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Indirect Mobilization: The Social Consequences of Party Contacts in an Election Campaign*

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Indirect Mobilization: The Social Consequences of

Party Contacts in an Election Campaign

Although direct contacts between campaigns and individuals are a central part of the process that encourages political participation, it is often argued that their effects extend beyond the initial contact via a secondary process of indirect mobilization. This paper puts that argument to the test by investigating possible connections between direct party contacts and political mobilization in social networks. The results show that the primary social consequence of party contacts is to alter the substance, but not the volume, of politically oriented conversations that occur in social networks. These conversations in turn increase the salience of the campaign in the electorate but have only a mild effect on levels of campaign involvement. Although political mobilization does influence social communication, its effect on political involvement is restricted to socially based forms of involvement under limited conditions.

INTRODUCTION

A great many Americans would agree – if asked – that citizens should participate in electoral politics. Nevertheless participation in campaigns is hardly widespread, in large part because many people are not sufficiently motivated to become involved. Consequently the efforts of political parties and candidates to mobilize voters, presumably by providing information about a campaign's dynamics or specific reasons for involvement, are a particularly important cause of political participation. Along these lines, considerable attention is given to explaining when and how political mobilization successfully spurs involvement. At the individual level of analysis, such efforts often examine how the behavior of citizens who have been directly contacted during a campaign differs from the behavior citizens who are not similarly exposed. But since these contacts are limited in number, discussion of their impact often refers to their cascading effects. The conceptual implication of such discussions is that political mobilization is a two-stage process. In the first stage, political parties or campaigns contact voters through a variety of methods in an attempt to garner people's support. In the second stage, labeled indirect mobilization by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), the information transferred in the first stage cascades through social networks, thereby affecting a broader cross-section of the electorate and magnifying the influence of party mobilization.

Though there is substantial evidence that traditional forms of partisan mobilization and contact increase participation (Gosnell 1972; Gerber and Green 2000a, 2000b; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), there has been next to no research on how social networks amplify, or potentially mute, the party contacting effect (but see Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Chapter 5). Additionally, research that examines social network effects on involvement (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; McClurg *forthcoming*; Mutz 2002; Leighley 1990; Knoke 1990; Kenny 1992; Verba *et al*. 1995) does not directly examine the overlap with elite-driven mobilization. Thus important questions about the mobilization process have gone largely unaddressed including such fundamental issues as whether diffusion occurs, how it occurs, and

how strongly it affects political participation. Therefore, we cannot adequately understand how broadly political mobilization reaches into the electorate and how much participation it stimulates.

In this paper I outline and test hypotheses about the operation and effect of indirect political mobilization. Using self-reported partisan contacts to measure direct political mobilization, I first examine whether people who are contacted during elections report different patterns of social communication. I then turn my attention toward the participatory consequences of indirect mobilization, asking whether it leads to greater involvement in electoral politics. Drawing on survey data specifically gathered to study the influence of social interaction on political behavior, the empirical evidence shows that party mobilization stimulates an efficacious process of indirect mobilization in social networks. However, the findings also show that indirect mobilization is limited in both the breadth and strength of its effect.

PARTISAN MOBILIZATION AND CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION

The Concept of Political Mobilization. Much work on political participation focuses on the individual determinants of action such as socioeconomic status (Verba and Nie 1972; Milbrath and Goel 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980), personal civic resources (Verba *et* al. 1995), or innate interest (Verba and Nie 1972). In wake of this research, it became clear that 1) political factors had a minimal role in scholarly explanations of involvement and 2) individual determinants of action had limited explanatory power in empirical models. Accordingly, more attention was given to factors broadly grouped together under the rubric of political mobilization.

According to Rosenstone and Hansen's comprehensive study of mobilization, this concept is defined as "the process by which candidates, parties, activists, and groups induce other people to participate" (1993, p. 25). A somewhat broader, but similar, definition is provided by Leighley who writes that "mobilization…is a response to contextual cues and political opportunities structured by the individual's environment" (1995, p. 188). In both instances, the

key idea is that regular citizens become more likely to participate when exposed to external political stimuli.

These definitions describe a broad set of factors that potentially influence participation, not all of which are central to this paper. Following Rosenstone and Hansen I restrict the concept in two ways for the analysis this paper. First, their empirical treatment of mobilization distinguishes among concrete contacts between people and the influence of broader environmental as stimuli toward political involvement. Although there is evidence that environmental cues affect individual participation (e.g., Cox and Munger 1989), these factors operate differently than the individualized contacts that occur via leaflets, phone calls, the party canvass, and similar activities (e.g., Gosnell 1927; Gerber and Green 2000a, 200b; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Wielhouwer and Lockerbie 1994). Second, Rosenstone and Hansen's theoretical discussion implies that participation is affected by two types of individualized contacts. Direct mobilization refers to interaction between political elite and voters that stimulates involvement, via such mechanisms as telephone banks and door-to-door canvassing. This can be distinguished from indirect mobilization where people who have been contacted by a party similarly motivate participation of other voters in their social circle.

This second distinction is central to this paper. While conceptually distinct, these two processes are discussed as though they overlap empirically. Specifically the belief is that partisan contacts (direct mobilization) activate the second-order social process where people are indirectly exposed to mobilization through social networks (indirect mobilization). For instance Rosenstone and Hansen write,

> The impact of political mobilization…extends far beyond the effect it has on the limited number of people who are contacted directly….Social networks, that is, converts direct mobilization into indirect mobilization. Political leaders mobilize citizens for political action through social networks (1993, p. 27).

Similarly Richard Fenno writes that,

> No matter how a congressman allocates, presents, or explains, he reaches a relatively few people directly. Offsetting this situation, House members believe that as a result of their direct contacts with as many supportive constituents as they can reach, they will also reach a great many more people indirectly. They are strong believers in the two-step flow of communication….Their belief is that though they may not reach as many people as they would like, those they do reach…will talk to others about them (1978, p. 237).

Thus, the belief is that party contacts diffuse through social networks in a manner similar to the two-step flow of communications described by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) and the contextual diffusion model illustrated by Huckfeldt and Sprague (1992, 1995).

Studies of Political Mobilization. Starting with Harold Gosnell's (1927) voter turnout study, a great deal of evidence demonstrates the efficacy of direct mobilization for explaining participation. Using a basic quasi-experimental design Gosnell found that turnout could be stimulated by something as innocuous as a brochure explaining how to register. Other field experiments demonstrate similar effects for people with little interest in (Eldersveld and Dodge 1954) or information about (Eldersveld 1956) local elections. More recently, Gerber and Green (2000a, 2000b) show that many (but not all) forms of direct contact (e.g., personal canvassing versus telephone contact) positively influence participation. Through a series of non-experimental studies, still other evidence suggests that real-life partisan contacting efforts produce similar results (Katz and Eldersveld 1961; Cutright 1963; Cutright and Rossi 1958a, 1958b; Bochel and Denver 1971, 1972; Cain and McCue 1985; Kramer 1970-1971; Price and Lupfer 1973; Lupfer and Price 1972; see Blydenburgh 1971 for an exception).

Rosenstone and Hansen further advance the literature by arguing that the contact effect exists for activities other than voter turnout. Relying on voter's self-reported contacts by political parties in the National Election Study from 1956 to 1988, they estimate that being contacted by a political party increased the probability of voting by 10.4-percent, of trying to persuade others how to vote by 11.8-percent, of doing campaign work by 4.8-percent, and of donating money by

6.7-percent. The only variables in their study with comparable effects were personal education and the perceived closeness of the election.

Viewed as a whole these findings support the notion that direct mobilization stimulates political involvement for an array of electoral activities but say next to nothing about the process of indirect mobilization. Although there is some survey-based research linking reported levels of formal (Leighley 1996; Pollock 1982; Verba *et al*. 1995) and informal (Leighley 1990; Knoke 1990; Kenny 1992; Lake and Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg *forthcoming*) social involvement to electoral participation, these treatments do not explicitly investigate the link between direct and indirect mobilization. Accordingly, we have no evidence that party contacts cascade through social networks and thereby generate a wide-reaching process of political mobilization. This has important consequences both for the state of our knowledge regarding political mobilization and our understanding of electoral outcomes. From a scholarly perspective, the lack of evidence on the overlap between elite mobilization and social mobilization means we do not have a clear understanding of either 1) the role of social networks in explaining involvement or 2) the impact of campaigns on individual participation. In short, our models of political behavior are based on incomplete evidence. But our lack of knowledge also calls into question how important get-out-the-vote efforts and similar campaign activities are in elections..

