Campaign Effects and the Dynamics of Turnout Intention in Election 2000

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Previous survey analyses examining campaign effects on turnout are somewhat unconvincing because they do not control for the fact that individuals may have decided they will vote independent of campaign activities (even before the campaign begins). Using a unique repeated measures data set of the 2000 presidential campaign, I estimate a Markov chain transition model to test the effects of campaign efforts on turnout intention conditional on precampaign turnout intention. I demonstrate that campaign efforts have a substantial influence on turnout intention, even taking initial turnout intention into account. More notably, I find that different campaign efforts are effective for intended nonvoters than for intended voters.

> A low voter turnout is an indication of fewer people going to the polls.
> —Dan Quayle

$\mathbf{T}$hough political science has offered more complicated explanations of voter turnout, its explanations have not always been any more informative than the one offered by Mr. Quayle. Understanding why some individuals go to the polls and others do not remains an enduring puzzle. Research has long debated whether turnout is primarily determined by a variety of relatively immobile social, demographic, and political characteristics or whether turnout is also dependent on the short-term activities of the campaign, candidates, or parties (Verba and Nie 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). In this article, I attempt to disentangle these short-term and long-term effects, focusing on the dynamics of turnout intention in the 2000 presidential campaign. More specifically, can individual level changes in turnout intention be attributed to campaign efforts? And which campaign efforts are most effective and for which portions of the electorate?

A windfall of recent research has attempted, with mixed success, to challenge the conventional wisdom that campaigns do not matter (Finkel 1993; Gerber and Green 2000; Holbrook 1996; Shaw 1999). In part, the scarcity of appropriate data has limited our ability to study explicitly the influence of campaign efforts on an individual's decision to vote, so existing research often muddles the relationship between campaign efforts and turnout intentions. Most cross-sectional survey data are inadequate for the task because they cannot account for the fact that

some people were already planning to vote independent of the campaign efforts. For instance, some individuals could tell you now whether they plan to vote in the 2008 or even 2012 presidential election. If the individuals who have already decided to vote (perhaps before the campaign even begins) are the same individuals exposed to campaign efforts, then the observed campaign effects may actually be spurious. One way to control for that possibility is to condition the effects of campaign efforts on an individual's pre-campaign turnout intention, thus allowing campaign effects to differ for intended nonvoters and voters. Using Knowledge Network's election panel data, I estimate a Markov chain transition model to test the condition effects of campaign efforts on *changes* in turnout intention during the 2000 presidential contest.

I find that the 2000 presidential campaign efforts substantially increased the probability of voting for both intended voters and nonvoters, but that different activities were influential for each of these groups.[1] Exposure to campaign advertising and personal vote persuasion increases mobilization among those previously not planning to vote, but has no influence on intended voters. In contrast, party/interest group contact increases the probability that an intended voter remains a voter, but has no effect for intended nonvoters. Overall, the 2000 presidential campaign appeared particularly effective at mobilizing intended nonvoters—the model predicts that the nonvoters most exposed to campaign efforts have a 56% probability of voting (compared to a paltry 16% chance for those least exposed)! These findings not only offer new evidence that campaigns matter, but they paint a much more complex picture of campaign mobilization effects in the 2000 presidential election.

Campaign Effects and Turnout Research

> Political scientists create images of voters driven by a sense of effectiveness, by intensely partisan feelings, or by some other psychological involvement; or moved by the skills and resources cultivated in substantial formal education; or pushed toward the polls by a relaxed and easy legal environment. But it is a comparative rarity for students of electoral turnout to credit active efforts by parties and candidates to campaign aggressively and to bring voters to the polls. Yet surely one explanation for variations in electoral participation across individuals or electoral units lies in the amount and intensity of political mobilization. (Caldeira and Patterson 1983, 677)

Despite the enormous amount of money, attention, and information associated with presidential campaigns, political science research has historically found little empirical evidence that they influence voter behavior. Though there are some notable exceptions, voting behavior literature typically emphasizes fixed social, demographic, and political determinants of voter behavior instead.[2] After

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[1] Because my dependent variable is turnout intention, rather than reported behavior, my analysis offers predictions for the probability of *intending to vote*, but the phrase "probability of voting" will be used throughout for ease of exposition.

[2] Contemporary voting behavior research has been shaped by the seminal words of the sociological and social-psychological approaches to explaining political behavior. The early Columbia school

accounting for the effect of these stationary characteristics, campaigns simply have little room to make much of a difference. And despite a boom of recent research challenging this minimal effects hypothesis, many in the discipline remain understandably skeptical (see Shaw 1999, for a review of campaign literature). To some extent, the available campaign data have necessitated vulnerable analyses and have typically produced only marginal effects. As Shaw concludes about his analysis of campaign effects, "Some scholars may consider the effects found here to be minor, while others will deem them significant" (1999, 357). At most, survey research has concluded that campaign efforts affect voting behavior at the margins. Coupled with a growing body of survey research that has interpreted small effects as evidence supporting the minimal effects hypothesis, it is hardly surprising that political science is still debating the vague and overly simplistic question of "do campaigns matter?"

