

Outside Contact and Young Voter
Responsiveness:
An Analysis of Voter Mobilization Techniques
and Youth

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INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

This report is divided into two sections. Both sections analyze young voter mobilization, a very pertinent area of study for politics today. Section 1 discusses the affect of various methods of mobilization. Section 2 discusses the differences between mobilizing full-time students and non-full time students.

CIVIC AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE STUDY

The research that will be referred to in this report primarily will come from the “Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study-Part 2.” Tufts’ Public Opinion and Survey Research class designed the survey using the “Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study- Part 1,” as the basis of the questionnaire. The survey was then conducted by Polimetrix online. They created the target sample of 1,000 by drawing a random subsample of 1,000 respondents aged 18 to 24 from the American Community Study conducted by the Bureau of the Census. The subsample was stratified so 500 members of the target frame were college students and 500 were not. No young people in the military were included.

They conducted 1,629 interviews with panelists, and selected the 1,000 closest matching cases to the target sample. Post-stratification weights for the final sample were constructed by weighting the sample in two ways. One set of weights represents the characteristics of the college and non-college respondents separately. The second set of weights represents the 18-24 population as a whole on the variables of age, race, education, and gender.

There were two groups of respondents for the study. 993 respondents were invited directly from the set of active panelists. Of these, 95.2 percent qualified for the

study. The within-panel of response rate for those invited was 31.2 percent. The remaining 636 interviews were conducted with screenouts from other studies that were fielded at the same time. Of all the eligible respondents who were redirected to the study, 66.7 percent completed it. More details on the survey as it applies to this report are included in the METHOD portion of each section.

SECTION 1:

Campaign and Organization Contact and Young Voter Turnout

INTRODUCTION

Out of all age cohorts, those aged 18-24 consistently show the lowest voter turnout. However, not many of them have a substantive reason not to vote. According to the National Civic Engagement Survey, people who were considered DotNets (those born after 1976), were the least likely to articulate a reason why they chose not to vote in the 2002 election. In fact, 48 percent, almost half gave no major reason to justify why they chose not to vote (Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, & Delli Carpini, 2006). From this information Cliff Zukin argued “that young people have not so much dropped out as they have never tuned in...the members of the youngest age cohort have not rejected the political system as so much as they are indifferent to it.” Assuming that Zukin’s argument is true, young people might be an easier generation to convince to vote than campaign officials previously thought. If they have no reason to reject the political system, then maybe they just need to be invited to join. What happens if youth are asked to vote? This question is at the heart of this report

In 2004, 18 to 24 year olds’ voter turnout increased 11 percent from the 2000 presidential election (Shea & Green, 2007). This increase was more than double the rate of increase seen in any other age cohort. Paralleling this large increase in voter turnout in the 2004 presidential election was an increase in voter mobilization programs designed specifically for youth. A variety of existing programs were expanded and many new initiatives were created to get young people involved in the political process. These programs ranged from nonpartisan projects like MTV’s Rock the Vote to efforts led by liberal interest groups like America Coming Together (Shea & Green, 2007). Although no statistical research has ever been done to prove a connection between the increase in

voter turnout and increase voter mobilization efforts in 2004, many researchers point to these two trends as connecting events (Shea & Green 2007).

Increased voter turnout continued in the following midterm election. In 2006, voters under 30's turnout rate increased by 3 percent. Not only was this the largest increase for any age cohort for the 2006 elections, but it also broke the trend of declining electoral participation among youth in midterm elections that had been occurring since 1982 (Lopez, Marcelo & Kirby, 2007). Once again, increased young voter mobilization efforts were pointed to as a potential explanation for the growth (Lopez et al., 2007).

Before the past few years, there was very little information on the extent current GOTV tactics affected the outcome of an election. Most people studying campaign strategy focused on how to persuade voters but not how to get them to the polls. Campaign officials claimed to know about how to mobilize voters, but in truth all they knew was theory and "war room stories." This led Donald P. Green and Alan S. Gerber to write Get Out the Vote!, because they saw a need to find experimental evidence to support all the existing theories (Green & Gerber 2004). In their book, they describe the major GOTV strategies, and then based upon randomized experimental design each strategy is tested. With this information, they created a GOTV "shopper's guide" including a dollar per vote analysis for each strategy. Their book and research led to a bevy of similar work analyzing voter mobilization.

The general consensus from Get Out the Vote! and other studies on voter mobilization is personal contact works best (Green, Gerber, & Nickerson, 2003; Green & Gerber, 2004; Nickerson, 2006b; Nickerson, Friedrich, & King 2006). People like to feel wanted at the polls. Door to door canvassing and personalized phone calls resulted in the

most success of increasing voter turnout. Mail, emails, and prerecorded messages made significantly less of a difference and really were not very cost effective despite campaigns' dependency on them (Green and Gerber, 2003). In short the medium of contact is extremely important sometimes even more important than the type of message used.

