

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

OPPORTUNITY 08: THE YOUTH VOTE

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Welcome:

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Moderator:

JAMES A. LEACH
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Introduction and Perspective:

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Panelists:

JOHN DELLA VOLPE
Polling Director, Institute of Politics

MARINA FISHER
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MATT VALJI
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming.

I'm Mike O'Hanlon with Brookings and our Opportunity '08 Project.

We're delighted today to be collaborating with Harvard's Institute of Politics and their annual study on youth attitudes towards the vote.

I'm going to introduce Ken Duberstein in just a second to say a few words about the project and the race perhaps. And we'll look forward to hearing from the panelists in just a second.

We're very glad to have you all here, including people like Mack McClarty and Bill Galston and other notables in the audiences and a very strong contingent of the younger generation.

And all I want to say before passing the baton to Ken is when you read through the survey and put this in perspective in the broader presidential race and trends over the years with the youth vote, it's striking to think of at least a couple of things that make the youthful demographic even more interesting and important politically than it's been.

One is sort of captured in the paraphrasing of the biblical line that the youth shall inherit the earth, if you'll permit me that slight liberty. And this is always true, but it's a little bit more of a daunting proposition in some ways when we don't know what the earth is going to look like in 20 or 30 or 40 or 50 years.

And a number of problems like global warming are of a historically different type, that at least when my generation was youthful and we were blessed with the end of the Vietnam War and morning in America, and it wasn't quite such a period of great worry about the future, at least not in quite the same terms.

So, there are certain issues having to do with the future of the planet and also the immediacy of the Iraq War, which the youth of this country are fighting more than my generation, that make the youth vote -- the younger demographic have a special interest in some of the issues that we are discussing in this presidential race.

And the other point, just to put it very quickly and bluntly, is that the younger generation is voting. And watch out, politicians, because you've got to spend even more time paying attention to this group of voters than you have before.

And that's a striking aspect of the survey that I was, frankly, surprised to read and learn something, among many other things that I learned from reading through this, that the percent of the younger demographic voting in today's elections has really increased.

So, that's all I want to say by way of motivation, except to say thank you on behalf of Brookings for the opportunity to collaborate. And I'll pass things over to Ken, who is one of the core members of our advisory council with the Opportunity '08 Project and a trustee at Brookings and a good friend.

(Applause)

MR. DUBERSTEIN: Good morning. Mike, thank you very much. What Mike didn't say is that I'm here wearing two hats. One hat is as co-chairman of Opportunity '08 at Brookings, as well as a trustee, and also that I am an honored member of the senior advisory board of the Institute of Politics at Harvard.

And I think it's absolutely wonderful that we have collaboration today between the IOP and Brookings, because after all, they really have complimentary goals. The goal of Opportunity '08 is to encourage thoughtful discussion among political candidates and the public during this presidential campaign.

Opportunity '08 aims to help presidential candidates and the public focus on critical issues facing the nation, providing ideas, policy forums, and information on a broad range of domestic and foreign policy questions.

The IOP, the Institute of Politics' mission is to inspire young people into a life of public service and politics and to engage them in the political process. The IOP works to show young people that politics really does matter and is relevant to their lives in the United States.

Projects like Opportunity '08 make the IOP job easier. Focusing the public on information and critical issues certainly encourages our young people to not only vote but to participate in the political process.

Voters today, I believe, are much less interested in the partisanship of politics and much more interested in issues and where the candidates stand on them. That's why young people everywhere, I think, should be tracking projects like Opportunity '08, which are raising the profile of critical issues facing our country.

As the IOP survey data will show, young people today are engaged heavily in the political process, and they are following the 2008 election with surprising and gratifying interest, a message, that as Mike said, is important to all of our presidential candidates.

America's youth today are talking about and caring about politics, and as Mike said, for a very good reason. They have probably much more at stake in this presidential election, more than anybody else because the decisions of the 44th president of the United States will impact them far greater than it will impact my generation or Mike's generation.

The IOP survey team will tell you that young people understand this, whether it's the state of our nation's healthcare system or the war in Iraq or Iran or other foreign policy issues. Young people today are very plugged in.

For example, I recently attended an Opportunity '08 event cosponsored with the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. And we had several students in the audience and the questions that they raised were

everything from Iraq and the Middle East to wire tapping and civil liberties. They were really involved in the Q and A.

So, I want to take a minute to thank Mike and Melissa Skolfield and Bill Antholis of Brookings for all their hard work in the Opportunity '08 Project. I want to thank ABC News for their support. There was a terrific session here on Monday with Rick Klein of ABC, which he moderated on how the next president should help the middle class grow and prosper.

As IOP Director, John Della Volpe, who you're going to hear from in a minute --

MR. VOLPE: Polling director.

MR. DUBERSTEIN: Polling director and Harvard undergraduates, Marina Fisher and Matthew Valji -- I got it, right; all right - - who worked on this survey will tell you, there's a lot of exciting information, which I think will be very important, not only to the media but most importantly to the pulse of America and to our political candidates about the views of the 18 to 24 year olds in America.

So now, I would like to welcome the IOP and especially Jim Leach as the director of the IOP and turn the program over to Jim. Thank you.

MR. LEACH: Well, thank you, Ken. And I'm honored to be with you and thanks Michael and Brookings for hosting this.

As you all know, we're a few weeks away from the beginning of the caucus and primary process which begins in my home state. And the primaries are going to fall in a very rapid and discordant way.

We know that when it comes to voting that the turnout in primaries is substantially less than the turnout in general elections. And it's my view that the greatest weakness in the American political process is the primary process. And partly for that reason, we at the Institute of Politics are going to be launching next Monday a website that deals with trying to incentivize a greater youth turnout.

So, what we're doing today is talking about attitudes of youth, but we're also going to be working on turning out youth in greater numbers for this election. Our website is called novotenovoice.com, and you're all invited to look at it. We're unveiling it Monday, but it's available for people to check out today.

In any regard, in terms of the survey, which John and Marina and Matthew have been working on, we know the youth of America are increasingly focused on issues and have a perspective somewhat different than predecessor generations.

And let me give an anecdote somewhat if I can. I gave a talk last week at a public school in Harlem. And in the midst of discussing certain issues, I asked for a show of hands how many kids had brother or sisters or cousins in Iraq, and I was astonished at the number of hands that went up. And when you think of public policy and youth, countries

don't call in grandfathers to do go war. They call in young people, and so youth are very much focused on war itself.

In any regard, the survey, under John's direction is rather extraordinary. John is considered the world's leading expert at youth surveying, and he's done a very impressive job. And I hope he tells you a little bit about the methodology he uses.

I would only say that even though the survey does give indications where at a moment in time, youth are leading towards presidential candidates and some ways the more important results the survey relate to issues, frankly, one of which is very counterintuitive to me, and also an indication that the youth believe in a world in which choice is kind of the commercial norm, that there may be room for a new political party movement. And that's, I think a very stunning aspect to this particular survey.

In any regard, let me introduce John. And thank you very much for this profound analysis of youth at this particular time. Thanks.

(Applause)

MR. VOLPE: Thank you very much, Congressman. Thank you very much, Michael.

What I'd like to do now is spend just a few minutes with you walking through the highlights of our work over the last eight years and some of the highlights from the most recent survey. And then what we'll do is I'll introduce Marina and Matt to give some students' perspective,

and then we can hopefully have a robust question, answer, and discussion period.

What I'd like to do introduce a survey to put it into a little bit of perspective. I think the big finding here is that within less than a month before the first votes are cast in Iowa and a couple days later in New Hampshire, young people are clearly engaged and interested in our election.

