

Closeness, Expenditures, and Turnout in the 2000 Presidential Election

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ABSTRACT. In this article I examine whether turnout in the 2000 presidential election was influenced by closeness and candidate expenditures. Evidence that closeness affects turnout supports the theory that voters assign more weight to their votes in close elections. Evidence that expenditures increase turnout provides support for the argument that greater mobilization efforts increase turnout in close elections. I test the effect of closeness and expenditures separately and jointly in state- and individual-level multivariate analyses. It is found that closeness affects turnout in the state- and individual-level models when expenditures are omitted. When expenditures are included in the analyses, closeness is rendered insignificant or takes on an unanticipated sign. Although the influence of closeness on turnout is uncertain and variable, expenditure allocation is related to closeness, and in all the analyses, expenditures, measured as presidential advertising and presidential visits, positively impacted turnout in the 2000 election.

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INTRODUCTION

The 2000 presidential election was one of the closest in American history. Al Gore won the popular vote by a margin of 543,895 votes, but George W. Bush became the 43rd president of the United States because he secured a razor-thin majority of 50.5% electoral votes (271 out of 537 votes cast) (Federal Election Commission). Despite the fact that the election was a toss-up, turnout in the 2000 election bested the rate in 1996 (a lopsided election that Clinton won with 54.7% of the two-party vote) by a meager 2.2 percentage points (51.2% versus 49.0% of the voting-age population) (Scammon, McGillivray, and Cook 2001). It is plausible to think that turnout should have been substantially greater in 2000. If we view the 2000 election as a political market, then rational choice theory posits an increase in turnout. From the demand side, the vantage point of the voters, it is expected that they will value their votes more highly compared with the 1996 election because a smaller number of votes are needed to decide the 2000 contest. To put it bluntly, in close elections voters exaggerate the probability that their ballots determine the winner (Riker and Ordeshook 1968).

There is, however, mixed empirical support for the hypothesis that turnout increases in close elections (Cox and Munger 1989). In recent research, scholars have shifted their focus away from voters in favor of examining the supply side of the electoral market—the candidates and their supporters. Turnout, it is argued, increases when elections are competitive not because voters inflate the probability that their votes are decisive, but rather mobilization on the part of the candidates intensifies in close contests and this results in higher turnout as more citizens are induced to vote (Aldrich 1993; Cox and Munger 1989; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

In this article I examine whether turnout in the 2000 presidential election was influenced by closeness and candidate expenditures. Evidence that closeness affects turnout supports the theory that voters assign more weight to their votes in close elections. Evidence that expenditures increase turnout provides support for the argument that greater mobilization efforts increase turnout in close elections.

I test the effect of closeness and expenditures separately and jointly in state- and individual-level multivariate analyses. It is found that closeness affects turnout in the state- and individual-level models when expenditures are omitted. When expenditures are included in the analyses, closeness is rendered insignificant or takes on an unanticipated sign. So closeness indirectly affects turnout through its effect on supply-side resource allocation decisions.

In the first section, I discuss prior research on individual-level and contextual factors that influence turnout, particularly the effects of closeness and mobilization. Then, I present the closeness and expenditure variables, respectively. Next I discuss the data and methods employed for the multivariate turnout models. In the next sections, I present the state- and individual-level results. Finally, I conclude with a brief discussion of my findings.

INFLUENCES ON TURNOUT

Research on turnout in American politics is voluminous. Scholars have identified the most important individual-level factors affecting turnout. Beginning with the work of Campbell et al. (1960), it was shown that party identification and the strength of partisanship—the degree of psychological attachment to the parties—served to increase the propensity to vote. Verba and Nie's (1972) socioeconomic (SES) model of political participation illustrated the importance of income, education, and occupation on turnout. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) split up the components of SES and found that education is the strongest predictor of turnout. Later works have confirmed the enduring importance of education as a factor affecting turnout (Leighley and Nagler 1992; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Other individual-level determinants, such as age (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980), race/ethnicity (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee 2000; Tate 1991), marital status (Stoker and Jennings 1995), and residential stability, (Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987) show an effect on the likelihood of voting.

The individual-level factors influencing turnout continue to dominate explanations of turnout decline. With Brody's (1978) presentation of the puzzle of turnout decline, numerous studies have set out to provide the solution or at least identify some of the reasons

for the downward trend in voting despite a more educated public and more liberal registration laws (Abramson and Aldrich 1982; Boyd 1989; Cavanagh 1981; Niemi and Weisberg 2001; Shaffer 1981). The majority of these studies point to a reduction in voter characteristics that correlate with higher turnout. For instance, the contemporary electorate is younger, less partisan (Wattenberg 1998), and less involved in social networks (churches civic organizations, etc.) that are known to foster turnout (Putnam 2001).

Yet not everyone agrees that turnout is on an inexorable downward path. The resurgence in two-party competition (Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Cohen, Fleisher, and Kantor 2001; Stonecash, Brewer, and Mariani 2003) and the recent increase in partisanship among the electorate (Bartels 2000) makes it possible that turnout may be on the upswing. Witness the turnout rate in the 2004 presidential election. Estimated at almost 60% of the voting-age population, turnout in 2004 was the highest it has been since 1968. McDonald and Popkin (2001) contend that the pattern of turnout decline evident since the 1960s is substantially overstated because estimates of turnout based on the voting-age population include a growing segment of the American electorate (e.g., felons and illegal aliens) that is not eligible to vote. When measures of turnout are based on the eligible voting population, the downward trend in turnout is considerably flattened.

