

12-10-2014

Challenging Conventional Campaign Wisdom

Bradley Joyner

Chapman University, joyne103@mail.chapman.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts

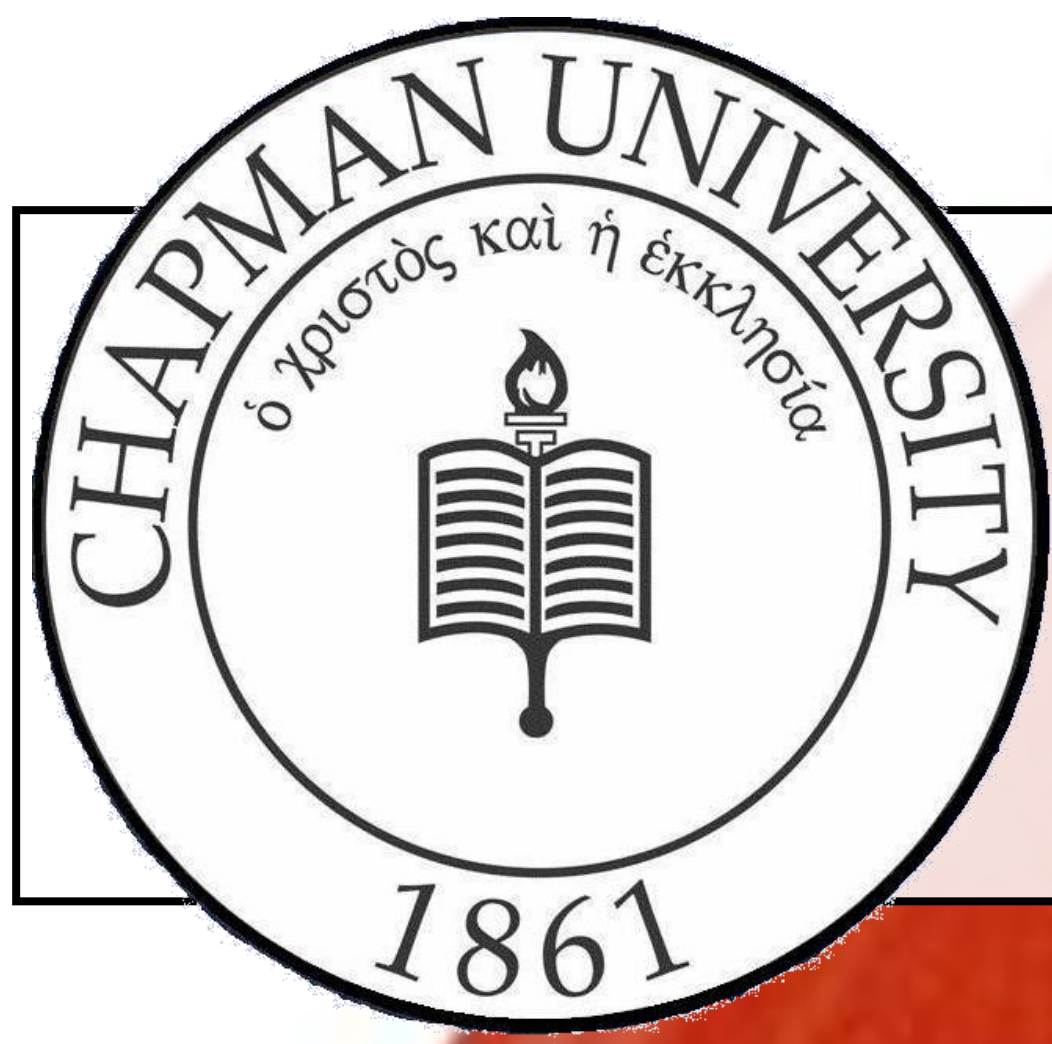


Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), and the [Civic and Community Engagement Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Joyner, Bradley, "Challenging Conventional Campaign Wisdom" (2014). *Student Research Day Abstracts and Posters*. Paper 69.
http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts/69

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Day Abstracts and Posters by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.