Yet, even if we were to accept the conclusion that presidential campaigns have little impact at the cumulative or aggregate level (Campbell 2000; Gelman and King 1993), it does not rule out the possibility that campaigns play a critical role at the individual level. Aggregate analyses may mute campaign effects because some individuals might be deciding to vote while others are simultaneously deciding not to vote. For instance, a negative campaign blitz might mobilize some individuals while demobilizing others, resulting in a small net effect (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995). Even individual level analyses, however, typically emphasize the relationship between political participation and the demographic characteristics of individual American citizens—the more educated, the more affluent, the more efficacious an individual, the more likely he or she is to participate in politics (Verba and Nie 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Quite simply, some individuals have the resources to pay the price of participating in politics, while others do not.[3] This research has consistently demonstrated that demographic factors such as age and income are strong predictors of voter turnout (Shields and Goidel 1997; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). We know, for instance, that relatively high socioeconomic status individuals are more likely to vote than low SES individuals (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). And SES variables are typically the most robust predictors, significant in nearly every study of turnout and participation. The minimal effects conclusion is further bolstered by research finding that the vote choice decision is primarily determined by another set of stable predictors, such as partisan identification, the state of the economy,

studies emphasized the importance of sociological and demographic characteristics (especially socioeconomic status, religion, and social group affiliations) in explaining voting patterns (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944). In contrast, the Michigan school studies emphasized the role of party identification, conceived as a psychological attachment to a political party (Campbell et al. 1960). Both, however, focus on noncampaign explanations of voting behavior.

[3] The rational choice perspective weighs the costs of participating relative to the benefits (Downs 1957; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Following the perspective of Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), this article assumes that mobilization efforts can reduce the costs and increase the benefits of voting to overcome the "paradox of participation."

and assessments of the incumbent party or administration (Campbell et al. 1960; Lewis-Beck and Rice 1992).

There has long been a disconnect between the conventional wisdom of political scientists and the campaign behavior of political parties, candidates, and interest groups. Anecdotal stories abound about the extraordinary efforts of candidates and parties to get voters to the polls. In the 2002 elections, organized labor reportedly made more than eight million phone calls, distributed more than 14 million leaflets at work sites, and registered more than two million new union household voters (Strope 2002). In 2000, mobilization activities included such bold efforts as "smokes-for-votes," in which Democratic activists allegedly bribed homeless people to vote for Gore in exchange for cigarettes. For their part, Georgia Republicans tried to increase turnout by raffling a gun to Republicans who made it to the polls (Dunham 2000).

And according to many accounts, such efforts have been effective. In the 2000 election, political analysts attributed Gore's narrow wins in states like New Mexico and Michigan to get-out-the-vote efforts, especially among labor and minorities. As one Democratic campaign official reported, "On November 7, we had people literally pulling folks off their couches on Election Day to get them to the polls. We had people giving folks coffee in line at 6:45 PM to keep them there until they voted. Those efforts paid off for Gore and the state legislative candidates" (Toulouse 2002, 3).

A growing body of political science research has argued that these campaign efforts do in fact influence an individual's likelihood of voting. Experimental research, in particular, has found consistent and substantial campaign effects on voting behavior. Gerber and Green (2000) find that grass-roots campaign efforts such as party contact and canvassing increase turnout. Similarly, Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) show that campaign information and media advertising increase the likelihood of voting. Yet, experimental research is often open to the criticisms about external validity, so their findings have yet to be reconciled with the minimal effects survey research that dominates the field.

Recent survey research has also concluded that campaigns shape voter turnout. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) and Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) show that individuals contacted by political elites are more likely to vote and participate in other forms of political activity than groups not exposed to mobilization efforts. Several studies have also found a positive correlation between total campaign expenditures or closeness of race and turnout in lower-level elections (Caldeira, Patterson, and Markko 1985; Cox and Munger 1989; Jacobson 1983). However, much of this research must contend with the criticism that effects may be spurious (see Gerber and Green (2000) for argument). It is not enough for survey analysis to show a relationship between campaign efforts and turnout— some individuals may have decided they will vote independent of campaign efforts (perhaps long before the campaign begins). If those already planning to vote are the ones exposed to campaign efforts, then the apparent link between campaigns and turnout could be artificial. For example, people who recall cam-

paign advertising may differ systematically from those who do not—they may be more likely to vote in the first place.[4] It may also be the case that previous analyses have either underestimated or overestimated the ability of campaigns to mobilize because their models implicitly assume that campaigns will have the same "mobilization effect" for all individuals—whether they were already planning to vote or not.

In this article, I explore the relationship between campaign efforts and changes in turnout intention. I take advantage of a repeated measures data set that will allow campaign effects on turnout intention to be analyzed while controlling for pre-campaign turnout intention. I am able to identify how individual transitions in turnout intention relate to specific campaign efforts using a Markov chain transition model. This unique data from Election 2000, coupled with a dynamic methodology, will offer insights into which campaign efforts matter and for whom they matter.

