A Critical Test of Habitual Voting and Residual Mobilization: Tracking Mobilized Voters in Future Elections

Victoria Shineman
Visiting Scholar
Center for the Study of Democratic Politics
Princeton University
shineman@princeton.edu

Abstract: It is frequently observed that some people participate regularly, and others don't. The phenomenon of repeated participation is often referred to as the "habit of voting". Although a habit of voting might exist, "habit" is only one of many potential reasons why individuals who participate at a given time are more likely to participate again in the future. This paper engages the more general phenomenon of repeated participation. I compare the possible mechanisms which might cause repeated participation, and present the results of an empirical study designed both to estimate the magnitude of residual mobilization effects, and to identify the causes of residual mobilization. The experiment integrated an intensive mobilization treatment into a panel survey conducted before and after the 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election. The mobilization treatment increased initial voter turnout by over 33 percentage points. Analysis of subsequent voter history files tracks the participation of mobilized and non-mobilized subjects in the 2012 General Election. Overall, I find that simply motivating people to vote in 2011 did not make those people more likely to vote in 2012, suggesting that a "habit" of voting did not develop. However, 2012 turnout was higher among the subset of subjects who were mobilized in such a way that also decreased their costs of future participation and future information gathering.

Introduction

Democratic theorists have long asserted that political participation is a self-reinforcing activity, and that motivating individuals to participate in one area will also cause those individuals to be more likely to participate in other areas as well (Barber 1984; Pateman 1970). Within the context of electoral participation in particular, it is frequently observed that some people participate regularly, and others don't. The phenomenon of repeated participation is often referred to as the "habit of voting". However, the observation that some people vote regularly does not necessarily mean that this pattern of repeated participation is caused by a habitual behavior. Although a habit of voting might well exist, "habit" is only one of many potential explanations why individuals who participate at a given time are more likely to participate again in the future.

This paper engages the more general phenomena of repeated participation. I engage the possible mechanisms which might cause repeated participation, and present the results of an empirical study designed both to estimate the magnitude of residual mobilization effects, and to identify the causes of residual mobilization. Overall, I find that simply motivating people to vote at a single point in time did not make those people more likely to vote in the future. However, residual mobilization effects were higher among the subset of subjects who were mobilized in such a way that also reduced their costs of future participation and future information gathering.

Section 1 explores potential causes of repeated participation, including – but not limited to – the possibility that voting can be habit-forming. Section 2 presents the design of an experimental study intended to generate an exogenous increase in voter turnout during the 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election. I then track the future participation of the mobilized and non-mobilized subjects during the 2012 General Election, in order to identify and understand residual

effects of initial mobilization. Section 3 presents the experimental effects during the 2011 election, and Section 4 presents the residual effects during the 2012 election. Section 5 concludes.

Section 1: Causes of Repeated Participation

What causes the positive relationship between voter turnout at an initial election and voter turnout at a subsequent election? Dozens of scholars have attributed patterns of repeated participation as evidence that voting is habitual. Although the phenomenon is commonly referred to as the "habit of voting", there are several different mechanisms which could produce observed patterns of repeated participation and non-participation.

1.1 – Voter Turnout is motivated by sticky characteristics

A central competing explanation for these patterns is that the characteristics which motivate individuals to participate are sticky, and persist between elections. For example, if a given individual is motivated to participate in an election because she has a strong sense of civic duty, that individual will likely vote in the next election for the same reason. In this case, it is not the initial participation that motivates the subsequent participation. Both acts of participation are driven by the same characteristic: civic duty. Many of the characteristics which have been found to increase the likelihood of participation are fairly stable – including social class, education, income, and race.

Denny and Doyle (2009, p. 17) point out that "if some proportion of persistence is actually habitual, then cross-sectional studies are likely to overestimate the importance of individual heterogeneity". Similarly, if we accept that at least some of persistent participation is

caused by individual-level characteristics, cross-sectional studies are unable to estimate how much of repeated participation – if any – is caused by habit.

Several studies have tried to engage this methodological puzzle. Multiple studies have compared individual-level voter turnout over time, and consistently find that engaging in participation at a given point in time increases the likelihood that an individual will participate again at a later point in time (Brody and Sniderman 1977; Pedersen 1982; Green and Shachar 2000; Plutzer 2002). Denny and Doyle (2009) note that these studies are unable to account for the influence of turnout decisions made before the first election in the analysis, and therefore neglect to account for the initial condition. To address this concern, Denny and Doyle estimate the residual effects of participation in a setting where the initial election is the very first election in which the sample population was able to vote. The results continue to suggest that voter turnout is a persistent behavior.

There are still concerns that initial turnout might be motivated by some unobserved characteristics, and those characteristics might continue to motivate subsequent participation. Meredith (2009), Gorecki (2012), and Dinas (2012) try to isolate natural experiments where the initial act of participation is partially determined by an exogenous shock. Meredith uses a regression discontinuity design to compare future participation of eligible voters who turned 18 just before and just after the 2000 US Presidential election. Dinas employs a similar design, comparing the future voter turnout of US citizens who turned 18 just before and just after the minimum voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. Gorecki uses the varying proximity between EU Parliament elections and national election cycles to gain leverage on the study of electoral context and habit. All three studies find evidence that initial participation increases the likelihood of subsequent participation.

Another approach is to administer randomized shocks intended to increase participation at a given time, and then continue to track that sample's participation in subsequent elections. Kraut and McConahay (1973) and Yalch (1976) both find that interviewing subjects before an election leads to an increase in voter turnout. Gerber, Green, and Shachar (2003) find that subjects mobilized to vote in the 1998 Congressional election were more likely to vote in November 1999. Cutts et al. (2009) find similar effects in a mobilization study conducted in the UK. Davenport et al. (2010) track the future participation of more than a million eligible voters across multiple mobilization studies. Although the residual mobilization effects vary between studies, they find that subjects motivated to participate by social pressure appeals did continue to vote more often in subsequent elections.

Overall, the evidence suggests that there is something about engaging in participation that further encourages an individual to participate in the future. In addition to habit, there are several other potential mechanisms through which engaging in participation might encourage future participatory engagement.

1.2 – Participation generates psychological and attitudinal changes

Engaging in participation might trigger psychological reactions within an individual. For example, there is evidence that engaging in participation might increase an individual's sense of political efficacy (Finkel 1985, 1987; Semetko and Valkenburg 1998; Smith and Tolbert 2004, Chapter 4), and also that this effect might be moderated by the interaction of participation and approval of the electoral outcome (Madsen 1987; Clarke and Ackock 1989; Bowler and Donovan 2002; Valentino and Gregoriwics 2009; Shineman 2012b). Political participation has also been found to increase political trust and approval of democracy, again some with some

interactions with approval of electoral outcomes (Nadeau and Blais 1993; Anderson and LoTempi 2002; Esaiasson 2012; Lundell 2012; Shineman 2012b).

Democratic theorists have long argued that motivating a person to participate in civic activities will eventually cause that person to increase their interest in politics and public life (e.g. Pateman 1970; Barber 1984).

Empirical evidence to support this claim is mixed. Loewen, Milner, and Hicks (1997) and Dinas (2012) both find no effects of participation on political information or interest. McClendon (2012) finds some evidence that participation might increase political interest. Shineman (2012a) finds that mobilizing voter turnout causes subjects to increase their political information, but does not lead to an increase in engagement with politics outside of the context of the election.

Overall, there is fairly compelling theory and evidence that suggests that engaging in participation causes people to increase their political efficacy, trust in government, political interest, and level of political information. Each of these characteristics is also known to be a motivator for participation, providing yet another possible explanation for trends of repeated participation. Perhaps it is not that participation itself is habitual, but rather that the act of participation generates a series of effects, and these effects all contribute to encouraging future participation.

1.3 – Participation is encouraged by social pressures

If an individual is motivated to participate in a given election by appeals targeting the desire to engage in socially desired behavior, those appeals can also have a lasting effect. For example, if a campaign motivates an individual to participate for the first time by activating that individual's belief that voting is a socially desired behavior, it is likely that the individual will continue to

view voting as something that is socially desired during subsequent elections. Davenport, Gerber, Green, Larimer, and Mann (2010) tracked over one million subjects across a series of field experiments which all encouraged mobilization through social appeals. The results vary between studies, but overall they find evidence that subjects who were mobilized once are more likely to vote at a later point in time. This repeated mobilization could be caused because attitudinal changes generated by the initial mobilization effort could continue to persist and continue to motivate participation in the future.

Because voting is generally considered to be a socially desired behavior, an individual who participates will also likely receive positive acclaim within social and professional networks (Plutzer 2002). These social rewards for participation can further incentivize the individual to continue participating in the future.

1.4 – Participation enhances perceptions of self as a public citizen

An individual's self-perception is affected by her behavior. If an individual participates, she will be more likely to think of herself as civic-minded and politically involved. As Green and Shachar (2000, pp 571) write, "The more one votes, the more one comes to regard going to the polls as 'what people like me do on election day'". Similarly, Gerber et al (2003, p. 548) write, "Participation in an election might simply strengthen a person's self image as a "good citizen" who contributes to a collective good such as electoral democracy." As an individual changes her perception of herself, her future behavior is also affected: being more likely to think of oneself as a participatory individual increases the probability of participating in the future.

1.5 – Engaging in participation changes attitudes and perceptions of participation

The act of casting a ballot makes the electoral process seem less foreign, more familiar, and more inclusive. Scholars across disciplines have long noted that people have a tendency to accept what is familiar as good and appropriate and legitimate. A voter might be more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the idea of voting, simply by being exposed to the behavior (Green and Shachar 2000).

A slightly more pessimistic version of this hypothesis argues that an individual who is compelled to participate at a given point in time will then adjust her self-perceptions and attitudes toward participation and civic activity in order to justify her behavior. People try to maintain consistency between their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. For example, if a citizen is motivated to vote by some external reason in a given election, she will adjust her attitudes to be more likely to agree that voting is important, or that voting can make a difference.

1.6 – Engaging in participation reduces future costs of participation

Another possible explanation for residual mobilization is that the process through which an individual engages in participation includes activities which result in reductions in the cost of voting at future points in time (see for example: Denny and Doyle 2009; Plutzer 2002; Gerber, Green and Shachar 2003; Highton 2000).