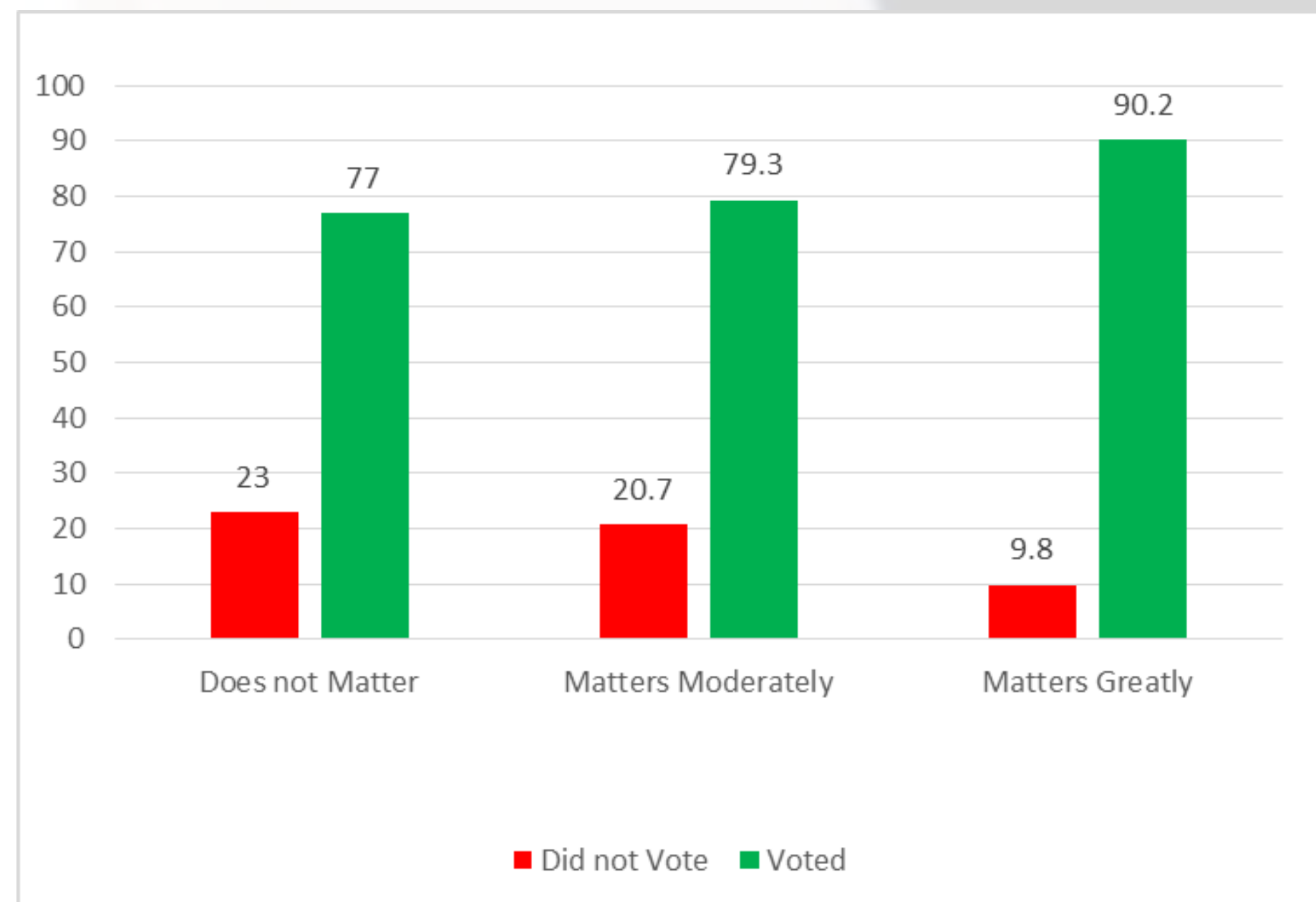
Challenging Conventional Campaign Wisdom

Bradley Joyner

Department of Political Science, Chapman University; Orange, California

Introduction to Research

- This study explores voter efficacy's effect on voting behavior, the effectiveness of varying campaign strategies in increasing that efficacy, and which voter mobilization techniques actually get voters to vote, specifically in the 2012 Election, with data gathered by the American National Election Survey.
- Traditionally, common wisdom in campaigns is that Face-to-Face contact is the best way to mobilize voters and ensure the highest percentage of people contacted actually came out to vote
 - While highly personal contact is a effective way to get people to vote, it is not so much so that it should be even the main focus of campaigns.
- When people are contacted about voting, It makes them feel like they are an important part of the process, it reminds them that voting matters, and therefore will increase the amount of people contacted that think that voting makes a difference
 - As a result of all of these factors, people who are contacted will vote at increased likelihood than people who were not, but the method of contact will not matter as much as traditionally thought



H 1: Voter Efficacy

- Respondents in the American National Election Survey were asked to rate how much they feel that it makes a difference if they vote or not, and then, amongst other questions, were asked if they voted in the 2012 November General elections.
- Respondents who answered voting matter greatly *voted at approximately 13 and 10% more often than people who responded as does not matter and matters moderately, respectively*

Hypotheses:

H 1: People vote more often if they feel that their vote matters

H 2: Voter outreach does increase voter efficacy and actual votes cast

H 3: Face-to-Face contact is not significantly the most effective way to get people to vote

