes more open, the likelihood of an individual voting decreases. Only in the 1998 analysis was the primary type significantly related to the likelihood of voting in the hypothesized direction.

As discussed in the analysis in the previous chapter, four control variables maintained highly significant relationships with the likelihood of voting. Each of these four variables - residential stability, history of voting, political attention level and number of contacts received by an individual - could be overwhelming the model. Being very good indicators of likelihood to vote, these variables are likely watering down the effects of primary type.

The three elections studied here do not provide enough of a picture of the overall importance of primary type to rule out any significance overall. By adding more elections to the study, the relationship should become clearer and more definitive. Based on the results produced in this study, primary type should not be discounted as having an effect on likelihood of voting.

The type of primary a state chooses to use has an effect on the political parties as well as the individual's cost of voting. Political parties benefit when a state uses a more closed primary type as they are able to control who is allowed to vote for the candidates representing each party. Also, the parties are able to lower the financial burden on each candidate by focusing their campaign efforts to only those voters who are registered as affiliated with that specific party.

When a state uses a more open type of primary, the financial burden for the parties as well as the candidates increase as they must now widen their campaign efforts to include all registered voters. The blanket primary puts the highest level of burden on both the parties and the candidates. As with the open primaries, any registered voter is allowed to vote for any candidate. However, now the candidates and parties must directly compete with the opposing candidates through both the primary election and general election (if necessary).

The findings of this study, that the type of primary in an individual's state does not have a consistently significant effect on the likelihood of that individual voting, does not diminish the importance of the type of primary a state chooses. Adding more election years as well as considering adding presidential elections would further evidence and perhaps demonstrate a more consistent pattern. Also, a time-series analysis could show a clearer picture of the effect of primary type on an individual's likelihood of voting. This study was limited, by both time and funding, to using three elections and data collected by an outside source. Taking a larger sample with a more even distribution among the types of primaries would give a better indication of the relationship that this study hints is present. Once the bigger picture is seen, states would be able to make informed decisions about ways to increase voter turnout.

## Appendix A<sup>13</sup>

### State Primary Types

Closed	Semi-closed	Semi-open	Open	Blanket
Arizona	Arizona <sup>14</sup>	Alabama	Idaho	Washington
California <sup>15</sup>	New Jersey	Arkansas	Michigan	Alaska
Colorado	Maine	Georgia	Minnesota	Louisiana
Connecticut	Massachusetts	Hawaii	Montana	California
Delaware	Oklahoma	Illinois	North Dakota	
Florida	Rhode Island	Indiana	Vermont	
Kansas	Colorado <sup>16</sup>	Iowa	Wisconsin	
Kentucky	Kansas <sup>16</sup>	Mississippi	Hawaii <sup>17</sup>	
Maryland	New Hampshire <sup>16</sup>	Missouri		
Nebraska	Oregon <sup>16</sup>	Ohio		
Nevada	North Carolina <sup>18</sup>	South Carolina		
New Hampshire	West Virginia <sup>18</sup>	Tennessee		
New Mexico		Texas		
New York		Virginia		
North Carolina		Wyoming		
Oregon				
Pennsylvania				
South Dakota				
Utah				
West Virginia				

<sup>13</sup> From Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Switched to a closed primary for 1998 election.

<sup>15</sup> Switched to a blanket primary for 1998 election.

<sup>16</sup> Switched to a semi-closed primary for 1994 and 1998 election.

<sup>17</sup> Switched to an open primary for 1994 and 1998 election.

<sup>18</sup> Switched to a semi-closed primary for 1998 election.

## Appendix B

### Question Wording and Coding of Variables

#### 1990

“Vote90” is coded as 0 if respondent did not vote in the 1990 election and 1 if voted.

Question: “In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren’t registered, they were sick, or they just didn’t have time. How about you – did you vote in the elections this November?”

“Primary” is coded based on the primary a respondent’s state used in the 1990 election as 1 for closed, 2 for semi-closed, 3 for semi-open, 4 for open and 5 for blanket.

The FIPS state code was compared to the table provided by Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27 and is attached as Appendix A.

“Education” is coded based on respondent’s given highest level of education completed. 1 is “some high school”, 2 is “completed high school/high school equivalent”, 3 is “some college”, 4 is “associate’s degree/certificate”, 5 is “bachelor’s degree” and 6 is “advanced degree”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of education questions.

