

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

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VOTER MOBILIZATION AND TURNOUT

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[TRANSCRIPT PREPARED FROM A TAPE RECORDING.]

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. MANN: Good morning. Welcome to Brookings. Thank you all for coming. I'm Tom Mann, a senior fellow here at Brookings. I want you to know I've just come from a battleground state. I was in Cincinnati this morning, and there's lots of interest. There's a real campaign going on out there—not like D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. I felt really good because I gave a talk last night, and I had people jam into the room. There must have been 300 people there. Then I read that the boss was in Toledo, and he got 80,000.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: It just doesn't seem fair, does it, but what are you going to do? My voice isn't quite the same.

We are delighted to welcome you back to the fourth of a series of five election seminars that are being sponsored by Brookings and Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School, at the initiative of Larry Bartels, the Donald Stokes Professor at Princeton, who got the idea some time ago and ran it by me. We concluded, together, that that made sense. The idea was a simple one: to see if we couldn't provide a little added value to the discussions here in Washington about the nature of the electoral process, to see if we couldn't get a little above the punditry and the shifting of commentary, depending on what the morning poll take seemed to have been. By the way, if you want that, we can give you that. I looked it up before coming down. I'm as subject to that as everyone else.

In our earlier sessions, we've covered the importance of partisanship, how campaigns do or do not make a difference, the way in which issues play in campaigns. Today, we couldn't have a more timely topic. It's on voter mobilization and turnout.

There is no question but that the effort of the campaigns is now overwhelmingly focused on getting known supporters to the polls. Of course, that's been going on for weeks with our early voting opportunities—now, one way or another, I believe, in 31 states.

Our fifth session will be after the election, two weeks hence, on mandates and governance. The transcripts from the earlier events are up on the Brookings website, and we will certainly get the remaining ones up there as quickly as we possibly can.

I think the reason these sessions have worked, at least from our point of view, is that we've been able to attract a wonderful group of scholars and journalists to participate in these events. The idea is to bring in scholars who have done research on the topic at hand and then to bring in a distinguished journalist to keep us all honest, to keep us focused on the linkages between the research and the current campaign.

Today's distinguished journalist is Jeanne Cummings, down at the far end from me, a reporter in the Washington bureau of the *Wall Street Journal*. You can follow her coverage of the White House and national politics and her particular focus in recent years on campaign finance and money. We are delighted to have her join us today.

On Jeanne's right is Alan Gerber, who is a professor of political science at Yale University. Alan is the coauthor, with Don Green, of an important Brookings book, *Get Out The Vote*, a book that if you don't have, you should. It's available in the Brookings bookstore, and Alan will be available after our session to autograph a few if some of you happen to purchase it. It is a statement and summary of some fascinating experimental research that he, Don, Lynn, and others have been conducting on the efficacy of different mobilization activities.

We then move past Larry Bartels, my co-host and guru, who will shortly make an introductory presentation, to Lynn Vavreck. I actually got to know Lynn when she spent a year with Larry at Princeton some years ago when we worked on a task force on campaign reform. Lynn is an assistant professor of political science at UCLA who has done a lot of good systematic research on campaigns and elections from the perspective of this session. She has been actively involved in running a series of major field studies on efforts to increase turnout and will be sharing some of that experience with us today.

And then, finally, right next to me here is Michael McDonald, who teaches political science at George Mason University, but who is a visiting fellow at Brookings this year.

Michael, some years ago, with a colleague, published a very important article that demonstrated conclusively that we measure turnout the wrong way. We've gotten confused about the appropriate denominator in measuring turnout. He has straightened some of us out, but it isn't yet universal. He has now systematically tried to collect the appropriate data to calculate it right.

Michael will also be up with Warren Mitofsky on Election Eve, helping out with the exit polling operation and working to integrate surveys of early voters with exit polls of Election Day voters. Now, there is a challenge. We will all be watching with great interest.

Well, there you have it. You know the series. You know today's topic. We're going to try to help you and all of us understand turnout, to understand what's been going on with efforts with new registrants, to try to analyze the experience with

new voting to see if we can detect whether there's any partisan advantage in all of this and what it might portend for Election Day.

With that introduction, I now turn to Larry Bartels.

MR. BARTELS: Thanks, Tom. Thanks, again, to everybody at Brookings for your hospitality and to the Carnegie Corporation which is helping to fund this effort to promote public understanding of the American electoral process.

Now, all of you who have followed American politics over the years know that one of the greatest problems with American democracy is that turnout in elections has been declining substantially over the last 40 years. Well, not so much.

Here's the trend in turnout over the last half-century. This is turnout calculated as a percentage of the eligible population. As Tom just mentioned, Mike McDonald and Sam Popkin have done important work figuring out what the right denominator for this calculation is, and that makes some difference, which he'll talk about a little bit later. That's one of the points at issue, in terms of talking about the magnitude of the decline in turnout over time.

A second point that I want to draw to your attention is that everyone calculates this decline in turnout starting in 1960. Why is 1960 the magic year? Well, because it happens to be the year in which turnout was highest, but it isn't necessarily representative of a kind of Golden Age steady state in voter participation. Indeed, if you look at the beginning of the graph, in 1948, the turnout was substantially lower than it was in 1960 and a little bit lower than it is even in the most recent elections.

The third point that I want to call to your attention is that, to the extent there has been a systematic decline, the bulk of it occurred in a very short period of time between 1960 and 1972. If you look sort of from 1972 to the present, you see some

bumps and wiggles, but there's really no systematic trend up or down in turnout since 1972.

Now, that's not to say that low turnout isn't a problem. Obviously, our democracy would be healthier in a variety of ways if more people were going to the polls, but I think this issue about the magnitude and timing of the decline is important among other reasons for thinking about why it is that this might have happened. The standard kind of explanations that people provide for the decline in turnout are people were turned off from politics because of Watergate. Cable television now features these partisan food fights which discourage people from thinking about politics the way they used to.

We're awash in campaign spending and negative television ads, and those turn people off and demobilize them, discourage them from turning out in polls. All of those things happened, for the most part, after 1972, and so they can logically be a very compelling explanation for this decline in turnout which occurred mostly in the 1960s.

Nineteen seventy-two is also an important point because it was the point at which 18 to 20 year olds first became eligible to vote, and part of the decline that you see between 1968 to 1972 is due to this movement into the eligible electorate of a set of people who were relatively unlikely to actually turn out. Again, the particular problem of turning out the young is an issue that has gotten a lot of attention over time.

Here's the age profile of turnout going back to 1972 and averaging from 1972 through 2000. You see that there is a very low level of turnout, about 35 percent among those people that I just described, the 18 to 20 year olds. And then turnout increases quite substantially until people get to about 50 years of age and then plateaus, falls off a little bit at the very end among people who are older than 75 years old. But

there's been a lot of attention directed to this problem of low turnout among young people. And, again, a lot of explanations that have to do with particular aspects of contemporary American culture that might make young people less interested than they used to be in electoral politics.

You can get some historical perspective on this issue by looking at the age profile of turnout in the period before 1972. The national election studies go back to the early 1950s, and so we can get a pretty good sense of what turnout rates have been in the early period and compare them to the present. You see one big difference between the two lines is that, in the earlier period, we didn't have that first lowest turnout category of 18 to 20 year olds. Their turnout was zero in that period because they were eligible to vote.