To start addressing this gap in the empirical literature, the next section outlines hypotheses about the connection between direct contacts and mobilization via social networks. Using self-reported partisan contacts as a lens through which to view direct mobilization, two specific issues are addressed. First, when and how do party contacts affect social interaction in interpersonal networks? Second, do social interactions stimulated by party contacts indirectly mobilize electoral involvement?

The Party Canvass and Indirect Mobilization. One possible way that party contacts affect indirect mobilization is to influence the exchange of political information within social networks (<u>informational</u> <u>contagion</u>). Empirically, this means that people who have been

contacted by a political party during a campaign should exhibit different patterns of political conversation with people in their social network when compared to people who have not been contacted (Burt 1990). This type of effect could manifest itself in two ways. First, party contacts may increase the exchange of political information in social networks either by leading people to discuss politics more frequently or to expand their politically-oriented network (the volume hypothesis). This type of change in social interaction would relate to participation, and thus indirect mobilization, by virtue of the fact that such conversations affect individual participation (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg *forthcoming*). Contacts may also change how people talk about politics with their network partners (the content hypothesis). If convinced by the appeals contained in party contacts, people who have been contacted may themselves try to mobilize other voters. In other words, a contacted citizen is presumed to mimic the party contact by specifically asking people to support specific candidates and become involved on that candidate's behalf (hereafter called interpersonal persuasion)

A second way that party contacts might stimulate indirect mobilization relies *not* on altered patterns of social communication, but on the behavior of the person initially exposed to the contact (behavioral contagion). If party contacts encourage participation of the person who is initially contacted, that change in behavior can activate social norms supporting electoral involvement and thus increase the probability a person's associates participate. Even if the contacted individual does not talk about politics more or explicitly mobilize her friends and neighbors, they can still influence their behavior by participating themselves and setting an example of good citizenship or signaling the importance of the campaign to friends and family.

Though this second possibility might seem unintuitive at first glance it has substantive appeal when carefully considered. In some friendship and family situations politics (along with religion) may be considered a taboo subject, regardless of party contact. People who are contacted may not necessarily alter their conversational patterns due to conventions that limit political discussion. Yet the simple act of putting up a yard sign or working on a campaign can

still signal what is appropriate political behavior to one's family and friends. This may be especially true in social networks, where an individual's participation can suggest to network members how "people like me" should behave with respect to elections. Buttressing this notion is Kenny's (1992) demonstration that people who have friends that participate in politics are themselves more likely to participate, even after accounting for simultaneous influence. In this scenario, we would then expect that a person's acquaintances are more likely to be involved if the party contact successfully mobilizes that person (behavioral contagion hypothesis).

In sum, this discussion identifies two links and three hypotheses between party contacts and indirect mobilization in social networks. Each of these is visually depicted in Diagram 1. In this schematic, the circles represent two citizens who share a common social tie, one of whom has been contacted by a political party. Each hypothesis is represented by a series of arrows and text boxes describing how indirect mobilization would follow the party contact. The largest rectangle represents pathways that require for altered patterns of social communication to occur for indirect mobilization to proceed, while the other text box represents the link that revolves around altered behavior of the contacted citizen. The remainder of this paper empirically investigates these possibilities.

[Diagram 1 about here]

DATA

To properly address these questions, it is necessary to have data on party contacts, the characteristics of individuals, social communication, and the behavior of the people in the individual's interpersonal network. In this paper, I use survey data from the South Bend Study, which was conducted during the 1984 presidential campaign (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1985). The South Bend Study is appropriate for examining the questions addressed here because it was designed to examine the relationship between social networks and political behavior. It includes interviews with an initial sample of registered voters (hereafter respondents) who were selected via a stratified sample in seventeen neighborhoods from South Bend, Indiana as well as

interviews with a sample of people who were named as political discussants (hereafter discussants) by the respondents.

Two subsets of the South Bend interviews are used in the analysis that follows. The first subset is a pre- and post-election panel of respondents. These data are used to analyze the relationship between party contacts and social interaction. Although the South Bend study was designed as a three stage panel study (two pre-election and one post-election waves), I draw only from the information gathered from participants in the second and third waves. In this subset there is a temporal gap between the stimulus of interest (party contacts) and a potential response (social interaction) thereby allowing for a better causal inference about these two variables. At the same time, using the second pre-election survey minimizes the effects of panel attrition and respondent recall error while simultaneously maximizing sample size.

The second subset of data is comprised of discussion dyads and it is used to study the consequences of social discussions influenced by party contacts. This subset was constructed by pairing each respondent with one of his or her discussants. With these discussion dyads, I can examine the effect of respondent behavior on discussant participation and accordingly judge the behavioral impact of party-stimulated social mobilization. We can, in other words, link both party contacts and patterns of communication directly to the behavior of the discussants with these two subsets of data.

PARTISAN CONTACTS AND DISCUSSION EFFECTS

The Volume of Political Discussion. It has been shown that social networks encourage higher levels of political involvement when they provide political stimuli to the participants (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg *forthcoming*). Much less clear is whether the frequency of political exchange in social networks – one potential form of indirect mobilization – is related to direct attempts at political mobilization. In this section, I investigate the volume hypothesis by analyzing the impact of party contacts on the amount of political discussion that occurs between respondents and the people in their social networks.[i]

The dependent variable is measured using a survey question in which each respondent reported on the frequency of political discussion with their network associates. For each network discussant,[ii] a respondent could report never discussing politics, talking politics once in a while, sometimes, or fairly often.[iii] Although respondent's perceptions may be biased by their own interest in politics or poor re-call, these distinctions provide analytic leverage for distinguishing among networks with a little and a lot of political interaction.

To measure direct mobilization, I use a party contacting variable in which respondents could report partisan contacts aimed at influencing his or her vote choices in the up-coming election. While respondents were asked a variant of this question in all three election waves, the second pre-election measure is employed in the analysis in this section in order to be consistent with the logic of causality and to maximize sample size. This variable is coded so respondents were either contacted by someone (coded "1") or not (coded "0"). Although this measure is widely employed in the field (e.g., Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), it is important to point out that that it underestimates the number and type of contacts people are exposed to and has the distinct disadvantage of not recording *what activity* the respondent was asked to do (Abramson and Claggett 2001). Keeping this limitation in mind, the results below only apply to the limited number of partisan contacts people are exposed to while potentially understating the effect of specific requests on similar requests in social networks.

Using Huckfeldt's (2001) model of political discussion to guide model specification, a host of motivational and social factors thought to stimulate political discussion are included in the empirical models reported below. To capture the effect of motivation and sophistication on discussion I include measures of campaign attentiveness, partisan extremity, and respondent education. Four measures of networks characteristics are also included. Two of these – whether the discussant is a spouse or relative rather than a friend – measure social intimacy between the respondent and each discussant. Another measure is the respondent's perception of the discussants political knowledge, a variable which Huckfeldt shows is strongly related to levels of

political discussion in networks. Finally, a dichotomous measure of perceived political agreement (i.e., whether the respondent's partisanship matched his or her perception of the discussant's partisanship) is included. If party contacting stimulates political discussion, the inclusion of these variables will rule out a number of alternative social and motivational interpretations and focus attention primarily on the consequences of party contact on network political interaction.[iv]

Three sets of ordered probit estimates are presented in Table 1. Each model represents the effect of the independent variables on the amount of political discussion between a respondent and one of his or her network discussants. Overall, the results show that political conversation changes primarily as a function of individual characteristics and the features of the discussion dyad, but not as a result of direct mobilization. Not only is the measure of partisan contacting statistically insignificant but is negative as well, providing no support for the volume hypothesis.[v]

[Table 1 about here]

This null finding has significant ramifications for our understanding of political mobilization. It is often argued that both political factors (like party contacts) and social factors (like conversation in social networks) can make participation more likely. Such arguments often imply that the primary role of social factors is to extend the influence of political mobilization rather than to independently influence participation. Yet this conventional wisdom is not supported by these findings and they highlight the possibility that social networks influence participation separate from the role given to them in the discussion of indirect mobilization. More practically, mobilization efforts by election campaigns likely do not have quite the reach that many people believe they do because they do not create political conversations where they do not already exist.