Studies of participation have consistently found that voter turnout increases when the costs of voting are lower. Some costs of voting are reoccurring in each election, such as transportation to the polls or time spent waiting in line. There are also other costs of voting which are present during an individual's first election, but then become less burdensome – or even non-existent – in subsequent elections. For example, in order to vote for the first time, an

individual has to register to vote, acquire a ballot, locate the polling station (or learn how to engage alternative forms of balloting, such as vote-by-mail or early voting), and learn how to accurately indicate her preference on the ballot or voting machine. If the same individual wants to vote for a second time, the costs in the second election are significantly lower. She is now registered, knows where the polling station is, and has already learned how to properly mark the ballot. The process is easier, both because the steps required to cast a ballot become more familiar, and also because some hurdles – particularly the act of registering to vote – only need to be crossed once. Unless an individual is changing locations or party affiliations, she will not need to register again.

The initial hurdle of voter registration is substantial. Highton (2000, p. 109) argues that the negative relationship between residential stability and voter turnout is driven more by the need to re-register at each new location, in comparison to the demobilizing effects of disrupted social ties. Beyond the requirement that an individual must be registered in order to vote, being registered to vote also produces other effects which further reduce the costs of future participation. Once registered, a citizen will continue to receive a voter card in the mail, reminders about the election date and polling locations, and might also receive a voter information guide, or even an absentee ballot.

Being on the voter registration list also makes an individual more likely to be contacted by political parties and advocacy groups, which further decreases the costs of both participation and political information. For example, Huckfeldt and Sprague (1992) find that citizens who voted in previous primary elections are more likely to be contacted by political campaigns before subsequent primary elections. Contact from the campaigns makes the individual aware of the upcoming election, and makes participation more likely. As Green and Shachar (2000, p. 570)

write: "Voting is self-reinforcing, by this account, because parties and interest groups have an incentive to focus their attention on active voters".

Residual mobilization might occur – at least in part – because motivating an individual to participate at a given point in time effectively reduces the costs associated with participation at a later point in time. Now that the later act of participation is less costly, the individual becomes more likely to vote again.

1.7 – Engaging in participation reduces future costs of information

An initial act of participation can also result in reduced costs of information during subsequent elections (Plutzer 2002). A registered voter will receive election materials in the mail and increased contact from campaigns. Moreover, the process of becoming informed about an election is more demanding in an individual's first elections. In order to determine her vote choice, an individual needs to learn about the parties and candidates and issues. The start-up information cost of the first election could be quite high. However, once this initial information is attained, much of the information (such as party ideologies or candidate platforms) is also useful in subsequent elections, reducing future information costs.

Shineman (2012a) argues that because informed participation requires both information and participation, reducing the cost of participation will increase information acquisition. She finds that mobilizing subjects to participate caused them to increase their political information. Similarly, reducing the cost of information will increase participation. Lassen (2005) finds evidence that suggests that citizens with more information are more likely to cast valid votes.

An initial act of participation might make future participation more likely, simply because the process of the initial participation reduces the costs of information in subsequent elections, and people are more likely to participate when the cost of information is lower.

1.8 – Maybe voting truly is a habitual behavior

Given all of the different explanations for repeating trends in participation, the phenomenon is still typically referred to as "habit". Several scholars have engaged the debate over whether the act of voting can be habit-forming.

Aldrich, Montgomery, and Wood (2011) suggest that some people deliberate whether to vote in each election, and others are habitual voters (or habitual non-voters) who just about always vote (or don't vote). The authors emphasize that habit requires a repeated context. Voter turnout is a peculiar behavior to become habitual because the physical context of elections changes over time. Changing context is particularly aggravated among people who moved recently, because the complete physical environment of the election changes.

Plutzer (2002) suggests a developmental theory of voter turnout, where young citizens begin as habitual non-voters, and then adjust their behavior in response to patterns and inertia that develop over time. Young citizens have lower resources and higher start-up costs for participation, and are also less motivated to participate because they have weaker community ties and are less likely to be targeted by campaigns. Once a citizen overcomes these initial obstacles votes, he or she begins to develop *intertia*, which can result in the citizen becoming a habitual voter. Inertia differs from the idea of persistence in that inertia "suggests that the roots of current turnout can be found in voting behavior in the previous one or two elections" whereas

persistence "suggests that one can find the origins of adult attitudes and ideology in events and influences that occurred many years earlier" (Plutzer 2002, p. 42).

Franklin (2004) further emphasizes that behavioral patterns developed during early formative years can have a substantial influence on future behavior. Franklin argues that the electoral context plays a much larger role in the turnout decision of young citizens, whereas the behavior of older citizens is driven less by each electoral context, and more by developed patterns of behavior.

Green and Shachar (2000) resist the term "habit" because they believe the term carries negative connotations. Instead, they use the term "consuetude" which is a near synonym for habit or custom, but without the unwanted connotations. Green and Shachar (2000, p. 562) characterize consuetude as follows: "an act may be said to be subject to consuetude if, other things being equal, merely engaging in the activity today makes it more likely that one will engage in the same activity in the future." The key element to this definition is "other things being equal" – it is very difficult to empirically test whether voter turnout is indeed habitual, because engaging in participation changes many things, making it difficult to compare cases where all else is equal.

Gerber, Green, and Shachar (2003, p. 542) write: "In the context of electoral participation, the concept of habit implies that if two people whose psychological propensities to vote are identical should happen to make different choices about whether to go to the polls on election day, these behaviors will alter their likelihoods of voting in the next election". Although a habit of voting would indeed produce such an effect, there are several other potential mechanisms between engaging in participation at one point in time and the likelihood of participating at a future point in time.

Given the endogeneity between all the motivators for initial participation, it is difficult to design an empirical study that enables the researcher to differentiate between the many competing possible mechanisms which might produce the phenomena of repeated participation. As Aldrich, Montgomery, and Wood (2011, p. 539) write: "Despite this movement toward empirical demonstrations of habit, the inability to settle on the reason for repeated behavior has left the theory of habitual turnout undeveloped".

Section 2: Research Design

This paper seeks to create and execute a research design that will not only allow us to estimate the magnitude of residual mobilization, but will also improve our ability to differentiate between the competing mechanisms which might be producing this effect.

2.1 – Experimental Research Design

Overview: The experimental design consisted of an intensive mobilization treatment and an information treatment integrated into a panel survey conducted before and after the November 8, 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election. The mobilization treatment reduced the cost of registration and voting, and additionally offered citizens a $25 financial incentive to cast a ballot. A 2x2 treatment design added varying access to low-cost information, in order to test the effects of mobilization across different information environments. I provide an abbreviated summary of the experimental protocol below. A more detailed account of the experimental design can be found in Appendix A.

Case Selection: San Francisco Municipal Election: In the November 2011 Municipal Election, the citizens of San Francisco voted on eight ballot propositions, and elected three different city-level offices: the Mayor, the Sheriff, and the District Attorney. All three contests were non-partisan, and were elected using ranked choice voting (RCV), a preferential voting system.

This election was an ideal case in which to apply the experimental design for several reasons. First, a municipal election was likely to have lower level of baseline voter turnout than a higher level election, which is key to generating a substantial turnout effect in the initial election, and therefore key to enabling precise estimates of residual mobilization. Second, San Francisco has remarkably progressive voter turnout laws, which maximized the ability for the mobilization treatment to reduce the costs of participation, simply by making subjects aware of the resources that were already available to them. Third, the city of San Francisco makes their validated voter history file available for scholarly research purposes, which was essential for verifying actual voter turnout. And lastly, the 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election was a case where it was possible to offer a financial incentive for participation. It is illegal to offer money or other material incentives in exchange for voting in all federal elections and within 48 states, but incentivizing participation is not forbidden in local elections in California (see Hasen 2000; Nichter 2008; and CA Election Code Sections 18520-18524).

Recruitment: Subjects were recruited through announcements made in classrooms at City College San Francisco and through postings in online job forums. The study was advertised as a money making opportunity, where participants would earn $25 for filling out two surveys about 6 weeks apart.

Pre-Treatment Survey: All subjects completed a pre-treatment survey in-person at a private office located in downtown San Francisco. Treatments were delivered in-person immediately after the subject completed the pre-treatment survey.

Experimental Treatment Design: The primary treatment was an intensive mobilization treatment, intended to simultaneously reduce the costs and increase the incentives for casting a ballot in the 2011 election. Subjects in the mobilization treatment were offered a voter registration form, were given information about how to locate their polling location, vote early, or vote-by-mail, and were sent two reminder e-mails before the election.

To incentivize participation, the mobilization treatment also provided each subject with a prepaid $25 Visa gift card (see Figure 1). In place of a name, the card read "THANK YOU FOR VOTING, SAN FRANCISCO 2011" (Appendix B: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Visa Card). After handing subjects the Visa card and describing it as a "gift for you", the researcher recited a memorized script that explained the following: (1) The $25 is already on the card, and the subject can spend it however he or she would like; (2) The card has not been activated yet; (3) I (the researcher) have the activation code; (4) I will activate the card after the upcoming municipal election; (5) However, if for whatever reason, the subject does not cast a ballot in the election, I will cancel the card and "take the money back"; and (6) I will verify whether or not the subject cast a ballot with the official voter turnout record from the Election Office (Appendix C: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Visa Verbal Script). By informing subjects that I would validate their voter turnout with official government records, the mobilization treatment also made subjects aware that voter turnout was recorded, and was going to be monitored.

15

Figure 1: Participation Incentive: $25 Prepaid Visa Card

In order to test the effects of mobilization in a low-cost information environment, I also integrated varying access to an information treatment, which provided access to low-cost neutral information about the candidates and the ballot referenda. The resulting 2x2 treatment design (see Figure 2) provided each subject with either the mobilization treatment, the information treatment, both treatments, or neither.

Figure 2: 2x2 Experimental Treatment Design

	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment
Information Baseline	Baseline (n = 90)	Mobilization Only (n = 84)
Information Treatment	Information Only (n = 89)	Mobilization + Information (n = 86)

Post-Election Survey: The San Francisco Municipal Election took place on November 8th, 2011. The post-election survey was conducted online through Qualtrics, and was distributed the

day after the election. Attrition was very low: 96.9% of subjects (349/360) who completed the first survey also completed the second survey.