But then, if you look at the pattern the rest of the way through, you see that it really is quite similar in the contemporary period to what it was in the 1950s and '60s. And to the extent that turnout is lower among younger people than it is among middle-aged people, that's something that's been true all through this period. It's not again a particular symptom of some problem with contemporary political culture. And to the extent that we understand these patterns, they seem to have a lot to do with lifestyle characteristics, the fact that young people aren't settled, they often don't get married, they may not have regular jobs. All of those things are factors that contribute to lower turnout in all age groups, but particularly among the young.

Another point about this declining turnout over the half-century, to the extent that it has declined, is that it seems to me to have obscured some other important trends in the composition of the electorate that we might care about from the point of view of democracy. And I've given you some indication of that in this table which looks

at the, first of all, in the top line, the overall decline in turnout from the 1950s and '60s, which is kind of the high point in turnout, to the three most recent presidential elections. You see that overall turnout has declined some, and that's something that you might be concerned about.

But if you look at the turnout gap, in particular social groups, you'll see that the disparity in turnout between men and women has declined substantially by about three-quarters over this period. The gap in turnout between whites in the South and the rest of the country has declined substantially. The gap in turnout between blacks and whites has declined hugely from more than 30 percent in the 1950s to less than 10 percent in the most recent period.

Now, these disparities on the far right are still things that we ought to be concerned about. I think we also ought to take a moment to notice that those disparities are much less substantial in the current period than they were in what people sometimes I think mistakenly think of as the good old days when turnout was somewhat higher than it is now.

Not all social inequalities have decreased over time. One of the other ones that I want to show you that I think is particularly important is the disparity in turnout by income level. Here, I'm showing the proportion of turnout in the upper, middle and lower thirds of the income distribution in each presidential election going back to 1952. You see that there is a very consistent gap in turnout between the upper third of the income distribution and the lower third amounting to about 20 percentage points.

That doesn't seem to have narrowed or widened significantly over time, and so we still have an important problem with respect to the electoral representation of

people who are less well off, and therefore are likely to have distinctive political views and distinctive political interests.

One way to think about that is just to calculate, from these surveys going back to the 1950s, the partisan balance--this is the percentage point difference between the number of people who identify as Democrats and the number of people who identify as Republicans in each presidential year, comparing voters and nonvoters. So the solid line on the bottom is the pattern among voters. You see a substantial decline in the Democratic advantage over this period. That is substantially a function of what's been going on in the South since the 1950s.

You see a similar kind of decline among nonvoters, but again a pretty steady, consistent gap in partisan attachments between nonvoters and voters. The nonvoters are noticeably more Democratic in their partisan loyalties than the voters are. And so by the implication, if turnout somehow increased, if we could imagine getting all of these people into the electorate, that would have some important consequence from the point of view of the partisan balance in the country as a whole and, by extension, important implications for the distribution of opinions on a variety of political issues on which people who are less well off differ from people who are better off in terms of income.

And so, again, this is a reason why we might be concerned not only about the low level of turnout in American politics, generally, but also about the transformative potential of the efforts that we have been seeing, especially in the current election cycle, to boost turnout, get people registered and get them to the polls, which is what we're going to be talking about this morning.

MR. MANN: Thanks.

Sean or someone, I believe, is going to move our equipment out of the way, and magically this background will disappear, the lights will come on, and our set will be transformed. You'll think you're on "Hardball" or something, but I promise you, you are not.

Just a couple points to underscore, if I may, from Larry's presentation, because they are recurring questions that come up in the commentary on the campaigns that have arisen in our previous seminars.

Larry noted that the disparity in turnout has declined among many social groups, but not among income groups, that there still is a rather substantial group there. You will see most recently Ron Brownstein's piece in the L.A. Times of a couple of days ago of their latest point, again, making the point that income is not as strongly related to voting as other factors are and as it once was. Yet, Larry presented information that, in fact, by some measures, it's more pronounced since the 1950s. It is true cultural issues have emerged to complicate, if you will, the portrait of Democratic and Republican voters, but by Larry's figures, now, for both voting preference and for turnout rates, there remains substantial differences.

Secondly, some scholars have argued that nonvoters in election years think very much like voters, and therefore if you had universal voting, it wouldn't ordinarily alter the outcome of elections. Larry's suggested a real partisan difference and, given the partisan voting patterns, one might think it's worth reconsidering that conclusion.

Anyways. That's something. If it stirs your interest--Alan, did you want to say something about that?

MR. GERBER: Just very briefly because I think your point is a really good one and, in many ways, I was very impressed by the point that Larry made regarding the composition of the electorate being one of his main focuses. The level of participation is important, but also the representativeness of the electorate is very important.

In the charts that Larry showed, he demonstrated that there was a difference in the average partisanship of the nonvoters and the average partisanship of the voters. When you look at the issue of mobilization, as you were suggesting, more mobilization would presumably reduce the inequalities in the electorate, but that would be true if it was the case--it would certainly be true if it was the case that the marginal additional person contributed to the electorate by the mobilization was characterized by the average nonvoter. But it is by no means clear I think that the marginal nonvoter is the same as the average nonvoter.

In some of the experimental studies that I've done, we looked at the marginal effects of a mobilization effort as a function of previous vote history. And in the canvassing experiments I'm familiar with, I have a number of more closer to the top of my head than all the other numbers, but I believe that there was twice the mobilization effect on those people who had a record of previous participation in elections, which implies that the marginal voter that's stimulated by high mobilization efforts may not really be the average nonvoter, in which case the benefits of mobilization might really not be as large as you might think in rectifying any imbalances that you would observe in the electorate.

MR. BARTELS: In the current environment, obviously, both parties are doing a lot to try and mobilize people, and which of them is more successful is certainly going to affect that. It will have a bearing.

MR. MANN: Very interesting.

I'd like to turn to Mike McDonald and ask him just to elaborate on the point made by Larry about the appropriate measure of turnout—why we seem to have gotten it wrong and how we think we now have it right and what the implications of that are.

MR. McDONALD: So this will be from the stapled handout that was given to you--your textbook for this forum.

And Larry very well described what's going on with the overall trends in turnout, but I wanted to just point out--because some people may have, this may be the first time that they've seen this information--why it's so important to contrast using the voting age population, which is the denominator that many people have used up until 2000 as the correct way of calculating turnout rates versus using something like the eligible population.

If you look at Figure 1 on that handout, you'll see that from 1972 through 2000 presidential elections using the voting eligible population or the voting age population as the denominator. What is the voting age population? If you go to the Census Bureau, it's something that the Census Bureau used to regularly report prior to an election so that we could get estimates of turnout, not just nationally, but in the States, and use this information.

They would produce a sex, age, race distribution so that pollsters could weight their surveys properly. And their documentation is very explicit. It says that this

is everybody age 18 and older living inside the United States. And it excludes people like overseas citizens, and it includes people who aren't eligible to vote. The definition was sitting there for everybody to look at, but nobody really bothered to say, well, what might be the consequence of looking at those eligible versus those who are just age 18 and older.

Well, it turns out, since 1972, we have seen a flood of noncitizens come into the United States, and the calculation then of voting age population gradually became skewed as to a perception of what's going on in terms of turnout. And in 1972, we were looking at about 1.5 percent of the voting age population was not a citizen. By today, we're looking at almost 8 percent of the voting age population. And that 8 percent is not evenly distributed throughout the United States. It should come as no big surprise that most of it's located in California and other large metropolitan areas, other states. And if you look at California, for example, nearly 20 percent of its voting age population is ineligible to vote either because of the noncitizen question or the other trend that we've seen upwards from the 1980s, which is the number of ineligible felons, according to state law. Not all states have the same laws.