Scholars do agree, however, that voter turnout varies substantially. Many scholars have turned to contextual factors to account for turnout variability. For instance, numerous studies have concluded that turnout in national elections would be significantly higher with the removal of various legal impediments (Highton 1997; Oliver 1996; Powell 1986; Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987; Timpone 1998; Traugott 2000; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Specifically, the closing date for voter registration has shown an enduring effect on reducing the probability of turnout and this restriction is the most important because most other legal impediments have been removed across all the states. As Traugott (2000) points out, one of the most active areas with respect to increasing turnout has been electoral reform designed to make voting more convenient.

Perhaps the most important contemporary research on contextual factors influencing turnout concerns the role of mobilization. Research on mobilization has given us a more comprehensive understanding of turnout, its variability, and the actions of political elites. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993; 2001) argue that mobilization is not

only complementary to other models of turnout, but the addition of mobilization variables solves the puzzle of turnout decline (but see Niemi and Weisberg 2001 for an opposing view).

Mobilization by candidates and parties (and other political actors or groups) serves to increase turnout for at least two reasons: (1) it reduces the costs of political participation and (2) it has a ripple effect that permeates social networks as citizens are persuaded to participate because of the provision of selective social incentives that materialize in social relations (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). In close elections it is in the interests of the parties and candidates to actively seek electoral support or demobilize supporters of the opposition so as to increase their chances of winning. Subsidizing the costs of participation by increasing political information and interest through campaign expenditures consistently shows the effect of increasing turnout (Caldeira, Patterson, and Marko 1985; Cox and Munger 1989; Jackson 1997; Jackson 1993; Patterson and Caldeira 1983).

Rational choice theory provides insight for why mobilization enhances turnout. Simply put, an individual will vote if the benefits of voting outweigh the costs (Downs 1957). The classic model of turnout can be presented as a simple equation:

$$p^*B + D > C = \text{vote.}$$

The benefits of voting consist of three components: (1) the probability that one's vote decides the election (p), (2) the benefit received from voting for one's preferred candidate (B), and (3) one's sense of obligation to vote ($D = \text{duty}$). An individual votes when the duty of voting, plus the probability that one's vote is decisive, times the benefit accrued if one's candidate wins, exceeds the costs of voting (time needed to vote and costs of being informed). Thus, in rational choice parlance, mobilization reduces the costs of voting to the point that the benefits of voting exceed the costs.

Many testable hypotheses have been generated from this simple depiction of voting as a cost/benefit decision. Initially, rational choice scholars examined whether turnout increased in close elections from the perspective of the voter. For instance, Riker and Ordeshook (1968) found that individuals who felt obligated to vote had significantly higher turnout in close elections. It was expected that more people would vote in a close election because the chance that their vote determined the outcome would be greater; that is, the

probability of casting the decisive vote increases in a close race. As Schwartz (1987) eloquently puts it, “saying closeness increases the probability of [a vote] being pivotal . . . is like saying tall men are more likely than short men to bump their heads on the moon.” (cited in Cox and Munger 1989, p. 218).

The work of Cox and Munger (1989) is the jumping-off point for the analyses in this article. Cox and Munger are skeptical of the argument that closeness increases turnout because it induces voters to think they have a greater chance of casting the decisive vote. To be sure, it is possible that individuals may be more likely to vote in close elections, but it is not very plausible to explain this behavior as a result of voters grossly exaggerating the importance of their votes. Instead of a direct link between closeness and turnout, Cox and Munger (1989) hypothesize that turnout increases in close elections because of the incentives of elite actors. They offer the possibility that, “perhaps closeness causes *elite* actors to increase their activity in the electoral process, thus stimulating turnout” (p. 218). Similar to Cox and Munger, I hypothesize that competitive elections increase campaign expenditures and expenditures increase turnout. In the analyses that follow, I include many of the factors discussed in this section as control variables in the multivariate models in order to isolate the effects of closeness and expenditures on turnout in the 2000 presidential election.

CLOSENESS

Closeness can be measured several different ways. In this study closeness is measured at the state-level and it is the absolute difference in the number of votes received by George W. Bush and Al Gore divided by the voting-eligible population. One objection to this measure of closeness is that there is a marked difference in a 25% margin in a large state compared to this same margin in a small state. But as Cox (1988) points out, in a high-profile contest like a presidential election, campaigns have the organizational capacity to treat percentage margins of the same size in small and large states as roughly equivalent. According to Cox (1988), “to the extent that each candidate can command pre-existing organizations whose size is proportional to the task facing them, the relevant variable is the percentage rather than raw vote margin” (p. 770).

An advantage to using this measure of closeness is that it avoids the econometric objection of including total votes in the denominator for closeness when total votes are the numerator in the turnout variable. Including total votes for both closeness and turnout can lead to spurious correlation (see Cox 1988). Following the advice of Cox (1988) and Cox and Munger (1989), in all of the multivariate analyses I include closeness and its squared value. Closeness is hypothesized to have a negative effect—a smaller margin is expected to yield a higher turnout. Thus, when closeness is squared the coefficient should take on a positive sign.