Candidates on both parts are wise not only to ask for their vote but ask for their help, because there's a significant segment of the electorate who are supporting all of the candidates for office that will help and organize and do things if simply asked.

So, that's one of the -- kind of the big messages I would like to leave with you today. A little history into the survey, actually my job was inspired by a couple students. In 1999-2000, there were two sophomores at the IOP named Erin and Trevor, who looked around their college campus and spoke to some of their fellow students in high -- you know, from high school during Christmas break. They noticed that lots of young people were involved in public service and community service, you know, mentoring young people in the high schools and the homeless shelter in Cambridge and Boston, but few people seemed connected with politics.

And it was their idea to start a survey to figure out what the disconnect was between politics and public service. So, this is -- this entire project, which is now our 13th survey was actually founded from the

grassroots, from young people, who really cared about what was happening and was inspired to do this project.

In terms of the methodology, as Congressman Leach said, we conduct 2500 -- 2400 interviews every semester. So, this is our 13th survey. We started two years ago connecting all of our interviews online for a simple reason.

If those of you who are young or those of you who are kind of friends or sons or daughters who are young, somewhere to a third and half of all young people don't actually have access to traditional -- you know, traditional landline, which means that they are either impossible or very difficult to reach through traditional sources.

So for that reason, we conduct all of our research and all of our polling online in a partnership with Harris Interactive. Twelve hundred of our interviews are conducted with college students at four-year universities and twelve hundred interviews are conducted with 18 to 24 year olds who are not enrolled in a four-year university. Those includes 18 year olds who aren't in college, some of which have graduated, and you know, span the spectrum from not attending at all to two year colleges, vocational, et cetera.

All the interviews for this survey that we'll discuss were conducted between October 28th and November 9th, 2007 and the margin of error is plus or minus four percentage points. So, over the -- just the next couple slides, I want to put kind of the scene into some perspective.

And I don't think we're necessarily going out on a limb to say that young people are going to be a major part of the next election, because young people were a major part of the last two elections, 2004, 2006. And I'll show you a couple of examples of why we think that.

2004, this graph here is the youth voter turnout between -- of 18 to 21 year olds since they first got the right to vote in 1972. This survey uses the U.S. Census population surveys. And we can see that between 2000 and 2004, there was a 31 percent increase in overall turnout between all 18 to 21 year olds. In 2000, about 3 in 10 turned out to vote. And in 2004, you can see that 42 percent turned out to vote and that increase of about 31 percent.

The older you got, if you look at 22 to 24 year olds, that increase was actually even higher than that. So, the point is in 2004, we saw the highest youth turnout in 32 years since young people first got the right to vote.

We were able to look at projections and some exit polls from the 2006 midterm elections and we saw that though the U.S. Census population supplement isn't available yet that we've seen, that we expect that to be at least the highest turnout since 1982 in Reagan's first midterm, if not higher than that in the 2006 election.

This is a graph that indicates -- the x-axis on the horizontal line on the bottom is actually every age -- every age group, 18 all the way

up to past 75 years old. And you'll see the red line is a 2004 turnout by age, and the gray line is a 2000 turnout by age.

So, as all people -- there was a higher increase in all voters in 2004. Most of that increase came from young people, less than 30 as that graph clearly indicates. As an example, 19 year olds went up 13 percentage points. You know, most other segments of the electorate either stayed flat or went up a point or two, but clearly, we had this kind of surge among young people in 2004.

CNN exit poll actually presented this research which indicates that there were actually more votes cast by people less than 30 years old than people over age 65. I grew up in campaigns. I worked a number of presidential campaigns.

Back in the eighties and nineties, you know, our first job was to target the seniors, get them out to T ballots, go -- you know, those are the easiest votes. And that was the case. It was actually much less expensive to target seniors who had a great voting record.

But today, because of the size of this generation and because of the technology and tools that are available, there are actually more votes cast -- and I believe there will be more votes cast in 2008 by young people than by kind of a golden group of what we call seniors, people over the age of 65.

Oh, if you can't see -- so, yeah, thank you.

So, what this indicates is that 17 percent of all the votes cast in 2004 were by people less than 30, 16 percent by people over 65, which is a net difference of over a million people.

It can -- this data also indicates that young people were the only segment of the electorate to vote for John Kerry, just an example of the impact of young people.

The other thing that this does not include is absentee ballots were not calculated typically in exit polls. And about one in three or so college students vote with an absentee ballot, so these numbers are actually on the conservative side in our opinion.

In terms of the history, now let's move on to the primary and caucus preferences. And we have a very detailed 14 or 15-page report with lots of data. I've got a book of data here under me. I'm just going to walk through a couple of the highlights to spur some conversation.

The first of which we'll talk about is the case -- the Republicans -- the case on the Republican side. You'll see the kind of the green bar is March of 2007, our last survey. And the gray bar is November of 2007, our most current survey.

Overall, this segment of the electorate looks a lot like the national electorate frankly. You have Giuliani with a significant lead over McCain. Some differences, you know, you see Romney and Thompson and Huckabee doing a little bit better today in the national polling than we see here kind of in this poll, which is a very weeks older this point.

One of the most striking things that I see on this is six months closer to the election from our first survey, we actually see the undecided number go up a little bit, which is pretty interesting. And we see support for the two major candidates, McCain and Giuliani actually decrease a little bit.

That doesn't happen very often as you get closer to the election. Typically kind of the base and the core support kind of hardens a little bit, which you'll see, I think, on the Democratic side. Obviously, we did not have Thompson, who was not a declared candidate in March, so he goes up to 9 percent. I also think it's interesting that Mitt Romney and Ron Paul are in a statistical -- they're in a dead heat, each of which are at six percent, again, on the national perspective.

And this was, again, out of the field on November 9th, so a lot of the momentum I think that Mike Huckabee has made has been in the later -- in the days after our last survey.

Compare this, though, to the Democratic primary preferences, where again, most national polls will show Hillary with somewhere around a 19 or 20 percent overall in most national polls, 44 percent to 23 percent was the poll I looked at this morning. However, among young people, actually Barack Obama has and continues to have a lead, five or six points. Not commanding, but he has a lead, a pretty solid lead, and it's a stark contrast to the way the nation as a whole -- Democratic nation as a whole is kind of thinking about this race.

You see John Edwards actually decreased a little bit. Percentage is about the same, but unlike the Republican where -- unlike the Republican electorate where the undecideds went up, you can see undecideds went down by 8 points, mostly those 8 points being split evenly between Obama and Clinton folks.

More interesting in that, in my opinion though, is some of the kind of the cross tabs. And I'm going to kind of walk you through some of the internals in our survey, which I think are interesting. On college campuses, Obama has a 21 percent lead, 21-point lead. So, overall, he has a five-point lead, but we just polled the folks who are on college campuses; he has a 21-point lead.

We know that young people on college campuses are more likely to vote than folks who aren't on college campuses, which I think is interesting. Among whites -- among whites, Obama has a 10-point lead, 37 to 27. Among blacks, he has a commanding lead, somewhere in the range of 3 to 1 or so. He's probably in the sixties and Hillary is in the mid-twenties.

And the Clinton campaign, which I think is indicative of the campaign on a national perspective as well is very, very strong with Hispanics and Latinos, where she has a larger than two to one lead.

Obama is also leading by men, and the race is essentially deadlocked among women, 37 to 36, which I think is the key -- which is the key to turnout in this -- in the first couple of states here.

The other interesting thing is the idea of polling young people is somewhat controversial. We started with telephone and have gone to telephone and Internet and now 100 internet. But if this poll were conducted just by people who have landline telephones, which was what most traditional pollsters still use, Hillary would have a five-point lead, okay.