So you can see there's a growing disparity between the two. People were relying on the voting age population without really thinking about what the consequences were and just got so out of whack that eventually making the correction seemed like the right thing to do and now the Census Bureau reports--at last a step in the right direction--they report the citizen voting age population in their reports, and other people at least taking that up and, hopefully, in the long run, will get them to do all of the adjustments in order to get a real grasp on what the turnout is within the U.S. and within states.

If you look at 2004, these are the estimates that I have for this current election. We have 221 million voting age. Subtract off about 17.5 million noncitizens, another 3.2 million ineligible felons. You add back in an estimate of overseas eligible, which really this is a number I'm pulling out of the air, to tell you the truth, because the Census Bureau doesn't do a census of people who are living overseas. So this is gleaned from reports from embassies and deployment reports from the military. But in any case, so 3.3 million there. You have to add them back in. They're eligible to vote, and we know that they are casting absentee ballots right now. And then if you look, you get 203.8 million eligible.

Now, why would this be so important in terms of this current election? If you look on the next page--this comes from Pew--and their survey in June asked about interest in the campaign. And we know that the measures of interest are up in this election and, sure enough, it's showing up in the Pew numbers, and we're a little bit below 1992. Maybe we're about 1992. And if you use those, just a trend line from the voting age population, and then we're going to bump up the current participation to 1992, you would have a turnout rate somewhere between 50 and 55 percent, if you were just using voting age. But if you were using the eligible population, you would have a trend line that's pretty much flat since '72, and then you would say, well, perhaps you'd predict the turnout was going to be around 60 percent or so. And if you do believe that, then you would have approximately 122 million people vote in this election. That would be an all-time record, in terms of total number of people who have voted. The largest number was in 2000, where we had 105 million people vote. So this would be quite a remarkable election, in terms of just sheer numbers. It would also be a nice election, since we would have turnout levels that were equal to '92 and that golden age of voting

in the 1950s, ending in 1960. So this just shows that if you have an interesting election, then people will vote. They will go to the polls. There is nothing wrong, necessarily, with American democracy that a little competition and interest can't cure, in one way or another.

Now, when I initially looked at these sorts of levels of interest, I thought, well, we're looking at a 1992 sort of turnout year. So 60 percent seems like a good target number. But then I started looking further at voter registration numbers, and I was surprised to see that--well, maybe not so surprised--that in these battleground states, and we've seen all sorts of news reports about this, how registration is up, and that is the big news story right now. Registration is up. We know that these mobilization efforts are underway in these battleground states.

But when you start looking at the states that aren't battleground states, you'll find that, on the whole, registration is actually going down in those states. And so, whatever is going on, in terms of mobilization and registering people to vote in the battleground states, that sort of intensity is not present in the nonbattleground states, unless there's an interesting Senate or governors election within the state. And so the rolls, at least the implication is, that the registration rolls are not being replenished as fast as they are being purged of the people who are no longer living at their residence.

So, taking that, I said, well, perhaps we're actually looking at a little bit less turnout because the way in which the electoral college is going to structure turnout across the states, sure it will be up in the battleground states, but we really don't know what's going to happen in these nonbattleground states. Will people vote? Will they stay at home? Will they cast a ceremonial vote for president? We'll have to see what

happens on election day to see if that interest across the United States permeates over into the nonbattleground states.

But there are some indications, if you look at the Figure 3, absentee balloting. And as Tom mentioned, I'm going to be at the exit poll service helping with calling the election. And we have estimates of the percent of absentee ballots or early ballots that are going to be cast within the states, and so I have provided that for you. And one interesting state, of course, is Oregon, which does all of their balloting by mail. And so they've been balloting for a while. And I've given you some figures here about what's going on in Oregon. I've actually got updated numbers that I just got right before I came down here.

In this current year, there are 962,000 people who have already mailed in their ballot as of Wednesday in Oregon. So we're almost to a million people. The similar Wednesday before the election in 2000, 613,000 people had turned in their ballots at this point. So we are running 14 percentage points higher, in terms of mail-in ballots in Oregon than over 2000. Now, the question is are these just people who are turning in their ballots earlier because they're afraid that something might be wrong with the way in which the ballots will be counted or is this a real trend up in terms of turnout? If it is, and we maintain this pattern in Oregon, this is much higher than I would have predicted in Oregon. We could be pushing close to 80-percent eligible turnout in the State of Oregon. That would be just a phenomenal turnout for a state.

And if that's happening in other battleground states, maybe we're seeing what I would have thought was the 1992 election, we're going to be above 1992 sort of turnout in these battleground states.

If you look at Florida, another state, we have already a million and a half people as of Tuesday had cast a ballot in Florida, and Nevada, which also reports this early number, we have about 230,000. So we're already pushing up to nearly three million people just among these three states. And there, as you can see, Washington, New Mexico, Nevada--well, we got that one--Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Tennessee, California all have substantial numbers of early balloting. So, literally, millions of people have already cast a ballot, and we're going to just have to see how many of those people are just trying to circumvent election day hangups that might happen at the polls or is this really a trend, which I think it is, of higher turnout in this election.

MR. MANN: Thank you very much, Mike. A couple of points of clarification, just so all of us can have this in mind Election Night and afterward: is it fair to say that the benchmarks for turnout would be roughly 60 percent in 1992 and just a bit under 55 percent in 2000 (when computed with the noncitizens out) and therefore, what we ought to be looking for is the movement from 2000 and whether it reaches the 1992 level or is above? Right now, you are seeing the possibility of a 5-percentage point increase—a possibility—and it could go higher, depending, in part, on whether voters in non-battleground states are stimulated to vote. Would that be a fair statement?

MR. McDONALD: I think that's a very accurate description.

MR. MANN: Because we're trying to keep in mind the measures and the baseline.

The other thing I wanted to bring up is that oftentimes you'll find Secretaries of State, like in Oregon, reporting turnout rates that are based on the turnout among registered voters as opposed to the turnout among eligible voters, and that always leads to huge confusion on Election Day and Election Night. You will hear people

saying, oh, we're on our way to 75-percent turnout, and people will compare that to the 50- or 55-percent turnout. So, what do we know—and this is a more general comment—about the percent of registered voters who vote over time? Have we compiled that systematically over the years? It's complicated by the fact that we have this handful of states that don't require registration or have same-day registration.

Michael, do you have any numbers for us on that?

MR. McDONALD: Yes, it would be--a very bad way to calculate turnout rates is to use registration within the state because there is this phenomenon of deadwood, which I alluded to earlier, in terms of purging, which are people who have moved from their address, but they remain on the rolls within that county, that local county that maintains the registration roll there.

And in 2002, you could take a look at the percent of those, of registrations, as a percent of those eligible, and compare it to the current population survey, which is a big survey that the Census Bureau does for labor statistics, and they ask additional participation questions. In an election year, they ask a registration question. It was 82 percent of registrants of the eligibles, if you look at just total number of registrants of eligibles. But when they ask this question of people--are you registered to vote--only 68 percent of the people said they were registered to vote.

So, somehow, and it would be remarkable if people were lying in the direction that they weren't registered because we know that people tend to overreport the fact that they voted. I mean, we see that on like the National Election Study, which Larry was showing you earlier some statistics from, people, about 10 percent or so more, say they voted more than the eligible voters.

All indications are that the registration within the state is going to be a very, very poor denominator for calculating turnout rates. We have no idea how purging practices within the state have varied over time. We have no idea how one state compares to another in terms of the way in which they keep their rolls updated properly, and so it would lead to very misleading conclusions about turnout.

MR. MANN: A warning to everyone. Don't listen to or carry in your stories any reports about turnout based on the proportion of those registered because it's really quite inaccurate.

