

VOTERS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Comparative Politics

Guillermo Toral

IE University

What we are covering today

- Political behavior – what it is and how to study it

What we are covering today

- Political behavior – what it is and how to study it
- Why do people participate in politics?

What we are covering today

- Political behavior – what it is and how to study it
- Why do people participate in politics?
- Vote choice: How do people choose who to vote for?

What we are covering today

- Political behavior – what it is and how to study it
- Why do people participate in politics?
- Vote choice: How do people choose who to vote for?
- Turnout: Who participates in elections, and how does it matter?

What we are covering today

- Political behavior – what it is and how to study it
- Why do people participate in politics?
- Vote choice: How do people choose who to vote for?
- Turnout: Who participates in elections, and how does it matter?
- Exercise: Mobilizing voters

Political behavior

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:
 - Form of government

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:
 - Form of government
 - Electoral system

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:
 - Form of government
 - Electoral system
 - Party system

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:
 - Form of government
 - Electoral system
 - Party system
- Largely we have focused on the causes and consequences of institutions

The course so far

- Approach and methods of comparative politics
- States – Origins and development of the main political arena today
- Political regimes – how democracy and autocracy matter for politics, for economics, and for societies
- Varieties of political representation – how politics differ by:
 - Form of government
 - Electoral system
 - Party system
- Largely we have focused on the causes and consequences of institutions
- Outcomes of interest have largely been at the macro level

Political behavior

- Comparative politics is also interested in individual-level outcomes, especially political behavior

Political behavior

- Comparative politics is also interested in individual-level outcomes, especially political behavior
- Political behavior refers to individual (or groups') involvement in politics, including any activities that have consequences in relation to politics, government, or policy.

Political behavior

- Comparative politics is also interested in individual-level outcomes, especially political behavior
- Political behavior refers to individual (or groups') involvement in politics, including any activities that have consequences in relation to politics, government, or policy.
- This field was fundamentally transformed from the 1950s onward through the “**behavioral revolution**” – mass surveys, systematic qualitative work, etc.

Political behavior

- Comparative politics is also interested in individual-level outcomes, especially political behavior
- Political behavior refers to individual (or groups') involvement in politics, including any activities that have consequences in relation to politics, government, or policy.
- This field was fundamentally transformed from the 1950s onward through the “**behavioral revolution**” – mass surveys, systematic qualitative work, etc.
- Political behavior responds to, but can also transform, macro-level political institutions

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties
- Petitioning

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties
- Petitioning
- Demonstrations

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties
- Petitioning
- Demonstrations
- Activism

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties
- Petitioning
- Demonstrations
- Activism
- Protest

Varieties of political behavior: Behaviors of interest

- Vote choice
- Electoral turnout
- Participation in unions
- Participation in parties
- Petitioning
- Demonstrations
- Activism
- Protest
- Violence

Varieties of political behavior: Dimensions of variation

- **Conventional vs unconventional:** depending on whether it's within formal institutions or outside them

Varieties of political behavior: Dimensions of variation

- **Conventional vs unconventional:** depending on whether it's within formal institutions or outside them
- **More vs less involved:** depending on how much engagement it requires

Varieties of political behavior: Dimensions of variation

- **Conventional vs unconventional:** depending on whether it's within formal institutions or outside them
- **More vs less involved:** depending on how much engagement it requires
- **More vs less public:** depending on how observable it is to others

Varieties of political behavior: Dimensions of variation

- **Conventional vs unconventional:** depending on whether it's within formal institutions or outside them
- **More vs less involved:** depending on how much engagement it requires
- **More vs less public:** depending on how observable it is to others
- **More vs less risky:** depending on the (legal, physical) risks it entails

Varieties of political behavior: Dimensions of variation

- **Conventional vs unconventional:** depending on whether it's within formal institutions or outside them
- **More vs less involved:** depending on how much engagement it requires
- **More vs less public:** depending on how observable it is to others
- **More vs less risky:** depending on the (legal, physical) risks it entails
- **Legal vs illegal:** depending on the extent to which it falls within what's legally allowed

Political behavior as a field of study: Classic questions

- How do people choose who to vote for?

Political behavior as a field of study: Classic questions

- How do people choose who to vote for?
- Why do people choose (not) to vote?

Political behavior as a field of study: Classic questions

- How do people choose who to vote for?
- Why do people choose (not) to vote?
- How do people form their political opinions and beliefs, and how do those affect their political behaviors?

Political behavior as a field of study: Classic questions

- How do people choose who to vote for?
- Why do people choose (not) to vote?
- How do people form their political opinions and beliefs, and how do those affect their political behaviors?
- Who joins social movements, and other costlier forms of political engagement?

Political behavior as a field of study: Recurrent themes

- **Biases** in political behavior (e.g., some people vote more than others)

Political behavior as a field of study: Recurrent themes

- **Biases** in political behavior (e.g., some people vote more than others)
- The **role and limits of rationality** (e.g., how the economy shapes or doesn't shape perceptions of the economy)

Political behavior as a field of study: Recurrent themes

- **Biases** in political behavior (e.g., some people vote more than others)
- The **role and limits of rationality** (e.g., how the economy shapes or doesn't shape perceptions of the economy)
- The **role of identity and emotion** (e.g., how identity shapes vote choice)

Political behavior as a field of study: Recurrent themes

- **Biases** in political behavior (e.g., some people vote more than others)
- The **role and limits of rationality** (e.g., how the economy shapes or doesn't shape perceptions of the economy)
- The **role of identity and emotion** (e.g., how identity shapes vote choice)
- The **role of elites** (e.g., how political entrepreneurs can influence individuals' political behavior)

Methods

- In the study of citizens' or elites' political behaviors, we are less constrained methodologically than when it comes to studying macro-structures such as the form of government or the electoral system

Methods

- In the study of citizens' or elites' political behaviors, we are less constrained methodologically than when it comes to studying macro-structures such as the form of government or the electoral system
- By focusing on **politics at the micro-level**, we can collect and analyze invaluable **micro-data** (e.g. through surveys, interviews, or ethnography)

Methods

- In the study of citizens' or elites' political behaviors, we are less constrained methodologically than when it comes to studying macro-structures such as the form of government or the electoral system
- By focusing on **politics at the micro-level**, we can collect and analyze invaluable **micro-data** (e.g. through surveys, interviews, or ethnography)
- Because the unit of observation is often an individual citizen / politician / bureaucrat, it is easier to design and implement **randomized experiments**

Methods

- In the study of citizens' or elites' political behaviors, we are less constrained methodologically than when it comes to studying macro-structures such as the form of government or the electoral system
- By focusing on **politics at the micro-level**, we can collect and analyze invaluable **micro-data** (e.g. through surveys, interviews, or ethnography)
- Because the unit of observation is often an individual citizen / politician / bureaucrat, it is easier to design and implement **randomized experiments**
 - Remember: by randomly assigning a treatment of interest and comparing outcomes across the treatment and the control group, **we can credibly draw causal inferences** (i.e., learn about the causal effect of a given intervention such as a campaign ad or a misinformation campaign)

Why do people participate in politics?