So, young people who have only telephone -- landline telephone access are significantly different than those who don't. They're very conservative. They're more supportive of the war. They've got a different set of issues, not on every question in the survey but specifically in the horserace question.

In the national, you know -- in a national poll, where young people -- still one in five voters that doesn't have as much of an effect as it would on a youth survey only. But it's very, very important for -- kind of for media and academics and other people looking at use surveys to really look at the methodology.

Somewhere between, you know, one and two or so of young people don't have access to landline telephones, so it's impossible to reach them. And this is just kind of a specific example of the effect it can have in looking at a horserace.

The other interesting news about both the Republican and the Democratic horserace is once you ask somebody who they're going to vote for, the next question we ask is okay, but if you could -- would you

volunteer on their behalf? What would you be willing to do on their behalf? And about a third -- a minimum of a third of all people say I'd be willing to do something if they just asked me.

So, we ask you who are you going to vote for, how likely would you be to do something. And we can see that certain people have kind of, you know, more kind of passionate groups of volunteers than others.

Mitt Romney is relatively small, six percent are very passionate about him. Over half of those people would volunteer if asked. And both the Obama and the Clinton people, about 44 percent of those folks would volunteer if asked, spread the message, start a group, any number of things.

Third major party, we've had a lot of questions and we spoke -- we had a -- we spoke with the press, we spoke with students, we spoke at academics over the last couple years asking them what information were they interested in. And we had a lot of kind of feedback about tell us about the state of the political parties.

And oftentimes, what we'll do is we'll find one or two questions that maybe a Gallup asked or CBS, New York Times poll asked and kind of benchmark against that. One question we asked was the state of the major parties. And the question was in your view, do the Democratic and Republican parties do an adequate job of representing

the American people or do they do such a poor job that a third party is needed, okay.

Overall, 31 percent of all young people think the two major parties are doing an adequate job, only 31 percent. Sixty-nine percent disagree with that, okay. Thirty-seven percent say yes, a third major party is needed today, and the other third or so are kind of unsure.

Frankly, when you offer up an internet based poll, where they see current -- keep it as it is, major change, or unsure, you'll have a higher likelihood of the unsure or the not sure response, which is a little bit different than you would get in a telephone survey.

The news here, though, is that essentially two out of three young people do not believe that the two major parties are doing an adequate job. And then we you break it down by party -- we broke it out here for you by ideology, you can see that liberals are more likely to believe this third major party is needed than conservatives, okay.

So, the gray bar here -- we've got liberals, moderates, conservatives. The green bar indicates that the two major parties are doing an inadequate job and the gray bar means a third party is needed. Forty-four percent, only half -- almost half of all liberals believe this third party is needed.

A couple of interesting little facts, I think, a third, 31 percent of Clinton voters believe a third party is needed, 38 percent of Obama voters. So, Obama voters aren't -- you know, they're kind of beginning to

kind of become more engrained, you know, in the Democratic -- the traditional Democratic party than you might have expected six months ago.

And 53 percent of John Edwards voters believe a third party is needed. Seventy percent of Ron Paul voters believe a third party is needed, not surprisingly. And 64 percent of Fred Thompson voters feel the same way.

So, I think it kind of -- it's going to be interesting in terms of whoever the nominee is to kind of bring each of their parties together.

Another thing I want to say about the parties is that although party registration and the likelihood to be connected the with Democratic party, the Republican party is relatively small compared to what is was a generation ago. We have 35 percent of all young people say they're Democrats; 25 percent of -- of all young people say they're Republicans.

Those people who actually say they're Republicans or Democrats, though, are pretty loyal. Seventy percent think they'll stay that way for the not too distant -- you know, for the near future. They don't think they'll change. And about half of the members of each party say they're strong Republicans or strong Democrats.

So, a plurality of folks consider themselves independent. But those who identify themselves with Democratic or Republican parties seem to want to stay that way for the coming years.

What's particularly interesting, I think, for the Democratic party is that overwhelmingly Hispanic, Latino voters believe -- indicate that they're Democrats. And they're also overwhelmingly the most loyal group -- subgroup of all young people.

I'll touch upon a couple of hot button issues before I introduce Marina and Matt, one of which is healthcare. So, we track on a regular basis the top issues in America, and we saw a couple of interesting things. This, you may find counterintuitive, as Director Leach did.

We found not unlike the national electorate, the issue of Iraq has actually kind of decreased a little bit as the number one issue in the country. There was a front-page article today. Gallup poll says that Iraq has decreased a little bit in terms of its kind of -- the spot it's having in the national debate right now.

And what we've seen is healthcare emerge as clearly the number two issue as of today among young people, clearly the number two issue to Iraq. Iraq actually has gone down 9 points over the last 6 months, and young peoples' concern about healthcare has actually double from 4 to 10 percent as the number 1 issue. It's also clearly the number two issue. So, on just about every measure, healthcare is emerging as the number one domestic issue and number two issue in the campaign.

On that subject, we asked a question about -- just kind of a basic ideological question about what do you think is better for the

country. You know, the green shaded bar -- the green shaded slice of the pie is universal healthcare system, having one health insurance program covering all Americans that would be administrated by the government and paid for by taxpayers.

You can see that a majority of all young people agree that is the way they'd prefer to go, sixty-nine percent of Democrats, 49 percent of independents believe a universal system and 30 percent of Republicans. So, that's kind of where young people are on the issue of healthcare.

The last issue I'll just touch upon before I introduce Marina is foreign policy. This is the area, I think, where we've kind of learned the most. When people ask me kind of what the big surprises are, they typically are associated with foreign policy. And we can discuss that in more detail later.

One of the issues, though -- that students that wanted to delve into in our group was kind of this debate a little bit between the Obama campaign and the Clinton campaign in terms of meeting with leaders of "rogue states."

So, we offered a couple of statements and we asked people what position comes closest to your own viewpoint. The green bar indicate -- is the Clinton campaign perspective. Some candidates believe that it would be irresponsible and naive for the next president to meet with leaders from hostile or rogue nations before their intentions were known.

We didn't indicate whose point of view that was. We just said some candidates believe that to be the case.

Other candidates believe we must have the strength and courage to meet with leaders of rogue nations and do so without conditions. Which of the following comes closest to your own view?

You can see overwhelmingly a plurality of every demographic group and every party group that we showed believe in the Obama point of view, that we should have the courage and strength to meet with leaders without conditions. Fifty-seven percent of Democrats feel that way; thirty-nine percent of Republicans feel that way, and forty-seven percent of independents feel that way, okay. Even 51 percent of Senator Clinton voters agree with the Obama position on that issue.

I think there's a lot more we can discuss about foreign policy during our discussion. But now, I would like to introduce Marina, who is a junior at Harvard, who is a co-chair of the committee to give her perspective on our results. So, thank you very much.

MS. FISHER: Thanks, John.

(Applause)

MS. FISHER: So, I think right now is sort of crucial moment with youth and politics. And particularly, this relates to the dissatisfaction of young people with the status quo.

So, as we've heard John say, only 15 percent of young people think that things in the country are headed in the right direction.

And more than one in three young people think a third major party is necessary. And at the same time, we see the emergence of new issues such as healthcare, which are very important to young people. And where young people agree that the way that these things are handle now is not what they would like.

And with this, we see that views are open and there is the opportunity for new candidates, new political parties, new viewpoints, and new ideas. The question then becomes how to engage young people and especially how to engage those who are open to participating in politics but are not that excited and are not necessarily going to be involved unless something stimulates them.