Mike has up on the Brookings website the best estimates of the voting-eligible population by state. You can use those as the denominators, and as the votes come in, you can calculate that and then compare it. I think you have turnout rates by state from previous elections. If so, that's a much better gauge of turnout. This is just a consumer advisory for election night.

MR. BARTELS: Can I ask a question about that?

MR. MANN: Please.

MR. BARTELS: Do you have any idea whether these numbers that we're going to get for turnout reported on election night include the people who have already voted before the election?

MR. McDONALD: That's a real problem, yes, that we're very worried about. And if you look historically, it's going to vary by states. Some states are very good about reporting all of their numbers very promptly on election night. Other states are not as good because, well, some states, like Florida, you can return your ballot on election day for absentee, and those, of course, will be counted as they come in, in the following weeks. Other states, like say Virginia, you have to have your absentee ballot

in by election day. So the number of ballots that are going to be counted and are still outstanding on election night, are going to vary by state. It's something that we really have to worry about. And, of course, also looming above all of this is this whole issue about provisional ballots and how we're going to count them and all of that. So be wary. If we're close within a state, and there's still enough outstanding ballots, we're likely not to call that state.

MR. BARTELS: So, if I'm going to wait until Wednesday to try and figure out who won, I should wait until January to try and figure out how many people actually voted.

MR. MANN: Actually voted.

MR. McDONALD: Yes, that's very good.

MR. MANN: Larry, I was in Ohio, and the state law there—I believe this is true—Jeanne, correct me if I'm wrong—said that provisional ballots are not to be counted until 12 days after the election; is that right?

MS. CUMMINGS: Ten.

MR. MANN: Ten days after the election—the provisional ballots. Now, presumably, they can do some checking about their eligibility ahead of time and put them in a pile for those eligible to be counted. But they're not counted until then, and you can't use just the number of provisional ballots that have been cast because some of those will be deemed ineligible. God, Larry, why'd you have to bring that up?

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: You can see the complications that develop in trying to get a handle on this with early voting.

Lynn?

MS. VAVRECK: I just wanted to ask you guys, when you're thinking about calling the election, it just says it's close. What's close?

MR. McDONALD: If it's enough with outside--what we do is we have these sample precincts, and we look at the behavior within the sample precincts, and if it is enough in one way or another, we'll probably call the election. But if we're uncertain enough, and there are enough outstanding ballots out there that our models can't predict, with a reasonable degree of certainty who is going to win the election, we are just going to back off and not call it.

My real hope for our democracy this time around is that we don't have this problem, that we have a decisive enough election that we know who the winner is, but of course it is a possibility that we won't know until a few days afterwards who actually won the decisive state in 2004.

MR. MANN: We all long for a decisive result, if only to keep all those lawyers that have been deployed in precincts in battleground states around the country in restaurants having lunch and dinner and not doing other things.

Alan, did you want to say something?

MR. GERBER: Just quickly, on the subject of the registration rates and registration rolls, and giving assignments and instructions to journalists and the media, one of the interesting things that someone might want to do, if you have a great intern who is good with statistical analysis, is a few months after the elections, the voter rolls are updated, and you can see all of the folks who are the new registrants prior to this election.

So, on the state voter rolls, you can see the date of registration, and it would be a very interesting thing to see what percentage of all of the new registrants that

had been produced in the battleground states actually showed up compared to previous elections, and that will all be available because whether or not an individual voted and when they registered is, in quite a few states, part of the public record, and so you could go back and see whether or not, during that period of time, when there was a lot of reporting of all of the registration activity, that did, in fact, translate into roughly comparable or rather few additional voters.

MR. MANN: But, Alan, what's with this two months? I mean, we want two days. We'll wait two days. What's this two months, though?

MR. GERBER: I would say petition your Secretary of States.

MS. VAVRECK: In may states, it takes longer than two months, too. It could be a year.

MR. MANN: To get it earlier.

MR. GERBER: This spring would be a good time to expect the--

MR. MANN: Listen, I'd like to change the focus now--

MS. CUMMINGS: Before we do the demographics.

MR. MANN: Go ahead, please.

MS. CUMMINGS: Just before we move away from some of the great demographic material that Larry, and Michael and Alan have provided, one thing that is interesting to look at in the big picture is the strategic plan of the two parties and how it fits into the demographics that they have outlined.

The Republican strategy is focused very much on getting out every Republican voter, with an assumption being that most Republicans who are going to vote probably are registered. They have had a strong registration drive, but it's been less targeted than the Democratic drive, and it's been--they went out for three years

registering voters, and they set up tables at events and that sort of thing. So it just doesn't have the same kind of targeted nature that the Democrats have. So their idea is to get every Republican out there to vote.

The Democrats have a different strategy. Their theory is that they need to grow their base, that more Democrats are not registered, as your demographics show, that they are the more marginal voters, as your demographics indicate. And so their idea is to broaden their registration base and, most importantly, to get out the marginal voters that may vote Democratic. And that's an important aspect of the Democratic strategy that's been overlooked. Because if, as Alan says, canvassing of a marginal voter has a greater effect, then the Democrats may, in fact, have more success there than dealing with a first-time voter who may or may not have just been registered by some kid on the street, and they did it, but they may not show up.

So they have very different strategic views on how they want to get out the vote this year that fits into the demographics that you all are looking at today.

MR. MANN: That's a very interesting observation. Could we generalize from the evidence we have and the strategic position of the parties to say that if turnout moves to a level of 1992 or exceeds it, it will work to the advantage of Democrats? What can we say about that?

MR. McDONALD: You know, that breaking point is to, as to when it tilts over into the Democrats favor, we really don't know what that number is, but I will say this, that these early voting numbers that we're seeing have got to be giving Karl Rove some heartburn because these are not good numbers for Republicans to see this many people voting. Now, it could be, like I said, that just everybody is voting early, and we won't actually see a large up-tick on voting on election day, but if this trend

holds, we are definitely going to be tipping into some of these people who don't usually vote, and we'll have to see. I mean, are these, as Alan was talking about earlier, are these going to be people that are different in composition than your true nonvoter, but I think it's got to be good news for the Democrats at this point.

MR. MANN: Jeanne, do we know if Republicans are working as aggressively at early voting opportunities as Democrats?

MS. CUMMINGS: They are, and they have a sophisticated operation. They've been planning for this for four years. In 2000, it became clear, after the election, that the Democrats snuck up on the Republicans. In a sense, Karl Rove never saw the long lines coming in Florida and St. Louis. Anecdotally, I've been told about a call from the Bush-Cheney operation to one of the business groups in town, saying, what are you all doing, because that was an arm of their get out the vote. And they cheerfully responded that they were doing everything that they planned, and the answer was, "Where the hell are your people?"

So there was a great concern, in 2000, that they had been asleep at the turnout effort. They were not going to let that happen to them again. They started in 2001 with a special election in Virginia to test out programs, basically, stealing pages from labor's book, to look at how many phone calls you can make to a voter, how much literature can you send to stimulate them to go out and vote? They also found out when you've gone too far, and the voter gets angry and doesn't vote.

So they have been practicing this. In 2002, they had a very good operation and, in fact, the Democrats were caught in some places in 20002 with the machine that came out.

Now, what does it look like? It looks a lot like the labor operation.

There's phone banking. It's been followed up with literature, followed up with another telephone call. Both parties are very sophisticated in having in computers the names of every voter they're targeting, and then they can go check to see if that person has voted.