The Content of Political Discussion. Although party contacts do not stimulate political exchange in social networks beyond what already exists, that does not imply that those exchanges are less important in the wake of a party contact. Along these lines, I now turn my attention to

the second discussion-based hypothesis: do party contacts spur indirect mobilization by changing the content of political discussion in social networks? My hypothesis states that party contacts make people more likely to persuade people in their network to support a specific side in an election (and potentially how to show that support).

For this part of the analysis, the dependent variable is a question on the second pre-election survey instrument that asked whether or not each respondent recalled trying to persuade others how to vote. Though this measure is limited in a number of ways, the most pressing issue is that it assumes that attempts at interpersonal persuasion occur in social networks. While this is a reasonable possibility, the indirect link between the phenomenon of interest (persuasion in a network) and the measure (persuasion in general) means that there is some additional uncertainty associated with the results of this analysis beyond that captured by the statistical estimates. Nevertheless, the survey question captures a behavior that is central to the content hypothesis and it is reasonable to believe that attempts at interpersonal persuasion are unlikely to occur with complete strangers except under specific circumstances. In addition to the variable measuring party contact, I include controls for a respondent's social status, strength of partisanship, and interest in the election in the estimates that follow. The effect of these variables on interpersonal persuasion is reported in Table 2.

[Table 2 about here]

Whereas contacts had no discernible effect on the frequency of political conversation, they do have a statistically significant and positive effect on the likelihood of trying to influence the voting behavior of others. Simply put, people who are contacted are more likely to engage in interpersonal mobilization, evidence that is consistent with the content hypothesis. Additionally, the results show that people who are more educated, more interested in the campaign, and stronger partisans are more likely to try convincing others how to act and whom to support.

Since the probability of each variable is contingent on the value of all the other independent variables in probit models, the effect of partisan contacts is estimated for a

hypothetical South Bend resident who was somewhat interested in the campaign, a "weak" partisan, currently employed, made between twenty and thirty thousand dollars, and average in all other regards. Using an algorithm developed by King *et al*. (2000; see also Tomz *et al*. 1998 and Appendix B), I produce a distribution of probabilities that this individual tried persuading others how to vote depending on whether he or she was contacted by a party during the campaign.[vi]

[Figure 1 about here]

The left-hand curve in Figure 1 displays the probability distribution for a person who was not contacted during the campaign; the right-hand curve is the distribution for the same hypothetical person who had been exposed to partisan contact. The distinct modes in the curves visually depicts the strong and positive effect of party contact on the probability of engaging in interpersonal mobilization. The mean of the left-hand distribution is .27, indicating that the probability this individual mobilized others was reasonably low. Moreover, the 95-percent credible interval for this distribution has an upper boundary of just .32, indicating that that at best only 3 in 10 hypothetical respondents attempted to mobilize others if not contacted by a party. The mean of the right-hand distribution is .42 with a lower credible interval boundary of .34. This shows that the consequence of party contact is to increase the average probability of mobilizing others by fifteen percent. Moreover, the lack of overlap between the credible intervals for both distributions lends considerable support to the confidence with which we can conclude that party contacting stimulates interpersonal mobilization. The worst case scenario is that party contacting increases the probability interpersonal persuasion by a modest 3-percent. But even after accounting for all sources of uncertainty with the "average" increase is a more robust fifteen percent with the best case (for the content hypothesis) being nearly twenty-seven percent. these are even strong effects than those reported by Rosenstone and Hansen.

Thus far, the evidence is consistent with the content hypothesis and we cannot reject the argument that party contacts affect the substance of information exchanged in these networks. While interpersonal political discussions are not stimulated by party contacts, people who are

contacted by a political party are more likely to engage in attempts at persuasion. This in turn implies that the mobilizing potential of network exchanges may shift in the wake of a party contact, at least creating the possibility for efficacious indirect mobilization. But several questions remain.

First, we do not know for certain that the respondent's persuasive attempts were aimed at people in their social networks. For instance, a person who is contacted by a political party could become mobilized to do campaign work and, as a part of that involvement, become an active participant in a canvass or telephone bank where they are trying to persuade strangers rather than friends. In analyses not shown here, this possibility was examined by re-estimating the model in Table 2 for those respondents who did **not** work on a campaign. Even after eliminating campaign workers from the sample, people who were contacted by a party were much more likely to engage in political persuasion (β=0.46, p<.001). This leaves open the possibility that party contacts stimulate persuasion with people that respondents bring into their networks (a possibility I cannot test), though the fact that party contacts do not affect discussion is inconsistent with this possibility.

Second, the results in Table 2 and Figure 1 may mask heterogeneity among individuals. Common sense suggests that strong partisans react differently a party contact than do independents or undecided voters. Indeed, the content of a party contact may not even be the same for both types of voters. This logic is one of the reasons why parties try targeting their contacting efforts towards certain voters, though such targeting meets with limited success.[vii] To examine this, I reproduced the simulations illustrated in Figure 1 for strong partisans and independents separately. Consistent with the aforementioned logic, stronger partisans are more likely to attempt persuading others than are leaners or independents. Yet the differences are not a substantively strong as we might expect. Among independents, party contacts increase the average probability of interpersonal persuasion by 13-percent as compared to an increase of 16-percent among strong partisans.

All in all, the results provide insight into the possibility that party contacts stimulate informational contagion in social networks. Although the evidence above does not support the possibility that direct mobilization increases the volume of information exchanged in networks, it implies that the substance of that information changes. Equally as important, this effect occurs for people who are not mobilized to become campaign participants and for independents and strong partisans alike. One implication of this is that campaigns are partly less effective at mobilizing participation than in the past because the social networks are smaller and less politically-oriented than they once were (e.g., Putnam 2000). Another implication is that campaigns do not currently stimulate more interactions, so that they must either contact more people or alter their contacts in such a way to stimulate broader exchange *if* they want to focus on mobilizing voters.

INDIRECT MOBILIZATION AND ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

In light of these results, the next issue is whether party contacts indirectly increase electoral awareness and engagement. There are two possibilities consistent with the arguments and evidence discussed thus far. First, discussants exposed to respondents that attempted to persuade others are more likely to become engaged in the election campaign than discussants who are not similarly exposed. This hypothesis is a natural extension of the analysis above. The second possibility does not rely on altered patterns of communication per se, but still allows for the possibility of indirect mobilization as a consequence of party contacts. A <u>behavioral contagion effect</u> implies that party contact indirectly stimulates participation by changing the behavior of the person originally contacted, with a likely explanation being that respondents who have been contacted are more likely to participate and that their family or friends participate at the same time, in the same activities. Such an argument fits well with Huckfeldt's (1979) finding that socially-based activities are susceptible to contextual influences while individually-based activities are not. This implies that we should only observe this effect for activities in which

multiple people can participate simultaneously, such as attending a campaign rally or working on a campaign – a refinement of the behavioral contagion argument.

To examine these hypotheses, I use five different measures of discussant political engagement as dependent variables from the dyad data. The first dependent variable is a measure of cognitive engagement, based on a survey question that asked discussants to report how interested they had been in the campaign. Discussants were allowed to report that they were not too interested, somewhat interested, or very interested. Additionally, four survey questions measuring involvement in each of the following campaign activities were also used: putting up a sign or displaying a bumper sticker; working for a candidate or party; attending a rally; or donating money to a party or candidate.[viii] Each discussant was distinguished by whether or not he or she reported participating in the activity (coded "1") or not (coded "0").

To test for the effects related to the content hypothesis on the discussant's political involvement, I measure interpersonal persuasion with the dependent variable analyzed in Table 2. Empirically estimating the behavioral contagion hypotheses is somewhat trickier since people who are active may also be more likely to be contacted, meaning that the indirect effect of a party contact might overlap with that of a respondent's underlying propensity to participate. Since the two processes overlap so much that a multiequation model is near-impossible to identify, I mimic an empirical strategy similar to that employed by Abramson and Claggett (2001): the indirect effect of party contacts are accounted for by including the measure of whether the respondent was contacted by a political party during the campaign which served as the independent variable in the previous section. Drawing on official voting information, I simultaneously control for the respondent's general predisposition toward political activity by measuring how many of the four previous general elections he or she voted in.[ix] This controls for the "typical" level of sociopolitical pressure that the respondent's behavior applies to the discussant, thus establishing a baseline against which the effects of 1) interpersonal persuasion [which is stimulated by party contacts] and 2) a respondent's party contacts exert on the discussant's level of participation.[x]

Incorporating both the respondent contact and persuasion variables as predictors of discussant political involvement is biased *against* finding evidence on behalf of *either* hypothesis because they should exert a strong affect on discussant behavior while being correlated with social interaction.