Other variables affected the responsiveness of people to the mobilization efforts. People were particularly receptive to GOTV appeals in low-turn-out elections like midterm elections (Green and Gerber, 2003). People were also very receptive to GOTV appeals when they were already considering voting (Nickerson, 2006a). Studies on the affect of partisan versus nonpartisan and positive versus negative messages in voter mobilization show little fluctuation between the different types of messages (Nickerson, 2005).

Although recent studies have shown that certain voter mobilization strategies do have a measurable effect on voter turnout only a few limited studies have analyzed the effect of voter mobilization efforts on just youth. Proving that youth are equally responsive to mobilization efforts is very pertinent today. Campaigns do not see youth as a good investment, so they often overlook youth during important elections creating a generation of young people who feel apathetic to the political process. On the other hand, if youth are shown to be equally receptive this could change. Also, finding a correlation between mobilization and voter turnout could help explain the increase of young voters in 2004 and 2006.

There is some research available about young voter mobilization but most of it is based off of the same collection of experiments (Darrow, 2003; Nickerson, 2006b;

George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management 2006; Shea and Green 2007). Several GOTV youth mobilization guides recommend applying the same techniques suggested for the more general research (Darrow, 2003; George Washington Graduate School of Political Management, 2006). They all highly recommend personal contact. There appears to be a consensus that young voters respond equally well to this personal contact as adults, but unfortunately they are about three times more difficult to contact because of their high mobility rate (Nickerson, 2006b).

These conclusions come mostly from several different randomized experiments, where one group was canvassed and another control group was not (Nickerson 2006b). However, since all of the research is experiment based, they were limited to cities. No national surveys are included in these results to look at the youth mobilization on a larger scale. Furthermore, most of these experiments only tested the affect of canvassing on young people already who were registered, but many GOTV organizations' first step in mobilizing voters is to encourage people to register, so these tests exclude a very important group of people (Nickerson 2006b). Therefore, I think more research is clearly needed to understand youth mobilization, which led me to use the Tufts' Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study to search for any possible correlations between contact by organizations and campaigns and registration/voter turnout.

HYPOTHESIS

Based on the assumption that GOTV youth campaigns helped increase voter turnout and previous works of research by other political scientists I hypothesize, young people aged 18-24 who were contacted by campaigns and organizations, including student organizations before the 2006 congressional election were more likely to vote and

register in the last election. More specifically, young people aged 18 to 24 who were contacted by more personal methods that involve talking to a real person were more likely to vote in 2006 than young people contacted by less personal methods like mail, prerecorded phone calls, internet, email, and networking sites like MySpace and Facebook, but even young people contacted by the less personal methods will be more likely to vote and register than those who were not contacted at all.

METHOD

I used the Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study-Part 2 to test this hypothesis. This sample was ideal for this particular hypothesis because of its focus just on young people. As a voting cohort, young people are generally looked at as a group aged 18-24, so this seems appropriate if I want to compare my results to other studies done on young people's voting turnout. For this hypothesis, it was imperative that the sample most accurately reflect the general characteristics of American young people. Therefore, it was important that the sample does not include young people who are in the military full time because soldiers vote more than other young people but at the same time are probably contacted less because campaigns do not usually spend time calling military bases in Iraq. Furthermore, since the survey was done online and military personnel have a large amount of access to computers, including full time military youth could have skewed results and therefore, not accurately reflect the population. Secondly, it is important that education, age, gender and race are all appropriately weighted in the sample to also help better reflect the population, too.

I am defining contact, the independent variable in both parts of my hypothesis, as anyone who can recall being contacted in 2006 by an organization or campaign by mail,

prerecorded phone message, phone with a live person, face to face canvassers, internet, email, or networking sites like Myspace and Facebook. To test this variable, I analyzed the responses to the following survey question:

Before the 2006 congressional elections, did any campaign or organization, including student organization, contact you to talk about the elections through any of the following means (check all that apply):

- <1> *Yes*
- <2> *No*
- <3> *Not sure*

By mail
By phone with a prerecorded message
By phone with a live person
In person at your home or some other place
Over the internet or via email
Through a networking site like MySpace or Facebook
By text message to your cell phone

It is important to note that even though in my first part of my hypothesis, the question includes all forms of contact, I chose to analyze each method separately because I did not believe all contact methods work equally. Nonetheless, I still believed all of them will have some relationship to increased voter turnout.

Then, I crosstabulated the responses with the dependent variable, voter turnout.

To divide people into voters and nonvoters, I chose to look at responses to the question:

Have you ever voted?

- <1> *Yes*
- <2> *No*

This question was not perfect because it does not ask specifically about the 2006 election like the contact question does, but it was the best question to use within the constraints of the survey. I also decided that since many organizations try to mobilize young voters by

helping them register, to define the dependent variable in a second way, using the following question:

We understand that plenty of young people are not registered to vote, but we are wondering if you are currently registered to vote?

