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STUDYING CONGRESSIONAL AND GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGNS

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# Studying Congressional and Gubernatorial Campaigns

R. Michael Alvarez\*

## 1 Do Campaigns Matter?

Political campaigns play a central role in democratic politics. Campaigns are an important source of contact between constituents and their elected representatives. In brief, a campaign can be seen as an attempt by a candidate to disseminate information about his or herself and the opponent, with this information aimed at persuading constituents to turnout and vote for the candidate on election day. This contact between candidate and potential voter can be direct contact (mailings, speeches, campaign appearances, or television advertising) or indirect, as filtered through other individuals (friends, neighbors, campaign workers, or co-workers) or institutions (the mass media).

Most of the literature on political campaigns has focused on presidential election campaigns, and has downplayed the impact of campaigns on voting behavior. The early electoral studies showed that the preferences and attitudes of American voters were amazingly stable during electoral campaigns, and even across elections (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1944; Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960). This implied that either the campaigns do not impart much substantive information, that this information is not received by the electorate, or that campaign information does not sway many voters.

In general, political campaigns were believed not to change the minds of voters, but rather to reinforce their predispositions to vote for a particular candidate. In the words of the Columbia researchers, "What the political campaign did, so to speak, was not to

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form new opinions but to raise old opinions over the thresholds of awareness and decision. Political campaigns are important primarily because they *activate* latent predispositions” (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1944: 74). Indeed, in their work, the Columbia team found that only about 14% of the electorate changed their minds about which candidate to support.

The argument that political campaigns have little effect on the electorate (the “minimal effects” hypothesis) has seen considerable discussion in the literature. From analyses of the impact of television coverage of presidential campaigns (Patterson and McClure 1976; Patterson 1980) to more traditional analyses of attitudinal and preference stability (Finkel 1993), the literature has long been held in the grasp of “minimal effects” findings.

But that grasp seems to be weakening. First, the ties which bound most voters tightly to partisan predispositions seem to have weakened considerably (Fiorina 1981; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Wattenberg 1991). Further, partisanship seems to be much more sensitive to political events and information than originally believed (Allsop and Weisberg 1988; MacKuen, Erikson and Stimson 1992). Also, it is now recognized that a massive quantity of information is made available during many campaigns, and that voters have well-developed strategies for using this information in their decision making (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Graber 1988; Page and Shapiro 1991; Popkin 1991; Sniderman, Brady and Tetlock 1991). In the face of this information, the perceptions of voters become more accurate, which is evidence that the information flow is reaching the electorate (Conover and Feldman 1989; Krosnick 1990; Alvarez 1996).

In the past, information was largely presented to voters as filtered through parties; parties provide the organization through which candidates contacted voters, and candidates relied on their partisan affiliations to provide cues for voters. But now information comes directly from the candidates to the voters in the form of television advertising. At this stage, whether political advertising is informative or not is an open question, with some studies showing that advertising increases voter information (Alvarez 1996; Brians and Wattenberg 1996; Just, Crigler and Wallach 1990); others have shown that recall of advertisements is low (Faber and Storey 1984) and that negative advertising has deleterious effects on candidate evaluation and political efficacy (Ansolabehere et al. 1994; Basil, Schooler and Reeves 1991; Garramone 1984; Garramone 1985; Iyengar and Ansolabehere 1995; Merritt 1984). Other forms of candidate contact with voters, through mass mailings, talk radio interviews, or telephone contacts, are poorly studied and understood.

In this paper I argue that the time is ripe for the National Election Studies to change the focus of the ongoing Congressional component of the NES so that the impact of campaigns on constituents might be better assessed. There is no doubt that since the last major revision of the NES Congressional component in 1978 that much has been learned about the importance of information about candidates and candidate quality (Abramowitz 1980; Goldenberg and Traugott 1984; Mann and Wolfinger 1980; Hinkley 1980; Jacobson 1981). Also, much has been written about constituency service and “the

personal vote” (Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987).

What we currently know about campaign effects, however, is mainly derived from analyses of presidential election campaigns. There is no question that presidential campaigns are important to study, as they involve the competition for the nation’s highest political office and are the focus of great media, elite and voter interest every four years. Yet I argue that if we want to understand the effects of political campaigns on the electorate, presidential campaigns have some characteristics which make them a poor case for exclusive attention.

There is no question that presidential campaigns are high-profile and high-information events. This facilitates the collection of contextual data about each campaign. But it is surprising to find that there is very little variation in both the media coverage and the intensity of each campaign in recent presidential elections (Alvarez 1996; Graber 1983; Patterson 1980). Without much variation across campaigns in media coverage or intensity, it is difficult to see how presidential elections can aid in determining how campaigns influence the electorate.

Also the sample of presidential elections is terribly limited. Since the advent of systematic survey sampling in the 1940’s there have only been a handful of presidential elections. The paucity of presidential elections also limits the variance we observe in these campaigns, which inhibits our ability to unravel the impact of political campaigns on voters.

These two critiques of the exclusive focus on presidential elections demonstrate the unique way in which the NES congressional component can have a vast impact on the study of campaigns. In each presidential election cycle there are almost 1000 races for congressional and gubernatorial seats. The sheer number of sub-national races relative to presidential races is overwhelming. Thus, congressional and gubernatorial campaigns provide a much better laboratory for studying campaign effects, given the dramatically higher number of observations and the greater amount of variance which would be observed in sub-national races.

Importantly, the variance in campaign variables — intensity, resource availability and utilization, television advertising, media coverage, candidate appearances, and so on — is quite high in sub-national campaigns. For example, campaign intensity (which can be seen as a summary measure of many aspects of campaign activity) varies quite dramatically between Senate and House races, with Senate races thought to be much more competitive than House races (Abramowitz and Segal 1992; Westlye 1991). In Table 1 I present the numbers and percentages of races which *Congressional Quarterly* classified as competitive or not.

In Table 1 there are higher percentages of highly competitive Senate races than House races in 1994 (28% in the Senate contrasted to 9% in the House). But notice that there are four times the number of highly competitive House races in 1994, and approximately seven times as many somewhat competitive House races. This implies that as a laboratory

for studying campaigns these House races are an important and underutilized resource for understanding the role of campaigns in American elections. By ignoring these House races in the study of campaigns, there is less variation to study. By focusing on only 18 relatively intense Senate races, instead of the 116 relatively intense House and Senate races in 1994, we risk losing important variation which can explain how campaigns inform voters, and how they persuade the electorate. Thus while the Senate Election Study (SES) has provided some opportunity to study Senate campaigns (Franklin 1991), the SES has limited utility since it examined only a few campaigns in each election year.

**Table 1 goes here**

Thus, with changes in design and content, the NES congressional component could greatly enhance our understanding of how campaigns influence the electorate. In the remainder of this paper, I discuss a number of avenues which might be taken by the NES to pursue this goal. First I elaborate on the types of campaign effects which might be studied, and present some empirical results from my research. Then I discuss in detail a series of steps which might be taken to re-engineer the NES congressional component to better understand the role of electoral campaigns in American democracy.

## 2 How Do Campaigns Matter?

Political campaigns in American politics can consume the better part of a calendar year. In presidential politics, for example, the struggle for a party's nomination now begins in the fall of the year preceding the election, and proceeds through the primary season, the party conventions, and then the general election campaign in the fall. Congressional and gubernatorial campaigns are more closely tied to the primary election calendar in each state, and in many instances, tightly contested and hard-fought primary campaigns are conducted in the spring and early summer of the election year.

Since political campaigns have this temporal component, clearly they might have both short- and long-term effects on the electorate. In the short-term, campaigns devise strategies for getting their message out, and for attacking their opponents. Also, campaigns change their strategies, often in response to the attacks or the messages of their opponents. So in the short-run, the tactics of campaigns can frequently change, and these short-term tactical effects are quite important to measure and understand.

Additionally, during the course of campaigns, there are many particular events which might have short-term effects on the electorate. In presidential campaigns, a signal event which marks the beginning of the general election season is each party's nomination convention, a time when there is intense media coverage of each party's positions and nominees. Also, there are staged debates between candidates in presidential campaigns; in many congressional and gubernatorial races there are also locally-covered debates and question-and-answer sessions. Last there are candidate appearances and gaffes, both of which are often cited by the press and popular pundits as having effects on electoral

evaluations of candidates. These campaign events might have strong short-term effects on the electorate which are important to understand.

On the other hand, campaigns can also have a longer-term, or cumulative effect on the electorate. Campaigns often have broad strategic messages which they try to communicate to the electorate. Campaign appearances, speeches, and advertisements are all typically geared to “staying on message”; the result of this targeted message could be a cumulative learning effect for the electorate. In the 1992 presidential election, for example, the Clinton campaign pushed “It’s the economy, stupid; change versus more of the same; don’t forget health care” as their broad themes. How these broader themes are communicated to the electorate, and how they influence electoral behavior, need to be better understood.

Furthermore, campaigns can be seen as time of communication between candidates and voters, a period where political learning can occur. Incumbents discuss what they have done while in office, and what they plan to do if returned to office. Their challengers attempt to cast a negative light on the incumbent’s activities, and also try to let the electorate know that their performance will be superior to the incumbent’s. Outside parties — predominantly organized interest groups — independently communicate to the electorate their “spin” on the incumbent and the challenger.

This ought to have at least four types of lasting effects on the electorate. First, as voters obtain more information about both the incumbent and the challenger, they should learn about the positions of each candidate on important issues, about the record of the incumbent, and about the personal background and traits of the candidates. Second, as they learn, voters ought to become more confident about these same dimensions of candidate evaluation. Third, voters might be persuaded that certain dimensions of candidate evaluation are more important than others. Fourth, voters might alter their own political attitudes, like their personal ideology, partisanship, or issue positions, as the result of information they obtained during a particular campaign.

Thus, campaigns may have both short- and long-run effects on the electorate. In the next section of this paper, I give some empirical examples of both short- and long-run effects drawn from my own research. I discuss four research projects which are all aimed at understanding how campaigns matter: an examination of the content of newspaper coverage in sub-national races; a study of television advertising strategies in sub-national races; showing how television advertisements influence voter knowledge of candidates; and showing how voters learn about Senate candidates during campaigns. These examples demonstrate that the short- and long-run effects of campaigns can be measured, and that they can influence the electorate.