In addition to the variables discussed above, I include measures discussant partisanship, education, income, age, and union membership on political engagement to control for individual factors that predict involvement. The measure of political discussion between the respondent and discussant examined as a dependent variable in Table 1 is also introduced to control for distinct processes of social mobilization that are unrelated to those stimulated by party contact.[xi] Unfortunately, data limitations make it impossible to include a measure of whether a discussant was exposed to the process of direct mobilization. Accordingly, we must remain open to the possibility that the effects of some variables may be due to the unmeasured effects a campaign contacts experienced by discussants. However, inclusion of the control variables still provides for a fairly broadly specified model of political participation that will shed some light on the impact of indirect mobilization. Table 3 reports the results of each model.

[Table 3 about here]

Consistent with previous work, we see that electoral interest and strength of partisan identification are statistically significant predictors for each form of political engagement. The amount of political discussion in the network influences three forms of engagement (attention to the election, campaign work, and display of campaign signs), while education, income, and age also influence some subset of the dependent variables. While confirming old hypotheses about the individual sources of participation, these findings also reiterate the fact that the amount of political discussion in social networks predicts participation. They also are consistent with Huckfeldt's (1979) finding that some activities are more susceptible to social influence than others, though it is unclear whether this same distinction applies to mobilization more generally.

Importantly, the model specification ensures that this effect is over and above the effects of social discussion stimulated by party contacts.

More central to this paper are the results regarding indirect mobilization. Here there is clear evidence that people who are exposed to indirect mobilization via social networks are more likely to become involved, though the effect is somewhat less consistent and milder than is typically assumed. With respect to the content hypothesis, a main respondent's willingness to engage in interpersonal persuasion has a statistically discernible effect on the discussant's attention to the election but not the discussant's likelihood of engaging in any of the four overt campaign activities. That iscussants who are exposed to a respondent's persuasive attempts do not engage in more costly forms of electoral participation implies that the socially-filtered party message does not carry the same weight and force as conveyed in the original contact.

Figure 2 displays the substantive effect of informational contagion on the discussant's attentiveness to the campaign, the only measure that is significantly influenced by this process. The curves in Panel A and Panel B show that discussed exposed to mobilizing respondents had slightly lower probabilities of being not very or somewhat interested in the campaign. Panel C, on the other hand, shows a strong effect on being very interested in the campaign. The average probability of a person who did not know a respondent that attempted to influence the votes of others was very interested in the campaign is 34-percent, while a similar person exhibits a probability of nearly 44-percent when exposed to such a mobilization attempt. This ten point shift represents a substantial increase in the likelihood of campaign interest. However, the simulations show that there is relatively high statistical uncertainty associated with this effect. The upper boundary for the 95-percent credible interval on the left hand curve is 46-percent, compared to 33-percent lower boundary for the other curve. So while discussant cognitive engagement is empirically affected by interpersonal persuasion, the substantive effect is not very large or without a measure of uncertainty.

[Figure 2 about here]

Stronger evidence exists on behalf of the behavioral contagion hypothesis. Discussants who know a contacted respondent are more likely to work on a campaign and attend meetings or rallies. While recognizing that the specification is imperfect but useable, controlling for the respondent's participatory history implies that the results reflect the indirect effect of party contacts and not the respondent's underlying disposition toward political involvement. Finally, the absence of a statistically reliable influence on the other forms of activity, each of which can be characterized as individual modes of involvement, again highlights the limited reach of indirect mobilization.

Figure 3 displays the substantive impact of knowing a respondent that was contacted by a political party on campaign work and meeting attendance while controlling for different levels of campaign interest. The effect of knowing a contacted respondent is weak for respondents who report being uninterested in the campaign and then increases for more interested respondents. For example, a discussant who knows a contacted respondent increases the average probability of campaign work from .2-percent to .7-percent for discussants who were not too interested in the campaign (upper left-hand graph). While this represents a large factor change, the probability of participation remains quite low. A similar result occurs for the attendance variable among uninterested respondents, where intepersonal persuasion increases the probability from 1.5-percent to a 3.8-percent. In contrast, the effect of party contacts is substantively much stronger among the very interested respondents displayed in the second row of Figure 3. Among these discussants the probability of working on a campaign nearly doubles going from 6.6-percent to 13-percent, while the probability of attending a meeting increases from 23-percent to 36-percent.

[Figure 3 about here]

These figures again show that there is a relatively high level of uncertainty associated with these results. As mentioned, discussants who know respondents that were contacted by a political party always have a higher mean probability of participation than discussants who were not similarly exposed to indirect mobilization. However, there is notable overlap in the 95-

percent credible intervals for the curves in all four panels of Figure 3. Not only does this mean that we have notable uncertainty about the substantive strength of the behavioral contagion effect, but it is further evidence that effects of indirect mobilization are limited in their scope.

The results show that even while party contacts do filter through social networks they only affect a subset of discussant political activities and with substantive effects that are contingent on levels of campaign interest. When combined with the results in the preceding section, we must conclude that indirect mobilization is not nearly as widespread and strong as the conventional wisdom implies. Party contacts can reach beyond the point of initial contact but only under a set of circumstances that are now relatively clear: 1) the initial contact must reach a person embedded in a network that is already politically-oriented, 2) the strongest substantive effect will be to increase interest in the campaign, and 3) the possibility that people who do become interested will participate is limited to socially-oriented activities and only then when they have become cognitively engaged in the campaign.

Not surprisingly, this picture implies that the process of indirect mobilization conveys party messages to more people than campaigns contact themselves. Rather than amplifying the message, the effect is limited in both the number of people it reaches and the types of activities it influences. This directly contrasts the received wisdom on this matter. Yet despite these qualifications, it would be inappropriate to suggest that indirect mobilization is unimportant. For example, the increased probability of campaign work for knowing a respondent who has been contacted by a party is approximately 7-percent for a discussant who is very interested in a campaign. To put this in the context of research on direct mobilization, party contacts (direct mobilization) themselves increase the probability of participation by only 5-percent (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

CONCLUSION

Many accounts of political mobilization make claims about the existence and importance of a two-step process without much evidence linking direct mobilization to the politics in social

networks. The main contribution of this paper is unpacking the complex theoretical relationship between the process of elite (or political) mobilization and social mobilization and then examining the implications with data. The evidence shows that party contacts stimulate some indirect mobilization in social networks, though the behavioral impact of that process is somewhat limited. This supports the conventional wisdom that indirect mobilization can be stimulated by campaign behavior, while simultaneously showing that the effect of direct contacts is narrower and weaker than assumed. Partly this is because party contacts do not stimulate additional political discussion and partly because the effects of indirect mobilization only exist under specific conditions. This means that arguments about the importance of indirect mobilization are partly right and partly wrong – while the process exists and it undoubtedly influences levels of activity, it is not as widespread or as significant as some would have us believe.

The results also confront an implied assumption in the field of political behavior, namely that social networks do not have an independent effect on participation. It is often argued that social network effects are primarily the result of 1) a general psychological disposition toward politics that also predicts participation or 2) a process of contagion where social networks are important only as a pipeline from the campaign to the public. Given the well-documented relationship between mobilization and political participation, the lack of evidence for the volume hypothesis calls the first view into question and implies that politically-oriented social interaction should be placed elsewhere in the taxonomy of political behaviors. This is further supported by the positive relationship between participation and indicators of both political discussion and indirect mobilization after controlling for a respondent's participatory history. Moreover, the finding that political discussion in the social network influences participation *after controlling for indirect mobilization* suggests networks exert an additional pull on participatory behavior that does not come simply from a campaign-stimulated process. In short, this is further – though still incomplete – evidence that social networks independently influence participation. Practically

speaking, this means that models of political involvement must therefore account for *both* political and social mobilization processes in order to be properly specified

Most importantly, these findings have important practical and normative implications. Although party contacts are an important precursor to participation, this form of campaigning is falling out of favor as campaigns make better use of media outlets as their main tactical tool. And since these contacts do not stimulate additional political discussion, we also have no evidence that they play a role in expanding the politically-relevant social networks. As a consequence, the aggregate impact of party contacts on participation is smaller than perhaps many believe and shows no sign of increasing under the conditions identified in this analysis. But on the positive side, these findings suggest that social networks do not rely upon party contacts in order to influence levels of political participation. Given the persistence of politically-oriented social interaction – even in the face of a decline of social interaction (Putnam 2000) – the social foundations of campaign engagement may be stronger than perhaps we believe.