The correlation between closeness and turnout (total votes cast for president divided by the voting-eligible population) at the state-level for the 2000 presidential election is $-.009$ ($p < .5$, one-tailed). The correlation at the individual-level is significant but the relationship is unexpectedly positive ($+.002$, $p < .001$, one-tailed). Thus, there is not a direct relationship between closeness and turnout at the state-level, and at the individual-level a person is more likely to vote if he/she lives in a state that is not competitive. Table 1 provides more evidence that there is not a direct relationship between closeness and turnout. The states are divided into quartiles according to closeness and the average and median turnout is displayed for each quartile.

TABLE 1. State-Level Turnout in 2000 Presidential Election Segmented by Closeness Quartiles

| States in Quartile | Closeness | Turnout: Average | Turnout: Median |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1st Quartile: AR, FL, IA, MN, MO, NV, NH, NM, OH, OR, PA, TN, and WI N = 13 | $\leq .02606$ | 57.35% | 56.73% |
| 2nd Quartile: AZ, CA, CO, GA, IL, LA, ME, ML, NC, VT, VA, WA, and WV N = 13 | $> .02606 \leq .06755$ | 55.45% | 56.24% |
| 3rd Quartile: AL, CT, DE, HI, IN, KS, KY, MD, MS, NJ, OK, SC, and TX N = 13 | $> .06755 \leq .11569$ | 52.45% | 51.59% |
| 4th Quartile: AK, ID, MA, MI, NE, NY, ND, RI, SD, UT, D.C., and WY N = 12 | $> .11569$ | 57.83% | 57.44% |

Note: Closeness is calculated as the raw vote margin for the two-party presidential vote divided by the voting eligible population. Turnout is based on the total votes cast divided by the voting eligible population.

The expected negative relationship holds for the first three quartiles. For those states with the closest margins, less than or equal to 2.6 percentage points, turnout is higher than the turnout among the states in the next two closeness quartiles. But notice that in those states with the largest presidential margins (over 11.5 percentage points) turnout was actually the highest. One of the added benefits of relying on a measure of closeness is that it avoids getting into a debate over which states the presidential campaigns deemed battlegrounds (see Hill and McKee 2005; Shaw 1999; Shaw 2006).

EXPENDITURES

Expenditures are considered to be a proxy for mobilization. Although the simple correlation between closeness and turnout does not hold, it is expected that closeness and expenditures are related and that expenditures have a positive effect on turnout. There are two measures of expenditures used in the turnout models: (1) presidential advertising and (2) presidential visits.

The presidential advertising measure is used to assess the electorate's level of exposure to campaign ads. Advertising is gauged in terms of the average cost per 100 gross rating points (GRPs). 100 GRPs is equivalent to the average viewer in a designated media market viewing a political ad one time. The cost per 100 GRPs is used because it allows one to determine the level of advertising across media markets that charge vastly different rates for political advertising. Hence, one can determine the amount of advertising exposure for viewers living in Gainesville, Florida versus viewers residing in Los Angeles.

Presidential advertising is calculated as the total dollars spent by the Bush and Gore campaigns and their respective national party committees (for the last 11 weeks of the general election campaign) in each media market divided by the cost per 100 GRPs in that market; this quotient is then multiplied by the percentage of the state population in the media market. This calculation is repeated for every media market in the state (with political advertising) and summed to determine the total level of advertising in each state. In statistical form the presidential advertising variable is:

$$\sum (\text{Total}\$_i) / (\text{Cost}_i) * (\text{Market Size}_i).$$

Total $\$_i$ is the sum of advertising dollars purchased by Bush/the Republican National Committee and Gore/the Democratic National Committee in the i th state media market. Cost $_i$ is the cost per 100 GRP's in the i th state media market. Market Size $_i$ is the percentage of a state's registered population residing within the i th state media market.¹

Presidential visits are the total number of campaign visits made by Bush and Gore and their vice presidential running mates. Visits have been determined at the city-level and therefore can be summed to get a total for the state-level analyses. For Bush and Cheney, visits have been recorded from August 4th to November 6th. For Gore and Lieberman, visits have been tracked from August 18th to November 6th. For the state-level models, visits are assigned to the state in which the city visit was made.

In two of the individual-level models, visits are assigned to the cities in a metropolitan statistical area (MSA). For example, the MSA for the city of Charlotte includes territory in North Carolina and South Carolina. In this instance I assign the one campaign visit by Dick Cheney to those respondents who reside in the Charlotte MSA that consists of North Carolina and South Carolina. I do likewise in the case of presidential advertising because I can account for the level of advertising at the city-level in metropolitan statistical areas that cross state lines.²

The relationship between closeness and expenditures is highly significant. The correlation between closeness and presidential advertising is $-.559$ ($p < .001$, one-tailed). The correlation between closeness and presidential visits is $-.409$ ($p < .001$, one-tailed).³

These simple relationships provide evidence that closeness is driving campaign mobilization efforts. Table 2 presents average and median expenditures according to closeness quartiles. Clearly, the presidential campaigns allocated the bulk of their advertising and visits to the most competitive states.