## 2.1 Newspaper Coverage of Sub-National Races

As part of a continuing project studying the dynamics of state-wide campaigns, I collected every article written about the 1994 Senate and Governor’s race in California from

the major California newspapers — the Los Angeles Times, the Sacramento Bee, the Pasadena Star-News, the San Jose Mercury News, the San Francisco Examiner, the San Diego Tribune and the Oakland Tribune — from May 23, 1994 until November 8, 1994. This period runs from two weeks before the state primary, through election day. The papers in this study were selected to give a balance of coverage from Northern California (San Jose Mercury news, San Francisco Examiner, and Oakland Tribune) southern California (Los Angeles Times, Pasadena Star-News, and San Diego Union Tribune), and the state capital (Sacramento Bee).

The basic unit of analysis was an individual article. An article was selected for inclusion in the study if it was primarily focused on the 1994 Senate and gubernatorial elections in California. Once selected for inclusion, each article was read carefully by the coders and was assigned up to two themes or topics. Each theme or topic, then, was broken into three components: a person/actor, a subject, and an evaluation. The first two codes, for the person/actor and subject, were open-ended codes. This allowed for single or multiple person/actors to be coded, as well as multiple subjects. The evaluation codes were positive or negative. Additionally, information was coded about the article — where it was positioned in the newspaper, the date, length, and type (newspaper reporter, wire service, or editorial).

This produced a large dataset, with 2056 articles examined and coded. These are distributed across the seven newspapers in the study with 471 Sacramento Bee stories (22.9%), 445 Los Angeles Times stories (21.6%), 276 San Francisco Examiner stories (12.4%), 271 San Jose Mercury News stories (13.2%), 260 San Diego Union Tribune stories (12.7%), 192 Pasadena Star-News stories (9.3%) and 141 Oakland Tribune stories (6.9%).

To facilitate analysis, the focus is on each article-theme. I used only article-themes which were associated with only one of the four major-party general election candidates (Feinstein, Huffington, Wilson and Brown). Thus, no article-themes were used in the analysis which had more than one subject identified in the coding. Then, the data were slightly aggregated into two week periods, which produced twelve discrete time points. Two further steps were taken with the data so that I could test the hypotheses associated with campaign content. First, a variable was coded for the general subject of the article-theme — campaign hoopla, issue or personality coverage. The guidelines for these categories followed Patterson's (1980) division of coverage.<sup>1</sup> And last, the

<sup>1</sup>Specifically, the open-ended subjects generated by the coders were categorized as follows. **Campaign Hoopla:** debate, debating techniques, chances of winning, campaign schedules, advertising attacks, campaign-staff, fundraising, media events, campaign visits, polls and potential voters, voter confidence, endorsements, women voters, television advertisements and coverage, political strength, money and campaign finance, past races, sports analogies, slate mailers, political action committee contributions, presidential and vice-presidential appearances, media fairness, election laws, and Wilson's presidential aspirations. **Issues:** governor's performance, political reforms and "change", death penalty, generation of jobs, campaign platform planks, crime, immigration, education, office record, state budget and taxes, small business creation, health care, tourism, Clinton's economic plan, trimming bureaucracy, California exports, worker's compensation reform, affirmative action, birth control and abortion, three-strikes bill,

article-subjects which were classified as issue-based were placed into one of issue-areas: past performance, reform or “change”, crime, economy, ideology, immigration, education, fiscal affairs, social issues, environmental issues, foreign issues, and transportation. Of these, five were by far the most prominent — economy, crime, immigration, fiscal affairs and social issues.<sup>2</sup>

These data allow for the testing of a number of hypotheses about state-wide elections (Alvarez 1995). In brief, the hypotheses I examine are:

1. Candidates for the governor’s office will receive more newspaper coverage than Senate candidates.
2. Incumbents will receive more newspaper coverage than challengers.
3. Coverage of campaign events (“hoopla”) should dominate personality and issue coverage.
4. Coverage of “state” issues (those relating to control of the state government) should dominate coverage of the governor’s race, while coverage of “national” issues should dominate coverage of the Senate race.

In the top panel of Figure 1 are the total number of stories in each biweekly period for the two Senate (Feinstein and Huffington) and the two gubernatorial (Wilson and Brown) candidates. This figure shows that for the majority of the 1994 campaign the gubernatorial candidates did outstrip the Senate candidates in newspaper coverage. Also, for much of this period (before the middle of October), the gubernatorial candidates received almost twice the newspaper coverage as did the Senate candidates.

**Figure 1 goes here**

However, in the last three periods of the campaign, from the middle of October through election day, the two Senate candidates began to receive more coverage than the gubernatorial candidates. The reasons for this sudden change at the very end of the campaign are unclear at this point; however, they probably can be traced to some combination of campaign events — Huffington’s surprising ability to run neck-to-neck with Feinstein, the last minute positioning by each candidate on the issue of illegal

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family values, environmental issues, term limits and Proposition 140, education, military base closings, liberalism, gun control, domestic partner’s legislation, drugs, Proposition 13, welfare, foreign affairs, and highway construction. **Personality:** Brown family ties, SEC investigation of candidates, personal relations to celebrities, comparisons to other prominent politicians, past experience, Arianna Huffington, Huffington as a carpetbagger, candidate finances, candidate religions, families of candidates, personal ethics of candidates, general personalities, personal reasons for running, anti-semitic remarks, and hiring of nanny.

<sup>2</sup>These five were coded as follows. **Economy:** generation of jobs, general California economy, small business creation, tourism, Clinton’s economic plan, California exports, worker’s compensation reform, and military base closings. **Crime:** death penalty, crime, three-strikes bill, and gun control. **Immigration:** immigration, and Proposition 187. **Fiscal Affairs:** state budget and taxes and Proposition 13. **Social Issues:** health care, affirmative action, birth control and abortion, family values, domestic partner’s legislation, and welfare.

immigration and Proposition 187, and the fact that both candidates became embroiled in similar controversies of their employment of illegal immigrants in their households.<sup>3</sup> But the general conclusion to be taken from this figure is that the simple version of the hypothesis that governor's races receive more newspaper coverage does not hold.

By turning to the bottom panel of Figure 1, where I give the total number of stories for each of the four candidates, further complexity emerges — as do additional problems for the claims made about coverage of candidates in subnational elections. Recall that the second hypothesis claimed that **incumbents will receive more coverage in newspapers than challengers, no matter the seat they are running for**. And keep in mind that the incumbents here are Feinstein and Wilson.

First, the spike in the last three campaign periods observed in the top panel of Figure 1 clearly is due to an enormous change in the number of stories devoted to Huffington in the last month or so of the race. But, also worth notice is the observation that in the last three periods of the campaign the other three candidates — Feinstein, Brown and Wilson — each received almost the same levels of coverage. Other than Huffington, who was a clear outlier in the last month, the other candidates virtually received the same amount of coverage. And the coverage of incumbent and challenger in each race do seem to track each other, again with the exception of coverage of Huffington in the last weeks of the electoral season.

In the earlier periods of the election year, though, notice that there is not much of a bias towards disproportionately high coverage of the incumbents. In the first four periods of the campaign, Wilson did get slightly more coverage than did Brown, and he also received more coverage in mid-August. But during the other periods of the campaign, Kathleen Brown was getting as much written about her candidacy in the newspapers.

But, the same dynamic was not apparent in the Senate race. There Feinstein received more coverage than Huffington in only one early period of the campaign (the period ending June 19). In each of the remaining periods, Feinstein generally received less coverage than did Huffington, and in a few cases she received roughly equal levels of coverage. Thus, in the 1994 California races there was little sign of a positive bias towards coverage of the gubernatorial incumbent, and no sign of a similar bias towards the Senate incumbent.

Next, I present in Figure 2 the total number of stories in each period broken down by the three types of coverage. Figure 2 shows first that hoopla coverage — stories with themes devoted to campaign appearances, the horserace, and campaign activities — clearly was an important component of the coverage in California. In periods immediately surrounding the primary and general election, hoopla coverage dominated the other forms of coverage. However, and importantly, issue coverage was equivant to or even greater than hoopla coverage during most of this electoral season. And issue-based coverage

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<sup>3</sup>We are currently linking the trends in coverage to both campaign events and the relative standings of the candidates in each race.

shows a very sharp spike in the last weeks of October, during the period of time many voters may be making up their minds about which candidate to support.

**Figure 2 goes here**

Also worth mention in Figure 2 is the relatively lower level of personality based coverage during this election. During most of the election season, through mid-September, discussions of candidate personality were minimal across the state, numbering in general less than fifty article-subjects across the seven papers. Then, personality-based coverage picks up, and tracks the other two types of coverage through election day.

The results in Figure 2 are most striking when placed in the context of Patterson's results for the 1976 presidential election (Patterson 1980), which demonstrated that the relative proportions of hoopla to substantive (both issue and personality) coverage were roughly 60% hoopla and 30% substantive. Here, it is clear that in these two state-wide races the proportions were not 2:1, but were more like 1:1 or better for substantive coverage across the entire course of this election year.

Another test of the third hypothesis comes when I break down the coverage across the two different races. This is done in Figure 3, where the top panel gives the coverage content for the gubernatorial race and the bottom panel gives the coverage content for the Senate race. Beginning with the gubernatorial race, notice that the content of coverage in this race was dominated by issue-based coverage. Only in three of the periods did hoopla coverage exceed issue coverage. Also worth notice is that the peak of issue coverage in the governor's race occurred in the period just before the election — again, the time when we might expect that issue coverage would have the greatest effect on candidate choice. Last, personality coverage was a significant (almost at equal levels to hoopla coverage) factor in the last half of the election.

**Figure 3 goes here**

Turning to the bottom panel of Figure 3, notice that through mid-September that there was no clear "winner" among the three categories of coverage. Hoopla, issue and personality coverage were all at roughly equal and low levels. It was only in the last two full months of the Senate race that a dynamic emerged, with personality-based coverage dominating through the rest of the campaign. During this same period of time, issue-coverage actually was greater than hoopla coverage, until the last period of the campaign.

Thus, the two races demonstrated remarkably different dynamics of coverage content during this election. In the gubernatorial election, issue coverage generally dominated, peaking just before the election. In the Senate election, only in the last two months of the election did a clear pattern emerge, with personality-based coverage jumping to the front. These two differences are difficult to reconcile with the third hypothesis, which stated that hoopla coverage should dominate, no matter which race we examine. That clearly does not happen in these two races.

To get a better understanding what might be causing these two differences, I have broken these coverage content numbers down even further, and present them by candi-

date. The coverage content in the governor's race is given in Figure 4, which Wilson in the top panel and Brown in the bottom panel.