Political behavior is costly

- Time consuming

Political behavior is costly

- Time consuming
- Cognitively costly

Political behavior is costly

- Time consuming
- Cognitively costly
- Risky, in some cases (in authoritarian settings, or when it takes illegal forms)

Political behavior is costly

- Time consuming
- Cognitively costly
- Risky, in some cases (in authoritarian settings, or when it takes illegal forms)
- May have economic costs

Political behavior is costly

- Time consuming
- Cognitively costly
- Risky, in some cases (in authoritarian settings, or when it takes illegal forms)
- May have economic costs
- May also involve social and emotional costs, especially in polarized societies

Political behavior often seeks to produce public goods

- Through participation, citizens often seek to produce public goods such as a better government, a change in public policy (e.g., universal healthcare) or a better environment

Political behavior often seeks to produce public goods

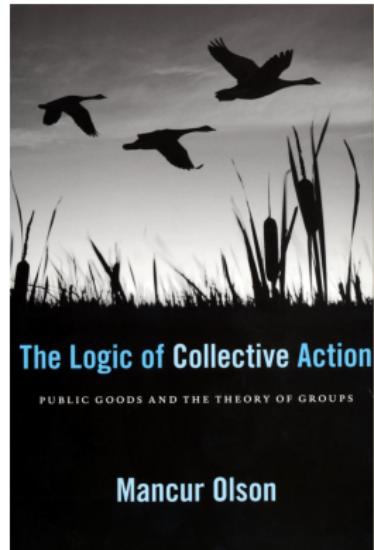
- Through participation, citizens often seek to produce public goods such as a better government, a change in public policy (e.g., universal healthcare) or a better environment
- One key feature of public goods is that they are **non-excludable**: individuals who did not contribute to the production of the good cannot be excluded from enjoying it

Political behavior often seeks to produce public goods

- Through participation, citizens often seek to produce public goods such as a better government, a change in public policy (e.g., universal healthcare) or a better environment
- One key feature of public goods is that they are **non-excludable**: individuals who did not contribute to the production of the good cannot be excluded from enjoying it
- The other key feature of public goods is that they are **non-rivalrous**: consumption of the good by one individual does not reduce the amount available for consumption by others

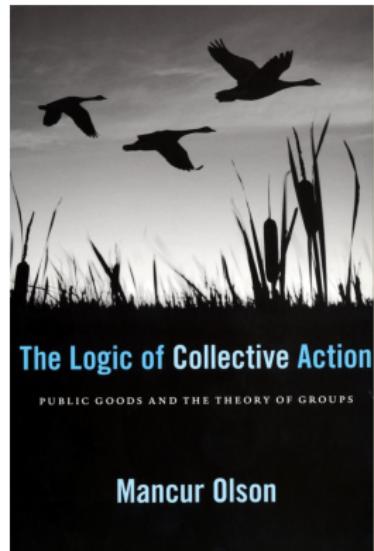
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- Self-interested individuals would find it rational to not engage in costly behavior to contribute to the production of a public good, in the hope that others will do



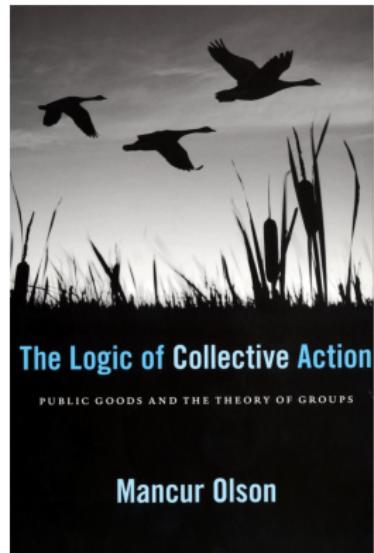
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- Self-interested individuals would find it rational to not engage in costly behavior to contribute to the production of a public good, in the hope that others will do
- The existence of a common interest among a set of people (one that could be advanced through collective action) does not lead to voluntary collective action to advance the interest.



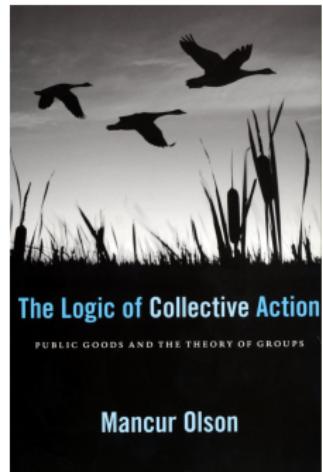
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- Self-interested individuals would find it rational to not engage in costly behavior to contribute to the production of a public good, in the hope that others will do
- The existence of a common interest among a set of people (one that could be advanced through collective action) does not lead to voluntary collective action to advance the interest.
- Olson highlighted how rational individuals would therefore fail to contribute to the production of public goods, and groups will therefore not produce optimal results



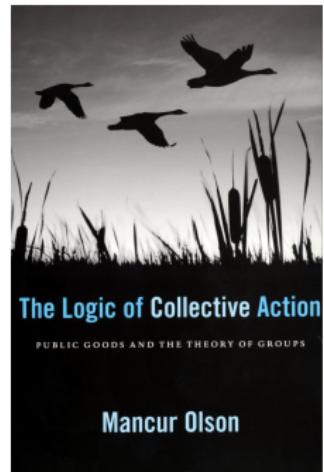
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- This free-riding behavior is more serious the larger the group, because in larger groups your individual decision to contribute to the public good is less likely to be the decisive factor



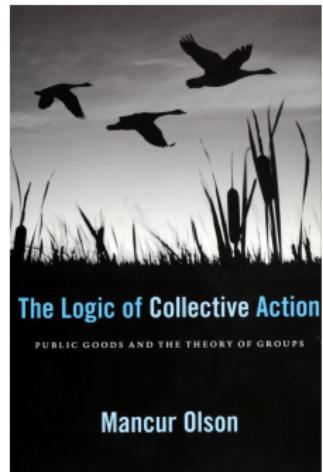
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- This free-riding behavior is more serious the larger the group, because in larger groups your individual decision to contribute to the public good is less likely to be the decisive factor
- Olson here went counter to the idea that the big threat in a democracy is the tyranny of the majority



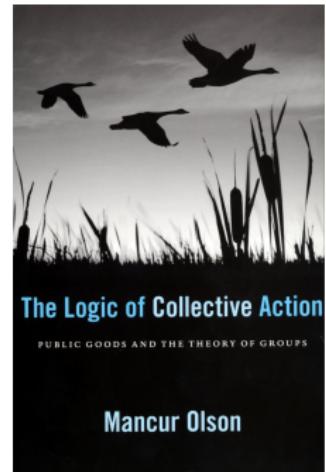
Collective action problems are key to political behavior

- This free-riding behavior is more serious the larger the group, because in larger groups your individual decision to contribute to the public good is less likely to be the decisive factor
- Olson here went counter to the idea that the big threat in a democracy is the tyranny of the majority
- From his perspective, the majority is likely unorganized



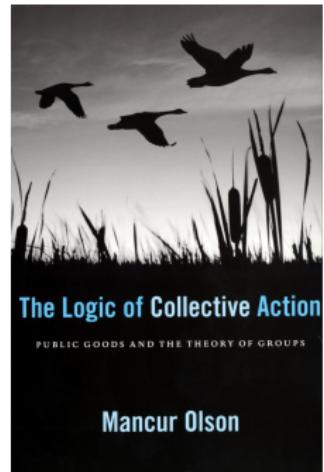
Yet we observe collective action and political behavior!

- Collective action in general, and political behavior more specifically, do happen.
This is the **collective action paradox**



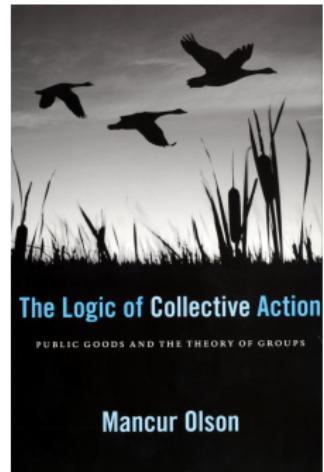
Yet we observe collective action and political behavior!

- Collective action in general, and political behavior more specifically, do happen.
This is the **collective action paradox**
- Why do people vote / protest / organize?



Yet we observe collective action and political behavior!