Incentives: All subjects who completed both surveys were paid $25 for their participation. Subjects in the mobilization treatment received an additional $25 (through the activated Visa card) if they cast a ballot in the election. [1]

---

[1] There is some concern that motivating involvement in the study through a monetary payment, as well as adding a financial incentive for participation, might affect the internal and external validity of the experimental design. By recruiting subjects through a monetary incentive, the experimental design might have restricted the subject pool to include only low-income subjects and people who are particularly motivated by money. If the representativeness of the sample were limited in this way, the ability for the results to provide inferences to a more general population would be limited. However, the sample characteristics suggest that respondents were not particularly poor. For example, more than 15% of the sample reported incomes over $90,000 per year. One can look at an extended presentation of pre-treatment sample characteristics in Appendix D, to further assess the diverse characteristics of the sample.

The financial incentive to cast a ballot in 2011 did not add any financial incentive to continue participating in 2012. If the sample were particularly motivated by money, residual mobilization effects would be even less likely.

There is also concern that offering a monetary incentive for casting a ballot might "crowd out" pre-existing intrinsic motivations for participation (Gneezy and Rustichini 2000; Panagopoulos 2008). If incentivizing participation in 2011 did crowd out instrumental incentives for voting, this spill over would cause the mobilization treatment to decrease incentives to participate in 2012, thereby again making residual mobilization to be less likely, suggesting that any observed estimates from 2012 might actually represent a lower bound of potential effects. 2008). If incentivizing participation in 2011 did crowd out instrumental incentives for voting, this spill over would cause the mobilization treatment to decrease incentives to participate in 2012, thereby again making residual mobilization to be less likely, suggesting that any observed estimates from 2012 might actually represent a lower bound of potential effects.

2.2 – Verifying Voter Turnout: After the election, actual voter turnout was validated using the confidential version of the Voter History File, acquired directly from the San Francisco Department of Elections. This file was used to validate the actual turnout of all subjects in the study, matching based on name, date of birth, gender, and both home and mailing addresses.

The San Francisco Voter History File records whether or not each registered citizen cast a ballot in each election, dating back to 1990. A single snapshot of the voter file also documents the initial date on which each citizen registered, and the date on which the citizen's voter history file was most recently updated. There are several reasons that the voter file might be updated: a citizen might register for the first time, might change her address or name or party affiliation, or might adjust her registration to become a permanent absentee voter. The voter file is also updated when a provisional ballot is approved. If a given citizen registers to vote in September, changes to vote by mail in October, and then casts a provisional ballot in November, the December voter file will document that she is registered as vote-by-mail and cast a provisional ballot. However, the changes in her registration over time are not recorded.

In order to account for changes in subjects' voter registration, I ordered several copies of the San Francisco Voter History File, dated at different points in time. I then merged these files together, matching individuals by their unique Voter ID numbers, to generate a new file that includes full voter history as well as the history of changes in registration status.

Specifically, I merge four voter history files from early October 2011 (just before the first survey was administered), early November 2011 (after the first survey and delivery of the treatments, but before the election), mid-December 2011 (after the voter turnout records for the 2011 election had been integrated into the data), and mid-December 2012 (after the voter turnout records for the 2012 elections had been integrated). The resulting dataset enables me to see

which subjects initiated registration or updated their registration during the course of the treatment (or arguably, in response to the treatment).

2.3 – Verifying Balance Between Treatment Groups

Establishing pre-treatment balance between groups is necessary in order to make inferences regarding the effects of the treatment. The experimental design used a short pre-survey questionnaire to randomize treatment assignment within a stratified block design, thereby combining random assignment with an intentional balance of key variables of interest. Additional information was gathered about each subject in the extended pre-treatment survey, enabling a more thorough verification of initial balance across the treatment groups. Treatment was assigned randomly, so any imbalance was due to chance. However, demonstrating balance across the treatment groups increases confidence in the accuracy of the estimated treatment effects.

Subjects between treatment groups were balanced on gender (52% female), age (average = 37), race (53% white, 20% Asian, 10% black, 10% Hispanic), marital status (9% married), number of years living at their current address (7.6 years on average), strength of partisan identity (average of 1.95 on a 3-point scale), voter registration status (78% registered pre-treatment), and ideological orientation (3.5 on an 11-point scale. By chance, there were some significant differences with regard to education, employment, and the percent of subjects who have children.

The pre-treatment survey also demonstrates that the treatment groups were statistically identical with regard to self-identified political interest, political attention, political information, the frequency of political discussion, predicted probability of voting in the 2011 election, and engagement with other forms of participation – such as donating money, or writing letters to

elected representatives. Appendix D provides a fuller presentation of characteristics of the sample as a whole, and displays the similarities and differences between each treatment group.

2.4 – Advantages of Experimental Design

Several scholars have tracked the future participation of subjects who were randomly encouraged to participate. The design of this particular study provides several unique opportunities which were not possible in previous studies.

First, most mobilization experiments select their subjects from validated voter registration lists, resulting in subject pools composed entirely of citizens who are already registered to vote. Although my sample included registered voters, I also sampled among non-registered voters. Including subjects who were not previously registered to vote allows the analysis to differentiate between the effects of overcoming the burden of initial registration from the effects of so-called "habitual voting". The best method for testing whether residual mobilization is caused by residual reductions in the cost of voting is to compare the rate of residual mobilization among subjects who were initially mobilized in ways that introduced varying residual reductions in the cost of future participation. Given that voter registration drastically reduces future costs of future participation, comparing initially unregistered citizens to initially registered citizens enables a more direct test of residual cost reduction hypothesis.

Second, by combining drastic reductions in the cost of voting with a strong financial incentive to vote, this study introduced the most intensive mobilization treatment ever delivered in a randomized experiment. The mobilization treatment successfully generated the largest increase in voter turnout ever produced in a randomized mobilization experiment (see Section 3.2 below). Although previous studies have identified residual effects of mobilization treatments, estimates of residual effects are limited by the magnitude of the initial effect. By increasing

initial voter turnout by such a large magnitude, this study increased the ability to precisely estimate the downstream effects of mobilized participation.

Third, this mobilization study was embedded in a panel survey. The ability to integrate this survey data with the voter history data provides opportunities for additional analyses at the individual level. Survey questions recorded basic demographic information, and also targeted political attitudes, behaviors, information, and opinions. I can test to see if residual mobilization is stronger among particular subsets of the sample. I am also able to use the survey data to better differentiate between the different potential causal pathways between initial mobilization and residual mobilization, by incorporating an analysis of other changes in attitudes, opinions, and behaviors.

Lastly, by gathering and combining voter history files at several points in time, this study not only measures whether each subject voted in each election, but also accounts for changes to each subject's voter registration record over time.

Section 3: Short-Term Effects on Registration and Participation

3.1 – Registration Before and After 2011 Mobilization Treatment

Table 1 displays the percent of subjects registered to vote before, during, and after the mobilization treatment.[2]

---

[2] The first survey (and the mobilization treatment) were conducted between October 11th – October 24th, 2011. I define subjects as being registered "before treatment" if they were already registered in the voter file dated on October 5th, 2011. I define subjects as being registered "during treatment" if they were not listed as registered on October 5th, 2011 but were registered

Table 1: Percent of Subjects Registered to Vote
Before, During, and After the Mobilization Treatment, by Treatment Group

	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment	Difference
Total Registered Before Treatment	76.9	77.8	+ 0.9
Initiated Registration During Treatment	2.3	17.6	+ 15.3**
Total Registered by 2011 Election	79.2	95.5	+ 16.3*

The first row displays the percent of subjects in each treatment group who were already registered to vote before the first survey was conducted. On average, 77.4% of the sample was registered to vote, and there was no significant difference in the rate of registration between treatment groups. The second row displays the percent of subjects in each treatment group who registered to vote for the first time during the course of the treatment, and the third row displays the percent of subjects in each treatment group who were registered to vote by the time the 2011 Municipal Election was conducted. The mobilization treatment clearly generated a substantial increase in voter registration. Whereas only 2.3% of non-mobilized subjects registered during this time, 17.6% of subjects in the mobilization treatment group initiated voter registration in response to the treatment. The mobilization treatment increased new voter registrations by 15.3 percentage points (more than a 665% increase).

Table 2 displays the registration behavior of subjects who were not registered before the first survey. The first row displays the percent of subjects who were not registered before the

by October 25th, 2011 (the last day a citizen could register and be eligible to vote in the Municipal Election on November 8th, 2011.

first survey. A comparable number of subjects were not registered in each group: 23% in the baseline, and 22% in the mobilization treatment. The second and third rows display the percent of these initially unregistered subjects who chose to register during the course of the treatment, and the percent who chose to remain unregistered. The mobilization treatment clearly increased new registrations among formerly unregistered subjects: only 10% of the unregistered subjects in the baseline chose to register, whereas 79.7% of the unregistered subjects in the mobilization treatment initiated new registrations in response to the treatment, an increase of 69.7 percentage points (or 697%).

Table 2: Registration Behavior Among Subjects Who Were
Not Registered to Vote Before the Pre-Treatment Survey, by Treatment Group

	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment	Difference
Total Subjects Not Registered Before Treatment	23.1	22.2	- 0.9
Percent of Non-Registered Subjects Who Initiated Registration During Treatment	10.0	79.7**	+ 69.7**
Percent of Non-Registered Subjects Who Did Not Register During Treatment	90.0	20.3**	- 69.7**

Table 3 displays the registration behavior of subjects who were already registered to vote before the first survey. The first row shows the percent of subjects who were already registered to vote. The groups were comparable, with 76.9% registered in the baseline, and 77.8% registered in the mobilization treatment group. The second and third rows indicate the percent of subjects who were already registered who then chose to update their registration in response to the treatment. Among subjects who were already registered to vote, 34.7% of those in the mobilization treatment group chose to update their voter registration after receiving the mobilization treatment.

23

Registration updates were clearly more frequent in the mobilization group, with only 5.7% of registered subjects in the baseline updating their registration during this period of time.