And at first glance, it might seem that the best way to engage young people is through new media, so things like Facebook or the internet or cell phones. And part of our data seems to show that this is maybe headed in the right direction. So, we found that 59 percent of young people would be willing to join an online group, such as a Facebook group or a Myspace group for a candidate that they supported.

But looking at the rest of the survey, it's clear that this is not the whole story. So, 60 percent of young people would like to be engaged by spreading the word to friends or family. And about half of young people would like to be engaged by either putting up a bumper sticker or a lawn sign or by attending a rally. And these seem like pretty much the oldest ways of engagement that we can think of.

At the same time, fewer than one in five young people would be willing to donate money on a website or on a cell phone or to download a ring tone from a campaign. So, it's clear that while new media are emerging, the old ones are here to stay.

And also, when we look at the influence on the level of political engagement among young people, young people say that friends and family are the most influential and media is significantly lower.

And a very important statistic about this is that while fewer than one in ten young people volunteered on a political campaign last year, 42 percent said they would be willing to if encouraged by a friend or a peer. So, we need to be mindful of the more traditional influences on engagement among young people.

But the way of the future, I think, or one possibility is a blending of the old and the new, an integration of new media and old media for engagement. And I think that there have already been some really important examples of how this can be a success story.

So, one is the CNN YouTube debate, which for a traditional televised debate, but the questions were submitted via YouTube, which is a video service that is basically at the cutting edge, I would say, of new media.

And another success story, I think, is the movement of major newspapers online. So, things like the New York Times and the

Washington Post now have very comprehensive websites that people can check on the internet.

And I think contrary to what some might think, young people don't get all of their news from blogs or from Facebook and in fact, Google News, which his touted as a very new sort of media for news, is just a compilation of traditional media on one website.

And so, I would get all my news from the website. I don't read online newspaper -- I don't read print newspapers, but the website that I go to for news is the New York Times.

So, again, I think young people are open to engagement and there are new possibilities. But the way to really get them involved and the way to get them excited and active about politics is to synthesize the old and the new methods of engagement and target them to young people and the issues that are important to them today.

So, I'd like to introduce Matt Valji, who is my co-chair on the IOP survey and a senior at Harvard.

MR. VALJI: Thanks, Marina.

The defining political moment of our generation was not the assassination of JFK or the fall of the Berlin Wall, but in fact, the events of September 11th. But instead of turning inward toward isolationism or lashing out in anger or fear, we adopted a world view that was more based on the cooperation between nations, not the United States acting as a

lone superpower unilaterally, but working within the world community to solve international problems.

Young people do not believe that America can stand alone when addressing issues like Iraq, Darfur, or the war on terrorism. As John mentioned, twice as many young people believe we should be engaging directly with foreign leaders unconditionally than those who disagree.

What that means is that young people no longer think we should stick stubbornly to ideological convictions, but that we need to cooperate with others to build a safer world.

Also, young people view the United Nations and other international organizations as being both more trustworthy and more effective in solving international crises. The United Nations commands a higher level of trust than the federal government or the president among young people, ages 18 to 24.

And as we found in our last survey in spring 2007, by a ratio of three to one, young people believe the United Nations should be spearheading the solutions of the world over the United States. And what's surprising about that number is although most young people are liberal, a majority of young Republicans agree the United Nations should be the number one place where the world's problems are solved.

The worldview of young Americans is shaped by the sense of internationalism. And when we look at the modern political debate that is going on in the presidential election, different candidates have different

perspectives, as was mentioned before between Clinton and Obama. And it would be remiss -- politicians would be remiss to ignore this sort of sense of internationalism.

While Iraq and the war have declined somewhat among young people as the most important issue, it's still number one. And 88 percent of young people believe that foreign policy has a major impact on their political affiliation.

So, if campaigns want to address young people, who are turning out in a higher number, the best way they can do that is to address their foreign policy concerns and address the new worldview.

MR. LEACH: Well, thank you very much. We'll now turn it over to the audience for any questions you might have.

Yes, ma'am?

QUESTION: (Inaudible) -- for the -- you know, for the caucuses then?

MR. LEACH: Well, that's a 64 network question. The assumption is that many will show up but in their hometowns rather than universities and colleges. There is a collegiality about colleges and universities that does cause people to actually go to caucuses, and it also involves bringing out of state people that are college students.

An out of state student has the option to vote at home or at the college or university where they're living and so it might decline that a bit.

On the other hand, there is a subtlety of Iowa that is really extraordinary on how the caucuses operate and that is that the Republicans and Democrats have different rules.

In the Republican caucuses, they just count where everybody stands on a candidate. In the Democratic caucus, you have to have a 15 percent basis.

And so, the premise of your question, if the candidate on the Democratic side has more support among young people, and let's presume that's Obama by a slight margin, does this hurt Obama?

On the other hand, if the young people vote at home in let's say a rural county, are they more likely -- and their for Obama -- to bring his number up to 15 so that he will not be eliminated in that particular precinct or county's counting as much.

And so, one of the theories is that this is helpful to Obama. Another theory is that it's hurtful to Obama. And I think it will be immeasurable, that is a phenomenon that we won't know about.

But I think in totality, unrelated to the Obama Clinton issue, it probably hurts a little bit, the college turnout in Iowa, but how much, I just don't know.

MR. VOLPE: Just to add one point to that.

MR. LEACH: Yeah.

MR. VOLPE: Between 2000 and 2004, Rock the Vote sent a briefing out over the last couple days indicating that the youth turnout in Iowa caucuses were up -- is four times what it was in 2000.

MR. LEACH: There is certainly enthusiasm among Iowa youth. I just -- I don't want to sound like the president and suggest something from the gut because John talks numerically. But I would be very surprised if there isn't a very large youth turnout in Iowa in this election.

And it will be not quite as measurable at places like where the campuses themselves are, but I think throughout the state in rural counties, where frankly, in many rural counties, you have a very high demographic elder population. Iowa ranks number 1 in the country in percentage over 85 and number 4 in percentage over 65 of all states.

I think you're going to see many more young people at rural caucuses than have ever gone in this particular election.

Yes, sir?

Then I'll come to you afterwards.

QUESTION: How did y'all incent people to fill out the survey?

MR. LEACH: Excuse me?

QUESTION: How did you incentivize people to fill out the survey?

MR. LEACH: What you'll find in our website is a, lots of methodology in how to vote in every precinct anywhere; b, you're going to see some tapping into speeches of -- whether it be John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, people in public life today about the importance of voting as kind of incentivization.

Then you're going to see our tie-in with Stephen Colbert, where we're going to give some rewards. We're going to have a little bit of a lottery of bill me to go, so we're going to fund a couple of kids going to see the Colbert show itself. And then we're going to be giving away on a kind of a lottery basis for people that agree to register and agree to register let's say five other people. They'll be able to register and do a lottery and periodically, we'll give away an iPod or two.

But we're trying to energize interest and getting people to communicate with each other on the principle of voting, not the principle of voting for a candidate, although obviously that's something that any individual can also advance.

Yes, back there? Yes, sir, in the white shirt. Yes, that's you.

QUESTION: Haider Mullick, Brookings. My question is directed to the students. I believe one of the most important U.S. foreign policy issues is going to be U.S. Islamic world relations. And I was wondering if you had asked the students and young people in particular about that and the findings.

MS. FISHER: Last semester, we looked at Islam and an international in general worldview. I don't know if you want to talk about that but, one of the things that we found that Matt touched on is that this generation is very internationalist in perspective. So, a lot of students want to go abroad, maybe to work abroad, study abroad for a while. And we're not as isolationist as some of the older people.

MR. VALJI: And when we asked about individual rogue nations, we actually enumerated some of those nations and many of them were within the Islamic world. So, I think when you look at these numbers, you can't just talk about the entire world but in part, about the Muslim world.