“Income” is coded based on respondent’s reported family annual income. 1 is none or less than \$14,999, 2 is \$15,000 to \$29,999, 3 is \$30,000 to \$44,999, 4 is \$45,000 to 59,999, 5 is \$60,000 to \$74,999, 6 is \$75,000 to \$89,999, 7 is \$90,000 and over. Don’t know and refuse to answer are coded as missing cases.

Question: “Please look at this page and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 1989 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. (If uncertain: What would be your best guess?)”

“Age” is coded based on the respondent’s year of birth.

Age was given by the respondent.

“Marital” is respondent’s marital status coded as 0 for “not married” and 1 for “married”. “Not married” includes: “Never married”, “Divorced”, “Separated”, “Widowed” and “Partners not married”.

Question: “Are you married now and living with your (Husband/Wife) – or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married? If spouse in nursing home, or works and lives in another city, or family is in process of moving and temporarily holding 2 residences, code 1 is used.”



“Employment” is coded based on respondent’s current employment status. Coded 0 for “Unemployed” and 1 for “Working”. “Unemployed” includes: “Temporarily Laid Off”, “Retired and not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Permanently disabled and not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Homemaker not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Student not working 20 hours or more per week”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of employment questions.

“ResTime” is coded based on how long the respondent has lived at current address. Coded 0 for less than 2 years, 1 for 2 to 4 years and 2 for 4 or more years.

Question: “How long have you lived in this (House/Condo/Apartment)?”

“OwnRent” is based on whether the respondent owns or rent the home at his/her current address. 0 is for “Rent” and 1 is for “Own”. “Rent” includes “Occupancy part of financial arrangement with employer or owner” and “Other”.

Question: “(Do you/Does your family) own your home, pay rent, or what?”

“Incumbent” is based on whether the incumbent is running in either the House or Senate race being held during the 1990 election cycle. 0 is for no incumbent in either race and 1 is for an incumbent is present in at least one of the races. Whether the incumbent is unopposed is not being looked at here, simply the presence or absence of an incumbent. If there is no race in the state or if any candidate ran unopposed, the case will be coded as a missing case.

Question is a summary by the author based on a set of information provided to the interviewer regarding the type of race in the state.

“Vote88” is coded based on whether the respondent voted in the 1988 election. 0 is for did not vote and 1 is for voted.

Question: “In 1988 George Bush ran on the Republican ticket against Michael Dukakis for the Democrats. Do you remember for sure whether or not you voted in that election?”

“PolMedia” is based on the respondent’s number of political news/media sources consumed per week. The number is based on the number of sources, not the number of times per week. This variable ranges from 0 to 2 as newspaper and television were included in the survey.

Question: “How many days in the past week did you read a daily newspaper?” “How many days in the past week did you watch the news on tv?”

“PolInterest” is based on the respondent’s level of political and/or campaign interest. 0 is for “Not much interested”, 1 is for “Somewhat interested” and 2 is for “Very much interested”. “Don’t know” responses are coded as a missing case.

Question: “Some people don’t pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in following the political campaigns this year?”

“PolInfo” is based on the interviewer’s perception of the respondent’s level of public affairs knowledge. 1 is for “Very low”, 2 is for “Fairly low”, 3 is for “Average”, 4 is for “Fairly high” and 5 is for “Very high”.

Question: “Respondent’s general level of information about politics and public affairs seemed:”

“PartyID” is based on the strength of the respondent’s identification with a political party. 0 is for “Independent”, 1 is for “Weak”, 2 is for “Strong”. 0 includes “Independent-Democrat”, “Independent-Independent”, “Independent-Republican”, “Other-Minor Party, Refuses to say” and “Apolitical”. “Weak” includes “Weak Democrat” as well as “Weak Republican”. “Strong” includes “Strong Democrat” as well as “Strong Republican”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of party identification questions.

“Trust” is based on the respondent’s trust in government. 0 is for “Never”, 1 is for “Don’t Know”, 2 is for “Sometimes”, 3 is for “Most of the Time”, and 4 is for “Always”.

Question: “How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?”