Turnout Intention in 2000

The analysis in this article utilizes an extensive panel data set collected by Knowledge Networks during the 2000 election. Knowledge Networks (KN) is a private survey research firm cofounded by Norman Nie and Douglas Rivers. Throughout the 2000 election, Knowledge Networks repeatedly asked 29,000 respondents about their vote intentions, yielding a two-way unbalanced panel of more than 100,000 turnout intention observations over the course of the campaign.[5]

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[4] Other have argued that campaign research suffers from an endogeneity problem—if a causal relationship also moves from turnout intention to the campaign measures then any results will be biased. Often, however, what is called an endogeneity problem is actually an omitted variable problem (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; footnote, page 172). For example, those who are more likely to turn out are also more likely to watch campaign news, but it is not turnout intention per se that causes respondents to watch campaign news. Rather, political interest (or some other variable) causes both turn out and news watching. Iyengar and Simon (2000) argue that the endogeneity stems from the use of self-reported measures of exposure. Though I must contend with the measurement error associated with self-reported measures of vote intention and campaign exposure, endogeneity is somewhat less of a concern because (1) the exposure and turnout intention variables were measured in different surveys at different points in time, and (2) I control for a general interest in politics within my multivariate model.

[5] The modal number of interviews per respondent is three, and the average number is about five interviews. The data were collected as part or all of approximately 75 randomly assigned surveys (with widely varying sample sizes) sampled from the Knowledge Networks panel. The data set is a two-way unbalanced panel in that the number of observations are not the same for every respondent and the intervals between observations are not equal. Given that the intermittent missing values are random (i.e., individuals have missing observations because they were not part of the random sample selected for a given survey), it is reasonable to assume that the analysis should give the relevant inferences. Data were weighted to independent population estimates based on the 2000 Current Population Survey. These weights take into account age, gender, race, region of residence, and MSA.

Respondents in the Knowledge Networks panel are randomly selected through Random Digit Dial (RDD) sampling techniques on a quarterly updated sample frame consisting of the entire U.S. telephone population who fall within the Microsoft Web TV network.[6] While KN panelists are recruited by phone, the actual mode of interviewing is self-completion, via the Internet and a Web TV unit. Panelists are provided with a Web TV unit and an Internet connection in exchange for their survey participation. Thus, although surveys are conducted over the Internet, respondents are a random probability sample of the United States population. By using a methodology that produces a representative sample of the U.S. population, KN overcomes the most common shortfall of previous Internet surveys. The viability of the KN methodology was recently demonstrated in an objective comparison test. Krosnick and Chang (2001) commissioned a set of side-by-side surveys using a single questionnaire to gauge public opinion and voting preferences regarding the 2000 U.S. presidential election from national samples of American adults. The researchers find that the Knowledge Networks survey is comparable to the RDD telephone survey and is representative of the U.S. population with respect to respondent demographics, attitudes, and behaviors.

The turnout intention variable is coded as a five-point scale: 1 (definitely will not vote), 2 (probably will not vote), 3 (not sure), 4 (probably will vote) or 5 (definitely will vote). In looking at the dynamics of the turnout intention question over the course of the entire campaign, I find that 50.5% consistently report that they "definitely" plan to vote every time they were interviewed, 7.0% always say they never will vote, and nearly 40% of the electorate changed their turnout intentions at some point during the campaign. This volatility opens the possibility that changes in turnout intention might be related to campaign efforts.

The most detailed measures of individual level exposure to campaign efforts came from a single survey fielded in the week of October 27, 2000 (no more than 11 days before Election Day). I therefore restrict my multivariate analysis to the randomly selected respondents in this particular survey, leaving a sample size of 2,683 individuals. I am then able to match an individual's current turnout intention with their pre-campaign turnout intention measured as part of a political profile survey taken before the start of the fall campaign (as early as mid-April). The profile survey includes questions about party identification, a general interest in politics, and other political characteristics, all collected without the heightened context of the fall campaign. As part of this survey, respondents were asked about their likelihood of voting in the presidential election, providing the pre-campaign measure of turnout intention necessary for my analysis.[7] In comparing

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[6] Eighty-seven percent of the U.S. population falls within this network, so the sample is very close to a national RDD sample. Telephone numbers have an equal probability of selection, and sampling is done without replacement. Household cooperation rate during this time averaged 56%. Detailed information on the Knowledge Networks methodology can be found on their website http://www.knowledgenetworks.com.

[7] Research on panel attrition concerns associated with the Knowledge Networks panel has found that panel attrition is evenly distributed across demographic groups (Dennis 2001).

these two interviews, I find that 29% of respondents change their turnout intention from their pre-campaign interview. Of those respondents, 55% became increasingly likely to vote in the subsequent interview. In this article, I look at the extent to which changes in turnout intention are related to various campaign activities.

Though some might prefer voting analysis to be conducted on behavior rather than intention, I model changes in turnout intention to examine the underlying process of voting behavior. Voting behavior on Election Day occurs only once (we hope!), so any dynamics can occur only in intentions, not behavior. Considering the influence of campaign efforts on changes in turnout intention also offers a more comprehensive evaluation of campaign effects because of the possibility that random occurrences on Election Day might interfere with intent.[8] Both measures are of course still susceptible to measurement error, most notably overreporting.[9]

So, who are the individuals who are changing their turnout intention and what accounts for their changes? In the next section, I explain how the Markov chain transition model can help to answer this question.