- Collective action in general, and political behavior more specifically, do happen. This is the **collective action paradox**
- Why do people vote / protest / organize?
- Olson thought collective action problems are solved, in large enough groups, mostly through either coercion or selective incentives



Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion:** compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes

Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion:** compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes
- **Selective incentives:** e.g., the Ghent system

Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion**: compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes
- **Selective incentives**: e.g., the Ghent system
- **Political leaders** may change people's perceptions of costs and benefits, or mobilize beyond the rational calculus

Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion**: compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes
- **Selective incentives**: e.g., the Ghent system
- **Political leaders** may change people's perceptions of costs and benefits, or mobilize beyond the rational calculus
- **Ideas**, e.g. nationhood, solidarity, political ideologies

Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion**: compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes
- **Selective incentives**: e.g., the Ghent system
- **Political leaders** may change people's perceptions of costs and benefits, or mobilize beyond the rational calculus
- **Ideas**, e.g. nationhood, solidarity, political ideologies
- **Social networks**: people's political behavior is often embedded in networks of friends, family, coworkers

Solutions to the collective action problem in politics

- **Coercion**: compulsory contributions e.g. through taxes
- **Selective incentives**: e.g., the Ghent system
- **Political leaders** may change people's perceptions of costs and benefits, or mobilize beyond the rational calculus
- **Ideas**, e.g. nationhood, solidarity, political ideologies
- **Social networks**: people's political behavior is often embedded in networks of friends, family, coworkers
- **Social psychology**: feelings of belonging and other intrinsic benefits of participation

Vote choice: How do people choose who to vote for?

Why understanding vote choice is important

- Understanding vote choice is central to comparative politics, for both theoretical and practical reasons, including:

Why understanding vote choice is important

- Understanding vote choice is central to comparative politics, for both theoretical and practical reasons, including:
 - Predicting the outcome of an election

Why understanding vote choice is important

- Understanding vote choice is central to comparative politics, for both theoretical and practical reasons, including:
 - Predicting the outcome of an election
 - Designing electoral campaigns

Why understanding vote choice is important

- Understanding vote choice is central to comparative politics, for both theoretical and practical reasons, including:
 - Predicting the outcome of an election
 - Designing electoral campaigns
 - Understanding the rise of extremist parties

Why understanding vote choice is important

- Understanding vote choice is central to comparative politics, for both theoretical and practical reasons, including:
 - Predicting the outcome of an election
 - Designing electoral campaigns
 - Understanding the rise of extremist parties
- What drives people to vote for one party or another, and changes in those reasons, may shape dynamics of democratic governance and accountability

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**
 - “The people” determine government policy by electing representatives (or through direct democracy)

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**
 - “The people” determine government policy by electing representatives (or through direct democracy)
- **Elections as leadership selection**

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**
 - “The people” determine government policy by electing representatives (or through direct democracy)
- **Elections as leadership selection**
 - Political elites compete for the vote; voters decide based on their assessment of incumbent performance

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**
 - “The people” determine government policy by electing representatives (or through direct democracy)
- **Elections as leadership selection**
 - Political elites compete for the vote; voters decide based on their assessment of incumbent performance
- **Elections as an expression of identity**

Three perspectives on elections and vote choice

- **Elections as popular sovereignty**
 - “The people” determine government policy by electing representatives (or through direct democracy)
- **Elections as leadership selection**
 - Political elites compete for the vote; voters decide based on their assessment of incumbent performance
- **Elections as an expression of identity**
 - People’s belonging and identity drive their vote (and their opinions)

Elections as popular sovereignty: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Normatively aligned with a democratic ideal (“government by the people and for the people”)

Elections as popular sovereignty: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Normatively aligned with a democratic ideal (“government by the people and for the people”)
- **How this view understands citizens:** they are informed, interested in politics, and engaged with the system

Elections as popular sovereignty: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Normatively aligned with a democratic ideal (“government by the people and for the people”)
- **How this view understands citizens:** they are informed, interested in politics, and engaged with the system
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** delegates representing the will of the people

Elections as popular sovereignty: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Normatively aligned with a democratic ideal (“government by the people and for the people”)
- **How this view understands citizens:** they are informed, interested in politics, and engaged with the system
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** delegates representing the will of the people
- **How this view understands vote choice:** 1) citizens have a self-placement in an ideological or policy space on one or multiple substantive issues; 2) citizens assess the placements of the different candidates / parties; 3) citizens choose the party / candidate closest to them

Elections as popular sovereignty: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Normatively aligned with a democratic ideal (“government by the people and for the people”)
- **How this view understands citizens:** they are informed, interested in politics, and engaged with the system
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** delegates representing the will of the people
- **How this view understands vote choice:** 1) citizens have a self-placement in an ideological or policy space on one or multiple substantive issues; 2) citizens assess the placements of the different candidates / parties; 3) citizens choose the party / candidate closest to them
- **How this view seeks to improve elections:** give more power to voters; strengthen deliberation; direct democracy; civic education

Elections as popular sovereignty: Limitations

- Survey data consistently show **people have low levels of interest in politics and information**

Elections as popular sovereignty: Limitations

- Survey data consistently show **people have low levels of interest in politics and information**
- Ordinary people have **no coherent policy preferences** consistent with issue voting

Elections as popular sovereignty: Limitations

- Survey data consistently show **people have low levels of interest in politics and information**
- Ordinary people have **no coherent policy preferences** consistent with issue voting
- **Expressed preferences are very sensitive to question wording**

Elections as popular sovereignty: Limitations

- Survey data consistently show **people have low levels of interest in politics and information**
- Ordinary people have **no coherent policy preferences** consistent with issue voting
- **Expressed preferences are very sensitive to question wording**
- When given opportunities of more direct democracy (e.g., referenda, participatory budgeting), **participation is often low** and biased

One plot vs elections as popular sovereignty



DEMOCRACY
FOR
REALISTS

*Why Elections Do Not Produce
Responsive Government*

CHRISTOPHER H. ACHEN
& LARRY M. BARTELS

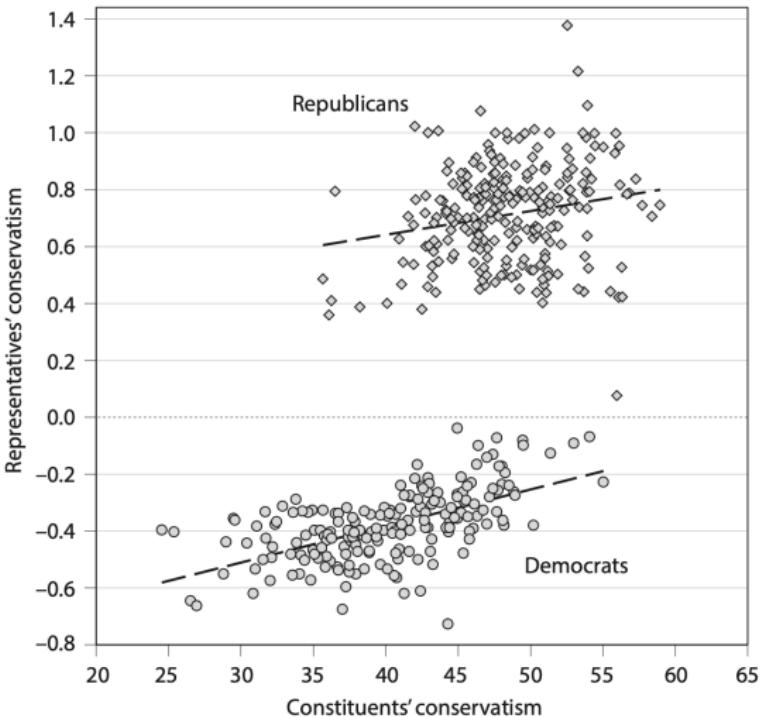


Figure 2.1. District Opinion and Representatives' Roll Call Votes, 2011–2013

Elections as popular leadership selection: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Less demanding assumptions about citizens, focus on elites