MR. VOLPE: I think just the other thing to add in terms of when probed a little bit last semester, in the fall, we try to talk about public -- we talk about community service, public service, horserace numbers. In the spring, the focus of the surveys are on ideology and probing some issues with more clarity.

We spoke about globalization and the net benefit of globalization among young people is kind of the enhancement of our own culture, of which all of this things, I think, kind of indicate that young people are kind of very much open in part of to this generation.

I give the -- I tell the -- with the amount of travel that young people do and the amount of friends they have with people from around the world is remarkable. From a more personal perspective, I'm from

Massachusetts and my class trip when I was in the 8th grade was to Washington, DC on a bus. My son is in public school; his class trip is to China.

You know, it's a different world. Public school in Massachusetts is in China for two weeks. It's a different world, and I think young people will continue -- will continue to have open ideas around the global community.

MR. LEACH: Yes, sir?

QUESTION: (Inaudible).

MR. VOLPE: We don't control for it, though we measure it quite carefully. We have all the details of the religious breakdown in the back of this packet here.

What we do, just in terms of methodology, I just want to kind of address that for one second, it's difficult to find young people. You know, so what we do is, as I say, we conduct all of our interviews online.

People opt in -- I believe opt in to every survey that's conducted. If we call somebody at home during dinner for 25 minutes, they're opting into participating in that survey. It's the same thing they're doing online, except that I believe online method has a lot more flexibility.

So, we do incentivize them. It's a couple of dollars a month to participate in surveys and panels like that. We only -- we only wait and control for the number of people who are on college campuses versus other major segments of the population.

SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. LEACH: Yes, ma'am?

QUESTION: (Inaudible) from Netherlands. How important is the global warming issue for the youth?

MR. VALJI: Well, we actually didn't address global warming in this particular survey, but for me personally, global warming is a very important issue, especially when looking to the future as far as international cooperation, as far as the Kyoto Pact or other international organizations and treaties for the future.

So, I believe that young people as a whole, although it's not given in the survey, are supportive of legislation that will curb carbon dioxide emissions.

MS. FISHER: And also the film, An Inconvenient Truth was widely seen by young people, and Al Gore is very much on the minds of young people, so I'd say we're very keen to that issue.

MR. LEACH: Let me just go on this side one more time. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: John, how did the over 24 year olds compare in the third party questions? Thirty-seven percent said the two parties do such a poor job that a major party is needed. Do you know how that corresponds to the older cohort?

MR. VOLPE: Yeah. It's -- it's a little bit of apples and oranges because of methodology. But typically, when we looked at our

methodology over 25, the over 25 is about 7 or 8 points more likely to believe that the Democrats or Republicans are doing an adequate job. So, they're around 39 percent, okay, whereas young people are up 31 percent.

MR. LEACH: Let's go over here. The green lady has had her hand up quite a while -- the green sweater lady, I should say.

question: I was wondering how you went about finding the people in your survey who were not in college? Where did you go, to who did you email; define those folks.

MR. LEACH: We have a detailed -- like a 10 page methodology report that we could send you. But the quick story, tens of different kinds of websites. We go -- and Harris Interactive, which is the largest interactive online research company based in New York City, recruits people from a number of different places, constantly adding them to the panel of over a couple million young people.

So, we looked at a number of different websites where people are active and applied that way.

MR. LEACH: Yes, sir?

question: Good morning. My name is Gabe. I'm with the United States Student Association. And I wanted to first thank you all for the research, this information, and it helps us in our work. And I think it's really useful for just energizing youth and are ways to get students involved.

I guess my question relates to -- I saw -- particularly in the questions when looking at a third party and people's -- students' -- young people's perception on that, I think it might -- a lot of that for me turns into this perception of government as being sort of a bad or government as a problem, you know, not the solution necessarily. I'm trying to understand like where it came from.

And has there been any research into like young people's perception of government as a whole currently? Was that part of this or has it been a part of this in the past? And what has that looked like outside just parties?

MR. VALJI: Well, I think that one particular point is if you look at where young people to trust the government to do the right thing most of the time, only about 30 percent -- John, you need to probably check that -- but about 30 percent of young people believe that the federal government does the right thing most of the time and that you trust them.

So, I would not be surprised if there was a link between this distrust for the federal government as a whole and the need for a third party and a new way in politics.

MS. FISHER: But at the same time, while there is those numbers, we also found that 67 percent of young people agree that running for office is an honorable thing to do. So, there is a sense of honor in politics, and also, there are majorities again of people that think

that political engagement is an effective way of solving problems in both the local and the national community. So, there is faith on that front.

MR. LEACH: Yes, ma'am?

question: The number may be in the cross tabs. It says here that 41 percent of the 18 to 20 year olds say they'd definitely vote in a primary or caucus next year, and I'm wondering what the split is within that 41 percent of college youth versus non-college youth.

And I'm asking that specifically to follow up on Susan's question about Iowa. Because, it seems to me that if college students don't really turnout and non-college students do really turnout in the caucuses, that would help Clinton, not Obama.

MR. VOLPE: There is a -- I can find -- I can dig up the exact number in a second. I think it was by five or six point difference between college and non-college folks, not dramatic. And unfortunately, even with 2500 interviews, we don't have enough to kind of dig deep into just the Iowa folks.

We did look at the first six states to see if kind of folks in those primaries and caucuses were different than everybody else. There weren't a lot of differences, but then again, I think a lot of those first six states were heavily geared towards the larger states and New Hampshire and Iowa are not two of those. But I can dig up and get that for you specifically afterwards.

MR. LEACH: Yes, ma'am?

QUESTION: You said that healthcare is clearly emerging as the number two issue for young people, so I'm interested what kind of that line up of issues is beyond healthcare and was it asked as an open -- how was the question asked about issues?

Because as somebody that does organizing in the field with young people, it's clear that neither Iraq or healthcare are the number two issues that we see young people organizing around. It's probably global warming, energy issues, and issues around Darfur.

So, I'm wondering how the question was asked and then what -- I don't have the packet in front of me, so.

MR. VOLPE: Yeah. So, the question was asked -- and this was the question we've asked for the last 8 years -- thinking about nation issues for moment, which two issues concern you most, number one and number two.

Number one is kind of a net of War in Iraq, 37 percent, by far as Marina said and Matt said, a very significant issue, had been in the 40s in the last survey. And then there's over a couple dozen individual issues that we track.

Healthcare was number two. It went from four percent to nine percent. Healthcare was the number one issue when we asked the follow up question, what's the second most important issue.

So, you can see, you know, healthcare emerging. To tell you the truth, I'm not surprised that much at that. When you kind of think

about the campaign a little bit in terms of what the debates have been around, it's pretty clear. It's universal healthcare or keeping the system as it is. It's kind of a yes or no before we get to that.

And as young people coming of age, as thinking about politics for the first time, it's an issue that, I think, kind of they gravitate towards because you can kind of think about kind of who they are ideologically and kind of which party they are.

Not to say that environment, education, economy are not extremely important issues, and we might see the effect of kind the debate on those issues kind of increase their importance in the springtime. What I'm saying now is that, you know, the big story here is Iraq has come down a little bit like it has in national polls and healthcare is emerging.

And I think when you think about kind of how the campaign has unfolded so far, it seems to make some sense to me. I've also seen in the last five or six years young people on campus or off campus are concerned about healthcare when we do focus groups. You know, they're concerned about breaking their arm and having no insurance and how do they get help and a number of other issues.

MR. LEACH: Way in the back.