Table 3: Registration Behavior Among Subjects Who Were
Already Registered to Vote Before the Pre-Treatment Survey, by Treatment Group

	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment	Difference
Total Percent of Subjects Already Registered Before Treatment	76.9	77.8	+ 0.9
Percent of Subjects Already Registered Who Did Not Update Registration During Treatment	94.3	65.3	- 29.0**
Percent of Subjects Already Registered Who Updated Registration During Treatment (All)	5.7	34.7	+ 29.0**
Percent of Subjects Already Registered Who Updated Registration During Treatment (To Become Permanent Absentee Voter)	0.6	10.8	+ 10.2**

Updates to the registration file might include several potential changes. Some subjects chose to change their voter registration status. For example, the fourth row of Table 3 displays that about a third of treated subjects who updated their registration did so in order to switch to become a permanent absentee voter.[3]

---

[3] Other updates included changes to the subject's name, address, or political party. Some subjects expressed that they were uncertain of whether or not they were registered, and submitted a registration form to make sure that they were registered. Because of this, some of the re-registrations were identical to the most recent registration – but the voter file still records that a re-registration confirmation was submitted. I have a record of exactly what change was made to the registration file in each case. Given the sample size, I combine all registration updates in this

3.2 – Voter Turnout Effects in 2011 Election

The mobilization treatment was incredibly successful at increasing voter turnout in the 2011 election. Table 4 presents the validated voter turnout rates among the voting age population in each treatment group for the last five elections.[4] There are some differences in the rate of voter turnout across treatment groups in previous elections, but no group voted consistently more or less often than the others.

Table 4: Validated Voter Turnout Across Five Previous Elections, by Treatment Group

	San Francisco Population	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment	Difference
2011 Municipal Election	42.5	51.4	84.7	+ 33.4***
2010 General Election	61.0	44.5	51.4	+ 6.9+
2010 Primary Election	34.7	30.6	27.8	- 2.8
2009 Municipal Election	22.6	20.2	19.3	- 0.9
2009 Statewide Special Election	28.1	26.0	19.3	- 6.7+

+ $p < 0.10$ * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

analysis. I did not notice any interesting trends between types of updates. Full data is available upon request.

[4] In order to account for subjects who were under the age of 18 before 2011, I calculate the rate of validated voter turnout only among subjects who were eligible to vote during each election. As a result, the reliability and precision of the comparisons is lower for more distant elections, because the voting eligible population decreases substantially. Full voter turnout data dating back to 1990 is available upon request.

As shown in Table 4, 20.2% of the baseline sample participated in the previous municipal election in 2009, comparable to the San Francisco city average (22.6%). There were no significant differences in the rate of turnout between the mobilization baseline and the mobilization treatment groups. In 2011, the participation rate in the pure baseline group (46.1%) was also comparable to the participation rate of the San Francisco population as a whole (42.5%). Although not shown here, the information treatment significantly increased voter turnout in 2011. Compared to the pure baseline group, voter turnout was 11 percentage points higher among subjects who received only the information treatment, increasing from 46.1% to 57.1%. The turnout of the full mobilization baseline group shown in Table 4 (51.4%) averages the turnout from both the pure baseline group and the group that received only the information treatment.

Figure 3 provides a visual display of the validated voter turnout rate among subjects in the mobilization baseline and the mobilization treatment group during the previous Municipal Election in 2009, and during the 2011 Municipal Election.

Figure 3: Validated Voter Turnout, by Treatment Group

2009 Municipal Election   2011 Municipal Election

| 20.8% | 18.8% | 51.4% | 84.7% |

☐ Baseline   ■ Mobilization Treatment
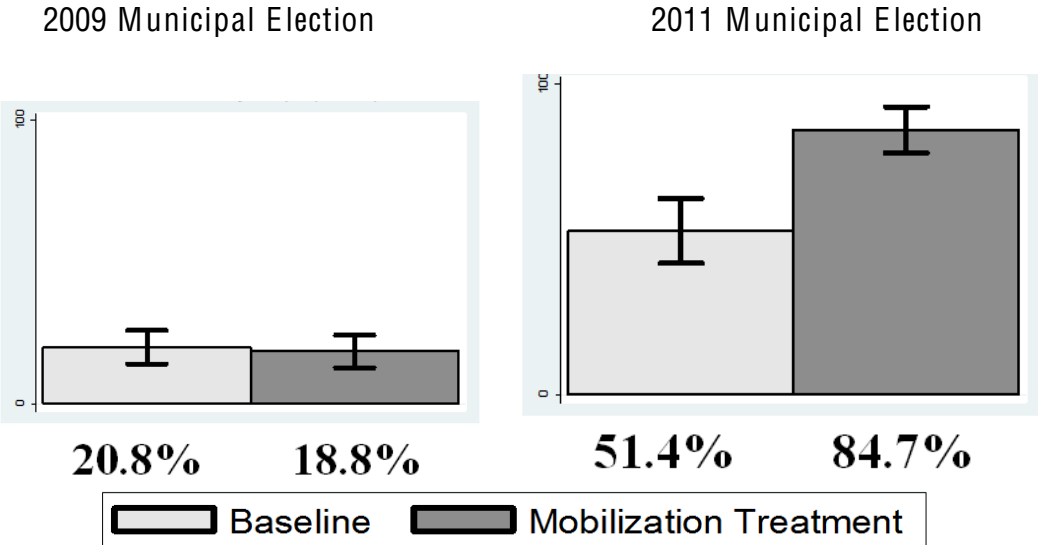
Unlike in 2009, turnout in 2011 was significantly higher among subjects who received the mobilization treatment. Turnout among subjects in the mobilization baseline groups was 51.4% on average, whereas a full 84.7% of subjects in the mobilization treatment groups cast ballots in the same election. The mobilization treatment increased voter turnout by 33.3 percentage points overall, a 64.8% increase in electoral participation.

The mobilization treatment intentionally combined several mobilization strategies in order to increase voter turnout as much as possible. The resulting increase in electoral participation was substantial: as far as I know, this is the largest increase in voter turnout ever produced by a randomized mobilization experiment.

Section 4: Residual Effects on Registration and Participation

4.1 – Residual Results: Self-Reported Participation

Several survey questions targeted self-identified attitudes toward participation. I asked subjects if they felt it was their duty to vote, participate, and become informed about politics at the local, national, and international levels. The data does not suggest that the mobilization treatment affected perceptions of civic duty in any of these cases.

However, in a separate analysis (Shineman 2012b), I do find that being mobilized to cast a ballot caused subjects to increase their sense of political efficacy and caused subjects to increase their trust and confidence in both the San Francisco city government, and the alternative voting system (ranked-choice voting) used to elect San Francisco city officials.

I also asked subjects whether they agree or disagree with the following statement: "I consider myself to be politically active". The mobilization treatment had no effect. Unexpectedly, the information treatment generated significantly lower agreement (a 6.2% decrease, p = 0.06). I suspect that being exposed to a lot of information about a local election might have made subjects aware of how much they didn't know, and might have therefore decreased their perceived level of political engagement.

Subjects who were exposed to the mobilization treatment were more likely to agree with the statement: "I like to participate" (a 6.5% increase, p = 0.05). It is unclear what caused this effect. Perhaps the act of casting a ballot made the voting process seem more familiar and fun. Alternatively, perhaps the $25 Visa card made the election more exciting, generating a short-term shift in subjects' perceptions about participation in general.

I also asked subjects to indicate how likely they thought they were to vote in the upcoming 2012 Presidential Election, 2013 Municipal Election, and 2014 Mid-Term Congressional Election. Receiving the mobilization treatment in 2011 did not affect subjects' predictions of future participation.[5]

Lastly, at the end of the second survey, I asked subjects if they would be interested in participating in another paid research study. This question was intended to capture whether the treatments shifted subjects' attitudes toward participation in general. Whereas 79.2% of subjects

---

[5] Interestingly, subjects exposed to the information treatment reported being 6% more likely to vote in the 2014 election (p = 0.03). Predictions of participation in 2012 and 2013 were also higher on average among subjects who received the information treatment, but these differences were not statistically significant (+ 2.8%, p = 0.14; and + 3.6%, p = 0.13). However, when I control for the self-assessed probability of voting recorded during the pre-treatment survey, these effects are no longer significant.

in the mobilization baseline said yes, 84.7% of subjects in the mobilization treatment group said yes, an increase of 5.5 percentage points (p = 0.09).[6] Subjects who received the information treatment were no more likely to want to participate in a future study.

Analysis: Overall, the data gathered in the survey questions suggests that being mobilized to vote in 2011 caused subjects to view participation in a more positive light. Mobilized subjects were more likely to say they liked participating, and indicated that they were more willing to sign up for an additional study. However, subjects mobilized in 2011 did not perceive of themselves as being more likely to vote in upcoming elections.

4.2 – Residual Results: Validated Registration and Voter Turnout Data

The mobilization treatment clearly increased registration and voter turnout in 2011. Now I proceed to test whether being mobilized in 2011 had any residual effects on registration or voter turnout in the 2012 primary and general elections.

Table 5 displays the rate of voter turnout in 2012 across each treatment group, for several sub-samples of the survey population. The first row displays the turnout for the full sample. Although turnout was substantially higher among the mobilization treatment group in the 2011 election, there was no significant difference in the rate of turnout between treatment groups in

---

[6] Although this result suggests that the mobilization treatment might have increased subjects' affinity toward participation, I suspect the reliability of this comparison. All subjects were identically recruited into a study to earn $25 in exchange for taking two surveys. Subjects in the mobilization treatment were then also offered a chance to earn an extra $25 (from the Visa card). This additional incentive might have caused mobilized subjects to estimate that participating in my future research studies would deliver higher benefits than those estimated by subjects in the mobilization baseline group.

the 2012 election: 63% of the mobilization baseline and 62.5% of the mobilization treatment

group voted in 2012.

Table 5: Voter Turnout in 2012 General Election,
by Subset of Sample and Treatment Group

	Mobilization Baseline	Mobilization Treatment	Difference
Full Sample	63.0	62.5	-0.5
Subjects Not Registered Before Treatment (All)	30.0	35.9	5.9
Subjects Not Registered Before Treatment, Who Initiated New Registration During Treatment	75.0+	38.7	-- [7]
Subjects Already Registered Before Treatment	72.9	70.1	-2.8
Subjects Already Registered Before Treatment, Who Updated Registration During Treatment	80.0+	47.5	-- [7]

+ The number of unregistered subjects who initiated their registration in the mobilization baseline group was very small (2.3%). The number of registered subjects who updated their registration in the mobilization baseline group was also very small (5.8%). Therefore the reported turnout rates of 75% and 80% are calculated from a very small sample, and are not reliable estimates for comparison.

Although there were no significant residual mobilization effects resulting from the mobilization

treatment as a whole, there are a few interesting patterns worth noting. Given that initial voter

registration is a substantial cost for a citizen's first election, and noting that more than 79% of

unregistered subjects initiated their first voter registration in response to the mobilization

---

[7] I do not display the difference in these cells because the populations are not comparable due to selection effects.

treatment, I predict that the residual effects of the mobilization treatment will be strongest among subjects who were not registered to vote before the first survey.