Methods and Empirical Model

I model the likelihood of voting as a function of demographic and attitudinal variables ($\mathbf{X}_1$) and multiple campaign variables ($\mathbf{X}_2$).

$$\text{turnout intention} = \mathbf{X}\beta + \varepsilon = \beta_0 + \mathbf{X}_1\beta_1 + \mathbf{X}_2\beta_2 + \varepsilon$$

The campaign variables include level of exposure to political advertising, an indicator if the respondent was contacted by a party or interest group, and an indicator for personal vote persuasion (someone at church, work, home, or in community talked to respondent about voting for a particular candidate).[10] All

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[8] For instance, should we conclude that the campaign had no influence if a vanload of "mobilized" voters breaks down on the way to the poll?

[9] Vote validation studies have found between 8 and 14% of respondents claim to have voted but could not be found in the official voting records (Traugott 1989). Although it is important to recognize such overreporting, research has largely concluded that it is of little consequence. For one, vote validation studies themselves are fraught with errors (Sigelman 1982). Second, the fiasco in Palm Beach county regarding ballot indentations and overvoting might even suggest that the self-reported vote may be preferable to validated measures. Most importantly, research has found that replacing self-reported voter turnout with validated voter turnout in multivariate analyses does not change the substantive conclusions (Sigelman 1982).

[10] Previous research has argued that self-reported exposure can be a poor measure of actual campaign exposure (Price and Zaller 1993). Certainly, these variables are not ideal measures of the campaign, but they do appear to capture real differences in exposure independent of the individual's level of interest, etc. A simple comparison of self-reported exposure rates in battleground and nonbattleground safe states helps to illustrate such differences. I find, as hypothesized, that individuals in battleground states are significantly more likely to report being exposed than those in safe states—they are more likely to report having been contacted by a party/interest group, more likely to report being the target of personal persuasion, and reported seeing more political ads.

campaign variables have been rescaled to range from 0 to 1. The model controls for the standard demographic and political variables, including age, gender, race, strength of partisanship, and general political interest.[11] Since these controls, including the political controls, were collected before the start of the campaign it helps to reassure that they are not endogenous to the campaign itself. We could undoubtedly think of other long-term factors that might play a role in the decision to vote (political efficacy, for instance), but recall that such factors are essentially already controlled for because the model conditions on pre-campaign turnout intention. Again, the focus of this analysis is to examine the determinants of any changes in turnout intention. After controlling for demographic and attitudinal factors, I expect that campaign variables should increase the likelihood of voting—but prior research offers no theoretical expectations about the effect of the campaign variables relative to one another. Will campaign advertising be more effective than party contact? Will different campaign efforts be effective for intended voters than for nonvoters?

  To employ a Markov chain transition model to test for campaign effects, I recode the vote turnout intention variable as a binary variable.[12] I code as voters those who "definitely" or "probably" intend to vote, and label as nonvoters those who are "not sure," "definitely" or "probably" will *not* vote. In collapsing the original voter intention variable from five categories into a dichotomous variable, I limit my ability to predict transitions. For instance, the individual who moved from "unsure" about voting to "definitely" not voting would not be captured as an observed movement with the dichotomous variable. Though 29% of respondents changed their turnout intention between interviews when change is measured on the five-point scale, only 12.1% changed their turnout intention with this collapsed variable.[13]

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[11] The survey questions are worded as follows: General political interest: "How interested are you in politics and public affairs?" Ads exposure: "Have you seen or heard any paid political advertisements for the presidential candidates on television and the radio?" Party contact: "Has anyone from a political party or interest group contacted you personally about the presidential election?" Personal persuasion (indicator if identified at least one): "How about people at work, school, or church—has anyone tried to convince you about whom to vote for in the presidential election? (home and local community also provided as answers)" The mean of these variables: Age (44.6), Female indicator (.51), Black indicator (.06), Hispanic indicator (.08), Strength of partisanship (.50), Political interest (.57), Party contact indicator (.22), Advertising exposure (.67), Personal persuasion indicator (.28).

[12] An ordinal logit transition model would better capture variation in turnout intention, but presents a few problems. First, as the number of categories increases, the number of parameters estimated proliferates. Second, there are J^2 probabilities, all which must be greater than zero in order to use the standard ordered probit and logit functions in statistical software to estimate the transition model. This problem is similar to problems of inference for cross-tabs with a large number of cells; if there are only a few observations (or none) in some of the cells, then inference is difficult (or impossible).