Elections as popular leadership selection: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Less demanding assumptions about citizens, focus on elites
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are not necessarily informed about policy issues, but they know how well incumbents did, or what kind of character candidates have

Elections as popular leadership selection: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Less demanding assumptions about citizens, focus on elites
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are not necessarily informed about policy issues, but they know how well incumbents did, or what kind of character candidates have
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** trustees – they enjoy citizens' confidence temporarily

Elections as popular leadership selection: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Less demanding assumptions about citizens, focus on elites
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are not necessarily informed about policy issues, but they know how well incumbents did, or what kind of character candidates have
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** trustees – they enjoy citizens' confidence temporarily
- **How this view understands vote choice:** A) Retrospective: citizens assess the performance of the incumbent (typically in the economy) and decide whether to renew their trust; or B) Prospective: citizens examine the character and trust-worthiness of candidates to decide who to vote

Elections as popular leadership selection: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Less demanding assumptions about citizens, focus on elites
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are not necessarily informed about policy issues, but they know how well incumbents did, or what kind of character candidates have
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** trustees – they enjoy citizens' confidence temporarily
- **How this view understands vote choice:** A) Retrospective: citizens assess the performance of the incumbent (typically in the economy) and decide whether to renew their trust; or B) Prospective: citizens examine the character and trust-worthiness of candidates to decide who to vote
- **How this view seeks to improve elections:** provide more and more timely information on relevant issues; raise education

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**
- Surveys show **people have trouble attributing responsibility** among levels of government

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**
- Surveys show **people have trouble attributing responsibility** among levels of government
- **Voters are very myopic** in their assessments of incumbents

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**
- Surveys show **people have trouble attributing responsibility** among levels of government
- **Voters are very myopic** in their assessments of incumbents
- There's evidence of **voters punishing incumbents for facts governments do not control**

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**
- Surveys show **people have trouble attributing responsibility** among levels of government
- **Voters are very myopic** in their assessments of incumbents
- There's evidence of **voters punishing incumbents for facts governments do not control**
- People's **assessments are often a consequence rather than cause of their partisan attachments**

Elections as popular leadership selection: Limitations

- Normatively, this is a rather **elitist perspective**
- Surveys show **people have trouble attributing responsibility** among levels of government
- **Voters are very myopic** in their assessments of incumbents
- There's evidence of **voters punishing incumbents for facts governments do not control**
- People's **assessments are often a consequence rather than cause of their partisan attachments**
- This bias is even stronger among more informed and educated people

One plot vs elections as leadership selection



DEMOCRACY FOR REALISTS

*Why Elections Do Not Produce
Responsive Government*

CHRISTOPHER H. ACHEM
& LARRY M. BARTELS

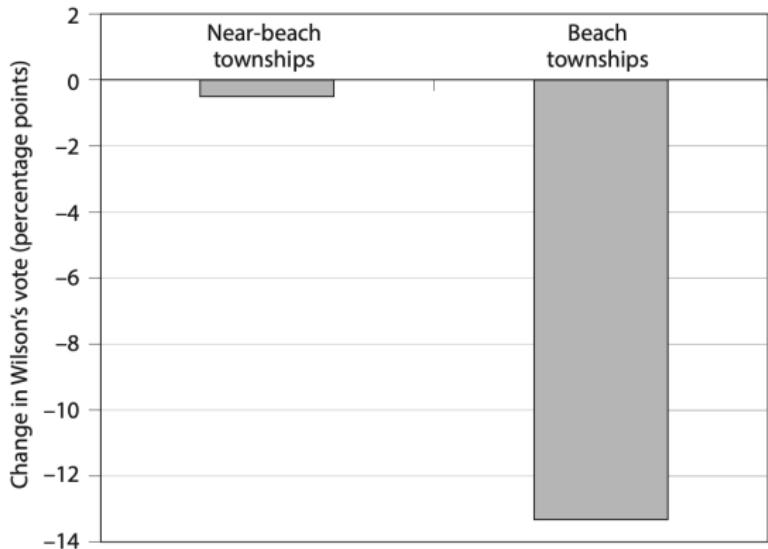


Figure 5.3. Change in Woodrow Wilson's Vote Share (1912–1916) in Ocean County Townships

Elections as expression of identity: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Does not rely on citizens' level of information; relevant in contexts of political polarization

Elections as expression of identity: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Does not rely on citizens' level of information; relevant in contexts of political polarization
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are members of groups; those overlapping memberships shape their identity and their view of the world; political attitudes are about groups / factions

Elections as expression of identity: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Does not rely on citizens' level of information; relevant in contexts of political polarization
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are members of groups; those overlapping memberships shape their identity and their view of the world; political attitudes are about groups / factions
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** Group members (descriptive representation); mobilizers of identity

Elections as expression of identity: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Does not rely on citizens' level of information; relevant in contexts of political polarization
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are members of groups; those overlapping memberships shape their identity and their view of the world; political attitudes are about groups / factions
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** Group members (descriptive representation); mobilizers of identity
- **How this view understands vote choice:** 1) citizens' social identities shape their partisan allegiances; 2) allegiances, in turn, shape how citizens assess the reality and choose their vote; 3) choices are rationalized ex post (motivated reasoning)

Elections as expression of identity: Rationale

- **Why this view is appealing:** Does not rely on citizens' level of information; relevant in contexts of political polarization
- **How this view understands citizens:** Citizens are members of groups; those overlapping memberships shape their identity and their view of the world; political attitudes are about groups / factions
- **How this view understands elected politicians:** Group members (descriptive representation); mobilizers of identity
- **How this view understands vote choice:** 1) citizens' social identities shape their partisan allegiances; 2) allegiances, in turn, shape how citizens assess the reality and choose their vote; 3) choices are rationalized ex post (motivated reasoning)
- **How this view seeks to improve elections:** facilitate the work of political parties and interest groups; limit the influence of money in politics; organize the unorganized

Elections as expression of identity: Limitations

- Normatively, **problematic in terms of polarization and the power of elites** (political as well as cultural)

Elections as expression of identity: Limitations

- Normatively, **problematic in terms of polarization and the power of elites** (political as well as cultural)
- **Many voters have weak(er) identities**, or less clear ideas of which group / party is consistent with their identities

Elections as expression of identity: Limitations

- Normatively, **problematic in terms of polarization and the power of elites** (political as well as cultural)
- **Many voters have weak(er) identities**, or less clear ideas of which group / party is consistent with their identities
- **Swing voters are often the most relevant** for electoral outcomes

Elections as expression of identity: Limitations

- Normatively, **problematic in terms of polarization and the power of elites** (political as well as cultural)
- **Many voters have weak(er) identities**, or less clear ideas of which group / party is consistent with their identities
- **Swing voters are often the most relevant** for electoral outcomes
- **Obstacles for the organization of certain groups** (or the activation of their identities)

Two plots on elections as expression of identity

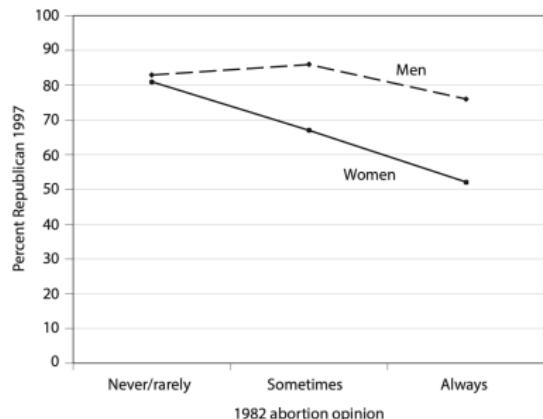


Figure 9.6. Retention of 1982 Republican Identifiers in 1997

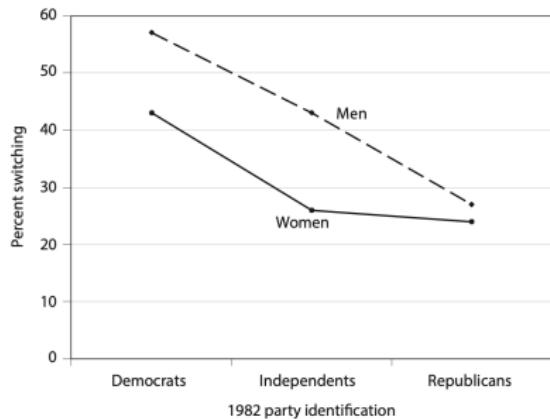


Figure 9.7. Conversion to 1997 Pro-Choice Views by 1982 Pro-Life Respondents

Turnout: Who participates in elections, and how does it matter?