The second and third rows of Table 5 display the 2012 voter turnout among the subsample who was not registered to vote before the first survey was conducted in 2011. Among subjects who were not registered to vote before the first survey, 30% of those in the mobilization baseline registered and then voted in the 2012 election. The rate of 2012 turnout in the mobilization treatment group was 35.9%, which is 5.9 percentage points (or 19.7%) higher. Because only 22% of subjects were not registered, the sample size in these cells is very small, yielding imprecise estimates. Although a 19.7% increase in voter turnout is substantial in magnitude, this difference is not statistically significant.

The fourth row of Table 5 displays the voter turnout among the subsample who was already registered before the first survey was conducted. There were no significant differences between the mobilization baseline (72.9%) and the mobilization treatment group (70.1%).

The fifth row displays the voter turnout among subjects who were already registered, but updated their registration in response to the treatment. The comparison is interesting. Turnout among subjects who updated their registration in the baseline group was technically 80%, but the number of subjects in this cell is very small (5.8%, or 10 subjects). It is not surprising that turnout was higher among subjects who took it upon themselves to update their registration just before the election, with no assistance or incentive from the experimenter.

However, subjects who updated their registration in the mobilization treatment group voted substantially *less* in 2012, with only 47.5% casting ballots – 22.5 percentage points lower than turnout among mobilized subjects who did not update their registration. On one hand, we might expect subjects who updated their registration to vote more often, since they are more

likely to be registered at the correct address, or might have switched to become a permanent absentee voter so it would be easier to vote. However, on the other hand, among subjects who were already registered to vote in October 2011, I suspect that those who updated their registration in response to the treatment are likely to be among those who had a lower initial propensity to vote. Subjects who were frequent voters would be confident that they were already registered, and that their registration was current. Many of the subjects who re-registered submitted a new registration form "just in case" they were not registered. Although subjects who updated their registration participated less than subjects who did not update their registration, these participation rates reflect the voter turnout of two different types of voters. It is entirely possible that subjects who updated their registration during the treatment voted more in 2012 than they *would have* if they hadn't updated their registration in 2011. However, I am unable to compare this rate of participation (47.5%) against a counter-factual, because I cannot identify which subjects in the baseline *would have* updated their registration, had they been in the mobilization treatment group.

Finally, although the residual effects of the mobilization treatment are not evident from the 2012 data, it appears that the 2011 information treatment produced a significant increase in voter turnout in 2012. Among the full sample, 2012 voter turnout was 56.8% among subjects in the information baseline and 69.0% among subjects in the information treatment group – a 12.2 percentage point (or 21.5%) increase. Among subjects who were already registered before the first survey, being exposed to the information treatment in 2011 increased voter turnout in 2012 from 64.5% to 79.0%, a 14.5 percentage point (22.5%) increase. Among subjects who were not registered to vote in October 2011, the rate of 2012 voter turnout was comparable among the information control group (33.1%) and the information treatment group (34.9%).

As noted in Section 3.2, the information treatment increased 2011 participation by more than 11 percentage points. In a separate study (Shineman 2012a), I also demonstrate that subjects increased their political information in response to both the information treatment and the mobilization treatment. It is unclear whether the increase in 2012 participation was generated by the increased participation in 2011 or the increase in political information in 2011, or perhaps the combination of the two.

Section 5: Analysis and Conclusion

Overall, the results do not support the theory that voting is habitual. Although 84.7% of treated subjects were mobilized to cast ballots in 2011, mobilized subjects were not more likely to vote again in 2012. Among subjects who were already registered in October 2011, 2012 voter turnout was actually 2.8 percentage points *lower* in the mobilization group than it was in the baseline treatment group (though this difference was not statistically significant). Being mobilized in 2011 did not affect future participation among subjects who were already registered. It is possible that a "habit" of voting could develop, but might require more mobilized elections before it would take hold. It is also possible that some subjects do vote out of habit, but they were already voting before the study began.

The evidence most strongly supports the theory that residual mobilization occurs because the process of engaging in participation generates residual reductions in future costs of participation and future costs of information. Previously unregistered subjects who were subjected to the 2011 mobilization treatment voted nearly 20% more often in 2012. This increase is not statistically significant, but the magnitude of the estimate is substantial, and indicates that

further study is surely warranted. I would like to repeat the study among a sample that includes a larger number of subjects who were initially not registered to vote, in order to increase the precision of the estimates in these cells. The information treatment also resulted in more than a 20% increase in 2012 voter turnout. Given the larger sample size, the estimate of the information treatment effect is more precise, and the estimated 20% increase in residual mobilization is statistically significant.

The survey data also suggests that the mobilization treatment might have increased positive attitudes toward participation, which would make future participation more likely. Evidence from other studies (including additional analyses of the data generated by this experiment) further suggest that engaging in participation increases political trust, efficacy, and information. All of these effects suggest that observed patterns of repeated participation might indeed be generated by a self-reinforcing cycle – but this cycle might not be connected to "habit".

Voter turnout was high in 2012, with 57.3% of the pure baseline group casting ballots. I will continue to track this subject population during the 2013 San Francisco Municipal Election. The 2013 ballot will elect the City Attorney and the Treasurer, and might also include a series of ballot referenda questions. The Mayor is not up for election again until 2015. As such, the 2013 contest will likely produce much low voter turnout in the baseline group. The lower level of baseline turnout will enable the analysis to yield more precise estimates, and will hopefully shed light onto some of the puzzles introduced in 2012. Will the residual effects of the information treatment continue in 2013? Will more precise estimates reveal significant residual effects of the mobilization treatment?

There is also the possibility that mobilizing participation in the 2011 municipal election might have bigger effects on participation in another municipal election, as compared to

national-level elections. Maybe being mobilized in the 2011 Municipal Election generated a newfound interest in engaging local electoral contests? For example, Yalch (1976) found that mobilized participation in a local contest generated residual turnout effects in a subsequent local runoff election, but these residual effects did not carry over to the general election primary. Comparing voter turnout in 2013 will enable me to distinguish whether such a trend is caused by the proximity or the context of the subsequent election.

Lastly, I intend to further incorporate the survey data into the analysis, to test whether residual mobilization is stronger among particular subsets of the sample – controlling for demographic characteristics like age and income, and also controlling for changes in attitudinal measures, such as trust in government and political efficacy.

Voter turnout is a central form of political participation. Many scholars are actively engaged in identifying the most effective methods for increasing participation. If motivating an individual to cast a ballot once also increases the probability that the individual will vote in the future, the effects of mobilization treatments might be larger than original estimates. Beyond the pursuit of estimating the magnitude of residual mobilization, an even more interesting puzzle might be trying to understand why residual mobilization occurs. It might be the case that the rate of residual mobilization will vary, based on the type of appeal used to generate the initial instance of participation.

Many campaigns focus on "marginal voters" because these citizens are considered to be the most efficient investment. But is the rate of residual mobilization also higher among this population? If we find, for example, that mobilizing unlikely (unregistered) voters produces larger residual effects, mobilizing communities who are unlikely to participate might be more cost effective in the long-term, even if it is more difficult within the context of a given election.

Bibliography

Aldrich, John, Montgomery, Jacob, Taylor, Ashley & Wood, Wendy (2011) Turnout as a habit. Political Behavior, 33(4), pp. 535–563

Anderson, Christopher and Andrew LoTempio, "Winning, Losing and Political Trust in America." *British Journal of Political Science*, 32 (2002), 335 -51.

Barber, Benjamin R. *Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*. University of California Press, 2004.

Brody, Richard A. & Sniderman, Paul M. (1977) From life space to polling place: the relevance of personal concerns for voting behavior. British Journal of Political Science, 7(1), pp. 337–360.

Clarke, Harold D., and Alan C. Acock. "National elections and political attitudes: The case of political efficacy." *British Journal of Political Science* 19, no. 4 (1989): 551-562.

Cutts, David, Fieldhouse, Edward & John, Peter (2009) Is voting habit forming? The longitudinal impact of a GOTV campaign in the UK. Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties, 19(3), pp. 251–263.

Davenport, Tiffany C., Alan S. Gerber, Donald P. Green, Christopher W. Larimer, Christopher B. Mann, and Costas Panagopoulos. "The Enduring Effects of Social Pressure: Tracking Campaign Experiments Over a Series of Elections." *Political Behavior* 32, no. 3 (2010): 423-430.

Denny, Kevin & Doyle, Orla (2009) Does voting history matter? Analyzing persistence in turnout. American Journal of Political Science, 53(1), pp. 17–35.

Dinas, Elias. "The Formation of Voting Habits." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 22, no. 4 (2012): 431-456.

Finkel, Steven E. "Reciprocal effects of participation and political efficacy: A panel analysis." *American Journal of Political Science* (1985): 891-913.

Finkel, Steven E. "The effects of participation on political efficacy and political support: Evidence from a West German panel." *The Journal of Politics* 49, no. 02 (1987): 441-464.

Franklin, Mark N. (2004) Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P. & Shachar, Ron (2003a) Voting may be habit-forming: evidence from a randomized field experiment. American Journal of Political Science, 47(3), pp. 540–550.

Gneezy, Uri, and Aldo Rustichini (2000). "A Fine Is a Price." *Journal of Legal Studies*, 29, 1–17 Górecki, Maciej A. "Electoral context, habit-formation and voter turnout: A new analysis." *Electoral Studies* (2012).

Green, Donald P. & Shachar, Ron (2000) Habit formation and political behavior: evidence of consuetude in voter turnout. British Journal of Political Science, 30(4), pp. 561–573.

Hasen, Richard. 2000. "Vote Buying." *California Law Review*, Issue 5, October 2000, pp. 1323-1372.

Highton, Benjamin. "Residential mobility, community mobility, and electoral participation." *Political Behavior* 22, no. 2 (2000): 109-120.

Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1992."Political Parties and Electoral Mobilization: Political Structure, Social Structure, and the Party Canvass." American Political Science Review 86 (March):70– 86.

Kernan, Walter N., Catherine M. Viscoli, Robert W. Makuch, Lawrence M. Brass, and Ralph I. Horwitz. "Stratified randomization for clinical trials." *Journal of clinical epidemiology* 52, no. 1 (1999): 19.

Kraut, Robert E., and John B. McConahay. 1973."How Being Interviewed Affects Voting: An Experiment." Public Opinion Quarterly 37(3):398 – 406.