For a variety of reasons, this paper is only the initial word on these issues. The results only examine one manner by which party contacts spur social mobilization – party contacts. It may very well be true that more common modes of campaign communication observed in campaigns today stimulate more discussions and information transfers with stronger effects (e.g., Popkin 1994, p. 45-50). Notable campaign events like the Willie Horton ad in the 1988 election or the second presidential debate in 2000 might be more worthy of water cooler conversation than the messages conveyed in the traditional party canvass. The analyses here also rely strongly on self-reports regarding campaign contacts, political communication in networks, and participation. These relatively rough measures, and the non-experimental nature of the analyses, also suggest that much exploration is left to be done.

Diagram 1. The Potential Social Consequences of Party Contacts. This figure shows three ways that party contacts may influence the participatory behavior of people via social networks. Each text box describes how interaction between Citizen A and Citizen B might influence the behavior of Citizen B. The large square represents links that rely on altered patterns of social communications. Arrows from Citizen A to the text box represent the manner by which Citizen A's party contact might be translated in a manner that it influences Citizen B. Arrows from each text box to Citizen B suggests that the pathway influences his or her propensity to participate in politics. Solid arrows represent links verified by empirical research; dashed arrows represent hypothesized links.

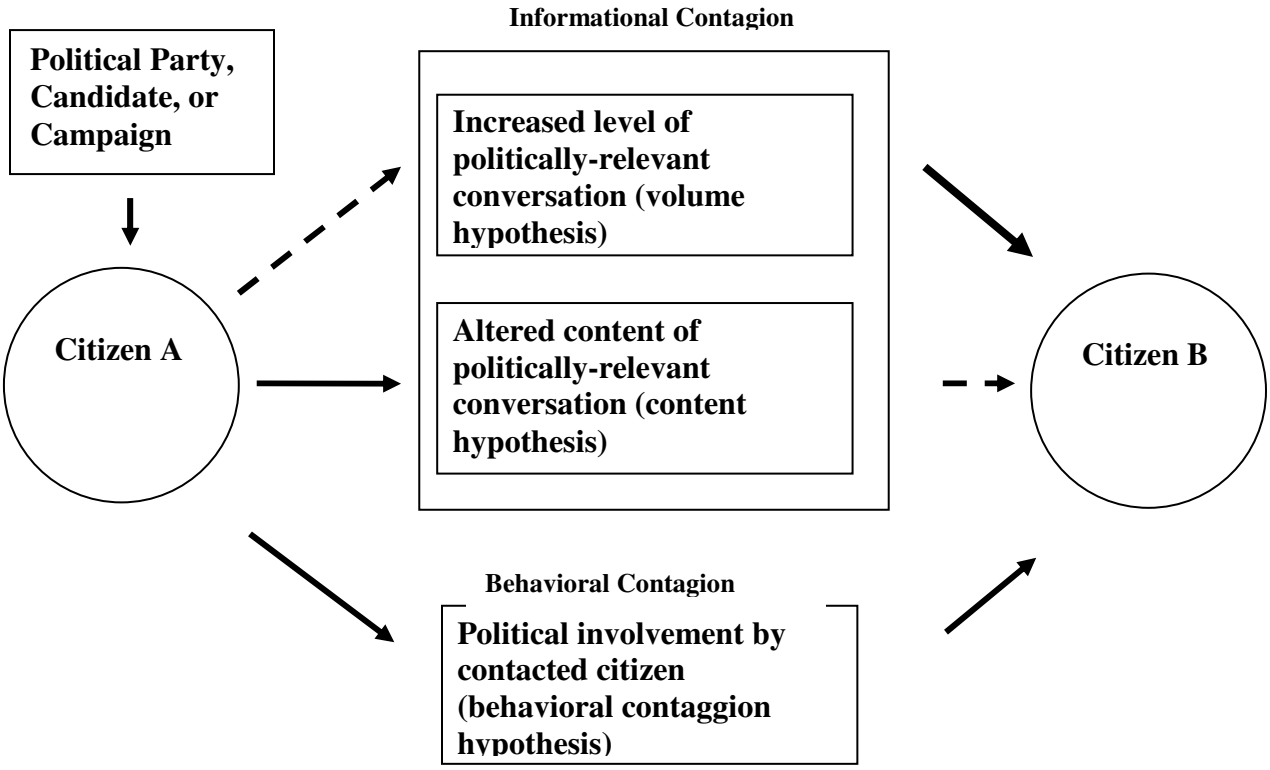


Table 1. Effect of Party Contact on Levels of Political Discussion, Ordered Probit Models.

Variables	First Discussant Named	Second Discussant Named	Third Discussant Named
Party contact	-0.08 (-0.84)[a]	-0.02 (-0.24)	-0.01 (-0.11)
Campaign attentiveness	0.51*** (6.16)	0.43*** (5.01)	0.38*** (4.43)
Strength of partisan identification	0.09** (2.47)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.01 (2.56)
Years of education	0.04** (2.74)	0.02 (1.07)	0.04** (2.34)
Perception of discussant's knowledge	0.51*** (8.09)	0.50*** (7.90)	0.49*** (7.62)
Spouse	0.13 (1.57)	0.43*** (3.15)	0.28* (1.87)
Other relative	0.05 (0.51)	-0.03 (-0.33)	0.04 (0.44)
Perceived partisan agreement	-0.04 (-0.58)	0.13 (1.65)	0.20 (2.55)
Threshold #1	-0.26 (s=0.23)	-0.75 (s=0.24)	-0.42 (s=0.25)
Threshold #2	2.14 (s=0.24)	1.79 (s=0.25)	2.18 (s=0.26)
Threshold #3	3.29 (s=0.25)	2.76 (s=0.25)	3.11 (s=0.26)
Likelihood χ^2	161.72	115.13	108.34
N	1060	1030	1005
Log Likelihood	-971.09	-877.32	-825.04

[a] Values in parentheses are Z-scores.
*p<.10, two-tailed test
**p<.05, two-tailed test
***p<.01, two tailed test
Dependent Variable: "When you talk to [NAME OF DISCUSSANT], how often do you talk about politics?"

Table 2. Effect of Party Contacting on Attempts to Persuade Others How to Vote, Probit Model.

Variables	Interpersonal Persuasion Model
Party contact	0.42*** (4.23)[a]
Interest in election	0.89*** (8.78)
Strength of partisanship	0.14*** (3.35)
Currently working	0.12 (1.21)
Income (in categories)	0.01 (0.54)
Years of Education	0.06*** (2.90)
Age	-0.01*** (-6.58)
Constant	-2.15 (-6.58)
Likelihood χ^2	167.32
N	1319
Log Likelihood	-632.00

[a] Values in parentheses are Z-scores.
*p<.10, two-tailed test
**p<.05, two-tailed test
***p<.01, two tailed test

Dependent Variable: "So far this year, have you talked to anyone and tried to show them why they should support one of the candidates for president?"

Table 3. The Effect of Respondent Persuasion and Knowing a Contacted Respondent on Discussant Political Involvement.