Why is turnout important?

- Turnout is a backbone of representative democracy:

Why is turnout important?

- Turnout is a backbone of representative democracy:
 - Turnout helps legitimize legislative and executive powers, and the system of government

Why is turnout important?

- Turnout is a backbone of representative democracy:
 - Turnout helps legitimize legislative and executive powers, and the system of government
 - Turnout directly connects citizen preferences and political selection

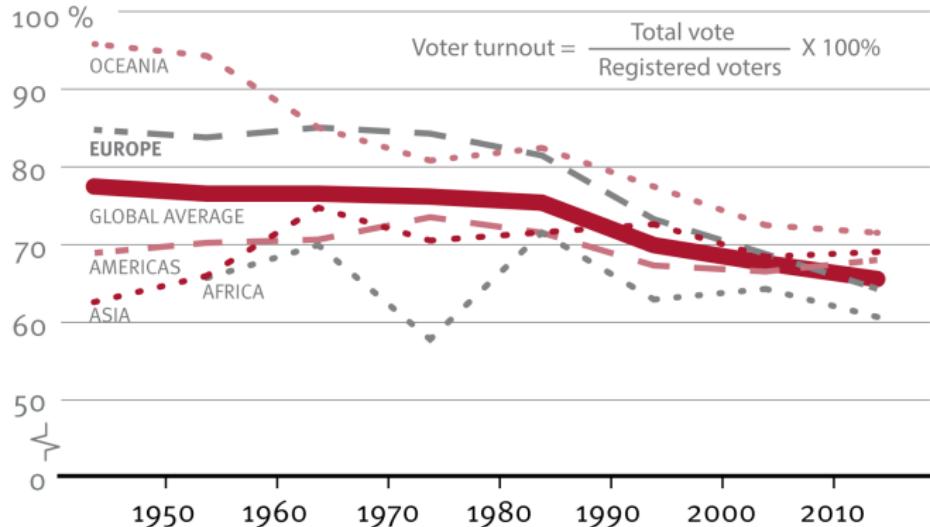
Why is turnout important?

- Turnout is a backbone of representative democracy:
 - Turnout helps legitimize legislative and executive powers, and the system of government
 - Turnout directly connects citizen preferences and political selection
- Yet there is wide variation across and within countries in rates of turnout, with systematic correlates (both at the macro- and the micro-levels) of the decision to vote.

Why is turnout important?

- Turnout is a backbone of representative democracy:
 - Turnout helps legitimize legislative and executive powers, and the system of government
 - Turnout directly connects citizen preferences and political selection
- Yet there is wide variation across and within countries in rates of turnout, with systematic correlates (both at the macro- and the micro-levels) of the decision to vote.
- Differential propensities in turnout bias who gets elected into office and how they behave.

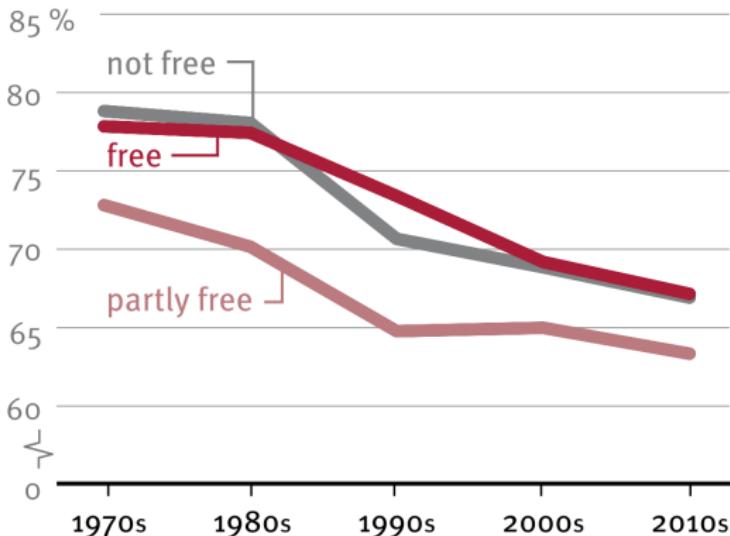
Global patterns in turnout



Source: Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout

Notes: Data is for Legislative (Lower House) Elections that took place across the globe since 1945 and covers 1,833 elections in total.

Global patterns in turnout



Source: www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout

Notes: Freedom House indicators have been used to group countries as free, partly free and not free. Freedom House data are available from the 1970s until 2015.

Why is turnout decreasing over time?

- Post-materialism has fundamentally transformed political behavior, with lower levels of trust and interest in formal political processes

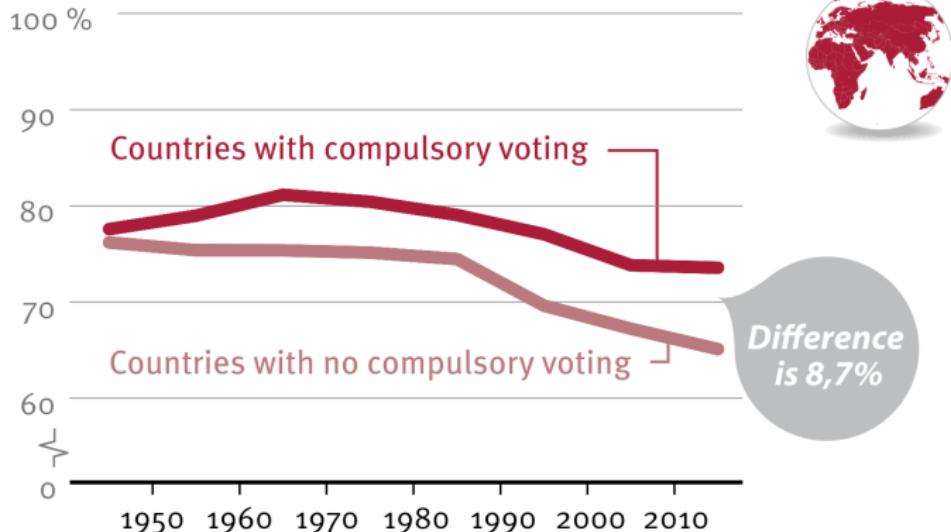
Why is turnout decreasing over time?

- Post-materialism has fundamentally transformed political behavior, with lower levels of trust and interest in formal political processes
- Political behavior has diversified, taking a wider range of forms, including online

Why is turnout decreasing over time?