[13] When we consider the entire campaign and all of the surveys in which individuals were interviewed, the level of change increases even more. Nearly 40% change their vote intention at some point and in some direction when considering the full five-point scale. With the collapsed scale, 61% of respondents are consistent voters in all interviews and 20% are consistent nonvoters in all interviews (number of interviews per respondent varies). Focusing on just two data points in the analysis

TABLE 1

Change in Turnout Intention

		Current Turnout Intention		
		Not Vote	Vote	Total
Pre-Campaign	Not Vote	609	172	781
Turnout Intention		(78%)	(22%)	(100%)
	Vote	153	1,750	1,903
		(8%)	(92%)	(100%)
	Total	762	1,922	2,683
		(28%)	(72%)	(100%)

Table 1 displays the transitions between interviews. Seventy-eight percent of intended nonvoters remain nonvoters. Similarly, 92% of respondents who said they intended to vote before the campaign also report that they intend to vote just before Election Day. Of interest in this article, however, are the explanations for why some individuals did change.

To distinguish campaign effects from a spurious correlation, I condition the effects of the covariates on pre-campaign turnout intention. An appropriate model for this task is a Markov Chain transition model (Diggle, Liang, and Zeger 2000; Hillygus and Jackman 2003). Traditional logit analyses of turnout are open to the criticism that campaign effects are illusionary because they do not account for the possibility that voters have decided whether or not to vote independent of the campaign. The transition model is capable of testing the effects of the campaign while taking into consideration the respondent's pre-campaign intention of voting by looking at the conditional effect of the covariates on changes in turnout intention. The model is also able to distinguish different processes depending on whether the respondent was an intended voter or nonvoter. For instance, there could be a different set of campaign activities that are effective for intended voters than for intended nonvoters.

To understand the transition model, consider a first-order Markov chain for binary data has a ***transition matrix***

$$\begin{pmatrix} p_{00} & p_{01} \\ p_{10} & p_{11} \end{pmatrix}$$

where $p_{ab} = Pr(y_{it} = b | y_{i,t-i} = a)$ are transition probabilities. For instance, p_{01} is the probability that the individual reported that they will vote when asked in the current interview, when they reported not planning to vote before the campaign. Given that $\Sigma_b P_{ab} = 1$, $\forall a$, there are just two uniquely determined elements of the 2×2 transition matrix for binary data. To look at the relationship between covari-

will mask some of the dynamics of turnout intention, but it provides an analytical framework such that the covariates of changes in turnout intention can be identified, in turn providing insights about changes in turnout decision-making over the entire campaign.

ates and the two transition probabilities, simple logit analysis can be applied. For the two transition probabilities I have the following logit link

$$\text{logit}[\text{Pr}(y_{it} = 1|y_{i,t-1} = 0)] \equiv \text{logit}(p_{01}) = y_{it}^*|(y_{i,t-1} = 0) = \mathbf{x}_{it}\beta_0$$

$$\text{logit}[\text{Pr}(y_{it} = 1|y_{i,t-1} = 1)] \equiv \text{logit}(p_{11}) = y_{it}^*|(y_{i,t-1} = 1) = \mathbf{x}_{it}\beta_1$$

where the hypothesis $\beta_0 \neq \beta_1$ tests the possibility that the effects of explanatory variables will differ depending on the individual's reported vote intention in the pre-campaign interview. These two transition equations can be combined to form the conditional model

$$\text{logit}[\text{Pr}(y_{it} = 1|y_{i,t-1})] = \mathbf{x}_{it}\beta_0 + y_{i,t-1}\mathbf{x}_{it}\alpha$$

so that $\beta_1 = \beta_0 + \alpha$.

It is quite simple to test hypotheses about the effects of the covariates on the transition probabilities—ordinary binary response models such as logit and probit can be used to consistently estimate β_0 and α and their standard errors. The α coefficients act as contrasts between the parameter vectors β_0 and β_1. Tests of the joint null hypothesis $\alpha = 0$ tap whether the effects of x are constant irrespective of the previous state of the binary process. In the next section I report the results from the logit transition model of campaign effects on turnout intention in the 2000 presidential election.

Empirical Results

Turning to the transition model results, I find that different campaign activities affect intended nonvoters than those that affect intended voters. In general, campaign efforts were most effective at mobilizing intended nonvoters—advertising exposure and personal vote persuasion have a positive and significant influence on the likelihood of voting for those who did not plan to vote before the campaign. Intended voters, on the other hand, remain likely to vote largely independent of campaign efforts—only party contact has an additional influence on the likelihood of voting among these respondents.

The coefficients and standard errors from the estimated transition model are presented in Table 2.[14] The β_0 coefficients represent the effect of the covariates

[14] Given the number of political variables in the model, I provide a brief summary of the multi-collinearity diagnostics. The unconditioned variables have VIF scores of no higher than 1.37 and a condition number of 2.05. As a rule of thumb, the conventional (arbitrary) thresholds signaling multicollinearity concerns are 10.0 for VIF scores and 20.0 for the condition number (Greene 1997). Given the interactive nature of the transition model, the fully conditional model will exhibit much higher levels of multicollinearity. Even here, however, we find that the only variables to exceed a VIF score of 10.0 are age and previous turnout intention (since it conditions all variables), which are inconsequential to the key conclusions. More importantly, the condition number remains a healthy 13.1. Moreover, the only campaign finding for which inflated standard errors could possibly change a conclusion is for the effect of party contact on intended nonvoters (the other insignificant effects are actually in the wrong direction).