Expenditures are related to closeness, but is it the case that mobilization increases turnout? At the state-level the simple correlation between presidential advertising and turnout is $+.214$ ($p < .07$, one-tailed). And the simple correlation between presidential visits and turnout is $+.153$ ($p < .14$, one-tailed). The correlations between expenditures and turnout are highly significant at the individual-level. Based on data from the 2000 Current Population Survey, the correlations between presidential advertising and turnout and presidential

TABLE 2. Average and Median Expenditure Allocation in the 2000 Presidential Election Based on Closeness Quartiles

| Closeness Quartile | Pres Advertising (GRPs) | Pres Visits |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Average | | |
| 1st Quartile | 291 | 24 |
| 2nd Quartile | 149 | 14 |
| 3rd Quartile | 64 | 4 |
| 4th Quartile | 21 | 3 |
| Median | | |
| 1st Quartile | 317 | 24 |
| 2nd Quartile | 30 | 6 |
| 3rd Quartile | 32 | 2 |
| 4th Quartile | 3 | 0 |

Note: See the text for an explanation of how presidential advertising and presidential visits were calculated.

visits and turnout are, respectively: $+.014$ ($p < .001$, one-tailed) and $+.010$ ($p < .01$, one-tailed).

The reason why presidential advertising and presidential campaign visits are expected to increase turnout is that these forms of resource allocation reduce the cost of political information. Voters in the so-called battleground states (states considered to be the most competitive by the Bush and Gore campaigns) were subjected to the most advertising and as a consequence they were the most knowledgeable of the 2000 presidential campaign (Lipsitz 2004). Candidate visits increase voter knowledge because attendees share their experience of the event through their social networks and because these events receive heavy media coverage (Hill and McKee 2005; Jones 1998). By increasing political knowledge these forms of mobilization reduce the cost of voting.

DATA AND METHODS

Although there is evidence of a direct relationship between expenditures and turnout, a more accurate assessment of the relationship between expenditures and turnout (and closeness and turnout) can be achieved by performing multivariate analyses to examine these relationships when controlling for other factors that influence turnout.

The data used for the state-level multivariate analyses come from several different sources. I have included an appendix that provides the variable definitions and sources for all of the variables included in the state-level models. I use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression for the state-level models. The dependent variable is the total votes cast for president divided by the voting eligible population. Similar to Cox and Munger (1989), the models are presented sequentially. The first model includes the closeness variables (Pres Closeness and Pres Closeness²) but not expenditures. The second model includes the expenditure variables (Pres Advertising and Pres Visits) but omits the closeness measures. The third (and final) model includes both the closeness and expenditure variables.

The data for the individual-level multivariate analyses come from the 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS)⁴ administered by the United States Census Bureau. I use logistic regression for the individual-level models. The dependent variable is self-reported turnout for the 2000 election; 1 = voted and 0 = did not vote.⁵ Like the state-level models, the individual-level models are arrayed sequentially. There are, however, two additional individual-level models. These two models include the expenditure variables at the city-level according to the data provided by the CPS. For these analyses, the first model includes expenditures and excludes the closeness variables, and the second model includes both closeness and expenditures.

Some of the state-level variables are included in the individual-level analyses. In addition to the closeness and expenditures variables, they are: Registration Closing Date, State PID Margin, Senate Race, Senate Spending, Gubernatorial Race, and Gubernatorial Spending. State PID Margin is a control for state partisanship and it is calculated by subtracting the five year average for the percentage of Republican identifiers minus the five year average percentage of Democratic identifiers in each state (see Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993, 14–17).⁶ The senate and gubernatorial variables are included in the state- and individual-level models in order to account for mobilization effects that stem from other elections (Cox and Munger 1989).

All of the models include numerous explanatory variables that previous research identifies as having an influence on turnout. Given the large number of controls, if it is found that closeness consistently impacts turnout, then this is strong evidence that electoral margin had an independent effect on turnout in the 2000 presidential election. Likewise, if expenditures have an independent effect on turnout

then this means that mobilization increased turnout in the 2000 presidential election.

RESULTS: STATE-LEVEL

Table 3 presents the estimates for the three state-level turnout models. Model 1 presents the closeness variables when expenditures are excluded. In Model 1, many of the control variables are significant. Education, median family income, the percentage of registered