Variables	Attention to Election (Ordered Probit)	Work on Campaign (Probit Model)	Attend Meeting or Rally (Probit Model)	Display Sign or Bumper Sticker (Probit Model)	Donate Money to a Party or Candidate (Probit Model)
Main Respondent Mobilized Others	0.26** (2.43)[a]	-0.12 (-0.74)	-0.12 (-0.90)	0.05 (0.37)	0.08 (0.58)
Main Respondent Contacted by Party	-0.07 (-0.54)	0.38** (2.15)	0.38** (2.46)	-0.06 (-0.39)	0.001 (0.01)
Attentiveness to the Election	-----	0.70*** (4.91)	0.73*** (6.38)	0.50*** (5.32)	0.45*** (4.75)
Strength of partisan identification	0.24*** (3.53)	0.32*** (4.03)	0.22*** (3.45)	0.26*** (4.43)	0.29*** (4.72)
Political Discussion with Main Respondent	0.24*** (3.13)	0.33*** (3.26)	0.13 (1.38)	0.15* (1.73)	0.13 (1.51)
Years of education	0.09*** (3.89)	0.05 (1.38)	0.07** (2.37)	0.05* (1.78)	0.08*** (2.66)
Income (in categories)	0.04 (1.55)	0.01 (0.12)	0.10*** (2.57)	0.01 (0.24)	0.19*** (5.33)
Age	0.02*** (5.24)	0.002 (0.56)	0.01* (1.80)	0.01 (1.57)	0.02*** (3.96)
Member of union household	0.16 (1.50)	0.16 (1.04)	-0.05 (-0.36)	0.01** (2.45)	-0.20 (-1.56)
Respondents Participatory History	-0.02 (-0.63)	0.002 (0.06)	0.11** (2.99)	0.03 (1.02)	-0.01 (-0.42)
Constant [b]		-4.40 (-6.64)	-4.75 (-8.27)	-3.39 (-6.68)	-4.77 (-9.09)
Threshold #1	1.77 (s=0.39)[c]				
Threshold #2	2.92 (s=0.40)				

Likelihood χ^2	79.81***	85.48***	129.13***	88.83***	144.06***
N	672	672	672	672	669
Log Likelihood	-603.43	-214.31	-290.98	-343.05	-333.47

[a] Values in parentheses are Z-scores.
[b] Parameter is an ordered probit threshold. Constant is for the probit model.
[c] The "s" stands for the standard error associated with thresholds in the ordered probit model.
*p<.10, two-tailed test
**p<.05, two-tailed test
***p<.01, two tailed test

Figure 1. The effect of party contacts on the probability of a main respondent engages in interpersonal mobilization.

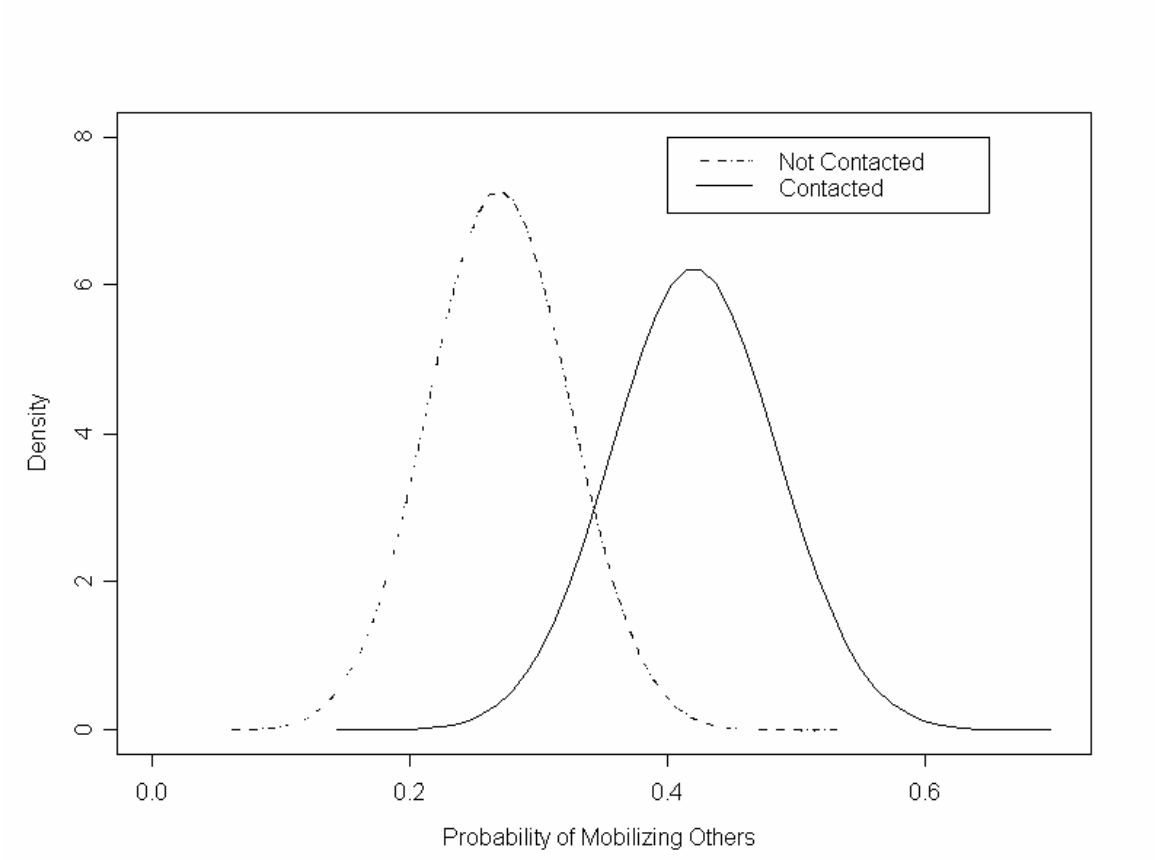


Figure 2. The effect of respondent interpersonal mobilization on a discussant's cognitive engagement.