**Figure 4 goes here**

There it is apparent that the enormous amount of issue coverage in the early periods of the governor's race is driven largely by issue-based stories referencing Wilson, the incumbent. But even towards the end of the race, issue-based stories still dominate the other two forms of coverage for Wilson.

The picture for Brown is much more complicated. For her, hoopla coverage was much more prominent across the whole campaign, with hoopla often dominating her newspaper coverage, most especially during the primary season, in the middle of September, and in the last two weeks of the general election. However, issue coverage of Brown was sometimes quite high, and it was greater than hoopla coverage in the four weeks before the end of the campaign season. Again, in the governor's race voters were receiving what seems like an enormous amount of issue-based information from the state newspapers about both gubernatorial candidates.

But what about the Senate race? Similar graphs are given in Figure 5, with Feinstein in the top panel and Huffington in the bottom panel. In general, Feinstein received more issue coverage than hoopla or personality coverage. But she got only marginally more issue coverage, and in the period leading up to general election day, when the closeness of the Senate race became increasingly apparent, hoopla coverage for Feinstein beat the other forms of coverage by a wide margin.

**Figure 5 goes here**

But Huffington's coverage explains the dramatic rise in personality coverage seen in Figure 5 in the Senate race. Most of those personality-oriented stories in the last two months of the Senate race were about Huffington, no doubt arising as the media focused on Huffington's hiring of illegal immigrants as household workers. But notice that in the last three campaign periods there were also a substantial number of issue-based stories about Huffington, almost twice the number of hoopla stories.

Thus, it seems that as far as the Senate and governor's races in 1994 in California are concerned, the hypothesis that the media is concerned primarily about hoopla and campaigning clearly does not comport with the data. Across Figures 3-5 I have presented the content of the coverage broken down in different ways, and have shown that in general, hoopla coverage was not the dominant form of coverage in these campaigns.

To examine the issue content of the newspaper coverage, In Table 2 I give the breakdown of the five prominent issues in the newspaper content data for both races. Here, there are a number of dynamics which deserve mention. In the first three campaign periods, in general the coverage focused on fiscal affairs, followed by immigration. Then, in the period August 7 through September 4, coverage of crime rose to prominence. Thereafter, through the end of the general election, immigration became the dominant issue.

## Table 2 goes here

To determine if this was true in both the Senate and governor's races, I present in Table 2 issue coverage broken down by the governor's candidates (top panel) and Senate candidates (bottom panel). In the top, notice the spike in coverage of fiscal affairs in the first two months of the governor's campaign — the periods including the primary and just thereafter. But, coverage of fiscal affairs diminishes rapidly in late June. Within the next month, crime enjoys a one-period rise to prominence in the governor's race. Then in the next six periods, immigration becomes the dominant issue in the governor's campaign. Only in one period, that running from October 3 through October 16, did another issue rise in coverage above immigration, and that was the economy.

In the Senate race, both similarities and differences can be seen (bottom panel). Here, immigration was the dominant issue in mid-June, but disappeared in the newspaper coverage of the Senate race until early October (at which time the Senate candidates began to take polarized positions on their support of Proposition 187). In mid- to late-August there is a rise in the coverage of social issues in the Senate race, paralleled by a similar rise in mid- to late-October.

Thus, in Table 2 there is some support for the fourth hypothesis. In the issue coverage of the governor's candidates, there were periods where issues which are primarily tied to the state were prominent — fiscal affairs and the economy. In the issue coverage of the Senate candidates, there were two periods where coverage of social issues, which the Senate does have some jurisdiction, were prominent. But in both the Senate and the governor's race, the overwhelming issue in California was immigration. And unfortunately for my desire to test this particular hypothesis, immigration is an issue which really is difficult to label either as either being a “federalist” or “nationalist”.

## 2.2 Television Advertisements in Sub-National Campaigns

The second component of my study of state-wide campaigns involved an analysis of campaign advertising in the 1994 California Senate and governor's races. During the last 8 weeks of the general election campaign, I videotaped prime-time coverage (6pm-midnight) of the two top-watched channels in Los Angeles — KABC and KNBC. This yielded 682 advertisements, 340 from KABC and 342 from KNBC. From these videotapes, we constructed a database which describes on a daily basis which advertisements were aired and when they were aired. The advertisements were also content analyzed to determine the candidate sponsoring each advertisement, the type of advertisement (positive, attack or contrast) the target of the ad (the sponsoring candidate, the opponent, or a comparative ad), the general content (issues, personality and background, and record) and up to four specific themes.

Very little is known in the academic literature about the strategies of campaign advertising. This is largely due to the lack of consistent data on candidate advertisements

(West 1993). What little is known about campaign advertisement strategies comes from selective sampling of advertisements from campaigns (West 1993) or from experimental studies (Ansolabehere et al 1994; Iyengar and Ansolabehere 1996; Garramone 1985; Garramone et al 1990).

In Figure 6 I present five charts, each of which gives the frequency of advertisements on a daily basis over the last 8 weeks of the 1994 California campaigns. In the lower right-hand corner of Figure 6 is given the advertising frequency across the four campaigns. The clear pattern across the four campaigns is that the frequency of advertisements increases quite dramatically over the final two months of the campaign, with a sharp increase in the final day of the campaign.

**Figure 6 goes here**

The other four charts in Figure 6 give the frequency of advertisements broken down for the individual campaigns. The top two charts are for Wilson and Brown, while the bottom two are for Huffington and Feinstein. For the governor's candidates, notice that Wilson seems to keep a consistent level of advertising maintained throughout the last two months of the race. However, Brown actually does not air any advertisements on many days scattered throughout the race, and interestingly, does not air any advertisements in the final few days of the race. In the Senate race, by contrast, Huffington maintains a steady rate of advertising, with a slight rise towards the end of the race. Feinstein does the same, but in the last day of the campaign, Feinstein airs a significantly greater number of advertisements.

Figure 7 examines the type of advertisement aired. All of the advertisements were classified as either a positive advertisement (positive statements about the candidate or the opponent), attack (negative statements about the opponent) or comparative (statements contrasting the sponsoring candidate with the opponent). In the lower right-hand chart are given the total frequencies for the four campaigns. There it is clear that the overwhelming proportion of advertisements in these races were attack advertisements. The remainder were equally balanced between positive and comparative ads.

**Figure 7 goes here**

The other four charts in Figure 7 break down advertisement type by candidate, with the governor's candidates in the top row and the senate candidates in the bottom row. In the governor's race, Wilson, the incumbent, aired mainly positive advertisements, with a few attack ads, and no comparative ads. In general, as will be revealed in subsequent results, most of Wilson's ads in this race discussed a series of campaign promises about the state's economy, immigration reform, and crime. Brown, on the other hand, aired mainly attack ads, with only a few positive ads (about her economic and education reform plans) and a few comparative ads.

The Senate candidates both concentrated on attack advertisements. Huffington aired mainly attack ads, followed closely by contrast ads. Feinstein aired mainly attack ads, sprinkled with a few contrast ads. Neither Senate candidate aired many positive ads.

Next, Figure 8 gives results for the targeting of the advertisements. Across the four campaigns (the lower right-hand chart), the primary target of television advertisements was the candidate's opponent. Ads about the candidate, and comparative ads, were far fewer in number.

**Figure 8 goes here**

The other four charts in Figure 8 break the ad target down by candidate. Wilson, the gubernatorial incumbent, ran ads primarily focusing on himself, with a few talking about Brown. Brown ran ads mainly talking about Wilson, though. Huffington, the Senate challenger, split this ads almost equally between ads about Feinstein and comparative ads. Feinstein ran almost only ads about Huffington.

Last in Figure 9 I present charts for the general content of the television ads ran by each candidate. Content here is broken down into stories about issues, about candidate personality and background, and about the candidate's past political record. In the lower right-hand chart are given the total frequencies of general coverage for all four candidates. Notice that the frequencies of issue, personal and record coverage were relatively the same over these four campaigns, with personal and background coverage slightly predominating.

**Figure 9 goes here**

But it is very apparent that cross-campaign heterogeneity exists in the general content of the advertisements. Wilson ran ads almost exclusively about issues, which his challenger (Brown) focused mainly on the record of both Wilson as governor and herself as state treasurer. There is a similar amount of heterogeneity in the Senate race. Huffington focused largely on Feinstein's record, while Feinstein ran ads targeting Huffington's background.

These four figures provide a revealing portrait behind the candidate strategies in the 1994 California elections. A composite sketch of each campaign shows:

- Wilson was on the television consistently throughout the last 8 weeks of his reelection race. His advertisements were mainly positive, about his issue positions.
- Brown ran advertisements sporadically, and was not on the air in the important final days of the race. Her ads were primarily attack ads, aimed at Wilson's record in office.
- Feinstein was on the air most of these 8 weeks, with a saturation attack of her ads on the last day of the race. She used mainly attack ads, aimed at Huffington's background and personality.
- Huffington was on the air consistently throughout this period. He ran mainly attack ads, targeting Feinstein's record; he also ran some comparative ads, which took on Feinstein's issue positions and background.

Thus by examining candidate general election television advertising, a composite sketch of each candidate's strategies can be obtained.

However, there is additional information in the television advertisement data. For example, I classified the issue-based advertisements in these races into the same categories used in the analysis of the newspaper articles — the economy, crime, immigration, fiscal and social issues. The weekly breakdown of television advertisement issue coverage for both races, and in each specific race, are given in Table 3.

**Table 3 goes here**

The top panel of Table 3 gives the issue frequency for both races over the final eight weeks of this campaign. Two points are important. In both races, fiscal issues predominated the issues discussed by the candidates, followed by social issues, immigration, crime and the economy. But notice the temporal dynamics of issue discussion in these races. Early in the general election, fiscal and social issues dominate the candidate advertisements. In the fourth week, though, discussion shifts to crime, but in the last two weeks fiscal, social, the economy and immigration all jump back into focus.

However these aggregate issue counts mask considerable heterogeneity in each race. In the Senate race (middle panel) the dynamic is clear — first fiscal issues are important, followed by crime in the fourth week, only to end with a discussion of immigration and social issues. The governor's race (bottom panel) is more complex. Fiscal and social issues dominate in early weeks. In the fourth week the economy and immigration become the focus of debate. The discussion shifts to crime and fiscal affairs in the fifth week. In the last two weeks, fiscal issues, the economy, social issues and immigration become important.

In general, the cumulative counts give a measure of the importance of each type of issue in these races. In the Senate race the candidates talked about immigration, with fiscal affairs, crime and social issues next in importance. In the Governor's race, the candidates focused more on fiscal issues, followed by social issues and the economy. Crime and immigration were actually discussed with much less frequency by the governor's candidates.