TABLE 3. State-Level Turnout Models

| Variables | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Education | 0.0058 (3.14)*** | 0.0065 (3.46)*** | 0.0066(3.73)*** |
| Income | 2.24×10^{-6} (1.61)* | 7.62×10^{-7} (0.61) | 1.91×10^{-6} (1.50)* |
| Age | -0.0539 (-0.17) | 0.6253 (2.17)** | 0.3324 (1.06) |
| Racial Diversity | -0.0013 (-2.10)** | -0.0017 (-2.87)*** | -0.0013 (-2.26)** |
| Registered | 0.0029 (4.96)*** | 0.0020 (3.13)*** | 0.0018 (2.78)*** |
| South | 0.0107 (0.71) | 0.0037 (0.25) | 0.0010 (0.71) |
| Urban | -0.0003 (-0.36) | -0.0003 (-0.46) | -0.0007 (-0.99) |
| Density | -6.37×10^{-5} (-3.63)*** | -1.49×10^{-5} (-1.73)** | -4.80×10^{-5} (-2.78)*** |
| State PID Margin | -0.0005 (-0.87) | 0.0004 (0.66) | -0.0003 (-0.47) |
| Registration | -0.0006 (-0.86) | -0.0012(-1.78)** | -0.0012 (-1.85)** |
| Closing Date | | | |
| Senate Race | -0.0092 (-0.80) | -0.0092 (-0.79) | -0.0010 (-0.91)** |
| Senate Spending | 0.0110 (1.70)** | 0.0121 (1.76)** | 0.0120 (1.85)** |
| Gubernatorial | -0.0275 (-0.76) | -0.0595 (-1.64)* | 0.0583 (-1.64)* |
| Race | | | |
| Gubernatorial | -0.0024 (-0.09) | 0.0210 (0.83) | 0.0237 (0.95) |
| Spending | | | |
| Pres Closeness | -0.8880 (-3.70)*** | — | -0.2542 (-0.80) |
| Pres Closeness ² | 4.2275 (3.52)*** | — | 2.1004 (1.56)* |
| Pres Advertising | — | 6.54×10^{-5} (1.48)* | 7.62×10^{-5} (1.45)* |
| Pres Visits | — | 0.0010 (2.15)** | 0.0011 (2.23)** |
| Intercept | 0.2217 (0.93) | -0.2291 (-1.06) | -0.0211 (-0.09) |
| Root Mean | .031 | .031 | .029 |
| Squared Error | | | |
| Adjusted R ² | .770 | .781 | .808 |
| N | 51 | 51 | 51 |

Note: Coefficients are unstandardized ordinary least squares (OLS) regression values. The dependent variable is the percentage state turnout among the voting-eligible population: t-statistics are in parentheses.

*p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .01, one-tailed tests.

voters, and Senate spending all positively impact state-level turnout. Racial diversity (see Hill and Leighley 1999), the proportion of different racial/ethnic groups in a state, has a negative effect on turnout. Density also has a negative effect on turnout. This is expected because denser areas have more mobile populations and greater mobility dampens turnout (Cox and Munger 1989; Squire et al. 1987). The variables of interest, Pres Closeness and Pres Closeness² are highly significant and of the anticipated sign. Model 1 provides support for the argument that closeness increases turnout.

Model 2 includes expenditures and omits the closeness measures. The fit of the data improves in Model 2 (adjusted $R^2 = .781$). Income is no longer significant. Three variables that were not significant in Model 1 attain significance in Model 2: Age, Registration Closing Date, and Gubernatorial Race. The age variable is the percentage of the voting-age population under 65 years old and thus it was not expected that this coefficient would take on a positive sign. As expected, registration closing dates set farther away from the day of the election negatively affect turnout. The presence of a gubernatorial election reduces turnout. Although the effects appear to be modest, both expenditure variables increase turnout.

Model 3 provides an answer to the question of whether it is closeness or expenditures that impact state-level turnout. Not surprisingly, including closeness and expenditures improves the fit of the data ($R^2 = .808$). Income is significant in Model 3 and age is no longer significant. All the other controls that were significant in Model 2 remain significant. Notice however, that when closeness and expenditures are in the same model, Pres Closeness is no longer significant and Pres Closeness² is significant but at a much lower level and its coefficient is more than halved compared to its value in Model 1. By contrast, both expenditure variables remain significant and their coefficients increase. The significance of Pres Advertising is slightly reduced ($t = 1.45$), but the significance of Pres Visits increases ($t = 2.23$). The results from the state-level models provide support for the argument that it is not closeness per se, but expenditures that increase turnout in close elections.

RESULTS: INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL

Table 4 presents the estimates for the individual-level models when expenditures are calculated as state totals. With such large sample