- Post-materialism has fundamentally transformed political behavior, with lower levels of trust and interest in formal political processes
- Political behavior has diversified, taking a wider range of forms, including online
- Political allegiances and identities have been transforming, leading some to disengage from traditional parties and their competition

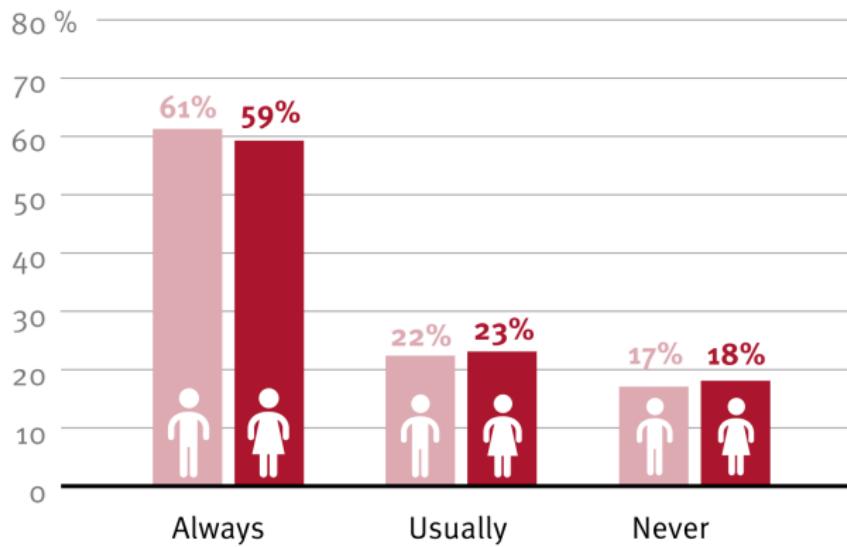
Global patterns in turnout



Source: Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout

Global patterns in turnout

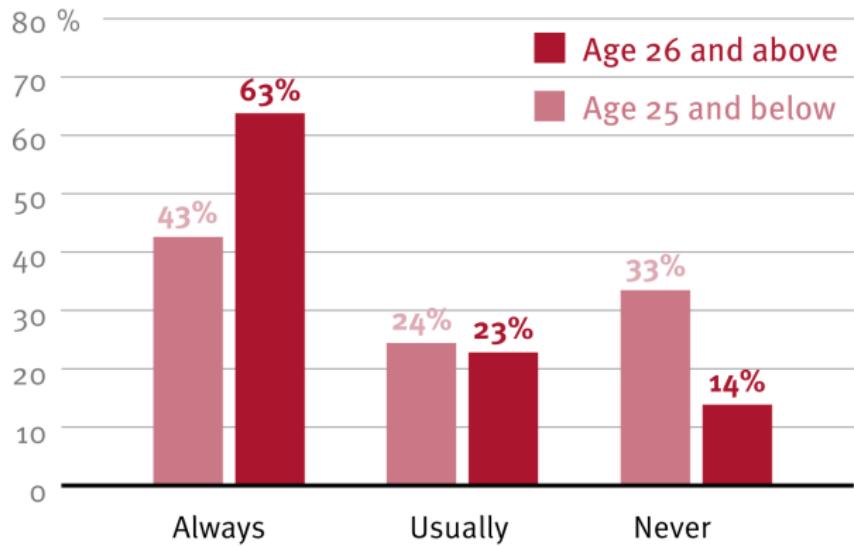
Do you vote in national elections?



Source: World Values Survey, Sixth wave (2010–14). Data were collected from 59 countries.

Global patterns in turnout

Do you vote in national elections?



Source: World Values Survey, Sixth wave (2010–14)

USA patterns in turnout

From an **article** using administrative (rather than survey) data

PLOS ONE

RESEARCH ARTICLE

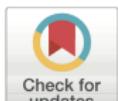
400 million voting records show profound racial and geographic disparities in voter turnout in the United States

Michael Barber^{1*}, John B. Holbein²

1 Department of Political Science, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, United States of America, **2** Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, United States of America

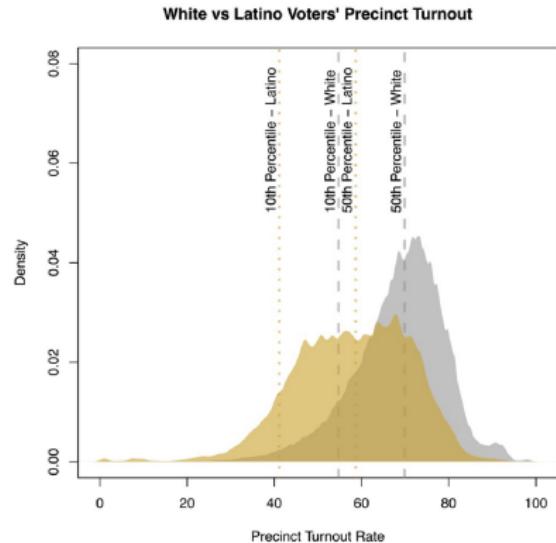
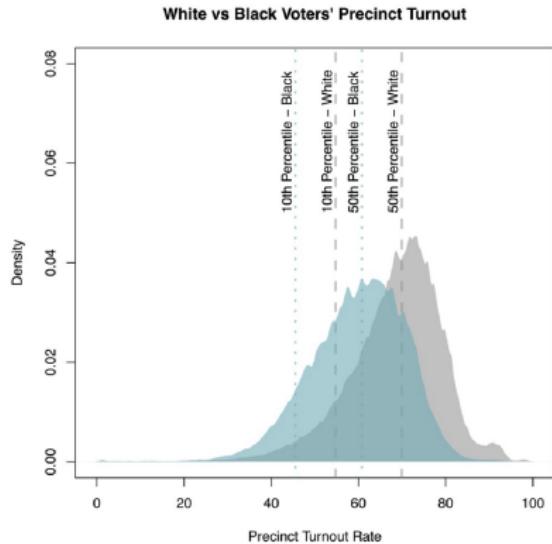
* These authors contributed equally to this work.

* barber@byu.edu



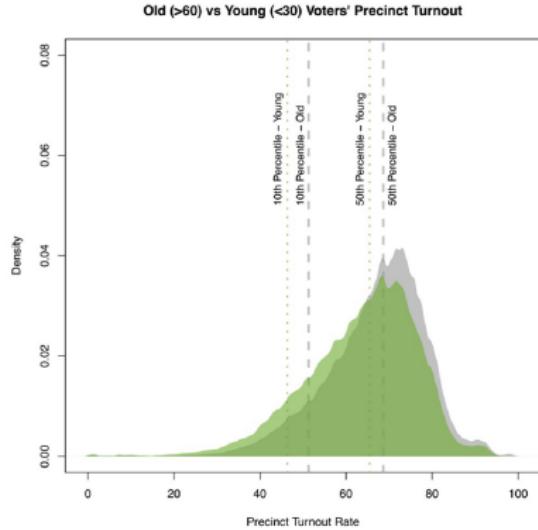
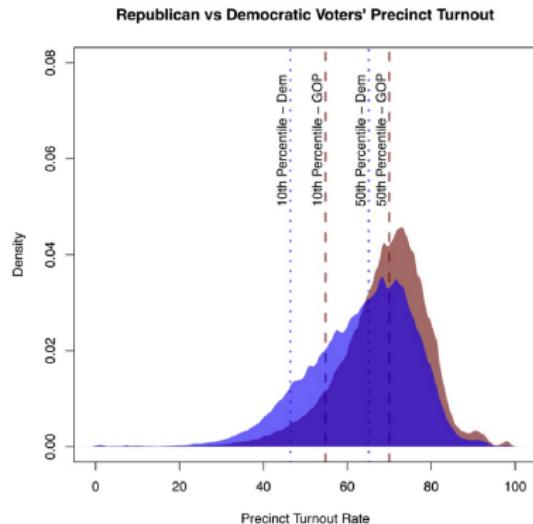
USA patterns in turnout