- <1> Yes
- <2> No
- <3> I don't know

All the “Not sure” and “I don't know” responses and people who skipped any of these questions were eliminated from the sample being analyzed. Frequencies distributions were checked for all of the questions, and all of them were fine except for text messages. I decided not to analyze text messages as a form of contact, because an insufficient number of people responded “yes.”

FINDINGS

The crosstabulations from the data collected by the survey show that before the 2006 congressional election when young people were contacted by organizations and campaigns by any method, they were also more likely to be registered and vote. Below are tables that illustrate the results:

Table 1: Relationship between Contact by Mail in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

	CONTACT	
	Contacted by Mail	Not Contacted by Mail
Registered to Vote	86.1%	70.7
Not Registered to Vote	13.9%	29.3
Total	368 100.0%	482 100.0

Table 2: Relationship between Contact by Mail in 2006 and Voting among Young People

	CONTACT	
	Contacted by Mail	Not Contacted by Mail
Ever Voted	71.9%	48.4
Did Not Ever Vote	28.1%	51.6
Total	381 100.0%	494 100.0

Table 3: Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by prerecorded phone message	Not Contacted by prerecorded phone message
REGISTRATION	Registered to Vote	84.3%	74.7
	Not Registered to Vote	15.7%	25.3
	Total	305 100.0%	542 100.0

Table 4: Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message in 2006 and Voting among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by prerecorded phone message	Not Contacted by prerecorded phone message
VOTER TURNOUT	Ever Voted	66.0%	55.3
	Did Not Ever Vote	34.0%	44.7
	Total	318 100.0%	555 100.0

Table 5: Relationship between Contact by Phone Message with Person in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by phone message with person	Not Contacted by phone message with person
REGISTRATION	Registered to Vote	87.2%	76.2
	Not Registered to Vote	12.8%	23.8
	Total	149 100.0%	673 100.0

Table 6: Relationship between Contact by Phone Message with Person in 2006 and Voting among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by phone message with person	Not Contacted by phone message with person
VOTER TURNOUT	Ever Voted	66.2%	57.2
	Did Not Ever Vote	33.8%	42.8
	Total	154 100.0%	691 100.0

Table 7: Relationship between Contact by Person in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by person	Not Contacted by Person
REGISTRATION	Registered to Vote	87.2%	75.8
	Not Registered to Vote	17.3%	24.2
	Total	133 100.0%	724 100.0

Table 8: Relationship between Contact by Person in 2006 and Voting among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Person	Not Contacted by Person
VOTER TURNOUT	Ever Voted	62.8%	57.5
	Did Not Ever Vote	37.2%	42.5
	Total	137 100.0%	744 100.0

Table 9: Relationship between Contact by Internet or Email in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Internet or Email	Not Contacted by Internet or Email
REGISTRATION	Registered to Vote	88.2%	71.9
	Not Registered to Vote	11.8%	28.1
	Total	322 100.0%	527 100.0

Table 10: Relationship between Contact by Internet or Email in 2006 and Voting among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Internet or Email	Not Contacted Internet or Email
VOTER TURNOUT	Ever Voted	73.2%	51.3
	Did Not Ever Vote	26.8%	48.7
	Total	328 100.0%	544 100.0

Table 11: Relationship between Contact by Networking Site in 2006 and Voter Registration among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Networking Site	Not Contacted by Networking Site
REGISTRATION	Registered to Vote	92.2%	74.6
	Not Registered to Vote	7.8%	25.4
	Total	153 100.0%	700 100.0

Table 12: Relationship between Contact by Networking Site in 2006 and Voting among Young People

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Networking Site	Not Contacted by Networking Site
VOTER TURNOUT	Ever Voted	75.3%	54.9
	Did Not Ever Vote	24.7%	45.1
	Total	158 100.0%	718 100.0

As Tables 1-12 illustrate, people who were contacted by all methods consistently vote and register more than people who were not contacted. However, these percents are not consistent between the alternating independent and dependent variables, so in order to understand which contact methods seem to have more of a relationship with voting and registration one must compare the size of difference between each independent variable.

Table 13 illustrates this:

Table 13: Percent Change in Voting and Registration among Young People Contacted and Young People Not Contacted
PERCENT CHANGE

CONTACT METHOD	*Difference in Registration Between Young People Who Were Contacted and Those Who Were Not Contacted (percent)	*Difference in Voting Turnout Between Young People Who Were Contacted and Those Who Were Not Contacted (percent)
	Contacted by Mail	+15.4
Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	+9.6	+10.7
Contacted by Phone Message with Person	+11.0	+9.0
Contacted by Person	+6.9	+5.3
Contacted by Internet or Email	+16.3	+21.9
Contacted by Networking Site	+17.6	+20.4

*Calculated by subtracting those not contacted who voted or registered from those contacted who voted or registered

By looking at Table 13, several patterns become apparent. First, the percent differences are always positive. This indicates that there is some positive correlation between voting/registering and being contacted by organizations and campaigns. However, with some of the methods a stronger correlation with voting exists than with registering. Four out of the six methods seem to create a larger positive change when crosstabulated with voting instead of registering. Interestingly, the two methods that have a stronger correlation with voting are the methods I defined as a more personal approach of contact. The percent change for getting contacted by phone with a person was 2.0 percentage points higher for registration than it was for voting, and the percentage change for getting contacted by a person was 1.6 percentage points higher.