And then the Republicans, distinct from the Democrats, end with rallies with the president that were very effective in 2002. In Georgia, for instance, he went down and did a very big rally in Marietta. It's not an open rally. It's an activists rally-- strictly activists. They bring them all in, pack them in a stadium. The president got them all revved up. They walked out the door, and Ralph Reed drove every one of them onto a bus and drove them right out into the neighborhoods, and they canvassed the neighborhoods. They did this in several states. It was very effective. The turnout in those areas was very high. We'll probably see them try to roll out, if not nationwide, certainly to the 18 battleground states, something similar. You'll probably watch the president's schedule in those last couple of days and identify the activist-rallying meetings, when then they're going to go out and do the finally sweeps of the neighborhoods.

MR. MANN: Fascinating reports, if you read this morning, that at some of the concerts—the Springsteen concerts—what they're doing is, after the concert, they're trying to take concert voters together to early voting places. It reminds one of the 19th-century political party rallies, when the way you mobilized the vote was to have a parade for a party, and you brought everyone along, gave them the partisan ballot (before the Australian ballot) to drop in the box, and that's how you increased turnout. It's deja vu all over again, huh? It's really quite amazing.

Alan?

MR. GERBER: Just a quick question, and I think I know now why everyone listens so carefully, Michael, when you talk about voter turnout because I think this is all just fascinating. I was struck by the mail-in balloting numbers that you have here. Obviously, there's a very large increase that you're showing here underneath Figure 3. I was just wondering whether or not you have any evidence about mail-in balloting during municipal elections and whether this trend is becoming more familiar with the technology of mail-in balloting, as opposed to indicating a special level of interest in this presidential election.

MR. McDONALD: Yes, well, I haven't done those studies, but the Secretary of State of Oregon has looked at what are the persisting effects of mail-in balloting. It seems that it does have a slight effect of increasing turnout in a national election, like a presidential election, but it has a very large effect in the municipal and local elections that are going on. They've seen very high increases in voter turnout in those elections. I guess, essentially, you send somebody a ballot, they feel obligated to turn it back in. So that's where they're seeing the real big effect is at the local level.

MR. MANN: But they're operating from a very low base of turnout, so it makes a difference. But part of Alan's question is: is there a learning effect over time such that each election year, a larger percentage of voters are casting their ballots early?

MR. McDONALD: I would say we really don't have a lot of data to take from that. But what's great, and this is something that you can look at--you know, political scientists always love data--the Secretary of State actually has all of the data there. They make it available in an Excel spreadsheet. You can get all of the previous mail-in balloting for the state, yes.

MR. MANN: Listen, I'd like to turn our attention to changes in turnout. Presumably, if turnout increases this year, it will be a function, if you will accept my conceptualization, of increased motivation, which is caused by events in the broader political environment, independent of any direct effort; that is to say, a more competitive election, big issues, higher stakes, grievance, anger, satisfaction, whatever, and mobilization efforts underway by various groups.

I'd be interested in whether our participants here have any sense of the rough magnitude of importance, in looking not at explaining who votes and who doesn't, but increments of, if you will, changes in turnout. Is more of it just naturally a consequence of the war in Iraq, the economy, the memories of November 2000, and the perception of a high-stakes, close election, or is more of it a matter of mobilization? That's one thing that you might, if you'd care to offer any reflections or evidence on, that would be even better, given the theme of our seminars.

The second is to get us into the mobilization activities. Do we know if partisan efforts are more successful than nonpartisan efforts? Which types of activities seem to be most influential? That's what I'd like to focus our conversation on here over the next few minutes. And whoever would like to jump in—Lynn, would you or maybe Alan--

MS. VAVRECK: Alan, you should probably start.

MR. MANN: --like to begin? Wherever.

MS. VAVRECK: Start on the ground, and then we'll go to the air.

[Laughter.]

MR. GERBER: Well, I've done with Don Green, and in addition there have been a number of other studies done by a variety of authors, I have done a number

of studies in which we have done experiments designed to explore some of the questions that Tom raised. The basic research design that we used in these studies was to create control groups and treatment groups, sometimes to look at nonpartisan efforts in conjunction with nonpartisan groups, sometimes working with campaigns, and the campaigns have their various activities. And sometimes it was mailing, sometimes it was door-to-door canvassing, sometimes it was phone calls, and various types of phone calls were also explored, ranging from long, conversational phone calls that had a very personal touch made by volunteers or commercial phone banks to robo calls, using celebrities.

And the basic finding of this research is that the face-to-face canvassing efforts, door-to-door door knocks are dramatically more effective than the most impersonal contact methods. So we found that celebrity robo calls had no discernible impact on turnout. And by discernible impact, this is a statistical thing, it was I think literally a zero effect, in some cases, a negative effect that we don't interpret as an actual, you know, darnit, I'm not voting--

MR. MANN: Depending on the celebrity.

MR. GERBER: Right.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: We'll talk about that later.

MR. GERBER: But we're interpreting it as a zero and a nonstatistically positive effect. And you can get a maybe 3- or 4-percent increase in turnout from a conversational call from a volunteer. These were in elections ranging from relatively low levels of competitiveness to moderate levels of competitiveness. In contrast, a door knock, a face-to-face visit with a canvasser, was worth somewhere between 7 and

12 percentage points increase. So it's dramatically more effective to have that kind of personal contact.

This research was going on at universities starting in 1998. Unbeknownst to us, and roughly at the same time, I think the AFL was doing this work and coming the similar conclusions. I remember meeting with Steve Rosenthal, it must have been sometime in 1999 or maybe that was it, and hearing about some of the things that the AFL was doing research on, and their results were quite similar to what we were finding.

And then, again, in terms of what the parties are up to, Jeanne was talking about, I believe, the 72-Hour Task Force that the Republicans put together following the 2000 election, where they observed that they underperformed the last polls in a number of states. They were very concerned that this meant that they were getting beaten badly in the ground game by the Democrats. So they did a lot of work trying to figure out how to mobilize their voters. And they also came up with roughly similar findings, that is, these personal approaches are much more effective than the impersonal approaches.

And so I think that these lessons have been learned and incorporated into what's going on in 2004. And at least from the--I don't know if it's the interest side or the mobilization side--I would expect that a fairly large percentage of the mobilization activities are going to be devoted to efficacious tactics because both the Democrats and-- Steve Rosenthal is now running ACT. I don't think he forgot the lessons that he learned at the AFL. And I know the Republicans are also very impressed with what they did in 2002, and they've been pushing the research that came out of their task force very hard. And so I expect to see a lot of doors get knocked on and a lot of the personal kinds of approaches, and I think that's a result of figuring out what works best.

MR. MANN: Alan, personal contact clearly makes a difference. How much is the trust, from a trusted authority, relevant here, I mean, a virtual stranger coming to your door, with no connection to your workplace or your community (it might be somebody who has been hired, it might be a volunteer who has come in from another state)? Do we know anything about the trusted authority part of this?

MR. GERBER: That's a good question. The first point is that, in the studies that I've described, not entirely, but for the most part, you are talking not about trusted authorities, but in the New Haven experiment from 1998, which was the first of these, it was Yale University graduate--

[Tape change.]

MR. GERBER: So it wasn't community leaders or familiar faces.

The conditions of the subsequent replication studies have ranged from people from the community and community organization groups to, I believe, I believe they've also included just "paid volunteers."

[Laughter.]

MR. GERBER: And so I think that it would stand to reason that it would be more effective if it was coming from your friend and neighbor, but the numbers that I'm looking at describing should then be viewed as a minimum estimate, in some sense. There is some evidence of interactions between canvasser and canvasser effectiveness from studies by, I believe, studies by Melissa Michaelson, where she found that a match between canvasser ethnicity and canvasee ethnicity was important when attempting to mobilize Latino voters.