“Efficacy” is based on a series of questions regarding the respondent’s perception that his or her participation may influence government and make a difference. Ranges from 0 to 6 based on the amount of positive answers. The higher the value of this variable, the more efficacious the person feels.

Questions: “Do you think that people in government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?” “Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all people?” “Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?” Agree/Disagree Statements: “Public officials don’t care much what people like me think.” “People like me don’t have any say about what the government does.” “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what’s going on.”

“NumCon” is the number of contacts a respondent has concerning the election. The variable ranges from 0-5 and includes contacts with: House members (initiated contact), House

challenger, Democratic candidate (non-incumbent), Republican candidate (non-incumbent) and House member (contacted by respondent).

Question is an index compiled by the author based on a series of contact questions.

“Governor” is based on whether or not a Gubernatorial race is included in the 1990 elections. 0 is no gubernatorial election and 1 is gubernatorial election included.

Question is based on information given to the interviewer which includes what types of races were being held.

“PolDisAff” is based on the concept of political disaffection. This variable is coded as Trust plus Efficacy and ranges from 0 to 9. As the value of the variable increases, the disaffection of the respondent decreases.

“PolAtt” is based on the concept of political attitudes and behaviors. This variable is coded as PolInterest plus PolInfo plus PartyID and ranges from 0 to 10. As the value of the variable increases, the more active the respondent.

“ResStab” is based on residential stability. This variable is coded as ResTime plus OwnRent and ranges from 0 to 3. As the value of this variable increases, the residential stability of the respondent increases as well.

## 1994

“Vote94” is coded as 0 if respondent did not vote in the 1994 election and 1 if voted.

Question: “In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren’t registered, they were sick, or they just didn’t have time. How about you – did you vote in the elections this November?”

“Primary” is coded based on the primary a respondent’s state used in the 1990 election as 1 for closed, 2 for semi-closed, 3 for semi-open, 4 for open and 5 for blanket.

The FIPS state code was compared to the table provided by Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27 and is attached as Appendix A.

“Education” is coded based on respondent’s given highest level of education completed. 1 is “some high school”, 2 is “completed high school/high school equivalent”, 3 is “some college”, 4 is “associate’s degree/certificate”, 5 is “bachelor’s degree” and 6 is “advanced degree”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of education questions.

“Income” is coded based on respondent’s reported family annual income. 1 is none or less than \$14,999, 2 is \$15,000 to \$29,999, 3 is \$30,000 to \$44,999, 4 is \$45,000 to 59,999, 5 is \$60,000 to \$74,999, 6 is \$75,000 to \$89,999, 7 is \$90,000 and over. Don’t know and refuse to answer are coded as missing cases.

Question: “Please look at this page and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 1993 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. (If uncertain: What would be your best guess?)”

“Age” is coded based on the respondent’s year of birth.

Age was given by the respondent.

“Marital” is respondent’s marital status coded as 0 for “not married” and 1 for “married”. “Not married” includes: “Never married”, “Divorced”, “Separated”, “Widowed” and “Partners not married”.

Question: “Are you married now and living with your (Husband/Wife) – or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married? If spouse in nursing home, or works and lives in another city, or family is in process of moving and temporarily holding 2 residences, code 1 is used.”

“Employment” is coded based on respondent’s current employment status. Coded 0 for “Unemployed” and 1 for “Working”. “Unemployed” includes: “Temporarily Laid Off”, “Retired and not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Permanently disabled and not working

20 hours or more per week”, “Homemaker not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Student not working 20 hours or more per week”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of employment questions.

“ResTime” is coded based on how long the respondent has lived at current address. Coded 0 for less than 2 years, 1 for 2 to 4 years and 2 for 4 or more years.

Question: “How long have you lived in this (House/Condo/Apartment)?”

“OwnRent” is based on whether the respondent owns or rent the home at his/her current address. 0 is for “Rent” and 1 is for “Own”. “Rent” includes “Occupancy part of financial arrangement with employer or owner” and “Other”.

Question: “(Do you/Does your family) own your home, pay rent, or what?”

“Incumbent” is based on whether the incumbent is running in either the House or Senate race being held during the 1994 election cycle. 0 is for no incumbent in either race and 1 is for an incumbent is present in at least one of the races. Whether the incumbent is unopposed is not being looked at here, simply the presence or absence of an incumbent. If there is no race in the state or if any candidate ran unopposed, the case will be coded as a missing case.