Most importantly for the hypothesis, Table 13 illustrates which methods seem to have the largest correlation with voting and registration. Being contacted by networking sites (+17.6 change) closely followed by being contacted by the internet/email (+16.3 change) showed the greatest relationship to registration. Being contacted by mail (+15.4 change) also seemed to be related with whether people register or not. The smallest changes in registration occur when people were contacted by people (+6.9 change) or on the phone (+9.6 change, +11.0 change). Nonetheless, these methods did show some amount of positive change. When the dependent variable was switched to voting the results varied slightly. There seemed to be the greatest relationship between voting and being contacted by mail (+23.5 change). Being contacted by the internet/email (+21.9 change), and networking sites (+20.4 change) showed the next largest relationship to voting. Similar to registering, the contact methods with the smallest relationship to voting were by person (+5.3 change) and by phone (+10.7 change, +9.0 change).

ANALYSIS

Analysis of the results indicates that my hypothesis is only partly correct. There does seem to be some type of positive relationship between contact by organizations and campaigns and voter turnout. This correlation seems to be stronger when the dependent variable is voting rather than registering to vote, but in crosstabulations with both dependent variables, patterns indicated some type of relationship with all contact methods. One possible explanation for the larger increase after contact seen in voting rather than registering is those who are considering voting (in other words those who are already registered) are easier subjects to convince to vote than people who are not even registered in the first place. Another possible explanation is that perhaps people who turn out to vote are more targeted by campaigns thereby

they receive the more contact. It is not hard to imagine young people more likely to vote will be more likely to be in situations that involve them with campaigns. Of course, all these explanations are just conjectures.

The data collected indicates the second part of my hypothesis is wrong. When analyzing the table 13 for both registering and voting, one can easily see that internet, email, networking sites and mail all had the highest changes between being contacted and not being contacted. In my hypothesis, I defined these as the least personal methods of communication. Face to face contact, the most personal form of contacting young people, had the lowest change. Phone calls, the next most personal form of contact, had the second lowest change. Furthermore, it did not seem to make any difference whether the phone calls were robocalls or calls involving real conversation. In short, the data seemed to indicate the inverse of my hypothesis. However, this does not match with the current accepted research on young voters at all. It does not even match with the current accepted wisdom on normal voters. Personal contact always seems to have the strongest effect in all trials and studies, so one must question why the Tufts' data result in a different conclusion.

Ultimately, I do not think that it overrides the previous studies on youth mobilization, instead I believe that the question used on the Tufts' Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study, ending up illustrating a different relationship than intended. What I really wanted to measure was whether contact increases voter turnout but I speculate that I instead found that voter turnout increases contact. This would explain why mailings, email, internet and networking sites showed the largest change, because they are the cheapest forms of contact to make and can be given out to the most

people. As a result, campaigns use them more, and if campaigns target likely voters, it makes sense that those people most likely to vote or register would receive them the most. Furthermore, if those people targeted by the campaigns were already planning on voting, the medium and quality of the contact really wouldn't change their minds. Nonetheless, this is all still a conjecture and I recommend more research before any conclusion can be reached.

Lastly, the data indicated that campaigns and organizations' contact by internet, email and networking sites more than any of the other mediums had the strongest correlation with an increase in voting. Although this is not completely pertinent to my hypothesis, this information is still important when analyzing youth mobilization in the future. Several questions arise with this observation. Does new technology engage young voters, more than old methods? Can technologically advanced mediums be made personal? Do campaigns consider the internet, email, and networking sites an important priority? Clearly, in all areas there is much more that can be studied and tested.

CONCLUSION

From analyzing the data from the Tufts' Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study, I conclude that in 2006 there is some relationship between contact by campaigns and organizations and voter turnout and registration. However, whether the medium of contact is a more personal method of contact does not seem to matter. In fact, less personal methods like mail, email, internet and network sites correlated with registering and voting more. The less a medium costs to distribute, the stronger relationship between contact and voter turnout appeared, but I argue that this part of the

relationship is only a result of the survey question itself and suggest more tests and studies to conclude it.

The reason why I think this survey alone was not a sufficient test for my hypothesis is two fold. First, if campaigns strategically target those most likely to vote (which most smart campaigns do) then the question on the survey might have picked up on that relationship, rather than showing the actual effects of voter mobilization. The question on the survey could not show whether contact by an outside source actually changed the minds of young people or whether they were all planning to vote before the contact even happened. This is a big problem. The second problem involved recall. Recall is very hard, especially when over a long period of time. Respondent's recollection of contact might be distorted or hazy and this can misrepresent results. Unfortunately, the timing of the survey constrained me to ask about contact before the 2006 election which was a long time ago, but it was the closest major election before the survey was distributed. Logically, over a year later, people cannot be expected to report upon their experiences with voter mobilization perfectly.