From an **article** using administrative (rather than survey) data



USA patterns in turnout

From an **article** using administrative (rather than survey) data



Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race
- Turnout at previous election

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race
- Turnout at previous election
- Party identification

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race
- Turnout at previous election
- Party identification
- Union membership

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race
- Turnout at previous election
- Party identification
- Union membership
- Attendance of religious services

Correlates of turnout: Micro-level

- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic background
- Income
- Race
- Turnout at previous election
- Party identification
- Union membership
- Attendance of religious services
- Social networks

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting
- Nature of the election (first-order)

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting
- Nature of the election (first-order)
- Timing of the election (weekend, concurrent)

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting
- Nature of the election (first-order)
- Timing of the election (weekend, concurrent)
- Competitive election

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting
- Nature of the election (first-order)
- Timing of the election (weekend, concurrent)
- Competitive election
- Small electorate

Correlates of turnout: Macro-level

- Ease of voting (automatic registration, early voting, etc.)
- Proportional representation electoral systems
- Compulsory voting
- Nature of the election (first-order)
- Timing of the election (weekend, concurrent)
- Competitive election
- Small electorate
- Expensive electoral campaign

How do these biases in turnout matter?

- Bias in the selectorate (who influences the election of public officials)

How do these biases in turnout matter?

- Bias in the selectorate (who influences the election of public officials)
- Bias in political selection (who is elected to public office)

How do these biases in turnout matter?

- Bias in the selectorate (who influences the election of public officials)
- Bias in political selection (who is elected to public office)
- Bias in elites' perceptions of citizen preferences

How do these biases in turnout matter?

- Bias in the selectorate (who influences the election of public officials)
- Bias in political selection (who is elected to public office)
- Bias in elites' perceptions of citizen preferences
- Bias in public policies

What can be done to increase turnout? Policymakers

- Scheduling elections on weekends, or concurrently

What can be done to increase turnout? Policymakers

- Scheduling elections on weekends, or concurrently
- Automatic registration

What can be done to increase turnout? Policymakers

- Scheduling elections on weekends, or concurrently
- Automatic registration
- Ease of access to the polls

What can be done to increase turnout? Policymakers

- Scheduling elections on weekends, or concurrently
- Automatic registration
- Ease of access to the polls
- Electoral and party system reform

What can be done to increase turnout? Policymakers

- Scheduling elections on weekends, or concurrently
- Automatic registration
- Ease of access to the polls
- Electoral and party system reform
- Compulsory voting

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads
- Social media campaigns

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads
- Social media campaigns
- E-mail campaigns

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads
- Social media campaigns
- E-mail campaigns
- Traditional mail campaigns

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads
- Social media campaigns
- E-mail campaigns
- Traditional mail campaigns
- Phone campaigns and robo-calls

What can be done to increase turnout? Campaigners

- TV and radio ads
- Social media campaigns
- E-mail campaigns
- Traditional mail campaigns
- Phone campaigns and robo-calls
- Door-to-door canvassing

How effective are get out the vote (GOTV) strategies?

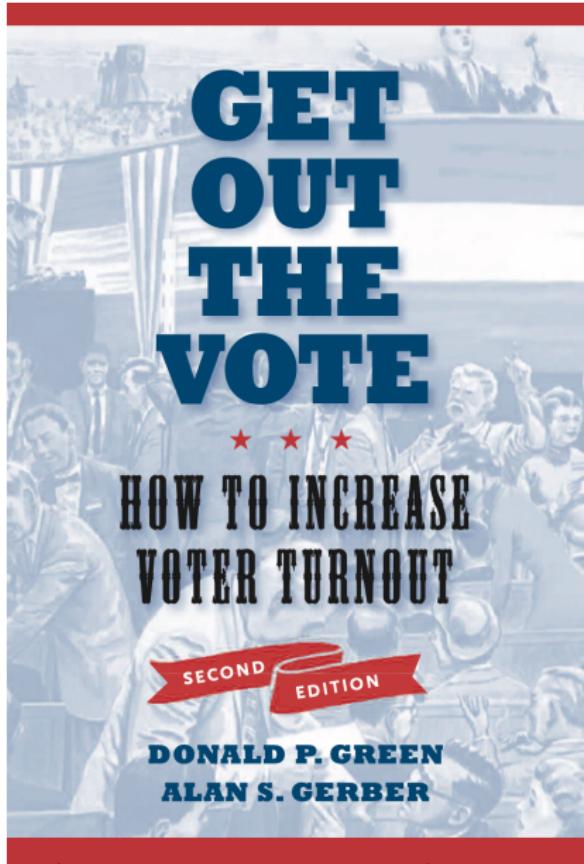


Table 10-1. Cost-Effectiveness of Get-Out-the-Vote Tactics^a
Updated for *Get Out the Vote*, second edition

GOTV effort	Start-up and overhead costs	Ongoing management	Effectiveness per contact ^b	Is effect statistically reliable?	Dollar cost per vote (excluding start-up and management costs)
Door-to-door	Labor intensive; recruit, prepare walk lists	Substantial ongoing training and supervision	One vote per 14 contacts (plus effects of spillover)	Yes	At \$16 per hour and 6 contacts per hour, one vote costs \$29
Leafleting	Labor intensive; recruit, prepare walk lists and leaflets, determine polling locations	Minimal: monitor walkers, check work	One vote per 189 voters reached by leaflets	Not significantly greater than zero	*
Direct mail, partisan	Resource intensive; design, print, mail	Intensive during start-up, then postal service takes over	No detectable effect	Large number of studies show average effect cannot be large	*
Direct mail, nonpartisan	Resource intensive; design, print, mail	Intensive work with consultants, then postal service takes over	One vote per 200 recipients	Yes, but borderline significant	At \$0.50 per piece, one vote costs \$67
Phone, volunteer	Labor intensive: amass enthusiastic callers and secure phone bank	Ongoing training and supervision	One vote per 38 contacts	Yes	At \$16 an hour and 16 contacts per hour, one vote costs \$38
Commercial live calls, without special coaching	Resource intensive; obtain phone list	Ongoing or sporadic monitoring	One vote per 180 contacts	Yes	At \$0.50 per contact, one vote costs \$90
Commercial live calls, with special coaching, long scripts	Resource intensive; obtain phone list, carefully select calling firm	Extensive monitoring	One vote per 35 contacts	Yes, but based on few studies	At \$1.50 per contact, one vote costs \$53
Robo calls	Obtain phone list, recording talent	None	One vote per 900 individuals called	Not significantly greater than zero	*
E-mail	Moderately labor intensive: amass e-mail lists, compose message(s)	Most of the work is in the start-up	No detectable effect	Large numbers of studies show average effect cannot be large	*
Election Day festivals	Labor intensive: arrange advertising and organization	Requires staff on hand to host and supervise events	Raises precinct-wide turnout by 1-2 percentage points	Yes, but based on few studies	Roughly \$28 per vote
Television	Resource intensive; hire consultants	None	Raises zip-code-wide turnout by 0.5 percentage point	Not significantly greater than zero	*
Radio	Resource intensive	None	Raises city-wide turnout by 0.8 percentage point	Not significantly greater than zero	*

a. Costs may vary due to local circumstances and market conditions.

b. "Contact" is defined as follows: for door-to-door canvassing, talking to target voter; for phone calls, talking to target voter; for mail sent; for leaflets, leaflet dropped at door. For leafleting and door-to-door canvassing, calculations assume that the average household has 1.5 voters.

* Cost-effectiveness is not calculated for tactics that are not proven to raise turnout.

10. Voters and political behavior

How effective are TV ads?