But notice the overlaps and disjunctions between the types of issues the candidates discussed and what the newspapers were covering (Table 2). In the newspaper coverage of the Senate race, immigration was most important, followed by social issues. Discussed with far less frequency were fiscal issues and crime. Thus, the candidates and the newspapers seemed to focus on immigration as the most prominent issue in the Senate race, and they agreed that social and fiscal issues, and crime were of secondary importance.

In the governor's race, the newspaper coverage prioritized immigration and fiscal issues, followed by crime and the economy. The disjunction between candidate and newspaper discussion of immigration is striking. Also, the candidates for governor preferred to discuss social issues more than did the newspapers.

To conclude, this case study of the 1994 California Senate and governor's campaigns produces relevant results for the study of sub-national elections. First, the temporal dynamics of these races should be apparent. Over the course of these general election campaigns, the content and focus of both newspaper and candidate advertisements changed significantly. Second, there is substantial heterogeneity between races and specific campaigns in their strategies, and in the information they transmit to the electorate. This implies that studies which produce aggregated measures of campaign content (i.e., studies which classify races as positive or negative or issue-based or personality-based) are potentially losing significant and important information about the campaigns under study. Third, the analysis of television advertisements gives a clear indication of candidate strategy. Fourth, by measuring campaign information in both the newspapers and in television advertisements we obtain measures of the information flow to the electorate.

### 2.3 Advertising and Candidate Issue Uncertainty

My next example focuses on whether candidate advertisements influence voter knowledge of candidate issue positions. Here I examine results from the 1992 presidential election campaign which are taken from Alvarez 1996. I used NES data from the presidential election to study the amount of uncertainty voters had about the issue positions of each of the presidential candidates (Bush, Clinton and Perot). Uncertainty here was measured as the squared difference between each voter's placement of each candidate on a seven-point ideological scale and the candidate's "true" position on that same ideological scale (for more discussion of measurement of candidate issue position uncertainty see Alvarez 1996, Chapter 4.)

This uncertainty measure was regressed on a series of variables measuring each voter's political information costs, the voter's candidate preference and the voter's exposure to political information both in the mass media and from television advertisements (Alvarez 1996). In Table 4 I present the results from these regression models.

**Table 4 goes here**

Looking down the columns in Table 4 it is apparent that the higher a voter's cost of information, the greater her uncertainty about a candidate's issue positions. Generally, political information, race, gender and education all have coefficient estimates which demonstrate that the higher a voter's information costs, the greater her uncertainty about the candidate.

The coefficients of primary interest here are those for whether the voter recalled seeing one of the candidate's television advertisements. If television advertisements were informative about the candidate's issue positions, I would expect the coefficient on this variable to be negative — recalling a candidate advertisement should reduce the voter's uncertainty about the candidate.

In Table 4, two of these coefficients are negative (for Clinton and Perot advertisements) but only one is statistically significant (Perot). These results indicate that for

Bush and Clinton, who were the major-party candidates, television advertisements did not have a statistically significant impact of voter uncertainty of their issue positions. But for Perot — the independent challenger — a voter who could recall seeing a Perot television advertisement was significantly more certain of Perot’s positions (controlling for candidate preference, information costs and information exposure).

There are a number of possible explanations for this result. For independent or third party candidates suffer from a lack of exposure. Since they are not members of an established party, they lack the infrastructure and financing for getting their message to the electorate. They also lack the partisan and ideological cues which come with major-party affiliation. Thus independent candidates start with little exposure, and voters are poorly informed about their positions on issues.

But Perot was a different type of independent candidate, since he personally bankrolled his campaign. Having a huge personal fortune, and a willingness to spend it on his campaign, Perot was able to transmit large quantities of information to the electorate via his long “infomercials”. Armed with piles of charts, a pointer, and his folksy voice, Perot seems to have informed the electorate through his television advertisement campaign.

This analysis demonstrates that candidate television advertisements can have a positive effect on voter knowledge of candidate issue positions. It also shows that the inclusion of questions about candidate television advertisements in the 1992 NES presidential study yields important results. This can be viewed as a long-run effect of this presidential campaign; voters who could recall seeing a Perot advertisement were significantly more certain of his issue position.

## 2.4 The Dynamics of Learning in Senate Elections

My last example again focuses on voter uncertainty about candidate issue positions. But here I look at the dynamics of this uncertainty for Senate candidates in the 1992 elections. Franklin and I conducted a rolling cross-section survey from early September through the end of November in the 48 contiguous states. We interviewed 877 respondents throughout this period (Alvarez and Franklin 1995). In this survey, we focused on the knowledge respondents had about their Senators and their challengers. We used two types of knowledge measures. One set was the standard type of information measures, where we asked respondents to rate a Senator or challenger on a feeling thermometer, and to place them on two seven-point issue scales. Following those issue placements, we asked respondents a series of questions designed to measure their subjective uncertainty about the candidate’s issue position, how clear the candidate had been on the issues, and how much they heard about the candidate on the issue (Alvarez and Franklin 1994). This yields nine information measures.

These nine information measures form the basis of our analysis (Alvarez and Franklin 1995). We model each information variable as a function of measures chosen to examine the variance across respondents, across the campaign, and across the settings and

resources of each Senate race. Most important for this discussion, though, is our measure of the week of the election. We measure the cumulative impact of the campaign by the number of weeks before the campaign. If learning occurs during a campaign, this coefficient ought to be positive. This means that as a campaign progresses, knowledge increases.

Instead of presenting the parameter estimates here, I concentrate on only the dynamic learning effects by examining the magnitude of the estimated effect of these coefficients in the models discussed above. Our approach differs for the binary and ordered probit models. In the binary probit models, we calculated the probability that an “average” voter would recognize and rate the candidate, and place her on the abortion or liberal-conservative scales.<sup>4</sup> We calculated these probabilities at the beginning and at the end of the campaign.

#### Table 4 goes here

The results of these calculations are presented in Table 4. There we also give the change in probability over the course of the election in the binary probit models. The first point to make about these probability calculations is to note again that they are all correctly signed — people are uniformly *better informed* at the end of these electoral campaigns than at the beginning. We believe this is an extremely important result. Secondly, note also that the changes attributed to the campaign are usually greater for challengers and open seat candidates than for incumbents. We will come back to this point later in this section, and discuss there the implications of these results.

The other models were ordered probit models, which are no where as simple to analyze (Greene 1993). To determine the marginal effects of the campaign on the probability of being “pretty certain” about a candidate’s position, for example, we must take into consideration the estimated coefficients, the values of the other independent variables, and the estimated “thresholds” (the  $\mu$ ’s in each table). Since the marginal effects of the campaign variable will depend upon the probability density at these particular points, we calculate both the probabilities of a “high” score (the probabilities of being very certain, having heard a lot, and that the information was very clear) as well as of having a “moderate” score on each scale (the probabilities of being pretty certain, having heard some, and that the information was pretty clear). These we give for the abortion items in Table 5 and ideology in Table 6.

#### Tables 5 and 6 go here

The conclusions to be drawn from Tables 5 and 6 mirror those of the earlier analysis. First, while the magnitudes of the campaign effects are not always extremely large, *they are always positive*. That is, in each of these models, the campaign uniformly increases the level of information possessed by voters. Second, the general pattern spotted in Table 4 which seemed to show that the campaign increased voter knowledge of open

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<sup>4</sup>We held the information and tenure variables to their sample means, the partisan agreement and ideological extremity variables were set to zero, and the media market dominance in the state was assumed to be low (0.01). These values were assumed in all of the binary and ordered probit calculation.

seat candidates and challengers much more than incumbents, are also borne out in these calculations.

These patterns are quite understandable. A large part of the advantage of incumbency is visibility, and in the case of Senate incumbents, being visible for at least six years. The incumbents, then, begin the campaign with a higher threshold of visibility. So voters begin the campaign with more information about incumbents and less learning about incumbents occurs during campaigns. But the task facing challengers and open seat candidates is different, since they need to quickly and effectively become visible and known to state-wide constituencies. So while challengers and open seat candidates begin the campaign with little exposure and visibility, there is a great potential for campaign-induced learning by voters. And this is exactly what we show in our results — while little learning occurs about incumbents at the margin, a substantial amount of learning occurs about challengers and open seat candidates.

There are two implications of this empirical example for the NES congressional component. First, it is possible to measure campaign effects with a rolling cross-sectional design. While we used our rolling cross-section to examine the long-term cumulative learning which occurred in these Senate races, this design could be employed to study short-term campaign effects. Second, there are a series of survey questions which are not contained in the usual NES studies which measure voter information about important dimensions of candidate evaluation. Thus the design of this study, the questions asked in our survey, and the strength of the results we obtained, all provide arguments for serious reconsideration of the basic NES congressional study design.

### 3 NES and Studying Campaigns

I have argued that there are campaigns have both short- and long-run effects on voters. In the previous section, I discussed empirical results from four different projects, all aimed at discovering these effects of the campaign on voters. The short-run effects of campaign events and tactical decisions made by candidates can be seen in the newspaper and television advertisement data; when I presented these data over the course of these campaigns many short-term and tactical events were identified and discussed. The long-run, or cumulative, effects of campaigns could be seen in the effects of Perot advertisements on voter certainty of Perot issue positions as well as in the results I presented which show evidence of voter learning across Senate campaigns in 1992.

I propose that the NES focus attention on congressional and gubernatorial campaigns. The NES calls the biannual midterm studies “congressional election studies”; I argue that the NES needs to return to studying *elections and campaigns* and to refrain from studying *the institutional advantages of incumbents*. There is no doubt that much has been learned about the incumbent “advantage”, and that more research needs to be done to fully understand why voters seem to prefer incumbents to challengers, all else equal. But this does not mean that the NES needs to continue including battery after battery

of questions probing dozens of dimensions of constituent contact and knowledge of her incumbent.

In recent past, the focus of the congressional components of the NES studies has not been suited to studying these campaigns, and has often ignored one of the most important actors in these political struggles — the candidates fighting for the right to represent a district or state. As Krasno concludes his study of House and Senate elections:

But if there is a broader lesson about politics to be drawn from this book it is that the candidates cannot be ignored. Candidates do the public relations work for the election. They compete, and their actions attract attention from the media and the public. The political themes that may dominate a campaign . . . do not spring up without help. Candidates give voice to these issues. Candidates also have another essential role: establishing their own credibility (Krasno 1994: 168).