After looking at these results, I question whether surveying young people is the best way to analyze this hypothesis. In some ways, the randomized experiments done in preexisting studies where there was a control group and a test group make more sense, but I still believe with enough funding and good timing the results of the survey could yield important information.

In an ideal world, the best way to test my hypothesis would be to use a panel survey. What I really intended to measure was a change in behavior over time, which is impossible to measure in one question that is only given once. Also, I would

recommend that this panel survey be given during the weeks leading up to the 2008 presidential election, because if respondents had to recall contact over a shorter period of time their responses would be much more accurate. It would also be interesting to expand my hypothesis to look at frequency of contact too, which would be plausible to gauge if more questions could be placed on the survey. If the survey were given in this format I believe the results would have been very different. Youth mobilization still has many more questions that need to be answered.

SECTION 2:

*Campaign and Organization Contact
and Young Voter Turnout Comparing
Full Time Students versus Not Full
Time Students*

INTRODUCTION

There are many demographic factors political scientists use to explain voter turnout, but education and voter turnout unarguably have one of the strongest relationships. In contrast, although political scientists are in general consensus on the relationship, no one really knows why it occurs, particularly because as education attainment has risen over the past decades, voter turnout has declined (Hillygus, 2005). Several hypotheses have been offered to explain the relationship. The civic education hypothesis attributes the relationship to “the belief that education provides both the skills necessary to become politically engaged and the knowledge to understand and accept democratic principles” (Hillygus, 2005). The social network hypothesis suggests that people with higher education have higher social network positions which bring them closer to the political elite (Hillygus, 2005). The political meritocracy hypothesis argues upon the assumption that intelligence begets education. Because people with education are more intelligent, they are more likely to vote (Hillygus, 2005). Nonetheless, whatever the reason education has a clear affect on political participation which leads me to wonder what affect it has in regards to voter mobilization.

Youth who attend college and youth who do not attend college face different challenges going to the polls (Jarvis, Montoya, & Mulvoy, 2005b). Youth at college campuses have better access to political resources, and have more of an opportunity to learn about political life. Those who live on campus also have a large opportunity to become involved in activities that created a sense of social capital. Although youth who do not attend college do not have all these same advantages, they are a less mobile group than college students. Many college students have left the place they grew up, the place

where they previously established roots, by moving to a new place they can be less invested in the community. Non-college students do not have that same problem. According to research, “the percentage changing their state of residence between 1979 and 1996 was 19.2 percent for those completing only high school, but 36.6 percent for those completing four years of college and 45.0 percent for those with even higher levels of education” (Jarvis et al. 2005b). Non-college students can also feel more involved with their communities by participating in the local workforce.

Whatever the reason, young people who attend college consistently have a higher voter turnout than those young people who do not attend some higher form of education. In 2000, 48 percent of college citizens aged 18-24 voted in comparison to only 25 percent of non-college citizens aged 18-24. In 2004, there was a large increase in voter turnout among youth, but the gap between college youth and non-college youth widened. Although non-college youth did increase their voting turnout by 9 percent, college students increased their voting turnout by 11 percent (Lopez, Kirby, Sagoff, & Kolaczowski, 2005).

In 2006, youth continued to improve their turnout (Lopez, Marcelo, Kirby, 2007). Several key races were decided by young voters, but these young voters were mostly college students (Student Attitudes: The Global Generation Executive Report, 2005). Once again, both college and non-college voter turnout increased, but the gap between the two was widened more. College attending youth’s voter turnout rate increased 4 percent between 2002 and 2006. In contrast, citizens aged 18 to 29 with a high school education only improved their voter turnout rate by 2 percent between 2002 and 2006

(Lopez et al., 2007). Why are college students voting more than their counterparts outside of the college campus?

One possible explanation is voter mobilization. In 2004 and 2006, voter mobilization programs for young people increased and improved, paralleling the growth of young voters showing up at the polls (Shea & Green, 2007). Although there still is not any definitive evidence that these two trends are directly related, many political scientists have reason to suspect a correlation. However, since young people are concentrated so heavily on college campuses and therefore easier to reach by mobilization efforts, young people who were not full time students in 2004 and 2006 largely were ignored (George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management, 2006). If this is what is accounting for the growing gap between college young people and non-college young people's voting rates, it needs to be prevented before an unintentional voter discrimination policy takes precedent.

Unfortunately, there is little evidence comparing voter mobilization between full time students and not full time students. In a few studies this gap is mentioned but only as a secondary observation, and it has been suggested that full time students respond better to mobilization, but this information comes from very limited research which was designed for other purposes (Jarvis, Montoya, & Mulvoy, 2005a). Otherwise, no research on the topic seems to be readily available. Therefore, I believe it is important that this issue is addressed and tested. If this information proves true, other methods could be enacted to increase non-college youth's participation

HYPOTHESIS

Based upon the available research, I too hypothesize that a larger amount of full time students were contacted by organizations and campaigns before the 2006 congressional elections than young people who are not full time students. However, even when that difference is accounted for, I hypothesize full-time students' voting rate increased more with contact than young people who are not full-time students' voting rate increased.