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TABLE 2

Estimates from Transition Model Predicting Turnout Intention

PRIOR INTENTION:	Not Vote β_0	Vote β_1
Intercept	1.37*	−.62
	(.50)	(.36)
Age	−.01	.04*
	(.01)	(.01)
Hispanic	−.16	−.48
	(.27)	(.28)
Black	.10	−.41
	(.33)	(.34)
Female	−.20	−.18
	(.18)	(.18)
Strength of Partisanship	.67*	1.17*
	(.27)	(.25)
Political Interest	.33	.86*
	(.33)	(.32)
Advertising Exposure	.89*	.51
	(.25)	(.27)
Personal Persuasion	.56*	.27
	(.21)	(.21)
Party Contact	.48	1.39*
	(.30)	(.35)
N	2,676	
Correctly predicted	88.5%	
Pseudo-R^2	.47	
Wald chi2(19)	1,485.9	

Note: Table entries are coefficient values with standard errors in parentheses. Asterisk indicates statistical significance at $p < .05$.

on the probability of voting for those previously indicating that they did not plan to vote; the β_1 coefficients show the effects of covariates on the probability of voting for those previously saying that they did plan to vote.[15] And by estimating these effects simultaneously in a transition model, I am able to produce statistical tests of the relationship between them.

These results illustrate that conditioning on the individual turnout intention history is the appropriate statistical model. Because there are statistically significant differences between β_0 and β_1 (the null hypothesis of $\alpha = 0$ can be easily rejected), the transitional model is preferable because it estimates separate effects for $y_{i,t-1} = 0$ and $y_{i,t-1} = 1$. A static logit model would have constrained the effects

[15] The contrast between β_0 and β_1, α, is not reported in the table. The coefficients and standard errors follow: Age .04(.01), Hispanic −.31(.39), Black −.51(.48), Female .02(.25), Partisan .50(.36), Interest .53(.46), Contact .91(.46), Ads −.37(.37), Persuasion −.31(.30).

of the covariates to be the same for intended nonvoters and voters, possibly masking or exaggerating campaign effects.

Considering the demographic controls, only age had a statistically significant influence on the likelihood of voting (and only for intended voters), once previous intentions were taken into account. We have long known that older Americans are more likely to turn out; this analysis shows that older respondents are also more likely to stay mobilized over the course of the campaign. It was somewhat surprising to find that there was not an independent race effect given the concentrated mobilization efforts by the Democratic party in black communities (the black indicator variable is positive among intended nonvoters, but not significant), though these efforts may simply be captured by the campaign variables. It may also be the case that examining differential mobilization effects among racial groups would require a somewhat more nuanced analysis that is beyond the scope of this analysis. For instance, the current model uses a combined measure of personal persuasion (at home, church, community, or work), but descriptive analysis finds that black respondents were nearly twice as likely as white respondents to have received a personal appeal in church, but were only half as likely to receive a personal appeal from home.

Not surprisingly, partisan strength increases the probability of voting for both intended voters and nonvoters. So, those who identify strongly with a political party are more likely to turn out regardless of their previous turnout intention. In contrast, political interest has a significant effect only on those already planning to vote. This suggests that the campaign simply serves to reinforce the role of political interest on the turnout decision. In other words, if an individual is politically interested yet still reports on intention of voting before the campaign, there appears to be little the campaign can do to change his or her mind. This perhaps suggests that among this group, nonvoting may actually be considered a political act in and of itself, rather than a function of a lack of information or interest.

Turning to the campaign variables, I find substantial evidence that campaign efforts did indeed mobilize the electorate, though the specific efforts that were effective differed for intended nonvoters and voters. As reported in Table 3, campaign advertising exposure and personal persuasion had a significant effect on the probability of voting among intended nonvoters, while party contact influenced only intended voters.[16]

The predicted probability of voting increases by .18 (2.43 higher odds) across the range of advertising exposure categories. This suggests that the millions of dollars spent on campaign advertising may serve not only to persuade voters to support a particular candidate, but also to persuade intended nonvoters to show up on Election Day. Although advertising is targeted to particular media markets, political advertising is unique in that it reaches even the least interested and atten-

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[16] All probability calculations are calculated holding all variables at their means, except the dummy variables, which are set to zero. Any references to statistical significance are based on the standard errors of the probabilities calculated by the delta method.

TABLE 3

Changes in Probabilities Based on Campaign Effects

PRIOR INTENTION:	Not Vote		Vote	
	First Difference	Odds Ratio	First Difference	Odds ratio
Advertising Exposure	.18 (.02)	2.43	NS	NS
Personal Persuasion	.12 (.01)	1.76	NS	NS
Party Contact	NS	NS	.04 (.02)	3.97

Note: Standard errors in parentheses computed using delta method. The first differences are based on movement from the minimum to the maximum value; "NS" indicates the coefficient was not statistically significant.

tive segments of the population within those markets. An individual can easily skip the daily newspaper or nightly broadcast news, but it is nearly impossible to escape exposure to political ads. These findings lend support to recent findings that political advertising is related to higher levels of turnout (Jamieson 2001), but suggest that the ads are effective only among those initially not planning to vote. In other words, these 60-second political spots do appear to provide some relevant information to the electorate, at least the less interested and informed portions of the population (the intended nonvoters).