Question is a summary by the author based on a set of information provided to the interviewer regarding the type of race in the state.

“Vote92” is coded based on whether the respondent voted in the 1992 election. 0 is for did not vote and 1 is for voted.

Question: “In 1992 George Bush ran on the Republican ticket against the independent Ross Perot, and against Bill Clinton for the Democrats. Do you remember for sure whether or not you voted in that election?”

“PolMedia” is based on the respondent’s number of political news/media sources consumed per week. The number is based on the number of sources, not the number of times per week. This variable ranges from 0 to 3 as newspaper, television and radio were included in the survey.

Question: “How many days in the past week did you read a daily newspaper?” “How many days in the past week did you watch the news on tv?” “How many days in the past week did you listen to the news on radio?”

“PolInterest” is based on the respondent’s level of political and/or campaign interest. 0 is for “Not much interested”, 1 is for “Somewhat interested” and 2 is for “Very much interested”. “Don’t know” responses are coded as a missing case.

Question: “Some people don’t pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in following the political campaigns this year?”

“PolInfo” is based on the interviewer’s perception of the respondent’s level of public affairs knowledge. 1 is for “Very low”, 2 is for “Fairly low”, 3 is for “Average”, 4 is for “Fairly high” and 5 is for “Very high”.

Question: “Respondent’s general level of information about politics and public affairs seemed:”

“PartyID” is based on the strength of the respondent’s identification with a political party. 0 is for “Independent”, 1 is for “Weak”, 2 is for “Strong”. 0 includes “Independent-Democrat”, “Independent-Independent”, “Independent-Republican”, “Other-Minor Party, Refuses to say” and “Apolitical”. “Weak” includes “Weak Democrat” as well as “Weak Republican”. “Strong” includes “Strong Democrat” as well as “Strong Republican”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of party identification questions.

“Trust” is based on the respondent’s trust in government. 0 is for “Never”, 1 is for “Don’t Know”, 2 is for “Sometimes”, 3 is for “Most of the Time”, and 4 is for “Always”.

Question: “How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?”

“Efficacy” is based on a series of questions regarding the respondent’s perception that his or her participation may influence government and make a difference. Ranges from 0 to 6 based on the amount of positive answers. The higher the value of this variable, the more efficacious the person feels.

Questions: “Do you think that people in government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?” “Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all people?” “Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?” Agree/Disagree Statements: “Public officials don’t care much what people like me think.” “People like me don’t have any say about what the government does.” “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what’s going on.”

“NumCon” is the number of contacts a respondent has concerning the election. The variable ranges from 0 to 4 and includes contacts with: House members (initiated contact), Political Parties, Someone outside of the political parties, Moral/Religious Groups.

Question is an index compiled by the author based on a series of contact questions.

“Governor” is based on whether or not a Gubernatorial race is included in the 1994 elections. 0 is no gubernatorial election and 1 is gubernatorial election included.

Question is based on information given to the interviewer which includes what types of races were being held.

“PolDisAff” is based on the concept of political disaffection. This variable is coded as Trust plus Efficacy and ranges from 0 to 9. As the value of the variable increases, the disaffection of the respondent decreases.

“PolAtt” is based on the concept of political attitudes and behaviors. This variable is coded as PolInterest plus PolInfo plus PartyID and ranges from 0 to 10. As the value of the variable increases, the more active the respondent.

“ResStab” is based on residential stability. This variable is coded as ResTime plus OwnRent and ranges from 0 to 3. As the value of this variable increases, the residential stability of the respondent increases as well.

## 1998

“Vote98” is coded as 0 if respondent did not vote in the 1998 election and 1 if voted.

Question: “In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren’t registered, they were sick, or they just didn’t have time. How about you – did you vote in the elections this November?”

“Primary” is coded based on the primary a respondent’s state used in the 1990 election as 1 for closed, 2 for semi-closed, 3 for semi-open, 4 for open and 5 for blanket.

The FIPS state code was compared to the table provided by Calcagno and Westley 2008, 27 and is attached as Appendix A.

“Education” is coded based on respondent’s given highest level of education completed. 1 is “some high school”, 2 is “completed high school/high school equivalent”, 3 is “some college”, 4 is “associate’s degree/certificate”, 5 is “bachelor’s degree” and 6 is “advanced degree”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of education questions.