METHOD

To test this hypothesis, I once again used the Civic and Political Attitudes of Young People Study-Part 2. It was well suited for this hypothesis for the same reasons as it was for the hypothesis in section 1. Additionally, it was very important for this hypothesis that an equal number of youth who attended college and youth who did not attend college were sampled because I needed the largest samples possible for each to compare their voting turnout rates.

Once again, I am defining contact, the independent variable in both parts of my hypothesis, as anyone who can recall being contacted in 2006 by an organization or campaign by mail, prerecorded phone message, phone with a live person, face to face canvassers, internet, email, or networking sites like Myspace and Facebook. To test this variable, I again analyzed the responses to the following survey question:

Before the 2006 congressional elections, did any campaign or organization, including student organization, contact you to talk about the elections through any of the following means (check all that apply):

- <1> Yes*
- <2> No*
- <3> Not sure*

By mail

By phone with a prerecorded message
By phone with a live person
In person at your home or some other place
Over the internet or via email
Through a networking site like MySpace or Facebook
By text message to your cell phone

Like section one, I will be looking at each medium individually, but unlike section 1, the only fluctuation I am looking for between mediums is if college students or non-college students voting patterns vary depending on the medium.

Similarly to Section 1, I crosstabulated the responses to the question above with the dependent variable, voter turnout. To divide people into voters and nonvoters, I again chose to look at responses to the question:

Have you ever voted?

<1> Yes

<2> No

Here the same issue that arose in Section 1 about election 2006 arises. However, the constraints of the survey restricted me from asking about the 2006 election specifically. I also once again decided that since many organizations try to mobilize young voters by helping them register, to define the dependent variable in a second way, using the following question:

We understand that plenty of young people are not registered to vote, but we are wondering if you are currently registered to vote?

<1> Yes

<2> No

<3> I don't know

All the “Not sure” and “I don't know” responses and people who skipped any of these questions were eliminated from the sample being analyzed. Once again, text messages were omitted from the results.

The biggest difference between testing the hypothesis in Section 1 and Section 2 is in this section the crosstabulation are multivariate controlling for the variable whether respondents are full-time students or not. To separate the respondents into the two groups, I used the question following question:

Are you currently enrolled full-time in a four year college or university?
 <Yes>
 <No>

It is important to note here that the sample is aged 18-24 so those students who already graduated are going to respond no to this question and will therefore be in the same category of people who were never a full-time student. However, since I created my hypothesis to better understand the effect of the large amount of mobilization efforts that went on specifically in college campuses, those who already graduated and not interacting on campus anymore would be equally affected as those who never went to college at all. Nonetheless, this means the split between full time students and not full time students is not fifty-fifty.

FINDINGS

For all types of methods of contact, full time students were contacted more than not full time students. Below are tables, illustrating the results:

Table 14: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Mail Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by mail	42.8%	48.
	Not contacted by mail	57.2%	51.7
	Total	421 100.0%	462 100.0

Table 15: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Prerecorded Phone Message Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by prerecorded phone message	35.6%	38.4
	Not contacted by prerecorded phone message	64.4%	61.6
	Total	421 100.0%	463 100.0

Table 16: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Phone Message with Person Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by phone with person	15.1%	21.9
	Not contacted by phone with person	84.9%	78.1
	Total	405 100.0%	447 100.0

Table 17: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Person Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by person	14.3%	18.5
	Not contacted by person	85.7%	81.5
	Total	427 100.0%	460 100.0

Table 18: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Internet and Email Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by internet or email	33.5%	46.8
	Not contacted by internet or email	66.5%	53.2
	Total	424 100.0%	455 100.0

Table 19: Not Full Time Student versus Full Time Students and Networking Site Contact

		STUDENT STATUS	
		Not a full time student	Full time student
CONTACT	Contacted by networking site	14.0%	25.4
	Not contacted by networking site	86.0%	74.6
	Total	420 100.0%	468 100.0

The actual degree of difference between percent contacted vary between methods. The differences were largest with internet, email (13.3) and networking site contact (11.4) and smallest between prerecorded phone messages (2.8). These numbers are illustrated in Table 20:

Table 20: Percent Difference between Not Full Time Students Contacted and Full Time Students Contacted

		DIFFERENCE
CONTACT METHOD		*Difference between Full Time Students and Not Full Time Students (percent)
	Contacted by Mail	+5.5
	Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	+2.8
	Contacted by Phone Message with Person	+6.8
	Contacted by Person	+4.2
	Contacted by Internet or Email	+13.3
Contacted by Networking Site	+11.4	

*calculated by subtracting not full time student contact percent from full time student contact percent

All the differences calculations are positive illustrating how full time students are contacted by all methods more.