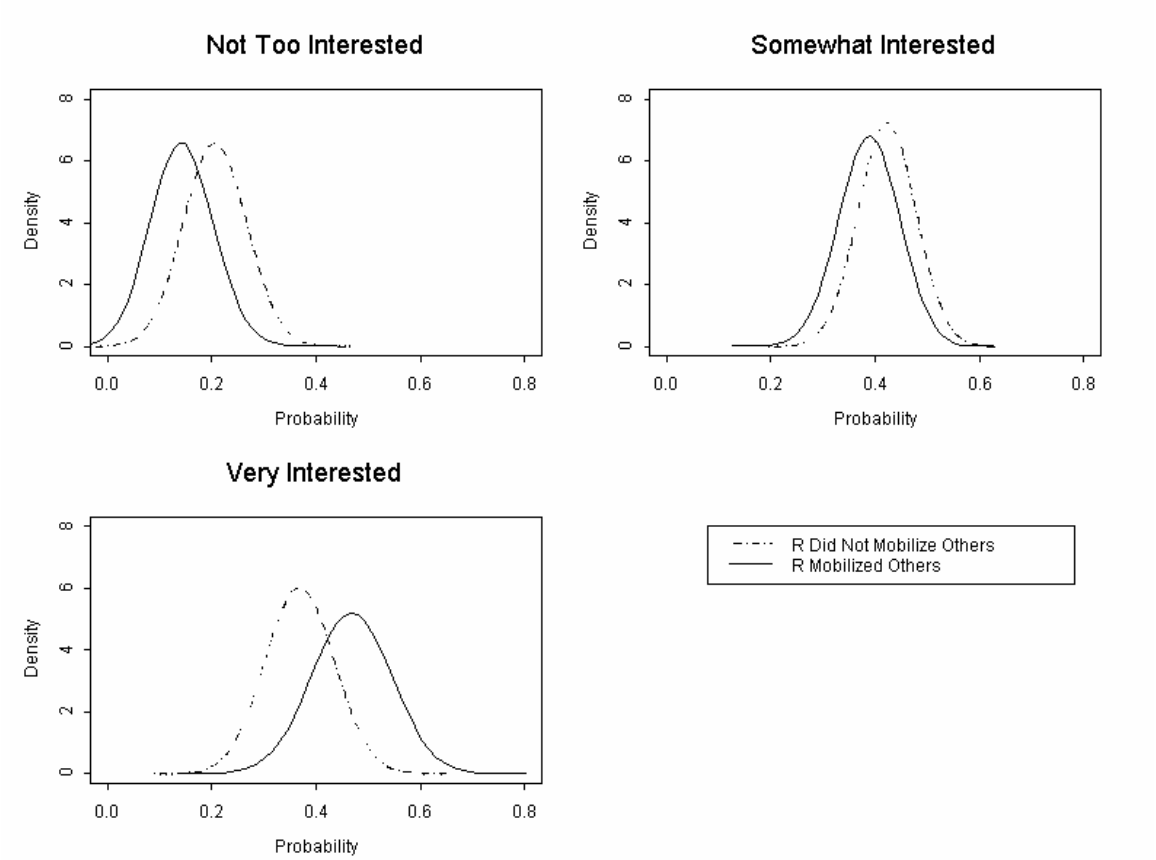
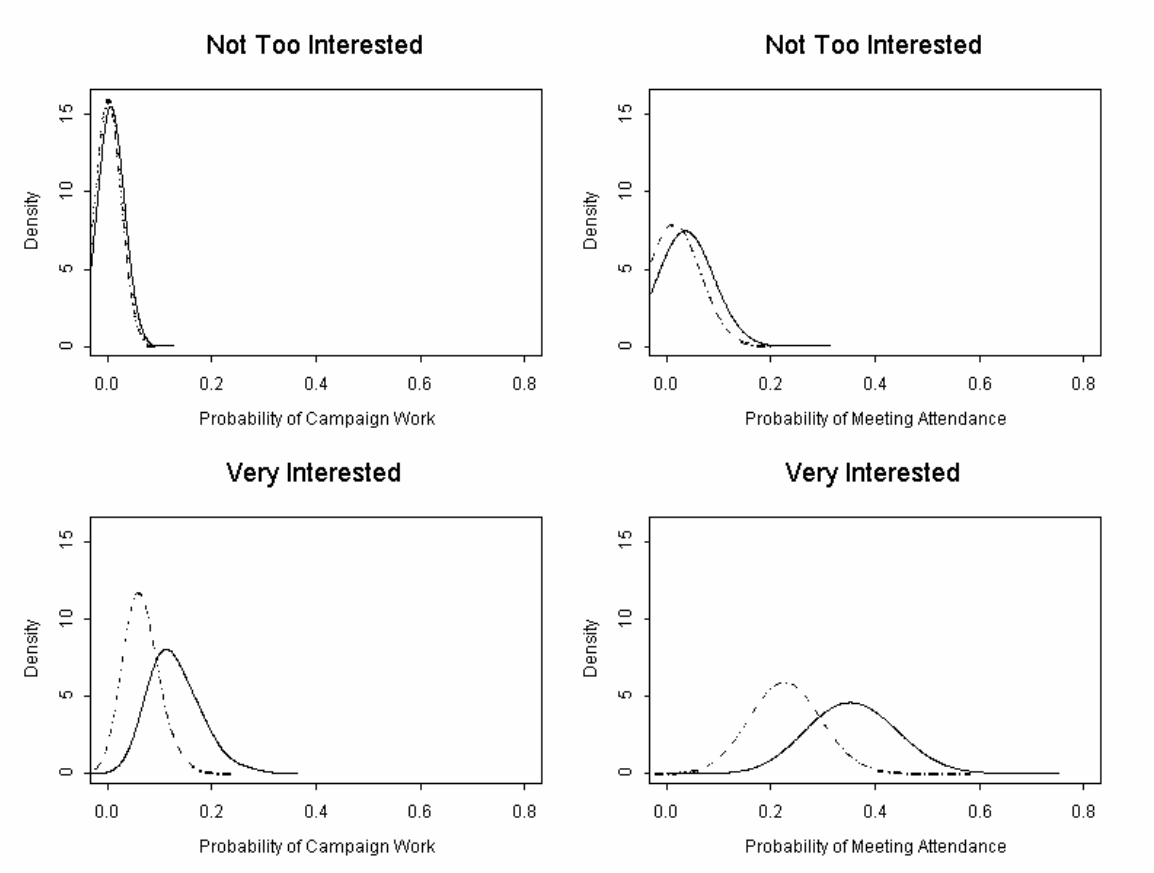


Figure 3. The effect of political party contact of a respondent on a discussant's likelihood of engaging in campaign work or attending a meeting, allowing for changes in discussant campaign interest.



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APPENDIX A: VARIABLE DESCRIPTIONS

The South Bend Study

These data were collected by Robert Huckfeldt and John Sprague. The survey was designed as a panel study with a snowball component. There were three waves in which data was gathered on the main respondents, who are analyzed in this paper. Two of the survey waves took place prior to the 1984 election. A third wave was administered soon after the election. There was replacement for observations that dropped out of the survey at each wave. The variables measuring income, education, and age were administered to main respondents during the survey wave in which they entered. The measures of political activity, number of discussants, and party mobilization were all administered in the post-election wave. The remainder of this appendix describes each of these variables and reproduces the original question used to gather the data.

I. Political Variables – Main Respondents

Mobilized Others

This is a measure of whether or not a main respondent explicitly tried to get people to vote for one candidate or another. These data were gathered in Wave B.

"So far this year, have you talked to anyone and tried to show them why they should support one of the candidates for president?"

(0) No (1) Yes

Partisan Contact

This question was used to measure whether or not a main respondent had been contacted by a political party or candidate during the campaign. This question was asked in Wave B of the survey.

Has anyone called you up or come around and talked to you about supporting a candidate for president?

(0) No (1) Yes

Worked on Campaign

Part of the analysis relies on controlling for campaign participation. The following question, asked in Wave C, was used for this purpose.

"How about you? Did you work for any candidate in this election?

(0) No (1) Yes

Interest in Politics

Main respondents' electoral interest was measured with a question about the whether or not they were paying attention to the campaign. This was asked in Wave B.

"Some people don't pay much attention to campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you were very much interested in following the political campaigns this year?"

(0) No (1) Yes

Strength of Party Identification

The measure of partisanship on the South Bend survey comes from two questions, both of which are the common measures. The first asks the respondent to say whether he or she identifies with a party. The second asks the respondent whether he/she leans towards are party or whether his/her identification was strong or weak. The measure used in this paper was created by folding the common seven point scale to produce a measure of how strong each respondent's partisan orientations are. The coding is listed below.

(0) Independent/Non-partisan (1) Partisan leaner (2) Weak partisan

(3) Strong partisan

II. Social Variables – Main Respondents

Years of Education

This is a straightforward question about how many years the main respondent had been educated. The survey question is provided below. Descriptive statistics are provided in Table A.

"What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed?"

Income

This variable measures each respondent's income level by categories. The survey question is listed below. Descriptive statistics are provided in Table A.

"Last year, before taxes, was your total family income (response categories read):

(1) Under $5000	(2) $5000 - $10,000	(3) $10,000 - $15,000
(4) $15,000 - $20,000	(5) $20,000 - $30,000	(6) $30,000 - $40,000
(7) $40,000 - $50,000	(8) $50,000 and over."	

Age

Each respondent was asked what year he or she was born in. The age variable was coded by subtracting that number from 1984. The survey question is listed below. Descriptive statistics are provided in Table A.

"In what year were you born?"

Union Membership

This variable measures whether someone in each main respondent's household belonged to union.

"Does anyone in your household belong to a labor union?"

Church Attendance

Each main respondent was asked how frequently he or she attended church.

"Would you say you go to church/synagogue every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year or never?"

(0) Never	(1) A few times a year	(2) Once or twice a year
(3) Almost every week	(4) Every week	

Currently Employed

This is a straightforward question about whether the main respondent was employed at the time of the survey. The survey question is provided below.

"We'd like to know if you are working now, or are you unemployed, retired, keeping house, a student, or what?"

Currently Married

This is a straightforward question about whether the main respondent was married at the time of the survey. The survey question is provided below.

"What is your present marital status?"

Active in Group

Nearly every respondent in the South Bend survey reported being a member of some group. Accordingly, the analyses in this paper use a measure of *active* membership in the following groups – fraternal/lodge, service/civic, veterans', sport, youth, school service, hobby, school fraternity/sorority, ethnic, literary, professional, neighborhood, charity, or country club. The general question wording is provided below and was asked in Wave B. The active group variable was created by summing together these responses and re-coding anything greater than or equal to one with a "1". The result is a dichotomous measure.

"Now we would like to know something about the groups and organizations to which you belong. Here is a list of various kinds of organizations. Could you tell me whether or not you are a member of any of these, and if you are active as a member?

First, fraternal groups or lodges. Do you belong to any? (If so: Are you active?) "

(0) Does not belong / belongs but not active (1) Belongs and is active

III. DYAD VARIABLES

Talk Politics with Discussant

This question is used to measure political discussion between a main respondent and a named discussant. This question was asked in Wave C.

"When you talk with <first name of discussant>, about how often do you discuss politics?"

(0) Never (1) Only Once in a While (2) Fairly Often (3) Most times

Discussant Order

This is variable is provided by the investigators. It simply records the order in which each discussant is named, thereby providing a measure of the discussant's saliency to the respondent.