QUESTION: Luke Sworthout, Student Public Interest Research Groups. Thanks again for having us. On the healthcare questions, I'm curious if you have asked or are considering asking how much students or young people in general feel like the candidates are

speaking to their issues, how much they feel like the candidates are responsive to them.

And healthcare is one of those issues that makes me think about this because the way young people think about healthcare is different than the way older generations think about healthcare, maybe different from how candidates feel about healthcare.

So, it could be a consensus second issue. It could be a top issue in the campaign and still it might not be something that young people really feel is being addressed.

So, I guess the real question is do you have a sense that young people feel like the candidates are speaking to them and connecting with them.

MR. VOLPE: Great question. I don't as of this moment around the healthcare issue. But when I look at the third party numbers, I'd say the consensus is no, they're not really connecting very well right now. You know, we spent the summertime offering up briefings to each of the major campaigns on our kind of elaborative data over the last 8 years.

But some campaigns are really focused on it. Some campaigns, we had 12, 13 members on the conference call. We had youth coordinators. We had their polling director. We had their deputy campaign manager. Some campaigns are really focused on that. They have youth coordinators throughout, you know, the first few states. Other campaigns are kind of less so.

My advice to those campaigns who want to connect is to kind of give away some of that power and influence to the young people and let them kind of spread the message as they want to and talk about kind of healthcare and those issues in a way in which they're most comfortable talking about it on behalf of the campaign.

MS. FISHER: I think there's also sort of a paradox in a sense that we have to question elected officials don't seem to have the same priorities as I have, agree or disagree. And 71 percent of young people agree that elected officials don't seem to have their priorities. But at the same time, 68 percent of young people said that politics was relevant to their life. So, there is sort of that -- that young people may not necessarily agree that their issues are being addressed, but they haven't given up on politics as a whole.

MR. LEACH: Way in the back on this side.

MR. PIPPARD: Wes Pippard. Did you breakdown the support for Obama as to how much of it was because he's a new face or his positions or that he's African American?

MR. VALJI: We did not. As we get closer, I think, in the -- we'll dig deeper in terms of whoever the general electorate candidates are, the party nominees, we'll dig deeper. We haven't dug any deeper at this point, no.

MR. LEACH: Yes, sir?

question: Hi. I'm Rob Anderson with Campus Progress. In terms of the support for individual candidates, your results are presented on a nationwide basis, so it seems to me that this helps us predict who young people are preferring, but it actually doesn't help us predict how we're going to impact the elections because obviously we don't vote in a national primary. So, this actually doesn't help us predict how much impact we're going to have in terms of who the candidate is going to be; correct?

MR. VOLPE: Well --

MR. VALJI: Go ahead.

MR. LEACH: No, go ahead.

MR. VOLPE: I think -- that's a great question. The first thing it tells you is that I think a minimum of 41 percent -- 41 percent said they were definitely going to participate in the caucus primary. And again, that's -- that's just a definite number. And that's, again, the most conservative, I think.

Most -- when you look at kind of what the other kind of student organizations are looking at -- predicting, they're predicting somewhere between a 45 and 55 percent turnout among this demographic group for the primaries and caucuses and perhaps over 50 percent. That's what the impact is going to be. So, the impact is that you're going to have significantly more young people vote than ever before in primaries and caucuses. So, that -- that's kind of a big impact.

And then, I think, you know, it's too early. It's still a month away and you can have -- and we can see kind of what he preferences are in the two -- within the two parties. I don't get a sense that there are different preferences necessarily in New Hampshire versus Iowa from some of the other internal polling that I've looked at in those states. I think what you'll see is -- what the turnout -- what it looks like on the ground, what the turnout is, and the organization vote, those sorts of things. But there are some indications from some cross tabs we're looking at from other polls in those states, samples are smaller, that say that they're basically on track with what we see here, slight advantage to Obama, slight advantage to Giuliani on the other side.

MR. LEACH: Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: I'm Deborah -- from Circle. What are the primary differences you found between the college and non-college participants in the survey?

SPEAKER: One is I think we have to be careful about, we break out as college and non-college, but understand that non-college has lots of other kind of sub-groups within non-college. We've got young people who have never attended college versus young people who have attended, but are now on to graduate school or working.

There are economic related issues. You know, the non-college electorate are more concerned about health care and the economy

than college people who are more concerned about Iraq and former policy. I think that's kind of a big driver.

And I think, you know, the driver of -- the mechanics of voting, young college people are more likely to vote -- they're more likely to vote, they're more likely to think about it, be organized, and be reminded about it. So I think overall, young people on college campuses are more mobilized, a little bit more active, more willing to connect with their friends, and more likely to kind of share information, some of those sorts of things. And non-college people are a little bit more concerned about economics and health care and domestic issues.

SPEAKER: Also, we found that college students are slightly more likely than non-college students both to volunteer for community service and to be politically engaged and participating in a government activity. And they also seem to think by a slight margin that these things are more effective in solving problems, both in their community and in the nation as a whole.

MR. VALJI: I think part of that could be attributed to the fact that when someone is at a four year institution, they're surrounded by the young people, and it's much more easy for them to get politically engaged. Marie and I are politically engaged through the Institute of Politics, but we might not have that opportunity if we weren't in a four year institution. So the fact that we have this big concentration of young people in our nation's colleges facilitates political engagement.

MR. LEACH: The lady back here, yes, in the blue sweater, blue scarf. Wait, you'll be next.

MS. FRICKSELL: Thank you. My name is Courtney Fricksell and I'm the Youth Campaigns Coordinator for the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. And I hate going back to this again, but I was curious why you didn't ask a global warming question or a climate change question, especially since I think you asked one in the spring, and why you didn't do a follow-up, as well as the connection between global warming and climate change to things like Hurricane Katrina and health care, as well as independence from oil and Iraq, which are the number one and two issues since there's such a correlation. Thank you.

MR. VOLPE: The guys that designed the survey. But it's very much a student led survey. We have a group of eight or so students who we've kind of helped collectively think about kind of the issues. Understanding that spring time is a time where we dig into issues deeply -- in issues, but do you want to address that?

MS. FISHER: Yeah; well, I think we also -- each individual survey can only have a certain number of questions, and from survey to survey, and from semester to semester, we alter those questions somewhat, sort of gauge a different perspective on where the youth are voting and what the youth are thinking. And the global warming was an important issue for young people, but when we asked it in an open ended question, nevertheless, we still had Iraq and health care as number one and two. As

far as political engagement and activism, my personal opinion is that there might be more on the side of the environmentalism because young people believe that they can make a personal impact in a way on the environment that it can't necessarily on health care policy except through voting.

MR. LEACH: Sir.

QUESTION: There's been speculation (inaudible)

MR. VOLPE: Well, there's a little bit of evidence, not in the survey itself, but sort of anecdotal that I believe is probably a good indicator in that Barack Obama has been very, very successful in getting a lot of his support from the -- not the 2,300 per person level, but under \$200 per person.

And if you look at what a college person can actually contribute and the amount of college support for Obama over Clinton and other Democratic candidates, I wouldn't be surprised if there was a connection between young people and small amounts of voting, small amounts of donations.

SPEAKER: But at the same time, like I noted briefly, fewer than 20 percent of young people said that they would be likely to either donate money on a web site or donate money through a cell phone, so they might be likely to, yes, but I think even more likely to do things like attend a rally and do more non-financial things.

SPEAKER: -- we did ask a couple of years ago, have you ever done that before. I think we even -- about ten percent or so. I think

that's a big deal. I think that there's 20 million young voters, right, and if ten percent of them, if 15 percent of them donate a little something, I think that's a big deal, it could have a significant effect.