Data

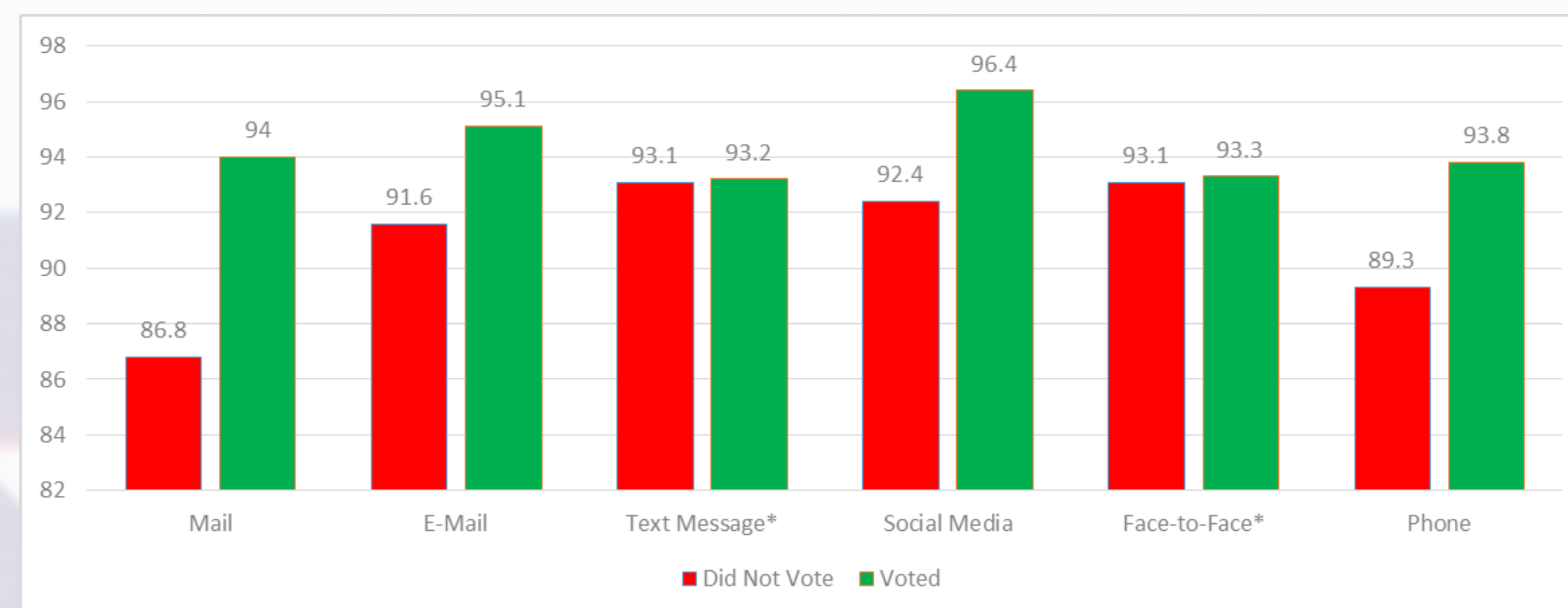
H 2: Voter Outreach and Efficacy

- This Cross-tabulation shows the relationship between the six means of voter outreach measured in the ANES, Face-to-Face contact, Phone calls, Mail, E-Mail, Text messages, and contact via Social Media. The means of outreach were tested against people who answered that they believed that voting matter greatly.
- Although there is a consistent increase in voters that were contacted that feel that voting matters greatly, the important thing to note on this table is *the lack of statistical significance in the majority of the increases.*

	Was not contacted	Was Contacted	Significance
Face-to-Face*	72.6	76.8	0.089
Phone*	72.2	73.8	0.298
Mail*	72.7	73.7	0.428
E-Mail	70.7	77.5	0.000
Text Message*	73.2	77.3	0.239
Social Media	72.3	79.3	0.003

H 3: Voter outreach and Voting

- Here, T=the cross-tabulation demonstrates the relationship between the six means of outreach and whether or not the respondents actually voted in the 2012 November Election.
- There is significant, both in real terms and statistically, increase of respondents that say they voted when they were contacted by almost any means, with the exceptions being Text Messages and *Face-to-Face contact, which not only showed almost no significant increase in turn out, but those increases were also statistically insignificant*



*Change is statistically insignificant (>.005)