To better understand how contact affects full time students and not full time students differently, I crosstabulated contact with voting/registering with a controlling variable separating those who are full time students and those who are not. The following tables illustrate those results:

Table 21: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Mail and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Mail and Voting

		CONTACT		
		Contacted by Mail	Not Contacted by Mail	
VOTER TURNOUT	Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	69.4%	45.0
		Did Not Ever Vote	30.6%	55.0
		Total	180 100.0%	242 100.0
VOTER TURNOUT	Full Time Student	Ever Voted	82.1%	59.0
		Did Not Ever Vote	17.9%	41.0
		Total	223 100.0%	239 100.0

Table 22: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message and Voting

		CONTACT		
		Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	Not Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	
VOTER TURNOUT	Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	62.7%	52.4
		Did Not Ever Vote	37.3%	47.6
		Total	150 100.0%	271 100.0
VOTER TURNOUT	Full Time Student	Ever Voted	78.0%	65.3
		Did Not Ever Vote	22.0%	34.7
		Total	177 100.0%	285 100.0

Table 23: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Phone Messages with People and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Phone Messages with People and Voting

		CONTACT		
		Contacted by Phone with Person	Not Contacted by Phone with Person	
VOTER TURNOUT	Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	63.9%	54.1
		Did Not Ever Vote	36.1%	45.9
		Total	61 100.0%	344 100.0
VOTER TURNOUT	Full Time Student	Ever Voted	76.5%	68.9
		Did Not Ever Vote	23.5%	31.1
		Total	98 100.0%	350 100.0

Table 24: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Person and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Person and Voting

		CONTACT		
		Contacted by Person	Not Contacted by Person	
VOTER TURNOUT	Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	60.7%	54.0
		Did Not Ever Vote	39.3%	46.0
		Total	61 100.0%	367 100.0
VOTER TURNOUT	Full Time Student	Ever Voted	78.8%	68.3
		Did Not Ever Vote	21.2%	31.7
		Total	85 100.0%	375 100.0

Table 25: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Internet and Email and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Internet and Email and Voting
CONTACT

VOTER TURNOUT

		Contacted by Internet or Email	Not Contacted by Internet or Email
Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	73.9%	48.2
	Did Not Ever Vote	26.1%	51.8
	Total	142 100.0%	282 100.0
Full Time Student	Ever Voted	79.0%	62.8
	Did Not Ever Vote	21.0%	37.2
	Total	214 100.0%	242 100.0

Table 26: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Networking Site and Voting Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Networking Site and Voting
CONTACT

VOTER TURNOUT

		Contacted by Networking Site	Not Contacted by Networking Site
Not a Full Time Student	Ever Voted	78.0%	51.5
	Did Not Ever Vote	22.0%	48.5
	Total	59 100.0%	361 100.0
Full Time Student	Ever Voted	77.5%	67.6
	Did Not Ever Vote	25.5%	32.4
	Total	120 100.0%	349 100.0

Table 27: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Mail and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Mail and Registration
CONTACT

REGISTRATION

		Contacted by Mail	Not Contacted by Mail
Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	82.4%	67.5
	Not Registered to Vote	17.6%	32.5
	Total	239 100.0%	335 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	93.0%	78.8
	Not Registered to Vote	7.0%	21.2
	Total	129 100.0%	146 100.0

Table 28: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Prerecorded Phone Message and Registration
CONTACT

REGISTRATION

		Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	Not Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message
Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	81.2%	70.5
	Not Registered to Vote	18.8%	29.5
	Total	202 100.0%	370 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	90.3%	83.7
	Not Registered to Vote	9.7%	16.3
	Total	103 100.0%	172 100.0

Table 29: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Phone Message with Person and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Phone Message with Person and Registration

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Phone with Person	Not Contacted by Phone with Person
REGISTRATION Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	87.5%	71.9
	Not Registered to Vote	12.5%	28.1
	Total	88 100.0%	467 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	88.5%	85.9
	Not Registered to Vote	11.5%	14.1
	Total	61 100.0%	206 100.0

Table 30: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Person and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Person and Registration

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Person	Not Contacted by Person
REGISTRATION Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	79.5%	71.9
	Not Registered to Vote	20.5%	28.1
	Total	83 100.0%	498 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	89.8%	84.5
	Not Registered to Vote	10.2%	15.5
	Total	49 100.0%	226 100.0

Table 31: Not Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Internet and Email and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' Relationship between Contact by Internet and Email and Registration

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Internet or Email	Not Contacted by Internet or Email
REGISTRATION Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	87.7%	67.7
	Not Registered to Vote	12.3%	32.3
	Total	195 100.0%	384 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	89.0%	83.2
	Not Registered to Vote	11.0%	16.8
	Total	127 100.0%	143 100.0

Table 32: Not Full Time Students' relationship between Contact by Network Site and Registration Compared to Full Time Students' relationship between Contact by Network Site and Registration