MR. MANN: Do we know if unions have been more successful because of the fact that they are contacting people who are part of the same organization? And

we know that's a huge part of the operation. I've read some statistics—Jeanne, check me on this—that some unions have tripled their GOTV budgets in this cycle.

MS. CUMMINGS: Certainly, they're all guns blazing. The interesting thing with the unions is, to build on what Alan was saying, when Rosenthal first tried this conversation with members after 1994 and '96, when the unions were not big on TV and didn't get anything for it, and so then he scaled back, tried a new approach. And what he found was that the union members didn't like them saying you've got to go vote for Al Gore or you've got to go vote for Bill Clinton. The union members wanted to talk about issues that were important to them so it became more of a nonpartisan conversation, and they did trust their union leaders.

And in some states, the percentage of union vote rose to a point where it exceeded the percentage of union population. So they were completely overperforming in their communities, and he has taken all of those things onto the road. And even though he now is over at America Coming Together, the AFL-CIO has his former assistant running their show, and they have invested very heavily, and they are very active in getting out their vote.

MR. MANN: Lynn?

MS. VAVRECK: I'll pick up on the TV reference there.

So, in the same spirit of the field experiment that Alan talked about with canvassing, and leafleting and phone calls, my role in this project has been to carry that field experimentation into television. So advertising is ubiquitous in presidential campaigns, and lots of people have studied the effectiveness of partisan advertising on preferences and things like this, and turnout, the tone of the advertising and how that

affected turnout. I see David McAlvey [ph] is out in the audience, and David has looked at the role of special money or special interest money.

But what we wanted to do is look at the efforts that groups make to show advertisements in order to increase participation. And we started with cable television because cable television is much more affordable than broadcast television, and also able systems are very small geographic units. Unlike media markets, the DMAs that we're all familiar with, a single media market could have 100, even more, cable systems within it. So that gave us the opportunity to select states that were having elections in particular years and make a listing of all of the cable systems and then randomly assign some to treatment and some to control groups and purchase advertising time in the treatment markets.

We have done this now in several elections--in 2003, general elections for statewide races in four states, in 2004 primary elections in Missouri, and we are in the field right now in 17 states with advertisements for the general election, 17 nonbattleground states. We really tried to select areas that weren't going to be saturated by all of these other kinds of GOTV efforts.

We tried to vary the context of the experiments. In some cases, we were in areas that were having very contested statewide races. In other states, we were in areas where it was a sleeper--you know, trying to get at the effect of that marginal ad, one more GOTV ad, you know, how does that affect turnout? This is still very much a work in progress, and the data are not yet complete, even for the 2003 general elections, although we have most of that in now. Alan is laughing at me because we had this conversation yesterday. The defined variable is coming. We get the defined variable, which is turnout, we get from the Secretaries of State's offices, and they can be very

slow in getting those lists updated. So we now have 2003, and we're ready to really dig into that.

But it looks like advertising has less of an effect than canvassing, leafleting or I should say than canvassing. We're getting results in most of the states that are in the 1-percentage-point range. However, in New Jersey, we have these negative results, which again we don't want to interpret as negative. It's zero. But when we put them all together, that negative result brings the average effect down.

So what is the real effect of a GOTV ad? We show it a week before the election multiple times on popular channels, USA, TNT, Lifetime, ESPN, MTV, so a reasonable campaign of advertising, maybe a percentage point, maybe a little less. So that sounds like a very small number. And, I'm sorry, Larry, it is a very small number?

[Laughter.]

MR. BARTELS: No, no. I just wanted to ask what is this 1 percent of? Is the overall turnout increasing 1 percent or it's an estimate that 1 percent of the people who saw the spot responded to?

MS. VAVRECK: I'm sorry. It's the difference between the treatment and control group, in terms of the turnout rate. So more people in the areas that we've treated turn out to vote than in the areas we haven't treated. Where was I going with this? A very small number, yes. One percent sounds like a very small number, and there is reason to believe that it could be a reasonable assessment of the effect. Alan's and Don and Alan's work show that these impersonal contacts don't work as well as when someone who is like you knocks on your door and has a conversation with you. Television is certainly an impersonal medium. So maybe that's reasonable that we would expect it not to have the kind of effect that canvassing would have.

On the other hand, we are reaching many, many, many more people with television advertisements than you could ever reach canvassing. The beauty of canvassing is it works. The difficulty with canvassing is that it's expensive, and it's hard. It's labor intensive. Television advertising, the first experiment we did in the four states involved 3.8 million voters. That's a lot of people. A 1-percent increase, when you're talking about reaching that many people, puts it on par with the kinds of effects you get from canvassing at an 8-percentage-point increase level.

So still a work in progress. Stay tuned. Pardon the pun.

MR. MANN: Thank you. Thank you.

I am soon going to turn to you, so prepare your questions. We'll have a mike. I'd like to reiterate a broad point and just collect any comments or ruminations or responses our panelists might have. I'd like to take you back to motivation versus mobilization. What evidence do we have from past elections or the current one that gives us some sense of the orders of magnitude of those two areas: motivation and mobilization?

Secondly, is partisan mobilization inherently more productive than nonpartisan? I ask because we know partisanship to be a strong motivator in general to participate in politics. There are a lot of nonpartisan efforts underway this year, especially among young people; do we have any sense of their relative impact?

I think the one area we resolved is that personal contact, by far, is the most efficacious form. I just wonder, in your future studies, whether you will build in rock concerts and mass movements to early voting places and whether that will count as a form of personal contact?

MR. : Alan is learning to play the guitar, actually.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: So?

MR. : I think it's hard to say anything very definitive about this issue of the relative importance of climate factors producing high interest and specific efforts to mobilize. But I think an important point here is that it's hard to imagine that there isn't a strong interaction between those things, that it's easier for a mobilizing effort to work in a situation where people see, from the general environment, that the stakes are high and that the contest is going to be close.

The other kind of juxtaposition that I think is quite interesting is that these increased efforts on the part of the parties especially to mobilize people are a product of a kind of coming together of two different factors:

One is people suddenly having caught onto this very long-term increase in the level of partisanship and partisan polarization in the electorate and suddenly saying to themselves, "Maybe we've gone as far as we can to try and persuade people who are undecided, and we ought to work harder at turning out the people that we already know are likely to be in our camp." That's a kind of change in the electorate over a 30-year period, but it's one that's attracted a lot more attention recently than it had in the past.

But at the same time the attention that has been generated by these very high-quality academic studies that have demonstrated that these canvassing efforts really have an impact. It's not a new idea to study mobilization efforts in this way. The first field experiments in political science in the 1920s were focused on this issue, but the quantity, and quality and visibility of the recent work I think has really attracted

attention among people who have lots of resources to devote to this and convince them that this is a productive way to go.

MR. MANN: Anybody else weigh in on these—Lynn?

MS. VAVRECK: I was thinking the other day about this election, and all of the groups that are spending money canvassing and mobilizing. And someone said to me, you know, Alan and Don, they've started this groundswell of canvassing. And I thought to myself, wow. Have Alan and Don started this groundswell of canvassing?

And I said the election is really this "perfect storm." It's the closeness of 2000. It's the electoral votes versus the popular vote in 2000. It's the war in Iraq. It's the soft money, the new role of soft money. Nobody talked about that. But could it be that a lot of that party money is now going to these groups? Like, what are they going to do with it? They can't advertise with it, right? So they're the ground campaign.