The analysis also finds that among intended nonvoters, the probability of voting increases .12 (1.76 higher odds) for those respondents for whom an acquaintance (at church, in community, at work, or at home) attempted to persuade them to vote for a particular candidate. It appears that for those individuals least likely to vote, the most effective mobilization efforts come from people they know. Others have also found that personal mobilization stimulates political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), but these efforts appear most effective among intended nonvoters.

For those already planning to vote, in contrast, political advertising and personal persuasion have no additional influence. Being contacted by a political party or interest group, however, helps to ensure the mobilization of this group. Among intended voters, contact increases the probability of turning out by 0.06 (3.79 higher odds). This suggests that "mobilizing the base" is an effective way to guarantee that supporters make it to the polls (or at least intend to). But, receiving a partisan plea has no influence on those individuals not planning to vote. It may be the case that an intended voter (more likely to be partisan) is pleased, for instance, to receive a call from a party activist or official whereas a disengaged nonvoter would view it as just another telemarketing annoyance. Thus, for nonvoters, an

appeal from an unknown activist or party worker seems to have little influence, while an appeal from a social or professional acquaintance can be effective.

These findings offer evidence that campaign efforts in the 2000 presidential contest not only mattered at the margins, but had the opportunity to have quite a substantial influence. Figure 1 illustrates the total possible effect of all campaign efforts for intended voters and nonvoters. Comparing the maximum and minimum values on all campaign variables, I am able to estimate the total potential effect of the 2000 presidential campaign on turnout intention. Considering all of the campaign efforts, those previously not planning to vote had the potential to increase their probability of voting by .40 if they were exposed to the maximum amount of campaign advertising, were contacted by a party, and had an acquaintance talk about voting for a particular candidate. This increase is enough to give the average intended nonvoter a predicated probability of voting of .56—thus making them more likely to vote than to not vote! These campaign efforts run into a ceiling effect for intended voters, but still increase their probability of remaining intended voters by .10. Clearly, the presidential campaign
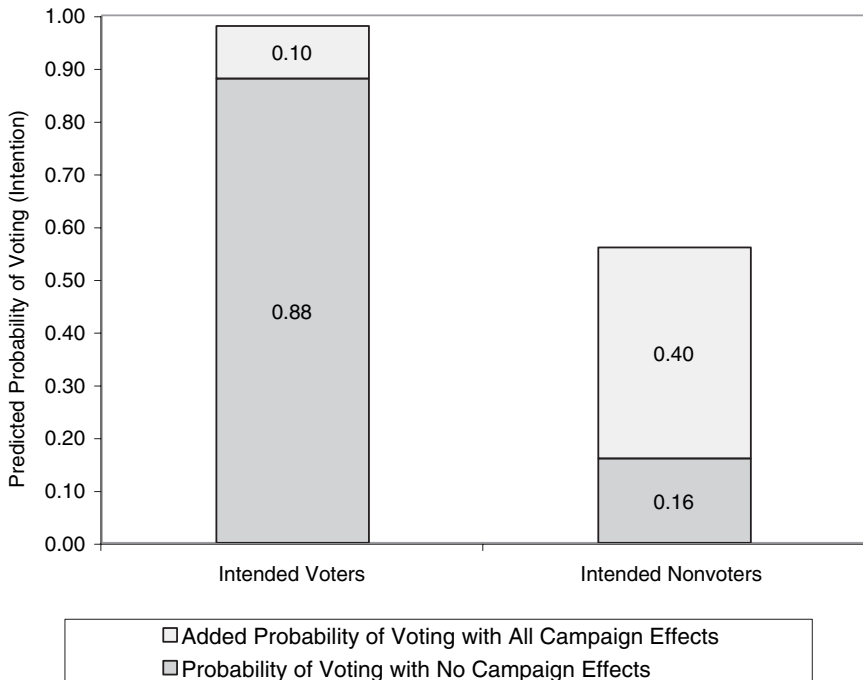
FIGURE 1

Total Possible Campaign Effects

TABLE 4

Percent Correctly Predicted

	Null model	Transition model
Overall Model	71.6%	88.2%
Intended Nonvoters	0%	79.8%
Intended Voters	100%	91.6%

Note: All percentages based on classification of valid observations for the transition model.

efforts helped to mobilize voters—but they were most effective among those previously not planning to go to the polls. In other words, previous research that has estimated a single (average) campaign effect has apparently underestimated the potential individual-level impact of campaign activities.

In evaluating the fit of the transition model, I compute the improvement in classification over the null model. As can be seen from Table 4, the transition model predicts 88.2% of the voter intentions correctly. The transition model provides a substantial improvement over the null model, which predicts only voters. The transition model predicts intended voters and nonvoters extremely well with 79.8% of nonvoters correctly predicted and 91.6% of voters correctly predicted.[17]

Discussion and Conclusion

Skepticism about the reliability of survey research on campaign mobilization effects has centered around the claim that effects could be an artifact of likely voters also having greater campaign exposure. Far from finding that campaigns do not matter once an individual's initial intention to vote is taken into account, my results indicate that campaign activities in the 2000 presidential contest had a substantial influence on turnout decision making. The analysis offers two notable conclusions: (1) various campaign efforts had different effects on intended voters than on intended nonvoters, and (2) campaign efforts were particularly effective among those initially not planning to vote.