To study the congressional and gubernatorial campaigns, I propose three areas of change for the NES: changes in the basic design of the NES to better analyze these races, the development and use of survey questions which focus on sub-national candidates and campaigns, and the collection and integration of contextual data about these campaigns.

### 3.1 Changes in the Survey Design

There are two serious design issues which must be considered if the NES congressional elections component is to be optimized for the study of campaigns. The first is the **sampling frame** of the study. In 1978 and 1980, the NES sampling frame consisted of 108 congressional districts; since 1982, however, the NES returned to the use of national probability samples. This practice leads to a sample which is representative of the national adult population — making it similar to the presidential election studies (a fact which has become very important in recent years as the NES has uses a complicated multiple panel format across election years) — but making the congressional studies of less use for studying congressional races since we do not have representative samples of congressional districts.

In many ways, the Senate Election Study (SES) was a reasonable solution to this problem. The SES aimed at obtaining small (roughly 75 respondents) samples from each state, over a three election period. Despite this unique state-level sample, we still are unable to use the SES to assess accurately electoral behavior in House campaigns without elaborate weighting schemes.

There are a number of solutions to the sampling question. One would be to return to a congressional district sampling frame like that used in the 1978 and 1980 studies. This would insure a valid sample of voters in House elections; if the congressional districts were chosen carefully, we could have districts which have Senate and gubernatorial races

occurring simultaneously. Another option would be to follow the SES approach, and use state-wide samples. In fact, it might be possible to reduce the number of states sampled, but to broaden the number of respondents per state to attempt better representation of voters in House races. The states to be sampled could be chosen so that they have Senate and gubernatorial races occurring simultaneously.

The second important issue to consider is the **use of post-election cross sections**. The current practice in the congressional election studies and the SES is to use only a post-election interview. This design is appropriate if the only type of campaign effects which we desire to examine are the long-term or cumulative effects of the campaign on the electorate. The post-election interview is the ideal format for studying cumulative effects, since the interviews are taken immediately following the election — when the cumulative effects of campaigns should be at their maximum.

But campaigns are dynamic affairs. It ought to be clear that it is difficult, if not impossible, to study dynamic phenomenon with static and after-the-fact surveys. Thus, I believe that at a minimum, the congressional surveys ought to begin using the same design as the presidential election surveys, a pre- and post-election interview. By moving one interview before the election, we ought to be able to obtain better information about the campaign and voter perceptions of the candidates, which are not polluted by the results of the election. One recent practice in the NES presidential election studies has been the division of the pre-election sample into quarters, with each quarter being interviewed in a separate two-week period prior to election day. This allows for the analysis of campaign effects at the end of the race, when campaign intensity is at its peak. Such a design could be used in the NES congressional component to better measure campaign effects.

However the use of other survey designs, like rolling cross-sections or panel surveys should be considered. The latter designs are much more appropriate for assessing dynamic changes in information and attitudes about candidates. If the goal is to understand the dynamic aspects of campaigns — as in the example in the previous section on voter learning in Senate campaigns — then rolling cross-sections or panel surveys ought to be used. Additionally, if the short-term effects of campaigns (the effects of tactical decisions made by campaigns or the influence of television advertisements) are to be understood, rolling cross-sections or panels are appropriate.

## 3.2 New Survey Questions

Given that political campaigns are about information and persuasion, to understand congressional races we need survey questions designed to ascertain what potential voters know about the candidates in the race and how that influences their preferences. Currently, the focus of the NES congressional election studies is on likes and dislikes, candidate contact and recall, incumbent contact, evaluations of congressional performance, recall of most important issues in the congressional campaign, placements on limited numbers of issues, and some other specific questions (term limits and votes on specific

salient bills). What is needed are questions focused on candidates and the information provided during their campaigns.

1. **More and more relevant issue placement questions.** In the 1994 study, placements were asked for House candidates on the liberal-conservative scale, jobs and standard of living, government services and spending, and federal health insurance. First, these were not asked for Senate candidates up for election, thus losing an important comparison. Second, these general questions really don't measure where potential voters think the candidates stand on issues which really matter in House races; for example, notice that these questions really do not allow us now to tell whether the issues included in the Republican "Contract with America" mattered in the 1994 election (balanced-budget amendment, term limits, tax cuts, welfare reforms, increases to defense spending, the curtailment of death penalty appeals).
2. **Certainty probes on issue placements and candidate evaluations.** Since campaigns are about the provision of information, we need survey questions which can assess respondent perceptions of the certainty and clarity of the information candidates provide. These questions have been shown to provide substantial insight about the formation and use of voter perceptions of candidates (Alvarez and Franklin 1994; Alvarez and Franklin 1996; Alvarez 1996b). As shown in the previous section, they also can be used to measure the cumulative learning that occurs in campaigns (Alvarez and Franklin 1995).
3. **Questions on candidate reliability and credibility.** As noted by Krasno and quoted above, an important component of persuasion is getting the electorate to believe that the candidate, and in particular the challenger, is capable of doing the job. This is an important aspect of the campaign which we currently have no survey questions to assess. The literature has largely focused on measuring challenger quality in aggregate analyses of congressional elections (Krasno 1994). Little work, with the exception of Mondak (1995), has focused on measuring incumbent quality in aggregate analyses. We need to understand how candidate quality (for both incumbents and challengers) is communicated to voters, and how it influences voter behavior in sub-national elections.
4. **Questions on information provision.** In particular, given the prevalence of television-based campaigns, even in House elections, we need questions about campaign advertisements (like those in the 1992 presidential survey) in the congressional surveys. Other dimensions of candidate contact during campaigns also need attention. What is the frequency of candidate (for both challengers and incumbents) contact through mass mailings? Through orchestrated telephone contacts? Through other media, like radio talk shows? Measures of information provision by campaigns are lacking in current NES studies. Also of use will be more and better measures of media useage by respondents, since we can then better assess the links between media coverage of campaigns and voter learning.

### 3.3 Collection and Integration of Contextual Data

Currently, little is done to facilitate the collection and distribution of contextual data about campaigns. While the primary job of the NES is to collect survey data, there is no reason that efforts are not made to coordinate with other researchers and institutions to collect databases which can be integrated easily with NES data on congressional campaigns. Whether these efforts are formal or informal, at the end of each election cycle the NES congressional survey data should be supplemented with campaign finance data, and other easy to collect data like voting scores from *CQ*. This has been done with the SES, but ought to be a standing practice with all NES congressional studies.

Also, coordinating with scholars and institution to insure the collection and distribution of data on the newspaper and television coverage of these races, and on the television and other advertising strategies of the candidates, is vital if an understanding of the informative role of the campaign is desired. The NES need not be in the business of collecting contextual data; however the NES can coordinate with researchers so that contextual data can be integrated with NES data efficiently. For example, if the NES uses a congressional district sampling frame in future congressional studies, communicating which districts will be sampled, and what types of campaign and media related questions will be included in the instrument, can be of vital importance to researchers interested in collecting contextual data.

## 4 Conclusions

Campaigns are a vital component of the representation process. Current NES congressional study designs are not well-suited to studying congressional and gubernatorial campaigns. Here I have argued that in each election cycle, these elections provide many more opportunities to study campaigns in action, and to examine how intense campaigns influence the electorate.

To better understand how campaigns influence voters the NES should seriously consider changing the congressional election study. Currently, the congressional studies are much less surveys focusing on elections than they are surveys focusing on congressional incumbents, and their institutional advantages. I propose that the NES consider altering the congressional study survey design, the questions asked in the survey, and to better coordinate the collection of contextual data about campaigns. With appropriate changes in these directions, the NES congressional election study can help answer “how campaigns matter”, and thereby broaden the understanding of campaigns and representative democracy.

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Table 1: House and Senate Intensity, 1994

CQ Rating	Senate Number	Senate Percent	House Number	House Percent
No Clear Favorite	10	28%	40	9%
Leans	8	22%	58	13%
Favorite	6	17%	49	11%
Secure	12	33%	288	66%

Note: Entries are from the October 22, 1994 *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*.

Figure 1: Coverage by Race and Candidate  
Senate vs. Gubernatorial Media Coverage, California 1994

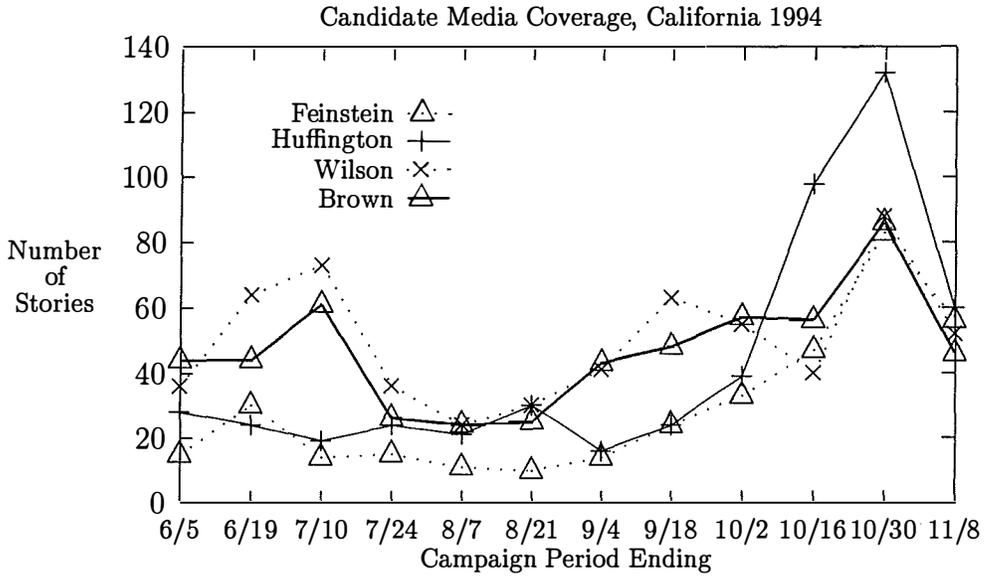
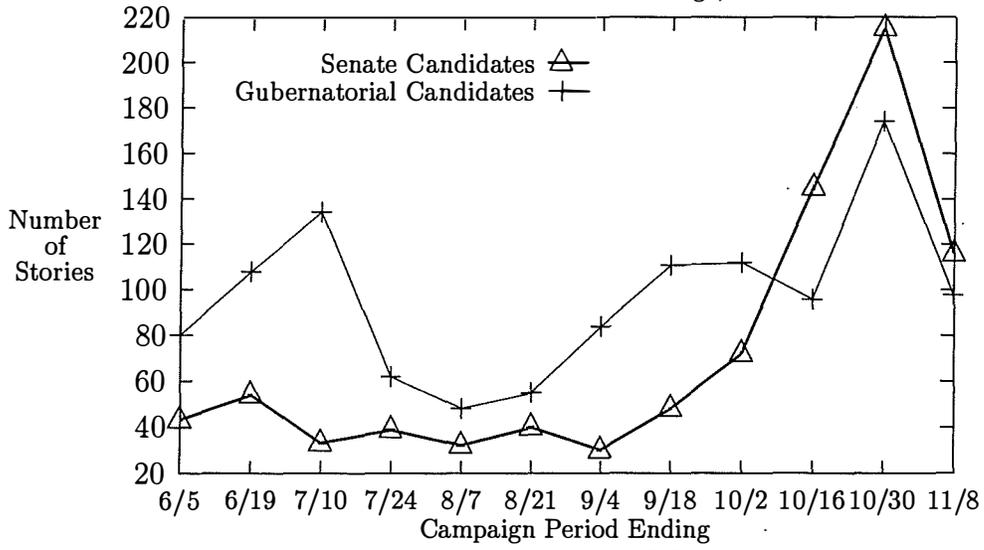


