

Hans Trautlein
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Thesis Proposal
Thesis

The Effect of Nominations in Presidential Campaigns

Advisor : Alex Montgomery
First Reader : Heather Hodges

I intend to write my thesis on the effects of political nominations in United States presidential campaigns. I am driven to this topic by the importance nominations seem to play in the entire process even though they seem to be ignored by political media and their importance is underplayed in the public arena. The issue was brought forward most by the important *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*.¹ This book will certainly be a guide to the ideas surrounding the nomination process and its importance in American politics. I intend to use the dataset from the book² as well as some datasets incorporating new data, for example the following dataset from FiveThirtyEight.³

I am expecting to use R throughout my thesis process as I intend for the thesis to be a primarily quantitative thesis. I also think I might examine GIS tools as examining geographic effects might be one way for me to find significance in this project. Ideas I am looking into, which could be superseded by the research of others, include the importance of party matching when endorsements are made, and how that could hold as a marker of elite polarization. I'm also curious in why the endorsements are made in the first place, so I might be curious in developing a model for what would encourage any politician to endorse another, perhaps looking at factors like time along with the many other variables that exist.

Finally, I want this thesis to primarily be a learning process about the tools involved and just a healthy introduction into how a researcher picks a topic and then dutifully inspects it.⁴

¹Cohen, Marty et al. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

²Marty Cohen - Data and Codebooks. "<http://www.martycohen.net/5.html>"

³[data/endorsements/-june-30 at master · fivethirtyeight/data · GitHub](https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master/endorsements-june-30).

⁴<https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master/endorsements-june-30>

⁴274 words in body of proposal.