		CONTACT	
		Contacted by Networking Site	Not Contacted by Networking Site
REGISTRATION Not a Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	91.4%	70.6
	Not Registered to Vote	8.6%	29.4
	Total	81 100.0%	494 100.0
Full Time Student	Registered to Vote	93.1%	84.0
	Not Registered to Vote	6.9%	16.0
	Total	72 100.0%	206 100.0

To make it easier to compare the results, I calculated the differences and compiled them all into one table. These calculations can be observed in the following table:

Table 33: Voting and Registration Percentage Changes for Full Time Students and Not Full Time Students
PERCENTAGE CHANGE

CONTACT METHOD	Difference Between Full Time Students Who Were Contacted and Those Who Were Not Contacted (percent)		Difference Between Not Full Time Students Who Were Contacted and Those Who Were Not Contacted (percent)	
	<i>*Registration Difference</i>	<i>*Voting Difference</i>	<i>*Registration Difference</i>	<i>*Voting Difference</i>
Contacted by Mail	+14.5	+23.1	+14.9	+24.4
Contacted by Prerecorded Phone Message	+6.6	+12.7	+10.7	+10.3
Contacted by Phone Message with Person	+2.6	+9.8	+15.6	+7.6
Contacted by Person	+5.3	+10.5	+7.6	+6.7
Contacted by Internet or Email	+5.8	+16.2	+20.0	+25.7
Contacted by Networking Site	+9.1	+9.9	+20.8	+26.5

*calculated by subtracting percent of students who were not contacted and voted/registered from percent of students who were contacted and voted/registered

The patterns here are more complicated to observe and therefore will be discussed in the analysis.

ANALYSIS

The data agrees with the first part of my hypothesis, full time students were contacted more than not full time students in 2006. The most significant differences in distribution of contact occurred when full time students were asked to recall being contacted by internet, email and network sites. The least differences were seen with prerecorded phone calls. This makes sense because some full time students do not use landlines in their dormitories, but all of them need to have access to internet for school. This information still agrees with the hypothesis that less voter mobilization programs for non-college youth led to their voting turnout increasing less than college students who were exposed to a plethora of programs.

On the other hand, the data from the Tufts' survey conflicts with the second part of my hypothesis. College students voting and registration did not increase anymore than those who were not full-time students. In fact, although not definitive enough to say conclusively, it appears that non-full time students who were contacted's voting turnout and registration were more likely to increase. In particular, non-full time students who vote were contacted by internet, email and network sites far more than full time students

who voted. Their difference for contact by email and internet varied by 9.5 percentage points and for contact by networking sites varied by 16.6 percentage points. This does not agree with the current research out there that suggests college students are more receptive to voter mobilization.

There are two possible explanations for these results. The first explanation is non-full time students might actually respond more to voter mobilization than full time students. However after the analysis in Section 1 that dealt with data from the same survey question the second explanation seems more likely. The second explanation is that the question in the survey did not measure the relationship I was hoping to analyze; instead, the relationship goes the other way. It measured whether voters beget contact not the other way around. Non-full time students who vote might be contacted more because campaigns know who to target. By being a regular voter, they attract more forms of contact. Still, it is interesting that non-full time student voters would attract more attention than full time student voters. This could lead to the possible conclusion that campaigns contact non-college voters more than they contact college voters. More research needs to be done to see if either of these explanations or another explanation all together explain the survey data.

CONCLUSION

For now I conclude that my hypothesis was only partially correct. Full time students can recall being contacted more than non-full time students before the 2006 congressional election. This might help explain why college students' voting turnout rates increased more than other youth. However, there was a larger increase between voting and registering among non-full time students who were contacted by organizations

compared to the smaller increase in voting and registering that occurred when full time students were contacted. The relationship was particularly strong among technological mediums like email, internet and networking sites.

Once again, I recommend that more research go into these topics because I do not believe this survey is sufficient. Any explanation for the difference between full time student and non-full time student's voting and registering after contact is merely a conjecture at this point. Once again I believe a panel survey during the 2008 presidential election would be the best way to test this hypothesis again.

Again I would like to emphasize, the question on the survey could not show whether contact by an outside source actually changed the minds of young people or whether they were all planning to vote before the contact even happened. Second, I also want to repeat that recall is very hard, especially when over a long period of time. Respondent's recollection of contact might be distorted or hazy and this can misrepresent results. Unfortunately, the timing of the survey constrained me to ask about contact before the 2006 election which was a long time ago, but it was the closest major election before the survey was distributed. Logically, over a year later people cannot be expected to report upon their experiences with voter mobilization perfectly.

Like Section 1, Section 2's data did not measure the relationship I really wanted to analyze and more tests need to be conducted. However unlike Section 1, Section 2's results can possibly interpreted as evidence for an interesting theory. The calculations suggest that even though non-full time students do not get contacted as much as full time students do, non-full time student voters actually might get contacted more by campaigns than full time student voters do. This raises new questions, so once again I must

conclude that there is still much more political scientists have to learn about GOTV efforts and mobilizing young people to vote and register.

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