Figure 2: Content of Coverage  
 Subjects of Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994

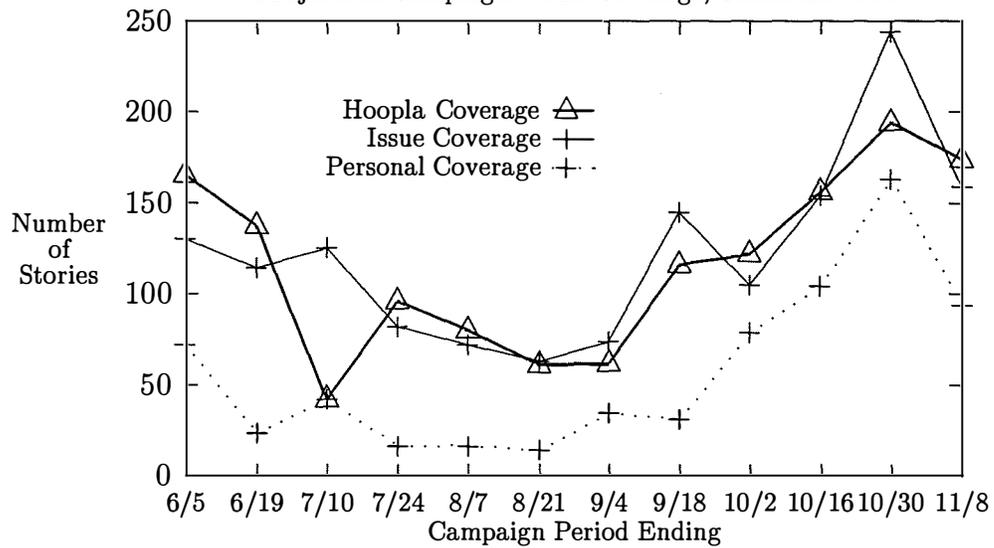
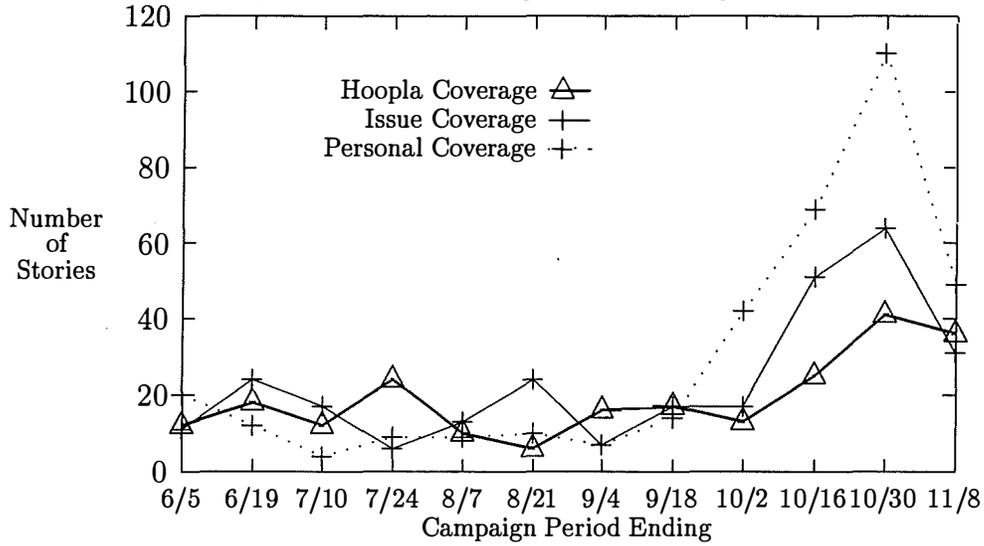


Figure 3: Content of Coverage by Race  
 Subjects of Senate Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994



Subjects of Gubernatorial Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994

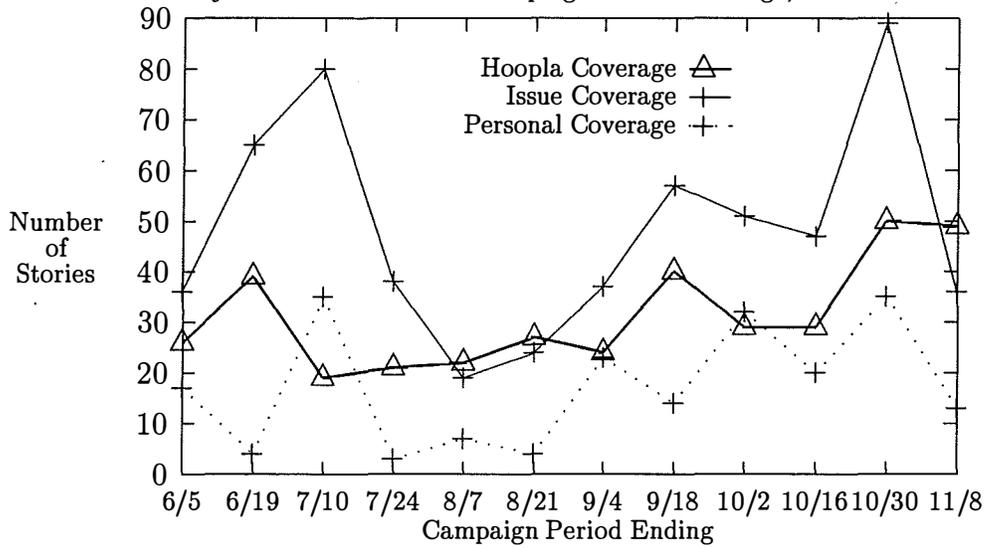
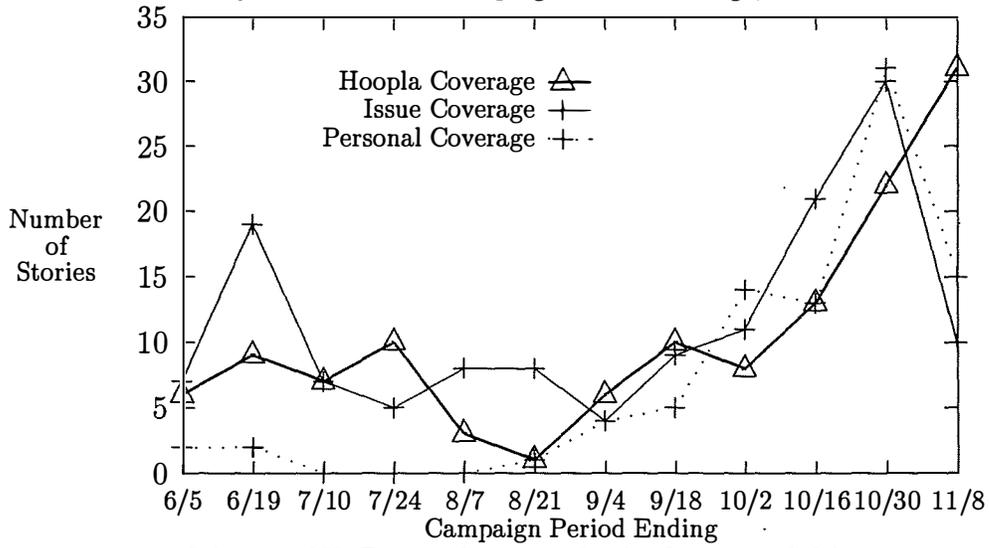


Figure 4: Content of Coverage by Gubernatorial Candidate  
 Subjects of Feinstein Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994



Subjects of Huffington Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994

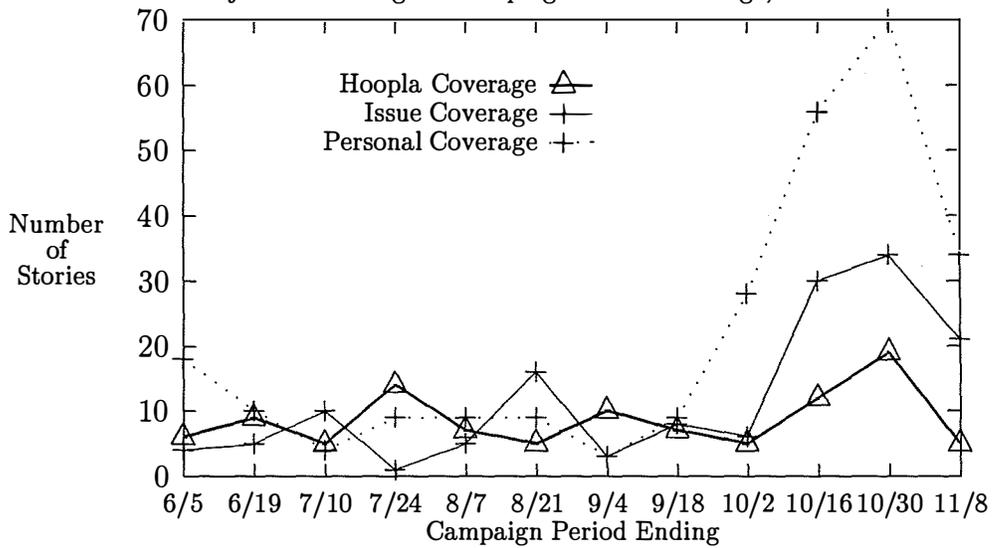
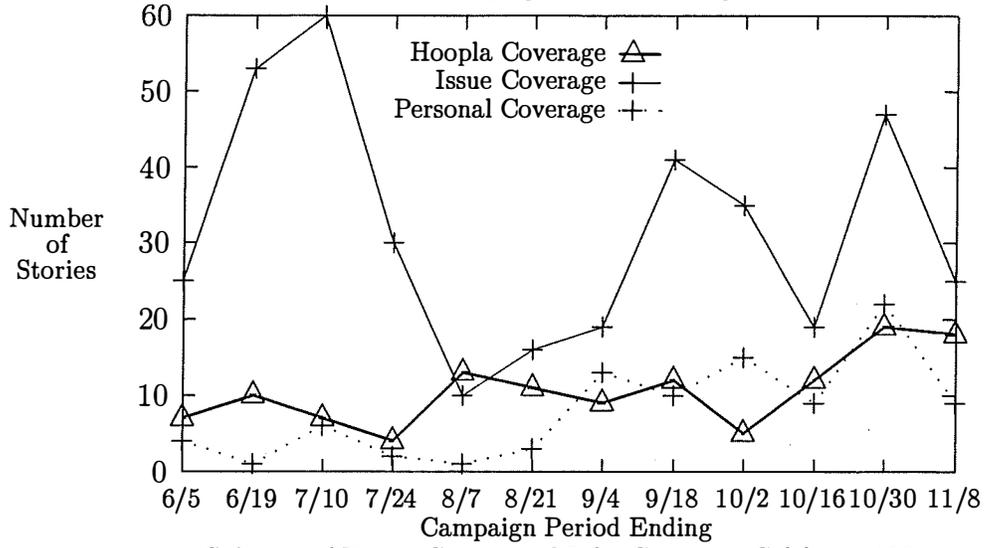