Loewen, Peter J, Henry Milner, and Bruck Hicks. 2008. "Does Compulsory Voting Lead to More Informed and Engaged Citizens? An Experimental Test." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 41(3): 655-672.

Madsen, Douglas. "Political self-efficacy tested." *The American Political Science Review* (1987): 571-581.

McClendon, Gwyneth H. 2013. "Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics". Paper Presented at the 2013 Center for Experimental Social Science Conference at New York University.

Meredith, Marc (2009) Persistence in political participation. Quarterly Journal of Political Science, 4(3), pp. 187–209.

Nadeau, Richard, and André Blais. "Accepting the election outcome: The effect of participation on losers' consent." *British Journal of Political Science* 23, no. 4 (1993): 553-563.

Nichter, Simeon. "Vote buying or turnout buying? Machine politics and the secret ballot." *American political science review* 102, no. 01 (2008): 19-31.

Panagopoulos, Costas. 2008. "Turning Out, Cashing In: Extrinsic Rewards, Intrinsic Motivation and Voting," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association 67th Annual National Conference, The Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL
Pateman, Carole. "Participation and Democracy Theory." *Cambridge Mass* (1970).

Plutzer, Eric (2002) Becoming an Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources and Growth in Young Adulthood. The American Political Science Review, 96(1), pp. 41–56

Semetko, Holli, and Patti Valkenburg. "The Impact of Attentiveness on Political Efficacy: Evidence from a Three-Year German Panel Study." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* (1998) 10(3): 195-210.

Shineman, Victoria. 2012. If You Mobilize Them, They Will Become Informed: Experimental Evidence that Information is Endogenous to Participation. Paper Presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (virtually via SSRN).

Shineman, Victoria. 2012. Estimating the Effects of Participation on Political Efficacy and Political Trust: A Field Experiment. Paper Presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (virtually via SSRN).

Smith, Daniel and Caroline Tolbert. 2004. Educated by Initiative: The Effects of Direct Democracy on Citizens and Political Organizations in the American States. University of Michigan Press.

Valentino, Nicholas, Krysha Gregorowicz, and Eric Groenendyk. 2009. "Efficacy, Emotions and the Habit of Participation." Political Behavior, 31: 301 − 330.

Yalch, Richard F. 1976. "Pre-election Interview Effects on Voter Turnout." Public Opinion Quarterly 40(1):331− 6.

Overview: The experimental design consisted of a mobilization treatment and an information treatment integrated into a panel survey conducted before and after the November 8, 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election. The mobilization treatment reduced the cost of registration and voting, and additionally offered citizens a financial incentive to vote. A 2x2 treatment design added varying access to low-cost information, in order to test the effects of mobilization across different information environments.

Case Selection: San Francisco Municipal Election: In the November 2011 Municipal Election, the citizens of San Francisco voted on eight ballot propositions, and elected three different city-level offices: the Mayor, the Sheriff, and the District Attorney. All three contests were non-partisan, and were elected using ranked choice voting (RCV), a preferential voting system.[8] This election was an ideal case in which to apply the experimental design for several reasons. First, a municipal election was likely to have lower level of baseline voter turnout than a higher level election, which is key to generating a substantial turnout effect in the initial election, and therefore key to enabling precise estimates of residual mobilization. Second, San Francisco has remarkably progressive voter turnout laws, which maximized the ability for the mobilization treatment to reduce the costs of participation, simply by making subjects aware of the resources

---

[8] Ranked-choice voting enables voters to indicate up to three ranked preferences in each contest, differentiating between their first choice, second choice, and third choice. If no candidate receives a majority of the first choice votes, the candidate with the fewest first-choice votes is eliminated, and those votes are redistributed to the next choice indicated on the ballots. All the votes are then re-counted, and the process continues until a single candidate has a majority of first-choice votes.

that were already available to them.[9] Third, the city of San Francisco makes their validated voter history file available for scholarly research purposes, which was essential for verifying actual voter turnout. And lastly, the 2011 San Francisco Municipal Election was a case where it was possible to offer a financial incentive for participation. It is illegal to offer money or other material incentives in exchange for voting in all federal elections and within 48 states, but incentivizing participation is not forbidden in local elections in California (see Hasen 2000; Nichter 2008; and CA Election Code Sections 18520-18524).

Recruitment: Subjects were recruited through announcements made in classrooms at City College San Francisco and through postings in online job forums, including backpage.org, craigslist.org, and the San Francisco Chronicle's online classified section. The study was advertised as a money making opportunity, where participants would earn $25 for filling out two surveys about 6 weeks apart.

Treatment Assignment: A website directed all subjects to a short online pre-survey questionnaire. The questionnaire verified eligibility, and gathered basic information used to stratify treatment assignment within a randomized block design. Random treatment assignment was intended to split the full sample into four groups that were comparable before the treatment was administered. Stratified randomization prevents imbalance between treatment groups, enabling stronger statistical power and increasing opportunities for subgroup analysis (Kernan,

---

[9] For the 2011 Municipal Election, San Francisco allowed registration to occur up until 15 days before the election, any citizen was able to request to vote by mail up until one week before the election, early voting opened at City Hall one month before the election, voters were not required to produce identification, there was no minimum residency requirement to register to vote, polling places were close in proximity, and any registered citizen was able to cast a provisional ballot at any polling place in the city.

Viscoli, Makuch, Brass, and Horwitz 1999). Treatments were also randomized over time, to create balance in the time of day and the proximity of the election.

Pre-Treatment Survey: Every subject completed the first survey in person at a private office located in downtown San Francisco between October 11th – October 24th, 2011. All subjects were contacted by e-mail twice more before the second survey: on October 28th to confirm participation in the study, and on November 7th to send details about the upcoming second survey. Varying treatments were also integrated into these e-mails, as described below.

Experimental Treatment Design: I introduced an intensive mobilization treatment intended to decrease costs and increase incentives for casting a ballot. In order to evaluate the effects of the mobilization treatment in a low-cost information environment, I also introduced varying access to an information treatment which was intended to provide subjects with low-cost factual information about the candidates and issues.

Experimental Treatments: A 2x2 treatment design (see Figure 6.1) assigned all subjects to receive one of the following: an information treatment, a mobilization treatment, both the information and the mobilization treatment, or neither. Both treatments were sequential in nature, consisting of three stages.

Stage 1: The first stage of each treatment was delivered in-person immediately after the subject completed the first survey. Stage 1 of the *information treatment* consisted of giving the subject a 42-page packet containing selections from the official voter guide, including statements from all candidates from all three races, and a description of each of the eight ballot propositions

(Appendix E: Stage 1 – Information: Handout).[10] All materials were gathered from official government sources, in order to minimize any perceived advocacy on behalf of the researcher.

Stage 1 of the *mobilization treatment* consisted of two parts, one designed to subsidize participation costs as much as possible, and the other designed to incentivize participation. To reduce the cost of voting, each subject received a 14-page packet of information prepared from official government sources, including the details on how to register to vote, verify registration, request and submit a vote-by-mail ballot, where and when to vote early, how the voting system (ranked-choice voting) counts the votes, and how to properly mark a ranked-choice ballot (Appendix F: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Handout). Subjects were also offered a voter registration card, so they could register, update their address, or request a vote-by-mail ballot, and the researcher offered to return the registration card for the subject.

To incentivize participation, the mobilization treatment also provided each subject with a prepaid $25 Visa gift card (see Figure XXX). In place of a name, the card read "THANK YOU FOR VOTING, SAN FRANCISCO 2011" (Appendix B: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Visa Card). After handing subjects the Visa card and describing it as a "gift for you", the researcher recited a memorized script that explained the following: (1) The $25 is already on the card, and the subject can spend it however he or she would like; (2) The card has not been activated yet; (3) I (the researcher) have the activation code; (4) I will activate the card after the upcoming

---

[10] All of the information provided during Stage 1 of the information treatment was gathered from the official San Francisco voter guide. Therefore, for any subject who was already registered to vote at the correct address, all of the information provided in Stage 1 was a duplicate of materials already being sent to the subject's home. However, for any subject not yet registered to vote (more than 20% of the sample) and for any subject who was registered at the wrong mailing address, the information provided in Stage 1 was likely a source the subject had not seen yet.

municipal election; (5) However, if for whatever reason, the subject does not cast a ballot in the election, I will cancel the card and "take the money back"; and (6) I will verify whether or not the subject cast a ballot with the official voter turnout record from the Election Office (Appendix C: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Visa Verbal Script).

Figure 1: Participation Incentive: $25 Prepaid Visa Card

The Visa card was intentionally introduced as a gift, so that subjects felt like they had extra money already in their possession. By threatening to cancel the Visa card and take the money back, I was trying to capture the feeling of having a penalty for not balloting, as opposed to a reward for balloting. Characterizing this part of the mobilization treatment as a non-participation penalty was intended to capture the conditions of compulsory voting, as well as to capitalize on the observation that people respond more to concerns of losing money they already have than they do to prospects of receiving new money. By informing subjects that I would validate their

voter turnout with official government records, the mobilization treatment also made subjects aware that voter turnout was recorded, and was going to be monitored.[11]

Stage 2: The second stage of the treatment was delivered via e-mail on October 28th. An e-mail was sent to all subjects, confirming their participation in the study, and reminding them that the second survey would begin November 9th. For subjects receiving the information treatment, the October 28th e-mail also included additional information and resources about the upcoming election, including links to video records of candidate debates, the online official voter guide, a document summarizing the pros and cons of each of the eight ballot measures, and short video recordings from all 25 candidates, and regarding all 8 ballot referenda. All information came from official government sources and was intended to be factual and unbiased. For subjects receiving the mobilization treatment, the October 28th e-mail also included a reminder about the upcoming election, a reminder about the terms of the $25 Visa card, and a list of resources intended to make it easier to vote (Appendix G: Stage 2 – E-mail Content).

Stage 3: An e-mail was sent to all subjects on November 7th, 2011 – one day before the election. This e-mail was a reminder that the second survey would begin in two days, on November 9th, 2011. The e-mail also informed subjects that all participants who completed the second survey within 24 hours of receipt would be entered into a lottery, and one random winner

---

[11] Before beginning the first survey, every subject in every treatment group signed an identical copy of a consent form that specified, among other things, that the experimenter could merge the survey data with other information about the subject, "such as your electoral district, your voter registration status, and other information available from the voter history file." So technically, subjects in the mobilization baseline were also alerted to the existence of a voter history file, and the fact that their records could be checked.

would be selected to receive an additional $100 bonus. The lottery was intended to motivate subjects to fill out the survey while the election was still fresh in their memory.