“Income” is coded based on respondent’s reported family annual income. 1 is none or less than \$14,999, 2 is \$15,000 to \$29,999, 3 is \$30,000 to \$44,999, 4 is \$45,000 to 59,999, 5 is \$60,000 to \$74,999, 6 is \$75,000 to \$89,999, 7 is \$90,000 and over. Don’t know and refuse to answer are coded as missing cases.

Question: “Please look at this page and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 1995 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. (If uncertain: What would be your best guess?)” Description of variable in survey data listed as income for 1997, it is possible that the question was typed wrong in the original survey data.

“Age” is coded based on the respondent’s year of birth.

Age was given by the respondent.

“Marital” is respondent’s marital status coded as 0 for “not married” and 1 for “married”. “Not married” includes: “Never married”, “Divorced”, “Separated”, “Widowed” and “Partners not married”.

Question: “Are you married now and living with your (Husband/Wife) – or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married?”

“Employment” is coded based on respondent’s current employment status. Coded 0 for “Unemployed” and 1 for “Working”. “Unemployed” includes: “Temporarily Laid Off”, “Retired and not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Permanently disabled and not working



20 hours or more per week”, “Homemaker not working 20 hours or more per week”, “Student not working 20 hours or more per week”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of employment questions.

“ResTime” is coded based on how long the respondent has lived at current address. Coded 0 for less than 2 years, 1 for 2 to 4 years and 2 for 4 or more years.

Question: “How long have you lived in this (House/Condo/Apartment)?”

“OwnRent” is based on whether the respondent owns or rent the home at his/her current address. 0 is for “Rent” and 1 is for “Own”. “Rent” includes “Occupancy part of financial arrangement with employer or owner” and “Other”.

Question: “(Do you/Does your family) own your home, pay rent, or what?”

“Incumbent” is based on whether the incumbent is running in either the House or Senate race being held during the 1998 election cycle. 0 is for no incumbent in either race and 1 is for an incumbent is present in at least one of the races. Whether the incumbent is unopposed is not being looked at here, simply the presence or absence of an incumbent. If there is no race in the state or if any candidate ran unopposed, the case will be coded as a missing case.

Question is a summary by the author based on a set of information provided to the interviewer regarding the type of race in the state.

“Vote96” is coded based on whether the respondent voted in the 1992 election. 0 is for did not vote and 1 is for voted.

Question: “In 1996 Bill Clinton ran on the Democratic ticket against Bob Dole for the Republicans, and Ross Perot as an independent candidate. Do you remember for sure whether or not you voted in that election?”

“PolMedia” is based on the respondent’s number of political news/media sources consumed per week. The number is based on the number of sources, not the number of times per week. This variable ranges from 0 to 5 as newspaper, national tv news, local tv news, radio and political talk radio were included in the survey.

Question: “How many days in the past week did you read a daily newspaper?” “How many days in the past week did you watch the national news on tv?” “How many days in the past week did you watch the local tv news, for examples, ‘Eyewitness News’ or ‘Action News’?” “How many days in the past week did you listen to the news on radio?” “If R listens to political talk radio programs: How often do you listen to those programs – every day, most days, once or twice a week, or only occasionally?”

“PolInterest” is based on the respondent’s level of political and/or campaign interest. 0 is for “Not much interested”, 1 is for “Somewhat interested” and 2 is for “Very much interested”. “Don’t know” responses are coded as a missing case.

Question: “Some people don’t pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in following the political campaigns so far this year?”

“PolInfo” is based on the interviewer’s perception of the respondent’s level of public affairs knowledge. 1 is for “Very low”, 2 is for “Fairly low”, 3 is for “Average”, 4 is for “Fairly high” and 5 is for “Very high”.

Question: “Respondent’s general level of information about politics and public affairs seemed:”

“PartyID” is based on the strength of the respondent’s identification with a political party. 0 is for “Independent”, 1 is for “Weak”, 2 is for “Strong”. 0 includes “Independent-Democrat”, “Independent-Independent”, “Independent-Republican”, “Other-Minor Party, Refuses to say” and “Apolitical”. “Weak” includes “Weak Democrat” as well as “Weak Republican”. “Strong” includes “Strong Democrat” as well as “Strong Republican”.