TABLE 4. Individual-Level Turnout Models

| Variables | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Education | 0.260 (58.17)*** | 0.261 (58.13)*** | 0.261 (58.21)*** |
| Income | 0.061 (19.02)*** | 0.060 (18.90)*** | 0.062 (19.26)*** |
| Age | 0.032 (47.60)*** | 0.032 (47.55)*** | 0.032 (47.67)*** |
| Male | -0.150 (-7.91)*** | -0.150 (-7.86)*** | -0.151 (-7.93)*** |
| Student | 0.482 (11.21)*** | 0.483 (11.22)*** | 0.478 (11.09)*** |
| Government Employee | 0.485 (14.09)*** | 0.495 (14.38)*** | 0.490 (14.23)*** |
| Weeks Unemployed | -0.018 (-1.73)* | -0.017 (-1.65)* | -0.018 (-1.71)* |
| Home Owner | 0.249 (10.05)*** | 0.243 (9.77)*** | 0.245 (9.87)*** |
| Length of Residence | 0.164 (21.59)*** | 0.165 (21.64)*** | 0.163 (21.41)*** |
| Lives in Trailer | -0.415 (-10.49)*** | -0.412 (-10.42)*** | -0.412 (-10.40)*** |
| African-American | 0.509 (15.01)*** | 0.529 (15.60)*** | 0.520 (15.29)*** |
| Hispanic | -0.066 (-1.74)* | -0.063 (-1.65)* | -0.053 (-1.38) |
| Married | 0.382 (18.12)*** | 0.383 (18.10)*** | 0.381 (18.02)*** |
| South | 0.019 (0.78) | 0.014 (0.57) | 0.078 (3.06)*** |
| Registration Closing Date | -0.010 (-8.17)*** | -0.011 (-8.85)*** | -0.012 (-9.41)*** |
| State PID Margin | -0.002 (-1.61) | -0.001 (-1.52) | -0.001 (-1.11) |
| Senate Race | -0.109 (-4.64)*** | -0.144 (-5.90)*** | -0.109 (-4.41)*** |
| Senate Spending | 0.065 (5.31)*** | 0.070 (5.65)*** | 0.054 (4.26)*** |
| Gubernatorial Race | -0.306 (-3.90)*** | -0.258 (-3.29)*** | -0.394 (-4.91)*** |
| Gubernatorial Spending | 0.204 (3.90)*** | 0.186 (3.57)*** | 0.293 (5.44)*** |
| Pres Closeness | -0.902 (-2.44)** | — | 2.103 (4.15)*** |
| Press Closeness ² | 5.481 (3.90)*** | — | -1.267 (-0.79) |
| Pres Advertising | — | 1.66×10^4 (2.19)** | 6.26×10^4 (6.26)*** |
| Pres Visits | — | 0.002 (2.99)*** | 0.003 (4.88)*** |
| Intercept | -4.777 (-62.65)*** | -4.807 (-63.92)*** | -5.065 (-59.81)*** |
| % Correctly Predicted | 73.7 | 73.8 | 73.8 |
| Pseudo R ² | .165 | .165 | .166 |
| N | 63,826 | 63,826 | 63,826 |

Note: Coefficients are logistic regression values. The dependent variables is the likelihood of voting (1 = voted, 0 = did not vote); t-statistics are in parentheses.

*p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .01, two tailed tests.

sizes (n = 63,826), it is expected that most of the control variables will attain statistical significance. In Model 1, only two variables are not significant, South and State PID Margin. Most of the variables are of the expected sign. It is surprising, however, that African-Americans were substantially more likely to vote. Also, the presence of Senate and Gubernatorial Races reduced turnout, but as expected, expenditures in these contests increased the likelihood of voting.

When only closeness variables are included, both measures are significant and of the expected sign.

In Model 2 the estimates for the control variables hardly change when the expenditure variables are included and the closeness variables are omitted. Pres Advertising and Pres Visits increase the likelihood that a person voted in the 2000 election.

In Model 3 there is a slight change in the estimates for the control variables. The Hispanic coefficient is no longer significant and respondents living in the South are more likely to vote. The latter finding is unexpected. Interestingly, Pres Closeness is highly significant but the sign is reversed-leading to the counterintuitive finding that larger electoral margins increase the likelihood of voting. It strains credulity to place much stock in this result.⁷ Also, Pres Closeness² is no longer significant and the sign reverses. Contrary to the closeness measures, the expenditure variables are of the expected sign and increase in significance. The coefficient for Pres Advertising is almost four times larger in Model 3 and the t statistic (6.26) almost triples in size. The coefficient and t statistic also increase for Pres Visits.

Table 5 presents the estimates at the individual-level when expenditures are calculated as city totals. Model 4 includes expenditures only and Model 5 includes closeness and expenditures. In contrast to the first three models, in Models 4 and 5, Weeks Unemployed is not significant, and State PID Margin is significant. Model 4 shows that Pres Advertising and Pres Visits both increase the likelihood of voting. With the addition of the closeness variables in Model 5, the expenditure variables remain significant whereas the closeness variables are of the expected sign but neither is significant.⁸

To get a tangible sense of the effect of closeness and expenditures on turnout, Table 6 presents the change in the probability of voting given the maximum difference in the values for closeness, advertising, and visits from all five individual-level models. In deriving these probabilities all of the control variables are set to their mean-values. In Model 1, when closeness is greatest (in other words, the electoral margin is the most narrow), the probability of voting increases by .07. Based on the estimates from Model 4, compared to a person in a city that did not air any presidential ads, an individual in a city with the maximum amount of advertising was more likely to vote by a probability of .04. The difference in the probability of voting for a person in the state with the most visits versus someone in a state