Relationship Between R and D

This variable measures how the respondent reported knowing each of his/her discussants. The questions used to gather this information is listed below. This information was re-coded as a trichotomous variable. The highest category was for non-relatives, the middle category for relatives other than spouses, and the lowest category for spouses.

"Is <first name of discussant> a member of your family? (I mean, is <first name of discussant> related to you in any way – by marriage or blood?)"

(1) Not related	(2) Spouse	(3) Mother or Father
(4) Brother or sister	(5) In-laws	(6) Son or Daughter
(7) Other blood relative		

"(If not related:) How did you get to know <first name of discussant>?"

(1) Work	(2) Church	(3) Neighborhood
(4) Family	(5) Republican Party	(6) Democratic Party
(7) Other organization	(10) Politics	(11) School
(12) Children in school together	(13) Friend of family	(14) Casual social sit.

IV. Discussant Variables

Social and Political Variables

The question wording for the discussant variables was the same as for the main respondent variables. All of the questions were posed *after* the election and the main respondent survey was complete.

Campaign Interest

This variable measures the level of interest each discussant reported having in the election campaign.

"Some people don't pay much attention to campaigns. How interested were you in following the political campaigns this past year?"

(0) Not too interested	(1) Somewhat interested	(3) Very interested

Political Action

These variables measure each discussant's participation in the following activities: working on a campaign, attending a meeting or rally, putting up a political sign or bumper sticker, or donating money to a party or candidate. The questions used to gather the information are listed below.

"Did you work for any candidate in this election?"

(1) Yes (0) No

"Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, dinners, or things like that?"

(1) Yes (0) No

"Did you put up a political yard sign or bumper sticker during the campaign?"

(1) Yes (0) No

"Did you give any money to a political party or candidate?"

(1) Yes (0) No

Table A-1. Descriptive Statistics for Main Respondents.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	N
Mobilized others	0.23	0.42	0	1	1504
Partisan contact	0.19	0.39	0	1	1503
Campaign work	0.07	0.26	0	1	1509
Attention to campaign	0.65	0.48	0	1	1498
Strength of partisanship	1.88	1.02	0	3	2124
Strength of ideology	1.80	0.87	0	3	1858
Years of Education	12.99	2.52	2	17	2150
Income	4.54	1.95	1	8	1931
Age	50.30	15.66	18	98	2129
Union	0.25	0.43	0	1	2144
Church attendance	2.55	1.43	0	4	2051
Employed	0.58	0.49	0	1	2155
Married	0.73	0.44	0	1	2149
Active in group	0.72	0.45	0	1	1495

Source: 1984 South Bend Election Study (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1985).

Table A-2. Descriptive Statistics for Discussants.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	N
Campaign work	0.13	0.34	0	1	924
Attended rally	0.21	0.41	0	1	924
Put up sign or sticker	0.26	0.44	0	1	924
Donated money	0.29	0.45	0	1	919
Followed campaign	1.40	0.70	0	2	923
Strength of partisanship	2.02	1.00	0	3	908
Strength of ideology	1.89	0.84	0	3	848
Years of Education	13.41	2.40	0	17	923
Income	4.99	1.83	1	8	838
Age	48.21	15.12	14	90	921
Employed	0.68	0.47	0	1	922
Married	0.81	0.39	0	1	923

Source: 1984 South Bend Election Study (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1985).

Table A-3. Descriptive Statistics for Dyad Variables.

Variable	Mean	Stand. Deviation	Min	Max	N
Relationship	0.74	0.89	0	2	924
Talk Politics	1.33	0.66	0	3	923

Source: 1984 South Bend Election Study (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1985).

APPENDIX B: INTERPRETING STATISTICAL RESULTS WITH STATISTICAL SIMULATION

Description

This appendix describes a method for interpreting statistical results developed by Gary King, Michael Tomz, and Jason Wittenberg (2000). In addition to developing this method, the authors have provided software (CLARIFY) for implementing it in STATA (Tomz *et al*. 1998).

Method

King *et al*. (2000) argue that there are two types of uncertainty in statistical results. One of these types is fundamental uncertainty. This form of uncertainty is accounted for in statistical results with the stochastic components of models. A second form, labeled estimation uncertainty, refers to the fact that we have imperfect knowledge about population parameters. In other words, the point estimates that come from statistical procedures are draws from a distribution around the true population parameter. The problem, according to King and his co-authors, is that interpretation rarely accounts for this latter form of uncertainty.

In order to rectify this problem, King *et al*. (2000) suggest using a simulation method to incorporate estimation uncertainty into substantive interpretation. This method assumes that the vector of parameter estimates in a statistical model, β^*, are a draw from a normal distribution around the true population parameter, β. The algorithm proceeds as follows:

1. Record parameter estimates from a statistical model;

2. To incorporate estimation uncertainty, draw a value from the distribution of β to represent a parameter estimate;

3. Choose values for the independent variables at which you will compute an expected value of the dependent variable;

4. Using the simulated coefficients from step 2 and using a draw from the model's stochastic distribution, simulate an expected value of the dependent value for the set levels of the independent variables.

By repeating each of these steps *M* number of times, it is possible to produce a distribution of expected values for the chosen levels of the independent variables that incorporates both types of uncertainty into the interpretation. Comparing the expected value distributions for different values of the independent variables allows us to see the substantive impact of these variables. In particular, graphical display of these expected value distributions can clearly depict these relationships (Cleveland 1993).

ENDNOTES

[i] It is possible that party contacts also lead people to increase the size of their politically-oriented networks by talking about politics to more people in their network. Unfortunately, the limited number of discussant names collected in these data make it impossible to test this possibility.

[ii] Respondents were asked questions about up to three different discussants. Discussant interviews, which are used later in the paper, were conducted with only a sample of these named discussants.

[iii] These responses numerically range from 0 (never) to 3 (fairly often). See Appendix A for coding details.

[iv] This statement is contingent on two assumptions. The first is that party contacts effects are not contingent on the nature of the network. Support for this can be seen in the quasi-experimental literature which implies the existence of an effect under highly controlled circumstances. Admittedly, this does not account for possible heterogeneity. The second assumption is that discussants themselves may be contacted and that those contacts are correlated with respondent contacts. There is little evidence on how recruitment and social networks overlap (but see Verba *et al*. 1995). If these assumptions do not hold, the effect of party contacts on indirect mobilization will be *overestimated* and thus should be kept in mind as interpretation of the results proceeds.

[v] Considering the weight attached to the social consequences of party contacts, I explored the matter more deeply by conducting additional analyses with party contacting measures from the first pre-election and the post election waves. Substituting these measures into the models does not change the results and hence the interpretation. The lone exception was for the party contact measure from the first pre-election wave, where party contacting has is a positive and significant of discussion with the first discussant. However that result should be treated skeptically because both panel attrition and repeated measurement effects could play a stronger role for this subset of data (Campbell and Stanley 1963).

[vi] The advantage of King *et al*.'s methodology is twofold. First, it incorporates information from both the systematic and stochastic portions of the empirical model. Second, in doing so, the results provide information beyond point estimates and thus more accurately reflect our level of statistical uncertainty. For more information see King *et al*. (2000), Tomz *et al*. (1998), and Appendix B to this paper.

[vii] In South Bend, both parties are handcuffed by the Democratic party's dominance of local elections. Put simply, many self-identified Independents and Republicans register in the Democratic party in order to cast meaningful ballots in local races that are for all intents and purposes contested in the Democratic primary. This means that both the Republican and Democratic parties have incomplete lists of supporters and detractors when they use the primary election ballot information (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992).

[viii] Conspicuously absent from this list is a measure of voter turnout. Although the survey instrument included a question about voter turnout, 91-percent of the discussant sample claimed to have voted. This unlikely number would call into question any results and the analysis instead focuses on the more reliable measures.

[ix] Unfortunately, I do not have access to the same information for discussants and still cannot measure their voter turnout.

[x] I am grateful to Bob Huckfeldt for this suggestion.

[xi] Even though party contacts do not stimulate higher levels of political conversation, those conversations do influence levels of political activity (McClurg *forthcoming*; Lake and Huckfeldt 1998). Accordingly, it is important to control for its effects in order to accurately gauge the impact of party stimulated interpersonal mobilization on behavior.