There was no additional information treatment at this time. For subjects receiving the mobilization treatment, the November 7th e-mail also included another reminder that the election was tomorrow, included information about how and where to vote, and included a reminder that the $25 Visa card would be canceled if the subject did not cast a ballot in the election (Appendix H: Stage 3 – E-mail Content).

Post-Election Survey: The San Francisco Municipal Election took place on November 8th, 2011. The post-election survey was conducted online through Qualtrics. The second survey was conducted online in order to enable all subjects to complete the survey within a short time frame. I wanted to minimize attrition by making the survey easy to complete. I also hoped that having the survey online would enable subjects to complete the survey soon after the November 8th election, while the candidates and issues were still equally fresh in their memories. An e-mail was sent to all subjects on Wednesday November 9th, 2011, including a unique personal link to the second survey.[12] Subjects were instructed that they had one week to finish the survey, and

---

[12] Conducting the post-treatment survey online reduced the ability to control the survey environment, and introduced concerns that subjects might "cheat" on the political information questions. One might worry that subjects who were motivated to cast a ballot by the mobilization treatment, or who had received the information treatment, might feel guilty or embarrassed about being uninformed, and thus might have stronger incentives to look up answers.

In order to reduce the temptation to look up answers online, before the information questions on the survey began, subjects were shown the following message on the computer screen, and had to wait several seconds before they were able to click on to the next section: "The next questions are intended to assess how much you know about the candidates and issues in the previous election. This is not a test, and you will not receive any reward for correct or

were encouraged to complete the survey within 24 hours, in order to be entered into the lottery for a $100 bonus. The lottery was quite effective: more than 70% of subjects completed the survey within 24 hours. Attrition was very low: 96.9% of subjects (349/360) who completed the first survey also completed the second survey.

Incentives: All subjects who completed both surveys were paid $25 for their participation. Subjects in the mobilization treatment received an additional $25 (through the activated Visa card) if they cast a ballot in the election. There was no additional incentive attached to acquiring information or answering information questions correctly.[13]

_____

incorrect answers. Please answer honestly based on what you actually know. All answers are confidential and will not be linked to your name. Select the answer that best represents your current actual knowledge about each question. Your responses are being timed, so please do not leave the survey to look up answers."

Every screen on the survey was timed, providing a baseline estimate of how long each subject required to answer questions about political information, as well as about other topics. An analysis of the average time spent on different types of questions across treatment groups did not indicate any irregularities that would suggest subjects were cheating.

[13] There is some concern that motivating involvement in the study through a monetary payment, as well as adding a financial incentive for participation, might affect the internal and external validity of the experimental design. By recruiting subjects through a monetary incentive, the experimental design might have restricted the subject pool to include only low-income subjects and people who are particularly motivated by money. If the representativeness of the sample were limited in this way, the ability for the results to provide inferences to a more general population would be limited. However, the sample characteristics suggest that respondents were not particularly poor. For example, more than 15% of the sample reported incomes over $90,000 per year. One can look at an extended presentation of pre-treatment sample characteristics in Appendix D, to further assess the diverse characteristics of the sample.

Verifying Voter Turnout: After the election, actual voter turnout was validated using the confidential version of the Voter History File, acquired directly from the San Francisco Department of Elections. This file was used to validate the actual turnout of all subjects in the study, matching based on name, date of birth, gender, and both home and mailing addresses.

The financial incentive to cast a ballot in 2011 did not add any financial incentive to continue participating in 2012. If the sample were particularly motivated by money, residual mobilization effects would be even less likely.

There is also concern that offering a monetary incentive for casting a ballot might "crowd out" pre-existing intrinsic motivations for participation (Gneezy and Rustichini 2000; Panagopoulos 2008). If incentivizing participation in 2011 did crowd out instrumental incentives for voting, this spill over would cause the mobilization treatment to decrease incentives to participate in 2012, thereby again making residual mobilization to be less likely, suggesting that any observed estimates from 2012 might actually represent a lower bound of potential effects.

Appendix B: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Visa Card

To: THANK YOU FOR VOTING

From: VICTORIA SHINEMAN

Amount: 25.00

Message: THIS $25 REWARD CARD IS A GIFT FOR YOU. HOWEVER, THE CARD WILL BE
           CANCELED IF YOU DO NOT CAST A BALLOT IN THE 2011 SAN FRANCISCO
           MUNICIPAL ELECTION.

Helpful Tips:

Read the Terms and Conditions on the reverse side to become familiar with the
use of your Reward Card. Next, go to www.wrl.com/cards/activate to activate
your WRL Visa Reward Card, or call our activation line at **1-877-357-4975.**

Using your Reward Card:
Although your Reward Card is marked as a "Debit" card, always choose
"Credit" at the point of sale.

RewardCard use at gas pumps:
Do not swipe your Reward Card at the gas pump. Always present your card to
an attendant inside the service station.

Reward Card use at restaurants/salons/service locations:
Many service industry merchants will pre-authorize a 20% gratuity when your
Reward Card is processed. Your Reward Card may be declined if the Reward
Card balance cannot accommodate this additional gratuity.

If yourReward Card is declined:
The most common reason for a declined transaction is that the purchase
amount exceeds the Reward Card balance. You can check your Reward Card
balance at www.wrl.com.

New York University
Victoria Shineman
19 W. 4th St 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10012

91829   1287   1   467045
New York University
THANK YOU FOR VOTING
649 MISSION STREET, 5TH FL
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

A Wolfe.com Company

Appendix C: Visa Verbal Script

The following script was recited from memory when giving subjects the Visa gift card:

"I have a gift for you. This is a $25 prepaid Visa gift card. The money is already on the card, and you are free to spend it on whatever you wish. The card has not been activated yet. I have the activation code, and I will activate your card after the upcoming San Francisco Municipal Election. However, if for any reason, you do not submit a ballot in this election, instead of activating your card, I will cancel the card, and I will take the money back. Although who you vote for and who you don't vote for is always secret, whether or not you submit a ballot is recorded by the San Francisco Election Office. This data is kept in an official Voter History File, which tracks the registration and turnout of everyone in the city. After the election takes place, I will use the official Voter History File to verify whether or not you cast a ballot in the election. Assuming you cast a ballot, your card will be activated. Otherwise, your card will be canceled, and I will take the money back."

Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics of Sample, by Treatment Group

	Baseline	Information Only	Mobilization Only	Information + Mobilization	Total Sample
Percent Female	52.81 (50.20)	54.22 (50.12)	51.14 (50.27)	51.72 (50.26)	52.45 (50.01)
Percent White	57.61 (49.69)	50.56 (50.28)	53.33 (50.17)	51.69 (50.25)	53.33 (49.96)
Percent Asian	18.48 (39.02)	16.85 (37.65)	22.22 (41.81)	22.47 (41.98)	20.00 (40.06)
Percent Black	8.70 (28.33)	8.99 (28.76)	11.11 (31.60)	10.11 (30.32)	9.72 (29.67)
Percent Hispanic	6.52 (24.83)	13.48 (34.35)	12.22 (32.94)	8.99 (28.76)	10.28 (30.41)
Percent Mixed Race	6.52 (24.83)	10.11 (30.32)	8.89 (28.62)	10.11 (30.32)	8.89 (28.50)
Percent Employed Full Time	31.52 (46.71)	28.09 (45.20)	28.89 (45.58)	21.35 (41.21)	27.50 (44.71)
Percent Employed Part Time	29.35 (45.79)	29.21 (45.73)	22.22 (41.81)	33.71 (47.54)	28.61 (45.26)
Percent in School Full Time	16.30 (37.14)	32.58 (47.13)	27.78 (45.04)	31.46 (46.70)	26.94 (44.43)
Percent in School Part Time	15.22 (36.12)	15.73 (36.61)	16.67 (37.48)	13.48 (34.35)	15.28 (36.03)
Percent High School Graduates	34.78 (47.89)	52.81 (50.20)	42.22 (49.67)	48.31 (50.25)	44.44 (49.76)
Percent Associate Degree	7.61 (26.66)	8.99 (28.76)	10.00 (30.17)	10.11 (30.32)	9.17 (28.90)
Percent College Degree	36.96 (48.53)	24.72 (43.38)	33.33 (47.40)	23.60 (42.70)	29.72 (45.77)
Percent Advanced Degree	20.65 (40.70)	13.48 (34.35)	14.44 (35.35)	17.98 (38.62)	16.67 (37.32)
Percent Married	8.70 (28.33)	10.11 (30.32)	8.89 (28.62)	8.99 (28.76)	9.17 (28.90)
Percent With Child(ren)	22.83 (42.20)	28.09 (45.20)	23.33 (42.53)	14.61 (35.52)	22.22 (41.63)

Length of Residency (in years)	7.76 (10.23)	7.42 (9.30)	7.44 (9.23)	7.77 (9.90)	7.60 (9.64)
Age	36.63 (14.48)	36.62 (14.50)	37.27 (15.57)	36.62 (16.08)	36.79 (15.12)
Age2	1549.08 (1193.97)	1548.74 (1244.47)	1628.64 (1345.32)	1596.74 (1352.29)	1581.17 (1280.86)
Income Category	4.51 (3.06)	3.51 (2.60)	3.91 (2.99)	4.02 (2.99)	3.99 (2.93)
(Pre Survey) Participation Index	19.40 (2.85)	19.27 (2.55)	19.29 (2.72)	19.55 (3.09)	19.38 (2.80)
Voter Turnout: Past 4 Elections	1.07 (1.37)	1.31 (1.37)	1.09 (1.39)	1.15 (1.34)	1.15 (1.37)
(Pre) Likelihood of Voting in 2001 Election	5.4 (1.84)	5.79 (1.61)	5.40 (2.00)	5.42 (1.90)	5.50 (1.85)
(Pre) Left-Right Ideology (11-point)	3.50 (2.96)	3.78 (3.00)	3.81 (2.39)	3.08 (2.94)	3.55 (2.83)
(Pre) Strength of Partisan Identity (3-point)	1.95 (0.71)	1.76 (0.75)	1.99 (0.74)	1.92 (0.77)	1.91 (0.74)

Appendix E: Stage 1 – Information: Handout

The information handout included a 42-page packet of information about the candidates and ballot referenda. You can download a complete copy of this packet here:

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1gapkqmiF36aTh0Y2RBSjNZYWc/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix F: Stage 1 – Mobilization: Handout

The mobilization handout included a 12-page packet of information about how to register to vote, how to verify one's registration status, how to update one's registration status, how to locate one's polling location, how to vote early at City Hall, how to register to vote-by-mail, how to submit a vote-by-mail ballot, how to submit a provisional ballot, and how to correctly mark a ranked-choice ballot. You can download a complete copy of this packet here:

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B1gapkqmiF36Mm92bEV5dmxuOVU/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix G: Treatment Stage 2: E-mail #1

[FOR ALL SUBJECTS]

Sent: Friday, October 28th 2011

From: Victoria Anne Shineman vas281@nyu.edu
Subject: San Francisco Survey - You Have Completed the First Survey! (details for Survey #2 Included)
To: vas281@nyu.edu
Date: Friday, October 28th, 2011

Dear Participant,

Thank you for participating in this research study. You have completed the first survey. The second survey begins on November 9th, 2011.