Fifteen percent, we've seen a rock core group of 15 percent of young people who are passionate, who get involved in any way they ask them, and do give them money. So I think it's somewhere between ten and 15 percent are actually giving money.

QUESTION: The Democrats are ahead of Republicans for the first time we can remember in contributions, and I'm wondering if maybe that Obama amount is counting for that, at least in part?

SPEAKER: That is, but we can see, you know, it's from the grassroots. It's just not about young people in terms of -- Don't forget -- on the other side, though, had a pretty good fundraising month himself based on the same kinds of technology and methodology.

MR. LEACH: The lady in the black sweater, go ahead.

QUESTION: Deanna (inaudible) My question is about gender and race, and if that question was sort of targeted for the -- election, is that a motivating factor for young people, does that have any impact for the first opportunity they may have to make a difference in that area?

SPEAKER: Well, I think definitely as far as race and gender, there is a split as far as the political party affiliation that they're leading towards and also the candidates within that affiliation. Among whites, they're basically split -- white, young people are basically split between

republic and Democrats. But as you look at different minority populations, you get more and more and more skewed toward the Democratic side.

But in all different races and groups, you have a large independent segment. So there's definitely some division between different races and genders, but there is sort of a core base.

SPEAKER: I think the last -- we asked questions about voting for -- without mentioning names, a female candidate or a minority candidate, and the overwhelming number of young people said that it didn't really make a difference, they would vote for, you know, someone regardless of what gender they were, what race they were, so it seemed to just be a matter of the personal preference for the candidate as opposed to the sort of stereotype about who young people would vote for or not.

MR. LEACH: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: I hate to be overly negative, but what kind of things do you think might actually disincentivize people to vote in a general election? I'm thinking about the two particular policy questions you asked about health care and foreign affairs. As far as health care goes, none of the major candidates are actually proposing any sort of single payer plan. Their health care plans seem to be focused more on subsidies and mandates, those sorts of things. And so, you know, the great response you got on health care, well, none of the candidates are actually offering that.

On foreign affairs, you know, you end up with the Clinton presidency, then she tends to be more for the minority position as opposed

to the -- position, you know, of it's dangerous and naive to be talking to these people. So do you think that maybe there's lots of excitement when young people go out and vote for Obama and he loses, and so, you know, they're crushed and don't decide to vote in November? I guess it's more of a substantive question than a full based question, but --

SPEAKER: Well, I think especially looking at young Democrats, which put us more relevant to the health care question and the Obama/Clinton question. Now, I think that, although many of them have been crushed by the elections in the recent past, they are voting in increasing numbers, and they're participating in politics in higher and higher numbers. So although some people are still apathetic obviously about politics, I believe that number is shrinking over time.

SPEAKER: Yeah, and I also think that the engagement or encouragement questions that we ask really address that. But health care is one issue among many, and yes, the views people made to verge from the issue of being a candidate, we have very strong numbers about young people willing to get engaged if someone asks them or encouraging them in the right way. So I think that there are still ways of getting these people.

SPEAKER: And especially when it comes to, yeah, especially when it comes to health care. Like what you're seeing now, even though people aren't proposing sort of a single pair total health care policy, we have a commitment from a number of the candidates for a universal health care covered system, which 15 years ago you never would have seen. And I

think part of that can be attributed to the fact, the younger generation of voters agrees with that position.

MR. LEACH: Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: Jenn talked about how among young Republican voters, the number of undecided has gone up since you did the last survey in April. I'm just curious, why do you think that is?

MR. VOLPE: You know, there's three issues I'd be concerned about if I were a Republican candidate right now. One is the -- have gone up a little bit. Second is, Republicans are about twice as likely to be dissatisfied with the choices than Democrats overall. While 36 percent, maybe 38 percent of Republicans are dissatisfied with the choices on their -- of their choices that they have than, number two.

Number three, when we talk to Republicans like we do Democrats, we said, okay, now that you said you're going to vote for X candidate, how likely are you to have to do something, share information, donate money, tell a friend, put a sticker, they're significantly more likely in almost every instance to be active. So they seem to be just not a lot of kind of passion associated right now among the Republican candidates for one person. So those three, and I'd be somewhat concerned -- a little bit concerned about turnout on the Republican side. I'd be concerned about lighting up the -- and the volunteers on that side.

MR. LEACH: Yes.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks; Congressman Leach, I was going to ask for your perspective. You've watched -- John, you showed earlier the voting trends over the years of younger voters. You've watched this, had a political career watching this and being involved in this. What strikes you about today's generation, sort of the most salient characteristic?

And maybe Matt and Marina, if you want to comment. I mean it's hard to put it in the same perspective perhaps for you, but how would you -- apart from all the issues, the specifics, you know, the data, how would you sum up what drives your generation in terms of priority? Is it, you know, the health care issue, or is it something more abstract? That's a vague question, but I hope you know what I mean.

MR. LEACH: Well, in theory, college years are kind of preparatory years. But I am absolutely overwhelmingly impressed with how idealistic and how engaged young people are today. The number of people getting the exact electoral -- want to volunteer to do something in the community is astonishing. And I think you're going to see a sense for a youth leadership in this country of a dimension that's never existed before.

And let me give kind of an anecdotal -- I mean a question was asked earlier about, what does it mean if a kid isn't going to be voting on a campus -- in Iowa, and one of the things it means is, they're going to go to their rural home, and instead of the father and mother saying we're for let's say John Edwards, so son or daughter, you be for Edwards, if the son or

daughter comes from campus and says, I'm for Barrack or I'm for Hilary, they are likely to influence the parents.

It is an extraordinary phenomenon. Families want to be together. But I think you're going to see the young leading the family rather than the family leading the youth. And that is kind of a mid-western thing, and so I hate to generalize, but I really see a different feeling. And certainly the word gravitates, it certainly is a question earlier about the sense of the environment. And I will tell you, 25 years ago, 30 years ago, the environment was an upper middle class yuppie issue, a little esoteric; today, it looks like the idealism of the environment is the most realistic set of concerns in the world. And young people are leading this movement to a tremendous degree, and they are educating their parents.

And so I think you're going to see some very different dynamics in American politics, particularly in this election. And likely -- the other thing that I really want to emphasize, especially if you -- of what the Republican candidates are saying, but when Matthew says that young people are interested in international, but they have confidence in the United Nations, more than their own government, is the principal place to solve problems.

This is out of sorts with what people think of older people. But most polls of all Americans have been pro UN ever since it's been created. But there is greater international than in America in terms of problem solving I think than ever before.

MS. FISHER: I think what surprises me is how interactive we are in getting the news and talking to each other about the news. I know I might not be representative of all young people in the young country, obviously, but I -- there probably isn't a day that doesn't go by when one of my friends doesn't send a new story to me, to share it, like read it online and decide, oh, it's interesting, I'll send it to her. And, you know, we talk about it, we discuss it over email. So I think youth are very -- not only reading things, reading news, but also responding to it and sharing it with their peers and friends and discussing it and forming opinions that way.

MR. VALJI: And major difference that a lot of people view as negative, comparing us to our parent generation and older generations is that, we aren't in the streets rioting, we aren't in the streets advocating political positions in the same way that they did in the '60's and '70's.

But you have to remember that young people -- that doesn't mean that young people aren't engaged and young people don't care, they just have different methods to communicate with other individuals, whether it be email, or blogs, or online petitions, or even attending old style political rallies. So although young people might not be as radical, they might not be as out there and anti-governmental, they are much more ingrained in the system and want as much cooperation as possible.