So it's all of these things that have changed at exactly the same time and all of these groups that are out there canvassing. And when the election is over, and there will be a higher turnout than there was in 2000--I think everybody is comfortable saying that--the groups are going to say we did it. We increased turnout. And political scientists are going to say, it's true. A close election means people will pay attention and vote. And so everybody who's got a dog in this fight is going to claim that their dog won.

And I think Larry is right. We don't have the number of elections with the kind of data we need to make sense of what kind of a contribution each of these things is making. And I also think Larry is right, that it's probably all interactive.

MR. MANN: Jeanne?

MS. CUMMINGS: I think she's right. We have a really crystal moment here where intensity and machine are meeting one another. Long-term analysis may tell us a lot of important things about this race. I have deadlines every day.

[Laughter.]

MS. CUMMINGS: And this race it may well be won on the margins, and that's where this is important. And so that, you know, intensity is important, but the machine is important if this turns out to be won on the margins because it will be the efforts to try to get it out that extra 50,000 people who didn't want to get up off their couch and to go out and vote.

If we come down to an election year where, God forbid, literally states are being won by 366 votes in New Mexico and 537 votes in Florida, I mean, if you think about it, it still boggles the mind that those were the margins in 2000. And so the idea that they can just get 20,000 people to go to the polls could create a huge difference.

And then one last thing, when you talk about the rock stars, one just observation is that what they have tried to do is a little bit different with the rock star thing. They got the celebrities, but they underlined it with a message--all the talk of Iraq, that's all about the rock star message. So they coupled the two, which was pretty clever on the Democrats' part.

MR. MANN: Is there a negativity bias in participation? That is to say, are people more highly motivated to participate if they're mad about something than if they're pleased about something? What do we know about that?

MS. VAVRECK: I think that's interesting. I spent a lot of time looking at the public service announcements that groups make and have had lots of cooperation, I should say, from Rock the Vote, and Youth Vote Coalition, and the Ad Council, the

Federal Voters Assistance Project. But Rock the Vote really I think believes this, right? If you look at all of the PSAs that they run to engage young people in politics, a lot of it is get mad. I think one of their campaigns was actually called "Piss-off a Politician."

[Laughter.]

MS. VAVRECK: So they believe this.

The question about whether there's any evidence that that is a better motivator, I think we have no evidence on that.

MR. MANN: Do we have any more general political science—we've talked about a negativity bias, and if one, say, strongly disapproves of a political figure, it seems to have a sharper effect at times than approval on, say, vote choice. I don't know about the turnout and mobilization. Maybe it's an urban legend that I've picked up on, but if it's true, it would provide a Democratic advantage, clearly, this time around. But from the looks around my panel--

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: --it means there is no evidence. So, please, David, a mike is on its way.

QUESTIONER: First, a comment and then a question.

I think one of the unintended effects of the Gerber-Green work and what's happened thanks to Rosenthal, in this cycle, is voter information. It's the first presidential election since redistricting. And what we're finding in our research is that the canvassers, the people who are doing the mobilization, are not only informing them about here's how to register, here's how to vote, but where to vote, which I think will be very important. There would be many people who might show up to the wrong place

and probably won't as a result of the person-to-person phone and mail contacts that are part of this comprehensive program.

That leads to my question which has to do with efficacy, and the partisan agenda that's happening in Ohio, and Florida, and elsewhere with respect to the charges of fraud, the concerns about long lines, and the possible challenges in the voting place themselves about whether a person is going to be able to vote and whether that has a differential effect on different kinds of voters, that is, a very long line. Do we have any data on that from the experiments in New Haven and elsewhere? Will people go home?

I know the groups are planning on doing things to motivate people to stay in line, but should we, in fact, have a lot of turnout in a state like Ohio, which doesn't allow early voting, and therefore the effect we're talking about from Oregon and other states that do is all going to hit on Tuesday, what will that effect be, and is there an education/efficacy effect we ought to watch for?

MR. : Actually, there have been a couple of studies that have recently come out where people look at access to the polling place, which is kind of along the lines that your question is, and they have found that more parking spaces, a well-lighted polling place, a polling place that's easy to find, all of those sorts of things to increase voter turnout in those polling places versus polling places where you have to drive a long way to get to it. You can't find it and those sorts of things.

So my suspicion then would be that the longer the line, the less turnout, ironically, that you would have had without that line there.

MR. MANN: This really raises a whole broader set of issues that we haven't been able to deal with here, but there is this matter of moving from mobilization to voter intention to vote, to actually showing up at the polling place—the right polling

place—being on the rolls, being given a ballot, casting the ballot correctly, and having it counted and counted correctly. We learned, all of us electoral specialists learned in 2000 what we didn't know about a whole area of election administration, and it's just a huge area now.

And because the parties understand the stakes within certain counties, if not precincts, of high turnout versus low turnout, they are using state law, which allows, in many places, one to contest someone while in the line to create the opportunities for discouraging turnout and for others to increase turnout; it could get very nasty.

MR. : I have two observations:

One is that if you stop to think about the social engineering problem here, it is really quite impressive to have 100 or 120 million people turn up mostly on the same day and work through this process. So it's, in some sense, not surprising that there are problems.

The second observation is that all of the problems and their political consequences are compounded by the fact that we insist on having this complicated federal system administered in a zillion different ways in a zillion parts of the country and often by partisan elected officials who have a strong stake on one side or the other rather than by competent professional administrators as most civilized countries do.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: Yes?

QUESTIONER: I'm Ted Truman from across the street. I'm going to ask an economist question.

You, Tom, have said canvassing is more effective. Lynn said, but it's more expensive. So there are budget constraints in this process. So what is the

consensus on that point? You've got a marginal \$100,000. Would you put it into your advertising or would you put it into hiring volunteer canvassers?

MR. MANN: We have an answer for that question. Alan?

MR. GERBER: Well, I think I have sort of an answer to that question. I think two points.

I would still--I think Lynn was careful to characterize the media results as somewhat on the preliminary side.

MS. VAVRECK: Yes.

MR. GERBER: And I haven't checked in recently. At some point, when the dependent variable arrives, I will have to analyze it. But I'm not yet sure we've achieved any kind of standard levels of statistical significance for any of these estimates.

Now, again, I don't want to get into an explanation of the fact that that doesn't mean it's not effective. It just means that our study was designed in such a way that we can't distinguish it from zero. But just for the record, I think we have preliminary estimates that are not statistically significant of the effectiveness of the public service advertisements.

With respect to canvassing, we have observed the effects of knocking on someone's door and how many additional votes are--how many visits generate how many additional votes.

The educated consumer of those numbers will have to understand, I assume, that canvassing in rural Montana might not be cost-effective, and so I don't think there's one number that one can use. But we've used a variety of what we consider to be reasonable numbers in terms of costs per canvasser and costs per visit and whatnot,

and we find canvassing to be more cost effective than telephone, mail, robo-calling, the variety of different alternatives.

We have just the weakest evidence of leafleting versus an actual visit. And the leafleting in one particular experiment seemed the work pretty well but, again, I think the evidence there is rather weak. Whereas, we have 15 or so, actually, 12, I believe it is, canvassing studies.

So I think the evidence regarding media effectiveness is quite weak at this point, and canvassing stacks up very well, under reasonable assumptions, against the alternatives.

MR. MANN: What's the ballpark, in terms of dollars per vote or votes per dollar?

MR. GERBER: I think we're using \$16 per vote or something like that for canvassing.

MS. CUMMINGS: As opposed to what?