These findings offer a significant contribution to the campaign literature, which has potentially muted or misinterpreted campaign effects by previously failing to recognize that activities might work differently for different portions of the electorate. The results here suggest that previous research has likely underestimated the potential impact of campaign activities by analyzing a single effect for the entire electorate (thereby averaging the effects for intended nonvoters and voters).

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[17] Using the arbitrary threshold of .5, the model predicts less than 10% of the observed transitions correctly, but that increases to 49% of those mobilized and 20% of those demobilized correctly predicted if the threshold is shifted by .25.

It seems indeed true, as other have suggested, that mobilization efforts have only a marginal influence on those already planning to vote. The key contribution of this analysis is the finding that intended nonvoters are in fact exposed to campaign mobilization efforts and, more importantly, those efforts are effective. In other words, campaigns have the strongest influence among those who have the greatest potential for information gain. Exposure to campaign advertising and personal vote persuasion have a positive, statistically and substantively significant effect on turnout intention among those initially not planning to vote. In contrast, only party contact has an additional influence on those already intending to vote. These findings not only offer insights into the decision-making process, but they also have practical implications for candidate behavior. Knowing which campaign efforts are effective among which groups is important, for instance, in developing strategies for candidate advertising or canvassing. As the common campaign adage goes: "I know half the money I spend is wasted. I just don't know which half."

Though the extent of these differences in campaign effects are quite surprising (to my knowledge, they have never been noted in previous campaign research), they confirm long-held theoretical expectations from political persuasion research. Campaign commercials may be the equivalent of "preaching to the choir" for intended voters. Even if intended voters are more likely to be exposed to political advertising, they may be less likely to find new or useful information in the spots. As more politically aware individuals, they are likely to have a much wider breadth and depth of information about the candidates and are able to resist any new information that is inconsistent with their predispositions. For the least engaged and aware individuals (those less likely to vote), in contrast, political advertising may provide one of the few information sources of the campaign. Thus, campaign advertising has the potential to play a much larger role in the decision making process of these individuals.

The contrasting findings with respect to personal vote persuasion and party contact (intended voters are influenced by appeals from political parties while intended nonvoters are more open to appeals from personal acquaintances) are also grounded in theories of political persuasion. Research on political persuasion has long suggested that the effectiveness of a message depends largely on the credibility, authority, and likability of the message *source* (Perloff 2003). It should be of little surprise then that intended nonvoters might not be receptive to the messages of political parties, whereas an intended voter might welcome a message from the party of their preferred candidate.

The finding that party contact is only effective among those already planning to vote also offers empirical support to a long-established strategy of the political parties. Candidates and parties appear rational in targeting mobilization efforts—if contact increases turnout only among those likely to vote, there is no reason to waste resources on those unlikely to turn out. It is more effective to simply solidify those individuals who have intentions of voting and make sure that they actually make it to the ballot box. It is also possible, however, that this

finding may in part be an artifact of this existing strategy if the type or quality of contact that nonvoters receive differs from the type that voters receive (unfortunately the contact measure cannot distinguish between a mass mailing or a personal phone call from a party official).

Although these findings suggest that campaigns play a much larger role in voter decision making than concluded by previous survey research, the inferential limitations of this analysis should also be acknowledged. The analytic approach I have used allows me to sidestep the possible spurious relationship between turnout and campaign exposure, but it does not completely untangle the relationship. A more complete analysis would rely on dynamic measures of both turnout intention and campaign activities (preferably independently measured campaign activities). Without an experimental design, I also cannot rule out the possibility that an omitted variable is causing both campaign exposure and changes in turnout intention. The most plausible candidate might be "interest in the campaign" (as distinct from general political interest, which is included in the model). An argument could be made that changes in campaign interest explain both turnout intention and exposure to the campaign (or at least recall of exposure to the campaign). In other words, as the campaign progresses, those not initially planning to vote become more interested in the campaign, leading to a change in their turnout intention and leading them to expose themselves more to the campaign (for instance, they might be more likely to watch campaign news or put themselves in situations in which they are more likely to become the target of personal persuasion). This process is certainly plausible, but given the number and variety of different campaign activities it seems somewhat less likely (interest alone cannot explain the variations in and across all three campaign measures). I also replicated the model controlling for "attention to campaign news" with no change in the statistical or substantive significance of the campaign variables.[18]

Though there remains much to be learned about the complex role of campaigns in shaping voter behavior, this article has attempted to refocus analysis away from the outdated debate of whether or not campaigns matter, toward more interesting questions about the mechanisms by which campaign efforts shape electoral behavior.

Acknowledgment

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[18] Including campaign attention to the model, however, raises another set of concerns and limitations about the analysis—primarily that attention to the campaign may not be either fixed or exogeneous.

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