You can download the article at

www.guillermotoral.com/cp/sides.pdf

American Political Science Review (2022) 116, 2, 702–718

doi:10.1017/S000305542100112X © The Author(s), 2021. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the American Political Science Association. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

The Effect of Television Advertising in United States Elections

JOHN SIDES *Vanderbilt University, United States*

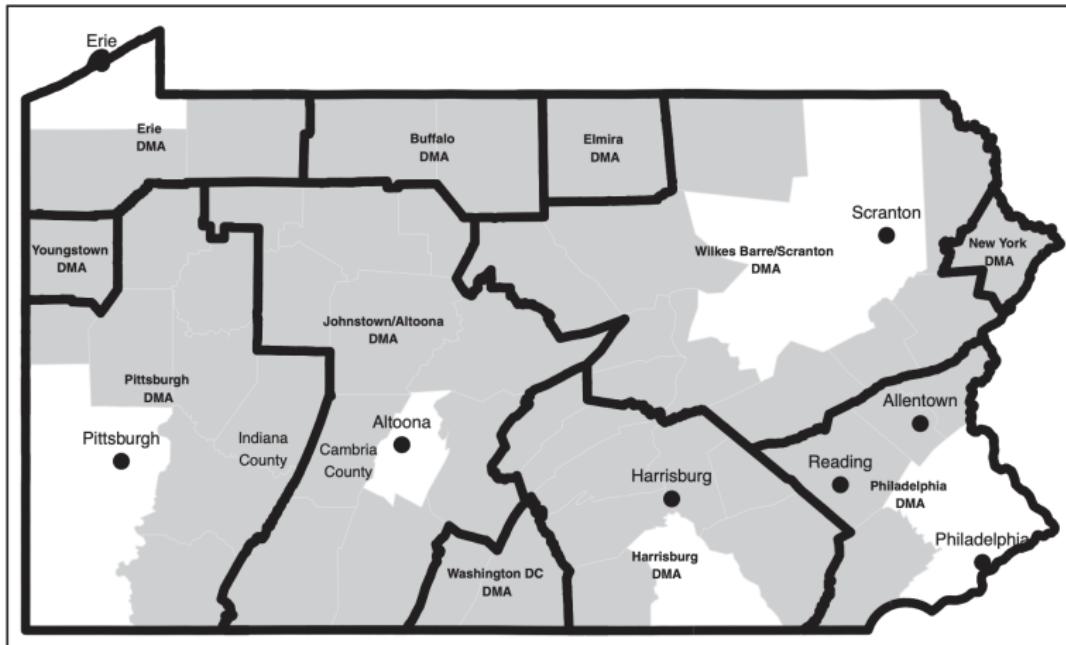
LYNN VAVRECK *University of California, Los Angeles, United States*

CHRISTOPHER WARSHAW *George Washington University, United States*

We provide a comprehensive assessment of the influence of television advertising on United States election outcomes from 2000–2018. We expand on previous research by including presidential, Senate, House, gubernatorial, Attorney General, and state Treasurer elections and using both difference-in-differences and border-discontinuity research designs to help identify the causal effect of advertising. We find that televised broadcast campaign advertising matters up and down the ballot, but it has much larger effects in down-ballot elections than in presidential elections. Using survey and voter registration data from multiple election cycles, we also show that the primary mechanism for ad effects is persuasion, not the mobilization of partisans. Our results have implications for the study of campaigns and elections as well as voter decision making and information processing.

How effective are TV ads?

FIGURE 2. Illustration of the Border Counties Design in Pennsylvania



Note: The dark lines indicate media market boundaries. The shaded counties, which lie along a media market boundary next to another county in Pennsylvania, are the ones included in the border county sample.

How effective are TV ads?

TABLE 2. The Effects of Television Advertising in Last Two Months of Presidential Elections (2000–2016)

	Dependent variable: Dem. vote share						
	All counties				Border counties		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dem. ad adv. (100 ads)	0.158** (0.036)	0.043** (0.013)	0.037** (0.007)	0.027** (0.008)	0.027** (0.005)	0.020** (0.006)	0.018** (0.005)
Year FE	X	X			X	X	
State-year FE			X	X	X	X	
County FE		X		X		X	X
Lagged outcome			X		X		X
Border-pair-year FE							X
Observations	12,652	12,652	12,650	12,652	17,652	17,689	17,689
R ²	0.076	0.930	0.953	0.962	0.956	0.968	0.993

Note: The treatment variable is Democratic ad advantage in terms of hundreds of ads. Standard errors are clustered by county and DMA-year in the left panel and by county and DMA border-year in the right panel. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

How effective are TV ads?

TABLE 3. Effects of Aggregate Television Advertising in Last Two Months of Election across Offices (2000–2018)

	Dependent variable: Dem. vote share					
	President	Senate	Governor	House	Attorney gen.	Treasurer
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
All counties						
Dem. ad adv. (100 ads)	0.027** (0.008)	0.055** (0.010)	0.087** (0.014)	0.091** (0.018)	0.260** (0.046)	0.337** (0.087)
County FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
State-year FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Observations	12,652	17,133	11,373	28,641	7,984	5,331
R ²	0.962	0.960	0.941	0.953	0.967	0.971
Border counties						
Dem. ad adv. (100 ads)	0.018** (0.005)	0.038** (0.007)	0.055** (0.010)	0.084** (0.022)	0.192** (0.031)	0.352** (0.056)
County FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Border-pair-year FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Observations	17,689	23,910	15,880	38,131	11,557	7,520
R ²	0.993	0.990	0.986	0.991	0.991	0.993

Note: The treatment variable is Democratic ad advantage in terms of hundreds of ads. Standard errors are clustered by county and DMA-year in the top panel and by county and DMA border-year in the bottom panel. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Group exercise

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard
- In designing your campaign and in the write-up of your plan:

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard
- In designing your campaign and in the write-up of your plan:
 - **Think through the context:** political regime, form of government, electoral system, party system

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard
- In designing your campaign and in the write-up of your plan:
 - **Think through the context:** political regime, form of government, electoral system, party system
 - **Reflect about the perspective(s) on elections** you endorse

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard
- In designing your campaign and in the write-up of your plan:
 - **Think through the context:** political regime, form of government, electoral system, party system
 - **Reflect about the perspective(s) on elections** you endorse
 - **Be mindful of costs** – whatever the setting, resources are limited

Group exercise

- **Choose a client in an upcoming election** (it could be legislative or executive office, local or national, in presidentialism or parliamentarism, under democracy or competitive authoritarianism)
- **Design an electoral campaign** to help that client win the election through legal means
- Write up a **1-page memo** with your campaign plan, and submit it on Blackboard
- In designing your campaign and in the write-up of your plan:
 - **Think through the context:** political regime, form of government, electoral system, party system
 - **Reflect about the perspective(s) on elections** you endorse
 - **Be mindful of costs** – whatever the setting, resources are limited
 - **Engage with issues of rationality, identity, collective action**

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*
 - *Where do veto players come from?*

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*
 - *Where do veto players come from?*
- **Do the readings** and come prepared for a potential quiz:

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*
 - *Where do veto players come from?*
- **Do the readings** and come prepared for a potential quiz:
 - *Comparative politics – chapter 13*

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*
 - *Where do veto players come from?*
- **Do the readings** and come prepared for a potential quiz:
 - *Comparative politics* – chapter 13
 - *Foundations of comparative politics* – chapter 11

Next steps

- Next we will turn to **subnational authorities**:
 - *When and how is authority divided territorially?*
 - *How do federalism and bicameralism impact state capacity?*
 - *Where do veto players come from?*
- **Do the readings** and come prepared for a potential quiz:
 - *Comparative politics* – chapter 13
 - *Foundations of comparative politics* – chapter 11
- **Make progress on your research design**