TABLE 5. Individual-Level Turnout Models

| Variables | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Education | 0.259 (48.76)*** | 0.259 (48.66)*** |
| Income | 0.058 (14.94)*** | 0.058 (14.91)*** |
| Age | 0.032 (38.78)*** | 0.032 (38.75)*** |
| Male | -0.180 (-7.90)*** | -0.180 (-7.90)*** |
| Student | 0.461 (9.12)*** | 0.461 (9.12)*** |
| Government Employee | 0.435 (10.44)*** | 0.435 (10.43)*** |
| Weeks Unemployed | -0.014 (-1.20) | -0.015 (-1.24) |
| Home Owner | 0.251 (8.55)*** | 0.252 (8.55)*** |
| Length of Residence | 0.159(17.60)*** | 0.159 (17.62)*** |
| Lives in Trailer | -0.457 (-7.50)*** | -0.456 (-7.49)*** |
| African-American | 0.502 (13.30)*** | 0.494 (13.06)*** |
| Hispanic | -0.070 (-1.67)* | -0.074 (-1.77)* |
| Married | 0.367 (14.47)*** | 0.368 (14.51)*** |
| South | 0.040 (1.38) | 0.046 (1.53) |
| Registration Closing Date | -0.012 (-7.17)*** | -0.012 (-6.77)*** |
| State PID Margin | -0.006 (-5.12)*** | -0.005 (-3.47)*** |
| Senate Race | -0.113 (-3.86)*** | -0.101 (-3.34)*** |
| Senate Spending | 0.056 (4.03)*** | 0.057 (4.05)*** |
| Gubernatorial Race | -0.217 (-2.26)** | -0.299 (-2.77)*** |
| Gubernatorial Spending | 0.127 (1.82)* | 0.185 (2.38)** |
| Pres Closeness | — | -0.277 (-0.58) |
| Pres Closeness ² | — | 2.372 (1.44) |
| Pres Advertising (City) | 5.59×10^4 (2.86)*** | 6.08×10^{-4} (2.62)*** |
| Pres Visits (City) | 0.041 (6.03)*** | 0.043 (6.27)*** |
| Intercept | -4.719 (-50.62)*** | -4.736 (-47.42)*** |
| % Correctly Predicted | 73.9 | 73.9 |
| Pseudo R ² | .162 | .162 |
| N | 44,795 | 44,795 |

Note: Coefficients are logistic regression values. The dependent variable is the likelihood of voting (1 = voted, 0 = did not vote); t-statistics are in parentheses.

*p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .01, two-tailed tests.

without any visits is .04. And compared to those individuals who resided in a state with no advertising and visits, if the maximum number of ads and visits were allocated to the same state, the probability of voting would be increased by .10.⁹

CONCLUSION

The 2000 presidential election provides an ideal opportunity to assess the effect of closeness and expenditures on turnout. The

TABLE 6. Change in Probability of Voting Given the Maximum Difference in Closeness, Advertising, and Visits

| Model | Closeness | Advertising | Visits | Ads and Visits |
|-------|-----------|-------------|--------|----------------|
| 1 | .0714 | — | — | — |
| 2 | — | .0156 | .0246 | .0399 |
| 3 | -.1442* | .0575 | .0416 | .0968 |
| 4 | — | .0370 | .0559 | .0893 |
| 5 | N.S. | .0401 | .0589 | .0948 |

Note: Probabilities were derived from the five individual-level logistic regression models. Blank entries mean the variable is not included in the model.

*The change in probability is of the wrong sign. N.S. = not significant.

competitiveness of the election and the structure of the Electoral College shaped the strategic behavior of the major party candidates and their respective party committees (Hill and McKee 2005; Mayer et al. 2002; Patterson 2002). The Bush and Gore campaigns placed the lion's share of their resources in the most competitive states because these states would decide the winner. Closeness guided expenditures and expenditures in turn had the effect of increasing turnout at both the state- and individual-level.

The state- and individual-level analyses in this research revealed a consistent pattern. Closeness impacted turnout if the expenditure variables were omitted. When expenditures, measured in terms of presidential advertising and campaign visits, were included and closeness was excluded, both expenditure variables increased turnout. And when closeness and expenditures were placed in the same model, only expenditures consistently exhibited a significant and anticipated effect on turnout.

The design of this study was influenced by the work of Cox and Munger (1989). Cox and Munger tested the impact of closeness and expenditures on turnout in district-level analyses of the 1982 U.S. House elections. Contrary to my findings, Cox and Munger find that both closeness and expenditures increase turnout when these measures are included in the same model. Since closeness has a significant effect on turnout when controlling for expenditures, Cox and Munger cannot rule out the possibility of "at least some *direct* response on the part of ordinary citizens to the closeness of elections" (1989, p. 226).¹⁰ Nonetheless, they theorize that closeness drives expenditures and it is expenditures that increase turnout.

Based on these analyses of turnout in the 2000 presidential election it is reasonable to be skeptical of the notion that closeness stimulates voting. As Cox and Munger (1989) argue, closeness provides the motivation for elites (candidates and their supporters) to mobilize voters. Elites have great incentive to mobilize voters because they have a direct and non-trivial stake in the election outcome. To be sure, the decisions of elected officials impact the lives of their constituents and this is a sound reason to vote, but perhaps more importantly, politicians' careers depend on the good graces of the voters and thus it makes perfect sense for candidates to actively seek their favor when an election is in doubt.

NOTES

1. An advantage to using this measure of advertising is that it accounts for the fact that some media markets cross state boundaries. Because I know the percentage of the registered state population in the media market, I have accounted for the level of advertising for all viewers in the media market even if the market spans state lines. For instance, the Mobile-Pensacola media market includes viewers residing in Alabama and Florida. The presidential campaigns targeted Florida and not Alabama because the former state was designated a battleground. But the media market includes Alabama viewers and therefore I can determine the level of presidential advertising in the Mobile portion of the market because I know the percentage of registered voters in Mobile. The state-level expenditure variables used in this article are the same as those used in Hill and McKee (2005). See Hill and McKee (2005) for a more complete explanation of how the presidential advertising variable was constructed. See Berkovitz (1996) for a more detailed discussion of political advertising.