Question is a summary by the interviewer based on a series of party identification questions.

“Trust” is based on the respondent’s trust in government. 0 is for “Never”, 1 is for “Don’t Know”, 2 is for “Sometimes”, 3 is for “Most of the Time”, and 4 is for “Always”.

Question: “How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?”

“Efficacy” is based on a series of questions regarding the respondent’s perception that his or her participation may influence government and make a difference. Ranges from 0 to 8 based on the amount of positive answers. The higher the value of this variable, the more efficacious the person feels.

Questions: “Do you think that people in government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?” “Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all people?” “Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?” “Some people say that no matter who people vote for, it won’t make any difference to what happens. Others say that who people vote for can make a difference to what happens ... where would you place yourself?” “Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what people think when it decides what to do – a good deal, some, or not much?” “How much do you feel that having elections makes the

government pay attention to what the people think?” “ Agree/Disagree Statements:  
“Public officials don’t care much what people like me think.” “People like me don’t have  
any say about what the government does.” “Sometimes politics and government seem so  
complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what’s going on.”

“NumCon” is the number of contacts a respondent has concerning the election. The variable  
ranges from 0 to 3 and includes contacts with: Political Parties, Someone outside of the political  
parties, Moral/Religious Groups.

Question is an index compiled by the author based on a series of contact questions.

“Governor” is based on whether or not a Gubernatorial race is included in the 1998 elections. 0  
is no gubernatorial election and 1 is gubernatorial election included.

Question is based on information given to the interviewer which includes what types of  
races were being held.

“PolDisAff” is based on the concept of political disaffection. This variable is coded as Trust  
plus Efficacy and ranges from 0 to 13. As the value of the variable increases, the disaffection of  
the respondent decreases.

“PolAtt” is based on the concept of political attitudes and behaviors. This variable is coded as  
PolInterest plus PolInfo plus PartyID and ranges from 0 to 10. As the value of the variable  
increases, the more active the respondent.

“ResStab” is based on residential stability. This variable is coded as ResTime plus OwnRent and  
ranges from 0 to 3. As the value of this variable increases, the residential stability of the  
respondent increases as well.

## Appendix C

### Variable Descriptive Statistics

Table C-1: 1990

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Value	Maximum Value
Vote90	.47	.499	0	1
Primary	2.25	1.178	1	5
Education	2.68	1.533	1	6
Income	2.59	1.597	1	7
Age	45.23	18.167	18	94
Marital	.54	.498	0	1
Employment	.62	.485	0	1
ResStab	1.79	1.209	0	3
Incumbent	.92	.276	0	1
Vote88	.63	.484	0	1
PolDisAff	2.68	2.170	0	9
PolAtt	4.47	1.835	1	9
PolMedia	1.71	.529	0	2
Governor	.89	.314	0	1
PartyID	.67	.801	0	2
NumCon	.58	.758	0	5

Table C-2: 1994

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Value	Maximum Value
Vote94	.59	.493	0	1
Primary	2.42	1.129	1	5
Education	3.02	1.568	1	6
Income	3.03	1.810	1	8
Age	46.36	17.688	18	91
Marital	.53	.499	0	1
Employment	.63	.484	0	1
ResStab	1.93	1.173	0	3
Incumbent	.91	.281	0	1
Vote92	.75	.432	0	1
PolDisAff	2.13	1.852	0	9
PolAtt	4.72	1.852	1	9
PolMedia	2.61	.653	0	3
Governor	.83	.379	0	1
PartyID	.35	.675	0	2
NumCon	.55	.772	0	4

Table C-3: 1998

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Value	Maximum Value
Vote98	.54	.499	0	1
Primary	2.67	1.243	1	5
Education	3.19	1.599	1	6
Income	3.31	2.122	1	8
Age	45.75	17.258	18	94
Marital	.53	.499	0	1
Employment	.58	.494	0	1
ResStab	1.92	1.211	0	3
Incumbent	.95	.213	0	1
Vote96	.71	.454	0	1
PolDisAff	5.70	2.489	0	13
PolAtt	4.09	1.626	1	7
PolMedia	3.41	.946	0	5
Governor	.70	.458	0	1
PartyID	.54	.758	0	2
NumCon	.41	.624	0	3

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