On Wednesday November 9th, 2011, I will send you an e-mail including a personalized link to a website, where you can fill out the second survey. The second survey must be filled out online, and you can fill it out any time that week, up until November 15th. As soon as you complete the second survey, your payment will be processed, and I will send you a $25 check immediately via postal mail. You should have your payment within seven days of when you complete the second survey.

[FOR SUBJECTS RECEIVING THE MOBILIZATION TREATMENT ONLY]

Your $25 prepaid gift card will be activated after the November 8th, 2011 election. However, if you do not cast a ballot in this election for any reason, I will cancel your gift card, and take the money back. I will send you a letter in the mail, as well as a letter by e-mail, informing you whether or not your card has been activated. If you cast a ballot in the election, your card will be active, and you are then free to use that card to buy anything you want.

As I explained before, and as is stated on the handout you were given after the first survey, I will verify your turnout record using the official voter history file. This file is produced by the Election Office, and it records whether or not you submit a ballot in each election. This is the only way to verify whether or not you voted. You do not need to save your ballot stub or call or e-mail to tell me when you vote. This is not necessary, and will not help your card get activated sooner. Your participation will be recorded automatically by the government, and I will use official government records to verify your status

Remember, you can vote in three different ways

1. In person, at your polling place, on November 8th 2011 (Election Day)
    You must have submitted your voter registration on or before October 24th, 2011

2. By mail, using your official vote-by-mail ballot
   You can still request a vote-by-mail ballot, up until Monday November 1st, 2011

3. Early Voting, in-person at City Hall
   You can vote early at City Hall, any day between now and November 8th, 2011.
   Early voting is open on Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and
   Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM.

You can watch a short video from the Election Office explaining these options here:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP44XiQ0Qss&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

If you want to learn more about ranked-choice voting, you can watch either of these videos,
which explain how the voting system works:
1. http://www.sfelections.org/demo/rcvvideo.html
2. http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=12993

[FOR SUBJECTS RECEIVING THE INFORMATION TREATMENT ONLY]

As you may remember, I offered you an information packet that included excerpts from the
official Voter Information Guide. You can also access this information online at this website,
which publishes the complete guide in a pdf format:
http://www.sfgov2.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/elections/NOV2011_VIP_EN.pdf

You can also view a shorter summary of the 8 ballot propositions, including a list of pros and
cons, at this link (prepared by the League of Women Voters):
http://lwvsf.org/pages/pdf/LWVSF_ProConGuide_Nov2011.pdf

If you want to learn more about any of the candidates running for Mayor, Sheriff, or District
Attorney, or about any of the 8 Ballot Propositions, you might find the video links listed below
to be useful. These online videos are intended to provide you with easily accessible information
about the upcoming election, so you can make a well-informed decision. The videos include:

1. Official statements from each candidate in each election
2. A video record of the Candidate Forum for each elected office; and
3. An informational video about each ballot proposition, including a summary of what the
proposition would do, and arguments from either side of the issue.

I hope you find this information useful.

[FOR ALL SUBJECTS]

Sincerely,

Victoria Shineman

PhD Candidate
Department of Politics
New York University
vas281@nyu.edu

[FOR SUBJECTS RECEIVING THE INFORMATION TREATMENT ONLY]

San Francisco Mayoral Election, November 2011

Mayoral Forum:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13385

Mayoral Candidate Statements (All):
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13144

Jeff Adachi – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/0/vQ17mR9O60k
Michela Alioto-Pier – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/1/Pj0dL06BpCM
Cesar Ascarrunz – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/2/1yFWFHMKIcU
Terry Baum – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/3/w6--8Fhk09Y
David Chiu – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/4/LzegNMYbJ7A
Paul Currier – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/5/_tpaOklUPJk
Bevan Dufty – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/6/Pa3NJGEBv3w
Tony Hall – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/7/bpTtmI6-LhU
Dennis Herrera – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/8/u8bvykSgF50
Ed Lee – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/9/78H2948kRLk
Wilma Pang – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/10/sXxI7WokPl4
Joanna Rees – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/11/dDZJgTaT7vM
Phil Ting – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/12/pHb4CniorWE
Leland Yee – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/3041565B65A0AF0D/13/11Q6iVGT0yM

San Francisco Sheriff's Election, November 2011

Sheriff Forum:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13298

Sheriff Candidate Statements (All):
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13143

Chris Cunnie – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B0F122C401419240/0/i0cC5R9ov-Q
Ross Mirkarimi – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B0F122C401419240/1/PMtsT6_07C8
Paul Miyamoto – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B0F122C401419240/2/IbJ4zQBYI_g
David Wong – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B0F122C401419240/3/CEfXMlaW81I

San Francisco District Attorney Election, November 2011

District Attorney Forum:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13070

District Attorney Candidate Statements (All):
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=139&clip_id=13142

Sharmin Bock – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B5709B6563D883B4/0/GZfXUp4J5FY
Bill Fazio – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B5709B6563D883B4/1/EVk-zCUUwkc
George Gascon – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B5709B6563D883B4/2/ywm5ozenSn0
David Onek – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B5709B6563D883B4/3/AoJsoRdXVKE
Vu Trinh – Individual Statement:
http://www.youtube.com/user/SFVotes2011#p/c/B5709B6563D883B4/4/SedYf7wYQL4

San Francisco Ballot Propositions, November 2011

Proposition A – School Bonds:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_49otM5jltw&NR=1
Proposition B – Road Repaving & Street Safety Bonds:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFllExvBQ5w&feature=related

Proposition C – City Pension & Health Care Benefits:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2vq_ZOaRFY&feature=related
Proposition D – City Pension Benefits:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRKyjYtTQQU&feature=related
Proposition E – Amending or Repealing Initiative Ordinances & Declarations of Policy:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmFRicDCnYY&feature=related
Proposition F – Campaign Consultant Disclosures:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF4cm1TNfF8&feature=related
Proposition G – Sales Tax:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AbvnANsNmg&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL
Proposition H – School District Student Assignment:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwJnwmZi1nA&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

Appendix H: Treatment Stage 2: E-mail #2

[FOR ALL SUBJECTS]

Sent: Monday November 7th 2011

From: Victoria Anne Shineman vas281@nyu.edu
Subject: Reminder: Survey #2 Begins Wednesday November 9th, Election Day is Tomorrow (November 8th), and $100 Bonus!
To: vas281@nyu.edu
Date: Monday, November 7, 2011, 5:48 PM

Dear Participant,

As you remember, you signed up for this research study, where you receive $25 in exchange for completing two surveys. You already completed the first survey, at my office in downtown San Francisco.

This is a final reminder that the second survey will begin in 2 days, on Wednesday November 9th, 2011. I will send you an e-mail on Wednesday including a link to a website, and you can fill out the survey on that website any time between November 9th - November 15th. You must complete the second survey by November 15th to receive the $25, and I encourage you to fill it out as early as possible.

As an added incentive to encourage you to complete the second survey early, if you complete the second survey within 24 hours, you will be eligible for a $100 bonus. This $100 bonus is in addition to the $25 you will already receive for completing the survey, [FOR SUBJECTS RECEIVING THE MOBILIZATION TREATMENT ONLY] as well as the $25 gift card you received for voting.

[FOR ALL SUBJECTS]

All participants who complete the second survey online within the first 24 hours will be entered in a lottery, and one eligible participant will be randomly selected as the winner. Your odds of winning this lottery depend on how many people finish within the first 24 hours. This bonus will be paid by check and will be sent to the winner along with the $25 check for taking the survey.

[FOR SUBJECTS RECEIVING THE MOBILIZATION TREATMENT ONLY]

The $25 check and the $100 bonus lottery are both in addition to the $25 gift card you received after you took the first survey.

Remember, your ballot must be received by the time the polls close tomorrow, Tuesday November 8th, 2011.
Otherwise your gift card will be canceled, and I will take the $25 back.

If you have not submitted your ballot yet, you can do this in several ways:

1. Vote In Person at Your Local Election Precinct: You can go to your polling precinct in the city, and cast a ballot any time between 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM on Tuesday November 8th, 2011. You must be in line by 8:00 PM to vote in person at any precinct. Not sure where your precinct is? You can look it up here: http://gispubweb.sfgov.org/website/pollingplace/

2. You can vote in the Election Office at City Hall, any time between 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM. San Francisco City Hall is located at 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place. You can drop off your vote-by-mail ballot or pick up a new ballot.

3. Vote-By-Mail – Important – **If you haven't mailed your vote-by-mail ballot yet, don't mail it now! It will not be received in time.**

However, you can still make sure your ballot is received by 8:00 PM on Election Day. You can drop off your vote-by-mail ballot at any of the precinct stations around the city. All precincts will be open from 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM. You can look up the closest station to you on this website: http://gispubweb.sfgov.org/website/pollingplace/

You can also drop off your vote-by-mail ballot at City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place.

Did you lose your original ballot, or make a mistake when marking it? You can still submit a ballot before the election is over! You can request a replacement ballot and submit it provisionally at any polling place in the city, or at City Hall. Once the Election Office confirms that your original vote-by-mail ballot was not received, your provisional ballot will be counted. You can verify that your ballot was counted online here: http://www.sfelections.org/pv/

[FOR ALL SUBJECTS]

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I will send you the second survey on Wednesday, and look forward to receiving the results. As before, all answers are confidential.

Sincerely,
Victoria Shineman
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Politics
New York University
vas281@nyu.edu