References

- Arceneaux, K., T. Kousser, and M. Mullin. "Get Out the Vote-by-Mail? A Randomized Field Experiment Testing the Effect of Mobilization in Traditional and Vote-by-Mail Precincts." *Political Research Quarterly* 65.4 (2012): 882-94. Print.
- Barton, Jared, Marco Castillo, and Ragan Petrie. "What Persuades Voters? A Field Experiment on Political Campaigning." *The Economic Journal* (2011): F293-326. Print.
- Doherty, D., and E.S. Adler. "The Persuasive Effects of Partisan Campaign Mailers." *Political Research Quarterly* 67.3 (2014): 562-73. Print.
- Gerber, Alan S. "Does Campaign Spending Work?" *American Behavioral Scientist* 47.5 (2004): 541-74. Print.
- Gillespie, A. "Canvasser Affect and Voter Response: Results From National Focus Groups." *American Politics Research* 38.4 (2010): 718-58. Print.
- Green, Donald P., Alan S. Gerber, and David W. Nickerson. "Getting Out The Vote In Local Elections: Results From Six Door-to-Door Canvassing Experiments." *The Journal of Politics* (2002). Print.
- Karp, Jeffrey A. "Electoral Systems, Party Mobilisation and Political Engagement." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 47.1 (2012): 71-89. Print.
- "Lessons from Recent GOTV Experiments | Get Out The Vote." *Lessons from Recent GOTV Experiments | Get Out The Vote*. Yale University, 30 Oct. 2014. Web. 1 Nov. 2014. <<http://govt.research.yale.edu/?q=node/10>>.
- Mann, Christopher B. "Is There Backlash to Social Pressure? A Large-scale Field Experiment on Voter Mobilization." *Political Behavior* 32.3 (2010): 387-407. Print.
- Murray, Gregg R., and Richard E. Matland. "Mobilization Effects Using Mail: Social Pressure, Descriptive Norms, and Timing." *Political Research Quarterly* 67.2 (2013): 304-19. Print.
- Nickerson, D. W. "Volunteer Phone Calls Can Increase Turnout: Evidence From Eight Field Experiments." *American Politics Research* 34.3 (2006): 271-92. Print.
- Nickerson, David W., Ryan D. Fridrichs, and David C. King. "Partisan Mobilization Campaigns in the Field: Results from a Statewide Turnout Experiment in Michigan." *Sage Journals. Political Research Quarterly*, 1 Mar. 2006. Web. 1 Nov. 2014.
- Niven, David. "The Mobilization Solution? Face-to-Face Contact And Voter Turnout In A Municipal Election." *The Journal of Politics* 66.03 (2004): 868-86. Print.
- Panagopoulos, C. "Partisan and Nonpartisan Message Content and Voter Mobilization: Field Experimental Evidence." *Political Research Quarterly* 62.1 (2008): 70-76. Print.
- Panagopoulos, Costas. "Positive Social Pressure and Prosocial Motivation: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment on Voter Mobilization." *Political Psychology* 34.2 (2013): 265-75. Print.
- Sinclair, Betsy, Margaret Mcconnell, and Melissa R. Michelson. "Local Canvassing: The Efficacy of Grassroots Voter Mobilization." *Political Communication* 30.1 (2013): 42-57. Print.
- "Young Voter Mobilization Tactics." *Young Voter Strategies*. George Washington University, 15 Nov. 2006. Web. 16 Nov. 2014.

Findings

H 1: Voter Efficacy

Voters who don't think voting matters vote about 13% less than voters who feel their votes matter greatly, which seems logical. Interestingly, voters who fall in the middle, and think voting moderately matters do not vote much more than the lowest group. This makes me think there might be other factors involved here that bridge the gap between the middle and top group.

H 2: Voter outreach and Efficacy

The data show that many forms of voter outreach had no statistical impact on voter efficacy, as the increases lacked statistical significance. The Text Messages and Social Media both showed significant increases in voters who answered that voting matters greatly

H 3: Voter outreach and Voting

Here we see statistically significant increase in respondents who say they voted when contacted via Mail, at 7.2%, via Email, at 3.5%, via Social Media, at 4% and contact via Phone, at 4.5%. Practically and statistically insignificant increases were shown when respondents were contacted via Text Message And Face-to-Face contact.

Conclusions

- People are so used to contact through electronic means that face-to-face contact is no longer the only way to make people feel that their vote is important. As argued by various studies and researchers, the content and quality of interaction matter much more than the type of interaction
- The effectiveness of E-mail and Social Media outreach, two forms which were predicted, by myself and by most literature, to be the least effective, turned out to be a quite statistically significant means of outreach. This requires further research, as it could be explained in a few ways: Either, because it is so unexpected as a form of voter outreach, it is particularly effective at gaining attention when is it used. It could be because it essentially cost nothing to produce, it can be used to reach out and remind voters numerous times, as opposed to more expensive forms, such as Face-to-Face, which may only be able to reach a voter once or twice in an give election cycle. It's significance could also be a result of confounding factor, such as voters who place themselves in a position where they would be contacted via E-Mail or Social Media already have high efficacy and vote regularly
 - In all measures of effectiveness used in this study, Face-to-Face contact failed to show almost any impact on both voter efficacy and behavior. This supports my hypothesis, but a little more strongly than suspected. There might be other factors in my data that explain this, and this irregularity calls for more study. A large amount of studies show much stronger impacts of Face-to-Face contact.