Figure 5: Content of Coverage by Senate Candidate  
 Subjects of Wilson Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994



Subjects of Brown Campaign Media Coverage, California 1994

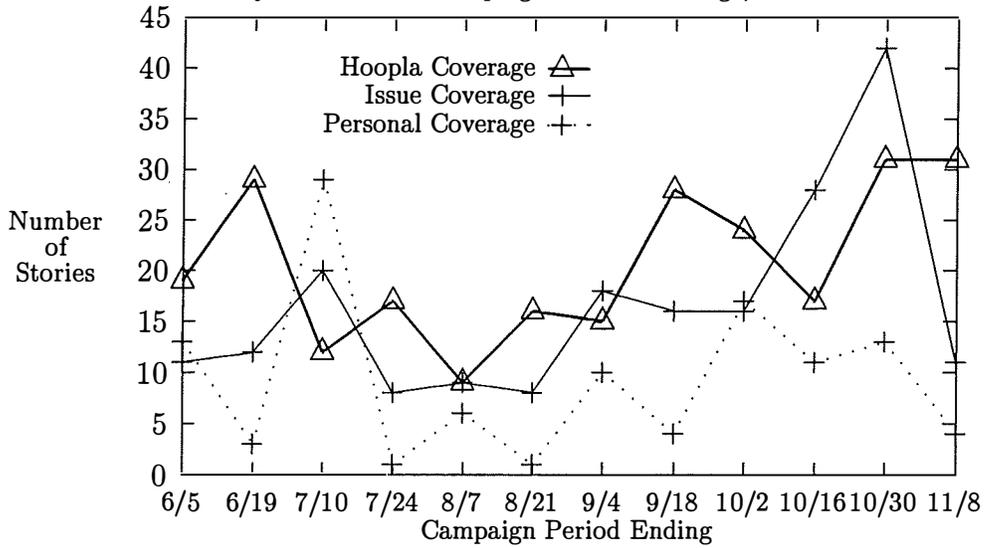


Table 2: Newspaper Issue Coverage in the 1994 California Election  
Issue Coverage in Both Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	9	10	18	20	6
2	6	7	25	41	10
3	8	16	19	56	5
4	2	11	13	11	7
5	5	23	7	16	7
6	0	27	3	4	23
7	5	19	15	5	2
8	15	19	51	8	19
9	4	18	36	5	2
10	9	18	28	25	25
11	15	23	106	38	6
12	8	12	97	11	8
Total	86	203	418	240	120

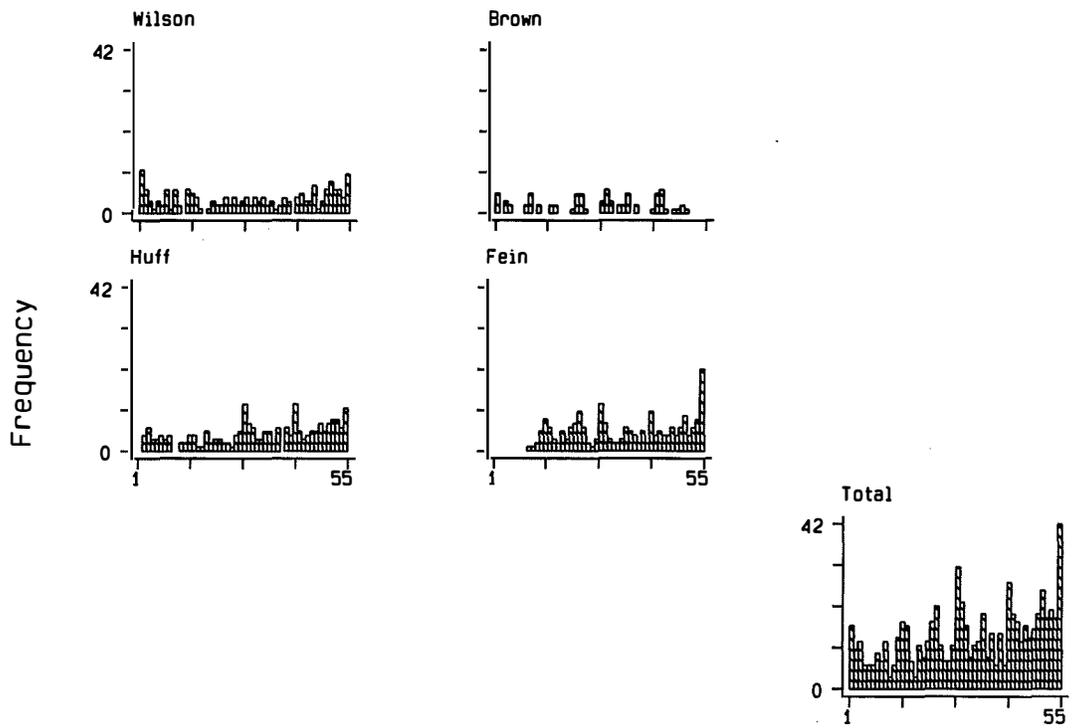
Issue Coverage in Senate Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	1	1	0	0	2
2	1	2	10	2	5
3	2	0	3	3	1
4	0	2	2	0	1
5	1	1	0	4	3
6	0	7	0	2	15
7	0	2	0	0	2
8	2	2	3	0	5
9	0	5	8	1	1
10	2	0	15	8	13
11	0	4	30	9	4
12	1	2	18	3	4
Total	10	28	89	32	56

Issue Coverage in Governor's Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	3	2	11	8	1
2	3	1	12	32	5
3	3	13	12	42	3
4	2	4	3	5	5
5	5	6	1	7	0
6	3	14	2	0	5
7	4	6	11	2	0
8	4	8	23	2	7
9	3	10	17	2	0
10	14	6	5	8	2
11	10	12	26	12	2
12	4	4	15	5	2
Total	58	86	138	125	32

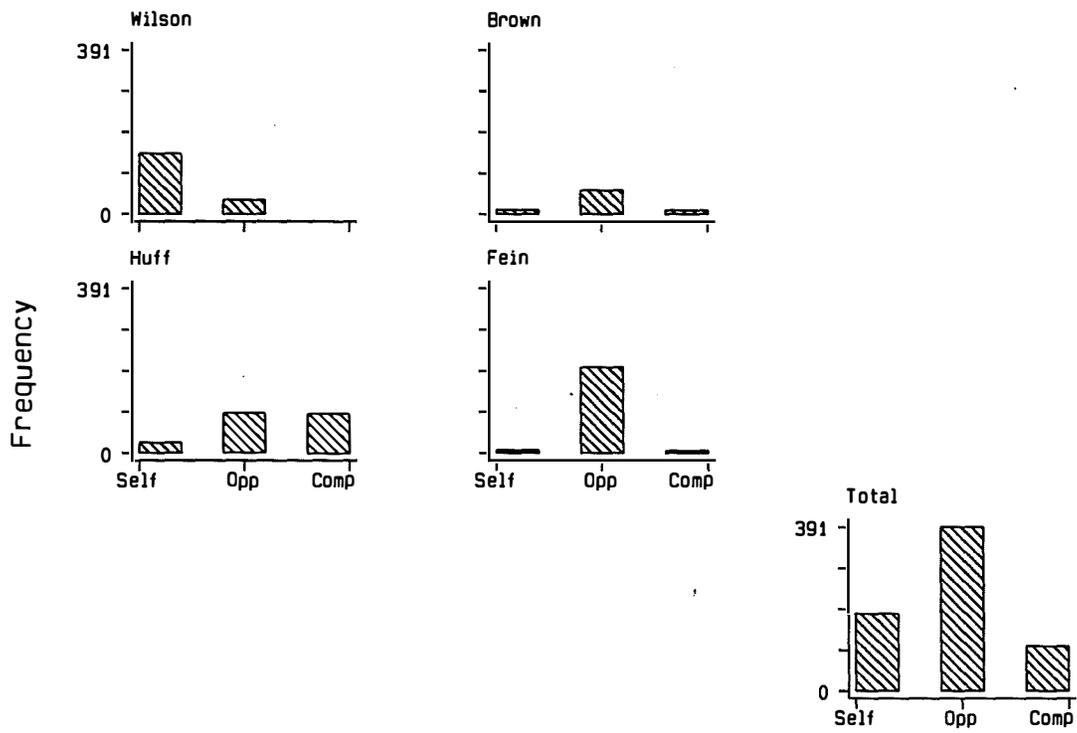
Figure 6:



Date  
Histograms by Candidate

STATA™

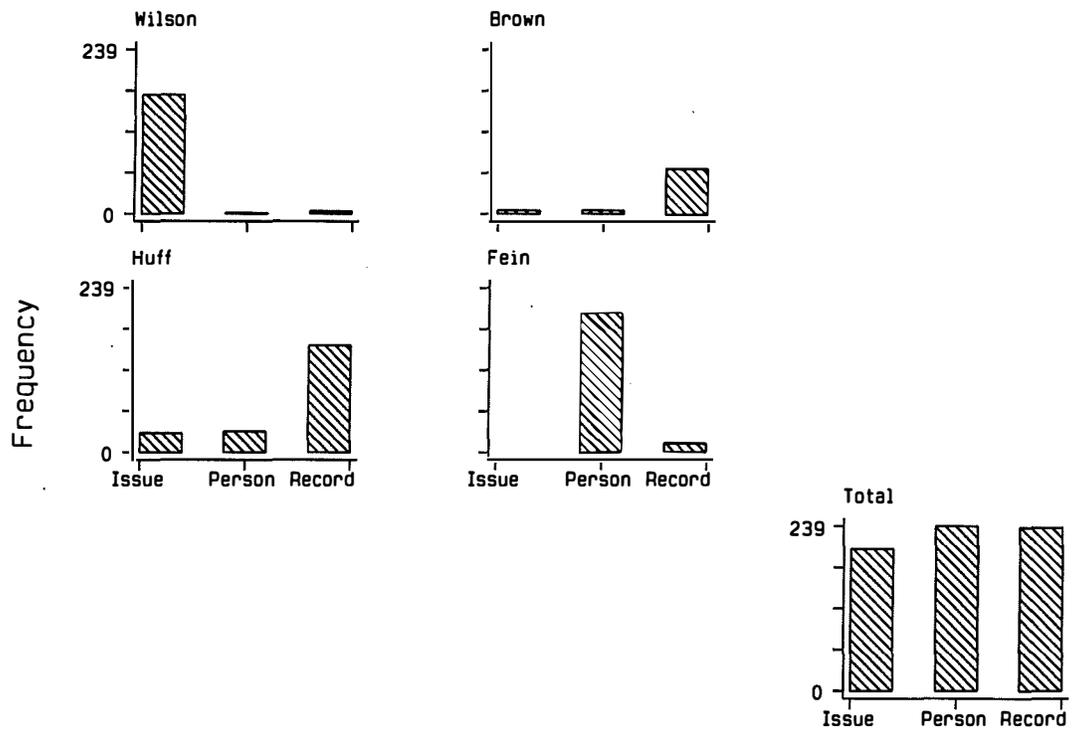
Figure 7:



Ad Target  
Histograms by Candidate

STATA<sup>™</sup>

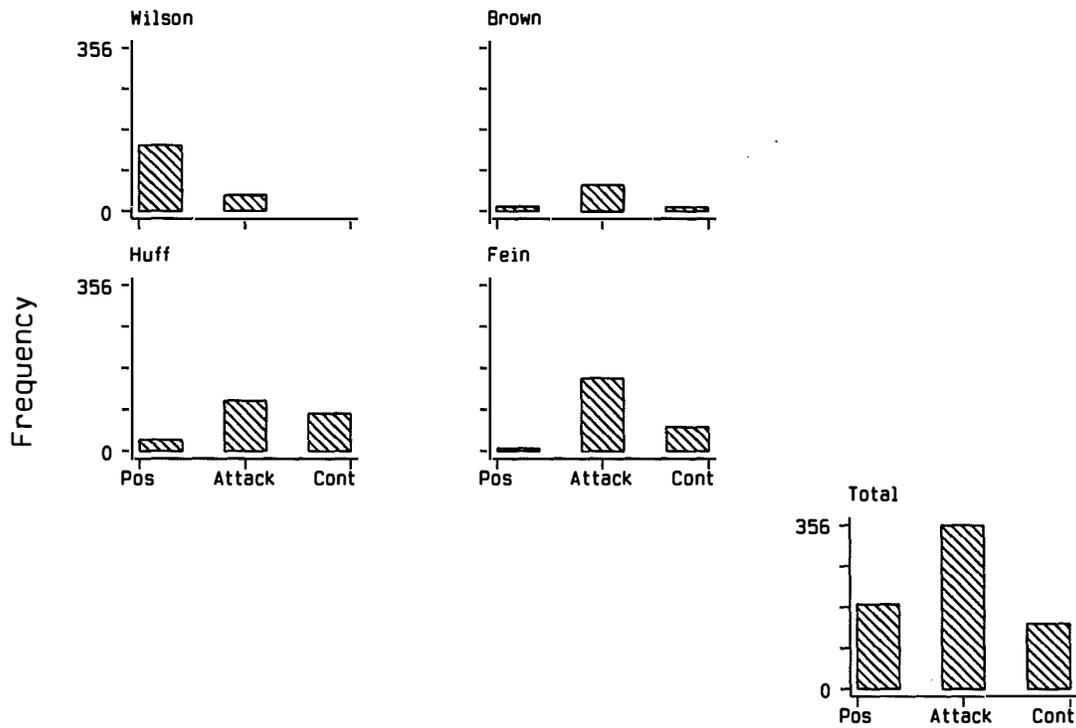
Figure 8:



General Content  
Histograms by Candidate

STATA™

Figure 9:



Ad Type  
Histograms by Candidate

STATA™

Table 3: Issue Coverage in Candidate Television Advertisements  
 Issue Coverage in Both Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	7	0	4	39	26
2	8	3	4	33	30
3	5	7	9	20	18
4	12	21	19	18	2
5	0	32	3	20	0
6	0	25	6	11	0
7	26	11	22	42	39
8	21	8	74	32	30
Total	79	107	141	215	145

Issue Coverage in Senate Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	0	0	0	10	0
2	1	1	0	10	6
3	0	1	1	13	16
4	0	20	0	6	2
5	0	16	0	0	0
6	0	11	6	8	0
7	0	5	22	7	20
8	0	5	62	13	12
Total	1	59	91	67	56

Issue Coverage in Governor's Races:

Week	Economy	Crime	Immigration	Fiscal	Social
1	7	0	4	29	26
2	7	2	4	23	24
3	5	6	8	7	2
4	12	1	19	12	0
5	0	16	3	20	0
6	0	14	0	3	0
7	26	6	0	35	19
8	21	3	12	19	18
Total	78	48	50	148	89

Table 4: Two-stage Uncertainty Results, 1992 Election  
Candidate Uncertainty

Independent Variables	Clinton Uncertainty	Bush Uncertainty	Perot Uncertainty
Constant	4.3**	4.3**	5.4**
	.74	.76	.84
Education	-.10	-.34**	.17
	.13	.13	.14
Political Information	-1.1**	-1.2**	-1.6**
	.12	.12	.14
Gender	.55**	.79**	.39*
	.22	.22	.25
Race	1.2**	2.1**	-.05
	.44	.38	.49
Partisan Strength	.27**	.21**	-.03
	.12	.12	.13
Media Exposure	-.09	.06	.22**
	.09	.09	.10
Political Efficacy	.06	.008	-.04
	.05	.05	.05
Candidate Advertisement	-.14	.15	-1.2**
	.26	.23	.36
Candidate Preference	-.37**	-.44**	-.31**
	.10	.14	.12
Adjusted $R^2$	.12	.18	.16
Model S.E.	3.3	3.3	3.7
Uncertainty mean	2.2	2.2	4.0
number of cases	937	937	937

Entries are two-stage least squares estimates, and their associated adjusted standard errors. \* indicates a p=0.10 level of statistical significance, and \*\* a p=0.05 level, both one-tailed tests. The standard errors have been corrected as discussed by Achen (1986).

Table 5: Estimated Campaign Effects  
Change in Probability of Informed Response Across Campaign:

Candidate:		Recognize and Rate	Ability to Place: Abortion	Ability to Place: Lib/Con
Incumbent	Beginning	88	43	67
	End	97	59	72
	<i>Change</i>	9	16	5
Challengers	Beginning	60	35	40
	End	66	54	52
	<i>Change</i>	6	19	12
Open Seats	Beginning	79	35	50
	End	93	51	65
	<i>Change</i>	14	16	15

Note: Probability calculations for an “average” respondent, from the models presented in Tables 2-4.

Table 6: Estimated Campaign Effects: Abortion  
Change in Probability of Abortion Certainty Across Campaign:

Candidate:		Pr(Very Certain)	Pr(Pretty Certain)
Incumbent	Beginning	8	22
	End	9	23
	<i>Change</i>	1	1
Challengers	Beginning	4	12
	End	8	18
	<i>Change</i>	4	6
Open Seats	Beginning	7	11
	End	11	14
	<i>Change</i>	4	3
Change in Probability of Abortion Information Across Campaign:			
Candidate:		Pr(Heard A Lot)	Pr(Heard Some)
Incumbent	Beginning	5	16
	End	8	21
	<i>Change</i>	3	5
Challengers	Beginning	3	13
	End	7	19
	<i>Change</i>	4	6
Open Seats	Beginning	2	13
	End	6	21
	<i>Change</i>	4	8
Change in Probability of Abortion Clarity Across Campaign:			
Candidate:		Pr(Very Clear)	Pr(Pretty Clear)
Incumbent	Beginning	8	18
	End	11	21
	<i>Change</i>	3	3
Challengers	Beginning	5	14
	End	10	21
	<i>Change</i>	5	7
Open Seats	Beginning	5	16
	End	12	26
	<i>Change</i>	7	10

Note: Probability calculations for an “average” respondent, from the models presented in Tables 2-4.

Table 7: Estimated Campaign Effects: Lib/Con  
Change in Probability of Lib/Con Certainty Across Campaign:

Candidate:		Pr(Very Certain)	Pr(Pretty Certain)
Incumbent	Beginning	8	33
	End	13	40
	<i>Change</i>	5	7
Challengers	Beginning	4	23
	End	6	29
	<i>Change</i>	2	6
Open Seats	Beginning	5	25
	End	12	36
	<i>Change</i>	7	11

Change in Probability of Lib/Con Information Across Campaign:

Candidate:		Pr(Heard A Lot)	Pr(Heard Some)
Incumbent	Beginning	6	24
	End	12	32
	<i>Change</i>	6	8
Challengers	Beginning	2	19
	End	6	29
	<i>Change</i>	4	10
Open Seats	Beginning	2	22
	End	9	38
	<i>Change</i>	7	16

Change in Probability of Lib/Con Clarity Across Campaign:

Candidate:		Pr(Very Clear)	Pr(Pretty Clear)
Incumbent	Beginning	6	28
	End	10	35
	<i>Change</i>	4	7
Challengers	Beginning	3	14
	End	6	21
	<i>Change</i>	3	7
Open Seats	Beginning	4	10
	End	8	14
	<i>Change</i>	4	4

Note: Probability calculations for an “average” respondent, from the models presented in Tables 2-4.