2. Because advertising totals are assigned to states, in the case of advertising at the city-level it was necessary to recode the MSA codes in the Current Population Survey to account for those cases where the MSA crossed state boundaries. For example, presidential ads were aired in the Chattanooga MSA, which covers Tennessee and Georgia. The level of advertising is pegged to the size of the *state's* registered population in the MSA and hence the number of GRPs is not equivalent in the Tennessee and Georgia parts of the Chattanooga MSA. To solve this problem, I recoded the number assigned to the Chattanooga MSA (1560) into two new numbers for the Georgia and Tennessee sections in the MSA. The state FIPS code for Georgia is 13 and thus, the Georgia segment of the Chattanooga MSA was recoded to equal 131560. With the new code I can then assign the appropriate amount of presidential advertising to a city when it spans state lines.

3. Based on data from the 2000 Current Population Survey, the correlations between closeness and presidential advertising and closeness and presidential visits are, respectively: $-.585$ ($p < .001$, one-tailed) and $-.473$ ($p < .001$, one-tailed).

4. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY: VOTER SUPPLEMENT FILE, NOVEMBER 2000 [Computer file]. ICPSR release. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census [producer], 2001. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2004.

5. The vote question on the CPS does not ask explicitly whether a person voted for president, rather it asks: "Did (you/name) vote in the election held on Tuesday, November 7?"

6. Using Alabama as an example, here is how State PID Margin was calculated. From 1995 to 1999 there were a total of 711 respondents who identified with the Republican party, 847 respondents who identified with the Democratic party, and 686 independents. So from 1995 to 1999, 711 out of a total of 2,244 respondents were Republicans (31.7%). And 847 out of 2,244 respondents were Democrats (37.7%). Therefore, the State PID Margin is the difference between the percentage of Republican and Democratic identifiers: $(31.7) - (37.7) = -6.0$. These data were provided by Gerald Wright (wright1@indiana.edu).

7. Of course, one of the hazards of including closeness and expenditures in the same model is that these variables are highly correlated and this may explain the volatility in the closeness estimates.

8. Caution should be exercised in evaluating these results when expenditures are totaled at the city-level because the closeness data are calculated at the state-level. Ideally, one would measure closeness at the city-level, but these data are not readily available.

9. This is a hypothetical scenario because the most advertising was in Wisconsin (458 ads for the average viewer) and the most visits were in Florida ($n = 61$).

10. Note however, that Cox and Munger (1989) do not test an individual-level model.

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APPENDIX

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Turnout | Total votes cast for President/voting-eligible population. <i>Source: Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections and Michael P. McDonald.</i> |
| Education | Percentage of state population 25 years or older with at least a bachelors degree. <i>Source: United States Census Bureau.</i> |
| Income | Median family income (1999). <i>Source: United States Census Bureau.</i> |
| Age | Percentage of voting-age population under age 65. <i>Source: United States Census Bureau.</i> |
| Racial Diversity | $1 - \sum P_i^2$, where P_i is the proportion of the voting-age population claiming one race in the i th racial/ethnic group. The groups considered in the measure are Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, African–American, and Other race (American Indian or Alaska Native alone +Asian alone +Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone +Some other race alone). <i>Source: United States Census Bureau.</i> |
| Registered | Percentage of the voting eligible population registered to vote in 2000. <i>Source: Federal Election Commission.</i> |
| South | Dummy variable coded 1 for the states of the Confederacy (AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, and VA). |
| Urban | Percentage of state that is urban. <i>Source: Almanac of American Politics (Barone et al. 2003).</i> |
| Density | Voting eligible population/square miles of land area. <i>Source: United States Census Bureau.</i> |
| State PID Margin | Average percentage (1995–1999) of Republicans minus the average percentage (1995–1999) of Democrats. <i>Source: Gerald C. Wright (http://php.indiana.edu/~wright1/).</i> |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Registration Closing Date | Number of days before the election that a person can register to vote. <i>Source: The Book of the States (2000–2001).</i> |
| Senate Race | Dummy coded 1 for states with a U.S. Senate election in 2000. <i>Source: Almanac of American Politics (Barone et al. 2001).</i> |
| Senate Spending | In (total senate expenditures/voting-eligible population). <i>Source: Almanac of American Politics (Barone et al. 2001).</i> |
| Gubernatorial Race | Dummy coded 1 for states with a gubernatorial election in 2000. <i>Source: Almanac of American Politics (Barone et al. 2001).</i> |
| Gubernatorial Spending | In (total gubernatorial expenditures/voting-eligible population). <i>Source: Thad Beyle.</i> |
| Pres Closeness | Absolute value of difference between votes cast for George W. Bush and Al Gore/voting-eligible population. <i>Source: Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections.</i> |
| Pres Closeness ² | $(\text{Pres Closeness}) * (\text{Pres Closeness})$ |
| Pres Advertising | Σ (Total advertising purchased by Bush and Republican National Committee and Gore and Democratic National Committee)/(average cost per 100 GRP's) * (percentage of state's registered voters in media market). <i>Source: Daron R. Shaw and the Republican National Committee's 1998 State Media Market Guide.</i> |
| Pres Visits | The total number of campaign visits by the Democratic and Republican presidential and vice presidential candidates. <i>Source: Daron R. Shaw.</i> |