MR. LEACH: Yes, please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Just a follow-up on the fact that there is such a willingness to volunteer, I think it was 40 percent that you said would

volunteer participate in a campaign if asked, yet CBC New York Times -- 68 percent of young people feel that the campaigns haven't done enough to reach them, so how do you recommend the campaigns bridge that gap between willingness to participate, yet a feeling that they haven't been reached out to; what should campaigns do to bridge that gap?

SPEAKER: Well, I think one sort of thing, you can bring sort of synthesis of our data together is that young people have their political engagement most influenced by their friends and family, and they want to be asked by a peer to attend these political rallies, not sort of a mass distribution like a cell phone text message or an email.

So if campaigns can go across the different student organizations, different colleges, or even different places of work, I believe that they recruit individuals who can ask other young people by word of mouth to volunteer, to participate in some way, they'd be much more likely to engage a larger segment of the younger population, not just the 15 percent that will do whatever it takes.

SPEAKER: Yeah, and also maybe just to make these events more interactive, where groups of friends can go and do something at once and not just be -- attending a rally, but maybe do something productive. I think young people are really into doing things together and having sort of interactive engagements.

SPEAKERS: Yeah, one particular anecdotal thing for me is that I remember there was a Barrack Obama event that cost \$23 to attend if

you had a university email address that you could buy the ticket from, which meant it was accessible easily for young people, and there were busloads going down from different universities to this event, and that would have never happened, those people would never have come had there not been sort of a young connectivity, a young connection with the campaign in a very direct way.

SPEAKER: To just add a quick thing, we conducted a survey of the 59 campaign managers from the -- races on the off year election, the top ten -- races to the House, to the Senate, and to -- focus on youth vote. Most campaign managers -- two-thirds of the campaign managers said they don't even know what percentage of youth was in their district. And we really could have drilled in to the campaign that had more success versus less success. And one of the kind of factors was who did the best job recruiting young voters, gave up control to young voters, more interns, more staff. And like Obama, I'm sure that Obama, you know, a rally was developed by students and by young people up on the campaign. So my advice to campaigns, if you want to connect with young people, ask young people, give them some authority, give them -- give some control and see what happens.

SPEAKER: And also just having campaign coordinators who are young people, because part of the fears that young people look at are, obviously, young people who are in charge of these campaigns. So if there's someone who's, you know, 80 years old trying to tell young people to

get engaged, it's not the same thing as having a 30 year old or a 20 something year old saying, hey guys, this is cool, you should go do this.

SPEAKER: It's just like in Iowa and New Hampshire, when a lot of voters are against people coming and swooping in from different states and telling them how to vote, a lot of young people feel the same way about being patronized or condescended to by a 50 or 60 year old telling them what they should believe, what they should think, and what the world is really about. If young people talk with other young people, they will get motivated and they will be engaged.

MR. LEACH: Joel.

QUESTION: (inaudible) as a means for reaching -- for young people. Not every young person has a computer, I don't believe. How do you -- I mean how do you know that you're getting a reasonable cross-section by using computers?

MR. VOLPE: That's a great question. And to be perfectly honest with you, there's no perfect methodology. Now, what I do know is that, you know, probably about 50 percent more young people have access to internet than access to traditional land line telephones. And it's not the perfect way, but the better way to do it today.

When we look at kind of -- we look at every single interview that we conducted. In doing this online versus the old method of telephone, we have many, many more college universities and many more diverse groups participate in this survey as compared to the previous survey that we

conducted that most people conduct. So again, not perfect, but our, you know, polling is a mixture of both art and science, and I think it's the single best way to reach out to this demographic today.

MR LEACH: Yes, behind Joel.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Could you just add a little bit about the social issues, how social the issues among young people differ from the average voters and what that means for their preferences in the next social issues in gay rights and these kinds of things?

MR. VOLPE: A couple things, first of all, Matt and Marina actually have to make a 12:30 flight to get back to class, so they're going to say goodbye.

MR LEACH: We thank you very much. And we'll just do one more question after this, but go ahead.

MR. VOLPE: I'll just -- for one second. Would you mind just repeating it for one moment so I can address it carefully?

QUESTION: Well, the question was, do you have any indication of social issues, the difference between what you -- as you define young people and their views on social issues and what that means for their preferences, the political preferences in the election.

MR. VOLPE: Overall, they're slightly -- again, we go in detail in the spring. And by the way, all of the 12 previous surveys are online, from the -- you can look into all the kind of results and the cross-tabs and such. Generally speaking, this generation is more liberal when it comes to most

social issues. But I'm hesitant that it's just going to end it there, because there's -- I think the most -- one of the most interesting aspects of this -- is a group that we call Religious Interest.

You know, again, as a generation, yeah, are they more kind of open to gay marriage and other kinds of more liberal social policy, yes. But I think the 25 percent or so who we consider to be religious interest is really kind of where the campaign -- the general election is going to be decided.

Those are folks who are much kind of like when I was growing up to politics, we called -- the Reagan Democrat or the -- they are very liberal on some social issues like homelessness and health care; on the other hand, they're very concerned about the -- to the contrary, not too excited about gay marriage and some of those other issues.

So I don't think it's fair necessarily to say the entire generation is more liberal or open to those policies. Yeah, they are kind of more liberal than older people generally, but there's a very significant group there who are the last people to decide who will kind of conflict on some of those issues, and in some ways look like they're Democrats, and other ways they look like Republicans. We conducted our survey a month before the 2004 campaign, and it was split evenly between Bush and Kerry. So that's something to kind of watch for in terms of this kind of world morale, religion, as well as social policy as it's developed. And we'll dig much deeper into that in the spring time.

MR. LEACH: We'll do one more question. Yes, in the blue.

QUESTION: Thank you. I guess I kind of had -- if I can cheat a little, two really quick ones. The first is employment, I haven't heard employment mentioned, which surprises me as a youth vote today. And I was kind of wondering how that played out compared with other years that you -- on the survey.

And then my second question pertains to student mobility and how that is kind of evolved with the youth vote. It's something that concerns me. I'm not sure, you know, there's lots of voting going on on college campuses, that's great, but who are we not getting, and if that's gotten better or worse? Has increased mobility really deterred voting or has the absentee ballots made up for that? So those are my two questions.

SPEAKER: I think there are a couple of reasons why we see an increase in 2004, one is because of September 11th, and politics actually did matter. We saw lots of indications in our data about the -- dissipate. Politics are much more relevant after September 11th than before September 11th. There are a number of other indications.

I think at the same time we have kind of this growth of these organic social -- other kinds of groups, many of which are here today, you know, Circle, lots of other ones, both on campus and off campus, who are helping mobilize people.

And there are, you know, I think most of those groups started on college campuses because that was kind of the easiest place to find

people. But there are a number of other groups targeting other aspects of kind of that generation, people who are kind of left connected in that way.

So I think the mobilization factor is something that is not perfect, but better than it was actually in 2004, because we're reaching out and organizing young people. And Face Book and Myspace and lots of these online tools make it much more cost effective than even a cycle or two cycles ago. So that's why I continue to be optimistic about the turnout. In terms of jobs, we didn't ask the question. You know, young people generally aren't that concerned. They think of their career not as I did or maybe my parents, my father or mother did, which is a 20 or 30 or 40 year horizon, they think of their career in much shorter terms, you know.

First job, you know, maybe six months, maybe a year, maybe a year and a half before grad school or something. So I don't see kind of the anxiety on the college campuses as I had previously of getting in that first job.

SPEAKER: Let me just add to this, what about --

MR. VOLPE: That's a great question. We haven't dug too deep into that recently so I'm not that comfortable discussing it.

MR. LEACH: Let me say, John's going to stay and we'll be happy to answer any individual questions. But I have a sense that we ought to bring it to an end now. I want to thank you all and thank John particularly. It's been a great session. Thank you.

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