MR. GERBER: As opposed to \$65 for mailings. I can give you, if you need these numbers, I can give you the exact numbers.

MS. CUMMINGS: I'll take your word for it.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: Or what's the "walking around" money in the New Jersey bars these days?

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: That's another story.

Tonya?

QUESTIONER: Tonya Smith, from down the street, Australian Embassy.

I'm going to ask the same question that Tom asked before because I think it's really crucial in these election, and it goes to the issue of motivation rather than mobilization, and that's the dynamic of hate versus love being a motivator for people to vote. There's a lot of analysis about the extent of party loyalty on the Democrat's side versus the Republican side for their candidate and a lot of speculation about what that might mean in terms of translating to votes on the day.

Is there anything that you can say, based on previous elections, about what we might expect in terms of, particularly on the Democrat's side, those who are motivated principally by a desire to get rid of the incumbent, actually, turning up on the day and voting for Kerry, even though they might have slightly more ambivalent feelings about him as a candidate?

And if there isn't anything to say about that, can I ask you to talk perhaps a bit about the role of the church and the effect that the Republicans have put a lot of store in getting the Christian evangelical vote out; similarly, on the Democrat's side, deploying people like Bill Clinton to mobilize the minority communities through the church networks to vote? Is there any interesting patterns emerging in this cycle that give one party an advantage over the other in that area?

Thanks.

MR. MANN: Larry?

MR. BARTELS: I've done some looking at the extent to which people's votes seem to be determined by their attitudes about the two candidates considered separately. I haven't been able to find any difference in terms of negative feelings

toward one candidate getting more weight than positive feelings toward the other candidate.

There does seem to be some pattern that, in any given election, people's feelings about the incumbent are likely to get more weight than their feelings about the challenger, but even that is a pretty small difference.

I was trying to do the analysis in my head of this question that Tom asked about fluctuations in turnout over time and whether they seem to be in cases where there's a lot of dissatisfaction. I guess just kind of anecdotally thinking about the cases where turnout has been unusually high, that's probably true, right? Ninety-two was a big turnout election because there were a lot of unhappy people not because there were a lot of happy people. In 1932, there was a huge increase in turnout because there were a lot of unhappy people. In 1952, there was a lot of unhappiness about the war and stuff like that. On the other hand, Eisenhower was an unusually attractive candidate, so it's a little harder to tell in that case what it was that got so many more people to the polls.

But, I guess, just kind of thinking about cases, it seems likely that turnout is, in general, higher in cases where there are more people who are unhappy.

MR. MANN: Unhappy about something, yes.

Anybody else? How about the targeted efforts? Jeanne, have you, on the church side, in particular?

MS. CUMMINGS: We don't know yet because this is the first time they've done it. Clearly, historically, the Democrats have had great advantage in the black churches, and it's been an effective turnout operation for them. We don't know how it will work in the white evangelical churches for a couple of reasons.

First of all, they do tend to vote, so it's not like you're driving out marginal voters. Karl Rove says four million evangelicals didn't vote in 2000 than voted in previous cycles, and those are the four million he wants to recapture, plus any he can get. Judging from the intensity of this year, I think it's hard to tell whether he would have gotten back the four million because of intensity or because of machine. I think that's difficult.

On the other side, I think that issues that will linger with us is the step-up of the Catholic Church in becoming increasingly more politically active. They always were, but it seems as though there's much more activity this year that's more organized. Having a Catholic nominee will also create an area that is due some analysis afterwards.

The experiences in the churches that are anecdotal only, you know, that in some areas it's being accepted, and there was, in Toledo, half the parish walked out. So this is a new experience for the Catholic Church at the level that they're doing it, and we'll see how effective it is on that particular side, although definitely Rove wants to swing, views Catholics as swings, and he's been courting them since day one.

MR. MANN: And, presumably, it varies by the bishop--

MS. CUMMINGS: A lot of things. It varies on a lot--geography--

MR. MANN: --and what his particular view is on the importance of various issues.

MS. CUMMINGS: Yes. So driving up evangelical and Catholic turnout in Alabama is great, but irrelevant. So there's a lot of analysis that needs to be done about how effective this.

MR. MANN: Mike?

MR. McDONALD: One of the greatest indicators of vote and being a conservative is your frequency of church attendance. And so what's the difference I think maybe half of the people who walked out are probably the people who go just once a week; while, on the other hand, the other half that stayed there, the people are going to be there the next day and the next day after that.

We see that if you've been in a church more than once a week, you're much more likely to be a conservative, and so maybe there are some splits within these churches that are showing up.

What's interesting, too, is I find about this was the number used to be 2 million, and now it's 4 million evangelicals.

MR. MANN: It's an urban legend.

[Laughter.]

MS. VAVRECK: And then some.

MR. McDONALD: So, by election day, it's going to be 10 million and then some.

[Laughter.]

MR. MANN: Carl [inaudible]--

QUESTIONER: That will be a pope urban legend.

I want to ask a Curtis Ganns question, but one which begs a larger question. Ganns, as you may know, is, on the one hand, saying that he expects the turnout, he's been talking for some time about a larger turnout this year and, at the same time, has been saying that this collection of sort of no-fault voting, anybody can have an absentee ballot, the no-excuse notion, unquestionably has been driving down turnout, with one exception in the State of Oregon.

So the Curtis Ganns question is can he be right--

MR. : No.

[Laughter.]

QUESTIONER: And the second question is whether or not the no-excuse, no-fault, opening up the system, increasing turnout is related in any way to the kinds of results we had in 2000, the kinds of results that we think we might have in 2004 and whether we're sort of into the land of unintended consequences.

MR. MANN: Mike?

MR. McDONALD: Well, the Curtis Ganns argument about early or mail-in balloting or absentee balloting is that you've lost the social capital in the society or civic culture by people not engaging in that ritual of going and standing in line and voting at a polling place on election day.

And my response to that is, if standing in line was an indicator of democracy, the old Soviet Union would have had the whole thing cornered.

[Laughter.]

MR. McDONALD: So that can't be the only reason why people are engaged in their community and the other things that are going on around them. Why Curtis Ganns can say that he finds this pattern is that he uses this voting age population to calculate his turnout rates. And we've seen that in these states that allow the no-fault absentee, and the early balloting and those sorts of things tend to be predominantly located in the Southwest. They're the states that have seen the largest increase in the noncitizens. And so you can get a downward trend in turnout if you use the VAP.

If you use the eligible population, some evidence that you actually have increased, and a number of studies are underway right now. I know other authors who

are working on these, and they are finding evidence that liberal absentee balloting laws does increase voter turnout.

MR. MANN: The critical question will be the extent to which the parties and other players try to seize the opportunities of various forms of early voting to mobilize peripheral voters who wouldn't otherwise get there, and that is just beginning to play out now. It's way too early, I would think, to form any definitive conclusions.

MR. McDONALD: That's the big question. Is this early voting phenomenon that we're seeing in this election, is it mobilization or is it interest?

MR. MANN: Right.

MR. McDONALD: If it's mobilization, then maybe we're not going to have the big turnout on election day; if it's interest, then we would.

I would say that--I used this estimate in 2003 for the recall election in California, looking at the number of absentees that were requested, and it was an excellent predictor. I almost got turnout exactly dead on in the recall election.

So my suspicion is that things really haven't changed much in one year, but it is an unusual election. We'll have to see.

MR. MANN: All right. Listen, I want to thank all of you for coming, and thanks to our panelists. They were terrific. And we're adjourned.

[Applause.]

[Whereupon, the proceedings were adjourned.]